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IMPLEMENTATION OF BRANDING STRATEGY AND PRODUCT INNOVATION IN EXPANDING MARKET ACCESS FOR COFFEE SHOP SMEs IN KENDARI CITY

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ABSTRACT

Growth of coffee MSMEs The growth of coffee shops in Kendari City is taking place alongside increasing business competition. In this environment, the ability to build strong branding and product innovation is becoming increasingly important for expanding market reach. However, understanding how business actors implement and interpret these two strategies in local business practices remains limited. This study aims to examine the application of branding strategies and product innovation as an effort to expand market access for coffee MSMEs. shop in Kendari City. The study used a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, field observations, and documentation of informants selected based on specific considerations. The results of the study indicate that branding is not only realized through business identity, but also through the formation of trust, emotional connections with customers, and the brand's ability to remain embedded in consumers' memories. Meanwhile, product innovation is carried out through the development of menu variations, creativity in presentation, adjustments to market needs, and the creation of new elements in the product. The implementation of these two strategies contributed to increased consumer interest, the formation of loyalty, and expanding market reach. The research findings emphasize that branding and product innovation need to be managed sustainably and adapted to local consumer characteristics to support the competitiveness and sustainability of MSMEs.

Keywords : branding, product innovation, market access, MSMEs

INTRODUCTION

The development of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the coffee industry Coffee shops have become a vital part of the dynamics of the urban economy in Indonesia, including in Kendari City (Hartojo 2023) . Changing consumer patterns and preferences, increasingly influenced by social media, brand experience, and the desire to