The Role Of Brand Reliability And Brand Intention In Mediating The Relationship Between Customer Satisfaction And Brand Loyalty

by Budi Setiawan

THE ROLE OF BRAND RELIABILITY AND BRAND INTENTION IN MEDIATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND BRAND LOYALTY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to fill the research gap regarding the role of brand reliability and brand intention in mediating the relationship between overall customer satisfaction on brand loyalty. The research context is on bottled drinking water customers who already know the brand name and have consumed products from the bottled drinking water brand name. The sampling technique used a non-probability sampling approach, namely purposive sampling. The sample size is 120 respondents by following the general rules of factor analysis. The study results revealed that brand intention has an essential role in mediating the effect of overall customer satisfaction on brand loyalty. Unfortunately, there is no data support regarding the mediating role of brand reliability.

Keywords: customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, brand reliability, brand intention

INTRODUCTION

Loyalty is a deeply held commitment to dispute consistently or re-support a preferred product/service in the future. Brand loyalty is a positive association consumer attach to a particular product or brand. Customers who demonstrate brand loyalty are loyal to a product or service, as demonstrated by their repeat purchases despite competitors' attempts to lure them in (Coelho et al., 2018). Brand loyalty is an optimistic association consumers display on a particular product or brand. Customers who show brand loyalty will devote themselves to the product or service, as indicated by their repeat purchases despite competitors' attempts to lure them in. Companies invest large sums of money in customer service and marketing to create and maintain

1

brand loyalty for established and reliable products. Brand loyalty refers to a pattern of consistent purchase of a particular brand over time and a favorable attitude towards a brand. Brand loyalty develops when the brand matches the consumer's personality or self-image or offers unique satisfactions and benefits that consumer seek.

Companies invest large sums of money in customer service and marketing to create and maintain brand loyalty for established products. Early views of brand loyalty focused on a behavioral perspective, buying patterns, or possible repurchases (Swaminathan et al., 2018). However, this perspective alone cannot measure loyalty comprehensively. Buying from consumers as the sole indication of loyalty has received a rebuttal from several marketing academics. Thus, another attitude aspect of loyalty is proposed to refer to consumers' psychological tendencies, including attitudes, preferences, and commitment to a brand. Therefore, attitudinal loyalty attracts factors underlie repurchase bias behavior (Tatar & Eren-Erdoğmuş, 2016).

In the face of competition between products, companies are required to make strategies to keep consumers from switching to consumers of other products and continue developing and finding new consumers to maintain customer loyalty. Fierce competition occurs between producers and customers, making consumers very quickly switch to competitors if their expectations are not met. Customer expectations include the set of responses, behaviors, prices, offers, service or product improvements, personalizations, experiences, and so on that customer long for or expect when interacting and engaging with a company. Therefore, it is essential for organizations to know, understand, and meet customer expectations to choose these products. This is a big challenge for companies in dealing with their customers. Products that are considered the most suitable and able to meet consumer expectations will make consumers choose a product and, in the end, it can be said that the consumer becomes loyal.

Brand reliability is the ability of an existing brand name to reduce the risk associated with purchasing a brand extension (Forster et al., 2018). Given this definition, this research focuses on the characteristics of existing brands rather than subsequent brand strategies designed to support the introduction of new products. When introducing extensions, brand managers may shape communication, distribution, and pricing strategies that reduce the importance or alter consumer perceptions of fit, the number of products affiliated with the brand, and variance in brand quality. Consumers rely on brands to reduce their uncertainty when considering brand extension purchases and evaluate factors that enhance brand reliability. Therefore, it can be understood that brand reliability is the ability of an existing brand name to act as a heuristic to reduce consumer risk perceptions when evaluating brand extension in a particular product category.

Brand intention is a consumer's belief that the brand can prioritize the interests of consumers when problems in product consumption arise unexpectedly. Therefore, intentionality is the belief that the brand will be interested in what consumers need and will not take advantage of consumer ignorance. Thus, it can be understood that brand intention is an individual belief in the guarantee of a product's safety when used and the effects that may occur in the future. The brand intention will be able to form consumer confidence that the brand can prioritize the interests of consumers when problems that occur in product consumption appear unexpectedly (Hsiu-Ying Kao et al., 2020).

The study of brand loyalty formed by overall consumer satisfaction through brand reliability and intention has not received much attention from marketing academics.

2

This is a significant research gap to be filled. This is the basis for the importance of conducting research that examines the effect of overall customer satisfaction on brand loyalty, with brand reliability and brand intention as mediating variables. The context of this research is one brand of bottled drinking water in Indonesia. This context was chosen with the consideration that consumers tend to easily switch brands in consuming bottled drinking water due to several brands of bottled drinking water available in the market. In addition, mineral water or bottled water tends not to distinguish the quality of the products directly easily, and each one tends to be similar. Thus, it becomes interesting to examine brand loyalty in this context.

Customer Satisfaction and Brand Reliability

Customer satisfaction is a feeling of pleasure that a person gets from comparing the perceived performance or results of the product and his expectations (Otto et al., 2020). A customer is satisfied or not. It depends on the product's performance (perceived performance) compared to the customer's expectations and whether the customer interprets the deviation or gap between the performance and the expectation. If the performance is lower than expectations, the customer concerned will feel dissatisfied. If performance is the same as expectations, then he will be satisfied. Meanwhile, if the performance exceeds expectations, the customer will feel very satisfied or even delighted.

Customer satisfaction is a person's feelings of pleasure or disappointment that arise after comparing the performance (results) of the product that is thought to the expected performance. Thus, customer satisfaction is a situation shown by customers when they realize that their needs and desires are as expected and well fulfilled. Customer satisfaction is the key to creating customer satisfaction and loyalty (Fornell et al., 2020). The company receives many benefits by achieving a high level of customer satisfaction. Increasing customer loyalty can prevent customer turnover, reduce customer sensitivity to prices, reduce marketing failure costs, reduce operating costs caused by the increasing number of customers, increase advertising effectiveness, and enhance business reputation. In determining customer satisfaction, the company must consider five main factors: product quality, service quality, emotional, price, and cost. Customer satisfaction is one indicator of the success of a business. This is generally believed because organizations can increase their profit levels and gain a wider market share by satisfying consumers.

Brand identity strongly influences customer satisfaction (Alvarado-Karste & Guzmán, 2020). Brand identity is related to the name, logo, color, tagline, and brand symbol. Brand identity is a unique brand association that shows promise to consumers. Brand identity needs to resonate with consumers. This resonance aims to distinguish the brand from competitors and explain what it will do to maintain its sustainability. Individual consumers often use brand identity to demonstrate their identity; Therefore, brand identity plays a significant role in increasing customer satisfaction. Unique brand identity is essential in increasing customer satisfaction at the 'moment of truth'. Customers tend to be more satisfied than their fellow customers (in a competitive market) if the brand of choice has a different brand identity (Sharma et al., 2022).

Brand reliability is the consumer's belief that the product can meet the promised value or, in other words, the perception that the brand can meet needs and provide satisfaction. This dimension is essential for creating trust in the brand because the

brand's ability to fulfill the value it promises will make consumers feel confident about the same satisfaction in the future. Therefore, it can be understood that brand reliability is a belief that a product can meet or satisfy consumer needs (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán, 2005).

Brand reliability has the competence and is based on consumer confidence that a brand can realize the promised values. In other words, it concerns the perception that the brand can meet or satisfy consumer needs. Therefore, brand reliability is essential for consumers to trust a brand because fulfilling the promises of a brand can encourage consumers to be more confident that satisfaction in the future will be achieved. The thing that underlies brand reliability is an estimate that a particular brand can meet the needs of each individual consistently positively (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán, 2005).

A person's trust arises because the perception of reliability from the consumer's point of view is based on experience or instead on a sequence of transactions or interactions characterized by the fulfillment of expectations for product performance and satisfaction. Trust is built because of the expectation that the other party will act following the needs and desires of consumers. Brand reliability is a brand's ability to fulfill the promised value and, of course, can provide satisfaction for its users.

Brand reliability relates to the assumption that a brand can respond to consumer needs. This dimension indirectly views the brand as a promise to provide performance in the future. The company must consistently improve if it wants the brand to be trusted by consumers. Later, it can also increase their desire to make repeat purchases at the next opportunity. Brand reliability can be understood more simply as how sure a brand is reliable and trustworthy. This reliable and trustworthy brand perception is then used as an indicator for the brand reliability dimension (Forster et al., 2018).

H₁: Overall customer satisfaction has a positive effect on brand reliability

Customer Satisfaction and Brand Intention

The brand intention is an individual belief in guaranteeing a product's safety when used and the effects that may occur in the future (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán, 2005). Brand Intention is a consumer believes that the brand can prioritize the interests of consumers when problems in product consumption arise unexpectedly. Therefore, intentionality is the belief that the brand will be interested in what consumers need and will not take advantage of consumer ignorance.

Brand intention describes aspects of belief that go beyond concrete evidence to make individuals feel safe. The brand will be responsible and protected despite changes caused by problematic situations or conditions in the future in the product consumption process. Consumers' beliefs will always underlie their expectations that the (company's) actions in the future will be carried out more correctly. Therefore, it is essential for consumers to feel confident that later brands will not take advantage of their weaknesses. The brand intention is how the company convinces consumers that the brand can handle any consumer complaints when problems come to the products used (Aaker et al., 2013).

H₂: Overall customer satisfaction has a positive effect on the brand intention

Customer Satisfaction and Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is a measure of customer relevance to a brand. This measure can provide an overview of the possibility of a customer switching to another product, especially in a brand where there is a change regarding price or other attributes. Therefore, it can be understood that brand loyalty is a commitment to repurchase an item or service consistently in the future. Loyalty is a consumer's willingness to continue purchasing at a company long-term, use the product or service repeatedly, and recommend it to friends and other parties voluntarily. This shows that brand loyalty in certain products or services positively contributes to the company's success in the future (Aaker et al., 2013).

Brand loyalty is defined as a deeply held commitment to repurchase the brand in the future regardless of situational factors (Tatar & Eren-Erdoğmuş, 2016). Based on this definition, behavioral loyalty leads to a high market share, while attitudinal loyalty leads to a higher relative brand value (Aaker et al., 2013). Brand loyalty is formed through a learning process, which is a process where consumers with experience trying to find the most suitable product for them, in the sense that the product can provide the satisfaction they want. (Aaker et al., 2013) further explains brand loyalty as consumer loyalty to continue using the identical product from a company. Loyalty describes the expected behavior concerning a product or service. Brand loyalty will be high if a product is judged to provide the highest satisfaction so that consumers are reluctant to switch to other brands.

H₃: Overall customer satisfaction has a positive effect on brand loyalty

Brand Reliability and Brand Loyalty

Trust is the primary driver of loyalty because it creates a highly valued reciprocal relationship (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán, 2005). Consequently, brand loyalty underlines a continuous process and maintains the value of a relationship created by trust (Aaker et al., 2013). Brand reliability shows how the brand can be trusted by consumers so that there is no doubt felt by consumers when choosing the brand. There is a positive relationship between brand reliability and brand loyalty. Furthermore, the greater the value of brand reliability, the better the assessment of brand loyalty (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán, 2005).

H₄: Brand reliability has a positive effect on brand loyalty

H₅: Brand reliability has a significant role in mediating the relationship between overall customer satisfaction and brand loyalty

The unique value of a brand will be obtained when the level of trust in the brand is very high, which also distinguishes the brand from other brands, leading to loyalty (Tatar & Eren-Erdoğmuş, 2016). Furthermore, it is said that the primary purpose of marketing is to create a strong bond between consumers and the brand and the main composition of this bond is trust. Brand Intentions is an individual belief in guaranteeing a product's safety when used and effects that may occur in the future (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán, 2005). There is a positive relationship between brand intentions and brand loyalty. Therefore, the greater the value of brand Intentions, the better the assessment of brand loyalty.

H[6]:   Brand intention has a positive effect on brand loyalty

H[7]:   Brand intention has a significant role in mediating the relationship between overall customer satisfaction and brand loyalty

METHODS

The population of this research is the consumers of bottled drinking water from one of the bottled drinking water brands in Indonesia. The sampling technique used by the author is purposive sampling with the criteria of being at least 17 years old, having a high school educational background, and knowing the brand of bottled water according to the research context. The final sample size of this study was 120 respondents, according to the number of measurement indicators set. Customer satisfaction is measured by five statements developed from four indicators: re-purchase, creating word of mouth, creating a brand image, and creating purchases at the same company. Brand reliability is measured by five statement items developed from two indicators: the perception of a reliable brand and a trustworthy brand. The brand intention is measured by five statements developed from two indicators: interest in a brand and attention to a brand. Brand loyalty is measured by five statement items developed from four indicators: regular purchases, referring to others, showing immunity to the product, and consumer resistance.

Primary data collection was carried out using a questionnaire instrument, while data analysis used structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis. Test the validity of the data using factor analysis to acquire the standardized loading factor value must be more than 0.5. Meanwhile, the reliability test refers to acquiring the Cronbach alpha value, which must be above 0.6. The measurement model test is carried out through a confirmatory factor analysis test, with the standardized loading factor limit value having to be more than 0.5. The model fit test refers to the goodness of fit rule, which consists of absolute, incremental, and parsimony fit index. The hypothesis is supported by primary data when the value of t-statistics is more than 1.96.

RESULTS

The profile of the research respondents is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent's profile

Category		n	%
Age	17 – 25 years old	79	65.8
	26 – 35 years old	25	20.8
	36 – 40 years old	10	8.3
	> 40 years old	6	5.0
Gender	Male	52	43.3

Table 1.1. Respondent's Profile (continuation)

	Category	n	%
	Female	68	56.7
Profession	Civil employee	2	1.7
	Academician	2	1.7
	State-owned enterprises employee	4	3.3
	Private employee	29	24.2
	Student	51	42.5
	Entrepreneur	19	15.8
	Others	13	10.8
Income	< IDR. 3,500,000	50	41.7
	IDR. 3,500,000 – Rp5,000,000	21	17.5
	IDR. 5,000,000 – Rp10,000,000	30	25.0
	> IDR. 10,000,000	19	15.8

Source : data processed

According to Table 1, it is known that the majority of the respondents belonged to 17 – 25 years old, had a profession as a student, and had a monthly income of less than IDR. 3,500,000. Therefore, the respondents in this research commonly belong to productive age and are dominantly university students.

To conduct structural equation modeling, first, it needs to run a confirmatory factor analysis. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is part of SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) to test how a measured variable or indicator is good in describing or representing a number of a factor. In CFA, factors are also known as constructs. Measurement theory is used to determine how variables are measured, systematically and logically describing a model's construct. Confirmatory factor analysis is a particular form of factor analysis in statistics, most commonly used in social research. It is used to test whether the construct's size is consistent with the researcher's understanding of the nature of the construct. It is essential to make sure all the measurement items have already met the threshold regarding the validity and reliability of the measurement. The measurement item has a good validity when the standardized loading factor (SLF) is more than 0.5. The measurement item on each latent also has good reliability when the construct reliability (CR) is more than 0.6 and the variance extracted (VE) is more than 0.5. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Item	SLF	StandardErrors	Reliabilitas	
			CR ≥ 0,70	VE ≥ 0,50
BR1	0,71	0,49		
BR2	0,77	0,41		
BR3	0,70	0,51	0,85	0,55
BR4	0,76	0,43		
BR3	0,70	0,51	0,85	0,55
BR4	0,76	0,43		
BR5	0,77	0,41		
BR1	0,71	0,49		
BI1	0,65	0,58		
BI2	0,79	0,38		
BI3	0,82	0,32	0,86	0,55
BI4	0,80	0,36		
BI5	0,65	0,58		
OS1	0,73	0,47		
OS2	0,70	0,51		
OS3	0,71	0,49	0,86	0,55
OS4	0,78	0,39		
OS5	0,79	0,37		
BL1	0,68	0,53		
BL2	0,82	0,32		
BL3	0,83	0,31	0,87	0,58
BL4	0,65	0,57		
BL5	0,81	0,34		

Source : data processed

According to Table 2, it is known that all the measurement items have successfully met the threshold of the validity and reliability of the research instrument. Therefore, it can be confidently continued with the goodness of fit analysis. It is essential to ensure that the research model created already fits with the primary data collected. The goodness of fit test results is as provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Goodness of Fit

No	Goodness of fit index	Cut off value	Results
1	RMSEA	< 0.08	0.051
2	NFI	> 0.90	0.94
3	NNFI	> 0.90	0.98
4	PNFI	> 0.60	0.81
5	RFI	> 0.90	0.93
6	PGFI	> 0.60	0.66
7	SRMR	< 0.05	0.052
8	CFI	> 0.90	0.98
9	IFI	> 0.90	0.98

Source : data processed

Based on Table 3, it can be concluded that in overall, the research model has successfully met the goodness of fit criteria. Regarding the goodness of fit results, it can be continued to the hypothesis test. The complete model of the structural equation modeling results is depicted in Figure 1.

9
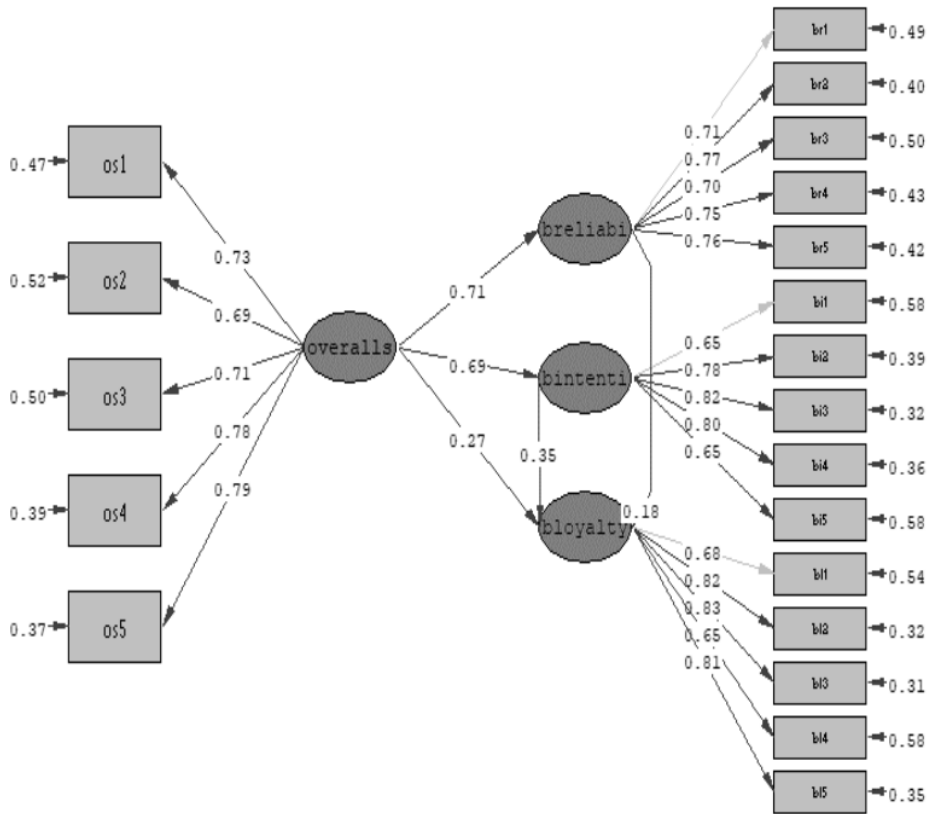
Chi-Square=218.45, df=165, P-value=0.00337, RMSEA=0.052

Figure 1. The structural equation modeling results

Source : data processed

Regarding Figure 1, the hypothesis test can be described more straightforward by comparing the t-value with the t-statistics. The hypothesis is supported by primary data when the t-value exceeds the threshold of 1.96. The results of the hypothesis test are provided in Table 4.

Table 4. Hypothesis Test Results

No	Path	Standardized loading factor	t-value	Conclusion
H1	Overall customer satisfaction → Brand reliability	0.71	6.32	Supported
H2	Overall customer satisfaction → Brand intention	0.69	5.83	Supported
H3	Overall customer satisfaction → Brand loyalty	0.27	1.62	Not supported
H4	Brand reliability → Brand loyalty	0.18	1.35	Not supported

10

Table 4. Hypothesis Test Results (continuation)

No	Path	Standardized loading factor	t-value	Conclusion
H5	Overall customer satisfaction → Brand reliability → Brand loyalty	0.25	1.86	Not supported
H6	Brand intention → Brand loyalty	0.35	2.59	Supported
H7	Overall customer satisfaction → Brand intention → Brand loyalty	0.39	2.86	Supported

Souce : data processed

Overall customer satisfaction has a significant effect on brand reliability. Overall, customer satisfaction is a significant milestone in the success of a brand. Overall customer satisfaction depends on how a brand can represent the reliability of its brand to increase the value of reliability in the minds of consumers. This condition means that overall customer satisfaction can be created if a brand can meet its reliability value and follow what is expected by its consumers. So that overall satisfaction is a variable that consumers can consider to increase the reliability value of the bottled drinking water brand.

Overall customer satisfaction has a significant effect on brand intention. Overall, customer satisfaction can be felt by customers when a brand can convince and prioritize the interests of consumers and make consumers believe that a brand can provide solutions when a problem arises unexpectedly. If customer satisfaction increases, the better the customer's perception of brand intention on a product. The brand intention is understood as a benchmark that makes customers feel satisfied and causes customers to feel more confident about a brand so that customers will choose that brand compared to other brands. Therefore, the value of brand intention is also significant to realize customer satisfaction so that customers are reluctant to switch to other brands.

Overall satisfaction does not affect brand loyalty. This condition means that overall customer satisfaction does not reflect brand loyalty. The overall satisfaction variable is not a variable that customers can consider in increasing brand loyalty from the bottled drinking water brand. Overall customer satisfaction ideally impacts brand loyalty where customers will give a positive image of a brand, become loyal to the brand, and make regular repeat purchases. Unfortunately, this study's availability of primary data has not supported the research hypothesis. Therefore, it needs further exploration regarding overall satisfaction and brand loyalty linkages. It needs more support from empirical data to provide evidence that brand loyalty is formed by overall satisfaction, as clearly explained from the theoretical base.

Brand reliability does not affect brand loyalty. This result means that brand reliability does not reflect brand loyalty, so the brand reliability has not been supported by data to be considered in increasing brand loyalty. The availability of primary data does not support the influence of brand reliability on brand loyalty. Overall satisfaction

has no significant effect on brand loyalty through brand reliability. In other words, brand reliability has not been supported by adequate data to be able to mediate the effect of overall satisfaction on brand loyalty. Therefore, overall customer satisfaction has not been supported by adequate data in establishing brand loyalty directly or indirectly through brand reliability.

The brand intention has a positive and significant influence on brand loyalty. Brand intentions are an individual belief in the guarantee of the safety of a product when it is used and the effects that may occur in the future. Loyalty is a deeply held commitment to buy or re-support a preferred product or service in the future, even though the influence of the situation and marketing efforts can cause customers to switch. The value of good and high brand intentions where customers will feel trust in a brand until finally will show their loyalty by making repeat purchases and showing immunity to other brands is a positive value that impacts this. Therefore, the greater the value of brand Intentions, the better the assessment of brand loyalty. Overall satisfaction positively and significantly influences brand loyalty through brand intention. Therefore, the brand intention has an essential role as an intermediary or indirect effect of overall satisfaction on brand loyalty. Customers will become loyal to the brand, directly through overall satisfaction or indirectly through brand intention.

CONCLUSION

Overall, customer satisfaction has a significant influence on brand reliability. The higher the overall level of customer satisfaction, it will be accompanied by an increase in the brand reliability value of the bottled drinking water brand. Overall, customer satisfaction has a significant influence on brand intention. The higher the overall level of customer satisfaction, it will be accompanied by an increase in the value of brand intention. Overall, customer satisfaction does not yet have adequate data to influence brand loyalty. The insignificant effect of overall customer satisfaction on brand loyalty is that customers tend not to refer positive things about the bottled drinking water brand to others. Brand reliability does not yet have adequate data support in influencing brand loyalty. The insignificant effect of brand reliability on brand loyalty is because customers have felt a gap in dissatisfaction with the brand name of bottled water. The brand intention has a significant influence on brand loyalty. The higher the value of brand intention will be accompanied by an increase in the value of brand loyalty.

Overall, customer satisfaction does not yet have adequate data to influence brand loyalty through brand reliability. This result means that brand reliability does not have adequate data support in mediating the effect of overall satisfaction on brand loyalty. Overall, customer satisfaction significantly influences brand loyalty through brand intention. These results indicate that brand intention has an essential role in mediating the relationship between overall customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

The establishment of brand loyalty needs to be supported by adequate brand reliability and has earned consumers' trust. Consumers of the AMDK brand need to be convinced that the AMDK brand will genuinely be able to meet their expectations. Optimization of brand reliability can be done by consistently communicating to consumers about the brand's reliability through appropriate exposure. It is necessary to examine the gaps in dissatisfaction that still exist, causing overall customer satisfaction to not succeed in forming brand loyalty.

Future research should consider measuring brand equity before linking satisfaction with brand loyalty. Further research also needs to consider consumer attitudes towards brands to form brand loyalty. This recommendation is because consumer attitudes will become an evaluation parameter of how consumers perceive the brand before finally being used as a predictor of brand loyalty.

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The Role Of Brand Reliability And Brand Intention In Mediating The Relationship Between Customer Satisfaction And Brand Loyalty

FINAL GRADE

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GENERAL COMMENTS

Instructor