MEGAMALL VS MANADO TOWN SQUARE DILEMMA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON CONSUMER PREFERENCES FOR SHOPPING DESTINATIONS - ANALYZING MALL ATMOSPHERE AND PRODUCT COMPLETENESS AS KEY FACTORS

DILEMA MEGAMALL VS MANADO TOWN SQUARE: STUDI KOMPARATIF PREFERENSI KONSUMEN TERHADAP DESTINASI BELANJA - MENGANALISIS SUASANA MALL DAN KELENGKAPAN PRODUK SEBAGAI FAKTOR KUNCI

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Abstract: This research investigates consumer preferences for shopping destinations in Manado, Indonesia, focusing on Mega Mall Manado and Manado Town Square (Mantos), two prominent shopping malls in the region. Through a literature review encompassing consumer behavior and retail management, with an emphasis on store atmosphere, product completeness, and shopping preferences. Quantitative researcher is used for testing objective theories by examining the relationship of variables. The number of samples used in this study is 100 respondents, sampling method that was used is purposive sampling method, with questionnaire as a tool in collecting data. The result shows that There are difference on Store Atmosphere and Product Completeness of Megamall Manado and Manado Town Square in terms of consumer preferences.

Keywords: Celebrity Endorsement, Online Promotion, Online Purchasing Decisions

Abstrak: *Penelitian ini menyelidiki preferensi konsumen terhadap destinasi belanja di Manado, Indonesia, dengan fokus pada Mega Mall Manado dan Manado Town Square (Mantos), dua pusat perbelanjaan terkemuka di wilayah tersebut. Melalui tinjauan literatur yang mencakup perilaku konsumen dan manajemen ritel, dengan penekanan pada suasana toko, kelengkapan produk, dan preferensi berbelanja. Peneliti kuantitatif digunakan untuk menguji teori objektif dengan menguji hubungan variabel. Jumlah sampel yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah 100 responden, metode pengambilan sampel yang digunakan adalah metode purposive sampling, dengan kuesioner sebagai alat pengumpulan data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat perbedaan Store Atmosfir dan Kelengkapan Produk Megamall Manado dan Manado Town Square ditinjau dari preferensi konsumen..*

Kata Kunci: *Dukungan Selebriti, Promosi Online, Keputusan Pembelian Online*

INTRODUCTION

Research Background

Consumers' preferences for shopping at malls have shifted towards a more experiential and personalized shopping experience. They are looking for unique and engaging experiences that go beyond just shopping, such as dining, entertainment, and socializing. Malls are also incorporating technology to enhance the shopping experience, such as mobile apps, virtual reality, and augmented reality. Store atmosphere is a crucial factor that affects consumers' preferences for shopping at malls. The store atmosphere includes the physical and emotional elements of the store environment, such as lighting, music, store layout, colors, and decorations. Product completeness is another essential factor that affects consumers' preferences for shopping at malls. Product completeness refers to the availability of a wide range of products that meet consumers' needs and preferences. Consumers prefer malls that offer a variety of products, including popular brands, niche items, and exclusive products.

Research has shown that consumers prefer malls that offer a variety of products in different categories, including clothing, electronics, beauty, and household items. They also prefer malls that offer high-quality products, competitive prices, and exclusive promotions and discounts. Overall, both the store atmosphere and product completeness are critical factors that influence consumers' preferences for shopping at malls. Retailers and mall operators should focus on creating a positive store atmosphere that complements the product range and meets consumers' preferences to enhance their shopping experience and increase their satisfaction and loyalty.

The object of this research will be the two most popular shopping center or mall in Manado, which are Megamall and Manado Town Square. Mega Mall Manado and Manado Town Square are two prominent shopping malls located in Manado, the capital city of the North Sulawesi province in Indonesia. Mega Mall Manado is a large shopping mall situated in the heart of Manado's central business district. It was opened in 2004 and is developed and managed by PT. Megasurya Nusalestari. The mall features five floors of retail space, including anchor tenants such as Matahari Department Store, Gelael, and XXI Cinemas. Mega Mall Manado also offers a variety of dining options, entertainment venues, and services, making it a popular destination for shopping and leisure activities in Manado.

Manado Town Square (Mantos) is another large shopping mall located in the heart of Manado. It was opened in 2006 and is owned and managed by PT. Gerbang Nusa Perkasa. The mall features five floors of retail space, including anchor tenants such as HyperMart, Matahari Department Store, and Cinema XXI. Mantos also offers a variety of dining options, entertainment venues, and services, making it a popular destination for shopping and leisure activities in Manado. Both Mega Mall Manado and Manado Town Square are popular shopping destinations in Manado, offering a wide range of products and services to cater to consumers' needs and preferences. The malls are located in strategic locations and are easily accessible, making them convenient for locals and tourists.

This study includes relevant studies on consumer behavior and retail management, focusing on topics such as store atmosphere, product completeness, and shopping preferences. It also explores the characteristics and features of Megamall and Manado Town Square, such as their size, location, store offerings, and target markets. Overall, this research aims to provide insights into the factors that drive consumer preferences for shopping destinations and to inform retail managers and marketers on how to create a favorable shopping experience for their customers.

Research Objectives
The purpose of this research to obtain the data, information and aims:
1. To find out the differences in consumer preference based on Store Atmosphere between Megamall and Manado Town Square.
2. To find out the differences in consumer preference based on Product Completeness between Megamall and Manado Town Square.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Marketing
According to Kotler and Keller (2009), marketing is a nodal and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others. Marketing means managing markets to bring about exchanges for the purpose of satisfying human needs and wants.

Consumer Preferences
According to Kotler (2000:154), Consumer Preference is the preference of consumers from various choices of existing products or services. Customer Preference appears at the third stage in the decision process purchase, namely at the alternative evaluation stage, where in that stage Consumers are faced with a wide variety of choices of goods and products services with a variety of different attributes (Putri and Iskandar, (2014).

Store Atmosphere
Kotler (1973) describes the atmosphere as the design of the of retail chain outlet that produces specific emotional effects on the buyer that enhances his purchasing probability. The physical aspect of a store, known

as store atmosphere, is crucial for creating a comfortable environment that meets the desires of customers and encourages them to spend time and make purchases (Purwaningsih, 2011).

Product Completeness

Kotler (2002:347) argues that the completeness of the product is the availability of all types of products offered to be owned, used or consumed by consumers produced by a manufacturer. Raharjani (2005:6) argues that consumers tend to choose places that are offers varied and complete products regarding depth, breadth, and the quality of the variety of goods offered by the seller. Availability of goods in a supermarket includes a large variety of brands, types and sizes of packages goods sold, various flavors of a product to be purchased. According to Utami (2010:162), product completeness is completeness products concerning the depth, breadth, and quality of the products offered also the availability of these products at any time in the store

Previous Research

Aziz (2021) determined the effect of store atmosphere and product completeness on purchasing decisions at the Agus Jaya store. The method used is quantitative analysis with multiple regression analysis techniques and for the sample obtained as many as 30 respondents with purposive random sampling technique. From the partial and simultaneous test results show that the store atmosphere and product completeness variables have a positive and significant effect on consumer purchasing decisions.

Hussain and Ali (2015) aimed at identifying the effects of atmosphere on the consumer purchase intention in international retail chain outlets of Karachi, Pakistan. This was the first study, which investigated the collective impact of atmospheric variables at one point in time on purchase intention. This research was causal in nature. A sample of 300 consumers was taken who usually visited these outlets. Data was collected through a well-structured questionnaire and analyzed through regression analysis. Research findings indicate that atmospheric variables such as cleanliness, scent, lighting, and display/layout have a positive influence on consumers' purchase intention; whereas music and color have insignificant impact on consumers' purchase intention. The temperature has almost no impact on the purchase intention of the consumers.

Sihite, Tulung, and Pandowo, (2023) determined the effect of product prices and store atmosphere on customer satisfaction at Fellow Coffee. This study uses quantitative methods and uses multiple linear regression tests to determine the effect of product prices and store atmosphere on customer satisfaction. The sample of this research is 100 respondents. The sampling technique used is non-probability sampling and the data collection method is in the form of a questionnaire run through the Google Form.Testing and data analysis in this study using SPSS 26 software. The results of this study indicate that product price (X1) partially has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction (Y). Store atmosphere (X2) partially has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction (Y). Product price (X1) and store atmosphere (X2) simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction (Y). The R square value obtained from the results of the coefficient of determination (R2) of 0.486 explains that 48.6% of customer satisfaction can be explained by product prices and store atmosphere. Meanwhile, the remaining 51.4% is influenced by other variables not examined in this study.

Conceptual Framework
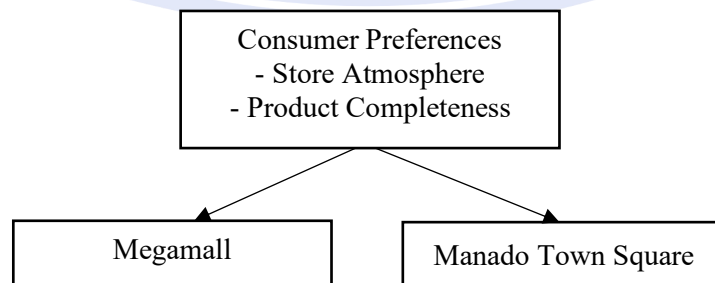
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
Source: Literature Review

Research Hypothesis

H1: There is a significant difference in Consumer Preference based on Store Atmosphere between Megamall and Manado Town Square.

H2: There is a significant difference in Consumer Preference based on product completeness between Megamall and Manado Town Square.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Approach

In this research, a comparative research design is utilized to analyze and compare consumer preferences in Megamall and Manado Town Square. As explained by Pickvance (2005), the purpose of comparative analysis is to comprehend and clarify the underlying mechanisms that contribute to the development of an event, characteristic or connection, by contrasting the variations in the explanatory variables. Comparative research has a lengthy history and has become increasingly important in contemporary studies due to globalization, technological advancements, and other factors. The study adopts a quantitative approach to collect and analyze data.

Population, Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Population, as defined by Sekaran (2006) refers to the complete group of individuals, events, or objects of interest that the researcher aims to examine. For this particular study, the population comprises people in Manado who have visited both Megamall and Manado Town Square. A sample, on the other hand, is a subset of the population that is chosen for research purposes and is intended to represent the entire population (Sugiyono, 2009). This research is conducted by distributing questionnaires to 100 respondents which proves that sample size used in this research is more than the minimum or required respondents. The sample size is 100 customers that divided into 50 Megamall customers and 50 Manado Town Square customers become the population for this study. For this study, a purposive sampling technique was utilized to select the sample. Purposive sampling is the method of choosing sample participants based on specific objectives rather than their location or level (Arikunto, 2010:183).

Data Collection Method

The questionnaire utilized in this study has been designed based on Sekaran (2006), comprising a written list of pre-formulated questions with structured response options. It serves as a tool for data collection, offering respondents clearly defined alternatives to answer the questions. The questionnaires have been specifically tailored with various levels of response choices, allowing participants to select their preferred answers.

Operational Definition of Research Variables

Variable	Definition	Indicator
Consumer Preference	Customer preference is the preference of consumers from various choices of existing products or services Kotler (2000)	1. Store Atmosphere 2. Product Completeness

Data Analysis Method
Normality Test

Before applying statistical methods to a dataset, it is common to conduct a normality test to determine whether the data follows a normal distribution or is close to it. The purpose of the normality test is to check whether the distribution of the data is skewed or not, and to determine if it follows a normal distribution pattern. A normal distribution pattern indicates that the data is symmetrically distributed around the mean, with most of the data falling within one standard deviation of the mean.

Independent Samples T-test

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), one sample t-test is used to test the hypothesis that the mean of the population from which a sample is drawn is equal to a comparison standard. It shows how far the impact of the independent variable in explaining the dependent variable. The criteria of the t-test as follows: Sig < 0.05 means Ha is accepted and Sig > 0.05 means H0 is accepted.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result
Normality Test
Table 1. Tests of Normality

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]		
		Statistic	df	Sig.
Store Atmosphere	Megamall	.128	100	.000
	Manado Town Square	.123	100	.000
Product Completeness	Megamall	.220	100	.000
	Manado Town Square	.154	100	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction
Source: Data Processed 2023

Normality test result in the Table 1 for every single variable has value of significant less than 0,05. The interpretation of Store Atmosphere: Normality test results shows that both groups of subjects in the study had a normal distribution. The interpretation of Product Completeness: Normality test results shows that both groups of subjects in the study had a normal distribution

Homogenity Test
Table 2. Test of Homogeneity of Variance

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Store Atmosphere	Based on Mean	15.159	1	198	.455
	Based on Median	13.229	1	198	.621
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	13.229	1	197.278	.621
	Based on trimmed mean	14.859	1	198	.000
Product Completeness	Based on Mean	.173	1	198	.525
	Based on Median	.033	1	198	.855
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.033	1	197.151	.855
	Based on trimmed mean	.124	1	198	.725

Source: Data Processed 2024

Homogenity test result in the Table 2 for every single variable has value of significant more than 0,05, it proves the data is homogenous

Independent Sample T-Test
Table 3. Independent Samples Test

		T-test for Equality of Means						
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
Store Atmosphere	Equal variances assumed	-7.555	198	.000	-3.310	.438	-4.174	-2.446
	Equal variances not assumed	-7.555	186.132	.000	-3.310	.438	-4.174	-2.446
Product Completeness	Equal variances assumed	-5.717	198	.000	-1.450	.254	-1.950	-.950
	Equal variances not assumed	-5.717	197.251	.000	-1.450	.254	-1.950	-.950

Source: Data Processed 2024

In the table 3 can be seen that there is difference in consumer preference based on Store Atmosphere between Megamall and Manado Town Square, and there is difference in consumer preference based on Product Completeness between Megamall and Manado Town Square.

Group Statistics
Table 4. Group Statistics

	Y1	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Store Atmosphere	Megamall	100	27.09	2.678	.268
	Manado Town Square	100	30.40	3.467	.347
Product Completeness	Megamall	100	11.00	1.848	.185
	Manado Town Square	100	12.45	1.737	.174

Source: Data Processed 2024

Based on the table 4, the average perception of Store Atmosphere of Megamall at 27.09 and perception of Manado Town Square at 30.04, It shows that there are differences in the average perception, means more positive perception of consumer preferences of Store Atmosphere on Manado Town Square than Megamall Manado. The average perception of Store Atmosphere of Megamall at 11.00 and perception of Manado Town Square at 12.45, It shows that there are differences in the average perception, means more positive perception of consumer preferences of Product Completeness on Manado Town Square than Megamall Manado.

Discussion
The difference in Consumer Preference Based On Store Atmosphere between Megamall and Manado Town Square.

Store atmosphere plays a pivotal role in shaping customer preferences and influencing their decision to visit a mall. The physical environment, encompassing factors like interior design, lighting, and layout, contributes to the overall shopping experience. A visually appealing and well-maintained atmosphere not only attracts customers but also influences their perception of the mall. Comfortable and convenient spaces, along with thoughtful aesthetics, contribute to a positive first impression and encourage customers to spend more time exploring the mall. Moreover, the atmosphere contributes to the emotional aspect of shopping, creating a connection that extends beyond transactions. Elements like background music, scent, and overall ambiance contribute to a memorable experience, fostering customer loyalty and a preference for a particular mall. Beyond aesthetics, the atmosphere also serves as a differentiating factor for malls in a competitive market. Malls that offer unique themes, entertainment options, and social spaces create a distinctive identity. This uniqueness can draw in customers seeking a specific experience, setting the mall apart from others and influencing customer preferences. In essence, investing in a well-crafted store atmosphere is not just about providing a physical space for shopping; it's about creating an immersive and positive environment that resonates with customers, influencing their choices and fostering a sense of loyalty to the mall. The result shows that there is difference in consumer preference based on Store Atmosphere between Megamall and Manado Town Square. Manado Town Square (Mantos) may be preferred by customers over Megamall Manado based on the factors of store atmosphere and product completeness. The distinct appeal of Mantos lies in its vibrant and community-oriented store atmosphere. Mantos is often recognized for its cozy and intimate environment, where local boutiques, eateries, and entertainment options coalesce to create a lively and social atmosphere. This ambiance resonates well with customers seeking a personalized and engaging shopping experience, contributing to a sense of connection and familiarity. The emphasis on a warm and welcoming store atmosphere can make Mantos more appealing to customers looking for a shopping destination that goes beyond mere transactions, fostering a sense of community and shared experiences.

The Difference In Consumer Preference Based On Product Completeness Between Megamall And Manado Town Square.

The completeness of product offerings within a mall is a crucial determinant in shaping customer preferences and driving visits. When a mall provides a diverse and comprehensive range of products, it caters to a broader spectrum of consumer needs and preferences, becoming a one-stop destination for shoppers. The availability of a wide array of products, ranging from fashion and electronics to home goods and specialty items, not only attracts a diverse customer base but also enhances the convenience factor. Customers are more likely to choose a mall that offers a complete shopping experience, reducing the need to visit multiple locations for their varied needs. This completeness in product offerings aligns with the evolving consumer demand for

convenience and efficiency, making the mall a preferred destination for a comprehensive and efficient shopping trip. Furthermore, product completeness contributes to the overall competitiveness of a mall in the retail landscape. In an era where consumers seek convenience and time-saving solutions, a mall that can fulfill a wide range of shopping requirements stands out. It not only meets the immediate needs of customers but also encourages longer dwell times, as shoppers explore various sections of the mall. A strategically curated mix of stores and product categories ensures that the mall remains relevant and attractive to a diverse customer base, fostering loyalty and increasing the likelihood of repeat visits. In essence, the completeness of product offerings in a mall is integral to customer preference, providing a competitive edge and positioning the mall as a go-to destination for a comprehensive shopping experience. The result shows that there is difference in consumer preference based on Product Completeness between Megamall and Manado Town Square. Additionally, while Megamall Manado boasts a comprehensive range of products, Mantos can still stand out for its niche and curated offerings. Customers who prioritize a unique and diverse selection of products, especially those with a local touch, may find Mantos more attractive. The personalized shopping experience and the social ambiance create a distinctive appeal that goes beyond the sheer volume of product options. In essence, Mantos, with its emphasis on a vibrant store atmosphere and a curated product mix, may be more likely to attract customers seeking a community-driven and unique shopping experience, setting it apart from the larger but potentially less intimate Megamall.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusions
1. There is a difference based on Store Atmosphere of Megamall Manado and Manado Town Square
2. There is a difference based on Product Completeness of Megamall Manado and Manado Town Square

Recommendations
1. Mantos can enhance its community-oriented atmosphere by strengthening partnerships with local businesses and artisans, hosting regular events, and showcasing unique, locally-made products. Additionally, investing in digital engagement platforms, such as a user-friendly website or app, will broaden Mantos' reach beyond physical visits and cater to tech-savvy consumers. Introducing sustainability initiatives will align with the growing demand for eco-friendly practices, further enhancing Mantos' appeal among environmentally conscious shoppers.
2. Megamall Manado can diversify its ambiance by introducing themed zones or sections, catering to different customer preferences. Optimizing the mall's layout for convenience through clear signage and interactive maps will enhance the overall shopping experience. Implementing customer loyalty programs or exclusive membership benefits will incentivize repeat visits, fostering customer loyalty and retention.
3. Competitors can conduct customer surveys to understand their customer base's preferences and expectations, guiding strategic decisions for improvement. Exploring innovative marketing strategies, such as leveraging social media and influencer partnerships, will create a buzz and attract a wider audience. Adapting to industry trends, whether related to technology, sustainability, or experiential shopping, will ensure competitors stay relevant and appealing to the evolving needs of their customer base.

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