

Analysis of the Influence of Brand Awareness, Brand Association, Brand Image, and Word of Mouth on the Purchasing Decisions of Batam State Polytechnic Students at the Polibatam Store

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of brand awareness, brand association, brand image, and word of mouth on purchasing decisions. The study respondents numbered 155 people selected using purposive sampling. Data collection was conducted through the distribution of questionnaires, which were then analyzed using multiple linear regression. The results showed that brand awareness and brand association had a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, while brand image and word of mouth did not have a significant partial effect. These findings indicate that although consumers have certain perceptions or assessments of the quality, reputation, or overall image of a brand, these factors are not strong enough to directly influence their decision to purchase a product. Partially, brand awareness and brand association have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions.

Keywords: Brand Awareness, Brand Association, Brand Image, Word of Mouth, Purchase Decision

Introduction

In an era of increasingly fierce business competition, understanding the factors that influence consumer purchasing decisions has become an important aspect of marketing strategy. Polibatam Store, as the official store of the Batam State Polytechnic, plays a role in providing various student needs such as clothing, alma mater, bouquets, and campus merchandise. Although its presence is quite well known, the level of student visits and purchases is still relatively low compared to the existing market potential. This phenomenon indicates a gap between brand awareness and actual purchasing behavior among students, highlighting the need for an in-depth analysis of the elements that shape purchasing decisions within the Polibatam Store environment.

Initial survey results show that 54% of students are aware of Polibatam Store, but most respondents are rarely exposed to the store's promotions. Meanwhile, more than half of the students (56.3%) have never visited the store in person. This indicates that although the Polibatam Store brand image is viewed positively, the conversion rate from awareness to purchase is still low. This condition shows that factors such as brand awareness, brand association, brand image, and word of mouth have the potential to play an important role in influencing students' purchasing decisions regarding Polibatam Store products.

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of brand equity elements in influencing purchasing behavior. Research by (Amperawati et al., 2024) found that brand awareness has a positive influence on purchasing decisions at online stores in Indonesia. Conversely, (Alfian et al., 2024) showed different results, where brand awareness did not significantly influence purchasing decisions for RRQ merchandise. Additionally, research by (Ramadani & Rachmawati, 2022) confirmed that word of mouth and brand image greatly contribute to shaping consumer purchasing decisions, while (Ayuningsih & Maftukhah, 2020) showed that brand association also plays an important role in fostering consumer confidence in products. However, literature that specifically discusses the interaction of these four variables in the context of official campus stores is still very limited.

Based on these research gaps, this study aims to analyze the influence of brand awareness, brand association, brand image, and word of mouth on purchasing decisions at Polibatam Store. This study is expected to explain how brand equity elements partially influence student purchasing behavior and identify the dominant factors that play the most significant role in shaping these decisions.

Theoretically, this study contributes to expanding the study of brand equity models proposed by (Aaker, 1991) and (Keller, 2003) by applying them to the unique context of official university stores. The brand equity model explains that the value of a brand is formed from four main elements: brand awareness, brand association, brand image, and brand loyalty. However, in this study, the dimension

of word of mouth (WOM) is also added as an important variable that can strengthen the relationship between brand image and purchasing decisions. The application of this model in the context of Polibatam Store is important, given that its consumers are predominantly students, where social factors and peer recommendations often form the basis of purchasing decisions.

From the perspective of purchase decision theory, the purchase decision-making process depends not only on functional needs for the product, but also on perceptions and emotional experiences formed from interactions with the brand (Kotler et al., 2022). Brand awareness plays an initial role in the recognition process, where consumers begin to become aware of and recognize the existence of a brand. Furthermore, brand association forms a network of meanings attached to the brand in the minds of consumers, either through direct experience or exposure to communication. Brand image then becomes a reflection of consumers' perceptions of product quality and credibility, while word of mouth communication acts as an external reinforcer that validates the experience through social recommendations. It is this relationship between elements that ultimately influences a person's purchase decision.

In previous literature reviews, research findings have been found that show differences in the influence of these variables on purchasing decisions. (Amperawati et al., 2024) stated that brand awareness has a positive and significant effect on the purchasing decisions of online store consumers in Indonesia, while (Alfian et al., 2024) found that brand awareness does not always have a significant effect in the context of e-sports merchandise products. Meanwhile, (Ramadani & Rachmawati, 2022) emphasized that brand association and word of mouth play an important role in shaping consumer trust in a brand, which then impacts purchasing decisions. Similar findings were also obtained by (Yuningsih & Suryoko, 2020), who stated that brand association and perceived quality have a positive effect on purchasing decisions for cosmetic products.

In addition, brand image has been proven to be a consistent factor influencing purchasing decisions in various research contexts. Research (Solihin & Setiawan, 2021) found that brand image has a significant influence on the decision to purchase Samsung smartphones, while (Purnamawati et al., 2022) showed that brand image plays a major role in electronic word of mouth and the decision to purchase fashion products online. On the other hand, a study (Mulyaningtyas & Yanti, 2025) reinforces the role of word of mouth as an effective communication element, where positive reviews and consumer experiences significantly increase purchasing decisions for cosmetic and fashion products on the Shopee Batam platform. Based on these findings, it is evident that brand awareness, brand association, brand image, and word of mouth are interrelated constructs that simultaneously influence purchasing decisions, although the degree of influence may vary depending on the research context.

Based on the theoretical framework and literature review results, this study developed four main hypotheses to be tested empirically. First (H1), brand awareness is predicted to have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, because the higher the level of consumer awareness of Polibatam Store, the more likely they are to choose products from that store. Second (H2), brand association is expected to have a positive effect on purchasing decisions, because strong and positive brand associations can increase the perceived value of a product. Third (H3), brand image is predicted to have a significant effect on purchasing decisions because a positive image reflects product credibility and quality. Fourth (H4), word of mouth is believed to have a positive effect on purchasing decisions (), given that social recommendations from peers play a major role in shaping students' perceptions and trust in brands.

By examining the relationship between these variables in the context of Polibatam Store, this study is expected to provide empirical understanding of how brand equity elements contribute to students' purchasing decisions. The findings of this study are expected to enrich the academic literature in the field of marketing management, particularly regarding the application of brand equity theory in the educational retail sector. In practical terms, the results of this study are expected to provide strategic recommendations for Polibatam Store managers to increase the effectiveness of promotions, strengthen

brand image, and utilize the power of word of mouth to encourage student loyalty and purchase intensity in the future.

Research Methodology

This study uses a quantitative approach with an associative descriptive type. This study examines five variables, namely brand awareness, which refers to the extent to which a brand is embedded in an individual's memory, as reflected in their ability to recognize brand elements such as names, logos, symbols, characters, packaging, and slogans in various contexts (Amperawati et al., 2024), brand association, which is the connection between consumer memory and a particular brand (Supiyandi et al., 2022), brand image, which is the mental representation of consumers in assessing a product, whether it is positive or negative, good or bad, and attractive or not (Waworuntu & Hasan, 2021), Word of mouth refers to direct communication between consumers (Mulyaningtyas & Yanti, 2025), and purchasing decisions are the individual process of determining one choice from a number of available options (Yuningsih & Suryoko, 2020). A total of 155 students from the Batam State Polytechnic were sampled using purposive sampling. Data were collected through a questionnaire with a four-point Likert scale, then analyzed using multiple linear regression through SPSS version 31. The validity test was conducted using Pearson Product Moment, while the reliability test used Cronbach Alpha.

Results

This study examines the influence of brand awareness, brand association, brand image, and word of mouth on purchasing decisions (PD) among active students at Batam State Polytechnic. The research data was obtained from questionnaires and analyzed using SPSS version 31. The details of the research results are presented as follows:

Respondent Characteristics

1 Table Respondent Characteristics

Demographic	Category	Total	Percentage
Active Student Status	Yes	155	100%
	No	-	-
Gender	Male	68	43.9
	Female	87	56.1
Age	Under 20 years old	25	16.1
	21-25 years old	123	79.4
	26-30 years	7	4.5
	31-35 years old	-	-
Education	D3	61	39.4%
	D4	94	60.6%
Major	Business Management	56	36.1
	Electronics Engineering	31	20
	Computer Engineering	37	23.9
	Mechanical Engineering	31	20
Students Know Polibatam Stroe	Yes, I have	155	100
	Never	-	-

Source: Data processed by researchers, 2025

This study involved a total of 155 respondents who were active students at the Batam State Polytechnic. Based on the demographic data of the respondents, it was found that the majority of participants in this study were women, totaling 87 people or 56.1% of the total respondents, while male

respondents numbered 68 people (43.9%). This distribution indicates that female students are more dominant at Batam State Polytechnic, which is the subject of this study.

In terms of age, the 21-25 age group dominated the respondent population with 123 people (79.4%), followed by the under-20 age group with 25 people (16.1%), and then the 26-30 age group with 7 people (4.5%). This pattern shows that the majority of respondents are in the 21–25 age range, which is the young adult age group and dominates the respondent population in purchasing decisions in this study. This adds value in the context of the study, as more experienced respondents are considered capable of providing more reflective and objective information.

In terms of education, most respondents were D4 students, namely 94 people (60.6%), while 61 people (39.4%) were D3 students. The dominance of D4 students in this research sample reflects that the research respondents were dominated by individuals with higher education levels and deeper academic orientation, so they are likely to have a broader understanding and more critical analysis of the research topic.

Meanwhile, based on majors, most respondents were Business Management students, numbering 56 or 36.1%, followed by 26 respondents from Electronics Engineering (20%), 37 respondents from Information Technology (23.9%), and the remaining 31 respondents (20%) from Mechanical Engineering. This distribution shows that the research respondents were dominated by Business Management students, indicating that the majority of participants had an academic background in management and business. This may influence their perspective and understanding of research variables related to marketing, management, or consumer behavior, compared to respondents from engineering majors.

Statistical Test (Descriptive Statistics)

Descriptive statistical tests are conducted to provide an overview of the data trends for each variable studied (Sugiyono, 2013). This analysis is carried out using statistical measures such as mean, standard deviation, and minimum and maximum values. The results of the analysis are presented in the following table:

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Indicator	Item	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	
Brand Awareness	BA1	BA1.1	1	4	2.80	0.668	
		BA2.1	1	4	2.80	0.648	
		BA3.1	1	4	2.75	0.667	
		BA4.1	1	4	2.83	0.682	
Brand Association	AS1	AS1.1	1	4	2.97	0.673	
		AS2.1	1	4	3.07	0.659	
		AS2.2	2	4	3.06	0.661	
		AS3.1	2	4	3.01	0.602	
Brand Image	AS4	AS4.1	1	4	3.03	0.551	
		BI1	BI1.1	2	4	2.98	0.586
			BI1.2	1	4	2.90	0.638
		BI2	BI2.1	2	4	2.90	0.611
BI2.2	1		4	2.86	0.665		
Word of Mouth	BI3	BI3.1	2	4	2.91	0.557	
		WM1	WM1.1	1	4	2.49	1.124
			WM2.1	1	4	2.49	1.124
WM3.1	1		4	2.49	1.124		
Purchase Decision	PD1	PD1.1	1	4	2.49	1.121	
		PD2.1	1	4	2.48	1.127	
		PD3.1	1	4	2.48	1.127	

Source: Data processed by researcher, 2025

Based on Table 2, the brand awareness variable (X1) consists of three indicators. The BA1.1 indicator item related to brand knowledge shows a minimum value of 1 and a maximum of 4, with an average of 2.80 and a standard deviation of 0.668. This reflects that most respondents tend to agree with the statement in the BA1.1 indicator (brand awareness). The BA2.1 question item, related to brand recall, has an average of 2.80 and a standard deviation of 0.648, indicating that respondents' perceptions of brand recall (the ability to remember brands) are at a fairly good level. Item BA3.1, related to brand recognition, has an average of 2.75 and a standard deviation of 0.667, indicating that most respondents tend to agree that they can recognize brands well. Item BA4.1, namely brand familiarity, recorded the highest average of 2.83 with a standard deviation of 0.682, indicating that most respondents have a fairly good level of familiarity with the brand.

Brand association variables (X2) were measured using three indicators. AS1.1, related to associations with product categories, recorded an average of 2.97 with a standard deviation of 0.673, indicating that most respondents tended to agree that they had clear associations or relationships between brands and product categories. AS2.1, which relates to associations with price and quality, had an average of 3.07 and a standard deviation of 0.659, indicating that most respondents tended to agree that they associated the brand with product quality and appropriate prices. AS2.2 association with price and quality had an average of 3.06 and a standard deviation of 0.661, indicating that most respondents tended to agree that they associated the brand with product quality and appropriate prices. AS3.1, related to associations with specific benefits or attributes, shows an average of 3.01 and a standard deviation of 0.602, with a range of values from 2 to 4, illustrating that respondents' perceptions of this indicator tend to be positive, indicating a good level of association. AS4.1, association with lifestyle or activities, has a mean of 3.03 and a standard deviation of 0.551, indicating that most respondents tend to agree that the brand is related to or suits their lifestyle and activities.

For the brand image variable (X3), all three indicators show consistent average values. BI1.1 related to corporate image has an average of 2.98 and a standard deviation of 0.586, indicating that respondents have a positive perception of brand image. BI1.2 (corporate image) has an average of 2.90 and a standard deviation of 0.638, indicating that respondents tend to have a positive view of brand image. BI2.1 related to user image has an average of 2.90 and a standard deviation of 0.611, indicating a positive assessment of brand image. BI2.2 (user image) has an average of 2.86 and a standard deviation of 0.665, indicating a positive assessment. BI3.1 related to product image has an average of 2.90 with a standard deviation of 0.557, reflecting that respondents are quite consistent, so it can be said that the majority of respondents have similar views regarding product image.

For the word of mouth variable (X4), all three indicators show high and consistent average values. WM1.1, WM2.1, and WM3.1 have an average of 2.49 with a standard deviation of 1.124, which reflects that respondents tend to not fully agree with statements describing word of mouth activities (sharing experiences, recommending, or talking about brands to others). Meanwhile, the standard deviation of 1.124 indicates a fairly high level of responses, meaning that there is considerable variation or difference of opinion among respondents regarding word of mouth.

Purchase decisions (Y) are measured using three indicators. PD1.1 has an average of 2.49 and a standard deviation of 1.121, indicating that respondents' perceptions of the aspects measured by PD1 are relatively low, and the diversity of responses is quite high, as seen from the large standard deviation of 1.121, which indicates differences in opinion among respondents. PD2.1 (much discussed) and PD3.1 (product quality) have averages of 2.48 and 2.48, respectively, with a standard deviation of 1.127, reflecting that respondents have not yet shown positive perceptions. Thus, it can be said that respondents have different views on how much the product is discussed and on the perceived quality of the product.

Overall, all variables in the study showed average values above 2.80, reflecting positive perceptions from respondents. The standard deviation of the variables is divided into two groups: brand awareness,

brand association, and brand image variables have relatively small values (0.55 to 0.68), reflecting high homogeneity and consistency in respondents' perceptions of brand equity dimensions. Conversely, the variables of word of mouth and purchase decision show relatively large standard deviation values (around 1.12), indicating significant heterogeneity or data dispersion among respondents, revealing a lack of agreement or strong results in recommendation behavior and purchase decisions.

Validity Test

Validity testing is conducted to assess the ability of items to measure constructs accurately. A statement is considered valid if its correlation value with the total score exceeds the r-table (Ghozali, 2018). With 155 respondents (df = 153), the r-table is 0.159. The following is a table of validity test results showing the correlation between items and the total score for each variable:

Table 3 Validity Test

Variable	Item	Calculated r	Table r (df = 153)	Description
Brand Awareness	BA1.1	0.400	0.159	Valid
	BA2.1	0.323	0.159	
	BA3.1	0.327	0.159	
	BA4.1	0.398	0.159	
Brand Association	AS1.1	0.327	0.159	
	AS2.1	0.337	0.159	
	AS2.2	0.315	0.159	
	AS3.1	0.366	0.159	
	AS4.1	0.431	0.159	
Brand Image	BI1.1	0.403	0.159	
	BI1.2	0.337	0.159	
	BI2.1	0.330	0.159	
	BI2.2	0.357	0.159	
	BI3.1	0.260	0.159	
Word of Mouth	WW1.1	0.411	0.159	
	WW2.1	0.460	0.159	
	WW3.1	0.443	0.159	
Purchase Decision	PD1.1	0.686	0.159	
	PD2.1	0.642	0.159	
	PD3.1	0.672	0.159	

Source: Data processed by researcher, 2025

Based on Table 3, all items of the variable statements have a calculated r value greater than the table r value, making them valid and suitable for use as research measurement tools.

Reliability Test

Reliability testing measures internal consistency between items within a construct. An instrument is categorized as reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value exceeds 0.70, which indicates measurement

stability and reliability (Ghozali, 2018). The following table shows the reliability test results, which indicate the Cronbach's Alpha value for each variable:

Table 4 Reliability Test Results

Variable	Alpha Value	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
Brand Awareness (X1)	0.809	0.7	
Brand Association (X2)	0.783	0.7	
Brand Image (X3)	0.776	0.7	Reliable
Word of Mouth (X4)	0.871	0.7	
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.873	0.7	

Source: Data processed by researcher, 2025

Based on Table 4, it can be seen that the variables in this study have Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.70, indicating reliability that meets the requirements as a research measurement tool.

Classical Assumption Test

a. Analysis of Normality Test, Heteroscedasticity Test, and Multicollinearity Test

Testing classical assumptions includes testing normality, heteroscedasticity, and multicollinearity. Normality testing is conducted through Kolmogorov-Smirnov analysis. Data is considered normal if the Sig. value is greater than 0.05, then the data is declared to be normally distributed (Ghozali, 2018). The heteroscedasticity test uses the Glejser method with a significance criterion of > 0.05 . Meanwhile, multicollinearity is tested through the Tolerance value (> 0.10) and VIF (< 10) (Ghozali, 2018). These three tests aim to ensure that the regression model meets the basic assumptions before performing multiple linear regression analysis.

Table 5 Normality Test, Heteroscedasticity Test, and Multicollinearity Test

Variable	Normality	Heteroscedasticity	Multicollinearity	
	Asymp. Sig.	Sig. (Glejser)	Tolerance	VIF
Brand Awareness	0.200	0.648	0.993	1.007
Brand Association		0.360	0.996	1.004
Brand Image		0.775	0.993	1.007
Word of Mouth		0.162	0.996	1,004

Source: Data processed by researchers, 2025

Based on the table above, the normality test results using descriptive statistics show an Asymp. Sig value of 0.200 (> 0.05), so it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed and has been fulfilled. The heteroscedasticity test results show that all independent variables have a significance value > 0.05 , which indicates that there are no symptoms of heteroscedasticity. The multicollinearity test also shows that all Tolerance values are > 0.10 and VIF < 10 for all variables, so the model is free from multicollinearity. With the fulfillment of these three classical assumptions, the regression model in this study is suitable for further analysis.

Multiple Linear Regression Test

Multiple linear regression is used to predict the value of a dependent variable based on the values of several independent variables, as well as to determine the direction and significance of the influence between variables (Ghozali, 2018). The results of the analysis are presented in the following table:

Table 6 Multiple Linear Regression Test

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	6.897	2.477	-	-2,784	0.006
1 Brand Awareness	0.490	0.110	0.323	4.438	0.001
Brand Association	0.389	0.101	0.279	3.839	0.001
Brand Image	0.163	0.090	0.132	1.813	0.072
Word of Mouth	0.020	0.073	0.020	0.780	0.780

Source: Data processed by researcher, 2025

This analysis produced the following regression equation:

$$Y=6.897+0.490 (X1) +0.389 (X2) +0.163 (X3) +0.020 (X4) \quad (1)$$

Based on the regression analysis results, it was found that:

- Brand awareness has a significant effect on purchasing decisions (Sig. 0.001 < 0.05).
- Brand association has a significant effect on purchasing decisions (Sig. 0.001 < 0.05).
- Brand image does not significantly influence purchasing decisions (Sig. 0.072 > 0.05).
- Word of mouth does not significantly influence purchasing decisions (Sig. 0.780 > 0.05).

Thus, only brand awareness and brand association are proven to have a significant effect on purchasing decisions in this model.

Determination Coefficient Test (R^2)

The coefficient of determination (R^2) serves to show how much variation in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variable in a model. A higher R^2 value reflects a better ability of the model to explain the dependent variable (Ghozali, 2018). The test results are shown in the following table:

Table 7 Test of the Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Model	Coefficient of Determination (R^2)	
	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.211	.190

Source: Data processed by researcher, 2025

Based on Table 7, the adjusted R square value of 0.211 indicates that the combination of brand awareness (X1), brand association (X2), brand image (X3), and word of mouth (X4) variables can explain 21.1% of the variation in purchasing decisions (Y), while the remaining 78% is explained by other factors outside the model. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.190 indicates that the ability of the independent variables to explain the dependent variable is 19%.

T-test (Partial)

The t-test aims to test the significance of the effect of each independent variable partially on the dependent variable. A variable is said to have a significant effect if the significance value is < 0.05 and the calculated t value is > t table (Ghozali, 2018). The analysis results are presented in the following table:

Table 8 T Test

Model	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-2.784	0.006
Brand Awareness	4.438	0.001
Brand Association	3,839	0.001
Brand Image	1,813	0.072
Word of Mouth	0.280	0.780

Source: Data processed by researchers, 2025

Based on the results of the t-test analysis presented in Table 8, it was found that the brand awareness variable obtained a t-value of 4.438 and a significance value of 0.001. Meanwhile, the brand association variable showed a higher t-value, namely 3.839, with the same significance level, namely 0.001. Referring to the significance threshold commonly used in research, namely 0.05, both variables can be said to have a significant partial effect on the dependent variable, namely purchase decision (Y). This means that both brand awareness and brand association have a meaningful contribution in explaining the variation in the purchase decision variable in the context of this study.

On the other hand, the brand image variable showed different results. The calculated t-value was 1.813 with a significance of 0.072, which means that the significance value was above the threshold of 0.05. In addition, the word of mouth variable obtained a calculated t-value of 0.280 with a very high significance of 0.780. This shows that statistically, brand image and word of mouth do not have a significant partial effect on purchasing decisions. This finding is reinforced by the partial significance testing criteria proposed by Ghozali (2018), which states that an independent variable is considered to have a significant effect if the significance value is below 0.05 and the t-value exceeds the t-table. Therefore, only brand awareness and brand association are statistically proven to contribute significantly to the regression model, while brand image and word of mouth do not show a significant influence in the context of this study.

Discussion

Table 9. Hypothesis Results

Variable	t	Sig	Hypothesis
Brand Awareness	4.438	0.001	Accepted
Brand Association	3,839	0.001	accepted
Brand Image	1,813	0.072	Rejected
Word of Mouth	0.280	0.780	rejected

From the results of the analysis and data processing, this study successfully revealed the influence of four independent variables, namely brand awareness, brand association, brand image, and word of mouth on the dependent variable of purchase decision (PD). This study provides an update by proving that not all factors that are theoretically considered to have a positive effect actually have a significant influence. Further elaboration is carried out based on each variable as follows:

1. The Influence of Brand Awareness on Purchase Decision (PD)

The regression analysis results show that brand awareness has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. The regression coefficient value of 0.490 with a significance level of 0.001, which is less than 0.05, indicates a strong and significant relationship. This means that the higher the level of consumer awareness of a brand, the greater their tendency to make a purchase.

Consumers who are familiar with and can easily remember a brand will be more confident in the product and more likely to choose it over competing products.

Thus, brand awareness becomes an important foundation in building consumer loyalty and preference. Polibatam Store can strengthen brand awareness through consistent marketing communications, a strong visual identity, and continuous promotions so that the brand becomes more recognizable and memorable to consumers.

2. The Influence of Brand Association on Purchase Decisions (PD)

The results of the analysis show that brand association has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions, with a regression coefficient of 0.389 and a significance of 0.001. This means that the stronger the brand association formed in the minds of consumers, the higher their tendency to buy the product. Positive associations, such as quality, reputation, and pleasant experiences, create added value and strengthen consumers' desire to buy.

These findings are consistent with the results of a study (Navanti et al., 2024) which explains that product variety and brand image associations contribute to increased interest and purchasing decisions for instant food products in Bekasi. Additionally, Bilgin (2020), in a study cited by (Amperawati et al., 2024), also confirms that strong brand associations form positive perceptions in consumers' minds and have a direct impact on purchasing behavior.

Thus, brand association plays a major role in strengthening consumer perceptions of product superiority. Polibatam Store needs to ensure that the associations formed in consumers' minds are related to the quality, reliability, and positive experiences offered by the brand in order to create long-term loyalty.

3. The Influence of Brand Image on Purchase Decisions (PD)

Unlike the previous two variables, brand image did not show a significant effect on purchasing decisions, with a significance value of 0.072. This indicates that although brand image has a positive relationship, its strength is not yet sufficient to directly influence purchasing decisions at Polibatam Store. Consumers tend to consider rational factors such as price and product availability more than the image that has been formed.

In line with these findings, research by (Jusika et al., 2024) shows that brand image also has no significant effect on Gen Z consumers' purchasing decisions on the Shopee e-commerce platform in Pekanbaru. Consumers in the study were more influenced by digital service quality than their perception of brand image. These findings indicate that brand image is often not a major determinant of purchasing decisions, especially when consumers are more focused on direct benefits such as service speed, ease of transaction, and recommendations from others. The results of the study by (Yunita & Indriyatni, 2022) found that the brand image variable did not have a significant influence on purchasing decisions, even though social media advertising and celebrity endorsements in the model contributed simultaneously.

Thus, even though brand image does not directly influence purchasing decisions, companies still need to maintain a positive image by improving service quality and customer experience in order to build a strong brand perception in the long term.

4. The Influence of Word of Mouth on Purchasing Decisions (PD)

The analysis results show that word of mouth does not have a significant effect on purchasing decisions, with a significance value of 0.780. This indicates that although word of mouth communication can shape initial perceptions of a product, it is not strong enough to directly influence purchasing decisions in the context of this study.

In line with these findings, research (Holidah et al., 2025) also shows that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has a positive but insignificant influence on the purchasing decisions of e-commerce consumers. The study confirms that WOM does not always have a direct impact on

purchasing behavior, especially when consumers prioritize functional considerations such as ease of transaction or product availability. This finding reinforces the results of research at Polibatam Store, which shows that WOM is not yet a dominant factor in shaping purchasing decisions. The results of a study by (Syahda et al., 2024) on users of the Shopee e-commerce application in Klaten City found that e-WOM did not have a significant effect on purchase decisions, even though other variables such as ease of use and service quality proved to be more dominant.

Thus, it can be concluded that the influence of word of mouth on purchasing decisions at Polibatam Store is still limited because it is not yet supported by a consistent communication strategy or an established brand reputation. Polibatam Store needs to strengthen its customer recommendation and testimonial strategy through digital platforms so that the effect of word of mouth has a greater impact on consumer purchasing behavior.

Partially, brand awareness is the most dominant factor, followed by brand association. Although brand image and word of mouth do not show a significant influence partially. This shows that consumer purchasing decisions are more influenced by factors, namely the ability of consumers to recognize and associate a brand with certain attributes or benefits, compared to affective factors such as image or recommendations from others. In other words, consumers tend to trust their personal awareness and perception of familiar brands more than relying solely on external opinions or general perceptions. Brand awareness and brand association play a major role in directly encouraging consumers to choose a product, while brand image and word of mouth play a supporting role in reinforcing consumers' perceptions and experiences of the brand.

Based on the test results, brand awareness and brand association were proven to have a significant effect on purchasing decisions. In order for these two factors to have a stronger influence on consumer behavior, Polibatam Store needs to improve the consistency of its marketing communications through social media, clarify its visual brand identity, and increase promotional activities that can increase student exposure to its products. In addition, brand association can be strengthened by improving product quality, creating a more attractive store layout, and clearly communicating the benefits, uses, and unique value of each product.

Meanwhile, brand image and word of mouth, which are currently insignificant, can still be optimized to make a greater contribution in the future. To strengthen its brand image, Polibatam Store needs to maintain service quality, improve the shopping experience, and build a positive reputation through consumer testimonials. Word of mouth can be improved through referral programs, consumer review content on social media, collaborating with campus influencer students, and creating a pleasant purchasing experience so that consumers are encouraged to give recommendations voluntarily. These efforts are important to ensure that even though currently both variables have not had a significant impact, the right strategy can strengthen their role in driving purchasing decisions in the future.

These findings are in line with studies conducted by (Keller, 2003) and (Aaker, 1997), which confirm that the elements that make up brand equity, such as brand awareness, brand association, and brand image, play complementary roles in influencing consumer behavior.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study aims to analyze the influence of brand equity on students' purchasing decisions at Polibatam Store. The results show that brand awareness and brand association have a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions. This means that the higher the level of awareness and the stronger the brand association in students' minds, the greater their tendency to choose and buy products at Polibatam Store. Meanwhile, brand image and word of mouth have a positive but statistically insignificant effect, indicating that positive perceptions of brand reputation and communication among students are not yet strong enough to directly influence purchasing decisions.

This finding is in line with Consumer Decision-Making Theory (Kotler & Keller, n.d.), which explains that purchasing decisions are the result of a cognitive process that begins with the recognition

of a need, followed by information search, evaluation of alternatives, and finally the purchase decision and post-purchase behavior. In the context of this study, brand awareness plays an important role in the recognition and information search stages, while brand association plays a role in the alternative evaluation stage when consumers assess the suitability of products to their needs. This shows that the cognitive aspects of brand equity have a more dominant influence than perceptual aspects such as brand image or word of mouth.

Based on the results of the study, Polibatam Store is advised to strengthen brand equity elements, especially brand awareness and association. This can be done through consistent promotional strategies, the use of memorable visual identities (logos, colors, and slogans), and digital marketing activities that highlight the superiority of Polibatam Store's products and unique values. Strengthening brand association can also be achieved by maintaining product quality, providing good service, and creating a pleasant shopping experience, thereby fostering a positive relationship between students and the brand.

Although brand image and word of mouth do not have a significant effect, both still play a supporting role. These findings are in line with (Purba & Heryenzus, 2023) and (Kotler et al., 2022), which emphasize that brand image and consumer-to-consumer communication have a stronger indirect effect when supported by high brand awareness and association. Therefore, Polibatam Store should implement an integrated marketing strategy that not only focuses on increasing brand awareness but also encourages positive word of mouth through customer satisfaction.

Theoretically, this study expands the application of the concepts of brand equity and Consumer Decision-Making Theory in the context of campus retail, particularly in the student environment. Practically, the results of this study can be used as a reference for Polibatam Store management in designing more effective marketing communication and brand management strategies. For further research, it is recommended to add other variables such as brand loyalty, perceived quality, customer satisfaction, and digital marketing engagement in order to obtain more comprehensive results. Researchers can also expand the research object to other campus stores, local souvenir centers, or MSMEs in the archipelago, as well as increase the number of respondents to more than 300 people so that the research results are more reliable and representative.

Limitations and Implications

This study has several limitations that need to be considered. First, the sample was limited to Polibatam Store consumers, so the results may not fully represent consumers outside this context. Second, this study used a quantitative approach with a questionnaire instrument, so the data obtained depended on the subjective perceptions of respondents, which could be influenced by individual bias or conditions at the time of completion. Third, variables such as brand image and word of mouth did not show a significant influence, so other external factors that were not measured, such as market trends or digital recommendations, may also influence purchasing decisions.

The implications of these findings are limited, but this study provides practical implications for Polibatam Store's brand management and marketing strategy. The results emphasize the importance of increasing brand awareness and brand association as key factors in driving purchase decisions, as well as maintaining brand image and supporting word of mouth to simultaneously strengthen brand equity. Academically, this research can serve as a reference for further studies to explore other factors that influence purchasing decisions, including psychological, social, or digital marketing variables, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior.

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