The Impact of Social Media Brand Community and Brand-Community Commitment on Customer Based Brand Equity

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ABSTRACT

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In green start-up business competition, the main challenge lies in focusing on social and environmental impacts. The purpose of this study is to describe the impact of Social Media Brand Community (SMBC) on Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) mediated by Brand-Community Commitment. This quantitative study uses a purposive sampling technique and the respondents of this study are members of the green start-up brand community as many as 125 respondents, data research are tested and analyzed using PLS-SEM. The findings of this study reveal that the characteristics of SMBC (shared awareness, rituals and traditions, and moral responsibility) directly affect brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty which are elements of CBBE while brand-community commitment does not affect to CBBE. To improve CBBE, it is necessary to focus on strengthening the characteristics of the brand community. The implementation of brand community in Indonesian green start-up companies has a real impact on marketing performance, especially in growing brand awareness within the community.

SARI PATI

Dalam persaingan bisnis green start-up, tantangan utama terletak pada fokus terhadap dampak sosial dan lingkungan. Tujuan dari penelitian ini yaitu untuk mendeskripsikan dampak Social Media Brand Community (SMBC) terhadap Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) yang dimediasi oleh Brand-Community Commitment. Penelitian kuantitatif ini menggunakan teknik purposive sampling, responden pada penelitian ini merupakan anggota brand community green start-up sebanyak 125 responden, data penelitian diuji dan dianalisis menggunakan PLS-SEM. Temuan penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa karakteristik SMBC (kesadaran bersama, ritual dan tradisi, serta tanggung jawab moral) secara langsung mempengaruhi brand awareness, perceived quality, dan brand loyalty sebagai elemen CBBE sedangkan brand-community commitment tidak memengaruhi CBBE. Untuk meningkatkan CBBE, perlu berfokus pada penguatan karakteristik brand community. Penerapan brand community pada perusahaan green start-up di Indonesia berdampak nyata terhadap kinerja pemasaran, terutama dalam menumbuhkan brand awareness pada komunitas.

INTRODUCTION

Until March 2023, Indonesia ranked 6th with the highest number of startups, amounting to 2,506 units, increasing number of startups in Indonesia has made business competition more intense. The popular term in IT, ''90% rule'' or «nine out of ten startups fail,» reflects the reality that most startups fail as the data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics for 2021. Startups are generally associated with new ideas or innovations, technology, and impact on consumers and society (Magalhães, 2019). Thus, entrepreneurs must create value through innovative business models and value proposition canvases. Therefore, startups nowadays are not limited to e-commerce, ride-hailing, or financial services but also include other sectors such as green startups that must focus on profits and sustainability, including environmental impact (Makower & Pike, 2009). The frequently mentioned pillars of sustainability are 3P - Profit, People, and Planet and also some points in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These can lead to several challenges such as customers fail recognizing the brand and understanding the value. Whereas, brand awareness is the top priority during the initial phase of a startup company before obtaining funding (Sirait, 2023).

Currently, some startups overcome challenges by building Social Media Brand Communities (SMBCs). Implementing a relationship strategy through online community marketing can become a solution because nearly 78% of the Indonesian population is on social media (Pakpahan and Yoesgiantoro, 2023). The formation of a brand community itself, if done correctly, can positively affect brand awareness, brand loyalty, and overall customer-based brand equity or CBBE (Santos, *et al.,* 2022; Laroche *et. al.* 2013, Hoang *et al.*, 2020). Previous studies indicated that the customer-initiated brand community of motorcycles, bicycles, and climbing equipment impacted brand equity. However, the empirical phenomena show the brand community in the green startup business is company-initiated. Furthermore, joining the brand community in a green startup is free and lacks requirements like

obligation to buy the product. According to the identification, brand community members may maintain their community attachment to a brand through three characteristics, namely shared consciousness, rituals and traditions, and moral responsibility (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001).

Literature Review & Research Gap

Indonesia since 2017, has experienced quite rapid growth of startup businesses. Google and AT Kearney released the Indonesia Venture Capital Outlook 2017 report, in the report it was stated that startups in Indonesia still have great potential to grow even though they are still relatively young compared to China and America.

According to Magalhaes (2019), a startup is a company that is generally associated with technology that continues to grow and has an impact on others. Meanwhile, Adamczyk (2016) defines a startup as an entity that uses external funding and market experiments to create a method of transforming innovation into customer value. Therefore, a startup is a special type of organization, which works at three levels:

a. Oprational level: Conducting market experiments and improving business models.
b. Tactical level: Satisfying investors and getting more funding.
c. Strategic level: Transforming innovation into a valuable new product and introducing it to the market.

The way that startups can use to grow their business sustainably is through marketing through brand communities. This strategy makes the most sense by utilizing all resources to get customers because customer acquisition costs remain expensive. Muniz Jr and O'Guinn (2001) from their previous research found that brand communities as social entities can bring brand attachment into the daily lives of consumers and become a way for brands to connect the path to consumers or the path from consumers to consumers. Startups are associated with innovation, technology, and social impact

(Magalhaes, 2019). Thus, entrepreneurs must create value through innovative business models and value proposition canvases. Therefore, startups nowadays are not limited to e-commerce, ride-hailing, or financial services but also include other sectors such as green startups that must focus on profits and sustainability, including environmental impact (Makower& Pike, 2009). The frequently mentioned pillars of sustainability are 3P - Profit, People, and Planet. These can lead to several challenges such as customers fail recognizing the brand and understanding the value. Whereas, brand awareness is the top priority during the initial phase of a startup company before obtaining funding (Sirait, 2023).

The combination of brand community and social media is often referred to as Social Media Brand Communities or SMBC (Algesheimer *et.al.* 2005). The distinguishes SMBC compared to communities in traditional media is the contribution of its members. In SMBC, the personality of the community is formed by the active creation of content as its contribution, which also determines how users and members interact with each other. Content in SMBC usually discusses certain topics that are difficult to match elsewhere because they are created from many thoughts of people with the same interests. This knowledge capital increases the value of knowledge for all members (Laroche, *et al.,* 2012). Although brand communities can be formed offline or online, brand communities still have the same character in order to stand. According to Muñiz and O'Guinn (2001), there are 3 (three) characteristics of brand communities, namely shared awareness, rituals and traditions, and moral responsibility.

Brand equity according to Aaker (1996), is a collection of assets and liabilities of a brand, its name and symbol that can add and also reduce value to customers. Brand equity can be categorized in five assets namely brand loyalty, name awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, in addition to perceived quality and other brand assets owned

by the brand itself. The Customer Based Brand Equity or CBBE concept according to Keller (2008) is their strength based on consumer experience from learning, feeling, seeing, and hearing about a brand for some time. There are 3 (three) main things that are seen from CBBE, namely the differentiation effect, brand knowledge and also consumer response to marketing programs. Some literature confirms that a brand can have high CBBE if consumers can give a positive reaction to a product.

Brand commitment is an emotional or affective attachment to a brand (Fournier, 1998) and is viewed as an attitudinal concept rather than merely a behavioral one. Previous research has shown that greater involvement leads to: 1) repeat purchase behavior (Gruen, Summers, and Acito, 2000), 2) positive word of mouth (Westbrook, 1987), 3) greater customer involvement (Gruen et al., 2000); and 4) increased customer commitment (Gassenheimer, Houston, and Davis, 1998), Community commitment refers to each member's attitude toward the community. In this case, the concept of commitment is used as a predictor of members' actual behavior in online communities, such as participating in community activities, providing assistance to the community, and solving other people's problems. Given the important role of commitment in the relationship with actual behavior in the community, commitment should be treated as an attitudinal factor that is emphasized when members recognize the value of the continued relationship between their community and themselves (Hur, Ahn, and Kim, 2011).

Currently, some startups overcome challenges by building SMBCs, so implementing a relationship strategy through online community marketing can become a solution because nearly 78% of the Indonesian population is on social media (Pakpahan & Yoesgiantoro, 2023). The formation of a brand community itself, if done correctly, can positively affect brand awareness, brand loyalty, and overall CBBE (Hoang, 2020; Laroche *et. al.*, 2013; Santos et.al.,2012). Previous studies

also indicate that the customer-initiated brand community of motorcycles, bicycles, and climbing equipment impacted brand equity. However, the empirical phenomena show the brand community in the green startup business is company-initiated. Furthermore, joining the brand community in a green startup is free and lacks requirements like obligation to buy the product. According to the identification, brand community members may maintain their community attachment to a brand through three characteristics, namely shared consciousness, rituals and traditions, and moral responsibility (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001). At the time this research was conducted, no literature had been found explaining brand communities in green start-up businesses, thus creating a theoretical gap. Therefore, this study empirically examines the influence of social media brand community on customer-based brand community and the role of brand-community commitment.

This research chooses three aspects or dimensions of CBBE, there are brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. Brand awareness was chosen because in addition to being the central aspect highlighted by investors in obtaining funding, some Indonesian people have never bought green products, and 30% are unaware of the urgency (muslim & Indriani, 2014). Hoang *et. al.* (2020) in his study proves that the characteristics of a brand community ultimately influence brand awareness and brand loyalty. The qualitative and conceptual research also stated that the social media brand community affected brand awareness and loyalty. Building a brand community is expected to result brand loyalty to the brand because based on CBBE pyramid proposed by Keller (2001) that community actualization is top of the pyramid.

The campaign community discusses environmental values more than product information. It will become a disadvantage if the community members need to gain knowledge of the brand quality of the product or service offered. Thus, this research chooses perceived quality as one of

three dependent variables. Brand community commitment influences perceived quality in the brand community, especially in the luxury goods industry (Bashir *et. al.*, 2020). The role and contribution of the members are highly influential in this dimension. Member value positively affected customer perceived value in online community marketing. When members have good character, can help, and become role models, others will receive what they convey well (Aibing, 2018).

Previous researches reveal that a brand community can positively influence a brand if there is a strong, committed relationship between community members and the brand itself. The brand-community commitment is one of the essential things that underlies how brand communities create brand loyalty (Liao, 2019). In direct relation to CBBE, the community's commitment to the brand and the community itself also influences the CBBE in terms of its characteristics, including shared consciousness and shared rituals and traditions (Hoang *et.al.* 2020).

Based on previous research, the conceptual model can be depicted as in Figure 1 and the hypotheses can be built as follows:

H1: Shared consciousness in SMBCs has a positive and significant effect on CBBE (H1a) brand awareness, (H1b) perceived quality, (H1c) brand loyalty, and (H1d) brand community commitment.

H2: Ritual and tradition in SMBCs have a positive and significant effect on CBBE (H2a) brand awareness, (H2b) perceived quality, (H2c) brand loyalty, and (H2d) brand community commitment.

H3: Moral Responsibility in SMBCs has a positive and significant effect on CBBE (H3a) brand awareness, (H3b) perceived quality, (H3c) brand loyalty, and (H3d) brand community commitment.

H4: Brand-community commitment has a positive and significant effect on CBBE (H4a) brand
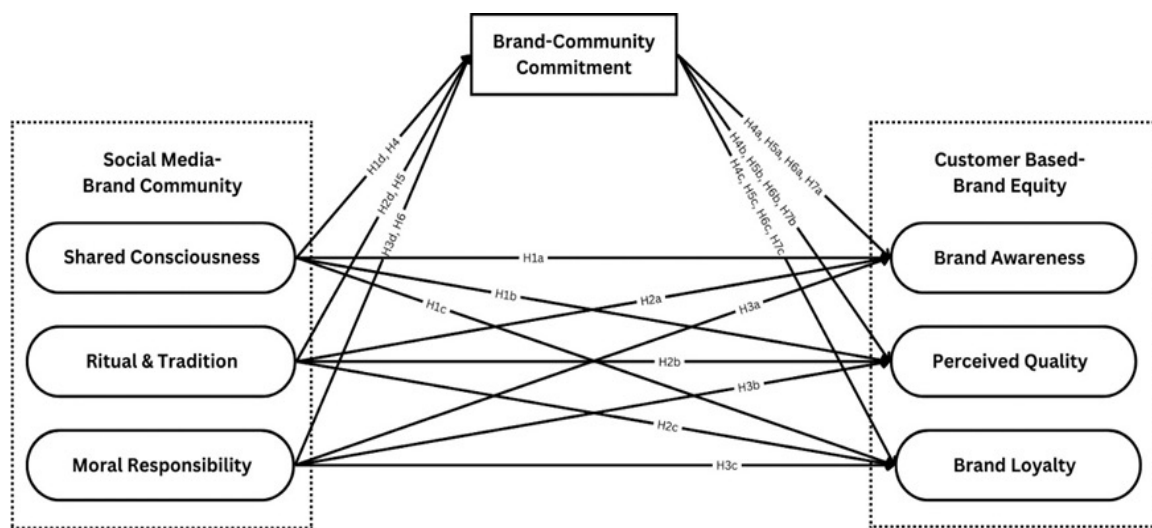
Figure 1. Conceptual Model

awareness, (H4b) perceived quality, and (H4c) brand loyalty.

H5: Brand Community Commitment has a positive indirect effect on the relationship between shared consciousness and CBBE (H5a) brand awareness, (H5b) perceived quality, and (H5c) brand loyalty.

H6: Brand Community Commitment has a positive indirect effect on the relationship between ritual and tradition and CBBE (H6a) brand awareness, (H6b) perceived quality, and (H6c) brand loyalty.

H7: Brand Community Commitment has a positive indirect effect on the relationship between moral responsibility and CBBE (H7a) brand awareness, (H7b) perceived quality, and (H7c) brand loyalty.

METHODS

This quantitative research as single cross-sectional study uses primary data from questionnaires with open and closed questions also uses secondary data from observations and literature reviews. Population are the members of social media brand community of green startup businesses in Indonesia, for example, Surplus Community (Brand: Surplus, Product: Anti Food Waste Apps),

Zero Waste Indonesia Online Community (Brand: ZWID, Product: Zero Waste Things), Relawan Lindungi Hutan (Brand: LindungiHutan, Product: Crowdfunding Platform in Conservation), Climate Defender (Brand: Jejakin; Product: Carbon Management Platform), Komunitas Si Lalat Baik (Brand: Almagot, Product: Maggot (BSF) Breeding Kit).

Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Square (SEM - PLS). The minimum sample size for SEM-PLS follows the "10 times rule," which requires the sample size to be at least ten times the largest number of formative indicators used to measure a construct (Hair *et.al.*, 2022). In this study, the largest number of formative indicators was 5, so ten times that number is 50. The sample size was 125 to increase the robustness of the study, Table 1 below shows the operational definition of the variables including the indicators used as questions in the questionnaire. The question item indicators use a Likert scale on a scale of 1-5. In order to enrich the research data, two open-ended questions were asked to respondents, the questions were "Tell me your opinion about the community" and "Tell me your opinion about the brand".

Table 1. Operational Definition of Variables

Variable: Social Media Brand Community			
Dimension	Definition	Code	Indicator
Shared Consciousness	Community members feel a strong connection to each other and describe it as "they already know each other," even if they have never met [8]	SC1	Feel a strong connection between community members, although do not know each other personally.
		SC2	All community members feel different or have their own identities from those who are not community members.
		SC3	Feel close to others when find out they are also a part of the community.
		SC4	Feel have a new identity like the community's image
		SC5	Have a sense of belonging to the community.
		SC6	The discussions in the community are excellent.
Ritual & Tradition	Symbolic communication among community members [15]	RT1	Know several traditions in the community.
		RT2	Celebrate the community's important days.
		RT3	Appreciate the values in this community.
		RT4	Share stories and experiences using community brand
Moral Responsibility	A sense of responsibility towards other members can create "a kind of cohesion within the community and lead to collective action." [8]	MR1	Community members help and provide suggestions and solutions for problems, especially regarding products.
		MR2	Have a responsibility as a member of the community.
		MR3	Get entertainment benefits from joining the community.
		MR4	Get economic benefits from joining the community.
		MR5	Community management is making an effort to attract new members.
		MR6	The community committee is making an effort to attract new members.
Variable: Brand-Community Commitment			
Brand- Community Commitment	Related to members' attitudes toward the community and behavior towards each other that can build value for the brand, company, and other customers (Hur et al., 2011).	BC1	Actively participate in community activities.
		BC2	Will share information and opinions about the community, products, and brands with other members.
		BC3	Will ask or gather information about the community, products, and brands from other members.
		BC4	Using the product from this brand as a community member is essential.
		BC5	The community will be more successful.
		BC6	The brand and community will be more successful.
Variable: Customer-Based Brand Equity			
Brand Awareness	The ability of potential buyers to recognize or recall that a brand is a member of a particular product category (Aaker, 1991)	BA1	Immediately think of the brand from the community when thinking of similar products.
		BA2	Know the brand's tagline, jargon, or logo.
		BA3	Know the uniqueness of the brand products in this community.
		BA4	Know the superiority of the brand products in this community.
		BA5	The brand of this community has always been on my mind.

Perceived Quality	A concept in marketing that refers to customer perceptions about the quality of a brand or products (Aaker, 1991).	PQ1	This community's brand is excellent.
		PQ2	The quality of the product or service of this brand is outstanding.
		PQ3	This brand is awe-inspiring.
		PQ4	This brand is capable of being a solution to environmental problems or issues.
Brand Loyalty	Brands become irreplaceable and irresistible in the minds of consumers. They will not consider purchasing any other brand at any time (Aaker, 1991).	BL1	Will not buy or use similar products other than this brand, if there are any.
		BL2	The products from this community will be the first choice if other similar items exist.
		BL3	The price and value of other products must be lower than the ones of this brand community.
		BL4	Like the values and image of this brand.
		BL5	Will stay loyal to this brand.

RESULTS AND DICUSSIONS
Respondents Profile

Two critical aspects of the respondents are their age or generation, the occupation and social media platforms they use, and the length of time they have been in the community. As in **Figures 2 and 3**, the respondents in this study were dominated by Gen Y or Millennials at 59% and Gen Z at 38%. Meanwhile, the remaining 3% were Gen X over 40 years old. Millennials and Gen Z are at a productive age and have better energy and time than Gen X to join the community. The majority of respondents in this study were employed, and the percentage reached 54%. As many as 30% were college students, while the rest of the 9% were students. The less common category was unemployed. The majority of those who were unemployed were fresh graduates

and homemakers. The latter join communities to socialize.

According to **Figure 4**, respondents willing to actively participate in this research were mostly new members. The lowest proportion was members who have joined for more than two years. Some communities implement a batch system or accept members only during specific periods, such as annually. It is also why many new members are more active than the old members, in addition to other factors such as higher enthusiasm. A lot of respondents use multiple or join more than one platform. Therefore, **Figure 5** is a bar chart rather than a percentage slice in a pie chart. The most widely used social media was Instagram & WhatsApp. They provide a timeline display in
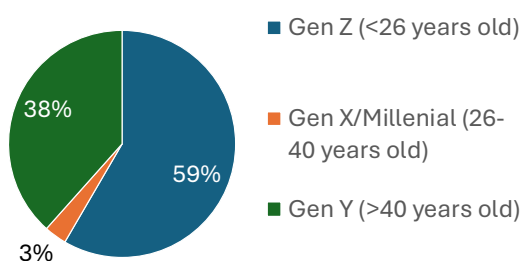

Figure 2. Respondent's Generation & Age
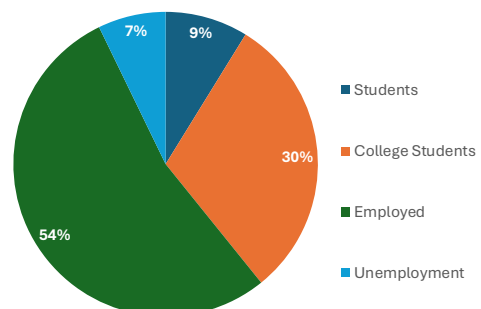

Figure 3. Respondent's Occupation

Respondent's Time Joined

Figure 4. Respondent's Time Joined

Social Media Community Platform Used by Respondents
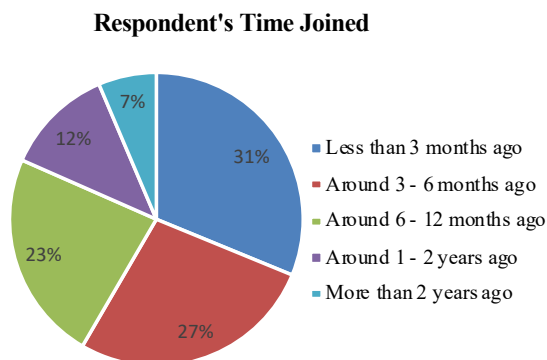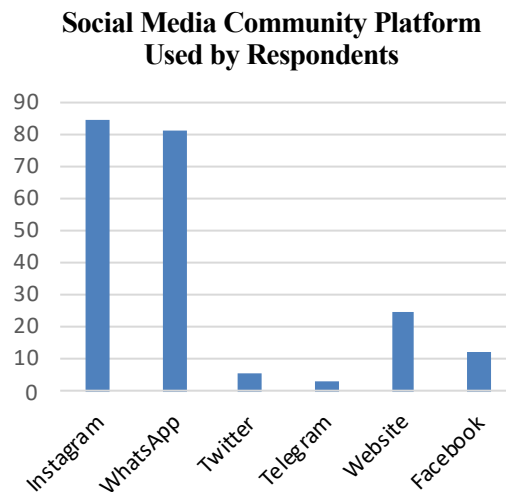

Figure 5. Platform Used

stories and private group chat facilities. Especially, Instagram facilitates visual-based content rather than written content. Users can interact with each other in the comment section of each post. Twitter, Telegram, Website, and Facebook are other platforms used, but in small numbers.

Measurement and Structural Model of Partial Least Square-Path Modelling

The variables in this measurement have been measured reflectively from the results of loading factor ≥ 0.6, composite reliability ≥ 0.7, Cronbach's alpha, and average variance extracted (AVE) ≥ 0.5, as well as the discriminant validity test using HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio) ≤ 0.9 and criteria Fornell Larcker [14]. Several indicators there are SC6 in the Shared Consciousness dimension, RT4 in the Ritual and Tradition dimension, MR4 in the Moral Responsibility dimension, BC5 and BC6 in the Brand Community Commitment dimension, BA1 in the Brand Awareness dimension, and BL3 and BL4 in the Brand Loyalty dimension excluded does not meet the requirements of the reflective measurement model, as mentioned previously. A multicollinearity test was used to evaluate the structural model using the inner VIF (Variance Inflated Factor) measure. The VIF value must be less than 5 (five) to infer no multicollinearity problem (Hair *et.al.* 2020). The graphical output of the model

that has been selected as valid and reliable can be seen in **Figure 6.**

Direct Effect Testing on Hypotheses

The direct effect test consisted of without mediating or intervening variables, consisting of 24 hypotheses. The relationship is the influence of the social media brand community

variables consisting of the dimensions of shared consciousness, ritual and tradition, moral responsibility, and the brand-community commitment variable, respectively, on the brand-community commitment variable and the customer-based brand equity variable (brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty).

The direct effect of the SMBC shared consciousness dimension on CBBE and brand community commitment can be seen in **Table 2.** According to **Table 2,** hypotheses H1c and H1d are rejected because the p-value is more significant than ∝, meaning that shared consciousness does not affect brand awareness and brand loyalty. Meanwhile, hypotheses H1a and H1b are accepted because the p-value is smaller than ∝ (0.05), meaning there is a significant positive effect between shared consciousness and brand-community commitment. These are the same as the results of previous
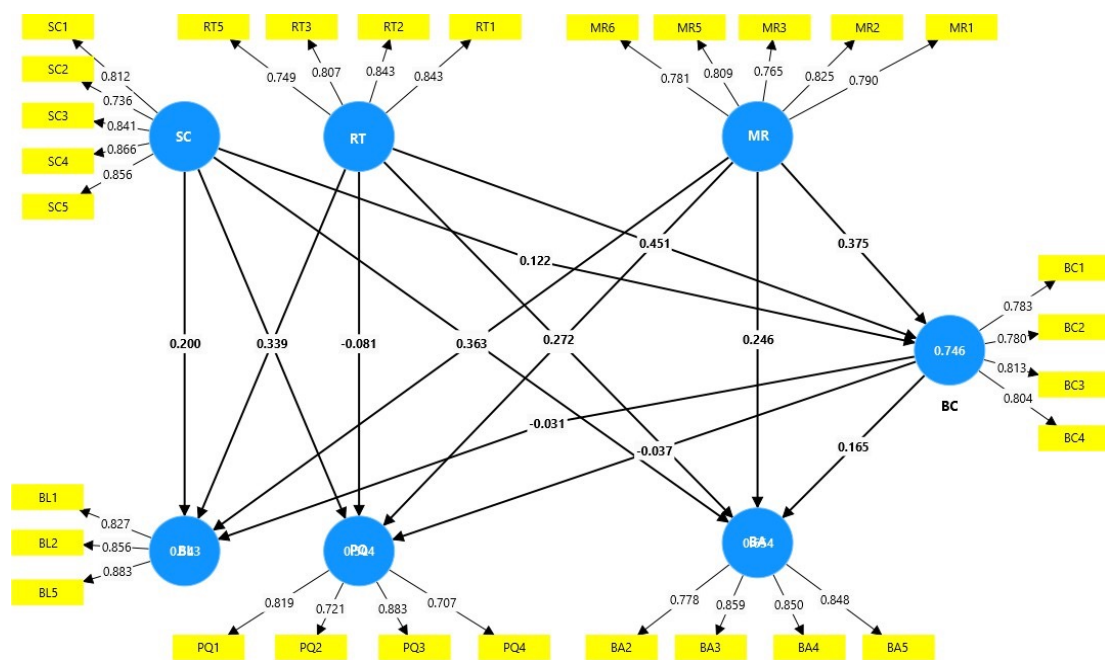
Figure 6. PLS-SEM Path Model Testing on Valid & Reliable Indicators

Table 2. Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing of Shared Consciousness Dimension

Hypothesis	Path coefficient	p-value	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Limit	Upper Limit
H1a: Shared Consciousness → Brand Awareness	0.217	0.037*	-0.013	0.412
H1b: Shared Consciousness → Perceived Quality	0.339	0.020*	0.050	0.584
H1c: Shared Consciousness → Brand Loyalty	0.200	0.147ns	-0.076	0.532
H1d: Shared Consciousness → Brand-Community Commitment	0.122	0.084ns	-0.019	0.267

Table 3. Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing of Ritual and Tradition Dimension

Hypothesis	Path coefficient	p-value	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Limit	Upper Limit
H2a: Ritual and Tradition → Brand Awareness	0.272	0.013*	0.082	0.488
H2b: Ritual and Tradition → Perceived Quality	-0.081	0.285ns	-0.335	0.134
H2c: Ritual and Tradition → Brand Loyalty	0.280	0.038*	0.028	0.543
H2d: Ritual & Tradition → Brand-Community Commitment	0.451	0.000*	0.303	0.596

research. Every increase in the element of shared consciousness will also increase the value of brand loyalty and brand-community commitment with a medium/moderate influence at the upper limit of 0.532 and 0.267.

Table 3 shows the direct effect of the ritual and tradition dimension of SMBC. Based on Table 3,

the H2a, H2b, and H2d hypotheses are accepted because the p-value is smaller than $\propto(0.05)$, meaning there is a significant positive effect concerning ritual, tradition, brand awareness, and brand community commitment. These positive results are the same as the previous research. The path coefficient is positive, so every increase in the ritual and tradition element will increase the brand

awareness, brand loyalty, and brand community--commitment value with a medium/moderate influence at the upper limit of 0.488 to 0.596 respectively. Meanwhile, H2b is rejected because the p-value is more than $\propto$, so ritual and tradition have no significant effect on perceived quality.

According to **Table 4,** which presents the results of the direct effect of the SMBC moral responsibility dimension, all the hypothesis is accepted because the p-value is smaller than $\propto$ 0.05), meaning that ritual and tradition have a positive significant moderate effect on CBBE and brand-community commitment. These results are in line with the previous research.

The direct effect of the mediating variable of brand-community commitment was also tested in **Table 5.** As a result, no hypothesis was accepted because the p-value is bigger than $\propto(0.05)$. Thus, brand-community commitment does not have a significant effect on customer-based brand equity. These results are different from the previous research.

Indirect Effect Testing on Hypotheses

The indirect effect tested the relationship between the independent variable's (social media brand community) characteristic and the dependent variable's (customer-based brand equity) mediated by brand-community commitment. The results of the indirect effect test can be seen in **Table 6.**

Based on **Table 6,** all of these hypotheses have p-values greater than $\propto(0.05)$, so there is no characteristic of SMBC influence on CBBE. These results are different from previous research. But, if alpha tolerates using 0.1, H5c hypotheses are accepted because the p-value is smaller than $\propto(0.1)$, so brand-community commitment acts as a mediating variable between moral responsibility and brand awareness. The type of mediation in the relationship is partial mediation because both significantly affected brand awareness in the previous test of direct effect.

Model Goodness of Fit Evaluation

First, the model is measured by SRMR or Standardize Root Mean Square Residual. This is a measurement

Table 4. Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing of Moral Responsibility Dimension

Hypothesis	Path coefficient	p-value	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower limit	Upper limit
H3a: Moral Responsibility $\rightarrow$ Brand Awareness	0.246	0.011[*]	0.083	0.418
H3b: Moral Responsibility $\rightarrow$ Perceived Quality	0.513	0.000[*]	0.321	0.659
H3c: Moral Responsibility $\rightarrow$ Brand Loyalty	0.363	0.005[*]	0.130	0.593
H3d: Moral Responsibility $\rightarrow$ Brand-Community Commitment	0.375	0.000[*]	0.233	0.537

Table 5. Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing of Brand-Community Commitment Dimension

Hypothesis	Path coefficient	p-value	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower limit	Upper limit
H4a: Brand Community-Commitment $\rightarrow$ Brand Awareness	0.165	0.066[ns]	-0.009	0.343
H4b: Brand Community-Commitment $\rightarrow$ Perceived Quality	-0.037	0.390[ns]	-0.238	0.197
H4c: Brand Community-Commitment $\rightarrow$ Brand Loyalty	-0.031	0.429[ns]	-0.344	0.243

Table 6. Indirect Effect Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Path coefficient	p-value	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower limit	Upper limit
H5a: Shared Consciousness → Brand Community Commitment → Brand Awareness	0.020	0.203	-0.004	0.070
H5b: Ritual & Tradition → Brand Community Commitment → Brand Awareness	0.074	0.101	0.007	0.180
H5c: Moral Responsibility → Brand Community Commitment → Brand Awareness	0.062	0.069	-0.007	0.128
H6a: Shared Consciousness → Brand Community Commitment → Perceived Quality	-0.005	0.418	-0.040	0.030
H6b: Ritual & Tradition → Brand Community Commitment → Perceived Quality	-0.017	0.397	-0.124	0.084
H6c: Moral Responsibility → Brand Community Commitment → Perceived Quality	-0.014	0.398	-0.103	0.073
H7a: Shared Consciousness → Brand Community Commitment → Brand Loyalty	-0.004	0.443	-0.051	0.036
H7b: Ritual & Tradition → Brand Community Commitment → Brand Loyalty	-0.014	0.427	-0.146	0.107
H7c: Moral Responsibility → Brand Community Commitment → Brand Loyalty	-0.012	0.427	-0.121	0.087

Table 7. Goodness of Fit Evaluation

Estimated Model's SRMR	0.080		
Heterogeneity Test	2 Segments		
	R-Square		
Dimension	Segments Merged	Segments Divided	
		Segment 1	Segment 2
Brand-Community Commitment	0.746	0.700	0.982
Brand Awareness	0.654	0.585	0.961
Perceived Quality	0.504	0.434	0.977
Brand Loyalty	0.543	0.478	0.922
	Segment Size		
Percentage Size		77.1%	22.9%

based on the difference between the data's correlation matrix and the model's estimated correlation matrix. An SRMR value that is considered to indicate acceptable model fit ranges from 0.08 to 0.10. According to **Table 7,** the SRMR value of the estimated model is 0.08 so the model fits the data well or can be well explained by the data. To ensure the robustness of the model, tests for linearity and homogeneity were conducted. In the linearity test, all indicators showed linear or robust relationships. However, the homogeneity test revealed that the segments were divided into 2 groups. The segment sizes can be seen in Table 7, with Segment 1 comprising 77.1% of respondents and Segment 2 comprising 22.9% of respondents. This could be the reason why in general or merged segments, the R-square typically ranges from 50% to 75%. The coefficient of determination, or R-square, is used to assess the extent to which the variation in the endogenous variable can be explained by other variables. For example, an R-square of 0.504 indicates that only 50.4% of the variation in the social media brand community and brand-community commitment variables can explain the perceived

quality. As seen in Table 7, segment 2 has a better R-square value than segment 1 and all of them are above 90%. It indicates that Segment 2 is more relatable with the indicators and variables than Segment 1.

Discussion

Based on the overall results of the hypothesis testing above, the dimensions in the independent variable influencing the dependent variable of customer-based brand equity can be summarized in Table 8. All three characteristics in the brand community influence brand awareness. While other dependent variables are influenced by two characteristics. Brand community commitment as a mediator variable was also influenced by ritual & tradition and the moral responsibility of the community. This is the same as CBBE's dimension of brand loyalty that is influenced by those two characteristics. Perceived quality is influenced by shared consciousness & moral responsibility. The positive results of this direct influence test are consistent with some previous literature, such as in Hoang et.al.2020 ; Santos et.al.2022 ;]Mniz Jr & O'Guinn (2001) Community managers should emphasize and strengthen these elements to enhance the intended customer-based brand equity.

There are some reasons behind the hypothesis's failure to be accepted or the variables not impacting it. Reference [16] found something similar: shared consciousness did not affect brand loyalty and brand-community commitment. This is because the indicators for shared consciousness tend to talk about relationships between communities so it will influence community-community relationships more than community–brand/product/company relationships. These four concepts of community relationships were ideated by [17] through their research finding. Reference [8] also previously said that this element of shared consciousness has different strengths depending on the community. Like in the Macintosh community, he also did not find the influence of shared consciousness.

Ritual and tradition have no significant effect on perceived quality. It can also be seen from the total rate of respondents on the ritual and tradition indicators that three indicators have an average of neutral answer choices. This means that community members were not sure that they knew the rituals and traditions in the community, so they were not influential to the perceived quality. It could be due to inactive groups, lack of notification from management, etc. It can be said like this because some respondents answered open-ended questions regarding perceived quality, for example:

"The idea of the product and brand is good, but in its execution, there is a slight identity crisis in terms of where it wants to go to build its future. Maybe it's more about the community being not very active—if there are expectations, there aren't any. Hopefully, this community can become a more active platform to educate about the topics raised during the creation of this group."

Table 8. Summary of Direct Effects Among Influencing Variables

Dependent Variables	Independent Variables that Influence
Brand-Community Commitment	Ritual & Tradition
	Moral Responsibility
Brand Awareness	Shared Consciousness
	Ritual & Tradition
	Moral Responsibility
Perceived Quality	Shared Consciousness
	Moral Responsibility
Brand Loyalty	Ritual & Tradition
	Moral Responsibility

Brand-community commitment has no significant effect on all CBBE dimensions. Previously, there was a study that tested the influence of information and system quality on brand community commitment, in which the results showed that the type of company-initiated brand community had no significant influence (Jang *et. al.* 2008). Therefore, the type of community can also become a factor without a relationship between these two variables. All brand communities in this research were the ones built by companies. The marketing communication style is soft-selling to community members so that the community needs to learn the identity and quality of its brand. In addition, in Hur (2011) research tested loyalty attitudes before developing brand loyalty, namely repurchase intention, positive word-of-mouth, and constructive complaints. The relationship in this study showed no effect, meaning a loyalty attitude might still need to be created among community members. Therefore, further research is needed and added to the mediation of attitude loyalty before brand loyalty.

All of the community characteristics did not have an indirect effect. Laroche *et.al* (2013) also found that brand community did not affect brand loyalty although using social networking, community engagement, impression management, and brand use as mediating variables. It indicates that the influence on CBBE is directly from the brand community. Therefore, to increase brand loyalty, it is necessary to focus on strengthening the characteristics of the brand community.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Relational marketing strategy through the formation of brand communities has an impact on marketing performance, especially brand awareness among community members. However, managers must strengthen the development of brand community characteristics, especially shared awareness. There was one response from respondents to the open-ended question regarding community conditions. Respondents gave a low score on the shared awareness indicator. Their statement is as follows:

"When I registered, I didn't expect there would be selection criteria to join the community. However, I am grateful to be accepted here. My hope is for real action from community members, even if it is only a small action such as educating the public about the environment (because from the beginning of the selection process, I assumed that all members had knowledge about the environment). However, so far, it has only been limited to meetings. Regarding products, there are many similar products other than community brands. The application developed by this brand so far has been good, but because I have known many similar applications before, I am not a 'loyal' user of this product." We conclude that this type of community needs special treatment to strengthen the characteristics of the community in order to produce maximum effects for CBBE results. Further research can be done to find out more about this phenomenon. In this case, they also need to strengthen their knowledge and experience of the product, especially products that have many similar products or competitors. This study shows the same results as Kim's (2015) opinion, that there are 3 (three) types of experiences in brand communities that can be used to improve perceived quality, namely hedonic experience, sociability experience, and usability experience.

CONCLUSION

Based on the hypotheses of this research, the shared consciousness in SMBC significantly affects CBBE brand awareness and perceived quality. However, it does not affect brand loyalty and brand-community commitment. These indicators have a different effect on each community and the four dimensions of community relations. Rituals and traditions affect brand-community commitment, brand awareness, and brand loyalty. Several indicators of rituals and tradition dimension showed that respondents were not sure they knew the community's rituals and traditions. On the other hand, moral responsibility in SMBC succeeds in significantly influencing the brand-community commitment and the three CBBE variables (brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty). The members' sense of responsibility

towards the community positively influences the brand.

The brand-community commitment does not affect any CBBE variables and does not mediate between SMBC characteristics and CBBE elements. The type of community can also become a factor influencing this result. All brand communities in this research were the ones built by companies but the marketing communication style is soft-selling. It can weaken the relationship of brand-community over community-community. There needs to be quality recognition introduced or shown by community administrators, and some relationships have more direct effects than indirect ones.

The theoretical benefit of this research is that it can become a reference for further research on other areas and objects because many regions and industries still want to implement or are currently implementing community marketing strategies. In addition, this research is helpful for marketing managers, especially community managers, as a basis for consideration in preparing plans, actions, interaction indicators, and community activities to impact the brand and the company positively. It is also helpful as a data source in making decisions to build a community marketing strategy to avoid wrong targets and wasting budgets, such as community members not knowing and not being attached to the brand but only to their community. ■

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