

Customer-Based Brand Equity in an Education Event

Elgine Harits, Reny Yuliati*

Department of Communication Sciences, Universitas Indonesia, Depok, Indonesia

*Corresponding author. Email: renyuliati@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between dimensions that exist in the customer-based brand equity (CBBE) concept in the context of an educational event, as well as to examine the relationship between event brand value and event brand loyalty, which is debated in the previous literature. In total, 298 participants completed questionnaires, which are used to assess the four dimensions of CBBE. Within the use of path analysis technique, the six hypothesis statements are supported statistically, and event brand loyalty (EBL) is proven to be directly affected by event brand value (EBV). Moreover, event brand quality (EBQ) is found to have the strongest influence to the EBL dimension, which is different with the findings of previous empirical studies that conclude event brand image (EBI) is the most predominant dimension affecting EBL.

Keywords: *Customer-Based Brand Equity, Event Brand Image, Event Brand Quality, Event Brand Value, Event Brand Loyalty.*

1. INTRODUCTION

An event cannot be separated from its branding strategy (C. R. Parahiyanti & A. S. Hussein, 2014). If an organizer wants to execute a successful event, then the organizer has to be able to measure the event's brand effectiveness (L. Hsing-Hui, 2011). In tourism studies, a destination branding effort throughout events could only be effective if an intangible asset called "brand equity" does exist in those events (C. R. Parahiyanti & A. S. Hussein, 2014).

In the context of a religious event, Hsing-Hui (2011) found strong a relationship between event brand image (EBI) dimension and event brand loyalty (EBL) dimension with the use of her proposed model of customer-based brand equity (CBBE) that involves five different dimensions. The research conducted by Parahiyanti and Hussein (2014) also found similar in the context of sports event. However, Hsing-Hui (2011) failed to prove the existence of relationship among the dimension of event brand value (EBV) and EBL in the context of religious event, while, despite the many kinds of special events mentioned by Goldblatt (2005), there is still zero research that considers educational events. Therefore, this research investigates the relationships among the dimensions of CBBE model, as proposed by

Hsing-Hui (2011), in the context of an educational. In this research, the dimension of event brand awareness is not used, as the founder of the concept itself, Aaker (1991), clearly stated that the variable does not play an important role.

The Program and Communication Division of an Indonesian institution called "Special Task Force for Upstream Oil and Gas Business Activities Republic of Indonesia" (SKK Migas) realized that a seminar event can be utilized as a public relations' tool. The division had a program named "Hulu Migas Goes to Campus" (GTC) that was held in 2017, and the division is about to conduct the same event in 2018. GTC is a seminar that bridges workforce of SKK Migas with the speakers and bachelor candidates from most parts of Indonesia as the participants. GTC also invites several leaders from cooperation contracts' institutions (such as Chevron and Pertamina) so that participants would be able to imagine themselves working at those institutions. The primary goal of conducting GTC is to create awareness among the participants about the roles of SKK Migas, remembering that most of participants are not aware of the vital role of SKK Migas in the oil and gas industry.

The objective of this study is investigate the relationships among EBI, event brand quality (EBQ), EBV, and EBL in CBBE model, which is used to

analyze an educational event. Moreover, this research reveals the validity of CBBE model in the context of educational event that was previously tested by Hsing-Hui (2011) in the context of religious event.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. CBEE

The oldest definition of brand equity was stated by Aaker (1991). Brand equity was defined as consumer values that are associated with a brand and are reflected in dimensions of: brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, and brand loyalty (D. A. Aaker, 1991; H. B. Kim & W. G. Kim, 2005). Since then, the concept of CBBE is being developed continuously by tourism scholars (L. Hsing-Hui, 2011; H. B. Kim & W. G. Kim, 2005; M. Konecnik & W. C. Gartner, 2007; S. Boo, J. Busser, & S. Baloglu, 2009; H. Qu, L. H. Kim, & H. H. Im, 2010). Chieng and Goi (2011) also added that the concept of brand equity continues to be developed in the context of customer-based (K. L. Keller, 1993) to examine its effects on brand preferences and purchase intent (C. J. Cobb-Walgren, C. Beal, & N. Donthu, 1995; S. van Osselaer & J. W. Alba, 2000), as well as brand alliances (A. R. Rao & R. W. Ruekert, 1994).

The concept of brand equity has been used widely by advertising practitioners since the 1980s (F. Y. L. Chieng & C. L. Goi, 2011; A. R. Rao & R. W. Ruekert, 1994). To correctly measure each variables of brand equity, studies have tried to identify dimensions of brand equity (S. Boo, J. Busser, & S. Baloglu, 2009; K. L. Keller, 2003; J. Lindermann, 2004). First, Aaker (1991) introduced five assets to the concept: brand loyalty, name awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and other proprietary brand assets. Subsequently, different components were mentioned by Keller (2001), who introduced brand resonance model as a model that is connected with the concept of customer-based brand equity (K. L. Keller, 2008). Five dimensions that existed in the model were: brand awareness, brand associations, brand attitudes, brand attachment, and brand activity. However, few researchers have also verified that a component called "perceived value" can actually be regarded as an independent dimension (S. Boo, J. Busser, & S. Baloglu, 2009; M. J. Sirgy & J. S. Johar, 1999; J. Hall, N. Robertson, & M. Shaw, 2001).

The former model of CBBE made by Aaker (1992) did not put "value" as a primary dimension, because "value" was regarded as a result of maximization of other brand equity assets. In other words, the former model of CBBE assumed that the component of value must be influenced by brand awareness, brand image, brand quality, and brand loyalty (L. Hsing-Hui, 2011), while marketing researchers recognized the "perceived value" component as a variable that affects customer

satisfaction and loyalty (L. Hsing-Hui, 2011; J. M. Cronin, M. Brady & G. T. Hult, 2000; A. Eggert & W. Ulaga, 2002; Y. Wang, H. P. Lo, R. Chi, & Y. Yang, 2004).

In 2007, Konecnik and Gartner (2007) started to use CBBE model to evaluate Slovenia's destination branding strategy (L. Hsing-Hui, 2011). Similar research continued until one study applied the model to evaluate event branding. However, the research used the CBBE model by Aaker (1992), which only recognized four dimensions: brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand awareness, and brand associations (also known as brand image). CBBE models that includes the dimension of value were developed by, e.g., Boo, Busser, and Baloglu (2009) and Hsing-Hui (2011). The dissertation of Hsing-Hui (2011) tried to examine the validity, reliability, and normality of CBBE model that includes the dimension of brand value, and then applied the model to evaluate Taichung Mazu International Tourism and Cultural Event.

Taichung Mazu International Tourism and Cultural Event is a famous religious event that is held annually in Taiwan. Thus, the dimensions of event brand awareness (EBA) and event brand image (EBI) were found highly affective to the dimension of event brand loyalty (EBL), while the dimension of event brand value (EBV) was found not directly affective to the dimension of EBL. Theories that were used by Hsing-Hui (2011) to validate the dimension of brand value came from the development of marketing studies in the 21st century. However, the proposed CBBE model, which included brand value as a primary dimension, was found highly applicable to evaluate other kinds of events. The fact came from numbers that appeared in confirmatory factor analysis.

2.2. EBI

The concept of brand image is identified as a collection of consumer perceptions toward a certain brand based on the consumer's emotion or thinking (S. Boo, J. Busser, & S. Baloglu, 2009). In research related to tourisms, tourists are found having desirability to revisit a destination if they perceived the destination as positive based on their first experience traveling to the site (G. F. Ross, 1993; A. D. A. Tasci & W. C. Gartner, 2007). A study on Ijen Car Free Day also found the dimension of EBI as the most significant dimension toward the dimension of event revisit intention (C. R. Parahiyanti & A. S. Hussein, 2014). In addition, a study of the Mazu Event agreed that the dimension of event brand image is highly affective to the dimension of EBQ, EBV, and EBL (L. Hsing-Hui, 2011). In the dissertation of Hsing-Hui (2011), brand image was considered equal to Paterson's brand personality (S. Horsany, Y. Ekinici, & M. Uysal, 2006), which is limited to social image and self-image (W. Lassar, B.

Mittal, & A. Sharma, 1995; M. Sirgy & C. Su, 2000; A. Beerli & J. D. Martin, 2004) elements.

2.3. EBQ

Brand quality was initially known as the dimension of perceived quality in the Aaker (1991) model. Perceived quality is based on consumer’s evaluation toward superiority of a product and differs with the term of “objective quality” (F. Y. L. Chieng & C. L. Goi, 2011; V. A. Zeithaml, 1988). Objective quality refers to the real condition of a brand or a service. Measurement toward objective quality can be conducted technically and can be verified; however, it is not always affective to brand equity (F. Y. L. Chieng & C. L. Goi, 2011; J. Anselmsson, U. Johansson, & N. Persson, 2007).

Perceived quality would directly influence the purchasing decision and brand loyalty, particularly when a buyer was not motivated to or could not analyze aspects of a brand (D. A. Aaker, 1991). After several developments to the concept of perceived value, perceived quality is considered as a factor that directly affects perceived value (S. Boo, J. Busser, & S. Baloglu, 2009; W. B. Dodds, K. B. Monroe, & D. Grewal, 1991; H. Oh, 2000; R. K. Teas & R. N. Laczniak, 2004). The hypothesis statement of Hsing-Hui (2011), which indicates EBQ positively affects EBV and EBL, is also approved and able to generalize previous findings.

2.4. EBV

The term of “value” is found in few brand equity models (F. Y. L. Chieng & C. L. Goi, 2011; W. Lassar, B. Mittal, & A. Sharma, 1995; P. Feldwick, 1996; G. S. Martin & T. J. Brown, 1991). In the Aaker (1992) brand equity model, value was not considered as one of the dimensions that exist in brand equity concept. Instead, value was considered as a result of brand equity assets’ collection, which could increase consumer’s satisfaction and intentions to purchase. A similar finding was also reported by Williams and Soutar (2009), who conducted an empirical study in Australia. However, Williams and Soutar (2009) found that the dimension of value positively affects customer behavior intentions. Furthermore, they developed value as a multidimensional concept, which contains: value for money, emotional value, and novelty value (L. Hsing-Hui, 2011).

The literature review of Boo, Busser, and Baloglu (2009) also highlights the previous findings, which stated customer value is playing an important role in constructing customer loyalty (D. Grewal, M. Levy, & D. R. Lehmann, 2004), and proven to affect customer loyalty (V. A. Zeithaml, 1988; R. L. Oliver, 1980).

2.5. EBL

When discussing about value of a brand, brand loyalty then becomes a key dimension, because brand loyalty defines the future margins (D. A. Aaker, 1992). Konecnik and Gartner (2007) and Gitelson and Crompton (1984) underlined that there are plenty of destination sites that pray for their tourists’ revisits. Consequently, Opperman (2000) suggested that destination loyalty has to be investigated further to understand long-term visitation behavior (M. Konecnik & W. C. Gartner, 2007). According to Day (1969), loyalty has two sub-dimensions: attitudinal, and behavioral. Behaviors toward a brand result in consistent purchase behavior (L. Hsing-Hui, 2011). The eesearch on Mazu event adopted those two sub-dimensions and found the dimension of EBL is affected by four other dimensions: EBA, EBI, EBQ, and EBV (L. Hsing-Hui, 2011).

2.6. Research Model

H1: EBI has a positive influence on event brand quality (EBQ).

H2: EBI has a positive influence on EBV.

H3: EBI has a positive influence on EBL.

2.7. Research Hypotheses

H4: EBQ has a positive influence on EBV.

H5: EBQ has a positive influence on EBL.

H6: EBV has a positive influence on EBL.

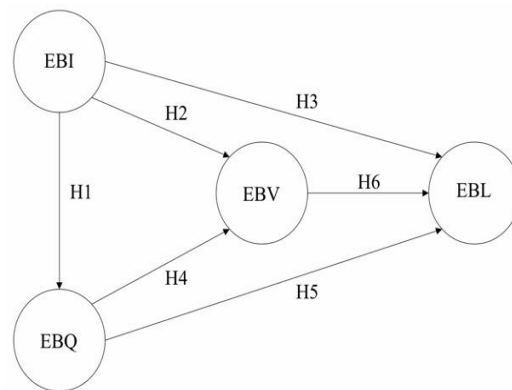


Figure 1 Proposed CBBE model (EBI, Event Brand Image; EBQ, Event Brand Quality; EBV, Event Brand Value; EBL, Event Brand Loyalty).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Participants

With the use of convenient sampling method, 298 university students were collected, comprising 47 in Jakarta and 251 in Yogyakarta. All participants from the Jakarta event come from a large university in Surabaya, Indonesia, and all of them are studying marine engineering. On the other hand, the survey participants from the Yogyakarta event come from various majors from different universities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

3.2. Measurement

The measurements of this study adopted the questionnaire used by Hsing-Hui (2011). The original questionnaire was then translated into Indonesian by a sworn translator. However, after the translation process, eight items were eliminated due to the consideration of irrelevancy, while some questions needed to be adjusted with the context. Eventually, the dimension of EBI was measured by six indicators (fitness-with-personality, self-identification, consistency with self-image, self-reflection, identification from others, and social image); the dimension of EBQ was measured by six indicators (consistency of quality, quality of experience, expectation of being successful, quality of accommodation, and level of tidiness, level of self-security); the dimension of EBV was measured by seven indicators (worthiness, prosperity, happiness, approval from others, acceptance from environment, good impression by others, and emotional-bound); and the dimension of EBL was measured by four indicators (happiness, loyalty, recommendation to others, and revisit intention).

3.3. Data Analyses

First, respondent profiles were described. Consequently, validity test and reliability test were conducted to test all the constructs. After all constructs were proven to have Pearson's coefficients of more than 0.30 (Sugiyono, 2008) and Cronbach's alphas of more than 0.80 (N. M. Webb, R. J. Shavelson, & E. H. Haertel, 2006), path analysis was examined. Path coefficient must be larger than 0.051 to identify a direct relationship among constructs (S. Baloglu and K. W. McCleary, 1999).

4. RESULTS

4.1. Profile of Respondents

The 298 students are taking 38 different majors. The majority of them take marine engineering (16.49%), followed by mechanical engineering (14.74%), geophysics (8.42%), physical engineering (6.67%),

geological engineering (6.32%), industrial engineering (6.32%), electrical engineering (5.96%), chemical engineering (5.25%), geodesy (3.16%), and law study (2.8%). Few respondents study chemistry, information system, etc., at around 1–2% per each subject. Very few individuals study subjects such as sociology and psychology, and are thus gathered into the category "others".

Male respondents were found dominant (69.52%) and 46.25% of the respondents are 21–22 years old. Overall, 37.29% of students are in Semester 7 or Semester 8, and 48.39% of students receive Rp 500,000–1,500,000 monthly. The vast majority of respondents still financially benefit from their parents (74.33%). Overall, 61.19% of the students stay in rental rooms during their studies, and more than 90% of the students choose to own their private vehicles. Students that come from Java Island (except Jabodetabek area) were found dominant (65.12%), and almost 90% of the respondent studies in Yogyakarta.

Before attending the seminar, more than 10% of respondents were not aware of the existence of SKK Migas. However, after attending the seminar, only slightly more than 1% of respondents are still unfamiliar with the institution. Almost all of the respondents answered to re-attend the event if SKK Migas as the organizer brings a different topic that was not yet used on a previous occasion. The table also demonstrates 93.95% of the students are already aiming to work in oil and gas sector, while 92.73% feel motivated to pursue a career in SKK Migas after their attendance to the event.

4.2. Path Analysis

After all of the constructs of this study were found valid and highly reliable ($\alpha_{EBI} = 0.916$; $\alpha_{EBQ} = 0.928$; $\alpha_{EBV} = 0.915$; and $\alpha_{EBL} = 0.911$), path analysis was conducted. All path relationships were found statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) and indicate the existence of direct path relationships. The path loadings on EBI–EBQ, EBI–EBV, EBI–EBL, EBQ–EBV, EBQ–EBL, and EBV–EBL are 0.800, 0.653, 0.238, 0.259, 0.427, and 0.297, respectively. The results of the path coefficient exhibit high levels of support for EBI–EBQ, EBI–EBV, and EBQ–EBL, while exhibit only moderate levels of support for EBI–EBL, EBQ–EBV, and EBV–EBL.

R² values provide clear interpretations of the variability of the latent variables. Variance of EBQ is 64.1% and influenced by the variable of EBI. Variance of EBV is 76.4% and influenced by the variables of EBI and EBQ. Variance of EBL is 79.8% and influenced by the combination of the other variables (EBI, EBQ, and EBV).

This finding reveals that the structural model provides strong explanation about the variances. This

finding indicates that the model can be used as a viable method to explain variables that construct a single latent variable.

4.3. Hypotheses Testing

Table 1. Summary of hypotheses testing.

Hypothesis	Path Loading	Path Pattern	p-value	Test Outcome
EBI→EBQ	0.800	Direct	**	Supported
EBI→EBV	0.653	Direct	**	Supported
EBI→EBL	0.238	Direct	**	Supported
EBQ→EBV	0.259	Direct	**	Supported
EBQ→EBL	0.427	Direct	**	Supported
EBV→EBL	0.297	Direct	**	Supported

4.4. Finalized Model

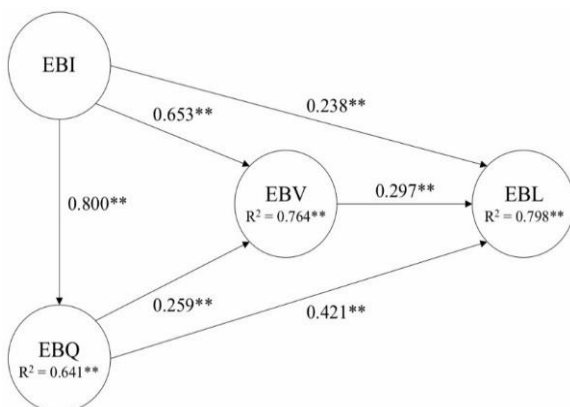


Figure 1 Finalized model (** p < 0.001).

As mentioned by Boo, Busser, and Baloglu (2009), previous studies have examined the important role of customer value in creating customer loyalty (D. Grewal, M. Levy, & D. R. Lehmann, 2004) and the effect of customer value toward customer loyalty (V. A. Zeithaml, 1988; R. L. Oliver, 1980). This research validated those statements with a finding that demonstrates a moderate level of support between variable of EBV and variable of EBL (path loading = 0.297**).

4. DISCUSSION

Some findings of this research are quite similar to the findings of Hsing-Hui (2011) who examined CBBE

model on the Mazu event. Hsing-Hui (2011) stated that EBI does influence EBQ and EBV. However, this research differs with one of the dissertation findings, which states that EBI has a strong influence on EBL. This research found EBI only affects EBI at moderate level (path loading = 0.238**).

Although self-image of respondents does not really affect their loyalty to the GTC event, qualities of the event are statistically proven as a set of factors that play an important role in loyalty. Thus, another finding of the research was found contrary with the finding of Hsing-Hui (2011), who found only moderate level of support between the variable of EBQ and the variable of EBL (path loading = 0.25**).

5. CONCLUSION

This research was conducted to understand the relationships among CBBE dimensions in the context of an educational event. Hsing-Hui (2011) conducted similar research in the context of a ceremonial event referring to the categorization of special events of Goldblatt (2005). With the use of path analysis, all research hypotheses are supported. This research also sought to identify the type of relationships that exist among the dimensions of EBV and EBL. Hsing-Hui (2011) failed to prove a hypothesis statement, implying the existence of direct relationship between the two dimensions. Within this research, it is proved that EBV directly and significantly affects EBL.

The most interesting finding of this research is the strong relationship found between the dimensions of EBQ and EBL. This finding actually informs that the most important aspects to increase brand equity in educational events are the qualities of the event, which involve: consistency of quality, quality of experience, expectation of being successful, quality of accommodation, level of tidiness, and level of self-security. The finding differs with the finding of previous studies (C. R. Parahiyanti & A. S. Hussein, 2014; L. Hsing-Hui, 2011) that indicate the most important dimension to increase brand equity in religious and sports event is EBI.

Hopefully, this research will add knowledge to the CBBE literature, as well as marketing communication studies literature, knowing that the concept is highly related to the study. Replications are needed to examine the relationships among CBBE dimensions in the context of other kinds of special events. For public relations professionals or event organizers, this research can be perceived as recommendations to execute better events, knowing that the recommendations are actually produced by the stakeholders. Methods of this research can be adopted as well, as a reference to evaluate the brand quality of an event.

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