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Is Brand Image Overrated? A Case Study of New Balance Consumer Behavior in Pekanbaru, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the influence of brand image, product quality, and price on purchasing decisions for New Balance shoes in Pekanbaru. The population in this study consisted of all Pekanbaru residents who used New Balance shoes. The sample size in this study was determined using the purposive sampling technique, in which all New Balance shoe users were included in the sample, resulting in a total of 105 respondents. The data analysis method used in this research was multiple linear regression analysis, processed using SPSS version 31. The results show that brand image has no significant influence on purchasing decisions. Product quality significantly influences purchasing decisions. Price significantly influences purchasing decisions. Brand image, product quality, and price significantly influence purchasing decisions.

Keywords: Brand image, Product quality, Price, Purchase decision

1. Background

The increasing development of the business world has led to intense competition among companies. This is a result of the open flow of globalization, which has given rise to new companies aiming to meet the ever-diverse needs of consumers, especially in the footwear sector. Every entrepreneur has a different way of thinking and seeks information by finding ways to boost their sales, such as considering consumers' purchasing decision rights. The importance of understanding consumer behavior has ultimately become a focus across various industries, including appearance. Company management must remain competitive so that the company can retain existing customers while also attracting new ones. The same applies to competition in Indonesia's footwear market.

Appearance is like a gem that influences first impressions and can play an important role in social interactions and purchasing decisions. To meet these expectations, New Balance provides various models and innovative products with quality that suits the needs of its consumers. New Balance is a sports shoe and sneaker company from the United States, established in 1906. New Balance is one of the most renowned shoe brands and has won several awards, such as the Best Running Shoe Award, Red Dot Design Award, and Collaborative Collections.

New Balance is known for its superior product quality and innovative technologies, such as ENCAP, which is designed to provide extra support and comfort to its users. However, data from the Top Brand Index shows that its brand image still lags behind other brands such as Converse. This raises important questions regarding the factors influencing consumer perceptions of this brand. Although technologies such as ENCAP offer advantages in terms of comfort and support, consumers often consider aesthetics and trends when choosing shoes.

A purchase decision involves the services provided by contributors to participants, with the intention that participants or recipients can make choices based on the contributor's preferences. A purchase decision is also a behavioral pattern in the decision-making process that determines the selection of products and services to meet consumer requirements. From the above definitions, it can be concluded that a purchase decision is made after certain considerations and involves choosing a product that meets one's needs (Wardana, 2017). Consumers' purchase decisions are the result of both internal and external factors that influence one another. A brand image

that is less dominant, even if well-known throughout history and recognized for its quality, can still be less popular than Nike and Adidas. Additionally, some New Balance shoe models are priced higher than others. Purchase decisions are influenced by various factors, such as price, brand image, and product quality, which prioritize user comfort and durability. Product quality is a crucial aspect that emphasizes a product's ability to satisfy consumer needs, not just its physical appearance. Consumers will not buy if New Balance products do not seem good, which is why New Balance products are adjusted to consumer desires to ensure successful marketing. Quality is the entirety of a product's or service's features and characteristics that depend on its ability to satisfy the consumer (Kotler and Keller, 2009). Price is also an important factor in purchase decisions because people usually check the listed price before buying a product. Many people assess the quality of a product based on its price alone. Price is the value exchanged by consumers to obtain the benefits of owning and using a product or service, enabling companies to earn a reasonable profit by charging for the customer value created (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012). In addition to price and product quality, companies also pay attention to their brand image. Brand image has become the company's largest asset. Today's product competition is increasingly intense, and consumers tend to try new brands launched by competitors to experience satisfaction, gain more benefits, and fulfill their curiosity about new brands. This implies that companies must have strong capabilities to maintain their brand image. Brand image is the perception of a brand in the minds of consumers, influenced by the brand itself and the information surrounding it. Brand image comprises not only a logo, name, or other visual elements but also the values, quality, and characteristics associated with the brand. In marketing, brand image is an important factor that affects consumer decisions. New Balance is a global shoe brand with a strong brand name, especially in the sports and everyday shoe categories. This brand continues to grow compared to other brands, such as Adidas, which focuses solely on comfort and classic design. Some of the most successful collaborations include those with Aimé Leon Dore, Stone Island, and JJJfound. These collaborations have increased New Balance's appeal and sales, making the brand relevant in sports and attractive to streetwear enthusiasts. Based on the aforementioned background, the research problems formulated in this study are as follows: (1) How does brand image influence the purchase decisions of New Balance shoes in Pekanbaru? (2) How does product quality influence the purchase decisions of New Balance shoes in Pekanbaru, Indonesia? (3) How does price influence the purchase decisions of New Balance shoes in Pekanbaru? (4) How do brand image, product quality, and price simultaneously influence the purchase decisions for New Balance shoes in Pekanbaru? Based on these research problems, the objectives of this analysis are as follows: (1) to determine whether brand image affects purchase decisions; (2) to determine whether product quality affects purchase decisions; (3) to determine whether price affects purchase decisions; and (4) to determine whether brand image, product quality, and price simultaneously affect the purchase decisions of New Balance shoes in Pekanbaru.

2. Research Methods

The types and sources of data used are quantitative data, which are obtained from the results of questionnaire calculations conducted in relation to the issues being studied. The sources of data in this research are primary data, which refer to data obtained directly from the original source. This data can be collected through various information-gathering methods, such as surveys and interviews. Primary data sources are obtained directly from individual respondents according to the needs of the research and cannot be processed or modified by other parties. Secondary data refers to existing data that was previously collected by other parties and not collected directly by the researcher for the current research. Secondary data are used when collecting new or original data is too costly or not feasible. The secondary data obtained by the researcher were obtained from the Top Brand Index. The population in this study included all consumers who purchased and used New Balance shoes in Pekanbaru. The sampling technique used is incidental sampling (non-random sampling), specifically purposive sampling, which targets only consumers who use New Balance shoes in the city of Pekanbaru. One way to determine the minimum sample size when the exact amount is unknown is to multiply the number of indicators in the variables used in the research by five to ten times. The number of indicators used in this research is 21, and the multiplier used is 5, so the sample size used is as follows

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Sample used} &= \text{Amount of indicators} \times 5 \\ &= 21 \times 5 \\ &= 105\end{aligned}$$

The use of 21 indicator variables and a sample size of 5 can result in a total sample of more than 100, which is considered to better support the research results.

The data collection techniques used in this study are as follows. The questionnaire was a data collection method in the form of questions provided through Google Forms and answered by respondents to gather a large amount of data.

3. Results And Discussions

Based on data obtained from 103 respondents, the validity test results for the four variables, namely, Brand Image (X1), Product Quality (X2), price (X3), and Purchase Decision (Y), are presented in the following table:

Table 1. Validity test results

Variables	Indicators	r count	r table	Remarks
Brand image (X1)	X1.1	0,787	0,1937	Valid
	X1.2	0,818	0,1937	Valid
	X1.3	0,792	0,1937	Valid
	X1.4	0,848	0,1937	Valid
	X1.5	0,815	0,1937	Valid
Product quality (X2)	X2.1	0,863	0,1937	Valid
	X2.2	0,830	0,1937	Valid
	X2.3	0,869	0,1937	Valid
	X2.4	0,878	0,1937	Valid
	X2.5	0,758	0,1937	Valid
	X2.6	0,811	0,1937	Valid
	X2.7	0,842	0,1937	Valid
	X2.8	0,839	0,1937	Valid
Price (X3)	X3.1	0,865	0,1937	Valid
	X3.2	0,890	0,1937	Valid
	X3.3	0,850	0,1937	Valid
	X3.4	0,903	0,1937	Valid
	X3.5	0,769	0,1937	Valid
Purchase decision (Y)	Y.1	0,909	0,1937	Valid
	Y.2	0,805	0,1937	Valid
	Y.3	0,892	0,1937	Valid

Source: Processed data, 2025

Reliability test

In the reliability test, the coefficient used was Cronbach's alpha with an actual value of 0.70. The test results were as follows:

Tabel 2. Reliability test results

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	Cut-off value	Remarks
Brand image (X1)	0,869	0,70	Reliable
Product quality (X2)	0,938	0,70	Reliable
Price (X3)	0,909	0,70	Reliable
Purchase decision (Y)	0,837	0,70	Reliable

Normality test

Table 3. Normality test results

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		103
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	-.0062451
	Std. Deviation	.98692197
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.075
	Positive	.075
	Negative	-.052
Test Statistic		.075
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) ^c		.175

Source: Processed data, 2025

Table 3 shows that the results of the normality test have a significance value of 0.175, indicating that all data for the variables Brand Image (X1), Product Quality (X2), price (X3), and Purchase Decision (Y) are confirmed to be normally distributed.

Multiple linear regression analysis results

Table 4. Multiple linear regression analysis results

Model	Coefficients ^a		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error			
1 (Constant)	.160	.681		.235	.815
Brand image	.162	.063	.238	2.591	.011
Product quality	.150	.041	.392	3.636	<.001
Price	.184	.049	.308	3.728	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase decision

Source: Processed data, 2025

Based on the SPSS output in Table 4, the following multiple linear regression equation was obtained:

$$Y = 0,160 + 0,162X_1 + 0,150X_2 + 0,184X_3$$

1. Based on these results, it can be explained that the value of a = 0.160 indicates that if Brand Image (X1), Product Quality (X2), and price (X3) are considered constant or unchanged, then the purchase decision has a value of 0.160.
2. The value of b1 = 0.162 indicates that if Brand Image (X1) increases by one unit, then Brand Image will experience a probability increase of 0.162. The regression coefficient for Brand Image was positive; therefore, it can be said that the direction of the influence of the Brand Image variable on Purchase Decisions was positive.

3. The value of $b_2 = 0.150$ indicates that if Product Quality (X2) increases by one unit, then Product Quality will experience a probability increase of 0.150. The regression coefficient for Product Quality is positive; therefore, it can be said that the direction of the influence of the Product Quality variable on Purchase Decisions is positive.
4. The value of $b_3 = 0.184$ indicates that if the price (X3) increases by one unit, the price will experience a probability increase of 0.184. The regression coefficient for price is positive; therefore, it can be said that the direction of the influence of the price variable on Purchase Decisions is positive.

Partial test results

Table 5. T-test results

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.160	.681		.235	.815
	Brand image	.162	.063	.238	2.591	.011
	Product quality	.150	.041	.392	3.636	<.001
	Price	.184	.049	.308	3.728	<.001
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase decision						

Source: Processed data, 2025

Based on the SPSS output in the Coefficients table, the results were as follows:

1. The brand image variable has a significance value of 0.011, which is also greater than 0.05 ($0.011 < 0.05$), and a t-value of (2.591) > t-table (1.984). This indicates that brand image has no significant partial effect on purchasing decisions.
2. The product quality variable has a significance value of 0.001, which is smaller than 0.05 ($0.001 < 0.05$), and a t-count value of 3.636 > t-table (1.984). This indicates that product quality has a significant partial effect on the purchasing decisions.
3. The price variable has a significance value of 0.001, which is also less than 0.05 ($0.001 < 0.05$), with a t-count of (3.728) > t-table (1.984). This means that price also has a significant partial effect on the purchasing decision.

F-test

Table 6. F-test results

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	315.580	3	105.193	105.398	<.001 ^b

	Residual	98.808	99	.998		
	Total	414.388	102			
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase decision						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Price, Brand image, Product quality						

Source: Processed data, 2025

Based on the SPSS output in Table 6, the calculated F value is 105.398 with a significance value (Sig.) of 0.001, since the calculated F value (105.398) > F table (2.14), and the significance (0.001) < (0.05).

Coefficients of determination

Table 7. Determination coefficients test results

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.873 ^a	.762	.754	.999
a. Predictors: (Constant), Price, Brand image, Product quality				
b. Dependent Variable: Purchase decision				

Source: Processed data 2025

Based on the SPSS output in Table 7, an R Square value of 0.754 was obtained, which means that 75.4% of the variation in purchasing decisions can be explained simultaneously by the variables of brand image, product quality, and price. The remaining 24.6% was influenced by other variables that were not examined.

4. Conclusions

Based on the results of the research on the influence of brand image, product quality, and price on the purchasing decisions of New Balance shoes in Pekanbaru, several conclusions can be drawn as follows: 1. Brand image does not significantly influence the purchase decisions of New Balance shoes in Pekanbaru. This is indicated by the significance value being greater than the significance level; thus, Hypothesis one (H1) is rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that, in the context of this study, consumers' perceptions of the New Balance brand image are not the main factor in determining purchase decisions. Consumers tend to prioritize other aspects, such as product quality and price. 2. Product quality positively and significantly influences the purchase decisions of New Balance shoes in Pekanbaru. Thus, it can be said that if the product quality, such as being comfortable to wear and durable, is good, consumers will feel satisfied and be motivated to buy. 3. Price has a positive and significant influence on the Purchase Decision of New Balance shoes in Pekanbaru. This indicates that the price offered by New Balance is appropriate or comparable to the quality customers receive; therefore, the decision to purchase will be made more quickly. 4. Brand Image, Product Quality, and Price simultaneously influence the Purchase Decision of New Balance shoes in Pekanbaru.

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