

## BRAND IMAGE EXPLORATION IN ENSURING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE TODAY'S COFFEE SHOP BUSINESS

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### ABSTRACT

*Contemporary coffee shops face challenges in maintaining customer loyalty and satisfaction despite offering similar products. Likewise, understanding the role of brand image in shaping customer satisfaction is still limited. This study aims to explore in depth the role of brand image, product quality, service, atmosphere and digital media in ensuring customer satisfaction in contemporary coffee shops in Kendari city. The research method used is descriptive qualitative with data collection through in-depth interviews and direct observation of customers and selected coffee shop managers. The results of the study indicate that a strong and consistent brand image supported by product quality, friendly service, comfortable atmosphere and creative digital communication have an effect on customer satisfaction and loyalty. The implications of this study emphasize the importance of integrated branding strategies and active customer involvement to increase the competitiveness of contemporary coffee shops in a competitive market.*

**Keywords:** Brand image, customer satisfaction, product quality, customer loyalty

### INTRODUCTION

The contemporary coffee shop industry in Indonesia is experiencing rapid growth along with changes in the lifestyle of urban society, especially among the younger generation who make coffee a part of their identity and social experience (Muflikh, Zamborita, and Burhani 2024; Muh. Husriadi, Citra Ayu Ningsi 2025). Consumers no longer only judge products in terms of taste but also prioritize the overall experience that includes atmosphere, service, and brand image (Sah, Hong, and Huang 2025). Increasingly tight competition requires coffee shop business actors to develop effective branding strategies to differentiate themselves and attract customers sustainably berkelanjutan (Koay and Low 2025). Although many coffee shops offer attractive products, they still face difficulties in maintaining customer loyalty and satisfaction. The lack of in-depth understanding of how brand image affects customer satisfaction is a major obstacle (Alfiansyah, Pamungkas, and Bakhri 2024; Husriadi and Kartika

2024). In addition, there is inconsistency in the results of previous studies related to the relationship between brand image and customer satisfaction in the contemporary coffee shop segment so that a more specific and contextual study is needed. (Cindy and Zai 2024; Husriadi 2024).

Likewise, previous studies have focused more on aspects of product, price, and location as determinants of customer satisfaction while in-depth exploration of brand image is still limited, especially in the context of contemporary coffee shops in Indonesia. In addition, there are still few studies that integrate qualitative and quantitative approaches to understand customer perceptions in assessing brand image comprehensively, so this study fills this gap with a more holistic and contextual approach. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify and analyze the role of brand image in increasing customer satisfaction in contemporary coffee shop businesses. The focus is to explore specific factors of brand image that contribute most to customer satisfaction and provide strategic recommendations for business actors in building and strengthening brand image to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty sustainably. This study also offers a new approach by comprehensively examining the role of brand image in ensuring customer satisfaction in contemporary coffee shops that are relevant to local market conditions and trends of young urban consumers. Its main contribution is the development of a conceptual model that is in accordance with the dynamics of the Indonesian market and the enrichment of service marketing literature in the SMEs coffee shop sector.

The practical implications of this study are expected to help coffee shop business actors in designing effective branding strategies to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty in the long term.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research method uses a descriptive qualitative design to deeply understand the phenomenon of brand image and customer satisfaction in contemporary coffee shops. The research population consists of customers and coffee shop managers who are selected by purposive sampling, namely by considering the criteria of relevance and the ability to provide in-depth information. The research procedure includes data collection through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation studies to obtain a comprehensive picture. The data analysis technique uses the Miles and Huberman interactive model which includes data reduction, data presentation, and systematic drawing of conclusions. This approach allows researchers to identify patterns, themes, and meanings that emerge from the data, resulting in a holistic understanding of the relationship between brand image and customer satisfaction in the context of contemporary coffee shops.

## DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Brand Image Perception

Based on the results of this study, a strong brand identity, visual consistency, and emotional value built through branding elements have a significant impact on the perception of brand image. Brand identity acts as an essence that reflects the company's values, vision, and personality so that it becomes a guideline for customers in recognizing and associating the brand. Visual consistency, such as the use of uniform logos, colors and typography across various platforms, strengthens brand trust and credibility in the eyes of consumers. In addition, today's coffee shop customers not only assess product quality but also the experience they feel, including the atmosphere and service that consistently reflect brand values. This is supported by the findings of the study (Liang et al. 2024). that an effective logo design can increase brand awareness and form deep positive associations that contribute to customer loyalty. In addition, attractive and consistent visual elements also trigger emotional involvement in customers that can create a more personal and authentic relationship with the brand. The emotional value built through this brand image is very important in forming positive perceptions and customer satisfaction. Likewise with the study (Liang et al. 2024) a strong and visually consistent brand image can generate trust and emotional attachment and become the main foundation in building customer satisfaction. Therefore, managing an integrated brand identity with consistent visual elements and authentic emotional values is a crucial strategy in strengthening the brand image of a contemporary coffee shop which has a direct impact on increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

### 5.2 Customer Satisfaction Factors

Based on the results of this study, customer satisfaction factors in contemporary coffee shops include product quality, service, atmosphere, and personal interactions which are interrelated and contribute to the overall customer experience.



Figure 1 Customer Satisfaction Factors in Coffee Shops

Product quality, such as menu variety and consistency of taste, is the main foundation of satisfaction. Customers expect quality products that meet their expectations, so coffee shops need to maintain standards of raw materials and production processes. In addition, friendly, fast, and responsive service also plays an important role in creating a positive experience for customers. Personal interactions between staff and customers, such as providing recommendations or remembering orders, can increase emotional attachment and customer loyalty. A comfortable and attractive atmosphere is also a determining factor in customer satisfaction in contemporary coffee shops. Aesthetic interior design, proper lighting, and functional layout can create a conducive environment for relaxing, working, or socializing. A pleasant atmosphere can enhance the overall customer experience and encourage them to come back again. This is supported by research findings (An, Lee, and Shin 2023) that the combination of product quality, service, atmosphere, and good personal interaction can create optimal customer satisfaction and have a positive impact on brand loyalty and word-of-mouth marketing. Therefore, contemporary coffee shops need to pay attention to every aspect of customer satisfaction factor to create a memorable experience and meet customer expectations. Maintaining product quality, friendly service, a comfortable atmosphere, and sincere personal interactions can help coffee shops build strong relationships with customers and increase competitiveness in an increasingly competitive market.

### **5.3 The Role of Digital Media**

Based on the results of this study, the role of digital media in building brand image and increasing customer satisfaction in contemporary coffee shops is increasingly crucial, especially through online communication, creative content, and customer engagement. For example, social media such as Instagram and Tok-tok are the main platforms for conveying brand messages effectively and building more personal interactions with audiences. Attractive visual content, such as high-quality product photos, videos of the coffee making process, and stories behind the brand, can attract attention and build emotional closeness with customers. In addition, customer engagement through interactive features and digital promotions has been shown to increase loyalty and satisfaction. This is supported by research findings (Luo et al. 2021) that promotional content, discounts, and creative activities on digital platforms are the main attractions that influence positive customer perceptions of the brand. A persuasive communication approach that emphasizes emotional narratives and aesthetic visuals also strengthens personal relationships with customers and creates virtual

experiences. This strategy not only increases brand visibility but also builds an active and loyal customer community. Therefore, digital media is not just a promotional tool but a strategic means to build an authentic and interactive brand image. Creative content management and active customer engagement through digital platforms are key to ensuring customer satisfaction and strengthening the position of contemporary coffee shops in a competitive market.

#### **5.4 Loyalty and Comparison**

Based on the results of this study, the comfort, product quality, and ease of access offered have a significant impact on customer loyalty in contemporary coffee shops. Customers choose to return to a particular coffee shop because they feel comfortable with the atmosphere offered, consistent coffee quality, and responsive service. In addition, strategic locations that are easy to reach and practical payment systems such as the use of QRIS e-wallet also increase comfort and facilitate the customer experience, thus encouraging repeat visits. Likewise, attractive interior design and supporting facilities are also important reasons why customers want to return and spend more time in coffee shops. This is supported by the findings of the study (Ting et al. 2018) which identified four main motivations that encourage consumers to revisit coffee shops, namely comfort and product quality, space design, and facilities. Of the four motivations, comfort and product quality are the dominant factors that influence customer loyalty. Consumers tend to choose coffee shops that offer a comfortable environment, quality products, economical prices, and good accessibility. This finding is in line with another study (Lee 2022) that positive customer experiences, both in terms of products and services, are the main keys to building loyalty and encouraging word-of-mouth recommendations. Therefore, contemporary coffee shops need to continue to improve product quality, create a comfortable atmosphere, and facilitate access and transactions to retain customers and strengthen their position in a competitive market. This strategy not only increases customer satisfaction but also builds sustainable long-term relationships.

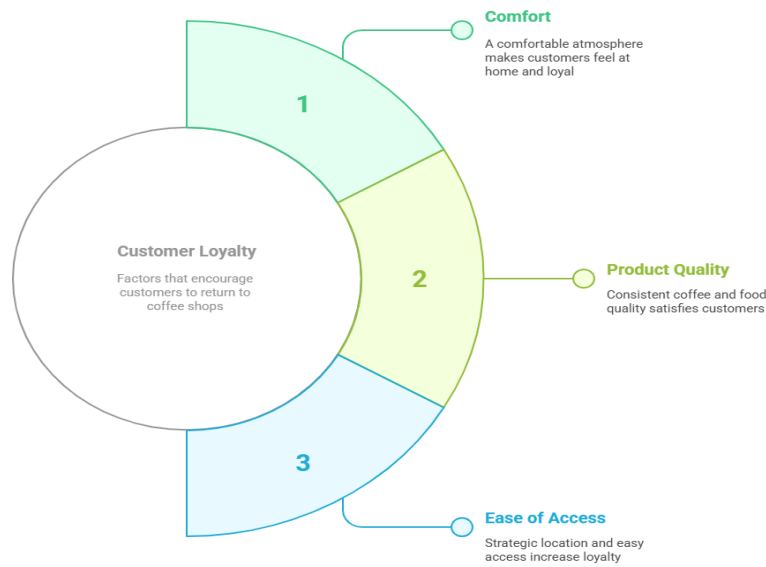


Figure 2 Customer Loyalty

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that brand image, product quality, service, and atmosphere have an effect on customer satisfaction in contemporary coffee shops. A strong and consistent brand image can build positive perceptions, increase trust and encourage customer loyalty. Maintained product quality, friendly service and a comfortable atmosphere further strengthen the customer experience, thereby encouraging repurchase intentions and positive recommendations. In addition, customer engagement through digital media and creative communication has also been shown to strengthen the relationship between brands and consumers. Therefore, coffee shop business actors in Kendari City are advised to continue to strengthen their brand identity and image through consistent visual and communication innovations and maintain product and service quality standards and actively build customer engagement both offline and online. It is also important to pay attention to customer feedback regularly to improve overall experience and satisfaction. With an integrated strategy, contemporary coffee shops in Kendari City can maintain customer loyalty and strengthen competitiveness in an increasingly competitive market.

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