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THE INFLUENCE OF DIGITAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE, PRODUCT QUALITY AND PRICE ON FROZEN FOOD PURCHASE DECISIONS AT A&Y FROZEN FOOD STORE AMONG CONSUMERS IN LHOKSEUMAWE CITY

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Abstract

This study examines the effects of *Digital Customer Experience*, product quality, and price on consumers' purchase decisions regarding frozen food at A&Y Frozen Food Store in Lhokseumawe City. A quantitative approach was adopted. Primary data were collected through questionnaires administered to 96 respondents who were customers of the store, selected by *purposive sampling*. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression in SPSS. The results indicate that *Digital Customer Experience* does not have a significant effect on purchase decisions ($t = -0.878$, $p = 0.382$). Product quality has a statistically significant but negative effect ($t = -2.578$, $p = 0.012$), whereas price exerts a positive and significant effect ($t = 12.436$, $p < 0.001$). The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.707$) indicates that the three predictors jointly explain 70.7% of the variance in purchase decisions, with the remaining 29.3% attributable to factors outside the model. These findings identify price as the dominant determinant of purchase decisions among the store's consumers.

Keywords: *Digital Customer Experience, Product Quality, Price, Purchase Decision, Frozen Food.*

INTRODUCTION

Advances in digital technology have transformed the ways in which firms and business owners interact with consumers. Interactions that were once conducted predominantly face to face now occur across a range of digital channels, including social media, messaging applications, websites, and other online platforms. These developments enable consumers to obtain product information, compare alternatives, communicate with sellers, and place orders with greater ease. In this context, the experience that consumers have when engaging with a firm through digital media has become a salient consideration in marketing practice.

Digital Customer Experience refers to the overall experience that consumers have when interacting with a firm across multiple digital touchpoints. It encompasses ease of use, information quality, system quality, personalization, security and privacy, and interaction quality. Kacprzak and Hensel (2023) argue that customer experience in digital environments is associated with the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses that arise during customers' interactions with a firm through various digital channels. Theoretically, a favorable digital experience may enhance customer satisfaction, trust, and purchase propensity.

Beyond digital experience, product quality is a key determinant in the purchase decision process. Product quality denotes the extent to which a product satisfies consumers' needs and expectations. In the case of frozen food, quality may be reflected in product condition, taste after preparation, packaging, safety, storage durability, and conformity to consumer expectations. Products perceived to be of high quality are expected to foster more favorable perceptions of value, thereby influencing consumers' choices.

Price is likewise an important determinant, as it represents the sacrifice that consumers must make to acquire a product. Consumers typically evaluate price affordability, the alignment of price with quality and benefits, and the price relative to competing products or stores. In the frozen food sector, product variety and heterogeneity in consumers' purchasing power make price perception a central component of the purchase decision.

A&Y Frozen Food Store is a frozen food retailer located at Jalan Gudang III No. 41, Banda Sakti District, Lhokseumawe City, Aceh Province. The store offers a range of frozen products, including nuggets, sausages, meatballs, dim sum, frozen french fries, frozen seafood, and other processed items. In addition to in-store sales, the store uses digital media, notably WhatsApp and Instagram, for promotion, product information, communication, and order placement.

Although digital media facilitate consumers' access to information and communication with the store, their availability does not automatically render digital experience the principal determinant of purchase decisions. Consumers may be guided by other, more compelling considerations, such as product need, product availability, price, quality, and prior purchase experience.

Descriptive statistics based on 96 consumers of A&Y Frozen Food Store show that *Digital Customer Experience* has a mean of 4.40 (SD = 0.739), which falls into the "very good" category. Product quality has a mean of 4.43 (SD = 0.632), price 4.38 (SD = 0.616), and purchase decisions 4.46 (SD = 0.603). Although all variables received high descriptive ratings, inferential testing remains necessary to determine the effect of each variable on purchase decisions.

Against this background, the present study seeks to examine (1) the effect of *Digital Customer Experience* on purchase decisions, (2) the effect of product quality on purchase decisions, and (3) the effect of price on purchase decisions, as well as (4) the extent to which these three variables jointly explain the variance in purchase decisions among consumers of A&Y Frozen Food Store in Lhokseumawe City.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital Customer Experience

Digital Customer Experience is defined as the customer experience formed through interactions with a firm across various digital channels. In the study by Firda, the construct was examined through six dimensions: ease of use, information quality, system quality, personalization, security and privacy, and interaction quality. Ease of use concerns consumers' ability to operate digital media with little effort. Information quality refers to the completeness, clarity, relevance, and comprehensibility of the information provided. System quality relates to the system's capacity to deliver services that are fast, stable, secure, and accessible. Personalization refers to the firm's ability to tailor information or services to customers' needs. Security and privacy concern the protection of personal data and the safety of transactions, while interaction quality pertains to the communication and service delivered through digital media.

In the context of A&Y Frozen Food Store, *Digital Customer Experience* arises when consumers view product information on social media, contact the store via WhatsApp, inquire about prices or product availability, receive responses from the seller, and place orders digitally. Theoretically, a more favorable digital experience should facilitate the consumer journey. The findings of this study, however, indicate that digital experience is not yet a significant factor in purchase decisions.

Product Quality

Product quality reflects a product's capacity to meet consumers' needs and expectations. For frozen food, quality pertains not only to taste but also to the product's physical condition, cleanliness, packaging, durability, safety, and suitability to needs. Consumers assess whether the products they purchase deliver the expected benefits and quality.

Respondents rated the product quality of A&Y Frozen Food Store as "very good" (M = 4.43). Several items received particularly high ratings: items 1 and 2 (M = 4.72), item 8 (M = 4.67), and item 7 (M = 4.63). These results indicate that, descriptively, consumers hold a positive perception of product quality. The partial test, however, reveals a negative direction of effect once the other variables are controlled for in the regression model.

Price

Price is the value that consumers must forgo in order to obtain a product or the benefits it offers. In purchase decisions, consumers may consider price affordability, the fit between price and product quality, the fit between price

and benefits, and price competitiveness. A price perceived to be commensurate with consumers' ability to pay and with the product's value can increase the likelihood that a product is chosen.

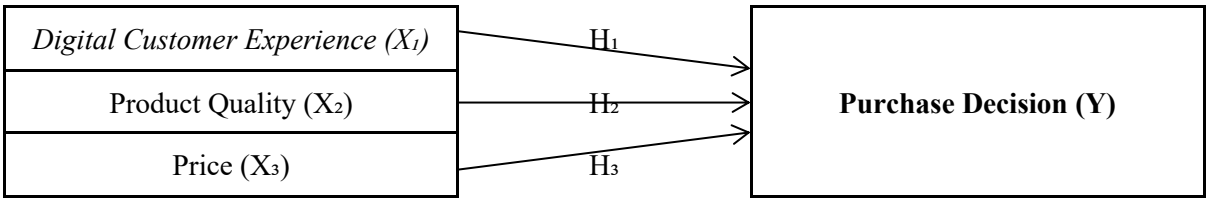
At A&Y Frozen Food Store, price perception has a mean of 4.38 (SD = 0.616) and falls into the "very good" category. Item 4 has a mean of 4.67, item 5 a mean of 4.63, and item 1 a mean of 4.55. These results indicate that respondents evaluate the prices of the store's products favorably. Furthermore, the t-test results show that price is the most dominant variable in the research model.

Purchase Decision

A purchase decision is the process through which consumers choose to buy a product on the basis of their needs, available information, evaluation of alternatives, and other considerations. In this study, purchase decisions were measured using indicators reflecting confidence in the product, habitual purchasing, recommendation to others, and repeat purchase. Such decisions may be influenced by consumers' experience, product quality, price, product availability, and other relevant factors.

The descriptive results show that purchase decisions have a mean of 4.46 (SD = 0.603), which falls into the "very good" category. This high score suggests a strong tendency among respondents to purchase products from A&Y Frozen Food Store. Nevertheless, the determinants of purchase decisions must still be examined statistically through their relationships with *Digital Customer Experience*, product quality, and price.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a quantitative approach, which is appropriate for measuring the relationships and effects between the independent variables—*Digital Customer Experience* (X_1), product quality (X_2), and price (X_3)—and the dependent variable, purchase decision (Y). The research was conducted at A&Y Frozen Food Store in Lhokseumawe City.

The population comprises consumers of A&Y Frozen Food Store. The sample consists of 96 respondents selected through purposive sampling, whereby respondents were chosen on the basis of their relevance to the research object, that is, their status as customers of the store. Primary data were collected through a questionnaire employing a Likert scale.

The research instrument was subjected to validity and reliability testing. Validity was assessed using Pearson Product Moment correlation by comparing the calculated r with the critical r value. With 96 respondents, the critical r value at the 5% significance level is 0.200. All statement items for *Digital Customer Experience*, product quality, price, and purchase decision were deemed valid, as their calculated r values exceeded the critical value.

Reliability was assessed using *Cronbach's Alpha*, with the instrument deemed reliable when the coefficient exceeds 0.60. Classical assumption tests were subsequently conducted, comprising tests of normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression. Hypotheses were tested using the partial test (t-test), and the model's explanatory power was evaluated using the coefficient of determination (R^2).

RESULTS

Respondent Characteristics

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	17–25 years	33	34%
	26–35 years	35	37%
	36–45 years	20	21%
	>45 years	8	8%
Gender	Female	61	64%
	Male	35	36%
Highest Education	Senior high school/vocational school	52	54%
	Bachelor's degree	26	27%
	Diploma (D3)	15	16%
	Junior high school	3	3%
Occupation	Private-sector employee	30	31%
	Student (school/university)	27	28%
	Entrepreneur	16	17%
	Homemaker	11	11%
	Civil servant	10	10%
	Other/Freelance	2	2%
Monthly Income	< Rp1,000,000	33	34%
	Rp1,000,000–Rp2,500,000	14	15%
	Rp2,500,001–Rp5,000,000	38	40%
	Rp5,000,001–Rp7,500,000	11	11%
Purchase Frequency	1 time	11	12%
	2–3 times	46	48%
	4–5 times	31	32%
	>5 times	8	8%

With respect to age, respondents aged 26–35 years constituted the largest group (n = 35; 37%), followed by those aged 17–25 years (n = 33; 34%), 36–45 years (n = 20; 21%), and over 45 years (n = 8; 8%). The predominance of productive-age respondents suggests that the store's customers are drawn largely from groups that require convenient food products and have relatively busy schedules.

In terms of gender, 61 respondents (64%) were female and 35 (36%) were male. Regarding highest education attained, senior high school/vocational school graduates formed the largest group (n = 52; 54%), followed by bachelor's degree holders (n = 26; 27%), Diploma (D3) holders (n = 15; 16%), and junior high school graduates (n = 3; 3%).

By occupation, private-sector employees constituted the largest group (n = 30; 31%), followed by students (n = 27; 28%), entrepreneurs (n = 16; 17%), homemakers (n = 11; 11%), civil servants (n = 10; 10%), and those in other occupations or freelance work (n = 2; 2%). In terms of income, the Rp2,500,001–Rp5,000,000 bracket was the largest (n = 38; 40%). With regard to purchase frequency, consumers who made purchases two to three times in the preceding month formed the largest group (n = 46; 48%).

Descriptive Analysis of Variables

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Category
Digital Customer Experience (X_1)	4.40	0.739	Very good
Product Quality (X_2)	4.43	0.632	Very good
Price (X_3)	4.38	0.616	Very good
Purchase Decision (Y)	4.46	0.603	Very good

Digital Customer Experience has a mean of 4.40 (SD = 0.739), which falls into the "very good" category and indicates that consumers generally evaluate their digital interactions with A&Y Frozen Food Store positively. Items 1 and 2 have a mean of 4.64, item 6 a mean of 4.60, and item 4 a mean of 4.55. Item 3 has the lowest mean (4.00), although it remains within the "good" category.

Product quality has a mean of 4.43 (SD = 0.632). Items 1 and 2 received the highest mean (4.72), followed by item 8 (4.67) and item 7 (4.63), while item 10 had a mean of 4.20. Overall, respondents evaluated the product quality of A&Y Frozen Food Store favorably.

Price has a mean of 4.38 (SD = 0.616) and falls into the "very good" category. Item 4 has a mean of 4.67, item 5 a mean of 4.63, and item 1 a mean of 4.55, indicating that consumers hold a positive perception of the prices set by the store.

Purchase decisions have a mean of 4.46 (SD = 0.603). Respondents' answers were predominantly in the "agree" and "strongly agree" categories, indicating a high propensity for purchase decisions among consumers of A&Y Frozen Food Store products.

Validity Test

Table 3. Validity Test Results

Variable	Number of Items	r Table	Result
Digital Customer Experience (X_1)	12	0.200	All items valid
Product Quality (X_2)	12	0.200	All items valid
Price (X_3)	12	0.200	All items valid
Purchase Decision (Y)	12	0.200	All items valid

The validity test was applied to all statement items. The results indicate that all items measuring *Digital Customer Experience*, product quality, price, and purchase decision have calculated r values exceeding the critical value of 0.200. All items were therefore deemed valid and suitable for subsequent analysis.

Reliability Test

Table 4. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Threshold	Remark
Digital Customer Experience (X_1)	0.869	0.60	Reliable
Product Quality (X_2)	0.708	0.60	Reliable
Price (X_3)	0.702	0.60	Reliable
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.674	0.60	Reliable

The reliability results show that all variables have *Cronbach's Alpha* coefficients above 0.60: 0.869 for *Digital Customer Experience*, 0.708 for product quality, 0.702 for price, and 0.674 for purchase decision. All instruments were therefore deemed reliable and to exhibit adequate internal consistency.

Classical Assumption Tests

Normality was assessed using the *One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test*, with residuals considered normally distributed when the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value exceeds 0.05. The results indicate that the model satisfies the normality assumption.

Table 5. Multicollinearity Test Results

Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Conclusion
Digital Customer Experience (X_1)	0.652	1.533	No multicollinearity
Product Quality (X_2)	0.344	2.903	No multicollinearity
Price (X_3)	0.439	2.279	No multicollinearity

The multicollinearity results show that all tolerance values exceed 0.10 and all VIF values are below 10, indicating the absence of high linear dependence among the independent variables. The three predictors were therefore deemed suitable for inclusion in the multiple linear regression analysis.

Heteroscedasticity was examined using a scatterplot. The points were scattered randomly around zero on the Y-axis and did not form any discernible pattern, such as a wave, a narrowing funnel, or a widening funnel. The regression model therefore does not exhibit heteroscedasticity.

Multiple Linear Regression

Table 6. Multiple Linear Regression Results

Variable	Coefficient B	Calculated t	Sig.
Constant	18.366	6.190	0.000
Digital Customer Experience (X_1)	−0.037	−0.878	0.382
Product Quality (X_2)	−0.221	−2.578	0.012
Price (X_3)	0.930	12.436	0.000

The multiple linear regression analysis yields the equation $Y = 18.366 - 0.037X_1 - 0.221X_2 + 0.930X_3$. The constant (18.366) represents the expected value of purchase decisions when *Digital Customer Experience*, product quality, and price are held at zero. The coefficient for *Digital Customer Experience* (−0.037) indicates a negative relationship, as does that for product quality (−0.221), whereas the coefficient for price (0.930) indicates a positive relationship.

Price has the largest coefficient, indicating that it makes the greatest contribution to the regression model. The significance of each variable's effect, however, is determined by the t-test results.

Coefficient of Determination

Table 7. Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error
0.841	0.707	0.698	1.868

The R Square value of 0.707 indicates that *Digital Customer Experience*, product quality, and price jointly explain 70.7% of the variance in purchase decisions among consumers of A&Y Frozen Food Store, while the remaining 29.3% is explained by factors outside the research model. The Adjusted R Square of 0.698 reflects the model's explanatory power after accounting for the number of predictors and the sample size.

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Partial Test (t-Test)

Table 8. Partial Test (t-Test) Results

Variable	Calculated t	Sig.	Decision
Digital Customer Experience (X_1)	−0.878	0.382	Not significant
Product Quality (X_2)	−2.578	0.012	Significant, negative
Price (X_3)	12.436	0.000	Significant, positive

Digital Customer Experience yields a calculated t-value of −0.878 with a significance level of 0.382. Because the significance level exceeds 0.05, *Digital Customer Experience* does not have a significant effect on purchase decisions. The first hypothesis, which posits that *Digital Customer Experience* affects purchase decisions, is therefore rejected.

Product quality yields a calculated t-value of −2.578 with a significance level of 0.012. As the significance level is below 0.05, product quality has a statistically significant effect on purchase decisions; however, the regression coefficient is negative. Consequently, if the hypothesis is formulated as a positive effect, it is not supported by the direction of the results.

Price yields a calculated t-value of 12.436 with a significance level of 0.000. As the significance level is below 0.05, price has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions, and the third hypothesis is therefore accepted.

DISCUSSION

The Effect of Digital Customer Experience on Purchase Decisions

The results indicate that *Digital Customer Experience* does not have a significant effect on frozen food purchase decisions at A&Y Frozen Food Store in Lhokseumawe City. The calculated t-value of −0.878 and significance level of 0.382 suggest that variation in consumers' digital experience is insufficient to explain variation in purchase decisions.

Descriptively, *Digital Customer Experience* has a mean of 4.40 and falls into the "very good" category, indicating that consumers evaluate positively the ease of obtaining information, communicating, and interacting through digital media. A favorable descriptive evaluation, however, does not necessarily imply a statistically significant effect on purchase decisions.

This result is plausible given that A&Y Frozen Food Store is a local business whose customers, in part, became familiar with the store through direct purchase experience or recommendations from family and friends. Digital media appear to serve as a supporting tool for obtaining information and communicating, whereas purchase decisions may be shaped more strongly by factors directly related to consumer needs, particularly price and product availability.

These findings are not fully consistent with Kacprzak and Hensel (2023), who argue that a positive digital experience has the potential to enhance satisfaction and stimulate purchases. The divergence suggests that the effect of *Digital Customer Experience* may depend on business characteristics, product type, consumer behavior patterns, and other factors that exert a stronger influence on purchase decisions.

The Effect of Product Quality on Purchase Decisions

Product quality has a significant but negative effect on purchase decisions. The calculated t-value of −2.578 and significance level of 0.012 indicate a statistically significant effect. The negative direction, however, indicates that, in a model that simultaneously accounts for *Digital Customer Experience* and price, higher product quality scores are associated with lower purchase decision scores.

This negative direction should not be interpreted to mean that consumers perceive the product quality of A&Y Frozen Food Store as poor. On the contrary, the descriptive results show a mean of 4.43, within the "very good" category. The finding is more appropriately understood as a partial relationship that emerges once the other variables in the regression model are controlled for.

One explanation offered in this study is the presence of other, more dominant factors, particularly price. Most of the frozen food products sold at the store are from brands already familiar to consumers. Consumers may therefore already trust the quality of these products, such that differences in perceived quality are not the primary consideration relative to the price they must pay.

This result departs from theoretical perspectives that position product quality as a key determinant of purchase decisions. The discrepancy may stem from differences in the characteristics of the research object and respondents. In the context of A&Y Frozen Food Store, product quality is generally already perceived as good, so the factor that differentiates consumers' choices is more strongly price.

The Effect of Price on Purchase Decisions

Price has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions. The calculated t-value of 12.436 with a significance level of 0.000 indicates a very strong statistical effect, and the regression coefficient of 0.930, the largest in the model, identifies price as the most dominant variable.

This finding suggests that the more favorable consumers' perception of the price offered, the higher their propensity to make a purchase decision. Consumers consider whether the price is affordable, whether it corresponds to the product's quality and benefits, and how it compares with alternatives.

The descriptive results corroborate this finding. Price has a mean of 4.38, within the "very good" category, with item 4 at 4.67, item 5 at 4.63, and item 1 at 4.55. Respondents thus generally evaluate the prices set by A&Y Frozen Food Store favorably.

The respondent profile also shows a considerable proportion of consumers with incomes below Rp1,000,000 and between Rp1,000,000 and Rp2,500,000. This may heighten the importance of price in purchase decisions: for consumers with limited purchasing power, a price perceived as appropriate may serve as the primary basis for selecting a product.

These findings are consistent with the marketing concept that price represents the value consumers must give up in order to obtain the benefits of a product. When consumers judge a price to be commensurate with their ability to pay and the benefits received, perceived value increases and may encourage a purchase decision.

Implications of the Research Results

The findings have implications for A&Y Frozen Food Store, notably that pricing strategy warrants primary attention. Because price is the most dominant variable, the store should maintain competitive prices that correspond to consumers' purchasing power and are balanced against the quality of the products offered.

Although *Digital Customer Experience* was not found to be significant, digital media management should nevertheless be sustained, as these media function as channels for information and communication. The store may update product information regularly, respond promptly, and improve the quality of its online service. Such efforts can preserve the consumer experience even though digital experience has not yet become a principal determinant of purchase decisions.

Product quality should also be maintained. Although its effect in the model is negative, the descriptive results show that consumers rate product quality as very good. Sustaining quality is necessary to preserve consumer trust and to ensure that products continue to meet expectations.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings concerning the effects of *Digital Customer Experience*, product quality, and price on frozen food purchase decisions at A&Y Frozen Food Store in Lhokseumawe City, it is concluded that *Digital Customer Experience* does not have a significant effect on purchase decisions ($t = -0.878$; $p = 0.382$).

Product quality has a significant but negative effect on purchase decisions ($t = -2.578$; $p = 0.012$). The negative direction indicates that, once the other variables in the model are controlled for, particularly price, higher product quality scores are associated with lower purchase decision scores. This finding does not imply that product quality is rated poorly, since, descriptively, product quality falls into the "very good" category.

Price has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions ($t = 12.436$; $p < 0.001$). The regression coefficient of 0.930 further confirms price as the most dominant variable influencing purchase decisions.

The R Square value of 0.707 indicates that *Digital Customer Experience*, product quality, and price jointly explain 70.7% of the variance in purchase decisions, while 29.3% is attributable to factors outside the research model.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

A&Y Frozen Food Store is advised to maintain a pricing strategy that is competitive and aligned with consumers' purchasing power, given that price proved to be the most dominant factor in purchase decisions. Pricing should also continue to take product quality and benefits into account.

The store is advised to continue maintaining the product quality that has received very good ratings. In addition, it may improve its digital media management by updating product information regularly, responding promptly to consumer inquiries, and providing clear information on prices and product availability.

Consumers are advised to consider price, product quality, product information, and their own needs before making a purchase, so that the products chosen correspond to their means and expectations.

Future researchers are encouraged to incorporate additional variables that may influence purchase decisions, such as promotion, digital service quality, brand image, consumer trust, location, customer satisfaction, or other relevant factors. Future studies could also use a larger sample or extend the research objects to improve the generalizability of the findings.

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