

EXPLORATION OF BRAND POSITIONING AND DIFFERENTIATION DYNAMICS IN IMPROVING PRODUCT BRANDING

Harmiaty Bahar*

Halu Oleo University, Kendari, Indonesia
mhymiedirga@gmail.com

Yussi Rahmawati

Atma Jaya Catholic University, Jakarta, Indonesia
yussi.rahmawati@atmajaya.ac.id

Muh. Husriadi

Halu Oleo University, Kendari, Indonesia
husriadiadi@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The market is growing competitive and digitalized demand companies to integrate positioning and differentiation strategies brand in a way effective use strengthen product branding. This research aims exploring the dynamics of positioning and differentiation integration brand in the context of improving product branding, with a focus on uniqueness feature product, coherence between brand position and attributes differentiation, as well as utilization of digital platforms for personalization experience consumers. The method used is qualitative research with data collection through interview deep to practitioners marketing and management brand. The results of the study show that unique product innovation and special features service is foundation capable differentiation strengthen brand position in a way authentic. Consistent coherence between promises in positioning and attributes applied differentiation build trust and loyalty consumers. In addition, personalization experience brand through digital platforms to improve proximity as well as relevance brands with consumers, encouraging stronger interactions and loyalty in the digital age. Implications practical from this research emphasizes importance strategic integration through coordination cross departments and the use of digital technology ethically to produce adaptive and sustainable branding. These findings contribute significant theoretical and practical implications in management development modern brands in the global market.

Keywords: brand positioning, differentiation product, product innovation.

INTRODUCTION

Product branding has become one of the aspect crucial in modern marketing strategies, especially in dealing with increasing market competition tight and dynamic (Aaker 2023) . In the era of globalization and digitalization Nowadays, consumers own wider access and easy information obtained, so that company must capably create mark add strength so that the

brand can stand out in the middle crowd. In this context, positioning and differentiation brand emerged as two fundamental concepts that play an important role in building image and loyalty consumer (Palaniswamy and Duraiswamy 2023) . Positioning allows brand to take a specific and relevant position in the mind consumers, while differentiation brand emphasize uniqueness products or services compared to competitors. These two strategies not only strengthen perception positive towards the product, but also a driving force main in the formation superiority sustainable competitiveness (Golob et al. 2022) . However, however, still there is challenge significant in the application of positioning and differentiation brand in a way simultaneous in practice marketing, especially in a rapidly changing and complex market environment (Schlegelmilch 2022) . One of the problem the main thing is the lack of holistic understanding regarding how both these concepts are interconnected interact and influence product branding power in a way overall (Helmold 2022) . Many companies have difficulty in developing a strategy that is able to integrate clear positioning with authentic differentiation, so that often expected branding results difficult achieved. This challenge is increasingly exacerbated by the dynamics of global markets and digital technologies that demand fast and innovative adaptation from every stakeholder's interests. Research is also directed at identifying practice best and obstacles faced companies in managing positioning and differentiation in a way effective. In addition, this research attempts to formulate recommendation strategies that can be applied by industry players to increase competitiveness product through integrated branding management (Keller and Brexendorf 2016) . From the review existing literature, it was found that most of Most previous studies have focused only on brand positioning or differentiation. product in a way separate, so less digging mechanism simultaneous interactions and impacts both of them towards branding success in general comprehensive. This gap shows the need for a research approach that integrates these two concepts in a dynamic framework that is capable of catch complexity market changes and behavior consumers. In addition, the literature that connects This branding theory with an empirical context in the Indonesian market is still limited, so this research is expected to capable fill in This gap also provides relevant contributions to the development of theory. and practice marketing (Mogaji 2021) . This research not only adds outlook theories related to interdependence between positioning and differentiation, but also emphasizes the importance of the dynamics of rapid change in today's business environment. The resulting contribution expected to enrich literature management marketing by presenting innovation in understanding adaptive and sustainable branding strategies.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach Because This method allows exploration in-depth understanding of the dynamic phenomena related to positioning and differentiation brand in the context of product branding, which is complex and contextual (Creswell, 2013). The research design applied is a case study, for the reason This design is able to provide understanding comprehensive understanding of processes and interactions in real contexts and supports a rich analysis of branding practices (Yin, 2018). The research population consists of from marketing and management industry players brands in companies that have been active carry out positioning and differentiation strategies. Sample chosen purposively, with criteria relevance and ability to provide information deep regarding the phenomenon being studied. The research procedure follows stages data collection through interview in-depth and observation participatory, because This method is effective for catching perspective and experience subject in detail (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Collected data analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model which includes data reduction, data presentation, and data extraction conclusion, because This method is systematic in managing and interpreting qualitative data. so that produce valid and reliable findings.

DISCUSSION

Uniqueness feature product / service

Based on research results show that the uniqueness feature products and services is element key to an effective differentiation strategy to strengthen product branding. The informants emphasizes that innovation and excellence product is not just fulfil need functional consumers, but also creates mark add a differentiator brand from competitors in a way significant. This uniqueness is achieved through feature development exclusive that is not easy imitated, such as design innovative, advanced technology, and experience personal and responsive service. Informant explains that this differentiation strategy is a driving force main loyalty consumer, because consumer feel benefit directly that makes them feel the brand is relevant and superior compared to other alternatives in the market. This discussion is in line with the findings of recent research from (Biazzo and Filippini 2021) who emphasized that unique product innovation plays a vital role in creating superiority competitive . They state that products with different features and value add that it is clear that it is capable build equity strong brand in the eye's consumers. In addition, research by (Z. Wang, Wang, and Sun 2024) also highlights the importance of innovation as a response to dynamic market needs , where brands must Keep going update and enrich the offer to remain relevant and capable compete in the digital ecosystem. Therefore, the results of this study provide an illustration that differentiation innovation is not only limited to the aspect technical products, but also on a personal and emotional service approach, which plays a role strengthen brand position. Therefore, companies that are able to guard consistency and originality differentiation

products and services tend to get higher recognition and trust from consumers, which ultimately impacts positively on product branding sustainability (Graham and Bonner 2024).

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Coherence between brand position and attributes differentiation

Based on research results show that coherence between brand position and attributes differentiation hold an important role in strengthening product branding in a way effective. The informants stated that the harmony between promises made in positioning with realization differentiation product or service produce perception a brand that is authentic and can be trusted by consumers. When the attributes emphasized differentiation according to the promised position, consumers feel that the brand meets their expectations in general consistent, so that strengthen loyalty and satisfaction. On the other hand, mismatch between positioning and differentiation can give rise to confusion as well as lower mark. The results of this study are in line with the results of research (Lim, Aggarwal, and Dandotiya 2022) which shows that the differentiation strategy influential positive and significant impact on positioning, with a value determination of 79.1% which shows strength connection between differentiation product, service, image, and market position. The study confirms that a strong brand position is useless if the attributes differentiation is less relevant or less consistent

applied. Likewise, a study by Dani (2021) confirmed that the strength of positioning-differentiation coherence forms a clear and profitable brand in the tight business competition. Therefore, a successful company guards the suitability of close coordination between team product research and development with the team marketing and communication brand. They monitor in a way continuous market feedback and conduct adjustments to ensure messages and features product still harmonious. Then from that, the formation of solid brand equity and increasing superiority competitive company in the middle very dynamic competition. Therefore, brand position coherence and differentiation are not only a matter of marketing strategy, but also an organizational culture that values integrity and consistency throughout business aspects. Thus, this research strengthens understanding that the success of product branding is highly dependent on continuity between what was promised brand and what it actually embodies in the offering products and services. A strategy that integrates both in a way harmony is an important prerequisite in facing challenges of today's global and digital markets. The research results show that the coherence between brand position and attributes differentiation has a crucial role in strengthening product branding. Informant confirms that the suitability between promises made in positioning with realization differentiation product make the brand becomes more credible and trustworthy to consumers. When differentiation is applied according to the position held, consumers feel that the product fulfil expectation in a way consistent, so that increase loyalty and satisfaction customer. On the contrary, misalignment between positioning and differentiation can give rise to confusion consumers and reduce mark brand. This finding is supported by research by Kusnanto and Azhari (2023), who found that the differentiation strategy influential positive significant to positioning with value determination of 79.1%. These results indicate that the success of positioning is highly dependent on the quality and consistency differentiation products, services, and image. Another study by Dani (2021) also emphasized importance coherence strategic positioning- differentiation in forming image strong and competitive brands in a tight market. This research shows that companies that are successful in maintaining this coherence does coordination close between related departments, as well as in a way active Monitor market feedback. Strategy adjustments are made continuously to ensure message brands and features product still harmonious and relevant. Then from that not only creates solid brand equity but also an advantage competitive in facing current market dynamics and digital technology.

Utilization of digital platforms

Based on research results show that the use of digital platforms for personalization experience branding becomes a central strategy in building proximity and relevance brands with consumers. The informants explains that the use of social media, email marketing, and applications digital technology based allows company to deliver messages and recommendations products tailored to preferences as well as behavior individual consumers.

This personalization not only improves level involvement consumers, but also strengthens connection emotional impact on loyalty customer. Informant emphasizes that the ability utilizing big data and algorithms intelligence artificial in identifying need unique consumer real-time is key the success of this strategy. The results of this study are supported by Surjono's research (2025) which shows that personalization content digital marketing in significant increase engagement and retention customers. The research confirms that relevant and unique experiences for each consumer create attachment strong emotional attachment to the brand. In addition, Kumar and Reinartz (2018) suggest that an integrated and seamless digital experience through omnichannel marketing can increase satisfaction and loyalty customer in a way significant. Two-way interaction through digital platforms also helps company understand need consumers better and provide a quick and relevant response. Therefore, from results interview shows that digital personalization strengthens a brand's position in a competitive market by delivering felt experience exclusive and close to consumers. However, informants also emphasized importance guard customer data privacy and security to ensure trust is not compromised. Therefore, the use of digital technology for personalization must balance with high transparency and ethics. So, personalization through digital platforms is an element essential strategy in strengthening product branding, especially in meeting expectation consumers in today's digital era.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the integration of positioning and differentiation dynamics brand plays a very important role in strengthening product branding in an increasingly competitive market era. competitive and digitalized. Uniqueness feature innovative products and services are the foundation main effective differentiation, resulting in mark add a differentiator brand from competitors in a way real. Coherence between the promised brand position and attributes realized differentiation is key trust and loyalty consumers, strengthening brand equity sustainably. In addition, the use of digital platforms for personalization experience brand becomes a strategic strategy use weave proximity emotional and high relevance to consumers, at the same time increase loyalty and interaction. This research proves that companies that are able to apply third the elements in a harmonious will be superior in creating experience authentic and competitive brands. Therefore, for further research development, it is suggested combines quantitative approaches to examine the integrative impact of positioning, differentiation, and digital personalization on branding performance more broadly and measurably. Researchers also explore in more depth the role of the latest digital technologies, such as intelligence. artificial and big data, in personalizing experience consumers and support branding strategies. From the perspective of practical, company recommended strengthen collaboration between department in maintaining harmony messages and products as well as utilizing digital technology effectively ethical and

transparent to build trust consumers. Rapid and innovative adaptation to market needs and emphasis on integrity brand is key sustained success in facing challenge globalization and digitalization.

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