

Review Article

# The Role of Brand Image in Mediating the Relationship of Product Quality and Price Fairness with Purchase Decision (A Case Study of the iPhone Product in Denpasar City)

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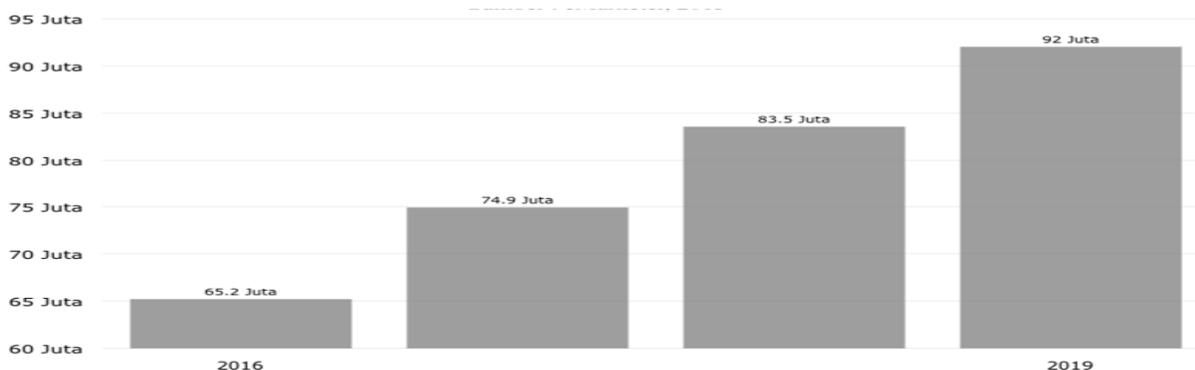
**Abstract** - The aim of this study is to explain the role of brand image in mediating the relationship of Product Quality and Price Fairness with Purchase decisions. This study was conducted in Denpasar City with a total sample of 190 respondents who are iPhone users. The sample was determined using a non-probability sampling method, namely the purposive sampling technique. The data analysis techniques utilized are the path analysis and the Sobel test using the SPSS program for windows. The research results showed that all the research hypotheses are accepted. Product quality and price fairness have a positive and significant influence on brand image, and brand image has a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision. This study is also able to prove that brand image is capable of mediating the influence of product quality and price fairness on the purchase decision. From the implications of this study, it is recommended for the iPhone distributors in Denpasar City to maintain their good product quality and price fairness so that the brand image improves and stimulates the purchase decision for iPhone products in Denpasar City.

**Keywords** - Brand Image, Product Quality, Price Fairness, and Purchase Decision.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement in communication technology has led to the increase in the needs of the Indonesian people for this technology. This can be seen from the continuous development of communication technology in Indonesia. Almost every human activity can now be supported by the technology; in other words, we are currently in the digitalization era.

The development in telecommunication technology has led to the creation of smartphones which greatly help humans in their work. Smartphone is one of the most popular technology products used, because it offers ease in usage, effectiveness, and efficiency. The existence of smartphones is one of the products of the technological advancement. The usage of smartphones has been increasing from year to year, including in Indonesia. Indonesia, as a country with a population of greater than 267 million lives, is one of the biggest market targets for smartphones. This can be seen in Picture 1, as follows:



Source: The Research Institute of Digital Marketing, Emarketer

Fig. 1 Number of Smartphone Users in Indonesia (In Millions)



Picture 1 shows that there is an increase in smartphone usage in Indonesia. With the high usage of smartphones as telecommunication devices, there is a business opportunity in this field, resulting in many firms competing to launch their best products. There are already many smartphone firms that have penetrated Indonesia's market, such as *Samsung, Oppo, Xiaomi, Realme, Redmi, Vivo, dan Apple*. Currently, Samsung still dominates the smartphone market in Indonesia at 42% of the market, while iPhone is at the lowest position at 6.5% (CNBC Indonesia, 2019).

Apple Inc. is a firm that focuses on consumer electronics, and the iPhone is among its products. The iPhone is a product with a strong reputation. This phenomenon depicts that the iPhone is able to convince consumers, making it easier for consumers to make purchase decisions. Apple has always maintained its product quality and continuously made innovations. The iPhone has a unique design which is one of the characteristics of Apple products.

In 2019, the iPhone XR became one of the best-selling products with a lower price compared to the iPhone XS and iPhone XS Max. The price strategy can be seen to be an effective step to improve sales. The iPhone XR is recorded as the best-selling iPhone model in 2019, in which Apple is able to sell at least 26.9 million units (Kompas.com, 2019). The tight competition has caused many competitors, such as *Oppo, Xiaomi, Vivo, Redmi, Realme, Sony, and even Lenovo*, to offer more affordable prices. Despite this, the iPhone is still the target of many consumers in the middle of the high smartphone competition in Indonesia. The survey by the Internet Service Usage Association of Indonesia (APJII) showed that the number of internet users in Indonesia has increased. The smartphone users in Indonesia is concentrated in the island of Jawa and Bali at 55% of the total (CNBC Indonesia, 2019). Based on this condition, Bali has become one of the main targets of the communication and technology industries, specifically Denpasar as the capital city of Bali.

The purchase decision is one of the considerations in developing a good product. It is important for producers to determine the factors that can influence purchase decisions (Putri, 2013). Purchase decision is a decision made by consumers in purchasing a product after considering various information, including how reasonable the product is (Alana et al., 2012). The purchase decision of consumers can be defined as a process in which consumers evaluate a product by considering the strengths and reputation of the product (Oghojafor et al., 2012). Many factors are considered by consumers before deciding to purchase a product. Thus producers must carefully determine what the factors that may attract consumers are. Among the factors which determine the purchase decision of consumers is product quality.

Product quality is the ability of the product to fulfill the needs or preferences of consumers (Nilsson et al., 2001). It is important to improve the quality of products because consumers want products of high quality. The product quality is assessed by the ability of the product to fulfill the needs and preferences of consumers. With a good product quality, consumers will have better trust and perception towards the product (Nurdianto and Yuniati, 2013). There are some previous studies related to the influence of product quality on the purchase decision. One of the studies stated that product quality has a positive and significant influence on purchase decision (Isyanto et al., 2012), while another found that product quality does not significantly influence the purchase decision of consumers (Pardede and Haryadi, 2017). These research results regarding the influence of product quality on purchase intention still show inconsistencies, thus the existence of a research gap.

Aside from product quality, there are still other consumer considerations in purchasing products, namely the price. The price is the amount of money that must be paid by consumers to obtain a certain product or service (Simanjuntak and Ardani, 2018). Consumer's purchase decision can be influenced by the price of the product. If the product price offered is not reasonable, consumers may perceive that the price is not fair. Therefore, firms must set a price corresponding to the product's quality, so that the needs and preferences of consumers are fulfilled, which would encourage consumers to make a purchase decision. The research conducted by Ariatmaja dan Rastini (2017) showed that price fairness has a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision. Conversely, another research stated that price fairness does not have a significant influence on the purchase decision of consumers. These results also show that there is a research gap.

As there is a research gap related to the influence of product quality on purchase decisions and the influence of price fairness on purchase decisions, there is, therefore, a need to complement this relationship with the brand image variable. The brand image variable is selected as the mediating variable because the brand image can be developed by providing good product quality (Kusuma, 2016). The fair price set for the product would also improve its brand image (Leksono dan Herwin, 2017), and brand image is also able to improve the purchase decision of consumers (Mendrofa, 2013)

Brand image is the impression in a consumer's memory as a result of the interaction between the consumers with a brand (Arslan, 2014). Brand image is also a factor considered by consumers before making a purchase (Lin and Bih, 2007). A good brand image has a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision. The better the brand image created by the firm, the greater the tendency of consumers to make a purchase from them (Suciningtyas, 2012).

Based on the research background and problem formulations discussed, the objectives of this study are to explain the influence of product quality on the purchase decision for iPhone products in Denpasar City, to explain the influence of price fairness on purchase decision, to explain the influence of product quality on the brand image of iPhone products in Denpasar City, to explain the influence of price fairness on the brand image of iPhone products in Denpasar City, to explain the influence of brand image on purchase decision, to explain the role of brand image in mediating the relationship between product quality and purchase decision for iPhone products in Denpasar City, and to explain the role of brand image in mediating the relationship between price fairness and purchase decision for iPhone products in Denpasar City.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

### A. Literature Review

Product quality can be defined as any aspect of the product that can satisfy customers, or that is in line with their requirements or needs (Munisih, 2014). Price fairness is a process to be considered in order to create an acceptable value. This explains that price fairness is evaluated by comparing price with other aspects related to the standard, process, value, reference, and norm (Consuegra et al., 2007). Brand image holds an important role in the purchase decision, in which the firm must have a good reputation in order to stimulate the intention of consumers to make a purchase decision (Nigam et al., 2011 and Pratiwi and Yasa, 2019). Purchase decision is the activity of an individual who is directly involved in the process of deciding to purchase a product offered by a seller (Nisel, 2001).

### B. Conceptual Framework

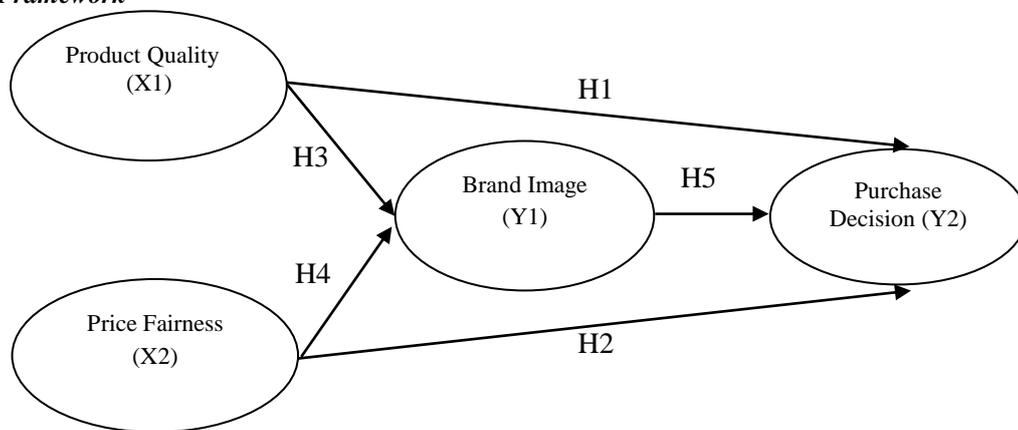


Fig. 2 Research Model

### C. Research Hypothesis

#### The Influence of Product Quality on Purchase Decision

The research conducted by Isyanto et al. (2012) and Budianti and Anjarwati (2017) stated that product quality has a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision. This shows that the greater the product quality perceived by consumers, the more likely consumers will make a purchase. Conversely, another research found that product quality has an insignificant influence on purchase decisions (Melly et al., 2013).

**H1 : Product quality has a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision.**

#### The Influence of Price Fairness on Purchase Decision

In the research conducted by Syahrial (2015), Ariatmaja and Rastini (2017), and Simanjuntak and Ardani (2018), it was found that price fairness has a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision. This means that when consumers perceive that the price fairness is greater, there will be a stronger tendency for consumers to make a purchase. However, in the research conducted by Ferdianto et al. (2015), it was stated that

price fairness has an insignificant influence on the purchase decision.

**H2 : Price fairness has a positive and significant influence on purchase decision**

#### The Influence of Product Quality on Brand Image

The study conducted by Noerchoidah (2013) and Kusuma (2016) revealed that product quality has a positive and significant effect on brand image. However, the results contradict the research results by Nurdianto dan Yuniati (2013), which stated that product quality does not have any direct and significant influence on brand image.

**H3 : Product quality has a positive and significant influence on brand image.**

#### The Influence of Price Fairness on Brand Image

Based on the research conducted by Leksono dan Herwin (2017) dan Saraswati dan Rahyuda (2017), it was revealed that price fairness has a significant influence on brand image. This means that a higher price fairness will be able to positively improve the brand image. Conversely, if the price is less fair, the brand image of the product will

be negatively affected. The research results by Zulaicha dan Irawati (2016), however, showed that price fairness has an insignificant influence on brand image.

**H4 : Price fairness has a positive and significant influence on brand image**

***The Influence of Brand Image on Purchase Decision***

The research results obtained in the study conducted by Lin dan Bih (2007) dan Wati (2017) revealed that brand image has a positive and significant effect on the purchase decision. Therefore, with a higher brand image for the firm, consumers would be more likely to make a purchase decision. However, in the research conducted by Junita (2015), it was shown that brand image does not have a positive and significant relationship with the purchase decision.

**H5 : Brand image has a positive and significant influence on purchase decision**

***The Role of Brand Image in Mediating the Influence of Product Quality on Purchase Decision***

The research results of the study conducted by Fianto (2014) showed that brand image is a mediator in the influence of product quality on the purchase decision. This is also supported by the research conducted by Darmajaya dan Sukawati (2018), which stated that brand image has a significant influence on the purchase decision of consumers.

**H6 : Brand image is significantly capable of mediating the influence of product quality on the purchase decision.**

**The Role of Brand Image in Mediating the Influence of Price Fairness on Purchase Decision**

In the research conducted by Widodo (2016), it was revealed that brand image significantly mediates the influence of price fairness on the purchase decision. This result is consistent with the research conducted by Putra dan Aksari (2018), which stated that price fairness has a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision.

**III. RESEARCH METHOD**

This research was conducted in Denpasar City. The data used in this study are qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data are the answers of the respondents towards the statements encompassing brand image, product quality, price fairness, and purchase decision. The quantitative data in this study are the answers to the questionnaire, which used the Likert scale, the age of respondents, and the market share of the iPhone product.

The sources of data in this study are from primary sources and secondary sources. The primary data were obtained from questionnaires distributed to and answered by respondents. The secondary data in this study are from articles, media, WEB sites, APJII, and CNBC Indonesia, which provided information on market shares.

The population in this study are all the citizens in Denpasar City who have purchased or used iPhone products. The number of indicators in this study is 19. Therefore the amount of sample needed is 190 respondents. This study utilized a non-probability sampling method, namely the purposive sampling technique. The sample criteria in this study are the respondents must be domiciled in Denpasar City, have purchased or used an iPhone product, and must have an education level of at least high school or equivalent.

The data were collected using questionnaires as the instrument, which were directly distributed to respondents. The scale used in this study is the Likert scale. This study utilized the validity test and the reliability test to ensure that the questionnaires produce valid and reliable data before continuing with the next step. The analysis technique used is the Path Analysis and the Sobel Test.

**IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The characteristics of respondents in this study are categorized into the following demographic variables, namely gender, occupation, age, and education level, which are displayed in Table 1.

**Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents**

No	Variable	Classification	Amount (People)	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	79	41.58
		Female	111	58.42
	Total		190	100
2	Age	18-22 Years Old	87	45.79
		24-29 Years Old	51	26.84
		28-32 Years Old	44	23.16
		> Years Old	8	4.21
Total		190	100	
3	Education Level	High School	73	38.42
		Associate Degree	40	21.05
		Undergraduate Degree	67	35.26

		PostgraduateDegree	10	5.26
		Total	190	100
4	Occupation	Student	76	40.00
		Private Employee	41	21.58
		Public Employee	34	17.89
		Entrepreneur	39	20.53
		Total	190	100

The validity test is conducted by correlating the factor score with the total score. If the correlation of each factor is positive ( $r > 0,3$ ), the research instrument is deemed to be valid. In detail, the validity test results are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2. Validity Test Results

No.	Variable	Instrument	Pearson Correlation	Remarks
1.	Product Quality (X1)	X1.1	0,341	Valid
		X1.2	0,850	Valid
		X1.3	0,763	Valid
		X1.4	0,539	Valid
		X1.5	0,845	Valid
		X1.6	0,807	Valid
2.	Price Fairness (X2)	X2.1	0,505	Valid
		X2.2	0,855	Valid
		X2.3	0,818	Valid
		X2.4	0,548	Valid
3.	Brand Image (Y1)	Y1.1	0,591	Valid
		Y1.2	0,764	Valid
		Y1.3	0,877	Valid
		Y1.4	0,853	Valid
4.	Purchase Decision (Y2)	Y2.1	0,830	Valid
		Y2.2	0,951	Valid
		Y2.3	0,892	Valid
		Y2.4	0,712	Valid
		Y2.5	0,951	Valid

The reliability test conducted on the research instrument produces Cronbach’s Alpha values of Greater than 0.6 for all the variables. This result shows that the research instrument is reliable. In more detail, the reliability test result is displayed in Table 3.

Table 3. Reliability Test

No.	Variable	Cronbach’s Alpha	Remarks
1.	Product Quality (X1)	0,798	Reliable
2.	Price Fairness (X2)	0,608	Reliable
3.	Brand Image (Y1)	0,782	Reliable
4.	Purchase Decision(Y2)	0,920	Reliable

The description of respondents’ answers regarding the brand image, product quality, price fairness, and purchased decision variable can be determined through the average score of the questionnaire answers. The average scores can be categorized into the following interval classes : 1.00 – 1.80 = Very Bad, 1.81 – 2.60 = Bad, 2.61 – 3.40 = good enough, 3.41 – 4.20 = good, and 4.21 – 5.00 = very good.

For the product quality variable, the highest average score is on the statement “iPhone products have good aesthetics in terms of their color mixes”. The average value of the product quality variable reveals that, in general, respondents agree that the iPhone has a good quality. For the Price Fairness variable, the statement with the highest average score is “the price of iPhone products is in accordance with its quality”.

The average value of the price fairness variable shows that the respondents, in general, agree that the iPhone has a fair price.

As for the brand image variable, the statement with the highest average value is "I feel iPhone gives me a sense of pride when I use it". The average value of the brand image variable shows that the respondents, in

general, agree that iPhone can give them a sense of pride when they use the product. For the purchase decision variable, the highest average score is in the statement, "iPhone has its own attractiveness which convinces me to purchase it". The average score of the purchase decision variable shows that, in general, the iPhone has its own attractiveness, which convinces respondents to purchase it.

**A. Path Analysis Results**

**The Influence of Product Quality and Price Fairness on Brand Image**

Table 4. Path Analysis Results of Structure 1

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.876	0.351		2.498	0.013
Product Quality	0.364	0.077	0.329	4.741	0.000
Price Fairness	0.322	0.084	0.266	3.828	0.000
R <sup>2</sup> : 0,252					

Based on the path analysis results shown in Table 4., the product quality variable has a coefficient of 0.329 which means that product quality has a positive influence on brand image. The price fairness variable has a coefficient of 0.266 which means that price fairness also has a positive influence on brand image.

**The Influence of Product Quality, Price Fairness and Brand Image on Purchase Decision**

Table 5. The Path Analysis Results of Structure 2

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.472	0.226		2.091	0.038
Product Quality	0.181	0.051	0.198	3.524	0.001
Price Fairness	0.429	0.055	0.427	7.760	0.000
Brand image	0.270	0.046	0.326	5.835	0.000
R <sup>2</sup> : 0.566					

Based on the path analysis results shown in Table 5., the product quality variable has a coefficient of 0.198 which means that product quality has a positive influence on the purchase decision. Meanwhile, the price fairness variable has a coefficient of 0.427 which means that price fairness has a positive influence on the purchase decision. Lastly, the brand image variable has a coefficient of 0.326 which means that brand image has a positive influence on the purchase decision.

**B. Classical Assumption Test**

Based on the normality test in this study, it was found that the variables fulfill the normality requirements. The multicollinearity test showed that the regression model is free from any signs of multicollinearity. The Heteroscedasticity test also showed that there are no signs of heteroscedasticity.

**C. Hypothesis Test**

**The Influence of Product Quality on Purchase Decision**

Based on Table 5., product quality has a beta value of 0.198 and a sig. Value of 0.001. This means that H<sub>a</sub> is accepted, as the sig value is 0.001 < 0.05. In conclusion, product quality has a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision.

**The Influence of Price Fairness on Purchase Decision**

In Table 5, price fairness can be seen to have a beta value of 0.427 and a sig. Value of 0.000. As the sig. value is 0.000 < 0.05, this means that H<sub>a</sub> is accepted. Thus, price fairness has a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision.

**The Influence of Product Quality on Brand Image**

Based on the results in Table 5, product quality has a beta value of 0.329 and a sig. Value of 0.000. As the sig value is 0.000 < 0.05, this shows that H<sub>a</sub> is accepted. Thus, product quality has a positive and significant influence on brand image.

**The Influence of Price Fairness on Brand Image**

Based on the results shown in Table 5, product quality has a beta value of 0.266 and a sig. Value of 0.000. As the sig value is  $0.000 < 0.05$ , this shows that  $H_a$  is accepted. Thus, this proves that price fairness has a positive and significant influence on brand image.

**The Influence of Brand Image on Purchase Decision**

Based on the results displayed in Table 5, brand image has a beta value of 0.326 and a sig. Value of 0.000. As the sig value is  $0.000 < 0.05$ , this shows that  $H_a$  is accepted. Therefore, it can be concluded that brand image has a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions.

**Testing the Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ ) and the Error Variable (e)**

The coefficient of determination calculated is 0.675, which means that 67.5% of the variables of the purchase decision for iPhone products in Denpasar City are influenced by product quality, price fairness, and brand image, while the remaining 32.5% are influenced by other factors not included in this research model.

**Table 6. The Direct and Indirect Influence of product Quality (X1)Price Fairness (X2), on the Brand image (Y1) and purchase Decision (Y2).**

Influence Path of Variables	Direct Influence	Indirect Influence Y1	Total Influence
X1→Y1	0,329		0,329
X2→Y1	0,266		0,266
Y1→Y2	0,326		0,326
X1→Y2	0,198	0,107	0,305
X2→Y2	0,427	0,087	0,514

Source: Computed Primary Data, 2020

From Table 6., it can be seen that the direct influence of the product quality variable on the brand image has a coefficient value of 0.329, the influence of price fairness on the brand image has a coefficient value of 0.266, the influence of product quality on purchase decision has a coefficient value of 0.198, the influence of price fairness on purchase decision has a coefficient value of 0.427, and brand image on purchase decision has a coefficient value of 0.326. Meanwhile, mediated by brand image, the influence of product quality has a direct and indirect influence on purchase decision with a coefficient value of 0.198 and 0.107, respectively. Thus the total influence is 0.305. With the mediation of brand image, price fairness has a direct and indirect influence on purchase decisions with a coefficient value of 0.427 dan 0.087. Thus the total influence is 0.514.

**D. Sobel Test Results**

**The Role of Brand Image in Mediating the Influence of Product Quality on Purchase Decision**

The Sobel Test Results showed that the z tabulation has a value of 3.633, which means that the z-table value is  $3.633 > 1.96$ . Thus,  $H_0$  is rejected, and  $H_1$  is accepted. From this result, it can be inferred that brand image as the mediator is capable of positively and significantly mediating the influence of product quality on purchase decisions.

**The Role of Brand Image in Mediating the Influence of Price Fairness on Purchase Decision**

The Sobel Test Results showed that the z tabulation has a value of 2.867 which means that the z-table value is  $2.867 > 1.96$ . Thus,  $H_0$  is rejected, and  $H_1$  is accepted. It

can be inferred from the results that brand image is positively and significantly capable of mediating the influence of price fairness on the purchase decision.

**V. RESEARCH IMPLICATION**

The theoretical implication of this study provides evidence and contributions to the development of knowledge in the focus of consumer behavior, specifically related to product quality, price fairness, brand image, and purchase decision. In addition, the results of this study can also be used by other researchers as a reference for their studies in the fields of product quality, price fairness, brand image, and purchase decision. The theoretical aspects of this study also provide explanations that product quality, price fairness, and brand image can truly improve purchase decisions. When the product quality and price fairness perceived by consumers improve brand image, their high view of the brand image will improve their likelihood to make a purchase decision.

**VI. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that product quality and price fairness have a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision for iPhone products in Denpasar City, product quality and price fairness have a positive and significant influence on brand image, brand image has a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision for iPhone products in Denpasar City, brand image is able to mediate the influence of product quality and price fairness on purchase decision for iPhone products in Denpasar City.

Based on the results of the research conducted, there are some recommendations for future studies. For future researchers on the topic, it is strongly recommended to add in more variables that may have an influence on purchase decisions, such as social media promotion, and service quality. It is also recommended to widen the scope of the study, so it is not only limited to the iPhone products in Denpasar City, by changing the research location, not only focused on a certain location, in order to provide greater insights and more generalizable results.

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