

The Effect of Price Perception and Product Quality on Purchase Decisions Mediated by Consumer Satisfaction in Malinau Regency

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Abstract

This study examines the relationships among price perception, product quality, consumer satisfaction, and purchasing decisions in the café industry in Malinau Regency. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 160 respondents who had experience purchasing products from local cafés. The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) to test both direct and indirect relationships among variables. The results indicate that product quality and consumer satisfaction have a positive, significant effect on purchasing decisions, whereas price perception does not. However, price perception significantly affects consumer satisfaction, suggesting that consumers evaluate prices based on perceived fairness and value for money rather than as a direct trigger for purchase decisions. Furthermore, the findings reveal that consumer satisfaction plays a strategic mediating role. Consumer satisfaction mediates the relationship between price perception and purchasing decisions, as well as between product quality and purchasing decisions. This indicates that fair pricing and high product quality first enhance consumer satisfaction, which, in turn, strengthens purchasing decisions and repurchase intentions. Product quality reflected in taste, consistency, presentation, hygiene, and freshness emerges as a critical determinant of satisfaction and long-term consumer behavior in the café context. Overall, this study highlights the importance of consumer satisfaction as a key psychological mechanism linking marketing variables to purchasing decisions. The findings provide practical implications for café business owners in Malinau Regency, emphasizing the need to focus on value-based pricing strategies, consistent product quality, and positive consumption experiences to foster satisfaction and sustainable purchasing behavior. This research also contributes to the marketing literature by reinforcing the mediating role of consumer satisfaction in the food and beverage industry, particularly in semi-urban regions.

Keywords: Price Perception, Purchasing Decisions, Product Quality, Consumer Satisfaction, SEM-PLS

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INTRODUCTION

As an institution with a strategic role in driving regional industrial and trade growth, the Department of Industry and Trade is required to deliver services that are effective, adaptive, and oriented toward enhancing competitiveness. However, in practice, various structural and managerial constraints are still frequently encountered, thereby hindering optimal performance. As noted by Mamahit (2021), budgetary constraints, human resource shortages, and other internal constraints significantly affect organizational performance. At the same time, the development of the café industry in non-metropolitan areas, including Malinau Regency, has shown a

significant growth trend in recent years. Cafés are no longer merely places to consume food and beverages; they have transformed into social spaces that facilitate interaction, recreation, and community activities. This phenomenon reflects changes in local consumer lifestyles that are increasingly open to experience-based business concepts. Nevertheless, consumer characteristics in Malinau Regency differ fundamentally from those in major cities. Factors such as purchasing power, taste preferences, social background, and local values play an important role in shaping consumption behavior. These conditions require café business owners to deeply understand local market characteristics in order to survive and compete sustainably.

Price perception is one of the main factors influencing consumer purchase decisions. Price is understood not only as a nominal value but also as a representation of the benefits, quality, and overall experience consumers receive. Consumers in regional areas tend to be highly price-sensitive; therefore, any mismatch between price and perceived value can directly reduce purchase intention. In addition to price perception, product quality is a strategic element that determines the success of café businesses. Product quality encompasses aspects such as taste, presentation, cleanliness, and product consistency. Consumers compare the quality they receive with their expectations; thus, high product quality can increase satisfaction and strengthen purchase decisions. Consumer satisfaction itself is the result of a comprehensive evaluation of the consumption experience. Satisfaction is not determined by a single factor, but rather by a combination of perceived fair pricing and product quality that meet or exceed consumer expectations. Satisfied consumers tend to make stronger purchase decisions and have a higher potential for loyalty.

The phenomenon observed in Malinau Regency indicates that many café business operators still adopt business strategies from large cities without making appropriate contextual adjustments. In fact, strategies that are successful in metropolitan areas are not necessarily relevant when applied in regions with different social and economic characteristics. Such strategic mismatches may reduce consumer satisfaction and weaken business competitiveness. Therefore, adapting marketing strategies based on local characteristics has become an urgent necessity for café operators in Malinau. Business owners are required to balance competitive pricing with consistent product quality while still considering local consumer preferences and expectations. From a theoretical perspective, the relationship between price perception, product quality, and purchase decisions is not always direct. Consumer satisfaction plays a mediating role, explaining how perceptions of price and product quality are translated into purchase decisions. This approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior.

This study is academically relevant because it examines consumer behavior within a regency-level context that remains relatively underexplored in marketing research. Moreover, the study offers practical contributions that serve as a basis for formulating more contextually relevant and applicable marketing strategies for local café businesses. Based on this background, the article investigates the effect of price perception and product quality on purchase decisions, with consumer satisfaction serving as a mediating variable in Malinau Regency. The results of this study are expected to contribute, both theoretically and empirically, to the development of behavioral science and to serve as a strategic reference for business practitioners in regional areas.

METHODOLOGY

The research design employed in this study is an explanatory cross-sectional survey, in which data were collected at a single point in time. A survey method was chosen because it allows researchers to reach a large number of respondents and to obtain primary data efficiently. The study was conducted in Malinau Regency, with café consumers in the region as the research subjects. The selection of this location was based on the relatively rapid growth of café businesses and the unique characteristics of local consumers compared to those in metropolitan areas. The population of this study comprises all café consumers in Malinau Regency. The research sample consists of café consumers who were willing to participate as respondents. Since the total population size could not be precisely determined, the sample size was set according to the guideline proposed by Hair et al. (2020), which recommends a minimum of 5–10 times the number of indicators. This study used 16 indicators; therefore, the minimum required sample size was 160 respondents. The margin of error was set at 10% with a confidence level of 90%.

The sampling technique applied in this study is non-probability convenience sampling, in which respondents were selected based on ease of access, availability, and willingness to participate. Data were collected through a structured, closed-ended questionnaire. Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS software. The analysis was carried out in two stages. First, the measurement model (outer model) was evaluated to assess convergent validity (outer loadings and Average Variance Extracted [AVE] ≥ 0.50), discriminant validity (cross loadings and the Fornell–Larcker criterion), and construct reliability (Composite Reliability ≥ 0.70 and Cronbach’s Alpha ≥ 0.60). Second, the structural model (inner model) was evaluated by examining path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values obtained via bootstrapping, as well as R² values to assess the model's predictive power.

Hypothesis testing was conducted to examine the significance of both direct and indirect (mediated) effects among variables. A hypothesis was considered significant when the t-value exceeded 1.96, and the p-value was less than 0.05. A mediation analysis was conducted to examine the role of consumer satisfaction in mediating the effects of price perception and product quality on purchase decisions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The number of respondents who participated in this study was 160. This sample size meets the requirements for SEM-PLS analysis as recommended by Hair et al. (2019). Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the respondents’ profiles obtained from the research questionnaire, which include demographic information and respondent characteristics. Of the 160 respondents, 55 (34.4%) were male, and 105 (65.6%) were female, indicating a predominance of females. This suggests that female consumers are more active or more easily reached in the context of the purchasing behavior studied and may exert a stronger influence on purchase decisions, particularly regarding price perception, product quality, and consumer satisfaction. In terms of age, the majority of respondents were under 30 years old (55%), followed by those aged 31–39 years (30%), 40–49 years (10%), and 50 years and above (5%). This distribution shows that younger consumers dominate the sample, which is relevant given their greater sensitivity to price changes and product quality, as well as their

greater familiarity with digital environments, which may shape their purchase decisions. Regarding educational background, most respondents had completed senior high school (44.4%), followed by bachelor's degree holders (33.1%), diploma graduates (11.3%), and master's degree holders (11.3%). This composition reflects a relatively well-educated respondent profile, enabling more critical and informed responses to the research instruments, particularly in evaluating price perception, product quality, and consumer satisfaction.

Table 1. Profile of Research Respondents

| Profil | Total |
|------------------------|------------|
| Gender | |
| Male | 55 |
| Female | 105 |
| Total | 160 |
| Age | |
| < 30 Years | 88 |
| 31-39 Years | 48 |
| 40-49 Years | 16 |
| ≥ 50 Years | 8 |
| Total | 160 |
| Education | |
| High School | 71 |
| Diploma | 18 |
| Bachelor's Degree (S1) | 53 |
| Bachelor's Degree (S2) | 18 |
| Total | 160 |

Outer Model

Validity Test

The validity test in this study was conducted to ensure that the indicators used for each construct were properly understood by the respondents and accurately measured the intended variables. Construct validity testing was conducted using SmartPLS and included assessments of convergent and discriminant validity.

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity was evaluated using factor loadings, which were considered acceptable if they exceeded 0.50 (Hair et al., 2014). In addition, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value should be greater than 0.50; however, values above 0.40 are still considered acceptable under certain conditions. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), if the AVE is below 0.50 but the composite reliability exceeds 0.60, the construct's convergent validity can still be considered adequate.

Based on Table 2, all factor loadings exceed the recommended threshold of 0.50. Likewise, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs exceed 0.50. Therefore, all measurement items in this study are valid, and the constructs demonstrate good convergent validity and are appropriate for further analysis.

Table 2. Loading Factor and AVE Values

| Variable | Questions Item | Loading Factor | AVE |
|----------|----------------|----------------|-------|
| (X1) | X1.1 | 0,936 | 0,781 |
| | X1.2 | 0,835 | |
| | X1.3 | 0,875 | |
| | X1.4 | 0,888 | |
| (X2) | X2.1 | 0,940 | 0,808 |
| | X2.2 | 0,815 | |
| | X2.3 | 0,913 | |
| | X2.4 | 0,922 | |
| (M) | M1 | 0,940 | 0,825 |
| | M2 | 0,831 | |
| | M3 | 0,927 | |
| | M4 | 0,930 | |
| (Y) | Y1 | 0,924 | 0,816 |
| | Y2 | 0,880 | |
| | Y3 | 0,886 | |
| | Y4 | 0,922 | |

Discriminant Validity

A construct is considered to have adequate discriminant validity if the square root of its AVE is greater than the correlations between that construct and other constructs in the model (Hair et al., 2014). Table 3 presents the results of the Fornell-Larcker criterion used to assess discriminant validity.

Table 3. Fornell and Larcker Criterion Values

| Variables | Consumer Satisfaction | Purchasing Decisions | Product Quality | Price Perception |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Consumer Satisfaction(M) | 0,988 | | | |
| Purchasing Decisions(Y) | 0,903 | 0,903 | | |
| Product Quality(X2) | 0,904 | 0,901 | 0,909 | |
| Price Perception(X1) | 0,810 | 0,904 | 0,867 | 0,904 |

Based on Table 3, the square root of the AVE values for each construct is greater than the correlations between that construct and other constructs in the model. Therefore, it can be concluded that all measurement items demonstrate satisfactory convergent and discriminant validity in accordance with the established criteria (Hair et al., 2019).

Reliability Test

In addition to validity testing, reliability testing is also required in the measurement model to assess the consistency and accuracy of the constructs. Reliability testing is conducted to ensure that the measurement instruments are reliable, consistent, and precise in capturing the intended constructs. A construct is considered reliable if it has composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values greater than 0.70 (Chin, 1998, as cited in Achjari, 2004).

Based on Table 4, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values for all constructs exceed 0.70, indicating very good reliability. This means that the variables tested are both valid and reliable, demonstrating accuracy and consistency in measurement. Therefore, the analysis can proceed to the next stage, namely the evaluation of the structural model (inner model).

Table 4. Composite Reliability Values

| Variables | Cronbach's Alpha | Composite Reliability | Information |
|---------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Kepuasan konsumen | 0,928 | 0,949 | Realiabel |
| Keputusan pembelian | 0,925 | 0,947 | Realiabel |
| Kualitas produk | 0,920 | 0,944 | Realiabel |
| Persepsi harga | 0,906 | 0,935 | Realiabel |

Inner Model Evaluation (Structural Model)

After the outer model requirements are satisfied, the next step is to evaluate the inner model. The structural model is assessed by examining R-square (R^2) values to determine the extent to which the independent variables explain variance in the dependent variables, as well as by analyzing path coefficients (Hair et al., 2014). In this study, the R-square values are interpreted as follows: 0.67 indicates a strong model, 0.33 indicates a moderate model, and 0.19 indicates a weak model (Chin, 1998).

Table 5. R-square Values

| Variables | R-Square |
|--------------------------|----------|
| purchasing decisions (Y) | 0,977 |

Based on Table 5, the research model yields an R-square of 0.977. This indicates that the variables of price perception and product quality explain purchase decisions through consumer satisfaction by 97.7%, which falls into the strong category. The remaining 2.3% is influenced by other variables not included in this study.

Hypothesis Testing Results

To determine whether the proposed hypotheses are supported, the significance level (p-value) is examined. In this context, parameter estimates and standard errors are not calculated under statistical assumptions but are derived from empirical observations using the bootstrap method. In this study, a hypothesis is considered supported if the p-value is below 0.05; otherwise, it is not supported (Hair et al., 2014). Hypothesis testing was conducted using the bootstrapping technique in SmartPLS to examine the effects of independent variables on dependent variables and the mediating role of the intervening variable. Table 6 and Figure 1 present a summary of the significance test results for each of the proposed hypotheses.

Table 6 Hypothesis Testing Results

| Hipotesis | Original Sample (O) | T-Statistic | P-Value | Information |
|--|---------------------|-------------|---------|-------------|
| H1 Price Perception → Purchasing Decisions | (+) -0.142 | 1.685 | 0.093 | Rejected |
| H2 Product Quality → Purchasing Decisions | (+) 0.491 | 2.916 | 0.001 | Acceptable |
| H3 Price Perception → Consumer Satisfaction | (+) 0.581 | 3.176 | 0.002 | Acceptable |
| H4 Product Quality → Consumer Satisfaction | (+) 0.412 | 2.262 | 0.004 | Acceptable |
| H5 Consumer Satisfaction → Purchasing Decisions | (+) 0.644 | 3.861 | 0.002 | Acceptable |
| H6 Price Perception → Consumer Satisfaction → Purchasing Decisions | (+) 0.374 | 2.108 | 0.036 | Mediating |
| H7 Product Quality → Consumer Satisfaction → Purchasing Decisions | (+) 0.265 | 1.967 | 0.020 | Mediating |

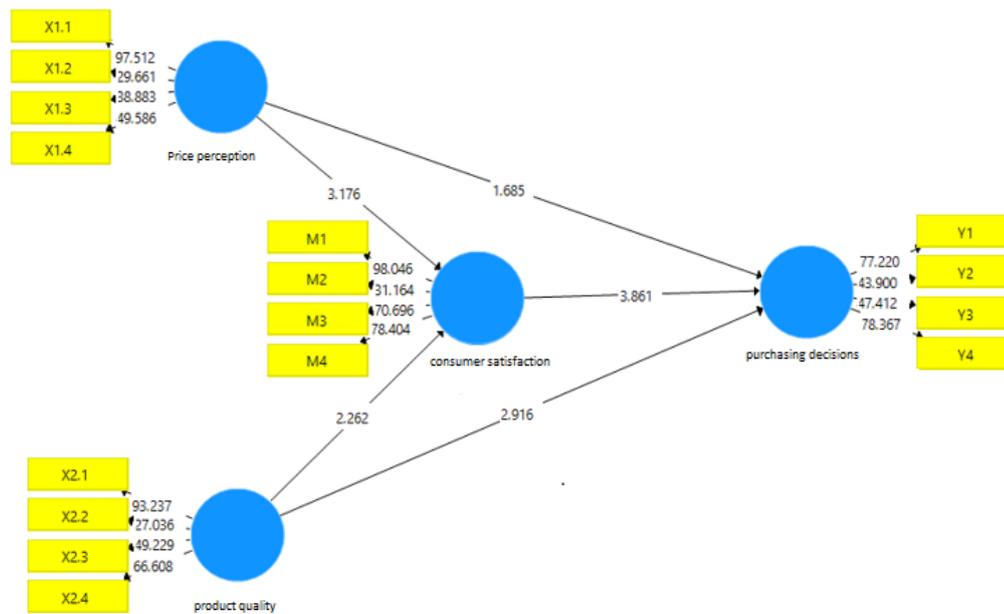


Figure 1. Model testing results

Hypothesis 1: The Effect of Price Perception on Purchase Decisions. The results indicate that price perception does not have a significant effect on café consumers' purchase decisions in Malinau Regency; therefore, the first hypothesis is rejected. This finding suggests that price is not the primary factor influencing purchase decisions in the local café market. This condition is largely influenced by the characteristics of the Malinau market, where consumers place greater emphasis on the consumption experience than on price. Consumers tend to prioritize aspects such as taste quality, portion size, café atmosphere, and service comfort. This finding is consistent with the study by Saraswati et al. (2025), which reported that in the café segment, purchase decisions are more strongly driven by experiential factors than by nominal price. In addition, the relatively homogeneous pricing among cafés in Malinau reduces the role of price as a differentiating factor. As a result, consumers focus more on functional and emotional attributes such as friendly service, cleanliness, and ambiance. This result supports the findings of Dinda and Verry (2024), who concluded that price perception is not always a dominant determinant of purchase decisions in certain culinary segments.

From a theoretical perspective, Robbins and Judge (2021) explain that consumer value perceptions are shaped by experiences, social interactions, and psychological factors rather than objective price information alone. Furthermore, motivational theories such as Expectancy Theory emphasize that expected benefits and emotional fulfillment influence purchase decisions. Positive employee behaviors, as reflected in Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), further enhance the consumer experience, thereby diminishing the role of price perception in shaping purchase decisions.

Hypothesis 2: Product Quality on Purchase Decision. This study confirms that product quality significantly affects the purchase decisions of café consumers in Malinau Regency; therefore, Hypothesis 2 is accepted. Consumers consider product quality the main factor in purchase decisions, including taste, presentation, aroma, texture, cleanliness, and product consistency. When product quality meets or exceeds consumer expectations, the likelihood of making a purchase or repeat purchase

increases significantly. The dominant role of product quality in the Malinau context indicates that consumers are more oriented toward functional aspects and product reliability than other marketing factors. This finding is consistent with the study by Herlina and Silitonga (2024), which states that in the culinary industry, consumers place strong emphasis on product quality evaluation before making a purchase decision. In addition, quality consistency plays a crucial role in building consumer trust and strengthening purchase decisions, even surpassing price considerations.

From an organizational behavior perspective and within the *Service-Profit Chain* framework, product quality is closely related to service quality and employee behavior. High employee motivation, discipline, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) encourage more professional and hygienic product presentation, thereby enhancing consumers' perception of quality. Consequently, the influence of product quality on purchase decisions is not only rational but also shaped by consumer experiences, perceptions, and social interactions, reinforcing both the findings of this study and those of previous research.

Hypothesis 3: Price Perception on Consumer Satisfaction. The study's results indicate that price perception significantly affects consumer satisfaction at cafés in Malinau Regency; therefore, the third hypothesis is accepted. Consumers tend to feel more satisfied when the price paid is perceived as reasonable, fair, and proportional to the benefits received. Price perception is not merely an evaluation of the nominal price, but rather an assessment of the overall value obtained, including product quality, service quality, and the overall consumption experience. These findings demonstrate that although price perception does not directly influence purchase decisions, it plays an important role in shaping post-purchase satisfaction. In Malinau Regency, consumers generally evaluate prices based on local quality standards, such as taste, portion size, and comfort. They are not solely oriented toward low prices, but rather toward prices considered "reasonable." This pattern is consistent with the findings of Trenggana and Cahyani (2022), who reported that price perception strongly influences consumer satisfaction in the food and beverage sector. In this regard, price serves as a frame of reference in forming initial expectations, which are later compared with actual consumption experiences.

From an organizational behavior perspective, the influence of price perception on consumer satisfaction can be explained through perception theory and Equity Theory. Robbins and Judge (2021) argue that subjective experiences and personal interpretations shape individual perceptions. When consumers perceive prices as fair relative to the quality received, a sense of equity emerges, leading to higher satisfaction. Furthermore, positive employee behaviors—such as friendliness, responsiveness, and professionalism strengthen perceived value, as described in the *Service-Profit Chain* and *Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)* concepts. Thus, consumer satisfaction is shaped not only by price and product attributes but also by interpersonal interactions within the organization.

Hypothesis 4: Product Quality and Consumer Satisfaction. The results indicate that product quality significantly affects consumer satisfaction among café customers in Malinau Regency. Consumer satisfaction is formed when products meet or exceed expectations, as reflected in taste, aroma, texture, presentation, cleanliness, and consistency over time. Consumers in Malinau consider product quality the primary factor in their consumption experience; therefore, higher product quality leads to more positive emotional evaluations. This finding is consistent with customer value theory,

which emphasizes quality as a core determinant of post-consumption satisfaction. Furthermore, the functional orientation of consumers in Malinau—such as a preference for good taste, adequate portion sizes, and hygienic presentation—makes quality consistency a crucial indicator for building trust and satisfaction. These results support previous studies by Herlina & Silitonga (2024) and Trenggana & Cahyani (2022), which found that food and beverage quality is a key determinant of customer satisfaction in the culinary industry. From an organizational behavior perspective, product quality also reflects the organization's internal quality. Through the Service-Profit Chain and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), employees' disciplined, caring, and service-oriented behaviors directly contribute to higher product quality and, ultimately, greater consumer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5: Consumer Satisfaction on Purchase Decision. The results indicate that consumer satisfaction significantly affects purchase decisions. The higher the consumers' satisfaction, the greater their likelihood of making repeat purchases and recommending the café to others. In Malinau Regency, consumers place strong emphasis on taste, comfort, and a family-like atmosphere when visiting cafés. When these aspects generate satisfaction, purchase decisions tend to occur more spontaneously and with greater conviction, even overriding other considerations such as price variation or location. These findings are consistent with prior studies. Sari and Lestari (2025) found that satisfaction has a direct and significant effect on repurchase intention in service industries, while Putri and Kurniawan (2023) identified satisfaction as the most dominant factor influencing purchase decisions in the food and beverage sector. Similarly, Panjaitan and Saragih (2025) found in their study on Tomoro Coffee that satisfied consumers consistently exhibit loyalty and repeat purchasing behavior. From an organizational behavior perspective, this relationship is further explained by the Service-Profit Chain and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), where friendly, responsive, and attentive employee behavior enhances the consumption experience. As emphasized by Robbins and Judge (2021), positive interpersonal interactions shape perceived value and decision-making. Therefore, purchase decisions are not driven solely by product quality or price, but also by the quality of organizational interactions that foster consumer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6: The Effect of Price Perception on Consumer Satisfaction Mediated by Purchase Decision. The findings indicate that consumer satisfaction mediates the relationship between price perception and purchase decisions. Price does not directly influence consumers' purchase decisions; instead, perceived fairness and reasonableness first enhance consumer satisfaction, which subsequently encourages purchasing behavior. This mechanism reflects a value perception process in which consumers assess whether the costs incurred are proportional to the benefits received. When prices are perceived as appropriate, consumers experience both emotional and cognitive satisfaction, leading to stronger intentions to purchase or repurchase. Thus, price perception plays an indirect yet meaningful role through satisfaction.

This result is consistent with prior studies. Panjaitan and Saragih (2025) found that price perception significantly affects customer satisfaction at Tomoro Coffee, which in turn increases repurchase intention. Similarly, Cahyono, Margaretha, and Winarto (2025) reported that price perception does not always directly affect purchase decisions but exerts influence through consumer satisfaction as a mediating variable. Sari and Lestari (2025) further confirmed that fair pricing enhances satisfaction, which ultimately drives loyalty and purchase decisions. These consistent findings reinforce

the conclusion that, in Malinau, price is not a primary direct determinant of purchasing, but it remains influential through its effect on consumer satisfaction. From an organizational behavior perspective, this mediating mechanism can be explained by Equity Theory, which posits that individuals feel satisfied when the ratio between inputs (price or cost) and outputs (experience, taste, and service quality) is perceived as fair. Additionally, the Service-Profit Chain and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) strengthen this relationship, as friendly and consistent employee behavior adds perceived value, making prices feel more reasonable. Consequently, the mediation effect observed in this study reflects not only economic evaluation but also psychological and social processes shaped by organizational behavior.

Hypothesis 7: The Effect of Product Quality on Consumer Satisfaction Mediated by Purchase Decision. The results show that consumer satisfaction mediates the relationship between product quality and purchase decisions. Product quality not only directly affects purchase decisions but also creates satisfying consumption experiences that strengthen consumers' willingness to buy or repurchase. Café consumers in Malinau evaluate quality through taste, aroma, texture, portion size, presentation aesthetics, and product consistency. When these aspects meet expectations, consumers experience high satisfaction, which becomes a psychological driver reinforcing purchase decisions.

This mediating role of satisfaction is consistent with previous studies. Trenggana and Cahyani (2022) found that product quality is a key determinant of satisfaction in the culinary industry, thereby influencing repurchase intention. Similarly, Herlina and Silitonga (2024) reported that high product quality enhances satisfaction and, in turn, strengthens purchase decisions. Panjaitan and Saragih (2025) also demonstrated that in modern coffee businesses such as Tomoro Coffee, purchase decisions are strongly shaped by satisfaction derived from product and service quality. These consistent findings confirm the robustness of the mediation relationship across culinary contexts. From an organizational behavior perspective, this mechanism can be explained through the Service-Profit Chain, which highlights the role of internal service quality and employee behavior in shaping external customer experiences. Positive employee behaviors, including professionalism, attention to detail, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), enhance perceived product quality, leading to higher satisfaction before influencing purchase decisions. Additionally, perception theory explains that satisfaction emerges from consumers' holistic interpretation of their experiences, combining objective quality and subjective expectations. Therefore, product quality influences purchase decisions through complex psychological and social processes, with consumer satisfaction serving as a crucial mediating variable.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study confirm that price perception and product quality play a crucial role in shaping purchase decisions among café consumers in Malinau Regency, both directly and indirectly through consumer satisfaction. A price that is perceived as fair, reasonable, and proportional to the benefits received encourages consumers to make purchasing decisions. This indicates that consumers in Malinau are strongly oriented toward *value for money*. In addition, product quality, as reflected in taste, consistency, presentation, and freshness, has a significant positive effect on purchase decisions. High product quality builds consumer confidence and encourages

purchases, even when prices are relatively higher, highlighting product quality as a key competitive factor for cafés in the region.

The study also demonstrates that price perception and product quality significantly influence consumer satisfaction. Satisfaction is formed not only through functional evaluation but also through emotional responses when consumers feel they receive fair value from their consumption experience. Furthermore, consumer satisfaction has a significant positive effect on purchase decisions, including repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth recommendations. Importantly, consumer satisfaction serves as a mediating variable in the relationship between price perception and purchase decisions, as well as between product quality and purchase decisions. This indicates that price and quality do not merely influence purchasing behavior directly but also operate through enhancing consumer satisfaction. From a managerial perspective, café owners in Malinau Regency are advised to adopt value-based pricing strategies that align prices with perceived product benefits. Prices do not need to be the lowest but must be perceived as fair and justified. Maintaining consistent product quality, particularly in taste, presentation, hygiene, and portion size, should be a continuous priority. Moreover, improving the overall consumption experience through friendly service, a comfortable café atmosphere, and adequate supporting facilities is essential to strengthening consumer satisfaction and fostering long-term loyalty.

For local governments and related institutions, this study can serve as a reference for designing capacity-building programs for culinary MSMEs, particularly café businesses. Training initiatives may focus on value-based pricing strategies, quality management, and consumer satisfaction enhancement to improve the competitiveness of local cafés and support regional economic growth. Finally, future researchers are encouraged to expand this study by incorporating additional variables, such as service quality, café atmosphere, brand image, or digital promotion, and by employing alternative research methods or examining different regions to enhance the generalizability and depth of insights into consumer behavior in the café industry.

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