

Survive amidst the Competition of Private Universities by Maximizing Brand Image and Interest in Studying

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ABSTRACT

The ability of universities to increase interest in college, especially for prospective new students, has an impact on the survival of universities. This research is very important to do in predicting the model of college interest in prospective new students. The main study of this research is to analyze the brand image model and college interest which is influenced by accreditation and telemarketing. The analytical method in this study uses a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach based on Partial Least Square (PLS). The population in this study was 100 students of class XII in SMA / SMK / Private Aliyah in the city of Medan. The sampling technique used was accidental sampling where 100 students of class XII were the main target. Data collection techniques using a questionnaire (questionnaire). The results showed that (1) directly accreditation was not significant to brand image, (2) telemarketing had a significant effect on brand image, (3) directly accreditation had a significant effect on college interest, (4) telemarketing directly had a significant effect on interest college interest, (5) directly brand image has a significant effect on college interest, (6) indirectly brand image has no role in mediating accreditation of college interest and (7) brand image indirectly has a role in mediating telemarketing on college interest.

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1. INTRODUCTION

A college is a place where someone hopes to get better knowledge, skills and behavior. In particular, private universities are required to continue to improve in providing the best for each of their graduates. This will have an impact on the survival of a private university which will be largely

determined by the large or small number of students (Wha, 2018). Studying how prospective new students determine the choice of the best campus certainly needs to be studied in more depth for leaders of private universities (Hutt, 2019)(Mubarok, 2020). Private universities that are in great demand by many people certainly have more advantages and disadvantages in selecting prospective new students (Burnett, 2020)(Hasmiaty; Rasyidin Abdullah; Budiman, 2021)(Silva, 2021). The college interests that exist in prospective students must of course be studied well so that every university that innovates services and products is able to answer the needs and desires of the industrial world (Haslerig, 2021)(Jr, 2020)(Dame, 2020). Interest in college can be interpreted as the desire of a prospective student to a private university (Azzam, 2019). The interest in college that exists in prospective students shows the level of desire to try and how many ways are planned to carry out their interests and behaviour (M. H. I. W. W. Liu, 2022).

This desire is only limited to the intention to continue studying but has not yet reached a final decision. So asking for the lectures that are available to prospective new students, it is actually not completely certain that they choose to study at these private universities (Selamet, 2020). It is possible that in the future prospective new students will be able to switch sources of information from other universities (Sylvia, 2020). For this reason, if the innovations carried out by private universities are not able to answer the needs and desires of the industrial world, of course this will not have an impact on the interest of prospective new students (E. H. S. Nasib, 2020). Then in measuring the interest in college in a prospective new student through how often they search for information about universities, the desire to pass the college entrance exam, are willing to pay the tuition fees that have been set (Widnyana, 2021).

Universitas Mahkota Tricom as a private university has also made efforts to increase the number of new students by changing its form from STIE to UNIVERSITY. Having 6 new study programs is expected to increase public enthusiasm to continue their education (Y. Liu, 2019)(Rahman, 2020)(Cheung, 2019). So it is hoped that this strategy will be able to increase the interest of prospective new students in college (Putra, 2020). One of the factors that influence college interest is the brand image of private universities. Universities that have a bad track record will certainly be very difficult to increase interest in college (Ma'arif, 2021). In general, prospective new students will see this track record, it will be seen from alumni who have been widely accepted in the industrial world (Mohtar, 2018). An indication of a track record that is considered bad by prospective new students if the college is proven to have done wrong administration (Lai, 2018). Lecture process that is not well conditioned, lecturers who are not active in conducting research and community service (Najib, 2020). Where all of this will form a negative image, especially for prospective new students (Megayani, 2020).

The increase in the number of new students at private universities is also inseparable from the accretion factor (Arvanitis, 2020). Today's private higher education accreditation is not only considered important for a prospective student, but the industry world also states that minimum accreditation is a mandatory requirement to be accepted in the world of work (Sembiring, 2014). Accreditation is an acknowledgment from the government to state the quality of higher education (Rahmadiane, 2017). The role of leadership in managing higher education is also inseparable (Barata, 2019). The ability to optimize its resources in achieving accreditation is also very much needed, especially the governance in it (Wahyuni, 2019). Excellent or excellent accreditation at private universities is an advantage in increasing the interest of prospective students (Romanowski, 2021). Private universities that do not yet have excellent and excellent accreditation, are often unable to

compete in this field with other private universities (Lesser, 2021). Universitas Mahkota Tricom itself is not included in the excellent or very good accreditation (Fadli, 2020). The current strategy is to provide understanding to prospective new students that every best graduate will be accepted by a foundation company. So it is hoped that prospective students will have opportunities, especially in internships and research as well as opportunities to be accepted for work in foundation companies (Marriott, 2019). Because the main reason for the foundation to establish a university is to be able to find prospective new employees from graduates Universitas Mahkota Tricom Unggul (M. Nasib, 2021). The results of previous studies stated that accreditation had a significant effect on college interest for prospective students. This can be interpreted that when a university has excellent or excellent accreditation, it will have an impact on increasing interest in continuing college (Kamase, 2020)(Lipsett, 2021)(Lesser, 2021)

Today's telemarketing is not only done by companies and banks but private universities (Wang, 2018). Telemarketing is a form of promotion in increasing the demand for prospective students to study at certain universities (E. H. S. Nasib, 2020). The use of telemarketing in private universities has been widely carried out in achieving certain targets (Arini, 2021). The purpose of this strategy was chosen with the aim that the number of new students would increase (Adam, 2021). The telemarketing strategy carried out by Mahkota Tricom Unggul University is to visit schools directly by promoting excellence in front of grade 12 students. Then the database for grade 12 students will be requested from the school for further follow-up so that students want to choose a college in Universitas Mahkota Tricom Unggul. It is hoped that this marketing strategy can provide a stimulus, especially for grade 12 students to continue their education. Telemarketing also functions to change the concept of thinking of a prospective student who initially does not want to go to college until finally wants to continue studying (Susanti, 2019). Telemarketing has a significant effect on brand image and college interest (Suryawardani, 2018). The results of research conducted by (Kohsuwan, 2021)(Cahyanti, 2021)(Turiska, 2021) telemarketing have a significant effect on interest in college, especially prospective new students.

2. METHODS

This research approach is quantitative with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Square (PLS). The research approach can predict brand image and college interest which is influenced by accreditation and telemarketing at private universities. The population in this study were students of class XII in Medan and its surroundings. The sampling technique used was accidental sampling where 250 students were selected to be the research sample.

Collecting data using a questionnaire with a Likert measurement scale based on each variable indicator. The variables in this study consisted of:

1. Exogenous variables include accreditation and telemarketing
 - a. The accreditation variable can be measured by indicators consisting of excellent, very good, and good.
 - b. Telemarketing can be measured by indicators of greetings, ability to explain products, responsiveness to questions, not cutting questions, tone of voice, and closing greetings.
2. This endogenous variable includes the behavior of college interest

Interest in college can be measured by indicators of the intensity of seeking information, desire or desire to pass the entrance test, willingness to sacrifice or pay tuition fees

3. This intervening variable consists of brand image

Brand image variables can be measured by indicators consisting of strength to remember, favorite to remember, and level of uniqueness

The analysis of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) model in this study is as follows:

$$\text{Equality I : } Y_1 = PY_1X_1 + PY_1X_2 + \epsilon_1$$

$$\text{Equality II : } Y_2 = PY_2X_1 + PY_2X_2 + PY_2Y_1 + \epsilon_2$$

Information:

X_1 = Accreditation (*Exogenous Variabel*)

X_2 = Telemarketing (*Exogenous Variabel*)

Y_1 = Brand Image (*Intervening Variabel*)

Y_2 = College Interest (*Endogenous Variabel*)

P = Regression Coefficient Path

ϵ = Number of variants ($\epsilon = 1 - R^2$)

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Measurement Model Analysis (Outer Model)

Convergent Validity Test

Table 1. Outer Model Variable Accreditation

Variable	Indicator	Factor Loading
Accreditation	AK1	0.934
	AK2	0.944
	AK3	0.976

Based on the table above, the factor loading value for each indicator of the accreditation variable is above 0.7. It can be stated that it is feasible for further analysis to be carried out.

Table 2. Outer Model Variable Telemarketing

	Indicator	Factor Loading
Telemarketing	TL1	0.892
	TL2	0.875
	TL3	0.852
	TL4	0.864
	TL5	0.896

Based on the table above, the factor loading value for each indicator of the accreditation variable is above 0.7. It can be stated that it is feasible for further analysis to be carried out.

Table 3. Outer Model Variable Brand Image

Variabel	Indicator	Factor Loading
Brand Image	BI1	0.765
	BI2	0.769
	BI3	0.74

Based on the table above, the factor loading value for each indicator of the accreditation variable is above 0.7. It can be stated that it is feasible for further analysis to be carried out.

Table 4. Outer Model Variable College Interest

Variabel	Indicator	Factor Loading
College Interest	CI1	0.956
	CI2	0.976
	CI3	0.952
	CI4	0.944

Based on the table above, the factor loading value for each indicator of the accreditation variable is above 0.7. It can be stated that it is feasible for further analysis to be carried out.

Construct Reliability Test

The results of data processing show that

Table 5. Construct Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Accreditation	0.948	0.964	0.966	0.905
Brand Image	0.771	0.953	0.845	0.646
College Interest	0.969	0.973	0.978	0.916
Telemarketing	0.925	0.936	0.943	0.767

Based on table 1 shows that the average value is >0.5. Then the composite reliability value > 0.7. So it can be concluded that the indicators in the study can measure well.

Measurement Model Analysis (Inner Model)

Coefficient of Determination (R²)

Table 6. R Square

Variable	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Brand image	0.564	0.555
College interest	0.894	0.891

Based on the data from table 6, it is known that the R Square Adjusted value for the brand image variable is 0.555 or 55.5% while the remaining 44.5% is influenced by other variables that are not variables in this study. As for the college interest variable, the value of R Square Adjusted is 0.891 or 89.1%, while the other 10.9% is influenced by other variables not included in this study.

Predictive Relevance (Q²)

Nilai Q² memiliki arti yang sama dengan koefisien determinasi (R-Square). Q- besar Nilai Square (Q²) 0 menunjukkan model memiliki Predictive relevance, sebaliknya jika sebuah nilai (Q²) kurang dari 0, ini menunjukkan model memiliki relevansi Prediktif kurang; atau dengan kata lain, dimana semua nilai Q² yang lebih tinggi, model dapat dianggap lebih cocok dengan data. Pertimbangan nilai Q² dapat dilakukan sebagai berikut

$$Q_2 = 1 - (1 - R_1^2)(1 - R_2^2) \dots (1 - R_n^2)$$

$$Q_2 = 1 - (1 - 0.555)(1 - 0.891)$$

$$Q_2 = 1 - (0.445)(0.109)$$

$$Q_2 = 1 - 0.048$$

$$Q_2 = 0.951$$

Based on these results, the value of Q² is 0.951. So it can be concluded that all variables in this study accreditation, telemarketing, brand image, and college interest contributed to the authenticity

of data in the existing structural model of 77.9%. Then the remaining 22.1 need to be developed apart from the research variables.

Effect Size (F2)

Effect Size (F2) is to determine the goodness of the model. To find out whether the predictor variables have a weak, sufficient, or strong influence at the structural level.

Hypothesis Test

Table 7. Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	Average (M)	(STDEV)	t Statistik	P-Value	Kesimpulan
Accreditation-Brand Image	0.013	0.016	0.120	0.107	0.915	Not significant
Telemarketing-Brand Image	0.741	0.745	0.123	6.040	0.000	Significant
Accreditation-College Interest	0.633	0.630	0.088	7.185	0.000	Significant
Telemarketing-College Interest	0.339	0.342	0.081	4.154	0.000	Significant
Brand Image-College Interest	0.287	0.290	0.056	5.143	0.000	Significant
Accreditation-Brand Image-College Interest	0.004	0.005	0.037	0.100	0.920	Not significant
Telemarketing-Brand Image-College Interest	0.213	0.216	0.055	3.868	0.000	Significant

Effect of Accreditation on Brand Image

Based on the results of the data analysis conducted, shows that accreditation is not significant to the brand image of private universities. This result can be seen from the significance value of 0.915 > 0.05 which means it is not significant. The results of this study are not following the results of research conducted by (Dost, 2020)(Kamase, 2020)(Sukib, 2020) which states that accreditation has a positive and significant effect on brand image. The implication of the findings shows that in private universities when increasing accreditation does not have an impact on increasing brand image. The strategy at private universities in improving a good brand image, especially for prospective new students, is to focus more on industrial needs, not oriented to the status of being accepted as a requirement to become a prospective civil servant.

The Effect of Telemarketing on Brand Image

The results of the study clearly show that telemarketing has a significant effect on the university's brand image. Where it is known that the significance value of 0.000 < 0.05 which means it has a significant effect. The results of this study are also in line with research conducted by (Dewiani, 2019)(Karakuş, 2021)(Turkmen, 2021). The findings that the researchers got were that face-to-face promotions to class 12 students were very effective in introducing the advantages of private universities. Furthermore, the results of these activities resulted in student contacts which would later be used as material for follow-up on students' interest in continuing to study at private universities.

The Effect of Accreditation on Interest in Studying

The results of data analysis state that accreditation has a significant influence on college interest. Where it can be seen that the significance value is $0.000 < 0.05$, which means it has a significant effect. Furthermore, this research is in line with previous research which states that accreditation has a significant effect on college interest (Lubis, 2020)(Lipsett, 2021)(Cummings, 2022). His findings imply that so far private universities have continued to improve the accreditation of their study programs. Furthermore, management and foundations need a strong commitment to improving accreditation. The achievement of the tri dharma of higher education will not be maximally achieved by management without solid support from the foundation.

The Effect of Telemarketing on Interest in College

Based on the data analysis that has been carried out, it shows that telemarketing has a significant effect on college interest. The significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$ means that telemarketing has a direct effect on college interest. This research is in line with the results of research (Hadi, 2021)(Febrita, 2022)(Miranti, 2022) which states that telemarketing has a significant effect on college interest. The implications of the findings in this study indicate that telemarketing activities have a major role in increasing the number of new students. This marketing activity is also adjusted to attractive offers such as discounted tuition fees, work-ready programs, and special scholarship programs. To ensure the achievement of the information conveyed, the personnel in charge of following up with prospective new students must have skills in communicating both to prospective new students and parents.

The Influence of Brand Image on Interest in College

Based on the results of data analysis, it is known that the significant value of brand image on college interest is $0.000 < 0.05$, which means that brand image directly has a significant effect on college interest. This research supports research conducted by (Widnyana, 2021)(Ma'arif, 2021)(Selamet, 2020) which states that the university's brand image can increase interest in college in prospective new students. Furthermore, the research found that the tendency of prospective students was initially based on the image of the university. When this college is widely known to the public, prospective students will be more interested in seeing the advantages offered to prospective new students.

The Effect of Accreditation on Interest in Studying Through Brand Image

Based on the results of data analysis, it shows that brand image does not have a role in mediating accreditation of college interest. Where the significance value is $0.920 > 0.05$, which means that indirectly brand image does not have a role in mediating accreditation of college interest. The results of this study are not in line with the results of research conducted by (Jumawan, 2020)(Yusuf, 2021)(Aqsa, 2022) which states that when the accreditation of private universities can improve for the better, it will have an impact on increasing brand image and interest in college. The finding in this study is that Mahkota Tricom Unggul University as a private university improves its brand image by changing the shape of a high school into a university. This strategy is considered effective in encouraging the interest of prospective new students to choose to study at Universitas Mahkota Tricom Unggul.

The Effect of Telemarketing on Interest in College Through Brand Image

Based on the results of data analysis, it can be seen that brand image has a role in mediating telemarketing on college interest. Where it is known that the significant value is $0.000 < 0.05$, which means that brand image indirectly has a role in mediating telemarketing on college interest. The results of this study also support research conducted by (Crano, 2020)(Suprpto, 2020)(M. H. I. W. W. Liu, 2022) which states that telemarketing has a significant effect on college interest through brand image. Furthermore, the findings in this study are that Mahkota Tricom Unggul University has not optimally implemented telemarketing for prospective new students. To obtain student data, many sacrifices have been made, starting from the time and cost of going to school. Then the low level of telemarketing activities is also not supported by competent personnel in building good communication, especially to prospective new students

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the Structure Equation Model (SEM) test based on Partial Least Square (PLS) it can be concluded that telemarketing directly has a significant effect on the brand image while accreditation is not significant on brand image. Furthermore, accreditation, telemarketing, and brand image have a significant effect on college interest. Lastly, indirectly brand image does not have a role in mediating the accreditation of college interest. However, brand image has a mediating role between telemarketing and college interest. The limitation in this study is that it only analyzes from one university while there are many private universities in Medan City. So the authors recommend that further research be carried out at least 5 private universities. So that the findings and research results are more in-depth and measurable to find out the extent of interest in college, especially prospective new students.

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