

The Mediating Role of Psychological Reactions in the Influence of Brand Experience on Brand Loyalty

Muhammad Rizki Zaldi ¹, Agus David Ramdansyah ², Yanto Azie Setya ³

¹⁻³Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, Indonesia
email: 5551210162@untirta.ac.id¹, agus.david@untirta.ac.id², yantoaziesetya@untirta.ac.id³

ABSTRAK

Studi ini mengkaji peran mediasi kepercayaan merek dan cinta merek dalam hubungan antara pengalaman merek dengan loyalitas merek pada pengguna marketplace Tokopedia Generasi Y dan Z di Indonesia. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner daring dari 200 responden yang dipilih secara purposive. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) dengan perangkat lunak SmartPLS 4. Hasil studi menunjukkan bahwa pengalaman merek tidak berpengaruh terhadap loyalitas merek. Namun, pengalaman merek berpengaruh positif signifikan terhadap kepercayaan merek dan cinta merek. Kepercayaan merek berpengaruh positif signifikan terhadap cinta merek dan loyalitas merek. Cinta merek juga berpengaruh positif signifikan terhadap loyalitas merek. Selanjutnya, kepercayaan merek dan cinta merek berperan sebagai mediator dalam hubungan antara pengalaman merek dan loyalitas merek, baik secara tunggal maupun simultan. Temuan ini menunjukkan faktor-faktor penting yang dapat meningkatkan loyalitas merek guna mencapai keunggulan kompetitif dan merumuskan strategi pemasaran yang efektif.

Kata kunci: Pengalaman Merek, Kepercayaan Merek, Cinta Merek, Loyalitas Merek

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the mediating roles of brand trust and brand love in the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty among Generation Y and Z users of the Tokopedia marketplace in Indonesia. Data were collected through an online questionnaire from 200 purposively selected respondents. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4 software. The findings reveal that brand experience does not have a direct effect on brand loyalty. However, brand experience has a significant positive effect on both brand trust and brand love. Brand trust significantly and positively influences both brand love and brand loyalty. Brand love also has a significant positive effect on brand loyalty. Furthermore, both brand trust and brand love serve as mediators in the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty, both independently and simultaneously. These findings highlight key factors that can enhance brand loyalty to achieve competitive advantage and support the formulation of effective marketing strategies.

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

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's increasingly competitive business landscape, establishing and maintaining strong consumer-brand relationships has become a key determinant of long-term business success. Customer loyalty is widely recognized as a critical driver of business performance, contributing to reduced marketing costs, enhanced competitive advantage, increased market share, stronger word-of-mouth promotion, and greater opportunities for sustainable growth (Na et al., 2023). To cultivate such loyalty, businesses must strategically develop fundamental brand attributes such as brand experience, brand trust, and brand love. These constructs have gained prominence in recent marketing literature, reflecting a shift in consumer expectations. Modern

consumers are no longer solely focused on the functional benefits of products or services; instead, they seek personal, emotional, and meaningful connections with the brands they support (Maduretno & Junaedi, 2022). Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of these psychological and experiential aspects of a brand and how they influence consumer behavior is essential for designing effective, consumer-focused brand strategies that build lasting loyalty.

In Indonesia, the e-commerce industry, particularly in the marketplace segment, has experienced significant growth accompanied by intense competition among various platforms such as Tokopedia, Shopee, Bukalapak, Lazada, and Blibli. Within this competitive landscape, Tokopedia's performance in the Top Brand Index has shown fluctuations from 2020 to 2024, with an overall downward trend. According to the Top Brand Index data, which is based on three main indicators, namely top of mind awareness, last usage, and future usage intention, Tokopedia recorded a score of 15.8 percent in 2020, which increased to 16.7 percent in 2021. However, this was followed by a gradual decline, with scores dropping to 14.9 percent in 2022, 11.3 percent in 2023, and 10.4 percent in 2024. This decline reflects a decreasing level of consumer preference and loyalty toward Tokopedia as the preferred platform for online shopping.

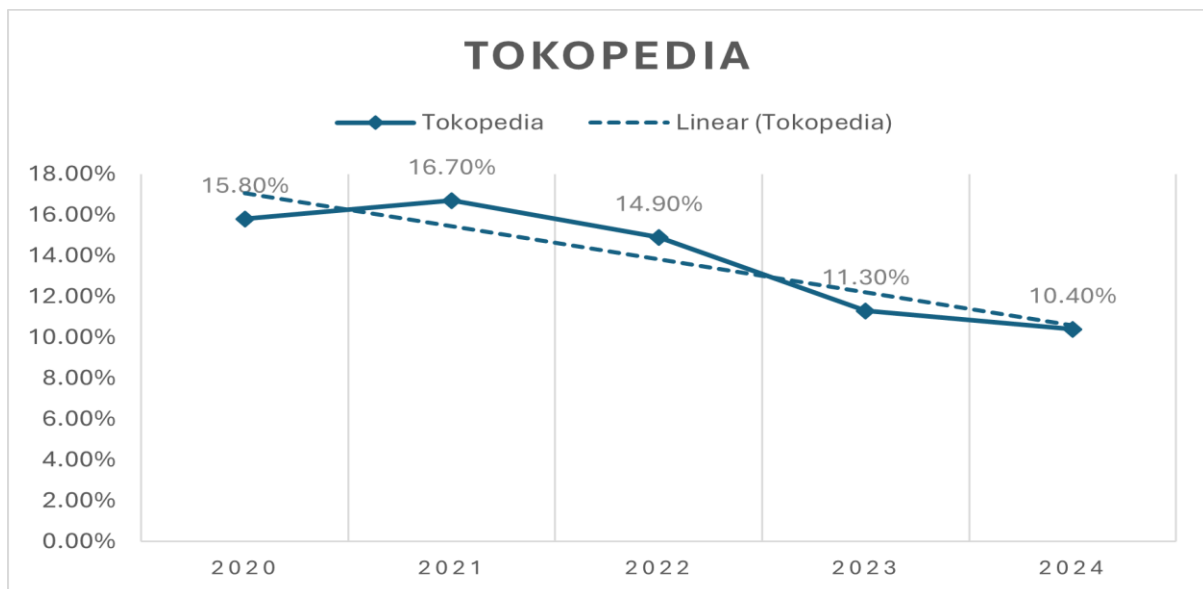


Figure 1. Top Brand Index Tokopedia 2020-2024

Based on this issue, the researcher is interested in further examining Tokopedia as one of the leading marketplaces in Indonesia, particularly in the context of brand loyalty in online shopping. This study highlights the importance of brand experience as a key factor in building and maintaining consumer loyalty. As consumer expectations continue to evolve, unique and memorable brand experiences have become increasingly important in marketing literature (Na *et al.*, 2023). Today's consumers no longer prioritize functional benefits alone; instead, they place considerable importance on the quality and emotional resonance of the brand experience (Maduretno & Junaedi, 2022).

In the context of online shopping, creating a positive brand experience is critically important. A pleasant and engaging experience not only enhances customer satisfaction but also encourages repeat usage and motivates consumers to recommend the brand to others. Several studies have shown that brand experience has a significant influence on brand loyalty (Nilowardono, 2022; Visza Adha & Utami, 2021; Wijardi et al., 2022). However, findings from other studies suggest that in certain contexts, such as the fashion industry (Mahardika & Setyawan, 2024; Sujana et al., 2023) and the sports industry (Chung & Peachey, 2021), brand experience does not always exert a direct influence on brand loyalty. These inconsistencies highlight a gap in the existing body of research.

The inconsistencies found in prior research emphasize the need for a more in-depth examination of the mechanisms that connect brand experience to brand loyalty. Recent studies propose that psychological constructs may act as mediating variables within this relationship. Among the most frequently explored constructs in marketing literature are brand trust and brand love (Maduretno & Junaedi, 2022; Na et al., 2023). These two constructs are essential in establishing the psychological connection between consumers and brands, shaped by two core dimensions: a rational dimension, represented by consumers' trust in the brand, and an emotional dimension, reflected in their affection or love for the brand.

Understanding the mediating roles of brand trust and brand love is therefore essential to provide a more comprehensive explanation of how brand experience affects brand loyalty, particularly in the online shopping environment. The central questions of this study are whether brand experience influences brand loyalty, brand trust, and brand love, and whether brand trust influences brand love and subsequently brand loyalty. Furthermore, the study aims to explore whether brand trust and brand love serve as mediating variables, both independently and jointly, in the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty.

2. LITERATUR REVIEW

2.1 The Brand Resonance Model

The brand resonance model serves as a foundational framework for the development of the proposed research model (Keller, 2016). According to the brand resonance pyramid, achieving brand resonance involves progressing through four hierarchical stages of brand development. At the base lies brand salience, which in this study is represented by brand experience, aiming to ensure that consumers can easily recognize and recall the brand. Building on this foundation, a psychological connection between consumers and the brand is developed through two distinct pathways: a rational path, represented by brand trust, and an emotional path, represented by brand love. The rational path encompasses elements such as brand performance, which addresses the fulfillment of functional needs, and brand judgments, referring to consumers'

personal evaluations of the brand. In contrast, the emotional path involves brand imagery and brand feelings, which reflect consumers' psychological responses and social identity needs. At the apex of the pyramid, these consumer responses culminate in brand resonance, characterized by active brand loyalty that encompasses both attitudinal and behavioral dimensions.

2.2 Brand Experience

Brakus *et al.* (2009) define brand experience as a consumer's internal and subjective response that encompasses sensory, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions, elicited by brand-related stimuli such as design, identity, packaging, communication, and the overall brand environment. In the digital context, Morgan-Thomas & Veloutsou (2013) conceptualize online brand experience as the subjective reaction consumers have when engaging with a brand through digital platforms. Similarly, Khan & Fatma (2017) describe it as a holistic response to various brand-related stimuli encountered via websites. Accordingly, brand experience spans both physical and digital domains, each playing a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions, emotional connections, and behavioral responses toward a brand.

Based on previous literature, brand experience has been shown to influence several key outcomes in consumer-brand relationships, such as brand loyalty, brand trust, and brand love. A unique and pleasant experience can encourage consumers to make repeat visits and foster long-term brand loyalty (Visza Adha & Utami, 2021; Wijardi *et al.*, 2022). In addition, consumers past experiences with a brand are a key factor in building trust. When a brand is consistently able to meet consumer expectations, trust is likely to be established (Khan *et al.*, 2020; Khan & Fatma, 2017). Furthermore, positive emotional interactions through brand experience can lead to a strong affective bond and generate brand love, where consumers feel emotionally attached, affectively satisfied, and demonstrate high levels of loyalty (Santos & Schlesinger, 2021). Based on this reasoning, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: BE has a significant positive effect on BL

H2: BE has a significant positive effect on BT

H3: BE has a significant positive effect on BLV

2.3 Brand Trust

Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001) define brand trust as the consumer's belief in a brand's reliability, safety, and honesty, highlighting that trust is not an automatic response but the outcome of deliberate and rational evaluation by consumers. Similarly, Suryani & Rosalina (2019) describe brand trust as a sense of security and confidence that arises when consumers perceive the brand as dependable and committed to fulfilling their needs and well-being. In line with this perspective, Zhang *et al.* (2020) define brand trust as consumers' awareness of a brand's integrity and benevolence.

Based on previous literature, brand trust has been proven to play a crucial role in shaping emotional connections and behavioral loyalty toward a brand. When consumers trust a brand, they are more likely to develop a deeper emotional bond, known as brand love (Zhang et al., 2020). Trust reduces uncertainty in the purchasing process and strengthens the emotional closeness between consumers and the brand (Na et al., 2023). Furthermore, consumers who trust a brand tend to feel more secure and confident in making purchases, leading them to remain loyal and engage in repeat purchases over time (Firdausiah et al., 2024; Larasari et al., 2023). In the online context, trust has also been shown to reduce perceived risk and enhance transactional comfort, ultimately fostering brand loyalty (Khan et al., 2020). Based on this reasoning, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4: BT has a significant positive effect on BLV

H5: BT has a significant positive effect on BL

2.4 Brand Love

Carroll & Ahuvia (2006) emphasize that brand love not only entails emotional bonding but also includes elements such as a sense of comfort, deep emotional resonance, alignment with personal values, a strong desire for interaction, and sustained commitment to brand usage. Similarly, Batra et al. (2012) emphasize that brand love not only entails emotional bonding but also includes elements such as a sense of comfort, deep emotional resonance, alignment with personal values, a strong desire for interaction, and sustained commitment to brand usage. Similarly, Putra et al. (2023) explain that brand love reflects a highly profound emotional relationship between consumers and a brand, developed through personal experiences, perceived meaning, and strong emotional relevance.

This attachment motivates consumers to maintain their relationship with the brand, even in the presence of cheaper or more accessible alternatives offered by competitors (Santos & Schlesinger, 2021). This attachment motivates consumers to maintain their relationship with the brand, even in the presence of cheaper or more accessible alternatives offered by competitors (Firdausiah et al., 2024; Sohaib et al., 2023). In such situations, brand love serves as a driving force for consumer loyalty in two forms: attitudinal loyalty, which reflects emotional commitment, strong preference, and a tendency to recommend the brand to others, and behavioral loyalty, which is manifested in tangible actions such as repeated purchase or consistent usage (Na et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2020). Based on this reasoning, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H6: BLV has a significant positive effect on BL

2.5 Brand Loyalty

Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001) define brand loyalty as a deeply held commitment to repurchase a preferred product or service consistently in the future, despite situational influences and marketing efforts that may potentially lead to switching behavior. Most recent empirical studies suggest that brand loyalty should be understood through two main dimensions: attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty. Attitudinal loyalty refers to the emotional commitment or preference that consumers hold toward a particular brand. In contrast, behavioral loyalty refers to the actual actions taken by consumers to support the brand, such as repeated purchases or continued usage of the product (Zhang et al., 2020; Na et al., 2023; Zha et al., 2024).

Based on previous literature, brand experience serves as the starting point for the formation of brand loyalty. A positive brand experience shapes consumers' perceptions, emotions, and values toward a brand, which become the foundation of a long-term relationship between the consumer and the brand (Na et al., 2023). Brand trust reflects consumers' cognitive belief in the brand's reliability and integrity. When consumers consistently have positive experiences with a brand, they tend to develop trust that the brand will continue to meet their expectations in the future (Maduretno & Junaedi, 2022). This trust reinforces loyalty, as consumers become reluctant to switch to other brands perceived as less reliable (Firdausiah et al., 2024). On the other hand, brand love represents a deep emotional attachment to a brand. Consumers who have enjoyable and meaningful experiences with a brand are more likely to form strong affective bonds (Santos & Schlesinger, 2021). Brand love motivates consumers to maintain their relationship with the brand both emotionally and behaviorally, even when faced with flaws or shortcomings from the brand (Kohli et al., 2021). To date, existing research has generally examined the mediating roles of brand trust and brand love separately in the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. However, there is a lack of studies that explicitly test both variables as simultaneous mediators within a single integrative model. Therefore, this study assumes that brand trust and brand love can operate concurrently in mediating the effect of brand experience on brand loyalty. This assumption is grounded in the dual-process approach within the brand resonance model, where brand trust represents the rational path and brand love represents the emotional path toward consumer loyalty (Maduretno & Junaedi, 2022; Na et al., 2023). Based on the above explanation, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H7: BT mediates the relationship between BE and BL.

H8: BLV mediates the relationship between BE and BL.

H9: BT and BLV simultaneously mediate the relationship between BE and BL.

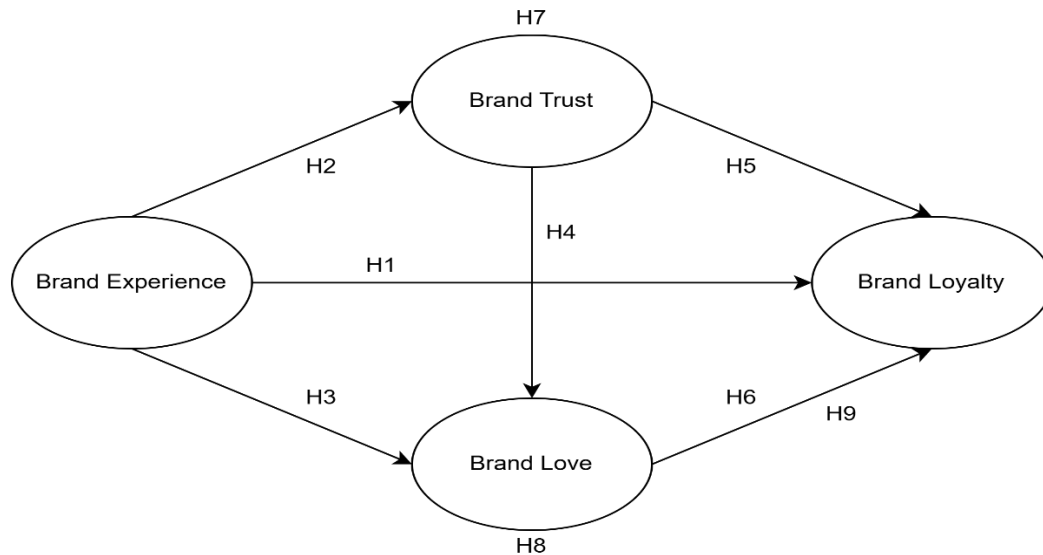


Figure 2. Conceptual framework

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data collection and Sample

This study was conducted in Indonesia and involved respondents aged between 13 and 44 years, encompassing members of both Generation Z and Generation Y. The selection of this age group was based on a survey conducted by Populix (2020), which indicated that individuals aged 18–21 (Generation Z) and 22–28 (Generation Y) were the most active marketplace users in Indonesia, with online shopping intensities of 35% and 33%, respectively. Therefore, Generations Z and Y were chosen as the target population, as they are considered to significantly contribute to the growth of marketplace platform usage in the country.

A purposive sampling method was employed in this study, which is a type of non-probability sampling where sample units are selected based on specific criteria and the researcher's judgment. The primary inclusion criterion required that respondents had used Tokopedia as their online shopping platform for a minimum of one year (Khan et al., 2020), to ensure adequate experience and interaction with the platform. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via a Google Forms link. In addition, respondents who had completed the survey were encouraged to share the link within their personal networks using a snowball sampling approach, in order to expand the respondent pool.

The sample size was determined using the Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) approach, which recommends a sample size of 5 to 10 times the number of parameters estimated in the model (Hair et al., 2017). With a total of 20 parameters, 200 respondents were included in the study. A total of 200 valid responses were successfully collected. The demographic profile of the respondents showed that the majority were female (77%) and aged between 18 and 30 years, with an even distribution between Generation Z (18–24 years) and Generation Y (25–30 years). Most respondents resided on Java Island (78%) and identified as students (47%) (see Table 1).

Table 1. The overview of respondent profiles

Demographics	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	45	22.5
	Female	155	77.5
Age (Years)	18–24 (Gen Z)	100	50
	25–30 (Gen Y)	100	50
Domicile	Java Island	157	78.5
	Sumatra Island	22	11
	Sulawesi Island	11	5.5
	Kalimantan Island	9	4.5
	Bangka Belitung Island	1	0.5
Occupation	Student	94	47
	Civil servant	16	8
	Private employee	59	29.5
	Freelancer	10	5
	Entrepreneurship	21	10.5

3.2 Measurement

All items were adopted from previously validated questionnaires to measure the research constructs. Brand experience was measured using 4 items from Brakus et al. (2009). Brand trust was measured using 5 items from Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001) and Zhang et al. (2020). Brand love was measured using 5 items from Carroll & Ahuvia (2006), and brand loyalty was measured using 6 items from Zhang et al. (2020) and Na et al. (2023). In the survey, all questions used a ten-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 10 (“strongly agree”).

3.3 Data Analysis

The proposed research framework was analyzed using the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method to evaluate the measurement model to assess construct validity and reliability, as well as the structural model to test the hypothesized causal relationships among the constructs using SmartPLS 4 software (Hair et al., 2019).

4. RESULT

4.1 Measurement Model

Measurement model evaluation was conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the constructs. Convergent validity was evaluated through the loading factor values, which were expected to be equal to or greater than 0.708. In addition, the average variance extracted (AVE) should be at least 0.50, indicating that the construct explains more than 50 percent of the variance in its indicators. Discriminant validity was assessed by comparing the factor loading of each indicator, which should be ≥ 0.708 and higher than its cross-loadings with other constructs (Hair et al., 2017). Furthermore, construct reliability was measured using composite reliability and cronbach’s alpha, both of which should range between 0.70 and 0.95 (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 2. Result of the measurement model

Construct	Item	FL	AVE	CR	CA
Brand Experience	BE1	0.829	0.651	0.885	0.826
	BE2	0.816			
	BE3	0.783			
	BE4	0.813			
Brand Trust	BT1	0.830	0.682	0.915	0.883
	BT2	0.825			
	BT3	0.844			
	BT4	0.812			
	BT5	0.819			
Brand Love	BLV1	0.862	0.678	0.903	0.866
	BLV2	0.758			
	BLV3	0.796			
	BLV4	0.815			
	BLV5	0.800			
Construct	Item	FL	AVE	CR	CA
Brand Loyalty	BL1	0.840	0.657	0.927	0.907
	BL2	0.843			
	BL3	0.799			
	BL4	0.796			
	BL5	0.868			
	BL6	0.793			

Note: FL = factor loading, AVE=average variance extracted, CA = cronbach alpha, CR = composite reliability

Table 3. Cross loadings of constructs

Item	BE	BT	BLV	BL
BE1	0.829	0.664	0.649	0.541
BE2	0.816	0.676	0.662	0.556
BE3	0.783	0.668	0.630	0.578
BE4	0.813	0.692	0.619	0.538
BT1	0.682	0.830	0.681	0.615
BT2	0.718	0.825	0.706	0.609
BT3	0.682	0.844	0.673	0.630
BT4	0.654	0.812	0.629	0.562
BT5	0.701	0.819	0.710	0.645
BLV1	0.656	0.681	0.862	0.683
BLV2	0.519	0.558	0.758	0.600
BLV3	0.699	0.727	0.796	0.608
BLV4	0.724	0.733	0.815	0.615
BLV5	0.576	0.615	0.800	0.761
BL1	0.512	0.588	0.670	0.840
BL2	0.567	0.618	0.623	0.843
BL3	0.480	0.489	0.585	0.799
BL4	0.624	0.646	0.704	0.796
BL5	0.500	0.578	0.678	0.868
BL6	0.664	0.715	0.724	0.793

Note: BE = brand experience, BT = brand trust, BLV = brand love, BL = brand loyalty

Based on the analysis results (see Table 2), all constructs demonstrated strong convergent validity, as evidenced by factor loadings ≥ 0.708 and AVE values ≥ 0.50 . Furthermore, both CR and CA values for each construct fell within the recommended range of 0.70 to 0.95, indicating a high level of internal consistency and reliability. In terms of discriminant validity (see Table 3), the cross-loading analysis confirmed that each indicator loaded highest on its associated construct compared to others, supporting the distinctiveness of each construct. Therefore, the measurement model satisfies the criteria for convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability, making it appropriate for subsequent structural model evaluation.

4.2 Structural Model

After evaluating the measurement model, the next step is to assess the goodness of fit of the structural model. The structural model evaluation aims to examine the model's adequacy and its predictive ability for the endogenous variables. In this study, the evaluation refers to the R-square (R^2) and the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) values.

Table 4. Coefficient determination and standardized root mean square residual

Construct	R-square	SRMR
Brand Trust	0.694	0.069
Brand Love	0.715	
Brand Loyalty	0.675	

Based on the analysis results (see Table 4), the R^2 values obtained were 0.694 for brand trust, 0.715 for brand love, and 0.675 for brand loyalty. According to the classification by Hair et al. (2019), an R^2 value of 0.75 is considered substantial, 0.50 moderate, and 0.25 weak. Therefore, the endogenous variables in this study exhibit a moderate to approaching substantial level of explanatory power. This indicates that the exogenous constructs in the model explain a significant proportion of the variance in the respective endogenous constructs. Moreover, the SRMR value was 0.069, which falls below the recommended threshold of 0.08 (Henseler et al., 2016), indicating an acceptable model fit. Taken together, these results suggest that the structural model possesses strong predictive capability and an adequate level of goodness of fit, thereby supporting the model's validity in assessing the hypothesized relationships among the constructs.

Before conducting hypothesis testing on the structural model, an evaluation of potential multicollinearity among the exogenous constructs was performed using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) analysis. Following the guidelines of Hair et al. (2019), VIF values less than or equal to 5 indicate the absence of serious multicollinearity issues. The analysis revealed that all exogenous constructs had VIF values ranging from 1.000 to 4.299. These results confirm that no multicollinearity is present within the model, thereby supporting the stability and reliability of the structural parameter estimates (see Table 5).

Table 5. Results of direct effects

Path	Variance Inflation factor	Path coefficient	95% bootstrap bias-corrected confidence interval	P values	Effect size (F ²)
BE → BL	3.661	0.002	[-0.184;0.181]	0.981	0.000
BE → BT	1.000	0.833	[0.771;0.883]	0.000	2.263
BE → BLV	3.263	0.337	[0.163;0.498]	0.000	0.122
BT → BLV	3.263	0.544	[0.395;0.703]	0.000	0.318
BT → BL	4.299	0.227	[0.009;0.407]	0.022	0.037
BLV → BL	3.504	0.623	[0.435;0.832]	0.000	0.341

Note: BE = brand experience, BT = brand trust, BLV = brand love, BL = brand loyalty

Hypothesis testing in this study was conducted using the bootstrapping method to obtain p-values and determine the 95% bias-corrected and accelerated (BCa) confidence intervals. A path coefficient was deemed statistically significant if the confidence interval did not include zero and the p-value was less than 0.05. Beyond statistical significance, the magnitude of the path coefficients was evaluated to assess the strength of the relationships among constructs. The standardized path coefficients range from -1 (perfect negative relationship) to +1 (perfect positive relationship), with a value of 0 indicating no relationship (Hair et al., 2019). Additionally, to assess the practical relevance of the predictor constructs' contributions to the dependent construct, effect size (f^2) analysis was performed. According to Hair et al. (2019), an f^2 value of 0.02 represents a small effect, 0.15 a medium effect, 0.35 a large effect, and values below 0.02 are considered negligible.

The path analysis results (see Table 5) show that BE has no significant effect on BL (H1), with $\beta = 0.002$, $p = 0.981$, and $f^2 = 0.000$ (no effect). BE has a significant positive effect on BT (H2), with $\beta = 0.833$, $p = 0.000$, and $f^2 = 2.263$ (large). BE also has a significant positive effect on BLV (H3), with $\beta = 0.337$, $p = 0.000$, and $f^2 = 0.122$ (small). Furthermore, BT has a significant positive effect on BLV (H4), with $\beta = 0.544$, $p = 0.000$, and $f^2 = 0.318$ (large). BT also has a significant positive effect on BL (H5), with $\beta = 0.227$, $p = 0.022$, and $f^2 = 0.037$ (small). Finally, BLV has a significant positive effect on BL (H6), with $\beta = 0.623$, $p = 0.000$, and $f^2 = 0.341$ (large). Therefore, hypotheses H2 through H6 are supported as they show statistically significant effects at the 5% level, while H1 is not supported and is rejected in this study.

Table 6. Results of specific indirect effects

Path	Path coefficient	95% bootstrap bias-corrected confidence interval	P values	Effect Size Mediation (v)
BE → BT → BL	0.189	[0.007;0.336]	0.021	0.035
BE → BLV → BL	0.210	[0.094;0.354]	0.002	0.044
BE → BT → BLV → BL	0.282	[0.176;0.431]	0.000	0.079

Note: BE = brand experience, BT = brand trust, BLV = brand love, BL = brand loyalty

To assess the magnitude of the mediation effect, the *upsilon* (υ) metric was used. This metric reflects the strength of the mediation contribution in the relationship between exogenous and endogenous constructs. The υ value is calculated using the formula $a^2 \times b^2$, where a is the path coefficient from the exogenous construct to the mediator, and b is the path coefficient from the mediator to the endogenous construct (Lachowicz *et al.*, 2018). Interpretation of the υ values follows the guidelines by Ogbeibu *et al.* (2021), where a value of 0.01 indicates a small mediation effect, 0.075 indicates a medium mediation effect, and 0.175 indicates a large mediation effect. In addition, to determine the type of mediation effect, this study adopted the characterization proposed by (Hair *et al.*, 2021).

The mediation path analysis results (see Table 6) show that BT significantly mediates the relationship between BE and BL (H7), with $\beta = 0.189$, $p = 0.021$, and $\upsilon = 0.035$ (calculated from $0.833^2 \times 0.227^2$), indicating a small effect. BLV also significantly mediates the relationship between BE and BL (H8), with $\beta = 0.210$, $p = 0.002$, and $\upsilon = 0.044$ (calculated from $0.337^2 \times 0.623^2$), also indicating a small effect. Finally, BT and BLV serve as simultaneous mediators in the relationship between BE and BL (H9), with $\beta = 0.282$, $p = 0.000$, and $\upsilon = 0.079$ (calculated from $0.833^2 \times 0.544^2 \times 0.623^2$), indicating a medium mediation effect. All three mediation effects are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) and categorized as full mediation, considering that the direct relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty was previously found to be insignificant. Therefore, hypotheses H7 to H9 are empirically supported.

5. DISCUSSION

This study investigates the effect of brand experience on brand loyalty among Tokopedia users from Generations Y and Z in Indonesia, focusing on the mediating roles of brand trust and brand love. The findings reveal that brand experience does not directly influence brand loyalty (H1), indicating that positive interactions with a brand alone are insufficient to generate full loyalty. This aligns with the perspective that brand loyalty is the result of a more complex psychological process, in which both rational and emotional dimensions must first be formed (Maduretno & Junaedi, 2022; Na *et al.*, 2023). In other words, consumers do not automatically become loyal merely due to positive brand experiences.

On the other hand, the results show that brand experience significantly influences brand trust (H2) and brand love (H3). These findings confirm that consistent and enjoyable brand experiences can strengthen consumers' confidence in the integrity and reliability of the brand, while also fostering the development of strong emotional bonds (Maduretno & Junaedi, 2022; Na *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, brand trust is also found to significantly affect brand love (H4), supporting previous literature which posits that trust is a foundational element in building emotional attachment to a brand (Na *et al.*, 2023; Zhang *et al.*, 2020). Both brand trust (H5) and

brand love (H6) are shown to significantly influence brand loyalty. This suggests that consumer loyalty is not solely dependent on functional or utilitarian aspects, but also on perceptions of brand reliability and emotional connection. In this context, brand trust serves as a rational element that reinforces confidence in the brand's quality and consistency, whereas brand love functions as an affective driver that encourages deep emotional attachment (Maduretno & Junaedi, 2022; Na et al., 2023).

Another key finding of this study is the empirical support for all three mediation hypotheses. Brand trust acts as a single mediator in the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty (H7), reinforcing the view that trust is a fundamental factor in shaping loyalty through a rational evaluative process. Brand love also acts as a single mediator (H8), indicating that emotional responses to the brand can also explain how brand experience leads to loyalty, showing even slightly stronger effects than brand trust in this study (Maduretno & Junaedi, 2022; Na et al., 2023). Furthermore, the sequential (dual) mediation, in which brand experience influences trust, which in turn fosters love, and ultimately leads to brand loyalty (H9), is also supported by the data. This dual mediation reflects a more comprehensive psychological process, consumers first develop trust, then emotional attachment, and finally become loyal. These findings affirm that brand experience influences brand loyalty indirectly through both rational (brand trust) and emotional (brand love) pathways (Maduretno & Junaedi, 2022; Na et al., 2023).

6. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of brand experience on brand loyalty among Tokopedia users from Generations Y and Z in Indonesia, focusing particularly on the mediating roles of brand trust and brand love. The findings revealed that brand experience does not directly influence brand loyalty, suggesting that positive interactions with a brand alone are not sufficient to foster sustained consumer loyalty. However, brand experience was found to significantly affect both brand trust and brand love. In turn, both brand trust and brand love were shown to have significant effects on brand loyalty. Moreover, the study confirmed that brand trust mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty, while brand love also functions as an independent mediator. A sequential double mediation was also identified, wherein brand experience leads to brand trust, which then fosters brand love and ultimately drives loyalty. These results emphasize the importance of developing both rational (trust-based) and emotional (love-based) connections with consumers. The findings also underscore that loyalty is not a direct outcome of good experiences but a result of psychological processes involving belief and emotional attachment. Overall, this study enhances our understanding of how brand relationships are formed in the digital marketplace and offers valuable insights for brands aiming to build long-term loyalty in the competitive marketplace environment.

7. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study emphasize that a positive brand experience is not sufficient on its own to establish strong consumer loyalty. Although users may initially be drawn to a brand due to a pleasant or efficient experience, such interactions alone do not guarantee lasting commitment, particularly in the context of highly competitive digital marketplace platforms. Brand loyalty only emerges when brand experience is supported by both trust and emotional attachment. Therefore, marketers should develop comprehensive brand strategies that not only enhance user experience but also deliberately foster brand trust and brand love over time.

For platforms such as Tokopedia, building brand trust starts with operational excellence. This involves ensuring secure and transparent transaction processes, providing reliable customer service, honoring guarantees and return policies, and delivering consistent service performance. Fulfilling these expectations consistently helps build a perception of dependability and integrity in the minds of consumers. In addition, proactive communication and responsiveness during service issues can further strengthen perceptions of honesty and responsibility, which are essential in establishing trust. In contrast, nurturing brand love requires addressing the emotional and psychological dimensions of consumer behavior. Unlike trust, which is grounded in rational evaluation, love for a brand arises from affective experiences that align with consumers' values, lifestyle, and identity. To foster this emotional connection, companies should invest in authentic brand storytelling, personalized experiences, support for social causes that resonate with their audience, and the creation of active brand communities. These approaches are particularly effective for Generation Y and Z, who often develop brand loyalty based on emotional relevance rather than transactional benefits alone.

Furthermore, the mediating roles of brand trust and brand love in the development of loyalty suggest that the path to consumer loyalty is a layered psychological process. This has important implications for customer relationship management. Instead of relying on short-term promotional tactics or superficial loyalty schemes, companies should implement long-term strategies that guide consumers from awareness to trust, then to emotional attachment, and finally to full loyalty. Such strategies may include integrated feedback systems, value-based loyalty programs that reward deeper engagement, and consistent brand messaging across all consumer touchpoints. In conclusion, building lasting brand loyalty in the digital marketplace requires a multidimensional approach. Every interaction with the consumer should reinforce both the credibility of the brand and its emotional appeal. By aligning rational trust-building measures with emotionally resonant branding, companies can retain existing customers and inspire them to become brand advocates. This dual strategy, rooted in experience, trust, and emotional connection serves as a foundation for cultivating strong and enduring brand loyalty.

REFERENCE

- Batra, R., Ahuvia, A., & Bagozzi, R. P. (2012). Brand Love. *Journal of Marketing*, 76, 1–16.
- Brakus, J. J., Schmitt, B. H., & Zarantonello, L. (2009). Brand Experience: What Is It? How Is It Measured? Does It Affect Loyalty? *Journal of Marketing*, 73, 52–68.
- Carroll, B. A., & Ahuvia, A. C. (2006). Some Antecedents and Outcomes of Brand Love. *Market Lett*, 17, 79–89.
- Chaudhuri, A., & Holbrook, M. B. (2001). The Chain of Effects from Brand Trust and Brand Affect to Brand Performance: The Role of Brand Loyalty. *Journal of Marketing*, 65, 81–93.
- Chung, M. R., & Peachey, J. W. (2021). The Influence of Brand Experience on Satisfaction, Uncertainty and Brand Loyalty: A Focus on The Golf Club Industry. *Sport, Business and Management: An International Journal*, 12(2), 154–170. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SBM-11-2020-0115>
- Firdausiah, R. A., Sunaryo, Sumiati, & Abidin, N. A. B. Z. (2024). Exploring Brand Loyalty: Revealing The Effect of Brand Experience Mediated By Brand Love and Trust Among Smartphone Users. *Jurnal Aplikasi Manajemen*, 22(1), 31–45.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2019). *Multivariate Data Analysis Eighth Edition*. www.cengage.com/highered
- Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2017). *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)* (2nd Edition). Sage Publications Inc.
- Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., Sarstedt, M., Danks, N. P., & Ray, S. (2021). *Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) Using R. Classroom Companion: Business*.
- Henseler, J., Hubona, G., & Ray, P. A. (2016). Using PLS path modeling in new technology research: Updated guidelines. *Industrial Management and Data Systems*, 116(1), 2–20. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IMDS-09-2015-0382>
- Keller, K. L. (2016). Reflections on customer-based brand equity: perspectives, progress, and priorities. *AMS Review*, 6(1–2). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13162-016-0078-z>
- Khan, I., & Fatma, M. (2017). Antecedents and Outcomes of Brand Experience: an Empirical Study. *Journal of Brand Management*, 24, 439–452.
- Khan, I., Hollebeek, L. D., Fatma, M., Islam, J. U., & Rahman, Z. (2020). Brand Engagement and Experience in Online Services. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 34(2), 163–175.
- Kohli, H. S., Khandai, S., Yadav, R., & Kataria, S. (2021). Brand Love and Brand Hate: Integrating Emotions into Brand-Related Experiences and Loyalty. *Journal of International Commerce, Economics and Policy*, 12(2), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1142/S1793993321500071>
- Lachowicz, M. J., Preacher, K. J., & Kelley, K. (2018). A novel measure of effect size for mediation analysis. *Psychological Methods*, 23(2), 244–261. <https://doi.org/10.1037/met0000165>
- Larasari, E., Taufik, H. E. R., & Nupus, H. (2023). Membangun Brand Loyalty Melalui Brand Trust (Studi pada Konsumen Uwais Hijab di Kota Cilegon). *Jurnal Riset Bisnis Dan Manajemen Tirtayasa (JRBMT)*, 7(2), 15–27. <https://dx.doi.org/10.48181/jrbmt.v7i2.23216>
- Maduretno, R. B. E. H. P., & Junaedi, M. F. S. (2022). Exploring the Effects of Coffee Shop Brand Experience on Loyalty: The Roles of Brand Love and Brand Trust. *Gadjah Mada International Journal of Business*, 24(3), 289–309. <http://journal.ugm.ac.id/gamaijb>

- Mahardika, M., & Setyawan, A. A. (2024). The Effect Of Brand Experience, Brand Trust On Brand Loyalty With Brand Love As An Intervening Variable (Empirical Study On Aerostreet Shoes Product). *Management Studies and Entrepreneurship Journal*, 5(2).
- Morgan-Thomas, A., & Veloutsou, C. (2013). Beyond Technology Acceptance: Brand Relationships and Online Brand Experience. *Journal of Business Research*, 66, 21–27. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.07.019>
- Na, M., Rong, L., Ali, M. H., Alam, S. S., Masukujjaman, M., & Ali, K. A. M. (2023). The Mediating Role of Brand Trust and Brand Love between Brand Experience and Loyalty: A Study on Smartphones in China. *Behavioral Sciences*, 13(6). <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs13060502>
- Nilowardonono, S. (2022). The Role of Brand Love in the Influence of Online Shopping Website Quality and Brand Experience on Costumer Loyalty. *International Journal of Social Science and Business*, 6(4), 585–593. <https://doi.org/10.23887/ijssb.v6i4.45787>
- Ogbeibu, S., Jabbour, C. J. C., Gaskin, J., Senadjki, A., & Hughes, M. (2021). Leveraging STARA competencies and green creativity to boost green organisational innovative evidence: A praxis for sustainable development. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 30(5), 2421–2440. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.2754>
- Populix. (2020). *Riset Populix: Tren Belanja Online Masyarakat Indonesia*. Populix.
- Putra, F. I. F. S., Panjaitan, R., & Fatmawati, E. R. (2023). *Strategi Membangun Loyalitas Merek: Tinjauan Komperhensif Terhadap Program Loyalitas Digital, Brand Love, dan Kemudahan Konsumen dalam Era Smartphone* (A. Masruroh, Ed.; 1st ed.). Widina Media Utama.
- Santos, M., & Schlesinger, W. (2021). When love matters. Experience and brand love as antecedents of loyalty and willingness to pay a premium price in streaming services. *Spanish Journal of Marketing - ESIC*, 25(3), 374–391. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SJME-11-2020-0201>
- Sohaib, M., Mlynarski, J., & Wu, R. (2023). Building Brand Equity: The Impact of Brand Experience, Brand Love, and Brand Engagement—A Case Study of Customers' Perception of the Apple Brand in China. *Sustainability*, 15(1), 1–19.
- Sujana, E. R., Verinita, & Sari, D. K. (2023). Pengaruh Brand Experience dan Brand Engagement terhadap Brand Loyalty dengan Brand Trust sebagai Variabel Mediasi . *Jurnal Informatika Ekonomi Bisnis*, 5(2), 554–558.
- Suryani, S., & Rosalina, S. S. (2019). Pengaruh Brand Image, Brand Trust, dan Kualitas Layanan Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Ulang Dengan Kepuasan Konsumen Sebagai Variabel Moderating (Studi Pada Startup Business Unicorn Indonesia). *Journal of Business*, 4(1), 41–53.
- Visza Adha, H., & Utami, W. (2021). The Effect of Brand Experience, Brand Personality and Brand Trust on Brand Loyalty. *Journal of Business and Management Review*, 2(12), 861–871. <https://doi.org/10.47153/jbmr212.2962021>
- Wijardi, C., Tjokrosaputro, M., Ekarista, M., & Krisnaputra, A. (2022). *The Effect of Consumer Engagement as a Mediation Variable on Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty on E-Commerce in Covid-19 Pandemic*.
- Zhang, S., Peng, M. Y. P., Peng, Y., Zhang, Y., Ren, G., & Chen, C. C. (2020). Expressive Brand Relationship, Brand Love, and Brand Loyalty for Tablet PCs: Building a Sustainable Brand. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00231>