Consumer's Perception Of Global Branding: Kopiko Product Placement In Korean Drama

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to describe consumer perceptions of global branding using product placement strategies in Korean dramas. Qualitative research is a research method that provides descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from individuals and the behavior of observed phenomena. The research "Consumer Perception of Global Branding: Kopiko Product Placement in Korean Drama" uses a qualitative descriptive approach. This method involves capturing and explaining consumers' perceptions and experiences about their opinions of Kopiko in Korean dramas. The result was that the product placement successfully increased brand exposure and strengthened the consumer experience with the identification of three distinct consumer perceptions. Despite the success, the study highlights the need for brand consistency and effective messaging, as well as the importance of emphasizing brand distinctive features such as the use of real coffee beans to reinforce identity and meet consumer expectations. Furthermore, cultural sensitivity to brand associations with Korean culture influences consumer perceptions, while Martin Roll's global branding theory provides insight into how factors such as brand recognition, unique value, consumer experience, consistency, and cultural sensitivity affect consumer perceptions.
Keywords: Kopiko, Global Brand Theory, Product Placement, K-drama, Perception

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the utilization of product placement strategies in movies and dramas has emerged as a prominent marketing tactic for companies seeking to expand their international market reach. Leveraging the power of visual media, particularly movies and television dramas, has proven to be an effective method for promoting products and enhancing brand visibility across diverse global audiences. Product placement, defined as the intentional integration of promotional material into noncommercial content, seamlessly blends advertising with entertainment, offering brands a unique opportunity to connect with consumers in a subtle yet impactful manner (Ginosar and Levi-Faur, 2010). The essence of product placement lies in its ability to embed brands or products within the narrative framework of movies, television shows, or other media platforms for promotional purposes. This approach, also known as branded entertainment or product integration, allows brands to reach their target audience through the natural progression of the storyline, effectively integrating marketing messages into the

viewer's entertainment experience (Panda, 2004; Cebrzynski, 2006). One significant trend in recent years has been the strategic use of Korean dramas as a platform for product placement to target global markets. Korean dramas have gained immense popularity worldwide, especially among younger demographics such as Gen Z, presenting an ideal opportunity for brands to tap into a vast and diverse audience base (Kembuan, 2021). In a study conducted across 26 countries in 2022, Korean dramas were found to enjoy widespread popularity, with a significant portion of respondents expressing enthusiasm for this form of entertainment (Maulida, 2021).

As a result, the international trade of Korean dramas has surged, leading to substantial growth in exports and viewership numbers. One notable example of successful product placement in Korean dramas is the integration of Kopiko candy, a brand originating from Indonesia, into popular series such as "Vincenzo" and "Hometown Cha Cha Cha." The appearance of Kopiko in these dramas generated significant buzz both domestically and internationally, marking a milestone for Indonesian products in the realm of Korean

entertainment (Maulida, 2021). This innovative marketing strategy not only enhanced Kopiko's brand visibility but also contributed to its global expansion efforts, with exports to numerous countries experiencing substantial growth (Kusumo, 2021). The success of product placement in Korean dramas is further evidenced by the positive impact it has had on the financial performance of companies like PT Mayora Indah, Tbk., the producer of Kopiko candy. By strategically investing in advertising placements within popular dramas, PT Mayora Indah has witnessed an increase in sales and market penetration, driving revenue growth both domestically and internationally (Maulida, 2021).

Moreover, the implementation of product placement strategies has been shown to significantly boost brand recognition and consumer engagement, resulting in tangible business outcomes for companies seeking to expand their global footprint. However, it is essential to acknowledge that product placement strategies are not without their challenges and potential drawbacks. Previous studies have highlighted concerns regarding audience perception and the potential for overcommercialization in movies and

television shows (Reijmersdal, Smit, & Neijens, 2012). Instances of excessive product placement, such as in the movie "Superman: Man of Steel," have been criticized for detracting from the overall viewing experience and undermining the integrity of the storyline (Alıcı and Aydınlıoğlu, 2017). When product placements are perceived as intrusive or disruptive, they may have adverse effects on brand perception and audience engagement.

In conclusion, product placement in movies and dramas represents a powerful marketing tool for companies seeking to expand their global reach and enhance brand visibility. By strategically integrating products into popular media content, brands can effectively engage with consumers and drive business outcomes. However, it is essential for marketers to strike a balance between promotional messaging and narrative integrity to ensure that product placements resonate positively with audiences and contribute to a cohesive viewing experience.

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK
Global Branding. A brand, as defined by Keller (1993), encompasses various elements such as a name, term, symbol, or design, used to differentiate products or services of one seller or group from competitors. Brands are often associated with specific linguistic contexts and can evoke emotions based on language nuances in the market of origin (Wilsher, 1992). While initially introduced for effective communication across cultures, branding entails more than just naming and logo; it involves changing product categories and demands sustained corporate commitment, resources, and expertise. In today's globalized economy, businesses seek international expansion to grow and survive amid heightened competition (Cavusgil, Ghauri, & Akcal, 2012). Global branding is includes the strategic and process of developing and maintaining brands in order to effectively compete on a worldwide level. It requires brand recognition, unique value and consumer experiences, brand consistency, create balance between local and international objectives, and cultural sensitivity (Rolls, 2015).

Korean Drama as Advertising Tools. Korean Wave, often known as Hallyu', is the fashion appearance of Korean Popular Culture (KPC). It was created in the late 1990s by Chinese observers to

describe the growing popularity of South Korean TV shows, musical arts, and films. The Korean wave, led by the beauty of the Korean star, drew fans to watch Korean dramas. 2013 (Hogarth) According to Bardia (2011), the attractiveness of an endorsement or performer influences an individual's first impression. Consumers would see superstars on Korean dramas promoting the brand for as long as the storyline of the drama lasted. For example, in Korean drama, the drama actors were picked based on their attractiveness, which can impact pleasure and also serve as promotional tools to the audience.

Product Placement in Drama. The product placement plan is a type of branding strategy that is effective since it has a nature that the audience cannot avoid. Product placement, according to Belk and Russell W. (2017), is the purposeful and paid placement of a certain product in the media with the goal of influencing the audience or readers in a less overt fashion. In practice, product placement can be an effective marketing tactic, particularly when the product appears in a popular film or television show with a huge audience that is relevant to the product's

target market. This strategy involves inserting a brand or product that you want to promote into the storyline of a film or television program. Belch (2004) defined product placement as a sort of advertising and promotion in which products are included in television programs and/or motion pictures in order to attract viewers' attention. According to Hackley and Tiwsakul (2006) in Nappolini (2008), product placement is also referred to as brand placement and entertainment marketing in the United States.

1. Advantages of Product Placement

The advantages of good product placement will increase the probability that the product will be recognized by individuals. Brand image is an association of all information that is currently known regarding the aforementioned brand's companies, goods, and services (Kotler and Keller, 2016). Brand image is connected to attitudes, such as beliefs and brand preferences. Customers are more inclined to make purchases when they have a favorable perception of a brand. Product placement has been shown to have a considerable impact on recall (Panda, 2004). For example, when the

visual/auditory modality and plot relationship are consistent, memory increases (Russell, 2002). Furthermore, showcasing the brand early and frequently with at least one verbal reference improves brand recall (Romaniuk, 2009). Product placement helps people recognize products because of their recollection and recall of the brand.

2. Disadvantages of Product Placement

In product placement, brands are relying on the producers and directors of movies or TV shows to showcase their products in the best light possible. If product placement is too obvious or forced, it can be perceived as intrusive and have a negative impact on the brand. Viewers may feel like they are being sold to rather than entertained. Measuring the effectiveness of product placement can be difficult, making it challenging to justify the investment. While it may increase brand awareness and recognition, it can be challenging to measure its impact on sales. Product placement needs to be relevant to the target audience to be effective. If the placement is in a media that is not

relevant to the target audience, it may not have the desired effect.

Perception

Consumer perceptions are thought to influence consumer satisfaction and the purchasing decisions made by these consumers. Perception is a process of thought through which we overcome the stimuli offered to us and seek to develop an organized and meaningful understanding of the situation at present (Fieldman, 1999). Morgan (1987) defined perception as the process by which we interpret and make sense of the sensory information we get from our surroundings, including visual, auditory, tactile, taste, and smell signals. Perception can be described as the whole of a person's subjective experiences. Consumer perception refers to the way of thinking by which individuals acquire, attend to, and comprehend information (Mowen et al, 2015).

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used is a qualitative approach. a qualitative research approach has been chosen (Moleong, 2007). Qualitative research is offers descriptive data through written or spoken words, capturing individual

perspectives and observed phenomena. This study, adopting a descriptive qualitative method, seeks to delve into consumers' perceptions and experiences regarding Kopiko's portrayal in Korean dramas. The research subjects targeted for this study are international consumers, particularly those aged between 18 to 25, who actively engage with Korean dramas featuring Kopiko product placement. These subjects are selected to ensure diversity in perspectives, representing varied cultural backgrounds and viewing habits of Korean dramas. By focusing on this demographic, the study aims to comprehend how global branding, as exemplified by Kopiko's product placement, influences consumer impressions. Data collection for this study primarily involves in-depth interviews, offering a platform for participants to express their thoughts and viewpoints freely. In-depth interviews, characterized by their independence and depth, provide profound insights into consumers' opinions and beliefs, aligning with the objectives of this research (Patton, 2002). These interviews aim to capture nuanced perspectives that might be overlooked by conventional data collection methods.

The study employs both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data is obtained through in-depth interviews, facilitating a direct exploration of consumer perceptions. Secondary data, comprising literature, journal papers, and online sources, supplements primary findings, enriching the study's context and understanding. Data processing techniques, guided by Patton's framework, involve data reduction, display, and verification. Data reduction aims to streamline information by selecting pertinent elements from interviews, ensuring focus and clarity. Data display entails presenting findings in a structured manner, utilizing narrative descriptions to elucidate consumer perspectives. Verification ensures the reliability and validity of conclusions drawn, emphasizing the importance of grounded interpretations. Quality criteria, as proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985), underscore the study's credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. Trustworthiness is upheld through internal and external validity, ensuring research findings accurately reflect consumer sentiments. Reliability is maintained through consistent data collection and researcher interpretation,

enhancing the study's applicability. Validity is assured by promoting reflexivity and employing triangulation to corroborate findings from diverse sources. Transferability is facilitated by providing comprehensive insights into consumer attitudes, enabling the extrapolation of findings to similar contexts.

FINDINGS

Perception Kopiko as Global Brand

Kopiko as global brand means that consumer recognize Kopiko as a global brand, they understand Kopiko is a candy that can compete on a worldwide level, as mentioned by Rolls (2015), Global branding includes the strategic and procedural aspects of creating and maintaining brands to effectively compete on a global scale. It requires the integration of branding strategy with brand recognition, unique value and consumer experiences, brand consistency, and create balance between local and international objectives. Martin Roll views global branding beyond a brand that is easily found in the world market as a strategic procedure that involves a unique brand commitment and outstanding brand delivery. He highlights the importance of maintaining

consistency in aligning brand promise and delivery to build and maintain strong brand equity. One of the things that sets global brands apart is their ability to build emotional connections with consumers across multiple markets. Based on the findings from interview, Kopiko as a global brand can be emerged with the existance of several factors:

1.Brand Recognition

Brand recognition is an important aspect that shapes the perception of global brands. It is essential to have brand recognition. When it comes to global branding, the process of developing a powerful brand presence across many cultures and areas. It is necessary for companies to create a strategy in order to assist consumers in remembering their brand. This can be accomplished through the utilization of consistent visual and auditory cues, such as logos, colors, marks, or jingles (Rolls, 2015). From the definition of brand recognition above, it can be explained based on the interview results, the interviewees have good knowledge about the Kopiko brand, where they can describe, and explain their perceptions of what they think about Kopiko when they first hear the brand.

The informant perceives Kopiko as a regular candy infused with inventive coffee extract. Additionally, Kopiko is regarded as a distinctive innovation that allows coffee enthusiasts to enjoy the flavor of coffee without the need to brew traditional coffee. This suggests that the informant still links Kopiko with the authentic taste of coffee. This also emphasizes Kopiko's achievement in establishing a distinct brand identity that sets it apart from other candy companies. Moreover, the inclusion of Kopiko in K-drama scenes significantly contributes to enhancing brand recognition. According to the informant, they experienced a sense of connection with Kopiko due to the portrayal of characters consuming the candy in K-dramas. The utterance of phrases such as "I feel very awake" during the scene remains firmly imprinted in their minds, indicating that Kopiko has effectively established an emotional bond by offering a cure for tiredness to its consumers.

2.Personal Experience

Personal experience is an important aspect in a person's perception of the brand.. In this case, informants have experienced with the Kopiko brand where informants already know Kopiko even before watching K-dramas, and how informants find Kopiko in several countries, which then strengthens the perception that Kopiko is a global brand because it is easy to find anywhere in accordance with Roberts (2009) that states that global brands are products that have been coordinated and can be found in many countries.

3.Brand Consistency

Brand consistency is an important aspect to form the perception that Kopiko is a global brand. Brand consistency is a crucial aspect of maintaining a brand as a global, Rolls (2015) highlights the importance of maintaining brand consistency in global brand management. Roll arguments that successful global brand management includes a careful balance between the brand promise and its actual delivery, with functional and emotional aspects serving as critical components to maintain customer satisfaction. He believes that brands are critical assets for contemporary companies striving for long-term success, and that an effective brand management strategy should include distinctive brand commitment and exceptional brand execution. Consistency plays an important role in

building and maintaining a good brand reputation. This is achieved when the brand consistently and effectively meets customer expectations across every interaction, aligned with overall strategic objectives.

In the context of brand consistency, Kopiko has several aspects that shape the perception of Kopiko as a global brand by utilizing consistent experiences in creating a careful balance between the brand promise and the actual delivery and representation of the brand in various markets. In this case, Kopiko highlights consistency by underlining that its product is a practice partner to be carried around, which is in line with what Kopiko is branding about its product, and also in line with what is conveyed in the drama. In addition, in the K-drama, Kopiko presents its image as a practical companion that can be carried everywhere, a concept that appeals to consumers who are active and have high mobility in various countries.

Perception Kopiko as Korean Brand

South Korea has been a centre of innovation and creativity across a wide range of industries, radiating its influence around the world through its famous brands and thriving popular culture. The term "Korean brand" refers to brands from South Korea that have gained global recognition and reflect various aspects of the country's excellence. Korean brands are often recognised for several distinctive features that set them apart from brands from other countries. One of these is a strong focus on innovation and attractive design as well as practicality and ease of mobility. Korea is also known for its culture of drinking coffee and making coffee a drink that can be enjoyed every day, the culture of drinking coffee in Korea is related to having a history where when King Gojong in 1896 first tasted coffee, which at that time coffee. Because of this, several aspects arising from this perception make the Kopiko brand considered a Korean product, which will be discussed below:

1.Unique Value and Consumer Experiences

Roll (2015) emphasises the importance of providing unique value and consumer experience in order to integrate into the social and cultural environment. Unique value is an aspect that shapes the perception of Kopiko as a Korean brand, this is explained when informants feel interested and consider

Kopiko unique because of its appearance in K-dramas collaborating with their favourite actors and actresses. Kopiko's appearance in K-dramas is what shapes informants' perceptions of Kopiko as a Korean brand.

2.Cultural Sensitivity

Another aspect that shapes the perception of Kopiko as a Korean brand is cultural sensitivity, being culturally sensitive allows organisations to tailor their strategy to local audiences, avoid potential controversy, and maintain strong customer connections (Roll, 2015). This is especially crucial when entering new markets, because understanding the language and cultural differences may help firms avoid marketing mistakes and develop a strong brand image. Informants' perceptions of Kopiko, which has the innovation of turning coffee into coffee candy that helps facilitate coffee lovers, especially the Korean habit of drinking coffee before doing or while doing activities, strengthens the perception of Kopiko as a Korean brand, and remembers the "ppali-ppali culture" found in Korea, which is the habit or culture of Koreans who do things quickly and efficiently. The pronunciation of "Kopiko" itself

which sounds like Korean pronunciation or language is also the reason that forms the perception of Kopiko as a Korean brand, where the Korean language of coffee is 커피 (keopi), which is pronounced as "kopi" which sounds familiar with the name Kopiko itself, because that is what makes the perception that Kopiko is a Korean brand.

Kopiko as Non-Korean Brand (Local Brand)

Kopiko as a Non-Korean Brand (Local Brand) refers to brands that originate from a specific country outside Korea, but are nonetheless recognised as local brands in the country in which they operate. In contrast, local brands are described as brands that exist only in a small geographical area or in a single country (Wolfe 1991). Aspects such as Kopiko's brand recognition as an Indonesian brand, brand inconsistency, and the imbalance between local and international goals reinforce people's perception of Kopiko as a non-Korean brand in terms of local brands.

1.Brand Recognition of Kopiko Origin

An individual's recognition of Kopiko's origins is a crucial factor that reinforces

their perceptions that Kopiko is not a Korean brand. According to the informants, they have identified that Kopiko originates from Indonesia based on information provided by their acquaintances. This reinforces the belief that Kopiko is not a Korean brand.

2.Brand Inconsistency

One of the important parts of maintaining a global brand according to Martin Roll is brand consistency. Martin Roll highlights the importance of maintaining brand consistency in global brand management. Successful global brand management includes a careful balance between the brand promise and its actual delivery, with functional and emotional aspects serving as critical components to maintain customer satisfaction. He believes that brands are critical assets for contemporary companies striving for long-term success, and that an effective brand management strategy should include distinctive brand commitment and exceptional brand execution. Consistency plays an important role in building and maintaining a good brand reputation. This is achieved when the brand consistently and effectively meets customer expectations across every

interaction, aligned with overall strategic objectives.

Based on the information listed on the website(https://www.mayoraindah.co.id/berita/Kopiko-besar-dari-Sekedar-Permen-Kopi-17) Kopiko claims that its product is a candy made from authentic Indonesian coffee bean extract, but based on the findings, according to the informants there is no scene where Kopiko highlights that Kopiko is made from real coffee beans, which also contradicts one of the aspects of global brand by Roll (2015) where consistency plays an important role in global brand which includes the balance between the brand promise and how the brand delivers the message to the audience.

3.Inbalance Between Local and International Objectives

In global branding, Roll (2015) also highlights the importance of creating a balance in local and international goals. To achieve success in global branding, strategies must be flexible and consistent. This delicate balance involves maintaining a unified and consistent brand image in each region while modifying the strategy to suit regional customs without diluting the essence of the brand, which is called

"glocalization" this includes logo utilization, color palettes, and tones of expression across all platforms. The informants revealed why they do not think of Kopiko as a Korean product from the aspect of Kopiko's packaging which has dark colors and does not use Hangeul letters, which is different from most other Korean candy packaging which has colorful and cute colors accompanied by Hangeul letters. Kopiko also has a halal logo which is very difficult to find in Korean candy products which usually don't have a halal logo. These things strengthen the informant's perception that Kopiko is not a Korean brand. Kopiko still stands by its stance of using dark packaging which is contrary to Korean sweets in general, and uses a halal logo.

CONCLUSION

The primary objectives of this study are to explain "how do consumers perceive Kopiko's global branding strategy in K-drama?". The research's overall conclusions provide summary of the perception of consumers towards Kopiko's global branding strategy in K-drama. This study can determine that: Consumers have good recognition of the Kopiko brand, they can say what is

unique about Kopiko based on their own perceptions. Based on the findings, the exposure generated by the Kopiko strategy in K-drama was quite significant, the informant also had good experience with the Kopiko brand. The most interesting findings are to characterize three types of consumer perceptions of brand product placement in K-drama, the first one is the perception of Kopiko as a global brand, which is formed by brand recognition, where consumers can easily recognize the Kopiko brand, then personal consumer experience where Kopiko is found in several countries which is easy to find, then another aspect is brand consistency, where Kopiko is successful in how Kopiko delivers the message and what the brand promises, namely easy to carry anywhere. The second one is the perception of Kopiko as a Korean brand, this aspect is supported by consumer perceptions in terms of the uniqueness of Kopiko which according to consumers is the appearance of Kopiko in K-drama, this strengthens a person's perception of Kopiko as a Korean brand, then cultural sensitivity also supports one's perception of Kopiko as a Korean brand, because Korean culture is used to drinking coffee every day, and is combined with "ppali-

ppali culture" which is a Korean culture that requires everything to be fast and efficient.

And the last one is the perception of Kopiko as a Non-Korean Brand in terms of local brand. The elements that support this aspect are the recognition of someone who already knows where Kopiko comes from, and also in terms of Kopiko's inconsistency in what is promised and what is delivered in K-drama, where Kopiko says that "Kopiko is made from real coffee beans" which where this scene is not highlighted in K-drama, the last element that makes consumers perceive Kopiko as a non-Korean brand is in terms of packaging which is different from Korean candy brands in general.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, it is evident that Kopiko's global branding through product placement in K-dramas has both strengths and areas for improvement. The practical implications suggest that while Kopiko has succeeded in enhancing brand recognition and consumer experience, there's a need for better consistency in messaging and alignment with its distinctive selling points, such as the use

of genuine coffee beans. Socially, the study underscores the importance of cultural sensitivity in global branding, emphasizing the need for Kopiko to strengthen its local brand identity while maintaining global appeal. Academically, the research contributes to the understanding of global branding theories and highlights the significance of factors such as brand recognition, cultural sensitivity, and consumer perceptions. Future research could delve deeper into how consumer perceptions of brand placement in media content impact brand attitudes and purchase intentions.

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