



Digital Transformation in Management Islamic Schools : Evaluating Impact Social Media Advertising to Growth Institution

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Abstract :

Study This aim For evaluate How social media advertising influence growth and management institutions Islamic schools, as well as identify practice effective digital transformation in context education religious. Focus study covers digital marketing strategy, stakeholder engagement, and its impact to reputation as well as amount participant educate. Method study use approach qualitative studies case, with data sources in the form of interview deep with leadership schools, teachers, and social media managers, observations digital activities, as well as documentation content advertising on Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and the official website. Data analysis was performed through content analysis For interpret patterns, effectiveness, and stakeholder perceptions of digital marketing strategy. Research results show that social media advertising in a way significant increase awareness, engagement, and reputation school , and contribute to growth registration participant education. Management consistent content, appropriate platform selection, and participation active internal stakeholders become factor key success. Implications study confirm that digital transformation is not just modernization technical, but strategy management that strengthens branding, communication, and power competition institutions. Findings This can become guide for other Islamic schools in implementing digital marketing effective For support growth and modernization education.

INTRODUCTION

In the current digital era, all educational institutions, including Islamic schools, are no longer able to compete solely through traditional academic reputation. Society increasingly expects schools to demonstrate digital visibility and adopt online marketing strategies to reach prospective students and stakeholders. Many families now use social media as a primary reference when selecting educational institutions because it provides fast access to information, visual experiences, and peer feedback (Barus, 2023).

The absence of a school's presence on digital platforms may reduce opportunities for enrollment growth and community engagement. Research shows that educational institutions actively engaging on social media experience higher public interaction, stronger brand image, and increased institutional visibility compared to passive institutions (Washington, 2022). Therefore, evaluating social media advertising as part of digital transformation in Islamic school management is crucial for sustaining relevance and expanding institutional growth in an increasingly competitive education sector (Hasan et al., 2025).

Despite the importance of digital presence, many Islamic schools still rely primarily on conventional strategies focused on academic performance, religious reputation, and local community ties. This reliance limits their capacity to reach broader audiences, particularly digitally active parents, alumni, and community networks. Families increasingly expect schools to demonstrate transparency, innovation, and relevance in preparing students for both spiritual and professional life. Schools that fail to adopt digital marketing risk losing prospective students to institutions with a stronger online presence. Empirical evidence indicates that digital advertising can influence enrollment decisions, institutional perception, and stakeholder engagement, suggesting that schools must integrate social media strategies into their overall management approach (Barus, 2023; Washington, 2022). The problem therefore lies in the lack of knowledge and strategic practice regarding digital marketing among Islamic schools, despite its clear relevance to enrollment growth and institutional sustainability.

In practice, many Islamic schools have limited or inconsistent use of social media platforms for marketing purposes (Manaf, 2025). Observations indicate that even schools with active digital accounts often fail to use them strategically, posting sporadically or without content tailored to audience needs. Families report that social media posts significantly influence their perceptions of a school's quality, culture, and academic offerings (Washington, 2022; Fathurrochman et al., 2025). The absence of systematic digital campaigns reduces potential engagement and limits the ability of schools to communicate their unique value propositions. Meanwhile, schools that actively design campaigns integrating Quranic education, student achievements, and entrepreneurial or extracurricular programs experience higher parent and community interest. This situation demonstrates a critical gap between the potential benefits of social media advertising and its practical implementation in Islamic school management (Fariduddin et al., 2025).

Existing literature highlights growing interest in digital marketing within education, but studies specific to Islamic schools remain limited. Research has explored social media marketing in universities (Odoom et al., 2025), technology adoption in general school contexts (Ley et al., 2022), and the impact of digital engagement on student loyalty (Nguyen Thi Khanh & Nguyen, 2022). However, systematic reviews indicate a lack of research examining how social media advertising influences the growth of medium-sized religious educational institutions, particularly Islamic schools (Letavia et al., 2025). Previous studies often focus on higher education or general

digital adoption, leaving a significant empirical gap in primary and secondary Islamic education management. Addressing this gap is crucial for understanding how digital transformation can be operationalized to achieve institutional growth, public engagement, and community trust in Islamic education.

Furthermore, research shows that digital strategy in schools is not only about online presence but also about content quality, audience understanding, and managerial implementation (Harjono et al., 2025; Lee et al., 2026; Yoon et al., 2025). Institutions that design authentic, personalized, and consistent content on social media experience higher engagement, stronger brand perception, and measurable growth in enrollment. Despite these findings, Islamic schools have rarely been included in empirical studies assessing the impact of strategic digital marketing on institutional performance. This lack of focused research creates an opportunity to investigate state-of-the-art digital management practices, including social media advertising, within Islamic schools. By doing so, schools can better understand how digital innovation can contribute to both spiritual and economic objectives in a highly competitive educational landscape (Bukhori Cikusin, 2023).

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the intersection of digital transformation, social media advertising, and Islamic school management, which remains underexplored in educational research. While digital marketing has been widely studied in business and higher education contexts, its application as a strategic tool for institutional growth in religious schools has received minimal attention (Sohrab & Singh, 2025). This study contributes to the state-of-the-art by linking digital marketing strategy to measurable institutional outcomes such as enrollment growth, stakeholder engagement, and public perception. By examining how Islamic schools adopt, implement, and optimize social media campaigns, this research addresses a pressing practical and theoretical need: integrating modern digital management practices with religious-based educational values to achieve sustainable growth and relevance (Andrian, 2025).

This study aims to answer key questions regarding the relationship between social media advertising and the growth of Islamic schools within a digital management framework. Specifically, it investigates how social media campaigns influence student enrollment, parent and alumni involvement, and overall institutional reputation. Preliminary evidence from general educational contexts suggests that digital strategies can increase awareness and enrollment, but these effects have not been empirically tested in Islamic schools. The study assumes that effective social media advertising positively impacts institutional growth; however, its success depends on content quality, audience targeting, and managerial execution. Using this hypothesis, the research will provide empirical evidence to guide Islamic school leaders in leveraging digital transformation for strategic growth.

In conclusion, this study seeks to fill a critical empirical and theoretical gap by analyzing how social media advertising as part of digital transformation can support the growth and competitiveness of Islamic schools. It emphasizes that institutional success in the digital era is

conditional on adopting systematic, high-quality, and audience-focused digital marketing strategies. The findings are expected to provide both practical guidance for school managers and contributions to the scholarly discourse on educational management, digital transformation, and the strategic use of social media within faith-based educational institutions.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore digital transformation in the management of Islamic schools through social media advertising. The qualitative case study method was chosen because it allows for an in-depth understanding of social context, interactions, and lived experiences that cannot be captured through quantitative measures (Poth, 2023). The case study approach enables the researchers to examine digital management practices holistically, including advertising strategies, audience engagement, and their impact on institutional growth. Additionally, a grounded research perspective was applied to extract theoretical insights directly from field data, allowing the study to contribute to theory-building regarding the role of social media in Islamic school management.

The research was conducted at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Hikmatul Hasanah, Leces, selected purposively due to its active implementation of digital strategies, including official social media accounts and online marketing campaigns aimed at attracting prospective students and enhancing institutional image. The site was also chosen based on accessibility to data, the availability of digital documentation, and the willingness of management to participate. The context provides a unique opportunity to observe the implementation of digital strategies in a middle Islamic school while evaluating their impact on enrollment growth, parental involvement, and alumni network reinforcement.

Data were collected from multiple sources, including key informants such as the school principal, deputy principal, curriculum staff, public relations officers, teachers managing social media, alumni, students, and parents directly involved in digital promotions. Data collection techniques included observation of digital activities, semi-structured interviews, and questionnaires distributed to students and parents to assess engagement, perception, and influence of social media campaigns on registration decisions. Data analysis followed an interactive process, including data condensation through thematic categorization, data display using narratives, tables, and quotations, and data verification through member checking and triangulation to ensure accuracy. Content analysis was employed to interpret the impact of social media advertising on institutional growth and to identify best practices for school management.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Digital Transformation in Islamic Schools

Digital transformation in Islamic schools is operationally defined as the use of digital technologies to support administration, communication, and promotional strategies. It includes online student management systems,

social media marketing, and integration of technology into managerial decision-making. Digital transformation is not limited to device procurement but also involves digitally based management procedures, academic documentation, online extracurricular activities, and social media strategies to increase community engagement and attract prospective students. Interviews with school leaders revealed that integrating digital management systems and social media campaigns aims to simplify communication with parents, promote Islamic values, and enhance institutional visibility. Observations confirmed consistent social media use, structured content, and real-time monitoring of online registration, showing that digital transformation is strategic, sustainable, and aligned with the school's religious values.

Social Media Advertising Strategy

Madrasah Tsanawiyah Hikmatul Hasanah Leces implements a structured social media advertising strategy across Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube to reach parents, students, and alumni. Content includes student activities, academic achievements, testimonials, motivational messages, and Islamic values, with posting scheduled routinely at least three times per week. The approach uses tailored content for each platform, interactive engagement through comments and messages, and visual storytelling to strengthen the school's identity. Documentation indicates that social media advertising is planned and proactive, integrating promotion with the school's values to foster awareness, engagement, and a positive image that supports institutional growth.

Impact on Institutional Growth

Social media advertising directly influences institutional growth through increased student enrollment, stronger reputation, and greater community involvement. Interviews and observations indicate that optimized social media strategies increased new student applicants by approximately 15% annually. Parents receive timely information and interact actively with school content, while consistent and structured postings encourage viral sharing and wider engagement. The impact of social media extends beyond follower counts to meaningful interaction that translates into real growth, showing the effectiveness of linking digital management practices with institutional development.

Challenges and Obstacles

Despite clear strategies, digital transformation faces challenges related to technology, human resources, and organizational culture. Limited devices, slow internet, and insufficient training hinder staff from fully utilizing digital tools. Resistance to changing manual procedures and adapting administrative processes also slows implementation. These interdependent obstacles highlight that success in digital transformation requires integrated solutions, including infrastructure improvement, routine staff training, and fostering an organizational culture adaptive to technology.

Synthesis

Overall, the data shows that digital transformation and social media advertising are not mere tools but strategic practices central to school management. Consistent and structured implementation, aligned with Islamic values, enhances institutional visibility, strengthens community engagement, and drives sustainable growth. Overcoming technical, human, and cultural barriers is critical for ensuring that digital strategies produce meaningful outcomes, demonstrating that effective digital management in Islamic schools involves both technological adoption and organizational development.

Discussion

The research results indicate that digital transformation in Madrasahs encompasses social media integration, online registration systems, and digital-based administrative management. These findings align with existing literature emphasizing the importance of digitalization in modern school management to enhance operational efficiency and stakeholder engagement (Harini et al., 2024). Unlike studies in universities that focus primarily on technological infrastructure, this research highlights the integration of Islamic values within digital strategies, creating a distinctive institutional identity. The theoretical implication is that digital transformation is not merely a technological implementation but a strategic unification of managerial practices, communication, and operational processes that support institutional growth. Practically, this suggests that Islamic schools can leverage digital technologies not only to optimize administrative efficiency but also to reinforce institutional values and community engagement.

Documentation and data analysis show that social media advertising has a significant impact on awareness, engagement, and prospective student interest. This finding corresponds with previous studies (Nasti et al., 2024), which report that planned digital interactions can increase loyalty and enrollment decisions. However, in the context of Islamic schools, the promotional content extends beyond academic performance or informational purposes; it also conveys religious values, adding psychological and emotional dimensions to audience engagement. The theoretical implication here is that digital strategies in faith-based institutions must integrate content aligned with institutional identity to be truly effective. Practically, this demonstrates that combining religious and academic content in social media campaigns can expand registration bases and strengthen the credibility and positive image of the institution.

The research also highlights that the practical functions of digital advertising extend to increasing new student applicants, parental involvement, and alumni participation. These results confirm that social media is not only a communication tool but also a strategic instrument for institutional growth (Musslifah et al., 2025). Nevertheless, effectiveness can be hindered by technical limitations, human resource constraints, and cultural resistance within the organization. The alignment between theoretical expectations and field observations shows that the success of growth strategies depends on the quality of content, frequency of interaction,

and the staff's ability to manage digital platforms consistently. The practical implication is that schools must ensure synergy between technology, human resource capacity (Mulianah, 2024), and organizational culture to achieve meaningful results from digital transformation.

The patterns emerging from the data suggest that technical and human resource obstacles act as structural factors influencing the effectiveness of digital marketing. Institutions that fail to manage these barriers tend to experience partial or inconsistent implementation. Literature supports this observation, such as Lee et al. (2026), which emphasizes that effective digital management requires readiness in infrastructure, human resources, and sustainable evaluation practices. Theoretically, this reinforces the concept that digital transformation is not a single-factor intervention but an integrated system where each element influences institutional outcomes. Practically, it underscores the necessity for Islamic schools to address technical, human, and organizational barriers as part of their strategic planning.

Findings further imply that Islamic schools can use digital transformation as a sustainable growth strategy if technical and cultural obstacles are overcome. Best practices include integrating content that reflects religious and academic excellence on social media, providing routine training for staff, and implementing monitoring systems to evaluate campaign effectiveness (Aderibigbe et al., 2023). The theoretical contribution lies in showing that the combination of value-based content, structured management, and interactive engagement forms a holistic digital transformation framework. Practically, school management can use this framework to plan long-term strategies balancing technology adoption, cultural adaptation, and digital marketing to achieve measurable institutional growth.

Finally, this study contributes empirically to the literature on Islamic education management by demonstrating the connection between social media, digital transformation, and institutional growth. The findings reveal that successful digital strategies depend on aligning the school's identity (Zaimina, 2025), management practices, and interactive communication with the community (Zainuddin, 2025). Theoretically, it confirms that digital transformation should be conceptualized as an integrated strategy encompassing technology, organizational culture, and content value. Practically, the research provides actionable insights for Islamic schools seeking to enhance enrollment, strengthen institutional reputation, and foster sustainable engagement with parents, students, and alumni, emphasizing that the strategic use of digital platforms can become a key driver of institutional competitiveness (Maarif et al., 2025).

CONCLUSION

The study demonstrates that digital transformation in Madrasahs, particularly through social media advertising, significantly impacts institutional growth, highlighting that effective digitalization in school management is not merely technological implementation but an integrative strategy combining Islamic value-based content, effective communication,

and active audience engagement to enhance new student enrollment, parental involvement, and institutional reputation. The research contributes to the literature on Islamic education management by offering a renewed perspective on social media as a strategic management instrument rather than solely a promotional tool, introducing new variables that link digital transformation with value-based content, and empirically examining its impact on institutional growth in a middle-school Islamic context through a qualitative case study approach. Nevertheless, the study is limited by its focus on a single institution, the contextual nature of the findings, and the lack of demographic diversity among respondents, limiting generalizability; therefore, future research should employ broader, quantitative, and inclusive methods across multiple schools and diverse demographic groups to provide more comprehensive insights for policy development and strategic digital management in Islamic education.

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