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## Brand Equity at The Islamic Boarding School (Study The Marketing of Educational Services at Islamic Boarding School in Banjarbaru City)

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### Abstract :

This study aims to identify and describe brand equity which consists of four assets namely brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty at the Al-Falah and Darul Ilmi Islamic boarding schools for girls in the city of Banjarbaru. This research is a type of field research. This study uses a descriptive research method with a qualitative approach. The subjects of this study were potential customers at the Al-Falah and Darul Ilmi Islamic boarding schools for girls. Data collection techniques are observations, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis by data reduction, data presentation, and verification. The results showed that brand awareness at the Al-Falah and Darul Ilmi Islamic boarding schools for girls was at the top of brand level brand association both also show positive information that is supported by positive responses from potential internal customers, supported by the advantages of Islamic boarding schools, suitability for lifestyle/life needs, and suitable prices. Perceived quality both of them show expectations or are satisfied with the quality provided by the Islamic boarding school. Both brand loyalty is at the committed buyer level.

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## Introduction

Education and Islamic boarding schools are a combination of two positive words that form valuable assets in the future, so that in the future you can feel the sweetness after being patient and consistent, because education is a form of investment in a long period of time. Islamic boarding schools are categorized as Islamic educational institutions that function actively to help solve the tangled threads of problems in the world of education and society in general. Islamic boarding schools have proven a high effort in carrying out their dual mission, namely the mission of sacred and social intentions. That is the reason why managing a pesantren requires not only the mission of the pure intention of a kyai, but also professional skills.

Islamic boarding schools are part of education which is incidentally the most Islamic. By de facto, Islamic boarding schools are contained in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system which states that Islamic boarding schools are part of education consisting of Ula, Wustha, Ulya, and Ma'had Ali levels. The implementation of educational

functions in Islamic boarding schools, da'wah functions and community empowerment is regulated in Law no. 18 of 2019.

Islamic boarding schools, which are familiarly called Islamic boarding schools, are part of the evidence of the long history of the pre-independence Indonesian people until now. It is recorded that Islamic boarding schools have existed since they were colonized by the Dutch. One of the proofs is that Islamic boarding schools as Islamic educational institutions are very distinctive and unique and hold positive traditions and also keep up with positive new things, which have given birth to their alumni to become national figures such as KH Hasyim Asy'ari (1871). -1947), KH Ahmad Dahlan (1868-1923), and others (Syafe'i 2017).

In the past, in its development, Islamic boarding schools were indeed very rapid, in the Dutch era alone the number of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia had been identified as many as 20,000. Interestingly, currently the number of Islamic boarding schools has reached 31,385. This figure shows the performance of Islamic boarding schools that still exist in Indonesia. Especially in South Kalimantan itself, the number of Islamic boarding schools has reached 214. As for Kotabaru, the newly released capital city in South Kalimantan, there are 13 Islamic boarding schools. This not small number shows the enthusiasm and concern of the community for Islamic boarding schools.

The mushrooming of this institution, of course, requires even more extra attention in order to maintain trust, quantity and quality. In order to continue to exist, Islamic boarding schools must pay attention to strategic marketing. As Stanley J. Spanbauer said, "Education is a service with customers like any other business..."(Pidarta 1997). Like companies, Islamic boarding schools also need strategic marketing in order to survive and compete with other institutions that are mushrooming. Islamic boarding schools with demands for independence in terms of funding should not be indifferent to market interests that can change.

The presence of brand equity research helps Islamic boarding schools to survive in the world of educational marketing. Brand in the eyes of Islamic boarding schools is none other than making it the first measurement tool in which buyers of educational services will make decisions to trust their best sons and daughters to attend Islamic boarding schools. Aaker, as quoted by Bohrer, argues that brand equity is a set of assets of a brand that adds value to customers (Bohrer 2007). These assets consist of brand loyalty, brand awareness, brand perceived quality, and brand association (Keller 2018; Hariadi et al., 2023)

The more famous (the public is aware of its existence) and the more it is stored in someone's mind about a pesantren institution, the stronger the brand equity of an institution seen from brand awareness. Meanwhile, the complementary attributes of a pesantren institution from programs, costs, facilities and services as a whole can determine brand perceived quality and association. Then, the level of satisfaction with educational services and services determines brand loyalty which is marked by repurchasing or providing positive information on the basis of a high sense of belonging without being asked by the pesantren. So that from some of these views it will determine how strong the brand of Islamic boarding schools in Banjarbaru is. This strong brand will have an impact on the choice of parents to house their children.

Normally, someone will entrust their child to a well-known educational institution. As cited in research Rahman and Noor, "consumers tend to buy well-known brands because they feel safe (Noor 2014)." If only in the business world, customers will think carefully in choosing products to get security from the products they buy and avoid losses. Moreover, in choosing an educational institution whose influence will last a lifetime for their children. In this case, brand equity can make Islamic boarding schools aware of the existence, position,

superiority, and loyalty of users of their educational services to be improved or maintained.

### **Research Methods**

This research is a qualitative research with a descriptive approach by collecting data using observation, interviews, and documentation. In this study, researchers will raise brand equity at Al-Falah Puteri and Darul Ilmi Islamic boarding schools located in Banjarbaru City. The target of her research is female students in Wustho and Ulya classes, and parents who send their children to Al-Falah Puteri and Darul Ilmi Islamic boarding schools.

### **Research Result and Discussion**

#### **Brand Equity at The Al-Falah Puteri Islamic Boarding School**

The existence of Islamic boarding schools in terms of brand awareness is at the top of the mind (top of brand). This is because the Al-Falah Islamic boarding school is a boarding school that is familiar to the public. Referring to the year it was founded, this pesantren is the oldest, largest, and well-known pesantren in the city of Banjarbaru. Normally, someone will entrust their child to a well-known educational institution.

If viewed from the brand association, which describes the overall perception of the Al-Falah female Islamic boarding school, positive values will be remembered by users of educational services for life. For example, Islamic boarding schools that focus on moral education, strengthening and mastering the Islamic religion are shown by their 7 superior programs, supported by additional and extracurricular programs, basic training before boarding such as *tajhizi* to even the best graduates are financed free of charge for their education abroad, an updated curriculum and in accordance with the future needs of female students without leaving classic books, a location that is considered strategic, adequate facilities, security and strict regulations that make parents feel more relieved, the same faith (*bermanhaj expert sunah wal jamaah*),

The continuation of the perceptions, values, and reputation or good image of the brand association owned by the Al-Falah Putri Islamic Boarding School will not last long if it is not supported by perceived quality / quality felt by users of educational services. Users of educational services reveal that overall services and learning at the Al-Falah Puteri Islamic boarding school are as expected/satisfied. Those expressions and beliefs are subjective judgments from users of educational services that make Al-Falah Putri even more prominent and invite other beliefs. We can see objectively from the research from Amirah and the team that revealed, "there is a significant influence of discipline at the Al-Falah Islamic Boarding School (HPPA) student association on the social capital of female students (Amirah, Bambang Subiyakto 2020)." Social capital is one of the capitals that must be owned by humans today. The results of this study have strengthened perceived quality, one of which is social capital held by female students, that female students who have been educated at Al-Falah Puteri Islamic Boarding School already have social capital in dealing with social life through a trained form of independence.

Furthermore, the level of loyalty is illustrated that the loyalty that is built between educational institutions and service users is very strong, not just providing positive information to the closest family and the general public. However, buying/choosing the Al-Falah Puteri Islamic boarding school as a trusted educational institution for the first, second,

and possibly spreading to other extended families has occurred at this pesantren.

### **Brand Equity at The Darul Ilmi Islamic Boarding School**

Historically, the existence of the Darul Ilmi Islamic boarding school was recognized as an institution that focused on caring for orphans and shifted to an educational institution for orphans. Over time, this noble activity was actually "flooded" by the trust of various groups, so it was initiated into a boarding school called Darul Ilmi.

Darul Ilmi Islamic Boarding School in terms of brand awareness, is also in the top of brand position for buyers and users of its educational services. The average answer that the researchers found revealed that the Darul Ilmi Islamic boarding school was their first choice because it was recognized as being in the city of Banjarbaru.

Darul Ilmi Islamic Boarding School also offers learning programs that are adapted and not demanding for graduates such as SD/equivalent whose religious-based curriculum is indeed somewhat less than MI/SD IT graduates. Darul Ilmi only offers a normal range of study for 6 years and compulsory residence. Now this positive perception has brought this pesantren with quite a lot of interest, namely 834 female students who come from three regions in Kalimantan namely South, Central and East Kalimantan.

Furthermore, how the quality perceived by users of educational services is obtained from the overall answers related to service and learning. Customers of education services at Darul Ilmi reveal what is expected/as expected.

Then, brand loyalty can be described through the behavior of education service buyers at Darul Ilmi on the repeat purchase indicator, to the extent that they share/promote positive information regarding the Darul Ilmi Islamic boarding school to the general public, only at that stage. Meanwhile, whether repeat purchases were made by the same family is still not clear, this is because the informants that the researchers met with users of educational services at the Darul Ilmi Islamic boarding school were considered new buyers/users.

Based on the data that researchers have collected. Thus, from the point of view of the internal customers of each Islamic boarding school, brand equity in Al-Falah Putri and Darul Ilmi Islamic boarding schools has similarities and differences. The similarities lie in 3 assets, namely brand awareness which is both at the top of the brand, perceived quality which is also said to have met expectations/satisfied as a whole, and brand loyalty which is in the position of a committed buyer. The difference can be seen from the brand association, the difference can be seen from the age of the pesantren which has an impact on the quantity of input and output, the history of its establishment, the span of education undertaken, the superior and additional programs implemented, to the monthly fees that must be paid by the parents of the female students. Even though, it is undeniable that several things revealed from brand awareness by customers in each Islamic boarding school also have similarities. In the following, the researcher has presented detailed information through a matrix that describes brand equity in the Al-Falah Putri and Darul Ilmi Islamic boarding schools.

Table 1. Brand Equity at Al-Falah Puteri and Darul Ilmi Islamic Boarding Schools

| No                                    | Brand Equity   | Al-Falah Islamic Boarding School for Girls  | Darul Ilmi Islamic Boarding School   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| 1                                     | Brand Awareness  | <i>Top of brand.</i>  | <i>Top of brand.</i>   |
| 2                                     | Brand Association  | Famous and oldest in Banjarbaru City  | Famous   |
|                                       |  | The largest in terms of quantity in the city of Banjarbaru  | Starting from an orphanage for orphans to a boarding school  |
|                                       |  | Number of female students in 2022: 2,020 people (1,793 mukim, 227 commuting)  | Number of female students in 2022: 834 people (all mukim)  |
|                                       |  | Santriwati currently comes from the provinces of South, Central and East Kalimantan   | Santriwati currently comes from the provinces of South, Central and East Kalimantan  |
|                                       |  | Using two combinations of curricula   | Using two combinations of curricula  |
|                                       |  | Prioritize morals according to vision   | Prioritize morals according to vision  |
|                                       |  | Still using the classic salafi book   | Still using the classic salafi book  |
|                                       |  | Bermanhaj expert sunnah wal congregation  | Bermanhaj expert sunnah wal congregation   |
|                                       |  | It is obligatory for tajhizi so normally if you graduate, you study for 7 years.  | The normal length of stay is 6 years   |
|                                       |  | There are 7 flagship programs: Amtsilati, Arabic, English, Mutun, tahfidz hadith, tahfidz Al-Qur'an, and Tahsin Al-Qur'an.  | Its flagship program: Darul Ilmi served outside the region (DAIM) when he was in grade 6 of the Quranic recitation and tahfidz |
|                                       |  | Other programs: muhadarah in front of thousands of students, mandatory entrepreneurship in the form of bazaars for female students when they are in class 3 ulya. | Extracurriculars held: scouts, KSR, maulid habsy, muhadah, martial arts, karate, dance, and recitations                        |
|                                       |  | Extracurriculars held: scouts, KSR, calligraphy and habsy birthday  | Regular lectures: every Tuesday night, Friday night, and every month   |
|                                       |  | Regular lectures: every night   | Strict rules   |
| The teacher who once taught is famous | In 2022, 1 female student will graduate and be accepted at Yemen's Al-Ahgaf University |   |  |

| No | Brand Equity      | Al-Falah Islamic Boarding School for Girls  | Darul Ilmi Islamic Boarding School  |
|----|-------------------|---|---|
|    |                   | Strict rules  | Beautiful and spacious environment  |
|    |                   | The 2 best graduates receive scholarships of Rp. 50,000,000.00 to continue their education abroad             | Strategic location  |
|    |                   | In 2022 there are 11 female students who will graduate and be accepted at Yemen's Al-Ahgaf University         | Standard fee (Infaq/month: IDR 650,000.00)  |
|    |                   | Alumni are scattered everywhere and have won a lot of public trust  |   |
|    |                   | Beautiful and spacious environment  |   |
|    |                   | Strategic location  |   |
|    |                   | Standard fee (Infaq/month: IDR 800,000.00)  |   |
| 3  | Perceived Quality | Overall, the services, teaching, competencies obtained by female students are considered to meet expectations | Overall, the services, teaching, competencies obtained by female students are considered to meet expectations |
| 4  | Brand Loyalty     | <i>committed buyer</i>  | <i>committed buyer</i>  |

### Conclusion

Based on the research above, it can be concluded that brand equity in Al-Falah Puteri and Darul Ilmi Islamic boarding schools can be summarized as follows: Brand awareness (awareness of brand existence) in Al-Falah Puteri and Darul Ilmi Islamic boarding schools is the same at the top of brand level (top of mind). Brand associations (things related to brands/brand associations) at Al-Falah Puteri and Darul Ilmi Islamic boarding schools, both of which show positive information that is supported by positive responses, supported by the excellence of Islamic boarding schools, conformity with lifestyle/life needs, and suitable price. Perceived quality at the Al-Falah Puteri and Darul Ilmi Islamic boarding schools, both of which indicated that they were as expected or satisfied with the quality provided by the pesantren. Brand loyalty at the Al-Falah Puteri Islamic Boarding School and Darul Ilmi, both are at the committed Buyer level, where potential internal customers claim to make repeat purchases by using the same educational services for other family members and provide positive information regarding the boarding school currently occupied.

The renewal implication of the conclusions above is that the more well-known and the longest established Islamic boarding school institutions have increased brand loyalty. The higher the loyalty that is built by users of educational services at Islamic boarding schools, the more likely repeat purchases can occur in allied families. With well-known figures in the community, it can add brand equity for pesantren to attract markets/increase quantity.

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