



THE EFFECT OF TUITION FEES, FACILITIES, AND DIGITAL MARKETING ON THE DECISION TO CHOOSE A UNIVERSITY MEDIATED BY BRAND IMAGE: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL

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ABSTRACT

Education in Indonesia has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, causing a decrease in student enrollment in educational institutions such as private universities. The decision of enrollment may be influenced by recognition, brand image, income, and provided facilities. This paper proposes a conceptual model regarding the effect of tuition fees, facilities, and digital marketing on the decision to choose a university with brand image as mediating factor. The implementation of this paper can provide information regarding the relationship among tuition fees, facilities, digital marketing, brand image, and the decision to choose a university.

Keywords

Tuition Fees, Facilities, Digital Marketing, Brand Image, Decision to Choose a University, Conceptual Model.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, the world is being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which affects all fields, including the field of education. As quoted from mediaindonesia.com, the COVID-19 pandemic has an impact on decreasing the number of new students in private universities in the country. The decline reached up to 30 percent. Trilogi University is one of the private universities in Jakarta that has experienced a decrease in the number of enrolling students. Trilogi University is a developed version of the Indonesian College of Financial Economics and Banking, which was founded in 1988. Trilogi University experienced a decrease in the number of incoming students. Although it had increased in 2020, the decline happened again in 2021, when the number of students enrolling during the COVID-19 pandemic was only 634 students.

Several research results show that there are several factors that can influence student decisions, one of which is brand image. There is a lack of recognition of the name Trilogi University compared to its previous name, STEKPI. As stated by one of the alumni of Trilogi University when conducting a job interview, the university is better known by the old name of STEKPI. Other alumni who applied to become government employees in 2019 also admit using STEKPI instead of Trilogi University while filling out the form.

According to the results of a survey quoted from kompas.com, 84 percent of people admitted that their income had dropped due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This is very influential for universities in determining the cost of education and will have an impact on the difficulty of inviting prospective students to be able to continue their studies at public and private universities. Trilogi University is one of the private universities that participate in the competition to get new students. Trilogi University, in terms of cost, can be said to be competitive compared to the surrounding private universities.

Another problem faced by Trilogi University is in terms of facilities. Many facilities in Trilogi University need renovation, such as inadequate classrooms with damaged chairs, broken air conditioning, and old computers in the library.

The obstacle to Trilogi University's marketing activities in the digital world is that there are still few followers on

social media, such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter which serve as the main source to provide information about Trilogi University and act as media for digital marketing. Another problem faced by Trilogi University in increasing the number of students is in terms of accreditation. Currently, Trilogi University only has "good" accreditation (B) and has not yet reached the "very good" accreditation (A).

Based on the description above, the author intends to conduct a deeper study of the research entitled "The Effect of Tuition Fees, Facilities, and Digital Marketing on the Decision to Choose a University with Brand Image Mediating (Case Study at Trilogi University, Jakarta)".

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Tuition Fees

Cost is defined as an economic sacrifice made in order to obtain goods or services. Cost can be interpreted as expenditure in economic terms. Costs can be in the form of money or other forms of monetary (Supriadi in Ulil Amri, Yahya (2021)).

Then the Planning Bureau of the Ministry of Education and Culture, quoted by Suhardan, explained that the cost of education is a cost that must be incurred either by individuals, families, communities, or educational institutions to obtain the education he wants (Suhardan, et al 2012).

Suhardan also defines the cost of education/tuition fees as the total costs incurred, be it incurred by individual students, families who send their children to school, or individual or group community members, which are incurred by the government for the smooth running of education (Suhardan, et al in Ulil Amri, Yahya (2021)).

According to Yahya, who was quoted by Mulyono, explaining that tuition fees are a decisive element in the budgeting mechanism. Tuition fees are influenced by the level of efficiency and effectiveness of activities in an educational organization in an effort to achieve educational goals (Mulyono in Ulil Amri, Yahya (2021)).

According to Ni Rai Seni, Nyoman Natajaya, and Anak Agung Gede Agung (2018), tuition fees are one of the instrumental input components that are very important in the implementation of education in schools. In every effort to achieve educational goals, whether quantitative or qualitative goals, tuition fees have a very decisive role.

B. Facilities

Facilities are important objects for increasing satisfaction, such as customer comfort, meeting the needs and comfort of service users. If the services provided meet the requirements, the client would be satisfied (Oetama in William, Tiurniari Purba (2020)).

According to Tjiptono in Ratu Syifa Nabila Khansa (2020), facilities are physical resources that must exist before service is offered to consumers. Facilities are something important in the service business. Therefore existing facilities, the condition of the facilities, interior and exterior design, and cleanliness must be considered, especially those that are closely related to what consumers feel directly. The perception obtained from consumer interaction with service facilities affects the quality of these services in the eyes of consumers.

According to Kotler (Apriyadi, 2017), it is stated that everything is in the form of physical equipment and is provided by the seller of services to support consumer comfort. Therefore, facilities are physical resources provided by the seller to provide convenience to consumers.

C. Digital Marketing

Tri Rachmadi, in Siti Khoziyah, Evawani Elysa Lubis (2021), explains that digital marketing is a technology in marketing products and services that must use digital media. The media used for digital marketing are websites, social media, e-mail marketing, video marketing, advertising, and search engine optimization (SEO).

Gede Wisnu Saputra and I Gusti Agung Ketut Sri Ardani (2020) said that Digital marketing is one of the marketing media that is currently in great demand by the public to support various activities carried out. People gradually began to abandon the conventional/traditional marketing model of switching to modern marketing, which is digital marketing.

D. Brand Image

Brand Image, according to Kotler in Ni Made Dwi Sanjiwani, I Gst. A. Kt. Gd. Suasana (2019), is a set of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a person has on a brand. Miniso is one of the brands that already have a positive image because its products can satisfy consumer needs. Therefore, the attitude and actions of consumers towards a brand are largely determined by the brand.

Perez and Tores (2017) state that the organizational image of the university is a perceptive phenomenon formed by rational and emotional judgments and interpretations made by people related to organizations and therefore consists of two inseparable

systems of components, which consist of cognitive (beliefs) and affective (feelings, emotions).

Brand Image is the radiance or reproduction of the identity of a product. Brand Image can be interpreted as people's perception of the identity of a brand (Siswanto in Son in Khairul Abidin, Mukran Roni (2017)).

According to Roziqin & Rozaq in Karsono, Purwanto, Abdul Matin Bin Salman (2021), there are several steps taken by madrasah institutions in forming a brand image, namely by conducting institutional accreditation, instilling good behavior in each student, improving student achievement, improving the quality of teachers and the quality of graduates, holding excellent activities, and establishing relationships with alumni.

E. Decision

Harrison in Muhdi, Nurkolis, and Suwarno (2017) argue that decision-making is the process of evaluating various alternatives related to individual or organizational goals. Decision-making is closely related to efforts to solve problems or potential problems facing a person or organization. According to Vroom and Jago in Muhdi, Nurkolis, and Suwarno (2017), effective decisions depend on three things, the quality of decisions, acceptance of subordinates, and punctuality. Decisions are said to be quality if they are able to solve problems faced by a person or organization.

A decision is the end of a thought about a problem that is considered a deviation from something that has been planned by choosing a choice of one solution. Decision-making is an approach used to face problems systematically (Anwar in Fitri Hayati, Riri Zulvira, Nurhizrah Gistituati (2021)).

CONCEPTUAL MODEL

The conceptual model is intended to briefly explain the researcher's train of thought related to research. In the conceptual model, there are the author's thoughts related to the variables of Education Costs, Facilities, Brand Image, and Decisions. From this description, the researcher can describe the framework of the theories and modeling of the research as follows:

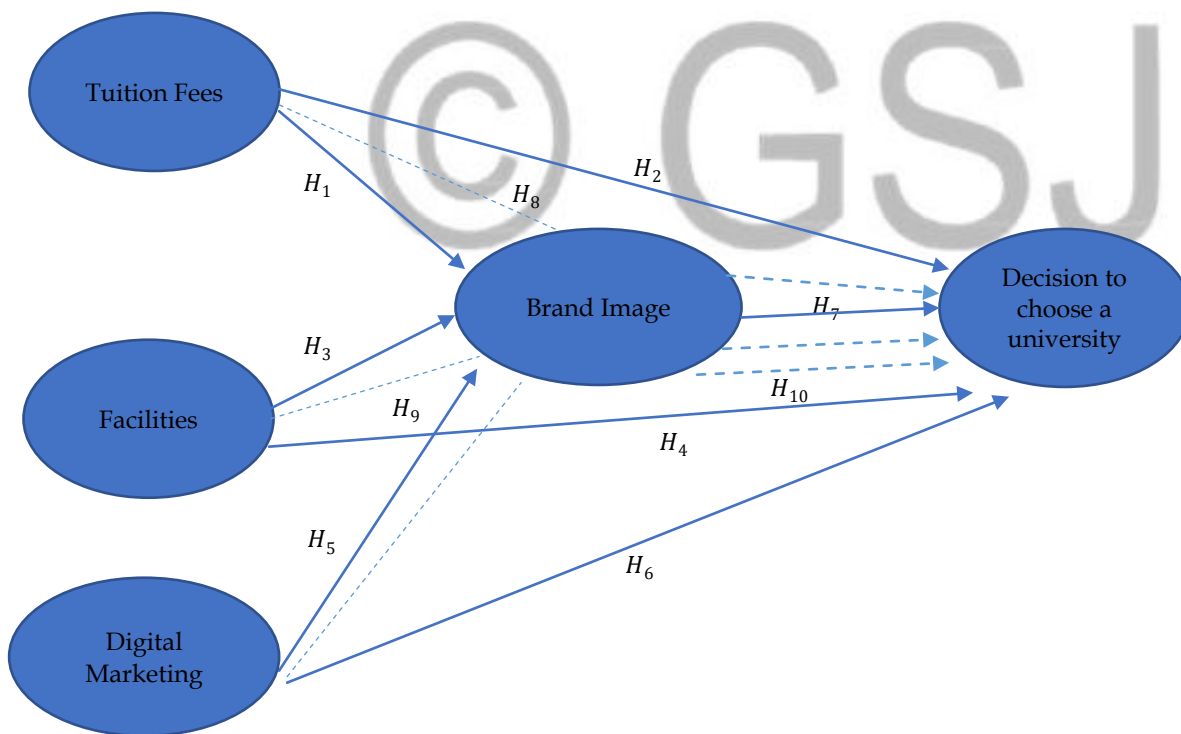


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

HYPOTHESES

Based on conceptual models and theoretical studies, hypotheses can be formulated as follows:

H_1 = There is an Effect of Tuition Fees on Brand Image

H_2 = There is an Effect of Tuition Fees on Decisions of choosing a university

- H₃ = There is an Effect of Facilities on Brand Image.
H₄ = There is an Effect of Facilities on Decisions of choosing a university
H₅ = There is an Influence of Digital Marketing on Brand Image
H₆ = There is an Influence of Digital Marketing on Decisions of choosing a university
H₇ = There is an Influence of Brand Image on Decisions of choosing a university
H₈ = There is an Effect of Tuition Fees on Decisions of choosing a university mediated by Brand Image
H₉ = There is an Effect of Facilities on Decisions of choosing a university mediated by Brand Image
H₁₀ = There is an Influence of Digital Marketing on Decisions of choosing a university mediated by Brand Image

METHODOLOGY

This research is associative research, which according to Sugiyono (2018: 14), is a study that aims to determine the influence or the relationship between two or more variables. The approach to the analysis used is a quantitative approach, which according to Sugiyono (2018;13), is a research method based on positivistic (concrete data), research data in the form of numbers to be measured using statistics as a calculation test tool, related to the problem under study to produce a conclusion. This study used primary and secondary data using questionnaires and literature studies.

According to Sugiyono (2018: 117), a population is a generalization area consisting of objects or subjects that have certain qualities and characteristics set by the researcher to study and then draw conclusions. The population of this study is all active students of Trilogi University Jakarta, classes of 2020 and 2021. According to Sugiyono in Jasmalinda (2021), the sample is part of the number and characteristics possessed by the population. By following the Slovin formula with an error rate of 10%, the total sample for this study was 93 people, rounded to 100 people. In this study, sampling was carried out intentionally (purposive) and was subjective. The sampling technique in this study uses a non-probability technique called the incidental sampling technique, which is a sample determination technique based on chance in which anyone who coincidentally/incidentally meets the researcher can be used as a sample.

The analysis used as the basis for hypothesis testing in this study is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis with a Partial Least Square (PLS) approach. SEM generally tests causality/theory, whereas PLS is a more predictive model. PLS is a powerful method of analysis because it is not based on many assumptions. This is in line with the opinion of Gozali in Alfiah (2018). For example, the data should be normally distributed, and the sample should not have to be large. In addition to being able to be used to confirm the theory, PLS can also be used to explain the presence or absence of relationships between latent variables. PLS can simultaneously analyze constructs formed with reflective and formative indicators. The purpose of PLS is to assist researchers in prediction purposes. This formal model defines a latent variable as the aggregate linear of the indicators. Weight estimates to create latent variable score components are obtained based on how the inner model (a structural model that connects the latent intervariable) and outer model (the measurement model, i.e., the relationship between the indicator and its construct) are specified. The result is the residual variance of the dependent variable. To analyze data using the PLS method, the researcher used SmartPLS 3.3.3 software. In this study, an analysis of outer models, inner models, and hypothesis tests were carried out.

CONCLUSION

This research developed a conceptual model intended for studying the effect of tuition fees, facilities, and digital marketing on the decision to choose a university while using brand image as mediating factor. This study is complemented with background research, literature review, hypothesis, and research methodology to develop a conceptual model. The conceptual model will be used to explore the effect of tuition fees, facilities, and digital marketing on the decision to choose a university with brand image mediating at Trilogi University, Jakarta.

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