

## THE IMAGE OF ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION REVIEWED FROM PROMOTIONS AND TUITION FEES AS WELL AS ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR COLLEGE DECISIONS

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### ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to determine how interested parents of high school students in Kerinci Regency and Sungai Penuh City are in choosing an Islamic college for their children's further studies. The factors tested in this research are the image of Islamic universities, promotions, and tuition fees. The sample for this research was 227 respondents. Data was collected using a questionnaire. Data analysis uses the Structural Equation Model (SEM) approach with the help of the SmartPLS 2.3.9 application. The results of this research show that promotions and tuition fees have a positive and significant effect on the image of Islamic universities and influence the interest of students' parents in recommending Islamic universities to their children to continue their studies. The image of Islamic higher education mediates the relationship between promotion and tuition fees in the Decision to choose an Islamic higher education institution. The type of mediation effect is partial mediation.

**Keywords:** College Decision; Image of Islamic Higher Education; Promotion; Tuition fee

### INTRODUCTION

The rapid changes and developments of the times have unknowingly brought us from the era of industrial revolution 4.0 to the era of smart society 5.0. This new civilization requires humans to be capable of at least several things: creativity, critical thinking, good communication, and collaboration. Therefore, a nation must prepare reliable and superior personnel/human resources who master technology, digitalization, and creativity in thinking. It is intended to form competence in solving problems because of the demands of this new era. To achieve this goal, the world of education is the biggest shareholder in creating people with a strong mentality to face the turmoil of digital competition. Good resources are certainly created from good education. The world of education is required to instill at least 4 (four) basic competencies in students: knowledge, abilities, ethics, and values. Basically, knowledge and abilities are dimensions of student competence, while ethics and values are dimensions of character formation. Good human resources are superior in terms of competence and characteristics.

Other factors that can impact the development of a person's competencies and characteristics are family, environment, peers/playmates, and teaching staff. Each of them has a different role. For example, the family plays a role in cultivating the characters mentioned above in the home environment. Educators can be role models for their students, and peers can become a gathering to share experiences, stories, ideas, information, and so on. Meanwhile, the community plays a role in creating a friendly and conducive environment to strengthen children's character.

Parents need to be involved in determining education for their children. This role will greatly influence the child's growth and development of competence. So, parents should build a harmonious closeness with their children to create a communicative atmosphere that will become a space for discussion on various matters, including determining education for the child. The main task of parents is to ensure education for their children because, through good education, they will form good attitudes and personalities for the child. Through a good attitude

The image of islamic higher education reviewed from promotions and tuition fees as well as its implications for college decisions and personality, the child is one of the indicators of success. One of the parents' successes in educating their children is having a role in determining their children's education from primary to higher education (Lufti, 2018).

The importance of children's education in the family can be seen from QS. At-Tahrim: 6 which reads:

مَا اللَّهُ يَعْصُونَ لَا شِدَادٌ غِلَاطٌ مَلِكَةٌ عَلَيْهَا وَالْجَارَةُ النَّاسُ وَقُودُهَا نَارًا وَأَهْلِيكُمْ أَنْفُسُكُمْ قُوا أَمْنُوا الَّذِينَ يَأْتِيهَا يُؤْمَرُونَ مَا وَيَعْلُونَ أَمْرُهُمْ

From this verse, we can draw a lesson in which parents should take a role in determining their children's education because good education is very important for parents and children to avoid the fire of hell. Because through good education, the child is expected always to be devoted to his parents and always remember Allah SWT. So, people should be expected to be able to choose higher education for their children that is not only oriented towards worldly desires but also higher education that can guide their children always to remember Allah SWT.

On the other hand, as previously discussed, parents are also not advised to overly restrain their child's desires because this will also negatively impact the child. Therefore, harmonizing views regarding higher education from parents and children is necessary. Parents must have a role in determining higher education for their children, and children must continue to listen to every advice from parents in all matters, including determining higher education. So, parents and children should suppress their respective egos to find a good middle ground for their child's education.

Based on research findings conducted by (Ubale, Abubakar, & Abdullah, 2015), there is a strong positive correlation between the involvement of people and increasing the learning achievement of students (children) at Islamic Religious Universities. Apart from that, the research results also confirm a strong positive correlation between parental involvement and intrinsic motivation in studying at Islamic Higher Education. As a result, increasing parental involvement is significantly related to increasing students' intrinsic learning motivation at Islamic Religious Universities. The parents' views on Islamic education are that according to parents, Islamic education plays an important role in instilling Islamic teachings and values in children. Therefore, parents tend to prefer Islamic-based schools for their children. In seeking the best education for their children, parents' perceptions can be influenced by the image of higher education. Parents also hope that Islamic universities can support the development of their children spiritually, physically, intellectually, and emotionally and prepare them to become superior generations in the future. (Mustafa, et al., 2017).

## Needs Theory

The most well-known theory regarding human needs is the needs theory developed by McCllland. Based on theory, basic human needs are divided into 3 (three), namely;

1. Achievement. Namely, the hard effort someone makes to pursue or even exceed existing standards.
2. Strength. is a person's behavior to achieve predetermined goals so that other individuals will behave as he wishes.
3. Relationships. There is a need to build a close and friendly relationship.

The needs expressed in this theory will encourage a person's behavior to work and continue to work hard to achieve certain goals in his life.

Based on this theory, if it is connected to the focus and objectives of this research, namely the needs of parents regarding their children's education, it can be seen that the goals of parents in playing a role in choosing higher education for their children consist of several motives as explained by this theory. The first motive is Achievement. In this case, parents will play a role in determining higher education for their children, where usually the higher education they choose is at least one level or even higher than the education of other children in their

The image of islamic higher education reviewed from promotions and tuition fees as well as its implications for college decisions environment. If the child is declared to have graduated from college, then this is an achievement as expected by his parents. The second motive is Strength. Parents choose higher education for their children, of course, with the aim that the child will be able to get a decent job in the future. If this can be achieved, then material things can be achieved. When material things are owned, at least someone already has the power to control others. For example, someone with excess material can easily hire other people's services to do work according to the wishes of the service hirer. In this case, the service hirer can control the person he hires. The third motive is relationship. In this case, parents will choose a college because they hope that when their child graduates from college and gets a decent job, the environment around the family will respect both the child and their parents.

### **Islamic Higher Education**

The concept of Islamic higher education focuses on forming a character who understands and has the enthusiasm and attitude to learn the meaning of one's own life so that, in turn, it will form piety and have a noble mind (Mujib & Mudzakiir, 2006). Islamic religion-based education is a conscious effort to produce human resources who can practice Islamic teachings with Istiqomah but always maintain harmony between religious communities and respect other religions (Zuhairini, 1983).

Islamic higher education is one part of the travel history of the Indonesian nation. The birth of Islamic universities was a reward for the services of Muslims in liberating the Republic of Indonesia. The inclusion of the label "Islam" in Islamic universities indicates that these institutions were born and established have the foundation of the Al-Qur'an and As-Sunnah to produce human resources who are moral, intellectual, intelligent, have great responsibility to create a social life that is peace and prosperity (Indra, 2016).

### **Image of Islamic University**

An image is a form of a person's impression or opinion of an object. The image of a university is something that prospective students will consider before deciding to study at a university. A positive image will be valuable for prospective students to place their choice of that university, and vice versa. A good image of a higher education institution can be reflected in its quality, accreditation, and the impact it has on society so that, in turn, it will influence prospective students and parents of prospective students to decide to choose that higher education institution to continue their studies (Qomusuddin, 2021).

### **Promotion**

Promotion or advertising is a strategy that Islamic universities can implement to attract the interest of prospective students because Promotion can be used as a tool to convey information about universities, which can influence prospective students to study at these universities to continue their education. Promotion, which is the main source of information, will explain the details of the university both in the form of visualizations and with interesting sentences. It will form an impression in the hearts of prospective students so that it will become a separate assessment for both prospective students and parents of prospective students that, in turn, will lead to the Decision of parents of prospective students to recommend the college to their children (Munarsih, Akbar, & Sudarsono, 2020).

### **Tuition fee**

Tuition fees are the price that students or their parents must pay to be able to attend lectures at a university. Tuition fees can be a consideration for parents of prospective students before choosing a college for their child because tuition fees are a fixed and mandatory expense that students' parents must meet so their children can continue their studies. Therefore, tuition

The image of islamic higher education reviewed from promotions and tuition fees as well as its implications for college decisions fees are a serious consideration for parents and prospective students when choosing a college. Universities should pay attention to this when determining policies regarding tuition fees because parents of prospective students will usually look at the comparison of tuition fees at one college with other universities. It is one of the determining factors in choosing a college (Fajri, Rasipan, & Jayadi, 2020).

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses quantitative data collected using a questionnaire. The population of this research is parents of high school students in Kerinci Regency and Sungai Penuh City, while the sample for this research is 227 respondents.

Analysis of this research data uses the Structural Equation Model (SEM) method with the help of the SmartPLS 3.2.9 application.

**Table 1.**  
**Operational Variables Definition**

No	Variable	Indicators	Source
1	College Decisions (Y)	1. Show interest 2. Looking for information 3. Make a choice	(Prasetyaningrum & Marlina, 2020) <i>Modified</i>
2	Image of Islamic Universities (Z)	1. Reputation 2. Academic atmosphere 3. Relationships	(Lopez, 2015) <i>Modified</i>
3	Promotion (X <sub>1</sub> )	1. Advertising 2. Information conveyed by word of mouth 3. Direct marketing	(Bahrum & Herningrum, 2022) <i>Modified</i>
4	Tuition fee (X <sub>2</sub> )	1. Affordable tuition fees 2. Compatibility of tuition fees with quality 3. Comparison of tuition fees with other universities	(Pradana, Hudayah, & Rahmawati, 2017) <i>Modified</i>

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Evaluation of Measurement Model

**Table 2.**  
**Construct Validity and Reliability**

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Tuition fee	<b>0.892</b>	<b>0.894</b>	<b>0.921</b>	<b>0.699</b>
Image of Islamic Universities	<b>0.901</b>	<b>0.905</b>	<b>0.923</b>	<b>0.668</b>
College Decisions	<b>0.902</b>	<b>0.907</b>	<b>0.921</b>	<b>0.569</b>
Promotion	<b>0.760</b>	<b>0.766</b>	<b>0.846</b>	<b>0.579</b>

Source: Data processed with SmartPLS 3.2.9

From the table above, it can be seen that the Cronbach's Alpha value for each variable is above 0.7, then the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value is above 0.5. So, it can be said that based on this test, the question items in this research are valid and reliable. Therefore, it is worth continuing in the next process.

The image of islamic higher education reviewed from promotions and tuition fees as well as its implications for college decisions

### Evaluation of Structural Model

**Table 3.**  
**R Square**

	<b>R Square</b>	<b>R Square Adjusted</b>
Image of Islamic Universities	0.720	0.717
College Decisions	0.679	0.675

Source: Data processed with SmartPLS 3.2.9

From Table 3, it can be seen that the R Square value of the College Decision variable (Y) is 0.679. It means that the influence given by the variables Promotion (X1), Tuition Fees (X2), and Image of Islamic Universities (Z) on Study Decisions (Y) at Islamic Universities is 67.9%. Meanwhile, the remaining 32.1% was influenced by other variables not tested in this study.

Meanwhile, the R Square test value of the Islamic Higher Education Image variable (Z) is 0.720. The meaning is the magnitude of the influence caused by the Promotion variables (X1) and Tuition Fees (X2) on the Image of Islamic Universities (Z), namely 72%. Meanwhile, the remaining 28% is influenced by other factors not included in this research model.

### Path Coefficients

**Table 4.**  
**Path Coefficients**

	<b>Biaya Kuliah</b>	<b>Citra Perguruan Tinggi</b>	<b>Keputusan Kuliah</b>	<b>Promosi</b>
Tuition fee		0.746	0.315	
Image of Islamic Universities			0.185	
College Decisions				
Promotion		0.153	0.431	

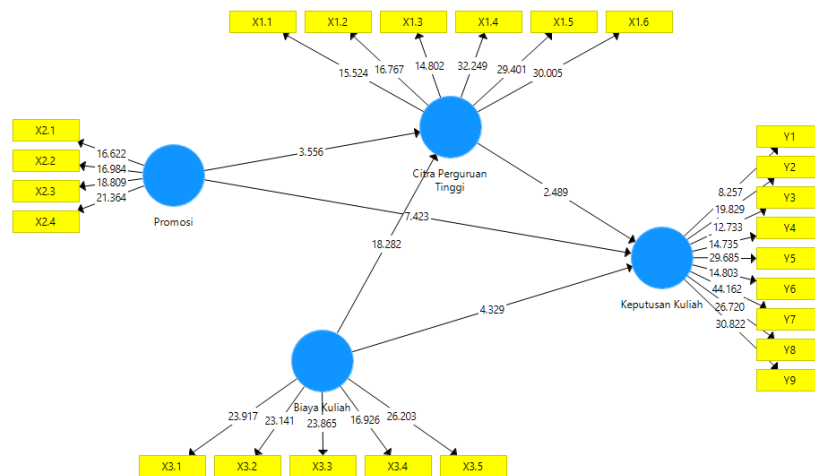
Source: Data processed with SmartPLS 3.2.9

Based on Table 4 above, it is known that all the values shown in the table are positive. It means that every increase in the value of each exogenous variable (X) will increase the endogenous variable's (Y) value.

The image of islamic higher education reviewed from promotions and tuition fees as well as its implications for college decisions

## T-Statistics (Bootstrapping)

**Gambar 1.  
Model Penelitian**



Source: Data processed with SmartPLS 3.2.9

## Direct Effect

**Table 5.  
Direct Effect**

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
Promotion -> College Image	0.153	0.156	0.043	3.556	<b>0.000</b>
Promotion -> College Decisions	0.431	0.434	0.058	7.423	<b>0.000</b>
Tuition Fees -> College Image	0.746	0.741	0.041	18.282	<b>0.000</b>
Tuition Fees -> College Decisions	0.315	0.316	0.073	4.329	<b>0.000</b>
Image of Islamic Universities -> Study Decisions	0.185	0.182	0.074	2.489	<b>0.013</b>

Source: Data processed with SmartPLS 3.2.9

## The Influence of Promotion on the Image of Islamic Higher Education

From Table 5, it can be seen that the t-statistic value is 3.556, with a P-value value of 0.000. So,  $H_1$  is accepted, meaning that there is a positive and significant influence of Promotion on the image of Islamic universities.

## The Effect of Promotion on College Decisions

Table 5 above also provides information that the t-statistic value is 7.423 with a P-Value of 0.000, so  $H_2$  is accepted, which means that Promotion also has a positive and significant effect on parents' decisions in choosing an Islamic college as a college for their child to continuing studies.



The image of islamic higher education reviewed from promotions and tuition fees as well as its implications for college decisions

### The Influence of Tuition Fees on the Image of Islamic Higher Education

Based on Table 5 above, it can be seen that the t-statistic value is 18.282 with a P-value value of 0.000, so  $H_3$  is accepted, which indicates that Tuition Fees have a positive effect on the Image of Islamic Higher Education.

### The Influence of Tuition Fees on College Decisions

The results of this research also show that the t-statistic value is 4.329 with a P-Value of 0.000, so  $H_4$  is accepted, which means that Tuition Fees have a positive and significant effect on parents' decisions to choose an Islamic college for their children to continue their studies.

### The Influence of Higher Education Image on College Decisions

Table 5 above also provides information where a t-statistic value of 2.489 is obtained with a P-Value of 0.013, so  $H_5$  is also accepted, which means that the Image of Islamic Higher Education has a positive and significant effect on the Decision of parents of students in choosing an Islamic higher education institution for their children to continue their studies.

### Indirect Effect

Table 6.  
Indirect Effect

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
Promotion -> College Image -> College Decision	0.028	0.027	0.012	2.346	<b>0.019</b>
Tuition Fees -> College Image -> College Decisions	0.138	0.136	0.058	2.379	<b>0.018</b>

Source: Data processed with SmartPLS 3.2.9

### The Mediating Effect of the Image of Islamic Higher Education on the Influence of Promotion on College Decisions

Based on Table 6 above, the t-statistic value is 2.346 with a P-Value of 0.019, where this value is smaller than alpha (0.05), so  $H_6$  is accepted, which means that the Image of Islamic Higher Education mediates the relationship between Promotion and Decision to choose an Islamic University. The influence of the existence of the Islamic Higher Education Image variable (Z) on the relationship between the Promotion variable (X1) and the Decision to choose an Islamic higher education institution (Y), namely Partial Mediation, means that the presence or absence of the Islamic Higher Education Image variable (Z) is not a problem for Promotion (X1) in influencing the Decision (Y) of students' parents to choose an Islamic college for their children to continue their studies.

### The Mediating Effect of the Image of Islamic Higher Education on the Influence of Tuition Fees on Study Decisions

Table 6 above also provides information that the t-statistic value is 2.379 with a P-value value of 0.018, smaller than 0.05. It means that  $H_7$  is also accepted. These results indicate that the image of Islamic universities also mediates the relationship between tuition fees and the Decision to choose an Islamic university. The influence of the existence of the Islamic Higher Education Image variable (Z) on the relationship between the tuition fee variable (X2) and the Decision to choose an Islamic higher education institution (Y), namely Partial Mediation, means that whether or not the Islamic Higher Education Image variable (Z) exists is not a

The image of islamic higher education reviewed from promotions and tuition fees as well as its implications for college decisions problem for tuition fees (X2) in influencing the Decision (Y) of students' parents to choose an Islamic college for their children to continue their studies.

## DISCUSSION

Parents of students view that Islamic education plays an important role in instilling Islamic teachings and values in their children. Therefore, parents tend to choose Islamic-based schools for their children. In seeking the best education for their children, parents' perceptions can be influenced by the image of higher education. Parents also hope that Islamic universities can support the development of their children spiritually, physically, intellectually, and emotionally and prepare them to become superior generations in the future. (Mustafa, et al., 2017). The results of this research prove that statistically, the image of Islamic universities has a positive and significant influence on parents' decisions to choose Islamic universities for their children. This research proves that the reputation of universities, such as good accreditation, complete facilities, comfort and security, and an Islamic atmosphere in the campus environment, are factors parents want for their children's further studies. This research supports previous research conducted by (Qomusuddin, 2021), who states that interest in choosing a university will arise when the university has a positive image.

Promotion is a medium for introducing goods or services to potential buyers, as is the case with promotions carried out by IAIN Kerinci, where the main aim is to attract prospective students' attention to this university to continue their studies. The target of higher education promotion should not only be to prospective students. Still, it should also reach the parents of prospective students because the existence of parents as a support system for student education must also be directly involved in determining further study options as stated by (Laden, 2014), who said that students' parents support their children in choosing a college in the form of instrumental and appreciation. Meanwhile, when making decisions, student parents consider several factors, such as economics and the child's abilities. The results of this research found that Promotion is one factor that can shape parents' interest in choosing a college to recommend to their children. This research supports previous research conducted by (Munarsih, Akbar, & Sudarsono, 2020), who state that Promotion has a good and positive influence on parents' decisions in choosing Islamic higher education for their children.

Artinya, promosi yang dimaksud yaitu melalui baliho/ spanduk, website dan media sosial seperti Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok, dan lainnya. Selain memanfaatkan berbagai media, promosi juga dapat dilakukan melalui sosialisasi langsung dari pihak kampus, seperti dosen, mahasiswa, dan alumni.

Tuition fees can influence parents to choose a college for their children, especially for parents whose income can only meet their daily needs. Therefore, a university should consider this when setting tuition fees. This research proves that, statistically, tuition fees are one of the determining factors in choosing a college. These results indicate that affordable tuition fees in line with income are the hopes of parents of students in Kerinci Regency and Sungai Penuh City. This research supports previous research conducted by (Fajri, Rasipan, & Jayadi, 2020), who found that tuition costs were one of the determining factors for parents in recommending universities to their children.

## CONCLUSION

1. The Promotion positively and significantly influences the Image of Islamic Higher Education. It means that the better the Promotion carried out by Islamic universities, the better the image of these universities will improve.
2. The results of this research found that there is a positive and significant influence of Promotion on the decisions of parents of students in Kab. Kerinci and Sungai Penuh City in recommending Islamic universities to their children.



The image of islamic higher education reviewed from promotions and tuition fees as well as its implications for college decisions

3. The results of this study reveal that tuition fees have a positive and significant effect on the image of Islamic universities, which means that the more students' parents feel that tuition fees are in line with their abilities, the better the image of the college, according to the student's parents. Kerinci Regency and Sungai Banyak City.
4. The results of hypothesis testing found that statistically, the more affordable the tuition fees are, the higher the student's parents' Decision to choose an Islamic college. Thus, it is concluded that tuition fees positively and significantly affect college decisions.
5. Statistically, it was found that the Image of Islamic Higher Education has a positive and significant effect on the Decision of students' parents to choose an Islamic higher education institution and recommend it to their children.
6. The image of Islamic universities mediates the relationship between Promotion and the Decision to choose an Islamic university. The influence of the existence of the Islamic Higher Education Image variable on the relationship between the Promotion variable and the Decision to choose an Islamic higher education institution is Partial Mediation.
7. The image of Islamic universities also mediates the relationship between tuition fees and the Decision to choose an Islamic university. The influence of the existence of the Islamic Higher Education Image variable on the relationship between the tuition fee variable and the Decision to choose an Islamic higher education institution is Partial Mediation.

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The image of islamic higher education reviewed from promotions and tuition fees as well as its implications for college decisions

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