The effect of social media, product availability, and prices on the purchasing decision to opt continuing study at University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang

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Abstract

This research is a typical of associative research which conducted through quantitative approach. This research aims to figure out things in relation to the effect of social media, product availability, and price on purchasing decision to opt continuing study at University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang. The total 300 samples in this research had been selected through simple random sampling technique out of the total number of populations. The data has been analyzed by using multiple linear regression. Based on the research conducted, there have been found several findings; 1) Social media, partially, has a positive effect on the decision-making for students to opt University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang as the educational institution to continue their higher education degree; 2) Product availability, partially, has a positive effect on the decision-making for students to opt University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang as the educational institution to continue their higher education degree; 3) Price, partially, has a negative effect on the decision-making for students to opt University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang as the educational institution to continue their higher education degree; and 4) Simultaneously, social media, product availability, and price, are capable of giving effect to Y variable for 92.7%. The remaining 7.3% is affected by other factors outside the variables under study, such as promotion, service quality, brand image, and others.

Key words: Social media; product availability; purchasing decision

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INTRODUCTION

Responding to the competitiveness of the Society 5.0 era necessitates the need for high-quality human resources with a competitive spirit, as Wiliana (2018) suggests. Achieving high-quality human resources with a competitive edge involves investing in education. Education serves as an investment that empowers individuals to tap into their full potential, encompassing personal development, theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and more, as stated by Prasetyaningrum and Marliana (2020). In this context, the role of education in creating professional, intelligent, and skilled individuals is essential.

In the current competitive professional world, as Wiliana (2018) notes, higher education services are crucial for meeting the demands for high-quality human resources. The interest and decision to pursue higher education are comparable to consumers' choices when purchasing a product, as stated by Arifin, Sumarwan, and Najib (2017). In today's globalized era of rapid advancements in science and technology, universities must consider factors that influence the decisions of consumers (prospective students) to choose their educational institution, as noted by Bagubau and Dwijayanti (2022). Given the competitive nature of the education industry, universities must understand consumer behavior and strive to meet consumers' rational needs to attract interest and decision-making when selecting an educational institution, as emphasized by Harwani et al. (2018).

The process of making a purchase decision involves various stages, including problem recognition, seeking information about products, evaluating alternatives, and ultimately, making a purchasing decision, as described by Ma'aruf (2019). Consumers do not make purchasing decisions without careful consideration to avoid disappointment. Therefore, sellers play a vital role in presenting their products effectively to attract consumers, as noted by Nur Firiani (2019). Creative and innovative marketing, market analysis skills, and an understanding of changes and developments are necessary, according to Kotler and Armstrong (2018).

Furthermore, apart from social media and product availability, the consideration of tuition fees is another critical factor influencing prospective students' choices, as stated by Faishal and Sulistyowati (2021). Price is a factor that can affect consumer (prospective student) purchasing decisions, and it can have a considerable impact on the choice of a university, as noted by Saputra (2019). The clarity of information and affordability of the tuition fees presented can significantly influence the choice of a university, according to Sutrisno (2020).

Literature Review
Purchasing Decision

A purchasing decision refers to a consumer's choice of a desired or needed product after undergoing several stages such as recognizing a need for a product, seeking information about the desired product, considering the purchase, executing the transaction, and making post-purchase decisions, as defined by Deliyanti (2013). Ultimately, the decision-making process involves consumers making a choice and being ready to exchange money for ownership or use of a product or service, as noted by Saladin (2019). Consumers have different characteristics and consider various aspects, including product quality, price, product completeness, purchase convenience, promotional activities, service quality, and more, as mentioned by Istijanto (2019). In terms of deciding on higher education, it is a purchasing decision related to consumer behavior, as suggested by Fakhri et al. (2017). Consequently, there are several factors that influence prospective students' decisions to select a specific university, as highlighted by Ambarwati, Sunarti, and Mawardi (2015). Therefore, universities must consider these factors to enhance students' interest and decision-making when pursuing higher education, as indicated by Ming in Prasetyaningrum and Marliana (2020).

Social Media

Social media is an effective marketing tool for presenting product-related information to consumers, influencing individual thought processes and, ultimately, purchase decisions, as described by Khoiro, Rachma, and Hufron (2019). The use of social media can increase consumer interest and engagement, which, in turn, can affect purchasing decisions, as noted by Ali and Akbar (2018). In the context of education, social media is an influential factor in shaping the perception of prospective students and helping them decide on their choice of university, as suggested by Mileva and Fauzi (2018). The effectiveness of social media as a tool that can support the marketing of a product depends on four indicators, as articulated by Gunelius in Faishal and Sulistyowati (2021).

Product Availability

In making their choices, consumers naturally prefer products that align with their specific needs. Furthermore, Jefkins (2014) asserts that business owners, in their entrepreneurial pursuits, must ensure the availability of the products they offer to consumers. This approach enables these products to gain broader recognition within the larger community, based on a hierarchy of benefits that consumers receive. The existence of this hierarchy aims to facilitate consumers in achieving maximal satisfaction through five levels of benefits, namely the core benefit (core product), the fundamental benefit (basic product), the expected benefit (augmented product), the anticipated benefit (expected product), and the exceeding expected benefit (potential product).

Price

Price is one of the factors that can significantly influence consumers' decisions when determining the purchase of a specific product or service, as highlighted by Suhaily, L., Darmoyo, S., and Boentoro, S. (2019). The clear presentation of information related to the pricing offered by educational institutions providing educational services can be a crucial point for individual consumers (prospective students) when choosing an academic program, as noted by Saputra, F. A. (2019). Regarding the prominence of price as one of the factors supporting consumer decisions in choosing their educational path, there are at least four indicators that serve as the foundation for the pricing of a particular product or service, as articulated by Kotler and Keller in Faishal, Y.R., and Sulistyowati, R. (2021).

METHOD

This research is of the associative type, aiming to analyze the relationships between the variables. The approach employed in this study is quantitative because the data analysis process will involve numerical values based on the Likert Scale ranging from 1 to 5. These numerical values are presented as response options in the questionnaire, which serves as the data collection instrument for indicators related to the variables Social Media (X1), Availability of Programs (X2), Price (X3), and Decision-Making for Enrollment (Y).

Data collection is carried out by distributing research questionnaires using a 5-point measurement scale: 5 for "Strongly Agree," 4 for "Agree," 3 for "Neutral," 2 for "Disagree," and 1 for "Strongly Disagree." Before administering the questionnaires to the research sample, the researcher will validate and assess the reliability of each question or statement included in the research questionnaire.

The subsequent steps in this research involve analyzing the collected data using the Classical Assumption Test, including several stages such as the Normality Test, Multicollinearity Test, Linearity Test, Heteroskedasticity Test, and Autocorrelation Test. Regarding hypothesis testing, the researcher will employ multiple regression analysis techniques, coefficient of determination analysis (R-squared), partial t-tests, and simultaneous F-tests using SPSS software version 25.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data Quality Test Results

Before presenting the questionnaire to the respondents, a pilot test was conducted. The reliability and validity of the instrument were assessed using 30 employees who would participate in this study:

The validity test was conducted to determine how well an instrument is used to measure the concept it is supposed to measure. To assess validity, a correlation between the item scores and the total score of the construct or variable was performed. The value of each item (item score) was evaluated for its correlation (Corrected Item-Total Correlation). If the correlation value is positive and $r \geq 0.361$, the instrument item is considered valid. According to Umar (2004), "A minimum of 30 respondents is recommended for a pilot test so that the score (value) distribution approaches a normal curve."

Tabel 1.
The Social Media Validity Test Result (X1)

Number of Question in Research Questionnaire	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Status
X1.1	0,922	Valid
X1.2	0,921	Valid
X1.3	0,939	Valid
X1.4	0,921	Valid
X1.5	0,922	Valid

Number of Question in Research Questionnaire	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Status
X1.6	0,848	Valid
X1.7	0,820	Valid
X1.8	0,922	Valid
X1.9	0,754	Valid
X1.10	0,954	Valid

The above table 1. which present the gaining result for each number in the questionnaires related to X1 variable (social media), it is to say that all numbers stated in the research questionnaire in relation to X1 variable (social media), are valid.

Tabel 2.
The Validity Test of Product Availability (X2)

Number of Question in Research Questionnaire	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Status
X2.1	0,879	Valid
X2.2	0,924	Valid
X2.3	0,921	Valid
X2.4	0,894	Valid
X2.5	0,944	Valid
X2.6	0,855	Valid
X2.7	0,739	Valid
X2.8	0,792	Valid
X2.9	0,924	Valid
X2.10	0,944	Valid

The above table 2, which present the gaining result for each number in the questionnaires related to X2 variable (product availability), it is to say that all numbers stated in the research questionnaire in relation to X2 variable (product availability), are valid.

Tabel 3.
Hasil Uji Validitas Variabel Harga (X3)

Number of Question in Research Questionnaire	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Status
X3.1	0,720	Valid
X3.2	0,724	Valid
X3.3	0,685	Valid
X3.4	0,737	Valid
X3.5	0,702	Valid
X3.6	0,733	Valid
X3.7	0,757	Valid
X3.8	0,834	Valid
X3.9	0,773	Valid
X3.10	0,679	Valid

The above table 3, which present the gaining result for each number in the questionnaires related to X3 variable (price), it is to say that all numbers stated in the research questionnaire in relation to X3 variable (price), are valid.

Tabel 4.
The Validity Test Result of Purchasing Decision (Decision in opting UMT) (Y)

Number of Question in Research Questionnaires	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Status
Y.1	0,782	Valid
Y.2	0,805	Valid
Y.3	0,908	Valid
Y.4	0,762	Valid
Y.5	0,705	Valid
Y.6	0,814	Valid
Y.7	0,831	Valid
Y.8	0,860	Valid
Y.9	0,819	Valid
Y1.10	0,676	Valid

The above table 4. which present the gaining result for each number in the questionnaires related to Y variable (Purchasing Decision), it is to say that all numbers stated in the research questionnaire in relation to Yvariable (Purchasing Decision), are valid.

Reliability Test

It is a fact that a questionnaire is considered reliable if an individual's responses to a question are consistent or stable over time. Reliability of the instrument is assessed using the Cronbach's Alpha technique. An instrument is considered reliable if it has a reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) greater than 0.60.

Tabel 5.
The Reliability Test

Research Variables	Cronbach's lpha	Status
Social Media (X1)	0,977	Reliable
Product Availability (X2)	0,975	Reliable
Price (X3)	0,932	Reliable
Purchasing Decision (Y)	0,952	Reliable

The Classical Assumption Test Result

The Normality Test is conducted to determine whether the data follows a normal distribution. Testing for the normality of data is done using a Normal P-Plot. If the data points are scattered around the diagonal line, and the distribution of data points aligns with the diagonal line, then the regression model satisfies the assumption of normality.
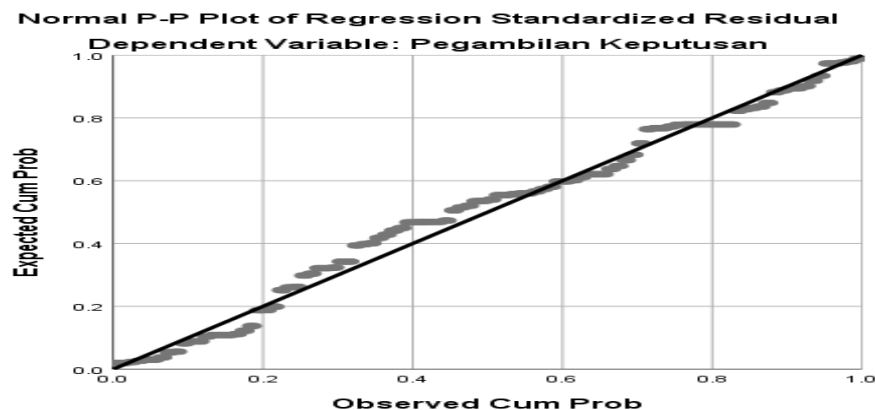

Figure 1.
The Normality Test Result

The P-Plot diagram above reveals that the data points are scattered around the diagonal line, and the distribution of data points aligns with the diagonal line, indicating that the regression model satisfies the assumption of normality.

Multicollinearity testing is conducted to determine whether there is a correlation between independent variables in the regression model. Detection is done by examining the values of tolerance and the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). If the VIF values are not greater than 10, and the tolerance values are not less than 0.1, it suggests that the independent variables are free from multicollinearity issues.

Tabel 6.
The Multicollinearity Test Results
Coefficientsa

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	Social Media	.350	2.857
	Product Availability	.203	4.915
	Price	.373	2.680

a. Dependent Variable: Purchasing Decision to Choose UMT in Continuing Higher Education

The above presented table 6, all VIF and tolerance values indicate that the model is free from multicollinearity.

Heteroskedasticity testing is conducted to determine whether there is variability in the variance of residuals from one observation to another within a regression model. If the variance of residuals remains constant across observations, it is referred to as homoskedasticity, while differing variances are termed heteroskedasticity.
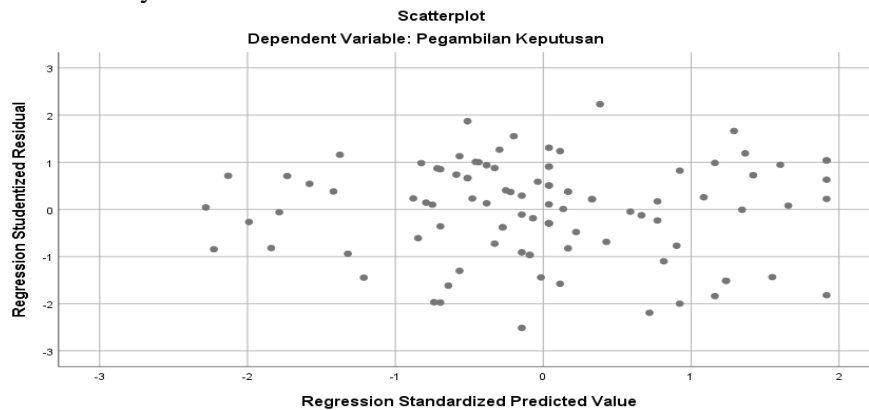

Figure 2.
The Heteroskedasticity Test Result

The Coefficient Determination Test Results

The Coefficient of Determination (R2) essentially measures how well the model can explain the variation in the dependent variable.

Tabel 7.
The Coefficient Determination Test Results

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.963a	.927	.927	1.661
a. Predictors: (Constant), Price, Social Media, Product Availability				

Based on the view table 7, that presented above, it can be concluded that the coefficient of determination (Adjusted R-Square) is 0.927, or 92.7%. The larger the Adjusted R-Square value, the stronger the relationship between variables in the regression model. It can be inferred that 92.7% of the decision-making variable can be explained by the variables of social media, product availability, and price. Meanwhile, the remaining 7.3% is influenced or explained by other variables not included in this study.

The Statistical t-test Results

Statistical t-test fundamentally indicates how far the influence of an explanatory or independent variable individually explains the dependent variable.

Tabel 8.
The Statistical t-test Results
Coefficientsa

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-1.633	.685		-2.385	.018
	Social Media	.093	.021	.117	4.423	.000
	Product Availability	.275	.034	.282	8.125	.000
	Price	-.639	.026	-.639	-24.887	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Purchasing Decision in Choosing UMT to Contibue Higher Education						

From Table 8, it can be observed that the social media variable obtained a calculated t-value of 4.423, and the tabulated t-value for n = 300, df = 300 - 4 = 296, with α = 5%, is 1.968. By comparing the calculated t-value (4.423) and the tabulated t-value (1.968), where the calculated t-value is greater than the tabulated t-value and the significance level sig. (0.000) < α (0.05), it can be concluded that there

is a significant influence of social media on decision-making in choosing University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang as the educational institution to continue their higher education degree.

Besides, from table 8, it can be observed that the availability of products variable obtained a calculated t-value of 8.125, and the tabulated t-value for n = 300, df = 300 - 4 = 296, with α = 5%, is 1.968. By comparing the calculated t-value (8.125) and the tabulated t-value (1.968), where the calculated t-value is greater than the tabulated t-value and the significance level sig. (0.000) < α (0.05), it can be concluded that there is a significant influence of product availability on decision-making for students to opt University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang as the educational institution to continue their higher education degree.

Furthermore, from table 8, it can be observed that the price variable obtained a calculated t-value of -24.887, and the tabulated t-value for n = 300, df = 300 - 4 = 296, with α = 5%, is 1.968. By comparing the calculated t-value (-24.887) and the tabulated t-value (1.968), where the calculated t-value is greater than the tabulated t-value and with a negative direction, and the significance level sig. (0.000) < α (0.05), it can be concluded that there is a significant influence of price on decision-making for students to opt University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang as the educational institution to continue their higher education degree.

The Statistical F-Test Results

The F-statistic essentially indicates whether all independent or predictor variables included in the model have a simultaneous influence on the dependent variable

Tabel 9.
The Statistical F-Test Results
ANOVAa

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10413.133	3	3471.044	1258.200	.000b
	Residual	816.587	296	2.759		
	Total	11229.720	299			
a. Dependent Variable: Purchasing Decision						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Price, Social Media, Product Availability						

Based on Table 9, the calculated F-statistic is 1258.200, with a probability level (Sig.) of 0.000, which is smaller than 0.05. Referring to the F-table for degrees of freedom df1 = k – 1 (4 – 1) and df2 = n – k (300 – 4) at an alpha level of 0.05 (F0.05(3)(296)), it can be concluded that F-calculation > F-table (1258.200 > 2.635). Therefore, there is a significant simultaneous influence of social media, product availability, and price on decision-making for students to opt University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang as the educational institution to continue their higher education degree.

The results of this study, following the examination of the relationships between variables, indicate that variables X1 and X2 have an impact on variable Y. To provide a clearer explanation of the analysis results in this research, the following can be stated:

The findings in this research, after testing the relationship between variables, show that the social media variable (X1) has a positive influence on the decision-making variable (Y). This can be observed from the calculated t-statistic (4.423) > t-table (1.968) at a significance level of 0.05, indicating that social media has a positive impact on decision-making for students to opt University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang as the educational institution to continue their higher education degree. This implies that the higher the influence of social media, the higher the level of decision-making. These research findings align with the study conducted by Indriyani and Suri (2020), which states that social media has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions.

The results of this research, following the examination of the relationships between variables, indicate that the product availability variable (X2) has a positive influence on the decision-making variable (Y). This can be observed from the calculated t-statistic (8.125) > t-table (1.968) at a significance level of 0.05, showing that product availability has a positive impact on decision-making for students to opt University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang as the educational institution to continue their higher education degree. This suggests that the higher the product availability, the higher the level of decision-making. These research findings are in line with the study conducted by Apriando, Soesanto, & Indriani (2019), which states that product availability has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions.

The results of this research, after examining the relationships between variables, show that the price variable (X3) has a negative influence on the decision-making variable (Y). This can be observed from the calculated t-statistic (-24.887) > t-table (1.968) at a significance level of 0.05, indicating that price has a negative impact on decision-making for students to opt University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang as the educational institution to continue their higher education degree. This implies that the lower the price, the higher the level of decision-making. These research findings align with the study conducted by Mulyadi (2022), which states that price has a negative and significant influence on purchasing decisions.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research findings and discussion, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Social media has a positive effect on the decision-making for students to opt University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang as the educational institution to continue their higher education degree. This means that the higher the influence of social media, the higher the enrollment decision;

Product availability has a positive effect on the decision-making process for students to opt University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang as the educational institution to continue their higher education degree. This implies that the higher the product availability, the higher the enrollment decision;

Price has a negative effect on the decision-making process for students to opt University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang as the educational institution to continue their higher education degree. This suggests that the higher the price, the lower the enrollment decision, and conversely, the lower the price, the higher the enrollment decision; and

The extent of effect exerted by social media, product availability, and price is 92.7%, indicating that the independent variables used in this model, namely social media, product availability, and price, are capable of influencing the dependent variable, the decision-making process, by 92.7%. The remaining 7.3% is influenced by other factors outside the variables under study, such as promotion, service quality, brand image, and others.

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