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Blue Ocean Strategy in the Development of Excellent Madrasahs in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how leading madrasahs formulate, implement, and experience the implications of Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS) for developing institutional quality, recognition, and human resource character. Previous studies have mainly discussed BOS as a strategy for institutional differentiation, while giving limited attention to how value creation is configured across these three dimensions in madrasah contexts. This study employed a qualitative multiple-case study at MIN 1 Malang and MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan. Data were collected through interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation involving 21 informants and were analyzed using single-case and cross-case analysis. The findings show that BOS was formulated through stakeholder participation and implemented through external partnerships, differentiated student and human resource development, and integrated educational services. These practices created distinctive educational value by combining institutional resources, external networks, human potential, and stakeholder-oriented services. The study contributes to BOS research by proposing a value-creation configuration comprising three interconnected mechanisms: reconfiguring institutional resources and networks, differentiating human resources and student development, and integrating educational services based on stakeholder needs. The findings suggest that BOS can be interpreted as a context-dependent approach to value creation in madrasah development.

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INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions operate in an increasingly competitive environment as the number of public and private institutions grows alongside increasingly complex societal demands.[1] In this context, institutions are required to continually develop their potential and respond to changes in technology, science, and societal needs.[2] Competition is therefore not only concerned with maintaining institutional existence but also with developing distinctive educational value and improving institutional quality.[3] The increasing similarity of educational services, programs, and institutional offerings may place institutions within a highly competitive environment, creating a need for strategies that enable them to develop distinctive forms of value rather than merely compete within existing patterns.[4] This condition raises an important question for educational management: how can educational institutions develop innovative and distinctive strategies to create greater value for students, parents, and other stakeholders?

Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS), developed by W. Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne, was initially formulated in the context of business competition, where organizations seek to move beyond crowded markets by creating new value spaces.[5] Rather than competing solely within existing market boundaries, BOS emphasizes value innovation by simultaneously pursuing differentiation and value creation. The experience of Cirque du Soleil illustrates this principle by combining distinctive forms of entertainment to reach a broader audience rather than competing directly within the conventional circus market.[6] Thus, the central principle of BOS lies not merely in avoiding competition but in creating distinctive value that changes how an organization responds to existing demands and opportunities.

Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS), developed by W. Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne, was initially formulated in the context of business competition, where organizations seek to move beyond crowded markets by creating new spaces of value.[7] Rather than competing solely within existing market boundaries, BOS emphasizes value innovation by simultaneously pursuing differentiation and value creation. The experience of Cirque du Soleil illustrates this principle. Rather than reproducing the conventional circus format, Cirque du Soleil

[1] Hema Malini et al., "Proses Inovasi dan Transformasi Pendidikan Berkelanjutan melalui Pengembangan Sistem Baru," *Mudir: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan* 8, no. 1 (2026): 377–382, https://doi.org/10.55352/mudir.

[2] Elham Mohmmad Abed Nabhan, 'Blue Ocean Strategy in Higher Education in Palestine', *Pakistan Journal of Life and Social Sciences (PJLSS)* 22, no. 2 (2024): 13288–13299, https://doi.org/10.57239/PJLSS-2024-22.2.00952.

[3] Ahmad Nurkakim and Imelda Dian Rahmawati, 'Sinergisitas Strategi Pemasaran Lembaga Pendidikan Swasta pada Satuan Pendidikan Muhammadiyah Sumberrejo', *Paradoks: Jurnal Ilmu Ekonomi* 8, no. 4 (2025): 673–693, https://doi.org/10.57178/paradoks.v8i4.1876.

[4] Muhammad Thoyib et al., "International Standard Excellent Islamic School: A Perspective of Strategy Canvas Analysis," *Cendekia: Jurnal Kependidikan dan Kemasyarakatan* 23, no. 1 (2025): 18–37, https://doi.org/10.21154/cendekia.v23i1.10942.

[5] Delima Nurul Nisrina, Ribhan, and Nurul Husna, 'Analysis of Business Implementation through the Blue Ocean Strategy Approach in an Effort to Face Competition in Culinary SMEs', *Asian Journal of Applied Business and Management* 3, no. 2 (2024): 77–88, https://doi.org/10.55927/ajabm.v3i2.9405.

[6] Hassan, Salman, and Hawas, 'The Blue Ocean Strategy and Its Role in Achieving Competitive Advantage', *Journal of Positive School Psychology* 6, no. 6 (2022): 1488–1503.

[7] W. C. Kim and R. Mauborgne, *Blue Ocean Strategy (Strategi Samudra Biru), terjemahan oleh Satrio Wahono* (Jakarta: Serambi Ilmu Semesta, 2017), 24.

combined elements of circus, theater, music, opera, and ballet to create a distinctive entertainment experience and reach a broader audience.[8] This example demonstrates that BOS is not merely about avoiding competition, but about redefining existing offerings and creating distinctive value that responds to broader market opportunities.

The application of such strategic thinking is also relevant to the contemporary educational context. Advances in technology and science have increased the demand for educational institutions to develop high-quality human resources with relevant competencies and greater independence.[9] As institutions responsible for preparing future generations, educational institutions are expected to continually develop programs that address changing societal needs and emerging challenges.[10] At the same time, growing expectations from students, parents, and other stakeholders regarding the quality of educational services have intensified the need for institutions to improve and differentiate their educational offerings.[11] This challenge is particularly relevant in Indonesia, where innovation remains an important concern in efforts to strengthen the competitiveness of the education sector.[12] Akbar, Handoyo, and Rokhman, citing data from the World Economic Forum, report that Indonesia recorded an innovation index score of 37.7 in 2023, ranking 74th out of 144 countries.[13] These conditions indicate the importance of strategic approaches that enable educational institutions to respond to changing educational demands.

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) provides an important context for examining strategic innovation in Islamic education because it constitutes a substantial segment of primary-level Islamic education in Indonesia. The scale of the MI sector is particularly evident in East Java, where 7,491 MI were recorded in the 2023/2024 academic year, consisting of 7,345 private MI and 146 public MI.[14] The predominance of private institutions indicates a diverse institutional landscape in which madrasahs operate alongside other primary education providers. This condition makes MI a relevant context for examining how Islamic educational institutions develop distinctive educational value and respond strategically to the demands of their surrounding environment.

The scale of the MI sector is accompanied by variation in institutional quality. The 2023 accreditation documentation of the National Accreditation Board for Early Childhood, Basic, and Secondary Education (BAN-PDM) reports that, at the SD/MI level, 18.33% of

[8] Kim and Mauborgne, 25.

[9] Yudi Ruswandi, "Strategi Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan di SMK IT Al-Junaediyah," *Al-Hasanah: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 7, no. 2 (2022): 142–158, https://doi.org/10.51729/7266.

[10] Rafiqah Rahmah et al., "From Diary to Pesantren: Integrating Islamic Religious Education as Socio-Psychological Capital for Golden Indonesia 2045," *Cendekia: Jurnal Kependidikan dan Kemasyarakatan* 24, no. 1 (2026): 93–114, https://doi.org/10.21154/cendekia.v24i1.12198.

[11] Nur Fitriyah, "Implementasi Manajemen Strategi Blue Ocean di LPI PG-RA Al-Muttaqin Tasikmalaya," *Heutagogia: Journal of Islamic Education* 2, no. 2 (2022): 215–230, https://doi.org/10.14421/hjie.2022.22-08.

[12] Sarun Premsuk, 'School Administration Based on the Blue Ocean Strategy', *Journal of Education and Innovation* 27, no. 1 (2025): 308–325, https://doi.org/10.71185/jeiejournals.v27i1.278160.

[13] Islam Ali Akbar, Eko Handoyo, and Fathur Rokhman, 'Kebijakan Pengembangan Mutu Pendidikan dalam Rangka Meningkatkan Daya Saing Bangsa', *Crossroad Research Journal* 2, no. 6 (2025): 1–13, https://doi.org/10.61402/crj.v2i6.529.

[14] Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Jawa Timur, Jumlah Sekolah Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) di bawah Kementerian Agama Menurut Kabupaten/Kota di Provinsi Jawa Timur, 2022/2023 dan 2023/2024, accessed August 15, 2024.

institutions achieved an "excellent" accreditation rating (A), while 55.50% received a "good" rating (B), 24.52% received an "adequate" rating (C), and 1.66% were classified as unaccredited or in the low and very low categories.[15] These figures indicate that institutions with the highest accreditation rating represent a relatively smaller proportion of the overall SD/MI population. At the same time, the majority are distributed across the B and C categories. This variation highlights the ongoing importance of improving institutional quality and developing distinctive educational value, particularly for madrasahs seeking to strengthen their position in an increasingly diverse educational landscape.

In the context of Islamic education, BOS can be understood as an approach to developing distinctive educational value by identifying opportunities for differentiation and creating or redefining educational offerings in response to stakeholder needs.[16] Rather than treating competition as a process of imitating existing programs, this approach encourages educational institutions to reconsider how programs, services, and institutional resources can be configured to provide distinctive value.[17] From this perspective, BOS provides a relevant analytical lens for examining how madrasahs respond to competitive pressures through innovative programs and institutional differentiation. This study examines the implementation of BOS in two selected madrasahs, MIN 1 Malang and MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan, to understand how the strategy is formulated, implemented, and reflected in the development of institutional quality, recognition, and human resource character.

Previous studies have examined the Blue Ocean Strategy in Islamic educational institutions, but their focus has largely been on specific institutional functions or programs. Rodiyah's study of the Nurul Ummah Islamic Boarding School examined BOS as a marketing strategy in the 4.0 era and found that innovative marketing practices were associated with increased enrollment of new students.[18] Meanwhile, Kasanah examined the implementation of the Qur'an memorization (Tahfizh) program based on the BOS concept and highlighted its role in developing Tahfizh as a competitive advantage for educational institutions.[19] These studies demonstrate the applicability of BOS to specific aspects of institutional development; however, they do not examine how the strategy is formulated and implemented simultaneously across multiple dimensions of madrasah development. This study addresses this gap by examining how BOS is formulated, implemented, and reflected across these three dimensions in two selected leading madrasahs.

The selection of MIN 1 Malang and MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan is based on their relevance as cases for examining strategic differentiation in madrasah management.

[15] Badan Akreditasi Nasional Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Pendidikan Dasar, dan Pendidikan Menengah, "Dokumentasi Akreditasi BAN-PDM Jenjang SD/MI Tahun 2023," accessed August 15, 2023.

[16] Devanny Gumulya, 'Implementasi Strategi Blue Ocean pada Perancangan Desain produk', *Jurnal Patra* 2, no. 1 (2020): 14–18, https://doi.org/10.35886/patra.v2i1.72.

[17] Wilin Murtanti et al., "Implementation of SWOT and Blue Ocean Strategy in Facing Competition for New Student Admission," *Briliant: Jurnal Riset dan Konseptual* 10, no. 3 (2025): 560–570, https://doi.org/10.28926/briliant.v10i3.2061.

[18] N. M. Rodiyah, 'Strategi Pemasaran Pondok Pesantren Nurul Ummah di Era 4.0 melalui Pendekatan Blue Ocean Strategy' (Undergraduate Thesis, UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2022), 9–19.

[19] C. Kasanah, 'Implementasi Program Tahfizh Al-Qur'an Merujuk Konsep Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS) dalam Manajemen Lembaga Pendidikan' (Master's Thesis, UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2022), 162.

First, both institutions hold an A/Excellent accreditation status and have developed distinctive educational programs, including digital madrasah initiatives, olympiad programs supported by partnership systems, the Al-Ghoffar Tahfizh program, Creative Student Leadership Training, and student-parent entrepreneurship activities. Second, both madrasahs have established institutional networks with kindergartens and Islamic kindergartens in their respective areas, indicating sustained efforts to develop partnerships and expand institutional outreach. Third, their institutional recognition is reflected in various national and international achievements, including mathematics and science competitions and recognition as a good-practice school through the USAID PRIORITAS program. Finally, the two institutions had relatively large student populations in 2024: 1,543 at MIN 1 Malang and 681 at MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan.[20] These characteristics provide a substantive basis for selecting the two madrasahs as cases through which the implementation of BOS can be investigated in relation to institutional quality, recognition, and human resource character.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach to develop an in-depth understanding of how Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS) was formulated and implemented in the development of leading madrasahs. The qualitative approach was considered appropriate because BOS in this study was examined as an institutional strategy whose formulation and implementation involve contextual considerations, decision-making processes, institutional practices, and the experiences and perspectives of organizational actors.[21] Rather than merely identifying the presence of innovative programs, the study sought to uncover how the madrasahs interpreted their institutional environment, developed distinctive forms of educational value, and translated strategic considerations into institutional practices. Accordingly, a qualitative approach enabled the study to examine the BOS phenomenon within its natural institutional settings at MIN 1 Malang and MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan, East Java.[22]

This study employed a multiple-case study design to examine the implementation of Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS) across two distinct but comparable madrasah contexts. A multiple-case study enables a phenomenon to be examined within individual cases and subsequently compared across cases to identify converging and diverging patterns.[23] The two cases, MIN 1 Malang and MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan, were purposively selected based on predefined criteria relevant to the study: (1) A/Excellent accreditation status; (2) the development of distinctive and innovative educational programs; (3) established institutional partnerships and community networks; (4) national and/or international institutional recognition and achievements; and (5) relatively large student populations.[24]

[20] MIN 1 Kota Malang and MI Unggulan Sabilillah, "Dokumen Profil MIN 1 Kota Malang dan Dokumen Profil MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan," accessed April 24, 2025, Arsip Ruang Tata Usaha MIN 1 Kota Malang dan MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan.

[21] Lexy J. Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Jakarta: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2012), 3.

[22] M. D. Ghony and F. Almansur, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif* (Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media, 2015), 13–14.

[23] Deddy Mulyana, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif: Paradigma Baru Ilmu Komunikasi dan Ilmu Sosial Lainnya* (Jakarta: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2017), 201.

[24] MIN 1 Kota Malang and MI Unggulan Sabilillah, 'Dokumen Profil MIN 1 Kota Malang dan Dokumen Profil MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan'. Accessed April 24, 2025, Arsip Ruang Tata Usaha MIN

These criteria were used to identify madrasahs with observable characteristics of institutional development and differentiation relevant to the examination of BOS. Each madrasah was first analyzed as an individual case, focusing on the formulation and implementation of the BOS, particularly how distinctive educational value was developed in relation to institutional quality, recognition, and human resource character. The two cases were then compared across these analytical dimensions to identify similarities, differences, and recurring patterns that could provide a more comprehensive conceptual understanding of BOS in madrasah development.

The study involved 14 informants who were purposively selected based on their knowledge, experience, and direct involvement in the formulation and implementation of madrasah development programs. Seven informants were selected from MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan and seven from MIN 1 Malang. At each madrasah, the informants consisted of the madrasah head, curriculum coordinator, student affairs coordinator, public relations coordinator, and three teachers. These positions were selected because they were directly involved in institutional management, curriculum and student development, external relations, and the implementation of educational programs relevant to the study. Data were collected through non-participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation in natural institutional settings.[25] Observation focused on the implementation of madrasah development programs and activities, while interviews explored informants' experiences, perspectives, considerations, and strategic practices related to BOS. Documentation included relevant institutional records and program-related materials. Data credibility was strengthened through source and method triangulation by comparing information across informants and data-collection techniques, as well as member checking to clarify and confirm the accuracy of interpretations with informants.

Data analysis was conducted through single-case and cross-case analyses. Each madrasah was first analyzed separately to identify case-specific characteristics, themes, and findings. The analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, comprising data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.[26] During data condensation, interview, observation, and documentary data were selected, focused on, simplified, and grouped into categories aligned with the research focus. The categorized data were then displayed descriptively to identify recurring themes, patterns, and relationships. Conclusions were continuously interpreted and verified against the available evidence. The cross-case analysis was conducted to determine how the findings from the two madrasahs converged, differed, and revealed recurring patterns in the formulation and implementation of BOS. Provisional propositions were first derived from the findings of each case by identifying the strategic practices, forms of differentiation, and value-creation processes evident in the data. The recurring patterns were interpreted in relation to the core principles of BOS, particularly value innovation and differentiation, to formulate conceptual findings on how BOS operates within the context of madrasah

1 Kota Malang dan MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan.

[25] Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2019), 227.

[26] Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldana, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook (3rd Ed.)* (California: Sage Publications, 2014), 12–14.

development. Thus, the cross-case analysis moved beyond describing individual programs to explain the common strategic patterns through which the two madrasahs created distinctive educational value.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Formulation of the Blue Ocean Strategy at Sabilillah Lamongan Elite Elementary Madrasah in Institutional Quality Development, Recognition, and Human Resource Character

The formulation of institutional development strategies at MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan (MIUS) was organized through a managerial innovation process involving the foundation, madrasah management, external partners, teachers, and parents. The head of the madrasah explained that the innovation process, which had been pursued since 2021, used institutional forums to identify current issues, develop shared understanding, and formulate policies and programs. The resulting strategies focused on three interconnected areas: human resource branding and credibility, institutional capability and quality, and human resource character.[27] This formulation process provides a basis for examining BOS in the madrasah context, as strategic innovation was developed by configuring institutional resources and educational priorities rather than reproducing existing practices.[28] Based on this process, MIUS formulated three strategic areas of institutional development, as presented in Table 1:

Table 1. Three Strategic Areas Identified in the Formulation of MIUS Lamongan's Development Strategy

No	Strategic Area	Main Focus	Expected Impact
1.	Human Resources Branding	Enhancing the capacity, credibility, and image of teachers, school staff, and students	To improve competitiveness and public trust
2.	Institutional Capabilities	Strengthening systems, governance, and the quality of educational services	Becoming a leading, adaptive, and innovative institution
3.	Quality of Human Resources	Development of outstanding character and Islamic values	Fostering graduates with integrity and moral character

The three areas indicate that MIUS did not formulate innovation as a collection of separate programs. Rather, human resource development, institutional capability, and character development were configured as interconnected components of institutional development. This configuration is relevant to the BOS concept of value innovation because it combines the creation of distinctive educational value with the strengthening of

[27] Kim and Mauborgne, *Blue Ocean Strategy (Strategi Samudra Biru), Terjemahan Oleh Satrio Wahono*, 69.

[28] Latha Ravindran et al., "Adapting the Blue Ocean Strategy for Educators: Opportunities for Professional Development in the Malaysian Higher Education Context," *e-Bangi Journal of Social Science and Humanities* 20, no. 2 (2023): 8–20, https://doi.org/10.17576/ebangi.2023.2002.02.

institutional capabilities. [29] The distinctive feature of the formulation, therefore, lies less in the existence of individual innovative programs than in how the madrasah organized various resources and development priorities around quality, recognition, and human-resource character. The relationship among these strategic areas is illustrated in Figure 1 below:

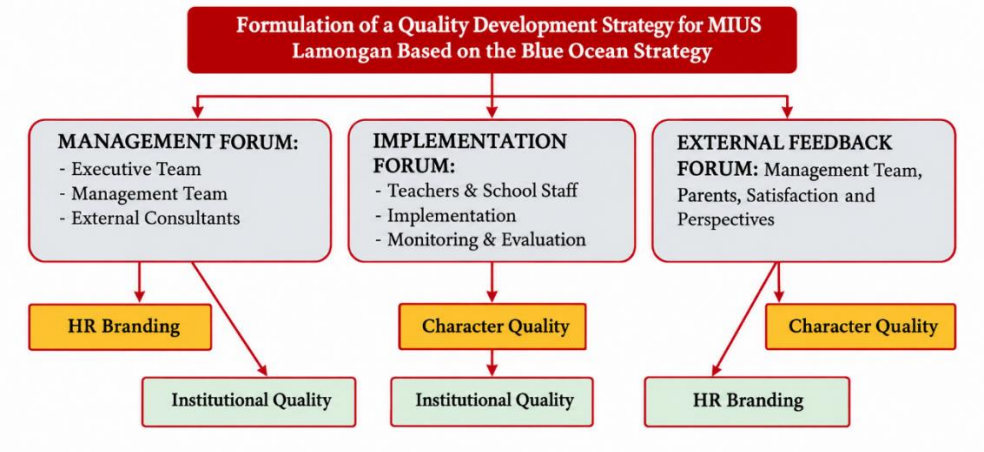


Figure 1. Formulation of the MIUS Lamongan Quality Development Strategy Based on the Blue Ocean Strategy

Implementation of the Blue Ocean Strategy in Institutional Quality Development, Recognition, and Human Resource Character

The implementation practices at MI Unggulan Sabilillah (MIUS) Lamongan can be interpreted through the Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS) perspective in the way the madrasah translated its development priorities into distinctive professional practices. One prominent area was human resource branding, which focused on strengthening the capacity, credibility, and professional image of teachers and educational staff. Rather than treating branding solely as external promotion, MIUS incorporated professional standards into everyday interactions and educational services.

Human resource branding was reflected in three interconnected practices: professional appearance, external communication, and standardization of teaching methodology. First, the madrasah established daily dress codes, formal uniforms for official activities, and guidance on professional appearance as part of broader standards of professional conduct. Second, teachers and support staff received guidance and training in public speaking, information-service simulations, and digital communication ethics to strengthen communication with parents, partners, and other stakeholders. Third, teaching methodology was standardized through training, workshops, and seminars on instructional materials and methods. Teachers teaching the same subject were encouraged to work within agreed standards to maintain consistency in learning services.

These practices show that MIUS constructed differentiation not only through distinctive educational programs but also through the professional practices through which educational services were delivered. Professional appearance contributed to a consistent

[29] Kim and Mauborgne, *Blue Ocean Strategy (Strategi Samudra Biru), terjemahan oleh Satrio Wahono*, 69–71.

institutional identity, communication competence strengthened stakeholder interaction, and standardized teaching practices supported consistency in educational services. From a BOS perspective, this represents value innovation by reconfiguring existing human resources and professional practices to create distinctive educational value rather than simply introducing entirely new educational products.[30]

The implementation was also embedded in MIUS's broader institutional innovation process. Professional standards were discussed and evaluated through institutional forums involving madrasah management, teachers and staff, and relevant external stakeholders. Thus, HR branding served as part of an institutional strategy to develop professional capacity and institutional identity simultaneously. The findings do not establish that these practices alone caused subsequent recognition or achievements. Rather, they indicate how MIUS deliberately constructed credibility, consistency, and institutional identity through professional educational services. This suggests that differentiation in Islamic education can be examined not only through the uniqueness of programs but also through how institutional resources and professional practices are configured to create value for stakeholders.[31]

The relationship among these implementation practices is illustrated in Figure 2 below:

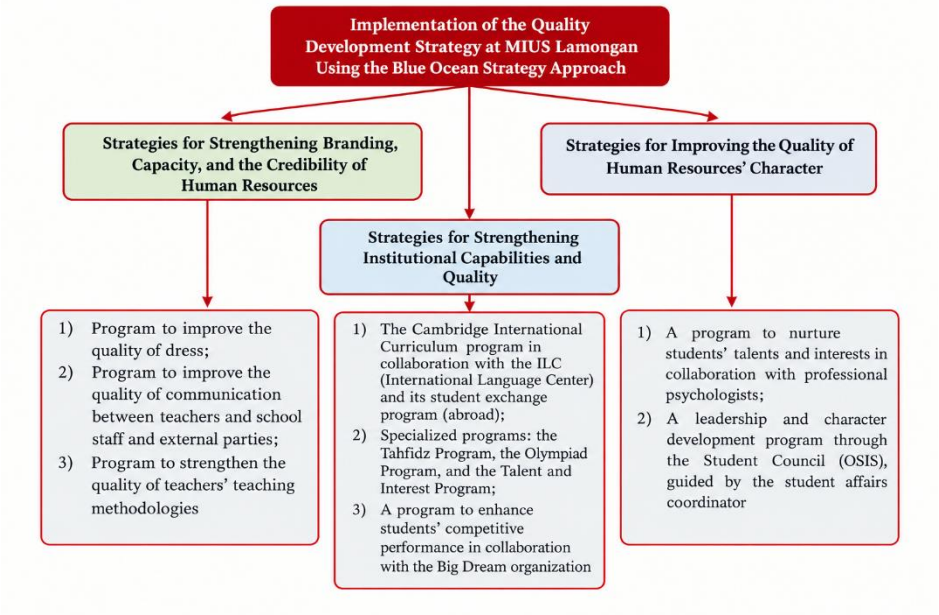


Figure 2. Implementation of the MIUS Lamongan Quality Development Strategy Using the Blue Ocean Strategy Approach

[30] Agus Zaenul Fitri, 'Blue Ocean Strategy for Improving Quality and Competitiveness of Islamic Educational Environment', *Asian Social Science and Humanities Research Journal (ASHREJ)* 3, no. 2 (2021): 18–28, https://doi.org/10.37698/ashrej.v3i2.75.

[31] Ujang Suyatman, Amanah Amnun Zulfa, and Ara Hidayat, "Implementation of Blue Ocean Strategy in Strengthening Madrasah Competitiveness," *Journal of Education Management and Policy* 1, no. 3 (2025): 162–174, https://doi.org/10.61987/sedu.v1i1.000.

Implications of the Blue Ocean Strategy in Institutional Quality Development, Recognition, and Human Resource Character

The implications of the development strategy at MI Unggulan Sabilillah (MIUS) Lamongan can be observed in institutional quality, recognition, and human resource development. The findings do not establish that BOS independently caused changes in accreditation, achievements, or institutional recognition. Rather, interviews, observations, and institutional documents indicate several forms of institutional development that can be interpreted in terms of differentiation and value innovation.[32]

In terms of institutional quality, MIUS obtained an A accreditation in 2022 and developed its curriculum and student development initiatives through Cambridge curriculum components, collaboration with ILC, differentiated learning pathways, and the Big Dream program. These practices indicate that institutional quality was developed through the configuration of curriculum innovation, external partnerships, student development, and professional capacity rather than through a single intervention. The BOS perspective, therefore, helps explain how the combination of these resources could constitute a distinctive institutional offering.[33]

Institutional recognition was also reflected in external partnerships, institutional learning activities, and student achievements at local, national, and international levels. These forms of recognition provide evidence of MIUS's institutional visibility and external engagement. The involvement of external consultants and institutional partners further indicates that recognition was connected to the madrasah's capacity to develop and maintain external networks. However, the findings do not demonstrate that BOS alone produced these achievements. Instead, they suggest that differentiated educational practices and partnerships provided channels through which institutional visibility and stakeholder relationships were developed.

The implications for human resource development extended beyond individual competence. Professional standards, communication development, teaching methodology standardization, talent and interest mapping, and student leadership activities connected teacher and staff professionalism to student competency and character development. Thus, human resource quality at MIUS was developed not only through individual capacity building but also through an institutional culture integrating professionalism, Islamic values, and opportunities for student development.

Taken together, the MIUS case suggests that the educational value associated with BOS extends beyond institutional prestige or competitive achievement. It encompasses academic development, character formation, professional services, and differentiated opportunities for students.[34] The significance of BOS, therefore, lies less in individual

[32] Mufid Ahsan Rofiqi and Nur Kolis, "Pengembangan Madrasah Perspektif Blue Ocean Strategy MTs Al-Islam Joresan Ponorogo," *Edukasia: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran* 1, no. 2 (2020): 270–283, https://doi.org/10.62775/edukasia.v1i2.23.

[33] Yusnaldi and Herni Pujiati, "Blue Ocean Leadership as a Transformational Strategy in Addressing Educational Challenges in Indonesia's Border Regions," *Jurnal Pertahanan: Media Informasi tentang Kajian dan Strategi* 11, no. 2 (2025): 253–262, https://doi.org/10.33172/jp.v11i2.20000.

[34] Sri Yulia Sari, Lidya Triani, and Meira Dwi Indah Purnama, 'Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS): Alternative for Management Development in Islamic Educational Institutions', *Proceedings of International Conference on Education, Society and Humanity* 1, no. 1 (2023): 375–385.

innovative programs than in how institutional capabilities, partnerships, professional practices, and student development pathways are configured to create distinctive educational value. This interpretation remains specific to the MIUS case and does not imply that the identified practices universally improve quality or recognition.[35]

Formulation of the Blue Ocean Strategy at MIN 1 Malang in Institutional Quality Development, Recognition, and Human Resource Character

The formulation of institutional development strategies at MIN 1 Malang was organized through a structured and participatory institutional process rather than through isolated programs. The findings indicate that strategic priorities were discussed through several interconnected forums involving madrasah management, parents, and external educational stakeholders. Weekly meetings between the head and vice-principals served as an internal coordination mechanism for discussing programs and monitoring their implementation. Parent forums and beginning-of-semester seminars provided opportunities to communicate institutional priorities and incorporate parental perspectives. At the same time, quarterly coordination with the Ministry of Religious Affairs and MI schools across Malang City connected MIN 1 Malang with the wider madrasah education environment. These mechanisms indicate that strategic formulation involves not only internal management but also stakeholder relationships and institutional networks.

The participatory process enabled MIN 1 Malang to connect internal capabilities with external resources and stakeholder needs when determining its development priorities. One priority concerned the recognition and development of teachers and students through partnerships with universities and competition institutions, including L2NI. Another concern was differentiated student-development pathways that accommodated academic, Olympiad, and tahfidz potential, supported by the institutional orientation "*Tiada Hari Tanpa Prestasi*." The formulation also included developing high-quality, integrated educational services through digital administrative services, a digital library, and the CMD (student digital card). Institutional reputation was incorporated into this strategic orientation through the "Beyond Unlimit Reputation" framing, which connected achievement, program innovation, and institutional visibility.

These priorities were not formulated as unrelated programs. Rather, they integrated human resource development, student potential, institutional recognition, educational services, and external partnerships into a broader institutional strategy. From the BOS perspective, the distinctive element therefore lies not simply in the presence of individual programs but in the configuration of institutional resources and relationships around stakeholder needs and educational value.[36] The participatory nature of these forums is important for understanding how the BOS. This interpretation is consistent with previous research suggesting that BOS in educational institutions can involve strategic collaboration

[35] Ira Nadya Octavira et al., 'Blue Ocean Strategy to Develop School Competitiveness: A Case Study', *IRJE: Indonesian Research Journal in Education* 8, no. 2 (2024): 878–887, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22437/irje .v8i2.36712.

[36] Muhamad Taufik Bintang Kejora, Diding Nurdin, and Eka Prihatin, "Blue Ocean Strategy: Review of Applications at Nature Elementary School Purwakarta," *Al-Ishlah: Jurnal Pendidikan* 16, no. 1 (2024): 428–439, https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v16i1.4071.

and the reconfiguration of available resources rather than differentiation through individual programs alone.[37]

Table 2. Analysis of the Three Areas of Institutional Development Strategy at MIN 1 Malang

No.	Strategic Area	Main Focus	Expected Impact
1.	Recognition of Teachers and Students	Partnerships with universities and L2NI for mentoring and capacity development	Strengthening the achievement and visibility of teachers and students
2.	High-Quality Educational Services	Curriculum, teaching methods, academic, and integrated digital services	Strengthening educational quality and service value
3.	Institutional Reputation *(Beyond Unlimited Reputation)*	Achievement, program innovation, and institutional communication	Institutional visibility and public trust

Table 2 summarizes the main strategic areas identified in the formulation process. Partnerships served as an external resource for developing teachers and students; differentiated pathways addressed variations in students' potential; and integrated services enhanced the value of the madrasah for students and parents.[38] The formulation, therefore, reflects a form of value innovation in which existing institutional capabilities, external relationships, and educational services were configured to create distinctive educational value.[39] The specific implementation of these strategic priorities is discussed in the following section. Simply put, the research findings can be illustrated by Figure 3 below:

[37] Rofiqi and Kolis, "Pengembangan Madrasah Perspektif Blue Ocean Strategy MTs Al-Islam Joresan Ponorogo," 270–283.

[38] Aliyatul Himmah and Wanidi Siregar, 'Strategi Blue Ocean dalam Meningkatkan Daya Saing Lembaga Pendidikan Islam di Era Digital', *J-MPI (Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam)* 10, no. 1 (2025): 70–79, https://doi.org/10.18860/jmpi.v10i1.29657.

[39] Robert Wanyama, "Integrating Lean Six Sigma and Blue Ocean Strategy: A Pathway to Innovation and Efficiency," *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science* 8, no. 11 (2024): 1119–1130, https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8110090.

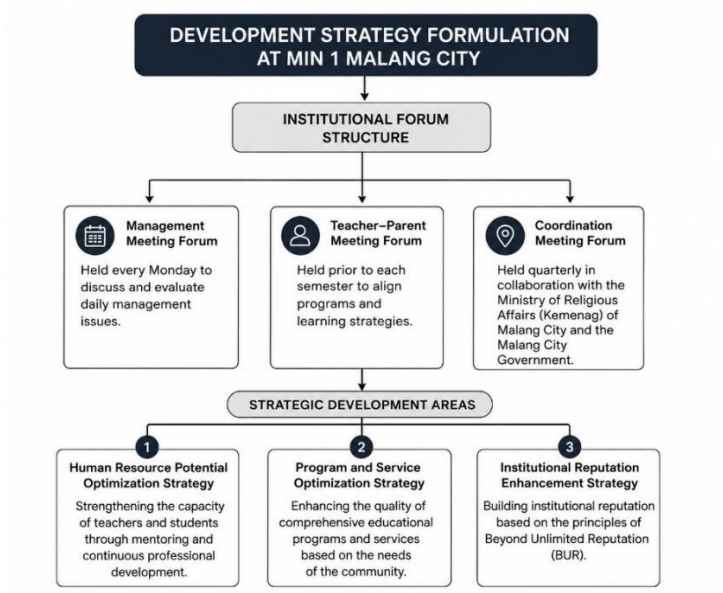


Figure 3. Formulation of a Development Strategy at MIN 1 Malang Based on the Blue Ocean Strategy

Implementation of the Blue Ocean Strategy in Institutional Quality Development, Recognition, and Human Resource Character

The implementation of the strategic priorities at MIN 1 Malang was reflected in practices for teacher and student development, differentiated student pathways, and integrated educational services. Rather than relying on a single flagship program, the madrasah implemented these priorities by combining internal capabilities with external partnerships, organizing student development according to different potentials, and integrating digital and inter-institutional services. These practices can be interpreted through the BOS perspective because they involve the reconfiguration of institutional resources and relationships to create distinctive educational value.

Strategic Partnerships for Teacher and Student Development

Teacher and student development was supported through partnerships with universities and competition-related institutions. Cooperation with PKM and UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang provided structured mentoring for students in science and mathematics. At the same time, collaboration with UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang and Universitas Negeri Malang supported teacher research competencies and innovative teaching practices. Opportunities for further study, supported by DIPA funding, also provided an institutional mechanism for continuing teacher professional development.

These practices show that MIN 1 MIN 1 Malang incorporated external expertise, networks, and opportunities into its human-resource development system rather than relying solely on internal capabilities. From the BOS perspective, this reflects value innovation by combining existing institutional resources with external resources to expand development opportunities for teachers and students.[40] Recognition was therefore pursued not only

[40] Ravindran et al., "Adapting the Blue Ocean Strategy for Educators: Opportunities for Professional Development in the Malaysian Higher Education Context", 8–20.

through competition outcomes but also through a development process that connected the madrasah with a broader educational ecosystem. This finding is consistent with Hassan, Salman, and Hawas, who emphasize the role of strategic partnerships and capability development in organizational value creation within the BOS perspective.[41]

Differentiated Student Development and Institutional Reputation

Differentiated student development was implemented through academic, Olympiad, and Qur'an memorization pathways beginning in the third grade. Students were directed toward pathways according to their potential, with specific teams and development methods supporting each area. The madrasah also implemented the "No Day Without Achievement" orientation by recognizing student, parent, and teacher achievements, including publishing congratulatory materials for high-achieving students and supporting teacher professional development.

This arrangement represents differentiation in educational provision because student development was organized around different forms of potential rather than a uniform pathway. Student selection, differentiated development, and achievement recognition, therefore, operated as interconnected practices: potential was identified, developed through an appropriate pathway, and subsequently recognized within the institutional achievement culture. The approach can be interpreted through the BOS concept of value innovation, as the value offered by the madrasah extends beyond general academic instruction to include differentiated opportunities for student development.[42]

The "Beyond Unlimited Recognition" orientation further connected recognition with student achievement, teacher development, and institutional quality. However, the findings do not establish that these practices caused changes in institutional reputation. They instead demonstrate how recognition was incorporated into the implementation of student and human resource development as part of the madrasah's broader institutional value-creation strategy.

Digital and Integrated Educational Services

Quality educational services were delivered through digital administrative services, a digital library, and the CMD (digital student card). Digital PTSP supported administrative processes, while the digital library expanded access to learning resources. The CMD/student digital card integrates attendance, book purchases, book lending, and information for parents, all accessible through their smartphones. These practices reorganized several administrative and educational functions into a more connected service system.

The relevance of these practices to the BOS lies in service integration rather than digitalization alone. Technology was used to connect the madrasah, students, and parents, and to make educational services more accessible and integrated. This finding is consistent with research linking organizational innovation, service development, and BOS in higher

[41] Hassan, Salman, and Hawas, "The Blue Ocean Strategy and Its Role in Achieving Competitive Advantage," 1488–1503.

[42] Cepi Safruddin Abdul Jabar, 'Institutional Strategies to Make Excellent Schools', *Proceedings of the 1st Yogyakarta International Conference on Educational Management/Administration and Pedagogy (YICEMAP 2017)*, 2017, 279–283, https://doi.org/10.2991/yicemap-17.2017.48.

education, particularly in responding to changing stakeholder needs.[43] Thus, digitalization at MIN 1 Malang can be interpreted as service differentiation, as technology was incorporated into the organization of educational services rather than merely serving as an additional facility.

Differentiation was also extended through the institutional integration of MIN 1 Malang, MTsN 1 Malang, and MAN 2 Malang. This arrangement created a connected educational pathway across different levels of madrasah education and provided greater continuity for students and parents in planning subsequent education. Unlike digital services, which primarily reorganized service delivery within the madrasah, this arrangement extended value creation across institutional boundaries through inter-organizational connectivity.

Overall, the implementation findings show three interconnected mechanisms: integrating external partnerships into human-resource development, differentiating student development according to potential, and integrating digital and inter-institutional educational services. The significance of these practices lies not in the novelty of each program but in how MIN 1 Malang configured its internal capabilities, external networks, student development pathways, and service systems to create distinctive educational value. The comparative significance of these mechanisms in relation to MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan is examined in the cross-case analysis. These findings can be illustrated by Figure 4 below:

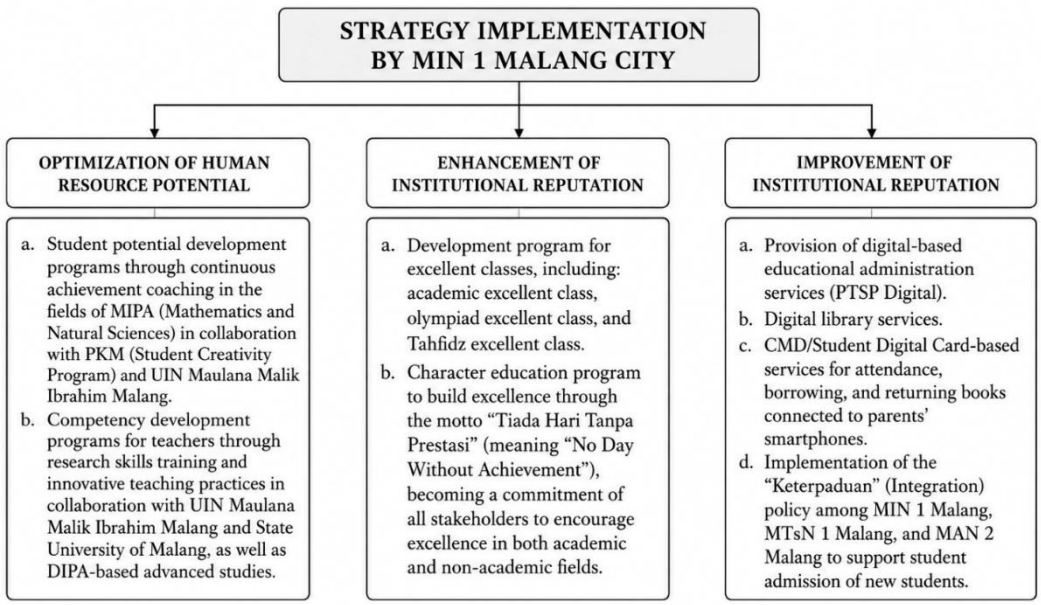


Figure 4. Implementation of the Blue Ocean Strategy at MIN 1 Malang

Implications of the Blue Ocean Strategy for Institutional Quality Development, Recognition, and Human Resource Character

The findings from MIN 1 Malang indicate that the significance of BOS lies not in individual innovative programs but in how institutional capabilities, external partnerships,

[43] Selma Koca and Mustafa Sağsan, 'The Mediating Role of Organizational Innovation in the Implementation of Intellectual Capital and Blue Ocean Strategy for Higher Education Sustainability', *Revista Argentina de Clínica Psicológica* 29, no. 1 (2020): 1552–1566, https://doi.org/10.24205/03276716.2020.1152.

student development pathways, and educational services are configured to create distinctive educational value. From this perspective, BOS provides an analytical lens for understanding madrasah development as a process of reconfiguring existing resources and relationships in response to stakeholder needs rather than merely competing through established forms of provision.[44]

An important implication concerns the meaning of human-resource recognition. At MIN 1 Malang, recognition was connected with capability development through university partnerships, competition mentoring, teacher professional development, and differentiated student pathways. Thus, recognition can be understood not only as an external indicator of achievement but also as part of a broader process through which the madrasah expands opportunities for teachers and students by connecting internal capabilities with external expertise and resources.[45] This finding lends more substantive meaning to differentiation in the madrasah context, as value creation occurs through the organization of developmental opportunities rather than through achievement programs alone.

Institutional reputation was similarly embedded within educational practices rather than treated solely as a branding activity. The "Beyond Unlimit Recognition" orientation, achievement culture, differentiated student pathways, and recognition of student, parent, and teacher achievements connected institutional visibility to human resources and student development. However, the findings do not establish that these practices directly caused an increase in institutional reputation. They indicate instead that recognition was incorporated into the madrasah's broader strategy for developing educational value.

The findings also broaden the meaning of educational service quality within the BOS perspective. Digital PTSP, the digital library, CMD/student digital card, and integration among MIN 1 Malang, MTsN 1 Malang, and MAN 2 Malang show that service differentiation involved both technological integration and institutional connectivity. The value created, therefore, concerned not only technology adoption but also more integrated services, communication with parents, access to learning resources, and continuity across educational levels.[46]

Taken together, the MIN 1 Malang case indicates three recurring patterns in the implementation of BOS: expanding human-resource development through external partnerships, differentiating student development and recognition practices, and integrating educational services across technological and institutional boundaries. These patterns suggest that value innovation in madrasah development can encompass human-resource development, stakeholder relationships, service accessibility, and continuity of educational provision, rather than being limited to academic achievement or institutional reputation. The specific configuration of these forms of value, however, remains dependent on the institutional context and should be interpreted alongside the findings from MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan in the cross-case analysis.[47]

[44] Wanyama, 'Integrating Lean Six Sigma and Blue Ocean Strategy', 1119–1130.

[45] Hassan, Salman, and Hawas, 'The Blue Ocean Strategy and Its Role in Achieving Competitive Advantage', 1488–1503.

[46] Koca and Sağsan, 'The Mediating Role of Organizational Innovation in the Implementation of Intellectual Capital and Blue Ocean Strategy for Higher Education Sustainability', 1552–1566.

[47] Rofiqi and Kolis, 'Pengembangan Madrasah Perspektif Blue Ocean Strategy MTs Al-Islam Joresan

The cross-case analysis shows that MIN 1 Malang and MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan shared a similar pattern in developing distinctive educational value. Both madrasahs involved institutional actors and external stakeholders in strategic development and configured internal resources, partnerships, and educational programs rather than relying on a single innovative program. In both cases, differentiation was also linked to human resource development, student development, institutional recognition, and educational quality.

The two cases differed in their dominant areas of strategic emphasis. MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan focused more strongly on human-resource branding, institutional capability, professional standards, and character development. Meanwhile, MIN 1 Malang emphasized external partnerships, differentiated student-development pathways, institutional recognition, and integrated digital and inter-institutional services. These differences reflect the specific institutional priorities and resources developed by each madrasah, rather than differences in BOS application levels.

Across the two cases, external partnerships served as resources for expanding institutional capabilities, while differentiation was achieved through the organization of human resources and student development, and the integration of educational services. These findings suggest that BOS in madrasah development is not limited to creating different programs but involves reconfiguring institutional resources and relationships to create educational value in response to stakeholder needs. Thus, the application of BOS in Islamic education is context-dependent, with the form of value innovation shaped by the institutional characteristics and strategic priorities of each madrasah.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the application of the Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS) in the development of leading madrasahs is reflected not simply in the presence of innovative programs, but also in how institutional resources, partnerships, human resource development, student pathways, and educational services are configured to create distinctive educational value. Across MIN 1 Malang and MI Unggulan Sabilillah Lamongan, BOS-related practices were formulated through institutional coordination and stakeholder involvement, and implemented through differentiated educational services, human resource development, external partnerships, and institutional innovation. The cross-case findings indicate that the distinctive value of BOS in madrasah development emerges from the integration of these practices rather than from any single program. This extends the application of BOS in Islamic education from the general notion of institutional differentiation toward an understanding of how value innovation can be organized within the specific institutional context of madrasahs.

This study is limited to two madrasahs and therefore does not support statistical generalization to other Islamic educational institutions. The findings also do not establish causal relationships between BOS-related practices and institutional quality, recognition, or human-resource development. Future research could examine the recurring patterns

Ponorogo', 270–283.

identified in this study across a wider range of madrasahs and use comparative qualitative or mixed-method approaches to examine their consistency. Further studies may also operationalize the identified forms of value creation into measurable dimensions and investigate their relationships with educational quality, stakeholder satisfaction, institutional recognition, and human resource development.

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USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

The authors used ChatGPT for language refinement, structural editing, and condensation during manuscript revision. The research design, data, analysis, interpretation, and conclusions remain the authors' responsibility, and all AI-assisted revisions were reviewed by the authors.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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