

## The Role of Program Diversification in Shaping Student Enrollment Decisions in Higher Education

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### ABSTRACT

In the current era, technological advancements significantly influence consumer attitudes and behaviors regarding the selection, consumption, and utilization of products perceived to possess high quality and standards. The purchasing decision is an integral aspect of consumer behavior, encompassing the study of how individuals, groups, and organizations choose, buy, and use goods, services, ideas, or experiences to fulfill their needs and desires. This research aims to examine the impact of product diversification (X) on purchasing decisions (Y) within the Meatrix business located in Pandeglang, Banten. The findings and discussions of this study lead to a general conclusion regarding the concept of product diversification, which is categorized as good based on consumer ratings. This indicates that the highest indicator within the product diversification variable is consumer needs and expectations, while the lowest indicator pertains to ready-to-consume products. Furthermore, the purchasing decision variable is also categorized as good, with the highest indicator being product selection and the lowest indicator related to the choice of distribution channels.

**Keywords:** Family Business; MSMEs; Product Diversification; Purchasing Decisions; Higher Education

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's world, technological advancements have a profound impact on consumer attitudes and behaviors related to the selection, consumption, and use of products that are viewed as high quality and valuable (Sari S. P., 2020). Kotler and Armstrong (2016:177) describe the purchasing decision as a facet of consumer behavior, focusing on how individuals, groups, and organizations choose, buy, and utilize goods, services, ideas, or experiences to fulfill their needs and wants. Tjiptono (2019:21) elaborates that the purchasing decision is a process where consumers recognize their problems, gather information about specific products or brands, and assess how effectively each option can resolve their issues, ultimately leading to a purchase. Zusrony E. (2021:43) notes that the purchasing decision marks a phase in the decision-making process, particularly when consumers finalize their purchases. Various factors can affect consumer purchasing decisions, with Solomon (2020) highlighting important elements such as cultural influences, subcultures, and social classes, which significantly shape consumer preferences and behaviors. Based on the

factors influencing purchasing decisions that have been outlined, one significant strategy affecting these decisions is product diversification. Product diversification refers to a company's efforts to develop a range of new products or variations of existing products to expand market share and meet the diverse needs of consumers (Syafi'i, A., Shobichah, & Mulyani, 2023). One of the considerations for consumers when making purchasing decisions is product diversification, as it plays a crucial role in enhancing product value (Sabrina, E., 2020). According to Nofrizal et al. (2023), the completeness or variety of products available in a store also influences consumer choices. When consumers opt to purchase from a store that offers a wide range of products, they can save time and costs by avoiding the need to visit multiple stores, thus making the shopping experience more efficient.

An example of a business that implements product diversification to influence consumer purchasing decisions is the family-owned business Meatrix. Meatrix is a family-owned enterprise that specializes in selling a variety of food products, including frozen meats, frozen foods, vegetables, fruits, and essential items. Founded in July 2022, the business initially concentrated on frozen meat and frozen foods. However, during its first year, Meatrix experienced a drop in consumer interest due to the non-essential nature of its offerings, which nearly resulted in bankruptcy. In response, the owner implemented strategic initiatives to foster growth, one of which was diversifying the product range. By August 2023, one year after its launch, Meatrix successfully executed a product diversification strategy that significantly boosted its sales volume. The concept of entrepreneurship has its roots in the 17th century and has undergone considerable evolution since then. While many view entrepreneurship simply as "starting one's own business," most economists argue that it encompasses a broader scope. The term "entrepreneurship" originates from the French word for "intermediary." According to Munawaroh, M., et al. (2016), entrepreneurship represents a proactive, creative, empowered, innovative, and humble mindset focused on increasing income through business activities. Individuals with an entrepreneurial spirit often feel dissatisfied with their current accomplishments. Sanawiri, B., & Iqbal, M. (2018:10) define entrepreneurship as the ability and willingness of an individual to create, manage, and develop new ventures that provide value. It involves processes of innovation and risk-taking to identify business opportunities, develop solutions, and drive change within the business environment.

Ultimately, the goal of entrepreneurship is to generate both economic and social benefits. Both individuals and society as a whole benefit from entrepreneurship. Those who engage in entrepreneurial activities are referred to as entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs possess the ability to identify and evaluate business opportunities, gather the necessary resources to take appropriate actions, capitalize on advantages, and exhibit the character, traits, and determination to transform innovative ideas into reality creatively, all in pursuit of success and increased income (Hastuti, P., et al. 2020). In the economic realm, diversification is associated with the variety of business activities to avoid dependence on a single product, service, or investment. Product diversification is a business strategy where a company adds to or expands the range of products or services it offers. Furthermore, Sari, as cited in Soetikno (2012:9), states that diversification is a form of corporate strategy aimed at enhancing profitability through increased sales volume in the form of new products or new markets. Kotler

and Armstrong (2008:71) characterize diversification as a corporate growth strategy that entails launching new business initiatives or acquiring companies that operate outside the firm's existing products and markets. This viewpoint is echoed by Tjiptono (2008:132), who defines diversification as the pursuit of new products or markets, or both, aimed at achieving growth, boosting sales, enhancing profitability, and increasing flexibility.

Furthermore, Assauri (2010:218) points out that product diversification occurs when a company develops new products while ensuring the economic viability of its current offerings. Tjiptono and Chandra (2017:125) explain that a diversification strategy involves creating products for new markets. Effendy describes product diversification as the broadening of a company's range of goods and services by introducing new products or services, or by improving the type, color, model, size, or variety of existing products to maximize profit. According to Tjiptono and Chandra (2017), ready-to-consume or ready-to-use products are those that fulfill consumer needs and desires immediately, without the need for further processing. Gitungwa and Gustafson (2024) highlight that ready-to-eat products underscore the significance of nutritional content, taste, health considerations, price, and the clarity of information on product labels as essential factors that aid consumers in their selection of ready-to-eat options. Assauri (2014) elucidates that purchasing decisions are influenced by a variety of factors, including psychological, social, and situational elements, all of which contribute to how consumers assess and select products. At this stage, psychological and social factors play a significant role in shaping consumer choices, including the impact of friends, family, and advertising.

Furthermore, Kotler and Keller (2016:235) assert that consumer purchasing decisions vary according to different decision-making behaviors. In executing their purchasing intentions, consumers may establish five sub-decisions: brand, distributor, quantity, timing, and payment method. Additionally, Assauri (2015:139) notes that consumer purchasing decisions are also affected by habits. These purchasing habits encompass when purchases are made, the quantity of items purchased, and the locations where purchases occur. According to Tjiptono (2019:21), the purchasing decision is a process in which consumers identify their problems, seek information about specific products or brands, and evaluate how well each alternative can address their issues, ultimately leading to a purchasing decision. The definition of purchasing decisions provided by various experts indicates that such decisions represent a complex process encompassing several stages, ranging from problem identification to the evaluation of alternative products or brands. This process is influenced by a variety of factors, including purchasing habits, brand preferences, and situational context. Furthermore, the consumer's decision to purchase a product or service consists of three sub-decisions, as explained by Kotler and Keller (2016:183): (1) Product Selection, (2) Brand Selection, and (3) Channel Selection.

## **METHOD**

Research methodology refers to a systematic scientific approach used to collect data with defined objectives and advantages (Sugiyono, 2021). In this study, the researcher employs a quantitative method that incorporates both descriptive and verificative approaches. The primary aim of this research is to analyze the effect of

product diversification (X) on purchasing decisions (Y) at Meatrix, a business located in Pandeglang, Banten. As noted by Sugiyono (2018), the verificative method is a research strategy designed to test theories or hypotheses, helping to determine their validity.

After conducting a literature review, the next step is to identify the research subject, which in this instance is Meatrix. Founded in 2021 in Pandeglang, Meatrix has emerged as a leader in modern meat retail within the Pandeglang Regency. Initially, the business focused exclusively on selling various types of meat, including beef, buffalo, goat, chicken, and fish. However, in early 2023, Meatrix broadened its product offerings by diversifying to include fruits, vegetables, and spices such as coriander, turmeric, and kencur, as well as essential grocery items. During the research process, a questionnaire was distributed in the form of statements via Google Forms, employing an ordinal scale and Likert-type statements. Furthermore, primary data was gathered through direct surveys and interviews, while secondary data was collected from a variety of sources, including journals, books, articles, and other relevant news related to the research. Following the data processing, the results from the distributed questionnaire were prepared as scores for each statement. Once the data was collected, the next step involved conducting data analysis using SPSS version 29, which included validity and reliability tests to determine whether the obtained data could be considered valid and reliable for each statement presented to the respondents. After completing the validity and reliability tests, additional tests were performed, including multiple regression analysis, t-tests, F-tests, and  $R^2$  tests, aimed at reinforcing the analysis regarding the impact of product diversification on purchasing decisions. Once the data was obtained, it would be processed to yield percentage scores for each dimension, ultimately leading to conclusions drawn from the research conducted. In this study, the population consisted of customers of Meatrix who frequently purchase products from the business, totaling 30 individuals. The research sample comprised 30 respondents, specifically the customers of Meatrix who regularly buy products from the establishment. Based on the formulated research problems and expert opinions, the hypotheses proposed for this study are articulated as follows:

H0: There is no positive influence of product diversification (X) on consumer behavior (Y).

H1: There is a positive influence of product diversification (X) on consumer behavior (Y).

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The validity test in this research is conducted to ascertain whether the study is valid or not. A questionnaire is considered valid if the statements contained within it can effectively reveal the aspects that will subsequently be measured by the research questionnaire. Below are the results of the validity test for the variables of product diversification and purchasing decisions:

**Table 1.1 Results of the Validity Test**

No	Variable	Valid	Invalid
1	X1-X6	6	0
2	Y1-Y9	9	0
	Total	15	0

Source: Data processed using SPSS 29.

Based on Table 2.1, the results of the validity test indicate that all components of the statements for each variable are valid, as evidenced by the calculated  $r$  value exceeding the table  $r$  value. The product diversification variable comprises six statement items, while the purchase decision variable consists of nine statement items, resulting in a total of fifteen statements. All statements have been confirmed as valid.

A research questionnaire is considered trustworthy or reliable if the respondents' answers to a statement are stable or consistent. In this study, the Cronbach Alpha technique is employed, meaning a variable can be deemed reliable if it yields a Cronbach Alpha value greater than 0.06. The following presents the reliability test results for the product diversification and purchase decision variables:

**Table 1.2 Reliability Test Results.**

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N
Product Diversification	0.765	6
Purchase Decision	0.826	9

Source: Data processed using SPSS 29.

Based on Table 4.2, the results of the reliability test indicate that the Cronbach Alpha value for the product diversification variable is greater than 0.06 ( $0.765 > 0.06$ ), and the Cronbach Alpha value for the purchasing decision variable is also greater than 0.06 ( $0.826 > 0.06$ ). This suggests that the reliability test for both the product diversification and purchasing decision variables can be considered reliable and trustworthy. Meatrix is a pioneer of modern meat shops located in Pandeglang Regency, established in 2022 in the city of Pandeglang. Initially, Meatrix focused solely on the sale of various cuts of meat, including beef, buffalo, goat, chicken, and fish. However, in mid-2023, Meatrix expanded its product offerings by diversifying into fruits, vegetables, and spices such as coriander, turmeric, and kencur, as well as essential grocery items. This research encompasses data related to product diversification and purchasing decisions. The data description presented in this study includes several statistical measures, such as mean, median, mode, standard deviation,

variance, range, minimum, and maximum values. The following are the results of the data description from this research:

Table 1.3 Descriptive Statistics

Statistic	Statistic	
	Product Diversification	Consumer Decision-Making.
N	valid	30
	mising	0
Mean	25.3000	39.3333
Median	26.0000	39.0000
Mode	26.00	39.00
Std. Deviation	2.66717	3.56548
Variance	7.114	12.713
Range	11.00	14.00
Minimum	19.00	31.00
Maximum	30.00	45.00

Source: Data processed using SPSS 29.

According to Table 2.3 of the Descriptive Statistics, each variable has a sample size (N) of 30, with no missing values. The product diversification variable has a mean of 25.3000, a median of 26.0000, and a mode of 26.00. In comparison, the purchase decision variable has a mean of 39.3333, a median of 39.0000, and a mode of 39.00. For the product diversification variable, the standard deviation is 2.66717, the variance is 7.114, the range is 11.00, the minimum value is 19.00, and the maximum value is 30.00. On the other hand, the purchase decision variable has a standard deviation of 3.56548, a variance of 12.713, a range of 14.00, a minimum value of 31.00, and a maximum value of 45.00. From the information in Table 2.3, we can conclude that the product diversification variable has a maximum value of 30.00, a minimum value of 19.00, a mean of 25.3000, a median of 26.0000, a mode of 26.00, and a standard deviation of 2.66717. In analyzing the product diversification variable, the median value is used. If the mean is lower than the median, it is classified as poor; conversely, if the mean is higher than the median, it is classified as good. The categorization details for the product diversification variable are provided in Table 2.4.

Table 1.4 Categorization Values for Product Diversification Variables.

No	Indicator	Mean	Median	category
1	Ready-to-Eat Products	4,07	4	Good
2	Consumer Needs and Expectations	4,37	4	Good
Average		4,22	4	Good

Source: Processed Data (2024)

According to Table 2.4, which categorizes the variables of product diversification, it is evident that the indicator for ready-to-consume products has a mean value that exceeds the median value. This indicates that it falls into the good category. This is attributed to the fact that many of the products offered by Meatrix are of the ready-to-consume type, allowing consumers to enjoy them without a lengthy preparation time; an example of this is frozen food. The indicators of consumer needs and expectations exhibit a mean value that exceeds the median, indicating a favorable assessment. This is attributed to the range of products available at Meatrix, which includes essential goods, frozen foods, and other items, thereby fulfilling consumer needs and expectations. Based on the two indicators within the product diversification variable, it can be classified as good; ready-to-eat products also fall into the good category, as do consumer needs and expectations. According to Table 2.3 of the Descriptive Statistics, the purchase decision variable shows a maximum value of 45.00, a minimum value of 31.00, a mean value of 39.3333, a median value of 39.0000, a mode of 39.00, and a standard deviation of 3.56548. In this study, the median value is utilized for the purchase decision variable. When the mean is less than the median, it is categorized as poor; conversely, when the mean is greater than the median, it is categorized as good. Below is a detailed table of the purchase decision variable:

Table 1.5 Categorization of Purchase Decision Variables

No	Indicator	Mean	Median	Category
1	Product Selection	4,43	4	Good
2	Brand Selection	4,41	4	Good
3	Distribution Channel Selection	4,27	4	Good

No	Indicator	Mean	Median	Category
	Average	4,37	4	Good

Source: Processed Data (2024)

Based on Table 2.5, the categorization of purchasing decision variables indicates that the product selection indicator has a mean value greater than the median value, which places it in the good category. This is attributed to the diverse range of products offered at Meatrix, making the product selection commendable. The brand selection indicator also shows a mean value exceeding the median value, categorizing it as good. This is due to the high quality of brands available at Meatrix, which appeals to consumers. Furthermore, the distributor location indicator has a mean value that surpasses the median value, placing it in the good category as well. This is because the distributors or stores are conveniently located near consumers, and Meatrix also offers home delivery for orders. Overall, the three indicators related to purchasing decision variables can be classified as good, as all indicators fall within this favorable category.

The normality test conducted in this study utilized histograms, Probability Plots, and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. In the normality assessment, the criterion for a regression model to be considered good is that it should have residuals that are normally distributed. The results of the normality test for this research are as follows:

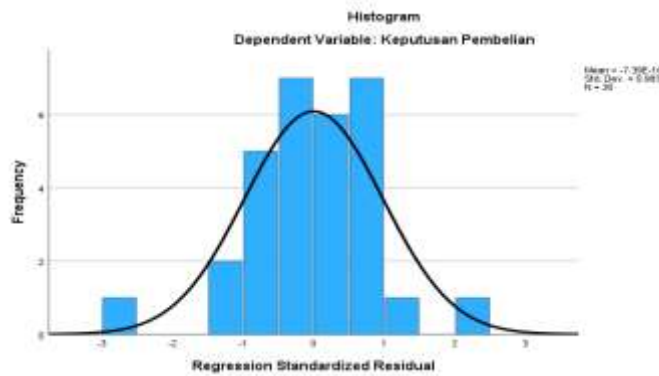


Figure 1 Normality Test Results Histogram

Source: Data processed using SPSS 29

According to Figure 4.1, the results of the Normality Test Histogram indicate that the curve within the histogram resembles a normal distribution. Therefore, it can be concluded that the data in this study follows a normal distribution. Following the normality test conducted with the histogram, the next step is to perform a Probability Plot or P-Plot test. Below are the results of the Probability Plot or P-Plot test:



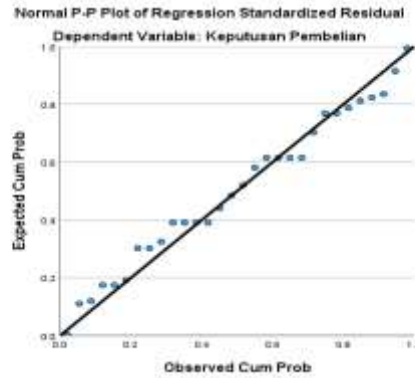


Figure 2 Results of Normality Test P-Plot

Source: Data processed using SPSS 29

According to Figure 4.2, the results of the Normality Test P-Plot indicate that the data in this study follows a normal distribution. However, to confirm whether the distribution in this research is indeed normal, a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was conducted. The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for this study are presented in

Table 1.6 Results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

One -sample kolmogorov-smirnov Test				Unstandardize d Residual
N				30
Normal Parameters <sup>a,b</sup>		Mean		.0000000
		Std.Deviation		2.98353619
Most Extreme Differences		Absolute		.098
		Positive		.094
		Negative		-.098
Test statistic				.098
Asymp stg. (2-tailed) <sup>c</sup>				.200 <sup>d</sup>
Monte Carlo Sig.(2-tailed) <sup>c</sup>		sig		.633
		99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.620
			Upper Bound	.645
a. Test distribution is Normal				
b. calculated from data				

c.LillieforsSignificance Correction

d.This is a lower bound of the true Significance 2000000

e.Lilliefors' method based on 10000 monte carlo samples with starting seed 2000000

Source: Data processed using SPSS 29.

Based on Table 4.6, the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test indicate that the significance value in this study is 0.200. This implies that when the significance value is greater than 0.05, the residuals in this research are normally distributed. The multicollinearity test conducted in this study aims to determine whether there is a correlation among the independent variables within the regression model, as a poorly constructed regression model will exhibit correlations among the independent variables. The following presents the results of the multicollinearity test in this research:

Table 1.7 Results of the Multicollinearity Test

model	Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
	Unstandardize d B	Coefficient s Std.error	Standardize d Coefficients Beta	t	sig	Collineart y Tolerance	Statisti c VIF
1 (Constant)	20.815	5.377		3.87 1	<,00 1		
Product Diversificatio n	.732	.211	548	3,46 2	.002	1.000	1.000

a.Dependent Variable :buyer's decision.

Source: Data processed using SPSS 29.

The results of the multicollinearity test presented in Table 4.7 indicate a tolerance value of 1.000. A tolerance value greater than 0.10 signifies the absence of multicollinearity ( $1.000 > 0.10$ , indicating no multicollinearity). Additionally, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for this study is also 1.000. A VIF value less than 10.00 further confirms the absence of multicollinearity ( $1.000 < 10$ , indicating no multicollinearity). Therefore, it can be concluded that this study does not exhibit multicollinearity, which suggests that the regression model is robust due to the lack of correlation among the independent variables. The heteroscedasticity test conducted in this study aims to determine whether there is a variance inequality among the residuals. A well-specified regression model should not exhibit heteroscedasticity. The following presents the results of the heteroscedasticity test conducted in this research:

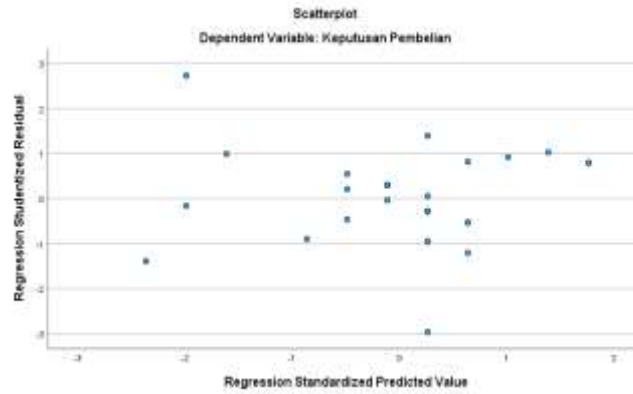


Figure 3 Results of Heteroskedasticity Test

Source: Data processed using SPSS 29

Based on Figure 4.3, the results of the Heteroskedasticity Test indicate that the distribution of all points is random, with all points perfectly distributed above zero. This suggests that the study does not exhibit heteroskedasticity. The simple linear regression analysis conducted in this research aims to examine the effect of the independent variable (product diversification) on the dependent variable (purchase decision). Below are the results of the simple linear regression analysis from this study:

Table 1.8 Results of Simple Linear Regression Analysis

		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				
model		Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std.error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	sig
1	(Constant)	20.815	5.377		3.871	<,001
	Product Diversification	.732	.211	.548	3.462	.002

a. Dependent Variable :buyer's decision.

Source: Data processed using SPSS 29

Based on Table 4.8, the results of the Simple Linear Regression Test yield the following equation:

$$Y = 20.815 + 0.732 X + e$$

The regression results indicate that the constant value (a) is 20.815, and the regression coefficient is 0.732. Therefore, the relationship between the product diversification variable and the purchasing decision variable can be summarized as follows:

1. The constant value (a) is 20.815, which implies that when the product diversification variable is 0, the purchasing decision variable for Meatrix is 0.732.
2. The regression coefficient is 0.732, indicating that for each additional unit increase in the X variable (product diversification), the Y variable (purchasing decision for Meatrix) will increase by 0.732. This positive regression coefficient suggests that the influence of the X variable (product diversification) on the Y variable (purchasing decision) is positive.

#### 4.4.2 Partial Significance Test t (t-test)

The partial significance test t, or t-test, in this study is employed to determine the impact of the product diversification variable on the purchasing decision variable. In other words, this research aims to establish that the product diversification variable positively influences purchasing decisions. The results of the partial significance test t or t-test in this study are as follows:

Table 1.9 Results of the Partial Significance Test t (t-test)

		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				
model		Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std.error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	sig
1	(Constant)	20.815	5.377		3.871	<,001
	Product Diversification	.732	.211	.548	3,462	.002

a. Dependent Variable :buyer's decision.

Source: Data processed using SPSS 29

Based on Table 4.8, the results of the Partial Significance Test (t-test) indicate a significance value of 0.002. This implies that when the significance value is less than 0.05, the product diversification variable has a significant effect on purchasing decisions ( $0.002 < 0.05$ ). Additionally, the calculated t-value is 3.462, while the critical t-value for this study is 1.701. Since the calculated t-value exceeds the critical t-value, we reject the null hypothesis (H0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H1) ( $3.462 > 1.701$ ). This outcome demonstrates a positive influence of the product diversification variable (Y) on the purchasing decision variable (X). Furthermore, the coefficient of determination test was conducted in this study to assess the extent to which the model can explain changes in the dependent variable. The results of the coefficient of determination test are as follows:

Table 1.10 Results of the Coefficient of Determination Test.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.548 <sup>a</sup>	.300	.275	3.03635

a. Predictors : (Constant), Product Diversification)

Source: Data processed using SPSS 29

Based on Table 4.10, the results of the coefficient of determination test indicate that the R Square value is 0.300. This implies that the product diversification variable accounts for 30% of the variance in the purchasing decision variable, while the remaining 70% is influenced by other variables that were not examined in this study.

## CONCLUSION

The investigator's study on product diversification's impact on consumer purchasing decisions at Meatrix in Pandeglang shows promising results. Increased product diversification correlates with improved purchasing choices, while reduced diversification leads to decreased decisions. Consumer feedback indicates high satisfaction with Meatrix's diverse offerings, including vegetables, fruits, meats, and spices, allowing customers to meet all their needs in one place. This variety effectively attracts consumers and influences their purchasing behavior. The t-test results reveal a positive relationship between product diversification (variable X) and purchasing decisions (variable Y), with a t-statistic of 3.462 exceeding the t-table value of 1.701. This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis and supports the conclusion that product diversification positively affects purchasing decisions. The determination coefficient indicates that product diversification accounts for only 30% of the variance in purchasing decisions, with other factors contributing to the remaining 70%. Overall, product diversification is viewed positively by consumers, primarily driven by their needs and expectations, while ready-to-consume products are less significant. Similarly, purchasing decisions are also rated positively, with product selection being the most influential factor and the choice of distribution channel the least..

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