

STUDY OF BRAND IMAGE, CREATIVE MARKETING IN MEDIATING PRODUCT QUALITY AND SERVICE QUALITY ON CONSUMER LOYALTY AT MCDONALD'S DKI JAKARTA AREA DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

The Covid-19 pandemic period is quite a difficult time and has an impact on all sectors including the culinary sector. The times have made a shift in people's lifestyles, where people are now more likely to adopt an instant and fast-paced lifestyle. In terms of the culinary industry, this lifestyle shift has made more outlets from fast food restaurants. In order to remain competitive, fast food restaurants are required to continue to design marketing strategies to retain their customers and attract new consumers. This study aims to analyze the role of brand image and

creative marketing in mediating product quality and service quality on customer loyalty at McDonald's outlets in the DKI Jakarta area during the Covid-19 pandemic. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling. The results show that brand image is a very important aspect in creating consumer loyalty, while creative marketing is not proven to have a role in mediating the relationship between product quality and service quality to customer loyalty without the role of brand image in it.

Keywords: Brand Image, Creative Marketing, Product Quality, Service Quality, Customer Loyalty

Introduction

In order to be able to remain competitive in the industrial world, companies must be able to develop dynamically in this era of globalization, where companies are constantly required to be able to keep up with the times so that they can adapt to existing changes. Companies are required to have a competitive advantage or uniqueness to be able to compete with competitors in the industrial world. The competitive advantage possessed by the company is the company's main key in attracting consumers. To create this competitive advantage, companies need to think about and develop effective marketing strategies in order to attract consumers to buy products or services at a particular company. One of the important factors in attracting consumer interest and attention is the quality that can be provided from the products or services offered by the company. According to [1, 2], the quality of products and services is a very crucial aspect that can affect a company's competitiveness. The company's competitive advantage can be achieved through the quality of products and services that are produced and felt by its consumers, where when consumers are satisfied, there will be trust from within consumers towards these products and services so as to create customer loyalty [3, 4].

One of the industries that is growing rapidly in the competitive business world is the culinary industry. Fast food restaurants are one of the businesses engaged in the industry which is growing rapidly, this is based on changes in consumer lifestyles where consumers today are more likely to adopt an instant and fast-paced lifestyle. The increase in demand for products from fast food restaurants has encouraged quite tight competition in this culinary sector, where the key to the success of fast food restaurants is increasingly dependent on the loyalty of their consumers [5, 6]. The quality perceived by consumers for the products and services of a company is very important to build the brand image of the company. In the food industry, such as fast food restaurants, the main goal is to provide services and food that has value and quality that can create a good image in the minds of consumers [7, 8]. These conditions make fast food restaurant owners to continuously develop their marketing strategies in the face of rapidly changing market dynamics.

According to [9], in overcoming market dynamics that are constantly changing, companies need to have the ability to satisfy and retain their customers, which can refer to creating a company's competitive advantage over its competitors, and can generate profits in the long term. Retaining current customers is a much more successful strategy for companies than attracting new customers to replace lost customers [10]. Fast food restaurants are hybrid products which can be interpreted as a combination of products and services offered with the aim of meeting consumer needs. In a fast food restaurant, consumers not only buy and consume food (tangible) from the restaurant, but consumers also get services (intangible) provided from the restaurant's employees. Whether or not consumers are satisfied with a fast food restaurant is determined by the quality of the food and services provided by the restaurant. When consumers are satisfied with the quality of food and service from a fast food restaurant, a good image will be created in the minds of consumers towards the restaurant, so that it can refer to the creation of consumer loyalty. [11] in his study

states that consumer perceptions of food quality and service quality are important determinants of creating customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

In addition, other aspects that are important factors in creating consumer loyalty are innovation and creativity carried out by a company. These two aspects are very important for the company to be able to keep up with market dynamics that continue to change rapidly. This of course needs to be carried out by the company in order to achieve the company's competitive advantage. Several previous studies have proven that there is a positive impact from the creativity aspect [12, 13], as well as the positive influence of the innovation aspect on the performance of a company [14]. Based on the presentation of [15] in his study, he explained that innovation leads to greater market and financial performance.

Creative and attractive marketing strategies need to be implemented by companies, including fast food restaurants, considering that they can still attract consumers in this competitive era. The results of research conducted by [16, 17] state that advertising content and marketing strategies that are disseminated creatively, especially through social media platforms can improve the company's brand image in the minds of consumers, where these results are also the same as the findings produced by [18] and [19]. Especially during this Covid-19 pandemic, where consumer purchasing power has decreased considerably considering that the pandemic has had quite an impact on all sectors, including the economy. For this reason, fast food restaurants need to think about how to market their food creatively so that they can still attract consumers to buy food, especially in this pandemic era.

McDonald's is one of the fast food restaurants that is well known by the public, especially in Indonesia. Similar to other fast food restaurants, McDonald's is also feeling the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, namely the decline in sales at these outlets during 2020. This condition has made the outlets develop quite interesting marketing strategies, one of which is the outlets collaborating with one of the famous boyband groups from South Korea, namely BTS. Through this collaboration, McDonald's packs its products with an attractive design that symbolizes the fans of BTS. This strategy is quite successful in attracting the attention of consumers, especially young people who like the BTS group, where the menu package is selling well in almost all McDonald's outlets, especially in the Jakarta area. This strategy certainly produces a positive response for consumers, where there is a distinct satisfaction felt by consumers when buying and consuming the collaboration menu. Of course, if McDonald's continues to develop its marketing strategy creatively, it will lead to loyalty for its consumers. In this study, it will be explored further regarding whether aspects of the brand image and creative marketing created by McDonald's have a role in mediating the relationship between product and service quality to McDonald's consumer loyalty in the Jakarta area, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. The research framework of this research is as follows:

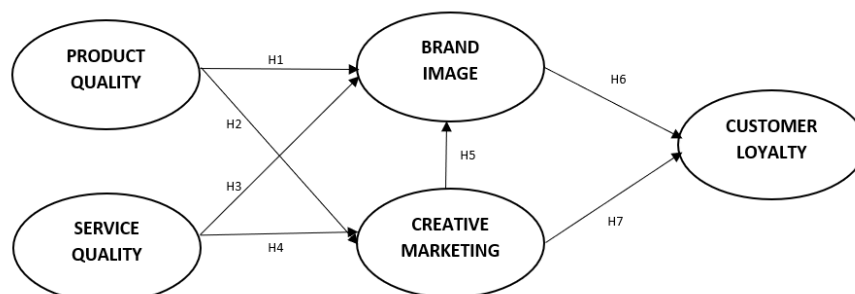


Figure 1. Research Framework

- H1: Product Quality has an effect on Brand Image.
- H2: Product Quality has an effect on Creative Marketing.
- H3: Service Quality has an effect on Brand Image.

- H4: Service Quality has an effect on Creative Marketing.
 H5: Creative Marketing has an effect on Brand Image.
 H6: Brand Image has an effect on Customer Loyalty.
 H7: Creative Marketing has an effect on Customer Loyalty.

Indirect Effect Hypothesis:

- H8: Brand Image mediates the relationship between Product Quality and Customer Loyalty.
 H9: Brand Image mediates the relationship between Service Quality and Customer Loyalty.
 H10: Creative Marketing mediates the relationship between Product Quality and Customer Loyalty.
 H11: Creative Marketing mediates the relationship between Service Quality and Customer Loyalty.

Literature Review

Product & Service Quality

Companies can offer products in a variety of forms. Products can be like physical goods (tangible) or services (intangible). The company's activities in producing an item will determine the quality of the product produced. The better and correct the company's operations produce it, the results of product quality will be more in line with customer desires, where of course customers want to get something that is balanced between paying for a product and also getting an item that is in accordance with its quality. The company has its own challenges in producing quality products. Product quality is a feature and characteristic of a company's product that depends on its ability to create satisfaction to meet consumer needs [20]. Good product quality will win market share. [21] provide a view of product quality as an aspect that is used to meet the wants and needs of customers. Because the company pays attention to the quality of the product, the company can show the various functions contained in the product, such as the durability of the product, product reliability, product accuracy and also the ease of using the product. Product quality is a product or service that has a complex nature, whether palpable or not, including an assessment of the packaging, price, prestige of the company and also the services provided by the company so that it can satisfy the wants and needs of buyers.

On the other hand, service quality is also an important thing for companies to pay attention to in order to compete with competitors and also remain the choice of consumers. Excellent service quality occurs when the service perceived by consumers is comparable or even exceeds what they expect [6]. The services provided must be in accordance with the heart so that consumers feel comfortable. If the product is damaged, then the company must be able to provide the best solution so that customers do not feel disadvantaged. Service quality is a concept where companies can have strategies to bring in new customers and minimize the shift of old customers to competing companies. Service quality can measure how far apart the reality is from the expectations expected by customers based on the services received. It is explained that service quality is an assessment given by customers on the basis of the services received. There are five indicators that need to be considered regarding service quality, namely tangibles, empathy, reliability, responsiveness and assurance.

Research conducted by [22] explains that the quality of a restaurant is determined through three main attributes, including food quality, service quality provided by employees, and the environment. These three aspects are used by consumers to evaluate their satisfaction with the quality of a restaurant they visit [5,

[23] also explained that food quality is the main factor that can affect consumer preferences for a restaurant. The quality of the food in question can be in the form of taste from food, packaging and packaging, food hygiene, and others. While the service aspect is a supporting aspect that can complement the determinants of consumer preferences for a restaurant. The response from consumers regarding their assessment of the perceived difference between what is expected and what consumers receive after consuming the food and services provided will shape consumer satisfaction and loyalty.

Brand Image

Brand image is a perception that is formed in the minds of consumers of a brand [16]. According to [24], consumer perceptions of a brand originate from five levels of satisfaction, namely satisfaction with the brand function, social image related to brand ownership, recognition and sentimental attachment to the brand, balance between brand value and function, and consumer confidence in the brand.

Building a positive brand image of a company can be a shortcut for consumers in the process of making purchasing decisions for a product or service [25]. [26] also suggested that these conditions can also affect the value, satisfaction, and behavior of these customers. The results of previous studies show that although interior and exterior decoration, cleanliness and location attributes are some aspects that are considered important, food quality is evaluated to be the most significant in building a positive restaurant image [16]. The results of other studies also explain that the quality of restaurant food positively affects the brand image of the restaurant [17, 25, 27].

Creative Marketing

Creativity in the context of marketing programs is the extent to which marketing actions for a product or service have a new meaning for consumers [13]. When discussing creative marketing, there are two aspects that are emphasized, namely meaningfulness which shows understanding related to marketing activities that are beneficial to customers. The second is novelty which refers to an activity provided by a company when compared to other competitors [20]. Therefore, it can be said that when a company designs a creative marketing program, it can make a significant difference to the company in competition with its competitors. Several tools that can be used and utilized by companies as a means to implement creative marketing include personal selling, shopper marketing, direct response marketing, public relations, sponsorship, and digital media. Currently, quite a number of restaurants have designed and implemented this creative marketing, one of which is by utilizing social media. Through the disclosure of information in social media can reach consumers more broadly, so that consumers can find out products and services that are packaged in an attractive way to attract the interest of consumers. Various creative marketing activities carried out by the company will be able to encourage sales by forming a positive brand image in the minds of consumers, so as to achieve consumer loyalty [28].

Customer Loyalty

Loyalty can be said as customer loyalty in consuming a product or service. Customer loyalty can have a positive impact on the company. Loyalty cannot be formed by itself if the customer does not buy the product first. Customer loyalty is a positive output resulting from the continuous buying experience that has been felt by the customer. Customer loyalty is someone who always makes repeat purchases so that it will have a positive impact on the company. The nature of customer loyalty

tends to want to buy an item in large quantities and also has a sense of desire to pay for an item at a high price. This customer loyalty is not just buying the product repeatedly without any clarity, but there are attitudes and behavior factors that are shown after the purchase transaction from the customer. The attitude of customer loyalty can be formed through the approach of the company based on aspects of behavior, attitude and integrity. There are four characteristic elements that can describe a customer as having a loyal attitude, namely:

- a. Make purchases regularly or in other words constantly.
- b. Purchasing other product lines or services from one place.
- c. Will not switch to competing products.
- d. Recommend products or services to others.

Methods

The data collected in this study is data obtained directly from the questionnaire through the distribution of questionnaires. The respondents in this study are consumers from McDonald's in the Jakarta area, which are 235 respondents. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, where the intended respondents are consumers who make purchases and consume at McDonald's fast food restaurants domiciled in Jakarta during the Covid-19 pandemic, namely in 2020. In analyzing the data, we use the Structural technique. Equation Modeling through SmartPLS tools.

Research and Discussion

Testing the outer model is the first step that must be taken to determine the validity and reliability of the constructs in this research model.

Table 1

Result of Validity and Reliability

Construct	Cronbachs' Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Product Quality	0,725	0,846	0,654
Service Quality	0,740	0,804	0,578
Brand Image	0,782	0,874	0,699
Creative Marketing	0,781	0,736	0,596
Customer Loyalty	0,774	0,819	0,604

If it is seen from the results of the Cronbach Alpha value, then all constructs have a value exceeding 0.7. The AVE value indicates that all constructs have met the criteria (>0.5), and the reliability value is above 0.7. Based on these results, it can be concluded that all constructs have met the requirements, which are reliable and valid.

Table 2

Result of R-Square

Construct	R-Square
Customer Loyalty	0,482

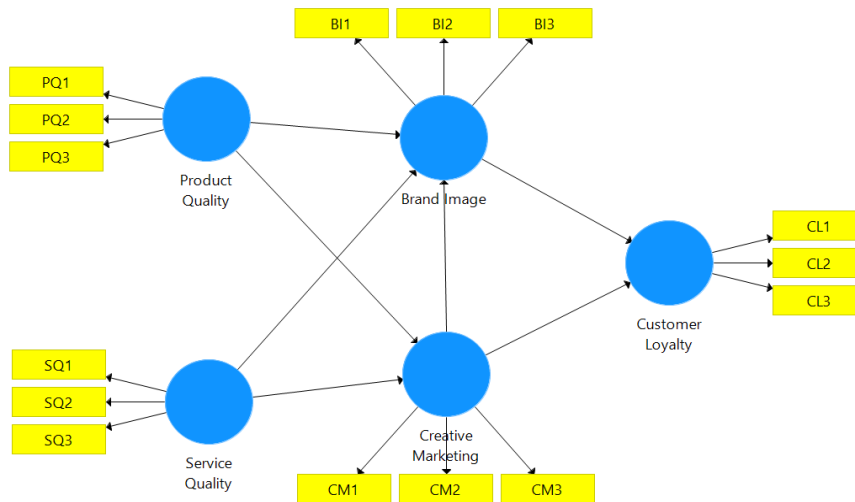
The result of the coefficient of determination (R2) which is 48.2% explains that the ability of all explanatory variables namely product quality, service quality, brand image, and creative marketing in explaining customer loyalty is 48.2%. The remaining 51.8% can be explained by other explanatory variables not examined in this study.

Table 3

Hypothesis Result

Variable	Coefficient	P-Value
Product Quality → Brand Image	0,007	0,026
Product Quality → Creative Marketing	0,235	0,018
Service Quality → Brand Image	0,167	0,032
Service Quality → Creative Marketing	0,302	0,042
Creative Marketing → Brand Image	0,598	0,000
Brand Image → Customer Loyalty	0,221	0,002
Creative Marketing → Customer Loyalty	0,320	0,047
Product Quality → Brand Image → Customer Loyalty	0,001	0,048
Service Quality → Brand Image → Customer Loyalty	0,037	0,019
Product Quality → Creative Marketing → Customer Loyalty	0,075	0,335
Service Quality → Creative Marketing → Customer Loyalty	0,097	0,224
Additional Test Result:		
Product Quality → Creative Marketing → Brand Image → Customer Loyalty	0,031	0,004
Service Quality → Creative Marketing → Brand Image → Customer Loyalty	0,040	0,011

Figure 2. Research Model



Testing the hypothesis in this study obtained results as shown in the table above. Product quality has a significant positive effect (0.007) on brand image. In fast food restaurants, product quality refers to the quality of the food served by the fast food restaurant, in this study the outlet in question is McDonald's in the West Jakarta Region. Food quality is an aspect that is the main consideration for consumers in evaluating and determining the level of acceptance of the food [29]. The results obtained are consistent with the research conducted by [30] and [31], where they prove that food quality is the most significant dimension that can shape the consumer's image of the restaurant. It is also consistent with research conducted by [16] which found that food quality is the most significant evaluation factor in building a positive restaurant image. Similar results also show a positive influence between product quality on creative marketing, and service quality on creative marketing. This

condition explains that when a restaurant has good quality food and service, it will be followed by the construction of a more creative strategy to market the food to consumers.

Service quality is proven to have a significant positive effect (0.167) on brand image. The results obtained are consistent with studies conducted by [11] which explain that the quality of service provided by fast food restaurant employees is an evaluation factor that is no less important in building a good image in the minds of consumers which leads to the creation of consumer satisfaction. This illustrates that restaurants must ensure that their employees provide excellent service to their customers [28]. Restaurant employees who provide good interpersonal interactions to their customers significantly affect the creation of customer quality [32].

Creative marketing proved to have a positive effect (0.598) on brand image. A creative product marketing strategy is certainly a marketing method that is quite effective in attracting consumer interest. In general, creative marketing that has been well packaged by the company is carried out using social media in order to reach a wider range of consumers. These results are consistent with research conducted by [16] which explains that creative advertising content disseminated through social media platforms can improve the brand image of the company's products. Through advertisements, as well as creative information disseminated through social media by companies, companies can stick to the minds of consumers [19]. Of course, when consumers already have a good image of a company, it is likely that consumer loyalty will be formed. Likewise, if the company continues to maintain and develop creative ideas in marketing its products, it will be able to maintain the loyalty of its consumers.

In this study, brand image is proven to have a role in mediating the relationship between product quality and service quality on customer loyalty. As previously explained, in the context of fast food restaurants, when the food and services provided to consumers are of good quality, consumers will have a good evaluation of the restaurant. This will certainly have an impact on the formation of a good image of the restaurant. When the restaurant already has a good image in the minds of consumers, then consumers will be loyal to the restaurant.

On the other hand, creative marketing is not proven to have a role in mediating the relationship between product quality and service quality to customer loyalty. Of course, the results obtained show that, although restaurants offer products and services of good quality and are packaged with creative and attractive marketing strategies, they cannot directly impact the formation of consumer loyalty. Of course, the brand image aspect is an important aspect, where before the formation of consumer loyalty, consumers must have a good image first of the restaurant. This condition is proven through the results of the additional test shown in the table above.

Conclusion

This study aims to analyze the role of brand image and creative marketing in mediating product and service quality on customer loyalty at McDonald's outlets in the DKI Jakarta area during the Covid-19 pandemic. The results obtained indicate that brand image is one of the most important aspects in creating consumer loyalty, while creative marketing is not proven to have a role in mediating the relationship between product quality and service quality to customer loyalty. These results indicate that, although restaurants offer products and services with good quality and are packaged with creative and attractive marketing strategies, they cannot directly impact the formation of consumer loyalty. Of course, the brand image aspect is an important aspect, where before the formation of consumer loyalty, consumers must have a good image first of the restaurant. This condition is proven through the results of the additional test shown in the table above.

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