



Analysis on the Effectiveness of Bung Hatta University's Promotion

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Abstract

There has been tight and steep competition in Indonesian universities for prospective students due to the increasing growth of private higher education or universities in all regions. Bung Hatta University as one of the largest universities in the Higher Education Service Institutions (LLDIKTI) region X also faces the impact of this competition. This study aims to analyze and measure the effectiveness of promotions that have been carried out by Bung Hatta University in attracting new prospective students. This research is a descriptive study that aims to describe, explain, and validate research findings. This study found that the main source of information for students obtaining information about Bung Hatta University, including all faculties available, was the nuclear family or close family at 37.99%, the second source of information with a proportion of 19.55% was promotions on social media, internet and websites. Information from students currently studying comes in the third place with a proportion of 12.99%. The fourth place is alumni with a proportion of 8.84% , the fifth place is information from friends or neighbors, as much as 7, 82%, the sixth place is from electronic media at 5.17%, the seventh place is from Senior high school teachers in which the students study 2.09%, the eighth source is from the visit of the university promotion team is 1.96%, the ninth source is from mass media, 1.96% and the last one, in the tenth place is information from employees or lecturers of Bung Hatta University is 1.54%. Several factors that encourage students to study at Bung Hatta University are the first one is the image of Bung Hatta University as Higher Education with a proportion of 60.20%, secondly is the economic aspect of 16.62%, the third factor is the student activities with a proportion of 14.11% and the fourth place is the physical aspect with the proportion of 9.08%.

Keyword: Promotion, Main Information, Students, Bung Hatta University

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of private higher education or universities in response to high demand in the current era of globalization is a recent phenomenon in Indonesia. In addition to state universities, many private universities have been established in the regions. With the issuance of Government Regulation Number 61 of 1999 concerning Higher Education Autonomy, the Government offers opportunities for each university to produce more efficient management and to contribute on scientific development through higher education autonomy. This regulation triggers the competition for higher education institutions to be tighter and steeper, as each university has to compete in attracting new prospective students.

Bung Hatta University, founded in 1981 in Padang, West Sumatera and currently with 7 Faculties and 31 study programs, faces similar problem. Graph 1.1 shows the fluctuation of the number of new students in the last 4 years.

Bung Hatta University has made various efforts to attract new prospective student, one of which is by allocating a budget for promotional activities each year. In addition, forming a promotion team at the university and faculty level that aims to convey information and attract the public interest so that the number of students increases. The promotion is carried out by advertising through print and electronic media, websites, and distributing brochures, banners and social media. In the last few years, promotion has also been carried out by visiting Senior high schools both in West Sumatra Province and the provinces nearby in order to reach out and to inform directly about Bung Hatta University and its programs.

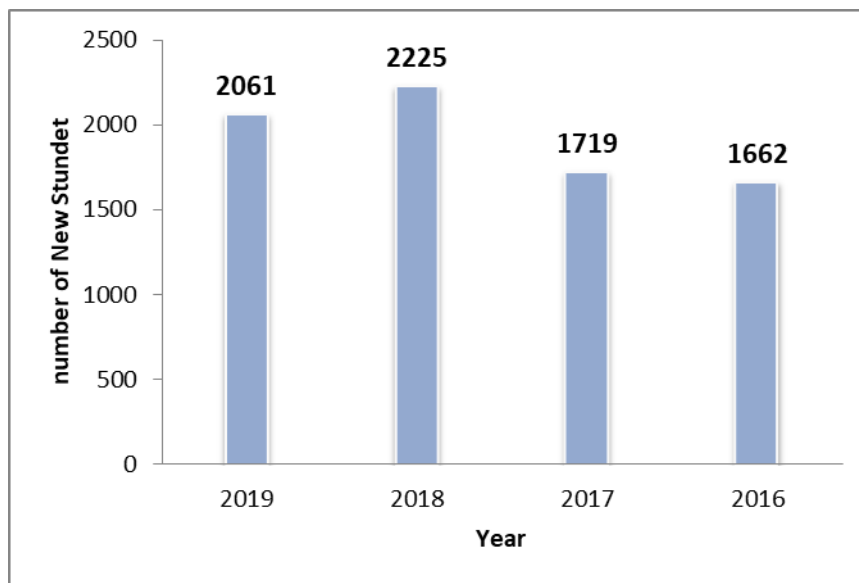


Figure 1. Number of new students in the last 4 years

One of the purposes of promotion is to increase public confidence in the quality assurance of a university. The higher the recognition of the quality assurance of a university, the more people will use its service (Wahyudi, 2015) . A university must be aware of where the prospective students get information, so that the right promotion strategy from various promotional mix alternatives can be determined. Furthermore, tertiary institutions also need to understand and identify the sources of information used by prospective students in selecting tertiary institutions. In recruiting prospective students, it is necessary to carry out a thorough examination of the appropriate promotional tools that are often used to find and select a University. A new challenge currently being faced by higher education institutions is that public and private universities increasingly view prospective students as consumers and try to market their institutions intensively (Kusumawati, 2018).

Promotion of educational services includes activities and materials used in order to reach audiences, build an internal environment, and create awareness of the efforts of educational institutions to fulfill the desires and expectations of the community (Lockhart, 2005). Educational services promotion activities are developed through educational service marketing communications. Marketing communication of educational services can be carried out by effective interaction between schools, prospective students and the community. Educational institutions need an effective marketing communication of educational services with the target market for educational services. Promotional activities, whether promotion of schools or universities, must inform the objectives, activities and offers of educational programs to education service customers so that they are interested (Wijaya, 2016).

This study aims to analyze and measure the effectiveness of promotions carried out by Bung Hatta University in attracting new prospective students. This study aims to answer the following questions. 1) What are the main sources of information for new students in choosing Bung Hatta University?; and 2) What are the main considerations for new students in choosing Bung Hatta University to study at Bung Hatta University?

This study also discuss some of the basic reasons why this research is very important to conduct, while the main point of this research is to analyze the main information of new prospective students in choosing Bung Hatta University (school promotion, social media, peers, etc.) and to analyze the main considerations of new students in choosing Bung Hatta University (marketing criteria and economic criteria).

1.1. The Marketing of Educational Services

Educational service marketing is an activity carried out by educational institutions to provide services or deliver educational services to consumers in a satisfactory way (Buchari, 2013). Service marketing performance refers to external and market conditions, which include market share, customer loss rate, customer satisfaction, product quality, and so on (Kotler and Keller, 2013) The marketing programs will describe the strategy that will be carried out by the company institution, which is described through the marketing mix. The definition of the educational service marketing mix is the elements of an educational organization that can be controlled by the organization in communicating with students and will be used to satisfy students (Buchari, 2013).

The key strategic factors in university development are changes in the university environment, academic structure, research, teaching and learning and university managerial. In addition, other things that must be considered by leaders are academic excellence, speed of

response, collaboration through partnerships, investment in appropriate infrastructure, and the highest quality staff (Scott, 2006).

In determining a higher education marketing strategy, a commitment to quality, relevance and competitiveness is required (Anwar, 2016). A good college marketing strategy is to produce high quality, relevant and highly competitive universities. In determining the strategy, it is necessary to apply an integrated management system with constant innovation and be responsive toward change in a sustainable manner. In order to achieve autonomic funding, universities should innovate in funding sources. The university marketing strategy mix that can be selected is the segmentation strategy, targeting strategy, positioning strategy, differentiation strategy, focus strategy and low cost strategy.

Several studies on higher education options by analyzing the decision-making process and seeking information on potential students usually occupy the highest position by describing the application of marketing concepts in the higher education sector (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2015). However, there is specificity in higher education where most students or students are one-time consumers, which is different from the business sector where consumers often make repeat purchases (Temple & Shattock, 2007).

1.2. Promotion of Educational Services

Susilawati, (2016) suggest the purpose of promotion as a modification of behavior. Promotion tries to change behavior and opinions and reinforce existing behavior. The seller (as a Source) always tries to create a good impression about himself (institutional promotion) or encourages the purchase towards company goods and services. Promotion also serves as informing and updating. Promotional activities can be aimed at informing the intended market about the company's offerings. Besides, promotion is also a persuasion however promotion of being persuasive is generally not preferred by some people. The purpose of promotion is also a reminder. Promotions are reminders carried out mainly to maintain the people's interest and product brand needs.

Although the forms of promotion of educational services have similar function as company promotion, they can be differentiated based on their specific duties. According to (Buchari, 2013), the special task is a mix of education services promotion which includes various aspects as follows:

a. Personal selling

It is a direct or face-to-face communication between educational service sellers and prospective customers of educational services to introduce educational service

products and form customer perceptions of educational services about educational service products so that the consumers are willing to try and use them.

b. Mass selling (mass selling)

It is an approach through communication media to convey information to school audiences within a certain period of time.

There are two forms of mass selling namely

1.) Advertising (advertising)

An indirect form of communication that conveys information about the advantages and advantages of educational service products, so that it creates a feeling of pleasure and changes one's mind to buy educational services

2.) Publicity (Publicity)

Utilization of news values contained in educational service products to form the image of educational service products

c. Sales Promotion

It is a direct form of persuasion through the use of adjustable incentives in order to stimulate the purchase of educational service products immediately and increase the number of educational service products purchased by education service customers.

d. Public Relations

Public Relation is a comprehensive communication effort for educational services to influence perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes of society towards educational services

e. Direct marketing

It is an interactive educational service marketing system that utilizes one or several advertising media to generate measurable responses and transactions at various educational service locations.

The effectiveness of the promotion is intended to encourage the public to care for higher education in order to improve science and technology in an effort to produce reliable human resources. Promotion is carried out in the field of education to increase public interest in entering colleges or universities (Azis, 2013). Promotion carried out in addition to providing information about tertiary institutions is also intended to attract prospective students.

Promotion through personal recommendations or better known as word of mouth marketing and the image of a university is vital for a university. There are several advantages of word of mouth marketing promotion including reducing marketing costs, easier access, attracting new students and retaining students. Research conducted by (Agustiani and Karini,

2017) suggests that Word of Mouth Marketing has a positive and significant effect on the image of higher education. In addition, this study found that Word of Mouth Marketing has a positive and significant effect on the decision to become a student. Judging from the image aspect of higher education, this study also found that the image aspect had a positive and significant effect on the decision to become a student. In addition, promotion can be used to increase public confidence in the quality assurance of a university, the more known the quality assurance of a university, the more people will choose to use its service users. One of the promotional tools that can be used is promotion in the form of interactive visual communication technology. This promotion has the ability to store audio-visual data, as a medium for promotion and image quality assurance, accountability and enhancing the credibility of higher education (Wahyudi, 2015).

Communication is a means of promotion, both by expanding the reach of the audience, and expanding information and increasing targets, in an effort to introduce it to the public. The level of promotion effectiveness cannot be separated from the factors that support the implementation of promotional activity planning. The factors that support promotion in order to reach the wider community, not only in cities but also in districts, are the timeliness of the promotion. Every year student admission becomes a competitive arena for promotion, especially for private universities. Therefore, efforts are made to use the right time for promotional activities, for example using face-to-face media with visits to the regions, to high school / vocational schools, it is also necessary to do before the implementation of the national exams, including the distribution of calendars bearing the university logo for each school (Azis, 2013).

The research conducted by (Wibowo and Widodo, 2013) has identified nine factors that are thought to be the determinants of study intentions in higher education. However, this study has not been able to answer the effect of these nine factors on study intention. The nine determinants of study intention are: perceptions of the quality of teaching, perceptions of the quality of graduates in the world of work, motivation to work, values of life, motivation to excel, campus comfort, university image, assistance in financing studies, and social status.

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Objects

The research respondents were 716 active students from 4 batches (2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019) who are currently active studying in the 2019/2020 academic year. Respondents were randomly selected for each faculty in the university.

2.2. Data Collection Method

Data were collected using a web survey and the instruments were submitted to respondents via the link <https://bit.ly/SurveiMahasiswaUniversitasBungHatta>. The survey instrument contains dimensions, namely the main source of information and the aspects most considered for choosing Bung Hatta University. Of the 10 types of information sources identified, respondents were only asked to choose one. Likewise with the most considered musty, respondents were only asked to choose one of four aspects. These four aspects are derived from two general criteria for accreditation, a marketing criterion and an economic criterion.

Aspects of higher education image are related to: accreditation, credibility of lecturers, campus services, credibility of alumni in the community while the aspect of student activities is related to the availability of supporting facilities for student activities such as: student activity units, student organizations, and the Student Executive Board, to the recognition of various parties regarding student achievement. The physical or tangible aspect is an aspect of service quality enjoyed, felt and assessed by students through their senses which consist of facilities: learning facilities and media, health, libraries, worship facilities, cafeterias, and internet access, to a comfortable and safe campus environment. Economic aspects are related to affordable tuition fees, ease of payment systems, cost of living, etc.)

2.3. Method of Analysis

Based on its objectives, this research is a descriptive study that aims to describe, explain, and validate research findings. In quantitative analysis, the description can be presented using tables, graphs and statistical measures. This study uses graphs or bar charts and cross tabulation. Bar chart is a type of diagram that displays numbers or quantities that can be rectangular or square. Bar charts also show bars that are vertical, horizontal, and equal in width to several separate bars. Cross tabulation tables are a fundamentally important tool in empirical research (White, 2004). Contingency analysis through cross tabulation is the simplest analysis method that presents the number of frequencies of objects in more than one variable arranged in rows and columns. Despite its simplicity, the cross tabulation table has a strong enough explaining ability and is even able to detect the relationship between variables if needed.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Profile of Respondents

Respondents come from each faculty in Bung Hatta University with students of the Faculty of Economics and Business as the largest respondents as many as 244 people or with a proportion of 34.08%. The least proportion of respondents is from the Faculty of Humanities (FIB) and the Faculty of Fisheries & Marine Sciences (FPIK), as many as 35 and 36 people, respectively. Apart from the faculty, the survey was also successful in obtaining respondents from Senior High School students from which they were divided into 3 groups, namely Padang City, West Sumatra and Outside of West Sumatra with 350 respondents (48.88%) from high school in West Sumatra. The full profile of the respondents is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1
The Profile of Respondents

Demographics	Total	Proportion
Gender		
L	265	37,01
P	451	62,99
Total	716	100,00
Years		
2016	69	9,64
2017	152	21,23
2018	348	48,60
2019	147	20,53
Total	716	100,00
Faculty		
Economics	244	34,08
Cultural Science	35	4,89
Education	143	19,97
Fishery science	36	5,03
industrial Engineering	106	14,80
civil Engineering	48	6,70
Law	104	14,53
Total	716	100,00
School Origin		
Non West Sumatera	217	30,31
Padang	149	20,81
West Sumatera	350	48,88
Total	716	100

Source: Research Data (2020)

3.2. Description of Main Information Sources in Choosing Bung Hatta University

There are 10 main sources of information about Bung Hatta University and the nuclear family or close family is in the first rank followed by the Internet (Social Media or website), current active students at Bung Hatta University as well as alumni. Meanwhile, the school promotion team visit was ranked 8th, followed by information through promotion in mass

media media and the last ranking was information from staff / lecturers. The complete ranking of main information sources can be seen in Figure 2 below.

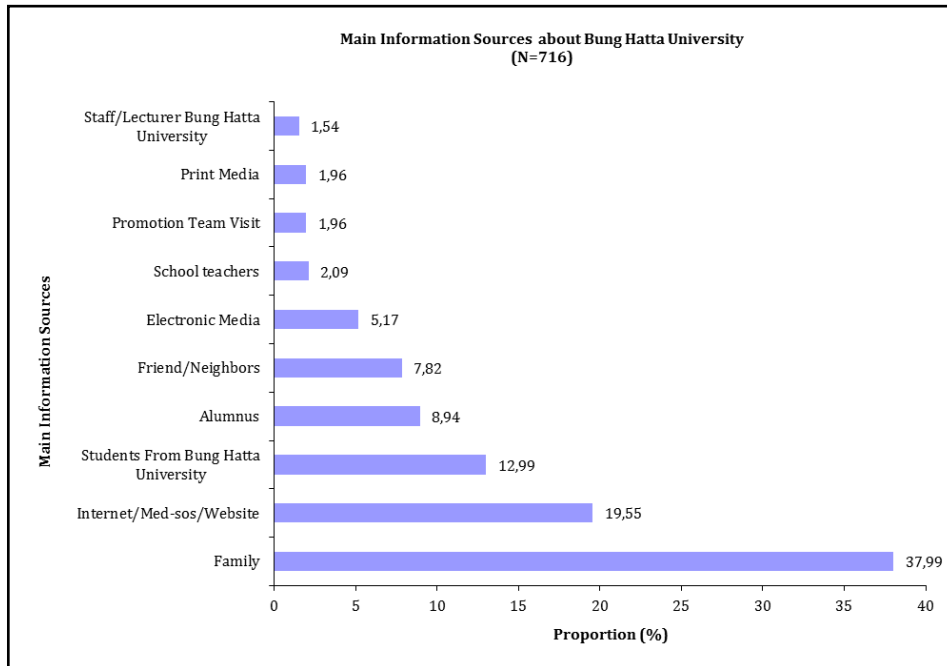


Figure 2. Main Information Sources in Choosing to Study at Bung Hatta University

Further study was carried out by breaking down the findings by faculty in the form of cross tabulated tables. The number of respondents who chose one of the main sources of information was arranged by faculty. The distribution of the number of respondents based on the main information source and the complete faculty can be seen in Table 1.2 below.

Table 2
Main Information Sources Based on Faculty of Origin

Main Information Source	Faculty							Total
	Economic	Cultural Science	Education	Fishery science	industrial Engineering	civil Engineering	Law	
Family	92	15	54	10	38	28	35	272
Internet/Med-sos/Website	47	8	27	6	20	8	24	140
Students From Bung Hatta University	27	5	23	4	12	5	17	93
Alumnus	26	2	8	5	9	2	12	64
Friend/Neighbors	21	1	10	4	9	3	8	56
Electronic Media	14	1	10	2	6	1	3	37
School teachers	3	3	1	4	3	0	1	15
Promotion Team Visit	4	0	3	0	5	1	1	14
Print Media	6	0	2	1	3	0	2	14
Staff/Lecturer Bung Hatta University	4	0	5	0	1	0	1	11
Jumlah	244	35	143	36	106	48	104	716

Source: Research Data (2020)

Cross tabulation with contingency coefficient analysis to obtain a Likelihood Ratio of 57.895 with Asymp value Sig. (2-sided) 0.334 which is greater than 0.05. These results indicate that there is no significant difference in the number of respondents who choose certain sources of information based on the faculty. Testing with Pearson Chi-Square also obtained the Asymp value. Sig. (2-sided) 0.334 which is greater than 0.05.

Nuclear family or close family ranks first because, of the 716 respondents, 272 of them (37.99%) chose this source as the main source of information. The nuclear family referred to in this study is the parents, while the immediate family can include relatives of the parents. This finding is interesting because the ranking of nuclear or close family outperforms information from students who are currently studying. Students who are in college are the ones who experience firsthand the entire lecture process. In addition, the information from students who are currently in college is actually ranked below the Internet (social media and website).

At the age of nearly 40 years, Bung Hatta University has produced thousands of alumni, many of whom, during that time, have children who will follow their parents continuing their education to higher education in the University. The experiences of their parents and families seem to have become important information for children in choosing Bung Hatta University.

Student respondents, who are the millennial generation, are greatly influenced by developments in information technology. The rapid development of social media has in turn changed the way they communicate. Efforts to improve the ability of the campus web-site in various ways including for media promotion gain strong support through student posts about their campus life experiences on media such as Facebook, Instagram or the WhatsApp application. Video posts created by students via their YouTube account provide a lot of information and are even able to create their own personal impression about Bung Hatta University.

3.3. Aspects that encourage students to study at Bung Hatta University

There are four aspects considered by prospective students in choosing Bung Hatta University, and it was found that the image of higher education is ranked as the first aspect, followed by economic, student activity and physical aspects. The visualization of the ranking of the considered aspects can be seen in the following figure 3.

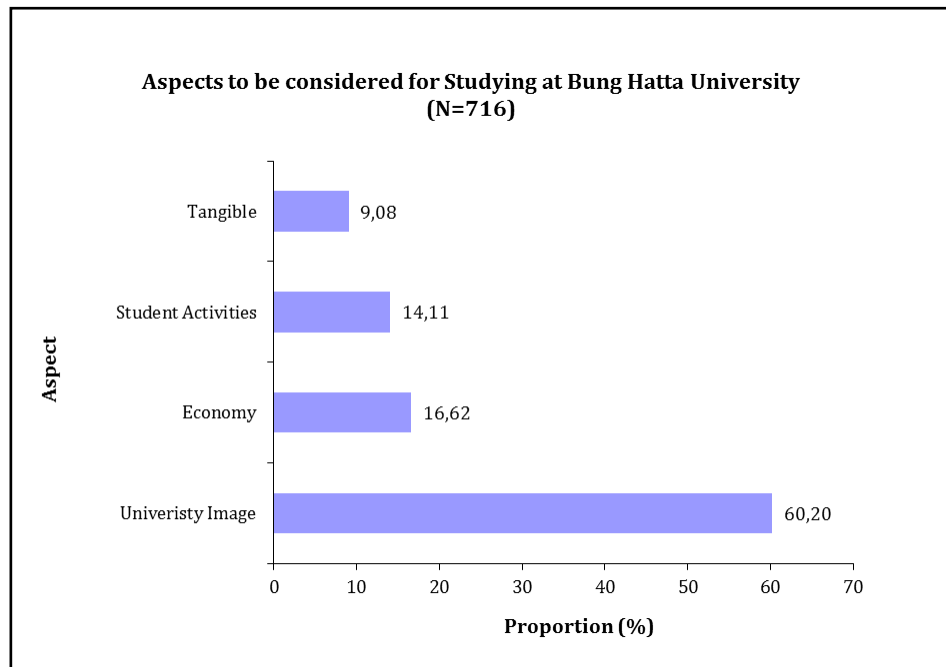


Figure 3. Aspects to be considered for Studying at Bung Hatta University

The image of Bung Hatta University (including: accreditation, credibility of lecturers, campus services, and credibility of alumni in society) ranks first because of the 716 respondents, 431 of them (60.20%) chose this aspect as the main consideration. Meanwhile, only 119 respondents chose the Economic Aspect. The physical or tangible aspect as the main consideration was only chosen by 65 out of 716 respondents (9.08%).

The existence and function of the National Accreditation Board for higher education contributes to how society assesses a university. In other words, the accreditation of a campus has become a brand image for the public to assess the reputation of the campus from a number of alternative favorite campus options. Therefore it is a logical implication if universities consistently strive to improve accreditation of study programs so that the campus has a good image in the eyes of the community.

The economic aspect is in the second rank because only 16.62% of respondents stated this aspect as the main consideration. For people who live outside the city, especially outside the West Sumatera province, choosing Bung Hatta University will have a multiplier effect in education financing. Apart from building fees and tuition fees each semester, parents also have to think about other costs arise from living costs, housing, and transportation to communication. There are at least two things causing the economic aspect to rank second. First, the execution of the strategy by making it easy for the community to pay in installments both the development money and tuition fees seems to have begun to change the image of the

high cost of education at Bung Hatta University. The second thing that also affected is that only 30.30% of respondents came from outside the province of West Sumatra, the rest came from within the province. Because almost 70% of respondents come from West Sumatra, the chance for a multiplier effect will be relatively low.

The ranking results for the four aspects also apply at the faculty level. A complete description of the distribution of considerations on the main aspects of each faculty can be seen in Table 3 below.

Table 3
A description of the distribution of considerations on the main aspects of each faculty

Aspect	Faculty							Total
	Economic	Cultural Science	Education	Fishery science	industrial Engineering	civil Engineering	Law	
Tangible	21	3	10	3	12	4	12	65
Student Activities	27	5	21	4	24	9	11	101
Economy	42	9	27	9	14	3	15	119
Univesity Image	154	18	85	20	56	32	66	431
Total	244	35	143	36	106	48	104	716

Source: Research Data (2020)

Contingency analysis through cross tabulation obtained a Likelihood Ratio of 21.38 with an Asymp value. Sig. (2-sided) 0.26 which is greater than 0.05. Testing with Pearson Chi-Square also obtained the Asymp value. Sig. (2-sided) 0.334 which is greater than 0.05. Because the two tests consistently received a significance value greater than 0.05, it is concluded that there was no significant difference in the number of respondents in selecting certain main aspects based on the faculty available.

4. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

4.1. Conclusion

- a. Traditional promotion by visiting schools, holding hearings, distributing leaflets and putting up banners is not effective and efficient. Apart from spending a relatively large amount of money because it is an annual program, the main objective of the promotion concept, which is to provide information to prospective students, is not achieved. Of the 716 respondents, only 14 of them (1.96%) chose the Promotion Team Visit to school as the main source of information.
- b. The main aspect considered for students is the Image of the University. Efforts to increase the accreditation of study programs and higher education institutions must be carried out programmatically because accreditation has become the university's brand image for the community.

4.2. Implications

- a. Universities must improve their promotional strategies by not only promotions by visiting the promotion team to schools), but also conducting internal promotions. Referring to the results of this survey, the policies and the allocation of visits by the promotion team to schools need to be reconsidered for the effectiveness of funding and recruiting new students. In fact, the main information that really needs attention is the optimization of promotion through programmed electronic media through social networking platforms (both paid and free).
- b. Promotion using social media and websites that have been carried out so far is quite effective; however improvement is needed for the content to make it more attractive to millennial students. There is also the needs for copywriting skills for Public Relations or the field responsible for promotion so that the content to be delivered has been reviewed in editorial and make use of popular language according to the set target. This effort can be made so that content conveyed through electronic media can massively increase and outreach interaction which can then build long-term relationships for institutions.
- c. Bung Hatta University must adapt, innovate, and improve its reputation as the largest private university in West Sumatra by increasing its accreditation, credibility of lecturers, campus services and credibility of alumni in the community.

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