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The Effect of Price and Customer Service on Pertamina's Lubricant Purchase Decision at PT Sukun Niaga Utama

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Abstract

Competition in the lubricant industry requires companies to comprehensively understand the factors that affect customer purchase decisions. The problem in this study is how price and customer service affect Pertamina's Lubricant purchase decision at PT Sukun Niaga Utama. This study aims to analyze the influence of price and customer service on purchase decisions, both partially and simultaneously. The research uses a quantitative design with a survey approach. The research population is all customers of PT Sukun Niaga Utama, with a sample of 179 respondents determined using purposive sampling techniques. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach, which includes testing measurement models and structural models. The results of the analysis showed that price had a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions, while customer service had a positive and significant influence with a greater degree of influence. Simultaneously, price and customer service have been proven to have a significant effect on purchase decisions. The discussion of the results of the study shows that appropriate price perception and good customer service are able to form customer confidence and certainty in making purchase decisions. The conclusion of this study emphasizes that price and customer service are the main determinants in improving Pertamina Lubricant purchase decisions at PT Sukun Niaga Utama.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of the transportation sector in Indonesia shows a very rapid increase, in line with economic growth, industrialization, and higher community mobility. Land, sea, and other supporting industries are the backbone of the distribution of goods and services. These conditions encourage the increasing use of motor vehicles and industrial machinery that require optimal maintenance in order to operate efficiently and sustainably. In line with these

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developments, the need for lubricants is becoming increasingly important. Lubricants play a role as one of the vital components in maintaining optimal engine performance. Without good lubrication, friction between engine components will increase, potentially causing wear, performance loss, and even engine damage. Therefore, choosing the right lubricant is the main need for consumers, both individuals and companies.

In general, the function of lubricants is to reduce friction, cool engine components, prevent rust, clean combustion debris, and extend engine life. Quality lubricants will provide maximum protection for the engine and support operational efficiency. Therefore, consumers tend to choose lubricant brands that have proven their quality and reliability. One of the widely known lubricant brands in Indonesia is Pertamina Lubricants. Pertamina lubricants are produced by PT Pertamina Lubricants and have been used in various sectors, ranging from motor vehicles, manufacturing industries, to the transportation and energy sectors. Quality excellence, international standards, and a wide distribution network make Pertamina lubricants the top choice for many consumers.

In marketing practice, consumers' purchasing decisions for lubricants are influenced by various factors. Purchasing decisions are the process that consumers go through in making choices for a product or service after considering the various alternatives available. Purchase decisions do not occur suddenly, but through stages that include identification of needs, information search, evaluation of alternatives, decisions to buy, and post-purchase behavior. These factors include product quality, price, brand, promotion, distribution, trust, and customer service. Consumers will consider these various aspects before deciding to buy and use a lubricant product. Especially for Pertamina lubricants, even though they have good quality and reputation, the company still faces challenges in increasingly fierce market competition. The abundance of other lubricant brands, both local and international, requires distributors to better understand the key factors influencing consumer purchasing decisions in order to maintain and increase customer loyalty.

Based on this description, the researcher is interested in studying more deeply the influence of price and customer service on Pertamina's lubricant purchase decision at PT Sukun Niaga Utama. This research is expected to provide an empirical overview of the most dominant factors influencing purchase decisions, as well as become a consideration for companies in formulating more effective and customer satisfaction-oriented marketing strategies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Hwang and Lee (2018), a purchase decision is an action taken by consumers when faced with various alternative choices, namely determining whether to buy a product or service or not to make a purchase. The decision-making process involves various considerations, such as needs, personal preferences, budget, and brand perception. Purchase decisions are not only limited to product selection, but also include determining when and where to purchase and how to make transactions.

According to Kotler and Keller (2022), price is one of the important elements in the marketing mix that directly contributes to a company's revenue. Price is not only understood as the nominal value of a product, but reflects the value that consumers must pay for the benefits obtained. In line with this, Ramadhani (2018) stated that price is a monetary value imposed on a good or service in the process of exchange in order to obtain the right to own or use the product.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry (2020) define service as the level of excellence of a service that is measured based on customers' perceptions of the service compared to their

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expectations. These experts emphasize that service consists of five dimensions, namely reliability, responsiveness, certainty, empathy, and tangible. Gummesson (2020) defines service as a multidimensional and multi-interpretive concept. According to him, service cannot be measured objectively, but must be measured based on individual customer perceptions and experiences. Gummesson emphasizes that.

Frame of Mind

Influence of price on purchase decisions

Price is one of the main elements in the marketing mix that functions as an indicator of the value of a product. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2022), price is the amount of money that consumers must pay to obtain a desired product or service. In consumer behavior theory, price is often used as the basis for initial evaluation before consumers make a purchase decision, because price reflects affordability, value suitability, and sacrifices that must be made by consumers.

In relation to purchase decisions, prices have a strategic role because consumers tend to compare prices with the benefits obtained. Prices that are considered appropriate and competitive will form a positive perception of the product, thereby encouraging consumers to make purchases. On the other hand, prices that are too high without being balanced with perceived quality and benefits can reduce consumer buying interest. Therefore, purchasing decisions are greatly influenced by how consumers assess the fairness and suitability of the prices of the lubricant products offered.

Empirically, the relationship between price and purchase decisions has been widely proven in previous research. Zhao et al. (2021) stated that price has a significant effect on consumer purchasing behavior, both directly and through consumer satisfaction. Research by Baisyir and Quintania (2023) also found that price is the most dominant factor in lubricant purchase decisions. In addition, Ramteke and Anute (2024) emphasized that price remains an important consideration in the selection of engine oil, especially for consumers with a middle income level. Similar results are also shown by Lee and Evyanto (2022) who state that price has a significant effect on lubricant purchase decisions.

Based on the theoretical foundation and the results of the previous research, it can be concluded that price has a strong and significant influence on purchase decisions. Thus, in this study, price is suspected to be one of the main factors that affect Pertamina's lubricant purchase decision at PT Sukun Niaga Utama.

The Influence of Customer Service on Purchasing Decisions

Customer service is an important part of modern marketing that is oriented towards satisfaction and long-term relationships with consumers. According to Tjiptono (2016), customer service is a company's effort to meet customer needs and expectations through employee attitudes, behaviors, and performance in providing services. Good service quality reflects the company's professionalism and can create a positive experience for customers.

In relation to purchase decisions, customer service plays a role in building consumer trust and comfort. Friendly, fast, and responsive service will increase customer satisfaction, thus encouraging consumers to make purchases and even repeat purchases. On the other hand, poor service can cause dissatisfaction and reduce buying interest, even though the products offered have competitive quality and prices.

Various studies support the influence of customer service on purchase decisions. Sibarani (2025) found that service quality has a positive and significant effect on consumer purchase decisions. Lee and Evyanto (2022) also stated that service quality has a significant influence on

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lubricant purchase decisions. In addition, Zhao et al. (2021) show that consumer satisfaction, which is formed through service experiences, plays an important role in driving purchasing behavior. The findings of Abd Razak et al. (2024) also reinforce that emotional and social values, which are closely related to service, influence consumer preferences and decisions.

Based on the theory and results of the previous research, it can be concluded that customer service has an important role in influencing purchase decisions. Therefore, customer service in this study is suspected to have a significant influence on Pertamina's lubricant purchase decision at PT Sukun Niaga Utama.

The Simultaneous Influence of Price and Customer Service on Purchase Decisions

Price and customer service are two complementary variables in shaping consumer purchasing decisions. In marketing theory, purchase decisions are not only determined by a single factor, but by a combination of several factors that interact with each other. Price functions as a rational consideration, while customer service plays a role in shaping the emotional aspects and consumer experience.

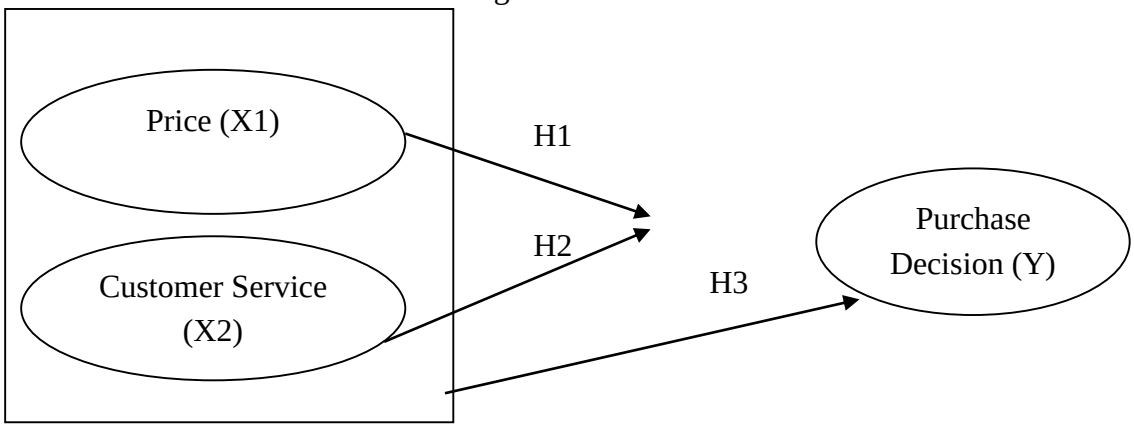
The simultaneous relationship between price and customer service to the purchase decision shows that consumers will be more likely to buy the product if the price offered is appropriate and supported by good service. Competitive prices without adequate service can reduce consumer satisfaction, as well as good service will not be optimal if the price is considered unreasonable. Therefore, the balance between price and customer service is an important factor in driving purchase decisions.

Empirical support for this simultaneous relationship is shown by Sibarani (2025) who states that price and quality of service together have a significant influence on purchasing decisions. Lee and Evyanto's (2022) research also proves that price and service quality simultaneously have a significant influence on lubricant purchase decisions. In addition, Zhao et al. (2021) show that price and consumer satisfaction, which are influenced by service, collectively influence purchasing behavior. The findings of Abd Razak et al. (2024) also confirm that functional and emotional value collectively determine consumer purchasing decisions.

Based on the theory and results of the previous research, it can be concluded that price and customer service simultaneously have a significant influence on purchase decisions. Thus, in this study, price and customer service are suspected to jointly affect Pertamina's lubricant purchase decision at PT Sukun Niaga Utama.

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Figure 1. Frame of Mind



Hypothesis

A hypothesis is a provisional statement that needs to be proven to be true or not (Umar, 2016:67). The hypotheses put forward in this study are:

1. It is suspected that there is a price influence on Pertamina's lubricant purchase decision at PT. Sukun Niaga Utama
2. It is suspected that there is an influence of customer service on the decision to purchase Pertamina's lubricants at PT. Sukun Niaga Utama

It is suspected that there is a simultaneous influence of price and customer service on the decision to purchase Pertamina's lubricant at PT. Sukun Niaga Utama

METHOD

Place and Time of Research

This research was carried out at PT Sukun Niaga Utama, which is a company engaged in the distribution and marketing of lubricants, including Pertamina brand lubricants. The selection of this research location was based on the consideration that PT Sukun Niaga Utama has a strategic role in distributing lubricant products to consumers and interacting directly with customers, so it is relevant to examine the influence of price and customer service on purchase decisions.

This research was carried out in the period of December 2025 – January 2026, which included the stages of research preparation, data collection, data processing, and the preparation of research reports. The timing of the research was adjusted to the availability of data and respondents, so that the research process could run optimally and the results obtained could describe the actual conditions at the time the research was conducted.

The target population in this study is all customers of PT Sukun Niaga Utama in 2024, which totals 179 customers. The sampling technique used in this study is non-probability sampling with a saturated sampling method This technique was chosen because the number of population in this study is relatively limited and it is still possible to be studied as a whole. Therefore, all customers of PT Sukun Niaga Utama in 2024, totaling 179 customers, will be used as samples, so that the results of the study are expected to describe the condition of the population as a whole and more accurately.

The data analysis technique in this study uses *the Partial Least Squares (PLS)* approach. According to Sugiyono (2017:232), data analysis is an activity of grouping and presenting data based on research variables, as well as conducting calculations to answer problems and test

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hypotheses. The PLS approach is used because it is able to analyze the relationship between latent variables simultaneously and predictively, so it is appropriate to explain the influence of price and customer service on purchase decisions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A crucial step in structural model analysis is to ensure that any estimate of the path influence has statistical significance that can be accounted for. To obtain this significance value, the method used is the bootstrapping procedure, which essentially creates thousands of sub-samples to test the stability of the path coefficient. The determination of the significance of a hypothesis is done by reviewing the two key values of the *bootstrapping* report: the parameter coefficient value and, more importantly, the t-statistical value. The decision-making process is to compare the t-statistical value (often called the t-count) obtained from the analysis with the critical value of the t-table. Using an alpha significance level of 0.05 (or 5%), the critical value of the t-table as a benchmark is 1.64. Therefore, a hypothesis can be declared significant if the t-statistical value exceeds 1.64.

Figure 2. Bootstrapping Test Results



Source: Smartpls 4.0, 2026

Based on figure 2. The results of the bootstrapping test can be explained in the form of a table as follows:

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Table 1. Direct Influence Hypothesis Test Results

Relationships between constructs	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (| O/STDEV|)	P values	Remarks
Price (X1) -> Purchase Decision (Y)	0.349	0.373	0.152	2.300	0.011	Positive and Significant
Customer Service (X2) -> Purchase Decision (Y)	0.496	0.478	0.125	3.969	0.000	Positive and Significant

Source: Processing Output with smartPLS 4.0, 2026

Based on the table above, the results of the Direct Influence Hypothesis Test are as follows:

1. The Influence of Price on Purchase Decisions
   The results of the last test showed that Price had a positive and significant effect on the Purchase Decision. The path coefficient value of 0.349 indicates a positive relationship, and its significance is supported by a T-statistical value of 2,300 (greater than 1.65) and a P-value of 0.011. In other words, an increase in price will directly encourage a significant increase in purchase decisions.
2. The Influence of Customer Service on Purchase Decisions
   The results of the last test showed that Customer Service had a positive and significant effect on the Purchase Decision. A line coefficient value of 0.496 indicates a positive relationship, and its significance is supported by a T-statistical value of 3.969 (greater than 1.65) and a P-value of 0.000. In other words, an increase in Customer Service will directly encourage a significant increase in purchase decisions.
3. Simultaneous Influence of Price and Customer Service on Purchase Decisions
   The simultaneous influence of the variables of Price and Customer Service on the Purchase Decision uses the following statistical hypothesis:
   Ho : There is no significant influence of the Price and Customer Service variables on the Purchase Decision.
   H1 : There is a significant influence of the variables of Price and Customer Service on Purchase Decisions.

With test criteria: Subtract H0 if Fcalculate > Ftable
To test the hypothesis, calculations are carried out using the following formula:

$$F = \frac{R^2/k}{(1-R^2)/(N-k-1)}$$
$$F = \frac{0{,}545/2}{(1-0{,}545)/(179-2-1)} = \frac{0{,}272}{0{,}003}$$
$$F = 105{,}244$$

From the table above, it can be seen that the value of Fcal is 105.244, where the rejection criterion of H0 if Fcount is greater than Ftable or F0> Ftable, with free degrees v1 = 2 and v2 = 179–2–1 and a confidence level of 95%, then from the distribution table F the value of Ftable is obtained for F0.05,2,176 = 3.047. So based on the test results, it can be concluded that F_{count} (105,244) > Ftable (3,047), meaning that variable prices and customer service have a significant effect on the Purchase Decision

Results

Based on the characteristics of respondents, this study found that the majority of PT Sukun Niaga Utama's customers are dominated by women (51.4%) and are in the productive age range of 25–35 years (40.2%), with a work background as an employee (83.2%) and have

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high loyalty as reflected in the length of subscription to Pertamina lubricants of more than five years (44.7%). These findings indicate that the decision to purchase Pertamina's lubricants from PT Sukun Niaga Utama is heavily influenced by consumers who are rational, experienced, and have sustainable operational needs. In this context, the price factor is an important consideration because most of the respondents are employees who tend to be sensitive to cost efficiency, while customer service plays a strategic role in maintaining long-term relationships, trust, and transaction convenience. The combination of competitive prices and responsive, informative, and consistent customer service has proven to be relevant in shaping purchase decisions, especially for customers who have subscribed for a long time and have a recurring purchase intensity. Thus, the characteristics of respondents strengthen the argument that price and customer service are important determinants in Pertamina's lubricant purchase decision at PT Sukun Niaga Utama.

The results of the descriptive analysis of the Price variable (X1) showed that the average score of all indicators was in the range of 4.27 to 4.49, which was included in the **very good category**, with a tendency to consistently high respondents' assessments in almost all statements. The indicator with the highest score was found in the statement that the price of Pertamina Lubricants at PT Sukun Niaga Utama was in accordance with the benefits obtained, which showed that the respondents felt the compatibility between the price paid and the benefits of the product received. Meanwhile, the indicator with the lowest value was the statement that the price of Pertamina Lubricants was affordable for customers, although this value remained in the very good category. These findings indicate that in general, respondents have a positive perception of the price structure of Pertamina Lubricants, especially in terms of price compatibility with product quality, benefits, and reputation, although there is a small variation in the perception of price affordability among customers.

Based on the results of the descriptive analysis of the Customer Service variable (X2), the average score of the indicator was obtained in the range of 2.97 to 4.08, with the tendency of respondents' assessments to be in the **good category**. The indicator with the highest score is the statement that employees understand customer needs well, which reflects a positive perception of the employee's ability to recognize and respond appropriately to customer needs. On the other hand, the indicator with the lowest score is found in the statement that service facilities support customer comfort, which indicates that the physical facilities aspect is not considered to be fully optimal by the respondents. The variation in scores between indicators shows that the quality of customer service has been felt to be quite good, especially in terms of employee interaction and competence, but there is still room for improvement in the service support aspect. These findings provide an idea that customer service at PT Sukun Niaga Utama is considered good in general, although it is not even across all service indicators.

The results of the descriptive analysis of the Purchase Decision variable (Y) showed that the average score of all indicators was in the range of 4.32 to 4.56, which was included in the **very good** category, with a tendency to assess respondents who were very positive and relatively homogeneous. The indicator with the highest score was the statement that respondents were confident in deciding to buy Pertamina Lubricants, which illustrates a strong level of confidence in the decision-making process. Meanwhile, the indicator with the lowest score was found in the statement that Pertamina Lubricants was able to meet the needs of engines or vehicles, even though the value remained in the very good category. These findings show that respondents not only have high confidence in the purchase decision, but also show satisfaction and certainty in the choices made, so that overall the purchase decision has been formed in a very positive and stable manner.

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Discussion

The Influence of Price on Purchase Decisions

The results of the hypothesis test showed that the Price variable had a positive and significant effect on Pertamina's Lubricant Purchase Decision at PT Sukun Niaga Utama. This is evidenced by the line coefficient value of 0.349 which indicates a positive relationship, where an increase in price perception is followed by an increase in purchase decisions. The significance of this influence is strengthened by a T-statistical value of 2,300 which is greater than the critical value of 1.65 and a P-value of 0.011 which is below the significance limit of 0.05. Thus, the hypothesis that the hypothesis states that Price affects the Purchase Decision is statistically acceptable.

The findings of this study show that price is not perceived solely as a nominal amount that must be paid, but as a representation of value that includes the suitability between cost, quality, benefits, and reputation of the product. Respondents assessed that the price of Pertamina Lubricants reflects the quality and usefulness of the products received, thus encouraging confidence in making purchase decisions. These findings indicate that when prices are considered fair and proportionate to the perceived benefits, customers tend to be more confident and steady in making purchase decisions.

The results of this study are in line with the findings of Zhao et al. (2021) who stated that price has a significant influence on purchasing decisions, especially when consumers feel value commensurate with the benefits of the product. Research by Baisyir and Quintania (2023) also found that price is one of the dominant factors in lubricant purchase decisions. In addition, Abd Razak et al. (2024) emphasized that functional value, including price, is the main factor in shaping the purchasing behavior of lubricant consumers. The consistency of these results shows that price is an important determinant in the context of lubricant products.

Based on these results and discussions, it can be concluded that the relationship between Price and Purchase Decision is positive and significant, where appropriate and reasonable price perception strengthens customer confidence in making a purchase. Price acts as the basis for rational customer evaluation in assessing the feasibility of the product, so that the more positive the customer's perception of the price, the stronger the purchase decision formed.

The Influence of Customer Service on Purchase Decisions

The results of the hypothesis test show that the Customer Service variable has a positive and significant effect on the Purchase Decision. This is evidenced by the path coefficient value of 0.496 which shows a positive relationship with a greater influence power than the price variable. The T-statistical value of 3.969 which far exceeds the critical value of 1.65 and the P-value of 0.000 indicates that the influence is very statistically significant. Thus, the hypothesis that the Customer Service has an effect on the Purchase Decision is accepted.

The findings of this study show that the quality of customer service is an important factor in shaping customer confidence and comfort when making purchases. Service aspects such as employee responsiveness, understanding of customer needs, service reliability, and professional attitude provide a positive experience that encourages customers to make purchase decisions. Customer service not only functions as a transaction support process, but also as a source of trust that strengthens customer confidence in the company and the products offered.

These results are supported by Sibarani's (2025) research which states that service quality has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions in the retail sector. Lee and Evyanto's (2022) research also found that service quality has a significant effect on lubricant purchase decisions, in addition to price and advertising factors. In addition, Ramteke and Anute (2024) emphasized that customer interaction and feedback play an important role in

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shaping trust and purchasing decisions for oil products. These similarities in results show that customer service is a key factor in the decision-making process.

Thus, it can be concluded that the relationship between Customer Service and Purchase Decision is positive and significant, where the better customer service is felt, the stronger the customer's decision to make a purchase. Customer service plays a role as an emotional and functional factor that strengthens customer confidence, so it has a great contribution to the formation of purchase decisions.

The Simultaneous Influence of Price and Customer Service on Purchase Decisions

The results of the simultaneous hypothesis test showed that Price and Customer Service together had a significant effect on the Purchase Decision. This was evidenced by the Fcal value of 105.244 which was much greater than the Ftable value of 3.047 at a significance level of 5%. Thus, the null hypothesis stating the absence of simultaneous influence was rejected, and an alternative hypothesis was accepted. These results show that the research model involving Price and Customer Service simultaneously is able to explain the significant variation in Purchase Decision.

The findings of this study show that a customer's purchase decision is formed through a combination of rational consideration and the service experience received. Price provides the basis for assessing the value and feasibility of the product, while customer service strengthens confidence and convenience in the purchase process. When these two factors are present simultaneously in the positive perception of customers, the purchase decision becomes stronger and more stable. These findings show that customers do not only consider one factor separately, but rather evaluate the entire purchase experience.

The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Sibarani (2025) which states that price and service quality simultaneously have a significant effect on purchasing decisions. Zhao et al. (2021) also emphasized that the combination of price and factors related to service or satisfaction strengthens the influence on purchasing decisions. In addition, Lee and Evyanto (2022) found that price and service quality together contribute significantly to shaping lubricant purchase decisions. This consistency shows that the simultaneous approach provides a more comprehensive picture of consumer behavior.

Based on these results, it can be concluded that the relationship between Price, Customer Service, and Purchase Decision is complementary and significant. Price serves as a value evaluation factor, while customer service strengthens customer experience and confidence. Simultaneously, the two variables form a stronger purchase decision than their respective influences, thus showing that the purchase decision is the result of the interaction of various considerations felt by customers.

CONCLUSION

1. Based on the test results, it shows that Price has a positive and significant effect on the Purchase Decision. The line coefficient value of 0.349 indicates a positive relationship, and its significance is supported by a T-statistical value of 2.300 (greater than 1.65) and a P-value of 0.022. In other words, an increase in the price will directly encourage a significant increase in purchase decisions.
2. Based on the test results, it shows that Customer Service has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decisions. The line coefficient value of 0.496 indicates a positive relationship, and its significance is supported by a T-statistical value of 3.969 (greater than 1.65) and a P-value of 0.000. In other words, an increase in Customer Service will directly encourage a significant increase in purchase decisions.

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3. Based on the test results, it shows that price and customer service simultaneously have a significant effect on the Purchase Decision. Based on the test results, the value of $F_{calculated}$ (105,244) > Ftable (3,047).

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