

SYNERGY OF STORE ATMOSPHERE AND BRAND IMAGE: ANALYSIS OF ITS INFLUENCE ON CONSUMER PURCHASING DECISIONS AT SOCIOLLA JAMBI CITY

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Abstract

The changing landscape of e-commerce businesses is the result of rapid technological advancements and changes in customer behavior. One of the largest beauty e-commerce businesses in Indonesia, PT Socio Bella, also known as Sociolla, is a platform that faces intense competition to develop and retain its online consumers to offline consumers in stores. This study aims to see how the influence of store atmosphere and brand image on consumer purchasing decisions partially and simultaneously. This study uses quantitative research methodology with an associative approach to see the effect of store atmosphere and brand image on purchasing decisions at Sociolla in Jambi City. The population used in this study were consumers who had made purchases or visited Sociolla in Jambi City while the sampling method used in the process was purposive sampling which involved a total of 100 respondents using the Lemeshow formula. The results showed that at Sociolla Jambi City, store atmosphere has a significant and positive influence on purchasing decisions and brand image has a significant and positive influence on purchasing decisions while both have a simultaneous effect on consumer purchasing decisions. So it can be concluded that these two factors go hand in hand with the emergence of consumer purchasing decisions at Sociolla Jambi City.

Keywords: Store Atmosphere, Brand Image, Purchase Decision, Sociolla

Introduction

Rapid advancements in technology and shifts in consumer behaviors have dramatically transformed the landscape of the e-commerce industry, leading to intense competition among businesses aiming to leverage the internet for commercial activities. One prominent example is the e-commerce sector, where customers can conveniently purchase a wide range of products—from food and medicine to clothing and beauty items—via applications or websites without visiting physical stores. Sociolla, officially known as PT Socio Bella, stands out as a leading beauty e-commerce entity in Indonesia. This platform, which experienced a significant 31.5% surge in organic social media traffic during the Covid-19 quarantine (Pasaribu & Suyatno, 2022), expanded its physical presence post-quarantine by opening offline stores across various Indonesian cities. According to a report by Beauty Journal (Larassaty, 2023), Sociolla now operates over 50 outlets in 30 cities. Emphasizing authenticity and quality, Sociolla collaborates with authorized national distributors, as noted on its official website. The company maintains a retail network that includes locations like the Jambi Town Square Mall in Jambi City. Sociolla also fosters a consumer community that engages via their application or the Beauty Journal website, where users can access reviews, shop, and explore products through the SOCO by Sociolla app. The design of every Sociolla outlet, characterized by its signature pink and white colors, varies in size and layout but maintains a consistent style. According to Similar Web (2023), Sociolla ranks as the second most popular beauty and lifestyle application in Indonesia. The brand maintains a robust presence on social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and Tiktok and utilizes sophisticated marketing strategies that include enlisting various actors and actresses as brand ambassadors, a move supported by research from Hapsara et al. (2021). These strategies significantly shape public perceptions of the brand.

Data indicates that Sociolla Indonesia's monthly web traffic ranged up to 4,000 visitors from third quarter of 2019 through the second quarter of 2022. To sustain and grow its customer base, it is essential to focus on various aspects such as enhancing the store atmosphere and brand image. Wirtz & Lovelock (2018) suggest that creating an inviting store environment can offer multiple benefits, including influencing customer behavior and helping to differentiate the brand. This necessitates a well-crafted strategy to foster a welcoming environment that strengthens the brand, as a robust brand image can encourage customers to make more frequent purchases (Arianty & Andira, 2021). However, it remains to be seen if the foot traffic in Sociolla's physical stores matches that of its online presence. Thus, the aim of this research is to examine how the "store atmosphere" and "brand image" impact consumer purchasing decisions at the Sociolla store in Jambi City.

Literature Review

Store Atmosphere

According to Berman et al. (2018), store atmosphere is defined as a deliberately crafted environment comprising elements like colors, aromas, layout, and lighting, all designed to capture attention and make

customers feel comfortable. This ambiance plays a crucial role in influencing customers emotions and their perceptions of products and brands, as noted by Gde & Dharma (2018). Additionally, Fatmawati et al. (2021) found that the store atmosphere significantly impacts consumer impulse purchases, highlighting the power of the shopping environment in influencing shopper behavior. Recognizing the importance of store atmosphere is vital for businesses as it not only attracts customers but can also enhance profits and bolster customer loyalty. The aspects of store atmosphere as outlined by Berman et al. (2018) include the exterior elements such as the store front, signage, building area, and entrance. The interior aspects involve the flooring, color schemes, lighting, furniture, temperature, and cleanliness. Additionally, the store layout involves strategic allocation of floor space and room arrangement based on operational needs, while the interior display focuses on how products are arranged on shelves, each tailored to communicate specific information to consumers.

Brand Image

Tjiptono (2015) characterizes brand image as the trust customers place in a brand, echoing Kotler and Keller's (2016) assertion that every product has its own public perception, shaped by the company. This concept is exemplified by L'oreal Paris Indonesia, where the use of brand ambassadors has been shown to positively enhance the brand's image, as highlighted in a study by Masyita and Yuliati (2017) which explored how product type impacts the pricing of L'oreal's consumer goods. Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015) also noted that consumers tend to trust brand ambassadors as representatives of reputable brands, especially when they are unfamiliar with the product, underscoring the importance of creating favorable brand perceptions. Additionally, a recent study by Ramadhan and Sugiyanto (2023) emphasized the significant role that Sociolla's brand image plays in increasing consumer satisfaction. To effectively build a strong and positive brand image, businesses utilize various brand image indicators, as outlined by Keller et al (2015). These include the physical identity of the brand like logos, colors, or slogans which help customers recognize and differentiate it from competitors; the unique qualities that define the brand's personality; associations like ambassador activities or sponsorship that consumers link specifically with the brand; the brand's communication attitude and how it interacts with customers; and the specific advantages the brand offers that meet consumer needs, creating positive experiences. Moreover, consumer behavior significantly influences purchasing decisions, with Aeni and Ekhsan (2020) pointing out that consumers consider factors such as product type and brand reliability before making a purchase. Kotler and Armstrong (2020) further break down the buying process into five stages: need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior. Kotler and Keller (2016) detail the customer selection indicators, which include product choice, brand selection, distributor choice, timing of purchase, amount of purchase, and method of payment, highlighting the comprehensive nature of consumer decision-making in the market.

Methods

this study adopts a quantitative research methodology with an associative approach. Sugiyono (2020) explains that this approach is suitable for examining the relationships between two or more variables. In this context, the study explores how consumer purchasing decisions, identified as the independent variable, are influenced by two dependent factors: store atmosphere and brand image. The hypothesis proposed seeks to investigate the extent to which these factors affect consumer decisions within the specified context.

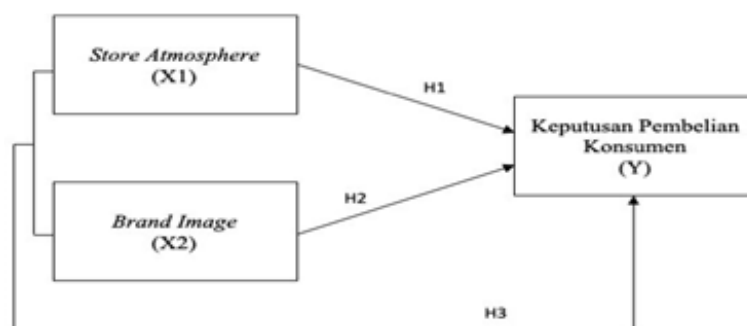


Figure 1. Proposed Conceptual Framework

This study will predominantly utilize numerical data, employing SPSS Ver 29 for data analysis. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), the Likert scale will be used to measure the degree of agreement with specific statements, facilitating the quantification of variables. Sugiyono (2015) defines the sample as a subset reflecting the size and characteristics of a broader population, which comprises individuals or items with particular attributes identified for research. A purposive sampling strategy is adopted for this study, utilizing Lemeshow's formula, the required sample size is calculated to be 96,04. However, to ensure

adequate representation and to accommodate potential variability, the study aims to gather data from approximately 100 respondents

Result and Discussion

Description of respondents using information from surveys distributed to Sociolla customers in Jambi City via Google Form, the findings are so that it can clarify how factors related to store atmosphere and brand image affect purchasing decisions. The results of the questionnaire analysis are as follows in table 1 data:

Table 1. Gender of Respondents

Gender	Total	Percentage
Perempuan	77	77%
Laki - laki	23	23%

In accordance with the data above, it is known that the gender of female respondents is the most dominant in making purchases at Sociolla Jambi City by 77% as follows in table 2.

Table 2. Age of Respondents

Age	Total	Percentage
15 - 20	16	16%
20 - 25	43	43%
25 - 30	27	27%
30 - 35	14	14%

In accordance with the data above, it is known that the age of respondents who are most dominant in making purchases at Sociolla Jambi City is the age range of 20 to 25 years with 43%.

Hypothesis Test Results

Test – t

The purpose of the t-test, also called the partial test, is to determine whether the independent and dependent variables have an effect. Where is the effect of brand image and store atmosphere on purchasing decisions in this study following in table 3.

Table 3. Test Result - t

		Coefficients ^a		t	Sig.
		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	5.314	1.285		4.135 .000
	store atmosphere	.702	.079	.541	8.898 .000
	brand image	.301	.040	.460	7.554 .000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

In this study, df were determined using the formula $df = n - k$, where n is the sample size and k is the number of parameters, resulting in a calculation of $df = 100 - 2 = 98$. With a significance level set at 0,05 for a two-sided test, the critical t-value from the t-table is 1.9844. The t-test results indicate that the store atmosphere significantly impacts purchasing decisions at Sociolla Jambi City, as evidenced by a t-value of 8.898, which is greater than the t-table value of 1.9844, and a significance value of 0.000, well below the threshold of 0.005, leading to the acceptance of hypothesis H1. Similarly, the influence of brand image on purchasing decisions is confirmed by a t-value of 7.554, exceeding the t-table value, and a significance level of 0.000, which also supports the acceptance of hypothesis H2. These findings illustrate that both the store atmosphere and brand image play crucial roles in shaping consumer purchasing decision at Sociolla Jambi City.

Test – F

To evaluate to what extent the combination of each independent variable will become that variable, the F test is applied. In this study, store atmosphere and brand image function as independent variables on purchasing decisions. The simultaneous influence on variable purchase decision is considered significant if the calculated f value > table value or significance value (sig) < 0,05. The following is in the table 4 below.

Table 4. Test Result - F

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1278.954	2	639.477	109.046	.000 ^b
	Residual	568.836	97	5.864		
	Total	1847.790	99			

a. Dependent Variable: purchase decision
b. Predictors: (Constant), brand image, store atmosphere

With the F table value set at 3.09, the results show a very low significance value of 0.000, which is far below the alpha threshold of 0.05. The Calculated F value of 109.46 significantly exceeds the F table value. This indicates that in Sociolla Jambi City, both the store atmosphere and brand image have a considerable impact on consumer purchasing decisions, both individually and collectively. Herefore, hypothesis H43, which posits that store atmosphere and brand image together significantly affect purchasing decisions, is confidently accepted.

Determination Coefficient Test

To ascertain the influence of other variables not included in this study, the R test was conducted. The test results using SPSS provide the following information:

Table 5. Test Results R

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.832 ^a	.692	.686	2.422	

a. Predictors: (Constant), brand image, store atmosphere
b. Dependent Variable: purchase decision

The R square value from the analysis is 0.686, indicating that the combined influence of brand image and store atmosphere accounts for 68.6% of the variation in consumer purchasing decisions at Sociolla Jambi City. The remaining 31.4% of the variation is attributed to factors that are not examined in this study.

Discussion

The study demonstrated that the store atmosphere significantly and positively affects consumer purchasing decisions at Sociolla Jambi City. The t-test results indicated a t-value of 8.898, surpassing the t-table value of 1.9844, with a significance level of 0.000, which is well below the threshold of 0.005. This engaging atmosphere at Sociolla Jambi City effectively aids consumers in their decision-making process. Supporting this finding, research by Saadah et al. (2023) also showed that store atmosphere significantly influences purchasing decisions at Miniso Store Mall Cikarang.

Additionally, the relationship between brand image and store atmosphere at Sociolla Jambi City is strong. A well-crafted store atmosphere not only pleases the eye but also enhances the brand image, as demonstrated by a t-value of 7.554 in the t-test, which exceeds the t-table value of 1.9844. These findings suggest that the brand image at Sociolla is robust enough to draw in customers and encourage purchases, aligning with Haribowo et al. (2022) who found a significant impact of brand image on the purchasing decisions for Bittersweet by Najla products.

Moreover, the F-test results indicated that both store atmosphere and brand image simultaneously affect purchasing decisions at Sociolla Jambi City, confirming that these elements work together to influence consumer behavior. This is corroborated by research from Sari Rahayu and Nursanta (2023), which found that both store atmosphere and brand image together affect purchasing decisions at J.co Donuts & Coffe, highlighting the synergistic importance of these factors in boosting sales.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion that has been carried out, it can be concluded on consumer purchasing decisions at Sociolla Jambi City. This factor shows that a pleasant store setting and atmosphere plays a crucial role in increasing consumer buying interest. In addition, brand image was also found to have a significant and positive impact on purchasing decisions. This indicates that good brand image maintenance is essential in influencing consumer purchasing decision. These overall findings confirm that the combination of store atmosphere and brand image together plays an important role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions at Sociolla Jambi City, highlighting the importance of physical and perceptual aspects in marketing strategies to increase sales

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