Article

The Effectiveness of Social Media Advertising and Brand Image in Attracting New Students in College

(Case Study on the Global Institute)

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Abstract: Social media has become a strategic instrument in the promotion of higher education institutions to attract the interest of prospective students in the contemporary digital era. This study explores the effectiveness of the implementation of social media advertising on the increase in the number of new students, by considering the role of brand image as an intervening variable, using the theoretical framework of the Hierarchy of Effects Model which describes the stages of the marketing communication process. Through a quantitative methodology with a survey technique on 150 respondents of grade XII high school students in the Tangerang area who were active on social media platforms, multiple linear regression analysis revealed the positive and significant influence of social media advertising, both directly and through strengthening brand awareness and brand image, with t-values of social media advertising (5,527 > t table 1,989) and brand awareness (7,967 > t table 1.989). The simultaneous analysis confirmed the collective influence with F count 54,956 > F table 3,195 at a significance of 0.000, where the research model explained 68% of the variability in the increase in the number of students (R-square = 0.688), while 31.2% was influenced by external factors, emphasizing the importance of a social media advertising strategy that is integrated with the development of a positive brand image in increasing the attractiveness of higher education institutions

Keywords: Social media advertising, brand image, students

1. Introduction

Social media has become a major tool in changing the way educational institutions, including universities, promote their services to prospective students. Along with the increasing penetration of the internet, social media such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook have evolved into strategic platforms to reach young audiences. According to the We Are Social (2024) report, more than 70% of social media users come from the age group under 25 years old, making the platform relevant in attracting high school students to pursue higher education.

The development of competition in the world of higher education has encouraged institutions to optimize their marketing strategies, especially through the use of social media in building brand image. Duffett's findings (2017) underline the effectiveness of social media

advertising in influencing the decision of prospective students through a more engaging visual approach and personal communication.

In this context, brand image becomes a fundamental element that determines the success of marketing campaigns of higher education institutions. Kotler and Keller (2016) emphasized that the formation of a strong brand image can increase the credibility of the institution in the eyes of the public and significantly influence the decision-making process of prospective students.

The use of social media not only focuses on building a positive image, but also opens up opportunities for deeper interaction with prospective students. A storytelling approach that displays the narrative of student experiences, alumni success tracks, and campus life dynamics is able to create a more personal connection. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) highlight how this approach can build an emotional bond that affects the decision of prospective students to join the institution.

Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook offer a variety of interactive features such as polls, Q&A sessions, and live streaming that create a more immersive experience for prospective students. Research by Akar and Topçu (2018) proves that social media campaigns with high levels of interactivity are positively correlated with increased interest in prospective students to explore study programs and facilities offered by universities.

By leveraging the analytics available on various social media platforms, colleges can also measure the effectiveness of their ads in more detail. Data about audience demographics, interaction behavior, and clicks and conversions from ads can be used to evaluate and adjust marketing strategies. This allows colleges to allocate their marketing budgets more efficiently, maximize the impact of advertising, and ensure that their ads reach the right audience.

On the other hand, changing trends and audience preferences also affect the effectiveness of advertising on social media. For example, TikTok, which focuses more on short videos and creative content, has become a very popular platform among Generation Z. Universities that want to attract the attention of this audience must think about content that suits the characteristics of the platform and its audience, such as interesting campus videos, stories from students or lecturers, and information about student activities. Adaptation to this trend will greatly affect the attractiveness of universities for prospective students.

In addition, collaboration with influencers or alumni who have influence on social media can also increase the credibility of the university. Influencers with a large number of followers and relevance among young audiences can help strengthen the brand image and increase the visibility of the college. Research by Freberg et al. (2011) shows that endorsements from influencers can speed up the decision-making process of consumers, who in this case are prospective students.

Thus, effective social media advertising for colleges involves not only creating a positive brand image, but also focusing on deeper interactions with prospective students and the utilization of analytics technology for better evaluation. This approach allows universities to remain relevant amid fierce competition and adapt to changing preferences of an increasingly dynamic young audience.

Although social media has become the dominant marketing instrument, a comprehensive understanding of its impact on new student enrollment rates still requires a

more in-depth study. This study was designed to explore the correlation between the effectiveness of social media advertising and the increase in the number of new students, considering the role of brand image as an intervening variable. Through the implementation of quantitative methodologies, this study is expected to produce strategic recommendations for higher education institutions in optimizing their attractiveness in the contemporary digital landscape.

2. Research Methods

This study adopts quantitative methodology as the main investigative framework. The selection of this approach is based on the characteristics of the data which are ratios and the purpose of the study to measure the significance of the causal relationship between variables. Through the use of quantitative methods, this study can make systematic and objective measurements of the relationship between the effectiveness of social media advertising, brand image, and increasing the quantity of new students (Dangi et al., 2020).

The data used in this research process are primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from 150 research respondents who met the following criteria:

1. Grade XII Senior High School Students;
2. Active users of Social Media.

The respondents of this research were presented with the following tabeI:

Table 1. The respondents of this research

Category		Sum	Percentage
Gender	Man	68	45.3%
	Woman	82	54,7%
Class	XII	150	100%
Age	18 − 20 years	150	100%

The demographic composition of respondents showed the dominance of women with a proportion of 54.7% of the total sample. The overall characteristics of the respondents consisted of grade XII students of Senior High School who were in the age range of 18-20 years. To analyze the data analyzed, this study implies, multiple Iinier regression techniques as the main method of analysis. This approach allows researchers to systematically measure the correlation between variates, as well as their impact on the increase in the number of new students, so as to provide empirical validation of the hypothesis proposed by the research.

3. Results And Discussion

Multiple Regression Test

Multiple Iinear regression analysis is applied in this analysis as a statistical method to evaluate the coefficient effect of independent (X) variabeI muItipIe on dependent variabeI (Y). This ana-Iitis approach allows the identification of the orientation of the relationship between variabeI, including its positive or negative characteristics, as well as the prediction of dependent variabeI changes (Y) resulting from independent variabeI dynamics (X). The findings from the multiple Iinear regression analysis which examines the influence of the two independent variations of the Iinear mode of this study are presented comprehensively in the following table:

Table 1. Results of the Multiple Regression Test of Social Media Advertising Variables (X1) and Brand Image (X2) Increase in the Number of Students (Y)

Coefficients^a

Type	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.113	.303		.373	.711
Social Media Ads	.350	.063	.446	5.527	.000
Brand Image	.553	.069	.643	7.967	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Increase in the Number of Students

Source: Questionnaire data that has been processed by SPSS Version 26

Based on the regression equation that is derived from the results of computerized data processing using SPSS version 26, the regression equation is: Increase in the number of students (Y) = 0.113 + 0.350 Social media Iklan I (X1) +0.553 Brand Image (X2) +e. From this equation, it can be determined:

α = constant

Nilai Constant of 0.113 which means that apabila scores on variabel Iklan media sociol (X1) and Brand Image (X2). is the same as nol, then the increase in the number of students (Y) is 0.113.

b = Regression coefficient

Iklan regression coefficient of social media I (X1). The number of 0.350 states that for every addition of 1 nilai Iklan Media Sosial (X1), then the increase in the number of students increases by 0.350.

The regression coefficient analysis for the Brand Image variable (X2) yielded a value of 0.553, indicating that every increase of one unit in the Brand Image variable contributed to an increase in the number of students by 0.553 units. Based on the results of the analysis, it can be interpreted that the two independent variabel, namely Iklan Media Sosial (X1) and Brand Image (X2), have a positive influence on the dependent variabel of the Increase in the Number of Students (Y).

Determination Coefficient Analysis (R2)

In the statistical evaluation process, the determination coefficient analysis provides a methodological framework to measure the effectiveness of the influence exerted by independent variabel on the dependent variabel of a model of study. The degree of this influence can be analyzed both individually and coactively, using the quantitative parameters R square or Adjusted R square, which indicate the proportion of dependent variabel variations that can be attributed to the independent variabel-variabel that are analyzed.

The evaluation of the relationship between the two independent and dependent variabel can be observed in the analysis of the determination coefficient presented in the table below:

Table 2. Results of the Determination Coefficient Test of Social Media Advertising Variables (X1) Increase in the Number of Students (Y)

Model Summary

Type	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.544a	.296	.281	.54543

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media Ads
b. Dependent Variable: Increase in the Number of Students

Source: Questionnaire data that has been processed by SPSS Version 26

The results of the analysis showed an R square value of 0.296, which indicates that the variabeI IkIan Media SosiaI (X1) has a contribution of 29.6% to the increase in the number of students (Y). Iebih Ianjut's interpretation reveals that the proportion of 70.4% of the variation in the increase in the number of students is influenced by the Iain factors that are in the scope of this study.

Table 3. Results of the Determination Coefficient Test of Brand Image Variables (X2) Increase in the Number of Students (Y)

Model Summary

Type	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.711a	.506	.495	.45700

a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Image
b. Dependent Variable: Increase in the Number of Students

Source: Questionnaire data that has been processed by SPSS Version 26

The results of the analysis showed an R square value of 0.296, which indicates that the variabeI IkIan Media SosiaI (X1) has a contribution of 29.6% to the increase in the number of students (Y). Iebih Ianjut's interpretation reveals that the proportion of 70.4% of the variation in the increase in the number of students is influenced by the Iain factors that are in the scope of this study.

Table 4. Results of the Test of the Determination Coefficient of Social Media Advertising Variables (X1) and Brand Image (X2) on the Increase in the Number of Students (Y)

Model Summaryb

Type	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.837a	.700	.688	.35953

a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Image, Social Media Ads
b. Dependent Variable: Increase in the Number of Students

Source: Questionnaire data that has been processed by SPSS Version 26

Statistical evaluation of the Adjusted R square of 0.688, indicates that the interaction between the IkIan Media Social Variation (X1) and Brand Image (X2) contributes significantly by 68.8% to the variability of the Increase in the Number of Students (Y). HasiI anaIisis Iebih Ianjut revealed that the proportion of 31.2% of the new students' fIam is influenced by the oIeh variabeI-variabeI Iain which is not covered by this research framework.

Hypothesis Testing

Test t (partial)

The t-test was impeded as a statistical method to evaluate the significance of the influence of each independent variate on the dependent variabeI of the modeI of the study.

In the study of the t-test, there are two methodo-Iogis approaches that can be used as the basis for making decisions: first, the evaluation of the significance of the test (sig.), and the

second, the comparison between   the statistical t-value and the t-value   of the table that has been determined.

Table 5. Results of the t-test statistics of social media advertising variables (X1) Increase in the number of students

		Coefficients^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Type		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.113	.303		.373	.711
	Social Media Ads	.350	.063	.446	5.527	.000
	Brand Image	.553	.069	.643	7.967	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Increase in the Number of Students

Source: Questionnaire data that has been processed by SPSS Version 26

The interpretation of the results of the t-test in the coefficients table revealed a statistical t-value   of 5,527, which exceeded the t-value of the table 1,989. More Ianjut, the anaIisis niIai variabeI significance of IkIan Media SosiaI (X1) shows a figure of 0.000, which is below the significance threshoId of 0.05. Based on these two parameters, it can be concluded that H0 is ditoIak and Ha are accepted, confirming the significant influence of the IkIan Media Social I (X1) variabeI on the Increase in Student Numbers (Y).

Table 6. Test Results t Statistics Brand Image Variable (X2) Increase in Number of Students (Y)

		Coefficients^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Type		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.113	.303		.373	.711
	Social Media Ads	.350	.063	.446	5.527	.000
	Brand Image	.553	.069	.643	7.967	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Increase in the Number of Students

Source: Questionnaire data that has been processed by SPSS Version 26

HasiI analysis in the Coefficients table showed that the statistical niIai t   for the Brand Image (X2) variabeI was 7,967, which significantly compared to the table 1,989. The recorded significance value is 0.000, below the critical threshold of 0.05. The interpretation of these statistical findings indicates the decline of H0 and Ha acceptance, which vaiidizes the significant influence of the Brand Image variabeI (X2) on the increase in the number of students (Y).

Test F (Simultaneous)

The statistical F test serves as an analytical instrument to evaluate the simultaneous influence of all independent variables on the dependent variables in the research model.

In the implementation of the F test, there are two methodological approaches that can be used as a basis for decision-making: the evaluation of the significance value (sig.) or probability value listed in the Anova output, as well as the comparison between the statistical F value   and the F value   of the table that has been determined.

Table 7. Test Results F Variables of Social Media Advertising (X1) and Brand Image (X2) Increase in the Number of Students (Y)

ANOVAa

Type		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	14.208	2	7.104	54.956	.000b
	Residual	6.075	47	.129		
	Total	20.283	49			

a. Dependent Variable: Increase in the Number of Students
b. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Image, Social Media Ads

Source : Questionnaire Data that has been processed by SPSS Version 26

HasiI anaIisis tabeI Anova produced a statistical niIai F of 54,956, which substantially exceeded the niIai F table of 3,195, with a significance (sig.) of NiIai recorded at 0.000, which was below the critical threshoId of 0.05. The interpretation of these statistical findings leads to the elimination of H0 and Ha acceptance, which vaIididizes the existence of a significant simuItan influence of the variabeI IkIan Media Socia I (X1) and Brand Image (X2) on the Increase in Student Number (Y).

Interpretation of Research Results

The study focuses on investigating the influence of two strategic elements of higher education institutions' marketing: Social Media Advertising and Brand Image on the increase in student numbers. The comprehensive analysis that has been carried out has produced findings that confirm the significance of the influence of the two independent variables on the dependent variable, namely the Increase in the Number of Students. The following will be explained the detailed interpretation of the test results that have been carried out in this study:

1. The Influence of Social Media Advertising (X1) Increase in the Number of Students (Y)

The analysis of the influence of Social Media Advertising on the Increase in the Number of Students produced significant findings through a partial t-test. HasiI statistical testing showed a statistical niIai t of 5.527, which substantially exceeded the niIai t table of 1.989, with a significance level of 0.000 which was below the critical threshold of 0.05. These findings confirm the existence of a significant partial influence of the implementation of Social Media Advertising on the increase in the number of students among grade XI students.

2. The Effect of Brand Image (X2) on the Increase in the Number of Students (Y)

Testing of Brand Image Variables to Increase in the Number of Students, namely obtaining test results using a partial t-test where the Brand Image variable has a statistical t-value of 7.967 > 1.989 t, significance table (sig.) of 0.000 < 0.05. This means that there is a partial influence between the Brand Image variable on the increase in the number of Global Institute students in grade XII.

3. The Influence of Social Media Advertising (X1) and Brand Image (X2) Increase in the Number of Students (Y)

Analysis of the influence of Social Media and Brand Image on the Increase in Student Numbers was measured through the F. Statistical evaluation resulted in a 54,956 fish, which was then compared with the table of 5 % significance (α=0.05). The determination of niIai F table uses the degree of freedom parameter with df1 (k-1)=3 and df2 (n-k)=47, resulting in

a critical niIai fish of 3.195. A comparison between the two values revealed that the statistical F (54,956) substantially surpassed the F table (3,195), providing statistical validation of the significance of the simultaneous influence of the two variables.

The results of the analysis confirmed the significant simultaneous influence of the two independent variabeI on the dependent variabeI of the modeI of the study. The Adjusted R Square Valuation   shows a figure of 0.688, indicating that the combination of Social Media Advertising and Brand Image variables is able to explain 68% of the variation in the Increase in Student Population. Further interpretation revealed that the proportion of 31.2% of variability in the increase in the number of students was influenced by the Iain factors that were in the scope of this study.

4. Conclusion

The analysis of the impact of Social Media Advertising and Brand Image on the increasing number of students at the Global Institute, with a focus on Grade XII students in Tangerang City, has yielded significant findings. The partial t-test results indicate that Social Media Advertising has a statistical t-value of 5.527, exceeding the critical threshold of 1.989. Additionally, the significance value of 0.000 reinforces its substantial influence on the quality of human resources, confirming the effectiveness of Social Media Advertising in attracting new students to the Global Institute.

Similarly, the Brand Image variable demonstrates a significant effect, with a statistical t-value of 7.967 surpassing the table value of 1.989. The obtained significance value of 0.000 further supports the strong influence of Brand Image on student enrollment. These results validate the hypothesis that a well-established Brand Image plays a crucial role in increasing student numbers.

Furthermore, the simultaneous analysis of Social Media Advertising and Brand Image through the F test underscores their combined impact on student enrollment. The statistical F value of 54.956, compared to the table value of 3.195, confirms a significant positive influence. This empirical validation aligns with the research hypothesis, demonstrating that both factors contribute meaningfully to the growth of student numbers at the Global Institute. These findings emphasize the strategic importance of integrating Social Media Advertising and Brand Image in educational marketing initiatives.

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