

## Customer Satisfaction Analysis: Factors Enhancing Purchase Decisions in Higher Education Institution

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### Abstrak

Higher education institutions face numerous obstacles, including severe rivalry. Higher education institutions must innovate to address these difficulties. The primary goal of this study is to investigate and analyze the elements that influence customer satisfaction and purchase decisions in higher education institutions. This research used quantitative methodologies, with questionnaires distributed to 385 students at one of Indonesia's institutions. The data will be processed using path analysis and correlational analysis with SEM-PLS in the SmartPLS software. The study's findings indicate that customer experience had positive and significant impact on customer satisfaction and purchase decisions ( $p < 0.05$ ). Communication quality and event marketing positively and significant impacts customer experience and purchasing decisions ( $p < 0.05$ ). Customer satisfaction significantly affects purchasing decisions ( $p < 0.05$ ). Higher education institutions must focus on the elements that influence consumer satisfaction and purchase decisions. This can be accomplished through excellent quality communication and appealing marketing strategies.

**Keywords:** Integrated Marketing Communication, Customer Experience, Communication Quality, Event Marketing, Customer Satisfaction, Purchase Decision

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## INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions face many challenges and intense competition (Le Roux & Van Rensburg, 2014). Research in higher education on choice and decision making is increasingly interesting because students have many options available to consider (D'Uggento et al., 2023). College selection has shifted from quality to value, a term with multiple dimensions and complexities (Doña-Toledo et al., 2017) (D'Uggento et al., 2023). Psychological elements such as hopes, aspirations, and personal opinions of students and their families, as well as the perception of the university, all effects of decision-making (Bertaccini et al., 2021) (Doña-Toledo et al., 2017). All these elements can be integrated with the concept of customer experience at universities, which shows the value that students perceive from their total university experience (Petruzzellis & Romanazzi, 2010) (Petruzzellis et al., 2006).

Customer experience is one of the innovations utilized by educational institutions to address issues and compete more effectively. Customer experience, as mentioned by Pine and Gilmore (1999) (in Mehmet and Marit Engen, 2011), has a significant differentiation and value at the marketing stage. According to Forbes, 74% of buyers base their purchasing decisions solely on their experience. According to Cision PR Newswire, 81% of organizations see customer experience as a competitive difference. Then Gartner stated that up to 80% of organizations compete primarily on customer experience. According to

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e-commerce marketing studies, customer experience can influence customer purchasing behavior, hence increasing sales (Jaiswal & Singh, 2020).

Customer satisfaction relies heavily on effective communication. To develop strong and gratifying relationships, it is critical to recognize, verify, and constructively respond to nonverbal cues. Customers tend to respond positively to information presented following great communication, which can lead to satisfaction (Chung et al., 2020). Communication quality refers to the level of social interaction and communication between two parties, namely the sender and receiver of information. The challenge faced by higher education institutions regarding communication is how the marketing team and all stakeholders within the institution can build effective communication and provide quality information to customers and potential customers. If these challenges can be overcome well, the hope is that customers will find suitable solutions and feel satisfied, which will ultimately encourage increased purchasing decisions.

Events provide an essential role in many institutions' communications efforts (Neus, 2020), since they help to create relationships with stakeholders and deliver institutional brand messages (Neus, 2020). Events are critical components of the collegiate marketing mix. Higher education is a complicated structure with numerous stakeholders, including students, researchers, lecturers, research partners, sponsors, and the larger community. These universities typically have multiple departments, and other entities, such as students or associated institutions, may arrange events involving a variety of higher education stakeholders (Neus, 2020). As a result, the number of events at universities is typically huge, with subjects that differ greatly from another.

Wood & Kinnunen, (2020) believes that event marketing is the most successful means of bringing things closer to the market. According to this explanation, higher education institutions confront challenges in planning and coordinating creative and appealing marketing activities that allow potential customers to have a unique experience and become interested in enrolling at the university. An analysis of several research on the topic of marketing activities in education reveals that, while marketing activities are changing, attention to this issue remains low. According to Nørgård, (2021) research, there has been a movement in event format from offline to online, with the potential for hybrid formats. The study concludes that marketing efforts are being transformed online, and students are becoming more interested in events that allow for online participation.

Higher education institutions are obliged to comprehend and skillfully identify aspects that influence customer satisfaction and purchase decisions. Customer satisfaction is a measure of customers' belief that the services they receive will result in a favorable experience (Udo et al., 2010). Customer experience during the purchasing process contributes significantly to customer satisfaction, which in turn influences future behavior, such as repurchase decisions and loyalty levels. According to D'Uggento et al., (2023) purchasing decisions are influenced by the service provider's image, which is related to customer trust.

Drawing from the explanation provided, it's feasible to construct and pinpoint the factors influencing customer satisfaction during purchasing decisions within higher education institutions. This research aims to investigate customer experience,

communication effectiveness, and event marketing to ascertain the primary driver of customer satisfaction and consequently, heightened purchasing decisions.

### **Hypothesis Development**

To describe the research objectives, hypotheses are developed using social marketing theory, which seeks to offer information (cognitive), change attitudes (affective), and influence behavior. In the notion of social marketing design, program implementation and control are considered to impact the acceptability of ideas and include considerations of product planning, pricing, communication, distribution, and marketing (İltaş & Demirgüneş, 2020).

### **Relationship of customer experience towards purchase decisions**

Several companies prioritize designing and delivering holistic customer experiences, resulting in higher customer value (Da Silva & Minciotti, 2022). Kim et al., (2008) emphasizes the importance of implementing this environment for enterprises to generate memorable experiences and contribute to a broader economy beyond merely production and services. According to Da Silva, 2(021) companies have shifted their focus from price, quality, and service to customer experience to gain a competitive advantage.

Previous research conducted by Esmailpour & Mohseni, (2019) on the fast food and restaurant industry in Shiraz shows that there is positive and significant influence of five dimensions of customer experience, including behavioral experience, cognitive experience, affective experience, sensory experience and social experiences on consumer purchasing intentions. Based on evidence from previous research, it can be concluded that the initial hypothesis proposed is as follows.

H<sup>1</sup>: Customer experience has a significant effect on purchasing decisions.

### **Relationship of customer experience to customer satisfaction**

Customer experience is generally recognized as a significant factor in determining perceived value (Kusumawati & Sri Rahayu, 2020), particularly in terms of customer satisfaction. According to Schmitt, (2010) customer experience can lead to satisfaction and loyalty by addressing perception, emotions, thoughts, actions, and relationships. Satisfaction with a product or service occurs when the customer's wants, desires, and expectations are met, resulting in repeat purchases and loyalty (Sondoh et al., 2007 in Minh-Tri Ha, 2021). (Walter et al., 2010) underline that to be competitive, a company must understand its customers' unique characteristics and what contributes to value. Customer experience is a collaborative action between supplier and customer that occurs when the customer knows and remembers the values (Chepur & Bellamkonda, 2019).

Previous research conducted by Minh-Tri Ha (2021) using the case study of Starbucks Coffee in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Empirically, the study's findings demonstrate that, through customer pleasure, the four components of the customer experience have a major impact on customer loyalty. Based on evidence from previous research, it can be concluded that the initial hypothesis proposed is as follows.

H<sup>2</sup>: Customer experience has a significant effect on customer satisfaction.

### **Relationship of communication quality towards purchase decisions**

Anderson & Narus, (1990) describe communication as "formal and informal sharing of meaningful and timely information between partners." Sharma & Patterson, (1999) define communication efficacy as the formal or informal sharing of important and timely information between service providers and clients who have a sufficient level of compassion for one another. Communication and engagement between the registration department and prospective students is unavoidable during the admissions process at higher education institutions. Throughout this process, both sides exchange information, both directly and indirectly, with the goal of achieving successful communication.

Previous research conducted by Zhao et al., (2020) demonstrated that information quality is positively associated to purchase intention in China, with trust in e-commerce platforms moderating the relationship. The quality of information is determined by the recipient's perception of the persuasive or useful content provided. According to (Wu et al., 2021) and (Zhao et al., 2020) this is the most important aspect of the persuasion process. Based on evidence from previous research, it can be concluded that the initial hypothesis proposed is as follows.

H<sup>3</sup>: Communication quality has a significant effect on purchasing decisions.

### **Relationship of communication quality to customer satisfaction**

Communication quality is critical for ensuring customer satisfaction (Lubis et al., 2021). (Montgomery & Baxter, (2013) that good communication demonstrates confidence, comfort, and control. Nonverbal behaviors must be recognized, verified, and fulfilled to foster reassuring, positive, and gratifying partnerships (Yudha, 2015). According to Chung et al., (2020), clients who receive quality communication are more likely to feel satisfied. Customers tend to prioritize the effectiveness of communication and information quality; these two factors are regarded as strong evidence that can assist customers in developing a clearer understanding of products and brands, as well as satisfaction with the information received (Zhao et al., 2020).

Previous research conducted by Curana et al., (2022) demonstrates that the quality of communication has a substantial impact on customer satisfaction at the e-commerce Shoppe using live chat customer support. Based on evidence from previous research, it can be concluded that the initial hypothesis proposed is as follows.

H<sup>4</sup>: Communication quality has a significant effect on customer satisfaction.

### **Relationship of marketing event to customer satisfaction**

An event can expose people to new experiences, resulting in a wide range of expressions. It also helps businesses achieve their marketing objectives, such as raising brand awareness, enhancing their market position, and increasing sales (Zarantonello & Schmitt, 203). Defines marketing activities as events that promote an organization's interests and brand (Wainaina, 2016) (Fadli et al., 2023). Event marketing is a reliable brand communication method that is employed in practically every industry (Neus, 2020). Based on explanation above, relationship between marketing activities and customer satisfaction in higher education is critical and interconnected, particularly when higher education institutions compete to attract and keep students as customers. Higher education

institutions can improve student satisfaction by managing expectations through clear communication, offering services that deliver on promises, and keeping students engaged. This will not only improve the institution's image and reputation, but it will also increase student retention and support from future alumni.

Related to this, previous research conducted by Boo & Busser, (2018) the study determined that combining the ECT model with the experience economy had a positive impact on tourist satisfaction, driven by a sense of enjoyment. The affective-cognitive approach increases understanding of visitor experiences and satisfaction. Based on evidence from previous research, it can be concluded that the initial hypothesis proposed is as follows.

H<sup>5</sup>: Marketing events have a significant effect on customer satisfaction.

### **Relationship of marketing event towards purchase decisions**

Event marketing is a type of brand promotion that involves the brand in cultural, social, sporting, or other activities that have a high level of community participation (Andrews & Shimp, 2018). Marketing events are part of the marketing strategy for establishing consumer engagement, and it is intended that customers will continue to develop buy intentions. Event marketing should be incorporated into event planning to generate more personal and memorable moments in the eyes of individual consumers. Event marketing, when done correctly, may broaden and strengthen the relationship between sponsors, businesses, and customers.

Previous research conducted by (Kok et al., (2018) demonstrates that event marketing has a favorable and significant impact on purchasing decisions in the Shopee e-commerce business. Based on evidence from previous research, it can be concluded that the initial hypothesis proposed is as follows.

H<sup>6</sup>: Marketing events have a significant effect on purchasing decisions.

### **Relationship of customer satisfaction to purchase decisions**

The third key factor, customer experience, communication quality, and event marketing, is strongly linked to customer satisfaction, which ultimately influences purchasing decisions. Customer satisfaction has emerged as an essential idea in marketing (Dash et al., 2021). Customer satisfaction is commonly defined in the literature as a combined response after getting and using a product or service for a set length of time (Giese & Cote, 2000) Different tactics should be taken depending on the type of product or service. Furthermore, customer satisfaction is seen as a significant indicator of purchase intention, a substantial predictor of customer loyalty, and a combination of transaction evaluation and overall assessment (Dash et al., 2021).

Previous research conducted by Dash et al., (2021) research demonstrates that brand identity and image have a substantial impact on customer satisfaction and purchase intention. Customer satisfaction has a substantial impact on purchasing intentions. Based on evidence from previous research, it can be concluded that the initial hypothesis proposed is as follows.

H<sup>7</sup>: Customer satisfaction has a significant effect on purchasing decisions.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This is explanatory quantitative research, with online questionnaires distributed to a sample of respondents via Google Form. The research included 10,196 XYZ University Strata-1 Regular Class students who enrolled during the 2023-2024 academic year. This study will employ a probability sampling technique, namely cluster random sampling. The population exceeds 1,000 respondents, the Yamane formula is used as a sampling approach. Regular undergraduate students at XYZ University's Jakarta, Tangerang, Bekasi, Bandung, Malang, and Semarang campuses have paid tuition fees.

Questionnaires were emailed to respondents between January 8 and January 31, 2024, to obtain a total sample size of 100 for the first portion. The second email was sent from February 15 to February 28, 2024, and received 385 responses. The questionnaire is divided into two sections. The first section comprises the respondent's demographic information such as age, residence, and gender, as well as if they registered at XYZ University and whether they have ever contacted XYZ University customer care. Meanwhile, the second section provides quotes from remarks on the primary research findings.

In this study, the independent variable, dependent variable, and intervening variable are measured using a Likert scale with five response options or answers: Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Neutral (N), Agree (A), and Strongly Agree (SA). The SmartPLS statistical application is used to do correlational analysis, path analysis with partial least squares (PLS) measurements, structural equation modeling (SEM) and Bootstrapping of the data.

### Validity Testing

The validity test assesses how well a measuring instrument measures what it is expected to measure (Abdullah, 2015). The validity test also determines whether a research questionnaire is valid (Ghozali, 2016). The validity test also determines whether the researcher's questions are suitable. A questionnaire is considered valid if the questions accurately represent what it will measure. The validity test determines the accuracy of the questions in the questionnaire that will be administered to respondents. This study's validity test utilized the Pearson Correlation technique, analyzing significant values in the table. A significance value of 0.05 indicates that the question is valid; if the significance value is less than 0.05, the question is invalid (Priyanto, 2014)

This study uses SmartPLS 4.0 software for statistical data processing. Each variable's validity is determined using one of two types of validity tests:

- a. To test convergent validity, consider two values: factor loading ( $>0.07$ ) for significant latent variables, and average variance extracted (AVE) ( $>0.05$ ) for adequate convergent validity (Sarwono, 2012).
- b. Discriminant validity evaluate of the cross-loading value, one variable must have a value more than 0.7, or the cross-loading value of the indicator that measures the latent variable must be greater than the other latent variables (Sarwono, 2012).

Validity & Reliability Testing

Table 6. Convergence Validity Result

Variable	Construct	Factor Loading	AVE
Customer Experience	CX1	0.771	0.637
	CX2	0.721	
	CX3	0.770	
	CX4	0.742	
	CX6	0.756	
Communication Quality	CQ2	0.805	0.789
	CQ3	0.798	
	CQ4	0.809	
	CQ5	0.821	
	CQ6	0.763	
	CQ7	0.838	
	CQ8	0.726	
	CQ9	0.818	
Event Marketing	EM1	0.774	0.566
	EM2	0.774	
	EM4	0.744	
	EM5	0.785	
	EM6	0.694	
	EM7	0.826	
	EM8	0.767	
	EM9	0.761	
	EM10	0.785	
	EM11	0.783	
	EM12	0.753	
	EM13	0.777	
	Customer Satisfaction	CS1	
CS2		0.902	
CS3		0.911	
CS4		0.861	
CS5		0.895	
Purchase Decision	PD1	0.739	0.535
	PD2	0.671	
	PD4	0.677	
	PD5	0.828	

In this research, some constructs or inquiries have factor loading values below 0.07, such as the variable "CX", notably the construct "CX5, CX7, CX8, CX9, and CX10", making the construct invalid. Then, in the variable "CQ", the construct "CQ1". The "EM" variable, specifically the "EM3" construct, is not valid. The "PD" variable, which includes the "PD3" construct, is ruled invalid. Aside from these constructs, other study questions were deemed acceptable because they exceeded 0.07. The study still includes some research constructs with percentages less than 0.07, such as "EM6", "PD2", and "PD4". This is regarded because the AVE value for each variable has met the validity conditions and has been certified valid.

So, according to the table above, the outer loading results for the Customer Experience variable (X1) with five indicators range between 0.721 and 0.771. The outer loading results for the Communication Quality (X2) variable, which includes eight indicators, range from 0.726 to 0.838. The Event Marketing (X3) variable, which has 12 indicators, produces outer loading results ranging from 0.694 to 0.826. The outer loading values for the Customer Satisfaction (Z) variable with five indicators range from 0.861 to 0.911. The outer loading findings for the Purchase Decision (Y) variable with four indicators range from 0.671 to 0.828.

Based on these findings, it may be inferred that the outer loading data from statistical calculations comprises 31 constructs with a value greater than 0.07, indicating that they are valid and meet the criteria, whereas 11 constructs with a value less than 0.07 are pronounced invalid and do not match the criterion. According to the results of validity testing in table 6, average variance extracted (AVE) data was received for each variable: Customer Experience (X1) was 0.637, Communication Quality (X2) was 0.789, Event Marketing (X3) was 0.566, Customer Satisfaction (Z) was 0.592, and Purchase Decision (Y) was 0.535. It may be determined that the AVE value of these five variables ranges from 0.535 to 0.789, with an AVE value above 0.5.

**Table 7. Discriminant Validity - Cross Loadings**

	CQ	CS	CX	EM	PD
<b>CQ2</b>	0.805	0.578	0.533	0.506	0.457
<b>CQ3</b>	0.798	0.618	0.495	0.499	0.472
<b>CQ4</b>	0.809	0.517	0.433	0.458	0.440
<b>CQ5</b>	0.821	0.545	0.477	0.504	0.441
<b>CQ6</b>	0.763	0.456	0.412	0.433	0.401
<b>CQ7</b>	0.838	0.536	0.481	0.490	0.460
<b>CQ8</b>	0.726	0.520	0.456	0.477	0.481
<b>CQ9</b>	0.818	0.608	0.506	0.544	0.536
<b>CS1</b>	0.609	0.870	0.577	0.626	0.621
<b>CS2</b>	0.613	0.902	0.580	0.618	0.623
<b>CS3</b>	0.623	0.911	0.623	0.619	0.622
<b>CS4</b>	0.586	0.861	0.589	0.554	0.561
<b>CS5</b>	0.634	0.895	0.566	0.599	0.630



	<b>CQ</b>	<b>CS</b>	<b>CX</b>	<b>EM</b>	<b>PD</b>
<b>CX1</b>	0.462	0.514	0.771	0.556	0.469
<b>CX2</b>	0.437	0.476	0.721	0.451	0.424
<b>CX3</b>	0.419	0.476	0.770	0.525	0.363
<b>CX4</b>	0.482	0.490	0.742	0.489	0.433
<b>CX6</b>	0.441	0.524	0.756	0.517	0.427
<b>EM1</b>	0.481	0.535	0.556	0.774	0.471
<b>EM10</b>	0.407	0.493	0.471	0.785	0.439
<b>EM11</b>	0.489	0.566	0.551	0.783	0.548
<b>EM12</b>	0.524	0.571	0.544	0.753	0.548
<b>EM13</b>	0.557	0.604	0.560	0.777	0.598
<b>EM2</b>	0.431	0.495	0.511	0.774	0.442
<b>EM4</b>	0.527	0.577	0.489	0.744	0.548
<b>EM5</b>	0.556	0.553	0.551	0.785	0.533
<b>EM6</b>	0.420	0.380	0.451	0.694	0.448
<b>EM7</b>	0.445	0.513	0.570	0.826	0.438
<b>EM8</b>	0.378	0.454	0.458	0.767	0.365
<b>EM9</b>	0.375	0.447	0.481	0.761	0.368
<b>PD1</b>	0.413	0.451	0.371	0.463	0.739
<b>PD2</b>	0.332	0.390	0.353	0.365	0.671
<b>PD4</b>	0.283	0.360	0.339	0.352	0.677
<b>PD5</b>	0.585	0.709	0.538	0.605	0.828

Based on table 7, it can be stated that the cross-loading value for each build is greater than the other construct values. This is owing to the construct variables' uniqueness, with each having its own differentiation. If the correlation between the latent variable and each indicator is greater than the correlation between the other latent variables, it can be stated that all the questionnaire's indicators are valid.

**Table 8. Cronbach Alpha & Composite Reliability**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Cronbach's alpha</b>	<b>Composite reliability (rho_a)</b>	<b>Composite reliability (rho_c)</b>
<b>CQ</b>	0.918	0.921	0.933
<b>CS</b>	0.933	0.934	0.949
<b>CX</b>	0.808	0.809	0.867
<b>EM</b>	0.937	0.940	0.946
<b>PD</b>	0.717	0.768	0.820

Based on the table above, we can deduce that the Cronbach Alpha value for each variable range from 0.717 to 0.937. To support the reliability test, the Composite Reliability value for each variable ranged from 0.768 to 0.940. With these data, it is possible to

conclude that each variable has a high level of reliability, as indicated by Cronbach Alpha and Composite Reliability value limits of greater than 0.7.

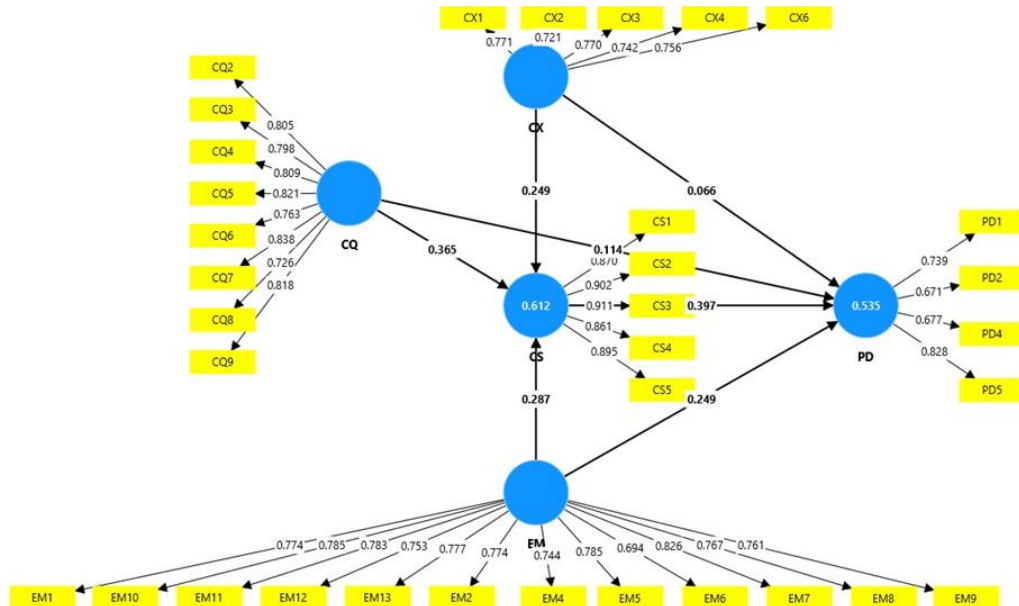


Figure 2. Output Graphic (Path Coefficient)

Source: SEM-PLS Analytics based on this research

The path coefficient demonstrates that customer satisfaction, an intervening variable, can improve the interaction between the customer experience, communication quality, and event marketing variables on the purchase decision variable (path coefficient value of 0.397). Figure 2 also shows that there is a direct relationship between variables "X" and "Y". Then it was explained that there was an indirect relationship in which the variable "X" had a relationship with the variable "Z", resulting in a higher coefficient value for the variable "Y".

The variable "X1" customer experience is positively related to purchase decisions (coefficient value 0.066) and customer satisfaction (coefficient value 0.249), however the path to customer satisfaction has a greater coefficient value. The variable "X2" communication quality also has a positive relationship with purchasing decisions (coefficient value 0.114) and customer satisfaction (coefficient value 0.365), with the highest coefficient among the dependent variables. The variable "X3" event marketing correlates positively with customer satisfaction and purchasing decisions, with nearly identical coefficient values (0.287 and 0.249). The table below provides more information about coefficient values.

**Table 9. Path Coefficient**

Path coefficients	
CQ -> CS	0.365
CQ -> PD	0.114
CS -> PD	0.397
CX -> CS	0.249
CX -> PD	0.066
EM -> CS	0.287
EM -> PD	0.249

**Path Analysis**

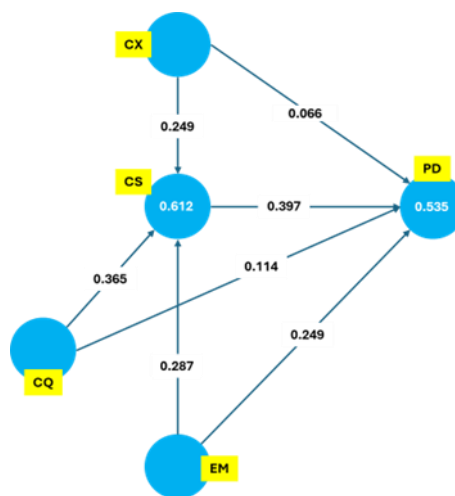


Figure 3. Final Model Path Analysis  
Source: SEM-PLS Analytics based on this research

**Table 10. R-square Overview Result**

	R-square	R-square adjusted
CS	0.612	0.609
PD	0.535	0.530

The R-square value of 0.612 in the model calculation results table indicates that X1, X2, and X3 account for approximately 61% of the variation in variable “Z”. The remaining 37% may be influenced by factors not considered in the study. The R-squared value of 0.535 in the model calculation results, table indicates that X1, X2, and X3 account for approximately 53% of the variation in variable “Y”. The remaining 47% may be influenced by factors not considered in the study. A path model, as illustrated in the graphic below, can be created by calculating the R square value using SmartPLS.

**Table 11. Total Effect**

	<b>CX</b>	<b>CQ</b>	<b>EM</b>	<b>CS</b>	<b>PD</b>
<b>CX (X1)</b>				0.249	0.165
<b>CQ (X2)</b>				0.365	0.259
<b>EM (X3)</b>				0.287	0.363
<b>CS (Z)</b>					0.397
<b>PD (Y)</b>					

Based on table 11, the total impacts in the image above can be deduced as follows:

- The total influence of X1 on Y is 0.165, indicating a positive influence. By increasing one unit, Y can increase by 16.5% both directly and indirectly via Z.
- The total influence of X2 on Y is 0.259, indicating that it has a positive effect. By increasing one unit, Y can increase by 25.9% both directly and indirectly via Z.
- The total influence of X3 on Y is 0.363, indicating that it has a positive effect. By increasing one unit, Y can increase by 36.3% both directly and indirectly via Z.
- The total influence on Y is 0.397, implying that Z has a direct.

### T-Testing Result

**Table 12. T Statistic Calculating Result**

	<b>Standard deviation (STDEV)</b>	<b>P values</b>
<b>CX -&gt; PD</b>	0.059	0.005
<b>CX -&gt; CS</b>	0.056	0.000
<b>CQ -&gt; PD</b>	0.062	0.000
<b>CQ -&gt; CS</b>	0.058	0.000
<b>EM -&gt; CS</b>	0.061	0.000
<b>EM -&gt; PD</b>	0.062	0.000
<b>CS -&gt; PD</b>	0.064	0.000

According to the results of the T test above, several things can be seen below:

- The variable (X1) customer experience for purchase decisions has a significance value of  $0.005 < 0.05$ , implying that customer experience had significant impact on purchase decisions. Next, the variable (X1) customer experience to customer satisfaction had a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ , implying that customer experience had significant impact on customer satisfaction.
- The variable (X2) communication quality for the purchase decision has a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ , indicating a significant impact on the purchase decision. The variable (X2) communication quality on customer satisfaction achieves a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ , indicating that communication quality has a significant influence on customer satisfaction.
- Next, the variable (X3) event marketing to customer satisfaction obtained a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ , so it can be concluded that event marketing has a significant influence on customer satisfaction. Then the variable (X3) event marketing

to the purchase decision obtains a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ , so it can be concluded that event marketing has a significant influence on the purchase decision.

4. Then the result, namely the variable customer satisfaction on the purchase decision, obtained a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ , which means that customer satisfaction has a significant influence on the purchase decision.

### Hypothesis Results

**Table 13. Hypothesis Testing Result**

Hypothesis	Original sample (O)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	Result
H <sup>1</sup>	0.165	2,808	Accepted
H <sup>2</sup>	0.249	4,408	Accepted
H <sup>3</sup>	0.259	4,195	Accepted
H <sup>4</sup>	0.365	6,305	Accepted
H <sup>5</sup>	0.287	4,698	Accepted
H <sup>6</sup>	0.363	5,859	Accepted
H <sup>7</sup>	0.397	6,187	Accepted

Table 13 demonstrates that all the hypotheses proposed have a statistical T-value greater than 1.96. So, based on this table, the entire hypothesis can be accepted. The goal of this study is to determine the impact of customer experience, communication quality, and event marketing features on customer satisfaction when making purchasing decisions in higher education institutions. The findings indicate that the three independent variables have a positive and significant influence on consumer satisfaction and purchase decisions, whereas the intervening variables have a significant influence on the dependent variable (Han, 2018).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Relationship of Customer Experience Towards Purchase Decisions

Tables 12 and 13 indicate that (H1) customer experience has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions in Indonesian higher education institutions, with a probability value of  $2.808 < 1.96$  and a p-value of 0.005. This is consistent with prior research conducted by Esmaeilpour & Mohseni, (2019) on the Effect of Customer Experience on Consumer Purchase Intention, which evaluated 385 consumers and fast-food restaurants in Shiraz, Iran. This study demonstrates a favorable and significant relationship between customer experience and purchase intention across five categories of customer experience: behavioral experience, cognitive experience, effective experience, sensory experience, and social experience.

The elements of customer experience, which include sense, think, feel, act, and relate, have a considerable impact on study topics in both the food and beverage sector and higher education. This supports Meyer and Schwager's (2007) theory that customer experience is tied to what they do and think. Higher education institutions can enhance

pleasant customer experiences by adapting to their feelings, requirements, and lifestyles. This requires customization or personalization for each client type.

#### **Relationship of Customer Experience to Customer Satisfaction**

Tables 12 and 13 indicate that (H2) customer experience has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction in Indonesian higher education institutions, with a probability value of  $4.408 < 1.96$  and a p-value of 0.000. This is consistent with Minh - Tri Ha's (2021) prior research on the impact of customer experience on customer satisfaction and loyalty, which was done on 335 Starbucks Coffee customers in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The study's findings indicate that consumer satisfaction and loyalty are greatly influenced by four characteristics of customer experience: sensory experience, emotional experience, social experience, and service quality.

As a summary, in higher education institutions, customer satisfaction can be achieved by providing a positive experience, which can lead to increased purchasing decisions. Customer satisfaction in higher education institutions can be accomplished through a variety of positive experiences, including good service from marketing staff, learning new things, helpful and polite customer service, and marketing personnel who provide efficient answers to customer issues. Then, when customers are satisfied with their registration experience, they are more likely to consider making a payment.

#### **Relationship of Communication Quality Towards Purchase Decisions**

Tables 12 and 13 demonstrate that (H3) communication quality has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions in Indonesian higher education institutions, with a probability value of  $4.195 < 1.96$  and a p-value of 0.000. This is consistent with recent research by Zhao et al., (2020) on electronic word-of-mouth and customer purchase intentions in social ecommerce, which looked at 209 users of China's Xiaohongshu marketplace. The findings of this study demonstrate that information quality has a positive association with purchase intentions, which is mitigated by trust.

Communication quality and information quality are closely related, albeit with different focuses. Communication quality focuses on the technique and process of transmitting messages, whereas information quality focuses on the substance and authenticity of the information provided. Both play a crucial part in ensuring that the message is properly received and comprehended by the recipient. In higher education institutions, the relationship between communication quality and purchase decisions is quite close, and it has a direct impact on many areas of the student experience, beginning with registration and continuing through graduation. Customers demand effective quality communication throughout the registration process to acquire exact and correct information on tuition fees, study programs, graduate career possibilities, and all registration requirements. The marketing staff must continually maintain high-quality contact with clients so that potential university students can understand all the information they require.

#### **Relationship of Communication Quality to Customer Satisfaction**

Tables 12 and 13 demonstrate that (H4) communication quality has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction in Indonesian higher education institutions, with a probability value of  $6.305 < 1.96$  and a p-value of 0.000. This is consistent with previous

research conducted by (Karimah et al., 2022) on the Influence of E-Service Quality, Communication Quality, and Perceived Value on Customer Satisfaction in Customer Service Via Live Chat in the Marketplace Industry, which surveyed 163 Shopee users. The research findings indicate that communication quality has a major impact on consumer satisfaction in live chat marketplace services.

The quality of communication in higher education institutions, particularly in marketing, is critical for attracting and retaining students, improving the institution's image, and maintaining positive relationships with all stakeholders. According to this study, communication quality influences customer satisfaction by moderating communication correctness, credibility, and competence. The marketing team's communication during the new student registration process can take the form of providing accurate information about the solutions customers require, demonstrating courtesy to customers, and displaying verbal and nonverbal messages in a way that customers can easily understand, understand, and interpret. This is possible if the marketing team is knowledgeable about customer service, resulting in effective and high-quality communication.

#### **Relationship of Marketing Event to Customer Satisfaction**

Tables 12 and 13 demonstrate that (H5) event marketing has a significant beneficial effect on customer satisfaction in Indonesian higher education institutions, with a probability value of  $4.698 < 1.96$  and a p-value of 0.000. This is consistent with prior research by Soyoung Boo and James A. Busser (2018) on guests' Hotel Event Experience and Satisfaction: An Integrative Approach, which evaluated 663 guests at a single hotel resort. The study's findings indicate that event experiences for tourists provide a better knowledge of tourist pleasure, particularly those driven by a nice atmosphere.

Based on the findings of this study, higher education institutions should focus on successful marketing methods for delivering products and services to clients. Customers will obtain precise and correct information through marketing initiatives, leaving a lasting impression and increasing consumer engagement. Marketing through events, often known as event marketing, is widely regarded as the most effective method of introducing new items to the marketplace. It is thought that incorporating customers in all marketing activities will boost customer satisfaction.

Wood & Masterman, (2008) discovered that there are 71 aspects that can improve the event experience: engagement, interaction, immersion, intensity, individuality, innovation, and integrity. XYZ University has engaged in a variety of marketing efforts to encourage customers to interact with products and services, as well as the use of influencers or brand ambassadors to elicit emotional responses to the brand. Aside from that, XYZ University conducts activities on a constant basis and packages them in a personalized manner based on the demands of each consumer.

#### **Relationship of Marketing Event Towards Purchase Decisions**

Tables 12 and 13 demonstrate that (H5) event marketing has a positive and substantial effect on purchase decisions at Indonesian higher education institutions, with a probability value of  $5.859 < 1.96$  and a p-value of 0.000. This is consistent with prior research undertaken by Kok et al., (2018) on The Role of Brand Ambassador, Event

Marketing, and Digital Marketing on Shopee User Purchase Decisions, which evaluated 100 Shopee users quantitatively. The study's findings indicate that brand ambassadors and event marketing have a favorable and significant influence on purchasing decisions, however internet marketing has no positive influence.

According to Saronto and Rosita (2018:2), event marketing is a promotional activity that aims to capture the target audience's attention and engage them with the brand. This incident has a big impact since it directly affects customers. Meanwhile, Wood (2000) believes that event marketing is the most effective approach for bringing products to market. The marketing event must be able to leave a lasting impression on each participant to impress consumers. Marketing involvement in an event, when properly managed, can widen and strengthen the interaction between customers and the marketing team.

Higher education institutions must continue to develop their most effective and efficient marketing operations to their clients so that the information they wish to transmit is well received. Marketing activities arranged by educational institutions must have a major impact and make a lasting impression on all participants. This way, clients and potential customers will remember the excellent experience for a long time.

### **Relationship of Customer Satisfaction to Purchase Decisions**

Tables 12 and 13 demonstrate that (H5) event marketing has a positive and significant impact on purchase decisions at Indonesian higher education institutions, with a probability value of  $6.187 < 1.96$  and a p-value of 0.000. This is consistent with prior research undertaken by Ganesh Dash, Kip Kiefer, and Justin Paul (2021) on Marketing to Millennials: Marketing 4.0, Customer Satisfaction, and Purchase Intention, which investigated 508 prospective first-time house purchasers in India's real estate market. The study's findings indicate that brand identity and image are the most important factors in determining customer happiness and purchase intention. This differs from brand integrity and brand interaction, which have no meaningful impact on customer happiness or purchase intentions. Meanwhile, consumer happiness has a substantial impact on purchase intentions.

Previous research has shown that if customers are satisfied with the service and quality of the product or service, they will make further purchases. Customer satisfaction is an important aspect in higher education institutions, since it can influence consumer purchasing decisions and the institution's long-term viability. According to Kotler and Keller (2012), satisfaction is a feeling of pleasure or disappointment that may be related to the perception one has of a product or service and their expectations. Meanwhile, Pereira et al., (2016) noted that customer happiness is vital since it influences future purchasing decisions and fosters loyalty.

Student and potential student happiness at higher education institutions must be considered because it has a substantial impact on purchase decisions, retention, and loyalty. Prospective students who are satisfied with the university's offerings, marketing efforts, pleasant experiences, and brand are more likely to enroll. In keeping with this, students who are satisfied with the institution's performance will be able to finish their studies rather than transfer to another university. Students who are satisfied with the university are more likely to promote it to others, and this form of marketing is thought to be beneficial in



attracting potential students. High student satisfaction can also foster commitment to the university; this is vital not just while students are still studying, but also when they become alumni, as they can actively serve the university in a variety of ways.

## CONCLUSION

Through this research, this study successfully demonstrated that customer experience has a substantial impact on consumer satisfaction and purchase decisions. To compete in the commercial world, higher education institutions must provide a favorable consumer experience. Then, the quality of communication, which aims for effective communication, has a substantial impact on consumer satisfaction and purchase decisions. Marketing initiatives have a substantial impact on consumer satisfaction and purchase decisions. Attractive marketing events can have a major impact and are the most effective approach to getting things into the market. Customer happiness has a big impact on purchase decisions. Higher education institutions must continue to increase customer satisfaction in a variety of areas, including customer experience, communication quality, and marketing efforts, because all these factors can influence purchase decisions.

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