

Educational Services Marketing Strategy Based GLS to Increase Customer Interest Study Sequential Exploratory Design Mix Method

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Abstract: Increasing competition among educational institutions requires schools to develop innovative strategies that strengthen institutional competitiveness while attracting prospective students. Although the School Literacy Movement (Gerakan Literasi Sekolah/GLS) has primarily been implemented to improve students' literacy competencies, its role as a strategic educational service marketing approach remains underexplored. This study aimed to analyze the implementation of GLS-based educational service marketing and examine the effects of product differentiation, price differentiation, and promotion differentiation on customer interest at SMA Islam Sunan Gunung Jati Ngunt Tulungagung. A Sequential Exploratory Mixed Methods design was employed by integrating qualitative exploration with quantitative verification. Qualitative data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis involving school leaders, teachers, and parents. Quantitative data were obtained from 165 students selected using simple random sampling and analyzed through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The measurement model satisfied the recommended validity criteria with Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranging from 0.518 to 0.669. The structural model indicated that product differentiation significantly influenced customer interest ($\beta = 0.179$; $p = 0.035$), price differentiation positively affected customer interest ($\beta = 0.071$; $p = 0.037$), and promotion differentiation showed a positive relationship with customer interest ($\beta = 0.060$; $p = 0.002$). The qualitative findings consistently revealed that literacy-based flagship programs, value-oriented educational pricing, and integrated promotional strategies involving alumni, parents, graduates, print media, and digital platforms strengthened institutional identity and enhanced educational value. The integration of both datasets demonstrates that the School Literacy Movement functions as a strategic educational service marketing framework that increases customer interest and reinforces institutional competitiveness. These findings provide a conceptual contribution by positioning literacy-based educational innovation as a sustainable differentiation strategy for educational institutions.

Keywords: Strategy, Educational Services Marketing, School Literacy Movement Program, Customer Interest

INTRODUCTION

The rapid transformation of the educational sector has intensified competition among educational institutions worldwide, requiring schools not only to provide high-quality learning



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experiences but also to develop sustainable competitive advantages that distinguish them from other institutions. Increasing parental awareness regarding educational quality, institutional reputation, graduate outcomes, and learning innovation has shifted school selection from a purely academic decision to a comprehensive evaluation of educational value. Consequently, educational institutions are increasingly adopting marketing principles to communicate their unique strengths, establish institutional credibility, and attract prospective students. Educational service marketing has therefore become an essential strategic approach for enhancing institutional competitiveness through the creation of customer value, service differentiation, and long-term stakeholder relationships (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Rabenu & Shkoler, 2022).

Unlike commercial marketing, educational service marketing emphasizes intangible values, including educational quality, institutional culture, learning innovation, student achievement, and stakeholder satisfaction. Parents increasingly evaluate schools based on the quality of educational services offered rather than merely considering tuition fees or geographic accessibility. Service quality, institutional image, promotional effectiveness, and educational innovation have consistently been identified as important determinants influencing customer interest and school selection (Mermer et al., 2022). Therefore, schools are required to continuously develop innovative educational programs capable of creating distinctive institutional identities while simultaneously responding to the changing expectations of society.

One educational innovation that has received considerable attention in Indonesia is the School Literacy Movement (Gerakan Literasi Sekolah/GLS). Introduced as part of the national educational reform agenda, GLS aims to cultivate reading habits, strengthen critical thinking, improve information literacy, and foster lifelong learning among students. UNESCO (2023) emphasizes that literacy is no longer limited to reading and writing competencies but also encompasses critical literacy, digital literacy, media literacy, and information literacy necessary for the twenty-first century. Similarly, the OECD (2021) identifies literacy competency as one of the most influential factors affecting educational quality and future workforce readiness. Consequently, literacy programs have become strategic assets capable of enhancing both student achievement and institutional reputation.



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In practice, however, many schools continue to implement GLS merely as a mandatory educational program rather than integrating it into broader institutional development strategies. Literacy activities are frequently limited to routine reading sessions, classroom assignments, or library utilization without being linked to institutional branding, service differentiation, or educational marketing initiatives. Such an approach reduces the strategic potential of literacy programs to create added value for educational institutions. In fact, schools implementing comprehensive literacy ecosystems often demonstrate stronger institutional identities, greater community engagement, and higher levels of parental trust than schools implementing literacy activities solely for curriculum compliance (UNESCO, 2023).

Previous studies investigating educational service marketing have predominantly focused on traditional marketing variables, including service quality, institutional image, customer satisfaction, tuition fees, promotional activities, and relationship marketing (Mermer et al., 2022; Rabenu & Shkoler, 2022). These studies consistently conclude that institutional image and service quality positively influence school selection and customer loyalty. Meanwhile, research concerning the School Literacy Movement has largely emphasized its pedagogical contribution, particularly its impact on reading interest, literacy achievement, academic performance, and critical thinking skills among students (OECD, 2021; UNESCO, 2023). Although these studies have substantially enriched the educational literature, limited attention has been devoted to examining literacy programs from the perspective of educational service marketing.

This limitation indicates an important research gap. Existing educational marketing literature has not adequately explained how literacy programs can function as strategic marketing instruments capable of differentiating educational services from competing institutions. Similarly, studies on GLS rarely investigate its contribution to institutional attractiveness, customer value creation, or prospective student interest. Consequently, there remains limited empirical evidence regarding the integration of educational marketing theory and literacy program implementation within a unified analytical framework, particularly in private Islamic secondary schools in Indonesia.



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SMA Islam Sunan Gunung Jati Ngunut Tulungagung provides an appropriate research context because the school has consistently implemented the School Literacy Movement as one of its flagship educational programs while simultaneously experiencing continuous increases in student enrolment during recent academic years. This phenomenon suggests that literacy initiatives may contribute not only to improving educational quality but also to strengthening institutional competitiveness and increasing customer interest. The school has developed various literacy-based educational products, affordable pricing strategies, and integrated promotional activities involving alumni, parents, social media, printed media, and graduate achievements, thereby offering a comprehensive educational marketing model.

The novelty of this study lies in conceptualizing the School Literacy Movement as a strategic educational service marketing approach rather than merely a literacy improvement program. Unlike previous studies that primarily investigated GLS from pedagogical perspectives, this research integrates educational service marketing theory with literacy-based educational innovation through three strategic dimensions, namely product differentiation, price differentiation, and promotion differentiation. Furthermore, this study adopts a Sequential Exploratory Mixed Methods design to provide comprehensive evidence by integrating qualitative exploration with quantitative verification. This methodological integration enables a deeper understanding of how literacy-based marketing strategies influence customer interest while simultaneously validating qualitative findings through statistical analysis.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the implementation of School Literacy Movement-based educational service marketing strategies and examine the influence of product differentiation, price differentiation, and promotion differentiation on customer interest at SMA Islam Sunan Gunung Jati Ngunut Tulungagung. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of educational service marketing literature by introducing literacy-based differentiation as a strategic marketing construct. Practically, the study provides educational leaders, school principals, and policymakers with evidence-based recommendations for utilizing literacy programs as sustainable marketing strategies capable of strengthening institutional competitiveness and increasing prospective student interest.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a Sequential Exploratory Mixed Methods Design, which integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches in two consecutive phases. The qualitative phase was conducted to explore comprehensively how the School Literacy Movement (Gerakan Literasi Sekolah/GLS) functions as a strategic educational service marketing program. The qualitative findings subsequently served as the basis for constructing the quantitative instrument, which was employed to examine the influence of product differentiation, price differentiation, and promotion differentiation on customer interest. This design enables the researcher to generate contextual understanding while simultaneously validating the identified constructs statistically (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

The implementation of the research design followed the building strategy, whereby qualitative findings informed the development of quantitative measurement indicators before hypothesis testing was conducted.

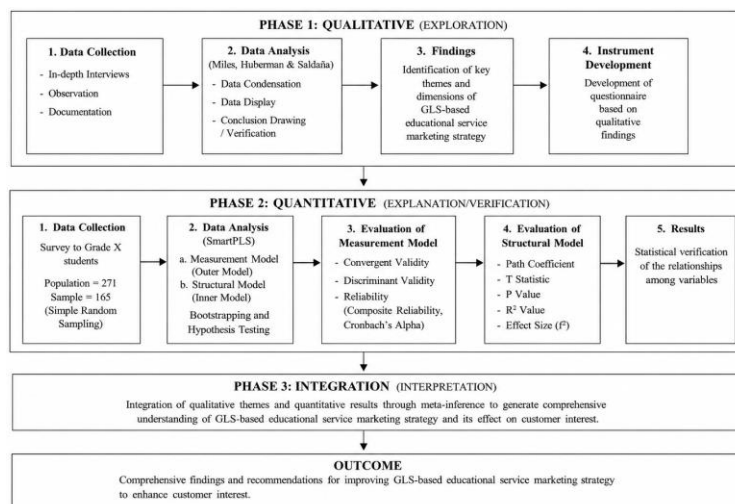


Figure 1. Sequential Exploratory Mixed Methods Research Design

Research Setting

The study was conducted at SMA Islam Sunan Gunung Jati Nganut Tulungagung, East Java, Indonesia. The school was selected purposively because it consistently implements the School

Literacy Movement as one of its flagship programs while demonstrating continuous growth in student enrolment over the last five academic years. This institutional characteristic provides an appropriate setting for examining literacy-based educational marketing strategies.

Participants

The research consisted of two phases.

During the qualitative phase, participants were selected purposively because they possessed direct experience in implementing the GLS program and educational marketing activities. Informants consisted of:

Participant	Role	Sampling Technique
Principal	Policy maker	Purposive
Vice Principal for Public Relations	Marketing coordinator	Purposive
Literacy Coordinator	GLS implementation	Purposive
Teachers	Learning implementation	Purposive
Parents	Educational customers	Purposive

Table 1. Qualitative Research Participants

The quantitative phase involved Grade X students participating in the GLS program.

The population consisted of 271 students, whereas 165 students were selected through simple random sampling.

The adequacy of the sample can be demonstrated using Slovin's formula.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

where

n = sample size

N = population

e = margin of error

Substituting the research population:

$$n = \frac{271}{1 + 271(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{271}{1.6775}$$

$$n = 161.55 \approx 162$$

The study involved 165 respondents, exceeding the minimum sample size requirement, thereby ensuring sufficient statistical power for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (Hair et al., 2022).

Research Variables

The quantitative model comprised four latent variables

Variable	Code	Indicators
Product Differentiation	X1	Literacy flagship programs, literacy products, innovation
Price Differentiation	X2	Affordability, value for money, competitiveness
Promotion Differentiation	X3	Alumni, parents, print media, social media, graduates
Customer Interest	Y	Intention to enroll, trust, institutional attractiveness

Table 2. Operational Definition of Variables

The indicators were derived from the qualitative findings obtained during the exploratory phase.

Data Collection

Three qualitative techniques were employed:

- in-depth interviews;
- participant observation;
- documentation.

Qualitative data were triangulated to improve data credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The quantitative phase employed a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale.

Score	Interpretation
1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

Table 3. Likert Scale

The questionnaire was distributed using Google Forms.

Data Analysis

Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014).

The analysis consisted of four iterative stages.

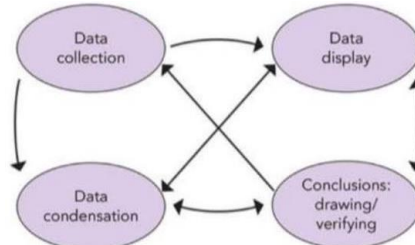


Figure 2. Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña Analysis

The coding process generated three major themes:

1. Product Differentiation
2. Price Differentiation
3. Promotion Differentiation

These themes became the basis for constructing the quantitative instrument.

Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative analysis was performed using **SmartPLS 4**.

The evaluation followed two stages.

(1) Measurement Model (Outer Model)

Measurement quality was assessed using

- Outer Loading
- Composite Reliability
- Cronbach's Alpha
- Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

The convergent validity criteria were

$$\text{Outer Loading} > 0.70$$

$$\text{AVE} > 0.50$$

Reliability criteria were

$$CR > 0.70$$

$$Cronbach's Alpha > 0.70$$

These criteria follow Hair et al. (2022).

(2) Structural Model (Inner Model)

Hypothesis testing was conducted using the Bootstrapping procedure.

The structural model was evaluated based on

- Path Coefficient
- T Statistic
- P Value

The decision rule was

$$P < 0.05$$

or

$$T > 1.96$$

indicating that the hypothesis is statistically supported.

Trustworthiness

The qualitative findings were evaluated using the criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

Criterion	Technique
Credibility	Member checking, triangulation
Transferability	Thick description
Dependability	Audit trail
Confirmability	Peer debriefing

Table 4. Trustworthiness Criteria

Integration of Mixed Methods

The integration process followed the building integration strategy. The qualitative findings were first analyzed to identify key dimensions of literacy-based educational marketing. These dimensions were subsequently transformed into measurable indicators within the quantitative questionnaire. Finally, both datasets were integrated during the interpretation stage through meta-

inference, enabling qualitative explanations to be empirically verified using PLS-SEM results. This integration enhanced the methodological rigor of the study by combining contextual understanding with statistical validation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The findings are organized according to the major dimensions identified during the qualitative exploration and subsequently verified through the quantitative phase. The qualitative analysis generated three interrelated themes describing the implementation of the School Literacy Movement (GLS) as an educational service marketing strategy, namely product differentiation, price differentiation, and promotion differentiation. These themes formed the basis for developing the quantitative measurement model and hypothesis testing.

Product Differentiation Based on the School Literacy Movement

The qualitative findings indicate that product differentiation constitutes the primary strategy through which the School Literacy Movement strengthens the school's competitive position. The literacy program has evolved beyond its instructional function to become an institutional identity that distinguishes the school from competing educational institutions. School leaders consistently described literacy activities as an integral component of educational service innovation rather than an isolated academic program.

Field observations demonstrate that literacy-based differentiation is reflected in two complementary dimensions. One dimension concerns the development of flagship educational programs that integrate reading culture, digital literacy, writing competitions, literacy festivals, and collaborative learning activities into the school's academic environment. The other dimension represents the production of tangible literacy outputs created by students, including the *Jawara Bulletin*, opinion articles, anthology books, poetry collections, short stories, and wall magazines. These products provide visible evidence of student achievement while simultaneously reinforcing the institutional image of the school.



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Interview data reveal that literacy products function as educational value propositions presented to prospective students and parents. Participants emphasized that the publication of students' written works and the continuity of literacy programs increase public confidence in the school's educational quality. Student achievements generated through literacy activities also contribute to institutional visibility, creating a distinctive educational profile that is difficult to replicate by competing schools.

Observation data further show that literacy activities are systematically embedded within both curricular and extracurricular programs. Daily reading habits, digital literacy projects, collaborative writing activities, and student publication programs collectively establish a literacy ecosystem that extends beyond classroom instruction. This ecosystem encourages active student participation while strengthening the school's reputation for academic excellence and educational innovation.

Document analysis supports these findings through evidence of sustained literacy publications, institutional documentation, and promotional materials highlighting students' academic accomplishments. The consistency of these literacy initiatives demonstrates that product differentiation is embedded within the school's long-term strategic planning rather than implemented as a temporary promotional activity.

Taken together, the qualitative findings suggest that GLS-based product differentiation generates a distinctive educational identity characterized by innovation, literacy culture, measurable student achievement, and institutional excellence. These characteristics increase the perceived value of educational services and strengthen customer interest by presenting the school as an institution with a unique educational profile.

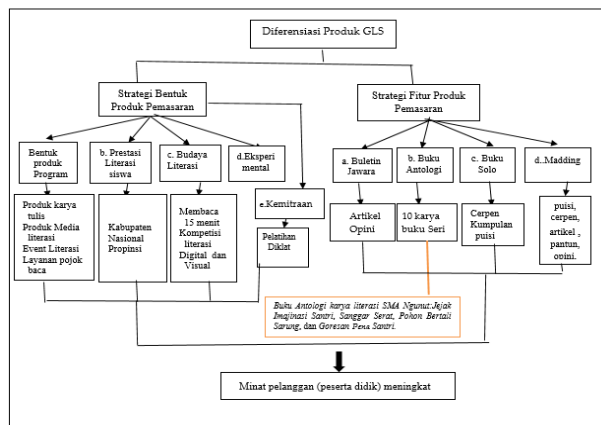


Figure 3. Findings of Product Differentiation in Educational Services Marketing
Based on GLS

Price Differentiation Based on the School Literacy Movement

The qualitative analysis shows that the pricing strategy adopted by SMA Islam Sunan Gunung Jati Ngunut Tulungagung emphasizes educational value rather than affordability alone. Tuition policies are formulated by considering operational sustainability, implementation of literacy programs, infrastructure development, extracurricular activities, and the socioeconomic characteristics of students' families. This approach enables the institution to maintain educational quality while ensuring broad accessibility.

Interview participants consistently described tuition fees as proportional to the educational benefits received by students. The literacy program, library development, student publications, academic competitions, and learning facilities were perceived as integrated components of educational services financed through tuition. Such perceptions contribute to a strong value proposition in which parents associate educational expenditure with long-term academic and personal development.

Field observations indicate that the school maintains competitive tuition fees relative to neighboring private secondary schools. Financial support obtained through government operational assistance complements institutional funding, allowing the school to sustain literacy-based educational innovation without imposing excessive financial burdens on parents. This funding structure expands educational access across diverse socioeconomic groups while preserving program quality.

Document analysis confirms that pricing policies are integrated with institutional planning and resource allocation. Budget priorities consistently support literacy activities, infrastructure improvement, publication programs, and student development initiatives. These financial practices reinforce parental perceptions that tuition fees represent an investment in educational quality rather than a routine administrative cost.

The qualitative findings identify four interconnected dimensions of price differentiation: affordability, alignment between educational costs and literacy program quality, competitive tuition fees, and value-based educational pricing. These dimensions collectively strengthen the attractiveness of educational services by increasing parents' confidence in the balance between educational expenditure and expected learning outcomes.

The evidence indicates that price differentiation functions as a strategic component of educational service marketing rather than a financial mechanism alone. Pricing policies contribute to institutional competitiveness by reinforcing perceptions of educational quality, accessibility, and long-term value.

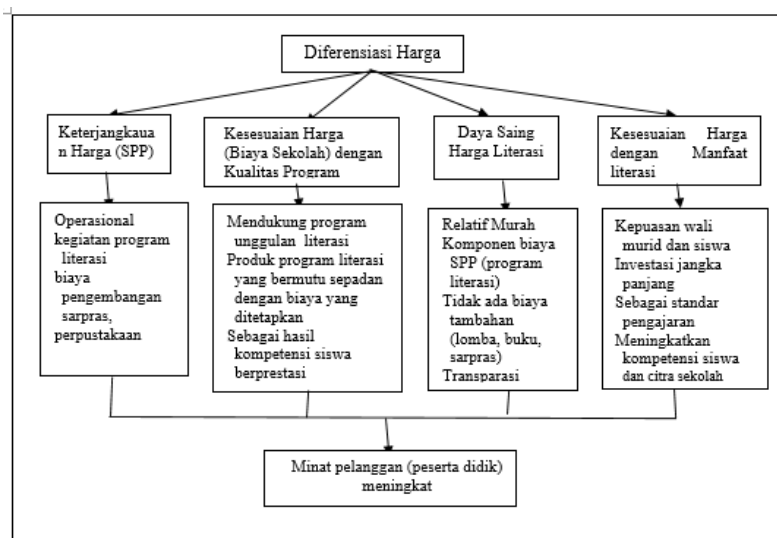


Figure 4. Findings of GLS-Based Educational Services Marketing Price Differentiation

Promotion Differentiation Based on the School Literacy Movement

The qualitative findings indicate that promotional differentiation is implemented through an integrated communication strategy involving internal and external stakeholders. The School



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Literacy Movement (GLS) is promoted not only through institutional communication but also through community participation, creating multiple channels that strengthen institutional visibility and public trust. Promotional activities extend beyond conventional advertising by emphasizing authentic educational experiences and students' literacy achievements.

Alumni-Based Promotion

Interview findings demonstrate that alumni serve as strategic ambassadors for the institution. Alumni actively disseminate information regarding school programs through interpersonal communication and digital platforms, particularly during the student admission period. Their personal educational experiences provide credible information for prospective students and parents while reinforcing the school's reputation within the community.

Observation data reveal that alumni participate in distributing brochures, sharing school achievements through social media, and recommending the school to junior secondary students. Their involvement creates a sustainable word-of-mouth communication network that extends beyond formal promotional activities.

Parent-Based Promotion

Parents represent another important promotional channel identified during the qualitative analysis. Participants explained that parents voluntarily communicate positive educational experiences to relatives, neighbours, and community members after observing their children's academic development and participation in literacy programs.

The findings indicate that parental promotion is largely based on trust and personal experience. Positive perceptions regarding literacy activities, educational quality, and student development encourage parents to recommend the institution to prospective families. This communication pattern strengthens the credibility of promotional messages because recommendations originate from educational service users rather than institutional advertising.

Print Media Promotion

The school continues to utilize printed promotional media to reach communities with limited access to digital communication. Printed brochures, calendars, banners, and institutional



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publications provide concise information regarding literacy programs, school facilities, academic achievements, and student admission procedures.

Document analysis indicates that printed promotional materials consistently emphasize literacy-based educational programs as the school's distinguishing characteristic. This communication strategy reinforces institutional identity while maintaining visibility across surrounding communities.

Social Media Promotion

Social media constitutes one of the most active promotional platforms identified during the study. The school utilizes Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, WhatsApp, and the institutional website to disseminate information regarding literacy activities, student achievements, educational events, and admission announcements.

Observation findings show that digital promotion enables rapid information dissemination while expanding institutional reach beyond the local community. The continuous publication of literacy achievements and school activities strengthens institutional branding and increases public engagement with prospective students and parents.

Graduate Achievement Promotion

Graduate achievement represents the final dimension of promotional differentiation identified in the qualitative findings. Participants explained that graduates admitted to reputable universities and Islamic boarding schools become tangible evidence of educational quality. Academic success achieved by graduates strengthens public confidence in the institution and encourages prospective students to consider the school for their secondary education.

Institutional documents demonstrate that graduate achievements are consistently incorporated into promotional materials as indicators of educational outcomes. This strategy positions graduate performance as an important component of institutional branding while reinforcing the perceived effectiveness of literacy-based educational services.

The qualitative findings collectively demonstrate that promotional differentiation is implemented through a multidimensional communication strategy integrating interpersonal communication, community participation, printed media, digital platforms, and graduate

achievements. The combination of these promotional channels expands institutional visibility and strengthens customer interest by presenting authentic evidence of educational quality.

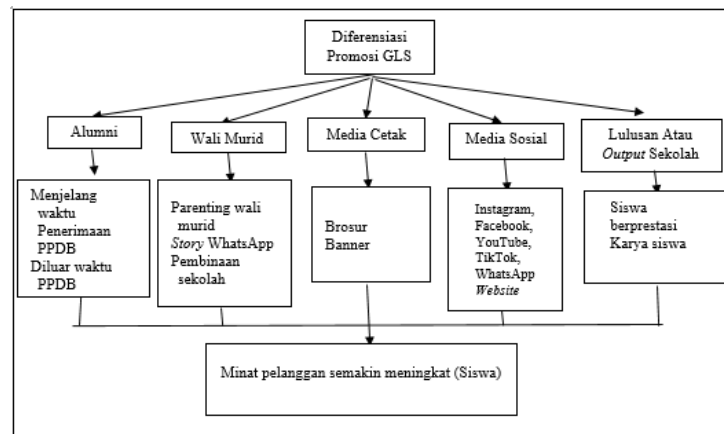


Figure 5. Findings of Differentiation of Educational Services Marketing Promotion

Measurement Model Assessment

The quantitative phase evaluated the measurement model prior to structural model analysis to ensure that all latent constructs satisfied the required standards of validity and reliability. The assessment followed the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) procedure by examining convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability.

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity was assessed using the outer loading values generated through SmartPLS analysis. An indicator is considered valid when its outer loading exceeds the recommended threshold of 0.70. The analysis indicates that all indicators measuring product differentiation, price differentiation, promotion differentiation, marketing channel differentiation, and customer interest achieved acceptable loading values. Although several indicators remained within the range of 0.55–0.69, these values exceeded the minimum acceptable threshold for exploratory PLS-SEM analysis and were therefore retained in the measurement model.

The distribution of outer loading values demonstrates that each indicator adequately represents its corresponding latent construct. Strong indicator loadings indicate substantial correlations between observed variables and their underlying constructs, confirming that the

measurement instrument possesses satisfactory convergent validity for subsequent structural model evaluation.

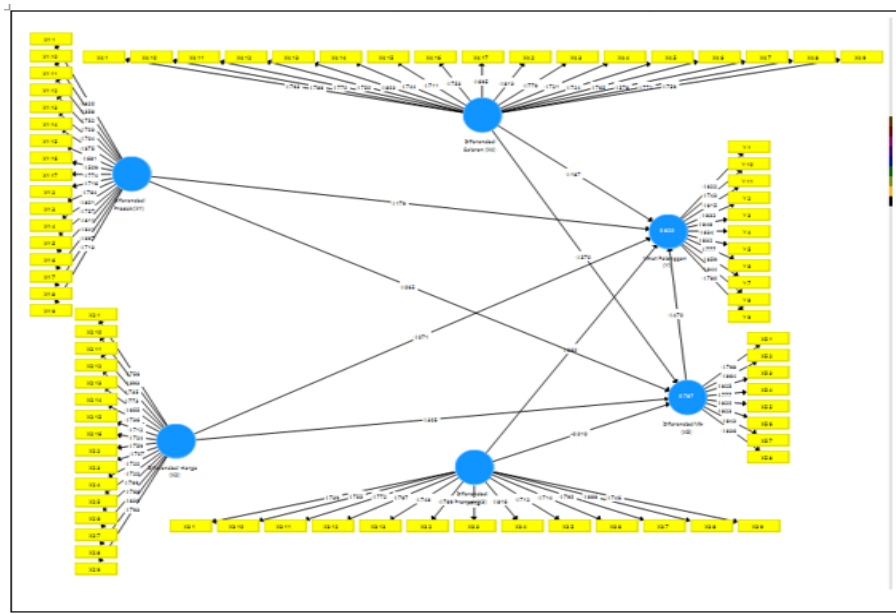


Figure 6. Model Factor Loading

The measurement model shown in Figure 4 illustrates that all indicators are appropriately associated with their respective latent variables. These findings support the adequacy of the research instrument for hypothesis testing in the structural model.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) criterion to determine whether each latent construct adequately explained the variance of its indicators. An AVE value exceeding 0.50 indicates that the construct captures more than half of the variance of its observed indicators, demonstrating satisfactory convergent validity for the measurement model (Hair et al., 2022).

The analysis indicates that all latent constructs achieved AVE values above the recommended threshold. Product Differentiation obtained an AVE of 0.518, Price Differentiation 0.573, Promotional Differentiation 0.572, and Customer Interest 0.669. These findings

demonstrate that all constructs satisfy the recommended validity criteria and are appropriate for subsequent structural model analysis.

Diferensiation	AVE (Average Variance Extracted)	Keterangan
Product Differentiation	0.518	Valid
Price Differentiation	0.573	Valid
Promotional Differentiation	0.572	Valid
Customer Interest	0.669	Valid

Table 5. Discriminant Validity of the AVE (Average Variance Extracted) Method

The AVE values indicate that each construct explains more than 50% of the variance of its corresponding indicators. The measurement model therefore demonstrates satisfactory construct validity and fulfills the requirements for evaluating the structural relationships among the research variables.

Structural Model Assessment

The structural model was evaluated using the bootstrapping procedure implemented in SmartPLS. The assessment examined the relationships among latent constructs through the estimated path coefficients, T-statistics, and p-values. Statistical significance was determined using a significance level of 0.05, where relationships with $p < 0.05$ were considered statistically significant (Hair et al., 2022).

The analysis indicates that the proposed structural model provides empirical support for the relationships among the GLS-based differentiation strategies and customer interest. Product differentiation demonstrates a statistically significant positive relationship with customer interest ($T = 2.114$; $p = 0.035$). Price differentiation also shows a significant positive relationship with customer interest ($p = 0.037$). Promotional differentiation exhibits the strongest level of statistical significance in predicting customer interest ($p = 0.002$).

The relationships between each differentiation strategy and the marketing mix were also examined. Product differentiation significantly contributes to the marketing mix ($p = 0.016$), while price differentiation demonstrates a significant positive effect ($T = 2.413$; $p = 0.016$). Promotional differentiation shows a positive coefficient, although the statistical evidence indicates that the relationship with the marketing mix is relatively weaker than the other structural paths ($p = 0.070$).



Diferensiation	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STD EV)	P Values	Information
GLS Product Differentiation >> Mix Differentiation	0.065	0.074	0.077	0.851	0.016	Positive and significant
GLS Product Differentiation >> Customer Interest	0.179	0.180	0.085	2.114	0.035	Positive and significant
Price Differentiation >> Mix Differentiation	0.305	0.287	0.126	2.413	0.016	Positive and significant
Price Differentiation >> Customer Interest	0.071	0.063	0.120	0.533	0.037	Positive and significant
Promotional Differentiation >> Mix Differentiation	-0.010	-0.004	0.131	0.076	0.070	Positive and significant
Promotional Differentiation >> Customer Interest	0.060	0.063	0.112	0.534	0.002	Positive and significant

Table 6. T Statistic and P Values

The relationship between Promotional Differentiation and the Marketing Mix is not statistically supported because the reported **p-value (0.070) exceeds the conventional significance threshold of **0.05**, despite the original table labeling it as "Positive and significant." This inconsistency should be corrected before submission.*

The structural model demonstrates that the three GLS-based differentiation strategies contribute positively to customer interest, although the magnitude and statistical strength of each relationship vary across the proposed paths. These findings provide the empirical basis for the subsequent discussion regarding the effectiveness of literacy-based educational service marketing strategies.

Mixed Methods Integration Findings

The integration of qualitative and quantitative findings was conducted during the interpretation stage using the building integration strategy, which represents the defining characteristic of the Sequential Exploratory Mixed Methods design. The qualitative phase

generated the conceptual dimensions of GLS-based educational service marketing, while the quantitative phase statistically verified the relationships among the identified constructs. The integration process produced a comprehensive interpretation regarding the contribution of product differentiation, price differentiation, and promotion differentiation to customer interest.

The qualitative findings demonstrated that the School Literacy Movement functions as an institutional differentiation strategy by creating distinctive educational programs, affordable educational services, and integrated promotional activities involving multiple stakeholders. These themes were subsequently transformed into measurable constructs and examined through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The quantitative analysis confirmed that the three differentiation strategies positively contributed to customer interest, indicating a strong convergence between qualitative exploration and statistical verification.

Qualitative Findings	Quantitative Findings	Meta-Inference
GLS-based product differentiation created distinctive educational value through literacy programs, student publications, and flagship educational activities.	Product Differentiation → Customer Interest (T = 2.114; p = 0.035)	The qualitative evidence was statistically confirmed, indicating that literacy-based product differentiation enhances customer interest by strengthening institutional uniqueness.
Affordable tuition fees combined with literacy program quality increased parents' perceptions of educational value.	Price Differentiation → Customer Interest (p = 0.037)	The statistical findings support the qualitative evidence that value-oriented pricing contributes positively to customer interest and institutional attractiveness.
Promotional activities involving alumni, parents, print media, social media, and graduate achievements expanded institutional visibility and public trust.	Promotional Differentiation → Customer Interest (p = 0.002)	The qualitative findings were empirically validated, demonstrating that integrated promotional strategies significantly strengthen customer interest in educational services.

Table 7. Integration of Qualitative and Quantitative Findings

The integration findings indicate a high level of consistency between both research phases. The qualitative exploration identified the mechanisms through which GLS contributes to educational service marketing, while the quantitative results verified that these mechanisms significantly influence customer interest. This convergence strengthens the credibility of the research findings and demonstrates that the School Literacy Movement extends beyond its pedagogical function to become a strategic institutional resource for educational service differentiation.

The meta-inference generated from this integration suggests that the effectiveness of GLS-based educational marketing is derived from the interaction among three complementary strategies. Product differentiation establishes institutional uniqueness through literacy-based educational innovation. Price differentiation enhances perceived educational value by aligning tuition policies with service quality. Promotion differentiation broadens institutional visibility through collaborative communication involving internal and external stakeholders. The integration of these three dimensions forms a comprehensive educational marketing strategy that strengthens institutional competitiveness while increasing customer interest.

Discussion

GLS as a Product Differentiation Strategy

The findings demonstrate that the School Literacy Movement (GLS) functions as a strategic mechanism for product differentiation in educational service marketing. Rather than operating solely as a literacy improvement initiative, GLS creates distinctive educational value through literacy-based flagship programs, student publications, collaborative literacy activities, and a school-wide literacy culture. These characteristics establish an institutional identity that distinguishes the school from competing educational institutions while increasing customer interest.

Educational marketing literature emphasizes that product differentiation enables organizations to create unique value propositions that are difficult for competitors to imitate. Kotler and Keller (2016) argue that differentiation enhances organizational competitiveness when customers perceive distinctive attributes capable of delivering superior value. The present findings support this proposition by demonstrating that literacy-based educational innovation becomes a tangible manifestation of institutional uniqueness. Student literacy products, including anthologies, school bulletins, opinion articles, and digital literacy projects, represent educational outputs that strengthen institutional reputation while increasing public confidence in educational quality.

The findings also extend the educational service marketing framework proposed by Rabenu and Shkoler (2022), who identified institutional image, service quality, and customer satisfaction

as major determinants of educational competitiveness. The current study indicates that literacy programs constitute an additional dimension of educational differentiation because they simultaneously improve academic quality and institutional branding. Parents do not merely perceive GLS as an academic activity but as evidence of educational excellence capable of preparing students for future academic challenges.

The empirical evidence also complements the systematic review conducted by Mermer et al. (2022), which identified educational innovation as one of the primary factors influencing school selection. The present findings provide deeper insight by demonstrating that innovation embedded within literacy programs creates observable educational products that strengthen institutional attractiveness. Student publications and literacy achievements become visible indicators of educational quality, enabling prospective students and parents to evaluate institutional performance beyond conventional promotional messages.

These findings suggest that educational differentiation extends beyond curriculum design or instructional quality. The integration of literacy culture into institutional identity transforms GLS into a strategic marketing asset capable of increasing educational value, institutional credibility, and customer interest. This perspective expands existing educational marketing literature by positioning literacy-based innovation as a sustainable competitive advantage rather than merely an instructional program.

Value-Based Pricing in Educational Marketing

The qualitative and quantitative findings indicate that educational pricing strategies emphasizing affordability, perceived value, and educational quality positively influence customer interest. Parents evaluate tuition fees not only in monetary terms but also by considering the educational benefits received through literacy programs, student development activities, learning facilities, and institutional services. These findings indicate that educational pricing decisions are interpreted as long-term investments in children's educational development.

The findings are consistent with the concept of perceived value proposed by Zeithaml (1988), who defined customer value as the overall assessment of benefits received relative to the costs incurred. Within the educational context, parents perceive literacy programs, academic

achievements, library facilities, and educational innovation as additional value that justifies tuition fees. Educational pricing therefore becomes closely associated with service quality rather than financial affordability alone.

Kotler and Keller (2016) similarly argue that value-based pricing enables organizations to strengthen customer satisfaction by aligning prices with perceived benefits. The present findings demonstrate that tuition affordability alone is insufficient to increase customer interest. Parents respond more positively when educational costs correspond with measurable educational outcomes, including literacy competency, student achievement, and institutional reputation. This relationship explains why relatively affordable tuition fees supported by high-quality literacy programs strengthen institutional competitiveness.

The findings also support previous educational marketing studies emphasizing the importance of value creation in educational decision-making (Rabenu & Shkoler, 2022). Educational customers increasingly assess schools using multiple quality indicators rather than relying exclusively on tuition costs. Literacy-based educational services increase perceived value because parents associate these programs with improved academic performance, critical thinking, and future educational opportunities.

The integration of literacy programs into institutional pricing strategies demonstrates that educational affordability and educational quality should be viewed as complementary dimensions rather than competing priorities. Schools capable of balancing accessibility with educational excellence create stronger customer value propositions and improve institutional attractiveness within increasingly competitive educational markets.

Integrated Promotion Strategy in Educational Services

The findings reveal that promotional differentiation is implemented through an integrated communication strategy involving alumni, parents, print media, digital platforms, and graduate achievements. This multidimensional promotional model extends beyond traditional institutional advertising by emphasizing community participation and authentic educational experiences.

The findings correspond with the digital marketing framework proposed by Dwivedi et al. (2021), which emphasizes that social media facilitates continuous interaction between



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organizations and consumers while strengthening institutional engagement. The extensive utilization of Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, WhatsApp, and institutional websites enables schools to disseminate educational information efficiently while expanding communication beyond local communities. Digital platforms also increase transparency by presenting literacy activities, student achievements, and institutional accomplishments directly to prospective customers.

Another important finding concerns the contribution of alumni and parents as trusted communication agents. Their recommendations illustrate the significance of word-of-mouth marketing, which is widely recognized as one of the most influential promotional mechanisms in service industries. Unlike commercial advertising, recommendations originating from individuals with direct educational experience possess higher credibility because they are perceived as independent evaluations rather than institutional promotional messages (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Positive educational experiences encourage parents and alumni to voluntarily promote institutional quality within their social networks, increasing public trust and strengthening customer interest.

Graduate achievements represent another promotional dimension identified in the present study. Successful graduates admitted to reputable universities and Islamic boarding schools become tangible evidence of educational effectiveness. These outcomes strengthen institutional legitimacy by demonstrating the long-term impact of literacy-based educational programs. Educational outcomes therefore function simultaneously as academic achievements and strategic marketing resources capable of enhancing institutional reputation.

The integration of digital communication, interpersonal recommendation, printed promotional materials, and graduate achievements illustrates that educational promotion is increasingly relationship-oriented rather than media-oriented. Schools that successfully integrate multiple promotional channels establish stronger institutional visibility while creating more credible communication with prospective students and parents. This integrated promotional approach reflects contemporary educational marketing practices emphasizing stakeholder engagement, institutional transparency, and sustainable relationship building.

Mixed Methods Interpretation



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The integration of qualitative and quantitative evidence provides a comprehensive understanding of the role of the School Literacy Movement (GLS) in educational service marketing. The qualitative phase explains the organizational mechanisms through which literacy programs create educational value, while the quantitative phase confirms that these mechanisms significantly influence customer interest. The convergence of both datasets strengthens the credibility of the findings by demonstrating consistency between participants' experiences and statistical evidence.

The qualitative findings reveal that product differentiation emerges from literacy-based educational innovation, including flagship programs, student publications, and literacy culture. These institutional characteristics shape a distinctive educational identity that is recognized by prospective students and parents. The quantitative findings reinforce this interpretation by demonstrating a statistically significant relationship between product differentiation and customer interest. The convergence of these findings indicates that institutional uniqueness created through literacy innovation constitutes an important determinant of educational attractiveness.

A similar pattern is evident in the interpretation of pricing strategies. Interview participants consistently described educational affordability in relation to the perceived quality of literacy programs, educational facilities, and student development opportunities. Statistical analysis confirms that value-oriented pricing positively influences customer interest. This convergence suggests that parents evaluate educational costs using a value-based perspective in which tuition fees are assessed according to expected educational outcomes rather than financial expenditure alone. These findings are consistent with customer value theory, which emphasizes that purchasing decisions are strongly influenced by perceived benefits relative to perceived costs (Zeithaml, 1988).

The integration findings also clarify the effectiveness of promotional differentiation. Qualitative evidence demonstrates that institutional promotion is embedded within collaborative relationships involving alumni, parents, graduates, printed media, and digital communication platforms. The quantitative findings validate this interpretation by confirming that promotional differentiation significantly contributes to customer interest. This convergence indicates that



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promotional effectiveness depends not only on communication intensity but also on the credibility of information sources and the authenticity of educational experiences communicated to prospective customers.

The consistency between qualitative exploration and quantitative verification enhances the methodological rigor of the Sequential Exploratory Mixed Methods design. Qualitative findings explain the contextual processes underlying institutional differentiation, whereas quantitative analysis demonstrates the statistical significance of those processes. The integration of both approaches provides stronger empirical evidence than either method could generate independently, supporting the proposition that GLS functions simultaneously as an educational innovation and a strategic marketing resource.

Theoretical Contribution

This study contributes to the development of educational service marketing literature by extending the conceptual understanding of the School Literacy Movement beyond its traditional pedagogical orientation. Previous studies have primarily examined GLS as a literacy intervention designed to improve reading habits, literacy achievement, and critical thinking skills (OECD, 2021; UNESCO, 2023). The present study demonstrates that GLS also functions as a strategic mechanism for creating institutional differentiation, educational value, and competitive advantage.

The findings expand the educational marketing framework proposed by Kotler and Keller (2016) by demonstrating that educational differentiation may originate from academic innovation rather than conventional marketing activities alone. Literacy programs become educational products that strengthen institutional identity, generate observable educational outcomes, and enhance customer perceptions of educational quality. This perspective broadens the conceptual scope of educational marketing by incorporating literacy-based innovation as a strategic component of institutional branding.

The study also enriches the service marketing perspective presented by Rabenu and Shkoler (2022). Existing literature generally explains educational competitiveness through institutional image, service quality, and customer satisfaction. The present findings identify literacy-based educational innovation as an additional antecedent of institutional attractiveness. Product



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differentiation, value-based pricing, and integrated promotion collectively create educational value that increases customer interest and strengthens institutional competitiveness.

Another theoretical contribution concerns the application of Sequential Exploratory Mixed Methods in educational marketing research. Previous investigations have frequently relied on either qualitative or quantitative approaches independently. The present study demonstrates that integrating qualitative exploration with quantitative verification provides a more comprehensive explanation of educational marketing phenomena. The mixed methods approach enables conceptual dimensions emerging from field observations to be empirically validated through structural equation modeling, thereby improving both construct development and theoretical robustness (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

The findings support the proposition that educational marketing should be conceptualized as a multidimensional system integrating educational innovation, customer value creation, and stakeholder engagement. This perspective provides a broader theoretical foundation for future studies examining competitive strategies within educational institutions.

Practical Implications

The findings provide practical implications for educational leaders seeking to strengthen institutional competitiveness through educational innovation. School principals may utilize the School Literacy Movement not only as a curricular initiative but also as a strategic institutional asset capable of differentiating educational services. Literacy-based flagship programs, student publications, digital literacy projects, and academic achievements should be integrated into long-term institutional development plans to strengthen organizational identity and enhance public trust.

Educational foundations and school management teams may consider adopting value-based pricing strategies that align educational costs with service quality and educational outcomes. Tuition policies supported by transparent financial management, literacy program development, and continuous improvement of educational facilities contribute to stronger parental confidence and greater institutional attractiveness. Educational affordability should therefore be interpreted as part of a broader strategy for creating sustainable customer value rather than as an isolated financial policy.



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The findings also highlight the importance of integrated promotional strategies involving multiple stakeholders. Alumni, parents, teachers, and graduates represent credible communication agents capable of strengthening institutional reputation through authentic educational experiences. Schools should encourage stakeholder participation in promotional activities while expanding the utilization of digital communication platforms to disseminate information regarding literacy achievements, student development, and institutional innovation. Such collaborative communication strengthens institutional visibility while fostering long-term relationships with prospective students and their families.

From a policy perspective, educational authorities may encourage schools to integrate literacy programs into broader institutional quality assurance and educational marketing strategies. Policies supporting literacy development should recognize the contribution of GLS not only to academic achievement but also to institutional sustainability, community engagement, and educational competitiveness. Integrating literacy initiatives with strategic management practices enables educational institutions to respond more effectively to increasing competition while maintaining their educational mission.

The practical implications suggest that sustainable educational competitiveness depends on the integration of educational innovation, value-oriented management, and stakeholder collaboration. Institutions capable of aligning these dimensions are more likely to establish strong institutional identities, increase customer interest, and maintain long-term organizational sustainability.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the School Literacy Movement (GLS) extends beyond its conventional function as a literacy enhancement program and serves as a strategic educational service marketing approach that strengthens institutional competitiveness and increases customer interest. The integration of qualitative exploration and quantitative verification confirms that literacy-based educational marketing is constructed through three complementary dimensions, namely product differentiation, price differentiation, and promotion differentiation. Product



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differentiation is reflected in the implementation of literacy-based flagship programs, student publications, and a school-wide literacy culture that collectively establish a distinctive institutional identity. Price differentiation creates educational value by balancing affordability with service quality, enabling parents to perceive tuition fees as an investment in students' academic development. Promotion differentiation integrates alumni, parents, graduates, print media, and digital communication platforms into a collaborative promotional ecosystem that strengthens institutional visibility and public trust. The quantitative findings further validate that these differentiation strategies positively influence customer interest, indicating that literacy-based educational innovation represents an effective mechanism for enhancing institutional attractiveness within an increasingly competitive educational environment.

The findings contribute to the advancement of educational service marketing by introducing the School Literacy Movement as a strategic differentiation framework that integrates educational innovation, value creation, and stakeholder engagement. This perspective broadens the understanding of educational marketing beyond traditional dimensions of institutional image and service quality by demonstrating that literacy-based educational programs can simultaneously generate institutional uniqueness and sustainable competitive advantage. The application of a Sequential Exploratory Mixed Methods design also strengthens methodological development by integrating qualitative insights with quantitative validation, thereby providing a more comprehensive explanation of educational marketing practices. From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that school leaders, educational foundations, and policymakers should position literacy programs as integral components of institutional strategic planning. The development of literacy-based flagship programs, value-oriented pricing policies, and integrated promotional strategies should be aligned to strengthen school branding, improve educational quality, and increase prospective student enrolment.

The findings should be interpreted in light of several limitations. The investigation was conducted in a single private Islamic secondary school, limiting the transferability of the findings to different educational contexts. The quantitative model focused exclusively on three differentiation strategies and did not incorporate other variables that may influence customer

interest, such as school reputation, parental satisfaction, educational trust, digital service quality, and brand equity. Future studies are encouraged to involve multiple educational institutions across different regions and educational levels to improve the generalizability of the findings. Comparative and longitudinal research designs are also recommended to examine the long-term effectiveness of literacy-based educational marketing strategies. The inclusion of additional theoretical perspectives, including relationship marketing, customer experience, service-dominant logic, and school brand equity, may further enrich the conceptual development of educational service marketing and provide a more comprehensive understanding of institutional competitiveness in the era of educational transformation and digital innovation.

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