

BRAND IMAGE OF PESANTREN, PRODUCT DIFFERENTIATION, AND ITS IMPACT ON CONSUMER LOYALTY: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION AT THE BASMALAH STORE

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of brand image and product differentiation on consumer loyalty in Basmalah stores through consumer satisfaction. The sample used was 100 people. The data analysis method used was analysis with the PLS-SEM method. Hypothesis testing was carried out through bootstrap testing. The results of the t-test, brand image has a significant effect on consumer loyalty, brand image has a significant effect on consumer satisfaction, product differentiation does not have a significant effect on consumer loyalty but has a significant effect if through consumer satisfaction as a mediating variable, product differentiation has a significant effect on consumer satisfaction, consumer satisfaction has a significant effect on consumer loyalty. Basmalah shop is necessary Keep going strengthening brand image and differentiation products offered For strengthen loyalty consumers.

Keywords: Consumer Loyalty; Brand Image, Product Differentiation, Consumer Satisfaction

Introduction

The significant development of the Islamic boarding school economy cannot be separated from various factors, one of which is the policy that encourages Islamic boarding schools to achieve economic independence. One of the key policies is Islamic boarding school law No. 18 of 2019, which provides as solid legal foundation for pesantren to systematically and professionally expand into economic activities. According to (Kamilah & ZH, 2023; Mohsen et al., 2022), this law mandates an active economic empowerment function for pesantren, though limited inter pesantren collaboration requires many pesantren to negative the free market individually. (Khoirurrijal et al., 2023) further note that law No. 18/2019 contributes to the enhancement of indonesia's Human Development index by encouraging pesantren to engage in vocational education and economic empowerment efforts.

Additionally, highlight that the pesantren economic independence program (bolstered by BUMN-linked investment capital) focuses on optimizing pesantren assets and operations for longevity (Muheramtohadhi et al., 2022). A study by (Masrur & Arwani, 2022) confirms that pesantren such as walindo have responded to this legal framework by establishing cooperative stores, muslim boutiques, water production units, and other student-led businesses since the law's enactment.

This competitive advantage is applied to the basmalah shop located in Situbondo under the management of the Sidogiri Islamic Boarding School foundation. The Sidogiri Islamic Boarding School in Pasuruan was established in 1718 and is one of the 3rd oldest Islamic educational institutions in East Java

(Rosliana, 2023) . For more than 300 years, this Islamic boarding school has developed into an influential educational institution in East Java and has succeeded in attracting thousands of students from various regions. In addition to focusing on education, the Islamic boarding school founded by KH. Sadoellah Nawawi also plays an important role in developing the people's economy through various business units (Busthami, n.d.). According to the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs (Pambudi & Hendratmi, 2020) , Islamic boarding schools have a large capacity to become centers for empowering the people's economy. The Basmalah Shop is one of the cooperatives with a good business development system and is based on Islamic Boarding Schools, (Pambudi & Hendratmi, 2020) . The Basmalah Shop is also one of the leading business units of the Sidogiri Islamic Boarding School from PT. Sidogiri Mitra Usaha, which was founded in 1961 (Busthami, n.d.)

Basmalah Store has successfully opened 271 branches spread across East Java and other regions in Indonesia (Busthami, n.d.). Basmalah Store is an example of the success of integrating Islamic values in the business world. By offering a variety of products from basic necessities to electronics and health products, Basmalah Store has become an important player in the local retail industry. The success of Basmalah Store cannot be separated from the strength of the brand image of the Sidogiri Islamic Boarding School, according to (Widiawati, 2020) , brand image is a consumer perception of a brand, which forms trust and loyalty. As the 3rd oldest Islamic Educational Institution in East Java, Sidogiri has built a strong reputation in society, especially in East Java. This reputation creates public trust in the products and services produced by this Institution. In a business context, this strong brand image is the main asset of the Basmalah Store in attracting and retaining consumers.

In addition, another advantage of the Basmalah store lies in its ability to provide a variety of products with good quality. According to (Kotler, P., & Armstrong, 2018) product differentiation is a marketing strategy that aims to differentiate the Company's products or services from competitors through features, performance or style. Through the product differentiation strategy, this store is able to meet various consumer needs at competitive prices, without ignoring quality and sharia principles. Some products sold by the Basmalah store are also products that are only produced by PT. Sidogiri Mitra Usaha and which are only sold at the Basmalah Store and are not sold in any other store such as santri water, kopyah and Sidogiri's signature taqwa clothes (Busthami, n.d.). In addition to having product differentiation, the Basmalah store also has many unique features that differentiate it from its competitors, some of which are that Basmalah has a wholesale system to help grocery stores, the losses of the Basmalah store are also not borne by employees like Alfamart, the uniqueness of the Basmalah store is also from the Basmalah employees who are required to wear kopyah and sarong costumes that reflect the *image of* Islamic boarding school students, the Basmalah store also does not have female employees (Busthami, n.d.). In addition, the Basmalah store also prioritizes alumni, students, and the community around the store to become Basmalah employees. This strategy is not only about product diversity, but also reflects the business philosophy of the Sidogiri Islamic boarding school which prioritizes serving the community with honesty and blessings.

Based on the results of interviews with several consumers of the Basmalah store in the pre-study, it was shown that some people agreed that the variables of the pesantren *brand image* and product differentiation influenced their loyalty to the Basmalah store, but some others stated that these variables did not influence consumers to be loyal to the Basmalah store, this phenomenon is one of the reasons

researchers studied whether the pesantren brand image and product differentiation affect consumer loyalty to the Basmalah store. This consumer loyalty is influenced by consumer satisfaction where According to Armistead and Clark in (Sumadi et al., 2021) consumer satisfaction is a marketing concept and has gone through consumer research. Consumer satisfaction is something that greatly influences the running of a business or business that is run. The services provided to consumers will trigger satisfaction for a consumer for the services provided (Sumadi et al., 2021) . Consumer satisfaction also influences consumer loyalty, this is supported by research by (Syah et al., 2022) where there is a positive and significant influence of consumer satisfaction on consumer loyalty.

In addition to differences in consumer opinions, previous studies have shown inconsistent findings regarding the relationship between brand image, product differentiation, customer satisfaction, and loyalty. For example, the study conducted by (Syaidah & Ramadhika, 2023) found that brand image had a significant positive effect on customer loyalty in the online retail context, supported by strong statistical results. However, in contrast, (Sayekti & Dwiridotjahjono, 2022) found that brand image did not have a significant effect on customer loyalty, and even product differentiation also failed to show a significant direct influence on loyalty. These conflicting results highlight that the influence of brand image and product differentiation on customer loyalty is not always consistent across different business models. Therefore, this study intends to re-examine these relationships in a pesantren-based retail setting, which carries unique cultural, spiritual, and social values that may influence customer behavior differently.

The Basmalah store branch in Situbondo was chosen as the research location because of the good profit percentage and the rapid development of the Basmalah store in the Situbondo branch to be able to compete with large retail stores such as Indomart and Alfamart. The second reason for choosing the research location is because the researcher comes from the city. As a researcher from Situbondo, local knowledge and understanding of market dynamics in this area will provide a deeper perspective in the analysis.

Literature review

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is a theory proposed by Ajzen (Ajzen, 1991) . TPB has five variables, namely; behavior, intention or interest, behavioral control, and subjective norms. A person's attitude is defined as their belief in their behavior or their belief about the potential consequences of their behavior. Attitude is also an assessment of an object, concept, or behavior that describes what is good or bad, what someone likes or dislikes. As a result of that attitude, something is rejected or accepted. This attitude encourages someone to act, in this study the action gave rise to loyalty.

Consumer Loyalty

Consumer loyalty is an emotional and behavioral attachment shown by consumers in the form of preference and loyalty to a particular brand or institution. According to (L., 1999) , consumer loyalty can be measured by the extent to which consumers tend to choose and remain loyal to a brand or institution, even though there are other options that may be better. According to Kotler and Keller (2006: 57) in (Tehuayo, 2021) indicators of consumer loyalty include: making repeat purchases (*repeat purchase*), resistance to negative influences regarding the company (*retention*), and recommending to others (*referalls*).

Islamic Boarding School Brand Image

Brand image according to Kotler and Keller (2009) is a consumer's perception embedded in his memory, which can first arise in the mind when a consumer hears a brand. According to Aaker and Biel (2009:71) in (Helen Heliani et al., 2022) the *Brand Image* indicators are the Maker Image (*Corporate Image*), Product Image (*Product Image*), and User Image (*User Image*). according to (Hidayani & Arief, 2023) Brand image is correlated significant to satisfaction consumers , brand image also has an influence positive and significant to loyalty Customers (Sari, 2023) consumer satisfaction is able to partially mediate between brand image and product quality towards consumer loyalty (Naully & Saryadi, 2021). With thus hypothesis can formulated as following :

H₁ : *Brand image* has a significant effect on *consumer satisfaction*.

H₂ : *Brand Image* has a significant influence on Consumer Loyalty .

H₆ : *Brand Image* has a significant influence on Consumer Loyalty . *Through satisfaction consumer*

Product Differentiation

Product differentiation is the act of designing a series of meaningful differences to distinguish a company's offering from competitors' offerings. In product differentiation, the product has a meaning or value that the company creates a new product that is perceived by all customers as a unique product (Tehuayo, 2021) . And according to Kotler (2018:43) in (Watung et al., 2022) Product differentiation can be divided into form, features, performance quality, conformity quality, durability, reliability, easy to repair. According to (Muhammad & Febriatmoko, 2022) differentiation product influential to satisfaction Consumers , Brand Experience and Perceived Differentiation have also been proven to have a direct and significant effect on Brand Loyalty (Sosrobahu & Isa, 2025), (Luo & Huang, 2015) also emphasized that the superiority perceived by consumers compared to competitor products is an important aspect of perceived differentiation, which is directly related to loyalty decisions. Consumer satisfaction can strengthen the relationship between product differentiation and consumer loyalty (Aryani, 2024). With thus hypothesis can formulated as following :

H₃ : Product differentiation has a significant influence on Consumer Satisfaction

H₄ : Product differentiation has a significant influence on Consumer Loyalty

H₇ : Product differentiation has a significant effect on consumer loyalty through consumer satisfaction .

Customer satisfaction

According to Kotler & Kevin Lane Keller, (2009) in (Syah et al., 2022) Consumer satisfaction is a feeling that states the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of consumers regarding the comparison between their expectations and the results obtained by a product or service. Indicators of consumer satisfaction according to Kotler & Keller (2009) in (Syah et al., 2022) are: the level of perception of quality after enjoying the product being sold, the level of product conformity with expectations and reality, and a high level of customer satisfaction that can create an emotional bond. There is no submission of customer complaints. According to (Genangku & Sabariah, 2023) customer satisfaction simultaneously and partially has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty . With thus hypothesis can formulated as following :

H₅ : Satisfaction consumer has a significant influence on Consumer Loyalty

Research methods

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method, which was conducted in Situbondo Regency, East Java, from October 2024 until completion. The population in this study is the people of Situbondo Regency, but due to limited time, resources, and accessibility, samples will be taken purposively from individuals who have shopped at the Basmalah Store.

Variable	Indicators	Source
Consumer Loyalty	Repeat purchases, Resistance to negative influences (Retention), Recommending to others (Referrals)	Kotler & Keller (2006:57) in (Tehuayo, 2021)
Brand Image	Corporate Image, Product Image, User Image	Aaker & Biel (2009:71) in (Helen Heliani et al., 2022)
Product Differentiation	Form, Features, Performance Quality, Conformity Quality, Durability, Reliability, Ease of Repair	Kotler (2018:43) in (Watung et al., 2022)
Customer Satisfaction	Perceived quality after using the product, Conformity of the product with expectations and reality, High satisfaction level creates emotional bonds, Absence of customer complaints	Kotler & Keller (2009) in (Syah et al., 2022))

Data were collected through a questionnaire measured using a semantic scale. Data analysis was carried out using SmartPLS with the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Partial Least Square (PLS) and Bootstrap approaches, which are divided into Outer Model and Inner Model analysis. In the Outer Model, data validity and reliability tests are carried out, while in the Inner Model there are tests for the R-Square and Q2 values. Overall, this study aims to obtain an in-depth picture of the preferences of the Situbondo Regency community in shopping and Hypothesis Testing (*Bootstrapping*).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Profile

Table 1. Respondent Profile

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Man	59	59%
	Woman	41	41%
	Total	100	100%
Age	< 17 Years	6	6%
	18-22 Years	29	29%
	23-27 Years	40	40%
	28-32 Years	14	14%

	33-37 Years	1	1%
	38-42 Years	5	5%
	48-52 Years	5	5%
	Total	100	100%

Based on the table above, from 100 respondents who filled out the questionnaire, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents were male, 59%, and dominated by the age group 23-27 years (40%).

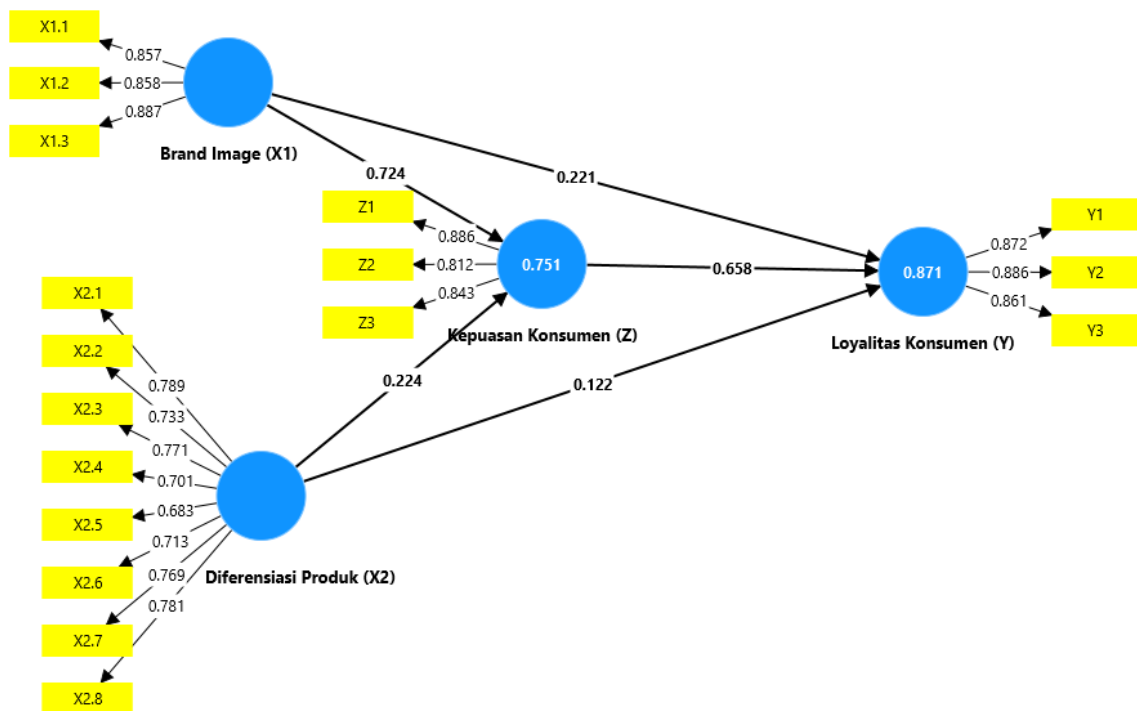


Figure 1. Research Model

Convergent Validity

According to Chin (in Ghozali, 2008) for the initial stage of research on the development of a measurement scale, a loading value of 0.5 to 0.6 is considered sufficient. In this study, a loading factor limit of 0.60 will be used.

Table 2. Convergent validity test results

indicator variable	Loading Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability Composite	AVE	Conclusion
Brand Image	X1.1	0.857	0.836	0.753	Good
	X1.2	0.858			
	X1.3	0.887			
	X2.1	0.789	0.884	0.553	Good
	X2.2	0.733			

Differentiation Product	X2.3	0.771				
	X2.4	0.701				
	X2.5	0.683				
	X2.6	0.713				
	X2.7	0.769				
	X2.8	0.781				
Loyalty Consumer	Y1	0.872				
	Y2	0.886	0.844	0.845	0.762	Good
	Y3	0.861				
Satisfaction Consumer	Z1	0.886				
	Z2	0.812	0.804	0.808	0.719	Good
	Z3	0.843				

Discriminant Validity

In the discriminant validity test, one way to measure it is to look at the value of cross loading factor; an indicator is declared valid if it has the highest loading factor value to the intended construct compared to the loading factor value to other constructs (Hair et al., 2014). From table 3, numbers printed boldly show the maximum number in each row. It appears that the loading factor of each indicator against the variable or construct of the destination has the most significant value, and this indicates that latent constructs predict indicators on their blocks better than indicators in other blocks.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity Test Results

	Brand Image (X1)	Differentiation Product (X2)	Satisfaction Consumer (Z)	Loyalty Consumer (Y)	Conclusion
X1.1	0.857	0.411	0.711	0.708	Good
X1.2	0.858	0.494	0.734	0.730	Good
X1.3	0.887	0.507	0.756	0.758	Good
X2.1	0.507	0.789	0.523	0.564	Good
X2.2	0.378	0.733	0.468	0.461	Good
X2.3	0.406	0.771	0.435	0.426	Good
X2.4	0.333	0.701	0.348	0.400	Good
X2.5	0.423	0.683	0.416	0.515	Good
X2.6	0.362	0.713	0.443	0.460	Good
X2.7	0.373	0.769	0.508	0.546	Good
X2.8	0.429	0.781	0.499	0.450	Good
Y1	0.742	0.571	0.808	0.872	Good
Y2	0.733	0.576	0.828	0.886	Good
Y3	0.737	0.552	0.774	0.861	Good
Z1	0.75	0.559	0.886	0.830	Good
Z2	0.686	0.441	0.812	0.739	Good

Z3	0.714	0.567	0.843	0.77	Good
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Composite Reliability

Composite Reliability value > 0.7 and Cronbach's Alpha value > 0.7 indicate a high level of reliability (Rahadi, 2021) . As seen in Table 2, the entire construct in the model has a value of Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability >0.70. So that all statements on the indicator are reliable and adequate.

R-Square (R²)

R-squared values with values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 indicate that the model is strong, moderate, and weak (Hair et al., 2018) .

Table 4. Value R²

Variables	R-square	Conclusion
Satisfaction Consumer (Z)	0.751	Robust
Loyalty Consumer (Y)	0.871	Robust

Q² Predictive Relevance

Hair et al. (2014) explain that accuracy prediction or Q² is an observation of how well the path model can predict the variables studied. If the size effect value is at 0.02, then it is worth a small amount. If the value is 0.15, then the category is moderate, and if it is worth 0.35 it means significant.

Table 5. Value Q²

Variables	Q ² predict	Conclusion
Customer Satisfaction	0.726	Good
Consumer Loyalty	0.744	Good

SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual)

Hair et al. (2014) states that SRMR is the square root of the fair difference of the implied matrix with the empirical correlation matrix. It is an absolute model match value. The smaller the difference from the estimated model with the results, the better the model. The SRMR value is said to be good if < 0.08. The model is said to be getting better if the value of the SRMR gets smaller, even rated perfect if the value is 0(Hair et al., 2018).

Table 6. SRMR Test

Original sample (O)	Conclusion

Saturated model	0.07	Good
Estimated model	0.07	Good

Hypothesis Testing (*Bootstrapping*)

Table 7. contains path coefficient information along with T statistical values and P-values obtained from smartPLS bootstrapping calculations. The information in this table becomes a reference in evaluating hypotheses.

Table 7. Path Coefficient Value

Influence Between Variables	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Conclusions
Direct Influence						
Brand Image (X1) -> Consumer Satisfaction (Z)	0.724	0.719	0.086	8,461	0.000	Significant
Brand Image (X1) -> Consumer Loyalty (Y)	0.221	0.226	0.077	2,872	0.004	Significant
Product Differentiation (X2) -> Consumer Satisfaction (Z)	0.224	0.232	0.089	2,516	0.012	Significant
Product Differentiation (X2) -> Consumer Loyalty (Y)	0.122	0.131	0.069	1,766	0.077	Not Significant
Consumer Satisfaction (Z) -> Consumer Loyalty (Y)	0.658	0.644	0.103	6.386	0.000	Significant
Indirect Influence						
Brand Image (X1) -> Consumer Satisfaction (Z) ->	0.477	0.463	0.093	5.107	0.000	Significant

Consumer
Loyalty (Y)

Product Differentiation (X2) -> Consumer Satisfaction (Z) -> Consumer Loyalty (Y)	0.148	0.148	0.059	2,512	0.012	Significant
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Direct Effect

Effect of Brand Image (X1) on Consumer Satisfaction (Z)

The results of the first hypothesis test show a relationship between brand image and consumer satisfaction, with a path coefficient value of 0.724 (positive) with a T statistic value of 8.461 greater than the t table (1.660). The P-value is 0.000 <0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that brand image has a positive and significant influence on consumer satisfaction.

The results of this study are supported by research by Naully and Saryadi (2021) which shows that Brand Image has a significant positive influence on Consumer Satisfaction. Explaining that the better the Brand Image, the more satisfied the consumer will be. Because a good Brand Image will provide good satisfaction and may be maximal in the minds of consumers.

Effect of Brand Image (X1) on Consumer Loyalty (Y)

The results of the second hypothesis test show a relationship between brand image and consumer loyalty, with a path coefficient value of 0.221 (positive) with a T statistic value of 2,872 greater than the t table (1,660). The P-value is 0.004 <0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that brand image has a positive and significant influence on consumer loyalty.

The results of this study are supported by research by Naully and Saryadi (2021) and Sari (2023) which shows that Brand Image has a significant positive influence on Consumer loyalty. Explaining that if consumers know the product very well, the more loyal consumers will be to continue making repeat purchases.

Effect of Product Differentiation (X2) on Consumer Satisfaction (Z)

The results of the third hypothesis test show a relationship between Product Differentiation (X2) and Consumer Satisfaction (Z) with a path coefficient value of 0.224 (positive) with a T statistic value of 2,516 greater than the t table (1,660). The P-value is 0.012 <0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that product differentiation has a positive and significant influence on consumer satisfaction.

The results of this study are supported by research by (Muhammad & Febriatmoko, 2022) which shows that the better the product differentiation strategy carried out by the company to be offered to its consumers, the more it will be able to increase consumer satisfaction with the product. These results indicate that a

product differentiation strategy as a differentiator from other products can be one of the factors that plays an important role in increasing the satisfaction felt by consumers after purchasing the product.

Effect of Product Differentiation (X2) on Consumer Loyalty (Y)

The results of the fourth hypothesis test show a relationship between product differentiation and consumer loyalty, with a path coefficient value of 0.122 (positive) with a T statistic value of 1.766 > t table (1.660). P-value of 0.077 > 0.05. Thus it can be concluded that product differentiation has an insignificant effect on consumer loyalty.

The results of this study are supported by research by (Syawab & Nursolih, 2023) which shows a positive and significant effect of product differentiation on customer loyalty. This means that if the implementation of product differentiation increases, customer loyalty will increase.

Effect of Consumer Satisfaction (Z) on Consumer Loyalty (Y)

The results of the fifth hypothesis test show a relationship between consumer satisfaction and consumer loyalty, with a path coefficient value of 0.658 (positive) with a T statistic value of 6,386 greater than the t table (1,660). The P-value is 0.000 < 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that consumer satisfaction has a positive and significant influence on consumer loyalty.

The results of this study are supported by research by (Agustini et al., 2022) which shows the influence of consumer satisfaction variables on consumer loyalty positively and significantly. This means that if consumer satisfaction increases, consumer loyalty will increase.

Indirect Effects

Effect of Brand Image (X1) towards Consumer Loyalty (Y) through Consumer Satisfaction (Z)

The results of the sixth hypothesis test show a path coefficient value of 0.477 (positive) with a T statistic value of 5.107 greater than the t table (1.660). The P-value is 0.000 < 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that brand image has an indirect and significant influence on consumer loyalty through consumer satisfaction.

The results of this study are supported by research by (Naully & Saryadi, 2021) which shows that Consumer Satisfaction as a partial intervening variable means that in creating good Consumer Loyalty, the factors that form consumer satisfaction are not only absolutely influenced by Brand Image and Consumer Satisfaction received, but are also influenced by other factors outside of Brand Image in creating Consumer Satisfaction.

Effect of Product Differentiation (X2) on Consumer Loyalty (Y) through Consumer Satisfaction (Z)

The results of the seventh hypothesis test show a path coefficient value of 0.148 (positive) with a T statistic value of 2,512 greater than the t table (1,660). The P-value is 0.012 < 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that product differentiation has an indirect and significant effect on consumer loyalty through consumer satisfaction.

The results of this study are supported by research by (Aryani, 2024) and (Cahyana, 2021) which shows that consumer satisfaction can moderate the effect between product differentiation and consumer loyalty. This means that increasing product differentiation must be accompanied by increasing customer satisfaction so that customer loyalty also increases.

Conclusion And Recommendation

Conclusion

Development economy Islamic boarding schools, especially those managed by the Islamic Boarding School Foundation Sidogiri through Basmalah Shop in Situbondo, showing existence connection significant between brand image, differentiation product, satisfaction consumers, and loyalty consumers. Based on findings, brand image has influence big to satisfaction consumer with contribution of 0.724, which indicates that image positive that is attached to the Basmalah Store, which is related with reputation Islamic Boarding School Sidogiri, can increase satisfaction Consumer. Satisfaction This Then become factor the key that pushes loyalty consumers, with contribution of 0.658. This is show that consumers who feel satisfied with experience shop more tend For still become customer loyal and recommend Basmalah Store to others.

Differentiation products also play role important in increase satisfaction consumers, with contribution of 0.224, because products offered own uniqueness and value add that differentiates Basmalah Store from competitor others. Although Thus, differentiation product No influential direct to loyalty consumers (contribution 0.122), but own influence No direct through improvement satisfaction consumer with contribution of 0.148. Therefore that, Basmalah Store needs Keep going strengthening brand image and differentiation products offered For strengthen loyalty consumers, while ensure that experience consumer still positive and satisfying, ultimately will increase sustainability business in term long.

Recommendation

Basmalah store is expected to increase customer satisfaction by improving services so that customer loyalty continues to increase. and for further researchers it is suggested to add research variables such as price, promotion, and service quality which can have a positive influence on consumer satisfaction and loyalty.

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