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BRAND IMAGE BUILDING IN ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract. The brand image of the university is cumulative perceptions of how consumers see the brand of university. It is the consumer's experience with the brand that build images. Brand image is a crucial element that contributes to the success of an university and the highest value representing the university. State Islamic Higher Education (Perguruan Tinggi keagamaan Islam Negeri) currently faces unfavorable condition and second class image in stakeholders's mind. So, there is a need to be aware the value of brand image building. Therefore, it is very urgent to conduct this research. This is a qualitative approach and case study type. Source of the data is derived from informants and documentation, which are adjusted to the research focus. The result of this research indicates that: (1) The brand image of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang based on stakeholder's perspective is quite good. According to the data, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang is considered as an Islamic University which integrates science and religion and combines the concept of ma'had and university. (2) The strategy used by UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang is starting with building many advantages, both comparative and competitive advantages. The strategies can be described in 3 steps: building strong positioning, supporting by differentiation then promoting and communicating to the stakeholders.

Keywords. Brand Image; Brand Image Building; Islamic Higher Education.

A. INTRODUCTION

Islamic Higher Education's image as a second grade campus is still very tight in the stakeholder's minds, some students who fails test to enter in the State Higher Education (PTN) that were expected, finally they register for State Islamic Higher Education (PTKIN). The quality of PTKIN graduates is still under PTN graduates in accessing of work. The stakeholder's stigma towards PTKIN is still not good compared to PTN. This is also evidenced by the results of the ranking of universities, both national and international levels.

Indonesia Ranking University by webometric version 2018 occupy University of Indonesia (UI) in the first ranking, Gadjah Mada University (UGM) was second ranking and Technology Institute Bandung (ITB) was ranked 3rd. The highest ranking of PTKIN was UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta and still occupy in the 40th ranking, then UIN Sunan Kali Jaga Jogjakarta was occupied in 45th, and UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang was in 51st ranking.

For the ranking of world universities, both the Times Higher Education Supplement (THES) and Webometric versions. Indonesia is still under 800 ranking. In Webometric version, UI still in 838 ranking, UGM 857 and ITB 1127. For PTKIN, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta is still in position 3993, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Jogjakarta is in position 4183 and UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang is in position 4417.

That conditions indicate that the quality of PTKIN according to webometric assessment standards still needs a lot of improvement. The standard of webometric assessment itself includes

50% impact (referring network) and 50% activity (Presence Web Pages, Transparency Papers, Excellence Papers).

The situation experienced by PTKIN is actually better than before. A historical leap has been achieved. The change in status from Institute (IAIN) to University (UIN) and from college (STAIN) to Institute (IAIN) became the first step in improving PTKIN's quality and opening a new round of national and international competition. The change in status from IAIN to UIN began in 2002, starting from UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, followed by UIN Sunan Kalijogo Jogjakarta and then UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.

UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang has unique case because the only Islamic Higher Education (PTKIN) has college (STAIN) status and immediately becomes university (UIN) without the process of becoming an IAIN. So that the image of UIN Maliki Malang among other PTKIN has a very high increase. From small campus such as SD Inpres (Old building for Elementary School) has limited lecturers and limited students. Now UIN Mailiki Malang has a large campus, high-rise buildings, many lecturers, have quite a number of medical faculties and foreign students.

This study intends to snapshot the journey of UIN Maliki Malang in brand image building, hopefully this research can add to the knowledge of management, especially in the field of higher education management and can be a basis for illustrating how to build a brand image continuously so that the quality and reputation of PTKIN can increase continuously, in National, regional and global landscape.

Creating a unique brand image is not an easy task as the digital world. The best way to build and nurture an effective brand image is through a multidisciplinary approach. Keller (2003) said that the branding strategy for a firm reflects the number and nature of common and distinctive brand elements applied to different products sold by the firm. To build a strong brand image, there are several strategies. one of the strategy of building brand images, found by Hermawan Kartajaya (2005), namely Triangle of PDB (Positioning, Differentiation, Brand).

Figure 1
PDB Triangle (Positioning-Differentiation-Brand Triangle)
(Source: Hermawan Kartajaya, 2005)



Brand image is the perception and beliefs held by consumers, as reflected in associations held in consumer memory (Kotler and Keler: 2009). For the image concept, delivered by Vuokko (2003) described as bellow:

Figure 2
Elements of Corporate Image, (Vuokko, 2003)



In this concept, brand image cannot be determined by one factor, but several excellent factors that are carried out and provided by the organization, and are able to attract good stakeholder's perceptions of the organization. Because brand image is an impression in the minds of stakeholders to organization, so to build a brand image the organization not only builds one advantage, but many advantages, both competitive and comparative advantages. so that a good impression will be obtained from various stakeholders.

B. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method. Zuriah (2005) said that qualitative research is more concerned with the formation of substantive theories based on concepts arising from empirical data. In qualitative research researchers feel they do not know about what is not known, so that the design developed is always an open possibility of various changes that are necessary and flexible to the conditions that exist in the field of observation. This research is about the strategy of building the brand image of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. This research was conducted at Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University (UIN Maliki) Malang which is located on Gajayana street 50 Malang.

Suharsimi (2006) said that data in research are information or tangible material that can be used as evidence and basic material for the study. While the data source is the subject where data is obtained. Data sources in this study can be divided into two, human and documents. Human data sources function as subjects or key informants. Whereas documents data sources are documents that are relevant to the research focus, such as pictures, photos, meeting notes or writings that are related to the research focus. In this study, there are two data sources, namely primary data sources and secondary data sources, here is an explanation related to the two data sources.

C. RESULT & DISCUSSION

1. The concept of the Ideal Brand Image of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang

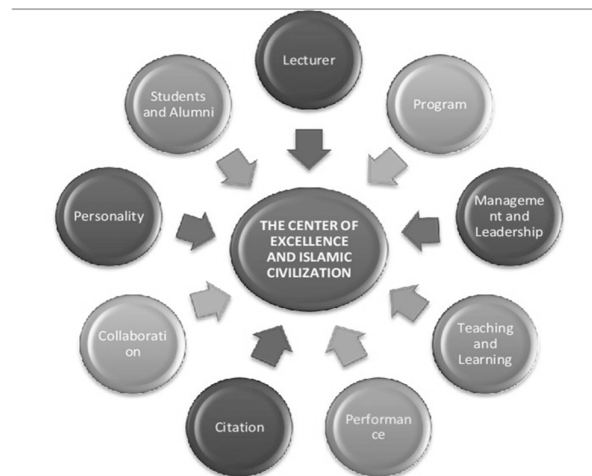
The effort to change institution from colage (STAIN) become university (UIN) began in 1998, then the 10 Year Strategic Plan of STAIN Malang was drafted in 1998-2008. The Strategic Plan later became a reference for the movement so that the determination of development in various fields emerged to achieve the ideals of STAIN Malang, to be The Center of Excellence and Islamic Civilization. The table below is an overview of the STAIN Malang situation in 1998.

Table 1
A description of STAIN Malang 1998

STATE OF MALANG 1998	
Institutional Status	College (STAIN Malang)
Human Resources	Amount 91 lecturers , with level education ; S3: 2, S2: 19 and S1: 70.
College Student	amount college student from 4 departments : Tarbiyah, Syari'ah, Language /Adab and Psychology : 2,648.
Means Infrastructure	Large land of 9 hectares , with building 1 unit office center , 1 unit office, 7 units of lecture office , 1 library unit , 1 unit hall, 1 building unit all-round use , 1 unit of micro teaching, 1 unit of laboratory language , 2 housing units lecturer , 1 mosque unit, 1 homestead ta'mir , 1 dormitory unit for female students, 1 unit of UKM (Activity Unit Students), 1 basketball court unit , and 1 field unit soccer.
Brand Image	Called as SD Inpres (Elementary School), Produces graduates as a religious teacher , modin, most of registrant is candidate students who don't accepted in state university (PTN), amount lecturer is limited and the quality is low, the facilities no worth to use, etc.

Islamic Higher Education's brand image is very different compared to the image of Islam as a religion that carries rahmatan lil alamin's mission . So, the improvement and movement is to reflect the glory of Islam. To achieve the vision, mission and goals of the university, UIN Maliki build and develop the identity of the campus, which is a culture of excellences. The culture of Excellences is the reflection in which aspects UIN Malang wants to perceived in stakeholder's mind. The culture of excellences that UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang build are:

Figure 3
The Culture of Excellences built in UIN Maliki Malang



There are nine advantages that are cultivated on campus, and also it reflect the willing of the university, in which aspects UIN Malang wants to perceived, that are: excellent personality, excellent teaching staff, excellent programs developed, excellent management and leadership, excellent education and teaching methods, excellent performance, excellent academic works (citation), excellent social networking (networking), and excellent alumni or graduates.

These image that will build in UIN Malang is same with Liston-Hayes opinion about universities reputation. Liston-Hayes (2009) said that universities should benchmark their reputation based on the percentage of full-time staff with PhDs, research rating based on academic publications, entry fees, ratio of full-time staff to full-time students, academic aptitude of students, starting salary of students after graduation, percentage of students employed upon graduating, and the university overall reputation.

2. Strategy to build a brand image of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang

The effort to build brand image of UIN Maliki Malang is a long journey that doing by the leaders and academicians of UIN Maliki Malang. To be able to play its strategic roles in the future as an Islamic higher education institution, UIN Malang has a strong will to achieve its big goal, which is to become best Islamic university with its various advantages. In other words, it will become the Center of Excellence and Islamic Civilization. All of this goal can be achieved if there is determination and spirit of the tempestuous and strategic steps toward change, growth and reform in all areas of the planned systematically and continuously.

Argenti (2000) said that "a school reputation represents the sum of multiple stakeholder perceptions of school identity or brand. Successful reputation is construed as an association with reputable university, a high-quality faculty and students, strong image in the corporate sector, prominent alumni and high survey rankings".

The steps of brad image building in UIN Malang are:

a. Institutional Change and Management

1) Reconstruction of Scientific Buildings and the Concept of Integrating Religion and Science

UIN Malang and the majority of PTKIN, according to Suprayogo (2011) often get the impression of being tilted in the stakeholder's eyes, some are skewed when Islamic universities are

associated with universities in general, including; Islamic universities only provide education for narrow areas, less progressive in scientific development, lack of research culture, tend to be conservative and not concerned with modern development.

2) Institutional Changes from college (STAIN) to university (UIN)

After reconstructing scientific buildings, the scope of scientific studies developed at college (STAIN) seems very narrow and not relevant to the vision and mission carried out. After changing its status to UIN, all elements of the campus built a common determination to make this Islamic university change in various aspects, both from the institutional side, the concept of scientific development, manpower, educational facilities and infrastructure and others as a whole.

Institutional change can be defined by the broader segmentation. By changing the institution, from college to university, it can attract more students in various faculties. And also it opens new competitive and larger segmentation and targeting.

3) Institutional Development Management

Institutionally, now UIN Maliki Malang has 7 faculties and postgraduate programs both Masters (S2) and Doctoral (S3) programs. Before, when still being college, UIN Malang has 4 departments.

4) Change in Institutional Identity

University Symbol:

- 1) The university's symbol is in the form of a green basic pentagon in which there is a yellow Arabic alphabet *Ulul Albab* (written in Arabic).
- 2) *Ulul Albab* writing in the middle of the five-fold symbolizes the commitment of the citizens of the academic community to become scholars who always zikir, thinking and do good deeds.
- 3) The yellow color of *Ulul Albab*'s writing shows the spirit of jihad in studying and developing it to give birth of mujtahid.
- 4) The basic color of green symbolizes the attitude of always promoting trust, honesty and peace.
- 5) The pentagon image symbolizes the aspiration to understand and practice Islam as a whole, broad and profound.

University Flags and Faculty Flags:

- 1) The university flags are rectangular in shape two-thirds in width.
- 2) The dark green university flag symbolizes the struggle for national truth and development.
- 3) In the middle of the flag was the emblem of the university.
- 4) Under the symbol is the writing of the State Islamic University Maulana malik Ibrahim Malang.

b. Education Model of UIN Maliki Malang

1) Implementation of Tarbiyah Ulul Albab Concept

The figure of *ulul albab* is a person who puts forward zikir, fikir (thinking) and good deeds. *Ulul Albab* is man/women who has extensive knowledge, sharp eyes, intelligent brain, gentle heart and spirit of warrior (jihad in the way of Allah) with a real struggle.

2) Integration concepts of University and Ma'had (Islamic Boarding School).

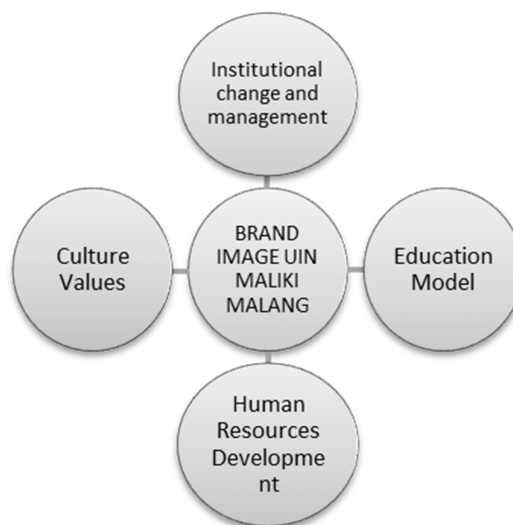
University and ma'had are two educational traditions that have many differences. University is a symptom of city, even ma'had is a symptom of village. University is synonymous with modernity, ma'had is synonymous with traditionalism. University emphasizes more on a liberal approach, even ma'had emphasizes conservative attitudes that rely on being centered on the figure of the kyai.

Integration concept of university and ma'had will give students wider knowledge and deeper spirituality. Students will do many practice of Islamic education. And they will live in Islamic culture and also will speak in English and Arabic. So, this concept hopefully will give better result and achievement for student, both in science and Islamic education.

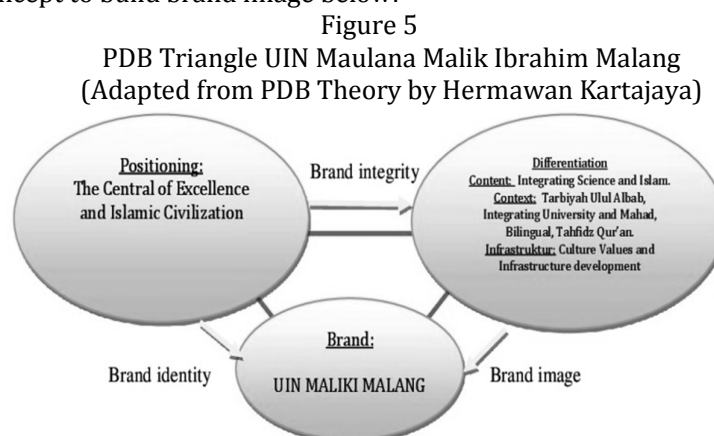
- c. Physical Building Development (Facilities and Infrastructures)
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim is partially deployed to develop physical facilities, such as purchasing land, building lecture halls, ma'had buildings, offices, mosques, library buildings, laboratories, ma'had caregivers' homes, security posts, and parking area.
- d. Lecturer Profile Improvement
Lecturers are a source of campus wealth that provides the greatest attraction. A superior campus is a campus that has superior lecturers, achievers and is famous for its knowledge, research results and writings.
- e. Organizing Support Programs
 - 1) Ma'had Sunan Ampel al-Aly
One of the UIN Malang's brand image that embedded in the minds of *key stakeholders* is the existence of ma'had which is a place to deepen students' religious knowledge and spirituality.
 - 2) Arabic Language Development Program (PPBA)
The low ability to speak Arabic and even other foreign languages (English) is experienced by PTKIN alumni students. So the students in UIN Malang given one year Arabic course.
 - 3) English Development Program (PPBI)
Given the importance of English as a language in the global world, UIN considers it necessary to equip its graduates with English language skills.
- f. Culture Values of UIN Maliki Malang
Making the campus clean, neat and beautiful, Improve the quality and productivity of lecturers, Improve student academic and leadership quality, Improve service quality (effective and efficient), Increase spirituality, character and manners, Ability to improve Arabic and English, Building a wider network of cooperation, Improvement of educational facilities and infrastructure, Improve and strengthen institutions, Increasing research, writing and community service activities, Expand funding sources and increase efficiency, Looking for an alternative to improving mutual welfare.

Based on the steps carried out at UIN Malang, we can see the suitability of the three theories of building brand image. Building brand image is building many advantage, both comparative advantage and competitive advantage. UIN Maliki Malang strategies can be described in 4 steps, that are:

Figure 4
Brand Image Elements of UIN Maliki Malang



If we analyzed the strategy in brand image building UIN Maliki Malang using PDB Triangle, we will find the concept to build brand image below:



Positioning is promise and purposes that will achieved, positioning is the willing of institutional, how they will perceived by stakeholder. UIN Maliki Malang want to achive the excelleces and being Islamic civilization. And positioning will supported by differentiation and distinction to achieve that position. Differentiation consist of three aspects, content, context and infrastucture. In UIN Maliki Malang, the differentiations that offered are the integrating of Islam and sciece, tarbiyah ulul albab, mahad, bilingual program, tahfiz (memorizing) Qur'an and building culture values and infrastructure development. Strong positioning and differentiation will build sustainable and good brand image.

D. CONCLUSION

The result of this research indicates that, ideal concept of brand image building in Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang is: being the center of excellence and Islamic Civilization. There are nine advantages that are cultivated on campus, and also it reflect the willing of the university, in which aspects UIN Malang wants to perceived, that are: excellent personality, excellent teaching staff, excellent programs developed, excellent management and *leadership*, excelent education and teaching methods, excelent performance, excellent academic works (citation), excelent social networking (*networking*), and excelent alumni or graduates.

The strategy of brand image building in Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang is build solid positioning and supported by strong differentiation. Solid positioning and strong differentiator will build sustainable and good brand image. The Positioning build is: The Center of Excellence and Islamic Civilization. Then supported by differentiation: the integrating of Islam and sciece, tarbiyah ulul albab, mahad, bilingual program, tahfiz (memorizing) Qur'an and building culture values and infrastructure development. Strong positioning and supported by differentiation will build sustainable and good brand image.

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