THE ROLE OF BRAND AUTHENTICITY, BRAND IMAGE, AND BRAND LOVE IN DRIVING REPURCHASES AND ADVOCACY OF INDONESIAN FASHION BRANDS

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ABSTRACT

Background: In this era of globalization, as brand competition intensifies in Indonesia, companies must explore strategies to become consumers' top choice. Strengthening branding efforts is one of the options for local fashion brands to enhance their competitive advantage. By concentrating on effective branding strategies, local brands can distinguish themselves and excel in a saturated market.

Purpose: This study aims to investigate the influence of multidimensional brand authenticity constructs (quality commitment, heritage, and sincerity), multidimensional brand image constructs (mystery, sensuality, and intimacy), brand love, and consumer behavior related to continuous purchase intention and positive word-of-mouth (WOM) in Indonesia.

Design/Methodology/Approach: This research is quantitative-based, with data collection conducted through an online survey of 265 respondents who purchased products from Indonesian local fashion brands from October 2023 until April 2024. Data analysis was conducted using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method through the SmartPLS application.

Findings/Result: The study's findings indicate that intimacy, an emotionally driven dimension of brand image, significantly predicts brand love, continuous purchase intentions, and positive WOM. Furthermore, the study confirms that brand love itself predicts continuous purchase intentions and positive WOM.

Conclusion: To achieve loyalty in the form of repeated purchases and positive WOM, Millennials and Generation Z consumers in Indonesia need to experience the stage of affection towards a certain Indonesian local fashion brand, rather than the cognitive or sensory aspects.

Originality/Value: This study intends to give a better understanding of several branding-related constructs in the Indonesian local fashion brand setting that can be utilized by marketers to develop consumer-brand relationships with a younger customer base (Millennials and Generation Z), which leads to continuous consumption and spreading positive news.

Keywords: brand love, brand authenticity, brand image, repurchase intention, positive word-of-mouth

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INTRODUCTION

Globalization and digitalization are phenomena that are unstoppable in their effects and, of course, cannot be avoided. One significant impact is the proliferation of products with different brands within an industry. Every company competes to release new products, but often these products are created as a response to competitors, losing sight of their original purpose. This scenario poses a challenge for businesses: not only to create authentic products but also to maintain a positive image in the eyes of consumers. These aspects can influence consumer purchasing decisions, long-term consumption, and word-of-mouth product attributes (Oh, 2019; Wijaya & Astuti, 2018; Dam, 2020).

For this reason, it's crucial for every business entity to have a strategic plan that helps achieve a competitive advantage in a fiercely competitive market (Syah & Olivia, 2022). From a marketing perspective, one effective approach is positioning analysis, which identifies a business's position relative to its competitors and facilitates the development of suitable marketing strategies (Hooley et al. 2017).

Generational differences among consumers also reflect varying behaviors. Generation X tends to be analytical and prioritizes functional characteristics when purchasing a product, whereas subsequent generations like Millennials and Gen Z are more influenced by symbolic attributes such as brand image and feelings (Islam & Rahman, 2016). A report by Marketing in Asia in 2022 highlighted authenticity as a consideration for Millennials and Generation Z when making purchasing decisions.

Brand authenticity is a construct that plays a role in determining positioning (Napoli et al. 2014). This construct is essential for evaluating strategic decisions by business entities aiming to offer authentic products to the market (Safeer et al. 2023). Research on brand authenticity extends beyond consumer perceptions of globally authentic brands (Safeer et al. 2023; Napoli et al. 2014; Tran, 2022) to explore consumer perceptions across various product categories (Oh et al. 2019; Rageh Ismail & Spinelli, 2012; Kim et al. 2021; Schallehn et al. 2014). In a competitive business landscape, brand image can create distinct impressions on consumers, helping entities differentiate themselves from competitors to achieve a competitive advantage (Syah & Olivia, 2022).

The creative industry remains dominated by Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), with the fashion industry contributing 2.8% to the overall revenue of the creative sector, while SMEs play a crucial role in driving Indonesia's economic growth (Andriani et al. 2018; Purusottama et al. 2022). Competition within Indonesia's fashion industry isn't limited to SMEs; large corporations and imported products also play a role. Imported products often offer similar quality at lower prices (Andriani et al. 2018; Hendrayati & Gaffar, 2016). This competitive landscape means that consumers have significant bargaining power due to factors like price changes, product quality, and added value, leading them to switch to other brands.

Top Brand's 2023 index indicates several local fashion brands lead in specific categories despite competition against global brands. For instance, in the suit and blazer category, The Executive, a local fashion brand, holds the market leader position. Other local fashion brands like Cardinal Femme and Minimal also featured prominently in this category. This data demonstrates that Indonesia's fashion industry, particularly local brands, has significant growth potential.

This empirical study aims to fill several gaps in previous publications. Firstly, the study intends to test the effects of multidimensional perceived brand authenticity on consumers' behavioral outcomes, particularly in Indonesia. The research will focus not only on the behavior of Millennials but also on the younger generation cohort, Generation Z. Secondly, Indonesia's local fashion brands, particularly targeting Generation Z consumers, have yet to apply the multidimensional brand image construct. Therefore, this paper will study the cognitive, sensory, and emotional aspects of brand image towards both Millennials and Generation Z behavioral outcomes in Indonesia. Third, while the role of brand love as a mediator is present for both constructs, the effects will be studied in Millennial and Generation Z settings in Indonesia. Based on the phenomenon explained above, this research aims to analyze the effect of brand authenticity and brand image dimensions on brand love, local fashion brands' consumer continuous purchase intention, and positive word-of-mouth. This research also aims to study the impact of brand love as a mediator between brand image and brand authenticity towards continuous purchase intention and positive word-of-mouth.

METHODS

This study will gather factual data about hypothesized relationships using a structured empirical approach. Data were collected through an online questionnaire using Google Forms from April to May 2024. The criteria for respondents in this study were Indonesian consumers of local fashion brands aged 17 to 43 (Millennials and Generation Z), residing in Indonesia, and who had made purchases from local Indonesian fashion brands within the last six months before the data collection period to ensure that it was completed by relevant respondents. Additionally, respondents were asked to mention one local fashion brand they most frequently used by specifying any clothing, shoes, bags, or accessories brands. This questionnaire uses validated scales adapted from various literature. Scales for perceived brand authenticity dimensions are adapted from Napoli et al. (2014) and Safeer et al. (2023), and brand image dimensions are adapted from Rodrigues & Rodrigues (2019) and Song et al. (2019). Positive WOM scales are adapted from Rodrigues and Rodrigues (2019), and continuous purchase intentions are adapted from Safeer et al. (2023). For each question item, a 7-point Likert scale was used, in which 1 represents "Strongly disagree" and 7 represents "Strongly agree."

The total number of collected respondents was 282. However, 17 respondents did not meet the screening criteria or failed to mention an Indonesian fashion brand; therefore, only 265 responses were analyzed. For hypothesis testing, the structural equation modeling (SEM) method is employed. Hair et al. (2019) define SEM as a technique for estimating measurement models that consist of a set of interrelated variables, where dependent variables in one relationship can serve as predictors in another. For this study, PLS-SEM—a method focused on explaining variance in dependent variables (Hair et al. 2019)—is used. According to Hair et al. (2011), PLS-SEM is particularly suitable for marketing research, especially when examining complex relationships in research models, and also can be applied to sample sizes ranging from under 100 respondents to over 2000 respondents. Another advantage of PLS-SEM is its robustness when dealing with non-normally distributed data, which is common in social science research (Hair et al. 2019). Data analysis was performed using SPSS 29 and SmartPLS 4.0.

Hypothesis Development

Brand authenticity can help a brand determine its positioning among competitors (Napoli et al. 2014). When consumers are exposed to a brand's marketing efforts, they engage in cognitive processes to assess the brand's authenticity, which can influence their feelings toward the brand (Napoli et al. 2016). Brand love occurs when expectations of an authentic experience are met, leading consumers to perceive a brand offers authentic product and as a result, consumers develop positive feelings toward the brand then ultimately form an emotional connection with it (Manthiou et al. 2018). **H1a-c:** Brand authenticity dimensions have a positive and significant influence on brand love

Research by Rageh Ismail & Spinelli (2012) indicates a positive and significant relationship between brand image and brand love. This finding is supported by Dam (2020), which validates the positive and significant association between brand image and brand love. Rodrigues & Rodrigues (2019) suggests that all dimensions of brand image mystery, sensuality, and intimacy have a significant positive impact on brand love.
H2a-c: Brand image dimensions have a positive and significant influence on brand love

In a study conducted by Safeer et al. (2023), brand love significantly influences consumers' continuous desire to purchase products from a specific brand. Similar result is shown in research by Albert and Merunka (2013), where brand love contributes to increased consumer commitment to a brand, leading to repeat purchases and a willingness to pay higher prices for products produced by that brand. Gumparthi & Patra (2020) stated that brand love can enhance marketing efforts across product and service categories, resulting in repeat purchases by consumers.
H3: Brand love has a significant positive influence on continuous purchase intention

The emotional attachment between a brand and consumers, especially when it reaches a stage of intense brand liking, leads consumers to speak positively about the brand and feel compelled to recommend it to others (Khan et al. 2021; Rageh Ismail & Spinelli, 2012). When a brand allows consumers to express themselves, it fosters brand loyalty and positive word-of-mouth (WOM) (Anggraeni & Rachmanita, 2015). Research investigating the impact of brand love on positive

WOM demonstrates a significant positive relationship (Rageh Ismail & Spinelli, 2012) which suggests consumers who experience brand love are more likely to engage in positive WOM (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006).
H4: Brand love has a positive and significant influence on positive WOM

Attribution theory serves as the foundation for explaining this relationship. Consumers' positive perception of brand authenticity motivates them intrinsically and leads to favorable thoughts about the brand (Safeer et al. 2023). Subsequently, these positive feelings drive consumers to make continuous purchases from the authentic brand (Safeer et al. 2023).
H5a-c: Brand authenticity dimensions have a positive and significant influence on continuous purchase intention

Research by Oh (2019) demonstrates a significant positive influence of brand authenticity from respondents' favorite brands on consumers' behavioral intentions, including recommending the brand to others. Consistent findings from previous studies support the statement that higher brand authenticity leads consumers to communicate the brand's excellence and recommend it to others (Tanaka et al. 2024). Brands that genuinely deliver on promises, such as consistently maintaining product quality, are more likely to generate positive word-of-mouth from consumers and accelerate brand acceptance (Safeer et al. 2023). Attribution theory, which links intrinsic motivation to authenticity, explains this phenomenon (Tanaka et al. 2024).
H6a-c: Brand authenticity dimensions have a significant positive influence on positive WOM

A study by Wijaya & Astuti (2018) reveals a positive and significant relationship between brand image and continuous purchase intention. This suggests that the better a brand's image, the greater the consumer's intention to make repeat purchases. This finding is reinforced by research from Bhakuni et al. (2021), indicating that consumers with a higher tendency to repurchase have more favorable evaluations of brand image.
H7a-c: Brand image dimensions have a significant positive relationship with continuous purchase intention

Anggraeni & Rachmanita (2015) explored the impact of brand image on WOM in the context of local fashion brands in Indonesia and found a positive and significant

relationship. Further research by Dam (2020) highlights how brand image significantly influences WOM. When the brand's projected image aligns with the self-image consumers want, it encourages positive discussions about the brand (Rageh Ismail & Spinelli, 2012).
H8a-c: Brand image dimensions (mystery, sensuality, and intimacy) have a significant positive relationship with positive WOM

The presence of brand love as a mediator variable in the relationship between brand authenticity and components of consumers' behavioral outcomes is explained by Safeer et al.'s (2023). The dimensions of perceived brand authenticity are considered to motivate millennials in Asia to develop positive emotions, thereby driving consumer behaviors such as continuous purchase intention. This finding aligns with the results from Rodrigues & Rodrigues (2019), where brand love is regarded as an essential concept in modern research. A study by Fritz et al. (2017) demonstrates that brand authenticity can strengthen the emotional bond between consumers and a brand, leading to increased consumer loyalty.
H9a-c: Brand love can mediate the relationship between brand authenticity dimensions on continuous purchase intention positively and significantly
H10a-c: Brand love can mediate the relationship between brand authenticity dimensions on positive WOM positively and significantly

One study investigating the role of brand love as a mediator is the research conducted by Rageh Ismail & Spinelli (2012). Brand love can act as a mediator that enhances the influence of brand image on word-of-mouth (WOM). When the brand image projected aligns with the self-image others want to have, it encourages consumers to speak positively about the brand. Additionally, according to Bhakuni et al. (2021), brand image not only affects repurchase behavior but also serves as a way to evaluate the quality provided and dismiss negative WOM. Brand image shapes consumer preferences, fosters brand affiliation, and creates product identification, ultimately leading to repurchase intentions (Bhakuni et al. 2021). Based on these statements, a plausible hypothesis is:
H11a-c: Brand love can mediate the relationship between brand image dimensions on continuous purchase intention
H12a-c: Brand love can mediate the relationship between brand image dimensions on positive WOM

Based on the hypothesis development above, the research framework is as shown in Figure 1. Broadly, this study aims to investigate the relationship between the dimensions of perceived brand authenticity (quality commitment, heritage, and sincerity), dimensions of brand image (mystery, sensuality, intimacy), brand love, and consumer behavior in the form of continuous purchase intention and positive WOM. This research also aims to understand the role of brand love as mediator for the relationship between multidimensional endogenous variables, such as brand authenticity and brand image, towards exogeneous variables, which are continuous purchase intention and positive WOM

RESULTS

Table 1 below shows descriptive analysis of respondent profiles distribution. The number of female respondents dominates over male respondents, with a frequency of 206 individuals, accounting for 77.74% of the total respondents. For age categories, there are two focal groups in this study: Millennials and Generation Z. Based on the data obtained, Generation Z respondents dominate the questionnaire responses, with a total of 189 individuals (71.32%). Meanwhile, the number of Millennial respondents is only 76, representing 28.68% of the total. In terms of monthly expenditures, the distribution is fairly even. The most frequent

expenditure range per month falls between 1,000,001 IDR and 2,500,000 IDR. This range was selected by 82 individuals (30.94%). Total of 147 individuals (55.47%) spend between 100,001 IDR and 500,000 IDR per month on fashion products. The next most common expenditure range for fashion products is between 500,001 IDR and 1,000,000 IDR, chosen by 71 individuals (26.79%) of the total respondents.

The evaluation of measurement models includes conducting reliability and validity tests. When evaluating reliability, two common metrics are considered: Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR). According to Malhotra (2020), the accepted threshold values for Cronbach's Alpha and CR are both greater than 0.6 and 0.7, respectively. Based on the reliability test results shown in Table 2, Cronbach's Alpha values for all variables are greater than 0.6. Furthermore, the CR values for all variables also exceeding 0.7. As for validity assessment, two metrics are observed: factor loading with a minimum threshold of 0.6 (Malhotra, 2020) and average variance extracted (AVE) with a minimum criterion of 0.5 (Hair et al. 2019). The data presented in Table 2 indicates that all indicators meet the factor loading criteria, exceeding 0.6. Additionally, for each variable, the AVE values are greater than 0.5. Therefore, all the variables and indicators of this research are considered reliable and valid.
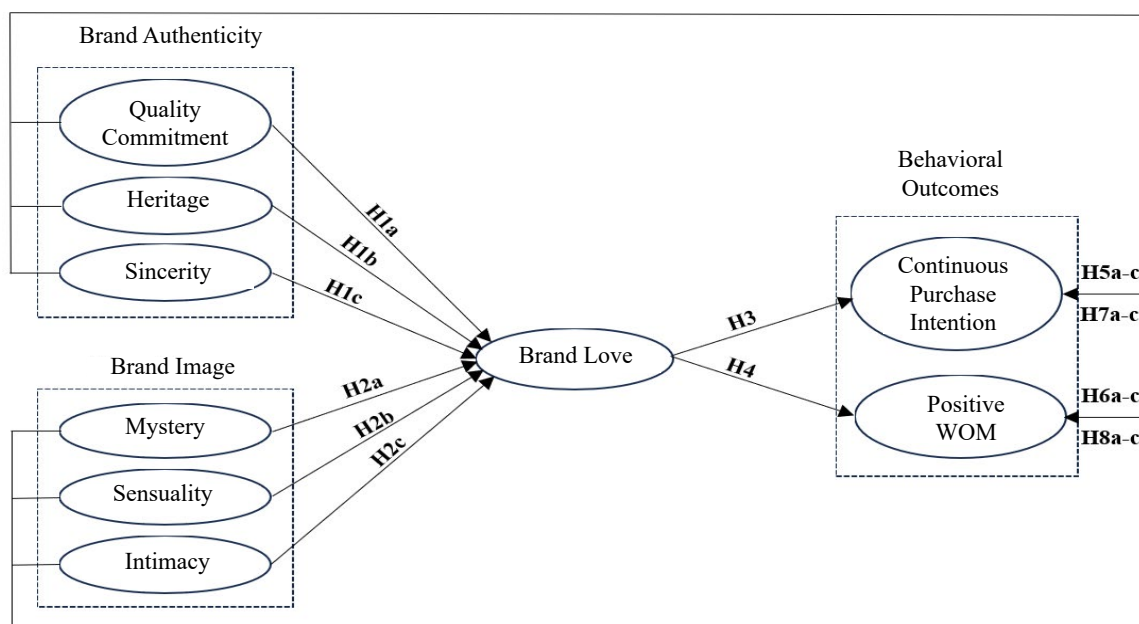

Figure 1. Research Model

Table 1. Respondent Profiles

Category	Information	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Women	206	77.74%
	Men	59	22.26%
Age Cohort	Generation Z (17-27 years old)	189	71.32%
	Millenials (28-43 years old)	76	28.68%
Monthly Expenditures	Less than 1.000.000 IDR	47	17.74%
	1.000.001 IDR - 2.500.000 IDR	82	30.94%
	2.500.001 IDR - 5.000.000 IDR	70	26.42%
	5.000.001 IDR - 7.500.000 IDR	35	13.21%
	7.500.001 IDR - 10.000.000 IDR	20	7.55%
	More than 10.000.000 IDR	11	4.15%
Monthly Expenses for Fashion Products	Less than 100.000 IDR	20	7.55%
	100.001 IDR - 500.000 IDR	147	55.47%
	500.001 IDR - 1.000.000 IDR	71	26.79%
	1.000.001 IDR - 2.500.000 IDR	22	8.30%
	2.500.001 IDR - 5.000.000 IDR	5	1.89%

Table 2. Validity and Reliability Test Result

Variable & Sources	Indicator	Factor Loading	AVE	CR	Cronbach α
Brand Authenticity – Quality Commitment (QCO)	Quality is the core of this brand	0.710	0.605	0.893	0.891
	In its production, this brand only uses high-quality materials	0.765			
	This brand is made to the highest standards, where everything done by the company aims to enhance quality	0.810			
Safeer et al. (2023)	This brand is produced with the strictest quality standards	0.790			
	This brand has a strong image of consistent long-term quality	0.738			
	This brand is crafted by skilled artisans who pay great attention to detail and are involved in the entire process	0.773			
	The firm is committed to maintain quality standards of this brand in the long run	0.853			
Brand Authenticity – Heritage (HER)	This brand has a strong connection to historical periods from a specific time, culture, and/or location	0.913	0.739	0.908	0.906
	This brand has a very close relationship with the past, where this connection is still preserved and celebrated today	0.912			
Safeer et al. (2023)	This brand reminds me of a peak of success in the past	0.902			
	This brand reflects traditional aspects	0.906			
	This brand showcases timeless design	0.627			
Brand Authenticity – Sincerity (SIN)	This brand remains loyal to the values it upholds	0.852	0.647	0.831	0.818
	This brand refuses to change the underlying values	0.821			
	This brand steadfastly adheres to its principles	0.815			
Napoli et al. (2014)	This brand is built upon traditions initiated by its founder.	0.724			

Table 2. Validity and Reliability Test Result (continue)

Variable & Sources	Indicator	Factor Loading	AVE	CR	Cronbach α
Brand Image – Mystery (MYS) Rodrigues & Rodrigues (2019)	This brand evokes beautiful memories for me	0.803	0.630	0.852	0.851
	This brand represents the meaning of life for me	0.842			
	This brand immediately comes to mind when I want to buy a product in the same category	0.667			
	This brand is a part of my life	0.839			
	This brand enriches my life experiences	0.806			
Brand Image – Sensuality (SEN) Rodrigues & Rodrigues (2019)	This brand has excellent advertising design	0.652	0.542	0.862	0.858
	A well-organized store environment is appealing to me	0.731			
	This brand has a very good website design	0.747			
	The packaging and products from this brand are equally satisfying	0.762			
	This brand has outstanding displays	0.789			
	The store environment of this brand is attractive to me	0.748			
	This brand has a beautiful color scheme	0.714			
Brand Image – Intimacy (INT) Song et al. (2019)	This brand provides a comfortable and prosperous feeling to me	0.755	0.612	0.878	0.873
	I feel a strong connection with this brand	0.751			
	I enjoy purchasing products from this brand	0.787			
	I find using products from this brand enjoyable	0.715			
	Thinking about this brand always brings me joy	0.831			
	I feel very interested in this brand	0.847			
Brand Love (BL)	This brand is remarkable	0.780	0.679	0.906	0.905
	This brand satisfies me	0.821			
	This brand is truly exceptional	0.852			
	This brand makes me very happy	0.849			
	I admire this brand	0.840			
	I am deeply attached to this brand	0.801			
Continuous Purchase Intention (CPI)	I plan to buy from this brand frequently	0.809		0.746	0.709
	I will purchase from this brand because it's recommended by others	0.619			
	I will highly suggest others to buy from this brand	0.819			
	If I want to make a purchase in the future, I will consider buying from this brand	0.654			
Positive Word-of-Mouth (WOM)	I have recommended this brand to many people	0.899		0.906	0.905
	I talk about this brand with my friends	0.893			
	I try to spread positive news about this brand	0.863			
	I give this brand a lot of positive word-of-mouth advertising	0.875			

In the discriminant validity assessment, Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) is used with a criterion that the accepted HTMT value should be less than 0.9 (Hair et al. 2019). The HTMT measurements result in Table 3 indicate that there are no inter-variable relationships exceeding 0.9. This suggests that all variables meet discriminant validity criteria.

In order to estimate the influence and significance of the relationships between variables for hypothesis assessment, a path analysis process is conducted through bootstrapping. The bootstrapping process is applied to 5000 sub-samples, utilizing standard error values to determine the t-values and p-values for each path (Hair et al. 2019), with the significance level of 0.05. Path coefficient and t-statistics value from SmartPLS calculation is shown on Figure 2.

Table 3. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

|	Quality Commitment	Heritage	Sincerity	Mystery	Sensuality	Intimacy	Brand Love	Continuous Purchase Intention	Positive WOM
Quality Commitment									
Heritage	0.494								
Sincerity	0.801	0.691							
Mystery	0.563	0.729	0.701						
Sensuality	0.742	0.471	0.782	0.638					
Intimacy	0.713	0.547	0.782	0.750	0.804				
Brand Love	0.802	0.548	0.748	0.754	0.796	0.898			
Continuous Purchase Intention	0.659	0.433	0.685	0.669	0.735	0.866	0.819		
Positive WOM	0.529	0.502	0.572	0.624	0.607	0.700	0.709	0.732	
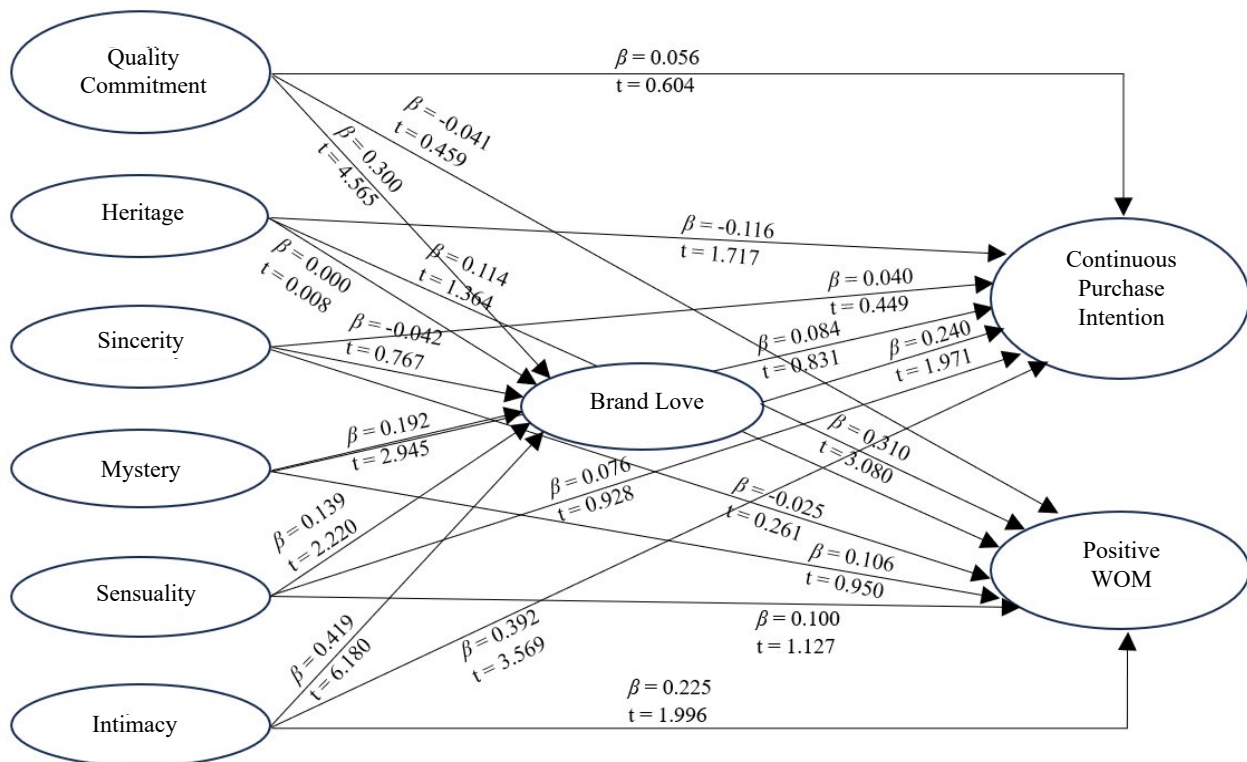
Figure 2. Path Coefficient and T-Statistics Value from SmartPLS

The findings from the analysis indicate varying results for each hypothesis, which will be explained by referring to previous research outcomes. Several notable results such as sincerity, a dimension of brand authenticity, has no significant path coefficient and t-statistic value towards any of the endogenous variables. Meanwhile, intimacy, as the sensory aspect of brand image, has significant value towards all endogenous variables.

H1a-c tests the effect of brand authenticity dimensions, namely quality commitment, heritage, and sincerity, on brand love. From Table 4, it is indicated that only quality commitment has a positive and significant influence on brand love. This result differs from Safeer et al. (2023) which shows all brand authenticity dimensions have positive and significant influence on brand love. In the case of quality commitment, local fashion brand

consumers have fulfilled expectations of receiving high-quality, authentic products, leading to the growth of positive feelings and emotions toward the brand (Manthiou et al. 2018). However, the respondents in this study hold diverse views regarding the heritage aspects of local fashion brands in Indonesia. This arises because respondents evaluate various fashion brands, and relative to the chosen brand, there are indications these brands do not consider historical aspects or their connection to local culture. Additionally, the perceptions of Millennial and Gen Z consumers regarding sincerity values embraced by a brand, do not necessarily play a significant role in developing brand love.

H2a-c tests the influence of brand image dimensions namely, mystery, sensuality, and intimacy on brand love. The results from Table 4 indicate that all brand image dimensions have positive and significant relationship with brand love. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Rodrigues & Rodrigues (2019). It suggests that a majority of Millennial and Gen Z consumers agree that local fashion brands have positive cognitive associations. Additionally, sensory aspects related to the brand, such as the purchasing environment and product experience, as well as emotional aspects, able to influence brand love.

H3 aims to test the effect of brand love on positive word-of-mouth (WOM), which indicates that brand love has a positive and significant relationship with positive WOM. These findings align with a study conducted by Albert & Merunka (2013), which suggest brands evaluated by Millennial and Gen Z are perceived positively, making them comfortable for self-expression. Consequently, the presence of a positive emotional connection to the brand can encourage repeat purchases by consumers (Rageh Ismail & Spinelli, 2012; Gumparthi & Patra, 2020). While H4 tests the relationship between brand love and continuous purchase intention. The results indicate a positive and significant relationship between both variables. The findings from this study align with the results of research conducted by Caroll & Ahuvia (2006), Rageh Ismail & Spinelli (2012), and Anggraeni & Rahmanita (2015). When Millennials and Gen Z in Indonesia have a positive emotional connection to a brand, they will spread positive opinions about that brand and recommend it to other consumers (Khan et al. 2021; Rageh Ismail & Spinelli, 2012). The stronger the positive emotional connection felt by consumers, the more engaged they become in positive word-of-mouth activities (Caroll & Ahuvia, 2006).

Table 4. Hypothesis Assessment

Relationship	Direct Effects	Indirect Effects	Total Effects	T-Statistics	P-Value
Quality Commitment → Brand Love	0.300**			4.565	0.000
Heritage → Brand Love	0.000			0.008	0.497
Sincerity → Brand Love	-0.042			0.767	0.222
Mystery → Brand Love	0.192**			2.945	0.002
Sensuality → Brand Love	0.139*			2.220	0.013
Intimacy → Brand Love	0.419**			6.180	0.000
Brand Love → Continuous Purchase Intention	0.240*			1.971	0.024
Brand Love → Positive WOM	0.310**			3.080	0.001
Quality Commitment → Continuous Purchase Intention	0.056	0.072*	0.128	1.360	0.087
Heritage → Continuous Purchase Intention	-0.116	0.000	-0.116	1.716	0.043
Sincerity → Continuous Purchase Intention	0.040	-0.010	0.030	0.326	0.372
Quality Commitment → Positive WOM	-0.041	0.093*	0.052	0.553	0.290
Heritage → Positive WOM	0.114	0.000	0.114	1.366	0.086
Sincerity → Positive WOM	-0.025	-0.013	-0.038	0.387	0.350
Mystery → Continuous Purchase Intention	0.084	0.046*	0.130	1.338	0.091
Sensuality → Continuous Purchase Intention	0.076	0.033*	0.110	1.357	0.087
Intimacy → Continuous Purchase Intention	0.392**	0.101*	0.493**	4.596	0.000
Mystery → Positive WOM	0.106	0.060*	0.165*	1.657	0.049
Sensuality → Positive WOM	0.100	0.043*	0.143	1.632	0.051
Intimacy → Positive WOM	0.225*	0.130**	0.355**	3.220	0.001

Note(s): t > 1.645 at *p < 0.05; t > 2.745 at **p < 0.01; (one-tailed)

H5a-c and H6a-c sequentially test the relationship between dimensions of brand authenticity and continuous purchase intention and positive WOM. The hypothesis test results indicate no positive and significant influence of brand authenticity dimensions on continuous purchase intention and positive WOM. These findings differ from the research conducted by Safeer et al. (2023) and Oh et al. (2019). For local fashion brand consumers in Indonesia, a brand's commitment to maintaining product quality, historical aspects of the business entity, and the belief that a brand genuinely creates its products are not factors driving continuous purchase intent and positive opinions about products from Indonesian local fashion brands.

H7a-c and H8a-c test the relationship between dimensions of brand image and continuous purchase intention and positive word-of-mouth (WOM), respectively. The results of both hypothesis tests indicate that only the intimacy dimension has a positive and significant relationship with continuous purchase intention and positive WOM. These findings differ from the research conducted by Wijaya & Astuti (2018) and Anggraeni & Rachmanita (2015). It suggests that within the scope of this research, cognitive attributes such as symbolic meaning and past experiences, as well as multisensory aspects, are not driving factors for continuous purchase intention. Additionally, it can be inferred that the preferences of Millennial and Gen Z consumers regarding the brand image displayed by a local fashion brand lean more toward how a brand evokes their emotional aspects.

H9a-c and H10a-c sequentially test the impact of brand love as a mediator between brand authenticity dimensions and continuous purchase intention and positive word-of-mouth (WOM). The mediation analysis results in Table 4 indicate that brand love fully mediates the relationship between quality commitment and both continuous purchase intention and positive WOM. These findings differ from the results of Safeer et al. (2023). It suggests that the commitment of local fashion brands to producing high-quality products enhances the affection of Millennial and Gen Z consumers, leading to repeat purchases and positive opinions about the brand. Historical aspects and brand values have less impact on brand love which drives these two behaviors.

H11a-c and H12a-c respectively examine the effect of brand love as a mediator on the relationship between brand image dimensions, continuous purchase intention, and positive WOM. The mediation analysis in Table 4 shows that mediation effects occur in all relationships. The mystery and sensuality dimensions experience full mediation effects, while intimacy experiences partial mediation. Therefore, it can be concluded that brand love effectively mediates both of these relationships. These findings indicate that the brand image projected by local fashion brands aligns with the image others want to associate with, motivating consumers to repurchase and speak positively about the brand (Rageh Ismail & Spinelli, 2012; Bhakuni et al. 2021).

Managerial Implications

Local fashion brand marketers can study the current consumer purchasing patterns in Indonesia, which are predominantly influenced by Millennials and Gen Z. Based on the results of hypothesis testing, intimacy and brand love emerge as the strongest predictors for encouraging repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth about a local fashion brand. Therefore, marketers can target the emotional side of consumers that aligns with their target market, using it as an entry point to foster loyalty. Marketers should create value, whether through differentiation or cost leadership. The expected outcome is the development of a competitive advantage, allowing local fashion brands to compete continuously with both other local brands and global fashion brands entering Indonesia.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

In this study, quality commitment, heritage, and sincerity are dimensions of brand authenticity that have been investigated for their impact on brand love, continuous purchase intention, and positive word-of-mouth (WOM). Meanwhile, the dimensions examined for their impact on the endogenous variable of brand image are mystery, sensuality, and intimacy. Based on the research findings, intimacy is the only dimension that shows a positive and significant relationship with brand love, continuous purchase intention, and positive WOM. This result is aligned with previous findings from Rodrigues & Rodrigues (2019). Intimacy,

representing the emotional aspect of human perception of brand image, serves as an important predictor in enhancing affection for the brand, intention to make repeat purchases, and spreading positive news about the brand. The stronger the emotional connection binds Indonesian consumers to a local fashion brand, the more likely they are to love or be attached to the brand, make repeat purchases, and share positive news. In addition to intimacy, brand love also has a significant positive relationship with continuous purchase intention and positive WOM. However, the other two dimensions of brand image mystery and sensuality do not directly and significantly impact continuous purchase intention or positive WOM. These results differ from Rodrigues & Rodrigues' (2019) findings. Through mediation with the brand love variable, there is an indirect relationship between mystery and sensuality and continuous purchase intention and positive WOM. These findings indicate that to achieve loyalty in the form of repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth, consumers must first go through the stage of affection or attachment to a local fashion brand. Consumers are less motivated to make repeat purchases or share positive news if they rely solely on the cognitive or sensory aspects of a local fashion brand. In terms of brand authenticity, only quality commitment positively and significantly impacts brand love. This result differs from Safeer et al. (2023), which showed all brand authenticity dimensions quality commitment, sincerity, and heritage have a positive and significant effect on brand love.

Recommendations

Some limitations encountered in this study, along with recommendations for future research, include no data separation between Millennial and Gen Z respondents during data processing. Consequently, phenomena specific to certain age groups may not necessarily apply to other age groups. Future research could provide more detailed findings based on age groups for comparison. Additionally, researchers could replicate this study by incorporating aspects of consumer ethnocentrism to explore consumer behavior when choosing local products. Another recommendation is to differentiate local brands into luxury and non-luxury categories to understand consumer perspectives on each type.

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