

## PRODUCT STRATEGY, BRAND EQUITY, AND SERVICE QUALITY EFFECTS ON PURCHASE INTENTION AMONG LINOW LAKE TOURISTS

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### Abstract

This study examines a model of how product strategy, brand equity, and service quality influence purchase intention among tourists visiting Linow Lake, Tomohon City, North Sulawesi, Indonesia. Using a causal associative design, data were collected online via a structured questionnaire (Google Form) from 100 respondents selected through purposive non-probability sampling. Product strategy was measured through product variety, quality, design, features, packaging, size, and return; brand equity through brand awareness, perceived quality, brand association, and brand loyalty; and service quality through reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. Purchase intention was assessed through indicators related to planned purchase/visit intention, patience/willingness, and information search. All measurement items were valid ( $r$ -count  $>$   $r$ -table) and reliable (Cronbach's alpha  $>$  0.6). Classical assumption tests indicated normal residual distribution, no multicollinearity (VIF  $<$  10; tolerance  $>$  0.10), and no heteroscedasticity. Multiple linear regression results show that product strategy and brand equity have positive and significant effects on purchase intention, while service quality is not statistically significant in the regression model. Simultaneously, the three predictors significantly explain purchase intention. The findings highlight the importance of strengthening tourism product attributes and brand equity to enhance tourists' purchase intention toward Linow Lake as a destination.

**Keywords:** *brand equity; product strategy; purchase intention; service quality; tourism destination.*

### INTRODUCTION

Sustainable tourism development is closely related to efforts to ensure that natural, social, and cultural resources used for tourism can be maintained for future generations. Tourism has become a dynamic force shaping regional economic development while also preserving the uniqueness and authenticity of nature. In North Sulawesi, tourism is currently prioritized, and destination managers continue to improve facilities and supporting infrastructure. One well-known destination is Linow Lake, located within the administrative area of Tomohon City, North Sulawesi Province. Linow Lake is recognized for its distinctive characteristic as a “three-color lake,” where water color changes can occur. This phenomenon is commonly associated with sulfur content and hydrothermal activity around the lake, as well as environmental and optical factors (Rigawa et al., 2015).

Statistical reports also indicate fluctuations in tourist arrivals. For example, the Tomohon statistical publication reported a decline in tourism figures in 2020 compared with 2019 (BPS Kota Tomohon, 2020). Such declines motivate further research into marketing-related determinants of tourists' intention to visit or purchase tourism services. Prior work also suggests that tourism destinations can influence local economic conditions by creating employment opportunities for surrounding communities (Mende et al., 2022). Therefore, this study investigates whether product strategy, brand equity, and service quality influence purchase intention among tourists visiting Linow Lake. Understanding these determinants can inform destination management strategies to strengthen competitiveness and tourist demand.

### Research Questions

1. Do product strategy, brand equity, and service quality affect purchase intention among Linow Lake tourists (simultaneously)?
2. Does product strategy affect purchase intention among Linow Lake tourists?

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3. Does brand equity affect purchase intention among Linow Lake tourists?
4. Does service quality affect purchase intention among Linow Lake tourists?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1. Product Strategy**

In marketing, the product is frequently treated as a central element of the marketing mix and a key driver of customer value creation (Abdelhady et al., 2019). In tourism, “product” may be a tangible offering, a service, or a combination that forms the tourist experience. Product strategy can therefore be operationalized through attributes that represent what tourists perceive and evaluate when deciding to visit or purchase. This study uses product strategy indicators commonly associated with marketing management, including product variety, quality, design, features, packaging, size, and return policies/guarantees (Kotler, 2000). For destination settings, these indicators can be interpreted as the diversity and uniqueness of attractions, perceived quality of facilities, experience design, experiential features, how the destination is “packaged” and communicated, accessibility/scale, and service recovery mechanisms.

### **2. Brand Equity**

Brand equity refers to the value added by a brand name to a product or service as reflected in consumer responses and market outcomes. Strong brand equity is typically associated with higher awareness, positive associations, perceived quality, and loyalty, components that collectively shape consumer preference and choice behavior (Aaker, 2018). In tourism, a destination brand can affect perceived credibility, reduce perceived risk, and strengthen the intention to visit. In this study, brand equity is measured through brand awareness, perceived quality, brand association, and brand loyalty. A destination such as Linow Lake; widely recognized for its unique natural features may benefit from strong brand salience and positive visitor associations, which can translate into higher purchase intention.

### **3. Service Quality**

Service quality is generally defined as the degree to which a service meets or exceeds customer expectations. The SERVQUAL dimensions reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles are commonly used to evaluate service performance in consumer contexts (Budiono, 2014; Ghazali, 2012). In tourism destinations, service quality relates to staff behavior, information support, cleanliness, safety, and the adequacy of physical facilities.

### **4. Purchase Intention**

Purchase intention represents a consumer’s willingness or plan to buy a product/service in the future. In tourism, it can reflect intention to visit, revisit, recommend, or purchase supporting services. Purchase intention is often used as an input for forecasting demand and market share estimation (Al Hafizi & Ali, 2021).

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design and Setting**

This study uses a causal associative research design to predict and analyze relationships between independent variables—product strategy (X1), brand equity (X2), and service quality (X3)—and the dependent variable purchase intention (Y). The research focuses on tourists/visitors related to the Linow Lake tourism destination in Lahendong Sub-district, South Tomohon, Tomohon City, North Sulawesi, Indonesia.

### **Data Sources**

- a) Primary data: collected from respondents via an online questionnaire (Google Form).
- b) Secondary data: supporting documents and statistical publications relevant to tourism context (e.g., BPS Kota Tomohon, 2020).

### **Population and Sample**

Population refers to a generalized area consisting of objects/subjects with specific characteristics determined by researchers for study and inference (Sugiyono, 2019). A sample is part of the population that represents the population's characteristics (Sugiyono, 2019). Sampling used non-probability purposive sampling, i.e., selecting respondents based on particular considerations relevant to the study objectives (Sugiyono, 2019). The final sample size was 100 respondents, consistent with general guidance that an appropriate sample may range from 30 to 500 depending on research needs (Sugiyono, 2019).

### **Variables and Measurements**

- a) Product Strategy (X1): product variety, quality, design, features, packaging, size, return (Kotler, 2000).
- b) Brand Equity (X2): brand awareness, perceived quality, brand association, brand loyalty (Aaker, 2018).
- c) Service Quality (X3): reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, tangibles (SERVQUAL dimensions).
- d) Purchase Intention (Y): indicators related to planning/intention, patience/willingness, and search.

### **Data Analysis**

Data were analyzed using:

- 1) Validity test (item validity using r-count vs r-table).
- 2) Reliability test (Cronbach's alpha; threshold > 0.6) (Ghozali, 2012).
- 3) Classical assumption tests: normality, multicollinearity (tolerance, VIF), and heteroscedasticity.

Multiple linear regression to test partial and simultaneous effects (t-test and F-test interpretation supported by significance values).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Respondent Profile**

**Table 1. Respondents by Age**

<b>Age (years)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
20–23	69	69%
24–27	6	6%
28–31	11	11%
32–50	14	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

The respondents were dominated by the 20–23 age group (69%), indicating that younger visitors formed the largest portion of the sample.

**Table 2. Respondents by Address**

<b>Address</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Manado	30	30%
Tondano	23	23%
Amurang	10	10%
Langowan	16	16%
Tomohon	21	21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Respondents were primarily domiciled in Manado (30%), followed by Tondano (23%) and Tomohon (21%).

### Instrument Testing

#### Validity Test

All items across variables were reported as valid because  $r\text{-count} > r\text{-table}$  (0.196) for each indicator.

#### Reliability Test

All variables were reliable (Cronbach's alpha  $> 0.6$ ) (Ghozali, 2012).

**Table 3. Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)**

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Product Strategy	0.836	Reliable
Brand Equity	0.799	Reliable
Service Quality	0.879	Reliable
Purchase Intention	0.828	Reliable

### Classical Assumption Tests

#### Normality

The normality plot shows points distributed around and following the diagonal line, indicating normal residual distribution.

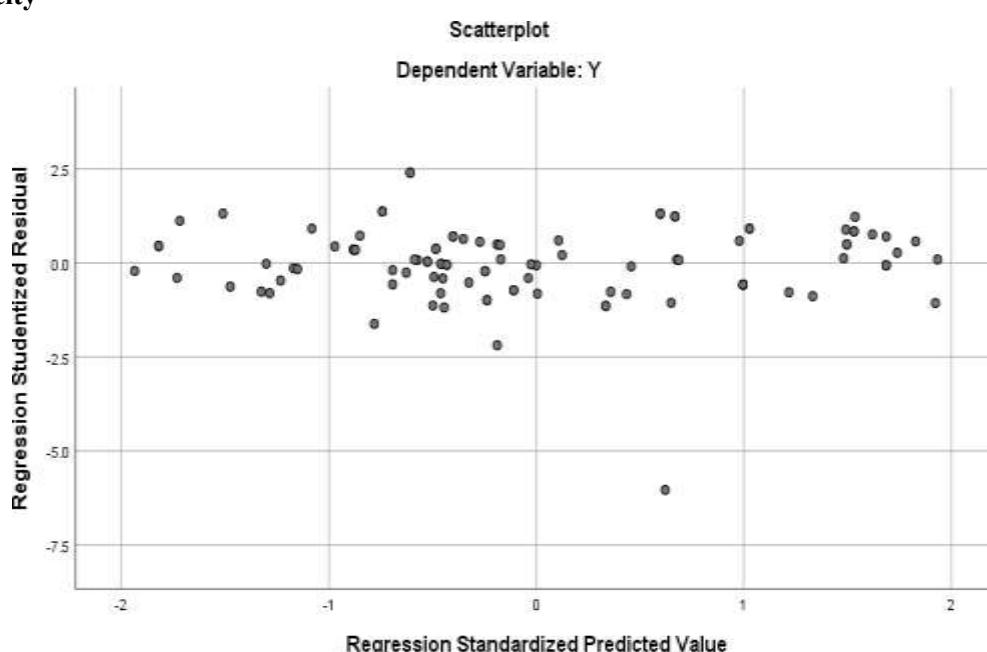
#### Multicollinearity

Tolerance values were  $> 0.10$  and VIF values were  $< 10$  for all independent variables, indicating no multicollinearity.

**Table 4. Multicollinearity Statistics**

Predictor	Tolerance	VIF	Interpretation
Product Strategy (X1)	0.376	2.659	No multicollinearity
Brand Equity (X2)	0.325	3.079	No multicollinearity
Service Quality (X3)	0.323	3.093	No multicollinearity

### Heteroscedasticity



**Figure 1:** The scatterplot (as reported) showed points randomly dispersed without a clear pattern, indicating no heteroscedasticity.

### Multiple Linear Regression

#### Regression Model

Based on unstandardized coefficients (B), the regression equation is:

$$Y = 0.718 + 0.189X_1 + 0.400X_2 - 0.031X_3$$

Where:

- $X_1$  = Product Strategy
- $X_2$  = Brand Equity
- $X_3$  = Service Quality
- $Y$  = Purchase Intention

**Table 5. Regression Coefficients**

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	0.718	2.531	—	0.284	0.777
$X_1$ Product Strategy	0.189	0.075	0.313	2.537	0.013
$X_2$ Brand Equity	0.400	0.120	0.442	3.328	0.001
$X_3$ Service Quality	-0.031	0.092	-0.045	-0.337	0.737

#### Interpretation (partial effects):

- Product strategy ( $X_1$ ) has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention ( $p = 0.013 < 0.05$ ).
- Brand equity ( $X_2$ ) has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention ( $p = 0.001 < 0.05$ ).
- Service quality ( $X_3$ ) has a negative but not significant effect on purchase intention in this regression model ( $p = 0.737 > 0.05$ ).

**Simultaneous Significance (F-Test)**

**Table 6. ANOVA (Model Significance)**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	560.203	3	186.734	26.161	0.000
Residual	685.237	96	7.138	—	—
Total	1245.440	99	—	—	—

The model is statistically significant simultaneously ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ), meaning X1, X2, and X3 together significantly explain purchase intention.

**Joint Influence of Product Strategy, Brand Equity, and Service Quality on Purchase Intention**

The simultaneous test results indicate that product strategy, brand equity, and service quality collectively influence tourists' purchase intention toward Linow Lake. This aligns with marketing theory that consumer intention is shaped by a combination of product value propositions, brand-based perceptions, and service experience (Abdelhady et al., 2019; Kotler & Keller, 2016). For tourism destinations, purchase intention can be strengthened when the destination provides a compelling "product" (attraction uniqueness and experience design), establishes a trustworthy brand image, and delivers services that support satisfaction and comfort. In this study, the overall model significance suggests that destination managers should view these factors as an integrated system. Even if one predictor is not statistically significant in the partial regression, the combined effect can still be meaningful for practical planning—particularly because tourists evaluate destinations holistically rather than through a single attribute.

**Effect of Product Strategy on Purchase Intention**

Product strategy significantly influenced purchase intention. For Linow Lake, product strategy can be interpreted as the uniqueness and configuration of tourism offerings—such as the lake's color-changing phenomenon, geothermal features, scenic viewpoints, and supporting facilities (e.g., photo spots and relaxation areas). When these attributes are designed and communicated effectively, potential visitors can form favorable expectations about the experience, increasing their intention to visit and purchase destination services. This finding is consistent with the view that product-related elements variety, quality, design, and features operate as core drivers of consumer preference (Kotler, 2000; Kotler & Keller, 2016). In destination contexts, an attractive tourism product helps reduce uncertainty and enhances perceived value, which supports intention formation.

**Effect of Brand Equity on Purchase Intention**

Brand equity significantly influenced purchase intention. Linow Lake's recognition as a distinctive destination—often associated with the "three-color lake" identity—may enhance brand awareness and shape positive associations in tourists' minds. When brand awareness and perceived quality are strong, tourists tend to have greater confidence in their decision to visit. This aligns with brand equity theory that awareness, associations, perceived quality, and loyalty contribute to stronger consumer response and intention (Aaker, 2018). In tourism, brand equity can function as a heuristic that simplifies decision-making, particularly for visitors comparing multiple destinations.

**Effect of Service Quality on Purchase Intention**

Service quality was not statistically significant in the partial regression model ( $p > 0.05$ ). In practical terms, this indicates that within this sample and model specification, variation in service quality scores did not explain additional variance in purchase intention beyond product strategy and brand equity. However, service quality remains conceptually important in tourism. Service quality contributes to satisfaction, comfort, and overall experience assessment, which can influence repeat visits, word-of-mouth, and long-term destination reputation (Budiono, 2014; Ghazali, 2012). The non-significant coefficient here may reflect sample characteristics, measurement context, or the possibility that service quality effects operate indirectly (e.g., through satisfaction or perceived value), which was not modeled in this regression.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that product strategy, brand equity, and service quality simultaneously influence tourists' purchase intention toward Linow Lake, Tomohon City. Partially, product strategy and brand equity have positive and significant effects on purchase intention, indicating that strengthening destination product attributes and building strong destination brand equity are key priorities for increasing tourist demand. In contrast, service quality is not statistically significant in the partial regression model, suggesting that its direct effect on purchase intention was not supported in this dataset when product strategy and brand equity were included. Practically, destination managers should focus on (1) improving and innovating tourism product features and experience design, and (2) strengthening brand identity and brand-based trust to enhance tourists' intention to visit and purchase. Service quality should continue to be maintained as part of holistic destination management, especially for visitor comfort and satisfaction outcomes.

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