

The Influence Of Social Media Attachment And Brand Identification On Brand Loyalty By Mediation Of Brand Love And Moderation Of Self-Esteem Study On The Indonesian Manufacturing Industry

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze the influence of social media attachment and brand identification on brand love and brand loyalty. The research design used hypothesis testing, using a questionnaire given to 313 respondents. This research was conducted in February 2023 with respondents who were social media users: Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok and Twitter. Data analysis using SPSS and AMOS software. Results: there is a positive and significant influence of consumer-brand identification on brand love, there is a positive and significant influence of social media attachment on brand love, there is a positive and significant influence of brand love on brand loyalty, there is a positive and significant influence of consumer-brand identification on brand loyalty, there is a positive and significant influence of social media attachment on brand loyalty, there is a positive and significant influence of consumer-brand identification on brand loyalty which is mediated by brand love. There is a positive and significant influence of social media attachment on brand loyalty which is mediated by brand love and there is a negative and significant influence of brand love on brand loyalty which is moderated by self-esteem. This research has limitations, quantitative with a survey method and the data collection process took short time with a limited number of respondents, limited to the isotonic drink category, and the market share in Indonesia currently dominated by one particular brand, therefore the source of respondents was also predominantly obtained from consumers of one brand.

Keywords: *Social Media Attachment, Brand Identification, Brand Love, Self-Esteem, Brand Loyalty*

INTRODUCTION

The Millennial Generation or Gen Y, was roughly born between the mid-1980s and early 2000s (Soares et al., 2017; Petrescu et al., 2018), and has become a "distinctive attraction" for corporate managers and academics (Bolton et al., 2013). Efforts to win the hearts and minds of the millennial generation, as well as grow *the brand loyalty* of the millennial generation have become a top priority for most marketers (Kandampully et al., 2015), along with the large number of millennial generations, 115 million people, equivalent to 44% of total population of Indonesia (Digital Market Overview, Bappenas, 2019).

Along with the development of social media usage *trends*, data shows that the number of users is still growing quite significantly. LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook monthly active users are around 100 million, 320 million, 400 million, and 1.6 billion respectively (Adweek, 2016). Overall, these numbers highlight that users are engaging with social media brands at a higher rate than in previous eras. Throughout 2019, there were 130 million Facebook users and 63 million Instagram users, with Instagram user growth of more than 5% (Hootsuit Indonesia Digital Report, 2020).

Some research suggests that millennials actively participate (Hayes et al., 2015), while others argue that millennials spend a lot of time passively hiding (Bento et al., 2018). Millennials are surrounded by technology like never before (Soares et al., 2017), which has the potential to cause variations in brand engagement and social media behavior (Bento et al., 2018). Therefore, further insight into millennials and brand relationships with the millennial generation is still

needed (Wallace et al., 2017).

Apart from that, there is no strong evidence regarding the real benefits that the millennial generation who diligently use social media can provide for brands and their role in growing *brand loyalty*. In fact, empirical validation of the consequences (in particular, brand loyalty) remains sketchy to date (Lim et al., 2020). *Brand loyalty* includes behavioral and attitudinal loyalty. It refers to the intention to purchase and repurchase the brand, willingness to pay a higher price, resistance to switching to another brand and recommending the brand to others (Roy et al., 2013).

Millennials tend to look for brands that suit their lifestyle, nature, and prioritize social and community values. Therefore, according to Ayaydin and Baltaci (2013), it can be said that the millennial generation uses brands for self-promotional purposes, symbolizing their individuality and communicating their principles.

Ordun (2015), found that the millennial generation is loyal to brands they trust and for a short period of time. The loyalty of the millennial generation changes because their preferences continue to change due to changes in fashion, trends and brand reputation. The brand loyalty of the millennial generation cannot be trusted because the millennial generation focuses more on fashion and brands rather than just price (Lissitsa and Kol, 2016).

In line with the problems arising from previous research results related to *Brand Loyalty* for millennials on social media, which shows no strong evidence about the real benefits that can be provided by millennials in growing brand loyalty, while the current phenomenon is increasingly widespread that companies and brand owners increase the portion of marketing costs in digital channels reaching 20% of total marketing costs, and in total reaching 3% to 6% of the company's total turnover.

Brand loyalty is one of the main consequences of brand love (Albert and Merunka, 2013). Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) state that *brand love* is the level of strong sentimental attachment that satisfied customers have for a particular brand. *Brand love* can be influenced by *consumer brand identification* (Karjaluo et al., 2016). *Consumer brand identification* positively influences loyalty-related outcomes, especially among young people (Lu and Xu, 2015). However, other studies found opposite results (Khamitov et al., 2019).

Several empirical studies have examined the influence of *consumer brand identification* on *brand loyalty*, but other research has found that this relationship is not significant (Leckie et al., 2016), or is mediated by other variables such as *brand love* (Alnawas and Altarif, 2016). Salem and Salem (2019), found that the use of social media can increase *brand love* and *brand loyalty*. Another researcher, Jibril et al (2019) found that *social media* influences *brand loyalty*.

Le (2020) found that *self-esteem* can influence *brand love* and *brand loyalty*. Varnali and Toker (2015) reported that people with high self-esteem tend to display an authentic self-image on social media, while people with low self-esteem tend to beautify their self-image. Social media gives users with low self-esteem the opportunity to reveal personal information and express themselves better than in the real world.

Recent social media marketing literature (Koay et. al., 2020) has adopted the *stimulus-organism-response* (SOR) model to investigate the impact of external environmental stimuli (S) on internal processes (O), which in turn influence certain consumer behavioral responses (R). In this research, external environmental stimuli (S) are *Social Media Attachment* and *Brand Identification*, internal processes (O) are *Brand Love* and *Self-Esteem*, while certain consumer behavioral responses (R) are *Brand Loyalty*.

Referring to the background, the problem formulation of this research in more detail is as follows: is there a positive influence of *consumer-brand identification* on *brand love*, is there a positive influence of *social media attachment* on *brand love*, is there a positive influence of *consumer-brand identification* on *brand loyalty*, Is there a positive influence of *social media*

attachment on brand loyalty, Is there a positive influence of brand love on brand loyalty, Does brand love mediate the influence of consumer-brand identification on brand loyalty, Does brand love mediate the influence of social media attachment on brand loyalty, does self-esteem moderate the influence of brand love on brand loyalty?

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is research using quantitative methods through hypothesis testing. Data collection was *cross sectional* and the method used in this research was a *survey method* through primary data collection in the field.

The population observed is: millennials in Indonesia, who have social media, and follow isotonic drink product brands on social media. Sampling used a *non-probability sampling method* with *convenience sampling techniques*. Based on the results of data collection, a sample of 313 respondents was obtained.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of hypothesis testing can be seen in the following table:

Table 1
Hypothesis testing

<i>Path</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>Conclusion</i>
<i>Consumer-Brand Identification → Brand Love</i>	0.41	6.35	Supported
<i>Social Media Attachments → Brand Love</i>	0.43	6.66	Supported
<i>Consumer-Brand Identification → Brand Loyalty</i>	0.18	3.44	Supported
<i>Social Media Attachments → Brand Loyalty</i>	0.14	2.76	Supported
<i>Brand Love → Brand Loyalty</i>	0.67	8.95	Supported
<i>Consumer-Brand Identification → Brand Love → Brand Loyalty</i>	0.27	5.57	Supported
<i>Social Media Attachment → Brand Love → Brand Loyalty</i>	0.29	5.73	Supported
<i>Brand Love → Brand Loyalty moderated by Self-Esteem</i>	-0.10	-5.48	Supported

Source: Processing Results with LISREL 8.80

Hypothesis 1 :

There is influence Consumer-Brand Identification of Brand Love.

Based on the results obtained, it is known that *Consumer-Brand Identification* has a direct effect on *Brand Love* with a *t-value* of 6.35 (*t-value* > 1.96), which means that hypothesis Ha1 is supported.

The findings of this research are in line with and support several previous research findings from Fernandes and Inverneiro (2020) where brand identification, brand experience were found to play a major role in developing brand love, which, in turn, is positively related to engagement and loyalty. According to Delgado-Ballester and Sabiote (2015), brand identification value is a more relevant antecedent of consumer-brand relationships than functional product characteristics alone. Apart from that, it can contribute to increasing the hedonic value of a brand (Ding and Tseng, 2015).

Hypothesis 2 :

There is influence *Social Media Attachment* to *Brand Love*.

Based on the results obtained, it is known that *Social Media Attachment* has a direct effect on *Brand Love* with a *t-value* of 6.66 (*t-value* > 1.96), which means the Ha2 hypothesis is accepted.

These results support Ruane and Wallace (2015) who stated that the emergence of social media has offered consumers additional opportunities to express themselves. Meanwhile, Rissanen and Luoma-Aho (2016) revealed that on social media, consumers can use brands as signals about themselves in the millennial generation, to create their own identity. Furthermore, compared to older generations, young consumers are more likely to use brands to create self-identity, which in turn increases *brand love*.

Hypothesis 3 :

There is influence *Consumer-Brand Identification* of *Brand Loyalty* .

Based on the results obtained, it is known that *Consumer-Brand Identification* has a direct effect on *Brand Loyalty* with a *t-value* of 3.44 (*t-value* > 1.96), which means that hypothesis Ha3 is supported.

These results are in line with previous conceptual research where *consumer brand identification* positively influences loyalty-related outcomes, especially among young people (Lu and Xu, 2015) considering that the millennial generation's brand consumption is highly motivated by the need for self-expression. Apart from that, *consumer brand identification* has a direct impact on *brand loyalty*.

Hypothesis 4 :

There is influence *Social Media Attachment* to *Brand Loyalty* .

Based on the results obtained, it is known that *Social Media Attachment* has a direct effect on *Brand Loyalty* with a *t-value* of 2.76 (*t-value* > 1.96), which means that the Ha4 hypothesis is supported.

This finding supports previous findings from de Sousa (2017) where social media content related to consumer brands was proven to have a direct impact on social interactive brands and *brand loyalty*. D'Arienzo, et al (2019) found that users who have insecure attachments appear to use social media sites as a way to replace and compensate for lost affection from those around the individual, such as family and peers.

Hypothesis 5 :

There is influence *Brand Love* towards *Brand Loyalty* .

Based on the results obtained, it is known that *Brand Love* has a direct effect on *Brand Loyalty* with a *t-value* of 8.95 (*t-value* > 1.96), which means that the Ha5 hypothesis is supported.

This finding is in line with and supports previous findings from Albert and Merunka (2013) where *brand love* has consequences for brand commitment, word of mouth promotion, and the tendency to pay a higher price for the brand and ends with *brand loyalty* which can bring big benefits such as reduced promotional costs and increased revenue.

Hypothesis 6:

There is an influence of *Consumer-Brand Identification* on *Brand Loyalty* mediated *BrandLove* .

Based on the results obtained, it is known that the indirect influence of *Consumer-Brand Identification* on *Brand Loyalty* through *Brand Love* is 0.27 and the *t-value* is 5.57 (*t-value* > 1.96), which means that the Ha6 hypothesis is supported.

The results of this research are consistent with previous research from Alnawas and Altarif (2016) where *brand love* can be a mediating variable for several variables such as *brand loyalty* and *consumer brand identification*. Lu and Xu (2015) found *consumer brand identification* positively influences loyalty-related outcomes, all of which may be especially true

among young people given that millennial generation's brand consumption is highly motivated by the need for self-expression.

Hypothesis 7:

There is an influence of *Social Media Attachment on Brand Loyalty mediated Brand Love* .

Based on the results obtained, it is known that the indirect influence of *Social Media Attachment on Brand Loyalty* through *Brand Love* is 0.29 and the *t-value* is 5.73 (*t-value* > 1.96), which means that the Ha7 hypothesis is supported.

The results of this research are continuous with previous research from Alnawas and Altarif (2016) where *brand love* can be a mediating variable for several variables such as *brand loyalty* and *consumer brand identification*. Positive experiences can create an emotional connection between an individual and a brand. Therefore, people who are active on social media like and share their experiences with a brand and then social media users start to create a favorable attitude towards a brand which makes them have a strong bond with a brand.

Hypothesis 8 :

Self-esteem moderates the influence of Brand Love on Brand Loyalty

Based on the results obtained, it is known that the magnitude of the influence of *Brand Love on Brand Loyalty* moderated by *Self-Esteem* is -0.10 and the *t-value* is -5.48 (*t-value* > 1.96), which means that the Ha8 hypothesis is supported. In addition, Sierra et al., (2016) suggested that *self-esteem* moderates brand attachment and is considered as a result of maintaining relationships with individuals or groups.

The moderating influence of *Self-Esteem* between *Brand Love* and *Brand Loyalty* is negative and significant. This means that the higher the level of *Self-Esteem moderation*, the stronger the influence of *Brand Love on Brand Loyalty*. This means that the more respondents feel that they lack a number of good personal qualities and do not take a positive attitude towards themselves, the more they feel that the product whose *social media* they *follow* is really extraordinary and they like it, so that in the end would recommend the product to friends and family and say positive things about the product to others.

CONCLUSION

There is a positive and significant influence of *Consumer-Brand Identification* on *Brand Love*, there is a positive and significant influence of *Social Media Attachment on Brand Love*, there is a positive and significant influence of *Brand Love on Brand Loyalty*, there is a positive and significant influence of *Consumer-Brand Identification on Brand Loyalty*, there is a positive and significant influence of *Social Media Attachment on Brand Loyalty*.

There is a positive and significant influence of *Consumer-Brand Identification* on *Brand Loyalty* which is mediated by *Brand Love*, there is a positive and significant influence of *Social Media Attachment on Brand Loyalty* which is mediated by *Brand Love*, there is a negative and significant influence of *Brand Love on Brand Loyalty* which is moderated by *Self-Esteem*.

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