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FACTORS AFFECTING BRAND AWARENESS IN CENTRAL REGION OF  
MALAYSIA: A STUDY ON FPTT

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This report submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of  
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I hereby declared that this thesis entitled  
“FACTORS AFFECTING BRAND AWARENESS IN CENTRAL REGION OF  
MALAYSIA: A STUDY ON FPTT”  
is the result of my own research except those as cited in the references. This thesis  
has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted by  
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## DEDICATION

I would like to appreciate the dedication of my beloved families who educated me and motivate me to learn until this level, the lecturers and friends who give me support and advice throughout the research. Without their blessing and encouragement, this research is impossible to complete within short period of time.

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## ABSTRACT

Brand awareness is the ability of potential consumers to recognize or recall of the certain brand from a certain product category. Brand Awareness has been infiltrated in service sectors across the world as well as education sector. In fact, creating brand awareness in universities is much more difficult than a product as the complexity of marketplace has increased tremendously. This research is to study the factors affecting brand awareness of higher education institution. Despite this, the research study will be focus in FPTT. In this research, students, parents and workers in central region of Malaysia play a main role in developing brand awareness of FPTT. This research study has been proposed with the research model of the factors affecting brand awareness of FPTT in central region of Malaysia. A several research method has been adopted to do the research such as descriptive research design with quantitative method, survey questionnaire and cross-sectional studies.

Keywords: Brand Awareness, FPTT, Accreditation, Service Quality, Advertising and Promotion, Reputation, Employability, International Recognition.

## **ABSTRAK**

*Kesedaran jenama adalah keupayaan pengguna berpotensi untuk mengenal atau penarikan balik jenama tertentu daripada kategori produk tertentu. Kesedaran jenama telah menyusup dalam sektor perkhidmatan di seluruh dunia serta sektor pendidikan. Tetapi, mewujudkan kesedaran jenama di universiti adalah lebih sukar daripada produk kerana kerumitan pasaran telah meningkat dengan ketara. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji faktor yang mempengaruhi kesedaran jenama institusi pendidikan tinggi. Tetapi, kajian ini akan menumpukan di FPTT. Dalam kajian ini, pelajar, ibu bapa dan pekerja di kawasan tengah Malaysia memainkan peranan utama dalam membangunkan kesedaran jenama FPTT. Kajian penyelidikan telah mencadangkan model penyelidikan mengenai faktor yang mempengaruhi kesedaran jenama FPTT di kawasan tengah Malaysia. Beberapa kaedah penyelidikan telah digunakan untuk menjalankan penyelidikan seperti reka bentuk penyelidikan deskriptif dengan kaedah kuantitatif, soal kaji selidik dan kajian keratan rentas.*

*Kata kunci: Kesedaran Jenama, FPTT, Akreditasi, Kualiti Perkhidmatan, Pengiklanan dan Promosi, Reputasi, Kebolehpasaran, Pengiktirafan Antarabangsa.*

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FPTT	=	Faculty of Technology Management and Technopreneurship
HEI	=	Higher Educational Institutional
KL	=	Kuala Lumpur
MQA	=	Malaysian Government Qualifications Agency
MQF	=	Malaysian Qualifications Framework
MQR	=	Malaysian Government Register
MOHE	=	Ministry of Higher Education
SPM	=	Malaysian Certificate of Education
STPM	=	Malaysian Higher School Certificate
UTeM	=	Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of Study

Around 1500 BC, branding began when the ancient Greeks remarked their livestock (Whisman, 2009). But, the branding of institutional enterprise began in 1931, when Procter and Gamble started setting tags on its product in assisting customer to differentiate one product from another (Whisman, 2009).

Branding is all about developing differentiation (Keller, 2013). Many firms and organizations have realized that one of their most valuable assets is their products or services associated by brand names (Keller, 2013). It is undeniable that the role of brand management has been evolved to a new significant level in today's global marketplace (Pinar et. al., 2014). Brand must be created and managed carefully as it is the one of the most priceless intangible assets in a organization (Pinar et. al., 2014). Mirzaei et. al. (2015) also stated that a brand forms a valuable asset for any organization when it managed in a comprehensive and complementary way that develops permanent brand health.

One of the challenges in branding services is that they are intangible than products and vary in quality, depending on the person or firm producing them (Keller, 2013). Therefore, branding is critical to service firms (Keller, 2013). Higher Educational Institutional (HEI) is one of the service firms. Branding of higher education (HE) are considered as one of the most important factors that indicate the

success of HEI (Almadhoun et. al., 2011). According to Malaysia Ministry of Higher Education, universities are one of the HEI. Nowadays, a lot of universities find themselves difficult to build a competitive position in the dynamic marketplace (Almadhoun et. al., 2011).

Today, people's desire to achieve university is increasing swiftly since the world is improving its total rate of literacy (Abbas, 2014). Students from rural areas are willing to move to metropolitan cities in order to extinguish their desire for HE (Abbas, 2014). As a result, marketing practices have become critical and significant for universities to attract students in the competitive environment (Abbas, 2014). And brand is an important elements in marketing (Vijayalakshmi and Barani, 2015).

Brand equity acts as a bridge for universities to market themselves (Keller, 2013). Before brand equity is developed, brand knowledge is needed in order to create strong brand equity. Brand awareness is one of the components of brand knowledge that can creates differences that drives brand equity (Keller, 2013). Quality of service caused by university becomes an important spark for brand awareness (Vijayalakshmi and Barani, 2015). This study is concerned with the factors that affecting brand awareness of Faculty of Technology Management and Technopreneurship (FPTT), one of the faculties in a HEI that is Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM) among students, parents and workers in central region of Malaysia which is Kuala Lumpur (KL) and Selangor.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

Brand awareness is one of a marketing tool for customers to recognize and recall a brand (Keller, 2013). Branding can be considered as the process of strengthening a university by guiding them to be able to confront with challenges during the unstable period (Jawad et. al., 2012). Creating brand awareness in universities is much more difficult than a product as the complexity of marketplace has increased tremendously (Vijayalakshmi and Barani, 2015).

The research is conducted at the FPTT of UTeM. According to the official website of UTeM, the university which was incorporated in December of year 2000 is the 14th HEI in Malaysia. FPTT is one of the faculties in UTeM. UTeM established FPTT on 19th March 2009 and starts operating at the City Campus, in the heart of the World Heritage City of Historic Melaka. FPTT also acts as a brand of UTeM.

FPTT is the sixth faculty to offer programs at Bachelor Degree level at UTeM. With its establishment, the faculty integrated a business and technology approach in enhancing the knowledge and skills of undergraduates. According to the FPTT academic handbook, the FPTT curriculum was developed to address issues and challenges in managing the force of globalization, rapid pace of technological changes, industry and competition, product density, pressure of cost of production, high risk and cost of research and development, and government regulations and market diversity.

A unique feature was that the program incorporates internship which requires students to do industrial attachment for 24 weeks as stated in the FPTT academic handbook. This provided students with invaluable working experience even before they graduated and got them ready to face the society once they graduated. The combination of classroom lectures and real life exposure enhances the employability of the graduates and got the students to be ready and learn to be adapting to the real society before they actually go for it.

University found that the complexity of competing for students and support has increased in the marketplace (Whisman, 2009). Vijayalakshmi and Barani (2015) also stated that universities have to focus on market orientation. Every potential competitive advantage need to take into account due to the numbers of university in Malaysia have increased (Vijayalakshmi and Barani, 2015). FPTT have been established for 7 years in Malaysia, as mentioned in the official website of FPTT. The number of students has increased throughout these 7 years. However, do outsiders really aware of FPTT especially students, parents and workers. Due to this, the study is examined on the performance level of FPTT in creating brand awareness and the factors of determining brand awareness of FPTT.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The purpose of this study is to develop a theoretical framework to understand the key factors of brand awareness of FPTT, and central region of Malaysia is the place that the researcher focuses on.

The objective of this study is to investigate how well FPTT is in developing brand awareness so that students, parents and workers could aware of. This research will also allow the researcher to identify the factors in creating brand awareness among students, parents and workers in central region of Malaysia.

Therefore, the researcher comes out with several research objectives of this research as below:

1. To measure the performance level of FPTT in creating brand awareness among students, parents and workers in central region of Malaysia.
2. To identify the factors that determined brand awareness of FPTT among students, parents and workers in central region of Malaysia.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

This research begins with measuring the performance level of FPTT in creating brand awareness among students, parents and workers in central region of Malaysia. The main purpose of this research is to investigate the factors that affecting the brand awareness of FPTT among students, parents and workers in central region of Malaysia.

Therefore, the researcher comes out the following research questions to be defined in the research as below:

1. What is the performance level of FPTT in creating brand awareness among students, parents and workers in central region of Malaysia?
2. What are the factors that determined brand awareness of FPTT among students, parents and workers in central region of Malaysia?

## **1.5 Scope, Limitations and Key Assumptions of the Study**

The research model is formulated to investigate the related question through questionnaire outlined in preceding section. This research only focuses on the students, parents and workers in central region of Malaysia which is KL and Selangor. The research instruments include a combination of structured questionnaire and surveys will be used for further validation. The results study will focus on the performance level of FPTT in creating brand awareness and the factors affecting brand awareness. The data collection was from real time to support the research. The results of the research were used for further validation.

The limitations of this research are more on human factor. There is a lack of accuracy in answering questionnaires as human error will appear due to the large scale of distribution. The key assumptions of this research are all the respondents are willing to help the researcher to complete this research, as they answer the

questionnaire with honest and willing to give any suggestion. Hence, the research is practical and the information will be very useful in the future.

### **1.6 Importance of the Research**

The importance of this research is to understand the relationship between the performance level of FPTT in creating brand awareness and the factors affecting brand awareness among students, parents and workers in central region and southern region of Malaysia. By having to know about the factors and their each importance, a lot of findings and solutions can be formulated or modified for better marketing strategies. Indirectly, this research creates awareness towards the branding of FPTT. For FPTT, this research was a stepping stone to choose the best marketing strategy to be used in their service respectively as it is saving cost and time to FPTT.

### **1.7 Summary**

This chapter of this study begins with a brief introduction and background of the research topic which was measure the performance level of FPTT in creating brand awareness and determine the factors that affecting brand awareness of FPTT among students, parents and workers in central region of Malaysia. Then, the problem statements which are the source of the research are stated here with the objectives to support them. The scope and limitation of the research is in this chapter along with the importance of the study as these are significant to support the outcome of the research.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter is discussing about performance level of FPTT and brand awareness of universities. Factors affecting brand awareness of FPTT are discussed in this chapter. Some factors are accreditation, service quality, advertising and promotion, reputation, career development and international recognition. These factors are the factors which led to the brand awareness of FPTT among students, parents and workers in central region of Malaysia. The research is trying to establish relationships between performance level of FPTT and factors affecting brand awareness of FPTT. Thus, theoretical framework and hypothesis are form in this chapter.

This chapter begin with section 2.2 overview of Malaysian higher education industry, section 2.3 brand and roles of brand, section 2.4 brand awareness, section 2.5 brand awareness of university, section 2.6 accreditation, section 2.7 service quality, section 2.8 advertising and promotion, section 2.9 reputation, section 2.10 career development and section 2.11 international recognition. Then follow by the discussion of conceptual framework of the study in section 2.12. Thus, hypotheses are generated for the literature review in section 2.13. Last but not least, the summary of chapter two is presented in section 2.14.

## **2.2 Overview of Malaysia Higher Education Industry**

The service of higher education institutions in Malaysia is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE). According to the MOHE (2016), Malaysia had 20 public universities, 53 private universities and 10 foreign university branch campuses; 401 active private colleges, 30 polytechnics and 72 public community colleges in 2016. There are also various institutions from the UK, the US, Australia, Canada, France, and New Zealand which offer twinning and '3+0' degree programmes through partnerships with Malaysian private higher education institutions.

## **2.3 Brand and the Roles of Brand**

This section is discussed about brand and the role of brand. Section 2.3.1 will discussed about the brand such as definition of brand and the characteristics of brand. Section 2.3.2 will discussed the role of brand like the function of brand from the perspective of customers and organizations.

### **2.3.1 Brand**

For the American Marketing Association (AMA), a brand is a design, term, sign, symbol or name, or a mixture of them, aimed to recognize the products or services of one vendor or group of vendors and to distinguish them from those of competition. Therefore, a brand is a product or service which helps consumers or organization to differentiate one product or service from others. According to Keller (2013), these differences can be rational, tangible, symbolic, emotional and intangible. People, place, firm or organization can be a type of brand also. A brand is one of the most valuable intangible assets of a firm (Kotler and Keller, 2012). Most of the practicing managers see brand as something that produced a particular amount of awareness, reputation, significance, and etc in the market (Keller, 2013).