

ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECT OF PROMOTION, DISCOUNT, AND BRAND TRUST ON PERFUME PRODUCT PURCHASE DECISIONS IN SURAKARTA

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the effects of promotion, discounts, and brand trust on perfume purchase decisions in Surakarta using an explanatory quantitative research approach. The population of this study is all consumers who have purchased perfume products in the Surakarta city area. The sampling method used in this study is random sampling with a sample size of 100. Primary data were collected through questionnaires distributed to 100 respondents who had previously purchased perfume products in Surakarta. Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis, F-tests, t-tests, and the coefficient of determination (R^2). The results of the t-test indicate that promotion, discounts, and brand trust each have a positive and significant effect on perfume purchase decisions in Surakarta. Of the three variables, brand trust had the greatest impact on purchase decisions, with the highest regression coefficient value of 0.56.

Keywords: *brand trust, discount, promotion, purchase decision*

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1. Introduction

In the era of globalization and rapid business development, companies must adapt to continuous changes in the global economy. In the perfume sector in particular, competition is intensifying with the emergence of numerous new brands offering competitive pricing. The cosmetics industry, especially perfumes, has become one of the most dynamic sectors, as perfume is no longer merely a necessity but an integral part of lifestyle and personal identity. In contemporary consumer markets, perfume products are often associated with self-expression, emotional value, and social identity. Therefore, consumers tend to evaluate perfume products not only based on functional benefits but also on symbolic and psychological attributes (Solomon, 2018). This situation is prompting companies to adopt new methods for customer retention. Companies are striving to attract the purchasing power of both existing and new customers.

A purchase decision is an evaluation process in which a customer selects a product from multiple available options (Sari, 2020). Consumer purchase decisions are influenced by consumers' cognitive and affective evaluations of products, including perceived value, brand perception, and marketing stimuli received during the decision-making process (Peter & Olson, 2010). According to Kotler and Keller (2016), purchase decisions occur after consumers recognize their needs, search for information, evaluate alternatives, and determine the most appropriate product to purchase. Consumer decisions are influenced by cultural, social,

personal, and psychological factors. In the beauty industry, the decision to purchase a perfume product is no longer merely a transaction, but a way for consumers to explore their personal identity and social status. This begins with a comprehensive promotional strategy that leverages the power of digital storytelling and collaborates with content creators to create an attractive brand image, effectively reach a large audience, and generate an emotional desire to purchase the product. According to Wijaya (2022), factors influencing purchase intent include promotions, discounts, and brand trust.

Promotion is essential for providing information to customers and attracting their interest. Promotion represents one of the most important elements of the marketing mix because it functions as a communication tool that informs, persuades, and reminds consumers about products and services offered by a company (Assauri, 2018). Effective, engaging, and accessible promotions can attract customers. In the digital age, the use of social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok has become a crucial tool for perfume shops and brands. Social media marketing facilitates two-way communication between companies and consumers, allowing firms to increase engagement, customer interaction, and brand visibility in real time (Yadav & Rahman, 2017). This allows for the rapid presentation of product information to potential buyers. Powerful promotions are expected to influence customer perception and behavior, encouraging them to try the product. Hidayat (2023) found that promotion has a significant effect on purchase decisions.

Strategic discounts are a highly effective tactical tool that influences consumer psychology, and price reductions and special offers are often key factors that encourage quick purchase decisions in search of greater economic value. Discounts aim to stimulate a rapid market response and increase consumer willingness to buy in a short period of time (Swastha & Irawan, 2008). Discounts are often an important factor that consumers consider before purchasing a product. Consumers frequently perceive discounted products as offering superior economic value. Consequently, temporary price reductions can encourage immediate purchasing behavior and stimulate sales performance (DeVecchio et al., 2006). Research by Pratama et al. (2023) has shown that discounts influence product purchase decisions.

Beyond price and promotion, brand trust is a crucial foundation for long-term customer relationships. Brand trust is a customer's willingness to trust a brand based on their confidence in its quality and consistency (Lau & Lee, 1999). Brand trust reduces consumer uncertainty and perceived risk during the purchasing process. Consumers who trust a brand are more likely to establish long-term relationships and repeatedly purchase products from the same brand (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). This trust forms the basis for customers choosing one perfume brand from the many available on the market. Products with a good reputation that enhance customer satisfaction build customer loyalty. If a company can maintain this trust, the sales value of its products increases and its market share expands. A trustworthy brand image creates a holistic sense of value in the customer's mind and ultimately influences their purchasing decisions. Strong brand trust can also increase customer loyalty and strengthen consumers' commitment toward a particular brand in highly competitive markets (Delgado-Ballester, 2004).

Surakarta (Solo) is one of Central Java's economic centers and attracts a diverse customer base. With the increasing number of perfume retailers—including local brands, refill shops, and modern stores in large shopping malls—competition is fierce. The sheer number of choices means the purchasing decision rests entirely with the customer. Therefore, perfume businesses in Surakarta need to develop effective strategies to succeed in this market.

Several previous studies have reported inconsistent findings regarding the effects of promotion, discounts, and brand trust on purchase decisions. Ramadhan et al. (2024) found that

promotion significantly influences purchase decisions, whereas Utami (2024) reported no significant effect. Likewise, Kusuma (2022) found that discounts significantly influence purchase decisions, while Saputra and Ghazali (2022) reported contrasting results. Furthermore, Hidayat (2023) found that brand trust significantly affects purchase decisions, whereas Mahendra (2023) concluded that brand trust does not significantly influence purchasing behavior. These inconsistencies provide a research gap that motivates the present study to examine the effects of promotion, discounts, and brand trust on perfume purchase decisions in Surakarta.

2. Literature Review

Purchase

A purchase decision is an evaluation process in which consumers choose a specific option from among several available options, going through stages such as identifying a problem, searching for information, and evaluating other options (Sari, 2020). According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, purchase decisions are influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control that shape consumer intentions (Ajzen, 1991). Consumer purchase decisions generally involve five stages: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior. Understanding these stages is important for marketers in designing effective marketing strategies (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019).

Promotion

According to marketing theory, promotion refers to a company's efforts to inform, persuade, and make customers remember its brand or products (Tjiptono, 2015). Promotion is an important communication bridge in the marketing mix for stimulating market response. Promotional activities play a strategic role in influencing consumer perceptions and increasing product awareness. Companies that communicate product value effectively are more likely to encourage positive purchase decisions (Belch & Belch, 2021).

Discount

Discounts, or price reductions, are part of a pricing strategy that serves as a short-term tactical incentive. Their primary purpose is to encourage consumers to respond quickly and shorten the trading cycle within a limited timeframe (Swastha & Irawan, 2008). Discounts are considered one of the most effective sales promotion instruments because they provide direct financial incentives and create a perception of increased value among consumers (Blattberg & Neslin, 1990).

Brand Trust

Brand trust refers to a customer's willingness to trust a brand based on positive expectations of quality, consistency, and reliability (Lau & Lee, 1999). In relationship marketing, trust is considered a key factor that strengthens long-term relationships between consumers and brands by reducing uncertainty and increasing confidence in future transactions (Zeithaml et al., 2018). In the perfume industry, this depends on the longevity of the fragrance and the safety of the product. Trust is developed through consistent product quality, reliability, and positive consumer experiences. Higher levels of trust increase consumers' willingness to purchase products and recommend them to others (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001).

Hypothesis

The hypothesis in this study is as follows:

- H1: Promotion has a positive and significant effect on perfume purchase decisions in Surakarta.
H2: Discounts have a positive and significant effect on perfume purchase decisions in Surakarta.
H3: Brand trust has a positive and significant effect on perfume purchase decisions in Surakarta.

3. Research Method

This study employs a quantitative method using an explanatory approach, aiming to understand causal relationships between variables through statistical testing. Quantitative research is widely used to examine relationships among variables through systematic data collection and statistical analysis, enabling researchers to test hypotheses objectively and draw generalizable conclusions (Malhotra, 2020). The primary data collection method was a questionnaire survey conducted among perfume consumers in Surakarta.

This study consists of descriptive and confirmatory analyses. The descriptive analysis was used to describe respondent characteristics, while the confirmatory analysis was conducted to test the proposed hypotheses using multiple linear regression analysis. This study targeted all individuals or consumers who purchased perfume products in Surakarta. Because this number was too large to reliably identify, the population was considered infinite. Sampling was conducted using accidental sampling (sampling based on chance) with 100 respondents. The use of accidental sampling is appropriate when researchers encounter respondents who meet the research criteria and are willing to participate in the study (Ferdinand, 2014). Anyone who purchased perfume in Surakarta and was encountered by the researchers was used as a sample if deemed appropriate as a data source.

The variables in this study include promotion (X1), discount (X2), and brand trust (X3) as independent variables, and the purchase decision of a perfume product (Y) as the dependent variable.

The data analysis methods used included descriptive analysis of respondent characteristics, data quality tests (Pearson moment validity test and Cronbach's alpha reliability test), classical assumption tests (normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity), and multiple linear regression analysis. These procedures are commonly recommended for examining causal relationships among variables in quantitative research (Hair et al., 2019)

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

Respondent characteristics

Based on a descriptive analysis of 100 survey respondents, the profile of the perfume consumer market in Surakarta is as follows:

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	45	45%
	Female	55	55%
Age	Under 20 years old (teenagers)	20	20%
	20-35 years old (Young Adults)	65	65%
	35 years of age or older (adult)	15	15%
Occupation	University students	40	40%

	Employees of private companies / Civil servants	35	35%
	Entrepreneurs	15	15%
	Others	10	10%

Source: Processed primary data, 2026

Instrument Tests and Classical Assumptions

Data quality testing revealed that all items X1, X2, X3, and Y were valid, and the Pearson correlation coefficients (r-values) exceeded the threshold of 0.196 (N=100, $\alpha=5\%$) in the critical r-table. An instrument is considered valid when the correlation coefficient of each item exceeds the critical value and is statistically significant, indicating that the items accurately measure the intended construct (Ghozali, 2018). Reliability testing showed high internal consistency, with Cronbach's α values for all variables exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.60 (Promotion = 0.782, Discount = 0.764, Brand Trust = 0.845, Purchase Decision = 0.811). A normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test yielded a significance level of less than 0.05, indicating that the data was statistically non-normally distributed. However, a graph diagnosis using a normal PP plot showed that the data points aligned with the diagonal reference axis, indicating minimal deviation. Applying the central limit theorem to a sample size of N=100, the regression residuals were determined to be sufficiently robust to linear analysis. Collinearity statistics confirmed the absence of multicollinearity between independent variables, and scatter plot evaluation confirmed that the assumption of equal variances was met.

Hypothesis and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Table 2 details the statistical parameters that show the influence of marketing variables on perfume purchasing behavior.

Table 2.1 Results of multiple linear regression analysis and partial t-tests

Research variables	Coefficient (B)	T-Count	Significance (p-value)	Conclusion
Constant (a)	0.724	4,871	0,000	Regression constant
Promotion (X1)	0.141	2,410	0.018	Significant
Discount (X2)	0.157	2,493	0.014	Significant
Brand Trust (X3)	0.560	9,003	0,000	Significant
F Test			0,000	Models suitable for use

Table 2.1 shows the results of the multiple regression analysis as follows:

$$Y = 0.724 + 0.141X1 + 0.157X2 + 0.560X3$$

This equation shows that the variables of promotion, discount, and brand trust have a positive impact on the purchase decision of perfume products in Surakarta. The regression coefficient for the promotion variable is 0.14, which means that, assuming the other variables are constant, the purchase decision increases by 0.14 for every unit increase in promotion. The regression coefficient for the discount variable is 0.15, which means that the purchase decision increases by 0.15 for every unit increase in discount. On the other hand, the regression coefficient for the brand trust variable is 0.56, which means that the purchase decision increases by 0.56 for every unit increase in brand trust. Since the value of the brand trust coefficient is

the largest compared to the other variables, we can conclude that brand trust is the most important variable influencing the purchase decision of perfume products in Surakarta.

The results of the f-test in Table 2.1 yielded a significance level of 0.000. This means that the variables of promotion, discount, and brand trust influenced purchase decision, and therefore the regression model is suitable for use.

The t-test results for the promotion variable show that promotions influence the decision to purchase perfume products in Surakarta, with a significance level of $0.018 < 0.05$. The significance level for the discount variable is $0.014 < 0.05$, indicating that discounts influence the decision to purchase perfume products in Surakarta. The brand trust variable also influences the decision to purchase perfume products in Surakarta, as indicated by its significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05).

The adjusted R-squared value obtained from the coefficient of determination analysis was 0.885. This value indicates that 88.5% of the variability in consumers' perfume purchase decisions in Surakarta is influenced by factors such as promotions, discounts, and brand trust. The remaining 11.5% is influenced by factors or variables outside the scope of this study model.

4.2. Discussion

The impact of promotion (X1) on purchase decisions (Y)

Partial hypothesis testing revealed that the promotion variable significantly influenced the purchase decision of perfume products in Surakarta. The coefficient value was 0.141, and the significance level was 0.018 (< 0.05). This result is consistent with Kotler and Armstrong's marketing mix (4P) theory, which states that promotion plays a crucial role in providing compelling information that attracts the interest of potential buyers. The more promotion a product receives, the more likely consumers are to make a purchase decision, and vice versa.

Customer characteristics in Surakarta are strongly influenced by local digital media and visual information such as clear price tags on promotional items in physical stores and fragrance information for perfumes, which directly stimulate purchasing intent. This finding is consistent with the results reported by Sari (2020) and is supported by the findings of Mahendra (2023).

The impact of discounts (X2) on purchase decisions (Y)

The results of a partial t-test showed that the discount variable had a positive and significant influence on perfume purchase decisions in Surakarta, with a coefficient of 0.157 and a significance level of 0.014 (< 0.05). This indicates that the larger the discount offered, the more likely customers are to make a purchase decision, and vice versa. Price-related information can significantly affect perceived quality and purchase willingness, particularly when consumers believe that the offered discount represents superior value (Dodds et al., 1991).

From a marketing accounting management perspective, discounts function as an effective short-term monetary incentive that lowers consumers' price sensitivity threshold. Consumers in Surakarta tend to be highly sensitive to price and value considerations. Tactical price reduction strategies during payday sales and perfume sets create a psychological urgency (scarcity effect) that makes consumers want to buy immediately. This finding is consistent with the argument proposed by Kusuma (2022) and contrasts with the findings of Saputra and Ghazali (2022).

The impact of brand trust (X3) on purchasing decisions (Y)

The brand trust variable had the highest regression coefficient at 0.560, with an absolute significance level of 0.000 and a t-value of 9.003, proving that this variable was the most influential factor in consumer purchasing decisions for perfumes in Surakarta. The higher consumers' trust in a brand, the better their purchasing decisions, and vice versa.

The perfume industry is closely tied to the user's sense of smell. Consumer trust is built on the consistency, reliability, and longevity of the product's fragrance, as well as the use of high-quality ingredients that minimize the risk of skin irritation. In the fierce competition between local refill stations and modern retail stores in Surakarta's shopping centers, a trustworthy brand reputation guarantees customer trust and reduces anxiety before making a final purchase decision. This fully supports the research of Hidayat (2023) and further develops the research of Lestari and Wijaya (2021).

5. Conclusions

1. In Surakarta, promotion has a significant influence on the decision to purchase perfume products.
Promotional materials such as price tags, wobblers, and point-of-purchase (POP) displays are effective because they influence purchasing decisions by providing information that highlights the product's benefits. Furthermore, promotional strategies through social media have proven to have a significant impact on perfume product purchasing decisions in Surakarta. The aesthetic optimization of digital information media in stores and the clarity of visual advertising materials clearly increase consumer purchasing intent.
2. In Surakarta, discounts significantly influence purchasing decisions for perfume products. Discounts offered at the checkout counter are particularly attractive and an effective strategy that influences consumer purchasing decisions. Strategic price reduction programs and bundle deals at the checkout counter attract price-sensitive consumers and encourage quick transaction completion.
3. Trust in a brand has proven to have a significant impact on purchasing decisions for perfume products in Surakarta. Fragrance consistency, longevity, and high-quality perfume packaging are influential factors in the purchasing decisions of both new customers and existing customers who continue to use the brand's perfumes.

Recommendations

To Retailers and Supermarket Owners: Perfume shops in Surakarta should maximize their use of promotional media as part of their marketing strategy. Partner with perfume manufacturers and their promotional teams to run targeted advertising specifically for stores in the Surakarta area. Regularly run discount campaigns at strategic times such as holidays and paydays to increase customer purchasing intent and prevent sales declines. Maintaining consistent fragrance quality and product longevity is essential for sustaining long-term consumer trust in the brand.

To future researchers: Future research should expand the scope of analysis by adding missing operational parameters such as service quality, store location accessibility, and comprehensive brand image across a wider geographical area, thereby further enhancing the data obtained and providing new results that can be used to improve the business processes of Indonesian perfume manufacturers in the future.

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