# The Meaning of Brand Awareness, Brand Experience, and Brand Engagement in Building Consumer Loyalty

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| Article Info | Abstract |
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| | *This study aims to analyze consumer loyalty towards Kopi Tuku through three main variables, namely brand awareness, brand experience, and brand engagement. This research uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. The research subjects consist of six consumers who have consistently purchased Kopi Tuku for the past two years. Data collection techniques in this study were carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis technique used is the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of this study indicate that Kopi Tuku's brand awareness is not only formed from visual recognition such as logos or packaging but has reached the highest level, namely top of mind. Brand experience is felt through sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioral dimensions, making Kopi Tuku not only a beverage provider but also part of the consumers' routines and identities. Meanwhile, brand engagement is reflected in strong emotional involvement, repeated purchasing habits, participation in trying new products, and ownership of merchandise. This study emphasizes that consumer loyalty towards Kopi Tuku is not solely built on product quality or price but through the synergy between brand awareness, brand experience, and brand engagement, which creates a personal and emotional connection between consumers and the brand.* |

## Introduction

Coffee is one of the world's main trade commodities with a wide consumption base in various countries. Indonesia occupies the fourth largest coffee producer in the world with an annual production of 789,000, consisting of 150,000 tons of arabica and 600,000 tons of robusta. Domestically, coffee consumption has developed to become a part of the lifestyle, especially among students and urban workers. This phenomenon has triggered the growth of the coffee shop industry, including local brands such as Kopi Tuku, which must compete not only through taste but also through strong branding strategies.

Kopi Tuku, which was established in 2015, is known as a pioneer of palm sugar milk coffee with an efficient takeaway concept, the use of quality ingredients, and support for local coffee farmers. The uniqueness that has made it last for more than 10 years includes: pioneering coconut milk coffee with the authentic taste of homemade palm sugar, efficient takeaway/to-go concept, use of high-quality selected ingredients, sustainable concept through partnerships with local farmers, personal interaction on social media with the greeting "neighbor buy". This innovation encourages consumer loyalty and strengthens competitiveness, even leading Tuku to expand internationally to Amsterdam and Seoul.

In the competitive coffee industry, branding elements such as brand awareness, brand experience, and brand engagement play an important role in shaping consumer loyalty (Choi et al., 2017; Maduretno et al., 2022; Han et al., 2018). Brand awareness helps consumers

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recognize and remember brands, brand experience creates a positive experience from service to store atmosphere, while brand engagement strengthens emotional engagement and consumer interaction, including through word of mouth promotion on social media. These three variables are in line with Keller's (1993) Customer-based Brand Equity (CBBE) theory as quoted in (Bakhshizadeh & Aliasghari, 2023) which explains that the value of a brand is formed from consumer perception and response to its marketing activities. The relationship between the researcher began from the phenomenon of the rampant discussion of Kopi Tuku on social media, especially Tiktok, and the frequent mention of this brand by the surrounding environment which is the driving force for this research. Many consumers recommend products word of mouth, showing a strong emotional attachment to the brand. This study refers to the theory of brand loyalty put forward by Aaker (1991) in Bustomi et al. (2023), which states that consumer loyalty is one of the main elements of a brand's strength, and can be formed through experience, engagement, and emotional attachment with the brand. Based on this presentation, the researcher was encouraged to explore more deeply the role of brand awareness, brand engagement, and brand experience in building consumer loyalty of Kopi Tuku in Surabaya.

**Theoretical Foundation**

According to Suchrisna (2022), a brand is a name, term, symbol, design, or a combination of these elements that serves to differentiate a product or service of one entity from that of another. This distinction forms the basis for consumers to recognize, choose, and build an emotional connection with the brand.

In the context of brand awareness, when a consumer can easily recall elements that are attractive to them, this becomes a benchmark for a brand's success in terms of brand awareness. This is in line with the opinion of Singh et al. 2023 in Alfian et al. (2024), who state that brand awareness can be defined as the potential consumer's ability to remember and recognize a brand within a particular product category offered. In the same journal, Bergkvist & Taylor (2022) state that brand awareness describes the level of potential buyers' ability to recognize and recall a brand as part of a particular product category; the higher the consumer's level of brand awareness, the greater the likelihood of the brand becoming the first choice when making a purchase decision.

The theory regarding levels of brand awareness, as introduced by Aaker (1991), divides awareness into four main levels, which were later developed by Febriyantoro 2020 in Alfian et al. (2024) into the following levels: Unawareness, Brand Recognition, Brand Recall, Top-of-Mind Awareness, Brand Acceptance & Preference, and Brand Loyalty.

This research also refers to the theory of brand experience, which, according to Kristy & Sari (2021) in Kasiha et al. (2023), is the experience felt by consumers after purchasing a product or service, formed through brand identity, design, packaging, marketing communications, and the environment associated with the brand. Brand experience encompasses all consumer interactions with a brand, both directly when using the product and indirectly through communications and perceptions that are formed (Beig & Nika, 2019; Hepola et al., 2017; Rageh Ismail et al., 2011; Lee et al., 2018; Ramaseshan & Stein, 2014).

Buchory & Saladin (2018) in Kasiha et al. (2023) emphasize that brand experience has dimensions that require consumer participation and emotional involvement, which can encourage loyalty. These dimensions include sensory experience, affective experience, intellectual experience, and behavioral experience. Through these four dimensions, brand experience plays an important role in shaping consumers' perceptions, trust, and emotional closeness to the brand, which in turn can strengthen consumer loyalty (Ahmadian et al., 2023; Joshi & Garg, 2021; Sahin et al., 2011; Guan et al., 2021).

According to Hollebeek et al. (2014) in Wulandari et al. (2025), brand engagement is one of the key pillars in the success of digital marketing. This concept reflects the extent to which consumers participate and engage with a brand through emotional, cognitive, and behavioral interactions. In the context of digital platforms, brand engagement is not only reflected in simple indicators such as the number of likes, comments, or shares, but also in deeper engagement, such as loyalty, trust, and active consumer support for the brand (Wulandari et al., 2025).

Furthermore, Maharani & Purnamasari (2015) in Adzimaturrahmah et al. (2019) state that brand engagement can be measured through five main indicators: consumers do not easily switch to other brands; consumers have a strong emotional attachment and feel a sense of loss when the brand is no longer available; consumers have an interest in trying new products offered by the brand; consumers remain loyal and continue to purchase even when there are issues or negative news about the brand; and consumers feel that something is missing if they do not buy the brand's products.

According to Kasiha et al. (2023), consumer loyalty is formed when consumers have a favorable view of the brand, show emotional attachment, and make future purchases. Loyalty not only reflects the habit of buying, but also involves the willingness to recommend the brand to others, as well as the tendency to stay despite offers from competitors (Oktavia et al., 2022). Maulidio et al. (2022) proposes six indicators of measuring consumer loyalty, namely: purchase frequency (the tendency to buy the brand continuously in the long term), repeated usage habits (consistent consumption patterns over time), brand preference (special interest and fondness for a particular brand), loyalty despite competitors (continuing to choose the brand even when there are alternatives), belief in brand quality (positive perceptions related to quality and usage experience), and willingness to recommend (willingness to promote the brand to others as a sign of high trust). Consumer loyalty plays a strategic role in strengthening the brand's market position, maintaining market share, and creating long-term mutually beneficial relationships between companies and consumers.

Based on the theoretical descriptions of brand awareness, brand experience, brand engagement, and consumer loyalty, this study focuses on how consumers interpret loyalty to Kopi Tuku through these three variables. These three variables are viewed not as factors that directly influence one another, but as parts of an interpretative process in which consumers form the meaning of loyalty based on brand experiences with Kopi Tuku. Therefore, the research framework can be illustrated in the following diagram:
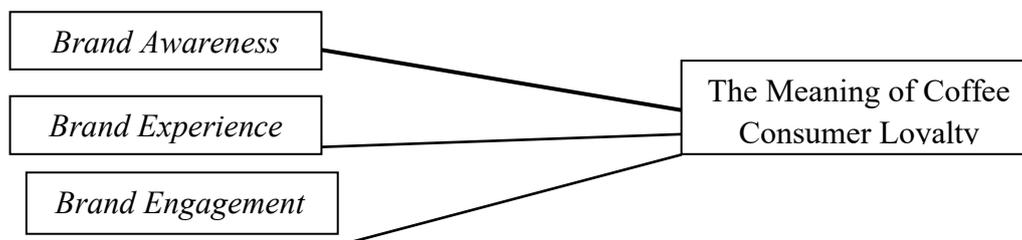


*Figure 1. Conceptual Framework*

Source: Data processed by the researcher, 2025

## Methods

This study uses a type of descriptive research with a qualitative approach to explore the meaning of *brand awareness, brand experience* and *brand engagement* in building consumer

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loyalty of coffee purchases. This approach allows researchers to understand the phenomenon in depth through observation, interviews, and social media analysis. The research location is at Kopi Tuku Merr Branch, Surabaya which was chosen because it has a high level of consumer interaction, both directly and through digital platforms.

The selection of the Merr Branch as the research site was based not only on its high consumer interaction but also on its distinctive position compared to other outlets. The Merr branch is strategically located near a university area, making it a hub for young consumers such as students and early-career workers. Compared to Kopi Tuku branches in residential or business districts, this location represents a consumer segment that is highly active on digital platforms and tends to express loyalty through online and offline interactions. This characteristic provides broader insights into how loyalty is constructed within the context of the younger, urban market in Surabaya. Industry reports (e.g.,Tanamanindustri, 2025) also indicate that the Surabaya youth market plays a significant role in shaping coffee consumption trends nationwide, which strengthens the relevance of this site as a case study.

The research subjects consisted of six loyal consumers selected through purposive sampling. Data collection was conducted through three complementary methods: (1) direct observation of consumer–employee interactions, (2) semi-structured in-depth interviews, and (3) social media content analysis. Observations captured real-time practices in-store, interviews explored motivations and personal meanings, and social media analysis revealed digital expressions of loyalty. The three data sources were cross-validated to ensure consistency. For example, friendliness of baristas observed on-site was echoed in consumer Instagram posts, while loyalty indicators from interviews (e.g., repeat purchases despite competitor promotions) aligned with observed behaviors. This triangulation not only confirmed consistency across methods but also reduced potential researcher bias by ensuring that findings were supported by multiple forms of evidence.

The interview protocol was designed around three categories of questions. Cognitive questions explored consumer recall and recognition of the brand, affective questions investigated emotions and feelings associated with brand experiences, and behavioral questions assessed loyalty indicators. This structure ensured that the interviews systematically captured awareness, experience, and engagement, moving beyond surface-level descriptions.

The data obtained consisted of primary data, namely the results of interviews and observations as well as secondary data in the form of information from social media and other documentation.

Data analysis uses the interactive model of Kusumastuti & Khoiron (2019) which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. To ensure data readiness, this study applies source triangulation techniques and methods, so that the results obtained are more valid and reflect factual conditions in the field. For instance, during data reduction, interview transcripts were coded according to categories of awareness, experience, and engagement, which were then compared with observational notes and social media content.

## Results and Discussion

### Interview Result with Six Kopi Tuku Consumers

Based on the interviews with six informants, it was found that the ways they first became acquainted with Kopi Tuku varied. Some informants initially discovered the brand through friends' recommendations, social media, or simply by noticing the kiosks along the street. Although some were unfamiliar with the brand at first, their initial experience of tasting Kopi Tuku beverages, especially Kopi Susu Tetangga (KST), left a positive impression. The

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distinctive, balanced, and well-suited flavor made this first experience memorable. Some informants tried other menu items, but Kopi Susu Tetangga remained their favorite due to its consistent taste and memorable coffee character.

This first experience was not only related to taste but also to the café atmosphere and interactions with the baristas. Informants appreciated the staff's friendliness, their ability to remember orders, and their special attention to customers, including those with disabilities. This created a sense of comfort and emotional attachment, making visits to Kopi Tuku more than just purchasing coffee. Some informants mentioned that although Kopi Tuku outlets are relatively small and minimalist, this actually created a warm, friendly, and homely atmosphere, even though the space was not ideal for activities that required long durations, such as working or studying.

The frequency of visits varied among the informants. Some visited 1–3 times per month, while others visited 8–10 times or 2–3 times per week. Some informants chose specific branches to maintain flavor consistency, while others took advantage of promotions or special days to buy their favorite drinks.

The main reasons for consumer loyalty to Kopi Tuku included consistent taste quality, competitive pricing, friendly service, comfortable café atmosphere, and easy access to branches. In addition, social media and digital interactions also strengthened attachment. Several informants followed Kopi Tuku's official Instagram account because the content was appealing, personal, and reflected a consistent brand. Some informants also shared their experiences on social media, encouraging friends and their close environment to try Kopi Tuku.

Beyond functional factors, consumer attachment was also built through emotional experiences. Consumers felt personally cared for, from the ease of recognizing their favorite orders to warm interactions with baristas. Some informants shared unique experiences, such as playing TikTok with friends at the café while enjoying coffee, making them feel that Kopi Tuku is more than just a place to drink coffee but also a part of personal moments and memories.

The first informant stated that they discovered Kopi Tuku by frequently passing the kiosk after college. Initially, they were not very interested because they assumed it was just an ordinary café. However, after a friend's recommendation, they tried the Earl Grey Milk Tea, which suited their taste. Later, they tried other variants, including Kopi Susu Tetangga, which became their favorite. They appreciated Kopi Tuku's combination of taste experience and comfortable café atmosphere, despite limited seating. The friendly, attentive baristas who remembered orders enhanced the comfort of their visits.

The second informant first tried Kopi Tuku upon entering college, although they had known the brand name from a cousin. Kopi Susu Tetangga surprised them because of its unique and distinctive taste, matching their preference for mild flavors. They noted that the service and coffee quality were very consistent, even across different branches. Kopi Tuku's Instagram account was considered personal and appealing, reinforcing loyalty and prompting them to share experiences with friends.

The third informant became familiar with Kopi Tuku after seeing the kiosk several times on the street and receiving recommendations from friends. They felt the taste of Tuku's milk coffee matched their preference, although the small café size was not ideal for long conversations. However, the baristas' friendliness, quick service, and coffee quality made them continue choosing Kopi Tuku over competitors with similar prices and locations.

The fourth informant first tried Kopi Tuku during the 5th or 6th semester of college, introduced by a coffee-loving friend. Their first order was a Caramel Macchiato, but they switched to Kopi

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Susu Tetangga because the sweetness level could be adjusted. They appreciated the homely atmosphere, barista service, and Kopi Tuku's attention to customers with disabilities, including the availability of sign language guides in the outlets. Social media also strengthened brand engagement, while memories and café atmosphere contributed to their loyalty.

The fifth informant discovered Kopi Tuku through social media, especially Twitter. Entertaining and interesting stories from netizens sparked their curiosity, prompting further research through Google. Their expectations regarding taste and café atmosphere were fulfilled, particularly when trying Kopi Susu Tetangga. They appreciated the baristas' friendliness, speed, and closeness to customers, while Tuku's Instagram content was considered personal and appealing. Although their visit frequency was not very high, they continued prioritizing Tuku due to consistent taste and service.

The sixth informant had known Kopi Tuku for a long time and visited at least four times per month. Their favorite menu was Iced Kopi Susu Tetangga due to its light taste and consistent quality. They often took advantage of promotions but still chose Tuku as a benchmark for coffee quality compared to competitors. The simple yet comfortable outlet, friendly service, and warm communication from baristas encouraged repeat visits.

Overall, the interviews indicate that Kopi Tuku successfully creates a comprehensive experience for consumers, from consistent coffee taste, friendly barista service, and comfortable café atmosphere to digital interactions via social media. All these elements foster long-term loyalty and emotional attachment, ensuring that consumers continue to choose Kopi Tuku even when alternatives with similar price, location, or concept are available.

**Consumers' Interpretation of Brand Awareness of Kopi Tuku**

Based on the research findings, consumer brand awareness of Kopi Tuku demonstrates a relatively strong level of recognition among loyal consumers. In-depth interviews with six informants revealed that most respondents became acquainted with Kopi Tuku through social media, friends' recommendations, and positive reviews on digital platforms. Informants noted that the name Kopi Tuku is easy to remember due to its distinctive identity as a local coffee shop with a simple yet consistent concept. This aligns with Tomokuromo and Berlianto (2024), who stated that high consumer satisfaction can form habitual behavior and increase consumers' intention to repeatedly visit a coffee shop.

Kopi Tuku's brand awareness is also shaped by consumer experiences that leave lasting impressions and create long-term associations. In this study, informants did not merely recognize Kopi Tuku as a coffee brand but associated it with a distinctive taste, friendly service, and a warm, consistent digital experience. Analysis indicates that brand awareness develops through several stages: first, becoming aware of Kopi Tuku via recommendations from close contacts or social media; second, directly experiencing the quality of the taste and service; and third, building an emotional connection reinforced by interactions on social media. Therefore, brand awareness is understood not only as knowledge or memory of the brand but also as an attachment involving emotion and personal preference.

Further analysis shows that Kopi Tuku consumers reach levels ranging from brand recall to top-of-mind awareness. At the brand recall level, consumers can mention Kopi Tuku when asked to name local coffee brands they know, whereas at the top-of-mind level, the brand emerges as the first choice for some informants when discussing local coffee in Surabaya. This is reinforced by social media observations showing numerous consumer posts voluntarily tagging Kopi Tuku's official account and sharing their experiences.

The strength of brand awareness is not solely built through digital promotion but also through direct consumer experiences at the cafés. Field observations show that the café's atmosphere, consistent with the brand image, and friendly service create positive memories that help consumers associate Kopi Tuku with certain qualities. This factor becomes a foundation for loyalty, as strong brand awareness facilitates repeat purchases.

Additionally, Kopi Tuku actively instills sustainability values through initiatives encouraging customers to bring their own tumblers for purchasing bulk coffee, particularly the signature Kopi Susu Tetangga. With a price of IDR 100/ml and a minimum purchase of 200 ml, this strategy not only reduces plastic waste but also provides economic benefits for consumers. Several informants reported feeling closer to the brand because they were given opportunities to contribute to environmental issues, and the habit of bringing a tumbler has become a trend among loyal consumers. This initiative represents Kopi Tuku's social values while strengthening the emotional connection between consumers and the brand.

Consistency in taste is an essential factor in building brand awareness. Unlike competitors who frequently follow new menu trends, Kopi Tuku maintains its signature menu, making its flavor easily recognizable and difficult to imitate. The brand identity is further reinforced by visual elements such as iconic cup designs, easily recognizable outlets, and inclusive touches like BISINDO alphabet posters in all Kopi Tuku branches. These elements are not merely decorative but reflect Kopi Tuku's care for the disability community while serving as a communication strategy that builds emotional attachment with consumers. From a brand awareness perspective, the presence of the BISINDO alphabet acts as an easily identifiable visual cue. Even consumers who have not visited all Kopi Tuku branches in Surabaya can recognize it, especially those attentive to detail. The BISINDO (*Bahasa Isyarat Indonesia*) visual not only strengthens the brand identity but also enhances consumers' memory of Kopi Tuku.

Therefore, Kopi Tuku's brand awareness is formed through a combination of visual, sensory, social, and emotional experiences, making it one of the local coffee brands that can survive and stand out in the competitive F&B industry. One element contributing to Kopi Tuku's brand awareness is its distinctive and consistent cup design since the brand's establishment. The illustration of the first Tuku Cipete branch printed on the cup, along with the use of simple yet unique colors and visuals, creates an identity easily recognized by consumers. Beyond serving as a visual identity, the cup design also reinforces Tuku's image as a brand close to the community and possessing strong aesthetic values.



*Figure 2. Old Tuku Cup Design*

Source: Pergikuliner.com Website

*Figure 3. New Tuku Cup Design*

Source: Instagram @tokokopituku

In its eighth year, Kopi Tuku updated its cup design by using 100% recycled plastic and removing the Cipete illustration as an effort to support sustainability (Instagram @tokokopituku, 2025). Although the illustration was removed, the brand's distinctive identity was maintained through a transparent emboss featuring the logo and the word "Tuku" on the cup. This change demonstrates the brand's consistency in maintaining quality and identity while emphasizing its commitment to social and environmental responsibility. The visual transformation of the packaging not only strengthens brand awareness but also communicates the sustainability values that are an integral part of the brand's message to consumers.

Overall, Kopi Tuku's brand awareness is not only established at the level of brand recognition but has also reached brand recall and, at its peak, top-of-mind awareness. This position is achieved through consistent flavor perception, strong visual identity, relevant social values, and deep emotional experiences, which together cultivate consumer attachment to Kopi Tuku amid the competitive local coffee industry. However, it is important to distinguish brand awareness from brand image and brand loyalty. Elements such as BISINDO posters and sustainable cup designs are more appropriately classified as brand image because they reflect inclusivity and environmental values, while repeated purchases and active advocacy on social media represent brand loyalty. By clarifying these boundaries, the analysis shows that awareness primarily concerns recognition and recall, image reflects value associations, and loyalty demonstrates behavioral commitment.

### *Consumer Brand Experience* in Interaction with Kopi Tuku

Consumer experiences with Kopi Tuku are shaped through a strong combination of sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioral aspects that are consistently perceived. From a sensory perspective, the distinctive flavor of Kopi Susu Tetangga, which is smooth, gentle on the stomach, and has a recognizable aroma, serves as a unique characteristic that is difficult for competitors to replicate. Iconic visual designs on the cup packaging as well as the warm layout

of the outlets further reinforce positive impressions that are directly embedded in consumers' memories.

One informant revealed that each time they purchase Kopi Susu Tetangga, the taste leaves a lasting and memorable impression. According to them, this flavor possesses a uniqueness not found in similar products elsewhere. Despite having tried various other brands of milk coffee, they consistently return to Kopi Tuku. This experience is not only related to taste but also to the strong and comforting coffee aroma immediately noticeable upon entering the outlet, creating a comfortable atmosphere while fostering a positive perception of Kopi Tuku's product quality.

In addition to flavor, consumers also appreciate the tactile aspects presented through the product packaging. Kopi Tuku's cup design, although simple, features distinctive characteristics that are easily recognizable. This uniqueness is evident in the white cup lid displaying the brand logo at the center, as well as the use of straws in colors rarely seen in other coffee outlets. Such detailed elements not only provide a different visual and tactile experience but also reflect authentic simplicity while reinforcing the brand's commitment to maintaining its local identity.



*Figure 4.  Kopi Tuku Cup Design*

Source: Personal Documentation of the researcher (2025)

Consumer experiences with Kopi Tuku are shaped through a strong combination of sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioral dimensions consistently perceived. From the affective dimension, consumers experience warmth and emotional closeness both when visiting the outlets and interacting with the brand digitally. Many informants reported that Kopi Tuku conveys a friendly and approachable impression, as if it has become part of their daily routines and personal memories. These feelings are reinforced by consistent service, comfortable store ambiance, and inclusive brand communication.

The affective meaning in consumer experiences with Kopi Tuku is built through small, natural moments within the outlet. Such interactions are facilitated by frequent visits, enabling baristas to recognize both the orders and names of customers personally. For example, some informants described being greeted with their name and specific order preferences. This simple form of attention produces a significant emotional impact, fostering personal connection and a sense of warmth rarely found in other coffee outlets. It reflects Kopi Tuku's high level of attention to its customers, even to individual preferences amidst high daily foot traffic.

Further analysis indicates that Kopi Tuku has become part of consumers' emotional routines. Some informants mentioned that visiting Kopi Tuku in the morning before work has become a

habit to start the day with positive energy. Meanwhile, for those experiencing a tiring day, a warm greeting from the barista provides soothing emotional support. Many admitted that their attachment is not only to the coffee's taste but also to the ambiance and interactions created in the store environment.

The intellectual dimension emerges when consumers are confronted with the brand's values, such as sustainability and environmental care. Strategies like purchasing bulk coffee using personal tumblers encourage consumers to think critically about the environmental impact of their consumption. Those engaged in this practice feel not only economically smart but also that they contribute to a greater purpose.

In this context, informants do not merely act as passive consumers but actively shape perceptions and meanings toward Kopi Tuku through cognitive, evaluative, and personal value-based processes. Some informants noted that Kopi Tuku possesses a distinctive appeal that motivates them to try and remember the brand. This reflects active observation and comparison between Kopi Tuku and competitor brands, which then generates personal meaning for the brand.

For the informants, Kopi Tuku is not just a place to purchase coffee; it is represented as a space reflecting a minimalist and practical lifestyle, as well as a symbol of affordability without compromising quality. Such assessments are formed through observation of price, packaging, and store ambiance, collectively producing the impression of being "simple yet characterful." This meaning arises not from direct brand messaging but from consumers' reflections after repeated interactions with the brand. One informant even revealed that, although initially indifferent toward Kopi Tuku, curiosity arose after witnessing the high enthusiasm for the Kopi Susu Tetangga menu. The desire to personally verify the brand's uniqueness demonstrates an intellectual process in constructing brand meaning.

Meanwhile, behavioral experiences are reflected in habits such as regularly bringing personal tumblers, visiting certain outlets, and sharing experiences on social media. These habits indicate active engagement beyond mere transactions, as consumers begin to perceive Kopi Tuku as part of a lifestyle they are proud of. Consumer experience with Kopi Tuku encompasses a complete set of dimensions. The richer the experience provided, the stronger the emotional bond between the brand and its consumers. In the context of consumer loyalty, this bond serves as a crucial foundation, as consumers return not only for the product but also because they trust and feel connected to the brand's values. These findings align with the study conducted by Putra et al. (2025), which explored service quality and customer experiences based on digital reviews.

In that study, customer experiences extended beyond transactional aspects, including product quality, service speed and friendliness, and physical store ambiance. Similar findings were observed in this research, where informants described their experience with Kopi Tuku as not solely based on the product consumed but also on factors such as interaction with baristas, comfort in the ordering flow, and other personal touches. Interestingly, both previous studies and the current research show that Millennials and Gen Z tend to interpret experiences personally and emotionally, indicating that brand experience for these generations must not only be good but also unique and memorable.

Consumer behavior is not limited to purchase decisions but also involves deeper engagement, where the brand becomes part of routines and even social identity. Interview findings indicate that Kopi Tuku functions not only as a place to obtain beverages but has also become integrated into informants' daily habits and activities.

One informant revealed a routine of stopping by Kopi Tuku BP Merr before attending classes or other activities. These visits were not solely for purchasing coffee but were driven by comfort and habits formed through repeated interactions. This indicates that consumer behavior toward Kopi Tuku develops gradually through consistent experiences, ultimately embedding into their routines.

Additionally, some informants position Kopi Tuku not merely as a coffee shop but as a space that holds personal memories with friends. For instance, Kopi Tuku BP Merr automatically evokes recollections of shared moments and warm conversations. In this context, the motivation to visit is no longer purely consumptive but driven by strong emotional and social values. Price considerations, taste, and strategic location also reinforce consumers' decisions to return.

Overall, consumer behavior toward Kopi Tuku is laden with meaning that goes beyond mere purchase activity. Consumers do not simply "come and buy" but bring along memories, habits, and emotions attached to every interaction. This positions Kopi Tuku as a distinctive part of their daily life, where consumption behavior reflects emotional and social relationships built over time rather than just transactional acts.

Interview results show that recurring behaviors, such as visiting before starting activities, consistently choosing the same menu, and associating the location with personal memories, are strong indicators of deep attachment developing over time. This attachment ultimately becomes a key element in fostering consumer loyalty to Kopi Tuku.

Overall, Kopi Tuku's brand experience reflects a multi-dimensional process that goes beyond taste or service. While friendliness of baristas and consistency of flavor are valued, these qualities are not unique and may also be found in competitors. What differentiates Kopi Tuku is the way these experiences are integrated with inclusive practices (such as BISINDO accessibility) and sustainability initiatives (such as tumbler discounts). Moreover, consumer groups interpret these experiences differently: younger consumers emphasize digital engagement, whereas long-term loyal customers highlight consistent taste and affordability. These variations suggest that although all experience dimensions matter, their relative importance differs across segments, and it is precisely this combination that fosters strong and enduring loyalty.

**The Meaning of Brand Engagement toward Consumer Loyalty of Kopi Tuku**

Consumer engagement with Kopi Tuku has been shown to extend beyond mere purchase transactions, evolving into deep emotional, social, and symbolic relationships embedded in their daily lives. Consistent positive experiences, ranging from the distinctive coffee taste, warm service from baristas, to the cozy store ambiance, create profound attachment that is difficult for other brands to replace. Kopi Tuku functions not only as a beverage provider but also as a symbol of routine, self-appreciation, and personal identity recognized within consumers' social environments.

This form of engagement is evident through consumer habits, such as continued loyalty despite price increases, enthusiastic trials of new products, and pride in using branded merchandise as expressions of emotional closeness. The presence of merchandise, such as tumblers, lanyards, and other items, serves not merely as supplementary products but as representations of values and pride that consumers carry into their social spaces, even giving them as gifts to close acquaintances.

*Figure 5. Merchandise at Kopi Tuku Merr Branch, Surabaya*

Source: Personal Documentation of the Researcher,2025

These findings reinforce that Kopi Tuku's brand engagement is shaped not only through digital interactions but, more importantly, through consistent direct experiences and interpersonal relationships at the outlets. Field findings obtained through interviews and observations indicate that this strong engagement encompasses all key indicators, in line with the brand engagement dimensions proposed by Maharani & Purnamasari (2015) as cited in Adzimaturrahmah (2019), namely: unwavering loyalty, a sense of loss if the brand were absent, willingness to try innovations, continued loyalty despite negative issues, and a feeling of incompleteness without the product. Together, these indicators form the foundation for long-term consumer loyalty.

There is an emotional dimension underlying consumers' routine in purchasing coffee, such as feelings of being accompanied, having their preferences "understood," or as a form of self-appreciation after a long day. This form of engagement does not arise from direct prompts from the brand, but from the accumulation of positive experiences consistently felt by consumers when enjoying the product and the atmosphere provided.

Observations indicate that consumers perceive Kopi Tuku as a consistent and reliable brand. This consistency is reflected across various aspects, from the stable flavor of beverages over time, uniform design and outlet layouts across different branches, to similar service experiences at every visit. The meaning formed is also related to consumers' perception that Kopi Tuku represents a reliable choice, especially when they need a quick-service beverage with a familiar taste. The speed of service, easy access due to strategically located outlets in several cities, and habitual incorporation of Kopi Tuku into daily routines further reinforce the impression that the brand provides not merely products but also assurance in the consumer experience.

This engagement is evident in statements from an informant who noted that friends often associate them with Kopi Tuku, for instance, by commenting, "You'll definitely buy Kopi Tuku again." This phenomenon indicates that the brand has successfully occupied a special space in consumers' social lives while reflecting deep emotional engagement with the brand.

When consumers feel acknowledged and welcomed in a distinctive manner that is easily memorable, they tend to experience comfort and an implicit emotional connection. This is illustrated by an informant who considers Kopi Tuku part of their routine, with their identity even being associated with the brand by close friends. This phenomenon demonstrates that emotional engagement can be formed through consistent and enjoyable direct experiences,

which are ultimately deeply embedded in consumers' memory. In Kopi Tuku's context, brand engagement emphasizes direct social interaction and positive purchase experiences, rather than mere brand presence on social media.

Based on observations at the Kopi Tuku Merr branch, some consumers were seen bringing their branded tumblers. Personal recognition from baristas was also evident through interactions, such as greetings like, "Using your Tuku tumbler, Kak? How many milliliters of Kopi Susu Tetangga would you like?" These interactions not only reflect consistent purchasing behavior but also demonstrate increasingly strong emotional attachment through the use of brand attributes as part of consumers' routines.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings regarding the meaning of brand awareness, brand experience and brand engagement in building consumer loyalty toward kopi tuku in Surabaya, it can be concluded that these three aspects are not only interconnected but also capable of creating personal, social and emotional experiencces that are meaningful to consumers. Consumers do not merely recognize Kopi Tuku through visual elements such as its logo or social media but also associate it with personal meanings shaped through repeated expereinces.

The meaning of brand awareness is formed through both cognitive and emotional processes, in which consumers not only recognize the brand but also recall and associate it with local identity and the values of simplicity promoted by the brand. Brand awareness becomes more meaningful as it not only activates memory but also evokes specific emotional and social associations.

Brand experience is strongly felt by consumers across various dimensions: sensory (the distinctive taste and aroma of kopi susu tetangga), affective (warm interactions with baristas), intellectual (the interpretation of the brand), and behavioral (purchase routines). These experiences position Kopi Tuku not merely as a product provider but as a part of consumers' daily lives. This authentic and repeated closeness creates a sense of comfort and relevance, strengthening the relationship between the brand and its consumers.

Brand engagement emerges as a deeper form of involvement, not only through routine purchasing activities but also through an emotional attachment that endures. Consumers perceive Kopi Tuku as part of their social identity, reflected in their willingness to try new products, purchase merchandise, and use these products as a means of expression or as gifts. This engagement deepens consumers' sense of ownership toward the brand.

Overall, the findings indicate that consumer loyalty to Kopi Tuku is not solely shaped by product quality or competitive pricing but is born from the accumulation of meaningful experiences built through mutually reinforcing brand awareness, brand experience, and brand engagement. The loyalty created is long-term in nature because it is grounded in consistent, personal, and meaningful connections. Consumers purchase not merely out of habit but because they feel emotionally connected and identify with the values the brand represents. These findings emphasize the importance of building authentic meaning in brand–consumer interactions, particularly amid the increasingly competitive local beverage industry.

### Suggestion

Based on the results of the research that has been carried out, there are several recommendations for related parties and for further research, namely:

For Kopi Tuku As a Brand: it is necessary to strengthen digital communication strategies to increase brand engagement in the realm of social media. Although consumers tend to be more

attached through direct experiences, the potential for strengthening loyalty can also be expanded through social media that is communicative, responsive and able to invite consumers to actively participate in brand activities.

For the Company: in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 12 goals regarding responsible consumption and production, the company is expected to strengthen the application of the zero-waste principle in its operations. Although currently the use of cups has utilized recycled materials, the use of plastic straws in takeaway products still has the potential to become a waste that is difficult to decompose. Alternatives that can be considered include straws made of environmentally friendly materials.

For the Next Researcher: this study uses a qualitative approach with a limited scope in the Surabaya area. Therefore, it is recommended to use quantitative approaches and mixed methods so that the results obtained can be compared more broadly and produce generalized data. In addition, future research may explore additional factors that have the potential to strengthen consumer loyalty

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