

THE EFFECT OF PRICE, BRAND IMAGE AND PRODUCT QUALITY ON REALME SMARTPHONE PURCHASE DECISIONS AMONG THE PEOPLE OF EAST ACEH DISTRICT

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the effect of price, brand image, and product quality on the purchasing decision of Realme smartphones among the people of East Aceh Regency. The population in this study were the people of East Aceh Regency who had purchased Realme smartphones. The research method used was a quantitative approach with a sample collection technique using purposive sampling. The data collected in this study were primary data, obtained through direct distribution of questionnaires using a non-probability sampling method, involving 100 respondents. For data analysis, multiple linear regression was used with the help of SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solution) software version 26.0. At the stage of testing the research instrument, validity and reliability tests were applied. The findings of this study indicate that price and product quality have a positive and significant influence on the purchasing decision of Realme smartphones among the people of East Aceh Regency, while brand image shows a positive but insignificant influence on the purchasing decision of Realme smartphones among the people.

Keywords: *Price, Brand Image, Product Quality, Purchase Decision*

INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology has fundamentally changed the way people live. Smartphones, as one of the most important innovations in this progress, not only function as a communication tool, but have also become an integral part of the modern lifestyle. With its various functions including access to information, entertainment, and financial transactions, smartphones have now become a basic necessity for many people, especially among urban communities and the younger generation. In the ever-changing world of the smartphone market, companies are required to maintain market share while creating new demand. To achieve this goal, an effective strategy must be able to attract new consumers and maintain the loyalty of existing customers. This requires innovation and product quality, as well as marketing strategies that are aligned with consumer trends and preferences to create sustainable business growth. The smartphone market in Indonesia is one of the largest and fastest-changing in Southeast Asia. Different brands compete fiercely to offer products with superior features at affordable prices, one of which is Realme which offers high-quality smartphones. Realme is a technology brand committed to providing high-quality smartphones. Since its official founding on May 4, 2018, by Sky Li, along with Madhav Sheth and a group of experienced young people in the smartphone industry, Realme has continued to experience rapid development. Since its official founding on May 4, 2018, by Sky Li and Madhav Sheth, Realme has shown rapid growth in Indonesia. This brand is known to be strong in the lower to middle segment, offering products with competitive specifications and affordable prices ranging from IDR 1 million to IDR 4-5 million, such as the Realme Note 60 and Realme 14 5G, as well as entry-level lines such as the Realme C35 and C75x in the range of IDR 1.5-2.4 million.

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Pasar Smartphone Indonesia, 5 Perusahaan Teratas dalam Hal Pengiriman, Pangsa Pasar, dan Pertumbuhan YoY, Q4 2021 (pengiriman dalam jutaan)					
Perusahaan	Pengiriman 2021Q4	Pangsa Pasar 2021Q4	Pengiriman 2020Q4	Pangsa Pasar 2020Q4	Pertumbuhan YoY
1. OPPO	2.1	20.0%	2.7	23.2%	-24.8%
2. vivo	2.0	19.6%	2.7	23.3%	-26.6%
3. Samsung	1.9	18.9%	1.6	13.5%	21.6%
4. Xiaomi	1.6	15.2%	1.8	15.3%	-13.9%
5. realme	1.4	13.5%	1.6	14.0%	-16.0%
Lain-lain	1.3	12.8%	1.2	10.6%	5.4%
Total	10.3	100.0%	11.8	100.0%	-12.8%

Sumber: IDC Quarterly Mobile Phone Tracker, 2021Q4

Figure 1 Indonesian Smartphone Market Data 2020-2021

Source: IDC Quarterly Mobile Phone Tracker (2021)

In 2020, Realme successfully maintained its position as one of the top five smartphone brands in Indonesia, supported by a good pricing strategy and offering innovative products that suit the desires of the younger generation. Realme's success in maintaining its position as one of the top five smartphone brands in Indonesia in 2020 is inseparable from the combination of a competitive pricing strategy and product innovation that targets the needs of the younger generation. Realme presents products with superior features, such as large batteries and fast charging technology in the affordable price segment, thus attracting the interest of young consumers who want quality devices without having to pay a high price. Therefore, Realme managed to achieve a market share of up to 14% and maintain its reputation as the fastest-growing brand among the top five vendors in Indonesia.

Indonesia Smartphone Shipments Market Share, 2023 vs 2022

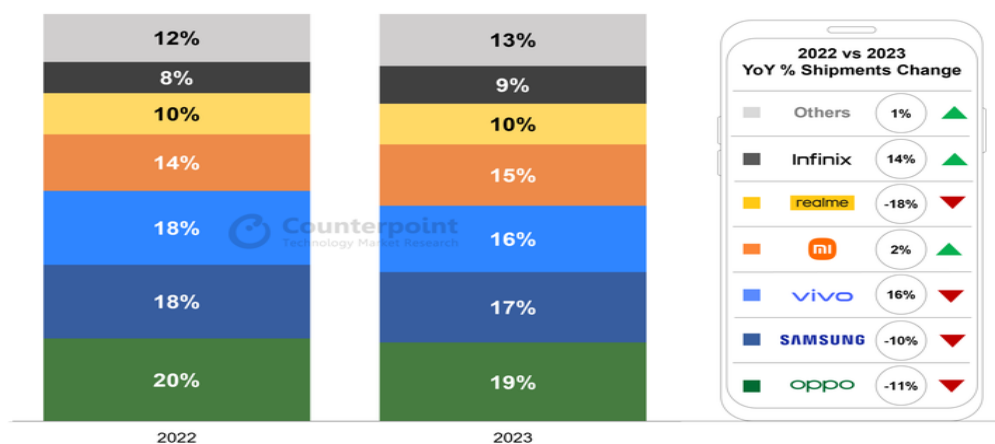


Figure 1 Smartphone Shipment Market Share

Source: <https://www.counterpointresearch.com/> (2024)

However, in the last two years, Realme has faced major challenges in the Indonesian smartphone market. National data shows that in 2023, Realme smartphone shipments decreased by 18% compared to 2022. This indicates a shift in consumer preferences influenced by uncertain economic conditions. Consumers are now more careful and consider many aspects before making purchasing decisions, not only affordable prices but consumers are starting to compare Realme with other products that offer better quality and have a stronger brand reputation at a similar price. This reputation is an important factor in building consumer trust in the quality of the products provided, so brands with a more capable image tend to be preferred in the purchasing decision process.

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Table1
Indonesia Shipments Market Share 2022-2023

Top 5 Indonesian smartphone vendors 2023	Market share 2023	Market share 2022	Shipment growth
Oppo	19%	20%	-11%
Samsung	17%	18%	-10%
Vivo	16%	18%	16%
Xiaomi	15%	14%	2%
Realme	10%	10%	-18%
Infinix	9%	8%	14%
Other	13%	12%	1%

Source: <https://www.counterpointresearch.com/> (2024)

Realme maintained a market share of around 10% in Indonesia, but experienced a decline in shipments of up to 18% throughout 2023. This decline pushed Realme out of the top five smartphone brands in the national market, replaced by the Infinix brand which recorded positive shipment growth of around 14% and managed to take over that position in the second quarter of 2023. The decline in Realme's market share throughout 2023 indicates increasingly fierce competition, especially in the entry-level segment, where consumers are increasingly looking for products with higher value. Realme needs to strengthen its innovation and marketing strategy to be able to compete again and maintain its existence in this dynamic market.

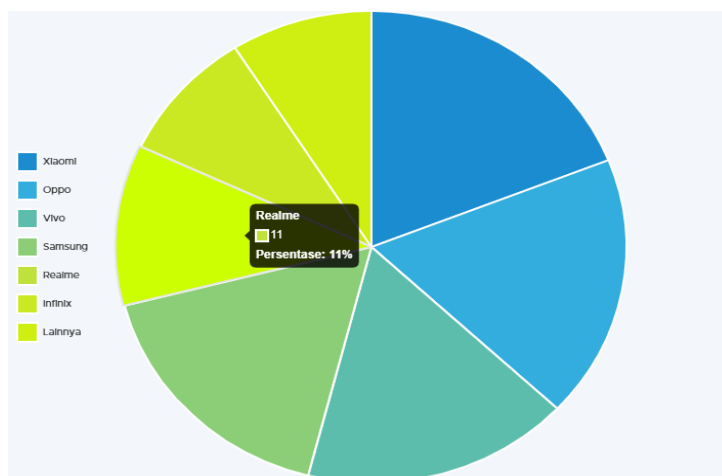


Figure 2 Indonesian Smartphone Market Data 2024
Source: data.goodstats.id (2024)

In the third quarter of 2024, the market experienced growth thanks to macroeconomic stability and increasing consumption by the upper middle class. This situation presents an opportunity for Realme to recover if it can adapt its marketing strategy, including pricing and products, to meet market needs. Price has been one of the challenges Realme has faced in the past few years in the market. *smartphone*Indonesia. A Canalys report (Kompas.com, May 19, 2025) shows that the smartphone segment priced under US\$100 (around Rp1.6 million) grew the fastest, at 35%. Meanwhile, the mid-range segment, which has been Realme's strength, actually experienced a decline of up to 34%. This condition indicates that consumers are increasingly sensitive to price and value for money, so Realme needs to adjust its pricing strategy to remain competitive without sacrificing brand image and product quality to stay competitive with its competitors. Realme, which was previously known as a brand with affordable products with high specifications, now has to compete more fiercely because more competitors are offering more attractive quality, features, and designs at a similar price range. The increasingly fierce price competition and shift in consumer preferences towards higher-value products make Realme face a serious challenge in determining a pricing strategy without sacrificing its brand image. Prices should reflect the brand's value and image and be competitive to attract price-sensitive consumers. The appropriateness of price to perceived benefits is a key factor in purchasing decisions, in line with research. (Rohana et al., 2022) which states that price has a positive and significant influence on purchasing

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decisions. Therefore, companies need to pay attention to affordability, price appropriateness, competitiveness, and price-benefit alignment to ensure product acceptance in the market. Competitive pricing and alignment with consumer perceived value are key factors in attracting buyers, especially amidst the rapid growth of the smartphone segment priced under US\$100, which is expected to reach 35% by 2023 (Canalys, 2025). However, a low price alone is insufficient without the support of a strong brand image as a marker of quality and consumer trust. Product quality is a crucial factor that significantly influences consumer purchasing decisions because good quality can meet or even exceed customer expectations, thus influencing consumer purchasing decisions. High-quality products not only enhance brand reputation but also build consumer trust, encouraging repeat purchases and recommendations. (Setiawan & Lestari, 2023) This indicates that product quality has a greater influence on purchasing decisions and brand image than brand image itself, as product quality is the primary asset for winning competition and maintaining business continuity. Therefore, companies must focus on improving product quality as a primary strategy for attracting and retaining customers in potential markets, particularly in developing regions.

The phenomenon of declining Realme sales is also reflected at the local level, particularly in East Aceh Regency. This region has unique demographic characteristics, high internet penetration rates, and good economic growth, making it a representative of a developing market outside of large cities. Therefore, to determine the variables that people consider in their decision to purchase Realme smartphones, researchers conducted initial observations in November 2024 on 30 Realme consumers in East Aceh Regency, and the results are as follows: Based on the pre-survey conducted, Realme consumers in East Aceh stated that price was the main factor in purchasing decisions (30%), followed by brand image (23.33%) and product quality (23.33%). Hedonic lifestyle factors and FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) also play a role, but their contributions are smaller. These findings confirm that consumers in East Aceh are not only sensitive to price, but also pay close attention to the reputation and after-sales service of the brands they choose. East Aceh Regency was chosen as the research location for several reasons. East Aceh is a non-metropolitan region with strong economic growth and high internet penetration, making it a representative market for emerging markets outside of major cities. The unique demographic characteristics of the East Aceh community, along with the high interest in lower-middle-class smartphones, provide an opportunity to examine consumer behavior in greater depth.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Relationship between Price and Purchasing Decisions

Pricing is an important strategy in determining customer satisfaction. Satisfied consumers tend to make repeat purchases, so pricing must be wise to benefit both sellers and buyers. (Iswandi, 2016) Price is the value set by a company or seller in exchange for goods or services. Meanwhile, Mardia et al. (2021) explain that price is the amount of money paid for a product or service, or the value a consumer places on the benefits or uses of that product or service. This finding aligns with research (Ramli, 2020) which shows that price has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions.

The Relationship Between Brand Image and Purchasing Decisions

A positive brand image increases consumer trust in a product, leading them to choose the brand over competitors, while a negative image actually decreases trust and purchase intention, so a strong brand image is important for improving purchasing decisions. According to (Syafitri et al., 2021) Brand image is a judgment that arises from consumers' feelings when they search for a particular product or service. This brand image not only serves as an assessment but also plays a crucial role in increasing consumer interest in that product or service. This statement aligns with research conducted by Setiawan and Alwie (2019) and (Pasaribu, 2022), who found that brand image has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions.

The Relationship Between Product Quality and Purchasing Decisions

Good product quality significantly influences consumer purchasing decisions, as they evaluate products based on their quality. If they are satisfied, consumers are more likely to choose and use the product. This is in line with research conducted by Indriyanti et al. (2022), which found that product quality influences purchasing decisions. Furthermore, another study, by Rihayana et al. (2022), also found that product quality has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions.

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Conceptual Framework

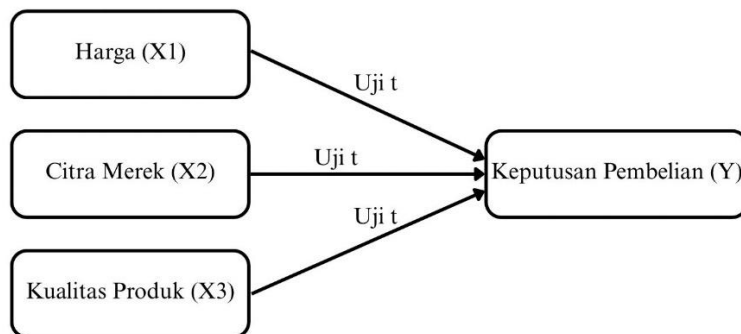


Figure 3 Conceptual Framework
Source: Processed primary data (2025)

Hypothesis

- H1: Price has a significant influence on purchasing decisions *smartphone* Realme in the people of East Aceh Regency.
- H2: Brand image has a significant influence on purchasing decisions *smartphone* Realme in the people of East Aceh Regency.
- H3: Product quality has a significant influence on purchasing decisions *smartphone* Realme in the people of East Aceh Regency.

METHOD

This research was conducted in East Aceh Regency. The subjects were residents of East Aceh Regency who had purchased Realme smartphones. A population refers to a generalized area consisting of objects or subjects possessing certain qualities and characteristics, determined by the researcher for analysis and used as a basis for drawing conclusions (Sugiyono, 2021). The population in this study was all residents of East Aceh Regency who had purchased Realme smartphones, with the exact population size unknown. A sample is a portion or part of a population selected to represent the entire population in a study (Sugiyono, 2021). The use of samples is necessary, especially when the population is too large to directly examine all members of the population. The process of selecting the right sample through sampling techniques is crucial so that the data obtained accurately reflects the characteristics of the population, and the research results are valid and generalizable. In this study, the author used a non-probability sampling technique with the purposive sampling method. According to Sugiyono (2021), non-probability sampling is a sampling technique that does not provide an equal opportunity for each element or member of the population to be selected as a sample. According to Sugiyono (2021), purposive sampling is a sampling technique that considers certain criteria. The sample determination in this study was carried out using the Hair formula. According to Hair et al. (2019), this formula is used for research with an unknown population size. In determining the sample, adjustments are made based on the number of questions in the questionnaire, assuming $n \times (5-10)$ observations for each variable. In this study, there were 20 statements submitted, so the minimum sample size to be taken can be calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Sample} &= \text{Number of indicators} \times 5 \\ &= 20 \times 5 \\ &= 100 \end{aligned}$$

Based on these calculations, this study used a sample of 100 respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Normality Test

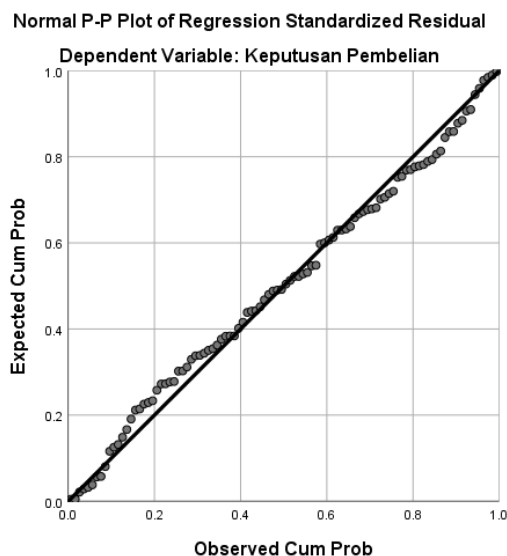


Figure 4 Results of the Normality Probability Plot Test

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

Based on the results of the data normality test using the normality probability plot test, it can be seen that the points in the graph are spread around or follow the diagonal line. Therefore, it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed.

Heteroscedasticity Test Results

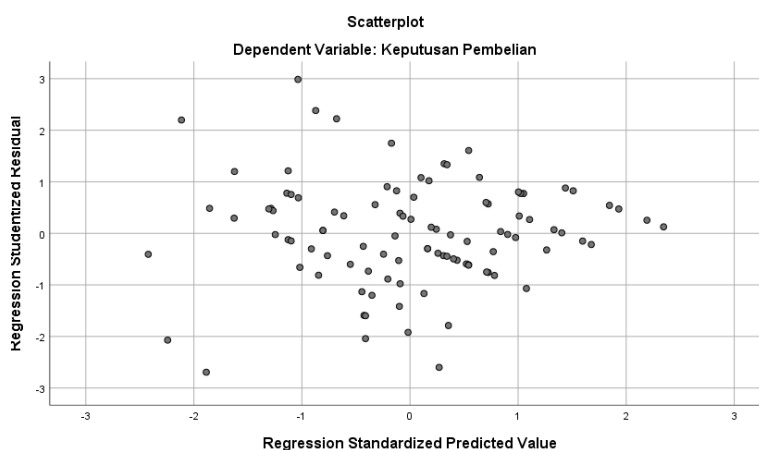


Figure 5 Scatterplot Test Results

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

Based on the results of the heteroscedasticity test using the scatterplot graph in Figure 5 above, the points in the graph are spread out and do not form a clear model. Therefore, it can be concluded that the data in the study does not have heteroscedasticity issues.

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Multicollinearity Test

Table 2 Multicollinearity Test Results

Coefficients ^a		Collinearity Statistics	
Model		Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)		
	Price	.934	1,071
	Brand Image	.948	1,055
	Product Quality	.912	1,097

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

Based on the results of the multicollinearity test in Table 2 above, it can be seen that all independent variables used in this study obtained a VIF value smaller than 10 and obtained a tolerance value greater than 0.10. Therefore, it can be concluded that the data in the study did not experience multicollinearity problems.

Multiple Linear Regression

Multiple regression analysis is a regression analysis that has one dependent variable and more than one independent variable. Multiple linear regression analysis is conducted to determine the direction and extent of influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The following are the results of multiple linear regression, which can be seen below:

Table 3 Multiple Linear Regression

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1,893	2,681		.706	.482
	Price (X1)	.533	.085	.511	6,287	.000
	Brand Image (X2)	.088	.057	.123	1,524	.131
	Product Quality (X3)	.198	.061	.268	3,521	.002

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

Based on table 3 above, it shows that the equation of multiple linear regression in this study is as follows:

$$Y = 1.893 + 0.533 X1 + 0.088 X2 + 0.198 X3.$$

Results of the Determination Coefficient (R²) and Correlation Coefficient (R) Tests

Based on the Adjusted R² value of 0.389 or 38.9%. This indicates that the variables of price, brand image, and product quality together influence purchasing decisions by 38.9%. Meanwhile, 61.1% of the variation in purchasing decisions is influenced by other factors outside the variables examined in this study. These factors can include the influence of promotions, consumer psychological factors, product innovation, and personal consumer preferences that are not included in this research model. Meanwhile, the correlation coefficient (R) value of 0.638 or 63.8% means there is a strong correlation between the independent variable (X) and the dependent variable (Y). The closer the R value is to 1, the stronger the linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Discussion

The Influence of Price on Purchasing Decisions

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, the first hypothesis (H1) is declared accepted or in other words the price variable is proven to have a significant influence on the purchasing decision of Realme smartphones in the people of East Aceh Regency. This finding shows that price is one of the crucial factors that influence consumer behavior in choosing smartphone products in the region. Price is the amount of money that must be paid to obtain an item that is expected to meet consumer needs for the item. Most consumers feel disappointed with the price offered by an item, this is because the price that must be paid to obtain an item that does not match what is contained in the item. The disappointment felt by consumers will be felt not only when the item is used but will have an impact on the desire to make a purchase of the product in the future.

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Consumers in East Aceh Regency tend to consider price as a primary aspect in making purchasing decisions, especially when the price is perceived as providing optimal value or benefits compared to the quality of the product they receive. This indicates that consumers consider the balance between price and quality as an important determinant in purchasing decisions for Realme smartphones. With relatively affordable prices, Realme has succeeded in attracting consumers' attention, thus increasing their interest and decision to purchase the product. Competitive pricing that is in line with consumer expectations regarding quality can strengthen consumer trust in the Realme brand, which ultimately encourages sustainable consumption. Therefore, an effective pricing strategy that is aligned with the quality provided by Realme is very important to maintain to support the success of Realme smartphone marketing in East Aceh.

This research is also supported by the results of other studies which show that price has a positive and significant effect on smartphone purchasing decisions, as found in various studies using regression models and significance tests such as those conducted by Ardiansas and Siregar (2022) entitled *The Influence of Brand Image and Price on Realme Smartphone Purchasing Decisions: A Study in the Subang Regency Area*, showing that there is a positive and significant influence of price on smartphone purchasing decisions in Subang Regency. And the results of research by Rohana, et al. (2022) with the title *The Influence of Price on Xiaomi Smartphone Purchasing Decisions (Case Study in the Community in Karawang)* which states that Price has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions in the community of Karawang Regency. And also in line with research conducted by Setitit et al. (2024) entitled *The Influence of Price, Promotion and Service Quality on Samsung Mobile Phone Purchasing Decisions at Pt. Multi Media Persada* which shows that there is a significant influence on the price variable on Samsung Mobile Phone purchasing decisions at Pt. Multi Media Persada.

The Influence of Brand Image on Purchasing Decisions

Based on the results of the hypothesis testing in this study, it was found that the brand image variable did not have a significant effect on the purchasing decision of Realme smartphones in the people of East Aceh Regency. This indicates that Realme's brand image is not strong enough to influence people's decisions in deciding to buy Realme smartphone products. Therefore, the second hypothesis (H2), which states that brand image has a positive effect on purchasing decisions, is rejected. Brand image can be thought of as what people imagine when they think about a company, associations can only appear in the form of thoughts or images related to a particular brand, but it turns out that this does not influence purchasing decisions.

From the questionnaire data analysis, it was found that the average respondent's answers indicated difficulty in specifically recognizing Realme smartphone products. Furthermore, most respondents also considered Realme brand products less able to provide uniqueness or something that stands out compared to other smartphone brands on the market. This condition can explain why brand image does not contribute significantly to purchasing decisions in the context of this study. Brands that are less well-known and perceived as less unique tend to be unable to build trust or strong preferences from consumers. Thus, negative or neutral perceptions of Realme's brand image by consumers will reduce consumer purchasing decisions for Realme brand products. The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Setiawan_ (2023) with the title "The Influence of Brand Image on Smartphone Purchasing Decisions at the RDS Phone Store in Surakarta," which states that brand image has a positive but insignificant effect on smartphone purchasing decisions in Surakarta. Furthermore, research conducted by Karim and Prijati (2023) found that brand image has a positive but insignificant effect on Apple smartphone purchasing decisions in Surabaya. This is in line with research conducted by Karim and Prijati (2023). (Rifai & Sigit, 2022) entitled *The Influence of Brand Image, Consumer Attitude, and Product Quality on Consumer Purchasing Decisions with Price as an Intervening Variable (Considerations of Students Studying in Yogyakarta in Purchasing an iPhone)* which found that brand image had no significant impact on the decision to purchase an iPhone in Yogyakarta.

The Influence of Product Quality on Purchasing Decisions

Based on the results of the hypothesis testing in this study, the product quality variable is proven to have a significant influence on the purchasing decision of Realme smartphones in the people of East Aceh Regency. This is reinforced by respondents' answers which indicate that the majority of consumers choose to buy Realme smartphone products because of satisfactory product performance. In other words, the better the quality and performance of smartphone products offered by Realme, the more positive consumer purchasing decisions in East Aceh Regency will be. The influence of product quality on purchasing decisions can be explained through several important aspects, including product performance, features, reliability, conformity to promised specifications, durability, service capabilities, aesthetic aspects, and overall quality perception. People in East Aceh Regency assess the quality of Realme smartphone products as very good and satisfactory, especially from the product performance provided, which

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then encourages people to purchase these products. Therefore, based on these findings, the third hypothesis (H3), which states that product quality has a significant influence on purchasing decisions for Realme smartphones, can be accepted. This finding aligns with marketing theory, which states that product quality is one of the main factors influencing consumer behavior in making purchasing decisions. High-quality products not only meet consumer expectations but also increase customer satisfaction and loyalty, thus positively impacting purchasing decisions. These results are also supported by previous research conducted by Pebrianggara (2020) entitled *The Influence of Product Quality, Service Quality, and Brand Image on Smartphone Purchasing Decisions in Sidoarjo City During the Covid-19 Pandemic Era*, which stated that product quality has a significant positive influence on smartphone purchasing decisions in Sidoarjo City. Furthermore, research by Putri and Djuita (2021) entitled *The Influence of Price and Product Quality on Xiaomi Smartphone Purchasing Decisions among Students of SMKN 1 Lubai Ulu* which shows that there is a positive and significant influence of the price variable on the decision to purchase a Xiaomi smartphone. This is then reinforced by research. (Zendrato et al., 2024) with the title *The Influence of Product Quality and Promotion on the Purchase Decision of VIVO Mobile Phones at Transcom Gunungsitoli* which states that there is a significant influence of Product Quality on the Purchase Decision of Vivo Mobile Phones at the Transcom Gunungsitoli Store.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion presented above, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Price has a significant influence on the purchasing decision of Realme smartphones among the people of East Aceh.
2. Brand image does not have a significant influence on smartphone purchasing decisions among the people of East Aceh Regency.
3. Product quality has a significant influence on smartphone purchasing decisions among the people of East Aceh Regency.

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