



School Principial Strategy Management in Promoting Al-Hidayah SMP Medan

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Abstract

The promotional strategy carried out by the Principal to introduce Al-Hidayah Medan Middle School is an effort to realize the vision, mission, goals and objectives that have been set. School principals must manage promotional strategies effectively so that the school can be better known and develop, including Al-Hidayah Middle School in Medan. Based on the research results, the promotion strategy involves several stages, namely promotion planning which includes forming a promotion team, formulating a strategy, and preparing attractive promotional materials; implementation of promotions which include outreach activities, distributing brochures, installing banners with community cooperation, as well as distributing pamphlets via social media such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp; and the evaluation stage as the final step in promoting the school, by assessing the achievement of the objectives of the promotion that has been carried out.

Keyword: *School Promotion strategy management*

PRELIMINARY

Learning is a process of education and developing ideas and potential in a student's soul so that it grows and develops a personality and abilities so that it can be said that learning is a creative path for students who can recognize the creation of a student's identity.

The school principal is one of the key factors that determines the success or failure of an educational institution. Effective leadership is very important in improving student learning achievement and teacher professionalism. Schools need principals who are able to attract students' interest in enrolling. Good promotion

with the right strategies, models and tricks can help achieve targets and satisfactory results.

Intense competition requires schools to provide the best service. Otherwise, schools will lose students and fall behind competitors. An effective promotional strategy is needed to maintain the existence of the school. Schools that are not promoted well will have difficulty attracting students and being recognized by the community. The aim of the promotional strategy is to improve the school's good image and attract student interest.

Promotion strategies must be in line with educational goals and student needs. This

research aims to analyze the promotional strategies used by the principal of Al-Hidayah Middle School in Medan to increase the number of students. The number of students at Al-Hidayah Medan Middle School decreased drastically in 2020-2021 due to poor management. In 2022, this school will begin to revive under the leadership of a new principal. Currently, the school has:

- Grade 7: 20 students
- Grade 8: 23 students
- Grade 9: 36 students

New school principals use various promotional strategies to attract student interest. This research is expected to provide benefits for schools in improving the quality of education and attracting student interest. In accordance with the background above, the research topic is "School Principal's Strategy in Promoting Al-Hidayah Medan Middle School". This research focuses on the Principal's Management Strategy in promoting Al-Hidayah Medan Middle School.

Research activities are directed, namely to describe the strategy carried out by the Principal in formulating the promotion of Al-Hidayah Medan Middle School to the public or community, formulating the implementation of the strategy carried out by the Principal in promoting Al-Hidayah Medan Middle School and evaluating the strategy carried out by the principal in promoting SMP Al-Hidayah Medan.

Theoretical Review

A. Understanding School Principal Strategic Management

According to Winardi (2022: P. 1), management is a typical process consisting of planning, organizing, activating and monitoring actions. The aim is to ensure and achieve predetermined targets by utilizing human resources and other resources. So, it can be concluded in interpretive language that Strategic Management is a unique process, and consists of actions, planning, organizing, moving, and ways to achieve short-term or long-term goals as well as methods that prioritize strategy in the organization and implement it at all levels of the organization to achieve certain goals.

According to Danim (2022), "A school principal is a teacher who gets a bonus assignment as a school principal." Meanwhile, for Daryanto, "The principal is the leader of a learning unit institution. The principal is a leader whose presence process can be selected directly, inaugurated by a foundation, or inaugurated by the government."

Therefore, the principal's leadership is one of the important functions for school management. The school development plan and its implementation can work if the entire school community has a description and unity of thought regarding the school's vision and mission, and the desire and expertise to make it

happen. In other words, the school principal is required to be able to be a leader as well as being a manager. From the interpretation above, it can be concluded that the principal's strategy is the method used by the head or school leader to achieve the goals of the school.

As a leader, the functions and duties of a school principal are very important in order to create a quality school. Karhi Nisjar and Winardi (2022: Pg. 25) describe the functions and duties of school principals in detail as follows:

- a. The principal as an educator
- b. Principal as manager
- c. The principal as administrator
- d. The principal as Supervisor
- e. The principal is the leader
- f. Principal as Motivator

From some of the functions and duties of a school principal's leadership, a school principal is obliged to carry out his or her functions and duties well, so that his position as a leader can run efficiently and effectively, so that educational staff can also carry out the duties assigned to him as well as possible. Because basically the success or failure of increasing the quality of the school depends on the leader.

B. School Promotion Concept

Promotion means a method for conveying information to the public about the existence of a school with the aim of attracting prospective students so that they register and

attend the school being promoted. The place or position of a school is something that is important because a strategic position can influence the progress of the school, while promotion and personal reputation are important things to protect the image of prospective students against the reputation of the school.

The image and reputation of the school needs to always be protected so that the school is always well known to the public. There is also for David (2020: P. 20) the concept of learning promotion has 2 bottoms, namely:

- a. Starting with the needs and desires of the people as the goal
- b. Achieving organizational goals by sharing satisfaction with citizens.

From these 2 variables, it can be interpreted that a learning promotion is a communication strategy that aims to increase awareness, interest and participation in learning activities. This can be done in various ways, such as, Providing clear and interesting information about the learning program, such as objectives, benefits, curriculum and schedule, Creating a positive image about the learning program and the institution that organizes it, Arousing the interest and curiosity of prospective students to take part in learning programs, Encourage prospective students to register and take part in learning programs.

Benefits of Learning Promotion:

1. Increase the number of students

2. Strengthen the reputation of the organizing institution
3. Improve the quality of learning programs
4. Expand the reach of learning programs

Advertising learning programs in newspapers, television or radio, Creating interesting content about learning programs on social media, Holding seminars on topics relevant to learning programs, Collaborating with schools to promote learning programs to students.

Learning promotion is an important strategy for increasing awareness, interest, and participation in learning activities. With appropriate and effective strategies, learning promotion can help achieve learning program goals and improve the quality of education.

a. Promotion media

For Kasali, advertising media is divided into 2, namely top line media consisting of published advertisements Apart from print media, electronic media (television, radio, cinema) and outdoor media (billboards and transportation), the nature of ATL is media that does not directly reach the audience, because it is limited to the reception of the media audience. ATL has the following characteristics:

- 1) Wide target audience
- 2) It is easier to explain concepts and ideas

- 3) There is no direct interaction with the audience
- 4) The media used are television, radio, magazines, newspapers, tabloids, billboards
- 5) Creation pay is less than broadcast.

b. Promotion methods

There are several things you need to try for effective promotion, namely:

1) Contact information

Consumers are required to participate in contact with promotional data so that the promotion can be successful. Data contact with promotions can be based on desire, for example consumers make contact with a promotion when participating in another activity. Sometimes promotional contacts can stimulate the purchasing decision making process, such as creating a desire to enroll one's child in school. Therefore, marketers must actively pay attention to the promotions provided. Massive promotions tend to be a situational source of engagement so they tend to get greater attention.

2) Word of mouth communication

Word of mouth (WOM) communication is a form of interpersonal communication in which individuals share information, ideas, and experiences about a product, service, or brand with others directly. WOM can occur through face-to-face conversations, phone calls, text messages, emails, or social media.

Marketers can increase the likelihood that this data will be communicated to other people by placing promotional data in the consumer area.

c. Promotion Strategy Steps

1) Get to know the target audience

Getting to know your target audience is an important step in developing an effective communications strategy. By understanding your audience, you can create more relevant and engaging content, choose the right communication channels, and increase the effectiveness of your marketing strategy.

2) Determine the promotional objectives

After the target audience has been identified, the school must determine the promotional goals to be achieved. Setting promotional goals will make it easier for schools to promote. There are also promotional objectives for Rossiter and Percy, namely:

- a) Increase customer perception of a need.
- b) Introducing and sharing a description of a product with consumers.
- c) Urge the choice of a product.
- d) Persuade customers to buy something promotional about the school.

C. Designing the Message

According to Gunawan Supratikno, there are four important factors in designing school promotional messages:

1. Message Contents

Search for and create appeals, themes, and ideas that appeal to the target audience, Demonstrate benefits of the school that can motivate prospective students to enroll, Consider three appeals:

- a) Rational: Arouse the audience's self-interest.
- b) Emotional: Arouse positive and negative emotions in the audience.
- c) Moral: Addresses the audience's feelings about what is right and proper.

2. Message Structure

Arrange messages logically and interestingly and determine the order of presentation of strong arguments (at the beginning or end of the message).

3. Message Format

The credibility and reliability of the message source can increase the effectiveness of the message, choosing a message source that suits the target audience. Adapt the message format to the media used and for print media:

- Attractive ad title.
- Attractive picture and color illustrations.
- Meanwhile for electronic media:
 - Choosing the right words.
 - Good voice quality and vocalization.

Designing effective school promotional messages requires careful consideration of the

four factors above. By paying attention to these factors, schools can convey interesting, informative and persuasive messages to their target audience.

Methods

A. Place and Time of Research

This research will be carried out at Al-Hidayah Middle School in Medan from 9 October 2023 to 9 December 2023. Researchers are confident that the location and time chosen for the research are appropriate and will help the research run smoothly.

B. Type of Research

A qualitative approach is an appropriate research method for understanding complex and multidimensional phenomena. By using this method, researchers can gain a deep understanding of the experiences and perspectives of individuals or groups, as well as the meaning they give to certain situations or contexts.

C. Research subjects

This research selected informants who were considered to know and understand the principal's strategic management in promoting Al-Hidayah Middle School, Medan. These informants are:

- a. Principal: Erlina Sari Siregar. S.Pd.
- b. Teacher: Jimmy. S.E. Ak
- c. School Committee: Imadussidqi Al-Amin, S.Pd
- d. Student: Syasa Mahira

D. Data Collection Techniques

Data collection is the process of recording important information about the study population. This information can be in the form of events, characteristics, or information that is relevant to the research.

Data collection technique

This research uses three data collection techniques:

1. Observation

Observations were carried out to observe directly how the principal of Al-Hidayah Middle School in Medan implemented his promotional strategy. Researchers carry out observations openly and covertly, recording information in notebooks or other media.

Observation Steps:

1. Arrange visits so as not to disturb the school.
2. Show interest in what is being learned.
3. Be friendly and polite to everyone at school.
4. Remove yourself from the subject and build rapport.
5. Record information in detail.

2. Interview

Interviews were conducted to obtain more in-depth information from key informants, such as school principals, teachers and staff. Researchers used open and closed interviews to gather information.

Interview Steps:

- Determine the informants who will be interviewed.
- Prepare interview questions and guidelines.
- Build good relationships with informants.
- Pace the interview and keep it productive.
- Record information in detail.
- Identify follow-up data collection.

3. Documentation

- Documentation is carried out to collect written data, images, or works from schools that are relevant to the research. Documentation complements data obtained from observations and interviews.
- Documentation Steps:
- Collect data in the form of writing, images or works from the school.
- Classify data based on type and relevance to research.
- Analyze data and relate it to information from observations and interviews.

D. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is an important step in qualitative research. The aim is to find meaning from the data that has been collected, such as interview transcripts, field notes, and other

materials. Bogdan and Biklen define data analysis as the process of systematically searching and organizing data. This case do for:

- Understand the data in more depth
- Find patterns and meaning in data
- Summarize the research results
- Report research results to other parties

Data Analysis Steps

The author uses three steps in data analysis:

1. Data Reduction

This step aims to simplify the data that has been collected. Researchers select and focus data that is relevant to the research focus.

Data reduction steps:

- Collect all data
- Select relevant data
- Summarize data
- Explore themes
- Make classifications
- Write a summary

2. Data Presentation

The reduced data is then presented systematically. Researchers group data based on themes and topics.

Purpose of data presentation:

- Makes it easier to understand data
- Clarify the meaning of the data
- Facilitates data analysis

3. Drawing conclusions/verification

At this stage, researchers draw conclusions from the data that has been

presented. Conclusions must be based on data and supported by evidence.

Steps to draw conclusions:

- Check the data again
- Complete missing data
- Draw a conclusion
- Prepare research reports

F. Data Validity Techniques

In research, the validity of the data is absolute to achieve the truth. The following are several techniques used to ensure data validity:

1. Credibility (Trust)

Researchers build good relationships with informants and make careful observations to obtain reliable information. Compare data from various sources (interviews, observations, documents) to ensure consistency and validity of information. Strengthen research findings with credible and relevant references.

2. Transferability (Transferability)

Presenting data in detail and systematically so that it can be understood and applied in different contexts. Compare Combine the elements in the research with other phenomena outside the scope of the study to see possible applications.

3. Dependability (Reliability)

Build a consistent research design from start to finish, including case selection, research focus, and conceptual framework. Document the entire research process clearly and systematically to enable audit and verification.

4. Confirmability (Certainty)

Consult with supervisors and experts in related fields to obtain input and validation of research findings. Present data and research findings transparently so that they can be tested and verified by other parties.

Research And Discussion

A. Formulation of the principal's strategy in promoting Al-Hidayah Medan Middle School

Strategy is a plan or procedure used by an organization to achieve its goals efficiently and effectively. Strategy is very important because it ensures the progress and decline of the organization. Therefore, organizational leaders must formulate appropriate strategies to achieve the desired goals.

School promotion strategies are very important for helping school principals achieve school goals. In forming strategies, school principals have an important position, as evidenced by interviews with several sources.

Erlina Sari Siregar, S. Pd., as principal of Al-Hidayah Medan Middle School, reported that she has been functioning actively in carrying out her duties. He gained the confidence of teachers, staff, and employees, and they all helped him in maintaining, promoting, and improving the school.

The right strategy is very important for achieving organizational goals, including

regarding school promotion. The school principal has an important position in formulating and implementing school promotion strategies. Sourced from an interview with Jimmy, SE. Ak., as well as the results of observations, it was concluded that Mother Erlina, the principal of Al-Hidayah Medan Middle School, had a very large position in the school's promotional activities. All promotional activities, such as making brochures and banners, were carried out under his orders. He also assigned teachers, students and alumni to distribute the brochures.

It can be concluded that the position of the principal in school promotional activities is very large. He is at the forefront of carrying out promotional activities and without his direction, promotional activities will not run easily. Promotion is a method of conveying information to the public about the existence of a school with the aim of attracting prospective students so that they register and attend the school being promoted.

The principal of Al-Hidayah Middle School, Medan, reported that promotional activities were very meaningful. Through promotional activities, it is hoped that students, parents and the wider community can recognize the nature and excellence of the school. This will encourage them to support the development of school programs as a whole.

One of the educators at Al-Hidayah Middle School in Medan emphasized that

school promotion is very important. Promotion can help schools develop and provide information about the school's existence, advantages, activities and programs to the community. This can attract the interest of prospective students, parents and the wider community to get involved in school development.

Effective promotion must be right on target. Before carrying out a promotion, you need to consider who the target audience you want to reach is.

The school principal has an important role in formulating promotional strategies. This strategy must be carefully designed so that the promotion can run according to plan and achieve the desired goals.

Al-Hidayah Middle School Medan has carried out several promotional strategies, such as:

- Organizing extracurricular activities and afternoon learning with a focus on activities contested at events such as Porseni.
- Invite experienced teachers in sports and arts to teach extracurricular activities.
- Open activities that children like.
- Showing school programs and activities at haflah events.

Based on the results of interviews with the principal of Al-Hidayah Middle School,

Medan, there are several steps in developing an effective promotional strategy:

1. Formulate Promotional Objectives

The first step is to formulate promotional objectives. This goal must be clear and measurable, for example increasing the number of new students by 10% in one year.

2. Determine Promotion Targets

After the promotional objectives have been set, the next step is to determine the promotional targets. Who does the promotion want to reach? Is it elementary school students, parents, or the general public?

3. Choose Promotional Media

The promotional media chosen must be appropriate to the target audience. For example, if the target audience is elementary school students, then the appropriate promotional media are brochures and banners distributed in elementary schools.

4. Form a Promotion Team

The promotion team is responsible for implementing the promotional strategy that has been formulated. This team consists of people who have expertise in the fields of marketing, communications and design.

5. Evaluate Promotion Results

Promotion results must be evaluated periodically to ensure their effectiveness. This evaluation can be done by looking at the

number of new student registrants, the level of public awareness of the school, and so on.

An effective promotional strategy can help Al-Hidayah Medan Middle School achieve its goals, namely increasing the number of new students, improving the school's reputation, and increasing the school's competitiveness.

David W stated that the education marketing concept relies on three main pillars:

1. Consumer needs and desires as the basis for goals: Marketing education must focus on the needs and desires of students and their parents. This becomes the basis for determining marketing goals and strategies.

2. Development of organizational approaches to satisfy customer needs and desires: Educational institutions need to formulate and implement appropriate strategies to meet the needs and desires of stakeholders. This strategy must be comprehensive and cover various aspects, such as curriculum, learning programs, services and facilities.

3. Achieve organizational goals by providing satisfaction to consumers: Consumer satisfaction is the main key in achieving organizational goals. Therefore, educational institutions must always try to provide the best service and exceed the expectations of stakeholders.

The principal of Al-Hidayah Middle School in Medan has shown a good example in

implementing the concept of educational marketing. He carries out thorough promotional planning by formulating appropriate strategies, preparing attractive promotional materials, and choosing appropriate techniques and media. This has proven successful in attracting public interest and increasing the number of registrants at Al-Hidayah Medan Middle School.

In conclusion, educational marketing is an important strategy for educational institutions to achieve goals and increase competitiveness in this era of globalization. By implementing the right education marketing concept, educational institutions can provide the best service to stakeholders and achieve their vision and mission.

B. Implementation of the strategy carried out by the school principal in promoting Al-Hidayah Medan Middle School

The promotional strategy designed must be carried out carefully according to a mutually agreed formula to achieve the expected promotional goals. The promotion process is an important moment for interaction between the promoter (SMP Al-Hidayah Medan) and the community. This interaction is carried out in a way or strategy that has been previously designed to achieve the desired goal.

Based on the research results, the following promotional strategies will be implemented by SMP Al-Hidayah Medan to attract the interest of new students:

a. Offline Promotion Strategy

Implementation is generally carried out by a team or committee formed during a coordination meeting for the process, which directly interacts with the community such as annual outreach activities. Socialization activities are carried out directly at school. In an effort to promote the school, what is the process?

The school principal answered: The process of implementing the promotion begins with distributing brochures in SD/MI. In distributing these brochures, we carry out outreach first to provide the target with an understanding about our institution, or put up banners in strategic locations such as at intersections. We also contacted the venue management to install banners, as well as working with the community around the school who were considered potential for promotions. The media we use at this school includes banners, pamphlets and calendars. We also provide free uniforms to all new students, as a strategy to help less fortunate students continue their education.

From this interview it can be concluded that MTs Kholid Bin Walid uses several

methods such as banners, calendars and brochures.

The observation results also support this question, it appears that the principal is very committed to advancing and promoting Al-Hidayah Medan Middle School so that it develops and becomes more advanced with support from teachers and school employees to increase school promotion. The aim of school promotion is to increase the number of students, so school principals use various methods such as banners, pamphlets, and others

b. Online promotion strategy

Promotion at Al-Hidayah Medan Middle School is also carried out online, according to the results of the interview. Not only relying on brochures, promotions are also carried out through online platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and other digital media. Utilizing technology is an important strategy considering the many media options available today. The use of social media can minimize promotional costs, but brochures remain one of the main media. Brochures will be distributed to visitors when there are activities at the school to attract people to register. When asked about the length of the promotion process, the head of the madrasah explained that promotions approaching the acceptance of new students

take 2 weeks to one month. The public and parents sometimes respond slowly to promotions, they usually need time to be sure before responding.

However, long-term promotions involving interesting activities will continue to be carried out on an ongoing basis, because these activities are part of the marketing strategy. According to Overall, the school promotion process does not have a definite time, but generally takes about a month due to tight competition with other madrasas. The promotion strategy carried out by the school principal includes two approaches, namely direct and indirect. Offline promotions include outreach, distributing brochures to nearby elementary schools, and placing banners in strategic locations involving collaboration with the local community. Meanwhile, online promotions are spread on social media such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp and websites.

C. Evaluation of strategies carried out by schools in promoting Al-Hidayah Medan Middle School

Evaluation is the final step in controlling the continuity of plans that have been formulated to measure the success of the plan. Mr. Imadussidqi Al Amin explained in an interview that to carry out an evaluation, all objectives that have been previously formulated must first be ascertained and properly arranged, so that you can measure the

extent of the success of the activity, as well as identify shortcomings for future improvement.

From the results of the interviews that have been submitted, the researcher wants to confirm the truth. Based on direct observations at Al-Hidayah Middle School in Medan and interviews with several informants, it can be concluded that the promotion management carried out by the head of the madrasah includes several stages:

a. Planning Stage:

1. Formation of a Promotion Team:

This team is tasked with developing promotional strategies and materials.

2. Strategy Preparation: Promotional strategies include the techniques and media that will be used.

3. Preparation of Promotional Materials: Promotional materials can include brochures, banners and online content.

b. Implementation Stage:

1. Online Promotion: Carried out through social media, school websites and other digital platforms.

2. Offline Promotion: Carried out through socialization, distributing brochures and placing banners in strategic locations. Meanwhile online promotions are carried out through distributing pamphlets on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp.

c. Evaluation is carried out as the final stage in promoting a school, using appropriate measurements between goals and results. The school principal carries out an evaluation with the promotion team, taking into account the previously formulated objectives to find out how successful the activity was and identify shortcomings for future improvement.

These findings are in line with the stages in Strategic Management:

a. Strategy Formulation

Formulating an organizational strategy is like building a road map to achieve goals. Starting with defining the vision and mission as a compass, identifying external opportunities and threats as obstacles and opportunities, and measuring internal strengths and weaknesses as resources and obstacles. This road map is then complemented by setting long-term goals as destinations, creating alternative strategies as preferred routes, and selecting the right strategy as the best route to reach the goal.

b. Strategy Implementation

Once the strategy roadmap has been created, it's time to move forward with implementing it. Starting with setting annual targets as milestones, creating policies as guidelines, and motivating employees as a source of energy. Allocation of resources becomes fuel for the journey, development of organizational culture as team glue, and formation of an effective organizational

structure as a vehicle. Direction of marketing efforts becomes a navigation map, budget preparation as a calculator, development of information systems as a digital compass, and the relationship between compensation and organizational performance as incentives.

c. Strategy Evaluation

Strategy evaluation is an important step to ensure the roadmap is still relevant and effective. This is done by reviewing external and internal factors as terrain changes, performance measurements as markers of progress, and corrective actions as direction adjustments. This evaluation needs to be done because current success does not guarantee future success, just like a map that needs to be updated for the next journey.

Conclusion

After conducting research at Al-Hidayah Middle School in Medan, it was concluded that promotion management carried out by the school principal involved several stages, such as forming a promotion team, planning appropriate strategies, preparing attractive promotional materials, as well as implementing promotions through various channels such as socialization in schools, surrounding elementary schools, installing banners in strategic locations with the support of the local community, and distributing pamphlets through various social media platforms. The final stage is evaluation to

assess the success of the promotion in achieving the set goals.

In refining this research, the researcher provides suggestions to those concerned:

1. School principals are advised to continue to improve their promotional strategy management, one of which is by including school achievements in various promotional media to attract the interest of prospective students.

2. It is also recommended that the number of banner media produced by SMP Al-Hidayah Medan be increased so that they can be installed in more places. This way, it will be easier for the public to see it and increase awareness about the school.

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