



THE INFLUENCE OF MARKET RESEARCH, CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND WORD OF MOUTH COMMUNICATION FOR SUSTAINABLE MARKETING OF ELECTRIC VEHICLE IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

The rapid transition to electric vehicles (EV) is driven by global environmental concerns and the need to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. In Indonesia, EV adoption faces challenges related to market dynamics, consumer behavior, and effective communication strategies. Marketing research and understanding consumer behavior aims to collect and obtain more detailed information and knowledge about customers towards electric vehicle products. Through this, it can understand customers and their tastes, preferences, reflect the future, and also help reduce the risk of product and business failure. Using Word of Mouth communication as part of a marketing strategy that can be carried out by companies in maintaining their business desires. In this article, the author tries to understand the concept of market research, consumer behavior, and the Word-of-Mouth communication model using a qualitative library observation approach, this study analyzes existing research on how these three factors contribute to the growth and long-term survival of the electric vehicle market. Market research provides insight into consumer preferences and market trends, offering important data to align EV products with consumer needs. Understanding consumer behavior is essential in overcoming perceived barriers, such as cost and infrastructure limitations, that hinder EV adoption. Meanwhile, word of mouth communication plays an important role in influencing consumer decisions by fostering trust and awareness of the benefits of EVs. The findings highlight the interconnections between these factors and their collective impact on the development of sustainable marketing strategies for EVs in Indonesia. This study provides valuable insights for stakeholders, including automotive companies and policymakers, in designing more effective marketing approaches that support the sustainable growth of the EV sector.

Keywords : Electric Vehicle, Market Research, Consumer Behaviour, Word of Mouth

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of the current business world requires changes in all areas, including marketing. Increasing global competition requires companies to gain effective strategic advantages. As one of the largest contributors to economic growth, the automotive industry continues to record satisfactory performance. In Indonesia, the automotive industry plays a



strategic role as one of the industrial sectors driving the national economy. The automotive industry is one of the sectors that continues to grow and experience rapid change. The contribution of national automotive product exports to total manufactured product exports in 2023 grew quite significantly by 5.96%, compared to 2022, which was 5.14%. The Electric Vehicle (EV) industry is considered a key strategy for decarbonization and green transportation due to the increasing social demand for environmental sustainability. In the transportation industry, around 24% of greenhouse gas emissions come from the transportation sector, with land transportation contributing 72%. This triggers the need for a transition to green transportation. EV offer a strategic solution to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve long-term ecological balance (Cao et al., 2021). Based on data from the Association of Indonesian Automotive Industries (Gaikindo) in December 2023, sales of 4-wheeled or more motor vehicles were recorded at 85,284 units. While cumulatively, sales of 4-wheeled or more motor vehicles in 2023 amounted to 1,005,802 units. Domestic sales of electric cars were recorded at 17,147 units and exports of electric cars were recorded at 1,504 units. Indonesia itself has produced 15,358 electric cars and 27,710 hybrid cars in 2023.

The adoption of electric vehicle (EV) technology in Indonesia faces challenges related to market dynamics, consumer behavior, and effective communication strategies. Entering the free market era, there has been a lot of development in all fields, both in the economic and industrial sectors. Development is the cause of the increase in people's purchasing power for industrial products. Rapid development has also occurred in the automotive industry. By looking at the increasingly rapid development of the automotive industry, many automotive companies have created fierce competition in the automotive industry. With the development of the era, more and more brands are producing the same products. With the many brands that exist, this can cause consumers to switch from one brand to another. Seeing such a phenomenon, companies should be able to meet what is needed and expected from consumers. Thus, companies must be able to make changes and adjustments in seizing market opportunities. Huded (2024) in his research reviewed the important role of market research in decision making. Market research provides primary and secondary data that analyzes various micro and macro factors, including market segmentation, competition, and market position. Market research not only helps understand the market but also builds realistic and effective strategies for brand development that can direct better strategic decisions in the company.

Market research is an important factor that plays a vital role in determining and making decisions related to marketing activities. Marketing is a process that starts from the customer and ends with the customer, with the main goal of satisfying customer needs. Market research helps companies understand customers, their tastes, and preferences, predict the future, and reduce the risk of product and business failure. Market research focuses on decision making, consumer behavior, and its impact on the company's decision patterns (Huded, 2024). In addition, changing consumer preferences are also a challenge. Modern consumers have different needs and expectations. Becoming more aware of environmental issues, fuel prices, and advanced technology in vehicles. To meet these needs, companies must continue to monitor consumer trends and make relevant innovations. Currently, electric vehicles are starting to hit the road and have become increasingly popular in the last half decade. The government even gave a good signal to encourage the acceleration of the use of electric vehicles in the country by issuing a Presidential Regulation (Perpres) concerning the Acceleration of



the Development of Electric Motorized Vehicles (Electric Cars). The Perpres is the basis for automotive industry players in Indonesia to build and develop electric cars.

Kharisma et al., (2017) In his research, he explains the impact of the increasing number of car users in Indonesia, which affects consumer behavior in the purchasing decision process. Consumer behavior itself according to Kotler and Keller (2009:166) "is defined as the study of how individuals, groups, and organizations choose, buy, use, and how goods, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy their needs and desires". In carrying out the purchasing decision process, some factors influence consumer behavior as stated by Ujang Sumarwan (2011:10), the factors that influence consumer behavior are three main factors, namely: Marketing strategy, individual differences, and environmental factors. The decision process for purchasing is influenced by various drives. With these purchasing motives, entrepreneurs or traders can influence or increase the tendency of consumers to buy in various ways, including by creating attractive product innovations so that prospective buyers are interested. Understanding consumer behavior is the key to success in an increasingly competitive business environment. Consumer behavior analysis not only reveals consumer needs on the surface, but also explores their hidden motivations and desires. By utilizing advanced technological tools, companies can be more accurate in formulating marketing strategies, designing appropriate products, and setting the right prices. Only by continuing to learn, adapt, and innovate can companies ensure that their marketing strategies remain relevant to consumer demands and market changes (Liu, 2024). In addition, Word of Mouth (WOM) marketing communications play an important role in shaping consumer opinion, especially in the adoption of new products such as electric vehicles (Atthifah et al., 2024). WOM, which includes word-of-mouth reviews both directly and through digital platforms, is one effective way to increase consumer trust and expand information about electric vehicles.

Huded, D. (2024) Marketers must have a thorough understanding of how consumers think, feel, and act and must offer clear value to each consumer. Understanding consumer needs is key to designing a value proposition that creates value for each customer. The current form of communication that impacts the marketing environment is word of mouth. This form of communication relies solely on the consumer's ability to hear and convey news and messages through conversation, consumers can create a more personal relationship with the company through word of mouth (Keller, 2009). This can encourage and force companies to learn more about consumer preferences and behavior (Rahmat Syah, 2013) .

Word of Mouth is also considered a very interesting form of marketing strategy because it does not require a lot of money and can have a very big influence (Rezky & Toruan, 2018). Referring to several previous studies that are relevant to the author's research, and in line with the current state of the automotive market, the author conducted a study of several previous studies to produce a paper on the Role of Market Research, Consumer Behavior, Word of Mouth Communication for Sustainable Marketing of Electrical Vehicles in Indonesia.



2.1 Market Research

- Kotler & Keller (2017) Marketing research is a function that connects consumers, customers, and society with marketers through information used to identify and define marketing opportunities and problems; generate, refine, and evaluate marketing actions; monitor marketing performance; and improve understanding of marketing as a process. Marketing research determines the information needed to address these problems, designs methods for collecting information, manages and implements the data collection process, analyzes the results, and communicates the findings and their implications.
- Marketing research is an important factor that plays a vital role in determining and making decisions regarding marketing activities. Marketing research is intended to collect and obtain more detailed information and understanding about customers. Market research is a unique process of determining the availability and viability of new services and products through direct research with potential customers. Market research can be done from home, mobile, internet, or physical observation and data collection from end users. It can be done by the company itself or by a third party to get returns. It is crucial component of a company's research and development department. Decision making is an important aspect in every business organization, good decision making affects the best performance of the company. The marketing concept can be influenced by many factors such as consumer taste preferences, product demand and supply, inflation, economic recession, unemployment, war, terrorism, rapid technological changes, etc. Amidst all these factors, if a company wants to run its business, they have to adapt and practice market research (Huded, 2024).
- Hamza (2014) in his journal explains the role of marketing research, its importance in decision making and the application of marketing research results in daily business activities. This will help in identifying potential customers, understanding existing customer behavior, helping to develop realistic and effective strategies for building brands in the market, and to identify new opportunities. Market research has a very important role in business strategy, helping companies understand consumer needs, preferences, and behavior.

Some of the significant impacts of market research include:

- **Consumer Insights:** Market research helps companies gain deep insights into who their consumers are, what they want, and how they behave. This allows companies to tailor their products and services to better suit market needs.
- **More Effective Marketing Strategies:** Information obtained from market research allows companies to design more effective and efficient marketing strategies. For example, by knowing consumers' media preferences, companies can choose the most effective communication channels.
- **Business Risk Reduction:** Market research helps companies reduce risk by providing accurate data on market conditions, competition, and potential challenges. This allows companies to make more informed decisions and reduce the chances of failure.



- **Appropriate Pricing:** By understanding how much consumers are willing to pay for a particular product or service, companies can set appropriate prices that will maximize profits without losing competitiveness.
- **Product Research and Development:** Analyze existing products and features in the market, conduct comparisons with competitors' products, and gain insights into consumer preferences regarding desired features and innovations in vehicles.
- **Customer Satisfaction Research:** Collecting data and feedback from customers about their experiences with a particular brand or model. Through this research, automotive industry players can understand their strengths and weaknesses in terms of customer satisfaction and improve their products and services.
- **Brand and Image Research:** Analyzing the consumer perception towards a particular automotive brand, brand image, and brand mapping against competitors. This helps in designing appropriate marketing strategies to build and strengthen brand image.

2.2 Consumer Behavior

Kotler & Keller (2017) Research on consumer behavior explores how individuals, groups, and organizations select, purchase, use, and dispose of goods, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy their needs and wants. To create customer value, marketers must fully understand both the theory and reality of consumer behavior. Consumer buying behavior is influenced by cultural, social, and personal factors. Of all these factors, cultural factors have the broadest and most profound influence on people's perceptions and desires, and how they satisfy their needs and wants.

Consumer behavior greatly influences shopping decisions both offline and online. Producers must certainly look at consumer behavior in marketing a product or service. Because consumer behavior is always changing, both in terms of attitudes, behavior, and also the perceptions of consumers themselves. So if producers can adapt or adjust to consumer desires seen from consumer behavior, it will be easy for consumers to make a purchasing decision. Consumer behavior can be defined as individual activities directly involved in obtaining and using goods or services including decision making in the preparation and determination of these activities (Rahman, 2023)

Xiaowei Liu (2024) Consumer behavior analysis is not only a scientific discipline but also an integral part of marketing. Each step in the consumer behavior process contains rich market signals. For example, at the stage of identifying needs, potential consumer needs can be realized through discussions on social media, keywords in online searches, and so on. Consumer behavior refers to the activities and decision-making processes of consumers when searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services. In an increasingly competitive business environment, understanding consumers is key to a company's success. Consumer behavior analysis not only reveals consumers' needs at the surface level but also explores their inner motivations and hidden desires. By accurately understanding these psychological and behavioral characteristics, companies can better meet consumer expectations in product design, pricing strategies, advertising promotions, and distribution channels (Peighambari et al., 2016).



Some of the significant impacts of market research include:

- **Consumer Surveys:** Consumer surveys can be conducted through face-to-face interviews, online questionnaires, or telephone calls. These surveys can be conducted to understand the preferences of potential or existing customers regarding their needs and expectations about a vehicle.
- **Market Study:** Conducting in-depth analysis of market size, market growth, market share, sales trends, and competition within the automotive industry. This involves statistical data collection, industry research, and data analysis to understand market dynamics.
- **Consumer Behavior and Trend Analysis:** Researching the latest trends in consumer preferences, in-vehicle technology usage, purchasing behavior, and consumer tendencies in choosing specific vehicle brands and models.

2.3 Word of Mouth

Word of Mouth is defined as part of oral communication, from person to person between the receiver and the communicator, which is non-commercial about a brand, product, or service. Solomon (2002) stated that information obtained through Word Of Mouth is more trusted because the information is obtained by people we know. Mowen and Minor (2002) also stated that Word Of Mouth information comes directly from other people who describe their personal experiences, so this is much clearer for consumers than information contained in advertisements. The net result is that Word Of Mouth information is much more easily accessible to memory and has a relatively greater influence on consumers. According to (Peighambari et al., 2016b), word of mouth is the act of providing information by a consumer to other consumers. According to Sernovitz (2012:3-4), who explains word of mouth as an action where a company provides a reason or an interesting topic so that people talk about the products it sells and makes it easier for the conversation to occur. Word of mouth can be done intentionally or unintentionally. As (Krisyanti & Rahanatha, 2019) argues, in the traditional view, the Word of Mouth communication process begins with information conveyed through mass media, then informed or captured by opinion leaders who have followers and are influential. Information captured by opinion leaders is spread to their followers through word-of-mouth communication. The occurrence of word-of-mouth triggers potential new consumers to make purchases in a product that they have heard from others. When potential consumers already know about the product that has been offered through promotion or get information by word of mouth, then potential consumers have the right to consider before they decide on a purchase. When consumers have used a product, consumers will of the product they have consumed, . if the product provides satisfaction and a positive impression to consumers, then positive word of mouth is likely to occur, and vice versa. Word of mouth can also mean that the result of consumer satisfaction and impressions of a product that has been consumed. Word of mouth will be positive if consumers are satisfied and give a positive impression of the product they have used, and will be negative when consumers are not satisfied and have a negative impression of the product they have used. Word of mouth has great power that impacts consumer purchasing behavior (Lauricia, 2020).



Word of mouth marketing, or often abbreviated as WOM marketing, is a marketing strategy that relies on recommendations from word of mouth or consumer to consumer. In a broader sense, WOM marketing also includes all forms of positive conversations that occur about a product, service, or brand without any direct effort from the company to promote it. One of the advantages of WOM marketing is that consumers tend to trust recommendations from people they know more than advertising or direct promotions from brands. This is because recommendations from people they trust are considered more objective and trustworthy. Word of Mouth (WOM), both in the form of direct conversations and through social media, is a very effective marketing tool. effective in building consumer trust in new products (Brown & Reingen, 1987). WOM is one of the factors that can significantly influence consumer perceptions of innovative products such as electric vehicles (Fitriana & Nugroho, 2022).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method that aims to provide an in-depth explanation of a phenomenon by collecting data comprehensively. The application of qualitative methods in research is prioritized on more detailed observations. This method can produce a more comprehensive study of a phenomenon. This research is exploratory and descriptive. This study focuses on factors that contribute to the implementation of market research, consumer behavior, and the implementation of corporate marketing communication strategies that have a positive impact on the sustainability of electric vehicle product marketing in Indonesia. Secondary data has been used in modern times to determine the impact of market research, consumer behavior analysis, and communication strategies. This secondary data is collected from several articles, websites, e-books, etc

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to understand the influence of market research, consumer behavior, and Word of Mouth (WOM) marketing communication on the sustainability of electric vehicle marketing in Indonesia. Based on the results of literature review and analysis of the automotive industry, especially electric vehicles (EV), several important findings were found that support a deeper understanding of the factors that influence sustainable marketing in Indonesia.

1. The Role of Market Research: Based on (Huded,2024), market research plays an important role in making strategic decisions for companies, especially in the automotive industry. Market research provides primary and secondary data that helps companies understand market dynamics, segmentation, and competitive position. In Indonesia, market research related to electric vehicles helps companies understand consumer preferences that are more concerned with environmental issues, fuel efficiency, and the technology offered. This research also helps in planning marketing strategies that are more relevant to consumer needs and expectations, thus supporting the sustainability of product marketing.
2. Influence of Consumer Behavior: As stated by Kharisma (2017), consumer behavior plays an important role in the purchasing decision-making process. This behavior is influenced by factors such as marketing strategies, individual differences, and environmental factors. Consumers of electric vehicles tend to be more environmentally conscious and interested in new technologies. However, factors such



as price, charging infrastructure, and perceptions of EV reliability are still obstacles that affect the adoption of this product. A deeper understanding of consumer motivations and the factors that drive them to choose EVs can help companies design products and campaigns that are more in line with market needs.

3. Word of Mouth (WOM) Communication: WOM, both directly and through digital platforms, has a significant influence on consumer decisions, especially in the adoption of new products such as electric vehicles. As stated by Sweeney et al. (2008), WOM can increase consumer trust in brands and expand information about the benefits of electric vehicles. This has proven to be an effective and efficient marketing tool in attracting consumer attention, especially in developing markets such as Indonesia. WOM not only helps create brand awareness, but also influences consumer perceptions and interest in purchasing electric vehicles.
4. Sustainable Marketing Strategy: Based on the analysis conducted, the sustainability of electric vehicle marketing in Indonesia is highly dependent on the company's ability to strategically combine market research, understanding consumer behavior, and WOM communication. The combination of these three factors can help companies create an effective and relevant marketing approach, ensuring that electric vehicle products are well received by the market and continue to grow in the future. The government's initiative to accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles also provides a great opportunity for companies to develop environmentally friendly products and meet consumer needs.

In facing the ever-growing challenges in the automotive industry, market research is the key to success. Conducting in-depth and relevant market research is essential for automotive companies to develop effective marketing strategies, understand consumer needs, and keep up with changing industry trends. Thus, market research is an important asset that should not be ignored in facing the changes that occur in the automotive industry. In starting market research, thorough preparation is needed to obtain valid and accurate results. The implementation of market research should be carried out by experienced social and marketing research consultants (Rinaldy et al., 2020). It can be concluded that conducting comprehensive market research is essential to understand the dynamics, trends, and structure of the automotive industry. Automotive market research allows stakeholders to identify key players, evaluate competition, assess market opportunities, and make the right strategic decisions. This helps industry players stay competitive, develop effective marketing strategies, and anticipate market changes. By staying up to date with the latest market research findings, industry stakeholders can adapt to changing consumer preferences, technological advances, and the regulatory landscape. This knowledge empowers decision makers to develop innovative products, improve customer experiences, and seize growth opportunities in a dynamic, evolving, and competitive automotive market. Effective marketing management strategies in the digital age require a consumer-centric approach, supported by the use of technology and data to understand consumers. Digital Age Behavior Through a deep understanding of the factors that influence changes in consumer behavior in the digital age, organizations can develop more adaptive and responsive marketing strategies. Integration of new technologies, sophisticated data analysis, a deep understanding of social and cultural trends, and monitoring economic and policy developments are important steps in ensuring the success of marketing strategies in the face of ever-changing market dynamics. In the face of ever-changing consumer



behavior dynamics, organizations must be able to deliver relevant and personalized messages to consumers through various communication channels. Here is a more detailed discussion of effective marketing strategies in the digital era: Utilization of Technology and Data. The digital era continues to develop, consumer behavior is becoming increasingly complex and diverse. Changes in information and communication technology have changed the way consumers interact with brands, products, and services. This study concludes that consumer behavior in the current digital context is influenced by ease of access to information, trust in recommendations from fellow consumers. To successfully navigate these dynamics, companies must adopt a consumer-centric approach, leverage information technology to understand consumer preferences and needs, and provide relevant and meaningful experiences that can generate positive communication between buyers.

To win the competition, not only focus on consumers and competitors, but also develop strategies, namely segmenting, targeting the target market, and the positioning that the company wants in the minds of consumers. The core of every good marketing strategy is a strategy to achieve the right position. The term positioning means how a product is defined by consumers through important characteristics in the minds of consumers that are owned by the product (Mudaningrum et al., 2023). The development of technology, market trends, government policies, and very dynamic consumer preferences are challenges for automotive industry business players to be able to survive. In facing this challenge, market research is one of the most important key elements. This article will discuss how market research and consumer behavior influence effective marketing strategies for new products in the automotive industry. The influence of market research, consumer behavior and word of mouth communication is very important in marketing. It includes finding, using, and evaluating products and services that meet consumer needs and wants. Therefore, to achieve business success with product marketing strategies, marketers must understand what consumers need, what their preferences are, and how consumers make decisions. Marketing research has a great impact on business decision making. A good decision-making process is influenced by the quality of marketing research, which ultimately impacts the performance of the company. This research helps companies make better strategic decisions regarding promotion, distribution and product development, as well as predicting future market trends. In short, marketing research is a very important tool in every aspect of organizational decision making.

4. CONCLUSION

To achieve sustainability in EV marketing in Indonesia, companies need to strategically integrate market research, consumer behavior understanding, and WOM communication. With the increasingly fierce competition in the automotive industry, companies must be able to innovate not only in terms of products, but also in terms of marketing. Raising awareness of the environmental benefits of electric vehicles and providing clear and easy-to-understand information about lower long-term costs and government support (e.g., tax incentives) can help overcome barriers to adoption. In addition, collaboration between the private sector and government in developing a wider and more efficient charging infrastructure will be a key factor in accelerating EV adoption.



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