

The Effect of Dimension of Triangular Theory of Love on Brand Loyalty in the Mobile Telecommunication Industry



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ABSTRACT: In the ever-growing digital era, internet access has become a basic need in everyday life. With the increasing number of internet users in Indonesia, so more data packages from cellular operator brands are appearing. Overall, customers who engage in expressive brand relationships can easily demonstrate brand loyalty attitudes and behaviour. Customer loyalty to a brand does not only occur because of continuous satisfaction, because customer satisfaction alone is not enough to guarantee a long-term relationship. Therefore, this research examines the customer's emotional perspective, especially love which is used as a mechanism to strengthen unwavering loyalty. One theory that discusses love is the Triangular Theory of Love put forward by Sternberg in 1986 which states that there are three elements in love, namely intimacy, commitment and passion. Data processed by 204 data package users from 4 brands of cellular operators in 6 major cities on the island of Java in Indonesia, using non-probability sampling techniques with a purposive sampling method, and analysed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) based on Partial Least Square (PLS) via the SmartPLS 4.1 application.

KEYWORDS: Triangular Theory of Love, Intimacy, Commitment, Passion

I. INTRODUCTION

In the ever-growing digital era, internet access has become a basic need in everyday life. The internet is one of the most rapid elements of change in the history of human civilization (KOMINFO, 2017). In 2023, according to the survey APJII (2023) noted that internet penetration in Indonesia has reached 78.19 percent in 2023 or reaching 215,626,156 people out of a total population of 275,773,901 people. The highest internet user penetration or above 80 percent is in Banten with 89.10 percent and followed by DKI Jakarta with 86.96 percent. Next, there is West Java with 82.73 percent, Bangka Belitung Islands with 82.66 percent, East Java 81.26 percent, Bali 80.88 percent, Jambi 80.48 percent, and West Sumatra 80.31 percent.

With the increasing number of internet users in Indonesia, more and more internet provider companies such as home wifi are emerging. However, the use of mobile data is still the internet connection method most widely used by residents in Indonesia. This is based on APJII survey results over the last 2 years. Mobile data users are above 77% percent, this is very far compared to WiFi usage.

Previous researchers discussed the use of mobile cellular services from a functional aspect. Therefore, researchers want to examine consumers' perspectives regarding their attachment to the brands they use. The literature also discusses these mobile services from an emotional perspective. So that the consumer decision making process is related to their attachment to the product or brand in the mobile card service. By studying consumer decision making from an emotional attachment perspective, we can complete the functional aspects of mobile card brands as reported in the APJII survey results.

Overall, customers who engage in expressive brand relationships can easily demonstrate attitudes and behaviours brand loyalty (Zhang et al., 2020). However, customer loyalty to a brand does not only occur because of continuous satisfaction. While satisfied customers may churn, marketers must move away from the so-called "customer satisfaction trap" and develop a more comprehensive theoretical and empirical understanding of the antecedents of brand loyalty as a driver of customer retention (Sang et al., 2018). Several studies have been conducted to explore other determinants of customer retention to overcome this empirical and theoretical contradiction. Amani (2022) examines the role of love in satisfied customers' relationships with retailers. This research reveals that in an environment where overall turnover rates among satisfied customers are increasing, love can be used as a mechanism to strengthen unwavering loyalty.

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One theory that discusses love is the Triangular Theory of Love which was put forward by Sternberg in 1986. This theory discusses three elements in love, namely intimacy, commitment and passion. Based on the elements of this theory, the variables to be studied can be considered, namely brand intimacy, brand commitment and brand passion.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Triangular Theory of Love

The Triangular Theory of Love is a theory of love that began to emerge in 1986 and was popularized by Sternberg, which includes 3 components, namely intimacy, passion and commitment. The Triangular Theory of Love states that love can be understood in terms of three components which together can be seen as forming the vertices of a triangle. The triangle is used as a metaphor, not as a rigid geometric model. These three components of love interact with each other.

These three components can each be described as:

- Intimacy refers to a person's feelings, bonds, and connectedness with other people.
- Passion refers to the physical interaction in a relationship.
- Commitment refers to short-term or long-term decisions.

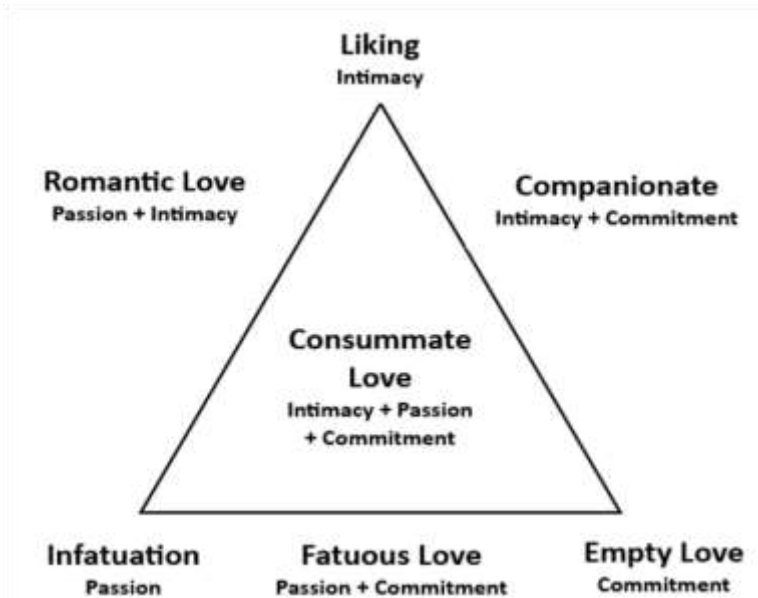


Figure 1. Components of Triangular Theory of Love

B. Brand intimacy

Brand intimacy is a customer's attitude or perception towards the care, understanding and attention of a loved brand (Batra et al., 2012). According to Kinyongoh (2019) in consumer psychology, brand intimacy explains the closeness and harmonizing characteristics of the relationship between customers and brands, and symbolizes the emotional willingness of customers to stay in touch with the brand they like and maintain it when the brand is in trouble. Wallace et al. (2014) suggests that brand intimacy is a form of reciprocity in which customers participate in reciprocal emotional exchanges with the brands they choose or love. Customers with high levels of intimacy develop a strong sense of loyalty and support for the brands they love (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006).

Based on the definition above, it can be concluded that brand intimacy is the level of intimacy or intensity of customer interaction with a brand. According to Shin & Back (2020) indicators of brand intimacy are that customers have emotional interest, close relationships, intimacy, extraordinary happiness towards a brand, and understand the brand they use.

C. Brand Commitment

Brand commitment is a behaviour expressed by customers who have a strong relationship with the brand they love or the brand they choose (Albert & Merunka, 2013). Montgomery et al. (2018) argued that customers with a high commitment to brands are willing and ready to invest energy, effort and resources in the brands of their choice. Often, highly committed customers prefer to cultivate strong relationships with preferred brands (Batra et al., 2012).

Brand commitment is a psychological state that can influence customers towards a brand they like or love to maintain a relationship with that brand. Indicators of brand commitment include customers' commitment to continue using a brand,

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maintaining the brand, having confidence in the brand, feeling satisfied when buying the brand, and being disappointed if they do not find the brand they use. (Hernandez-Ortega & Ferreira, 2021).

D. Brand Passion

Albert & Merunka (2013) argued that brand passion is a psychological state of mind consisting of excitement, infatuation and obsession with a loved brand. Brand passion is a category of idealization and obsession in the minds of customers that motivates the desire to maintain a long-term relationship with a loved brand (Batra et al., 2012). In theory, passion is a state of deep longing to live together with other people. In the context of passionate customers participating and actively engaging in an emotional relationship with the brand they love and longing for the brand when it is not around (P. Becerra & Badrinarayanan, 2013).

Thus, brand passion is a strong feeling or enthusiasm that binds customers to the brands they like or love. Giovanis & Athanasopoulou (2018) in his research, he explains that the indicators of brand passion are that customers are interested, trust, enthusiastic about a brand, customers feel their relationship with the brand is very important, and feel that the brand they use is very interesting.

E. Brand Loyalty

Mostafa & Kasamani (2020) revealed that brand loyalty is a strong, ongoing commitment to consistently repurchase products or services you like in the future. Where, consumers repeatedly buy the same brand, despite situational influences and marketing efforts that have the potential to switch to another brand. Brand loyalty according to Mowen & Minor (2002) defines the meaning of brand loyalty as a consumer's positive relationship or attitude towards a brand. This positive relationship is able to encourage them to continue making transactions and become emotionally involved.

Based on the definition above, it can be concluded that brand loyalty is the behavior of consumers who are committed to a brand to continue buying products from that brand on an ongoing basis. Indicators of brand loyalty are customers recommending the brand they use to others, regretting not using that brand, regularly using a brand, and being loyal customers of that brand. Apart from that, customers always talk positively about a brand, are willing to pay high prices for the brand they use, and do not use other brands (Kazmi & Khaliq, 2019).

III. METHOD AND MATERIAL

This research aims to test whether the identified variables have a positive and significant relationship with Brand Loyalty. The following is the framework for this research:

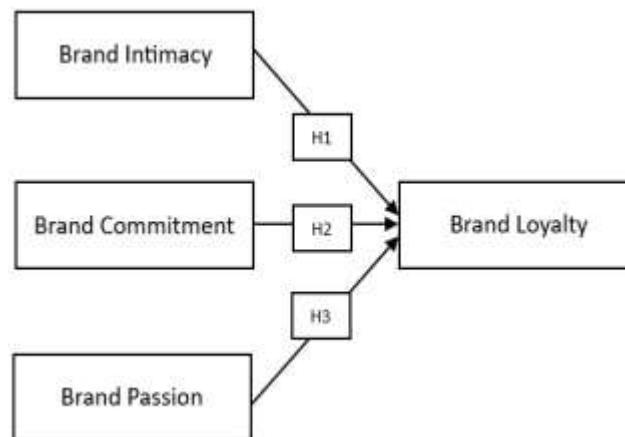


Figure 2. Research Framework

The population used in this research are mobile data users who have used a mobile data package for at least 6 months spread across 6 large cities on the island of Java, Indonesia, namely Jakarta, Bandung, Semarang, Yogyakarta, Surabaya and Tangerang. The sample size used in this research was calculated using Gpower 3.1 software with error parameters = 5%, statistical power = 95% and number of predictors = 3 to obtain a sample size of 119 people.

To obtain greater statistical power, the number of questionnaires that will be distributed will be approximately 250 respondents. In this research, the data collection method used was a questionnaire. Questionnaires will be distributed to samples determined by researchers online via the Google Form platform using social media such as WhatsApp and Instagram, with the help of colleagues. This research uses a 7-point Likert scale. The research method used in this research uses a Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) approach based on Partial Least Square (PLS) through the SmartPLS 4.1 application. PLS is an alternative model

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to covariance-based SEM. PLS is used to confirm a theory by looking at the relationship between several variables and determining how well the proposed theory fits.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSION

Respondent data shows that based on age, respondents were dominated by the age range 18 - 30 years as many as 84 people (41.18%). Based on gender, respondents were dominated by 115 women (56.37%). Based on monthly income, 77 people (37.35%) dominated respondents who earned less than IDR 5,000,000. Based on work, there are 117 private employees (57.35%). Based on domicile, 90 respondents from Jakarta dominated (44.12%). Based on the cellular provider used, it is dominated by Telkomsel with 105 people (51.47%).

Table 1. Reliability dan Validity

Variable	Indicator	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Brand Intimacy	BINT1	0.777	0.842	0.845	0.614
	BINT2	0.807			
	BINT3	0.792			
	BINT4	0.737			
	BINT5	0.802			
Brand Commitment	BCOMM1	0.836	0.854	0.859	0.639
	BCOMM2	0.837			
	BCOMM3	0.831			
	BCOMM4	0.840			
	BCOMM5	0.630			
Brand Passion	BPAS1	0.798	0.878	0.880	0.672
	BPAS2	0.838			
	BPAS3	0.813			
	BPAS4	0.803			
	BPAS5	0.846			
Brand Loyalty	BLOY1	0.802	0.834	0.838	0.601
	BLOY2	0.825			
	BLOY3	0.749			
	BLOY4	0.764			
	BLOY5	0.731			

The standard factor loading value on PLS is at least 0.708. According to Hair et al. (2017) factor loading values below 0.4 were discarded from the model. Based on table 1 above, it can be seen that each indicator has a factor loading value in accordance with the recommended value, so that each indicator can be declared passed and can be tested as maintained. According to Ghozali (2015), a variable can be declared to meet composite reliability if the composite reliability value is > 0.6 and meets Cronbach's alpha if the Cronbach's alpha value is > 0.7 . Based on the table above, it can be seen that the composite reliability value for all research variables is greater than 0.6 with values ranging from 0.838 to 0.880 and the Cronbach's alpha value for all variables is greater than 0.7 with values ranging from 0.834 to 0.878. These results indicate that all variables in the research have met the criteria, so it can be concluded that all variables have a good level of reliability. According to Hair et al. (2017) the square root of average variance extracted (AVE) value must be greater than 0.50, so it is said to be valid. Based on the table above, it is also known that the AVE value for all variables is greater than 0.5 with values ranging from 0.601 to 0.672. Thus, it can be stated that each variable has good convergent validity and can be said to be valid.

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Table 2. Path Coefficient

Relationship	Path Coefficient	T-statistics	P-Value	Decision
Brand Intimacy - Brand Loyalty	0.128	1.621	0.105	Not Supported
Brand Commitment - Brand Loyalty	0.402	6.263	0.000	Supported
Brand Passion - Brand Loyalty	0.304	3.985	0.000	Supported

Based on the table above, several hypotheses can be concluded, namely:

1. The effect of Brand Intimacy on Brand Loyalty has a Path Coefficients value of 0.128 (positive value), t-statistic $1.621 < 1.96$, and p-value $0.105 > 0.05$. This means that Brand Intimacy has a positive and insignificant effect on Brand Loyalty, so hypothesis 1 is rejected. The results of this study contradict research Shukla & Pattnaik (2020) that brand intimacy has a significant influence on brand loyalty. This research is also different from research Khalid et al. (2023) where brand intimacy also has a direct influence on brand loyalty. This could possibly be caused by differences in respondents and research countries.
2. The effect of Brand Commitment on Brand Loyalty has a Path Coefficients value of 0.402 (positive value), t-statistic $6.262 > 1.96$, and p-value $0.000 < 0.05$. This means that Brand Commitment has a positive and significant effect on Brand Loyalty, so hypothesis 2 is accepted. The results of this study confirm the research Suhan et al. (2022) that the stronger the brand commitment value, the stronger the brand loyalty value. On research Tiyasherlinda & Novitaningtyas (2021) The results also show that brand commitment significantly influences brand loyalty.
3. The effect of Brand Passion on Brand Loyalty has a Path Coefficients value of 0.304 (positive value), t-statistic $3.985 > 1.96$, and p-value $0.000 < 0.05$. This means that Brand Passion has a positive and significant effect on Brand Loyalty, so hypothesis 3 is accepted. The results of this study confirm the research Mostafa & Kasamani (2020) that the stronger the brand passion value, the stronger the brand loyalty value. On research Revaldi et al. (2022) also shows the results that brand passion significantly influences brand loyalty.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis and discussion that has been described, it can be concluded as follows:

1. Brand Intimacy has a positive and insignificant influence on Brand Loyalty among mobile data users, meaning that if the Brand Intimacy value increases, there will also be an increase in the Brand Loyalty value of mobile data users and statistically it has an insignificant influence.
2. Brand Commitment has a positive and significant influence on Brand Loyalty among mobile data users, meaning that if the Brand Commitment value increases, there will also be an increase in the Brand Loyalty value of mobile data users and statistically it has a significant influence.
3. Brand Passion has a positive and significant influence on Brand Loyalty among mobile data users, meaning that if the Brand Passion value increases, there will also be an increase in the Brand Loyalty value of mobile data users and statistically it has a significant influence.
4. Because there are 2 dominant components of the Triangular Theory of Love, namely commitment and passion which do not have an intimacy component. This forms Fatuous Love. Therefore, cellular operator companies are expected to be able to foster intimacy, so that the third component of The Triangular Theory of Love is fulfilled and Consummate Love is formed which makes customers continue to use cellular data packages from a cellular operator brand for a long time.

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