



A Study of Students and Parents' Awareness and Interest in Banjarmasin Polytechnic

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia is currently focusing on vocational education and skills improvement to improve the quality of the human resources. The government has also long established several vocational universities, including in South Kalimantan. Therefore, this study seeks to describe the awareness and interest of South Kalimantan Community towards the Banjarmasin Polytechnic. This study aims to find the level of awareness and interest of prospective students towards Banjarmasin Polytechnic, and how to improve the awareness and interest towards Banjarmasin Polytechnic. This study used a quantitative descriptive approach. Data conducted using Online Survey with total sample of 400 people. The respondents were students and parents of SMA/SMK from big regencies/cities in South Kalimantan. The findings indicate that the level of awareness and interests towards Banjarmasin Polytechnic is quite good (between 68%-76%). However, several efforts are still needed to raise awareness and interest of prospective students and parents of students towards the Banjarmasin Polytechnic. The implications of this research are optimizing promotions through social media, establishing collaborations and making visits to high school / vocational schools. In the future, the choice of majors, study programs and curriculum offered should also focus on entrepreneurial skills / business skills in each scientific field.

Keywords: *Awareness; Marketing; Promotion; Interest; Vocational Education; Polytechnic*

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is currently focusing on vocational education and skills improvement in order to improve the quality of the Indonesian human resources [11]. The government has also long established several vocational universities, including in the South Kalimantan area, namely Banjarmasin Polytechnic. In terms of quantity, there are far fewer vocational graduates than graduates of academic education [10]. So that the job opportunities for vocational graduates are still wide open and for this reason, efforts are needed to increase public awareness and interest in vocational education [8].

According to Crow & Crow, Oemar, and Bunker, to support industrial and business operations in a region, skilled and competent workers are should be appropriate and relevant to the needs of the industry in that region [2-3,7]. So that the *link and match* process between labour providers (schools and higher education) and industry can run smoothly. Higher Education is expected to be able to print the number of workers according to needs. This raises the government's awareness of the

importance of the role of vocational higher education in increasing the competitiveness of that region.

Previous findings by Al-Dajeh, Henny, Fajar, and MarkPlus showed that the absorption of vocational higher education is less than academic higher education [1,4-6]. In Indonesia, especially in South Kalimantan region, from a total of 127,440 high school and vocational high school students, there are only 40% students who continue their academic and vocational higher education under the Ministry of Education and Culture in the South Kalimantan region [9]. This means that the remaining 60% choose to work or continue their education in private institutions / higher education outside South Kalimantan, or worse: become unemployed. In contrast to the national unemployment rate, the highest unemployment rate in South Kalimantan is actually at the high school level, which is 5.66%. Meanwhile, the level of education at the University/equivalent is actually lower, which is 3.65% [9]. This is very unfortunate because in fact there is a huge opportunity for higher vocational education to be able to absorb high school and vocational high school

graduates in their own area, and furthermore, of course, to be able to reduce the number of unemployed high school and vocational high school graduates.

Therefore, this study seeks to describe the awareness and interest of the people of South Kalimantan towards vocational higher education in South Kalimantan, especially the Banjarmasin Polytechnic. The research will begin with a description of the awareness and interest of parents and high school and vocational students towards the Banjarmasin Polytechnic, followed by conclusions and implications in order to increase public interest in the Banjarmasin Polytechnic.

2. METHOD

The research used a survey type quantitative approach. The variables in the study consisted of Awareness and interest in higher vocational education. Data analysis techniques used descriptive statistics. The study was conducted in August 2020. Respondents will be given a questionnaire which was developed based on indicators in research by MarkPlus [6]. Before the data is analysed further, the validity and reliability of the research instrument used will be tested first. Then, the researcher will analyse the level of awareness and interest of the South Kalimantan community towards the Banjarmasin Polytechnic, in this case, prospective students and the parents. The level of awareness and interest of prospective students and the parents will be in the form of a percentage (%). Furthermore, the data collection & sampling techniques is as follows:

1. Collecting data using Online Survey and Computer Assisted People Interview (CAPI) methods with respondents from big regencies/cities in South Kalimantan.
2. Respondents from this study were parents of high school and vocational students in South Kalimantan and high school and vocational high school students in South Kalimantan.
3. The criteria for selecting the sample used as respondents include: aged 13-65 years, for respondent parents of students must have children who attend SMA / SMK grades 1, 2, and 3, while for respondent students must attend SMA / SMK class 1, 2, and 3.
4. The selection of the number of respondents (both parents and high school and vocational high school students) was taken from major districts / cities in South Kalimantan with the highest number of high school and vocational students (based on data obtained from [12]). The selected regencies / cities are Tanah Laut Regency, Kota Baru, Banjar Regency, Tabalong Regency, and Banjarmasin City. The number of students from these 5 districts / cities is 38,034 for high school students and 32,768 for vocational students. The total is 70,802 people.
5. Sampling was taken with a margin of error of 5% with a 95% confidence level, to see the awareness and interest of high school and vocational high school students towards vocational higher education in South Kalimantan.
6. The number of respondents in each region is adjusted to the number of students in the district / city, with the exception of Banjarmasin because it is the provincial capital.
7. The sample calculation uses the Slovin formula (400 respondents).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

The results showed that the level of *awareness* of prospective students and the parents of SMA and SMK age towards Banjarmasin Banjarmasin Polytechnic is quite good, namely 75.9% of students' parents and 68.9% of students. So, it is necessary to increase awareness of the Banjarmasin Polytechnic, especially those devoted to prospective students. The results also showed that the level of interest of prospective students and parents of prospective high school and vocational students in Banjarmasin Polytechnic is quite good, where for students it is 73.4% and parents are 84.3%. However, the number of students who are not interested in continuing their studies at the Banjarmasin Polytechnic is more than the parents of students, which is 26.6%. This shows that the target of increasing interest in studying at the Banjarmasin Polytechnic should be focused on prospective students because there are still quite a few who are not yet interested in Banjarmasin Polytechnic (almost 30%).

3.2. Discussion

Based on the awareness data, it can be concluded that students and parents have a quite good of knowledge about vocational education. But, the Awareness level of students to the Banjarmasin Polytechnic is slightly lower than the parents. This shows that most students still do not know about the existence of the Banjarmasin Polytechnic. This is of course unfortunate, because students are the main target of students at the Banjarmasin Polytechnic. In addition, most sources of information about Banjarmasin Polytechnic are obtained through social media, teachers/schools, and parental friends. This means that the three sources of information can be maximized by the Banjarmasin Polytechnic in promoting itself to prospective students and the parents. For this reason, several efforts can be made in order to increase awareness of the Banjarmasin Polytechnic, including the following:

1. Utilizing social media for disseminating information and promotions about Banjarmasin Polytechnic

(using Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok and Twitter)

2. Collaborating and making visits to schools both at the SMA and SMK levels to introducing and promoting Banjarmasin Polytechnic.
3. Implementing special meetings, communities or groups on social media as a communication media between the campus and alumni / parents to disseminating and promoting Banjarmasin Polytechnic.

Based on the data regarding Interest in Banjarmasin Polytechnic, it also can be concluded that the target of increasing interest in studying at Banjarmasin Polytechnic should be focused on prospective students. In addition, it is also known that the advantages of the Banjarmasin Polytechnic are graduates who are ready to work and the short study time, which gets the lowest percentage indicates the low information from prospective students and the parents about this. Although the interest of prospective students and the parents is quite large, it cannot be denied that its popularity is still not as good as the University. Moreover, the suitability of interests and students' future goals also needs more attention. Last, the percentage of students who are willing to recommend Banjarmasin Polytechnic is greater than the percentage of the parents. This shows the need for a special approach in order to increase the willingness of the parents in recommending Banjarmasin Polytechnic to others. For this reason, several efforts can be made in order to increase interest in the Banjarmasin Polytechnic, including the following:

1. Using social media, visiting/collaborating with the school, or strengthening ties with alumni/parents/guardians of students through special communities or groups as described previously to emphasize the interest of prospective students towards Banjarmasin Polytechnic.
2. Promotional materials should be emphasized on the advantages and main characteristics of the Banjarmasin Polytechnic, especially about short study times on it.
3. Promotional activities at the Banjarmasin Polytechnic need to be carried out in a massive and structured. In the future, promotional activities can use influencers, icons, figures, and public figures to boost the popularity of the Banjarmasin Polytechnic.
4. The management of the Banjarmasin Polytechnic can evaluate and add to the choice of majors, study programs, and existing curriculum whether they are in accordance with the interests and aspirations of prospective students. Considering that the goal that is most chosen by prospective students is to become an entrepreneur, the choice of majors, study programs and curriculum at the Banjarmasin Polytechnic should also focus on entrepreneurial skills / business skills in each scientific field.
5. The need for a special approach in order to increase the willingness of the parents in recommending Banjarmasin Polytechnic to others through regular

meetings, communities, or special groups that facilitate the exchange of information and promotion for Banjarmasin Polytechnic.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that the level of awareness of the interests of prospective students and parents of prospective high school and vocational students in Banjarmasin Polytechnic is quite good. The implications of this research are:

1. Utilization of social media with the target of prospective students (high school/vocational school children) by using Instagram Ads, Facebook Ads and YouTube Ads, which are expected to increase awareness and interest of the target audience.
2. Uploading advertisements on social media (instagram, facebook, youtube, tiktok and twitter) in the form of talk show content, education, or miniseries conducted by the Banjarmasin Polytechnic.
3. Translating vocational education into a persona, through the presence of icons/characters (influencers, actors, actresses, and public figures). This icon will as a spokesperson for Banjarmasin Polytechnic. The content can be delivered in the form of talk show, advertisements and socialization of the Banjarmasin Polytechnic through the icon's personal account.
4. Implementing virtual events and seminars to increase the curiosity of the parents to Banjarmasin Polytechnic. For example, Poliban Fair activities before the New Academic Year which invites parents and prospective new students, holding a Booth exhibition which allows parents and prospective students to interact directly with the Banjarmasin Polytechnic. Or it could be by holding seminars, webinars, or talk shows containing success stories delivered by the icon of the Banjarmasin Polytechnic.
5. Refocus the social media content of the Banjarmasin Polytechnic to communicate the value and quality indirectly. This can be done with each content upload containing a focus of discussion about the quality, or it can also be in the form of statistical data presented using infographics or interesting facts or information about the importance of choosing Banjarmasin Polytechnic. In addition, all types of content should be presented visually.
6. Banjarmasin Polytechnic can use an entrepreneurial marketing approach in the implementation of its education. This is done by upgrading D3 to D4 with an entrepreneurship curriculum, providing briefing and certification of D3 and D4 graduates in marketing (in brand, sales, service, and digital business), enriching creativity and entrepreneurship curriculum, and providing certified internship programs.

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