An Empirical Investigation into the Roles of Price Discounts, Product Quality, and Service Quality in Shaping Generation Z Consumers Purchase Decisions in Makassar, Indonesia

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Abstract

Abstract: *This study aims to empirically examine and analyze the effects of price discounts, product quality, and service quality on purchase decisions among Generation Z consumers in Makassar's retail market. The research urgency stems from the retail sector's vital role as a driver of domestic economic growth and the rapid shift in consumer behavior, particularly among Generation Z, who are digital natives characterized by technology-driven, consumption-oriented lifestyles. Using an associative quantitative approach, data were collected through surveys and literature reviews, and purposive sampling was used to select 100 Generation Z respondents (born between 1997 and 2012) who had made transactions in modern retail stores in Makassar. Data were analyzed using multiple regression with SPSS 25. The simultaneous test revealed that price discounts, product quality, and service quality collectively had a significant influence on purchase decisions. The coefficient of determination indicating that the model could explain 75.5% of the variation in purchase decisions. Partially, all three independent variables also had positive and significant effects. These findings suggest that improving discount strategies, product standards, and service performance can enhance purchasing decisions among Generation Z consumers in the retail industry.*

Keywords*: price discounts, product quality, purchase decision, service quality*

1. INTRODUCTION

The era of globalization has brought significant changes across multiple dimensions of human activity, particularly in the business sector. The rapid evolution of global business dynamics has led to the emergence of diverse types of enterprises, intensifying competition across industries. The retail industry, which involves selling products and services tailored to meet the needs of individuals, families, groups, or end-users in small quantities, is one of the most dynamic and competitive sectors of the economy today (Himkawati, D., & Nuryakin, C., 2017). Retail plays a pivotal role in the distribution process, serving as the final stage that connects producers and consumers. The retail industry is essential to meeting societal demands for consumption. Retail serves as a middleman between producers and consumers, making a variety of products and services easily accessible. Due to shifting consumer preferences and growing demand, Indonesia's retail sector is continuing to expand rapidly. Retailers are increasingly required to enhance their competitiveness and differentiation strategies to survive in an overcrowded marketplace. On a global scale, Indonesia ranked fourth among the world's largest retail markets with a Retail Market Index of 53.0 in 2021, largely driven by the expansion of the middle class, urbanization, and changing lifestyles that stimulate domestic consumption (Ministry of Trade of Indonesia, 2022). As a result, the retail industry not only serves as a conduit for the transfer of products and services but also plays a significant role in economic growth by generating money, jobs, and GDP. As a result, the retail sector is now essential to the economy of Indonesia and the rest of the world. Parallel to these developments, consumer behavior has undergone a profound transformation. Advances in computer technology, telecommunications, information systems, transportation, and other innovations have drastically changed the way companies deliver value to their customers (Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G., 2008). Among the emerging consumer segments, Generation Z (Gen Z) has become one of the most significant and influential.

Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, represents consumers who are highly influenced by digital technology and social media, and who have strong preferences for innovative products and high-quality service experiences. They are often characterized as highly consumptive, image-conscious, and socially driven, meaning that their purchasing behavior is not merely based on functional needs but is also motivated by social acceptance, prestige, and emotional factors (Susanto, 2001). For many in this cohort, shopping has evolved from a necessity into a form of lifestyle expression and recreation, especially within the urban middle class. Moreover, Generation Z has emerged as a highly influential group in advancing sustainable consumption. These customers are acknowledged as digital natives who have broad access to information, exhibit high levels of social awareness, and are very interested in brand narratives that prioritize sustainability, innovation, and transparency. As a result, the decisions they make extend beyond individual purchases and reflect a more profound commitment to moral and environmental principles. In contrast to earlier generations, Generation Z customers actively consider environmental and social values when making purchasing decisions, and they expect businesses to incorporate sustainability, authenticity, and ethical considerations into their fundamental organizational principles. (Ling et al., 2024). The shifting behavior of Generation Z consumers presents new challenges for companies and retail markets, as this generation possesses distinct characteristics that demand efficiency and uphold sustainable values.

Consequently, companies must redesign their marketing strategies to remain competitive and retain consumers amid the growing landscape of retail and digital markets. The purchasing decision process involves implementing several marketing strategies that influence future consumer decisions. These influences include establishing appropriate pricing, providing high-quality service, and utilizing promotional activities such as product discount offers, all of which can serve as key factors in determining consumer purchasing decisions (Wibowo, H. O., & Rahayu, S., 2017). Price discounts,

product quality, and service quality are not only factors that stimulate or influence purchasing decisions but are also associated with a company's efforts to create value and enhance service quality for its customers (Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G., 2008). Price is one of the factors that can influence individuals during the purchasing decision-making process. This decision-making condition refers to a process undertaken by buyers to select one option among various alternatives, which ultimately results in an actual purchasing action (Hariati, T. R., & Hariani, M., 2021). Price competition through discount programs has intensified due to the high level of rivalry among retail businesses and e-commerce platforms. This situation presents a challenge for companies in determining the level of price discounts that can attract the interest of Generation Z without reducing profit margins. Therefore, pricing decisions become highly important, as companies may offer price discounts as a strategic approach to attract consumers. A price discount is considered one of the methods companies use to generate revenue quickly (Kusnawan et al., 2019). Furthermore, product quality is another essential aspect that must be considered, particularly in an increasingly competitive industry environment.

The rapid shift in consumer preferences requires companies to maintain consistently high product quality, as Generation Z places a strong emphasis on moral principles, particularly regarding product authenticity, features, and functional performance, before making a purchase decision. Product quality refers to a product's ability to perform its intended functions, encompassing reliability, durability, accuracy, ease of operation, ease of repair, and other valuable attributes. Product quality is a factor that requires primary attention from companies or producers, given its close relationship with consumer satisfaction, which is the central objective of marketing activities undertaken by firms (Wulandari, K. R., & Fikri, M. H., 2023). Quality represents the degree to which a particular brand or product is capable of performing a specific function. The shift in Generation Z consumer behavior, characterized by expectations for fast, responsive, and digitally integrated services, makes service quality an essential element that companies must prioritize. One of the primary ways to enhance service quality is by strengthening technology-based service excellence systems, including automated product information, enhanced service staff capabilities, and the utilization of customer relationship management to deliver more personalized and efficient services. By understanding what consumers want and expect from the quality of services provided, companies can create added value for their business. Because service fundamentally represents a consumer's evaluation of the level of service received in comparison to the level of service provided by the firm or its employees, service quality has a significant impact on purchase decisions (Wanda, 2015). When the service provided meets consumers' needs and preferences, it can positively influence their purchasing decisions.

Several studies have found that price discounts, product quality, and service quality have a significant influence on purchasing decisions (Yufa, I. H. N., & Lestari, W. D., 2023; Famelia et al., 2022), with a primary focus on consumer behavior among earlier generations. However, other studies examining consumer behavior report that price discounts, product quality, and service quality do not have a significant influence on purchasing decisions (Karina, M., & Sari, N. M., 2023; Febriah, I., & Febriyantoro, M. T., 2023). This inconsistency highlights a gap, as there is still a lack of comprehensive understanding of how the combination of these three factors influences purchasing decisions, particularly among Generation Z consumers. Overall, this study aims to examine the partial and simultaneous effects of the three independent variables, namely price discounts, product quality, and service quality, on the dependent variable of purchasing decisions. The study is expected to provide an evaluation of marketing strategies used to influence purchasing decisions among Generation Z consumers, who place a strong emphasis on sustainability. By integrating classical marketing theory with empirical data from this emerging consumer group, the study aims to enrich

academic discourse on retail marketing strategies and provide practical implications for retailers seeking to maintain competitiveness within the rapidly evolving Indonesian retail landscape.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A key component of marketing science is research on consumer behavior, particularly in analyzing various marketing stimuli that influence customers' thought processes and behavioral reactions, which ultimately lead to purchasing decisions. Companies must implement efficient methods to ensure long-term sustainability in today's fiercely competitive business environment. For shops facing fierce competition in the online market, this requirement is essential. Price reductions, the inherent value of goods (product quality), and the caliber of transactional interactions (service quality) are all important components of these tactics. The necessity to gain a thorough understanding of how these elements interact to influence customer reactions led to this study. Accordingly, this review seeks to establish a robust theoretical and empirical foundation for constructing a research model that explains variations in purchasing decisions as a function of price discounts, product quality, and service quality.

2.1. Price Discount

One key business strategy to attract consumers and stimulate purchasing behavior is offering discounts, which encourage consumers to make more purchases. Discounts represent an essential pricing strategy in competitive business environments, drawing customer interest and driving sales. According to Kotler & Keller (2009), a discount is an adjustment to the listed price in which companies offer price reductions or allowances to promote prompt payment, bulk purchases, or off-season transactions. One marketing tactic businesses use to attract customers is offering discounts.. This strategy is considered successful because it can influence customers' purchase decisions, thereby improving a business's sales performance (Prabarini et. al., 2018). The greater the discounts offered by a business, the stronger the consumers' desire to purchase its products. In the current market environment, discounts are no longer limited to loyal customers; new customers are also entitled to receive them (Febriyantoro et al., 2019). According to Tjiptono (2020), a discount is a price reduction granted by sellers to buyers as a form of appreciation for specific actions taken by the buyers, such as making prompt payments, purchasing in large quantities, or buying during off-peak seasons. Price reductions play a crucial role in expediting consumer purchasing decisions by enhancing perceptions of value and creating a sense of urgency to buy.

H_1: *Price discounts have a significant effect on purchasing decisions.*

2.2. Product Quality

Product quality is a key indicator of a product's ability to fulfill consumer needs and expectations. It encompasses the characteristics and attributes of a product offered to the market, designed to meet consumer desires and ensure satisfaction (Sukimin et. al., 2021). The ability of the product to successfully carry out its planned functions is the main emphasis of product quality. Superior products are believed to enhance customer satisfaction and trust, while also improving brand perception. According to Wibowo (2014), quality is defined as the effort to meet or exceed customer expectations, whereas Assauri (2015) describes it as the degree to which a brand or product can perform its expected functions. The causal relationship here implies that high quality will result in positive subjective evaluations, known as satisfaction, which, in turn, influences purchasing behavior. Therefore, product quality is consistently recognized as a critical determinant of purchasing decisions, as it reinforces consumer perceptions of value and trust.

H_2: *Product quality has a significant effect on purchasing decisions.*

2.3. Service Quality

Service quality is a determining factor in the success and excellence of a company, where the company's ability to provide service to customers is considered crucial (Lupiyoadi, 2013:216). Service quality can be defined as a global assessment or attitude regarding the superiority of a service. Service quality is a comparison between one service and another, which feels the same as or exceeds the expected service quality. It can shape consumer impressions and perceptions of a product or service. According to Kotler & Keller (2009), customer demands must be the basis of customer quality, and customer perception of service quality is a comprehensive evaluation of service excellence. Service quality is an intangible activity or performance that arises from interactions between consumers and employees, where the accuracy and reliability of service delivery must align with consumer expectations (Ramadani, 2019). When the perceived quality of service meets or exceeds customer expectations, it fosters positive impressions and perceptions among consumers. Moreover, service quality has a far-reaching impact, influencing not only purchasing decisions but also serving as a key determinant of customer loyalty.

H_3: Service quality has a significant effect on purchasing decisions.

2.4. Purchase Decision

Before deciding to acquire or use a good or service, consumers go through a series of intricate decision-making phases and a psychological process known as the buying decision. According to Tjiptono (2013), consumer purchase decisions are made by people who are either directly or indirectly involved in obtaining and using a desired good or service. This process begins with the consumer's awareness of a product or service, followed by interest in learning more about its features and attributes. According to Alma (2019), buyers are influenced by various stimuli derived from information related to the product, price, location, and promotion. Consumers then process this information while considering other contextual factors, such as financial capability, cultural background, and technological exposure, which ultimately lead to a behavioral response, including selecting a product, brand, store, and the timing of purchase. According to Engel et al., as cited in Zusrony (2021:31), the five steps of the purchase decision-making process are problem identification, information search, alternative evaluation, choice, and outcome. Meanwhile, Kotler & Armstrong (2008) explain that the purchasing decision process begins long before the actual act of purchasing, involving several stages that lead to the final decision. These stages include need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior. From both models, it is essential to recognize that contemporary consumers exhibit distinct behavior due to the growing use of technology and a greater emphasis on personal values.

This highlights the need for greater transparency of information, thorough evaluation, and alignment with personal values, all of which can influence and shape consumer purchasing decisions. Consumers who decide to purchase or use a product undergo a process in which they analyze various inputs before making purchasing decisions (Putri, A. R., & Lestari, W. D., 2022). Purchasing decisions are recognized as a form of consumer behavior that emerges in response to promotional activities or sales initiatives (Ardiansyah & Nurdin, H. 2020). These decisions play a crucial role in both retaining existing consumers and attracting new ones (Romla, S., & Ratnawati, A., 2018). Consequently, purchasing decisions provide significant benefits to sellers by enhancing brand recognition among a wider audience, potentially leading to positive word-of-mouth recommendations. However, purchasing decisions involve multiple considerations, leading to diverse consumer behaviors and decision-making patterns (Kotler, P. & Keller, K. L., 2009).

H_4: Price discounts, product quality, and service quality have a significant effect on purchasing decisions.
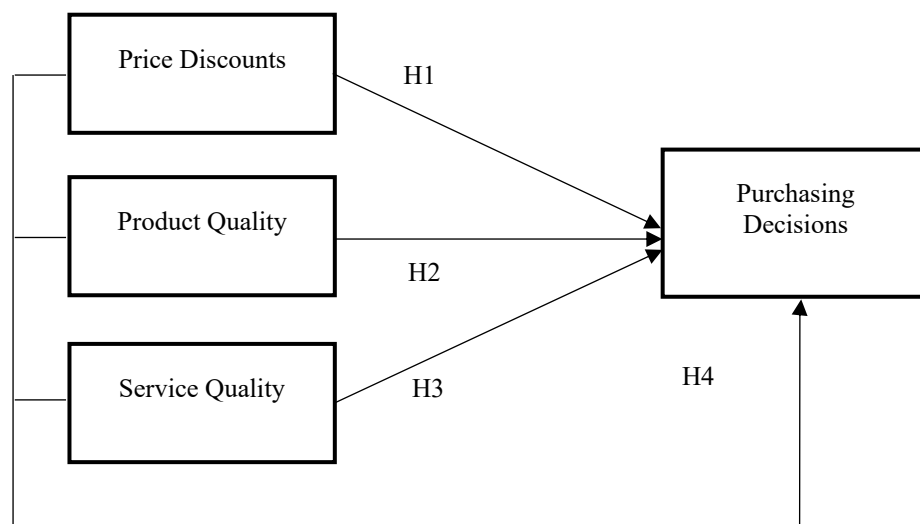
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
Source: Author's elaboration (2025)

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach with an associative explanatory research design. The quantitative approach is selected because the primary aim of the study is to measure, test hypotheses, and analyze causal relationships as well as the strength of influence between the independent variables, which include price discounts (X1), product quality (X2), and service quality (X3), and the dependent variable of purchasing decisions (Y). This approach is grounded in the positivist paradigm, which emphasizes objectivity and the use of statistical analysis applied to empirical data collected from a representative sample (Creswell, 2014). In this study, the three independent variables (price discounts, product quality, and service quality) and the dependent variable (Generation Z purchasing decisions) are measured using a structured research instrument. The research was conducted in Makassar City, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, specifically within its retail market environment. Makassar was selected as the research site because it is a major regional economic hub, characterized by a rapidly growing retail sector and a substantial population of Generation Z consumers.

The study focused on Gen Z consumers' perceptions of price discounts, product quality, and service quality, and on how these perceptions influence purchase decisions in the retail context, particularly in modern retail stores and supermarkets. Several retail outlets, including shopping centers and supermarkets across Makassar, were purposively selected as sampling locations to capture diverse consumer experiences. This choice aligns with Gen Z's multichannel retail behavior, which often combines physical and digital shopping experiences. The study population comprised Generation Z consumers in Makassar who had made retail transactions. Generation Z was operationally defined as individuals born between 1997 and 2012. Purposive sampling was employed because it enables the selection of respondents based on specific criteria relevant to the study's goals. Participants had to meet the following inclusion criteria:
1. Individuals belonging to Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2012).
2. Consumers who have conducted at least one transaction in retail markets (particularly modern retail stores). Since the sample size determination is not yet known, the Lemeshow formula (Unaradjan, 2019) will be used, namely; $n = \left(\frac{Z_{a/2\,\sigma}}{e}\right)^2$, $n = \left(\frac{(1,96).(0,25)}{0,05}\right)^2$, $n = 96.04$, $n = 96.04$ is rounded to 100. Therefore, the researcher is confident, with a 95% confidence level, that a sample size of 100 respondents is adequate. Based on this calculation, the study involves 100 consumers classified as

members of Generation Z who meet the sampling criteria established for the research. Two types of data were utilized in this study: primary data and secondary data: (1) Primary data were obtained directly from respondents through structured questionnaires and brief interviews. The questionnaires were designed based on the operationalization of research variables and measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"); (2) Secondary data were gathered through a literature review, including academic books, government reports, and accredited scientific journals relevant to price discounting, product quality, service quality, and purchase decision constructs.

Data collection was conducted using a combination of various techniques, including questionnaires, observations, and interviews. In this case, questionnaires were used to obtain quantitative data directly from a sample of Gen Z respondents. Observations were then conducted to gain insight into consumer behavior in the field. To gather qualitative data regarding the viewpoints of Gen Z customers in Makassar City, in-depth interviews were utilized. By complementing and validating the data, this set of techniques aims to facilitate a deeper analysis. Multiple linear regression is the analysis technique used in this study. Using SPSS 25 for Windows, several analysis techniques were applied, including tests for normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, and autocorrelation. This model is suitable for elucidating the impact on the previously established framework. The following is the formula for multiple linear regression analysis:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$$

Information:
Y	= *Purchase Decision*
X_1	= *Price Discount*
X_2	= *Product Quality*
X_3	= *Service Quality*
β_0	= *Constant*
$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$	= *Regression Coefficients*
ε	= *Error term*

4. RESULTS

This study conducted validity and reliability tests to determine the extent to which the questionnaire was appropriate and consistent in answering the research questions. The validity testing criteria were to compare the corrected item–total correlation value with the r-table value (97) with a level (α) of 0.05, namely 0.1996. The decision criterion was that if the corrected item–total correlation was greater than the r-table value, the indicator was valid (Ghozali, 2017). Meanwhile, another instrument test is the reliability test, which assesses the accuracy of the data. The reliability test uses the alpha coefficient value, which is compared to a value of 0.60. A construct or variable is said to be reliable if it has an alpha value above 0.60 (Ghozali, 2017).

Table 1. Validity and Reliabily Test

Variable	Corrected Item–Total Correlation	Cronbach α
Price Discount (X1)	0.788 – 0.911	0.831
Product Quality (X2)	0.647 – .886	0.863
Service Quality (X3)	0.818 – 0.903	0.915
Purchasing Decisions (Y)	0.715 – 0.848	0.841

Source: Primary data processed (2025)

Based on Table 1, it can be observed that all indicators are valid, as evidenced by the Corrected Item-Total Correlation values exceeding the r-table value (0.1996). This finding indicates that all indicators are appropriate for use as construct measures. Furthermore, the alpha coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) > 0.60, indicating that the research variables, namely discount, product quality, service quality, and purchase decision, are reliable or have a high level of consistency, thus ensuring their accuracy for use as variables in a study. A good regression model must satisfy the requirements of classical assumption tests. If a model deviates from these assumptions, it is considered biased and fails to meet the criteria for the Best Linear Unbiased Estimators (BLUE). Therefore, it is crucial to run several traditional assumption tests, such as tests for normality, linearity, heteroscedasticity, and multicollinearity, prior to performing regression analysis and hypothesis testing. These tests ensure the validity and reliability of the model.

Tabel 2. Classical Assumption Tests

The Classical Assumption	Variabel	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF	Description
Normality Test		0.051			Normal
Linearity Test	Price Discount (X1)	0.000			Linear
	Product Quality (X2)	0.000			
	Service Quality (X3)	0.000			
Heteroscedasticity Test	Price Discount (X1)	0.623			No heteroscedasticity was observed.
	Product Quality (X2)	0.615			
	Service Quality (X3)	0.281			
Multicollinearity Test	Price Discount (X1)		0.145	6,833	No multicollinearity was observed.
	Product Quality (X2)		0.120	8,349	
	Service Quality (X3)		0.228	4,390	

Source: Primary data processed (2025)

Based on the results presented in Table 2, the normality test shows a p-value of 0.200 > 0.05, indicating that the regression model meets the normality assumption and that the data are normally distributed. The linearity test yields a significance value greater than 0.05 (sig. > 0.05), confirming that all research variables exhibit a linear relationship. Furthermore, the heteroscedasticity test results indicate that each variable is not heteroscedastic ($p > 0.05$) and thus meets the requirements for regression analysis. Additionally, the multicollinearity test indicates that all predictor variables in the regression model have relatively low VIF values (below 10) and tolerance values above 0.10. This demonstrates that the independent variables in the study do not exhibit multicollinearity, confirming that all variables are mutually independent and appropriate for inclusion in the regression analysis.

The statistical calculations for the multiple linear regression analysis employed in this study were carried out using SPSS for Windows version 25. The results of the data processing using SPSS are summarized as follows:

Tabel 3. Hypothesis Testing

Variabel	B (Unstandardized Coefficients)	Beta (Standardized Coefficients)	t	F	Sig.	Desc.

Discounts on Purchase Decisions (H₁)	0.438	0.290	2.192		0.031	Accepted
Product Quality on Purchase Decisions (H₂)	0.338	0.365	2.501		0.014	Accepted
Service Quality on Purchase Decisions (H₃)	0.225	0.249	2.355		0.021	Accepted
Discounts, Product Quality, Service Quality on Purchase Decisions (H4)				98.562	0.000	Accepted
Constant	2.279					

Source: Primary data processed (2025)

The regression equation is obtained as follows:

$$Y = 2.279 + 0.290\ X_1 + 0.365\ X_2 + 0.249\ X_3 + \varepsilon$$

The regression equation explains that the constant has a positive value of 2.279, indicating that if the variables of discount quality, product quality, and service quality increase, the purchase decision will increase by 2.279. The coefficient for price discount (X_1) is 0.290, meaning that for each one-unit increase, purchasing decisions rise by 0.290. For product quality (X_2), the coefficient is 0.365, which indicates that a one-unit increase in product quality leads to a 0.365 increase in purchasing decisions. The coefficient for service quality (X_3) is 0.249, implying that a one-unit increase in service quality results in a 0.249 increase in purchasing decisions. These results suggest that higher price discounts, improved product quality, and better service quality all positively influence purchasing decisions.

The test results in Table 3 show that H_1 is accepted because discounts have a positive and significant effect with a t-value of 2.192 and a significance value of 0.031 (0.000 < 0.05). Then, H_2 is accepted because product quality has a positive and significant effect with a t-value of 2.501 and a significance value of 0.014 (0.000 < 0.05). Next, H_3 is accepted because service quality has a positive and significant effect with a t-value of 2.355 and a significance value of 0.021 (0.000 < 0.05). Finally, H_4 is accepted because discounts, product quality, and service quality have a positive and significant effect with a calculated F value of 98.562 and a sig. value of 0.000 (0.000 < 0.05).

5. DISCUSSION
5.1. The Influence of Price Discount on Purchase Decision

The analysis results indicate that discounts have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, implying that the more attractive the discounts offered, the stronger the purchasing decisions made by consumers. Based on the data analysis, the calculated t-value for this effect is 2.192, with a significance level of 0.031 (0.031 < 0.05). This demonstrates that discounts partially exert a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions. These findings confirm that the discount variable's impact on purchasing decisions meets the significance criteria, indicating that higher discount levels lead to greater purchasing. Therefore, the research hypothesis is supported and acceptable. Theoretically, price is a determining factor that quickly influences purchasing decisions. For Gen Z consumers in Makassar, who exhibit high consumption levels but may still face financial constraints, discounts serve as an important financial incentive.

These results align with studies showing that sales promotions and discounts influence consumer purchase decisions. Discounts are powerful inducements for Gen Z consumers to test new

products and make impulsive purchases, particularly when the discount amount is seen as highly alluring. Based on the analysis results, retail companies have successfully implemented this strategy. This is evident from the respondents' answers, where the discount dimensions such as discount frequency, discount amount, and discount duration show that the overall responses fall into the high category. This indicates that retail companies place considerable emphasis on discounts as a key factor influencing consumer purchasing decisions. In particular, the discount amount dimension shows that the size of the discount significantly affects consumers' willingness to purchase. Therefore, to attract more consumers and stimulate buying behavior, retail companies should consistently apply and determine discount rates that are both appealing and competitive. However, in this situation, retail businesses also need to be very mindful of how often and how frequently discounts are offered.

The analysis of the research data reveals that among the three dimensions used to measure the discount variable, the average score for the discount frequency dimension is lower than that of the discount amount dimension, although it still falls within the strong category. Furthermore, the discount periodicity dimension also shows relatively lower results in this study. This finding indicates that retail companies tend to offer discounts less frequently and with intervals that are too short, suggesting the need for a more balanced and strategically planned discount schedule to maximize consumer interest and purchasing behavior. Discounts are among the key marketing strategies companies use to attract potential buyers. The greater the discounts offered by a business, the stronger consumers' desire to purchase products from that business. In today's digital era, retail companies face increasing competition from a wide range of digital sales platforms.

As a result, retail companies are highly vulnerable to competitive pressures in attracting and retaining consumers. Therefore, one effective approach to attracting and retaining potential customers is to focus on discounts. Discounts are considered an essential element that can facilitate both customer acquisition and retention. This finding is consistent with previous research by Salim & Fermayani (2021), titled "The Effect of Discounts, Sales Promotions, and In-Store Displays on Impulsive Purchasing Decisions of Consumers at Matahari Department Store Padang." Their study demonstrated that discounts, sales promotions, and in-store displays collectively have a significant impact on consumers' impulsive purchasing decisions. Furthermore, a study by Nainggolan & Parinduri (2020), titled The Effect of Discounts and Bonuses on the Purchasing Decisions of Consumers at Indomaret Serbelawan Minimarkets, found that both discounts and purchase bonuses significantly influence consumer purchasing decisions. This finding is also consistent with research by Famelia et al. (2022), titled "The Effect of Digital Marketing and Discounts on Purchasing Decisions among Students of the Management Study Program, Faculty of Economics, University of Medan Area, on the Shopee Shopping Platform." Their study demonstrated that, both partially and simultaneously, the variables of digital marketing and discounts have a significantly positive impact on purchasing decisions.

5.2. The Influence of Product Quality on Purchase Decision

Purchase decisions are positively and significantly impacted by product quality, according to the analysis of the relationship between the two. This implies that customer purchase decisions tend to increase when product quality improves, but decrease when product quality deteriorates. The analysis shows a t-value of 2.501, with a significance level of 0.014 (0.000 < 0.05). Therefore, product quality partially has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. These results confirm that the product quality variable has a statistically significant influence on purchasing decisions, as it meets the required level of significance. In other words, the higher the product quality, the stronger the consumer's purchasing decision. Thus, these findings are considered valid and reliable. Based on the research analysis, the quality of products in the retail market of Makassar City indicates that companies have successfully implemented product quality management. This can be seen from the

respondents' answers, where the five measurement dimensions, namely durability, uniqueness, reliability, suitability, and aesthetics, show that user responses are in the high category.

This result demonstrates that consumers are heavily influenced by product quality when deciding what to buy. Put another way, buyers are more likely to purchase if the marketed products are of higher quality. Furthermore, the characteristics of the respondents indicate that most Gen Z consumers fall within the 18–28 age range, a group known to be more selective and critical in evaluating the products they intend to buy. This suggests that retail companies have been able to deliver high-quality products that meet consumer expectations, ultimately encouraging purchasing decisions. Therefore, companies must continuously maintain and enhance all aspects of product quality, particularly those dimensions that receive lower ratings, to ensure long-term competitiveness and customer satisfaction. The results of the data analysis show that among the five dimensions used to measure the product quality variable, the average score for the uniqueness dimension (defined as the extent to which products offered have more complete features than similar products in other markets) is lower than that of the other dimensions, although it still falls within the strong category. This aspect requires particular attention and improvement from retail companies. One effective strategy to enhance consumer purchasing decisions is for companies to focus on offering products with more comprehensive and distinctive features. By doing so, consumers will find it easier to identify and select the products or services that best meet their needs, thereby increasing both satisfaction and the likelihood of purchase.

The study's findings also show that businesses can successfully improve consumers' final purchase decisions by implementing measures of the product quality variable. These results corroborate the field's empirical data, which indicates that a major factor influencing consumer choices is product quality. Therefore, retail companies must continue to strengthen their brand image by consistently providing high-quality products, particularly for Generation Z consumers who are characterized by their intelligence, modernity, and discernment in evaluating product value. Understanding and fulfilling customer needs and preferences is a fundamental aspect of marketing management, as the products consumers choose often reflect their identity and values. Therefore, companies must focus on developing and maintaining high-quality products to ensure customer acceptance, satisfaction, and long-term loyalty.

The more selective and perfectionist a person is, the more careful they are in their purchasing decisions, especially when choosing the latest and highest-quality products. This tendency is especially evident among Generation Z, who place a strong emphasis on product quality and authenticity in both online and offline purchases. Products that accurately match their descriptions, demonstrate durability, and meet consumer expectations are more likely to enhance customer satisfaction and strengthen purchasing decisions. This study also supports previous studies conducted by Fadli et al. (2022), The Effect of Products, Promotions, and Prices on Mizon's Purchasing Decision at Alfamart Sungai Harapan. The results of their study indicate that the variables of product, promotion, and price have a significant positive effect on purchasing decisions, both partially and simultaneously. Furthermore, research conducted by Putri et al. (2021) titled "The Effect of Price, Product Quality, Service Quality, and Promotion on Product Purchasing Decisions (Four Bro Consumers)." The results show that the price variable does not affect purchasing decisions, whereas product quality, service quality, and promotion do.

5.3. The Influence of Service Quality on Purchase Decision

Purchasing decisions are positively and significantly impacted by service quality, according to the examination of the relationship between the two. This implies that customer purchasing decisions rise in tandem with improvements in service quality and fall in tandem with declines in service quality. The analysis shows a t-value of 2.355 and a significance value of 0.021 (0.000 < 0.05).

Therefore, service quality has a positive and significant partial effect on purchasing decisions. These findings confirm that the service quality variable influences purchasing decisions, meeting the significance criteria, implying that higher service quality is associated with a greater likelihood of purchase. Thus, these results are considered valid and acceptable. As discussed in the literature review, there are reasons to suggest that service quality will impact purchasing decisions and, therefore, is an important factor to consider. Gaining a large market share, boosting revenues, and offering clients high-quality services are all important components of a successful business.

This theory suggests that service quality is an intangible action or activity offered by one party to another, resulting from interactions between consumers and employees, or from other things provided by the company to meet consumer needs and desires, and accurately delivering on consumer expectations (Karina et al., 2022). From a managerial perspective, it is important to understand the barriers to maximizing service quality so that it can be further improved. In line with the opinion of Anabila et al. (2022), companies must continuously improve service quality to foster customer loyalty, as poor-quality products or services often lead to customer dissatisfaction and disloyalty. This implies that when service quality is properly managed and prioritized, companies are more likely to secure long-term customer loyalty (Anabila et al., 2022). Therefore, maintaining high service quality becomes particularly critical in competitive retail markets where numerous companies operate. In such conditions, if service quality is lacking, consumers are more likely to switch to competitors, making it difficult for companies to retain their existing customers. A more in-depth analysis of lower-strength items and descriptive data (with ease of returns as the highest indicator, while employee interaction received a low rating) yields a specific interpretation of Gen Z behavior. This consumer group, known as digital natives, views service quality not solely as warm personal interaction, but rather as efficiency and transactional risk mitigation. Clear services regarding return and exchange procedures serve as a guarantee (security) in transactions, thereby increasing consumer confidence (consumers are confident to buy).

Service quality is an essential hygiene factor that must be met to maintain trust, but it is less likely to trigger purchasing decisions when product quality or price is inadequate. Recent research also confirms that the role of service quality in the purchasing process can interact with customer satisfaction. This study is also consistent with previous research by Dapas et al. (2019), titled "The Effect of Service Quality and Website Quality of Zalora.com on Purchase Decision as Mediated by Purchase Intention." The findings revealed that service quality significantly influences both purchase intention and purchase decisions. Additionally, while website quality significantly affects purchase intention, it does not directly influence purchase decisions. However, purchase intention itself has a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions. These results indicate that high-quality service fosters consumer trust and positive perceptions, which, in turn, encourage Generation Z consumers to purchase from the same retailer, even when other alternatives are available. In essence, the research underscores that superior service quality plays a crucial role in maintaining customer loyalty and driving repurchase behavior when customers perceive the service as responsive, reliable, and consistent with their expectations. Their confidence and satisfaction increase, ultimately leading to stronger purchasing decisions.

5.4. The Influence of Price Discount, Product Quality, Service Quality on Purchase Decision

Based on the results of the simultaneous analysis of price discounts, product quality, and service quality on purchasing decisions among Gen Z consumers in the retail market of Makassar City, the findings show that the F-test value is 98.562 with a significance level of 0.000 < 0.05. Therefore, price discounts, product quality, and service quality collectively have a significant influence on the purchasing decisions of Gen Z consumers in Makassar's retail market. This result indicates that these three variables (price discounts, product quality, and service quality) are interrelated and together

play a crucial role in shaping Gen Z consumers' purchasing behavior. It highlights that competitive pricing strategies, consistent product quality, and superior service delivery must be managed simultaneously to enhance consumer decision-making and sustain competitiveness in the modern retail industry. The results of this study demonstrate that price discounts, product quality, and service quality collectively have a significant influence on purchasing decisions, accounting for 74.7% of the variation, while the remaining 25.3% is attributed to other variables not examined in this research.

This value was derived from multiple regression analysis using the adjusted R^2, as the model included more than one independent variable (price discounts, product quality, and service quality). From the perspective of consumer behavior theory, these findings are consistent with the view of Kotler & Keller (2009), who assert that purchasing decisions represent consumer responses to stimuli that include price elements, product quality, and the quality of services received. Accordingly, when these three variables are present in a consistent and mutually reinforcing manner, consumers exhibit a stronger tendency to make a purchase. The results of this study also align with the Stimulus-Organism-Response theory proposed by Mehrabian & Russel (1974), which explains how a stimulus can trigger a consumer's response or behavior. In this context, marketing stimuli such as price discounts, product quality, and service quality are processed by consumers, ultimately leading to a response in the form of purchasing behavior.

This suggests that price discounts serve as economic stimuli, motivating consumers to make purchases after conducting an internal evaluation of their purchasing needs. Similarly, high product quality serves as a stimulus that increases consumer trust and satisfaction, while superior service quality enhances loyalty and reduces friction during the purchasing process. This indicates that retailers must implement an integrated and hierarchical marketing mix. Product quality must be a fundamental value (the highest strength) that guarantees satisfaction. Price discounts serve as a catalyst to attract attention in a competitive market. Meanwhile, service quality provides a foundation of trust and operational efficiency, reducing friction in the purchasing process. Strategies that rely solely on discounts, without being supported by superior product quality, risk failing to drive sustainable purchasing decisions and Gen Z consumer loyalty. The results of this study also support previous studies by Christine et al. (2022), who examined the Influence of Product Quality, Service Quality, and Price on Purchasing Decisions at PT. Karya Furnindo Modern. The study found that product quality, service quality, and price influence purchasing decisions both partially and simultaneously.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Discounts, product quality, and service quality have a positive and significant influence on the purchasing decisions of Generation Z consumers in the Makassar retail market. The primary challenges moving forward involve adapting to rapidly evolving global trends and increasing market competition. Moreover, the ongoing shifts in consumer consumption patterns require companies to innovate to meet evolving customer needs continually. Therefore, the study's findings can be used as helpful assessment material for companies, emphasizing the necessity of enhancing product quality, providing competitive and appropriate pricing, and offering outstanding customer service in order to draw in new customers and keep hold of current ones. Furthermore, companies must pay close attention to consumer feedback and promptly address obstacles or complaints to enhance consumer trust and influence purchasing decisions, as Generation Z places great importance on fast and responsive service. Retail businesses should also focus on maintaining and redesigning their product layouts and selections to improve the overall shopping experience.

This aspect is particularly crucial in today's era of technological advancement and intense competition, where well-organized and high-quality product displays can significantly enhance consumer satisfaction and perceived value. Given that product quality issues are among the most

common complaints in online shopping, this presents an important opportunity for retail companies to prioritize and ensure the quality of the products they offer to consumers.

This study also has limitations related to the sample, which focuses solely on Generation Z consumers in the city of Makassar. Therefore, generalizing the findings to Generation Z consumers in other regions should be approached with caution. Additionally, the descriptive quantitative design employed in this study may not fully capture changes in consumer behavior over time. Future research should consider expanding the geographical scope and comparing the behavior of Generation Z with that of other generations to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their similarities and differences. Further studies may also explore additional relevant variables, such as the influence of social media, digital experiences, or demographic factors, that can be integrated into the Stimulus-Organism-Response model. By acknowledging the geographical and demographic limitations of the present study, future research will be better positioned to deepen the understanding of the transformation of Generation Z consumer behavior within the context of sustainable marketing in Indonesia, as well as globally.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

The results of this study have several important implications for the development of science, managerial practices, and socio-economic contributions in society. From an academic perspective, this research strengthens the theoretical framework of consumer behavior and the marketing mix, particularly within the context of the digital generation (Generation Z), whose decision-making patterns differ significantly from those of previous generations. Empirical evidence demonstrating that discounts, product quality, and service quality positively and significantly influence purchasing decisions supports the relevance of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theory in explaining contemporary consumption behavior. Therefore, this study can serve as a conceptual foundation for future research on multichannel purchasing behavior and adaptive pricing strategies in the digital era.

Practically speaking, the study's conclusions also offer strategic advice to shops in Makassar and neighboring cities. Retail managers must develop pricing strategies, such as seasonal discounts, digital loyalty programs, and customized offers based on consumer data, that are both competitive and in line with Gen Z's view of value. Additionally, to meet the demands of a younger, critical, and quality-sensitive generation, product quality improvements must focus on consistency and feature distinctiveness. Additionally, service quality must be managed holistically, emphasizing not only direct interaction but also the effectiveness of the return system, transaction speed, and the accuracy of product information across multiple sales channels.

From a social and community perspective, the results of this study suggest that Generation Z's consumptive behavior has the potential to become a key driver of growth in the modern retail sector, particularly in urban areas. Therefore, local governments and trade associations can use these findings to formulate policies to promote local economic empowerment by strengthening the competitiveness of modern retail through customer experience. Another important implication is the need to educate young consumers to develop greater financial awareness in response to increasingly aggressive marketing practices. In this way, a balance can be achieved between retail sector growth and rational consumer behavior, fostering sustainable economic and social development.

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