

Developing an Adaptive Total Product Concept-Based Educational Marketing Model for Islamic Elementary Schools in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT: Educational marketing has become an increasingly important strategic function for educational institutions operating in competitive environments. However, existing studies predominantly focus on promotional strategies, institutional branding, or service quality, while limited attention has been given to developing comprehensive educational marketing models that integrate educational value creation with organizational adaptation. This study aims to develop an Adaptive Total Product Concept-Based Educational Marketing Model for Islamic elementary schools in Indonesia. A qualitative multi-case study design was employed at two Islamic elementary schools in Banyumas Regency, Indonesia. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis involving school leaders, teachers, administrative staff, school committee members, and parents. The data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña through data condensation, data display, conclusion drawing, and cross-case analysis. The findings reveal that educational marketing is constructed through the dynamic interaction of four interconnected dimensions: generic product, expected product, augmented product, and potential product. Generic product strengthens educational quality and institutional identity; expected product enhances stakeholder trust through consistent educational services; augmented product creates institutional differentiation through value-added programs; and potential product ensures long-term sustainability through continuous innovation and organizational adaptability. Rather than functioning independently, these dimensions operate as an integrated educational management system that strengthens institutional competitiveness and stakeholder confidence. The study proposes the Adaptive Total Product Concept-Based Educational Marketing Model as its principal theoretical contribution, extending Kotler's Total Product Concept into the context of educational management. The proposed model offers both a conceptual framework for educational marketing research and practical guidance for Islamic elementary school leaders seeking to improve educational quality, institutional competitiveness, and organizational sustainability.

KEYWORDS: Educational Marketing; Total Product Concept; Adaptive Marketing Model; Islamic Elementary School; Qualitative Multi-Case Study.

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid transformation of education in the digital era has fundamentally altered how educational institutions establish competitiveness and maintain public trust. Schools are no longer perceived merely as social institutions responsible for delivering knowledge; rather, they increasingly function as service organizations operating within a highly competitive educational market. Educational institutions are expected to provide not only academic excellence but also comprehensive educational experiences capable of meeting the evolving expectations of students, parents, and wider communities (null, 1983). Consequently, educational marketing has become an integral component of institutional management, influencing school sustainability, organizational reputation, and long-term competitiveness.

Increasing competition among educational institutions has intensified parents' selectivity when choosing schools for their children. Decisions are no longer determined solely by geographical accessibility or tuition fees but increasingly by institutional reputation, quality of educational services, innovation, digital engagement, character education, and students' academic and non-academic achievements (Darwanto et al., 2024). These changing expectations require school leaders to develop marketing strategies capable of communicating institutional value while simultaneously improving educational quality. Consequently, educational marketing should not be interpreted merely as promotional activities but as a strategic management process that integrates institutional development, service quality, stakeholder satisfaction, and sustainable organizational competitiveness.

Within Islamic educational institutions, these challenges become even more significant. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Islamic elementary schools) operate under dual responsibilities: maintaining their distinctive Islamic identity while simultaneously

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responding to contemporary educational demands characterized by technological advancement, globalization, and increasing public expectations regarding educational quality. Parents today expect Islamic schools to provide not only religious instruction but also modern learning environments, digital literacy, character education, innovation, and strong academic performance (Mukhlis et al., 2026). Therefore, Islamic schools require comprehensive marketing strategies that extend beyond conventional promotional approaches and emphasize sustainable value creation.

Educational marketing literature has predominantly focused on traditional marketing frameworks, including marketing mix strategies, service quality, institutional branding, customer satisfaction, stakeholder engagement, and relationship marketing (Mukhlis et al., 2026). Numerous studies have demonstrated that promotional activities, institutional reputation, educational service quality, and parental satisfaction significantly influence school selection decisions. Nevertheless, these approaches often examine marketing components separately without explaining how educational institutions strategically integrate multiple dimensions of educational products into a coherent and sustainable value proposition (Pinar et al., 2011).

One conceptual framework offering broader strategic perspectives is Kotler's Total Product Concept (TPC). Unlike conventional marketing approaches emphasizing tangible educational attributes or promotional strategies, the Total Product Concept explains that organizational value is constructed through multiple interconnected product levels (Kotler, 2017). In educational contexts, these dimensions encompass the fundamental educational service, stakeholders' expected educational experiences, additional value created through institutional differentiation, and future innovations designed to sustain competitiveness. This framework suggests that educational institutions should continuously develop their educational products beyond basic instructional services to create distinctive institutional identities and enduring competitive advantages (Kotler et al., 2015a).

Despite its conceptual relevance, the application of the Total Product Concept within educational management remains relatively underexplored, particularly in Islamic educational settings (Alonso-Rasgado et al., 2004). Existing educational marketing research generally concentrates on isolated marketing variables such as promotion, institutional image, customer satisfaction, or service quality. Few studies investigate how the various dimensions of Total Product Concept collectively contribute to educational competitiveness through integrated institutional management. Furthermore, previous research has rarely proposed comprehensive educational marketing models specifically designed for Islamic elementary schools operating within dynamic educational environments (Prasad, 2001).

This limitation becomes increasingly important because educational competition has shifted from traditional competition toward value-based competition (Warren et al., 2001). Educational institutions no longer compete merely through physical facilities, tuition policies, or promotional intensity. Instead, they compete by creating educational experiences, institutional trust, continuous innovation, and sustainable stakeholder relationships that are difficult for competitors to imitate (Srinivasan et al., 2012). Consequently, educational marketing requires adaptive managerial approaches capable of integrating institutional identity, educational quality, innovation, branding, and community engagement into a unified strategic framework.

The Indonesian context provides an appropriate setting for investigating these issues. Indonesia possesses one of the world's largest Islamic education systems, where Madrasah Ibtidaiyah continue to experience increasing competition from public schools, integrated Islamic schools, and private educational institutions (Goodman, 1979). This competitive environment requires madrasahs to continuously strengthen their institutional identity while simultaneously improving educational quality and organizational competitiveness. Under these circumstances, educational marketing becomes an essential managerial function for ensuring institutional sustainability.

This study specifically investigates two Islamic elementary schools in Banyumas Regency that demonstrate contrasting yet successful approaches to educational marketing. MI Ma'arif NU 01 Pageraji has strengthened its institutional competitiveness through gradual organizational transformation, curriculum improvement, teacher development, Qur'anic literacy programs, community engagement, and continuous service enhancement. In contrast, MI Darul Hikmah Bantarsoka has developed institutional differentiation through digital communication, structured Tahfiz programs, STEAM-based learning, digital literacy, robotics, foreign language programs, and systematic branding strategies. Although both institutions successfully attract public trust, they adopt different pathways toward organizational competitiveness.

The comparison between these two schools provides an opportunity to understand how different dimensions of the Total Product Concept are implemented within Islamic elementary schools. Rather than viewing educational products merely as educational services, this study conceptualizes educational marketing as an integrated system involving generic product, expected product, augmented product, and potential product, all functioning collectively to establish institutional competitiveness and educational sustainability. The findings indicate that these four dimensions should not operate independently but require continuous adaptation according to institutional characteristics, stakeholder expectations, and environmental changes.

Based on these findings, this study proposes an Adaptive Total Product Concept-Based Educational Marketing Model. Unlike previous educational marketing frameworks that primarily emphasize promotion or service quality, the proposed model integrates

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the four interconnected dimensions of Total Product Concept into an adaptive managerial system capable of strengthening institutional trust, improving educational service quality, enhancing organizational competitiveness, and ensuring sustainable development in Islamic elementary schools. The concept emphasizes that educational marketing should evolve continuously in response to changing educational environments while preserving the distinctive Islamic identity of madrasahs.

Therefore, this study aims to develop an adaptive educational marketing model grounded in the Total Product Concept through an in-depth qualitative multi-case study of two Islamic elementary schools in Indonesia. The study contributes theoretically by extending the application of the Total Product Concept within educational management literature and contributes practically by providing a comprehensive educational marketing framework that may guide Islamic school leaders in strengthening institutional competitiveness while maintaining sustainable educational values.

II. LITERATUR REVIEW

A. Educational Marketing in Educational Institutions

Educational marketing has evolved from a promotional activity into a strategic management function that enables educational institutions to create, communicate, and deliver value to stakeholders (Riccomini et al., 2024). Contemporary educational organizations operate within increasingly competitive environments characterized by demographic shifts, technological advancement, parental expectations, and institutional accountability. Consequently, marketing has become an essential managerial process that supports institutional sustainability rather than merely increasing student enrollment.

Kotler and Fox define educational marketing as a systematic process of analyzing stakeholder needs, designing educational services, communicating institutional value, and maintaining long-term relationships with communities (Fox et al., 2008). Within educational organizations, marketing extends beyond advertising because educational institutions offer intangible services whose quality is largely determined by stakeholder experiences, institutional reputation, and educational outcomes. Therefore, educational marketing should be integrated into institutional planning, leadership, service quality improvement, and organizational development (Siswadi, 2023).

Educational marketing literature has identified several strategic dimensions influencing institutional competitiveness, including service quality, institutional branding, customer satisfaction, relationship marketing, digital communication, and stakeholder engagement (Rohmat, 2006). Previous studies consistently demonstrate that parents increasingly evaluate educational institutions based on educational quality, school image, innovation, character education, technological readiness, and institutional credibility rather than solely on tuition costs or geographical accessibility. These findings indicate that educational marketing should be understood as value creation rather than promotional communication (Rohmat et al., 2024).

Within Islamic educational institutions, educational marketing assumes additional significance because schools simultaneously pursue educational excellence and religious missions. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah are expected to preserve Islamic values while responding to contemporary educational challenges such as digital transformation, globalization, and increasing public expectations regarding educational quality (Wiyani & Nuryana, 2023). Consequently, educational marketing in Islamic schools requires approaches capable of integrating institutional identity, educational quality, stakeholder trust, and continuous innovation into sustainable organizational strategies.

B. Total Product Concept in Educational Services

The theoretical foundation of this study is grounded in Kotler's Total Product Concept (TPC), which conceptualizes products as multidimensional constructs rather than single tangible offerings. According to this framework, customers evaluate products not only through their core functions but also through additional values, expected experiences, differentiated services, and future innovations provided by organizations.

Although Kotler originally introduced five product levels core benefit, basic product, expected product, augmented product, and potential product educational institutions require contextual adaptation because educational services differ fundamentally from commercial products. Education represents an intangible service in which learning experiences, institutional culture, teacher competence, stakeholder interaction, and organizational reputation collectively shape perceived value (Kotler et al., 2015b). Therefore, applying the Total Product Concept within educational management requires reinterpretation according to educational characteristics.

This study adopts four operational dimensions of the Total Product Concept that correspond to educational service management. Generic product represents the institution's fundamental educational services, including curriculum quality, teacher competence, student achievement, flagship programs, and learning quality. Expected product reflects stakeholders' expectations regarding educational quality, institutional credibility, parental satisfaction, safe learning environments, and consistent educational standards (Munjin et al., 2026) Augmented product encompasses additional educational services that differentiate institutions from competitors, including extracurricular programs, digital learning, institutional branding, partnerships, community engagement, and value-added educational experiences. Finally, potential product represents future-oriented

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innovation through digital transformation, continuous organizational improvement, educational innovation, strategic development, and institutional adaptability.

These four dimensions collectively explain that educational competitiveness cannot be achieved solely through promotional activities. Rather, sustainable competitiveness emerges from continuous institutional development that integrates educational quality, stakeholder satisfaction, organizational differentiation, and long-term innovation. Consequently, the Total Product Concept provides a comprehensive theoretical framework for understanding educational marketing as an integrated management system rather than isolated marketing activities.

C. Adaptive Educational Marketing Model: Research Gap

Despite extensive educational marketing research, several theoretical limitations remain evident. Existing studies predominantly investigate isolated marketing variables such as institutional image, marketing mix, service quality, digital promotion, parental satisfaction, or branding effectiveness. Although these studies contribute significantly to understanding educational marketing practices, they rarely explain how multiple educational product dimensions interact within a comprehensive institutional management framework (Ramachandran, 2010).

Similarly, research applying the Total Product Concept within education remains relatively limited. Most existing applications emphasize product differentiation or service quality without proposing adaptive managerial frameworks capable of responding to changing educational environments. Furthermore, empirical investigations within Islamic elementary schools are still scarce, despite the increasing strategic importance of educational competitiveness among madrasahs in Indonesia (Aithal & Maiya, 2023).

Another limitation concerns organizational adaptability. Contemporary educational environments are characterized by rapid technological change, shifting parental expectations, demographic transitions, educational policy reforms, and increasing institutional competition. Educational marketing models emphasizing static marketing strategies are therefore insufficient to explain how schools continuously adapt while preserving institutional identity and educational quality (Elken, 2020).

Addressing these limitations requires a conceptual framework that integrates multiple dimensions of educational products into a dynamic and adaptive management system. Based on qualitative evidence from two Islamic elementary schools in Indonesia, this study proposes an Adaptive Total Product Concept-Based Educational Marketing Model, which conceptualizes educational marketing as the continuous integration of generic product, expected product, augmented product, and potential product. Rather than functioning independently, these dimensions interact dynamically to strengthen institutional trust, improve educational quality, enhance organizational competitiveness, and ensure institutional sustainability.

Accordingly, this study contributes to educational marketing literature by extending the application of the Total Product Concept within Islamic educational management and proposing an adaptive conceptual model capable of responding to contemporary educational challenges while maintaining the distinctive identity of Islamic elementary schools.

III. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a multi-case study design to develop an adaptive educational marketing model based on the Total Product Concept (TPC) in Islamic elementary schools. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to explore educational marketing practices, organizational experiences, managerial strategies, and institutional innovations within their natural settings rather than testing predetermined hypotheses. The multi-case design enabled analytical comparison between two schools with different organizational characteristics while identifying common patterns that contributed to the development of a conceptual model (Sugiyono, 2022).

The research was conducted at two Islamic elementary schools (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah) in Banyumas Regency, Central Java, Indonesia: MI Ma'arif NU 01 Pageraji and MI Darul Hikmah Bantarsoka. These schools were purposively selected because both have demonstrated sustainable institutional development and public trust while employing different educational marketing strategies. MI Ma'arif NU 01 Pageraji has strengthened institutional competitiveness through gradual organizational transformation, community engagement, curriculum improvement, and religious literacy programs. In contrast, MI Darul Hikmah Bantarsoka has emphasized institutional differentiation through digital communication, structured Tahfiz education, STEAM-oriented learning, robotics, foreign language programs, and systematic branding initiatives. The contrasting characteristics of these schools provided rich empirical evidence for cross-case comparison and model development.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in educational marketing and institutional management. The participants consisted of school principals, vice principals responsible for public relations and student affairs, program coordinators, teachers, administrative staff, school committee members, and parents. These stakeholders were considered capable of providing comprehensive information regarding planning, implementation, institutional communication, stakeholder engagement, and educational service development.

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Data were collected through in-depth interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews explored participants' perceptions of educational marketing practices, institutional competitiveness, stakeholder expectations, and innovation strategies. Observations focused on educational activities, learning environments, institutional facilities, flagship programs, promotional practices, and interactions among school stakeholders. Documentary evidence included strategic planning documents, school profiles, promotional materials, annual reports, institutional regulations, digital communication content, and supporting administrative records. The integration of multiple data sources enhanced the comprehensiveness and credibility of the findings.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. During the condensation stage, interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary evidence were systematically coded to identify recurring concepts related to educational marketing. Subsequently, the coded data were organized into thematic matrices representing the four dimensions of the Total Product Concept: generic product, expected product, augmented product, and potential product. Cross-case analysis was then conducted to compare similarities, differences, and contextual variations between the two schools. Finally, analytical interpretation enabled the development of an Adaptive Total Product Concept-Based Educational Marketing Model, synthesizing the empirical findings into a comprehensive conceptual framework.

To ensure research trustworthiness, four criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba were applied. Credibility was established through prolonged engagement, triangulation of interviews, observations, and documentation, as well as member checking with selected participants. Transferability was supported by providing detailed contextual descriptions of both research sites and participant characteristics. Dependability was maintained through an audit trail documenting the research process, coding procedures, and analytical decisions. Confirmability was strengthened by preserving research documentation and ensuring that interpretations were consistently grounded in empirical evidence obtained from multiple data sources.

The study adhered to established ethical principles throughout the research process. Prior permission was obtained from both participating schools before data collection commenced. All participants voluntarily agreed to participate after receiving information regarding the purpose of the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by removing personally identifiable information from research records, and all collected data were used exclusively for academic purposes.

IV.FINDINGS

Generic Product as the Foundation of Educational Value

The findings indicate that both Islamic elementary schools recognize generic product as the fundamental educational value that shapes institutional identity and public trust. However, each school developed this dimension through different managerial approaches.

At MI Ma'arif NU 01 Pageraji, the generic product was strengthened through curriculum improvement, enhancement of instructional quality, reinforcement of Qur'anic literacy, teacher professional development, and continuous improvement of students' academic and non-academic achievements. School leaders emphasized that educational quality should be established before promotional activities could effectively attract community interest. Consequently, institutional development primarily focused on improving internal educational processes that directly influenced learning outcomes.

Conversely, MI Darul Hikmah Bantarsoka positioned its generic product around curriculum differentiation by integrating Islamic values with contemporary educational approaches. Structured Tahfiz programs, STEAM-oriented learning, foreign language instruction, digital literacy, and robotics education became the school's core educational offerings. Rather than relying solely on religious education, the school combined Islamic character formation with twenty-first-century competencies, thereby creating a distinctive institutional identity.

Cross-case analysis demonstrates that although both schools pursued educational excellence, they adopted different strategic pathways. MI Ma'arif NU 01 Pageraji emphasized organizational strengthening through gradual quality improvement, whereas MI Darul Hikmah Bantarsoka developed curriculum differentiation from the outset. Nevertheless, both approaches established generic product as the foundation upon which subsequent educational marketing strategies were developed.

Expected Product as Community Trust and Service Quality

The second finding concerns the implementation of expected product, representing stakeholders' expectations regarding educational quality, institutional credibility, and service reliability.

Both schools demonstrated strong commitment to fulfilling parental expectations through consistent educational services, transparent communication, disciplined school management, safe learning environments, and continuous quality assurance. Parents expected schools not only to deliver academic achievement but also to cultivate Islamic character, provide supportive learning environments, and maintain effective communication with families.

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At MI Ma'arif NU 01 Pageraji, community trust gradually increased following improvements in learning quality, school facilities, teacher competence, and institutional communication. School administrators actively strengthened relationships with parents and local religious leaders through regular meetings, community-based programs, and religious activities.

Meanwhile, MI Darul Hikmah Bantarsoka emphasized institutional professionalism by maintaining standardized educational services, systematic program evaluation, responsive communication, and consistent organizational performance. Digital communication platforms also facilitated continuous interaction between schools and parents, increasing transparency and stakeholder confidence.

Across both cases, expected product extended beyond meeting minimum educational standards. Instead, it represented continuous efforts to maintain institutional credibility and strengthen long-term relationships with stakeholders.

Augmented Product as Institutional Differentiation

The findings further reveal that augmented product became the primary source of institutional differentiation in both schools.

MI Ma'arif NU 01 Pageraji developed additional educational value through various flagship programs, extracurricular activities, Qur'anic literacy initiatives, character education, community engagement, and partnerships with local organizations. These programs enriched students' educational experiences while strengthening the school's social reputation within surrounding communities.

In comparison, MI Darul Hikmah Bantarsoka implemented a broader range of differentiated services, including structured Tahfiz education, robotics, English enrichment, digital literacy, educational technology integration, and intensive institutional branding through websites and social media platforms. Digital communication enabled the school to present educational achievements transparently while strengthening institutional visibility among prospective parents.

Despite differences in implementation, both schools regarded augmented product as an essential mechanism for creating educational value beyond standard academic services. Additional educational programs enhanced stakeholder satisfaction while simultaneously strengthening institutional competitiveness within increasingly competitive educational environments.

Potential Product as Sustainable Educational Innovation

The fourth finding demonstrates that potential product represents the most dynamic dimension of educational marketing because it focuses on future-oriented institutional development.

Both schools continuously developed educational innovations to respond to changing educational environments and stakeholder expectations. At MI Ma'arif NU 01 Pageraji, innovation emphasized gradual organizational improvement through teacher capacity building, curriculum refinement, digital adaptation, and expansion of educational partnerships. School leaders viewed innovation as a continuous organizational learning process rather than isolated projects.

Meanwhile, MI Darul Hikmah Bantarsoka implemented more extensive digital transformation initiatives, including educational technology integration, continuous program development, institutional branding strategies, and expansion of future-oriented learning programs. Innovation was systematically incorporated into long-term strategic planning to ensure institutional sustainability.

Cross-case analysis indicates that potential product functions not merely as future planning but as an organizational capability enabling schools to continuously adapt to technological development, educational policy changes, demographic shifts, and evolving parental expectations. Sustainable innovation therefore became a critical determinant of long-term institutional competitiveness.

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The cross-case analysis demonstrates that the four dimensions of the Total Product Concept should not be interpreted as independent components. Instead, they interact dynamically within an adaptive educational management system.

The findings show that generic product establishes institutional credibility through educational quality; expected product strengthens stakeholder trust by consistently meeting community expectations; augmented product creates institutional differentiation through value-added educational services; and potential product ensures long-term sustainability through continuous innovation and organizational adaptation.

Rather than operating sequentially, these dimensions continuously influence one another through organizational learning, stakeholder interaction, institutional leadership, and environmental adaptation. This dynamic interaction resulted in the development of an Adaptive Total Product Concept-Based Educational Marketing Model, in which educational marketing functions as an integrated managerial system that continuously aligns educational quality, stakeholder expectations, institutional differentiation, and innovation.

The proposed model suggests that sustainable competitiveness in Islamic elementary schools is achieved not primarily through promotional activities but through the adaptive integration of educational services, organizational innovation, institutional identity,

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and stakeholder engagement. Consequently, educational marketing should be understood as a continuous process of value creation that strengthens institutional trust, educational quality, competitiveness, and long-term organizational sustainability.

V. DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrate that educational marketing in Islamic elementary schools extends beyond promotional activities and should be understood as an integrated managerial system that continuously creates educational value. Unlike conventional educational marketing practices that emphasize student recruitment, institutional visibility, or communication strategies, this study shows that sustainable competitiveness is primarily established through the systematic development of educational products that correspond to stakeholders' evolving expectations. This perspective supports Kotler and Fox's view that educational marketing involves creating and delivering value rather than merely promoting educational services (Lokare et al., 2024). However, the present study extends this perspective by demonstrating that value creation in Islamic elementary schools is dynamic, adaptive, and embedded within institutional management rather than functioning as an independent marketing activity.

The first important finding concerns the role of generic product as the foundation of institutional competitiveness. Both schools recognized that educational quality constitutes the primary source of organizational credibility before any marketing activities can effectively influence public perception (Lokare et al., 2024). Curriculum quality, teacher competence, learning innovation, student achievement, and Islamic character education collectively formed the institutional value perceived by stakeholders. This finding reinforces the Total Product Concept, which emphasizes that product quality represents the essential basis for customer value creation. In educational contexts, however, generic product extends beyond instructional services because it integrates academic excellence with religious values and institutional identity. Consequently, educational quality itself becomes the school's most influential marketing asset (Ahmadi et al., 2025a).

The implementation of expected product further demonstrates that educational marketing is closely associated with stakeholder trust. Parents increasingly evaluate schools according to service consistency, communication transparency, educational credibility, and institutional accountability rather than relying solely on academic indicators. These findings are consistent with educational service quality literature, which argues that stakeholder satisfaction develops through long-term educational experiences rather than isolated interactions (Taufik & Mulyanto, 2025). Nevertheless, this study reveals that in Islamic elementary schools, expected product encompasses not only educational standards but also ethical values, religious commitment, and organizational integrity that strengthen public confidence. Accordingly, stakeholder trust should be regarded as a strategic educational resource rather than merely an outcome of marketing activities.

The findings regarding augmented product indicate that institutional differentiation constitutes an increasingly important source of educational competitiveness. Both schools created additional educational value through flagship programs, extracurricular activities, digital learning initiatives, institutional branding, community partnerships, and various educational innovations (Ndlovu & Mafora, 2024). These findings support previous studies suggesting that differentiation enables educational institutions to distinguish themselves within competitive educational markets. However, unlike earlier research that frequently interprets differentiation as promotional strategy, this study demonstrates that differentiation emerges from continuous organizational development and educational innovation. Therefore, augmented product represents an institutional capability that enhances educational experiences while simultaneously strengthening long-term competitiveness.

The fourth finding emphasizes the strategic importance of potential product, which emerged as the most adaptive dimension of educational marketing. Continuous curriculum refinement, digital transformation, organizational learning, educational innovation, and future-oriented strategic planning enabled both schools to respond effectively to changing educational environments (Ahmadi et al., 2025b). This finding extends Kotler's Total Product Concept by illustrating that potential product should not be interpreted merely as future product development but rather as an institutional capacity for continuous adaptation. Within rapidly changing educational systems characterized by technological advancement and evolving parental expectations, organizational adaptability becomes an essential determinant of institutional sustainability.

An important theoretical contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that the four dimensions of the Total Product Concept do not operate independently. Previous applications of the Total Product Concept generally conceptualize product levels as hierarchical marketing components (Reike et al., 2022). The present findings instead indicate that generic product, expected product, augmented product, and potential product continuously interact through reciprocal organizational processes. Educational quality strengthens stakeholder trust; stakeholder trust encourages institutional differentiation; differentiation stimulates innovation; and innovation subsequently reinforces educational quality. This cyclical relationship suggests that educational marketing functions as a dynamic organizational system rather than a linear marketing process.

Based on this interaction, the study proposes the Adaptive Total Product Concept-Based Educational Marketing Model. The concept of adaptation represents the principal theoretical extension beyond the original Total Product Concept. While Kotler's framework explains multiple levels of product value, it provides limited explanation regarding how educational institutions

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continuously adjust these dimensions in response to organizational change, technological development, stakeholder expectations, and educational competition. The adaptive model developed in this study addresses this limitation by positioning continuous organizational learning, institutional responsiveness, and strategic innovation as mechanisms connecting the four product dimensions within educational management (Agyapong et al., 2024).

The proposed model also contributes to educational marketing literature by integrating marketing management with educational leadership. Rather than separating educational quality improvement from marketing activities, the model conceptualizes educational marketing as a comprehensive management process involving curriculum development, teacher professionalism, institutional communication, stakeholder engagement, innovation management, and organizational sustainability. This integration is particularly relevant for Islamic elementary schools, where educational missions encompass both academic excellence and religious character formation (Shaleh et al., 2024). Consequently, educational marketing should support institutional transformation while preserving Islamic educational values and organizational identity.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that school leaders should reconsider educational marketing strategies that rely predominantly on promotional campaigns or institutional branding. Sustainable competitiveness cannot be achieved solely through communication activities but requires continuous investment in educational quality, stakeholder relationships, organizational innovation, and adaptive institutional development. Educational marketing therefore becomes a strategic leadership responsibility involving the alignment of educational services with societal expectations while maintaining institutional distinctiveness.

Overall, this study advances educational marketing theory by demonstrating that sustainable competitiveness in Islamic elementary schools is achieved through the adaptive integration of generic product, expected product, augmented product, and potential product. The proposed Adaptive Total Product Concept-Based Educational Marketing Model extends the original Total Product Concept from a marketing framework into a dynamic educational management model capable of strengthening educational quality, institutional trust, organizational competitiveness, and long-term sustainability. This theoretical contribution provides a broader perspective for understanding educational marketing within faith-based educational institutions operating in increasingly competitive educational environments.

CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that educational marketing in Islamic elementary schools should be understood as a comprehensive managerial process that extends beyond promotional activities to encompass the continuous creation of educational value. Through a qualitative multi-case study of two Islamic elementary schools in Indonesia, the findings reveal that institutional competitiveness is developed through the integrated implementation of four interconnected dimensions of the Total Product Concept: generic product, expected product, augmented product, and potential product. Generic product establishes educational quality and institutional identity; expected product strengthens stakeholder trust through consistent service quality; augmented product creates institutional differentiation through value-added educational programs; and potential product ensures long-term sustainability through continuous innovation and organizational adaptation. These dimensions operate as a dynamic system rather than as independent marketing components, enabling schools to respond effectively to changing educational environments while maintaining their Islamic educational mission.

The principal theoretical contribution of this study is the development of the Adaptive Total Product Concept-Based Educational Marketing Model. Unlike the original Total Product Concept, which primarily explains multiple levels of product value, the proposed model conceptualizes educational marketing as an adaptive management system in which educational quality, stakeholder expectations, institutional differentiation, and innovation continuously interact to strengthen public trust, organizational competitiveness, and institutional sustainability. This model extends the application of the Total Product Concept from commercial marketing into the context of educational management and provides a conceptual framework that is particularly relevant for faith-based educational institutions operating in increasingly competitive educational environments.

Practically, the findings suggest that school leaders should integrate educational quality improvement, stakeholder engagement, institutional innovation, and strategic communication into a unified educational marketing strategy rather than relying predominantly on promotional activities. Sustainable competitiveness can be achieved when educational marketing becomes an integral component of institutional leadership and continuous organizational development. The proposed model may therefore serve as a strategic reference for Islamic elementary schools seeking to strengthen educational quality, institutional reputation, and long-term sustainability.

This study is limited to two Islamic elementary schools located in Banyumas Regency, Indonesia. Although the qualitative multi-case design provides rich contextual understanding, the findings should not be generalized to all educational settings without careful consideration of contextual differences. Future research may validate and refine the proposed model through comparative studies involving different types of educational institutions, broader geographical contexts, or mixed-method and quantitative

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approaches to examine the relationships among the four dimensions of the Adaptive Total Product Concept-Based Educational Marketing Model.

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