
**PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON DIAMOND JEWELRY PURCHASE
DECISIONS AS A TERTIARY NEED (A STUDY ON THE FEBRIMELA BRAND)**



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Abstract

This research seeks to explore the decision-making process behind purchasing diamond jewelry as a way of fulfilling tertiary needs, with a specific focus on the local brand FebriMela. The motivation to buy diamond jewelry extends beyond functional purposes, encompassing emotional, psychological, and social dimensions such as boosting self-confidence, gaining social acknowledgment, and shaping personal identity. Employing a qualitative approach through a phenomenological lens, the study investigates consumers' subjective experiences. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation involving individuals who have bought FebriMela jewelry. The findings reveal that brand trust plays a central role in purchase decisions, followed by emotional experiences and social interactions with the sellers. These results highlight the significance of emotional value in the consumption of luxury goods in Indonesia and offer fresh perspectives on local consumer behavior regarding diamond jewelry. This study aims to contribute to the broader understanding of luxury consumer behavior, particularly within the Indonesian cultural context.

Keywords: Tertiary Needs, Diamond Jewelry, Phenomenology, Consumer Behavior, Local Brands

INTRODUCTION

Every individual has various types of needs that must be fulfilled to support their survival. In everyday life, these needs are categorized based on their level of intensity: primary, secondary, and tertiary needs (HAN & KO, 2024). Primary needs include fundamental necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter, which must be fulfilled first. Once these basic needs are met, secondary needs such as education and healthcare take priority (Hasan et al., 2020). Tertiary needs, which include luxury items, are only pursued once primary and secondary needs are satisfied. One example of a tertiary need is diamond jewelry. Diamond jewelry has long been regarded not only as a luxury item but also as a symbol of social status and prestige (Fitriana et al., 2020). Its use goes beyond mere adornment, serving as a marker of social standing, particularly among the upper-middle class (Saptorini et al., 2021). Thus, the purchase of diamond jewelry is a phenomenon that involves more than just physical needs it also encompasses more complex psychological and social factors (Anindito & Handarkho, 2021).

As a luxury item, diamond jewelry is not only valued for its functional attributes but also for the emotional aspects related to fulfilling the consumer's psychological needs. According to consumer behavior theory proposed by Nuzula & Wahyudi (2022), the purchase of luxury goods such as diamond jewelry is often influenced by deeper emotional factors. Consumers do not merely buy diamond jewelry as an investment or a symbol of wealth, but also as a means of fulfilling their psychological needs, such as self-confidence, social recognition, and self-worth (Setiawati & Baningrum, 2018). This indicates that the decision to purchase diamond jewelry is not solely driven by rational considerations, but also by emotional factors tied to the consumer's perception of the value and meaning embodied in the jewelry. This phenomenon becomes even more interesting when considering how individuals interpret luxury items within their social context, particularly in cultures that place a strong emphasis on status and social recognition (Hamdani et al., 2023).

According to the *Global Diamond Industry 2021* report by Bain & Company, demand for diamond jewelry continues to rise across various parts of the world, including developing countries such as China and India (Henders et al., 2015). In Indonesia, this phenomenon is also reflected in the rapid growth of the diamond jewelry industry. As a country with a growing middle-class population, Indonesian consumers are increasingly adopting a consumerist lifestyle that involves purchasing luxury items as a way to express their social status (Juhro & Iyke, 2020). The purchase of diamond jewelry in Indonesia is no longer limited to personal needs or investment purposes but has become a means of showcasing social identity and prestige among upper-middle-class consumers (Suhartanto, 2018). In this context, local diamond jewelry brands like FebriMela play a vital role in providing products that offer not only aesthetic value but also symbolic meaning for consumers wishing to assert their status (Wijaya et al., 2020).

Despite the growth of the diamond jewelry industry, FebriMela's diamond jewelry sales have experienced significant fluctuations. Although there are spikes in sales during certain periods, such as the Eid season or special occasions, the brand often sees drastic declines in other months. This indicates that the decision to purchase diamond jewelry is not solely influenced by seasonal factors but also by other elements that require deeper analysis. These fluctuations may stem from shifts in consumer perceptions of the value of diamond jewelry, changes in consumption behavior, or emotional and psychological factors affecting

their decisions (Khamainy et al., 2021). Therefore, it is important to further explore the factors influencing diamond jewelry purchasing decisions in Indonesia, particularly with regard to local brands such as FebriMela.

A phenomenological approach is considered highly relevant to understanding diamond jewelry purchasing decisions as a fulfillment of tertiary needs, as it enables researchers to delve into individuals' subjective experiences. According to Raras & Sri (2014), phenomenology focuses on how individuals assign meaning to their experiences—in this case, the consumer experience of purchasing diamond jewelry. This approach allows researchers to deeply explore the feelings, motivations, and meanings behind the purchase decisions made by consumers (Gunawan, 2015). Phenomenology helps identify how emotional and psychological experiences influence consumers' perceptions of diamond jewelry, and how such jewelry becomes a part of their social identity and status (Ilhamuddin et al., 2021). This approach helps answer deeper questions about why consumers choose to buy luxury items like diamonds, despite their relatively high cost and non-essential nature (Hasdiansa & Balqiah, 2019).

Furthermore, Hidajat (2020) in his phenomenological study emphasizes that phenomenology also aims to understand how individuals assign meaning to experiences involving objects they consider important, such as diamond jewelry. In this context, diamonds are not merely seen as physical objects, but as symbols carrying various meanings both social and personal. By using a phenomenological approach, this study aims to reveal how consumers perceive the purchase of diamond jewelry as part of fulfilling their tertiary needs, and how these decisions are shaped by deeper emotional and psychological factors (Wulandari et al., 2018).

Although numerous studies have explored consumer behavior in luxury goods purchases, most of them focus more on rational and social factors influencing purchasing decisions. Previous research has largely emphasized aspects such as price, quality, brand image, and social influence in the decision-making process for luxury goods (Chandra et al., 2021). However, there is a lack of studies that examine consumers' subjective experiences, especially within local contexts like Indonesia. Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap by exploring in-depth the motivations and perceptions of consumers regarding FebriMela diamond jewelry, and by understanding the emotional experiences related to their purchasing decisions.

Based on the existing research gap, this study will further analyze consumer motivations and perceptions in choosing diamond jewelry from the FebriMela brand as a means of fulfilling their tertiary needs. By employing a phenomenological approach, this research is expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of the emotional, psychological, and social factors that influence luxury purchase decisions, particularly within the local Indonesian context (Mustikasari, 2017).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Previous research on consumer behavior related to luxury goods has largely emphasized rational considerations such as the product's price, quality, and brand reputation as well as social factors like peer influence, social norms, and the desire for status recognition. These studies often interpret consumer decisions through a logical or utilitarian lens, where purchases are seen as calculated actions based on external influences or material

benefits. However, there remains a significant gap in the literature regarding the emotional and psychological dimensions that also shape consumer choices, especially when it comes to luxury items like diamond jewelry. Such purchases are not always purely rational; they can be deeply tied to personal feelings, emotional needs, and inner motivations.

In response to this gap, the present study adopts a phenomenological approach, which focuses on understanding consumers' lived experiences and the meanings they attach to those experiences. Researchers such as Gunawan (2015) and Ilhamuddin et al. (2021) have demonstrated that phenomenology allows for a more nuanced exploration of how individuals perceive and emotionally engage with luxury consumption. By applying this method, the study seeks to uncover how consumers interpret the act of purchasing diamond jewelry not merely as a financial decision, but as an expression of identity, emotional satisfaction, and social belonging.

Focusing specifically on the local Indonesian brand FebriMela, the study aims to reveal how diamond jewelry serves as more than just a decorative item or status symbol. Instead, it becomes a vehicle through which consumers fulfill deeper psychological needs such as enhancing self-esteem, gaining recognition, or solidifying one's place within a certain social class. This perspective provides richer insight into consumer behavior, especially in the context of tertiary needs that go beyond survival and practical function, highlighting the symbolic and emotional value embedded in luxury consumption.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Approach

This study adopts a qualitative approach, aiming to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon by collecting data and insights from respondents related to the issue being investigated. According to Vikal (2017), in qualitative research, participants are considered subjects who provide valuable subjective insights, in contrast to quantitative approaches that often treat participants as mere objects. This research does not rely on statistical analysis but instead focuses on gathering subjective narratives from participants. This approach enables the researcher to explore the experiences, perceptions, and meanings consumers attach to their decision to purchase diamond jewelry as a tertiary need.

Phenomenology was chosen as the research approach because it seeks to uncover the subjective meanings consumers assign to their decision to purchase diamond jewelry. According to Vikal (2017), phenomenology provides an opportunity to explore deep experiences that are not always revealed through quantitative methods. Using this approach, the study focuses on understanding consumers' emotions, perceptions, and motivations in choosing diamond jewelry from the FebriMela brand as part of fulfilling their tertiary needs.

Types and Sources of Data

This study uses two types of data: primary and secondary. Primary data refers to information directly collected by the researcher from informants, while secondary data refers to information gathered from existing sources relevant to the research topic (Islam & Islam, 2020).

Population and Sample

The population in this study consists of all consumers who have purchased diamond jewelry from the FebriMela brand. The sample was selected using purposive sampling, a technique that selects respondents based on specific research criteria. The sample criteria are

as follows: (1) Consumers who have purchased diamond jewelry from the FebriMela brand at least once, and (2) Consumers who are willing to participate in in-depth interviews and share their experiences and motivations behind purchasing diamond jewelry. The exact number of participants is not predetermined, as this study prioritizes the depth of information over the quantity of respondents. Sampling will continue until data saturation is reached—i.e., the point at which no new information emerges from further interviews.

Data Collection Methods

Data was collected using several techniques, including:

1. Interviews

Interviews were conducted by directly asking questions to informants who were previously selected, based on a prepared interview guide. The interviews were flexible and open-ended, allowing questions to be adjusted based on the informants' responses.

2. Observation

Observation was used to collect data regarding behaviors and situations that occur in the context of purchasing diamond jewelry. In this case, the researcher observed consumer interactions with the FebriMela brand.

3. Documentation

The documentation technique was used to gather data from sources such as magazines, newspapers, or reports related to the context of diamond jewelry purchasing.

Data Processing and Analysis Techniques

The collected data were analyzed through the following steps:

1. Data Categorization

In the initial stage, the collected data were categorized based on key points relevant to the research topic.

2. Data Reduction

Irrelevant data were filtered and eliminated. This process aims to ensure that the analysis focuses only on information that is significant and aligned with the research objectives.

3. Data Presentation

The filtered and categorized data were presented in the form of charts, brief descriptions, or relationships between relevant categories to facilitate understanding and further analysis (Sugiyono, 2017).

4. Conclusion Drawing

After data analysis, the research findings were used to draw relevant conclusions and represent the results based on the collected data.

Triangulation Technique

Data triangulation was used to validate the research findings. Triangulation involves using multiple methods or data sources to broaden the understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Noble & Heale, 2019).

Trustworthiness

To ensure the validity and quality of the research findings, the concept of trustworthiness was applied. This concept reflects the degree of confidence in the quality and relevance of the data obtained in qualitative research.

Interview Guide

Interviews in this study were conducted using an interview guide designed to explore in-depth information from consumers regarding their diamond jewelry purchase decisions.

The interview design was structured to allow respondents to freely share their experiences and perspectives related to the phenomenon under investigation.

Research Location and Time

This research was conducted at the residences of individual consumers who had purchased diamond jewelry from FebriMela. The data collection took place starting in December 2024.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Consumer Perceptions of the FebriMela Brand

1. Trust

Trust in the FebriMela brand emerges as a key factor in consumers' purchasing decisions. Before considering other aspects such as aesthetics, price, or service, consumers first ensure that they feel safe and confident in the brand's quality and integrity.

- Informant 2 (Mrs. A) chose to purchase from FebriMela because she already knew the seller and was confident that each diamond was verified for authenticity before being sold.
- Informant 4 (Mrs. B) also stated that her decision to purchase was influenced by recommendations from trusted individuals.
- Informant 5 (Mr. E) trusted FebriMela due to the seller's long-standing reputation and experience in the diamond industry.

The trust built by FebriMela is not solely based on the physical product but also on social relationships and consumers' emotional experiences. This highlights the importance of word-of-mouth and personal relationships in building trust, especially for high-value products like diamonds.

2. Quality Products

Product quality is a primary factor driving consumers to choose diamond jewelry from FebriMela.

- Informant 2 (Mrs. A) mentioned that the diamonds purchased were tested to ensure authenticity, giving consumers a sense of security.
- Informant 1 (Mrs. C) revealed that the product received matched the original agreement and demonstrated high quality.

Guaranteed quality reinforces purchasing decisions and enhances consumer loyalty. Additionally, the neat design and use of high-quality materials make FebriMela's products not only visually appealing but also durable and valuable as assets.

3. Installment Facilities

Although only one of the five informants explicitly mentioned installment options, this payment method plays a significant role in the decision to purchase high-value items.

- Informant 1 (Mrs. C) stated that the availability of installment payments was an added reason for purchasing diamonds from FebriMela, as it made it easier to buy expensive items without placing immediate strain on personal finances.

The installment facility provides consumers with flexibility and fosters a stronger emotional connection, as they feel valued and trusted by the seller.

Purchase Decision Process

The decision-making process to purchase a diamond from FebriMela involves several stages, including the influence of social media, direct interaction, interest in the product, and ultimately the purchase decision.

1. Viewing on Social Media

The majority of informants revealed that the initial stage of the decision-making process was visual exposure on social media, especially through WhatsApp status and stories posted by people they know.

- Informant 1 (Mrs. C) felt interested after seeing the WhatsApp status of a friend who had a connection with the seller.

This phenomenon shows that social media has become an effective marketing tool in the local market context. The emotional engagement triggered by social media, especially when shared by known or trusted individuals, sparks initial interest that leads consumers to the next step.

2. Seeing in Person

After being intrigued by social media, most consumers proceed to view the product in person, which reinforces their purchase decision.

- Informant 1 (Mrs. C) stated that she felt more confident after meeting the seller in person to view the diamond's quality and discuss installment options.

The experience of seeing the product in person shifts the consumer's perception from digital exposure to a real-life experience, strengthening the emotional and physical connection with the product.

3. Interest in the Product

After viewing the product, consumers show deeper interest, which includes a sense of ownership and a match between the design and their personal preferences.

- Informant 3 (Mrs. D) felt attracted due to the unique design of the diamond, which was different from others, even though it was just for keeping.

The stage of interest demonstrates how consumers begin to form deeper meaning about the product, not just in terms of practical needs but also related to status, identity, and personal aesthetic value.

4. Making the Purchase

After all these stages, the decision to purchase the diamond becomes final, driven by trust, emotional attachment, and payment flexibility.

- Informant 2 (Mrs. A) felt secure because of the guaranteed product quality and transparency in the sales process.

This purchase decision process reflects the long emotional and rational journey consumers undergo, making the diamond purchase an expression of identity and prestige, more than just an economic transaction.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to understand the motivations, experiences, and perceptions of consumers in their decision to purchase diamond jewelry from the FebriMela brand as part of their tertiary needs. By using a phenomenological approach, this research successfully uncovers the subjective meanings behind these purchasing decisions based on data analysis from five informants. The results of the study show that consumers' motivations for buying

diamond jewelry from the FebriMela brand are diverse and interconnected. These include investment motivations as a form of long-term asset security with stable value, collecting for personal satisfaction and as a symbol of social status, aesthetic needs due to the beautiful design of the jewelry that aligns with personal taste, and giving gifts as a symbol of love, appreciation, and emotional meaning to loved ones. Consumers' perceptions of the FebriMela brand are generally positive, as indicated by their trust in the product quality, brand reputation, and transparency in the sales process. Additionally, the product quality, including the authenticity of the diamonds and the complementary materials, as well as the installment payment options offering financial flexibility, further strengthen consumer attraction to the brand.

In the purchase decision-making process, consumers go through several stages, starting with initial interest via social media, followed by validation through direct observation of the product, the emergence of personal interest, and ultimately making the purchase decision after experiencing both emotional and rational confidence. Overall, this study proves that the decision to purchase diamond jewelry as a tertiary need is not only influenced by economic considerations but also by symbolic, aesthetic, emotional, and social values. In the context of a local brand like FebriMela, personal trust and an emotional approach have proven to be key in building strong and sustainable relationships with consumers.

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