



Applying The 7P Marketing Mix Strategy In Promoting Islamic Education At Aqobah International School (AIS) Jombang

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the implementation of the 7P marketing mix strategy in the context of educational service marketing at Aqobah International School (AIS) Jombang. The strategy encompasses seven key elements: product, price, place, promotion, people, physical evidence, and process. As a pesantren-based Islamic educational institution with an international vision, AIS has developed an integrative marketing approach to attract public attention, especially from parents seeking high-quality education embedded with strong religious values. Utilizing a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The findings indicate that implementing the 7P marketing mix strategy at AIS effectively strengthens the institution's image and increases public interest in the educational programs offered.

Keywords: 7P Marketing Mix, Educational Services, Marketing Strategy.

INTRODUCTION

Marketing has become an increasingly important aspect for Islamic educational institutions in facing growing competition. These institutions are now required not only to offer teaching and learning programs but also to effectively communicate their values, advantages, and unique features to attract the public's interest, especially parents who seek quality education with strong character for their children (Habibulloh et al., 2024). In this context, an appropriate marketing strategy can help Islamic educational institutions not only maintain their existence but also grow and adapt to the needs of the times (Habibulloh et al., 2025).

Islamic educational institutions possess unique characteristics that distinguish them from general educational institutions, primarily through the integration of Islamic values in every aspect of learning and school life. (Sugiyanto & Santosa, 2021) Therefore, any marketing strategy implemented must be capable of consistently reflecting these values, thereby building trust and emotional engagement with the public. Furthermore, marketing plays a crucial role in



strengthening the institution's positive image, raising public awareness, and opening access to prospective students aligned with the school's vision and mission(Habibulloh & Ridho, 2024).

The 7P marketing mix concept is one of the most comprehensive and effective approaches in developing marketing strategies, especially for educational services (Maisah et al., 2020). This concept includes seven essential elements: Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Physical Evidence, and Process(Habibulloh & Ridho, 2024). Each element is interconnected and plays a role in shaping the experience and perception of users of educational services(K. Syafi'i & Ikwandi, 2023). This approach helps institutions manage various aspects in an integrated manner so that the marketing strategy implemented is not only attractive but also provides clear added value to all stakeholders.

Several previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach. Research by Rini Setyowati shows that the elements of people and process in educational services greatly influence customer satisfaction and loyalty to integrated Islamic schools(Yuli et al., 2023). Another study by Aminullah Assagaf reveals that emotionally and spiritually driven promotions have a positive effect on strengthening the image of pesantren-based educational institutions(Munif et al., 2023). Meanwhile, Yusak Anshori, in his research, emphasizes that the 7P approach can serve as a strategic framework for increasing school competitiveness amidst the challenges of open markets. These findings reinforce the position of the 7P marketing mix as a relevant and applicable approach in building competitive advantage in the Islamic education sector.

Aqobah International School (AIS) Jombang serves as an example of an Islamic educational institution that integrates the 7P marketing mix strategy in marketing its educational services. AIS combines national and international curricula with strong Islamic values, offering educational products that focus not only on academic achievement but also on character development and global competency. The comprehensive implementation of this marketing strategy is expected to strengthen AIS's position as a leading educational institution in East Java.

This article aims to examine how the 7P marketing mix strategy is applied at AIS and how it contributes to building the institution's image and increasing public interest in the educational services offered. By understanding the implementation of all seven elements of this marketing



strategy, the study hopes to provide practical insights for other Islamic educational institutions seeking to optimize their marketing efforts in an increasingly competitive context.

METHOD

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at obtaining a deep and comprehensive understanding of the marketing practices applied at Aqobah International School (AIS). This approach was chosen to allow the researchers to explore complex phenomena related to educational service marketing within a natural school setting, where behaviors, strategies, and institutional decisions can be observed in context.

Data collection was conducted through multiple techniques to ensure the credibility and richness of the information.(Charli et al., 2022) These included direct participant observation within the school environment, enabling the researchers to capture real-time interactions, promotional activities, and the overall educational atmosphere that influences public perception. Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted with various stakeholders, including the school principal, several teachers, and selected parents of students. These interviews provided nuanced insights into the rationale behind the institution's marketing strategies, the perceived strengths and challenges, and the expectations of the stakeholders.

Furthermore, document analysis was employed as a complementary method to review relevant materials such as school brochures, promotional content shared through social media platforms, and internal documents including school profiles, vision and mission statements, and enrollment data. These documents offered valuable background information and allowed for triangulation of the observational and interview data.

The process of data analysis followed a systematic qualitative procedure involving three key stages: data reduction, where irrelevant information was filtered and meaningful data were selected and categorized; data presentation, where the information was organized in a structured narrative to identify emerging themes and patterns; and conclusion drawing, which involved interpreting the findings in light of the study's objectives and the theoretical framework of the 7P marketing mix. Throughout the process, validity was ensured through source triangulation and reflective analysis, reinforcing the depth and reliability of the research outcomes.(Creswell, 2003)



RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The 7P Marketing Mix Concept in Islamic Educational Institutions

The marketing mix concept was first introduced by Neil Borden and later developed into four main elements by E. Jerome McCarthy, known as the 4Ps: Product, Price, Place, and Promotion. (Kotler & Keller, 2009) However, with the growing complexity of the service sector particularly in education Philip Kotler expanded this concept into the 7Ps by adding three crucial elements: People, Physical Evidence, and Process. These additions accommodate the unique characteristics of services, which are intangible and involve intensive interaction between providers and customers.

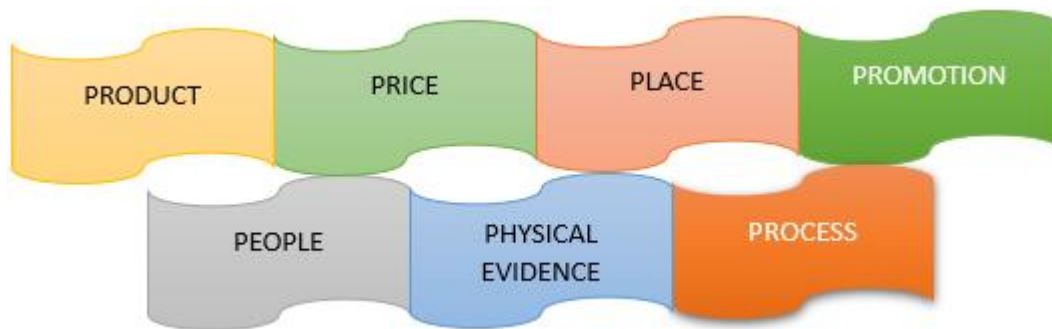


Figure 1: 7P Marketing Mix Elements

(Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Physical Evidence, Process)

The application of the 7P marketing mix is particularly relevant in the context of Islamic educational institutions because, aside from academic aspects, Islamic values are embedded and must be reflected in every element of the marketing strategy. The product offered by Islamic educational institutions is not just the curriculum or teaching programs but also includes character building, the development of spiritual competence, and moral values integrated into daily school life. Pricing must consider social justice aspects, so institutions often implement affordable pricing systems or cross-subsidies to ensure educational access for a broader public.



From the perspective of distribution or place, Islamic education marketing extends beyond physical school or pesantren locations to encompass a range of learning platforms, particularly the rapidly evolving online learning systems. This broadens the reach of educational services so they are accessible to more people. Promotion plays a key role in introducing and attracting the public to the institution. Promotion must not only convey information but also build a positive image through strong emotional and religious approaches. (Waruwu et al., 2021)

According to Agus Eko Sujianto, an effective promotional strategy for Islamic educational institutions should prioritize personal and relational approaches, utilize religious media as a communication tool, and optimize digital technology such as social media and websites to efficiently and attractively reach a broader audience. The consistency of promotional messages with Islamic values is also crucial for building long-term trust and loyalty. (Rinawati et al., 2023)

The “people” element, or human resources, plays a central role in the delivery of Islamic educational services. Teachers and staff who possess competence, integrity, and Islamic character represent the institution’s values and determine the quality of interaction with students and parents. Physical evidence such as school facilities, a conducive environment, and professionally produced promotional materials reinforces public perception of the institution's credibility and professionalism. The educational service process from student admission to character building and religious activities must operate with transparent, friendly, and responsive procedures to create a positive and satisfying learning experience for all involved.

The integrated implementation of all these elements enables Islamic educational institutions to create marketing strategies that are not only commercially attractive but also prioritize prophetic values such as *khidmah* (service), *amanah* (trust), and *rahmah* (compassion). This approach helps institutions survive in increasingly competitive environments while strengthening the mission of Islamic education as a medium for character development and sustainable cultural da’wah. Various studies and practices in Islamic educational institutions and modern pesantren demonstrate that applying the 7P marketing mix with appropriate adjustments to Islamic values can enhance the institution’s image and increase public interest in their educational services. (Sulistyorini, 2023)



Product

The product strategy developed by Aqobah International School (AIS) emphasizes the provision of education services rooted in Islamic values. This is reflected in a learning approach that focuses not only on cognitive aspects but also on spirituality and character development. Islamic values are thoroughly integrated into every activity both academic and non-academic creating a religious, warm, and meaningful learning environment. Religious education is not merely taught as a subject but is cultivated as a way of life among students.

Furthermore, AIS adopts a curriculum integration strategy combining the national curriculum with the international Cambridge curriculum. This approach aims to merge the strengths of a contextual national education system with a global perspective grounded in science and critical thinking. Through this strategy, students are not only prepared to meet national education standards but are also equipped with the ability to compete at the international level. This curriculum integration strengthens AIS's image as a modern educational institution that remains rooted in local and religious values.

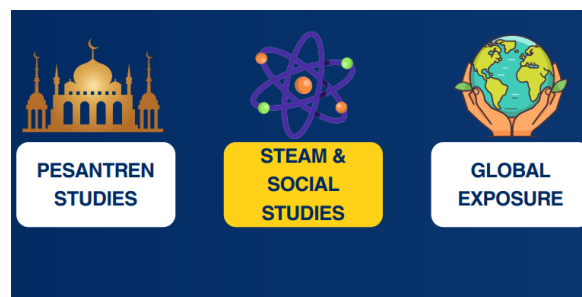


Figure 2: AIS Curriculum Approach

Another distinctive feature of AIS's educational product is the implementation of a Qur'an memorization (*tahfidz*) program, which is a core part of the learning process. This program is designed with a structured and measurable system adapted to the age and ability levels of each student. With the support of specialized teachers and a conducive environment, students are encouraged to memorize the Qur'an according to set targets. This strategy not only differentiates AIS from other schools but also serves as a major attraction for parents who value education centered on love for the Qur'an.



In addition to *tahfidz*, mastery of foreign languages is a key focus in AIS's product strategy. Arabic and English are intensively developed through bilingual methods in both instruction and daily communication. Arabic serves to reinforce Islamic identity, while English acts as a gateway to global knowledge. (Nurhadi & Atiqullah, 2020a) This strategy demonstrates that AIS aims to produce students who are not only religiously committed but also capable of effective international communication.

AIS also emphasizes character formation and the cultivation of students' leadership spirit. Through programs such as leadership training, student organization activities, mentoring, as well as habitual worship and social engagement, AIS instills values of responsibility, discipline, empathy, and a spirit of service. This strategy supports the development of graduates who excel not only in knowledge but also in leadership and moral integrity.

Service diversification is another strategy that strengthens AIS's appeal. The school offers various extracurricular options to support the comprehensive development of students' potential, such as robotics, English debate, calligraphy, and martial arts. These activities provide students with opportunities to express their interests and talents beyond the classroom, enriching their learning experience in dynamic and enjoyable ways. These programs reflect AIS's holistic educational approach that balances academic achievement, spirituality, and life skills.

The combination of these strategies results in an educational product with significant added value, enabling AIS to establish strong positioning amid educational competition. The services offered not only fulfill formal education needs but also deliver meaningful, value-based, and future-oriented educational experiences. This makes AIS an institution that produces not only intelligent students but also a generation of Muslims who are intellectually, spiritually, and socially excellent.

Price

The pricing strategy applied by Aqobah International School (AIS) is designed with consideration for the middle-to-upper market segment as its primary target. In determining educational fees, AIS aligns pricing with the quality of services offered, such as nationally and internationally standardized curricula, the Qur'an memorization (*tahfidz*) program, and modern facilities that support the learning process. This strategy demonstrates AIS's orientation toward



value-based pricing, where the price is determined based on the value and benefits received by students and parents.

AIS also recognizes the importance of flexibility in payments to reach a broader audience. Therefore, the institution offers installment payment schemes that can be adjusted to the financial capabilities of parents. This arrangement provides convenience for families so they are not burdened by large payments at the beginning of the academic year, while also fostering a positive perception of the institution's sensitivity and empathy toward the community.

Tuition discounts are also part of AIS's pricing promotion strategy. Incentives are offered during certain periods, such as early bird registration or for group enrollments. This approach aims to increase prospective student interest and accelerate the new student admission process. (Habibi & Wahyuni, 2020) These discounts also create the perception that AIS provides broader access to families enthusiastic about high-quality education.

The pricing decisions made by AIS are based on the principle of balance between institutional sustainability and affordability for the target community (Andayani & Akbar, 2025). Prices are not set solely for financial gain but are aimed at ensuring the continuity of high-quality educational services. (Mukhtar, 2017) With this approach, AIS maintains its credibility as a quality education provider without neglecting the humanistic aspects of delivering education (Habibulloh, 2025).

The pricing strategy is also supported by transparent cost information provided to prospective parents from the beginning. Detailed explanations regarding the components of educational fees, the facilities included, and the services offered provide clarity and eliminate the impression of hidden costs. This transparency strengthens public trust and creates an honest relationship between the institution and the parents. (Saepulloh & Badrudin, 2023)

AIS has successfully built an image as a leading Islamic educational institution that is professional, inclusive, and quality-oriented through a combination of competitive, flexible, and value-based pricing strategies (Noviyanti et al., 2025). This serves as a key competitive advantage that sets AIS apart from similar institutions in the Jombang area and beyond, and supports its broader marketing strategy rooted in quality and social commitment.



Place

Aqobah International School (AIS) is strategically located in East Jombang, an area that greatly supports a safe and comfortable learning environment. This location is easily accessible from various major cities in East Java, making it convenient for students and parents in their daily activities and transportation to and from school. AIS's presence in a relatively quiet area away from the hustle and bustle of the city center creates a conducive atmosphere for focused learning and ensures a secure, peaceful environment for students.

This location advantage is also considered a significant selling point in AIS's marketing strategy. Parents who are searching for an educational environment that offers not only academic quality but also security and peace of mind for their children find a fitting solution in AIS's setting. Therefore, the choice of location is not only geographical but also part of the institution's value proposition to prospective students and their families.

The distribution of information about AIS is not limited to the school's physical presence but also relies on various outreach channels to reach a wider public. Offline, AIS actively participates in education fairs, visits partner schools, and collaborates with educational institutions and local communities. These activities aim to expand AIS's network and introduce the school directly to a broader audience, especially prospective students and their parents.

In the digital age, AIS also optimizes online channels as distribution media. The school's official website is designed as the main source of information easy to access and regularly updated with relevant content (A. Syafi'i et al., 2024). In addition, social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok are used intensively to promote school activities, student achievements, and flagship programs (Yuniarti, 2024). This approach allows AIS to engage with younger audiences and tech-savvy parents in an interactive and appealing way (Ahmed et al., 2024).

WhatsApp chat services also serve as an effective and efficient channel for information distribution. (Nurhadi & Atiqullah, 2020) Parents and prospective students can easily contact the school to consult, ask about enrollment procedures, schedules, and other important details in real-time (Sholeh, 2023b). This combination of offline and online distribution shows that AIS integrates both traditional and modern methods in its placement and information dissemination strategies to optimally reach various segments of society (Habibulloh et al., 2024).



Figure 3. The facilities at AIS (Aqobah International School)

Promotion

Promotion is one of the crucial elements in the marketing strategy implemented by Aqobah International School (AIS). The school adopts a diverse and creative approach to reach prospective students and their parents by utilizing various media and methods tailored to the target market's characteristics. One of the main channels used is social media, where AIS regularly uploads engaging and informative visual content, such as videos of school activities, student achievements, and its featured programs. This content is designed not only to attract attention but also to effectively convey the school's values and vision.(Firdausi et al., 2024)

AIS actively organizes online webinars and parenting seminars featuring expert speakers who provide education on child-rearing and learning(Syafi'i & El-Yunusi, 2024). These events serve not only as promotional tools but also as means to build strong and positive relationships with prospective students' parents. In doing so, AIS demonstrates its genuine commitment and concern for student development, thereby increasing public trust in the institution.

Testimonials from alumni and current parents are also among the most effective promotional strategies used to build AIS's credibility. Their success stories and positive experiences are published on social media and other promotional materials(Sholeh, 2023). These testimonials help instill confidence and trust among prospective students and their parents that AIS is the right choice for a quality Islamic-based education(Abror et al., 2024).



AIS also utilizes advertisements in both local media and digital platforms to broaden its promotional reach. These advertisements are carefully crafted with attention to aesthetics and messaging that can capture the interest of the public (Sholeh et al., 2024). This approach enables AIS to reach a wider market segment and enhance its visibility amid competition from other educational institutions.

The Pesantren Weekend Program at Aqobah International School (AIS) Jombang is another effective promotional strategy designed to attract prospective students and their parents to choose AIS as their place of residence and learning. This program provides participants from various regions the opportunity to experience first-hand the educational atmosphere, pesantren environment, and holistic, character-based learning approach implemented at AIS. The program not only introduces the school's excellent facilities and modern educational methods but also reinforces AIS's image as an Islamic educational institution that integrates Islamic values, international academics, and 21st-century skills.

Equally important, AIS routinely holds national-scale competitions and educational events that involve participants from various regions. These activities serve not only to introduce AIS to the wider public but also to foster engagement and stronger interaction between the school and the community. Through its integrated and humanistic promotional strategies, AIS successfully builds a positive image and increases the trust and loyalty of prospective students and parents, which ultimately contributes to the successful marketing of its educational services.

People

Aqobah International School (AIS) fully recognizes that the quality of human resources is one of the main factors in delivering excellent and competitive educational services. Therefore, the recruitment process for teachers and education personnel is conducted with a highly rigorous and comprehensive selection process. (Pramono et al., 2022) This selection not only assesses candidates' academic abilities but also evaluates their spirituality and interpersonal skills, which are essential for creating a harmonious and conducive learning atmosphere. Through such strict criteria, AIS ensures that each educator and staff member is strongly committed to the institution's vision and mission.



Beyond recruitment, AIS places significant emphasis on continuous human resource training and development. Regular training programs and workshops are organized to enhance the professionalism of teachers and staff while updating their teaching methods and pedagogical approaches in line with the latest developments in education. As a result, educators and personnel are not only able to carry out their duties optimally but also continuously grow to meet the demands of the times.

At AIS, the role of teachers and staff extends beyond being formal instructors in the classroom. They are also mentors and role models for the students. They are encouraged to build warm and inspiring interpersonal relationships that motivate students to learn and develop positive character traits (Ismanto & Trisatyawati, 2024). This approach positions teachers and staff as figures who are close to the students and capable of providing guidance and support in shaping their personality and spirituality (Mukaromah & Fadly, 2022).

This consistent quality of human resources is a key advantage for AIS in competing with other educational institutions. Parents' trust in the quality of AIS's educators and staff is one of the main reasons they choose the school for their children's education. Therefore, the success of AIS in marketing its educational services is highly dependent on the professionalism and quality of its human resources.

AIS's human resource management strategy reflects a humanistic and holistic educational philosophy, where academic instruction is integrated with character and spiritual development. This aligns with AIS's vision as a modern, internationally-oriented Islamic educational institution that prioritizes human resource quality as the foundation for delivering the best possible educational services.

Physical Evidence

As a service-based educational institution, physical evidence plays a critical role in building a positive image and public perception. At Aqobah International School (AIS), this is manifested through the design of a modern, green, and comfortable school environment. The buildings, constructed with contemporary architecture, not only convey a professional impression but also enhance students' comfort during the learning process. Complete supporting facilities such as science and computer laboratories, a representative mosque, spacious sports fields, and multimedia



rooms equipped with advanced technology are tangible proof of AIS's commitment to providing quality learning facilities.

In addition to buildings and infrastructure, the school's visual identity is taken very seriously. Neat student uniforms that reflect the school's character, attractive and informative brochures, and a logo that symbolizes Islamic values and modernity all contribute to reinforcing AIS's image of professionalism and integrity. These visual elements serve as non-verbal communication tools that strongly convey the school's vision, mission, and values to prospective students and parents.

The school's neatly arranged and Islamic-themed environment also becomes a unique attraction. The beauty of the gardens, cleanliness of classrooms and public facilities, and Islamic ornaments decorating various corners of the building create a learning atmosphere that is both conducive and reflective of an educational philosophy grounded in the balance between knowledge and spirituality. This is essential for fostering a learning experience that not only excels academically but also shapes the students' character in accordance with Islamic values.

High-quality and consistent physical evidence also helps strengthen parental trust in AIS as a professional and quality-focused educational institution. When prospective students and parents visit the campus and witness the school's facilities firsthand, they can immediately feel the supportive atmosphere for learning making the decision to enroll at AIS easier and more convincing.

These points demonstrate that physical evidence is not merely a complement, but an integral part of AIS's marketing strategy, aimed at building a strong reputation and competitive appeal. Well-designed and maintained physical infrastructure reflects the quality of services provided and clearly shows that AIS pays close attention to all aspects that contribute to the success of its students' education.

Process

An effective and efficient service process is one of the main pillars in building customer trust and satisfaction in the field of education. (Prihatin & Ahmad, 2020) At Aqobah International School (AIS), the entire service process from student admission to academic progress reporting is designed to be systematic and well-structured. Student enrollment is conducted digitally through an accessible platform, making it easy for prospective students and their parents to register without



having to visit the school in person. This system not only saves time but also reduces administrative errors, ensuring that the process runs smoothly and transparently.

Following enrollment, AIS implements a well-planned orientation program for new students to help them adjust to the school environment and understand the rules and learning culture. This program provides a strong initial foundation to ensure that students are well-prepared to participate fully in the learning process. Furthermore, the teaching and learning activities are carried out according to high standards, involving professional teachers and innovative teaching methods tailored to the students' needs.

One of AIS's key strengths is its use of information technology in facilitating communication between the school and students' families. Through an integrated digital platform, parents have real-time access to monitor their children's academic progress and activities. Learning reports, attendance records, and important announcements can be accessed anytime, allowing families to feel involved and informed in their children's education. This system also makes it easier for parents to communicate directly with teachers or school staff when needed.

In addition to technical aspects, AIS emphasizes the importance of friendly and responsive service. Each service process is supported by staff trained to provide information and assistance promptly and courteously. This creates a welcoming atmosphere and ensures that service users feel appreciated and cared for. (Pratiwi et al., 2024) Such positive service experiences play a significant role in increasing the loyalty of both parents and students to AIS.

With well-organized procedures supported by digital technology and a human-centered service culture, AIS delivers educational services that are not only academically strong but also satisfying in terms of user experience. This well-managed process enhances public trust and solidifies AIS's position as a preferred educational institution in Jombang.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the 7P Marketing Mix strategy at Aqobah International School (AIS) Jombang demonstrates that a structured, value-based marketing approach can enhance the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions amid global dynamics and challenges. The seven elements product, price, place, promotion, people, physical evidence, and process are



executed in an integrated manner, taking into account the target market's needs and maintaining consistency with the Islamic vision upheld by the institution.

The research findings show that the integration of Islamic values into each element of the marketing strategy effectively strengthens the institution's image, builds public trust, and increases parental interest in choosing AIS as an educational partner for their children. These findings underscore the importance of planning and executing marketing strategies that do not rely solely on technical aspects but also prioritize the spiritual and cultural values of the institution. For other Islamic educational institutions, the 7P marketing mix can serve as a strategic model for developing marketing systems that are effective, meaningful, and sustainable. This study is expected to contribute both practically and academically to the development of adaptive and visionary Islamic educational marketing management.

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