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Determinants of Millennial Consumers' Purchase Intentions on Bread and Pastry Products in the Philippines: The Roles of Perceived Price, Packaging, Perceived Quality, Perceived Risk, Advertisement, and Store Image

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Abstract

Since the emergence of the global pandemic, the needs and wants of the market have changed together with their purchasing behavior. Despite the ongoing pandemic, the baked goods industry in the Philippines benefited because consumers are now choosing food with longer-lasting and more shelf-stable food options. Marketers and business owners need to know the current trends and different factors affecting consumer behavior to survive in their respective industries. This research aims to determine the different factors affecting Filipino millennial consumers' purchase intention and purchase decisions on bread and pastry products. Two hundred ten (210) Filipino millennial consumers of bread and pastry products participated in the Greater Metro Manila Area survey. Results showed that among the variables under investigation, perceived quality, perceived price, and store image positively affects consumers' purchase intention, while packaging, perceived risk, and advertisement were found to be non-significant factors. In addition, consumer purchase intention also positively influences consumer purchase decisions. Thus, there is a need for business owners, and marketers of bread and pastry products must evaluate and improve their products' quality, price, and store image to encourage more Filipino millennial consumers to buy their products and survive the competition in the Philippines' baked goods industry.

Keywords: bread and pastry product, consumer purchase behavior, Filipino millennial consumers, purchase intention, purchase decision

Introduction

Consumer buying behavior is a mental condition (Detorri et al., 2020) that refers to selecting, purchasing and consuming different products and services to satisfy the consumer's wants (Ramya and Ali, 2016). Different processes involved in consumer behavior may be affected by factors that may influence the decision-making process of an individual, such as personal, psychological, social, cultural, and economic factors (Ramya and Ali, 2016), especially in the food category. At present, several industries, including baked goods manufacturers, need to address the demands of the consumers to improve the quality of their products (Shah and Ganji, 2017). Some of the trends for product innovation in this industry are related to convenience, health, and pleasure (Martinez-Monzo et al., 2013).

The food business is advantageous financially since food is a fundamental physical need for human existence. Although hunger is the primary physiological motivation for eating, people's food choices are determined not only by nutritional needs Moslehpour et al. (2015). Other researchers also identified more specific factors that may affect consumer purchase behavior, such as perceived price, packaging, perceived quality, lifestyle, product innovation, and perceived risk (Musharraf and Ali, 2014; Yang et al., 2019). A consumer purchase decision regarding a specific product may be affected by each one of these factors. The identification and understanding of different factors that influence consumers' purchasing behavior are essential for marketers and business owners in developing compelling messages for marketing and advertising strategies. Understanding how these choices are made is crucial to understand which factors play critical roles in buying decisions, especially in our own country.

Relative to this, the Philippines is one of the Southeast Asian countries with a growing market for premium food products that target consumers who prefer convenience and food that would help them improve their health (Woods and Thornsbury, 2009). Since the Spanish colonial era, bread became a staple food for Filipinos used as a substitute for rice (Gabriel and Mollenhauer, 2016). Bread and pastry products play a significant role in reflecting the country's rich culture and history. From being a small sector, the baked goods industry has become a large industry that opened up different business and employment opportunities for several Filipinos (Filipino-Chinese Bakery Association, Inc., 2019).

When the COVID-19 pandemic emerged globally, several businesses were affected and even closed down. On the other hand, the baked goods industry in the Philippines benefitted from the increased demand for shelf-stable packaged leavened bread. Further, because of the lockdown restrictions and the growing desire of consumers to stay at home, online selling and delivery services are expected to increase (Euromonitor, 2021). A 2019 report revealed that globally, millennial consumers enjoy bread and pastry products, especially for breakfast (Sherred, 2019). Meanwhile, in the Philippines, millennials make up about one-third of the population who dictate the food trends in this decade, especially for bread and pastry products. In addition, Filipino millennial consumers buy these products because of their freshness, variety of flavors, convenience, health-consciousness, and waste reduction (Filipino-Chinese Bakery Association, Inc., 2019).

Based on the latest national statistics, as cited by Ledesma (2021), millennials and Generation Z constitute around 70 percent of the Philippine population. Moreover, as the buying power of millennial consumers continuously grows, they are expected to contribute to the economic boost of the country (Mccormick, 2016). Therefore, it is essential to determine the different factors influencing Filipino millennials' purchase decisions on specific products.

Research conducted by Jaafar et al. (2012) and Musharraf and Ali (2014) investigated different factors that influence consumers' purchase intention towards private label food brands (PLBs). Factors investigated were: perceived price, packaging, perceived quality, perceived risk, advertisement, store image, perceived value, and customers' attitude. Despite having standard variables in the study, the results of these studies differed. The 2014 study showed that the two main factors that influence consumers' purchase intention towards PLBs in Pakistan were perceived quality and perceived price, while the 2012 study showed that the most significant

factors in Malaysia were consumers' attitude and perceived price. It may be concluded that there are differences in factors influencing consumers' purchase intention, especially in different areas. Therefore, future researchers must conduct a local study for a specific product or brand.

Unfortunately, research on the different factors affecting consumers' purchase intention and specifically on baked and pastry products in the Philippines is limited. Therefore, this study aims to determine the different factors influencing Filipino millennial consumers' purchase intention and decisions. This study will provide guidelines for baked goods products manufacturers and marketers on the factors they should consider to improve their marketing strategies further and increase their revenue. Furthermore, it will offer context-specific knowledge relating to factors affecting Filipino millennial consumers' purchase intentions towards baked goods products in the Philippines. Lastly, this study will apply the facts gathered from related literature in the Philippine setting as most available studies are based overseas.

Bread and Pastry Product Consumption in the Philippines

As a nation tied to vibrant food culture, beloved staples like bread and pastry products became a huge part of the Filipino lifestyle (The Manila Times, 2016.) As of February 2021, a faster value and volume growth is expected in the baked goods industry. It also benefited during the 2020 lockdown since consumers now choose food with longer-lasting and more shelf-stable food options (Euromonitor, 2021).

The Millennials Buying Behavior on baked good products

The United Nations reported that nearly two out of every three people worldwide fall into two demographic groups – millennials or Gen Z (Corbion, 2019). They are one of the largest consumer bases ever to hit the baked goods industry having carbohydrates as part of their daily diet. In 2019, a study revealed that globally, millennials drive the trend for the baked goods category, whose purchasing and spending influence are expected to grow (World Bakers, 2019).

Perceived Price

Price is the trade-off or sacrifice to acquire a product or a service (Wang and Chen, 2016). It is a significant factor the consumer considers before their purchase, especially for frequently purchased products (Albari and Safitri, 2018). On the other hand, the perceived price is the consumer's perception of the product price, including time, search, effort, psychic, monetary, and non-monetary costs (Wang and Chen, 2016). Moreover, price perception significantly impacts the consumer's purchase decision by explaining details and information about a product. Consumers nowadays are becoming very reasonable when evaluating a particular product or service (Albari and Safitri, 2018).

Packaging

The primary roles of food packaging include containment of food, protection of food products from outside contamination, and provision of necessary information (Coles, 2003 as cited by Marsh, 2007). It also reaches all of the consumers, and it serves as the basis for information

which makes it an essential factor in the decision-making process of the target consumers before their purchase (Jaafar et al., 2012). Previous studies found that packaging positively influenced consumers' purchase intention and purchase behavior (Hussain et al., 2015; Khan et al., 2018).

Perceived Quality

Perceived quality "is a cognitive element affecting the customer's satisfaction concerning the choice of a product and, with the perceived value and the prepurchase quality expectations, will be translated into the consumer's decision to buy a certain product rather than another (Detorri et al., 2020)." It also represents a consumer's judgment about the overall excellence or superiority of a brand (Erdil, 2015). Research conducted by Tsiotsou (2006) verified the primary role of perceived quality and its direct effect on the satisfaction of consumers (Tsiotsou, 2015). Therefore, it is expected that the perceived quality of a product is directly proportional to consumer satisfaction. Lastly, Taylor and Baker (1994) reported an interaction effect between satisfaction and perceived quality on purchase intentions (Erdil, 2015).

Perceived Risk

Perceived risk was defined as people's subjective judgment about the possibility of a negative occurrence or consequence such as fraud, disease, and illness, among others (Kanwal, 2021). It is also a fact that people feel safer buying products or goods that have well-established brands (Musharraf and Ali, 2014). Consumers always think that purchasing a low price, simple packaging, and even less-well-known products are highly risky because the quality of those products is of lack of confidence and doubtful (Jaafar et al., 2012). Nowadays, food safety has become a significant concern, where people are more worried about the product's safety, especially those related to consumables and daily rations. Thus, consumers' perceived risk may affect purchase intention.

Advertisements

One of the strategies of promotion is advertising or advertisements. It is an essential tool in creating awareness in potential customers' minds to buy the product. It serves as a communication tool to inform consumers regarding the product and service (Jaafar et al., 2012). The creative team and the brand create an emotional link with the target audience through different kinds of media. Therefore, it is more likely that these customers create an emotional link with that brand's ads (Mirabi et al., 2015).

Store Image

Store image can be defined as brand associations related to the store in the consumer's memory. Brand associations are concerned with perceptions of the store attributes and the consumer's perceived benefits (Albarq, 2020). Store image dimensions have been centered on quality and the variety of products sold, prices, and physical facilities of in-store services. It also helps maintain brand image and customer satisfaction and is vital for gaining competitiveness (Erdil, 2015).

Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is the consumer's readiness to buy a product soon. It is a significant factor linked with consumers' perception, attitude, and buying behavior that influences their purchase decision (Musharraf and Ali, 2014).

Synthesis

Different factors influencing consumer buying behavior may be internal or psychological, social, cultural, personal, and economic (Ramya & Ali, 2016). Other studies investigated more specific factors that fall under these five categories. In 2012, Jaafar et al. investigated different factors to determine their influence on consumers' purchase intentions towards PLBs in Malaysia. Results showed that the most significant factors were consumers' attitudes and PPR. Meanwhile, Musharraf and Ali (2014) replicated their study with fewer variables. Results showed that PQ and PPR were the most significant factors affecting consumers' PI towards PLBs in Pakistan. The standard variable that was found to be significant and affected consumers' PI was PPR, even though the studies were conducted in different countries. Therefore it may be concluded that factors affecting consumers' purchase intention and buying behavior differ depending on the area of study and product categories. It is also essential to explore other product categories to add to knowledge in unexplored areas.

Thus, this study investigates some of the factors used in these previous studies and applies them to a different product category in the Philippines. Moreover, since, globally and locally, millennials have become trendsetters, and large consumers for bread and pastry products, a better understanding of this market segment is essential. Hence, the choice of millennial consumers to be the subject of this study.

Theoretical Framework

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The TPB will be its theoretical framework since the study deals with a person's intention and behavior. The TPB defines an attitude towards behavior as "the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation or appraisal of the behavior in question (Ajzen, 1991)." It focuses on the consistency of attitude-behavior that can expound the positive attitude of consumers who have good perceptions towards certain products or brands as they make purchase decisions (Yeow et al., 2012). Therefore, if a more favorable attitude towards a particular behavior, an individual will have a stronger intention to perform that behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Yeow et al., 2012).

Conceptual Framework

Musharraf and Ali's Conceptual Model (2014)

This conceptual model (Figure 1) was developed in 2014, which measures the relationships of two intrinsic factors [perceived price (PPR) and perceived quality (PQ)] and two extrinsic factors [packaging (PCK) and perceived risk (PR)] towards consumers' purchase intention (PI)

towards PLBs. This model was derived from Jaafar et al.'s 2012 conceptual model, adapted from previous studies.

Figure 1
Conceptual framework of Musharraf and Ali's 2014 Conceptual model
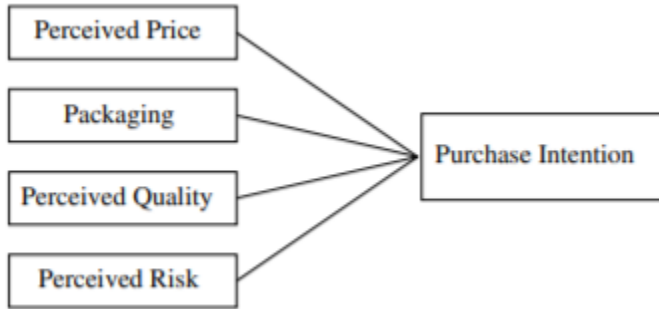
Research on the different factors affecting consumers' PI and purchase decisions towards bread and pastry products is not limited to several extrinsic and intrinsic factors; However, all of these factors could not be covered in a single study. Hence, the researchers improved the existing model of Musharraf and Ali (2014) in order to explain the variation in consumers' PI towards bread and pastry products in the Philippines (Figure 2). Researchers added advertisement (ADV) and store image (SI) to determine their influence on consumers' PI and purchase decision (PD) dimensions to determine the influence of PI towards consumer's PD (Jaafar et al., 2012).

Figure 2
Conceptual framework using a modified Musharraf and Ali's 2014 Conceptual model and its impact on consumer's purchase decision
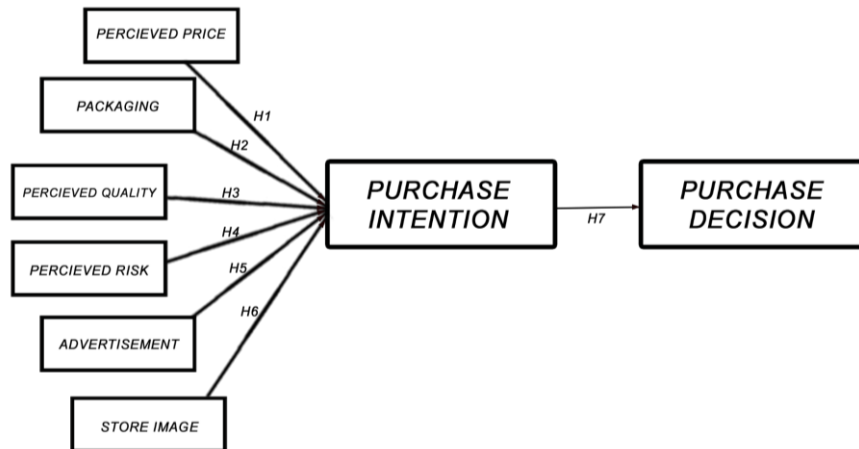
Hypotheses

Previous studies have already presented and investigated different factors influencing consumers' PI and PD. This paper will identify the factors influencing consumers' purchase intention and purchase decisions towards bread and pastry products in the Philippine setting.

The effect of the PPR on customer's PI

Previous studies of Jaafar et al. (2012) and Musharraf and Ali (2014) found PPR as a significant factor affecting consumers' PI. It may also be worth noting that even though their studies were conducted in different places and involved different samples, this factor was significant. Therefore, based on the arguments above, researchers propose the following hypothesis:

H1: PPR will positively affect the consumer's PI.

The effect of PCK on customer's PI

Hussain et al. (2015) and Khan et al. (2018) found that packaging positively influenced consumers' purchase intention and purchase behavior. However, in the studies conducted by Jaafar et al. (2012) and Musharraf and Ali (2014), which also investigated packaging, results showed that packaging had no significant effect on consumers' purchase intentions. Therefore, it is essential to investigate if this variable will affect bread and pastry products. Given these arguments, the researchers propose the following hypothesis:

H2: PCK will positively affect the consumer's PI.

The effect of PQ on customer's PI

Studies by Musharraf and Ali (2014) and Mirabi et al. (2015) found that perceived quality was one of the most significant factors affecting consumers' purchase intention. These results implied that products and brands need to improve PQ to increase business revenues. Therefore, based on the arguments above, the researchers propose the following hypothesis:

H3: PQ will positively affect the consumer's PI.

The effect of PR on consumers' PI

In the 2012 study of Jaafar et al., PR ranked third as the essential criteria in consumers' PI. A study by Bhukya and Singh (2015) showed that all the dimensions of perceived risk have a direct negative significant effect on consumers' purchase intention. Given these arguments, the researchers propose the following hypothesis:

H4: PR will negatively affect the consumer's PI.

The effect of ADV in the customer's PI

Jaafar et al., 2012 defined ADV as a communication tool informing consumers regarding products and services. It is essential to create awareness in the minds of potential customers to decide to buy the product. Furthermore, it also plays a significant role in consumers' PI and purchases decisions as it provides information that helps consumers differentiate products (Jaafar et al., 2012). Therefore, based on the arguments above, the researchers propose the following hypothesis:

H5: ADV will positively affect the consumer's PI.

The effect of SI in the customer's PI

A previous study showed that good SI could help lessen PR and add value to the product. Furthermore, it was found out that store image had a positive relationship with consumer purchase intention (Jaafar et al., 2012). Given these arguments, the researchers propose the following hypothesis:

H6: SI will positively affect the consumer's PI.

The effect of customer's PI on the customer's PD

PI was defined as the consumer's readiness to buy a product soon. It is a significant factor linked with consumers' perception, attitude, and buying behavior that influences their purchase decision (Musharraf and Ali, 2014). Therefore, based on the arguments above, the researchers propose the following hypothesis:

H7: PI will positively affect consumers' purchase decisions.

Methodology

The study used a survey research design to investigate factors that affect consumer behavior. A survey research design is usually utilized to study a group of people's characteristics, opinions, and behavior (Cherry, 2020). In addition, surveys are usually used in social and psychological research to describe and investigate human behavior (Singleton & Straits, 2009). Therefore, it is appropriate to use a survey research design as this study deals with consumer behavior. A survey questionnaire based on the research instruments of Jaafar et al. (2012) and Musharraf and Ali (2014) with some modifications based on the newly added dimension was used in this study. Google Form was utilized to create an online survey form with seven sections. A four-point Likert scale was used for the attitude and expressions towards the questions in each category (1: Strongly disagree; 4: Strongly agree) to avoid neutral responses.

Primary and secondary data were collected for this research. The researchers used the purposive sampling method to determine the participants who fit this study's specific characteristics. Respondents were selected to fit both criteria: (1) Filipino millennials and (2) consumers of bread and pastry products. Of the 210 respondents, the majority were female

(55.77%), followed by male (41.9%), while the remaining 2.4 percent of the participants preferred not to say their sexual orientation. The online survey was conducted for four days, from August 22 to 25, 2021. Each section measured the participants' perception based on a four-point Likert scale (1 – Strongly disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3- Agree, and 4- Strongly agree) to avoid neutral responses. The researchers processed and analyzed the data collected using Smart PLS software. Results on the personal information of respondents were described using means and percentages. Meanwhile, to test the hypotheses of the study, multiple regression analysis was used to determine the significance of relationships among variables.

Prior to distributing the electric questionnaire, a pilot study of 30 respondents was analyzed. To ensure the scale reliability and consistency of the research instrument, Chronbach's alpha was used (Cronbach, 1951). A good Chronbach alpha value is at least 0.70; however, in social psychology research, 0.60 is still acceptable (Taber, 2018). A preliminary analysis was conducted through JAMOVI to test the reliability of each variable, and the overall Chronbach alpha yielded 0.90 (The Jamovi Project, 2021). Thus, the constructs in the research instrument have internal consistency, as Table 1 shows.

Results and Discussion

Figure 4 shows the survey responses regarding perceived price. Consumers highly value price and consider it essential, especially since they compare prices of different brands before making a purchase. They also believe that bread and pastry products have reasonable prices. They also purchase these products because of their nutritional value and their shelf-life.
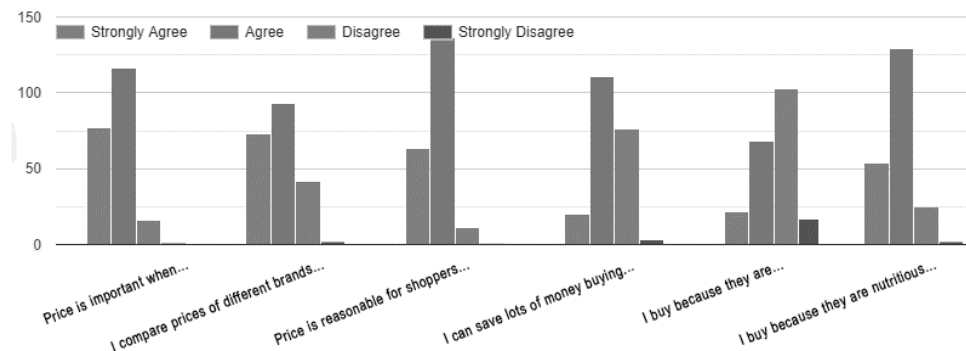
Figure 4
Perceived Price

Figure 5 shows the survey responses regarding packaging. Results showed that consumers find complete information on packaging vitally because it helps them in their purchase decision. Moreover, most respondents buy bread and pastry products with high-quality and attractive packaging.
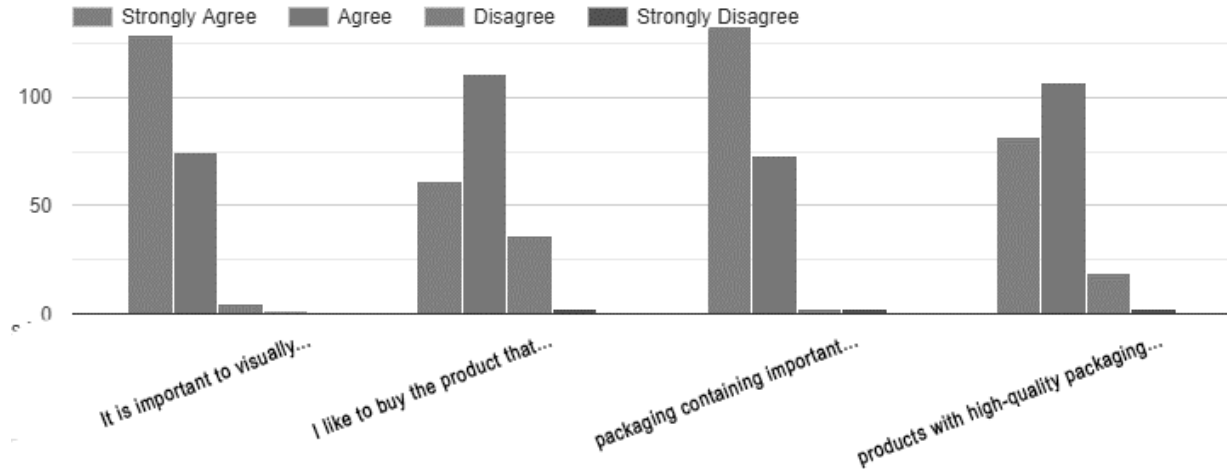
Figure 5
Packaging

Figure 6 shows the survey responses regarding perceived quality. Consumers identified quality as an essential factor when buying bread and pastry products. Consumers also prioritize buying delicious, fresh, nutritious bread and pastry products with high-quality ingredients.
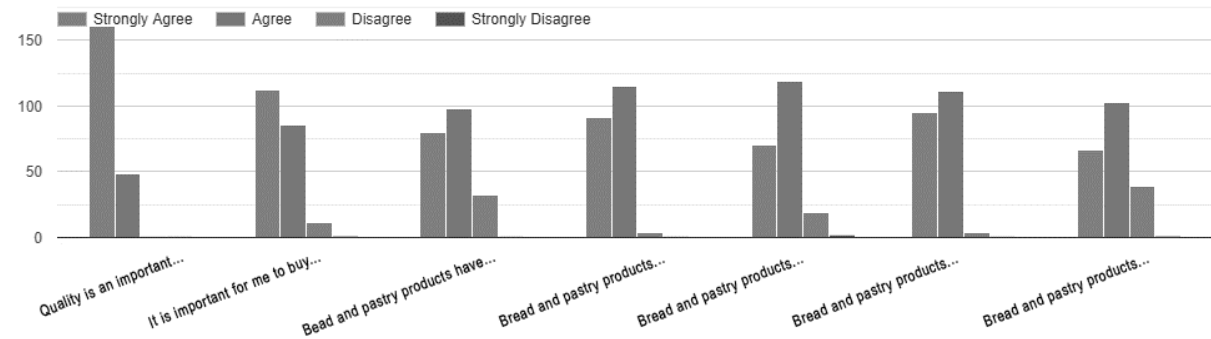
Figure 6
Perceived Quality

Figure 7 shows the survey responses regarding perceived risk. Consumers carefully choose the bread and pastry products they purchase because they are uncertain if it is worth their price. On the other hand, consumers do not think that the cheapness of a bread and pastry product puts them at risk. They also identified the distribution of free samples to decrease their uncertainty on buying bread and pastry products.
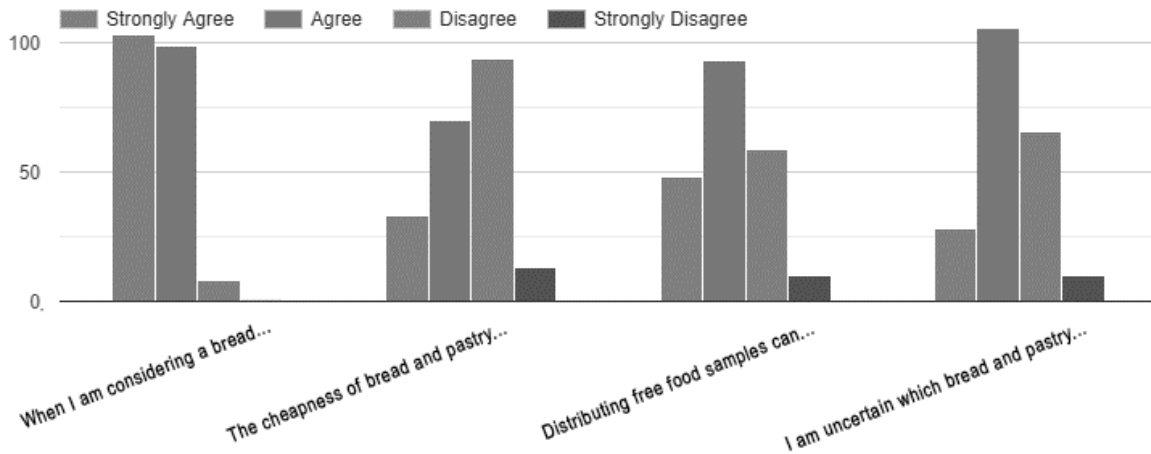
Figure 7
Perceived Risk

Figure 8 shows the survey responses regarding advertisements. Consumers trust the messages in advertisements and think that advertisements are essential for bread and pastry products. However, 50 percent of the respondents said that advertisements influence their purchase decision, while the other 50 percent said it does not affect their purchase decision.
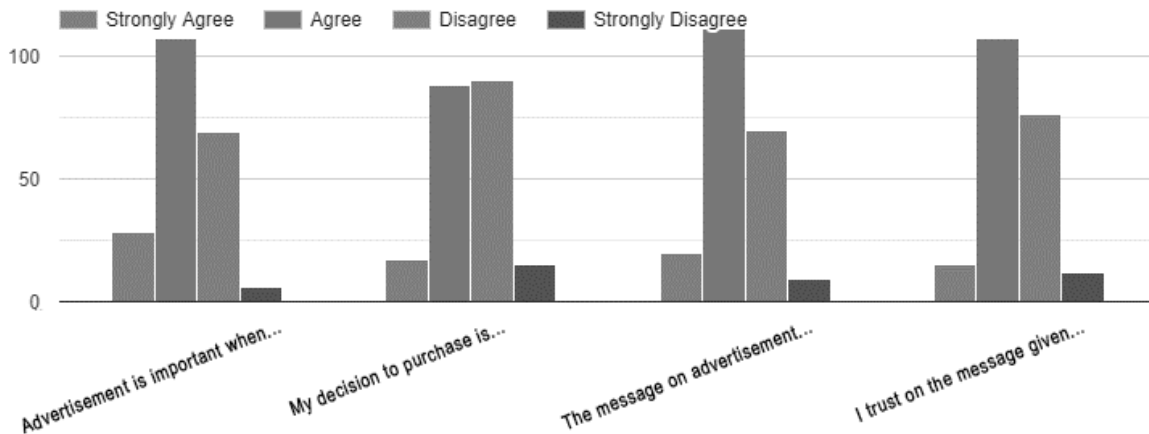
Figure 8
Advertisement

Figure 9 shows the survey responses regarding store images. Consumers said that store image is essential because it helps them easily remember the positive characteristics of bread and pastry products.
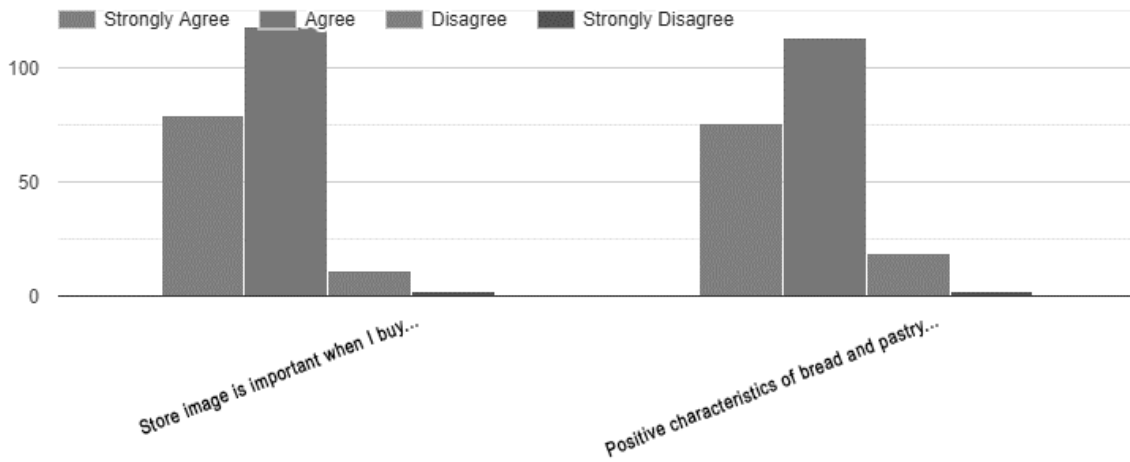
Figure 9
Store Image

Figure 10 shows the survey responses regarding purchase intention. Consumers were considering and were willing to purchase bread and pastry products, especially for economic purposes.
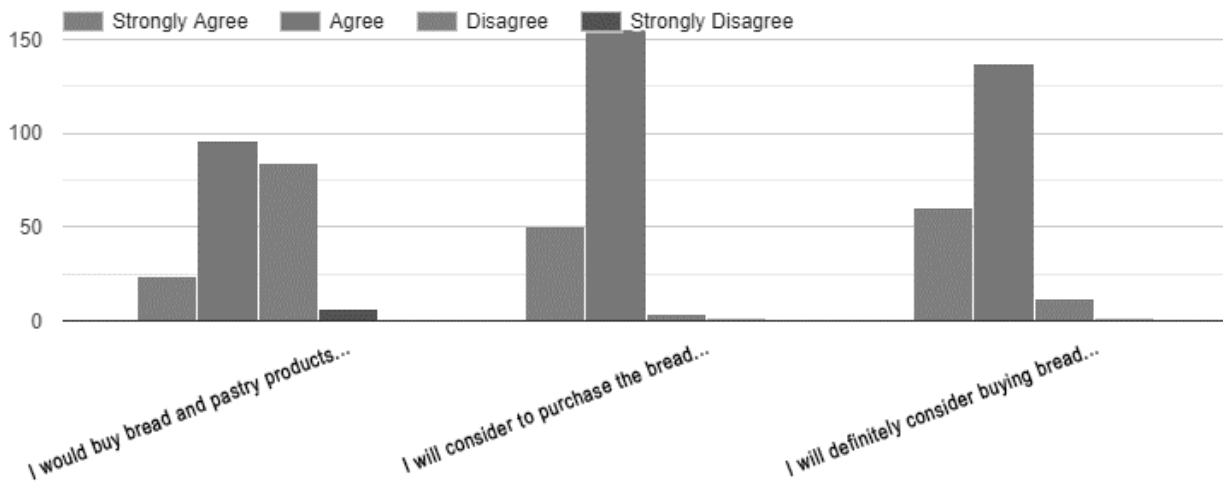
Figure 10
Purchase Intention

Figure 11 shows the survey responses regarding purchase decisions. Consumers wanted to purchase nutritious and quality bread and pastry products if given a chance.
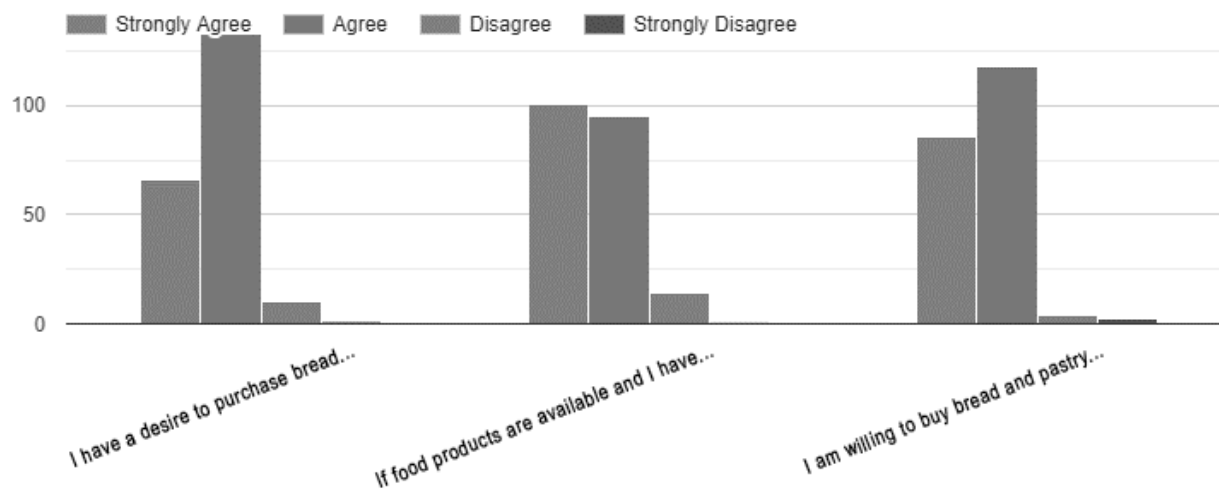
Figure 11
Purchase Decision

Table 1 presents the results through weighted mean computation using Microsoft Excel and can also be computed through SMART PLS's complete bootstrapping MV descriptives function. This shows the summary of the overall effectiveness of the factors based on the data collected

Table 1
Weighted Mean Average

FACTORS	Average	Explanation
Perceived Price	2.99	Agree
Packaging	3.40	Strongly Agree
Perceived Quality	3.38	Strongly Agree
Perceived Risk	2.90	Agree
Advertisement	2.63	Agree
Store Image	3.28	Strongly Agree
Purchase Intention	3.03	Strongly Agree
Purchase Decision	3.35	Strongly Agree

Using the four-point Likert scale interpretation of Chua and Yunus (2020) in Table 2, the result of Table 1 was evaluated.

Table 2
Chua and Yunus Weighed Mean Interpretation

Scale Range	Explanation
3.00- 4.00	Strongly Agree
2.00-2.99	Agree
1.01-1.99	Disagree
0.99-1.00	Strongly Disagree

Table 3 presents the results through bootstrapping analysis using SMART-PLS. In interpreting the results, the researchers applied the basic statistical principles: results are considered highly significant if the P-value is less than 0.01, and results are considered non-significant if the P-value is more significant than 0.05. It also summarized the direct paths.

Table 3
Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis	Path	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values	Accept or Reject Hypothesis
H1	Perceived Price -> Purchase Intention	0.182	0.19	0.069	2.647	0.008	Accepted
H2	Packaging -> Purchase Intention	0.016	0.02	0.079	0.202	0.840	Rejected
H3	Perceived Quality -> Purchase Intention	0.309	0.307	0.077	4.011	0.000	Accepted
H4	Perceived Risk -> Purchase Intention	-0.032	0.009	0.078	0.411	0.681	Rejected
H5	Advertisement -> Purchase Intention	0.087	0.082	0.068	1.272	0.204	Rejected
H6	Store Image -> Purchase Intention	0.182	0.16	0.081	2.239	0.026	Accepted
H7	Purchase Intention -> Purchase Decision	0.666	0.666	0.046	14.394	0.000	Accepted

Results showed that perceived price, perceived quality, and store image were significant variables that positively influence consumers' purchase intention. This confirms the results of previous studies of Jaafar et al. (2012) and Musharraf and Ali (2014), which claimed that these factors positively affected consumer purchase intention. On the other hand, packaging, perceived risk, and advertisement were non-significant to purchase intention. Lastly, purchase intention was found to be a significant variable that positively influences consumers' purchase decisions.

Table 3 presents the results through Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) analysis using SMART-PLS. The SRMR is an absolute measure of fit for PLS-SEM that can be

used to avoid model misspecification (Henseler et al., 2014). A good fit is defined as a value less than 0.10 or 0.08 (in a more conservative variant; see Hu and Bentler, 1999).

Table 3
SRMR

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	95%
Saturated Model	0.09	0.058	0.066
Estimated Model	0.093	0.061	0.072

Results showed that the SRMR at 95 percent confidence level is less than 0.10 and 0.08; thus, the model used was considered fit.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Different factors influence consumers' PI and purchase decisions. This may vary depending on the target consumer and product category, among others. The global pandemic drastically changed the needs and wants of the market, which also changed consumer behavior. Even though the baked goods industry in the Philippines benefited from the ongoing pandemic (Euromonitor, 2021), marketers and business owners need to know the current trends and the different factors affecting the consumer behavior of their target market in order to survive in their respective industries. Given the results of the study, hypotheses 1, 3, 6, and 7 were accepted, while hypotheses 2, 4, and 5. This means that among the factors investigated, PQ, PPR, and SI were significant factors that positively influenced Filipino millennials' PI towards bread and pastry products. On the other hand, PCK, PR, and ADV were non-significant factors on Filipino millennials' purchase intention. Moreover, it was found that Filipino millennials' PI positively affects their purchase decisions.

Thus, business owners and marketers of bread and pastry products must evaluate and improve their products' quality, price, and store image to encourage more Filipino millennial consumers to buy their products as the emergence of this new segment brought by the global outbreak is inevitable. On the other hand, even though PCK was not considered to be a significant factor that positively influences consumer purchase intention, it may be worth noting that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed that it is essential that PCK contain all the necessary information about the product which helps them in their purchase decision. Also, it was interesting to find out that perceived risk did not negatively affect Filipino millennials' purchase intention, which proves that aside from being regarded as the trendsetter for the bread and pastry products industry, they are also risk-takers (Filipino-Chinese Bakery Association, Inc., 2019; World Bakers, 2019; Dewi et, al., 2020). The added resilience also proves that the market landscape of the Filipino millennials has already shifted and been made stronger by the pandemic.

Limitations and Recommendations for future research

The data collected were limited to millennial Filipinos that buy or consume bread and pastry products. The sample is taken through a purposive sampling method, which cannot produce

a reliable generalization of the Filipino population. Thus, future researchers may consider investigating different product categories, locations, and segments with a larger sample size. In addition, variables that were studied only include PPR, PCK, PQ, PR, ADV, SI, PI, and purchase behavior. Therefore, researchers suggest considering other variables such as consumer loyalty to the brand and the mediating effect of consumer attitude towards purchase intention, among others, to contribute to the existing body of knowledge about consumer behavior. Also, a qualitative study may be considered to understand better the different factors affecting consumer purchase intention towards baked goods products in the Philippines. Future studies can help business owners and marketing managers in their market positioning and other business strategies in their respective industries.

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