



The Dhuha Prayer and Bahtsul Masail as the Hallmarks of MTs Cipasung's Excellence in Developing the Madrasa's Image

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Article history: Received: June 24, 2026 Revised: July 25, 2026 Accepted: August 18, 2026 Available Online: September 10, 2026	The success of Islamic schools is no longer determined solely by academic quality but also by their ability to establish a distinctive institutional identity as a foundation for building a positive image and gaining public trust. However, studies examining religious programs as a means of shaping institutional identity and developing the image of Islamic schools remain limited. This study aims to analyze the role of the Salat Dhuha and Bahtsul Masail programs in shaping the distinctive identity of MTs Cipasung and their contribution to the development of the school's image. This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation and were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that the Salat Dhuha program fosters a religious culture through habitual worship, strengthened discipline, and teacher role modeling. Meanwhile, Bahtsul Masail serves as a platform for strengthening Islamic scholarly traditions by developing students' critical thinking skills and their ability to address contemporary religious and scholarly issues. The consistent implementation of both programs has established a distinctive institutional identity that differentiates MTs Cipasung from other Islamic schools and contributes to the development of its institutional image. This contribution is reflected in increased public trust, a growing number of students from outside the pesantren community, and positive recommendations from alumni. These findings confirm that sustainable religious programs not only contribute to students' character development but can also serve as an institutional strategy for building identity, strengthening the school's image, and enhancing the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions. This study contributes to the development of Islamic education management by demonstrating that religious programs, particularly Salat Dhuha and Bahtsul Masail, can function as strategic instruments for shaping institutional identity and strengthening the image of Islamic schools.
Keywords: Islamic School Branding; Institutional Identity; Madrasah Image; Dhuha Prayer; Bahtsul Masail.	
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	ABSTRAK
	Keberhasilan madrasah tidak lagi semata-mata ditentukan oleh kualitas akademik, tetapi juga oleh kemampuan membangun identitas kelembagaan yang khas sebagai landasan dalam membentuk citra dan memperoleh kepercayaan masyarakat. Namun, kajian mengenai program keagamaan sebagai pembentuk identitas kelembagaan dalam pengembangan citra madrasah masih terbatas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peran program Salat Dhuha dan Bahtsul Masail dalam membentuk identitas keunggulan MTs Cipasung serta kontribusinya terhadap pengembangan citra madrasah. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model Miles dan Huberman melalui tahapan reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa program Salat Dhuha membentuk budaya religius melalui pembiasaan ibadah, penguatan kedisiplinan, dan keteladanan guru. Sementara itu, Bahtsul Masail menjadi wadah penguatan tradisi keilmuan Islam yang mendorong kemampuan berpikir kritis serta pemecahan masalah keagamaan dan keilmuan kontemporer. Pelaksanaan kedua program secara konsisten membentuk identitas khas yang membedakan MTs Cipasung dari madrasah lainnya dan berkontribusi terhadap pengembangan citra madrasah. Kontribusi tersebut terlihat dari meningkatnya kepercayaan masyarakat, bertambahnya jumlah peserta didik yang berasal dari luar lingkungan pesantren, serta adanya rekomendasi positif dari alumni. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa program keagamaan yang dilaksanakan secara berkelanjutan tidak hanya berperan dalam pembentukan karakter peserta didik, tetapi juga dapat menjadi strategi kelembagaan dalam membangun identitas, memperkuat citra, dan meningkatkan daya saing madrasah. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi bagi pengembangan manajemen pendidikan Islam dengan menunjukkan bahwa program keagamaan, khususnya Salat Dhuha dan Bahtsul Masail, dapat menjadi instrumen strategis dalam membentuk identitas kelembagaan dan memperkuat citra madrasah
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A. Introduction

The success of an educational institution is not only measured by its academic quality but also by its ability to establish a distinctive identity that represents its institutional character. The formation of such an identity does not occur instantly; rather, it develops through a continuous process of internalizing values, culture, habits, practices, and mindsets that characterize the institution (Yuris, n.d.). An identity that is

consistently established through institutional culture and flagship programs becomes an essential asset in shaping a positive image in the eyes of the public, both through product-related and non-product-related attributes (Sudiantini et al., 2023). Furthermore, the implementation of flagship programs in Islamic education and institutional identity is not solely oriented toward academic achievement but also toward strengthening religious character, which serves as a distinctive characteristic of Islamic educational institutions (Husna et al., 2021).

The image of a madrasah refers to the perceptions, evaluations, and impressions formed by the public regarding the quality and trustworthiness of an educational institution. Such an image is not established instantly but develops through a continuous process reflected in the implementation of institutional values, the quality of educational services, organizational culture, and various flagship programs that are consistently implemented (Karimah, 2022). Furthermore, brand image refers to the perceptions formed in the minds of stakeholders regarding an institution ([Author], 2026). In this process, institutional identity serves as the primary foundation for image formation because it reflects the characteristics, values, and distinctive advantages that the institution seeks to present to the public. The stronger the institutional identity is developed and maintained through various flagship programs, the greater the opportunity to establish a positive image in the eyes of society. Ultimately, a positive image enhances public trust and strengthens the competitiveness of an educational institution as a high-quality educational provider.

Research by Eriani et al. (2025) demonstrated that branding strategies implemented through social media play a significant role in shaping a school's image. The school's image can be developed by utilizing social media to strengthen public trust in the educational institution. In addition, Suhartini (2023) found that the development of a school's image can be achieved through the provision of adequate facilities and infrastructure, the improvement of teaching quality, and the establishment of open communication between the school and parents.

Previous studies have generally examined the development of madrasah image through communication strategies, educational marketing, and the provision of facilities and infrastructure. However, these studies have paid limited attention to how flagship programs, particularly religious programs, can function as institutional identity while simultaneously contributing to the development of a madrasah's image. Therefore, this study seeks to address this research gap by analyzing the Dhuha Prayer and Bahtsul Masail programs as distinctive elements of the institutional identity of MTs Cipasung in building the madrasah's image.

MTs Cipasung is a madrasah that develops its institutional identity through flagship programs based on Islamic values. This identity is manifested through the flagship Dhuha Prayer habituation program, which is consistently implemented before classroom learning activities, and the Bahtsul Masail program, which serves as a platform for students to develop critical thinking skills regarding contemporary *fiqh* issues through the tradition of scholarly discussion. These flagship programs are not merely components of the learning process but have also become distinguishing characteristics that differentiate MTs Cipasung from other madrasahs. Based on the results of observations, the community recognizes MTs Cipasung as a madrasah with a strong religious development program through these two flagship programs, making them one of the considerations for parents when selecting an educational institution for their children.

Based on the above explanation, this study aims to analyze how Dhuha Prayer and Bahtsul Masail establish the identity of excellence of MTs Cipasung and to examine the role of this identity in the development of the madrasah's image. This study is expected to contribute to the advancement of Islamic educational management studies, particularly regarding the role of religious flagship programs in developing the identity and image of educational institutions.

B. Methods

The research method employed in this study, entitled “*Dhuha Prayer and Bahtsul Masail as the Identity of Excellence of MTs Cipasung in the Development of the Madrasah’s Image*,” uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. A qualitative approach was selected to explore and understand the phenomenon in its natural setting, particularly the implementation of religious flagship programs in shaping the distinctive institutional identity of the madrasah (Safarudin et al., 2023). The case study design was employed because this research focuses on an in-depth investigation of a specific case, namely MTs Cipasung, located in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia. MTs Cipasung was purposively selected due to its distinctive characteristics as a *pesantren*-based educational institution with various religious flagship programs, particularly Dhuha Prayer and Bahtsul Masail.

In addition, the qualitative approach employed several data collection techniques. First, interviews were conducted through direct interaction between the researcher and the research participants. The interviews involved teachers and female students who were considered relevant to the implementation of the flagship programs at MTs Cipasung. Second, observation was used as a data collection technique involving direct observation of participants engaged in activities relevant to the research, including religious activities, social media management, and promotional activities. The observations were conducted over one full day, from morning until late afternoon. To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, the researcher also conducted follow-up confirmation with the informants through online communication. Third, documentation was employed by collecting various supporting materials, including photographs of activities, social media content, the madrasah’s vision and mission statements, promotional materials, and other documents relevant to the institutional identity of MTs Cipasung (Ardiansyah et al., 2023).

The collected data were subsequently analyzed using the Miles and Huberman data analysis model, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, simplifying, organizing, and

focusing qualitative data so that the information obtained remains relevant to the research objectives. Data display involves organizing and presenting the findings systematically to facilitate the interpretation of patterns, relationships, and meanings emerging from the data. Conclusion drawing was conducted throughout the research process, beginning with data collection and continuing through the interpretation and verification of findings. This analytical process enabled the researcher to identify and interpret the role of Dhuha Prayer and Bahtsul Masail in establishing the identity of excellence of MTs Cipasung and contributing to the development of the madrasah's image (Qomaruddin & Sa'diyah, 2024).

C. Result and Discussion

1. Institutional Identity of Educational Institutions and Its Formation through Flagship Programs

MTs Cipasung was established to optimise the potential of Qur'anic teachers (*guru ngaji*) and senior students of Cipasung Islamic Boarding School (*Pondok Pesantren Cipasung*), who had available time outside their teaching activities at the pesantren. The initiative was proposed by KH. Acep Adang Ruhiat and realised through the establishment of MTs Cipasung by Drs. KH. A. Bunyamin Ruhiat, M.Si. in 1992. The school officially began operating in 1993 under the Cipasung Islamic Boarding School Foundation, located in Singaparna District, Tasikmalaya Regency. Since its establishment, the madrasah has been committed to integrating Islamic values with the development of students' competencies.

Over time, MTs Cipasung has continuously improved its facilities and educational programmes. In 2007, the madrasah introduced flagship programmes such as *Shalat Dhuha* and *Tahfidz Juz 30*. In 2025, it further expanded its flagship programmes by introducing *Bahtsul Masail*, *Story Telling*, *Tarbiyatul Mubalighin*, *Musabaqah Syarhil Qur'an* (MSQ), and *Sanggar Matsacip* as a platform for developing students' interests, talents, and creativity.

These innovations have significantly enhanced the quality of educational services and strengthened public trust in the institution. This is reflected in the steady increase in student enrolment, which has reached approximately 512 students, making MTs Cipasung one of the most sought-after Islamic junior secondary schools in Tasikmalaya Regency.

a. Vision, Mission, and Goals as the Foundation of the Madrasa's Identity

Identity in the context of Islamic educational institutions is not only understood as institutional excellence but is also rooted in Islamic values that serve as the foundation for the implementation of education. (Aisi & Zakir, n.d.) This concept is in line with the vision of MTs Cipasung, namely, "To Realize an Islamic, Intelligent, and Skilled Generation." This vision reflects the madrasa's commitment to producing students who not only possess academic competence and skills but also demonstrate Islamic character as the primary pillar in their lives. This commitment is further elaborated through the madrasa's mission, namely, to cultivate Islamic practices, create a safe, healthy, and conducive madrasa environment, implement varied, creative, and innovative learning processes, improve the quality of educators and educational personnel, and establish good institutional governance.

The vision and mission not only serve as the direction of the madrasa's policies but are also implemented through the internalization of Islamic values in all educational activities. Based on the research findings, the internalization of Islamic values is realized through various habituation programs, such as congregational Dhuha Prayer, Bahtsul Masail, *istighasah*, the Tahfidz Al-Qur'an program covering Juz 28–30, and the integration of Islamic values into the learning process. Thus, the identity of MTs Cipasung is not only reflected in its vision and mission statements but is also consistently manifested through the madrasa's culture and flagship programs, which serve as its distinctive characteristics and differentiate MTs Cipasung from other educational institutions.

b. Implementation of Madrasa Values in Identity Formation

MTs Cipasung also upholds several core values that serve as the foundation for the implementation of education while simultaneously shaping the madrasa's identity. Religious values are reflected through the predominance of religious-based activities that have become part of the madrasa's culture. The implementation of these values is realized through the habituation of congregational Dhuha Prayer, Bahtsul Masail, *istighasah*, the Tahfidz Al-Qur'an program covering Juz 28–30, and the integration of Islamic values into the classroom learning process.

In addition, MTs Cipasung instills character values as part of its institutional identity. The value of discipline is demonstrated through the implementation of an attendance system during the Dhuha Prayer habituation activities and discipline throughout the learning process. The value of responsibility is cultivated through the habitual practice of maintaining the cleanliness and tidiness of the classroom environment collectively by students. Meanwhile, the value of courtesy is reflected in the culture of respecting teachers, using polite language, and implementing the 5S culture (*Smile, Greeting, Salutation, Politeness, and Courtesy*) in daily interactions within the madrasa environment. This is consistent with the interview results conveyed by Mr. Dede Suhana, a teacher at MTs Cipasung, as follows:

"The curriculum guide clearly states that moral character is prioritized, emphasizing how students should behave politely when meeting teachers and fellow students. In the learning process, every teacher is required to guide students in terms of moral character. In the future, every subject should be integrated with verses from the Qur'an or Hadith so that students become closer to Allah."

Based on the interview findings, the researcher interprets that character development is one of the primary priorities in the educational implementation at MTs Cipasung. The researcher further interprets that MTs Cipasung's efforts to integrate Islamic values are not merely intended to build a positive institutional image but are primarily directed toward fostering students' moral character through the continuous

internalization of Islamic values. Therefore, the positive image of the madrasa can be understood as a consequence of the institution's consistent commitment to instilling Islamic values rather than the primary objective of its educational practices.

Furthermore, the madrasa's identity also embraces the value of consistency, which reinforces the sustainable and systematic implementation of its flagship programs. Each program is designed through systematic planning from the beginning of each semester, including the preparation of learning materials, implementation mechanisms, and activity scheduling. One example is the Bahtsul Masail program, which has a well-planned implementation system, enabling it to be carried out consistently over time. This consistency demonstrates the madrasa's commitment to maintaining program quality while strengthening its institutional image in the eyes of the community.

In its development strategy, it is necessary to optimize the utilization of information technology to support the implementation of its programs (Aisi & Zakir, n.d., p. 1119). This is consistent with the values upheld by MTs Cipasung, which implements modern and innovative values through the utilization of digital technology in the provision of education. Technology integration is applied not only in the learning process but also in administrative and communication aspects. The use of a digital attendance system, digital communication between teachers and parents, and assignments that encourage students to produce scholarly *da'wah* content on social media are forms of implementing these values. This demonstrates that MTs Cipasung strives to integrate Islamic values with technological advancements, thereby building an image as a madrasa that remains firmly grounded in Islamic values while being responsive to the demands of education in the digital era.

These findings indicate that the values and flagship programs implemented by MTs Cipasung have successfully established the madrasa's attractiveness, enabling it to attract prospective students from both the *pesantren* community and the general public outside the *pesantren* environment. This is consistent with the concept that flagship programs implemented consistently become the distinctive characteristics of an institution, leading the public to prefer institutions that possess clear characteristics and

competitive advantages over those that lack distinctive features (Kurli & Elserisa, 2023).

c. Competitive Advantage as the Distinctive Feature of MTs Cipasung

MTs Cipasung also possesses distinctive characteristics reflected in its various flagship programs. These programs are designed not only to strengthen Islamic values but also to respond to the educational needs of an ever-evolving era. These programs include:

1) Dhuha Prayer as the Formation of MTs Cipasung's Identity of Excellence

The research findings indicate that the implementation of activities at MTs Cipasung is systematically organized through the integration of spiritual development with the academic learning process. Before classroom learning begins, all students participate in a series of religious activities, including the performance of Dhuha Prayer, Tasbih Prayer the submission of Qur'an memorization according to predetermined targets, and the delivery of short religious sermons (*kultum*) by students on a rotating basis among classes. This series of activities demonstrates that religious development is not implemented merely as a formal activity but has become a structured and sustainable part of the madrasa culture at MTs Cipasung.

The series of activities demonstrates that religious development at MTs Cipasung is not merely implemented as a formal activity but has become a structured and sustainable part of the madrasa's culture. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Evicenna Yuris, which argues that institutional identity is formed through a continuous process of internalizing values in a consistent and sustainable manner (Yuris, n.d.). The findings of the present study reinforce this argument by demonstrating that the internalization of values is manifested not only through institutional policies but also through the habituation of worship, teachers' role modelling, and daily religious activities. The continuous internalization of these religious values ultimately becomes the institution's distinctive identity, shaping students' character while simultaneously strengthening the image of MTs Cipasung as an Islamic educational institution grounded in Islamic values.

In addition to involving students, teachers also play an active role in supporting the continuity of the program. Teachers not only serve as mentors and supervisors but also perform Dhuha Prayer together with the students as a form of exemplary conduct. Furthermore, teachers are responsible for listening to students' Qur'an memorization recitations, providing their initials as verification of memorization achievement, and recording students' attendance during the implementation of Dhuha Prayer. The direct involvement of teachers demonstrates the madrasa's commitment to internalizing religious values within the school environment.

These findings indicate that religious development at MTs Cipasung has been implemented consistently and integrated into the educational process. This condition has enabled Dhuha Prayer to function not only as a practice of worship habituation but also to develop into a flagship program that represents the integration of spiritual values with academic activities. Therefore, the implementation of Dhuha Prayer not only reflects the madrasa's religious culture but also serves as a distinctive characteristic that strengthens the identity of excellence of MTs Cipasung as an Islamic educational institution. This condition is consistent with the notion that flagship programs function not only as a means of improving educational quality but also as an identity that distinguishes a madrasa from other educational institutions (Hermanto et al., 2024).

2) Bahtsul Masail as a Reinforcement of MTs Cipasung's Identity of Excellence

The institutional identity of MTs Cipasung is not only established through the habituation of Dhuha Prayer but is also strengthened by the implementation of the Bahtsul Masail program, which has become one of the madrasa's distinctive characteristics in developing students' religious competencies. The research findings indicate that Bahtsul Masail differs from the Dhuha Prayer flagship program, which is mandatory for all students. The Bahtsul Masail program at MTs Cipasung is one of the flagship programs that is optional in nature. This program is intended for students who have an interest in deepening their understanding of Islam, particularly in the fields of *fiqh* and the resolution of religious issues. Therefore, participation in Bahtsul

Masail is not compulsory for all students but is limited to those who have the interest and commitment to participate actively.

The implementation of the Bahtsul Masail program involves the collaboration of several teachers as a form of support for the development of students' religious knowledge. Nevertheless, the primary responsibility for guiding the activities rests with the *Fiqh* teacher, Mr. Dede Suhana, who serves as both the facilitator and resource person. The supervising teacher directs the discussion, ensures that the discussion remains focused on the designated topic, and provides reinforcement for the arguments presented by the students.

The Bahtsul Masail program is conducted regularly once a week, every Saturday from 08:30 to 09:30 WIB. The consistency of its implementation demonstrates the madrasa's commitment to providing a learning environment that encourages students to think critically, analytically, and to examine various religious issues in depth. From the planning perspective, the Bahtsul Masail materials are prepared for an entire semester, ensuring that each discussion has a clear direction and learning objectives. However, the preparation of the materials is not entirely rigid. On certain occasions, discussion topics may also originate from suggestions or questions submitted by students regarding religious issues they encounter in their daily lives. This flexibility makes the learning process more contextual, relevant, and capable of addressing the intellectual needs of the students.

Table 1. Stages of the Bahtsul Masail Program Implementation Based on the Research Findings

Stage of Bahtsul Masail Implementation	Description of Bahtsul Masail Activities
Opening	The activity begins with the <i>Fiqh</i> teacher opening the Bahtsul Masail session, explaining the learning objectives, and providing an introduction to the topic to be discussed.
Presentation of the Material	The supervising teacher presents the <i>fiqh</i> material or issue that serves as the

	main topic of discussion during the session, based on the materials that have been prepared for the semester or on topics proposed by the students.
Question and Answer Session	Students are given the opportunity to ask questions, express their opinions, and present arguments based on the Islamic sources they understand.
Discussion and Deliberation	The supervising teacher and all participants discuss the various viewpoints that emerge in an open manner by referring to relevant classical Islamic texts (<i>kitab</i>), while upholding the principle of deliberation (<i>musyawarah</i>) to achieve an ideal understanding.
Drawing Conclusions	The supervising teacher summarizes the discussion, provides feedback on less accurate opinions, and reinforces students' understanding of the <i>fiqh</i> concepts that have been discussed.
Outcomes of Bahtsul Masail	Through the flagship Bahtsul Masail program, students are provided with a platform to deepen their knowledge of <i>fiqh</i> , while simultaneously developing critical thinking skills, the ability to solve contemporary religious issues, and fostering an Islamic academic culture within the madrasa.

Various advantages possessed by MTs Cipasung have become one of the primary factors in attracting prospective students. In addition to being supported by its flagship programs, the madrasa also implements an online registration system, enabling it to reach a broader range of prospective students and not limiting its admissions to the community within the Cipasung Islamic Boarding School (*Pondok Pesantren Cipasung*). This was expressed by Mr. Dede Suhana:

“Previously, the percentage was 10%; now it is 30%. The nearest communities are around here, while the farthest are from Mangkubumi and Gunung Kawung. Those are quite a few kilometers away. The closer ones are from Cikunyir and Cintaraja.”

Based on the interview findings, the researcher found that the implementation of flagship programmes at MTs Cipasung has had a significant impact on strengthening public trust. This trust is reflected in the increasing number of students enrolling from various regions outside the Cipasung Islamic Boarding School community. These findings indicate that the consistent implementation of flagship programmes has not only enhanced the attractiveness of the madrasa but has also strengthened the positive image of MTs Cipasung in the eyes of the public. This finding is consistent with the view of Xio Yaping, who argues that, from a psychological perspective, a brand is not merely a name, logo, or symbol, but rather a perception formed in the minds of the public that enables people to recognize an institution (Yaping et al., 2023). Therefore, the positive public perception of MTs Cipasung's flagship programmes contributes to strengthening the madrasa's identity while simultaneously building its positive institutional image.

These findings indicate that the flagship programs implemented by MTs Cipasung have successfully enhanced the madrasa's attractiveness, enabling it to attract prospective students from both the *pesantren* community and the general public outside the *pesantren* environment. This is consistent with the concept that flagship programs implemented consistently become the distinctive characteristics of an institution, leading the public to prefer institutions with clear characteristics and competitive advantages over those that lack distinctive features (Kurli & Elserisa, 2023).

2. Development of the Madrasa's Image through Institutional Identity and Programs

In analyzing the development of the institutional image, this study adopts the concept proposed by Budiyatmo and Iriani, which explains that an institutional image is developed through four dimensions, namely personality, value, communication, and likeability (Budiyatmo & Iriani, 2022).

Dimension	Research Findings at MTs Cipasung
Personality	The madrasa's flagship programs demonstrate a consistent pattern in the implementation of Dhuha Prayer and Bahtsul Masail as the school's commitment to developing students'

	religious character.
Value	Religious values, <i>akhlakul karimah</i> (noble character), discipline, and <i>pesantren</i> culture are integrated through the two flagship programs, Dhuha Prayer and Bahtsul Masail.
Communication	Communication in the publication process of the flagship programs has been carried out through social media; however, it has not yet been optimal due to limited human resources in managing digital media.
Likeability	The community has demonstrated a high level of trust in MTs Cipasung and considers the flagship programs as one of the reasons for choosing the madrasa for prospective students.

Further, MTs Cipasung implements various strategies to introduce the madrasa's identity to prospective students as part of its efforts to develop the institution's image. Based on the research findings, one of the strategies employed is the distribution of brochures for new student admissions. This is consistent with the concept that efforts to develop a school's image can be optimized through promotional activities (Budiyatmo & Iriani, 2022). The brochures are distributed not only within the Cipasung Islamic Boarding School (*Pondok Pesantren Cipasung*) but also to communities outside the *pesantren* area. This effort aims to expand the dissemination of information regarding the madrasa's profile, flagship programs, and various advantages so that it can reach prospective students from a broader geographical area.

In addition to brochures, MTs Cipasung also utilizes social media platforms, such as Instagram and Facebook, as media for publication and communication with the community. Through these two platforms, the madrasa regularly uploads various information regarding learning activities, flagship programs, student activities, and the achievements attained by the students. The utilization of social media represents one form of the madrasa's adaptation to the development of digital technology while simultaneously serving as a medium for strengthening its existence and introducing the identity of MTs Cipasung to the wider community.

This strategy is further supported by the implementation of a New Student Admission (PPDB) system that can be conducted both online and offline. The registration system, which has been implemented for several years, provides convenience for prospective students in accessing registration services without being limited by distance or location. In addition to official promotional media, interviews with students indicate that information about MTs Cipasung is also disseminated through recommendations from alumni. Several students became aware of and chose to continue their education at MTs Cipasung based on the experiences and positive recommendations provided by alumni. These findings indicate that the positive experiences of alumni contribute to building the trust of prospective students in MTs Cipasung. Therefore, the strategy for developing the madrasa's image is not only implemented through formal promotional media but is also reinforced by positive alumni testimonials, which have become one of the important factors in increasing the attractiveness of and public trust in MTs Cipasung.

In addition to the various promotional strategies implemented, the role of teachers also serves as an important indicator in the development of the identity of MTs Cipasung. Based on the observation results, teachers function not only as educators but also as role models (*uswatun hasanah*) for students. This exemplary conduct is reflected in the teachers' habit of responding to greetings when entering the office or classroom before beginning the learning process, as well as in their implementation of the 5S culture (*Smile, Greeting, Salutation, Politeness, and Courtesy*) in daily interactions. These attitudes are consistently demonstrated to students, becoming part of the character-building process within the madrasa environment. These findings indicate that students' character formation is carried out not only through the delivery of learning materials but also through the exemplary conduct demonstrated by teachers in their daily lives.

The learning process also constitutes an important aspect in the development of the identity of MTs Cipasung. Before learning activities begin, students are accustomed to reading the Qur'an as part of strengthening Islamic values. Subsequently, teachers

implement interactive learning through case study and question-and-answer methods, encouraging students to think critically and participate actively in the learning process. In certain subjects, particularly *Fiqh*, students practice the procedures for shrouding a deceased person (*mengkafani jenazah*), enabling them not only to understand the concepts theoretically but also to apply them in daily life.

On the other hand, MTs Cipasung not only focuses on strengthening Islamic values but also strives to develop students' competencies so that they are able to adapt to contemporary developments. This is realized through the implementation of learning that integrates digital technology. The madrasa provides computer facilities that students can utilize as supporting tools for learning, enabling them to develop digital competencies without neglecting the Islamic values that characterize the madrasa. This is consistent with the concept that public perception is influenced by the quality of educational services, including the availability of facilities and infrastructure that can be assessed by the community (Budiyatmo & Iriani, 2022). In addition, the role of teachers as role models, together with the learning process that integrates character education, practical learning, and the utilization of technology, constitutes an important factor in strengthening the madrasa's identity while simultaneously improving the quality of education at MTs Cipasung.

Therefore, through the consistent implementation of flagship programs, teachers' exemplary conduct, and the learning process, the madrasa strives to develop students who are not only academically excellent but also possess Islamic character, practical skills, and the ability to adapt to contemporary developments. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by (Husna et al., 2021) which argues that Islamic educational institutions are not solely oriented toward academic achievement but also toward strengthening religious character as a distinctive institutional characteristic.¹ The findings of the present study reinforce this argument by demonstrating that religious character is strengthened through the continuous internalization of Islamic values

implemented through flagship programmes, madrasa culture, and teachers' role modelling. This process not only shapes students' character but also develops an institutional identity that strengthens the image of MTs Cipasung as a madrasa capable of balancing academic excellence with religious character.

The impact of the Development of the Madrasa's Image through Institutional Identity and Programs has expanded significantly. Students enrolling at the madrasa no longer come solely from the Cipasung Islamic Boarding School environment but also from various regions outside the *pesantren* area, including relatively distant regions such as Mangkubumi and Cintaraja. These findings were conveyed by Mr. Dede Suhana, the *Fiqh* teacher, who stated that the percentage of students from outside the *pesantren* environment had increased from approximately 10% to 30%. This finding reinforces the study conducted by Dian Sudiantini et al which argues that an institutional identity consistently developed through flagship programmes can foster a positive public image (Dian Sudiantini et al., 2023). In the context of MTs Cipasung, the increasing number of students from outside the *pesantren* community indicates that the implementation of flagship programmes has not only succeeded in establishing a strong institutional identity but has also enhanced public trust in the quality of the madrasa.

This increase indicates that the identity and flagship programs developed by MTs Cipasung have expanded the madrasa's attractiveness, enabling it to reach prospective students from a broader geographical area. Furthermore, the research findings also reveal positive testimonials from MTs Cipasung alumni, as conveyed by the students. The recommendations provided by alumni to their families, relatives, and surrounding communities have become one of the factors strengthening public trust in the madrasa. This is consistent with the concept that an institutional image can be identified through public evaluation, whether in the form of acceptance, trust, or various responses toward an organization. This condition indicates that the educational experiences and trust perceived by alumni generate a high level of satisfaction, encouraging them to recommend MTs Cipasung to other prospective students. Therefore, the expansion of

the student recruitment area and the emergence of positive recommendations from alumni serve as indicators that the image of MTs Cipasung has developed positively through the quality of its flagship programs, learning process, teacher competencies, and the educational experiences perceived by its students.

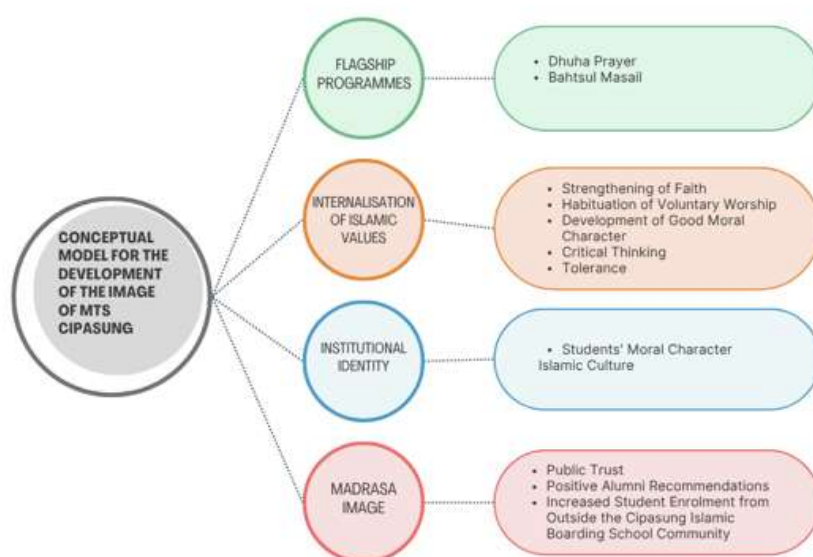


Figure 1. Conceptual Model for the Development of the Image of MTs Cipasung

Based on the research findings, the researcher proposes a conceptual model demonstrating that the formation of MTs Cipasung's image is not solely the result of its flagship programmes, such as Dhuha Prayer and Bahtsul Masail. Rather, these programmes first facilitate the internalisation of Islamic values through the habituation of worship, the development of moral character, the cultivation of tolerance, and the enhancement of critical thinking. This process of internalisation subsequently shapes the institution's identity, which is reflected in its Islamic culture and the moral character of its students. Furthermore, this institutional identity contributes to the development of a positive image of MTs Cipasung, as evidenced by increased public trust, positive

recommendations from alumni, and the growing number of students enrolling from outside the Cipasung Islamic Boarding School community.

D. Conclusion

This study shows that Dhuha Prayer and Bahtsul Masail are not merely religious programs, but serve as distinctive identities of excellence that differentiate MTs Cipasung from other educational institutions. Dhuha Prayer fosters a religious culture through the habituation of worship, discipline, teachers' exemplary conduct, and the reinforcement of *akhlakul karimah* (noble character), while Bahtsul Masail serves as a platform for developing the Islamic academic tradition by encouraging critical and analytical thinking, as well as solving religious issues based on Islamic sources. The consistent implementation of these two programs enables Islamic values to be internalized into the madrasa culture, thereby shaping students with strong character.

Furthermore, this study also reveals that the identity established through these flagship programs contributes to enhancing the development of the madrasa's image. This is reflected in the increasing public trust, as evidenced by the growing number of students from outside the pesantren community, the rising number of applicants from various regions, and the emergence of positive recommendations from alumni.

Therefore, this study emphasizes that the success of building a madrasa's image depends not only on promotional strategies but also on the institution's consistency in implementing flagship programs that reflect its distinctive values, culture, and character. Accordingly, the madrasa's identity, developed through various religious programs, serves not only as a distinguishing characteristic but also as a valuable asset in building public trust. Amid the dynamic and increasingly competitive educational landscape, maintaining this identity consistently remains essential for realizing a high-quality Islamic educational institution that continues to be relevant to the needs of society. Furthermore, the implications of this study indicate that school principals should maintain the consistent implementation of the Dhuha Prayer and *Bahtsul Masail* programs as the institution's distinctive strengths through sustainable policies

and regular program evaluations. In addition, school administrators should optimize communication and digital publication strategies by consistently sharing the school's flagship activities on social media to expand the reach of MTs Cipasung's identity and positive image to a broader community. Consequently, the sustainability of these flagship programs not only strengthens the religious culture within the madrasah but also enhances public trust and improves the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions.

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