

Examining the Product Quality Attributes That Influences Customer Satisfaction Most When the Price Was Discounted: A Case Study in Kuching Sarawak

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Abstract

The study is about customer satisfaction towards the product quality. The effect of low pricing product with the product quality plays the same result of low price products produces low quality product and vice-versa. Data instrument that is used in obtaining data is by distributing survey questionnaire. The main purpose of this research is to classify whether the eight dimension of product quality after price discounting is satisfying towards customer. The respondent of the research was chosen through sampling method by using the non-probability sampling. The results infer that that the customer's satisfaction towards the discounted product quality is based on the three attributes most namely perceived quality, performance and reliability. The Perceived quality- on image, brand name, and advertising is positively related to the level of satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product; were all supported as the relationships between the variables were statistically significant. This study does also provide useful guidelines for future researcher to be more rigorous and also in-depth to empirical and theoretical processes. In future study, customer satisfaction towards discounted product quality of the product to be specified to a product only determine by one gender (female) and also a perception towards a certain discounted price level of a product and its quality with extension of product design and customer requirements.

Background of the study

This study is to give a clearer view of how eight attributes of product quality namely performance, features, reliability, conformance, durability, serviceability, aesthetics and perceived quality (Garvin, 1984) plays very important role in being influential to customer satisfaction to product which price is discounted. This research will determine customer satisfaction on which attributes in the product quality from eight types of attributes mentioned when price discounting occurs. This research will also determine the effect of low pricing product with the product quality whether it play the same result of low price products produces low quality product and vice-versa. Most people were attracted with low price of the product because customers can minimize their expenditure. Purchasing a low price product will the standard of the low price product being equalize with price. This create dilemma for consumers because customers are to choose either cheaper product for low financial sacrifice and probably a low quality or a high price product that will have consumer to have high financial sacrifice and to be assure that to have high quality product but it is not a guarantee (Suri et al., 2000).

Besides that, discounted product, does the perspective of the product reflects to the consumer satisfaction? People will always be very alert on discounts, and sales.

When sales come around, will the product quality that will the customer perceive will be forgotten because of the main motive is expenses are minimized. Special deals will influence the rationality of consumer to decide precisely because the price is here out once lowest in the market that only happens once in a blue moon (Inman et al, 1997) where the lower pricing excites consumer and their motive of purchasing is to be left behind because the effect of excitement (Suri et al. , 2002). Not to deny, sales is one of the most favorite time for shoppersto can get product of their choices at the cheapest price. Sales or price discount is a definite issue where will satisfy consumers on their shopping spree.

Price discounting is beneficial in monetary saving, but does it plays the same role in product quality, the study will define are customer satisfied on product quality after price discounting. Not to deny, price discount attract many people to the supermarket and consumer will have the thought of it is giving an opportunity where it might not going to experience it the near future if the opportunity is given today. People will purchase product with a low price after discount, doubting on product quality is an issue to customer or not. Generally, discount leads as little as two impact to the consumers either financially gain or possibility facing risk. As for some customer, they are willing to get or purchase a second best product with a cheaper price. Some product in a second best group would be acceptable but does it go the same to product that will have higher risk for example, electrical product (Ronald Drozdenko and Marlene Jensen, 2005).

By using the value-based approach, value-based measure the product's quality with the reasonable price that are acceptable to consumers. Where consumer will measure a product's quality with the product price where this is a statement is told from a traditional economics model (Sebastianelli and Tamimi, 2002). There are some issues came into the story where people tends to relate product quality with the price of the product in market. The higher the discount will lower the product quality and vice versa (Madan and Suri, 2001). This is also happen when consumers being not sure about the product quality, where this heuristic enables consumers to evaluate a product quality (Rao and Monroe, 1988).

Objectives of the study

- To evaluate the customer satisfaction on the high-low product quality after price discount.
- To evaluate customer satisfaction towards product quality dimensions.
- To evaluate the relationship of consumer satisfaction to product quality components.

This study is to give a clearer view of how eight attributes of product quality namely performance, features, reliability, conformance, durability, serviceability, aesthetics and perceived quality (Garvin, 1984) plays very important role in being influential to customer satisfaction to product which is discounted. On the other hand, this research will also determine the effect of low pricing product with the product quality whether it play the same result of low price products produces low quality product and vice-versa. Most people were attracted with low price of the product because customers can minimize their expenditure. Purchasing a low price product will the standard of the low price product being equalize with price. This create dilemma for consumers because customers are to choose either cheaper product for low financial sacrifice and probably a low quality or a high price product that will have consumer to have high financial sacrifice and to be assure that to have high quality product but it is not a guarantee (Suri et al., 2000).

Besides that, discounted product, does the perspective of the product reflects to the consumer satisfaction? People will always be very alert on discounts, and sales. When sales come around, will the product quality that will the customer perceive will be forgotten because of the main motive is expenses are minimized. Special deals will influence the rationality of consumer to decide precisely because the price is here out once lowest in the market that only happens once in a blue moon (Inman et al, 1997) where the lower pricing excites consumer and their motive of purchasing is to be left behind because the effect of excitement (Suri et al. , 2002). Not to deny, sales is one of the most favorite time for shopping for us consumers where one can get product of their choices at the cheapest price. Sales or price discount is a definite issue where will satisfy consumers on their shopping spree.

Review of past literatures

Quality is enriched with information in explaining the elements that are the influential to the successful of achievement of total quality management (TQM) (Crosby, 1979; Juran and Gryna, 1988).

Before quality can be measured, quality must be cleared, but there are complications because there are no universal definition of quality exists, at the same time, there are alternative measures laid from five main approaches, which are transcendent, product-based, user-based, manufacturing-based, and value-based (Sebastianelli and Tamimi, 2002).

Product quality is product features matched with 8 dimensions namely, performance, features, conformance, reliability, durability, serviceability, aesthetics, and customer-perceived quality. Briefly, performance is the products primary operating characteristic, features is mean to the additional features for the product, conformance is representing the extent in which the product's design and also its operating features met the established standards, reliability specifies the probability that the product will be operating properly over a specific period of time under the stated condition of used, durability is the means of the overall amount of the consumers get to use the product before the product physically deteriorates or until it need to be replaced, serviceability is referring to the speed, competency, and courtesy if repairs, aesthetics is how the product appeal to the five sense and lastly customerperceived quality indicates the customer's perception of a product's quality, which it basically on reputation of the firm (Garvin, 1988).

Traditionally, quality has been defined in four categories namely excellence, value for money, conformity to requirements and also meeting or exceed customers' requirements (Reeves and Bednar, 1994). A product based approach is used in focusing on the performance, features and durability, user-based approach used in focusing on aesthetics and perceived quality, and lastly manufacturing approach is used in focusing on conformance and reliability (Garvin, 1984).

Product Quality

Product-based approach is based on its economical roots which the differences of the elements or attributes infatuated by the product are being considered as reflecting to the differences in quality (Garvin, 1984). The user-based approach is where quality of products and services meets or surpasses customers' expectation. Quality was of two parts namely, the quality of design and also the quality of conformance (Juran, 1951). Providing satisfaction to customers by the design the products to the needs of customer is referred to the "quality of design" (Juran, 1974). In manufacturing- based approach has its origins from operation and production management; hence it is called as conformance to specification. The degree of the product meets certain standard designation it is called as quality of conformance which it has internal focus on the contrary of external focus of the user-based approached and quality is being reflected in outcome of engineering and also manufacturing processes (Crosby, 1979). Lastly, value-based approached compared quality towards the performance at the satisfactory price or conformance at the affordable price which consumer uses price as the measurement to quality (Feigenbaum, 1951). Besides that, quality set at a high level off product or services, it expand reputation, increase customer retention, attracting new customer from the word of mouth, and also increasing the financial performance as well ask profitability (Julian and Ramaseshan, 1994; Zeithaml,1996). In value based approach, quality is being defined as the product or services meet the consumers need and wants or expectation. Quality of design and quality of conformance is the origin of quality (Juran, 1951). The quality of design is used in addressing product quality to the design which designated and met consumers' needs (Juran 1974).

Meanwhile, in manufacturing approach conformance in the product meets the formulated standards or specifications (Crosby, 1979). Based on value approached, product quality is been define as the have fair relations between quality with performance at an acceptable or affordable price. Always product quality is being thought to contribute to the expansion of competitive advantage whereas the product is to be designed and also manufactured to achieve customer requirements in enhancing the product performance (Benson et al., 1991; Flynn et al., 1994). Product attributes has become products quality's view where in operations management, multiple dimension of quality has been determine which it resulted in the fitness usage of the product which means does the product do as it supposed to do and does the features meets customer's needs, reliability of the product which means to what level the product is off from insufficiency (Parasuranaman et al., 1988).

What is Price?

Price is a factor that is playing neither an important role in affecting the distribution of newly product nor services in the market. Hence, setting a price for a new product in the market is difficult (Foxall, 1984).

Price is one of the element in marketing mix, which it is very plays a very heavy role because marketers uses price as communication medium with customers where the message is being clearly perceived by customer as what it meant to the marketers (Dickson and Sawyer, 1990; Monroe and Lee, 1999; Vanhuele and Dreze, 2002).

A product price is one of the main decision methods for both customer and also retailers as now the market is very competitive, price has made its position and role in differentiate in designing marketing and business strategies. Price resulted to be the main point for customer to judge what is offered in the market (Monroe, 2003; Monroe and Lee, 1999; Oliver, 1997). Price is also a main factor in transaction relationship where it is one of the medium used by marketers to counter the market, either in attracting or in retaining customer or as a element in competing with competitors (Summerour, 2000; Patton, 2002; Beck, 2000). In making a reasonable and affordable price for a product in depth information from what does a customer perceive is needed (Munnukka, 2005). Consumers' center of concentration in developing the distinctive of price and the cognitive is the element on which the price information to be elaborated and kept (Xia, 2005). Price does not only as an element of financial sacrifice but as well as a determination of product quality (Monroe, 2003).

Price maybe resulted in both positive and negative factor in influencing a purchase by customer perception which it may cue to a quality, standing or the consumer's reputation (Lichtenstein et al., 1990; Monroe and Krishnan, 1985). On the other hand, a lower price is being featured as economically sacrificing. Hence, both positive and also negative features of a price show customer decision making process in this competitive market situation (Dodds, 1995). This proves to a study that, generally price is used as the factor in determining the level of product quality (Lichtenstein et al., 1993). Price in fixed price concept, means that process are not to be negotiated and customer is paying for the same price and they would not have the thought of the price will be set lower then what they paid for today (Suri et al., 2000). Price is being portrayed as financial cost (Fox et al., 2004), it is also as a factor in a wider image of a store (Finn and Louviere, 1996) and also the customer's value (Sweeny and Soutar, 2001). Price has also been found that it is the main factor of one customer in determining the choice of the store to proceed with their shopping (Seiders and Costley, 1994). Marketing managers are interested in which the ability in providing competitive price and the prices did resolve the customers' anxiety either before or after purchasing. This resulted in empirical proving where price is important and also price's effect on post-purchase behavior as guidance for retailers who want to adapt into low pricing strategy (Jain and Srivastava, 2000). Market price is where the prices are at equal to retailers and also consumers which they do not have the opportunity in paying high prices in store and to found lower price elsewhere (Lucas, 2001).

Price Discounting

Price discounting is where the price that is being set lower from the normal pricing or fixed price (reference price). Price discounting might result in what does the consumer perceive towards the product's worth (Della Bitta et al. 1981). Besides that, price discounting are also being related to unambiguous and also hidden requirement which the discount is valid whereas it is being a signaling to consumers that, price discounting are up to valid until a particular date (Inman and McAlister, 1994; Inman et al. 1997; Suri and Monroe, 1999).

A price discounting or promotion were implemented on regular price which were gathered as the price discounting which offers special benefits to customer will not be continued as the promotion is over after a particular period of time (Suri et al. 2000). Discounts is being misunderstood because discounting has makes customers to question enquire the availability of discount either the regular price before discount is not the price which is real or inflated price meanwhile the discounted price is the real supposed to be price to the market (Suri et al., 2002) Price discounting is where consumers are being told that they are being offered with an ultimate deal from the regular pricing but at the same time, price changes will leads to consumers' uncertainty whether the price is the best offer being offered in the market (Inman et al., 1997).

Price discounting uncertainty yet also to increase consumers' concern and vagueness (Suri et al., 2002) where it keeps anxiety manner of consumers and continuous seeking of information (Hofstede, 1994). Price discounting is not to be likely that to bring new customers or effect in any long term after purchase effect, since customer are purchasing because the trust they have in their mind in purchasing range (Ehrenberg et al., 1994). Consumer need to use more of their brain in determining and evaluating (Monroe and Lee, 1999), because complication of discounting in which to evaluate or determine a deal price where the result of getting the best deal will always fail customer (Kerwin, 1997).

Price discounting give the possibilities of the discount offered at this time is the best discounting or there will be a better and higher discount rate which customer who bought a product now on the present discounted price may have a sense of regret in which the probability of having a higher discount in future and not to wait until the price discount hit the highest level and vice-versa. Hence, price discounting does create a sense of regret (Landman, 1987; Simonson, 1992). Price discounting divided into two formats namely, soft discount and hard discount. Explaining soft discount as the profitable offer roughly 50percent for national brands and private labels and also the variety is more than hard discounting. Meanwhile for hard discounting, pricing variables is being used more assertively in all references which private labels are taking up to 90 or 95percent total of variety by a lower number of referencing (Rodriquez del Bosque et al., 1996). Price discounting leads to consumers' positivity to the transaction effectiveness is in which the higher the discounts, the higher the value of the offer being perceived because of the thought of that is the real bargain (Monroe, 1990).

Customer Satisfaction

Satisfaction study began with exploratory of potential reasoning to dissatisfaction. Consumer satisfaction has been very well-known in marketing where as it is as the basic focus in achieving business objective, vision and also mission (Anderson et,al, 1994 and Yi,1990). This is being proved by business articles from different varieties which show that customer satisfaction is an arousal to special acknowledgements (Anton, 1997). Consumer satisfaction is customer evaluation or felt towards a product after usage that does the product itself differs from some of the features or factors through the expectation and also the presentation of the product itself (Yi, 1990; Day, 1984; Kotler, 1991; Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1988; and Tse and Wilton, 1988). Customer satisfaction a fresh thoughts that is used to be the representative to the wholly after purchasing effects on the products after a duration (Anderson et al., 1994; Fornell, 1992; Johnson and Fornell, 1991)

On the other hand, customer is not basically a value or price oriented. Hence, when customer satisfaction is at a certain level, it does base on price (Caruana et al, 2000; De Ruyter et al, 1997; Howard and Sheth, 1969; Kotler and Levy, 1969; Rust and Oliver, 1994) because price is a medium which can be used together as a conceptual framework where it can be very comparable (Fornellet al., 1996; Lancaster, 1971). As for distinguished value, quality partnering with price (Bolton and Drew, 1991; Dodds et al., 1991; Holbrook, 1994; Zeithaml, 1988) because most of the time, customer counts both price and quality to product's value. (Fornell, 1992; Fornell et al., 1996).Price, product features, and product reliability as the factor in effecting on customers toward a product in satisfying themselves (Madu et al, 1995).Customer satisfaction perceived as high has quite a number of benefits whereas it in enhance customer loyalty, improved reputation, lower down price elasticity, lower the cost in future transaction and also increase employees competence (Anderson et al., 1994; Fornell, 1992; Swanson and Kelly 2001). Customer satisfaction is resulted from the comparison of service and also the performance with expectation in determination (Barsky, 1992; Hill, 1986; Oliver, 1980). It is a mindset where customers' needs, wants and also expectations on a product or services has met or exceeded, in which it resulted in repeating in purchasing and also loyalty (Anton, 1997).

Customer's arousing responses to the usage of product or services is defined as customer satisfaction (Oliver, 1981). In other words, customer satisfaction is a complicated human thought that is involving cognitive and effecting procedures together with the further psychological and physiological influences (Oh and Parks, 1997). Traditionally, customer satisfaction pursuing the disconfirmation paradigm of consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction by proposing that satisfaction or dissatisfaction resulted by the contact between consumer's pre-purchase expectation and post-purchase evaluation (Berkman and Gilson, 1986; Czepiel and Ronsenberg, 1997; Engel et al., 1990; Handy, 1977). On the other hand, the satisfaction view can be measured from a point of view or evaluation in performance, and with addition on the unnecessary disconfirmation process (Churchull and Surprenant, 1982; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Olshavsky and Miller, 1972). Hence, measuring customer satisfaction is a vital part in the effort to enhance product's quality, company competitive advantage (Garvin, 1998) repurchasing and positive word-of-mouth advertising (Fornell, 1992). Customer satisfaction in total is equal to the emotional perception (Wong, 2000). Customer satisfaction resulted as an evaluation which is being reflected after product or services usage. Therefore, customer satisfaction is evaluated by positive perception perceived which have similarity to the meaning of customer value package that are from price, product quality, service quality, innovation and corporate image (Fredericks and Salters, 1995) Price is one of the elements in measuring customer satisfaction where price or value is a similar in considering it is a important factor in influencing and assisting in building up customer satisfaction (Getty and Thompson, 1994).

Quality is the factors of fair specification, meanwhile satisfaction has a wider range of elements, and one of the elements is quality (Oliver, 1997). Besides that, requirement needed in determining satisfaction is customer experiences but in determining quality, customer experiences are not needed (Bolton and Drew, 1991a; Boulding et al., 1993; Cronin and Taylor 1994; Oliver 1980; Parasuraman et al., 1988).

The Study on Product Quality towards Price

Price discounting, is a factor for consumer used as information in determining the quality of products and at the same time it is also used as to determine monetary or financial sacrifice on a particular purchasing (Dodds et al., 1991; Monroe 1990; Zeithaml, 1988). Research which has been done before suggest that in relation in which product information suitable in influencing a price as the information in accessing a product quality more than monetary sacrifice or vice-versa (Monroe, 1990; Peterson and Wilson, 1985; Zeithaml, 1988; Suri and Monroe, 1999). Particularly, price is used as heuristic indication in influential to the product's quality where high price is specifying as a high quality product and vice-versa (Pechman and Ratneshwar, 1991; Suri, 1996). Therefore, perspective which gives way to product information to be meticulously developed (Chaiken, 1980), consumer take into command that they will use the information available in determining product quality (Rao and Monroe, 1988). Hence, price will be used as the financial sacrifice resulted from the purchasing the product (Grewal et al., 1994; Suri and Monroe, 1999).

There are two types of low price product quality possibility where firstly, low price is the indication to low quality. On the other hand, low price is indicating to good or very good quality. Although product price is set at low, to penetrate the market in high speed, product quality is actually high although the price is set low (Hilleke and Butscher, 1997). Price has been found very vital in affecting distinguish quality and safety of a product (Asher, 1992; Dodds et al., 1991; Enis and Stafford, 1969; Tse, 1999). A study being done on perceiving product quality, divulged if the one factor that is price is the only factor indicator, price is apparently a straight in determining a product's quality (Dodds, 1991). Quality has many cause of differentiation where it is being describe in segregation approach in which a predictable knowledge has proven that high quality products and being set at a high price is because of the cost used in processing and producing the product (Philips et al., 1983).

Therefore, high quality product is set to be a low price product is suggestions where it will be turned out to beneficial on the economies of scales through higher share (Kroll et al., 1999; Philips et al., 1983). Price not only as an indicator to monetary of financial sacrifice, but it is also display on product quality (Monroe, 2003). Pricing and quality relationship, is a relating factor that facilitate consumers to have price as an assistance as an information on product quality (Rao and Monroe, 1988). From a traditional economic model, consumers always take up price as the ruler in measuring the product quality with the price of the product (Feigenbaum, 1951).

Some consumers prefer to pay for fixed price, this is because fixed price is perceived to be at a higher level of quality and value but lower in sacrifice. On the other hand, some consumers like discounted price because it is probably to be perceived in a higher quality and value with monetary saving.

Price discounting as a lower price set which the concept of quality cost is giving a clarification in associating quality performance and also cost decrease. Quality cost, any faulty products it will acquire cost, which the linkage between cost and quality is related (Crosby, 1979; Juran and Gyryna, 1993). The main point for consumer in increasing the judgment of the overall is price (Monroe, 2003; Monroe and Lee, 1999; Oliver 1997). As consumer do have inadequate information of prices and quality relationship, it will always result in poor satisfying in quality's view (Best and Andreasen, 1977; Dickson and Sawyer, 1990; Estelami, 2003; Estelami and DeMaeyer, 2002; Lichtenstein and Bearden, 1988; Monroe and Lee, 1999; Stremersch and Tellis, 2002).

Research methodology

Garvin (1984) has introduced eight dimension of quality as a framework for thinking about the basic elements of product quality. The eight dimension listed are performance, features, reliability, conformance, durability, serviceability, aesthetics and perceived quality. Product quality construct were being used as measuring medium in examine effects incorporated quality management of product quality, the elements of the construct are performance, reliability, conformance and durability (Ahire et al., 1996).

There was a study done in determining is causal relationship does exist in between multivariate build of quality that is to be exact in determining customer satisfaction. The use of price, product features and product reliability is used in determine the key in indicating customer satisfaction construct (Madu et al., 1995). In this research, the independent variable is product quality and dependent variable is customer satisfaction. Based on the Garvin, 1984 eight dimension of product quality, eight hypothesis has been developed to determine which attributes will influenced customer satisfaction most when purchasing a discounted product.

- H1: The Performance -Primary operating characteristic of a product is positively related to the level of satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product.
- H2: The Features- Secondary characteristic of a product that supplements its basic function is positively related to the level of satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product.
- H3: The Reliability- Product probability of failure-free performance over a specific period of time is positively related to the level of satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product.
- H4: The Conformance- Degree to product’s physical and performance characteristics meet design specification is positively related to the level of satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product.
- H5: The Durability- Measure of useful product life, before it deteriorates or must be replaced is positively related to the level of satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product.
- H6: The Serviceability- Ease, Speed, courtesy and competence of repair is positively related to the level of satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product.
- H7: The Aesthetics- Product’s look, feels, sounds, tastes or smell, a matter of personal preferences is positively related to the level of satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product.
- H8: The Perceived quality- on image, brand name, and advertising is positively related to the level of satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product.

In this research, the target population is from Malaysians of Kuching City. The target population is those who are able to perceive product quality of the product they bought for any reason to purchasing. The Malaysian population of Kuching City is estimated to be 582300 people (Source: Monthly Statistical Bulletin Sarawak, December 2007, Department of Statistic Malaysia, Sarawak). The population targeted is specifically referring to Malaysians only.

The respondent of the research was chosen through sampling method by using the non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling is appropriate to this research is because there are peoples are at different places, who did purchase product during sales promotion. The non-probability sampling used is the “convenience sample”. Convenience sampling uses respondents that are conveniently found which it advantaged us in time saving, and also in saving up cost.

The calculation of minimum sample size for this research is based on formula that introduced by Luck, Taylor and Robin (Luck et al., 1987) as follow:

$$S = \frac{S_0}{1 + \frac{S_0}{N}}$$

Formula: $S_0 = \frac{(Z)(Z) \times pq}{(e)(e)}$

- Where as S = size of the sample
- N = size of the population
- p = population proportion or 0.5
- q = (1-p) or 0.5
- e = the proportion of sampling error or 0.05

Z = the standard score corresponding to a given confidence level or 1.625

As a result, $S_0 = \frac{(1.625)(1.625) \times (0.5)(0.5)}{(0.05)(0.05)}$
 $= 264$

Thus, $S = \frac{264}{1 + \frac{264}{582300}}$
 $= 263.88$
 $= 264$

With the sample size calculated, **264** were this research’s respondents.

Data instrument that is used in obtaining data is by distributing survey questionnaire. Self-administered questionnaire is this research instrument in determining the data. Questionnaire will be attached together with English and Bahasa Malaysia translation covering letter, the content of the questionnaire divided into 2 parts namely Part A and Part B. Part A with question on demography data (age, gender, race, religiosity, income and profession-occupation and evaluation as a shopper). In Part B contains questions on product quality eight dimensions (performance, features, reliability, conformance, durability, serviceability, aesthetics and perceived quality) in measuring customer satisfaction after price discounting.

Pearson's Correlation analysis will be used to find out whether any relationship exists between the dependent (Customer's satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product) and independent variables (eight attributes of the product quality). Correlation analysis is the statistical tool that can be used to describe the degree to which one variable is linearly related to another (Levin & Rubin, 1998). The questionnaire used the six-point Likert scale (Likert, 1934) ranging from 1 = "Extremely Dissatisfied", 2 = "Very Dissatisfied", 3 = "Somewhat Dissatisfied", 4 = "Somewhat Satisfied", 5 = "Very Satisfied", and 6 = "Extremely Satisfied"

There were seven questions asked related to demographic characteristic of respondent in the questionnaire. Characteristics asked were gender, age, race, religion, education level, profession or occupation, personal monthly income and level as a shopper. From the study, 116 or 43.0 percent were male while 154 or 57.0 percent respondent were female. The majority of the respondents were aged between 20 and 29 years old (40.7%), followed by 57 (21.1%) respondents aged 30 to 57 years old. Therefore, 108 respondents (40.0%) were Chinese, while Malay respondent were 88 respondents (32.6%). Yet, there were 1 respondent (0.4%) were Kayan and Melanau.

With respect to the education background, 81 respondents (30.0%) have their tertiary education with a Bachelor Degree and yet, there were 15 respondents (5.6) who do not have any formal education. Therefore, 55 respondents (20.4%) were students, while 28 respondents (10.4%) were in the educating field and clerical and administrative staff, Homemaker holds 24 respondents (8.9%) and salesperson were 21 respondents (7.8%) and also businessman or self-employed were 14 respondents (5.2%).

Research findings and discussion

From the study, Table 1 demonstrates 101 respondents choose clothes on their most preferred price on price discounting for the last three months purchase. The result followed by 1 respondent (0.4%) purchase of sports equipment and communication tool.

Table 1: Frequency of most preferred shopping product on Price Discount

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Clothes	101	37.4
Pants/Trousers	14	5.2
Food	23	8.5
Beverages (Drinks)	10	3.7
Accessories	14	5.2
Foot Wear	33	12.2
Necessities (Rice) / Household Items	11	4.1
Computer/IT Peripheral	9	3.3
Kitchen Utensils	3	1.1
Toiletries	21	7.8
Sports Equipment	1	0.4
Stationery / Reading Materials	2	0.7
Communication Tools	1	0.4
Electrical Goods	2	0.7
Dairy Products	6	2.2
Cosmetics/ Fragrance	10	3.7
Bags	7	2.6
Bed sheets (Bedroom accessories)	2	0.7

Finally from table 2, among the ideal discount is very prominent 77 respondents (28.5%) of 70 percent price discount, hence, also 50percent represented by 64 respondents (23.7%) and yet 9 respondents (3.3%) for 1st item, 2nd item 50% (T&C).

Table 2: Frequency of Ideal Price Discount Value

Price Discount value	Frequency	Percent
10%	15	5.6
20%	22	8.1
30%	39	14.4
40%	2	0.7
50%	64	23.7
60%	11	4.1
70%	77	28.5
1st item 30%, 2nd item 50% (T&C)	9	3.3
Savings of (??) RM/Cents	31	11.5

As refer to table 3 is for measuring the internal consistency of the six-point Likert scales, a Cronbach's Alpha analysis has been used.

Table 3: Cronbach's Alpha Analysis

Dimension Of Product Quality	Number of items	Mean (1-5 scale)	Std. Deviation	Reliability (alpha)
Performance	5	4.8037	0.72295	0.841
Features	4	4.5630	0.77706	0.735
Reliability	4	4.3185	0.82842	0.691
Conformance	2	4.6296	0.81108	0.727
Durability	4	4.2296	0.73105	0.482
Serviceability	5	3.3370	1.23807	0.923
Aesthetics	5	4.6593	0.84627	0.907
Perceived Quality	9	4.4556	0.75409	0.876
CStPQ	39	4.7185	0.87639	0.934

The table above shows the mean and Standard Deviation for each of the attributes and consumer satisfaction to Product Quality of discounted items. The high means for the eight attributes reflected positive level of customer's satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product and the low Standard Deviations reflected a minimum spread of respondent's responses, suggestive of a fairly homogeneous response of the sample as a whole. The alpha values represent the reliability of each studied variable. The value of alpha ranges from 0 to 1, the nearer the value of alpha to 1, the better the reliability. If the value is low, either there are too few items or there is very little commonality among the items (Churchill, 1979). At the early stages of research, Nunnally (1978) suggested that the reliability of 0.50-0.60 is sufficient, although a coefficient of 0.7 or above is desirable (Hair et al., 1998). Internal consistency for each attributes and overall customer's satisfaction to Product Quality of discounted items using Cronbach alpha were high in the studied variables except Durability which is 0.482.

Pearson's Correlation analysis were used to find out whether any relationship exists between the dependent (Customer's satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product) and independent variables (eight attributes of the product quality). Correlation analysis is the statistical tool that can be used to describe the degree to which one variable is linearly related to another (Levin & Rubin, 1998). After collecting the data, correlation matrix for the variables will be prepared and the researcher will use enter and stepwise regression to test the strength of associations between the study variables. In interpreting the strength of relationships between variables, the guidelines suggested by Choudhury, Amit (2009) were followed. His classification of the correlation coefficient (r) is as follows:

r value	Strength of relationship
1.0 to 0.5	Strong
0.3 to 0.5	Moderate
0.1 to 0.3	weak
0.0 to 0.1	none or very weak

Table 4: Correlation Analysis between the variables

	Customer Satisfaction to Product Quality	Performance	Features	Reliability	Conformance	Durability	Serviceability	Aesthetics
Performance	.540**							
Features	.392**	.502**						
Reliability	.400**	.347**	.413**					
Conformance	.423**	.510**	.574**	.364**				
Durability	.316**	.268**	.446**	.499**	.288**			
Serviceability	.136*	.041	.304**	.428**	.210**	.411**		
Aesthetics	.502**	.522**	.406**	.405**	.438**	.379**	.181**	
Perceived Quality	.628**	.499**	.424**	.421**	.435**	.450**	.221**	.629**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

From the table 4, there are statistical significant positive relationships among all the variables which indicated that an increase in one variable is associated with an increase in another variable. The strongest relationship, in order of sequence, were between PQ and Aesthetics($r=0.629$), PQ and CStPQ ($r=0.628$), Features and Conformance ($r=0.574$), Performance and CStPQ ($r=0.540$), Performance and Aesthetics ($r=0.522$), performance and Conformance ($r=0.510$), Aesthetics and CStPQ ($r=0.502$), Performance and Features ($r=0.502$), Performance and Perceived Quality ($r=0.499$), Reliability and Durability ($r=0.499$). The relationship with medium strength were between Durability and Perceived Quality ($r=0.450$), Features and Durability ($r=0.446$), Conformance and Aesthetics ($r=0.438$), Conformance and Perceived Quality ($r=0.435$), Features and Perceived Quality ($r=0.424$), Reliability and Perceived Quality ($r=0.421$), Features and Reliability ($r=0.413$), Durability and Serviceability ($r=0.411$), Features and Aesthetics ($r=0.406$), Reliability and Aesthetics ($r=0.405$). The relationship with the lowest strength were between Serviceability and Aesthetics ($r=0.181$), Serviceability and Perceived Quality ($r=0.221$), Conformance and Serviceability ($r=0.210$). There is a weak relationship between Performance and Serviceability ($r=0.041$), its not significant relationship.

A stepwise regression analysis was performed using Customer Satisfaction to Product Quality as the dependent variable using the eight attributes (performance, features, reliability, conformance, durability, serviceability, aesthetics and perceived quality) as the independent variables. The model is

$$\text{Customer Satisfaction to Product Quality} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (\text{Performance}) + \beta_2 (\text{Features}) + \beta_3 (\text{Reliability}) + \beta_4 (\text{Conformance}) + \beta_5 (\text{Durability}) + \beta_6 (\text{Serviceability}) + \beta_7 (\text{Aesthetics}) + \beta_8 (\text{Perceived Quality})$$

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.628a	.394	.392	.68337
2	.680b	.463	.459	.64468
3	.689c	.474	.468	.63912

- a. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedQuality
- b. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedQuality, Performance
- c. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedQuality, Performance, Reliability
- d. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction to Product Quality

Table 6: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	81.453	1	81.453	174.418	.000a
	Residual	125.155	268	0.467		
	Total	206.607	269			
2	Regression	95.637	2	47.819	115.054	.000b
	Residual	110.97	267	0.416		
	Total	206.607	269			
3	Regression	97.952	3	32.651	79.932	.000c
	Residual	108.656	266	0.408		
	Total	206.607	269			

- a. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedQuality
- b. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedQuality, Performance
- c. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedQuality, Performance, Reliability
- d. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction to Product Quality

Table 7: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.467	.250		5.877	.000
	PerceivedQuality	.730	.055	.628		
2	(Constant)	.488	.289		1.686	.093
	PerceivedQuality	.554	.060	.477		
	Performance	.366	.063	.302		
3	(Constant)	.275	.300		.915	.361
	Perceived Quality	.509	.063	.438		
	Performance	.340	.063	.281		
	Reliability	.125	.053	.119		

- a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction to Product Quality

Table 7 shows the result of the analysis. At this stage, the Perceived Quality , Performance and Reliability (p < 0.05) is found to be significantly related with Customer Satisfaction to Product Quality, while the rest five (Features, Conformance, Durability, Serviceability and Aesthetics) fail to be considered. It implies that the customers still consider perceived quality, performance and reliability as the main factors of satisfaction towards discounted product quality. The Features, Conformance, Durability, Serviceability and Aesthetics, these five variables have been excluded from the regression equation since they do not have significant association. Result reveals that R-square was significantly greater than zero (R²=0.474).

It inferred that 47.4% of the variation in Customer Satisfaction to Product Quality could be explained by the three attributes: the Perceived Quality, Performance and Reliability while the remaining 52.6% was unexplained by these three predictors. The model seems to be moderately good fit. The standardized coefficients value for Perceived Quality ($\beta = 0.438$) was the highest among the three predictors, which indicate that Perceived Quality was the most important attribute in predicting customer's satisfaction towards discounted product quality. This was followed by Performance ($\beta = 0.281$) and Reliability ($\beta = 0.119$).

The results infer that that the customer's satisfaction towards the discounted product quality is based on the three attributes most namely perceived quality, performance and reliability. The regression analysis results supported to the hypotheses H1, H3 and H8. The first hypothesis H1: The Performance -Primary operating characteristic of a product is positively related to the level of satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product; H3: The Reliability- Product probability of failure-free performance over a specific period of time is positively related to the level of satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product and H8: The Perceived quality- on image, brand name, and advertising is positively related to the level of satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product; were all supported as the relationships between the variables were statistically significant.

The Perceived quality attribute appeared to be the strongest determinant for the level of satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product with r equal to 0.628 and Standardized Coefficient 0.438 which strongly supported H8. The greater the perceived quality of the branded product the higher the level of satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product. The second strongest determinant for the level of satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product is Performance with r equal to 0.540 and Standardized Coefficient 0.281. The last determinant for the level of satisfaction towards the quality of discounted product is Reliability with r equal to 0.400 and Standardized Coefficient 0.119

The regression result shows that the components were very significant in influencing the level of customer satisfaction (Sig. =0.000, Sig. 0.034, Sig. 0.000). Performance, reliability and perceived quality does have relationship in influencing the level of satisfaction in which, product performance which is the primary operating characteristic is important to customers. Performance is rated as the most important as it relates to the primary characteristic of the product which it meets with performance standard and meeting the design specifications. Perceived Quality were the component which deal with the reputation as the high-end design elements. Therefore, reliability is related to the hassle-free use of the product which it lead to relating on customer satisfaction (Sebastianelli&Tamimi, 2002). Relating with customer satisfaction, these components are main customer satisfactory response as customer satisfaction are evaluation of performance, and the expectation of quality of a certain product (Yi, 1990). Customer satisfaction increase when the product is able to give the customer product of dependability and also accurately (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Regression result of features, conformance, durability, serviceability and aesthetic are very not significant in influencing the relationship between customer satisfaction and features of product quality (respectively, Sig. 0.842, Sig. 0.281, Sig. 0.691, Sig 0.512, Sig. 0.382). The result turns out to be not significant in relating with customer satisfaction. These components cannot relate to the consumer satisfaction towards discounted product of its insignificant, are the identification of the experiences and the consequences of the components (Chan et al. 2003).

Conclusion

The conclusion resulted from this study is drained in two aspects of finding as well as the contribution of the study. There is significant in the components or attributes of product quality for a discounted product to customer satisfaction. There is relationship between factors in the product quality towards the level of customer satisfaction of a discounted product quality. There is also interaction of difference with customer satisfactory and gender with customer satisfactory of discounted product qualities. Which females are more relatively critical in analyzing product quality and they are ones who are highly satisfied with the discounted product quality. From the practical point of view, this study's findings make several important contributions. Firstly, in measuring the satisfaction level of the discounted product quality shows that, product of all kinds on sales or discount are not in consumers mind set of relating low price are relatively low quality product. The possibility is there, but from this study, product on discount has kept a level of standard that could satisfy the consumer on their purchase of the product. Hence, discounted products are not low in quality, but the probability of the same level of quality product before any alteration of price. Secondly, the finding shows that the product does have disadvantages.

Thus, it held that not all products which are discounted are at the tipped-top condition but although it happens, the product does still satisfy consumers. Understanding the disadvantages help in stores or shopping complexes to have an overlook on to the criteria of unsatisfying the consumers in future improvement.

This study does also provide useful guidelines for future researcher to be more rigorous and also in-depth to empirical and theoretical processes. Hence, by using the eight attributes of product quality, it gives more attention on what should be more focused on for product quality wanted and perceived and also satisfying the consumers. Thus, the attributes provides the consumers to choose the best of quality product on sales and not being eyes closed by the Sales, as it is only a word of price reduction. Although price is important but purchasing a product of one's satisfaction and worth-wile of the product is very much important. In addition, using the product quality components, one of the implications turn out that the consumers must look into their product quality components. Which this lead to more effective and worth shopping as does not being treated in the lies of discount or sales but as well as well known the product.

There were some limitations in this study. Firstly, the location of questionnaire being distributed narrowed, because there are quite a numbers of departmental store or shopping complexes are not being listed where as those locations are offering price reduction in discount. Secondly, many of the product quality literature remain to be in in-depth exploration for this, perception of product quality is evaluated by the high low price but the price are not being determined as the selling price or the fixed price. Thirdly, the study examines the customer satisfaction towards discounted product quality only with the attributes or components of product quality. Recently, product quality has been described in a broaden terms in product design and customer requirements (Flynn et al, 1994; Reeves and Bednar, 1994; Lynch, 1999).

The study show that product quality attribute of performance, features, reliability, conformance, durability, serviceability, aesthetics and perceived quality (Garvin, 1988) are the attributes in leveling the customer satisfaction towards discounted product quality. The customer satisfaction level can be measure in more accuracy in adding in the components in term of product design and also customer requirements (Flynn et al, 1994; Reeves and Bednar, 1994; Lynch, 1999). Apart from that, this study can be specified to only one gender response in which for female (women), as the respondents of the research. Female consumers are experiencing emotional pleasure when she is evaluating the quality of a product when the product arouses the emotion of cautious (Klerk and Lubbe, 2006). In future study, customer satisfaction towards discounted product quality of the product to be specified to a product only determine by one gender (female) and also a perception towards a certain discounted price level of a product and its quality with extension of product design and customer requirements. Lastly, recommending on how a discounted product's satisfaction leads to loyalty.

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