THE IMPACT OF BRAND PERSONALITY AND SELF-IMAGE CONGRUENCEON STUDENT'S BRAND ATTACHMENT OF APPLE PRODUCTS

PENGARUH PERILAKU MEREK DAN GAMBARAN PERSONALITAS TERHADAP HUBUNGAN MEREK PRODUK APPLE DARI MAHASISWA

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Abstract: Creating an attachment between brand and consumer represents a key of success for a company for many years to come. Consumers intend to buy a product that describes their self-image in a way that they want to be seen by others. The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of brand personality and self-image congruence on student's brand attachment of Apple products, as for now Apple products are known to have great quality of products on their field which differentiate the product with other type of products. The population of this research is the student of Sam Ratulangi University and the quantitative method is used in this research. In order to collect the data, questionnaires were distributed to 100 Sam Ratulangi University students. The result of this research shows that brand personality has positive relationship toward brand attachment with significant influence, and self-image congruence also has positive relationship toward brand attachment with significant influence. It is recommended for the marketers to utilize on both variables in order to increase the tendencies of people in buying the product.

Keywords: brand personality, self-image congruence, brand attachment

Abstrak: *Membuat suatu hubungan antara merek dan konsumen menjadi sebuah kunci kesuksesan untuk sebuah perusahaan bertahan bertahun-tahun. Konsumen selalu membeli produk yang menggambarkan diri mereka sendiri, selai itu para konsumen juga ingin membeli produk agar sesuai dengan tanggapan orang lain juga. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui dampak dari personalitas merek dan gambaran personalitas terhadap hubungan merek Apple yang dimiliki mahasiswa, saat ini Apple menjadi produk yang dikenal dengan kualitas yang baik sehingga produk mereka berbeda dengan produk yang lainnya. Populasi dari penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa Universitas Sam Ratulangi dan metode kuantitatif digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukan bahwa personalitas merek memiliki dampak positif dan signifikan terhadap hubungan terhadap merek, selain itu gambaran personalitas juga memiliki dampak positif dan signifikan terhadap hubungan antar merek yang ada. Sangat direkomendasikan bagi para penjual produk untuk memperhatikan variabel variabel yang ada untuk meningkatkan kemungkinan para konsumen untuk membeli produk sehingga sekaligus meningkatkan penjualan produk yang ada.*

Kata kunci: personalitas merek, gambaran personalitas, hubungan terhadap merek

INTRODUCTION

Research Background

Today, the impact of branding can be felt in order to do successful marketing because of the recognition that a company will receive from the customers. Branding can change how people perceive your brand; whether driving new customer or increasing brand awareness. Branding is crucial when trying to generate future business, and brand that has been strongly established can boost the value of a business by offering the company more leverage in the industry. Strong branding commonly means that the customer will more likely to do business with the company as a result of having a positive impression on customer that will remain for a long time, thus creating familiarity and a sense of trust for using a brand they know. Accordingly, brand personality will help consumer to know whether their self-concept match with the brand itself. Many companies attempt to find a strategic way to create strong relational bonding with their consumers because such attachment has a profound impact on attitudinal and behavioral responses to the brand. The effects of self-image congruence on brand attachment have been explored in marketing literature. For example, consumers' self-image congruence plays an important role in building and fostering emotional brand attachment. Specifically, actual self-image congruence has a stronger influence on consumers' emotional brand attachment than ideal self-image congruence. Consumers tend to develop stronger emotional attachment to products with a personality that is congruence to their self-image (Back, 2005).

Consumers are attached to brands as brand usage helps them improve their self-image and achieve a sense of belonging and connections with others. Products/brands can serve as communication symbols that are socially shared and reproduced through social interactions (Postica and Cardoso, 2015). The function of social image congruence in consumer behavior can be explained by two motivations: social consistency motive and social approval motive. Social consistency motive suggests that consumers are motivated to keep their self- image in a way that they want to be seen by others, while social approval motive denotes that consumers have a motivation to earn approval from others. Therefore, we propose that consumers use brands that are consistent with their social image to gain social approval from others. Apple Inc. as for right now act as one of the major companies that have high value and reach toward all places in the globe; it cannot be denied that the products of Apple can be found anywhere and it even become synonymous with the life of many people. Apple's products such as the Iphone, Ipad and more are some of the juggernaut for the company's products.

Many consumers, especially youngsters, will eventually know about these products because of the exposure of the business and its products as well, that is why Apple's brand is regarded as one of the best products in the world right now and the brand's personality can be considered as high end and elegant. High end because the products of Apple as for the current status quo are mostly sold with higher prices compare than to other smartphone or other electronic devices; while elegant can be found within the products value as for right now. Common people now saw Apple product as the apex of electronic devices especially smartphone; therefore, people usually consider the product as a rare one which can only be purchased by high end people. The brand personality of these products is already known worldwide; it makes sense because Apple trying to reach the consumers with the people who have rich self-concept. Currently the people with this self-concept can come from students. Students usually consist of young people with the need of approval from people around them.

The problem occurs regarding Apple's brand personality and student's self-image congruence; even though it can be seen that the personality of the brand is in line with the self-image but the extent of how students describe their needs and wants is still unknown. Also, about how students can be attached and willing to actually try to purchase the products because they have an emotional attachment and the desire to have the products which in line with their value is still left with some questions to be answered. It can be stated that these 2 variables can have a close connection regarding brand attachment; or maybe it does not.

Research Objective

The research objectives are:
1. To find out the influence of brand personality on brand attachment of Apple product
2. To find out the influence of self-image congruence on brand attachment of Apple product
3. To find out the influence of brand personality and self-image congruence on brand attachment of Apple products simultaneously

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Brand Personality

The application of Brand Personality can be seen in many brands right now in this world; according to the definitions above brand personality can be consider as the persona of a certain brand. This persona of the brand seen in many perspectives of people but usually will end up in one conclusion; thus, making a certain product synonymous with a certain persona (Chinomona, 2013). There are few examples of persona within a brand; however, it can be categorized in 2 main categories which are high end and low end. These 2 personas have 2 different meanings which also can be relevant to different sets of people and consumers; it cannot be denied that people have different types of income. Therefore, people will eventually do adjustment with the products that they will buy in the end of the day; these adjustments will eventually correlate with the brands of products out there. The two main categories in this scenario are high end persona and low-end persona; which are contradict with each other thus creating dynamic for brand personalities in the end.

Self-Concept

The root of the self-image congruence comes from social psychology, where interpersonal relations are analyzed. From that area, a lot of studies show that people perceive others they like to be more similar to themselves than the people they don't like. The opposite relation was also proven: people like more the people that are similar to them and like less those who are different. If we transpose these conclusions in the context of consumer behavior, we could predict that people would prefer brands which they think people similar to them use. According to Rosenberg (Sirgy, 1982), self-concept is the totality of the individual's thoughts and feelings having reference to himself as an object. The self-concept is the totality of all the beliefs an individual hold about himself. It is the way they define themselves. The self-concept might serve as an anchor for comparison and evaluation. Individuals are searching to maintain and enhance their self-concept and want to be in a position where their actual self-image is so good, that it matches their relevant ideal self. In the present environment, brands act as symbols, means through which consumers can express their identity and interact easier with others of similar interests.

Self-Image Congruence

For consumers, brands have symbolic attributes, which construct the brand-user image, meaning how would a typical user of this brand look like and behave. To decide if they like the brand, individuals try to match their own perceived image with the said brand. This is called "self-image congruence". If these two have a lot of things in common, the individual will have a positive attitude towards the brand. Everybody has a particular identity, preference and habit that they are aware of. Once their "self" is set, individual tends to protect them. For instance, in term of self-image and identity; there are examples such as the perfectionist and also person that can be considered as "calm and collective" (Kressman et al, 2006). In a perfectionist world; these people that have this type of self-image will see themselves as people that need to do everything right and need to achieve the best result. The highest or best result will usually become the main goal and these people will not accept failure at the end of the day; it can be seen within their daily life whether or not they have a perfectionist self-image or not. For example, through their work ethics, management of either time or work, and even the way these people spend their free time. Another example is the "calm" self-image; which is the opposite of a perfectionist personality. These people mostly are not striving for the best outcome per se; but tend to find a rather easier way to do things even though the end result will be lackluster compare than the perfectionist.

Brand Attachment

The collection of characteristics, traits, and memberships that cognitively represent an individual in memory is generally described as the self-concept (Hosany and Martin, 2000). An attachment object becomes connected to the self when it is included as part of the consumer's self-concept. This relationship perspective differs sharply from a trait perspective on attachment where attachment reflected an individual difference variable characterizing one's systematic style of connection across relationships over time (i.e., secure, anxious-ambivalent, and avoidant styles). The basic explanation of self-concept is highly connected with the believe that a certain human being hold; there are many types of self-concept that can be found because of the human nature which differ from one and another. A certain characteristic or traits within a person can determine their main self-concept; as an internal factor it plays an integral part that will shape a person's mindset and, in the end, create the self-concept for a person. This self-concept will eventually be exposed to other people and will be labelled by

others as well; thus, creating diversity of self-concept at the end. However; beside the internal factors there are also external factors that can re-shaped the self-concept of a person. Even though the person or customer already have a distinctive self-concept, it can still be change from outside interference. Outside interferences such as groups of people; friends, co-workers or even the condition of working place can play a big part in the re-shaped and even can outrun the internal factor of a person's self-concept.

Previous Research

Tong, Su and Xu (2018) in brand personality and its impact on brand trust and brand commitment: an empirical study of luxury fashion brands found that there is a linkage between brand personality and brand attachment. "Results of Study 1 revealed that American consumers perceive six distinct personality dimensions and 37 personality traits in luxury fashion brands. Study 2 validated the results from Study 1 and further clearly indicated that brand personality has a significant effect on both brand trust and brand commitment."

Kim et al (2015) in the impact of image congruence on brand attachment and loyalty: the moderating role of product type also founds that self-image congruence affect the brand attachment. "The findings reveal that self, social, and functional image congruence are positively associated with brand attachment, which in turn leads to greater brand loyalty. The expressive and functional product types are found to moderate the effects of self and functional image congruence on brand attachment."

Li, Wang and Yang (2011) in the effects of corporate-brand credibility, perceived corporate-brand origin, and self-image congruence on purchase intention: evidence from china's auto industry shows that self-image congruence associated with brand attachment in the end. "The results reveal that corporate-brand credibility, perceived corporate-brand origin, and self-image congruence have direct positive impacts on purchase intention. Furthermore, corporate-brand credibility and self-image congruence both acted as moderating variables in the relationship between corporate-brand origin and purchase intention. Corporate-brand credibility is more significant in influencing consumers; purchase intention toward the brand than perceived corporate-brand origin."
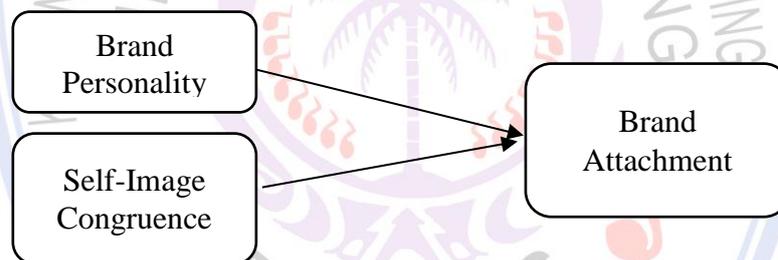
Conceptual Framework

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
Source: Data Processed, 2020

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Approach

This is a quantitative research that emphasizes objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data collected through polls, questionnaires, and surveys, or by manipulating pre-existing statistical data using computational techniques. Survey method used as the source of primary data by distributing questionnaire to find out the direct influence of independent variables (X) which are brand personality and self-image congruence on dependent variable (Y) which are brand attachment.

Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

The population of this research are students of Sam Ratulangi Univeristy that use Apple products. The sample size of the research will be 100 respondents which are users of Apple products. Sample method that can be used for this research is convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a type of nonprobability sampling where members of the target population that meet certain practical criteria are included for the purpose of the study.

Data Collection Method
        To collect the research data, primary data collection was used through questionnaires. A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions (or other type of prompts) for the purpose of gathering information from respondents.

Operational Definition of Research Variables
Table 1. Variable Definition

Variable	Definition	Indicators
Brand Personality (X_1)	Brand Personality is the stage of brand development, which means that brand reflect the personality of the company. In this case Apple has a unique brand personality which are high end, glamour, sophisticated and limited editions.	-Sincerity -Excitement -Competence -Sophistication
Self-Image Congruence (X_2)	Self-Image Congruence refers to the cognitive match between consumers' self-concept and a product/brand image, store image, destination image, or user image of a given product	-Actual Self -Ideal Self -Social Self
Brand Attachment (Y)	Brand attachment is an emotionally charged bonding between consumers and brand and essential foundation to successful brand management. It also refers to the strength of the cognitive and affective bond connecting the brand with the self in a symbolic manner.	-Feeling -Thought -Connectedness

Source: Author's Note, 2020

Validity and Reliability
        Validity test use to measure the obtaining data are in line with the research concept. In other words, the instrument items used to obtain the data is correct and related with the concept of the research that will be conducted. Scale validity uses content validity where content validity shows the extent to which the items in the test cover the entire area of the object to be measured or to what extent the contents of the test reflect the characteristics of the attributes to be measured. Reliability test use to measure the consistency of instrument items. Reliability test defined as an index that showed how far instrument items can be trusted or dependable. Another definition if a set of the same object is measured many times with the same measuring instrument will get the same result.

Multiple Linear Regression
        Multiple Linear Regression is used in this research. Multiple Regression is a correlation coefficient indicates the strength of relationship between two variables, it gives us no idea of how much of the variance in the dependent or criterion variable will be explained when several independent variables are theorized to simultaneously influence it. This analysis is adopted when the researcher has one dependent variable which is presumed to be a function of two or more independent variables. The objective of this analysis is to make a prediction about the dependent variable based on its covariance with all the concerned independent variables.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result
Validity and Reliability
        The validity test of brand personality (X1), self-image congruence (X2), and brand attachment (Y) are all valid. The variable is reliable because the value of Cronbach's Alpha is 0,783 bigger than 0,6.
Result of Multiple Linear Regression
Table 2. Case Processing Summary

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	5.148	1.474		3.492	.001
	Switching Barriers (X1)	.271	.091	.329	2.979	.004
	Inertia (X2)	.139	.049	.315	2.853	.003

Source: Data Processed, 2020

Multiple regression analysis is used to determine the effect of the independent variables on dependent variable. The multiple linear regression equation can be interpreted as the followings. Constant value of 5.148 means that in a condition of ceteris paribus, if all independent variables equal to zero, then Brand Attachment (Y) as dependent variable will be 5.148. X1' s coefficient value of 0.271 means that if there is one unit increase in Brand Personality (X1) then the Brand Attachment (Y) will improve and increase by 0.271. X2's coefficient value of 0.139 means that if there is one unit increase in Self-Image Congruence (X2) then the Brand Attachment (Y) will improve and increase by 0.139.

Table 3. Table of R and R Square

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.587[a]	.345	.332	1.827

Source: Data Processed, 2020

The coefficient of determination (R^2) measures the ability of a model in explaining variation of dependent variable. The value of coefficient of determination is between 0 and 1. The coefficient of determination (R) according to the table 3 is 0.587 which shows that the variation of all independent variable explains 58.7% of variation in the Brand Attachment (Y), while the remaining 42.3% is explained by other factors outside the model or not discussed in this research.
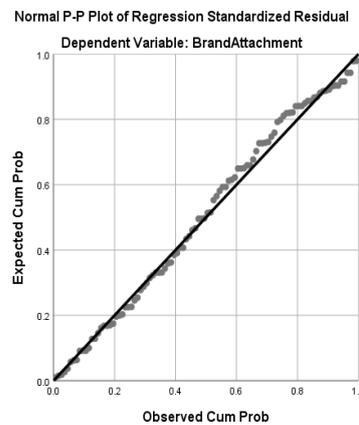

Figure 1. Normality Test
Source: Data Processed, 2020

Figure 1 shows that the dots are spreading near to the diagonal line and follow the direction of the diagonal line. Therefore, the normality test is accepted which means the data of this research is normally distributed.
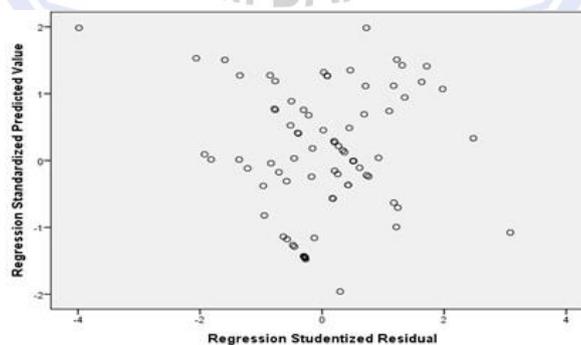

Figure 2. Heteroscedasticity
Source: Processed Data, 2020

Figure 2 shows that the dots are spreading above and below the number zero (0) in the Y axis. This proves that there is no heteroscedasticity in this regression.

Table 4. Multicollinearity Test Result

Model	Collinearity Statistics		Status
	Tolerance	VIF	
Brand Personality	0.347	1.223	No Multicollinearity
Self-Image Congruence	0.347	1.223	No Multicollinearity

Source: Data Processed, 2020

Table 4 shows that the tolerance value of Brand Personality is 0.347, and Self-Image Congruence is 0.347 meaning that the tolerance value of each variable is more than 0.1. The VIF value of Brand Personality is 1.223, and Self-Image Congruence is 1.223 meaning that the VIF value of each variable is less than 10. Since all the tolerance values are more than 0.1 and VIF value of each independent variable is less than 10, this research is free from multicollinearity.

Table 5. F-Test

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	170.626	2	85.313	25.562	.000[b]
	Residual	323.743	97	3.337		
	Total	494.360	99			

Source: Data Processed, 2020

Table 4.8 shows the value of Fcount is 25.562. The value of Ftable is found on the F Distribution Table by determining the degree of freedom 1 (numerator) is 2 and degree of freedom 2 (denumerator) is 97 with level of significance is 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$) and the level of confidence is 95% then Ftable is 3.09. The result is Fcount (25.562) > Ftable (3.09) with the level significant of 0,000. Therefore, since Fcount is greater than Ftable and the significant is 0.000<0.05, Hypothesis 3 is accepted which means the independent variables simultaneously influence the dependent variable significantly.

Table 5. T-Test

Variable	tcount	Ttable	Description
Brand Personality	2.979	1.984	Accepted
Self-Image Congruence	2.853	1.984	Accepted

Source: Data Processed, 2020

The t-test is used to see the partial influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable. The value of t-count of X1 is 2.979 with the level significant of 0.000. Since the value of tcount = 2.979 > ttable = 1.984 meaning that H1 is accepted. Sig <0.05 means that the confidence of this prediction is above 95% and the probability of this prediction errors is below 5% which is 0.000. The result of this declares that X1 (Brand Personality) partially has a significant effect on Brand Attachment (Y). The value of t-count of X2 is 2.853 with the level significant of 0.000. Since the value of tcount = 2.853> ttable = 1.984 meaning that H2 is accepted. Sig <0.05 means that the confidence of this prediction is above 95% and the probability of this prediction errors is below 5% which is 0.000. The result of this declares that X2 (Self-Image Congruence) partially has a significant effect on Brand Attachment (Y).

Discussion

Today, the impact of branding can be felt in order to do successful marketing because of the recognition that a company will receive from the customers. Branding can change how people perceive your brand; whether driving new customer or increasing brand awareness. Realize it or not, our daily life is surrounded with branding. This phenomenon can be seen from two different sides, like a coin. On one hand, company makes consumers easier to make choices with the brand on the product, so the customer can easily identify the product that they looking for. But from the other side, there is a dilemma that actually creates new confusion for consumers to choose products in the midst of the many similarities of various brands offered in the market. Branding is crucial when trying to generate future business, and brand that has been strongly established can boost the value of a business by offering the company more leverage in the industry. Strong branding commonly means that the

customer will more likely to do business with the company as a result of having a positive impression on customer that will remain for a long time, thus creating familiarity and a sense of trust for using a brand they know.

This research was analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis. In the multiple regression method, regression procedures must divide the variables into two types which are dependent variable and independent variables. To get an accurate result from multiple linear regression method the purpose of this research is to analyzed the effect of Brand Personality (x1) and Self-Image Congruence (x2) as the independent variables towards Brand attachment (Y) as the dependent variable. The result of this research shows that based on hypothesis testing by using F-test, it is proven that there is linear relationship between independent and dependent variable simultaneously. It is also show that based on hypothesis testing using t-test, from the significance value it can be seen that not all variables individually have a significant effect. All variables have positive and significant effect toward Brand attachment as the singular dependent variable. This result is the same with theories and previous researches that stated that Brand Personality and Self-Image Congruence do have positive effect on Brand Attachment.

The hypothesis about Brand Personality shows that it has a positive and significant effect on the Brand Attachment, therefore hypothesis 1 is accepted. This is in line with the previous research that explained about the effect of Brand Personality towards the Brand Attachment. It was proved that brand personality has significant effects on brand attachment (Tong, Su and Xu, 2018). Switching barrier impact on customer loyalty significantly through customer satisfaction. The hypothesis about Self-Image Congruence shows that it has a positive and significant effect on the Brand Attachment, therefore hypothesis 2 is accepted. This is in line with the previous research that explained about the effect of self-image congruence towards the brand attachment (Kim et al, 2015). It was also proved that self-image congruence has significant effects on brand attachment; which is the sole conclusion of the current research as well (Li, Wang and Yang, 2010).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion
1. Brand Personality has positive correlation and significantly influence brand attachment of Apple Products within Sam Ratulangi University students. Meaning that Brand Personality can be one of the deciding factors of brand attachment for college students.
2. Self-Image Congruence has a positive correlation and significantly influences brand attachment of Apple Products within Sam Ratulangi University students. Meaning that self-image of a person and a brand can be correlated in order to gain brand attachment of a certain brand, in this case Apple product.
3. Brand Personality and self-image congruence have significant influence on brand attachment of Apple Products within Sam Ratulangi University students. Meaning that both variables will give influence toward Brand Attachment of Apple products; both can have the same and exact effect.
4. By looking at the conclusion of the research; it can be stated that the two main variables which are brand personality and self-image congruence have influence toward brand attachment on Apple Products within students of Sam Ratulangi University. It means that there is high tendency for students of the university to be attached toward a brand by looking at the personality of the brand and also the sense of relatable between the students and brand.

Recommendation
The marketer should take into consideration about what sort of personality do the consumers want and carefully set the branding strategies according to the expected personality. The marketer should have a better understanding about the consumer's preference; then discover ways to make the consumer feel that the brand can help them to bring out their self-image. By having the sense of relatable; consumers will have more tendencies to buy the products. It would be better if marketer find effective approach to convey their brand so it can be in-line with the consumers' self-images. This research can be used as a reference to develop new idea that can be implemented towards marketing and consumer behavior study. The future researchers may have more samples and have specific requirement of samples, also can develop this research by using other independent variables or other factors that influence brand attachment for the better research

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