

INFLUENCE ON PRODUCT QUALITY BUYING DECISIONS THROUGH BRAND IMAGES AT PT. ASSA BELAWAN

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ABSTRACT

This research is motivated by a decrease in the volume of fish sales at PT. Assa Belawan from 2016 to 2020. This decline has resulted in the emergence of new competitors who produce similar products so some buyers switch to competing products. This study aims to identify, describe and analyze the problem of how product quality influences purchasing decisions through brand image (brand image). The research method used in this study is a quantitative method technique by taking samples by Non-Probability Sampling, amounting to 53 respondents. The data analysis technique used is multiple regression analysis which was previously tested with classical assumptions. The results showed that there was a direct positive and significant influence between product quality (X) on the brand image (Z) with the relationship $Z = 0.8563X + e_1$. Based on path analysis there was a positive and significant effect between product quality (X) on decision purchase (Y) through Brand image (Z) with the relationship $Y = 0.4041X + 0.4527Z + e_2$. Based on the value of the determination of the relationship between the effect of product quality on the brand image can be explained by 73.33% and the rest can be explained by other variables.

Keywords: Product Quality, Brand Image, Purchase Decision

INTRODUCTION

Facing today's increasingly fierce business competition, such as the sale of fish in Indonesia, many companies are buyer-oriented (A. F. Nasib, 2019). The sense that the company uses an integrated marketing strategy to increase consumer purchasing decisions in making choices (Sari, 2020). In a business environment accompanied by economic globalization, it has an impact on 3C which includes *customers, competition, and change*. Currently, the *customer* is in control of the business, previously it was the producer who determined what products and services should be provided in the market.

Knowledge of consumer behavior continues to experience developments in business marketing, the decision to determine marketing strategy begins with analyzing consumer buying behavior in the right situation, so that it can influence consumers to buy the goods and services offered (N. D. T. E. Novirsari, 202 C.E.). In the current global era, purchasing behavior is increasingly complex because consumers buy products more critically, not solely based on needs (Syaifullah, 2021). This situation results in entrepreneurs having to make even more extra efforts to maintain the continuity of their business, develop their business, and obtain maximum profits to face competitors, both old and newcomers (Banuari, 2023). For competition in the field of product marketing to create customers or retain customers, an entrepreneur must prepare a good product. Considerations in choosing a product can also be said as an effort to achieve a target, it can be started from an internal perspective, especially the products offered. This phenomenon inspires entrepreneurs to think critically, and provide quality, superior and attractive product concepts for consumers. Every company must have an advantage in its products from its competitors so that consumers have reasons to make choices in choosing a product. When a company has differences in terms of quality from competitors and if these differences are felt to be better than competitors, consumers will decide to buy the product.

The purchasing decision is a concept in buying behavior where the buyer decides to act or do something and in this case make a purchase or utilize a particular product or service. Purchasing decisions are an important thing to pay attention to because this will certainly be a consideration of how a marketing strategy will be carried out by the company (Keller, 2016). According to research conducted by [7], the factors that influence the *brand image* in purchasing decisions are the association factor of excellence, the association factor of strength, and the associated factor of uniqueness. Research conducted by [8] states that product quality has a significant influence on purchasing decisions. If there is even a slight change in the product quality variable, there will immediately be a significant change in the purchasing decision variable (B. Nasib, 2019). Product quality is an important component in creating and considering strategies within a company, if the quality of the product produced is good then it will be a special attraction for consumers in making choices to buy a product, otherwise, if the quality of the product is bad or not as expected, then Consumers will switch their purchases to other similar products. To achieve the expected product quality, a quality standard is needed, this method aims to keep the resulting product able to meet predetermined standards so that it is right for the intended market segmentation (Hou, 2021).

A product can be said to be of high quality if the product meets the needs and desires of the buyer. Thus consumer behavior can be used as a tool to see new opportunities that arise or to anticipate such intense competition (E. Novirsari & Tricom, 2019). To survive, develop and be able to compete, the company must be able to maintain a level of customer satisfaction. There are various ways to maintain consumer satisfaction, one of which is to always improve the quality of the products sold, always pay attention, and as much as possible not increase the prices of the products sold (A. Fadli, 2020).

PT. ASSA Belawan is a company engaged in the *trading business* or as a distribution market selling imported and local frozen fish. Sales results for the last 5 years are as follows.

Table 1. Sales Data of PT. Assa Belawan

Year	Sale
2016	IDR 20,408,955,000
2017	IDR 18,998,234,550
2018	IDR 17,350,200,680
2019	IDR 16,950,440,000
2020	IDR 15,758,012,000
Total	IDR 89,465,842,230

Source: PT. Assa Belawan (2021)

Based on fish sales data from PT. Assa Belawan in the last five years has shown a decline in its sales. There was a decline in sales at PT. Assa Belawan is a reality that must be resolved immediately and the causes sought. Many things are the cause of this, one of which is the provision of incomplete products and lack of attention to product quality and brand image so that the level of consumer purchases will be lower.

The big influence of Brand Image formed by marketers can shape the perception of buyers in deciding to buy a product. Marketers must try hard to attract the enthusiasm of buyers so that the brand image formed is achieved (A. H. D. Siregar, 2021). Brand Image is a situation where a brand can influence consumer behavior towards a product in purchasing decisions so that the better the brand image, the greater the opportunity for purchasing decisions (Najib, 2020). Many choices of fish products are on the market. Therefore PT. Assa

Belawan should pay more attention to the brand image created by the company. So that buyers choose PT. Assa Belawan is a fish distributor that will meet their needs.

Buyers always want to get a quality product with a brand image that is known by many people (Pranata, 2021). When a buyer wants to buy a product, he will consider the risks that will occur. One thing that buyers do to avoid this risk is to choose products based on brand image (Pribadi, 2021). The quality of the product and the brand with a good reputation to be chosen are considered safer. Thus a good brand image will influence someone in making purchasing decisions (Qomariah, 2021). Although some buyers think that expensive products are quality products. Product quality and a good brand image are self-considerations for consumers who will buy a product. Both these, regarding product quality and brand image, are important components of a product, because they will affect company profits (Purwadi, 2021).

LITERATURE E REVIEW

Buying decision

The purchasing decision is a person's attitude to buy or use a product either in the form of goods or services that are believed to satisfy him and is willing to bear the risks that may arise (Kotler, 2009). The purchase decision taken by the buyer is a collection of several organized decisions. The purchasing decision is a decision-making process in buying, the decision to buy a product that starts from a problem experience, information search, evaluation of alternatives, making purchasing decisions, and finally obtaining behavior after buying, namely, satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a product purchased (Kotler & Amstrong, 2012). Purchase decisions made by consumers or buyers are also influenced by habits. Buying habits include when the purchase is made, in what quantity the purchase is made, and where the purchase is made (Assauri, 2012).

Brand Image

A brand is a sign or symbol that gives the identity of a certain product or service which can be in the form of words, pictures, or a combination of both (Alma Buchari, 2013). Brand Image is the overall perception of a product or brand that is formed from information and past experiences with that product or brand (Sutisna, 2012). A brand is defined as an image that can be remembered by the public, creating a brand that is positive, relevant, and easy to remember by consumers (Fandy Tjiptono, 2013).

Product Quality

Product quality is an important part of marketing activities because the product is the result of a company's activities which will later be offered to consumers to fulfill consumer wants and needs (Asniwati, 2020). In general, when buying a product, consumers don't just buy the product, but they also buy the benefits and advantages that come from the product they buy (Aqsa, 2022). Therefore, a product must have advantages compared to other products, such as the quality of the product to be offered. The concept of quality itself is relative, that is depending on the point of view used to determine its characteristics and specifications (Lupiyoadi, 2013). Product quality is the overall characteristics and characteristics of a product or service in its ability to satisfy stated/implied needs (Kotler, 2009). The quality of goods and services is as a whole a combination of the characteristics of goods and services according to marketing, engineering, production, and maintenance that make the goods and services used to meet customer or consumer expectations. Quality is something that is decided by the customer. That is, quality is based on the customer's or consumer's experience of goods and services that are measured based on certain requirements or attributes (Sitio, 2020).

METHODS

The type of research used in this study is a type of quantitative research. According to (Sugiyono, 2015) Quantitative research can be interpreted as a research method based on a positive philosophy, used to examine certain populations or samples, sampling techniques are generally carried out randomly, collecting and using research instruments, and data analysis are quantitative/statistical in nature to test established hypothesis. Based on the definition of the population above, the population in this study will be fish buyers who come to PT. Assa Belawan totaling 53 people. This study used a *non-probability sampling technique* using a saturated sample. Saturated *sampling is a sampling technique in which all members of the population are used as samples*. So that the sample in the sample in this study was 53 respondents. Data collection techniques using questionnaires and data analysis using path analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Validity test

Product Quality Variable (X)

A validity test is used to measure the validity or validity of a questionnaire. A questionnaire is said to be valid if the questions on the questionnaire can reveal something that will be measured by the questionnaire (Ghozali, 2009:45). To measure the validity can be done by doing a correlation between the score of the questions with the total score of the construct or variable. Data is declared valid if $r_{count} > r_{table}$. The results of the data processing are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Product Quality Validity Test Results

r_{count}	Alpha (0.05)	Information
0.4823	0.2284	Valid
0.6550	0.2284	Valid
0.5954	0.2284	Valid
0.5188	0.2284	Valid
0.5236	0.2284	Valid
0.5697	0.2284	Valid
0.7218	0.2284	Valid
0.5351	0.2284	Valid

Source: Processed by Researchers (2022)

From Table 2 above, it is known that the validity value of the questions for service quality are all valid because the entire validity value is greater than r_{table} ($5\%; n-2 = r_{table} (5\%; 51) = 0.2284$) and can be used in subsequent calculations because all of them are declared valid.

Purchasing Decision Variable (Y)

A validity test is used to measure the validity or validity of a questionnaire. A questionnaire is said to be valid if the questions on the questionnaire can reveal something that will be measured by the questionnaire (Ghozali, 2009:45). To measure the validity can be done by doing a correlation between the score of the questions with the total score of the construct or variable. Data is declared valid if $r_{count} > r_{table}$. The results of the data processing are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Purchasing Decision Validity Test Results

r_{count}	Alpha (0.05)	Information
0.7572	0.2284	Valid
0.7307	0.2284	Valid

0.6932	0.2284	Valid
0.6252	0.2284	Valid
0.7734	0.2284	Valid
0.8696	0.2284	Valid

Source: Processed by Researchers

From Table 3 above, it is known that the validity value of the questions for all prices is valid because the entire validity value is greater than r table (5%; $n-2$) = r table (5%; 51) = 0.2284 and can be used in subsequent calculations because all of them are declared valid.

Brand Image Variable (Z)

A validity test is used to measure the validity or validity of a questionnaire. A questionnaire is said to be valid if the questions on the questionnaire can reveal something that will be measured by the questionnaire (Ghozali, 2009:45). To measure the validity can be done by doing a correlation between the score of the questions with the total score of the construct or variable. Data is declared valid if r count > r table. The results of the data processing are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Validity Test Results in Consumer buying interest

r count	Alpha (0.05)	Information
0.7890	0.2284	Valid
0.8899	0.2284	Valid
0.6531	0.2284	Valid
0.7890	0.2284	Valid

Source: Processed by Researchers

From Table 4 above, it is known that the validity value of the questions for the brand image are all valid because the entire validity value is greater than r table (5%; $n-2$) = r table (5%; 51) = 0.2284 and can be used in subsequent calculations because all of them are declared valid.

Reliability Test

The reliability test is the level of constraints of a research instrument. A reliable instrument is an instrument that when used repeatedly to measure the same object will produce the same data. The reliability test can show the consistency of the respondents' answers contained in the questionnaire. This test was carried out after the validity test and the test was a valid question. This study was carried out by looking at the *Cronbach Alpha value* in the data that had been processed by the SPSS version 20 program. If the *Cronbach Alpha value* in the questionnaire was > 0.6, the variable was declared reliable. This is to the statement of Ghozali (2009:45), which states that a variable is said to be reliable if it gives a *Cronbach's Alpha value* > 0.60 a critical value whereas, otherwise the data is said to be unreliable.

Table 5. Instrument Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach Alpha value	Critical Limit	Information
Product Quality (X)	0.7093	0.6	Reliable
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.8183	0.6	Reliable
Brand Image (Z)	0.6617	0.6	Reliable

Source: SPSS Calculation Results (attachment)

Based on table 5 above, it is known that the *Cronbach Alpha value* for all variables exceeds 0.6 so the variable is said to be reliable.

Path Analysis

In this study the independent variable is the purchase decision, the dependent variable is product quality, and the mediating variable is the brand image. The following is an overview of the path analysis based on the problems above:
 The equation of the path analysis is

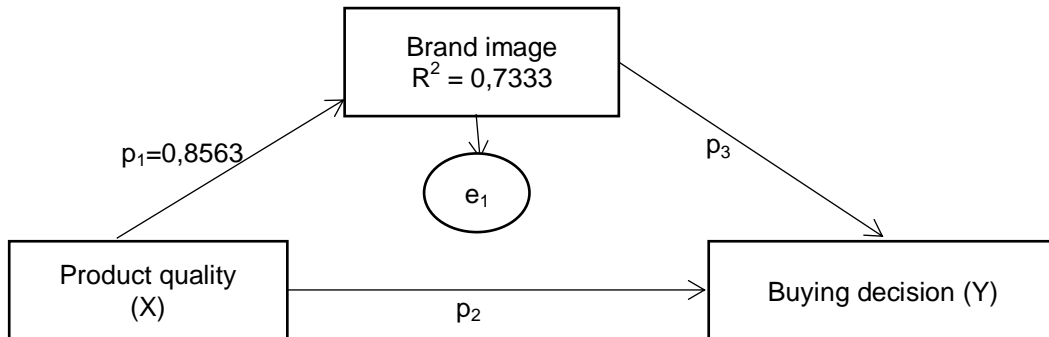


Figure 1. Product quality path analysis with Brand image

The value of e_1 is obtained from $\sqrt{1 - R^2} = \sqrt{1 - 0,7333} = 0,5164$
 So the equation I $\rightarrow Z = 0.8563X + e_1$
 For equation II as follows

Table 6. Correlation of Product Quality, *Brand Image*, and Purchasing Decisions

Summary models				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	std. The error in the Estimate
1	0.8256 _a	0.6816	0.6688	1.1909

a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Image, Product Quality

Source: SPSS Calculation Results (attachment)

Table 7. Product Quality Path with Purchase Decision through *Brand Image*

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	std. Error			
1	(Constant)	5.7639	2.2557		2.5552	0.0137
	Product Quality	0.3099	0.1185	0.4041	2.6152	0.0118
	Brand Image	0.7922	0.2704	0.4527	2.9296	0.0051

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

Source: SPSS Calculation Results (attachment)

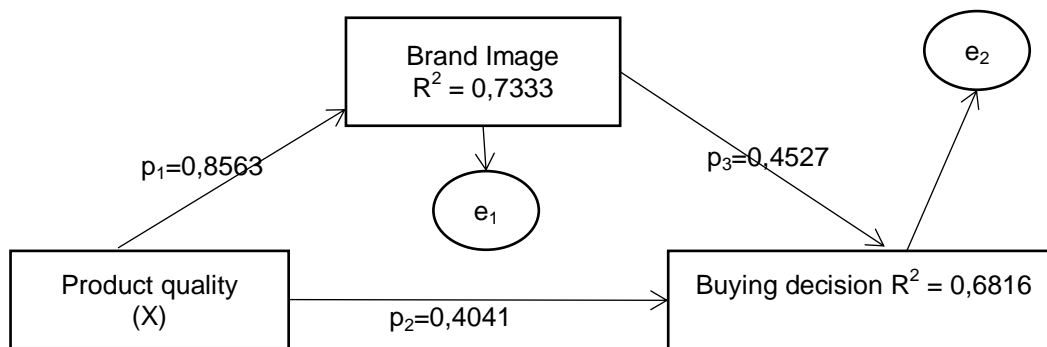


Figure 2. Product Quality Path With Purchasing Decisions Through Brand Image

Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The value of the coefficient of determination (R^2) is used to measure the magnitude of the relationship between the independent variables consisting of product quality, brand image, and purchasing decisions.

1. Determination between product quality and brand image
The determination value between product quality and brand image can be seen in table 4 with a determination value (R^2) = 0.7333 = 73.33%. Based on the determination value, it states that the effect of product quality on brand image is 73.33%, while the remaining 26.67% is influenced by variations in other variables outside the model study.
2. Determination between product quality and purchasing decisions through brand image.
The value of determination between product quality and purchasing decisions through brand image can be seen in Table 5 with a determination value (R^2) = 0.6816 = 68.16%. Based on the determination value, it states that the effect of product quality on purchase decisions through brand image is 68.16%, while the remaining 31.84% is influenced by variations in other variables outside the model study.

The value of e_2 is obtained from $\sqrt{1 - R^2} = \sqrt{1 - 0,6816} = 0,5643$
So that equation II $\rightarrow Y = 0.4041X + 0.4527Z + e_2$

Effect of Product Quality on Brand Image

Product quality has a positive and significant effect on brand image. Positive means that if the product quality value increases, the brand image will also increase. Significant means that the influence of product quality on brand image is very significant/real. The results of this study are the results of research (S. Nasib, 2021)(Chaniago, 2019)(E. Novirsari & Tricom, 2019)(D. Tambunan, 2019) which state that product quality has a significant effect on brand image.

Effect of Product Quality on Purchasing Decisions

Product quality has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. Positive means that if the product quality value increases, the purchase decision will also increase. Significant means that the influence of product quality on purchasing decisions is very significant/real. The results of this study are the results of research conducted (A. Fadli et al., 2022)(Bhastary, 2021)(Hou, 2021)(J. Z. L. I. E. A. F. N. M. R. A. M. P. A. Siregar, 2022)(Nofriza, 2022) which states that product quality has a significant effect on purchasing decisions.

The Effect of Brand Image on Purchasing Decisions

Brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. Positive means that if the brand image value increases, the purchasing decision will also increase. Significant means that the influence of brand image on purchasing decisions is very significant/real. The results of this study are the results of research conducted by (E. H. S. Nasib, 2020)(Lubis, 2020)(N. M. F. A. S. D. N. R. A. Fadli, 2022)(M. Nasib, 2021) which states that brand image has a significant effect on purchasing decisions.

Effect of Product Quality on Purchasing Decisions Through Brand Image

Thus, there is an influence of product quality on purchasing decisions through the brand image with a contribution of 0.3876 units. Based on that, the intervening variable (brand image) is still lacking in mediating (not mediating) the effect of product quality on purchasing decisions. The results of this study support the results of previous studies which state that brand image has a significant role in mediating product quality in purchasing decisions (Daulay, 2021)(N. M. Z. F. A. Fadli, 2020)(P. P. D. M. H. Nasib, 2020)(T. A. S. M. I. P. S. A. S. C. Nasib, 2021).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of processing the research data above, conclusions can be drawn

1. Based on path analysis, there is a direct positive and significant effect between product quality (X) on the brand image (Z) with the relationship $Z = 0.8563X + e_1$.
2. Based on path analysis, there is a positive and significant influence between product quality (X) on purchasing decisions (Y) through brand image (Z) with the relationship $Y = 0.4041X + 0.4527Z + e_2$.
3. Based on the value of the determination of the relationship between the effect of product quality on brand image, it can be explained by 73.33% and the rest can be explained by other variables.
4. Based on the value of the determination of the relationship between the effect of product quality on purchasing decisions through brand image can be explained by 68.16% and the rest can be explained by other variables.

Suggestions in this study are as follows:

1. We recommend that product quality continues to be improved because improving product quality has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions.
2. Product quality can explain the increase in purchasing decisions through *the brand image* of 68.16%, meaning that other variables can also influence it, for that PT Assa Belawan should also look for other variations in terms of increasing consumer purchasing decisions.

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