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EXPLORING BRAND LOYALTY: REVEALING THE EFFECT OF BRAND EXPERIENCE MEDIATED BY BRAND LOVE AND TRUST AMONG SMARTPHONE USERS

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Abstract: Increasingly fierce competition in the smartphone industry encourages companies to design mature marketing strategies to create added value for consumers and build strong relationships with their consumers. This study aims to identify and analyze the direct and indirect effects of brand experience, brand love, brand trust, and brand loyalty on Samsung smartphone users in Malang City. Data for this was collected through a questionnaire and a sample of 140 smartphone users in Malang City. Sample selection was carried out using the purposive random sampling method. The collected data will be analyzed using SmartPLS 3.0. These results reveal that brand experience has no direct effect on brand loyalty. However, this study confirms an indirect influence of brand experience on brand loyalty through brand love and trust. The results have important implications for building strong emotional relationships and bonds between brands and consumers, and it is necessary to use cognitive and affection factors to create brand loyalty.

Keywords: Brand Experience, Brand Love, Brand Trust, Brand Loyalty, Samsung, Smartphone

CITATION

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INTRODUCTION

Smartphones are one of the needs of modern society to support their activities. Almost everyone has a smartphone since this communication tool is very easy to find in everyday life (Sulatyningtyas et al., 2017). The increasing number of smartphone users has led to the emergence of various types of choices, ranging from Android-based smartphones IOS to Windows-based phones. Smartphones have become one of the essential items that many companies have produced under various brands because they have become a "lifestyle" icon. According to a report from We Are Social/GSMA Intelligence, there was an increase in the number of smartphone users every month in 2017. Since January, there has been an increase of 43 million smartphone users.

Meanwhile, in 2017, the total number of gadget users reached almost 5 billion or 4.96 billion, which will continue to increase to 5.7 billion, or the equivalent of three-quarters of the world's population in 2020 (Jemadu, 2017). In Indonesia, the number of smartphone users is increasing every year, and it is predicted to become the country with the fourth largest active smartphone users in the world after China, India, and America (Novalius, 2018). One smartphone brand that has been able to enter the Indonesian market share and still survive amidst competitive competition is Samsung. Based on the table above, the Android operating system is still the ruler of the smartphone market in 2018. Android has a larger market share, followed second by IOS. Samsung is still the king of smartphone manufacturers in 2018 (Sari, 2018). Samsung's dominance in smartphone products also occurs in the city of Malang. Based on data obtained by Radar Malang in 2018 regarding smartphone sales in several cellphone shops in Malang City, it is revealed that Samsung dominates sales every month.

Overall, Samsung smartphones have advantages that make consumers interested in buying and switching from previous cellphone brands to Samsung brands. Brand transfer behavior can occur because consumers are not loyal and feel dissatisfied with the quality of the previous cellphone. Brand loyalty is an important factor in purchasing because if consumers are loyal to a brand, they will not move to buy another brand. Brand loyalty as an effort to survive in the market and

become a competitive advantage makes marketers compete to find ways to create it. One strategy that is currently attracting the attention of Samsung manufacturers to build brand loyalty effectively is the use of experience. A strong relationship between a brand and consumers triggers an emotional bond that is created due to experiences related to touch or taste (Schmitt, 1999). Brand experience will arise when consumers have used the brand. Consumers will tell other people about the brand and look for information about the brand, promotions, and events held by the brand if they have had a good experience (Taleghani et al., 2011).

The relationship between the brand experience influence on brand loyalty has been empirically proven in a study conducted by Sahin et al. (2011), Rahman (2011), Erciş et al. (2012), Maeshwari et al. (2014), Bapat and Thanigan (2016), Hussein (2018). The results of the study stated that brand experience directly and positively affects brand loyalty. The better the experience that consumers get, the more the brand loyalty of consumers will increase. However, the results of the above studies are not in line with the results of research by Iglesias et al. (2011) and Francisco-Maffezzoli et al. (2014), which reveal that brand experience does not have a significant effect on brand loyalty.

The tendency of significant and insignificant influences resulted in research gaps. Gaps that arise because of the consistency of the research results cause the mediation variable, which is predicted to be able to better explain the relationship between the influence of brand experience and brand loyalty. This research aims to analyze the factors that influence brand loyalty using the cognition-affect-behavior (C-A-B) model (Holbrook and Batra, 1987).

The C-A-B paradigm states that consumer cognition will influence affective states, which can then influence consumer behavior (Laroche et al., 2001). Brand experience is a cognitive aspect of consumers that can influence an affective aspect, which will then influence brand loyalty. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the quality relationship between consumers and brands, where two components can mediate the relationship between brands and brand loyalty (Huang, 2017), namely the rational and emotional components. Brand love was chosen as a mediating variable because it represents the emotional component

(Huang, 2017), while brand trust was chosen to represent the rational component (Fournier, 1998). This study makes theoretical contributions to marketing and provides practical insights into applying cognitive and affective factors that influence long-term relationships between brands and consumers among smartphone users in Malang City.

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Brand Experience

According to (Brakus et al., 2009), brand experience is defined as sensations, feelings, cognitions, and consumer responses generated by brands related to stimuli caused by brand design, brand identity, marketing communication, people, and the brand's environment. The brand experience starts when consumers search for products, buy them, receive services, and consume them. Brakus et al. (2009) claimed that as a result of the effects of positive experiences, consumers can become loyal. Ponsonby-McCabe and Boyle (2006) found that two kinds of conditions affect the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty.

First, consumers will have the desire to repurchase the same brand over and over again because they have good experience with the brand. Secondly, consumers believe that brand experience is able to deliver value-for-profit benefits at the price they have to pay. This finding is also supported by research by Sahin et al. (2011) and Rahman (2011). Erciş et al. (2012), Maheshwari et al. (2014), Bapat and Thanigan (2016), and Hussein (2018) suggest that brand experience influences brand loyalty.

H1: Brand experience has a significant effect on brand loyalty.

Brand experience is one of the constructs that influence the brand love of a consumer (Roy et al., 2013; Batra et al., 2012). Consumers who have experience buying a brand will have an extraordinary experience with the brand, causing the emotional bond of consumers to be fulfilled so that consumers will have a strong memory of the brand. Consumers use this experience to foster their love towards a brand (Langner et al., 2016). Consumers who have emotional ties with a brand will have a love for it, so that they will be more loyal to it. Several studies conducted by Roy et al. (2013), Langner et al. (2016), and Bıçakcıoğlu et al. (2018)

suggest that brand experience influences brand love.

H2: Brand experience has a significant influence on brand love.

The brand trust that is formed is depicted or determined based on the experience previously felt by the user. Brand experience will provide a long-term influence on consumer memory and provide deep meaning so as to contribute to the creation of brand trust. (Ramaseshan and Stein, 2016).

H3: Brand experience has a significant effect on brand trust.

Brand Love

Brand love is a level of emotional bond that is passionate about the satisfaction of consumers to own a brand. According to (Hwang and Kandampully, 2012), love is a very strong emotional experience both in terms of interpersonal relationships and relationships between consumers and brands. Brand love can occur when customers can see the brand as an individual they can love like someone (Ranjbarian et al., 2013). Rageh-Ismail and Spinelli (2012) reveal consumers like brands because they inspire them. The love of the brand will be a strong foundation formed between consumers and brands that will allow consumers to voice their opinions and provide positive feedback to other consumers. Positive emotions and attitudes are associated with greater repurchase intentions ((Batra et al., 2012); (Loureiro et al., 2012); (Alnawas and Altarifi, 2015)). Batra et al. (2012) also emphasize the importance of brand love in the field of consumer behavior and connect this with essential concepts such as producing positive word of mouth, influencing the desire to pay higher prices, and leading to positive evaluations of brands, even when consumers exposed to negative information about the brand. Based on these findings, this research proposes the following hypothesis:

H4: Brand love has a significant effect on brand loyalty.

Brand Trust

Trust can be defined as the extent to which consumers believe that certain brands fulfill their beliefs and desires (Zhou et al., 2012). Brand trust can also be interpreted as a high expectation that a particular brand will bring positive results to cus-

tomers. Trust starts from past experiences and interactions because its development is influenced by the individual experience process from time to time, where it summarizes the knowledge and experience of the customers with the brand. Brand trust is a key mediator for long-term relationships that lead to brand loyalty (Drennan et al., 2015). According to Chiou and Dronge (2006), brand trust is the beginning of the formation of brand loyalty. The more positive consumer confidence in a brand, the more it will be the basis for building deeper relationships with the brand so that it will generate greater brand loyalty (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2003). Therefore, the following hypothesis is obtained.

H5: Brand trust has a significant effect on brand loyalty.

Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is a crucial concept in marketing strategies. The existence of consumers who are loyal to the brand is needed so that the company can survive. Brand loyalty is described as a firm commitment to repurchase or repeat the preferred product/service consistently in the future (Bıçakcıoğlu et al., 2018). This definition is based on two approaches, namely behavioral and attitudinal. If the approach used is behavioral (approach), then this refers to the behavior of consumers who only buy a product repeatedly, without including aspects of feeling in it. Conversely, if the attitudinal approach is used, brand loyalty contains aspects of consumer preferences for a brand.

Brand experience plays an important role in determining the components of brand love (Batra et al., 2012). Brand experience is able to create brand love through the extraordinary experience that consumers feel with the brand. Brand love is defined as a strong passion that appears to have a brand. Bıçakcıoğlu et al. (2018) revealed that consumers who have brand love tend to produce brand loyalty that is stronger than brand loyalty without brand love (Roy et al., 2013). Therefore, the following hypothesis is obtained.

H6: Brand experience significantly influences brand loyalty through brand love.

Brand experience is able to form brand trust through positive experiences that consumers continue to feel with the brand. Chiou and Dronge

(2006) say that brand trust is the beginning of the formation of brand loyalty. When a consumer has brand trust, they will have a positive perception of the brand, which makes them continue to use the brand and are reluctant to move to another brand. The more positive consumer confidence in a brand will be the basis for building deeper relationships with the brand so that it will generate greater brand loyalty (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2003). Based on these findings, this research proposes the following hypothesis:

H7: Brand experience significantly influences brand loyalty through brand trust.

METHOD

This type of research is explanatory research. The approach used in this study is quantitative. The population and sample of this study were all Samsung smartphone users in Malang City. The number of respondents for this study was determined based on references from Hair et al. (2019), where the number of research indicators was multiplied by 10 to obtain 140 respondents. The sampling technique used in this research is non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling method, namely selecting samples based on the following criteria: the respondents are users who have made repeat purchases of Samsung smartphone products at least twice, the respondent is someone over 18 years of age, and respondents live in Malang City.

RESULTS

Data Analysis

The validity and reliability test uses an outer model with convergent and discriminant instruments (Wong, 2013). The measure lies in the correlation of reflective indicator scores and latent variables (if the loading value is ≥ 0.6). The results of hypothesis analysis for each path obtained by using SmartPLS 3.0 software are as in table 1. Based on the data collected through distributing questionnaires to respondents, it was revealed that women dominated the research respondents. Of the 140 data collected, female respondents were 61%, while male respondents were 39%. This distribution showing a higher number of women illustrates that the female group is more consumptive in purchasing smartphones than men. Furthermore, the age distribution of respondents shows an

interesting pattern, with the majority of respondents being dominated by respondents aged 18 - 25 years, as many as 73 respondents (52.14%). These results illustrate that most Samsung smartphone respondents came from the teenage to adult age group because Samsung was felt to provide an experience through innovation, features, and design that perfectly suited the respondents' needs in the digital era.

Meanwhile, in the marital status category, it is known that the majority of respondents have unmarried status, namely 83 respondents (59.29%). It can illustrate that unmarried consumers find it easier to repurchase a Samsung smartphone because they do not need to consider their partner's opinion when purchasing. The job category shows that most Samsung smartphone respondents work as private employees, namely 45 respondents (32.14%). Meanwhile, the respondents with the

smallest percentage were housewives, nine respondents (6.43%); this was because these respondents needed to have their income, so they ignored the brand of smartphone they used. The income category shows that the respondents with the most significant percentage have an income of IDR 1,500,000 to IDR 5,000,000 monthly, 68 respondents (48.57%). This data illustrates that consumer income matches the affordable price of Samsung brand smartphones.

Validity Test

The convergent validity test uses parameters with an outer loading value of more than 0.5 (Ghozali and Latan, 2012), as well as an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value and a communality value of more than 0.5 (Hussein, 2015). The following are the results of convergent validity testing.

Table 1. Respondents' Characteristics

Categories		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	54	39%
	Female	86	61%
Age	18 – 25	73	52.14%
	26 – 35	47	33.57%
	36 – 45	15	3.57%
	> 45	5	10.71%
	Marital Status	Married	57
	Unmarried	83	59.29%
Job	Student	37	26.43%
	Civil servants	20	14.29%
	Private sector employee	45	32.14%
	Entrepreneur	12	8.57%
	Housewife	9	6.43%
	Etc	17	12.14%
	Income	< Rp.1,500,000.-	36
Rp.1,500,000.- s/d Rp.5,000,000.-		68	48.57%
Rp.5,000,001.- s/d Rp.10,000,000.-		27	19.29%
> Rp.10,000,000.-		9	6.43%

Source: Primary Data Processing (2018)

Table 2. Outer Loading, AVE, and Commuality Values

Variable	Item	Outer Loading	AVE	Commuality
Brand Experience	BE1	0.5347	0.5014	0.5014
	BE2	0.7257	0.5014	0.5014
	BE3	0.7804	0.5014	0.5014
	BE4	0.6695	0.5014	0.5014
	BE5	0.7325	0.5014	0.5014
	BE6	0.6595	0.5014	0.5014
	BE7	0.7439	0.5014	0.5014
	BE8	0.7500	0.5014	0.5014
	BE9	0.7237	0.5014	0.5014
	BE10	0.7304	0.5014	0.5014
Brand Love	BL1	0.6969	0.5866	0.5866
	BL2	0.8065	0.5866	0.5866
	BL3	0.8305	0.5866	0.5866
	BL4	0.8063	0.5866	0.5866
	BL5	0.8189	0.5866	0.5866
	BL6	0.7724	0.5866	0.5866
	BL7	0.8711	0.5866	0.5866
	BL8	0.6318	0.5866	0.5866
	BL9	0.7246	0.5866	0.5866
	BL10	0.7536	0.5866	0.5866
	BL11	0.7230	0.5866	0.5866
	BL12	0.7230	0.5866	0.5866
Brand Trust	BT1	0.8972	0.5653	0.5653
	BT2	0.7735	0.5653	0.5653
	BT3	0.5810	0.5653	0.5653
	BT4	0.8285	0.5653	0.5653
	BT5	0.7976	0.5653	0.5653
	BT6	0.7917	0.5653	0.5653
	BT7	0.5777	0.5653	0.5653
	BT8	0.7784	0.5653	0.5653
	BT9	0.7919	0.5653	0.5653
Brand Loyalty	BLY1	0.7824	0.6421	0.6421
	BLY2	0.8828	0.6421	0.6421
	BLY3	0.7806	0.6421	0.6421
	BLY4	0.7096	0.6421	0.6421
	BLY6	0.7984	0.6421	0.6421
	BLY7	0.8429	0.6421	0.6421

Source: Primary Data Processing (2018)

Table 3. Cross Loading Values

Item of Variable	BE	BL	BT	BLY
BE1	0.5347	0.4454	0.4532	0.3805
BE2	0.7257	0.5799	0.5951	0.5319
BE3	0.7804	0.6393	0.6065	0.5234
BE4	0.6695	0.5046	0.4925	0.3993
BE5	0.7325	0.5522	0.5718	0.4910
BE6	0.6595	0.5964	0.5866	0.6686
BE7	0.7439	0.6227	0.5390	0.5620
BE8	0.7500	0.5134	0.5594	0.5049
BE9	0.7237	0.5560	0.5689	0.4663
BE10	0.7304	0.5041	0.5582	0.4109
BL1	0.6298	0.6969	0.6136	0.6480
BL2	0.6879	0.8065	0.6623	0.6821
BL3	0.6726	0.8305	0.5875	0.6415
BL4	0.6741	0.8063	0.6596	0.6110
BL5	0.6561	0.8189	0.5612	0.6692
BL6	0.6560	0.7724	0.7176	0.5783
BL7	0.4960	0.6317	0.4988	0.5969
BL8	0.6929	0.8711	0.6710	0.6723
BL9	0.4917	0.7246	0.5717	0.5941
BL10	0.5131	0.7536	0.5280	0.5934
BL11	0.4812	0.7230	0.4836	0.5524
BL12	0.4812	0.7230	0.4836	0.5524
BT1	0.6259	0.5926	0.7972	0.6055
BT2	0.6452	0.6331	0.7735	0.6872
BT3	0.4056	0.5495	0.5810	0.4928
BT4	0.6388	0.6430	0.8285	0.6059
BT5	0.6386	0.5775	0.7976	0.5197
BT6	0.6161	0.6174	0.7917	0.5828
BT7	0.4477	0.5578	0.5777	0.5534
BT8	0.6616	0.5110	0.7784	0.5294
BT9	0.5772	0.5332	0.7919	0.5343
BLY1	0.5687	0.5911	0.7004	0.7824
BLY2	0.6734	0.7408	0.7071	0.8828
BLY3	0.4913	0.6263	0.5772	0.7806
BLY4	0.5695	0.5894	0.5191	0.7096
BLY6	0.5301	0.6204	0.5598	0.7984
BLY7	0.5565	0.6993	0.5670	0.8429

Source: Primary Data Processing (2018)

Table 2 shows that all indicators have factor loading values above 0.5. Apart from that, each construct's AVE and communality values are more than 0.5. It shows that all indicators in each construct can be declared valid.

Discriminant Validity

The second stage is the discriminant validity test. The parameter used is a cross-loading value of more than 0.5. Table 3 shows that the cross-loading value of each indicator has a value of more than 0.5 in one variable. It can be concluded that all constructs and indicators have met the discriminant validity test parameters so that they can be valid.

Reliability Test

The next stage is reliability testing. This test uses composite reliability value parameters and Cronbach's alpha values. Hair et al. (2019) said it is reliable if the composite reliability value is more significant than 0.70 and the Cronbach's alpha value is more than 0.6. Table 4 shows that all constructs have a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.6 and a Composite Reliability value above 0.7. So, all the constructs used in this research have met the reliability test or can be said to be reliable. Based on all validity and reliability tests that have been carried out and fulfilled, all indicators in this research instrument are valid and reliable so that hypothesis testing can be carried out.

Table 4. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability Values

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Brand Experience	0.8878	0.9088
Brand Love	0.9350	0.9442
Brand Trust	0.9009	0.9202
Brand Loyalty	0.8873	0.9146

Source: Primary Data Processing (2018)

Table 5. Direct Effect Test

Relation Between Variable	Path Coefficient	t- statistics	p-values	Results
Brand Experience - Brand Loyalty	0.043	0.416	0.677	Not Significant
Brand Experience- Brand Love	0.785	26.491	0.000	Significant
Brand Experience- Brand Trust	0.786	19.242	0.000	Significant
Brand Love- Brand Loyalty	0.529	5.834	0.000	Significant
Brand Trust- Brand Loyalty	0.317	3.444	0.001	Significant

Source: Primary Data Processing (2018)

Table 6. Mediation Test Results

Correlation	path coef	t- statistic	p-value	Results
brand experience -> brand love-> brand loyalty	0.415	4.799	0.000	Significant
brand experience -> brand trust-> brand loyalty	0.249	2.845	0.000	Significant

Source: Primary Data Processing (2018)

The results of the direct effect test from the hypothesis in Table 5 show that the first hypothesis is rejected. It means that brand experience has no significant influence on brand loyalty. It can be seen from the results of the t-statistic <1.96 and the value of p-values <0.05 . The other four hypotheses show the results of t-statistics >1.96 and the p-values <0.05 . That is, the other four hypotheses are accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that brand experience has an influence on brand love and brand trust. Furthermore, brand love and brand trust also have an influence on brand loyalty.

Mediation Test Results

Testing of mediation effects is done in two ways: looking at the indirect effect test and seeing how the mediating properties are formed. Table 6 shows a summary of the test results of the indirect effects of the mediating role of brand love and brand trust. The t-statistic value for the brand love variable is 4.799, with a significance level of 0.00. Given the t-statistic >1.96 and p-values <0.05 , then the influence of mediation brand love is declared significant. Meanwhile, the results of the t-statistic and p-values for the effect of brand trust mediation amounted to 2.845 and 0.00, respectively. Thus, it was concluded that brand love and brand trust were able to mediate brand experience relationships with brand loyalty.

DISCUSSION

Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty

The findings of this study indicate that brand experience does not significantly influence brand loyalty. That is, brand experience does not have a direct influence on brand loyalty. The results of this study confirm the findings of Francisco-Maffezzoli et al. (2014), Choi et al. (2011), Iglesias et al. (2011), and Achmad et al. (2020). However, the results of this study are incompatible with the findings of Hussein (2018) and Mostafa and Kasamani (2021), who found that brand experience has a significant effect on brand loyalty.

Brand experience does not affect brand loyalty, indicating that although consumers may have various interactions or experiences with a brand, it does not significantly influence the extent to which they remain loyal to the brand. In this context, other factors or elements in consumer purchasing decisions or preferences may have a greater im-

pact on brand loyalty than the brand experience itself. It could also indicate that certain aspects of brand experience play a less key role in shaping consumer loyalty. A smartphone is one of the shopping items that has a relatively expensive price, causing consumers to have consideration when making a purchase. Consumers consider various factors, including price, quality, and product features. Therefore, to build brand loyalty, a brand must ensure that the brand can meet the needs and expectations of consumers.

Brand Experience and Brand Love

The findings of this study indicate that brand experience has a significant effect on brand love. That is, a consumer who has good experience with a brand is more in love with the brand. The results of this study confirm some of the findings of previous proprietary studies, Bıçakcıoğlu et al. (2018), Safeer et al. (2020), and Rodrigues and Brandão (2021) who found that brand experience has a significant impact on a consumer's brand love.

In the descriptive results, it is known that Samsung smartphone consumers show a positive response to the brand experience through sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioral indicators. Brand experience sensory indicators rely on the five senses to stimulate consumer love of brands because respondents of this age will be more easily attracted to the features offered by Samsung smartphones, so they have the desire to buy them.

Samsung smartphones always launch the latest series with different features. For example, some time ago, Samsung released the latest series of Galaxy S8 smartphones that have fast charging features. This fast-charging feature has never existed in previous series, and it has even been absent in other competitors. Some innovations related to features that Samsung always releases the deep impressions are able to create a sense of pleasure towards Samsung. When consumers buy Samsung smartphone because they are interested in the features offered and then try the product, they will evaluate the smartphone. Brand love will arise when the smartphone they buy turns out to fulfill the desires and emotions that match their expectations.

Brand Experience and Brand Trust

The findings of this study indicate that the brand experience has a significant effect on brand

trust. That is, the higher the level of brand experience that consumers feel, the higher the level of brand trust. The results of this study confirm some of the previous research findings belonging to Fikri et al. (2018) and Akoglu and Özbek (2022), who found that brand experience has an essential impact on a consumer's brand trust. Brand experience gained by consumers is able to influence trust related to how brand experience is applied in accordance with consumer expectations and how it influences creating strong bonds between brands and consumers. One of the advantages possessed by Samsung is that there is a Samsung Care program that is aimed at users to optimize the functionality of features on a smartphone. This program is one of the strategies carried out by Samsung so that users feel satisfied. If the user is satisfied when using a Samsung smartphone, this indicates that what is expected by the user is in accordance with what is obtained, so that comes the feeling of trust that Samsung can be relied upon.

Brand Love and Brand Loyalty

The findings of this study indicate that the brand love has a significant effect on brand loyalty. That is, the higher the level of brand experience that consumers feel, the higher the level of brand trust. This is reinforced by the findings of Salem et al. (2019) and Mody and Hanks (2020), which state that brand love has an impact on a consumer's brand loyalty. Samsung's advantages compared to other brands are Samsung's ability to provide after-sales services to prospective customers or loyal consumers. Samsung opened three official Samsung Experiment Store outlets in the city of Malang, namely outlets that provide official services and guarantees that are easily accessible to consumers. The services provided are felt to be in accordance with the needs and expectations of consumers because they have maximum knowledge about Samsung products.

In addition, Samsung has Galaxy Gift Indonesia application that loyal consumers can download. Samsung gives various kinds of rewards with the aim of strengthening long-term relationships with consumers. This engagement process leaves a deep impression on consumers that arouses love for Samsung. This feeling of love will bring the potential for consumer loyalty towards Samsung.

Brand love is the basis for creating consumer identity (Rodrigues and Reis, 2013). Consumers are more likely to like a brand that they feel is strong with consumer identity, as Samsung has done. Most of the respondents involved in this study were young and considered their smartphone brand to be a symbol of social status. Respondents assume that if they follow the trend of the latest series of smartphone brands, they will improve their social status. Therefore, as long as Samsung can satisfy respondents' emotional desires, consumers will be loyal to the brand.

Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty

The findings of this study indicate that the brand trust has a significant effect on brand loyalty. That is, the higher the level of brand trust consumers feel about the brand, the higher the level of their brand loyalty. This is reinforced by the findings of Akoglu and Özbek (2022) and Atulkar (2020), which state that brand trust has an impact on the brand loyalty of a consumer. Consumers are able to trust Samsung smartphones because they deliver the results they promised. In accordance with the results of the highest brand trust variable, the response frequency distribution of the respondents is at the reliability indicator. It means that correspondents as consumers of smartphone users of Samsung have felt the suitability of the Samsung Smartphone's performance results with what is expected. Every feature on the Samsung smartphone has a good performance. Consumers, when using a Samsung smartphone, certainly expect positive results to be obtained so that it makes life easier, and Samsung Smartphones are able to meet these expectations. The ability of the brand trust to influence consumer brand loyalty in this study emphasizes how the performance of Samsung smartphones is perceived by consumers so that trust is formed through the perception of the product that will direct consumers to remain loyal to the Samsung brand.

The Mediation Role of Brand Love

The mediation test results proved the influence of brand experience on brand loyalty by involving brand love as a mediating variable. The impact of the mediation of the brand of love is known to be full mediation. Thus, without brand love, brand experience is not able to influence

brand loyalty. The study findings confirm some of the findings of previous research by Huang (2017) and Ferreira et al. (2019), which revealed that brand trust mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty.

The more well-known brand chosen can increase consumer prestige. Here, the role of brand love is to generate emotional ties between consumers and brands. Brand love is the basis for creating consumer identity (Rodrigues and Reis, 2013). The consumer's love for the brand will be even greater if the brand shapes the identity of consumers. Samsung plays this role because it has high brand equity. Samsung smartphones, known as high-class smartphones, make respondents not overthink about the functional side but rather think about how brands can improve consumer identity. Therefore, the emotional desires of Samsung respondents can be fulfilled, causing consumers to be loyal to the brand. Samsung always wants good relations with its permanent customers by strengthening after-sales services. So that consumers still have ties to the Samsung brand.

The Mediation Role of Brand Trust

The mediation test results proved the influence of brand experience on brand loyalty by involving brand trust as a mediating variable. The impact of the mediation of brand trust is known as full mediation. Thus, without brand trust, brand experience is not able to influence brand loyalty. The research findings confirm some of the findings of previous research by Başer et al. (2016) and Marliawati and Cahyaningdyah (2020), which revealed that brand trust mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty.

Samsung smartphones that are able to improve the quality of experience ultimately form consumer brand trust, where brand trust is the beginning of the formation of consumer brand loyalty. According to Sung and Kim (2010), trust is built not only through quality but also by doing so sincerely. Some authors believe that consumers expect a brand to satisfy them. These functional and trusting needs then develop primarily from additional emotional security, kindness, and reciprocity Portal et al. (2019).

IMPLICATIONS

The theoretical implications of this study are

to contribute to a deeper understanding of the cognitive and affective factors that influence long-term relationships between brands and consumers. In addition, the results of this study can enrich marketing theory regarding the formation of brand relationships and stimulate further research that considers the complex dynamics between consumers' thoughts and emotions. The results of this study have practical implications, namely the importance of building a brand's long-term relationships with consumers. Marketing managers can measure and evaluate the effectiveness of marketing strategies through consumers' cognitive and affective responses. Therefore, balanced communication between rational information and emotional stimuli is needed to create stronger bonds with consumers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Samsung must focus on improving the brand experience to capture consumers' hearts. It can be done by providing a more enjoyable, interactive, and meaningful experience for smartphone users in Malang City, for example, by presenting creative programs or visually and emotionally attractive content. Apart from that, companies should prioritize building brand love and trust to increase brand loyalty. This is because these two factors are proven to influence brand loyalty significantly. By strengthening brand love and trust, companies can generate stronger consumer loyalty. The limitations of this study are (1) The object is still limited to one smartphone brand, namely Samsung, thereby limiting the generalization of results; (2) This study was primarily conducted in malls because of their time and cost limitations.

CONCLUSIONS

Brand experience does not significantly affect brand loyalty because it has yet to be able to attract consumers' hearts. However, brand experience significantly affects brand love, strengthening consumers' emotional feelings towards the brand. Besides that, brand experience also significantly influences brand trust, contributing to the formation of consumer trust in the brand. Brand love and trust both significantly affect brand loyalty, with higher levels leading to greater brand loyalty. This suggests that the experience of brutality increases with a sense of love and trust in the brand.

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