



**A STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS AND BUYING DECISION OF THE
FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS IN IIB DARMAJAYA DURING COVID-19
PANDEMIC**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF UNDERGRADUATE OF MANAGEMENT IN
BUSINESS PROGRAM**

Arranged By:

**Winni Sari
1712110027**

**MANAGEMENT STUDY PROGRAM
FACULTY OF ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS SCIENCE
INFORMATICS AND BUSINESS INSTITUTE OF DARMAJAYA
BANDAR LAMPUNG**

2020/2021



**A STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS AND BUYING DECISION OF THE
FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS IN IIB DARMAJAYA DURING COVID-19
PANDEMIC**

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
UNDERGRADUATE OF MANAGEMENT IN BUSINESS PROGRAM

Arranged By:

**Winni Sari
1712110027**

Under The Supervision of
Novita Sari Idham, S.Sos., M.M

**FACULTY OF ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS
INSTITUTE OF INFORMATIC AND BUSINESS OF DARMAJAYA
BANDAR LAMPUNG**

2020/2021

DEDICATION

All thanks and praise to the Almighty God, because of His abundant gifts, generosity and great loyal love finally the writer can finish writing the thesis with the title " **A STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS AND BUYING DECISION OF THE FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS IN IIB DARMAJAYA DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**".

This thesis was written with the intention of completing one of the requirements for obtaining a Bachelor degree (S1) in Economics, Department of Economics, Faculty of Economics and Business at the Institute of Informatics and Business Darmajaya. The author realizes, of course, that this writing cannot be separated from the assistance and direction of all parties. With this opportunity the authors would like to thank:

1. Mr. Ir. Firmansyah YA, MBA., M. Sc., As the Rector of IIB Damajaya Bandar Lampung.
2. Mr Dr. RZ., Abdul Aziz, S.T., M.T., as Vice Rector I IIB Darmajaya Bandar Lampung.
3. Mr. Ronny Nazar, S.E., M.M., as Vice Rector IIB Darmajaya Bandar Lampung.
4. Mr. Muprihan Thaib, S.Sos., M.M., as Vice Rector III IIB Darmajaya Bandar Lampung.
5. Mr Prof. Dr. Ir. Raden Achmad Bustomi Rosadi, M.S., as the Vice Rector IV IIB Darmajaya Bandar Lampung.
6. Ms. Faurani I Singagerda S.E., M.M., as Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business IIB Darmajaya Bandar Lampung.
7. Ms. Dr. Anggalia Wibasuri, S.Kom., M.M., as Chairwoman of the IIB Darmajaya Management Department.
8. Ms. Novita Sari Idham, S.Sos., M.M., as the supervisor with patience and sincerity to help and direct the author in composing thesis so that it can be completed.

9. Mr. and Ms. lecturers who have shared knowledge and guidance at IIB Darmajaya.
10. Dear Beloved Father and Mother, who never stop giving prayers and support both material and non-material for the success of the author.
11. My only one beloved little sister, and extended family who always encourage and participate awaits the success of the author.
12. Someone who always keeps me motivated and passionate inside my life thank you for all the prayers and motivation.
13. All those who have helped the author both joy and sorrow which cannot be mentioned one by one.
14. And my pride, Alma Mater IIB Darmajaya.

Hopefully the preparation of this thesis can be useful for all parties who need it. The author hopes that the results of this research can be used as an input and reference in the development of researches next in the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The biggest expression of my gratitude is given to The Almighty God for all His amazing grace. I also give a big expression of my gratitude to Holy Kwan She Im Phusa for her prayers along with all The Bodhisattva Mahasattva Buddhas. Their amazing grace and prayers helped me to finish my biggest responsibility as a student of Institute of Informatics and Business of Darmajaya.

I would like to whole-heartedly give my thanks to my important people who were always with me during the process of finishing my thesis. The first one is my advisor, Novita Sari Idham S. Sos., MM., for her unlimited patience, motivation, understanding, support, and guidance during the unforgettable thesis writing process. Thereafter, I would be glad to deliver my appreciation and thanks to The New Admission Office of IIB Darmajaya who has facilitated me to have an internship activities there and initiated me to conduct the theme of this thesis. Subsequently, I would like to convey my grateful feelings and thanks to Ms. Cahyani Pratisti S.Pi., MBA., for her truly uplifting words, experiences, motivations and prayers. Her kind-hearted personality will always be remembered by me in my entire life.

Hereinafter, I would like to express my highly uncountable gratitude to my parents Tjen Khioen Fo a.k.a Hendra Fernandez and Lisa Monica Foe for their extremely valuable wisdom, advice and spirit for me, my only one beloved sister Liana Sari for her super eyes-opening sarcastic words yet super motivating, funny and hilarious. To my beautiful and supportive Auntie, Shinta, for her unbroken love and prayer and so much help even 300 kms away from here. To my brother-like support system Ajunk for his religious motivation wisdom, generosity, psychological guidance and humours. My long-distance best friend who have been with me since I haven't even started this thesis until it's done, Ali Tahir, for his advice and warm support. All of them are my precious people who keep making me moving forward.

The last but not least I would like to pass my best appreciation to my classmates and my warm friends Rizky Wahyuningsih, Ricka Dita Agata, Sumaria Liswita, Muhammad Reza Pahlevi, Historia Suri, Amellya Alya, Olvy Andri, Jaka Eriyadi, and Nucky Indriana for the brotherhood and sisterhood feelings for the past 3 years of togetherness. And to any other individuals that can not all be mentioned by me one by one who have given their warm contribution and helped me to complete my thesis. I believe that this thesis can not be completed without your participation and contribution. Your generosity means a lot to me.

Bandar Lampung, February 24, 2021

Winni Sari

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

Declaration:

I declare that this document is entirely my work and that no part of it has been previously submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification at this or any other institution of learning.

I am aware of and understand the University's policy on plagiarism and I certify that this document is my own work, except where indicated by referencing, and that I have followed ethical academic practices.



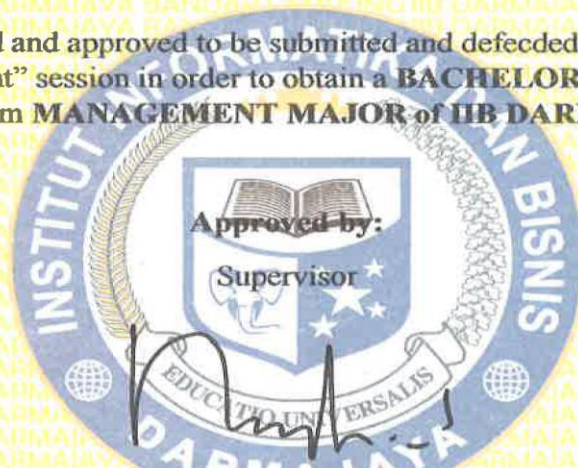
Signature:

Date: February 26, 2021

APPROVAL PAGE

TITLE	A STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS AND BUYING DECISION OF THE FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS IN IIB DARMAJAYA DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC
NAME	WINNI SARI
ID NUMBER	1712110027
MAJOR	MANAGEMENT

Has been examined and approved to be submitted and defended in the “Study Closing Assignment” session in order to obtain a **BACHELOR DEGREE** of **ECONOMICS** from **MANAGEMENT MAJOR** of **IIB DARMAJAYA**.



Approved by:
Supervisor

Novita Sari Idham S.Sos., MM.

NIK. 01071104

Head of Department



Dr Anggalia Wibasuri, S.Kom., M.M.

NIK. 11310809

LEGITIMATION PAGE

On 9 April 2021 in Room D 3.7 had been held a **THESIS TRIAL** with the title **A STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS AND BUYING DECISION OF THE FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS IN IIB DARMAJAYA DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC** to fulfill some of the academic requirements in order to obtain a **BACHELOR DEGREE OF ECONOMICS** for student:

Name of Student : **WINNI SARI**
ID Number : **1712110027**
Major : **MANAGEMENT**

And has been declared to have passed the trial by a board of examiners consisting of:

Nama

Status

Tandatangan

1. **Muhammad Ariza, S.P., M.M** Penguji I
2. **Muhammad Saputra, S.E., M.M** Penguji II



Dean of Business and Economic Faculty of IIB Darmajaya

Dr. Fauzani Santi Singagerda, SE., M.Sc

ABBREVIATIONS

Covid-19	: Corona virus disease year 19
HEI	: Higher Educational Institution
IIB	: Institute of Informatics and Business of Darmajaya.

LISTS OF CONTENT

TITLE PAGE

DEDICATION.....	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iii
DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY	v
APPROVAL PAGE	vi
LEGITIMATION PAGE	vii
ABBREVIATION	viii
LIST OF CONTENTS.....	ix
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
ABSTRACT.....	xii

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem Background.....	1
1.2 Research Question.....	4
1.3 Research Scope.	4
1.4 Research Objectives	5
1.5 Research Benefits.....	5
1.6 Writing Formats	6

CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Perception.....	7
2.1.1 Definition of Perception.....	7
2.1.2 Perception Process	9
2.1.3 Factors of Perception	11
2.1.4 Principles of Perception	12
2.2 Consumer Behaviour	13
2.2.1 The Definition of Consumer Behaviour	13
2.2.2 Factors Influencing Consumer Purchasing Decision.....	14
2.2.3 The Behaviour of Consumer Purchasing	19
2.2.4 Different Types of Decision-Making.....	22

2.2.5 Service Marketing.....	24
2.2.6 Service Marketing Mix	24
2.3 Previously Mapping Researches	26
2.4 Conceptual Research Framework	30
CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
3.1 Type of Research.....	32
3.1.1 Descriptive Study	33
3.2 Data Sources.....	34
3.3 Data Collection Method	34
3.4 Population and Sample.....	38
3.4.1 Population	38
3.4.2 Sample	39
3.5 Limitations and Delimitations.....	40
3.6 Data Analysis Method.....	41
CHAPTER IV DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS	
4.1 Revisions of Interview Protocol.....	43
4.2 Research Questions.....	44
4.3 Research Results	44
4.3.1 Brand Image.....	45
4.3.2 Product Features	49
4.3.3 Human Resource Management.....	51
4.3.4 Personal Reasons/Preferences.....	54
4.3.5 Marketing Strategy	58
4.3.6 Pricing Strategy.....	67
4.4 Additional Findings.....	73
CHAPTER V DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	
5.1 Conclusion	78
5.2 Implication	79
5.3 Recommendations	80
REFERENCES	86
APPENDICES	89

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 New Admission Comparison 2019-2020	2
Table 2.3 Previously Mapping Researches	26
Table 3.4 Total Population Of IIB Darmajaya From All Courses in 2020	39
Table 3.6 The Code Mapping	42

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Perception Process	9
Figure 2.2 The Hierarchy of Needs by Maslow	19
Figure 2.3 Decision Making Process.....	20
Figure 2.4 Four Types of Buying Behavior	23
Figure 4.1 Memo of The Research Result	47
Figure 4.2 Most Frequent Words Mentioned by The Students	48
Figure 4.3 Perceptions About Competitors.....	49
Figure 4.4 Perceptions About Scholarships	52
Figure 4.5 HR Management Satisfaction Map.....	54
Figure 4.6 General Perceptions of University Selection.....	57
Figure 4.7 Reasons to Favour/Motive to Enroll in IIB Darmajaya.....	58
Figure 4.8 Preferences Between TikTok and Instagram.....	62
Figure 4.9 Perceptions About Websites	68
Figure 4.10 Perceptions of Pricing Strategy	70
Figure 4.11 Covid-19 Influence to University Selection	72
Figure 4.12 Decision Making Process	76

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A. Informed Consent Form	89
Appendix B. Interview Protocol	91
Appendix C. Participant List.....	95

ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS AND BUYING DECISION OF THE FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS IN IIB DARMAJAYA DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

By

WINNI SARI

Covid-19 has brought some negative impact globally, including the declining interest to register in universities due to economic problem. The purpose of this study is to reveal the perceptions of first-year students regarding their experience/exposure of IIB Darmajaya as a whole especially during Covid-19 Pandemic. Furthermore, Participants will help the Researcher to uncover their buying decisions after receiving exposures and information from IIB Darmajaya. Moreover, the Researcher will obtain the disclosure whether or not the Covid-19 Pandemic influences their buying decision in selecting higher institutional education. This research use the approach of qualitative phenomenological study. To acquire the data, the researcher use the deep-interview method. A sample of 14 students of Darmajaya's first year-students and a number of selection criteria were identified. This study found that students tend to have a good perceptions about IIB Darmajaya regarding the cost affordability, information accessibility and marketing references. Excellent accreditation become the most mentioned reason why students chose Darmajaya as their favourite higher educational institution. While it was found that there was a balance answer whether Covid-19 has influences to their buying decision.

Keywords: Perceptions, Buying Decisions, Decision Making, Service Marketing Mix, Covid-19, Pandemic.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem Background

The development of marketing in Indonesia continues to escalate quite promising periodically. Indonesia's digital landscape is growing swiftly with more than 260 million populations along with the rapidly rising number of internet users, striking 40% of social media penetration rate, and developing infrastructure. Moreover, with the growing economy, the digital literacy, and the rising urban population, Indonesia has a potential to become a place of digital creativity (GetCRAFT, 2017).

Martin (2015) explained in which research that marketing which nowadays done digitally has created changes to the world along with the higher education sector to the brand new innovation. Without the growth of enrollment, colleges and universities may not sustain. Universities and college face challenges of maintaining relevance among students who are increasingly more reliant on technology as a communication source. Sherman (2014) in Best Practices Guide "Proving the Value of Digital Marketing in Higher Education" explained that higher education has been undergoing a transition for many years. Both internal and external challenges are faced by higher educational institutions (HEIs) worldwide. This challenge entails the marketing of higher educational institutions to move from traditional brochures to social media platforms and the web to captivate prospective students' attention. Universities along with colleges are becoming more selective about spending and more aggressive in recruiting prospective students. However, livening up competition and rising prices have forced students to become more selective to choose for the university or college.

As competition rises up in the higher education institution sectors, private and public universities view students as target consumers and try to market their

institution intensively. As a result, the motivating factors for students in choosing a university have undergone some changes. Various pressures and changes in the higher education environment including a decrease in government funding, increased competition, as well as a restricted financial environment all impact on a university's endeavours to attract quality students (Martin (2015).

As per October 1 2020, reported from the archives of The Office of New Admissions Center, the total numbers of new enrollers in Informatics and Business Institute (IIB) of Darmajaya has significantly dropped from what the year of 2019 could yield. It may be worsened by the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). The previously unidentified virus has emerged from Wuhan China in late December 2019 and resulted in a formidable outbreak including in Indonesia (Wu et. al 2020). Coronavirus (COVID-19) has spread to 214 countries and territories around the world and affect the global economy until today (BBC.com). The Financial Ministry of Indonesia Sri Mulyani, reported from BBC Indonesia stated that Indonesia could face the recession phase due to Coronavirus outbreak. In the second quarter this year, Indonesian economy is recorded to have contraction in the number of 5,32%.

Faculty	Course	2019	2020
Economics & Business	Management	485	219
	Accountancy	200	108
	Digital Business	7	61
Computer Science	Informatics Engineering	171	136
	Information System	198	113
	Computer System	100	39
	Visual Com. Design	12	70
Total		1.173	746

Table 1. New Admission Comparison 2019-2020

In such situations, marketing efforts should play an increasingly important role in higher education, particularly in student recruitment management.

Hence, there is a call for the development of new marketing approaches (Simões & Soares 2010). This research will study about how students perceive IIB Darmajaya in their mind compared to other universities that they decide to enroll in IIB Darmajaya as a buying decision especially in the Covid-19 outbreak. As IIB Darmajaya provides service as its main product, this research will study about how the students perceive the service along with marketing activities that Darmajaya provides to satisfy their needs. This research will also study if there is any change of the buying behavior of the students when facing the Covid-19 outbreak.

This research undertaken in the context of perceptions and purchase decision is hopefully make a contribution to the improvement and reinnovate the strategy in order to captivate the students attention to step up onto the buying decisions to IIB Darmajaya. Therefore, hopefully it makes a contribution as well to the body of knowledge in this area of research. Therefore, the writer is interested to do a research in the title of **“A STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS AND BUYING DECISION OF THE FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS IN IIB DARMAJAYA DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC.”**.

1.2 Research Questions

Withdrawn from the research background written previously, the problem in this research can be stated in the followings below:

1. What are students' perceptions of Informatics and Business Institute of Darmajaya?
2. What makes the students take the buying decision to IIB Darmajaya especially in the middle of Covid-19 Pandemic?

1.3 Research Scope

1.3.1 The Scope of Subject

The scope of the subject of this research is the students of IIB Darmajaya who currently are running their first semester.

1.3.2 The Scope of The Object

The Scope of The Objects of this research covers Perception and Buying Decision.

1.3.3 The Scope of Place

The Scope of Place for this research will be assessed in Informatics and Business Institute, Bandar Lampung.

1.3.4 The Scope of Time

The Scope of Time for this research is around October-December 2020.

1.3.5 The Scope of Knowledge

The Scope of Knowledge of this research are Consumer Behaviour and Marketing Management that consist Perception, Marketing Communication Approach and Buying Decision.

1.4 Research Objectives

The primary purpose of this qualitative study is to obtain an understanding and knowledge about the perceptions and buying decision of the first year students of IIB Darmajaya. The second purpose is to obtain the knowledge if there is any change from the students to choose an educational institution especially during Covid-19 pandemic. Specifically, this study can hopefully be used as a reference of IIB Darmajaya to make up an additional marketing strategy particularly to strengthen the buying decision and make a good image of perceptions from the students to attract new potential enrollers especially in the middle of this pandemic.

1.5 Research Benefits

The research benefits consist of:

1. Theoretical Benefit

As the additional reference for the Marketing Management Science especially in the variation of Marketing Communication Approach in terms of Buying Decision when facing an emergency situation such as Covid-19. Also, this could be a good reference to fix the misperception that may happen among the students' mind as the part of Consumer Behaviour Science.

2. Practical Benefits

- a. To the company, this research can provide them the additional information about what kind of marketing communication that they should fix, add, eliminate, or combine especially in the middle of facing the COVID-19 pandemic to create the intention of buying decision.
- b. This research can provide the information about the perception and misperception from the students about IIB Darmajaya along with the

way how the marketers should establish a good image in students' mind.

- c. To writer, this research is conducted as the prerequisite of the Bachelor Degree of Management study program in IIB Darmajaya. Moreover, this research can escalate the writer's insights and later in the future, may apply it to any company.

1.6 Writing Formats

Thesis writing systematics aims to provide an outline picture regarding the content of this thesis with a clear and structure, it is described below systematic writing of the thesis:

1.6.1 Chapter I : Introduction

This chapter describes the background, problem formulation, scope research, research objectives, research benefits, research systematics, about "A Study Of The Perceptions and Buying Decisions of The First-Year Students In IIB Darmajaya During Covid-19 Pandemic."

1.6.2 Chapter II : Theoretical Basis

In this chapter describes briefly the theories in research, research framework, and hypotheses (provisional assumptions).

1.6.3 Chapter III : Research Methods

This chapter discusses the method of analysis that will be used in research, the relationship between variables, determination of samples, types and sources of data as well as the analysis used in the research.

1.6.4 Chapter IV : Results and Discussion

In this chapter the writer describes the results and discussion about how the students perceive IIB Darmajaya in their mind before reaching the stage of buying decision.

1.6.5 Chapter V : Conclusions and Suggestions

This chapter discusses conclusions based on the results of the discussion and data obtained from the results of research, provide suggestions and improvements for the parties concerned.

REFERENCES

ATTACHMENTS

CHAPTER 11

THEORETICAL BASIS

2.0 Introduction

This chapter begins with a review of the literature of Perception. Here, Perception will be discussed comprehensively starts from the definition, process, factors, and so on.

2.1 Perception

2.1.1 Definition of Perception

J.J. Gibson as quoted by Covarrubias (2017) believed that a human perceives objects (their sensory qualities) in a way by which packets of information — arrays determined (structured) by objects, enter his sensors. The beams of light reflect off the surface of objects and thus carry the information about their shape, size, texture, etc. Similarly, our ears are impacted by arrays of vibrating waves or by the influence of tangible objects. These information beams — arrays — form an extremely broad set of information flows, as in our environment there are billions of beams impacting our receptors from the entire perception field we happen to be impacted. (Andrej Demuth 2013:25).

Perception is the process of human thinking about certain phenomenon, stated by Rumbold and Keane (2017).

Perception is started from the sense of organ. This process is related to the acceptance of message or information by human brain. In this process, a person interact with his/her environments using five senses. Those are vision, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. People interact with the environment using these senses, then the stimuli will be registered by brain and send them to nervous system. Furthermore, this process is called as sensation, and sensation is a part of perception.

Koentjaningrat (2010:42) explained that perception is the realization of human brain process and it appears as a view about phenomenon. In this process, many factors such as feeling, needs, motivation, educational background, experiences, etc are involved. Then the process is followed by a process which a person's brain arrives at meaningful interpretation of stimuli.

The process of perception is a highly active process of extracting sensory stimuli, their evaluation, interpretation and backward organization of sensory stimulus. Perception is the end product of the interaction between stimulus and internal hypotheses, expectations and knowledge of the observer, while motivation and emotions play an important role in this process. Perception is thus influenced by a wide range of individual factors that can lead to an inadequate interpretation. (Bharath, Sreedevi, 2020).

Perception is started from the sense of organ. It includes the 5 senses; touch, sight, taste smell and sound. It also includes what is known as perception, a set of senses involving the ability to detect changes in body positions and movements. It also involves the- cognitive processes required to process information, such as recognizing the face of a friend or detecting a familiar perfume (Eysenck & Keane 2015).

It can be concluded that perception is the process of receiving, selecting, organizing, interpreting, checking, and reacting to sensory stimuli or data by seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting and smelling the environment.

2.1.2 Perception Process

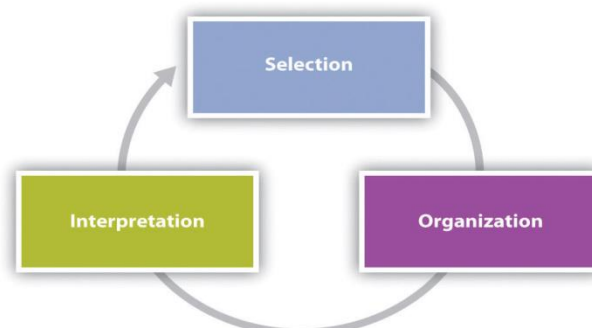


Figure 2.1 Perception Process

The perception process consists of three stages: selection, organization, and interpretation Ou, Q. (2017: Vol. 15, No. 4, 2017, pp. 18-28), they are:

a. Selection

Selection is the first stage in the process of perception, during which we transmit the environment stimuli into something we can understand. In daily life we are frequently rained by such a large variety of information that at a blink moment we may encounter these stimuli: the words we are hearing, the witness of an accident, the ticking of a clock, to name but a few. This kind of millions of occasions around us are waiting to be proceed from stimuli to something we can translate. Therefore, we perceive only part of the information from the environment through a selective process, just as notes Eysenck & Keane (2015): “We experience everything in the world not as it is—but only as the world comes to us through our sensory receptors.” A lot of researchers have paid great attention to this selection stage of perception.

to notice is to select, to regard some bits of perception, or some features of the world, as more noteworthy, more significant than others. Of these, we attend, and the rest we ignore—for which reason...attention is the same time ignorance

despite the fact that it gives us a vividly clear picture of what we choose to notice. Physically, we see, hear, smell, taste, and touch innumerable features that we never notice.

b. Organization

The second step after selection process is called organization. It is the process of our cognitive skill to organize lots of information we received before and accomplishing it by putting things or people into categories, and that is why it is also termed categorization by some researchers. In another name, we can call this stage as a “categorization” stage.

In this stage of perception, the social and physical events or objects we encounter will immediately have shape, color, texture, size, etc. For instance when someone ask about what a doctor is, we may answer that it is a human’s job related to health and medicine, others may answer that doctors are ones who help them recover from illness. If we close our eyes and think what our university classes is, we experience an organized environment with an internal and external structure. Categorization allows “us to structure and give coherence to our general knowledge about people and the social world, providing typical patterns of behavior and the range of likely variation between types of people and their characteristic actions and attributes” (Eysenck & Keane 2015).

Perception at this stage gives two characteristics enjoyment. First, the categorizing process gives human perception structure. We always put raw stimuli from the outside world into structured meaningful experience. Second, the process shows that human perception possesses stability. That is to say, after we select stimuli and put them into categories, the selected stimuli become durable.

c. Interpretation

The next and last phase of perception is called interpretation, that refers to the process of attaching meaning to the selected stimulus. Once we have selected information and translating them into something we may have representation about, we need to try to make sense of these patterns by assigning meanings to them. Eventhough every person would have different point of view about the categorized stimulus they have, we are always allowed to interpret ours. For instance, a car crash survivor might be considered as “lucky-to-be-alive” by the witnesses but to the victim, she has lost her car and we do not know whether she suffers from serious injuries or not. From another example, we may find it normal when we get acquainted to someone and ask for their age, but to people in some countries, it is considered as “rude” or “not your business” stuff.

Such interpretation differences arise because “Culture provides us with a perceptual lens that greatly influences how we interpret and evaluate what we receive from the outside world” (Ou, Q. (2017). Different experiences and backgrounds will result in people’s attributing different meanings to the same stimulus, so perception diversity appears. To the general people, one occasion that happens may have the same meaning or interpretations to them but to some unique individuals that may have different pas life and experience, the interpretations may vary.

2.1.3 Factors of Perception

According to Proffitt & Baer (2020), there are two factors that influence someone’s perception, those are as follows:

a. Internal Factors

Internal factor is a factor which comes from inside of an individual. It depends on psychological factors such as thoughts, feeling, willingness, need, sex, attention, and motivation. Every human being has different characteristic and temperament shaped by individual's family and environment. Each individual may have different characteristics of internal conditions eventhough they live in a same environment.

b. External factor

It is a factor that comes from outside of an individual or it can be said as the individual's environment. The environment can lead to someone's behavioural forming. The external factors also affect someone's perception, and stimulus is an internal factor in monitoring process. The process of stimulus will connect through the sense of organ or receptor such as sight, sounds, hearing, etc. It can be concluded that individual's sense of organ is as a connector between individual and the object in the world.

2.1.4 Principles of Perception

In relation with the definition of perception, Proffitt & Baer (2020) has divided the principles of perception into four, those are as follows:

a. Perception is relative not absolute

In relation with the relative perception, the first stimulus will give bigger impact than the next one.

b. Perception is selective

A person's ability to catch a stimulus is restrictive, because human brain only catches the stimulus based on the most attractive thing.

c. Perception has arrangement

Perception has arrangement because people receive the stimulus in the form of relations/groups.

d. People perceptions may be different

The different perceptions can be explored in differences individually, behaviour, attitude, and motivation.

2.2 Consumer Behaviour

2.2.1 The Definitions of Consumer Behaviour Theory

Michael Solomon (2018) as well as elaborate on the definition by explaining that consumer behaviour is, furthermore, the study of how individuals take decisions to spend their available resources (money, time, effort) on consumption-related items. It involves the study of what, why, when, where and how frequent they purchase and how they use the purchased product. In addition, it encompasses all the behaviours that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs.

Schiffman (2019) defines consumer behaviour as the process whereby individuals decide whether, what, when, where, how, and from whom to purchase goods and services. It is also the study of the buying units and the exchange processes involved in acquiring, consuming, and disposing of goods, services, experiences, and ideas. This definition focuses on buying units in an attempt to include not only the individual but also groups that purchase products or services.

Joseph L. Wisenbit (2015) stated that consumer behavior is the directly-involved act in acquiring, consuming, and spending products or services, including the decision that precedes and follow these actions later in the future.

While according to Sethna and Blythe (2019) consumer behavior is a behavior of buying of the end-consumer, either individual or household who buys the product to personal consumption. They define consumer behaviour as: "*The behaviour that consumers display in*

searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products, services, and ideas."..

2.2.2 Factors Influencing Consumer Purchasing Decision

Sethna and Blythe (2019) described a holistic view of the concept encapsulating the marketing of a product offering which he defined broadly from inception to obsolescence, stating that "Consumer behavior is the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires."

Eventhough the concept has multiple definitions, there are some striking commonalities from all the definitions. For instance, it is clear that consumer behavior comprises three key considerations or elements that are prepurchase, purchase and postpurchase. These elements influence both marketers and consumers.

Generally, consumers can be categorized into individual or organizational consumers. Individual consumers try to satisfy their own needs and wants by purchasing things for themselves or satisfy the need of others by buying for them. These individual consumers can come from different backgrounds, ages and life stages. (Kardes et al. 2011, p. 8).

Buying behavior of a consumer is affected from social, cultural, personal and psychological factors. Consumer behavior is a part of human behavior study. Marketers are able to forecast how consumers might behave next time when making purchasing decisions by studying their previous buying behavior (Sethna and Blythe (2019)). The personal, social, and psychological characteristics of consumer behavior will be discussed below.

a. Personal Factors

Stankevich (2017) defined personal factors referred to the ones unique for each consumer. Above all data like age, sex, place of domicile, occupational and economic conditions, personality and self – consciousness can be found in personal factors. While personality is created by inner characteristics and by behaviour. This makes a person unique. Personal characteristics influence the way how people behave. it is, however, difficult to find a reliable connection between the individual personality and the behaviour type.

The change of consumers during their life and buying of products depending on their stage of life and age. Factors of age for instance such as fashion and food preferences. Furthermore, lifestyle, environment, values, consumer habits and hobbies evolve during lifetime. Family life stages usually changethe buying behavior and the selection of brand. Traditionally a family life cycle included only young singles and married couples with children. Nowadays marketers are focusing on alternative, nontraditional stages such as unmarried couples, same sex couples, childless couples, single parents and singles marrying later in life (Stankevich, 2017).

The profession of the consumer and the purchasing power will affect his buying decisions and buying behavior. The income level influences his perspective towards money and what he can afford with the money. People who share similar professions tend to have similar taste in music, clothing and leisure activities. They would usually socialize with each other, and share the same kind of values and ideas. The level of income affects on what consumer can afford and perspective towards money (Solomon 2011, p. 12). On the other hand, those who have lower income are more interested in buying products that are

necessary for survival than spending on luxury brands or designer clothing.

The life style of a consumer tells how the person lives and spends money. It is a combination from their earlier experiences, current situation and congenital characteristics. Choices of the products that consumers take are related to their lifestyle. An individual's lifestyle consists of different lifestyle dimensions Stankevich (2017):

1. Activities, describe how consumers spends time, e.g. hobbies, work, or vacations.
2. Interests, are consumers' preferences and priorities e.g. home, family, or food.
3. Opinions tell how consumers feel about different issues, e.g. politics, values, or products.

These lifestyle dimensions express a person's pattern of living. Lifestyle will influence consumers' buying behavior and decisions (Kardes et. al. 2011).

Moreover, personality differentiates one person from another by individual characteristics. Personal characteristics or traits for instance are sociability, self-confidence, adaptability, and dominance (Sethna and Blythe (2019). Personality determines the way we see ourselves and the world around us as well as how other people see us. Values, attitudes and society establish our personality. Personality alters during life when a person grows up and changes surroundings (Sethna and Blythe (2019). However, self-concept is a more complex and multi-dimensional term. Kardes et al. (2011) defines the self-concept as follows, "*Self-concept is often described as the totality of an individual's thoughts and feelings regarding him/herself as an object.*" In another words, it is the image that people hold about themselves formed by attitudes and beliefs. A lot of brands have developed an

image and personality that correspond with consumers' values and characteristics. It allows consumers to express themselves through the selection of brands (Kardes et al. 2011, p. 230). There are at least five dimensions of brand personality: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness.

b. Social Factors

Social factors influence the behavior of a consumer significantly. Every individual has someone around to influence their buying decisions. The important social factors are: reference groups, family, role and status (Perreau, 2014).

Every consumer is an individual, who actually belongs to a group. The group to which a consumer belongs is called a membership group. This one type is a simple and direct classification. The second type of group is called as reference group. Reference group affects the self-image of consumers and their behavior. Reference group provides some points of comparison to consumers about their lifestyle, behavior, or habits. Usually there are many smaller reference groups, which are established by close friends, work group, family, neighbors or other people that consumers associate with. The groups to which a consumer does not belong yet can also affect their behaviour. These aspirational groups are the groups where a consumer wants to belong and be a part of in the future. (Sethna and Blythe (2019); Kotler & Armstrong 2010, p. 164).

Family members can also influence individual consumers' buying behavior. A family forms the environment for an individual to obtain values, establish and shape personality. This environment offers the possibility to form opinions and attitudes towards several subjects such as society, social relations, and politics. First, a family creates perceptions about brands or products and buying habits. (Wisnbit

(2015). For instance, the consumers who have created brand perceptions when they were young, can carry out these same brand selections in the adult life without even recognizing that their family influenced these selections.

Individuals play many different roles in their lives. Each role consists of activities and attitudes that are expected from an individual to perform according to the persons around him. (Solomon 2018). Social status reflects the position that individuals have in social groups based on such things as money and wealth, education or occupation. In many societies status is important and people want the admiration of others. Social status can be acquired by being successful in life or being born into money. Product and brand selection often reflects the social role and status. (Schiffman 2019).

c. Psychological Factors

A consumer is an individual who has different needs. These needs can be biological like hunger or psychological arising from the need of belonging or recognition. A need can be aroused to a sufficient level of intensity when it alters a motive. A motive is basically a need that drives a person to seek satisfaction. Abraham Maslow through his Theory of Human Motivation book explained the hierarchy of human needs. He described why humans are driven by different needs at different times. (Schiffman 2019). Figure 2.2 shows the hierarchy of Maslow's theory of human needs from the most stressing at the bottom and the least stressing at the top. The basic rule is to satisfy the basic need first before proceeding up the ladder. When that need has been fulfilled, it stops being a motivator and a person focuses on the next most important need. Maslow's needs are:

1. Physiological: basic need such as food, sleep, or water.
2. Safety: the need to feel secured and protected.

3. Belongingness: the need to feel affection and be accepted by others.
4. Ego needs: to accomplish something and have status among others.
5. Self-actualization: to have enriching experiences and feel self-fulfillment (Solomon 2011).

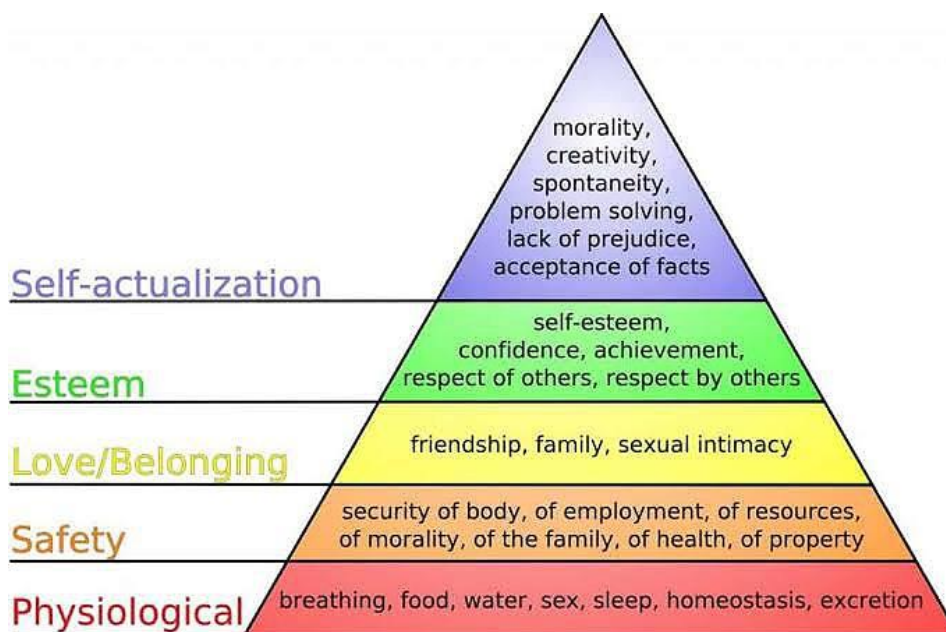


Figure 2.2 The Hierarchy of Needs by Maslow (Wikimedia Commons 2013)

2.2.3 The Behaviour of Consumer Purchasing

The decision-making process of a customer involves five stages before the actual purchase. During these stages the customer will recognize the need, collect information, evaluate alternatives and execute the purchase decision. After the actual purchase the customer experiences post purchase behavior where the customer evaluates the received satisfaction level. (Schiffman 2019; Kotler & Armstrong 2010). Kotler and Armstrong (2010) stated that the customer can skip a few stages during a daily purchase. However, when a customer deals with a new and complex purchase situation, all of the five stages shown in Figure 2.2, must be gone through to complete the buying process.

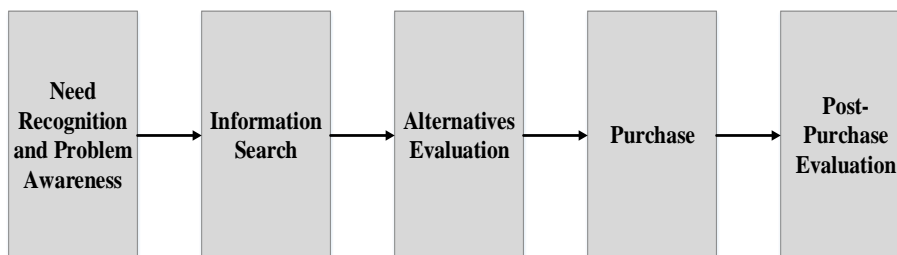


Figure 2.3 Decision Making Process

A decision-making procedure starts with the focus of need. There are a few types of classifications of need recognition. One type is the place the customer recognizes a need or problem that can be prompted by internal or external stimuli. Internal stimuli are a human's basic needs, for instance the thirst that makes someone gets thirsty and gets the purchaser purchase a pepsi. External stimuli as an example a catalog of Samsung's smartphone that triggers you to find an information on it and purchase. (Stankevich, 2017).

At this level the customer often sees a significant difference between the current situation and expected situation. The process of need recognition may occur naturally but often marketers can set it in motion. Marketers often try to create demand where customer are encouraged to use a product regardless of the brand they choose. Marketers will try to convince customer to choose their brand instead of others. (Solomon 2011, p. 297.) Another classification type of need recognition includes:

1. Functional need: the need which is related to a functional problem. The consumer purchases a blender to avoid mixing dough by hands.
2. Social need: the need that occurs when a consumer wants social recognition or desire espousal. The consumer may purchase luxury items to look good in front of others.
3. Need for change: the consumer may feel the need to make a change. This may result in the purchase of new clothes or fashion to change current appearance. (Perreau, 2014.)

At the second stage of the decision-making process, the customer engages with information search. Sometimes customer can choose products without any information and other times information need to be searched carefully for identifying all alternatives. (Solomon 2011, p. 299.) The customer can get information from multiple sources by reading magazines, talking with friends or family, or using the Internet searching engine. The amount of the searching effort will usually depend on how the customer drives it into, obtaining the information and satisfaction from the search. Nowadays customers get a huge amount of information from commercial sources that are controlled by marketers. Still, the most effective sources tend to be personal such as family or friends. Consumers can obtain information and increase awareness towards available brands. This information helps consumers to drop some brands when making the final selection of the brand. (Perreau 2014).

At the third stage of evaluating alternatives, a consumer may ask her/himself questions like: "Do I actually need the product?" Are there alternatives out there? Is the original product that bad? Usually, the consumer chooses one the most important attribute based on which he/she will make a final decision or using cut-off method (e.g., price, quality, brand, etc.). Here moments that matter could be emotional connections/experiences with products, surrender to advertising/marketing campaigns. For marketers on this step, it is important that a consumer is aware of their brand during the evaluation (Stankevich, 2017). After information needed is all collected, the customer will be able to evaluate different alternatives. The alternatives evaluation will vary among customers and purchases (Wright 2006, p. 28). In some cases customers make little or no evaluation and make their buying decision based on impulse or intuition. In cases where little or no evaluation of alternatives is used might be caused by a habitual decision process.

Next, at the fourth stage, the customer has evaluated alternatives and is ready to proceed to the actual purchase itself. Basically, the customer's purchase decision is to buy the most preferred brand. There are factors that can influence the

customer's buying decision such as the attitudes of others or beliefs about the brand created by marketers (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, p. 179). Sometimes to simplify buying decisions, customers can make mental shortcuts that can lead to hasty decisions, especially when limited problem solving occurs before coming to a choice. These kinds of shortcuts can range from general thoughts like "higher price products are higher quality" or "buy the same brand as last time" to specific "buy the same brand that my family used to buy". These shortcuts can turn out to be unfavorable to the consumer. (Solomon 2011, p. 312).

On the last fifth stage - post-purchase (satisfaction or dissatisfaction), consumers evaluate and review the product. Was the product right for the consumer? Did their expectations confirm? If a customer finds that the product has matched or exceeded the promises made and their expectations, they will potentially become a brand ambassador influencing other potential customers in the stage two of their customer journey, increasing the chances of the product being purchased again. The same can be said for negative feedback, which is if emerge at the stage two can restrain a potential customer's journey towards your product². The moments that matter on the last stage is to catch the point if the customer is not satisfied. If the customer is satisfied, then to turn him/her into a loyal customer. Such factor as the product matched or exceeded consumer expectations. Also, follow up activities (after purchase) help to make a loyal customer.

2.2.4 Different Types of Decision-Making

Every customer buying decision is not alike and the amount of effort put into the decision making process differs from each other. Often the decision-making process requires a lot of time and information search. The products that are rarely bought involve high risk and extensive problem solving (Kardes et al. 2011, p. 71). Figure 2.2.1 shows four types of decision making based on the degree of the involvement of customer:

	High Involvement	Low Involvement
Significant Differences Between Brands	Complex Buying Behaviour	Variety-seeking Buying Behaviour
Few Differences Between Brands	Dissonance-reducing Buying Behaviour	Habitual Buying Behaviour

Figure 2.4 Four types of buying behavior (Kotler&Armstrong 2010, p. 176.)

Complex buying behavior can be initiated by a motive that is centralized to the individual's self-perception. The products that usually are rarely bought such as jewelry or a luxury car require more considerable before the purchase decision. The consumer is highly involved because the product is risky expensive, and reflects to the customer's characteristic. A lot of brands can be evaluated separately to see which brand responds best to the set of desired characteristics. (Solomon 2011, p. 295 ; Kotler & Armstrong 2010, p. 176).

Customers will be highly involved during the dissonance-reducing buying behavior, because the product might be expensive, self-expressive and rarely bought. Nevertheless, customers see a little or even no difference among the brands. It is a simple yet straight-forward activity to select a product among the alternatives even if the customer has to shop around. (Solomon 2011, p. 295 ; Kotler & Armstrong 2010, p. 176).

Normally, habitual decision-making choices are spontaneously done with little or no conscious effort. This is almost the opposite to the extended decision-making where the information is needed with a lot of search. Many decisions are taken everyday that the customer does not even realize them before seeing the products in the shopping cart. This kind of activity might be dangerous, but at the same time efficient. Changing a customer's habit might become a serious problem for marketers when they want to introduce a new product (Solomon 2011, p. 295).

The last characteristic of buying behaviour is variety seeking buying behavior. At this level customers are interested to change the brand for the need of variety rather than dissatisfaction. Customer can take buying decisions without evaluation to the product or the brand (Solomon 2018). These kind of decisions are usually taken with the products that are bought everyday like rice or salt. Marketers can encourage consumers to variety-seeking by special deals, offering free samples or low prices.

2.2.5 Service Marketing

Nejadjavad and Gilaninia (2016) described that service and service quality has turned into an exceptionally interesting issue in operation management (OR), service marketing and management (SMM), and design research. Service quality is as of now rising as one of the significant subjects of the current business and plan instruction.

Jochen Wirtz (2016) stated that service marketing is the acts that can be offered by one party to another party which is intangible and does not result in ownership of something. While Lovelock and Gummesson (2011: 36) elaborated that service is a form of service where customers or consumers can benefit through the expected service value. Marketing services is a link between organizations with its consumers. This liaison roles will be successful if all marketing efforts are market oriented. The involvement of all parties, from top management to non-managerial employees, in formulating and supporting the implementation of consumer-oriented marketing is something that cannot be bargained again (Rangkuti F., 2013).

2.2.6 Service Marketing Mix

Marketing mix is a set of tools that companies use to generate the satisfying response from the target market (Tjiptono 2014:41). According to Fandy, "marketing mix is a set of tools which can be

used by the marketer to establish service characteristics offered to the customers.”.

Rambat Lupiyoadi (2013:92) defined marketing mix as “... a set of tools for marketers consists of various elements of a marketing program that needs to be considered so that the implementation of the marketing strategy and the positioning can be run successfully.”.

Marketing mix is not enough just to rely on product, price, place and promotion. Rambat Lupiyoadi (2013:92) explained that there are the elements of service marketing mix:

1. Product

A whole concept of object or process that provides certain values to customer.

2. Harga (Price)

A number of sacrifice that needed to be paid by the customer to obtain product or services.

3. Place

Related to where the company does the operation or its activities

4. Promotion

The activities done by a company to communicate the product benefit and as a tool to influence customers in buying activities or service usage based on their needs.

5. People

Are the people who are directly involved and influence each other in service product exchange.

6. Process

A combination of all activities, generally consists of procedure, working schedule, mechanism, and daily stuff where services is generated and delivered to customers.

7. Physical Evidence

The environment that allows the delivery of a product or services which consists of ambience, layout and brand.

2.3 Previously Mapping Researches

In conducting this research, the writer uses references from some of the previous researchers. The previous researches are in the list below in Table 2.3

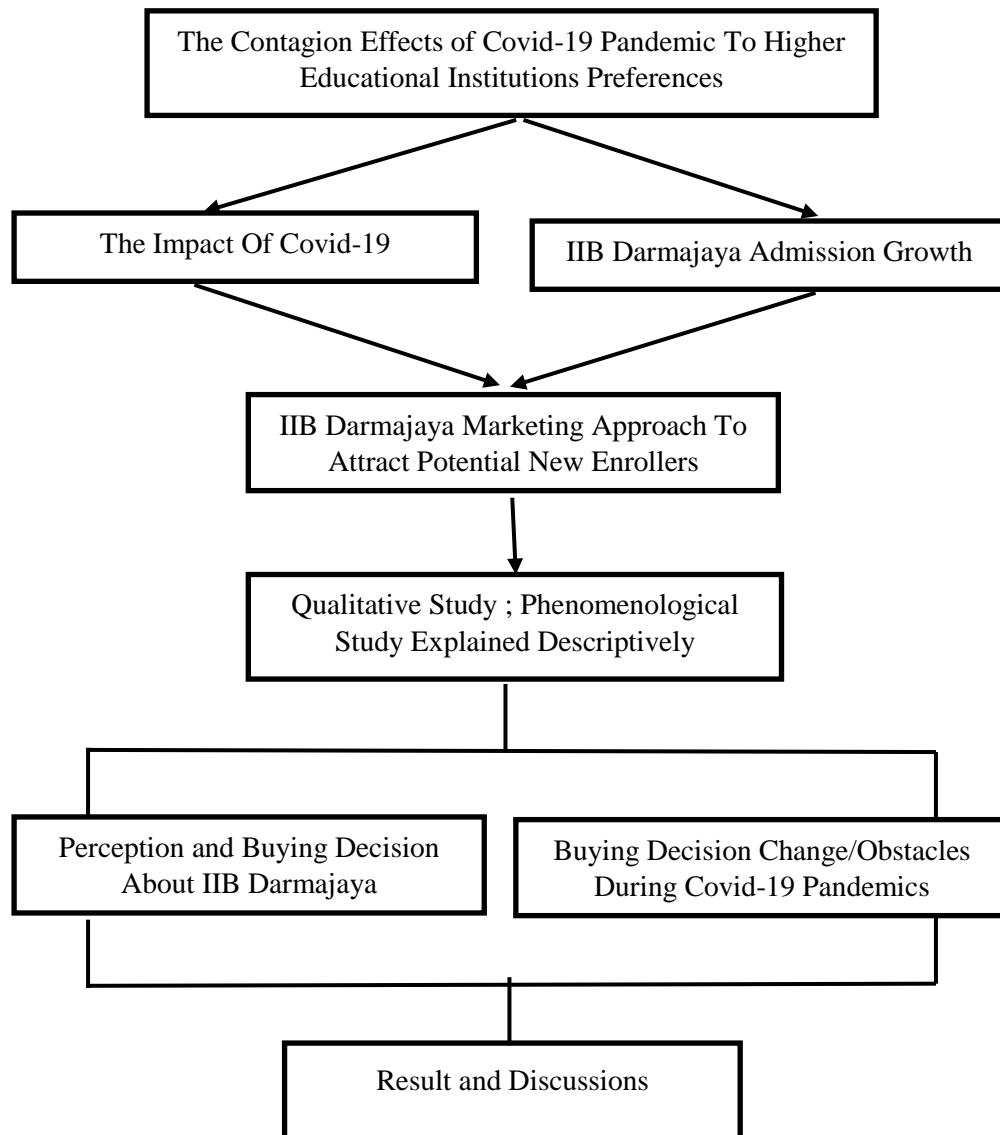
Authors	Title	Year	Difference	Results and Findings
Trent Anthony Grundmeyer	A qualitative study of the perceptions of first year college students regarding technology and college readiness	2012	Was based in the constructivism paradigm, using a phenomenological strategy to explain the perception	Cognitive strategies, self-management, content knowledge, Knowledge about Postsecondary Education, and Self-Advocacy Skills were considered as important factors that make students ready for college life.
Tanja Lautiainen the selection	Factors Affecting Consumers' Buying Decision Of A Coffee Brand	2015	Qualitative for in depth-information and quantitative for processing the large number of	Social, personal and psychological factors have effect on a consumer's decision-making

			units.	process when selecting a coffee brand.
Adaninggar Septi Subekti	Self-perceived communication competence and communication apprehension: A study of Indonesian college students	2020	Quantitative Method with Descriptive and regression Analysis.	Students perceive that English is considered as something to take serious with when there are an important event to join. Persuasive marketing communication needs to be implemented to make English be preferred by students.
Rohan Samsona, Dr. Mita Mehtab, Prof. Arti Chandani	Impact of Online Digital Communication on Customer Buying Decision	2014	Quantitative method using online questionnaire.	Online digital media is the preferred source of information for those who intend to buy a car. It has a positive influence on a potential customers buying decision.

Kathleen J. Marino	A Qualitative Study Exploring Faculty Perception and Adaptation of Social Presence in the Online Classroom	2012	Qualitative Method, using ATLAS.TI as the analysis tool.	Faculty found social presence to be an important factor in online learning based on interactivity, intimacy, and immediacy.
Helpris Estaswara	Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) in Higher Education In Indonesia	2016	Mix Method, using Survey for Perception and Quantitative Analysis with SPSS.	Perception of lecturers stated that the IMC is crucial to undergraduate students in Indonesia associating brand, communications and information technology investment, consumer database, and evaluation method.
Dikdik Harjadi and Dewi Fatmasari	Implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication in Image of	2017	Descriptive and Verificative Method	If the advertising activity is done effectively, it will be able to improve the

	Private Higher Education			image perception of private university.
John T. Drea, Carolyn Tripp & Kathleen Stuenke	An Assessment of the Effectiveness of an in-Class Game on Marketing Students' Perceptions and Learning Outcomes	2015	Quantitative Method, using focus groups and experimental groups.	The in-class game studies has a positive impact on student learning It indicates that students positively perceive the in-class game. It also indicates that the method can escalate student outcomes.

2.4 Conceptual Research Framework



The Coronavirus (Covid-19) dissemination in late 2019 has brought so many impacts to a lot of sectors in global life. From economic knots to another distress high level of hardships. Economic quandary to some education-prioritized people, can lead to higher educational institutions confusions or even unaffordability. This situation must be grasped fast by IIB Darmajaya as something precarious that needs immediate solutions but last in the long-term. It affects the total numbers of new admissions for 2020 from what the year of 2017 could yield. This critical problem straightly forces Darmajaya to change the marketing communication approach in order to attract potential new enrollers to register in. This is applied to fix or to change the misperception of IIB Darmajaya that some students might think of. This research intends to examine how potential new enrollers perceive IIB Darmajaya “sell” or “communicate” its product as Covid-19 Pandemic spreads fast to challenge them. Qualitative Study will be applied in this research as the framework shows above. Qualitative will be applied to examine the perception of potential new enrollers of IIB Darmajaya with the help of phenomenological and constructivism method. The result appears then will show how the students perceive the marketing communication approach of IIB Darmajaya when facing the Covid-19 Pandemic.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology in conducting this study. The first section will focus on the research design with refers to the overall strategy of the study in a coherent and logical way, in this manner, ensuring the study will effectively address the research problem, it constitutes the plan for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. This will then be followed by the population and sample design, method of data collection, measurement instrument and operationalize of variable, pilot study and method of data analysis.

3.1 Type of Research

Bogdan and Taylor (2016) defined that qualitative research method is a procedure of a research that generates descriptive data in a form of words, notes relates to understanding, meaning, along with definition. This method model in terms of data observation is not limited and isolated to variables, population, sample and hypothesis. So does the qualitative study does not use the quantum model or any quantitative model. Therefore, qualitative method is holistic, that has interpretation to the data related to some aspects that may possibly exist.

This research basically uses qualitative approach. The characteristic of qualitative research lies in the object that becomes the object. Qualitative research does not emphasize on the quantum or an amount of something. It emphasizes on the natural quality aspect because it involves understanding, concept, values, along with traits that sticks to another research object (Kaelan, 2010 p.5).

According to Kaelan (2010 p.5), the characteristics of qualitative research included:

- a. Based on the natural setting
- b. The researcher as the instrument
- c. Descriptively explained
- d. Involves the qualitative method
- e. Process is more important than result
- f. Prioritize direct data source
- g. The data is purposive
- h. Accentuate on emic perspective
- i. Emphasizes on contextual summaries
- j. Conduct analysis since the beginning of the research
- k. The data analysis is conducted inductively.

This research proposal will adopt a qualitative methodology study since the Perception is something that needs a full and deep understanding. The researcher wanted to obtain a different vision of buying decision from the students through qualitative study of the students that need to be checked in relation with the marketing communication approach that IIB Darmajaya has been doing in the middle of this Covid-19 pandemic. Perception is something that can not be obtained through any quantitative approach. It needs special treatment, in-depth understanding, and particular observations to obtain an accurate result. Thus, to acquire the result of Perception, qualitative study is chosen to learn and acquire the what-to-be-expected-as-variative outcome from each informants or participants. The qualitative study approach will gain some assistants from some of its sub-studies in order to get the full-scale yet precise outcome in the middle of Covid-19 Pandemic.

Researcher chooses qualitative type of study over another type of methodology since it is an inquiry process of understanding a social or

human problem, which is based on establishing a complex, holistic figure, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting (Bogdan and Taylor 2016 p. 104 ; Kaelan, 2010).

3.1.1 Descriptive Study

Qualitative descriptive studies focus on low inference description, which increases the likelihood of agreement among multiple researchers. The difference between high and low inference approaches is not one of rigor but refers to the amount of logical reasoning required to move from a data-based premise to a conclusion. Researchers who use qualitative description may choose to use the lens of an associated interpretive theory or conceptual framework to guide their studies, but they are prepared to alter that framework as necessary during the course of the study. The qualitative descriptive design is selected because this research studies about phenomenon and factual responses to questions from the participants, what reason they have for using or choosing something over other things, and other-in-depths questions that is suitable to this research (Sandelowski, 2010).

3.2 Data Sources

In this research, the information that needs to be obtained is 'Perception' and 'Buying Decision'. To get the result of perception, qualitative study approach is employed. In qualitative method, the data source used is the primary data that can only be acquired by conducting direct observations. Direct observation data sources consist of interviews, observation, documentation, and questionnaire.

3.3 Data Collection Method

As this research needs real time and direct answer from the informants, the researcher employs the interview and field notes.

a. Interview

Primary data is the signature characteristic of qualitative study, in which interview method is included. The qualitative research interview seeks to describe and the meanings of central themes in the life world of the subjects. The main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say. (Bogdan & Taylor, 2016; Sandelowski 2010).

In stark contrast to structured interviewing, qualitative interviewing is flexible and dynamic. Qualitative interviewing has been referred to as nondirective, unstructured, nonstandardized, and open-ended interviewing. As Seidman (2013) noted, “At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (p. 9).

Bogdan and Taylor (2016 p. 102) stated that “The in-depth interview is modeled after a conversation between equals rather than a formal question-and-answer exchange. Far from being an impersonal data collector, the interviewer, and not an interview schedule or protocol, is the research tool. The role entails not merely obtaining answers but learning what questions to ask and how to ask them. As a qualitative research approach, in-depth interviewing has much in common with participant observation. Like observers, interviewers come on slow initially. They try to establish rapport with informants, ask nondirective questions early in the research, and learn what is important to informants before focusing on the research interests.”.

The interview is an important data gathering technique involving verbal communication between the researcher and the participant. Interviews are commonly used in survey designs and in exploratory and descriptive studies (Bogdan & Taylor, 2016). An interview is a conversation for gathering information. A research interview involves an interviewer,

who coordinates the process of the conversation and asks questions, and an interviewee, who responds to those questions. Interviews can be conducted face-to-face or over the telephone. The internet is also emerging as a tool for interviewing.

For this study, the interviews will be conducted in the field including IIB Darmajaya, some high schools in Bandar Lampung and through the phone call (any ways could be possibly done including video call to make the participants convenient). Interviews through the phone or video calls might be conducted considering there might be busy students or the ones who have hectic schedules. Plus, phone and video calls is the effective way to connect with participants who live far away.

Before the interview is started, the participants are reminded of the expected benefits, purpose of the study, their rights to withdraw from the study at any time, research procedures, and protection for their confidentiality. In an effort to develop a good connection with respondents and to demonstrate familiarity with the topic (Bogdan and Taylor, 2016 p. 111-112), the researcher identified herself as a bachelor student at IIB Darmajaya.

With participants' permission, the interviews will be audio-recorded to ensure a complete transcript (Bogdan and Taylor, 2016 p. 130). Hand-written notes or typed notes will be taken during all interviews, enabling the researcher to track the key points to return later in the interview and to ease the data analysis phase.

Semi-standardized (or semi-structured) interview is chosen to assist the researcher obtaining answers and response from the participants. Semi-structured interview offer a more flexible approach to the interview process. While any researcher may use an interview schedule for

predetermined topics, semi-structured interviews allow for unanticipated responses and issues to emerge through the use of open-ended questioning (Bogdan & Taylor, 2016). The flexibility of the semi-standardized interview allows the interviewer to pursue a series of less structured questioning and also permits the exploration of spontaneous issues raised by the interviewee to be explored. The wording of questions is flexible and facilitates different levels of language to be used and clarifications to be made by the interviewer (Seidman, 2013). Discovery interviews are an example of a semi standardized approach to interviewing. These are one-to-one interviews which use open-ended questions and probes, based on the principle of allowing the interviewee control over the interview process.

Participants will be informed about the interview protocol at least a week before their scheduled interview is held. It aims to give the participants time to prepare things so that unexpected occasion won't happen the time the interview is conducted. The interview will be begun with "Please mention your experience in the first semester of college". This question will be delivered in the manner of providing participants with the flexibility and freedom to explore the phenomenon in depth (Bogdan & Taylor, 2016). The questions will mostly be in an open-ended frame throughout the interview to encourage participants to talk freely and respond without any doubt (Bogdan & Taylor, 2016). Delving out questions will be conducted when necessary to clarify to or encourage participants elaborate on a response (Bogdan & Taylor, 2016) or explore root experiences). Furthermore, participants will be frequently asked "why" after responding to interview questions. The "why" question is the researcher's attempt for the participant to be able to optimally think about and elaborate on their answer or experiences. The audio recordings will carefully be transcribed verbatim to any thing the participants say.

b. Field Notes

Field note serves as a field record created by researcher during the act of qualitative fieldwork to remember and record the activities, behaviours, events, and other features of an observation setting (Emerson, 2011). Field notes are intended to produce meaning and an understanding of the social situation, culture, or phenomenon being studied. Field notes are formatted using the suggestion of Phillippi and Lauderdale (2017).

On every first page of each set of notes, the researcher will record the date and time including a working title that indicates the content of the notes. The topic will be address in the field notes including particular events that participants might recall, the researcher's consideration about emerging themes, points of explication, and any connections that the researcher may detect between or among participants' perceptions (Bogdan & Taylor, 2016). Other topics included in the field notes included observations about the participant's attitude and direct excerpts that may catch the attention of the researcher. The researcher will immediately highlight the excerption from participants in red so that they could be easily found during data analysis.

3.4 Population and Sample

3.4.1 Population

Population of interest is the study's target population that it intends to study or treat. In some research studies, it is often not appropriate or feasible to recruit the entire population of interest (Broeck et.al. 2013). Population is a generalized zone consisting of subjects/objects that have certain quality and characteristic determined by the researcher to be studied and to be later concluded (Sugiyono, 2008). While University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL, 2014) stated that population is a complete set of elements (people or objects) that posses some common characteristic defined by the sampling criteria established by the researcher.

The population of this research is the freshmen or the students of IIB Darmajaya who currently are running their first semester in 2020.

Total Population Of IIB Darmajaya From All Courses in 2020		
Department of Economic and Business	Course	Total Students
	Management	219
	Accountancy	108
	Digital Business	61
Department of Computer	Information System	113
	Information Engineering	136
	DKV	70
	Computer System	39
Total		746

Table 3.4 Total Population Of IIB Darmajaya From All Courses in 2020

3.4.2 Sample

Sampling is the process of selecting a statistically representative sample of individuals from the population of interest (Kamangar & Islami, 2013). Sampling is an important tool for research studies because the population of interest usually consists of too many individuals for any research project to include as participants (Etikan & Bala, 2017).

Sample is a part of the total amount and characteristic possessed by the related population. If the population is considered as too large and it is not possible for the research to study all inside the population, for example because of limited fund, energy or time, so the researcher is suggested to take just the sample. It already represents the population (Sharma, G. 2018).

According to Nyoman (2012) descriptive research refers to a research that tries to describe the phenomenon of events systematically sincerely of what they supposed to be without any manipulation. Descriptive research is done to acquire information about current situation. In the research, the researcher tries to determine the situation characteristic as when the research is conducted. A proper control is considered as strongly suggested as in experimental research because the purpose is to describe what the variables relate to or a condition in certain situation.

According to Shetty (2020), for in-depth interviews it is recommended to have a sample size of 20-30. But in some cases that supports, a minimum of 10 is acceptable assuming the population integrity in recruiting. From the total population of IIB Darmajaya new admissions recorded as many as 680, the sample will be taken from each courses. There are 7 courses divided in 2 departments. The researcher will use the convenience sampling and take two participants from each courses whoever willing to participate. In total, there will be 14 informants for the interview session.

To reduce any personal bias on the results of this study, participants checks will be utilized during and after interviews to increase the validity, transferability, and credibility of the study results (Etikan & Bala, 2017). After the recorded interviews has been transcribed, the researcher will ask for a permission for each informant to review the content of his or her transcript for accuracy. Next, the researcher will include sufficient and relevant quotes from participants to strengthen the findings of the study.

3.5 Limitations and Delimitations

This research will focus on two limitations. It will focus on just the perception of that 14 students. A larger amount of informants participating in might provide different or additional themes. Secondly, the data for this study is acquired from the new enrollers in their first semester who

previously have received exposure from the marketing team of IIB Darmajaya for the promotional advertising either direct (offline) or indirect (online) to attract them register in. The results of the study will only be applied to the population inspected and should not be generalized to other students in different semester. The result will only be transferred to them and will not be transferred to students in other semesters.

This research study will also yield at least two delimitations describing how the study is specified in specific scope (Etikan & Bala, 2017). The primary delimitations of this study include: (a) the sample consisted of fourteen first-semester new enrollers/students who volunteered to participate in this study; and (b) the techniques of this qualitative data collection including semi-structured, telephone interviews, and field notes.

3.6 Data Analysis Method

Qualitative data refers to non-numeric information such as notes, images and text documents, interview transcripts, video and audio recordings. Data analysis in qualitative research is a process of categorization, description, and synthesis. Data reduction is necessary for the description and interpretation of the phenomenon under study". Briefly, data analysis is a systematic process to analyze data that have been collected (Dudovskiy, 2018).

Qualitative data analysis can be divided into five types consist of narrative analysis, framework analysis, content analysis, discourse analysis, and grounded theory (Dudovskiy, 2018). In this research, the researcher will not process them manually. This research will use the help of Nvivo 12 Pro as the tool to process the data gained from the in-depth interview.

Dudovskiy (2018) stated that at least there are three types of coding:

1. Open coding. The beginning of organization of raw data to try to make sense of it.
2. Axial coding. Concossiating and linking the codes categories.
3. Selective coding. Formulating the story by connecting the categories.

All coding activities will be done in NVivo 12 Pro as the tool with the type of selecting coding, in which the researcher will connect the codes with the theme or research questions. Developing and applying codes as the first step can be defined as data grouping or data categorization. A 'code' is a representation of a theme or any ideas that is established from a word or a short phrase. Each of the code should be appointed the meaningful titles. Also, a wide extent of non-quantifiable elements such as behaviours, meanings, events, activities, etc. can be coded.

For this research, the mapping of the coding can be seen below:

Research Title	Elements to be coded	Codes
A Study Of The Potential New Enrollers Perceptions in Bandar Lampung Regarding Marketing Communication Approach By IIB Darmajaya During Covid-19 Pandemic	Perceptions, Buying Decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Price Affordability - Competitor - Ease of Information Accessibility - Social Media Content - Reference-Exposure - Service - Reason to Purchase

Table 3.6 The Code Mapping

The second step will be identifying themes, patterns and relationships.

Discordant from quantitative methods, in qualitative data analysis there are no generally suitable techniques that can be applied to engender findings. Critical and analytical thinking skills of researcher plays significant role in data analysis in qualitative studies. For this reason, no qualitative study can be repeated to engender the same results.

Summarizing the data will be the last step of the qualitative data analysis method. At this point it is important for the researcher to link the findings to the objectives or research aim. Researcher will use the noteworthy quotations from the field note or transcript acquired from interview done previously in order to highlight major points within findings and possible contradictions.

CHAPTER IV

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

The primary purpose of this study is to have the knowledge of the perceptions of the students related to the image of IIB Darmajaya as a whole and to obtain the knowledge about what makes or what are the reasons of the students to make the buying decisions in IIB Darmajaya.. The other purpose of the study is to obtain the knowledge if there is any change from the students to choose an educational institution especially during Covid-19 pandemic.

The insights of participants' experiences and feedback to the analysis all are written precisely in this study. By being attentive to and analyzing the experiences of the participants, important information were obtained concerning of the perceptions related to the marketing communication approach during Covid-19 Pandemic. In this chapter, the analysis queries are addressed with supporting proves, including all quotations and feedback from the participants

4.1 Revisions of Interview Protocol

The preface of the interview protocol (see appendix) had a lengthy introduction about the purpose of the study, the participant's risks and rights, who would have access to the participant's responses, and when the interview data would be discarded. The procedure was that the researcher would read the introduction verbatim as part of the interview to each participant. The researcher verbally improvised this introduction many times when speaking with participants in order to get the initial interview protocol started in a punctual time and comfortable condition. All fourteen participants received the preliminary interview protocol ahead of time, afterwards the participants may feel comfortable enough to be presented by the major points outlined in the introduction and the researcher might ask each of the participant, "Do you have any questions before we begin?" Most of the interview questions were asked exactly as they were written. However, the researcher often inquired the semi-structured questions with open-

ended questions such as, “Why?” and/or “Can you tell me more?” This question would dig the answer even deeper and the researcher might obtain a deeper insight and understanding about the thoughts that previously might not be delivered by the participants. Also the researcher often came to emphasize the answers from the participants when they can not express their thoughts in a proper way or when the participants did not answer the questions clearly. Some added questions can be seen in the appendix for further read.

4.2 Research Questions

1. What are students’ perceptions of Informatics and Business Institute of Darmajaya?
2. What makes the students take the buying decision to IIB Darmajaya especially in the middle of Covid-19 Pandemic?

4.3 Research Results

There are at least six distinct themes emerged from the research question 1. The main major themes identified from the results of the study includes:

1. It turns out that in the future, there should be more effort in building the strong ***brand image*** as the private university in Bandar Lampung since IIB Darmajaya is still compared to other local private universities.
2. Students consider that the ***products offered*** by IIB Darmajaya vary widely even though there are some to be improved.
3. ***Human resource management*** is considered as one of the main keys to deliver information to the students, it needs some extra improvement in the future.
4. Students agree that IIB Darmajaya has the strongest ***marketing socialization*** in ***social media*** especially in the middle of this Covid-19 outbreak as they found a lot of information from there.
5. Most students think that the ***pricing strategy*** IIB Darmajaya applied is normally worth what the students can get inside the campus underlining that the Covid-19 pandemic is spreading.

6. There are so many reasons why the students put IIB Darmajaya in their *preferences* list before deciding to enroll. They felt IIB Darmajaya was able to accommodate their expectations mostly and especially in the middle of the outbreak.

Themes 1, 2, and 3 answered the first research question, *what are students perceptions of Informatics and Business Institute of Darmajaya?* Themes 4, 5 and 6 then answered the second research question, *what makes the students take the buying decision to IIB Darmajaya especially in the middle of Covid-19 Pandemic?* Research question 2 was answered variously by the students with “Pandemic didn’t really affect the university selection” won the majority answer eventhough the comparison was so little. The detail of each research question will be specifically explained and discussed below.

A. Research Question 1 : Perception and Buying Decision

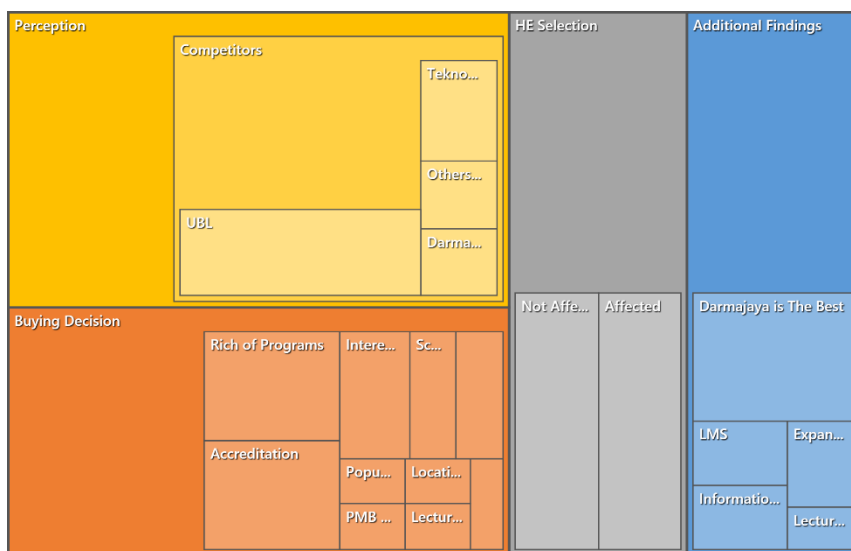


Figure 4.1 Memo of Research Result

- **Competitors**

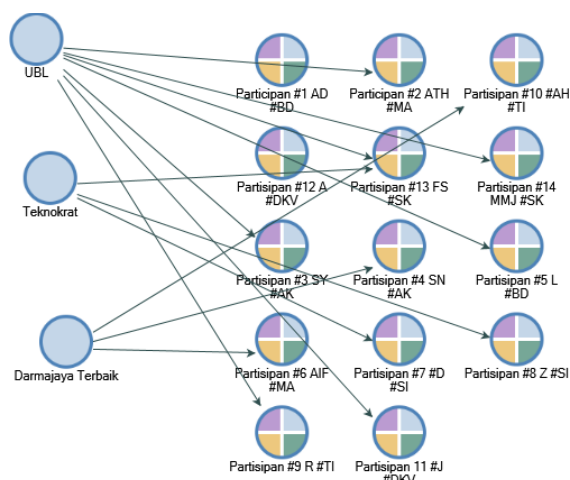


Figure 4.3 Perceptions About Competitors

Participants were asked if they have any opinion about the competitors of IIB Darmajaya, or whether they think that Darmajaya have no competitors, in any words, is the best. During the field notes, the researcher observed that students tend to answer quickly what was in their mind regarding who's the strongest competitor. The quick answer indicates that besides Darmajaya, they also have knowledge about other universities. Some students even stated that they also consider other private universities much before they chose to register in IIB Darmajaya. This gives the researcher clue that there are still some strong competitors for IIB Darmajaya to compete with in especially building a strong brand image to strengthen its position in the market as Participant 2 stated, "For private universities it's definitely UBL (University of Bandar Lampung-red) besides Unila and Itera as the state university. I can say Univeristy of Bandar Lampung because of the name and popularity because people know UBL first before Darmajaya due to its existence that was established first far before Darmajaya was established. Also the availability of choices of courses in UBL are more than in Darmajaya. And there are so many facilities offered there yet they are also in good quality. The point is, that the name and popularity is already widely known." From this statement, the participant wanted to let the researcher know that something will be more recognized

if it was the first one to appear, come, or established. He indicated that people tend to remember something who becomes the pioneer and build a good strong image in it. Participant 9 even uttered that, “Yes, there is one competitor, we don’t need to go far, it is our next door neighbor, UBL. It’s a strong competitor for a very simple reason, because it is already well-known to the people. For the very expensive cost of its but it’s worth the quality as well and is also known for the goodness. If you ask me which choice would the new enroller go for after they are refused by the state university, between UBL and Darmajaya I would say UBL wins the game because it already adopts the structure of a university in which the courses available there is so abundance while our campus is only an informatics and business institute which couldn’t provide so many courses like UBL does”. Again, we can draw a line from his answer that it’s the matter of “brand image” which Darmajaya faces right now. But there is one thing that he has in which Participant 2 didn’t say, the models of the higher educational institutions. He uttered that UBL wins at at least 3 points, popularity, quality, and university-model. Besides its popularity which most people recognizes, University of Bandar Lampung is also known for its expensive price. But it seems that the price reflects on its quality since Participant 9 thought so. And university model may have plus point according to him. It can provide the students more choices to choose from to accommodate their interests and focus after they finish the high school stage. He said, university has more allure like a magnet to attract students to enroll in, due to its abundance of courses. In line with Participant 2 and 9, Participant 13 also voted UBL as Darmajaya strongest competitor. But she added University of Teknokrat in the list along with Participant 7 and 8 as they considered Teknokrat has abundant experience especially in international field.

“In Lampung I consider University of Teknokrat as Darmajaya’s competitor because its English Literature major is so excellent that it is

equivalent with other popular universities outside Lampung.” Participant 7 reported. In line with Participant 7, Participant 8 also confessed, “I do not mean to demonize or boast about one party, but to me University of teknokrat is pretty capable to compete even with state university. Teknokrat has quite a lot of events to hold and enjoy. Which Lampung people do not know about Teknokrat and its events? Teknokrat has the robotic events which already penetrated to the international scene and even it has won the title. That what makes it is capable enough to compete with Darmajaya.”

No significant difference with Participant 9 who already conveyed his thoughts first, Participant 13 also noted, “For the competitors of Darmajaya, I pick UBL and University of Teknokrat because both of them have already had the structure of university model that it could provide the students with so many choices of fields. Most of new enrollers look for the one who is already in university model and they do not know much about institute who could provide them the same goodness as what the univeristies could give. Most students might think that in Darmajaya there are not many choices to choose from due to its intitute model. On the other hand, university is more familiar to their ears so that is why UBL and Teknokrat becomes Darmajaya’s closest competitors.” Participant 7 and 8 stated that *events* and *achievements* are so important to construct the popularity and strength of a university or institute in consumers’ mind. It will build a strong brand image in their mind. While Participant 13 was talking about how providing more courses can attract more students to enroll in.

4.3.2 Product Features

- **Scholarship**

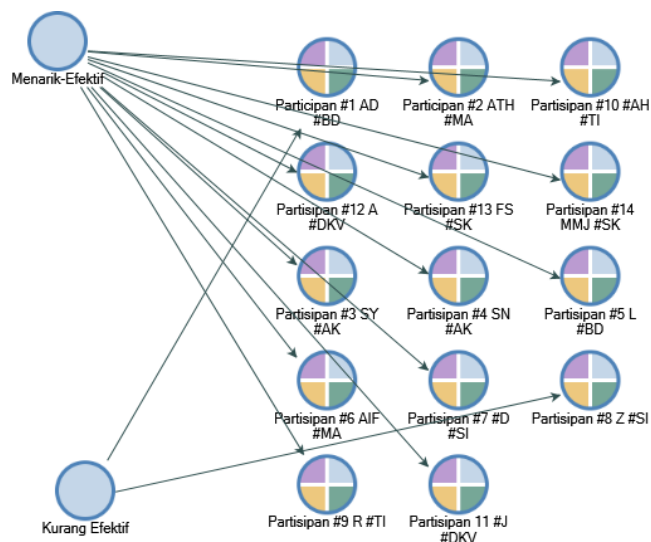


Figure 4.4 Perceptions About Scholarship

As many as twelve participants stated their agreement with how scholarship becomes one of the precise marketing strategies to build a good brand image in people’s mind. They reported that scholarship not only could attract new enrollers to get in but also help their financial so much.

As what participant 6 appreciate this approach, stating,

“Scholarships is extraordinarily able to attract students because if people see like there is a discount, they will surely get curious and find some information about it especially in the middle of this pandemic. So this strategy of discount and scholarship is already super effective.”

Participant 12 underlined how the variety of products offered by Darmajaya impressed her,

“Scholarship is so interesting because for like my friends, many of them join the scholarships. And the variants offered by Darmajaya according to me is pretty complete already, particularly there is a special scholarship for Hafidzh Qur’an, that is pretty awesome.

Darmajaya really takes it into accounts the abilities of the students, that's great".

Participant 5 also thought scholarship as a good advantage for students,

"During this pandemic who don't want to get scholarship? Scholarship gives us a lot of benefits during this pandemic so I think this strategy is well-done. We receive quite a lot of discounts especially for my course, but for other courses also there are discounts and another scholarships like PPA scholarship (High achieving scholarship) and many more."

Participant 2 even recommended Darmajaya to keep this strategy noting that students may facing financial problem duting this pandemic,

"Scholarships are way so interesting particularly in the middle of this outbreak. Receiving discounts must be satisfying. This strategy is really effective and helps the financial so much. Scholarships, discounts must be kept during this pandemic outbreak."

Eventhough scholarships did attract students because of the benefits, turns out there are still some little things to be improved. Two students uttered their dissatisfaction about different things.

Participant 1 said,

"In my point of view, the scholarship policy is not really effective yet because it is easy for them who have many achievements to apply for it since the first semester, but the ones who don't have that much achievement could start to enroll in third semester. Why not from the beginning? It's way too long so to me it's not really effective".

Different from Participant 1, Participant 8 reported another case but still the same disappointment,

"That's it, Darmajaya does have the scholarship policy, doesn't it? But this thing is not socialized enough to the students in high school especially my school (Yadika High School-red). Even most of us didn't know that Darmajaya has scholarships. Well in my point of

view the socialization of scholarship program of Darmajaya has not been effectively implemented yet, there are still a lot of students don't know that Darmajaya has scholarships”.

From these feedbacks the researcher obtained the information that IIB Darmajaya needs to spread and socialize about the scholarships more. During this pandemic the socialization could be spread on Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, the official website or any other mass media start from telling the students about what kind of scholarships, when and how they could apply, the pre-requirements, etc. This might look minor but if it just let it be, the word of mouth promotion in the future might give negative impacts to IIB Darmajaya itself.

4.3.3 Human Resource Management

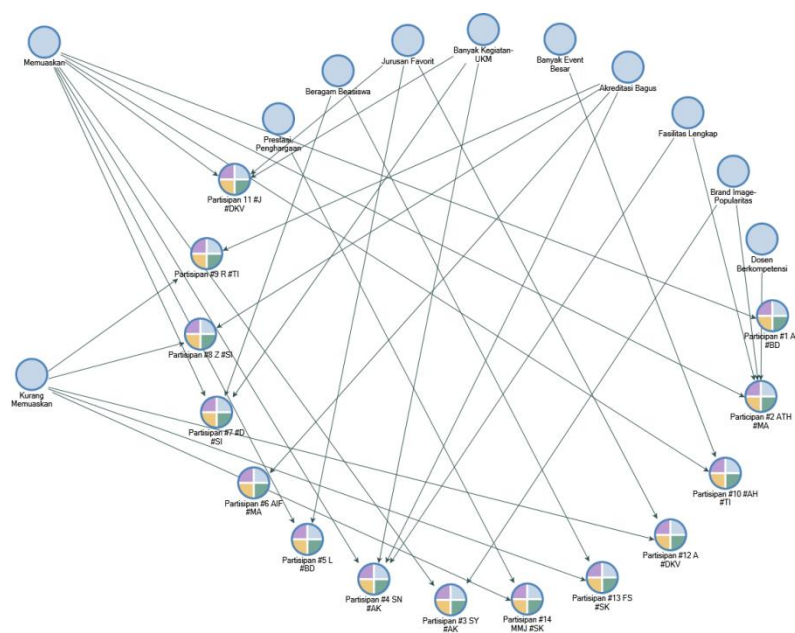


Figure 4.5 HR Management Satisfaction Map

As many as eight out of fourteen participants answered that the service Darmajaya gave to them was satisfying while five of them uttered their dissatisfaction due to various reasons. One student didn't give her opinion since she didn't go to customer service office due to no problem faced on. Participant 3 told the researcher how fast response the customer service

officers treat the customers stating that,

“Darmajaya’s customer service is so satisfying. Furthermore, what we asked was explained crystal clear and very responsive. At that time I chatted them at 9 o’clock and I received the reply at 11 o’clock, that is quite fast because I understand that there must be so many chats they received so in my point of view it is considered as very satisfying and responsive.”

Participant 10 admitted the customer service officer treatment, saying that, “For the customer service treatment it is clearly not a disappointment. It’s quite satisfying and helpful in answering questions. There is a problem solving and clear response.” Also, the same thing was uttered by Participant 4, noting that, “For the customer service is pretty satisfying because all the information I’ve got are real and accurate. I fully understand the response they gave.”

Participant 1, 2, 5 and 7 all gave the same thought about how accurate the information given and how responsive the officers were in overcoming the problem faced by the Participants stating that, “The service was good, the response was fast and there is answer for a question.”

The plus points obtained by the Human Resource Officers are clear according to participants, they gave accurate information overall and delivered a super fast response to satisfy the customers. For a question there is always an answer and for a problem there will always be a response.

But eventhough eight is dominating the satisfaction, five unsatisfying response can not be considered as a small number. As many as five Participants stated their dissatisfaction due to one or two of the officers giving a super slow response and there was a late in giving information while the Participants needed the answer immediately. Three of the Participants stated their deep dissatisfaction due to how slow response the officers were in overcoming questions and problem, one Participant

uttered how one officer gave him a wrong information, and the last Participant stated that there is a technical error he faced when enrolling in.

“According to my experience, there is one thing who needed to be improved, especially one officer that I feel is not really capable in giving information. When I asked her about a question she couldn’t answer it and even asked it to the other officer. I think one of them really needs an improvement that I gave rating 8 out of 10. That part is unsatisfying.” Said Participant 12.

Participant 14 also denoted the complaints, noting that,

“For the responsiveness of the customer service according to me it needs a better improvement. But for the explanation they have given it’s already good. That one thing that must need an improvement is one, it’s really slow response that the information we needed was so late to receive.”

Participant 13 also reminiscing how ‘responsiveness’ still became a problem, “ It’s not really fast response cause the response was quite late when I asked about registration.”

Participant 8 told the researcher how he got a wrong information about the study schedule, “The explanation was not really clear because we were still a general person at that time, probably they need improvement at that part. Once I asked about the study time because I took the extension class due to working, he said the time was flexible but turns out what I got is it’s difficult in Darmajaya to arrange time. I prioritize my job over my study cause I’m working but the study time turns out deviated from what I expected.”

4.3.4 Personal Reasons/Preferences

a. General Preferences on The Selection of a University

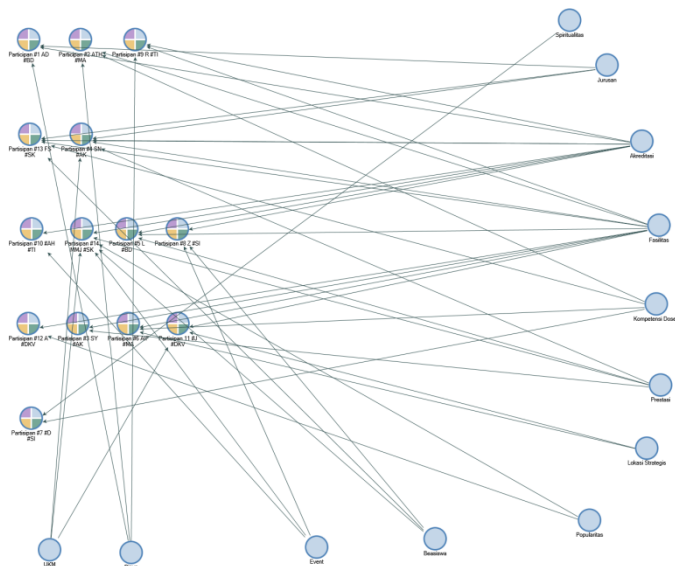


Figure 4.6 General Perceptions of University Selection

All fourteen Participants uttered various answers of their personal preferences on the selection of higher educational institution. The most spoken factors mentioned by the students are the facilities (9 mentions), followed by accreditation (8 mentions). The other factors are quite balancing in total mentions, there are achievements and lecturers' competency both with total mentioned of 4 times. The rest were price, courses, scholarships, students organization (3 mentions), location and popularity (2 mentions) and the least one was spirituality (1 mention).

As Participant 5 mentioned,

“The interesting things to select for a university first of all we see from the facilities, do the facilities properly available or not, complete for us to use or not.”

Participant 12 also stated the same,

“The first one is facilities, that's for sure.”

“According to me, it's the facilities, the facilities are the important enticement to attract students. If the facilities are complete, who

would reject to not register there?” Said Participant 2.

Participant 4 continued to tell about accreditation,

“Accreditation is the main thing seen by the people, also more like a relation between one campus to another. The impact is so massive actually the first one is to ourselves, because public will question ‘*which campus do you graduate from? What is the accreditation?*’ It’s more like that.”

Participant 13 sorted down her perceptions stating,

“In my point of view the first one is the accreditation, second is scholarship, the third is the campus must be convenient and the last is that the courses are in accordance what we’re interested in.”

She added how the lecturers competency matters a lot, “The competency of the lecturers are super important to me to be able to grasp the lessons quickly, to be able to understand the subjects we are studying.”

b. Reasons to Favour/Motive to Enroll to IIB Darmajaya

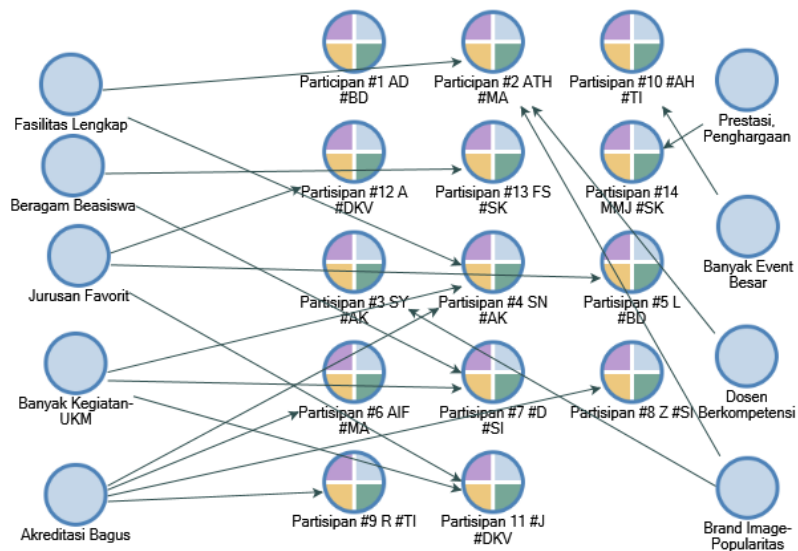


Figure 4.7 Reasons to Favour/Motive to Enroll to IIB Darmajaya

In the interview session all fourteen students stated various answers regarding their perceptions of IIB Darmajaya in general. The most mentioned word were accreditation, as Participant 8 admitted,

“First, I want to tell you that I also work, so I started to find out which campus could accommodate the extension student. So I looked up at Teknokrat at first because there were some of my seniors have been there before. But turns out the schedule in Teknokrat was kinda hectic and stricter. Then I searched information to Umitra, but the accreditation seemed to be less good. Fortunately in Darmajaya the accreditation is far above the others and I don’t know why I got interested and enroll in Darmajaya, I think it’s because of the good accreditation.”

Participant 9 told the researcher how accreditation of a course influences people’s buying decision,

“According to me, Darmajaya is surely excellent because of the accreditation honestly. In my course I am taking, the accreditation is already A. For me who is also working while studying, I want a campus that can accommodate me later in the future with its accreditation because sometimes with my job I couldn’t handle the lessons given by the lecturers so the only thing that could help me when I apply for a job in the future is the accreditation itself.”

Also, Participant 6 told how influencing accreditation of a course could be,

“Because it’s already good for the accreditation of management course. I was aiming for the management major and here in Darmajaya management is already great and A accredited.”

Participant 7 continued telling about how organizations and other programs build a good image of a higher educational institutions,

“Honestly the first one is the scholarship, I saw there were so many scholarships accommodated by Darmajaya. Second, I saw that indeed in Darmajaya there are so many organizations and even the study goes abroad (student mobility, joint

research-red) so I got interested to register and yeah, I try. If there are a lot of enticements then it is interesting to get to know it.”

Participant 2 said that Darmajaya is one of the most popular private campuses in Lampung,

“It is obvious that Darmajaya has a good name, popular. It already becomes one of the most favoured or chosen in Lampung. Furthermore, Darmajaya excels at its competency of lecturers, the facilities are at the finest and the same as displayed in brochure. So I finally chose Darmajaya because one, it is a well-known campus in Lampung. Two, the lecturers. Three, the facilities.”

While Participant 11 and 12 told the researcher how the availability of interested course could really attract the registrants,

“Why did I choose Darmajaya? It’s because I really wanted to enroll in Visual Communication Design (DKV) course. At first I wanted to enroll in Itera but because my home is quite far away from Itera and it happened to me that my older brother was also an alumni of Darmajaya, after I failed to enroll in Itera I straightly wanted to know about Darmajaya. And turns out that the Visual Communication Design course was available. But I was afraid that the costs would be expensive because it was still a new course opened by Darmajaya, right? And after I observed the facilities, the organizations have so many achievements and all are good so yeah I decided to enroll in Darmajaya.”

“I was a computer network engineering graduate and I really wanted to continue the study of my field, I wanted to be a bachelor of computer. I heard from my friend that Darmajaya is good at computer major so why didn’t I give it a try? After that we enrolled together and it is proven Darmajaya has so many achievements.”

Participant 10 even uttered how he first get to know to Darmajaya, making him having a good thought of it,

“At first, I figured out that one of my teachers studied at Teknokrat and I once joined an event or competition of computer when I was still in vocational school like programming and design and it was in Teknokrat. But then when the new admission was almost closed, I searched some information about Darmajaya and it seemed that it’s better to choose Darmajaya than Teknokrat if you want to take Information Engineering. It made me intrigued about Darmajaya and got interested afterall.”

4.3.5 Marketing Strategy

Second research question is questioning about the students’ buying decisions of IIB Darmajaya, which must have given them exposures from marketing activities in accordingly. During this Covid-19 outspread. During Covid-19, direct marketing such as personal selling, on the road promotion activities, and brochures spreading couldn’t be applied due to the government health protocol. So the solution IIB Darmajaya took was to maximize the marketing activities and promotion online. The question is answered in detail by the participants who thought there are still some minus to improved in the future other than the pluses which is already well-done.

a. TikTok

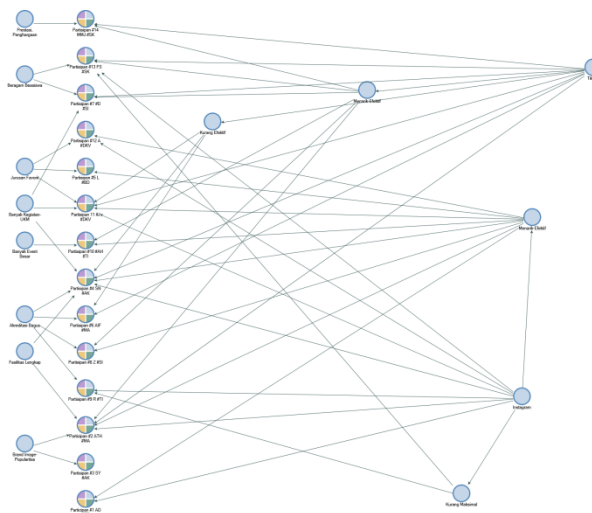


Figure 4.8 The Preferences between TikTok and Instagram Perceived by The Participants

TikTok social media recently is exploding again after its hiatus two years ago in millennial circles. There are a lot of young users in it including the target market Darmajaya aims at, the students. Many of the participants agree to the utilization of TikTok app that Darmajaya prevails to cover more views and target market so that when new academic year comes, students already have choices in their mind and in this case, it is hoped to be IIB Darmajaya.

Participant 3 stated his excitement about TikTok use by Darmajaya, saying, “It is clear that social media helps students a lot to look for information, TikTok for example. TikTok is closer to the millenials that it makes the information delivered becomes easy and fun, and yeah, very interesting. For why in the middle of this Covid-19 outbreak the information delivery through social media is more effective, it is because most millenials nowadays use this TikTok app so it suits both the students and Darmajaya itself to deliver and receive information from there. To me, I think this kind of strategy of marketing communication is really on target, not just ‘quite’, but it is really on target in order to attract the new registrants”. In tune with Participant 3, Participant 1 even reported that, “I don’t really see

the other universities much, but as what I have seen until now, Darmajaya is the most incessant in posting information online to social media like TikTok and Instagram,. Every certain hours there must be new contents and information while the other universities are more active at promoting their webinar activities, so it makes us harder to find the information cause we need to search it manually. For the information clarity and the choice of words used are all already good. The information contained are already clear.” Participant 14 uttered the same agreement, stating, “In my point of view, the information contained in and delivered by IIB Darmajaya is crystal clear, clear and accurate. So, here it is, so in TikTok it attracts the attention of the potential new enrollers of IIB Darmajaya that they might be able to ask the information detail directly regarding the registrations to the marketing office if they want to. And for the language clarity I assume it delivers a good and communicative words. For the promotion and communication approach IB Darmajaya has done in my perspective is already pretty understandable so that the students could understand about the information delivered.”

From the feedback they have given above, it is clear that they are trying to convey an information about how attractive the TikTok social media could be if Darmajaya could handle it maximally. They explained that the maximal utilization of TikTok may attract much more views and might expand to more coverage since there are so many millenials use it nowadays. TikTok combines the use of video creativity along with variative music that goes breakthrough the innovation. These points, according to them, are the powerful weapons to attract new students to enroll in.

While there are so many pluses have been uttered, there are still some minuses for IIB Darmajaya to improve in the future regarding marketing activities and in this section is, the social media promotion. As Participant

6 stated, “From all social medias I have been observing, it is indeed TikTok that incessantly does the promotion activities. In my perspective the words choices still needs some improvement because Darmajaya is a newbie in using TikTok so that’s why the information provided there is still not really good and still not satisfying. There are still a lot of information promoted in TikTok that I feel still not effective, especially from the aspect or words choices.” In tune with Participant 6, Participant 4 also reported about. “For the use of language and words to me there is no problem, it’s clear already and will always be clear but, the problem Darmajaya is facing in TikTok probably because of the short duration is applied there, the information wanted to be delivered becomes unclear for the students. It makes it not really effective, since not all information could be transferred to public due to that short duration.” While Participant 11 noted that Darmajaya still needs to reconsider promoting information in TikTok because, “Promoting in TikTok to me is not really effective because not all students use TikTok, so I think for TikTok there will be less people will know the information about Darmajaya. The promotion activities could be done in another platform.”

The three of the participants stated the same disagreement to the effectivity of TikTok utilization by IIB Darmajaya but for some very different reasons. Participant 6 felt that the information provided in TikTok is still not effective because of the diction chosen and because IIB Darmajaya is still a new user to TikTok that it did not provide a sufficient yet proper information to the students. On the other hand, Participant 4 thought that the diction chosen by IIB Darmajaya is already clear to the students who viewed it, it’s just the matter of the duration that makes it becomes ineffective in delivering information. While Participant 11 stated his disagreement particularly because in his perspective, not all students have and use TikTok especially after the ban two years ago. Moreover, at that time the Ministry of Communication and Information labeled TikTok as a

'improper and uneducating' app. For that reason, Participant 11 thought Darmajaya should reconsider the utilization.

b. Instagram

Instagram is a social media which covers up 26% of population in Indonesia. In Indonesia, according to a survey institution *Napoleon Cat*, from January to June 2020 the total of Instagram users in Indonesia itself reached the number of 69,3 million in which, the millenials (with the range of age between 18-24 years old) reached the peak of 25 million users. Instagram becomes one of the most social media that is used by Indonesia people.

IIB Darmajaya, has seen it as a golden opportunity to expand its coverage as much as possible. Darmajaya has been promoting much in Instagram in order to socialize its products with the advantages to students. In regards of facing Covid-19 outbreak, IIB Darmajaya prevails the social media promotion as an important way to run the marketing activity. In Indonesia, the use of Instagram is way a lot longer than TikTok. The large number of Instagram user convinces Darmajaya to cover up the target market and focus on there.

Participant 4 has a good high appreciation for Darmajaya because of the optimization for Instagram use, as she admitted, "Specifically in Instagram, during this pandemic Darmajaya has already been up-to-date to its contents like the enrollment, and then like events, Darmajaya would update it right away. To attract new entollers, I assume those efforts are already interesting. Especially if they optimize the contents or post it a bit more longer, and in particular like the students organization make their own posts then upload it on Instagram it will make it even like, *'oh, this organization is like this, oh that one looks like that'*. It may depends on how Darmajaya manage it but I think it will attract more students to

explore and obtain a knowledge about Darmajaya and end up with registering”.

Still tuning up with agreement, Participant 10 noted that,

“The information is quite interesting underlining the virus outspread. If a student look carefully at the contents and not just read it, they will surely get attracted moreover to enroll in. The words choices are close to millenials so I consider it is as interesting.”

Participant 8 stated the same appreciation,

“In social media aspect especially for nowadays kids, I consider that it’s already close to them to obtain and grasp information. For that part, I think the information delivery is already good and clear, remembering that we are in the modern era right now and we love to play Instagram. So basically to me the Instagram utilization is already well-done. As a proof, I myself have enrolled in so it means yes, the use of Instagram and also TikTok is already effective.”

Participant 2 also gave a positive review to Darmajaya’s Instagram uploads uttering,

“For a pandemic like this, uploading on social media like Instagram for example already is the best choice to do because it’s not allowed anymore to do the offline promotion activity during this pandemic, it’s been restricted. In my point of view the contents uploaded from the language aspect well, is quite interesting to attract new students.”

Despite there are more users in Instagram than TikTok, the fact is that some students prefer to wait for information from TikTok due to the fun it can provide to the users. Participant 13 admitted,

“Yes I have seen information from Darmajaya in TikTok. To me, acquiring information from TikTok is so interesting because it also provides entertainment besides the knowledge shared—I mean there is music in the background so it makes me entertained while gaining

information about the campus. To me, the choice to do the promotion in TikTok is already great, because it is close to millennials. Well, Instagram is good too, already well done as well. And yes, for the most crystal clear information you can find it from Instagram. But to me Instagram doesn't do me much because it has no entertainment like TikTok does, there is no music so it's like, what could I do next? So to me which one is more interesting, I'll choose TikTok."

Participant 7 also reported her preference to TikTok eventhough the researcher ask her the question of Instagram too. She thoroughly admitted that,

"It is clear in the middle of Covid-19 outbreak we dominantly see information from social media, right? So anything that Darmajaya uploads I can understand it thoroughly like TikTok, from TikTok I knew that *'oh there is this course, oh there is that course'*. Especially because there is a music played in it so that we can grasp the information quickly while enjoying it. When there is a new TikTok post I usually will see it immediately. So according to me, TikTok post from Darmajaya is super interesting and super helpful especially around this time because people mostly look for information online and Darmajaya wants to find a bigger market, right? Yes Instagram is also useful and gives much information too. But I say that TikTok is important right now, particularly in this pandemic era and I can say that TikTok utilization is effective to attract new students."

c. Website

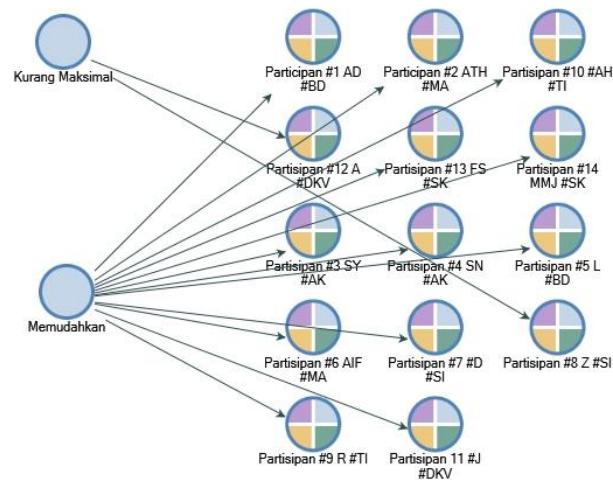


Figure 4.9 Perceptions About Websites Accessibility

During Covid-19 outbreak, one of the many ways to spread information is through the internet. After expanding its coverage on Instagram and TikTok, Darmajaya did not want to abandon its official website as one of the main trusted information source. The researcher wanted to know if Darmajaya has done enough to give information the students expected in the official website, and if it is effective enough or there is something to be improved for the next year admission. All fourteen students have seen and accessed that website, giving various numbers of impression.

Participant 4 and 9 reported their experience in accessing other universities' websites compared to Darmajaya's, stating it has better ease of use,

“Yes I have accessed other websites from another universities, Unila (University of Lampung—red) for example. For the display I would say both Darmajaya and Unila have the same interesting display but I want to underline the information column. For information there is a difference between Darmajaya and Unila. In Unila's website, there are some information that haven't been updated at that time. In Darmajaya, all are updated. Everyday there is an update so that we

would not miss any information or news. If we compare it with other universities' website, we will need extra effort to search for the information, do another more research, and gotta have so many scrolling downs. I can say from the information aspect Darmajaya excels them all, the info will be posted as a title in a headline so it gives us a sign to update more information. It makes us to not have to retype it or re-search it because in the timeline they have already posted the headline or thumbnail”.

Participant 14 even admitted the same distress when accessing other universities' website,

“Yes I did open their websites and look for information there because the registration info are all there. I can say that the website of Itera (Institute of Technology of Sumatera—red) is more complicated for us to look for information, how to enroll. Compared to Itera, It is Darmajaya whose website is surprisingly more simple according to me so it is easier for us to understand what information we want to observe—it's quicker to find. In Itera itself it's more complicated in terms of, when we want to search info A, the website will provide us info B, even they provide us to another topic. While, in Unila, we were redirected into another link, I felt like being played at that time. For Darmajaya's website, I would give 10 out of 10 compared to Unila and Itera, it's the best.”

Participant 3 and 11 also answered how Darmajaya give easiness to students who wanted to obtained information through website,

“Darmajaya eases students in accesability. It's not complicated compared to other universities. We just clicked on the '*enroll*' button, and then that's it. Unila and Itera didn't give students the same convenience.”

4.3.6 Pricing Strategy

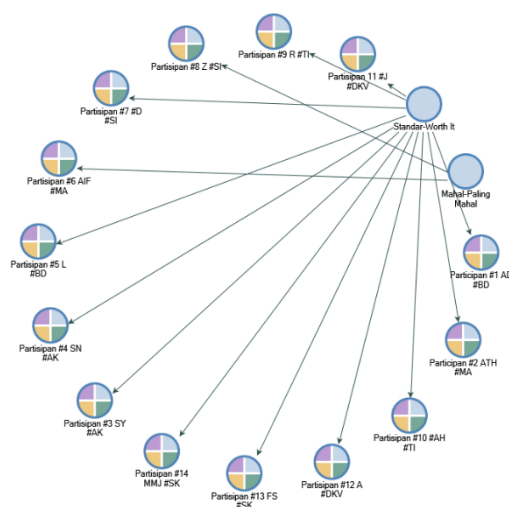


Figure 4.10 Perceptions of Pricing Strategy

For pricing strategy applied by IIB Darmajaya, twelve out of fourteen students perceived Darmajaya has applied a standard price—in which some of them perceived it's actually expensive but it's worth what they could get. The rest two of the Participants stated that Darmajaya is the most expensive campus in the circle of their research.

Participant 4 told the researcher,

“I can say that Darmajaya is the most expensive campus but it's worth what Darmajaya can give and offer to the students so it's worth it. It's worth what we can get and the price given is properly applied. Especially there are scholarships program that has already been given so eventhough we have trouble with financial Darmajaya could still accommodate us through scholarships.”

Participant 5 highlighted how the price worth the facilities and lecturers competency, stating,

“Yes it's pretty interesting with the discount program. I think the pricing strategy is considered as effective according to me, especially to attract new students. I can say that this policy is already the correct one, because with the amount of numbers compared to the study quality we receive along with the lecturers competency and qualified

the numbers are quite standard.”

Participant 1 stated that the pricing offered to the students is already pretty interesting, “It’s interesting, to me it’s already quite effective to attract new students to enroll.”. Even Participant 13 uttered the same thing, “In my opinion the price is standard, neither too expensive nor too cheap.”. In tune with them, Participant 12 told that, “In my perspective it’s quite good already for the marketing because at that time they let me to pay half in installment or pay as much as we could. For pricing strategy it’s quite good I think.”.

Participant 4, 7, 9 and 11 told the researcher how the price applied to them worth the facilities, the students organizations they could join, the lecturers quality, the human resource. But Participant 9 added that,

“For the future strategy, because after the Covid-19 pandemic the economy will still be weak, at least there should be an additional policy, between offerings and price in the future must be some relief.

Surprisingly, between the two disagree Participants, Participant 6 told the researcher that,

“To me, the normal price is way too expensive. In my point of view the offered price is considered as expensive so that is probably the factor why this year there are so many people did not choose Darmajaya.”

She had a vision that the price Darmajaya applied was way too high that it might be a reason for why the new admission declined. Different case from Participant 6, Participant 8 had his own experience, noted that,

“For the pricing aspect, the price of campuses in Bandar Lampung in my point of view Darmajaya is the most expensive after I did a research and asked some questions to Umitra (University of Mitra of Indonesia-red) and Teknokrat. The result is Darmajaya has the highest price. But I don’t know why, I got so interested to Darmajaya because the first one is the flexible study time—even though it’s quite wrong informed, and the second one because of its accreditation. Even

though I know Darmajaya is the most expensive I chose Darmajaya because it's worth what I pay for.”

Participant 8 tried to come up with two sides, the plus and the minus. Eventhough Darmajaya is the most expensive campus especially in the middle of this Covid-19 Pandemic, but it provided all the price worth for.

B. Research Question 2 : Buying Decision Change in Deciding Higher Educational Institutions During Covid-19 Outbreak

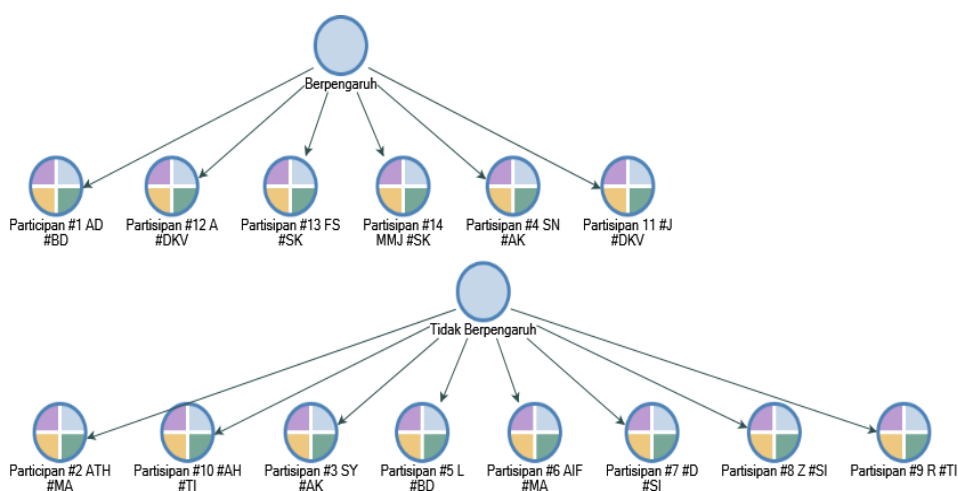


Figure 4.11 Covid-19 Influence to Universities Selction

The map shows that there is only a slight difference in the comparison of the students buying decision in the middle of this outbreak. As many as 8 students stated that Covid-19 did not really influence their higher educational selection while 6 more told the researcher that Covid-19 did influence their higher educational selection by preventing them from applying to universities in Jawa like University of Indonesia, Binus University, etc.

As Participant 1 admitted that at first, her primary choice for a university before the pandemic strikes was not IIB Darmajaya,

“Yes before the pandemic strikes I had a plan to go abroad but after the pandemic affects Indonesia my parents did not allow me to go anywhere. They worried that there would be any bigger virus wave striked that

would infect me and that it would be so difficult for me to go back to my home after I've been there. So my parents wanted me to just enroll in any universities in Lampung and so here I am now. To me, this outbreak really affects my decision in selecting higher educational institution.”

The same thing was uttered Participant 11 as he wanted to be a part of Binus University,

“I once asked a permission from my parents to study at Binus because I have a cousin who studies at Binus as well. Moreover, fortuitously my Dad is a Padangnese who have a tradition to wander and that's why I was eager to go out of Lampung and try to study somewhere else. Binus was my choice and usually in the big city the job opportunity is bigger and prominent especially in the big companies. But because my parents didn't let me to, so I undid my intention to study in Binus. To me this outbreak really affects my choice in deciding which university I should enroll in.”.

Participant 14 let his story out to the researcher, as he said that he wanted to try his luck,

“For the intention yes I did have a plan to go out of Lampung like UIN and University of Indonesia but what could I do? It's pandemic right now and there is nothing wrong with trying to find information to local university and luckily I found Darmajaya. This pandemic in my vision really influences our decision in selecting universities.”

A bit different from 3 previous Participants, Participant 4 and 13 told the researcher that that the pandemic affects their buying decision not in the selection of university outside Lampung, but it affects from the aspect of information access as they said, Covid-19 had affected their buying decision by hindering the information spread,

“It is really obvious that between before and when the pandemic strikes it does affect our choice. Before the pandemic we could straightly go to the preferred campus and find much information from there like, *'oh this is building A, oh that is building B'*, we could observe directly. But after the

pandemic strikes all we could do was just seeing the photos and videos updated from the universities. The access became slower than when we go straightly to the universities. When we want to ask them directly it becomes more difficult since we need to keep the distance and we should apply the hand sanitizer, masks, etc.”

“No I don’t have any plan to go outside Lampung, even, I really enjoy Lampung and I have already targeted to enroll only in Lampung. But yes, this Covid-19 affects my decision in selecting a university because the information became unclear and it made us couldn’t search information freely because the access became limited especially in registration. I prefer offline registration before the pandemic strikes in because sometimes I got bored too for being at home too long. Besides, if every single access is all onlined some of us might face a signal trouble that might give us troubles in receiving information. So I preferred offline learning and registration.”

On the contrary, all 9 other students told the researcher that they didn’t face any difficulty in deciding which university they wanted to choose in the middle of this outbreak. They uttered that they did have a plan to just study in Lampung and that they had already targeted to consider universities choices in the area of Lampung. As Participant 2 admitted that,

“To myself, this pandemic doesn’t really give any impact to determine a choice in selecting a university. I did want to study at STAN, but I thought that the major wouldn’t fit to me and that there would be so many competitors so yeah, I decided to study in Lampung. From Unila, UBL, Darmajaya all have been surveyed by me and I only likes Darmajaya. Also my brother told me about it. So to me Covid-19 does not really affect my decision.”

Participant 10 also uttered that,

“It is my intention to study in Lampung since the first time I thought about it. So the pandemic doesn’t give so much impact to me in deciding a university especially outside Lampung. Except, the registration procedure

became different from before the pandemic struck in. But instead of giving me a trouble, that kind of procedure in fact pleases me a lot because online registration is giving us so much ease.”.

Participant 7 told the researcher that,

“It (the pandemic) doesn’t give too much difference to me since I am working too so I looked for a campus which is in the same direction as where I work. Actually I did not target any specific region or area of university for me to study. Honestly I really wanted to study outside Lampung but because I am attached to my job responsibilities and because I still live here so the best choice is to study here in Lampung. So yeah, between before and after the pandemic struck it does not affect my decision.”.

Participant 3 and 6 all stated that they have completely decided to enroll in Darmajaya since the beginning,

“I straightly wanted to go to Darmajaya so I did not consider any other university because I have made up my mind to go to Darmajaya.”.

“I indeed have targetted only in Bandar Lmapung and I have made up my mind to choose Darmajaya .”.

Participant 9’s opinion is not really indifferent either,

“I didn’t have any plan to go outside Lampung. But yes there is indeed a difference between before and after pandemic. The difference is, when the pandemic strikes we are not allowed to crowd out, for instance when the orientation program was held, the quota of participants was limited, we should wear face shield and many more. It was not as hilarious as wbefore the pandemic strikes. But I prefer online registration since I don’t really like to go outside my house just to fill the registration form. It is more effective, saving more time and energy too.”

4.4 Additional Findings

In Chapter II it has been explained comprehensively about the *Decision Making Process* which included five steps, in which there is one optional step that could be skipped.

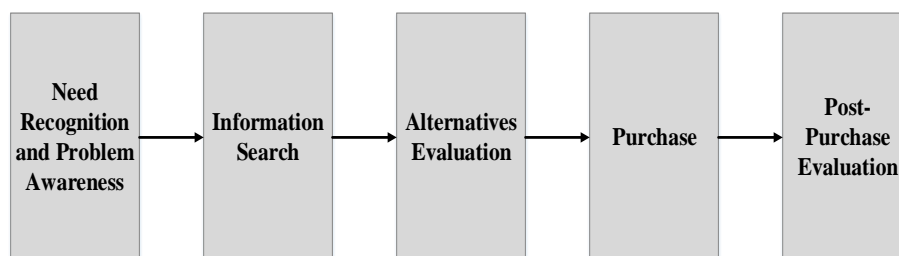


Figure 4.12 Decision Making Process

In this case, the students knew that they wanted to continue their study to a higher level and then they began to search for information, some of them compare their choices with other universities which they consider have the same good quality, and after they have considered enough, they went to the purchase decision or in this case, enrolling themselves. One thing that surely a customer do after purchasing a product, they will give a review of it with their experience. This step involves either positive or negative reviews. If the company from where the products are manufactured fulfills the customers' expected result, then the customers will surely give positive reviews and there might be a big possibility that they will recommend it to other people. But if the company can not fulfill what the customers expected, negative reviews will come and if the customers are patient enough they will give a critics along with a recommendation to the company to fix. But if the customers are disappointed too much, they will give a bad *word of mouth* news to other people.

During the interview, most of the students stated that so far, they were satisfied with the information accuracy that Darmajaya provides, how responsive the customer service were, and how easy the accessibility they provided for the students to enroll. But when the researcher asked them if

there is any expectation that Darmajaya hasn't fulfilled yet or if there is anything Darmajaya should fix-improve, surprisingly as many as 8 Participants uttered that there are indeed some things for Darmajaya to improve or fix in the future to overcome bad reviews.

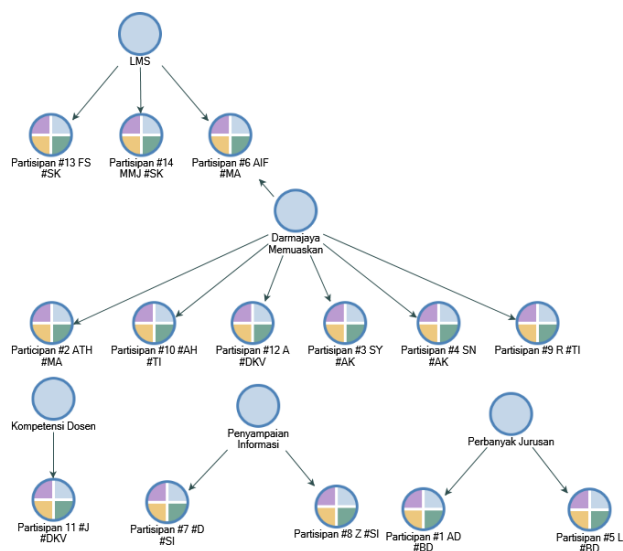


Figure 4.12 Additional Findings

Their recommendations were various, started from the frontliners to the technical issues. Most students uttered their recommendations despite their satisfaction they received from Darmajaya. This indicates that Darmajaya have done quite well so far, even though there are still some little things to improve.

a. Darmajaya Learning Management System (LMS)

As many as 3 Participants proclaimed that Darmajaya's E-Learning system hasn't done a very good job yet. Participant 13 reported her frustration in accessing LMS somehow for being error at important schedule,

“There are still errors occurs in LMS, sometimes when I need to fill the presence list online the LMS couldn't be accessed. The system needs to be fixed. Because the error occurrence frequently happens, I'll rate 8 out of 10 for LMS. It needs to be fixed.”

Participant 6 even concurred a more critical review for LMS,

“For online facility like LMS, to me it hasn’t been satisfying yet because it often errors so I couldn’t send my homework. I’ll rate 6 out of 10 for LMS because it needs so much improvement in the future especially in the system to support a continuous online learning.”

Participant 14 was in tune with both of them, saying that,

“There is something that Darmajaya should fix. When we access the LMS, it keeps giving us a trouble lately. Usually the capacity of quota it can handle is around 1000 students, but recently, when there are only 700 students accessing it, it somehow errors and the server would be down. It troubles us from accessing the material of subjects we need to study. Plus, the presence-list access also needs to be fixed, it can’t be let just that way. Henceforth, the upload file size is having a problem too. It gives us 1 MB size limit only while our homework file size could be like 10 MB. We have compressed the file twice but still, the size maximal compression is 2 MB. It’s really frustrating. It needs improvement especially in quota capacity and file size limit. These all needs to be fixed so that they won’t affect Darmajaya’s performance.”

For Participants who take so much concern on their studies, online learning system becomes the most important part of the learning process. Eventhough the researcher have tried to stimulate their opinion about other aspect like facilities or marketing strategy, the Participants kept persistent on the LMS errors. This indicates that students put a lot of care on both their studies and how they analyze weaknesses in Darmajaya. Complaints about LMS is in the top peak of other complaints reported by the Participants.

b. Delivery of Information

There were 2 Participants who complained about how they received a complicated process of registering along with a ‘not-so-accurate’ information, leaving them quite disappointed with the customer service

officers. One Participant was a conversion student and another one was an extension student.

Participant 7 reported how her conversion process took a long very long time to reach the final step,

“Okay, I don’t mean to blame any specific person or one department and because probably I was a new student too, but I felt that it was quite hard to gain information about conversion class for example the majors, how is the process of my documents going, how the major department thinks about my subjects, are they acceptable or is there any problem. Things like that were so hard for me to observe. I once received a late information about my document regarding my conversion process, but they did not tell me about the due date. And it turned out everything went quite rough that time, it took a long process after all.”

Participant 8 told the researcher how there was a disinformation about study schedule the customer officer promised with the reality he faces now, saying that,

“For the learning process I don’t face any problem yet, only the one in the beginning when I was about to enroll. It deviated a lot from what I thought before. I was told that the learning schedule in Darmajaya is so flexible regarding the extension class. I am a working student, so I might prioritize my work schedule first before attending the class, but it turned out to me the reality is not like what I thought before. Turns out that the learning schedule is so strict and it gives me a trouble. So I think please next time, just give the real information to the registrants, just be honest and give the clear information.”

c. To Vary More Majors

There were 2 students who wanted Darmajaya to vary the majors in the future. According to them, one of the enticements of a university is the majors availability. They thought the more various the major is, the more

interested the student will be. Despite the 'institute' structure that Darmajaya holds, the students wanted that at least make it more various in the field of economic and computer, like Participant 1 said,

"I think it's better if the majors are expanded, because I saw that the other universities have a lot of majors, right, while in Darmajaya yeah, has less majors probably because it is an institute. But still, I hope the majors are expanded."

"Maybe the majors could be expanded, so that Darmajaya could compete with other universities who have a lot of majors. Maybe that's all, to attract more interest of new students." Said Participant 5.

d. Lecturer Competency

One student experienced a unique and it might be the most different from any other's experiences. He admitted to the researcher that there were in fact two lecturers of his major—DKV—who never gave explanations to their lectures other than posting the materials online and gone. He said that it was quite frustrating, since he was not the only one who experienced it but the whole class too. He told that his intention for learning was so big that he couldn't handle two lecturers who didn't give any explanation to students' big questions everyday. He proclaimed that,

"Frankly speaking there is indeed one thing to fix especially from the lecturer aspect. There are two lecturers from my majors, DKV, who never teach us anything, they only give the material on LMS and never explain it. They even straightly give us homework to us who don't even understand a single thing. The way they teach us needs to be fixed because it doesn't just disadvantage one party only but surely there must be so many parties too."

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Chapter 4 provided the results of this study. This chapter includes the conclusion of the results and implications for various stakeholder groups. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future research in the areas of buying decisions and perception towards IIB Darmajaya .

a. Perceptions

1. Intitute of Informatics and Business (IIB) of Darmajaya has a strong competition with University of Bandar Lampung (UBL) and University of Teknokrat for the area of brand image.
2. Students have a good overview about the products offered by IIB Darmajaya with its scholarships, study programs, etc.
3. The services provided by IIB Darmajaya was pretty satisfying, even so, it still needs much improvements.
4. IIB Darmajaya has the strongest marketing socialization in social media especially in the middle of Covid-19 Pandemic.

b. Buying Decisions

1. The pricing strategy applied by IIB Darmajaya affords the students to seal their buying decisions to enroll in particularly in Covid-19.
2. Students chose IIB Darmajaya due to various advantages it can give including accreditation, prospective study programs, facilities, and lecturer competency.

c. Change of Buying Decision

1. There was a slight difference of the numbers of buying decision change. Most students have planned to choose a university far before the pandemic strikes. So the pandemic did not give any change to their buying decision in selecting a university.

5.2 Implications

This study has resulted to some implications for IIB Darmajaya itself to improve in the future..

a. For Institute of Informatics and Business (IIB) Darmajaya

This study investigated the first-semester perceptions of students along with their buying decisions about IIB Darmajaya. The participants uttered that IIB Darmajaya has so much to be proud of, amongst its advantages and benefits to students. Even so, the students also reported some major disadvantages that IIB Darmajaya needs to fix in order to make a good image of perception before new potential enrollers come up to buying decisions. *First*, it needs to put more effort in socializing students program especially organizations to social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and the official websites. Students complained that IIB Darmajaya lack of giving information about students organizations to social medias, so this attempt may help IIB Darmajaya to build a broader thought and perception to students to come up with buying decisions. *Second*, IIB Darmajaya needs to train and accommodate the service officers or frontliners with maximum preparations so that there won't be any misinformation. Some students complained about how they got a not-so-accurate information from PMB team. *Third*, IIB Darmajaya needs to inform the students what benefits they would receive with the price affords to them. Some students complained how the price could make them think twice before deciding to enroll especially in Covid-19

pandemic. So it would be better that next time IIB Darmajaya could inform in more detail both in social medias or direct marketing.

5.3 Recommendations

1. Conduct more interesting and attractive programs in order to attract students' attention

This could impact to students' knowledge about what benefits they can get if they enroll in IIB Darmajaya, what facilities they may enjoy, what kind of courses they may get interested on, why they should choose IIB Darmajaya over the other university, etc. To conduct this event, IIB Darmajaya may collaborate with famous public figure or millenials figure to add up the enticement.

2. Give more information about what the students can get during Covid-19 learning method or online—long distant learning

Students tend to be reluctant when they are informed to study online because they perceive all the price they have paid is not worth to what they can get. They couldn't enjoy the free wifi, they could not see how beautiful the buildings are, they could barely recognize who is lecturer A who is lecturer B. It is better during the pandemic of Covid-19 that the PMB or marketing team socialize about what compensation that students may receive related to the price.

3. It will be much better if the Learning System Management (LMS) could provide a stable system

Many Participants complained how the LMS happens to be error frequently that it gave them so much trouble in studying session. Some said that they couldn't fill up the presence list while some more reported the system were running out of quota. It would be so much nicer if this bugs fixed to provide a better learning experience for the students.

4. It would be better to maintain the good bond and ambience between lecturers and the students

Participants reported how some of them faced a little trouble in implementing the online learning method not because of the system or connection but because of the lecturers teaching style. They reported how some lecturers did not give any explanation to them before giving a homework and how the Participant felt the lecturers kind of being *distant* when they want to communicate with the lecturers. This might result to a negative post-purchase and word of mouth so it is better that the stakeholders of IIB Darmajaya socialize more about how important it is to provide a fun and relax and friendly learning situation to the students.

REFERENCES.

- Bogdan, R. Taylor, S. J. (2016). *Introduction to Qualitative Research Method. A Guidebook and Resource*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey, USA.
- Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Démuth, A. (2013). *Perception theories*. Kraków: Trnavská univerzita.
- Denscombe, M. (2002). *Ground rules for good research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Drea, J. T., Tripp, C., & Stuenkel, K. (2005). *An assessment of the effectiveness of an in-class game on marketing students' perceptions and learning outcomes*. *Marketing Education Review*, 15(1), 25-33.
- Denzin, N. (1989). *The research act*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall
- Estaswara, H. (2016). *Integrated marketing communications (imc) in higher education in Indonesia*. *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 14.
- Easwaramoorthy, M., & Zarinpoush, F. (2006). *Interviewing for research*. Canada Volunteerism Initiative, 1-2.
- Fox, N. *Using Interviews in a Research Project*. (2006). The NIHR RDS for the East Midlands / Yorkshire & the Humber.
- Gibson, J.J., (1983). *The Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems*. Praeger; Revised ed. Edition. USA
- George E. Belch & Michael A. Belch, *Advertising & Promotion: an IMC Perspective*, 2010:17, 8th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010.
- Harjadi, D., & Fatmasari, D. (2017). *Implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication in Image of Private Higher Education*. *Trikonomika*, 16(2), 63-67.
- Joseph, M., & Joseph, B. (2000). *Indonesian students' perceptions of choice criteria in the selection of a tertiary institution: Strategic implications*. *International Journal of Educational Management*.

- Kotler, Philip., & Armstrong, G (2010). *Principles of Marketing*. Upper saddle River, N.J: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Kotler, Philip, & Amstrong, Gary (2012). *Principles Of Marketing*, Global 14th Edition, Pearson Education.
- Kotler & Keller, (2012). *Marketing Management* 14th Edition. Global Edition. Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Krisna, I. I., Mardapi, D., & Azwar, S. (2016). *Determining standard of academic potential based on the Indonesian Scholastic Aptitude Test (TBS) benchmark*. REiD (Research and Evaluation in Education), 2(2), 165-180.
- Kusumawati, A., Yanamandram, V. K., & Perera, N. (2010). *University marketing and consumer behaviour concerns: the shifting preference of university selection criteria in Indonesia*.
- Kvale, W. (1996). *InterViews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Lautiainen, T. (2015). *Factors Affecting Consumers's Buying Decision in The Selection of a Coffee Brand*.
- Majid, U. (2018). Research fundamentals: Study design, population, and sample size. *Undergraduate research in natural and clinical science and technology journal*, 2, 1-7.
- Maxwell, J. A. (2005). *Qualitative research design* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc
- Pich, J., Hazelton, M., Sundin, D., & Kable, A. (2011). *Patient-related violence at triage: A qualitative descriptive study*. *International emergency nursing*, 19(1), 12-19.
- Rahayu, W., Putra, M. D. K., Iriyadi, D., Rahmawati, Y., & Koul, R. B. (2020). *A Rasch and factor analysis of an Indonesian version of the Student Perception of Opportunity Competence Development (SPOCD) questionnaire*. *Cogent Education*, 7(1), 1721633.

Rubin, H. & Rubin, I. (1995). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (1995). *Qualitative interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Ryan, F., Coughlan, M., & Cronin, P. (2009). *Interviewing in qualitative research: The one-to-one interview*. *International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation*, 16(6), 309-314.

Solomon, M.R. (2011). *Consumer Behaviour (9th Global Edition)*. Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, USA.

Strauss, A. M., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. (3rd Edition.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc

Subekti, A. S. (2020). *Self-perceived communication competence and communication apprehension: A study of Indonesian college students*. *EduLite: Journal of English Education, Literature and Culture*, 5(1), 14-31.

Websites:

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.public.asu.edu/~kroel/www500/Interview%2520Fri.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwi8iJ6Z-NbsAhVK63MBHRqND4sQFjABegQIBRAB&usg=AOvVaw2FhP4zPevRYBAQp23sH1nR>

https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.deakin.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/681025/Participant-observation.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwiG6bjF-NbsAhVYT30KHUbjBQwQFjAMegQIAhAB&usg=AOvVaw3WD8dEJSw9ax-VLdyvmyJP

<https://research-methodology.net/research-methods/data-analysis/qualitative-data-analysis/>

APPENDIX A. INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of Study : A Study Of The Perceptions and Buying Decisions of The First-Year Students In IIB Darmajaya During Covid-19 Pandemic.

Investigator : Winni Sari, IIB Darmajaya Bachelor candidate, (with assistance from Ms. Novita Sari S. Sos., M.M).

This is a research study. Please take your time in deciding if you would like to participate. Please feel free to ask questions at any time.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to reveal the perceptions of first-year students regarding their experience/exposure of IIB Darmajaya as a whole especially during Covid-19 Pandemic, along with the marketing strategy that they received beforehand. Furthermore, Participants will help the Researcher to uncover their buying decisions after receiving exposures and information from IIB Darmajaya. Moreover, the Researcher will obtain the disclosure whether or not the Covid-19 Pandemic influences their buying decision in selecting higher institutional education. You are being invited to participate in this study because you fit the criteria for this study:

1. First-year students of 2020 studying at IIB Damajaya and currently studying in semester 1.
2. Have read or received any promotional activities conducted by IIB Damajaya both in person and through social media.

DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES

If you agree to participate, Winni Sari will interview you according to the time needed. You will be presented with the interview guide ahead of time. The full interview will be recorded. You will be identified by a pseudonym for the study and your information will be protected before, during, and after this research project. During the interview process, you may skip any questions that you do not wish to answer.

Your participation will last for the amount of time that the interview takes. After the interview, the audio recording will be transcribed, and you will be presented with a copy of the transcript for your review. After that, your participation will be over. At the conclusion of the thesis research, you will be provided a write-up of the findings from the study.

RISKS

There are no known or foreseeable risks for participation in this study.

BENEFITS

If you decide to participate in this study, there will be a possibility of positive changes and evaluations regarding the new students recruitment in the future. The information obtained from this research is expected beneficial for institutions,

college leaders and students in relation with promoting resources, technology and IIB Darmajaya as a whole to the next potential new students.

COSTS AND COMPENSATION

You will not have any costs related to participating in this study, other than the time you spend during the interview and reviewing the interview transcript. The time you spend as a participant in this study is voluntary.

PARTICIPANT RIGHTS

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may initially refuse to participate or stop participating in the study at any time. If you decide to not participate in the study or leave the study early, it will not result in any penalty or detrimentally affect your relationship with the researcher, her major professor, and/or IIB Darmajaya

CONFIDENTIALITY

Records identifying participants will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by applicable laws and regulations and will not be made publicly available. However, the Supervisor Boards along with the discussants have access to listen to the ongoing interview conversations to ensure the authenticity of the data. Participants' information will remain anonymous. These records may contain private information.

To ensure confidentiality to the extent permitted by law, the following measures will be taken:

1. Your interview will be recorded and transcribed but you will be identified in the transcripts and on tape with a pseudonym.
2. The data will be stored on a password-protected computer in a locked room at all times.
3. The data only will be kept until the completion and publication of the study. If the results are published, your identity will remain confidential.

QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

You are encouraged to ask questions or express your concerns at any time during this study. For further information about the study, you may contact the Researcher Winni Sari or her Supervisor Novita Sari Idham, S.Sos., MM. on the numbers that have been given before.

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE

Your signature below indicates that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study, that the study has been explained to you, that you have been given time to read this document, and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered:

Name :
 Major :
 Phone Number :

APPENDIX B. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Introduction

Hello (respondent name). Thank you so much for agreeing to speak with me. I know you have a busy schedule and really appreciate your willingness to participate in this project.

As stated in a previous letter, I am a Bachelor student at IIB Darmajaya conducting A Study Of The Perceptions and Buying Decisions of The First-Year Students In IIB Darmajaya During Covid-19 Pandemic. Today I hope to glean insight into your perceptions of IIB Darmajaya as a whole especially during this Covid-19 Pandemic, along with the marketing strategy that you have received beforehand. Furthermore, I hope to obtain knowledge about the reasons of your buying decisions after receiving exposures and information from IIB Darmajaya. Finally, I hope to obtain the answer whether or not the Covid-19 Pandemic influences your buying decision in selecting higher institutional education.

IIB Darmajaya as a whole especially during Covid-19 Pandemic, along with the marketing strategy that they received beforehand. Furthermore, Participants will help the Researcher to uncover their buying decisions after receiving exposures and information from IIB Darmajaya. Moreover, the Researcher will obtain the disclosure whether or not the Covid-19 Pandemic influences their buying decision in selecting higher institutional education.

For ease of note taking, getting all of your input, and not slowing down the interview, I would like to record our conversation. The recording made today will be kept confidential and in a safe place. The only people that will hear the audio recording will be me and the person who transcribes our conversation. It will be kept in a secure location and destroyed when the study is complete. If at any time you would prefer that I turn the recorder off, please let me know, and I will do so immediately.

Any questions before we begin?

Did you sign the Informed Consent to participate in this study?

Do I have your permission to begin recording our discussion?

Research Question # 1: What are the students' perceptions about the marketing communication approach that has been taken by IIB Darmajaya and what are the reasons for making a purchase decision at IIB Darmajaya?

✚ General Questions

1. How long have you monitored IIB Darmajaya as one of the universities you are considering?
2. Can you tell us how you came to know IIB Darmajaya?
3. What do you think was conveyed by the Darmajaya Marketing Team (PMB) during promotion with the facts you encountered after studying at Darmajaya?
4. Have you ever received promotions via WhatsApp, Facebook, SMS, or pay phones?
 - a) If so, what do you think Darmajaya's telemarketing strategy is, is it effective or less effective? Why?
 - b) Responding to promotions via WhatsApp, Facebook, SMS, and pay phone social media, do you think the information provided by IIB Darmajaya is clear and accurate enough?
 - c) How is the customer service (CS) provided by Darmajaya in response to questions and feedback?
5. Can you tell us why you finally chose Darmajaya as one of your chosen universities?

✚ Special Questions

1. Can you mention which universities were your main consideration before you made your choice to Darmajaya? Why did you choose these universities?
2. In your opinion, what indicators make prospective students interested in enrolling in a university of their choice?
3. There are a lot of students who express their desire to study at state universities because they are considered superior to private universities. Do you agree with that statement? Can you say your opinion, why do you say that?
4. Are there private universities other than IIB Darmajaya that you feel have the advantage of competing with state universities? Why?
5. Does social media really help you in finding information about IIB Darmajaya?

- a) How do you think IIB Darmajaya has in terms of display or web page appearance compared to the tertiary institutions that were your previous consideration?
 - b) What is the promotional approach taken by IIB Darmajaya through IG, FB, and TikTok social media in terms of language and information provided?
6. In your opinion, what should Darmajaya improve when compared to other universities?

Research Question # 2: What are the students' perceptions about the relationship between the Covid-19 pandemic phenomenon and the determination of college elections?

1. Can you share your experiences in choosing higher education institutions in the midst of a pandemic like this? Is it different before the pandemic happened?
2. The Covid-19 pandemic caused some people to experience difficulties from almost all aspects, especially the economy. Has the Covid-19 pandemic phenomenon also had an impact on financial difficulties for you?
 - a) What do you think about IIB Darmajaya's pricing strategy when it comes to attracting customers?
 - b) IIB Darmajaya provides various scholarships to camaba who will apply for both academic and non-academic scholarships. Darmajaya also provides many discounts on fees so that students can continue to study. Do you think this strategy is capable enough to attract attention given the pandemic situation is raging? Why?
 - c) What do you think about the availability and affordability of government quota assistance that IIB Darmajaya accommodates to camaba, is it quite attractive and effective?
3. Do you think the marketing communication approach taken by IIB Darmajaya in the midst of this pandemic situation has been effective? Why do you say that?
4. The pandemic has made almost all activities carried out via remote methods, one of which is teaching and learning activities (KBK). What do you think about the role of easy access to online learning in helping round out your decision to choose IIB Darmajaya?

5. Are you satisfied with the facilities and services provided by IIB Darmajaya so far? Why is that?

APPENDIX C. PARTICIPANT LIST

No.	Participants	Sex	Major
1	AD	F	Digital Business
2	ATH	M	Management
3	SY	M	Accounting
4	SN	F	Accounting
5	L	F	Digital Business
6	AIF	F	Management
7	D	F	Information System
8	Z	M	Information System
9	R	M	Information Engineering
10	AH	M	Information Engineering
11	A	F	Computer System
12	FS	F	DKV
13	MMJ	M	Computer System
14	J	M	DKV