

## Positioning the Quality Excellence Competitiveness of Integrated School Education Using the Multidimensional Scaling Model

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**ABSTRACT:** *This research was carried out by developing an analysis model of the competitiveness quality performance of the Integrated Islamic Middle School (SMPIT). Judging from acquiring new students, SMPIT is currently experiencing increased student interest. The research aims to build a marketing strategy model based on competitive quality performance excellence and determine the superior position of each SMPIT in Klaten City as a manifestation of the emergence of the competitive advantage of Integrated Islamic High Schools in Indonesia. The research was conducted quantitatively through multivariate multidimensional scaling statistical tests. The sample was taken using a purposive sampling technique as many as 112 respondents, namely parents of students from the entire community who believe in leading Islamic education in Klaten. The quantitative test of the model includes testing the validity and reliability of the instrument and a quantitative multidimensional scaling test of SMPIT's competitiveness using the SPSS 21 program. This research produces attributes in a questionnaire adapted from Wahyudin including market orientation, program innovation, environmental adaptability and the influence of competitive advantage. Quantitative test results show that the instrument items are valid and reliable. SMPIT Ibnu Abbas and SMPIT Hidayah have the highest competitive advantage points on the map of superior school competitiveness from quantitative and qualitative aspects in Klaten Regency, namely in Quadrant I. In the final stage of the research, a map of each SMPIT was formed to create competitiveness for Islamic secondary schools. This will lead to welcoming the era of demographic bonuses and economic growth to Indonesia's golden generation in 2045. The novelty of this research combines positioning the competitiveness of superior Islamic schools based on multidimensional scaling with the object of observation of secondary Islamic education in Klaten Regency, a cluster of economic growth areas experiencing rapid growth in the Joglosemar region. This research combines the concept of competitive advantage in the quality performance of Islamic educational institutions through a multidimensional scaling model positioning.*

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Penelitian ini dilakukan melalui pengembangan model analisis kinerja mutu daya saing Sekolah Menengah Islam Terpadu (SMPIT). Dilihat dari aspek perolehan jumlah siswa baru, saat ini SMPIT mengalami peningkatan jumlah minat siswa. Penelitian bertujuan membangun suatu model strategi pemasaran berbasis keunggulan kinerja mutu saing dan mengetahui posisi keunggulan masing-masing SMPIT di Kota Klaten sebagai wujud munculnya keunggulan daya saing Sekolah Menengah Islam Terpadu di Indonesia. Penelitian dilakukan dengan pendekatan kuantitatif melalui uji statistik multivariat multidimensional scalling. Pengambilan sampel menggunakan teknik purposive sampling sebanyak 112 responden yaitu orang tua siswa dari populasi seluruh masyarakat yang mempercayai pendidikan Sekolah Islam Unggulan di Klaten. Uji kuantitatif model meliputi uji kesahihan dan keandalan instrumen dan uji kuantitatif multidimensional scalling daya saing SMPIT menggunakan program SPSS 21. Penelitian ini menghasilkan atribut dalam kuesioner diadaptasi dari Wahyudin meliputi Orientasi pasar, Inovasi program, adaptabilitas Lingkungan dan pengaruh keunggulan bersaing. Hasil uji kuantitatif menunjukkan butir instrumen *shahih* dan handal. SMPIT Ibnu Abbas dan SMPIT Hidayah memiliki posisi nilai tertinggi poin keunggulan kompetitif di peta daya saing sekolah unggulan baik dari aspek kuantitatif maupun kualitatif di Kabupaten Klaten yaitu di Kuadran I. Tahap akhir penelitian telah terbentuk peta masing-masing SMPIT sehingga tercipta daya saing Sekolah menengah Islam Unggulan menyongsong era bonus demografi dan pertumbuhan ekonomi menuju generasi emas Indonesia di tahun 2045. Kebaruan dari riset ini memadukan konsep positioning daya saing sekolah Islam unggulan berbasis multidimensional *scalling* dengan obyek amatan pendidikan Islam menengah di Kabupaten Klaten, suatu kluster wilayah pertumbuhan ekonomi mengalami pertumbuhan pesat di wilayah Joglosemar. Penelitian ini memadukan konsep keunggulan bersaing kinerja mutu intitusi pendidikan Islam melalui positioning multidimensional *scalling* model.

**Keywords:** *Competitiveness, Multidimensional Scaling, Quality Performance.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

It is still an assignment to prepare Indonesian students to face increasingly complex real-life challenges in the future through quality learning. The decline in the 2022 International Student Assessment Program results must be a reflection. Based on the PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) results, Indonesia experienced a decline in its score. According to educational practitioner Indra Charismiadji, these results in a review by Muhamad, (2023) reflect a severe learning crisis in reading literacy and must be overcome thoughtfully and sustainably. ITB Professor Iwan Pranoto, in a review of Muhamad, (2023), explained that in reflecting on PISA results, it is not only the ranking that is important but also that Indonesian students' scores from the 2022 PISA results need to be compared to other countries. The 2022 PISA score results only saw 18 per cent of Indonesian students reaching level two in learning

mathematics. This result is much lower than the OECD country average of around 69 per cent. The country of Singapore, which was in first place in the 2022 PISA score and can reach an average of 85 per cent, is at level 5 or 6. Very few of the best performing Indonesian students in mathematics are at level 5 or 6, an average score.

Even though Indonesian students have lagging academic scores, support for students to learn is still considered positive. OECD Director Andreas Schleicher in Mahar Prastiwi & Kasih, (2023) explained that Indonesian students have scores above the average for OECD countries on a solid sense of belonging. The data shows that 87 per cent of students in Indonesia find it easy to make friends at school, and 86 per cent feel accepted at school. This value is above the average for OECD countries of 75 per cent. The assessment of the factor of parental involvement in student learning in Indonesia got a higher score. Indonesian students received a lot of support from teachers during the pandemic. For educational observers, this is important because technology cannot replace teacher attention. For education observers, learning for students is transactional and essential for experiencing social relationships.

Apart from the decline in PISA scores, people who are observers of the world of education in Indonesia are shocked by several heartbreaking incidents related to teachers and students. During the pandemic in the last two years, disturbing images appeared on various social media regarding violence in the world of education (Damanik, 2019). This broadcast gave rise to information about rude behaviour between students and between students towards teachers and teachers towards students. There was heartbreaking news regarding the death of an honorary fine arts teacher in Sampang, Madura, due to the beating of a student. This tragic incident adds to a long line of dark problems in the national education system in Indonesia, especially secondary education. The irony and various issues in Indonesia's education world cannot be separated from the pattern of influence of relations between subjects and objects built in science. This pattern of relationship influence is rooted in the non-objectivity of science. According to research by Damanik, (2019), the education system in Indonesia is not objective. There are several fundamental weaknesses in Indonesia's national education system. Weaknesses in the system include problems with principles, objectives, curriculum, teaching methods, evaluation, students, organizations, educators, facilities, and educational financing.

Efforts to increase the quality and number of excellent secondary education units in Indonesia in the future are a strategic issue in laying the foundation for developing Indonesia's intelligent human beings towards the next stage. The concept of excellent Islamic schools that emerged in the mid-1990s offered an alternative solution to the concerns of the majority of people in Indonesia who wanted a new Islamic educational institution that was committed to being able to implement Islamic values in the learning system as a whole (Muslim & Tang, 2024). This excellent Islamic learning system offers learning activities in the general realm and Islamic religious education, which can be directly implemented in the teaching and learning process and students' daily life practices. In the concept of integrated and excellent Islamic education, the theories learned in class are directly applied by students in activities outside of school, family and society (Ikhwan, 2016). Education observers believe that the concept of integrated excellent Islamic education can build a quality education system by combining various components and strengths that can improve the quality of education (Ahmad, 2016). This concept is expected to produce competitive young learners in Indonesia who have integrity, morals, fighting power, ethics, innovation, faith and high purity.

The increase in the quality and competitiveness of excellent integrated Islamic secondary schools in Indonesia must be developed by building Islamic educational institutions that are complete and have competitive excellence. This research activity focuses on forming a positioning map of the quality excellence of each [SMPIT (Islamic Integrated Junior High School)] in Klaten Regency. The essence of positioning excellent Islamic education institutions is marketing strategy activities through a combination of product and service mix in the education sector to form a competitive excellence position map for each school. From the description of the background of the problem, it is necessary to map the position of [SMPIT's (Islamic Integrated Junior High School)] quality competitiveness in Klaten Regency. So the main research formulation is: "How can competitive excellence in [SMPIT (Islamic Integrated Junior High School)] education in Klaten Regency be created through mapping the position of integrated excellent secondary schools based on performance quality?"

In general, this research aims to develop a model of excellence in the quality of SMPIT-integrated secondary education in Klaten City, which can be used as a strategic reference to achieve competitive excellence in excellent Islamic secondary school educational institutions. The benefits that can be obtained from this research activity are that science, through the positioning model of excellent Islamic secondary schools, can be provided with empirical evidence of the importance of knowing the competitive excellence of the quality of education of each SMPIT at the methodological level, through a positioning test approach using multidimensional scaling based on competitive excellence, this research can provide a complete position map image of each of the excellent SMPITs in Klaten city based on variables that drive performance quality.

Muttaqin, (2023) explained the concept of implementing good and well-planned management of excellent Islamic school education, which can have an essential influence in consistently spreading Islamic values to all elements of teaching staff, education, and students. The Islamic values taught in excellent integrated secondary schools include all practical values, including honesty, transparency, kinship, being happy to help others, developing oneself and maintaining respect (Hidayat et al., 2022). The success of implementing Islamic values in an excellent integrated Islamic secondary education institution depends on how individuals can make decisions to continue to integrate religious values actively and accept these values as part of the structure to build character through the characteristics of *kaffah* (the whole) Muslim (Ikhwan, 2014).

Ahmad, (2016) research delves into the concept of integration in the implementation of integrated excellent Islamic secondary schools, offering a comprehensive view of the various aspects involved. This includes curriculum integration, an integrated balance of various intelligences including Spiritual Quotient, Social Quotient, Emotional Quotient and Intelligence Quotient (Anwar et al., 2023). It also encompasses the integration of the formation of students' maturity, including the development of physical, spiritual and sensory aspects, and the integration of learning resources with various learning aids, media and materials. One of the most important elements in the activity is the integration of principles in educating children, balanced practice of good values through environmental factors, parents and schools, as well as the integration of various *maaddah* (materials) including *qauliyah* (verbalistic) and *kauniyah* (empirical) aspects.

The competitive excellence of an educational institution can be formed in various ways. Kotler & Fox, (1995) stated that an educational institution can use marketing assets to create a competitive excellence. These marketing assets include aspects of the quality

of academic programs, differentiation of academic programs, costs or prices, reputation of educational institutions and well-qualified human resources. A position of competitive excellence can be achieved by presenting spatial maps of people's perceptions and preferences using visible displays. Perception or relationship between stimuli is psychologically shown as a geographic relationship between points in a multidimensional space (spatial map). A spatial map is a relationship between brands or other perceived stimuli, expressed as a geometric relationship between points in a multidimensional space. It has coordinates that indicate the specific position of a brand. The configuration in a spatial map can be interpreted by examining objects' coordinates and relative positions. Objects close to each other will compete because they are similar (Bijmolt et al., 2022). An isolated brand indicates a unique image. Gaps in the spatial map indicate potential opportunities for introducing new products.

## II. METHOD

This quantitative research uses the multivariate multidimensional scaling analysis method (J. F. Hair et al., 2019). This test helps map the position of each excellent integrated Islamic secondary school with similarities and differences in the excellence of learning quality. The position of each school in the respondents' perception map becomes a reference for maintaining a position of competitive excellence. If the school's position is less favourable, it can be used to catch up with the quality of learning services. The research was conducted in Klaten Regency at 6 SMPITs, namely SMPIT Ibnu Abbas, SMPIT Hidayah, SMPIT Muhammadiyah 1, SMPIT PK Muhammadiyah Delanggu, SMP Nurul Mustofa and SMPIT Aisyiyah Klaten. The presentation of quality-based, integrated, excellent Islamic secondary education services characterizes these six SMPITs. The selection of schools as samples was based on data from the education service of Klaten Regency and social media websites related to the excellent Islamic S School in Klaten Regency. Research activities were carried out for three months in the field from June to September 2023, and one month included tabulation, analysis of the final report and output.

The scope of the research includes a survey of parents who have a strong interest in sending their students to the excellent SMPIT of Klaten city by providing an online questionnaire (google form) so that the competitive position of each SMPIT is known through four dimensions of the competitive, excellent model including market orientation, innovation learning programs, environmental adaptability and competitive excellence (Wahyudin, 2018). Questionnaires were distributed to 112 respondents to determine their perception of the attractiveness of the existing 6 SMPIT quality performance. Hair et al., (2019) explained that the number sufficiency of samples follows the multivariate test, so standard data requires a minimum of 10 times the number of indicators. The data obtained was then analyzed using the double variable multidimensional scaling technique to determine the relative position of one object relative to another based on the respondent's assessment of each dimension.

The research data source was primary data obtained through distributing questionnaires. Secondary data was obtained from research activities through literature studies by searching various journals on the internet, magazines, textbooks and other articles related to the research topic. Data checking, tabulation, and validity and reliability testing of model instruments were conducted early. Further analysis was carried out

through multivariable multidimensional scaling (MDS) multivariable tests using the SPSS 21 program (J. F. Hair et al., 2019).

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### Validity Test and Reliability Test

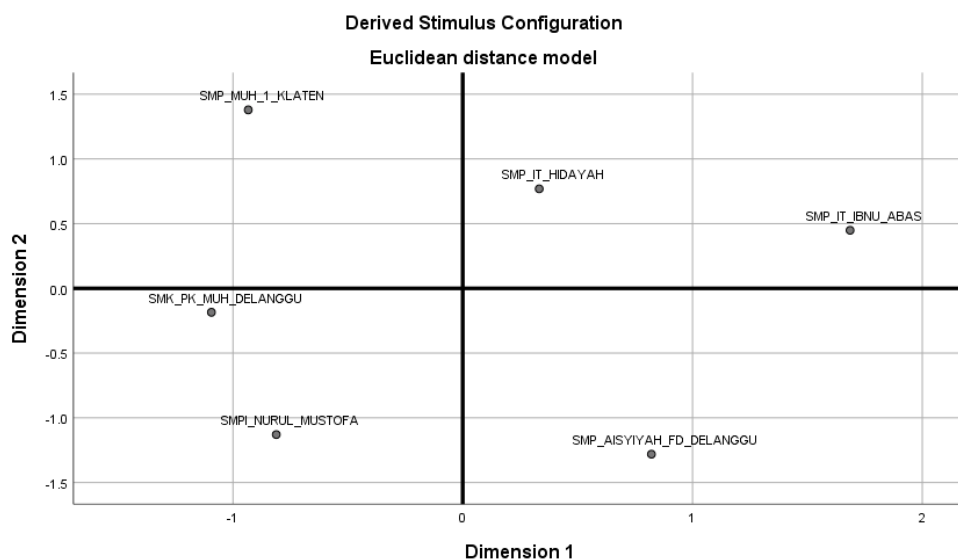
##### *Validity test*

The validity considered in this research activity is the item's validity. Item validity tests the items of a measuring instrument. Item validity produces a correlation score between items with a relevant criterion (total score) in an aspect. The total score is obtained from the sum of all item scores. If the correlation score of these items produces a significant score, it means they can measure the concept to be measured (J. Hair & Anderson, 2018). In this study, 112 answers were pre-tested on the pre-survey activity, with all items valid.

##### *Reliability test*

The item reliability test determines the extent to which measurements can give the same or consistent results if repeated measurements are made on the same subject. This test was carried out factor by factor, as many as the factors in the questionnaire (J. Hair & Anderson, 2018). The research results show that the reliability test results for all items exceed Cronbach's alpha score of 0.600, a commonly accepted threshold for internal consistency. From the data elaboration, it can be concluded that all statements in the questionnaire are reliable, so they can be used in the next analysis stage.

The framework of the research model based on multidimensional scaling variables through interaction tests is outlined in Figure 1 below:



**Figure 1.** Model framework SMPIT multidimensional scaling

Based on the spatial map image, it can be seen that the position of SMPIT Ibnu Abbas and SMPIT Hidayah is in quadrant I. Quadrant I shows the position of excellence in the quality of integrated, excellent Islamic secondary school educational services from all quality aspects, both qualitative and quantitative aspects. These two SMPITs have similarities regarding excellent quality education services, so the community's response

in Klaten City places these two SMPITs in quadrant I or the excellent quadrant. SMPIT Muh Delanggu and SMPIT Nurul Mustofa occupy Quadrant III. This quadrant has the advantage that the educational costs charged to students are relatively low, so the public assesses that the positions of these two SMPITs are similar in terms of cost. The location of these two SMPITs is also outside the city of Klaten, so the public has the same perception regarding the geographical aspects of these two schools. Quadrant II and IV positions are occupied by SMPIT Aisyiyah, which has the unique characteristics of SMPIT specifically for young female students. This SMPIT has a unique position different from the other five SMPITs. SMP Muh I Klaten occupies Quadrant IV. For the people of Klaten City, SMPIT has the perception of being categorized as a growing school or a challenger category in providing excellent quality Islamic education services to other SMPITs.

The position of SMP Muh I Delanggu and SMPI Nurul Mostofa is in the lagging position regarding the quality of learning in both qualitative and quantitative aspects. This lagging position is in quadrant III. These two schools must work hard to catch up with their performance and shift their competitive excellence positions to Quadrant II and Quadrant IV. SMP Muhammadiyah I Delanggu and SMPIT Aisyiyah must work hard to improve one of the lagging aspects of learning quality, both qualitative and quantitative aspects, so that they can change their position to quadrant I catching up with the other two excellent SMPITs. Based on multidimensional scaling map analysis, according to the perception of the Klaten community, there are two excellent SMPITs in terms of the quality of learning services, namely SMPIT Ibnu Abbas and SMPIT Hidayah.

### **The Antecedents of Excellence Competitiveness of SMPIT Education**

Market orientation, a strategic approach that focuses on understanding and meeting the needs of the market, has a positive influence on performance excellence (Plastun et al., 2023). Research shows that educational institutions that can implement market orientation have the advantage of knowledge and can understand customers' wants and needs. This advantage can be a source of how institutions present superior products and services. An excellent Islamic secondary school educational institution that can create innovative programs well and publicize these excellences to the community and student's parents will be able to create competitive excellence (Hardianto, 2016).

School adaptability, the ability of an educational institution to adjust and respond to changes in its environment, has a positive effect on performance excellence. Islamic educational institutions that can adapt to the environment by, for example, introducing new teaching methods or adjusting their curriculum to meet the needs of the students, will improve their performance. This adaptability allows them to align strategies and demonstrate a high level of adaptiveness and flexibility with the external environment. This school's ability to adapt can show better performance than competing schools. The results of this research are in line with research by (Mucheru et al., 2024), which explained that to be able to successfully win the competition, organizations must be aware of the importance of organizational management strategies. Managers of excellent educational institutions must understand changes in the competitive environment, actively seek opportunities to utilize the institution's strategic capabilities, make continuous adjustments, and seek improvements in every line.

Research Horbal & Karachkov, (2024) explained that competitive excellence positively influences performance by increasing sales volume, profit levels, market share and

return on investment. Competitive excellence is obtained through the institution's ability to process and utilize its resources and capital. Institutions that can create competitive excellence will have the strength to compete with other institutions because their products and services are in demand by the public. The increasing interest of parents in sending their children to SMPIT and the ability to produce output in the form of competitiveness of graduates who can obtain high National Examination results means that SMPIT in Klaten City can become an institution with excellent performance and increasingly in demand by the public in the future.

The level of education with the integrated Islamic label is the answer to collaboration between general education and religious education, which contains the concept of 'one for all'. In general, the life of urban Muslims refers to those who live and are domiciled in urban areas. This community generally has sufficient capital, is highly educated and adheres to a moderate Islamic religion. At this time, this phenomenon is starting to spread to rural areas. The standard curriculum for excellent Islamic secondary schools aims not only to develop knowledge and equip students with technical abilities but also in conjunction with the integral cultivation of religious morals further to strengthen students' belief in the Islamic religion. The curriculum of this integrated superior Islamic secondary school is balanced between skills in mastering technology and cultivating religious morals (Anshori et al., 2022).

The initial foundation for the formation of the excellent integrated Islamic high school label aspired to be able to form a future generation that would rise through the spirit of preaching Islam more openly and comprehensively and making it proud among the Muslim community at various socio-economic levels (Muslim & Tang, 2024). Many operational financing models at leading excellent Islamic secondary schools are cross-subsidy. So the emergence of this integrated excellent Islamic secondary school dispels the notion of the emergence of a new capitalism in the world of education. This superb integrated Islamic high school rejects the idea that quality schools have to be expensive. This confirms that excellent integrated Islamic secondary schools are now sought after among Muslim elites economically, educationally and bureaucratically.

### **The Problems of Islamic Secondary Education in Indonesia**

Research by Prihatin & Subiyantoro, (2022) has highlighted several issues with Islamic secondary education in Indonesia, including the lack of public interest in Islamic education. The quality of Islamic school education, while currently below that of excellent state public schools, can be significantly improved. The low quality of teachers could be one factor. Quality ustad/male teachers and ustazah/female teachers provided for Islamic secondary schools, especially private ones, is an independent and self-financing effort. Educators for state schools automatically receive allocations from the government budget. There is still government discrimination regarding the allocation of education funds for private Islamic schools and the low quality of the learning management process in each educational unit through the unequal quality of learning services at excellent Islamic secondary schools in the future must continue to be addressed (Haidir et al., 2021). It is crucial for all stakeholders to play an active role in improving the quality of learning services, which will lead to the formation of intelligent, qualified, and useful individuals for the nation, and prepare for Indonesia's golden generation era in 2045. This is a shared responsibility.

Some findings Adelia & Mitra, (2021) explained the problems of secondary education in Indonesia in general, namely the relatively low quality of learning services, relevance,



elitism, and internal and external problems. Management, which is related to the freedom of school leaders to innovate, still needs to improve (Fitra, 2021). This occurs because almost all education-related problems are resolved by educational authorities (Musrifah, 2018). These various problems in the education sector are the main problems for Islamic secondary school education, which multiple parties consider more problematic (Supandi, 2023). Leadership at the educational unit level is a process of influencing the activities of a group to achieve the set goals. Research findings Niam, Yuliejantiningasih, & Miyono, (2021) show that to become an excellent Islamic school, the principal must be able to define the school's vision and mission clearly. The principal must lead by example, develop an appropriate curriculum, motivate teachers and students towards competitive excellence, manage finances and establish good relationships between various stakeholders that are the keys to the superior quality of excellent Islamic secondary schools in the future (Hulkin & Shaleh, 2024).

#### IV. CONCLUSION

From the discussion in the above chapter, the following conclusions are obtained. Based on the excellence of educational service quality performance, qualitative and quantitative aspects of the six SMPITs, scores were obtained to determine each SMPIT's quality excellence. Each SMPIT has a distribution of the highest and lowest position values. SMPIT Hidayah and Ibnu Abbas have the highest educational service quality performance positions. Meanwhile, SMPIT Aisyiyah and Nurul Mustofa have positions in the growing and challenging categories regarding academic quality performance service aspects, both from physical and non-physical elements. There are weak points in each SMPIT in the minds of respondents' perceptions. These can be used as input and a follow-up to improve the quality and competitiveness of integrated Islamic education services in each SMPIT. The four SMPITs must be able to improve the quality of learning services from both quantitative and qualitative aspects to catch up with the position they are lagging in and shift the position of their respective schools to quadrant I. This quadrant is perceived by the Klaten Regency community as being occupied by SMPIT, which has excellent quality and competitiveness.

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