

ABSTRACT

Technological advances in the Industrial Revolution 4.0 era have brought significant changes to marketing approaches in various sectors, including the higher education sector. Social media marketing strategies are now used as an effective medium to shape brand image and influence prospective students' decisions in determining their choice of study program. This study aims to analyze the influence of social media marketing on the decision to choose the Digital Business Undergraduate Study Program at Telkom University Purwokerto, with brand image as a mediating variable. The study was conducted using a quantitative approach with the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method processed through SmartPLS 4 software. The number of respondents in this study was 237 people, who were selected using a purposive sampling technique. The results of the analysis show that social media marketing does not have a significant direct influence on the selection decision, but indirectly influences through brand image, which is proven to have a positive and significant influence. Thus, this finding highlights the important role of strengthening brand image through social media as a communication strategy that can increase the attractiveness of prospective students.

Keywords: *brand image, selection decision, SEM-PLS, social media marketing, study program*