



A VISIBILITY-CREDIBILITY FRAMEWORK OF INSTITUTIONAL BRANDING: HOW SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION QUALITY SHAPE SCHOOL IMAGE IN INDONESIAN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

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Accepted: June 18, 2026	Reviewed: June 28, 2026	Published: June 30, 2026
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Abstract

Digital transformation has reshaped how educational institutions communicate value, build stakeholder trust, and manage public perception. In Indonesia's highly connected digital environment, senior high schools face increasing pressure to manage institutional visibility and information credibility strategically. This study develops a visibility-credibility framework to explain how Social Media Marketing Activities and Information Quality jointly contribute to school image, extending existing brand equity and information quality perspectives beyond their conventional treatment as separate antecedents. Using a qualitative conceptual research design, this study applies an integrative, framework-based literature review supported by secondary data from peer-reviewed publications, academic books, government statistics, institutional reports, and credible digital reports published primarily between 2016 and May 2026, while retaining earlier seminal works as theoretical foundations. Thematic analysis was employed to synthesize conceptual patterns across Social Media Marketing Activities, Information Quality, and school image. The findings propose that Social Media Marketing Activities strengthen school image through entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth as the visibility pathway, while Information Quality strengthens school image through accuracy, relevance, timeliness, completeness, and credibility as the trust pathway. A strong school image emerges when engaging digital communication is aligned with credible information, as visibility without credibility produces a fragile image, whereas credibility without visibility may leave institutional value unrecognized. This study contributes to digital marketing and educational branding literature by extending these perspectives to the underexplored context of Indonesian secondary

education and provides a structured basis for ethical, engaging, and trustworthy digital branding strategies.

Keywords: *Digital institutional branding; Information quality; School image; Senior high school; Social media marketing activities; Visibility-credibility framework*



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1. Introduction

Digital transformation has repositioned educational communication from routine dissemination toward strategic institutional branding, in which institutions are increasingly evaluated through the clarity, credibility, and consistency of their digital communication. In Indonesia, this shift is intensified by widespread internet and social media adoption, as Kemp (2025) reports 230 million internet users, equivalent to 80.5 percent of the population, and 180 million social media user identities, equivalent to 62.9 percent. Evidence from higher education already confirms that social media functions as a core branding instrument capable of shaping institutional identity and stakeholder trust (Maresova et al., 2020), a pattern that becomes increasingly relevant as school selection grows more digitally mediated. Senior high schools (SMA) occupy a strategic position in this transformation because school selection involves academic, emotional, social, and reputational considerations, while recent regulation, namely Ministerial Regulation No. 9 of 2026 operationalizing Government Regulation No. 17 of 2025 on child protection in electronic systems, underscores the need for responsible school digital communication (Ministry of State Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2026).

Recent studies confirm that digital marketing and social media have become central mechanisms in educational branding. Wahyunto et al. (2024) demonstrate that digital marketing increases public interest in schools, Irdiyanti et al. (2023) identify structural barriers and strategies for branding among Indonesian private schools, Marhareita et al. (2022) link social media marketing activities to brand awareness and image, and Ruangkanjanases et al. (2022) show that Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) build behavioral engagement through brand equity. Most recently, Li et al. (2025) confirm that social media communication and brand image jointly shape enrollment preference among international university students, reinforcing the consistency of this relationship across diverse higher-education settings. Beyond the education sector, comparable SMMA mechanisms, including content-driven engagement and electronic word of mouth, have also been shown to strengthen marketing outcomes for small and medium enterprises and digital retail platforms in Indonesia (Suhardi et al., 2021; Prasetya et al., 2025), indicating that the visibility function of SMMA is empirically robust across institutional and commercial contexts. However, this body of evidence

concentrates almost entirely on higher education and commercial branding, leaving image formation in Indonesian senior high schools conspicuously underexplored.

A further gap concerns the limited integration of Information Quality (IQ) into educational branding research. Attractive social media content cannot sustain stakeholder trust when information is inaccurate, incomplete, or unverifiable, since perceived usefulness and reliability determine whether information is trusted at all (Wang & Strong, 1996). Brand image itself depends on associations that are favorable, strong, and unique (Keller, 1993, 2013), meaning that visibility efforts without credible information risk producing associations that are attractive yet unstable, as synthesized in table 1.

Table 1. Synthesis of Prior Studies and Research Gaps

Author	Context/Method	Main Contribution	Key Limitation
Irdiyanti et al. (2023)	Private school branding in Indonesia (qualitative)	Identifies barriers and strategies for school branding	Does not integrate SMMA and IQ as image-forming constructs
Wahyunto et al. (2024)	School branding via digital marketing	Digital marketing increases public interest in schools	No multidimensional conceptual model
Marhareita et al. (2022)	Educational branding and social media marketing	Links SMM to brand awareness, image, and attitude	Does not treat information quality separately
Ruangkanjanases et al. (2022)	Prospective students, Indonesia (SEM)	SMMA drives brand equity and behavioral engagement	Focuses on higher education, not SMA
Sánchez Garza et al. (2024)	Public higher education (SEM)	Confirms SMMA effects on awareness, image, loyalty	Limited to higher education; no IQ focus
Song et al. (2023)	Higher education social media engagement	Engagement shapes relationship quality and performance	Emphasizes engagement over information quality
Laradi et al. (2023)	Social media marketing capability	Posting, interaction, monitoring build brand equity	Outside school context; not adolescent-focused
Fauzi et al. (2025)	Islamic higher education reputation	Social media strengthens institutional reputation	Higher education focus, not SMA image
Prasetia (2026)	AI and visual branding	Explains AI-driven visual identity transformation	Not specific to educational institutions
Li et al. (2025)	International higher education (PLS-SEM)	Confirms social media communication and brand image jointly shape enrollment preference	Higher education focus; not applicable to secondary education branding

Source: Developed by the authors based on the reviewed literature (2026)

Table 1 shows that prior research clarifies why digital branding matters for educational institutions but remains limited in explaining how engaging social media

activities and credible information jointly shape school image at the senior-secondary level, rather than being treated as separate contributors. This limitation is analytically significant because senior high schools face reputational stakes distinct from higher education, including heightened parental scrutiny, adolescent protection concerns, and shorter decision cycles during annual admission periods. This gap therefore justifies the present study as a conceptual effort to develop a visibility-credibility framework explaining school image formation in Indonesian senior high schools.

The contribution of this study extends beyond combining Social Media Marketing Activities and Information Quality as two parallel antecedents of school image. Existing brand equity research treats visibility-oriented marketing activities and information-oriented quality signals largely as independent predictors, each evaluated separately for its direct effect on brand association (Kim & Ko, 2012; Wang & Strong, 1996). The visibility-credibility framework proposed in this study instead conceptualizes these two constructs as interacting mechanisms, in which the strength of school image depends not merely on the additive presence of SMMA and IQ, but on the degree to which engaging communication and credible information reinforce one another within a single institutional narrative. This interaction perspective departs from prior educational branding models by explaining why visibility without credibility produces a fragile image and why credibility without visibility leaves institutional value unrecognized, a relational logic that has not been explicitly theorized in prior school branding literature (Irdiyanti et al., 2023; Wahyunto et al., 2024; Marhareita et al., 2022). By foregrounding this interaction mechanism rather than treating SMMA and IQ as separate antecedents, the study offers a theoretical extension applicable to institutional branding contexts beyond commercial marketing, particularly in sectors where public trust and reputational accountability carry greater weight than in consumer markets.

2. Literature Review

Institutional Branding in Education

Refers to the strategic construction of an institution's identity, reputation, and perceived value in stakeholders' minds. School image is conceptually related to brand image, reflected in associations that are favorable, strong, and unique (Keller, 1993, 2013): favorability arises from perceptions of academic quality and school culture, strength from consistent messaging across platforms, and uniqueness from distinctive programs and values. This Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) perspective must be adapted carefully, since schools bear broader public and developmental responsibilities than commercial brands, as summarized in table 2.

Table 2. Key Dimensions of Digital Institutional Branding in Senior High Schools

Dimension	Analytical Meaning	Relevance to SMA	Risk if Weak
Digital Identity	Consistency of presence across platforms	Logo, profile, tone, and platform identity	Fragmented identity reduces recognition
Stakeholder Communication	Relevant messaging to diverse groups	Admission, parent, alumni, community content	Generic content reduces relevance
Reputation Signals	Digital evidence supporting trust	Achievements, competence, facilities, awards	Weak evidence raises skepticism
Brand Differentiation	Communication of distinctive value	Special programs, values, learning culture	Similar content weakens uniqueness
Visual Consistency	Coherent visual identity and storytelling	Photos, videos, AI-assisted visuals	Inconsistent visuals weaken image
Digital Information Quality	Accuracy, timeliness, and credibility	Admission dates, curriculum, achievements	Inaccurate information damages trust

Source: Developed by the authors based on Keller (1993, 2013), Wang and Strong (1996), Irdiyanti et al. (2023), and Prasetya (2026).

Table 2 confirms that digital institutional branding is multidimensional: visibility alone cannot produce a strong image when identity, reputation signals, or information quality are weak, positioning SMMA and IQ as complementary pillars of school image.

Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) refer to marketing activities on social media that create interaction, engagement, and brand-related associations. Kim and Ko (2012) conceptualize SMMA through entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth—dimensions later shown to influence higher-education brand equity and engagement (Ruangkanjanases et al., 2022; Sánchez Garza et al., 2024). Applied to senior high schools, these dimensions require conceptual caution: entertainment must align with educational dignity, interaction must prioritize meaningful responsiveness over metrics, trendiness must remain age-appropriate, and customization and word of mouth require a credible information foundation.

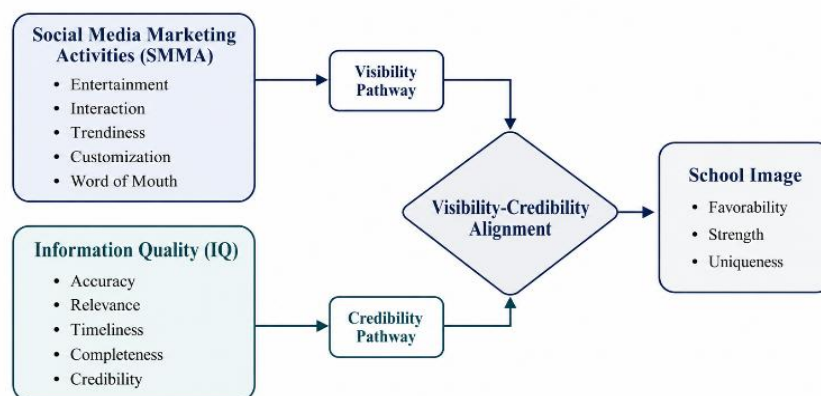
The relevance of these cautions becomes clearer when senior high schools are contrasted with higher education institutions, where most SMMA evidence originates. Universities compete primarily for academically motivated adult decision makers who evaluate institutions through rankings, research output, and career outcomes, a pattern evident in recent higher-education branding studies (Li et al., 2025; Ruangkanjanases et al., 2022). Senior high schools instead communicate with adolescent prospective students and their parents simultaneously, two audiences with different literacy, risk perception, and decision authority, so that content judged engaging by students may raise credibility concerns for parents evaluating the same message. Furthermore, schools operate under

child-protection obligations that do not apply to university marketing, requiring that entertainment, trendiness, and word of mouth be filtered through an ethical lens before being filtered through an engagement lens (Ministry of State Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2026). These distinctions justify treating senior high school branding as a conceptually distinct case rather than a smaller-scale replication of higher-education social media marketing.

Information Quality (IQ) refers to the extent to which information is useful, reliable, and fit for stakeholder needs. Wang and Strong (1996) identify accuracy, relevance, timeliness, completeness, and credibility as core dimensions, all highly relevant to school digital communication, where claims about programs, achievements, and costs must be honest, current, and verifiable. IQ is often underemphasized in educational marketing research, which tends to treat content mainly as an engagement vehicle (Fauzi et al., 2025; Prasetya, 2026); yet IQ functions as trust infrastructure that prevents school branding from becoming shallow or misleading.

School image thus emerges from the interaction of two pathways: SMMA creates visibility by making communication engaging, current, and shareable, while IQ creates credibility by ensuring communication is accurate, complete, and trustworthy. A school with strong SMMA but weak IQ may gain attention without lasting trust; a school with strong IQ but weak SMMA may possess credible value without adequate reach. Based on this synthesis, three propositions are advanced: SMMA strengthens school image via visibility and engagement (P1); IQ strengthens school image via credibility and trust (P2); and SMMA and IQ interact as complementary pillars determining overall image strength (P3), as illustrated in figure 1.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework: Visibility-Credibility Model of School Image Formation



Source: Developed by the authors based on Kim and Ko (2012), Wang and Strong (1996), Keller (1993, 2013), Ruangkanjanases et al. (2022), and Prasetya (2026).

The theoretical basis for this interaction can be clarified through classical communication theory. Source credibility theory establishes that a message is evaluated jointly on the attention or attractiveness it commands and the trustworthiness of the party

delivering it, such that messages from low-credibility sources are discounted even when their surface appeal is high (Hovland & Weiss, 1951). Applied to school branding, SMMA determines whether a message reaches and engages stakeholders at all, while IQ determines whether that message is subsequently believed and retained, meaning the two constructs operate at sequential stages of the same persuasion process rather than as independent, additive predictors of image. This sequential logic explains why visibility without credibility produces attention that later erodes, since audiences eventually discount content from a source they perceive as unreliable, and why credibility without visibility produces trustworthy value that remains unrecognized because the message never reaches a sufficient audience. This mechanism substantiates Propositions 1 through 3 by grounding the visibility-credibility interaction in an established theory of persuasion rather than presenting SMMA and IQ merely as parallel, complementary factors.

This study therefore aims to build a conceptual framework explaining how SMMA and IQ shape school image in Indonesian senior high schools, addressing three research questions: how SMMA dimensions contribute to school image, how IQ strengthens school image, and how SMMA and IQ interact as complementary pillars of institutional branding. The originality of this study lies in developing this visibility-credibility framework, extending digital marketing, information quality, and brand image theory into the underexplored context of Indonesian secondary education, with practical implications for school administrators and education marketers designing digital communication that is engaging, ethical, and credible.

3. Research Method

Research Design and Data Sources

This study adopts a qualitative conceptual research design using an integrative, framework-based literature review, prepared for the ICETEA 2026 conference. This design is appropriate because the study seeks to synthesize existing knowledge and build theoretical explanation rather than test causal relationships with primary survey data (Paul et al., 2024). The unit of analysis is the conceptual relationship among SMMA, IQ, and school image in Indonesian senior high schools. The data consist entirely of secondary sources—peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, books, government publications, and credible digital reports—drawn from Scopus- and Web of Science-indexed literature where available, Google Scholar, SINTA/Garuda-indexed Indonesian sources, and official government portals. Search terms combined construct-, context-, and method-based keywords such as “social media marketing activities,” “information quality,” “school image,” “institutional branding,” and “thematic analysis,” in both English and Indonesian.

Table 3. Literature Search Strategy and Selection Criteria

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication Period	2016 to May 2026 (seminal works excepted)	Sources without theoretical relevance outside this range
Source Type	Peer-reviewed articles, books, government publications, credible reports	Wikipedia, blogs, unverifiable web pages
Subject Relevance	SMMA, IQ, school image, institutional/educational branding	Studies unrelated to digital marketing, branding, or education
Bibliographic Validity	Identifiable authors, publication year, journal identity, DOI where available	Inconsistent authorship or missing metadata

Source: Developed by the authors based on Paul et al. (2024), Bartoloni and Ancillai (2024), and Naeem et al. (2023).

Selection and Analytical Procedure

Sources were selected through three stages: screening titles, abstracts, and keywords for relevance; verifying full texts and bibliographic metadata (authors, year, journal, DOI); and extracting information into a review matrix covering construct definitions, findings, limitations, and contributions to the proposed framework. Non-credible or unverifiable sources were excluded. The analysis then applied thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Naeem et al., 2023) through six phases—familiarization, initial coding, theme construction, theme review, theme definition, and framework development—organized around three theoretical foundations: the SMMA dimensions of Kim and Ko (2012), the IQ dimensions of Wang and Strong (1996), and the school-image dimensions of Keller (1993, 2013). Final themes were synthesized into the propositions and conceptual framework presented in the Introduction. The coding process moved from descriptive statements in each source to increasingly abstract conceptual categories. For example, the finding reported by Ruangkanjanes et al. (2022) that social media marketing activities drive behavioral engagement through brand equity was first coded descriptively as engagement through digital interaction, then reclassified during theme construction under the broader category of visibility mechanisms, and finally consolidated into the visibility pathway theme aligned with Proposition 1. A parallel process was applied to Information Quality sources, in which the finding by Wang and Strong (1996) that accuracy and completeness determine information usefulness was coded as trust-relevant information attributes before being consolidated into the credibility pathway theme aligned with Proposition 2. This progression from descriptive codes to conceptual themes followed the six-phase procedure of Braun and Clarke (2006), ensuring that each final theme remained traceable to specific coded statements in the review matrix rather than being asserted without an auditable analytical trail.

Quality Assurance and Credibility

Credibility was strengthened through source triangulation across international articles, Indonesian studies, government data, and institutional reports; bibliographic validation of author names, publication year, and DOI records; consistent linkage of every conceptual claim to SMMA, IQ, or school-image constructs; exclusion of non-credible sources such as Wikipedia and unverifiable web pages; and a final coherence check confirming that each construct, dimension, and relationship in the proposed framework is supported by validated literature. Despite these safeguards, representativeness in this review is bounded by design rather than exhaustive. As an integrative, framework-based literature review rather than a systematic review following a PRISMA-type protocol, the corpus was assembled through purposive relevance and credibility screening rather than through an exhaustive, replicable database query across all possible sources. Consequently, the synthesized themes should be read as representative of well-established and credible scholarly positions on SMMA, IQ, and school image, rather than as a complete census of every publication addressing these constructs. This boundary is consistent with the conceptual, theory-building aim of the study, since the objective is to develop a coherent framework rather than to quantify the prevalence of specific findings across the entire body of literature.

4. Results and Discussion

The thematic synthesis produced three central themes—digital visibility, information credibility, and visibility-credibility alignment—corresponding to the study's three research questions. As this is a conceptual literature-based study, the discussion presents synthesized theoretical patterns rather than statistical evidence, organized around the three propositions advanced in the Introduction.

Proposition 1: SMMA as the Visibility Pathway

SMMA strengthens school image by increasing digital visibility, stakeholder engagement, and the favorability, strength, and uniqueness of school associations (Kim & Ko, 2012). Entertainment builds favorable associations through engaging, values-aligned content such as student activity videos and achievement stories, though excessive dramatization can weaken institutional seriousness (Wirga et al., 2022; Sánchez Garza et al., 2024). Interaction builds relational strength through responsive, courteous communication, but should be judged by response quality rather than volume, since Wirga et al. (2022) found raw interaction volume to be an insignificant predictor of image. Trendiness and customization support uniqueness by combining contemporary formats with audience-specific messaging for prospective students, parents, and alumni (Laradi et al., 2023; Ruangkanjanases et al., 2022), while word of mouth extends visibility through testimonials and community stories—provided these remain accurate and verifiable, since misleading narratives damage trust when reality contradicts online claims.

Table 4. Thematic Synthesis of SMMA Dimensions and School Image Formation

SMMA Dimension	Visibility Mechanism	School Image Linkage	Supporting Sources
Entertainment	Positive attention and affective appeal	Favorability	Kim and Ko (2012); Sánchez Garza et al. (2024)
Interaction	Two-way communication and responsiveness	Strength	Song et al. (2023); Wirga et al. (2022)
Trendiness	Contemporary relevance and cultural fit	Uniqueness	Kim and Ko (2012); Laradi et al. (2023)
Customization	Audience-specific, targeted value	Strength and uniqueness	Ruangkanjanases et al. (2022)
Word of Mouth	Stakeholder sharing and amplification	Favorability and strength	Kim and Ko (2012); Ruangkanjanases et al. (2022)

Source: Developed by the authors based on Kim and Ko (2012), Ruangkanjanases et al. (2022), Wirga et al. (2022), Laradi et al. (2023), and Sánchez Garza et al. (2024).

Proposition 2: Information Quality as the Credibility Pathway

IQ strengthens school image by increasing the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, completeness, and credibility of school communication (Wang & Strong, 1996). Accuracy and relevance build favorable perceptions when admission requirements, achievements, and program descriptions are factually correct and address stakeholder concerns; exaggerated claims may create short-term appeal but risk reputational damage once experience contradicts messaging. Timeliness and completeness reduce uncertainty during admissions and school events, strengthening the stability of school associations, while credibility integrates all IQ dimensions by determining whether stakeholders trust institutional claims at all (Fauzi et al., 2025). Visual sophistication, including AI-assisted design (Prasetia, 2026), can reinforce professional image but cannot substitute for information credibility.

Table 5. Information Quality as a Credibility Mechanism in School Image Formation

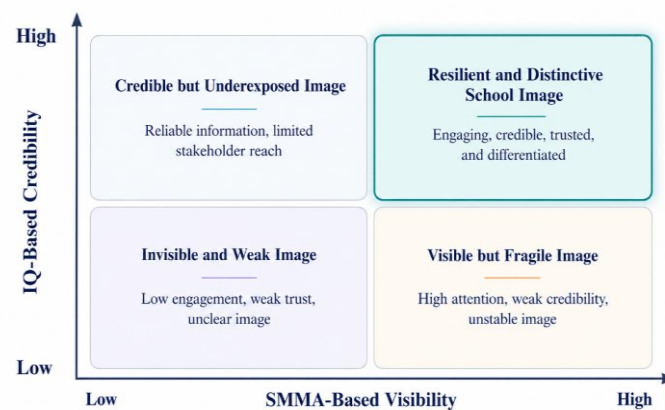
IQ Dimension	Credibility Mechanism	School Image Contribution	Supporting Sources
Accuracy	Factual correctness of school information	Builds favorable, trustworthy associations	Wang and Strong (1996); Fauzi et al. (2025)
Relevance	Aligns information with stakeholder needs	Strengthens perceived usefulness	Wang and Strong (1996); Irdiyanti et al. (2023)
Timeliness	Information delivered at the right time	Reinforces professionalism	Wang and Strong (1996); Wahyunto et al. (2024)
Completeness	Sufficient detail for decision-making	Builds comprehensive associations	Wang and Strong (1996); Keller (1993, 2013)

IQ Dimension	Credibility Mechanism	School Image Contribution	Supporting Sources
Credibility	Confidence in truthfulness of messages	Supports lasting trust and legitimacy	Fauzi et al. (2025); Prasetya (2026)

Source: Developed by the authors based on Wang and Strong (1996), Keller (1993, 2013), Fauzi et al. (2025), and Prasetya (2026).

Proposition 3: The Visibility-Credibility Model

Figure 2. Visibility-Credibility Typology of School Image Outcomes



Source: Developed by the authors based on Kim and Ko (2012), Wang and Strong (1996), Keller (1993, 2013), and Prasetya (2026).

Figure 2 translates Propositions 1 and 2 into a typology of four possible school image outcomes, positioned along the two axes of SMMA-based visibility and IQ-based credibility. Schools occupying the resilient and distinctive quadrant combine strong digital engagement with dependable information, a position achievable only when the sequential persuasion logic established earlier operates as intended, meaning stakeholders are first reached through engaging content and then retained through credible follow-through rather than through either mechanism alone. Schools in the visible but fragile quadrant illustrate the discounting effect described by source credibility theory, in which high initial attention decays once stakeholders discover inconsistencies between promotional claims and lived experience (Hovland & Weiss, 1951). Conversely, schools in the credible but underexposed quadrant possess trustworthy information that fails to translate into recognition because it never reaches a sufficiently broad audience, while schools in the invisible and weak quadrant lack both the reach and the substance needed to form any stable image at all. This typology indicates that school administrators should diagnose their current position along both axes before designing interventions, since a school low in visibility requires different corrective action than a school low in credibility, even though both may currently report a similarly weak overall image.

Practical and Governance Implications

For Indonesian senior high school administrators and education marketers, five operational implications follow from this framework. First, digital communication should be governed through a formal social media governance structure, in which a designated communication team, rather than individual staff acting independently, maintains a content calendar aligned with the admission cycle and reviews every planned post against explicit SMMA and IQ checklists before publication. Second, schools require a documented content verification procedure in which admission requirements, achievement claims, and event schedules are cross-checked against official administrative records by a staff member other than the content creator prior to release, thereby separating content production from content approval and reducing the risk of inadvertent inaccuracy. Third, this verification procedure should be time-bound, with routine information such as admission dates and curriculum details reviewed at fixed intervals, for example at the start of each semester, so that timeliness is maintained proactively rather than only in response to stakeholder complaints.

Fourth, communication policy must operationalize adolescent protection rather than referencing it only in principle, which requires written consent procedures for publishing student photographs and testimonials, clear guidelines distinguishing promotional storytelling from exploitative dramatization, and a designated point of contact for parents who wish to request the removal of previously published content, consistent with Indonesia's child-protection regulation for electronic systems (Ministry of State Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2026). Fifth, visual branding and artificial-intelligence-assisted content should be governed by an authenticity standard specifying that AI-assisted visuals may enhance presentation quality but must not misrepresent facilities, achievements, or student experiences that do not exist, since the credibility risk of synthetic media is particularly acute for institutions serving minors (Prasetya, 2026). Taken together, these governance, verification, ethical, and visual-authenticity guidelines translate the abstract requirement for SMMA and IQ alignment into procedures that school administrators can implement directly within existing institutional structures.

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

This study develops a visibility-credibility framework explaining how Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) and Information Quality (IQ) jointly shape school image in Indonesian senior high schools. SMMA strengthens school image through digital visibility, engagement, and stakeholder-driven amplification, while IQ strengthens school image through accurate, relevant, timely, complete, and credible information, and the two pathways interact sequentially in the manner described by source credibility theory, whereby visibility determines whether a message reaches stakeholders and credibility determines whether that message is subsequently believed. The study answers its three research questions by showing that SMMA dimensions build favorability, strength, and uniqueness, that IQ converts digital exposure into stakeholder trust, and that

SMMA and IQ interact as complementary pillars determining the resilience of school image. Theoretically, the study extends SMMA, IQ, and Customer-Based Brand Equity perspectives into the underexplored context of Indonesian secondary education, while practically offering school administrators and education marketers a structured basis for designing digital communication that is attractive, ethical, credible, and aligned with institutional identity.

As a conceptual literature-based study, this research does not provide primary empirical evidence, so the proposed relationships should be treated as theoretical propositions rather than tested effects, and their application beyond Indonesian senior high schools requires adaptation to local digital infrastructure, regulation, and stakeholder behavior. This limitation is compounded by the possibility of publication bias in the underlying literature, since studies reporting significant or favorable relationships between social media marketing and brand outcomes are more likely to be published than studies reporting null or mixed findings, which may have inflated the apparent strength of the SMMA-image relationship synthesized in this review. A related limitation concerns the contextual dependence of the reviewed studies, most of which were conducted in higher-education or commercial settings with different stakeholder structures, regulatory environments, and decision timelines than Indonesian senior high schools, so that constructs validated in those settings may not transfer to secondary education without empirical adjustment. Because the propositions rest entirely on secondary literature rather than on original data collection, the framework cannot account for relationships that may exist in practice but have not yet been documented in published research, and mediating constructs such as institutional trust and stakeholder satisfaction accordingly remain beyond this study's scope.

Future research should empirically validate the proposed framework using structural equation modeling to test the hypothesized paths between SMMA, IQ, and school image among prospective students, parents, and school administrators as respondents. Comparative studies between public and private senior high schools would help clarify whether the relative weight of the visibility and credibility pathways differs by governance structure and funding source, given that private schools often rely more heavily on brand differentiation to justify tuition costs. Future work should also test institutional trust and stakeholder satisfaction as mediating variables between SMMA, IQ, and school image, alongside moderating variables such as school type, parental digital literacy, and the extent of AI-assisted content use, to determine the boundary conditions under which the visibility-credibility interaction holds most strongly.

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