



## The Model of Purchasing Decisions Making for Honey Product

Agus Mulyana<sup>1</sup>, Deden Komar Priatna<sup>2\*</sup>, Anne Lasminingrat<sup>3</sup>, Dodi Sukmayana<sup>4</sup>, Dodi Tisna Amijaya<sup>5</sup>, Luthfi Setiadiwibawa<sup>6</sup>, Rudi Suprianto Ahmadi<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1),2),3),4),5),6)</sup> Universitas Winaya Mukti Bandung. Indonesia

\*Correspondent Author: [dedenkomar63@gmail.com](mailto:dedenkomar63@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** This study aims to explore the perception of Perhutani brand honey products' attributes, brand image, and their influence on consumer purchasing decisions. To achieve this, both descriptive and explanatory survey methods were utilized to understand the behavior of variables and test hypotheses. The research type adopted was causality-based, focusing on establishing a causal relationship between product attributes, brand image, and buying decisions. Individual analysis was conducted on consumers of Perhutani brand HONEY at Ahmad Yani and Setiabudi outlets in Bandung. With a cross-sectional approach, this research collected empirical data to gauge the majority population's opinion. The study found that product performance attributes and reference groups have a considerable impact on the products' selling price trend. The product mix performance and the influence of reference groups play a crucial role in shaping brand image. They also significantly impact purchase decisions. Interestingly, the relationship between brand image and the selling price trend is closely linked. Similarly, the performance of the product mix is also dependent on the reference group.

**Keywords:** Product, Brand, Image, Purchase, Decision

### INTRODUCTION

Honey has been a valuable commodity for humanity over the millennia. This natural liquid is created by bees who process plant nectar and store it in honeycombs. Honey has many uses, ranging from culinary to medicinal and cosmetic applications. It is a popular sweetener and seasoning that can be added to food and beverages. Moreover, honey is renowned for its medicinal properties, which include respiratory and gastrointestinal treatments. It is also a traditional dressing for wounds, ulcers, and burns due to its ability to alleviate pain and odors. Finally, honey's beauty benefits are well documented, with its ability to enhance skin softness and encourage hair growth. (Source: Ratnayani et.al, 2008; Purbaya, 2002; Murtidjo, 1991)

The era of exclusive honey products for the upper class has faded away. Today, honey is widely consumed by people of diverse backgrounds, resulting in a proliferation of product options and deals in the market. This abundance can create confusion among consumers, who struggle to distinguish genuine products from fake ones. With so many alternatives at hand,

brand name and reputation often become deciding factors for buyers, who hope the product will be beneficial and not harmful. Nonetheless, it is crucial to analyze product features, especially the accuracy and comprehensiveness of information on the honey's contents, before finalizing a purchase.

Forestry honey offers considerable health benefits, but its reputation suffers due to increasing concerns about counterfeit products. A 2011 survey commissioned by Perum Perhutani revealed that consumers harbor doubts about the authenticity of the Perhutani brand, impacting honey sales. Consequently, buyers are discerning in their selection and purchasing decisions, making it challenging for brands such as Perhutani to meet consumer demand.

As observed by Kotler and Keller (2006: 156), the process of selecting a product, brand, dealer, timing, and amount of purchase can be quite intricate for buyers. This complexity is further amplified when customers seek to select genuine honey products that align with their desired product attributes and brand image.

Kotler and Keller's (pp. 182) 2006 work suggests that successful marketing campaigns employ an all-encompassing approach, including a focus on the marketing mix stimuli: product, price, promotion, and place. However, it's important to consider external individual factors, such as culture, social class, and family, among others, as well as buyers' characteristics, like age, occupation, personality, and motivation. Additionally, purchase decisions are influenced by factors such as perception, learning, beliefs, and attitudes, all of which play a crucial role in product and brand selection, dealer choice, timing, and amount spent.

Research conducted by Bennett in 1997 indicates that when it comes to customer purchasing decisions, the product mix is the primary influencer. Other studies, such as those conducted by Foyal and Pallister in 1998, suggest that expensive product designs, variations, and assurances are also key to attracting customers. Looking at the case of Perhutani brand honey, it appears that the lack of variety in the product offerings, inadequate customer service, and poor product guarantees may be causing customer dissatisfaction. These elements are essential to creating a successful product mix.

Aaker's 1991 statement (109-110) describes a brand image as a set of associations arranged in a meaningful way. In essence, when customers associate a product with its physical appearance, completeness of information, clear benefits, color and logo, it creates a brand image that is perceived not just by customers, but by society as a whole. As per Zeithaml & Bitner (1996: 115), a positive and well-known brand image is an asset for any company, as it influences how customers perceive quality, value, and satisfaction. Furthermore, a strong image can act as a safeguard for a high-quality product.

Customer consideration of honey product brands is crucial to their success in the market. Without a range of options that meet their expectations, brands risk losing customers and ultimately, facing closure. To avoid this outcome, it's essential to analyze how product attributes and brand image influence customer purchasing decisions. To this end, the study uses grand theory in marketing management, middle-range theory in consumer behavior, and applied theory. The research was conducted in and around Bandung city.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The method used is descriptive survey method to describe the behavior of variables and explanatory survey method to test the hypothesis. The type of investigation that is used is the causality hypothesis, namely the type of research that suggested a causal relationship between the independent variable, in this case, the product attributes and brand image to the purchasing decision. The unit of analysis of this research is the individual, that is to say, the consumer/buyer of the product at the outlet Perhutani brand HONEY Ahmad Yani and Setiabudi Bandung. Judging from his time horizon, this research is cross-sectional, ie

information from the majority of the population (the sample of respondents) was collected directly at the scene empirically, to know the opinion of the majority population of the object being studied.

Sources of data in this research are secondary data sources of documentation or reports available at the relevant institutions. While the primary data in the form of product attributes, brand image and customer purchasing decisions outlet sourced from Ahmad Yani and Setiabudi Bandung.

As described in the methods of research, this research is the study of perception/opinion on the subject of research, which in this case is the products customers HONEY brand Perhutani sold in the Outlet Ahmad Yani and Setiabudi Bandung, therefore the type of data in this research is the subject data (self-report data), thus obtained research data sourced directly from a customer (primary data) and secondary data to support data. While the source of the data, namely (1) Secondary data sources are from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), Perum Perhutani and (2) Sources of primary data customers. Types and sources of data by the purpose of research.

## RESULTT AND DISCUSSION

Satisfying daily requirements is an essential part of human existence, wherein goods or services are consumed to meet these needs. The fulfillment of basic needs is crucial for human survival. Meanwhile, secondary needs can be temporarily postponed. According to Kotler (2003: 12), there are four ways to meet human needs: (1) self-production, (2) coercion, (3) begging, and (4) exchange. The study of consumer behavior, or the behavior of consumers in buying or using services to fulfill their needs, is a topic of interest in the field of psychology. As Mowen (1995: 5) defines it, consumer behavior delves into the acquisition, consumption, and disposal of goods, services, and ideas.

The research findings reveal that both Product Attributes and Brand Image hold sway over purchasing decisions, accounting for 18.8% or 0.433 of the total influence. However, when analyzed separately, Product Attributes exert a significant impact of 0.121 (sig.level 0:01 <0.05), while Brand Image carries greater weight with a significant impact of 0.390 (sig.level 0:00 <0.05). Evidently, Brand Image dominates over Product Attributes in influencing purchase decisions. Nevertheless, other factors also wield significant influence, amounting to 81.20% or 0.901, including external and internal individual factors, the marketing mix, and other variables.

In his work, Kotler (2003:161) outlines the "models of buyer behaviors" - a set of factors that affect purchasing choices, including marketing stimuli, other external influences, personal characteristics of the buyer, and the decision-making process. For companies, comprehending consumer behavior and the various factors that shape it is crucial, as it reflects on how customers make purchases. By gaining a deeper understanding of consumer behavior, marketers can ensure that products are accurately targeted and tailored to meet the needs of the desired audience. Sumantri (2001:9) notes that the "purchase decision is one step in the buying behavior process that precedes and determines the necessary action". This underscores the importance of understanding the buyer's journey, from problem recognition to information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase action, and post-purchase activity. Two key components of consumer behavior emerge from this discussion, namely: (1) The decision-making process, as outlined by Kotler (2003, 2), and (2) individual activities related to the evaluation, acquisition, and usage of the product.

## CONCLUSION

Product attributes form a crucial component of a company's marketing mix, representing the item offered for sale as well as the overall product. To ensure effective implementation of product strategy, companies must consider the four key dimensions of their product mix: width (product lines), length (number of items in the product line), depth (number of versions of each product offered), and consistency (consistency of the product with its target market, production, distribution, and other factors).

The significance of a strong brand for any company lies in its ability to persuade customers regarding the uniformity and quality of its products. Given that products are usually uniform in nature, it's the brand that distinguishes one company's product quality from others, ultimately influencing a consumer's decision to choose a particular product. Therefore, the brand name plays a crucial role in driving customer choice and loyalty.

When it comes to purchase decisions, product attributes and brand image are undoubtedly influential factors. However, it's worth noting that brand image alone may have a more dominant effect than product attributes. This implies that there are other factors to consider that also impact purchasing decisions, including individual external and internal factors, as well as the overall marketing mix.

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