

CHAPTER V

CLOSING

5.1 Research Conclusions

This study was conducted to analyze the effect of Brand Image, Packaging, and Product Quality on Purchase Decision of FOOM products in Padang City. Using a quantitative approach with PLS-SEM analysis and involving 180 respondents, several important conclusions can be drawn based on the empirical findings.

First, the results reveal that Brand Image has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decision. The statistical analysis shows that Brand Image is the only variable among the three independent variables that significantly influences consumers' purchasing decisions. This indicates that consumers are more likely to purchase FOOM products when they perceive the brand positively. A strong brand image enhances consumer trust, reduces perceived risk, and creates emotional attachment. For the dominant respondent profile young adult male consumers brand image appears to function not only as a representation of product credibility but also as a symbol of lifestyle and social identity. Therefore, Brand Image plays a central and strategic role in influencing purchase behavior in the context of FOOM products.

Second, the findings show that Packaging does not have a significant effect on Purchase Decision, although the relationship is positive. This indicates that while improvements in packaging may contribute to more favorable consumer perceptions, packaging alone does not significantly determine whether consumers

decide to purchase FOOM products. This result suggests that packaging primarily functions as a supporting attribute rather than a key determinant in the consumer decision-making process.

This finding can be explained by considering the characteristics of the respondents in this study. The majority of respondents are experienced FOOM users who have used the product for several months or even more than one year. In consumer behavior theory, repeat buyers tend to rely more on their previous consumption experiences and product satisfaction rather than on external product cues such as packaging appearance. As consumers become more familiar with a product, the influence of packaging attractiveness tends to decrease because purchasing decisions are increasingly driven by brand trust, habit formation, and prior experience with the product.

Furthermore, the nature of the electronic cigarette market may also contribute to this phenomenon. In many contemporary markets, particularly among younger consumers, vaping products are often perceived not only as functional products but also as lifestyle-oriented goods. In such contexts, purchasing decisions are frequently influenced by symbolic factors such as brand reputation, product popularity, and social identity rather than by packaging attributes alone. As a result, packaging may still play a role in supporting brand communication and product identity, but it may not act as the primary trigger for consumer purchasing decisions.

Another possible explanation is the increasing influence of digital marketing and social media in shaping consumer perceptions. Consumers today are frequently exposed to product information, reviews, and recommendations

through online platforms before encountering the product physically. Consequently, brand image, peer recommendations, and online visibility may have a stronger impact on purchase decisions than packaging design itself. Therefore, although packaging remains an important element of product presentation and brand consistency, its influence on purchase decisions in this study appears to be relatively limited.

Third, the results indicate that Product Quality does not have a significant effect on Purchase Decision, despite showing a positive directional relationship. This finding suggests that product quality may be perceived by consumers as a basic requirement rather than a key differentiating factor in their purchase decisions.

One possible explanation for this result is the existence of a quality threshold within the electronic cigarette market. Consumers generally expect a minimum level of product quality before considering purchasing a product. Once this basic quality standard is achieved, additional improvements in product quality may not significantly influence the consumer's decision to purchase. Instead, consumers may shift their attention to other attributes that provide greater emotional or symbolic value.

This phenomenon is particularly relevant when considering the characteristics of the respondents in this study, who are primarily students and early-career employees with relatively low to middle income levels. Consumers within this segment often prioritize product affordability, brand reputation, and social influence rather than focusing solely on technical product specifications. As long

as the product performs adequately and meets their basic expectations, product quality may not become the primary factor influencing their purchase decisions.

In addition, the rapid development of the electronic cigarette industry has resulted in relatively standardized product quality across many competing brands. When consumers perceive that most available products already meet acceptable quality standards, the perceived differentiation in quality among brands becomes relatively small. Under such conditions, consumers are more likely to base their purchasing decisions on other factors such as brand image, product popularity, or lifestyle compatibility.

Moreover, electronic cigarette products are increasingly associated with lifestyle and social identity among younger consumers. Purchasing decisions may therefore be influenced by symbolic attributes such as brand recognition, community trends, and social media exposure rather than by detailed evaluations of technical product quality. In this context, product quality still plays an essential role as a prerequisite for consumer acceptance, but it may not function as the dominant factor influencing purchase decisions.

Overall, these findings indicate that within the context of FOOM products in Padang City, consumer purchase decisions appear to be influenced more strongly by perceptual and symbolic factors, particularly brand image, rather than by functional product attributes such as packaging or product quality.

5.2 Research Implications

The findings of this study have both theoretical and practical implications.

Theoretical Implications

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the development of consumer behavior and marketing management literature by providing empirical evidence regarding the differential impact of psychological and tangible product attributes on Purchase Decision.

The findings confirm that Brand Image has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decision, supporting consumer behavior theories that emphasize the importance of psychological perceptions, symbolic meaning, and emotional attachment in shaping purchasing behavior. In lifestyle-oriented product categories such as electronic cigarettes, brand-related perceptions appear to be more influential than purely functional attributes. This reinforces theories suggesting that consumers, particularly young adults, often make purchase decisions based on identity congruence, social image, and brand associations.

However, this study finds that Packaging and Product Quality do not have significant effects on Purchase Decision, although both show positive directional relationships. This result provides an important theoretical insight: tangible product attributes may function as basic or hygiene factors rather than primary decision drivers in certain market contexts. Once a minimum acceptable standard of quality and packaging is achieved, these attributes may no longer serve as strong differentiators in influencing purchasing behavior.

Therefore, this study refines existing theoretical assumptions by demonstrating that, within the context of FOOM products in Padang City, psychological factors particularly Brand Image play a more dominant role than tangible attributes in determining purchase decisions. Furthermore, this research enriches the literature by applying the PLS-SEM approach in a local Indonesian

consumer product setting, thereby extending empirical evidence in emerging markets.

Practical Implications

From a practical standpoint, the results provide important managerial insights for FOOM management and marketers. Since Brand Image is the only variable that significantly influences Purchase Decision, strengthening brand image should become a strategic priority. Management should focus on maintaining consistent branding, developing effective marketing communication strategies, and building strong brand associations that resonate with the target market. Creating emotional connections and reinforcing brand identity are essential, particularly given that the dominant consumer segment consists of young adult males who are generally responsive to brand symbolism and lifestyle positioning. Although Packaging does not significantly influence Purchase Decision, it should not be neglected. Packaging still plays a supporting role in maintaining brand consistency, delivering product information, and ensuring functionality and protection. However, improvements in packaging alone may not substantially increase purchase decisions without strong brand reinforcement.

Similarly, Product Quality, while not statistically significant, remains a fundamental requirement. Consumers may perceive FOOM products as already meeting acceptable quality standards; therefore, quality functions as a basic expectation rather than a competitive differentiator. Management must ensure consistent product performance to avoid dissatisfaction, even though enhancing quality alone may not significantly boost purchase decisions. Overall, managerial

efforts should prioritize brand-building strategies while maintaining acceptable standards of packaging and product quality.

5.3 Research Limitations

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations.

First, the explanatory power of the structural model is relatively low, with an R-square value of 0.160. This indicates that 84% of the variation in Purchase Decision is explained by other variables not included in this study, such as price perception, promotion, lifestyle, social influence, peer recommendation, and brand community effects.

Second, this study focuses exclusively on FOOM consumers in Padang City, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other geographical areas or consumer segments.

Third, the data were collected using self-administered questionnaires, which may be subject to response bias and variations in individual interpretation of the questions.

5.4 Research Recommendations

Based on the findings and limitations, several recommendations for future research can be proposed.

Future studies are encouraged to include additional variables such as price perception, promotional strategies, lifestyle orientation, social influence, brand loyalty, and peer effects to improve the explanatory power of the model. Considering the low R-square value, incorporating these variables may provide a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of purchase decisions.

Expanding the research area to other cities or regions would enhance generalizability and allow for comparative analysis across different market contexts.

Additionally, future research may apply alternative analytical approaches or use longitudinal data to observe changes in consumer behavior over time. Such efforts would contribute to a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of purchase decision behavior, particularly in lifestyle-oriented consumer product industries.

