



Critical Review of Marketing Mix, Brand Equity on Restaurant Consumer Purchasing Decisions

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Abstract

The success of the marketing campaign of "Share a Coke With" has been globally known as one of the personalized campaigns with some popular individual names. This act of corporate communication has made the Coca-Cola Company even stronger as a multinational company. The usage of individual names has created a stronger bond between the brand and the audience. This qualitative research examines to what extent the brand image of Coca-Cola has affected the perception of its audience as it will have the implications of the economic and the social effects to the brand. The qualitative approach is used through the content analysis technique to some residents who were born and raised in Surabaya as of 2024, with 6 participants participating by the purposive sampling. This research examines the brand image by its favourability, strength, and uniqueness associated to Coca-Cola as a brand. Results has indicated a significant influence to the brand image and the personalized campaign. This research has underscored the importance in building consumer relations, strengthening the marketing strategy, and shaping brand image in a more complex world full of messages.

Introduction

The restaurant business holds promising opportunities and the potential to create unique culinary experiences for people. In addition to providing an opportunity to express creativity through a diverse menu, restaurants are also a place to establish social and community relationships. It's no wonder why people's interest in owning a restaurant business continues to grow. With the increasing public interest in culinary and dynamic lifestyles, restaurant businesses can achieve significant financial benefits, as stated in (Dharmmesta, 1999). (Dharmmesta, 1999)The purpose of establishing an organization (company) is to exceed many business goals, especially business profits.

As a result, the level of competition has become higher in the industry. To win the competition, companies are required to be able to compete to produce better products that suit people's tastes. In order to compete with other competitors, companies must innovate their products.

In addition to the innovation factor, there are at least two factors that greatly influence the success of restaurants in attracting consumer interest, namely: brand equity and marketing mix. Brand equity is an important element that affects consumer perceptions of a brand. It is said (von Martens & Hilbert, 2011), increased competition in various industries has resulted in better brand management techniques, which focus on increasing customer loyalty.

In increasing customer loyalty, nowadays many sellers or companies do not just advertise photos of their products to consumers, but try to be more active and increase the brand value of their products in the eyes of consumers. (Dabbous & Barakat, 2020). This can be done by companies to increase the brand equity attached to the Company's brand. (Muthukannan et al., 2021).

While the marketing mix, or marketing mix, is an important factor in consumer decisions to buy something. Lidwina (2013) reveals that the marketing mix, which consists of products, prices, advertising, and distribution channels, is a controllable component that companies can use to influence consumer reactions. Even Aaker (1991) mentions that marketing mix elements are the precursor to higher-level marketing constructs such as brand equity. (Aaker, 1991; Lidwina, 2013; Park & Srinivasan, 1994).. In fact, Stern & Dolye (2006) mentioned that the position of the brand in the minds of consumers can be determined by the elements of the marketing mix which include: product, price, place, and promotion. Therefore, through a combination of strong brand equity and effective marketing mix strategies, products such as fast food restaurants have greater potential to succeed in a competitive market (Stern & Dolye, 2006). (Stern & Dolye, 2006).

Therefore, many academics state, brand equity factors determine the future success of the brand. By linking marketing strategies with equity, we can gain important insights into how to maintain a strong brand (Buil et al., 2013; Yoo et al., 2000). (Buil et al., 2013; Yoo et al., 2000). In the context of the restaurant industry, it is important for business actors to focus on strategies in terms of strengthening brand equity and implementing the right marketing mix with targeted consumer preferences. Through these two approaches, restaurants are expected to build a loyal customer base, which not only affects short-term sales but also long-term business success.

Purpose of Critical Review

This study aims to understand the effect of brand equity and marketing mix on consumer purchasing decisions. By identifying theories, methods, and variables in previous research, and evaluating the results, with the following objectives: Identify the theories used in previous studies related to the influence of brand equity and marketing mix on consumer purchasing decisions. Analyze the research methods applied in these studies to understand the most effective approach in exploring the relationship between brand equity, marketing mix, and purchase decision. Identify the main factors and variables that influence brand equity and marketing mix on purchasing decisions. Evaluate existing research results to get a comprehensive picture of the role of brand equity and marketing mix in driving purchasing decisions.

Focus and Scope of Critical Review

This Critikal Review focuses on evaluating brand equity, marketing mix in influencing consumer purchasing decisions in the restaurant business. The goal is to understand the extent to which marketing mix, brand equity in increasing the attractiveness of restaurants in increasingly competitive competition. Researchers chose brand equity, marketing mix as the object of evaluation because theoretically and practically these two strategies have a significant impact on consumer purchasing decisions, even to make repurchase intentions. Through a deep understanding of the application and effectiveness of marketing mix and brand equity in the restaurant sector will provide valuable insights in formulating marketing for restaurant business people.

In the context of restaurants, brand equity can increase attractiveness, because strong brands are often perceived as having better quality or providing added value, thereby increasing consumers' desire to make purchases. According to Keller (2010), customer satisfaction with a

brand is reflected through premium prices and increased market share. Customer brand equity is known to be determined by product and organizational attributes (J. M. Keller, 2010). (J. M. Keller, 2010). For this reason, the evaluation in this Critical Review covers key aspects such as brand equity (brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand association) to assess how these two elements contribute to purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, the marketing mix, which includes product, price, location, and promotion, is also an important factor that directly affects consumer perceptions and satisfaction in interacting with brands. In this case, products and prices are assessed based on the quality perceived by consumers and their suitability for their budget, while location plays a role in ease of access that can strengthen customer preferences for restaurants.

As mentioned by Kotler et al. (2022), the promotional aspect is also very instrumental in creating initial appeal, both through digital media and direct campaigns, which can influence consumer purchasing decisions. For this reason, the evaluation of the marketing mix will highlight each element to create a positive consumer experience and encourage consumers to make a purchase. (Kotler et al., 2022). As for the scope of the review, it will involve analyzing several empirical studies and relevant literature to evaluate the direct and indirect impact of brand equity and marketing mix on consumer purchases.

Literature Review

Brand Definition

Kotler & Keller (2009) define a brand as a combination of various aspects that include tangible and intangible features intended to differentiate it in the minds of consumers and competitors' offerings. Meanwhile, Ogonje (2010) explains brand as an individualized experience that customers have of products from a particular company. (Akelo, 2010; Kotler & Keller, 2009)..

Meanwhile, with regard to consumers, they have a tendency to develop a repurchase culture if the product or service meets intrinsic needs, as Pike et al. said, (2010) the value of a brand can foster consumer trust and loyalty. (Pike et al., 2010).

Brand has a high influence in terms of purchasing decisions, as the identity of a company, and is a differentiator from one product to another. According to Chaudhuri & Holbrook, (2001) and Berkowitz, (1978) customers who are loyal to a brand may be willing to pay more for a brand because they perceive a unique value in the brand that other alternatives cannot provide. (Berkowitz et al., 1978; Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001)..

Therefore, Keller et al. (2008) suggest that for brand companies to develop a strong brand is determined by consumer research in a changing business environment. By doing so, companies are more likely to produce satisfactory products by involving their consumers during the production process. (K. L. Keller et al., 2008).

Brand Equity

Brand equity according to Bhat (2004) conceptualizes brand equity as a unique image that consumers have of certain products in the market. Meanwhile, Lee & Oh (2006) describe brand equity as the satisfaction that consumers get after consuming a product. Meanwhile, Domingo & Cristina (2012) defined brand equity as a combination of product assets and liabilities that consumers tend to identify with the offerings of a company. (Bhat & Reddy, 2001; Domingo & Cristina, 2012; Lee & Oh, 2006).

Brand equity as a set of characteristics that distinguish a product and automatically trigger consumer demand to buy it to fulfill their needs and wants. Customer satisfaction with a brand is reflected in premium prices and increased market share. Customer brand equity is observed

to be determined by product and organizational attributes (Bregman & Willems, 2011). (Bregman & Willems, 2009; J. M. Keller, 2010).

Customers must value the brand for it to have any significant meaning or effect on the overall productivity of the company. Aaker (2004) argues that the strength of a brand is determined by the customer experience which includes; feelings, information, attitudes, and perceptions. Furthermore, according to him, one approach to measuring the extent to which consumers identify with a brand is through referrals, sales volume, and profits. (Aaker, 2004).

Bhat (2004) mentions, brand equity continues to be the only strategic approach to maintaining customer loyalty despite various interpretations of this concept from a consumer perspective. For this reason, (Kalampokis et al., 2016) also suggested that customer brand equity can be conceptualized in terms of market share, operating costs, and profits generated. (Bhat & Reddy, 2001; Kalampokis et al., 2016)..

However, according to Godey & Lai (2011), brand equity involves the real value that a brand name has in the minds of consumers. It includes aspects that influence the purchasing behavior of individuals and organizations in a constantly changing marketing environment. A strong brand in the market can differentiate the products and services provided by the organization, which results in a premium price. (Godey & Lai, 2011).

Marketing Mix

Marketing mix is a key concept in contemporary marketing strategy, firmly rooted in academic research and practical application. (Santoso & Baihaqi, 2017). This concept consists of factors that companies can control and manage to strategically influence consumer decisions (Kotler & Keller, 2009). (Kotler & Keller, 2009) Academically, the marketing mix is defined as a combination of tactics that a company uses to reach and engage its target audience while achieving its objectives. (Nguyen & Tran, 2018). The concept was first introduced by Neil Borden in 1949 and later defined by McCarthy in 1960 with four P's: product, price, place, and promotion. (McCarthy, 1960; Pourdehghan, 2015)..

These elements are critical to developing brand equity and building relationships with consumers, with each factor especially price playing an important role in consumers' purchasing decisions. (Giovanis et al., 2013).. In addition, geographical factors are also said to be able to influence purchasing behavior, because they function as distribution channels. (Elvinda et al., 2019; Sulaiman et al., 2017).. Over time, the marketing mix in services evolved into the 7Ps, adding people, process, and physical evidence to the traditional framework.

The retail marketing framework, as discussed by (Kotler & Keller, 2009) and (T. N. Nguyen et al., 2015) emphasize the importance of a holistic approach, encompassing product choice, store atmosphere, and customer service. These factors significantly shape consumers' evaluations and purchasing decisions in various sectors, including food retail and residential apartments. (Thabit & Raewf, 2018).

Purchase Decision

Purchasing decisions by consumers are a complex process involving various psychological, social, and economic factors. According to Kotler & Armstrong (2016) purchasing decisions are a component of consumer behavior, where consumer behavior is the study of how a person or group determines, buys, consumes, and what products, ideas, or experiences can satisfy their needs. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016).

In other words, purchasing decisions by consumers are the result of the interaction of various factors, both internal (psychological) and external (social and environmental). With satisfaction

when buying a product, it is certain that consumers will make repurchases. Meanwhile, when it comes to the relationship between brand equity and purchasing decisions, brands have a high influence in terms of purchasing decisions, as the identity of a company, and are a differentiator from one product to another.

Methods

This research uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach as a research method. If done correctly and gradually, SLR can provide the desired information and have reliable sources (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). The data sources used in this research are journal articles, books, and other academic sources that discuss the topics of brand equity and marketing mix and purchasing decisions. (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009).

Step 1: Review Planning

Before conducting a review, what must be done is to provide subject area boundaries. In this study, marketing mix and brand equity are the focus of research to determine the effect of brand equity and marketing mix on restaurant consumer purchasing decisions.

Step 2: Conduct the Review

Table 1. Search string and search formula

Code	Formula for search queries
SS1	"Brand Equity"
SS2	"Marketing Mix"
SS3	"Purchase Decision"
SS4	"Restaurant"

SS: search string

Our comprehensive search began with the selection of databases hosting reputable journal articles, books, etc. We decided to use three large electronic databases (Scopus, Watase Uake and Google Scholar) to ensure the widest possible coverage of the research domain. Search strings were then created, taking into account relevant terms, keywords, their synonyms and acronyms. In addition, we combined the search strings using and and or within the search formula, to generate replicable results from the search query.

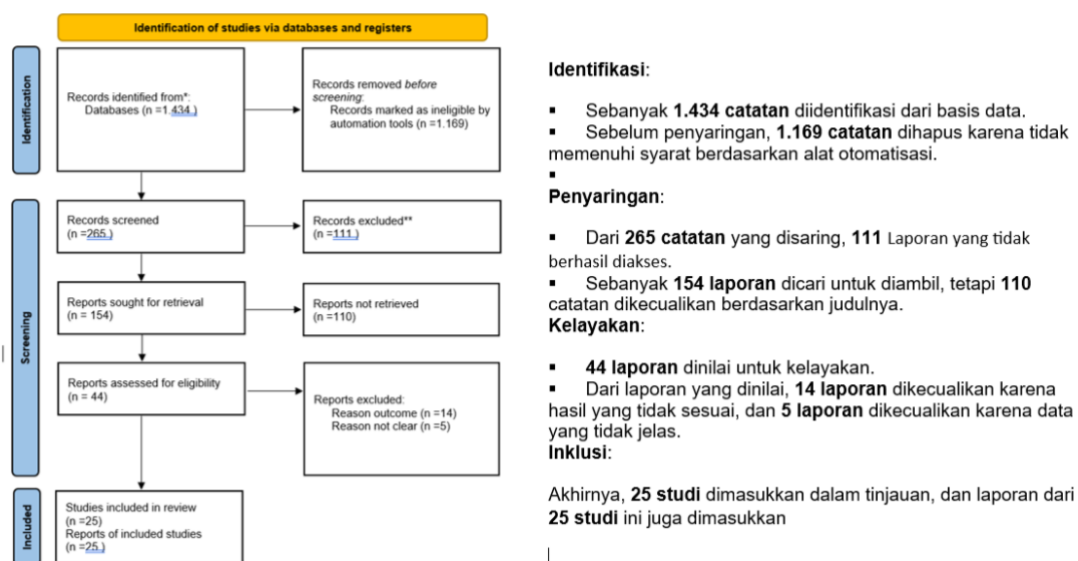


Figure 1. Prisma Diagram

The PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) diagram is an important tool used to visualize the process of literature selection and inclusion in a systematic review or meta-analysis. It provides a comprehensive overview of the research flow from initial identification, screening, eligibility assessment, to inclusion of relevant studies. The main purpose of using the PRISMA diagram is to increase transparency and consistency in the reporting of scientific reviews, ensuring that only the most relevant and high-quality data are used to produce reliable conclusions.

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Step 3: Documenting the Review

The documentation follows rigorous scientific procedures for empirical research. We describe in detail the extraction of relevant data, content analysis to generate research findings, and synthesis of research propositions. We discuss the theoretical underpinnings that demonstrate key concepts, which are fundamental to understanding the research theme. The tasks were carried out in a structured manner to answer the research questions.

Results and Discussion

Over the past few decades, *brand equity* and *marketing mix* have become one of the focuses of marketing research, especially in terms of their influence on consumers' purchase decisions and repeat purchases. Based on a review of twenty-five reviewed journals, the following findings and discussion follow.

Brand Equity and Marketing Mix Theory

Aaker's *Brand Equity Model*, which includes dimensions such as *brand awareness*, *perceived quality*, *brand loyalty*, and *brand associations*, is widely applied in various studies to understand its impact on consumer purchasing decisions. This model is particularly relevant in the fast food industry, where strong *brand equity* has been shown to increase consumers' propensity to purchase, as they have loyalty and positive perceptions of a well-recognized brand. (Hanaysha, 2016).

Meanwhile, the *Marketing Mix* theory, which was originally known as the 4Ps (*Product, Price, Place, Promotion*) and later evolved into 7Ps with the addition of *People, Process, and Physical Evidence* elements, is also applied in various studies to measure its impact on consumer perceptions and decisions, especially in the context of *Quick Service Restaurants* (QSR). The marketing mix concept was first introduced by Neil Borden in 1949 and then defined by McCarthy in 1960 with four P's: product, price, place, and promotion. (McCarthy, 1960; Pourdehghan, 2015)..

Studies show that the right combination of *marketing mix* can create added value and strengthen *brand equity*, especially through elements such as service processes and physical evidence that enhance the consumer experience. (Pheunpha, 2021).

To explore the relationship between *brand equity*, *marketing mix*, and purchase decisions, most studies use a quantitative approach with *Structural Equation Modeling - Partial Least Square* (SEM-PLS) as the main tool. SEM-PLS allows researchers to model the complex relationships

between these variables. For example, this method is used to show how variables such as *brand loyalty* and *perceived quality* can strengthen the relationship between promotional elements and purchase decisions (Shakuntala & Ramantala, 2014). (Shakuntala & Ramantoko, 2023)..

Data in this research is generally collected through surveys or questionnaires with non-probability techniques, such as *purposive* and *convenience sampling*, to gain insight into consumers' experiences with specific brands. This method helps researchers understand the influence of *marketing mix* elements on perceptions and purchase intentions in various industry contexts. (Pheunpha, 2021).

Key Factors and Variables

From the research review, it was found that *brand loyalty* and *perceived quality* are the main variables in the *brand equity* model that significantly influence consumer *repurchasing*. These two variables often serve as mediators between *marketing mix* elements such as product and promotion and consumer purchase decisions, demonstrating the importance of building loyalty and perceived quality. (Owino et al., 2016).

In addition, *marketing mix* elements such as competitive pricing and strategic location are important factors in the fast food industry. In a competitive environment, competitive prices and location accessibility play an important role in increasing consumer interest in buying. (Hanaysha, 2016). The results show that the marketing mix significantly influences consumer purchasing behavior in the context of fast food restaurants. This study highlights the importance of sales promotions, such as discount coupons, in attracting customers and influencing their purchasing decisions. (Obomwan, 2020). Research findings show that improving pricing strategies, distribution channels, promotional activities, staff interactions, operational processes, and physical evidence can improve consumer purchasing decisions. (Thu et al., 2024).

It was found that brand equity has a direct and significant effect on the purchasing decision process. Marketing mix variables were shown to strengthen brand equity, which suggests that a supportive marketing mix can positively influence consumer perceptions. This study concludes that improving marketing mix indicators such as price, people, process, and physical evidence is critical to creating strong brand equity. (Rahmah et al., 2018).

The results show that brand equity significantly affects consumer behavior and firm performance in the fast food industry. The study highlights that brand awareness, perceived value, and brand association collectively form consumer perceptions, which provide a "reason to buy" the product. (Nguyen et al., 2011). The results concluded that brand equity has a strong positive influence on consumer purchasing decisions. Brand association has the highest influence on purchase intention, followed by brand loyalty, which also shows a moderate relationship with purchasing decisions. (D et al., 2021).

Variables such as *brand loyalty* and *brand awareness* play an important role in strengthening the relationship between *marketing mix* elements (such as products and promotions) and purchasing decisions, suggesting that marketing strategies supported by *brand equity* can be more effective in building long-term consumer loyalty. (Shakuntala & Ramantoko, 2023). In conclusion, strong brand equity, which is influenced by marketing mix elements such as price, process, and service quality, has a significant impact on purchasing decisions.

Critical Review

In this research on the influence of *brand equity*, *marketing mix* on purchasing decisions, most of the journals reviewed show important contributions in strengthening the relationship between the two concepts. Aaker's *Brand Equity Model* is the main reference in many studies,

with variables such as *brand equity and marketing mix*, consistently proven to influence purchase decisions. However, many studies still rely on quantitative approaches with SEM-PLS, which while effective in identifying relationships between variables, often neglect qualitative approaches that can reveal consumers' motivations and perceptions in greater depth. For example, these quantitative approaches do not fully explain the reasons behind consumer loyalty to certain brands, especially in competitive environments such as the restaurant industry.

Furthermore, most studies focus on the fast food sector, which results in findings that are quite specific and may be less applicable to other industries with different characteristics, such as luxury goods or educational services. Some studies expanded the marketing mix from 4Ps to 7Ps by adding *people, process, and physical evidence* elements, which are relevant in the service sector but less consistently applied in other industries. This raises questions about the limited generalizability of research findings across sectors.

In terms of data collection methods, most studies use non-probability sampling techniques, such as *purposive and convenience sampling*, which can lead to bias in respondent selection. Although more practical, these techniques are often less representative of the wider population, so the results may not be fully generalizable to other consumer groups.

Overall, although this review of twenty-five journals provides important insights into the influence of *brand equity and marketing mix* on purchase decisions, there is still a need for more varied research approaches, both in terms of methods and sectors. Further research that combines qualitative and quantitative approaches and involves more moderating and mediating variables is expected to enrich the understanding of the dynamics of *brand equity and marketing mix* across different industries and consumer contexts.

Conclusion

From the analysis, it can be concluded that brand equity dimensions such as brand awareness, brand associations, brand loyalty, perceived quality, and pricing policy have a significant influence on consumer purchases or repurchases. This study shows that consumers are more likely to choose products from brands with strong equity and are able to meet their expectations, making brand equity a major factor in consumer purchases. A high level of brand awareness makes it easier for consumers to recognize products, thereby creating greater purchasing opportunities and increasing the company's competitive advantage.

Positive brand associations, including the image and values attached to a brand, also strengthen consumer trust. Perceived quality, whether based on consumers' personal experiences or reviews from other users, plays an important role in purchasing decisions. Therefore, marketing strategies must ensure that products not only meet but also exceed consumers' expectations in terms of quality. In this digital era, online reviews and recommendations have a huge influence in shaping consumer perceptions, so companies need to proactively manage brands across various digital platforms to increase brand equity.

In addition, the right pricing strategy also greatly influences purchasing decisions. Prices must reflect the perceived value of consumers and remain competitive in the market. Companies need to implement pricing policies that are flexible and responsive to changes in demand and consumer behavior. By combining strong brand equity with effective marketing mix strategies, companies can increase consumer loyalty, sales, and profitability in a competitive market.

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