DAMPAK PERSEPSI PENTINGNYA ISU SOSIAL DAN PUBLIKASI NEGATIF TERHADAP DUGAAN DUKUNGAN STARBUCKS TERHADAP ISRAEL DALAM KONFLIK GAZA TERHADAP KEPUTUSAN PEMBELIAN PELANGGAN DI MANADO

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Edward T. B. Kamoda[1], Lawren J. Rumokoy[2], Ferdinand J. Tumewu[3], Maya P. Warouw[4]
[1,2,3]Jurusan Manajemen, Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnis Universitas Sam Ratulangi Manado
[4]Jurusan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya Universitas Sam Ratulangi Manado
E-mail: [1]kamoda.edward@gmail.com, [2]juliorumukoy@unsrat.ac.id
[3]tumewufj@unsrat.ac.id, [4]maya_warouw@unsrat.ac.id

Abstract
This study examines how the perceived importance of social issues and negative publicity regarding Starbucks' alleged support for Israel in the Gaza conflict affect customer purchase decisions in Manado, Indonesia. A quantitative approach was used, with 100 respondents selected via stratified random sampling. The results show that while the perceived importance of social issues does not significantly impact purchase decisions, negative publicity has a strong and significant influence. Moreover, the combined effect of these factors significantly affects consumer behavior. These findings emphasize the power of negative publicity in shaping purchasing decisions, particularly in contexts involving politically sensitive issues. The study provides insights for businesses on how social and political narratives can influence consumer choices in emerging markets.
Keywords: Social Issues, Negative Publicity, Purchase Decision, Starbucks.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, customer awareness of social issues has increased significantly (Mohr, Webb, & Harris, 2001). Companies are no longer evaluated solely based on the quality of their products or services but also on their stance toward social and political issues (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). Consumers today are more likely to choose brands that align with their beliefs, while companies perceived as supporting controversial policies or actions often face boycotts and negative reactions (Klein, Smith, & John, 2004).

Starbucks, as one of the largest coffee chains in the world, has been the subject of controversy related to the Israel-Palestine conflict. Allegations regarding Starbucks' support for Israel in the Gaza conflict have widely circulated through social media and various news platforms, triggering waves of negative sentiment toward the company (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010). Although Starbucks has denied these claims, public perception continues to play a crucial role in customer purchasing decisions. Negative publicity arising from political issues can significantly impact customer loyalty and a company's business performance (Coombs, 2007).

In Indonesia, Manado is one of the cities with a relatively high level of social awareness. Customers in this city tend to pay attention to global issues and hold strong opinions about companies perceived to be involved in social or political conflicts (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Therefore, it is essential to understand how the perceived importance of social issues and negative publicity influence customer purchase decisions in Manado, particularly regarding global brands like Starbucks.

This study aims to analyze the

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relationship between the perceived importance of social issues and negative publicity on customer purchasing decisions regarding Starbucks in Manado. Using a quantitative approach, this research will provide insights into the extent to which these factors influence customer behavior and offer implications for corporate marketing strategies in addressing sensitive social issues.

Research Objectives
The objectives of this study are:
1. To assess whether the perceived importance of social issues impact the customer purchase decision regarding Starbucks in Manado.
2. To examine the impact of negative publicity on costumer purchase decision toward Starbucks in Manado.
3. To analyze the simultaneous influence of the perceived importance of social issues and negative publicity toward purchase decisions regarding Starbucks in Manado.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)
The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), proposed by Ajzen (1985), is a psychological model designed to predict and explain human behavior in specific contexts. TPB is an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), adding the component of perceived behavioral control to the existing components of attitude toward behavior and subjective norms.
- Attitude toward behavior refers to an individual's evaluation of a particular action, whether positive or negative.
- Subjective norms relate to perceived social pressure to engage in or avoid a particular action.
- Perceived behavioral control reflects an individual's belief in their ability to perform the behavior, influenced by prior experiences and anticipated obstacles.

This theory has been widely applied in various fields, including health, environmental studies, and consumer behavior. In this research, TPB is used to explain how consumer attitudes toward social issues, perceived social pressure, and their control perceptions in making ethical decisions influence their purchase decisions.

Marketing
Marketing focuses on building relationships with customers by creating value and ensuring satisfaction. It involves attracting new customers by promising superior value and maintaining and expanding the existing customer base through consistent satisfaction. Successful companies recognize that effectively meeting customer needs often leads to increased market share and profitability (Kotler et al., 2015).

Consumer Behavior
Consumer behavior is the study of how individuals, groups, and organizations select, buy, use, and dispose of goods, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy their needs and desires (Solomon, 2018).

According to Kotler & Keller (2016), various factors influence consumer behavior, categorized into internal and external influences:
- Internal factors include psychological aspects such as motivation, perception, beliefs, and attitudes.
- External factors encompass social, cultural, economic, and technological influences. Social factors include family, friends, and social networks that affect an individual's preferences and behavior. Cultural factors, such as norms and values, also shape consumer attitudes and choices.

Purchase Decision
A purchase decision refers to the process by which consumers select and commit to a product or service from various alternatives.

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This process is influenced by multiple factors, including personal preferences, social influences, and brand perceptions (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

According to Schiffman and Kanuk (2010), factors such as brand reputation, perceived value, and external influences like negative publicity play a crucial role in shaping consumer choices. Kotler and Armstrong (2010) emphasize the importance of understanding the factors influencing purchase decisions so that companies can align their marketing strategies with consumer expectations.

Perceived Importance of Social Issues

The perceived importance of social issues refers to the extent to which individuals recognize and prioritize social issues—such as environmental sustainability, human rights, and ethical business practices—in their decision-making processes.

Sen and Bhattacharya (2001) found that consumers' perceptions of corporate social responsibility significantly influence their attitudes and behaviors. Consumers who highly prioritize social issues tend to support companies that align with their values and avoid those that do not (Mohr, Webb, & Harris, 2001). Klein, Smith, and John (2004) also discovered that perceptions of social issues can drive significant actions, such as boycotts against companies engaged in unethical practices or support for companies actively addressing social concerns.

Negative Publicity

Negative publicity is defined as unfavorable media attention toward a company or its products, which can negatively impact consumer perceptions and behavior and damage corporate reputation (Crijns, Cauberghe, Hudders, & Claeys, 2017).

According to Coombs (2007), negative publicity arises when an organization faces damaging media coverage or public criticism that harms its reputation. Negative publicity can stem from various issues, including ethical violations, poor management decisions, or involvement in controversial situations.

Coombs emphasizes that negative publicity can lead to a loss of public trust and affect an organization's credibility, ultimately influencing consumer behavior.

Previous Studies

Ingenbleek, Meulenberg, & Van Trijp (2015) introduced the concept of Buyer Social Responsibility (BSR), which integrates social concerns into consumer decision-making. The study found that media framing and agenda-setting influence consumer awareness and purchasing behavior regarding social issues. It also identified different consumer segments, such as those who prioritize ethical considerations versus those who focus on personal benefits. This study is relevant as it examines how social responsibility considerations influence purchasing decisions, although it differs by focusing on consumer-driven sustainability efforts rather than corporate publicity.

Pandya & Venkatesan (2016) analyzed consumer responses to political conflict, specifically the U.S.–France dispute over the Iraq War, by examining supermarket sales data. The study found that sales of French-sounding brands declined in U.S. supermarkets, especially in regions with a higher concentration of U.S. citizens. This research is relevant as it illustrates how political affiliations and national identity can shape consumer behavior, similar to how Starbucks' alleged stance on Gaza may impact purchasing decisions in Manado. However, it differs by focusing on international political conflicts rather than corporate reputation.

Yu, Liu, & Lee (2019) explored how cultural factors such as collectivism and uncertainty avoidance influence responses to negative publicity in the banking sector. Their results showed that collectivism and uncertainty avoidance increased information-seeking behavior and the spread of negative word-of-mouth. This study is relevant as it discusses how negative publicity affects customer decisions across different cultural contexts.

Maslikhan (2019) investigated the impact

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of negative publicity on brand equity in the case of Dolce & Gabbana's racism scandal. Using a quantitative approach, the study found that negative publicity reduced brand attitude and brand image, though there remained a positive relationship between brand image and purchase intention. This study is relevant as it demonstrates how social issues can affect customer decisions toward a brand.

Roozen & Raedts (2020) examined the impact of negative publicity on the fast fashion industry through a pre-post experimental design. Their findings indicated that negative publicity significantly reduced consumer attitudes and purchase intentions, with a stronger effect than positive publicity. Consumers with high social awareness were more susceptible to these negative influences. This study is relevant as it highlights how negative publicity shapes customer perceptions and purchasing behavior.

Handarkho (2020) investigated how social experiences, such as parasocial interaction, herd behavior, and peer communication, shape consumer purchase decisions in social commerce (SC). The study found that social validation and peer influence significantly impact purchasing behavior, particularly in online environments. While this study focuses on interpersonal influences in digital commerce, it provides insights into how public narratives—such as negative publicity—can affect consumer behavior through social validation and peer influence.
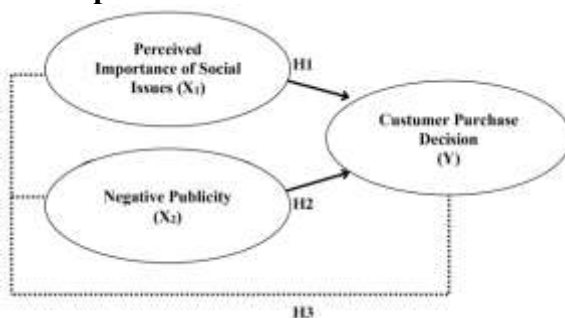
Conceptual Framework

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
Source: Teoritical Review, 2025

Research Hypotheses

$H0_1$: Perceived importance of social issues (X1) does not have a significant effect on customer purchase decisions (Y) at Starbucks.

H_1 : Perceived importance of social issues (X1) has a significant effect on customer purchase decisions (Y) at Starbucks.

$H0_2$: Negative publicity (X2) does not have a significant effect on customer purchase decisions (Y) at Starbucks.

H_2 : Negative publicity (X2) has a significant effect on customer purchase decisions (Y) at Starbucks.

$H0_3$: Perceived importance of social issues (X1) and negative publicity (X2) do not simultaneously affect customer purchase decisions (Y) at Starbucks.

H_3 : Perceived importance of social issues (X1) and negative publicity (X2) simultaneously have a significant effect on customer purchase decisions (Y) at Starbucks.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
Research Approach

This study employs a quantitative approach using questionnaires. Multiple linear regression analysis is utilized to examine the relationship between the perceived importance of social issues and negative publicity on customer purchase decisions. This method allows for the collection of measurable data that can be statistically analyzed to understand consumer behavior patterns (Bryman, 2016).

Population and Sample

The population of this study consists of Manado residents who are active social media users and have purchased Starbucks products. This population was selected because social media serves as the primary platform for disseminating information related to social issues and negative publicity (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018).

The sample size was determined using Paul

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Leedy's formula for an unknown population. With a 90% confidence level and a 10% margin of error, a sample of 100 respondents was obtained (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019). This sample size is considered sufficient to represent the population and provide generalizable results.

The sampling technique used in this study is purposive sampling, where respondents are selected based on their engagement in discussions related to Starbucks and their experience in purchasing Starbucks products. This method ensures that the selected respondents are relevant to the study, enhancing the validity of the findings (Singh, 2007).

Data and Data Sources

This study utilizes quantitative data collected through structured questionnaires. Data sources consist of:

- Primary data obtained directly from respondents.
- Secondary data in the form of articles, reports, and publications related to Starbucks and customer perceptions of social issues.

The use of secondary data helps provide context for the study's findings (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018).

Data Collection Method

Data was collected using a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire, which measures respondents' agreement levels with statements related to social perceptions and negative publicity. This scale allows for a higher level of precision in measuring consumer opinions and attitudes (Cohen et al., 2018).

Operational Definition of Research Variables

1. Perceived Importance of Social Issues is defined as the extent to which consumers consider social and ethical factors, such as human rights, in their purchase decisions (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001; Mohr et al., 2001). Indicators for this variable include customer awareness of social issues (e.g., genocide/humanitarian crises), concern for ethical practices, and expectations regarding corporate stance on social issues (Wesley et al., 2012).

2. Negative Publicity Regarding Starbucks' Alleged Support for Israel refers to any form of unfavorable media attention toward the company or its products, which may negatively impact consumer perceptions and behavior, potentially leading to reputational and financial losses (Crijns et al., 2017). Indicators for this variable include media coverage intensity, public sentiment, and customer engagement in social media discussions (Aaker, 2014).

3. Customer Purchase Decision is defined as the process in which consumers select and commit to purchasing a specific product or service from various available alternatives, influenced by personal, social, and external factors (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Indicators for this variable include purchase timing relative to external events, brand choice as part of purchase decisions, and product selection within the context of social issues and negative publicity (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Data Analysis Method

Validity and Reliability Testing

The validity test was conducted using IBM SPSS Version 30, with factor analysis to ensure that the research instrument accurately measures the intended variables.

The reliability test was performed using Cronbach's Alpha, where an instrument is considered reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value exceeds 0.70, indicating strong internal consistency (Hair et al., 2010).

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is used to determine the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable using the following regression model:

$$Y = a + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + e$$

Where:

Y = Customer Purchase Decision
a = Constant
β_1 = Regression Coefficient for X_1

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β_2 = Regression Coefficient for X_2
X_1 = Perceived Importance of Social Issues
X_2 = Negative Publicity
e = Standard Error

This analysis helps in understanding how independent variables influence customer purchase decisions (Field, 2013).
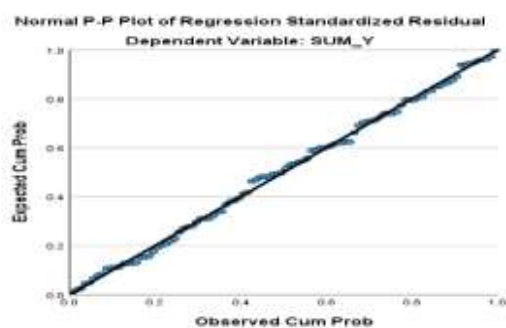
RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Research Results
Validity and Reliability Test
The **validity test** ensures that the research instrument accurately measures the intended variables (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). **Content validity** was confirmed through expert reviews, while **construct validity** was tested using **bivariate correlation analysis** in SPSS. An indicator is considered valid if it has a significant value and a correlation score above **0.5** (Haynes, Richard, & Kubany, 1995). The results indicate that all indicators meet the validity criteria, with **Sig. 2-tailed values < 0.05**.

The **reliability test** was conducted using **Cronbach's alpha** to assess the internal consistency of the research instrument. A **Cronbach's alpha value ≥ 0.70** indicates a reliable instrument (Field, 2013). The findings show that all variables have **Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.70**, confirming that the research instrument is consistent and reliable for further analysis.

Normality Test

Figure 2. P-Plot Normality Test

Table 1. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		d Residual
N		100
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	3.48836089
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.042
	Positive	.035
	Negative	-.042
Test Statistic		.042
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)[c]		.200[d]
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed)[e]	Sig.	.943
	99% Confidence Interval Lower Bound	.937
	Upper Bound	.949

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.
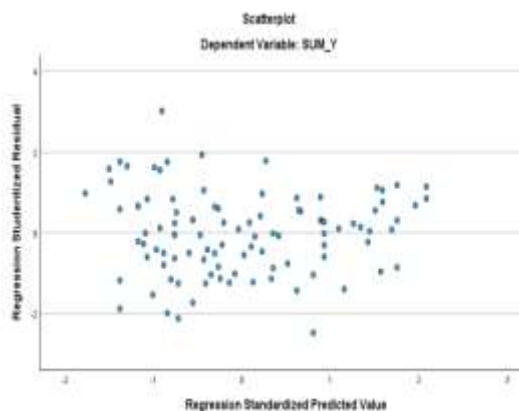d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.
e. Lilliefors' method based on 10000 Monte Carlo samples with starting seed 2000000.

Source : SPSS, 2024

Based on Figure 2, the P-Plot normality test shows that the data distribution closely follows the diagonal line, indicating that the residuals are normally distributed. This is further supported by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results in Table 1, which show a significance value of 0.200. Since this value exceeds the 0.05 threshold, it confirms that the regression model satisfies the assumption of normality. In other words, the data in this study is normally distributed, validating the model for further analysis.

Heteroscedasticity Test
his study examines heteroscedasticity through scatterplot analysis. If the scatterplot does not show a clear pattern and the data points are randomly distributed above and below 0 on the Y-axis, it indicates that the regression model does not exhibit heteroscedasticity.

Source : SPSS, 2024

Figure 3. Scatterplot Heteroscedasticity Test

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The scatterplot results demonstrate no distinct pattern, with data points randomly scattered around **0** on the Y-axis. This confirms that the regression model does not suffer from heteroscedasticity, meeting the classical assumption for multiple linear regression analysis.

Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity occurs in multiple linear regression models when two or more independent variables exhibit a high correlation, potentially distorting regression results. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is used to measure the level of multicollinearity between independent variables. According to Hair et al. (2010), a VIF value below 10 indicates an acceptable level of multicollinearity. If multicollinearity is high, model accuracy may be compromised, requiring adjustments to independent variables.

Table 2. Multicollinearity Test Results

Collinearity Statistics			
Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Status
X_1	0.763	1.310	No Multicollinearity
X_2	0.763	1.310	No Multicollinearity

Source : SPSS, 2024

Based on Table 2, the variables Perceived Importance of Social Issues (X1) and Negative Publicity (X2) have a tolerance value of 0.763 and a VIF value of 1.310. Since the tolerance value is above 0.1 and the VIF value is below the critical threshold of 10, it can be concluded that there is no multicollinearity issue in this regression model. This confirms that the correlation between independent variables is not excessively high, ensuring that the regression analysis can be performed without significant bias due to multicollinearity.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

The multiple linear regression model is formulated as follows:

$$Y = a + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + e$$

Table 2. Results of Multiple Linear Regression

	Coefficients						
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	10.996	1.929		5.705	.001		
SUM_X1	-.072	.089	-.067	-.814	.418	.763	1.310
SUM_X2	.575	.064	.737	8.988	.001	.763	1.310
a. Dependent Variable: SUM_Y							

Source : SPSS, 2024

The regression analysis results in the following equation:

$$Y = 10.996 - 0.072X_1 + 0.575X_2 + e$$

where:
- Y = Customer Purchase Decision
- X_1 = Perceived Importance of Social Issues
- X_2 = Negative Publicity

The regression results indicate that the constant (α) is 10.996, meaning that if both independent variables are zero, the baseline value of customer purchase decisions is 10.996.

- The coefficient for Perceived Importance of Social Issues (β_1 = -0.072, p = 0.418) suggests that this variable does not have a significant influence on customer purchase decisions.
- The coefficient for Negative Publicity (β_2 = 0.575, p < 0.001) demonstrates a strong and significant positive impact on customer purchase decisions.

Correlation Coefficient (R) and Coefficient of Determination (R²)

Table 3. Multiple Regression Correlation Coefficient (R) and Coefficient Determination Test (R²)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.707ª	.500	.490	3.52414

a. Predictors: (Constant), SUM_X2, SUM_X1
b. Dependent Variable: SUM_Y

Source : SPSS, 2024

To assess the overall relationship between the independent and dependent variables, the correlation coefficient (R) and coefficient of determination (R²) are analyzed.

From Table 3, the correlation coefficient (R) is 0.707, indicating a strong positive relationship between Perceived

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Importance of Social Issues (X1) and Negative Publicity (X2₂) with Customer Purchase Decision (Y). This suggests that changes in the independent variables are significantly associated with changes in the dependent variable.

Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R²) is 0.500, meaning that 50% of the variance in customer purchase decisions can be explained by Perceived Importance of Social Issues and Negative Publicity. The remaining 50% is attributed to other external factors, such as personal preferences, brand loyalty, and economic conditions.

These findings highlight that while concern for social issues does not significantly affect purchasing behavior, negative publicity has a major impact, reinforcing the role of public perception and media influence in consumer decision-making.

Hypothesis Testing
Partial Test (t-Test)

The t-test is used to determine the significance of individual predictors in the regression model. A p-value < 0.05 indicates that the corresponding independent variable has a significant impact on the dependent variable (Field, 2013).

Table 4. Result of t-Test

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	10.996	1.928		5.705	<.001		
	SUM_X1	-.372	.899	-.067	-.814	.418	.763	1.310
	SUM_X2	.575	.084	.737	6.868	<.001	.763	1.310

a. Dependent Variable: SUM_Y

Source : SPSS, 2024

Perceived Importance of Social Issues (X1) → p = 0.418 (> 0.05)
- H0₁ accepted, H₁ rejected → No significant impact on Customer Purchase Decision (Y).
- Standardized Beta = -0.067 → Minimal and negative influence.

Negative Publicity (X2) → p < 0.001 (< 0.05)
- H₂ accepted, H0₂ rejected → Strong and significant impact on Customer Purchase Decision (Y).
- Standardized Beta = 0.737 → Major

positive contribution, confirming that negative publicity strongly influences consumer purchasing behavior.

Simultaneous Test (F-Test)

The F-test assesses the overall significance of the regression model. A p-value < 0.05 indicates that the independent variables collectively explain a significant portion of the variance in the dependent variable (Gujarati, 2004).

Table 5. F-Test Results

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1204.062	2	602.031	48.474	<.001ᵇ
	Residual	1204.698	97	12.420		
	Total	2408.760	99			

a. Dependent Variable: SUM_Y
b. Predictors: (Constant), SUM_X2, SUM_X1

Source : SPSS, 2024

- H3 is accepted, and H0₃ is rejected if Sig. < 0.05
- H3 is rejected, and H0₃ is accepted if Sig. > 0.05

The F-test yields a Sig. value < 0.001, which is below the 0.05 threshold, indicating statistical significance.

Discussion
Perceived Importance of Social Issues and Purchase Decision

Findings indicate that Perceived Importance of Social Issues (X1) does not significantly affect Customer Purchase Decisions (Y) regarding Starbucks in Manado. While consumers may be aware of social issues, these concerns do not translate into purchasing behavior. This aligns with Yu et al. (2018), who found that while social responsibility influences consumer attitudes, it does not always drive purchases.

Manado's religious and demographic context may contribute to this finding. The city's Christian majority (72%) holds mixed views on the Gaza conflict (36.5% support Palestine, 12.5% support Israel, 51% neutral), reducing the issue's impact on purchasing decisions. Additionally, younger, educated consumers (76% aged 18–24, 69% pursuing higher education) may prioritize product

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quality and convenience over ethical considerations (Ingenbleek et al., 2015).

Furthermore, Starbucks' corporate clarifications and humanitarian contributions may have mitigated concerns. Many respondents felt reassured after Starbucks' statements, underscoring the role of transparent communication in managing brand perception.

Negative Publicity and Purchase Decision

Unlike social issues, **Negative Publicity (X2) has a highly significant impact on Customer Purchase** Decisions (Y). This supports studies by Pandya & Venkatesan (2016) and Maslikhan (2019), which show that negative publicity—especially related to ethical controversies—erodes consumer trust and influences purchasing behavior.

Although 73% of respondents never participated in boycotts, negative publicity still triggered awareness and emotional responses, aligning with Handarkho (2020), who found that negative information has a stronger impact on decision-making than positive information. This highlights how public sentiment, rather than direct activism, can still alter consumer behavior.

Starbucks' proactive response—clarifying their stance and promoting their donations to Gaza—likely played a role in moderating backlash. Some respondents expressed increased confidence in their purchases after learning about these clarifications, reinforcing the importance of crisis communication strategies.

Combined Effect of Social Issues and Negative Publicity

The simultaneous test (F-test) confirms that both Perceived Importance of Social Issues and Negative Publicity significantly influence Customer Purchase Decisions. While social issues alone do not drive purchasing behavior, they gain relevance when amplified by negative publicity—a pattern observed in Ingenbleek et al. (2015).

Manado's cultural and religious backdrop also plays a moderating role. While sympathy for Gaza exists, religious ties to Israel create mixed sentiments, potentially neutralizing the direct impact of social issues. However, negative publicity heightens awareness and instills guilt, making it a more dominant factor in shaping consumer choices.

Overall, negative publicity remains the key driver of purchasing decisions, while social issues only gain significance when intertwined with media narratives. These findings emphasize the need for brands like Starbucks to navigate social controversies carefully, as consumer perceptions can shift rapidly in response to public discourse and media framing.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that should be considered for future research:

1. Limited Scope and Generalizability
   The study focuses solely on Starbucks consumers in Manado, a predominantly Christian city, which may not reflect broader consumer behavior across different cultural and geographical contexts. Future research could expand to diverse regions for broader applicability.

2. Cross-Sectional Nature
   The study captures consumer perceptions at a single point in time, limiting insights into long-term behavioral changes. Longitudinal studies could track shifts in consumer attitudes over time.

3. Reliance on Self-Reported Data
   Data was collected through self-reported surveys, which may introduce social desirability bias. Future research should incorporate actual purchase behavior or sales data for validation.

4. Exclusion of Psychological Factors
   While the study confirms the influence of negative publicity, it does not explore underlying psychological mechanisms such as guilt, moral alignment, or cognitive dissonance. Investigating these factors could enhance understanding of consumer responses.

5. Focus on a Single Brand

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By examining only Starbucks, the study does not account for industry-wide trends. Future research could compare multiple brands to assess whether negative publicity and social issues affect purchasing behavior differently across sectors.

To address these limitations, future studies could:

1. Expand the Geographical Scope – Investigate different regions and cultural contexts to enhance generalizability.
2. Conduct Longitudinal Studies – Track changes in consumer behavior over time to assess the evolution of purchasing decisions.
3. Use Behavioral Data – Integrate actual sales records, purchase history, or digital footprints to strengthen findings.
4. Explore Psychological Mechanisms – Examine how emotions, guilt, or cognitive dissonance influence consumer decisions.
5. Compare Across Brands and Industries – Determine if negative publicity and social issues impact various brands differently.
6. Assess Social Media Influence – Analyze how online discussions, influencer endorsements, and digital activism shape brand perception.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the impact of Perceived Importance of Social Issues and Negative Publicity on Customer Purchase Decisions regarding Starbucks in Manado, particularly in relation to allegations of support for Israel in the Gaza conflict.

1. Perceived Importance of Social Issues does not significantly influence purchase decisions, as consumers prioritize convenience, product quality, and brand loyalty over ethical concerns.
2. Negative Publicity significantly affects consumer behavior, demonstrating that politically charged narratives can influence purchasing decisions, even if unverified.
3. Consumer Sentiments are shaped by Manado's religious and cultural context, resulting in mixed or neutral attitudes toward the controversy.
4. Combined Influence – While social issues alone do not impact purchasing, their relevance increases when tied to strong negative narratives.

RECOMMENDATION

For Starbucks:
• Maintain transparency to reinforce trust and counter misinformation.
• Leverage positive sentiment through marketing emphasizing ethical practices.
• Strengthen local CSR efforts to align with consumer values.

For Marketers:
• Address negative publicity proactively with strategic crisis management.
• Enhance consumer experience by emphasizing product quality and convenience.
• Promote social responsibility to counterbalance negative narratives.

For Researchers:
• Explore emotional and cognitive factors influencing consumer responses.
• Assess the role of clarifications in restoring consumer trust.
• Expand research scope to different cultural and regional contexts.

For Advocacy Groups & Policymakers:
• Encourage fact-checking to prevent misinformation.
• Promote consumer awareness on ethical consumption.

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