

ANALYSIS OF THE PROMOTION OF NEW STUDENT ADMISSIONS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ISLAMIC BUSINESS ETHICS

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to uncover how the promotion activity of Universitas Muhammadiyah Enrekang in South Sulawesi Province is implemented according to Islamic business ethics to recruit new students. This research uses qualitative methods, namely by structured interviews with the Promotion Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Enrekang, in June-August 2022. This research found that Universitas Muhammadiyah Enrekang uses a promotion model that is complied with the Islamic business ethics, which consists of of autonomy, honesty, justice, mutual benefit and moral integrity. This research also reveals that these promotional activities are not merely business activities but have da'wah values. The novelty of this research is in describing how promotion can be done in line with the principles of Islamic business ethics and how business and ethics are two things that be able to in line.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is one of the developing countries that continue to focus on developing the quality of its human resources through education, which is expected to be able to continue to support welfare development. In this case, private universities (PTS) have a role to further expand access to human resources for quality higher education. Private Higher Education activities are largely determined by the Education Development Contribution (SPP) amount. PTS management must always think creatively and innovatively to recruit students every new school year with various methods and approaches [1]. For this reason, promotional activities are important.

Promotion is part of a marketing strategy [2] that not only introduces but also forms a good image of the institution and attracts the interest of prospective students in choosing a university to study. With promotional activities, higher education institutions can introduce and present themselves and have confidence in the community in various activities and information carried out in tertiary institutions [3].

The importance of promotion in order to attract new students is also well understood by Enrekang Muhammadiyah University (UMER), a PTS in Enrekang district, South Sulawesi Province, which is under the guidance of the Muhammadiyah organization. UMER manages nine study programs [4], which annually accept student applications from various regions, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of Enrekang Muhammadiyah University New Student Registrations in 2019, 2020 and 2022

Faculty	2019	2020	2021
Faculty of Teacher Training and Education	163	161	167
Faculty of Science and Technology	0	160	110
Amount	163	321	277

Source: Enrekang Muhammadiyah University (2022)

Table 1 shows that in 2019, 2020 and 2021, new student admissions fluctuated quite a bit. Conditions like this certainly have to be a serious concern for UMER management so that the number of students registering for UMER can continue to increase. One of the things that UMER management is currently promoting is increasing marketing promotion activities to market the good name of the campus in the community, which in turn can encourage high school graduate students to be interested in registering themselves at UMER.

As an institution that breathes the Islamic movement because it carries the name of the Muhammadiyah organization, UMER, in its operational activities, including promotional activities, it can

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reflect Islamic values. Related to this, Widana et al. (2014) explained that implementing Islamic business ethics will ensure that the organization's operational activities align with Islamic values. So the purpose of this study is to analyze how promotional activities are by Islamic business ethics, which UMER carries out in recruiting prospective new students..

2. METHOD

The research used a qualitative approach through a structured interview method [5]. In this case, it was carried out at the Institute for Promotion and Institutional Development at the Muhammadiyah University of Enrekang. Research activities occur at Enrekang Muhammadiyah University in Enrekang Regency, South Sulawesi, in June-August 2022.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A brief description of the research object

The Muhammadiyah College of Teaching and Education (STKIP) was the beginning of history which later developed into Enrekang Muhammadiyah University. STKIP Muhammadiyah was established based on the Establishment Charter of the Muhammadiyah Teaching and Culture Council number 026/III.SW.S73/79 dated 19 September 1979. STKIP Muhammadiyah Enrekang continues to grow. The last and most significant development is that in 2020, STKIP Muhammadiyah Enrekang changed its form to Muhammadiyah Enrekang University (EMER) (Enrekang Muhammadiyah University, 2022). Currently UMER has 2 (two) faculties which cover a total of 9 (nine) Study Programs.

Table 2: Faculties and Study Programs Owned by Enrekang Muhammadiyah University

Faculty	Study program
1 Faculty of Teacher Training and Education	Nonformal Education Study Program
	PRPDI Guidance and Counseling
	English Education Study Program
	Mathematics Education Study Program
	Elementary School Teacher Education Study Program
2 Faculty of Science and Technology	Civil Engineering Study Program
	Agrotechnology Study Program
	Bioentrepreneurship Study Program
	Library and Information Science Study Program

Source: Enrekang Muhammadiyah University (2022)

Implementation of promotional activities

This research has conducted interviews with the UMER Institute for Promotion and Institutional Development. The following is a summary of the results of the interviews that have been conducted.

- (1) The form of a marketing promotion by UMER is personal selling carried out by UMER staff appointed directly by the Institute for Promotion and Institutional Development to conduct outreach to various high schools and equivalents, especially those in Enrekang Regency.
- (2) Promotional planning is carried out prior to the implementation of the promotion, including:
 - a. Target audience: The promotion team targeted high school graduates, so outreach was conducted directly at various high schools (equivalent) in the Enrekang Regency area. To facilitate the activities and coordination of the promotion team, the target high schools were divided into several zones according to the number of existing sub-districts. Promotional activities are deliberately adjusted to the momentum of the holy month of Ramadan, utilizing activities at the mosque to carry out outreach.
 - b. Communication goal: to move more and more high school graduates interested in registering for UMER. Then the form of communication is designed to encourage conative (action) immediately (commonly referred to as hard selling).
 - c. The message to be conveyed: The socialization aligns with UMER's vision: "To become a superior university in the field of techno and solopreneurship with a global perspective based on progressive Islamic values". The message's contents are that studying at UMER will be better prepared to face competition.
 - d. Selection of communication channels: Because the nature of the promotion is personal selling, direct socialization in the form of presentations in front of the target audience is considered more effective. An important point in personal selling is the creation of good relations between the

- organization and the target audience. Therefore, the presentation of the material must be interesting and interactive.
- e. Determination of the required budget: Because it is carried out during Ramadan, the University does not need to provide a consumption budget for socialization participants.
 - f. Implementation of an integrated marketing communication mix: The University only uses socialization media (personal selling) and little advertising in the form of pamphlets/brochures distributed to socialization participants and banners and billboards at several points in Enrekang Regency.
 - g. Ensuring feedback: The promotion team provides a hotline with a what apps number so interested prospective students can ask questions and get answers immediately.

Regarding the dimensions of Islamic business ethics, the implementation is as follows:

- a. The Principle of autonomy: Promotion is socialization, not coercion. Even though the aim is to encourage as many high school graduates as possible to register for UMER, communication must still be carried out politely without using a tone of threats. Promotion must contain da'wah and educational messages that enlighten the target audience.
- b. Principle of honesty: The information submitted regarding UMER is true and accurate. This means not exaggerating UMER's advantages or vilifying other institutions. The promotion team may fairly convey UMER's strengths and achievements.
- c. Principle of justice: Communication is sought to be reciprocal, not unidirectional. Participants are welcome to ask questions, and the promotion executor will try to answer each question as completely as possible. The team was asked to record all questions and suggestions from the target audience.
- d. The Principle of mutual benefit: Apart from communicating the benefits of Enrekang Muhammadiyah University, it also provides promotional packages, for example, cutting tuition fees for early batch applicants and providing scholarships for students from underprivileged families.
- e. The Principle of moral integrity: The executor/officer of promotional activities is kind and polite, like a guest. For example, always ask for official permission from the authorities before carrying out socialization activities.

Preparation of team members before going to the field: Several things must be considered because UMER is an Islamic institution. Therefore, members of the promotion team need to prepare themselves as well as possible by doing the following:

- a. Establish sincere and sincere intentions in carrying out activities, realized by always being enthusiastic about activities and trying as much as possible, but the results are left to the decree of Allah SWT.
- b. Be professional in preparing promised activities in the form of good, interesting and informative material. In addition, the promotion team prepares itself to be able to master the material and convey it to the target audience properly.
- c. Honest and trustworthy, implemented by conveying data and information properly and completely. The information submitted must be accurate and credible. If there is a promise, it must be ensured that it can be kept. So the promotion team must master all the information and understand which information can be conveyed and which cannot.
- d. Not violating sharia, manifested by always paying attention to Sharia aspects in activities, such as wearing Muslim/Muslimah clothing, carrying out activities, not cutting prayer times, etc.
- e. Prioritizing ukhuwah Islamiyah by avoiding debates or arguments that lead to differences in manual fiqh. It is generally known that Muhammadiyah has several understandings of fiqh that are different from other Islamic organizations. If the target audience asks this, the question will not be answered directly and will be directed to the material on the role of UMER in advancing the quality of human resources in Enrekang Regency.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, business and ethics are two things that should go hand in hand. Business should be a worldly activity and an investment in the hereafter. For this reason, Islamic ethics is needed in providing business guidance. Applying ethics in business is a barometer of obedience and piety to Allah because it ensures that all life activities, including business, are a means of worship to Allah SWT in achieving piety. Enrekang Muhammadiyah University's promotional activities in recruiting new prospective students, namely directly visiting prospective students both outside and at school. Promotional

activities are carried out by prioritizing the principles of Islamic business ethics, namely autonomy, honesty, fairness, mutual benefit and moral integrity.

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