

Optimizing Student Admissions: Case Study of Integrated Islamic Private High School An-Nahl, Percikan Iman Jambi

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Abstract

This research aims to delineate the principal's strategic endeavors to enhance the student enrollment process at An-Nahl Percikan Iman Integrated Islamic Junior High School in Jambi. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, data were gathered via observation, interviews, and documentation techniques. The analysis involved data reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusive insights. The findings reveal several key aspects: Firstly, student admissions at An-Nahl Percikan Iman Jambi Integrated Islamic Middle School are conducted both offline and online. Secondly, the management of admissions involves comprehensive planning, committee formation, criteria establishment, and varied promotional activities encompassing flyers, brochures, banners, billboards, and the setup of PPDB stands. Preparation entails facility administration, oral and written testing, implementation of activities such as BKA initiatives, school networking, parent engagement, and community outreach. Evaluation encompasses offline and online registration processes, emphasizing parent interviews crucial for fostering a conducive learning environment, culminating in student graduation announcements. Thirdly, the school principal fosters improvements in the admissions system through intensified communication with educators and stakeholders.

Keywords : : Management, Admissions of students, Integrated Islamic School.

Introduction

Education serves as a means to sharpen abilities and strengthen the willingness to become the best version of oneself. It is of utmost importance for societal development and the advancement of humanity. Education holds the responsibility of uplifting diverse segments of society, not just the elite. Every individual in Indonesia possesses a constitutional right to

education. The purpose of education is to enhance one's quality of life by fostering growth in several areas: self-awareness, curiosity, and competence (Rohmah et al., 2020).

Article 1, Paragraph 1 of Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System (Sisdekna) states, "Education is the deliberate planning of a conducive environment and teaching methods for the development of students' religious and

spiritual maturity and self-discipline. The moral character, intelligence, and competencies needed for oneself, society, the state, and the government." According to the Republic of Indonesia Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, students are individuals who push themselves to do their best. Creating learning methods applicable to specific educational paths and levels (UUD RI No. 41, 2003).

Various junior high schools in Jambi, both private and public, certainly conduct admissions for new students. One of the newly established junior high schools in Jambi, listed as a private institution, is An-Nahl Integrated Islamic Junior High School. Specifically, this school is divided into two programs: the Full Day Integrated Islamic Junior High School (SMPIT) and the Boarding Integrated Islamic Junior High School (SMPIT Boarding). The full-day junior high school operates from 7 AM to 4 PM, encompassing academic learning along with religious education, including memorization of at least 3-5 juz of the Qur'an. On the other hand, the boarding school is similar to a modern boarding school, where students stay in the dormitories during the learning period and go home during semester breaks. Particularly for boarding class 7, the focus

is on memorizing a minimum of 10-15 juz of the Qur'an, although the academic learning process differs from that of the full-day program.

SMPIT An-Nahl Jambi has experienced fluctuations in student admissions over the past five years: in 2018-2019, there were 20 students (13 males and 7 females); in 2019-2020, admissions increased to 55 students (25 males and 30 females); in 2020-2021, there were 94 students (46 males and 48 females); in 2021-2022, admissions slightly decreased to 90 students (38 males and 52 females). Subsequently, in 2022-2023, admissions rose to 103 students (57 males and 46 females).

It can be inferred that from 2021 to early 2022, student admissions were conducted offline using mediums such as flyers and banners. During this period, the limited human resources led the organizing committee to maximize personnel for online registration due to prospective students applying from outside Jambi city. Additionally, the admissions process from 2021 to 2022 coincided with the COVID-19 recovery phase. Therefore, the offline admission procedures outside the school (community engagement) were unable to proceed as planned. Insufficient human resources due to busy schedules, lack of timely

communication of admission schedules to teachers and school staff resulting in unawareness of opening, closing, or increased quotas, administrative data management issues, and inadequacy in community engagement and direct interaction with some schools have not been fully optimized. Nevertheless, An-Nahl Integrated Islamic Junior High School in Jambi stands strong among other private schools.

The success of community engagement at the school, particularly in attracting new students, is possible through effective New Student Admissions (PPDB) management. Public trust in educational institutions needs to be supported. For efficiency and effectiveness to grow, a systemic approach is necessary. Managing complex educational institutions is increasingly challenging. Without internet-based information technology, conventional management techniques cannot effectively address current complex issues.

In the New Student Admissions (PPDB) process, the school has strategies to attract consumers, not only through social media promotions, brochures, field visits by teachers and community members but also by utilizing the website for new student registration into

established academic programs practiced by the school. It is difficult to achieve the best without this. Furthermore, effective team collaboration and guidance with alumni and parents need to be established so they can function as direct word-of-mouth marketers for the institution. Considering that SMPIT An-Nahl can develop potential by fulfilling components in the management of new student admissions (Baharuddin et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, educational institutions are involved in student management to provide the best available services. Currently, various school management strategies are being formulated in line with educational standards. This initiative inspires the author to examine Student Admission Management at SMPIT An-Nahl Integrated Islamic Junior High School to understand the current school management. The investigation will focus on New Student Admissions Management.

The PPDB process involves several stages, including the formation and committee meetings for student admissions tasks, scheduling PPDB, weekly activity evaluations, determination of PPDB requirements, media preparation, administrative and necessary facilities and

infrastructure preparations, test preparation, and student announcement.

Integrated Islamic Schools in Jambi have established several schools, but the researcher is particularly interested in exploring SMPIT An-Nahl Integrated Islamic Junior High School, which has not completed a full cycle yet but has had a substantial or stable number of student admissions in PPDB each year. SMPIT An-Nahl is still considered a new school in Jambi, and considering these factors, the researcher is intrigued to understand the student admission management process at SMPIT An-Nahl Integrated Islamic Junior High School.

Based on the exposition, analysis, and study findings, this research is necessary to examine the Student Admission Management at An-Nahl Integrated Islamic Junior High School.

Methods

The research method employed in this study combines descriptive and qualitative strategies. The outcomes of the qualitative approach rely on observations rather than statistical methods or quantitative measurements, as asserted by Fauzan Almanshur and M. Djunaidi Ghony (2017). Conversely, as per Hadari Nawawi and Mimi Martini (1996), "descriptive method" refers to the process

of defining the conditions of the study object based on observable facts.

Referring to the above definition, descriptive qualitative research involves a systematic effort to seek, collect, and evaluate findings based on observable facts to achieve the research objectives, which are conveyed through a written report. This study aims to explore information regarding the new student admissions process at SMPIT An-Nahl Percikan Iman Jambi using a qualitative descriptive approach.

The research is planned to take place at the An-Nahl Percikan Iman Jambi Integrated Islamic Junior High School, situated at Dr. Tadzir Street, RT 14, Buluran Kenali Village, Telanaipura District, Jambi City. The research subjects encompass the school principal, foundation representatives, vice-principal for student affairs, SC (Cognitive Student), committee chairperson, new student admission secretary, and Administrative Staff. The sampling technique utilized is purposive sampling.

The primary data collected in this research includes interviews with the school principal, foundation representatives, vice-principal for student affairs, SC, PPDB (New Student Admissions Committee) chairperson, PPDB secretary, and Administrative Staff.

Additional data sources involve the school principal, vice-principal for student affairs, Administrative Staff, PPDB committee, PPDB secretary, SC, and foundation representatives. Data collection methods encompass observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis process involves data reduction, presentation, drawing conclusions, and verification..

Results and Discussion

The research findings indicate that the New Student Admission Process (PPDB) at SMPIT An-Nahl Percikan Iman Jambi is an annual routine activity led by the school-level Committee under the direction and coordination of the Department of Education. The PPDB functions as a selection process for prospective new students through various stages.

The collected data demonstrates that the PPDB involves a selection process that includes direct interaction between prospective students and the admissions committee, both offline and online. Information dissemination regarding the PPDB is conducted through various methods such as direct introduction, social media (flyers, banners, and billboards), and the use of pamphlets as daily promotional tools.

During the academic year 2021-2022, registrations were conducted both offline with face-to-face interactions at the school or booths, and online through a website link provided by the school. The advantage of offline registration is that prospective students can directly observe the school environment, whereas online registration allows students to enroll without queuing at the location and ensures the completeness of registration documents through the available online link.

The Admission Management of Students at SMPIT An-Nahl Percikan Iman Jambi

The Student Admission Management at SMPIT An-Nahl Percikan Iman Jambi is conducted every new academic year. The planning agenda for admissions takes place from early November to late January.

The Admission Management at SMPIT An-Nahl Percikan Iman Jambi is based on the POAC theory (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling) (Guanabara et al., n.d., 2015).

Planning

The entire process of carefully deciding what needs to be done in the future to achieve set goals is known as planning. The steps involved in the admission planning process include:

- a) Formation of the student admission committee.
- b) Determination of the criteria for accepted prospective students.
- c) Preparation of media.
- d) Preparation of administration and the necessary facilities and infrastructure.
- e) Preparation for tests and announcements.
- a. Formation of the student admission committee

The initial stage in the process of admitting prospective students involves the admission committee determining the number of students to be accepted and establishing the number of students that can be accepted based on the school's facilities and infrastructure. During the execution of the New Student Admissions (PPDB), preparations begin with the formation of the committee, setting student admission targets for each unit, determining the number of banners to be ordered, designing and creating brochures for PPDB information, and deciding on the location and schedule to open stands each week.

- b. Determination of admission criteria for prospective students

Before the commencement of new student admissions, the first meeting is utilized to establish the

admission requirements for prospective students. These requirements do not entail specific criteria for registering students; rather, they depend on parental commitment and the ability to follow the school's Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and policies.

There are some entry requirements for SMPIT An-Nahl Percikan Iman Jambi. Furthermore, SMPIT An-Nahl Percikan Iman Jambi provides two admission pathways for prospective students: Bina Lingkungan and Regular/general. The admission procedures are conducted in two ways by the admissions committee: Offline registration is done at the school or designated stand prepared by the committee team, while Online registration is available via the registration link.

Organizing

Once the planning is established, administrative management tasks continue. Operationalizing the plan is the next task. Organization, often referred to as organizing, refers to one of the administrative management tasks in executing a strategy. A mechanism of cooperation among a group of individuals to achieve common goals is referred to as an organization. Planning is the initial

stage in organizing and requires identification of areas or tasks within the intended operational scope of the cooperative group. The entire playing field functions as a single integrated system.

Considering this, it's possible to view each division of labor as a small system that performs a set of related tasks as components of the total tasks performed by this cooperative group.

According to the school principal, advertising the school involves application processes by suggesting activities, producing video materials, and taking pictures to post on social media platforms such as the school's website, Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok.

As per the interview results, the number of admitted students aligns with the school's facilities and infrastructure. Generally, the number of admitted students is divided into two categories: full day and boarding. For full day classes, they are separated into male (ikhwan) and female (akhwat) with each having a maximum of 32 students. As for boarding, it is divided into two classes for male and female, also with a maximum of 32 students each. Therefore, it's concluded that there are four available classes, with each class accommodating a maximum of

32 students, resulting in a targeted number of admitted students being $4 \times 32 = 128$ students.

SMPIT An-Nahl Percikan Iman Jambi spreads information about student admissions through flyers, brochures, banners, billboards, and admission stands.

Actuating

The function of actuating is an integral aspect of an organization or group process that cannot be separated. To execute or move forward, motivation along with knowledge about the basis of the work being done is required, especially toward the established goals, as well as providing good motivation, guidance, or direction. This will make them understand and develop a desire to work diligently and effectively.

Regarding the acceptance of new students at SMPIT An-Nahl Percikan Iman Jambi, several activities are carried out, including the BKA (An-Nahl Creative Month) event every year, inter-school socialization, and fostering relationships with parents and the surrounding community.

The purpose of these activities is to attract the interest of potential students, parents, and elementary schools seeking junior high school options. SMPIT An-Nahl provides various aids to potential students through several means: Special

external achievement scholarships with the condition of memorizing 5-10 Juz (sections of the Quran) will receive a 25% reduction in tuition fees, and internal achievement scholarships with the requirement of memorizing 3-5 Juz will also receive a 25% reduction.

Additionally, there is a discount on the registration form for students who register at the admission booth, receiving a 10% reduction. Furthermore, during the 8th month of the An-Nahl Creative Month, there is a 20% discount on registration form purchases at the designated booth (According to an interview conducted on February 7, 2023). Furthermore, student admissions started from February 1st until February 16th, known as the last edition.

The Administrative and Facilities needs required for student admissions can be divided into 2 categories: Offline Registration Preparation and Online Registration Preparation. The Test Preparation is conducted after the student registration period has concluded. Students who have registered, both offline and online, will be contacted beforehand to be included in an information group regarding the test and interview schedule.

The tests conducted for student admissions include written exams, oral tests, and parental interviews.

Controlling

In the context of management, evaluation or controlling refers to the process of determining whether the actions taken align with the initial plan or not. Measurement and assessment both fall under the evaluation process in Islamic education management. Testing is a method used to conduct the necessary measurements to ensure the value of a given object.

The announcement of test results and parental interviews will be made one week after the tests and interviews are conducted, revealing the accepted students and ending the student orientation.

Regarding the special student admission process, it must be reviewed from several aspects: health and learning aspects. Here, the institution also accepts special needs children with certain requirements, such as a doctor's note and one-on-one teacher assistance approved by parents to accompany the child from arrival at school until the completion of learning.

According to the school principal, the committee holds regular weekly meetings in this process for evaluation and strategy-making in the student admission process, creating schedules for student admission. An evaluation is always conducted before the meeting to identify the obstacles encountered in the previous

PPDB activities, enabling the prevention of similar issues in the upcoming activities, ensuring they run better than before.

In the planning process for student admission developed by this school, several aspects have been executed according to plan, while some have not been maximally executed. The latter was due to constraints in the media operator section, lacking expertise in designing pamphlets to be promoted across all social media. However, it has now been organized more efficiently and creatively in social media promotion. As for the others, they have been well-implemented based on the prior planning.

Conclusion

The Student Admission Management at SMPIT An-Nahl Percikan Iman Jambi is an annual routine activity involving planning, organizing, actuating, and evaluation strategies. The student admission process encompasses various steps, including planning, setting admission criteria, organizing the admission committee, and offline/online registration processes.

The school employs diverse marketing strategies such as the "Bulan Kreasi" (An-Nahl Month) program, guidance, and information dissemination for new student admissions. There are

assistance schemes and fee discounts available for high-achieving students or those registering during specific periods.

The school prepares various administrative requirements and facilities to support student admission.

Evaluation is a crucial aspect of student admission management to improve subsequent activities and overcome encountered challenges. Parent interviews and tests are pivotal in the selection of new students.

Despite some aspects being executed as planned, there are challenges in social media marketing impacting the optimal implementation of certain parts of the admission process.

This conclusion emphasizes the significance of an organized management process and continuous evaluation in supporting the effectiveness of the student admission process at SMPIT An-Nahl Percikan Iman Jambi, while highlighting areas that require further improvement.

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