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Examining Corporate Image Mediating Role Between Promotion and Household Interest at Tirta Mayang Drinking Water Corporate, Jambi City, Indonesia

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis Pengaruh Promosi terhadap Minat Rumah Tangga dalam pemasangan sambungan pipa di Kota Jambi, Perumda Air Minum Tirta Mayang Kota Jambi (PAMTM). Sebanyak 156 responden disurvei menggunakan kuesioner terstruktur. Penelitian ini menggunakan Partial Least Square (PLS) untuk menganalisis data, dengan uji awal pada model luar untuk validitas dan reliabilitas sebelum melanjutkan ke uji hipotesis. Oleh karena itu, kami menganalisis data dengan model dalam yang melibatkan uji R-square dan F-square (ukuran efek F²). Temuan menunjukkan bahwa Promosi Berpengaruh Langsung Terhadap Kepentingan Rumah Tangga dan dimediasi oleh Citra Perusahaan. Oleh karena itu, kami menyarankan agar PAMTM secara strategis meningkatkan upaya promosinya untuk meningkatkan calon rumah tangga menjadi pelanggan dan menghentikan penggunaan sumber daya air sumur yang tidak memenuhi baku mutu air. PAMTM dalam hal ini hendaknya berkolaborasi dengan institusi terkait di tingkat pemerintah daerah, khususnya dalam mencapai tujuan pembangunan berkelanjutan (SDGs). Dengan begitu, PAMTM akan memperoleh keuntungan bisnis karena pelanggannya akan bertambah, dan pada saat yang sama, tujuan sosialnya akan tercapai, seperti penyediaan air bersih untuk masyarakat.

Kata Kunci: *Promosi, Citra Perusahaan, Minat Pelanggan, Minat Beli, Perumda Air Minum Tirta Mayang*

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the impact of Promotion on Household Interest in installing the pipe connection in Jambi City, Perumda Air Minum Tirta Mayang Kota Jambi (PAMTM). A total of 156 respondents were surveyed using structured questionnaires. The study employs Partial Least Square (PLS) to analyze the data, with initial tests on the outer model for validity and reliability before proceeding to hypothesis testing. Accordingly, we analyze the data with an inner model involving R-square and F-square (F2 effect size) tests. Findings indicate that promotions directly Affect Household Interests and are mediated by the Corporate Image. Hence, we suggest that PAMTM strategically enhance their promotional efforts to boost prospective households to be customers and halt the use of well-water resources that do not fulfil the water quality standard. PAMTM, in this case, should collaborate with relevant institutions at the local government level, especially in achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs). In this way, PAMTM will gain business benefits because its customers will increase, and at the same time, its social goals will be achieved, such as providing clean water to the community.

Keywords: *Promotion, Corporate Image, Customer Interest, Buying Interest, Perumda Air Minum Tirta Mayang*

INTRODUCTION

Perumda Air Minum Tirta Mayang Kota Jambi (PAMTM) is a regional public drinking water corporation in Jambi City, Jambi Province, Indonesia. It is responsible for preparing clean water through piping systems to provide clean water for the people in their houses. So, it has two orientations: profit-oriented and social-oriented functions. In doing so, PAMTM provides various piping connections to enlarge the household coverage and attract non-customer household interest. To establish it, PAMTM establishes marketing strategies and promotions to attract more households to be the customer.

Based on the PAMTM data, from 2019 to 2023, it showed a slow increase. However, it does not fulfil the PAMTM target. The corporate has only reached a 66% average in the last five years. Hence, the corporation expects new household installations by increasing the promotion, especially in the coverage area. Therefore, promotion to the household should ensure that the water produced and distributed by PAMTM is good quality. It has been processed through a series of phases to meet the standards of the Regulation of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, such as physical, chemical, and biological parameters.

PMATM's social goals are increasingly contextual in increasing networks because of the unpredictable climatic conditions between the rainy and dry seasons; PAMTM is essential to meet citizens' clean water needs. In the dry season, some people who usually

use or take water from wells (shallow or deep wells) are in drought and have no water. The clean water is needed by Citizens, especially in maintaining public health.

Accordingly, the corporation promotes clean water to ensure prospective households. In doing so, PAMTM promotes these kinds:

1. PAMTM conducts in-person meetings with the non-customer communities at the district office, the village head, non-customer households, or the service office.
2. PAMTM uses social media like Facebook, Instagram, WA groups, and print and electronic media.
3. Promotion of sports activities (event). PMATM doing sponsors/donors, implementing activities) Moreover, delivering the message to the household.
4. Direct sales to the household.

Additionally, PAMTM prepares the primary information in promotion:

1. Hydration and Physical Health: Clean water is needed to introduce nutrition and oxygen and remove impurities from the human body.
2. Mental health: Lack of water causes a lack of awareness and memory.
3. Skin health, weight loss, and prevention of other diseases: Water is necessary for metabolic processes in the body, skin health, and the prevention of other diseases, such as kidney failure.
4. Economic and environmental benefits: Using clean water from electricity costs (if using wells with a power source) or buying water saves the environment from bottled water.
5. Affordability and simplicity: Water is effortless to reach to support health.
6. Service quality includes water flow continuity, pipe maintenance, and other customer complaints.

Promotion is an element of the marketing mix that persuades the prospected customer with a designed message. The role is to increase the sales volume and introduce new products. Kotler & Armstrong (2012) said that promotion is essential for companies to convey the benefits of goods and services produced. The activities are also designed to receive feedback in one hand. Conversely, promotion is a communication model that reminds the audience about a person or organization's goods or services (Alexandrescu & Milandru, 2018).

In the case of PAMTM, the promotion aims to introduce clean water so that people stop consuming well-sourced water, which is harmful to their health. Marlinae et al. (2023) reported a Kalimantan case where the well-water source did not meet physical, chemical,

and bacterial standards. Therefore, the corporation is a communicator who has sent a message to the target market, hoping to get a response or reaction to every customer complaint.

Furthermore, practical promotion enhances the Corporation's Image; finally, effective promotion enhances the Corporate Image. Several related studies have shown that good promotion will shape the Corporation's Image (Alexandrescu & Milandru, 2018; Yolanda & Wijanarko, 2018). Accordingly, the corporation's Image and promotions can indirectly affect customer interest in purchasing products and services (Alguacil et al., 2022).

Corporate Image, encompassing various factors such as the physical attributes and behaviours of the brand, plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer perceptions and purchase intentions (Bravo et al., 2010; Nguyen & Leblanc, 2001). These factors include the business name, products/services, traditions, and quality conveyed through customer interactions.

Research suggests that a positive corporate image is associated with increased consumer trust and likelihood of purchasing from a particular corporation (Ko et al., 2008; Alrubaiee et al., 2017). Consumers with a favourable perception of a corporation can better comprehend its offerings and experience reduced uncertainty in purchasing decisions. Therefore, this study aims to reveal the mediating role of Corporate Image in influencing promotion effectiveness and public interest in becoming customers."

Interest, often described as a person's intention, guides how someone might act in a specific situation and whether they will follow through with an action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). This concept is closely tied to consumers' feelings about an object, including their likes and dislikes. Interest is fueled by the motivation to act and possess; thus, stronger motivation towards an object typically results in greater perceived interest (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012; Liang, T. P., & Turban, 2011). In a consumer context, interest can predict future purchasing behaviour. Hence, five indicators are commonly used: interest in seeking product information, considering a purchase, trying the product, learning about the product, and a desire to own the product (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007).

Interest is an internal motivational drive for a person towards action, often influenced by external stimuli and positive perceptions of a product or service. Specifically, buying interest emerges in response to promotion, which stimulates products and services. Subsequently, this initial interest may develop into a desire to explore or experience the product, ultimately culminating in purchasing and possessing it (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012). According to Nickels et al. (2010), the promotion aims to influence people to participate in purchases. The primary purpose of promotion is to modify consumer behaviour, inform,

influence, persuade, and remind target consumers about the corporation and its products or services. Additionally, Kotler & Keller (2016) suggested that promotion measurement consists of 1) promotion frequency, 2) quality of promotion, 3) promotion quantity, 4) promotion time, and 5) accuracy or suitability of the promotional objectives. However, interest is one of the successful promotion programs.

Effective promotion not only determines the desire to buy but can also create a corporate image if what is conveyed can be accepted by customers. Alexandrescu & Milandru (2018) argued that promotion is crucial for companies to communicate about their products and services. He further explains that promotion is a form of communication that the firms provide. Hence, the firms wait for feedback upon the promotion and expect community involvement in the promotion itself.

Furthermore, interest is also determined by the corporate Image. Image is a corporation's critical asset that should be continuously built and maintained (Putra et al., 2015). Additionally, he emphasized that the corporation image is an impression or mental impression or an image of a corporation in the eyes of the audience formed based on their knowledge and experience. However, Beil argues that the corporate Image is a set of consumer perceptions of companies that make a product or service, including corporate credibility, corporate distribution network and corporate popularity (Li et al., 2011).

Corporate Image is the customer's response to the overall offer given by the corporation and is defined as several beliefs, ideas, and public impressions of a corporation (Kotler, 2013). The corporation's Image is an overall message formed in the minds of the public about the corporation, where the corporation is related to the business name, architecture, variations of products, traditions, ideologies and impressions on the quality of communication carried out by each employee who interacts with the organization's clients. Adona suggests that the corporation's Image is owned by individuals so that in its implementation, individuals with a good perception of the corporation will eventually foster interest and trust. (Putra et al., 2015).

Corporate Image is essential; it is the overall impression formed in the public's minds about the corporation. Image can be related to the business name, architecture, product variations, traditions, ideology, and the impression on the quality of communication carried out by each employee who interacts with the corporate clients. Corporate Image can be perceived as a selective mental image because the overall impression of the characteristics of a corporation will later shape the corporation's Image in the public's minds.

According to Harrison (2010), a corporate image consists of four elements: 1) personality, 2) reputation, 3) values, and 4) corporate identity. Consumers can capture these aspects and give rise to consumers' impressions and perceptions of the corporation. Meanwhile, Zhang (2009) proposed the corporate image measurements: 1) likeability, 2) Competence (competence), 3) Quality (Quality), 4) Performance (performance), and 5) Responsibility. So, we present a logical construction in Figure 1.

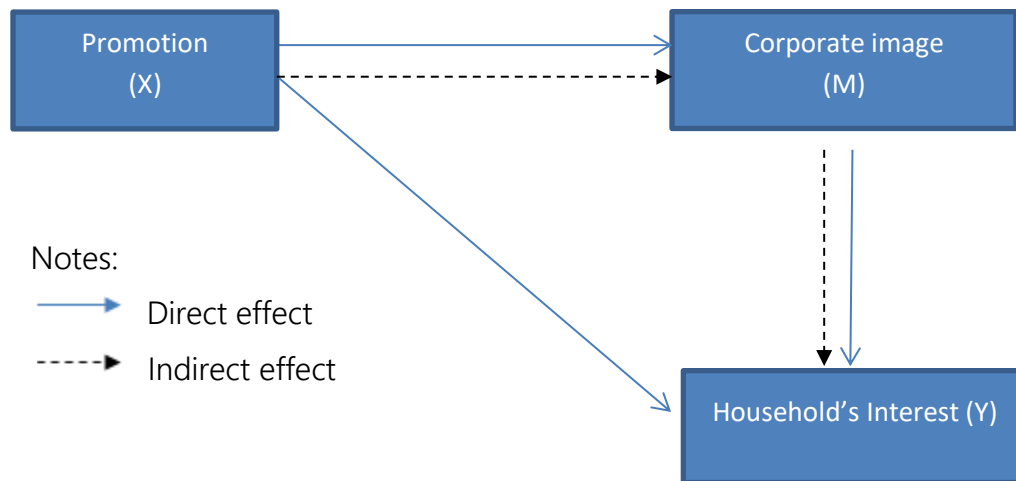


Figure 1. Mediating Role of Corporate Image in the Relationship Between Promotion and Customer Interest at Tirta Mayang Drinking Water Corporation

Based on Figure 1, we propose these hypotheses.

H1: Promotion affects the Corporation's Image.

H2: Promotion affects Household Interest.

H3: Corporate Image Affects Household Interest.

H4: Promotion through Corporate Image Affects Household Interest.

RESEARCH METHOD

1. Population and Sample. The study population comprises Jambi City residents who are not currently PAMTM customers. Assuming each house connection serves five people, we calculated that 120,260 houses or about 20% of residents are not PAMTM customers yet. Using the Slovin formula with an 8% margin of error, we determined a sample of 156 households.
2. Research Methods and Approaches. This study employs both descriptive and explanatory research methods. Hence, descriptive research statistically analyses data

as collected, clearly depicting the variables studied: Promotional Activities, Corporate Image, and Household Interest (Cooper & Schindler, 2011; Sugiyono, 2010).

3. Data Analysis. We used frequency distribution to present average values, processed using Partial Least Square (PLS), Smart PLS 3.0 software. Hence, the purpose is to predict relationships between latent variables. The analysis begins with validity and reliability tests of the outer model, followed by the inner model tests using R-square (coefficient of determination) and F-square (F2 effect size) as described by (Ghozali & Latan, 2015).

4. Variable and The Indicators

In this research, three variables have five indicators.

- a. The promotion has five indicators: X1 = Frequency, X2 = Quality, X3 = Cost, X4 = Time, and X5 = accuracy or suitability of the promotional objectives.
- b. The Corporate Image has five indicators: M1= likeability, M2 = competence (competence), M3 = Quality, M4=Performance (performance), and M5 = Responsibility.
- c. The Household Interest has five indicators as follows: Y1 = Interested in finding information about products; Y2 = considering buying; Y3 = Interested in trying; Y4 = Wanting to know the product; Y5 = Willing to own the product.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

General

During the dry season, the Batanghari River, PMATM's primary water source, declines in quality and quantity, leading to disruptions in household water supplies. Consequently, many households use water from wells, which may not consistently adhere to safety standards. Despite the advantages of using PMATM-treated water, interruptions remain a significant issue. To manage these shortages, PMATM implements regular water delivery rotations and communicates these schedules through local newspapers, helping customers prepare for periods of disconnection.

Respondents' characteristics by exploring the impact of water supply issues. It comprises gender, age, educational level, and occupation, providing a backdrop for understanding community needs and perceptions. Most of the survey participants are male (64.7%), with diverse age groups and educational backgrounds, indicating a varied demographic that might influence individual needs and responses to water supply issues. The next research variable we present is as follows. Household Interest (Y), the average

score for these statements was 4.042, which belongs to high interest. It indicates a robust public inclination to become PAMTM customers, driven by the significant demand for clean water. Meanwhile, for Promotion (X), the average score of this variable is 4.207; it is a perfect measurement, and it seems the promotion practice is effective. Finally, Corporate Image (M) scored 4.171, which is a good measurement; it supports that PAMTM has a positive image among its citizens.

Statistical Examination

Measurement Model (Outer Model)

The measurement model was examined using three critical tests, each designed to refine the understanding of the latent variables. The first analysis, convergent validity, examines how each item correlates with the latent variable. The second, discriminant validity, examines each item's distinctiveness by confirming that items related to different latent variables do not correlate too closely, thereby validating the model's accuracy. The third, composite reliability, examines the consistency of the items in measuring the latent variables.

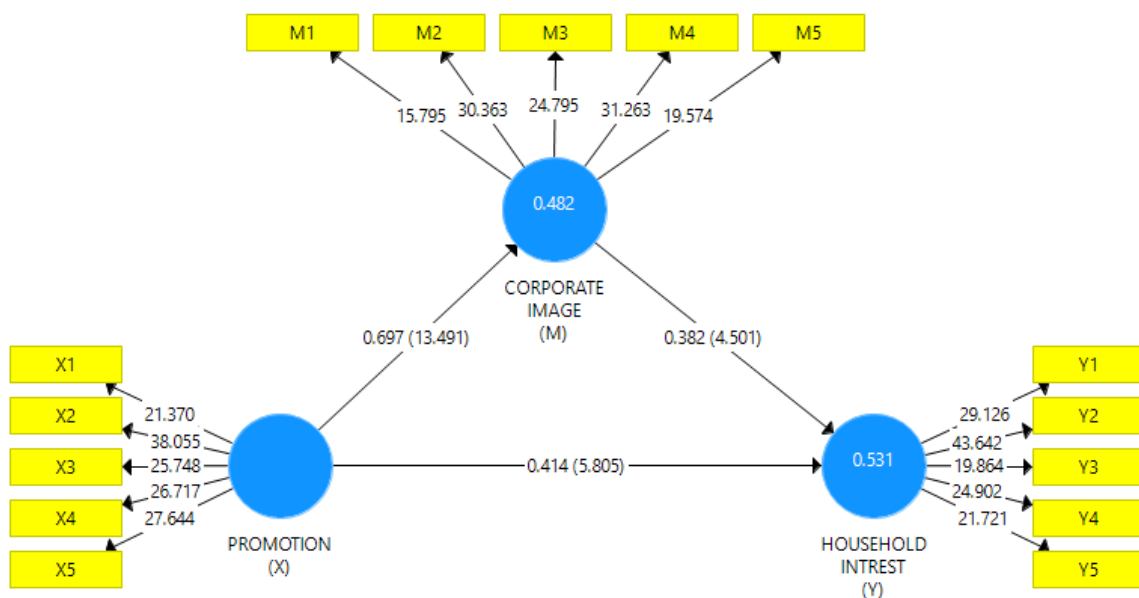


Figure 2. Full Outer Model of Corporate Image Model Role of PAMTM in Jambi City

Figure 2 above shows that each indicator contributes validly and significantly to the latent variable. These indicators are crucial in building the research model and aligning with the established constructs. For instance, interest in becoming a customer comprises seeking information, considering purchase, product awareness, willingness to try, and desire for ownership. Similarly, promotional activities are characterized by frequency, quality, quantity,

timing, and precision in targeting. Additionally, the specification of a corporation's Image is structured around dimensions such as likability, competence, quality, performance, and responsibility.

Structural Model Test Results (Inner Model)

The structural model analysis assesses whether the constructed research model meets the criteria for the goodness of fit and fulfils its underlying assumptions. This analysis entails several critical tests, including R-Square, Goodness of Fit Index, and Path Coefficient tests. So, the structural model test holds particular significance as it directly addresses the research objectives and aims to validate the hypotheses formulated within the research model.

a. R-Square value (Coefficient of determination)

The R-Square test analysis evaluates the effectiveness of the research model in explaining the variance of the endogenous variables. According to the criteria, a higher R-Square value indicates a stronger relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables. Expressly, an R-Square value of 0.75 signifies a strong relationship, 0.50 indicates a moderate relationship, and 0.25 suggests a weak relationship. The outcomes of this analysis are elaborated upon in the discussion presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1 . *R-Square* Test Results

	R Square	Adjusted R Square
M_Corporate Image	0.495	0.491
Y_Interest in Becoming a Customer	0.539	0.533

Source: SmartPLS Output 3, 2024.

Table 1 indicates that the promotion construct accounts for 49.5% of the variance in the corporate image variable (R-square = 0.495). Similarly, the Promotion and Corporate Image construct collectively influence the interest in becoming a customer, explaining 53.9% of the variance (R-square = 0.539). So, it suggests that promotion activities significantly contribute to shaping the Corporate Image and play a considerable role in influencing customer interest. However, upon closer examination, the R-square value for the corporate image variable exceeds the threshold of 0.25, indicating a weak relationship between Promotion and Corporate Image. Conversely, the R-square value for interest in becoming a customer stands at 0.539, surpassing

the threshold of 0.50, indicating a moderate relationship between Promotion and Corporate Image concerning interest in becoming a customer (customer interest).

b. F– Square Value (f 2 Effect Size)

F-square is calculated to gauge the significance of changes in the R-square value when specific constructs are removed from the model, thereby assessing whether these removed constructs substantially influence the endogenous constructs. According to the rule of thumb, Hair et al. (2017), F-square values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 indicate small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively. Additionally, an effect size below 0.02 suggests that the variable has no significant effect. The results of the F-square value analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. *F-Square* Test Results

	M_Corporate Image	Y_Interest in Becoming a Customer
X_Promotion	0.979	0.207
M_Corporate Image		0.143

Source: Smart PLS Output 3, 2024.

Based on the data processing results presented in the table above, it is evident that one variable significantly contributes to the R-square value in the research model: the F-square value for the promotion variable on the Corporate's Image is 0.979, surpassing the threshold of 0.35, indicating a significant effect. Similarly, the promotion variable's effect on interest in becoming a customer is 0.207, exceeding the threshold of 0.15, signifying a medium effect. Additionally, interest in becoming a customer's impact on the Corporate Image is 0.143, above the threshold of 0.02, representing a small effect.

Hypothesis Testing Results and Discussion

Hypothesis testing

The structural model testing analysis aims to ascertain the relationships between constructs. These results are obtained through the bootstrapping process. Certain assumptions must be met to drive path coefficient values, t-statistics, and p-values in the constructed structural model. The detailed results of the structural model testing are elucidated in the discussion provided in Picture 3 and Table 3 below.

Table 3 Research Construct Relationship Model Using *Bootstrapping Method*

Direct Effect					
Hypothesis	Latent Variable	Path Coefficient	t Statistik	P Value	Information
H ₁	Promotion → Corporate Image	0.697	13.482	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
H ₂	Promotion → Household Interest	0.414	5.165	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
H ₃	Corporate Image → Household interest	0.382	4.229	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted

Source: Smart PLS Output 3, 2024.

Table 3 shows the P-value for each path coefficient at 0.000. It shows a significant relationship: Promotion has a positive effect on corporate Image (H1), promotion has a positive effect on Household Interest (H2), and Corporate Image has a positive effect on Household Interest (H3). Furthermore, the coefficient of the promotion mediated by Corporate Image is 0.267 with a P value of 0.000, which indicates a significant result; the hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

The challenge of providing clean water (healthy water) in Indonesia mainly depends on region-specific problems, such as those situated along riverbanks. Fulazzaky (2014) propose an integrated approach, and he identifies critical challenges, including environmental empowerment, institutional frameworks, and infrastructural facilities crucial for future water processing endeavours. However, the reliance on well-water sources underscores its vulnerability to water quality issues.

Furthermore, Umami et al. (2022) report the impact of poor-quality water on diarrhoea cases by 11 % per year and dengue fever by 6.5 % per year. Consequently, the government's effort to provide access to clean water is the development of the Community-Based Water Supply and Sanitation Program, which has been successfully implemented for 15.4 million people. However, in the future, it is necessary to conduct in-depth studies related to institutions in the management of clean water resources in Indonesia.

Promotion is vital in altering behaviours toward using clean and safe water. In this context, PMATM has the opportunity to leverage promotions effectively, given the positive response from respondents (Darmawan, 2019). So, effective promotion not only influences

behavioural change but also contributes to enhancing corporate Image. In this case, PMATM should respond to any customer complaint caused by water service default. Furthermore, the promotion can stimulate demand for a product, encouraging existing consumers to make repeat purchases and ultimately increasing the sales volume of a corporation's products (Fakhri, 2020).

Effective promotion significantly boosts household interest in becoming PMATM customers and using its services. It also requires robust customer service mechanisms to address complaints quickly (Alguacil et al., 2022; Dakhi, 2021; Wei et al., 2016). Moreover, a well-designed promotional campaign should meticulously target appropriate audience segments, such as non-household customers (Elrod & Fortenberry, 2020). Effective promotion will encourage household decisions to engage with PMATM to generate the corporate Image. A positive corporate image fosters the inclination to become a customer and cultivates trust in the corporation's reliability (Horng et al., 2018).

Various studies further support the notion that consumers are motivated to become customers, utilize additional services, and gain insights into the goods and services offered by the corporation (Hu, 2015; Ko et al., 2008; Yu et al., 2021). Importantly, even in service failure instances, the corporate Image plays a pivotal role in consumers' understanding and perception of the situation (Balmer et al., 2020). Consequently, corporate Image is determined through different physical and behavioural characteristics such as business name, architecture, variety of goods/services, protocols, ideology, and the impression of the quality of those who enter into contracts with customers (Esmailpour & Barjoei, 2016).

Promotion and Corporate Image simultaneously will encourage households to become customers, particularly in the PMATM service piping service area, which is a captive market. A positive market image will encourage households to become customers by installing clean water networking (Safitri, 2020). Additionally, Good Promotion will determine the corporation's Image at once. Therefore, promotions must coincide with customer complaint services, especially in overcoming the problem of non-continuous water supply, which often occurs in the dry season, coinciding with a decline in river water supplies (Urfanisa et al., 2022). Promotions must also consider customer needs regarding service information, why service failures occur, how to contact employees, and how to handle damage (Setiawan et al., 2023). So, providing this information will empower the promotion effect.

In a broader understanding, promotion must also be related to sustainable development. Hutton & Chase (2016) suggested that preparing clean water coincides with

the WASH (Water, Sanitation, and hygiene) approach to designing effective interventions. Hence, PMATM must be integrated with other development indicators, such as SDG (sustainable development goal), at the level of regional development.

In addition, promotions based on a solid corporate image can also help build long-term customer loyalty. Customers who feel emotionally connected to a corporation's Image tend to be more loyal and persuade non-household customers. Therefore, promotions focused on strengthening the corporation's Image are not just about attracting the interest of potential customers but also about building sustainable and meaningful relationships. Thus, a corporation's Image can be an invaluable asset in a promotional strategy, helping a corporation not only attract interest but retain customers effectively.

CONCLUSION

According to the preceding explanation, PAMTM endeavours to bolster household interest in becoming customers through persuasive promotional strategies, emphasizing the advantages of accessing clean and safe water from PAMTM over unreliable well water sources. Highlighting the vulnerabilities of the well-water source and its remarkable variability in cleanliness and health underscores the urgency of promoting the superiority of PAMTM's water supply, especially during the dry season when the demand for healthy water escalates. Simultaneously, maintaining commitments to serve residents who have transitioned to PAMTM's services contributes to cultivating a positive corporate image. Engaging these residents in promotional activities reinforces their loyalty and commitment to remaining customers, ultimately advancing PAMTM's objectives of customer acquisition and satisfaction.

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