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Marketing Mix Factors of Educational Services, Accreditation Status, and Image Formation as Intervening Variables on Decisions in Choosing Private University in Palembang: Bina Darma University Palembang

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to find out and analyze (1) the marketing mix towards the decision to choose Bina Darma University (2) the accreditation status towards the decision to choose Bina Darma University (3) The marketing mix towards image (4) the accreditation status toward image formation (5) the image toward decision to choose Bina Darma University. This study was conducted using descriptive and quantitative methods. SEM analysis was used and operated through the AMOS program. There were 300 students as the samples taken by using purposive sampling method based on suitable specific characteristics with the research objectives so that they were expected to answer research problems. The results of the study showed that (1) the marketing mix had a positive and significant effect on the decision to choose Bina Darma University (2) the accreditation status had a positive and significant effect on the decision to choose Bina Darma University (3) the marketing mix had a positive and significant effect on the image formation (4) the status accreditation had a positive and significant effect on the formation of image (5) the image had a positive and significant effect on the decision to choose Bina Darma University. It can be concluded that all proposed hypotheses were accepted.

Key Words: Marketing Mix, Accreditation, Image, Choosing Decision

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia as one of the countries in Asia continually experiences developments and changes, including in the world of education. The existence of education reformation such as privatization, internationalization, decentralization, and changes in the structure of higher education creates a competitive environment in education (Soedijati, 2011). These changes affect how higher education institutions operate nowadays, and it is considered a driving force for the marketing orientation in higher education (Maringe, 2006).

In the Higher Education Sector, there are some competitive business phenomena in this industry. Higher education as one part of formal education sector makes the need for education services getting increase and diverse, so it becomes a strategic sector that is expected to produce the quality of human resources (Arwanda et al. 2014). In

addition, it was revealed that only 25 percent of the total private university had more than 500 students, and the rest have fewer than 500 students. Therefore, the Private Universities are required not only to develop the right strategy in attracting the interest of prospective students, but also a strategy to keep the students from following the process of education until their graduation.

Currently, there are 3,011 higher education institutions in Indonesia based on their ownership status consisting of state-owned universities called *Perguruan Tinggi Negara (PTN)* and private-owned universities called *Perguruan Tinggi Swasta (PTS)* with the composition based on various forms of education consisting of universities, institutes, high schools, academies, and polytechnic (Ministry of National Education Statistics, 2015). It proves that higher education in Indonesia is experiencing very high development because in 2014 the number of higher education institutions in Indonesia total of 2,928. It can be seen in table 1:

Table 1. Higher Educational Institutions in Indonesia in 2014/2015 (in thousands)

Variables	Public		Private		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	
<i>Institute</i>	83	2.76	2,928	97.24	3,011
<i>University</i>	48	10.43	412	89.57	460
<i>Diploma</i>	6	11.32	47	88.68	53
<i>High School Institution</i>	2	0.15	1,314	99.85	1,316
<i>Academy</i>	0	-	1,015	100.00	1,015
<i>Polytechnic</i>	27	16.17	140	83.83	167

Source: Ministry of National Education statistics, 2015

The high growth of universities and higher educational institutions in Indonesia should be in accordance with the increasing of services quality because only universities or institutions that have competitive advantages are able to survive in competition.

Table 2. The Comparison Number of PTN and PTS Students in Indonesia, 2012 – 2015 (in thousand and million)

University	Years			
	2012	2013	2014	2015
Public	2.243.761	2.567.879	2.373.223	2.323.924
Private	805.479	824.693	978.739	907.154

Source: Ministry of National Education Statistics, 2015

Table 2 shows that the number of PTN is higher than PTS students from year to year, even though the number of PTS was higher than PTNs in 2015. The number of *PTSs* in Indonesia total of 2,928 (97.24%) (Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry of National Education, 2015).

According to Assauri (2007), the marketing mix is "a combination of variables or activities as the core of the marketing system, variables that can be controlled by the company to influence the reactions of buyers or consumers." When good Image has been formed, the positive impressions generated can increase the probability of the educational institution to be chosen (Kusumawati, 2013).

Accreditation is an assessment activity to determine the feasibility of a study program. Accreditation is a high education quality assurance system. Accreditation is important for private universities because the existence of accreditation status will affect the acquisition number of students and the composition of the lecturers. Accreditation is also one form of an external quality assurance system, a process used by authorized institutions to provide formal recognition to carry out certain activities.

According to Sach (2007) image is knowledge about person and attitudes toward persons who have different groups. The definition of an image as cited by Effendi in Soemirat and Ardianto (2007) that is the world around a person that looks at the person. According to Canton in Sukatendel (1990) image is the impression, feeling, the image of the public toward the company. It is the impressions that are deliberately created from an object, person

or organization (Soemirat and Ardianto, 2007). From this understanding, Sukatendel in Soemirat and Ardianto (2007) argue that the image intentionally needs to be created to be positive values.

According to Swastha (2007) define Purchasing decision is one of the main components of consumer behavior. Consumer purchasing decisions are step by step used by consumers when buying goods and services (Lamb, 2008). Purchasing decision is an approach to solve problems in human activities to buy an item or service in fulfilling their wants and needs consisting of the introduction of needs and desires, information seeking, evaluation of alternative purchases, the decision of prospective students to choose the desired place to study in *PTSs*.

In this study, the writer adapted some addition to the accreditation variable based on Verawati (2016) research, the results of her research showed that the factors influencing students' interest in continuing the Magister of Accounting included motivation, study program accreditation, educational facilities, majors concentration, tuition fees, and reputation of educators . So that it can be interpreted that the six independent variables have a significant effect on students 'interest in continuing their magister program, and the results of Bahri Kamal's research, Ghea Dwi Rahmadiane (2017) showed that students' perceptions, study program accreditation, and promotion had an influence on students' decision to choose Accounting Study Programs at Polytechnic of Harapan Bersama, and accreditation of study programs was the most influential variable on the decision of students to choose the Accounting study program at the Harapan Bersama Polytechnic.

The purposes of this study were (1) whatwere the effects of the marketing mix of educational services consisting of products, price, distribution / place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence on the decision of students to choose Bina Darma University? (2) How did the status of accreditation influence the decision to choose Bina Darma University Palembang? (3) How did marketing mix of the product, price, distribution / place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence of the image of Bina University Darma Palembang? (4) How did the Status of Accreditation affect the Image of Bina Darma University Palembang? (5) How did the image influence the student's decision to choose Bina Darma University?

Based on the literature that has been described and the phenomena exist, the writer was interested in conducting research on "Marketing Mix Factors of Educational Services, Accreditation Status, and Image Formation as Intervening Variables on the Decision to Choose Private Universities in Palembang: Case Study at Bina Darma University Palembang."

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

Marketing Mix. Rambat Lupiyoadi (2013) defines the marketing mix as a device / tool for marketers that consist of various elements of a marketing program to be considered so the implementation of the marketing strategy and determining the position can be successful. Whereas, according to Gunara & Sudibyo (2007) the marketing mix is the combination of elements of goods or services, product excellence, pricing, packaging, advertising, inventory, distribution, and marketing budgets in an effort to market a product or service. Kotler and Armstrong (2012) divide the dimensions of the marketing mix as follows:

- 1) **Products**, in higher education, more often referred to as educational programs or services. The program is the most basic thing in higher education institutions. Products can be seen from two perspectives, as follows: if students as consumers, the product leads to services offered by the university to meet the needs of students, whereas, if the job market as a consumer, students are products of the university. Products in educational services include: educational / academic quality and concentration choices / Prospects of getting a job and career can also be considered a product the university.
- 2) **Price**, Price of education services is all costs incurred by students to obtain educational services offered by a college. The price of education services includes tuition fees (Educational Development Donations or SPP, construction costs, laboratory fees), scholarships and flexible payment systems. Often this price element is linear with the quality of educational products.
- 3) **Place or Location**, In the context of educational services, what is meant by place is the location of educational institutions. Location Higher education is an important element in influencing student preferences in making

choices. The location of colleges that are easily accessible by public transportation, the proximity of the location of universities, and the availability of tertiary educational sites are virtual locations of universities through the internet which can be an attraction because of that they get information without having to go to a physical location.

- 4) **Promotion**, promotion is a means to provide information and try to convince stakeholders of educational services, so that they continue to know and remember it. Promotions in higher education services can include advertising (newspaper advertisements, TV, radio, brochures), public relations activities (holding events and invitations) and direct contact with prospective students and the community.
- 5) **People**, all people involved in the process of delivering education services to education customers. Human resources include qualified lecturers, professors, and lecturers with other academic degrees, competent administrators / leaders (rector), and professional administrative and educational staff.
- 6) **Process**, the process of higher education concerning its main products, the teaching and learning process from lecturers to students including administrative services that provide accurate, responsive, care. The quality of human resources related to delivering education services.
- 7) **Physical evidence**, in higher education, physical evidence is an environment where students and higher education institutions can interact, in which there are tangible components or facilities that support the performance or communication of these educational services. Physical evidence of higher education includes the design / style of buildings (conformity between aesthetics and functionality), supporting infrastructure facilities (laboratories & libraries, parking, religious facilities) and the technology used. Besides that, the existence of a dormitory building is the main attraction for students. Physical evidence plays an important role and often reflects the quality of services provided by educational institutions

Accreditation. According to Sumaryanto (2008) accreditation is an educational activity carried out by an agency called the National Accreditation Agency/ *Badan Akreditasi Nasional*(BAN) to accredit or determine the feasibility of study programs and educational units. Basically, accreditation is carried out as a form of accountability objectively, fairly, transparently and comprehensively by the education unit to the public Known by the public, accreditation is an assessment carried out by the government towards private universities to rank the government recognition of these institutions, but this policy is now being implemented towards universities as a whole, both public and private. It shows that accredited universities get a higher recognition in society compared to universities that have not been accredited (Prasetyo, 2014),

Image. According to G. Sach in Soemirat and Elvinaro Ardianto (2007) image is knowledge about people and attitudes toward people in different groups. This definition is then cited by Effendi in Soemirat and Elvinaro Ardianto (2007) that image is the world around us that looks at us. According to Bill Canton in Sukatendel (1990) image is the impression, feeling, and public image of a company. Frank Jefkins in Soemirat and Elvinaro Ardianto (2007), divided images into several types, including:

- a. **The mirror image** (image reflection), which is how management (image) predicts the external public in seeing the company.
- b. **The current image** (warm image) that is the image contained in the external public, which is based on experience or concerning the poor information and external public understanding. This image can be contrary to mirror image.
- c. **The wish image** (desired image), is management wants certain achievements. This image is applied to something new before the external public gets complete information.
- d. **The multiple images**, namely a number of individuals, branch offices or other company representatives can form a certain image that does not necessarily correspond to the uniformity of the image in the entire organization or company

Purchasing Decision / Choosing. According to M. Iqbal Hasan (2002), a decision is the result of resolving the problem taken firmly. Decisions must be able to answer questions related to planning. Astuti et al. (2007), define purchasing decision as strong self-confidence in consumers or customers who believe that the purchasing decision for a product taken is correct. According to Kotler, et al. (2012) there are several stages in the process of consumer purchasing decisions, can be seen in the following descriptions:

1. **The Problem recognition**, marketers need to identify conditions that trigger certain needs by gathering information from a number of consumers, so they can recognize stimuli that often occur to generate interest in certain types of products / services. The problem recognition phase in the process of purchasing higher education services is from the prospective student or external such as advertising, discussion with friends, and advice from the teacher. At this stage, the purchasing process is activated by a person who has a role as an initiator. Marketers of educational services need to identify the trigger factors that stimulate interest in certain educational institutions.
2. **Information Searching**, Consumers who have certain needs, will be encouraged to seek more information. The main concern of marketers is the main sources of information that become consumers' reference and the relative influence of each source on following purchasing decisions.
3. **Alternative Evaluation**, there are several factors considered by consumers to choose from many alternatives: product characteristics / performance, brand trust, brand selection procedures, benefit functions for each feature. Evaluation often reflects beliefs and attitudes through acting and learning, people gaining confidence and attitude. Consumers finally take a position (decision, preference) on various brands through product evaluation procedures. In evaluating higher education service buyers (prospective students) do: (a) evaluate all college attributes and give relative values, they will choose universities that provide the highest scores; (b) evaluate each attribute, and eliminate those that do not fit their criteria.
4. **Purchasing Decision**, at the evaluation stage, consumers form preferences for brands that are in a collection of choices. Consumers can also form an intention to buy the most preferred brand. In purchasing decisions involving 5 (five) sub-decisions, namely: branding decision, providing a decision, numbering decisions, timing decision, and paying procedure decision. The purchasing stage decision to choose a university can be interpreted that the consumers (prospective students) register to the chosen university.
5. **Post-Purchasing Behavior**, the post-purchase behavior is the stage of the consumers' decision process where consumers take further action after the purchase based on satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Consumers' satisfaction and dissatisfaction on higher education services (students) will greatly influence the following behavior. Whether the consumers continue their study or make recommendations to others.

Framework and Hypotheses

The framework in this study is a development model from the theories and the results of previous studies. The framework is described in Figure 1 as follow:

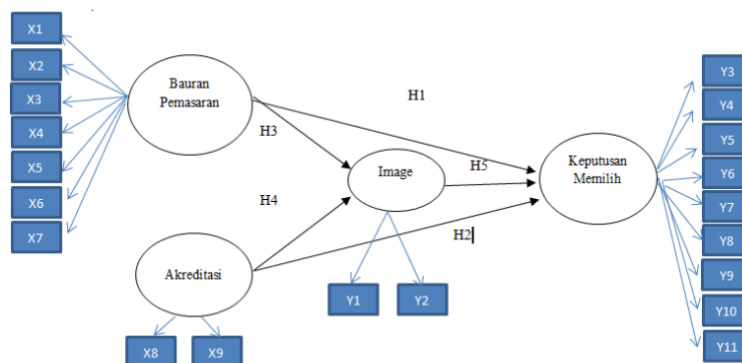


Figure 1. Framework

Research Hypotheses

According to Sugiyono (2010), the hypothesis is a temporary finding to the research problem formulation. The hypothesis is compiled and tested to show right or wrong by being free from the values and opinions of the researcher who compiled and tested it.

There were several hypotheses tested in this study, as follows:

H1: The **Marketing Mix** consisting of products, prices, places, processes, people, promotions, and physical evidence influenced the decision to choose Bina Darma University Palembang.

H2: The **Accreditation** status influenced the decision to choose Bina Darma University Palembang.

H3: The **Marketing Mix** had a positive and significant effect on the image formation of Bina Darma University Palembang

H4: The **Accreditation** status influenced Image Formation

H5: The **image** Influenced the Decision to choose Bina Darma University Palembang

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study was quantitative research with causal research design to determine the effect of marketing mix factors on educational services, accreditation status, and image formation as an intervening variable toward the decision to choose a private university in Palembang: a case study in Bina Darma University Palembang. There were 4 (four) variables in this study, consisted marketing mix variables (X1), accreditation variables (X2) as independent or exogenous variables while mediating variable was an image (Y1) and decision variable (Y2) as dependent variable or endogenous variable. The marketing mix variables were measured using 7 (seven) dimensions: Product (X1), Price (X2), Place (X3), Promotion (X4), People (X5), Process (X6), and Physical evidence (X7). The number of indicators used in this study was 35 indicators. This study used primary data through distributing questionnaires by using ordinal scales and rating scales with 10 point measurement levels; points 1 through 10 that measured each item in the questionnaire (1 = strongly disagree to 10 = strongly agree).

Population and Samples

The population in this study was all students accepted at Bina Darma University Palembang. Purposive sampling technique was used in this study; the samples were specified based on suitable specific characteristics with the objectives of the study, which was expected to answer the research problems. There were 300 respondents taken as the samples in this study, the number of the sample met the minimum sample requirements using Structural Equation Model (SEM) analysis technique.

Analysis Methods

The analysis technique used in this study consisted of descriptive analysis by looking at the frequency table of respondents' characteristics and quantitative analysis using SEM analysis. The model development in this study used a second-order confirmatory factor (SOFC) technique, which was a two-level measurement model while the estimation method was the Maximum Likelihood (ML). In evaluating the suitability of the model (goodness of fit) was conducted using three suitability measures; (1) the suitability of the measurement model, consisting of measurements of construct validity and construct reliability. (2) the suitability of the structural model based on P-Value $< \alpha$ where $\alpha = 5\%$ and (3) the suitability of the whole model based on the index of the goodness of fit (Hair et al., 2010).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Respondents

Respondents in this study, based on gender, were 57.3% females, 62.4% aged between 18 to 25 years. In evaluating the suitability, construct validity and construct reliability were calculated. In measuring construct validity, the indicators were considered significant when the probability value or p-value < 0.05 and the Standardized factor loading value was valid when the standardized factor loading > 0.50 . Based on Table 3, all the CR values of each variable were above 0.7, so it was reliable.

Model Test or Measurement Model

In evaluating the suitability, two measurement models were conducted; construct validity and construct reliability. In measuring construct validity, the indicators were considered significant when the probability value or p-value $< 0, 05$ and the Standardized factor loading values were valid when > 0.05 . Based on Table 1, from the two test points above, it can be concluded that all measurement models were valid. In measuring construct reliability, the

indicator was reliable when the value of construct reliability (CR) > 0.7. Based on Table 3, all CR values of each variable were above 0.7, so it can be concluded that the measurement model was reliable.

Table 3. Test Results for Validity and Construction Reliability

Variables	Dimension	Indicators	$\sum\lambda$	$\sum e_j$	Construct Reliability
Marketing Mix	Product	X1	0,781	0,390	0,961
		X2	0,686	0,529	
		X3	0,764	0,416	
	Price	X4	0,706	0,502	
		X5	0,645	0,584	
		X6	0,686	0,529	
	Promotion	X7	0,584	0,659	
		X8	0,685	0,531	
		X9	0,725	0,474	
	People	X10	0,706	0,502	
		X11	0,746	0,443	
		X12	0,644	0,585	
	Process	X13	0,806	0,350	
		X14	0,800	0,360	
		X15	0,851	0,276	
	Physical evidence	X16	0,817	0,333	
		X17	0,800	0,360	
		X18	0,776	0,398	
		X19	0,733	0,463	
		X20	0,706	0,502	
		X21	0,602	0,638	
		X22	0,725	0,474	
Acreditation	X23	0,992	0,016	0,976	
	X24	0,960	0,078		
Image	Y1	0,855	0,269	0,905	
	Y2	0,961	0,076		
ChosingDicission	Y3	0,810	0,344	0,926	
	Y4	0,785	0,384		
	Y5	0,687	0,528		
	Y6	0,748	0,440		
	Y7	0,904	0,183		
	Y8	0,772	0,404		
	Y9	0,667	0,555		
	Y10	0,759	0,424		
	Y11	0,711	0,494		

Source: Results of AMOS Output Processing

In conducting a compatibility test, the overall model is based on the estimation of the SEM model as shown in Figure 2 below:

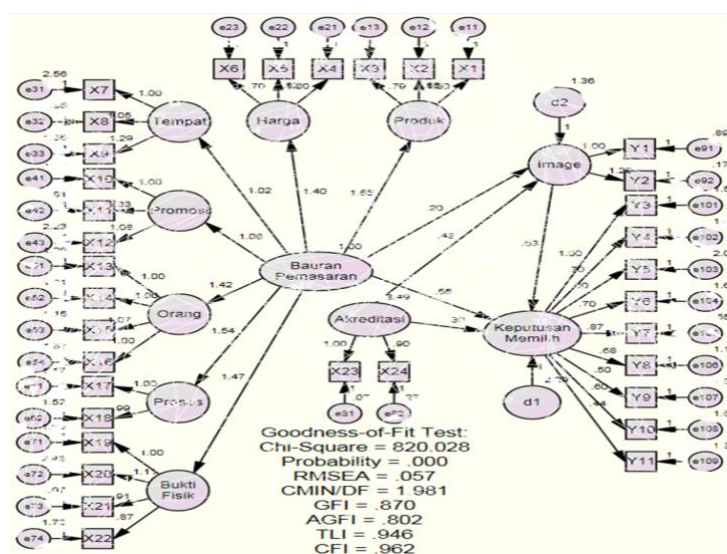


Figure 2. SEM model

Based on Figure 2, the results of the SEM model shown in table 4 are as follows:

No.	Goodness of fit index	Cut off value	Values	Results
1	<i>Chi-Square</i> τ CMIN	<i>good fit</i> if $CMIN < Chi-Square$ table $\alpha = 5\%$ DF = 763, <i>Chi-Square</i> table = 462,440	820,028	<i>not good fit</i>
2	<i>Significance Probability of</i> CMIN (<i>p-value</i>)	<i>good fit</i> if $P\text{-value} \geq \alpha$ $\alpha = 5\%$	0,000	<i>not good fit</i>
3	RMSEA	RMSEA < 0,08 <i>good fit</i> RMSEA < 0,05 <i>close fit</i>	0,057	<i>good fit</i>
4	CMIN/DF	<i>good fit</i> if $CMIN/DF < 2,00$	1,981	<i>good fit</i>
5	GFI	GFI close to 1 <i>good fit</i> Empirical: $GFI \geq 0,90$ <i>good fit</i> $0,80 \leq GFI \leq 0,90$ <i>marginal fit</i>	0,870	<i>marginal fit</i>
7	TLI	$TLI > 0,90$ <i>good fit</i> $0,80 \leq TLI \leq 0,90$ <i>marginal fit</i>	0,946	<i>good fit</i>
8	CFI	$CFI > 0,90$ <i>good fit</i> $0,80 \leq CFI \leq 0,90$ <i>marginal fit</i>	0,962	<i>good fit</i>

From testing the overall suitability of the model, showed the good model was 75%, so the SEM model was good.

Hypotheses test results. After testing the fit model as a whole, hypotheses testing was carried out to find out whether the hypotheses were rejected or accepted. A hypothesis can be accepted if the p-value is smaller than 0.05. Based on Table 3, the results of the 5 hypotheses were shown in Table 6 as follows:

Descriptions	Parameter Estimation Values	P-Value	Results
Hypothesis 1 (H1)	0,554	< 0,001*	Hypothesis accepted
Hypothesis 2 (H2)	0,296	< 0,001*	Hypothesis accepted
Hypothesis 3 (H3)	0,204	< 0,003*	Hypothesis accepted
Hypothesis 4 (H4)	0,428	< 0,001*	Hypothesis accepted
Hypothesis 5 (H5)	0,633	< 0,001*	hypothesis accepted

Source: Amos Output

H1: The Marketing Mix affected the decision to choose

The results of the first hypothesis showed that there was a positive and significant effect of the marketing mix on the decision to choose a total of 0.554. It meant that the student's decision to choose a university was influenced by the service marketing mix which included products / study programs, prices / costs, places, processes, promotions, people, and physical evidence. The results supported the researches from Isnaeni (2002), Payne (2000) which revealed that the marketing mix of services could be used to satisfy customers. Product related to the choosing decision.

H2: Accreditation influenced the choosing decision

From the result of the second hypothesis, it was found that accreditation had a positive and significant effect on making a decision. It had a statistically acceptable value of 0.296, which meant that accreditation influence on

making the decision to choose the university. Based on these conclusions it can be said that the status of Accreditation for Higher Education institutions is a form of evaluation (assessment) of the quality and feasibility of higher education institutions or study programs. The choice was focused on the presentation of accreditation quality in education (Prasetyo, 2014). The better the accreditations rank, the higher the student's decision to choose the study program. On the contrary, the lower the accreditation ranks, the lower the student's decision to choose private institutions.

According to respondents, they chose Bina Darma University Palembang because the Information System Study Program accreditation was accredited A, and the Informatics Engineering Study Program was accredited B which had the competent quality of graduation, and the implementation of educational programs met the standards set by the National Accreditation Board of Higher Education (BAN-PT). It is in accordance with the regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 87 of 2004 stating that accreditation is an assessment activity to determine the feasibility of study programs and university. The significance in this study supported the research conducted by Widi Rudini (2013) stating that there was an influence of rating accreditation on the interest in choosing study programs, with an effective contribution of 63.89%. While in this study, the effective contribution of accreditation ratings was 53%, lower than the previous study.

Research conducted by Bahri Kamal, Gea Dwi Rahmadiane (2017) state that Study Program Accreditation and student decision to choose Accounting study programs at Tegal Harapan Bersama Polytechnic and study program accreditation were the most influential variables on student decisions to choose Accounting at Polytechnic of *Harapan Bersama Tegal*. Research conducted by Verawati (2016) stated that the factors influenced students' interest in continuing the Accounting Masters included motivation, study program accreditation, educational facilities, departmental concentration, education costs, and the reputation of educators. So that it can be interpreted that the six independent variables had significant effects on students interest to continue their magister of Accounting, it was indicated by the value of each variable <0.05 .

H3: Marketing Mix affected Image

The third hypothesis results found that the marketing mix had a positive and significant effect on Image of 0.204 which meant that the coefficient of 0.204 showed the marketing mix increased on one unit, the higher the image value, the lower the marketing mix value. Supported by previous research by Arwanda, Nur Oktalia Dwine; Hartoyo; Sri Hartoyo. (2014) that the image of the academy had the highest relationship to improve students' perceptions to higher education institutions.

H4: Accreditation had an effect on Image

The fourth hypothesis results showed that accreditation was a positive and significant influence on image formation with a statistically acceptable value of 0.428, which meant that accreditations affected the image of higher education institutions on the decision to be chosen. Based on these conclusions, it can be said that the status of Accreditation for Higher Education is a form of evaluation (assessment) of quality and feasibility for the image of higher education institutions or study programs. A positive image from a college will have a better chance to attract students. According to Nugroho (2013), the image is "total perception of an object, which is formed by processing information from various sources."

The image of the higher educational institution is measured through reputation or the same as the Accreditation of Higher Education. It indicates that the status and ranking of accreditation of higher education institutions greatly influences the image of a university which indicates high credibility (level of public trust). It also shows that the accreditation influences greatly in improving the image of a university.

H5: Image influenced the choosing decision

The results of the fifth hypothesis showed a positive and significant effect on the decision to choose a private university at Bina Darma University Palembang with an estimate of 0.663 indicating that the higher the value of the image, the higher the decision value, the lower the value of the image, the lower the value of the decision. The image can be interpreted as a belief in the form of a picture and general impression of a company by looking at various aspects formed by processing information from various sources.

Nugroho J Setiadi (2013), explained the relationship of brand image as follows; brand image associated with attitudes in the form of beliefs and preferences for a brand. Consumers with a positive image of a brand are more likely to make a purchase; therefore the main use of advertising is to build a positive image of the brand. The image has a very important meaning for a university where the image will shape public perceptions differently, before making a decision. Differences in perceptions of a particular object are possible because each individual has experience, understanding, and the way to capture different information.

Regarding the result of the study by Zainal Hanafi, Amri, Sulaiman (2016), the image variable had a very dominant influence on the decision of students to choose universities, and further research showed that mediation of image variables had a significant influence on the decision of students to choose Polytechnic of Aceh. It is needed to pay more attention to form an image of the university with graduation who has high market acceptance; image strengthening will have a strong impact on the decision of prospective students to choose to study at the Aceh Polytechnic.

Research conducted by Fure et al. (2015) stated that simultaneously Image had a significant effect on consumer purchasing decisions. Partially the brand image had a significant effect on consumer purchasing decisions, and the price variable had no significant effect.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study indicated that (1) the Marketing mix had a positive and significant effect on the decision to chose Bina Darma University Palembang, (2) Accreditation Status had a positive and significant effect on the decision to choose Bina Darma University Palembang (3) Marketing Mix had a positive and significant effect on image formation of Bina Darma University Palembang (4) Accreditation Status had a positive and significant effect on the Image of Bina Darma University Palembang and (5) Image had a positive and significant effect on the decision to choose Bina Darma University Palembang.

Suggestion

Based on the previous results of the study, it is suggested as follows: (1) For Bina Darma University Palembang to add / open a New Study Program (for example: Marketing Management Department), to maintain and to improve the accreditation status that has been better in each The Study Program at Bina and to enhance the image of Bina Darma University. (for example qualified graduates, work-ready graduates, etc.), to improve better services and satisfaction to students (for example academic administration processes, teaching and learning processes, facilities and infrastructure, curriculum quality, scholarships and etc.), to increase promotion continuously every year, especially when receiving prospective new students. (For example socialization to schools, holding events / stands, giving discounts to the first 50 registrants, etc.). (2)for further researches, it is necessary to add other variables, for example, cultural variables (culture, sub-culture, social class), social factors (group, family, personal factors: age / cycle, product, occupation, economic situation, personality lifestyle), psychological factors (motivation).

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