PRODUCT VALIDATION OF ORGANIC SCARF PRODUCT

[1]NOORLIA AISYA AL ZAHRA, [2]WAWAN DHEWANTO

School of Business and Management, InstitutTeknologi Bandung, West Java, Indonesia

Abstract - Modest fashion in Indonesia begins to rise as a 'Hijab Revolution' along with the rising of slow fashion movement. This sustainable modest fashion attracts middle-class Muslim women with high purchasing power and tends to be open-minded. This research explores the product validation of organic cotton scarf as part of items in sustainable modest fashion through small business who wants to sell organic cotton scarf. Primary data is collected through in-depth interview. The informantsare the consumers who live around Greater Jakarta and Bandung. The interview's results are analyzed using product validation tools. It is found that majority of consumers still unaware of organic cotton scarf and do not interested in buying the product due to higher price. Non-organic material scarf with specific characteristics might be more attractive for the consumers to choose. This research highlighted the specific characteristics of scarf, which the consumers prefer to choose.

Keywords - Fashion Business, Sustainable Modest Fashion, Product Validation

I. INTRODUCTION

As the sustainable fashion emerge, modest fashion is also rising in Indonesia, which is called as a 'Hijab Revolution'. Hijab in Indonesia, which in the past was associated as pious, inelegant, and even oppressing become the most stylish and modern fashion item in this country with the user over 20 million people [1]. This shifting paradigm from conservative to modern, increase the number of hijab user significantly. To meet the demand from consumers and to compete in this market, some new local fashion lines that combine these two concepts, which are sustainable and modest fashion, also begin to be recognized. Data from Katadata, 2016 mentions that 83% of Jakarta's people are Muslim, thus there is a potential for modest fashion market of almost three million people [2]. Most of the modest fashion designer that started raising sustainability issues also thrives from Jakarta call it Dian Pelangi, IrnaMutiara, Ria Miranda, and Rani Hatta. Although the price of the designer clothing is not affordable, they are in demand by Jakarta residents who are dominated by middle class. This middle class tends to buy luxury goods, a high consumerism attitude, and technologically literate. They also tend to be open-minded and like something symbolic like hijab and have a fairly high purchasing power [3].

According to a report from LitbangKompas conducted in 2012 in six major cities (Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, Medan, Makassar) shows that the number of middle –class is 50.3% out of total population in those major cities [4]. By 2020 it is estimated that the middle class is increasing by 12 million people in Greater Jakarta (Jabodetabek)with almost 40% people are from Jakarta itself. Although Jabodetabek is geographically not as vast as other cities in Indonesia, however the industrialization growth in this region is very rapid [5].Organic cotton is consider as part of slow fashion movement because of its ethically and environmental friendly methods. This kind of methods leads to more costly material and expensive final product or clothes. Consumers need to have more knowledge on the importance of slow fashion movement particularly the use of organic cotton clothes. Vasana as a brand new small businesssee this opportunity to seize the market, particularly on sustainable modest fashion market that still globally unaddressed high potential product segment according to Thomson Reuters report in State of The Global Islamic Economy Report 2016/2017 [6]. Vasana is struggle to introduce its organic cotton scarf to the consumers.A proper product validation is needed to test whether Vasana's product is targeting the apropriatetarget market and how Vasana adjust with this target market. The researcher used product validation's result to determine what kind of product Vasana should produce to meet with its target market demand.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the determinants tomaximizea firm's profitability is the ability of the firm to utilize its internal strengths. A firm's internal strengths divided into two headings, the cost advantage and the differentiation. Those two headings consist three generic strategies, which the company can apply in either a broad or narrow scope. The three generic strategies are cost leadership, differentiation, and focus. [6]. Segmentation matrix is a matrix to map and describe specifically which segments should the company pursue [7]. The list of customers is the company 's existing segments. The column heads of segmentation matrix is the criteria used to evaluate segments and the criteria are up to the business situation and the characteristics of the criteria must distinguish thesegments (see Table A).

Customer zoom tool is a tool to narrow down a persona based on segments who most likely to buy or use the company's product [7]. The characteristics to choose the persona are unique attributes of

company's target customers and behaviors the researcher can observe in company's customers. Zoom column describes the real person who buys and uses the company's product and she or he represents the perfect customer or persona for the product. The behaviors column is the customer attitude towards their shopping habit derived from interviews. The unique attributes column is the personality derived from psychographic segmentation.

Table A. Segmentation Matrix of Vasana thesegments (see Table A).

Table A. Segmentation Matrix

Customers	Depth of Pain	Budget	Ease of Reach	Tech Savvy	Values	Rank
Entrepreneur	M	H	H	H	H	1
Employee	L	H	H	H	M	2
College student	L	M	H	H	M	3

***Note**: Depth of Pain= customers' problem; Budget=willingness to buy product; Ease of Reach−distribution ability; Tech Savvy− social media usage; Values= the company's feel about serving those segments.*
H=High; M=Medium; L=Low

Value proposition canvas is part of business model canvas, which main focus is creating value based on customers' problem [8]. The researcher used value proposition canvas to improve or create a new product's value based on interviews with the informant. Value proposition canvas is the first stage on stage of start-up, which is problem solution fit. In value proposition canvas, the interview result focus on testing the problem and validating whether the company's product have a problem worth solving.

III. METHODOLOGY

The main method for this research is qualitative method. This research select Vasana, a new fashion business as a case study. The researcher conducted an interview for the consumers of Vasana to explore about the product and the business' situation. The result for this interview is to gain information about how to validate the right product or the target market and improve the product to attract more customers. The questions aredeveloped based on product validation toolsand the answers are used to analyze the business solution through each product validation tools. The product validation tools are used sequentially. The researcher started with segmentation matrix and then continued with the customer zoom tools. Both tools are to determine the segmentation and targeting of the company's product. The next step was determined the value proposition canvas of the company's product and validated through Javelin Board as the final tools. The researcher conducted the interview for two periods. The first interview is an in-depth interview with eleven informantsto validate the existing product and the second interview is to validate the new prototype that the researcher proposed.

The criteria of informantsfor this research are young adult female age 23-40 years old with minimum spending for secondary needs is Rp 500.000. The name of the informantswill be modified according to the Table B.

Table B. Table of Informants

Alias	Age	Job
Informant 1	24	Designer
Informant 2	25	College Student
Informant 3	25	Employee
Informant 4	25	Entrepreneur
Informant 5	23	Employee
Informant 6	25	Employee
Informant 7	36	College Student
Informant 8	31	College Student
Informant 9	23	College Student
Informant 10	25	College Student
Informant 11	26	Employee

IV. RESULT ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

Vasana applies the focus strategy through differentiation. Vasana wants to distinguish its scarf through the unique and authentic pattern from similar scarves in the market. The focus differentiation strategy is concentrates on a narrow market segment as the target scope with product uniqueness as the main advantage. Vasana only target young adult and adult female lives in Jakarta with minimum spending for secondary need is Rp 500.000. By focusing entirely on the narrow market segment their needs can be better served with the company's advantage. Vasana's advantages are the pattern uniqueness, authenticity, and exclusive product.

Based on segmentation matrix, Vasana should pursue three main target markets, which are entrepreneur, employee, and college student. The three choices are based on rank through five criteria, which the researcher determined foremost. Depth of pain explains about the seriousness of the problem company's tried to solve for those particular segments. The problem is about customers' need to wear scarf or hijab from organic cotton or natural fabric. Budget is about the willingness of customers to pay for a solution, which is organic scarf or hijab. Ease of reach is how those particular segments marketable enough through relatively easy channels. Tech savvy is how those particular segments look for technology solutions such as social media to problems. Values are about the company's feel about serving those particular segments. Each criterion is ranked H for high, M for medium, or L for low, and then following which segments appeared to be the one most worth pursuing. Rank determines which segments scores the highest base on each criterion's weigh (L= 1; M= 2; H= 3). The result of this segmentation matrix helps the researcher to identify which segment characteristics need to be surveyed or interviewed.

After determining the segmentation, the researcher constructed the target market or persona through

customer zoom tool. The persona is the real customers who willing to buy Vasana's scarves. She is fulfilling the criteria on unique attributes and behaviors. Vasana's persona is female age between 23 – 40, modern woman who is inquisitive or curious and knowledgeable or able to be educated about new product in the market. Most of Vasana's target market behaviors are drawn to good design and material to buy scarfs. They are also loyal and smart buyer, which understand good quality, good design and material, and reasonable price of scarfs.

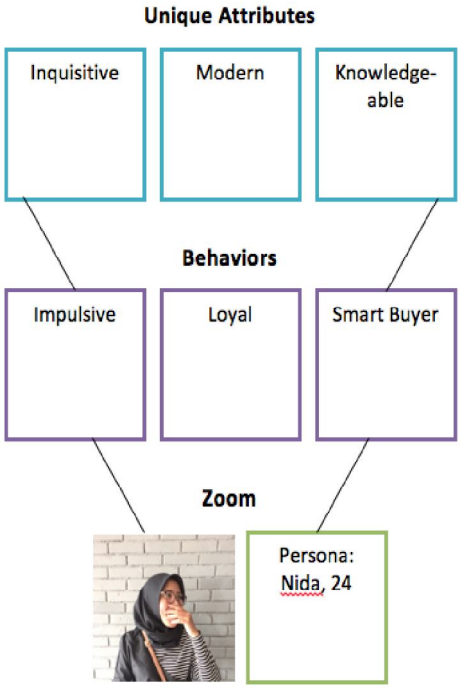


Figure A. Vasana Customer Zoom Tool

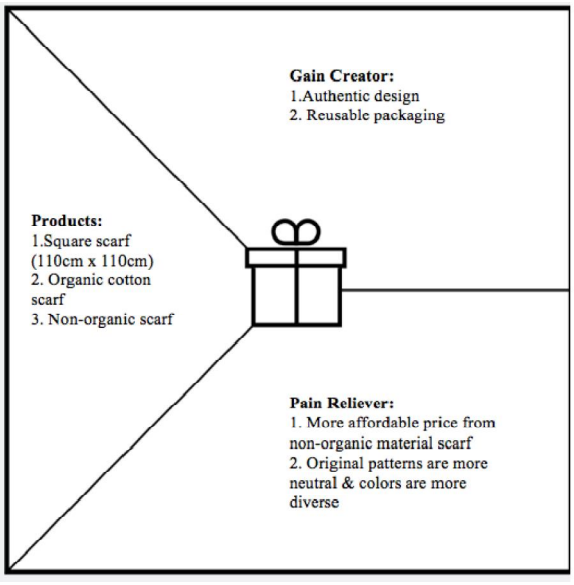
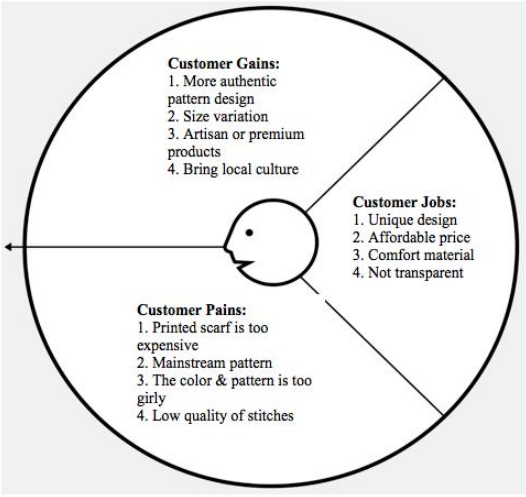


Figure B. Vasana Value Proposition Canvas



The researcher uses value proposition canvas to improve or create a new Vasana's value based on interviews with potential target market or customers. Value proposition canvas is the first stage on stage of the start-up, which is problem solution fit. In this process the interview result focus on testing the problem and validating whether Vasana have a problem worth solving. Value proposition canvas consists of two main parts, the customer profile and the value map of the product. In the customer profile, the researcher mapped out the customer jobs of the product, which are unique design, affordable price, and comfort material. The customer pains of the respondents are the expensiveness of the price and that the pattern design is too mainstream. The customer gains are the authenticity of the design, size variation, and exclusivity of the product. In the value map, the researcher creates the antithesis from customer pain and gain. Vasana should offer scarf from different and cheaper material but maintaining the authenticity of the design and exclusivity of the product.

Price

Eight out of eleven interviewees stated that Vasana's printed scarf's prices are still too high. This becomes the problem from customer's perspective. Some of them realized that using organic cotton results in higher price compares with usual cotton. On the interview, Informant 10 said that it is hard to sell product using organic material with cheaper price. Informant 8 said that it is reasonable to put a higher price on organic cotton scarf but the buying power in Bandung might be lower than in Jakarta. Informant 5 realized that the price might be expensive because it is not a mass production.

Design

Ten out of eleven interviewees said that pattern is their main consideration for choosing scarf or hijab and lot of scarf's pattern in the market are very much alike. Some of them said it is too girly or too feminine and dominated with floral pattern. Informant 7 said that she prefer scarf with more edgy pattern. Concurred with Informant 7, Informant 9 said

that the market is dominated with floral and abstract pattern, which is quite similar and it is good to know if there is any hijab with more artsy and authentic pattern design. Some of the interviewees already wear and see the Vasana's scarf and they said that the pattern design is already good even though the color should be vary. Informant 1 said that the pattern design is simple and try to focus on particular color scheme such as earth tone. Informant 11 said that the pattern design is nice and very artsy.

Material

Based on interviews, only one out of eleven interviewees said that it is important for her to wear organic cotton scarf. Organic cotton scarf is non allergenic and it is what she needed. Informant 8 said that she wears the scarf in neck because she is not a hijab user, and she needed scarf that does not cause itching. The researcher's hypothesis is invalid and needed to pivot. The researcher then asked the interviewees whether how important for them to buy and wear organic cotton scarf. Ten out of eleven interviewees said that it is not too important right now, because what matter is the material is light, airy, and not transparent. This is due to the expensive price of the material that leads to higher price of the product. The hypothesis for this problem is valid. Vasana needs to change its business model from only selling printed organic cotton scarf, to selling printed non-organic scarf in order to be accepted by the market.

The researcher constructed new business model using lean canvas. Problems in lean canvas are the three main problems that drive the rest building blocks in the canvas. The three main problems are derived from value proposition canvas and Javelin board. Vasana's three main problems are that printed scarf is too expensive, the design is too mainstream, and the pattern or the color is too girly. These problems were answered in solutions building block.

Vasana's new customer segments are modern, inquisitive, and knowledgeable female between 23 to 40 years old, college student or workers. In the previous lean canvas, Vasana's customer segments included housewife and not considering their unique attributes. Vasana's existing product is a signature scarf made from 100% organic cotton with fabric printing technology. The scarves are not merely targeting Muslim consumer but also non-Muslim consumer who want to wear it as a scarf, not a hijab.

Currently the scarf comes in square size (100cmx100cm). In the new lean canvas, Vasana will also produces different scarf using non-organic material, such as satin velvet. The size still comes in square size but wider (110cm x 110cm) because of the demand for square size is high. The owner of Vasana created new prototype for new product using satin velvet material, wider size, more authentic design, and cheaper price (Rp 195.000). The researcher then asked some of the interviewees for their opinions of the new scarf. Informant 1 said that she prefers the satin velvet scarf because it is cheaper and not wrinkled easily unlike the organic cotton scarf. Informant 3 said that she prefer the satin velvet scarf because it is more suitable for scarf user who does not use scarf as hijab because the material is not easily wrinkled.

CONCLUSIONS

Vasana should create a good business model design and implementation in order to meet with customer needs [10]. Although sustainable fashion business is very prospective and its development is acceptable in Indonesia society notably in big cities including Jakarta, demand for organic scarf is still very poor. This is caused by the consumer's knowledge about organic fabrics is still limited and the price of products that carry the concept of sustainable is still rare, so the selling price is expensive. Consumers are still putting forward an affordable price in buying scarf and scarf material, which are not transparent and easily wrinkled rather than environmental friendly materials such as organic cotton. One of the weaknesses of organic cotton fabric is the material that is easily wrinkled so it less favored by the consumers. In order to be accepted by the market and maintain its sales, Vasanamust adjusted its product to non-organic scarf such as satin velvet from polyester thus create new business model that meet with customer needs.

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