



Role of Digital Marketing on Value of Firm at Politeknik Negeri Samarinda

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Abstract

Higher education institutions are competing with one another to draw in new students, which has prompted them to use more flexible marketing techniques, such as digital marketing. The purpose of this study is to examine how digital marketing affects Politeknik Negeri Samarinda's firm value. New students from the 2025 cohort serve as the primary informants for this qualitative study. Semi-structured in-depth interviews, documentation studies, and monitoring of the institution's official digital media (website and social media) were used to gather data. The Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model, which uses member checking and triangulation to ensure data veracity, is referred to as data analysis. The findings indicate that social recommendations from friends, family, and relatives have a greater influence on Politeknik Negeri Samarinda brand knowledge and choice than exposure to digital marketing. Students' initial decisions to enroll at Polnes have not been significantly influenced by digital marketing. In the meantime, student satisfaction and retention rates are extremely high, but they are more impacted by internal institutional elements like the academic community's support, tuition costs, the quality of the lecturers, and the learning environment. Students' readiness to promote Polnes to others is extremely high, although the switching intention indicator showed a rather moderate tendency. Overall, this study shows that digital marketing has not been fully integrated as a long-term institutional value-building strategy and continues to play a limited role in determining the firm's worth at Politeknik Negeri Samarinda. Higher education administrators should strengthen more focused, dependable, and value-oriented digital marketing strategies in light of these findings.

Keywords: Digital Marketing; Value; Brand; Switching Intention; Retention Rate

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1. Introduction

The advanced level of education sought after graduating from senior high school or its equivalent is known as higher education. A person's decision to continue their education at a

certain university or study program is influenced by a variety of circumstances. For prospective students, accreditation, tuition costs, and school location are some of the most important factors (Masnawati & Darmawan, 2023). The competition to draw in new students has grown more fierce. Private universities are increasingly competing with public institutions, which used to control student admissions, by actively stepping up their marketing campaigns and continuing to enhance the quality of their services (Nursyamsi et al., 2022).

To draw in potential students, a variety of marketing techniques might be used. While traditional marketing techniques like billboards, banners, and posters are still employed, the usage of electronic promotional media through official university websites and social media platforms is growing quickly. Higher education institutions also exhibit this tendency. A university's ability to draw in a lot of new students is no longer assured by its established reputation. Rather, the volume of applications is mostly determined by promotion via social media and other online platforms (Sahid, 2023).

Marketing strategies that utilize internet-based platforms, commonly referred to as *digital marketing*, are currently considered the most effective means of reaching a wide range of prospective students. *Digital marketing* also enables users to easily analyze audience reach and the number of individuals who view their advertisements. According to the latest data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) in 2025, Indonesia has approximately 229.4 million internet users, representing 80.66% of the total population (APJII, 2025). This indicates that the internet has become an essential part of daily life in Indonesia. One of the most active user groups consists of young people, particularly high school students and university students.

Previous studies on *digital marketing* in higher education, such as research conducted at Jakarta Global University, show a positive influence of distance targeting, socio-economic targeting, and the diversity of marketing content on the success of *digital marketing* in the new student admission process (Hertin & Ahmad Pitra, 2024). Another study involving 12th-grade high school students found a strong relationship between *digital marketing* and the decision to enroll in a university, with *interesting content* being the most influential factor in shaping students' choices (Setyowati, 2022).

However, prior studies have not specifically examined the extent to which *digital marketing* contributes to the *value of the firm* within higher education institutions. This indicates the presence of a research gap that forms the basis of this study. To address this gap, the present research aims to analyze the role of *digital marketing* in influencing the *value of the firm* in a higher education context. The research is specifically conducted at Politeknik Negeri Samarinda to ensure that the findings are contextual and relevant to the dynamics of competition among higher education institutions. Therefore, this study not only evaluates the effectiveness of *digital marketing* in attracting prospective students but also examines its contribution to institutional value as a whole, thereby offering a new perspective that has not been explored in previous research.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Digital Marketing in Higher Education

Digital marketing is a marketing strategy that utilizes digital technology to deliver information, build perceptions, and systematically influence the attitudes and decisions of target audiences in a measurable manner (Kotler, 2000). The ongoing digital transformation in higher education has encouraged institutions to adopt marketing approaches that are not only informative but also interactive and user experience-oriented. In this context, *digital marketing* is no longer viewed merely as a promotional tool, but as a strategic instrument for building institutional communication and shaping a university's long-term image.

The implementation of *digital marketing* in higher education is typically carried out through social media, official websites, and other digital platforms that serve as central hubs for both academic and non-academic information, as well as institutional identity. Digital media enable universities to showcase their competitive advantages—such as academic quality, facilities, student achievements, and graduate career opportunities—in a more visual and accessible manner. In addition, *digital marketing* provides space for two-way interaction between institutions and prospective students, thereby strengthening *engagement* and fostering emotional connections from the early stages of institutional introduction.

Several previous studies have demonstrated that *digital marketing* has a positive impact on prospective students' interest and decisions regarding university choice. Hertin and Ahmad Pitra state that accurate target segmentation and the diversity of digital content enhance the effectiveness of university promotion (Hertin & Ahmad Pitra, 2024). Setyowati emphasizes that digital content that is informative, relevant, and visually appealing is a dominant factor in shaping perceptions and influencing prospective students' decisions (Setyowati, 2022). Sahid also found that the active and consistent use of social media can increase institutional exposure and the number of applicants (Sahid, 2023). However, most of these studies still focus on the role of *digital marketing* in the initial stage of decision-making, and have not extensively examined its contribution to the long-term development of institutional value.

2.2 Value of the Firm in the Context of Higher Education

Value of the firm describes the overall value of an institution as shaped by public perceptions of its reputation, service quality, stakeholder loyalty, and brand strength (Damodaran, 2012). In the context of higher education, institutional value cannot be measured solely by financial indicators, but rather emphasizes non-financial aspects that reflect public trust and recognition of the educational institution.

In higher education, the value of the firm is represented through brand awareness, institutional reputation, brand preference, student retention rates, low switching intentions, and student satisfaction. The concepts of brand awareness, institutional reputation, and brand preference are crucial elements in building a university's attractiveness to prospective students. According to (Aaker, 2009), brand awareness indicates an individual's ability to recognize and remember a brand, which in the context of higher education is reflected in the level of public recognition of the university's name and image. Furthermore, (Koh et al., 2022) explain that institutional reputation is the public's collective perception of the organization's credibility and quality, formed over the long term, including the quality of its graduates, academic performance, and social contributions. Meanwhile, (Keller, 2025) states that brand preference reflects an individual's tendency to choose a brand over other alternatives based on their experience and perceived value. These three aspects are interrelated and influence prospective students' decisions when choosing a university.

Furthermore, a university's success is measured not only by its ability to attract new students but also by its student retention rate and low switching intentions. (Tinto, 2023) states that student retention is an institution's ability to retain students until they complete their studies, which is influenced by the quality of academic services, student engagement, and satisfaction with the learning experience. (Zeithaml, 2026) explains that switching intention is an individual's tendency to switch to another service provider, which in the context of higher education can be interpreted as a student's desire to transfer to another university. Therefore, higher brand awareness, institutional reputation, and brand preference tend to increase student

retention and decrease turnover intentions, thereby strengthening student loyalty to the university.

Several studies have shown that institutional reputation and student satisfaction significantly influence the competitiveness of higher education institutions (Nursyamsi et al., 2022). High *brand awareness* increases the likelihood of an institution becoming the top choice for prospective students (Wike Vivi et al., 2024), while student retention reflects the institution's success in meeting students' academic and non-academic expectations (Tinto, 2012). Low *switching intention* also indicates the stability of institutional value and success in building long-term relationships with students (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

However, empirical studies that specifically link *digital marketing* with the *value of the firm* in the context of higher education remain relatively limited. This indicates a research gap, particularly in understanding the extent to which *digital marketing* not only influences initial interest but also contributes to the overall formation of institutional value

3. Method

This study employs a qualitative approach aimed at obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the role of *digital marketing* in influencing the *value of the firm* at Politeknik Negeri Samarinda. The qualitative approach was chosen because it enables an in-depth exploration of informants' perceptions, experiences, and perspectives regarding the *digital marketing* strategies implemented by the institution and their impact on the formation of institutional value.

The research was conducted at Politeknik Negeri Samarinda, with new students of the 2025 cohort serving as the primary informants. These students were selected because they were directly exposed to the institution's *digital marketing* strategies during the initial stage of decision-making in choosing a university. In addition, Polnes' official digital media, including Instagram, Facebook, and the institutional website, were used as objects of observation to understand communication patterns, content characteristics, and the intensity of *digital marketing* activities carried out by the institution.

The selection of informants was conducted using purposive sampling, based on criteria relevant to the research objectives. The number of informants was determined until data saturation was reached, which occurred at 87 informants. Data collection was carried out through semi-structured in-depth interviews to obtain rich and detailed information, as well as direct observation of the institution's *digital marketing* activities. Secondary data were obtained from New Student Admissions (PMB) documentation, institutional reports, and relevant academic literature.

Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification in an iterative process. Data validity was ensured through source and technique triangulation, *member checking*, and thorough documentation of the research process to guarantee credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the data (Miles, 1994)

4. Result And Discussion

4.1 Result

Politeknik Negeri Samarinda is one of the public higher education institutions located in East Kalimantan, specifically in the city of Samarinda. It has 10 departments with 28 study programs in the fields of engineering and business administration (Sani, 2003). The total number

of students at Politeknik Negeri Samarinda (Polnes) in the Even Semester of 2024/2025 reached 6,825 students, covering postgraduate (Applied Master's/M.Tr) and undergraduate applied science (S.Tr) levels. For the 2025 new student admissions through achievement-based, test-based, and independent pathways, there were 13,644 applicants (PMB, 2025). This figure is significantly high compared to the available quota of approximately 2,000 new students. These data indicate that Politeknik Negeri Samarinda is one of the popular higher education institutions among prospective students. To understand the role of digital marketing in influencing the value of the firm at Polnes, the findings are presented as follows;

4.1.1 Brand Awareness

The first indicator related to brand awareness at Politeknik Negeri Samarinda is observed from the information source, specifically how students first became aware of Polnes. Based on the data, 84.6% of new students from the 2025 cohort learned about Polnes through friends or family. This finding demonstrates that Politeknik Negeri Samarinda is widely recognized by the public. Meanwhile, online advertisements and social media contributed only 2.6% each.

Table 1. Sources of Information about Polnes

No.	Source Informasi Polnes	Percentage
1	Social Media	2,6%
2	Friends and Family	84,6%
3	Online and Offline Advertising	2,6%
4	Education Fairs	1,3%
5	School Outreach Programs	6,4%
6	Family Inspiration	1,3%
7	School Teachers	1,3%

Source: Processed Data (2026)

Furthermore, the next data for the brand awareness indicator are identified from how often new students have seen or heard information about Politeknik Negeri Samarinda in the past six months, as presented in Table 2 below;

Table 2. Information about Politeknik Negeri Samarinda in the Last 6 Months

No.	Indicator	Percentage
1.	Often	53,8 %
2.	Quite Often	35,9 %
3.	Rarely	10,3 %
4.	Never	0%

Source: Processed data (2026)

The data above show that 53.8% of informants stated that they frequently hear about Politeknik Negeri Samarinda, a relatively high figure that is consistent with the previous finding that they first learned about Polnes from friends or family. Meanwhile, 35.9% reported that they hear about Polnes quite often, indicating that there are various channels through which the

general public and prospective students can access information about the institution. The data in the table also indicate that 10.3% of respondents rarely or seldom hear about Polnes.

Table 3. Reputation of Politeknik Negeri Samarinda

No.	Indicator	Percentage
1.	Very Good	24,4 %
2.	Good	62,8 %
3.	Less Favorable	12,8 %

Source: Processed data (2026)

Reputation is an indicator of an institution's good name. Every institution—whether in business, government, social sectors, or especially education services—pays close attention to how it is perceived by the public. Based on the data collected from informants consisting of new students of Polnes in 2025, the reputation of Polnes received three types of responses: 24.4% rated it as very good, 62.8% as good, and a relatively notable proportion of 12.8% perceived it as less favorable.

4.1.2 Brand Preference

Brand preference in this study refers to the tendency of prospective students or new students to choose or favor a particular higher education institution over others when making decisions. This occurs when students have beliefs or information that lead them to prefer a certain university, often based on experience, habits, or the attractiveness of the institution itself. The data for Politeknik Negeri Samarinda are presented in the following chart;

Table 4. Reasons for Choosing Politeknik Negeri Samarinda

No.	Reason for Choosing	Respondents	Percentage
1	Academic Quality	28	35.9%
2	Cost	15	19.2%
3	Location	32	41%
4	Reputation	13	16.7%
5	Facilities	2	2.6%
6	Recommendation	48	61.5%
7	No Other Choice	1	1.3%
8	Purely Based on Interest	1	1.3%
9	Continuing Vocational Major	1	1.3%
10	Personal Preference ("Heart")	1	1.3%
11	Accepted Here	1	1.3%
12	Family Encouragement	1	1.3%
13	Continuing Previous Major	1	1.3%

Source: Processed data (2026)

From the table above, it can be seen that the main reason new students of the 2025 cohort chose Polnes is due to recommendations from family, friends, or relatives. The relatively high figure of 61.5% indicates that Polnes is well known by the wider community and likely has a good reputation, leading many people to recommend it to those close to them. The next data relate to the retention rate, or how strong students' intention is to remain at Politeknik Negeri Samarinda.

4.1.3 Retention Rate

The retention rate referred to here is the extent to which students intend to remain at Politeknik Negeri Samarinda until they complete their chosen level of study. This indicator also reveals the factors that influence their decision to stay. This metric is highly important for higher education institutions, as the services they provide have a defined duration, and retention is a key indicator of long-term success. Regarding their plans to complete their studies at Polnes, the data presented in the chart show that 92.3% of respondents are confident that they will continue their studies until graduation.

Table 5. Intention to Continue Studies at Politeknik Negeri Samarinda

No	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	72	92,3%
2	Uncertain	3	3,8%
3	No	3	3,8%
Total		78	100%

Source: Processed data (2026)

The figure of 92.3% reflecting new students' confidence in continuing their studies until graduation is relatively high and therefore requires supporting data regarding the reasons behind their intention to persist. The subsequent data indicate that these reasons include the learning environment, lecturers, affordable tuition fees, and community support from both current students and alumni.

Table 6. Factors Influencing Student Retention at Politeknik Negeri Samarinda

No	Factor	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Lecturers	28	35,9
2	Facilities	14	17,9
3	Learning Environment	57	73,1
4	Cost	28	35,9
5	Community	26	33,3
6	Other Reasons (friends, family, organizations, teaching methods, etc.)	8	1,3 each
Total		78	

Source: Processed data (2026)

4.1.4 Switching Intention

The next indicator is switching intention, which refers to an individual’s tendency or intention to switch from their current service or product provider to another. This term is commonly used in marketing contexts, such as a customer’s intention to change brands or service providers—for example, switching from one university to another. The data presented in the table below show a nearly balanced percentage between those who are certain they would choose Polnes again and those who might consider choosing another university, with figures ranging between 43% and 45%.

Table 7. Will You Still Choose Politeknik Negeri Samarinda

No	Response Category	Frequency (People)	Percentage (%)
1	Yes, definitely	35	44,9
2	Maybe	34	43,6
3	Not sure	6	7,7
4	No	3	3,8
Total		78	100

Source: Processed primary data, 2026.

Furthermore, the aspect of recommending Politeknik Negeri Samarinda to peers and friends for continuing higher education was analyzed using a rating scale from 1 to 10, where a higher score indicates a greater likelihood of recommendation. Based on the data presented in the table below, ratings of 8–10 dominate the responses, indicating a very high likelihood of recommending Polnes to others, accounting for 76.9%.

Table 8. Likelihood of Recommending Politeknik Negeri Samarinda

No	Rating Score	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	1	0	0
2	2	0	0
3	3	0	0
4	4	1	1,3
5	5	5	6,4
6	6	3	3,8
7	7	9	11,5
8	8	34	43,6
9	9	6	7,7
10	10	20	25,6
Total		78	100

Source: Processed data (2026)

4.1.5 Satisfaction and Improvement

The next indicator is satisfaction related to the teaching experience of new students at Politeknik Negeri Samarinda, measured using a rating scale: 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = satisfied, and 4 = very satisfied. The combined percentage of satisfied and very satisfied responses reaches 92.3%, while only 7.7% reported dissatisfaction. This represents a significant level of satisfaction among new students, particularly regarding the teaching experience at Polnes.

Table 9. Satisfaction with Politeknik Negeri Samarinda

No	Response Category	Frequency (People)	Percentage (%)
1	Very Satisfied	23	29,5
2	Satisfied	49	62,8
3	Dissatisfied	6	7,7
4	Very Dissatisfied	0	3,8
Total		78	100

Source: Processed data (2026)

Furthermore, aspects for improvement are presented in the following table 10.

Table 10. Areas for Improvement

No.	Area for Improvement	Description
1	Facilities	Bathrooms, parking, and classrooms
2	Human Resources	Lecturer quality, discipline, and class schedule
3	Information System	Wi-Fi quality, academic information system, and student services

Source: Processed data (2026)

From the table above, it can be seen that there are three main issues raised by students, namely infrastructure and facilities, the quality of human resources, and digital services, which are still considered inadequate.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 Brand Awareness

One of the most important indicators of a product's probability of getting selected is its strong brand. The first product to be mentioned or suggested to others is usually one that the general public is familiar with. This also holds true for organisations that provide services, like educational institutions. In Indonesia, public universities continue to be the top option for many individuals, and parents frequently encourage their kids to attend public universities. Public colleges continue to be the first choice for local communities in many areas. The quality of academic procedures, facilities, and infrastructure, as well as comparatively lower tuition costs, are some benefits that are frequently linked to public colleges (Wike Vivi et al., 2024). One of the most renowned public universities in East Kalimantan is Politeknik Negeri Samarinda, or Polnes. Universitas Mulawarman (Unmul), the biggest and oldest public university in the area, is the most popular. Institut Teknologi Kalimantan (ITK), Politeknik Negeri Samarinda (Polnes), Universitas

Muhammadiyah Kalimantan Timur (UMKT), a well-known private institution, and UINSI Samarinda are the next most popular universities.

According to data, 84.6% of new Polnes students from the 2025 cohort first heard about the school from family members. This high proportion illustrates how well-liked Polnes is. Universities are well-known for their academic reputation, which is shaped by things like faculty, curricula, research output, and employment opportunities, especially whether or not graduates land positions that fit their skill set. Accreditation, tuition costs, subsidies, location, surroundings, institutional image, and marketing all have an impact on popularity. In the meantime, social media and internet advertising play a very small part in Polnes' popularity. All of these elements guarantee that the provided education is regarded as excellent and appealing.

How frequently new students have seen or heard about Politeknik Negeri Samarinda in the last six months is a crucial component of the brand awareness indicator. The community is well-informed about Polnes, as seen by the 89.7% of respondents who selected "often" and "very often." University public relations departments frequently employ a variety of publications to advertise their universities, usually in both direct and indirect ways (Luthfia Amanda, 2022). The next aspect is reputation. Data indicate that 87.2% of new students perceive the reputation of Politeknik Negeri Samarinda as good or very good, reflecting generally positive public opinion. However, there remains a notable proportion—12.8%—who perceive the institution's reputation as less favorable. Several factors contribute to whether an institution's reputation is viewed positively or negatively. Reputation is critically important across both business and public sectors. In the field of education, particularly in higher education, reputation is a key driver of competitiveness. As an accumulation of institutional image, reputation is often closely associated with long-established universities. Image and reputation are typically linked to the role of public relations, the achievements of students and faculty, and the ability of alumni to demonstrate their competencies in the workforce. These elements collectively contribute to managing institutional image and building a strong reputation (Patrianti, 2022).

4.2.2 Brand Preference

It is evident from the brand choice results table that recommendations from friends, family, or relatives were the primary reason new students in the 2025 cohort selected Politeknik Negeri Samarinda. With a comparatively high percentage of 61.5%, this factor is the most important, followed by academic excellence at 35.9% and location at 41%. These results show that the biggest factor in selecting Polnes is still recommendations from intimate social groups. There are several factors that lead individuals to recommend a brand, whether a product or a service. In the context of higher education, research findings show that the quality of campus services has a positive and significant effect on institutional reputation and student satisfaction. Furthermore, campus reputation also has a positive and significant influence on students' intention to stay and to recommend their university to others (Khusaini, 2024).

When making decisions on what to buy or select, each person has their own points of reference. In addition to external variables like other people's influence and even prominent figures, there are interior aspects like comfort and personal fulfilment. There are a number of factors to take into account when students or potential university candidates select a major or institution. Choosing a study program is frequently influenced by traits like bravery and accountability. Some students report that their decision-making process evolves after receiving support from their parents, which ultimately encourages them to take a step forward in selecting a major and consider parental support as a key factor (Laden, 2014). Other research findings also

support this, showing that parental social support significantly influences decision-making in choosing a social science education program (Solicha et al., 2020).

In addition, the location and academic quality of a university, which can be reflected in its accreditation level, are also important reasons for new students in choosing Polnes. Several studies align with these findings, indicating that location, accreditation, and tuition fees significantly influence students' intention to choose a university. These variables have been proven to play a substantial role in shaping students' preferences in selecting higher education institutions (Masnawati & Darmawan, 2023). Similarly, other research shows that accreditation, location, alumni, physical evidence, references, reputation, and student activities simultaneously influence student decisions. Partially, accreditation, location, physical evidence, and reputation have a positive and significant effect on student decisions, while alumni, references, and student activities do not show a significant effect on decision-making (Amirsyah & Cholila, 2017).

4.2.3 Retention Rate

An indicator of a person's intention and plan to stick with a product is its retention rate. When it comes to consumable items, it indicates whether or not consumers will make additional purchases and use the same product going forward. Students' intentions to stay and finish their study within a given program or institution can be used to observe this element in the context of educational services, especially higher education. Data from Politeknik Negeri Samarinda's 2025 cohort of new students shows a very encouraging number: 92.3% of respondents said they were confident in their ability to finish their education at Polnes..

A student may encounter a number of circumstances throughout their academic career. Some students may quit college early without earning a degree, a phenomenon known as dropout. Academic infractions, personal choices, or even legal problems could be the cause of this. Retention, on the other hand, is the process of continuing education until a degree is obtained (De Witte et al., 2013). A product or service's quality, longevity, and comfort all have an impact on consumers' intentions to stick with it. Academic achievement, learning capacity, and student participation in campus events are important markers of student retention in higher education (Moesarofah, 2021).

The 2025 cohort of new students at Polnes demonstrates a very high *retention rate*, which is influenced by several factors, including the learning environment, tuition costs, lecturers, community support, and facilities. A comfortable learning environment dominated by practical activities, affordable tuition fees, strong support from alumni communities, and competent lecturers are key factors that encourage students to continue their studies until completion at Polnes.

4.2.4 Switching Intention

An indicator of a person's propensity to move to a different service or product is switching intention. Higher education is another setting in which this indicator might be used. The crucial question would be whether students would select Politeknik Negeri Samarinda again if they were given the chance to reapply. With numbers ranging from 43% to 45%, the data displayed in the table below reveals a fairly equal ratio between those who are convinced they would select Polnes again and those who might think about choosing another university. The question of whether Polnes was indeed their top choice is raised by this distribution. Students are usually given three options based on the policies governing the new student selection process for public universities, especially through achievement-based and test-based pathways: their first choice as the primary option, the second as an alternative, and the third as a "backup." This reflects a common

phenomenon in study program selection, where many students end up enrolling in programs that were not their first preference.

Furthermore, regarding the aspect of recommending Politeknik Negeri Samarinda to peers and friends for pursuing higher education, ratings were given on a scale from 1 to 10, where higher ratings indicate a greater likelihood of recommendation. The data show that ratings of 8–10 dominate the responses, indicating a very high likelihood of recommending Polnes to others, accounting for 76.9%. Several factors influence an individual's willingness to recommend a university, including service quality, tuition costs, and student satisfaction (Muzaki, 2023)

4.2.5 Satisfaction and Improvement

The next measure is how satisfied new students are with their teaching experience at Politeknik Negeri Samarinda. The academic process had been going on for about three months, or about twelve class meetings, at the time the data were gathered. Student satisfaction was assessed using a four-point rating system: 1 represented extreme dissatisfaction, 2 dissatisfaction, 3 contentment, and 4 great satisfaction. Just 7.7% of respondents expressed discontent, compared to 92.3% who were satisfied or very satisfied. This indicates that new students are quite satisfied with their teaching experience. Additionally, there is a strong correlation between great service quality, sufficient facilities and infrastructure, and student satisfaction. In this context, when sufficient facilities are provided and high-quality services are delivered, students tend to feel more satisfied with their educational experience (Dunggio, 2023). Regarding areas for improvement at Politeknik Negeri Samarinda, new students expressed varied opinions on aspects that need enhancement. However, several recurring concerns emerged during the interview process, particularly related to facilities, human resources, and the academic information system. These concerns appear to require special attention from Polnes management, as impressions formed during the early stages of the academic process—within the first three months—can create a negative image and potentially impact the institution's future development. Adequate facilities and an effective administrative service system, such as strong administrative support, responsive academic services, and efficient registration processes, can significantly improve the overall learning experience. Therefore, improving educational facilities and administrative service systems can lead to higher levels of student satisfaction (Anandikha et al., 2024).

5. Conclusion

The following conclusions are drawn from the five metrics used to assess how digital marketing affects Politeknik Negeri Samarinda's business value. First, recommendations from friends and family of new students are the main way that Polnes is recognised in terms of brand recognition; digital marketing through online ads and social media contributes relatively little. Second, when it comes to brand preference, recommendations, affordability, and location are the primary factors encouraging prospective students to select Polnes. Digital marketing did not significantly influence Polnes' pick, according to this metric. Third, there is no clear correlation between retention rate and digital marketing; in this instance, new students have a very high intention to stay and finish their education at Politeknik Negeri Samarinda. Fourth, the data for the switching intention indicator reveal a somewhat unusual pattern: there is a fairly balanced proportion of people who would still choose Polnes and those who would think about choosing another university if given the chance to retake the admissions process. Lastly, a number of

factors were emphasised for the satisfaction and improvement indicators, especially those pertaining to the academic information system, facilities, and human resources.

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