



The Roles of Brand Love in Predicting Brand Loyalty

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Abstract. The purpose of this research is to analyze the effect of self-expressive brands on brand loyalty as mediated by brand love. The population of this study is H&M users in Indonesia and Taiwan, and we collected a sample from 170 respondents, divided between 85 respondents from Indonesia and 85 respondents from Taiwan. The sample was taken based on non-probability sampling, which is used the purposive sampling method. Data analysis techniques used Smart PLS 4.0 software. The analytical results of this study show that self-expressive brands did not have a significant effect on brand loyalty. Afterward, self-expressive brands have a significant effect on brand love. Then, brand love has a significant effect on brand loyalty. Eventually, brand love will fully mediate the effect of self-expressive brands on brand loyalty. This is the first study that seeks to analyze cross-cultural research that is significant to the self-expressive brand's relationship with brand love. The combination of these concepts would contribute in the direction of an improved comprehension of the brand-love relationship. Further research is expected to examine whether luxury brands such as Gucci, Dior, Chanel, and Yves Saint Laurent are able to make consumers loyal.

Keywords: Brand Love · Brand Loyalty · Self-Expressive Brands

1 Introduction

The rapid change in civilization makes the development so rapid in the field of science and technology. Industries can now compete on a global scale as a result of advancements in science and technology. The sector also includes the clothing industry, which creates textile products like garments. To encourage repeat purchases and customer loyalty, textiles must develop stronger clothing marketing tactics in light of the escalating global rivalry in the apparel business.

Clothing is a basic human need that must be met, but over time clothes are not just a necessity, but clothes change functions into fashion. This shift in the function of clothing causes consumers would buy clothes to show their lifestyle and identity. The degree to which consumers believe a brand improves their social selves is the definition of self-expressive brands (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Wallace et al., 2021). People who are encouraged by the need to express themselves tend to be very engaged with brands, and consumers are actively motivated to help build brand equity (Wallace et al., 2021).

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Self-Expressive is a means for consumers to express themselves in a social environment. The Indonesian and Taiwanese dress lifestyles tend to imitate western styles, both in terms of design and quality. There are so many clothing brands in Indonesia and Taiwan, both local and international brands. One of the international brands in Indonesia and Taiwan is the H&M brand.

Currently, Indonesian and Taiwanese people tend to visit foreign brands more often than local brands, because this modern style of dress requires consumers to show off products that have been purchased in their social environment, either directly or through social media, such as TikTok, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and others. They would be proud when using brand products from other countries that are more famous than local brands through good quality.

This is because foreign brands that are known to be successful in the global market are considered capable of providing a true consumer identity, this identity can be in the form of the characteristics of a consumer as well as the social and economic status of consumers. For a number of reasons, including the desire to lead like the wealthy, consumers are purchasing more luxuries.

If a brand has a good reputation and image, it creates loyalty to the brand among consumers. A high level of affective attachment based on consumer satisfaction with a brand is the definition of brand love (Ghorbanzadeh and Rahehagh, 2020). Brand love will also create a sense of consumer loyalty to a product, consumers will spread positive words and recommend the product to others (Batra et al., 2012; Pandir & Yasin, 2017). There are many advantages of brand love and this connects to brand loyalty (Le, 2020).

(Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Loureiro et al., 2012; Kaufmann, 2016) Brand love stems from the self-description of the brand and the hedonistic nature of the product is at first brand loyalty. Customers who feel brand attachment beyond brand satisfaction continue to make repeat purchases (Unal & Aydin, 2013). Therefore, this study examines brand love focused on the H&M brand. This model was specifically developed and tested through cross-cultural country studies to illustrate the concurrence between H&M brand love antecedents and outcomes. Although previous studies on brand love have been carried out, this is one appropriate the first studies to examine conceptual models of H&M brand love in Indonesia and Taiwan.

2 Brand Love

2.1 Definition

This study views brand love as a love relationship (Sternberg, 1987; Alnawas & Altarifi, 2016) defining and conceptualizing brand love based on the theory of love (Alnawas & Altarifi, 2016). Brand love is a customer's emotional commitment to a certain business name (Christino J, et al., 2020; Nailis et al., 2022). Brand love is an abstraction deeply rooted in popular culture (Ahuvia et al., 2020). The emotional component of brand loyalty that helps companies keep clients for a long period is also known as brand love (Kumar & Sahah, 2004; Unal S & Aydin H, 2013).

The structure of brand love is also relevant when the consumer's relationship with the brand is weak usually enough to be considered love (Rauschnabel and Ahuvia, 2014). Brand love is assembled with the intention of can be used in distinctive customer behavior

studies and is not presently the uncommon case of focused relationships (Rauschnabel and Ahuvia, 2014).

Long-term emotional, cognitive, and behavioral factors are a relationship of brand love (Batra et al., 2012). Uncovering the implied definition of feeling affection for consumers use when they say they love a particular brand is the earliest step toward accepting brand love (Batra et al., 2012). An important aspect of brand love is the passionate affection and feeling bonded to the brand (Fournier 1998; Thomson et al., 2005; Batra et al., 2012). Brand love is viewed as a brand 'fanaticism' in which customers are consequently influenced by that love that they discontinue expanding what other brands might present (Coelho et al., 2019). A passion for attachment, favourable appraisal, positive feelings in reaction, and assertion of love for a brand is the scope of brand love (Ahuvia, 2005). Brand love was created with several organizational benefits (Rossiter, 2012; Palusuk et al., 2019).

An awesome brand, a brand that makes the heart happy, the brand is a passion, the brand makes someone bond, and the brand gives pure pleasure, it all the indicators come from brand love (Barbara et al., 2006; Hermanto, 2019). When you feel happy, positive, and excited about something, you are more likely to have repurchase intention (Thomson et al., 2005; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Batra et al., 2012; Loureiro et al., 2012; Kaufmann, 2016). However, the association between brand love and brand personal purchases in use continues to be argued and thus not related to actual brand performance (Rossiter and Bellman, 2012; Zarantonello et al., 2016). The elements of the brand love prototype are superior quality, established values, existential significance, intrinsic reward, self-identity, positive influence, passionate desire and natural sense of alignment, affective attachment and expected heartbreak, and the acquisition of frequently thoughts gains, and useful life (Batra et al., 2012).

Consumer love features: (1) brand enthusiasm, (2) brand loyalty, (3) positive evaluation of the brand, (4) positive sentiment toward the brand, (5) declaration of love for the brand (Albert et al., 2008). It is the dynamics inherent in the structure of brand love that help develop an important viewpoint on brand management against initiation to advance and capability (Bergkvist & Bech-Larsen, 2010). Love for the brand increases customer loyalty to the brand, and brand her community increases both love and loyalty. This means a distinctive attitude against brands (Coelho, 2019). Brand love involves the consumer-brand relationship and broad positive feelings and attitudes toward the brand (Batra et al., 2012; Kaufmann et al., 2016).

The dimension of brand love stacked into a single high-level factor shows that they are part of a single phenomenon (Rauschnabel and Ahuvia, 2014). (Keh, et al., 2007; Pang et al., 2009) define brand love as the interactive, vibrant, diverse, then purposeful connection between pleased customers with their brands, and characterized as emotional, positive, and cognitive traits of individuals (developing three-dimensional models of brand relationships and brand love). Triangular love theory proposes how it can be adapted to characterize consumer-object relationships (Sternberg, 1986; Shimp and Madden, 1988; Pang et al., 2009). Three main components of brand love such as: brand intimacy, brand passion, and brand loyalty, address the emotional, positive, and cognitive aspects of the relationship between consumers and brands (Pang et al., 2009). Brand love is considered in terms of volume-based sales metrics (Zarantonello et al., 2016).

Brand love is important when it comes to building good relationships with customers. Brands that are able to make their customers love them create a sustainable advantage and successfully outperform their competitors (Roberts, 2006; Sallam, 2015). In the context of marketing, brand love is important as it is positively related to brand loyalty (Bergkvist et al., 2009; Sallam, 2015). Brands that customers love should not only be the first choice but the only brand chosen by consumers and recommended by others (Thomson, 2005; Niyomsart and Khamwon, 2016). Brand love is stronger than preference and is part of the correspondence structure connecting consumers and brands (Heinrich et al., 2012; Fetcherin and Heinrich, 2014; Niyomsart and Khamwon, 2016).

3 Hypothesis Development

3.1 The Effect of Self-Expressive Brands on Brand Loyalty

Self-expression encouraged customers to help shape brand equity, as people motivated by self-expression were more predisposed to engage with businesses online (de Vries et al., 2017; Wallace et al. 2021). Consumers who consume brands because they reflect them tend to be loyal (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). Previous research (Ruane & Wallace, 2015) found that self-expression has a significant impact on brand loyalty. We also know that self-expressive brands have a positive effect on brand loyalty (Leckie et al., 2016).

H0: Self-expressive did not have a significant effect on brand loyalty.

H1: Self-expressive did have a significant effect on brand loyalty.

3.2 The Effect of Self-Expressive Brands on Brand Love

(Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006) define self-expressive brands as consumers' insight into how much a particular brand enhances their social and inner selves. A self-expressive brand (inner self) in a straight-line influences brand love (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). Customers adore brands that play a key role in determining characteristics that should cultivate (Ahuvia, 2005). Another study (Vania et al., 2020) found that self-expressive brands have a positive effect on brand loyalty.

H0: Self-expressive did not have a significant effect on brand love.

H2: Self-expressive did have a significant effect on brand love.

3.3 The Effect of Brand Love on Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is a deep-seated psychological obligation to continually repurchase a product or service in the future and to continue to stick to the same brand despite the influence of circumstances and marketing efforts that may trigger switching behavior. It leads to repeat purchases (Hwang et al., 2022). This level of loyalty is behavioral and related to how much and how often customers purchase brands (Odin et al., 2001; Unal & AydÖn, 2013). Previous studies have examined beneficial associations that connect brand love and brand loyalty (Mody et al., 2019).

H0: Brand love did not have a significant effect on brand loyalty.

H3: Brand love did have a significant effect on brand loyalty.

3.4 The Effect of Brand Love as a Mediation Variable

An emotional component of brand loyalty is brand love, it would help companies keep clients for a long period (Kumar and Sahah, 2004; Unal S, Aydın H, 2013). Brand love is a relationship involving long-term, such as emotional, cognitive, and behavioural factors (Batra et al., 2012). Love for a brand as well as a stronger affective response than sympathy is conceptually different (Ahuvia, 2006). Self-presenting brands have a significant impact on brand loyalty with the help of brand love as an intermediary (Vania A et al., 2020) (Fig. 1).

H0: Brand love did not have mediated self-expressive brands on brand loyalty.

H4: Brand love did have mediated self-expressive brands on brand loyalty.

4 Research Method

Concerning this research, the sampling technique utilized non-probability sampling which is purposive sampling because the researcher chose a sample from the population based on certain criteria, using a 5-point Likert scale. The survey research uses quantitative data methods and collection tools to respondents used the Google forms. The sample size in this study uses the method from (Roscoe, 1975; Uma Sekaran, 1992; Halim et al., 2011) if the sample is further divided into sub-samples, the minimum number of sub-samples shall be 30.

The sample of this study reached 170 respondents from 85 H&M users in Indonesia and 85 H&M users in Taiwan. The determination of a sample of 170 respondents is considered sufficient to represent the sample in this study, where the sample is larger than the minimum requirement of 30 respondents. Data analysis techniques used descriptive analysis techniques and SEM PLS using Smart PLS 4.0 software and hypothesis testing using bootstrap and blindfold.

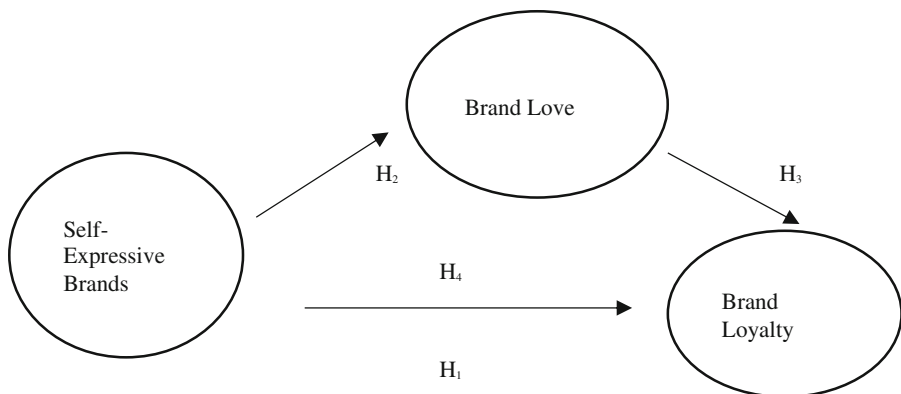


Fig. 1. Framework of the SOR Model

5 Research Results and Discussion

The sample of this study used 170 respondents consisting of 85 respondents from Indonesia and 85 respondents from Taiwan. Then, in the analysis technique, this research uses Microsoft Excel software to analyse descriptive analysis and Smart PLS 4.0 software to analyse hypotheses using SEM PLS, bootstrapping, and PLS prediction techniques.

5.1 Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis is used at the same time as part of a comprehensive purposeful appraisal of the troubling behaviour, the definition of descriptive analysis is a series of observational activities to gather information without any experimental manipulation, the descriptive analysis also identifies events that correlate with the occurrence of multiple target responses (Sloman, 2010).

5.2 Descriptive Respondents

Respondent data is used to identify characteristics or backgrounds of respondents such as sexual characteristics, age, job description, educational level, and country. Based on the survey respondents' responses, gender accounted for 65% of females and only 35% of males. In the respondents' age analysis, millennial age dominates, namely at the age of 21–30 years at 81%, at the age of 15–20 years at 13%, at 31–50 at 5%, and at 41–50 at only 1%.

Then the educational level of respondents shows that senior high school is only 9%, while college is very dominant at 91%. In the job description, the results of the analysis show that housewives are at 4%, entrepreneurs are at 2%, employees are at 21%, and students have the highest percentage, which is 73%. Because this research is a cross-cultural country study, therefore the respondents' results obtained from the two countries are the same, such as in Table 1 Indonesia 50% and Taiwan 50%.

5.3 Construct Validity and Reliability

Validity analysis using convergent validity and discriminant validity tests. A convergence test is considered valid if the Average Variance Extracted value is > 0.50 (Chin & Todd, 1995). A discriminant test is considered valid if the indicator value for each construct must be high compared to the indicators for the other constructs in the cross-loading test. For composite reliability, a reliability score is said to be reliable if the composite value of the reliability score is greater than 0.7 (Chin, 1998). Cronbach's strongest alpha level is 0.70, which is considered fairly reliable (Urdan, 2016).

Based on responses to a questionnaire circulated by 170 respondents. This study uses convergent validity and discriminant validity. A convergent validity test is a valid indicator if the value of the outer loading is > 0.70 and the average variance extracted is > 0.50 for convergent validity (Chin & Todd, 1995). From the load value test results in Table 2, we can see that all cross-loading values are > 0.7 . This means that all latent variables are suitable to represent the indicator. Based on the discriminant validity check

results in Table 2, the value is greater than 0.5. This means that each indicator in the variable has a high correlation value with the intended configuration. Therefore, it can be said that each index in this study is effective as a determinant. After calculating the test's validity, the researchers calculated the test's reliability. This reliability test uses composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha. The structure is reliable if the composite reliability score is greater than 0.70. This survey shows that all survey variables have high-reliability values. Based on the data presented in Table 2, Cronbach's alpha reliability values are > 0.70 for all study variables. This indicates a high degree of reliability for all survey variables.

5.4 Mean Values

The mean (average) is the total number of data divided by the number of data (Sekaran, U. & Bougie, R.J., 2016). Average is used to calculate the average score of all respondents' answers combined. From the average values below, we can see that there is one metric whose value is still below 2,500. This means that H&M is the only brand we buy on this product. Based on the respondents' average score, it can be concluded that the H&M brand has not been able to make consumers the only product that consumers will buy.

6 Measurement Model

Classical Assumption Test

The classical analysis of the hypotheses in this study uses the multicollinearity test, which means that it occurs when more independent variables of the regression model are correlated. This test can be said to have no multicollinearity if the tolerance is greater than 0.10 or if the VIF is less than 10 (Hair et al., 1998; Jung and Wang, 2006).

Based on Table 4, the results of the VIF show that each VIF value < 10 with the value of the Self-Expressive variable (X1) on the Brand Loyalty variable (Y) is 1.399, the value of the Self-Expressive variable (X1) on the Brand Love (Z) variable is 1.000, and the value of the Brand Love variable (Z) on the Brand Loyalty variable (Y) is 1.399. This shows that the regression model in this study is free from multicollinearity or it could be said non-multicollinearity.

Structural Model

Structural models contain of the amount of statistical methods for estimating a complex of causal relations, definite according to the theoretical type, involving a more potentially complicated approach, each concept is measured by the observable indicators (Bollen 1989; Kaplan 2000; Vinzi et al., 2010).

Goodness of Fit Test

The goodness of fit test is generated based on theoretical assumptions in the SEM that determine whether the model wants to be tested (Kula, 2011). This study uses R squared

Table 1. Mean Values.

	Mean	Median	Observed min	Observed max	Standard deviation
BL1	3.400	3.000	1.000	5.000	0.829
BL2	3.347	3.000	1.000	5.000	0.849
BL3	3.253	3.000	1.000	5.000	0.826
BL4	3.341	3.000	1.000	5.000	0.820
BL5	3.376	3.000	1.000	5.000	0.833
BL6	3.400	3.000	1.000	5.000	0.785
BL7	3.353	3.000	1.000	5.000	0.877
BL8	2.847	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.018
BLY1	2.394	2.000	1.000	5.000	1.059
BLY2	2.653	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.042
BLY3	2.600	3.000	1.000	5.000	0.979
SE1	3.382	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.035
SE2	3.212	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.069
SE3	2.976	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.178
SE4	2.982	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.176
SE5	2.965	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.137
SE6	2.959	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.185
SE7	3.206	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.062
SE8	3.294	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.033

Source: Primary Processed Data, 2022

Table 2. Multicollinearity analysis results.

	Brand Love	Brand Loyalty
Brand Love		1.399
Self-Expressive	1.000	1.399

Source: Primary Processed Data, 2022

and Q squared to evaluate the goodness of fit of the structural model. An R-squared is said to be a strong category if the value of 0.75, the R-squared value of 0.50 is an average category, and the R-squared value of 0.25 is a weak category (Hair et al., 2011; Henseler, 2018). The chi-square value is a traditional measure to estimate the general fit of the model amid the sample and the fit covariance matrix (Hu and Bentler, 1999; Hooper et al., 2008). The q-squared analysis is used to analyse whether a variable is related or not. If the Q-squared value > 0 shows that the model has a predictive fit (Chin, 1998) (Table 3).

Table 3. R-Square analysis results.

<i>Variables</i>	<i>R-square</i>
Brand Love	0.285
Brand Loyalty	0.332

Source: Primary Processed Data, 2022

R-Square Analysis

Based on Table 5, means that the self-expressive brands (X1) have an effect on the brand loyalty variable (Y) of 28.5% or 0.285 has a strong value. Meanwhile, the self-expressive brand variable (X2) together affects the brand love variable (Z) by 33.2% or 0.332 has a strong value.

Q-Square Analysis

Based on the data which presented in Table 6, the endogenously value Q square is 0.110. Looking at this value, one can conclude that this study has good observational value because the value of Q square is $0.110 > 0$.

Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis testing is typically performed by using samples, once the daily contingency tables are diminished to daily threat assessments for hypothesis testing, the data are in a suitable form for using ordinary hypothesis testing such as the paired t-test (Hamill, 1999). This study was carried out by analysing direct and indirect effects using bootstrap analysis.

Direct Effect

(Ravand & Baghaei, 2016) define direct effects as effects that are not mediated by other variables in the model. In determining the significant value, it can be found in the p-value. The p-value of self-expressive brands on brand loyalty is 0.360, a p-value $0.360 > 0.05$ is considered not significant and the decision is rejected H1. The results show that self-expressive brands did not have a significant effect on brand loyalty. This illustrates that the higher level of self-expressive on the H&M brand does not affect brand loyalty to consumers, it should use brand love as a mediator. The self-expression of brand love is 0.000 and the p-value is < 0.000 . At 0.05, called significant positive, the decision is accepted in H2. Based on the results of statistical tests, self-expressive brands are known to have a significant positive effect on brand love. This illustrates that a higher

Table 4. Q-Square analysis result.

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Q² predict</i>
Brand Love	0.289
Brand Loyalty	0.110

Source: Primary Processed Data, 2022

level of self-expressive brands would encourage an increase in brand love in the heart of consumers.

The results of this hypothesis follow the findings of a study (Vania et al., 2020) that self-expressive brands have positive implications for brand love. The results with a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$ are said to be significantly positive. The decision is that H3 is accepted. Based on the results of statistical tests, brand love is known to have a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty. This shows that if consumers like the product, they will stay loyal to the brand. The results of this hypothesis are consistent with research findings (Anggoro et al., 2019) that brand love has a substantial impact on brand loyalty.

Indirect Effect

The specific indirect effect was examined as a mediation variable. The way that mediation analysis is conducted is that there is no mediation effect if the direct path is significant and the indirect path is not significant, full mediation will occur if the direct path is not significant and the indirect path is significant, and partial mediation if the direct path is significant and the indirect path is significant (Baron and Kenny 1986).

Brand Love mediated Self-Expressive on Brand Loyalty, the T statistics value is $5.627 > 1.96$ with a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$ which has a full mediation effect. Because in the direct effect in which the result of Self-Expressive on Brand Loyalty is not significant, and in the specific indirect effect Brand Love mediated Self-Expressive on Brand Loyalty is significant, so H4 accepted and the result is Brand Love fully mediated Self-Expressive on Brand Loyalty. Previous research (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006) found that brand love as the most significant mediator of self-expressive brands. It is known that brand love fully mediates self-expressive brands on brand loyalty based on the findings of statistical tests. This study is an extension of earlier research (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006) which states that brand love would mediate self-expressive brands.

Future Research

Future research can examine whether the scope of marketing (advertising, e-Wom, celebrity Instagram) affects customer loyalty, and it is hoped that further research can increase the sample which could be more representative of the population.

It is hoped that additional research will help develop new indicators for the variables of brand love, brand loyalty, and self-expressive brand because there are still a lot of indicators that need to be taken into account when formulating these variables.

This study found that the H&M brand has not been able to make consumers only buy H&M products. We suggest that further research is to examine whether luxury brands such as (Gucci, Dior, CHANEL, and Yves Saint Laurent) are able to make consumers loyal. Further research is also expected to use Turkey and Indonesia as research locations.

Table 5. Indirect effect hypotheses result.

Variables	T-statistics	P-values	Explanation
Self-Expressive Brands -> Brand Love -> Brand Loyalty	5.627	0.000	Supported

Source: Primary Processed Data, 2022

7 Conclusions

According to the outcomes of the aforementioned analysis, this study's findings include: Brand love is significantly influenced by self-expressive brands. Brand loyalty is significantly impacted by brand love. Brand love is a full mediation on brand loyalty. Self-expression, however, has no significant effect on support for a particular brand (brand loyalty). The findings show that the brand love indicator (an awesome brand, a brand that makes the heart happy, a brand that is a passion, a brand that makes someone bond, and a brand that gives pure pleasure) can aid brand love in boosting brand loyalty behavior in Indonesians and Taiwanese consumers. Brand love has a full mediation in a direct relationship to self-expressive on brand loyalty. Brand love makes people who buy a product based on their inner and outer self-interested loyal to the brand. The success factors of brand love are when consumers feel bonded and emotionally connected to a brand.

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