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The Effect of Brand Experience, Brand Loyalty, and Self-Congruity on Positive Word of Mouth with Brand Love as an Intervening Variable: A Study in Banjarbaru Starbucks Customers

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ABSTRACT

Several factors that can influence positive WOM are brand experience, brand loyalty, self-congruity, and brand love. Brand experience, created by Starbucks in Banjarbaru, can be a positive or negative experience experienced by customers when interacting with the brand. A positive brand experience can make customers feel comfortable and happy to be in the cafe and satisfied with the quality of the products and services they receive. High self-congruity can make customers feel comfortable and happy interacting with a brand and make consumers more loyal to that brand. This research method uses a questionnaire with 165 Starbucks Banjarbaru customers as a sample and was selected from the entire customer population. Variable measurement uses the Likert Scale technique with a weight scale from 1 to 5. Data analysis uses partial least squares with the help of the SmartPLS program. The research results show that brand experience, brand loyalty, and self-congruity have a positive effect on positive word of mouth. Brand love mediates the influence of brand experience, brand loyalty, self-congruity on positive word of mouth.

1. Introduction

Coffee lovers must be familiar with Starbucks, a very famous coffee shop chain founded in 1974 in Seattle, United States. with initially just a coffee bean shop. Currently, Starbucks has more than 30,000 branches throughout the world. On May 17th, 2002, through PT. Mitra Adiperkasa Tbk (MAP), which holds the franchise rights for the Starbucks brand, Starbucks has finally entered Indonesia and opened its first outlet in Jakarta. In 2010, Starbucks succeeded in establishing 90 outlets in different locations in Indonesia. Until 2017, the number of

Starbucks outlets in Indonesia continued to increase and has now reached 300 outlets. Starbucks will still be the leading coffee brand in Indonesia in 2022, with market share increasing to 22.5%. To remain competitive with its rivals, Starbucks needs to maintain customer loyalty and improve word of mouth (WOM) positively from their customers (Agatha, 2020; Anjasari, 2022).

Several factors that can influence positive WOM are brand experience, brand loyalty, self-congruity, and brand love. The brand experience created by Starbucks in Banjarbaru can be a positive or negative



experience for customers when interacting with the brand. brand experience, which can positively make customers feel comfortable and happy to be in the cafe and satisfied with the quality of the products and services they receive. Self-congruity A high level can make customers feel comfortable and happy interacting with a brand and make consumers more loyal to that brand. Brand love Starbucks can encourage customers to continue shopping and express their love by spreading positive reviews about the brand (Agatha, 2020; Bıçakcıoğlu, 2018). This research aims to find factors that can influence the relationship between these variables and positive word of mouth. This research tests the effect of brand experience, brand loyalty, and self-congruity on positive word of mouth by inserting brand love as an intervening variable.

2. Literature Review

Theory of stimulus organism response (SOR)

S-O-R theory is an abbreviation of stimulus-organism-reaction. Stimulus refers to stimulation that contains a message or idea. Organism refers to the individual or recipient of the message in the communication process, while Response describes the result of the stimulus. According to SOR theory, the stimulus a person receives will influence emotions, perceptions, and motivation (organism), which will ultimately influence behavior (response). The following is an example of the relationship between stimulus, organism, and response in the context of Starbucks: Stimulus: High-quality coffee. (brand experience), Organism: Consumers who like high-quality coffee. (self-congruity), Response: Consumers will give a positive perception of the quality of Starbucks coffee and will most likely buy the product or service again. (positive WOM); Stimulus: Comfortable physical environment. (brand experience), Organism: Consumers who like a relaxed atmosphere. (self-congruity), Response: Consumers will feel comfortable at Starbucks and will likely come back. (positive

WOM). The stimulus can be brand experience, brand loyalty, and self-congruity to feel positive towards the brand and then spread positive WOM. Hence, variables intervening in SOR theory, namely brand love, will play an important role in the relationship between stimulus and response.

The Influence of brand experience with positive WOM

Brand experience is a behavioral response that arises in consumers as a result of stimuli provided by brands, such as design, identity, packaging, communication, and environment. This consumer reaction is subjective and inner and involves sensory, affective, behavioral, and intellectual experiences. According to the literature, love relationships last many years, and friendships consist of many emotional, cognitive, and behavioral experiences. Consumer experience with the brand plays an important role in determining components of brand love. As passion in the consumer experience increases, customer satisfaction can turn into customer delight. Emotional arousal is one component of brand experience that can turn into customer delight and correspond to brand love over time. Customer delight, such as pleasure, happiness, and feelings of surprise, has been identified as one of the influencing factors of brand love. Brand experience with brands plays an important role in fostering relationships. Brand love is influential and emotional. Therefore, the brand experience can be one of the influencing constructs of brand love, and it is important to develop a positive consumer experience with the brand (Djaelani, 2021; Giantari, 2020).

Influence brand loyalty with positive WOM

A study examines the effect of brand loyalty on positive word-of-mouth with customer satisfaction as a mediator. The results of the analysis show that brand loyalty has a positive influence on positive word-of-mouth, with customer satisfaction as a mediator



between these two variables. Another study conducted research with the aim of testing the relationship between brand loyalty and positive word of mouth among fast-food restaurant consumers. The results of the analysis show that brand loyalty significantly influences positive word of mouth among fast-food restaurant consumers. Generally, most customers do not tend to complain or speak ill of a particular brand unless they experience dissatisfaction. After feeling satisfied with a positive emotional experience with a brand, customers become loyal and tend to share positive experiences with other people around them. Therefore, the brand recommendation is one of the most desired outcomes of brand loyalty (Hersetyawati, 2021; Japutra, 2021).

Influence self-congruity with positive WOM

Self-congruity refers to the suitability or consistency between an individual's self-image and the image of a particular brand or product. Positive WOM (word-of-mouth) refers to positive conversations about a brand or product that consumers have with others. These two concepts have a close relationship in the marketing context and can influence consumer behavior. In the context of Starbucks coffee shops, self-congruity will happen if consumers consider their self-image to be compatible with the Starbucks brand image, for example, if consumers feel they care about the quality of coffee and the environment and feel they are compatible with the Starbucks brand which is known for its high-quality products and strong environmental initiatives. If consumers feel that they are compatible with the Starbucks brand, they will provide positive WOM to other people about the brand.

Influence brand love mediate brand experience with positive WOM

The Relationship between brand love mediates brand experience with positive WOM in Starbucks coffee shops, which illustrates that strong feelings of affection for a particular brand or product can mediate

brand experience positive conversations and positive conversations about brands or products carried out by consumers with others. Brand love is a concept in social psychology that can be influenced by good experiences. Other studies also state that brand experience has a positive effect on Brand love. Other studies add that the emotional element of deep brand experience can affect brand love, while according to other studies, brand experience sensory, affective, and intellectual aspects can have an influence on Brand love. Brand love can be defined as relationships and emotions, so brand experience can affect brand love. From these various opinions and research, it can be concluded that when a consumer has a good experience with a brand, the consumer will feel that the brand provides added value and ultimately love the brand. Therefore, it can be assumed that brand experience influences brand love to consumers (Martiyanti, 2021; Nailis, 2021).

Influence brands love to mediate brand loyalty with positive WOM

Brand love involves various emotions, such as passion, positive attitude, evaluation, attachment, and commitment. If consumers like a brand, it can increase loyalty, generate a desire to invest more resources in purchasing the brand and increase involvement in choosing which brand to use. This is also reflected in consumer behavior, such as recommending brands positively and maintaining a positive attitude toward them. Another study found that brand love can predict brand loyalty and Word of Mouth. Brand love has a positive impact on brand loyalty. Based on findings from previous research, it can be concluded that the more consumers love a brand, the more loyal they are to the brand, and tend to be reluctant to switch to another brand. Therefore, it can be said that love for a brand can trigger brand loyalty (Park, 2019; Vernuccio, 2015).



Influence brand love mediate self-congruity with positive WOM

When choosing products and services, consumers not only consider utilitarian benefits but also symbolic benefits and the experience gained. Self-congruity, the relationship between consumer self-concept and the symbolic values of the brand, becomes important in consumer behavior. In the context of brand management, self-congruity, and brand love can be important factors in understanding consumer behavior. Brands that allow consumers to express themselves generate stronger, triggering emotional bond brand loyalty. Several studies also show that self-image motives and self-esteem motives can cause consumers to fall in love with a brand. Therefore, Self-

congruity levels can have an influence on brand love (Wulandari. 2019; Yohanna, 2021).

3. Methods

The type of research used is quantitative descriptive. This type of method is used to describe or analyze research results. The research location is Starbucks Banjarbaru, located on Jl. A. Yani, North Loktabat. North Banjarbaru District, Banjar Baru, South Kalimantan 70714. A total of 165 research subjects took part in this study. The research subjects were Banjarbaru Starbucks consumers, and the sampling process was carried out by purposive sampling.

Table 1. Research instruments.

Variable	Indicator
Brand experience (X1)	Sensory
	Affective
	Behavior
	Intellectual
Brand loyalty (X2)	Reluctance to try new brands
	Tolerance of higher prices
	Continuous purchases
	Desire to recommend
Self-congruity (X3)	Personal values
	Personality
	Identity
Brand love (Y)	Self-brand integration
	Passion driven behaviors
	Positive emotional connection,
	Long-term Relationship
Positive word of mouth (Z)	Anticipated separation distress
	Attitude valence
	Recommendation frequency
	Trust and reliability
	Speed of response
	Satisfaction

This research was measured using PLS analysis, where all collected questionnaires will be used for the data analysis stage. The data will be entered into the software SmartPLS and rechecked to find consistent results so as to minimize errors when entering data. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical analysis.

4. Results and Discussion

The study results show that 65.4% of the variable positive word of mouth is influenced by brand experience, self-congruity, brand loyalty, and brand love, while the remaining 34.6% is influenced by other variables not included in the research model. Hypothesis testing is done by looking at the t-statistic



resulting structural model (inner model) on PLS. The hypothesis is accepted if t-statistic > 1.96 with an alpha value of 5%. Brand experiences have a positive influence on positive word of mouth. The t-statistics value is $3.442 > 1.96$, and the p-value is $0.001 < 0.05$. This shows that brands experience a positive influence on positive word of mouth. Brand loyalty has a positive influence on positive word of mouth. The t-statistics value is $2.192 > 1.96$, and the p-value is $0.029 < 0.05$. This shows that brand loyalty has a positive influence on positive word of mouth. Self-congruity has a positive influence on positive word of mouth. The t-statistics value is $0.638 < 1.96$, and the P value is $0.524 > 0.05$. This shows that self-congruity has no effect on positive word of mouth. Brand love mediates the influence of brand experience on positive word of mouth. The t-statistics value is $2.796 > 1.96$, and the P value is $0.005 < 0.05$. This shows that brand love mediating influences brand experience to positive word of mouth. Brand love mediating influences brand loyalty through positive word of mouth. The t-statistics value is $3.507 > 1.96$, and the p-value is $0.000 < 0.05$. This shows that brand love mediating influences brand loyalty to positive word of mouth. Brand love mediating influences self-congruity to positive word of mouth. The t-statistics value is $2.616 > 1.96$, and the p-value is $0.009 < 0.05$. This shows that brand love mediating influences self-congruity to positive word of mouth.

Positive experiences with a brand will increase a consumer's tendency to speak favorably about the brand to others. This is because a pleasant experience can trigger feelings of satisfaction and a strong emotional connection to the brand, so consumers tend to share positive experiences with others. Consumers who are loyal to brands tend to give positive recommendations to others. Consumers who feel attached to a brand will feel responsible for sharing positive experiences with the aim of strengthening relationships with the brand and influencing others to choose the same brand. When consumers feel that a

brand reflects themselves and their values, consumers tend to be more motivated to speak well of the brand to others. Consumers who identify a brand with themselves will feel emotionally connected to the brand and are more likely to recommend it to others. Brand love at high levels will increase consumer motivation to share positive experiences with others because they feel emotionally connected and have a strong bond with the brand (Nailis, 2021; Wulandari, 2019).

5. Conclusion

Brand experience influences positive word of mouth for Starbucks' Banjarbaru coffee shop customers. Brand loyalty influences positive word of mouth for Starbucks' Banjarbaru coffee shop customers. Self-congruity has no effect on positive word of mouth for Starbucks' Banjarbaru coffee shop customers. Brand love mediates influence brand experience to positive word of mouth to Starbucks' Banjarbaru coffee shop customers. Brand love mediates influence brand loyalty to positive word of mouth to Starbucks' Banjarbaru coffee shop customers. Brand love mediating influences self-congruity to positive word of mouth to Starbucks' Banjarbaru coffee shop customers.

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