The Influence of Brand Communication, Brand Image, and Brand Trust on Brand Loyalty At University In Jakarta

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Abstract

Institutions in the education industry, including higher educations, need to have the right strategy in creating a brand with the appropriate quality. Besides, universities need to have different values with the high quality of products and services. An institution such as a university must be able to communicate its brand-related products well to consumers. Therefore this study aims to see the effect of brand communication, brand image, and brand trust on brand loyalty at the university in Jakarta. The sample of this study was 210 university students in Jakarta. This research is deductive. Data were collected using a questionnaire. The analytical method used is the Structural Equation Model (SEM). The results showed that: Firstly, there is an influence between brand communication on brand image. Secondly, there is an influence of brand communication on brand trust. Thirdly, there is an influence between brand image and brand trust. Fourth, there is an influence between the brand image on brand loyalty.

Keywords: *brand communication, brand image, brand trust, brand loyalty*

I. Introduction

There are lots of universities in Jakarta. Consequently, each university must be able to compete by having strong brands in the market (Bougenvile & Ruswanti, 2017). Not only does it have unique values and an important domain, but universities must also communicate the brand well to consumers. Besides, in the current pandemic era, universities must be present amid the public to provide benefits, such as disseminating information on the current situation. Therefore, university brand communication must be well-created because building the popularity of a brand into a well-known brand with a better and trusted image that has an impact on brand loyalty in the minds of consumers is not easy. By increasing the perception level of the brand image through effective brand communication, marketers will be able to gain customer trust and become loyal to brands that are considered trustworthy (Chinomona, 2016).

Riegner (2007) states that brand communication generated by online users is an essential means by which customers can obtain information related to products and service quality. According to Zehir, Uahina, Kitapçıb & Özúahinb (2011) the purpose of brand communication is to expose the audience to the brand and to increase awareness and higher memory of the brand. Braun, Eshuis & Klijn (2014) states that place brand communication and word-of-mouth of place brand communication influence the place brand image. Several other research results also show that there is a relationship between brand communication and brand image (Chinomona, 2016; Arif, Bhatti, Mariam & Sadiq, 2017).

Well-built brand communication can affect consumer confidence in the brand itself. Brand communication creates and develops a trust-based relationship platform between brands and customers (Zehir *et al.* 2011). Khalid (2016) explains that the essential points of his findings come from the source of customer reliability that can depend on the content created by companies, friends, and other consumers about the brand. Therefore, brand communication influences brand trust (Chinomona, 2016). Apart from brand communication, other factors can influence brand trust, such as building a brand with a positive image in the minds of consumers. The brand image itself serves as an essential substitute for intrinsic product attribute information, which in turn fosters customer trust in a brand (Pavlou, Liang & Xue, 2007). Hulu & Ruswanti (2018) say that a brand with a well-created image will get a competitive advantage in the market.

A well-created brand image, according to Frida, Syah & Negoro (2019), can give buyers confidence that their performance is better than unknown brands. Chinomona (2016); Lee & Jee (2016); Chen (2010); Afriani, Indradewa & Syah (2019); Han, Yu, Chua, Lee & Kim (2019) state that brand image affects brand trust. Social media allows consumers to provide feedback to brands after using the products (Arif *et al*, 2017). Well-built feedback can influence a positive image so that it creates a good impression in the minds of consumers as well as builds trust in the brand that leads to repurchase, and it is a form of consumer loyalty to the brand. Lee & Jee (2016) stated that brand trust affects brand loyalty. Brand loyalty, in turn, plays an essential role in

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marketing efforts for company system suppliers to maintain customer satisfaction in a competition. Several previous research results concluded that brand trust affects brand loyalty (Chinomona, 2016; Anwar *et al.* 2011; Zehir *et al.* 2011).

In contrast to previous research conducted in Gauteng, South Africa, this research explored the same variables (brand communication, brand image, brand trust, brand loyalty). This research also used SEM PLS analysis techniques because it is more suitable under the research objectives with a relatively small sample size. Based on his research recommendations, he should consider increasing the sample size and research area (Chinomona, 2016). So this study uses SEM analysis techniques to obtain a larger number of samples. Some previous research conducted by Anwar *et al.* (2011); Zehir *et al.* (2011); Afriani *et al.* (2019); Han *et al.* (2019); Lee & Jee (2016); Arif *et al.* (2017); Chen (2010); Khalid (2016); Braun (2014) could not prove the direct influence of brand communication, brand image and brand trust on brand loyalty in one research model. For this reason, the objective of this research is to determine the role of brand communication, brand image, and brand trust in brand loyalty among university students in Jakarta.

II. Literature Review

Brand Communication
Lee & Jee (2016) stated that brand communication is the ability of brands to communicate by giving positive results to voters so that it will create brand trust. Meanwhile, Low & Lamb (2000) stated that brand communication is an overall consumer evaluation of a brand; brand attitude summarizes the meaning that consumers attach to, which in turn will affect purchasing behavior. As for measuring brand communication, it will adopt the theory of Zehir, et al. (2011) in Chimonoma (2016), that brand communication is the idea of a product or service being marketed so that uniqueness can be identified and recognized by consumers.

Brand Image
According to Kotler & Keller (2016), brand image, the perception, and trust held by consumers, which is inherent in the consumer's memory, can be formed based on the consumer's experience of the brand. Sumiyati & Syah (2016) said that brand image is a type of association that appears in the minds of service users when using a brand. Their image refers to the schematic memory of a brand regarding the interpretation of the target market, product attributes, usage situations, benefits, and it is related to what consumers think when they see or hear the brand name (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). As for measuring brand image, it will adopt the theory of Salinas & Perez (2009) in Chimonoma (2016) that a product or service from a brand has high quality.

Brand Trust
Brand trust is the perception of reliability when viewed from a consumer's perspective based on their experience or interactions characterized by the fulfillment of expectations for the performance of the product (Costabile, Raimondo & Miceli, 2002). According to Kotler & Amstrong (2014), trust is the willingness of consumers to trust a brand because there is an expectation that it can provide positive results. As for measuring brand image, it will adopt the theory of Chauduri & Holbrook (2001) dalam Chimonoma (2016), that someone believes in the brand of the product or service.

Brand Loyalty
According to Schiffman & Kanuk (2014) brand loyalty is a form of consistent consumer preference to make purchases on the same brand on specific products or certain service categories. Brand loyalty is a way in which consumers express satisfaction with the performance of a product or service that has been consumed (Ballester & Aleman, 2001; Ruswanti, Herlambang & Januarko, 2016). To measure brand image, it will adopt the theory of Chauduri & Holbrook (2001) in Chimonoma (2016)), someone is said to be loyal to a brand, if that person will use the same brand in their next purchase.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VARIABLES
Relationship between Brand Communication and Brand Image
Chinomona (2016) explains the need for marketers to communicate the customer's experiences related to a brand, customer satisfaction experiences using the brand, and how this brings pleasure so that it makes them want to buy the product again and again. Riegner (2007) states that brand communication generated by online users is essential by which customers can obtain information about products or services. When a good massage from a brand is conveyed to customers, the brand image will develop (Arif *et al.* 2017). It is following the results of research by Chinomona (2016); Braun *et al.* (2014); Arif *et al.* (2017); Afriani *et al.* (2019) concluded that brand communication affects brand image. Based on the above statements, the hypothesis is as follows:
H_1: Strong brand communication will increase the brand image.

The Relationship Between Brand Communication and Brand Trust

The purpose of brand communication is to expose consumers to brands, where the effect can be maximized in terms of increased awareness and higher memory, and make the customers buy the brand that has the highest memory. Brand communication can also satisfy customers to the optimal level (zehir *et al.*, 2011). By increasing the level of brand image perception through effective brand communication, marketers will be able to obtain customer brand trust, which in turn, customers will be loyal to brands they can trust (Chinomona, 2016). It is consistent with the results of research conducted by Zehir *et al*. (2011); Khalid (2016); Afriani *et al*. (2019) showed that brand communication affects brand trust. From the literature above, the hypothesis is as follows:

H_2: Strong brand communication will increase brand trust.

Brand Image Relationship to Brand Trust

Companies that focus their marketing efforts on strengthening brand image will provide an increase in building brand trust and brand loyalty (Lee & Jee, 2016). A positive brand image will increase customer trust which in turn will have an impact on their trust in a brand (Kotler & Keller, 2016). It can be said that before buying a product, consumers will find out about the product to be purchased (Stiawan & Syah, 2017; Imelia & Ruswanti, 2017). In the end, the more confident customers are in the brand, the more likely they will trust the brand (Chinomona, 2016). It is following the results of research conducted by Chinomona (2016); Lee & Jee (2016); Chen (2010); Han *et al*. (2019); Afriani *et al*. (2019) that showed brand image affects brand trust. From the literature above, the hypothesis is as follows:

H_3: Strong brand image will increase brand trust.

Relationship between Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty

Consumers who trust a brand will be more willing to stay loyal to that brand, will pay a higher price, and share the same information about their tastes, behavior, and preferences (Mabkhot *et al.* 2017). Increased brand trust can also lead to brand loyalty because consumers become comfortable with what they believe (Lee & Jee, 2016). Reast (2005) explains that trust is involved in the acceptance of brand expansion and is important for the development of brand loyalty and is part of brand equity in creating customer relationships and is the only powerful liaison marketing tool. It is following the results of research conducted by Chinomona (2016); Lee & Jee (2016); Anwar *et al*. (2011); Zehir *et al*. (2011); Afriani *et al*. (2019) that showed brand trust affects brand loyalty. From the literature above, the hypothesis is as follows:

H_4: High brand trust will increase brand loyalty.

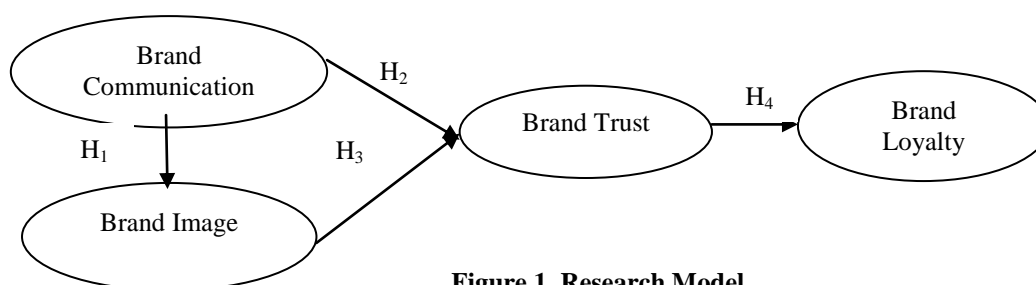From the description above, the research model can be described as follows:

Figure 1. Research Model

III. Research Methodology

This study is deductive in nature, with exogenous variables (brand communication) and endogenous variables (brand image, brand trust, and brand loyalty). The data collection Collecting was done using a survey method by distributing questionnaires. Measurements were obtained using a Likert scale. The measurements of brand communication were done using the variables adopted from Zehir *et al*. (2011) in Chinomona (2016). The brand image was measured using variables adopted from Salinas & Pérez (2009) in Chinomona (2016). Brand trust was measured using variables adopted from Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001) in Chinomona (2016), and brand loyalty was measured using variables adopted from Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001) in Chinomona (2016). The total questions in the study were 21 questions.

The population of this research is university students in Jakarta. This research utilized purposive sampling, namely active students, students who get references from their closest relations, and students who continue their education at the same campus. The collection technique was represented by distributing the initial questionnaire (pre-test) to 30 respondents.

The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and SPSS. The sampling, according to Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black (2014) must be at least 5-10 times the number of questionnaires, so that the number of questionnaires used is twenty-one with a study sample of 210 (21x10) respondents. Furthermore, the validity test was done using confirmatory factor analysis by looking at the value of the Kaiser-Msyer-Olkin measure of sampling (KMO) and the measurements of sampling adequacy (MSA). If the KMO value is below 0.500, then the factor analysis cannot be used. All variables of brand communication, brand image, brand trust, and brand loyalty were declared valid, with KMO and MSA (anti-image correlation) values> 0.500 with 1 component matrix. In the reliability test, all variable statements are declared reliable with alpha Cronbach > 0.6 which means good reliability (Sekaran & Bougie, 2017).

IV. Results

The results of data processing using SEM, involving a sample of 210 students in Jakarta, shows that the measurement of the validity test of research construct and all the variables indicators of brand communication, brand image, brand trust, and brand loyalty had a positive fit factor loading value of (> 0.50). The t-value is greater than the t-table (1.96) at the 5% significance level. Furthermore, the construct reliability test meets the reliability requirements where the CR value (> 0.60) of brand communication is (0.95), brand image is (0.92), brand trust is (0.89), and brand loyalty is (0.92). The VE value (> 0.50) of brand communication is (0.79), brand image is (0.65), brand trust is (0.69), and brand loyalty is (0.75).

The structural test with the value of R^2 for each equation functions to show how far the independent variable can explain the dependent variable. First, brand communication influenced brand image with an R2 of 0.87. Second, brand communication and brand image influenced brand trust with a value of R2 of 0.83. Third, brand trust influenced brand loyalty with an R2 of 0.99.

Furthermore, the analysis of the suitability test of all models from group 1 to group 7, not all tests show good fit, including Chi-Square, RMSEA, ECVI, AIC and CAIC, Fit Index and goodness of fit indicates a good fit. Meanwhile, Critical N shows a marginal fit. From the analysis, it can be concluded that the suitability of all models still meets the requirements (goodness of fit). Furthermore, this research produces the following path diagram:

Chi-Square=331.99, df=167, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.069
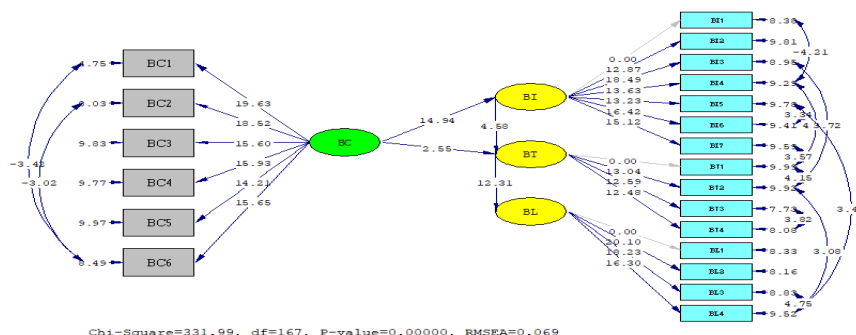
V. Discussion

The results of testing the first hypothesis (H1) show that brand communication has a positive effect on brand image. This study corroborates several previous research results such as Chinomona (2016); Braun *et al*. (2014); Arif *et al*. (2017); Afriani *et al*. (2019) that brand communication influences brand image. Universities need to build study programs as attractive as possible that can represent the message that the brand wants to convey. The most important thing is that information related to the study programs offered must be conveyed well so that brand communication can build a positive image in the minds of consumers.

The results of testing the second hypothesis (H2) show that brand communication has a positive effect on brand trust. The results of this study corroborate previous studies such as Zehir *et al*. (2011); Khalid (2016); Afriani *et al*. (2019) that brand communication affects brand trust. Brand communication can create a picture of the positive experience that consumers will feel when using the brand so that it can persuade consumers and generate their trust. Alamsyah & Ruswanti (2017) states that the fact of consumers buying a brand is related to the experience felt by the consumer.

The results of testing the third hypothesis (H3) show that brand image has a positive effect on brand trust. The results of this study are in line with the results of previous studies such as Chinomona (2016); Lee & Jee (2016); Chen (2010); Han *et al*. (2019); Afriani *et al*. (2019) that brand image affects brand trust. The brand image must be able to describe the university concerned and prioritize consumers so that it creates trust. Consumers who trusted a brand are not easily influenced by other brands that are not well known.

The results of testing the fourth hypothesis (H4) show that brand trust has a positive effect on brand loyalty. The results of the study corroborate some of the previous research results of Chinomona (2016); Lee & Jee (2016); Anwar *et al.* (2011); Zehir *et al.* (2011); Afriani *et al*. (2019) that brand trust influences brand loyalty. Consumers who already have an attitude of trust in a brand, then these consumers will enter the next stage, namely having a brand loyalty attitude towards a brand. Having trust in a brand indicates a strong consumer belief that the brand will bring good benefits.

VI. Conclusion

In this research, all the proposed hypotheses support the results of previous studies. There are three limitations to this study. First, this study only discusses the variables of brand communication, brand image, brand trust, and brand loyalty. In further research, it is suggested to add other variables, such as the variable brand attitude, variable, and customer perceived value. Second, the area covered in this study only examines students who are at the university in Jakarta. Therefore, further research is expected to expand the sample coverage. Third, there is a possibility that the respondents fill out a questionnaire based on the ideal conditions expected and not the actual.

This study aims to determine the effect of brand communication, brand image, and brand trust on brand loyalty at universities in Jakarta. The first managerial implication for improving brand communication is that university leaders must plan the right strategy for the content of the promotion to generate consumer confidence and their positive impression. First, the university must continuously hold events that benefit the wider community. Universities can conduct socialization that is educational to the public so that people can feel the presence of the university. The second implication is the brand image. In building a positive image, university leaders can emphasize advantages such as study programs and qualified facilities at affordable costs. The third implication is brand trust. In this case, a brand must be counted on to generate consumer trust. In service, leaders must continue to explore and train the attitudes of employees both from staff and teaching staff.

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