INJECT (Interdisciplinary Journal of Communication)
p-ISSN: 2548-5857; e-ISSN: 2548-7124
Vol. 11. No. 1 June 2026: p. 891-908
DOI: https://doi.org/10.18326/inject.v11i1.6661

# Digital Marketing Communication Strategy Based on STP and 4C: An Interdisciplinary Communication Approach to Non-Formal Education in Bone Regency

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## Abstract
The rapid evolution of new media and information technology has fundamentally restructured public communication patterns, necessitating a paradigm shift in the communication strategies of educational institutions. While digital marketing communication is widely documented in the commercial and formal schooling spheres, its application through an interdisciplinary communication lens in non-formal educational institutions remains very limited. This study evaluates the implementation of a digital marketing communication strategy that integrates media communication and social interaction studies for the Mawar Community Learning Center (PKBM) in Bone Regency. Using a descriptive cross-sectional design incorporating a retrospective pre-test component, data were drawn from 101 respondents. The STP (Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning) framework was applied to map the message architecture and media preferences of the audience, revealing that the primary audience is females (22–35 years old) who are highly receptive to visual message transmission in the form of short videos on Instagram and TikTok. Furthermore, the 4Cs (Context, Communication, Collaboration, Connection) framework was used to assess the effectiveness of the communication dialogue and post-campaign public perception. The results of the study indicate a substantial shift in information penetration, moving from 54.5% retrospective

awareness to 98% current awareness. Furthermore, this new media communication strategy effectively expanded the geographical transmission of messages, reaching 47.5% of the audience outside the host sub-district. The 4C analysis yielded a highly favorable message reception rate, particularly in fostering emotional connections and supportive community communication (the Total Category Response score for the Connection dimension reached 91.29%). Despite methodological limitations, these findings enrich the interdisciplinary communication science discourse by demonstrating that dialogic and contextualized digital media communication management can significantly bridge information asymmetries, dismantle institutional stigma, and reconstruct public trust in alternative educational institutions.

***Keywords**: Digital Marketing, Digital Strategy, Non-formal Education, PKBM Mawar, STP*

## 1. Introduction

Digital marketing has emerged as a critical tool for promoting educational services, a need underscored by Indonesia's rapidly evolving digital landscape. By 2024, internet penetration in Indonesia had reached 66.5%, encompassing over 185 million active users. This massive user base is not simply composed of passive content consumers (APJII, 2024). Rather, these individuals are active participants in a dynamic digital ecosystem. A substantial majority of these internet users are highly active on social media, with platforms like Instagram and TikTok emerging as key arenas for interaction, community building, and information consumption. Therefore, social media-based digital marketing strategies represent a highly relevant solution to modern communication challenges for various institutional sectors (Trinugroho et al., 2022).

Implementing social media-based marketing strategies is a pressing solution because these platforms offer direct, personalized, and cost-effective interactions. For the non-formal education sector, the urgency of using digital marketing goes beyond economic motives. It's about empowerment and equal access to basic educational rights (Rembangsupu et al., 2022). By leveraging algorithms and the broad reach of social media, institutions can overcome the geographic isolation and budget constraints that have historically hampered their traditional promotional efforts, making research on these strategies crucial (Wang et al., 2023).

Previous literature has extensively documented the effectiveness of digital marketing in various sectors. Kashali and Risal (2024) demonstrated that visual formats on Instagram, particularly short videos (reels) and carousels, can substantially increase audience engagement and build strong brand awareness for alternative schools (Kashali & Risal, 2024). In line

with these findings, research by Sulistiyawan et al. (2024) confirmed a direct correlation between proactive digital interactions and a significant increase in new student admissions (PPDB) in formal secondary schools (Sulistiyawan et al., 2024).

On the other hand, from an operational efficiency perspective, Deniar et al. (2022) found that social media offers absolute efficiency in saving time, budget, and human resources for business promotion at scale (Deniar et al., 2022). However, the transition to a digital ecosystem presents its own challenges. A study by Maimunah et al. (2023) emphasized that digital marketing effectiveness relies heavily on consistent interactions but is often hampered by a lack of human resource capacity and information technology literacy within an institution (Maimunah et al., 2023). This review of the literature confirms that digital marketing is highly effective but requires specific tactical modifications depending on the organization's capacity.

While the above literature provides valuable insights, a significant research gap remains: the lack of literature specifically evaluating the effectiveness of digital marketing in the non-formal education sector, such as Community Learning Centers (PKBM). A limitation of previous studies is that the majority focused on purely commercial entities or formal schools, which generally have adequate budgets and structured target markets (Rembangsupu et al., 2022). Practically, PKBM Mawar in Bone Regency faces a very different and urgent operational challenge: they must operate amidst the stigma that views equivalency education (Packages A, B, and C) as second-class, as well as the "invisibility" of visibility due to their reliance on local print promotions. These practical challenges demand a digital strategy that goes beyond advertising, but also demystifies stigma and builds emotional connection with dropout learners (Ayu et al., 2023).

To address these issues, this study aims to formulate and implement a digital marketing strategy based on STP (Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning) audience mapping in non-formal educational institutions. Furthermore, this study aims to descriptively evaluate the effectiveness of the social media campaign in shaping audience perceptions using the 4C relationship indicators (Context, Communication, Collaboration, and Connection).

## 2. Method

### *2.2 The* Context *of Digital Marketing in the Education Sector*

Digitalization and the internet have fundamentally transformed traditional forms of marketing into interactive, data-driven disciplines. In

the education sector, digital marketing allows institutions to engage with prospective students digitally, transcending geographic boundaries and significantly lowering acquisition costs. Previous studies have validated the efficacy of this approach. Kashali and Risal (2024) demonstrated that specific content formats on Instagram, such as short videos (reels) and carousels, significantly increased audience engagement and brand awareness for alternative schooling models. Similarly, Sulistiyawan et al. (2024) established a direct correlation between proactive social media use and increased student enrollment in formal secondary schools.

However, research focusing on the informal and non-formal sectors notes very different challenges. Deniar et al. (2022) highlighted that social media promotion does save time, money, and human resources, which are acutely scarce in for-profit and non-formal institutions. However, this transition did not occur without internal obstacles. Another study by Maimunah et al. (2023) concluded that consistent and tailored interactions on social media build brand engagement, but they identified substantial barriers, such as a lack of information technology literacy among administrative staff. This literature review shows that while digital marketing tools are universal, their implementation in non-formal education requires a high degree of customization to overcome internal resource deficits and external audience skepticism.

### *2.3 Justification for Using the STP Framework*

The STP (Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning) framework is utilized as a fundamental analytical tool to understand the audience landscape. Unlike mass-market commercial products, non-formal education appeals to a very specific niche (Artha et al., 2025). These are often marginalized adults, school dropouts, or individuals seeking rapid vocational skills upgrades.

Segmentation allows institutions to categorize markets based on demographic and geographic variables, which is crucial when reaching populations in districts like Bone. Targeting ensures that limited marketing budgets and time are directed only at the most viable and responsive segments. Positioning, meanwhile, dictates how the institution differentiates itself from formal schools, framing itself not as a secondary option or a place for failed individuals, but as a flexible, equitable, and empowering alternative. The STP framework was deliberately chosen over broader strategic models because a key obstacle identified historically at PKBM Mawar was a fundamental misunderstanding of who their potential audience was and where they consumed information.

### *2.4 Rationalization of the 4C Approach*

To evaluate the efficacy of the implemented social media strategy, this study used the 4Cs framework (Context, Communication, Collaboration, Connection) rather than traditional mechanistic models like AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) or the 4Ps marketing mix (Product, Price, Place, Promotion). While the AIDA model is highly effective for linear commercial sales channels, education, particularly non-formal education, is a high-engagement service driven by community ties.

The 4Cs model shifts the evaluation focus entirely to the consumer perspective, which in this case is the learner or community member (Sari et al., 2023). Context evaluates whether the educational content aligns with the socioeconomic realities and knowledge needs of the audience. Communication assesses the clarity and trustworthiness of the two-way dialogue; this is a crucial parameter when addressing populations that may have had negative or traumatic experiences in formal academic settings. Collaboration measures the extent to which the audience is invited to participate, transforming passive followers into community advocates. Finally, Connection measures the emotional bond and long-term trust built between the institution and the community. For institutions like PKBM Mawar, building supportive community connections is far more critical to sustained enrollment than simply triggering short-term transactional actions.

### *2.5 Design Approach*

This research is structured through systematic operational stages, starting from problem formulation to output evaluation.

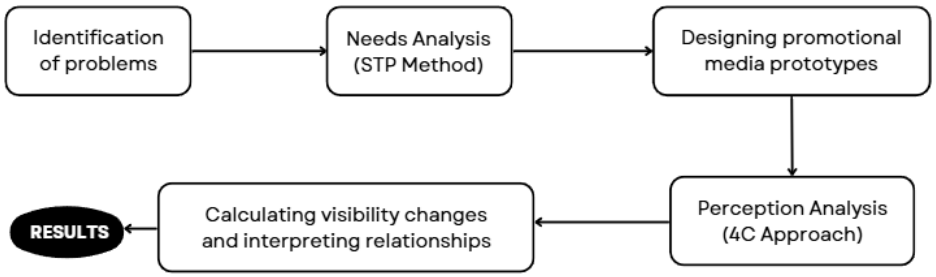



**Figure 1**. Research Design

This research process began with a problem identification stage through initial observations within the Mawar Community Learning Center (PKBM Mawar) environment to map the limitations of the use of traditional print promotional media and the low IT literacy of staff. Next, a needs analysis was conducted using the STP method by distributing an

initial questionnaire to the community in Bone Regency to determine segmentation, target audience, and appropriate positioning, thus identifying the most relevant platforms and types of content. Based on these results, promotional media prototypes were designed in the form of vertical videos and program information graphics, which were then published on a scheduled basis through Instagram and TikTok platforms. After content distribution, a perception analysis was conducted using the 4C approach by distributing a final questionnaire to respondents to measure Context, Communication, Collaboration, and Connection aspects. The final stage of this research was to calculate changes in visibility and interpret the relationship between the implemented digital promotional strategies and increased audience reach and engagement as a basis for drawing conclusions.

### *2.6 Population Mapping and Sample Determination*

The research was conducted with a geographic focus on the service area of the Mawar Lappariaja Community Learning Center (PKBM) in Mattampawalie Village, Bone Regency, South Sulawesi. The target population was broadly defined as the total demographic of Bone Regency, encompassing approximately 820,510 individuals. This macro definition was chosen because digital marketing essentially eliminates local village boundaries, allowing the campaign to mathematically reach all individuals within the regency with internet access (Kamil, 2011).

Given the vast population and the operational constraints inherent in non-profit/non-formal institutions, the sample size was determined using Taro Yamane's formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{Nd2 + 1}$$

Description:

n = Sample size

N = Population size

d2 = Precision/Margin of Error set

Based on this formula, with a population (N) of 820,510, a precision or margin of error (d) of 10% (0.1) was set. While a 5% margin is generally recommended in broad social sciences, a 10% margin was justified and intentionally applied in this budget-constrained applied research setting (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The goal was purely to measure general directional trends in market response, not absolute population parameters. This calculation resulted in a minimum sample size requirement of 100 individuals. A purposive sampling technique was then applied, with inclusion criteria that respondents must be active social media users, aged

between 12 and 64, and residing in Bone Regency. This sampling technique ultimately resulted in the recruitment of 101 valid respondents (Mahmud et al., 2022).

### *2.7 Data Collection Triangulation*

Data collection was executed over a two-month period through a combination of non-participant observation and online-based structured questionnaires (Google Forms).

**Table 1.** Data Collection Triangulation

| Method | Implementation Description |
|---|---|
| Non-Participant Observation | Initial field observations within the Mawar Community Learning Center (PKBM Mawar) operational environment revealed a stagnant reliance on outdated print media (brochures and banners). Key qualitative findings indicated that administrative staff lacked the information technology literacy to manage complex digital assets. This observational data provided triangulation to justify the need for a highly simplified and easily managed content strategy (such as short vertical videos). |
| Initial Stage Questionnaire | The first phase of the instrument focused solely on collecting raw data for the STP framework. The survey captured user demographics, platform preferences, active time, preferred content formats, and retrospective audience recall regarding their awareness of the institution prior to viewing the digital campaign. |
| Final Stage Questionnaire | Following the implementation of a social media content calendar prioritizing the distribution of short videos on Instagram and TikTok, a second survey phase was distributed. This phase exclusively used Likert-scale indicators from the 4Cs framework to assess audiences' affective and cognitive perceptions of the marketing communications they had just consumed. |

### 2.8 *Instrument Validation and Statistical Analysis*

Given the constraints of operating in a small-scale applied research environment, formal psychometric validation of the instrument pre-distribution (such as calculating Cronbach's alpha to ensure internal consistency reliability of the 4C scale) was not conducted. The instrument relied on face validity and theoretical alignment from marketing experts to

ensure congruence between the questions asked and the theoretical constructions of the 4Cs (Nugraha, 2025).

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics. To quantify perceptual responses on a 5-point Likert scale (where 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree), the Total Category Response (TCR) formula was applied. TCR calculates the percentage of the audience's actual score achieved against the theoretical maximum score limit (Poodo & Pabulo, 2024). The calculation formula used is:

$$TCR = \frac{Rs}{n \times 5} \times 100$$

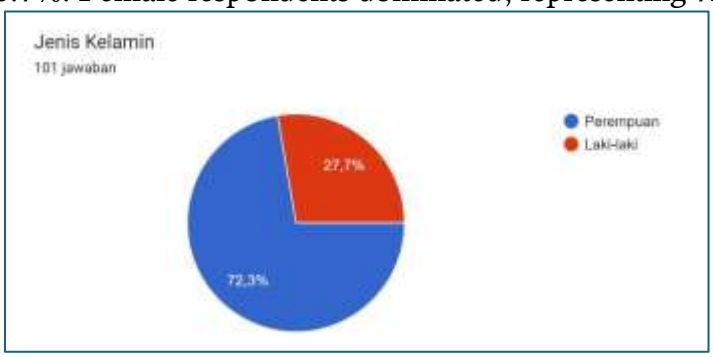
This percentage metric allows for the categorization of audience perceptual responses into standard qualitative bands (e.g., >80% = Very Good, 61%-80% = Good) to simplify the interpretation of the marketing campaign's viability. Due to the cross-sectional design of the study, inferential statistics for hypothesis testing differences in variables (such as parametric or non-parametric paired difference tests) were not applied. Therefore, all quantitative findings are restricted to representing the proportional percentage distribution within the sample studied (Akramul Kabir, 2024).

## 3. Results

### *3.1 Identifying Audience Profiles through STP Analysis*

The first fundamental step in this research involved mapping the audience landscape to inform content development strategies. Descriptive analysis of 101 respondents provided a specific targeting and segmentation data matrix.

Demographic Segmentation: The sample data revealed an audience dominated by young adult women. The largest age group was in the 22–35 age range, representing 46.5% of the sample, followed by the 12–21 age group at 28.7%. Female respondents dominated, representing 72.3%.



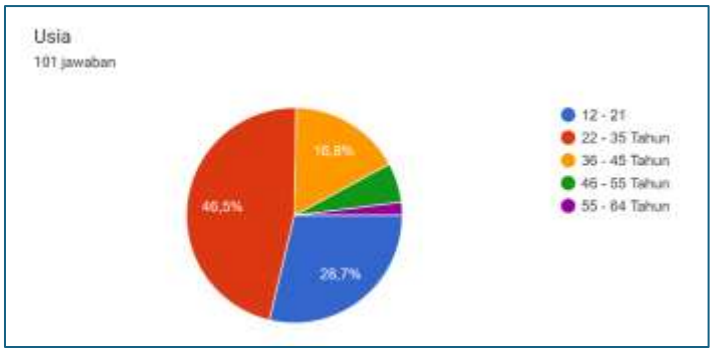



**Figure 2**. Demographic Segmentation

Psychographics and Platform Positioning: Analysis of digital interaction behavior highlights the high frequency of exposure; 95% of the audience reportedly accesses social media daily. Based on analysis of media channel preferences, the landscape is heavily skewed towards visual-based platforms. Instagram emerged as the dominant platform, used by 65.3% of respondents, closely followed by TikTok at 50.5%, while text-based platforms like Facebook were significantly lower in terms of engagement.

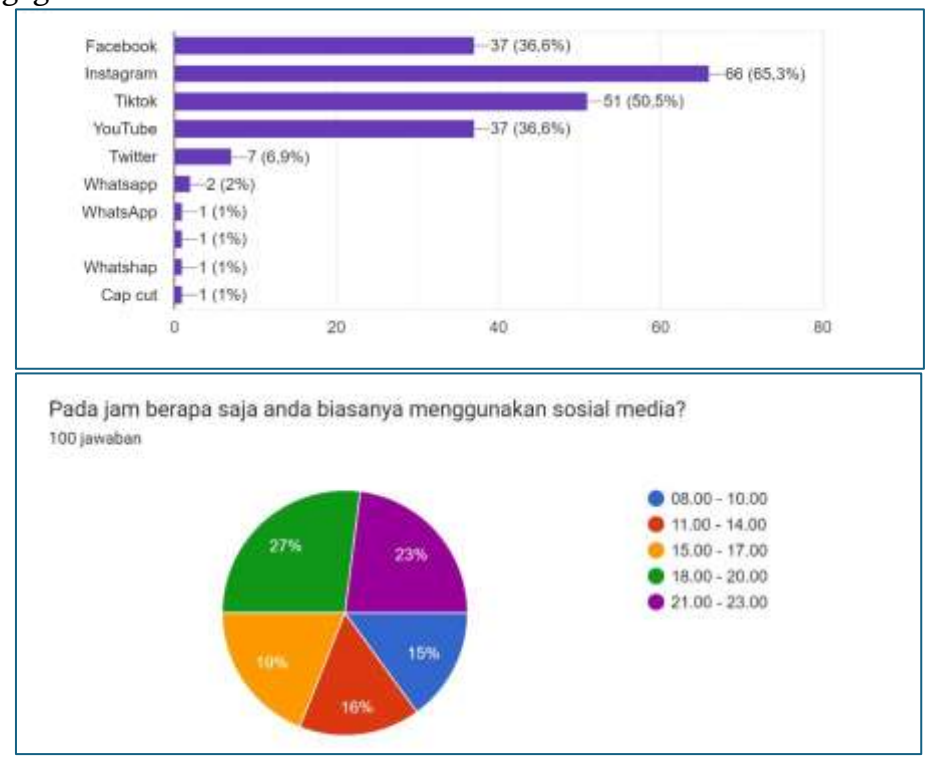



**Figure 3**. Psychographics and Platform Positioning

Leveraging this Positioning insight, PKBM Mawar revised its previously ad-hoc communication strategy on legacy platforms. The social media campaign was refocused specifically on the production of short-form vertical videos distributed through Instagram and TikTok (Fanani & Kusumandyoko, 2024). Upload times were coordinated exclusively to align with daily peak user activity times, namely between 6:00–8:00 PM and 9:00–11:00 PM local time.

### *3.2 Institutional Awareness Shift (Retrospective Assessment)*

The primary empirical objective of this digital marketing strategy is to bridge the visibility gap (Vij et al., 2024). Because the data is based on retrospective memory recall, the percentages below represent the descriptive proportional shifts reported by respondents.

**Table 2.** Awareness before and after implementing digital strategies

| **Public Awareness Metrics** | **Pre-Implementation Awareness (Retrospective)** | **Post-Implementation Awareness (Current)** |
|---|---|---|
| Understanding the Existence of General Non-Formal Education | 80.2% (81 Respondents) | 100% (101 Respondents) |
| Knowing the Existence of the Specific Mawar PKBM | 54.5% (55 Respondents) | 98.0% (99 Respondents) |
| Have you ever seen a digital advertisement for non-formal education? | 50.5% (51 Respondents) | 100% (Implications of PKBM campaign exposure) |

*Source: Primary Data 2025*

The above data demonstrates that, prior to exposure to PKBM Mawar's digital initiative, nearly half of the district's target population (45.5%) were completely unaware that the institution existed. Interestingly, post-implementation of the short video strategy, recognition of PKBM Mawar surged to near total saturation (98%), with only 2% of individuals remaining unaware. The descriptive fact that this distribution of institutional knowledge infected 47.5% of the population physically located far outside the host district (Lappariaja) provides operational

evidence that the barrier of physical distance has been effectively broken down by social media.

### *3.3 Audience Affective Perception Analysis (4C Framework)*

To dissect why this surge in awareness occurred, and to understand the extent to which the public accepted the quality of the message, the 4C framework instrument dissects perceptions into four dimensions mapped by Likert metrics.

#### *3.3.1 Context*

The Context dimension assesses narrative relevance, educational value appropriateness, and clarity of the user interface environment.

**Table 3.** Context Frequency Distribution

| Statement Indicator (P) | Mean Score | TCR (%) | Eligibility Category |
|---|---|---|---|
| Q1: Display clear and easy-to-understand information. | 4,158 | 83,17% | Good |
| Q2: Relevant/in accordance with the educational needs of the community around me. | 4,406 | 88,12% | Very Good |
| Q3: Helps to better understand the benefits of non-formal education. | 4,228 | 84,55% | Good |
| Q4: Keeping up with current technological developments and educational needs. | 4,267 | 85,35% | Very Good |
| Q5: Reflects the identity and noble values of the institution. | 4,119 | 82,38% | Good |

*Source: Primary Data 2025*

#### *3.3.2 Communication*

The Communication dimension measures the flow of communication dialectics, and most importantly, in non-formal education, measures the development of institutional trust levels.

**Table 4.** Frequency Distribution for Communication

| Statement Indicator (P) | Mean Score | TCR (%) | Eligibility Category |
|---|---|---|---|
| Q6: Always provide complete information. | 3,980 | 79,60% | Good |
| Q7: The information presented is always easy to understand. | 4,020 | 80,40% | Good |
| Q8: Communication encourages the search for further information (Service). | 3,891 | 77,82% | Good |
| Q9: Communication makes me have more trust in the institution. | 4,327 | 86,53% | Very Good |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Q10: Use simple and communicative language. | 4,228 | 84,55% | Good |

*Source: Primary Data 2025*

Communication Dimension Evaluation: Non-formal education demands a higher burden of proof of legitimacy than public formal schooling. The fact that indicator P9, which asks whether communication fosters trust, achieved a score of "Very Good" with a TCR of 86.53% is a phenomenal achievement metric. The use of simple language, free from academic technical jargon (P10, 84.55%), has been shown to foster a sense of mutual understanding and pedagogical inclusiveness among the public.

*3.3.3 Collaboration*

The Collaboration dimension captures the capacity of marketing content to extract participatory engagement (transforming passive audiences into active network transmission nodes).

**Table 5.** Frequency Distribution for Collaboration

| Statement Indicator (P) | Mean Score | TCR (%) | Eligibility Category |
|---|---|---|---|
| Q11: Comfortable communicating with the agency team via social media. | 3,901 | 78,02% | Good |
| Q12: Encourage followers to collaborate on activities. | 3,970 | 79,41% | Good |
| Q13: Involves massive interaction and participation from followers. | 3,881 | 77,62% | Good |
| Q14: Invite the audience to contribute to the dissemination of information. | 4,188 | 83,76% | Good |
| Q15: Regularly ask for public feedback. | 3,980 | 79,60% | Good |

*Source: Primary Data 2025*

Collaboration Dimension Evaluation: Although this dimension had the lowest aggregate score among the four 4C pillars, the success of variable P14 (TCR 83.76%) stood out positively. This figure indicates that audiences on Instagram and TikTok felt compelled by the institution's Call-to-Action to organically share the video and digital pamphlet within their friendship networks (family/village WhatsApp groups), a key driver of organic viral reach.

*3.3.4 Connection*

The Connection dimension measures the solidity of collective emotional bonds, representing the culmination of an institution's transformation from a mere service provider to a center of support for the social fabric.

**Table 6.** Frequency Distribution for Connection

| Statement Indicator (P) | Mean Score | TCR (%) | Eligibility Category |
|---|---|---|---|
| Q16: Helps me feel closer to the institution. | 4,218 | 84,36% | Good |
| Q17: Makes me interested in participating/registering. | 3,970 | 79,41% | Good |
| Q18: Encourage the desire to share urgent information with others. | 4,446 | 88,91% | Very Good |
| Q19: Creating a community that supports non-formal education. | 4,564 | 91,29% | Very Good |
| Q20: Influence social views of the institution in a positive way. | 4,495 | 89,90% | Very Good |

*Source: Primary Data 2025*

Connection Dimension Evaluation: This paradigm recorded the most impressive performance of the entire study. Variable P19 achieved a monumental achievement with the highest absolute TCR value at 91.29%. This metric is a theoretical indication that digital marketing implemented by PKBM Mawar is not only successful as a program sales instrument but also functions as an ecosystem catalyst that unites the community in supporting alternative education as a means of vertical social mobility.

## 4. Discussion

To understand the comprehensive meaning behind the above statistical shift, it is crucial to compare the findings of PKBM Mawar research with previous studies in the formal and commercial sectors, to map the academic position of this study.

**Table 7.** Comparison of Research Findings with Previous Studies

| Analysis Variables | Previous Study Findings | Findings of This Study (PKBM Mawar) | Explanation of Differences & Similarities |
|---|---|---|---|
| Effective Content Formats | Instagram Reels & dynamic visual formats trigger optimal engagement (Kashali & Risal, 2024) | Absolute use of Short Videos on Instagram and TikTok (Respondent choice 70.3%). | Same. Psychologically, the cognitive load of processing dynamic visual media is preferred by digital-age consumers across all socioeconomic backgrounds. |

| Analysis Variables | Previous Study Findings | Findings of This Study (PKBM Mawar) | Explanation of Differences & Similarities |
|---|---|---|---|
| Geographic and Cost Efficiency | Social media reaches a limitless market and is budget-effective for commercial ventures (Deniar et al., 2022) | The reach of information widened substantially, reaching 47.5% of respondents outside the institutional sub-district on a non-residential basis. | Similarly, digital distribution technology operates boundarylessly, making this efficiency replicable to the nonprofit education sector. |
| Audience Relationship Motivation | Focus on concrete transactions/Admission of New Students in prestigious formal schools (Sulistiyawan et al., 2024) | Building trust (TCR 86.53%) and demystifying stigma through community support ties (TCR 91.29%). | Different. The audience characteristics are radically different. Prospective formal school students seek prestige, while marginalized PKBM demographics seek a sense of security and inclusive acceptance after the trauma of dropping out of school. Therefore, emotional touch (community connection) is the primary driver. |
| Management Capacity | Often hampered by the lack of a dedicated management team and lack of IT expertise (Saputri et al., 2023; Maimunah et al., 2023) | Observational triangulation confirmed an acute deficit in IT literacy among local educational institution managers. | Similarly, local/informal organizations face a severe budget crunch to employ professional marketing agencies, underscoring the need for a very simple strategy format. |

Explanation of Results and Practical Contributions: Based on the comparison table above, it is clear why the highest TCR result in this study fell on the indicator of creating an inclusive community (Connection, Q19:

91.29%). Unlike the formal school PPDB studied by Sulistiyawan et al. (2024), which is generally linear, enrollment of students in equivalency institutions is always overshadowed by feelings of inferiority. The greatest practical contribution of this study is the finding that for non-formal institutions, the function of digital marketing (Context and Communication) has shifted from being merely a "diploma-selling tool" to a sociological engineering tool for image rehabilitation. Simplified narrative language (TCR 84.55%) psychologically breaks down the barriers of exclusivity.

However, the surge in awareness of up to 98% should be viewed with caution. The lack of experimental control allows for the influence of confounding variables (such as the effects of concurrent offline village promotions) or recall bias due to the retrospective cross-sectional design used.

## 5. Conclusion

This study descriptively concludes that the implementation of a digital marketing strategy formulated through the STP (Segmenting, Targeting, Positioning) blueprint is a highly relevant procedure for non-formal educational institutions. Based on the research objectives, this strategy successfully bridged the institutional visibility gap by reducing the proportion of basic ignorance from 45.5% to an absolute recognition of 98%. The 4C framework-based approach also confirms that the digital strategy is not only effective as a virtual bulletin board, but also successfully establishes a dialectical relationship with the public, normalizes views on alternative education, and extracts an extraordinarily high level of community connection (91.29%).

While these findings are acknowledged to be affected by limitations such as the vulnerability to recall bias due to the lack of an empirical control group, their practical contribution cannot be overlooked, to implement these findings practically, PKBM institutions and similar entities are urgently recommended to standardize their marketing production on a short-format vertical video architecture. Furthermore, institutional management needs to encourage the implementation of organic digital ambassador programs (by motivating alumni/tutors to share content) and must immediately allocate funds for capacity-building training for local administrative staff to ensure the sustainability of this promotion. Future academic research is recommended to shift to true experimental control designs to dissect causality without looming bias.

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