

Brand Evaluation and Consumers' Preference Towards Pioneer and Follower Brands: Empirical Study on Dairy Products

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Abstract. The aims of this research were to identify brand recall as well as to analyze consumers' attitude and consumers' preference toward pioneer and follower brands on processed dairy product. One hundred and fifty housewives were engaged as respondents in this research. The techniques used in the data analysis were non parametric two related sample test, one sample t-test and independent sample t-test. The result indicated that each of the product category, the percentage of the pioneer brand preference was higher than follower brand, namely Ultra Milk (87.30%), Yakult (94.70%), Anlene (93.30%) and Kraft (98.70%). The result showed that from 150 respondents were able to correctly recall Ultra Milk (66.70%), Yakult (86.70%), Anlene (82.70%) and Kraft (96.00%) as the pioneer brand on each product category. Furthermore, the results showed that the average consumer attitudes were higher toward the pioneer brands than the follower brands. The result also indicated that consumers preferred pioneer brands than follower brands for the same flavour, quality and price. The result led to conclusion that consumers retrieved or recalled pioneer brands more correctly than follower brands. Moreover, consumers had a more favourable attitude to pioneer brands than to follower brands, in which consumers preferred to purchase the pioneer brands products to those of the follower brands concerning the farm-manufactured products of UHT milk, pro-biotic milk, high-calcium milk and cheese.

Key Words: brand retrieval, brand recall, attitudes, preference

Introduction

Brand becomes an important factor in marketing in compliance with the increase of consumers' selection in brand choice. Brand often emerges as determinant criterion or a product quality indicator. For consumers, trusting a famous brand is a way to reduce the risks. As a result, it makes a famous brand get high enthusiasm from consumers and domination in the market despite the high price.

A product without brand can be merely a commodity. Value created by brand can be very significant for consumers of a product in addition to expect functional utility from the product. Additional value created by brand implies an addition benefit for producer and definitely becomes an ideal for every producer to own a strong brand. The role of a brand

becomes very important when the competition gets more intense.

The status as pioneer brand is one of the features that can be a powerful weapon to win the intense competition, if it is managed well. Pioneer brand is very important for a product, it can be a brand image for people, so that the product is memorized by people as the first product released. Pioneer as the first entry, has appearance that people perceived as new idea and becomes consumers' attention. Some factors such as differences and brand uniqueness make pioneer brand as a basic for consumers to retrieve, remember, and choose rather than the follower brand. Carpenter and Nakamoto (1989) stated the establishment of consumers' preference process towards pioneer brand makes pioneer brand more preferable by consumers to follower brand. Alpert and Kamins (1995) explained that

consumers have better attitude towards pioneer brand than the follower brand. Pioneer status can be reached by developing new product, implementing new process or introducing product to the new market (Kerin et al., 1992).

Product development in dairy industry grows to fulfill the increase of consumers need in both quantity and quality. Dairy product industry produces ultra high temperature milk, pro-biotic milk, high-calcium milk and cheese. Most producers use brand to differentiate the product and at the same time to present product features informed on the package such as halal label, expired date, nutrition facts, and nutrient content. Some brands are pioneer in the industry, and some others are follower brands. Research conducted on brand use selection on dairy product focus on local and non-local brand and the result showed that brand determined consumer attitude in that they had more positive attitude on non-local brand of dairy product (Citra and Syahlani, 2008). Studies of pioneer brands and follower brands has not yet conducted in order to gain understanding of brand retrieval, brand recall, brand attitude and consumer preference on processed food products, specifically on dairy products. Therefore, it is important to conduct this research (1) to measure brand retrieval and brand recall of pioneer and follower brand in dairy products; (2) to analyze brand attitude and consumer preference among pioneer and follower brand in dairy products.

The status of pioneer brand is one of features that can be part of an excellent marketing strategy to win the competition when managed well. One of the benefits to be a pioneer is gaining the first position in consumers' memory (Kardes et al., 1993). Pioneer brand is an important factor for a product, since it has the opportunity to gain excellent brand image in people's mind. Other brands that emerge next are follower brands with less opportunity to form an image as

pioneer brand. Consumer capability to remember a brand depends on some factors; one of them is how and when someone gets the information for the first time (Zinkhan, 2005). Consumers are able to remember pioneer status on a brand by identifying a brand that exists as pioneer. Consumers are able to know a brand that becomes pioneer without recalling or knowing the characteristics simply because the brand comes out from the memory (Pham and Johar, 1997). Pioneer brand is easier to be recalled, considered, and selected by consumers because by the time the brand enters the market as new product, it will be the center of attention since there are no other competitors. This factor causes pioneer brand to be more memorable for consumers. Hypotheses were formulated based on the arguments above as follows: H₁: Consumers retrieve or recall pioneer brand rather than follower brand; H₂: Consumers exactly know pioneer brand status in a category given.

Consumers like pioneer brand rather than follower brands (Carpenter and Nakamoto, 1989). Retailers have a very positive favorable attitude, like the first "me-too" a little, and dislike the second "me-too" a lot and so on (Alpert et al., 1992). Pioneer brand assumed as innovative and has distinguished value means that producer has good product knowledge (Kamins et al., 2007). Hence, in this case the third hypothesis can be defined as follows: H₃: Overall consumers like pioneer brand rather than follower brand.

The benefit as a pioneer is that consumers will select its brand rather than the follower brand for equal price and quality (Alpert and Kamins, 1995). Consumers' purchasing preference is affected by the time a brand enters a market. Consumers prefer purchasing pioneer brand product, so the follower brand will have more difficulties to enter the market and win the competition. In this case, the fourth hypothesis can be defined as follows: H₄: Consumers prefer pioneer brand in terms of

purchasing preference and actual behavior, if the other things are equal.

Materials and Methods

Research was conducted with survey design involving 150 housewives as respondents. Sampling determination was non probability namely judgment sampling considering the respondents were able to give information needed. Housewives were chosen since the decision making of food in a family is so far dominated by housewife (Davis and Rigaux, 1974). Questionnaire was composed for variable measurement of consumer attitude using semantic differential scale. This scale was identified at an extreme scale and respondents were required to show their attitude towards the brand, in this case was on a scale which has two contradictive adjectives. Consumers responded questions with the interval between -3 up to +3. Furthermore, variable measurement of consumer preference was performed by using Likert scale. This scale requires respondents to respond question items by choosing 1 from 7 answers provided with different score. The answer value was rated as 7 for "totally agree", 6 for "agree", 5 for "slightly agree", 4 for "neutral", 3 for "slightly disagree", 2 for "disagree", and 1 for "totally disagree".

H_1 was analyzed using non parametric statistic in which two samples correlated to perform distribution comparison of two correlated variables using Wilcoxon test. Test selection using non parametric test was performed in which the use of nominal scale was number 0 (not mentioning the brand) and 1 (mentioning the brand). Before the test was performed, the frequency was calculated to select follower brand which had mentioned items that are adjacent to those of pioneer brand. This test was performed by comparing pioneer brand with the most approaching follower brand.

H_2 and H_4 was analyzed using one sample t-test. Hypothesis test of H_2 was used to measure the ability to memorize a brand name which was a pioneer brand without memorizing or knowing obviously the characteristics of the asked product. Respondents were given questions to choose which brand was a pioneer and were provided "no idea" option on the alternative answers available. The hypothesis H_4 test was aimed to test consumers purchasing preference. Hypothesis test H_3 was performed using independent sample t-test. The Hypothesis H_3 test was aimed to test consumers attitude towards pioneer brand and follower brand.

Results and Discussion

H_1 test performed to test consumers ability to recall pioneer brand was started by identifying the mention of adjacent pioneer and follower brands (Table 1). This result showed that of UHT milk category, Ultra Milk and Frisian Flag were known as the follower brand and the pioneer brand respectively, Furthermore, similar analysis on probiotic milk product category resulted in Vitacharm and Yakult as follower and pioneer brand respectively; Hi-Lo and Anlene on high calcium milk and Cheesy and Kraft on cheese product, respectively. Non parametric testing two related sample test with Wilcoxon test is presented on Table 2 and Table 3. This test showed that H_1 was supported ($P < 0.05$). This result showed that consumers recalled pioneer brand rather than follower brand on processed product of livestock namely UHT milk, probiotic milk, high-calcium milk and cheese. This result was consistent with Dalimunthe (2001) research that consumers are able to recall pioneer brand rather than follower brand. The existence of follower brand can threaten pioneer brand position to be the market leader since one of the features to be a pioneer brand is to have consumers with high loyalty. This is

because pioneer brand is the first brand that gets into consumers mind that cause an advantage to be learned earlier (Kamins et al., 2003).

H₂ hypothesis test was used to measure the ability in identifying a brand namely pioneer brand without knowing the shape or showing the product. Frequency analysis which was performed to know consumers ability

to recognize pioneer brand correctly on livestock processed products showed that a brand was known as pioneer on each product given can be seen in Table 4. The result showed that most of the respondents were able to know pioneer brand correctly including 66.70% respondents for Ultra Milk, 86.70% respondents for Yakult, 82.70% respondents for Anlene and 96% respondents for Kraft.

Table 1. The amount and percentage of mentioning pioneer and follower brands for processed milk products

Product Category	Brand	Amount	Percentage (%)**
UHT milk	Frisian flag	102	68.00
	Indomilk	91	60.70
	Ultra milk*	131	87.30
	Milo	3	2.00
	Boneto	1	0.70
Pro-biotic Milk	Activia	86	57.30
	Vitacharm	120	80.00
	Yakult*	142	94.70
High-Calcium Milk	Anlene*	140	93.30
	Hi – Lo	115	76.70
	Nesvita	61	40.70
	Produgen	20	13.30
Cheese	Chessy	95	63.30
	Diamond	17	11.30
	Kraft*	148	98.70
	Qeju	68	45.30

* pioneer brand status; ** percentage of 150 respondents

Table 2. Wilcoxon signed ranks test

Category	Result	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
UHT Milk (Ultra Milk-Frisian flag)	Negative ranks	12 ^a	27.00	324.00
	Positive ranks	41 ^b	27.00	1107.00
	Ties	97 ^c		
	Total	150		
Pro-biotic Milk (Yakult-Vitacharm)	Negative ranks	4 ^d	15.50	62.00
	Positive ranks	26 ^e	15.50	403.00
	Ties	120 ^f		
	Total	150		
High-Calcium Milk (HiLo-Anlene)	Negative ranks	35 ^g	23.00	805.00
	Positive ranks	10 ^h	23.00	230.00
	Ties	105 ⁱ		
	Total	150		
Cheese (Kraft-Cheesy)	Negative ranks	2 ^j	29.00	58.00
	Positive ranks	55 ^k	29.00	1595.00
	Ties	93 ^l		
	Total	150		

^a Ultramilk < Frisian Flag, ^b Ultramilk > Frisian Flag, ^c Ultramilk = Frisian Flag, ^d Yakult < Vitacharm,

^e Yakult > Vitacharm, ^f Yakult = Vitacharm, ^g Hi-Lo < Anlene, ^h Hi-Lo > Anlene, ⁱ Hi-Lo = Anlene ^j Kraft < Cheesy, ^k Kraft > Cheesy, ^l Kraft = Cheesy.

Table 3. Wilcoxon non-parametric that consumers were able to recall pioneer brand rather than follower brand on processed milk products

Category	Z	Probability significance
UHT Milk (Ultra Milk-Frisian Flag)	-3.983 ^a	0.000
Pro-biotic Milk (Yakult-Vitacharm)	-4.017 ^a	0.000
High-calcium milk (HiLo-Anlene)	-3.727 ^b	0.000
Cheese (Kraft-Cheesy)	-7.020 ^a	0.000

^a Based on negative ranks; ^b Based on positive ranks; ^b Based on positive ranks.

Table 4. The amount and percentage on respondents' preference towards pioneer brand on each category of milk processed products

Category	Brand	Amount	Percentage (%)
UHT milk	Frisian flag	31	20.70
	Indomilk	18	12.00
	Ultramilk*	100	66.70
	Unknown	1	0.70
Pro-biotic milk	Activia	5	3.30
	Vitacharm	13	8.70
	Yakult*	130	86.70
	Unknown	2	1.30
High-calcium milk	Anlene*	124	82.70
	Hi – Lo	22	14.70
	Nesvita	2	1.30
	Unknown	2	1.30
Cheese	Chessy	5	3.30
	Kraft*	144	96.00
	Unknown	1	0.70

*shows pioneer brand status

H₂ test result is listed on Table 5 and it can be seen that consumers were able to know correctly pioneer brand with each product category ($P < 0.05$). The result of second hypothesis test showed a positive result since the data obtained was significant and showed that H₀ was rejected. A market pioneer is the first company that releases a brand in new product category (Golder and Tellis, 1993 *cit* Wardayanti, 2006). A pioneer status of a brand can be communicated through advertising, label, sales person, and other information source. The more communications are performed, the easier the consumers remember a brand as the pioneer one.

H₃ test that was performed to identify consumers attitude towards pioneer brand and follower brand was performed using independent sampe t-test to find out two mean from two samples that are independent or unrelated. Hypothesis testing result can be seen

on Table 7. The statistic result showed that the mean of two groups with brand treatment namely pioneer brand and follower brand was different. Table 6 shows the mean of overall consumers attitude towards pioneer brand (6.014; 5.891; 5.727; 6.124) is higher than the mean of overall consumers attitude towards follower brand (4.784; 4.684; 4.819; 4.669). The use of brand both pioneer and follower brand, usually followed by information on food labeling that enhance consumer opportunity to evaluate product attribute (Syahlani, 2008). However, Table 7 shows that t value for the mean of overall attitude towards UHT milk product, pro-biotic milk, high-calcium milk and cheese in a row with equal variance not assumed are 8.927; 8.491; 6.119; 9.987 ($P < 0.05$). The difference among the two factors are significant, it is shown by mean difference significance on Table 7. Because of the probability is $< 0,05$, then H₀ is rejected, or both

Table 5. The result of one sample t test to test that consumer will know pioneer brand correctly in the product categories given

Product category	T	Significance	Mean difference
UHT milk (Ultra Milk) ^a	10.789	0.000	0.417
Pro-biotic milk (Yakult) ^a	22.144	0.000	0.617
High-calcium milk (Anlene) ^a	18.596	0.000	0.577
Cheese (Kraft) ^b	39.244	0.000	0.630

^atest value 0.25; ^btest value 0.33

Table 6. Variance homogeneity test on consumers' attitude towards pioneer brands and follower brands on processed milk product (N = 150)

Research Variable	Brand	Mean	Deviation standard	Levene's test sig.
Consumers attitude on UHT milk	Pioneer	6.014	1.000	0.006
	Follower	4.784	1.359	
Consumers attitude on pro-biotic milk	Pioneer	5.891	1.049	0.004
	Follower	4.684	1.390	
Consumers attitude on high-calcium milk	Pioneer	5.727	1.147	0.044
	Follower	4.819	1.408	
Consumers attitude on cheese	Pioneer	6.124	1.027	0.000
	Follower	4.669	1.459	

Table 7. Comparative statistic of consumers' attitude towards pioneer brand and follower brand on processed milk product

Product category	T	Significance	Mean difference
UHT milk	8.927	0.000	1.229
Pro-biotic milk	8.491	0.000	1.207
High-calcium milk	6.119	0.000	0.907
Cheese	9.987	0.000	1.456

Table 8. Preference test on consumers purchase towards pioneer brands on processed milk products

Product category	T	Significance	Mean difference
UHT Milk	7.382	0.000	1.027
Pro-biotic milk	6.881	0.000	0.942
High-calcium milk	6.534	0.000	0.902
Cheese	9.158	0.000	1.264

mean of consumers attitude towards pioneer brand and follower brand are different.

This hypothesis test result showed that consumers prefer pioneer brand rather than follower brand in dairy product. This research result was consistent to Alpert and Kamins (1995) that implied that pioneer brand was trusted as a brand with the best quality, the most experienced, as a status symbol, and as an innovator. Pioneer brand was also a market leader and used as purchasing decision, resulted in consumers having more positive attitude towards pioneer brand. Follower brand

was trusted as a brand that could not be a status symbol, unpopular and considered as an imitator (Wardayanti, 2006).

H₄ hypothesis test was performed to identify purchase preference using one sample t-test. Table 8 shows that this hypothesis was supported on overall categories (P<0.05). Consumers consistently selected pioneer brand rather than the follower brand for the same price, quality and flavor on some categories namely UHT milk product, pro-biotic milk, high-calcium milk and cheese. The result was in accordance with a research conducted by

Carpenter and Nakamoto (1989) which stated that benefits owned by pioneer brand form consumers preference in that they like pioneer brand rather than follower brand.

Conclusions

The result of this research showed consistency with the previous researches that pioneer brand is easier to be retrieved, recalled, liked and preferred by consumers rather than follower brand product. The consumers memory consistent in terms of brand retrieval and brand recall measurement on four product categories namely UHT milk, pro-biotic milk, high-calcium milk and cheese. Consumers were able to recall pioneer brand rather than follower brand. Consumers were also able to recognize correctly pioneer brand on those dairy products. Research result also showed that consumers attitude was positive towards pioneer brand and consumers also had higher preference to select pioneer brand products than follower brand products.

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