



Formulating Marketing Strategies in Education: Enhancing Competitiveness and Customer Satisfaction

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Abstract. In today's fast-paced and interconnected technological landscape, educational institutions face many complex challenges. These institutions, whether formal or informal, are not only striving for academic excellence but also competing to attract and retain students through effective promotional strategies. As a result, higher education institutions are increasingly focusing on marketing principles and refining them as strategic assets to stay competitive in the market. The implementation of effective marketing tactics is crucial for these institutions to attract the desired number of students and ensure their satisfaction, thereby maintaining a competitive edge. This in-depth article examines a wide range of literature sources to identify and develop effective marketing strategies within the educational sector. The analysis adopts a literature review approach to integrate relevant research from 2019 to 2024, with the aim of enhancing the competitiveness and satisfaction of educational institutions. Key findings highlight the importance of offering exceptional programs, improving service quality, and utilizing innovative marketing approaches. The importance of offering exceptional programs is emphasized as a fundamental strategy to differentiate institutions and attract prospective students. Improving service quality is discussed as a means to enhance student satisfaction and retention, ensuring that institutions not only attract students but also provide them with a fulfilling educational experience. Utilizing innovative marketing approaches, such as digital marketing, is highlighted as crucial in reaching and engaging a tech-savvy student population. The role of digital marketing in contemporary strategy development is emphasized, particularly the importance of customer relationship management. Case studies and real-world examples are used to illustrate successful strategy implementations and the challenges faced in dynamic market environments. These efforts not only elevate educational standards but also provide students with more options and benefits. By integrating marketing strategies, educational institutions can strengthen their position in the market and achieve long-term success.

Keywords: Marketing Strategies, Education Sector, Competitiveness, Customer Relationship Management

1 Introduction

In the era of globalization and rapid technological development, the education sector faces increasingly complex challenges. Educational institutions, both formal and non-formal, compete not only in terms of academic quality but also in terms of marketing strategies to attract and retain customers. Intense competition in the world of education encourages higher education institutions to focus more on marketing concepts and develop them as strategies. If universities want to succeed in attracting the desired number of students in the future, they must implement a good integrated marketing strategy [1].

Increasing marketing competition between educational institutions shows how important service marketing is in this sector. By offering superior programs, improving the quality of services and facilities, and implementing innovative marketing strategies, educational institutions can attract more students and maintain their position in the competitive market [2]. This intense competition has not only raised the bar of educational quality but also provided more choices and benefits to customers. Marketing in the educational context is a form of public institutional trust in the educational services provided [3].

Higher education marketing is part of an educational institution's strategy to make continuous improvements to improve the quality of education. Quality human resources will have an impact on the progress of a country. This is why the quality of service in education must be improved [4].

Increasingly fierce competition requires educational institutions to be more creative and imaginative in identifying their advantages and uniqueness. This shows that educational institutions are required to try to increase public interest and trust in educational institutions. Thus, educational institutions must be able to provide acceptable services to ensure customer satisfaction for the sustainability of the educational institution.

Through service quality in creating customer satisfaction [5]. The services provided by a particular educational institution reflect the quality of that institution. If customers assess the service as good because it meets expectations, then the institution can be said to be good. However, on the other hand, if the service provided by the institution is bad then it is said that the institution is bad [6].

Ineffective service marketing strategies in education can have a negative impact on various aspects of the operations and development of educational institutions. Lack of visibility and traction can make it difficult for an institution to compete with other educational institutions that have better marketing strategies. Ineffective marketing can lead to unmet expectations resulting in decreased customer satisfaction. From decreased enrollment to a bad reputation. Therefore, it is important for educational

institutions to develop and implement good marketing strategies, that focus on customer needs and expectations, and increase competitiveness.

The focus of questions based on problem symptoms in this research is as follows:

1. 1.What is the right marketing strategy to increase the interest of prospective students/registrants in an educational institution?
2. What kind of strategic application of marketing educational services is to increase the competitiveness of the quantity and quality of customers in educational institutions?

2 Method

This research uses the literature review method, namely a method that analyzes literature sources to synthesize research that is relevant to a particular topic or research question. Literature reviews to gain an in-depth understanding of the subject being researched, identify gaps in the literature, and provide a strong theoretical foundation for further research.

Data sources were taken to obtain empirical, quantitative, qualitative, and mixed studies, as well as literature sources in the form of scientific articles from 2019-2024 to identify and analyze sources contained in articles in identifying service marketing strategy formulations in the educational context to increase competitiveness and customer satisfaction.

3 Result and Discussion

Data sources for scientific articles that have strong relevance for answering questions in the research problem formulation are as follows:

Table 1. Literature Sources

No	Research Title	Research methods	Research result
1.	Strategy to Increase Brand Image and Competitiveness in Marketing Services in Higher Education [7].	Qualitative Approach, interviews, observations, and documentation with research objects at Darussalam Gontor University	1) Darussalam Gontor University's marketing targeting strategy to improve its brand image to be competitive includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darussalam Gontor University Gontor chose alumni consumer groups from Madrasah Aliyah; • Darussalam Gontor

University serves more than one well-defined market group through a marketing mix and serves consumers without limiting market segments as long as they meet predetermined criteria and procedures.

- Through relations with alumni lodges.

2) Darussalam Gontor University's marketing promotion strategy in improving *the brand image* and competitiveness of the institution uses two media, namely:

- Conventional media such as brochures, magazines, and non-conventional media:
- Its use of internet-based promotional media includes websites, and social media applications such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.

2. Marketing Evaluation of Higher Education Teaching and Science Education Services in Higher Education [4].

Descriptive analysis, qualitative approach with research objects at teaching and educational science faculties

Evaluation of Higher Education Marketing Management in one of the teaching and educational science faculties in universities in Papua by:

- *Goal-Oriented Evaluation Model*

- in Papuan universities
- *Marketing Mix* approaches such as *physical evidence, partnership building, process, and performance.*
- 1) Research finds that digital marketing has a major impact on *Customer Relationship Management (CRM)* in the education sector.
 - 2) Educational institutions use digital marketing strategies not only to target audiences but also to strengthen their branding. Branding can be done through social media (WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube).
- Education marketing strategies that must be integrated to create student/customer satisfaction are:
- Expand the university's wireless network access points, as necessary, and plan the areas where tables are set up so that students can access the internet connection.
 - Enter into exchange agreements with foreign universities that have degrees similar to UPFIM such as Argentina, Cuba, Spain, North America,
3. Adoption of Digital Marketing in Educational Institutions: A Critical Literature Review [8].

Literature review using electronic databases (EBSCO, Scopus, Web of Science, Springer's, Taylor and Frances, and Google Scholar) with search objects the criteria are based on the words "Digital Marketing" and Higher education.
 4. Educational Marketing as a Strategy for the Satisfaction of University Students [9].

A quantitative approach is non-experimental with objects at the Francisco I. Madero Polytechnic University.

			<p>and Canada.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate on the website the projects of research professors, as well as their CVUs, so that those interested in a subject can contact researchers and consult with their questions. • Create a Facebook page to report on projects implemented by UPFIM. • Provide access to a computer center to view digital books, or anywhere else where they have internet access. • Propose the creation of a website where you can download materials (audio, video) for studying or reviewing English.
5.	<p>Application of 7Ps as a Higher Education Marketing Strategy [1].</p>	<p>Descriptive analysis with the research object looking back at the era of the Islamic kingdom in Indonesia</p>	<p>Marketing implementation uses a marketing mix strategy <i>by</i> implementing the 7P strategy in higher education institutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The four traditional aspects related to the marketing of goods are <i>product</i>, <i>price</i>, <i>place</i>, and <i>promotion</i>. • Three aspects of marketing expansion, namely: <i>people</i> (human resources), <i>physical evidence</i> (physical evidence), and <i>process</i> (management of services provided)
6.	<p>Transformational</p>	<p>A descriptive qualitative</p>	<p>1) The competitive</p>

- Leadership: approach is the capacity of higher
 Increasing the main writing education can be
 Competitiveness method with measured using the 7n1
 of Higher literature study, competitiveness tool,
 Education in the discussion, and namely market share,
 Industrial Era 4.0 subjective customer perception,
 [10]. intuitive customer image, client
 techniques. fulfillment, customer
 service, stakeholder
 value, and *development*.
- 2) The competitiveness of a university depends on how well it can mobilize potential resources to win the competition (in this case the leadership as the center of management).
 - 3) Transformational leadership in higher education provides opportunities for subordinates to participate in change plans (involving subordinates is the main key to transformational leadership).
7. Increasing Student Satisfaction Through Academic Service Quality (Case Study at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, As-Syafiiyah Islamic University, Jakarta) [11].
- This research uses a quantitative descriptive methodology with data calculations using SPSS version 22.0. The research instrument used a questionnaire with a total of 20 (twenty) questions and analysis used the data collection method of correlation
- Based on the calculation of the coefficient of determination, it was obtained at 80.4%, indicating that the influence of academic service quality on student satisfaction is true. This shows a large number considering that the remaining 19.6% is influenced by other factors, namely facilities, performance, *and* main operating characteristics of the core product *purchased*, additional features, reliability, conformance *to* specification, durability, *serviceability*,

- coefficient test, coefficient of determination test, and regression equation test. *aesthetics*, and perceived *quality*.
8. Empirical Model of Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Performance of Private Higher Education Lecturers in Medan [12].
 The data analysis method used is Structural Equation Modeling. The sampling technique uses *non-probability sampling*.
 The results of this research conclude that work motivation has a significant influence on *organizational citizenship behavior*, work motivation has a significant influence on lecturer performance, organizational climate has a significant influence on *organizational citizenship behavior*, organizational climate has a significant influence on lecturer performance and *organizational citizenship behavior* has a significant influence on lecturer performance, as well as work motivation and organizational climate influence lecturer performance through the *Organizational Citizenship Behavior* variable at private universities in Medan. Based on research findings, the results of this research have implications such as the need for work motivation and a good organizational climate to improve *organizational* and lecturer performance
 9. Excellent Service Management in Increasing Student Satisfaction with Learning Services (Case Study at STIT Rakeyan Santang Karawang) [13].
 This research method uses qualitative research with research studies using a descriptive analysis method approach based on
 The determining factors for student satisfaction with higher education services are tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. If a priority scale is needed in efforts to improve service quality, then the *reliability factor* must first be

- field research (Field Research). increased, because it has a dominant influence in determining student satisfaction with STIT services. Rakeyan Santang Karawang is an educational institution.
10. Lecturers' Scientific Article Writing Skills and Efforts to Improve Scientific Publication Performance [14]. This literature study examines 30 articles selected from 54 articles compiled using the *Publish or Perish 7* application and *Google Scholar*. Lecturers, both personally and in the community, need to improve their competence by attending training, lecturer discussion forums, or workshops on scientific writing, as well as being open to sharing knowledge and writing experiences for mutual progress.
11. Implementation of *Competitive Strength, Competitive Area, Competitive Results* in Increasing Competitiveness and Marketing of Islamic Education Services [15]. The literature study research method uses a qualitative descriptive approach using keywords and classification techniques to find a conceptual model that suits the research theme. In this research, more emphasis is placed on building a strong foundation of competitive strength which is very important for marketing excellence, student growth, and building a positive image in society through:
- **Competitive Strengths**
Key elements of competitive strength include product excellence, product or service quality, competitive prices, marketing and promotion, distribution, and accessibility. Institutions identify and develop distinctive factors that differentiate a product or service, such as technological innovation, attractive design, or superior quality.

12. Marketing Strategy as an Alternative to Increase the Competitiveness of Bina Insani University Graduates [16].
- Qualitative, literature study and observation with research objects at Bina Insani University.
- **Competitive Area**
Important components in the competitive area are market segmentation, competitor analysis, market demand, customer value analysis, product development and innovation
 - **Competitive Results**
Market share, sales growth, operational profits and efficiency, competitive advantage, brand reputation and image, customer satisfaction and loyalty
- Marketing strategy that focuses on increasing the competitiveness of graduates at Bina Insani University through:
- Market segmentation
 - Targeting
 - Positioning
 - Sales projections
 - Revenue streams
13. Managing programmatic trade-offs for centers of teaching and learning: Applying a segmentation, targeting, and positioning approach to pedagogical offerings [17].
- Qualitative case study that focuses on the practical application of the STP (Segmentation, Target, Position) strategy in the context of pedagogical program development in a learning center.
- Implementation of the STP strategy
- Targeted segment
 - Program positioning
 - Exchange (*trade-off*)
- Clarify to the target or participants the program aimed at them.
14. Optimization of Digital Platforms as Part of SEO-Based Digital
- Qualitative descriptive with data collection techniques
- 1) Research reveals that digital marketing can reach a wider and more specific audience based

- Marketing Strategy to Appear on Google. Procedia of Engineering and Life Science offerings [18].
- through observation, analysis and documentation.
- on interests, demographics, behavior, location.
- 2) Identify platforms that have the capability to appear and be indexed by the Google search engine. With this capability, these platforms can attract audiences who have interests that are relevant to the products or services being marketed.
 - Pinterest
 - ISSUU
 - Tumblr
 - Flickr
 - Carousel
 - 3) Increase visibility, reach target audiences, and generate greater engagement and conversions profitably.
15. Marketing Strategy for New Student Admissions [19].
- Qualitative research with a case study approach and descriptive characteristics of research objects for New Student Admissions Staff and Students at Djuanda University.
- 1) Utilization of media (brochures, flyers, banners, social media, applications, websites)
 - 2) Promotion
 - 3) Socialization
 - 4) Improve the quality of performance and administration effectively and efficiently
 - 5) Digital marketing (online advertising, google Ads, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn)
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3.1 Enhancing Competitiveness and Customer Satisfaction

In today's rapidly evolving technological landscape, educational institutions face significant challenges, not only in striving for academic excellence but also in competing to attract and retain students through effective marketing strategies. The intense competition within the education sector necessitates a focus on sophisticated marketing principles to maintain a competitive edge and ensure customer satisfaction.

3.2 Key Strategies for Educational Marketing

Offering Exceptional Programs. One of the fundamental strategies highlighted in the literature is the importance of offering exceptional programs. This approach is vital for differentiating institutions and attracting prospective students. High-quality programs serve as the primary attractor, setting institutions apart in a crowded marketplace. For instance, institutions that develop specialized programs tailored to the demands of the job market can significantly enhance their appeal to potential students.

Improving Service Quality. Service quality is another critical factor in enhancing student satisfaction and retention. Educational institutions must focus on providing a fulfilling educational experience that meets or exceeds student expectations. Elements such as competent and friendly teaching staff, adequate facilities, and responsive administration are essential indicators of good service quality. High service quality not only attracts students but also fosters loyalty and retention, thereby contributing to the institution's long-term success.

Utilizing Innovative Marketing Approaches. In the digital age, innovative marketing approaches, particularly digital marketing, are crucial for reaching and engaging a tech-savvy student population. Digital marketing strategies, including social media engagement, search engine optimization, and targeted online advertising, can effectively reach prospective students. The integration of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems further enhances these efforts by enabling institutions to manage and analyze interactions with current and potential students, leading to improved satisfaction and loyalty.

3.3 Real-World Examples and Case Studies

Several case studies illustrate the successful implementation of these strategies. For instance, Darussalam Gontor University's marketing strategy, which includes targeted alumni engagement and the use of both conventional and digital media, has been effective in enhancing its brand image and competitiveness. Similarly, the evaluation of marketing management at a university in Papua highlighted the importance of a goal-oriented approach and the marketing mix in achieving marketing objectives.

Moreover, research has shown that digital marketing significantly impacts Customer Relationship Management in the education sector. Institutions that adopt digital marketing not only effectively target their audience but also strengthen their branding through platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.

Based on the results of a review of several scientific articles and journals that are relevant to this research problem, researchers can carry out further analysis and discussion regarding the problem formulation question. The application of marketing strategies to increase the interest of prospective students in an educational institution, especially higher education, first begins with the needs identification or needs assessment stage by formulating three strategic marketing stages, namely segmenting which separates the target market from needs, then targeting to determine the target market, and positioning which placing the product in the minds of consumers. Furthermore, marketing implementation is carried out using a marketing mix strategy which implements the 7P strategy in higher education institutions by placing four traditional aspects related to the marketing of goods, namely: product, price, and place, and promotion (promotion). Also, three aspects of marketing expansion, namely: people (human resources), physical evidence (physical evidence), and process (management of services provided).

Marketing activities to increase competitive advantage, brand image, and customer quality can be carried out by carrying out promotions that disseminate information about products/services provided through conventional media such as brochures, banners, magazines, and non-conventional media such as internet-based promotional media which are Its use includes websites, social media applications such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Currently, educational institutions apply digital marketing promotional techniques using non-conventional media not only to target audiences but also to strengthen their branding, so that it can increase the interest of prospective new students to register.

Based on the results of research conducted by Maisah et al., (2020) [1], which states that the implementation of marketing strategies for educational services can be classified into two stages, namely the planning stage and the implementation stage. At the planning stage, what is done is market identification, market segmentation and positioning, product differentiation, marketing communications, and services. Meanwhile, marketing implementation uses a marketing mix strategy which includes four or seven aspects, namely: product, price, location, promotion, human resources, physical evidence and process. Product in this case is a form of goods or services offered by universities, for example in this case it can be educational programs, talent, interest activities, etc. The Faculty of Education, Jakarta State University offers 7 (seven) study programs, including Elementary School Teacher Education, Early Childhood Education Teacher Education, Educational Management, Educational Technology, Community Education, Special Education, and Guidance Counseling. The specific aim of product marketing is to provide information to the public/consumers/prospective students regarding the benefits of each product /study program offered.

Price is related to the educational costs that must be paid to choose a product, in this case, it is often referred to as registration fees and single tuition fees. Education costs are related to overall expenses while the student is studying, so knowing the education

costs at the start helps parents/guardians or students' financial arrangements. Financing student tuition fees is usually called Single Tuition Fee (UKT). UKT financing must be in accordance with the financial condition of students who are divided into several UKT groups. The UKT groups in each study program at the Faculty of Education, Jakarta State University are different. Having a price that suits the target market will increase students' interest in registering.

Place is the ease of access to reach that place and how this location directly affects the image of the university. The general objective of place aspect marketing is to provide information about the location of universities to consumers/prospective students. Meanwhile, the specific aim of place aspect marketing is to provide information about strategic advantages and benefits for consumers/prospective university students. For example, Jakarta State University is a university located in the middle of the city of Jakarta so transportation access to reach it is very easy and strategic so that people can easily recognize it and it has become its own branding.

Promotion in this case is an activity carried out to introduce products owned by the university. Promotion can utilize various types of media, both conventional media and non-conventional media. The aim of this promotion is to improve higher education branding so as to create a competitive advantage for higher education institutions.

According to the research results [19], they concluded that the use of social media and online platforms is the key to reaching the current generation of students. Engaging in online marketing campaigns, using paid advertising, and leveraging platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn can increase an educational institution's visibility and build positive interactions with prospective students. Additionally, understanding trends and developments in the world of education, such as an emphasis on technology and innovation, as well as involvement in social and sustainability programs, can provide a competitive advantage. Educational institutions that are responsive to these changes can attract the interest of prospective students who are looking for relevant and up-to-date learning experiences.

Based on the results of research conducted by Wijaya & Eviyanti (2024) [18], digital marketing strategies can be optimized through platforms that have the ability to appear and be indexed by searches on Google. Research reveals that digital marketing can reach a wider and more specific audience based on interests, demographics, behavior, and location. Utilizing platforms to reach customers in the context of educational institutions can build interaction with prospective students and make customer satisfaction a top priority in educational strategies. This can increase customer satisfaction by providing better implementation of educational strategies that meet expectations.

In an effort to implement the right marketing strategy to increase the interest of prospective new students to enroll in higher education and create a competitive advantage for higher education, higher education must implement a marketing mix

strategy with appropriate marketing planning and implementation (Need Assessment, Segmenting, Targeting, Positioning). The success of a marketing strategy depends on good coordination, understanding the target audience, and adaptability to changing trends and technology. By using marketing media effectively, universities can maximize their efforts in attracting and retaining prospective new students.

3.4 Challenges and Opportunities

Effective marketing strategies can bring significant benefits to educational institutions, but there are challenges to be mindful of. The fast pace of technological advancements means institutions must constantly adjust their strategies. Moreover, the varied needs and preferences of potential students require a personalized marketing approach. Nevertheless, these challenges also offer opportunities. By utilizing data analytics and CRM systems, institutions can gain deeper insights into student behavior and preferences, enabling more customized and efficient marketing efforts. Additionally, the incorporation of cutting-edge technologies and digital tools can simplify marketing processes and improve overall effectiveness.

4 Conclusion

To increase competitiveness and customer satisfaction, it is necessary to formulate a good and appropriate marketing strategy. The demands of the times and technological developments emphasize that institutions or organizations in the educational context must be ready to compete between institutions. Educational institutions must understand customer needs and behavior and provide optimal services to increase their satisfaction.

The three stages of strategic marketing are segmenting which separates the target market from needs, then targeting to determine the target market, and positioning which places the product. There are important elements in a marketing strategy, namely 4P (product, price, promotion, and location). The implementation of marketing strategies for educational services can be classified into two stages, namely the planning stage and the implementation stage. At the planning stage, what is done is market identification, market segmentation and positioning, product differentiation, marketing communications, and services. This builds the provision of adequate information for customers so that good customer relationship management can be created and is the basis for formulating marketing strategies in educational contexts.

The formulation and implementation of effective marketing strategies are crucial for educational institutions to enhance their competitiveness and ensure customer satisfaction. By offering exceptional programs, improving service quality, and utilizing innovative marketing approaches, institutions can attract and retain students in a highly competitive market. The successful examples and case studies discussed provide valuable insights into best practices and highlight the importance of a strategic, adaptive approach to educational marketing.

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