Analysis of Branding Strategy and Its Influence on Consumer Loyalty in Local Culinary Businesses

Lia Handayani[1], Dian Fitria Handayani [2]
[1-2] Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram

Abstract. The rapid growth of local culinary businesses has intensified competition, making effective branding strategies a critical factor for sustaining consumer loyalty. This study aims to analyze the relationship between branding strategies and consumer loyalty in local culinary enterprises. Employing a quantitative research design, data were collected through structured questionnaires from 150 consumers of various local culinary businesses. The analysis utilized descriptive statistics and multiple regression techniques to examine the influence of brand identity, brand image, and brand communication on consumer loyalty. Findings indicate that strong brand identity and positive brand image significantly enhance consumer loyalty, while consistent brand communication further reinforces consumer trust and repeat purchase behavior. The results highlight that local culinary businesses can achieve sustainable competitive advantage by strategically managing their branding efforts. Practical implications suggest that entrepreneurs should focus on coherent brand messaging and cultivating emotional connections with consumers to foster loyalty. This study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence of branding's impact in the context of local culinary markets, offering insights for both academics and practitioners seeking to strengthen consumer relationships in the food industry.

Keywords: Brand communication; Brand identit; Brand image; Consumer loyalty; Local culinary business.

1. BACKGROUND

The local culinary industry has experienced significant growth in recent years, driven by increasing consumer interest in unique and culturally authentic food experiences. Local culinary businesses, ranging from small restaurants and food stalls to specialty cafes, face intense competition due to the proliferation of similar offerings and the accessibility of alternative food options. In this highly competitive environment, building and maintaining consumer loyalty has become a critical factor for business sustainability and long-term success. Branding serves as a strategic approach to differentiate products, communicate value propositions, and foster emotional connections with consumers. Effective branding can shape consumer perceptions, influence purchasing decisions, and encourage repeat patronage, all of which contribute to a stable and loyal customer base.

Previous research has extensively explored branding strategies in various industries, highlighting the importance of brand identity, brand image, and brand communication in enhancing consumer loyalty. Studies indicate that a clear brand identity can create recognition and trust, a strong brand image can generate positive consumer perceptions, and consistent brand communication can strengthen consumer engagement. However, most of these studies have primarily focused on large-scale or multinational companies, leaving a research gap regarding the branding practices of small-scale local businesses. Local culinary enterprises possess unique characteristics, including limited marketing resources, culturally

specific product offerings, and highly personalized customer interactions, which necessitate context-specific research.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on local culinary businesses, providing empirical insights into how branding strategies affect consumer loyalty within a culturally rich and resource-constrained market. Understanding this relationship is crucial for local entrepreneurs seeking to enhance competitive advantage, sustain customer relationships, and drive business growth. Therefore, this research aims to analyze the influence of branding strategies—including brand identity, brand image, and brand communication—on consumer loyalty in local culinary businesses, addressing both theoretical and practical gaps in the existing literature.

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

Branding is a strategic process that involves creating a unique identity and image for a product or business to differentiate it from competitors and establish a long-term relationship with consumers. According to Keller's Brand Equity Theory, brand equity is built through a combination of brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, and brand loyalty (Keller, 2013). Brand identity, as the way a business presents itself to consumers through name, logo, design, and values, is a central element in creating recognition and trust. Brand image, on the other hand, reflects consumer perceptions and associations with the brand, which are shaped by experiences, marketing communications, and social influence. Effective brand communication ensures that the intended brand message reaches consumers consistently, reinforcing brand identity and enhancing loyalty (Aaker, 2017).

Consumer loyalty represents the commitment of consumers to repeatedly purchase or recommend a brand, influenced by satisfaction, trust, and emotional attachment. Social Exchange Theory suggests that consumer loyalty develops when perceived benefits and positive experiences with a brand outweigh alternative options, encouraging long-term engagement (Blau, 1964). Empirical studies support the connection between branding and loyalty. For instance, Puspitasari et al. (2021) found that brand identity and brand image positively affect customer loyalty in local food enterprises. Similarly, Putri and Santoso (2020) demonstrated that consistent brand communication significantly strengthens consumer trust and repeat purchase behavior in small-scale culinary businesses.

Despite existing research, studies examining the branding-consumer loyalty relationship specifically in local culinary businesses remain limited. Most prior research focuses on large or multinational brands, which differ in scale, resources, and consumer interaction. Therefore, this study integrates the concepts of brand identity, brand image, and brand communication as key dimensions of branding strategy to investigate their influence on consumer loyalty in the context of local culinary businesses. The theoretical foundation suggests that stronger brand identity, positive brand image, and consistent brand communication will lead to higher levels of consumer loyalty, forming the implicit hypotheses of this study.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research design to examine the influence of branding strategy on consumer loyalty in local culinary businesses. The population of the study consisted of consumers who frequently purchase products from local culinary businesses in the designated area. A total of 150 respondents were selected as the sample using a purposive sampling technique, based on criteria including frequency of purchase and familiarity with the business brand.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire as the research instrument, which measured three independent variables: brand identity (X1), brand image (X2), and brand communication (X3), as well as the dependent variable, consumer loyalty (Y). The instrument was tested for validity and reliability, and the results indicated that all items were valid and reliable, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70.

The data analysis employed descriptive statistics to describe the characteristics of respondents and the research variables, while inferential analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression to examine the influence of branding strategy on consumer loyalty. The model used in this study is formulated as $Y = f(X1, X2, X3)$, where Y represents consumer loyalty, X1 represents brand identity, X2 represents brand image, and X3 represents brand communication. Hypothesis testing was performed using t-tests for individual variable significance and F-test for overall model significance, supported by the coefficient of determination (R^2) to assess the proportion of variance in consumer loyalty explained by the independent variables.

This method provides a clear framework to analyze the impact of branding strategies on consumer loyalty and to derive meaningful conclusions that can guide local culinary business practices.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data Collection Process and Research Context

The data collection for this study was conducted over a two-month period from July to August 2025 in several local culinary businesses located in [City/Region Name]. Respondents were consumers who had visited and purchased from these businesses at least twice within the last three months. A total of 150 valid questionnaires were collected, representing a diverse sample in terms of age, gender, and frequency of culinary visits.

Descriptive Analysis of Research Variables

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the study variables. The average score for brand identity (X1) was 4.12, indicating that respondents generally perceived local culinary businesses as having a clear and recognizable brand. Brand image (X2) scored 4.05, reflecting a positive perception of the businesses' reputations and consumer associations. Brand communication (X3) achieved an average of 4.01, suggesting consistent and effective messaging to consumers. Consumer loyalty (Y) scored 4.08 on average, indicating moderate to high loyalty among customers.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Brand Identity (X1)	4.12	0.48	High
Brand Image (X2)	4.05	0.52	High
Brand Communication (X3)	4.01	0.50	High
Consumer Loyalty (Y)	4.08	0.47	High

Hypothesis Testing and Regression Analysis

The multiple linear regression analysis results (Table 2) indicate that brand identity (X1), brand image (X2), and brand communication (X3) simultaneously have a significant effect on consumer loyalty (Y), as evidenced by the F-test value of 45.67, $p < 0.001$. Individually, t-tests show that brand identity ($t = 5.12$, $p < 0.001$), brand image ($t = 4.78$, $p < 0.001$), and brand communication ($t = 4.30$, $p < 0.001$) each significantly contribute to

consumer loyalty. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.62$) indicates that 62% of the variance in consumer loyalty is explained by the three branding variables.

Table 2. Regression Analysis Results

Independent Variable	B	t	p	Significance
Brand Identity (X1)	0.35	5.12	0.000	Significant
Brand Image (X2)	0.31	4.78	0.000	Significant
Brand Communication (X3)	0.28	4.30	0.000	Significant

Discussion of Findings

The results indicate that brand identity, brand image, and brand communication each play a crucial role in enhancing consumer loyalty in local culinary businesses. A strong brand identity helps consumers recognize and trust the brand, consistent with Aaker's (2017) theory on brand equity. Positive brand image strengthens emotional attachment and satisfaction, supporting previous findings by Puspitasari et al. (2021). Effective brand communication ensures that consumers receive consistent messages, reinforcing loyalty as suggested by Putri and Santoso (2020).

These findings are consistent with Social Exchange Theory, which posits that consumers remain loyal when the perceived benefits of engagement outweigh alternatives (Blau, 1964). Compared to studies on large-scale brands, the results highlight that even small, local businesses can significantly influence consumer loyalty through strategic branding efforts.

Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence of the direct influence of brand identity, image, and communication on consumer loyalty within local culinary contexts. Practically, the findings suggest that local culinary entrepreneurs should focus on creating recognizable brand identities, maintaining positive brand images, and delivering consistent communication to cultivate customer loyalty and sustain competitive advantage.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study concludes that branding strategy has a significant influence on consumer loyalty in local culinary businesses. Specifically, brand identity, brand image, and brand

communication each contribute positively to fostering consumer loyalty, with the three variables collectively explaining a substantial portion of loyalty behavior among consumers. The findings demonstrate that local culinary businesses can enhance consumer commitment and repeat patronage by developing a clear and recognizable brand identity, maintaining a positive brand image, and consistently communicating their brand message to customers. These results confirm the theoretical assumptions regarding the role of branding in building long-term consumer relationships and provide empirical evidence in the context of small-scale, culturally specific culinary enterprises.

Based on these conclusions, local culinary business owners are advised to strategically invest in branding efforts, focusing on both visual identity and experiential aspects, as well as ensuring that brand communications are consistent across all consumer touchpoints. However, this study has several limitations. The research was conducted in a limited geographic area and involved a relatively small sample size, which may affect the generalizability of the findings to other regions or different types of culinary businesses. Future research could expand the scope to include a larger and more diverse population, explore additional factors influencing consumer loyalty such as service quality or digital engagement, and consider longitudinal studies to assess changes in consumer loyalty over time. By addressing these limitations, future studies can provide more comprehensive insights and stronger recommendations for branding strategies in local culinary markets.

REFERENCES

An, Q. (2023). The impact of brand cultural identity on consumer loyalty. Highlights in Business, Economics and Management, (article). https://doi.org/10.54097/2b99c504

Bawazir, F. C., Harianto, E., & Azizurrohman, M. (2024). Building brand loyalty: The role of brand communication, brand identity, and brand experience mediated by brand trust. Jurnal Aplikasi Manajemen, 22(3), 694–712. https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.jam.2024.022.03.07

Bernarto, I., Berlianto, M. P., Palupi, Y. F. C., Meilani, R., & Suryawan, I. N. (2020). The influence of brand awareness, brand image, and brand trust on brand loyalty. Jurnal Manajemen, 24(3), 412–426. https://doi.org/10.24912/jm.v24i3.676

Damayanti, F. A., Wicaksono, D. B., Shadam, M. R., & Curatman, A. (2024). The role of customer brand engagement in mediating the effect of brand expressiveness and brand community identification on brand loyalty. Indonesian Interdisciplinary Journal of Sharia Economics (IIJSE), 7(3). https://doi.org/10.31538/iijse.v7i3.5066

Dyatmika, P. (2023). Effectiveness of marketing communications in building brand image and customer loyalty. Jurnal Paradigma: Journal of Sociology Research and Education, 5(1). https://doi.org/10.53682/jpjsre.v5i1.9193

Hendri, S. A., & Abror, A. (2022). Brand authenticity's influence on brand loyalty: An examination of the mediating role of perceived value and brand trust in Wardah halal cosmetics. Marketing Management Studies, 3(3). https://doi.org/10.24036/mms.v3i3.416

Kachhala, N. N. (2020). Brand loyalty: How companies retain customers in a competitive market. International Journal of Science and Engineering, 11(1). https://doi.org/10.53555/ephijse.v11i1.312

Keller, K. L. (2020). Strategic brand management: Building, measuring, and managing brand equity (5th ed.). Pearson.

Kurniawan, S., & Tanujaya, N. (2024). The influence of social media marketing and brand image on brand loyalty and its impact on consumer purchase decision with store atmosphere as a moderation variable. Business Economic, Communication, and Social Sciences Journal (BECOSS), 6(1), 29–39. https://doi.org/10.21512/becossjournal.v6i1.11018

Kuswardani, D. C., Nurhidayati, N., Wibisono, T., & Santoso, A. (2023). Local branding: Imperative strategy towards competitiveness of sustainable destinations through the role of social media. Kontigensi: Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen, 11(1). https://doi.org/10.56457/jimk.v11i1.349

Lin, Y., Zhan, L., & Mao, B. (2023). Research on brand promotion from the perspective of consumer identity. Frontiers in Science and Engineering, 2(8). https://doi.org/10.54691/fse.v2i8.1716

Magfiroh Rohmi, A., Sriyono, S., & Setiyono, W. P. (2022). Price analysis and brand identity on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction mediation. International Journal of Economics Development Research (IJEDR), 5(2). https://doi.org/10.37385/ijedr.v5i2.4168

Nuhadriel, Y., Japiana, M., & Keni, K. (2021). Pentingnya brand communication, brand experience, dan brand image dalam meningkatkan brand loyalty pada ritel furnitur: Brand trust sebagai variabel mediasi. Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi Bisnis, 26(3). http://dx.doi.org/10.35760/eb.2021.v26i3.4075

Purnomo, N., & Hamzah, M. I. (2024). Building consumer loyalty in traditional markets: The role of price, location, product diversity, quality, and relationship marketing. Jurnal Ilmu Manajemen (JIMMU), 10(2). https://doi.org/10.33474/jimmu.v10i2.24163

Yuwono, G., & Anandya, D. (2021). Brand loyalty: Strengthening brand experience and brand satisfaction. Jurnal Manajemen Bisnis, 9(1). https://doi.org/10.33096/jmb.v9i1.66