

The Effect of Price Advantage, Product Advantage, and Technological Advantage, with Brand Image as an Intervening Variable, on Brand Trust in Rational Combi Ovens

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to test the influence of product quality, price perception and equity on consumers who are satisfied with the reliability of composite materials. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method. Data was collected from 200 respondents who were users of Rational Combi Oven through the distribution of questionnaires. The data analysis technique used is Structural Equation Modeling Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with the help of SmartPLS 3.0 software to test the validity, reliability, structural model, and research hypothesis. The results of the study show that product excellence has a positive and significant effect on brand trust, while price perception and technological excellence do not have a significant effect on brand trust directly. Brand image has been proven to have a significant effect on brand trust. In addition, technological excellence has a significant effect on brand image, while price perception and product excellence have no significant effect on brand image. This research highlights the importance of quality control, competitive pricing strategies and consistent product design to improve customer satisfaction in the kitchen industry, especially Combi Oven cookware.

INTRODUCTION

The cooking industry has experienced rapid development in recent years, characterized by the increasing need for efficient, effective, and high-quality kitchen equipment. In the face of increasingly fierce competition, the success of a business depends on work quality and product quality.

Companies need to innovate in understanding customer needs, and one of the innovations that has attracted the most attention is the SelfCookingCenter device, a combi oven developed by Rational AG. This system is designed as an all-in-one cooking solution that integrates the functions of a conventional stove, oven, steamer, and related cooking methods (Mehling, 2023; Venugopal et al., 2022; Zhou, 2023). This device not only provides convenience but also ease of use in processes such as roasting, steaming, baking, and holding food quality. This is important for chefs who are challenged every day to create delicious and high-quality food. The importance of this product is especially evident in kitchen operations used in restaurants, catering services, and commercial food service establishments (DiPietro, 2017; Hennchen, 2019).

Product quality is essential for customer satisfaction. Quality products meet customer needs and ensure long-term reliability. Features such as performance, durability, and functionality affect the overall perception of quality (Smith and Colgate, 2007). Product quality

is a measure of how well a product meets or exceeds customer expectations (Suhardi and Carolin, 2019). A product is considered beneficial if its advantages or benefits align with the value perceived by consumers (Jannah and Hayuningtias, 2024). In addition, if customers are satisfied with the product, it is considered superior or better than competitors (Purba et al., 2023). Quality affects the product and is closely related to customer value and satisfaction. The relationship between product quality and customer satisfaction is supported by previous research (Sari and Tuti, 2017).

In addition to product quality, price is also an important consideration in this study. In the context of combi ovens, price perception includes customers' evaluation of the price offered relative to the quality and features of the product received (Zeithaml, 1988). A positive perception of price can increase customer satisfaction because customers feel they are receiving value commensurate with the money they spend. Whether the price paid matches the perceived value determines overall satisfaction (Raji & Zainal, 2016; Samudro et al., 2020). Therefore, when the price meets customer expectations, it leads to varying levels of satisfaction. According to Kotler (2016), price is the amount of money charged for a particular product. Customers who are satisfied with the product, price, and service tend to recommend the brand to others. However, this differs from the findings of (Prastiwi & Rivai, 2022), which state that price quality has no effect on customer satisfaction.

Branding is an effective marketing strategy for improving company performance (Moreira et al., 2017). However, there are differing opinions regarding the role of brands in marketing strategies. (Iglesias et al., 2019) argue that a brand is the result of customer satisfaction. On the contrary, (González-Mansilla et al., 2019) and (Hapsari et al., 2017) argue that high brand equity is a driver of customer satisfaction and commitment. According to Aaker (1996), brand equity is a set of assets and liabilities associated with a brand and its symbols that increase or decrease the value of goods and services offered by a company or to its customers. Brand trust refers to customer confidence that a brand will deliver on its promises. Brand trust is an important mediator in the relationship between price perception, product quality, brand equity, and customer satisfaction. According to Permana's research (2013), brand trust has a significant influence on customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Customer satisfaction is the feeling of pleasure or disappointment that arises when a product's performance is compared with expectations. According to Prastiwi & Rivai (2022), customer satisfaction is influenced by various factors such as product quality, price, and brand image, which ultimately shape a customer's emotional response after evaluating product performance against expectations.

Although many studies have examined the influence of each element on brand trust, few have combined all these elements into a single comprehensive research model and examined the mediating role of brand trust, especially in the context of combi oven products. This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the influence of product quality, price, technological advantage, and brand image as an intervening variable on customer satisfaction, particularly in kitchen equipment, especially combi ovens. The theoretical benefit of this research is to enrich the literature on consumer behavior and marketing strategy, particularly regarding the formation of brand trust through the mediation of brand image in the kitchen equipment industry. The practical benefit of this research is to provide strategic recommendations for Rational AG and other combi oven manufacturers in formulating competitive pricing

strategies, improving product quality, developing technological excellence, and strengthening brand image to build long-term brand trust and customer loyalty, ultimately increasing market competitiveness.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used a quantitative method in answering problems. Research activities were carried out to customers who use Combi Oven Rational. The population and study sample were users of Combi Oven Rational. This study uses a purposive sampling technique, namely customers who buy and use Combi Oven Rational and obtained 200 respondents.

The indicators used for the variables used include Price (X1), namely: price in accordance with benefits, price competitiveness, price affordability and price conformity with quality, Tjiptono (2017; 121). Product Advantages (X2) namely: accessibility advantages, design advantages, durability advantages, material advantages, and product facility advantages, (Abdul Gofur, 2019). Technological Excellence is :p lifting and maintenance, Jurnal Supomo (2017; 27). Brand Image (Y1) namely: the advantages of brand association, the strength of brand association, the uniqueness of brand association, Kotler et al., (2018). Brand Trust (Y2) is: trust in the brand, the security of a brand, the honesty of a brand and the intention to reuse, (Gecti & Zengin, 2013).

The primary data of the study was collected through offline questionnaire distribution, with the data analysis method using a structural equation model with the help of SmartPLS 3.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data Analysis and Discussion

Respondent Description

Based on gender, Table 1 shows that 134 people (67.0%) of the total respondents were male. By age, 81 people (40.5%) were mostly between the ages of 41 and 50. With 118 people (59.0%), most of the respondents were D3 educated. Judging from the length of time they have been customers, 119 people (59.5%) have been customers between 1-3 years, and 119 people (59.5%) are self-employed.

Table 1 Respondent Description

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	134	67,0 %
Women	66	33,0 %
Age		
20 – 30 Years	14	7,0 %
31 - 40 Years	46	23,0 %
41 - 50 Years	81	40,5 %
>51 Years	59	29,5 %
Education Level		
SMA	34	17,0 %
D3	118	59,0 %
S1	48	24,0 %
Long Time Being a Customer		
< 1 Year	42	21,0 %
1 – 3 Years	119	59,5 %

> 3 Years	39	19,5 %
Jobs		
Civil Servant	7	3,5 %
Private Employees	119	59,5 %
Self-employed	74	37,0 %
Total	200	100 %

Source: Primary data (questionnaire of 200 respondents), processed by researchers, 2026

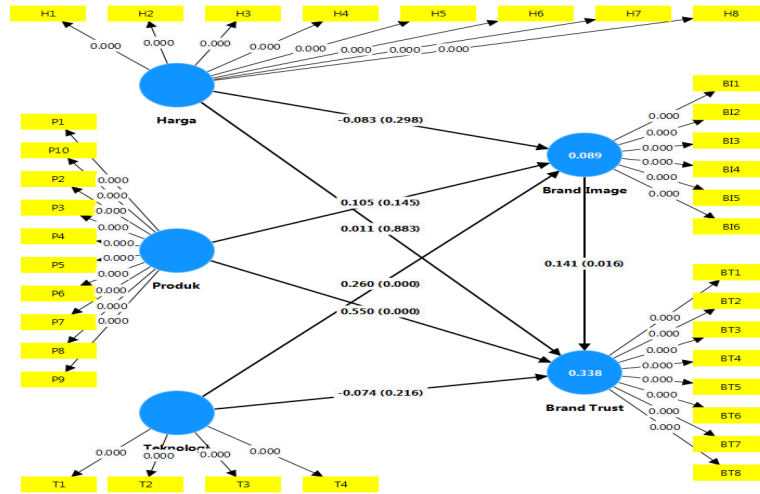


Figure 2. Structural Framework

Source: Processed researcher using SmartPLS 3.0, 2026

Evaluation of Measurement Models

Variable	Indicator	Item	Loading Factor	Reliability	AVE	
Price (X1)	1. Prices that match the benefits 2. Price Competitiveness 3. Price Affordability 4. Price Compatibility with Quality	X1.1			0,596	0,730
		X1.2				
		X1.3	0.909			
		X1.4	0.925			
		X1.5	0.907			
		X1.6	0.804			
		X1.7	0.821			
		X1.8	0.819			
Product Advantages (X2)	1. Accessibility Advantages 2. Design Advantages 3. Durability advantages 4. Material Advantages 5. Product facility advantages	X2.1			0,970	0,765
		X2.2				
		X2.2	0.844			
		X2.3	0.827			
		X2.4	0.901			
		X2.5	0.902			
		X2.6	0.916			
		X2.7	0.873			
		X2.8	0.863			
		X2.9	0.868			
	X2.10	0.889				
		0.858				

Technology Excellence (X3)	1. Devices	X3.1			
	2. Care	X3.2	0.927	0,937	0,790
		X3.4	0.897		
		X3.4	0.796		
			0.928		
Brand Image (Y1)	1. Advantages of brand associations	Y1.1			
		Y1.2	0.906		
	2. The strength of brand associations	Y1.3	0.933	0,974	0,862
		Y1.4	0.932		
	3. The uniqueness of brand associations	Y1.5	0.936		
		Y1.6	0.927		
			0.937		
Brand Trust (Y2)	1. Trust in the brand	Y2.1			
	2. The security of a brand	Y2.2			
		Y2.3	0.860		
	3. The honesty of a brand	Y2.4	0.887		
		Y2.5	0.901	0,967	0,788
	4. Intention to reuse	Y2.6	0.884		
		Y2.7	0.906		
		Y2.8	0.913		
			0.933		
			0.812		

Source: Processed researcher using SmartPLS 3.0, 2026

Composite Reliability (CR), used to measure consistency between components using Cronbach's Alpha value on PLS. If the CR data value is more than 0.7, then the condition is acceptable. Based on Table 2, a CR value of more than 0.7 indicates that the results have good consistency between constructs. These values are displayed as numbers between 0.804 and 0.937. The AVE value of the entire variable ranges from 0.730 to 0.862 which indicates that they all meet the AVE standard

Table 3 Discriminatory-Fornell Lacke Validity

Variable	Pricing	Product Advantages	Technology Advantages	Brand Image	Brand Trust
Pricing	0,929				
Product Advantages	0,184	0,888			
Technology Advantages	-0,102	0,016	0,854		
Brand Image	0,118	0,566	0,023	0,875	
Brand Trust	0,267	-0,034	-0,085	0,005	0,889

Source: Processed researcher using SmartPLS 3.0, 2026

Discriminant validity is declared valid if each variable can show a higher loading factor value in the latent construct being studied compared to other latent constructs. These requirements must be met for the validity of the discrimination to be considered valid. Discriminant validity is also established because the square root of each variable's AVE is more significant than any correlation (Fornell, & Larcker, 1981). Each value generated by each variable based on (Table 3) is Price (0.929), Product Excellence (0.888), Technology Excellence (0.854), Brand Image (0.875), and Brand Trust (0.889). Thus, based on the data in Table 3, it can be said that the validity of the discriminator is correct.

Table 4. Multicollinearity Test

	Brand Image	Brand Trust	Pricing	Product Advantages	Technology Advantages
Brand Image		1.084			
Brand Trust					
Pricing	1.008	1.014			
Product Advantages	1.001				
Technology Advantages	1.007	1.081			

Source: Processed researcher using SmartPLS 3.0, 2026

The results of the VIF value are used as a parameter to assess multicollinearity, provided that the VIF value must not exceed 5.0. The resulting VIF value is 1,001–1,081 based on the data in Table 4. These results show that multicollinearity is not a problem and the research can be carried out until it is completed.

Table 5. Coefficient Determination Test

	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Brand Image	0.092	0.078
Brand Trust	0.042	0.027

Source: Processed researcher using SmartPLS 3.0, 2026

The model will then be assessed by measuring R-square. Table 5 shows the R-square values for Brand Image (0.092), Brand Trust (0.042) respectively. This shows that the price of product excellence and technological excellence has a small influence of 9.2% on Brand Image, 4.2% on Brand Trust,

Table 6. Prediction Accuracy Test

	RMSE	IT IS	MAP	prediction_Q ²
BI6	0.717	0.557	16.012	0.043
BI5	0.734	0.575	16.422	0.031
BI4	0.715	0.553	15.944	0.029
BI3	0.708	0.551	15.752	0.070
BI2	0.713	0.558	15.969	0.047
BI1	0.761	0.594	17.954	0.046
BT8	1.391	1.224	58.179	0.003
BT7	1.402	1.238	58.560	0.000
BT6	1.403	1.234	58.764	-0.002
BT5	1.418	1.255	60.360	0.001
BT4	1.417	1.253	60.694	0.003
BT3	1.411	1.243	59.703	0.002
BT2	1.416	1.252	60.663	0.004
BT1	1.415	1.253	60.378	0.002

Source: Processed researcher using SmartPLS 3.0, 2026

Next, the accuracy test uses a value of Q². Provided that a model is said to have high prediction accuracy if Q² is more than 0, while a model is said to have a weak prediction accuracy category if Q² is less than 0. Table 6 shows that for variables with a Q² value of 2>

0, this model provides a low level of prediction accuracy (between 0.000 and 0.043

Table 7 Test F

	f-square
Brand Image -> Brand Trust	0,027
Price -> Brand Image	0,007
-> Brand Trust Price	0,000
Product -> Brand Image	0,012
-> Brand Trust Products	0,451
Technology -> Brand Image	0,074
Technology -> Brand Trust	0,008

Source: Processed researcher using SmartPLS 3.0, 2026

The F-square value is 0.02 as small, 0.15 as medium, and 0.35 as large. A value of less than 0.02 can be ignored or considered to have no effect (Hair, Sharma, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Liengaard, 2024). As seen in Table 7, Products have a great influence (0.451) on Brand Trust and (0.074) on Technology. Furthermore, the Brand Image on Brand Trust (0.027) has a medium size, as well as Technology on Brand Trust has a small size with a value of (0.008). Lastly, the price has a negligible influence, $F = 0.000$ on the Trust brand, and the price on the Brand Image can also be ignored because it has the smallest size of $F = 0.000$.

Tabel 8 Path Coefficient

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Brand Image -> Brand Trust	0,141	0,144	0,059	2,399	0,016
Price -> Brand Image	-0,083	-0,083	0,079	1,040	0,298
-> Brand Trust Price	0,011	0,014	0,074	0,147	0,883
Product -> Brand Image	0,105	0,105	0,072	1,459	0,145
-> Brand Trust Products	0,550	0,549	0,062	8,826	0,000
Technology -> Brand Image	0,260	0,264	0,063	4,103	0,000
Technology -> Brand Trust	-0,074	-0,076	0,060	1,238	0,216

Source: Processed researcher using SmartPLS 3.0 (bootstrapping), 2026

Hypothesis testing was carried out using the bootstrapping method on SmartPLS to find out which hypotheses in this study were accepted or rejected. The hypothesis is acceptable if the T value is above 1.96 and the P value is below 0.05. In Table 8, it is known that the hypothesis is accepted because the T value is calculated > 1.96 and the P value is < 0.05 . The hypotheses proposed were Brand Image -> Brand Trust (T = 2.399 and P = 0.016), Price -> Brand Image (T = 1.040 and P = 0.298), Price -> Brand Trust (T = 0.147 and P = 0.883), Product -> Brand Image (T = 1.459 and P = 0.145), Product -> Brand Trust (T = 8.826 and P = 0.000), Technology-> Brand Image (T = 4.103 and P = 0.000), Technology -> Brand Trust (T = 1.238 and P = 0.216),

Discussion

The variables in this study are divided into two parts, namely Price Free Variables (X1), Product Quality (X2) and Technology Excellence (X3), Brand Image (Y1), and Brand Trust (Y2) bound variables. These variables are factors for the Brand Trust of purchasing Combi Oven Rational. This study uses a purposive sampling technique, namely customers who buy Combi Oven Rational products with a total of 200 respondents.

According to Julius (2016:60), brand image is the desire of consumers to think, feel and act towards a brand. It can also be said that brand image is a concept created by consumers for subjective reasons and personal emotions. From the results of the research that Brand Image has an influence on Brand Trust, this statement is supported by the results of the hypothesis that were submitted and showed that the calculated T value is greater than 1.96 and the P value is less than 0.05.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that brand image plays a mediating role in shaping consumer brand trust toward Rational combi ovens, where it not only directly influences purchase intentions and repeat buying behavior but also operates indirectly through price perception and technological advantage. However, as this is a perceptual study based on a sample drawn from a single café, the results may not be fully generalizable to all Rational combi oven users or the broader food service industry. Future research is recommended to expand the sample across different types of businesses and geographical areas to improve generalizability, as well as to further explore specific dimensions of brand image that most strongly influence brand trust. A more comprehensive investigation of these dimensions could provide deeper and more practical insights for the combi oven industry in developing effective marketing strategies, enhancing customer experience, and strengthening long-term brand loyalty, while also contributing valuable theoretical advancement in consumer behavior and marketing literature.

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