



Multi-Platform Advertising Optimization: Digital Strategy Integration as A Brand Equity Catalyst

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the role of multi-platform digital advertising in strengthening brand equity within educational institutions through structured, consistent, and sustainable branding strategies. This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore digital branding practices and institutional communication strategies. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation of digital communication activities, followed by analysis through data reduction, narrative presentation, and interpretation processes. The findings indicate that strengthening brand equity can be achieved through three main strategies: maintaining consistency between institutional identity and messages across various digital platforms, optimizing platform-specific features to enhance audience engagement, and utilizing data-driven evaluation to improve communication effectiveness. The results demonstrate that digital platforms function not only as communication media but also as strategic instruments for understanding audience behavior and developing adaptive branding policies. The implications of this study highlight that educational institutions should integrate digital branding into their strategic management practices by combining institutional values with innovative communication approaches to build a strong, relevant, and competitive institutional image.

INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions currently operate in an increasingly competitive environment where public trust is influenced not only by academic performance but also by institutional identity and reputation. The central issue is that educational branding has become a strategic necessity for ensuring institutional sustainability and competitiveness. This is important because prospective students, parents, and other stakeholders increasingly evaluate educational institutions based on perceived values, digital visibility, and public image rather than relying solely on educational outcomes. Previous studies demonstrate that institutions implementing consistent branding strategies are more successful in strengthening institutional recognition, stakeholder engagement, and competitive positioning (Yusuf, 2023; Razak et al., 2025). Moreover, the rapid expansion of digital communication has intensified competition among educational providers, making institutional differentiation increasingly important. Therefore, educational branding should be understood as a strategic process for communicating institutional values, strengthening public trust, and ensuring the long-term relevance of educational organizations, including Islamic educational institutions, within contemporary society.

Islamic educational institutions face a fundamental challenge in communicating their institutional strengths despite possessing distinctive educational characteristics rooted in religious values, moral education, and cultural traditions. Although many institutions have successfully developed innovative curricula, character-based learning systems, and

community-oriented educational programs, these advantages are often insufficiently recognized by wider society because they are not communicated effectively. Branding is frequently interpreted merely as promotional activity rather than as a comprehensive strategy encompassing institutional identity, organizational culture, stakeholder relationships, and strategic communication. Consequently, many institutions experience difficulties in transforming their educational excellence into a strong and sustainable public reputation. Previous research emphasizes that educational competitiveness depends not only on internal quality improvement but also on effective reputation management and public perception development (Munif et al., 2021; Thohir, 2024; Zain, 2026). This problem highlights the necessity of developing more comprehensive branding strategies specifically suited to the characteristics of Islamic educational institutions.

Current practices indicate that many Islamic educational institutions have not fully adapted to the opportunities provided by digital communication and branding. Institutional social media platforms frequently function only as channels for disseminating routine activities rather than as strategic media for constructing meaningful institutional narratives, strengthening stakeholder engagement, and communicating educational values. As a result, institutional communication often lacks consistency and fails to establish emotional connections with prospective students, parents, alumni, and broader communities. In contrast, many educational organizations have successfully utilized digital storytelling, interactive communication, and community participation to strengthen institutional reputation and public engagement. Previous studies also indicate that digital branding and communication significantly influence institutional image and stakeholder relationships (Sa'diyah et al., 2025; Isma'il, 2026; Rosi & Nugraha, 2025). These field phenomena demonstrate that ineffective digital communication can reduce the visibility and competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions despite their substantial educational strengths.

Previous studies have extensively examined educational branding from perspectives including institutional image, service quality, marketing communication, and organizational reputation. Research conducted by Munawwaroh et al. (2024) and Kumala and Nadya (2024) demonstrates that public trust can be strengthened through quality management and effective institutional communication. Likewise, Yusuf (2023), Razak et al. (2025), and Mufidata and Arsyadana (2025) argue that strategic positioning and consistent brand image contribute significantly to institutional competitiveness. These studies collectively establish that branding represents an important managerial instrument for improving institutional performance and public recognition. However, most previous investigations primarily conceptualize branding from managerial and promotional perspectives emphasizing visibility, marketing effectiveness, and organizational competitiveness. Consequently, the distinctive characteristics of Islamic educational institutions as value-based organizations remain relatively underexplored, particularly regarding how religious principles function as strategic foundations rather than complementary components of institutional identity.

Other scholars have focused on digital transformation, pesantren development, and communication strategies within Islamic educational institutions. Research by Kamil et al. (2025), Novita (2025), and Najiburrohman (2026) discusses the growing importance of digital marketing, online communication, and reputation development in strengthening institutional recognition. These studies acknowledge that digital platforms provide broader opportunities for educational institutions to engage with communities and expand their visibility. Nevertheless, existing literature has not comprehensively explained how Islamic values, institutional philosophy, and digital communication strategies can be systematically integrated into a unified educational branding framework. Most previous studies examine

these dimensions separately, creating limited theoretical understanding of their interaction in building authentic institutional identity and sustainable public trust. This unresolved gap indicates the need for a more comprehensive conceptual framework that integrates spiritual identity with contemporary branding practices within Islamic educational institutions.

The novelty of this study lies in proposing an integrated conceptual framework of Islamic educational branding that combines spiritual values, institutional identity, strategic communication, and digital transformation into a unified perspective. Unlike conventional educational branding models that primarily emphasize promotional visibility and market competition, this framework positions Islamic values as strategic assets that guide institutional differentiation, organizational authenticity, and sustainable trust building. Digital communication is also viewed not merely as a promotional instrument but as a platform for representing institutional philosophy, educational excellence, community participation, and long-term stakeholder relationships. This perspective provides a more contextual understanding of educational branding by emphasizing that sustainable competitiveness emerges from meaningful value communication rather than promotional intensity alone. Accordingly, the proposed framework responds to contemporary educational challenges while preserving the distinctive identity and philosophical foundations of Islamic educational institutions.

Based on these considerations, this study seeks to examine how branding strategies can be developed effectively within Islamic educational institutions to strengthen institutional competitiveness and public trust. Specifically, the research investigates how Islamic values can be integrated into branding strategies, identifies the factors influencing successful educational branding, and explores how digital communication contributes to institutional image development. This study argues that effective Islamic educational branding requires a balanced integration of authentic religious values, strategic institutional identity, and adaptive digital communication practices. Sustainable branding success is achieved not simply through intensive promotional activities but through the institution's consistent ability to communicate meaningful values, establish credible public narratives, and maintain stakeholder trust over time. Therefore, this research contributes by providing a conceptual framework that supports the development of authentic, sustainable, and competitive branding strategies for Islamic educational institutions in the contemporary digital era.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to obtain an in-depth understanding of branding strategies implemented within an Islamic educational institution. The qualitative approach was selected because this research focuses on exploring processes, meanings, experiences, and institutional practices rather than measuring relationships between variables. A case study design enables researchers to examine phenomena within their natural context and understand how strategic practices are developed and implemented in real-life situations (Restu et al., 2026; Sugiono, 2022). This design is considered appropriate for analyzing branding practices because institutional image formation involves complex interactions between organizational values, communication strategies, and stakeholder perceptions. The research was conducted at an Islamic educational institution that actively utilizes digital platforms, including social media, official websites, and other online communication channels, as part of its branding strategy. The institution was selected purposively because it demonstrates continuous efforts to strengthen institutional identity, improve public recognition, and develop competitive advantages through strategic branding practices (Razak et al., 2025; Yusuf, 2023).

The data collection techniques in this study involved observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation analysis. Observations were conducted to identify how branding strategies were implemented in practice, including digital content management, communication patterns, promotional activities, and the representation of institutional values through online platforms. In-depth interviews were conducted with purposively selected informants who had direct involvement and knowledge of the institution's branding process, including institutional leaders, public relations or marketing teams, and digital media managers. To obtain broader perspectives, supporting informants such as students and parents were also involved to understand external perceptions regarding institutional reputation and image development. The use of multiple data sources allowed researchers to obtain comprehensive information and strengthen the credibility of findings through data triangulation (Rifa'i, 2023; Fildzah & Atmadi, 2022). Furthermore, documentation related to digital content, promotional materials, and institutional communication records was analyzed to support the interpretation of branding practices.

Data analysis was conducted using an interactive qualitative analysis model consisting of data condensation, data display, and verification of conclusions. The data condensation stage involved selecting, simplifying, and organizing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documents based on the research focus, particularly regarding branding strategies, digital communication practices, and institutional identity construction. The condensed data were then displayed in the form of systematic narratives and thematic categories to facilitate interpretation and identify patterns among findings. The final stage involved data verification, where researchers examined relationships, meanings, and emerging themes to formulate valid conclusions. To ensure research credibility, triangulation was applied by comparing information from different sources and techniques, including interview results, observational findings, and documentation analysis. This analytical process supports a comprehensive understanding of how Islamic educational institutions develop branding strategies through the integration of institutional values and digital communication approaches (Najiburrohman, 2026; Mundiri et al., 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Synchronization of Brand Messages and Identity Across Various Platforms as a Foundation for Brand Equity

The findings show that SDN Kalikajar 2 implements synchronization of brand messages and identity across various communication platforms. This synchronization is reflected in the consistency of information, values, and institutional image conveyed through both digital and direct communication channels. The school maintains similar messages through social media, WhatsApp groups, information boards, and face-to-face meetings with parents. The consistency is not only visible in visual elements such as logos and slogans but also in the narratives used to communicate school programs, activities, achievements, and educational values.

Based on interviews with teachers, the school actively attempts to maintain consistency in delivering information to avoid differences in understanding among stakeholders. One teacher stated, "We always try to convey the same information, both in the parent WhatsApp group and during face-to-face meetings, so that there are no differences in perception." Similarly, a student's guardian explained, "Information from the school feels clear and not confusing because what is conveyed on social media is the same as what the teacher explains." These statements indicate that teachers and parents perceive the school's communication process as consistent and well-organized.

Observation results indicate that SDN Kalikajar 2 uses several communication channels, including WhatsApp groups, bulletin boards, social media platforms, and direct meetings. Information related to school activities, student achievements, and flagship

programs is presented with similar content and messages across these platforms. The school consistently highlights similar themes when communicating with stakeholders, creating a recognizable pattern in the delivery of institutional information.

The research findings demonstrate that message synchronization has become part of the school's communication practice. Consistency appears in the content, communication style, and information delivery process across different platforms. The collected data show that stakeholders receive similar information regarding school programs, activities, and institutional values. The findings are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Research Results: Message Synchronization and Brand Identity

Research Aspects	Findings
Message Synchronization	School information is delivered consistently through WhatsApp groups, social media, bulletin boards, and direct meetings.
Brand Identity	The school maintains consistency in the use of logos, slogans, and narratives related to school programs and achievements.
Interview Results	Teachers emphasize the importance of delivering unified information, while parents perceive school communication as clear and consistent.
Observation Results	Content related to activities, achievements, and flagship programs shows similar messages across different communication platforms.
Impact on Communication	Stakeholders receive consistent information regarding the school's image, programs, and values.

Leveraging Specific Platform Characteristics to Increase Audience Engagement

The findings indicate that SDN Kalikajar 2 utilizes different communication platforms according to their respective characteristics. The school does not distribute identical content across all platforms but adjusts the type of information based on the function of each medium. WhatsApp groups are primarily used for direct and rapid communication, particularly for announcements, schedules, and administrative information. Meanwhile, social media platforms are used to display school activities, student achievements, and visual documentation.

Based on interviews, teachers explained that each platform has a different communication function. One teacher stated, "On WhatsApp we focus on important and quick-to-read information, but on social media we usually upload photos of activities to make them more engaging." A parent also shared, "I see school activities more often from the photos shared, so I feel closer to my child's activities at school." These statements show that the school differentiates its communication approach based on the needs and characteristics of platform users.

Observation results reveal that WhatsApp groups contain short messages related to school announcements, activity schedules, and important information for parents. In contrast, social media content focuses more on visual materials, such as photos of student activities, school events, achievements, and learning activities. The school adjusts the presentation format and content type according to the platform being used.

The research findings show that SDN Kalikajar 2 applies different communication patterns across platforms to reach its audience effectively. The differentiation of content based on platform characteristics creates varied forms of interaction between the school and stakeholders. The school adjusts the type, format, and delivery method of information according to the function of each communication medium. WhatsApp groups support direct and practical communication, while social media platforms provide visual information related to school activities and achievements. These findings indicate that platform utilization at SDN Kalikajar 2 is adjusted to the communication needs of its users. A summary of the findings regarding platform utilization and audience engagement is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Research Results: Platform Utilization and Audience Engagement

Research Aspects	Findings
WhatsApp Utilization	Used for announcements, schedules, administrative information, and direct communication with parents.
Social Media Utilization	Used for sharing school activities, student achievements, and visual documentation.
Interview Results	Teachers and parents perceive different platforms as having different functions in supporting school communication.
Observation Results	Content formats differ according to the characteristics of each platform.
Audience Engagement	Stakeholders interact more easily with school information through appropriate communication channels.

Data Integration and Continuous Evaluation as Catalysts for Strengthening Brand Equity

The findings indicate that SDN Kalikajar 2 implements data integration and continuous evaluation in managing school activities and communication processes. The school collects various information from internal and external sources, including parental feedback, community responses, student participation, activity documentation, and interactions on digital platforms. The collected information is used by the school as material for evaluating programs and improving future activities.

Based on interviews, informants explained that evaluation activities are conducted regularly after school programs are implemented. One informant stated that each activity is reviewed by considering feedback from parents and internal documentation to determine whether the activity has achieved the expected outcomes. Another informant explained that the school observes several indicators, such as new student registration data, community participation in school activities, and responses received through digital platforms. These data are used to identify the effectiveness of school communication and program implementation.

Observation results show that SDN Kalikajar 2 maintains systematic documentation of school activities. The school stores activity reports, photographs, publication materials, and records of stakeholder responses as evaluation materials. The documentation is reviewed during internal discussions to identify aspects that need improvement. The school also makes adjustments to activity implementation, information delivery, and publication methods based on previous evaluation results.

The findings show that data collection and evaluation are conducted continuously as part of the school's management practices. The school uses collected information to monitor activities, understand stakeholder responses, and determine follow-up actions. The evaluation process is reflected in the school's efforts to improve programs and communication activities based on available data.

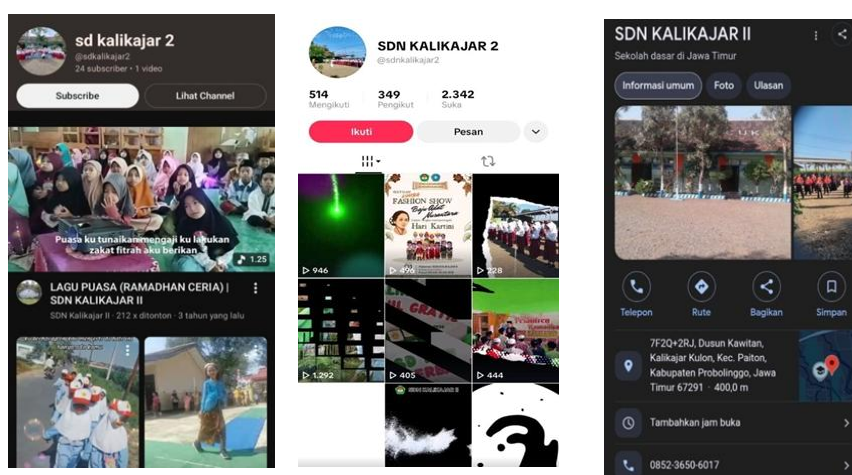


Figure 1, 2, 3. YouTube, TikTok, and the SDN Klikajar 2 website

The documentation of SDN Kalikajar 2's digital platforms, as presented in Figure 1, Figure 2, and Figure 3, shows the school's use of digital media for institutional communication. The three platforms demonstrate different forms of information presentation, including school activity documentation, student achievements, educational programs, and institutional profiles.

The YouTube platform shown in Figure 1 is utilized by the school to publish video-based documentation of various activities. The displayed content includes school events, student activities, and learning programs. This platform provides visual documentation that presents school activities to students, parents, and the wider community.

The TikTok platform presented in Figure 2 demonstrates the school's use of short-form digital content. The platform contains activity highlights, student involvement, and moments from school programs. The content format shows the school's effort to present information through brief and accessible visual materials.

The official website displayed in Figure 3 provides structured institutional information. The website contains the school profile, educational programs, activity announcements, and other institutional information. It functions as a formal digital source that presents the school's identity and activities.

Based on the documentation shown in Figure 1, Figure 2, and Figure 3, the findings indicate that SDN Kalikajar 2 utilizes different digital platforms according to their respective functions. Each platform presents different types of information while collectively supporting the school's digital communication activities.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that multi-platform communication management at SDN Kalikajar 2 functions not merely as a promotional activity but as a strategic process for constructing institutional identity. The consistency of messages delivered through WhatsApp groups, social media, bulletin boards, and direct communication with parents indicates that brand identity formation requires alignment between what the school communicates and what stakeholders experience. This finding supports the argument that educational branding is strongly influenced by the ability of institutions to create clear and recognizable identities through consistent narratives (Yusuf, 2023; Razak et al., 2025). Furthermore, the findings strengthen previous discussions on digital branding, which emphasize that communication consistency across platforms contributes to public engagement and institutional reputation (Mundiri et al., 2021; Najiburrohmah, 2026). The contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that message synchronization, which is commonly discussed in commercial branding contexts, is also applicable to elementary education institutions where trust, values, and social relationships become central elements of brand formation.

The second important finding relates to the school's ability to adapt communication strategies based on the characteristics of each digital platform. The utilization of WhatsApp as an informative communication medium, social media as a visual storytelling platform, and the website as a formal information center shows that effective educational branding requires platform differentiation rather than simply increasing the number of communication channels. This finding expands previous research that emphasizes the importance of digital communication adaptation in educational institutions (Isma'il, 2026; Fildzah & Atmadi, 2022). Similar studies also highlight that digital marketing strategies in Islamic and educational contexts need to consider audience characteristics and communication patterns (Kamil et al., 2025; Abdurrahman, 2025; Aisyah et al., 2022). The

implication of this finding is that schools should not treat all digital platforms equally but should develop specific communication functions according to stakeholder needs. Thus, the research contributes a practical perspective that platform optimization is achieved through strategic differentiation, not through excessive digital presence.

The findings regarding data integration and continuous evaluation reveal that SDN Kalikajar 2 has developed a more adaptive approach to managing its institutional image. The school utilizes feedback from parents, activity documentation, student participation, and digital interactions as evaluation materials for improving future communication and programs. This finding indicates a shift from conventional branding practices that emphasize promotion toward a more reflective and evidence-based branding process. Previous studies have shown that strategic management and institutional reputation development require continuous evaluation and responsiveness to environmental changes (Sudarwan, 2025; Thohir, 2024). In addition, digital transformation studies emphasize that data utilization strengthens institutional decision-making and improves communication effectiveness (Safitri, 2026; Najiburrohmah, 2026). The contribution of this research is the identification of evaluation mechanisms as an essential component of educational brand equity development, particularly in elementary school settings where systematic branding practices remain limited.

The relationship between digital platforms and stakeholder engagement found in this study also provides important insights into how educational institutions construct public trust. The use of YouTube, TikTok, and the official website demonstrates that digital media can function simultaneously as information channels, documentation spaces, and interaction platforms. This finding supports previous research indicating that educational institutions increasingly rely on digital communication strategies to strengthen public awareness and institutional recognition (Kumala & Nadya, 2024; Ni'am et al., 2025). Furthermore, studies on digital marketing in Islamic education highlight that online platforms provide opportunities for institutions to communicate values, achievements, and organizational identity more broadly (Novita, 2025; Kamil et al., 2025). The novelty of this finding lies in showing that even elementary schools can develop a structured digital communication ecosystem similar to larger educational institutions. This expands the understanding that digital branding is not limited to higher education or commercial organizations but can also be strategically implemented at the primary education level.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the development of educational branding literature by integrating three interconnected dimensions: message consistency, platform-specific communication, and continuous evaluation. Previous studies have generally examined branding through isolated perspectives, such as image development, communication strategies, or institutional reputation (Yusuf, 2023; Munif et al., 2021). However, the findings of this study show that brand equity development occurs through a continuous process involving identity construction, stakeholder interaction, and organizational learning. This perspective is supported by research emphasizing that educational institutions must combine internal quality, public communication, and strategic management to strengthen competitiveness (Razak et al., 2025; Thohir, 2024). Therefore, this research contributes a more integrated model of educational branding by positioning communication management as an ongoing institutional process rather than merely a promotional activity.

The findings also indicate that successful digital branding requires alignment between online representation and actual institutional practices. SDN Kalikajar 2 does not only present attractive digital content but also communicates real activities, achievements, and school programs. This alignment strengthens stakeholder confidence because digital narratives are supported by direct experiences. Previous studies have emphasized that institutional reputation is developed when communication messages reflect authentic

organizational values and practices (Munawwaroh et al., 2024; Kumala & Nadya, 2024). Similarly, research on Islamic educational institutions highlights that strong branding must be rooted in institutional identity and cultural values rather than only visual promotion (Mufidata & Arsyadana, 2025; Yusuf, 2023). The implication of this finding is that educational branding strategies should prioritize authenticity as a foundation for sustainable reputation development. Therefore, the research extends existing discussions by emphasizing that digital visibility must be accompanied by substantive institutional quality.

Overall, this study contributes a new understanding of multi-platform advertising optimization as an integrated strategy for strengthening educational brand equity. The research demonstrates that effective branding in schools is not determined by the quantity of digital platforms used but by the ability to synchronize messages, adapt content to platform characteristics, and utilize evaluation data for continuous improvement. This finding complements previous research on digital branding, educational marketing, and institutional reputation management (Rongi, 2025; Abdurrahman, 2025). The novelty of this study lies in presenting a practical framework for elementary schools that combines communication consistency, digital platform management, and data-based evaluation within a single branding process. The study therefore provides both theoretical and practical contributions by showing that educational institutions can build stronger public trust and competitiveness through strategic digital communication without losing their institutional identity.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the most important finding is that strengthening educational brand equity requires an integrated branding strategy that combines message synchronization, platform-based communication management, and continuous evaluation. The main lesson learned from this research is that digital platforms should not be viewed merely as promotional tools but as strategic spaces for constructing institutional identity, maintaining stakeholder trust, and developing sustainable relationships with the community. Theoretically, this study contributes to educational branding literature by proposing an integrated perspective that connects digital communication practices, institutional identity consistency, and data-based evaluation as essential components of brand equity development in educational institutions. This contribution extends previous discussions that often position branding as a promotional activity by emphasizing its role as a strategic management process. However, this study is limited by its qualitative case study design conducted in a single educational institution, which restricts the generalization of findings across different educational contexts. Future research is recommended to involve multiple institutions, broader stakeholder groups, and mixed-method approaches to examine how demographic factors, institutional characteristics, and digital capabilities influence the effectiveness of educational branding strategies.

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implementation of digital platform-based branding strategies in educational environments. Hopefully, the results of this research can provide benefits for the development of educational branding studies, as well as serve as a strategic reference for educational institutions in building strong, relevant, and competitive brand equity through adaptive and sustainable digital communication integration.

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