

The Influence of Personal Selling and Promotion on Increasing Sales Through Brand Image in MSMEs Medan Food Court

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to analyze the influence of personal selling and promotions with brand image moderating variables on increasing sales at Medan Foodcourt MSMEs . The population in this research was 46 MSMEs, taking illustrations using a saturated sampling method with a total of 46 illustrations. This research used SEM PLS analysis procedures tested using software smart PLS. The results of this research show that personal selling has a positive influence and has a big impact on brand image. Promotion has a positive and significant influence on Brand Image. Personal selling has a positive and significant influence on increasing sales. Promotion has a positive and significant influence on increasing sales. Brand Image has a positive and significant influence on Increased Sales. Personal selling through Brand Image has a positive and insignificant effect on increasing sales. Promotion through Brand Image has a positive and significant influence on increasing sales. The implications of this research suggest that Foodcourt MSMEs must focus on developing personal selling and promotional strategies that can improve brand image to achieve long-term sales growth.

1. INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) rely heavily on marketing strategies to survive and develop in the era of globalization and increasingly fierce business competition. Changes in the business environment have an impact on increasing competition, as can be seen from the many new products launched by companies to maintain their existence (Sari & Tanjung, 2023). MSMEs are the backbone of the country's economy because of their role in absorbing labor and their contribution to GDP. MSMEs are the pillars of the country's economy (Tanjung & Mulyani, 2023) . "MSMEs contribute up to 61% of GDP, this is much higher than ASEAN countries and the *selected* G20, Sri Mulyani stated, "MSMEs contribute up to 61% of GDP, this is much higher than ASEAN countries and selected G20" (CNBC, 2024) "The number of our MSMEs is around 65 million with a contribution of 61% to GDP and employment of 97%," said Jokowi at the BRI *Microfinance Outlook* 2024 event in Jakarta (Kompas.com, 2024) . and significant promotions in increasing product or service sales.

In the food and beverage business, such as *Foodcourt Medan*, *brand* image is an important factor that influences consumer preferences. Medan Foodcourt serves a variety of food and drinks from various local Medan MSMEs. Benny Iskandar Nasution, head of the Medan Industry and Trade SME Cooperative Service, stated, "MSME players must be increasingly enthusiastic about improving product quality and packaging to compete," and added that his party would add events to expand the MSME market (Pemkob, nd) . Monetary policy is the monetary authority's efforts to use various instruments to achieve the goal of low and stable inflation with sustainable economic growth (Tanjung, 2021) . Facing tight competition in the culinary market, Medan *Foodcourt MSMEs* must have an effective marketing strategy to increase sales. "MSMEs at the Medan *Foodcourt* can enjoy increased sales with comfortable facilities for consumers, including children's play areas. "Medan *food court* opens at 14.00 WIB, attracts office workers and teenagers, with clean and comfortable conditions and a large parking area," said the manager.

MSMEs are the driving force of the Indonesian economy today because of their large contribution in supporting the economy (Tanjung & Mulyani, 2021) . Performance is the result of a reference and measurement process over a certain period of time based on regulations or conventions that reflect a person's abilities and skills (Ruhmi & Tanjung, 2023) . PT Dodol picnic producer Herlina Citra Pratama has used a profitable communication strategy using advertising, sales promotions, public relations, events and direct marketing (Buchori & Sugiantoro, 2023) . The glagah putri twin broom household industry increases sales by using a combination of promotions that include advertising, personal sales, sales promotions,

public relations, and direct marketing (AQILUNAZA, 2023) . The analysis shows that marketing strategy influences the sales volume of Pondok Penyet 18 Pabuaran MSMEs (Al-khatiri et al., 2023) . Not all marketing methods used by food court MSMEs in Medan have

proven to be effective. This research needs to be carried out to find out the extent to which personal selling and promotions can increase sales directly and indirectly through brand image.

The Shanie Store brand image helps increase product sales. This shows that brand image can increase sales (Agustin, 2023) . (ALMAS, 2022) . Customer CV study Mitra Jaya's study shows that *personal selling* increases the level of client CV sales. According to Etalase Mitra Jaya. *Personal selling* is a method of direct or face-to-face communication between sellers and potential buyers with the aim of introducing the product and increasing the buyer's understanding of the product (Tjiptono & others, 1995) . analysis of emotional facial expressions, and neuro-physiological experiments , have proven to be instrumental in understanding user behavior and emotions. These techniques provide objective measurements and deeper insight into user reactions to different stimuli, helping in identifying areas for improvement and improving user engagement (Kemora et al., 2024) . The results of hypothesis testing regarding the relationship between advertising costs and sales show that advertising costs have a significant positive impact on sales (significance value $0.000 < 0.05$). Therefore, the hypothesis is supported. That the regression model has an effect on sales of 93.2% is shown by the adjusted R Square value of 0.932, or 93.2%. ShopeeFood's brand image can increase loyalty because a positive impression makes customers prefer to use their services rather than other delivery applications which are capable of increasing consumer loyalty because based on this research potential buyers are willing to make repeat purchases at ShopeeFood and are willing to make ShopeeFood the main choice in making purchases by delivery order, and potential buyers will also be willing to recommend it to other people. (Kusumayanti et al., 2022)

Hypothesis . The research success rate of 64.8% supports the hypothesis that product sales are influenced by personal sales (Astutik et al., 2021) . This shows that customers still view MSME promotions in a relatively positive way. The relationship correlation value (R) shows the influence of S3shop MSME promotion. (Nurhayati et al., 2023) , (Mirnasari & Yamin, 2022) , resulting in the following framework of thinking:

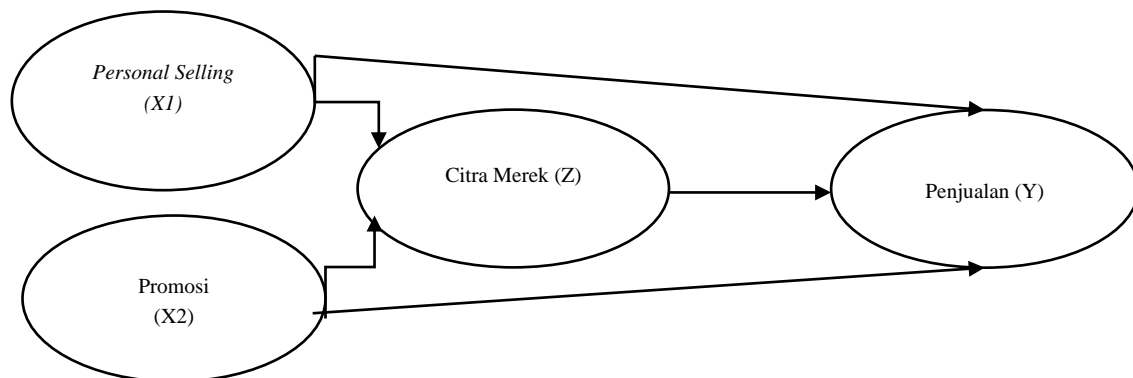


Figure 1. Research Model

Source: Researcher, 2024

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research was carried out at the Medan *food court*, located on Jalan Gatot Subroto No. 175, Sei Kambing B, Medan Sunggal District, starting from February to June 2024. The sample in this study is defined as part of the population that is the actual data source. The sample is part of the population, which is a representation of the population as a whole (Amin et al., 2023). This research uses the Saturated Sample method, the entire population is taken as a sample in this research (Sugiyono, 2019). Medan *Foodcourt*, which was founded in 2019, offers a variety of culinary delights, including Indonesian and Korean food food, and others, as well as various types of drinks. This *foodcourt* has 46 MSMEs operating there.

Data analysis method. Data analysis is the process of searching for and organizing data obtained through field notes, interviews, and documentation. This research uses a quantitative descriptive approach which is based on measuring quantity or amount (Tanjung & Muliyani, 2021). The *Smart PLS* application along with SEM analysis was used in this research. *Loading Factor*, *Average Variance Extracted (AVE)*, and *Cross Loading* is used to test the validity of the research. Research results are considered valid only if the data collected and researched are similar. Reliability test, carried out using *Cronbach Alpha* and *Composite Reliability*, determines how consistent the measurement results are with the same object (Sugiyono, 2017).

3. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Validity and Reliability Test

To measure the accuracy of the instruments used in this research, validity and reliability tests were used. This is the result of the reliability and validity test of this research

Loading factors

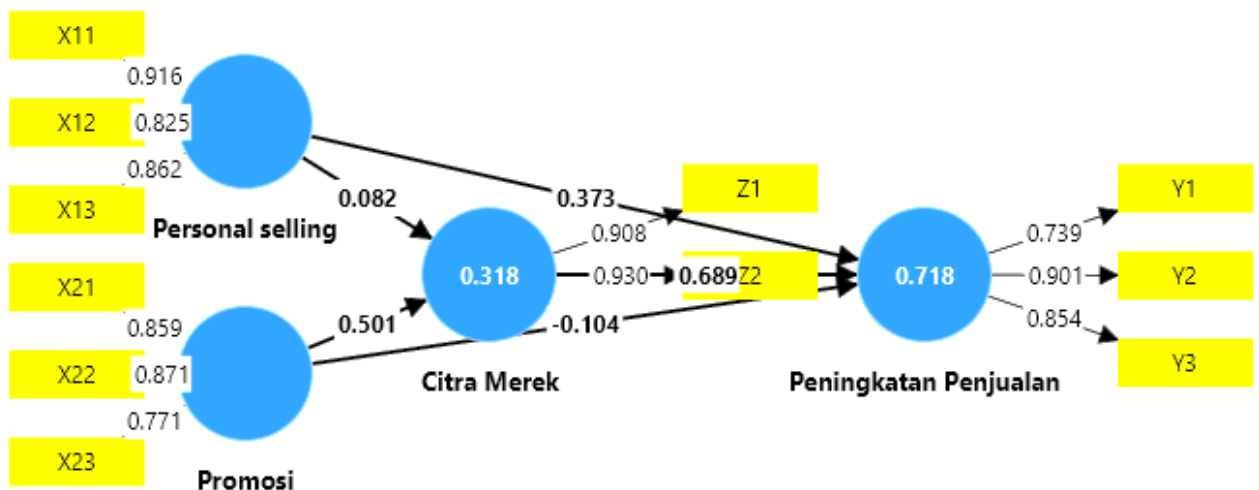


Figure 1. Outer Model

Source: Researcher, 2024

All indicators in the latent variable have values *loading* The average factor is 0.7, as shown in the figure above. As a result, it can be concluded that this research questionnaire is valid .

The profile or identity of the research sample is included in the respondent's attributes. This research involved 46 MSME actors in the Medan Foodcourt who filled out questionnaires based on their age, gender, length of business, type of MSME business, monthly turnover, number of workers and their education level. Data on respondent characteristics are as in **table 1**:

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics		F	JLH(%)
Age	20 - 30	7	15.2%
	30 – 40	26	56.5%
	40 – 50	13	28.3%
Total		46	100%
Gender	Male	26	56.5%
	Female	20	43.5%
Total		46	100%
Length of business	1 month – 1 Year	28	60.9%
	1Year – 3Year	10	21.7%
	3Year – 5Year	8	17.4%
Total		46	100%
Business	Food	37	80%
	Drinks	9	20%
Total		46	100%
Monthly Turnover	500 – 1M	13	28%
	2M – 5M	33	72%
Total		46	100%
Number of Employees	1 – 3	33	72%
	4 – 5	13	28%
Total		46	100%
Primary 1	SD	1	2.2%
	SMP	1	2.2%
	SMA	39	84.8%
	Kuliah	5	10.9%
Total		46	100%

Source: Prepared by Researchers 2024

Table 2. Results loading factors

Indicators	Personal Selling	Promotion	Increase Sales	Brand Image
Trading skill	0.916			
Negotiation	0.825			
Marketing relationships	0.862			
Advertising		0.859		
Events and experiences		0.871		
Public relations		0.771		
Optimize sales			0.739	
Get a profit of			0.901	
Growth of MSMEs			0.854	
Brand advantage				0.908
Brand strength				0.930

Source: Smart Researcher Data Processing PLS 2024

The table above shows the loading results factor of all indicators shows the loading value factor above 0.7, which means all indicators are valid. Thus, it can be concluded that each indicator used in this research meets the requirements for convergent validity and can be used for further analysis.

Table 3. Cronbach Alpha, Composite Reliability, Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Indicator	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Personal Selling	0.839	0.902	0.754
Promotion	0.782	0.873	0.697
Increase in Sales	0.782	0.872	0.696
Brand Image	0.817	0.916	0.845

Source: Smart Researcher Data Processing PLS 2024

Table 3 shows that the Cronbach's alpha value for each indicator related to the latent variable must be more than 0.6, which shows that the survey is reliable. Apart from that, the composite reliability value is also ≥ 0.7 , so it can be concluded that this questionnaire is reliable. The average value of the variance extracted (AVE) for each indicator in the latent variable is ≥ 0.5 , so this research can be declared valid.

Table 4. Croos loading

Indicators	Personal Selling	Promotion	Sales Increase	Brand Image
Trading skills	0.916	0.637	0.598	0.493
Negotiation	0.825	0.623	0.404	0.271
Marketing relationships	0.862	0.660	0.544	0.366
Advertising	0.719	0.859	0.550	0.482
Experience	0.598	0.871	0.439	0.464
Public relations	0.501	0.771	0.390	0.460
Optimize sales	0.291	0.224	0.739	0.543
Earning a profit of	0.673	0.597	0.901	0.787
Growth of MSMEs	0.482	0.503	0.854	0.632
Brand advantage	0.401	0.467	0.691	0.908
Brand strength	0.424	0.559	0.772	0.930

Source: Smart Researcher Data Processing PLS 2024

The table above shows that Cross Loadings for indicators on the sales variable have a greater construct value compared to other constructs .

Hypothesis test

Determinant Coefficient (R ²)

Table 5. Determinant Coefficient Test

Indicator	R square
Increase in Sales	0.872

Source: Smart Researcher Data Processing PLS 2024

The coefficient of determination of 0.872, or 87%, was found from table 5. This shows that *personal selling* and promotions can be responsible for 87 percent of sales variability at Medan *Foodcourt* . Other variables not examined in this study account for the remaining 13%.

Test (T)

Table 6. Partial Test Results (T)

Indicator	T Statistics	P Value
X2 (Promotion) => Z (Brand Image)	2.435	0.015
X2 (Promotion) => Y (Increase in Sales)	0.745	0.457
Z (Brand Image) => Y (Increase in Sales)	5.821	0,000
X1 (<i>Personal Selling</i>) => Z (Brand Image)	0.366	0.715
X1 (<i>Personal Selling</i>) => Y (Increase in Sales)	3,247	0.001

Source: Smart Researcher Data Processing PLS 2024

The research results show that the promotion variable for brand image has a calculated t value of 2.435 which is higher than the t table value of 2.01, and has a P value of 0.015, which is lower than alpha 0.05 (5%). This shows that promotions have a positive and large impact on brand image perceptions. In addition, the direct promotion variable which is related to increasing sales has a calculated t value of 0.745, which is also greater than the t table of 2.01, and has a P value of 0.457, which is lower than alpha 0.05. This shows that promotions influence increased sales positively and significantly, indicating that there is a significant relationship between promotions and the formation of increased sales. In addition, the calculated t value of the brand image variable on increasing sales is 5.821, which is greater than the t table value of 2.01, and the P value is 0.000, which is less than alpha 0.05. This shows that brand image influences increased sales. For the *personal selling variable* on brand image, the calculated t value of 0.366 is greater than the t table Of 2.01 and the P value of 0.715 is smaller than alpha 0.05. This shows that *personal selling* has a positive and significant effect on brand image. Finally, the *personal selling variable* for increasing sales has a calculated t value of 3.247, higher than the t table value of 2.01, and a P value of 0.001, lower than alpha 0.05. This shows that *personal selling* has a positive and significant impact on increasing sales partially and widely.

Table 7. Hypothesis testing results (direct relationship)

Relationship variables	sample Original (O)	mean to (M)	standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistic (O/STDEV)	P value (P values)
X2 (Promotion) =>					
Z (Brand Image)	0.501	0.477	0.206	2.435	0.015
X2 (Promotion) =>					
Y (Increase in Sales)	0.104	0.109	0.139	0.745	0.457
Z (Brand Image) =>					
Y (Increase in Sales)	0.689	0.690	0.118	5.821	0.000
X1 (<i>Personal Selling</i>) =>					
Z(Brand Image)	0.082	0.104	0.225	0.366	0.715
X1 (<i>Personal Selling</i>) =>					
Y (Increase in Sales)	0.373	0.385	0.115	3.247	0.001

Source: Smart Researcher Data Processing PLS 2024

Promotion directly influences the Brand Image of Foodcourt MSMEs Medan . Promotion plays an important role in building and strengthening a brand image. Effective promotions, such as advertising, discounts, special offers, and promotional events, help increase consumer awareness of a brand. Promotion has a positive and significant influence on brand image. That brand image consists of a person's beliefs, ideas and impressions of a brand (Kotler, 2017) . Therefore, promotions have a positive and significant impact on brand image. Studies conducted by (Tan & Utami, 2021) and (Pradnyana & Suryanata, 2021) support the idea that promotional factors have a positive and significant impact on brand image. Therefore, hypothesis H1 is that promotions have a positive and significant impact on brand image. This positive influence shows that effective promotions can improve customer perceptions of brand image.

Promotions directly influence the increase in sales at MSME Foodcourts Medan. Promotion is an important tool in marketing that is used to attract customer attention and increase sales. In the context of *food court MSMEs* in Medan, promotion plays an important role in introducing products and services, building brand image, and encouraging increased sales. The theory states that Sales is defined as a process in which the seller meets the needs and desires of the buyer in an effort to consistently achieve profitable benefits for both parties (Nickles, 2015) . This research is in line with studies by (Waruwu et al., 2021) and (Iskandar & Suarsih, 2022) showing that promotional variables have a positive and significant effect on increasing sales. Thus, hypothesis H2 is that promotion has a positive and significant effect on increasing sales. This means that an increase in promotional activities is associated with an increase in the number of sales. The more intensive or effective the promotional efforts are, the higher the sales achieved.

Brand image directly influences increasing sales at Medan foodcourt MSMEs . Consumers' perceptions of a particular brand image are shaped by their experiences, promotions, interactions and associations with the brand. In the case of Medan *foodcourt MSMEs* , a positive brand reputation significantly increases sales. Consumers tend to choose brands that are well known and reliable . This is reinforced by the theory that selling is a social management process in which people and groups get what they need and want from brands, create, offer and exchange products of value (Keller, 2009) . This research is in line with (Fransiscus & Husda, 2022) , (Shibab & Siregar, 2023) that brand image has a positive impact on increasing sales. Hypothesis H3 means that brand image has a positive impact on increasing sales. These results show how important marketing strategies that focus on creating and maintaining a strong brand image are when increasing sales.

Personal Selling directly influences the brand image of Medan foodcourt MSMEs . Brand image is a consumer's perception or view of a brand which is formed through certain experiences, promotions, interactions and associations. In the context of *food court MSMEs* in Medan, a positive brand image has a significant impact that directly influences increased sales. Consumers who trust and are loyal tend to choose brands with a good and trustworthy reputation. Theory supports this by stating that brand image is a consumer's perception of a brand as a reflection of the associations that exist in the consumer's mind. Brand image is an association that appears in consumers' minds when they remember a particular brand. These associations can simply appear in the form of certain thoughts and images associated with a brand (Kotler & Keller, 2016) . This research is in line with studies by (Andi mappatempo, Arfan, 2022) and (Huda k, 2023) with the results that *personal selling* has a positive and significant effect on brand image. So hypothesis H4 is that *personal selling* has a positive and significant effect on brand image. that an increase in *personal selling activities* , such as direct interaction with customers, personal delivery of product information, and tailoring offers to individual needs, can directly improve the brand image in the eyes of consumers.

Personal Selling directly influences the increase in sales at Medan foodcourt MSMEs . In Medan food court MSMEs , *personal selling strategies* can be a very effective tool for increasing sales. MSME owners and managers can train their staff to become more skilled in personal selling , including how to interact with customers effectively, understand their needs, and offer the right solutions. Theory supports this by stating that increased sales are the result of direct individual interactions aimed at creating, improving, mastering, or maintaining exchange relationships that are profitable for both parties (Dh, 2008) . This research is in line with the studies of (Verra Putri Angala et al., 2022) and (Mahyani, 2021) , which show that the *personal selling variable* has a positive and significant effect on increasing sales. Thus, hypothesis H5 is that personal selling has a positive and significant effect on increasing sales. This shows that *personal selling efforts* , such as direct interaction with customers, product demonstrations, and consultations carried out by sales personnel, are able to significantly increase the number of sales .

Table 8. Hypothesis testing results (indirect relationship)

Relationship variables	sample Original (O)	mean to (M)	standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistic (O/STDEV)	P value (P values)
(<i>Personal selling</i>) =>					
(Brand Image) => (Increased sales)	0.057	0.064	0.151	0.375	0.708
(Promotion) =>					
(Brand Image) => (Increased Sales)	0.345	0.341	0.175	1.970	0.049

Source: Smart Researcher Data Processing PLS 2024

The influence of *personal selling* through brand image on increasing sales at Medan food court MSMEs . The influence of *personal selling* through brand image on increasing sales at Medan *foodcourt MSMEs* can be explained as follows. In the context of *food court MSMEs* in Medan, *personal selling* can be done through direct on-site interaction, product demonstrations, or personal customer service. The theory of increasing sales states that sales is a human activity that aims to satisfy needs and desires through an exchange process (Sofjan Assauri, 2014) . The results of the analysis show that the calculated t value of *the personal selling* variable through brand image on increasing sales has a positive but not significant effect. This finding is in line with previous research conducted (Artini et al., 2021) which shows that *personal selling* through brand image has a positive but not significant effect on increasing sales. Therefore, hypothesis H6, which states that *personal selling* through brand image has a positive but not significant effect on increasing sales, is strengthened by these findings. Although *personal selling efforts* carried out with the aim of improving brand image show a positive direction in increasing sales, the effect is not strong or consistent enough to be considered significant.

The effect of promotion through brand image on increasing sales at Medan foodcourt MSMEs . In the context of *food court MSMEs* in Medan, promotions can be carried out through various channels, such as social media, print advertisements, discounts, loyalty programs and special events. Brand Image is consumers' perception of a brand which is formed from their various experiences and interactions with the brand. Strengthened by a theory that states a specific set of characteristics, benefits and services consistently to buyers. Brands can convey six levels of meaning, namely attributes, benefits, values, culture, personality and usage (Tjiptono Fandy and Diana, 2016). From the results of the calculated t value The promotion variable through brand image on increasing sales is positive and significant for increasing sales. This is supported by previous research conducted by (Amalia Probosini et al., 2021) , (Irawan & Kamil, 2022) in which the promotional variable through brand image has a positive and significant effect on increasing sales. So hypothesis H7 is that promotion through brand image has a significant and influential effect on increasing sales. These results show that successful promotional efforts to build and improve a good brand image, such as through advertising, social media and other *branding activities*, are able to significantly increase sales.

4. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Personal selling has a positive and significant impact on brand image, which shows that effective *personal selling efforts can improve customer perceptions of the brand*. In addition, promotions have a significant positive impact on brand image, indicating that effective promotions can improve brand image. Effective *personal selling can immediately increase sales figures because they positively and significantly influence increasing sales*. In addition, promotions have a positive and significant impact on increasing sales, which shows that a good promotional strategy can increase sales. A strong brand image can increase product sales, as shown by the fact that a strong brand image contributes to increased sales. However, *personal selling* through brand image only has a positive but insignificant impact on increasing sales, indicating that although *personal selling* can improve brand image, its impact on sales through brand image does not reach the expected level of significance. In contrast, promotion through brand image has a positive and significant impact on increasing sales, indicating that promotion focuses on building brand image.

Therefore, *foodcourt MSMEs* must focus their attention on increasing *personal selling* by training sales teams to communicate with customers better and offer products that suit their needs. In addition, marketing strategies must also be optimized by providing sufficient resources for innovative and successful marketing campaigns. To increase sales and brand image, customer loyalty programs, discounts, and special offers can be effective promotional strategies. Lastly, it is very important for *foodcourt MSMEs* to improve their brand reputation through *branding efforts* consistent and successful. Thus, this research shows that *foodcourt MSMEs* must concentrate on developing personal sales and promotion strategies that can improve brand image so that sales can continue to increase . The Role of Customer Satisfaction as a Mediator: Objective: To identify the role of customer satisfaction as a mediating variable between *personal selling strategies* and increasing sales. Variables Researched: *Personal selling* /promotional strategy (independent variable), customer satisfaction (mediating variable), and sales (dependent variable) Variables that Need to be Researched in Brand Image Research Customer Recommendations: The role of *word-of-mouth* or recommendations from other customers in form a brand image. *Foodcourt* Design and Aesthetics : How the design and aesthetics of a business place affect brand image. Marketing Communications: The influence of various types of marketing communications (advertising, social media, direct promotion) on brand image. Online Reputation: The impact of reviews and ratings online on brand image. By examining these variables, future research can provide deeper insight into the factors that influence brand image and how *foodcourt MSMEs* can improve their brand image to achieve sustainable sales increases.

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