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Strategies to Increase Students' Registering Interest in Private Schools

Anisa Maulidya¹, Miftah Royyani²

^{1,2} Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

anisa.maulidya@uinsu.ac.id¹, miftah.royyani@uinsu.ac.id²

ABSTRACT

Private schools are schools founded by religious and non-religious organizations. The contribution of private schools to the nation and state is enormous. However, one of the problems faced by private schools is the lack of students' registering interest. This paper aims to find out the strategy to increase students' registering interest in private schools. There are several strategies that can be carried out by private institutions to increase the interest of applicants, namely: 1) good branding management; 2) having a reliable marketing strategy; 3) improving school quality; and 4) providing discounts.

Keyword : private schools, students' registering, increase students' registering.

INTRODUCTION

Private schools have existed since before independence and continue to exist today. These schools were founded by religious and non-religious organizations. The contribution of private schools to the nation and state is enormous. This school has succeeded in giving birth to generations who are intelligent, militant, and have personalities. Without the presence of private schools, the state will not be able to realize any of the state goals listed in the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution. Despite this, after 73 years of independence, private schools closed or went out of business one by one. This is due to government policies that do not support its existence.

Every year, the government builds new schools in each sub-district city for junior high, high school and vocational school levels. Existing public schools continued to increase. Public high schools can have study groups of up to 33 classes or about 11 parallel classes at each level. Vocational High Schools have more classes because they are given the opportunity to open and have various study programs (majors). The number of public SMK students can reach 1,500–2,000 students. This policy has resulted in private schools experiencing a shortage of students. This condition is one of the serious problems experienced by private schools every time a new school year approaches. Automatically, the rations obtained by private schools increase slightly each year. This is also the cause of the lack of students' registering interest in private schools.

This competition between public and private schools is one of the efforts of educational institutions to continue implementing strategies to increase the interest of applicants in their institutions so as to attract students'

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interest and public trust. So educational institutions should have a strategy to increase students' registering interest so that it refers to the increase in competitiveness needed to maintain the existence of these schools. This is important to study as a benchmark for the existence of private schools in facing competition between educational institutions as well as a preference for the results of a strategy to increase students' registering interest in private schools.

Result and Discussion

Students' Registering Interest

Registered student means a student who is registered to study in one or more modules offered by the University or School. Such registration will lapse on the date of the following registration session or earlier should the student cease to be an admitted student. Interest is a feeling that accompanies or causes special attention to something or someone. Students' Registering Interest means a student who is interested in registered study in one or more modules offered by the university or schools.

Private Schools

Private schools are schools founded by religious and non-religious organizations, such as Ma'arif, Muhammadiyah, Cikini Taman Siswa, and others. The contribution of private schools to the nation and state is enormous. This school has succeeded in giving birth to generations that are intelligent, militant, and full of personality. However, there are several internal factors that cause them to go out of business, including:

First, the promotions offered by the government with free schools are increasingly eroding the existence of private schools. The cost factor is the main reason for some parents to keep trying so that their children can go to public schools. As a result, private schools are only used as a last resort by parents when their children are not accepted into public schools. This condition is coupled with the idea that public schools are of higher quality than private schools. Finally, private schools can only be accessed by students who cannot pass into public schools and parents who are economically well off.

Second, the government's policy is to attract public teachers who are seconded to private schools. This policy requires private schools to appoint teachers independently. As a consequence, of course, they have to finance their salaries independently as well. The teacher salary component almost always occupies the largest allocation in the school expenditure item. Considering that

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the source of funding for private school operational costs is parents, this post is increasingly difficult to fulfill. This is what makes private schools expensive. To be able to survive and provide proportional welfare, parents must at least pay an education administration contribution (SPP) of Rp. 500 million to Rp. 1 million. Indeed, the government provides BOS funds, but the allocation is not intended to pay the salaries of teachers and employees. Even if teachers survive to become private teachers, there is a teacher's professional allowance that can help support their living expenses. What needs to be noted is that not all teachers receive this professional allowance because the requirements are getting more difficult.

Third, the income gap between public teachers (PNS) and private teachers only private schools have a good reputation, are trusted by the community, and have many students who have more than sufficient financial capacity, so they are able to provide salaries in accordance with the salaries of civil servant teachers. As a result of this reality, private teachers do not have extra funds to attend training, education, and training, purchase books, access the internet, or subscribe to newspapers, magazines, and journals. The income received is only sufficient to meet basic needs.

Fourth, private school managers do not have sufficient confidence to compete in the market with state schools. The result of this self-doubt is quite fatal. It is true that some are able to make advertisements in various media, some are creative in sponsoring activities at schools, and some are giving bonuses to teachers or schools that can send their students to school, but these various strategies can only be carried out by private schools that are able to effectively manage finances. However, such strategies often fail to gain students' attention. There are still many private schools in the process of attracting new students, only waiting for an overflow of students who are not accepted at public schools. The method they take is by visiting prospective students who are not accepted, immediately registering, and declaring them accepted without selection and without even paying a penny.

Fifth, the opportunity for private school teachers to develop professional and pedagogical competencies from the government is not as wide as that of public school teachers. The teacher empowerment program is more for public school teachers. The perceived impact, insight, and competence of private school teachers are not optimally developed compared to those of public school teachers. The impact is that private school teachers are left out of the loop, and their competence is lacking. even though the burden that must be borne by private teachers is heavier because most of the

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students who are assisted in the learning process are students who are classified as lacking in terms of intelligence and economy.

Strategies to Increase Students' Registering Interest in Private Schools

Various problems that arise in private schools make them need to improve quality in various ways, including through strategies to increase the number of registrants. The following are some strategies that can be carried out by private institutions to increase the interest of applicants:

1. Good Branding Management

Brand management is management that aims to build a strong brand, namely one with higher equity (Karsuno, Kurwanto, & Salman, 2021). Several literature reviews reveal that the management strategy for increasing applicant interest is to strengthen school branding, specifically by strengthening school quality, assigning public relations to carry out promotions and publications about school excellence to various media, and directing socialization to related schools.

2. Having a reliable marketing strategy.

Schools, particularly private schools, require a marketing strategy to attract students (Wijaya, 2012). As a result, private schools should have a dependable marketing strategy, such as forming a full-time marketing team. In general, the marketing team is all part-time teachers. We know that the teacher's main job is to teach, and this job takes up his time and energy. With such a heavy burden, it is difficult for them to really carry out the marketing function. We also need to remember that marketing work requires a lot of time, effort, and creativity. For this reason, it is impossible for teachers to do this job well, except for maybe a few who do have talent and a high interest in marketing. In general, private schools do not have adequate new student recruitment programs (Martono, Puspitasari, & Wardiyono, 2018).

Among the forms of marketing strategy that can be carried out is a form of promotion through student guardians to the wider community, which feels that private school education services are good. Then promotion through print media such as banners, brochures, and calendars. You can also carry out promotions through social media by distributing flyers through platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube, which are carried out by all stakeholders. Finally, promotion through

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school graduates or outputs with achievements (MY, Hayat, Chaniago, & Erlianto, 2022).

3. Improving School Quality

An educational institution will gain the trust of the community if it is of high quality with many achievements within a certain period of time. In addition, the community and parents can get what they want from education for their children, so parents will feel their child's education needs are met (Sutama & Hasthanti, 2019).

4. Provision of Discounted Prices

Discounts are reductions from the list price given by sellers to buyers who also sacrifice a marketing function or provide this function for themselves. Discounts can be used as a useful tool in strategies to increase enrollment in private schools. This program is provided to parents who register in the first and second batches, where the discounted price can attract parents to enroll their children in private schools. Discounts can also be a benefit for parents because they reduce the costs that should be incurred. This discount program is provided by providing additional student quotas to be accepted so that the expected profit is still obtained (Putri, Barkah, Herawaty, & Auliana, 2021).

Conclusion

Various problems that arise in private schools make them need to improve quality in various ways, including through strategies to increase the number of registrants. There are several strategies that can be carried out by private institutions to increase the interest of applicants, namely: 1) good branding management; 2) having a reliable marketing strategy; 3) improving school quality; and 4) providing discounts.

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