

Evaluation of Socialization and Promotion Activities at Open and Distance State University

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Abstract: Promotional activities are essential to offer special programs so it would be more valuable for the community towards the university. Promotion is one of the determining factors for the success of a marketing program in universities. This study aimed to describe how open and distance institution carries out promotional activities. Therefore, it can be seen as a promotional activity that effectively increases the number of new students. The research methodology used was descriptive qualitative. The data collection technique was carried out by in-depth interviews. This research was conducted online and offline in regional offices of Mataram, Denpasar, Malang, Bandung, Semarang, Ambon, Manado, Makassar, Jakarta, Majene, and Lampung. This study evaluated promotional activities that can be used as input for further promotional activities. Socialization and promotion activities at open and distance institution affect the increase in the number of students, and several things, such as population, presence of competitors, and condition of the community, influence addition.

Keywords: Marketing, Open and Distance University, Socialization and Promotion Activities, Use of Promotional Media

A. Introduction

In carrying out its function as an educational institution, both public and private universities need students who can be referred to as consumers. It is also for the smooth implementation of learning in each college. In addition, the number of students can be used as one of the benchmarks in developing the quality of higher education. In general, most people consider universities that have a large number of students to have high quality, so students are also one of the important aspects in representing higher education.

Universities must provide maximum service. No matter how good a student's academic ability is, a college education will only succeed with good service. Therefore,

educational administration needs attention to the human aspects, curriculum, and facilities that will attract prospective students through various strategic efforts.

Competition in both public and private universities is getting tougher along with the times. Each university competes with each other to make prospective students interested in enrolling themselves. For this reason, appropriate promotional activities are needed to attract prospective students. Promotional activities are very important to offer superior programs in the hope of becoming more valuable in the eyes of the community towards the college. The majority of universities strive to offer the best educational services and facilities they have to meet the needs of prospective students. It indicates the seriousness of college managers to attract the sympathy of prospective students (Riswanto, 2020).

In carrying out promotional activities, universities need to pay attention to key steps such as identifying target audiences; planning which includes: setting promotional objectives, designing messages; setting budgets; and selecting communication channels (Asmiati, 2014). With market segmentation, promotional strategies can be more focused, including determining the messages and channels to be used (Pintek. id, 2021).

Nurhayati's research (2017) related to the Promotion of Private Universities in Attracting New Student Interest (Case Study of UPT HPPMB Promotion of Muhammadiyah University Sukabumi) shows that the promotional efforts made by UPT HPPMB to Senior high school / vocational high school/ Madrasah Aliyah students have been carried out optimally because they have succeeded in getting a larger number of students when compared to the number of students in the previous two years. The promotions carried out are news through print media; electronic media; websites; social media; and informing directly by visiting schools to socialize university academic programs with 12th-grade students.

Another study by Ratnawuri (2020) on the Analysis of Integrated Marketing Communication Strategies on Student Interest in Economic Education at Muhammadiyah Metro University explained that student interest in studying at the Muhammadiyah Metro University campus was obtained students, namely 32 or 64% came from relatives (family, alums, relatives) who had experience from Muhammadiyah Metro University, especially alums who had provided information to their relatives. Providing information from relatives through the Word of Mouth strategy can be used as a mainstay because this strategy is effective in persuading and can influence the decisions of prospective students.

In addition, Sari's research (2019) related to Promotion Strategies Through Direct Marketing to Increase the Number of New Students concluded that UKSW has implemented several direct marketing promotion strategies, namely through face-to-face selling (personal selling) by participating in educational expos and conducting presentations at high schools in various regions in Indonesia. In addition, UKSW also advertises in several promotional media such as bulletins, newspapers, and

brochures. UKSW also promotes through online channels (internet), direct mail, and telemarketing via telephone and WhatsApp. So far, the UKSW Promotion Bureau has carried out these strategies quite well. Some of the strategies that have been carried out, which have the most impact on increasing the number of students, are through face-to-face selling activities, especially expo activities and presentations at schools because in addition to being able to meet and interact directly with the target, the UKSW promotion team also has its uniqueness in delivering information, namely conveying the same information but in different ways, adjusting to the conditions and situation of the target. The uniqueness of information delivery can certainly impact increasing the number of new students each year.

Promotion is faced with a variety of activities that universities can carry out to communicate the advantages possessed by universities. Therefore, the promotion team must choose the right and integrated form of promotion to produce a domino effect to increase the quantity/number of students (Astuti, 2015). College promotion activities are generally carried out online and offline. Online promotions that are usually carried out are social media ads (Facebook ads or Instagram ads.), websites, content marketing, SEO, and optimizing social media owned by universities. Meanwhile, offline promotions usually include installing outdoor media (OOH), collaborating with agencies, holding events, and participating in exhibitions.

When discussing promotional activities, of course, all strategies undertaken to promote universities are only sometimes successful. There are times when universities find obstacles that cannot be controlled amid promotional activities. It is because not all promotional strategies to promotional media are effective and right on target. Therefore, it is important to know the characteristics of the market. However, every obstacle encountered is certainly a challenge for universities to be able to find solutions, so universities need to evaluate the promotional activities carried out.

Based on the above background, promotional activities carried out by universities are interesting to study. Because it can provide an overview of the various promotional strategies carried out by universities to be evaluated, this study will examine the evaluation of promotional activities of open and distance state universities. Whether the promotional activities have been carried out, have been effective and successful in achieving the target number of new students. Thus, this research question is how open and distance state universities carry out promotional activities. This study aimed to describe what promotional activities were carried out by open universities so that it could be known what kind of promotional activities are effective in increasing the number of new students. The result of this research was to evaluate promotional activities that could be used as input for further promotional activities.

When referring to previous research, where direct marketing and word of mouth are the main promotional activities discussed, this research has the novelty of discussing various online and offline promotional activities that Open and Distance State Universities had carried out to increase the number of students. This research also

concluded what strategies are most effective both online and offline. This research is useful as input in conducting socialization and promotion activities for Open and Distance State Universities or as a reference for similar institutions.

B. Methods

This qualitative research is a method for exploring and understanding the meaning of some individuals or groups of people ascribed to social problems. This qualitative research process involves important efforts, such as asking questions and procedures, collecting specific data from informants, analyzing data, and interpreting the meaning of data (Creswell, 2014). The researcher used a case study research strategy. According to Neuman (2014), case studies help reveal how an issue or case develops, how conflicts arise, or how social relationships are built. A case study is a research strategy in which researchers carefully investigate a program, event, activity, process, or group of individuals. Case studies were conducted on promotional activities carried out by open-state universities.

There are two types of data in this research, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data sources used are the results of in-depth interviews with sources and informants from several regional offices UT spread throughout Indonesia, namely Mataram, Malang, Denpasar, Semarang, Bandung, Ambon, Makassar, Manado, Lampung, Majene, Makassar, and Jakarta, both online and offline, on the evaluation of promotional activities that have been carried out in their respective regions. The selection of informants using criterion sampling is selecting informants based on criteria tailored to the researcher's needs (Patton, 2015). This study's participants included students, socialization and promotion staff, registration and testing managers or heads of administration, and Universitas Terbuka directors in various regions. Interviews with informants are conducted to obtain perspectives on promotional activities carried out by open and distance state universities. Secondary data sources came from literature studies from documents found at the local, books, journals, or other sources related to the research. Researchers use data analysis stages: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Fajarianto, 2021).

C. Results and Discussion

In an educational institution, socialization and promotion are very important. Socialization and promotion must be done to attract consumer attention and conducts socialization and promotion activities to get new students. In this case, students become the main consumers, so UT needs to know the characteristics of its students to determine market segmentation in its promotional activities. One of the roles of each branch office and head office is to conduct promotional activities to increase the number of students so that people can get higher education with an open and distance education system for all levels of society everywhere. By taking distance education,

students can solve the limitations faced in completing their studies, being unable to leave their hometowns, and time constraints due to work that cannot be left behind.

The number of students at UT depends on four things, namely the population in a province, city, or region; the number of competitors or campuses in the area, the characteristics of the region, whether it is an archipelago or not; the infrastructure in it (the presence of electricity and the quality of internet networks in the place); the concept of education, whether people in the area are familiar with open and distance education; and job opportunities when students graduate. UT's current challenge is to introduce UT to be known by the wider community with a learning system different from other campuses as an organizer of open and distance higher education. In addition, there are different characteristics, such as regional and community characteristics. Regarding regional characteristics, UT Ambon is an archipelago, so, unsurprisingly, the number of students is less than unit offices in other regions. When viewed from the community factor, most people need help understanding the implementation of open and distance learning (ODL) because people think that college students must come to campus and meet lecturers and other fellow students.

An online learning system that is different from universities in general, of course, impacts student characteristics that are different from other universities. UT students are very diverse and consist of a wide range of young people or fresh graduates to parents. The current trend of UT students is balanced between primary education and nonprimary education. UT students are also graduates of senior high school / vocational high school / *Madrasah Aliyah* who directly continue their studies. It is because UT does not limit prospective students' graduation years.

Based on the explanation from the marketing staff of UT Denpasar and UT Malang, it can be concluded that current UT students have begun to be balanced in age. The ratio of fresh graduates or 20 years old to those aged 30 years and over is 50:50. In this case, it consists of students who have not worked, have worked, have been to college, to those who continue their studies at UT. The characteristics of students based on age fall into the demographic segmentation category conveyed by Romli (2021), namely the grouping of consumers based on demographics (population), such as the number of family members, education, social class, and descent.

When viewed from *pendas* and non-*pandas*, the Director of UT Majene stated that at UT Majene, there had been more non-*pandas* students since a long time ago. In addition, the Director of UT Mataram added that students who work are indeed aiming to study at UT to support their careers, and those who also work as police. They study to get a diploma recognized as a promotion or position requirement. However, students, in general, are always directed by the director to try to add quality knowledge and improve their abilities. Thus, it can be concluded that the characteristics of UT students in each region differ.

UT Denpasar students said that UT students are different from students in general who have to study face-to-face on campus. Even during the covid-19 pandemic, when

all campuses began to learn online, UT has been using the system from the beginning so that UT students are not surprised by the online system. UT students have been educated to be independent and not depend on other people, both lecturers and other students. It is because they are used to taking care of all matters of lectures themselves and remotely.

It can be concluded that the online learning system is an added point for UT students as consumers. The system makes the lecture schedule at UT more flexible than at universities. Many students take advantage of this advantage to study while working. In addition, UT students were not surprised by online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic because they were used to it. UT students have integrity and maturity that are not inferior to other students because the majority can implement lessons in the world of work and even have much experience because they study while working. It also shapes UT students into independent individuals who do not depend on others.

On the other hand, the Director of UT Ambon gave a quite different statement from other UT regions. Students at UT Ambon are few due to the geographical islands and the low economy of the community. The data shows that Maluku is the fourth poorest province which causes people to have a stigma of education only up to high school. When referring to Romli's (2020) statement regarding market segmentation, what is experienced by UT Ambon is included in the geographic and demographic segmentation, which is important for UT to know in marketing.

The characteristics of UT students illustrate what kind of market segmentation will be targeted as a consideration in socialization and promotion activities. Socialization and promotion are very important activities. This activity is what attracts prospective students to enroll at UT. Accordingly, it is also important for UT to evaluate the promotional activities that have been carried out. What activities are effective and what are ineffective so that it becomes better prepared to carry out promotional activities in the future. UT can maintain activities that are effective and need to improve activities that are not effective.

According to UT Denpasar students, social media is effective in promotional activities. Facebook can be used for remote area targets, and Instagram, Twitter, Tiktok, and Youtube can be used for cities. In addition, word of mouth is more effective for socialization activities because people will be more interested in hearing it. On the one hand, UT Mataram students think that endorsement activities to influencers can be a promotion strategy for UT. In addition, it can mobilize UT students to participate in promoting UT on their respective social media. Furthermore, UT Mataram students consider conventional promotion methods by distributing brochures to schools, and word of mouth is still effective.

It can be concluded that social media is now the most effective promotional activity, such as Instagram, Twitter, Tiktok, Youtube, and even Facebook. Promotion can be more interesting using social media, but it is still informative so that prospective students are helped to find out about UT. Most of them also agree that word of mouth

is the most effective promotional socialization activity. Many of them know and register UT because of information conveyed by those closest to them, such as friends, family, and workplaces. It is relevant to Dharmawansyah (2014), who states that advertising is a promotional method often used in commercial marketing. Advertising can be done through electronic media (television, radio, film, cinema, internet), print media (newspapers, magazines, bulletins), and outdoor media (billboards, billboards, tree advertisements, banners, posters, and others). The properties of advertising include a wide advertising range, ability to persuade, expressive, impersonal, and efficient, which means that all forms of UT promotional activities that are persuasive are part of advertising.

According to UT Semarang students, they have a slightly different response from UT Denpasar, Malang, and Mataram students. Although social media is the current trend, according to him, a more effective promotional activity is the installation of billboards. Then, UT could involve students in socialization activities to provide testimonials related to lectures at UT. The installation of billboards is very influential in increasing the number of UT Manado students. Therefore, his staff makes an attractive design and always updates every two months with a manageable amount of content so that the message is conveyed and the public gets bored seeing the UT Manado billboard.

It can be concluded that *social media*, including Instagram, Twitter, Tiktok, and Facebook, are not necessarily effective in various regions, even though they are used by the public, especially young people. However, billboards also have an important role in promotional activities. In addition, suggestions from students to invite students to collaborate are interesting findings in this study. It is also a new insight for UT in developing promotional activities at UT as an organizer of open and distance higher education. It is also relevant to Canada (2019), who said that students are the main component in university promotion activities. Students can provide a clear picture of campus programs related to campus academic development and campus infrastructure related to learning and services provided by the campus to them. The comfort and excellence of the campus academic system will give students the confidence to invite prospective students to enter their campus so that UT can consider involving the role of students.

UT Denpasar's marketing staff confirmed that social media is effective for promotional activities at the moment. In addition, out-of-home promotions such as banners and billboards are considered less effective. Moreover, UT Denpasar's Socialization and promotion staff admitted that word of mouth remains UT's mainstay promotion strategy. The Director of UT Denpasar surveyed the field to find out the extent of public knowledge about the existence of UT. As a result, people need to learn UT, even those closest to the UT Denpasar environment. One of the promotional activities carried out in Denpasar is to go down to the community through the Badminton community, Café, Hotel, or other public places to promote UT, telling stories about UT so that people know the existence of UT. From these

promotional activities to the field, it was found that billboards and banners were no longer effective because they were only seen at a glance.

In addition, by this evaluation, the field conditions can be understood, and UT can develop new strategies that can be right on target. By directly promoting UT to the field, studying the characteristics of the UT target market, and promoting it, UT Denpasar's prospective students have exceeded the initial target, which should be 1,500 prospective students, but they have recorded 1,700 prospective students. It is due to the cohesiveness and hard work of the socialization and promotion staff of the UT team and other employees.

Regarding Gitosudarmo (Astuti, 2015), word-of-mouth activities to go directly to the field in promotion included personal selling, a company activity to make direct contact with prospective / consumers. This direct contact will be able to influence consumers more intensively because, in this case, entrepreneurs can find out the desires and tastes of their consumers and their lifestyles. Thus, entrepreneurs can adjust their approach or communication with consumers more precisely, following the consumers' concerned. It is relevant because it is better to know what the characteristics of the market are and the right strategy to increase the number of new students at UT Denpasar so that it can be seen from the number of prospective students, as many as 1,700 which exceeds the initial target, namely 1,500.

Relevant to the UT Denpasar Director, the Marketing staff of UT Ambon and the UT Ambon Director agreed that the most effective promotional activities are *face-to-face* or *direct marketing* because they can convince people directly and consider that *word of mouth* has a strong influence.

Slightly different from UT Denpasar, the Socialization and promotion staff of UT Malang explained that UT Malang's promotional activities are still adapted from electronic media, such as radio and local TV. However, UT Malang also started digital marketing by using consultant services. In addition, according to the Socialization and promotion staff of UT Malang and Makassar, it is more effective to use public figures known to the community, such as the government or politicians in their regions. Unfortunately, it is not allowed by UT Center to use public figures related to politics.

The Director of UT Mataram has an interesting point of view regarding the effectiveness of the word-of-mouth strategy, which the majority of students, the Director of UT Denpasar and the Director of UT Ambon, said that the strategy is UT's mainstay. According to data in the field, when students fill out the registration form, most students know UT from friends. However, according to him, more than word of mouth is needed. All media must be used so that UT is known to all levels of society in the future.

The statement of the Director of UT Mataram is supported by the marketing staff of UT Semarang. They also think that students fill out the form knowing UT information from friends just for a safe answer and tend to choose the top. By this phenomenon,

promotional socialization activities carried out by UT regions become invisible when evaluated by UT Center. It is an interesting finding in this study because UT Mataram and UT Semarang realize that students who fill out the form know UT from the closest person is most likely just a safe answer and tend to choose the top choice.

The socialization and promotion staff of UT Semarang also said that the media selection strategy carried out by UT Semarang is based on tariffs. The socialization and promotion staff of UT Semarang are also said to save costs and be more efficient. UT Semarang wants to focus on certain activities that look effective so far. For this reason, they will offer study programs in high demand by involving *pokjar* (learning group).

It can be concluded that there are different *trends in* promotional strategies between UTs in each region, and each region has its way. The most effective promotion is conventional methods such as personal selling or direct door-to-door consumer meetings. In addition, social media is considered effective for urban or young target markets. At UT Denpasar and UT Ambon, word of mouth is very reliable. The director of UT Denpasar has also abandoned outdoor media, such as banners and billboards because he has gone directly to the field to see for himself the character of the community. In Malang, outdoor media is still quite effective, especially featuring public figures known to the community. It makes people more trusting of the testimonials or quotes from these figures. Unlike UT Denpasar, UT Manado assessed that billboard is the most effective. Meanwhile, UT Mataram and UT Semarang both found that word of mouth was less effective than conveyed by students. However, to introduce UT, it is necessary to use all media to reach various groups.

On the other hand, UT Lampung has unique activities that are different from other UT regions. The Director of UT Lampung said that they routinely hold events during the Dies Natalis moment. It is to gather the community and convey information about UT at each interlude of the event series. It is considered effective in gathering the community. The events attracted the community's attention to stay energized, and UT promotional information was filled as an interlude. The information delivered in the crowd with entertainment is expected to attract people's attention to recognize UT.

Still related to promotional activities, every time you do anything, there must be challenges or obstacles in the field that are different from what was planned at the beginning. The same is the case with socialization and promotion activities carried out by the Universitas Terbuka. The promotional activities so far carried out by UT have remained manageable, but this has become a challenge for UT to develop a more appropriate promotion strategy.

UT Denpasar marketing staff said that actually, the use of banners and billboards could be effective. It is just that the banner installation area is very limited; it should have its area. Even banners that have been installed are removed by unknown people. The obstacles faced by UT Malang are different from UT Denpasar. UT Malang staff said that the covid-19 pandemic was a major obstacle and affected UT Malang's

socialization and promotion activities because the socialization and promotion staff of UT could not go to the field again, as before the pandemic. In addition, the media segmentation used is also unclear, so it is only a one-way communication without any feedback. With these obstacles, the Socialization and promotion staff of UT Malang learned and found a solution to change its communication style. Now, UT Malang serves prospective students more. Trying to be able to provide a quick response if there are prospective students who need help. It has produced positive results and is considered more satisfying for prospective students. It can be concluded that each region with a different strategy must find different obstacles or challenges. Media use is considered effective if it follows the target. It is important to know the needs of consumers or prospective students to determine the right strategy to get positive feedback.

In contrast to UT Denpasar and UT Malang, the obstacles faced by UT Semarang are internal, namely weak people development. The socialization and promotion staff of UT Semarang said that if there is an activity at UT. At the same time, on the outside, there is a good opportunity for socialization so that the schedule clashes. It is because no special team focuses on carrying out socialization and promotion. Even with the distribution of tasks for performance appraisal, the people who carry out these activities are different, and some need help understanding in conveying product knowledge information. It is relevant to what Dharmawansyah (2014) said that the obstacle often found in conducting promotional socialization, especially personal selling, is the lack of human resources.

Much different from the obstacles experienced by other UT regions, UT Manado has problems with *Pokjar*, which should play a role in assisting promotional activities. However, inversely it turns out that *Pokjar* in the Manado area hampers the promotional activities carried out by UT Manado. It is caused by *Pokjar* staff who need to be technologically literate. UT Manado Director said:

Not only UT Manado has problems with *Pokjar*, but the Directors of UT Majene and UT Ambon also said that not all *Pokjar* were active and helped with promotional activities, so it can be concluded that not all *Pokjar* played their role well and helped UT. Arpah (2021) stated that obstacles to higher education promotion activities are marketing budget constraints, socialization location mileage constraints, and information and communication technology constraints. Hence, UT needs to re-evaluate its promotional activities and make careful preparations to deal with the obstacles that have been found in the field.

For all parties, including students, social staff, directors, and leaders, to have a voice in evaluating socialization and promotion activities, Universitas Terbuka involves all parties, particularly students, social staff, and directors. It is done to align UT's promotional socialization strategy with students' perceptions of UT's promotional activities, what needs to be improved, or what should be maintained in future promotional activities.

UT Denpasar students said that the situation in the city and village is different; the internet is not evenly distributed in the village, and the signal needs to be stronger. It must also be considered for the use of social media. It means that social media cannot reach those in the village. We may still use outdoor media. In contrast to Desi, who views media use from the differences between cities and villages, another UT Denpasar student focuses more on age differences. According to him, today's parents have begun to follow the times. UT Malang students added that UT rarely joins campus expo activities in high schools. He feels that these activities are effective for getting new prospective students. In addition, it can focus on institutions to reach the target of prospective students who will continue their studies.

UT Mataram also provided *insight* for future promotional activities by organizing cultural festivals like in Japan that can invite citizens to convey information about UT. In addition, it can work with parties and form organizations that gather people with all abilities and work with agencies to the government. In addition, UT Semarang students provided input to collaborate with students; UT Ambassadors should be reactivated so that people know what UT students look like.

UT Ambon students said that the data that UT graduates become the most civil servants in Indonesia can be used as an advantage that must be conveyed to the public because many people think that civil servants are cool. It is relevant to Canada (2019), who said that alums are a component that can have a big influence in attracting new students. UT Ambon students also conveyed that student activities need to be shown because Ambon people like crowds.

Based on the explanation from the students, it can be concluded that the promotional activities carried out by UT are good, it just needs to be improved again. Diverse students need to be the main consideration for UT in making socialization and promotion strategies, in terms of age, geography, and the needs of prospective students. So far, the media that can be used for promotion are social media for urban and youth targets, and outdoor media can be used for regional target markets. In conducting socialization and promotion, UT can also involve the role of students, and it is important to establish cooperation with various agencies ranging from schools and offices to the government. Thus, socialization, promotion, and marketing activities are more evenly distributed.

UT Denpasar's marketing staff said that in addition to using social media and SEO for now, there is also an input for UT Center. It is better to coordinate marketing activities from the center and facilitate with guidelines. It is so that UT in each region is consistent in preparing promotional materials. It is reinforced by the marketing staff of UT Malang, who also provided input to the UT Center to consider the problem of using *public figures* on billboards to provide the best solution. In addition, a tagline can be proposed for each region to show each region's identity better. The marketing promotion staff of UT Malang hopes that UT Center can facilitate training related to content creation.

From the exposure of the marketing staff of UT Denpasar and UT Malang, it can be concluded that regional UT hopes that UT Center can facilitate socialization and promotion activities with guidelines for making promotional materials to special training in content creation so that the material presented can be uniform and not contradictory among regions. It should be done so that coordination between UT Center and UT in the regions is even better for preparing promotional materials.

The Director of UT Denpasar added that in conducting socialization and promotion activities must be good at communicating. Also, it is important to go to the field to find out the market situation and not just assumptions. Then, there needs to be one goal and cohesiveness between social staff, leaders, and all employees so that all employees can explain UT to the public.

Referring to the UT Denpasar Director's explanation regarding his efforts to promote UT, the marketing staff of UT Semarang emphasized that a head or director should have marketing insight to understand segmentation, targeting, and positioning. UT Majene Director and UT Manado Director argue that if UT targets fresh graduates to enter UT, a different strategy is needed. Not only delivering information to high school students but also to parents. This results from the UT Manado social staff review that parents have an important role in decision-making and determining where their children will study.

Referring to Kananda (2019), parents are one of the components that have a major influence on the interest of new students, where parents/guardians can provide an overview of their child's achievements. Most parents of prospective students want to follow the success of their friends' or neighbours' children. Parents also play an important role in deciding which university suits their children. Therefore, it is relevant, who also made parents the target market. It can be concluded that determining the target market is not only specific to the main target but also needs to consider other supporting parties so that in determining promotional activities, it can be integrated and reach all targets. The staff could not just focus on the main target and ignore the consideration of the supporting parties. After all, fresh graduate students also involve parents.

The essence of the promotional activities carried out not only hopes that prospective students choose UT as the campus where they study but also other people tell the advantages of UT to their relatives, colleagues, and acquaintances. Based on the description above, the things done by the marketing team at UT as an open and distance university:

1. Evaluation of socialization and promotion media per semester
2. Survey of information-seeking behaviour and characteristics of UT students, especially freshmen.
3. Selection of promotional media following the survey results to be right on *target*, according to the coverage area of each unit office located in the regions, and according to the *target market*.

4. Digital marketing and engaging *influencers* or *key opinion leaders*
5. Education exhibition to introduce UT to high school and equivalent students
6. Outdoor media *billboards*, conventional media (newspapers), videotron, and other media, such as advertisements on *commuter lines* according to the UT coverage area
7. Conduct socialization and promotion to agencies
8. Collaborate with *Pokjar* to provide promotions in their coverage areas.
9. Electronic media, radio, and TV as appropriate to the survey.

D. Conclusion

There are three ways promotional activities are carried out. *The first* is conventional direct marketing to prospective consumers, such as agency, school, and educational university promotions. This method creates word of mouth and is considered effective in determining a person's decision to choose UT as their campus. The most effective socialization, promotion, and marketing strategy is door-to-door or personal selling, such as visiting schools/agencies. Schools visiting can bring UT students and conduct it in November when students will determine the campus for further study. In addition, staff must also know UT's product knowledge. Most of the influential promotional techniques at UT still rely on word of mouth until now. However, UT Mataram and UT Semarang found that word of mouth was less effective than the students suggested because it was the safe answer and top choice on the form. However, to introduce UT, it is necessary to use all media to reach various groups. *Second*, the use of communication media, whether it is new, traditional, or conventional media, such as advertisements on social media, electronic media (TV, radio, and newspapers), and outdoor media (billboards, banners, and posters) at strategic points aims to build image, branding and public awareness of UT as a pioneer of state universities that implement open and distance education.

Conventional print media in the form of brochures is needed as a medium for conducting offline promotional activities, either carried out by regional offices or Pokjar. Communication media is used to provide information to stakeholders and provide services to students *online* through the features on Instagram. *Third*, working with study group administrators (*Pokjar*) who are the head of UT in the regions in supporting the success of learning at UT, especially student administrative activities with various limitations if they have to come directly to the unit office. *Pokjar* administrators look for student door to doors to residents and collaborate with various agencies (usually the education office for teachers, police, and other agencies), and the program they offer is packaged TTM (face-to-face semester package system) which requires *Pokjar* administrators to prepare registration students with a minimum limit of 25 students. There are interesting findings that students, alums, and parents are important components in conducting promotional activities that can affect new student interest. UT can collaborate with students, can display alum data that UT graduates become the most civil servants in Indonesia, and participate in promoting

to parents of prospective students as decision-makers. In addition, because the trend of students from fresh graduate students continues to increase, an attractive and creative strategy is needed to get the millennial generation's attention. Thus, based on this research, it can be seen that effective promotional media and ways that have been and will be carried out by UT technical service units spread across several regions throughout Indonesia because the characteristics of the region and the people of each region are different so that this is a challenge that must be found a solution by the UT Center leaders in providing services to students.

Suggestions for marketing development (1) It is necessary to divide marketing tasks between UT Center and regional offices. In addition, good coordination is needed between UT Center and regional offices. (2) The center needs to create a study program profile to inform the public easily. (3) UT leaders must have marketing insight to understand segmentation, targeting, and positioning. (4) Standardization of advertising design and content following the desired image of UT as a whole so that the public does not think that UT Jakarta is different from UT Bogor and other UTs because each regional office UT has a different advertising design, such as advertisements in mass media, posts on social media, and advertisements in conventional media. (5) If the regional offices of UT want to be different to attract local people, it needs to get direction and approval from UT Center so that it does not deviate from UT branding. (6) If the UT ad design is standardized, regional offices only need to add the identity or contact center for each regional office's UT. In addition, if you want a local wisdom approach in the ad design by adding the city's identity, the standard must remain the same as UT Center so that UT branding remains one. (7) The selection of social media is transferred to UT-Center, and some can be transferred to the regions, such as regional radio, regional TV, and regional local newspapers. UT-Center cannot handle that. (8) UT must also be brave in branding for young people because the number of UT students is currently dominated by students aged 24-30, so it is necessary to find out what age the buyer persona is. (9) UT needs to do digital marketing and venture into the web, TikTok, reels, social media ads, or web series and (10) UT must conduct a comparative study with other institutions to determine its marketing activities.

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