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Promotional Strategies to Increase Admissions of Prospectus Students in University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang, Indonesia

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Abstract:

Competition between private universities (PTS) and state universities (PTN) in Indonesia in the fighting for new students is quite heavy. This study aims to determine the extent to which the development of promotional strategies in marketing management to improve the acceptant of new students using mixed promotion methods. Subjects in this study consist of promotion team and prospectus students of University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang. Data collected through interview, then analyzed by using data diagram which has already existed in Prospectus Student Admission (PMB) University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang. The results of the research show that the promotion strategy conducted by the University is to conduct exhibitions in schools and educational events, advertisement in the form of banners, publicity, approaches by alumni and active students. Based on the strategies, the approach by active students and alumni to the prospectus are the most influential promotion, while the advertisement, publicity, and exhibition in schools and educational events are not very influential in increasing the number of new admissions at University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang.

Keyword: Admission, mixed promotion, university of muhammadiyah tangerang

1. Introduction

A university is a container used as research and development centre to generate generations that have personality and scientific competence according to its field (Sutabri, 2007). When a person going to a higher level is someone who has obtained higher education decree generally. The decision to choose a college is an investment on education that becomes an investment that gives social and personal benefits, and leads to make the nation and individual dignified (Kasmaee, Nadi, & Shahtalabi, 2016). This issue is in addition to costing problem that has been going on, therefore the University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang provides relief by way of payments that can be paid in installments until the Final Exam each semester. It also equipped by flexible timetable for prospective applicants who work that become no longer hindered to have rights to pursue higher education. In the higher education industry, competing in the student market is getting tighter, as a result University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang have established additional services for academic excellence such as a language institution, Holmesglen Institute, from Australia, and also has cooperation with a number of distinguished companies, such as Garuda Indonesia, Gajah Tunggal, Panarub, Bank BJB, Bank Bukopin for internship programs

According to Rahayu (2008), education unit is required to continue to refresh its strategy, to ensure the suitability of environmental demands and competition with its internal strength. The inability of an educational institution to respond external opportunities and threats will lead to decreasing competitiveness or hamper the achievement of educational institution performance. If this is neglected, it will threaten the continuity and existence of that educational institution. In addition, private universities are also given the opportunity to grow and develop their quality to build self-image and marketing strategies in parallel with state universities. To that end, higher education providers need to manage their organization just like a business company without leaving its ideal objectives.

The promotion concept should be applied in marketing to manage the organization. Marketing is no longer a functional activity of the marketing division but rather an integral part of an organization. The basic instrument used to achieve the communication goals of an institution or organization is an effective promotion strategy with reference to the mixed promotion.

University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang is the largest private university in Tangerang city Banten Indonesia, which was established in 3 August 2009 with Minister of National Education Decree No. 109/D/0/2009. The University has many faculties; Faculty of Economics and Business, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Faculty of Health Sciences, Faculty of Teachers

Training and Education, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Postgraduate Program. Seeing the name of Muhammadiyah known by the people with its Islamism affects hesitant for non-Muslims to pursue degrees at University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang, it is very necessary to introduce and market this higher educational institution more broadly to the community, especially new prospective students regardless the race, geography and religion as well as affiliation.

In addition, the initial interview with the public relations bearue and the promotion team of University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang is not currently the main preference of students or schools originating from the city of Tangerang, however the university is always more advantageous and demanded by the surrounding communities or schools from Tangerang Regency because there are not many institutions that have characteristics and coverage owned by University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang.

According to the promotion team of University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang, the university management has to maintain trust of communities or schools of Tangerang districts, and for the city of Tangerang they will always introduce the excellence of University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang campus with various promotional strategies such as conducting exhibitions at schools or educational events, advertising in the form of banners, approaches by alumni or active students. This research is conducted based on the prospective students in academic year 2015/2016, this school year is chosen because of the results of the data admissions at the University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang has an increase in targeted achievement that has been set by the management.

2. Literature Review

According Kasmaee, Nadi, & Shahtalabi (2016), a strategy in marketing education institution is as a program to determine and achieve goals, or a pattern of an organization's response to the environment at all times. The strategy consists of integrated decision, actions, or plans that will set and achieve viable organization goals. Promotion is an activity that is shown to influence consumers so that they can become familiar with the product. Essentially, promotion is an effort in information, persuasion and conversely, a person who is in persuasion is also being informed and influenced (Starck & Zadeh, 2013).

Marketing management has the meaning of a process consisting of planning, organizing, mobilizing and controlling to determine and achieve the goal through the utilization of human resources and other resources effectively to achieve certain goals (Gupta, 2016). Cheruon & Richard (2015) suggest that marketing is the process of planning and execution of conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of goods, services and ideas that can satisfy customers and corporate goals.

Marketing management in education is an activity, planning, implementation and control of programs that are created to establish, build and maintain the advantages of exchange through the target market in order to achieve the educational organization goals in the long run (Akdon, 2011). The marketing concept says that the key to achieving organizational goals consists of determining the needs and wants of the target market and delivering the expected satisfaction more effectively and efficiently than competitors. Then for the implementation of marketing, a product within the institution needs to be held planning first. For example planning of marketing area, planning about price, planning strategy to be used in entering market and technique of promotion strategy to be used. Robbin & DeCenzo (2008) points out that marketing management is the process of increasing the effectiveness and efficiency by which marketing activities are performed by individuals or organizations.

Admission of new students is the process of enrollment and selection of new student candidates in one university with some requirements that have been determined by certain universities. Admission of new students is one of the obligations of the Universities under the Ministry of Higher Education and Technology every new academic year.

The University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang conducts promotional activities through exhibitions in schools, advertising via banners and billboards, publicity, and approaches to the prospectus by alumni and active students, to find out increasing the number of new students in two academic years 2013/2014 and 2014/2015.

3. Method

The objective of this article aims at identifying the development of promotion strategy in marketing management to increase the number of new admissions at University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang. This research is conducted in the Admissions Office of University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang. In terms of obtaining comprehensive information on promotion strategy in marketing management conducted by University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang, the selection of research informants is conducted based on the research objective by using purposive sampling. Therefore, the informants whom the researcher considers are relevant and in accordance with the purpose of this research, they are the promotion team of University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang with new student candidates from two academic years 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 who register and re-register at University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang. Technique of data collection uses saturated sample technique or often called as total sampling. The sample is saturated sampling technique by taking all members of the population as respondents or samples, so this sampling method is used for students where the design of probability sampling with simple random sampling technique take place.

Data analysis technique of this research uses two methods for qualitative research with technique of data triangulation. By using the technique, configuring the degree of confidence in the findings of several data collection techniques, checking

multiple data sources with the same method. Triangulation of data to check the use of data collection methods; whether the information is obtained by the method of interview with observation method or vice versa.

4. Results and Discussion

The characteristics in the selection of informants are people who know the procedure of promotion strategy widely and directly coordinate the promotion process. Informant Elma indicates that that carrying out promotional activities is making billboards, banners, posters, brochures, branding car, banners and stickers that they put in strategic places. As for some types of promotional tools are there that they make themselves in LAB, printing practice, this is done to train the skills of active students and save considerable budget expenditure. In addition, the promotion team also put an advertisement on the printed media and electronic media, although in a number that is still very limited. The barriers obtained during the promotion of advertising are the promotion funds that are still very low and can still be unflexibly assessed by the team, especially for advertising activities.

While informant Harum Lestari indicates that in carrying out personal selling activities, promotion team visit or socialize the university's excellences to high schools or vocational schools and private schools in the city or the district of Tangerang. Usually the promotion team consists of two to four people who are assigned to provide information directly to the schools and the students of grade XII who will be admitted to the National Final Examination (UAN). The factors that can hamper the activities of personal selling is the lack of human resources who are able to communicate well in providing information directly to the market, especially students who will soon be at the National Final Examination.

In addition, Informant Maulana states that in carrying out publicity activities the team create workshop activities or events on campus and off campus then invited journalists from the print media to cover these activities. In addition, promotional teams utilizes Internet media through social networks such as facebook and Website to share pictures or workshops and events that they have done to other social networking. It is expected to create a good image of the campus in the communities, he also argues that the factor of inhibition in publicity activities so far is the problem of funds that are perceived to be insufficient to carry out publicity activities maximally. Another problem is the lack of human resources in the public relations of University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang that can design good communication plans.

Futhermore, Informant Andrie Delviyanto Nurdin says that conducting an approach to active students and alumni become one of the most effective forms of marketing, especially with the union of alumni in the communities is a pride for its members, because with the organization they can exchange information and share memories. The almamater that always makes contact with the alumni association, will gain many benefits, because they can accelerate information and can also use alumni as a path of increasing the image of the university. The role of alumni to recruit prospective students is also very important. As indicated by the results of the study that they are most effective towards parents of prospective students (Starck & Zadeh, 2013). Many activities that can be done by alumni such as seminars, symposiums, experience exchanges through discussion forums to create magazines or bulletins within alumni, attract new prospectus students, and achieve publicity and so forth. In this case of positive information about the campus to wider communities around them like families, neighbors, or people they know, This activity expects people who can share information will be interested to disseminate information to others without considering the issue of cost a lot, and seeing in terms of age of high school students, peers are one of the most important factors in making decisions. In this case there is no factor that can hinder the approach between active students and alumni towards prospectus applicants, because the campus always maintains good relationship and communication to the alumni through tracer study system.

The following data shows the diagram of new admissions at the University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang:

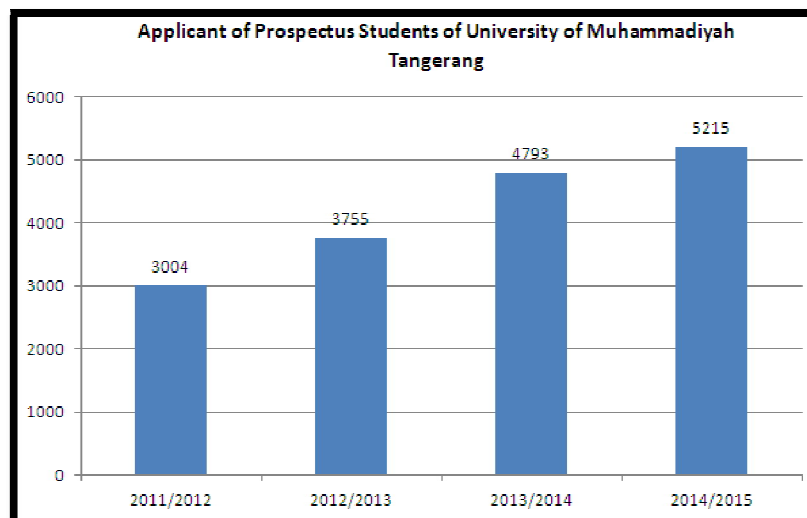


Figure 1

5. Conclusion

Based on this research, the promotional activities of University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang perform 4 promotion methods, namely advertisement, exhibition at school and educational event, publicity, and approach to active students and alumni. The approach to active students and alumni is the most influential promotion, publicity, as well as exhibitions in schools and educational events are not very influential in increasing the number of new admissions at the University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang.

Therefore promotion strategy in this marketing management that has been done must be developed more. For promotion team of University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang, they should plan more effective and efficient promotion budget for promotion activities, and public relations division must be more functioned in accordance with their marketing targets, respectively and always develop human capital, especially in the field of communication and relation services.

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