




“Brand-consumer relationship of female millennials toward K-beauty”

AUTHORS	Adma Sari  Sucherly Meydia Hasan  Yevis Marty Oesman
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Yevis Marty Oesman, 2022

Adma Sari, Ph.D. Student of Doctoral
Science in Management Program,
Economic and Business Faculty,
Universitas Padjajaran, Indonesia.
(Corresponding author)

Sucherly, Lecturer, Professor at
Doctoral Science in Management
Program, Economic and Business
Faculty, Universitas Padjajaran,
Indonesia.

Meydia Hasan, Lecturer, Associate
Professor at Doctoral Science in
Management Program, Economic
and Business Faculty, Universitas
Padjajaran, Indonesia.

Yevis Marty Oesman, Lecturer,
Associate Professor at Doctoral Science
in Management Program, Economic
and Business Faculty, Universitas
Padjajaran, Indonesia.



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Adma Sari (Indonesia), Sucherly (Indonesia), Meydia Hasan (Indonesia),
Yevis Marty Oesman (Indonesia)

BRAND-CONSUMER RELATIONSHIP OF FEMALE MILLENNIALS TOWARD K-BEAUTY

Abstract

For the last decade, the Korean beauty market has skyrocketed in terms of sales. Despite differences in usage steps, culture, and geography, Korean beauty products are the fastest-growing market segment in Indonesia. In addition, they are aimed primarily at millennial consumers. Therefore, this study looked at the effect of the brand-consumer relationship on the experience of Korean beauty products in Indonesia. The research sample consisted of millennial female users. As a result, 255 valid responses were obtained. Using SEM Lisrel, the study revealed that all study hypotheses were accepted. All the variables had a significant influence on each other. Notably, brand commitment had the strongest impact, and it was significantly related to and contributed more to brand love. The contribution of this brand-consumer relationship stems from the fact that brand commitment is more consistent in achieving brand love than brand experience. Furthermore, it was found that brand experience is more subjective, resulting in irrational consumer behavior toward brand love.

Keywords relationship marketing, consumer behavior, hedonic
brand, beauty, emotional feeling

JEL Classification D91, L84, M31

INTRODUCTION

With its innovative offer, K-beauty in cosmetics has immediately succeeded as a global trend. In 2020, Korea became the world's third-largest cosmetics exporter after France and the United States (Premium Beauty News, 2021). The success of K-beauty can be traced back to its iconic products, such as BB creams and cushion products. This uproar encourages European and American brands to launch these products in order to win over Asian consumers.

Beauty product brings beautiful promises and hopes, especially to millennial consumers. Garg et al. (2015) state that brand love and brand experience are inseparable, with brand experience being a relationship that impresses and excites consumers. On the other hand, a good brand experience does not guarantee that consumers will consistently like the brand. As a result, consumer behavior is a disparity between what they buy and what they want. When faced with the decision of which position to purchase, consumer priority indicates that the attribute of the brand's ability to meet specific consumer needs is not found (Nielsen, 2015).

Strong emotions fill a relationship interaction. However, there is a failure to understand the brand commitment relationship. According to Shuv-Ami (2017), strong emotions of brand love can have an impact on brand commitment, whereas the opposite conclusion is that brand commitment will affect brand love (Batra et al., 2012). As a result, it

is critical to take action to avoid failure to comprehend brand love (Junaid et al., 2019). This objective, however, has not drawn a broader view in academic publicity (Andreini et al., 2018).

A successful brand is defined by brand-consumer relationship. As in perceived commitment, it elicits feelings and emotions toward loyalty, which shares ongoing mutual engagement and beneficial consumer-brand relationships. However, the most important aspect is what lies beneath the bonds that bind them together (Mrad et al., 2018; Cui et al., 2018). This study's relationship variables seek to investigate further the influence and impact of brand experience and brand commitment to brand love of K-beauty brands in Indonesia. One of them is brand consumer behavior, which is rapidly evolving toward K-beauty and has not been thoroughly researched.

Due to previous research limitations, this study aims to relate several variables in the context of consumer-brand relationships in the sphere of K-beauty brands. This is because brand-consumer relationships were thought to play a critical role and were highlighted as unilateral feelings (Ramadan, 2019). Furthermore, the brand is thought to have no sensitivity in the brand-consumer relationship, so the brand is thought to be unable to provide a reciprocal relationship (Bengtsson, 2003). Even though Valos et al. (2016) and Onete et al. (2017) have debated this, investigating the relationship between brand experience, brand commitment, and brand love would be beneficial.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

The literature review has shown various topics and numerous analyses of the brand as a subject of study (Santini et al., 2018). The brand experience is a fundamental and vital marketing tool in brand management (Shamim & Mohsin Butt, 2013). The consumer experience interaction points challenge marketers to act quickly and create good experiences as market competition is becoming increasingly fierce (Mathew & Thomas, 2018). Many multinational brands claim to be highly experiential, and brand experience has taken a strategic position in order to appeal to consumers (Rodrigues, 2018) emotionally.

Over the last two decades, consumer brand experiences have been identified as an intriguing research topic. Brakus et al. (2009) presented the construct of brand experience of consumption: sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioral. They used a scale to make it measurable, and brand experience became very popular. This has prompted many researchers to investigate the construct in various studies, sharpening the phenomenon analysis and broadening the scope of studies (Santini et al., 2018). Since brand experiences are unique, they vary in strength or intensity; they are stronger than others, even though they occur spontaneously and can be positive or negative.

According to Andreini et al. (2018), brand experience studies flourished in the early 2000s as a result of experiential in the marketplace (e.g., Pine & Gilmore, 1998, 1999), and research on marketing and consumer behavior (e.g., Aggarwal, 2004; Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2013).

Brand experience plays a significant role in improving customer relationships (Shaw & Ivens, 2002). This customer relationship is an important research topic if a company wants to win the competition, and there has not been much done in this area (Pina & Dias, 2021). Brand experience is defined as the subjective evaluation of consumers and non-consumers when interacting with brands (Brakus et al., 2009; Meyer & Schwager, 2007) and is recorded as a source of experience in consumer memory (Pine & Gilmore, 1998) via cognitive, affective to conative, and behavioral responses to brand stimuli (Brakus et al., 2009). Building brand experiences is necessary because of the consumer's lifestyle and personality.

Consumer preferences are strong, and they expect a similarity between brand image and their self-concept when it comes to brands (Tsai et al., 2015). They expect a brand to be able to manage their personality as well as their social self at the same time (Delgado-Ballester & Sabote, 2015; Escalas & Bettman, 2003; Fournier, 1998; Schmitt et al., 2015; Swaminathan et al., 2009; Thomson et al., 2005).

The constraint in experience is that it only happens once and is explained personally; based on virtue, it is impossible if the same experience occurs to other people (Walls et al., 2011). Evaluation will be impacted due to customer subjectivity when having a brand experience. This is due to the fact that each consumer will tell a different story about their brand experience, even if they consume the same brand at the same time. Consumers widely consume cosmetics and other hedonic products. Cosmetics contain higher subjectivity because brand experience is related to hedonic consumption. Thus, there is a natural consequence that cosmetics will influence consumer subjectivity.

Inconsistencies in the brand-consumer relationship are caused by consumer behavior. This behavior varies between men and women. Minkov (2011) and Tifferet and Herstein (2012) have suggested that women's consumer behavior is influenced by cultural influences and personality traits, such as women being more careful and detailed in understanding information. Especially worth mentioning women's behavior consumption in the context of "brand commitment, impulse buying, and hedonic consumption."

The recurring subject thought in brand loyalty is brand commitment (Wang, 2002). Kim et al. (2008) stated that their relationship is strongly related to customer characteristics. In addition, brand commitment is a function of brand characteristics. Commitment is significantly related to improving the quality of relationships (Khodabandeh & Lindh, 2021). Purchase intention toward a brand is influenced by a variety of factors, including not only public perception but also consumer commitment (Quero & Ventura, 2015).

Commitment is considered a behavior in relational marketing and is a central concept in the relational marketing paradigm. Most studies in marketing agree that brand commitment represents the relationship between the consumer and the brand. Commitment is valuable, especially in defining relationships (Čater & Čater, 2010) that last in long-term relationships (Chang et al., 2012). Thus, relationship commitment needs to be maintained (Shukla et al., 2016), and there needs to be consistent action and emotional closeness so that it can last in a long-term relationship.

Women exhibit distinct behaviors in terms of commitment and dominance over their own behavior (Zhang et al., 2015). In response, they become more open and closer to a brand. Consequently, millennial women have the highest level of relationship commitment, which is consistent with Tifferet and Herstein (2012).

In psychology, commitment is defined as a decision or cognition that corrects or blinds individuals to behavioral dispositions (Pritchard et al., 1999). Commitment demonstrates both parties' willingness to pursue the same goal, namely to make short-term sacrifices for long-term gains in a consumer-brand relationship. Commitment is noted as forward-thinking and reflects a desire for a long-term relationship.

Referring to Meyer and Allen's (1997) dimensions of commitment, i.e., affection, calculative, and normative, it is tailored to the type of product that has high relevance in emotional psychology and research background in consumer goods. The construct of brand commitment is built as affective, calculative, and normative attitudes and behaviors based on experience in the form of a desire to build long-term relationships or motivation to maintain mutually beneficial relationships.

The consumer's emotional connection provides great power, which causes consumers to be excited about the brand. In the concept of brand-consumer relationship, consumers' love for a brand contributes to building this feeling. Nothing can replace the brand even when the brand is unavailable (Batra et al., 2012). This consumer passion is called brand love (Fetscherin, 2014). According to Batra et al. (2012), emotional relationships and overall positive attitude of brand users contributed significantly to brand love. This means that brand love is more than just a love emotion (Carrol & Ahuvia, 2006) that does not result in short-term and discontinuous relationships but rather describes a long-term relationship based on "cognitive, affective, and behavioral experiences" (Batra et al., 2012). For consumers, cognitive evaluation is driven by rational profit, so brand love must be rational (Sarkar, 2014; Langner et al., 2015). All of this shows the important role of brand love in maintaining brand-consumer relationships.

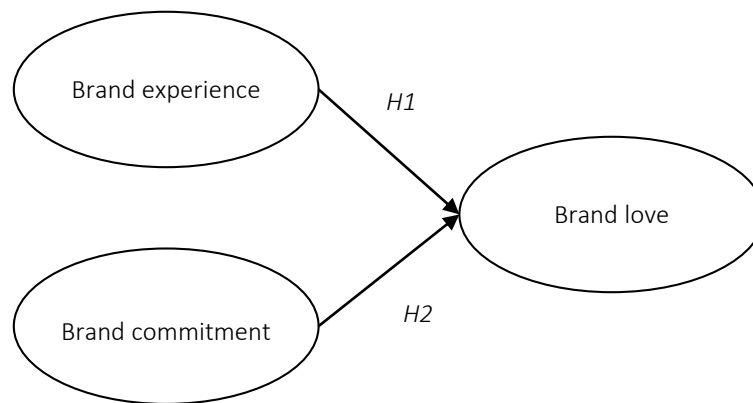


Figure 1. Research model

Early studies stated that brand love affects consumers in several ways: consumers spread positive things to others (Batra et al., 2012; Albert & Merunka, 2013), commitment, willingness to pay a premium price (Albert & Merunka, 2013), brand loyalty (Bergkvist & Bech-Larsen, 2010; Algharabat, 2017) and customer engagement (Prentice et al., 2019). Brands and consumers affect long-term relationships (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006; Albert et al., 2009; Sarkar et al., 2012; Batra et al., 2012). Relationships are based on the influence of emotional and rational thinking (Batra et al., 2012; Sarkar, 2014; Langner et al., 2015). A relationship entails affective and cognitive consistency (Fournier, 1998; Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006), a certain act, more thoughtful consideration, and behavior as a topic of discussion (Batra et al., 2012).

In the marketing literature, brand love is a necessary construct that influences consumers' relationships with brands (Ismail & Spinelli, 2012). Consumer brand love is the level of consumer affection that makes switching brands difficult and valuable as consumer satisfaction in the long run. In the face of competition, brand love assists brands in deciphering and forecasting significant changes from satisfied consumers following consumption.

According to Carroll and Ahuvia (2006), several things describe brand love from satisfaction: (1) not a cognitive assessment, more influential because it uses feelings; (2) non-transactional has since evolved and is more related to long-term brand relationships; (3) brand love does not require unexpected expectations; (4) is built on var-

ious perceptions that are loaded with affective behavior, such as; self-integration, desire-driven behavior, positive emotional relationships, long-term relationships, overall positive attitude (certainty and self-confidence) and stress from separation (Batra et al., 2012; Thomson et al., 2005). As a result, brand love denotes a far more powerful consumer-brand relationship than simply a positive attitude or brand satisfaction.

Brand love uses ten items of brand love based on feelings of excessive love, affection for the brand, attraction to the brand, positive evaluation of the brand, positive emotional response to the brand, and expressing love for the brand (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). This study investigates the experiences of women consumers who use Korean cosmetics to fulfill their lifestyle and personality based on their expectations of the similarity between brand image and their self-concept. Moreover, it considers the willingness of a desire for a long-term relationship, which will encourage consumers to love the brand. This research problem postulates the following objectives: (1) How does brand experience affect brand love? And (2) How does brand commitment affect brand love?

The following hypotheses were developed based on the above discussion to reach the objectives (Figure 1):

- H1: Brand experience has a positive and significant influence on brand love.*
- H2: Brand commitment has a positive and significant influence on brand love.*

2. RESEARCH METHODS

Millennial women as users of Korean decorative cosmetics in Indonesia are the unit of analysis. To be accurate and save time in recruiting respondents, the paper first uses a respondent filter. Therefore, prospective respondents must pass filter questions, such as the length of time they use cosmetics, at least three brand names from the K-beauty cosmetic brand they are currently using, and must have been routinely in daily use for the past six months.

Data were collected using online media such as telephone, email, and social networks by sharing link addresses to fill out surveys. This study was conducted in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta, Indonesia, between May and June 2020. Jakarta was chosen because it has the most millennial res-

pondents as well as the most significant Korean cosmetic shopping center in Indonesia. In addition, the criteria can be met by millennial female customers who enjoy Korean decorative cosmetics.

The study received 255 complete responses after several weeks of contact and posting over the course of two weeks. First, purposive random sampling was used to collect data; then, the data were analyzed using SEM Lisrel to determine the relationship between latent variables (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993).

The item interval scale employs a five-point Likert scale. This item has been modified and justified for emotional involvement in the consumption of beauty products so that it corresponds to the respondent's understanding. The questionnaire items are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Questionnaire Items

Brand Experience	
BE 1	This Korean decorative cosmetics brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.
BE 2	I find this Korean decorative cosmetics brand interesting in a sensory way.
BE 3	This Korean decorative cosmetics brand does not appeal to my senses for trial
BE 4	This Korean decorative cosmetics brand induces feelings and my positive sentiments.
BE 5	I do not have strong emotions for this Korean decorative cosmetics brand.
BE 6	This Korean decorative cosmetics brand is an emotional brand.
BE 7	I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I use this Korean decorative cosmetics brand.
BE 8	This Korean decorative cosmetics brand results in bodily beauty experiences.
BE 9	This Korean decorative cosmetics brand is not action oriented.
BE 10	I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this Korean decorative cosmetics brand.
BE 11	This Korean decorative cosmetics brand does not make me think twice.
BE 12	This Korean decorative cosmetics brand stimulates my curiosity and beauty problem solving.
Brand Commitment	
BC 1	I feel a great deal of loyalty to this Korean decorative cosmetics brand
BC 2	I enjoy discussing this Korean decorative cosmetics with other people
BC 3	This Korean decorative cosmetics brand has a great personal meaning for me
BC 4	I feel emotionally attached to this Korean decorative cosmetics brand
BC 5	I care about the long-term success of this Korean decorative cosmetics brand
BC 6	I am proud to belong to this Korean decorative cosmetics brand
BC 7	My relationship with this Korean decorative cosmetics brand is very important to me
BC 8	It would be very hard for me to leave this Korean decorative cosmetics brand right now, even if I wanted to
BC 9	Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave this Korean decorative cosmetics brand now
BC 10	I feel like I don't have a choice as to which decorative cosmetics brand I use
BC 11	I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this Korean decorative cosmetics brand
BC 12	It would be too costly for me to leave this Korean decorative cosmetics brand now
BC 13	I am committed for this Korean decorative cosmetics brand because feel a great deal of loyalty to my friends
BC 14	My friends has a great deal of personal meaning of cosmetics brand to me, so I will use the same Korean decorative cosmetics brand as theirs
BC 15	I usually follow my friends choice of Korean decorative cosmetics brand
BC 16	I feel guilty if I leave this useful Korean decorative cosmetics brand
BC 17	I am a loyalist when using this kind of Korean decorative cosmetics brand
BC 18	I have to use again this Korean decorative cosmetics brand, hence I will not leave them

Table 1 (cont.). Questionnaire Items

Brand Love	
BL 1	This is a wonderful Korean decorative cosmetics brand
BL 2	This Korean decorative cosmetics brand makes me feel good
BL 3	This Korean decorative cosmetics brand is totally awesome
BL 4	I have neutral feelings about this Korean decorative cosmetics brand (-)
BL 5	This Korean decorative cosmetics brand makes me happy
BL 6	I love this Korean decorative cosmetics brand !
BL 7	I have no particular feelings about this Korean decorative cosmetics brand (-)
BL 8	This Korean decorative cosmetics brand is a pure delight
BL 9	I am passionate about this Korean decorative cosmetics brand
BL 10	I am very attached to this Korean decorative cosmetics brand

3. RESULTS

Demographics in Table 2 show that most of the respondents (121 female) were between 19 and 24 years old (50%). Ninety-two (92) respondents were between 25-30 years old (35%), while only forty-two (42) respondents were between 31-36 years old, with a percentage of 15%.

Table 2. Demographics of participants

Demographic Criteria	Number of answers	Percentage
Age	19-24	121 50%
	25-30	92 35%
	31-36	42 15%
Education	School	49 20%
	Diploma	12 5%
	College/ University	145 55%
	Postgraduate	49 20%
Occupation	Student	50 20%
	Housewife	6 2%
	Non-employee	4 1%
	Employee	195 77%
The length of time that Korean decorative cosmetics are used	Less than 6 months	61 24%
	6-12 months	89 35%
	13-24 months	63 25%
	More than 25 months	42 16%
Using Korean cosmetics for more than 25 months	3 years	21 50%
	4 years	11 26%
	5 years	10 24%
Cosmetic purchase per month	Irregular buyer	10 4%
	One per month	125 49%
	Two per month	89 35%
	Three per month	28 11%
	Four per month	3 1%
Cosmetics monthly expenditure	< \$17	120 47%
	\$18-\$35	92 36%
	\$36-\$70	30 12%
	\$71	13 5%

The descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) of the constructs are given in Table 3. First, the study assessed the reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The fit index includes chi-square statistics with *p*-values, RMSEA, SRMR, CFI, and NNFI. The recommended criteria are RMSEA < 0.08. The result is 0.17 > 0.08, which means it is not good. The recommended standardization of RMR < 0.05; the result is 0.090 > 0.05, which means that it is not good. Recommended CFI 0.9, the result is 0.67 < 0.9; which means it is not good. Recommended NNFI 0.9, the result is 0.65 < 0.9; which means it is not good. Therefore, this fit index is not good enough to support the quality of data and measurements. Second, structural equation modeling (SEM) is used in the evaluation step to test the hypotheses.

Observing the model through its relations, together with its convergent and discriminant validity, the paper uses R²-values and exceeds 0.2 for each variable. This analysis is shown in Table 4. The T-values should exceed T table 1.96, and the factor-loading (completely standardized solution) should exceed 0.3. Both will ascertain the validity and reliability of the structural model. LISREL is the process of analyzing the collected data and reducing the threat to discriminant and convergent validity. The scale may contain items that pose a threat; then, they pass the specified criteria. Therefore, they need to remove such items from the model in an iterative analysis process. Then the model will fit the data because the threat has been minimized, which will ensure the model can be relied upon to analyze the results. This study uses a model with items that pass the established criteria (see Table 5 for values and Figure 1 for the model). At the same time, it verifies that the model fits the data as an

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for each variable

Descriptive Result	Brand Experience	Brand Commitment	Brand Love
Mean	3.37	2.83	3.22
Std.Dev	1.01	0.98	0.86

assurance of reliability and validity and the fact that it contains no more threats. Further testing of the data is needed to further analyze the model strength and construct quality, the model strength and construct quality, and the appropriate fit index.

Different index criteria must be met: GFI 0.46; AGFI 0.40; CFI: 0.67; TLI/NNFI 0.65; chi-squared

5558.34 ($p = 0.0$). This fit index is not good enough to support the quality of data and measurements. To evaluate the data to test the hypotheses, t-values, estimates, and significance levels are discussed. These values emphasize the meaning of the strength of relations (paths), especially the significant ones. Table 4 shows the values for each hypothesis.

Table 4. Items and their loadings

Constructs and Indicators	R ²	t	Factor loading
Brand Experience			
This Korean decorative cosmetics brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.	0.69	16.06	0.83
I find this Korean decorative cosmetics brand interesting in a sensory way.	0.43	11.61	0.66
This Korean decorative cosmetics brand does not appeal to my senses for trial.	0.65	15.41	0.81
This Korean decorative cosmetics brand induces feelings and positive sentiments.	0.73	16.87	0.85
I do not have strong emotions toward this Korean decorative cosmetics brand.	0.48	12.51	0.70
This Korean decorative cosmetics brand is emotional.	0.37	10.62	0.61
I engage in physical actions and behaviors when using this Korean decorative cosmetics brand.	0.67	15.87	0.82
This Korean decorative cosmetics brand results in bodily beauty experiences.	0.73	16.84	0.85
This Korean decorative cosmetics brand is not action-oriented.	0.68	16.04	0.83
I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this Korean decorative cosmetics brand.	0.62	14.92	0.79
This Korean decorative cosmetics brand does not make me think twice.	0.22	7.80	0.47
This Korean decorative cosmetics brand stimulates my curiosity and beauty problem-solving.	0.71	16.53	0.84
Brand Commitment			
I feel a great deal of loyalty to this Korean decorative cosmetics brand.	0.45	11.95	0.67
I enjoy discussing these Korean decorative cosmetics with other people.	0.57	14.11	0.76
This Korean decorative cosmetics brand has a great personal meaning for me.	0.50	12.83	0.71
I feel emotionally attached to this Korean decorative cosmetics brand.	0.60	14.54	0.77
I care about the long-term success of this Korean decorative cosmetics brand.	0.73	16.98	0.86
I am proud to belong to this Korean decorative cosmetics brand.	0.47	12.29	0.68
My relationship with this Korean decorative cosmetics brand is significant to me.	0.65	15.54	0.81
It would be tough for me to leave this Korean decorative cosmetics brand right now, even if I wanted to.	0.47	12.43	0.69
Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave this Korean decorative cosmetics brand now.	0.52	13.13	0.72
I feel like I do not have a choice as to which decorative cosmetics brand I use.	0.57	13.99	0.75
I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this Korean decorative cosmetics brand.	0.81	18.39	0.90
It would be too costly for me to leave this Korean decorative cosmetics brand now.	0.59	14.35	0.77
My friends have a great deal of personal meaning of cosmetics brand to me, so I will use the same Korean decorative cosmetics brand as theirs.	0.71	16.66	0.85
I usually follow my friends' choice of Korean decorative cosmetics brand.	0.68	16.02	0.82
I feel guilty if I leave this useful Korean decorative cosmetics brand.	0.42	11.47	0.65
I am a loyalist when using this kind of Korean decorative cosmetics brand.	0.44	11.85	0.66
I have to use this Korean decorative cosmetics brand again; hence, I will not leave them.	0.49	12.65	0.70

Table 4 (cont.). Items and their loadings

Constructs and Indicators	R ²	t	Factor loading
Brand Love			
This is a wonderful Korean decorative cosmetics brand.	0.73		0.86
This Korean decorative cosmetics brand makes me feel good.	0.69	17.42	0.83
This Korean decorative cosmetics brand is totally awesome.	0.58	15.08	0.76
This Korean decorative cosmetics brand makes me happy.	0.58	15.01	0.76
I love this Korean decorative cosmetics brand!	0.68	17.15	0.83
I have no particular feelings about this Korean decorative cosmetics brand.	0.73	18.31	0.86
This Korean decorative cosmetics brand is a pure delight.	0.48	12.96	0.69
I am passionate about this Korean decorative cosmetics brand.	0.86	21.31	0.92
I am very attached to this Korean decorative cosmetics brand.	0.76	18.87	0.87

Table 5. Paths, estimates, and significance

Hypotheses	Relationship	t-value	estimate	Outcome
H1	Brand experience → Brand love	9.86	0.35***	Supported
H2	Brand commitment → Brand love	14.64	0.75***	Supported

Note: $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

The first hypothesis, which proposes the impact of brand experience on brand love, is supported by the analysis (9.86; 0.35***), in line with Aro et al. (2018), Garg et al. (2016), and Roy et al. (2013). The analysis supports the second hypothesis concerning the effect of brand commitment on brand love (14.64; 0.75***). This finding shows that the influence of brand commitment does affect the brand love itself, which is the opposite of Shuv-Ami (2017), Albert and Merunka (2013), and Yasin and Shamim (2013). They found that brand love does influence brand commitment. However, these findings are in line with Batra et al. (2012) and Albert et al. (2008), who assume there is a lack in the influence of brand commitment and brand love. Therefore, these scholars advise further research on this relationship.

Thus, this study has findings to support this relationship.

The analysis with LISREL shows the path values between the three latent variables (the concepts of the conceptual model in Figure 1). The values in Table 4 show that all of them received strong support. They are both confirmed as directly impacting brand love (H1, H2). This is shown in Figure 2 as factor loadings and t-values. This, in itself, implies an interesting discovery for the present analysis. In this case, the implication is that both brand experience and brand commitment bear brand love. It indicates that unilateral feelings in brand-consumer relationships are mainly emanating from consumers toward brands in a one-directional way.

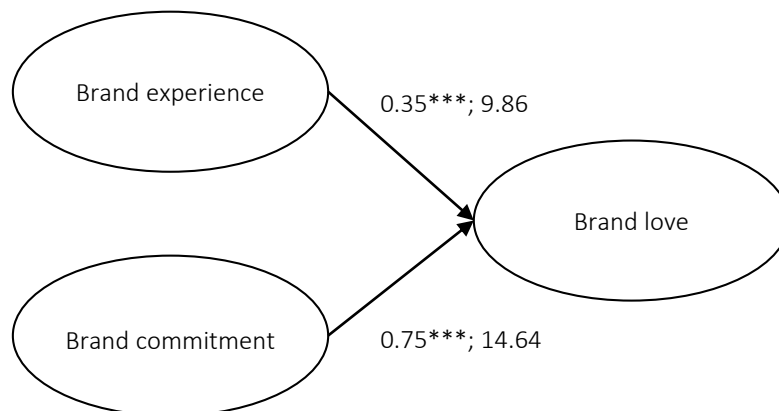


Figure 2. Structural model (factor loadings and t-values)

In LISREL, the search for more complex models motivates the use of this statistical tool analysis. For this case, it helped to establish that brand experience and brand commitment do make a difference when influencing brand love. The outcome is that brand commitment is more powerful to affect brand love than brand experience to brand love, as illustrated in Figure 2.

4. DISCUSSION

Data analysis resulted in a significant effect of the brand-consumer relationship. This means that brand experience and brand commitment influence brand love. This study strengthens the academic understanding of brand experience, brand commitment, and brand love of the Indonesian millennial women for the use of K-beauty products, which are famous at the moment. Other studies also find the same results that brand experience has a significant relationship to brand love, which are in Finnish Lapland for destination tourism (Aro et al., 2018), a literature review analysis using Social Exchange Theory (Garg et al., 2016), and other literature reviews to identify antecedents of brand love (Roy et al., 2013). However, there has been little attention paid to the brand experience of beauty brands, but rather to product attributes.

According to the previous discussion, not all brands are appropriate for measuring the consumer-brand relationship, even though the variables are part of the relationship (Smit et al., 2007). Brand experience has different interactions in the context of the function of the brand and the hedonic brand, with the importance of enhancing customer relationships. Experiences can strengthen consumers' relationships with brands (Venkatesan et al., 2018). Hence, the phenomenon of brand love will be explained in detail so that it is not incorrect to understand brand love (Junaid et al., 2019) based on millennial smartphone use research.

Millennials are highly educated and smarter in marketing campaigns than the previous generation (Lazarevic, 2012). In Indonesia, consumers are involved emotionally and rationally in evaluating beauty products even though they

have purchasing power. This is consistent with Fleming (2016), who stated that millennials are a distinct segment with enormous purchasing power, a strong interest in high-tech modernization, and a desire for tailor-made experiences (Ameen et al., 2021) when compared to previous generations. Thus, brands hold an important aspect of consideration in decision-making (Soh et al., 2017). Furthermore, through experience, women are connected to physical appearances indulgence (Stokburger-Sauer & Teichmann, 2013). This is related to the main intentions of quality, uniqueness, and social value (Wiedmann et al., 2009).

However, this study found that brand experience was less powerful than the impact of brand commitment on brand love. This is because of the following reasons. First, the way consumers process brand information and consumption satisfaction can change the relationship based on the length of brand experience (Ranaweera & Menon, 2013). Cosmetics is a hedonic product, so there is a level of pleasure effect on the purchase behavior. Consumers with hedonic motives have different experiences than utilitarian. They are more intuitive with hedonic brands, which leads to less loyalty and possible brand switching due to subjective price assessments (Keaveney, 1995).

Second, the findings explain that the impact of brand commitment is stronger on brand love. Previous studies have shown that the brand-consumer relationship will not break easily due to the consumer's emotional connection (Albert & Merunka, 2013; Batra et al., 2012; Huber et al., 2015; Langner et al., 2015), because brand love is the primary goal of the customer-brand relationship (Karjaluo et al., 2016). Furthermore, in evolutionary psychology, women have higher levels of brand commitment (Tifferet & Herstein, 2012) because they prefer to have and maintain bonding and committed relationships. This is consistent with a supermarket study by Bellizzi and Bristol (2004), which shows that women are more committed because they use their loyalty cards more frequently. In addition, this finding is in line with Huber et al. (2015), who state that cosmetics as a hedonic brand have been shown to influence brand love greatly.

This shows that hypotheses 1 and 2 are important in the consumer-brand relationship. However, the situation is quite complex because more variables are involved, which is consistent with Ramadan (2019). Furthermore, the strength of a deep emotional connection has an impact on consumers' intentions towards the brands they use. Therefore, brand love is vital in influencing consumer relationships with brands.

CONCLUSION

This study is intended to describe the results of research conducted on the K-beauty cosmetic brand. Its primary goal is twofold: first, to investigate the relationship between brand experience and brand love, and second, to investigate the relationship between brand commitment and brand love. The results showed that brand experience and brand commitment had significant effects on brand love. The analysis found that brand commitment was a strong predictor of brand love and brand experience. Consumer emotional connection via hedonic products demonstrates that women are more risk-averse and prefer to maintain consumer-brand relationships. Women also demonstrate a higher level of commitment, which is the most powerful influence shaping the variables in this study and serving as the foundation for developing strategies in the beauty market.

This study is not without some flaws. This study was conducted on female millennials who are K-beauty users, while age and gender differences may be product-dependent. Future research can study the level of pleasure effect in brand experience. Another limitation of this study is that this study was tested without a mediating variable. Future research may examine customer delight as a mediating variable to increase the generalizability of the results. Future research could also look at materialism to expand on this initial study because women like unique and luxurious self-appearances.

A recommendation for brand strategists in the beauty industry is to signal sensory cues at outlets for the most attractive and most high-quality products. It is possible to appeal to all of the senses in order to entice shoppers to become more committed. Women need sensual cues and a cozy atmosphere to get just the right item in stores. Therefore, designing a comfortable atmosphere to encourage shoppers can make them stay longer. Then, because women place a higher level of commitment, loyalty card programs can retain them as repeat shoppers.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Adma Sari, Sucherly, Meydia Hasan, Yevis Marty Oesman.

Data curation: Adma Sari, Sucherly, Meydia Hasan, Yevis Marty Oesman.

Formal analysis: Adma Sari, Sucherly, Meydia Hasan, Yevis Marty Oesman.

Funding acquisition: Adma Sari.

Investigation: Adma Sari.

Methodology: Adma Sari, Sucherly, Meydia Hasan, Yevis Marty Oesman.

Project administration: Adma Sari.

Resources: Adma Sari.

Software: Adma Sari.

Supervision: Sucherly.

Validation: Sucherly, Meydia Hasan, Yevis Marty Oesman.

Writing – original draft: Adma Sari.

Writing – review & editing: Adma Sari.

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