Research article

The Extension of Customer Brand Engagement Framework: Indonesian Smartphone Brands Customers

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Abstract.
This research identifies evidence regarding the nexus between the antecedents of CBE dimensions and consequences on smartphone brands in Indonesia. Data were collected through an online questionnaire targeted at a total of 1251 smartphone users/consumers in Indonesia. AMOS SEM was used in processing the statistical tests of this research. Convergent validity and composite reliability were also used to check the questionnaire items. The authors found that consumer involvement and self-expressive brand affect all the CBE dimensions (COG, AFF, ACT) while consumer participation only affects one CBE dimension (COG). Subsequently, CBE dimensions affect brand usage intent and self-brand connection. Therefore, this study contributes to the body of work in consumer brand engagement literature.

Keywords: consumer brand engagement, consumer involvement, consumer participation, self-expressive brand, brand usage intent, self-brand connection

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1. Introduction

Basically, humans need communication to convey a specific purpose. Communication is an important human need due to everyone is social beings. Communication can be explained through a model of the communication process that begins with the delivery of messages from the communicator to the communicant through intermediries or medium, so that reciprocity can occur in accordance with the expecations of the message sender [1]. Communication is integral part that has embedded into almost every element of a individuals life. This is supported by digitization and consumer evolution which causes a paradigm shift in Integrated Marketing Communication [2]. This digitization makes it easier for consumers to communicate with others. Meanwhile, companies can seize the opportunities created by these phenomenon by increasing the consumer engagement with their brands. Digital marketing and technology revolution

have also contributed in delivering new feature to reach, inform, offer, and sell products and services to consumers [3].

The impact of sophisticated information technology development can be found in the telecommunication products at marketplace, such as smartphones. There are a lot of brands offer a variety of specifications and qualities targeted at various consumer segments, both middle to lower and upper middle class. This shows that each brand has its own target market. Consumers have their preference in deciding to buy and choose certain smartphone products compared to others. Many factors are considered by consumers in the decision process. So this causes the company to create consumer engagement toward brands offered by them. Engagement can be one of the factors that results in sales and company profitability. On the other hand, consumers who respond toward the brand engagement would show enthusiasm and focus on the brand they choose. In other words, engaged consumers is a good news for the company.

This research identifies the effect of consumer involvement, consumer participation, self-expressive brand, and brand satisfaction on the dimensions of Consumer Brand Engagement (CBE), namely cognitive processing, affection, and activation. Afterwards, we also analyze the consequences of CBE dimensions on brand usage intent and self-brand connection.

2. Research Model and Hypotheses

This research model is based on framework of previous studies which examining the consumer brand engagement and its dimensions [4-9] as well as the development of previous work of [10]. The CBE process consists of several stages which can be marked by the increasing ability of brands to get closer to their consumers. The more consumers are engaged to a particular brand, the stronger the relationship between them. These stages are brand appearance, brand body, and brand soul which in turn will generate brand embeddedness when the brand is embedded in the consumer's soul and causes consumers engagement to the brand [11]. Brand engagement has been widely studied, for example the conceptual model of CBE can be drawn from the relationship marketing theory [4, 12], explains the type of commitment created by consumers to continue to provide useful ideas, criticisms, and suggestions for the company. CBE can also defined as multidimensional construct that can explain the cognitive processing, affection, and activation that consumers have.

Consumer involvement is the first step in brand engagement. When consumers are willing to engage with a brand, it means that they have relationship with the brand
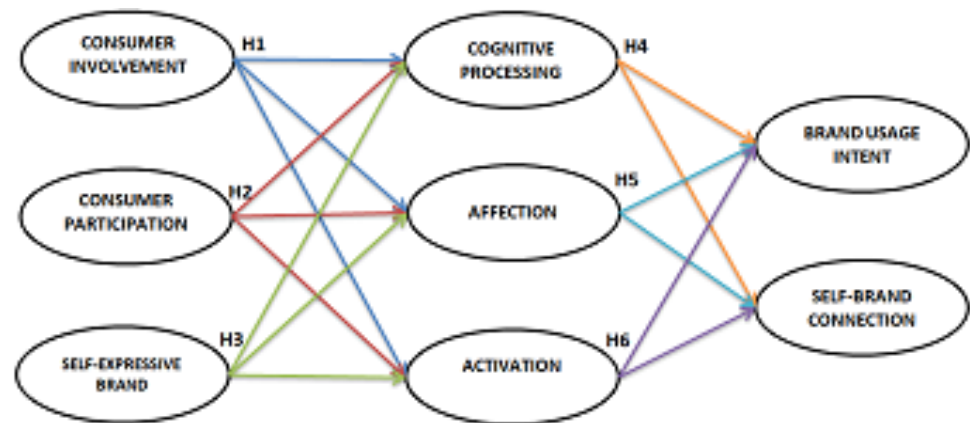
Figure 1: The extended Conceptual Framework of Consumer Brand Engagement.

even though in post-purchase stage. If the involvement is high, they will feel beyond strong relationship [13] due to the likeliness to engage in broader extensive search for information about the brand and processing the information about brand in detail [14]. Consumers with high level of engagement tend to enhance the relationship and experiences with brand. Consumers who already involved with particular brand tend to be more committed to maintaining the benefit with the brand [15]. According to Beatty and Smith [14], involvement generate higher cognitive processing. Consumer involvement can influence cognitive processing, the thinking process of consumer toward a particular brand when interactions occur [6]. The more consumers involved with a particular brand, it can lead to higher consumer knowledge or cognitive processing and will also be more actively searching for information that increase their knowledge about brand. The more consumers are involved, the higher the affection or emotion and the activation. Affection is positive feeling of consumer toward the interaction with particular brand, then activation is the level of efford and time spent by consumer while interacts with certain brand [6, 16]. The hypothesis 1 as follows **H1: consumer involvement (CIN) positively and significantly affects cognitive processing (a), affection (b), and activation (c).**

Consumer participation provides many benefits such as receiving important information in a timely manner [17], increased offerings [18] and development of new services [19]. The participation of consumers in their interactions can provide benefits for the common interest between companies and consumers and can generate a higher level of consumer enthusiasm**.** Thus, can lead to increased brand engagement [12]. Consumer participation reflects the company's ability to provide high quality services. It helps companies to pay more attention to consumers [20] and can facilitate interaction between consumers and companies. Leckie et al. [4] stated that consumer participation has a significant and positive effect on cognitive processing. Likewise, Algharabat et al.

[5] have the same result, namely the consumer participation variable has a significant and positive effect on cognitive processing, affection, and activation. Consumers should be considered as an essential element of co-production. In the perspective of shared value creation, participating consumers aim to increase their satisfacition which in turn can affect their loyalty [21]. The hypothesis 2 as follows **H2 consumer participation (CPR) positively and significantly affects cognitive processing (a), affection (b), and activation (c).**

Dwivedi [22] and Wallace et al. [23] found that consumers who like certain brands are used to clarify brand self-expression that can shape and predict CBE. Therefore, consumers who like certain brands show consumer engagement to that brand, which means that consumers perceive the brand as part of their self-expression [24]. Schau & Gilly [25] stated that certain brands can have the opportunity to present their ideal self to consumers. Thus, consumers who are engaged to the brand can express themselves. This study explains that companies must consider the expressive nature of the brand when they want the brands they produce to be liked by consumers. Lipsman et al. [26] stated that consumer perceptions of the expressive nature of brands can influence consumer attachment to a brand. In certain brands, consumers who are tied to the brand have the perception that consumers like brands that can express themselves [26]. So, this self-expression brand is important for a company to be able to create a brand that consumers like and make that brand a reflection of who they are. The hypothesis 3 as follows **H3 self-expressive brand (SEB) positively and significantly affects cognitive processing (a), affection (b), and activation (c).**

The conceptual model that examines the effect of CBE dimensions on self-brand connection and brand usage intent was adapted from Hollebeek et al. [6], Harrigan et al. [16], and Brandão et al. [18]. Findings from Hollebeek et al. [6] suggest that self-brand connection and brand usage intent are the consequences of the CBE dimension. Self-brand connection is the extent to when consumer believe a certain brand is a part of themselves [6]. Brand usage intent is the tendency of consumer to use one particular brand compared to other brands [16]. Meanwhile the results of study 4 show that all hypothesis regarding CBE dimensions have significant and positive effect are supported, except for the influence of cognitive processing dimensions on brand usage intent [6]. The results of hypothesis tests by Harrigan et al. [16] show the overall hypotheses are supported. Then finally, the results from [8] show that all hypotheses are supported, except for cognitive processing on brand usage intent. Based on the results of previous research, hypothesis 5, 6, and 7 can be formulated as follows **H4 cognitive processing (COG) positively and significantly affects brand usage intent (BUI) (a) and**

self-brand connection (SBC) (b). H5 affection (AFF) positively and significantly affects brand usage intent (a) and self-brand connection (b). H6 activation (ACT) positively and significantly affects brand usage intent (a) and self-brand connection (b)

3. Research Methods

We designed a quantitative survey using online questionnaires through purposive sampling technique. As for the criteria of respondents in this research are (1) able to distinguish smartphone brands in Indonesia, (2) have purchased or owned at least minimum one particular brand of smartphone, and (3) use the smartphones frequently for daily activities. Then we use online questionnaire instrument via Google Form for the reasons of its functionality. We adapted questionnaire items from previous studies. Consumer involvement 4 items [27] consumer participation 4 items [28], self-expressive brand 4 items [27], cognitive processing 4 items [6], affection 4 items [6], activation 3 items [6], brand usage intent 5 items [6-7], and self-brand connection 4 items [6-7]. Then each item is measured using five-point Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. Items were measured convergent validity and composite reliability [8]. The fit indices test was also conducted to measure the goodness of fit of the model in this research. The indices are χ^2/d.f (Chi-square/degree of freedom), GFI (Goodness-of-Fit Index), RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation), AGFI (Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index), TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index), and NFI (Normed Fit Index). Furthermore, hypotheses test is carried out to analyze whether the hypotheses are supported or not by using AMOS Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

4. Results and Discussions

4.1. Results

Total sample obtained was 1251 respondents, consist of 434 men (34.7%) and 817 women (65.3%) as smartphone users. Smartphone brands data that has been collected are Xiaomi 304 (24.3%), Samsung 291 (23.3%), Oppo 234 (18.7%), Iphone 203 (16.2%), Vivo 90 (7.2%), Asus 54 (4.3%), Lenovo 18 (1.4%), Huawei 10 (0.8%), Sony 10 (0.8%), and other brands 37 (3%). 539 (43.1%) respondents income/allowance per month are less than Rp1.000.500, 455 (36.4%) respodents ranged from Rp1.000.500 – 2.000.000, 134 (10.7%) respondents for Rp2.000.500 – 3.000.000, 57 (4.6%) respondents for Rp3.000.500 – 4.000.000, 35 (2.8%) respondets for more than Rp5.000.000, and 31

(2.5%) respondents for Rp4.000.500 – 5.000.000. Based on age demography are dominated by 21-25 (62.9%) year old respondents. 681 (54.4%) respondents are college students.

The result for all convergent validity (greater than 0.5) and composite reliability (greater than 0.6) in this research are satisfactory. Table 1 shows the results of convergent validity and composite reliability.

TABLE 1: Convergent Validity and Compositve Reliability Test Results.

Variables	Items	Convergent Validity (respectively)	Composite Reliability
Consumer Involvement	4	0.708, 0.787, 0.771, and 0.682	0.827
Consumer Participation	4	0.850, 0.891, 0.857, and 0.823	0.916
Self-expressive Brand	4	0.902, 0.929, 0.926, and 0.772	0.935
Cognitive Processing	4	0.682, 0.862, 0.888, and 0.876	0.899
Affection	4	0.740, 0.817, 0.917, and 0.911	0.911
Activation	3	0.877, 0.609, and 0.879	0.837
Brand Usage Intent	5	0.723, 0.852, 0.904, 0.893, and 0.869	0.929
Self-brand Connection	4	0.885, 0.904, 0.898, and 0.879	0.939

Model fit is how well the model able to represents the data that reflects theory used in the research [30]. Hair et al. recommendations as explained in Brandão et al. [8], the χ^2/d.f is less than 3, the RMSEA is less than 0.08, and TLI is greater than 0.9 cut-off value. Meanwhile, traditionally, GFI, AGFI, and NFI cut-off value recommendations as good fit and generally accepted are greater than 0.9 [30]. The results for model fit indices test are χ^2/d.f = 5.1 (bad fit), GFI= 0.889 (marginal fit), RMSEA= 0.58 (good fit), AGFI= 0.869 (marginal fit), TLI= 0.942 (good fit), NFI= 0.937 (good fit).

H1 stated positive and significantly affect of CIN on COG (a) (β = 0.283; p-value = <0.001), AFF (b) (β = 0.478; p-value = <0.001), and ACT (c) (β = 0.604; p-value = <.001) are supported. H2 stated positive and significantly affect of CPR on COG (β = 0.097; p-value = <.001) is supported, however on AFF (β = 0.025; p-value = >0.05) and ACT (β = -0.056; p-value = >0.05) are proven not supported. H3 stated positive and significantly affect of SEB on COG (a) (β = 0.512; p-value = <0.001), AFF (b) (β = 0.347; p-value = <0.001), and ACT (c) (β = 0.173; p-value = <.001) are supported. H4 stated positive and significantly affect of COG on BUI (a) (β = 0.165; p-value = <0.001) and SBC (b) (β = 0.475; p-value = <0.001) are supported. H5 stated positive and significantly affect of AFF on BUI (a) (β = 0.377; p-value = <0.001) and SBC (b) (β = 0.373; p-value = <0.001) are supported. Then final hypothesis H6 stated positive and significantly affect of ACT

Table 2: Hypotheses Test Results.

Hypotheses	Standardized estimates (β)	p-value	Results
H1a: CIN COG (+)	0.283	0.000	Supported
H1b: CIN AFF (+)	0.478	0.000	Supported
H1c: CIN ACT (+)	0.604	0.000	Supported
H2a: CPR COG (+)	0.097	0.000	Supported
H2b: CPR AFF (+)	0.025	0.362	Not Supported
H2c: CPR ACT (+)	-0.058	0.076	Not Supported
H3a: SEB COG (+)	0.512	0.000	Supported
H3b: SEB AFF (+)	0.347	0.000	Supported
H3c: SEB ACT (+)	0.173	0.000	Supported
H4a: COG BUI (+)	0.165	0.000	Supported
H4b: COG SBC (+)	0.475	0.000	Supported
H5a: AFF BUI (+)	0.377	0.000	Supported
H5b: AFF SBC (+)	0.373	0.000	Supported
H6a: ACT BUI (+)	0.406	0.000	Supported
H6b: ACT SBC (+)	0.096	0.000	Supported

on BUI (a) (β = 0.406; p-value = <0.001) and SBC (b) (β = 0.096; p-value = <0.001) are supported.

4.2. Discussion

The first hypothesis shows positive and significant impact of consumer involvement on the CBE dimensions was prove to be supported. The first hypothesis confirms the result of Brandão et al. [8], Harrigan et al. [16], Hollebeek et al. [6], Tunca [7], and partial results of Algharabat et al. [5] due to the effect of consumer involvement on activation in Algharabat et al. is not supported. Consumer involvement is one of important antecedents on CBE dimensions. Second hypothesis, stated that consumer participation on CBE dimensions, only one hypothesis is supported, namely cognitive processing and this supports the results of Leckie et al [4]. Meanwhile, the results of the unsupported hypotheses (H2b and H2c) are also consistent with Leckie et al's because smartphone users have limited activity in consumers participations to provide ideas and suggestions for the development of brands. The third hypothesis, self-expressive brand can also be an antecedent for the CBE dimensions, it is proven to be supported in this research.

The fourth hypothesis, cognitive processing has positive impact on brand usage intent and self-brand connection. This means that users or consumers who have a

good experience with a particular smartphone brand will use and interact with the brand. The fifth hypothesis, affection has impact on brand usage intent and self-brand connection proves that the feelings of smartphone users will always be attached to certain brands, so that they will tend to be engaged. The sixth hypothesis, activation has positive impact on brand usage intent and self-brand connection. Users are willing to spend their energy, money and time on a brand when there is interaction between them. The fourth to the sixth hypothesis has confirmed the research of Harrigan et al. [16], Hollebeek et al. [6], and Tunca [7].

5. Conclusion

The existence of the smarphone brands in daily life of people have very significant and fundamental impact. Almost every day, whenever and wherever we go, people always holding their smartphone. Companies that are able to see this phenomenon as an opportunity can find the way to increase brand engagement through effective and efficient marketing efforts. Perhaps they can analyze and conduct survey to distinguish between which users are engaged with brand and which are not. Then they can formulate strategies that fit to seize the opportunities.

This research has made contributions to the body of knowledge in Consumer brand engagement research by extending and integrating previous research framewok. Nevertheless, this research also has limitations First, several model fit indices are not meet the recommendation cut-off value. Second, the use of several smartphone brands instead of focusing to one brand, this due to the segmentation strategy of each brand are unique and different. Perhaps different brands has their own special engagement with their consumers/users. Finally, we do not differentiate product types of smartphone within certain brand.

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