ST.MARY'S UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

PROMOTION PRACTICE OF ST. MARYS UNIVERSITY: IN THE CASE COLLAGE OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

BY

BIRUK ENGDA

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

ST.MARY'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES COLLAGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT

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RESEARCH SUBMITTED TO SCHOOLS OF GRADUATE STUDIES OF ST.MARY'S UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILMENTS OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF ART IN MARKETING MANAGEMENT

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ENDORSEMENT

This is to certify that **BIRUK ENGDA** carried out her thesis on **"PROMOTION PRACTICE OF ST. MARYS UNIVERSITY: IN THE CASE COLLAGE OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING"** and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Masters of Art in Marketing Management at St. Marry University with my approval as university advisor.

Signature: _____   *Date:* _____

Asfaw Yilma (PhD) – Advisor

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ACRONYMS

CODL: Collage of Open and Distance Learning

DE: Desistance Education

FBC: Fana Broadcasting Corporation

ODL: Open and Distance Learning

SMU: St. Mary's University

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to assess the promotion practice of St. Mary's university, collage of open and distance learning. Both primary and secondary data was collected. The primary data was collected from 27 center coordinators who are selected by using purposive sampling technique using questionnaire. Likert scale was the main measurement scale of the instruments which was used to collect the data and key informant interview was also employed to support the data collected from the regional coordinating offices. Secondary data also collected from the CODL registrar and finance offices. In this study, to analyze the secondary data correlation and simple regression analysis was used. The results of the study revealed that promotion had a significant effect on the student's number in the university; the result further indicates that among the promotion strategies: promotion through radio, through flyers and broachers, and through office setting are have been used very intensively in addition to this the finding indicate that Word-of-mouth promotions have a significant effect, while print media promotion are not used by the university. Based on the findings of the study the researcher recommend that, St. Mary's University ,CODL should prepare a clear promotional plan by conduct a need assessment by using student's feedback to understand which promotion mix is effective, the study further recommend that training should be given to the center coordinators regarding promotion and other related areas. Since promotion had significant effect on the student's number the university should increase its promotion cost.

Key words: promotion, promotion mix, promotion strategy, promotion practice

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of the Study

Promotion has been defined as the coordination of all seller initiated efforts to set up chainless of information and persuasion in order to sell goods and services or to promote an idea. While implicit communication occur through the varies elements of the marketing mix, most of an organization with the market take place as part of carefully planned and controlled promotional program. The basic tools used to accomplish an organization communication objective are often referred to as the promotional mix (Belch & Belch. 2004:515).

Traditionally the promotional mix has included four elements; advertising, sales promotion, publicity/public relation , and personal selling, however in today condition direct marketing as well as interactive media as major promotional mix elements that modern day marketers used to communicate with their target market (Belch & Belch,2004: 515).

Open and distance learning (ODL) has evolved over the last century, but the ways in which its benefits are marketed to students and other stakeholders have remained relatively unchanged. The benefits are still relevant but they are no longer sufficient as marketing strategies in the context of education systems in the 21st century. Among the marketing mix elements promotion is crucial in open and distance learning. (Glen.2012)

Similarly, Kotler (1984) states that, promotion is a very important part of the firms marketing strategy, promotion or to promote means to move forward and marketing promotion is a form of persuasive, reminding and informative way of Communicating Promotion process within a person which creates motivation interims leading to particular designed cause of an action. After the company gain understanding of the communication process and what to transmit, it is ready to develop and over all promotional plans such a plan consists of objectives, budgeting and promotion mix to its target segment.

 In addition to providing information, promotion has the role of increasing demand,

differentiation a product, improve brand recognition, improve market share, inform and educate the market etc. One should note that benefits from Promotional strategy get only when it operates properly. To be effective, the strategy must consistent with the needs of consumers and integrated with other marketing mix elements (product, price, and place). In contrast, in effective operation of promotion can waste millions of dollars and actually damage the image of company and its products. So in line with this the purpose of this study is to assess the promotional practice of St. Mary's university collage of open and distance learning.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Promotion is stimulates that is offered from time to time, and encourage publicity that will lead to action for purchase of a certain product. Sales promotion techniques are techniques that immediately try to affect customer's buying behavior research are still telling that sales promotion activates should be done infrequently, when the customers do not expect it (Alvaraz and Casielles 2005; 213). They say that because the sales promotion is conducted from time to time this is not something done on impulse rather it has to well prepared, organized and integrated in the company's marketing plan. It is also crucial for the companies to decide what the objectives for the sales promotion are as the objectives help to decide on what techniques to use. In light with this, the company has lack of effective marketing and sales promotion strategies which is to select the media to assure the message to reach their target audience with sufficient frequency and provide memorable message.

There is lack of proper promotion and building brand awareness for their product, and due to this the company forced to customized the sales promotion, this help for the competitors' to cover certain geographical area and to have competitive sales promotion. There is also a problem in gaining more customers and retaining current customers which is attributed to lack of sufficient budget for sales promotion activities and materials that are used for promotion (like brochures which are not updated). It does not provide specialty advertising items that carry the Company's name (such as pens, pencils and calendars).

There are previous researches which are conducted on promotional activities, but most of these researches are conducting on the manufacturing sector. There is a Research made on the same area regarding promotional practice; an evaluation of promotional practices for private colleges:

the case of Addis Ababa medical college and CPU College by Gebremicael (2011). However the study didn't consider the effect of promotion on increment of student's and it didn't also show the challenges of promotional practice. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to fill the research gap that initiates the objectives of the research.

1.3 Objective of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective of the Study

The general objective of this study is to assess the promotional practice of St. Mary's university, collage of open and distance learning

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

This research is designed:

- To identify how different type of promotion tools are practiced
- To determine the effect of promotion on student number increment
- To examine the challenges of promotional practices

1.4 Research Questions

The following are the basic research questions that the student researcher tried to give answers:

1. What type of promotional tools is used by the college?
2. How promotion does affect student number?
3. What are the main challenges of promotional activities?

1.5 Research Hypothesis

This research has one basic research hypothesis:

H1: Promotions have a significant effect on student's number

1.6 Significance of the Study

With the increasing acceptance of Open Distance Learning (ODL) as a major channel of widening access to higher education in Ethiopia, it has become increasingly necessary that promotional practice process is developed and maintained if the ODL provision is to be relevant and recognized as complimentary to conventional higher education. In this regard St. Mary's university is the main beneficiary of this research. The university can get a good insight about the current status, impact, and challenges of the promotional practices. This will help the university to focus on the effective promotion mix and give solution for the main challenges.

This study also helps institutions in advocating the use of ODL methods. In order to have a stronger impact, they need to be bundled into a much more comprehensive view of marketing and branding for ODL. The finding of this study on promotional marketing strategies should help leaders of ODL institutions in their efforts to successfully position their institutions within their respective education systems. The student researcher believes that the study provides and helps the company to analyze the different factors that affects their promotion practice. It helps the student researcher to develop a skill about research undertakings. The study also gives a clue for those who will be interested to conduct further study on the issue.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is to assess the promotional practice of St. Mary's university collage of open and distance learning. So among the four marketing mix elements this study will try to see only promotion mix.

1.8 Limitation of the study

The limitation of the study is arises due to lack of enough literatures over the area; it's difficult to get the actual figure of target population/ students because of the nature of distance learning.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This thesis is categorized into five chapters. The first chapter concentrates on introductory parts of the paper that mainly pinpoints the statement of the problems and objective of the study. The second chapter provides related literature review with specific emphasis to theoretical, empirical, and conceptual framework aspects. The third chapter deals with research methodology and design. The fourth chapter includes data presentation and analysis of the descriptive and regression results. The fifth chapter focuses on conclusion and recommendations on the basis of the research outcomes.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Theoretical Literature

This chapter outlines the theoretical and empirical literature on the promotion mix strategies, effects of promotional mix strategies on the growth of students and the challenge of the promotional practice.

2.1.1 The Concept of Promotion

Promotion is the act of making people aware of the school, the services, and what can be done to help them. It informs individuals why they should come to the school being promoted for these solutions, rather than the competition. It also reassures current customers that they made the correct decision by coming in the first place (Prushan, 1997). The marketing mix promotional element consists of advertising, personal selling, sales promotions, and publicity. All should be in balance with the other components of the marketing mix. By identifying specifically who current stakeholders are, identifying who future stakeholders will be and then defining these needs and wants; Parmerlee (2000) maintains that an organization can better determine how to reach these targeted people and acquire or retain them as clients and stakeholders.

Advertising can be conducted in a number of different Medias. Levinson (1998) described some of these in his book Guerilla Marketing. Radio is considered the most intimate media tool for advertising. This is due to listeners often being alone in their homes or cars. Magazine readers often become more involved in the content than a newspaper reader does. Whether a reader buys or subscribes to a magazine, they tend to take a good, long time to read them. Levinson (2005, Para 18) believes, "Television is still the undisputed heavyweight champion of marketing." He feels that television allows words to be combined with music and motion pictures to get into the minds of potential customers. Levinson argues that TV ads are very costly and they must be done properly or not at all.

Levinson (1998) feels that direct mail allows for the most precise niche marketing, serving the needs of small groups, and it can be a very effective tool if used properly. He believes signs and billboards are superb at reminding people of products and services, but they do not work well by themselves. Levinson feels that canvassing takes the most time, but it is highly effective. It has few limitations and allows for personal contact. He claims that by using other advertising concurrently with canvassing the stranger element can be reduced.

Yellow pages marketing and classified advertisements hit the very hottest of prospects. Nevertheless, Levinson points out that this is also one of the most confrontational advertising arenas, as all of the competitors can be found there as well.

Brochures offer the greatest opportunity for providing detailed information about products or services. Telephone marketing can be even more intimate than radio advertising, but it is often viewed as invasive unless pre-qualification techniques were used to create the calling list. Tiny signs on bulletin boards serve to make the organization a part of the community. These ads are extremely inexpensive and they help to build confidence.

There are a number of other forms of advertising that range from airplanes to zoos. Balloons have been used to spread advertisement messages, as have buses, billboards, barns, and a bevy of others. A recent Pizza Hut advertising campaign had planned to project an image onto the moon, but instead they refocused their efforts a little more down to earth. Outlandish campaigns can grab attention and free publicity, but any promotional effort needs to maintain consistency with the school charter (Prushan, 1997, p. 8).

"Public relations campaigns should be designed to develop momentum," according to Schulz (2001, p. 179). He feels that by overlapping efforts, consumers will receive new and slightly different news about a school from many different sources. Levinson (1998) suggests that positive news should be publicly reported by writing a piece to different news agencies. Such a report is called a publicity release. The releases should be addressed to as specific a news department as possible, sports, entertainment, business, or whatever, and preferably to the specific editor of that department. A release for newspapers might be longer and more detailed than a release for radio or TV. It is important to post the date in the upper right corner of a

release. A contact name and phone number should also be included for any additional information.

As with all of the other marketing mix elements, it is crucial that school employees are completely aware of all the ongoing marketing programs. All school representatives must positively reflect and support the messages being conveyed in the promotional efforts.

Promotion covers all those communication tools that can deliver a message to a target audience. These tools include advertising, sales promotions, personal selling and publicity (kotler. 1997). The aim of a promotional strategy is to bring existing and prospective customers from a state of relative unawareness of an organization's services to a stale of actively adopting them. Promotion also helps create widespread awareness about services on offer and to enhance the image of the institution. I his has a major impact on the customer and may sway his/her attitudes.

Like the marketing mix, the promotional mix involves the proper blending of numerous variables to satisfy the needs of the firm's target market and achieve organizational objectives. While the marketing mix is comprised of product, pricing, promotion, and distribution elements, the promotional mix is a subset of the overall marketing mix. With the promotional mix the marketing manager attempts to achieve the optimal blending of various promotional mix are personal selling and non personal selling, including advertising, sales promotion, and public relations (Kurtz, 1992).

Marketing communication (commonly referred to as promotion mix), as defined by Keegan (1995), refers to all forms of communication that organizations use to establish meaning and influence buying behavior among existing and potential customers. A marketing communication should be designed to tell customers about the benefits and values that a product or service oilers, therefore marketers jobs are cut out in ensuring that the communicate effectively to their target market to gain leverage as well as use it to gain competitive advantage. Kotler(2000). Points out that, it is no longer enough to first develop a good product, price it attractively, and make it accessible. He states that firms must also communicate with the present and potential stakeholders, and the general public. Every firm is cast into the role of communicator and promoter. I o promote its products, and gain market share, individual firms must carry out

research and plans based on sound and basic concepts of marketing research and product development (Grosse and Hempell. 1980).

For purposes of this study, the researcher has adopted the promotional mix as defined by Kotler (2000). He sees promotional mix as consisting of five major modes of communication, viz: advertising, sales promotion, public relations and publicity, personal selling and direct marketing (Naikuni. 2001).

2.1.2 Promotion Mix Strategies

According to Brassington and Pettitt (2000), promotion strategy is the direct way in which an organization communicates the product or service to its target audiences. Within the healthcare industry, promotion is used in many different ways (Meidan, 1996). Brassington and Pettitt (2000) has categorized the promotional tools into five main elements; Advertising, Sales promotion, Public relations, Personnel selling, and Direct Marketing.

2.1.2.1 Advertising

Brassington and Pettit (2000) define advertising strategy as any paid form of non-personal communication directed towards target audiences and transmitted through various mass media in order to promote and present a product, services or idea. The key difference between advertising and other promotional tools is that it is impersonal and communicates with large numbers of people through paid media channels. Meidan (1996) states that a healthcare services organization can use its advertising for either its short-term or its long-term objectives. Healthcare organizations attempting to create a long-term relationship, should build up of its name by using institutional advertising, while a laboratory services organizations interested in promoting its brand name and its differentiated services would use a brand advertising policy.

The institutional advertising consists of promotion of the firms' image as a whole and promotion of the products offered, with extra emphasis on the specific firm's name organization. The organization seeks through its marketing communications to build awareness and to impress customers looking for the best range of healthcare services, due to

the former impression of laboratory services organizations as impersonal institutions with no interest in their customers as people, and of healthcare services as abstract and quite similar the institutional advertising has become more and more important (Meidan, 1996) Brand advertising follows closely in the footsteps of institutional advertising. Its purpose is to create awareness of the laboratory services organizations' name and to advertise the different services it is offering. Since healthcare firms are serving a mass of people, the problems of brand advertising are to know who to advertise to, and how to advertise (Pettit, 2000). While institutional advertising is directed towards the whole population, the brand advertising of particular products has to be much more selective since it has to show that the consumer will benefit from the service. Furthermore, all the individual campaigns of brand advertising have to be compatible in tone and presentation and match the image the laboratory services organizations has created through its institutional advertising (Mortimer, 2001).

Mortimer (2001) states that an important part of advertising is to make the service tangible in the mind of the consumer in order to reduce perceived risk and provide a clear idea of what the service comprises. Furthermore she considers it important to advertise consistently, with clear brand image in order to achieve differentiation and encourage word-of-mouth communication. Meidan (1996) suggests that there are two types of advertising channels appropriate for healthcare advertising. That is "above-the- line" and under-the-line" advertising. Above-the-line advertising contains different channels of communication such as television, radio, posters, magazines and newspapers. Under-the-line advertising constitutes a huge part of a healthcare organization advertising activities. It is the invisible advertising of the banks services including leaflets, pamphlets, explanatory guides and manuals that can be used to support selling of a specific service.

2.1.2.2 Sales Promotion

According to Brassington and Pettit (2000) sales promotion is tactical marketing techniques with mostly short- term incentives, which are to add value to the product or service, in order to achieve specific sales or marketing objectives. Furthermore, Meidan (1996) states that it has two distinctive qualities. Firstly, it provides a "bargain chance" since many sales promotion tools have an attention gaining quality that communicates an offer that although they appeal to

a wide range of buyers, many customers tend to be less brand loyal in the long run. Secondly, if sales promotions are used too frequently and carelessly, it could lead to insecure customers, wondering whether the services are reliable or reasonably priced.

Meidan (1996) indicates that due to conflicting ideas concerning the benefits of sales promotions, healthcare organization must base its decision upon relevance and usefulness of sales promotion as well as cost effectiveness. Petit (1994) claim that normally, coupons, special offers and other forms of price manipulation are the dominant forms of sales promotion. Thus, price based promotions are difficult and probably dangerous to use for healthcare service markets.

This is due to the fact that the price setting of healthcare service is already a difficult process, and that consumers often see lower prices as a result of lower quality However, Meidan (1996) states that sales promotion with healthcare services appear to be most effectively used in combination with advertising. The primary objectives with sales promotion within healthcare services are attract new customers; to increase market share in selected market segments; and to lower the cost of acquiring new customers by seeking to avoid direct price competition with other healthcare organizations.

2.1.2.3 Public Relation

According to Brassington and Pettit (2000) the essence of public relations (PR) is to look after the nature and quality of the relationship between the organization and its different publics, and to create a mutual understanding. Public relations cover a range of activities, for example the creation and maintenance of corporate identity and image; charitable involvement, such as sponsorship, and community initiatives; media relation for the spreading of good news as well as for crisis management, such as damage limitation.

Moreover, an organization can attend trade exhibitions to create stronger relationships with key suppliers and customers as well as enhancing the organization's presence and reputation within the market (Brassington, 2000). Meidan, (1996) states that another part of public relations is the publicity gained through magazines. Healthcare services obtain considerable publicity in so called quality press, such as different healthcare journals. In popular

newspaper the publicity is, in contrary to the quality press, often negative from the healthcare firm's point of view.

2.1.2.4 Personal Selling

Brassington and Pettit (2000) argue that, personal selling is a two way communication tools between a representative of an organization and an individual or group, with the intention to form, persuade or remind them, or sometimes serve them to take appropriate actions. Furthermore, personal selling is a crucial element in ensuring customers' post- purchase satisfaction, and in building profitable long-term buyer-seller relationship built on trust and understanding. Verhallen *et al* (1997) states that the increased competion within the fast changing environment of healthcare services has led healthcare organizations to develop and maintain comprehensive relationship with their customers.

Furthermore, Julian and Ramaseshan (1994) state that the long term person to person relationship is an important factor for a retail firms to achieve a competitive advantage. Meidan (1996) points out that once customer has chosen its laboratory services organizations, he is unlikely to switch to another. Thus, personal selling is probably the most important element in the communication press within the financial services industry.

According to Julian and Ramaseshan (1994) the relationship between the salesperson and customer is perceived as being of great importance for the marketing of healthcare organizations. Hence, the sales force within the healthcare services industry needs not only to be trained in the art of selling but also to be aware of all the services available and be able to clearly explain what each services offers. Since customers' needs and motivation are likely to be complex, and their ability to assess alternative courses of action without professional assistance is likely to be limited, it is of great significance for the sales force engages and co-operates toward the customer, trying to find a solution to the customer's problem, rather than only persuading him to purchase the products or services (Meidan, 1996).

2.1.2.5 Direct Marketing

According to Brassington & Pettit (2000) direct marketing is an interactive system of marketing, using one or more advertising media to achieve measurable response anywhere, forming a basis for creating and further developing an on-going direct relationship between an organization and its customers, to be able to create and sustain quality relationship with sometimes hundreds or even thousands of individual customers, an organization needs to have as much information as possible about each one, and needs to be able to access, manipulate and analyze that information, thus, the database is crucial to the process of building the relationship.

Lee (2000) states that the fast advances in technology over the past 30 years have reshaped how consumers today interact with their financial institutions.

The healthcare sector has extended its face to face selling towards direct marketing of products and services in the form of phone, mail or computer transactions. Moles (2000) claim that as computer literacy and the availability of computers increase and the costs decrease. Through the internet, laboratory services organizations can identify their customer interests. Furthermore, the Internet technology also makes it possible to follow individual customer usage. With the information gathered in an integrated database it is possible to read the customers' needs and satisfy them. This knowledge can be used for different kinds of direct marketing (Lee, 2000).

2.1.3 Marketing Communication in Distance Education

Because of increased competition for scarce resources, marketing has become an important activity of many nonprofit organizations. Higher education institutions, as one of these nonprofit organizations, provide us with excellent examples of this trend the marketing of higher education has received a tremendous amount of emphasis and attention (Hayes, 1991).

Distance education (DE) has become an accepted form of education and has been gaining widespread popularity in recent years. Marketing concept has been gaining importance in distance education sector throughout the world. The factors responsible for this are self-support policies, increasing competitiveness in the marketplace, rising customer

expectations, widening access to education etc. More than 70 countries are offering educational programs through distance education all over the world today (Sudalaimuthu , March, 2005,) Because of flexibility, convenience and opportunity, distance education is becoming so popular, profitable and vital. By 2005, % 90 American universities will offer at least one course online. Currently about 3 million Americans are distance education students (Gonzales, 2002).

2.1.4 Marketing of distance education

American Marketing Association states that marketing is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives (Berkowitz, Kerin, Hartley and Rudelius, 1997). To serve both buyers and sellers, marketing seeks to discover the needs and wants of prospective customers and to satisfy them. Marketing is design to produce four principal benefits:

1. Greater success is fulfilling the institution's missions.

2. Improved satisfaction of the institution's public.

3. Improved attraction of marketing resources

4. Improved efficiency in marketing activities

Marketing provides tools for comparing what the institution is actually doing with its stated mission and goals. Marketing helps identify problems and plan response that will help the institution fulfill its mission. Marketing, in stressing the importance of measuring and satisfying consumer needs, tends to produce an improved level of client services and satisfaction. It provides a disciplined approach to improving the attraction of the students, employees, volunteers, donations, and grants' needed resources. Marketing emphasizes the rational management and coordination of program development, pricing, communications, and distribution (Kotler& Fox, 1985).

In recent years marketing concept has been gaining importance in all sectors of service throughout the world. The responsible factors for this are self-support policies, increasing competitiveness in the marketplace, rising customer expectations, widening access to information etc. In order to survive in such an environment DE institutions need to evaluate their activities with the external environment, get in touch with the users' need, and integrate this analysis into every day working of the DE organization - in short to adopt the marketing concept (Gupta, February, 2005).

Educational institutions face marketing problems. Many face changing student needs and societal expectations, increasing competitions for scarce client and funding resources, and unlimited financial pressures. One result is that educators are often forced to take a hard look at marketing to see what this discipline might offer to keep their institutions viable and relevant. At the same time, many educators are approaching marketing with caution. Although educational administrators have readily adopted such business functions as finance, accounting, planning, and public relations, they have been more skeptical about marketing. (Gupta, February, 2005).

Marketing has the image of being primarily a function for profit making enterprises. Educational administrators worry that marketing is manipulative and expensive, and that their boards will feel uncomfortable. Some administrators approach marketing with a "show- me" attitude. The burden of proof of the relevance of marketing falls to be marketer (Kotler & Fox, 1985).

Someone in the organization must take action and develop a complete marketing program to reach consumers by using a combination of four tools called the 4P's (Berkovits, Kerin, Hartley and Rudelius, 1997). Four P's consist of product, price, promotion and place.

2.1.4.1 Product

Product is a good, service or idea is the consumer's needs for satisfying. Physical product can be described in terms of its physical characteristics and is what most people actually think of as the product (Pardey, 1991). Some author argued that education is a product. For example; Kaye suggests looking at distance education as a product instead of a tool for distributing

education. He says that in order to most efficiently use our resources, the needs of the student/consumer should be assessed. By doing so, we can learn from the students and then apply that knowledge to attract future students while meeting the needs and improving upon the services offered to the current students (Butcher, 2005).

In this paper, author uses the concept of product as DE institution itself. It's a different name, logo, color and physical attributes. We can say that DE institution is a brand and a brand is a way of differentiating one product from another; the greater the perceived similarity of products, the more important the brand in establishing the differences. Some schools will clearly feel that they are different from others, or that the market perceives differences, which makes it less important for them to establish their corporate identity (Pardey, 1991).

2.1.4.2 Price

What is exchanged for the product? It contains more than a value that someone will pay for it. The mean of price changes according to the different situations. DE Institutions have also pricing policy. All of DE institutions hope to increase their application and enrollment rates. Pricing policy may be one of the reasons that students are willing to choose any institution.

2.1.4.3 Place

Place is a means of getting the product into the consumer's hands. The personality of the place sends messages to the target audience.

2.1.4.4 Promotion

Promotion is a means of communication between the seller and buyer. It contains advertising, public relations, personal selling, publicity, and sales promotions.

All of them are consisting of institutions' marketing communication tools. Marketing communication is a communications with target audiences on all matters that affect marketing and business performance. It involves the management of the marketing communication mix (Picton & Broderic, 2001).

Marketing communication is a continuous dialogue between an institution/brand and consumers. Because of the rapid rising amount of DE Institutions, they have to put their institution's differences among others. Why do the students choose that DE institutions among competitor? What's their mission? Are those institutions know and satisfy their publics (employee, students, donors, faculties etc.)

Table 2.1: Target Audiences and Marketing Communication Tools of Distance Education

	Communication Channels	Target audiences
Distance Education Institutions	**Advertising**	**Students**
	Public relations	**students' families**
	Sponsorship	**employee**
	Promotions	**faculties/academic staff**
	Word-of-mouth	**donors**
	Corporate communication	**government**
		supplier

DE institutions must start with the idea of what its corporate brand. The corporate brand comprises three discrete but overlapping concepts: personality, identity and image. Corporate personality is a term used in similar way to a person's personality. It's essentially, who the organization is? This question replied by Borca, with some descriptions as hardness, sincerity, expertise, excitement and sophistication (Borca, 2002).

Corporate identity the means by which corporate personality is projected, transmitted or communicated. It's the basis on which the organization is known and understood (whether or not this is deliberate and planned, intentional or unintentional, managed well or badly). Corporate image is the impression created by the corporate identity. It's the perceptions held of the organization by its audiences. Corporate image is what is felt and thought about and organization (Picton &Brodenic, 2001).

DE institutes must constitute their personality. It's may be an expert, sincere, modern or sophistic. Their identities consist of social, ethical, ideological, economical and quality behavior of the institutions. The messages of the DE institution are sent by incorporate or out of the corporate. The decision that an institution must decide is which communication

channel are used in transmitting the DE institutions' message. They are able to use advertising, public relations, sponsorships, word-of-mouth and promotions to publics.

2.1.5 Promotional Effectiveness

Measuring the effectiveness of the promotional expenditure has become an important research question. The effectiveness of advertising is often measured in practice by examining changes in customers' attitudes or in a behavior other than purchase (Davies, 1991). Sales promotion activities are often used in conjunction with other promotional efforts to facilitate personal selling, advertising or both (Pride and Ferrell, 1991).

However, sales promotion is not always secondary to other promotion mix ingredients, in which case measures such as increased sales, store traffic and number of enquiries are used to determine promotion effectiveness. As far as personal selling is concerned, the current trend for many retailers is a movement towards a behavior based evaluation system, where the activities of retail job performance are evaluated against such measures as merchandise procedure, sales ability and product knowledge (Bush *et al.,* 1990).

The traditional output orientated system is supplemented by the inclusion of environmental considerations and other types of control such as cultural, social and self-control. The effectiveness of publicity is usually measured by the number of news articles actually published or broadcast (Jefkins, 1992).

2.1.6 Factors Influencing the Choice of the Promotion Mix

Each promotional tool, advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, publicity and direct marketing has its own unique characteristics and costs and marketers have to understand these characteristics in selecting them (Kotler, 1984). According to Kotler and Amstrong (2001), companies consider factors such as market target and product when developing their promotion mix strategies. The importance of different promotion tools varies between consumer and industrial markets. The promotion mix will be influenced by whether the company chooses a ''push" or "pull" strategy to create sales (Kotler, 1984). According to Kotler and Amstrong (2001), consumer goods firms "pull" more by using more advertising, followed by sales promotion, personal selling and then public relations. According to Shimp (2000), a company's

marketing strategy on whether to put emphasis on either push" or "pull" strategy will determine the type of promotion mix to use. A Push strategy calls for using sales force and trade promotion to push the product through the channels (Kotler, 1984). Industrial firms tend to "push" more, pu ting more of their funds into personal selling, while advertising and sales promotion plays a supporting role (Cravens and Piercy, 2003). Personal selling is used more heavily with expensive and risky goods and in markets with fewer and lager sellers (Kotler and Armstrong, 2001).

The promotional tools vary in their effectiveness at different stages of the product life cycle. According to Kotler (1984), advertising and publicity are cost effective in producing high awareness at the introduction stage and sales promotion is useful in promoting early trial. Personal selling, although expensive, is used to get the trade to carry the product. In the growth stage, advertising and publicity continue to be used (Kotler, 1984). In mature stage, sales promotion resumes in importance relative to advertising while in decline stage, advertising is kept at a reminder level and publicity and personal selling is given minimal attention.

According to Kotler (1984) promotional tool vary in their cost effectiveness at different stages of buyer readiness. Advertising and publicity plays the most important role in the awareness stage more than calls from sales representatives. Education affects customer comprehension with advertising and personal selling playing secondary roles Customer conviction is influenced by personal selling followed by advertising, while closing the sale is a function of the sales call. Personal selling is focused on the later stages of the customer buying Process (Kotler, 1984).

Cravens and Piercy (2003) give other factors affecting the choice of promotion mix as, number and dispersion of buyers, buyer's information needs, and distribution. If the number and dispersion of buyers is small, a firm will tend to use personal selling; if large they use advertising and sales promotion. For the buyer's whose information needs are high, personal selling is used, while advertising is used when the buyer needs are low. If distribution is direct to the user, personal selling is used, if through the channel, then advertising and sales promotion will be used.

According to Cravens and Piercy (2003), technology also plays an important role in company's promotion strategies. For example, the internet provides car buyers with access to important information in making purchase decisions.

Promotion budget is another important factor that determines choice of promotion mix to use. According to Kotler and Amstrong (2001), and Cravens and Piercy (2003), factors that determine promotion budgets include the objective-and-task method, competitive parity, percentage-of-sales method, and affordable method. Joseph and Richardson (2002) report that when firms are flush with cash, they tend to spend liberally on advertising even beyond what seems necessary or desirable. this link between the excess cash and the budget constitutes the affordability" method of promotion budget. Regulatory is another factor that may determine the type of promotion mix to be used. For instance, in Kenya CAP 346 of pest control products Act stipulates that products that fall under the class of "Restricted Use" should not be publicly advertised.

2.1.7 Advertising in Ethiopia

In ancient times traders in Ethiopia used to advertise their products by cutting stones in symbols or drawings. There were also public criers-those who advertised their products by shouting their information walking up and down streets (Muna, 1996). Advertising in Ethiopia showed further development with the establishment of the Ethiopian printing press. It was some hundred years ago during Minilik's reign that the first press advertising appeared in the first Ethiopian newspaper, 'Aimro', which advertised washing soap on August 2, 1914 publication. Following this beginning, there appeared advertisements in Addis Zemen, an Amharic newspaper, at the end of 1950s and beginning of the 1960s.

The increasing need for different items for local people and for foreigners during the Italian occupation raised competition, which led into development in the advertising sector. After the occupation, the same trend continued well into the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s. Advertisements such as "'Wonji Sugar' strengthens like an elephant", and Philips with Wubshet Workalemaw started to transmit commercials at that time. The National Lottery had started to use public criers at market places, and continued commercial advertising after the 1974 Ethiopian Revolution. There were few advertising agencies that existed before the revolution, such as one of the first advertising agency, Anbessa, which Ato Wubshet, the advertising pioneer, opened up (Yosef Girmay, 2005).

Ato Woubshet, who has contributed to the development of advertising in Ethiopia, used to work first for the National Lottery. He used to prepare copies of advertisements for newspaper,

magazine or posters, and read them for radio and television as well. Ethiopian Television started its service on the Emperor's coronation day, on October 23, 1965 E.C. In 1969 E.C the Advertising and Distribution Agency was founded under the then Ministry of Information and Tourism. Its purpose was "to promote the advertising industry and to promote trade" in the country. However, after two years without doing much the agency was contracted to Ethio-marketing, a private enterprise (ibid, 2005).

After the Emperor, the Derg military government nationalized most companies and then all advertising agencies and almost all commercial advertisements, except public announcements, vanished from the media scene. Following market opportunities - the mass importation of consumer goods, and liberalization and deregulation after the fall of the Derg regime, the advertising sector in Ethiopia has begun flourishing. Presently, there are some legal advertising agencies, which employ both print and electronic media to advertise, and with this there started lots of advertisements appearing on Ethiopian television. These advertisements, containing various images of gender, are now knocking at everybody's home, and may tend to influence the lives of consumers through various appeals.

2.2 Empirical Literature

Gebremicael (2011) carried out a study on Addis Ababa medical college and CPU College with the aim of assessing the promotional practice of the collages. He found out that the highest percentage (30.9%) of the respondent, the reason to choose the colleges were the quality of service they provide and followed by proximity to their residence. Most of the students the source of information (first motivator) to join the colleges were their friends. In this study the findings also shows that the most persuasive promotion mix was advertising and publicity. On the other hand, the colleges' promotional activities and actual offering was not the same, i.e. 40.8% of the respondents were responding as they have medium different between the actual service and promotional practice.

Study on the effect of promotional strategies on performance revealed a positive correlation between promotional strategies and sales performance. Alphonce, Victor, Fredrick, Patrick, Beatrice, and Odhiambo, (2012) it was reported that at 5% level of significance, there was positive relationship between the promotional strategies and profits because as the costs on the promotional strategies increased so did the profits.

Grankvist, Kollberg, Peterson, (2004) in their study in which they focused on promotional strategies for banking services, concluded that all elements of promotion mix were used to some extent for promotion of banking services. This view was supported by Ananda & Murugaiah (2003) who carried out similar study on financial industry and recognized the importance of promotional strategy in influencing performance in the sector. In his finding, Kristina (2006) recommended that promotional strategies should be designed as per the nature of services to be promoted.

The impact of promotional strategy was further noted by Channon (1985) when he opined that promotion attract deal oriented consumers who are likely to switch banks rather than new long accounts.

Mohd & Wannur (2012) in their study noted that personal network promotional tool comprised of promotion through family / friends (asking friends or relatives to advertise), sales promotion (special sale price, purchase with purchase, giveaway with purchase and free sample) and distributors (which moving around office, schools, clinics, houses and any premises showing the products) have impact on performance.

In the study conducted among women in Kenya by Arvinlucy (2012) it was found that most women groups use personal selling in promoting their products. This was due to the fact that other promotional elements require a lot of money and the groups do not have sufficient fund to carry out those other promotional elements. Advertising was only used once by the groups providing services just to create awareness of their existence so that they may get donors to fund their activities. The different elements of the promotional strategy impacts on performance were also noted in the previous studies.

Chalarsoughi and Savory (2012) in the study on effect of sales promotion as a tool on customer attention to purchase concluded that introducing Khodro's products through sales' promotion attracts customer's attention to purchase. 50% of the participant selected the agreement choice believing that sales' promotion will bring about customers attention and promotion of selling. Fornell, Robinson, and Wernerfelt (1985) argued that sales' promotion can play a dual role in that it can be involved in both "habit formation" as well as in "habit destruction".

Metwally (1997) explained the variations in the growth rates of advertising expenditure of consumer goods and services in Australia during the period 1975- 1995 by developing and

testing a number of hypotheses. The regression results indicate, among other findings, that the growth in advertising expenditure is strongly correlated with the growth in sales and that movement in market shares exerts a significant effect on the growth in advertising expenditure. This view was corroborated by Dekimpe and Hanssens (1995) who used the Vector Auto Regressive modeling to show that temporary increases in advertising have a long term carry over effect on the brand's performance in some, but not all the stores.

Andras and Srinivasan (2003) highlighted the importance of higher advertising intensity in performance especially profits. The view of Joshi and Hanssens (2004) was not different from Andras and Srinivasan who concluded on the impact of advertising and R&D spending on sales and profits and also went on to show that there is a positive impact of advertising on market capitalization.

2.3 Conceptual Frame work

The conceptual framework for the study is depicted by figure 2.1 below. Conceptualization attempts to visualize the causality of the research problem prior to understand this research in detail. In this research it is planned to explain the relationship between promotion mix and students number.

Independent variable   **dependent variable**
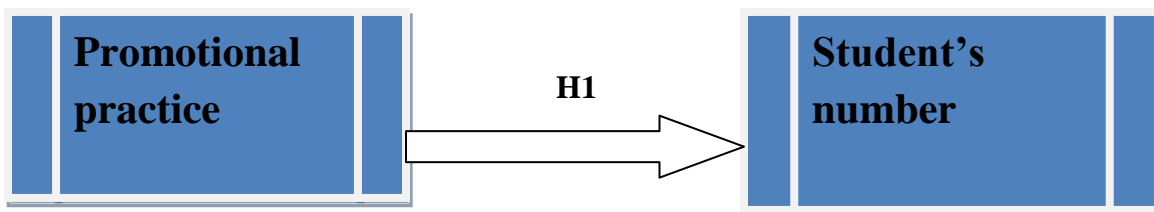
Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 Background of the Organization

St. Mary's University (SMU), established in 1998 E.C, is an Ethiopian institution of higher learning located in the capital Addis Ababa. After fifteen years of service as a college first and a university college since 2008, it earned university status from the Ethiopian Ministry of Education in September 2013. The university has four campuses in Addis Ababa, 13 Distance Education Regional Centers, and 110 Coordination Offices throughout the country. It has 200 full-time academic staff and 1000 employees. It caters to the needs of six thousand undergraduate students, twenty thousand students enrolled in distance education programs, and two thousand students in graduate programs. (SMU, 2017)

In March 2000e.c, St. Mary's University (then St. Mary's College) opened its Distance Education Division – DED (now College of Open and Distance Learning (CODL) –– with Business and Law fields of studies. A year after its establishment, it widened its training programs and included various fields of studies in Teacher Education. CODL has one hundred ten Coordinating Centers and Agent Offices which are responsible for registration of students, distribution of learning materials, and organization and coordination of term-based tutorial and examination sessions in their respective regions.

The Centers and Agent Offices are also responsible for liaising with government and non-government bodies and the peoples of the regions. The Coordination Centers and Agent Offices are directly responsible to their respective Regional/Main offices in matters of administration, and all their work is monitored by the same.

In 2009 the DED (now College of Open and Distance Learning) today offers a total of 22 degree programs through its 154 coordinating centers, which are located throughout the country catering to the needs of close to 20,000 students. In the conventional mode of learning, the university has eleven degree programs with student population of more than 6000. (SMU, 2017)

3.2 Research Design and Approach

The study employs a mixed approach of both qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative approach is adopted to get more insight on the promotion practice and to understand the major constraints of promotional practice. The quantitative research approach is adopted to see the effect of the promotion on the number of students. Furthermore the research employs causal research design.

3.3 Population and Sampling Design

3.3.1 Study Population

The target population of the study is coordinators of the regional cluster and agent offices. Based on the Head centers management office report as of 2010 E.C there are 108 centers operating throughout the country. Therefore, the populations of this study are 108 individuals who are the center coordinators.

3.3.2 Sampling Procedure

For qualitative and quantitative data collection, sampling is executed using the non probability sampling technique. To select the required respondents, the researcher used purposive sampling technique. This technique is employed because it is believed it enables the researcher to select the real marketing activity employees across the centers.

According to the preliminary investigation among 108 centers 27 are engaged in promotional activities. Out of these 27 centers 14 centers are regional coordinating centers and 13 centers are cluster centers. All 27 regional center coordinators among the 108 centers are selected purposively because the promotional activity is undertaken by these coordinating offices.

As we see from table 1 the regional offices and cluster offices were selected purposively. These 27 centers undertake the promotion activity directly or indirectly for the centers under their region. Beside this the collage marketing manager is purposely selected as a key informant because he is responsible for the marketing activity of the collage.

	Regions	Clusters	Centers
1	**Addis Ababa**	**-Wolkitie** **-D/Birhan**	-Addis Ababa -Butajira -Debre Birhan -Dera -Enewari --Fichie -Mehal Mieda -Shewa Robit -Wolkitie
2	**Arbaminch**	**- Wolayta**	-Arbaminch -Basketo - Duramie -Halaba -Hossaena - Jinka -Kemba --Modula - Sawla -Tercha - Wolayta
3	**Mekele**		-Mekele -Abi-Adi - Axsum - Maychew -Shirie
4	**Hawassa**	**-Negeleborena**	-Hawassa -Aleta wondo - Amaro kelie - Bensadaye - Borie -Dilla -Yirgalem -Dollo Ado - Filtu - Gedeb - Negelie Borena --Wadera
5	**Adama**		-Adama -Arsi robie - Assela - Chiro -Diksis
6	**Bahir dar**	**-D/markos** **-Motta** **-Chagni**	-Bahir dar-Bichena -Bulen -Chagni -D/markos - Dangila - Tilili -Gilgel Beles - Goncha -jawi - Debere-Work - Digua Tsion -Feres biet -Finote Selam - Liben -Mertole mariam -Motta
7	**Dessie**	**- Woldiya** **-Sekota** **-Mekaneselam**	- Dessie -Abergelie -dawunt - Dehana - Diensa - Kelela ---lalibela - Jamma Degolo -Mekane Selam - Mekidela ---Muja --Sahila Seyemt --Saynt -Sekota --Tenta -Wogdi -Wogel-Tenna -Woldia -Ziquala
8	**Jimma**	**-Metu**	-Jimma -Bedelie - Bonga -Gambela -Masha -Metu - Mizan Teferi -Saylem -Tapi
9	**Assosa**		-Assosa Nekemte -Dembi Dello - kamash
10	**Gonder**	**-Debre tabor**	-Gonder -Arbaya -Debark - Debere Tabor -Estie - Filakiet -Nefas Mewucha -simada
11	**Dire dawa**		-Dire Dawa -Bedeno -Harar -
12	**Jigjiga**		- Jijiga Godie -Kebri Dehar
13	**-Dubti**		-Dubti
14	**Gambela**		-Gambela

Table 3.1: CODL center offices

Source: Head centers management office, 2010

3.4. Data Collection

The study employed both primary and secondary data sources. As to the primary sources, data is collected from the CODL marketing manager and region office coordinators with a focus on general information and the promotion activities, the challenges and other vital information related to the research objectives.

The primary data is collected through using semi-structured mailed questionnaires and in-depth interview with key informant is used to support the result. To strength the reliability of the data and supplement the information gathered secondary data which was collected from books, journals and CODL main registrar, CODL finance and CODL regions support and coordinating office reports.

3.5. Data Analysis Technique

The study uses both qualitative and quantitative data pertaining to the problem. Hence, both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques were employed to analyze the data. The data from interview results is discussed qualitatively. The data about to what extent does St. Mary's university use the promotional strategies from questioner are presented in narrative form by using tables descriptively.

The data collected in the research was edited, coded and entries made into made into statistical software (Statistical Package for Social Sciences, SPSS version 20). This involved converting quantitative (nominal and ordinal data) into numerical codes. This Descriptive statistics is consisted of frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation. Analysis of quantitative data is using econometric model techniques to present the data. And inferential statistics was employed to test the hypothesis.

To analyze the secondary data the research uses a simple liner regression analysis technique that shows the relation of the promotion on the student's number. Especially secondary data of 10 years promotion cost and students' number is analyzed by using econometrics techniques based on simple linear regression model techniques.

The Key Variable of the study or independent variable is promotion cost.

Assume that

- Promotion cost (X_1)
- constant terms (β_0)
- Partial slops or coefficient: β_1
- error terms (ε)
- Dependent variable of the study (students number) (Y)

$$Y = f(X1)$$

$$Y = \beta 0 + \beta 1 x 1 + \varepsilon$$

$\beta 0$- is intercepts, β_1 are partial slope coefficients, $\varepsilon_{i\text{-}}$ error terms

The above equation finally arrive at the equation of

Y= the dependent variables (a column Vectors) or students number

X= the vector of independent variable or promotion cost

ε= error terms

$\beta 0$= partial slope of coefficients

The econometric model is

Y= X'β +ε………………………………………………………………….1

Using Ordinary Least Square estimation procedures check:

β Is a linear function of Y, β a least variances and measuring of fit goodness by R^2 and possible to use other techniques.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

The clarity of the instrument items to the respondents was established so as to enhance the instrument's validity and reliability. According to Sekaran (2003), validity is the degree by which the sample of test items represents the content the test is designed to measure. To establish the validity of the research instrument the research sought opinions of experts in the field of study especially the researcher's supervisor. Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement and is frequently assessed using the test–retest reliability method (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). Reliability was tested using Cronbach Alpha test with a threshold of 0.7. This facilitated the necessary revision and modification of the research instrument.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The results of the research project are exploring the promotional practice of St. Mary's university collage of open and distance learning. The results of the analyses are presented in relation to the study objectives and described in tables. The sample size for the analysis is 27 coordinators of St. Mary's university. Once the respondents answered the questionnaire, data was coded and analyzed using SPSS. The interview results are discussed in support of the questioner results.

4.2 Demographic Information

This section presents the data findings on the respondents' demographics. It specifically looks at their age, level of education and length of time the respondent has been working in St. Mary's university or experience.

The respondents were required to indicate their age where the study findings indicated that majority (59.3 %) indicated that their age bracket was between 31 and 40 years. Analysis of findings also indicated that 29.6 % of the respondents were between 21 and 30 years of age. The findings further indicated that 7.4 % were between 41-50 years while 3.7 % were above 51 years of age. The finding therefore implies that the most respondents were between 30-40 years. The findings of the study are illustrated in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Age Distribution

Age Category	Frequency	Percentage
21-30 years	8	29.6
31-40 years	16	59.3
41-50 years	2	7.4
51 years and above	1	3.7
Total	**27**	**100.0**

Source: Survey result, 2018

The study sought to find out the respondents level of education. The findings of the study are displayed in Table 4.2. From the findings, majority (66.7 %) had university degrees, followed by 29.6 % college diplomas. The findings further revealed that 3.7 % of the respondents had post graduates. It is therefore revealed that most respondents had university degrees as shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Level of Education

Academic level	Frequency	Percentage
Diploma	8	29.6
Degree	18	66.7
Postgraduate	1	3.7
Total	**27**	**100.0**

Source: Survey result, 2018

The study further determined the number of years the respondents have stayed in St. Mary's university Data collected from the field was coded and analyzed as per the study objective. From the analysis of the findings, 37.1 % indicated 2-5 years who were the majority of the respondents, 29.6 % said 6-10 years, and 18.5 % indicated below 1 year. The findings of the study further revealed that the remaining percentage 14.8 % said above 10 years. The results are as shown in Table 4.3. This indicates that the university can use this as an advantage for the promotion practice.

Table 4.3: Duration/experience of respondents in St. Mary's university

Duration	Frequency	Percentage
Below 1 Year	5	18.5
2 - 5 Years	10	37.1
6 - 10 Years	8	29.6
Above 10 years	4	14.8
Total	**27**	**100.0**

Source: Survey result, 2018

4.3 Advertising Practice

This section presents the findings on the various advertising techniques used by St. Mary's university collage of open and distance learning to avail information to attract customers.

The respondents were asked to indicate the medium of which St. Mary's university uses. On electronic media as source of information, Table 4.4 shows that the majority of the respondents 85.2% describe that the university uses radio stations. 11.1 % of the respondents said St. Mary's university through TV (such as ETV); and, 3.7% through the internet. This depicts that radio advertisement is used much more by St. Mary's university in its advertisements. This is also supported by the marketing manager interview result. As the marketing manager said the university uses radio advertising to reach students in different areas of Ethiopia by using their own languages in each three terms in one year.

Table 4.4: Electronic Media

Source	Frequency	Percentage
Radio [Local FM stations]	23	85.2
TV [ETV]	3	11.1
Internet	1	3.7
None	0	0
Total	**27**	**100.0**

Source: Survey result, 2018

On print media source of information, Table 4.5 shows that 81.5% of the respondents have said that the university didn't use the mentioned print Medias to promote. 7.4% respondents describes that the university uses newspaper, 7.4% buy using magazines and 3.7% by journals. This shows that St. Mary's university has a gap in using print media as a tool of promotion. This result explains that the university didn't have a trend in print media promotional practice.

Table 4.5: Print Media

Source	Frequency	Percentage
Newspapers	2	7.4
Magazines	2	7.4
Journals	1	3.7
none	22	81.5
Total	**27**	**100.0**

Source: Survey result, 2018

On outdoor publicity, the findings presented in Table 4.6 shows that 74.1% of the respondents identify that the university delivers its information by using posters, and 25.9% of the respondents respond that the university uses billboards. From the result we can say that St. Mary's university uses posters among the outdoor publicity techniques. This is also supported by the marketing manager in the interview. According to the manager the university uses posters and broachers intensively and these are prepared by the head office marketing department and distributed to the 14 regional coordinators and 13 clusters after that these centers will again distribute for every center under their region.

Table 4.6: Outdoor Publicity

Source	Frequency	Percentage
Posters	20	74.1
Billboard	7	25.9
None	0	0
Total	**27**	**100.0**

Source: Survey result, 2018

So In addition to this according to the collage marketing department head Mr. Tesfaye the collage uses different types of promotional activities. This activities range from direct promotion which conducted by using cars in different regions that the university has distance coordinating offices to online website promotion. This different type of promotion mix's are conducted in different years beginning from its establishment year 1993 E.C to today 2010 E.C.

According to the response of the marketing manager in the first years of the collage the promotion was very intensive and they use different type promotional mixes. They conduct advertising, direct marketing and personal selling very often. Among this techniques most of the time outdoor publicity was conducted by the collage personnel's in different regional centers by using car. The responsible person for the campaign sent from the head office then he/she try to undertake the promotional activity on the selected region by coordinating with the responsible region coordinator. Beside this according to the manager broachers were distributed throughout the centers.

4.4 Challenges in Promotional Practice

The result below in table 4.7 shows that 29.6% of the respondents choose lack of clear promotional plan is the major challenge for St. Mary's University promotional practice. This followed by competition and cost of promotion which have the percentage of 25.9% each. Media barriers also get 18.6% of the respondents. This indicates that the university faces the above challenges in conducting promotional activities.

Table 4.7: Challenges of promotional practice

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of Clear promotional plan	8	29.6
Competition	7	25.9
Cost of promotion	7	25.9
Media barriers	5	18.6
Total	27	100.0

Source: Survey result, 2018

This shows that, the colleges have problems in their promotion activity. We can associate the reason from the interview result; the colleges have not any formal promotion plan as well as there is a problem in assessing the implemented promotion plan. According to Alfred (2010) One challenge marketers in an academic setting face is the lack of stated plans, goals and Objectives by either the institution the majority of respondents (86 percent) said their university has a written marketing plan and 43 percent of them have had a plan for between one and five

years. Only two of the respondents (9.5 percent) said the institution has had a plan for more than 10 years.

In the interview the marketing manager describe about some of the major challenges in promotional practice of St. Mary's university. Lack of Proper promotional plan is the main challenge in the university. According to their response the marketing skill of the center coordinators is the major challenge for undertaking effective promotional activity. The other challenge is related to cost and budget of promotion. This challenge is mainly related to because of the increase and varies nature of advertising cost. Because of the high television advertising cost the university stops using television promotions.

The nature of distance learning also makes the promotional practice more difficult. The students are dispersed across all over the country and different languages are spoken around the country. This makes the promotional practice difficult in terms of cost and because of the language barrier specifically the advertising message didn't reach to the intended audience.

4.5 Promotion Strategies

4.5.1 Promotion

The respondents were asked to disclose the extent to which St. Mary's university uses the several promotional strategies. A 5-point Likert scale was used in data collection and analysis where 1 point was accorded to no extent, 2 points to small extent, 3 points to moderate extent, 4 points to great extent while 5 points to very great extent.

The findings were presented in Table 4.9. The descriptive results from findings show that: promotion through flyer and brochure had a mean of 4.3; promotion through radio had a mean of 4.3 Promotion through Office setting had a mean of 3.5 , promotion through sponsorship had a mean of 2.3; promotion through television had a mean of 2.1; promotion through telephone handling had a mean of 2.1; promotion through a website had a mean of 2.1; Promotion through demonstration had a mean 1.9; Promotion through Billboards had a mean 1.8; and Promotion through newspapers had a mean 1.7.

This shows that the promotion activities carried out by St. Mary's university are done mainly through flyer and brochure, and promotion through radio. Though, from this result we know that these two methods of promotion strategies are conducted at great extent by St. Mary's university. Promotion through office setting is conducted at moderate level.

The result further shows that St. Mary's university uses promotion through sponsorship, promotion through television, through telephone handling, promotion through website, and Promotion through demonstration, promotion through billboards, and promotion through newspapers at very small extent. These promotion strategies are not used at a good extent by St. Mary's university.

Table 4.8: Extent of Use of Promotion Strategies

List of measurements	No Extent	Small Extent	Moderate Extent	Great Extent	Very Great Extent	Mean	STDEV
Promotion through demonstration	5	19	3	0	0	1.9	0.6436
Promotion through Telephone handling	6	12	9	0	0	2.1	0.6884
Promotion through flyer and brochure	0	0	2	15	10	4.3	0.7432
Promotion through Office setting	0	0	17	6	4	3.5	0.8078
Promotion through radio	0	0	5	9	13	4.3	0.6785
Promotion through television	4	16	7	0	0	2.1	0.7866
Promotion through newspapers	15	5	7	0	0	1.7	0.7797
Promotion through Billboards	10	12	5	0	0	1.8	1.1984
Promotion through sponsorships	2	15	10	0	0	2.3	0.6948
Promotion through website	2	19	6	0	0	2.1	0.6255
Promotion Strategies	**44**	**98**	**71**	**30**	**27**	**2.6**	**0.8554**

Source: Survey result, 2018

In addition to this based on the interview result of the marketing manager the university promotion practice is mainly through advertising by using electronic media. This is mainly conducted by regional radio stations like FBC (Fana Broadcasting Corporation). For this purpose five regional coordinating centers will conduct the advertising (i.e., Dre Dawa, Hawassa, Adama, Bahir Dar, and Mekele).

The advertising held in each term. These five centers contact the advertising agencies in their respective area and inform to the marketing department at the head office. The advertising in each regions are conduct in their own language and sometimes more than one language. For example in Dre Dawa the advertising is prepared by Afan Oromo, Somali, and Amharic languages. In same way in Mekele region center the advertising is held by two languages i.e. Afar and Tigregna.

Based on the interview result there are also other promotional tools the university uses to reach the intended audience. In this case the broachers and flayers are prepared and distributed by the head office marketing department for every 108 centers. The regions and the clusters are responsible for the centers under their area. The regional coordinating offices and cluster centers ask for the head office marketing department for additional broachers and flyers when they need. From the interview we find that Addis Ababa center which is in the head office mostly uses flayers.

The interview result also reviled that St. Mary's university is using 2meter by 1.5meter banners for each 108 centers distributed by the university head office marketing department. The banners are prepared by the different languages as per the centers request. For example in this year 2010e.c 91 broachers in Amharic, 12 broachers in Oromifa, and 5 broachers in Somali are distributed for the 108 centers.

The broachers contain information about the different departments and the field of studies and the criteria for registration. From the interview we find that Addis Ababa center which is in the head office mostly uses flayers.

4.5.2 Public Relations

To the question on the extent of use of public relations by St. Mary's university, the findings were presented in Table 4.10. The study used a 5-point Likert Scale in collecting the data so that the factors could be ranked based on their weighted mean as previously indicated. From the results: clear vision and goals had a mean of 3.8, opening more branches had a mean of 3.4, adequate marketing campaigns and good/attractive premises had a mean of 3.1, enter into new markets had a mean of 2.5, and collecting market information on customer needs had a mean of 2.3.

From the findings it can be deduced that St. Mary's university, in regarding to public relations activities, has a clear vision and goals, it has a good trend in opining new branches, the university conduct adequate marketing campaigns and good/attractive premises moderately, the result also shows there is a little work done or there is a small extent practice regarding enter into new market and collecting market information.

Table 4.9: Extent of Use of Public Relations

List of measurements	No Extent	Small Extent	Moderate Extent	Great Extent	Very Great Extent	Mean	STDEV
Collecting market information on customer needs	2	15	10	0	0	2.3	0.7599
Adequate marketing campaigns	0	2	13	10	0	3.1	0.7546
Enter into new markets	0	16	8	3	0	2.5	0.6991
Opening more branches	0	0	16	10	1	3.4	0.5947
Good/attractive premises	0	3	17	7	0	3.1	0.8195
Clear vision and goals	0	0	9	13	5	3.8	0.4975
Public Relations	**2**	**36**	**73**	**43**	**6**	**3.0**	**0.8894**

Source: Survey result, 2018

4.5.3 Personal Selling

The study sought to establish to what extent St. Mary's university uses personal selling to grow its customers or market share. A five point Likert scale was used as previously indicated. Table 4.16 shows that: positive word of mouth from loyal customers had a mean of 4.6, close relationship had a mean of 4.2, and personal contact with customers had a mean of 4.1, and, This depicts that St. Mary's university as personal selling technique uses, to a great extent, positive word of mouth from loyal customers, personal contact with customers and close relationship.

Table 4.10: Extent of Use of Personal Selling

List of measurements	No Extent	Small Extent	Moderate Extent	Great Extent	Very Great Extent	Mean	STDEV
Personal contact with customers	0	0	3	19	5	4.1	0.7078
Close relationship	0	0	5	10	12	4.25	0.7316
Positive word of mouth from loyal customers	0	0	2	5	20	4.6	0.7445
Personal Selling	**0**	**0**	**10**	**34**	**37**	**4.3**	**0.9574**

Source: Survey result, 2018

The interview result also indicates that among the different type of promotion they use positive word-of –mouth promotion type is considered us effective. When they explain every weekend Saturday morning there is a graduation ceremony of awarding temporary degree for those who finished their courses. During this time the university marketing head deliver speech to create a positive attitude about the university. This activity has a great effect on positive- word- mouth.

4.5.4 Direct Marketing

The study sought to establish to what extent St. Mary's university u s e s direct marketing to grow its customers or market share. A five point Likert scale was used as previously indicated. Table 4.12 shows that: personal contact with customers had a mean of 3.9, and telemarketing had a mean of 1.3, and direct marketing by email had a mean of 1.1, this depicts that St. Mary's university c o n d u c t s direct marketing using personal contact with customers by a great extent. The result also shows us among direct marketing practices promotions through email and through telemarketing are not practiced by St. Mary's university. The marketing manager support this result by saying, "Because of the nature and infrastructure barriers the university didn't use such e-marketing promotional practices"

Table 4.11: Extent of Use of Direct Marketing

List of measurements	No Extent	Small Extent	Moderate Extent	Great Extent	Very Great Extent	Mean	STDEV
personal contact with customers	0	0	7	15	5	3.9	0.7245
By email	22	4	1	0	0	1.1	0.7248
By telemarketing	18	7	2	0	0	1.3	0.9214
Direct Marketing	**40**	**11**	**10**	**15**	**5**	**2.1**	**0.6475**

Source: Survey result, 2018

In addition to this regarding whether the university uses website promotion? The marketing manager in the interview informs me that the university has a website in general which contains the detail information about St. Mary's university as a whole. The collage of open and distance learning didn't have its own website.

According to Francis, 2015 indicate that promotional elements usually are used by various organizations to elicit responses from target markets to increase the market share. Findings of the study reveal that personal selling (66%) was the highest ranked promotional mix element with regards to its effect on sales volume, advertising (65%) was ranked second, public relations (63%) was ranked third, and direct marketing (50%) was the least ranked. There is a consistency with my research public relation have a mean of 4.3 and ranked first , public relation with a mean 3.0 rank second , promotion strategies/ advertising ranked third , and direct marketing is last ranked with a mean of 2.1.

This research have also some inconsistency with Mogobo, 2013 which found a result a unit increase in advertising would lead to a 0.316 (p = .002) increase in customer growth, a unit increase in public relations would lead to a 1.403 (p < .001) increase in customer growth, a unit increase in personal selling would lead to a 0.570 (p < .001) increase in customer growth, and a unit increase in direct marketing would lead to a 0.462 (p = .028) increase in customer growth. This shows that among the promotion mix strategies, public relations followed by personal selling and direct marketing would have the most positive influence on growth.

4.6 Econometric Analysis: The Effect of Promotion on Student Number

The effect of promotion on student number increment is analyzed using 10 year data; the costs of promotion is measured using the costs incurred per term/semester for the last ten year, and the number of students represent the number of students registered per semester where the promotion is takes place. Totally the institution invests 3,595,397.21 birr for promotion and 50503 students were registered in these periods.

Both correlation and regression analysis were performed in order to test whether the promotion contributes of student number increment; The correlation analysis is done using Pearson correlation analysis, and the correlation analysis shows that there is strong, positive and significant relationship between promotion and number of students, $r = 0.735$, $p < 0.001$. The analysis shows that whenever the promotion or promotion investment increases so does the number of students.

Table 4.12: Result of correlation analysis

```
. pwcorr promotion StudentNo, star (0.05) sig

                │ promot~n Studen~o

      promotion │  1.0000


      StudentNo │  0.7359*   1.0000
                │  0.0000

```

      Source: Own computation

A regression analysis was also performed to test to what extent the promotion is affected the student number increment. Before performing a regression analysis the necessary per-regression test was performed such as Autocorrelation, multicolinearity and hetrosckedasticity. As a matter of chance the data was free from these problems; this is may be due to the number of observation was small.

The regression analysis shows that promotion was found to have a positive and significant effect on student number with p value p<0.05. This indicates that the explanatory variable which is promotion had a 95% significant level on explaining the dependent variable. Based on this the research alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted.

The estimation result revealed that as the promotion increases by one the number of newly registered students will increase by 0.47 percent. According to Francis, 2015 in his research indicate that promotional elements have a significant effect to increase the market share.

Table 4.13: Regression analysis result

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs =	10		
Model	11.5992	1	11.5992	F(1, 11) =	11.93		
Residual	10.6939	11	0.97218	Prob > F=	0.0031		
Total	22.2932	12	1.85777	R-squared =	0.8503		
				Adj R-squared =	0.7267		
				Root MSE =	1.4144		
promotion	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P>t	[95% Conf.	Interval]	
Student No	.00474242	.1560268	0.18	0.005	.3255328	.3803813	
_cons	6.892622	2.031074	3.39	0.008	2.298015	11.48723	

Source: Own computation

The results of the econometric model estimation revealed that promotion had a significant effect on the student's number. Accordingly, the promotion aspect found it had a positive relationship with student number, higher promotional activity is related with higher student number, and this means with higher and intensive promotion mixes students number are more likely to be in the category of high registration level.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary and Conclusion

This study in general sought to understand the promotional practice of St. Mary's university collage of open and distance learning. With this the research sees the current promotional practice of the university the effect promotional practice on the student's number and also the major challenges regarding promotional practice have been discussed. Based on this the major findings of the research are describer here.

Promotion has a significant effect on the student's number in St. Mary's university CODL. The result indicates a strong, positive, and significant relationship between promotion and number of students.

The result indicates that most of the center coordinators 59.3% are under the age limit of 31-40. 66.7% of the respondents are degree holders this shows most of them are having a good educational status. The work experience of the respondent is lie between 2-5 year and 6-10 years with 37.15 and 29.6% respectively. This show that there is relatively a moderate turnover among the center coordinators which intern is asset for the university to establish integrated communication with the students.

The university employs different types of promotional mixes. Radio advertising holds the major part with 85.2 % response among electronic media advertising. The results indicate St. Mary university collage of open and distance learning (CODL) uses radio advertising intensively. The university didn't uses print media advertisings from the response 81.5% of them says among the print media ways of advertising the university uses none. Posters have been used in a great level in the university with 74.1 % of response among the outdoor publicity tactics of advertising.

The extent of St. Mary's university CODL use promotional strategies also shows that the university didn't uses most of the elements of promotion strategies. Among the promotion

strategies promotion through radio, promotion through flyers and broachers, and promotion through office setting are used very intensively. But the rest strategies are not well used.

The university is in moderate level regarding public relation with a mean of 3.0 among this the university with a good reputation have a good clear vision and goal, and tries to open more branches around the country by collecting market information and customer need.

Personal selling is at a great level used by St. Mary University CODL the result shows it have a mean of 4.3 which is great. Form this positive word of mouth is used very intensively. The university also uses a strong contact with its customers/ students and has a close relationship with them. there is a poor practice concerning direct marketing techniques even if they have a good personal contact with the customers/students direct marketing using email and telemarketing are not practiced in St. Mary's university CODL.

 The major challenges of St. Mary's university CODL is mainly emerged from the lack of clear promotional plan. In addition to this due to the nature of distance learning and it is students are dispersed around all over the country with different culture and languages makes the promotion practice difficult. Beside this the cost of advertising is rapidly increasing and this is also the major challenge for the university. There is high competition in the sector and the marketing skills of the center coordinators are not good. This is the main challenges for the promotional activities and practice of the St. Mary's university CODL.

5.2 Recommendations

The promotion concept has been gaining importance in distance education. Promotion provides tools for comparing what the institution is actually doing with its stated mission and goals. Student needs, societal expectations are changing and competitions are increasing. Competitiveness in the marketplace forces DE institutions putting their uniqueness. This uniqueness will be constituted by corporate personality, identity and image. And then, DE institutions communicate their messages to the related groups (students, workers, employee, students' families etc.) using with marketing communication tools which we named advertising, public relations, sponsorships, word-of-mouth and promotions.

St. Mary's university CODL should prepare a clear promotional plan by conduct a need assessment by using student's feedback to understand which promotion mix is effective. Though each center should gather information on the registration from students how they get the information and Follow up with graduates about their careers and tell them about further learning opportunities that might interest them. This can be also an input to prepare the perfect and clear promotional plan.

ODL evolved to address circumstances that were preventing potential learners from gaining access to education opportunities. Mitigating barriers such as geographical location, the need to combine earning and learning, and learning while juggling family needs, etc., require institutions to be flexible in the way they deliver their products. St. Mary's university CODL need to capture the benefits they provide in value propositions that focus on how they meet these needs for flexibility. Many institutions capture this in their vision or mission statements. For Partner with other institutions for joint marketing, promotion or program delivery purposes to increase the public relation strategy.

Regarding the center coordinators the university should give training on integrated marketing communication. Since the major challenge of the promotional practice of the university is regarding marketing skills of the center coordinators contentious trainings should be given to them.

There is lack of using direct marketing by email, websites and telemarketing. Even if there is lack of infrastructures to facilitate this type of promotions now days they are very effective so the university should consider them as new promotional tools.

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Appendix

Appendix I: Introductory Letter

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a student pursuing a Masters degree in Marketing Management at the St. Mary's university. In partial fulfillment of the requirements to the award of the Masters degree, I am required to carry out a study on; "assessment of promotional practice of St. Mary's university collage of open and distance learning"

I kindly request your assistance by availing time to respond to the questionnaire. A copy of the final report will be made available to you at your request. The information given will be treated with high confidentiality.

Yours faithfully,

STUDENT   **SUPERVISOR**

BIRUK ENGDA MEKURIYA   **DR. ASFAW YILMA**

SIGN………………………   SIGN………………………..

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

PROMOTIONAL PRACTICE OF ST. MARYS UNIVERSITY: IN THE CASE COLLAGE OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

SECTION: A   PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Please supply the required data by filling in the blanks where space is provided or by ticking [√] against the most appropriate answer.

I respondents name……………………………………………………….. [Optional]

1. **Age**

   a) 21-30 years   [ ]

   b) 31-40 years   [ ]

   c) 41-50 years   [ ]

   d) 51 and above years   [ ]

2. **Academic level**

   a) 0-Level   [ ]

   b) A-Level   [ ]

   c) Diploma   [ ]

   d) Degree   [ ]

   e) Postgraduate   [ ]

3. **How long have you been work in St. Mary's university?**

   a) Below 1year   [ ]

   b) 2-5   years   [ ]

   c) 6-10   years   [ ]

   d) Above 10 years   [ ]

SECTION: B   **ADVERTISING**

4. Through which medium of promotion did you use to communicate with the students?

    1. Electronic media:-

    a. Radio [Local FM stations]   [ ]

    b. TV   [ ]

    c. Internet   [ ]

    2. Print media:-

    a. Newspapers   [ ]

    b. Magazines   [ ]

    c. Journals   [ ]

    3. Outdoor publicity:-

    a. Posters   [ ]

    b. Billboard   **[ ]**

SECTION C: PROMOTIONAL CHALLENGES

1. What are the main promotional challenges in your center office?

    a. Lack of Clear promotional plan   [ ]
    b. Competition   [ ]
    c. Cost of promotion   [ ]
    d. Media barriers   [ ]

5   To what extent does St. Mary's university use the following promotional
     strategies?

PROMOTION STRATEGIES	Very Great Extent	Great Extent 4points	Moderate Extent 3 points	Small Extent 2 points	No extent 1 point
Promotion through demonstration					
Promotion through Telephone					
Promotion through flyer and brochure					
Promotion through Office setting					
Promotion through radio					
Promotion through television					
Promotion through newspapers					
Promotion through Billboards					
Promotion through sponsorships					
Promotion through website					
PUBLIC RELATIONS					
Collecting market information on					

customer needs					
Adequate marketing campaigns					
Enter into new markets					
Opening more branches					
Good/attractive premises					
Clear vision and goals					
PERSONAL SELLING					
Personal contact with customers					
Close relationship					
Positive word of mouth from loyal customers					
DIRECT MARKETING					
Personal contact with customers					
By email					
By telemarketing					