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The Influence of Price and Store Atmosphere on Purchasing Decisions (Study at a Bookstore in Bandung)

4 Abstract

This study aims to investigate the impact of price and store ambiance on consumer purchasing decisions, using a case study of a bookstore located in Bandung. This study involved distributing questionnaires to a select group of respondents who were patrons of the bookstore. The researchers aimed to determine the extent to which pricing and store ambiance influence consumer purchasing decisions. This study employed a quantitative methodology utilising route analysis to investigate the direct and indirect interactions among variables.

The findings demonstrate that price has a significant impact on purchasing decisions, both directly and indirectly through the store atmosphere variable. This condition indicates that when a bookstore's pricing aligns with buyers' expectations, the likelihood of purchase increases, particularly when complemented with a pleasant and appealing retail environment. The store atmosphere contributes significantly, albeit to a lesser extent than price. An orderly retail environment, adequate lighting, and appealing product displays can foster a favorable ambiance for consumers, thereby promoting purchases.

Moreover, the analysis reveals that the interplay of pricing and store atmosphere characteristics may elucidate most purchasing decisions. These two characteristics greatly influence consumers' purchasing decisions at the bookshop selected for this study. Nonetheless, additional factors beyond these two variables also contribute, albeit to a lesser extent.

Bookshop management should strike a balance between competitive pricing and creating a retail environment that enhances consumer comfort and satisfaction. This condition will help consumers make informed purchasing decisions and foster lasting loyalty.

Keywords: Price, Store Atmosphere, Purchase Decision

Introduction

In January 2020, the COVID-19 outbreak began to spread across many countries rapidly ² and was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11, 2020. Consequently, retail sales in Indonesia, especially at bookshops in Bandung, are presently at risk of being impacted; alterations due to the COVID-19 pandemic have also engendered new habits reflecting changes in social behavior across various facets of life. To reduce the incidence of infections, numerous countries have implemented COVID-19 protocols in alignment with World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations, which include frequent handwashing, avoiding large gatherings, maintaining physical distance, restricting outdoor activities unless necessary, and practicing self-isolation.

Countries including Italy, Spain, and India have enacted measures such as lockdowns, whilst Indonesia proclaimed a national emergency in March 2020 pending the implementation of Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) rules. This condition was executed to inhibit additional dissemination. In response to community concerns over security, a bookstore in Bandung has adopted a corporate commitment to address the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This condition seeks to instill a sense of security and comfort in consumers during their purchasing experience. The initiative established at the Edia bookshop in Bandung prioritises families, healthcare professionals, optimises the layout for efficiency, ensures a secure shopping environment, and enforces health protocols related to the COVID-19 virus.

This bookstore is one of the largest in Indonesia, with multiple branches located across various cities. It has been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to a potential decline in sales and consumer traffic at its Bandung location. This bookstore has positioned itself as both a retail

establishment and a locale for tourists and residents to enjoy the ambiance while browsing books. Initially, this bookstore concentrated solely on the sale of diverse books; however, it has since expanded to offer a range of products, including various stationery items, new book releases, office supplies, sports equipment, accessories, and health products, all available at different price points. This bookshop has utilized the concept of a highly inviting environment to encourage patrons to stay on-site and subsequently make purchasing decisions based on various factors. (Kasmad, 2022; Putra, Sidharta, Rusjiana & Kadir, 2025; Janah, Muslihudin, Nurhuda & Nurdianto, 2023)

Consumer purchasing decisions present significant challenges for this bookstore, directly impacting business continuity. Consequently, it is imperative for managers to enhance marketing strategies and analyze consumer behavior to ensure satisfactory service, thereby fostering consumer trust and encouraging repeat visits to this bookstore in Bandung. (Achmadi, Supardi, Sriyono & Setiyono, 2022; Khan, Vivek, Minhaj, Saifi, Alam & Hasan, 2022; Essardi, Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2022)

Attractive pricing influences consumers' decisions on allocating their purchasing power among different goods and services. Purchasers evaluate pricing among various options and subsequently determine the preferred distribution of resources. Price exerts a favourable impact on customer purchasing decisions. (Hendarto, Ermaini, Fatmawati, Ismanto, Wibowo & Tsai, 2023; Wahyuni, Larashati, Dwiyanisa & Suherman, 2022; Nababan, Rahmah & Rahman, 2025)

Visitor numbers reportedly commenced a significant decline in 2020, decreasing by 14.18%, followed by 10.40% in 2021, and 8.47% in 2022 (January-August) as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and

governmental regulations, including extensive social restrictions (PSBB) and operational limitations at a bookstore in Bandung during the pandemic. (Susanto & Adiwijaya, 2023; Colly & Lahindah, 2024; Juhana, 2023)

There is a disparity in the prices at a particular bookshop in Bandung compared to those at other rival bookstores within the city. The pricing at one bookshop in Bandung is generally higher within their price range compared to those at other competing bookstores in the city. This condition can undoubtedly affect consumer purchase choices at a bookstore in Bandung. In the statement "the suitability of the distributor selection is based on the availability of products in one of the bookstores in Bandung and in the statement "the time of purchasing products in one of the bookstores in Bandung based on certain promotions and discount events" has an average value of the same dimension score, namely 3.40 (Good Enough), in the statement "the amount of purchases based on the suitability of needs and product availability in one of the bookstores in Bandung has an average value of the dimension score of 3.37 (Good Enough), in the statement "the selection of product brands in one of the bookstores in Bandung is based on consumer trust regarding the brand factor and the reputation of the brand provided" has an average value of the dimension score of 3.33 (Good Enough), in the statement "the products that have been provided in one of the bookstores in Bandung are in accordance with the quality and diversity of products" has an average value of the dimension score of 3.30 (Good Enough), in the statement "consumer responses regarding payment methods in one of the bookstores in Bandung only using cash and non-cash methods" has an average value of the dimension score of 3.20 (Quite Good). Consequently, according to the findings of the

pre-survey questionnaire, the purchasing decision variable (Y) achieved an average score of 3.33, classified as (quite excellent). This condition suggests that the shopping decisions at a bookstore in Bandung are suboptimal.

Observations and pre-surveys conducted at the research site revealed that consumers at a bookstore in Bandung perceived the payment methods, product quality, product diversity, brand selection based on reputation, product availability, distributor selection, and the timing of specific promotions or discounts as suboptimal. A bookstore in Bandung indicated the necessity for more optimisation or development to enhance its operations. (Monoarfa, Juliana, Setiawan & Abu Karim, 2023; Winarsih, Mandey & Wenas, 2022; Ramadania, Ratnawati, Juniwati, Afifah, Heriyadi & Darma, 2022)

Companies must consider numerous elements in their operations, particularly in purchasing decisions, including price and the retail environment offered to consumers. Attractive pricing and a pleasant store ambiance will enable consumers to influence the purchasing decision process. (Chatzopoulou, Tsogas & Kyriakou, 2022; Lavuri & Thaichon, 2023)

The statement "the price of the product offered at one of the bookstores in Bandung is by the quality" has an average dimension score of 3.40 (Good Enough). The statement "the suitability of the price and the use and benefits of the product at one of the bookstores in Bandung" has an average dimension score of 3.30 (Good Enough). The statement "the price of the product at one of the bookstores in Bandung is affordable for all groups" has an average dimension score of 3.17 (Good Enough). The statement "the price is more affordable compared to competitors' prices" has an average dimension score of 2.87 (Good Enough). Consequently, the pre-survey

questionnaire findings for the price variable (X1) yielded an average score of 3.18, categorised as "adequate," indicating that the pricing at a particular bookshop in Bandung is suboptimal.

Observations and pre-surveys conducted at the research site indicate that consumers at a bookstore in Bandung perceive its prices as affordable compared to those of another bookshop in the area. Consumers at a bookstore in Bandung perceived competitors' prices, which were deemed affordable for all demographics, as suboptimal. They asserted that pricing should be recalibrated to ensure greater affordability for all groups and further optimised about their utility and quality.

Besides pricing, the store atmosphere is another aspect believed to influence unsatisfactory consumer purchasing decisions at a bookstore in Bandung. The ambience of a store is an essential physical attribute for every retail enterprise. It contributes to establishing a conducive environment that satisfies client preferences and promotes prolonged engagement within the store, hence impacting consumer behaviour. A corporation that establishes a great, pleasant, and aesthetically pleasing store environment will substantially impact consumer purchasing decisions.

The facilities at a bookstore in Bandung have an average appropriateness score of 3.57 (Good). The lighting arrangement at a bookstore in Bandung gets an average dimension score of 3.57, indicating it is good. The temperature suitability in one of the bookstores in Bandung received a score of 3.23 (Quite Good). The design and colour suitability of the store also achieved an identical average score of 3.20 (Quite Good). Meanwhile, the product arrangement, based on the grouping of goods in another bookstore in Bandung, garnered an average score of 3.00 (Quite Good). Consequently, the pre-survey questionnaire findings indicate that

the store atmosphere variable (X2) received an average score of 3.24, categorised as "quite good," suggesting that the store atmosphere in a particular bookstore in Bandung is suboptimal.

Observations and pre-surveys conducted at a bookstore in Bandung reveal that consumers perceive the product arrangement, room temperature, store design, colour, lighting, and available facilities as suboptimal. Consumers suggest that these elements should be better optimised to enhance comfort and facilitate quicker product identification, ultimately influencing their purchasing decisions. This condition is supported by the view that all stakeholders need to comprehend the store concept and the intended image, ensuring that the resultant design is not merely aesthetically pleasing but also optimal for sales. The store's ambience can elicit response and foster comfort for consumers, potentially influencing their shopping decisions in the future. The cost and ambience of the store significantly impact purchasing decisions. Consumers are influenced in their purchasing decisions by the presence of appealing prices or cheap pricing, as well as a pleasant shopping environment. Researchers are keen to pursue additional investigations into all previously discussed topics. Consequently, in compiling this thesis, the researchers selected the topic "The Influence of Price and Store Atmosphere on Purchasing Decisions at a Bookstore in Bandung."

Research Method

Research methods are systematic approaches for acquiring accurate data aimed at discovering, creating, and validating specific information, which can subsequently be utilised to comprehend, address, and predict issues.

This study employs descriptive and verification research approaches. Descriptive research is used to ascertain the value of one or more independent variables without comparing or relating them to other variables under investigation, hence yielding findings.

Verification methods constitute a research focus on evaluating ideas and establishing scientific methodologies, specifically regarding the status of hypotheses, which determine whether a hypothesis is accepted or rejected. Verification research methodologies are employed to ascertain and address the research question concerning the impact of price and store ambience on purchasing decisions at a bookstore in Bandung.

The population must possess identical features to the subject of inference. A population is a defined group of things or individuals that exhibit specific attributes and characteristics as identified by the researcher for analysis. Consequently, a population encompasses not just individuals but also inanimate things and other natural entities.

The population in this study comprises the number of clients at a bookshop in Bandung from January to August 2022, as detailed below:

Table 1. Visitor Count at a Bookstore in Bandung

Month	Number of Visitors
January	109
February	110
March	102
April	115
May	127
June	103
July	110

August	120
Total	896

The aggregate number of patrons frequenting a bookstore in Bandung from January to August 2022 was 896. A sample is a subset of the attributes of a population. When the population is extensive and the researcher is unable to examine the entirety due to constraints such as limited funding, personnel, or time, a sample from that population may be utilised. The results derived from the sample can subsequently be applied to the population. Consequently, the sample extracted from the population must be genuinely representative of the population. The sample for this study comprised shoppers from a bookstore in Bandung. The participants were, undoubtedly, patrons of the bookstore. This study employed convenience sampling, a method for picking samples based on accessibility and randomness.

The integrity of respondents' answers was essential due to the data collection method employed, which included a questionnaire. The accuracy of social research findings is predominantly influenced by the measurement tool employed. If the measuring equipment is inaccurate or unreliable, the research outcomes will not accurately represent the actual circumstances. To resolve this issue, two forms of testing are necessary: validity and reliability.

An instrument is deemed legitimate if it effectively measures the intended construct and appropriately reflects data from the variables

under investigation. Validity testing is to ascertain the reliability of data in accurately representing reality.

Reliability denotes the consistency and stability of a score on a measurement scale. A reliability test assesses the degree to which a measuring equipment yields consistent results when applied to the same participants repeatedly.

Reliability testing applies only to items that have undergone validity assessment; therefore, invalid items are excluded. Reliability testing aims to assess the degree of reliability through internal consistency methods, focusing on the instrument's internal components, specifically the associated items or questions that collectively constitute the N assertions.

Results and Discussion

This study employed a questionnaire for data collection. Consequently, the validity of the questionnaire must be assessed. Validity pertains to the correlation among question items within a singular variable.

To assess the correctness of the suggested assertion, the computed r value is juxtaposed with the r table. If the computed r value exceeds the r table value, the measurement instrument is deemed legitimate. If the computed r value is inferior to the r table, the measurement instrument is deemed invalid.

Reliability assessment uses the Cronbach's Alpha (α) methodology. A threshold of 0.7 (0.700) is employed to assess the instrument's reliability, utilising SPSS 24 for Windows software. Reliability denotes that repeated

testing of the device will yield consistent results. If the r-Alpha number is below 0.7 (0.700), the questionnaire is deemed unreliable, indicating a lack of consistency.

The results of the validity and reliability tests for all statement items were obtained using IBM SPSS version 24.

Table 2. Results of Validity and Reliability Testing

No	Price	Store Atmosphere	Purchasing Decisions
1	0.563	0.407	0.431
2	0.608	0.649	0.549
3	0.661	0.667	0.655
4	0.546	0.478	0.481
5	0.492	0.342	0.493
6	0.473	0.573	0.438
7	0.473	0.636	0.447
8	0.661	0.797	0.628
9	0.489	0.402	0.534
10	0.689	0.758	0.579
11	0.683	0.525	0.475
12	0.581	0.632	0.454
13	0.708	0.785	0.520
14	0.626	0.546	0.582
15	0.677	0.630	0.512
Cronbach's Alpha	0,869	0,859	0,803

According to Table 1, after processing the data with IBM SPSS version 24, it is evident that all statement items for the Price (X1), Store Atmosphere (X2), and Purchase Decision (Y) variables yielded r-calculation results exceeding the r-table value of 0.300. Consequently, it may be asserted that

all statement items within the Price (X1), Store Atmosphere (X2), and Purchase Decision (Y) variables are deemed legitimate.

The computation results for the 15 statement items indicate the following Cronbach's Alpha values: Price (X1) is 0.869, Store Atmosphere (X2) is 0.859, and Purchase Decision (Y) is 0.803. The aforementioned calculations indicate that all variables satisfy the criteria, since each r-Alpha value exceeds 0.7 (0.700), hence confirming the reliability of all study variables.

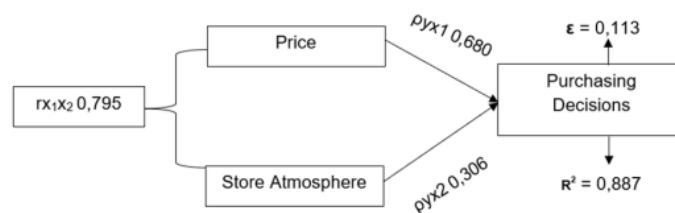


Figure 1. Path Analysis Outcomes

The path coefficient for pricing (pyx1) is 0.680, while the path coefficient for store atmosphere (pyx2) is 0.306, as illustrated in Figure 1 above. This is demonstrated in the subsequent path equation:

$$Y = 0,680 X1 + 0,306 X2 + py\epsilon$$

This equation indicates that the variables price (X1) and store atmosphere (X2) exert a favourable effect on purchase decisions (Y). The regression coefficient of 0.680 for the price variable indicates that a one-unit increase in price will result in a 0.680-unit increase in purchasing decisions, assuming that other variables are held constant. This study confirms that pricing has a greater influence than store atmosphere on consumer purchasing decisions at a bookstore in Bandung.

The regression coefficient of 0.306 for store atmosphere indicates that a one-unit increase in store atmosphere will elevate purchase decisions by 0.306 units. While its impact is less pronounced than that of price, store atmosphere nonetheless plays a substantial role in influencing customer purchasing decisions. The store atmosphere includes features such as lighting, background music, product arrangement, comfort, and cleanliness, which collectively contribute to a favourable shopping experience for consumers.

This investigation concludes that pricing is a more significant determinant in purchasing decisions than store atmosphere. This condition suggests that buyers at a bookstore in Bandung prioritise pricing in their purchasing decisions. Consumers typically pursue competitive pricing and appealing promotions or discounts to obtain items at a lower cost.

Nonetheless, retail ambience is essential in attracting and retaining clientele. An inviting retail ambience can enhance the shopping experience and foster client loyalty. A tidy store environment, enough lighting, and convenient access to books can foster a sense of comfort for patrons. This condition corroborates prior research indicating that an agreeable retail atmosphere can positively influence consumer purchasing intentions.

From a managerial standpoint, the findings of this study have significant implications for the administration of a bookstore in Bandung. A competitive pricing strategy should be a primary focus. The store can employ various pricing strategies, including exclusive discounts, loyalty initiatives, and bundled promotions, to attract clients. Additionally, the bookshop may implement a dynamic pricing strategy, allowing for price adjustments in response to client demand trends and rival pricing to maintain market competitiveness.

Secondly, while store atmosphere exerts a lesser influence than price, store managers should not disregard this factor. Enhancing the store's ambience to foster a more comfortable shopping experience might positively influence client purchasing decisions over time. Strategies to apply include enhancing the store's interior design for greater appeal, establishing a comfortable reading area, and ensuring cleanliness and optimal lighting to create a welcoming atmosphere for clients.

Moreover, the amalgamation of pricing and retail ambience might serve as a potent method to influence consumer purchasing decisions. This bookshop might provide themed events or promotions that provide appealing discounts while enhancing the shopping experience. Utilizing experiential marketing strategies, such as author-led book discussions or innovative workshops, can enhance client attraction to the business and increase the likelihood of a purchase.

Moreover, in light of prevailing shopping patterns increasingly characterised by e-commerce and digital marketplaces, this bookshop must also evaluate the integration of offline and online purchasing experiences. While price remains a significant determinant in purchasing decisions, many consumers still value the in-store shopping experience. Consequently, this bookshop might implement an omnichannel strategy that integrates online and offline buying experiences, such as a click-and-collect program, enabling customers to purchase books online and collect them at a nearby location, thereby enhancing the purchasing experience.

This study demonstrates that price and store atmosphere significantly influence consumer purchasing decisions at a bookstore in Bandung, with price being the predominant determinant. Consequently, a good marketing strategy must strike a balance between offering appealing pricing and

creating a pleasant retail environment to enhance the shopping experience and foster client loyalty. By enhancing these two elements, the bookstore can sustain its competitiveness in the progressively dynamic and evolving book retail sector.

Conclusion

The research findings indicate that both price and store atmosphere exert a ¹ positive and significant impact on purchasing decisions at a bookstore in Bandung. The regression analysis results demonstrate that pricing exerts a greater influence than store atmosphere on consumer purchasing decisions. The stronger regression coefficient for the price variable illustrates that fluctuations in price exert a more significant influence on purchase decisions than alterations in store atmosphere.

Price is a primary consideration for consumers when purchasing at a bookstore in Bandung. Consumers exhibit price sensitivity and pursue products that offer value for money. Consequently, competitive pricing methods, including discounts, special promotions, and customer loyalty programmes, are essential for enhancing product attractiveness and stimulating purchasing decisions.

While the impact of store atmosphere is less significant than that of price, it remains a vital element in fostering an enjoyable shopping experience. An inviting retail atmosphere, enough illumination, cleanliness, and an appealing product arrangement can enhance consumer satisfaction and reinforce their commitment to the establishment. Consequently, this store must consistently enhance its atmosphere to foster client comfort and promote repeat purchases.

This study verifies that integrating competitive pricing with a pleasant retail ambiance can effectively enhance consumer purchasing decisions. The store's management is encouraged to continue enhancing these two elements to attract more customers and maintain competitiveness in the book retail sector. Moreover, the integration of offline and online shopping experiences may serve as a pertinent strategy to address the evolving dynamics of consumer behavior in the digital age. With an appropriate strategy, this store can sustain its status as one of the community's favoured bookstores.

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