



From Digital Visibility to Institutional Growth: Social Media Advertising in Islamic School Management

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Abstract:

Digital transformation has become increasingly important in educational management as schools seek to strengthen institutional visibility, stakeholder engagement, and sustainable growth. However, the role of digital transformation and social media advertising in Islamic school management remains insufficiently understood, particularly regarding the integration of technological practices with institutional values. This study aims to examine how digital transformation and social media advertising contribute to institutional growth and to identify the managerial practices and challenges associated with their implementation. A qualitative case study design was employed, using observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation as data collection techniques. Data were analyzed through data condensation, data display, and verification. The findings indicate that digital transformation integrates online registration, digital administration, social media communication, and promotional activities. Social media advertising was associated with increased new student applicants, parental engagement, alumni involvement, and institutional visibility. The findings also reveal that content quality, consistency, staff competence, infrastructure readiness, and organizational adaptation influence the effectiveness of digital implementation. The study contributes to Islamic educational management by demonstrating that digital transformation functions not merely as technological adoption but as an integrated strategy connecting institutional values, communication, and growth. Practically, schools should strengthen digital infrastructure, staff competencies, content planning, and continuous evaluation.

INTRODUCTION

In the current digital era, educational institutions, including Islamic schools, are increasingly expected to establish visibility beyond traditional academic reputation. Digital platforms have become important spaces through which families obtain information, compare educational alternatives, and develop initial perceptions of school quality (Harini et al., 2024; Harjono et al., 2025). This development makes digital communication relevant not only to institutional promotion but also to broader access to educational information. Social media provides schools with opportunities to communicate programs, achievements, values, facilities, and community activities rapidly and interactively. Barus (2023)

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reported that educational institutions actively using social media can experience stronger public engagement and institutional brand image than those with passive digital activities. Therefore, digital visibility has become an increasingly important component of institutional communication (Fahriansyah et al., 2025; Jasmin et al., 2025). For Islamic schools, effective social media advertising may support broader public awareness and strengthen their ability to communicate educational identity in an increasingly competitive environment.

The importance of digital visibility extends beyond promotion because school development is closely associated with the perceptions and decisions of families and other stakeholders. Parents increasingly encounter educational information through online platforms before directly contacting or visiting schools. Consequently, the quality, consistency, and accessibility of digital communication can influence how institutions are perceived by prospective families. Ju'subaidi et al. (2024) found that digital strategies can significantly affect parents' perceptions of school quality, indicating that online communication may contribute to institutional positioning. This condition is particularly relevant for Islamic schools because they compete not only through academic programs but also through educational values, religious identity, student development, and community trust. When these characteristics are not effectively communicated online, institutions may have difficulty reaching potential stakeholders. Thus, understanding social media advertising as a component of digital transformation is important for supporting the visibility, sustainability, and institutional development of Islamic schools.

Despite the growing importance of digital communication, many educational institutions still face difficulties in transforming social media activity into an effective institutional growth strategy. The general problem is not simply whether schools use digital platforms, but whether their digital presence is strategically managed to generate meaningful responses from prospective students, parents, alumni, and the wider community. Passive, inconsistent, or poorly targeted communication may limit the ability of schools to communicate their distinctive educational offerings and establish continuous engagement. This problem can ultimately affect institutional awareness, stakeholder participation, and prospective student interest. In the context of Islamic education, the challenge becomes more complex because schools must communicate educational quality while simultaneously presenting religious identity and institutional values appropriately. Therefore, the growing dependence on digital information creates a management challenge: Islamic schools need to integrate social media advertising into institutional strategies rather than treating it merely as an additional promotional activity.

The phenomenon observed in the educational sector indicates that digital engagement is increasingly becoming part of institutional competition. Families can rapidly access information about school programs, achievements, facilities, activities, and organizational identity through social media, while schools can directly communicate with prospective parents and community members. Institutions that maintain an active digital presence may therefore have more opportunities to remain visible in the public sphere. Barus (2023) highlighted stronger public engagement and brand image among educational institutions with active social media practices, while Ju'subaidi et al. (2024) demonstrated the

relevance of digital strategies to parents' perceptions of school quality. In addition, Sohrab and Singh (2025) indicated that digital strategies can contribute to awareness and enrollment in educational contexts. These developments suggest that social media advertising is becoming connected with institutional growth. However, the extent to which these practices operate within Islamic schools, particularly in relation to student registration, parent engagement, alumni involvement, and institutional support, remains insufficiently understood.

Previous studies have established several foundations for understanding digital transformation in education. Research by Odoom et al. (2025) examined social media marketing in higher education, demonstrating the growing relevance of digital platforms for educational institutions. Zainul et al. (2025) investigated technology adoption in general school contexts, while Ikhwan et al. (2025) examined the relationship between digital engagement and student loyalty. These studies indicate that digital technologies can influence communication, engagement, and institutional relationships. However, much of the existing literature focuses on universities, general schools, or student-centered outcomes rather than institutional growth in Islamic schools. The systematic review by Letavia et al. (2025) further indicates a need for research examining how social media advertising contributes to the development of educational institutions, particularly at the primary and secondary levels. Consequently, existing findings provide useful conceptual foundations but do not sufficiently explain the specific dynamics of digital advertising in Islamic school management.

The literature also reveals an important empirical limitation concerning the integration of digital marketing and Islamic educational management. Existing studies tend to examine social media marketing, technology adoption, digital engagement, or institutional outcomes as separate issues, leaving limited understanding of how social media advertising can function as a strategic management instrument for institutional growth. Furthermore, recent empirical research specifically addressing digital management practices in Islamic schools remains limited, creating an identifiable gap in the literature. The absence of context-specific evidence makes it difficult to determine whether findings from universities or general educational institutions can be directly applied to Islamic schools, whose institutional identity and stakeholder relationships may differ. Therefore, further investigation is necessary to connect social media advertising with measurable dimensions of institutional growth. Addressing this gap can contribute to digital education management literature by providing evidence from an underexplored institutional context and clarifying the strategic role of social media in Islamic school development.

The novelty of this study lies in positioning social media advertising as a strategic component of digital transformation in Islamic school management rather than merely as a communication or promotional tool. The study specifically connects digital advertising practices with institutional growth by examining outcomes such as prospective student registration, parent and alumni engagement, institutional reputation, and stakeholder support. This approach provides a more integrated perspective on how Islamic schools can use digital platforms to strengthen institutional visibility and maintain sustainable development. The study is important because Islamic schools increasingly operate within an educational environment in which families expect accessible, relevant,

and engaging digital information. Understanding the relationship between advertising practices and institutional growth can help clarify how digital activities should be organized, targeted, and evaluated. The findings are expected to provide a contextual foundation for developing more systematic digital management practices that align communication strategies with institutional goals and educational identity.

This study addresses the research problem of how social media advertising contributes to the growth of Islamic schools within the context of digital management. Specifically, it examines whether social media advertising is associated with increased prospective student applications, stronger engagement among parents and alumni, and broader stakeholder support, while also considering how Islamic schools manage their digital campaigns. The underlying argument is that social media advertising can contribute positively to institutional growth when it is supported by relevant content, clear audience targeting, consistent communication, and effective managerial implementation. However, its contribution is not assumed to be automatic because digital exposure alone may not generate meaningful institutional outcomes. The effectiveness of advertising is expected to depend on how well schools translate digital communication into engagement, trust, and institutional interest. Accordingly, this study seeks to provide empirical evidence concerning the role of social media advertising in strengthening the growth and sustainability of Islamic schools.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study design to obtain an in-depth understanding of digital transformation in Islamic school management through social media advertising. A qualitative approach was selected because it enables researchers to explore social contexts, interactions, experiences, and managerial practices that are difficult to capture through quantitative measurements (Poth, 2023; Yoon et al., 2025). The case study design was considered appropriate because it allows the phenomenon to be examined holistically within its real-life institutional context. The study focused on how social media advertising was planned, implemented, and managed, as well as how stakeholders perceived its contribution to institutional growth. Rather than testing predetermined relationships statistically, the study sought to identify patterns, practices, challenges, and contextual factors emerging from the field. This design therefore provided a comprehensive understanding of digital management practices within an Islamic secondary school.

The study was conducted at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Hikmatul Hasanah, Leces. The school was purposively selected because it has implemented digital communication strategies through official social media accounts and online promotional activities aimed at attracting prospective students and strengthening institutional image (Alwizra et al., 2024; Arief et al., 2024). The selection of this setting was also based on the availability of relevant digital documentation, accessibility of information, and the willingness of school management and stakeholders to participate in the research. Madrasah Tsanawiyah Hikmatul Hasanah provides a relevant context for examining digital transformation because it represents an Islamic secondary-school environment in which institutional promotion, stakeholder communication, and student recruitment increasingly

interact with digital platforms. The research particularly examined the implementation of social media advertising, stakeholder engagement, and perceived institutional growth, including student registration, parental involvement, and alumni participation.

Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and documentation to obtain comprehensive information and facilitate triangulation. Observations focused on the school's digital activities, including social media content, posting patterns, audience interactions, promotional messages, and online responses. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the principal, public relations personnel, teachers responsible for social media management, and selected alumni to explore advertising strategies, implementation challenges, stakeholder responses, and perceptions of digital promotion. Questionnaires were distributed to parents and students to obtain supporting information concerning their engagement, perceptions, and responses to social media campaigns related to school registration (Maemonah et al., 2023; Siregar & Nuddin, 2025). Relevant school documents and digital materials were also examined to complement primary data. Participants and information sources were selected purposively based on their direct experience and involvement in the school's digital communication and promotional activities.

Data analysis followed an iterative qualitative process involving data condensation, data display, and verification. First, data condensation was conducted by selecting, simplifying, organizing, and categorizing information obtained from observations, interviews, questionnaires, and documentation. Relevant statements concerning social media advertising, audience engagement, management practices, challenges, and institutional growth were identified and grouped into emerging themes. Second, condensed data were displayed through thematic summaries, tables, narrative descriptions, and selected interview quotations to facilitate the identification of relationships and recurring patterns. Third, data verification was conducted through member checking and cross-checking information across different participants and data sources. This process was used to strengthen the credibility and consistency of the findings. The final interpretation focused on identifying patterns in digital management practices and explaining how social media advertising was perceived and implemented in relation to the growth of the Islamic school.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Context of Digital Transformation in Islamic Schools

The findings indicate that digital transformation at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Hikmatul Hasanah, Leces, encompasses various managerial activities that utilize digital technology to support administration, communication, institutional promotion, and stakeholder engagement. Operationally, digital transformation was identified through digital management systems, online registration, official social media platforms, digital documentation, and technology-supported managerial activities. The findings show that transformation extends beyond the provision of technological devices because digital procedures have been incorporated into routine school activities. These practices include managing academic information,

communicating announcements, documenting extracurricular activities, and promoting school programs through social media. The findings therefore focus on how digital practices are implemented in daily school management and how these practices are connected with institutional visibility, communication efficiency, community engagement, and institutional growth. Evidence for this finding was obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation of school activities.

Interview findings provide evidence of the practical implementation of digital transformation within the school. The principal stated, "We started integrate system information digital management since two year lastly, including online registration platforms and announcements via official Instagram school. The goal for make things easier communication with parents and interesting more lots student new." The public relations staff added, "Social media content designed to reflect Islamic values and achievements academic, so that audience can see quality school in a way real." These statements indicate that digital transformation involves the integration of administrative functions, communication activities, and promotional practices. The interview data show that digital technology is intentionally connected with institutional identity and student recruitment activities. The findings further indicate that digital platforms are used to make information more accessible while simultaneously presenting academic achievements and Islamic values to external audiences. Thus, digital transformation operates through interconnected managerial and communication practices.

Field observations further demonstrate that digital transformation has become part of the school's routine management activities. The school's social media platforms were used consistently, with regular posts appearing at least three times per week. The content included student activities, academic achievements, extracurricular programs, and motivational messages reflecting Islamic values. In addition, the online registration system enabled parents to complete registration without physically visiting the school, while administrative staff could monitor registration information in real time. These observations indicate the existence of a structured and continuing digital management pattern. Digital technology was not limited to administrative efficiency but was also used to strengthen institutional visibility and communication with the school community. The simultaneous use of administrative systems and social media platforms demonstrates that digital practices have been incorporated into several areas of school operation. The observed activities therefore show continuity between digital administration, communication, promotion, and stakeholder access.

The combined interview and observation findings indicate that digital transformation at the school consists of three interconnected areas: technology-supported management, social media-based promotion, and digital communication with stakeholders. These practices are implemented according to the school's operational needs and Islamic institutional identity. The findings show that technology is used not only as an administrative instrument but also as a mechanism for increasing information accessibility, institutional visibility, communication, and stakeholder engagement. The integration of Islamic values into digital content further demonstrates that digital practices are connected with the school's organizational identity. The evidence indicates that digital transformation has become a practical component of institutional management.

Rather than functioning as an independent technological initiative, digital transformation connects administrative processes, promotional activities, stakeholder communication, and institutional development. The findings therefore demonstrate that digital practices have been incorporated into the school's existing managerial structure and are used across several institutional functions.

Digital Transformation of Madrasahs

The findings from interviews, observations, and documentation were synthesized into a visual representation to clarify the main characteristics of digital transformation at the school. Figure 1 presents digital transformation through an integrated visual structure in which the school is positioned at the center of several digital and managerial activities. The figure emphasizes two characteristics identified in the findings, namely strategic implementation and integration. Different school actors are represented alongside digital devices, communication activities, educational information, and institutional resources. These visual elements correspond with the observed use of digital management systems, online communication, social media promotion, and stakeholder interaction. The figure therefore summarizes how digital technology has been incorporated into different areas of school management. It provides a visual representation of the empirical findings without introducing additional outcomes beyond those identified through interviews, observations, and documentation.



Figure 1. Digital Transformation of Madrasahs

Figure 1 illustrates that digital transformation at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Hikmatul Hasanah is characterized by strategic and integrated implementation. The word “STRATEGIS” at the upper part of the figure represents the strategic orientation identified in the findings, while “TERINTEGRASI” in the central section represents the connection among different digital functions. The central school representation is surrounded by school personnel, students, communication activities, technological devices, and educational information. These elements correspond with the observed integration of administrative digitalization, social media communication, online registration, and promotional activities. The circular arrangement visually represents connections among the different components rather than isolated technological activities. The figure therefore shows that digital transformation involves several actors and institutional functions operating

simultaneously. Overall, Figure 1 summarizes the empirical finding that digital technology has become integrated into school management, communication, promotion, and stakeholder interaction within the Islamic school environment.

Social Media Advertising Strategy in Educational Institutions

Documentation findings show that Madrasah Tsanawiyah Hikmatul Hasanah, Leces, has developed a structured and planned social media advertising strategy using several digital platforms. The strategy involves Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube to reach parents, prospective students, current students, and alumni. The content includes academic activities, student achievements, extracurricular programs, student and parent testimonials, motivational messages, and Islamic values representing the school's institutional culture. Posting activities are conducted regularly, with publication timing adjusted according to engagement observations. The school also uses relevant hashtags and Story Highlights to facilitate access to important information. The documented strategy demonstrates that digital advertising activities are organized around several communication objectives. Promotional content is used to provide information, present institutional characteristics, maintain audience interaction, and strengthen the school's public image. The strategy therefore represents a coordinated digital communication practice involving platform selection, content development, publication scheduling, and information accessibility.

Before presenting the platform-level findings, Table 1 summarizes the documented digital marketing visibility of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Hikmatul Hasanah. The table organizes the findings according to four observable dimensions: platform, type of content, posting frequency, and objective. This structure allows the specific function of each digital platform to be identified within the school's broader advertising strategy. Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Story Highlights are presented separately because each serves a particular communication function. The table also records the frequency of content publication, providing an indication of the consistency of digital activity across platforms. By organizing the documentation in this form, the table provides a structured description of the school's multi-platform strategy. It also shows how different digital channels are used together to provide information, reach specific stakeholder groups, increase institutional awareness, maintain engagement, and support registration-related communication. The table therefore clarifies the distribution of digital activities across platforms.

Table 1. Madrasah Digital Marketing Visibility

Platform	Type of Content	Posting Frequency	Objective
Instagram	Photos of activities, student achievements, motivational stories	3–5 times/week	Engagement, positive image, registration information
Facebook	Official announcements, activity videos	2–3 times/week	Reaching parents, increasing awareness
YouTube	Documentation, student testimonials	1–2 times/week	Public education, institutional promotion
Story Highlights	Registration information, achievements	Regular updates	Easier access to information and quick references

Table 1 demonstrates that the school applies an integrated multi-platform approach rather than depending on a single social media channel. Instagram has the highest documented posting frequency, with three to five posts per week, and combines student activities, achievements, and motivational content with engagement and registration objectives. Facebook is used two to three times per week for official announcements and activity videos intended to reach parents and increase awareness. YouTube is used one to two times per week for documentation and student testimonials supporting public education and institutional promotion. Story Highlights provide regularly updated registration information and achievement-related content for rapid access. The table therefore shows differentiated platform functions within one overall strategy. Each platform has a distinct communication role, while their combined use creates broader institutional visibility. The findings demonstrate consistency between platform selection, content type, publication frequency, and the specific communication objectives assigned to each channel.

The interpretation of the documentation indicates that the school's social media advertising strategy is proactive and planned rather than consisting of random or occasional posts. The use of different platforms with specific content types demonstrates that digital communication is organized according to audience characteristics and institutional objectives. Motivational messages and Islamic values are consistently incorporated into promotional materials, while academic achievements and student activities provide visible information about school performance. This combination creates a recognizable institutional presentation across digital platforms. The findings also show that social media is used to increase awareness, encourage engagement, provide registration information, and strengthen institutional image. Consequently, the documented practice connects promotional communication with broader institutional activities. The school's digital advertising strategy functions as part of an integrated management approach in which content planning, platform selection, institutional identity, and stakeholder communication are organized within a continuous promotional process.

The documentation further reveals continuity and consistency in the school's digital advertising strategy. The multi-platform approach is maintained by adapting content to the characteristics and functions of individual social media channels. Regular posting schedules indicate that digital communication is planned over time rather than being conducted only during student recruitment periods. The repeated presentation of Islamic values and student achievements demonstrates consistency between promotional content and institutional identity. The use of Story Highlights and video documentation also shows that the school employs different digital formats to maintain information accessibility and audience attention. These patterns indicate that digital advertising is connected with both communication and institutional management. The findings identify three central characteristics of the observed practice: content planning, appropriate platform selection, and consistent implementation. Together, these characteristics form the main elements of the school's documented social media advertising strategy and its continuing institutional communication activities.

Impact of Social Media Advertising on Institutional Growth

The findings concerning institutional growth were examined through several indicators, including the number of new applicants, parental involvement, school reputation, and alumni support. Operationally, the impact of social media advertising was identified not only through the number of social media followers or visitors but also through the quality of interactions and stakeholder responses. The evidence focused on whether digital promotional activities were associated with increased institutional visibility, communication with prospective students, registration interest, and community participation. Particular attention was given to stakeholder responses to social media content, including comments, direct messages, and shares. The findings therefore characterize institutional growth as a multidimensional outcome involving student recruitment, stakeholder engagement, public perception, and community support. This approach allowed the research to connect observed digital activities with reported institutional outcomes while maintaining the distinction between registration-related information and qualitative stakeholder responses obtained from interviews and observations.

Interview findings indicate a reported increase in prospective student applications following the optimization of social media activities. The principal stated, "Since social media optimized, number applicant new increase around 15% per year. Parents now more fast get information and often ask activity school via DM or comment." The public relations staff similarly stated, "The feedback we received on Instagram and Facebook was very positive. influence parental decision for register, especially because they see performance students and activities Islamic in a way direct." These statements indicate that school management perceived social media as contributing to increased awareness and registration interest. The interview evidence also identifies interactive communication as an important component of the observed outcome. Parents did not only receive promotional information but also used digital channels to ask questions and respond to school content. Thus, the reported impact involved both recruitment and stakeholder interaction. The findings connect social media activity with reported changes in registration interest and parental communication.

Observational and documentation findings provide additional evidence of simultaneous digital activity and registration-related development. The school routinely published academic achievements, religious activities, student activities, and testimonials, which subsequently received likes, comments, and shares. The observed interaction indicates that audiences actively responded to content rather than merely viewing it. The findings further show that content emphasizing Islamic values and student achievements attracted attention from parents and community members. This pattern indicates that content characteristics were relevant to audience responses alongside posting frequency. The observed engagement included comments, direct responses, and content sharing, providing visible indications of audience participation. The data therefore demonstrate a relationship between the school's continuing promotional activities and stakeholder responses. The findings also highlight that content quality and relevance were observable elements of the school's social media activity, particularly when posts presented academic achievements, religious activities, student experiences, and information related to institutional programs.

The combined interview and observation findings indicate that social media advertising contributes to institutional growth through several interconnected areas. The reported increase in new applicants represents the most direct recruitment-related outcome, while parental inquiries, comments, and responses indicate increased stakeholder involvement. The presentation of academic achievements, Islamic activities, and student testimonials also provides recurring digital representations of the school's institutional identity. These activities create opportunities for prospective families to obtain information through digital channels without relying exclusively on physical visits. The findings therefore show that the impact of social media advertising extends beyond follower growth. Digital communication is connected with registration-related interest, institutional reputation, and community participation. The observed pattern emphasizes the role of planned promotional activities, relevant content, and interactive communication in generating the institutional outcomes identified through interviews, observations, and documentation. The results consequently present social media as an observable component of the school's institutional growth activities.

The preceding findings were synthesized into a visual representation to clarify the observed relationship between social media promotion, stakeholder engagement, and institutional growth. Figure 2 presents the madrasah as the central institutional element surrounded by social media communication, promotional activities, stakeholder interaction, and representations of institutional development. The visual includes social media symbols, communication activities, school-related content, parents, students, and an upward growth trajectory. These elements correspond with the documented findings concerning online promotion, audience responses, student recruitment, and stakeholder involvement. The figure is intended to summarize the different forms of digital interaction identified during the research and their relationship with the observed growth indicators. It does not introduce additional numerical findings but visually consolidates the patterns identified through interviews, observations, and documentation concerning social media advertising and the development of the madrasah. The visual therefore provides an integrated representation of the reported institutional growth process.



Figure 2. Impact of Social Media Platforms on Madrasah Growth

Figure 2 illustrates an upward pattern connecting social media activity with the observed growth of the madrasah. The upward arrow visually represents the growth trajectory identified in the findings, while social media symbols

surrounding the school represent the use of online platforms as communication and promotional channels. The figures representing parents, students, and community members indicate the stakeholder groups involved in the school's digital communication activities. The visual also includes promotional content, communication indicators, and representations of institutional development, corresponding with the observed likes, comments, shares, inquiries, and registration-related responses. The central representation of the madrasah indicates that digital activities are directed toward institutional development. The combination of social media interaction, promotional content, stakeholder participation, and the upward growth pattern summarizes the empirical relationship identified in the research. Overall, Figure 2 visually represents the connection between digital promotion, audience engagement, and institutional growth as identified through the collected data.

Challenges and Obstacles of Digital Transformation

The documentation findings identify several challenges affecting digital transformation at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Hikmatul Hasanah, Leces. These challenges can be grouped into technical, human-resource, organizational-cultural, and administrative categories. From a technical perspective, limited devices and slow internet connections were identified as constraints affecting digital management activities and social media implementation. From the human-resource perspective, some teachers and staff members still require additional training to use digital applications effectively. Organizational culture also presents challenges, particularly initial resistance to replacing manual procedures with digital systems. Administrative procedures have not been fully adapted to the new digital environment, resulting in inconsistencies in data management and documentation. These findings indicate that the school has established a commitment to digital transformation but continues to encounter internal conditions that influence implementation consistency. The identified barriers therefore involve several organizational dimensions operating simultaneously rather than representing a single technological limitation within the school's digital transformation process.

Before presenting Table 2, the documented challenges were organized according to their category, field indicators, and observed impact on digital transformation. This classification provides a structured representation of the different obstacles identified during the research. The table distinguishes technical limitations from human-resource constraints, organizational-cultural resistance, and administrative adjustment problems. Each category is connected with specific indicators observed at the school and with the corresponding impact on digital implementation. This organization is important because the documented barriers occur at different levels of school management. Technical barriers concern equipment and connectivity, human-resource barriers concern digital competencies, cultural barriers concern acceptance of organizational change, and administrative barriers concern the adaptation of existing procedures. Table 2 therefore provides a systematic overview of the multidimensional challenges identified in the field. It also clarifies how different types of obstacles influence the continuity and effectiveness of the school's digital transformation activities.

Table 2. Categories of Barriers, Indicators, and Impacts on Digital Transformation

Category of Obstacle	Indicators in the Field	Impact on Digital Transformation
Technical	Limited devices, slow internet connection	Digital activities are hampered and posting delays occur
Human Resources	Insufficient training in the use of digital applications	Implementation of new systems is not yet optimal
Organizational Culture	Resistance to changing manual procedures	Difficulty adopting digital management systems
Administrative	Internal procedures have not been fully customized	Data and documentation inconsistencies

Table 2 demonstrates that the obstacles to digital transformation are multidimensional and affect different components of school management. Technical limitations directly constrain digital activities through insufficient devices and slow connectivity. Human-resource limitations appear through the need for additional training, which affects the optimal implementation of digital applications. Organizational-cultural barriers are reflected in resistance to changing established manual procedures toward digital management systems. Administrative barriers occur because internal procedures have not been fully adjusted to the digital environment, resulting in data and documentation inconsistencies. The table therefore shows that the identified challenges extend from technological infrastructure to human capacity, organizational acceptance, and administrative procedures. The distribution of indicators across the four categories provides a structured representation of the conditions encountered by the school. The findings demonstrate that digital transformation involves several interconnected areas of institutional operation that collectively influence the implementation process.

The interpretation of the findings indicates that the identified barriers are interdependent. Technical limitations can restrict the ability of staff to conduct digital activities consistently, while limited human-resource capacity can reduce the effective use of available technological systems. At the same time, organizational resistance can slow the transition from established manual practices to digital procedures. Administrative procedures that have not been fully customized can further create inconsistencies in data and documentation. These conditions indicate that the school's digital transformation is influenced by the interaction between infrastructure readiness, staff capacity, organizational acceptance, and procedural adjustment. The findings therefore show that the presence of a digital strategy does not eliminate implementation difficulties. Instead, the effectiveness of digital practices is shaped by the extent to which different components of the school system operate together. The observed barriers consequently form a connected implementation pattern involving technological, human, cultural, and administrative dimensions.

The documentation further shows that the obstacles to digital transformation are layered and interconnected. Technical barriers involving devices and internet connectivity affect the ability of staff to operate digital systems efficiently. Human-resource limitations and organizational resistance can strengthen these constraints because staff may experience greater difficulty

adapting when technological capacity and organizational readiness are simultaneously limited. Administrative barriers represent another layer because existing procedures have not been completely synchronized with digital systems. The resulting pattern demonstrates a connection between technological readiness, human capacity, organizational culture, and administrative adaptation. The findings therefore indicate that digital transformation at the school involves more than introducing technological tools. The implementation process also includes adjustments to internal capacity and working procedures. Across the documented evidence, the continuation of digital activities is affected by the school's ability to address infrastructure limitations, strengthen staff capabilities, and accommodate organizational and administrative changes within its existing management structure.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that digital transformation at the madrasah encompasses social media integration, online registration systems, and digitally based administrative management. This finding is consistent with Harini et al. (2024), who emphasize the importance of digitalization in modern school management for improving operational efficiency and stakeholder involvement. However, the present findings extend this perspective by showing that digital transformation in an Islamic school is not limited to technological adoption or operational efficiency. Instead, digital practices are integrated with Islamic values and institutional identity (Gani et al., 2026; Siahaan, 2023). Social media content, administrative systems, and communication activities are simultaneously used to represent the school's religious character and organizational objectives. Theoretically, this finding broadens the understanding of digital transformation in educational management by positioning institutional values as an integral component of digital implementation. Practically, it indicates that Islamic schools need to align technological adoption with their distinctive organizational identity.

The findings further demonstrate that social media advertising contributes to institutional awareness, audience engagement, and interest in new student registration. This result is consistent with Nasti et al. (2024), who report that planned digital interactions can strengthen loyalty and influence registration-related decisions. However, the present study identifies an additional characteristic within the Islamic school context: promotional content communicates not only academic performance and institutional information but also religious values. This distinction indicates that social media advertising operates through both informational and identity-based communication. Theoretically, the finding extends the understanding of digital engagement by demonstrating that institutional values can become part of the content through which schools establish connections with prospective students and parents (Basri et al., 2023; Fajri & Wibowo, 2026). Practically, integrating Islamic values with academic achievements, student activities, and registration information provides schools with a coherent approach to communicating institutional characteristics while expanding digital visibility and maintaining consistency with their organizational identity.

The study also identifies both the functions and dysfunctions of digital advertising in institutional growth (Askar et al., 2025; Wahono et al., 2023). The reported increase in new applicants, parental involvement, and alumni participation demonstrates that social media can function beyond communication by becoming part of institutional growth activities. At the same time, technical limitations, insufficient human-resource capacity, and organizational resistance constrain the consistency of digital implementation. This finding complements Lee et al. (2026), who emphasize infrastructure readiness, human resources, and continuous evaluation as important elements of effective digital management. The present study extends this perspective by showing how these elements interact within the specific context of Islamic school management. Theoretically, digital transformation can therefore be understood as an interconnected system rather than a single technological intervention. Practically, school management needs to coordinate infrastructure, staff capabilities, content management, and organizational adaptation to maintain consistent digital activities and support institutional development.

The emerging pattern further indicates that the effectiveness of digital transformation depends on the alignment between content quality, interaction frequency, staff capability, and institutional readiness. Technical and human-resource constraints influence the extent to which digital marketing strategies can be implemented consistently, while organizational resistance can interrupt the transition from conventional to digital procedures. This finding reinforces Lee et al. (2026), particularly regarding the importance of infrastructure, human-resource readiness, and continuous evaluation, but adds an institutional and cultural dimension by demonstrating the relevance of organizational adaptation within Islamic schools. The state of the art emerging from this study is therefore the integration of three dimensions: technological capability, managerial practice, and institutional values. This represents a more comprehensive perspective than viewing digital transformation solely as technology adoption. Theoretically, the study contributes a context-sensitive understanding of digital management, while practically it highlights the need for integrated planning rather than isolated technological investment.

The principal contribution of this research lies in connecting digital transformation, social media advertising, and institutional growth within the management of an Islamic secondary school. Previous research has addressed digitalization, digital interaction, and institutional management, but the present findings provide an empirical account of how these elements operate together within a religious educational context (Furqon & Zahroh, 2025; Wahyudin et al., 2024). The novelty is reflected in the identification of Islamic values as an active component of digital communication rather than merely a background characteristic of the institution. Academic achievements, religious activities, student experiences, and promotional information are incorporated into a unified digital presentation. This configuration provides a distinctive mechanism through which institutional identity and digital visibility are simultaneously communicated. The contribution is therefore both contextual and conceptual: contextually, it expands evidence from Islamic education management; conceptually, it demonstrates how institutional identity can be integrated into digital transformation and social media advertising practices.

The findings have theoretical and practical implications for the development of Islamic educational management. Theoretically, the study contributes empirical evidence that digital transformation is a multidimensional process involving technology, management, organizational culture, institutional identity, and stakeholder interaction. It demonstrates that institutional growth cannot be understood solely through technological adoption because implementation depends on the alignment of these interconnected elements. Practically, Islamic schools can strengthen digital management by integrating religious values with academic achievements in social media content, providing continuous training for staff, improving digital infrastructure, and establishing monitoring systems to evaluate campaign effectiveness. These practices can support more consistent communication with parents, prospective students, students, and alumni. The research therefore contributes a context-specific model of digital institutional development in which technological readiness, managerial capability, organizational adaptation, and Islamic identity operate together to support visibility, engagement, and sustainable institutional growth.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that digital transformation in Islamic schools is not merely the adoption of technology but an integrated managerial strategy that combines Islamic values, effective communication, audience engagement, and digital administration to support institutional growth. The most important lesson is that social media advertising can contribute to increasing new student applicants, parental involvement, alumni participation, and institutional visibility when supported by consistent content and interaction. Scientifically, this study contributes to the literature on Islamic educational management by providing a context-specific understanding of how digital transformation and Islamic value-based social media strategies operate together, positioning social media as a strategic management instrument rather than solely a promotional channel. However, the study is limited by its focus on one Islamic school and its qualitative case-study design, which restrict the transferability and generalization of the findings; demographic variations among audiences and staff were also not examined specifically. Future research should employ broader quantitative or mixed-method designs involving multiple Islamic schools, locations, demographic groups, and institutional characteristics. Practically, the findings imply that school managers should strengthen digital infrastructure, develop staff competencies, conduct continuous evaluation, and align social media content with both institutional values and stakeholder needs to support sustainable institutional development.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGY

AI-assisted tools were utilized during the development of this manuscript to assist with language editing, sentence clarity, and the organization of academic content. The author independently examined and refined all AI-assisted outputs to ensure their consistency with the research objectives, findings, and scholarly standards. The author remains solely accountable for the accuracy, originality, interpretation, and overall integrity of the manuscript.

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