The Influence of Brand Image on Purchasing Decisions with Trust as an Intervening Variable

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Abstract*. This study aims to analyze the influence of Brand Image on Purchasing Decisions with Customer Trust as a mediating variable. This study is motivated by the controversy in previous studies and phenomena that show the importance of the role of brand image and customer trust in driving purchasing decisions. This study uses an explanatory research approach with a population consisting of Batik Benang Raja consumers in Semarang City. The sample in this study was determined based on the formula of the number of question items multiplied by 10, so that 130 respondents were obtained who were Benang Raja Batik consumers in Semarang City. The sampling technique used was simple random sampling. Variable measurements were carried out using a closed questionnaire with a Likert scale of 1 to 5, ranging from Strongly Disagree (STS) to Strongly Agree (SS). Data analysis was carried out using descriptive statistics to describe data characteristics through mean values, standard deviations, variances, minimums, maximums, sums, ranges, kurtosis, and skewness. The results of the study indicate that Brand Image has a positive and significant influence on Customer Trust. In addition, Brand Image also has a positive and significant influence on Purchasing Decisions. Furthermore, Customer Trust is also proven to have a positive and significant influence on Purchasing Decisions. These findings emphasize the importance of the role of Brand Image and Customer Trust in increasing purchasing decisions, so that Batik Semarangan UMKM actors need to strengthen their brand image and build customer trust in order to increase their business competitiveness.*

Keywords*: Customer; Decision; Image; Purchase; Trust.*

1. Introduction

Facing changing preferences and shopping habits, marketing efforts are concentrated digitally to offer more value to customers and curate content to be distributed through online platforms in order to continue to accelerate and grow.(Herhausen et al., 2020a). One of the marketing strategies that has seen a significant increase is social media marketing.(Li et al., 2010).

Consumers' structural shift in behavior vis-à-vis digital and online makes digital marketing more important than ever.(Ramyashree, 2019). However, adopting digital marketing effectively requires a mindset shift in how organizations engage and communicate with customers.(Dastane, 2020). The change in mindset has led to several changes in consumer behavior. One of the positive impacts of the pandemic is that people are more ready to accept digital trends from work to shopping and even entertainment. According to(Mekawie & Hany, 2019). Digital marketing is a marketing activity including branding that uses various web-based media such as blogs, websites, e-mail, Adwords, or social networks. Digital marketing as one form of modern marketing has significantly influenced the consumer's soul in the form of increasing online sales that are promising for businesses.(Tenia Gorokhova, 2021).

Consumer purchasing decisions are one of the crucial aspects in marketing.(Amron, 2018), because this decision is not only influenced by product satisfaction and quality.(Okta Pradita et al., 2020), but also by consumer perception of the company(Lăzăroiu et al., 2020), including their level of trust(Samed Al-Adwan et al., 2020). Trust plays an important role as a factor that can strengthen purchasing decisions.(Lee et al., 2021). According to several studies, trust in a brand or company can increase customer loyalty and significantly influence their purchasing decisions.(Sulistyo & Siyamtinah, 2016).

2. Research Methods

The type of research thatusedThis research is an associative explanatory research type, which aims to determine the relationship between two or more variables (Sugiyono, 2012). This study aims to explain hypothesis testing with the intention of justifying or strengthening the hypothesis with the hope that it can ultimately strengthen the theory used as a basis. In this case, it is to test the influence of brand image on purchasing decisions with Trust as an intervening variable. Descriptive statistics are results that provide an overview or description of data that can be seen from the mean value, standard deviation, variance, minimum, maximum, sum, range, kuntosis and skewness.(Ghozali, 2017)). Assumptions or basic assumptions about a picture of a guess, estimate, an opinion or temporary conclusion that has not been proven. Or a starting point of thought whose truth is accepted by the investigator.(Arikunto, 2016)Based on the understanding above, the assumptions put forward in this study are:*brand image*,*Customer Trust*and purchasing decisions.

3.Results and Discussion

The descriptive analysis of the characteristics of the research respondents aims to understand the demographics and other characteristics relevant to the research context. This study used 130 respondents of Batik Benang Raja Consumers in Semarang City.The research was conducted by distributing research questionnaires on 4-17 December 2024.In the implementation in the field, all respondents were willing to fill out the questionnaire, so that the research results obtained 130 research questionnaires that were completely filled out and could be used in the analysis of this research data.

The description of the respondents in this study can be explained in four characteristics, namely based on age, occupation and reasons for purchasing, which are explained below:

1) Age

Based on the questionnaire data of 130 respondents, this study can be described in the data presentation in Table 4.1 below. From the table, it can be seen that the largest number of respondents have an age range of 36 - 40 years, which is 36 people (27.7%). Furthermore, the age above years is 33 people (25.4%), the age of 31 - 35 years is 32 people (24.6%), the age of 26 - 30 years is 15 people (11.5%), the age of 20 - 25 years is 11 people (8.5%), and the age <20 years is 3 people (2.3%).

Respondent Characteristics Data Table by Age Level

Age Level	Frequency	Percentage
<20 years	3	2.3
20 - 25 years	11	8.5
26 - 30 years	15	11.5
31 - 35 years	32	24.6
36 - 40 years	36	27.7
>40 years	33	25.4
Total	**130**	**100.0**

Source: Data processing results, 2024.

2) Work

Based on the questionnaire data from 130 respondents in this study, their characteristics can be described based on the work factor as follows:

Respondent Characteristics Data Table by Occupation

Work	Frequency	Percentage
Student	11	8.5
State-owned/Regional-Owned Enterprises Employees	20	15.4
Private employees	45	34.6
civil servant	14	10.8
Businessman	22	16.9
Housewife	18	13.8
Total	**130**	**100.0**

Source: Results of data processing, 2024.

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the majority of respondents are private employees, namely 45 people (34.6%). For respondents with the entrepreneurial profession, there are 22 people (16.9%), BUMN/BUMD employees are 20 people (15.4%), PNS are 14 people (10.8%), housewives are 18 people (13.8%), and there are 11 respondents (8.5%) who are students.

3) Reasons for Purchase

Based on the questionnaire data from 130 respondents in this study, their characteristics can be described based on the reasons for purchasing as follows:

Data Table of Respondent Characteristics According to Purchase Reasons

Reasons for Purchase	Frequency	Percentage
Personal use	56	43.1
Collection	23	17.7
Resale	17	13.1
Souvenirs/gifts	34	26.2
Total	130	100.0

Source: Primary Data Processing Results, 2024.

In the table it is known that most respondents buy batik for personal use, which is 56 respondents (43.1%). Respondents who buy batik as souvenirs/gifts are 34 respondents (26.2%), while purchases for collection reasons are 23 respondents (17.7%), and the least reason is to resell as many as 17 respondents (13.1%).

Descriptive analysis is intended to obtain a picture of respondents' assessment of the variables studied. Through descriptive analysis, information will be obtained regarding respondents' tendencies in responding to the indicator items used to measure the variables of this study.

The data is explained by giving a weight assessment for each statement in the questionnaire. The respondent response criteria follow the following assessment scale: Strongly Agree (SS) score 5, Agree (S) score 4, Quite Agree (CS) score 3, Disagree (TS) score 2, Strongly Disagree (STS) score 1. Furthermore, from the scale, data categorization will be formed into 3 groups. To determine the score criteria for each group, it can be calculated as follows(Sugiyono, 2017):

a. Highest score   = 5

b. Lowest score   = 1

c. Range   =Highest score – lowest score = 5 - 1 = 4

d. Class interval   =Range / number of categories = 4/3 = 1.33

Based on the magnitude of the class interval, the criteria for the three categories are: low category, score = 1.00 - 2.33, medium category, score = 2.34 - 3.66 and high/good category, with a score of 3.67 - 5.00. A complete description of each variable is presented below:

1) Reliability Test

Reliability testing is carried out to prove accuracy, consistency and precision. instrument in measuring constructs. Reliable indicates that the research indicators used are in accordance with the actual conditions of the research object. Measuring the reliability test of a construct with reflective indicators can be done using three methods, namely:

a. *Composite Reliability*. Indicators of a construct give good results, namely if they are able to provide a composite reliability value of more than 0.70.

b. *Average Variance Extracted*(AVE). AVE criteria that are above 0.5 indicate that the indicators that form the research variables are said to be reliable, so they can be used in further analysis in research.

c. *Cronbach's alpha.*The Cronbach alpha score criteria of more than 0.70 means that the reliability of the construct being studied is classified as good.(Ghozali, 2014).

The composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha, and AVE values for each construct of this study are presented in their entirety in the table below:

Reliability Test Results Table

	Cronbach's alpha	*Composite reliability*	*Average variance extracted (AVE)*
Brand Image	0.804	0.883	0.717
Buying decision	0.904	0.926	0.676
Trust	0.905	0.934	0.779

Source: Smart PLS 4.1.0 data processing (2024)

The results of the reliability test of each structure are shown in the table above. The findings show that the cronbach alpha value of each construct is more than 0.7, then the composite reliability value of each construct is more than 0.7, and the AVE value of each construct is more than 0.5. Based on the results of the reliability test, it can be concluded that the research instrument has high reliability.

Based on the results of the convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability tests of the research variables, the conclusion that can be drawn is that the indicators used in measuring latent variables can all be stated as valid and reliable measurement indicators.

2)Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity testing needs to be done before hypothesis testing. Multicollinearity is a condition where there is a high or perfect correlation between independent variables in a regression model. Multicollinearity can cause inaccuracy in parameter estimates regarding the influence of each variable on the outcome variable. Multicollinearity testing can be done by looking at the Collinearity. Statistics (VIF) value on the inner VIF. Values. If the inner VIF <5 indicates no multicollinearity.

Multicollinearity Test Results Table

	VIF
Brand Image -> Purchase decision	1,472
Brand Image -> Trust	1,000
Trust -> Purchase decision	1,472

Source: Smart PLS 4.1.0 data processing (2024)

Based on the results above, it can be seen that the VIF value of all variables is below 5. This means that there is no multicollinearity problem in the model formed. Thus, the analysis can be continued with hypothesis testing.

The last analysis in PLS is the structural model analysis or inner model. In the structural model analysis, hypothesis testing can be carried out through the t-statistic test (T Statistics). The test results can be seen from the output of the structural model on the significance of the loading factor which explains the influence of the Brand image construct on Purchasing Decisions through the mediation of Customer trust as an intervening variable.

research hypothesis conducted in the previous chapter. To find out whether the hypothesis is accepted or not, you can compare the t-count with the t-table, assuming that the t-count is greater than the t-table. The t-table value for a significance level of 5% is 1.96. The following table shows the results of the test of influence between variables using Partial Least Square analysis.

By presenting the results of the data processing, testing can then be carried out for each research hypothesis, namely:

1) Hypothesis Testing 1:

H1: Brand image has a positive and significant influence on customer trust.

The first hypothesis test was conducted by looking at the estimated coefficient value (original sample) of the influence of brand image on customer trust, which was 0.566. The results provide evidence that brand image has a positive influence on customer trust. The results of the t-test confirmed the findings, where it was known that the magnitude of the t-count (8.318) was greater than the t-table (1.96) with p (0.000) less than 0.05. The conclusion of the test is that brand image positively and significantly influences customer trust. This result means that the better the brand image, the more customer trust will tend to increase. On this basis, the first hypothesis proposed in this study, namely "brand image has a positive and significant influence on customer trust" can be accepted.

2) Hypothesis Testing 2:

H2: Brand image has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions.

The second hypothesis test was conducted by looking at the estimated coefficient value (original sample estimate) of the influence of Brand image on purchasing decisions, which was 0.320. The results provide evidence that Brand image has a positive influence on purchasing decisions. The results of the t-test confirmed the findings, where it was known that the magnitude of the t-count (3.061) was greater than the t-table (1.96) with p (0.002) less than 0.05. The conclusion of the test is that Brand image positively and significantly influences purchasing decisions. This result means that the better the Brand image, the higher the purchasing decision will tend to be. On this basis, the second hypothesis proposed in this

study, namely "brand image has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions" can be accepted.

3) Hypothesis Testing 3:

H3: Consumer trust has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions.

The third hypothesis test was conducted by looking at the estimated coefficient value (original sample estimate) of the influence of Customer trust on Purchasing decisions, which was 0.427. The results provide evidence that Customer trust has a positive influence on Purchasing decisions. The results of the t-test strengthen these findings, where the magnitude of the t-count (3,794) more than t-table (1.96) with p (0.000) smaller than 0.05. The conclusion of the test is that Customer trust positively and significantly influences Purchasing Decisions. This result means that if Customer trust is higher, Purchasing Decisions will tend to increase. On this basis, the third hypothesis proposed in this study, namely "Consumer trust has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions" can be accepted.

Summary Table of Hypothesis Test Results

	Hypothesis	t value	p-value	Conclusion
H1	Brand image has a positive and significant influence on customer trust	8,318	0.000	Accepted
H2	Brand image has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions	3,061	0.002	Accepted
H3	Consumer trust has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions	3,794	0.000	Accepted

Description: The hypothesis is accepted if t>1.96 and p value <0.05
Source: Results of data processing with Smart PLS 4.1.0 (2024)

Discussion:

1) Influence *brand image* to *customer trust*

This study proves that brand image has a positive and significant influence on customer trust. This result means that the better the brand image, the more customer trust will tend to increase. The results of previous studies show that the better the brand image of a company, the greater the consumer trust in the brand.(Sanny et al., 2020).

The measurement of the Brand image variable in this study is a reflection of three indicators.namely the indicator*Mystery, Sensuality, Intimacy*. Meanwhile, customer trust in this study is a reflection of four indicators.namely the indicatorHonesty, Commitment, Virtue and Competence.

2) Influence *brand image* on purchasing decisions

This study proves that Brand image has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions. This result means that the better the Brand image, the higher the purchasing decision will tend to be. Previous research shows that the better the brand image of a product, the greater its influence on consumer purchasing decisions.(Prakoso, 2023).

The measurement of the Brand image variable in this study is a reflection of three indicators.namely the indicatorMystery, Sensuality, Intimacy. Meanwhile, the purchasing decision in this study was measured from the reflection of six indicators. namely the indicatorIntention to search for information on the same product, Intereste in using the same product, Willing to buy the same product, Intention to buy at the same place, Intention to buy by choosing another product from the same company and Possibility of spending a budget to buy the same product

The Brand Image variable has an indicator with the highest outer loading value on the Sensuality dimension, while the Purchase Decision variable has an indicator with the highest outer loading value on the Purchase Intention indicator by Choosing Other Products in the Same Company. These results indicate that the higher the customer's perception of sensuality associated with the brand image, the higher the customer's intention to purchase other products from the same company. In other words, sensuality in the brand image, which reflects a strong aesthetic appeal, beauty, or sensory experience, can influence the customer's desire to explore and purchase other products offered by the company.

3) Influence *Customer trust* on purchasing decisions

This study proves that Customer trust has a positive and significant influence on Purchasing Decisions, which means that if Customer trust is higher, then Purchasing Decisions will tend to increase. These results confirm previous studies that Trust has become the basis for online transactions, because it reduces the risk of becoming a victim of opportunistic behavior.(Khwaja et al., 2020).

The measurement of the customer trust variable in this study is a reflection of four indicators. namely the indicator Honesty, Commitment, Virtue and Competence while Purchasing Decisions in this study are measured from the reflection of six indicators. namely the indicator Intention to search for information on the same product, Intereste in using the same product, Willing to buy the same product, Intention to buy at the same place, Intention to buy by choosing another product from the same company and Possibility of spending a budget to buy the same product

4. Conclusion

Based on the proof of the hypothesis and the discussion that has been done related to the influence of brand image in increasing purchasing decisions with customer trust as a mediating variable, it can be concluded that the answer to the research questions that have been formulated previously is: This study proves that brand image has a positive and significant influence on customer trust. These results indicate that the better the elements such as Mystery, Sensuality, and Intimacy in the brand image, the more customer trust tends to increase. This study confirms that brand image has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions. The better the brand image of a product or company, the higher the customer's purchasing intention and behavior. A strong brand image encourages consumers

to seek more information about the product, increases interest in using it, and increases their likelihood of making a purchase. In addition, customers tend to buy in the same place, try other products from the same company, and even allocate a larger budget to repurchase the product. Thus, a positive brand image not only attracts customer interest but also plays a role in encouraging loyalty and ongoing purchasing decisions. This study shows that customer trust has a positive and significant impact on purchasing decisions. These findings indicate that the higher the level of honesty, commitment, benevolence, and competence perceived by customers, the greater the influence in driving their decision to make a purchase.

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