



Optimizing Islamic Boarding School-Based Branding to Increase the Reputation of Islamic Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The main objectives of this research are to identify effective branding strategies, understand the impact of implementing Islamic boarding school-based branding on the university's reputation, and explore the role of Islamic boarding school values in building a positive image of the institution. **Method:** The method used in this research is a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. **Results:** The research results show that integrating Islamic boarding school values in the curriculum, using social media for promotion, and collaborating with alums and Islamic boarding school figures are effective branding strategies in improving the university's reputation. Implementing these strategies has succeeded in increasing the attractiveness of Qomaruddin Gresik University in the eyes of prospective students and the wider community and strengthening alum loyalty. This research also found that Islamic boarding school-based branding can provide a strong and unique identity for the university, differentiating it from other Islamic universities. **Novelty:** This research emphasizes a holistic approach to optimizing Islamic boarding school-based branding, focusing not only on promotional aspects but also on integrating Islamic boarding school values in all aspects of university operations.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding school-based higher education has developed into an institution ready to face the global era. In facing the challenges of globalization, these institutions must not only maintain high-quality education but must also be able to compete at the international level. Building a brand image through various efforts to improve institutional quality manifests strong competitiveness. A good image allows Islamic boarding school-based universities to stand out among the many higher education options available, attracting interest not only from within the country but also from prospective students, lecturers, and international partners (Broucker, 2021).

Success in building a positive brand image can significantly impact a college's ability to attract high-quality students and experienced faculty from various parts of the world (Saurombe, 2020). This not only enhances the academic environment by providing diverse international perspectives and experiences but also increases the diversity on campus. Furthermore, collaboration with international partners can facilitate new opportunities for research, exchange programs, and innovative curriculum development (Sun, 2023). Thus, Islamic boarding school-based universities can more easily adapt to changes and demands in global education.

Building branding at Islamic boarding school-based universities must use a holistic approach. Pesantren, Indonesia's oldest Islamic educational institution, has a rich and robust heritage in shaping its students' character and Islamic knowledge. However, in

the era of globalization and modernization, the challenges for Islamic boarding schools have become more complex. Many Islamic boarding schools have transformed into universities to answer the needs of the times, but still face difficulties in carrying out effective branding. Usually, branding efforts are only limited to promotional and marketing aspects, without paying attention to the fundamental values of Islamic boarding schools. Therefore, a comprehensive strategy is required that emphasizes promotional aspects and incorporates Islamic residential schools' principles into all facets of university operations. Hence, Islamic universities recognize that they contribute to intellectual advancement through educational institutions (Yanti et al., 2024).

Despite our assessment of the Islamic residential school branding doctrine as marginal and deficient in quality, we continue to accept it as a matter of course as lower-class individuals (Yanti et al., 2024). Integrating Islamic boarding school values into the curriculum, extracurricular activities, and university administration is a comprehensive strategy for optimizing the branding of Islamic boarding schools in the current era. Sincerity, independence, and discipline are taught in the classroom and implemented in the daily lives of students on campus. In this manner, students acquire academic knowledge and cultivate a strong character in accordance with the principles of Islamic residential schools. This method guarantees that the university's distinctive Islamic boarding school identity is reflected in all aspects, thereby establishing a solid point of differentiation in the context of university competition. This comprehensive approach also necessitates involving all stakeholders, including instructors, students, and the local community. Islamic boarding school-based universities can create programs that are pertinent and responsive to the current circumstances by working closely together, all while maintaining their sincerely held traditional values. With this comprehensive integration, the resulting branding is not merely an image on the surface, but rather a reflection of the Islamic boarding school's essence, thereby attracting the interest and trust of potential students and other relevant parties.

Building positive branding is not solely about enhancing an institution's popularity; it guarantees sustainability and excellence in a competitive educational environment. A reliable reputation recognized by various stakeholders, such as prospective students, parents, alums, and industry partners, is established through solid branding. This reputation is vital for supporting recruitment efforts, obtaining research funding, and establishing strategic partnerships (Khoshtaria, 2020). Therefore, it is crucial for Islamic boarding school-based higher education institutions to maintain their relevance and superiority in the dynamic global education market by continuing to enhance their brand image through innovation in teaching, research, and community engagement. The process of higher education is a series of stages, beginning with the planning phase, then the organizing phase, the implementation phase, and the control and supervision of the various operational aspects of the institution. The primary objective of higher education management is to realize the organization's vision, mission, and objectives.

Branding of Islamic boarding school-based universities is one potential strategy for improving the reputation of Islamic universities, especially in Indonesia. Islamic universities have unique qualities and distinctive values that can be optimized through solid and effective branding. Islamic boarding schools, as Islamic educational institutions, have strong Islamic values, discipline, and integrity, which can be a unique attraction for prospective students and the wider community (Ansori et al., 2023). Islamic boarding schools have long been known as educational institutions

emphasizing moral development, discipline, and religious knowledge (Maruf, 2019). Islamic boarding schools have a significant role in producing a young generation with character and knowledge (Ambarwati, 2024). Apart from that, Islamic boarding schools are also considered a moral fortress that can shape students' character with integrity (Firmansyah et al., 2022).

Branding is essential in the marketing strategy and reputation development of higher education institutions, especially for Islamic boarding school-based universities. Effective branding can create a solid and consistent identity, differentiate an institution from competitors, and build trust and loyalty among students, alums, and the wider community (Salazar, 2020). In the context of Islamic higher education, Islamic boarding school-based branding has significant added value because it can highlight the uniqueness and excellence of the institution in integrating general education and Islamic values (Yudianto et al., 2023). Strong branding in Islamic educational institutions can increase prospective students' attractiveness and trust and improve student recruitment quality that is more in line with the institution's vision and mission (Juhaidi, 2024). Additionally, Islamic boarding school-based universities can broaden their collaboration network with various parties, such as the government, donor agencies, and industry, due to their strong branding (Amirullah & Hamami, 2020). This collaboration is essential to support the development of quality academic, research, and community service programs. Institutions with good branding find it easier to get support and investment from external parties, which in turn can improve the quality and capacity of the institution (Subbarayalu, 2022). Thus, strong branding impacts public perception and increases an institution's resources and ability to provide better education.

At Qomaruddin Gresik University, it is crucial to optimize the branding of Islamic boarding schools, as they are instrumental in the development of students' religious knowledge and character, which serves as a critical foundation for the branding of Islamic universities (Fitri & Ondeng, 2022). Integrating Islamic boarding school values into the university curriculum can increase the public's attractiveness and trust in the institution (Maarif & Rofiq, 2018). This corroborates the notion that branding that emphasizes Islamic boarding school values can enhance the university's identity and reputation. The effective utilization of social media is also a critical factor in promoting educational institutions' excellence and developing a solid brand (Shukla, 2022). This is relevant to Qomaruddin Gresik University's strategy to utilize social media platforms to strengthen its image and attract prospective students. Collaboration with alums and successful Islamic boarding school figures can improve the image and reputation of Islamic universities (Khanna, 2019). This corroborates the significance of alum participation in university branding strategies. In addition, Islamic boarding schools in East Java that employ effective branding tend to have higher enrollment rates and greater appeal (Ummah, 2019). These findings show that effective Islamic boarding school-based branding can positively impact the attractiveness and reputation of Islamic educational institutions. Overall, previous research findings can be used as empirical facts that support Qomaruddin Gresik University's efforts to optimize Islamic boarding school-based branding to increase its reputation and competitiveness as an Islamic higher education institution.

Optimizing branding at Qomaruddin Gresik University was implemented to overcome the challenges of strengthening its position as a superior and trusted Islamic university. One of the main reasons is to increase the university's attractiveness in

prospective students' eyes, especially those looking for an education that integrates Islamic values with general knowledge. Strong and targeted branding can effectively emphasize the superiority and uniqueness of Qomaruddin Gresik University, given the escalating competition among universities. In addition, the university is committed to fortifying its connections with the Islamic boarding school community and alums, as they serve as a critical support system for institutional growth. However, the classic style of Islamic boarding school-based universities is still strong in three things, namely: 1) the Islamic boarding school curriculum still applies a traditional style that focuses on religious studies; 2) traditional teaching methods of lecturers; and 3) management is Islamic boarding school-centric and not democratic (Jihan et al. et al., 2018).

In the face of the escalating competition among Islamic universities, the primary strategy for enhancing the competitiveness and position of Qomaruddin Gresik University is to implement effective branding. By optimizing Islamic boarding school-based branding, universities can highlight their unique strengths and values to attract more prospective students and increase public trust. This research aims to examine and identify: 1) strategies for optimizing Islamic boarding school-based branding that are effective in improving the reputation of Qomaruddin Gresik University as an Islamic higher education institution; 2) integration of Islamic boarding school values in various operational aspects of higher education can build a strong and unique identity; and 3) explore the impact of implementing an Islamic boarding school-based branding strategy on student and alums loyalty, as well as collaboration networks with external parties.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. Qualitative research explores and understands specific individuals' and groups' meanings of social or humanitarian issues (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The flowchart of this research series is as in Figure 1.

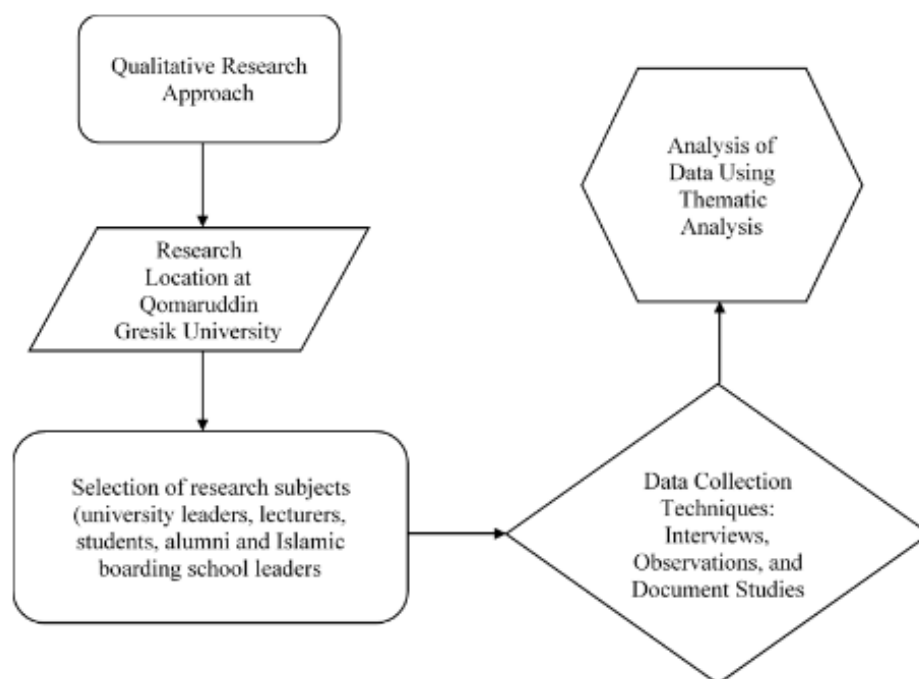


Figure 1. Research flowchart.

This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand the phenomenon of Islamic boarding school-based branding in depth in the specific context of this university. The research was conducted at Qomaruddin Gresik University, East Java, and the research subjects consisted of university administrators, lecturers, students, alums, and influential Islamic boarding school figures. Subject selection was carried out using purposive sampling. The selection of informants was determined based on predetermined categories. Data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with university administrators, lecturers, students, alums, and Islamic boarding school figures to gain information regarding the branding strategy implemented, their perceptions of Islamic boarding school-based branding, and its impact on the university's reputation. Observations were conducted to observe activities and programs related to Islamic boarding school-based branding at universities, such as academic activities, promotional events, and collaboration with the community. In addition, online and offline promotional brochures, activity reports, university websites, and other related publications were analyzed to understand how Islamic boarding school values are presented and communicated in university branding efforts. The data obtained was analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The data analysis process entails the following steps: data organization by source and type, data coding to identify pertinent units of information, data interpretation to comprehend the meaning and implications of research results in the context of optimizing Islamic boarding school-based branding, and the identification of central themes that emerge from the data (Rosairo, 2023). Triangulation techniques were used to ensure the validity and reliability of the data (Creswell, 2017).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Strategies for Optimizing Islamic Boarding School-Based Branding That Are Effective In Improving The Reputation of Qomaruddin Gresik

Incorporating Islamic boarding school values into the educational curriculum at Qomaruddin University has significantly influenced the identity and character of students, who are knowledgeable and possess a noble character. This can be seen from the positive responses of students and parents who feel that the existing curriculum is able to equip students with academic knowledge and strong Islamic values. Lecturers, students, alumni, and industry practitioners participate in curriculum development. Various parties' input helps create a scholarly, practical curriculum that meets the demands of the working world. Lecturers, learning requirements, and experiences offer academic viewpoints contributed by students and alums, and industry practitioners offer insight into the competencies and abilities required in the workplace. This partnership guarantees that the curriculum created is always current and adaptable to the market's demands and changing circumstances.

In addition, effective curriculum development also requires continuous evaluation and feedback. Qomaruddin University has implemented mechanisms to measure curriculum success through various means. Student satisfaction surveys provide a direct picture of their learning experience, while lecturer performance evaluations help ensure the quality of teaching. Additionally, learning and graduate outcomes are analyzed to assess how well the curriculum prepares students for their careers. With the sustainable approach, Qomaruddin University can continue to refine its curriculum by

adopting this approach, which guarantees that each graduate is not only academically prepared but also possesses strong character and noble morals according to the principles of Islamic boarding schools.

Integration of Islamic Boarding School Values

Table 1. Integration of Islamic boarding school values in the curriculum at Qomaruddin University

Integration Aspects	Integration Method	Description
Special Courses	– Courses on Islamic teachings and Islamic boarding schools	Offers courses such as Morals, Fiqh, Tafsir, and in-depth Hadith.
	– Character education	It provides special courses on character development based on Islamic boarding school values.
Extracurricular activities	– <i>Majelis Ta'lim</i> (Ta'lim Council)	Holding regular recitations attended by students and staff.
	– Islamic Student Organization (UKM Islam)	Manage student organizations that focus on religious and social activities.
Character Development	– Coaching by Kyai and Ustadz	We provide direct guidance and mentoring by kyai and ustadz in various campus activities.
	– Campus Islamic Boarding School Program	Students must attend an Islamic boarding school program as part of the curriculum for a certain period.
Campus environment	– Dormitory with Islamic boarding school culture	Requires students to live in dormitories with rules that reflect Islamic boarding school life.
	– Routine religious activities	Holding congregational prayers, dhikr, and regular studies.
Rules and Discipline	– Rules that emphasize discipline and simplicity	Implement strict rules regarding discipline, modest dress, and ethical behavior.
Collaboration and Partnership	– Collaboration with Islamic boarding schools	Collaborate with Islamic boarding schools to bring in kyai or hold joint activities.
Evaluation and Assessment	– Character-based assessment	Assess students not only based on academics but also character and daily behavior.
Technology Usage	– Online platform for religious learning	Using digital platforms to expand access to Islamic teachings and Islamic boarding school materials.

Table 1 is the method used by Qomaruddin University to integrate Islamic boarding school values into various aspects of the curriculum and campus life. This holistic approach ensures that Islamic boarding school values are embedded in the student's educational experience. Qomaruddin University uses social media as a promotional tool. This method has succeeded in increasing the visibility and attractiveness of the university in the eyes of prospective students and the wider community. Social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube promote academic and non-academic activities, student achievements, and various superior programs based on Islamic

boarding school values. Through engaging and informative posts, the university can show student achievements, the excellence of study programs, and activities based on Islamic boarding school values, which are the hallmarks of this university. Thus, social media becomes a window for the wider community to see more deeply about campus life and the various potentials offered by Qomaruddin University.

Promotional campaigns carried out consistently and creatively through social media have attracted the interest of prospective students to join Qomaruddin Gresik University. Attractive visual content, such as videos, infographics, alumni success stories, and narratives prioritizing Islamic boarding school values, make this campaign effective in attracting attention. Additionally, interactive features such as live streaming, Q&A sessions, and polls provide opportunities for prospective students to interact directly with the university. This enhances engagement and fosters a sense of trust and intimacy, ultimately inspiring their decision to enroll in Qomaruddin University as their academic institution. In addition, creating a solid and loyal community is facilitated by the active engagement of followers on social media. The image and repute of Qomaruddin University in the digital world are further fortified by the ongoing dissemination of information and positive values through this community.

Explore The Impact of Implementing An Islamic Boarding School-Based Branding Strategy

Qomaruddin University's reputation is strengthened by collaboration with alums and Islamic boarding school leaders. Successful alums are often invited to give public lectures, seminars, and workshops, enriching students' insight and building a positive image of the university. Influential Islamic boarding school figures are also involved in various academic and non-academic activities, which help strengthen Qomaruddin Gresik University's position as an Islamic higher education institution committed to Islamic boarding school values. Alum networks also play an essential role in maintaining a sense of community and shared identity among graduates. They feel connected to their alma mater and fellow alumni, which can create strong bonds and social support throughout their lives. Through online platforms, social media, and in-person events, alumni can continue to engage and support each other in various aspects of their professional and personal lives.

The implementation of the branding optimization has succeeded in increasing the attractiveness of Qomaruddin Gresik University in the eyes of prospective students and the wider community. New student registration data shows a significant increase after implementing the Islamic boarding school-based branding strategy. Additionally, alumni loyalty to the university is becoming more potent, as demonstrated by their active participation in various university activities and their support for university development programs.

This research also discovered that Qomaruddin Gresik University can establish a distinctive and robust identity that differentiates it from other Islamic universities by branding Islamic boarding schools. Islamic boarding school values are integrated into all university operations, providing a distinctive characteristic that makes this university better known and appreciated. This strong identity enhances the university's reputation and builds trust and loyalty among students, alumni, and the wider community. Thus, optimizing Islamic boarding school-based branding has an impact on increasing reputation and the sustainability and development of the university as a whole.

Discussion

Strategies for Optimizing Islamic Boarding School-Based Branding That Are Effective In Improving The Reputation of Qomaruddin Gresik

Integration of Islamic boarding school values in the curriculum, use of social media for promotion, and collaboration with alums and Islamic boarding school figures are effective branding optimization efforts in improving the reputation of Qomaruddin University Gresik. The integration of Islamic boarding school values in the educational curriculum has significantly contributed to shaping the identity and character of students who are knowledgeable and noble (Aimah, 2021). This is evident from the favorable reactions of students and parents who believe that the current curriculum effectively provides kids with academic knowledge and robust Islamic principles (Maarif & Rofiq, 2018). Islamic boarding school-based education plays a vital role in forming the character of students (Collins, 2022). In the context of Qomaruddin Gresik University, applying Islamic boarding school values such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility in the curriculum helps students develop these traits daily. In this way, students gain in-depth academic knowledge and are guided to become individuals with good morals and social responsibility.

In the context of Qomaruddin University, Islamic boarding school values are integrated into the curriculum through various comprehensive approaches. One of the methods used is offering special courses that focus on Islamic teachings and Islamic boarding school values. Courses such as Morals, Fiqh, Tafsir, and Hadith are taught in-depth, in addition to character education courses designed to develop students' character through Islamic boarding school values. Character education based on Islamic boarding school values effectively shapes students' morality at Islamic universities (Kristanto et al., 2021). Furthermore, Qomaruddin University holds extracurricular activities that support strengthening Islamic boarding school values, such as Majlis Ta'lim, a routine recitation attended by students and staff, and the Islamic Student Activity Unit, which focuses on religious and social activities. Character development is also carried out through direct mentoring by kai and ustadz in various campus activities and through the campus Islamic boarding school program, which requires students to participate in Islamic boarding school programs for a certain period as part of the curriculum. The role of figures in character development in the educational environment is vital.

Integration Of Islamic Boarding School Values

The campus environment at Qomaruddin University is also designed to reflect Islamic boarding school life by requiring students to live in dormitories that apply rules of discipline and simplicity. Routine religious activities such as congregational prayers, dhikr, and regular studies are held to strengthen students' spiritual aspects (Amirudin, 2020). Strict campus rules regarding discipline and ethical behavior are also applied to instill Islamic boarding school values (Saurombe, 2020). A campus environment with Islamic boarding school values can increase student discipline and modesty (Ostojić, 2021). Qomaruddin University collaborates with traditional Islamic boarding schools to bring in kyai or hold joint activities and use digital platforms to expand access to Islamic teachings and materials. Evaluation and assessment of students are not only based on academic achievement but also daily character and behavior, reflecting a holistic approach to education (Foroudi, 2020; González, 2021; Maunze, 2020). Character

evaluation in Islamic boarding school-based education functions to produce graduates with high integrity.

Furthermore, a curriculum that integrates Islamic values improves academic quality and strengthens educational institutions' identity. In this case, Qomaruddin Gresik University has succeeded in creating a learning environment that supports the development of Islamic values in all aspects of education (Mampaey, 2020). The curriculum, designed considering Islamic boarding school values, provides characteristics that differentiate the university from other higher education institutions (Cordelier, 2021). This attracts the interest of prospective students seeking education based on religious values and builds the university's reputation as an institution committed to the development of character and morality. Integrating Islamic boarding school values in the curriculum provides academic benefits and shapes students into individuals with noble character ready to contribute positively to society (Srivastava, 2020).

Using social media as a promotional instrument has successfully enhanced the visibility and appeal of Qomaruddin Gresik University to potential students and the broader community. Social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube promote academic and non-academic activities, students' achievements, and various superior programs based on Islamic boarding school values (Wu, 2018). Social media is a very effective platform for building brand awareness and increasing engagement with the audience (Saputra, 2018). Through social media, universities can reach a broader and more diverse audience and convey essential messages regarding educational programs and the values they adhere to (Pringle, 2019). Promotional campaigns carried out consistently and creatively through social media have attracted the interest of prospective students to join Qomaruddin Gresik University because they can see and experience the academic atmosphere and campus life directly through published content. Prospective students can directly observe and experience the academic atmosphere and campus life through various published content.

The use of social media as a promotional tool for higher education shows its effectiveness in attracting the attention of prospective students by providing visual and interactive access to campus life, which is often a determining factor in university selection decisions. Consistent and creative content on social media can build a positive image and trust among prospective students (Ramadanty, 2021). These campaigns provide a comprehensive and engaging picture of what to expect from the university by showcasing the university's academic achievements, extracurricular activities, and unique values. With these accesses, prospective students feel more connected and motivated to join when they can see active and dynamic campus life directly through social media.

Furthermore, active interaction with followers on social media also helps build a solid and loyal community. Educational institutions that actively utilize social media to interact with prospective students and promote academic and non-academic activities tend to have better reputations and higher enrollment rates (Maresova, 2020). The interactions carried out by Qomaruddin Gresik University with their followers, such as answering questions, holding live question and answer sessions, and sharing student and alum success stories, help create more personal and meaningful relationships with prospective students. By responding quickly and interactively to followers' comments, messages, and questions, the university has created positive and dynamic relationships on social media. This responsive interaction shows that the university values every

question and comment received and is committed to providing the answers and assistance needed. This approach builds followers' sense of involvement and trust because they feel heard and cared for. A personal and timely response also shows the university's professionalism and dedication to effective communication (Alfonzo, 2023). This increases the university's attractiveness and builds community and loyalty among students and alumni. This, in turn, strengthens the university's reputation as an educational institution that cares about and is responsive to the needs of its community.

Collaboration with alums and Islamic boarding school leaders has proven effective in strengthening the reputation of Qomaruddin Gresik University. Successful alumni are often invited to give public lectures, seminars, and workshops, enriching students' insight and building a positive image of the university (Shaari, 2019). Alumni involvement in academic and non-academic activities can improve the institution's image and build strong loyalty (Amani, 2022). Students are inspired by alums who have achieved success in their professions, demonstrating that the education they received at this institution can lead to success (Deng, 2023). The presence of alumni in various activities also strengthens the network between students and the world of work, allowing them to learn directly from practical experience and get valuable guidance.

Influential Islamic boarding school figures are also involved in various academic and non-academic activities, which help strengthen Qomaruddin Gresik University's position as an Islamic higher education institution committed to Islamic boarding school values. Collaboration with Islamic boarding school leaders can increase public trust in Islamic educational institutions. The legitimacy and reputation of the university can be enhanced by the participation of Islamic boarding school figures in university activities, as they significantly impact their communities (Mohiuddin, 2022). Qomaruddin Gresik University's dedication to the preservation and advancement of Islamic boarding school values in higher education is further demonstrated by the participation of Islamic boarding school leaders in various university programs. This enhances the university's appeal to prospective students interested in pursuing an education rooted in religious principles (Sultan, 2019). However, it also fosters trust and loyalty among the broader community, who perceive the university as an educational institution that incorporates and respects religious values into the educational process.

Explore The Impact of Implementing An Islamic Boarding School-Based Branding Strategy

Implementing Islamic boarding school-based branding strategies has succeeded in increasing the attractiveness of Qomaruddin Gresik University in the eyes of prospective students and the wider community. New student enrollment data shows a significant increase after implementing this branding strategy. A strong and targeted branding strategy can increase the number of new student registrations (Yousaf, 2020). Branding that emphasizes Islamic boarding school values provides a clear and consistent message about the university's identity, attracting prospective students seeking an education that aligns with their religious values (Amani, 2023). In addition, a holistic and integrated approach to conveying branding messages through various media, including social media, campus events, and alums participation, helps strengthen the university's positive image in the eyes of the public (Melewar, 2018). Qomaruddin Gresik University is distinguished from other Islamic universities by its distinctive and robust branding based on Pesantren. This robust identity draws in potential students and establishes a steadfast and devoted community, fostering a

positive and enduring impact on the university's reputation and growth (Foroudi, 2020). With a clear identity and strong values, Qomaruddin Gresik University can continue to develop as an educational institution that is respected and recognized nationally and internationally.

In general, the findings of this research are by the literature, which demonstrates that Islamic boarding school-based branding strategies that involve the integration of Islamic boarding school values into the curriculum, the use of social media for promotion, and collaboration with alums and Islamic boarding school figures are a practical approach to enhanced reputation. Educational institutions that are Islamic. These strategies increase the university's attractiveness in the eyes of prospective students and the wider community and build a solid and unique identity that differentiates Qomaruddin Gresik University from other Islamic universities.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding: This research found that optimizing Islamic boarding school-based branding to improve the reputation of Qomaruddin Gresik University consists of (1) integrating Islamic boarding school values in the curriculum, (2) using social media for promotion, and (3) collaborating with alums and Islamic boarding school figures. Implementing these strategies has succeeded in increasing the university's attractiveness in the eyes of prospective students and the wider community and strengthening alum loyalty. **Implication:** These findings show that Islamic boarding school-based branding can provide a strong and unique identity for the university, which differentiates it from other Islamic universities. **Limitation:** This research is limited to the context of one university, so the results may not be fully applicable to other institutions. **Future Research:** Future research could focus on an in-depth analysis of the specific influences of each branding strategy and how they can be adapted or enhanced to continue to support the university's growth and reputation.

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