

## Marketing Mix in Educational Services Marketing in the Digital Age

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### ABSTRACT

In an era of technological dynamics and increasingly fierce competition, educational institutions are faced with the challenge of increasing the range of educational services. Marketing mix planning strategy is crucial in dealing with this change. The background to this issue reveals the need to understand the impact of marketing strategies on educational outreach amid an ever-changing environment. The purpose of this study is to find out what a marketing mix is, how the role of marketing mix in increasing the reach of educational services amid the dynamics of technological development, and to find out what are the main challenges in implementing a marketing mix planning strategy. This research uses a qualitative approach with a focus on literature review. Through a critical analysis of literature related to marketing mix planning in the marketing of educational services, this study aims to develop a solid theoretical foundation to understand the strategic role of marketing mix in the context of education. From the analysis of the literature review, the results of this study present an in-depth understanding of how marketing mix can affect the increase in the reach of educational services. The findings of this study provide insight into effective integration strategies, key challenges faced by educational institutions, and efforts to overcome these barriers. This research is expected to contribute new thinking in the context of marketing educational services, providing a foundation for the development of more effective and sustainable marketing strategies.

**Keywords:** *Marketing mix, Marketing educational services, digital age*

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is a crucial element in community development and individual development (Murtafiah 2022). Improving the accessibility and quality of education services is a top priority to ensure every individual has equal opportunities to access knowledge and skills (Manan 2023). In this context, the role of marketing mix planning in the marketing of educational services is becoming increasingly important.

Technological developments, changing social dynamics, and increasingly fierce competition in the education sector demand a measurable and effective marketing strategy (Riyadi 2021). The use of the marketing mix concept, which involves product, pricing, promotion, and distribution, can be key to increasing the reach of education (Dayat 2019).

However, until now, there are still challenges and complexities in implementing marketing mix planning that can be optimal in the education service sector (Sudirjo 2022).

Previous research has been done in the field of marketing mix, but not so much in studying the marketing mix in educational institutions in the digital era. Fendy Hariatama, studying SWOT Analysis of Marketing Mix Implementation (Marketing Mix) At the Main Prima Mandiri Education Institution Palangka Raya (Hariatama 2021). Ammar Kukuh Wicaksono, researching Marketing Mix Strategies in Attracting New Students to Private Islamic Education Institutions: A Case Study at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Misriu Al Hasan, Mojo District, Kediri Regency (Wicaksono 2021). Syahrial Labaso discusses the Application of Marketing Mix as an Educational Service Marketing Strategy at MAN 1 Yogyakarta (Labaso' 2018). From previous research, the question still arises to what extent can marketing mix planning contribute to increasing the reach of education? How can the integration of these marketing mix elements optimize the visibility and accessibility of education services? Is the adoption of this strategy able to answer the changing dynamics of the education market?

The purpose of this study is to find out what a marketing mix is, how the role of marketing mix in increasing the reach of educational services amid the dynamics of technological development, and to find out what are the main challenges in implementing a marketing mix planning strategy. Through a deep understanding of the background of this issue, it is hoped that this research can make a significant contribution to the development of marketing strategies that can increase the reach of education and meet the needs of the community for quality education services.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a focus on Library studies (Adlini and others 2022) to gain a deep insight into marketing mix planning in educational services marketing. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand the complex and dynamic context of this topic, as well as gain a more in-depth interpretation of the phenomena involved (Fadli 2021). Selection of quality information sources, such as academic books, journal articles, research reports, and official documentation related to marketing mix planning in the education sector. Ensure diversity of information sources to gain a comprehensive perspective. Through a literature review approach with qualitative analysis methods, it is hoped that this research can provide rich and deep insights into marketing mix planning in the context of marketing educational services.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Marketing Mix**

Marketing Mix, also known as marketing mix, is a strategic concept that encapsulates four main elements that a company or organization must pay attention to in order to market their products or services (Thabit 2018). Offer a "marketing mix", often referred to as the "4Ps", as a means of translating marketing planning into practice (Londhe 2014). These four elements are interrelated and influence each other, and careful

application of them can help companies achieve their marketing goals. The Marketing Mix has also played an important role in the evolution of marketing management science as a basic concept of commercial philosophy (Constantinides 2006).

Here's an in-depth explanation of each element of the Marketing Mix:

**1. Product:**

Product refers to the goods or services offered by the company. In terms of educational services, products include curriculum, teaching methods, facilities, and learning experiences offered by educational institutions. Products are all the components and elements necessary to perform a service that generates value for customers (Jain 2013). The most important feature is the complexity of the product and the complexity of the buying process which leads to a high degree of interdependence between buyers and sellers (Rafiq and Ahmed 1995). In essence, a person buys products to satisfy a need or desire. Someone buys a product not just physically, but the benefits caused by the product purchased (Silaningsih and Utami 2018). The success of a product is influenced by the extent to which it meets consumer needs and expectations. In education, the quality of the curriculum, the reputation of the institution, and the learning experience become important factors.

**2. Price:**

The price includes the cost set for the product or service. In education, pricing involves tuition fees, scholarships, discounts, and financial policies of the institution. Price is an amount of money exchanged for a product or service. Furthermore, price is the amount of value that consumers exchange for a certain amount of benefit by owning or using a good or service (Firmansyah and Mahardhika 2015). The problem that often arises is related to prices that are sometimes complained by consumers or even harm consumers (Syukur and Syahbudin 2017). Price concerns the issue of consumer purchasing power (Sahabuddin and others 2022). Proper pricing plays a key role in attracting prospective students. Transparent pricing policies that match the value provided by education can influence value perception.

**3. Promotion:**

Promotion involves all activities designed to increase consumer awareness and interest in a product or service. In education, promotion includes marketing activities such as advertising, event promotion, and digital marketing strategies. Promotion is the activity of communicating the advantages of the product as well. Persuade target customers to buy it (Firmansyah and Mahardhika 2015). The promotion mix can also be done by using more innovative communication media, such as short message services that can attract potential customers (Wahyuni and others 2012). Effective promotion can improve the image of the institution, increase the number of registrants, and build positive relationships with stakeholders.

**4. Place:**

Distribution includes the way in which a product or service is provided to consumers. In education, distribution involves the physical location of an institution, partnerships with other institutions, and accessibility policies. Place (Distribution) according to Kotler and Armstrong "Distribution includes company activities so that products are easily

obtained by target consumers" (Firmansyah and Mahardhika 2015). Promote and distribute goods and services that can satisfy consumer needs (Nurcholidah 2019). Factors such as the location of the institution, the availability of online services, and partnerships with industry can affect the accessibility and affordability of education services.

By understanding and managing the four elements of the Marketing Mix well, an organization can create a solid and integrated marketing strategy. Alignment between products, pricing, promotion, and distribution is the key to success in achieving marketing goals and meeting customer needs.

### **The role of marketing mix in increasing the reach of educational services amid the dynamics of technological developments**

In the context of dynamic technological developments, the role of marketing mix is crucial in an effort to increase the range of education services (Ilmi and Zulkarnain 2023). Marketing mix, which consists of four main elements "product, price, promotion, and distribution" (Nurcholifah 2014) become a strategic foundation for achieving marketing objectives and expanding the impact of Education services (Fathurrochman and others 2021). Marketing mix planning in the marketing of educational services in the digital age requires an up-to-date approach and is responsive to changes in technology and consumer behavior (Ariyanto and others 2021). The digital era brings new challenges and great opportunities, and marketing mix planning must be able to utilize digital technology to increase the effectiveness of marketing education services (Puspawati and Ristanto 2018). Marketing mix planning in the marketing of educational services in the digital age must include an in-depth understanding of online consumer behavior, digital data analysis, and adaptation to the latest technological trends. By leveraging effective digital tools and marketing strategies, educational institutions can expand their reach, increase engagement, and build a positive image in a competitive digital world.

Here is the extent to which the marketing mix can contribute to increasing the reach of educational services amid the dynamics of technological development:

#### **1. Product:**

- **Adaptation to Technology:** The integration of technology in educational products can improve curriculum quality and relevance, expand accessibility through online learning, and create innovative learning experiences.
- **Educational Technology Development:** Updates to learning technologies, such as the use of e-learning platforms and mobile applications, can extend the reach of educational services to a wider market segment.

#### **2. Price:**

- **Cost Efficiency Through Technology:** The application of technology can help cost efficiency, resulting in more competitive pricing without sacrificing the quality of educational services.
- **Pricing Strategies Through Digital Platforms:** Innovative pricing models, such as dynamic pricing or special offers through digital platforms, can be an attraction to increase participation.

### 3. Promotion:

- **Digital and Social Media:** The utilization of digital and social media enables educational institutions to reach a wider audience, build awareness, and communicate effectively with prospective students.
- **Content Marketing and Online Education:** Using content marketing and online education strategies can help create a positive image of educational institutions, introduce service excellence, and build engagement with prospective students.

### 4. Place:

- **Use of Online Platforms:** The distribution of educational services through online platforms expands geographic reach, allowing institutions to reach students in various locations without physical restrictions.
- **Partnerships with E-learning Platforms: Cooperation with e-learning** platforms or online institutions can help institutions optimize distribution and improve the affordability of educational services.

By adapting marketing mix strategies wisely in the face of technological developments, educational institutions can improve marketing effectiveness, reach a wider target market, and provide more relevant and innovative educational services. Thus, marketing mix becomes the main instrument in developing strategies that are responsive to technological developments to increase the reach of educational services.

### Key challenges in implementing the marketing mix

Educational institutions are often faced with a number of significant challenges when implementing marketing mix planning strategies. The presence of the marketing paradigm is not intended as an effort to commercialize education, but rather a strategy for educational institutions, so that they continue to exist in responding to the challenges and changes of the times that continue to grow, change, and develop (Labaso' 2018). The implementation of marketing mix in the industrial era 4.0 must be able to win the competition with competitors by implementing marketing mix strategies that are relevant to the challenges of the times (Shiddiq and others 2021). In order to achieve optimal results, it is important to identify these barriers and design appropriate coping strategies.

The following is an explanation of the main challenges faced by educational institutions in implementing marketing mix planning strategies and how to overcome these obstacles:

1. **Limited Financial Resources:** Institutes of education often face budget constraints for marketing, which can limit the ability to adopt more sophisticated strategies. Educational institutions must be able to analyze the barriers and challenges in utilizing digital marketing (Wardhani and Romas 2022). The search for low-cost alternatives such as digital marketing, social media utilization, and strategic partnerships can help improve the efficiency of marketing spending.
2. **The complexity of technology trends:** Rapid developments in technology require a deep understanding and ability to adapt, which may not always be easy for educational institutions. Marketing strategies must be innovative and creative due to shifts in consumer behavior, industry issues, and the pace of technological advancement. In the

digital age, managing change has become critical to overcoming challenges and seizing opportunities (Ananda and others 2023). Conducting ongoing training for marketing staff, engaging with technology experts, and keeping up with industry trends can help institutions to continuously innovate and take advantage of the latest technology.

3. **Slow Decision Process in Educational Environment:** Slow and complex decision-making among educational institutions can hinder the implementation of responsive marketing mix planning. In an organizational setting, decision making is the most important part of planning activities. Allows a decision making to have an impact on solving problems or even adding to the problem (Abduh 2016). Establishing efficient decision-making teams, supporting collaboration between departments, and facilitating more agile workflows can help speed up the decision process.
4. **High Competition in the Education Sector:** Increasing competition in the education sector requires institutions to differentiate themselves with unique marketing mix strategies. The emergence of new educational institutions, on the one hand is a positive signal of the high level of attention of the government or the public to the world of education, but on the other hand competition between educational institutions is increasingly attractive (Efferi 2014). A focus on unique added value, utilization of competitive pricing policies, and the creation of a strong brand image can help institutions stand out amid the competition.
5. **Changes in Consumer Needs and Preferences:** The changing dynamics of consumer needs and preferences require flexibility in marketing mix planning. Very radical changes are taking place in the marketing environment, such as technological changes, globalization and government regulations. These situations and conditions will encourage the emergence of new behaviors from consumers that are reflected in their needs and desires (Mahendra and Ardani 2015). Conducting regular market research, listening to customer feedback, and adjusting marketing mix strategies according to changing trends can help institutions stay relevant.

By recognizing these challenges and implementing appropriate resolution strategies, educational institutions can optimize the implementation of their marketing mix planning strategies. The key is alacrity, flexibility, and creativity in overcoming obstacles and adapting to changing marketing environments.

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of marketing mix planning strategies in the marketing of educational services requires a deep understanding of market dynamics, technology trends, and consumer needs. Educational institutions face a number of significant challenges, including limited financial resources, technological complexity, slow decision processes, intensifying competition, and changing consumer needs. Nonetheless, awareness of these challenges provides an opportunity to devise effective coping strategies. With creativity, flexibility, and responsiveness to change, educational institutions can achieve optimal results in the marketing of educational services. The importance of implementing a marketing mix strategy is seen in its ability to increase visibility, optimize accessibility, and

form a positive brand image. By overcoming these barriers, educational institutions can build strong relationships with students, parents, and other stakeholders, increase attractiveness, and provide quality and relevant educational services in the ever-changing digital age. Overall, the success of education services marketing depends on the efficient integration of products, pricing, promotion, and distribution involving sustainability, innovation, and adaptability as key to achieving strategic goals.

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