

THE IMPROVEMENT OF PURCHASE DECISIONS OF PUTRA KUSUMA PIA CAKE THROUGH PRODUCT QUALITY, PRODUCT VARIATIONS, AND PACKAGING

Hapsawati Taan¹, Rizan Machmud²

^{1,2}Faculty of Economics, State University of Gorontalo, Jl. Jenderal Sudirman No. 6 Gorontalo City,
Post Code 96128, Indonesia
Co-author: hapsataan@yahoo.co.id

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to discover and analyze (1) the impact of product quality towards purchase decisions, (2) the impact of product variation towards purchase decisions, (3) the impact of packaging towards purchase decisions, (4) the impact of product quality, product variation, and packaging towards purchase decisions. The population of the research is the number of customers from Putra Kusuma Gorontalo Pia Cake Shop. The sampling technique is *Accidental Sampling*, and the number of the samples is as much as 97 respondents. This research applies Multiple Linear Regression Analysis. The results discover that product quality, product variations, and packaging on purchase decisions had a positive and significant effects. It finds out that these three aspects are one of the important parts of a product to determine the level of purchase decisions. Quality, product variety, and packaging is a marketing strategy and an essential part of a product in making a purchase. Suggestions: To improve product quality and product variations, Putra Kusuma Pia Cake, it is recommended to increase the product variations. To improve the packaging, it is better to enhance the packaging by displaying images of a product with regard to the color and the shape as well as there must be any consistency between a product and an image of a product.

INTRODUCTION

A competition in a business is rapidly developed that creates one and another company continue to compete and survive in the business. Companies must be able to determine some marketing strategies to survive and to achieve the main goals. In business development, it is marked by a variety of revolutionary changes that make the current market situation more competitive. By offering a wide range of products with different qualities, it can provide more alternatives for customers.

Purchase decisions is choosing two or more alternatives for customers to make a decision. Therefore, a company must provide a wide range of products. A high purchasing decision is a dream for every company. It determines that the products are successfully sold and loved. (Lumapow & Tumiwa, 2020). This is because if the company conducts its operations using large amounts of external funds (debt), it will adversely affect the company's financial condition because it has to pay large obligations. So, the greater the use of debt, the profitability will decrease (Lumapow & Tumiwa, 2020). The product quality is a factor of the determinants of decision level after making a purchase and using a product (Tjiptono, 2015).

Quality of a product is the ability of a product to perform its functions which include durability, reliability, accuracy, ease of operation, and other attribute enhancements (Taan, 2020), maximizing the procurement of facilities and infrastructures related to service, service mobile procurement, and organizing socialization and evaluation on employee performance.

When a product has been able to carry out its functions, it can be considered as a good quality product (Imaningsih & Saiful, 2018; Amron, 2018). The more diverse numbers and types of products sold in one place, the customer will feel satisfied if he makes a purchase at that place. Therefore, he will not make a purchase in another place (Landahl & Johannesson, 2018; Tjiptono, 2015).

Another factor that affects purchase decisions is packaging (Mughtar & Nurif, 2015; Said, 2016) explain that packaging becomes a medium of communication between producers and potential customers. Therefore, package design must provide information that can be understood by potential customers to provide comfort.

One of business field that feels intense competition is Putra Kusuma Gorontalo Pia Cake Store. It must compete with a number of business company in Gorontalo City since the produce various products of pia cake with different flavor, texture, price, and quality. The customers can have some alternatives to compare one and another product before purchasing.

Putra Kusuma is one of brands in pia cake that is located in Gorontalo City. It is a favorite store for Gorontalo City community and outside Gorontalo to buy various pia cake for their own consumption or souvenirs. Pia cake is made from good ingredients. It is very important to pay attention to this matter because there is very tight competition from other companies. Each company tries to display their own flavor, thickness, texture, size, and shape to create their own identity. The following is the data on sales at Putra Kusuma Pia store in 2019.

Table 1. Data on Sales at Pia Putra Kusuma Store in 2019

No	Month	Pia Flavors				Total
		Chocolate	Cheese	Mung beans	Peanut Chocolate	
1	January	1500	780	400	320	3,000/Box
2	February	900	500	500	450	2,350/Box
3	March	1000	820	300	350	2,470/Box
4	April	1150	500	250	250	2,150/Box

5	May	2500	800	200	500	4,000/Box
6	June	15000	6000	1000	2000	24,000/Box
7	July	980	850	300	500	2,630/Box
8	August	500	300	150	200	1,150/Box
9	September	486	300	250	190	1,226/Box
10	October	520	250	200	120	1,090/Box
11	November	385	200	215	200	1,000/Box
12	December	3000	1500	500	800	5,800/Box
	Total	27,921	12,800	4,265	5,880	50,866/Box

Source: Putra Kusuma Pia Store in 2019

Based on the table, it figures out that the sales of Pia Putra Kusuma Store in 2019 has unstably increased and decreased every month which can be identified from January to April, and from July to November it decreases. The decrease was caused by many alternative products with same quality and innovation. Therefore, the customers can compare one and another from different stores. Judging from the good measurement unit of product appearance, it is still a top priority where customers have different tastes; therefore, they do not agree with the appearance.

A competition in a business is rapidly developed that creates one and another company continue to compete and survive in the business. Companies must be able to determine some marketing strategies to survive and to achieve the main goals. In business development, it is marked by a variety of revolutionary changes that make the current market situation more competitive. By offering a wide range of products with different qualities, it can provide more alternatives for customers.

According to Kotler and Keller (2018), there are five stages that must go through in the purchasing decision process such as problem recognition, information disbursement, alternative evaluation, purchasing decision, and post-purchase behavior. Schiffman & Kanuk (2013) state that the level of customers' problem solving in making a purchase depends on how well the selection criteria are set, how much information is held about the product, and how limited the range of products to be chosen by customers. When a product has been able to carry out its functions, it can be considered as a good quality product (Imaningsih & Saiful, 2018; Kotler & Armstrong, 2016)). Weenas (2013) states that product quality influences purchase decisions. Buchari, (2013) explained that there are eight elements that can be used to analyze product quality such as performance, features, reliability, conformity to specifications, durability, service capability, appearance, and good name. Product variations can be interpreted as products that have different designs or types and are produced by a factory. Product differences include differences in shape and size (Crasto et al., 2020; Groover, 2014; Isqo, 2015). The Adidas group also needs to note the need for the increased awareness that it needs to create for its products and focus more on the quality for its products in the accessory category.

According to (Said, 2016) packaging is defined as a place or a wrapper to protect and maintain quality of a product or a good, both when stored, distributed and when displayed on a shelf. Packaging is a unique image of a manufacturer's product that helps customers identify products from a variety of other brands (Farooq, Habib, & Aslam, 2012; Mufreni, 2016). Furthermore,

Klimchuk and Sandra (2007) explained that packaging design is a creative business that links the shape, material structure, color, image, typography, and design elements with product information so that products can be marketed. Food labeling, packaging, and quality are important because they represent the entire product and are important information for consumers (Chung et al., 2020). Price perception has a positive effect on purchasing decisions Price becomes an illustration of the quality of a product (Mukaromah, Kusuma, & Anggraini, 2019).

According to Tjiptono (2015;56), the more various the products in a certain place, the more satisfied the customers. Therefore, they do not need to buy the products in another store. Rahmawaty (2015) states that product variations may significantly influence purchase decisions. In a company, a producer must keep trying to develop and produce various products efficiently with a different configuration and performance, and at the same time, he must ensure every variant can be produced using production choice resources (Landahl & Johannesson, 2018; Nuryanti & Rahman, 2008). The innovative thinking of online shopping sites to reach more and more consumers is appreciable (Goel, Verma, Almutairi, Bhardwaj, & Tyagi, 2020). They increased their network as much as possible with ultimate aim of reaching more and more customers.

Based on the explanations above, the following is the research conceptual framework:

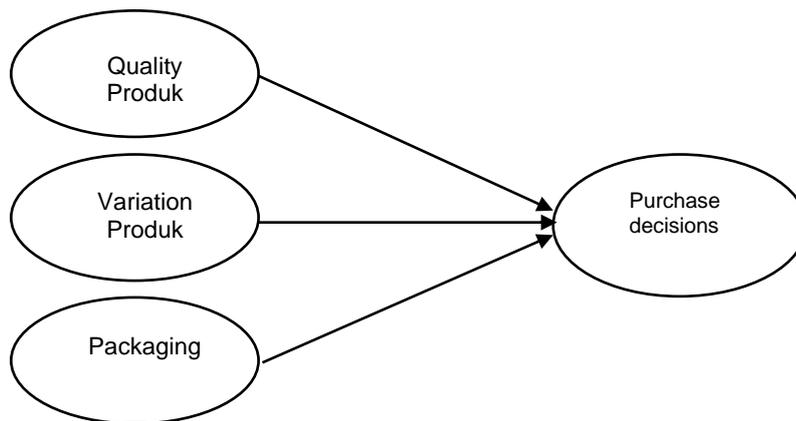


Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework

One of business field that feels intense competition is Putra Kusuma Gorontalo Pia Cake Store. It must compete with a number of business company in Gorontalo City since the produce various products of pia cake with different flavor, texture, price, and quality. The customers can have some alternatives to compare one and another product before purchasing. The aims of the study are: 1) to find out and analyze the influence of product quality towards the purchase of Pia Kusumaputra cake, 2) to discover and analyze the influence of product variations towards the purchase of Pia Kusumaputra cake, 3) to examine and analyze the influence of packaging towards the purchase of Pia Kusumaputra cake, 4) to find out and analyze the product quality, product variation, and packaging towards the purchase of Pia Kusumaputra cake.

METHODS

A Research Design

A research design used in this research is descriptive-qualitative which systematically describes a factual and actual relationship and influence of each variable by examining a hypothesis, making a prediction, and making an implication towards problem solving. Therefore, the research result may portray the value of each variable and the influence of independent variables toward dependent variables (Sugiyono, 2014:11). It is casual research, and its research analysis units are customers from Putra Kusuma Pia Cake store in Gorontalo.

Population and Sample

Population of this research is the customers from the store which are randomly picked. Sugiyono (2014:116), sample can be taken with Lameshow pattern since the total of the population is unknown. The total of sample is 97 respondents. The sample is taken by Accidental Sampling which is determining the sample by chance or by spontaneity. It means that everyone who was accidentally met by the researcher and was matched to the characteristics.

The Definition of Operational Variables

Variables which are analyzed in this research are the following: (1) Product Quality refers to a characteristic of the overall nature of an item that may affect the ability of the item to meet the needs including performance, durability, conformity, to specifications, and the features. (2) The product variation refers to a brand or a product line which can be distinguished by size, price, appearance, and product availability. (3) The packaging refers to a marketing tool that is designed with innovative packaging design; therefore, it might create compatibility for customers, and a promotional value for producers. (4) Purchase decisions in this research is customers' decisions which go through five stages such as problem recognition, information search, alternative evaluations, purchase decisions, and post-purchase behavior.

Data Collection Technique

To obtain accurate data in the research, it may use field research method which are conducted directly in the field to get primary data. The field study is conducted in the following ways: 1) Questionnaire is a data collection technique which is to support a bunch of questions or written statements to respondents, and they answer using Likert level scale, 2) Observation is a direct examination to record events during the research, 3) Documentation is all data sourced from certain research locations which are taken in written or printed as complementary data.

Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis technique is applied in the research with multiple linear regression analysis to analyze the relationship pattern between variables. This model aims to find out the direct or indirect influence of a set of independent variables towards dependent variables. The similarity is as follows:

$$Y = a + b_1 X_1 + b_2 X_2 + b_3 X_3 + e$$

Note: Y= Purchase decisions of customers, X₁= Product quality, X₂= Product Variations, X₃= Product package, a = constant that declares the influence of independent variables, the value of b_{1,2,3}=a, and b_{1,2,3}= coefficient of partial regression for X₁, X₂, X₃, e = error standard

RESULT

The variable reliability test was performed after testing the instrument validity.

The reliability test results can be seen in table 2 as follows:

Table 2. The Result of Reliability Test

No	Variable	Alpha	Information
1	Product quality	0.8968	Reliable
2	Product variations	0.7526	Reliable
3	Packaging	0.7168	Reliable
4	Purchase decisions	0.7297	Reliable

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2019

Table 2 explains that all variables have a large alpha coefficient that is more than 0.60, so it can be concluded that all items of variable questions in questionnaire is reliable, and it means that the questionnaire is good enough. Normality test is conducted on residual regression. Testing is done using P-P Plot graph. Normal data are indicated by points that spread not far from the diagonal line. The result analysis of linier regression with normal P-P Plot towards error residual of regression model to show a normal graph pattern whose positions are not far from diagonal line as described in the following figure.

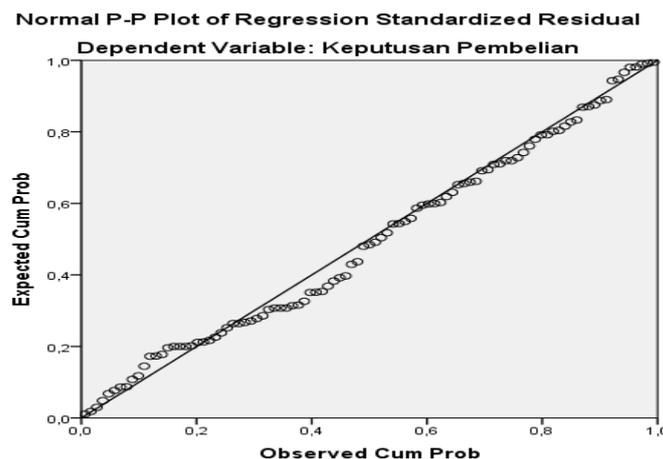


Figure 1 A Test of Normality Data

Source: processed primary data (MSI), 2019

Figure 1 describes that the testing result indicates the points which are located not far from the diagonal line. It means that in regression model data are normally distributed. The mutual linier regression testing requires interval data while the current data are in ordinal scale. Therefore, the ordinal data are transformed into internal through Method of Successive Interval (MSI). The calculation of coefficient statistical analysis discovers that multiple regression can be seen in table 3 as follows.

Table 3. The Result of Multiple Linier Regression Analysis

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.435	3.345		.728	.468
	Product Quality	.439	.138	.457	3.188	.002
	Product Variation	.376	.097	.284	3.889	.000
	Packaging	.735	.089	.604	8.279	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase decisions

Source: Primary Data (MSI), 2019

Based on the output, it obtains the value of a as much as 2,435, the value of b₁ as much as 0.439, b₂ as much as 0.376, and b₃ as much as 0.735. Therefore, the equation of multiple linear regression is as follows:

$$\hat{Y} = 2.435 + 0.439X_1 + 0.376X_2 + 0.735X_3 + e$$

Regression model is interpreted as follows: (1) a = 2.435 finds out that the product quality, product variation, and packaging as much as 0; therefore, purchasing decision will be as much as 2.345. (2) b₁ = 0,439 finds out that if product quality increases as much as one unit while the product variation is constant; therefore, the purchase decisions will be as much as 0.439 unit. (3) b₂ = 0.376 discovers that if product variation increases as much as one unit while the packaging is constant; therefore, the purchase decisions as much as 0.376 unit. 4) b₃ = 0.735 discovers that if packaging increases as much as one unit while product variation is constant; therefore, the purchase decisions will be as much as 0.735 unit.

To find the enormity of the influence contribution of each independent variable partially can be determined by multiplying the beta value with the zero-order value as in the table 4 as follows:

Table 4. Determination of Product Quality (X1), Product Variations (X2), and Packaging (X3) towards Purchase decisions

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Standardized Coefficients	Correlations		
		Beta	Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)				
	Product Quality	.457	.736	.312	.217
	Product Variation	.284	.540	.372	.257
	Packaging	.604	.724	.649	.546

Source: primary data (MSI), 2019

Based on the output on table 4, the calculation is as follows: The influence of X1 towards Y= 0.457 x 0.736 = 0.336 or 33.6%. The influence of X2 towards Y= 0.284 x 0.540 = 0.153 or 15.3%. The influence of X3 towards Y= 0.604 x 0.724 = 0.437 or 43.7%. Based on the calculation, it explains that Packaging

(X₃) gives a big influence to purchase decisions (Y) as much as 43.7%, and it is followed by variable of product quality (X₁) as much as 33.6%. The simultaneous testing (F test) is used to test whether product quality (X₁), product variation (X₂), and packaging X₃) can jointly affect purchase decisions. Significance level (α): 0,5, Test Criteria: Push H₀ if the value $F_{\text{calculation}} > F_{\text{table}}$, receive H₁ if the value of $F_{\text{calculation}} < F_{\text{table}}$. The statistical value of testing F can be found in the output in the table 5 as follows:

Table 5. The Statistic Value of F Test

ANOVA ^a					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	2036.972	3	1018.486	67.758	.000 ^b
Residual	1412.934	94	15.031		
Total	3449.906	96			
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase decisions					
b. Predictors: (Constant), product quality, packaging, product variations					

Source: primary data (MSI) 2019

According to the output in table 5, it explains that the value of $F_{\text{calculation}}$ as much as 67,758. This value is compared to F_{table} . With $\alpha=0.05$, $db_1=3$ and $db_2=94$, it results the value of F_{table} as much as 3.09; therefore, H₀ is failed and H₁ is accepted. It means that the simultaneous influence affects significantly to the product quality (X₁), Product Variations (X₂), and packaging (X₃) towards the purchase decisions. The result significantly shows that the more optimum the marketing strategy through product quality, product variation, and packaging, the higher the potency of customers in buying the products.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The Influence of Product Quality towards Purchase Decisions of Putra Kusuma Pia Cake

Based on the analysis result, the product quality variables positively and significantly influence the purchase decisions of Putra Kusuma Pia Cake. The product quality consists of performance indicators, privilege, reliability, and durability. It shows that the quality of the product is one of the factors that can determine the level of purchase decisions of the Putra Kusuma Pia Cake. The higher the quality of the product is carried out, the higher the potency the customers buy the products. It is better if the low product quality. The purchasing decision of the products also decreases.

The finding of the research supports the research result by Ardiansyah and Rokhmi (2017). They explained that product quality and the price give the positive and significant effect towards the purchase decisions of Cleo. The result is also supported by (Imaningsih & Saiful, 2018; Tjiptono, 2013; Weenas, 2013), that states that the product quality has closed relationship with the customers where the product quality encourages customers to connect the strong relationship with a company. Buchari (2013) explains that the aspects are carried out to analyze the product quality such as performance, features, reliability, conformity to specifications, durability, service capability, and appearance. Although some attributes can be measured from the marketer's point of view, product quality must be measured by the buyer's perception (Amron, 2018; Kotler & Amstrong, 2016). Product quality is an important aspect in influencing product purchasing decisions. One of the trends in

improving product quality is the development of green products (Okadiani, Bayu, Mitariani, & Imbayani, 2019).

The results of the description of this study also showed that the quality of the products of Putra Kusuma Pia Cake was perceived by consumers as a good product. In terms of performance, they were able to be responsible and provide the best, the privilege of providing easy and convenient services to consumers. The quality of the product given must be under the type of product and the condition of the store because the mistakes in the marketing system can reduce the level of purchase decisions.

The Influence of Product Variations towards Purchase Decisions of Putra Kusuma Pia Cake

Based on the results of the analysis of product variation variables have a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions of the Putra Kusuma Pia Cake. Product variations consist of size, price, display and product availability indicators. These results indicate that product variation is one of the marketing strategies used by companies to attract consumers in determining the purchase decision of these products. It finds out that product variation is one of the factors that can determine the level of purchase decisions. The higher the product variation is carried out, the higher the decisions to purchase. On the other hand, if the product variation is low, the decision to purchase will also decrease.

The findings of this study support the results of research Nuryanti and Rahman (2008) state that product variations have a positive and significant effect on the decision to purchase Ultrajaya box tea. This is in line with Nurahman (2016), and Nyoto (2016) arguing that product variations have a significant effect on purchase decisions. Michael and Dennis (2000) states that there are several ways in which variations can be distinguished, namely variations can be done by distinguishing in color, shape, and size. Groove (2014), Landahl & Johannesson (2018), and Zielke (2010) stated that in a company, producers continue to strive to develop and produce various products efficiently with different configurations and performance while ensuring that each variant can be produced using sources choice of production power. Kotler & Keller (2018), and Tjiptono, (2015) explained that product variation is a collection of all products and goods offered by certain sellers to buyers. However, the results of this study are not in line with Rahmawaty (2015), suggesting that product variations, prices, and consumer experience have no significant effect on breadtalk purchase decisions.

The results of the description of this study also indicate that the product size aspect variations include the shape, model, and physical structure of the Pia Kusuma Putra cake easily chosen and under consumer tastes. The price of Putra Kusuma Pia Cake is affordable by consumers. Putra Kusuma Pia Cake has an attractive shape and appearance, from the aspect of product availability Putra Kusuma Pia Cake is always available according to the number of consumer needs.

The Influence of Packaging towards the Purchase Decisions of Putra Kusuma Pia Cake

Based on result analysis, packaging variable has positive and significant effect towards purchase decisions of the products. Packaging consists of some indicators such as packaging design, packaging quality, packaging innovation. The research result discovers that the higher quality of the products, the higher

potency of buying. On the other hand, if the packaging is under quality, the purchase decisions will decrease.

The research result support Nyoto, (2016) who states that packaging has a significant effect towards purchase decisions. This research also confirms the research by Nuryanti and Rahman (2008) who state that packaging has a significant and positive effect on buying the products from Ultrajaya. Therefore, this finding is also in accordance with (Farooq, et al, 2012). He explains that packaging is a unique picture of a product from producers which help the customers identify products from various brands. The shape of the packaging describes the size of the product that is packed inside. Packaging is a container that occupies an item to be safe, attractive, and has the allure of a person who wants to buy a product (Klimchuk & Sandra, 2007; Muchtar & Nurif, 2015). The results of this study do not support Darmawan (2017), showing that packaging has no significant effect on purchase decisions for hydroponic vegetable products.

The description of research result indicates that packaging is perceived well by the customers in improving the purchase decisions of Putra Kusuma Pia Cake. It has given an interesting and unique impression. Therefore, customers enjoy to buy the products. Packaging with color, shape, material, and innovation indicators is one of the factors considered by customers in the purchase the product.

The Influence of Product Quality, Product Variations, and Packaging towards the Purchase Decisions of Putra Kusuma Pia Cake

Based on the results of the analysis of product quality variables, product variations, and packaging on purchase decisions have a positive and significant effect on the purchase decisions of the Putra Kusuma Pia Cake. These results indicate that the owner of the Putra Kusuma Pia Cake must know the needs and desires of consumers and determine the right strategy. The more companies that offer products with different quality, variety, and packaging, the more alternative consumers will be in determining the purchase decisions of the products needed.

The findings of this study support the results of the studies by Ahmad (2012), Imaningsih and Saiful (2018), Nuryanti and Rahman (2008), stating that product quality, product variations, and packaging affect purchase decisions. Kotler & Keller (2018) consumer purchase decisions are buying the most preferred brand from various alternatives, but two factors are being between purchase intention and purchase decision. Isqo (2015), and Mokhlis & Salleh (2009) stated that consumer decision-making style has a motive, mental, cognitive orientation towards shopping and purchasing that constantly dominates consumer choices.

The purchasing decision process is a basic psychological process that plays an important role in understanding how consumers make purchase decisions through the stages of problem recognition, information search, alternative assessment, and evaluation (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012; Umar, 2011). The degree of problem-solving of consumers in making purchase decisions depends on how well the selection criteria are set, how much information is held about the product, and how limited the range of products to be chosen by consumers (Ahmad, 2012; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2013).

Product quality has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions for Pia Kusuma Putra cake. It consists of indicators of performance, privilege, reliability, and durability. It shows that quality of the product is one of the factors that can determine the level of purchase decisions.

Product variations have a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions for the Putra Kusuma Pia Cake. Product variations consist of size, price, display and product availability indicators. Product variation is one of the marketing strategies used by the company to attract consumers in determining the purchase decision of the cake.

The packaging has a positive and significant influence on the decision to purchase the Putra Kusuma Pia Cake. The greater the packaging, the higher the decision to purchase the product. Conversely, if the packaging is low, the purchasing decision will also decrease. It means that packaging becomes an important part of a product and is a concern of consumers in making purchases.

Product quality, product variations, and packaging on purchase decisions have a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions of the products. These results indicate that the owner of the Putra Kusuma Pia Cake Shop must know the needs and desires of consumers and determine the right strategy. The more companies that offer products with different quality, variety and packaging, the more alternative consumers will be in determining the purchase decisions of the products needed

The limitation of this study is that first, this study only used samples of Pia cake at the Kusuma Putra Store, therefore the findings of this study might be different if adopted for the company. Second, the study design in the form of a cross-section also provides limitations in this study because of its inability to observe in depth various aspects of relationships and influences created during a certain period of time.

IMPLICATIONS

This research is expected to give contributions on science development and marketing management theory specially to complete a concept of product quality, product variation, packaging, and purchase decisions. The implication theory that can be put forward in this study to improve purchase decisions of Putra Kusuma Pia Cake in Gorontalo City can use the concept of product quality, product variation, and packaging. Practical implications for business actors in the food industry, especially pia cake maker in the form of information as the basis to improve the business.

SUGGESTIONS

To improve the product quality and product variation, Putra Kusuma Pia Cake company should improve product variations with various flavors such as strawberry, durian, pineapple, and other variations according to customers' tastes.

To improve the packaging, the company must add a picture in the packaging design according to the product shape, color, and topping. It requires consistency between the product contents and packaging pictures. For the future research, it is recommended to add or to use other variations such as technology innovation, brand image, and promotion.

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