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THE ROLE OF BRAND ANTHROPOMORPHISM IN SHAPING BRAND LOVE AND BRAND LOYALTY TO EUROPEAN CAR CONSUMERS IN INDONESIA

Pramatatya Resindra Widya[1]
Adi Mursalin[2]
[1]*Shanti Bhuana Institute, Bengkayang, West Kalimantan, Indonesia*
[2]*Faculty of Economics, Panca Bhakti University, Pontianak, Indonesia*
e-mail: pramatatya@shantibhuana.ac.id, adimursalin@gmail.com
Correspondence: pramatatya@shantibhuana.ac.id

Abstract: This study will examine the influence of brand anthropomorphism and brand experience on brand love and its impact on brand loyalty with perceived price fairness as the moderation variable. The research uses a quantitative approach with a survey method. The sample in this study amounted to 250 European car users spread across DKI Jakarta, DI Yogyakarta, Central Java, and East Java. The analysis model in this study will be divided into 3 stages analysis. The first stage is multiple regression analysis, the second stage is simple regression analysis. The third stage of the moderation test with hierarchical moderated regression Brand anthropomorphism had a positive effect on the formation of brand love. Brand experience also has a positive and significant effect on brand love. Brand love has a positive effect on brand engagement. perceived price fairness does not moderate the relationship between brand love and brand engagement. For further research, it is suggested to add subjective norm variables to this research model.

Keywords: Brand Anthropomorphism; Consumers; European Car; Building Brand Love and Brand Loyalty.

INTRODUCTION

A brand is important for marketers. This is because a brand is like an identity for the product or service offered. In other words, a brand is an identity that is known by consumers to the wider community. To be able to increase brand loyalty, companies must have brand experience. Brand experiences occur when consumers search, shop, and consume products that consumers are exposed to when they search for information or visit stores. When searching for goods, consumers are exposed to various stimuli related to a particular brand (Kim & Yu, 2020). In addition, it is also influenced by the brand trust. Brand trust is defined as the willingness of consumers to trust a brand to rely on a brand's ability to perform its functions (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2008). According to Payne et al. (2017), consumer trust in brands is very important for companies to be able to establish good relationships with consumers and maintain consumer trust. In order for consumers to buy back products from the company, the company must introduce its products well in order to build brand trust in consumers. Brand satisfaction (brand satisfaction) is where the performance of a product is felt according to the expectations of the buyer, if the performance of a product or service is in accordance with expectations, the customer will be satisfied or vice versa. A smart company aims to satisfy customers by delivering more than they promise. Customers who are satisfied with a product can lead to loyalty (Kotler & Armstrong, 2014).

One of the things that can create customer loyalty is brand engagement. (Wallace et al., 2014) stated that brand engagement is a sign of a customer's emotional commitment to a brand. Things that affect the creation of brand engagement include the activity of emotional relationships between a brand and its consumers in digital media, such as social media, websites, blogs, and other digital sites. All activity on social media has the potential to have an influence in enhancing those emotional connections. The term 'engagement' or engagement can be defined as an interest in the representation of an object. Engagement can also be interpreted as the result of repeated interactions that strengthen the emotional and psychological bond between consumers and brands. In simple terms, engagement is the action or participation of consumers in the digital or online world. Measuring the level of consumer engagement in a brand on social media can be seen based on the results of account analysis in general or at the level of each content uploaded.

One of the factors that shape brand engagement is brand love. Brand love originated from research conducted in the field of consumer delight and relationships that explored the duo of consumers and brands. The origin of love lies in the psychology in which (Sternberg, 2018) discusses the concept of love with the help of Intimacy, Passion and Commitment. Furthermore, (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006) introduced the concept of brand love taking hedonic products as a stimulus. Brand love is irreplaceable and much more intense than the concept of "likes".

Therefore, it has emerged as a significant construction that affects several other constructions such as brand loyalty, brand sacredness, and brand advocacy (Drennan et al., 2015), (Wang et al., 2019), (Palusuk et al., 2019), Joshi and Garg, 2020). Some authors have outlined the antecedents and results of brand love. However, construction has such a strong impact on consumer psychology that the literature on branding should continue to explore its new horizons. Love takes different forms that can generate jealousy (Sarkar et al., 2019); can lead to a willingness to pay (Siew et al., 2018) and, can turn consumers into brand cultists. A construction with such dynamic properties can never end Researched. (Drennan et al., 2015) discuss a framework that states the role of brand trust and brand satisfaction in brand love in the context of wine. The authors discuss that future researchers may explore the role of additional antecedents such as a brand image in determining brand love. The effect of brand love on active engagement and loyalty intentions was discussed by (Sarkar & Sreejesh, 2014) and (Sarkar et al., 2019) respectively in their study.

Today marketers realize that a brand is not just a brand that becomes an identity. However, the brand has a soul that reflects the cross-section of the brand and must be conveyed to the public. Likewise from the customer side. In customers who already have experience with the brand, it may be that they will feel that they fit the brand and instead make the brand a reflection of themselves. But sometimes the opposite happens. A person wears a brand because of the image that the brand evokes. This shows that today the brand or brand already has a soul. A brand is associated with the depiction of a human being who has senses and a soul like a human being. So it often reflects a match when used by customers. The belief that consumers tend to perceive branded products as if human objects are becoming popular among marketing scholars and practitioners. Anthropomorphization tendencies in several ways, such as product design, brand naming, and animation. In the automotive industry, for example, product designers often give cars an outward look that makes consumers think of these things as actual human beings. Empirical research also supports this practice. showing that consumers tend to associate car headlights and grille with two human eyes and mouth (Windhager et al., 2008); (Landwehr et al., 2011). Marketers also give names to products that explicitly relate to humans (e.g., Mr. Clean) in an effort to support anthropomorphization. In advertising, animation and computer graphics technology are used by communication agencies to develop campaigns promoting branded products as animated entities (e.g., M&M ads, nutrisari, etc). In academic research, the tendency of consumers to anthropomorphization of branded products has recently attracted the attention of scholars. Previous studies have examined the psychological processes that are activated when consumers are faced with products with a human-like appearance (Aggarwal & McGill, 2007), and their consequences on product evaluation (Landwehr et al., 2011) and purchasing behavior (Chandler & Schwarz, 2010); (Aggarwal & McGill, 2012). In other streams of research, research has investigated how

consumers build relationships with brands similar to interpersonal brands (Fournier, 1998); (Fournier & Alvarez, 2012), whether and to what extent consumers view brands as 'intelligent agents' (Rijsdijk et al., 2007), or 'deliberate agents' (Kervyn et al,2012), as well as how consumers experience emotions towards brands that are usually felt by humans, such as love (Batra et al., 2012), passion and forgiveness (MacInnis, 2012). In academic research, the tendency of consumers to anthropomorphization of branded products has recently attracted the attention of scholars. Previous studies have examined the psychological processes that are activated when consumers are faced with products with a human-like appearance (Aggarwal & McGill, 2007), and their consequences on product evaluation (Landwehr et al., 2011) and purchasing behavior (Chandler & Schwarz, 2010) (Aggarwal & McGill, 2012). In other streams of research, research has investigated how consumers build relationships with brands similar to interpersonal brands (Fournier, 1998); (Fournier & Alvarez, 2012), whether and to what extent consumers view brands as 'intelligent agents' (Rijsdijk et al., 2007), or 'deliberate agents' (Kervyn et al,2012), as well as how consumers experience emotions towards brands that are usually felt by humans, such as love (Batra et al., 2012), passion and forgiveness (MacInnis, 2012). In conclusion, brand anthropomorphism, that is, the extent to which branded products are considered human (Epley et al, 2007; (Aggarwal & McGill, 2012), are gaining a superior position in branding research. However, despite its growing relevance in research and practice, little is known about the

conceptual domain of this relatively recent construction and its measurements. Previous studies (e.g., (Aggarwal & McGill, 2007); Kim and McGill, 2011) have examined this concept in an experimental setting, manipulating rather than measuring the degree of brand anthropomorphism, and some of the available scales are only used for manipulation examination without being empirically validated. This research fills this important gap by developing a scale of measurement of brand anthropomorphism, which can be useful for researchers and practitioners to ask how branded products can be anthropomorphized, and whether this phenomenon has an impact on consumers' perception and evaluation of these products. Anthropomorphism refers to an individual's tendency to see inanimate objects as human-like entities (Guthrie, 1995). Epley et al (2007) describes this phenomenon as a process of inference that connects external characteristics, motivations, behaviors, and basic states typical of humans with non-human objects and agents. Psychological research has extensively shown how people tend to anthropomorphize objects such as personal computers (Waytzdkk,2010) and cars (Windhager et al., 2008), as well as non-human agents such as supernatural entities (Epley et al,2008a) and pets (Chartrand et al., 2008). Such a trend seems so widespread that it has recently caught the attention of marketing experts (e.g., Kim and McGill, 2011; (Aggarwal & McGill, 2012), who investigated anthropomorphism with respect to branded products. The concept of brand anthropomorphism here is defined as the

extent to which a branded product is considered an actual human being. In particular, the anthropomorphic perception of branded products may occur through two different, but not mutually exclusive processes. First, it may occur through the perceived similarity between the external appearance of the product and some human physical attributes (for example, a product package that resembles the human body; (Aggarwal & McGill, 2007); Epley et al.,2007; (Puzakova et al., 2009). In addition, the anthropomorphic perception of branded products may occur through the perceived fit between the product and some aspects of the consumer's self-concept (Fournier, 1998); (J. Aaker et al., 2004). The construct of self-concept refers to how the consumer perceives themselves and consists of different, albeit related, aspects: the 'actual' self-concept (that is, whom he or she thinks), the 'ideal' self-concept (that is, whom one wants to be), the 'social' self-concept (that is, whom others believe others think of themselves), or the 'social ideal' self-concept (that is, whom others want to think of themselves). (Sirgy, 1982); (J. L. Aaker, 1999). Thus, an anthropomorphic perception of a branded product may occur to what extent consumers perceive the product according to how they view themselves in actual, ideal, or social terms (for example, a product whose image is consistent with the actual or ideal personality traits of the product). This reason implies that brand anthropomorphism is a multidimensional construction. However, hypothesizing the specific theoretical dimensions of this construct is not an easy task, given its complexity and relative novelty in the

domain of marketing. One can identify at least two main dimensions underlying brand anthropomorphism: one dimension about the outward appearance of a branded product, and another dimension based on the idea of self-brand fit, that is, the extent to which the product reflects consumers' perception of themselves. Recent research provides support for the existence of such dimensional structures. As for the first dimension, previous studies have provided evidence of the presence of external components of construction brand anthropomorphism, according to which products are considered anthropomorphic entities to what extent they have a human-like morphology. In particular, (Aggarwal & McGill, 2007) have shown that products are more likely to be anthropomorphic when they are endowed with physical characteristics (such as the depiction of people 'smiling' in the design of the front grille of a particular brand of car) capable of activating human schemes during perception. (Landwehr et al., 2011) has shown that consumers exposed to products with human-like physical characteristics perceive such objects using the same inferences they use in interpersonal perception. For example, the authors observed that the special configuration of the lower 'mouth' button on the phone (i.e., reverse versus lowered) led respondents to infer 'friendliness' in that product, in the same way a smile directed people to use this. emotional expression to infer happiness in a smiling person (Ekman, 1993). As for the second dimension of brand anthropomorphism, which concerns self-brand alignment, academic research has long shown that

consumers evaluate and select products based on the extent to which these products are considered to fit their self-concept (Sirgy, 1982). Specifically, consumers tend to choose branded products that help them express their actual, ideal, or social self-view (Sirgy, 1982); (J. L. Aaker, 1999). The effect of self-alignment on product choice becomes the basis of consumers' tendency to see a part of themselves in their favorite brands and products (Belk, 1988); (Escalas & Bettman, 2005); Lam et al, 2013), and to establish relationships with these objects similar to those normally constructed with others (Fournier, 1998); (J. Aaker et al., 2004). All this is a psychological process that occurs in the minds of consumers - that is, the assessment of the suitability of the brand itself, the successive identification with certain branded products, and the subsequent development of an 'interpersonal' relationship with them require anthropomorphized inanimate objects. In such cases, anthropomorphization does not have to be based on the external appearance of the branded product, but also on the perceived similarity between internal qualities (such as motivation, emotions, and mental states) that are considered to be derived from themselves and those that they consider being derived from the product (Fournier & Alvarez, 2012). Another study (Fitzsimons et al., 2008); (Aggarwal & McGill, 2012) further supports the idea that consumers can anthropomorphize branded products based on the suitability of their own brand, beyond external appearance, by finding that individuals prioritized a self-appropriate brand interaction with this brand in a similar way to that usually observed among humans.

According to (Matzler et al., 2007) Price Fairness is a consumer perception where the difference between the price received is feasible compared to others, can be considered or the price is acceptable. If the consumer's perceived price is lower, then the sacrifices given will also be lower (Zeithaml, 1998). Consumers of service goods actually value high prices because these prices describe the prestige/image of quality, or the acquisition of certain special benefits (Yazid et al., 2020). Price fairness involves a comparison of the price of the procedure with a standard in question, reference, or norm (Martín-Consuegra et al., 2007). (Martín-Consuegra et al., 2007) also define price fairness as an assessment of an outcome and a process for achieving a reasonable and acceptable outcome. The reasonableness of the price can be measured by several attributes as follows:

1. The customer feels that they are paying a reasonable price on every purchase transaction.
2. Reference to the level of reasonableness of the price, where the customer feels it is reasonable if a product or service of the same type from different companies is set at a different price.
3. The price fairness policy determined by the company is reasonable and acceptable to customers.
4. The reasonableness of the price set is an ethic, where the customer is always informed of the price changes that will be made by the company before the new price is set.

This research will examine the influence of brand anthropomorphism and brand experience on brand love and its impact on brand loyalty with perceived price fairness as a moderation variable
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MATERIALS AND METHODS

The method used in this study is quantitative using a survey method with non-probability pasting techniques. The selection of this technique is used because it is not known exactly the actual number of the study population (Cooper, 2011). Respondents and samples from this study used several criteria so as to use *purposive sampling* techniques (Malhotra, 2012). The population in the study was European car customers such as BMW, Mercedes, and so on. The sample in this study amounted to 250 European car users spread across DKI Jakarta, DI Yogyakarta, Central Java, East Java, data collection methods are one aspect that plays a role in the smoothness and success of a study. In this study, the data collection method was obtained directly from respondents through the dissemination of questionnaires both via the internet and directly using the questionnaire by making a systematic list of questions directly on the selected respondents into a research sample compiled using a Likert scale. Each question has 5 answers, ranging from strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. In this study, data collection was carried out using a survey method connected to google Forms and spread by utilizing social media access to Facebook, Whatsapp, and email. The secondary data is obtained from data sourced to writings such as books, magazines, journals, the internet, and other data related to this research. The variables used as operational definitions in this study are t brand anthropomorphism, brand experiences, and brand love. Meanwhile, the perceived price fairness variable is the variable moderation. The dependent variable in this study is brand loyalty. The conceptual framework in this study can be seen in the following figure:
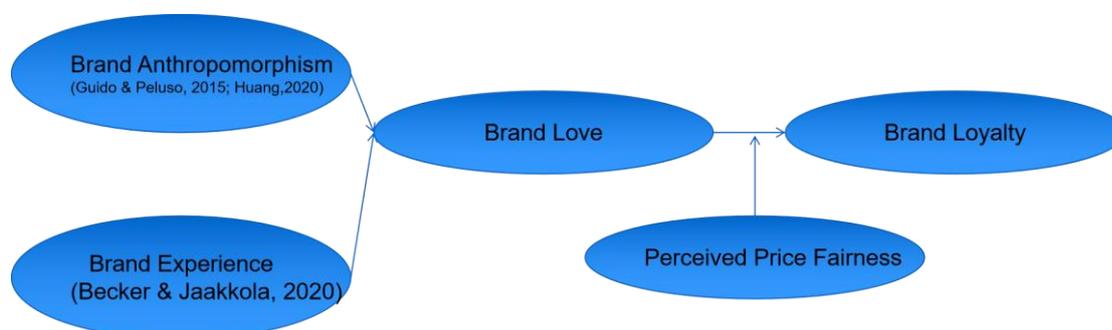
Picture 1. Theoritical Framework

The analysis model in this study will be divided into 3 stages analysis. The first stage is to analyze the influence of brand anthropomorphism and brand experience on brand love with multiple regression analysis. The second stage is to analyze the influence of brand love on brand loyalty with a simple regression analysis tool. The third stage is the analysis of perceived price fairness in moderating the relationship between brand love and brand loyalty with hierarchical moderated regression (Andersson, 1986).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Testing in this study was carried out in 4 stages. First, the KMO-MSA test to test the adequacy of data variance, the instrument validity test with factor loading, and the Reliability test by looking at Cronbach's alpha value. The results of the data quality test can be seen in table 1.

Table 1.
Data Quality Test Results

Variable	KMO-MSA	Grain	Loading factor (> 0,4)	Cronbach's Alpha (> 0,5)
Brand anthropomorphism	.853 Sample adequacy Fulfilled (KMO-MSA>0,5)	BA1 BA2 BA3 BA4	.780 .843 .678 .649	0,745
Brand Experience		BE1 BE 2 BE 3 BE 4 BE 5	.871 .743 .765 .830 .720	0,649
Brand Love		BL 1 BL 2 BL 3 BL 4	.743 .877 .784 .920	0,810
Brand Loyalty		BLT 1 BLT 2 BLT 3	.780 .865 .672	0,683
Perceived Price Fairness		PPF 1 PPF 2 PPF 3	.734 .629 .847	0,772

Source : Primary Data

According to (Hair Jr, 2010) states that one of the ways that can be used to estimate the validity of such convergent is based on the value of the loading factor. The minimum loading factor limit for each indicator item is 0.35-0.40 (Hair Jr, 2010). Before conducting a factor analysis, there are requirements that must be met, namely the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO MSA) test and the Barlett's Test of Sphericity and no cross-loading occurs. The required KMO MSA value is above 0.5 and Barlett's Test of Sphericity is statistically significant with a significantly less than 0.05 (Hair Jr, 2010). The KMO value in this study is 0.731, which means KMO > 0.50. Based on these results, the adequacy of the sample was declared to be in the satisfactory category. Further predictions and analysis of research variables can also be continued. The hypothesis in this study was tested using an influence test with multiple linear regression analysis tools. The results of the hypothesis test can be seen in table 3.2.

Table 2. Model Test 1

Independent Variables	R^2	Adjusted R^2	F	Dependent Variables : Brand Love		
				B	t	Itself.
Brand anthropomorphism	0,437	0,428	47,153 (0,000)	0,328	5,032	0,024
Brand Experience				0,370	4,740	0,017

In testing the accuracy of this research model, statistically it can be seen that the ability of independent variables, namely *Brand anthropomorphism and* brand experiences, in predicting the variable love for brands as a dependent variable shows an adjusted R square of 0.428. This means that the ability of independent variables as predictors of dependent variables is 42.8 percent. The remaining 57.2 percent can be influenced by other variables outside of this research model.

The ability of this model to explain the situation of reality is shown by the Goodness of fit index which in this study is shown with a value of F. With a value of F of 47.153 (> 1) and a significance of 0.000 (>0.05) shows that this model is able to reflect the real state of affairs in reality.

Based on the results of hypothesis tests that have been carried out, it can be seen that brand anthrophomorphism has a positive effect on brand love (β:0.328; sig.:0.024). Thus, hypothesis 1 in this study is supported. The results of this hypothesis test are in accordance with the findings of Singh (2021) which states that consumers will love the brand as much as their attitude in loving their fellow human beings if they have got an emotional match.

Brand Experiences also have a positive effect on *brand love* (β:0.310; sig.:0,000). Thus, hypothesis 2 in this study is supported. these findings confirm the

results of the research of (Safeer et al., 2020) and the results of the research of Joshi and Garg (2020) that the brand experience can form a love for the brand.

The second model in this study is to answer the third hypothesis. That is the influence of brand love on *brand engagement*. The results of the third hypothesis test can be seen in the following table:

Table 3. Model 2 Test

Independent Variables	R^2	Adjusted R^2	F	Dependent Variables : *brand engagement*		
				B	t	Itself.
Brand love	0,413	0,402	46,204 (0,000)	0,375	7,236	0,007

Based on the results of the third hypothesis test that has been carried out, it can be seen that brand love has a positive effect on brand engagement (β:0.375; sig.:0.007). Thus, hypothesis 3 in this study is supported.

These findings confirm research from (Wallace et al., 2014) and (Loureiro et al., 2017) which state that love of a brand can build the chemistry between the consumer and the brand.

Based on the results of the fourth hypothesis test which aims to test the moderation effect of perceived price fairness on the relationship between brand love and brand engagement, it can be seen that the perceived price fairness variable does not moderate the relationship between brand love and brand engagement. The results of moderation testing using hierarchical moderated regression can be seen in the following table:

Table 4. Moderation test results

Stages Regression	Variable Independent/ Pemoderasi	Dependent Variables : Brand Engagement						
		Adjusted R^2	D R^2	F	ΔF	B	t	itself
1	BL	0,183	-	45,063 (0,000)	-	0,412	6,647	0,000
2	BL	0,174	-	34,733 (0,000)	-	0,408	6,530	0,000
	PPF		0,009		10,330	0,039	0,562	0,575
3	BL	0,168	-	30,946 (0,000)	-3,787	0,616	2,204	0,029
	PPF		0,006			0,267	0,872	0,384
	BL*PPF					-0,067	-0,764	0,446

From table 4. it can be seen that perceived price fairness does not moderate the relationship between brand love and brand engagement. Allegedly because at this stage European car consumers no longer see price as a significant problem. Apart from the profile of its users, the majority of whom are already at a high net worth level, the love of the brand makes them not hesitate to spend more funds for the maintenance of the car.

CONCLUSIONS

This study aims to test the influence of testing the influence of brand anthropomorphism and brand experience on brand love and its impact on brand loyalty with perceived price fairness as a moderation variable. Data analysis was performed in three stages of regression consisting of multiple linear regression to test model 1, simple regression to test model 2, and hierarchical moderated regression to test the model. The third is the moderation test. The results of the study can be concluded as follows:

1. Brand anthropomorphism has a positive effect on the formation of brand love. The results of this hypothesis test support the findings of research from Singh (2021) which states that consumers will love brands as much as their attitude in loving their fellow human beings if they have obtained an emotional fit.

2. Brand experience also has a positive and significant effect on brand love. these findings confirm the results of the research of (Safeer et al., 2020) and the results of the research of Joshi and Garg (2020) that the brand experience can form a love for the brand.

3. Brand love has a positive effect on brand engagement. The results of this study confirm research from (Wallace et al., 2014) and (Loureiro et al., 2017) which states that love for a brand can build consumer and brand chemistry.

4. Perceived price fairness does not moderate the relationship between brand love and brand engagement. This is because European car consumers no longer see price as a significant problem. Apart from the fact that the profiles of its users, the majority of which are already at a high net worth level, the love of the brand makes them not hesitate to spend more funds on the maintenance of the car.

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