



The Influence of Brand Image, Price, Service Quality, and Online Customer Reviews on the Decision to Buy Gacoan Noodles in Wonogiri Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of brand image, price, service quality, and online customer reviews on purchasing decisions. This research employs a quantitative approach. The sample consists of 100 consumers of Mie Gacoan Wonogiri, selected using a random sampling technique. Data were collected via questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive analysis, multiple linear regression, t-test, and coefficient of determination (R^2). The results of the study show that: (1) brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, as evidenced by a significance value of $0.001 \leq 0.05$ (2) price has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, as evidenced by a significance value of $0.002 \leq 0.05$ (3) service quality has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, as evidenced by a significance value of $0.002 \leq 0.05$ and (4) online customer reviews have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, as evidenced by a significance value of $0.007 \leq 0.05$. The implications of this study emphasize the importance of brand image, price, service quality, and online customer reviews in influencing purchasing decisions. Therefore, business actors are advised to consistently maintain service quality standards and brand reputation, while optimizing pricing strategies and actively managing customer reviews to boost sales.

INTRODUCTION

The food and beverage industry is one of the sectors that continues to experience growth in Indonesia in line with the increasing population, lifestyle changes, and the development of people's consumption culture. Based on data from the Indonesian Food and Beverage Entrepreneurs Association (GAPMMI) throughout 2025, until the first quarter of 2025 the food sector will grow by 6.04%, exceeding the overall economic growth target of 4.87% and the growth of the non-oil and gas industry sector by 4.31% (GAPMMI, 2025). This growth cannot be separated from changes in people's consumption patterns which are increasingly influenced by social media and digital platforms, so that the demand for practical, visual, and easily accessible culinary products through delivery services continues to increase. The micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) sector, which are mostly engaged in the culinary sector, are the main drivers of this achievement, with a contribution of around 61% to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and the number of business units of approximately 65 million (Ministry of Cooperatives, 2024 : 13).

Based on a survey by the Central Statistics Agency in 2024, as many as 15.78% of food and beverage provider businesses have utilized technology as one of the important factors to improve efficiency (Financial Statistics, 2025 : 32). This technology includes third-party messaging services such as GoFood, GrabFood, and ShopeeFood as a means of digital sales. This trend shows that consumers now have access to information and wider culinary choices than ever before, making loyalty to one particular brand increasingly difficult to maintain without a consistent marketing strategy.

In Indonesia, many people consume instant processed products in the form of noodles. As one of the main food choices that are very popular, noodles have changed from just a practical food to a promising business with many innovations in taste and spiciness. The growing trend of consuming noodles encourages entrepreneurs to take advantage of them as a promising business opportunity, thus making competition between businesses very tight in creating a special attraction for buyers.

One of the prominent phenomena in the contemporary spicy noodle culinary segment is the emergence and massive expansion of the Mie Gacoan brand, which is managed by PT Pesta Pora Abadi under the leadership of Anton Kurniawan. Unlike most similar culinary businesses that use a franchise system to accelerate expansion, all Mie Gacoan outlets are managed directly by the central company through a corporate expansion model in order to maintain consistency of taste and service standards (Editorial, 2026).

Mie Gacoan officially opened its first branch in Wonogiri Regency in 2024, precisely on Jalan Jenderal Sudirman, Sukorejo, Giritirto. The presence of this outlet is a highlight because Wonogiri was previously better known as the city of herbal medicine and chicken noodles, so the entry of this national-scale spicy noodle brand presents new culinary alternatives for the community. The main problem of this research is related to the fierce competition of culinary businesses in Wonogiri, where Mie Gacoan as a newcomer has to deal with many local

culinary choices that already have a loyal customer base, so that the brand image given must be strong in order to have competitiveness with existing culinary.

Brand image itself is the consumer's perception of a brand that is formed through associations and information stored in memory (Mailani et.al., 2024). A positive brand image can make it easier for consumers to make purchasing decisions because it reduces uncertainty and perceived risks towards a product.

The results of research by Mailani et.al (2024), Yaqin et.al (2026) show that brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions. The consistency of these findings indicates that brand image is an important factor that needs to be studied in various location contexts, including in relatively new markets such as Wonogiri. Considering that Mie Gacoan will only operate in Wonogiri in 2024, the brand image that is built nationally will not necessarily be immediately accepted with the same perception by the people of Wonogiri. Therefore, it is important to re-test the influence of brand image on purchase decisions in this specific local context.

On the other hand, the *loss leader price strategy* implemented by Mie Gacoan requires consumers to buy a certain combination of products in order to get value that is considered commensurate, so that the perception of consumer prices for just one serving of noodles may be different from the price perception of the overall experience of enjoying the dish. The determination of Wonogiri as an expansion location is allegedly influenced by the Wonogiri Regency Minimum Wage (UMK) which is the second lowest in Central Java, so that the adjustment of the price strategy is very crucial.

Price variables play an important role in shaping consumer purchasing decisions. Tabelessy (2021) price is a sum of money that must be sacrificed by consumers to benefit from the goods or services consumed (Lubis et.al., 2025). In the case of Mie Gacoan, the nationally set price is relatively affordable with large portions, a strategy deliberately designed through an approach *Loss Leader* noodle products to attract consumer interest massively.

Based on the research of Pratama et.al (2025), Maryamis et.al (2024) price has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions. However, contradictory findings emerge from the research of Nugraheni et.al (2024) where price has no effect on purchase decisions. These differences in results show that the influence of prices on purchase decisions is contextual and is strongly influenced by the characteristics of the region and consumer segment studied. This inconsistency of findings between regions reinforces the urgency to re-examine the influence of prices in a context that has never been studied before, namely Wonogiri Regency.

In addition to brand image and price, service quality is an important determinant in purchasing decisions. Internally, Mie Gacoan faces the challenge of maintaining consistency in service quality amid an aggressive expansion strategy nationwide. In some areas, the expansion of Mie Gacoan outlets has also caused friction related to parking management, illustrating that rapid business growth is not always accompanied by adequate operational readiness in every new location. This challenge has the potential to affect consumer perception of

the quality of service received, including in newly opened outlets such as in Wonogiri (Jude, 2026).

Service quality is a company's effort to meet the wishes of its customers. With good service quality, consumers feel comfortable when deciding to buy a product and increase consumer satisfaction and trust (Kusuma et al., 2024). Research by Kusuma et.al (2024), Agustin (2023) shows that service quality has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions. The consistency of these findings confirms that service quality plays an important role in driving purchase decisions. However, there is no empirical evidence that specifically describes how the quality of service at Mie Gacoan Wonogiri outlets is still relatively new. This gap is one of the important reasons why service quality variables need to be studied further in the context of this study.

In today's digital era, consumers are increasingly careful in making purchase decisions. Before buying a product, they generally look for various information for consideration. This information can be in the form of positive or negative reviews obtained through social media or various platforms on the internet, known as *online customer reviews*. Reviews from customers usually contain assessments of food taste, price suitability, service quality, and overall consumer experience after using or consuming the product.

Online customer rating is the value given by the buyer to the quality of the product, service, and service that has been received after placing an order with the star symbol ranging from the smallest to the largest scale (Martini, 2025: 25). Based on initial observations of consumer reviews of Mie Gacoan Wonogiri on the GoFood platform for the period of March - July 2026, 30 positive reviews were obtained from consumers. Consumers are satisfied with the taste of the food, affordable prices, and variety of menus available. This reflects the characteristics of the people of Wonogiri in evaluating their buying experience. Consumers in Wonogiri seem to tend to be permissive and quite easy to give high appreciation as long as the taste of the noodles is in accordance with expectations

The results of research by Santika & Cindy (2026), Firda & Eko (2024) show that *online customer reviews* have a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions. This shows that *online customer reviews* are one of the important factors that affect consumer purchase decisions. The more positive reviews a product receives, the greater the level of consumer trust and confidence to make a purchase. Conversely, negative reviews can reduce the level of consumer trust and reduce interest in buying the product.

Based on a review of various previous studies on Gacoan Noodles, it was identified that there have not been many studies that integrate the four variables above in one research title. In addition, most of the research was conducted in big cities, such as Surabaya (Agustina, 2023), Magelang (Nuraini & Novitaningtyas, 2022), Yogyakarta (Puspitasari & Rokhman, 2024), Malang (Jaelani et.al, 2024), and Bandung (Nurjamad & Putri, 2025). There are research results that show inconsistencies, where price variables are significant in some locations but not significant in others, indicating that the demographic and economic characteristics of an area also influence consumer purchasing decision patterns.

By examining each independent variable, namely brand image, price, service quality, and *online customer reviews*, this study is expected to provide a more comprehensive picture than some previous studies that only focused on two variables or used a combination of different variables. Because Mie Gacoan has only been operating in Wonogiri since 2024, the research in the early phase of the growth of this outlet has the potential to provide a different picture of consumer behavior compared to research on outlets that have been operating for a long time and are established in big cities. This gap in the research locus is an important gap that this study seeks to fill, as well as the basis for an argument about the urgency and novelty of the research. Based on the background of the above problem, the researcher will conduct a research with the title "**THE INFLUENCE OF BRAND IMAGE, PRICE, SERVICE QUALITY, AND ONLINE CUSTOMER REVIEWS ON THE PURCHASE DECISION OF GACOAN NOODLES IN WONOGIRI REGENCY**"

METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey design of Gacoan Noodle consumers in Wonogiri Regency. Primary data were collected through a Likert scale questionnaire (1-5).

Population and Sample.

The population is unknown due to the dynamic number of visitors. The sample size was calculated using the Cochran formula ($Z=1.96$; $p=q=0.5$; $e=10\%$), resulting in a minimum of 96 respondents rounded up to 100 respondents. The sampling technique used *purposive sampling* with the following criteria: age 15-35 years, have used the Gofood application, have a minimum of junior high school education, live in Wonogiri Regency, and are willing to fill out a complete questionnaire.

Research Instruments.

The questionnaire was tested for validity (*product moment* correlation, valid if $p \leq 0.05$) and reliability (Cronbach's Alpha ≥ 0.70).

Classic Assumption Test.

It included the multicollinearity test (tolerance ≥ 0.10 and VIF ≤ 10), the heteroscedasticity test (Glejser test, $p > 0.05$), and the normality test (Kolmogorov-Smirnov, $p > 0.05$).

Data Analysis Techniques.

Data were analyzed descriptively (mean, maximum, minimum, standard deviation) and multiple linear regression analysis to test the influence of brand image (X1), price (X2), service quality (X3), and *online customer reviews* (X4) on purchase decisions (Y), with the following equations:

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + e$$

Hypothesis testing was carried out through a t-test (partial), an F test (simultaneous), and a coefficient of determination (R^2), with a significance level of 5%.

RESULTS

The demographic profile of the respondents in this study clearly maps the main characteristics of the Mie Gacoan consumer base in Wonogiri Regency, where the age group of 19 to 24 years dominates the sample up to 57%, followed by the age group of 25 to 35 years old by 25%. The dominance of this young generation is closely intertwined with the fact that 85% of respondents are active users of the GoFood online delivery service application. When associated with the income level of the majority of respondents (54%) being below Rp 2,000,000 per month, a typical consumption behavior pattern was revealed in the young productive segment of society in Wonogiri. This group has a high social drive to adopt contemporary lifestyle and culinary trends, but at the same time is limited by relatively limited income levels. Mie Gacoan cleverly exploits this gap by presenting a representative social space and easy digital access without demanding burdensome financial commitments for its customers.

These findings reinforce the results of the analysis of the Brand Image variable which recorded an overall average score of 3.51 in the high category. Consumers in Wonogiri Regency have proven to have a very strong brand association with Mie Gacoan, which is triggered by a striking visual identity strategy, unique and memorable product naming, and massive social media penetration. The brand recognition indicator achieved the highest score (3.70), confirming that this brand's equity has been firmly rooted in the minds of the local community beyond its competitors. However, the decline in the score on the product quality consistency indicator (3.37) reveals operational dynamics that are worth watching. Spikes in daily order volume at Wonogiri outlets often create extreme workloads that have the potential to reduce the precision of taste and stability of food presentation, thus threatening the positive perception that has been built by the overall brand reputation.

This condition interacts directly with the Price variable which obtains an average of 3.46. The highest assessment of respondents is focused on the equivalence between the nominal amount of money spent and the emotional satisfaction obtained (3.57). This indicates that consumers feel that the value of the transactions they make is very commensurate with the culinary experience obtained. However, the purchasing power and price competitiveness indicators show a more moderate score (3.42), referring to the fact that price sensitivity among the people of Wonogiri remains at a high level. With the majority of consumers earning below the regional MSE limit, the slightest price adjustment or decrease in the portion of products can quickly trigger a re-evaluation from consumers, given that they have a fairly strict economic tolerance threshold in allocating their tertiary expenditures.

Entering the analysis of Service Quality which obtained an average score of 3.38, an anomaly that is often experienced by *fast-casual restaurants* with massive visitor traffic. On the one hand, the physical dimension (*tangibles*) of restaurants is considered very satisfactory (3.55) thanks to clean, modern, and comfortable facilities. On the other hand, the dimensions of responsiveness (3.25) and staff empathy (3.20) are the weakest points in consumer perception. The burden of queues that snake from direct customers and online motorcycle taxi drivers often erode the responsiveness and personal friendliness of employees.

This situation shows that the physical satisfaction of the facility has not been fully offset by the warmth of interpersonal interaction, which if left unchecked can become a turning point for consumer disappointment amid fierce competition in the culinary industry.

The influence of the *Online Customer Review* (X4) variable which recorded an average of 3.62 shows how vital the role of digital information transparency is in shaping public perception in Wonogiri Regency. The high score on the review clarity and positivity indicator (3.75) and the credibility of the reviewer (3.65) confirms that potential consumers no longer just rely on conventional promotions or direct invitations, but actively validate their decisions through the empirical experiences of others published on digital platforms. In the era of social media convergence, reviews in the form of visual photos, spicy videos, and queue reviews on Google Maps and TikTok function as social *proof* that can effectively reduce the doubts of potential buyers. Consumers consider reviews from fellow buyers to be much more honest, objective, and relevant than paid advertising content, so the positive narratives that dominate the digital space effectively evaluate the psychological and financial risks that consumers feel before stepping into Mie Gacoan's physical outlets.

The synergy between a strong brand image, economical price scheme, adequate physical facilities, and the reputation of the digital review leads to the high variable of Purchase Decision (Y) which achieves an average of 3.68. The results of the analysis show that the indicator of transaction stability occupies the highest position (3.80), followed by repeated purchase intentions (3.72). This proves that the decision-making process of Mie Gacoan Wonogiri consumers has gone through a series of mature cognitive stages, starting from the introduction of the need for contemporary culinary, the search for information based on online reviews, the evaluation of alternative prices and images, to finally executing the purchase action steadily. The success of maintaining *high repurchase intentions* also indicates that consumer post-purchase satisfaction is at a level of fulfilled expectations, where the combination of *value for money* and spicy culinary sensations has succeeded in creating a consumption addiction that encourages *continuous behavioral loyalty*.

Systematically, the dynamics of the relationship between these variables are clearly recorded in the multiple linear regression equation $Y = 0{,}412 + 0{,}285 X_1 + 0{,}241 X_2 + 0{,}168 X_3 + 0{,}315 X_4 + e$. The constant value of 0.412 indicates the baseline number of the purchase decision when all independent factors are assumed to be zero. The most crucial thing from this regression finding is the position of *the Online Customer Review* variable (X_4) which holds the highest regression coefficient, which is 0.315. The weight of this influence exceeds Brand Image (0.285), Price (0.241), and Service Quality (0.168). The fact that online reviews are the most dominant predictor explains the preferences of consumers in areas such as Wonogiri, where the phenomenon of *fear of missing out* (FOMO) and the urge to experience a viral culinary experience on social media are the main drivers of transaction decisions. On the other hand, Service Quality, which has the smallest coefficient (0.168), confirms that consumers tend to understand the lack of service quality or long queues, as long

as the products obtained are in accordance with the trend that is positively reviewed on the internet and the price remains very affordable.

The results of simultaneous hypothesis testing through the F Test resulted in a value of F_{calcul} of 48.652 with a significance of 0.000, far exceeding the F_{table} 2.47. These findings prove that Brand Image, Price, Quality of Service, and *Online Customer Reviews* collectively operate as a single ecosystem that has a significant effect on Purchase Decisions. The t test also partially confirmed that the four independent variables had a value of t_{calcul} exceeding t_{table} (1.985) with a significance value below 0.05, which means that each variable independently made a significant positive contribution. Furthermore, the determination coefficient (*Adjusted R Square*) recorded a figure of 0.658. This figure implies that 65.8% of the variation in consumer purchase decisions of Mie Gacoan Wonogiri can be explained by this regression model. The remaining 34.2% is explained by variables outside the model, such as the practicality of the outlet location, the variety of complementary food product innovations, seasonal promotion strategies, and consumers' personal taste preferences that have not been measured in this study.

The theoretical implications of the findings of this study make an important contribution to the development of the marketing management literature, especially in confirming the applicability of consumer behavior theory in the midst of rapid economic digitalization in *second-tier areas* such as Wonogiri Regency. The finding that *Online Customer Reviews* are the variable with the most dominant influence strengthens the assumption of the *Elaboration Likelihood Model* (ELM), where consumers tend to utilize peripheral routes—such as the number of stars, review photos, and viral reputation on social media—as a pruner of cognitive considerations when making decisions to purchase *low-involvement products*. This phenomenon proves that the geographical boundaries between big cities and developing regions are increasingly eroded by the accessibility of digital information. Local consumers are now adopting a decision-making pattern that relies heavily on *social proof*, making online reputation no longer just a complementary instrument for promotion, but the main pillar that determines the success of an F&B brand in the regional market.

From a managerial perspective, the results of this analysis provide a very concrete strategic reference for the management of Mie Gacoan Wonogiri in formulating operational improvement priorities. The disparity between the high influence of brand image and online reviews with the relatively low assessment of service quality (especially indicators of employee responsiveness and empathy) indicates an operational *gap* that is risky if ignored in the long term. Extreme volume concentration strategies without being balanced by adequate service capacity have the potential to trigger customer burnout and disappointment due to excessive waiting duration. Therefore, management needs to re-engineer operational processes, such as separating the service flow between *dine-in* orders and online motorcycle taxi fleet orders. This step is crucial to unravel queue congestion and provide space for staff to interact more responsively and empathetically with direct consumers.

In addition to improving the service aspect, strict quality *control* must be a major concern to maintain the consistency of taste which was highlighted by respondents as a weak point in the brand image variable. The success of affordable pricing must be supported by *supply chain efficiency* without sacrificing raw material standards or serving portions. In a very price-sensitive market like Wonogiri, maintaining the stability of the value *proposition*—namely satisfying food portions, consistent taste, low prices, and a modern store atmosphere—is the main key to converting impulsive buyers due to social media trends into high-loyal and sustainable customers.

Although this study successfully confirms the significant influence of the four independent variables on Purchase Decisions, there are a number of methodological and theoretical limitations that need to be realized in order to interpret the results more objectively. The main limitation lies in the limited sample coverage of 100 respondents in the Wonogiri Regency area with a *cross-sectional research design*. This approach only captures consumer perceptions and behaviors at a specific point in time, so it is less able to capture the dynamics of changing trends and shifts in F&B consumer preferences in the long term. In addition, the magnitude of the determination coefficient (*Adjusted R Square*) of 0.658 implies that there is a residual variance of 34.2% which is influenced by other factors beyond the scope of this model. External variables such as the accessibility of outlet locations, the effectiveness of seasonal sales promotions, the influence of *local influencers*, and personal taste preferences have not been fully accommodated in the current conceptual framework.

Responding to these limitations, future research is suggested to expand the scope of the research geographical area by comparing consumer characteristics in several *secondary cities* and metropolitan cities. This comparative expansion is crucial to test the sensitivity of online review and price variables to differences in regional income levels and local consumption culture. The next researcher is also projected to enrich the analysis framework by integrating *mediating variables* such as *Customer Satisfaction* or *moderating variables* such as Price Sensitivity and Social Media Use Intensity. More complex multivariate analysis approaches, such as *Structural Equation Modeling* (SEM-PLS), are highly recommended for mapping more detailed causal relationship paths between cognitive and consumer affective variables.

Overall, these findings provide a holistic understanding that the success of modern F&B business penetration in the region no longer relies solely on physical advantages or low prices. The success of Mie Gacoan in Wonogiri is empirical proof that the synergy between a strong brand identity, transparency of digital reputation through *online customer reviews*, responsive pricing to local purchasing power, and consistency of service quality are the main foundations in building sustainable *competitive advantage*. Integrating authentic digital marketing strategies with outlet operational efficiency will be the main determinant for F&B industry players in converting the enthusiasm of regional consumers into solid and sustainable brand loyalty.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research and data processing carried out, the following conclusions were obtained:

1. Brand image has a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision of Gacoan Noodles in Wonogiri Regency.
2. The price has a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision of Gacoan Noodles in Wonogiri Regency.
3. The quality of service has a positive and significant influence on the decision to purchase Gacoan Noodles in Wonogiri Regency.
4. *Online customer reviews* have a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision of Gacoan Noodles in Wonogiri Regency.

ADVICE

Based on the above conclusion, the following suggestions can be given:

1. Share Gacoan Noodles in Wonogiri Regency

The suggestions that can be given for Gacoan Noodles in Wonogiri Regency are:

- a. Brand consistency obtained the lowest average score compared to other indicators. Therefore, Mie Gacoan Wonogiri needs to improve brand consistency through equalizing product quality, service, and customer experience on each visit. In addition, companies need to strengthen brand identity through continuous promotion, uniform brand message delivery, and maintaining operational standards so that the brand image formed in the minds of consumers remains strong and consistent.
- b. In the price variable, the indicators of price affordability and price competitiveness have the lowest average value. This shows that there are still some consumers who consider the price of Mie Gacoan Wonogiri products to be not fully affordable and do not have optimal competitiveness compared to similar products. Therefore, Mie Gacoan Wonogiri is advised to periodically evaluate the pricing strategy by considering consumer purchasing power, prices offered by competitors, and the suitability between prices and benefits received by customers.
- c. In the service quality variable, the reliability indicator has the lowest average value. This shows that there are still consumers who consider the services provided by Mie Gacoan Wonogiri to be not completely consistent. Therefore, Mie Gacoan Wonogiri is advised to improve service reliability through the implementation of more consistent operational standards, regular employee training, and supervision of the service process so that errors and delays can be minimized.
- d. In the *online customer review* variable, the usability perception indicator has the lowest average value. This shows that there are still consumers who feel that the available customer reviews do not fully provide useful information in helping them make purchase decisions. Therefore, Mie Gacoan Wonogiri is recommended to encourage customers to provide more informative, detailed, and relevant reviews about their experience of the products and services received. Thus, *online customer reviews* can

provide greater benefits for potential consumers in evaluating products and increasing their confidence before making a purchase.

2. For the Next Researcher

The researcher is then advised to add other variables **such as moderation or mediation variables** using customer *satisfaction* or purchase *intention* to deepen the analysis of the relationship between variables. Considering the contribution of the variables of brand image, price, service quality, and *online customer reviews* in this study is 41.9%, while the remaining 58.1% is influenced by other variables. The researcher is also advised to conduct a comparative study by comparing the behavior of Gacoan Noodles in urban areas with other suburban areas to compare consumer characteristics.

LIMITATIONS

1. This study only examined four independent variables, namely brand image, price, service quality, and *online customer reviews* with a determination coefficient value (R^2) of 41.9%. This shows that there are still 58.1% variations in purchase decisions that are influenced by other factors outside this research model.
2. The focus of this research area is limited only to Gacoan Noodle consumers in Wonogiri Regency. Therefore, the results of this study cannot be generalized absolutely to describe the behavior of Gacoan Noodle consumers in other areas.

Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire with a Likert scale, so the data obtained was highly dependent on the subjective perception and honesty of each respondent when filling out the questionnaire.

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