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https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/289/2021_2022_GMAT_E5_86_99_E4_BD_9C_c89_289789.htm

5. The following appeared in an announcement issued by the publisher of The Mercury, a weekly newspaper. “ Since a competing lower-priced newspaper, The Bugle, was started five years ago, The Mercury ’ s circulation has declined by 10,000 readers. The best way to get more people to read The Mercury is to reduce its price below that of The Bugle, at least until circulation increases to former levels. The increased circulation of The Mercury will attract more businesses to buy advertising space in the paper. ” Discuss how well reasoned... etc. A newspaper publisher is recommending that the price of its paper, The Mercury, be reduced below the price of a competing newspaper, The Bugle. This recommendation responds to a severe decline in circulation of The Mercury during the 5-year period following the introduction of The Bugle. The publisher ’ s line of reasoning is that lowering the price of The Mercury will increase its readership, thereby increasing profits because a wider readership attracts more advertisers. This line of reasoning is problematic in two critical respects. While it is clear that increased circulation would make the paper more attractive to potential advertisers, it is not obvious that lowering the subscription price is the most effective way to gain new readers. The publisher assumes that price is the only factor that caused the decline in readership. But no evidence is given to support this claim. Moreover, given that The Mercury was the established local paper, it is unlikely

that such a mass exodus of its readers would be explained by subscription price alone. There are many other factors that might account for a decline in The Mercury ' s popularity. For instance, readers might be displeased with the extent and accuracy of its news reporting, or the balance of local to other news coverage. Moreover, it is possible The Mercury has recently changed editors, giving the paper a locally unpopular political perspective. Or perhaps readers are unhappy with the paper ' s format, the timeliness of its feature articles, its comics or advice columns, the extent and accuracy of its local event calendar, or its rate of errors. In conclusion, this argument is weak because it depends on an oversimplified assumption about the causal connection between the price of the paper and its popularity. To strengthen the argument, the author must identify and explore relevant factors beyond cost before concluding that lowering subscription prices will increase circulation and, thereby, increase advertising revenues.

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