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## Communication Science Students' Perception of Somethinc's Product Discount Promotion Strategy on TikTok

Difa Anugrah Indah Cahyani<sup>1</sup>, Yuliana Astutik<sup>2</sup>, Rio Kurniawan<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup> Prodi Ilmu Komunikasi, Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Budaya, Universitas

Trunodjoyo Madura, Bangkalan, Jawa Timur, Indonesia

[difaanugrah7@gmail.com](mailto:difaanugrah7@gmail.com), [yulianaastutik405@gmail.com](mailto:yulianaastutik405@gmail.com),

[rio.kurniawan@trunojoyo.ac.id](mailto:rio.kurniawan@trunojoyo.ac.id)

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### Abstract

*This study aims to analyze the perceptions of Communication Science students at Universitas Trunojoyo Madura toward Somethinc product discount promotions on TikTok, identify the factors influencing those perceptions, and examine their impact on students' interest in the products. This research employed a qualitative descriptive approach within a constructivist paradigm. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation involving five Communication Science students who actively use TikTok and have encountered Somethinc discount promotions on the platform. The findings indicate that students generally have positive perceptions of Somethinc's discount promotions on TikTok. The promotions are considered attractive, informative, easy to understand, and effective in capturing attention through creative visual content and clear messages. Students' perceptions are influenced by personal experience, product needs, promotional characteristics, and the intensity of TikTok usage. Furthermore, the promotions increase students' interest in Somethinc products by encouraging them to seek product information and consider purchasing decisions. The study concludes that discount promotions on TikTok are an effective digital marketing communication strategy for attracting consumer attention and increasing purchase interest among university students.*

**Keywords**– Perception, Discount Promotion, Tiktok, Somethinc, University Students.



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## 1. Introduction

The rapid evolution of digital technology has fundamentally transformed how society communicates, acquires information, and executes consumption activities. A prominent manifestation of this shift is the burgeoning utilization of social media as both a communication vehicle and a strategic marketing channel. TikTok has emerged as one of the fastest-growing platforms, highly favored by the younger demographic, particularly university students. Facilitated by its interactive short-video features, TikTok transcended its initial purpose as a mere entertainment hub to become an exceptionally potent tool for product promotion, utilized extensively by corporations and independent entrepreneurs alike.

The adoption of TikTok as a marketing medium has accelerated alongside the exponential growth of its active user base. Companies strategically employ the platform to cultivate brand awareness, introduce novelty products, and drive sales performance through diverse promotional mechanisms. Among these mechanisms, price discount promotion remains a cornerstone strategy due to its immediate capacity to capture consumer attention and trigger purchasing impulses. Price reductions generate a tangible perception of economic advantage for consumers, making them highly effective in contemporary digital marketing landscapes (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

This phenomenon has been adroitly capitalized upon by Somethinc, a leading Indonesian local skincare brand that actively deploys promotional campaigns on TikTok. Somethinc's marketing mix spans highly dynamic configurations, including short creative videos, influencer endorsements, live shopping streams, and exclusive discount offerings. Evaluating student perceptions of Somethinc's discount schemes on TikTok yields compelling academic value, given that individuals process and interpret promotional messaging through diverse frameworks. Variations in perception are typically driven by distinct personal histories, individual product requirements, brand trust levels, and specific cognitive methods of decoding social media content.

Perception is defined as the multi-stage cognitive process through which individuals select, organize, and interpret sensory inputs to construct a

meaningful worldview (Robbins & Judge, 2017). Within digital marketing communications, managing consumer perception is vital because it directly dictates consumer engagement, attitudinal shifts, and eventual purchasing behaviors. Hence, investigating how university students perceive Somethinc's promotional activities on TikTok provides crucial insights into how modern promotional discourse is received by digital-native audiences.

Prior scholars have extensively explored the domain of social media-driven marketing communications and product endorsements. Extant literature indicates that the younger generation views digital media as the primary landscape for information acquisition and brand engagement (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Parallel studies corroborate that social media plays an essential role in modulating consumer responses toward holistic digital marketing architectures. Specifically, investigations into skincare marketing on TikTok confirm that creatively packaged presentations significantly augment consumer attention span and brand affinity. Nevertheless, a critical literature gap persists. The vast majority of existing studies have predominantly targeted the direct quantitative correlation between promotions and final purchase intentions, or measured the general efficacy of digital marketing strategies broadly. Qualitative literature focusing specifically on student perceptions of localized skincare discount strategies on TikTok remains noticeably scarce. Furthermore, the dominance of quantitative models in this area leaves a conceptual void regarding the deeper subjectivities—how students actually decode, rationalize, and experience discount incentives within their daily social media routines.

To bridge this empirical gap, this study offers novelty by providing a nuanced qualitative-descriptive analysis of Communication Science students' perceptions at Universitas Trunojoyo Madura regarding Somethinc's discount initiatives on TikTok. Moving beyond mere behavioral metrics, this inquiry focuses on the internal and external dynamics shaping these psychological perceptions. Consequently, this study complements foundational theories in digital marketing communication while providing an empathetic look at target audience receptivity. The objective of this research is three-fold: to analyze

students' perceptions of Somethinc's TikTok discount promotions, to map the underlying factors driving these perceptions, and to observe how these dynamics alter consumer affinity toward the brand.

## **2. Method**

This study implemented a qualitative descriptive method rooted in the constructivist paradigm. A qualitative approach was deemed appropriate to capture the deep, lived subjectivities regarding how Communication Science students at Universitas Trunojoyo Madura evaluate TikTok discount schemes. The constructivist paradigm operates on the ontological premise that social realities are not fixed, but are actively constructed by individuals via experiential navigation and social interactions (Moleong, 2017).

The research subjects comprised active students from the Communication Science Department at Universitas Trunojoyo Madura. Informants were selected via purposive sampling based on explicit criteria: (1) active enrollment in the Communication Science program at Universitas Trunojoyo Madura, (2) active usage patterns on TikTok, (3) direct exposure to Somethinc's discount promotions on the platform, (4) willingness to participate voluntarily, and (5) the capacity to provide rich, articulate insights regarding the research focus. Five informants who strictly matched these criteria were selected for the final sample.

Data collection was carried out through triangulation methods consisting of field observations, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and systematic documentation. Observations concentrated on the explicit content forms used in Somethinc's discount campaigns on TikTok, including promotional video rollouts, influencer endorsement formats, paid ads, and live streaming interactions. In-depth interviews were guided by a semi-structured protocol designed to map out informants' experiences, cognitive evaluations, and behavioral feedback. Documentation served a supportive function, compiling field notes, interview transcriptions, and structural media artifacts.

Data analysis followed the interactive qualitative model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which comprises data reduction, data display,

and conclusion drawing/verification. In the data reduction phase, raw interview audio was transcribed verbatim, filtered for analytical relevance, and organized around the core research questions. Data display was achieved by systematic thematic coding, conceptual categorization, and mapping emerging cross-case themes. Finally, conclusions were drawn and iteratively verified against empirical evidence to maintain structural integrity. To establish trustworthiness and data validity, a source triangulation technique was applied, continuously cross-referencing and validating insights derived from observations against interview disclosures and media documentation.

### **3. Result and Discussion**

Field data analysis reveals that Communication Science students at Universitas Trunojoyo Madura maintain a highly favorable perception of Somethinc's discount promotions on TikTok. Informants uniformly characterized the promotional outputs as visually captivating, highly informative, conceptually transparent, and remarkably effective at securing immediate engagement through aesthetic video design and explicit brand messaging. The actual monetary deductions offered by Somethinc stood out as a primary psychological stimulus that induced students to allocate focal attention toward the advertised products.

These findings illustrate that discount strategies do more than just lower financial barriers; they operate as complex marketing communication units that actively foster positive consumer brand schemas. As Communication Science students, the informants do not merely process promotional data passively; instead, they critically decode incoming media messages. Visual aesthetics, product specification clarity, and the perceived value of the discount serve as external stimuli that students calculate as a net economic benefit. This proves that digital promotional efficacy relies heavily on a firm's ability to seamlessly pair financial incentives with clear, creative storytelling (Tjiptono, 2019).

The research further identifies that these perceptions are co-created by an intersection of internal and external factors: personal history, subjective

skincare needs, promotional characteristics, and TikTok consumption intensity. Informants with an immediate, conscious need for skincare routines showed significantly higher cognitive processing of Somethinc ads compared to those without such needs. Additionally, the strategic use of key opinion leaders (KOLs) and niche content creators greatly enhanced message credibility and persuasive appeal.

This matrix validates the psychological reality that consumer perception is formed through an interaction of internal predispositions and external inputs (Rakhmat, 2018). Internal attributes (needs and personal history) dictate how an individual interprets promotional data, while external elements (creative formatting, influencer authority, and exposure frequency) reinforce the validation of that data. Therefore, optimal digital strategies must map message delivery directly onto the target audience's demographic needs. This study demonstrates that Somethinc's TikTok discount strategies successfully drive immediate consumer progression down the conversion funnel. Exposure to these promotions consistently compelled informants to seek deeper product information, evaluate user reviews, perform price-comparison across platforms, and execute final purchasing actions. This path underscores that short-form video discount campaigns do not just build brief brand awareness; they actively drive immediate downstream purchasing behavior.

These dynamics line up with digital communication models which argue that interactive media spaces play an essential role in defining how younger demographics process external information (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). This study adds nuance to general marketing theories by showing how young consumers evaluate discount incentives on TikTok. For corporate brands, this highlights the necessity of designing campaigns that balance clear product information with the fast-paced, highly visual style of modern social media.

#### **4. Conclusion**

This study concludes that Somethinc's discount promotions on TikTok enjoy an overwhelmingly positive perception among Communication Science

students at Universitas Trunojoyo Madura. This favorable standing is built on the clear presentation of key promotional features, such as appealing price drops, high-quality visual production, structured product data, and relatable influencer messaging. These perceptions are driven by both internal factors (personal skincare needs and user experience) and external factors (exposure frequency on TikTok). The study proves TikTok's capacity to serve as an impactful digital marketing channel that shapes positive audience schemas. It shows that digital campaign success depends on more than just the discount value; it requires presenting the offer through creative, clear messaging that fits the target audience's needs. Practically, these insights can help brands design more effective social media campaigns and provide a useful reference for future research on consumer behavior in digital spaces.

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