

# Factors That Determined University Selection (Case Study on High School/Vocational High School Students in Sidoarjo)

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## ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** The focus of this study explores what factors will determine a high school / vocational high school student choosing a university, especially a private university.

**Design/methodology/approach:** Accidental sampling was used to collecting data because the population is unknown, where questionnaires is given to 412 high school and vocational high school students in Sidoarjo for three weeks period. Data was collected through the process of distributing questionnaires given to 12th grade high school / vocational high school students in the Sidoarjo region. Researchers hope that through this research can be obtained a picture that can be used by the university in determining the strategy for the Sidoarjo region.

**Findings:** The result of this study indicate that the variables that influence the selection of Private Universities in Sidoarjo.

**Research limitations/implications:** Data was collected through the process of distributing questionnaires given to 12th grade high school / vocational high school students in the Sidoarjo region.

**Practical implications:** Competition between universities in attracting prospective students is now getting tighter, the competition that occurs today is not only applicable among private universities, but it seems that state universities also enliven the arena of prospective student selection.

**Originality/value:** This phenomenon is getting stronger since the status of several State Universities was changed to become a Legal Entity State University (PTN-BH), where one of the implications is that more programs and acceptance channels are opened for prospective students who want to enter State University.

**Paper type:** Research paper

**Keyword:** Marketing Strategy; Marketing Mix; University Marketing in Sidoarjo

## I. Introduction

Higher education as the end of the national education system has a very important role to prepare students to become individuals who have good academic abilities and professional abilities that can be used when they enter the world of work. National education system in general tertiary institutions have two forms in the form of both state and private universities. The state universities in Indonesia can take the form of academics, polytechnics, institutes and legal entities (PTN-BH). The term PTN-BH is stated in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia number 12 of 2012 in Article 62 paragraph 1, which states that the implementation of higher education autonomy can be given selectively based on the performance evaluation by the minister to state university by applying the financial pattern of public service agencies or by forming state university legal entity to produce quality higher education. Based on the law above it is said that a state university that has PTN-BH status is given the freedom to organize higher education autonomously to produce high quality universities. Based on data from the Ministry of Research and Technology, the number of existing state universities is 375 universities, of which 11 of them are PTN-BH.

The autonomy given to PTN-BH is like a sword that has two sharp sides that together can provide great benefits in the management of the University but on the other hand can make a PTN-BH go bankrupt if there is a mismanagement of the university. This condition is certainly realized by each state university that has PTN-BH status by trying to increase the number of applicants and the number of students who will be accepted at their universities. Some indications of a more intense PTN-BH status university attracting students are shown by several promotional activities that are started by state universities both through social media and educational exhibition activities.

Table 1. Number of Private Universities in East Java

No	Form of Higher Education	Total
1	Academy	78
2	Polytechnic	12
3	Colleges	143
4	Institute	13
5	University	83
6	Community Academy	1
	Total	330

Source: Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education

Table 1 above shows that total number of private universities in East Java reaching 330 Universities, which means that competition among private universities in East Java is quite high, coupled with the presence of two state universities with PTN-BH status; Airlangga University and Sepuluh Nopember Institute of Technology. In addition to the regular admission program which is open by state universities there is an independent pathway program which also offered to prospective students who do not have the opportunity to enter the state university and also open an independent path which further tightens the competition to find new students. With the occurred phenomenon above, the private universities have to understand factors that are considered by high school student in choosing universities, in order to formulate better marketing strategies. Based on the given introduction, this study will look for factors that

influenced prospective students to choose private universities as their higher education destinations.

## **II. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Marketing Mix of Education Services**

The marketing mix of services is an element of marketing that is interrelated, mixed, organized and used appropriately so the company can achieve effective marketing goals, while meeting the needs and desires of consumers. According to Huriyati (2005:49), marketing mix of services consists of 7P; product, price, place, promotion, people, physical evidence and process. The service marketing mix is supported by research that conducted by Wijaya (2008: 53):

- **Service Product**  
Is anything that can be offered by service providers to be considered, requested, sought, purchased, used or consumed by the relevant market. In relation to universities to market their products in the form of outcomes or learning outcomes and graduates produced in these colleges, courses, lecturers that meet the minimum qualifications of the Ministry of Research and Technology, and activities that support the development of students and the community, and also in the form of reputation, prospects and other variations.
- **Price**  
Is the determination of income from a business which related to the price or the cost of entering the college, can be in the form of tuition fees, development costs, laboratory fees, education services, scholarships, and installment requirements.
- **Place**  
Regarding the location of College services is a consideration for stakeholders to choose a university that suits their needs. Some of the factors that are taken into consideration regarding the selection of locations are 1) access to public and private transportation, 2) visibility, which is a clearly visible location both on the side of the road and strategic places, 3) where more traffic passes opportunities for congestion, 4) wide and safe parking lots, 5) sufficient for university expansion, 6) environment that supports services offered, 7) inter-university competition, 8) government regulations. Also the location is a reference for stakeholders where the location is close to the city center, housing, a conducive learning environment, and education services that can be accessed virtually (internet).
- **Promotion**  
Is a determinant of the success of a marketing program to inform, influence, and persuade and remind customers of the colleges offered in the form of advertisements, TV, radio, spot, billboards, direct contact with prospective students, university achievements, and other types.
- **People**  
Are all people who play a role in the presentation of services that can influence students and the community (stakeholders) in their selection in the form of administrators, instructors, and employees.
- **Process**  
Is all procedures, mechanisms, and activities used in universities can be in the form of teaching and learning processes, examinations and others.
- **Physical Evidence**  
Is all procedures, mechanisms, and activities used in universities can be in the form of teaching and learning processes, examinations and others.

According to Suryani (2008: 245), private universities can form a marketing mix through 1) offered product strategies in line to the selected segment, 2) appropriate promotional strategies need to be designed so that the marketed products are perceived as expected, 3) pricing strategies determined to be competitive in accordance with the purchasing power of the target market that needs to be carefully determined, 4) distribution strategies need to be designed regarded to the dynamics and decision-making processes in the student's family by involving parents.

## 2.2 Student Choices

The decision making process or choice of students towards selection of private universities has five stages based on Kotler and Armstrong (2008: 179); needs recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchasing decisions, and post-purchase behavior.

- In the problem recognition phase, students need to identify conditions that trigger their needs by gathering information related to their needs in private universities that are available primarily in Sidoarjo.
- For the information retrieval stage, students have certain needs that are motivated to find more information, especially in the sources which are the reference of students which are four groups:
  - Personal sources are from family, friends and neighbors
  - Commercial sources are from advertising, sales people, suppliers, packaging, shops in stores.
  - Public sources are mass media, consumer ranking determinants.
  - The source of experience; handling, assessment and use of the product.
- Alternative evaluation; students understand the evaluation process in the form of fulfilling their needs, continuing their advanced education according to their needs, students seeking benefits from private tertiary products that are presented, as well as students views on different attributes in providing benefits that are used to meet their needs in supporting level of education.
- Student decisions, at the evaluation stage, students have formed preferences (choices) of the brand (college) in the collection of choices. Also students have formed the intention to use education services in universities which are their preferences. Although students have formed a college evaluation, there are other factors that influence student decisions; the attitude of others and unanticipated situation factors.
- Post-purchase behavior is the stage of the student's decision process in subsequent actions after registering at private universities, especially in Sidoarjo based on satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

According to Suryani (2008: 245), children (students) in the family have a relatively important role in decision making. When children (students) are able to express their opinions and desires, in these conditions, children (students) begin to play a role in decision making. From peer groups in their social environment directly and indirectly affect student behavior, while family members of adult have a strong role in decision making. Research by Dinawan (2010) about factors that influence consumer purchasing decisions on motorcycle products using product quality, competitive prices, and brand image that are hypothesized against product purchasing decisions. The result of the research is that the seller variable cannot partially influence the buyer's decision. Kresnaningtyas (2010) in her research shows that six core factors that are considered by parents in making decisions about choosing education services include physical evidence, promotion, people, product, place and process.

## III. Research Methods

### 3.1 Population and Sample

The present study is descriptive quantitative. Accidental sampling has been used to obtain the views of high school and vocational high school student in Sidoarjo, because population size is unknown. This survey has been conducted for three weeks and completed questionnaires from 412 respondents have been received. The data have been tabulated and tested for validity and reliability to make sure that all data gathered are suitably to analyzed using multiple regression by SPSS 17. The data will be tested at 5 percent level of significance.

### 3.2 Hypotheses

In conformity with the above stated research questions and objectives, the following null hypotheses have been formulated:

- H<sub>1</sub>** : There is no relationship between Product (X<sub>1</sub>) and Selection of Private University (Y)
- H<sub>2</sub>** : There is no relationship between Price (X<sub>2</sub>) and Selection of Private University (Y)
- H<sub>3</sub>** : There is no relationship between Place (X<sub>3</sub>) and Selection of Private University (Y)
- H<sub>4</sub>** : There is no relationship between Promotion (X<sub>4</sub>) and Selection of Private University (Y)
- H<sub>5</sub>** : There is no relationship between People (X<sub>5</sub>) and Selection of Private University (Y)
- H<sub>6</sub>** : There is no relationship between Process (X<sub>6</sub>) and Selection of Private University (Y)
- H<sub>7</sub>** : There is no relationship between Physical Evidence (X<sub>7</sub>) and Selection of Private University (Y)

## IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Validity and Reliability Test

In order to gather the data, some of schools in Sidoarjo were contacted and visited. There were 5 schools that being respondents of this study. The validity test is used to measure the validity of a questionnaire (Ghozali, 2005:45). The absolute value of factor analysis for each dimension or item of the instrument is valid if each dimension or item of instrument is rated  $\geq 0.5$ . Factor analysis was conducted using SPSS 17.

Reliability test used to measure the consistency and stability. Consistency shows how well items that measure a unified concept into group. This internal consistency items of measurement in questionnaire tested with Cronbach alpha. Cronbach alpha used is  $\geq 0.6$ . The reliability test in this study was conducted using SPSS 17. Table 2 and Table 3 shows the result of validity and reliability test.

Table 2. Validity Test Result

NO	VARIABLE	R <sub>COUNT</sub>	R <sub>TABLE</sub>	RESULT
<b>Product (X<sub>1</sub>)</b>				

1	PRD1	0,632	0,121	Valid
2	PRD2	0,668	0,121	Valid
3	PRD3	0,620	0,121	Valid
4	PRD4	0,644	0,121	Valid
5	PRD5	0,679	0,121	Valid
	<b>Price (X<sub>2</sub>)</b>			
1	PRI1	0,690	0,121	Valid
2	PRI2	0,856	0,121	Valid
3	PRI3	0,748	0,121	Valid
4	PRI4	0,677	0,121	Valid
	<b>Place (X<sub>3</sub>)</b>			
1	PLA1	0,630	0,121	Valid
2	PLA2	0,773	0,121	Valid
3	PLA3	0,805	0,121	Valid
4	PLA4	0,663	0,121	Valid
	<b>Promotion (X<sub>4</sub>)</b>			
1	PRM1	0,541	0,121	Valid
2	PRM2	0,869	0,121	Valid
3	PRM3	0,845	0,121	Valid
4	PRM4	0,836	0,121	Valid
5	PRM5	0,827	0,121	Valid
	<b>People (X<sub>5</sub>)</b>			
1	PEO1	0,584	0,121	Valid
2	PEO2	0,529	0,121	Valid
3	PEO3	0,677	0,121	Valid
4	PEO4	0,660	0,121	Valid
5	PEO5	0,697	0,121	Valid
6	PEO6	0,737	0,121	Valid
7	PEO7	0,668	0,121	Valid
	<b>Process (X<sub>6</sub>)</b>			
1	PRO1	0,790	0,121	Valid
2	PRO2	0,875	0,121	Valid
3	PRO3	0,834	0,121	Valid
4	PRO4	0,773	0,121	Valid
	<b>Physical Evidence (X<sub>7</sub>)</b>			
1	PHY1	0,700	0,121	Valid
2	PHY2	0,629	0,121	Valid
3	PHY3	0,752	0,121	Valid
4	PHY4	0,747	0,121	Valid
5	PHY5	0,768	0,121	Valid
6	PHY6	0,575	0,121	Valid
7	PHY7	0,749	0,121	Valid
	<b>Selection of Private Universities (Y)</b>			
1	Y1	0,788	0,121	Valid
2	Y2	0,765	0,121	Valid
3	Y3	0,800	0,121	Valid
4	Y4	0,673	0,121	Valid
5	Y5	0,694	0,121	Valid
6	Y6	0,812	0,121	Valid

Based on the results from Table 2, it is known that the instrument of validity test give a good value on the indicator items of each main variable.

Table 3. Reliability Test Result

Variabel	Alpha	Result
Product	0,654	Reliable
Price	0,731	Reliable
Place	0,679	Reliable
Promotion	0,849	Reliable
People	0,772	Reliable
Process	0,840	Reliable
Physical Evidence	0,838	Reliable
Selection of Private Universities	0,847	Reliable

From Table 3 it is known that the item value of all variables indicated as Reliable. All of Alpha Cronbach's value are above 0.60. So it can be concluded that all construct variables are valid and reliable to used for further statistical analysis.

#### 4.2 Determination Coefficient Test

Table 4 shows the determination coefficient test result.

Table 4. Summary Model

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,539 <sup>a</sup>	,291	,278	,41774

a. Predictors: (Constant), AVG\_X7, AVG\_X4, AVG\_X1, AVG\_X2, AVG\_X3, AVG\_X6, AVG\_X5

Based on Table 4, it is known that:

- From the calculation of the correlation coefficient (R) shows the value of 0.539 which means Product (X<sub>1</sub>), Price (X<sub>2</sub>), Place (X<sub>3</sub>), Promotion (X<sub>4</sub>), People (X<sub>5</sub>), Process (X<sub>6</sub>), and Physical Evidence (X<sub>7</sub>) has a relationship towards Selection of Private Universities (Y).
- From the calculation of R square (R<sup>2</sup>) shows the value of 0.291, meaning 29.1% influenced by Product (X<sub>1</sub>), Price (X<sub>2</sub>), Place (X<sub>3</sub>), Promotion (X<sub>4</sub>), People (X<sub>5</sub>), Process (X<sub>6</sub>), and Physical Evidence (X<sub>7</sub>) while the remaining 70.9% is influenced by other variables not examined in this study.

#### 4.3 F-Test

Table 5 shows the F-test result.

Table 5. ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	28.879	7	4.126	23.642	,000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	70.501	404	,175		

Total 99.308 411

a. Dependent Variable: AVG\_Y

b. Predictors: (Constant), AVG\_X7, AVG\_X4, AVG\_X1, AVG\_X2, AVG\_X3, AVG\_X6, AVG\_X5

Based on Table 5 above, it is known that: the results of the F test calculation show that  $F_{count} > F_{table}$  ( $23.642 > 2.033$ ) or  $Sig F < 5\%$  ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). It means Product ( $X_1$ ), Price ( $X_2$ ), Place ( $X_3$ ), Promotion ( $X_4$ ), People ( $X_5$ ), Process ( $X_6$ ), and Physical Evidence ( $X_7$ ) significantly influence the Selection of Private Universities ( $Y$ ).

#### 4.4 Multiple Linear Regression Test

Table 6 shows the Multiple Linear Regression result.

Table 6. Multiple Linear Regression Test

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1,686	,219		7,689	,000
AVG_X1	,131	,049	,138	2,683	,008
AVG_X2	,028	,027	,048	1,061	,289
AVG_X3	,014	,042	,017	,325	,745
AVG_X4	-,023	,035	-,032	-,650	,516
AVG_X5	,109	,049	,129	2,213	,027
AVG_X6	,087	,028	,145	3,132	,002
AVG_X7	,286	,055	,276	5,152	,000

a. Dependent Variable: AVG\_Y

Based on Table 6 above it is known the regression equation are as follows:

$$Y = 1,686 + 0,131X_1 + 0,028X_2 + 0,014X_3 + (-0,023)X_4 + 0,109X_5 + 0,087X_6 + 0,286X_7$$

Information:

Y = Selection of Private Universities / Constants

$X_1$  = Product

$X_2$  = Price

$X_3$  = Place

$X_4$  = Promotion

$X_5$  = People

$X_6$  = Process

$X_7$  = Physical Evidence



A constant of 1,617 states that Product ( $X_1$ ), Price ( $X_2$ ), Place ( $X_3$ ), Promotion ( $X_4$ ), People ( $X_5$ ), Process ( $X_6$ ), and Physical Evidence ( $X_7$ ) are ignored so the selection of Private Universities ( $Y$ ) = 1,686

- a. Value of  $b_1$ , which is the regression coefficient of the Product variable ( $X_1$ ), 0.131 means that if the product has an increase of 1 unit, then the decision to choose a Private University will also increase of 0.131 units with the assumption that other variables remain or constant.
- b. Value of  $b_2$ , which is the regression coefficient of Price ( $X_2$ ), of 0,028 means that if the product has an increase of 1 unit, then the decision to choose a Private University will also increase by 0,028 units with the assumption that other variables remain or constant.
- c. Value of  $b_3$ , which is the regression coefficient of Place ( $X_3$ ), of 0.014 means that if the product has an increase of 1 unit, then the decision to choose a Private University will also increase of 0.014 units with the assumption that other variables remain or constant.
- d. Value of  $b_4$ , which is the regression coefficient Promotion ( $X_4$ ), of -0.023 means that if the product has an increase of 1 unit, then the decision to choose a Private University will also decrease of -0.023 units with the assumption that other variables remain or constant.
- e. Value of  $b_5$ , which is the regression coefficient of People ( $X_5$ ), of 0.109 means that if the product has an increase of 1 unit, then the decision to choose a Private University will also increase of 0.109 units with the assumption that other variables remain or constant.
- f. Value of  $b_6$ , which is the regression coefficient of Process ( $X_6$ ), of 0.087 means that if the product has an increase of 1 unit, then the decision to choose a Private University will also increase by 0.087 units with the assumption that other variables remain or constant.
- g. Value of  $b_7$ , which is a regression coefficient of Physical Evidence ( $X_7$ ), of 0.286 means that if the product has an increase of 1 unit, then the decision to choose a Private University will also increase by 0.286 units with the assumption that other variables remain or constant.

#### 4.5 T-test

##### **Product ( $X_1$ ) T-test**

Product ( $X_1$ ) has a T-count of 2,683 with a significance of 0.008. Because T-count > T-table (2.683 > 1.976) or sig t is 0.8% (< 5%), then partially Product ( $X_1$ ) has significant effect on the decision to choose a Private University ( $Y$ ) assuming other independent variables are constant. So,  $H_1$  is rejected.

##### **Price ( $X_2$ ) T-test**

Variable Price ( $X_2$ ) has a value of T-count of 1,061 with a significance of 1.061 Because T-count < T-table (1,061 < 1.976) or sig t is 28,9% (> 5%), then partially Price ( $X_2$ ) has no significant effect on the decision to choose a Private University ( $Y$ ) assuming other independent variables are constant. So,  $H_2$  is accepted.

##### **Place ( $X_3$ ) T-test**

Place ( $X_3$ ) has a T-count of 0.325 with a significance of 0.745 because T-count < T-table (0.325 < 1.976) or sig t equal to 74,5% (> 5%), then Place ( $X_3$ ) partially has no significant effect on the decision to choose a Private University ( $Y$ ) assuming other independent variables are constant. So,  $H_3$  is accepted.

**Promotion (X<sub>4</sub>) T-test**

Variable Promotion (X<sub>4</sub>) has a value of T-count of -0,650 with a significance of 0.516 because T-count > T-table (0.650 < 1.976) or sig t of 51,6% (>5%), then partially Promotion (X<sub>4</sub>) has a no significant effect on the decision to choose a Private University (Y) assuming other independent variables are constant. So, H<sub>4</sub> is accepted.

**People (X<sub>5</sub>) T-test**

People variable (X<sub>5</sub>) has a T-count of 2,213 with a significance of 0.027 because T-count <T-table (2.213>1.976) or sig t is 2.7% (< 5%), then partially People (X<sub>5</sub>) has significant effect on the decision to choose a Private University (Y) assuming other independent variables are constant. So, H<sub>5</sub> is rejected.

**Process (X<sub>6</sub>) T-test**

Variable Process (X<sub>6</sub>) has a value of T-count of 3.132 with a significance of 0.002 because T-count > T-table (3,132> 1.976) or sig t of 0.002 (<5%), then partially Process (X<sub>6</sub>) has a significant effect on the decision to choose a Private University (Y) assuming other independent variables are constant. So, H<sub>6</sub> is rejected.

**Physical Evidence (X<sub>7</sub>) T-test**

Physical Evidence (X<sub>7</sub>) has a value of T-count of 5.152 with a significance of 0.000 because T-count > T-table (5.152> 1.976) or sig t of 0.000 (<5%), then partially Physical Evidence (X<sub>7</sub>) has a significant effect on the decision to choose a Private University (Y) assuming other independent variables are constant. So, H<sub>7</sub> is rejected.

Based on the results of the data processing above, it can be concluded that the students in the Sidoarjo region are of the opinion that there are 4 factors that have an influence on their decision to choose a private university as a place to continue their studies. These four factors are product, people, process, and physical evidence. While other factors such as price, place and promotion do not have a significant influence in the selection of universities. Product factors are represented through clarity of study programs offered, knowledge that can be useful in the world of work, university accreditation, the existence of practicum activities and field lectures, and the existence of seminars for students by inviting experts in certain fields to be things that must be provided by private university to attract high school / vocational high school students. In terms of the people factor that must be considered is the recommendation of high school / vocational high school teachers, campus staff who want to serve, be friendly, the presence of lecturers and staff from abroad, as well as the presence of domestic and foreign graduate lecturers. For process factors, high school / vocational high school students consider it important that universities have a system of consultation and mentoring for students, offer a pleasant teaching atmosphere, have a clear and easy administrative system, and have learning methods both in the classroom and outside the classroom. While in terms of physical evidence, aspects that must be considered are the existence of campus facilities which include places of worship, dormitories, libraries, sports facilities and classrooms that are cool and modern, a magnificent campus building, and other adequate supporting facilities.

This study found that high school / vocational high school students considered 4 factors important in choosing a university as a place to continue their education. The results of this study can provide direction for the marketing team at the university in implementing appropriate strategies and work programs in an effort to market universities in the Sidoarjo region.

**V. CONCLUSION**

This study finds that from F-test calculation, Product (X<sub>1</sub>), Price (X<sub>2</sub>), Place (X<sub>3</sub>), Promotion (X<sub>4</sub>), People (X<sub>5</sub>), Process (X<sub>6</sub>), and Physical Evidence (X<sub>7</sub>) are simultaneously influence the Selection of Private University (Y). From the T-test results, it was known that Product (X<sub>1</sub>), People (X<sub>5</sub>), Process (X<sub>6</sub>), and Physical Evidence (X<sub>7</sub>) has significant effect on the decision to choose a Private University (Y) of high school/vocational high school students in Sidoarjo. So it can be concluded that private universities in Sidoarjo or private universities that targeting high school students in Sidoarjo should consider Product image from student, people who serve the student, quality of the education and service process and physical evidence as the important factors for effective marketing strategy. Based on the results of this study, marketing at each university can do a gap analysis to find out whether the strategy taken by the university marketing team is in accordance with the results of this study.

### **Suggestion for Future Research**

There are several research areas for further research purpose. One of research area is to focus on exploring more variables that may have an influence to the decision of high school students in choosing private university. Another research area that can be done is applying this research topic to another cities in Indonesia, so that private universities can get a more comprehensive picture of effective marketing strategies that must be applied to the target areas.

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