



Family Support and University Choice Decision: A Strategic Perspective in Private Higher Education

Rita Sri Silvia Pamuji

Program Studi Manajemen, Fakultas Ekonomika Dan Bisnis, Universitas Majalengka, Majalengka, Indonesia

*[*ritasri@unma.ac.id](mailto:ritasri@unma.ac.id)*

Article history: **Submission:** 25 February 2026

Revised: 7 June 2026

Accepted: 9 June 2026

ABSTRACT

Rising competition among private higher education institutions has made university choice decisions increasingly important. This study aims to examine the influence of family support on university choice decisions and to explore its strategic implications within the context of higher education. The research adopts a quantitative approach using survey data collected from 200 students enrolled in Majalengka University. The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling with the Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) technique. The findings indicate that family support has a positive and significant effect on students' university choice decisions. These results confirm the importance of social support mechanisms in educational decision-making processes. From a strategic perspective, the findings of this study indicate that family driven decision making dynamics may contribute to shaping preferences toward higher education institutions. However, this study does not directly examine broader institutional outcomes; therefore, the strategic implications should be interpreted with caution and require further empirical investigation. Drawing on Social Support Theory and the Resource-Based View, this study focuses on how family support functions as a social resource influencing university choice decisions within a strategic higher education context. The results provide important implications for management this institution in developing more effective student recruitment strategies. This study extends the strategic management perspective by positioning family support as a strategic social resource influencing institutional competitiveness in university choice decision.

Keywords: family support; higher education; social influence; student decision-making; university choice.

INTRODUCTION

The global higher education landscape has undergone significant transformation over the past two decades, driven by intensified institutional competition, increasing student mobility, and the growing marketization of education systems. Higher educations are no longer viewed solely as educational institutions but increasingly operate within competitive market environments where attracting and retaining students becomes a critical determinant of institutional sustainability (Hazelkorn, 2024; Marginson, 2024). In many countries, particularly those with rapidly expanding university choice decision sectors must continuously compete to secure student enrollment as a key resource for institutional growth and financial stability (Altbach & de Wit, 2024; Mok, 2024).

Higher education institutions now engage in branding, positioning strategies, and relationship marketing in order to attract prospective students and strengthen institutional

reputation (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2024; Pinar et al., 2024). As a result, the decision-making process of prospective students has become a central issue in higher education management research, particularly in understanding the determinants that influence university choice behavior (Chapleo & Simms, 2024). In this study higher education institutions are examined as competitive actors, with a focus on factors influencing students' university choice, particularly family support. In Indonesia, university choice decision institutions (PTS) play an important role in providing access to higher education for the wider community, especially in areas that are underserved by public higher education institutions. The achievement of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) is relevant to institutional competitiveness, which is indirectly shaped by students' university choice and associated social factors such as family support (Muhammad Iqbal, Deden Mulyana, 2024). Nationally, the dynamics of higher education in Indonesia show a trend of growth in the number of universities that is not always accompanied by a proportional increase in the number of new students, requiring them to constantly innovate so that their businesses can remain sustainable and grow (Beben Bahrena, Indi Ramadhanib, 2018). Data from the Higher Education Database (PDDIKTI) of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology shows that in recent years, Private higher education institutions continue to constitute a substantial component of the Indonesian private higher education system, but the distribution of new students tends to be concentrated in certain institutions that are more competitive (Kemendikbudristek, 2023). This condition indicates that competition among private higher education institutions is becoming increasingly fierce, especially in attracting new students. In addition, data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) shows that the Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) for higher education in Indonesia is still at a level that requires improved access and equity (BPS, 2023). Although there has been an increase in GER in recent years, disparities in participation between regions and social groups remain a challenge. In this context, the decision to pursue higher education is influenced not only by academic factors, but also by social and economic factors within the family.

University choice has been widely examined in the literature as a complex decision-making process influenced by multiple factors, including institutional reputation, program quality, tuition costs, employment prospects, and campus facilities (Li & Qiu, 2024; Nguyen & Le, 2024). These factors reflect the increasing role of students as consumers within the higher education marketplace, where institutional attractiveness and perceived value significantly influence enrollment decisions (Dwivedi et al., 2024). Consequently, understanding the drivers of university choice is essential not only for explaining student behavior but also for developing strategic management policies within higher education institutions (Alam & Paramati, 2024).

Although existing studies have identified various institutional attributes influencing university selection, a growing body of research highlights the importance of social and relational factors surrounding prospective students. Educational decision-making is often embedded within broader social contexts where family members, peers, and social networks play an influential role in shaping student aspirations and preferences (Liu et al., 2024; Memon et al., 2024). Among these social influences, family support has consistently emerged as one of the most significant factors affecting educational decisions, particularly in collectivist societies where family involvement in career and educational planning remains strong (Azoury et al., 2024).

Family support encompasses various forms of assistance provided by family members, including emotional encouragement, financial resources, informational guidance, and social networking opportunities. These forms of support contribute to shaping students' perceptions of educational opportunities and influence their confidence in pursuing higher education pathways (Cheng & Yuen, 2024; García-Aracil & Van der Velden, 2024). Previous studies have shown that students who receive stronger family support tend to exhibit greater motivation, higher educational aspirations, and more deliberate decision-making when

selecting universities (Kim & Park, 2024; Rodríguez et al., 2024). This indicates that traditional social factors remain highly relevant in the modern context. Accordingly, university choice decisions should be understood as the outcome of interactions between social, psychological, and strategic considerations, which are relevant for informing institutional strategies in higher education. Understanding the factors that influence university choice decisions has become increasingly important in higher education research. As competition among universities intensifies, institutions need a deeper understanding of how prospective students evaluate and select higher education providers. Among the various determinants identified in prior studies, family support has emerged as a potentially influential social factor that may shape students' educational preferences and enrollment decisions.

Although many universities in Indonesia have implemented integrity zone programs, there are still several challenges that need to be overcome (Muhammad Iqbal & Deden Mulyana, 2024). Majalengka University must continue to improve their organizational performance to attract prospective students (Elistia, Purwana, Effendi, Arief, & Wibowo, 2025), generally they recognize the value of knowledge (Putri, Permatasari, Susanto, Lee, & Kurniawan, 2023) because universities are able to maximize the benefits gained from knowledge efforts through the maintenance and active utilization of intellectual abilities (Alzghoul, Aboalganam, & Alzghoul, 2025). However, the success of Majalengka University in attracting prospective students is greatly influenced by various factors, both internal and external, one of which is family support. Education is a person's awareness that is planned in the learning process so that students actively improve their potential, skills, intelligence, and noble character (Masduki, Endah Prihatini, 2023). Education can be used as capital for investing in the future. If you want to find a certain job, you must have the appropriate level of education, so that education can be an important factor in improving welfare. However, there are other opinions that state that students who have graduated from higher education are not guaranteed to get a job easily (Radina Ridyah, 2020). The definition of education itself is a training process provided to an individual to develop themselves (Andrea Yogas, 2024). Education is also said to be the main key in helping and encouraging individuals in the development of the era in facing globalization (Dewi Widiya Handayani, Cahyo Apri Setiaji, 2023). So, it is clear that education has a very important role in the life of a nation because it can affect the quality of a nation (Adi Rahman, Anthonius J. Karsudjono, 2022). In order for everything to go according to plan, the community needs to make decisions in choosing a university, which requires a lot of consideration, one of which is to focus on a field of concentration that is needed to enter the world of work. However, basically, the decision to choose a university is always related to the marketing process by the parties offering these services (Masduki, Endah Prihatini, 2023).

Theoretically, the decision to choose a university can be understood through the consumer behavior and strategic management approaches. In the context of educational services, institutions are viewed as organizations competing for strategic resources in the form of high-quality students (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2022). The Resource-Based View asserts that competitive advantage is obtained through the management of resources that are valuable, scarce, difficult to imitate, and not easily replaced (Barney et al., 2021). Family support may influence how prospective students evaluate educational opportunities and make enrollment decisions. In this study, family support is examined as a social contextual factor rather than as a direct source of institutional competitive advantage. Recent research shows that social factors, particularly family, have a significant influence on educational decisions, whether in the form of emotional, financial, or informational support (Goniu & Ha, 2022; Li & Qiu, 2023).

However, most studies still position family support as an individual psychosocial variable and have not explicitly linked it to strategic implications for institutional competitiveness. On the other hand, the strategic management literature emphasizes the importance of a stakeholder based strategy approach in enhancing organizational competitive advantage (Freeman et al.,

2023). In the context of higher education, families can be viewed as key stakeholders that influence market decisions. Institutions that are able to build trust and relationships with families have the potential to create differentiation that is difficult for competitors to replicate. Researchers have found that family support influences the decision to pursue higher education (Masduki, Endah Prihatini, 2023; Nurrohmatulloh, 2016) and, of course, family support will affect students' work performance in order to continue to higher education (Ibrahim, Cahyadi, Anggriani, & Abdurrahman, 2020). Several recent empirical studies confirm that the decision to choose a college is influenced by institutional image, service quality, tuition fees, and social influence (Alam & Paramati, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2022). However, there are inconsistencies in the findings regarding the relative strength of social factors compared to institutional factors. Some studies find that family factors play a dominant role in the context of developing countries (Li & Qiu, 2023), while other studies show that reputation and branding factors are more decisive in the context of global competition (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2022). This gap highlights the need for an approach that integrates individual behavioral perspectives and organizational strategic implications through a comprehensive structural model.

Based on this gap, this study uses Structural Equation Modeling to test the model of the relationship between family support and university choice decisions within the framework of strategic management. The novelty of this study lies in examining family support as a multidimensional social factor encompassing emotional, informational, instrumental, social network, and appraisal support within the context of university choice decisions at a regional private university in Indonesia. Unlike most prior studies that generalize findings across broader populations, this study highlights the contextual dynamics between family structure, regional educational opportunities, and institutional preferences. To address this gap, this study focuses on the role of family support in influencing students' decisions to enroll at Majalengka University, a rapidly growing private institution in West Java.

This study specifically examines the role of family support in shaping students' university choice within regional institutional competition. Within the framework of strategic management, the national data shows that the decision to choose a university is part of the dynamics of a competitive higher education market. Majalengka University is required to develop strategies that are adaptive to changes in the characteristics of prospective students and their families. Conceptually, this study departs from the assumption that family support, which includes emotional, instrumental, informational, social networking, and assessment dimensions, will increase the confidence and intention of prospective students in choosing a particular institution. Based on social influence theory and the Resource-Based View (Barney, 2021), the stronger the family support, the higher the probability of choosing a higher education institution that is perceived to have strategic value. Therefore, the hypothesis proposed in this study is that family support has a positive and significant effect on university choice decisions. Although university choice decisions may have broader implications for institutional recruitment outcomes, the present study focuses specifically on examining the relationship between family support and students' university choice decisions. Therefore, conclusions regarding institutional competitiveness remain beyond the scope of the empirical model tested in this study.

Based on the previous discussion, this study seeks to examine the extent to which family support influences university choice decisions from a strategic perspective within higher education. The purpose of this research is to test the structural model of this relationship and provide strategic implications for the formulation of marketing policies and positioning of Majalengka University.

Family support encompasses various forms of assistance provided by family members, including emotional encouragement, financial resources, informational guidance, and social networking opportunities. Family support is widely recognized as an important social

determinant of educational decision-making. Although existing studies have identified various institutional attributes influencing university selection, limited attention has been given to how family support systematically shapes university choice decisions, particularly in the context of private higher education institutions in Indonesia.

Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: Family support positively influences university choice decisions.

The argument for this hypothesis is based on social support theory, which states that emotional, instrumental, and informational support increases an individual's confidence and commitment in decision-making (Taylor, 2022), and is reinforced by recent empirical findings that show the significant influence of family factors on higher education decisions (Liu et al., 2023; Rahman et al., 2023). The conceptual model of this study positions family support as an exogenous variable influencing university choice decisions as the endogenous variable, with strategic implications within the higher education context.

Family Support → University Choice Decision

Source: Rahman, M. M., et. al, 2023.

Figure 1. Research Framework

Thus, the urgency of this research is not only based on theoretical relevance, but also on the practical need to understand the social determinants that influence university choice decisions in the context of national competition. The integration of empirical findings on family support and national enrollment trends provides a strong foundation for the formulation of evidence-based institutional strategies in university choice decision institutions. This study contributes to the higher education decision-making literature by providing empirical evidence regarding the role of family support in influencing university choice decisions among prospective students in the Indonesian university choice decision context. Unlike previous studies that treat family influence merely as a psychological determinant of student choice, this research integrates Social Support Theory to explain how family driven decision dynamics can influence institutional competitiveness in university choice decision.

This limitation suggests the need for a broader theoretical perspective that integrates individual decision-making processes with institutional strategic outcomes. One theoretical perspective that can help explain this relationship is Social Support Theory. Social Support Theory suggests that individuals' decisions and behaviors are strongly influenced by the support they receive from their social environment, particularly from close relationships such as family members. In the context of higher education, family support can therefore function as a key social resource that shapes students' educational choices. This study proposes a conceptual framework grounded in Social Support Theory to explain how family support influences university choice decisions within a strategic higher education context.

Furthermore, this study offers practical implications for university management by highlighting the importance of understanding family involvement in student recruitment strategies. Universities that recognize the strategic role of family influence in educational decision-making may develop more effective communication and engagement strategies that address both students and their families as key stakeholders in the higher education ecosystem. Considering these factors, this study aims to examine the influence of family support on university choice decisions and to interpret its strategic implications within university choice decision institutions. It further seeks to contribute both theoretically and practically to the literature on higher education management and student decision-making behavior. Based on the theoretical framework and the proposed hypothesis, this study proceeds to empirically examine the relationship between family support and university choice decisions. The following section outlines the research design, data collection, and analytical methods employed in this study.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative explanatory design to examine the influence of family support on university choice decisions among students of Majalengka University. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire, while secondary data were obtained from institutional reports, higher education policy documents, and relevant academic publications.

The study population consisted of 5.252 active students enrolled at Majalengka University during the 2025/2026 academic year. A proportionate stratified random sampling technique was applied to ensure representation across study programs. Respondents were selected randomly within each stratum using a random number generator, resulting in a final sample of 200 students. Eligibility criteria included active enrollment status and completion of the university selection process.

The research instrument was developed based on prior literature. Family Support was measured using five dimensions: emotional support, instrumental support, informational support, social network support, and appraisal support. University Choice Decision was measured using five indicators adapted from higher education consumer behavior studies, including location and accessibility, career prospects, information search, social environment, and family influence (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2022; Li & Qiu, 2023). All items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS software. PLS-SEM was selected because the study aims to examine the predictive relationship between two latent constructs measured through multiple indicators. The analysis consisted of measurement model evaluation (convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability) and structural model evaluation through path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and bootstrapping significance tests (Hair et al., 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Before presenting the results of the structural model analysis, it is important to first describe the demographic characteristics of the respondents involved in this study. Understanding the demographic profile of the respondents provides an overview of the sample distribution and helps ensure that the collected data appropriately represent the target population of the research. Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents based on several categories, including gender, age, faculty affiliation, and year of study. These characteristics are important in describing the background of the participants who contributed to the survey data used in this study. A total of 200 respondents participated in this research, all of whom were students enrolled in Majalengka University. The demographic distribution of the respondents reflects the diversity of the student population and provides relevant insights into the characteristics of individuals who were involved in the university selection process. The detailed distribution of respondents across demographic categories is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent Demographic Profile

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	82	41.0%
	Female	118	59.0%
Age	17–18 years	46	23.0%
	19–20 years	92	46.0%
	21–22 years	52	26.0%
	>22 years	10	5.0%

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Faculty	Economics & Business	54	27.0%
	Engineering	48	24.0%
	Education	63	31.5%
	Social Sciences	35	17.5%
Year of Study	First Year	78	39.0%
	Second Year	64	32.0%
	Third Year	40	20.0%
	Fourth Year	18	9.0%

Source: Calculations from SPLS Version 3.0 (Data processed independently, 2026).

The demographic profile of the respondents is presented in Table 1. The sample consisted of 200 students from Majalengka University. Based on gender distribution, the majority of respondents were female students (59%), while male students accounted for 41% of the sample. In terms of age, most respondents were between 19 and 20 years old (46%), indicating that the participants were primarily in the early stages of their higher education journey.

Regarding faculty distribution, students from the Faculty of Education represented the largest proportion (31.5%), followed by Economics and Business (27%), Engineering (24%), and Social Sciences (17.5%). In addition, the majority of respondents were first-year students (39%), suggesting that the respondents were relatively close to the period in which they made their university choice decisions. These characteristics indicate that the respondents provide relevant insights into factors influencing university choice behavior. This study analyzes the influence of family support on the decision to choose a Majalengka University using a Partial Least Squares-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-PLS) approach. Data were obtained through questionnaires distributed to respondents and then processed using the SmartPLS 3.0 application. Model evaluation was carried out in two stages, namely measurement model testing (outer model) and structural model testing (inner model). In the measurement model evaluation stage, indicator validity was reviewed through outer loading values as shown in the following figure:

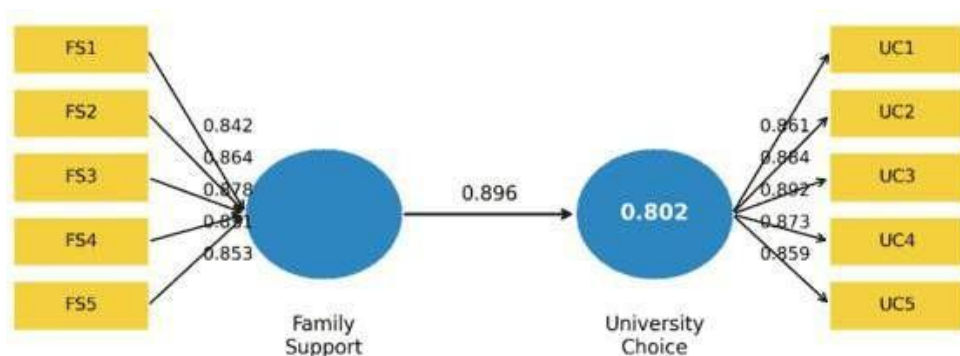


Figure 2. Graphical Output

Figure 2 presents the structural model illustrating the relationship between Family Support and University Choice. The model also shows the loading values of each indicator used to measure the latent constructs. The measurement model indicates that all indicators used to measure the Family Support construct demonstrate satisfactory loading values. The outer loading values range from 0.821 to 0.878, with FS3 showing the highest loading value (0.878), followed by FS2 (0.864), FS5 (0.853), FS1 (0.842), and FS4 (0.821). These values exceed the commonly recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating that the indicators have strong convergent validity and contribute adequately to explaining the Family Support construct.

Similarly, the indicators used to measure the University Choice construct also demonstrate strong loading values. The outer loading values range from 0.859 to 0.892, where UC3 shows the highest loading value (0.892), followed by UC2 (0.884), UC4 (0.873), UC1 (0.861), and UC5 (0.859). These results indicate that all indicators reliably represent the University Choice construct and meet the recommended criteria for indicator reliability.

In the structural model, the path coefficient between Family Support and University Choice is 0.896, indicating a strong positive relationship between the two constructs. This result suggests that higher levels of family support significantly increase the likelihood of students choosing a particular university. Furthermore, the R^2 value of 0.802 for the University Choice construct indicates that approximately 80.2% of the variance in university choice decisions can be explained by family support. This value demonstrates that the model has strong explanatory power in predicting students' university selection behavior. Overall, the results confirm that family support plays a substantial role in influencing students' decisions when selecting higher education institutions, highlighting the importance of social support mechanisms in shaping educational decision-making processes.

Table 2. Outer Loading of Indicators

Construct	Indicator	Outer Loading
Family Support	FS1	0.842
	FS2	0.864
	FS3	0.878
	FS4	0.821
	FS5	0.853
University Choice	UC1	0.861
	UC2	0.884
	UC3	0.892
	UC4	0.873
	UC5	0.859

Source: Calculations from SPLS Version 3.0 (Data processed independently, 2026).

Convergent validity was then tested using Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values. The results showed that all constructs had AVE values above 0.50. This value indicates that the constructs were able to explain more than 50% of the variance in the indicators, thus meeting the criteria for convergent validity.

Table 3. Average Variance Extracted Values

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Family Support	0,664
Private College Admission Decisions	0,632

Source: Calculations from SPLS Version 3.0 (Data processed independently, 2026).

Convergent validity in this study was tested using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for each latent construct. Based on the analysis results, the AVE value for the Family Support construct was 0.664, while for the University Choice Decision it was 0.632.

According to the criteria recommended in SEM-PLS analysis, a construct is considered to have convergent validity if the AVE value is greater than 0.50. This value indicates that the construct is able to explain more than 50% of the variance of the indicators that form it. Thus, an AVE value of 0.664 in the Family Support construct indicates that 66.4% of the indicator variance can be explained by this construct, while the remaining 33.6% is influenced by error or other variance outside the model. Similarly, an AVE value of 0.632 in the University Choice

Decision shows that 63.2% of the indicator variance can be explained by the measured latent construct. Since both constructs have AVE values above the threshold of 0.50, it can be concluded that all constructs in this research model have met the criteria for convergent validity. This indicates that the indicators used are substantially capable of representing the latent variables being measured and are suitable for proceeding to structural model testing.

Table 4. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability Values

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Family Support	0.924	0.940
University Choice	0.899	0.912

Source: Calculations from SPLS Version 3.0 (Data processed independently, 2026).

The internal reliability of the construct in this study was evaluated using two main indicators, namely Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR). These two measures were used to assess the level of internal consistency between indicators in representing the latent construct. Based on the analysis results, the Family Support construct had a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.924 and a Composite Reliability of 0.940. Meanwhile, the University choice decision construct showed a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.899 and a Composite Reliability of 0.912. All of these values were above the recommended minimum threshold of

0.70. A high Cronbach's Alpha value indicates that the indicators in each construct have a very good level of internal consistency. In other words, the items in the questionnaire measure the same concept in a stable and consistent manner. However, in the context of SEM-PLS, Composite Reliability is often considered a more representative measure than Cronbach's Alpha because CR does not assume equal weights between indicators and gives more consideration to the actual contribution of each indicator to the latent construct.

The Composite Reliability value of 0.940 for the Family Support construct and 0.912 for the University Choice Decision indicates a very high level of reliability. These values indicate that the constructs are able to represent latent variables consistently with a low level of error. In addition, CR values below 0.95 also indicate that there is no excessive indicator redundancy. Thus, based on Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values, the two constructs in this study can be said to have excellent internal reliability and are suitable for use in structural model testing.

Table 5. Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion / HTMT)

Construct	Family Support	University Choice
Family Support	—	0.71
University Choice	0.71	—

Source: Calculations from SPLS Version 3.0 (Data processed independently, 2026).

The discriminant validity of the constructs was evaluated using the Fornell–Larcker criterion. As presented in Table 4, the correlation value between the constructs of Family Support and University Choice is 0.71. This value indicates that the constructs are sufficiently distinct from one another, suggesting that each construct captures a unique aspect of the research model. The result demonstrates that the indicators used to measure Family Support and University Choice adequately represent their respective latent variables without excessive overlap. Therefore, the discriminant validity requirement of the measurement model is considered satisfactory, confirming that the constructs in this study are empirically distinguishable and suitable for further structural model analysis. In addition to the Fornell–Larcker criterion, discriminant validity was further assessed using the Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio to provide a more robust and comprehensive evaluation. The HTMT approach is

considered a more sensitive criterion in detecting discriminant validity issues in PLS-SEM analysis.

Table 6. HTMT Ratio (Discriminant Validity)

Construct	Family Support	University Choice
Family Support	—	0.71
University Choice	0.71	—

Source: Calculations from SPLS Version 3.0 (Data processed independently, 2026).

Discriminant validity was further assessed using the Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. As shown in Table X, all HTMT values are below the recommended threshold of 0.90, indicating satisfactory discriminant validity. This suggests that the constructs are empirically distinct and measure different concepts within the research model.

Table 7. Model Fit

Construct	Q ²
University Choice	0.52

Source: Calculations from SPLS Version 3.0 (Data processed independently, 2026).

Predictive relevance was assessed using the Stone–Geisser Q² value obtained through the blindfolding procedure. The Q² value is greater than zero, indicating that the structural model has predictive relevance. This result suggests that the research model has adequate predictive capability in explaining the relationship between Family Support and University Choice, confirming that the model is suitable for explaining the observed phenomenon.

Table 8. Path Coefficient and Hypothesis Testing

Relationship	Path Coefficient	t-value	p-value	Result
Family Support → University Choice	0.896	21.45	0.000	Supported

Source: Calculations from SPLS Version 3.0 (Data processed independently, 2026).

The structural model was evaluated by examining the path coefficient between Family Support and University Choice. The results show that Family Support has a positive and statistically significant effect on University Choice ($\beta = 0.896$ $t = 21.45$, $0.000 < 0.05$). This finding indicates that stronger family support increases the likelihood of students choosing a particular higher education institution. The positive coefficient suggests that family encouragement, emotional support, and informational guidance play a crucial role in shaping students' decision-making processes when selecting universities. From a strategic management perspective, this result supports the argument that family support can function as a strategic social resource that influences institutional demand in the higher education market. Consequently, higher education institutions particularly Majalengka University should consider family engagement as part of their institutional strategy to attract prospective students and strengthen their competitive positioning.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that family support has a positive and significant influence on university choice decisions. This result suggests that educational decision-making is not solely an individual process but is embedded within a broader social environment where family members play an important role. In the context of higher education, students often face uncertainty regarding academic quality, financial commitment, and future career opportunities. Consequently, support from family members may help reduce uncertainty and strengthen confidence when evaluating available university options.

From the perspective of Social Support Theory, family support functions as a source of emotional, informational, and instrumental resources that facilitate decision-making. Emotional support may increase students' confidence in pursuing higher education, while informational support helps them assess institutional alternatives and educational opportunities. Instrumental support, particularly financial assistance, may also expand students' access to higher education by reducing perceived barriers associated with tuition and living costs. These findings indicate that family support operates through multiple mechanisms that collectively influence students' university choice decisions.

The results are consistent with previous studies reporting that family influence remains a significant determinant of higher education decisions (Li & Qiu, 2024; Nguyen & Le, 2024). Similarly, Azoury et al. (2024) found that family members often play a central role in educational planning, particularly in developing countries where educational investments are commonly viewed as collective family decisions rather than purely individual choices. The present findings reinforce this perspective by demonstrating that family support remains relevant in shaping students' enrollment preferences even within an increasingly competitive higher education environment.

An important implication of these findings is that students' university choices are influenced not only by institutional characteristics but also by the social context surrounding prospective students. While universities frequently emphasize program quality, facilities, accreditation status, and career prospects in their recruitment activities, the results suggest that family members may also influence how such information is interpreted and evaluated. Therefore, university choice behavior should be understood as the outcome of interactions between institutional attributes and social support mechanisms.

From a practical perspective, universities may benefit from adopting recruitment and communication strategies that acknowledge the role of family involvement in educational decision-making. Information sessions for parents, family-oriented communication materials, and outreach programs that address concerns related to educational quality, affordability, and career outcomes may help strengthen prospective students' confidence during the university selection process. These implications should be interpreted as practical inferences derived from the findings rather than as outcomes directly tested in the present study.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study focuses on students from Majalengka University, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other institutional contexts. Second, the model examines family support as a single predictor of university choice decisions, whereas other determinants such as institutional reputation, peer influence, tuition costs, and digital information sources may also contribute to students' decisions. Future studies are therefore encouraged to develop more comprehensive models incorporating multiple social and institutional factors to provide a broader understanding of university choice behavior.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the influence of family support on university choice decisions among students at Majalengka University. The findings demonstrate that family support has a positive and significant effect on university choice decisions. Emotional encouragement, informational guidance, financial assistance, and social support provided by family members contribute to students' confidence in evaluating educational alternatives and selecting a university. These findings confirm the relevance of Social Support Theory in explaining educational decision-making behavior, particularly in the context of higher education.

The results suggest that university choice decisions are influenced not only by institutional characteristics but also by the social environment surrounding prospective students. Family support serves as an important source of information, encouragement, and resources that help

students reduce uncertainty during the university selection process. Therefore, understanding family involvement may provide valuable insights for higher education institutions seeking to improve student recruitment and communication strategies.

From a practical perspective, universities may consider developing recruitment initiatives that engage both prospective students and their families. Information sessions, family-oriented communication materials, and outreach activities addressing concerns related to educational quality, affordability, and career prospects may support more informed university choice decisions.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, this study was conducted within a single institutional context, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, the model examined family support as the primary predictor of university choice decisions and did not include other potentially relevant determinants such as institutional reputation, peer influence, financial considerations, or digital information sources. Third, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to observe changes in decision-making over time.

Future research is encouraged to examine university choice decisions using more comprehensive models that incorporate additional social and institutional factors, broader samples from different higher education settings, and longitudinal approaches to better understand how educational decision-making evolves across different stages of students' academic pathways.

Funding Statement

This research was conducted independently without funding support from government agencies, private institutions, or specific research grant schemes.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to express his appreciation to Universitas Majalengka for its academic support. He would also like to thank all respondents who participated in this study, as well as those who provided constructive feedback during the process of drafting and revising this manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest in the conduct of the research or in the publication process of this article.

REFERENCES

- Adi Rahman, A., Karsudjono, A. J., & N. L. (2022). Pengaruh pengetahuan, dukungan keluarga, dan minat mahasiswa terhadap keputusan mahasiswa dalam memilih kuliah di Jurusan Akuntansi pada STIE Pancasetia Banjarmasin. *Jurnal Mitra Manajemen*, 5(10), 718–735. Retrieved from <http://e-jurnalmitramanajemen.com/index.php/jmm/article/view/578/509>
- Alam, M., & Paramati, S. (2022). Determinants of higher education selection. *Studies in Higher Education*.
- Altbach, P. G., & de Wit, H. (2024). Global trends in higher education internationalization. *Studies in Higher Education*.
- Alzghoul, A., Aboalghanam, K. M., & Alzghoul, A. (2025). Investigating the effect of knowledge management systems on university performance: The interplay of intellectual and human capital. *Journal of Knowledge and Performance Management*, 9(1). [https://doi.org/10.21511/kpm.09\(1\).2025.07](https://doi.org/10.21511/kpm.09(1).2025.07)
- Anderson, R., & Swaminathan, S. (2024). Strategic marketing in education. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*.

- Andrea Yogas, N. H. (2024). Efikasi diri, motivasi wirausaha, dukungan keluarga, dan pendidikan terhadap niat berwirausaha.
- Annamdevula, S., & Bellamkonda, R. S. (2021). The effects of service quality on student loyalty: The mediating role of student satisfaction. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 43(4), 403–419.
- Azoury, N., Daou, L., & El Khoury, C. (2024). University choice determinants in emerging economies. *Higher Education Policy*.
- Badan Pusat Statistik. (2023). *Statistik pendidikan 2023*. Jakarta, Indonesia: Badan Pusat Statistik.
- Baker, M., & Brown, G. (2024). Institutional reputation and student enrollment. *Higher Education Research*.
- Bahrena, B., Ramadhani, I., & S. E. (2018). Membangun keunggulan bersaing melalui inovasi produk, inovasi proses, inovasi marketing, dan inovasi organisasi untuk meningkatkan kinerja perusahaan. 4(Mei), 8–18.
- Chapleo, C., & Simms, C. (2023). Strategic marketing in higher education: A systematic review. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*.
- Cheng, M., & Yuen, M. (2024). Family influence on higher education aspirations. *Educational Research Review*.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2022). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (6th ed.).
- Davies, J., & Qureshi, S. (2024). Digital transformation in higher education marketing. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*.
- Dewi Widiya Handayani, D. W., Setiaji, C. A., & A. R. (2023). Pengaruh persepsi profesi guru dan dukungan keluarga terhadap minat menjadi guru pada mahasiswa Pendidikan Ekonomi Universitas Muhammadiyah Purworejo. *Jurnal Pendidikan Ekonomi*, 3(2), 79–92.
- Dwivedi, Y. K., et al. (2023). Consumer decision-making in the digital era: Social influence and higher education choice. *Journal of Business Research*, 156, 113456.
- Elistia, E., Purwana, D., Effendi, M. S., Arief, M., & Wibowo, S. F. (2025). Determining factors of sustainable competitive advantage in higher education institutions. *TEM Journal*, 14(1), 562–573. <https://doi.org/10.18421/TEM141-50>
- Foss, N. J., & Saebi, T. (2024). Business model innovation and competitive advantage. *Long Range Planning*.
- Freeman, R. E., Dmytriiev, S., & Phillips, R. (2023). Stakeholder theory and strategic management in the 21st century. *Journal of Management Studies*, 60(1), 1–20.
- García-Aracil, A., & Van der Velden, R. (2024). Educational choices and labor market outcomes. *Higher Education*.
- Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2022). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Hassan, S., & Shamsudin, M. F. (2021). Measuring service quality and student satisfaction in higher education. *Quality Assurance in Education*, 29(2), 213–229.
- Hazelkorn, E. (2024). Rankings and the global competition in higher education. *Higher Education Policy*.
- Hemsley-Brown, J., & Oplatka, I. (2022). Higher education consumer choice and marketing strategy: A review of contemporary developments. *International Journal of Educational*

- Management, 36(5), 789–804.
- Ibrahim, I. D. K., Cahyadi, I., Anggriani, R., & Abdurrahman, A. (2020). Pengaruh motivasi dan dukungan keluarga terhadap prestasi belajar mahasiswa selama penggunaan e-learning masa pandemi Covid-19 (Studi kasus pada mahasiswa Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnis Universitas Bumigora). *Target: Jurnal Manajemen Bisnis*, 2(2), 265–278. <https://doi.org/10.30812/target.v2i2.1016>
- Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi. (2022). Statistik pendidikan tinggi 2022. Jakarta, Indonesia: PDDIKTI Kemendikbudristek.
- Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi. (2023). Pangkalan data pendidikan tinggi (PDDIKTI): Statistik nasional. Jakarta, Indonesia: Kemendikbudristek.
- House, J. S., Landis, K. R., & Umberson, D. (2024). Social relationships and health: The role of social support. *Annual Review of Sociology*.
- Li, X., & Qiu, L. (2023). Family influence on higher education choice decisions: Evidence from emerging markets. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 33(2), 245–263.
- Liu, Y., Zhang, X., & Fu, Q. (2023). Family influence and students' higher education decision-making process. *Educational Studies*, 49(6), 874–891.
- Li, X., & Qiu, Y. (2024). Determinants of student university selection. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*.
- Liu, Y., Zhang, X., & Zhao, H. (2024). Social capital and educational decisions. *Education Sciences*.
- Marginson, S. (2024). Higher education and global competition. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*.
- Masduki, M., Prihatini, E., & A. D. (2023). Analisis faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi keputusan kuliah di perguruan tinggi swasta.
- Memon, M. A., Salleh, R., & Baharom, M. N. (2022). Social influence and educational decision making: Evidence from developing countries. *SAGE Open*, 12(3), 1–12.
- Iqbal, M., Mulyana, D., & Y. A. (2024). Analisis dampak pembangunan zona integritas terhadap kinerja organisasi melalui kualitas pelayanan publik dan persepsi anti korupsi. [Lengkapi nama jurnal], 10(November), 89–100.
- Mok, K. H. (2024). Marketization and higher education reforms. *Higher Education Policy*.
- Nguyen, T. T., & Le, H. T. (2022). Determinants of students' university choice: Evidence from emerging markets. *Education Sciences*, 12(9), 612. <https://doi.org/>.
- Nurrohmatulloh, M. A. (2016). Hubungan orientasi masa depan dan dukungan orang tua dengan minat melanjutkan studi ke perguruan tinggi. *Psikoborneo: Jurnal Ilmiah Psikologi*, 4(1), 58–65. <https://doi.org/10.30872/psikoborneo.v4i1.3932>
- Pinar, M., Trapp, P., Girard, T., & Boyt, T. (2024). University branding and student satisfaction. *International Journal of Educational Management*.
- Putri, N. K. S., Permatasari, D., Susanto, R., Lee, C. K., & Kurniawan, Y. (2023). Knowledge management evaluation using digital capability maturity model in higher education institutions. *Electronic Journal of Knowledge Management*, 21(2), 140–157. <https://doi.org/10.34190/ejkm.21.2.3009>
- Ridyah, R. (2020). Pengaruh pendidikan kewirausahaan dan dukungan keluarga terhadap minat berwirausaha melalui mediasi self-awareness pada mahasiswa Universitas Dinamika Surabaya. *Jurnal Ilmu Manajemen Indonesia*, 1(2).

- Rahman, M. M., Uddin, M. A., & Khan, M. A. (2023). Social support and academic decision-making among higher education students. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, Article 1182456.
- Rodríguez, C., García, M., & López, J. (2024). Family engagement in educational pathways. *Educational Review*.
- Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2022). *Research methods for business: A skill-building approach* (9th ed.).
- Smith, J., & White, R. (2024). Social context of educational decisions. *Sociology of Education*.
- Taylor, S. E. (2022). Social support: A review and theoretical integration. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 73, 349–375.
- Temple, P. (2024). University governance and strategic management. *Higher Education Quarterly*.
- Tight, M. (2024). Higher education research and institutional strategies. *Higher Education Research & Development*.
- Tran, L., Vu, T., & Nguyen, H. (2024). Student mobility and university competitiveness. *Studies in Higher Education*.
- Veloutsou, C., & Guzmán, F. (2024). University branding strategies. *Journal of Brand Management*.
- Zhou, Y., Li, W., & Chen, L. (2024). Parental expectations and student aspirations. *Educational Studies*.