

Mediating Role Of Brand Trust in the Relationship between Word of Mouth and Purchase Decision of Fresh Products in Minimarkets

Tin Agustina Karnawati

Institut Teknologi dan Bisnis Asia Malang, Indonesia

E-mail : tiena.karnawati@gmail.com

Abstract. *Fresh products are now more readily available to consumers through modern retail, particularly minimarkets. The emergence of fresh food minimarkets offers an attractive solution due to the wide variety of fresh products available. Naturally, the decision to purchase fresh products is influenced by various factors. Consumer behavior in purchasing fresh products can be influenced by trust in the offering party. Strong Brand Trust can increase positive word of mouth, thus supporting effective marketing strategy planning. This study seeks to understand how word-of-mouth recommendations impact purchasing decisions, with brand trust acting as a mediating factor. A quantitative causal research design was used for this investigation. Primary data was collected from 100 respondents using Accidental Sampling. Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) was used to analyze the data.. The findings demonstrate that brand trust and word-of-mouth significantly influence purchase decisions. Additionally, word-of-mouth also plays a crucial role in shaping brand trust. Additionally, word of mouth has an indirect effect on purchase decision through brand trust.*

Keywords: *brand trust, word of mouth, purchase decision*

I. INTRODUCTION

The change of consumer behavior towards a healthier lifestyle has driven increased interest in consuming fresh food with higher nutritional content compared to processed food. As consumers become more health-conscious and prioritize quality of life, they recognize that consuming fresh food can contribute to overall health and prevent various diseases. Fresh products are now more readily available to consumers, even without visiting traditional markets, as they can be purchased at convenience stores. With longer operating hours and convenient locations, minimarkets offer a wide range of fresh products that cater to the needs of modern consumers. The existence of convenience stores offering fresh produce has become a solution to meet the growing consumer demand for easily accessible fresh food. With modern lifestyles becoming increasingly busy, consumers seek practical solutions to fulfill their daily needs, including fresh food. Minimarkets specializing in fresh products present a promising business opportunity as they offer a wide variety of fresh options to cater to the busy lifestyles of modern consumers.

While convenience stores specializing in fresh produce have significant market potential, they also face several challenges. Maintaining product quality and freshness, especially considering their perishable nature, can be difficult and often results in inconsistent quality standards. Additionally, these stores typically offer higher prices compared to traditional markets with a wider variety of products. The ever-changing consumer trends in food preferences further complicate the situation, as fresh produce stores must constantly adapt their offerings to meet evolving customer demands. To address these challenges, businesses must invest significant efforts in

understanding their target market and implementing effective marketing strategies. Building a strong brand reputation as a reliable provider of high-quality fresh produce is essential for success.

Consumer purchasing decisions for fresh products are influenced by various factors. A purchase decision occurs when someone chooses to buy and use a specific product. In line with (Kotler dan Keller, 2016), a purchase decision is an integrative approach for synthesizing data to evaluate different alternatives and select one. A purchase decision is one of the consumer's decisions to choose what they want. According to (Setiadi J., 2015), consumer purchase decisions are the alternatives that consumers consider when solving a problem, such as the type of product, brand, or model that the consumer wants to buy. Consumer purchasing decisions are also influenced by consumer behavior during the purchasing decision-making process. Consumer behavior refers to the fundamental activities of consumers that are closely related to the purchasing process, such as searching, researching, and evaluating products. Purchasing decisions can be influenced by various aspects, one of which is consumer trust in a brand. In today's increasingly competitive business environment, building positive perception of a brand's reputation is crucial. Brand trust is not merely a preference but also a determining factor in consumer purchasing decisions. This trust is formed from various aspects, such as product quality, good service, brand consistency, and a positive reputation.

Brand trust is also a primary element that companies must possess to increase consumer purchasing decisions. Without trust, a brand cannot function well in its target market. Brand trust is consumer position confidence in a brand. Consumers who trust in a brand is often loyal and more likely to purchase products from that

brand. Brand trust is built through several factors like consistent product quality, good customer service, and a positive brand reputation. Brand trust is a consumer's readiness to rely upon a brand in risky situations driven by the confidence that the brand will deliver positive results (Tjiptono, 2014). (Hendro & Keni, 2020) describe brand trust as consumer confidence in a brand's quality can meet the expectations of consumers who purchase products from that brand. Research by (Apriliansi et al., 2022) and (Michelle Gracella Harifin, 2024) found that brand trust has a positive and significantly affects purchasing behavior. However, (Herviani et al., 2020) and (Ali et al., 2019) found the opposite, that brand trust does not influence purchasing decisions.

In the competitive fresh product minimarket business, word of mouth can be an effective marketing tool that influences purchasing decisions. In line with (Kotler dan Keller, 2016), Word of Mouth is oral, written, and electronic communication between people who share interests or experiences in buying or using products or services. According to (Sutisna, 2013), information from close and trusted relatives has the potential to minimize the risk of purchase because what is conveyed is based on experience and observation during product use. Consumers increasingly rely on recommendations from friends, family, or online communities before deciding to purchase fresh food products. (Sudarmin, 2023) and (Susanti et al., 2023) determined that recommendations from others positively impact buying choices. However, result of study by (Kasakeyan et al., 2021) identified word-of-mouth as a factor does not have a significant impact on purchasing decisions.

Consumer trust in a brand, or brand trust, is an essential foundation for triggering positive word of mouth. Brand trust can influence consumers to spread positive information about a product to others, thereby increasing sales and strengthening the brand's market position. For fresh produce minimarket businesses, understanding the mechanism behind the influence of brand trust on word of mouth is crucial. By knowing the factors that can increase brand trust and trigger positive word of mouth, more effective marketing strategies can be designed to achieve sustainable business growth. Positive word of mouth, such as recommendations from friends about the freshness of the fruit in a fresh produce minimarket, can increase consumer trust in that brand. Conversely, pre-existing brand trust can make consumers more open to trying new products based on recommendations from others. Research by (Isabil et al., 2023), (Stefanny et al., 2022), and (Sari et al., 2021) found that word of mouth influences brand trust. However, in the research of (Tanjung & Keni, 2023) it was found that Word of Mouth did not effect Brand Trust.

Considering the description of the background phenomena and the various findings of previous studies that have not been consistent, it is still considered promising to engage in further research on the role of brand trust serving as a bridge for word-of-mouth that influences consumer purchasing decisions. This study is designed to provide practical recommendations for fresh

product minimarkets in efforts to build strong brand trust and encourage consumers to actively promote their products to others.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs quantitative research. Quantitative research is based on scientific inquiry criteria, is concrete/empirical, objective, measurable, rational, and systematic (Sugiyono, 2019). This research is a perception survey with primary data collected directly from the source. This study uses associative research, which is correlational research (Situmorang dan Lutfi, 2015). The variables connected in this research are word-of-mouth and consumer behavior mediated by brand trust. Primary data in this research is information collected using observation, interviews, and by giving questionnaires to sample respondents. Questionnaires were distributed to consumers who visited and purchased at classic-themed cafes during the research period. The research respondents numbered 100 people according to the Lemeshow formula. The conceptual model for this research is demonstrated by understanding the interaction between variables and analyzing the impact of Word of Mouth (X) on purchasing decisions (Y), which is mediated by Brand Trust (Z), as shown in Figure 1 below :

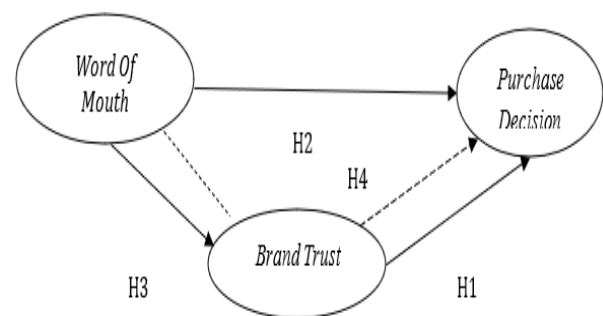


Figure 1 : Conceptual model for the research

The hypothesis is as follows :

- H1 : Brand Trust significantly and positively impacts purchasing decisions
- H2 : Word Of Mouth significantly and positively impacts purchasing decisions
- H3 : Word Of Mouth significantly and positively impacts brand trust
- H4 : Word of Mouth significantly and positively impacts purchasing decisions through Brand Trust

Operationally, the research variables can be explained by indicators based on the following references and empirical evidence:

Table 1 : Operationalization of Variable

Variable	Indicator	Source
Word Of Mouth (X)	Talking about positive experiences	(Hasan, 2010)
	Sharing to others	(Sudarmin, 2023)
	informing about product advantages	
	Recommending to friends or family	
Brand Trust (Z)	Persuading to someone	
	This brand makes me feel sure	(DAM, 2020)
	This brand is secure	(Tanjung & Keni, 2023)
Purchase Decision (Y)	This brand has my complete trust	
	This brand is reliable.	
	Needs identification	(Rossanty, Y., Nasution, M. D. T. P., & Ario, 2018)
	Information search	
	Purchase decision	(Kotler dan Keller, 2016)
	Behavior following purchase	

The data collection technique using Likert scale questionnaires consists of 1-5 statements on a Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The technical analysis uses SEM-PLS with the criteria for testing the outer and inner models. The Outer measurement model indicates the relationships between unobserved variables and their indicators. Testing the outer model includes: a. Convergent Validity: This involves the loading factors of latent variables with their indicators. The expected value is 0.70 or higher, indicating satisfactory convergent validity. b. Discriminant Validity: This assesses cross-loading factors to determine if constructs have sufficient discrimination by comparing loading values with other constructs. c. Average Variance Extracted (AVE): The expected value is > 0.50. d. Reliability Testing is Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha. The expected minimum value is 0.70 for both.

III. RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Validity testing of indicators is conducted using loading factors. Each indicator is measured for its loading factor on its respective construct. A loading coefficient of more than 0.7 is expected, but for exploratory research, values above 0.5 are considered adequate (Ghozali, I & Latan, 2015). The loading factor values of each indicator on their constructs are measured using algorithms in the Smart PLS software. The algorithm results in the model, presented in Figure 2, show that all indicators have reached loading factors above 0.7. To assess convergent validity, we examine the loading factors of indicators measuring each construct in the reflective measurement model. This study investigates four constructs. From the output analysis, it is evident that all constructs produce

loading factor values > 0.70, indicating that all construct indicators are valid.

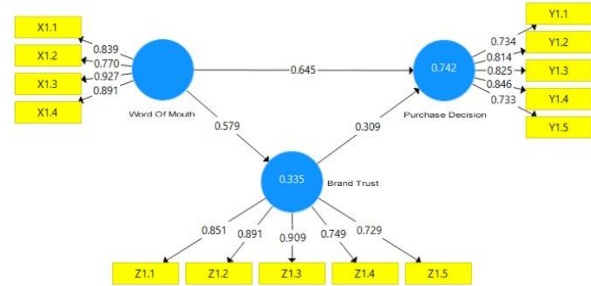


Figure 2 : Factor Loading Results of the Research

Discriminant validity testing, assessed based on cross-loadings between indicators and their constructs as illustrated in Table 2. Table 2 shows us that cross-loading analysis shows that the construct correlation between brand trust, word of mouth, and purchase decision with the values on the indicators is higher compared to other construct correlations. The indicators employed in this study demonstrate satisfactory discriminant validity. Reliability testing is conducted to measure consistency. In PLS, measurement is done using Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha, with a minimum acceptable value of 0.7.

Table 2 : Cross Loading

	Word Of Mouth	Purchase Decision	Brand Trust
X1.1	0.839	0.777	0.641
X1.2	0.870	0.703	0.400
X1.3	0.927	0.690	0.487
X1.4	0.891	0.627	0.413
Y1.1	0.557	0.934	0.586
Y1.2	0.642	0.814	0.617
Y1.3	0.705	0.825	0.595
Y1.4	0.749	0.846	0.485
Y1.5	0.591	0.873	0.410
Z1.1	0.360	0.472	0.851
Z1.2	0.421	0.525	0.891
Z1.3	0.429	0.501	0.909
Z1.4	0.333	0.396	0.749
Z1.5	0.677	0.475	0.729

Table 3 shows us that each construct in this research exhibits good reliability with high consistency values. This also indicates that all indicators in this study are reliable in composing the constructs.

Table 3: Reliability Test Results

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Word Of Mouth	0.880	0.918
Brand Trust	0.888	0.916
Purchase Decision	0.850	0.893

The R-squared value measures the extent to which changes in the independent variables explain variations in the dependent variable. Its fluctuations can be used to gauge the impact of independent variables on the dependent variable. Based on the table above, the R-squared value for Brand Trust is 0.335 or 33.5%, while for Purchase Decision, it is 0.742 or 74.2%. According to (Ghozali, 2018), R-squared values between 40% and 60% are considered moderate, while those between 60% and 80% are considered strong. This implies that the R-squared values obtained from the structural model analysis fall within a good category. The detailed R-squared values are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: R-Square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Purchase Decision	0.742	0.736
Brand Trust	0.335	0.327

Hypothesis testing in the research model utilizes t-statistic and p-values generated through bootstrapping algorithms. In this research, with an alpha level of 5% (or 0.05), the t-statistic used is the 5% significance level t-value, which is 1.96 based on Table 5. Thus, the summary of the findings of the hypothesis tests performed in this study are as follows:

Table 5 : Results of the hypothesis testing

No	Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STD EV)	P Values
H1	Brand Trust -> Purchase Decision	0,645	10,168	0,000
H2	Word of Mouth -> Purchase Decision	0,309	4,483	0,000
H3	Word Of Mouth-> Brand Trust	0,579	7,938	0,000
H4	Word Of Mouth-> Brand Trust -> Purchase Decision	0,179	3,774	0,000

Table 5 shows us that for hypothesis 1, a t-statistic value of 10.168 was obtained, with a t-value exceeding 1.96 and a p-value below 0.05. Therefore, H1 is accepted. This indicates that brand trust plays a substantial role in consumer choice. Consumers hold a favorable view of

fresh products in minimarkets and believe that products with good labels and packaging ensure product quality, freshness, and safety standards. A positive correlation exists between consumer trust and purchase decisions. The research findings align with those of (Apriliani et al., 2022), and (Michelle Gracella Harifin, 2024), studies have established that brand trust significantly influences purchasing behavior.

For hypothesis 2, a t-statistic of 4.483 was obtained, with a t-value exceeding 1.96 and a p-value below 0.05, leading to the acceptance of H2. This means that word-of-mouth significantly impacts purchase decisions. Basically, positive word-of-mouth communication about fresh products in minimarkets contributes to increased purchase decisions. Satisfied consumers are more likely to share information, discuss, and recommend the product to friends, family, and acquaintances. These research findings are in line with (Sudarmin, 2023) and (Susanti et al., 2023), researchers have established that word-of-mouth significantly influences purchasing behavior.

For hypothesis 3, a t-statistic of 7.938 was obtained, with a t-value exceeding 1.96 and a p-value below 0.05, leading to the acceptance of H3. This means Brand trust is significantly influenced by word-of-mouth. Consumers tend to have increased trust in fresh products when many people talk about them. Positive word of mouth, such as recommendations from friends about the freshness of fruits in a minimarket, can enhance consumer trust in that brand. Conversely, pre-existing brand trust can make consumers more open to trying new products based on recommendations from others. These research findings align with the studies of (Isabil et al., 2023), (Stefanny et al., 2022), and (Sari et al., 2021), which found that word of mouth influences brand trust.

For hypothesis 4, a t-statistic of 3.774 was obtained, with a t-value exceeding 1.96 and a p-value below 0.05, leading to the acceptance of H4. This means that word of mouth through brand trust makes a significant impact on purchase decisions. Trust and communication or recommendations from other users will contribute to a growth in consumer demand for fresh products in minimarkets. Consumers will make purchases when they trust the product, brand, and retailer offering the product. Additionally, positive perceptions from other users who have used the product make consumers more confident in making purchases.

IV. CONCLUSION

According to the study findings and discussion regarding word of mouth, brand trust, and purchase decisions, tested using SEM-PLS analysis, it can be concluded that brand trust exhibits a substantial positive impact influence on purchase decisions. Word of mouth exhibits a substantial positive impact on purchase decisions. Word of mouth exhibits a substantial positive impact on brand trust. Word of mouth, through brand trust, makes a significant positive difference on purchase decisions for fresh products in minimarkets.

V. REFERENCES

- [1]. Ali, I., Irdiana, S., & Irwanto, J. (2019). Dampak Brand Image , Brand Equity Dan Brand Trust Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Laptop Asus (Studi Pada Toko Komputer Lumajang Computer Centre Di Kabupaten Lumajang). *Progress Conference*, 2(1), 406–413. <http://proceedings.stiewidyagamalumajang.ac.id/index.php/progress/article/view/210/199>
- [2]. Apriliani, R., Ardiyanti, Y., Efendi, B., & Nurhayati, E. C. (2022). Pengaruh Brand Image, Brand Trust Dan Product Quality Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian (Studi pada pembeli Kopi Bowongso di Kabupaten Wonosobo). *Jamasy : Jurnal Akuntansi, Manajemen & Perbankan Syariah*, 2, 100–108.
- [3]. DAM, T. C. (2020). Influence of Brand Trust, Perceived Value on Brand Preference and Purchase Intention. *Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 7(10), 939–947. <https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2020.vol7.no10.939>
- [4]. Ghozali, I., & Latan, H. (2015). *Konsep, Teknik, Aplikasi Menggunakan Smart PLS 3.0 Untuk Penelitian Empiris*. BP Undip.
- [5]. Ghozali, I. (2018). *Aplikasi Analisis Multivariate dengan Program IBM SPSS 25*. Badan Penerbit Universitas Diponegoro.
- [6]. Hasan, A. (2010). *Marketing dari Mulut ke Mulut : Word Of Mouth Marketing*. Media Pressindo.
- [7]. Hendro, H., & Keni, K. (2020). eWOM dan Trust sebagai Prediktor terhadap Purchase Intention: Brand Image sebagai Variabel Mediasi. *Jurnal Komunikasi*, 12(2), 298. <https://doi.org/10.24912/jk.v12i2.7760>
- [8]. Herviani, V., Hadi, P., & Nobelson. (2020). Analisis Pengaruh Brand Trust, E-WOM, dan Social Media Influencer Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Lipstik Pixy. *Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Bisnis*, 10(02), 1351–1363.
- [9]. Isabil, S., Farhan, T., Wati, S., & Wahyuni, S. (2023). *The Influence of Brand Name and Word of Mouth (WOM) on Brand Trust in Purchasing MS Glow Products (Case Study at Duta Cosmetics Bireuen Shop)*. 1(January), 3215–3222.
- [10]. Kasakeyan, R. F., Tawas, H. N., & Poluan, J. G. (2021). Pengaruh Electronic Word Of Mouth, Kualitas Produk Dan Experiential Marketing Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Produk Street Boba Manado. *Jurnal EMBA*, 9(4), 1208–1217.
- [11]. Kotler dan Keller. (2016). *Manajemen Pemasaran*. PT Index.
- [12]. Michelle Gracella Harifin, S. P. (2024). Pengaruh Brand Trust dan Brand Awareness terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Produk Kecantikan. *Prologia*, 8(2), 401–409. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24912/pr.v8i2.27641>
- [13]. Rossanty, Y., Nasution, M. D. T. P., & Ario, F. (2018). *Millennial, Consumer Behavior In Era*. Lembaga Penelitian dan Penulisan Ilmiah Aqli.
- [14]. Sari, N. N., Fauzi, A., & Rini, E. S. (2021). The Effect of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-Wom) and Brand Image on Repurchase Intention Moderated by Brand Trust in the Garuda Indonesia Airline. *International Journal of Research and Review*, 8(9), 81–91. <https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20210912>
- [15]. Setiadi J., N. (2015). *Perilaku Konsumen*. Kencana Prenada Media Group.
- [16]. Situmorang dan Lutfi. (2015). *Analisis Data Untuk Riset Manajemen Dan Bisnis*. USU Press.
- [17]. Stefanny, N., Rahmiati, F., & Roni, M. (2022). The role of brand image and brand trust in mediating the influence of e-WOM on purchase decision (case of video-on-demand Netflix). *IDEAS: Journal of Management & Technology*, 2(1), 12. <https://doi.org/10.33021/ideas.v2i1.3696>
- [18]. Sudarmin. (2023). PENGARUH WORD OF MOUTH DAN CITRA MEREK TERHADAP KEPUTUSAN PEMBELIAN PRODUK MS GLOW. *SOLUSI : Jurnal Ilmiah Bidang Ilmu Ekonomi*, 21(3), 310–316. <https://journals.usm.ac.id/index.php/solusi/article/view/6977/3364>
- [19]. Sugiyono. (2019). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Alfabeta.
- [20]. Susanti, I. D., Waru, A. P. D. T., & Janah, Y. (2023). Pengaruh Word Of Mouth Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Produk Natasha Skin Care Jakarta Pusat. *Jurnal Administrasi Bisnis*, 3(1), 28–31. <https://doi.org/10.31294/jab.v3i1.2020>
- [21]. Sutisna. (2013). *Perilaku Konsumen dan Komunikasi Pemasaran*. Erlangga.
- [22]. Tanjung, R., & Keni, K. (2023). Pengaruh Celebrity Endorser dan E-WOM terhadap Purchase Intention Produk Skincare di Jakarta dengan Brand Trust sebagai Variabel Mediasi. *Mbia*, 22(1), 88–102. <https://doi.org/10.33557/mbia.v22i1.2144>
- [23]. Tjiptono, F. (2014). *Kepercayaan Merek (Brand Trust)* (5th ed.). Andi.

