

THE INFLUENCE OF PRICE, PRODUCT QUALITY, AND BRAND IMAGE ON PURCHASE DECISIONS OF LIFEBOUY BATH SOAP

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to evaluate how price, product quality, and brand image influence consumers' purchase decisions of Lifebuoy bath soap on the Shopee platform, specifically among Management students at Mikroskil University in 2022. This research is grounded in the growing interest in online shopping among younger generations and the importance of understanding the factors that affect consumer decision-making when selecting personal care products on e-commerce sites. This study employed a descriptive quantitative method with a survey approach, distributing questionnaires to 70 respondents selected using a saturated sampling technique. The collected data were analyzed using multiple linear regression with SPSS version 25. The results indicate that individually, price, product quality, and brand image each have a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions. Furthermore, these three factors collectively contribute to the purchase decisions of Lifebuoy bath soap. These findings suggest that companies need to pay close attention to setting competitive prices, continuously maintaining and improving product quality, and strengthening brand image to capture consumer attention on digital platforms. This study is expected to offer theoretical contributions in the field of marketing and provide practical insights for companies in designing more effective e-commerce-based marketing strategies.

Keywords: Price, Product Quality, Brand Image, Purchase Decision, E-Commerce

INTRODUCTION

Currently, economic competition is increasing, driven by several factors such as globalization, digitalization, and others. The level of competition among companies has become increasingly apparent and is accelerating in Indonesia. The growing intensity of business competition year after year has made market rivalry even stronger. Today's economic developments have created an intensely competitive business environment. Every business actor must be capable of competing and offering their products effectively in order to survive in the market, and companies are expected to determine appropriate strategies to compete successfully and achieve their business objectives. This shift has occurred due to advancements in the internet sector, which has accelerated business communication. The number of internet users worldwide is projected to reach 5.5 billion in 2024, up from 5.3 billion the previous year (Statista, 2019). This development has strengthened Indonesia's economic growth, particularly in the digital economy sector.

Indonesia's economic reform and growth have notably occurred through the development of online business approaches. The shift in paradigm from a traditional economy to a digital economy has occurred because of a fundamental transformation in how people conduct business, engage in transactions, and access desired economic resources. This shift involves a transition from conventional transaction models to more digitally connected transactions for business players. These technological advancements also allow consumers to select and purchase products or services directly from online stores. The digital business model involves selling goods or services online through platforms such as websites, Amazon, eBay, Tokopedia, and Shopee (Ari et al., 2024).

Table 1.1 shows that the country with the highest number of visits to the Shopee platform is Indonesia, with 124.9 million visits in 2023. This data reflects the high level of interest in digital transactions in Indonesia, particularly on Shopee. Meanwhile, Table 1.2 reveals that Shopee's largest user group comprises young people aged 20-24, accounting for 24% of users. This trend is natural as younger generations tend to keep up with increasingly modern developments. With various features that facilitate transactions, such as a range of payment methods, fast delivery services, and attractive promotions, Shopee has become the primary choice for this demographic. In digital marketing, communication and transaction processes can occur anytime and anywhere in real time and globally. Every day, the number of internet users on social media continues to rise, creating vast opportunities for business players to expand their ventures via smartphones. The importance of business competitiveness in Indonesia lies in establishing brand images for business players that distinguish them from both national and international competitors (Hasiholan Dheasey Amboningtyas, 2021). As digital competition intensifies, consumers have more options to choose products that suit their needs. Therefore, companies must stay aligned with evolving consumer behavior and needs. Several economic industries have existed in Indonesia since 1826 during the Dutch colonial period. Human needs gradually formed into primary, secondary, and tertiary categories, with primary needs still accounting for the highest market demand. One of the essential primary needs is personal hygiene products, such as soap (Suryana, 2008).

Personal hygiene is a crucial necessity in daily life, whether in education, the workplace, or social settings. The continuous spread of various viruses across Indonesia highlights the importance of strengthening public health. Skin health is one of the most

sensitive aspects of personal hygiene. The rising population in Indonesia from year to year also means an increasing need for personal hygiene. This situation encourages soap manufacturers to develop brands that offer benefits to the public, alongside good product quality and competitive prices. The creation of various soap products has become one of the economic strategies to achieve Indonesia's clean and harmonious development goals. To this day, numerous soap brands have been produced by hygiene industry players.

One of the most well-known soap brands in Indonesia is Lifebuoy. This brand continues to compete with various other products, each with its own strengths. In this context, consumers' decisions to purchase a product are generally influenced by three main factors: affordable price, good product quality, and a trusted brand. Therefore, it is important to understand how these three factors influence consumer decisions in purchasing Lifebuoy body soap. According to Kotler, Philip & Keller (2016), purchasing decisions are part of the consumer decision-making process, which includes problem recognition, information searching, evaluating alternatives, purchasing decisions, and post purchase evaluations. This process reflects specific considerations that lead consumers to place their trust in and feel confident about a product. Understanding this decision-making process is essential for companies to comprehend consumer perspectives and identify what consumers seek in a soap product. Several factors determining consumer purchasing decisions for soap are also linked to the desire to fulfill economic resources according to their needs and the benefits experienced from the product's quality when used directly.

According to Ajzen's theory, consumer purchasing decisions are influenced by three primary factors: price, product quality, and brand image. This theory posits that consumers' decisions to purchase a product depend heavily on their perceptions of the price offered, the expected quality, and the brand image established beforehand. These three elements are interconnected and play a crucial role in influencing consumers' final purchasing decisions (Ajzen, 1991). Price is the amount of money charged to consumers to obtain goods or services and reflects a product's perceived value in the eyes of consumers (Tjiptono, 2015). Prices that are too high may cause doubt, while prices that are too low are often associated with poor quality. Price determination is always a challenge for companies since it is not an absolute authority of entrepreneurs. As mentioned, pricing determines the sales revenue generated from the marketed products. Pricing becomes increasingly important amid sharp competition and limited market demand. Thus, price is a vital factor in increasing purchasing decisions. Some researchers claim that price partially affects the purchasing decision for Lifebuoy body soap among students at Pondok Pesantren Putri Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Al-Khoiriyah Hasyim (Asriyah and Frianto, 2021). In contrast, other researchers show that when consumers have an emotional attachment to a brand or product, they tend to overlook price and focus more on the perceived value of the product (M. R. Solomon, 2018).

Pricing on the Blibli shopping platform is cheaper and more affordable compared to Shopee. Business owners must be able to set geographically and economically appropriate prices to maintain customer loyalty over the long term. Affordable prices are more likely to attract public interest in purchasing a product. According to good pricing indicators, prices should be affordable, competitive, and aligned with product quality. The pricing of Lifebuoy on Shopee is less competitive than on Blibli. Additionally, Lifebuoy's pricing strategy on Shopee lacks variety and is not geographically adapted.

Product quality refers to a product's conformity to certain standards or specifications and its ability to meet consumer needs (Garvin, 1987). Lifebuoy is known as a body soap offering antibacterial protection. It is often chosen for its perceived effectiveness in maintaining hygiene, providing freshness, and being safe for the entire family. When consumers are satisfied with Lifebuoy's quality, they are more likely to make repeat purchases and even recommend the product to others. High-quality products can enhance consumer trust and strengthen their loyalty to a brand. Numerous studies support this indicator. For instance, Asriyah and Frianto's journal states that product quality significantly influences purchasing decisions for Lifebuoy body soap among their research respondents (Asriyah and Frianto, 2021). However, other research suggests that product quality does not significantly affect Lifebuoy purchasing decisions in Karawang (Michael R. Solomon, 2018).

Brand image is a set of consumer perceptions and beliefs about a brand, reflected in the brand associations they recall (Kotler, Philip & Keller, 2016). A positive brand image makes consumers feel confident and proud to use products from that brand. Lifebuoy is one of Indonesia's most famous body soap brands, frequently associated with cleanliness, health, and protection from germs. Through various advertising campaigns on television, social media, and health programs, Lifebuoy has successfully built a reputation as a safe and ideal soap for all family members. This strong, positive image has led many consumers to remain loyal to Lifebuoy, despite the abundance of competing products on the market. Consequently, a good brand image can be a crucial factor influencing consumer purchasing decisions. One study claims that brand image positively and significantly influences Lifebuoy purchasing decisions in South Tangerang (Amirudin, 2022). In contrast, a study by Ari Apriani explains that while brand image does have an influence, it is not as strong as product quality in affecting purchasing decisions (Apriani, 2021).

Data from ResearchGate also indicates that Shopee is widely used by the younger demographic. Furthermore, Lifebuoy body soap is a household name among Indonesians and is one of the nation's favorite brands, signaling the product's good quality. Referring to the background phenomenon and differing results in previous studies, the author is interested in conducting research on The Influence of Price, Product Quality, and Brand Image on the Purchase Decision of Lifebuoy Body Soap (A Study of Shopee Consumers among Mikroskil Management Students, 2022 Academic Year).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Economic Competition and Digital Transformation

Economic competition in Indonesia has intensified due to globalization and digitalization, forcing businesses to adopt effective strategies to remain relevant in a dynamic market. The rapid growth of internet usage, projected to reach 5.5 billion users globally by 2024, has accelerated digital economic activities and reshaped the competitive business environment (Statista, 2019).

The Rise of Digital-Based Transactions

Indonesia's economic reforms have driven a transition from traditional business models to digital platforms, enabling consumers to transact easily via online stores such as Shopee, Tokopedia, and Amazon. This shift has transformed how businesses reach consumers, reflecting the growing dominance of digital business models in Indonesia (Ari et al., 2024).

Shopee as the Leading E-Commerce Platform

Indonesia recorded the highest number of Shopee visits in 2023, with 124.9 million, predominantly from users aged 20–24. Shopee’s appeal among young consumers lies in its convenient features, diverse payment methods, and attractive promotions that meet the digital consumption habits of modern youth (Statista, 2023).

Digital Marketing and Consumer Behavior

Digital marketing has allowed businesses to engage consumers globally and instantly. As competition sharpens, firms must adapt to evolving consumer demands, particularly in essential categories like hygiene products, which consistently maintain high market demand in Indonesia (Hasiholan Dheasey Amboningtyas, 2021; Suryana, 2008).

The Importance of Personal Hygiene Products

Personal hygiene items such as soap are vital for everyday health in various social and professional contexts. Rising public awareness of health and hygiene, coupled with Indonesia’s population growth, has increased demand for quality, affordable soap products that support clean, healthy living (Suryana, 2008).

Factors Influencing Lifebuoy Purchase Decisions

Lifebuoy remains one of Indonesia’s top soap brands, with purchasing decisions influenced by price, product quality, and brand image. Kotler & Keller (2016) explain that these factors play crucial roles in consumer decision-making, from product awareness to post-purchase evaluation.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research applies a descriptive quantitative approach aimed at describing phenomena through the collection of numerical data, using questionnaires distributed to Shopee consumer students who use Lifebuoy soap at Mikroskil University, class of 2022. The population consists of 70 respondents selected through a saturated sampling technique. Data collection was carried out through pre questionnaires, main questionnaires using a Likert scale, and literature studies. The study investigates the influence of price, product quality, and brand image on purchasing decisions. Data analysis employs multiple linear regression using SPSS version 25.00, supported by descriptive statistics, data quality tests (validity and reliability), and classical assumption tests including multicollinearity, normality, and heteroscedasticity tests. Hypothesis testing uses t-tests for partial influence, F-tests for simultaneous influence, and the coefficient of determination (R^2) to evaluate the model's explanatory power. The operational definitions of each variable are clearly determined to convert abstract concepts into measurable indicators for accurate quantitative analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data Quality Test Results

Validity Test

The purpose of the validity test is to ensure that the questionnaire used is reliable and appropriate for measuring the intended variables. A questionnaire is considered valid if the statements within it can reveal the aspects intended to be measured (Ghozali, 2018). Validity can be evaluated by comparing the calculated value (r_{count}) with the table value

(r_{table}) based on the degrees of freedom (df) = $n-2$, where n is the number of respondents. The validity indicators are determined based on the following criteria:

- a. If $r_{count} > r_{table}$ and the significance < 0.2352 , then the statement is valid.
- b. If $r_{count} < r_{table}$ and the significance > 0.2352 , then the statement is invalid.

Table 1.
Validity Test Results for the Price Variable

No.	r_{count}	r_{table}	Description
1	0.678	0.2352	Valid
2	0.780	0.2352	Valid
3	0.628	0.2352	Valid
4	0.851	0.2352	Valid

Source: Research Results, 2025 (Processed Data)

Based on the data in Table 1, the results of the price validity test can be seen in the Corrected Item-Total Correlation output, where the r_{count} value is greater than r_{table} (0.2352). Therefore, it can be concluded that these 4 statements are valid and can be used in the research.

Table 2.
Validity Test Results for the Product Quality Variable

No.	r_{count}	r_{table}	Description
1	0.691	0.2352	Valid
2	0.666	0.2352	Valid
3	0.712	0.2352	Valid
4	0.731	0.2352	Valid
5	0.631	0.2352	Valid
6	0.700	0.2352	Valid
7	0.469	0.2352	Valid
8	0.870	0.2352	Valid

Source: Research Results, 2025 (Processed Data)

Based on the data in Table 2, the product quality validity test results appear in the Corrected Item-Total Correlation output, where the r_{count} value is greater than r_{table} (0.2352). Thus, it can be concluded that these 8 statements are valid and can be used in the research.

Table 3.
Validity Test Results for the Brand Image Variable

No.	r_{count}	r_{table}	Description
1	0.621	0.2352	Valid
2	0.750	0.2352	Valid
3	0.755	0.2352	Valid
4	0.731	0.2352	Valid
5	0.718	0.2352	Valid

Source: Research Results, 2025 (Processed Data)

Based on the data in Table 3, the brand image validity test results appear in the Corrected Item-Total Correlation output, where the r_{count} value is greater than r_{table} (0.2352). Therefore, it can be concluded that these 5 statements are valid and can be used in the research.

Table 4.
Validity Test Results for the Purchase Decision Variable

No.	r_{count}	r_{table}	Description
1	0.811	0.2352	Valid
2	0.804	0.2352	Valid
3	0.737	0.2352	Valid
4	0.749	0.2352	Valid

Source: Research Results, 2025 (Processed Data)

Based on the data in Table 4, the purchase decision validity test results appear in the Corrected Item-Total Correlation output, where the r_{count} value is greater than r_{table} (0.2352). Therefore, it can be concluded that these 4 statements are valid and can be used in the research.

Reliability Test

Reliability measures the consistency of the obtained data by outlining a risk rehabilitation approach in corporate management for dealing with crises. This test assists organizations in identifying new risks and formulating better mitigation strategies (Sari & Handayani, Risk Management in the Digital Era, 2024). The criteria used are as follows: if Cronbach's Alpha > 0.70 , the variable can be considered reliable, whereas if Cronbach's Alpha ≤ 0.70 , the variable is considered unreliable.

Table 5.
Reliability Test Results for the Price Variable

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	0.719
N of Items	4

Source: Research Results, 2025 (Processed Data)

Based on the data in Table 5, the Cronbach's Alpha value for the price variable in this research is 0.719. This value indicates that the statements in the price variable questionnaire are reliable and can be continued for further research.

Table 6
Reliability Test Results for the Product Quality Variable

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	0.841
N of Items	8

Source: Research Results, 2025 (Processed Data)

Based on the data in Table 6, the Cronbach's Alpha value for the product quality variable in this research is 0.841. This value shows that the statements in the product quality variable questionnaire are reliable, so the research can proceed.

Table 7
Reliability Test Results for the Brand Image Variable

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	0.757
N of Items	5

Source: Research Results, 2025 (Processed Data)

Based on the data in Table 7, the Cronbach's Alpha value for the brand image variable in this research is 0.757. This value shows that the statements in the brand image variable questionnaire are reliable, so the research can proceed.

Table 8.
Reliability Test Results for the Purchase Decision Variable

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	0.774
N of Items	4

Source: Research Results, 2025 (Processed Data)

Based on the data in Table 8, the Cronbach's Alpha value for the purchase decision variable in this research is 0.774. This indicates that the statements in the purchase decision variable questionnaire are reliable, so the research can proceed.

Classical Assumption Test

Multicollinearity Test

The multicollinearity test is an essential procedure in regression analysis to ensure that no independent variables are highly correlated with each other. When independent variables are correlated, it can disrupt the estimation of regression coefficients and reduce the model's reliability. In management, a good understanding of multicollinearity assists managers in making better decisions based on accurate data analysis (Rahman & Sari, 2021). A good regression model should have a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) < 10 and Tolerance > 0.10, indicating no multicollinearity.

Table 9.
Multicollinearity Test Results

Model	Tolerance	VIF
X1 (Price)	0.516	1.939
X2 (Product Quality)	0.336	2.975
X3 (Brand Image)	0.378	2.648

Source: Research Results, 2025 (Processed Data)

Based on the analysis results in 9, the Tolerance values for X1 (0.516), X2 (0.336), and X3 (0.378) are > 0.10, and the VIF values for X1 (1.939), X2 (2.975), and X3 (2.648) are < 10, indicating no multicollinearity.

Normality Test

The importance of normality and multicollinearity tests in data analysis within the management field has been emphasized. The normality test ensures that the residuals of the regression model are normally distributed, while the multicollinearity test identifies strong

correlations between independent variables that may distort the model (Sari & Indriani, 2023).

Statistical Method

This test uses the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) method with the following criteria:

- If the residual significance > 0.05 , the residuals are normally distributed.
- If the residual significance < 0.05 , the residuals are not normally distributed.

Table 10.

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test Results

N	Sig. (2-tailed)
70	0.144

Source: Research Results, 2025 (Processed Data)

Based on the analysis results in Table 10, the significance value (2-tailed) is 0.144 > 0.05 , indicating that the data are normally distributed.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

This analysis measures the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable and tests the research hypothesis. In this study, multiple linear regression analysis is used to observe the influence of product quality (X2), price (X1), and brand image (X3) on purchasing decisions (Y).

Table 11.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Variable	Coefficient (B)	Sig. Value
Constant	1.282	0.513
X1 (Price)	0.154	0.290
X2 (Product Quality)	0.107	0.250
X3 (Brand Image)	0.429	0.002

Source: Research Results, 2025 (Processed Data)

The analysis reveals that the regression constant is 1.282, which means that if the values of the independent variables X1 (Price), X2 (Product Quality), and X3 (Brand Image) are zero, the value of the dependent variable Y (Purchase Decision) will remain at 1.282. Furthermore, the price variable (X1) has a positive regression coefficient of 0.154, indicating that for every 1-unit increase in the price variable, the purchase decision is expected to increase by 0.154 units, assuming other variables remain constant. Similarly, the product quality variable (X2) has a positive coefficient of 0.107, suggesting that a 1-unit increase in product quality will increase the purchase decision by 0.107 units. The brand image variable (X3) shows the highest positive coefficient of 0.429, signifying that an increase of 1 unit in brand image will result in a 0.429-unit increase in the purchase decision. These findings indicate that while all three variables have a positive relationship with purchase decisions, brand image exerts the strongest influence among them.

Hypothesis Test Results

Partial Test (t-test)

The t-test assesses the individual effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable (Budiarto & Utami, 2021).

Table 12.
Partial Test Results

Variable	t-value	Sig. Value
X1 (Price)	1.067	0.290
X2 (Product Quality)	1.160	0.250
X3 (Brand Image)	3.248	0.002

Source: Research Results, 2025 (Processed Data)

The decision shows that both X1 (Price) and X2 (Product Quality) have positive but not significant effects on purchase decisions. Meanwhile, X3 (Brand Image) has a positive and significant effect, with a t-value of 3.248 greater than the t-table value of 1.99547 and a significance level of 0.002, which is less than 0.05.

Simultaneous Test (F-test)

The F-test assesses whether the independent variables collectively affect the dependent variable (Kusnadi & Sari, 2022).

Table 13.
Simultaneous Test Results

F-value	Sig. Value
21.485	0.000

Source: Research Results, 2025 (Processed Data)

Since F-value (21.485) > F-table (3.13) and sig (0.000) < 0.05, X1, X2, and X3 simultaneously have a significant positive effect on Y.

Coefficient of Determination (R²)

The R² value evaluates how well the model explains the variation in the dependent variable. Adjusted R² is a modified R² that is always smaller.

Table 14.
Coefficient of Determination Test

R ²	Adjusted R ²
0.494	0.471

Source: Research Results, 2025 (Processed Data)

The analysis shows that 47.1% of the variation in purchasing decisions (Y) is explained by the variables Price (X1), Product Quality (X2), and Brand Image (X3), while the remaining 52.9% is explained by other variables outside this regression model.

The Effect of Price on Purchase Decision

The test results for the price variable show that the t-value is 1.067, which is lower than the t-table value of 1.99547, with a significance value of 0.290 > 0.05. Therefore, H₀ is accepted and H_a is rejected, meaning that price has a positive but not significant effect on the purchase decision of Lifebuoy bath soap. This result supports the previous research by M. R. Solomon (2018), which stated that when consumers have an emotional attachment to a brand or product, they tend to disregard the price and focus more on the perceived value of the product.

The Effect of Product Quality on Purchase Decision

The test results for the product quality variable show that the t-value is 1.160, which is lower than the t-table value of 1.99547, with a significance value of $0.250 > 0.05$. Thus, H_0 is accepted and H_a is rejected, indicating that product quality has a positive but not significant effect on the purchase decision of Lifebuoy bath soap. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Michael R. Solomon (2018), which explained that product quality is not always the dominant factor, especially when consumers are already accustomed to and loyal to a particular brand.

The Effect of Brand Image on Purchase Decision

The test results for the brand image variable show that the t-value is 3.248, which is higher than the t-table value of 1.99547, with a significance value of $0.002 < 0.05$. Therefore, H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, indicating that brand image has a positive and significant effect on the purchase decision of Lifebuoy bath soap. This finding is in line with the study by Amirudin (2022), which stated that brand image has a significant influence on purchase decisions, as a positive brand image builds consumer trust and loyalty toward a particular brand.

The Effect of Price, Product Quality, and Brand Image on Purchase Decision

The results of the F-test show that the F-value is 21.485, which is higher than the F-table value of 2.74, with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Therefore, H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, indicating that price, product quality, and brand image simultaneously have a significant effect on the purchase decision of Lifebuoy bath soap. The Adjusted R^2 value of 0.471 indicates that 47.1% of the purchase decision variable can be explained by these three variables, while the remaining 52.9% is influenced by other factors outside the regression model. This result is consistent with the research conducted by Sari (2021), which stated that these three variables collectively contribute significantly to influencing consumer purchasing behavior in e-commerce platforms.

CONCLUSION

Price, product quality, and brand image significantly influence students' purchasing decisions for Lifebuoy body soap through Shopee. Affordable and competitive prices aligned with product benefits encourage purchases, while Lifebuoy's reputation for maintaining hygiene, safe ingredients, and practical packaging fosters trust and loyalty. Additionally, its strong, reliable brand image as an antibacterial soap makes it the preferred choice among students, with these three factors collectively shaping positive perceptions and driving purchasing decisions.

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