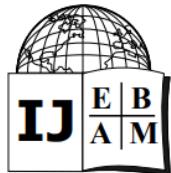


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# Analysis of Factors Influencing Students' Decisions in Choosing A Private College in Yogyakarta

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ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT
Section	This research aims to examine and analyze the influence of
Research Article	several factors on university selection, such as university
History Article	location, perceptions about the university, graduate
Article Submitted: 23/06/2024	employability, tuition fees, academic quality, and
Accepted: 24/06/2024	university brand. The analysis carried out will provide an
Available online: 29/06/2024	in-depth understanding of how significant the influence of
Keywords	each of these factors is in influencing prospective students'
location	decisions in choosing their university. This study uses a
university perception	descriptive approach to observe and analyze the
graduate employability	relationships between variables. The purposive sampling
tuition Fees	method was used to select respondents who met the criteria,
academic quality	with questionnaires distributed via Google Mail to new UII
brand	students class of 2023 to facilitate accurate and efficient
	online data collection. The results of this research show that
	location, perception of the university, and academic quality
	do not influence the choice of university and the ones that
	do are the employability of graduates, tuition fees, and
	brand.

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is an effort to create an atmosphere of learning and learning which aims for students to have self-control, intelligence, religious morals and spirituality, skills that are useful for themselves and for the country (Soekarnoputri and Kesowo, 2003).

Education has an important role in improving the quality of a country's human resources. There are many factors that cause the low quality of education in Indonesia, such as low educational infrastructure, low teacher quality, low teacher welfare, low student



achievement, and lack of equal distribution of education in Indonesia (Agustang, Mutiara and Asrifan, 2021). The existence of universities in a society indicates the development of a civilization. In higher education, there are many activities that can be carried out, such as teaching activities, advancing knowledge, increasing research and international awareness, and community service (Sonhadji, 2014).

With the increasing number of universities in Indonesia today, these educational institutions need to continue to develop business strategies to attract as many new students as possible. Universities also need to analyze the needs of new students so they can adjust strategies appropriately. With prospective students becoming increasingly rational and increasing competition between higher education institutions, higher education providers are required to be more careful and understand consumer behavior in choosing higher education services (Koesoemaningsih, 2013).

Consumer behavior is generally influenced by various factors when making decisions. These factors can influence consumer behavior both individually and simultaneously. Prospective students usually choose universities that offer educational services that suit their needs or that perform well in their perception. Each individual has a unique background that influences their choice in choosing a college study program.

Students generally look for programs that not only support their educational goals but also open up promising career opportunities in the future so it is important for universities to understand what students consider important to provide relevant information about the benefits they offer, and deliver on that promise. The success of higher education institutions often depends on their ability to understand and accommodate student perceptions and consumer behavior. This research aims to examine and analyze the influence of several factors on university selection, such as university location, perceptions about the university, graduate employability, tuition fees, academic quality, and university brand.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW & HYPOTHESIS**

### **Theoretical Foundations**

#### **Theory Planned Behaviour**

Theory of Planned Behavior has been widely used in recent years to research that individual desires determine whether they will carry out or not carry out a certain behavior. In the Theory of Planned Behavior, a person's actual behavior in carrying out an action is directly influenced by their intentions, which are determined by their attitude and perceived behavioral control towards that action. Attitude (attitude toward behavior), subjective norm (subjective norm), and perceived control over behavior (perceived behavioral control) can predict an individual's intention to carry out certain behavior. Attitude towards behavior is a person's positive or negative evaluation of certain objects, people, institutions, events, behavior or intentions (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen, 1991, 2005).

#### **Hypothesis Development**

Location refers to the geographical location of the university or can also refer to the location of the university which is close to the city center or to home. The proximity of a university to where one lives is an important factor in the university selection process (Dawes and Brown, 2005; Alves And and Raposo, 2007; Alves and Raposo, 2007). This research shows that the distance from home to the university is important for students because students usually like social activities. Other research states that universities that are close to where they live have

advantages for the university because prospective students will enroll at the university because it is easy for prospective students to reach (Aydin, 2013). Location is also an important consideration in choosing a university when considering the cost of living.

University perception is the belief that a person has towards a university (Duarte, Alves and Raposo, 2010). Colleges or universities that tend to have a good public image are an attraction for prospective students to enroll, such as many prospective students who want to enroll at Harvard University because it has a quality of teaching, research and academic achievements that are known to be good.

Graduate employability is an important factor for job prospects and career choices when they graduate. If graduates from a university have a good career in a field that prospective students are interested in, then this will be a consideration for prospective students in choosing that university. The success of graduates is an important factor in this aspect because it can provide an overview of the quality of education at the university. Graduates' success in careers can give prospective students confidence that the university has good quality education and study programs (Støren and Aamodt, 2010).

Tuition fees that will be incurred later when they study at the university of their choice will be a consideration for students in choosing a university (Briggs and Wilson, 2007). Several researchers also explain that education costs have a direct and significant influence on prospective students' intentions to study at university (Wagner and Fard, 2009). This is because prospective students also consider other costs such as transportation costs because the distance from home to the university also increases the costs that will be incurred so that it has a significant impact on the selection and preferences of prospective students in choosing a university. Apart from that, flexibility in paying tuition fees and accommodation costs also influences university selection (Foskett, Roberts and Maringe, 2006).

In this aspect, there are several indicators that can be seen, such as academic ranking. Universities that have good rankings tend to attract prospective students to enroll at that university. Another indicator is the university's reputation. A university's reputation describes the image of the university in society. Prospective students usually choose universities that have a good reputation because usually a university that has a good reputation will have good academic quality, such as quality lecturers, good learning facilities, and the best curriculum. Accreditation is also an important indicator in looking at academic quality. Accreditation is an official assessment given by a particular accreditation agency to a university or institution. Another indicator that influences academic quality is the quality of the study program. Study programs that offer quality programs and have advantages in certain fields can attract prospective students to choose that university.

The university brand includes academic reputation, facilities and infrastructure, study programs and curriculum, alumni achievements, as well as overall campus experience and life. A good and respected academic reputation is often the main factor influencing students' decisions, because they tend to choose universities that are considered to have high quality education, adequate facilities and infrastructure, appropriate study programs, impressive alumni achievements, and positive experiences in the environment. Campus is also an important consideration for students in choosing a university.

***H<sub>1</sub>: Location has a positive influence on student decisions.***

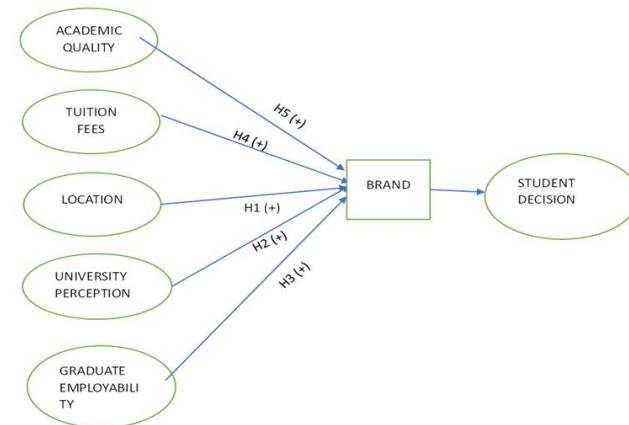
***H<sub>2</sub>: University perceptions have a positive influence on student decisions.***

***H<sub>3</sub>: Graduate employability is positive for student decisions.***

***H<sub>4</sub>: Tuition fees have a positive influence on student decisions.***

***H<sub>5</sub>: Academic quality has a positive influence on student decisions.***

***H<sub>6</sub>: Brand has a positive influence on student decisions.***



**Figure 1.** Research Framework

Source: Processed by the author (2024)

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a descriptive research design to describe, research and explain the reasons for the related variables and conduct hypothesis testing. In collecting data for this research, quantitative methods or techniques were used, namely by distributing surveys in the form of online questionnaires in the form of Google Forms. The sampling method uses a purposive sampling technique which allows researchers to distribute questionnaires to respondents who match the criteria which are sent via Google Mail to each intended respondent. The purpose of using this technique is to make it easier for researchers to obtain research samples.

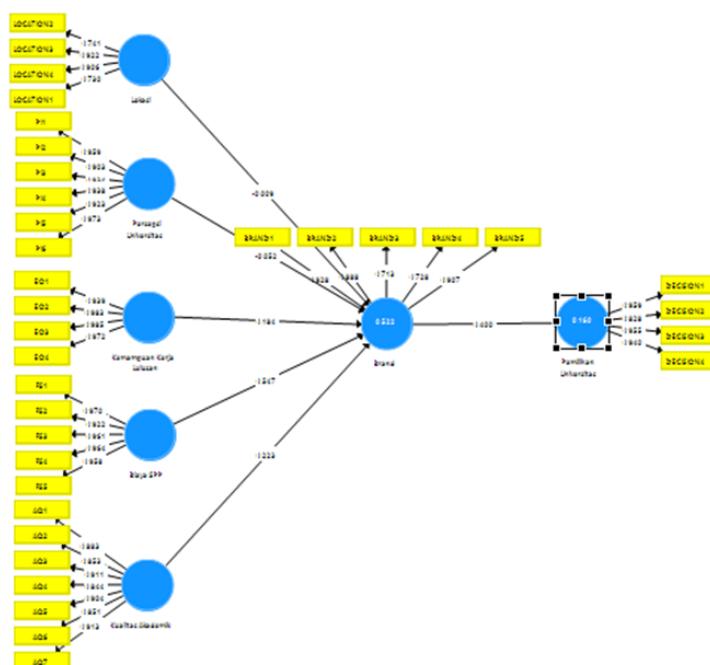
**Tabel 1.** Descriptive Analysis of Demographic Variables

Variabel Demografis	N	%
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	53	25,8
Female	145	73,2
<i>Faculty</i>		
Faculty of Business and Economic	44	22,2
Faculty of Law	19	9,6
Faculty of Islamic Religious Sciences	12	6,1
Faculty of Medical	9	4,5
Faculty Mathematics and Natural Sciences	21	10,6
Faculty of Psychology and Cultural Sciences	46	23,2
Faculty of Civil Engineering and Planning	18	9,1
Faculty of Technology and Industry		
School	29	14,6
Private	68	34,3
Country	130	65,7
<i>Pocket Money Month</i>		
Rp500.000-<Rp1.000.000	78	39,4
	70	35,4

Variabel Demografis	N	%
Rp1.000.000 -<Rp2.000.000	36	18,2
Rp1.000.000 -<Rp2.000.000	7	3,5
Rp3.000.000-<Rp.4.000.000	4	2
Rp4.000.000 -< Rp5.000.000	3	1,5
Rp< 5.000.000		
<i>Age</i>	160	68
15-20	38	19,2
21-25		
<i>People who most influence the decision</i>	121	61,1
Self	63	31,8
Parents	9	4,5
Relation	4	2
High School Teacher		
<i>Entrance option</i>	96	49
First Choice	100	51
Second Choice After Failing to enter PTN		
<i>Registration Scheme</i>	137	70,2
CBT (Computer-Based Test)	53	26,8
SIBER (Report-Based Selection)	6	3
PSB (Achievement Student Search)		

Source: Processed by the author (2024)

## ANALYSIS RESULTS



**Figure 2.** Outer Model Result

Source: Primary Data Processed (2024)

### Convergent Validity Test

A variable has adequate validity if it exceeds 0,50 (Hair *et al.*, 2019).

**Table 2.** Validity Test Results

	LOCATION	PI	EO	FS	AQ	BRAND	DECISION
LOCATION1	0,730						
LOCATION2	0,741						
LOCATION3	0,922						
LOCATION4	0,906						
PI1		0,959					
PI2		0,903					
PI3		0,934					
PI4		0,938					
PI5		0,923					
PI6		0,973					
EO1			0,939				
EO2			0,983				
EO3			0,985				
EO4			0,972				
FS1				0,97			
FS2				0,922			
FS3				0,961			
FS4				0,964			
FS5				0,958			
AQ1					0,883		
AQ2					0,853		
AQ3					0,911		
AQ4					0,844		
AQ5					0,904		
AQ6					0,851		
BRAND1						0,928	
BRAND2						0,888	
BRAND3						0,713	
BRAND4						0,728	
BRAND5						0,907	
DECISION1							0,959
DECISION2							0,828
DECISION3							0,955
DECISION4							0,94

Source: Primary Data (2024)

### Discriminant Validity Test

**Tabel 3.** Fornell-Larcker Criterion for Discriminant Validity Test

	FS	BRAND	EQ	AQ	LOCATION	DECISION	PI
FS	0,955						
BRAND	0,662	0,838					
EQ	0,178	0,325	0,97				

	FS	BRAND	EQ	AQ	LOCATION	DECISION	PI
AQ	0,432	0,491	0,242	0,88			
LOCATION	0,157	0,092	0,017	0,061	0,83		
DECISION	0,005	0,4	0,342	0,12	0,056	0,922	
PI	0,254	0,178	0,197	0,245	0,032	-0,03	0,939

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Table 3 displays the square root AVE value in the Fornell-Larcker criteria. Each square root AVE value for this variable shows a higher result compared to the value of the variable below it. This shows satisfactory results according to the measurement criteria of Fornell & Larcker (1981). Therefore, all variables can be considered discriminantly valid in this test.

**Tabel 4.** Values Heterotrait-Monotrait

	FS	BRAND	EQ	AQ	LOCATION	DECISION	PI
FS							
BRAND	0,659						
EQ	0,182	0,351					
AQ	0,447	0,532	0,251				
LOCATION	0,152	0,092	0,044	0,096			
DECISION	0,03	0,443	0,361	0,124	0,064		
PI	0,258	0,174	0,198	0,251	0,046		0,052

Source: Primary Data (2024)

The HTMT value of all variables is below 0,85 (Henseler, Ringle and Sarstedt, 2015). This indicates that the results of this test are acceptable. Thus, it can be concluded that all variables in this study have obtained adequate discriminant validity.

### Reliability Test

In this study, the reliability test parameters depend on the cronbach alpha and composite reliability (CR) values which must exceed 0,6 for the variable to be considered reliable (Hair Jr. *et al.*, 2021).

**Tabel 5.** Reliability Test

Variabel	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability
Location	0,976	0,981
University Perception	0,894	0,921
Graduate Employability	0,979	0,985
Tuition Fees	0,951	0,96
Academic Quality	0,891	0,897
Brand	0,941	0,958
University Decision	0,973	0,978

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Table 5 reflects that all variables show cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) values that exceed 0,6; in accordance with the criteria applied in this research. Thus, the results of this test are acceptable. The higher the cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values, the higher the level of reliability.

## Collinearity Test

**Tabel 6.** Collinearity Test

	FS	BRAND	EQ	AQ	LOCATION	DECISION	PI
FS		1,298					
BRAND						1,000	
EQ			1,09				
AQ				1,295			
LOCATION					1,026		
DECISION							
PI						1,116	

Source: Primary Data (2024)

The collinearity test is based on the results of the variance inflation factor (VIF) value (Hair Jr. *et al.*, 2021). The table above shows that the results of this research's collinearity test do not indicate the presence of critical multicollinearity problems. This is because the variance inflation factor (VIF) value for all variables is no more than 5 (VIF < 5). In fact, all the VIF values displayed are far below 3, which means that the test results are far from critical multicollinearity problems.

## Coefficient of Determination Test

**Tabel 7.** Coefficient of Determination Test (R-Square)

Variabel	R Square	R Square Adjusted
BRAND	0,522	0,509
DECISION	0,332	0,311

Source: Primary Data (2024)

The coefficient of determination test uses R-square to measure how effectively the independent variable explains variations in the dependent variable. The R-Square value of the Brand variable (0,522) shows that this variable can be explained by independent variables such as Location, University Perception, Graduate Employability, Tuition Fees, and Academic Quality of 52,2%. This means that 47,8% of other factors outside the scope of this research have the potential to influence the Brand variable. Meanwhile, the R-Square value of the University Choice intention variable (0,332) indicates that this variable can be influenced by independent variables such as University Perception, Graduate Employability, Tuition Fees, Academic Quality and Brand by 33,2%. In other words, 66,8% of other factors not included in this study have the potential to influence the University Choice intention variable.

## Q-Square Test

The Q-Square test is used to evaluate the predictive relevance of endogenous constructs predicted by the constructs that influence them.

**Tabel 8.** Q-Square Test

Variabel	Q Square
Brand	0,337
Decicion	0,256

Source: Primary Data (2024)

According to the Q-Square test results recorded in Table 8, the Brand variable ( $Q^2 = 0,337$ ) is predicted by the variables Location, University Perception, Graduate Employability, Tuition Fees, and Academic Quality by 33,7%. Meanwhile, the University Choice variable ( $Q^2 = 0,256$ ) is predicted by Location, University Perception, Graduate Employability, Tuition Fees, and Academic Quality by 25,6%.

### **Path Coefficient Test**

The results of testing are carried out by considering the T-statistic value and P-value. The research hypothesis is declared accepted if the T-statistic value exceeds 1,96 (T-statistic  $> 1,96$ ). Furthermore, a hypothesis is considered significant if the P-value is less than 0,05 (P-value  $< 0,05$ ).

**Tabel 9.** Path Coefficient Test

	$\beta$	T Statistic	P Values	Conclusion
Location -> University Decision	0,079	0,736	0,462	REJECTED
University Perception -> University Decision	-0,073	1,005	0,316	REJECTED
Graduate Employability -> University Decision	0,242	2,5	0,013	ACCEPTED
Tuition Fees -> University Decision	-0,43	4,081	0,000	REJECTED
Academic Quality -> University Decision	-0,052	0,688	0,492	REJECTED
Brand -> University Decision	0,63	5,332	0,000	ACCEPTED

Source: Primary Data (2024)

## **Discussion**

### **The Influence of Location on University Selection Decisions**

Based on the research results, it was found that location did not influence the decision to choose a university. In the context of university selection, location is often considered an important factor that can influence student decisions. However, there is an argument that location is not always the main factor in choosing a university. Several reasons may explain why location does not always influence university selection decisions significantly.

In the era of globalization and advances in information technology, accessibility is no longer a major obstacle. Students currently have easier and faster access to information about universities in various locations, including those abroad. Prospective students can easily access information to get information about the universities they are interested in. Therefore, students are not always limited to universities located in certain areas. Factors such as accessibility, the surrounding environment, and facilities located around the campus have an important role in influencing students' decisions to choose a university with affordable costs according to their financial conditions (Masnawati and Darmawan, 2023).

### **The Influence of University Perceptions on University Selection Decisions**

Based on the research results, it was found that university perceptions did not influence university selection decisions. There are several reasons underlying the hypothesis that university perceptions do not always influence university selection decisions. One of them is

that other factors may be more dominant in influencing prospective students' decisions, such as personal preferences, academic needs, geographical location, costs, and other factors related to their personal lives or social environment (Idham, Aswin and Sari, 2021). Additionally, personal preferences and academic needs can also play a significant role in choosing a university. A prospective student may have a particular interest or talent in a particular field of study and choose a university that offers the best programs or facilities in that field (Puspasari *et al.*, 2021). The cost factor can also be an important consideration in university selection decisions. The burden of educational costs, including tuition fees, living expenses, and other costs, can differ between universities, and this can affect a prospective student's ability to choose a particular university, regardless of perceptions of its quality. Apart from that, the influence of parents, teachers or educational counselors can also play an important role in university selection decisions. Recommendations or views from people a prospective student trusts can influence their decision, even if their perceptions of the university do not align.

### **The Influence of Graduates Employability on University Selection Decisions**

Based on the research results, it was found that graduates' employability influences the decision to choose a university. In this context, students who consider universities to continue their studies The decision to choose a university by students is not only based on academic factors, but also on practical aspects such as job opportunities after graduation. also indirectly consider their career prospects after graduation. It is important to remember that the perception of graduate employability is not only based on individual opinion, but can also be influenced by objective factors such as job placement rates, starting salaries, university reputation among employers and industry, and alumni success in their careers (Støren and Aamodt, 2010).

### **The Influence of Tuition Fees on University Selection Decisions**

Based on the research results, it was found that tuition fees affect negatively university selection decisions. Tuition fees include tuition fees, registration fees, study material fees, administration fees, and other fees required to take part in a study program at a university. Students and their families should consider these costs in the context of their financial capabilities. High tuition fees can be an obstacle for prospective students with limited financial resources. They may tend to choose universities that offer more affordable costs or have larger financial aid programs. In contrast, for prospective students who are financially capable, high tuition fees may not be a determining factor in their decision, but they may prefer universities that offer higher educational value or a better reputation (Aprillita and Njotowidjojo, 2023). Apart from that, prospective students also consider the values and benefits they get from the tuition fees they pay. They may view tuition fees as an investment in their education and choose universities that offer high-quality study programs, good facilities, research or internship opportunities, and strong alumni networks.

### **The Influence of Academic Quality on University Selection Decisions**

Based on the research results, it was found that academic quality does not influence the decision to choose a university. Although the academic quality of a university is important, it is not the only factor influencing prospective students' university selection decisions. Several reasons why academic quality may not be a determining factor in the decision to choose a university are as follows: First, the strength of Brand and Reputation is often the main factor influencing student choices. Second, the decision to choose a university is also influenced by non-academic factors such as geographical location, campus facilities, cost of living, and social environment.

Third, the suitability of the study program with the interests and career goals of prospective students is often the main consideration. Fourth, practical experience and internship opportunities in the workplace can also be important factors in choosing a university. Finally, financial considerations, such as tuition and financial aid, may also influence college selection decisions. Thus, although academic quality remains important, university selection decisions are complex and influenced by various interrelated factors (Turnip, Rosmiati and Nasori, 2022).

### **Brand Influence on University Selection Decisions**

Based on the research results, it was found that brand influences university selection decisions. A strong brand image can increase prospective students' trust and confidence in the quality of education offered by the university. Universities with a good reputation tend to be considered to have high academic standards, adequate facilities, and a strong alumni network, all of which are deciding factors for prospective students. A strong brand image can also increase the university's attractiveness and prestige in competition with other institutions. Prospective students tend to be more interested in joining universities that are considered prestigious and have a good reputation in society. A positive brand image can create a sense of identity and pride among students and alumni, which in turn can influence the perception and reputation of the university as a whole. A consistent and well-managed brand image can help universities attract quality talent and resources, including lecturers, researchers and industrial partners (Juliana and Johan, 2020).

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the research results: (1) University location, university perception, and academic quality have no influence on university selection; (2) graduate employability, and brand have a positive and significant influence; (3) while tuition fees have a negative and significant influence. This research has important benefits and implications for universities. The benefit, this research helps universities in developing more effective marketing strategies by emphasizing influencing factors such as graduate employability, tuition fees, and university brand. In addition, universities can allocate resources more efficiently, focusing on improving the university brand and graduate employability rather than improving location or academic quality which turns out to be insignificant.

The implication is that universities must direct promotional efforts at significant aspects such as the university brand and graduate employability, with marketing campaigns that highlight the advantages of graduates in the world of work and the positive image of the university. Considering that tuition fees influence university selection, universities need to ensure that the fees set are competitive and commensurate with the quality of services provided. Discounts or scholarships can also be used as a strategy to attract prospective students. Even though academic quality does not have a significant impact, universities still need to maintain academic standards and ensure the curriculum is adapted to industry needs to increase graduate employability.

A limitation in this research is that this research only focuses on one university, namely the Islamic University of Indonesia, the data collected in this research is limited to a certain time period and may not reflect changes in dynamics or trends that occurred after the research was conducted, the sample size used in this research may not be large enough to represent the overall student population at the Islamic University of Indonesia. Therefore, researchers provide several suggestions, namely universities must invest resources in effective marketing campaigns to strengthen the brand, academic quality should not be the main factor in university

selection decisions, it is still important for universities to maintain and improve academic standards, research further about how engagement can be increased in the educational environment to improve student satisfaction, as well as strategies that can be implemented to increase overall student engagement and satisfaction.

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