

Perceptions of the Society towards the Profile of Teachers' Preparation Program

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Perceptions of the Society towards the Profile of Teachers' Preparation Program

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ABSTRACT

The quality improvement of the university becomes one of the considerations in choosing of study program. Therefore, the higher education branding is essential to maintain its existence in the society. As a part of Teacher Preparation Program in Central Java, Faculty Education of Mathematics, Science, and Information Technology University PGRI of Semarang (FPMIPATI UPGRIS) needs a branding effort to increase its existence in the community so that it can increase the interest of prospective new students to choose it as a destination for undergraduate education. This study aims to determine public perceptions about the profile of FPMIPATI UPGRIS. The method used in this study is a cross-sectional quantitative survey method. The results showed that the profile of each Study Program at FPMIPATI which consists of (1) excellent curriculum and competencies, (2) partnerships that exist in the study program, (3) Facilities, (4) programs to facilitate students to obtain funding other than scholarships, (4) profiles of graduates from each Study Program, able to be an attraction for the public, especially prospective new students.

Introduction

In the digital era, people requires the thinking skills and life skills to improve the competitiveness and quality of life. Improving thinking skills and life skills could be achieved through the education process in the higher education. Since the importance of higher education levels, it triggers an increasing number of universities in Indonesia, particularly the number of private universities in Central Java private in 2018 increased by 248 universities (PDDIKTI, 2018). This leads to a high level of competition between universities to carry out branding in maintaining its existence in the community. Universities are increasingly making branding efforts, as well as the Faculty of Mathematics, Science and Information Technology (FPMIPATI) in the Universitas PGRI Semarang (UPGRIS), one of the private university in Central Java. Various branding efforts were carried out, namely through promotion strategies, the accreditation of department, improving the information systems

as a form of improving service quality, as well as faculty publications with the faculty website. These efforts are aimed at increasing the number of new students in each period of new student admission (PMB). In PMB 2020 as of September 29, 2020 the number of new regular FPMIPATI students consisting of the Mathematics Education Study Program, Physics Education, and Information Technology Education reached 179 students, meanwhile the number of registrants who passed the selection was 300 people (PMB UPGRIS, 2020). So the percentage of re-registrants from the number of prospective students who pass the selection is 59.67%. Based on this percentage, it is necessary to optimize branding efforts to increase the number of new students at FPMIPATI in the following year.

The evaluation of branding that has been carried out by FPMIPATI UPGRIS is that several are not familiar with FPMIPATI UPGRIS. Therefore, this conditions requires better promotional efforts. Regarding to the percentage of the number of prospective students who re-registered has not reached 75% of the number of prospective students who passed the selection, it showed other universities have a higher attractiveness than FPMIPATI UPGRIS. Therefore, an effort is needed to extract information in the community related to matters that influence the selection of study programs, faculties, and Universities as the destination for studying. This study raises the issue of what is the public perception of the profile of FPMIPATI UPGRIS. Meanwhile, the purpose of this study is to describe the perception of the society towards profile of FPMIPATI UPGRIS. The results of this study are expected to provide recommendations for promotion strategies for PMB FPMIPATI UPGRIS in the future period and provide recommendations related to the expectations and needs of the society related to the competence of learning outcomes in the universities, particularly in FPMIPATI UPGRIS.

Literature Review

Universitas PGRI Semarang (UPGRIS) was established by the Regional Level I PGRI Central Java Province through the Educational Institution Trustees Foundation (YPLP) IKIP PGRI Central Java and is a change in form from IKIP PGRI Semarang with the Academy of Technology Semarang. The purpose of its establishment is to prepare prospective leaders who are superior and have national character so that they can become role models in the life of the nation and state in achieving the welfare of all Indonesian people.

The Faculty Education of Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Information Technology hereinafter abbreviated as FPMIPATI is one of 8 faculties under UPGRIS which has a vision to become a superior and self-identified Faculty in 2025. FPMIPATI has a mission to provide education and role models to produce graduates in the field Education in mathematics, science, and information technology that is superior and has identity. These vision and mission is described as follows: (a) carry out innovative research to improve the quality of learning in the fields of Mathematics, Science, and Information Technology Education; (b) carry out community service as the implementation of research results to improve the quality and welfare of the community and (c) carry out partnership activities with the domestic and foreign institutions as a manifestation of the Tri dharma of Higher Education.

FPMIPATI Universitas PGRI Semarang has four study programs, namely, Mathematics Education with B accreditation, Biology Education with A accreditation, Physics Education with B accreditation and Information Technology Education with B accreditation. Every year, FPMIPATI Physics Education students always represent Central Java private universities (Kopertis VI) in the National Physics Olympiad competition. FPMIPATI students each year always pass the Higher Education funding in the National Student Creativity Program (PKM) with the highest number of all faculties under UPGRIS. The alumni of the Biology Education Study Program have become the driving force of hydroponic agribusiness and plant nutrition entrepreneurs in several areas, such as Kudus, Pati, Banjarnegara, Brebes and Jepara. Mathematics students always have a place as champions in the development of Augmented Reality learning media at regional and national levels.

The achievements of various things related to quality improvement carried out by FPMIPATI UPGRIS will be able to provide a good image and strengthen reputation if accompanied by a good branding (Setyanto et.al, 2017). A solid reputation for private universities has a very important meaning in order to maintain the existence of its name in the community so that it is not abandoned by the community. Improving the reputation of private universities through branding can also be done by increasing the relationship or psychological bond between the university and students, improving this relationship can be done by meeting students' expectations related to the learning experience. Therefore, the students will have a good perception and will maintain their emotional bond with others until they graduate, and they will give a positive image of the university in the community (Kusumah et.al, 2020). A university brand image needs to be built by creating an image in the eyes of the public about the advantages that are in great demand by the community, the brand image has a great influence on the community in making the choice of a university to continue their studies. The brand image can increase public awareness, so of course it will increase public interest in voting (Ningsih, 2019).

Research Methods

This study uses a quantitative approach using a cross-sectional quantitative survey method. The quantitative approach is used in this study because of its ability to collect and analyze data for numerical settings in explaining the phenomenon under study (Gay & Mills, 2018). While the survey method was chosen because this method can be used as a tool to collect data with descriptive purposes (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Jackson, 2006). The survey research procedure to be carried out in this study refers to Cohen, Manion, & Morrison (2007) which includes the following stages: (1) determining the focus, (2) determining the information needed to answer the problem formulation, (3) determining the technique the sampling used, (4) determining the data collection instrument, (5) compiling the instrument, (6) conducting the instrument test and revision if necessary, (7) data collection, (8) data analysis, and (9) report preparation. The research was carried out at FPMIPATI In October – December 2020, with samples of parents and students from the Faculty Education of Mathematics and Information Technology who came from the various cities and regencies in Central Java. The technique sampling in this survey research was

carried out through probability random sampling technique (Jackson, 2006), with a sample size of 199 people consisting of 99 new FPMIPATI students, 75 FPMIPATI new students parents, 17 high school students, and parents of high school students amounted to 8 people.

The data collection technique used was an electronic survey using the Google Form application. This technique was chosen because of the COVID-19 pandemic which made it impossible to meet face-to-face with many people. Through electronic surveys, the advantage of the data obtained tends to be less subject to sampling bias because respondents can clearly write down their responses without the intervention of others (Jackson, 2008). In addition, using online surveys can reduce costs, without the cost of photocopying survey manuscripts, and no coding required. Thus the results are ready for statistical analysis immediately (Hair et al., 2013).

The instrument in this study is in the form of question items which ask about four study programs in FPMIPATI UPGRIS. This questionnaire was given in the form of a google form link for a survey through the WhatsApp application. Respondents are required to respond to all items in the google form before submitting their answers. In the google form important questions are starred to prevent possible data loss. The researchers obtain the data from all respondents in the form of google sheets. Questions are separated according to the role of the response as grade 12 students, parents of grade 12 students, new students, or parents of new grade 12 students.

The system in the google form is created for each role. However, the core of the question asked is related to the purpose of the research conducted. In answering these questions, respondents answered with a Likert scale where 1 stated strongly disagreed, and 5 stated strongly agreed.

The data analysis technique in this study is descriptive analysis from the question in the Google form based on the formulation of the problem.

Findings and Discussion

This section provide the information of the description of profile and the discussion related to the data displayed. The following are several aspect pf the perception from the society related to the FPMIPATI UPGRIS as a faculty that prepare for the Teachers' Preparation Program.

1. The attractiveness of the Study Program related to the curriculum & superior competence of the Study Program

In a survey questionnaire to see the attractiveness of each Study Program in FPMIPATI UPGRIS, detailed information regarding superior courses and superior competencies that support the profile of graduates of each Study Program is presented, with the aim of respondents being able to provide answers that match their perceptions based on the information provided, precise and complete. The results of this survey are shown in Figure 5.

In general, respondents stated that the superior courses and competencies in each Study Program at FPMIPATI UPGRIS are important things to consider in determining the place to

study, this is indicated by an average percentage of 64% to 67% of respondents answering important in the survey in each program. Studies. This shows that the superior curriculum and competencies provided by each Study Program are in accordance with the expectations of the community and are the profile of FPMIPATI UPGRIS that is able to become an attraction for the community.

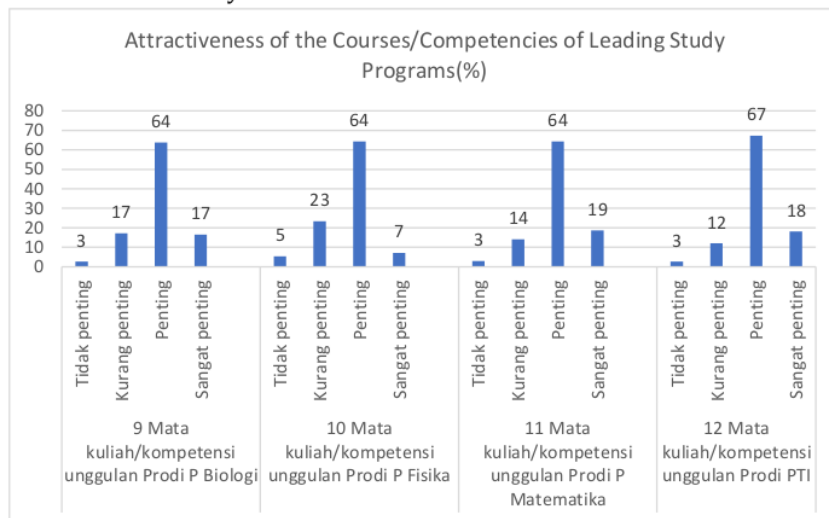


Figure 5. The results of the survey of the attractiveness of the courses or superior competencies of the Study Program at FPMIPATI on the selection of places to study by prospective students

2. The attractiveness of the Study Program related to partnerships with other institutions to support additional competencies

The partnerships established by each Study Program at FPMIPATI are described in detail in the survey questionnaire, so that respondents know all the institutions that cooperate with each Study Program. Thus, respondents are expected to provide answers to questions in accordance with what is known. The results of the survey can be seen in Figure 6.

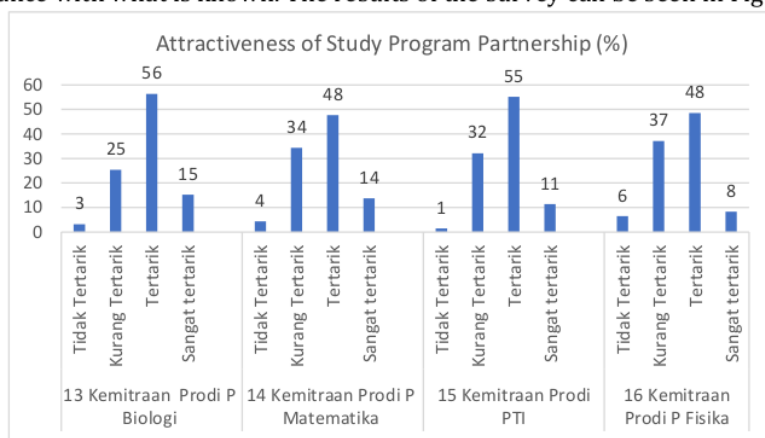


Figure 6. The results of the survey on the attractiveness of partnerships made by each Study Program at FPMIPATI UPGRIS

The partnerships with various institutions, both public and private, carried out by the Study Programs at FPMIPATI are generally perceived as interesting by respondents, which is indicated by the highest percentage being interested in the answer options for the survey in each Study Program. This shows that the partnership that has been established, for most respondents is considered to have been supportive in equipping students with competencies according to the graduate profile. However, respondents also responded by choosing the less interested option with an average percentage exceeding 25%, from this result it can be predicted that some respondents consider the partnership not sufficient to support the provision of student competencies, or it is not a very important attraction but it is also not ignored by the community.

3. Attractiveness of Study Programs related to Online Learning Supporting LMS

The pandemic situation that requires the learning process to be carried out online will certainly be a consideration for prospective students to choose a university to study. Therefore, in this survey questionnaire, the researcher asked questions related to the availability of LMS as an online learning facility at FPMIPATI UPGRIS. The results of the survey can be seen in Figure 7.

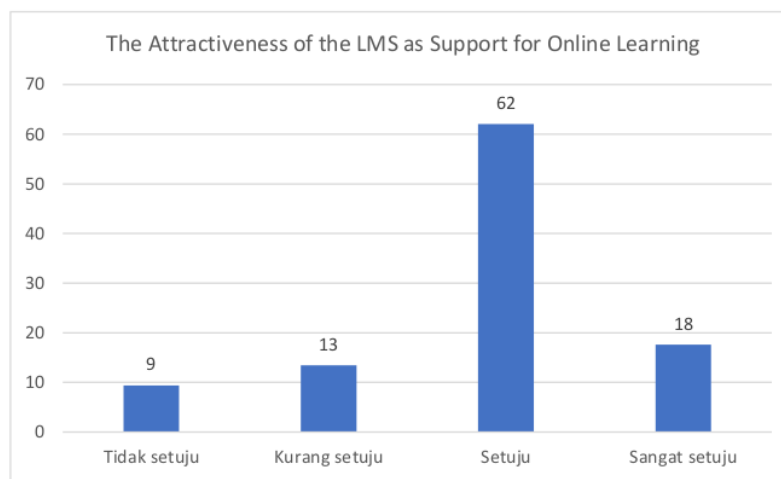


Figure 7. The results of the survey on the attractiveness of LMS as a support for online learning at FPMIPATI UPGRIS

The learning management system (LMS) provided by universities was responded to by respondents as important and agreed that the availability of the LMS provided an attraction in choosing a place to study.

4. Attractiveness of Study Programs related to funding opportunities other than scholarships

At FPMIPATI UPGRIS opens the widest opportunities for students to develop their potential as well as opportunities to earn additional income, in this research survey questionnaire, various opportunities are presented including from the Student Creativity Program (PKM), student internships at UPGRIS institutions, practicum assistants, to entrepreneurship. The survey results related to the attractiveness of funding opportunities other than scholarships can be seen in Figure 8.

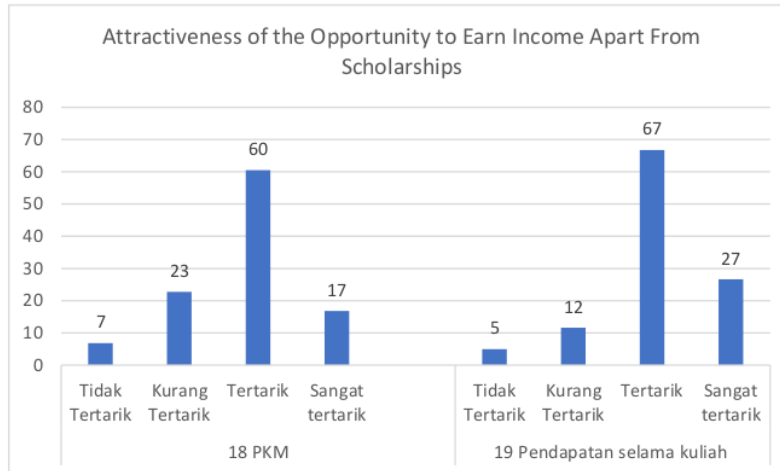


Figure 8. The results of the survey on the attractiveness of obtaining additional income apart from scholarships at FPMIPATI UPGRIS

Respondents chose the interested option with a percentage exceeding 50% in the survey related to the opportunity to earn additional income while studying, both from the opportunity to compete for funding in the Student Creativity Program (PKM) or other activities. This shows that the opportunity provided by FPMIPATI is an attraction for the community and can influence in determining the choice of a place to study.

5. The attractiveness of the Study Program related to the professional description of the graduates of each Study Program

The graduate profession is often used as a benchmark for someone to see the success of a university in preparing its students to get a good future, therefore in this research survey, respondents are given a detailed description of the professions of alumni from each study program at FPMIPATI. UPGRIS to see the attractiveness of the FPMIPATI profile regarding this for prospective students. The results of the survey on the attractiveness of the graduate's professional profile can be seen in Figure 9.

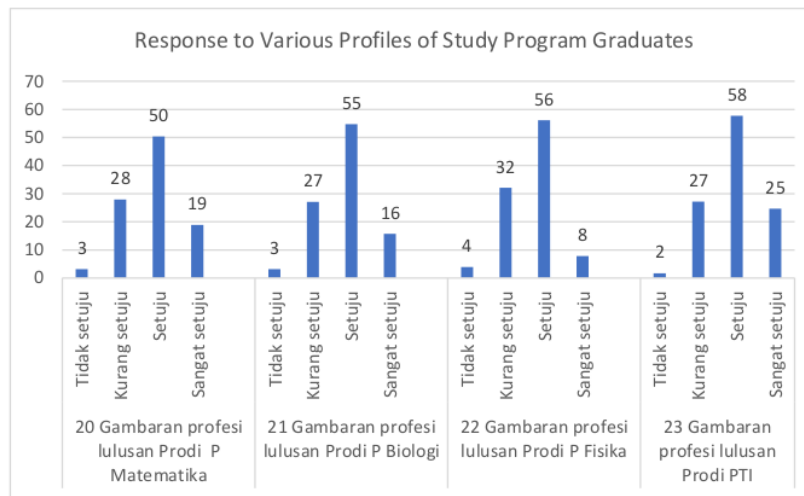


Figure 9. Survey on the attractiveness of various profiles of FPMIPATI UPGRIS graduates

Based on the percentage of responses given by the respondents, the highest percentage is the agreed response in each study program, which is in the range of 50% to 58%. This shows that the profession of graduates of each Study Program at FPMIPATI is able to attract people to choose FPMIPATI UPGRIS as a place to study.

6. Competence expected by society

Additional competencies that are expected to be obtained by respondents from FPMIPATI are character, mastery of IT, managerial, public speaking, laboratory analysis, writing, banking, soft skills, spirituality, and sports.

7. Effect of Study Program profile on selection decisions

In a survey related to the influence of the profile of this Study Program, respondents were given an open question, namely "Which profile interests you to study or recommend your son/daughter to study at FPMIPATI UPGRIS? Give reasons for your answer!"

From the results of the profile survey or things that interest respondents to the Study Program at FPMIPATI, namely the professional profile of graduates, especially being professional teachers/educators and entrepreneurs, affordable fees, reduced fees and payments, scholarships, study program accreditation, study programs and curriculum, facilities, vision and mission, university profile, alumni profile, PGRI profile, lecturer profile.

Conclusion

The results showed that the profile of each Study Program at FPMIPATI which consists of (1) excellent curriculum and competencies, (2) partnerships that exist in the study program, (3) Facilities, (4) programs to facilitate students to obtain funding other than

scholarships, (4) profiles of graduates from each Study Program, able to be an attraction for the public, especially prospective new students.

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