

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background problem

Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School (SMATIQ 'Aisyah) is an educational institution that focuses on Islamic religious education and tahfizhul Qur'an (memorizing the Koran). In the current era of globalization, many educational institutions have emerged, including Islamic-based educational institutions or Islamic boarding schools, so that competition is getting tougher by showing their superiority. Therefore, Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School needs to carry out appropriate marketing strategies to increase the acceptance of new students. One marketing strategy that can be implemented in this era is to utilize digital marketing communications.

Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School has experienced significant development since it was founded in 2021. At the beginning of its establishment, the quota for accepting female students was only 10 people. However, in 2023, the quota for female student admissions will increase to 20 people, and will successfully accept 18 new students. Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School has become one of the recommended schools for high school level girls to memorize the Koran.

This increase in the number of student admissions can be attributed to the digital marketing strategy used by Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School, namely through social media such as Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp. This is a positive thing that Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School has and is of course related to its digital marketing to convey information or promotions to the public. Thus, digital marketing has played an important role in increasing public awareness of the school, thereby increasing the number of student enrollments.

Digital marketing carried out by Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School through social media Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp has helped the school in disseminating information and promotions effectively. Through these platforms, schools can introduce the facilities, curriculum, programs and extracurricular activities offered to prospective students and their parents.

The increase in the number of new student admissions at Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School can also be linked to the marketing mix concept. This concept involves four key elements, namely product, price, place and promotion. Apart from that, digital marketing can also be related to the 7P concept in the marketing mix, which includes product, price, place, promotion, people, process and physical evidence. Through digital marketing, schools can introduce their products, namely the educational services they offer, reach prospective students in various places via social media, and promote the excellence of their schools.

The use of digital marketing in Islamic educational institutions, especially Islamic boarding schools, has also been carried out by several educational institutions. One of them is the Tahfizh Al-Qur'an Ath-Thohiriyah Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School (PPTAAM) which has conducted social media marketing training for Islamic boarding schools to expand marketing reach (Maimun et al., 2022).

Digital marketing communication can be done through various types of digital marketing, such as social media, websites, email, and so on. One of the social media that can be used is Instagram, which is an application that focuses on experience to show images and videos (Kusmiati, 2021). Apart from that, digital marketing can also be carried out through training and assistance in the application and optimization of information technology (internet) to improve the management's ability to use digital marketing as a marketing medium.

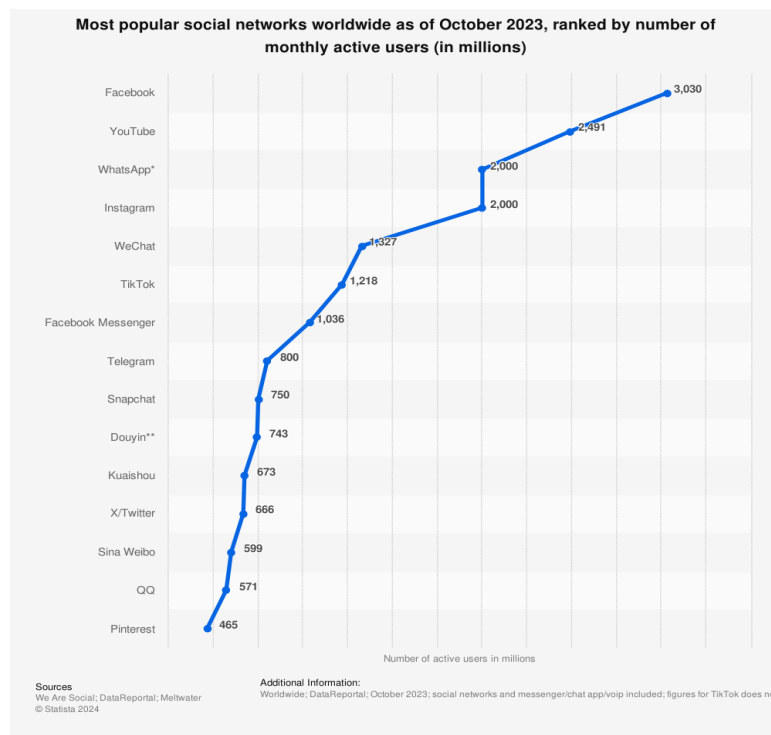
Digital marketing also provides the opportunity to engage interactively with the audience through educational content, in the form of photos or videos, as well as testimonials from students and parents who have experienced the benefits of education at Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School. The use of SEO (Search Engine Optimization) technology will ensure that this institution is found by

prospective students and parents when they are looking for information about quality Islamic education.

Social media has a crucial role in digital marketing strategy. In today's digital era, social media has become one of the most effective and efficient marketing tools to reach the target market. Through social media platforms, companies can interact with customers, promote their brands, products and services, and expand market coverage. Additionally, social media also provides an opportunity for companies to gain valuable market insights and improve their business understanding. By monitoring customer activity on social media, companies can identify their customers' preferences and needs, and design more appropriate and efficient marketing strategies.

On the other hand, social media also provides an opportunity for a company to strengthen interactions with their consumers. Through dialogue on social media platforms, companies can improve relationships with customers and build loyalty to their brands. Social media is also a means for companies to expand market reach by leveraging their influence and consumer networks. By fostering strong engagement with customers on social media, companies can gain a significant competitive advantage and improve overall marketing performance.

Figure 1. Most Popular Social Media in 2023



Social media is a marketing communication medium that is suitable for use today. According to Statista, Global Social Networks Ranked by Number of Users in October 2023, Facebook is the first leading social media worldwide with 3,030 million active users. Then followed by YouTube with 2,491 million active users, WhatsApp and Instagram with 2,000 million active users. Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School uses the four most popular social media platforms in carrying out its digital marketing.

There are 569 followers on Facebook at Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School, with 87 posts. Then there are 206 followers on Instagram at Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School with 95 posts, also 37 subscribers on YouTube with 7 video posts. This shows that Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah 'Aisyah High School is very active in carrying out its digital marketing on the most popular platforms. So it is appropriate for the author to research how Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School uses social media to carry out digital marketing communications to increase the number of its students.

Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School needs to pay attention to the general profile of the institution, vision and mission, as well as the programs offered in implementing digital marketing communications. Apart from that, it is necessary to carry out appropriate marketing strategies, such as optimizing the use of websites and emails to expand marketing reach. Unfortunately, Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School currently does not have a website that can share information. However, because many people prefer to search for information via the internet, especially social media. Therefore, Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School needs to ensure that the institution's social media is always updated and easily accessible to the public. Apart from that, promotions need to be carried out via email and social media to reach prospective new students who are outside the area.

Therefore, based on the explanation above, the author decided to choose Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School as the research subject due to the increasing number of Islamic-based schools or Islamic boarding schools in the Gedong Tataan area, where Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School is located, so the competition will be higher. However, in the midst of this intense competition, Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School is apparently able to compete even though its status is still relatively new (only established 2-3 years) compared to others, with digital marketing being carried out actively. Not only promotional content regarding the opening of registration, Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School also uploads informative content regarding student activities, student achievements and accomplishments, student murottal, and preaching content.

1.2. Identification of problems

Based on the background above, several problems can be identified as follows:

- 1.2.1. Complete and structured information about educational programs, facilities and extracurricular activities offered by Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School is still lacking in efforts to increase new student acceptance through digital marketing communications. Without clear

and structured information, prospective students and their parents may find it difficult to understand the advantages and benefits offered by Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School, which can hinder effective digital marketing efforts.

- 1.2.2. Limitations in diversifying digital marketing channels are also an issue that needs to be addressed. Even though Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School actively uses social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp, relying too much on social media as the main channel for digital marketing communications can be an obstacle. Diversifying digital marketing channels such as optimizing the use of websites, email marketing, or other platforms can help Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School reach a wider and more diverse audience effectively.

1.3. Problem Formulation

- 1.3.1. How does Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School's digital marketing communications increase new student acceptance?
- 1.3.2. What factors influence Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School's digital marketing communications in increasing new student acceptance?

1.4. Research purposes

- 1.4.1. Knowing the digital marketing communication model of Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School in increasing the acceptance of new students.
- 1.4.2. Knowing the factors that influence Tahfizhul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School's digital marketing communications in increasing new student acceptance.

1.5. Benefits of research

The benefits of this research can be divided into theoretical benefits and practical benefits:

1.5.1. Theoretical Benefits

It is hoped that this research can contribute to the development of digital communication and marketing theory, especially in the educational context. The research results can be a basis for developing new theories or refining existing theories related to digital marketing in educational institutions.

1.5.2. Policy Benefits

It is hoped that the results of this research can become a basis for schools, especially in terms of developing digital marketing strategies that are more effective in increasing the acceptance of new students. Then it can become input for institutions or the government in formulating policies related to digital marketing in educational institutions.

1.5.3. Practical Benefits

It is hoped that this research can provide practical benefits for schools, especially in designing and implementing digital marketing strategies that are more effective in increasing new student enrollment. It is then hoped that the results of this research can provide benefits for prospective students and parents in understanding the importance of digital marketing in the context of school selection.

1.6. Research Limitations

Regarding the formulation of the problem being studied, the author limited the research to clarify the focus of the research carried out. Therefore, the author limits research related to digital marketing communications at Tahfizhul Qur'an

'Aisyah High School in increasing the acceptance of new students whose address is in Tamansari Village, Gedong Tataan District, Pesawaran Regency, Lampung.

This research uses a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through interviews and observation. The respondents who were the subjects of this research consisted of the school, teaching staff, and social media managers of Tahfidzul Qur'an 'Aisyah High School. The author will take the time for this research from the second batch of registration, which starts from 1 September - 30 November 2022 (first wave) to 1 January - 31 March 2023 (second wave).