THE INFLUENCE OF PROMOTION, SERVICE QUALITY, AND BRAND IMAGE ON STUDENTS' DECISIONS TO STUDY CHOOSE AT UNIVERSITAS WIDYA HUSADA SEMARANG

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ABSTRACT

The company uses an integrated marketing strategy with the aim of increasing student purchasing decisions in making choices. The purpose of this study was to analyze the effect of promotion, service quality, and brand image on student decisions. This research was conducted using a survey method on 85 students at Universitas Widya Husada Semarang. Data analyzed using multiple linear regression. The results of the study found that promotion, service quality, and brand image had a positive and significant effect on student decisions. The recommended for management are pay attention the attractiveness of the message conveyed, provide the best service according to the needs and desires of students, and pay more attention to the attributes.

Keywords: promotion, service quality, brand image, student decision

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INTRODUCTION

All companies must understand that the survival of the organization depends on the company's ability to meet customer needs and desires which depend on customer behavior (Tjiptono, 2015). So it requires an integrated marketing strategy to improve customer purchasing decisions in choosing products. Factors that influence purchasing decisions are promotions (Hidaya & Lubis, 2019), service quality also influences purchasing decisions (Kamanda, 2022), and brand image (Riyadh & Nikmah, 2018).

Promotion is used by companies as a way to introduce and convey information about products or services to potential customers (Syaleh, 2017). Consumers will become customers or use these services after conducting research on the products or services offered by the company, but they will not do so if they are unsure of these products or services. Therefore, proper promotion needs to be done in order to have a positive influence on increasing sales. Through effective promotion, consumers will be more interested in trying the products or services offered and choosing the brand among the many alternatives available on the market (Lysistrata, 2018).

Service quality also influences purchasing decisions (Kamanda, 2022). Quality is considered to meet or even exceed expectations when it conforms to established requirements or standards (Goetsch & Davis, 2013). Especially in the service industry, every company must prioritize good service and understand consumer desires, because the benefits are directly felt

by consumers. Service quality is an effort made by an organization or company to meet customer needs and desires (Tjiptono, 2015).

Brand image plays an important role in influencing consumer decisions in purchasing a service (Riyadh & Nikmah, 2018). Brand image is defined as the view or perception held by the public or audience towards a company, which is produced in a planned manner through the products or services offered (Canton, 2012). Brand image is related to the business name, building design, product variations, customs, ideology, and the impression of information given by each employee who interacts with company customers. Having a good brand image and strong brand equity can help build a company's strategic position in the market (Amini, 2012). Some of them found that brand image has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions (Harahap et al., 2020; Meirista, 2018; Wulandari et al., 2020).

Even so, there are still differences in research results (research gaps) regarding the relationship between purchasing decision variables and the factors that influence them. Several studies have shown a positive and significant effect, but there are also studies showing the opposite. Several previous studies have shown that promotions have a positive and significant impact on purchasing decisions (Fajri et al., 2020; Hidaya & Lubis, 2019; Suriansha, 2022), while research conducted by Febriana (2020) concluded that promotions have no significant effect on decisions purchase. According to (Kamanda, 2022; Lubis & Hamdan, 2020; Wirjawan et al., 2021) service quality has a positive and significant effect on consumer purchasing decisions, whereas according to Cahya (2021) service quality does not have a significant effect on purchasing decisions. Brand image is stated to have a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions (Harahap et al., 2020; Meirista, 2018; Wulandari et al., 2020) whereas according to (Wijaya & Pahar, 2022) brand image is stated to have no significant effect on purchasing decisions.

University Widya Husada Semarang (UWHS) pays attention to student decisions in choosing a campus as a provider of educational services. UWHS realizes that higher education is currently a potential business world, where the university's reputation is the main capital for business developers in the education sector. A good image reflects the quality of the university, but developing higher education institutions in Indonesia is not an easy matter, considering that competition with other universities is getting tougher. In the last 3 years, new student admissions from 11 study programs at UWHS have not reached the set targets. The 2020 period only achieved 94.5% of the target, while in 2021 it only achieved 73.7% of the target, and even though in 2022 there was an increase, it only reached 88.0% of the target. The fact that the target was not achieved indicates that there needs to be an increase in purchasing decisions by students. This is a concern for UWHS as an education service provider to improve its image and reputation to increase student acceptance. Based on the research gap phenomenon, the problem in this study is how to influence promotion, service quality, and brand image on students' decisions to choose to study at Universitas Widya Husada Semarang.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Effect of Promotion on Student Decisions

Promotion is a means for companies to introduce and provide information on their products or services to potential customers (Syaleh, 2017). Promotion is an important aspect of marketing management and is often said to be a continuous process. Promotion influences consumer attitudes and preferences in choosing a company's products or services, as well as motivates consumers to take positive action, namely making purchasing decisions for the products or services offered. Thus, promotion is a company activity carried out in order to introduce products or services to consumers so that with these activities consumers are interested in making purchases (Lysistrata, 2018). Previous research found that promotions

had a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions (Fajri et al., 2020; Hidaya & Lubis, 2019; Suriansha, 2022). Based on the description, hypothesis 1 proposed in this study is:

H1: Promotion has a positive and significant effect on student decisions.

The Effect of Service Quality on Student Decisions

Quality is a dynamic condition related to products, services, people, processes, and the environment that meet or exceed expectations (Goetsh and Davis, 2013). Perceived service quality will be a competitive advantage to attract new customers and contribute to share. If the customer is satisfied with the service, he will recommend the product or service to others and will be loyal to the brand so that they are less aware of the price and have a good experience with the company (Simarmata, 2017). Research on service quality and purchase decisions has been carried out by several previous researchers who found service quality to have a positive and significant effect on consumer purchase decisions (Kamanda, 2022; Lubis & Hamdan, 2020; Wirjawan et al., 2021). Based on the description, hypothesis 2 proposed in this study is: H2: Service quality has a positive and significant effect on student decisions.

The Effect of Brand Image on Student Decisions

1.

Brand image is an impression, feeling, or image from society or the public of the company, an impression that is deliberately created from a product or service offered (Canton, 2012). Brand image is needed to influence customers' minds. Customers consider the company's ability to influence their perception of what is offered and will have an impact on customer buying behavior. Research on brand image and purchasing decisions has been carried out by several researchers before. Several previous studies have found that brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions (Harahap et al., 2020; Meirista, 2018; Wulandari et al., 2020). Based on the description, hypothesis 3 proposed in this study is:

H3: brand image has a positive and significant effect on student decisions.

Based on this description, the research framework can be developed as shown in Figure

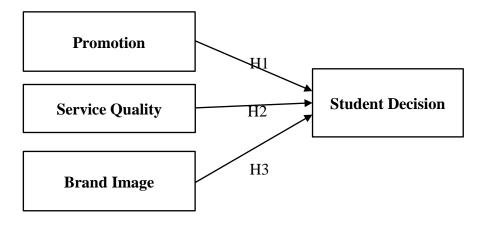


Figure 1. Research Framework

RESEARCH METHODS

Population and Sample

The population in this study were students at Widya Husada University Semarang Class of 2021/2022, with a total of 528. The sampling technique in this study used the Slovin formula with an error limit of 10%, obtaining 85 respondents. Based on the calculations above, the sample in this study is 15.92% of the total population, which is presented in Table 1. The sampling method used a proportional random sampling technique.

Table 1. Sample Distribution

No	Study program	Number of Students	Sample
1	D3 Physiotherapy	53	8
2	D3 X-Ray Engineering	109	17
3	D3 Refraction Option	49	8
4	S1 Medical Informatics	18	3
5	S1 Nursing	129	21
6	D3 Nursing	32	5
7	Nurse Profession	19	3
8	D3 Electrical Engineering	80	13
9	S1 System and Information Technology	5	1
10	S1 Management	23	4
11	S1 Entrepreneurship	11	2
	Amount	528	85

Source: Processed from UWHS, 2022

Operational Definitions and Variable Indicators

Promotion is the communication of seller and buyer information that aims to change the attitude and behavior of buyers, who previously did not know to be familiar with it so that they buy and still remember the product. Promotion is measured by promotional attraction, media diversity, promotion effectiveness, and advertising message. Service quality is a form of action of excellence expected and controls over the level of excellence to meet customer desires. In this study, an indicator of service quality is physical evidence, reliability, responsiveness, guarantee, empathy, competence, and courtesy.

Brand image is Impressions, feelings, and images of the public towards the company, the impression that is intentionally created from an object, person, or organization. Brand image is measured by personality, reputation, mark, and company identity.

Student decision is buying the most preferred brand from the various alternatives, but two factors can be between the purchase intention and the purchase decision. The indicator of student decision in this study is The stability of buying after knowing the product information, Deciding to buy because of the most preferred brand, Buying because it suits your wants and needs, and buying because of recommendations from others.

Data analysis

Data were collected using a questionnaire with five Likert scales, from strongly disagree with a value of 1 to strongly agree with a value of 5. Furthermore data analyzed using multiple linear regression with the SPSS version 24.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION Result

From the results of research conducted on 85 respondents, information about gender can be described from a total who were the object of research 56.5% of them were women, while the number of male respondents was only 43.5%. Therefore, there is a significant difference between the number of female and male respondents in this study. This is because 75% of the study programs at UWHS are health study programs. The respondent's age is majority of respondents have an age range between 18 to 19 years, with a total of around 68.2%. This can indicate that new students in 2023 are at a productive age, and have teenagers who have a passion for learning and organizing on campus. Based on education background, the data of respondents show more respondents have a vocational education background, namely as many as 47 people or 55.3%, this shows that new students who are interested in choosing a school at UWHS are vocational graduates from various majors with the hope of obtaining a higher education level higher expertise.

The validity test was carried out by comparing the value of the r-count with the r-table for a significance level of 5 percent from the degree of freedom (df) = n-2, in this case, n is the number of samples. If r-count > r table then the question or indicator is declared valid, and vice versa if r count < r table then the question or indicator is declared invalid (Ghozali, 2018). Table 2 shows that all items in the questionnaire proved to be valid because each item met the criteria, namely having a corrected total item correlation value or r-count > r-table = 0.213 (N = 85, alpha=0.05).

Table 2. Validity Test Results

Variable	Indicator	r-count	r-table	Decision
Promotion (X1)	X1.1	0.902	0.213	Valid
	X1.2	0.512	0.213	Valid
	X1.3	0.452	0.213	Valid
	X1.4	0.803	0.213	Valid
Quality of service (X2)	X2.1	0.621	0.213	Valid
	X2.2	0.803	0.213	Valid
	X2.3	0.634	0.213	Valid
	X2.4	0.653	0.213	Valid
	X2.5	0.803	0.213	Valid
	X2.6	0.919	0.213	Valid
	X2.7	0.933	0.213	Valid
Brand image (X3)	X3.1	0.614	0.213	Valid
	X3.2	0.557	0.213	Valid
	X3.3	0.660	0.213	Valid
	X3.4	0.913	0.213	Valid
Student decision (V)	Y1	0.814	0.213	Valid
Student decision (Y)	Y2	0.607	0.213	Valid
	Y3	0.418	0.213	Valid
	Y4	0.652	0.213	Valid

Source: Primary data, 2023

A reliability test is a tool to measure a questionnaire which is an indicator of the variable. If the Cronbach Alpha value is > 0.70, the questionnaire is said to be reliable (Ghozali, 2016). It can be concluded from the Table 3 that all variables in this research are considered reliable because they have a Cronbach Alpha value above 0.7.

Table 3. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach Alpha	Information
Promotion	0.830	Reliable
Service quality	0.922	Reliable
Brand Image	0.843	Reliable
Student Decision	0.798	Reliable

Source: Primary data, 2023

Normality test through testing using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method, results were obtained with a value of 0.083 at a significance level of 0.102 (see Table 4). Because the significance value is greater than 0.05, it can be concluded that the data tested has a normal distribution. The results of the multicollinearity test in Table 5 show tolerance above 0.1 and VIF under 10. It can be concluded that the variables in this research are free of multicollinearity. In the results of the heteroscedasticity test with graphical, there were no signs of heteroscedasticity in the variables in this study.

The value of the coefficient of determination is calculated using the adjusted R Square. The results of the regression analysis show that the value of the adjusted R Square or the coefficient of determination obtained is 0.550. This value indicates that 55.0 percent of the variation of all the independent variables used can provide an explanation for the variation of the dependent variable. The remaining 45.0 percent can be explained by external factors which are not included in this research.

The test shows that the F-count has a value of 33.036 and a significance number of 0.000, which means it is smaller than the alpha value (0.05). In this context, a smaller value than alpha indicates that the results obtained are statistically significant. Based on the results of the adjusted R Square and F tests that have been carried out, it can be concluded that this regression equation model can be used properly.

Based on the test results, the calculated t value of 5.343 is greater than the t table value of 1.663 and has a significance level of 0.05 on one side. In addition, a significance value of 0.000 is obtained which is smaller than the significance level of 0.05, so the hypothesis 1 which states that promotion has a positive effect on student decisions is proven. The calculated t value is 2.346, which is greater than the t table value of 1.663, and a significant number of $0.021 < \alpha = 0.05$. Therefore, the hypothesis 2 that service quality has a positive influence on student decisions is proven. Furthermore, the calculated t value is 4.728 which is greater than the t-table = 1.663 and a significance number $0.000 < \alpha = 0.05$, then the hypothesis 3 that promotion has a positive effect on student decisions.

Table 4. Normality Test Results

Parameter	Unstandardized Residuals		
N	85		
Test Statistics	0.074		
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.082		

Source: Primary data, 2023

Table 5. Multicollinearity Test Results

Variable	tolerance	VIF	Information
Promotion	0.851	1.174	Multicollinearity Free
Service quality	0.788	1.269	Multicollinearity Free
Brand Image	0.875	1.143	Multicollinearity Free

Source: Primary data, 2023

Table 6. Hypothesis Test Results

Effect	t-value	t-table	p-value	Decision
Promotion → Student Decision	5.343	1.663	0.000	H1 Accepted
Service quality → Student Decision	2.346	1.663	0.021	H2 Accepted
Brand Image → Student Decision	4.726	1.663	0.000	H3 Accepted
R-Square	0.550			
F-count	33.036			
F-Sig.	0.000			

Source: Primary data, 2023

Discussion

It is found that there is an influence between the promotion variable and student decisions, which means that the first hypothesis is accepted. The results of the descriptive analysis found that promotion was in a fairly good category, this can be seen from the respondents feeling that the promotion carried out by UWHS attracted the attention of respondents, UWHS carried out promotions through various media, UWHS was effective in attracting consumers, and advertisements carried out by UWHS were in accordance with the quality of education provided. offered. The existence of this good promotion will increase students' decision to be able to study at UWHS, which can be seen from their having the stability to choose to study at UWHS after knowing information about studying at UWHS.

Promotion can affect student perceptions of a product or service so that it can influence student decisions to choose or not choose that product or service. If a tertiary institution carries out good and effective promotion of the study programs they offer, students will be more inclined to choose these study programs. Promotions carried out can be in the form of advertisements, brochures, educational exhibitions, and so on. In addition, promotion can also affect the brand image of the university, which in turn can influence the student's decision to choose the college. Promotion that is done well can improve the brand image of the university in the eyes of prospective students. The findings from previous studies support that promotion plays an important role in influencing purchasing decisions with a positive and significant influence (Fajri et al., 2020; Hidaya & Lubis, 2019; Suriansha, 2022).

There is an influence between service quality variables on student decisions, which means that the second hypothesis is accepted. The results of the descriptive analysis found that the quality of service was in a fairly good category, this could be seen from the respondents who felt that UWHS had good physical facilities, UWHS had the ability to provide promised services immediately, UWHS had the desire to help customers, UWHS had staff who could be trusted, UWHS has an understanding of the needs of customers, UWHS has the knowledge and skills needed to be able to provide educational services, UWHS has staff who are polite, respectful, caring and friendly. The existence of fairly good service quality will increase student decisions to be able to study at UWHS. They will tend to decide to study at UWHS because it is the campus they like.

Service quality can affect student satisfaction and perceptions of tertiary institutions, which in turn can influence student decisions to choose or not to choose these tertiary institutions. Students who are satisfied with the services provided by the tertiary institution will be more likely to choose to continue their studies at the tertiary institution. Conversely, students who are dissatisfied with the services provided may choose to look for a better alternative to higher education.

Service quality can be seen from various aspects, such as responsiveness, reliability, communication, empathy, and staff knowledge. If a tertiary institution is able to provide good service quality in these aspects, students will be more likely to choose to continue their studies at that tertiary institution. This is in line with the results of research conducted by

previous researchers who found service quality had a positive and significant effect on consumer purchasing decisions (Kamanda, 2022; Lubis & Hamdan, 2020; Wirjawan et al., 2021).

There is an influence between brand image variables on student decisions, which means that the third hypothesis is accepted. The results of the descriptive analysis find that the brand image is in a good category, this can be seen from the respondents who feel that UWHS is a campus that has a good social responsibility, UWHS is a campus that is safe in transactions, UWHS is a campus that is responsive to student requests and complaints, and UWHS's attributes make it easier for the target public to identify the campus. The existence of a good brand image will increase student decisions to be able to study at UWHS.

Brand image is the perception of students about tertiary institutions which is influenced by service quality, promotion, reputation, and other factors. A positive brand image can influence a student's decision to choose that college. Students tend to choose universities that have a good and positive brand image in the eyes of the public because a good brand image can give a sense of trust and credibility to these universities. A good brand image can also provide added value to college graduates in the eyes of companies or the world of work. This is in line with the results of previous studies which found that brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions (Harahap et al., 2020; Meirista, 2018; Wulandari et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis that has been carried out and the discussion, several conclusions can be given. First, there is an influence between promotion on student decisions. Second, there is an influence between service quality on student decisions. Finally, there is an influence between brand image on student decisions.

Managerial Implications

Based on the findings of this research, there are many suggestions that can be given for improving the promotion, service quality, and brand image of Universitas Widya Husada Semarang (UWHS). First, the results of the analysis regarding the promotion variable have an average value the indicator with the lowest score is an indicator of promotion effectiveness. To increase the effectiveness of promotion, it is necessary to pay attention to several important things, such as the attractiveness of the message conveyed to attract the attention of prospective students, the style of the message according to the characteristics of the target market, the level of accuracy and clarity of the message so as not to cause misunderstandings, and the frequency of delivering the right message so that it can reach a wide range of prospective students. Second, service quality variables have an average value the indicator with the lowest score is the empathy indicator. The need for the management of UWHS to provide the best service according to the needs and desires of students. Third, the results of the analysis of brand image variables have an average value the indicator with the lowest score is the corporate identity indicator. It is necessary for the management of UWHS to pay more attention to the attributes that UWHS has to make it easier for the target public to recognize the campus.

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