

## Analysis of Product Differentiation on Customer Satisfaction and The Effect on Customer Loyalty at Jomtea Batam

Raudhatul Fauziah<sup>a</sup>, Shinta Wahyu Hati<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Politeknik Negeri Batam

<sup>b</sup> Politeknik Negeri Batam

✉ raudhatul.rf123@gmail.com

Received: 6 March 2026 ; Accepted: 18 March 2026 ; Published: 26 March 2026

**ABSTRACT.** This study aims to analyze the effect of product differentiation and its implications on customer satisfaction on customer loyalty either partially or simultaneously. The population are people who have bought Jomtea product with 100 respondents as sample using purposive sampling technique. The analysis technique applied for hypothesis testing is path analysis. The results show that product differentiation had a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. With an R Square value of 0.788, this shows that the variables of price, uniqueness, and brand image are 78.8% simultaneously able to influence customer loyalty through Jomtea customer satisfaction in Batam City, while 0.212 or 21.2% are obtained from other variables. Based on path analysis, it was found that the customer satisfaction variable as an intervening variable was declared unable to mediate the relationship between exogenous variables and endogenous variables.

Keyword: Product Differentiation; Price; Uniqueness; Brandimage; Customer Satisfaction; Customer Loyalty

JEL Classification: L1, M31, M30

Jurnal Bisnis dan Kewirausahaan, Vol. 3 No. 1, pp. 81-91  
Copyright © Internasional Connecting Publisher  
ISSN: 3089-3062  
DOI: 10.71154/181z7j86



## **INTRODUCTION**

Jomtea is a local F&B brand in Batam that offers contemporary products with a target market of millennials. Jomtea was founded at the end of 2016. In the beginning Jomtea sell tea-based drinks served with various fruit flavors that can be enjoyed anytime and anywhere Jomtea has opened five outlets in Batam City which are spread across various regions including Legenda Sei Panas, Batu Aji, Botania and Tiban with increasingly varied and updated menus such as banana nuggets, dwinggers, korean street food, smoothies series, frap series, chocolate series, coffee, milk tea series, lemonade series, early gray series, pentol, meatballs aci, noodles, rice bowls and various other food and snack products.

Business competition is very tight in the current era of globalization, requiring business owner to always try to fulfill consumer needs and offer something different from other business and produce quality products. Therefore, various efforts are needed for product development so that business can offer innovative products so that consumers buy products that suit the needs and tastes of the community. To retain customers, business actors are advised to have a strategy that can be applied by business to be implemented in their business products, such as product differentiation that can be done to add product value in order to survive and be able to compete in the midst of competitive market competition.

In addition to implementing product differentiation, Jomtea has also improved the quality of customer service, product quality, and various other promotions to increase customer satisfaction. Based on the trend of food and beverage industry growth data (Industrial Research Data, 2021) shown that in 2019-2020 there was a very significant decline and, according to BPS data, 92.47% of business in the food and beverage sector experienced a decrease in income. However, Jomtea managed to survive and continues to operate to this day. Successfully differentiated the product, so that it can continue to attract the attention of customers who always want new variants in accordance with the development of the culinary field and are supported by customers who have high loyalty.

This is in line with the research conducted by Tehuayo (2021) that product differentiation can have a significant effect and can increase customer loyalty. Several previous studies have also shown a link between product differentiation and customer loyalty, Tehuayo said that product differentiation can have a positive impact and differentiation must be done in order to increase consumer loyalty. This statement is also supported by Ardika (2021). Based on the explanation and discussion above, we can conclude that product differentiation will actually provide difference and added value to the product. Product differentiation is created to attract customers from competitors' offerings and increase customer satisfaction, which can have an impact on customer loyalty. Harmonious relationships between customers and producers can create long-term customer loyalty.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Product Differentiation**

Product differentiation in general can be interpreted as an action to provide a differentiator to a product or service with the aim of making the product have its own attractiveness value. Product differentiation is a product offering that consumers perceive as different from competitors in terms of physical or non-physical product characteristics, including price. Kartajaya (2010) explains that

differentiation is all efforts of business owner to make a difference with similar competitors with the aim of providing maximum and highest value to consumers. Differentiation is a strategy of business actors to maintain customer loyalty. By using a differentiation strategy, customers can get more value compared to similar products.

Henry Mintzberg in the book *International Business in The 21st Century* (Keillor & Wilkinson, 2011) states that in general there are several forms of product differentiation including price, image, support, design, quality. Mintzberg states that these differentiations are in the same position and compete with each other in order to achieve competitive advantage and be able to compete in the market. This is in accordance with the opinion (Trout, 2001) that product differentiation is also influenced by quality, line extension, market specificity, price, and preferences.

The concept of product differentiation in this study is based on pre-research research that has been carried out by researchers and in accordance with Mintzberg's theory, Trout is the appropriate variable for this research. Then it can be concluded that the indicators of product differentiation are (1) price, (2) product uniqueness, (3) brand image.

### **Price**

According to Kotler and Keller (2016) price is an element of the marketing mix that can generate income, expenses needed by customers to acquire products, including the cost of returning or reimbursement. Setting prices for goods and services is a key strategy in various companies as a consequence of deregulation, increasingly fierce global competition, low growth in many markets, and providing opportunities for entrepreneurs to establish their position in the market. Price affects financial performance and also greatly affects the perception of buyers in brand positioning. Price becomes a measure of product quality will be quality if buyers have difficulty evaluating complex products.

Tjiptono (2014) stated that price is a component that directly affects operating profit. The price level set affects the quantity and quality of products. In addition, indirectly, the price also affects the cost. In addition, indirectly, price also affects costs, because the quantity sold affects the costs incurred in relation to the efficiency and quality of the product. Therefore because pricing affects the opinion of total and total costs, then pricing decisions and strategies play an important role in every business. In addition, Tjiptono also mentioned several indicators used for price determination including affordability, conformity, price competitiveness, the suitability of the price paid by the customer in accordance with the benefits received by the customer.

### **Uniqueness**

The uniqueness of the product is the added value that makes the product stand out compared to other competitors. Uniting a company's products is important and must always be improved. By continuing to develop the uniqueness of a product, a product image will be formed which is a differentiator among products on the market (Sarosa, 2004). Uniting a product not only creates advantages in its product but also provides benefits to business owner who create product uniqueness.

Product uniqueness has benefits that affect the sustainability of a business entity including being able to extend the product life cycle, consumers will easily remember the product, customers will choose products that have better value in terms of visualization or other added value compared to ordinary products, increase selling value, and help create a product image. As for what is an

indicator of measuring product uniqueness, it consists of the type of product, taste image of the product and presentation of the product.

### **Brand Image**

Brand Image is a brand perception associated with brand associations inherent in the memory of consumers. Marketing tools that can be used to create a brand image are the product itself, packaging/label, brand name, logo, colors used, purchase promotion points, retailers, advertisements and all other types of promotions, price, brand owner, country of origin, even the target market and product users (Rangkuti, 2009).

Kotler and Keller (2016) state that brand image is how people view a brand as a result of a collection of information about products that consumers remember. The positive brand image can require a strong market, many people's preferences, and unique. When the image of a brand is positive the probability of a purchase decision is even greater as for what is an aspect of measuring brand image according to Kotler and Keller, it is uniqueness to brand associations, liking for brand associations, and strength towards brand associations.

### **Customer Satisfaction**

According to Kotler and Keller (2016) states that "satisfaction is the feeling of pleasure or disappointment of a person who appears after comparing the performance (result) of the thought product against the expected performance (result)". Consumer satisfaction becomes a company vision that must be realized continuously by creating various missions in every marketing activity (ranging from internal, external and interactive marketing). Competitive advantage is also determined by how much business owner are able to create consumer satisfaction. Consumer satisfaction is the main asset that underlies the business continuity of business owner in the modern era.

Tjiptono (2014) defines customer satisfaction as a conscious evaluation or cognitive assessment of whether a product's performance is relatively good or poor or whether the product in question is suitable or unsuitable for its purpose of use. Customer satisfaction as an overall attitude towards the suitability of goods or services after acquisition and use. Satisfied customer is a customer who obtains value from a product sourced from a provider of goods or services in the form of a product, service, system, or something emotional (Irawan, 2002). There are five main factors that must be considered to measure customer satisfaction, product quality, service quality, emotional, price, and cost.

### **Customer Loyalty**

Loyalty that proves that consumers have a positive strength and attitude towards business that can ultimately show their loyalty to a particular brand of goods or services depends on several factors. The specificity and quality of replacement or service, quantity, or similarity of services, risk of cost changes due to replacement or service, and changes in new brand satisfaction compared to previous brand usage experiences (Griffin, 2003).

Loyalty is the willingness of customers to always use business products in the long term and use them exclusively and recommend these products to their friends or colleagues (Lovelock and Mussry, 2016). In line with research by Teuhuayo (2021), which states that loyalty refers to the form of positive behavior of decision-making units to make continuous purchases of goods or services of a selected business. The success or failure of a business in creating loyal consumers

depends largely on the business's ability to create value and continuously strive to improve it. Consumer loyalty becomes stronger if the value of the goods can foster a peak of pleasure in oneself arising from the existence of a customer experience and cannot just happen. Sangadji (2013) mentioned that customer loyalty must be designed by business owner with three stages, namely identifying customer segments, designing strategy changes, and improving performance.

**METHODS**

This research uses quantitative descriptive methods or research methods that explain conditions according to data in the field that have been collected and analyzed. The types of data used in this study are primary data obtained from the research object directly, and secondary data sourced from records or reports related to the research object. The object on this study is Jomtea consumers who have purchases at least three times over the past three months. Technique of data collection used purposive sampling with 100 respondents. The data were then analyzed using path analysis. The instrument in this study is a questionnaire containing questions about the identity of respondents and statements about the object of study, price (X1), uniqueness (X2), brand image (X3), and customer satisfaction (Y), and customer loyalty (Z). The questionnaire was distributed online through social media using Google Form.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**Descriptive Statistics**

The number of consumers in Jomtea who were sampled was 100 people. When viewed from gender, female gender dominated in the study with 65 percent. When viewed from age, 21-24 years old dominates with a percentage of 62 percent, this shows that Jomtea consumers are relatively young because the atmosphere and environment are in accordance with the target and market segmentation that have been set are millennials.

**Tabel 1.** Descriptive Statistic

<b>Variabel</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Mean</b>
X1	100	3.38	3.55	3.463
X2	100	3.42	3.64	3.478
X3	100	3.47	3.72	3.571
Y	100	3.43	3.64	3.536
Z	100	3.39	3.62	3.477

The results of the descriptive analysis of the price variable have the lowest value on the product affordability statement, which is 3.38 and the highest mean value on the price and quality conformity statement is 3.55. Overall the mean value of the price variable is 3,463, meaning the customer response to the price variable is positive. This shows that customers think that the price of the products offered by Jomtea is not too expensive or too cheap.

In the uniqueness variable, there is a mean value of respondents' answers, the lowest value in the Jomtea product variation statement according to the tastes and needs of the community, which is 3.42 and the highest mean value in the attractive product display statement is 3.64. Overall the mean value of the uniqueness variable is 3.4788, meaning that customer responses to the uniqueness variable are positive. This shows that customers feel that the visual appearance of Jomtea products is very good, but Jomtea still needs to do research on customer tastes and needs regularly and periodically. In the brand image variable, the respondent's answer value was the

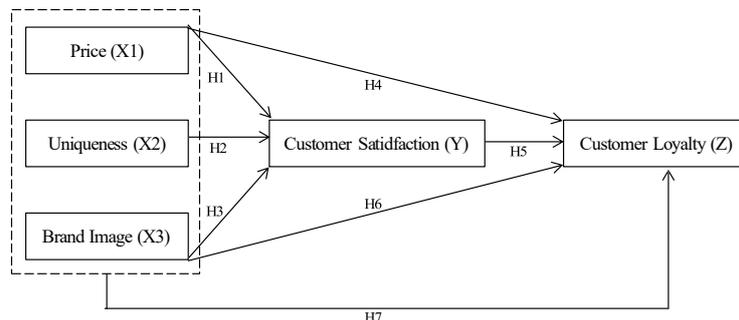
lowest value of 3.47 on the statement of good reputation in the field of F&B and the highest mean value in the statement of the existence of jomtea among the people of Batam city was 3.72. The overall mean value of the brand image variable is 3,573, meaning that customer responses to the brand image variable are positive. This shows that jomtea has been recognized by the public, but efforts are still needed to improve quality.

In the customer satisfaction variable, the lowest mean value in the activity statement following the development of information on social media and the highest mean value in the good product quality statement is 3.64. Overall the mean value of the customer satisfaction variable is 3,527, meaning that the customer response to the customer satisfaction variable is positive. This is in line with the research that has been carried out that Jomtea makes efforts to maintain product quality with Quality Control activities in all outlets regularly every month to maintain quality standards but still must increase the use of promotional media to the maximum.

In the customer loyalty variable, the lowest mean value on the long-term purchase statement is 3.39 and the highest mean value on the desired product availability statement can be easily found at 3.62. Overall the mean value of the customer loyalty variable is 3,477, meaning the customer response to the loyalty variable is positive. This shows that the availability of Jomtea products is very good, but efforts are needed to increase customer purchasing power with a membercard program so that it will make customers buy products in the long term.

### Hypothesis Test

Path analysis is used to estimate how much influence the causality relationship between variables. In this study, there are two path models:

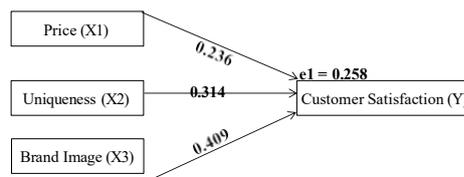


**Figure 1.** Path Analysis Diagram

$$Y = P_1 \cdot X_1 + P_2 \cdot X_2 + P_3 \cdot X_3 + \varepsilon_1$$

$$Z = P_1 \cdot X_1 + P_2 \cdot X_2 + P_3 \cdot X_3 + \varepsilon_2 \quad (1)$$

Coefficient the first path analysis of price, uniqueness, brand image and customer satisfaction



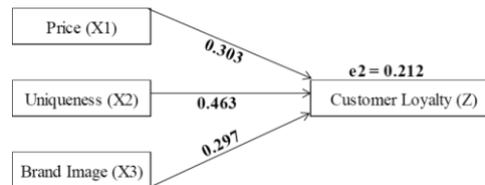
**Figure 2.** Path Analysis First Equation

The estimation of the first path coefficient is used to measure the relationship of the exogenous variables of price (X1), uniqueness (X2), brand image (X3) to the intervening variable

of customer satisfaction (Y). The first path used to test hypotheses with structural equations is as follows :

$$Y = 0.236 X1 + 0.314 X2 + 0.409 X3 + 0.258$$

Based on the Figure 2 of path analysis using SPSS obtained the path value (Standardized Coefficients Beta) as follows, it can be concluded that the Price variable (X1) has a direct effect on the customer satisfaction variable of 0.236 or 23.6%, then the uniqueness variable (X2) directly affects the customer satisfaction variable by 0.314 or 31.4%, and the brand image variable (X3) has a direct effect on customer satisfaction of 0.409 or 40.9%. Coefficient the second path of price, uniqueness, brand image and customer loyalty



**Figure 3.** Path Analysis Second Equation

The estimation of the coefficient of the second path is used to measure the relationship of the variables exogenous price (X1), uniqueness (X2), brand image (X3) to the endogenous variable of customer loyalty (Z). The first path used to test hypotheses with structural equations is as follows :

$$Z = 0.303 X1 + 0.463 X2 + 0.297 X3 + 0.212$$

Based on Figure 3, the value of the influence of the price variable (X1) directly affects the customer loyalty variable by 0.303 or 30.3%, then the uniqueness variable (X2) has a direct effect on the customer loyalty variable of 0.189 or 18.9%, and the brand image variable (X3) has a direct effect on customer loyalty of 0.297 or 29.7%.

In addition to looking for direct influences, in research this path is also required to look for indirect influences. To look for an indirect influence between each of the price variables (X1), uniqueness (X2), and brand image (X3) through customer satisfaction (Y) on customer loyalty (Z). The following is a calculation of indirect influence :

$$\begin{aligned} \text{PTL1. } & 0.236 \times 0.189 = 0.044 \\ \text{PTL2. } & 0.314 \times 0.189 = 0.059 \\ \text{PTL3. } & 0.409 \times 0.189 = 0.077 \end{aligned}$$

Based on the first calculation for the price variable (X1) on customer loyalty, the magnitude of the direct influence is 0.303 and the indirect influence through the customer satisfaction variable (Y) is 0.044, it can be concluded that the direct influence is greater than the indirect influence. Furthermore, the calculation of the second variable of uniqueness (X2) on customer loyalty (Z) the magnitude of the direct influence is 0.463 and the indirect influence through the customer satisfaction variable is 0.059, it can be concluded that the direct influence is greater than the indirect influence.

Finally, the calculation of the third variable of brand image (X3) on customer loyalty (Z) the magnitude of the direct influence is 0.297 and the indirect influence through the customer satisfaction variable is 0.077, it can be concluded that the influence is directly greater than the indirect influence. If the indirect influence is greater than the direct influence or  $PTL > PL$  then it is stated that intervening variables are able to mediate exogenous variables and endogenous

variables. Based on the calculation above, it is stated that the value of the direct influence of the three exogenous variables is greater than the indirect influence, the customer satisfaction mediation variable is not able to mediate exogenous variables and endogenous variables in this study.

**Tabel 2.** Path Analysis

Variable	Direct Effect		Indirect Effect	Total Effect
	Customer Satisfaction (Y)	Customer Loyalty (Z)		
Price	0.236	0.303	0.044	0.347
Uniqueness	0.314	0.463	0.059	0.522
Brand Image	0.409	0.297	0.077	0.374
Customer Loyalty		0.189		
<b>R Square</b>				0.788
<b>F</b>				88.160 Sig. <.001

Based on Figure 4 and Tabel 2, it can be concluded that the exogenous variable that most affects customer loyalty through customer satisfaction is the uniqueness variable of 52.2%, then the second largest influence is the brand image that is able to influence customer loyalty through customer satisfaction of 37.4% and finally the price variable with the least influence on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction of 34.7%. R Square's value of .788 or 78.8% of Jomtea's customer loyalty is influenced by price (X1), uniqueness (X2), brand image (X3) and customer satisfaction (Y). Meanwhile 21.2% was influenced by other variables outside this study that were not studied in this research.

**Discussion of Hypothesis**

The effect of product price differentiation on Jomtea customer satisfaction. H1 is accepted because of the calculated value of 3.161 > t<sub>table</sub>1.662 and the sig. 0.02 < 0.05 shows that the product price variable has a significant effect on Jomtea's customer satisfaction. In the calculation of the analysis of the path of the influence of product prices on customer satisfaction by 23.6%.

The effect of product uniqueness differentiation on Jomtea customer satisfaction.. H2 is accepted because of the calculated value of 3.201 > t<sub>table</sub>1.662 and the sig. 0.02 < 0.05 showed that the product uniqueness variable had a significant effect on Jomtea's customer satisfaction. With the calculation of path analysis that shows the effect of product uniqueness on customer satisfaction by 31.4%.

The effect of brand image differentiation on Jomtea customer satisfaction. H3 was received because the calculated value of 4,870 > t<sub>table</sub>1,662 and the sig. 0.001 < 0.05, showed that the brand image variable had a significant effect on Jomtea's customer satisfaction. With the value of the path analysis calculation that shows the influence of brand image on customer satisfaction by 40.9%.

The effect of product price differentiation on Jomtea customer loyalty. H4 was rejected because the calculated value of 0.49 < t<sub>table</sub>1.662 and the sig. 0.961 > 0.05, indicated that the price variable test of customer loyalty was negative and insignificant. So it can be concluded, the price contained in jomtea products cannot affect customer loyalty. With the calculation of the path analysis that show the effect of product price on customer loyalty by 30.3%.

The effect of product uniqueness differentiation on Jomtea customer loyalty. H5 received a calculated value of 4,920 > t<sub>table</sub>1.662 and a sig. 0.001 < 0.05, indicating the variable uniqueness to customer loyalty is positive and significant. So it can be concluded, the uniqueness contained in

Jomtea products can affect customer loyalty. With the calculation of the path analysis that shows the effect of product uniqueness on customer loyalty by 46.3%.

The influence of brand image differentiation affects Jomtea's customer loyalty. H6 was received because the calculated value of  $3,478 > t_{table} 1.662$  and the sig.  $0.001 < 0.05$ , indicating the brand image variable to customer loyalty is positive and significant. With the calculation of the path analysis that shows the influence of brand image on customer loyalty by 29.7%.

Product differentiation affects customer loyalty through Jomtea customer satisfaction. H7 is accepted because value of  $F 88.16 > F_{table} 2.70$  and the Sig.  $0.001 < 0.05$ , indicating the effect of product differentiation on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction is positive and significant. Based on the value obtained from the total influence of the path analysis, it can be concluded that the influence of differentiation of product uniqueness has the highest influence 52.2%, then the variable with the second highest influence is the brand image with a total influence of 37.4% and finally the lowest total influence is the price variable of 34.7%.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusions obtained based on the results of the path analysis show that the entire hypothesis is acceptable and proven to have a positive and significant effect. This means that there is an influence between product differentiation variables consisting of price, uniqueness, and brand image on customer loyalty through Jomtea customer satisfaction in Batam City.

Based on some of the conclusions above, several suggestions can be put forward as follows : Jomtea must be able to improve the differentiation of its products by paying attention to the affordability of product prices, determining product variations according to the tastes and needs of the people of Batam, increasing excellence by presenting different products that can be a characteristic of Jomtea products, attracting the attention of the public by utilizing the maximum use of social media, and increasing customer purchases in the long term by creating a membership program that will provide benefits as Jomtea's loyal customers. In this study, only exogenous variables of price (X1), uniqueness (X2), and brand image (X3) were only used to see the effect on customer loyalty (Z) through customer satisfaction (Y) as mediation, it is hoped that subsequent researchers can add other research variables that were not discussed in this study. A broader research subject is also expected in future studies both in terms of demographic and geographical. This research is not spared from the existence of limitations, there are limitations that are likely to interfere with the results of the study, namely limitations in the results of the analysis of intervening variables where the customer satisfaction variable is not a variable that mediates the influence between exogenous variables on endogenous variables, in this case causing results that are not in accordance with research expectations.

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