

## **Implications of the Promotional Mix in the Decision to Choose University**

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### **Introduction**

Marketing activities are always present in every profit-oriented company or institution, be it a company that offers products in the form of goods or services. One of the companies or institutions in Indonesia that is engaged in the business of providing services, namely educational institutions, in this case are universities, both State Universities (PTN) and Private Universities (PTS). In carrying out its goals as an educational institution, universities must be able to compete to meet these goals. One way that can be applied to fulfill all of that is by promotion. Promotions that must be carried out by public and private universities must be able to provide information and influence prospective students so that they are interested in the university. Competition that arises indirectly requires every university to promote to many places so that it can reach many prospective students. Promotions are usually carried out in SMA/SMK/equivalent in cities in Indonesia. In connection with promotional activities carried out in many cities, it is necessary to determine a promotional strategy that can influence so that it is not misdirected. Determining the promotion strategy cannot be done arbitrarily because the wrong decision or lack of it will have a negative impact on the results of the promotion. In the promotion there are 5 elements that need to be considered. This element is often known as the promotional mix. Kotler (2012), states that the promotional mix is a special blend of advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations and direct marketing that companies use to achieve their advertising and marketing goals. The determination must be made by considering the important things that are the determining factors in decision making. Based on the thoughts described above, the formulation of the problem is: Do advertising, relationships, personal selling, and direct marketing which are part of the marketing mix affect the student's decision to choose a university.

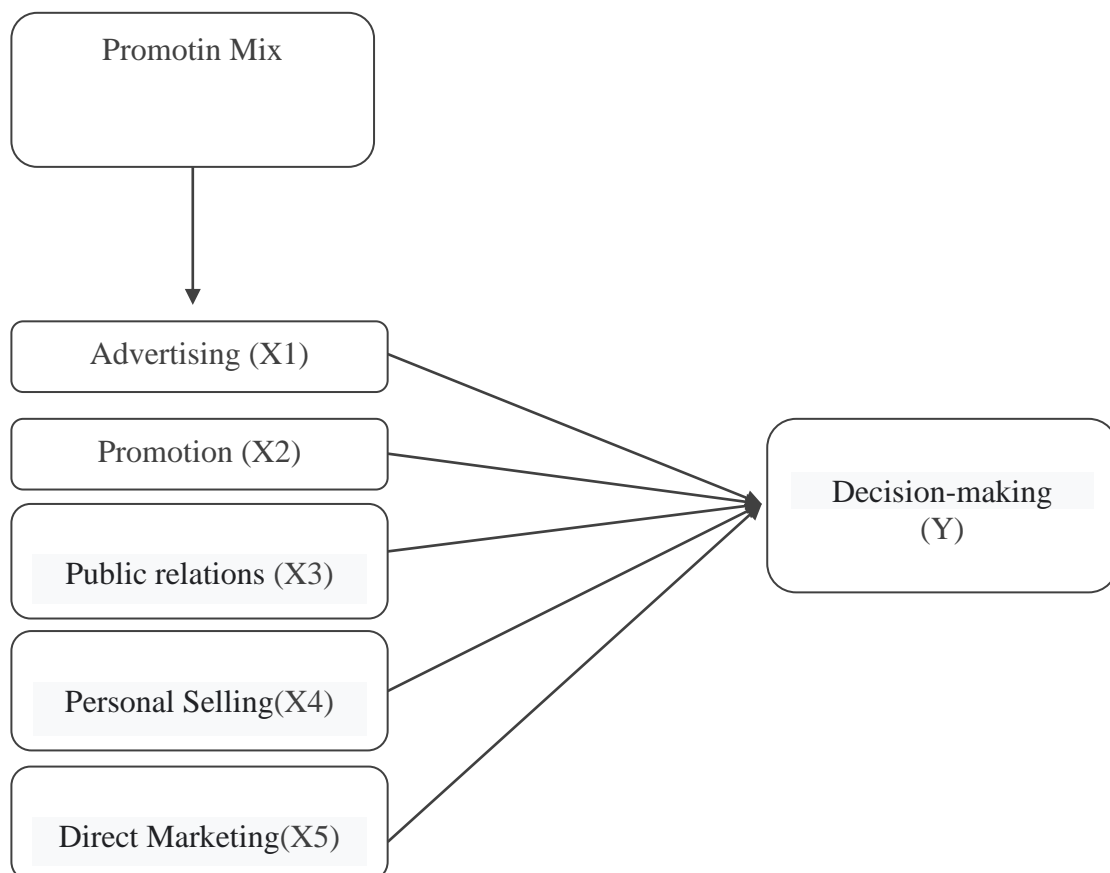
### **Discussion**

Kotler (2012) marketing management is the analysis, implementation and supervision of programs aimed at conducting exchanges with the target market with a view to achieving organizational goals. It relies heavily on the organization's offerings in attracting market needs and wants. This definition recognizes that marketing management is a process that involves the analysis, planning, implementation, and control of goods, services and ideas that depend on exchange with the aim of generating satisfaction for the parties involved. Marketing management can be applied to all fields of education. In management there are functions of analysis, planning, implementation or implementation as well as supervision. The planning stage is the stage that determines the continuity and success of a marketing organization. The planning process is a process that always looks forward or in the future, including the development of programs, policies and procedures to achieve marketing objectives. Marketing is an important factor to achieve success for the company will Agree there are ways and philosophies involved in it. This new way and philosophy is called the marketing concept. According to Simamora (2007) the promotion mix is the choice of instruments used to market a product or service. The elements of the promotion mix include advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, and public relations. Kotler (2012) The promotional mix is a special blend of advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations and direct marketing that a company uses to achieve its advertising and marketing objectives. . Based on some of the theories above, it can be concluded that the promotion mix is an effort made by the company for its marketing purposes including advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations and direct marketing. According to Lupiyoadi (2016: 120) Promotion is one of the variables in the marketing mix that is very important to be implemented by companies in marketing service products. Promotional activities not only function as a communication tool between companies and consumers, but also as a tool to influence consumers in purchasing activities or using services according to their wishes and needs. according to Kerin, *et.al* (2013:434) *Advertising is any paid form of nonpersonal communication about an organization, product, service, or idea by an identified sponsor. The nonpersonal component of advertising is also important. Advertising involves mass media (such as TV, radio, and magazines), which are nonpersonal and do not have an immediate feedback loop as does personal selling.* According to Rambat Lupiyoadi (2016: 120) Promotion is one of the variables in the marketing mix that is very important to be implemented by companies in marketing service products. Promotional activities not only function as a communication tool between companies and consumers,

but also as a tool to influence consumers in purchasing activities or using services according to their wishes and needs. Kerin, et.al (2013:436) **Public Relations** is a form communication management that seeks to influence the feelings, opinions, or beliefs held by costumers, prospective customers, stockholders, suppliers, employees, and other publics about a companyand its products or services. Many tools such a special events, lobbying efforts, annual reports, press conferences, social media (including Facebook and Twitter), and image management may be used by a public relations department, although publicity often plays the most important role. Kerin, et.al (2013:435) **Personal Selling** which is two-way flow communication between buyer and seller designed to influence a person's or group's purchase decision. Unlike advertising, personal selling is usually face-to-face communication between the sender and receiver. Kerin, et.al (2013;437) **Direct Marketing** uses direct communication with consumers to generate a respons in a form of an order, a request for further information, or a visit to retail outlet. The communication take many forms, including face to face selling, direct mail, catalogs, telephone solicitations, direct response advertising (on television and radio and in print), and online marketing. Like personal selling, direct marketing often consist of interactive communication. It also has the advantage of being customized to match the needs of specific target markets.

Decision is the process of tracing the problem that starts from the background of the problem, identification of the problem to the formation of conclusions or recommendations. These recommendations are then used and used as a basis for guiding decisions. Therefore, it is agreed that the effect that will occur if the recommendations produced are errors or hidden errors due to factors of carelessness in conducting a problem assessment. The birth of a decision does not necessarily take place in such a simple way, because a decision is always born based on a process that takes time, energy and thought until finally a crystallization occurs and the decision is born. The moment of decision is the moment where we fully choose to control our actions while the moment of uncertainty is the moment when something outside of us determines what will happen, meaning control is beyond our ability. Furthermore, what is considered important is the accountability of the decision itself to interested parties.

Conceptual Framework Flowchart



#### Measurement Indicator

Advertising is a form of non-individual communication used by companies, institutions, non-institutions, non-profits and individuals. The role of advertising in marketing services is to build

awareness of the existence of the services offered, increase consumer knowledge about the services offered, persuade potential consumers to buy or use these services, and differentiate one company from another. Based on the operational definition of the variable regarding the advertising component, it is adapted in advertising indicators as follows: Product introduction (University) via radio, Product introduction (University) through newspapers, Product introduction (University) via the internet, Product introduction (University) through billboards. The next variable Sales promotion is all activities intended to increase the flow of goods or services from producers to their final sale. Point of sales promotion consists of brochures, information sheets, and others. The sales promotion component is adapted to indicators, namely providing product discounts/college scholarships, holding promos when enrolling at the university, giving rewards to prospective students with high achievements who wish to enroll at the university.

Subsequent variables Public relations is another important marketing ploy, in which the company must not only deal with customers, suppliers, and dealers, but also have to deal with a more amenable set of public interests. The community relations component is adapted in indicators, namely: Being a sponsor in one of the community activities, Conducting activities involving the community, Procurement of product-related exhibition locations (Universitas). Then the Individual Sales variable is direct communication (face to face) between the seller and prospective customers to introduce a product to potential customers and form customer understanding of the product so that they will then try to buy it. Individual sales are adapted to indicators, namely Conducting socialization in various high school/vocational schools, Building good relationships with prospective buyers/prospective students. Direct marketing is an interactive marketing system that uses one or more advertising media to generate measurable responses and/or transactions at a location. Direct marketing adapted is to provide sufficient information related to products (University) through university websites, Marketing through catalogs/distribution of brochures. Then for the dependent variable, decision making is the process of making a choice between several choices and the hope of creating a good result. Decision making is the result of a process of several alternative considerations to solve problems. Based on the existing theory regarding the components of purchasing decisions, the student's decision to choose a university is adapted to the following decision indicators: Decision on product type/University type, University brand/name decision, Decision on product/University price.

#### Analysis Method

Qualitative analysis is to classify, analyze and present the data found in the field descriptively. This method can be done with the aim of being able to find the effect on the dependent variable or find the causes that exist in the independent variable. Quantitative analysis that can be used to find the effect of the promotion mix on students' decisions to choose a university is using regression. multiple (Riduwan & Sunarto (2010:108) with the following formula:

$$Y = a + bX_1 + bX_2 + bX_3 + bX_4 + bX_5$$

Information :

X<sub>1</sub> = Advertisement

X<sub>2</sub> = Sales Promotion

X<sub>3</sub> = Public Relations

X<sub>4</sub> = Individual Sales

X<sub>5</sub> = Direct Marketing

Y = Decision Making

a = Constant ,

b = Regression Coefficient X<sub>1</sub>,X<sub>2</sub>,...,X<sub>5</sub> against Y.

#### Analysis results

The multiple linear regression equation is as follows:

$$Y = 3,886 + 0,241X_1 - 0,067X_2 + 0,245X_3 + 0,191X_4 + 0,270X_5$$

The value of 3.886 is a constant value (alpha) which indicates that if Advertising (X<sub>1</sub>), Sales Promotion (X<sub>2</sub>), Public Relations (X<sub>3</sub>), Personal Sales (X<sub>4</sub>), and Direct Marketing (X<sub>5</sub>), explain their influence on Decision Making (Y) Not done by the University of Gorontalo, the student's decision to choose the University of Gorontalo is still 3,886.

1. For the value of 0.241 X<sub>1</sub> is a regression coefficient which indicates that for every additional 1 unit of advertisement, the student's decision will increase by 0.241.
2. For the value of -0.067 X<sub>2</sub> is a regression coefficient which indicates that every time there is an additional sales promotion of 1 unit, the student's decision will decrease by -0.067.
3. For the value of 0.245 X<sub>3</sub> is a regression coefficient which indicates that every time there is an additional 1 unit of public relations, the student's decision will increase by 0.245.

4. For the value of 0.191  $X_4$  is a regression coefficient which indicates that for every additional 1 unit of individual sales, the student's decision will increase by 0.191.
5. For the value of 0.270  $X_5$  is a regression coefficient which indicates that for each additional 1 unit of direct marketing, the student's decision will increase by 0.270.

Based on the above results that have been carried out, it shows that simultaneously Advertising ( $X_1$ ), Sales Promotion ( $X_2$ ), Public Relations ( $X_3$ ), Personal Sales ( $X_4$ ), and Direct Marketing ( $X_5$ ) have a significant effect on Decision Making ( $Y$ ). This can be seen in table 5.19 which shows that the value of  $F_{count}$  is greater than the value of  $F_{table}$  with a significant  $<0.05$ . This shows that the independent variables simultaneously have a significant effect on student decisions in choosing a university. While partially, where each variable, namely advertising, public relations, personal selling and direct marketing, has a positive and significant impact on students' decisions to choose a university with results showing that the  $t_{count}$  value of each variable is greater than the  $t_{table}$  value with a significant  $<0.05$ . This shows that these variables still have an influence on student decision making to choose a university. On the other hand, the sales promotion variable has no positive and significant effect on the student's decision to choose a university. This is because the value of  $t_{count}$  is greater than the value of  $t_{table}$  with a significance  $> 0.05$ . It could be that this shows that sales promotions have not been carried out in the right way so that it does not affect the student's decision to choose a university. Thus the proposed hypothesis regarding advertising, public relations, personal selling and direct marketing in this study is accepted, while the proposed hypothesis related to sales promotion is rejected.

Furthermore, the results of the t-test between advertising on decision making can be seen in the regression results shown in table 5.18, where the table shows the t-test results of 7.482 with sig 0.000. The sig value obtained is  $<0.05$ , then  $H_1$  which states that the advertisement has a positive and significant effect on the student's decision to choose the university to be accepted. This is also evidenced by the results of interviews with several respondents, where they explained that the advertisements carried out by the University were quite influential in their decision to register at the campus, although there were some advertising items used to be removed, because they were not too interested in seeing such advertisements. The advertisements that must be removed are those that are broadcast on radio and newspapers, because they have very little effect.

The results of the t-test between sales promotion and decision making can be seen in the regression results shown in table 5.18, where the table shows the t-test result of -2.577 with sig 0.010. The sig value obtained is  $> 0.05$ , so  $H_2$  which states that sales promotion has a positive and significant effect on student decisions to choose University, which is rejected. However, the sales promotion variable in this study did not have a positive and significant influence on the student's decision to choose a university. This happens because the sales promotions carried out by the University are not very attractive because the promotions carried out only talk about scholarships and ordinary promotions which they think are ordinary promotions. In addition, based on the results of interviews with one of the respondents, namely students who stated that their decision to enter the University was not due to the scholarships offered but there were several other factors that were not mentioned. So that the University must be able to change the style of sales promotion offered, so that it can influence the student's decision to choose the University. The results of the t-test between public relations and decision making can be seen in the regression results shown in table 5.18, where the table shows the t-test results of 6.574 with sig 0.000. The sig value obtained is  $<0.05$ , then  $H_3$  which states that public relations has a positive and significant effect on students' decisions to choose accepted universities.

This is because the University always carries out community service such as the "Kuliah Service Program (KKP) program so that it makes the University close to the community and this can also be said as one of the promotions. So it must be maintained and must be improved again in order to get even better results. The results of the t-test between individual sales and decision making can be seen in the regression results shown in table 5.18, where in the table the results of the t-test are 5.120 with sig 0.000. The sig value obtained is  $<0.05$ , then  $H_4$  which states that individual sales have a positive and significant effect on students' decisions to choose accepted universities.

The results of the t-test between direct marketing and decision making can be seen in the regression results shown in table 5.18, where the table shows the t-test results of 6.778 with sig 0.000. The sig value obtained is  $<0.05$ , so  $H_5$  which states that direct marketing has a positive and significant effect on students' decisions to choose a university. Thus the correlation between variables can be seen in appendix 7. Furthermore, in decision making, decision making that will occur after the promotion action is in the area of 44.9% (relative frequency distribution, see table 5.19) who agreed to choose the University, the rest amounted to 55.1% would choose another college. While the coefficient of determination is 63.2% (see table 5.23) or there are still 36.8% who are in the area of not choosing a university. Thus, even though there are various effects of promotion on decision making, 36.8% of students will not choose University. Thus, if the University wants to attract more prospective students who decide to study at the University, then the University must be able to change various old



promotion models to new promotion models, or it can be said to renew their promotion models. The University must be observant to see opportunities that can be used as promotional materials, so that the promotional activities carried out will not end in vain, but can produce real results or outputs.

Thus, the promotion mix has a very large influence on the student's decision to choose a university seen from the results of the research that has been done. In fact, based on interviews conducted during the study, several respondents, namely students, stated that their decision to choose a university was only because of the distance from their house which was close to the location of the university and because they did not pass the joint selection to enter a state university. So that this is what the University needs to pay attention to, where the University must be able to have a high attractiveness for the progress of the University in the future.

### Conclusion

Based on the results and the previous discussion, it can be concluded that:

1. The advertising variable has a positive and significant effect on the student's decision to choose a university. These results provide evidence that the advertisements carried out by the University are correct. Although in reality there are several ad items that must be removed and replaced with more attractive ads and in accordance with current trends.
2. The sales promotion variable has no positive and significant effect on the student's decision to choose the university. This is because the t-count value of the sales promotion variable shows the number -2.577 with a significant sales promotion that is 0.010 smaller than the ttable value so H2 is rejected. This is because the promotional materials carried out are still general and mediocre. So that it does not influence the student's decision to choose a university.
3. The public relations variable has a positive and significant effect on students' decisions to choose a university. These results provide evidence that the public relations carried out by the University are good and are able to represent the promotions carried out by the University. Because in general, to get a positive reaction from the community, the University must be able to establish good relationships. And the University is already doing just that. However, it still needs to be improved.
4. The individual sales variable has a positive and significant effect on the student's decision to choose a university. These results provide evidence that individual sales carried out by the University have been carried out in a good manner even though in fact individual sales have not been carried out thoroughly to areas that can be reached by the University. Therefore, the University must be able to re-read the points that can be made for the individual sale.
5. The direct marketing variable has a positive and significant effect on the student's decision to choose a university. These results provide evidence that direct marketing carried out by the University has also been able to slightly represent its relationship to the promotions carried out. And furthermore, the University only needs to increase the direct marketing activities carried out a little. The rest of the direct marketing activities that have been carried out previously have been good.
6. Furthermore, from the research results shown in the relative frequency table, it is known that 44.9% of prospective students will choose to continue their education at the University, while the remaining 55.1% will choose other universities. While the coefficient of determination shows that 63.2% of prospective students will choose to study at the University, and there are still 36.8% of prospective students who do not choose the University.
7. Of the five variables tested, the advertising variable is the most significant variable and influences the student's decision to choose a university.

This research is still far from perfect so it still needs additional research that is sustainable, more focused and broader than this research so that the weaknesses that arise in this research can be improved and perfected. So for suggestions that can be given as an alternative in this research in the future are as follows. For further researchers, it should involve a larger number of respondents and various demographics, not limited to the scope or object of research so that they get better generalization results and research. In the future, it is necessary to involve variables that can influence student decisions, considering that each region has different characteristics. For universities, they must be able to play promotions in the realm of social media (don't just play on one social media, but must be able to enter various social media according to the times). able to attract the attention of prospective students. In the tips for promoting to University schools, do not focus on only one area, but must be able to carry out promotions as a whole so that all schools in the district/city can hear and see the promotions being carried out firsthand.

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