

Implementing the 7P Marketing Mix in Islamic Education: Insights from Phatnawitya School, Thailand

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ABSTRACT:

This research provides an in-depth examination of the 7P marketing mix strategy within Phatnawitya School, an Islamic institution catering to a minority Muslim community in a predominantly Buddhist region of Southern Thailand. Utilizing a qualitative methodology with a descriptive approach, the study explores the school's application of the 7P framework, focusing on the creation of well-rounded individuals and the establishment of a strong community presence. The collected data reveal a comprehensive education offering, from early childhood to advanced Islamic studies, facilitated by a robust infrastructure and innovative programs such as the Change ILP and sports initiatives. The school's approach to market identification, segmentation, and product differentiation demonstrates a strategic alignment with the needs and expectations of its student body. The research highlights the school's adept use of both direct community engagement and social media to communicate its values and offerings. While the study is limited by its singular focus on one institution, the findings suggest that Phatnawitya School's implementation of the marketing mix can inform broader strategies for Islamic educational services in similar socio-cultural contexts. Recommendations for further research include a broader examination of marketing strategies across Islamic educational institutions with varying cultural influences.

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini memberikan pemeriksaan mendalam tentang strategi bauran pemasaran 7P di Phatnawitya School, sebuah lembaga Islam yang melayani komunitas Muslim minoritas di wilayah yang didominasi Buddhis di Thailand Selatan. Memanfaatkan metodologi kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi penerapan sekolah dari kerangka kerja 7P, dengan fokus pada penciptaan individu yang menyeluruh dan pembentukan kehadiran komunitas yang kuat. Data yang dikumpulkan mengungkapkan penawaran pendidikan yang komprehensif, dari anak usia dini hingga studi Islam tingkat lanjut, difasilitasi oleh infrastruktur yang kuat dan program inovatif seperti Change ILP dan inisiatif olahraga. Pendekatan sekolah untuk identifikasi pasar, segmentasi, dan diferensiasi produk menunjukkan keselarasan strategis dengan kebutuhan dan harapan siswa. Penelitian ini menyoroti penggunaan mahir sekolah dari keterlibatan komunitas langsung dan media sosial untuk mengkomunikasikan nilai-nilai dan penawarannya. Sementara penelitian ini dibatasi oleh fokus tunggal pada satu institusi, temuan menunjukkan bahwa penerapan bauran pemasaran Phatnawitya School dapat menginformasikan strategi yang lebih luas untuk layanan pendidikan Islam dalam konteks sosial budaya yang serupa. Rekomendasi untuk penelitian lebih lanjut termasuk pemeriksaan strategi pemasaran yang lebih luas di seluruh institusi pendidikan Islam dengan pengaruh budaya yang bervariasi.

Kata kunci: *penyampaian layanan pendidikan, pemasaran pendidikan islam, baur pemasaran 7P*

INTRODUCTION

The strategic integration of marketing principles in educational settings, particularly in Islamic educational institutions, has emerged as a pivotal concern in the evolving landscape of global education. This study delves into the 7P marketing mix strategy as implemented at Phatnawitya School, an Islamic school in Southern Thailand, offering a unique perspective on the adaptation of marketing strategies in a socio-cultural context defined by a Muslim minority within a predominantly Buddhist nation. The interplay of marketing strategies and educational objectives in such a setting raises significant questions about the efficacy and adaptability of marketing concepts in the realm of education, especially in the context of integrating Islamic values with modern educational practices.

The concept of marketing in education, as delineated by scholars such as (Mardius et al., 2023; Putri et al., 2022) extends beyond the mere promotion of educational services. It involves a structured transfer of norms, aligning with the institution's vision and mission, and is influenced by the actual demand of the



community and stakeholders (Hermawan & Maulidiyah, 2022; Siswopranoto et al., 2023). This broader understanding of educational marketing is crucial in exploring how marketing strategies are tailored to fit the needs and aspirations of specific educational environments, such as those at Phatnawitya School. The utilization of English and Thai-Malay languages in instruction at Phatnawitya School exemplifies the school's efforts to meet global education standards while retaining its Islamic identity.

Furthermore, the role of marketing strategy in educational services, as expounded by (Ibadiyah et al., 2022), involves creating products that satisfy consumer or societal demands. This encompasses elements of competitive strategy, marketing tactics, and marketing value, as described by (Barton, 2022) (Yuliantine et al., 2018)hen, and involves market segmentation, targeting, and positioning. These elements are crucial in understanding how educational institutions like Phatnawitya School navigate the complex demands of their target markets, which include both academic and non-academic student development.

The vast array of previous studies in the field of education marketing, ranging from niche marketing in higher education (Barton, 2022) to innovative strategies for internationalization (Hung & Yen, 2022), provides a rich backdrop against which the marketing strategies of Phatnawitya School can be analyzed. These studies underscore the importance of adaptability and responsiveness in educational marketing strategies, highlighting the need for institutions to stay attuned to the changing demands and trends within their specific educational contexts.

However, there are notable gaps and controversies in the existing literature, particularly regarding the application of marketing strategies in settings where educational institutions serve as cultural and religious minorities. This study aims to address these gaps by providing a comprehensive analysis of how Phatnawitya School implements and adapts the 7P marketing mix in its unique setting. The focus is on evaluating the outcomes of this strategy in terms of both academic and non-academic developments and its role in meeting the challenges of modern Islamic education, particularly in integrating Islamic principles with contemporary scientific knowledge.

In summary, the aim of this research is to provide a thorough understanding of the 7P marketing mix strategy as applied in an Islamic educational setting, with a focus on Phatnawitya School in Southern Thailand. This study seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on marketing strategies in education, particularly in contexts where cultural and religious considerations play a significant role in shaping educational approaches and objectives.

METHODS

This research adopted a qualitative methodology with a descriptive approach, as this was deemed most appropriate for examining the intricate phenomenon of the 7P marketing mix strategy as implemented in Islamic educational services at Phatnawitya School, a minority institution in Southern Thailand. The descriptive nature of this study allowed for a detailed portrayal and analysis of the 7P marketing mix, aiming to provide an accurate representation based on factual evidence and data pertinent to the research topic. This approach facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the strategies employed by the school in the context of its marketing efforts within the Islamic educational system (Agustianti et al., 2022).

Data collection was carried out on-site at Phatnawitya School from July 3, 2023, to July 20, 2023. The primary data collection involved open interviews with the school's principal, teachers, and educators, focusing on the programs related to the 7P marketing mix strategies. These interviews were complemented by direct observations of the school's physical environment, facilities, and infrastructure, positioning the researcher as a participant observer to gather nuanced insights into the research subject. Secondary data were acquired through the examination of documents related to the governance system of Islamic education in Southern Thailand and operational data from Phatnawitya School's profile and other supporting materials. This documentation study took place within the school's administrative office (Agustianti et al., 2022).

The data analysis process began with data reduction, where information pertaining to the 7P marketing mix strategy was immediately transcribed or recorded systematically post-collection. This was followed by data display, wherein the reduced data was organized into a simplified format for easier examination and analysis. The final stage involved drawing conclusions; the



data, having been thoroughly reduced and reviewed, allowed for the formulation of coherent conclusions regarding the 7P marketing mix strategy that were previously ambiguous or unclear, thus aligning with the aims of the study. To ensure reliability and validity, the research incorporated triangulation of data sources, prolonged engagement in the field, and peer debriefing sessions. These measures provided a means to cross-verify information and interpretations, thereby enhancing the study's credibility and the trustworthiness of its findings (Agustianti et al., 2022).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

Phatnawitya School was founded in 1961 by Haji Hama Wae with the first name of the school being natoltul which means Islamic education. Phatnawitya School focuses on the development of all learners who become the strength of the nation to become balanced human beings in terms of physical, knowledge, virtue, and awareness as Thai citizens, and become a citizen of the world that adheres to a democratic system of government with the King as the head of state, as well as having basic knowledge and skills, including attitudes necessary for further study, work, and lifelong study by emphasizing learners based on these beliefs. Phatnawitya School stands on an area of 13 rai 1 ngan 280 square wa, with the location of the school has boundaries, namely the north bordering Satri Yala School, the south bordering Rangsi Anuson School, the east facing the Office of the Islamic Council of Yala, and the west meeting with the regional office of Muaeng, Yala Province. Phatnawitya School organizes the Qur'an teaching system using the Qiroati system. Generation after generation until today it has been accepted by the community and society. The school can lead the teaching of the Qur'an, using the Qiroati system to become a complete Muslim. Phatnawitya School has the motto "Clean school, good manners, outstanding academics" with the school emblem dominated by white color. Phatnawitya School has a flag dominated by the color navy which has calmness, firmness, stability, and strength.

Phatnawitya School offers 3 levels of schooling, ranging from early childhood education (grades 1-3), primary school (grades 1-6), Islamic studies courses from early Islamic education to late Islamic studies (Ibtida'i year 1 to Sanavi class year 10). Phatnawitya School has a very large building size, so the

school provides comfortable facilities for learners. In 2023, Phatnawitya School has 3,057 students and 255 professional teachers. The following is an explanation of the planning and implementation of educational services marketing strategies in this study.

First, market identification is carried out to understand the intensity of demand for education consumers. In marketing strategy, market identification is the first step that should be implemented by producers, to obtain reactions related to market expectations and conditions. This also functions in the organization of educational institutions in modern times and is used as a policy basis for the formulation of the target market of the educational institution. In practice, Phatnawitya School carries out market identification in its educational services marketing strategy, taking into account its main characteristics, namely Islamic-based education that focuses on the academic and non-academic development of students. The institution continues to direct its development concerning global evaluations, especially in the context of the challenges faced by Islamic education in the modern era, which involves the merging of Islam and science. These actions are implemented to meet the demands of both modern and traditional consumers of Islamic education.

Second, market segmentation is the next stage of identification, which has been planned previously, in this step the educational institution will allocate consumer groups based on certain characteristics and traits. The market segmentation stage at Phatnawitya School creates 2 characteristics of education consumers, which are the direction of its educational services, namely prospective students who have academic excellence, and prospective students who have non-academic excellence. Regarding positioning, Phatnawitya School emerges as a superior and affordable Islamic educational institution, that can nurture all prospective students, both prospective students who have academic and non-academic skills. The efforts carried out by Phatnawitya School have a direction to become an Islamic educational institution that has calmness, firmness, stability, and strength.

Third, product differentiation is an effort to classify the characteristics of the products presented, with products presented by other competitors. So with this classification, it becomes an achievement, which results in consumers deciding to choose the product presented. In the implementation of product



differentiation, Phatnawitya School has run two of its newest programs, namely the Change ILP program, and the sports program. With these two programs, it is expected to meet the demand of all students.

Fourth, marketing communication, is an effort carried out to provide information to the public, about the advantages of products presented by an institution, in general, in the marketing concept, marketing communication is often carried out with promotional activities through advertisements on banners, magazines, radio, and television. The marketing communication carried out at Phatnawitya School is carried out in two ways, namely directly through mouth-to-mouth with the surrounding community, and through the school's Facebook account, by uploading championship content or student activities.

Fifth, school services, are a major component in the marketing of educational services, these actions relate to the expectations of the suitability of consumers for educational services that have been planned. From this explanation, it can be understood that the implementation of the 7P marketing mix strategy as an educational service at Phatnawitya School, is an effort made to overcome the problem of difficult access to Islamic education among the community as a minority, and becomes an idea in carrying out Islamic education service activities in southern Thailand, so that they can reach a global scale community by facing various challenges and current trends. including if they lack facilities and human resources, then they will be able to carry out policies and efforts to overcome this, with the 7P marketing mix strategy as an Islamic education service. Phatnawitya School, if they lack facilities and human resources, then will be able to make policies and efforts to overcome this, with the 7P marketing mix strategy as an Islamic education service carried out by Phatnawitya School shows that as a minority in Thailand, they can adapt and explore their market and marketing targets.

DISCUSSION

The strategic implementation of the 7P marketing mix at Phatnawitya School seeks to navigate the nuanced demands of marketing Islamic education services within a socio-cultural context marked by a Muslim minority in Thailand. This endeavor aligns with the objective to foster academic and non-academic development, resonating with the broader goal of integrating Islamic

principles with modern educational imperatives (Barton, 2022; Yangzi et al., 2023). The research question centers on the effectiveness of such a strategy in a unique setting, drawing parallels with literature that explores the interplay between marketing strategies and educational frameworks (Riedel et al., 2023; Voropai et al., 2019).

The findings of this study underscore the school's historical commitment to developing balanced individuals, the strategic use of the Qiroati system, and the market segmentation tailored to academic and non-academic prowess (Ho & Law, 2022; Khashab et al., 2022). Particularly noteworthy is the school's response to market demands through innovative programs and direct marketing communications, which mirror the adaptive strategies observed in higher education marketing literature (Bass et al., 2023; Wilkins, 2020).

Comparatively, Phatnawitya School's approach substantiates findings from various international contexts, where educational institutions adapt marketing strategies to enhance competitiveness and address market segmentation (Almomani et al., 2019; Hung & Yen, 2022). However, the school's distinctive emphasis on Islamic values through modern marketing techniques presents a unique case that diverges from the primarily secular focus of previous studies (Haider & Ahmed, 2023; Korshunov et al., 2019).

The significance of Phatnawitya School's marketing strategy lies in its tailored approach, addressing the cultural and educational needs of its community. The school's ability to maintain a robust enrolment and faculty size, despite potential resource constraints, speaks to the efficacy of its marketing mix (Kostygina et al., 2022; Wijaya & Padmanegara, 2021). These findings highlight the school's adaptability and resilience, providing a model for other minority-serving institutions in similar contexts.

The proactive measures taken by Phatnawitya School, including its service offerings and marketing communications, illustrate a comprehensive application of the 7P marketing mix (Rana et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2023). The school's strategy, reflective of both global trends and local imperatives, suggests a balanced approach to marketing in education, where tradition and modernity coalesce to serve the community effectively.



The implications of this research extend beyond the confines of Phatnawitya School, offering insights into the broader discourse on marketing strategies in education. The school's successful integration of the 7P marketing mix could inform practices in other institutions striving to balance cultural integrity with educational excellence (Scheer, 2020; Wang et al., 2023). As the landscape of educational marketing continues to evolve, Phatnawitya School's approach serves as a viable blueprint for Islamic educational institutions globally, particularly those in minority settings seeking to enhance their visibility and impact within a competitive market (Mickienė & Valionienė, 2021; Ramaditya et al., 2023). By navigating the dual challenges of maintaining cultural ethos and pursuing academic innovation, Phatnawitya School exemplifies the potential of the 7P marketing mix to foster sustainable growth and relevance in the ever-changing realm of education (Fernández Bravo & Guindal Pintado, 2020; Wilkins, 2020).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study provides a comprehensive assessment of the 7P marketing mix strategy at Phatnawitya School within a minority Muslim community in Thailand, highlighting its significant role in promoting holistic student development and establishing a robust community presence. The research demonstrates the effectiveness of the school's strategic approach in market segmentation, identification, and product differentiation, enhanced by innovative use of direct and digital marketing methods. This aligns well with both modern marketing demands and traditional values, showcasing Phatnawitya School's success in attracting and retaining students while overcoming resource challenges. However, the study's focus on a single institution suggests the need for broader research across varied Islamic educational settings to develop a more universally applicable marketing framework that respects cultural, economic, and political diversities.

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