

**THE EFFECT OF EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING, TEACHING IMAGE
TOWARDS *WORD OF MOUTH* AND ITS IMPACT ON
THE DECISION OF CHOOSING MM-UAD**

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze and test the experiential marketing variables and the image of higher education towards the decision to choose MM-UAD with word of mouth as an intervening variable. In this study using quantitative methods. To test the instrument, used the validity test and reliability test using the SPSS program. The results of the study are as follows: (1) experiential marketing has a significant positive effect on word of mouth with a significance level of 0.003, (2) the image of college has a significant positive effect on word of mouth with a significance level of 0.001, (3) experiential marketing has a positive effect significant towards the decision to choose MM-UAD with a significance level of 0.045,

Keywords: *experiential marketing*, college image, word of mouth, purchasing decisions

INTRODUCTIONS

One of the service sectors that can support the quality of human resources is through the education service sector. This education sector is able to provide an understanding of the perspective and take the best action, especially regarding the influence of globalization which can fade the nation's culture. Higher education is one of the education service sectors in Indonesia which has the highest hierarchy in the world of education. Currently, if we look at the development of both public and private universities, it is growing very rapidly, both physically and non-physically. This can happen because higher education, as an institution that provides services in the field of education, must always meet the needs and desires of consumers. This means simply that universities are always required to gain public trust.

With very tight competition from all public and private universities, university managers should be able to create unique marketing. Unique marketing here aims to attract consumers, this

is done because the behavior of each consumer's purchasing decisions is different. So that we need a marketing concept that is not only oriented to the product, quality, benefits, and function. But college marketing management must also be able to provide a touch of marketing communication to consumers, so that there is a bond where consumers will automatically be touched and will independently buy and share their experiences with others.

One of the marketing strategy concepts that might be implemented is experiential marketing strategy. The concept of experiential marketing is an alternative strategy that focuses more on the ability of the product or service to offer emotional experiences to touch the hearts and feelings of customers. Experiential marketing according to (Schmitt 1999) states that the concept he developed is that marketers offer their products and services by stimulating the emotional elements of consumers that produce various experiences for consumers. However, apart from the experiential marketing concept, the managers must also maintain the image of the university they manage. Kotler (2012) states that the definition or understanding of image is a set of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a person has about an object. This image also plays a very important role in increasing public trust. On the side, the image manager can be a factor in determining the marketing strategy. Because the better the image of a university, the higher public trust in the university. The higher the public's trust, the community will automatically share their experiences with the products / services they try with others. This opportunity can be taken by the manager by taking advantage of the situation, where the manager will not need to spend a lot of promotional and advertising budgets to the general public, the manager simply takes advantage of the moment when consumers start to share their positive experiences with others. In the science of marketing this event is called the word of mouth strategy. According to Kotler and Keller (2012: 615) word of mouth is personal communication about a product between target buyers and neighbors, friends, family members and colleagues. The word of mouth strategy has a very important role for the marketing of products or services, because word of mouth has a power in conveying a message, so this will accelerate the purchase decision process.

From the description above, the authors are interested in conducting a research related to service marketing, the author will raise the title of the research, namely: The Effect of Experiential Marketing, Higher Education Image Against Word Of Mouth and Its Impact on the Decision to Choose MM-UAD.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative method, which is research used to prove values by measuring the relationship between variables, so that data can be obtained in the form of numbers so that it can be analyzed by statistical ordering (Noor, 2011). In this study, the objects that the author examined were the influence of experiential marketing, the image of higher education to word of mouth and its impact on the decision to choose MM-UAD. The subject of this research was carried out on students and alumni of MM-UAD. The population in this study were all students and alumni of MM-UAD. The samples used in this study were 43 users. Technique The sampling in this study uses Non Probability Sampling and the technique is saturated sampling, because all MM-UAD students and alumni are used as samples. (Sugiyono, 2014). The method in collecting data in this study using a survey method through an online questionnaire (Google Form). To test the instrument, the validity and reliability tests were used

by using the SPSS version 24 program. Meanwhile, the data analysis technique used path analysis techniques.

RESULT

Based on the results of the study, the results obtained: experiential marketing variables have a significant positive effect on word of mouth, which means that when experiential marketing is high this will affect the level of a person's word of mouth. From the results of the research, the variable image of higher education has a positive and significant effect on word of mouth, which means that the better an image of higher education will automatically increase the word of mouth. Meanwhile, from the regression model 2 with the dependent variable the decision to choose MM-UAD, the results showed that the experiential marketing variable had a significant positive effect on the decision to choose MM-UAD. The university image variable from the analysis showed a significant positive effect on the decision to choose MM-UAD. And for the results of the word of mouth variable, the results have a significant positive effect on the decision to choose MM-UAD. As for the results of the indirect influence in this study, the results obtained, indirectly, the experiential marketing variable through word of mouth on the decision to choose MM-UAD has no positive and significant effect. And for the results of the image variables of higher education indirectly through word of mouth on the decision to choose MM-UAD has no positive and significant effect.

DISCUSSION

Based on the results of statistical analysis and hypothesis testing, it is known that there is an influence between experiential marketing and word of mouth. This is evidenced by the significance value which is less than 0.05 ($0.003 < 0.05$). The results of this study are in accordance with the results of research conducted by Eko Wardoyo (2018) in his thesis entitled the influence of experiential marketing and university image on students' word of mouth. The results of the research conducted state that there is a significant influence between the experiential marketing variables on the word of mouth variable. Experiential marketing according to (Schmitt 1999) states that the concept he developed is that marketers offer their products and services by stimulating the emotional elements of consumers that produce various experiences for consumers. Experiential marketing can be very useful for a company that wants to increase a brand that is in a downward stage, differentiating their product from competitors' products. So that when it is associated with word of mouth, this strategy is very good to do because it will automatically stimulate and tell the experience to others.

Based on the results of statistical analysis and hypothesis testing, it is known that there is an intermediate influence image of college with word of mouth. This is evidenced by the significance value less than 0.05 ($0.001 < 0.05$). The results of this study are in accordance with the results of research conducted by Eko Wardoyo (2018) in his thesis entitled the influence of experiential marketing and university image on students' word of mouth. The results of the research conducted state that there is a significant influence between the image variables of higher education to the variable word of mouth. So it can be concluded that when the company image is good in the eyes of consumers, consumers will automatically tell positive things about our products / services to others and vice versa.

Based on the results of statistical analysis and hypothesis testing, it is known that there is an influence between experiential marketing and the decision to choose MM-UAD. This is evidenced by the significance value which is less than 0.05 ($0.045 < 0.05$). The results of this study are in accordance with the results of research conducted by Resci Fierdiansya (2016) in a journal entitled *influence experiential marketing* against Go-Jek's purchase decision. The results of the research conducted state that there is a significant influence between the variable *experiential marketing* to the purchasing decision variable. The simple experiential marketing strategy is to provide a positive experience in relation to purchasing decisions, this is also explained by Kertajaya (2010: 23 in Eko Wardoyo, 2018) he states that experiential marketing is a marketing concept that aims to shape customers by creating positive experiences and providing a positive feeling of their services and products. So it can be concluded that when the experiential marketing strategy goes well, it will greatly influence someone to make a purchase

Based on the results of statistical analysis and hypothesis testing, it is known that there is an intermediate influence image of higher education with the decision to choose MM-UAD. This is evidenced by the significance value of less than 0.05 ($0.028 < 0.05$). The results of this study are in accordance with the results of research conducted by Indah Nur Agustiani (2017) in a journal entitled the influence of word of mouth marketing on the image of higher education and its impact on the decision to become a student at STKIP Pasundan Cimahi. The results of the research conducted state that there is a significant influence between the image of a university variable on the decision variable to become a student of STKIP Pasundan Cimahi. In simple terms, an image is needed for a company that tries to offer its products and services. A good image will bring positive things for the company. Meanwhile, a bad image will have a negative impact and can even reduce consumer confidence. So it can be said that the image is very influential on purchasing decisions

Based on the results of statistical analysis and hypothesis testing, it is known that there is an influence between word of mouth and the decision to choose MM-UAD. This is evidenced by the significance value less than 0.05 ($0.001 < 0.05$). This is also reinforced by research conducted by Indah and Rieke in 2017 with the title "the influence of word of mouth marketing on the image of college and its impact on the decision to become a student at STKIP Pasundan Cimahi" with the results of the study showing that the influence of word of mouth marketing on the decision to become a student. . Word of mouth is a marketer strategy that utilizes customers or consumers to convey information on products or services that he has tried to others. Word of mouth can also be said to be a strategy that does not require a lot of money, because consumers who have tried our products or services recommend it to other people, so that people who receive this information will believe and will decide to try it.

Based on the results of the path analysis, it is known that the direct effect value is 0.240 and the indirect effect is 0.189, which means that the value of the indirect effect is smaller than the value of the direct effect, this result shows that indirectly the experiential variable marketing through word of mouth has no effect. significant towards the decision to choose MM-UAD. This is because the experiential marketing variable for consumers is very helpful in relation to purchasing decisions, and also because this strategy places more emphasis on customers to experience a positive experience and provide a positive feeling on their services and products, so as if other information is no longer needed by consumers.

Based on the results of calculations and path analysis, it is known that the value of the direct effect is 0.270 and the indirect effect is 0.206, which means that the value of the indirect effect is smaller than the value of the direct effect, this result shows that indirectly the image of higher education through word of mouth did not have a significant effect on the decision to choose MM-UAD. This is because the factors or indicators of purchasing decisions are not only influenced by word of mouth, but other factors such as corporate image / university image can also be a major factor. In relation to the purchasing decision making process, someone will find out directly the truth of a product or service and one of them can see the image factor of the company / college.

CONCLUSION

1. Experiential marketing variables have a positive effect on word of mouth variables.
2. The college image variable has a positive effect on the word of mouth variable.
3. Experiential marketing variable has a positive effect on the decision variable to choose MM-UAD.
4. The university image variable has a positive effect on the decision variable to choose MM-UAD.
5. The variable word of mouth has a positive effect on the decision variable to choose MM-UAD.
6. Experiential marketing variable through word of mouth on the decision to choose MM-UAD shows that indirectly it has no significant effect.
7. The variable image of higher education through word of mouth on the decision to choose MM-UAD shows that indirectly it has no significant effect

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