

# The Role of Social Media Marketing Activity, Brand Love and Brand Personality toward Brand Loyalty: The Triangular of Love Approach

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**Abstract:-** The role of Generation Z in various aspects of life has become a significant focus of attention Gen Z has the ability to think globally due to their frequent use of social media. With the large number of Instagram users in Indonesia, Instagram aims to achieve a high adoption rate for advertising each year. Brands are perceived as an emotional connection between consumers and products, where this level of attachment is defined as brand loyalty. The tendency of Gen Z towards brand loyalty is relatively low, allowing them to switch brands. Therefore, this study examines consumer emotional perspectives, particularly in terms of love and social media activities, to enhance loyalty. Sternberg in 1986 stated that The Triangular Theory of Love represents the nature of the relationship between consumers and an object (such as a brand). Then, in 2009, Barefoot & Szabo defined social media marketing as activities conducted through social media to introduce a company and its products. The data was collected from 223 Instagram users within the Gen Z age group in six major cities on the island of Java in Indonesia. The sampling technique used was non-probability sampling with purposive sampling method, and it was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Square (PLS) through the SmartPLS 4.0 application.

**Keywords:-** Triangular Theory of Love, Social Media Marketing Activity Theory, Social Media Marketing Activity, Brand Love, Brand Personality, Brand Loyalty.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The role of Generation Z in various aspects of life, including consumer behavior and brand interactions, has been a significant focus of public discussion and academic research. Gen Z possesses a global mindset, as they frequently use social media to communicate with people worldwide. According to data from We Are Social, the majority of Instagram users fall within the 16-34 age group, including Indonesia, where the birth years range from 1997 to 2012 and are predominantly Gen Z. This is supported by data from the Indonesian Central Statistics Agency, which indicates that 27.94% of the population actively and influentially use social media. Given that Gen Z represents the largest population and will be the future consumers, it is

highly relevant for industries to understand their behaviors (Pinto & Paramita, 2021).

Brand choosing digital marketing as one of the ways to expand the market and reduce promotional costs in conventional media, which are known to have higher production costs compared to social media, and quickly determine consumer reactions towards the brand (Naibaho, 2023). With the reliability of social media, Generation Z can easily make purchases, including in the categories of snacks & beverages, ready-to-eat food, internet data, and personal care products that are most in-demand (UKMIndonesia, 2023).

Based on the results of data according to datareportal Indonesia in 2022 and 2023, the percentage of use of all social media as a whole as a channel to find information related to brands and products is quite high, which in 2022 has a percentage of 82.7% and in 2023 has a percentage of 82.4%. Thus, social media platforms used for brand research are very important to be carried out so that brands can maximize their influence on consumers (NapoleonCat, 2020-2023). Social media users are increasingly actively involved in various online discussions, trends, and activities, which are centered on individual members with related information and topics, and content-based activities (Algharabat, 2017). The social media that uses the most widely used content base in Indonesia is Instagram. Based on the results of NapoleonCat data from 2020 to 2023, there is a trend that continues to increase in the use of Instagram in Indonesia in 2020 as many as 83,770,000, then in 2021 as many as 92,527,400, then in 2022 as many as 97,171,400, and in 2023 as many as 113,396,500.

With the large number of Instagram users in Indonesia, Instagram aims to continually increase its advertising reach potential each year. For instance, in 2020, the advertising reach potential was 63,000,000; in 2021, it was 85,000,000; in 2022, it reached 99,150,000; and in 2023, it is projected to be 106,000,000. Despite this high advertising reach potential on Instagram, the adoption rate remains at 48.4% in 2023. The adoption rate refers to how quickly brands or users adopt Instagram as a marketing or promotional tool, leading to direct consumer purchases from those brands.

In literature, a brand is considered an emotional attachment between consumers and a product, where the level of attachment is defined as brand loyalty. Additionally, the tendency of Generation Z towards brand loyalty is low, allowing them to switch brands frequently. This is evident in the research findings of Pinto and Paramita (2021), which state that Generation Z tends to switch brands frequently, making it challenging for companies to commit to a particular brand.

Several factors that influence brand loyalty in this context are social media marketing activity, brand personality, and brand love. In their efforts to reach and build relationships with consumers, through social media marketing activity (SMMA) and analyzing brand personality in their consumers. SMMA has five dimensions: interactivity, informativeness, personalization, trendiness, and e-word of mouth (E-WOM). Through these activities, various characteristics of consumer perceptions towards SMMA can be summarized (Yadav & Rahman, 2018). According to the research findings by Pratama (2016), social media significantly influences brand loyalty. Therefore, social media marketing can be a profitable campaign with relevant and popular content, indicating that an increase in social media marketing will also impact brand loyalty.

Various attributes related to brand personality inevitably play a role in successful social media communication (Hu et al, 2018). Based on the research by Garanti & Kissi (2019), it is stated that building a positive overall image and a harmonious personality are crucial for developing deeper and long-lasting connections, leading to loyalty over time. Furthermore, research suggests that aggressiveness as a brand personality trait may be less important when it involves personal interactions (such as visiting a destination or purchasing a car). Before social media marketing and brand personality influence brand loyalty, there is another factor that can affect it, namely brand love. Where, before someone becomes loyal to a brand, they will first show a desire to own products from a specific brand so that consumers will feel satisfied and confident when they can own and use that brand. According to the research by Bairrada et al (2018), brand love has a positive and significant impact on brand loyalty. The results indicate that brand loyalty is becoming an increasingly important trend for consumers who value a connection with a brand.

## II. LITERATUR REVIEW

### A. *The Triangular Theory of Love*

The triangular theory of love by Sternberg (1986) posits that the nature of the relationship between consumers and an object (such as a brand) is based on three factors: preference, aspiration, and choice or commitment. By considering the presence or absence of these three dimensions as emotional dimensions in the consumer-brand relationship, affection towards a brand is founded on the theory of triangular love. Delving deeper into the concept and application of this love theory can provide valuable

insights and a better understanding of the factors that drive customer loyalty.

### B. *Social Media Marketing Activity Theory*

Social media marketing itself refers to all activities carried out through social media to introduce a company and its products (Barefoot & Szabo, 2009). In an effort to conceptualize the main activities that can enhance the success of a brand using online social media (Kim & Ko, 2012), five dimensions of social media marketing activity have been identified: entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and E-WOM (Ebrahim, 2020), as follows:

- E-word of mouth
- Customization
- Trendiness
- Interaction
- Entertainment

Digital marketing activities can encompass various different strategies such as email, promotional strategies through websites, and social media. Social media marketing activity is considered one of the most successful strategies for achieving branding goals (Habibi et al, 2014).

### C. *Brand Loyalty*

Brand loyalty is the desire within consumers to repurchase products and services they desire in the future, even if circumstances or marketing efforts influence them to change (Kotler & Keller, 2016). According to Radhitama (2018), brand loyalty in consumers is also influenced by the use of social media channels by companies. This makes it easier for consumers to seek and receive useful information across various social media platforms. Based on the above definition, it can be concluded that brand loyalty is a repetitive purchasing behavior, influenced by positive attitudes towards consistent service and satisfaction with the product or brand. According to BILGIN (2018), the indicator of brand loyalty is feeling satisfied with a brand that appears on social media, typically choosing this brand as the first option over others, and recommending it to others through social media.

### D. *Social Media Marketing Activity*

Social Media Marketing Activity is the technique of using social media to create content that is used by people in their daily lives, due to the easily accessible and measurable technology such as social networks, blogs, micro-vlogs, communities, photos, and podcasts (Singh & Diamond, 2020). According to Godey et al (2016), social media marketing activity provides a significant opportunity to reach consumers within social media communities and also to develop more intimate relationships with them. Based on the above definition, it can be concluded that social media marketing activity is an online marketing activity using social media to introduce, enhance brand image, and raise consumer awareness of the products to be marketed, by creating engaging content in the form of videos or attractive photos.

**E. Brand Personality**

According to Kotler & Keller (2016), brand personality is a specific blend of human traits that can be associated with a particular brand. Similarly, Coelho et al (2020) state that brand personality provides benefits for both businesses and consumers. Furthermore, Siahaan et al (2023) indicate that the indicators of brand personality include portraying friendly, safe, successful, and responsible characteristics in the brand's products. Based on the above definitions, it can be concluded that brand personality is a unique characteristic within an individual that is linked to a brand, by evoking consumer emotions and influencing their preferences towards the brand.

**F. Brand Love**

Brand love explains the importance of enhancing emotions and positive attitudes towards a brand, thereby increasing brand acceptance, brand loyalty, consumer-brand relationships, marketing opportunities, and purchase intentions, while reducing price sensitivity. In the context of online network-based communities, buttons such as like and the heart icon, similar to Instagram, are considered expressions of love for the brand, creating a positive emotional connection between consumers and the brand (Algharabat, 2017). Furthermore, according to Ercis et al (2020), brand love is a strong bond that is built on social media through the development and formation of emotions, leading to passionate intimacy between consumers and the brand. Based on the definition above, it can be concluded that brand love is an emotionally and passionately deep connection that causes consumers to feel a personal relationship with a brand, motivating them to consistently choose, use, and support that brand over time. Indicators of brand love. According to Algharabat (2017), include the brand being exceptional, comfortable, truly outstanding, capable of bringing joy, liked by the individual, genuinely enjoyable, and creating a strong attachment.

**III. METHOD AND MATERIAL**

This research aims to test the variables that have been identified to determine whether they have a positive and significant relationship with Brand Loyalty.

➤ *The Research Framework is as Follows:*

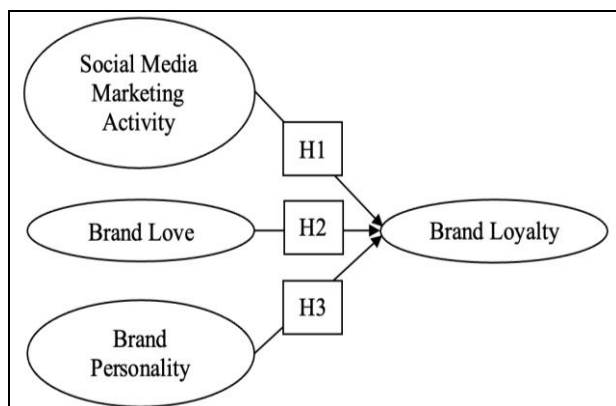


Fig 1: Research Framework

The population in this study consists of Instagram users who have made purchases through Instagram social media with a minimum of 3 purchases per year, residing in six major cities in the Indonesian island of Java: Jakarta, Bandung, Semarang, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, and Banten. The sample size for this study was calculated using G\*Power 31 software with an error parameter of 5%, statistical power of 95%, and 3 predictors, resulting in a total sample size of 119 individuals.

Due to the presence of two mediating variables and data cleaning, it is necessary to increase the number of respondents in distributing the questionnaire. Therefore, considering these factors, the questionnaire will be distributed to 250 respondents. The data collection method for this research will be through the use of a questionnaire, which will be distributed online via Google Form through WhatsApp, Instagram, and Twitter, with the assistance of colleagues. The research will utilize a 7-point Likert scale and the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach based on Partial Least Square (PLS) using the SmartPLS 4.0 application. This is because of the use of several indicators and the limited sample size.

**IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The respondent data shows that based on gender, the respondents are predominantly female, totaling 187 respondents (83.86%). Based on age, the respondents are predominantly in the 25-27 age range, totaling 70 respondents (31.39%). In terms of brands followed on Instagram, in the snack and beverage category, the brand Bittersweet by Najla has 88 respondents (39.46%), in the ready-to-eat food category, Kyla Food has 112 respondents (50.22%), in the internet data category, Telkomsel has 111 respondents (49.78%), and in the personal care category, The Body Shop has 92 respondents (41.26%).

Table 1: Reliability dan Validity

Variabel	Indikator	Factor Loading	Composite Reliability	AVE
Brand Love	BL 1	0.739	0.910	0.562
	BL 2	0.734		
	BL 3	0.754		
	BL 4	0.830		
	BL 5	0.772		
	BL 6	0.833		
	BL 7	0.750		
	BL 8	0.550		
Brand Loyalty	BLOY 1	0.813	0.833	0.624
	BLOY 2	0.789		
	BLOY 3	0.768		
Brand Personality	BP 1	0.825	0.908	0.713
	BP 2	0.882		
	BP 3	0.834		
	BP 4	0.835		
Social Media Marketing Activity	SMMA 1	0.632	0.853	0.539
	SMMA 2	0.532		
	SMMA 3	0.624		
	SMMA 4	0.568		
	SMMA 5	0.666		
	SMMA 6	0.639		
	SMMA 7	0.646		
	SMMA 8	0.522		
	SMMA 9	0.622		
	SMMA 10	0.684		
	SMMA 11	0.644		

According to Hair et al (2017), the standard value for factor loading must be at least > 0.7 to be considered passing in the test This is because values smaller than 0.4 cannot be used in the model. Therefore, factor loadings of 0.5 or 0.6 are still acceptable. Based on Table 1 above, it can be observed that each indicator has factor loadings that meet the recommended criteria, indicating that each indicator has passed the test. According to Sekaran & Bougie (2020), the reliability test value should have a composite reliability (CR) coefficient of  $\geq 0.7$ , looking at

Table 1, it is evident that the composite reliability (CR) values for all variables in this study fall within the range of 0.833 – 0.910. Based on the results, it can be seen that the variables in this study overall meet the criteria and also have good reliability. According to Hair et al (2017), the average variance extracted (AVE) should be  $\geq 0.5$  In Table 1, it is evident that the AVE results fall within the range of 0.539 – 0.713 Therefore, this study demonstrates excellent convergent validity and can be considered valid.

Table 2: Path Coefficients

Relationship	Path Coefficients	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
Social Media Marketing Activity – Brand Loyalty	0.290	3.577	0.000	Supported
Brand Love – Brand Loyalty	0.467	5.682	0.000	Supported
Brand Personality – Brand Loyalty	0.026	0.406	0.685	Not Supported

➤ *Based on the Results from the Table Above, the Following Results were Obtained:*

- The influence of Social Media Marketing Activity on Brand Loyalty has path coefficients with a value of 0.290 (positively valued), t-statistics of 3.577 > 1.96, and p-values of 0.000 < 0.05. This means that social media marketing activity has a positive and significant impact on brand loyalty, thus supporting hypothesis 1. This study confirms the findings of Wantini & Yudianta (2021) and also Dani and Perengki (2023), indicating that consumer engagement and active participation

through social media lead to increased trust in the brand and ultimately enhance brand loyalty.

- The influence of Brand Love on Brand Loyalty has path coefficients with a value of 0.467 (positively valued), a t-statistic of 5.682 > 1.96, and a p-value of 0.000 < 0.05. This means that Brand Love has a positive and significant impact on brand loyalty, thus supporting hypothesis 2. This study confirms the findings of Siahaan et al (2023) and Sikandar & Ahmed (2019), indicating that when consumers perceive self-reflection and active engagement with a brand, they are more likely to exhibit loyalty towards that brand.



- The influence of Brand Personality on Brand Loyalty has path coefficients of 0.026 (positively valued), a t-statistic of  $0.406 < 1.96$ , and a p-value of  $0.685 > 0.05$ . This means that Brand Love has a positive but insignificant effect on brand loyalty, thus rejecting hypothesis 3. This study confirms the findings of Angelina & Nurlinda (2023) and Bairrada et al (2018), suggesting that brands still need to differentiate themselves and expand their target market.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

➤ *Based on the Previous Discussion, it can be Concluded as Follows:*

- Social media marketing activities has a positive and significant impact on brand loyalty among Instagram users who follow a brand within the Gen Z age group, this means that if the value of social media marketing activity increases, there will also be an increase in brand loyalty among Instagram users who follow a brand within the Gen Z age group, and statistically, this has a significant influence.
- Brand love has a positive and significant influence on brand loyalty among Instagram users who follow a brand within the Gen Z age group, this means that if the value of brand love increases, there will also be an increase in brand loyalty among Instagram users who follow a brand within the Gen Z age group, and statistically, this has a significant impact.
- Brand personality has a positive but not significant influence on brand loyalty among Instagram users who follow a brand within the Gen Z age group, this means that if the brand personality score increases, there will also be a slight increase in brand loyalty among Instagram users who follow a brand within the Gen Z age group, although statistically it is not significant.

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