

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

The pursuit and demand of a healthier lifestyle have been increasing worldwide, including in Jakarta. Studies show that health-consciousness also determines the consumer's purchase intentions towards food products. As health-consciousness has been trending, it might be beneficial to understand what different individuals seek in food products, specifically processed snack products.

Studies have shown that individuals who prioritize health tend to seek out foods with high nutritional value, lower calorie content, and minimal processing. This behavior is often associated with a desire for better physical and mental health (Su, et al., 2020).

Health consciousness is defined as consumers' awareness and concern about their well being. Health-conscious people are more motivated to improve or maintain their health and quality of life in good condition by engaging in healthy behaviours such as eating nutritious food and doing regular exercises. Young adults, aged 18 to 30, are increasingly making health-conscious food choices (Jonathan & Tjokrosaputro, 2022).

Previous studies have stated that there are many determining factors which heavily influenced consumer selection in processed snacks products. The most important factors are price, packaging and brand, promotional schemes, nutritional information, cleanliness, manufacturing and expiry date, etc (Saha, et al., 2020).

Price is a main purchase determining factors. Therefore pricing strategy and price changes influence food-purchasing behavior of various food categories. However it is to be noted that different food categories have their own-price elasticity, of which the study showed that it is higher for less

healthier food products and is estimated slightly lower for healthier food products (Epstein, et al., 2012).

Another study stated that taste is deemed to be one the most important key determining factors of food choice as taste along with culinary experience can strongly influence food demand. However, the importance of taste was also found to may differ over different consumer groups. According to the study, taste factor was also a strong determining factor with the healthier options foods. As the study suggested that healthy products should also be tasty. However, balancing the taste factor with the health factor can be difficult to do, as the commonly perceived “good” taste often includes ingredients that might be perceived as unhealthy when overconsumed such as fat, sweeteners and salt (Thunström & Nordström, 2015).

Branding and packaging of the product is a primary communication and promotional tool for any brand which can significantly affect consumer decision making process. Especially for processed foods, consumers emphasize on factors on the packaging such as the packaging design and the availability of nutritional value (Saha et al., 2020). The combination of packaging and branding of a brand is also strengthened by their social media's influence. Thus, products from well-known brands with eye-catching packaging are more attractive to consumers (Alvar, 2024).

Another important aspect of packaging are food labels, which the study stated is integral in promoting healthy eating and helping consumers identify healthy products. This may includes nutritional facts, list of ingredients, allergen information, net quantity, information of the manufacturer or distributor, etc. Supposably, health-conscious individuals pay more attention to the food labels as a determining purchase factor compared to non health-conscious individuals (Thunström & Nordström, 2015).

With all of the determining factors stated above, it needs to be investigated the difference in the consumer behaviours between health conscious and non-health conscious individuals. Therefore, this study is carried out to determine and understand the factors that influence the consumers' purchase decisions and their correlation to one another, which might be important in developing suitable products for the market and making the correct marketing strategies. A comparison between different groups may also provide valuable information to create products that better cater to their target market.

1.2 Objective

The objective of this study are :

1. To examine how the differences in economic levels influence health consciousness level.
2. To analyze and compare the determining key-factors differentiating between health-conscious and non health-conscious young adults in Jakarta when selecting processed snack products

1.3 Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this study are :

1. Economic Level Correlation with the Health-Consciousness Level

Ha: There is no significant correlation between economic level with the health-consciousness level

H₀: There is a significant correlation between economic level with the health-consciousness level

2. Comparison of Determining Key Factors Between Health-Conscious and Non-Health-Conscious Individuals

Ha: There is no significant difference in the influence of taste/price/nutritional value/packaging/branding on purchase intention between health-conscious and non-health-conscious individuals.

H₀: There is a significant difference in the influence of taste/price/nutritional value/packaging/branding on purchase intention between health-conscious and non-health-conscious individuals.