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DESCRIPTIVE OF QUANTITATIVE DATA | SUPPLEMENTARY

Building Customer Loyalty Through Brand Image: A Case Study on Balong Aja Café in Garut

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Abstract: In an era of increasingly fierce business competition, building customer loyalty is one of the important factors for business continuity, especially in the culinary sector. This study aims to determine the effect of brand image on customer loyalty at Café Balong Aja, Garut. This study uses a quantitative approach with descriptive correlational research. The population in this study were Café Balong Aja customers who visited more than once, with the sampling technique using purposive sampling. The sample used amounted to 100 respondents who met the research criteria. The location of this research was at Café Balong Aja, which is located at Cilopang Adventure Camp, Garut, with the research time lasting six months, from January 2024 to June 2024. Data were obtained through questionnaires distributed to customers and analysed using SPSS. The results showed that brand image has a positive influence on customer loyalty, although the effect is fairly low. This shows that although brand image can increase customer loyalty, other factors such as product quality, service, and customer experience also play an important role. The implication of this study is that it is important for culinary entrepreneurs to strengthen brand image while improving product quality and service to build higher customer loyalty.

Keywords: Brand Image, Customer Loyalty

1. INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalisation marked by technological advances and changes in people's lifestyles, the business sector, especially MSMEs, is experiencing rapid development. This increasingly dynamic lifestyle is followed by increased competition, especially in the culinary industry such as cafes and coffee shops. The existence of cafes is not only limited to a place to enjoy food and drinks, but also a centre of social activity and even culinary tourism. One of the phenomena that needs attention is the increasing number of cafes which results in increasingly fierce competition in various cities. Therefore, it is very important for cafe entrepreneurs to continue to innovate and build a competitive advantage, with customer loyalty as one of the main factors that must be considered to ensure long-term business continuity (Septiady & Nurwulandari, 2022).

This study chose Café Balong Aja (PT ANP Wisata Rasa) as the object of research for various underlying reasons. Café Balong Aja, located in Cilopang Adventure Camp, Garut, has a unique concept, combining culinary with tourist facilities such as overnight stays and sports. In addition, Café Balong Aja offers various interesting activities for visitors. Based on the results of the pre-survey, it was found that the level of customer loyalty in this café is fairly low, so it is the right object to analyse the factors that influence customer loyalty. By comparing Café Balong Aja with other cafes in Garut that have higher ratings, this research is expected to provide an overview of the strengths and weaknesses in Café Balong Aja's brand image and how it affects customer loyalty (Mulia, 2020).

This study focuses on two main variables, namely brand image and customer loyalty. Brand image includes perceptions formed in the minds of consumers regarding the quality of products and services



provided by Café Balong Aja. A strong brand image will create a positive impression in the eyes of customers, which in turn can increase their loyalty. Customer loyalty itself is a long-term commitment to continue to choose the same product or service, despite many alternative choices. By understanding the relationship between these two variables, it is hoped that effective strategies can be found to increase customer loyalty through strengthening brand image (Septiady & Alghatia, 2022).

This research is also motivated by the gaps found in previous studies. Relevant research, such as that conducted by Septiady & Nurwulandari (2022), shows that service quality factors and customer satisfaction have a significant effect on customer loyalty, but not many have discussed the influence of brand image specifically in the context of culinary MSMEs such as Café Balong Aja. In addition, research conducted by Mulia (2020) and Tojiri et al. (2024) also show the relationship between product quality and purchasing decisions, but have not connected it directly with brand image in the culinary industry. Thus, this study will add novelty by analysing how brand image affects customer loyalty in local cafes (Mulia, 2020; Tojiri et al., 2024).

This research has novelty in analysing the effect of brand image on customer loyalty at Café Balong Aja, which is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the importance of brand image in maintaining customer loyalty. The benefit of this study is to provide recommendations to café entrepreneurs on how to strengthen their brand image to increase customer loyalty and, in turn, increase their business competitiveness. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between brand image and customer loyalty and provide strategies that can be implemented by businesses to improve the performance and attractiveness of their businesses amid increasingly fierce competition in the culinary sector (Septiady & Padilah, 2022).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Brand Image

Brand image is a key element in marketing that reflects consumer perceptions of a brand or product. Brand image is formed from various elements, such as product quality, customer experience, and communication and promotion carried out by the company. A positive brand image can increase consumer confidence and influence their purchasing decisions. Tojiri et al. (2024) state that a strong brand image will make it easier for companies to maintain customer loyalty, because consumers tend to choose brands that they already trust and recognise. In addition, brand image also plays an important role in creating differentiation in highly competitive markets, such as those in the culinary industry (Sugiat, 2023).

Meanwhile, Hidayat (2022) mentioned that the creation of a consistent brand image is very important to build long-term relationships with customers. A good impression of the brand, either through product quality or service, will encourage customers to continue using the same product or service. Research by Sugiat et al. (2022) also highlighted that a strong brand image can create better customer loyalty, even in the midst of increasingly fierce competition in the culinary business sector.

2.2 Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty refers to the willingness of customers to continue using products or services from a particular company in the long term. This loyalty is not only influenced by the quality of the product or service, but also by how the company builds emotional relationships with customers (Mulia, 2020). In the context of a café or coffee shop, customer loyalty is very important because it can reduce marketing costs and increase profits through returning customers.

According to Mulia (2020), customer loyalty is influenced by adequate product and service quality, as well as good relationship management with customers. Research by Tojiri et al. (2023) also emphasises that customers' positive experiences will have a major influence on their decision to remain loyal. In addition, customer loyalty is also influenced by elements such as attractive promotions,

loyalty programmes, and good communication between companies and customers (Sugiat et al., 2022).

2.3 Relationship between Brand Image and Customer Loyalty

There is a very close relationship between brand image and customer loyalty. A positive brand image not only builds a good perception in the eyes of consumers, but also increases the likelihood of them remaining loyal to the brand. As explained by Sugiat (2020), a strong brand image can create emotional bonds with customers that lead to repeat purchases and word-of-mouth recommendations.

Research by Hidayat (2024) shows that a brand image formed through consistent product and service quality can encourage customers to not only return, but also recommend the product or service to others. By improving brand image, companies can create higher customer loyalty, which in turn will help maintain their position in a competitive market (Tojiri et al., 2024).

Although many studies have examined customer loyalty and brand image, there are still gaps in the context of the local culinary industry. Research by Septiady & Nurwulandari (2022) and Sugiat et al. (2022) show the importance of service factors and product quality in building loyalty, but few discuss how brand image directly affects customer loyalty, especially in the culinary MSME sector. Therefore, this research focuses on filling the gap by examining the effect of brand image on customer loyalty at Café Balong Aja, a growing local café in Garut.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

This research uses a quantitative approach with descriptive correlational research. Descriptive research aims to systematically describe or provide an overview of the effect of brand image on customer loyalty at Café Balong Aja. Meanwhile, correlational research aims to determine whether there is a relationship between two variables, namely brand image (independent variable) and customer loyalty (dependent variable). This type of research is designed to gain a better understanding of how much influence brand image has on customer loyalty based on the data collected (Yusuf Tojiri, M. M., Putra, H. S., & Nur Faliza, S. E., 2023).

3.1. Research Instruments

The main instrument in this study was a questionnaire distributed to Café Balong Aja customers who met the sample criteria. This questionnaire contains statements related to brand image and customer loyalty, which are arranged based on a Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). In addition to the questionnaire, secondary data such as information on the number of visitors and café ratings were also used to support the analysis results. This questionnaire method is an efficient tool to collect data directly from respondents who can provide relevant information regarding their perceptions of brand image and customer loyalty (Subagyo, A., et al., 2023).

3.2. Data Source

The data sources in this study consist of two types, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data is obtained directly from respondents through filling out questionnaires. Respondents in this study were customers who visited Café Balong Aja more than once, who gave responses regarding brand image and customer loyalty. Secondary data was obtained from other relevant sources, such as information about the history of Café Balong Aja, ratings from various review platforms (e.g. Google Reviews), as well as documents related to brand image and customer loyalty at the café. The use of both types of data helps to enrich the research results and provide a more comprehensive analysis (Yusuf Tojiri et al., 2023).

3.3. Population and Sample



The population in this study were all Café Balong Aja customers who visited more than once in the research period. This population is expected to provide a representative picture of the effect of brand image on customer loyalty. The sampling technique uses non-probability sampling techniques with a purposive sampling approach, which means that respondents are selected based on certain criteria relevant to the research objectives. The number of samples taken in this study were 100 respondents, which were considered sufficient to represent the existing population and meet the research objectives (Yusuf Tojiri et al., 2023).

3.4. Data Analysis Technique

To analyse the data obtained from the questionnaire, researchers used several statistical analysis techniques. First, descriptive analysis was used to describe the characteristics of the respondents and describe the data regarding brand image and customer loyalty. Second, the Pearson (or Spearman Rank) correlation test was used to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between brand image (independent variable) and customer loyalty (dependent variable). Third, the coefficient of determination test is used to determine how much brand image contributes to customer loyalty. Fourth, the hypothesis test (t test) is used to test whether there is a significant influence between brand image on customer loyalty. All analyses were conducted using SPSS Version 25 to calculate the correlation coefficient, coefficient of determination, and t test (Subagyo, A., et al., 2023).

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Validity and Reliability Test

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Test

T est	R esults
Validity T est	All items are valid (correlation value > 0.3)
Reliability T est	Cronbach's Alpha = 0.85

The validity test results show that all items in the questionnaire have a correlation value greater than 0.3, indicating that all items are valid. In addition, the reliability test was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha, with a result of 0.85, which indicates that the questionnaire instrument is highly reliable because it exceeds the recommended threshold value of 0.7.

4.2 Correlation Coefficient Test

Table 2. Correlation Coefficient of Brand Image and Customer Loyalty

Brand Image	Customer Loyalty
0.339	Low influence

The processing results using SPSS Version 25 show a correlation coefficient value of 0.339. This figure indicates a low influence between Brand Image and Customer Loyalty, which is in the coefficient interval 0.20 - 0.399. This means, if the Brand Image is good, then Customer Loyalty will increase, and vice versa, if the Brand Image is bad, Customer Loyalty will decrease.

4.3 Determination Coefficient Test

Table 3. Coefficient of Determination of the Effect of Brand Image on Customer Loyalty

Variables	Contribution (%)
Brand Image	11%
Other Factors (Unexamined)	89%

The processing results use SPSS Version 25, which produces a coefficient of determination of 11%. This means that Brand Image contributes 11% to Customer Loyalty, while the remaining 89% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study, such as customer satisfaction, product quality, perceived value, trust, and others.

4.4 Hypothesis Test

The t test is used to test whether the independent variable (Brand Image) has a significant effect on the dependent variable (Customer Loyalty). Based on the test criteria, H₀ is rejected if $t_{count} > t_{table}$ or if the significance value is smaller than 0.05.

In this test, the t_{count} is 3.566, which is greater than the t_{table} 1.661, and the significance value of 0.001 is smaller than 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that H₀ is rejected and H₁ is accepted, which means that there is a positive and significant influence between Brand Image on Customer Loyalty at Café Balong Aja.

Table 4. Brand Image t test on Customer Loyalty

thitung	ttable	Significance
3.566	1.661	0.001

DISCUSSION

Relationship between Brand Image and Customer Loyalty

Based on the results of the study, there is a significant influence between brand image and customer loyalty at Café Balong Aja. Testing the correlation coefficient which produces a value of 0.339 shows that the relationship between the two variables is in the **low** category, which means that brand image has an impact on customer loyalty, but the effect is not very strong. This result shows that although brand image can affect customer loyalty, there are other factors that influence it, such as the quality of products and services provided.

This research is in line with the findings of Septiady & Nurwulandari (2022), which show that good service can increase customer satisfaction, which in turn strengthens their loyalty. However, this study is slightly different from the research by Sugiat et al. (2022) which shows that customer loyalty can be influenced by several factors such as price and product quality. In the research of Café Balong Aja, although brand image affects customer loyalty, the contribution is fairly low, which is only 11%. This could be due to other factors that are more dominant in shaping loyalty, such as customers' personal experiences, the variety of products offered, or a less than optimal loyalty programme.

However, this study differs from several previous studies that indicate that the relationship between brand image and customer loyalty is often very strong. For example, Tojiri et al. (2024) showed a stronger relationship between brand image and loyalty in the context of the tourism industry, where the influence of brand image is often greater in shaping customer loyalty. This indicates that the culinary industry may have additional factors to consider, such as direct experience and satisfaction with the product, that play a greater role than brand image alone.

The Effect of Brand Image on Customer Loyalty at Café Balong Aja

Based on the results of the coefficient of determination test which shows the contribution of the influence of Brand Image on Customer Loyalty of 11%, it can be concluded that most of the factors that influence customer loyalty at Café Balong Aja come from other factors not examined in this study, such as service quality, price, product variety, and other external factors that are more dominant. Research by Mulia (2020) which discusses the influence of advertising and product quality on purchasing decisions also shows that although external factors such as advertising influence purchasing decisions, the main factors that shape customer loyalty still come from the experience and satisfaction that customers feel with products and services.

Based on this difference in findings, this study suggests that in the culinary sector, customers may prioritise their direct experience, and factors such as product and service quality are very important in creating loyalty. For example, although the brand image of Café Balong Aja is good, if the customer experience at the café does not match expectations or if the quality of the products offered is inconsistent, customer loyalty will be difficult to form.

This study has several differences with previous research which emphasises product quality and service as the main factors in shaping customer loyalty. For example, Mulia (2020) shows that product quality and advertising influence are very significant in influencing purchasing decisions. However, in this study, although the brand image at Café Balong Aja is quite good, its influence on customer loyalty is relatively low, which indicates that brand image alone is not strong enough to create high loyalty. Meanwhile, research conducted by Sugiat et al. (2022) shows that the effect of price on customer loyalty is much greater than the effect of brand image. This may also explain why in Café Balong Aja, although the brand image is relatively good, other factors such as price and product quality may play a more significant role in shaping customer loyalty.

The results of this study have important implications for café entrepreneurs and the culinary industry in general. Although brand image can influence customer loyalty, entrepreneurs should note that other factors such as product quality, good service, and competitive prices also play a major role in creating customer loyalty. Therefore, to increase customer loyalty, Café Balong Aja needs to strengthen their brand image by maintaining product quality and providing adequate service. Adding service variety and enhancing customer experience can further increase customer loyalty, even if their brand image is not yet fully strong. Thus, although brand image is an important element, café entrepreneurs need to combine efforts to strengthen brand image with improvements in product quality and service aspects to create a well-rounded and sustainable customer experience, which can ultimately increase customer loyalty in the long run.

This study confirms that brand image does affect customer loyalty, but with a relatively small contribution, only 11%. Other factors, such as product quality, customer experience, and price, may be more influential in shaping customer loyalty. This study shows a difference with previous research, which emphasises the strong influence of brand image on customer loyalty in other sectors, such as tourism and other industrial sectors. Therefore, entrepreneurs in the culinary sector such as Café Balong Aja need to balance efforts to build brand image with improvements in product quality and customer experience to strengthen their customer loyalty.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that brand image affects customer loyalty at Café Balong Aja, but the effect is not dominant. Although a good brand image can help increase customer loyalty, other factors such as product quality, service, and customer experience during visits play a greater role in shaping this loyalty. This shows that brand image alone is not enough to guarantee high customer loyalty, especially in the highly competitive culinary industry that prioritises direct customer experience. In addition, the results of this study show that in the culinary sector, customers are more likely to maintain their loyalty based on a good consumption experience, the variety of services offered, and how a cafe is able to create a closer relationship with its customers. Therefore, although a positive brand image can be an initial attraction for customers, improvements are still needed in various other aspects to strengthen customer loyalty in a sustainable manner. Café Balong Aja can increase customer loyalty by strengthening marketing strategies, improving service quality, and providing more product variations that can meet customer expectations.

For future research, it is recommended that other broader factors that influence customer loyalty be examined, such as product quality, customer experience, promotional strategies, and more in-depth customer relationships. This research only focuses on brand image, so there are still many other factors that have not been explored in more detail that may have a greater contribution to customer loyalty in the culinary business. In addition, the scope of research locations can also be expanded so that the

research results are more representative and can be compared with other cafes or culinary businesses that have different strategies in building customer loyalty. In addition, for future researchers, it is recommended to use more varied research methods, such as a qualitative approach or a mixture of quantitative and qualitative, in order to explore more deeply the emotional and psychological factors that influence customer loyalty. This research can also be extended by examining the effectiveness of customer loyalty programmes or digital innovations in culinary marketing, which can provide greater insight into the most effective strategies in increasing customer loyalty in this sector.

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