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Efforts to increase purchase decision through advertising creativity and product quality with brand image as intervening variable

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effect of advertising creativity and product quality on purchase decisions with brand image as an intervening variable. The research method used is quantitative with a descriptive approach. This research collects data based on questionnaires, literature studies and observations. The population in this study were Lux bath soap users in Cilegon City aged 17-35 years and a sample of 102 respondents using purposive sampling. The data analysis method used is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the SmartPLS 4 analysis tool. This research has the results that advertising creativity has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions, while product quality has positive and no significant effect on purchase decisions. Brand image can mediate the indirect influence of advertising creativity and product quality on purchasing decisions.

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INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, the level of competition in the consumer goods industry is getting tighter. This can be seen from the many basic goods available, such as foodstuffs, drinks, shampoo, and soap. This intense competition requires companies to be stronger in retaining existing consumers and attracting new consumers to buy their products. One example of consumer goods that continues to grow is soap, because it is a product needed by everyone. As a result of this competition, companies are competing to produce goods with various types and variants, so consumers must be smart in choosing the best product according to their needs. This condition leads to the formation of consumer behavior towards the products offered in the market, where consumer behavior serves as the basis for them in formulating purchasing decisions (Muntaha et al., 2015). The growth of the consumer goods industry in Indonesia in recent years has been significant. Based on reports from several market research institutions, the consumer goods industry, especially food and beverages, experienced an average annual increase of around 5-6%. Factors driving this growth include increased consumer purchasing power, urbanization, and changes in a more modern and

consumptive lifestyle. Consumer goods segments such as hygiene and personal care products are also showing strong growth due to increased consumer awareness of hygiene and health.

Trends in consumer preferences in choosing bath soap products in Indonesia reflect the changing needs and awareness of the products used. Consumers are increasingly looking for soaps with natural and organic ingredients that are considered safer and more environmentally friendly. They also show interest in products with recyclable packaging, and tend to choose brands with a positive image that are known for consistent high quality. In addition, body washes with additional ingredients such as moisturizers, anti-bacterials, or aroma therapies are gaining popularity as they provide additional benefits. Although consumers are looking for quality products, the price factor remains a key consideration, with consumers looking for the best value in terms of quality compared to the price paid. These trends show that Indonesian consumers are increasingly savvy and selective, so companies need to continue to innovate and adapt their marketing strategies to meet consumers' evolving needs and preferences.

The purchase decision is the next stage after the emergence of buying interest. Consumers will usually research product brands before making a purchase choice to learn more about the brand. In the process of making purchasing decisions, the product brand becomes very important to reduce the risk of post-purchase problems. Therefore, it is important for companies to know the factors that influence purchasing decisions, such as advertising creativity, product quality, and brand image (Sili & Kurniadi, 2023). Companies in the bath soap industry use a variety of marketing strategies to attract consumer attention. These strategies include engaging advertising creativity, the use of loyalty programs to encourage repeat purchases, and promotions and discounts that attract new consumers. In addition, companies also innovate with attractive and eco-friendly packaging, and utilize digital campaigns and consumer testimonials to increase trust in their products.

To win the competition, companies must be able to position their product brands in the minds of consumers and build a strong brand image. One way that can be done is through promotion with advertising media, so that products are recognized and remembered by consumers. Creative advertising can make products stand out among the many similar advertisements that can bore audiences (Andayani et al., 2016). In addition to advertising creativity, product quality is also an important factor influencing purchasing decisions. Consumers tend to compare product quality before making a purchase. Companies must offer superior products with added value to differentiate their products from competitors in a competitive market. Product quality is a major consideration for consumers because good quality and reliable products will always be remembered by customers (Kotler & Amstrong, 2016). Brand image also plays an important role in the purchasing decision-making process. Consumers tend to choose products with a positive brand image that matches their preferences and lifestyle. A good brand image will help the product stand out from competitors even though the products are similar (Lk et al., 2019; Haryantana & Ekawati, 2015).

This study aims to fill the existing gap by exploring the factors that influence consumer purchasing decisions for Lux brand bath soap in Cilegon City, Banten. Lux bath soap is a brand of PT Unilever Indonesia which has a long sales history since 1936. However, increasingly fierce competition with other brands such as Lifebuoy, Shinzui, Giv, and Nuvo has caused Lux's sales to decline. Survey data in 2022 shows that Lux bath soap ranks third in the category of the most frequently used bath soap brand in Indonesia with a percentage of 36.5% (Databoks, 2022). In addition, sales data from several agents in Cilegon City show a decrease in sales of Lux bath soap every year, in contrast to the sales of other brands which continue to increase. This data indicates a problem in Lux's marketing strategy. To strengthen the research, researchers conducted a presurvey of 30 respondents in Cilegon City to evaluate the purchasing decision of Lux bath soap. The pre-survey results showed that the majority of respondents tended to disagree with several questions regarding the indicators of Lux bath soap purchasing decisions.

The results of previous studies show that there is a research gap regarding the effect of advertising creativity and product quality on purchasing decisions. Some studies show that advertising creativity and product quality have a significant positive effect on purchasing decisions (Falah et al., 2020; Wulandari & Darma, 2020; San Taslim et al., 2022; Hamidah, 2017; Santoso et al., 2020), while other studies show different results (Andayani et al., 2016; Sutrisno & Haryani, 2017; Nadiya & Wahyuningsih, 2020; Amelisa et al., 2018; Maghfirah & Lubis, 2018). Therefore, this study adds an intervening variable, namely brand image, to bridge the differences in previous research results and create a better research model.

The main objective of this study is to determine the effect of advertising creativity and product quality on purchasing decisions, as well as the role of brand image in mediating the relationship. By identifying the factors that influence consumers' purchasing decisions towards Lux brand bath soap, this study aims to fill the gaps that exist in previous research results. This study aims to provide better insight into how Lux can strengthen its marketing strategy to face the increasingly fierce competition, as well as improve advertising effectiveness and product quality in building a positive brand image.

The results of this study can help PT Unilever Indonesia in several ways to increase sales of Lux bath soap. First, by emphasizing the positive and significant importance of advertising creativity on purchasing decisions, Unilever can develop more creative and attractive advertising campaigns to attract consumer attention. Second, although product quality does not directly affect purchasing decisions, good product quality is proven to improve brand image. Therefore, Unilever can continue to improve the quality of Lux products to build a stronger brand image. Third, this study shows that brand image has a significant impact on purchasing decisions. Thus, Unilever should focus on marketing strategies that strengthen Lux's brand image through consistency of advertising campaigns and emphasis on strong and unique brand associations. In addition, recommendations to improve packaging design, expand distribution networks, and offer loyalty programs can also help increase the number of consumer purchases and strengthen Lux's position in the market.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses quantitative methods with a descriptive approach, as explained by Ferdinand (2014), which allows the creation and testing of hypotheses using empirical data. The focus of quantitative research is often on identifying cause-and-effect relationships between variables. In this study, the sample selection criteria used purposive and accidental sampling techniques. Purposive sampling involves selecting a sample based on certain characteristics that are important to the research, while accidental sampling selects a sample by chance from an easily accessible population. To ensure a good representation of the population of Lux bath soap users in Cilegon City, which amounted to 434,896 people, samples were drawn from all eight sub-districts in the city. A total of 102 samples were selected to ensure adequate sample size. Measures such as sample stratification, ensuring an even distribution of samples, and the use of valid and reliable research instruments were applied to obtain accurate data that can be generalized to the entire population. This research uses Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0 analysis tool. Data were collected through a questionnaire using a 1-10 interval scale. Each item is measured on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree), allowing for a more detailed and specific analysis of how various factors influence consumer purchasing decisions. Data analysis techniques include descriptive statistics and SEM analysis to test the relationship between variables. Index values from respondents were calculated to interpret the research variables using the three-box method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

SEM or Structural Equation Modeling is used as a data analysis technique to build and test statistical models in the form of causal models. SEM has characteristics that are as an analytical technique for confirmation rather than explanation. Researchers use SmartPLS 4 software in analyzing SEM.

Model Measurement Analysis (Outer Model)

Researchers first tested the outer model to test the validity and reliability of indicators of independent, mediating and dependent variables. This is done so that the indicators included in each variable can represent the latent variable in testing. To determine the validity of the research model built can be done through two validity tests, namely the convergent validity test and the discriminant validity test (Abdillah & Hartono, 2015). The following is the output of the calculation of the outer model that has been carried out.

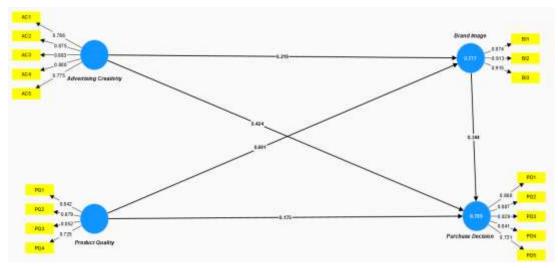


Figure 1. Display of Measurement Model Output (Outer Model)

Based on Figure 1 the results of the outer model calculation above, it can be seen that all indicators in each variable> 0.5, which means that they have met the requirements of convergent validity if the loading factor value is> 0.5. This shows that the proposed model has met the requirements and can be tested or analyzed further.

Table 1. Average	Variance Extraced
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Variabel	AVE	√AVE
Advertising Creativity	0,674	0,821
Product Quality	0,811	0,900
Brand Image	0,694	0,833
Purchase Decision	0,684	0,827

Based on the table of Average Variance Extraced (AVE) test results above, in this study the AVE value for each construct or variable has a value of > 0.5. Advertising Creativity has an AVE value of 0.674, Product Quality has an AVE value of 0.811, Brand Image has an AVE value of 0.694 and Purchase Decision shows an AVE value of 0.684. The results that have been obtained show that each construct has met the requirements of convergent validity in the model that has been tested with an AVE value > 0.5.

Table 2. Outer Loading

-		Outer Loading	-	
	Advertising	Product	Brand Image	Purchase
	Creativity	Quality		Decision
AC1	0,786			
AC2	0,875			
AC3	0,863			
AC4	0,800			
AC5	0,775			
PQ1		0,842		
PQ2		0,879		
PQ3		0,852		
PQ4		0,725		
BI1			0,874	
BI2			0,913	
BI3			0,915	
PD1				0,868
PD2				0,887
PD3				0,829
PD4				0,841
PD5				0,731

Based on the results of testing the measurement model with a total of 102 respondents, the following results were obtained: advertising creativity constructs are measured using AC1-AC54 indicators, and all constructs are valid because they have factor loading, AVE value, and communality of more than 0.5 each. Product quality constructs are measured using PQ1-PQ4 indicators, which are also all valid with factor loading, AVE value, and communality of more than 0.5. Furthermore, the brand image construct is measured using indicators BI1-BI3, and all of these constructs are valid with factor loading, AVE value, and communality of more than 0.5. Finally, the purchase decision construct is measured using indicators PD1-PD5, all of which are valid with factor loading, AVE value, and communality of more than 0.5.

Then measure the discriminant validity test by comparing the cross loading value of each indicator in one construct with other constructs. The construct can be said to be valid if the value of each indicator in a construct is greater than the indicators in other constructs (Abdillah & Hartono, 2015). Then this agrees with the expert Ichwanuddin (2018) stating that in this test it is necessary to ensure that the cross loading value on the intended construct must exceed the critical value of 0.6 or must be greater than the loadings of other constructs.

Table 3. Cross Loading

	Advertising	Product Quality	Brand Image	Purchase
	Creativity		J	Decision
AC1	0,786	0,698	0,621	0,712
AC2	0,875	0,739	0,748	0,753
AC3	0,863	0,649	0,663	0,715
AC4	0,800	0,674	0,609	0,583
AC5	0,775	0,653	0,603	0,679
PQ1	0,705	0,842	0,737	0,683
PQ2	0,715	0,879	0,808	0,755
PQ3	0,763	0,852	0,707	0,713
PQ4	0,556	0,725	0,624	0,573
BI1	0,666	0,778	0,874	0,727
BI2	0,745	0,805	0,913	0,771
BI3	0,732	0,776	0,915	0,753
PD1	0,715	0,741	0,737	0,868
PD2	0,765	0,822	0,783	0,887
PD3	0,685	0,717	0,761	0,829
PD4	0,721	0,654	0,648	0,841
PD5	0,614	0,465	0,503	0,731

An indicator can be said to be valid if the highest loading factor is on the intended latent variable construct compared to the loading factor of other constructs. Based on table 3 above, it shows that the cross loading value for all variable constituent constructs is greater than the loadings value of other constructs. So that this research model can be declared to have met discriminant validity.

Furthermore, a reliability test is carried out to measure the consistency and reliability of a measuring instrument which shows the accuracy, consistency and accuracy of the measuring instrument (Prasetyono et al., 2020). The reliability test was carried out using two methods, namely Cronbach's Alpha> 0.6 and Composite Reliability> 0.7 (Prasetyono et al., 2020). The following are the results of the reliability test in this study:

Table 4. Reliability Testing Results

Variabel	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	
	(CA)		
Advertising Creativity	0,878	0,911	
Product Quality	0,844	0,896	
Brand Image	0,883	0,928	
Purchase Decision	0,889	0,919	

Based on the table above, it can be seen that each construct value can be said to be reliable. This is indicated by the Cronbach's Alpha value on each construct> 0.6 and the Composite Reliability value on each> 0.7.

Analysis Structural Model (inner model)

The structural model or commonly called the Inner Model is evaluated using R Square for the dependent variable and the path coefficient value for the independent variable, which is then the significance value based on the t-count or t-statistic value on each path (Abdillah & Hartono, 2015). The results of the R Square calculation explained in the dependent variable should be >0.1 or >10% (the higher the value, the better) so that it can be said that the dependent construct is good (Ichwanuddin, 2018). To evaluate the structural model, it can be done by looking at the dependent construct and shown the t-values and path coefficient. The value is used to measure the level of variation in changes in the independent variable on the dependent variable and has a substantial effect (Abdillah & Hartono, 2015).

Table 5. R Square

Variabel	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Brand Image	0,777	0,773
Purchase Decision	0,789	0,780

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that testing the structural model shows that the brand image variable has an R Square value of 0.777, which means 77%. Meanwhile, the purchase decision variable has an R Square value of 0.789 or 78.9%. Thus it can be interpreted that the model built in this study is factually acceptable and reflects the actual situation in the context of body care. This also indicates that the greater the R square value produced, the better the model studied.

Furthermore, hypothesis testing is carried out by looking at t-statistics, as well as path coefficients in bootstraping testing. The p value as a reference is used to show the significance of the direct relationship between variables, while the path coefficients show the nature of the direct relationship between constructs. In hypothesis testing that refers to the t-statistic value, then for alpha 5% the t-table value used is> 1.98. Acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis that has been tested is used a probability with a p value <0.05. So, Ha is accepted and Ho is rejected if the p value <0.05. In the table below, the direct effect test results are as follows:

Table 6. Direct Effe

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T-Statistic	P Value
AC - PD	0,424	0,423	0,103	4,117	0,000
PQ - PD	0,175	0,192	0,112	1,566	0,117
AC – BI	0,219	0,217	0,086	2,552	0,011
PQ – BI	0,691	0,689	0,078	8,887	0,000
BI – PD	0,344	0,327	0,102	3,375	0,001

Based on the direct effect table, the results of direct testing on each hypothesis are as follows: Hypothesis 1 shows that advertising creativity has a positive and significant effect on purchase decision with a parameter coefficient of 0.424, a t-statistic value of 4.117 (>1.98), and a p value of 0.000 (<0.05). Hypothesis 2 shows that product quality has a positive but insignificant effect on purchase decisions with a parameter coefficient of 0.175, a t-statistic value of 1.566 (<1.98), and a p value of 0.117 (>0.05). Hypothesis 3 shows that advertising creativity has a positive and significant effect on brand image with a parameter coefficient of 0.219, a t-statistic value of 2.552 (>1.98), and a p value of 0.011 (<0.05). Hypothesis 4 shows that product quality has a positive and significant effect on brand image with a parameter coefficient of 0.691, a t-statistic value of 8.887 (>1.98), and a p value of 0.000 (<0.05). Hypothesis 5 shows that brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase decision with a parameter coefficient of 0.344, a t-statistic value of 3.375 (>1.98), and a p value of 0.001 (<0.05).

Furthermore, Indirect Effect testing is a stage of testing the indirect relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable which aims to determine how much the role of the mediating variable is in increasing or changing the results and significance in the hypothesis proposed. In the table below, the results of indirect effect testing are found as follows:

Table 7. Indirect Effect

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
AC - BI - PD	0,075	0,069	0,034	2,209	0,027
PQ - BI - PD	0,238	0,227	0,079	3,011	0,003

Based on the indirect effect table, the results of testing the indirect relationship between constructs show: Hypothesis 6 indicates that brand image partially mediates the relationship between advertising creativity and purchase decision with a beta coefficient of 0.075, a t-statistic value of 2.209 (>1.98), and a p value of 0.027 (<0.05), so this relationship has a positive and significant effect. Hypothesis 7 shows that brand image perfectly mediates the relationship between product quality and purchase decision with a beta coefficient of 0.238, a t-statistic value of 3.011 (>1.98), and a p value of 0.003 (<0.05), so this relationship also has a positive and significant effect.

Discussion

This discussion includes the research results that have been tested as a whole along with the interpretation of each hypothesis testing. Hypothesis 1 shows that advertising creativity has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions with a parameter coefficient of 0.424, a t-statistic value of 4.117 (>1.98), and a p value of 0.000 (<0.05). These results are similar to previous research by Falah et al. (2020), E. Wulandari & Fauzi (2022), Santoso et al. (2020), and San Taslim et al. (2022). In conclusion, advertising creativity has a positive and effective impact on increasing the purchase decision of Lux products. Hypothesis 2 shows that product quality has a positive but insignificant effect on purchase decision with a parameter coefficient of 0.175, a t-statistic value of 1.566 (<1.98), and a p value of 0.117 (>0.05), in contrast to previous research by Suhaily & Darmoyo (2017) and others. This shows that the effect of product quality on purchase decision is small so Lux needs to improve its product quality.

Hypothesis 3 shows that advertising creativity has a positive and significant effect on brand image with a parameter coefficient of 0.219, a t-statistic value of 2.552 (>1.98), and a p value of 0.011 (<0.05), in line with research by Yoong & Yazdanifard (2014), Putri & Kusumadewi (2018), and Adam et al. (2022). The better the advertising creativity, the higher the brand image. Hypothesis 4 shows that product quality has a positive and significant effect on brand image with a parameter coefficient of 0.691, a t-statistic value of 8.887 (>1.98), and a p value of 0.000 (<0.05), in line with research by Hernikasari et al. (2022) and others. The better the product quality, the higher the brand image.

Hypothesis 5 shows that brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions with a parameter coefficient of 0.344, a t-statistic value of 3.375 (>1.98), and a p value of 0.001 (<0.05), in line with research by Adinugroho et al. (2023) and others. The better the brand image, the higher the purchase decision. Hypothesis 6 shows that brand image partially mediates the relationship between advertising creativity and purchase decision with a parameter coefficient of 0.075, a t-statistic value of 2.209 (>1.98), and a p value of 0.027 (<0.05), in line with research by Falah et al. (2020), Adinugroho et al. (2023), and Yoong & Yazdanifard (2014).

Hypothesis 7 shows that brand image perfectly mediates the relationship between product quality and purchase decision with a parameter coefficient of 0.238, a t-statistic value of 3.011 (> 1.98), and a p value of 0.003 (< 0.05), in line with research by Cahayani & Sutar (2020) and others. Overall, the results show that brand image is able to mediate the relationship between product quality and purchase decision positively and significantly. Thus, brand image plays a role as a mediator either wholly or partially in influencing purchase decision, bridging the influence of advertising creativity and product quality on the purchase decision of Lux products.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to determine the effect of advertising creativity and product quality on purchase decision and the role of brand image in mediating the relationship, because there is a gap in the results of previous research on the effect of these two variables on purchase decision. Based on the research results previously described, it can be concluded that advertising creativity has a positive and significant effect on purchase decision, meaning that the stronger the advertising creativity, the higher the purchase decision, so the first hypothesis is accepted. Product quality has a positive but insignificant effect on purchase decision, meaning that the good quality of Lux products does not necessarily make consumers make purchases, so the second hypothesis is rejected. Advertising creativity also has a positive and significant effect on brand image, which means that the stronger the advertising creativity, the higher the brand image, so the third hypothesis is accepted. In addition, product quality has a positive and significant effect on brand image, meaning that the better the product quality, the higher the brand image, so the fourth hypothesis is accepted. Brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase decision, meaning that the stronger the brand image, the higher the purchase decision, so the fifth hypothesis is accepted. Advertising creativity has a positive and significant effect on purchase decision mediated by brand image, meaning that brand image is able to partially mediate the relationship between advertising creativity and purchase decision, so the sixth hypothesis is accepted. Product quality also has a positive and significant effect on purchase decision mediated by brand image, meaning that brand image is able to perfectly mediate the relationship between product quality and purchase decision, so the seventh hypothesis is accepted.

Companies can apply the findings of this study in their marketing strategies and product development in several ways. First, companies like Lux can enhance the creativity of their advertisements by adding more in-depth emotional messages to capture the audience's attention. Surprising advertising approaches can also be tried to increase the effectiveness of advertisements. Second, the company needs to maintain the elegant and brightly colored packaging design and

improve the quality of packaging durability by using stronger materials and better protection technology. Third, companies should strengthen brand associations through consistent advertising campaigns and enhance the uniqueness of brand associations with immersive sensory experiences, such as exclusive scents or limited editions. In addition, expanding distribution networks for easy access to products and offering promotions and loyalty programs can help increase the number of purchases.

The managerial implication of this study shows that advertisements with emotional messages are more attractive to audiences, so Lux should deepen the emotional messages in its advertisements. A surprising advertising approach can also be tried to increase the effectiveness of the advertisement. The elegant and brightly colored packaging design needs to be maintained, while the quality of packaging durability needs to be improved with sturdier materials and protection technology. The strength of brand association needs to be strengthened through consistent advertising campaigns, while the uniqueness of brand association can be enhanced with immersive sensorial experiences, such as exclusive scents or limited editions. Lux also needs to expand its distribution network to ease product access and offer promotions and loyalty programs to increase the number of purchases.

This study has several limitations, including the data collection method, the sample used, and the statistical analysis conducted. First, the research sample consists of only 102 respondents in Cilegon City, which may not be sufficient to represent the wider population. This may affect the generalizability of the research results. Second, the sampling techniques used were purposive and accidental sampling, which may not fully eliminate bias in the selection of respondents. Third, this study uses a quantitative approach with SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) analysis using SmartPLS 4.0, which although powerful in identifying relationships between variables, the results are highly dependent on the quality of the data collected and the assumptions of the model used. For future research, it is recommended to increase the sample size in order to obtain better data interpretation and analysis, as well as expand the research object to increase the variety and general perception of the research variables. Research can also add or replace other variables that are considered capable of mediating the effect of advertising creativity and product quality on purchasing decisions. In addition, it is recommended to examine other factors that influence purchasing decisions so that the research results are more complex and comprehensive. A qualitative approach can also be used to gain deeper insights into consumer behavior and psychological factors that influence purchasing decisions. Further research can also consider other variables that influence purchasing decisions and examine other relevant factors in different contexts. Thus, the results of this study can be more complex and relevant to be applied in various market situations.

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