Investigating the Effect of Corporate Logo Determinants on Corporate Image, Based on Consumer Perception: Conceptual Paper

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Organizations around the world have extensively focus in creating a favourable corporate logo that will represent their corporate image in the mind of the consumers and maintain competitive advantage. The effect of corporate logo on the corporate image has been given little attention in the marketing literature and has been barely researched in the emerging market. The objective of this study is to investigate on the effect of corporate logo determinants on the corporate image specifically in the Malaysian mobile service provider based on consumer perception. Quantitative method of electronic questionnaire was used to collect the data from the consumers of two mobile phone service providers in the Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysian. SPSS 20.0 was used to analysis the data. The findings of this research hope to answer the research questions and reach the research objective and extend the aspect of corporate logo and corporate image into mobile phone service provider in the Malaysian context..

KEYWORDS: Corporate image, corporate logo, name, typeface, color, design

INTRODUCTION

Research Overview

General evaluation of any organization corporate image is a serious issues that affect organization of different industries (Sarstedt et al., 2012). Therefore, there is a need for continues research on corporate image, especially organizations that strive to maintain their competitive advantage over another competitors in the same business and effectively distinguish themselves in the market place (Abd-El-Salam, Shawky & El-Nahas, 2013). Maintaining competitive advantage in the challenging market and creating positive corporate image in the mind of the consumers, building trust and attracting more consumer is essential (Kyurova & Yaneva, 2017) and there is a high risk of failure for any organization that ignores to creating a positive corporate image in the mind of their consumers (Gilpin, 2010). Therefore, there is a need for an organization to create a positive corporate image in the mind of the consumers to sustain long-term success and gain a competitive advantage over business competitors (Fariaa & Mendes, 2013; Massey, 2016; Bhatti, Awan, & Siddiquei, 2017). In order to build a positive corporate image, organizations of different businesses around the world have extensively focus in designing and presenting favorable corporate logo that will communicate their value to the consumers (Foroudi et al., 2014). Corporate logo as a strategic tool to communicate an organization corporate image need to be considered by corporations because the more favourable consumers perceive corporate logo, the more positive effect on the corporate image and reputation (Foroudi et al., 2017). This corporate logo consists of four determinants namely; name (Selame & Selame, 1975), typeface (Henderson, Giese & Cote, 2004), color (Aslam, 2006), and design (Gorn et al., 1997). Consumer's perception toward an organization

image or its product are based on these four types of signals of a corporate logo determinants (Foroudi et al., 2014).

Background of the study

Mobile phone service provider industries has been reported in the International Telecommunication Union research report to be listed among the fastest growing industry in the world that contribute to countries economic for many years (Atsu et al., 2014). In the Malaysian context, telecommunication industry is reported as one of the fastest growing sectors of keeping proper step with the general improvement to the nation economic, most especially the mobile phone service provider (Rosli, Said, & Fauzi, 2015). Many organisation of different industries are facing challenges in sustaining their competitive advantage and protecting corporate image (Rosli, Said, & Fauzi, 2015). There has been increase of challenges faced by many international and local telecommunication industry specifically mobile phone service provider. This situation have led to the offering high-speed data coverage as a strategy to sustain competitive advantage and create a positive corporate image in the mind of the consumer (Ibrahim, Shahid, & Ahmed, 2014). Regardless of the significant revenue that the mobile phone service provider segment has contributed in the country economic, still the Malaysian top mobile phone service providers Maxis and, DiGi and Celcom continued to witness decreasing amount of subscribers in the first three months of 2017. In turn, results in their reduction of business revenue (Kok, 2017).

Negative consumer behaviour toward a corporate image and the issues of organization competing among each other's to maintain competitive advantage in the market have led to difficulties in creating trust, attraction and building a positive corporate image of themselves in the mind of the consumer (Adeniji, Osibanjo, & Adodun, 2013; Kyurova & Yaneva, 2017). Building a positive corporate image in the mind of the consumers and maintain competitive advantage is a difficult and challenging because it relate with individual

evaluation and perception about organization performance, value, and promise (Kehinde, 2012). Due to the difficulties in building a positive image, corporate logo is used as a tool to identify the image consumers perceive toward organization (Foroudi et al., 2014). However, the effect of these four corporate logo determinants influence on consumer evaluation, the effect of corporate logo on corporate image, and the relationship between the corporate logo determinants and corporate image is limited in the academic research and has barely been researched in the emerging market (Zhu & Argo, 2013; Foroudi et al., 2014; Foroudi et al., 2017; Bresciani & Del Ponte, 2017). Based on these issues, this study uphold that the effect of corporate logo determinants on the corporate image is limited in the research literature and in the emerging. Also no precise research on the relationship between corporate logo determinants and corporate image. Furthermore, there is no study deeply discussed on the corporate logo determinants that influence consumer evaluation. Therefore, this study investigate the effect of corporate logo determinants on the corporate image in the Malaysian mobile service provider specifically on the Maxis and DiGi based on consumer perception. To investigate on the effect corporate logo determinants on corporate image, research questions and research objectives were developed:

Research question
    i.   What effect does corporate logo determinant name have on the corporate image?
    ii.   What effect does corporate logo determinant typeface have on the corporate image?
    iii.   What effect does corporate logo determinant color have on the corporate image?
    iv.   What effect does corporate logo determinant design have on the corporate image?

Research question

i. To investigate the effect of corporate logo determinant name on the corporate image.
ii. To investigate the effect of corporate logo determinant typeface on the corporate image.
iii. To investigate the effect of corporate logo determinant color on the corporate image.
iv. To investigate the effect corporate logo determinant design on the corporate image.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Corporate Image Definitions

Underlining on the definition of the corporate image, various scholars, researchers, and experts have defined the corporate image from their own respective opinions. According to Keller (1993), corporate image is the beliefs, behavior, reaction, and feelings held by consumers about an organization. Dutton et al. (1994) claimed that corporate image is the way internal stakeholder belief on how external stakeholders perceives their organization. Corporate image is an organization identity that includes a package of values derived from a group of individual of internal and external stakeholders (Balmer & Wilson, 1998). It is referred as the overall consumer assessment of an organization values (Nguyen & Leblanc, 2001). Corporate image is the organization indicator that creates feelings on the consumer's toward their product or brand (Hatch & Schultz, 2003). It is also the part that represents the perceptions reflection of an organization in the mind of the consumers which can be seen as the organization name that has been memorized by the consumers instead of the product (Bravo et al., 2009). The image that consumer perceives toward an organization or a product in known as corporate image (Sahin & Baloglu, 2011). A study by Kehinde (2012) claim that the image that represents what an organization stands for and how it perceived by consumers is referred as corporate image. Hamid and Jusoh (2016) posits that corporate image is a general perception, feelings, beliefs, behavior toward an organization, institution or business

that comes from experience through the perceived qualities received by individuals. A more recent study by Bhatti, Awan, and Siddiqui (2017) portrayed that corporate image is a vital tool that can create long-term success for an organization. In addition, corporate image can be viewed as a strategic tool used to create a positive feelings and beliefs in the mind of the consumers (Manzanares, 2017).

A corporate image have two main components: functional and emotional (Martineau, 1958). The functional part is known as the physical features that are viewed and evaluate. For instance, price, service, reliability, and quality. The emotional components explain how corporate image related to consumer perception and behaviors (Kennedy, 1977; Dowling, 1986). Corporate image is the way organization presents them self in the mind of the consumers (Nesset et al., 2011). Another study by Kehinde (2012) addressed that corporate image is in every large or small scale business entities, corporations, and government bodies. It is designed to serve as an influences factor to consumer buying intention (Brunner et al., 2008; Hansen et al., 2013). For an organization to achieve successful sale and gain more profits, they need to sustain a favorable corporate image in the mind of the stakeholders (Fariaa & Mendes, 2013). In organizational perceptive, corporate image is designed to sustain or recover a positve image in the mind of their stakeholders (Willi, Nguyen, Melewar & Dennis, 2014). Corporate image is the factor that influences consumer satisfaction (Giovanis, Athanasopoulou, & Tsoukatos, 2016).

Corporate Logo and Its Determinants

Several scholars and researchers have defined corporate logo and the most related definitions regarding corporate logo were from marketing literature (Bernstein, 1986; Van Riel & Balmer, 1997; Henderson & Cote, 1998) and also from design perspectives (Selame & Selame, 1975; Napoles, 1988; Olins, 1989; Balmer, 1998). Marketing scholar believed that corporate logo is the sign to represent corporate image and reputation and increase the perception of the

consumers about the organization (Hatch & Schultz, 2001; Van Riel & Van den Ban, & Heijmans, 2001; Van den Bosch, De Jong, & Elving, 2005). Research in academic field argued that corporate logo is the origin of corporate identity (Balmer, 2001; Van den Bosch, Elving, & De Jong, 2006). This is because the first thing that comes to individual mind when viewed a corporate logo or organization name is the corporate image (Gray & Balmer, 1998). Therefore, it is important for an organization to create an effective corporate logo to sustain a favorable image in the mind of the consumers (Van Heerden & Puth, 1995). Corporate logo is the representation sign used by the organization to promote their brand to the consumers (Kay, 2006); consists of name, typeface, color, and design elements (Melewar & Saunders, 1999; Van den Bosch, de Jong, & Elving, 2005, Foroudi et al., 2014; Foroudi et al., 2017).

Corporate logo Determinant Name

For individual or consumer to remember an organization, a name is a vital part for selling programme which stands as the primary impression consumer sees of any organization image (Ries & Trout, 1981). Klink and Athaide (2003) when brand trademark is consistent with the name design, organization brand meaning will improve. Name is very important because the more favourable consumers perceive it, the more positive effect on corporate image (Foroudi et al., 2014). Therefore, it is vital for a company to create a name or reveal the new name that obviously represents the new organization name in the mind of the consumers (Foroudi et al., 2017). Many element support to improve an organization image including the name (Lair, 2013). Name as an element of the corporate logo has significant relationship with the organization image (Balmer & Gray, 2000; Fombrun & Van Riel, 2004; Muller et al., 2013). For an organization to achieve a positive corporate image, they should design or apply a meaningful name, typeface, color, and design (Chakraborty, 2014). Based on the evidence shown in this section of corporate logo

determinant name, this study developed the first hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: Corporate logo determinant name have a significant effect on the corporate image.

Corporate logo Determinant Typeface

Typeface as one of the determinants of the corporate logo is a visually perceived property of an organization. It stands as the wording or art of creating communication between the firm and individuals (Henderson, Giese, & Cote, 2004). The typeface used to identify an organization name is a vital graphics tool that supports in achieving corporate communication objectives (Childers & Jass, 2002). Many studies on a typeface from other researchers focus on legibility, readability, and recognition. However, there is limited research on typeface and its potential characters on corporate logo (Li & Suen, 2010). As noted by Hagtvedt (2011) incomplete typeface logo is related to a lower trustworthiness of an organization, but with more innovativeness. Furthermore, the visual components such as typeface words are perceived by the viewers before its real meaning. Consequently, can affect the following information processed by individuals (Celhay, Boyselle, & Cohen, 2015). In the marketing research, the visual typeface aspect of organization representation has received high attention (Foroudi et al., 2014).The different characteristics such as activity, complexity, and symmetry of typeface have a unique effect on the corporate logo (Grunwald, 2016). Somerick (2000) believe that a typeface can create a significant impression and a positive corporate image with the audience. A typeface can contribute to increase an organization value and result to positive corporate image (Hagtvedt, 2011) and the more favourable typeface is perceived by the consumers the more positive effect on corporate image and reputation (Foroudi et al., 2014). Building on this evidence shown in this section of corporate logo determinant typeface, this study developed the second hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: Corporate logo determinant typeface have a significant effect on the corporate image.

Corporate logo Determinant Color

Earlier research by Humphrey (1976) argued that color application on corporate logo could react as a natural or instinctual origin. Jenkins (1991) state that color feelings from an individual can vary in different region or context. Henderson et al. (2004) affirmed that color does affect other aspects of corporate logo or corporate visual identity, for instance, typeface. Aslam (2006) also support that color is an essential part of a corporate logo which stands as a marketing communication between company and consumers as well as influence feelings and attitude of perception on consumer toward a corporate logo. Color utilized on the corporate logo has different meaning on an individual of different culture and region when applied as visual to communicate with an audience (Foroudi et al., 2017). Heerden and Puth (1995) believed that corporate logo that consists of name, typeface, color, and design contributes to a successful corporate image. Madden et al. (2000) examined the consequences of managing color to build and sustain brand and corporate images across international markets, believed that no empirical studies had been done yet to address to what level color can be used to develop and sustain brand and corporate image. Foroudi et al. (2014) also claimed that little is known about the relationship between the color and corporate image (Foroudi et al., 2014). Based on the evidence shown in this section of corporate logo determinant color, this study developed the third hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3: Corporate logo determinant color have a significant effect on the corporate image.

Corporate logo Determinant Design

In regards to design of corporate logo of an organization, Henderson and Cote (1998) portrayed that consumer's reaction to product or organization logo is influenced by the design

characteristics applied. Cohen (1991) revealed that consumer level of recognition, familiarity, and meaning of a logo is influenced by the design they view. The design determinant is the creative process formed to deliver a message to the audience or consumers (Cohen, 1991). According to Nee (2011), design or graphic of a logo should apply a sense of genuineness, efficient, and apparently standard representation of what it stands for the organization. Bestley and Noble (2016) states that individual's do use a graphic design as a finished work in poster, logo, layout or any website. Balmer (1998) claimed that design imposed a high impact on the corporate image. This is because corporate image is how organization presents their image through a name or icon design. Past research by Van den Bosch et al. (2005) argued that corporate logo determinate design also have significant relationship between corporate images. However, there is no precise examination of the relationship between corporate logo determinants and corporate image (Foroudi et al., 2014). Based on the evidence shown in this section of corporate logo determinant design, this study developed the fourth hypothesis.

Hypothesis 4: Corporate logo determinant design have a significant effect on the corporate image.

Underpinning Theory

Psychological research on attribution began with the work of Fritz Heider who developed models of attribution for both object perception and person (Malle & Bertram, 2004). Attribution is a concept within social psychology which describes the process by which individuals explain the cause of behaviours and events that they perceive (Heider, 1958). Past studies by Foroudi et al. (2014) adopt attribution theory as a base in their mix method research to evaluate the factors that influence consumer favorable corporate logo and its effect on corporate image and reputation based on consumer perception in a financial setting. Another qualitative study by Foroudi et al. (2017) adopts attribution theory to evaluate the management perception of the

impact of corporate logo on corporate image and reputation in Mexico and Persia context. A more recent research by Moser et al. (2018) also adopt attribution theory to examine the effect of a service provider's competitive market position on churn among flat-rate customers. This study will adopt attribution theory proposed by Weiner (2000) developed by Heider (1958) as a base for this study to investigate the effect of corporate logo determinants on the corporate image in the Malaysian mobile service provider specifically on the Maxis and DiGi based on consumer perception.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopt a quantitative method for data collection. According to Creswell (2013), quantitative research design is essential to generate a measurable result and to show the relationship between the variables of a study. The population for data collection is the individual consumers of Maxis and DiGi mobile phone service provider among the students and staffs in three universities UUM, USM, and UniMap in Kedah, Penang, and Perlis of Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia. Probability of a simple random sampling technique is used to distribute the questionnaire because the population has a known chance of being selected as a respondent in the sample and it permits the use of a statistical method of analysing sample result (Sekaran, 2003; Creswell, 2013). A minimum of 381 sample size required for this study is based on the 73,956 population of the three universities involved for the data collection recommended by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). This study unit of analysis is the consumers among students and staffs of Maxis and DiGi mobile phone service provider Malaysia. Electronically questionnaires of close-ended questions is used to collect the data through online Google form and email to distribute. The 37 items utilized to collect the data was adopted from the previous study of Foroudi et al. (2014). The name variable comprises of ten items, typeface variable eight items, color variable six items, design variable eight items and corporate image variable five items. Likert scale was employed to measure the

items adopt and utilized for data collection. This is because it measures the distance between any two points and permits respondents to choose and express their thoughts toward a specific question (Nemoto & Beglar, 2014; Sekaran, 2003). A nominal scale was also adopt and used to give a number to a specific measures and categorize answers (Stevens, 1946; Raiphea, 2015). Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was run to reveal the vital structure of a reasonably large set of variables. Multiple regressions were carried out to justify the relationship between independent variables corporate logo determinants name, typeface, color, and design and corporate image as a single dependent variable hypothesized in this study. The data gathered from the respondents were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 20.0.

CONCLUSION

The negative consumer evaluation toward a corporate image and the issues of organization competing among each other's to maintain competitive advantage in the market have led to difficulties in creating trust, attraction and building a positive corporate image of themselves in the mind of the consumer. There is a limited research done on the effect of corporate logo determinants on the corporate image. No precise research on the relationship between corporate logo determinants and corporate image. Additionally, no study deeply discussed on the corporate logo determinants that influence consumer evaluation. Consequently, this study investigate the effect of corporate logo determinants on the corporate image in the Malaysian mobile service provider specifically on the Maxis and DiGi based on consumer perception, to fill in the gap found in literature. The findings of this research hope to answer the research questions and reach the research objective and extend the aspect of corporate logo and corporate image of Foroudi et al. (2014) into mobile phone service provider in the Malaysian context. In addition, to build an additional knowledge of the effect corporate logo determinant on corporate image of mobile

phone service providers in the marketing literature.

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