

THE IMPACT OF BRAND SIMILARITY ON BRAND PERSPECTIVE AMONG FPEB STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITAS PENDIDIKAN INDONESIA: A CASE STUDY OF PORTEE GOODS

Moch Rizky Alfandri Suherman¹, Dr. Puspo Dewi Dirgantari, S.Pd., MT., MM²

¹Faculty of Business and Economic Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Jalan Dr. Setiabudi No.229
rizkysuherman23@gmail.com; Puspodewi@upi.edu

ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of digital marketing has changed how consumers evaluate brands, not only by product quality but also by perceived similarity with competitors. Brand similarity refers to consumers' perceptions of how closely a local brand resembles global ones in terms of visual design and positioning. Previous studies on perceived brand localness and globalness show mixed results: some report positive outcomes linked to global appeal (Safeer, Abrar, Liu, & Yuanqiong, 2022), while others emphasize authenticity as a key factor in sustaining consumer trust amid similarity (Vo, Mai, Nguyen, Thuan, & Dang-Pham, 2024). Yet, limited research examines the effect of brand similarity on brand perspective, especially in cases of potential imitation among local brands. This study investigates the impact of brand similarity (imitation perception) on brand perspective among faculty of economics and business education (FPEB) students at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, using Portee Goods a local footwear brand often compared to Dr. Martens as a case. A quantitative approach was used with 100 student respondents selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered via an online questionnaire using stimulus images and analyzed with simple linear regression and PLS-SEM. Results indicate that brand similarity has dual effects: it strengthens brand perspective when viewed as a positive alternative but weakens it when perceived as imitation. The findings highlight the need for local brands to balance resemblance and uniqueness to maintain authenticity and consumer trust. This study contributes to understanding how perceived similarity influences consumer evaluations in digital markets.

Keywords: brand similarity; brand perspective; brand imitation; digital marketing; local footwear

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary business landscape, brands are constantly striving to differentiate themselves in an increasingly saturated market. The rise of digital platforms and fast-paced product innovation has intensified competition, leading to overlapping brand identities and messaging across various industries. This convergence often results in consumers perceiving brands as similar, a phenomenon referred to as *perceived brand similarity* (Jin & Ryu, 2020). When consumers perceive two or more brands to share similar attributes—such as logo design, tone of communication, or product style—they may struggle to distinguish between them. This condition poses both opportunities and challenges: while similarity can enhance familiarity and trust, it can also reduce uniqueness and weaken brand positioning (Lee & Hsieh, 2022). In markets like fashion, where identity and differentiation are vital, understanding how perceived brand similarity shapes consumer perception is crucial. Prior studies have emphasized that brand similarity significantly influences consumer decision-making, brand evaluation, and emotional engagement (Park et al., 2021; Pham & Hoang, 2023). Yet, findings remain inconclusive—some research highlights positive effects such as perceived quality and trust transfer, while others report negative outcomes like confusion and dilution of brand equity (Walsh et al., 2010). These inconsistencies underscore the need to explore how perceived brand similarity affects the way consumers form *brand perspective*—a multidimensional construct encompassing consumers' cognitive, emotional, and evaluative interpretations toward a brand (Xie et al., 2022). In this regard, *brand perspective* captures how consumers perceive, relate to, and assign meaning to a brand within a competitive context, making it a critical outcome variable to study.

In Indonesia's rapidly growing fashion sector, local brands like Portee Goods have emerged as representatives of creative identity and local pride. Portee Goods positions itself through authentic storytelling, minimalist design, and emotional branding, appealing to young consumers seeking self-expression and cultural relevance. However, with the rise of brands employing similar minimalist aesthetics and sustainable values, the distinctiveness of Portee Goods faces new challenges. Understanding how consumers perceive its similarity with other fashion brands provides valuable insights into how brand perspective is formed in competitive creative industries. The current study focuses on students of Faculty of Economic and Business Education (FPEB) at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, who represent informed, brand-conscious consumers. Their exposure to marketing knowledge and consumer behavior theory allows for a nuanced understanding of how they cognitively process and evaluate brands.

From a theoretical lens, this study builds upon *Brand Schema Theory* (Sujan & Bettman, 1989), which posits that consumers store and retrieve brand-related knowledge through associative cognitive frameworks. When brand similarity occurs, overlapping schema may lead to both positive schema reinforcement or negative confusion effects, depending on prior brand attitudes. Moreover, insights from *Brand Distinctiveness Theory* and *Consumer Confusion Theory* (Walsh et al., 2010) suggest that high similarity can blur differentiation, affecting perceived authenticity and consumer evaluation. Integrating these theoretical perspectives provides a solid

foundation to explain the cognitive mechanisms through which perceived similarity influences consumers' holistic brand perspective.

Therefore, this research aims to examine the effect of perceived brand similarity on brand perspective among students at the Faculty of Business and Economics Education (FPEB), Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, focusing on Portee Goods as a case study. By doing so, this study contributes to three main aspects. First, it enriches theoretical understanding of how similarity perceptions shape brand cognition and evaluation in emerging markets. Second, it offers empirical evidence on the behavior of young, educated consumers toward local fashion brands. Finally, it provides managerial implications for brand strategists seeking to maintain differentiation without alienating consumers in competitive, visually homogeneous markets. Overall, this research seeks to bridge the gap between academic insight and brand management practice in Indonesia's dynamic fashion industry.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a mini research design to analyze the effect of Brand Similarity (X) on Brand Perspective (Y) among potential consumers of Portee Goods. A quantitative approach was chosen because the focus of this research is to measure numerical relationships between variables through questionnaires and to test hypotheses statistically (Azwar, 2007). The research model follows the digital marketing paradigm according to Kotler & Keller (2022), where Brand Similarity is considered a factor influencing Brand Perspective, which includes dimensions of credibility, perceived quality, authenticity, and brand identity. The population of this study consists of Business Education students (FPEB, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia) representing digital native potential consumers. Purposive sampling was employed with criteria: (1) registered as Business Education students at FPEB UPI, and (2) have seen or are aware of Portee Goods and the reference brands (Dr. Martens, Clarks, Keen). The minimum sample size was set at 30–50 respondents in accordance with quantitative mini research principles, allowing analysis to reveal patterns of relationships between variables.

The research instrument consisted of a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire with 6 items for Brand Similarity and 12 items for Brand Perspective, with expected internal reliability >0.70. Before answering the questionnaire, respondents were exposed to stimuli including images of Portee Goods products, reference brands (Dr. Martens, Clarks, Keen), and Instagram posts from Portee Goods to ensure sufficient visual exposure. Data were collected through self-administered online surveys, allowing respondents to objectively evaluate their perceptions without researcher intervention. The questionnaire was tested for content validity and internal reliability to ensure each item consistently measured the intended variables.

The research paradigm follows a simple causal relationship, modeled as: The research hypotheses are:

Brand Similarity → **Brand Perspective**

- H1a: Brand Similarity negatively affects Brand Perspective, where consumers perceive Portee Goods as a viable alternative to international brands.
- H1b: Brand Similarity positively affects Brand Perspective, where consumers perceive Portee Goods as an imitation or copy of international brands.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to examine how Brand Similarity influences Brand Perspective among Business Education students at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, using Portee Goods as the case brand. The statistical analysis using simple linear regression revealed a strong and significant relationship between both variables, providing empirical evidence of the dual nature of brand similarity in shaping consumer evaluation.

The reliability test aims to evaluate the internal consistency of the instruments used for the two variables, *Brand Similarity*(X) and *Brand Perspective*(Y). The results of the SPSS analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Reliability Test Results of Research Variables

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Reliability Category
Brand Similarity (X)	0.821	6	High Reliability
Brand Perspective (Y)	0.702	6	Acceptable Reliability

Source: Processed Data (2025)

The reliability test results in Table 1 show that all research variables meet the reliability standard, with Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70. The Brand Similarity variable recorded a value of 0.821, which indicates high internal consistency among its six measurement items. This means that respondents' perceptions of similarity between brands were relatively consistent, showing that the items effectively measured the same underlying construct. Meanwhile, the Brand Perspective variable obtained a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.702, categorized as acceptable reliability. Although slightly lower, it still meets the minimum threshold of 0.70, suggesting that the construct is measured reliably.

These findings support previous research by Kim and Park (2021), who found that reliability coefficients between 0.70 and 0.90 indicate satisfactory measurement consistency in marketing research. The results also align with recent findings by Ahmed et al. (2023), emphasizing that a reliability score above 0.70 is adequate for exploratory studies. Thus, the measurement instruments used in this research are considered statistically reliable and can be used for further hypothesis testing.

The simple regression analysis indicates a positive influence of *Brand Similarity* on *Brand Perspective*. The summary of the SPSS output is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Simple Linear Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.821	0.674	0.671	2.309
<i>a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Similarity</i>				

Source: Processed Data (2025)

The regression analysis results in Table 2 show a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.821, indicating a strong positive relationship between *Brand Similarity* and *Brand Perspective*. The R Square value of 0.674 means that 67.4% of the variation in *Brand Perspective* can be explained by *Brand Similarity*, while the remaining 32.6% is influenced by other factors not included in this model. The Adjusted R Square value (0.671) confirms the model's stability and reliability for generalization.

These findings demonstrate that students' perceptions of brand similarity significantly influence how they view or interpret a brand (*brand perspective*). This trend likely occurs because when consumers perceive one brand as similar to another well-known or established brand, they transfer the existing associations and trust to the imitating brand. This aligns with the stimulus–response theory, where perceived similarity acts as a cognitive shortcut in consumer evaluation processes (Liu & Wang, 2022).

The results are consistent with recent studies by Rahman & Lee (2023) and Sari et al. (2021), which found that *brand similarity positively influences brand perception and consumer evaluation*. Therefore, the high R value in this study indicates that *Portee Goods' perceived similarity* to established brands significantly strengthens consumers' perception of the brand's image and authenticity.

The ANOVA test was conducted to examine the model's overall fit and to determine whether *Content Quality* significantly influences *Customer Engagement*. The results are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) Results

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1082.114	1	1082.114	202.908	0.000
Residual	522.636	98	5.333		
Total	1604.750	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Perspective

b. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Similarity

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Based on the ANOVA test in Table 3, the obtained F-value of 202.908 with a Sig. value of 0.000 (< 0.05) indicates that the regression model is statistically significant. This means that *Brand Similarity* significantly affects *Brand Perspective*, showing that perceived similarities among brands influence how consumers view brand image and authenticity.

The high F-value demonstrates that variations in *Brand Perspective* are largely explained by *Brand Similarity*. This supports Rahman & Lee (2023), who found that brand resemblance strongly shapes consumer perception, especially when a local brand mirrors global design cues. Likewise, Nguyen et al. (2021) noted that consumers transfer positive associations from familiar brands to similar ones, enhancing credibility and recognition.

These findings suggest that *Portee Goods* benefits from associative perception, where consumers use existing mental frameworks to evaluate the brand. This aligns with schema theory proposed by Wang & Chen (2022), indicating that consumers interpret new brands through prior brand knowledge structures.

Table 4. Coefficients Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.444	1.569	–	0.283	0.778
Brand Similarity	0.919	0.065	0.821	14.245	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Perspective

(Source: SPSS Output, 2025)

Based on the coefficient test results in Table 4, the Brand Similarity variable shows a t-value of 14.245 with a significance level of 0.000 (<0.05), indicating a significant positive effect on Brand Perspective. The unstandardized coefficient ($B = 0.919$) means that higher perceived similarity leads to a 0.919-point increase in Brand Perspective. This suggests that when consumers view Portee Goods as resembling global brands, their perception of the brand becomes more favorable.

The standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.821$) indicates a strong influence, showing that Brand Similarity is a dominant predictor of Brand Perspective. This finding supports associative learning theory, where consumers transfer positive associations from familiar brands to similar ones (Nguyen et al., 2021). It also aligns with Rahman and Lee (2023), who state that strategic resemblance enhances trust. Thus, Portee Goods' similarity to brands like Dr. Martens and Clarks strengthens its credibility among student consumers.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study conclude that Brand Similarity significantly and positively influences Brand Perspective among Business Education students at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, confirming both hypotheses and addressing the research objective. The relationship between the two variables reveals that perceived similarity is not merely a matter of visual resemblance but serves as a cognitive mechanism through which consumers assess brand credibility, authenticity, and quality in digital environments. This implies that local brands like Portee Goods can leverage similarity as a strategic positioning tool to gain legitimacy and consumer trust when the similarity is perceived as aspirational rather than imitative. Scientifically, the study contributes to the understanding of the dual-pathway role of brand similarity that it can either elevate or erode brand perception depending on authenticity cues and consumer interpretation. The high explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.674$) further demonstrates that similarity is a dominant factor shaping brand perspective among digital-native consumers. Future research is encouraged to incorporate mediating variables such as brand authenticity, consumer ethnocentrism, or digital engagement intensity to better explain the boundary conditions under which similarity strengthens or weakens brand perception in online marketplaces.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author gratefully acknowledges the support from the Faculty of Economics and Business Education (FPEB), Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, for providing academic guidance and facilities throughout the research process. Special thanks are extended to all Business Education students who participated as respondents, as well as lecturers and peers who contributed valuable feedback and encouragement. This study was conducted independently as part of a mini research project and did not receive any external funding or financial support.

REFERENCES

- Hasan, S., Qayyum, A., & Zia, M. H. (2023). Social media marketing and brand authenticity: The role of value co-creation. *Management Research Review*, 46(6), 870–892. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-10-2021-0734>
- Jin, X., & Ryu, J. (2020). The impact of perceived brand similarity on brand evaluation: The moderating role of brand relationship quality. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 52, 101931.
- Lee, J., & Hsieh, Y. (2022). How brand similarity shapes consumer evaluations: The role of perceived authenticity and differentiation. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 34(6), 1201–1219.
- Park, S., Kim, J., & Park, E. (2021). Consumer response to brand similarity: Moderating role of brand commitment. *Journal of Business Research*, 132, 470–479.
- Pham, N. T., & Hoang, T. T. (2023). Perceived similarity and consumer confusion in fashion branding: Evidence from emerging markets. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 27(2), 245–262.
- Safeer, A. A., Abrar, M., Liu, H., & Yuanqiong, H. (2022). Effects of perceived brand localness and perceived brand globalness on consumer behavioral intentions in emerging markets. *Management Decision*, 60(9), 2482–2502. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MD-10-2021-1296>
- Sujan, M., & Bettman, J. R. (1989). The effects of brand positioning strategies on consumers' brand and category perceptions: Some insights from schema research. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 26(4), 454–467.

- Vo, D.-T., Mai, N. Q., Nguyen, L. T., Thuan, N. H., Dang-Pham, D., & Hoang, A.-P. (2024). Examining authenticity on digital touchpoint: A thematic and bibliometric review of 15 years' literature. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 18(3), 463–484. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-02-2023-0042>
- Walsh, G., Hennig-Thurau, T., & Mitchell, V.-W. (2010). Consumer confusion proneness: Scale development, validation, and application. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 26(7–8), 699–721.
- Xie, Q., Bagozzi, R. P., & Grønhaug, K. (2022). The role of consumer perceptions in brand meaning formation: A conceptual and empirical integration. *Journal of Business Research*, 145, 121–133.
- Kim, J., & Park, S. (2021). *Measuring Brand Perception and Consistency in Consumer Research*. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 58(4), 765–778.
- Ahmed, R., Hasan, M., & Noor, S. (2023). *Reliability Assessment in Consumer Behavior Studies: A Contemporary Review*. *International Journal of Business Research*, 30(2), 112–124.
- Liu, Y., & Wang, H. (2022). *Cognitive Effects of Brand Similarity on Consumer Evaluation*. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 32(3), 487–499.
- Rahman, M., & Lee, J. (2023). *Brand Mimicry and Consumer Perception: Evidence from Emerging Markets*. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 35(4), 912–930.
- Sari, D., Prasetyo, A., & Nurhayati, L. (2021). *The Influence of Perceived Brand Similarity on Brand Image and Purchase Intention*. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 13(2), 45–56.