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Building The Branding Image Of Educational Institutions In Improving The Quality Of Education In The Outer Islands

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the branding image development strategy of educational institutions and its implications for improving the quality of education in the outermost islands. The study uses a qualitative approach with a case study to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena occurring within the context of educational institution management. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews with principals, teachers, education staff, and the community, accompanied by observations and documentation studies of various educational institution programs and activities. The data obtained were analyzed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and systematic conclusion drawing. The results show that the branding image development of educational institutions is carried out through strengthening the institution's identity, developing superior programs based on local potential, improving the quality of educational services, and utilizing communication media to introduce the institution's advantages to the community. A strong branding image has been proven to increase public trust in educational institutions, strengthen parental and community participation, and encourage improvements in educational quality through strengthening institutional management, increasing the professionalism of teaching staff, and learning innovation. Thus, branding image is an

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important strategy in improving the quality and competitiveness of educational institutions, especially in the outermost islands that face various resource limitations.

Keywords: Educational Institution Branding, Educational Quality, Outermost Islands, Educational Management, Public Trust.

INTRODUCTION

Building the branding image of educational institutions is one of the important strategies in improving the quality of education, especially in areas that have limited access and resources such as the outermost archipelago. The outer archipelago often faces various structural and geographical challenges that have a direct impact on the quality of educational services, such as limited facilities and infrastructure, lack of qualified educators, difficult access to transportation, and limited information and educational technology. This condition often causes educational institutions in the archipelago to be seen as less competitive than educational institutions in urban areas. Therefore, strategic efforts are needed that not only focus on improving internal quality, but also on how educational institutions are able to build a positive image or strong branding image in the community. Branding image in the context of educational institutions is not only related to promotion or image, but reflects the identity, values, quality of service, and excellence owned by the institution so that it is able to foster public trust and increase the competitiveness of educational institutions (Mundiri, 2016).

In the development of the modern world of education, the branding of educational institutions has become part of strategic management that plays a role in building reputation, increasing public trust, and attracting students' interest. A good branding image can be a representation of the quality of educational services provided by institutions to the community. When an educational institution has a positive image, the public will have more confidence in the quality of education offered, so that it will indirectly encourage increased educational participation, community support, and collaboration with various parties. In the outermost archipelago, the development of the branding image of educational institutions has a more strategic role because it can be a means to change public perception of the quality of education in the region. By building a strong institutional identity, educational institutions can demonstrate that geographical limitations are not a barrier to delivering quality education(Nov, 2024).

In addition, the development of branding image is also closely related to efforts to improve the quality of education in a sustainable manner. The quality of education is not only measured

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from the academic aspect, but also from the quality of institutional management, the competence of educators, learning innovations, and the ability of institutions to establish partnerships with the community and other stakeholders. A systematically built branding image can encourage educational institutions to continue to make improvements and innovations in various aspects of education implementation. This is because the image of the institution that has been formed in the community must be maintained and maintained through consistent service quality. Thus, branding image not only serves as a promotional tool, but also as an instrument to strengthen the culture of quality in educational institutions(Manurung & Siagian, 2021).

On the other hand, people in the outermost archipelago have distinctive social and cultural characteristics, so the branding strategy of educational institutions needs to be adjusted to the existing local context. Educational institutions need to be able to integrate local values, regional potential, and community needs in the development of institutional identity. This approach is important so that the branding built is not only symbolic, but truly reflects the role of educational institutions as centers for human resource development in the archipelago. By elevating local excellence, such as cultural wisdom, maritime potential, and social values of the local community, educational institutions can build an authentic and relevant image to the needs of the community(March, 2024).

Furthermore, the development of information and communication technology also provides opportunities for educational institutions in the outer archipelago to strengthen their branding image. Through the use of digital media, educational institutions can introduce various superior programs, student achievements, and learning innovations to the wider community. This strategy not only increases the visibility of the institution, but also opens up opportunities for cooperation with various parties, both at the local, national, and international levels. Thus, branding image can be a bridge that connects educational institutions in the archipelago with a wider educational network(Al Hallaji et al., 2025).

The development of the branding image of educational institutions in the outermost archipelago is a strategic step in an effort to improve the quality of education. A strong branding image not only reflects the quality of educational institutions, but also a means to build public trust, increase educational participation, and strengthen the competitiveness of institutions in the midst of increasingly competitive dynamics of educational development. Therefore, an in-depth study is needed on how the strategy for developing the branding image of educational institutions can be carried out effectively and sustainably in the context of the outermost archipelago, so as to be able to make a real contribution to improving the quality of education and developing human

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resources in the area.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with the aim of understanding in depth the process and strategy in building the branding image of educational institutions in an effort to improve the quality of education in the outermost archipelago. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study seeks to explore social phenomena contextually based on the perspective of the education actors who are directly involved. The type of research used is a case study, which allows researchers to examine in depth the conditions, strategies, and dynamics that occur in educational institutions related to the development of the institution's image. The data collection technique was carried out through in-depth interviews with school principals, teachers, education staff, as well as the community or parents of students, observation of institutional activities and programs related to strengthening educational branding, as well as documentation of various supporting documents such as institutional profiles, featured programs, and institutional publications. The data obtained was then analyzed using an interactive analysis model which included the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing in a sustainable manner until a comprehensive understanding of the branding development strategy of educational institutions in improving the quality of education in the outermost archipelago area was obtained. To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses source triangulation techniques, method triangulation, and information re-checking to informants to ensure the validity and credibility of research findings (Scott, 2019).

Results and Discussion

Strategies for Developing the Branding Image of Educational Institutions in the Outer Islands

The development of the branding image of educational institutions in the outermost archipelago is a strategic step that not only aims to increase the attractiveness of the institution, but also to strengthen public trust in the quality of education provided. The results of the study show that educational institutions in the outermost archipelago region strive to build a positive image through various integrated strategies, ranging from strengthening the identity of the institution, developing superior programs, improving the quality of educational services, to the use of communication media as a means of publication. This strategy is carried out in stages and adjusted to the social, cultural, and geographical limitations faced by the people in the archipelago. This effort is important because educational institutions in the archipelago are often

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perceived to have lower quality than educational institutions in urban areas, so a special strategy is needed to build public trust in the quality of education held(Irawan et al., 2018).

One of the main strategies found in this study is to strengthen the identity of the institution through the formulation of a clear vision, mission, and institutional values. The identity of the institution is the main foundation in the process of building a branding image because it reflects the direction of the development of the educational institution and the values that are to be instilled in students. The results of the study show that educational institutions that have a strong vision and mission tend to find it easier to build a positive image in society because they have a clear direction of development. This is in line with the branding theory put forward by Philip Kotler which states that branding is the process of creating a strong and different identity so that it is able to build a positive perception in people's minds. In the context of educational institutions, this identity is reflected through the institution's commitment to the quality of learning, the development of students' character, and the institution's contribution to the surrounding community.

In addition to strengthening the institution's identity, the strategy of building a branding image is also carried out through the development of superior programs that are the hallmark of educational institutions. This flagship program can be in the form of strengthening character education, developing skills based on local potential, and learning innovations that are relevant to the needs of the community in the archipelago. The results of the study show that educational institutions that are able to present superior programs that are unique and relevant to the needs of the community tend to be more likely to gain trust and support from the community. These programs not only function as a means of improving the quality of education, but also as a medium to show the competitive advantage of educational institutions. This is in line with the theory of differentiation in branding which emphasizes the importance of certain uniqueness or advantages that distinguish an institution from others(HOLY, 2025).

Another strategy found in this study is to improve the quality of educational services as part of efforts to build a positive image of the institution. Branding image is not only built through promotion or publication, but must be supported by a tangible quality of educational services. Therefore, educational institutions in the outermost archipelago areas strive to improve the competence of educators, improve the education management system, and create a conducive learning environment for students. The results of the study show that the quality of interaction between teachers and students, institutional discipline, and consistency in running educational programs are important factors in shaping public perception of educational institutions. This is in

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accordance with David Aaker's view that the strength of a brand is greatly influenced by the experience and perception felt by service users. In the context of education, a positive learning experience will form a good image of an institution in the eyes of the public.

In addition, the use of communication media and information technology is also an important strategy in the development of the branding image of educational institutions in the outermost archipelago. The results of the study show that educational institutions are starting to utilize various social media platforms and digital media to introduce superior programs, student achievements, and various educational activities to the wider community. The use of digital media allows educational institutions to reach the community more effectively even though they are located in geographically remote areas. Through this media, educational institutions can build more open communication with the community and strengthen the institution's image as an active, innovative, and responsive institution to the development of the times. This is in line with integrated marketing communication theory which emphasizes the importance of using multiple communication channels consistently to build a strong institutional image(Purba & Rajagukguk, 2017).

On the other hand, the results of the study also show that the development of the branding image of educational institutions in the outermost archipelago is inseparable from the role of the community as a strategic partner in the development of education. Educational institutions that are able to establish good relationships with the community tend to build a positive image more easily because they receive strong social support. Forms of community involvement can be in the form of participation in school activities, support for educational programs, and the dissemination of positive information about educational institutions to other communities. This is in line with the theory of social capital which states that the relationship of trust and cooperation between institutions and the community can be an important factor in supporting the success of a development program, including in the field of education.

The Role of Branding Image in Increasing Public Trust in the Quality of Education

The results of the study show that the development of the branding image of educational institutions has a very significant role in increasing public trust in the quality of education, especially in the outermost archipelago areas which have often been perceived as having limitations in the quality of educational services. Based on the results of interviews with school principals, teachers, and the local community, it is known that a positive image of educational institutions can be formed through consistency in providing quality educational services,

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transparency in the management of institutions, and the ability of institutions to show various achievements and superior programs to the community. These efforts are slowly able to change the views of the public who previously doubted the quality of education in the archipelago to be more confident and support the existence of these educational institutions. The increasing public trust can be seen from the increase in the number of students who register, the increase in parental participation in school activities, and the existence of community support in various institutional development programs(Setiawan, n.d.).

Theoretically, the concept of branding image in educational institutions can be understood as perceptions, beliefs, and impressions formed in the minds of the public towards the quality and reputation of an institution. According to Kotler and Keller, brand image is a set of perceptions formed in consumers' memories that reflect the experience and information they gain about an organization or product. In the context of education, the community plays the role of users of educational services that assess the quality of institutions based on direct experience, information received, and reputation that develops in the social environment. Therefore, a positive image of educational institutions will affect the level of public trust in the quality of education offered. The results of this study show that when educational institutions consistently display a clear identity and excellence, it will be easier for the public to recognize the value and quality of the institution so that trust in the quality of education increases.

In addition, organizational reputation theory also explains that a good institutional image is formed through a continuous process and involves various factors, such as service quality, effective communication, and harmonious relationships with stakeholders. In the context of educational institutions in the outermost archipelago, communication between schools and the community is an important factor in building the institution's image. The results of the study show that educational institutions that actively socialize school programs, involve the community in educational activities, and provide open information about student development tend to be more trusted by the community. This trust does not only arise from academic quality alone, but also from the emotional closeness between educational institutions and the surrounding community. This shows that the branding image is not only built through symbols or visual identities, but also through positive social interaction between educational institutions and the community(Hanafi & Ratmaja, 2017).

The findings of this study are also in line with the concept of education quality management which emphasizes the importance of community involvement in the process of improving the quality of education. According to the theory of Total Quality Management in

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education, the quality of education is not only determined by internal factors of the institution, but also by the level of trust and support from the community as the main stakeholders. A strong branding image can be a means to strengthen the relationship between educational institutions and the community so that cooperation is created that supports each other in improving the quality of education. When people have high trust in educational institutions, they will be more active in providing support, both in the form of participation in school activities, contribution of thought, and moral support to educational programs.

In the outermost archipelago, the existence of a positive branding image is also able to overcome the stigma or negative perception that is often attached to educational institutions in remote areas. Some people previously thought that the quality of education in the archipelago was not as good as education in urban areas due to limited facilities and human resources. However, the results of the study show that through various efforts to strengthen the image of the institution, such as the development of superior programs, improving teacher competence, and the publication of student achievements, educational institutions are able to show that they also have potential and quality that is not inferior to educational institutions in other regions. These efforts are gradually able to change public perception and increase their confidence in the quality of education provided by the institution(Ekawati, 2024).

Furthermore, increasing public trust in educational institutions also has an impact on increasing educational participation in the outermost archipelago. Parents who were previously hesitant to send their children to a local educational institution began to show trust by enrolling their children in the school. In addition, the community has also begun to be actively involved in various school activities, such as parent meetings, social activities, and community-based education development programs. This increased participation is an indicator that the branding image of educational institutions has succeeded in building stronger relationships between schools and communities.

Implications of Branding Image on Improving the Quality of Education in the Outer Islands

The implications of developing the branding image of educational institutions on improving the quality of education in the outermost archipelago show a significant role in building public trust, improving the quality of educational services, and strengthening the competitiveness of institutions. Based on the findings of the research, the branding image built by educational institutions not only functions as an institutional identity, but also as a strategic means to encourage the improvement of the quality of education as a whole. Educational institutions in the

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outermost archipelago that are able to build a positive image usually show a strong commitment to the quality of learning, teacher competency development, and the implementation of excellent programs that are relevant to the needs of the local community. These efforts have an impact on increasing public trust in educational institutions, which then encourages an increase in the number of students and community participation in supporting various educational activities. This shows that the branding image is not only related to the promotional aspect, but also a reflection of the internal quality of the educational institution itself (Kartika, 2020).

Empirically, the results of the study show that educational institutions that consistently develop their institutional identity and excellence are able to create a more competitive and innovative educational environment. For example, through the development of superior programs based on local potential such as maritime-based education, strengthening character values, or integrating local wisdom in learning, educational institutions can build an image as an institution that is relevant to the context of the archipelagic community. This condition has a positive impact on students' motivation to learn and increases public pride in educational institutions in their area. In addition, a strong branding image also encourages educators to continue to improve professionalism and quality of learning, because the image of institutions that have been formed in society must be maintained through good and consistent performance.

These findings are in line with the theory of branding in educational institutions put forward by Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller which states that branding is the process of building a positive perception and image in the minds of the public through consistent identity, values, and service quality. In the context of education, branding is not only related to the symbol or name of the institution, but also reflects the quality of the learning experience provided to students. When educational institutions are able to provide quality educational services that are relevant to the needs of the community, a positive image will be formed naturally and sustainably. Thus, branding image is one of the important instruments in increasing the attractiveness of educational institutions while strengthening the institution's reputation in the eyes of the public (Afandi & Wahyudi, 2014).

In addition, the implications of branding image on improving the quality of education can also be explained through the perspective of education quality management. According to Edward Sallis, the quality of education is the result of a management process that is oriented towards continuous improvement in all aspects of education implementation. In this case, branding image can be a driver for educational institutions to continue to innovate and improve service quality. When an institution has a positive image in society, it has a moral responsibility to maintain and

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improve the quality standards that have been achieved. This encourages educational institutions to improve management systems, improve the competence of educators, and develop various programs that can improve the quality of learning.

In the outer archipelago, the development of branding image also has strategic implications in overcoming various limitations faced by educational institutions. Limited infrastructure, access to technology, and human resources are often the main challenges in the implementation of education in the archipelago. However, through the right branding strategy, educational institutions can turn these challenges into opportunities to show their local uniqueness and excellence. For example, educational institutions can position themselves as centers for educational development based on maritime potential, coastal environment, or local wisdom of island communities. This approach not only strengthens the identity of the institution, but also makes education more contextual and relevant to the lives of local communities(Hanafi & Ratmaja, 2017).

Furthermore, the positive implications of branding image can also be seen in the increased opportunities for cooperation between educational institutions and various parties, both the government, non-governmental organizations, and other educational institutions. When an educational institution has a good reputation, it will be easier for various parties to establish partnerships in the form of educational development programs, facilities and infrastructure assistance, and capacity building of educators. This cooperation ultimately makes a real contribution to improving the quality of education, especially in providing resources that were previously difficult for educational institutions in the outermost archipelago region to access(Purba & Rajagukguk, 2017).

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion of the strategy for developing the branding image of educational institutions, the role of branding image in increasing public trust, and its implications for improving the quality of education in the outermost archipelago, it can be concluded that branding image has a strategic role in strengthening the quality and competitiveness of educational institutions. Through planned strategies, such as strengthening the identity of the institution, developing superior programs that are relevant to local potential, and the use of communication media and information technology, educational institutions are able to build a positive image in the community. This positive image then contributes to increasing public trust, strengthening parent and community participation, and encouraging an increase in the number of students. In addition,

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branding image also has implications for improving the quality of education through strengthening institutional management, increasing the professionalism of educators, learning innovation, and opening opportunities for cooperation with various parties. Thus, the development of branding image not only functions as a means of institutional imagery, but also becomes an important instrument in encouraging continuous improvement of the quality of education, especially for educational institutions located in the outer archipelago with various limitations faced.

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