The Customer Satisfaction as an Antecedent of Purchase Decision in the Post Pandemic Era

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: *People's consumption habits have changed because of the pandemic which has been ongoing for about a year. The government's execution of the PSBB strategy has had a significant negative impact on local economic activity, particularly the food industry. Regional food and souvenirs are among the most potential industries that may grow following the COVID-19 pandemic. people visit one of these places since it has its own distinctive qualities and to remember, people bring home some souvenirs. The goal of this study is to determine whether consumer satisfaction can affect buying choices following the Covid-19 epidemic.*

Methodology: *The study's quantitative approach makes use of purposive sampling of 100 participants and structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis methods with SmartPLS 3.0 software.*

Finding: *The findings of the study indicate that product quality, brand image, and sales promotion significantly impact purchasing decisions. This suggests that these factors play a crucial role in shaping consumer choices. Additionally, the study reveals that purchasing decisions significantly influence consumer satisfaction. The level of consumer satisfaction with a product positively correlates with the likelihood of choosing to buy Tebing Tinggi's souvenir items. These findings highlight the importance of consumer happiness in influencing buying decisions, particularly in the post-Covid-19 epidemic environment.*

Conclusion: *This study demonstrates that consumer satisfaction can indeed affect buying choices following the Covid-19 epidemic. The results emphasize the significance of product quality, brand image, and sales promotion in shaping purchasing decisions. Moreover, the study underscores the importance of consumer satisfaction as a determinant of buying behavior. These findings have implications for businesses operating in the post-pandemic environment, highlighting the need to prioritize factors that contribute to consumer happiness in order to drive sales and improve overall customer satisfaction.*

Keywords: *Product Quality, Brand Image, Sales Promotion, Consumer Satisfaction, Purchase Decision*

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INTRODUCTION

The food and beverage industry continues to grow during the Covid-19 pandemic, despite slowing down. Figure 1 below shows that in the second quarter of 2022, the performance of the food and beverage industry experienced positive quarterly growth of 2.30 percent (Guo et al., 2020). Meanwhile, the annual growth of the food and beverage industry sector in semester 1 of 2022 (year on year) was 3.71 percent. This positive growth performance continues the performance of previous years which has also always been positive. (https://www.dataindustri.com/produk/data-pertumbuhan-industri-makanan-dan-minuman/)

Figure 1: Growth Trend of the Food and Beverage Industry
Sumber: *https://www.dataindustri.com/produk/data-pertumbuhan-industri-makanan-dan-minuman/*

People's consumption habits have changed because of the pandemic which has been ongoing for about a year. The government's execution of the PSBB strategy has had a significant negative impact on local economic activity, particularly in the food industry. Due to the PSBB period's encouragement of staying at home, people prefer to limit their consumption and opt to save money which has resulted in a reduction in food and beverage sales for the food business. The price of essentials has significantly decreased because of the decline in demand for food and drink. Since operational costs such as the price of renting space, electricity, or employee salaries decrease while the business operating cost is rising with no income, this has led to several business owners in the food industry sector making decisions that result in the closure of their operations and the layoff or termination of some of their employees. According to statistics gathered by P2E LIPI, the impact of the economic downturn on MSMEs operating micro food and beverage businesses reached 27% while it had a smaller impact on small and medium-sized firms (0.07% and 1.77%, respectively). This shows that the Covid-19 epidemic has a significant impact on MSMEs' development, particularly in the food and beverage industry and initiatives are required to slow the drop.

Regional mementos are among the most potent food industry items following the COVID-19 pandemic. When people visit a place, they usually bring home souvenirs since every location has its own distinctive features. The taste and memories associated with the uniqueness of the location make it alluring to bring back. To provide the public with high-quality culinary products they enjoy, culinary firms must aggressively develop in the future.

Tebing Tinggi City is a city in the Indonesian state of North Sumatra. Tebing Tinggi City is a city with a 38.44 km2 area and 172,838 inhabitants in 2020, situated in the Serdang Bedagai

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regency, and has a population density of 4,496 inhabitants per km2. Tebing Tinggi is well-known for producing a variety of common snacks but it does not have a dedicated MSME player marketing center. Peanut cake is one illustration of a top-notch memento from Tebing Tinggi. The bean cake resembles 'bakpia' from Yogyakarta, except the skin is thicker and has a sesame seed garnish. The level of sales was consistently rising before the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this situation got worse once the pandemic spread throughout the entire planet. A very big drop in sales was observed in the city's product industry. Along with the pandemic risk, the threat of rival companies offering identical goods can also have an impact on the drop in sales. Therefore, a solid strategy is required to ensure that this company can continue operating and that customer satisfaction is fulfilled with its products.

Consumer satisfaction, according to Firmansyah (2019) is the degree of the consumer's feelings after comparing them to their expectations. Someone is more likely to be a customer for a very long time if he or she is happy with the value that a product or service offers (Genoveva & Samukti, 2020). The five steps of the purchasing process which include problem detection, information search, alternative appraisal, purchasing decisions, and post-purchase behavior are supported by Kotler and Keller (2016). Consumers will evaluate the results of their purchases in the final stage, known as post-purchase behavior. If the performance of the product falls short of expectations, consumers will be disappointed. However, if expectations are met, consumers will feel satisfied and happy and may even decide to make product purchases again.

According to Abdullah and Aloysius (2018) study, factors influencing purchasing decisions include brand image, product quality, and promotion. Kotler and Keller (2016) note that consumer purchasing decisions are a component of the assessment stage that shapes preferences among brands in a range of options and may also influence the intention to purchase the most popular brand. There are empirical studies that have been conducted on the effect of product quality on purchasing decisions and purchasing decisions on customer satisfaction where the results show that product quality and promotion have a significant effect on purchasing decisions while purchasing decisions have a significant effect on customer satisfaction (Rahman & Sitio, 2019; Ilham et al., 2020; Sudarman et al., 2021). However, studies on the effect of product quality, brand image, and sales promotion on purchasing decisions and customer satisfaction are still limited. After careful analysis of all available options and numerous calculations, the buying choice is made. To compete with rivals, it's critical to comprehend consumer happiness and purchase decisions. Based on this occurrence, the goal of this study is to determine whether consumer satisfaction can have an impact on purchasing decisions in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer Satisfaction. When starting a business, the main objective is to determine how the company can make its customers happy after they use the goods or services offered (Astini & Yuyus Yustian, 2020). This degree of customer satisfaction may have a significant direct and indirect effect on the business. Kotler and Armstrong (2018) assert that consumer satisfaction is the degree to which the perceived performance of a product is consistent with the expectations of buyers. Kotler (2016) defines consumer satisfaction as a feeling of pleasure or disappointment that arises after comparing the performance of the perception of a product or service (or result) with his expectations. Customer satisfaction plays a dual role as an objective and marketing goal, highlighting the importance of meeting customer needs and fostering

loyalty (Cakici et al., 2019). It is influenced by several factors, including service quality, product quality, price, and contextual and personal elements (Chien and Chi, 2019). Additionally, indicators identified by Hasfar et al. (2020) provide valuable insights into customer satisfaction, such as expectations of service quality, satisfaction with the services provided, loyalty towards the quality of services, and responsiveness to the quality of services. According to this assertion, if the product purchased by a customer meets their needs and expectations, that customer's level of satisfaction will also be high.

Purchasing Decisions. Purchasing decision is the consumers' choices regarding whether to purchase a product from a certain brand, as well as the factors they considered when doing so which leads to purchasing decisions (Ramli et al., 2020). According to Kotler and Keller (2016), making a purchase is a step in the consumer evaluation process where preferences for brands are formed along with perhaps an intention to acquire those products. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2018), The most popular product should be purchased. An individual who is directly involved in obtaining and using the supplied commodities engages in decision-making (Hanaysha, 2022). The purchase decision refers to the choices made by consumers regarding whether to buy a product or not (Kotler, 2002). Indicators that can be used to assess the purchase decision process include the reasons for purchasing a product, the information processing involved in selecting a particular brand, the level of loyalty towards a product, the likelihood of recommending the product to others, and the tendency to make repeat purchases (Kotler, 2012).

Sales Promotion. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), sales promotion is a crucial technique for encouraging consumers to buy mostly short-term, swiftly supplied goods and services. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2018), promotional sales have been used by businesses to inform clients about new or improved products. According to Musfar (2020), the fundamental goal of promotion is to educate, persuade, and remind target customers about the brand and marketing strategy. Sales can be thought of as the action of promoting a product's benefits to get customers to purchase a good or service. In addition, according to Felita and Oktivera (2019), consumer-focused sales promotions include various strategies such as offering product samples, distributing coupons, providing complimentary products after a purchase, enabling consumers to win prizes through competitions, games, or sweepstakes, implementing rebates, presenting bonus packs, offering discounted prices, establishing loyalty programs, and organizing marketing events. The findings of a study conducted by Sihabudin (2016) demonstrate that certain sales promotion indicators, namely discount guarantee cards, sample giveaways, and gift offerings influence consumer decision-making. Similarly, Leksono and Herwin (2017) employ the discount factor as an indicator to impact purchasing decisions.

A brand's image. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), a brand's image is how consumers perceive it in relation to the associations they have with it. Brand image can be used to characterize a product or service's extrinsic qualities, such as its attempts to satisfy consumers' psychological or social demands. Brand image and consumer perception of a brand are related Tjiptono (2016). Making sure that consumers have strong, enjoyable, positive, and distinctive brand associations with the company's brand products is the aim of strategic initiatives to manage brand image. According to Sopiah and Sangadji (2016), consumers who have a favorable opinion of a brand are more likely to make purchases while businesses can create new product lines by making use of the favorable perception that has been built against established

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product names. Additionally, Shamma and Hassan (2011) assert that a strong brand image in consumers' minds enhances their interest in buying a product. A compelling brand image possesses its own impact, drawing consumers towards making purchases. According to Park, Jaworski, and Maclnnis (1986), indicators of brand image include functional aspects where product features address consumer needs; symbolic imagery, satisfying desires such as self-worth and social status; and experiential imagery, providing diverse consumers with enjoyable experiences. A positive brand perception drives consumer purchasing behavior, and a favorable brand image appeals to consumers by effectively addressing their needs, fulfilling their desires, and offering pleasant experiences.

Product excellence. Product quality refers to a product's ability to live up to consumer demands and expectations. For a product to have greater value, it must be created by a company as a whole to meet market demands and continuously improve product quality. According to Tjiptono (2016), a product's quality is established by its capacity to satisfy predetermined needs and by its latent qualities. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2018), a product's quality is determined by how well it can satisfy the explicit or implicit needs of the client. The research problem's formulation has a short-term solution in the shape of the hypothesis (Sugiono, 2019). As stated by Widyananto and Nurmahdi (2014), product quality entails utilizing high-quality raw materials that align with the expectations of customers. Furthermore, according to Kotler and Keller (2016), product quality encompasses the product's ability to perform its functions, including durability, reliability, and accuracy as a whole. Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) assert that product quality is demonstrated by a company's ability to establish a distinct identity or characteristic for each product, enabling consumers to recognize it. Tjiptono (2008) proposes several indicators of product quality, such as performance, durability, adherence to specifications, features, reliability, and aesthetics. Therefore, hypotheses are proposed:

1. Partially directly influencing purchasing decisions include product quality, brand perception, and sales promotion positively and significantly
2. Consumer satisfaction is directly affected by purchasing decisions positively and significantly
3. Through purchasing decisions, Product Quality Affects Consumer Satisfaction positively and significantly
4. Consumer satisfaction is affected by brand image through purchasing decisions positively and significantly
5. Consumer satisfaction is affected by sales promotion through purchasing decisions positively and significantly
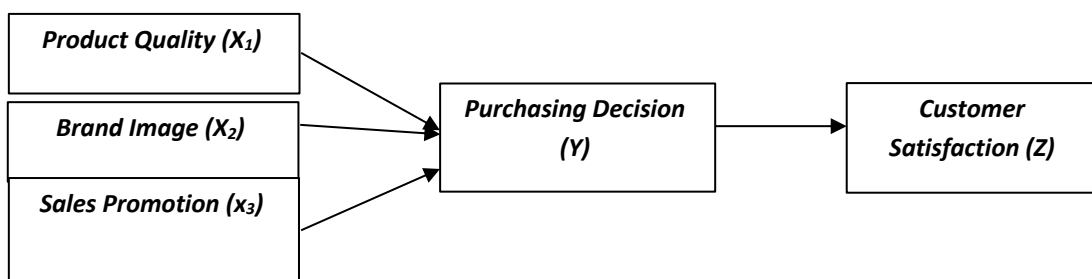

Figure 2.   Research Model

This study employed a quantitative research methodology to collect and analyze data. The population consisted of 100 participants from the Tebing Tinggi region who had purchased and consumed food items as gifts. The study utilized the Partial Least Square (PLS) approach which is a variant-based method recommended by Abdillah (2018) as a substitute for the covariance-based SEM method. PLS is particularly adept at predicting models compared to covariance-based SEM which typically focuses on examining theories or causation. To collect data, survey questionnaires were distributed directly to customers and also to Tebing Tinggi's souvenir traders. The questionnaires were designed by adapting 44 research items, and operationalizing constructs related to Product Quality, Brand Image, Sales Promotion, Consumer Satisfaction, and Purchase Decisions. Participants rated the items using a five-point Likert scale. The collected data was then analyzed using Smart PLS and SEM software, specifically applying the PLS-SEM method. This approach facilitated a detailed statistical analysis suitable for complex models with multiple constructs. The analysis encompassed two stages: assessing the measurement model and evaluating the structural model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

1.   Measurement Model Test Results (Outer Model)

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis was used in the study to ascertain the impact of Product Quality, Brand Image, and Sales Promotion on Consumer Satisfaction through Purchase Decisions. A model that demonstrates the connection between each indicator and its latent variables is known as a measuring model or outer model. 44 indicators were used in this study to measure 5 hidden variables. Software version 3.0 of SmartPLS was used to conduct the test. It can be considered valid if it has a loading factor value of > 0.7 and an AVE value of > 0.5, according to the findings of convergent validity testing (Ghozali and Latan, 2015). The correlation between loading factor indicators and AVE values for each research variable yielded the following results.

Table 1. Convergent Validity Result

Variable	Indicators	Loading Factor	Ave	Conclusion
Product Quality (X1)	X1.1	0.766	0.552	Valid
	X1.2	0.747		Valid
	X1.3	0.728		Valid
	X1.4	0.759		Valid
	X1.5	0.714		Valid
	X1.6	0.718		Valid
	X1.7	0.768		Valid
	X1.8	0.718		Valid
	X1.9	0.743		Valid
	X1.10	0.742		Valid
	X1.11	0.736		Valid
	X1.12	0.780		Valid
	X1.13	0.735		Valid
	X1.14	0.771		Valid
	X1.15	0.717		Valid

Variable	Indicators	Loading Factor	Ave	Conclusion
Brand Image (X2)	X2.1	0.785	0.593	Valid
	X2.2	0.780		Valid
	X2.3	0.732		Valid
	X2.4	0.734		Valid
	X2.5	0.733		Valid
	X2.6	0.848		Valid
Sales Promotion (X3)	X3.1	0.801	0.763	Valid
	X3.2	0.869		Valid
	X3.3	0.922		Valid
	X3.4	0.928		Valid
	X3.5	0.916		Valid
	X3.6	0.794		Valid
Purchasing Decision (Y)	Y.1	0.821	0.610	Valid
	Y.2	0.781		Valid
	Y.3	0.820		Valid
	Y.4	0.770		Valid
	Y.5	0.786		Valid
	Y.6	0.772		Valid
	Y.7	0.808		Valid
	Y.8	0.755		Valid
	Y.9	0.707		Valid

Variable	Indicators	Loading Factor	Ave	Conclusion
Customer Satisfaction (Z)	Z.1	0.784	0.624	Valid
	Z.2	0.781		Valid
	Z.3	0.736		Valid
	Z.4	0.829		Valid
	Z.5	0.786		Valid
	Z.6	0.831		Valid
	Z.7	0.791		Valid
	Z.8	0.778		Valid

Source: Author's Elaboration

According to the convergent validity calculation findings presented above, all indicators have loading factors > 0.7 and AVE values > 0.5, indicating that all indicators have met the criteria for validity in terms of assessing each of their latent variables. The purpose of the discriminant validity test is to determine how significantly the latent construct differs from other constructs to be able to explain the measured phenomenon. The Fornell Lacker Criterion test outcomes in this investigation are as follows:

Table 2. Discriminant Validity Test Results

	Product Quality	Brand Image	Sales Promotion	Purchasing Decisions	Customer Satisfaction
Product Quality	**0.743**				
Brand Image	0.782	**0.770**			

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Sales Promotion	0.456	0.442	**0.873**		
Purchasing Decisions	0.697	0.689	0.509	**0.781**	
Customer Satisfaction	0.826	0.816	0.442	0.721	**0.790**

Source: Author's Elaboration

The AVE root values of each of the model's latent variables are greater than their highest correlation values with other variables, as shown in the table above, indicating that the model has good discriminant validity. Cross-loading values can be used to verify the validity of discriminants in addition to comparing AVE roots with their correlation. The cross-loading test results from this investigation are as follows:

Table 3. Cross-Loading Test Results

	Product Quality	Brand Image	Sales Promotion	Purchasing Decisions	Customer Satisfaction
KUP1	**0.766**	0.619	0.296	0.491	0.656
KUP2	**0.747**	0.632	0.235	0.502	0.673
KUP3	**0.728**	0.578	0.288	0.501	0.641
KUP4	**0.759**	0.446	0.361	0.479	0.589
KUP5	**0.714**	0.516	0.358	0.474	0.460
KUP6	**0.718**	0.563	0.240	0.427	0.636
KUP7	**0.768**	0.568	0.344	0.511	0.660
KUP8	**0.718**	0.559	0.433	0.556	0.548
KUP9	**0.743**	0.539	0.344	0.509	0.487
KUP10	**0.742**	0.530	0.501	0.565	0.485
KUP11	**0.736**	0.564	0.401	0.501	0.611
KUP12	**0.780**	0.684	0.361	0.694	0.700
KUP13	**0.735**	0.563	0.219	0.431	0.670
KUP14	**0.771**	0.648	0.421	0.542	0.693
KUP15	**0.717**	0.673	0.209	0.487	0.697
CM1	0.590	**0.785**	0.356	0.573	0.700
CM2	0.562	**0.780**	0.294	0.538	0.588
CM3	0.532	**0.732**	0.380	0.441	0.667
CM4	0.584	**0.734**	0.371	0.436	0.572
CM5	0.606	**0.733**	0.298	0.562	0.552
CM6	0.721	**0.848**	0.363	0.595	0.691
PP1	0.377	0.394	**0.801**	0.273	0.380
PP2	0.380	0.367	**0.869**	0.396	0.313
PP3	0.288	0.283	**0.922**	0.438	0.256
PP4	0.339	0.325	**0.928**	0.408	0.304
PP5	0.338	0.295	**0.916**	0.484	0.309
PP6	0.603	0.601	**0.794**	0.559	0.668
KEP1	0.557	0.605	0.324	**0.821**	0.587
KEP2	0.631	0.652	0.339	**0.781**	0.628
KEP3	0.679	0.626	0.434	**0.820**	0.674
KEP4	0.418	0.420	0.395	**0.770**	0.406
KEP5	0.441	0.405	0.366	**0.786**	0.472
KEP6	0.504	0.512	0.383	**0.772**	0.562

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KEP7	*0.554*	*0.607*	*0.351*	***0.808***	*0.626*
KEP8	*0.549*	*0.463*	*0.434*	***0.755***	*0.579*
KEP9	*0.484*	*0.461*	*0.577*	***0.707***	*0.442*
KK1	*0.693*	*0.630*	*0.173*	*0.503*	***0.784***
KK2	*0.581*	*0.730*	*0.382*	*0.574*	***0.781***
KK3	*0.608*	*0.640*	*0.433*	*0.667*	***0.736***
KK4	*0.710*	*0.649*	*0.357*	*0.588*	***0.829***
KK5	*0.648*	*0.593*	*0.319*	*0.535*	***0.786***
KK6	*0.693*	*0.688*	*0.505*	*0.587*	***0.831***
KK7	*0.674*	*0.604*	*0.293*	*0.560*	***0.791***
KK8	*0.608*	*0.605*	*0.275*	*0.500*	***0.778***

Source: Author's Elaboration

The test findings demonstrate that each indicator's cross-loading factor value is higher than its counterpart for other constructions. Therefore, it can be stated that the 44 elements of the statement can be utilized as research instruments because the indicators employed in this study matched the criteria and have strong discriminant validity. The indicator variable's increase when the latent variable grows is then measured using a reliability test, also known as internal consistency reliability. It can be deemed dependable if the Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha (CA) are both above 0.7 (Ghozali and Latan, 2015). The reliability test results are shown below:

Table 4. Reliability Test Results

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Conclusion
Product Quality	0.942	0.949	Reliable
Brand Image	0.862	0.897	Reliable
Sales Promotion	0.938	0.951	Reliable
Purchasing Decisions	0.920	0.933	Reliable
Customer Satisfaction	0.914	0.930	Reliable

Source: Author's Elaboration

The test findings demonstrate that all indicators have a consistent level of consistency, implying that the measurement results obtained using these instruments can be trusted and that the value of Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha (CA) above 0.7 is dependable.
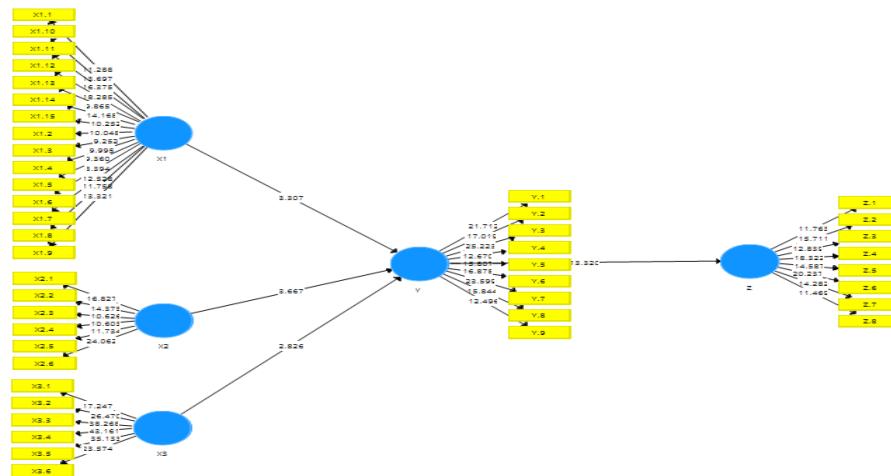
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Discussion

Figure 3. Model of Path Diagrams

Source: Author's Elaboration

Hypothesis Testing

a. Direct Relationship Hypothesis

Direct influence is a relationship that connects two constructs with the direction of a single arrow.

Table 5: Direct Influences

Variable & Relationships	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Result
ProductQuality(X_1) → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.350	3.307	0.001	Positive and significant
Brand Image (X_2) → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.323	3.667	0.000	Positive and significant
Sales Promotion (X_3) → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.206	2.826	0.005	Positive and significant
Purchase Decision (Y) → Customer Satisfaction (Z)	0.721	13.320	0.000	Positive and significant

Source: Author's Elaboration

Effect of Product Quality on Purchasing Decisions

The test results showed that the value of t-statistical at 3,307 and p values of 0.001 where the value of t-statistical (3,307) is greater than the t-table (1.96) and p values (0.000) < 0.05 states that product quality has a positive and significant effect of 0.350 or 35% on purchasing decisions, meaning that the higher the product quality, the more it will improve purchasing

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decisions and vice versa, the lower the product quality, the lower the level of purchasing decisions. This is in line with the research conducted by Ristanti, et al (2020) and Suhariyo (2013) showing that product quality has a significant effect on purchasing decisions. Furthermore, this positive relationship indicates that the higher the product quality of Tebing Tinggi's souvenir products, the higher the tendency of individuals to make purchasing decisions on Tebing Tinggi's souvenir products. While there is a significant relationship between product quality and purchasing decisions, it means that it can be generalized to all populations where the sample in this study is the population of Tebing Tinggi's souvenir product users.

The Effect of Brand Image on Purchasing Decisions

The test results indicated that Brand Image had a positive and significant impact on purchasing decisions, as indicated by the p-value of 3,667 and t-statistic of 0.000 where the value (3,667) t-statistic was more than (1.96) and p values (0.002) <0.05. The more favorable the brand image, the more likely consumers are to make a purchase; conversely, the more negative the brand image, the less likely consumers are to make a purchase. This is consistent with research by Evita (2017) that demonstrates how brand image affects consumer decisions. The decision to buy from consumers in souvenir businesses in Tebing Tinggi cities is adequate, according to the study's findings which demonstrate that direct brand image has a positive influence on purchasing decisions by 0.323 or 32.3%. Furthermore, this positive relationship indicates that the higher the brand image of Tebing Tinggi's souvenir products, the higher the tendency of individuals to make purchasing decisions on Tebing Tinggi's souvenir products.

Effect of Sales Promotion on Purchasing Decisions

The test results revealed that sales promotion has a positive and significant impact on purchasing decisions when the value of 2,826 and p values of 0.005 where the value of t-statistic 2,826 was greater than (1.96) and p values (0.005) <0.05 were present. The Purchase Decision will increase in direct proportion to the Sales Promotion's level, and vice versa; the lower the Sales Promotion, the lower the Purchase Decision rate. This is consistent with Yosep (2013) research which demonstrates that promotions have a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions. According to the study's findings, direct sales promotion has a positive influence on purchasing decisions by 0.206 or 20.6%. Furthermore, this positive relationship indicates that the higher the sales promotion of Tebing Tinggi's souvenir products, the higher the tendency of individuals to make purchasing decisions on Tebing Tinggi's souvenir products. While there is a significant relationship between sales promotion and purchasing decisions, it means that it can be generalized to all populations where the sample in this study is the population of Tebing Tinggi's souvenir product users.

The Effect of Purchasing Decisions on Consumer Satisfaction

The test results indicated that the Purchase Decision had a positive and substantial impact on Consumer Satisfaction with a value of 13,320 and p-value of 0.000 where the value of (t statistic 13,320) was more than (t-statistic 1.96) and p-value (0.005) <0.05. The greater the increase in Purchase Decision, and vice versa, the lower the degree of Purchase Decision, the lower the Consumer Satisfaction. The decision to buy from consumers in souvenir businesses in Tebing Tinggi cities is adequate, according to the study's findings which demonstrate that direct purchase decisions have a positive influence on consumer habits by 0.721 or 72.1%. However,

this decision still needs to be supported by other factors so that customer satisfaction is consistently maintained.

b. Indirect Relationship Hypothesis

Indirect influence is a relationship that involves some interrelationships between constructs. The indirect influence of an exogenous variable on an endogenous variable is through another variable called an intermediate variable (intervening).

Table 6: Indirect Influences

Variable & Relationships	*Original Sample*	*T Statistics*	*P Values*	Result
Product quality (X_1) → purchase decision (Y) → Consumer Satisfaction (Z)	0.350	3.307	0.001	Positive and significant
Brand Image (X_2) → Purchase Decision (Y) → Consumer Satisfaction (Z)	0.323	3.667	0.000	Positive and significant
Sales Promotion (X_3) → Purchase Decision (Y) → Consumer Satisfaction (Z)	0.206	2.826	0.005	Positive and significant

The Effect of Product Quality on Consumer Satisfaction Through Purchasing Decisions

The test findings revealed a path coefficient value of 0.350, a value of t statistic 3,307, and a p-value of 0.001 for the indirect association between product quality and consumer satisfaction as determined by purchasing decisions. The results indicate that 3,307 > 1.96 and a p-value of 0.001<0.05 indicates that Product Quality significantly influences customer Satisfaction through purchase decisions. The value of path coefficients was positive at 0.350 indicating product quality against customer satisfaction through purchasing decisions is positive and significant.

The Effect of Brand Image on Consumer Satisfaction Through Purchasing Decisions

According to the test results, there is an indirect relationship between brand image and customer satisfaction as measured by purchasing decisions. This relationship has a path coefficient value of 0.323, a t-value of 3.667, and a p-value of 0.000. According to the results, which show 3.287 > 1.96 and a p-value of 0.001<0.05 shows brand image significantly influences customer satisfaction via purchase decisions. The value of path coefficients was positive at 0.323 which indicates brand image against customer satisfaction through purchasing decisions is positive and significant. This is in line with the research conducted by Rahman and Sitio (2019) showing that brand image has a significant effect on purchasing decisions through purchasing decisions.

The Effect of Sales Promotion on Consumer Satisfaction Through Purchasing Decisions

The test findings revealed a path coefficient value of 0.149 with a value of 2.878 and a p-value of 0.004 for the indirect association between sales promotion and consumer satisfaction as measured by purchasing decisions. This indicates that 2.878 > 1.96 with a p-value of

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0.004<0.05 indicates that Sales Promotion significantly affects Consumer Satisfaction as Measured by Purchasing Decisions. The value of path coefficients was positive at 0.323 which indicates brand image against customer satisfaction through purchasing decisions is positive and significant. This is in line with the research conducted by Rahman and Sitio (2019) showing that promotion has a significant effect on purchasing decisions through purchasing decisions.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study highlight the importance of product quality, brand image, and sales promotion as it significantly influence purchasing decisions and consumer satisfaction in the food industry, specifically in Tebing Tinggi City. These factors play a significant role in shaping consumers' decision-making processes and their overall satisfaction with the products. However, there is still room for further research in this area. Future studies could explore additional variables that may influence purchasing decisions and consumer satisfaction, such as pricing strategies, convenience factors, and the influence of online platforms. Additionally, conducting comparative studies across different regions and demographics could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that drive consumer behavior in the food industry. Furthermore, investigating the long-term effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on consumer preferences and behaviors would be valuable for industry players in adapting their strategies to changing market dynamics. Overall, future research should continue to explore the complexities of consumer behavior and satisfaction in the food industry to support businesses in developing effective marketing strategies and enhancing customer experiences.

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