Building Brand Identity Through Social Media Platform during Covid-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Building a substantial brand identity value has become a key issue for many companies' reputations. In previous years, the majority of studies focused on the consumer's perspective on organizations' brand equity value. Thus, this study expanded on earlier research by offering a more in-depth exploration and understanding of organizations' perspectives on how they develop their brand identity through social media platforms. A qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews was employed to explore the small-medium enterprise (SME) of the food and beverage service industry. Interviews were conducted with independent food truck businesses in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This study yielded results that showed respondents' interest in brand identity building on social media platforms. Creating a brand identity perception that is recognized by its customers through social media has become an essential activity for food truck (FT) owners to communicate their brand digitally.

Keywords: Brand Identity, Food Truck, SME, Social Media

INTRODUCTION

Recent years have seen renewed interest in popular social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter which are now playing an important role in attracting new potential customers. Social media and networking sites provide a virtual space for people to communicate through the internet, which also might be an important agent of consumer socialization (Vinerean et al., 2013). The growth in online shopping sites has created an active interaction and useful information which creates a positive perception of product messages and influences online shoppers' shopping behaviour (Chung and Muk, 2017). Recent evidence suggests that social media has emerged as a new marketing channel and an important source of customer inspiration, as customers become inspired and motivated by social media to purchase the advertised products (Sheng et al., 2020). Bozkurt et al. (2020) also indicate that when customers perceive a brand to be highly interactive on social media (vs inactive), they are more willing to buy brand offerings, refer to the brand in exchange for monetary incentives, inform their family and friends about the brand on social media and provide feedback and suggestions for improving the brand. It has been observed that Malaysian SMEs have different perspectives on social media. Some went on to social media commercialization, while others were hindered by their poor knowledge and limited understanding. With the development of information and communication technology in recent years, digital transformation and technology adoption have become crucial factors for SME business

sustainability (Bin and Hui, 2021). Thus, a company's brand identity serves as both an intangible resource for its product visibility and an important part of what it stands for.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the SME community faces a greater urgency than ever to 'survive and prosper in the new norm. As in today's competition, Malaysian SMEs are critically on the lookout for innovative ways to increase their brand's visibility among potential customers. Social media interaction and connection with consumers is a critical marketing approach for small businesses, as it enables SMEs to enhance brand awareness, expand their client base, and engage with current and prospective customers. Malaysian SMEs, especially food truck (FT) owners and operators, should ensure that their physical brand identity and marketing message content on social media receive great physique brand identity features on the social media platform. The pandemic has affected and reshaped countries across the globe, from rising health issues to economic slowdown, financial imbalance, interrupted social life, and political consequences (SME Corp, 2020). The epidemic has had a significant impact on demand and supply in the local and global economies, affecting companies' short-term economic prospects. Although most business activities have resumed operations under the Recovery MCO in the second half of 2020, they are still facing a slow pace of recovery in consumer demand, and operating costs remain a challenge (SME Corp, 2020). SMEs are battling to keep their businesses afloat as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has also impacted people in the B40 group who are trying to make ends meet owing to the loss of jobs and income. Similarly, food trucks (FT) in the F & B industry have seen significant drops in business since Malaysia's Movement Control Order (MCO). They also face the same pressures as those in other industries. Thus, the objectives of this study offer more in-depth exploration and understanding of SME's perspectives on how they develop their brand identity through social media platforms during Covid-19 slow pace of business recovery. This study contributed to the role of building SME brand identity in the digital world and engaging in customer engagement model from the customer perception towards their brand. In addition, sustainable digital branding over time can contribute to SMEs customer engagement for better customer loyalty and trust.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The new SME definition was made in place of the current economic situation and developmental changes in government economic policy and the business competitive environment. The definition is periodically reviewed to reflect the economy as it relates to SMEs (Kumar, 2018). This new definition is more appropriate for SMEs to meet new business challenges in a more competitive global business environment. Generally, SMEs were defined differently among countries, which had their guidelines based on various criteria, including the number of employees, annual sales, and total capital. In 2018, Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM), through SME Corp. Malaysia redefined the SME criteria based on sales turnover and the number of employees. Malaysian SMEs are classified into three categories, which are micro, small and medium. Malaysian SMEs were also divided into two main sectors, which are manufacturing and services, among others. Malaysia has a growing domestic F&B market, driven by a growing population and rising income among the Southeast Asian countries. The food and beverage services recorded a gross output value of RM82.8 billion in 2017 as compared to RM66.4 billion in 2015 with an annual growth rate value of 11.7 per cent (DoSM, 2019). Thus, in the modern urban lifestyle, consumers prefer an assortment of merchandise, including convenient foods and beverages (F&B) (Faizal et al., 2019). However, the total revenue of the services sector in the third quarter of 2021 recorded RM391.0 billion, which decreased to 8.7 per cent as compared to the same quarter in 2020 (DoSM, 2021).
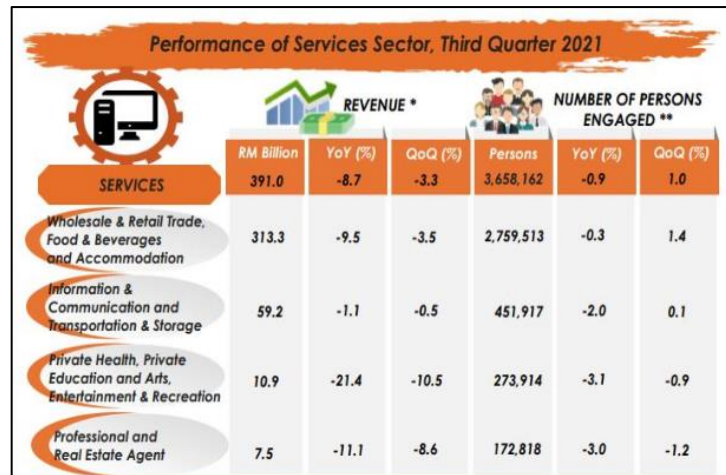
Figure 1: Performance of Services Sector, Third Quarter 2021. (DoSM, 2021)

Considering the uniqueness of the food, beverages, and food cultures, Malaysia can simply be regarded as a gastronomic paradise (Abubakar, 2010). Gastronomy encompasses an appreciation for diverse social, cultural, and historical components, as well as literature, philosophy, economics, and religion, all of which revolve around food. The street food vendors and hawkers in the night market have continued to grow in recent years due to a more attractive business model with promising income. The physical trucks have distinct personalities. The uniqueness of the food they offer has made gourmet food trucks a popular dining choice, and a fusion of tastes is the best way to describe the innovative food creations that food trucks are known for (Ibrahim, 2011). The term "food truck" refers generally to a motorized vehicle often customized from which an operator sells food to consumers where these trucks typically contain cooking facilities the operator uses to prepare food, sometimes customized according to a particular consumer's order (Linnekin, 2011).

Malaysia F&B Industry and Brand Identity

The food and beverage industry is now turning to mobile vendors, including food trucks, as a new and promising business proposition. With the current trend, the vendor's creativity and consumer's demands influence the evolution of the food truck business in Malaysia (Rahman, 2019). In Malaysia, mobile eateries, the new generation of food trucks, is undergoing a revolution. Food trucks are a fun-oriented business that has the potential to grow over time, which means a daily basis of profit can be earned with the right plan for a younger, enthusiastic new generation. The food truck model has been fairly popular among people due to an increase in youth spending, middle-class spending, conscious consumerism, mobile lifestyles, and the need for food on the go. In creating a social media brand identity and surviving in today's competitive business environment, food truck (FT) operators must seek out novel methods of communicating with their consumers and stakeholders. Social media is an effective tool for food truck (FT) operators and consumers to create relationships. Additionally, social media marketing is one of the most effective tools for capturing millennials' attention and influencing their purchasing decisions for any type of product or business. Social media marketing is a strategy several brands have taken up over the past few years. Brands and companies are beginning to focus on improving their social media presence the initiatives they take on and how they approach consumers (Sayyed and Gupta, 2020).

The origin and history of brand definition can be traced back to over 2000 years ago. During Greece's Iron Age civilization, pottery products were imprinted with the maker's name and image to convey information about the maker's origin and quality (825 – 336 BCE). The above evidence shows the marking of ownership by the producer along with product origin and quality information. Gardner

and Levy (1955) were among the first to introduce the concept of branding, which they defined as a complex symbol that represents a variety of ideas and attributes. In the modern world, a brand can be defined as a set of tangible and intangible attributes designed to create awareness and identity and to build the reputation of a product, service, person, place, or organization (Sammut-Bonnici, 2015). Certain identifications to unique associations such as names, logos, colours, and other attributes may create a distinctive place in the consumer's mind and experience.

Much of the current literature on branding pays particular attention to building a brand for their products by making them memorable, recognizable, and highly reliable in quality. A large and growing body of literature has investigated that brands have substantially developed the interaction between the brand and the consumer, particularly via building brand value that creates the entire brand equity. Brand equity is the "added value" with which a brand endows a product; this added value can be viewed from the perspective of the firm and the consumer, who, by building strong and sustainable brand equity, can enhance the value of a product beyond its functional purpose (Farquhar, 1989). Brand equity is connected with a symbol and a brand name that is given to a product or service: brand equity adds to or subtracts from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and its customers (Aaker, 1991). Simon and Sullivan (1993) defined brand equity as the incremental cash flows which accrue to branded products over unbranded products, and they suggest a technique for estimating a firm's brand equity that extracts the value of brand equity from the value of the firm's other assets. Customers will happily pay a high price for a company's products when it has favourable brand equity, even if they could buy the same thing from a competitor for less. Furthermore, Motameni and Shahrokhi (1998) also view brand equity in terms of the incrementally discounted future cash flows that would result from a branded product in comparison with the revenue that would occur if the same product did not have the brand name.

Kapferer (2008) has introduced brand identity prism attributes that are useful for understanding the brand identity of an organization. According to the European Institute of Brand Management (Eurib) (2009), Kapferer suggests that strong brands are capable of combining all the aspects of brands into an effective, clear, and appealing brand identity. According to (Kapferer, 2008), the first step in developing a brand is to define its physical aspect: What is it concretely? What does it do? What does it look like? Roy and Banerjee (2014) suggested that a brand with a strong identity ensures clear and convincing reasons to buy it and offers a sustainable competitive advantage. Physique is an exterior tangible dimension of what the brand represents: the design of its name, products, logo, symbol, colour, packaging and shape. Through physique, exterior tangible dimension can create a distinct value of appearance in the consumer's mind. Thus, the brand's physique facet will strike a consumer's mind when a purchase decision is to be made.

This study led Malaysian SMEs to develop an effective brand that produces certain effects within the minds of its consumers. Many corporations have successfully developed and built their brand personality facet that communicates an instant understanding of who "they" are. Brand identity is needed to distinguish products or services among business competitors with unique characteristics in the customer's mind. Corporate and brand identity is an issue of growing importance to all companies and has become a key dimension within an organization's strategy, which extends beyond the company's logo and name (Melewar et al., 2006). Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism has been successfully and vastly used in various past research for large corporations. The brand identity prism has been adopted previously by various researchers in several fields of studies that relate to brand identity understanding and development (Ponnam, 2007; Rashid, 2012; Roy and Banerjee, 2014). Recent developments in brand physique have heightened the need for brand logos and names, especially for new start-ups that provide an affective reaction from the consumer.

The adoption of information technologies by individuals and organizations has been an area of substantial research interest since the early days of computerization, research efforts to date have led to mixed and inconclusive outcomes (Moore and Benbasat, 1991). Brodie et al. (2011) proposed five propositions used in the development of a framework for future research, the undertaking of which

would facilitate the subsequent refinement of the conceptual domain of customer engagement. Vivek et al. (2014) define consumer engagement as the intensity of an individual's participation in and connection with an organization's offerings and/or organizational activities, which either the customer or the organization initiate.

However, there is a relatively limited body of literature that is concerned with and carried out on Malaysian micro-SMEs' physique brands (image/pictorial, logo/symbol, colour scheme, and tagline) to create a unique value in the minds of consumers and add value to their business performance. In addition, corporate trademarks and marketing expenses do have a positive association with SME sales performance and suggest that branding may also play a relevant role in the SME context (Agostini et al., 2015). Thus, there is still a literature and knowledge gap on building a brand identity on social media platforms among Malaysian SMEs. This is the most crucial agenda among SMEs to ensure their competitive advantage as well as to create a long-term, sustainable business relationship and encourage consumer trust and loyalty.

METHODOLOGY

This study engaged in a qualitative research approach. It involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (text, audio, and images) to understand concepts, opinions, and experiences. This article focuses on the process of building a brand identity on social media platforms among Malaysian food truck (FT) operators since digital and social media transformation and utilization have received considerable critical attention. In this study, a model of Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism (1997) will be taken as a main principle point of study to evaluate the Malaysian SMEs Food Truck Operator brand identity building process. As this study is a phenomenon-based research design, the main argument against considering a quantitative research approach is its inability to explain an in-depth underlying meaning and provide a fruitful explanation in this context of research. This study employed the realism paradigm in a qualitative research approach to further understand small businesses' processes of building their digital brand on social media platforms. Phenomenology Qualitative research design was chosen as it is a useful tool to examine, comprehend, and illustrate the experience of an individual or a group with a specific phenomenon (Creswell, 2003). For this study, the concept of building brand identity in the food and beverage industry is the main focal point of study. Since the phenomenological perspective is tied to a broad range of theoretical frameworks and schools of thought in the social sciences (Taylor et al., 2016), the views of Malaysian micro-SME food truck operators motivated the researchers to look deeper to comprehend the brand identity building process phenomena.

The sample representative for the qualitative part was derived equally from Malaysian SME food truck owners who operate around Klang Valley, Kuala Lumpur. A total of 12 food truck operators (founder/owner) in various TAPAK areas participated in the research. Most interviews were conducted in the local language (Bahasa Melayu) and only a few in English. The researcher linked pseudonyms to every participant to guarantee their privacy and to protect their identity. A random alphabetical person name i.e. Mr A, and a numerical number for the food truck i.e. FT1 is given. This is to ensure participants personal information are secured and protected. The researcher chose instruments such as face-to-face semi-structured interviews for data gathering. Through these instruments, the researchers obtained an understanding of why certain behaviours and experiences occurred and how these took place in the research context of building a brand identity on social media platforms. In this study, the researcher engaged the qualitative data analysis steps proposed by Creswell (2014) to analyze and interpret the qualitative data which include data transcribing, coding, and thematic and content analysis.

Table 1: Participants Background

Food Truck	Pseudonyms	Gender	Position	Types of Product
FT1	Mr. A	Male	Founder/Owner	Food
FT2	Mr. F	Male	Founder/Owner	Food
FT3	Mr. N	Male	Founder/Owner	Food
FT4	Mr. J	Male	Founder/Owner	Food
FT5	Ms. E	Female	Founder/Owner	Beverages
FT6	Mr. H	Male	Founder/Owner	Food
FT7	Mr. K	Male	Founder/Owner	Food
FT8	Mr. D	Male	Founder/Owner	Food
FT9	Ms. A	Female	Founder/Owner	Beverages
FT10	Mr. I	Male	Founder/Owner	Beverages
FT11	Mr. B	Male	Founder/Owner	Food
FT12	Mr. R	Male	Founder/Owner	Food

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Food trucks (FT) without active and intense social media usage may miss an opportunity to communicate their brand with the greater market and enhance organizational performance in the digital age. Furthermore, the existence of social media proved to have a positive impact on SMEs competitiveness (Lányi et al., 2021) particularly during the current pandemic and economic crisis in 2021. In this section, food truck (FT) brand physical appearance in social media postings that emphasize image/pictorial, logo/symbol, colour scheme, and tagline (slogan) is discussed.

The principal reason for a firm connecting to social networks has to do with the possibility of presenting services to a greater number of potential customers (Franco et al., 2016). In the current digital age, consumer eating habits and the decision-making process of food choices depend largely on countless digital and social media. Food photography and cues in social media can have impacted food truck (FT) operations where it could impress the entire friends list and followers. As one interviewee said:

> "*I feel like I post different pictures daily and that's how I make people feel like they want to try our product. It is not the same picture all the time which can make it boring*" (Ms A., FT9, Jalan Ampang, 2021).

Image (Pictorial)

The customer viewing appetizing food images (pictorial) on social media will lead them to try out and order a greater amount and different types of food. Posting an appetizing food image (pictorial) on social media may also be strengthened with a celebrity endorsement. Consumers were more likely to recall a celebrity endorsement who was handsome, humorous, and outspoken. Chan et al. (2013) argue that identified popularity, a good image, and congruence between the celebrity's image and that of the brand as important factors for marketers to consider in selecting celebrity endorsers. Additionally, celebrities who have likeability, popularity in the target market, personality, positive image, capability to add some value to the brand can enhance brand awareness (Rahman, 2018). One participant commented:

> "*We sometimes post food, sometimes there are also artists like back then, there were events, Serina Redzuawan, what was the name of her brother, I forgot - Chef Riz. There are also artists that*

would come to eat, bring the TV crew like that". (Mr. K., FT7, Tasik Permaisuri, 2021).

Mr K. food truck (FT) have joined numerous local food event and festival to promote his business to the public and create page follower. As a result, consumers get to know the product offered and engage in his food truck (FT) social media page through likes, comments, and shares. Comments and shares might be viewed as a more trustworthy indicator of user engagement. Patel et al. (2019) indicate that social media managers, who are always keen to enhance user engagement and interaction with their Facebook pages, could utilise the findings to create posts that are related to customer interests to deliver more value. Quesenberry and Coolsen (2018) research findings also indicated that factors for consumer likes, comments, and shared social media page posts depend on the new/now and time/date of the postings themselves. However, customer engagement with promotion and contest postings is insignificant in terms of likes, comments, and shares on social media pages.

Logo / Symbol

There is also food truck (FT) owners who emphasize logo/symbol as brand physical appearance on their social media page. In today's culture, an outstanding logo design signifies a successful commercial move and serves as a potent weapon for a food truck (FT) to withstand adversity and strengthen itself. As Mr J., (FT4) commented:

> *"In terms of the logo, we only use the truck tire logo. It is indeed old and does not get much response. So we hired skilled people to change the design of our logo, and it helped a little in expanding our business. In using social media, the majority of people will see presentations such as pictures, logos, what we serve and so on"*. (Mr. J., FT4, Tasik Permaisuri, 2021).

Additionally, one interviewee added:

> *"Extra Bubble's logo is professionally made. If you see our FB, you can see our logo. I did try to make my logo but it did not turn out great"* (Mr I., FT10, Shah Alam, 2021).

The changed elements in the brand logo help to build a positive brand attitude based on the modified logo and play a critical role in serving as a point of connection between food truck (FT) business and their customer. Visual representation of a brand, corporate logos has the potential to communicate and reinforce a brand's core values and principles, which we call its symbolic benefits (Park et al., 2014). The visualization of identity and its components often becomes a determining condition in consumers' brand choice (Sytnyk and Hrozna, 2021) and the visualization of the brand logo is effective and significantly influenced brand awareness (Bayunitri and Putri, 2016). Gajic et al. (2020) study on consumer choices of food found that gastronomic consumers have great confidence in social networks and that it creates a certain brand and attitude. Undoubtedly, the food truck (FT) brand physical appearance (logo/symbols) on their social media page helped to build a positive brand image and significantly influenced brand awareness among local gastronomic consumers. In addition, building a consistent, well established visual and communication brand identity through media channels, especially social media, is a necessity in today's world to gain competitive advantages for food truck (FT) business owners.

Visual identity contributes to the establishment and maintenance of a company's corporate image, with the colour and design of the company's logo playing a critical role. Thus, O'Connor (2010) argue that colour, one of several design elements used to create a new logo, is a key element in creating a unique logo and in terms of enabling a logo to achieve differentiation in a competitive environment.

Colour selections offer food truck logos more dimension by creating a visual link between the values and personality of the food truck firm. Food trucks may express their mood to customers by using the correct blend of colours and graphics.

Hynes (2019) study results strongly indicated that consumers make clear judgements about the image of a firm from the logo design and have strong opinions about which colours are appropriate for different corporate images. Thus, for a new food truck (FT) looking to break into a particular industry, designing a logo is critical. The majority of food truck (FT) owners emphasize brand/logo colour scheme as a physical appearance on their social media page. As one interviewee said:

> "*Initially, we used white backgrounds and black writing but in 2015, we chose to change the background to black and white writing*" (Mr H., FT6, Tasik Permaisuri, 2021).

Additionally, as mentioned earlier, th*e* way for Mr N., (FT3) create a physical brand identity for his food truck (FT) business when he started the food truck (FT) business in 2014 was inspired by his experience while studying in United State in 2011 as well as his passion and joy for Texan barbecues culture.

> *We incorporate the colours of the American flag, barbecue, very Texas, the stars, it always very Texas, the sheriff's stars. Our colour scheme was red, white and blue with the star* (Mr N., FT3, Shah Alam, 2021).

Colour Scheme

The majority of those who responded to this item felt that colours help their food truck (FT) brand connect with consumer deeper and create an emotion that associate the product and services offered. As one participant also put it:

> "*The orange colour symbolizes our "special" water. Orange colour raises the aura and attracts the interest of the public*" (Ms E., FT5, Cyberjaya, 2021).

Nevertheless, Torbarina et al. (2021) research findings indicate that logos when presented in greyscale were recognized more accurately can be explained by the total amount of information a consumer has to remember about the logo where colour showed no effect on either of the brands' awareness. Thus, the form or colour of a logo has little influence on its popularity, but greyscale logos are more correctly recognized than coloured logos. However, in the food and beverages (F&B) market sector, the majority of vendor chooses to colourize their brand logo to attract more consumer and create an effective brand image through visual identity specifically on a social media platform. Considering the non-random sample findings also demonstrates that colours employed in branding affect customer perception, are used to identify items, and convey a meaning that has grown into a relationship between the brand and the consumer. Consistent with (Labrecque and Milne, 2011) research findings also found that through colours, brands effectively establish an identity, communicate a mood, and form a relationship with consumers.

Tagline (Slogan)

Further analysis shows that food truck (FT) owners also emphasize their brand/logo which is attached to the tagline and slogan as a physical appearance on their social media page. Taglines (alternatively referred to as slogans, catchphrases, and positioning lines) are the initial phase and a

critical component of brand development. Cheema et al. (2016) study has concluded that the tagline of the brand has a strong impact on building positive brand perception. However, *s*logans are a key element of a brand's identity and contribute to a brand's equity and in today's marketplace, almost all brands employ slogans; they enhance a brand's image, aid in its recognition and recall, and help create brand differentiation in consumers' minds (Kohli et al., 2007).

Additionally, a slogan is a critical component of a brand's advertising platform, as it contributes to the formation of its identity and definition of its positioning. However, according to Alnajjar and Toivonen (2020) argument, slogans and taglines are often used interchangeably; slogans are made for an advertising campaign whereas taglines are employed as an identifiable phrase for the brand. In other words, while a slogan is created for a single advertising campaign, a tagline is generally created once for the life of the business. Therefore, a tagline is often part of the brand logo that represent the tone and feel of the product or services offered and its permanent. Slogans are always used for one product or one campaign which is more flexible and temporary for specific advertising campaigns and promotions.

To promote this unique business concept, Mr F., (FT2) emphasize on tagline and slogan attached to Nachoslah brand/logo. Nachoslah tagline is Anti Nachos Nachos Club and the slogan:

> "*Our slogan 'A Box of Happiness', we create colours and so on*".
> (Mr F., FT2, Shah Alam, 2021).

Mr F., (FT2) continuously uses the same slogan to promote every Nachoslah food campaign from time to time. However, Namkung and Jang (2007) argue that overall food quality also significantly escalates customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. Thus, the relationship between food quality and customer behavioural intentions is mediated by satisfaction. This is important for Nachoslah to ensure that its customers are satisfied with the product offered. A Box of Happiness slogan was chosen to treat Nachoslah customers, friends and family with amazing and unique food tastes offered that make them happy and satisfied.

A successful tagline helps a brand stand out in the customer's mind and as such, taglines work when a brand's differentiation is derived from a product attribute (Where's the beef?) or a unique benefit (Tastes great. Less filling) (Yohn, 2013). Besides, in this hyper-digital and social media age, modern taglines can function not only as an identifiable phrase for the brand and welcome signs, buy highly concise mission statements as well. Dhanyasree and Kumar (2018) also argue that taglines are a combination of simple and catchy words created for advertising purposes and used to give an idea about a product or service offered. Thus, a successful tagline conveys the entire advantages of the offered product. As one participant commented:

> "*We have our tagline for La Famiglia's, Food, Fashion and Lifestyle. That is our tagline. We also have the words Cosa Nostra meaning Our Thing*". (Mr D., FT8, Jalan Ampang, 2021).

Mr D., (FT8) also emphasize on tagline and slogan that are attached to his food truck (FT) brand and logo as a physical appearance on their digital and social media page since 2013. Three special words were used as taglines that carry different significant meanings. As Mr D., (FT8) remarked:

> "*For example, for food, we will post pictures of our food, pictures of customers eating. Fashion, we have merchandise shirts. Lifestyle, we once did buy one old Mercedes (W123). The old Mercedes we made sort of Godfather had a car. The car will go where ever La Famiglia goes. It will be parked next door and people can see it. That's the lifestyle concept*". (Mr D., FT8, Jalan Ampang, 2021).

The idea that a tagline and slogan should be tied to the food truck (FT) brand/logo and present regularly on their digital and social media pages was a recurring issue throughout the interviews. This is because taglines serve an important purpose and are still a simple and efficient approach to expressing a new or updated brand statement (Yohn, 2013). The best taglines will set the food truck (FT) apart from the competition, reflect their individuality, and complement their cuisine promotion.

CONCLUSION

Creating a great brand identity perception through online media has become an essential activity for food truck (FT) owners to communicate their brand digitally. Thus, there were processes that the food truck (FT) founder and owner had to follow in developing the identity of their physique brand. The founder and owner of a food truck (FT) emphasizes an appealing image (pictorial), logo or symbol, and tagline (slogan) in social media postings. Viewing appetizing food images (pictures) on social media will be more likely to try out and order greater amounts and different types of food. As discussed above, the food truck (FT) founder and owner have successfully built their brand identity (name and logo) before the business operations. It shows an understanding among the food truck (FT) founders and owners of the importance of building their business physique brand identity as it creates a unique business concept that is different from other competitors.

The unit of analysis in this study is limited to SME businesses in the food and beverage service sector (food trucks), and the sample is drawn from participants who operate their businesses in the Klang Valley. As a result, opinions on what constitutes a strong and recognizable brand identity may vary due to differences in belief and nature of the business. The limitation of self-reported data is that it is rarely verifiable independently. Thus, self-reported data contains several potential sources of bias and should also be viewed as a research limitation. Qualitative cross-language research is conducted when researchers and participants are separated by a language barrier. Thus, data and information gathered from this study's interview session faced a communication and language barrier. Participants who are unable to communicate effectively provide difficulties for researchers attempting to elicit responses and information. Future research may also examine how buyers perceive a brand. Additionally, it is vital to comprehend the brand's perception (brand image) in the minds of customers on various social media platforms. This is to elicit further information on customers' perceptions of the brand based on their interactions and experiences with the brand, as well as their views about what the brand could be. Another future study avenue is the inclusiveness of other social media platforms and their brand activities, such as TikTok and YouTube. Additionally, there are additional untapped tools and features that SMEs may and should leverage to develop a strong brand on social media platforms where customers also use other social media platforms to seek product information and express feedback.

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