PERCEIVED QUALITY OF COUNTERFEIT PERFUME AND ORIGINAL PERFUME

PERSEPSI KONSUMEN TERHADAP KUALITAS PARFUM PALSU DAN PARFUM ASLI

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Abstract: *Perfume is one type of product that often has prestigious prices tied with quality to attract consumers, which (as often is seen with high-priced products) arouses the interests of counterfeiters to copy the originals. Perfume comes in many fragrances which are offered to customers. Fragrances have their own characteristics in order to match with the various tastes, moods, and occasions they may want them for. Perfume also can reflect certain life-styles. Perfume creates different perceived values depending on the consumer. The purpose of this research is to determine the differences of consumers' perceived quality between counterfeit and original perfume. This research uses comparison method based on data gathered from 100 respondents from the Faculty of Economics and Business, Sam Ratulangi University. By using independent sample t-test with SPSS program to analyze the data, this research found difference in consumer perception of counterfeit perfume and original perfume. As seen from the mean difference, original perfumes have more positive perception by consumers compared to counterfeit perfumes. Company management who produce original perfume should consider the market for their products in Manado, as the people here perceive original perfume to be better than counterfeit.*

Keywords: *consumers perceived quality, counterfeit perfume, original perfume*

Abstrak: Parfum adalah salah satu jenis produk yang sering memiliki harga prestisius diikat dengan kualitas untuk menarik konsumen (seperti yang sering terlihat pada produk dengan harga tinggi), membangkitkan keinginan para pemalsu untuk meniru aslinya. Parfum ditawarkan dalam berbagai aroma (wewangian) yang ditawarkan pada konsumen. Wangi parfum memiliki karakteristik tersendiri agar sesuai dengan selera konsumen, suasana hati, situasi dan kebutuhan parfum masing-masing konsumen. Parfum juga dapat mencerminkan gaya hidup tertentu. Parfum menciptakan nilai yang dirasakan berbeda yang sangant bergantung pada kepribadian konsumen. Tujuan penelitian ini untuk mengetahui perbedaan persepsi konsumen terhadap kualitas antara parfum palsu dan asli. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode perbandingan berdasarkan data yang dikumpulkan dari 100 responden dari Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnis Universitas Sam Ratulangi Manado. Hasil uji independen sample t-test dengan program SPSS untuk analisis data, temuan penelitian bahwa terdapat perbedaan persepsi konsumen antara parfum palsu dan parfum asli. Seperti terlihat dari *mean difference*, antara parfum original yang memiliki persepsi lebih positif dibandingkan parfum palsu pada konsumen. Manjemen perusahaan yang memproduksi parfum asli sebaiknya lebih memperhatikan pasar produknya di kota Manado, karena konsumen disini lebih menyukai parfum asli dibandingkan parfum yang palsu.

Kata kunci: *persepsi konsumen terhadap kualitas, parfum palsu, parfum original*

INTRODUCTION

Perfume is one type of product that often has prestigious prices tied with quality to attract consumers, which (as often is seen with high-priced products) arouses the interests of counterfeiters to imitate the originals. Perfume comes in many various fragrances which are offered to many various consumers. Fragrances have their own characteristics infused in them in order to match with the immensely various tastes of consumers, various moods the consumers may be in, and various situations and special occasions they may need or want them for or both. Perfume, among other things, can also reflect certain life-styles. Based on that view, perfume creates different perceived values depending on the consumer. It is important to know whether consumers perceive original perfume as higher quality than counterfeit perfume or whether they do not perceive original perfume as higher quality than counterfeit perfume, because if consumers do consider original perfume to have higher quality than counterfeit perfume, then there is potential market for original perfume. However, if consumers do not consider original perfume to have higher quality than counterfeit perfume then there is no practical market for original perfume.

Original perfume costs more than counterfeit perfume for many reasons. Original perfume companies have costs for researching good ingredient combinations, researching into allergy likelihood of ingredients (and picking less risk ingredients), researching into customer wants and tastes, marketing costs, etc. Whereas counterfeiters (for the most part) require only to try to imitate the original---much lower cost, even if the counterfeit's quality is close to (or exactly) the same as the original. This results in the price of original perfume to be higher than the prices of its counterfeit competitors, even if the counterfeiters are able to produce counterfeit perfume that is very close to the same (or exactly the same) quality as the original perfume. So if the consumers perceive counterfeit perfume quality equal to or greater than original perfume quality (whether accurate or not), then there'd be little to no motivation to buy original perfume with its higher price instead of counterfeit with its lower price.

The study of customer value continues to become significantly more important in both research and practice. Analysis and critical evaluation of the different trends and approaches found to date in this research field, encompassing the development of perceived and desired customer value research, the relationships between the Customer Value (CV) construct and other central marketing constructs, and the linkage between CV and the company interpretation of the value of the customer, like customer lifetime value (CLV). Although customer value has become the object of much investigation only during the last couple of years, the value concept has always been the fundamental basis for all marketing activity (Holbrook, 1994:22).

Delivering superior value to customers is an ongoing concern of management in many business markets today, and the value concept is considered one of the most popular constructs among business managers and academia. Market share and ultimately corporate profitability depend heavily on perceived customer value to the extent of stating that value can be considered the fundamental basis for all marketing activities. Zeithaml has suggested that perceived value can be regarded as a consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product (or service) based on perceptions of what is received and what is given. She referred to this assessment as a comparison of a product or service's 'get' and 'give' components. The most common such definition of value is the ratio or trade-off between quality and price. (Zeithaml, 1988)

Identifying and creating customer value is regarded as an essential prerequisite for long-term company survival and success. Understanding the way customers judge and value a service or product is crucial to achieving a competitive advantage. Scientists and practitioners have recognized the power of the customer value concept in identifying value for customers and managing customer behavior (Graf & Mass, 2008).

What are the meanings of quality and value in consumers' eyes? In what way are perceptions of quality and value developed in the minds of consumers? Do they carry similarities throughout various consumers and products? In what way do consumers relate quality, price, and value in their contemplations of products and services? This research strives to supply the solutions to those questions by: expounding the concepts of price, quality, and value with the perspective of consumers, associating the concepts in a model, and evolving propositions about the concepts, inspecting the accessible evidence at hand in support of the propositions, and proposing places of which further research is required. In order to reach these goals, a formal assessment of past research was augmented through exploratory investigation of quality and value in the product category of perfume.

Research Objective

To ascertain whether significant difference does exist in consumers' perceived quality between counterfeit perfume and original perfume.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Marketing

Kotler and Keller (2009:287) defined marketing as a process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational goals. That is, marketing is the process that companies use in order to sell products and services to gain profit. It includes such things as market research, advertising, sales, delivering of products, etc.

Marketing Research

Marketing research is research done to aid organizations in solving problems, realizing opportunities, and making decisions in order to benefit the organization. It often deals with consumer behavior and consumer perception, as what consumers think is important to the market. Malhotra (2007:7) defined it as the systematic and objective identification, collection, analysis, dissemination, and use of information for the purpose of improving decision making related to the identification and solution of problems and opportunities in marketing.

Consumer Behavior

In order to develop products and market them in an appealing way to their target audience, businesses must understand their consumers and potential consumers. The taste and perspective of different people on different products and services vary---some positive and some negative. Consumer behavior studies the phenomena of how various stimuli as thoughts, culture, and peer pressure affect people's reasons and means to purchase various products and services. Why (the reason), when (the time), and how (the means) is what consumer behavior (the field of study) aims to study and understand. Actual consumer behavior is the behavior which consumers have toward products and services while purchasing (or not purchasing) them. A mix of many different things affects the behavior of consumers, including psychological, social, economical, anthropological situations, and their environment. For marketers to recognize the actions that consumers will take, it is important to study consumer behavior. Marketers have done a great many things to try to fully understand consumer behavior, and continue to study because consumer behavior changes constantly (and often rapidly). It is more easily understood with definitions of consumer behavior and its theories by experts on the subject. Bello (2008:2) explained, The term consumer behavior is defined as the behavior that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing of product and services that they expect will satisfy their needs. Consumer behavior focuses on how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources (time, money, effort) on consumption related items. This includes what they buy, why they buy it, when they buy it, where they buy it, how often they buy it, how often they use it, how they evaluate it after the purchase and the impact of such evaluation on future, and how they dispose of it.

The purchasing decisions of consumers are based on various factors, comparing products and choosing which product is most fitting and they are most comfortable with. Solomon (2011:34) added that consumer behavior may be affected by skillful marketing, which enhances the motivation and even behavior of consumers; for example, by giving products and services more attractive designs. Reid and Bojanic (2009:87) also points out that there are two main factors influencing consumer behavior: external factors and internal factors. External factors including: culture, socioeconomic level, social and belonging needs---in other words, peer-pressure. Internal factors such as: self esteem, experience, personality, self-image, and safety needs.

An excellent explanation of consumer behavior is also stated by Noel (2009:22), describing the model of consumer behavior discussing the factors influencing consumer behavior in a most intellectual way. While consumers live their lives, buying, utilizing or consuming, and dismissing or disposing of companies' products and services, there exist various factors which often (if not always) affect their (the consumers') behavior. Noel (2009:22) groups these factors into three conceptual domains:

1. External influences
2. Internal processes (including consumer decision making)
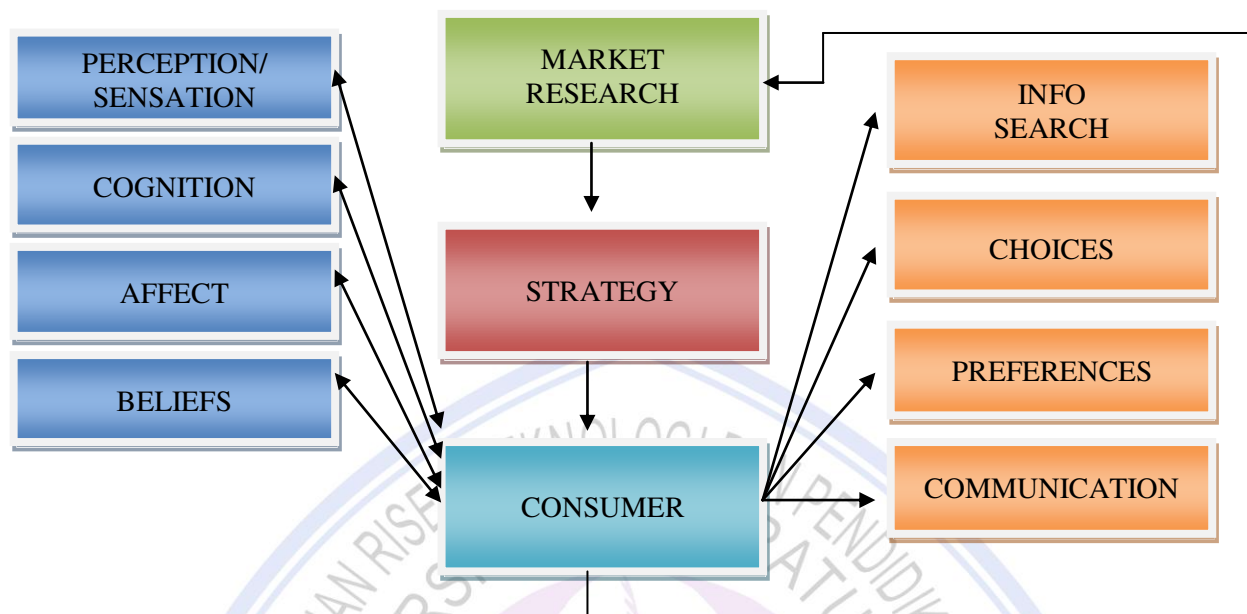3. Post-decision processes

Figure 1. Influences on and of Consumer Behavior
Source: Lars Perner (2008)

Profitable consumers are paramount for businesses to gain revenue. Consumers are what companies are concerned about. They research and make developments in order to better understand the desires of consumers. Research empowers companies to strategize for creating products and services which appeal to their target markets.

Consumer Perception

Two different people may interpret the same thing they experience differently. How creatures receive and process (or interpret) stimuli is the description of perception, as is seen in this definition of perception: The process by which an individual selects, organizes, and interprets information inputs to create a meaningful picture of the world. (Kotler and Keller, 2009:788)

Quality perception of consumers is said to be an essential and measured determinant for product choice. It is for this reason that the understanding exists of consumer perception influencing customers' amount of satisfaction, and in so doing also influencing their purchasing and application choices. Consumer application and purchase of any product greatly is dependent upon what their perception is of said product. Perception may be developed (in favor or against said product) by how effectively (or ineffectively) said product is marketed. Organizations recognize that getting customer's attention and making positive impressions is important, and so may even change the color and shape of a product (among many other things) based on their data of consumer perception.

Perceived Quality

Perceived quality, as defined by Aaker (1991:85-86), can be defined as the customer's perception of the overall quality or superiority of a product or service with respect to its intended purpose, relative to alternatives. Perceived quality is, first, a perception by customers. It thus differs from several related concepts, such as actual or objective quality (the extent to which the product or service delivers superior service), product-based quality (the nature and quantity of ingredients), and manufacturing quality (conformance to specification, the *zero defect* goal).

Perceived quality is intangible. It is feeling or perception about the product or service---what the consumer *thinks* the quality of the product or service is. It doesn't have to reflect the actual quality; it is simply the perception of the consumer.

Previous Research

Bian and Moutinho (2011) hold the positions that consumers have more favorable perceptions of original products than of counterfeit products, with exceptions of financial risk and security concerns; that significant perception differences concerning counterfeit products were identified between counterfeit product owners and non-owners; that, in contrast, counterfeit product ownership had no significant effect on consumers' evaluations of original products; that several perception dimensions appeared to be significantly influential on counterfeit behavioral intention, with brand personality playing the dominant role; and that evidence of an interaction effect of counterfeit ownership with consumers' perceptions of counterfeit products on counterfeit product purchase intention did not exist.

Research Hypothesis

The hypothesis for this research is:

H_1 : There is significant difference of consumers' perceived quality between counterfeit perfume and original perfume.

RESEARCH METHOD

Type of Research

This research is comparison type of research where the difference of perceived quality between counterfeit perfume and original perfume is investigated.

Place and Time of Research

The object of the research is the consumers of perfume in Manado, SULUT, Indonesia from January until April 2015.
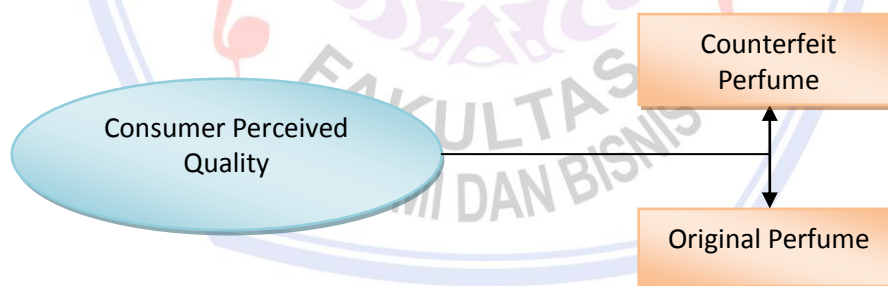
Research Procedure

Figure 2. Research Procedure
Source: Research Method

Population and Sample

Population is generalized to the object/subject that have a certain quantity and characteristic which is required by the researcher to study and reach conclusions (Sugiyono, 2005:55). The population in this research is all the perfume consumers in Manado.

The sample of this research is perfume consumers in Manado, as many as 100 respondents. The sampling design is convenience sampling which is considered as the best way of gathering basic information quickly and efficiently. Convenience sampling is collecting information from members of the population who are conveniently available to provide it (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010:276).

Data Collection Method

This research used several methods to collect data, namely questionnaires and library studies. Questionnaires were distributed to consumers of perfume in Manado, respectively 100 sheets. While calculating weight rating customer questionnaires using a Likert scale. The Likert scale was associated with a statement about one's attitude towards something. Whereas library studies is a data collection method whereby relevant literature was studied to acquire a theoretical overview of the perceived quality of perfume concept.

Data Analysis Method

Independent Sample T-test

A *t*-test is any statistical hypothesis test in which the test statistic follows a Student's *t* distribution, if the null hypothesis is supported. It is most commonly applied when the test statistic would follow a normal distribution if the value of a scaling term in the test statistic were known. When the scaling term is unknown and is replaced by an estimate based on the data, the test statistic (under certain conditions) follows a Student's *t* distribution. This t – test is used to analyze the difference between consumers' perception of counterfeit perfume and original perfume.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation

In Bivariate Correlations, the relationship between two variables is measured. The degree of relationship (how closely they are related) could be either positive or negative. The maximum number could be either +1 (positive) or -1 (negative). This number is the correlation coefficient. A zero correlation indicates no relationship.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Questions

$X_{1.1}$ Do you agree that the perfume that you use reflects your personality?

$X_{1.2}$ Do you agree that the perfume you use can increase your self-confidence?

$X_{1.3}$ Do you agree that the perfume you use lasts?

$X_{1.4}$ Do you agree that the price of the perfume that you use meets the quality of the product?

$X_{1.5}$ Do you agree that the perfume that you use doesn't make marks?

$X_{1.6}$ Do you agree that the packaging of the perfume you use doesn't easily break and preserves the quality of the perfume in question?

Results

General Information of Respondents

From the questionnaires were 100 respondents. 100% were between the ages of $0 - 20$ years old. 64% were female, and 36% were male. 100% were students.

Validity and Reliability Test

The validity test results show that all the indicators of independent variables in questions $X_{1.1} - X_{1.8}$ are valid because the correlation value for each is above 0.3.

The Reliability results show that the instrument is acceptable because Cronbach's Alpha coefficient has a value of 0.688; it proves that the data is up to standard and can move forward to the next step. The Validity result shows that the validity for each variable are good where the values are above the minimum level of 0.60. It means that all independent variables are above the minimum level and the results are reliable, as shown in the table below.

Table 1. Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.688	6

Source: Data Processed 2015

Hypothesis Testing

Normality Assumption

Normality test data is a common thing to do before a statistical method. Purpose of the test for normality is to determine whether the distribution of the data follows a normal distribution pattern close to the distribution of data with a normal distribution pattern (i.e. data distribution is not skewed to the left or right).

Analysis:

H_o : The population is normally distributed
H_a : The population is not normally distributed

The criteria of decision making is based on the probability

If the probability value > 0.05 then H_o is received
If the probability value ≤ 0.05 then H_o is rejected

As seen from the table below, H_a is true.

Table 2. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		$X_{1.1}$	$X_{1.2}$	$X_{1.3}$	$X_{1.4}$	$X_{1.5}$	$X_{1.6}$
N		200	200	200	200	200	200
Normal	Mean	3.1300	3.0900	3.0800	3.0700	3.0550	3.2450
Parameters[a,b]	Std. Deviation	1.07652	1.17849	1.21283	1.15836	1.18702	1.07272
Most Extreme	Absolute	.173	.185	.191	.164	.178	.205
Differences	Positive	.173	.185	.191	.164	.178	.205
	Negative	-.166	-.160	-.123	-.149	-.152	-.144
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		2.447	2.622	2.705	2.321	2.524	2.904
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.392	.125	.790	.201	.853	.861

[a] Test distribution is Normal.
[b] Calculated from data.
Source: Data Processed 2015

T-test

T-test is used to determine the partial effect of each independent variable to dependent variable. T-test value is obtained by comparing value of t_{count} with t_{table}. If t_{count} is higher than t_{table}, H_o is rejected and H_a is accepted.

Table 3. Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
$X_{1.1}$	EVA[a]	.036	.850	7.403	198	.000	1.00000	.13507	.73364	1.26636
	EVNA[b]			7.403	197.782	.000	1.00000	.13507	.73363	1.26637
$X_{1.2}$	EVA	1.927	.167	7.277	198	.000	1.08000	.14841	.78733	1.37267
	EVNA			7.277	194.661	.000	1.08000	.14841	.78730	1.37270
$X_{1.3}$	EVA	8.394	.004	9.770	198	.000	1.38000	.14124	1.10147	1.65853
	EVNA			9.770	189.464	.000	1.38000	.14124	1.10139	1.65861
$X_{1.4}$	EVA	.951	.331	6.107	198	.000	.92000	.15066	.62291	1.21709
	EVNA			6.107	196.266	.000	.92000	.15066	.62289	1.21711
$X_{1.5}$	EVA	6.958	.009	8.364	198	.000	1.21000	.14467	.92472	1.49528
	EVNA			8.364	183.754	.000	1.21000	.14467	.92458	1.49542
$X_{1.6}$	EVA	.155	.694	5.426	198	.000	.77000	.14190	.49017	1.04983
	EVNA			5.426	197.196	.000	.77000	.14190	.49016	1.04984

[a] Equal variances assumed
[b] Equal variances not assumed
Source: SPSS 19, Year 2015

The table above provides information about the difference between Original and Counterfeit Perfume Quality measured by six indicators which are X1.1 until X1.6. The information interpretation of the table above is as follows:

1) $X_{1.1} - X_{1.6}$ normality test results show that both groups of subjects in the study had a normal distribution.
2) $X_{1.1}$, $X_{1.2}$, $X_{1.4}$, and $X_{1.6}$ homogeneity test results show that the variance between the study samples is homogeneous.
3) $X_{1.3}$, and $X_{1.5}$ homogeneity test results show that the variance between the study samples was not homogeneous.
4) $X_{1.1} - X_{1.6}$ show the average perception of quality for original perfume is greater than the average perception of quality for counterfeit perfume, with t values for all questions above 5.4, showing that H_a is acceptable.
5) That means there is significant difference of consumer perception between the quality of original perfume and counterfeit perfume, and that consumers perceive original perfume to be better quality than counterfeit perfume.

Discussion

As seen in the data analysis above, comparing the Mean Differences using independent sample t-test of consumer perception of Pricing between Original and Counterfeit of Perfume Quality, the result shows that there exists mean difference between Original and Counter Fait Perfume Quality and it is supported by a level of significant. That means that Original and Counterfeit of Perfume Quality have a significantly different consumer perceived value, and based on the comparison of mean and t value as Positive, Original Perfume Quality is better than Counterfeit Perfume Quality. This coincides with Bian's and Moutinho's (2011) findings that consumers have more favorable perceptions of original products than of counterfeit products.

Respondents have more positive perception of Original Perfume because it reflects from the quality itself. Respondents feel that the scent that comes from original perfume has more power and longer durability. Some of the respondents have the perception that original perfume will increase their self confidence and performance in public, while counterfeit perfume couldn't do that (as they perceive it). Counterfeit perfume has more negative perception from respondents because respondents aren't satisfied with the quality.

Many imitation perfumes have exactly the same designer names, almost identical labels, boxes, bottles and very similar scents! It's really not that easy since counterfeiters have become masters of their crime with the aid of modern digital imaging and printing techniques. They are capable of producing almost identical replicas of all the major leading perfume brands on the market today. Consumer may never really know, until they experience the actual fragrance which may be close to but not exactly as it should be. Consumers discover that the perfume does not last as long, perhaps as little as one hour instead of half a day or longer as is the case with original designer perfume.

The other side that the price bounded with high quality of perfume is one additional factor of why respondents have more positive perception of original perfume rather than counterfeit. Price sometimes determines the prestige of a product as long as it comes with high quality. Respondents might be satisfied if they can afford to purchase original perfume with its luxury price bounded together with quality.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

There are significant differences in Consumers' Perception of Perfume Quality between Original and Counterfeit. Consumer Perception of Perfume Quality for Original Perfume is better than for Counterfeit Perfume.

The importance of this finding is that it shows there is potential market for original perfume in Manado. Knowing that consumers' perception of original perfume is better than that of counterfeit perfume aids researchers in seeing the potential market for original perfume in Manado, because it shows that there is fairly good probability that consumers will buy the original when they have opportunity to do so. It implies that original perfume with its higher price can still compete fairly well against counterfeit perfumes.

Recommendations

1. Company management should care about the Consumer Perfume Quality Perception and about Original and Counterfeit Perfume Quality, since there is a significant difference in Perfume Quality Perception between Original and Counterfeit. Perfume Quality Perception of Original is better than Counterfeit.

2. Company management who produce original perfume should consider the market for their products in Manado, as the people here perceive original perfume to be better than counterfeit.

3. Future replications of this model might consider investigating the mediating effect of differences in Perfume Quality Perception between Original and Counterfeit.

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