

# The Importance of Social Media Content in Influencing the Intention to Enroll in Higher Education

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## ABSTRACT

Using company generated content (FGC), this article aims to discover the influence of social media content on students' perceptions of value, social media usage intentions, and college enrollment intentions. A total of 450 people participated in an online survey. IPMA and a variance-based structural equation model were used to examine the most relevant components in affecting students' intentions to enroll. According to the findings of this study, FGC has a favorable and significant impact on social media use. Consumers' desire to use social media was shown to be strongly influenced by their perceptions of the service's value. To enlist, one must have a strong desire to follow social media. In addition, IPMA results suggest that FGC is the most important construct when compared to the others. Research shows that social media marketing content provided by colleges and universities has a significant impact on students' desire to attend college or university. The findings of this study will help higher education marketers generate content that encourages people to follow them on social media, which in turn increases the likelihood that they will enroll in their programs. A hitherto unidentified influence of social media material on enrollment intentions is also explored in this study.

**Keywords:** Firm generated content, Perceived value, Intention to enroll, Intention to follow social media.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

As a result of the rise of social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, anyone everywhere may now participate in an online community [1]. There are a plethora of social media sites from which individuals may publish all kinds of information, and they can use these platforms to write, edit, and share what they've made. It has become easier for customers to engage directly with businesses because to the rise of social media. As a result, the role of customer contact with corporate social media has evolved from passive to active. It's no secret that user-generated content (UGC) has grown to be a useful resource for both consumers and businesses [6]. Because of this, it is critical to find out how potential students value the company's information about higher education.

Prospective students, as well as current students, can utilize a variety of social media to gather information about colleges and universities. Increasingly popular social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook are being used by firms to promote their products and by customers to verify their own instinctive purchase decisions. Choosing a college or university has grown more dependent on the influence of social media

networks [7]. As a result, higher education institutions' social media material may aid in the development, maintenance, and strengthening of their relationships with potential students. There is evidence that it has a favorable impact on the value of social media [8], [9], and the desire to follow social media.

As a prospective student, he/she may look for information on the university's programs of study, as well as reviews from current and former students. It is critical for service providers to understand how to evaluate services and how value factors contribute to customer perceptions of value in service delivery [13]. According to the expectancy-value theory, students' decision-making is influenced by their perceptions of how well they can perform and the degree to which they value the activity [14]. The importance of value, what drives it, and how it affects user behavior has been highlighted in previous research [10], [15], [15]. As a response, this study explores the impact of FGC on perceived worth and its effect on the desire to follow social media and enroll in college.

For this study, we look at how FGC and perceived value are linked to the idea of consumption values, which in turn influences consumers' intentions. FGC and

perceived value are two of the key characteristics in this study, and Importance-Performance Map Analysis will be used to explain which components are most essential in predicting whether or not students would enroll in higher education (IPMA). The findings of this study will contribute to a better understanding of the significance of these intention factors from a theoretical standpoint. These findings may be used to help higher education produce successful content marketing as a long-term strategy to build favorable value perceptions, enhance social media following, and raise the likelihood of enrolling in the university.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Firm Generated Content**

This study indicated that social media material, which in this case was FGC, had an impact on a variety of value dimensions. First, the impact of FGC and the value it provides in terms of functionality. The functional usefulness of social media is positively correlated with its interactive, recommendation, and feedback aspects [9]. Studies have indicated that social networks have a positive correlation with information value, where information value is part of the functional value [8]. Second, the impact of FGC on the value of emotions. Several studies have found a positive correlation between the emotional worth of information gleaned via social networks and the quality of that information. The emotional worth of an image shown by FGC can be predicted [4]. Thirdly, the impact of FGC on the value of innovation. Start-up firms' innovative values are also influenced by their social media presence, and social engagement is linked to creativity. FGC's impact on economic value is the fourth consideration. Using FGC to deliver information can also lead to sales from potential consumers. It has been shown that distributing knowledge via social media may have a favorable impact on the economy [8].

H1. Firm generated content has a positive and significant effect on perceived value

FGC has a significant effect on the desire to follow social media. According to the report, Instagram can assist marketers get followers' attention through their content by publishing photographs and short videos with powerful graphics and a creative nature. [11]. In addition, it has been found that social networking site users consume brand-related content with the purpose of obtaining helpful knowledge [32]. In addition, the most important aspect in creating a pleasurable and rewarding Instagram experience is the content's perceived uniqueness [11]. [10] Research on micro-blogs indicated that emotionally and socially stimulating messages inspire users to continue following or sharing messages with their online acquaintances. The closer a person is to

a university's social media pages, the stronger the connection. As a result, the theory states:

H2. Firm generated content has a positive and significant effect on intention to follow social media

A person's behavioral intentions were discovered to be affected by FGC as well. A study by Kumar et al. (2016) shown that FGC can have a significant influence on the likelihood of purchasing. According to other studies [33, 34], there is a link between brand social media content and beneficial economic effects. That social media users believe that FGC may start and strengthen purchasing intents has been discovered by Balakrishnan et al (2014). As it pertains to higher education, the term "intention" refers to one's desire to enroll. As a result, we propose the following:

H3. Firm generated content has a positive and significant effect on intention to enrol.

### **2.2. Perceived Value**

In the literature on marketing and economics, the concept of value has garnered a lot of attention. The perceived worth of a social media account is a significant influence in a user's decision to follow it. As long as consumers believe they are getting more than they are spending, they will continue to follow [10], but if the perceived value can't be maintained, the relationship with social media like blogs will deteriorate or be destroyed [10]. Perceived value has been demonstrated to influence the desire to follow microblogs [10], social commerce [15], and brand sites [15] in previous research. The sense of perceived value in higher education will influence the desire to follow higher education social media, which in turn will increase the likelihood of enrolling. In light of this, the following idea is proposed.

H4. Perceived value has a positive and significant effect on intention to follow social media

If someone has consciously planned whether or not they would engage in some future activity, then they have demonstrated a high degree of behavioral intention. In the context of social commerce, previous research have studied the impact of customer perceived value on consumer behavioral intentions. For many consumers, perceived value is their primary motivator for purchasing goods and services [17]. When it comes to traditional and digital marketing, the issue of perceived value is a fundamental one. Successful marketing relies on establishing a product's perceived worth. Value was discovered to influence the decision to enroll in higher education. As a result of this, the following theory is proposed:

H5. Perceived value has a positive and significant effect on intention to enroll.

### 2.3. Intention to Follow Social Media

To put it another way, a student's behavioral intention to apply relates to their evaluation of whether or not they intend to enrol [12]. For service marketing on Facebook, less engaged fans are more likely to show a lack of purchase intent. Following a fan page on social media has been demonstrated to increase the likelihood of a purchase. They observed a strong correlation between the number of "likes" on a fan page and the likelihood of making a purchase. As a result of this, the following theory is proposed:

H6. Intention to follow social media has a positive and significant effect on intention to enroll.

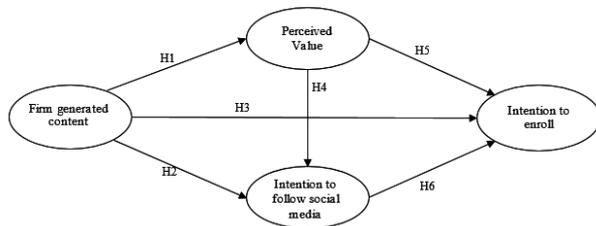


Figure 1 Conceptual model.

## 3. METHODS

### 3.1. Sampling and Data Collection

Bandung high school students who want to attend college or university in the future are the focus of this study's demographic. Control questions on the questionnaire were used to identify high school students who were active and planned to pursue their education at a college or university. In July 2021, the data gathering procedure will last for three weeks. Once ethical approval has been granted, data will be gathered by means of an online survey delivered to participants. A total of 450 answers were gathered for this study. Analytical methods employed in this study include SEM-PLS. This kind of analysis necessitates the use of a small sample. In order to determine the minimal sample size, we utilize G\* Power, which calculates statistical power. [6, 7] The findings demonstrate that the sample statistical power is 0.96, which is greater than the minimal criterion of 0.8. As a result, the study's sample size is adequate.

There were 56% of males and 56% of women in the sample, based on the demographics of the respondents (44 percent). Then, 66.2 percent of the respondents were from public schools, compared to private institutions, which had a 3.6 percent share (33.8 percent). At the age of 17, 57.8% of the population, followed by 16-year-olds, was the most common age group (25.8 percent). More over two-thirds of the students who went to college made the decision on their own, with the help of their parents, or without their parents' help (9.3 percent). In this case, it is clear that participants in the selection of higher

education are either self-directed or influenced by their family. Based on the vocations of their parents, the majority (46.2 percent) are private employees and entrepreneurs (29.6 percent).

### 3.2. Research Instruments and Measurements

It's a questionnaire that's being employed. On a 5-point Likert scale, constructs were rated on their agreement or disagreement with each other, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In addition, demographic questions (gender, school status, decision to pursue further education, and parental employment) were added. According to the FGC concept, students' perceptions of the collegiate social media they are interested in are measured by five items [8, 9]. Using a second order concept, students' views of functional, emotional, inventive, and economic value may be assessed [23], [10], [13], [1], and [13]. Six items are used to gauge students' intentions to follow social media accounts relating to higher education that they are interested in. It is also measured by five measures that demonstrate how interested students are in enrolling in higher education. Table 2 lists the components for each build. In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument, 30 respondents from the survey population were asked to complete a pre-test.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1. Measurement Model

The measurement model stage, during which reliability and validity were assessed using PLS, was completed. To ensure the validity and reliability of the constructs in the outer model, the measuring model is evaluated [7]. The loading of the indicators is assessed while measuring the individual dependability of the items. There must be at least 0.708 [7] loading. All of the loadings in this example are over 0.708. We used the Composite Dependability (CR) and the Dijkstra - Henseler's rho (A) to evaluate the individual reliability of each construct. Dijkstra-Henseler Rho (A) values larger than 0.7 were found for all composites, confirming their dependability [7]. Convergent validity is assessed by calculating the average variance extracted (AVE), and it must be larger than 0.5 to be considered valid (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Covergent validity was acknowledged based on the results, which showed that all AVEs for each construct were larger than 0. Table 1 shows the outcomes of the measuring model.

### 4.2. Structure Model

Once the measurement model is tested, it's time to test the structural model, too. It is important to test for colinearity in order to guarantee that the regression findings are not biased. There should be a VIF value less

than 3. Because the VIF value was below the cut-off value, there was no collinearity issue in the VIF test findings (see Table 4).

**Table 1** Discriminant validity (Fornell–Larcker criterion).

	01	03	04	05	06	07	08	09
01_Firm generated content	<b>0.875</b>							
02_Perceived Value	0.581	<b>0.918</b>						
03_Intention to follow social media	0.622	0.556	<b>0.901</b>					
04_Intention to enroll	0.161	0.147	0.206	<b>0.961</b>				
05_Economic value	0.294	0.687	0.380	0.174	<b>0.813</b>			
06_Emotional value	0.620	0.844	0.556	0.128	0.456	<b>0.894</b>		
07_Functional value	0.449	0.853	0.381	0.081	0.497	0.619	<b>0.870</b>	
08_Innovative value	0.512	0.705	0.515	0.134	0.579	0.702	0.684	<b>0.825</b>

Note: The square root of AVEs are shown diagonally in bold.

The structural model is the next phase in the testing process. The importance of indicators and path coefficients was evaluated using a bootstrap approach with 5,000 iterations [56]. Cross-validated redundancy (Q<sup>2</sup>), coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>), effect size (f<sup>2</sup>), and path coefficient (R<sup>2</sup>) are all employed in this analysis. All endogenous structures that are regarded considerable, moderate, or weak must pass the R<sup>2</sup> test with scores of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25. Perceived value construct R<sup>2</sup> (0.338) and intention to use social media R<sup>2</sup> (0.444) are both moderately high (0.444). As a result, R<sup>2</sup> in the intention to enroll construct (0.045) falls well short of the acceptable level of statistical significance (See Table 4).

The next step is to measure the magnitude of the change. Calculating f<sup>2</sup> using the criteria of 0.02 (small), 0.15 (middle) and 0.35-0.35 (big) can decide this test for each route model. Perceived value (0.510) and social media follower intent are the two major outcomes that FGC has on the broad criterion (0.243). The moderate criteria's effect size is the influence of perceived value on the desire to follow social media (0.102). When it comes to the low influence, FGC (0.001), the perceived value (0.001), and the desire to follow social media (0.016) all have an effect size of less than 0.001.

As a final step, this study uses Stone and Geisser's Q<sup>2</sup> to evaluate the structural model's predictive power. Q<sup>2</sup> values are above zero in Table 4, which suggests that the model is able to accurately predict the outcome of a given experiment.

The next step is to test the hypothesis and the impact of the constructs on one another. The bootstrap resampling approach (5,000 subsamples from the original sample size) was used to evaluate the significance of each effect between constructs. Many inconsequential effects have been found with a 95% confidence level. There was a positive and significant influence on perceived value (= 0.581, 0.01) and intention to follow social media when FGC was tested, hence H1 and H2 are accepted as hypotheses in this study. FGC, on the other hand, has no influence on enrollment intentions (= 0.040, > 0.05), hence hypothesis H3 is discarded. If you want to follow social media, you need a high level of perceived value. If you want to enroll in a school, you need a low level of perceived value. H4 is approved, while H5 is denied because of these findings. A positive and statistically significant effect of intention to follow social media is found (= 0.163, 0.01) H6 is accepted.

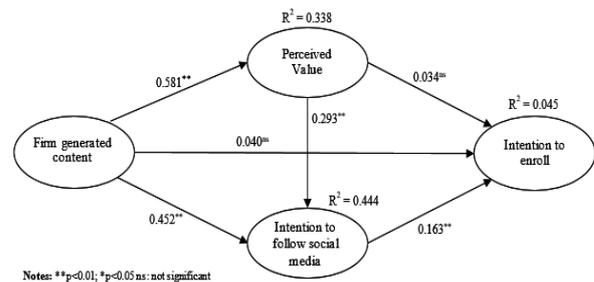


Figure 2 The result model.

### 4.3. Impact-performance Map Analysis

Importance-Performance Map Analysis (IPMA) is used to determine which component has the most influence on a student's decision to enroll. It is the goal of IPMA to determine which constructions have a reasonably high significance for the target construct (intention to enroll) but also a relatively poor performance. The performance of the FGC constructions and the desire to follow social media are nearly identical, with 64,319 and 65,693 respectively. It is notable, however, that among all constructions, intention to follow social media has a greater level of relevance (0.163). Prioritizing components that improve the likelihood of a student's desire to join should be done since they are of the utmost significance and operate at an average level. In terms of social media use intention, FGC is a similarly important notion (0.161). As a result, it is necessary to take into account factors associated to FGC in order to increase the likelihood of enrolling.

## 5. DISCUSSION

Study results reveal the importance of a kind of marketing communication called FGC in boosting the sense of value. Findings like these are consistent with those of other researchers, such as those found in [4, 8]. It may be predicted that, in general, an increase in FGC will lead to a rise in perceived value, based on the results. By posting photographs and short films that are visually appealing and creatively appealing to their followers, Instagram social media may help companies get new customers. It is possible to establish a good view of the value of higher education through the publication of material in the form of images and videos connected to educational information, activities, and quality. As a higher education marketer, you must focus on boosting perceived value by using FGC. Higher education marketers must produce high-quality, useful, and fascinating material in order to capture the attention of potential students. Thus, these data demonstrate the relevance of FGC in determining the perception of value in higher education.

A direct influence on the desire to follow social media was found, while an indirect and overall effect on the want to enroll was found. [15] This shows that when institutions directly convey their message to the public, they have an influence on consumer purchasing, which in this instance is the desire to enroll. Choosing a higher education institution can be influenced by FGC, according to this research. This confirms recent study [2] and [15] that found that FGC had a beneficial impact on purchasing intention. Higher education Instagram is the topic of this study, which is based on prior research that found Instagram is more popular among the younger age. Higher education FGC is likely to have an influence on the desire to follow higher education social media, which in turn affects the desire to enroll. According to these findings, the importance of social media content and the increase of followers cannot be separated in forecasting a student's desire to enroll.

According to hypothesis testing, the perceived value of social media has a positive and substantial impact on the desire to follow it. It is consistent with earlier research that found a link between perceived worth and intention to follow [10, 15]. A favorable opinion of the value they'll receive means that prospective students are more likely to follow higher education social media. For this reason, prospective students require social media material that is tailored to their needs. Social media information has a significant impact on the perception of value. In the long run, the usage of social media will have an impact on the value and eventually lead to a desire to follow. This study, therefore, adds to the existing literature on the impact of perceived value on the intention to follow social media material in the context of higher education.

Previous research have revealed various outcomes in the influence of perceived value on the propensity to enlist. According to R square, the intention to enroll isn't very high. Due to the high level of education, brand personality, strong image, and outstanding future prospects associated with a college degree [12], students may be more motivated to enroll if they have a positive opinion about the school. Aside from this consideration, the school's ranking plays an essential role in the decision to enroll. Students may now have a better awareness of how other factors play a role in the college selection process, thanks to this study.

The findings also demonstrate that the desire to follow social media has an impact on the likelihood of enrolling. Additionally, the IPMA results reveal that the intention to follow social media is more important than other variables. Previous studies have found this to be the case. This shows the impact of social media in influencing students' behavioral intentions. As a result of social media's ability to link pupils, students are able to learn about numerous educational opportunities [12]. Students' behavioral intention to register might be influenced by a variety of information collected by students. Higher education marketers should identify and utilize social media as a vital component of their marketing communications because of its favorable impact on the decision-making process [2]. Finally, this study demonstrates the importance of leveraging social media to get people to sign up for a course.

## 6. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATION

Researchers' findings have ramifications for higher education leaders hoping to keep and grow their ranks of students enrolled. Higher education social media managers should pay greater attention to the perceptions of the perceived value of potential students, which are defined by the FGC, according to this study's conclusions. [2] FGC may help firms build and strengthen relationships with their target consumers. Managers must thus develop and maintain social media in such a way that the posted material successfully increases students' perceived worth and desire to enroll in the school. In addition, perceived value does not directly influence the intention to enroll, but indirectly influences the desire to follow social media, thus higher education marketers must take care to manage and grow their social media followings to maximize their potential. As many students as possible should be involved in this effort in order to enhance their chances of getting into college.

## 7. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has several limitations that affect the generalizability of the findings. First, this research was conducted entirely in the context of a developing country,

namely Indonesia and only focused on one big city in Indonesia. Results may differ in other country contexts. Future research in other countries will provide a different understanding. Second, this study examines the intention to enroll only at one point in time. Students' perceptions of higher education may vary over time, and thus a multi-period study should be conducted to uncover the longitudinal behavior of students. Third, higher education social media has different characteristics that may have different perceptions of students. Future research is expected to be able to learn more about the characteristics of higher education social media.

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