THE ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER PERCEPTION TOWARDS CHINESE PRODUCTS IN MANADO

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ABSTRACT

Product is one of the marketing tools, and something that marketers offer to market, which the target is to meet the consumer needs and wants. China becomes one of the largest countries that produced many products. Many of the Chinese products enter the market almost around the world. This research is conduct in Manado, North Sulawesi. The objectives of this research are to analyze consumer perception towards Chinese products, partially and simultaneously. This research is the causal type of research where it will investigate the influence of elements on consumer perception. Use multiple regression models to answer the research problem. The population in this study is a consumers of Chinese products, whereas samples taken by each respondent 100 respondents. The hypothesis testing, this research conduct a conclusion of there is a significant influence of Country of Origin, Product Quality, Product Type, and Price Sensitivity simultaneously and there is a significant influence of Product Type and Price Sensitivity partially on Consumer Perception. This study reveals that price sensitivity is a mental decision that made by the consumer has a strong influence factor in order to buy a product, when consumer go for purchasing, they prefer to purchase a product with affordable price.

Keywords: consumer perception, product type, price sensitivity.

INTRODUCTION

Research Background

The global competition nowadays is develop rapidly, free trade and globalization is the main causes of the tight market competition around the world. Many of companies make their best marketing strategies to compete with their competitor and try to deliver great value for their market. Product is one of the marketing strategies, which the target is to meet the consumer needs and wants.   Many of products are offered in the market today, in order to fulfill the needs and wants of consumer. But, consumer has their own assessment and perception towards the products they will purchase. The value of a product is determined by the satisfaction of every consumer, are they satisfied or not, and because of that, many companies from around the world try to create a best product with the aim of giving satisfaction to their consumer.

China is one of the countries that producing a lot of manufactured products in the market today, many of Chinese products are available in several countries, including in Indonesia, and has spread across cities and regions throughout Indonesia, particularly in Manado city. Some of Chinese product, such as mobile phone, electronics, hardware, home appliances, stationary items, clothes and fabric. Few of the products originated from China such as Lenovo computers and Tsingtao Beer had already gained world class reputation. And, there are other big Chinese companies such as China Shenhua Energy, Baoshan Iron and Steel, China Telecom, China Coal Energy, Dongfeng Motor Group, SAIC Motor, Suning Appliance, ZTE, Kweichow Moutai, Tingyi, Wuliangye Yibin, Want Want China and Jiangsu Yanghe Brewery. In 2012, China's trade surplus stood at 231 billion U.S. dollars and its exports totaled 2.05 trillion U.S. dollars, up nearly 8% from the previous year. China overtook Germany as the largest exporting nation in 2009. The United States ranked second with exports amounted to 1.48 trillion U.S. dollars, while Germany came in third with 1.47 trillion U.S. dollars as of 2011. In the same year, China's export of goods and services constituted 26% of GDP.

Chinese products get the attention of consumer because the price is cheap. It's because China has an economical labor cost compared with other countries and its make many of industry companies to manufacture their products in China while maximizing their profits. Nevertheless, the "cheap" image of Chinese product make consumer wonder about their product quality, and it raised the issue to further investigate why consumer buy Chinese products and what they perceive before buying.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are to analyze the influence of:

1. Country of origin on consumer perception towards Chinese products in Manado.
2. Product quality on consumer perception towards Chinese products in Manado.
3. Product type on consumer perception towards Chinese products in Manado.
4. Price on consumer perception towards Chinese products partially in Manado.
5. Country of origin effect, product quality, product type, and price sensitivity on consumer perception towards Chinese products in Manado.

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

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Theories

Marketing

Marketing is the strategies in business, through the exchange product that companies create, in order to get profit from their customer. Kotler, et al (2005:5) defined marketing as a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging value with other. In a narrower business context, marketing involves building profitable, value-laden exchange relationship with costumers. Marketing as the process by which companies create value for customers and building strong relationship in order to capture value from customers in return.

Marketing Mix

Kotler et al (2005:45) defines marketing mix as the set of controllable, tactical marketing tools – product, price, place and promotion – that the firm blends to produce the response it wants in the target market. Kotler and Amstrong (2008:67) define marketing mix as, the set of controllable, tactical marketing tools that the firm blends to produce the response it wants in the target market. Marketers used marketing mix as the strategic tools to penetrate the market and determine the best way in order to get consumer attention and make consumer buy their product repeatedly.

Product

Product is one of the marketing tools, and something that marketers offer to market, which the target is to meet the consumer needs and wants. Hawkins et al. (1998:18) stated that, Product is anything a consumer acquires or might acquire to meet the perceive needs. Consumer often expects more from an organization than a simple tangible good. The task of marketing management is to provide a complete offering that includes not the basic good or service but also the 'extras' go wit I. Kotler et.al (2005:45), Product fall into classes based on the types of consumer used them–Consumer products are products and services bought by final consumer for personal consumption.

Product Quality

The quality of the product is a very important part for the manufacture company to notice. Kotler and Amstrong (2008:347) stated that, product quality is the ability of a product to perform its function, and quality is one of the main tools for positioning the set position for marketers. Product quality is rated by the consumer who will buy and use it. Good quality product means that the product can fulfill and meet consumer expectation, and vice versa. Kotler and Amstrong (2008:330), most products are provided in one of four levels of quality, namely: low quality, average quality is being, good quality and very good quality. The assessment of consumer on a product based on quality is a very essential characteristic in purchasing processes and consumers are conscious of quality difference of all products (Nugroho and Wihandayo, 2009 in Rajput et al, 2012:488).

Freling and Forbes (2005: 412) had also mentioned that it is the perception of product quality at the time of the next buying decision that may better explain again purchasing behavior. Hence, the perception of the product quality from one to another consumer will not necessarily be same.

Product Type

Product type is a group of similar kinds of manufactured goods or services. Product type might be used by marketing team of a business to structure its overall marketing strategy and direct it toward optimally interested. Product type becomes a significant problem especially in buying decision. Each of costumers has their own perception towards types of product. Consumer prefers to the product based on brand and manufacturing country. Related with Chinese product, customers have intentions and perception which can be said as pre-purchase for the products and consumers take the country image as how China is seen in the market for the specific product. Basically, it's become an active process for the consumer purchase intention and product classification in buying Chinese product.

Price

The element in marketing mix that produces revenue is price. Price is the total or amount of money at which a thing is valued. Kotler and Amstrong (2008:371) stated that, price is the amount of money charged for a product or service, or the sum of the values that consumers exchange for the benefits of having or using the product or service. Price becomes the most flexible elements of the marketing, which can change quickly based on the conditions. Pricing and price competition is the most problem facing by many marketers.

Price Sensitivity

Price sensitivity is the degree to which price affects consumers purchasing behavior and affects the sales of a product or service. The degree of price sensitivity varies from product to product and from consumer to consumer. In economics, price sensitivity is commonly measured using the price elasticity of demand. Price sensitivity is also known as price elasticity of demand and this means the extent to which sale of a particular product or service is affected. For example, if homogeneous products do have the price variations, customers will purchase the lower price product. And it happened between the Chinese product and other product, consumer rather choose buy Chinese product because the price is lower that other product. Another way of explaining price sensitivity is, "the consumer demand for a product is changed by the cost of the product. It basically helps the manufacturers' study the consumer behavior and assists them in making good decisions about the products. The level of price sensitivity varies depending on various products and consumers. Price sensitivity, in economics, is generally quantified through the price elasticity of demand.

Country of Origin

The country of origin, refers to where the product are made or the made-in image, is a psychological effect describing how consumers' attitudes, perceptions and purchasing decisions are influenced by products' country of origin labeling. The Country-of-Origin refers to "the picture, the reputation, the stereotype that business people and consumers attach to products and services associated with a specific country (Lin and Kao, 2004:38). Such an image may emerge from representative products, national characteristics, economic and political background, history and traditions (Nagashima, 1970).

Consumer Perception

Perception is the process of sensing, selecting, and interpreting consumer stimuli in the external world. Perception occurs as individuals subjectively organize and interpret sensations. Kotler and Keller (2009:174) stated that, perception is the process by which an individual's selects, organizes, and interprets information inputs to create a meaningful picture of the world. Perception depends not only on the physical stimuli, but also on the stimuli's relation to the surrounding field and on condition within the individuals. Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:148-163), perception is defined as the process by which an individual selects, organizes, and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world.

Previous Researchers

Sarwar et al. (2013), Customer's Perception towards Buying Chinese Products an Empirical Investigation in Malaysia. Ulgado et al. (2011), Country image and brand equity effects of Chinese firms and their products on developed-market consumer perceptions. Khan, and Ahmed (2012), Comparative study of consumer perception of product quality: Chinese versus Non-Chinese Products.
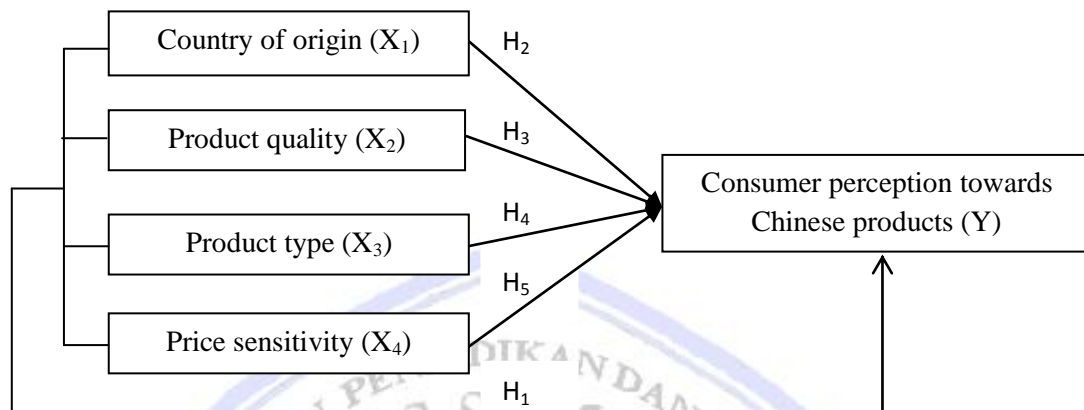

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework
Source: Processed data 2014

Hypothesis

The hypotheses of this research are:

H_1 : Country of Origin, Product Quality, Product Type and Price Sensitivity have significant influence on Consumer Perception Towards Chinese Products simultaneously.
H_2 : Country of origin influences consumer perception towards Chinese products partially.
H_3 : Product quality influences consumer perception towards Chinese products partially.
H_4 : Product type influences consumer perception towards Chinese products partially.
H_5 : Price sensitivity influences consumer perception towards Chinese products partially.

RESEARCH METHOD

Type of Research

This research is a causal type of research where it will investigate consumer perception towards Chinese products in Manado.

Place and Time of Research

This study was conducted in Manado City. The questionnaire was distributed directly at some places where respondents from regions in Manado being at, such as campus, hangout sites, and restaurants. The research was conducted on June to July 2014.

Population and Sample

Population is the entire group or people, events, or things that the researcher desires to investigate (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010:443). The population in this research is for all Chinese products users in Manado. The sample of this research is the Chinese products users as much as 100 respondents. The sampling design is sample random sampling that is considered as the best way of getting some basic information quickly and efficient. Sample random sampling is using every element in the population has a known and equal chance of being selected as a subject. This sampling design has the least bias and offers the most generalizability (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010:270).

Data Collection Method

They are two types of data: (1) Primary Data use questionnaires were distributed to consumer of Chinese products, respectively 100 sheets. While calculating weight rating customer questionnaires using Likert scale. Likert scale was associated with a statement about one's attitude towards something. And (2) secondary data is method of data collection by studying the relevant literature in order to obtain a theoretical overview from books, journals, and relevant literature from library and internet of the concept of consumer perception towards Chinese products.

Operational Definitions and Measurement of Research Variable.

Operational definitions of research variables are:
1. Country of origin (X_1) is refers to products are made from China (Made in China).
2. Product Quality (X_2) is how good the Chinese products to fulfills the expectation of every consumer.
3. Product Type (X_3) is a group of similar kinds of manufactured Chinese products.
4. Price sensitivity (X_4) is the degree to which price affects consumers purchasing behavior and affects the sales of Chinese products.

Data Analysis Method

Validity and Reliability Test

The reliability of a measure is established by testing for both consistency and stability. Consistency indicate how well the items measuring a concept hang together as a set, Gronbach's alpha is a reliability coefficient that indicates how well the items in a set are positively correlated to one another (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010:162). Since reliable scale are not necessarily valid researchers also need to be concerned about validity. It assesses whether scale measure what is supposed to be measured. Thus validity is a measure of accuracy in measurement (Hair et al, 2010:120).

Multiple Regressions on Analysis Method

Linear regression is used to model the value of a dependent scale variable based on its linear relationship to one or more predictors. The method of analysis used in this study is multiple regression models approach the return. Cooper and Schindler (2001:767) stated that multiple regression analysis is techniques to observed value more than one X to estimate or predict corresponding Y value. The formula of multiple linear regressions is as follows:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + e$$

Where:

Y = Consumer perception
X_1 = Country of origin
X_2 = Product quality
X_3 = Product type
X_4 = Price sensitivity
α = Constant
b1, b2, b3 = the regression coefficient of each variable
e = error

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Validity and Reliability

The validity test of Country of Origin (X_1) 0.887, Product Quality (X_2) 0.828, Product Type (X_3) 0.807, Price Sensitivity (X_4) 0.946 also Consumer Perception (Y) 0.819 are above 0.3 which mean that all indicator are valid. The reliability test using Alpha Cronbach. The Cronbach's Alpha parameter, with ideal score more than 0.6. The variable are reliable because the value of Cronbach's Alpha is bigger than 0.6.

Test of Classical Assumption
Multicolinearity
Table 1. Collinearity Statistics

	Model	Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	**VIF**
1	X_1	.551	1.815
	X_2	.975	1.026
	X_3	.178	5.622
	X_4	.242	4.135

a Dependent Variable: Y (Customer Satisfaction)
Source: Processed Data, 2014

The calculation multicolinearity through VIF and tolerance. VIF value of Country of origin (X_1) 1.815 Product quality (X_2) 1.026, Product type (X_3) 5.622, and Price sensitivity (X_4) 4.135 are <10, this means that there is no connection between the independent variables.

Heteroscedasticity

Heteroscedasticity occurs if there are dots which form a certain pattern regularly as waves. Homoscedasticity occurs if there are no certain patterns which are clear, and the dots spread above and below the 0 the Y-axis.
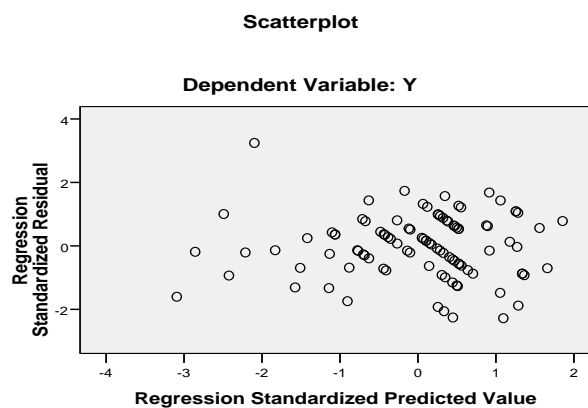

Figure 2. **Heteroscedasticity Results**
Source : Processed data 2014

Figure 2 shows that the patterns of the dots are spreading and the dots are spreading above and below the zero point of Y-axis. So, there is no heteroscedasticity in this regression.

Normality

Normality test can be identifying by using graph of P-P Plot. The data will distribute normally if the value of P-P Plot is near diagonal line of the graph.

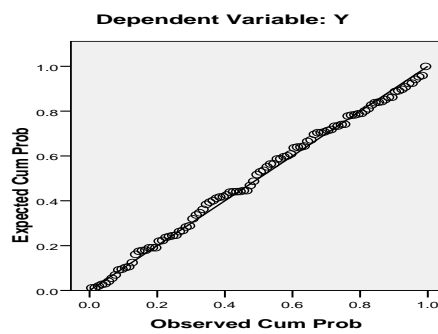**Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual**

Figure 3. **Normality Results**
Source : Processed data 2014

Figure 3 shows the dots spread near the diagonal line and follow the direction of the diagonal line. Therefore, the data is distributed normally.

Multiple Regression Analysis
Table 2. Multiple Regression Result

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.637	.189		3.379	.001
	X_1	.096	.059	.110	1.619	.109
	X_2	-.019	.032	-.030	-.577	.565
	X_3	.277	.102	.325	2.708	.008
	X_4	.405	.081	.515	5.007	.000

Source: Processed Data, 2014

From the analysis, obtained by linear regression equation as follows:

$$Y = 0.637 + 0.096\ X_1 - 0.019\ X_2 + 0.277\ X_3 + 0.405\ X_4 + e$$

From the multiple linear regression equation above, it can inform the interpretation as follows:
1. Constant 0.637 shows the influence of Country of origin (X_1), Product quality (X_2), Product type (X_3), Price sensitivity (X_4) and Consumer Perception (Y). It means that, in a condition where all independent variables are constant (zero), Consumer Perception (Y) as dependent variable is predicted to be 0.637.
2. X_1 (Country of origin) has an effect to Y (Consumer perception) as many as 0.096. In condition where other variables are constant, if there is one unit increasing in X_1 (Country of origin), Y (Consumer Perception) is predicted to be increased by 0.096.
3. X_2 (Product quality) has an effect to Y (Consumer perception) as many as -0.019. In condition where other variables are constant, if there is one unit increasing in X_2 (Product quality), Y (Consumer Perception) is predicted to be increased by -0.019.
4. X_3 (Product type) has an effect to Y (Consumer perception) as many as 0.277. In condition where other variables are constant, if there is one unit increasing in X_3 (Product type), Y (Consumer Perception) is predicted to be increased by 0.277.
5. X_4 (Price sensitivity) has an effect to Y (Consumer perception) as many as 0.405. In condition where other variables are constant, if there is one unit increasing in X_4 (Price sensitivity), Y (Consumer Perception) is predicted to be increased by 0.405.

Coefficient Determination (r^2)

Table 3. Table R and R^2

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.870(a)	.757	.747	.27414

a Predictors: (Constant), X_2, X_1
b Dependent Variable: Y
  Source: Processed Data, 2014

To determine the contribution The Influence of Country of origin (X_1), Product quality (X_2), Product type (X_3), Price sensitivity (X_4) on Consumer Perception (Y) towards Chinese products in Manado can be seen that the determinant of the coefficient (r2) in the table above. R2 value of 0.757 in this study may imply that the contribution of The Influence of Country of origin (X_1), Product quality (X_2), Product type (X_3), Price sensitivity (X_4) on Consumer Perception (Y) towards Chinese products in Manado of 75.7% while the remaining 24.3% is affected by other variables not examined in this study.

Hypothesis Testing
Table 2 F-Test

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	22.257	4	5.564	74.040	.000(a)
	Residual	7.139	95	.075		
	Total	29.396	99			

a Predictors: (Constant), X_2, X_1
b Dependent Variable: Y
  Source: Processed Data, 2014

Value of 74.040 of F_{Count} significant 0.000. Because the sig <0.05 means the confidence of this prediction is above 95% and the probability of this prediction error is below 5% which is 0.000. Therefore H_0 is rejected and accepting H_a. Thus, the formulation of the hypothesis that Country of origin (X_1), Product quality (X_2), Product type (X_3), Price sensitivity (X_4) on Consumer Perception (Y) towards Chinese products in Manado Simultaneously, accepted.

Table 3. t-Test

Model	T	Sig.
Country of origin	1.619	.109
Product quality	-577	.565
Product type	2.708	.008
Price sensitivity	5.007	.000

a Dependent Variable: Y
  Source: Processed Data, 2014

The calculations in the table above, the interpretation as follows:
1. t_{count} for Country of origin (X_1) 1.619 less than the value of 1.660 t_{table} means Country of origin (X_1) in partial does not influence on Customer perception (Y) towards Chinese products in Manado. The sig. value at 0.109 means that prediction of Country of origin (X_1) does not influence Consumer perception (Y) towards Chinese products in Manado doing errors is 10.9%, thus the confidence of this prediction is below 95%. Therefore, H_0 received.
2. t_{count} for Product quality (X_2) -0.577 less than the value of 1.660 t_{table} means Product quality (X2) in partial does not influence on Customer perception (Y) towards Chinese products in Manado. The sig. value at

0.565 means that prediction of Product quality (X_2) does not influence Consumer perception (Y) towards Chinese products in Manado doing errors is 56.5%, thus the confidence of this prediction is below 95%. Therefore, H_0 received.

3. t_{count} for Product type (X_3) 2.708 greater than the value of 1.660 t_{table} means Product type variable (X_3) in partial influence Consumer perception (Y) towards Chinese products in Manado. The sig. value at 0.008 means that prediction of Product type (X_3) influence on Consumer perception (Y) towards Chinese products in Manado doing errors is 0.0%, thus the confidence of this prediction is above 95%. Therefore, H_a received.

4. t_{count} for Price sensitivity (X_4) 5.007 greater than the value of 1.660 t_{table} means Price sensitivity variable (X_4) in partial influence Consumer perception (Y) towards Chinese products in Manado. The sig. value at 0.000 means that prediction of Price sensitivity (X_4) influence on Consumer perception (Y) towards Chinese products in Manado doing errors is 0.0%, thus the confidence of this prediction is above 95%. Therefore, H_a received.

Discussion

F-test shows that country of origin, product quality, product type, and price sensitivity influence consumer perception towards Chinese products simultaneously and significantly. It shows that the consumer perception towards Chinese products in Manado is influenced by country of origin, product quality, product type, and price sensitivity simultaneously and significantly.

T-test shows that The multiple regression result showed that, Country of Origin does not has significant influence on consumer perception towards Chinese products, this result occured because, some of respondents are interested to buy Chinese products because their perception of Chinese products are better than local products and it is more interested to buy compare with others. But it does not mean that all of the respondents have the same perception, some of the respondents showed that they do not like to buy Chinese products, and vice versa. In general, the result confirm that the consumers who use Chinese products can not be influenced by Country of Origin or they are not concern about where the products came from or "made in", they are just attracted by the model and the affordable price of the Chinese product. Thus, they buy the products which are produced by China.

Product Quality also does not has significant influence on consumer perception towards Chinese products. This may happens because some of the respondents still questioning about the quality of the Chinese products, especially about the durability of the products, and consumers are not satisfied in the experience using Chinese products and argue that other products is better than Chinese products, but on other hand, some of the respondents agree that Chinese products have a good quality, and consumer satisfied on using Chinese products, and vice versa. This result confirms that, generally consumers in Manado seem can give tolerance about the quality of Chinese products which means that all the Chinese products have lower quality. And the affordable prices of Chinese products become an option for consumers in Manado to buy Chinese products.

The other multiple regression result showed that, Product Type has significant influence on consumer perception towards Chinese products; most of the respondents agree that Chinese product have many types of products compare with other products, they also interested with the model or shape and features that Chinese products offer to them in the market place. This result confirms that, consumers in Manado really concern with the type of the products. Consumers are very selective on choosing what kind of product they will use and Chinese products become an option for them.

Price sensitivity also has significant influence on consumer perception towards Chines products. Respondents on this study have perception that Chinese products are cheaper than other products, the affordable price influencing Consumer in Manado to buy Chinese products. They also agree that Chinese products become an alternative of low price products on market place. This result confirms that generally consumer in Manado really concern about price of the products; it is supported by the high value and significant result of the price sensitivity. This result also supported a research by Sarwar et al. (2013) study about Customer's Perception towards Buying Chinese Products an Empirical Investigation in Malaysia. This study suggests that, the Malaysian consumers are very conscious about the price of Chinese products.

This study proves that the respondent/consumers in Manado very concern about Product Type and Price Sensitivity while buying Chinese products. The others two independent variables (country of origin and product quality) do not have significant influence on the consumer perception towards Chinese products. Consumers in Manado are very concern and mostly attracted by the affordable price and interesting type/variant of the Chinese products. And it becomes recommendation for marketers of Chinese products in Manado that they should give more attention about the price, and type of Chinese products that they offer in the market in Manado.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

There are three constructive findings that can be concluded from the overall result in this research, which are listed as follow:

1. Countries of Origin, Product Quality, Product Type, and Price Sensitivity influence consumer perception towards Chinese products simultaneously and significantly.
2. Country of origin does not influence consumer perception towards Chinese products partially and significantly.
3. Product Quality does not influence consumer perception towards Chinese products partially and significantly.
4. Product Type influence consumer perception towards Chinese products partially and significantly.
5. Price Sensitivity influence consumer perception towards Chinese products partially and significantly.

Recommendations

The results of the analysis explain two of the independent variables include in this research which are product type and price sensitivity have a significant effect to the consumer perception towards Chinese products in Manado. From two of these variables, price sensitivity is the strongest effect of consumer perception in Manado. For the management parties and seller from Chinese products in Manado, it is recommended to keep collaborating, because the consumers has satisfied with the products of Chinese, and try to expand this strategy to the another kind of products. Avoid to failure of the production because currently the Chinese products is well known in Manado, and once the image fall, the consumer will feel dissatisfied and it is hard to get back the consumer trust.

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