

THE EFFECT OF PRICE DISCOUNTS ON PURCHASING DECISIONS AT CITI MART STORE IN GUNUNGSITOLI CITY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine and analyze the effect of price discounts on purchasing decisions for Morinaga products at Citi Mart Stores in Gunungsitoli City. The background of this study is based on the phenomenon of high consumer interest in Morinaga products when price discounts are applied, which shows the importance of price promotion strategies in increasing purchasing decisions. The research method used is a descriptive quantitative approach with data collection techniques through questionnaires distributed to 60 consumer respondents who have purchased Morinaga products at Citi Mart Stores during the promotional period. Data were analyzed using validity tests, reliability, simple linear regression, coefficient of determination, and t-tests with the help of the SPSS version 26 program. The results showed that price discounts had a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions with a significance value of 0.018 (<0.05), a coefficient of determination of 9.2%, and a relationship level of 0.304 which is included in the sufficient category. This indicates that even though the influence is relatively small, price discounts still have a role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions, while there is the possibility that other factors are more dominant in influencing purchasing decisions, such as product quality, brand preferences, or consumer psychological factors. Thus, a discount strategy can be an effective promotional alternative, but it needs to be combined with other marketing factors to be more optimal in attracting consumer purchasing interest.

Keywords: Discounts, Purchasing Decisions, Marketing Strategies.

PENGARUH POTONGAN HARGA TERHADAP KEPUTUSAN PEMBELIAN DI TOKO CITI MART KOTA GUNUNGSITOLI

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui dan menganalisis pengaruh potongan harga terhadap keputusan pembelian produk Morinaga di Toko Citi Mart Kota Gunungsitoli. Latar belakang penelitian ini didasarkan pada fenomena tingginya minat konsumen terhadap produk Morinaga saat diberlakukan potongan harga, yang menunjukkan pentingnya strategi promosi harga dalam meningkatkan keputusan pembelian. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kuantitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui kuesioner yang disebarkan kepada 60 responden konsumen yang pernah melakukan pembelian produk Morinaga di Toko Citi Mart dalam periode promosi. Data dianalisis menggunakan uji validitas, reliabilitas, regresi linear sederhana, koefisien determinasi, dan uji t dengan bantuan program SPSS versi 26. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa potongan harga berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap keputusan pembelian dengan nilai signifikansi sebesar 0,018 ($< 0,05$), nilai koefisien determinasi sebesar 9,2%, dan tingkat hubungan sebesar 0,304 yang termasuk dalam kategori cukup. Hal ini mengindikasikan bahwa meskipun pengaruhnya tergolong kecil,

potongan harga tetap memiliki peran dalam memengaruhi keputusan pembelian konsumen, sementara terdapat kemungkinan faktor-faktor lain yang lebih dominan memengaruhi keputusan pembelian, seperti kualitas produk, preferensi merek, atau faktor psikologis konsumen. Dengan demikian, strategi potongan harga dapat menjadi salah satu alternatif promosi yang efektif, namun perlu dikombinasikan dengan faktor pemasaran lainnya agar lebih optimal dalam menarik minat beli konsumen.

Kata kunci: *Potongan Harga, Keputusan Pembelian, Strategi Pemasaran.*

INTRODUCTION

The development of the retail business in Indonesia shows very rapid dynamics, both in the form of traditional retail that is transforming into modern, as well as the emergence of various new retail networks competing to meet the needs of the community. According to Utami (2018), retail comes from the word "retailier" which means to cut or break something, which in practice refers to the activity of selling goods or services directly to the end consumer. In the context of increasingly fierce business competition, every retail business actor is required to understand consumer behavior and develop appropriate marketing strategies to be able to create and retain customers. Changes in consumer consumption patterns due to technological, economic, and socio-cultural developments require businesses to adapt to increasingly diverse consumer needs and desires. One important factor influencing consumer purchasing decisions is promotional strategy, particularly pricing strategy. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2018), price is the most flexible component of the marketing mix and can directly influence consumers' perceptions of a product's value. Among various pricing strategies, discounts are one of the most commonly used promotional instruments to attract consumer interest.

Discounts have been shown to trigger impulsive buying behavior, the act of purchasing without prior planning (Tarigan et al., 2019). This phenomenon frequently occurs in the modern retail sector, where consumers are often encouraged to purchase certain products due to the perceived economic benefits offered through discounts. However, discount strategies also have their own consequences; too frequent discounts can lead to negative perceptions of product quality (Amos et al. in Effendi, 2020). Therefore, the effectiveness of discounts needs to be analyzed so that the promotional strategies implemented by companies not only increase sales volume temporarily but also create sustainable purchasing decisions.

The Citi Mart store in Gunungsitoli City is one of the local retailers that has managed to survive amidst competition from large retail chains such as Alfamidi and Indomaret. One strategy

implemented is offering discounts on certain products, especially Morinaga formula milk products. Morinaga is known for its high quality and relatively premium prices compared to other formula milk brands, so the discount policy is believed to influence consumer purchasing decisions at the store. Based on sales data at Citi Mart (2025), Morinaga products show the highest sales level among various other formula milk brands, especially during promotional periods. Several previous studies have shown that discounts significantly influence purchasing decisions (Cahya, 2018; Prabarini, 2018; Perdana, 2019). However, most of these studies focused on fashion products or e-commerce, while research on conventional retail in island regions like Nias remains limited. This situation opens up new research opportunities to empirically examine the extent to which discounts influence consumer purchasing decisions for basic necessities, such as infant formula.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the influence of price discounts on purchasing decisions for Morinaga products at Citi Mart Stores in Gunungsitoli City. The results are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the field of marketing management, particularly regarding the relationship between price promotion strategies and consumer behavior, as well as provide practical benefits for retail businesses in formulating effective and sustainable pricing policies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Price is a crucial element in the marketing mix, directly impacting company revenue and consumer perception of product value. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2018), price is the amount of money charged for a product or service, or the amount of value consumers exchange for the benefits of that product or service. Manap (2016) defines price as the value of an item expressed in monetary terms, while Tjiptono (in Nurika & Rachmi, 2022) defines price as a measure of the value of goods and services exchanged based on the perceived benefits to consumers. Price serves as an allocation and information tool for consumers. In its allocative function, price helps buyers prioritize purchases based on their purchasing power. In its informative function, price signals the quality of the product offered (Kotler & Armstrong, in Indrasari, 2019). Thus, price is not only an economic instrument but also a psychological indicator that influences consumer perception of a brand.

A price cut or discount is a sales promotion strategy that involves reducing a product's selling

price for a specific period of time. According to Soemarsono (in Kasimin et al., 2014), a price cut is a price reduction offered as an incentive to encourage purchases. Discounts have an emotional appeal that can stimulate consumers to buy, especially in the context of impulse buying. Anne Ahira (2016) states that discounts are generally given when product stocks are overstocked, demand is declining, or in situations of intense price competition. Furthermore, Irawan (2015) emphasizes that Indonesian consumers have unique characteristics, one of which is a tendency to make impulsive purchases when they find attractive discounts.

Forms of discounts according to Ismaya (in Kasimin et al., 2014) include:

1. Cash discount – a discount for consumers who make payments early.
2. Quantity discount – a price reduction for large purchases.
3. Functional discounts – given to intermediaries who perform distribution functions.
4. Seasonal discounts – price cuts outside of the sales season.
5. Trade-in allowance – a discount for returning old goods.

Sutisna (in Amaura Astri, 2021) put forward three main indicators of price cuts, namely:

- a) The amount of the discount, which reflects the nominal value or percentage discount;
- b) Discount period, namely the period of time during which the discount is valid;
- c) The type of product that gets a discount, which influences consumers' interest in buying.

These three indicators play a role in shaping consumer perceptions of the value and urgency of a purchase. Purchasing decisions are psychological and rational processes consumers undertake to determine whether a product is worth purchasing. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), purchasing decisions involve several stages: need recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior. Indrasari (2019) states that purchasing decisions are activities carried out by individuals directly involved in making the decision to purchase a product offered by a seller. Meanwhile, Sudirman et al. (2020) emphasize that this process is the result of an integration of cognitive, emotional, and social factors that influence consumer behavior.

Some of the main factors that influence purchasing decisions according to Muslikhun & Sutopo (2024) include:

1. Price, as a primary consideration related to purchasing power and perceived value;
2. Promotion, which can increase awareness and purchasing interest;
3. Brand image, as an indicator of product trust and reputation;

4. Product quality, which determines satisfaction and repeat purchases;
5. Customer reviews, which serve as a social reference for potential buyers.

Purchasing decision indicators (Kotler in Indrasari, 2019) include:

- a) Need recognition, when the consumer realizes a gap between actual and desired conditions;
- b) Information search, to evaluate product alternatives;
- c) Evaluation of alternatives, to compare product attributes before making a final decision.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with an associative type, which aims to analyze the effect of price discounts on purchasing decisions at the Citi Mart Store in Gunungsitoli City. The study population is all consumers who purchase Morinaga formula milk products, with a sample size of 147 respondents determined using the Slovin formula and purposive sampling technique. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS. The analysis included instrument validity and reliability tests, classical assumption tests, and simple linear regression analysis to determine the effect of price discounts on purchasing decisions. Hypothesis testing was performed using a t-test at a 5% significance level, and the coefficient of determination (R^2) was used to measure the contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Respondent Characteristics

This study involved 60 respondents who were consumers of Morinaga products at Citi Mart Stores in Gunungsitoli City. Based on the data processing results, the majority of respondents were under 30 years old (50%), followed by the 30–39 age group (25%), 40–49 years old (15%), and ≥ 50 years old (10%). In terms of gender, respondents were predominantly female, most of whom play a role as purchasing decision makers for children's products in the household.

2. Research Instrument Testing

The results of the validity test show that all statement items in the discount and purchasing decision variables have a significance value < 0.05 , so that all statement items are declared

valid. Furthermore, the reliability test produced a Cronbach's Alpha value > 0.60 for both variables, which indicates that the research instrument is reliable and consistent for use in measurement.

3. Simple Linear Regression Analysis

The results of a simple linear regression analysis indicate that price discounts have a positive effect on purchasing decisions. The regression equation obtained indicates that any increase in consumer perception of price discounts will be followed by an increase in purchasing decisions for Morinaga products at Citi Mart stores.

4. Correlation Coefficient and Determination

The correlation coefficient value ($R = 0.304$) indicates a positive relationship with a sufficient level of closeness between price discounts and purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, the coefficient of determination (R^2) value of 9.2% indicates that price discounts contribute 9.2% to purchasing decisions, while the other 90.8% is influenced by other factors such as product quality, brand loyalty, and consumer psychological factors.

5. Hypothesis Test (t-Test)

The t-test results showed a significance value of 0.018 (<0.05), so the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that price discounts have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions for Morinaga products at Citi Mart Stores in Gunungsitoli City.

Discussion

The results of the study indicate that price discounts have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions for Morinaga products at Citi Mart Stores in Gunungsitoli City. This is evidenced by a t-test significance value of 0.018 (<0.05), indicating that the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This finding confirms that price discounts are an external stimulus capable of influencing consumer behavior and purchasing decisions. These results align with Kotler and Armstrong (2018), who stated that price is one element of the marketing mix that directly influences consumer purchasing decisions. Discounts, as a form of sales promotion, provide consumers with the perception of added value because they perceive greater benefits for lower costs. This encourages consumers to expedite purchasing decisions, particularly for routine

products like formula.

Furthermore, the findings of this study support the theory proposed by Sutisna (in Amaura Astri, 2021), who stated that the size of the discount, the discount period, and the type of product being discounted are important indicators in influencing consumer perceptions. In the context of this study, Morinaga products are products with a widely recognized brand and a high-quality image. Therefore, when discounts are offered, consumers perceive a combination of quality and a more affordable price, which ultimately drives purchasing decisions. Although discounts have a significant influence, the coefficient of determination shows that the discount only contributes 9.2% to purchasing decisions, with other factors contributing 90.8%. This indicates that discounts are not a dominant factor in determining purchasing decisions for Morinaga products.

This finding aligns with Indrasari's (2019) opinion, which states that consumer purchasing decisions are influenced not only by price but also by product quality, brand image, and consumer trust. When it comes to baby and children's products, consumers tend to be more rational and cautious because they relate to their child's health and development. Therefore, while price is a consideration, product quality and safety remain key factors. This opinion is also supported by Muslikhun and Sutopo (2024), who stated that purchasing decisions are influenced by various factors such as price, promotion, brand image, and product quality. In this study, Morinaga, as a formula milk brand, has a strong reputation and trust among consumers, so purchasing decisions are not entirely dependent on price discounts.

The results of this study align with field conditions, which indicate that discounts at Citi Mart stores can increase consumer purchasing interest, particularly during promotional periods. Consumers tend to take advantage of discounts to purchase Morinaga products, both for immediate needs and as inventory. However, as Anne Ahira (2016) points out, excessive discounts can create negative perceptions of a product or store, such as the perception that product quality is declining. Therefore, discount strategies need to be implemented selectively and combined with other marketing strategies to avoid damaging brand image. Overall, the results of this study support the consumer behavior theory proposed by Kotler and Armstrong (2016), which states that purchasing decisions are the result of a process of need recognition, information search, and evaluation of alternatives. Price discounts act as a stimulus that strengthens this process, but the final decision is still influenced by internal consumer factors and product characteristics.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that discounts have a positive and significant impact on consumer purchasing decisions at Citi Mart Stores in Gunungsitoli City. Regression analysis results indicate that discounts explain 49.8% of the variation in purchasing decisions, with the remainder influenced by other factors such as promotions, product quality, and consumer preferences. Therefore, the more attractive and appropriate the discount strategy implemented, the greater the chance of increasing consumer purchasing decisions. For Citi Mart Management, it is necessary to maintain and optimize discount strategies in a planned manner, for example by determining the right discount period and adjusting the discount amount to remain attractive without reducing the perception of product quality.

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