
**THE INFLUENCE OF PRODUCT ASSORTMENT AND WORD OF MOUTH ON
PURCHASE DECISION MEDIATED BY BRAND AWARENESS AMONG
BOGAJAYA RETAIL OUTLET CONSUMERS AT JUANDA INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT, EAST JAVA**

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Abstract

This explanatory research aims to comprehensively investigate the causal dynamics between product variety (Product Assortment), social referrals (Word of Mouth), and consumer purchasing execution (Purchase Decision), by positioning Brand Awareness as an intervening variable. The study context is focused on the consumers of the Bogajaya Retail Outlet operating within the travel retail environment of Juanda International Airport, a commercial ecosystem heavily characterized by high passenger mobility and severe time-pressure. A quantitative research design was applied, utilizing survey questionnaires distributed to 92 respondents selected through a purposive sampling technique. Data processing and structural evaluations were executed using the Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach via SmartPLS 3.0 software. The structural model evaluation revealed several crucial empirical findings. The Product Assortment dimension failed to exert any significant direct effect on either Brand Awareness or Purchase Decision. In stark contrast, Word of Mouth consistently generated a positive and significant impact on both brand cognition and transaction certainty. Furthermore, Brand Awareness held the most dominant leverage in triggering the execution of Purchase Decisions. In the mediation analysis, Brand Awareness was proven to act as an indirect-only mediation bridging product completeness with purchase decisions, while simultaneously serving as a complementary mediation to amplify the influence of Word of Mouth toward sales conversion. This research culminates in the managerial conclusion that within a fast-paced travel retail landscape, the physical variety of store displays acts merely as a passive attribute that strictly requires a cognitive catalyst (Brand Awareness) to generate economic value. Additionally, the flow of organic reviews holds an absolute role as a "trust accelerator" capable of circumventing consumer hesitation and expediting travelers' transactions.

Keywords: Purchase Decision, Brand Awareness, Product Assortment, Word of Mouth, Marketing Mix, Travel Retail

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's current economic dynamics are closely linked to the central role of the retail sector in supporting macroeconomic stability and post-pandemic recovery. The Indonesian Retailers Association reports that retail businesses continue to expand and innovate in response to strong domestic household consumption (Aprindo, 2023). The government has also strengthened the retail and MSME ecosystem through recovery, digitalization, and financing programs to enhance competitiveness (Kemenko Perekonomian, 2021). This positive trajectory is further reinforced by sustained investment growth and evolving retail competition in East Java's Surabaya metropolitan area (Jawa Pos, 2024).

In this competitive landscape, Bogajaya has positioned itself as a prominent souvenir retail brand originating from Surabaya since 1976. The company has consistently maintained product authenticity and quality as its core competitive advantage (Toko Bogajaya, 2022). Its strategic expansion into Juanda International Airport represents a transformation into the travel retail segment. This move aligns with the increasing competitiveness of local souvenir businesses that adapt traditional products into modern retail concepts (Vokasi Unair, 2023).

Within a time-pressured airport retail environment, product assortment becomes a crucial determinant of consumer purchase decisions. A comprehensive and well-organized product display enhances shopping efficiency and stimulates impulse buying behavior (Grewal et al., 2018). Beyond physical availability, Word of Mouth (WOM) significantly shapes consumer cognition by reducing perceived risk prior to purchase (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). In highly competitive travel retail settings, positive recommendations function as social proof that accelerates decision execution, particularly among travelers with limited time (Litvin et al., 2008).

However, neither product assortment nor WOM can optimally translate into transactions without strong brand awareness serving as a mediating mechanism. Brand awareness acts as a heuristic shortcut that enables consumers to recognize and trust a brand instantly in complex retail environments (Foroudi, 2019). Prior studies reveal inconsistent findings, where some argue that assortment directly drives purchases (Grewal et al., 2018), while others emphasize the necessity of strong brand recognition for sales effectiveness (Sihotang, 2021). Therefore, this study proposes brand awareness as a mediating variable linking product assortment and WOM to purchase decisions in a time-pressure retail context.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Marketing

Marketing Theory serves as the grand theoretical foundation of this study. Marketing is defined as a process through which firms create value for customers and build strong relationships to capture value in return (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016). It is also described as a social and managerial process that enables individuals and groups to obtain what they need and want through value exchange (Kotler, 2010). The strategic role of marketing in aligning company offerings with customer needs is further emphasized in contemporary marketing frameworks (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

The fundamental objective of marketing is to understand customers so precisely that products and services fit their needs effectively. The Consumer Behavior Model explains how marketing stimuli influence consumers' internal decision processes (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Marketing stimuli operate as external inputs that affect the buyer's "black box" before producing purchase responses (Kotler & Keller, 2009). This theoretical lens bridges company-designed strategies with consumer behavioral outcomes (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019).

Marketing Mix

The Marketing Mix provides a tactical framework for implementing marketing strategies. Traditionally conceptualized as the 4Ps, the framework has evolved into 7Ps to accommodate service-oriented industries such as retail (Kotler et al., 2019). The additional elements—People, Process, and Physical Evidence—are crucial in shaping customer experience in service environments (Booms & Bitner, 1981). Retail marketing strategies rely heavily on the integration of these seven elements to enhance competitiveness (Berman & Evans, 2018).

In retail contexts, Product relates to assortment management, while Promotion includes interpersonal communication such as Word of Mouth (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Place reflects strategic location decisions that influence accessibility and consumer convenience (Levy & Weitz, 2012). Physical Evidence and Process shape in-store experience and service efficiency (Zeithaml et al., 2018). The integration of Product and Promotion becomes particularly vital in high-traffic retail environments such as airports (Grewal et al., 2017).

Purchase Decision

Purchase decision represents the stage where consumers form preferences among brands and develop buying intentions (Kotler & Keller, 2016). It is influenced by cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors that shape consumer evaluation (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). The decision is the culmination of cognitive and behavioral processes undertaken to satisfy needs (Solomon, 2018).

The Five-Stage Model of Consumer Decision Making explains how consumers move from problem recognition to post-purchase behavior (Kotler & Keller, 2009). Information search and alternative evaluation significantly determine final brand choice (Blackwell et al., 2006). Post-purchase satisfaction influences future repurchase intention and Word of Mouth behavior (Oliver, 2014). This framework provides measurable indicators for analyzing purchase decision variables.

Brand Awareness

Brand Awareness is a fundamental component of Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) theory. It reflects the strength of a brand's presence in consumer memory structures (Keller, 2003). Strong brand awareness enhances brand salience and increases the likelihood of inclusion in the consideration set (Aaker, 1996). It forms the foundation of long-term brand equity development (Keller, 2013).

Brand awareness consists of recognition, recall, and top-of-mind levels that represent hierarchical memory strength (Keller, 2003). High awareness functions as a cognitive shortcut in complex retail environments (Romaniuk & Sharp, 2004). Mental availability significantly influences brand choice under time pressure (Sharp, 2010). In

airport retail settings, strong awareness accelerates purchase decisions by simplifying cognitive processing (Foroudi, 2019).

Product Assortment

Product Assortment refers to the total set of products offered to the market to satisfy consumer needs (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Assortment structure includes width, length, depth, and consistency dimensions that shape competitive positioning (Levy & Weitz, 2012). Retailers use assortment strategies to differentiate themselves in highly competitive markets (Berman & Evans, 2018).

A broad and deep assortment enhances shopping efficiency and reduces consumer search costs (Grewal et al., 2018). Comprehensive product availability increases perceived store attractiveness (Briesch et al., 2009). Assortment variety also stimulates impulse buying behavior in retail environments (Kahn & Wansink, 2004). Effective assortment management therefore contributes to both purchase decisions and brand perception.

Word of Mouth

Word of Mouth (WOM) refers to interpersonal communication regarding product experiences that occurs outside formal company channels (Kotler & Keller, 2012). WOM can occur through oral, written, or electronic interactions between consumers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2017). It is considered highly credible because it originates from non-commercial sources (Litvin et al., 2008).

WOM is influential due to its perceived honesty and situational relevance (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). Personal recommendations reduce perceived risk and accelerate decision-making processes (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006). In uncertain retail environments, credible recommendations function as trust accelerators (Brown et al., 2007). Therefore, WOM acts not only as information diffusion but also as a powerful persuasive mechanism.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative explanatory approach to examine causal relationships among variables through statistical analysis. Quantitative research is appropriate for hypothesis testing and objective measurement of latent constructs (Creswell, 2014). Explanatory research is designed to analyze the influence of independent variables on dependent variables within a structured model (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The model investigates the effects of Product Assortment and Word of Mouth on Purchase Decision with Brand Awareness as a mediating variable (Hair et al., 2019). Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which is suitable for complex predictive models (Henseler et al., 2015).

The research was conducted at the Bogajaya Retail Outlet located in the commercial area of Juanda International Airport due to its relevance to time-pressured airport retail behavior. The population consists of consumers who have purchased products at the outlet and is treated as infinite due to fluctuating daily transactions (Sugiyono, 2017). A purposive sampling technique was applied to select 100 respondents who met specific criteria, ensuring data relevance and adequacy for PLS-SEM analysis (Hair et al., 2017). Primary data were obtained through digital questionnaires using a five-point Likert scale to measure perceptions of all constructs (Malhotra, 2010). Secondary data from academic

journals and marketing literature were used to strengthen the theoretical foundation (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Instrument testing was conducted using SmartPLS with evaluation of both measurement and structural models. Convergent validity was assessed through outer loadings and Average Variance Extracted values, which should exceed recommended thresholds (Hair et al., 2019). Discriminant validity was examined using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the HTMT ratio to ensure construct distinctiveness (Henseler et al., 2015). Reliability was evaluated using Composite Reliability and Cronbach’s Alpha to confirm internal consistency (Ghozali, 2016). The structural model was analyzed through path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values to determine the significance of direct and mediating effects (Hair et al., 2017).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study examines the influence of Product Assortment and Word of Mouth on Purchase Decision mediated by Brand Awareness at the Bogajaya retail outlet located in Juanda International Airport. Hypothesis testing was conducted using variance-based Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3.0. Product Assortment was measured with four indicators, Word of Mouth with three indicators, Purchase Decision with five indicators, and Brand Awareness with three indicators.

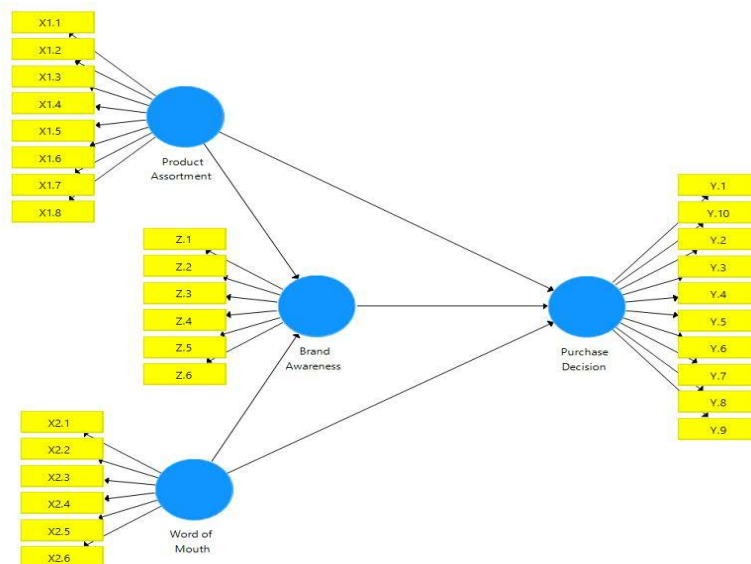


Figure 1.
SmartPLS 3.0 Model Specification

Primary Data Processed by the Researcher, 2026

Based on Figure 1, the PLS-SEM analysis consists of two stages: evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and evaluation of the structural model (inner model).

Outer Model Evaluation

The outer model assesses validity and reliability through convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability.

a. Convergent Validity

Convergent validity was evaluated using outer loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Indicators are considered valid if loadings exceed 0.70. Most indicators met this threshold. Although Y.5 (0.605), X2.3 (0.544), and Y.4 (0.698) were below 0.70, they were retained because overall AVE and Composite Reliability values satisfied recommended standards (Hair et al., 2021).

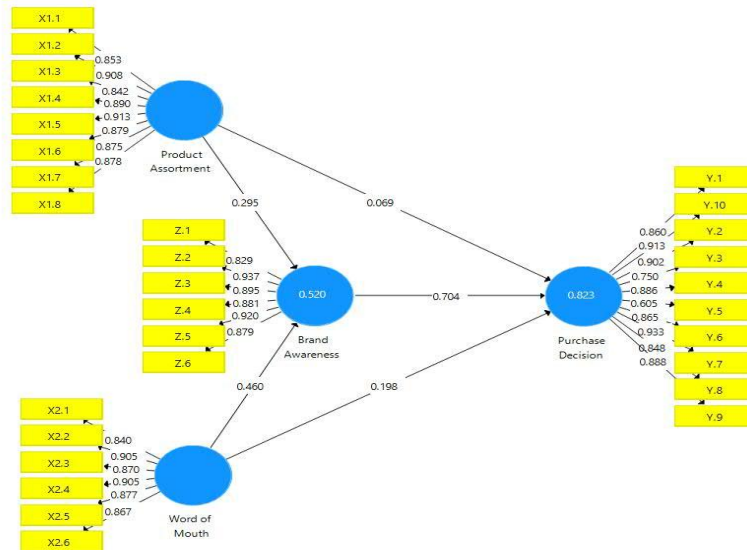


Figure 2.
Outer Loading Results of SmartPLS 3.0

Primary Data Processed by the Researcher, 2026

Figure 2 shows that the majority of indicators have loading values above 0.70, indicating adequate convergent validity.

Table 1.
Loading Factor Values

Indicator	Outer Loadings	Parameter	Description
X1.1 <- X1	0.853	>0.70	Retained
X1.2 <- X1	0.908	>0.70	Retained
X1.3 <- X1	0.842	>0.70	Retained
X1.4 <- X1	0.890	>0.70	Retained
X1.5 <- X1	0.913	>0.70	Retained
X1.6 <- X1	0.879	>0.70	Retained
X1.7 <- X1	0.875	>0.70	Retained
X1.8 <- X1	0.878	>0.70	Retained
X2.1 <- X2	0.840	>0.70	Retained
X2.2 <- X2	0.905	>0.70	Retained
X2.3 <- X2	0.870	>0.70	Retained
X2.4 <- X2	0.905	>0.70	Retained
X2.5 <- X2	0.877	>0.70	Retained
X2.6 <- X2	0.867	>0.70	Retained
Y.1 <- Y	0.860	>0.70	Retained
Y.2 <- Y	0.902	>0.70	Retained
Y.3 <- Y	0.750	>0.70	Retained

Y.4 <- Y	0.886	>0.70	Retained
Y.5 <- Y	0.605	<0.70	Retained
Y.6 <- Y	0.865	>0.70	Retained
Y.7 <- Y	0.933	>0.70	Retained
Y.8 <- Y	0.848	>0.70	Retained
Y.9 <- Y	0.888	>0.70	Retained
Y.10 <- Y	0.913	>0.70	Retained
Z.1	0.829	>0.70	Retained
Z.2	0.937	>0.70	Retained
Z.3	0.895	>0.70	Retained
Z.4	0.881	>0.70	Retained
Z.5	0.920	>0.70	Retained
Z.6	0.879	>0.70	Retained

b. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was tested using cross-loadings and the Fornell–Larcker criterion. All indicators loaded higher on their respective constructs than on others, confirming discriminant validity.

Table 2.
Latent Variable Correlation and AVE

Variable	Brand Awareness	Product Assortment	Purchase Decision	Word of Mouth	AVE
Brand Awareness	1.000	0.671	0.889	0.701	0.794
Product Assortment	0.671	1.000	0.703	0.816	0.775
Purchase Decision	0.889	0.703	1.000	0.748	0.723
Word of Mouth	0.701	0.816	0.748	1.000	0.770

Table 2. shows that all AVE values exceed 0.50, indicating that each construct explains more than 50% of its indicator variance.

Table 3.
Fornell–Larcker Criterion

Variable	Brand Awareness	Product Assortment	Purchase Decision	Word of Mouth
Brand Awareness	0.891			
Product Assortment	0.671	0.880		
Purchase Decision	0.889	0.703	0.850	
Word of Mouth	0.701	0.816	0.748	0.878

Each square root of AVE exceeds inter-construct correlations, confirming discriminant validity.

c. Construct Reliability

Reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s Alpha and Composite Reliability. All constructs exceeded 0.70, indicating high internal consistency.

Table 4.

Construct Reliability and Validity

Variable	Cronbach’s Alpha	rho A	Composite Reliability
Brand Awareness	0.948	0.950	0.958
Product Assortment	0.958	0.962	0.965
Purchase Decision	0.956	0.963	0.963
Word of Mouth	0.940	0.944	0.953

Primary Data Processed by the Researcher, 2026

Table 4 indicates that the square root of AVE for each construct is greater than its correlations with other constructs, satisfying the Fornell–Larcker criterion

Inner Model Evaluation

After confirming validity and reliability, structural relationships were tested using bootstrapping.

a. Goodness of Fit

Model fit was assessed using SRMR.

Table 5.

Model Fit Results

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.070	0.070

Table 5 shows that all reliability values exceed 0.70, indicating strong internal consistency across constructs.

b. Coefficient of Determination (R-Square)

Table 6.

R-Square Values

Variable	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Brand Awareness	0.520	0.509
Purchase Decision	0.823	0.817

Brand Awareness is explained by Product Assortment and Word of Mouth by 52%. Purchase Decision is explained by Product Assortment, Word of Mouth, and Brand Awareness by 82.3%, indicating strong predictive power.

Table 7.

f-Square Values

Variable Relationship	Value	Effect Size (Cohen)	Description
Brand Awareness → Purchase Decision	1.342	Large Effect	Highest
Product Assortment → Brand Awareness	0.061	Small Effect	
Product Assortment → Purchase Decision	0.009	Small Effect	Lowest
Word of Mouth → Brand Awareness	0.147	Small Effect	
Word of Mouth → Purchase Decision	0.065	Small Effect	

Primary Data Processed by the Researcher, 2026

Table 7 presents the effect size (f^2) of each structural relationship. Brand Awareness shows the strongest effect on Purchase Decision, while Product Assortment has the weakest direct impact on Purchase Decision. Interpretation of f-Square Values:

1. Brand Awareness \rightarrow Purchase Decision ($f^2 = 1.342$)
 Brand Awareness demonstrates the highest effect size in the model, far exceeding the large-effect threshold (≥ 0.35). This indicates that brand awareness plays a highly dominant role in driving purchase decisions. When the Bogajaya brand is strongly embedded in travelers' memory (brand recall or top-of-mind), the likelihood of purchase significantly increases.
2. Word of Mouth \rightarrow Brand Awareness ($f^2 = 0.147$)
 This relationship falls within the small-effect category but is close to the medium threshold (0.15). Word of Mouth contributes meaningfully to strengthening consumers' mental availability and recognition of the Bogajaya brand.
3. Word of Mouth \rightarrow Purchase Decision ($f^2 = 0.065$)
 The direct effect is small but meaningful. Positive recommendations help reduce perceived risk, especially in time-constrained airport shopping situations.
4. Product Assortment \rightarrow Brand Awareness ($f^2 = 0.061$)
 The effect is small, suggesting that product variety alone contributes modestly to strengthening brand memory.
5. Product Assortment \rightarrow Purchase Decision ($f^2 = 0.009$)
 This is the lowest effect size and falls below the minimum practical threshold (0.02), indicating no substantial direct practical impact.

c. Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing

Direct effect testing evaluates whether exogenous variables significantly influence endogenous variables.

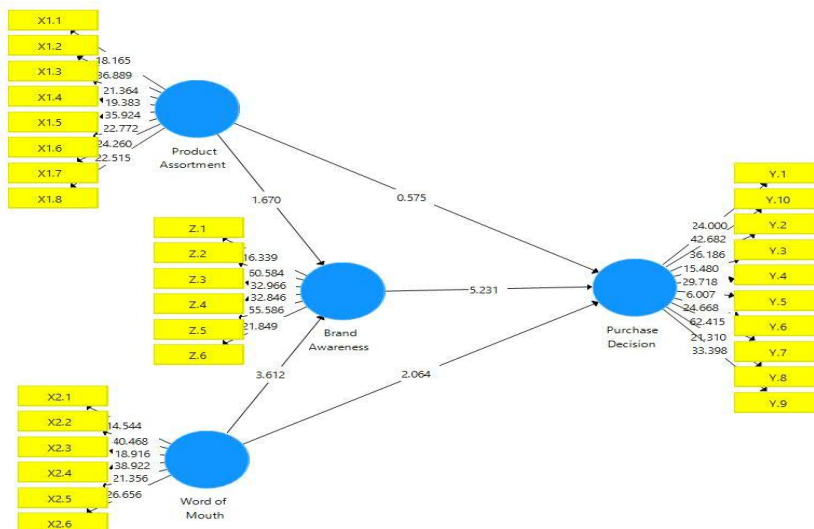


Figure 3.
Bootstrapping Results of SmartPLS 3.0
 Primary Data Processed by the Researcher, 2026

Figure 3 illustrates the bootstrapping results, showing the significance levels and path coefficients of all structural relationships.

Table 8.
Path Coefficient Results

Relationship	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	STDEV	T Statistics	P Values
Brand Awareness → Purchase Decision	0.704	0.650	0.135	5.231	0.000
Product Assortment → Brand Awareness	0.295	0.315	0.177	1.670	0.096
Product Assortment → Purchase Decision	0.069	0.106	0.120	0.575	0.566
Word of Mouth → Brand Awareness	0.460	0.467	0.127	3.612	0.000
Word of Mouth → Purchase Decision	0.198	0.223	0.096	2.064	0.039

Primary Data Processed by the Researcher, 2026

Table 8 shows that Brand Awareness and Word of Mouth significantly influence Purchase Decision, while Product Assortment does not have a significant direct effect.

1. Product Assortment → Brand Awareness (H1 Rejected) Not significant (P = 0.096). Although positive, the effect is statistically insignificant.
2. Word of Mouth → Brand Awareness (H2 Accepted) Significant positive effect (P = 0.000). WOM strengthens brand awareness.
3. Product Assortment → Purchase Decision (H3 Rejected) Not significant (P = 0.566). Product variety alone does not directly trigger purchases.
4. Word of Mouth → Purchase Decision (H4 Accepted) Significant positive effect (P = 0.039). Positive recommendations influence buying decisions.
5. Brand Awareness → Purchase Decision (H5 Accepted) Highly significant (P = 0.000) and strongest relationship in the model.

d. Indirect Effect (Mediation) Testing

Table 9.
Specific Indirect Effects

Relationship	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	STDEV	T Statistics	P Values
Product Assortment → Brand Awareness → Purchase Decision	0.208	0.191	0.103	2.021	0.044
Word of Mouth → Brand Awareness → Purchase Decision	0.324	0.306	0.113	2.860	0.004

Primary Data Processed by the Researcher, 2026

Table 9 confirms that Brand Awareness significantly mediates the relationships between both Product Assortment and Word of Mouth on Purchase Decision.

1. Product Assortment → Brand Awareness → Purchase Decision (H6 Accepted)
 The indirect effect is significant (P = 0.044). Since the direct effect (H3) was not significant, this represents Indirect-Only Mediation. Brand Awareness fully mediates the

relationship, meaning product variety influences purchase decisions only through strengthening brand awareness.

2. Word of Mouth → Brand Awareness → Purchase Decision (H7 Accepted)

The indirect effect is significant ($P = 0.004$), and the direct effect (H4) is also significant. This indicates Complementary Mediation, where both direct and indirect paths positively contribute to Purchase Decision.

This finding suggests that Word of Mouth works through dual mechanisms: directly persuading consumers and indirectly strengthening brand awareness, which sustains purchasing behavior in competitive airport retail environments.

Discussion of Hypothesis Testing

The Effect of Product Assortment on Brand Awareness

Structural model testing shows that Product Assortment does not significantly influence Brand Awareness ($T = 1.670 < 1.96$; $P = 0.096 > 0.05$). This indicates that the completeness of product lines displayed at the Bogajaya outlet in Juanda International Airport is insufficient to independently build brand memory in consumers' cognition. In a time-pressured airport retail context, abundant product variety is perceived merely as a generic souvenir shop unless supported by external communication stimuli. This finding contrasts with Hidayat et al. (2022), suggesting that in travel retail, physical assortment requires a communication bridge to transform into strong mental availability.

Descriptive results support this conclusion. Although product depth indicators (e.g., packaging size variation) recorded high mean scores, this satisfaction did not automatically translate into brand recall. A notable proportion of neutral responses on non-food souvenir availability indicates that consumers focus more on item attributes than on the store identity. Consequently, visual assortment alone fails to establish long-term brand memory.

The Effect of Word of Mouth on Brand Awareness

Word of Mouth (WOM) significantly affects Brand Awareness ($O = 0.460$; $T = 3.612$; $P = 0.000$). Since statistical thresholds are fully met, the hypothesis is accepted. This confirms that interpersonal recommendations—whether from colleagues, family members, or airport staff—play a crucial role in strengthening brand recognition. The result aligns with Angkasa and Cokki (2025) and Rahayu and Witjaksono (2023), who emphasize that social reference communication is a primary driver of brand memory formation.

Descriptive findings reinforce this relationship. Timely recommendations received when consumers were searching for souvenirs obtained high agreement scores, directly enhancing brand recognition. Most respondents reported easily recognizing the Bogajaya logo at the airport, indicating that verbal recommendations effectively anchor visual brand identity in consumers' long-term memory.

The Effect of Product Assortment on Purchase Decision

The direct effect of Product Assortment on Purchase Decision is not significant ($O = 0.069$; $T = 0.575$; $P = 0.566$). Regardless of how diverse or complete the product display is, assortment alone does not trigger immediate purchasing behavior. This finding reflects the rational characteristics of the dominant 20–40-year-old demographic, who prioritize familiarity and reputation over product variety. The result supports the research gap identified by Maharani and Wiyadi (2024), indicating that product diversity in dense public retail spaces does not automatically generate sales conversion.

Questionnaire responses confirm this interpretation. Although respondents rated product availability highly, they did not consider it a sole reason for purchasing. Airport consumers rely more on heuristic or emotional triggers rather than rational product comparison, demonstrating that a full display functions merely as a hygiene factor rather than a decisive stimulus.

The Effect of Word of Mouth on Purchase Decision

Word of Mouth significantly influences Purchase Decision ($O = 0.198$; $T = 2.064$; $P = 0.039$). This indicates that trusted recommendations directly reduce perceived risk and accelerate purchasing decisions, especially among professionals operating under tight flight schedules. The findings are consistent with Pratiwi and Silitonga (2024) and Kusuma et al. (2022), who identify social influence as a dominant catalyst in accelerating purchase execution.

Descriptive evidence shows high trust in relatives' recommendations, which correlates directly with strong purchase commitment at the cashier stage. Once travelers receive positive testimonials, hesitation diminishes rapidly, resulting in faster and more confident transactions.

The Effect of Brand Awareness on Purchase Decision

Brand Awareness exerts the strongest and most dominant influence on Purchase Decision ($O = 0.704$; $T = 5.231$; $P = 0.000$). This confirms that when Bogajaya occupies the top-of-mind position as a souvenir center, it becomes the default choice for travelers. The finding reinforces conclusions from Prawira and Arif (2024) and Pricilla et al. (2025) regarding the critical role of brand awareness in retail purchasing behavior.

Descriptive analysis highlights strong top-of-mind recognition and high intention to repurchase. The absence of negative responses across Brand Awareness indicators demonstrates that mental availability is the company's primary competitive advantage in the airport retail environment.

Brand Awareness Mediates the Effect of Product Assortment on Purchase Decision

Indirect effect testing shows a significant mediating role of Brand Awareness ($O = 0.208$; $T = 2.021$; $P = 0.044$). Since the direct effect of Product Assortment on Purchase Decision was previously rejected, this relationship represents indirect-only (exclusive) mediation. Product variety influences purchasing decisions only after being processed into brand awareness. This supports Pricilla et al. (2025), who argue that physical marketing mix elements require mental brand availability to generate sales outcomes.

Descriptive integration confirms that high product depth scores translate into purchase urgency only when consumers associate product completeness with the Bogajaya brand identity. Without brand cognition, physical assortment remains merely decorative and economically ineffective.

Brand Awareness Mediates the Effect of Word of Mouth on Purchase Decision

The second mediation test reveals a significant indirect effect ($O = 0.324$; $T = 2.860$; $P = 0.004$). Because the direct effect of Word of Mouth on Purchase Decision is also significant, this relationship is classified as complementary mediation. Word of Mouth not only directly stimulates purchases but also strengthens brand awareness, which further enhances transaction likelihood. This finding extends the dual-path social recommendation model proposed by Angkasa and Cokki (2025).

Descriptive patterns show that shared shopping experiences improve brand reputation, which subsequently positions Bogajaya as the primary transaction choice. Social recommendations thus function as the primary fuel sustaining brand awareness and ensuring stable transaction flow in the airport commercial setting.

CONCLUSION

Based on SmartPLS 3.0 analysis and field findings at the Bogajaya Retail Outlet in Juanda International Airport, the study concludes that Product Assortment has no significant direct effect on either Brand Awareness or Purchase Decision, while Word of Mouth significantly influences both Brand Awareness and Purchase Decision; moreover, Brand Awareness exerts the strongest positive effect on Purchase Decision and significantly mediates the effects of both Product Assortment (indirect-only mediation) and Word of Mouth (complementary mediation). Theoretically, this research contributes to integrated marketing literature in travel retail by confirming that physical assortment is a passive attribute requiring cognitive brand awareness to generate sales, while also contextualizing Aaker's Customer-Based Brand Equity and Kotler's purchase decision model under time-pressure conditions, where consumers rely on top-of-mind awareness as a heuristic shortcut. Practically, the findings suggest that Bogajaya's management should prioritize brand-building strategies and stimulate organic Word of Mouth rather than merely expanding product variety; similarly, other SMEs operating in transport hubs can adopt this model to strengthen brand identity before point-of-sale interaction, and airport authorities such as PT. Angkasa Pura may incorporate Brand Awareness and social recommendation potential as strategic criteria in tenant development to enhance non-aeronautical revenue and passenger experience.

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