BRAND AUTHENTICITY IN THE HEART OF LOCAL FASHION BRAND CONSUMERS AND THE NEED FOR RELATIONSHIP

a Magdalena Lestari Ginting, b Ferdi Antonio, c Sabrina Sihombing

ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aimed to investigate the antecedents of brand authenticity and its consequences on brand usage intention.

Theoretical framework: The growth of the local fashion brands in emerging countries is pivotal due their economic impact, however, the previous studies do still not confirm local brands as the predictable driver in consumer choice. The brand uniqueness value that lies in authenticity needs to be explored furtherly.

Method: This study uses quantitative research methods with a multivariate PLS-SEM approach. Respondents were taken from Generation Z who bought and use local fashion brands. There were respondents that eligible for this study obtained by online questionnaire.

Result: The result of this study has contributed two new insights to the marketing field. Firstly, this study established the relevant dimensionality of brand authenticity in the context of fashion brands. Secondly, so far this is the first study that demonstrated the link between marketing content to brand authenticity mediated by brand clarity communication, and further its impact on brand usage intention through brand relation quality. In addition, this study indicates the moderating role of brand involvement in the brand authenticity formation.

Conclusion: this study contributes new insights into the marketing field, through established the dimensionality of brand authenticity in the context of fashion brands. Lasty but most important finding that this study revealed the brand authenticity as heart of branding process from content, mediated by brand clarity and outflow the impact on brand usage intent through the brand relation quality. The notable of brand building in local fashion is to pursue relationship as the important direction to develop long lasting brand for generation Z.

Keywords: brand authenticity, brand usage intention, local fashion brand, brand communication clarity, social media.
RESUMO

Objetivo: Este estudo teve como objetivo investigar os antecedentes da autenticidade da marca e suas consequências na intenção de uso da marca.

Quadro teórico: O crescimento das marcas de moda locais em países emergentes é fundamental devido ao seu impacto econômico, no entanto, os estudos anteriores ainda não confirmam as marcas locais como o motor previsível na escolha do consumidor. O valor exclusivo da marca, que está na autenticidade, precisa ser explorado mais a fundo.

Método: Este estudo utiliza métodos de pesquisa quantitativa com uma abordagem PLS-SEM multivariada. Os entrevistados foram retirados da Geração Z, que comprou e usa marcas de moda locais. Houve respondentes que se qualificaram para este estudo obtidos por questionário on-line.

Resultado: O resultado deste estudo contribuiu com dois novos insights para o campo do marketing. Em primeiro lugar, este estudo estabeleceu a dimensionalidade relevante da autenticidade da marca no contexto das marcas de moda. Em segundo lugar, até o momento, este é o primeiro estudo que demonstrou a ligação entre o conteúdo de marketing e a autenticidade da marca mediada pela comunicação de clareza da marca, e ainda mais seu impacto na intenção de uso da marca através da qualidade de relação da marca. Além disso, este estudo indica o papel moderador do envolvimento da marca na formação da autenticidade da marca.

Conclusão: este estudo contribui com novos insights no campo do marketing, através da determinação da dimensionalidade da autenticidade da marca no contexto das marcas de moda. A descoberta mais recente, porém mais importante, de que esse estudo revelou a autenticidade da marca como centro do processo de branding a partir do conteúdo, mediado pela clareza da marca e extravasando o impacto na intenção de uso da marca através da qualidade da relação da marca. O notável de construção de marca na moda local é buscar relacionamento como a direção importante para desenvolver marca de longa duração para a geração Z.

Palavras-chave: autenticidade da marca, intenção de uso da marca, marca de moda local, clareza de comunicação da marca, mídia social.

1 INTRODUCTION

The fashion industry is an industry that is growing rapidly around the world. Indeed in fashion, clothes are judged not only by their utility but the human need to express themselves through their appearance or what they wear. This is according to what Holbrook said long ago about symbolic consumption that revealed hedonic motives (Holbrook, 1999). Currently, the growth in the fashion industry is supported by advances in social media technology where fashion becomes the content that is shared and consumed by the netizen. For example, the outfit of the day phenomenon and fashion trends are influenced by influencers on the digital platform (Zou, 2019). For the younger
generation, such as millennials and gen z, fashion is a means to show their identity and preference. The ownership of a particular fashion brand can indicate a certain social status. To maximize business performance in fashion products, players in this business seek and depend on the branding strategy for the fashion products they produce (Mishra, 2021). The brand of a fashion product can be cue not only by the quality of the product but what social and emotional benefits that can be felt by its users (Fuchs, 2013). Marketing studies have confirmed that brand equity can be a competitive advantage for players in the fashion industry (Su, 2018).

Global brands with a lot of resources have advantages in massively branding their fashion products. For example, by using famous world artist figures, and high exposure in the media and international events. This global brand’s country of origin usually came from North America and Europe, although technically fashion products such as apparel and accessories are produced in developing countries such as Asia Countries. The paradox of globalization shows a phenomenon of the resistance of the local culture. The local business players emerge to create their designs and material thus becoming a counter to the global domination of brands. Entrepreneurs in developing countries innovate and produce fashion products with their unique brands. As local entrepreneurs, they use to capture the tastes of the market in their country and produce products that match their purchasing power. (Monika & Antonio, 2022) Some of these local fashion brand producers label their brands by mimicking global brands as their marketing strategy, but some are struggling with trying to create authentic brands without disguising their local identity. From this point of view, local fashion branding is pivotal because it relates to more equitable economic growth, especially in emerging countries with large populations.

An effective branding strategy should encounter many challenges to develop a successful local fashion brand, especially with limited resources. An effective branding effort based on customer perspective is needed to win the competition. In addition, these local brands need to maximize digital marketing which is relatively more efficient than conventional advertising, such as TV ads. (Tran, 2017). In that context, a study is needed to provide relevant insights into how the local fashion branding process can be optimized. Local brands need to differentiate and form a brand identity that can be chosen by a dynamic segment of the younger generation. The most likely differentiator is the authenticity of the brand in the eyes of its consumers (Kotler, 2019). Brand authenticity
was defined as the extent to which a brand is considered unique, legitimate, truthful to its claims, and lacking falsity (Akbar, 2017). However, there is still not much research related to branding using authentic brands, several studies on brand authenticity have been carried out but not specifically on fashion (Campagna, 2022). Several other studies are limited to simpler branding processes, for example how authentic brands can influence business intention without a relationship process between consumers and brands (Lin, 2010). Besides that, it is not yet clear what the antecedents of brand authenticity are and how to measure it, for instance, what are the appropriate dimensions of fashion brand authenticity. This study attempt to extend the brand strategy kinds of literature by answering three research questions in the context of local fashion brand; (1) to what extent the marketing stimulus from social media content could affect the brand’s authenticity? (2) does brand authenticity could drive customer choice through the brand-customer relationship? (3) which brand authenticity dimension is needed and relevant for fashion brands?

To answer those research questions, this study proposed a conceptual framework derived from brand theories and previous studies. The social media content related to the branding activities was drawn as user-generated content and firm-generated content (Santiago, 2022). Brand clarity was identified and deployed to mediate that independent variable to brand authenticity. Meanwhile, this study acknowledged the participation of the customer through involvement that moderates the relation to and from brand authenticity (Fritz, 2017). Based on previous studies there were various reflective dimensions of brand authenticity (Moulard, 2016) unfortunately, there were not specific to the fashion brand, therefore, this study explores the ten dimensions of brand authenticity. Finally, the impact of brand authenticity through brand relationship quality on the brand usage intention. This conceptual framework with a focus on brand authenticity was empirically tested on several local brands with certain criteria, such as being owned by local entrepreneurs, having promoted their brand through social media e.g. Instagram, and surviving in the market for more than five years. The setting of this study was a local brand from Indonesia that represent an emerging country with a population of millions and gross domestic products (Tambunan, 2008).
2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Social media offers companies and customers new ways to engage with each other, so decision-makers expect communication on social media on behalf of the company to engage with customers and build good product perceptions, disseminate information, and learn customer characteristics (Brodie, 2013). Company-generated content or better known as firm-generated content (FGC) is believed to be a form of online advertising because it allows companies to communicate by creating and disseminating information and promotions (Yang, 2019). Many fashion brands use social media to facilitate various business needs. User-Generated Content (UGC) is defined as creative content published on accessible websites and created with links that lead users to make purchases as an act for monetary gain or other interests. The development of UGC is the result of the development of technology and the internet that allow customers to review products and services, document travel experiences, and upload photos and videos or other information such as complaints. UGC is widely used by consumers to share information and as a source of information to help them make decisions (Perez-Aranda, 2018).

The basic premise of the consumer-based brand equity model states that the strength of a brand lies in what customers have learned, felt, seen, and heard about the brand as a result of the company's efforts over time. Aaker explains the dimensions of the valuable assets of the brand, namely brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived brand quality, brand association, and other brand assets. Keller describes a multilevel pyramid that makes up brand equity. At the bottom is the level of brand salience which contains brand knowledge. At the second level, there is brand imagery and brand performance. At the third level, there are brand feelings and brand judgments. And at level 4 there is brand resonance (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993). In other words, the power of the brand lies in what is in the mind of the customer (Keller, 2013).

Consumer-based brand equity (CBBE) has a basic premise about the strength of a brand that lies in the consumer's experience over time with the brand. Keller describes a pyramid that has 4 levels of equity building. Brand resonance is at the fourth level which provides an overview of the relationship between the brand and the customer. In its implementation, it is distinguished from the psychological aspect of the brand and the experience aspect which identifies the point of consumer interaction that is different from the image perceived by the customer. A comprehensive brand planning strategy will cover
all people involved in product management (Keller, 2013). In relational phenomena, Fournier identified 15 typologies of brand relationship quality. The brand relationship quality (BRQ) concept was developed from a slice of life story that explains the mechanisms of maintaining brand-person relation time after time at high levels of intensity (Fournier 1994). This quality of relationship leads to attitude and satisfaction to provide some insight on usage intention matter.

In this study, the selection of brand equity which is composed of brand awareness is very closely related to brand authenticity. The way of company marketing builds an image through social media and gives meaning to products and consumers so that a good relationship is formed. The Theory of Reasoned Action or TRA (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) reveals that the best indicator of actual behavior is a person's intention to act according to what is signaled. This theory becomes a very important marketing goal because the overall signal sent by the company is a calculated investment that needs to be returned in the form of the brand used by consumers. This intention to use the brand will be tested from the relevant indicators of the brand communication clarity variable represented by firm-generated content and user-generated content.

3 HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Kumar (2016) further explains FGC as a multifaceted construct that tends to influence the target audience by considering the sentiment of the message, the customer's response to the message, and the customer's disposition towards the company's social media platform. This shows that the clarity of FGC can be focused on the uniqueness of the brand attributes that are superior to competitors or matching the brand with the aspirations, insights, experiences, and feelings of consumers (Ashley & Tuten, 2014). User-Generated Content (UGC) is defined as creative content published on accessible websites and created with links that lead users to make purchases as an act for monetary gain or other interests. UGC has developed into various formats, such as virtual communities, consumer reviews (reviews), personal blogs, social networks, sharing media, and wikis (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). The development of UGC is the result of the development of technology and the internet that allow customers to review products and services, document travel experiences, and upload photos and videos or other information such as complaints. UGC is widely used by consumers to share information and as a source of information to help them make decisions (Perez-Aranda, 2018).
Products and services can be identified through a name, word, sign, symbol, or design commonly known as a brand. Marketers need to have expertise in creating, managing, maintaining, protecting, and enhancing the brand image as a long-term investment (Kotler, 2004). The experience that a consumer has with a brand starting from the level of affection, cognitive, and behavior can affect brand loyalty (Fournier, 1998). Practically, in a company's marketing communication process it is important to use brand engagement (Kim, 2013).

H1: Firm-Generated Content has a positive effect on Brand Communication Clarity.

H2: User-Generated Content has a positive effect on Brand Communication Clarity.

H3: Clarity of Brand Communication has a positive effect on Brand Authenticity.

H4: Clarity of Brand Communication mediates the positive effect of Firm-Generated Content on Brand Authenticity.

H5: Clarity of Brand Communication mediates the positive effect of User-Generated Content on Brand Authenticity.

Consumers rely on social media to make decisions, and actively engage in relationships with brands on social media. The social exchange theory replicated their proposed model to relate consumer brand engagement to consumer involvement, self-brand connection, and brand usage (Harrigan, 2018). There are five concepts of engagement: ego, commitment, communication, purchase, and response (Loonam, 2018). Involvement is defined as a person's level of interest in an object or the object's centrality to one's ego structure. It is something that is determined by the centrality, relevance, and involvement of values shown in an attitude. It is also a person's perceived relevance of an object based on needs, values, and interests (Zaichkowsky, 1985. Tyebjeem 1979. Ferns, 2012). Involvement becomes present whenever a problem or object is related to the attitudes and values that constitute the ego of the individual. In line with this view, involvement as a variable is defined as an internal state that shows the amount of arousal, interest, or drives evoked by a particular stimulus or situation (Mitchell, 1979. Richins, 1983).

**H6: The greater Brand Involvement the stronger relationship from Brand Communication Clarity on Brand Authenticity**
**H7: The greater Brand Involvement the stronger relationship from Brand Authenticity on Brand Relation Quality**

Purchase intention can occur when trust and satisfaction increase (Hsu, 2015). Previous research confirms that intention to use is an antecedent of intention to use a brand, in this research confirms that brand usage intention is the consequence of brand authenticity. Messages with persuasive content have a positive effect on brand authenticity, because they encourage customers to react, especially in response to its existence (Raji, 2019). Brand authenticity can be increased through effective communication by providing information that customers can remember. The greater the percentage of mind share won, the more influence it will have on the decision-making process (Raji, 2018). This finding is supported by Sigurdsson’s research on mobile advertisement positively impacts behavioral intentions (Sigurdsson, 2017). Various empirical studies confirm that the perceived brand relationship quality is an implication of brand satisfaction (Aaker, 2004) and how the relationship premise gives live experience to the customer that has an impact on intention to use (Fournier, 1998)

- **H8: Brand Authenticity has a positive effect on Brand Relationship Quality.**
- **H9: Quality of Brand Relationship has a positive effect on Intention to Use Brand.**
- **H10: Brand Relationship Quality mediates the positive effect of Brand Authenticity on Intention to Use Brand.**

From the development of hypotheses, a research model or research conceptual framework can be described. In this research model, there are seven variables with seven paths marked as arrows to describe the research hypothesis. The picture of the research model along with the hypothesis is as follows:

![Figure 1. Research Framework](image-url)
4 METHOD

This study uses a quantitative survey method with a cross-sectional data approach to answer research questions (Bougie & Sekaran, 2020). The targeted population in this study is Generation Z who are consumers of local online fashion brands in Indonesia, one of the largest contributors to the gross domestic product in Indonesia. The local fashion brands selected in this study have the following criteria: fashion products, local owners of capital, fashion brand names, established for more than 3 years, number of employees of 10 – 30 people, have access to banking funding sources, conduct online selling and buying activities, establish its own business social media account.

Research respondents obtained from distributing questionnaires during September 2021 were obtained by distributing google forms as a form of an online survey. Respondents are Generation Z who do online shopping for fashion products. In filling out the questionnaire, there are filter questions that become the qualifications for respondents, all the data obtained are 703 people, then 680 people who qualify as Generation Z are 680 people, and 598 people who meet the qualifications for doing fashion shopping online. Some answers are considered invalid during data cleaning, and, finally, 499 is qualified.

The construct in the proposed conceptual framework is measured by a set of indicators in a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire used in this study was modified from the existing research construct. The questionnaire uses a Likert scale from 1 to 5; the respondents were asked to state their level of agreement with a statement on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) (Bougie & Sekaran, 2020). The conceptual framework consists of seven construction and is considered a complex research model. The PLS-SEM method is preferred because of its ability to analyze complex models in exploratory and predictive research (Hair et al., 2019). The PLS-SEM analysis was applied through the SmartPLS™ Version 3.3 as it provides bootstrapping menu to test for significance (Memon et al., 2021). In addition, the power test of the samples was conducted using G*Power 3.1 software, the power index was 0.9, alpha 0.05, and the result of the sample size estimation was 147. The number of samples, in this research, exceeds the required minimum sample by the inverse root square method, 160 (Kock & Hadaya, 2018).
5 RESULT

Respondents obtained from distributing questionnaires during September 2021 were obtained by distributing google forms as a form of an online survey. Respondents are Generation Z who do online shopping for fashion products. In filling out the questionnaire, there are screening questions that become the qualification requirements of the respondents, all the data obtained are 703 people, then 680 people who qualify as Generation Z, and 598 people who meet the qualifications for doing fashion shopping online. The screening of respondents' eligibility is then carried out by looking at the suitability of the introduction of local fashion brands with the choice of local fashion brands that are the reference in filling out the questionnaire, in this process the number of respondents who meet the requirements is 499.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Profile</th>
<th>Sample (n)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domicile</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Java</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumatra</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sulawesi</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalimantan</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nusa Tenggara</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papua</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maluku</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior High School</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>65.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior High School</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Ownership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Own Business</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Business</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fashion Expenditure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; US$ 50</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US$ 100 – US$ 200</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US$ 200 – US$ 500</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; US$ 500</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Created by Author, 2023

5.1 MEASUREMENT MODEL

To establish the reliability and validity of the model measurement the outer model evaluation could be seen as follow
The indicator loading has exceeded 0.708 as required, thus deemed indicator reliable. In particular, all loading for BA dimensions exceeds 0.708 as well, therefore the dimensions are considered reliable and can be used. Secondly, construct reliability was assessed through Cronbach’s alpha (α). As Cronbach’s alpha was higher than the threshold value of 0.7, construct reliability was supported (Hair et al. 2014). The model assessed the construct validity by looking at the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). As all the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were higher than the threshold value of 0.5, convergent validity was confirmed (Hair et al. 2014). Furthermore, discriminant validity by looking at the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT), must have a value of < 0.85.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity of Framework Variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>BC C</th>
<th>Brand Authenticity</th>
<th>Brand Involvement</th>
<th>Brand Relation Quality</th>
<th>Brand Usage Intention</th>
<th>Firm-Generated Content</th>
<th>Mod.Brand dlnv &gt; BCC</th>
<th>Mod.Brand dlnv &gt; BrandAu</th>
<th>User-Generated Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand Authenticity</td>
<td>0.2 53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Involvement</td>
<td>0.2 79</td>
<td>0.690</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From Table 2. It could be seen that the value of the discriminant validity test results is shown where the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HT/MT) of each variable is found to be below 0.9. Based on these results, it can be concluded that all indicators in the research model have been well discriminated against so that they can measure their respective constructs. With these results, this research stage deserves to be continued in the next analysis stage, namely the inner model test (structural model).

5.2 STRUCTURAL MODEL

The first stage of the analysis of the inner model is to assess whether there is a problem of collinearity between variables in the model. The value used is the inner variance inflation factor (VIF) for the multicollinearity test. The results of the multicollinearity test indicate that all the VIF values were below 3. Thus deemed no multicollinear issue in this model.

For the brand authenticity variable, it is found that the R2 value is 0.479 and is classified in the weak category. The variable of brand authenticity as the dependent variable of this research model can be explained by 47.9% of the independent variables, while the remaining 52.1% can be explained by other variables outside this research model. For the variable brand usage intention, it was found that the R2 value was 0.477 and was classified in the weak category. The variable of brand authenticity as the dependent variable of this research model can be explained by 47.7% by its independent variables, while the remaining 52.3% can be explained by other variables outside this research model.
the f-squared test which is used to determine the effect size or the magnitude of the influence of a construct if there is a change in the value of the R-squared of a target construct when certain constructs as predictors are removed from the research model. The f-squared test provides a value for how large the effect size is or the effect size is used as an evaluation of a substantial impact. The size of the f-squared or effect size is if 0.02 is said to have a small effect size of a latent variable if 0.15 is said to be a moderate effect size of the latent variable, if 0.35 is said to be a large effect size of a latent variable. The value of 0.15 itself is considered a significant limitation of the effect that can be given by a latent variable, if f² is found to be lower than 0.15, it is said to have no effect size large enough to have a significant effect.

In the above, it was found that the dependent variable brand authenticity by the variable in the model has a significant and large effect size with a value above 0.35, 0.70 brand communication clarity on brand authenticity. Meanwhile, in the independent variable path from brand usage intention to brand relation quality, a significant and large effect size was also found with a value above 0.35, namely 0.914.

6 HYPOTHESIS TESTING

The results of hypothesis testing can be assessed by looking at the two values of the empirical test results, namely the significant value and the coefficient value. The direction of the coefficients must be in accordance with the direction of the proposed hypothesis because the nature of this hypothesis is directional so that a one-tailed test is carried out. If the T-Statistic value from bootstrapping is greater than the T-table value, namely 1.645 (with an alpha of 0.05), then the relationship between variables can be declared significant (Ringle et al., 2014). The analysis of this research model was carried out using a one-tailed hypothesis test with a significance level of 0.05. After seeing the significance, it is assessed how big the standardized coefficient is in each path or path. If the test results have met these two conditions, the research hypothesis can be said to be supported.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Path</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficient</th>
<th>T-statistic</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>Firm-Generated Content - &gt; Brand Communication Clarity</td>
<td>0.341</td>
<td>7.849</td>
<td>Hypothesis supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>User-Generated Content - &gt; Brand Communication Clarity</td>
<td>0.528</td>
<td>12.798</td>
<td>Hypothesis supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis</td>
<td>Path Analysis</td>
<td>t-value</td>
<td>p-value</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
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<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3</td>
<td>Brand Communication Clarity -&gt; Brand Authenticity</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>2.310</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4</td>
<td>Firm-Generated Content -&gt; Brand Communication Clarity -&gt; Brand Authenticity</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>2.163</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5</td>
<td>User-Generated Content -&gt; Brand Communication Clarity -&gt; Brand Authenticity</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>2.272</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6</td>
<td>Moderation: Brand Involvement * Brand Communication Clarity -&gt; Brand Authenticity</td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td>2.952</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7</td>
<td>Moderation: Brand Involvement * Brand Authenticity -&gt; Brand Relation Quality</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>1.430</td>
<td>Not Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8</td>
<td>Brand Authenticity -&gt; Brand Relation Quality</td>
<td>0.153</td>
<td>2.620</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H9</td>
<td>Brand Relation Quality -&gt; Brand Usage Intention</td>
<td>0.691</td>
<td>22.159</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H10</td>
<td>Brand Authenticity -&gt; Brand Relation Quality -&gt; Brand Usage Intention</td>
<td>0.106</td>
<td>2.528</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Created by Author, 2023

In the result testing, FGC and UGC have a positive and significant influence on brand communication clarity. Furthermore, it was found that brand communication clarity has a positive and significant influence on brand authenticity. Brand communication clarity is identified as being able to mediate the significant influence of both FGC and UGC on brand authenticity. It is identified that the influence of UGC is greater with a coefficient of 0.528 than FGC on brand authenticity and brand communication clarity can mediate both UGC and FGC on brand authenticity.

Brand involvement can moderate positively, which means the greater involvement the stronger clarity to brand authenticity. However, positive brand involvement events cannot significantly increase the influence of brand authenticity on brand relation quality.

As the empirical result, brand authenticity has a positive and significant influence on brand relation quality, which brand relation quality has impacted on brand usage intention. Significant mediation of brand relation quality is proven to be able to mediate brand relation quality on brand usage intention. The results of the empirical tests that have been analyzed by PLS-SEM produce a model of research results as below.
7 DISCUSSION

In the context of local fashion brands, marketing is done digitally in order to effectively reach Generation Z where Generation Z gets a lot of conveniences to connect with many people in various places virtually through an internet connection. Digital marketing in this case requires UGC as content that is more effective in giving signals than FGC. This finding is in line with previous research (Vincent, 2019) that UGC shared through social media has a greater influence than other sources because it is transmitted by trusted sources of information submitted by consumers. However, FGC cannot be ignored because it is complementary. The findings of this study provide something new, namely that FGC and UGC must be mediated by brand clarity communication in order to have a significant influence on brand authenticity.

Brands when entering the digital world must be prepared for the noise that appears as an uninvited brand (Fournier, 2010). This is something that marketers need to pay attention to the dynamics of comments, likes and dislikes, and memes from being a form of noise in communication clarity. Noise is found in both firm-generated content and user-generated content, so social media specialists in one particular job description are needed so that every element in the communication process that has the potential to have noise can be properly minimized. The implication of this research suggests managers to continuously pay attention to the positive sentiment of the content on their social media.

This study confirmed that brand authenticity is a multidimensional construct as stated in previous studies (Bruhn, 2012. Choi, 2014. Oh, 2019) moreover this study revealed that in the context of local fashion brands the dimension could be extended by relevant reflective dimension. Innovativeness and consistency were the prominent
dimensions, that were interestingly found. This is aligned with a study from Choi (2019) stated that innovation is recognized by young customers. That finding was justifiable since the nature of young customers is using brands to express their personality that is associated with something new or trendy (Oh, 2019). Therefore to stimulate consumer perception of brand authenticity innovation attributes should be taken into account. This study offered new insight to explore the dimensionality, however, it should be confirmed with the external validity from the study based on various cultural backgrounds.

This finding is in line with previous research (Zhang, 2013. Holebeek, 2014) that the quality of brand relationships has a significant effect on individual brand intentions. Specifically, this study captured what has been done by local fashion business actors that consumers showed positive assessment in long-term relationships with the brand. Therefore brand owners need to strengthen their efforts to engage with customers and be more open to customers’ feedback. As the foundation of the relationship, this should be done interactively (Aaker and Fournier, 2022) where involvement is counted (Tuten, 2020). Brand owners need to explore the dynamic of customer interests in fashion products and incorporate them into the marketing strategy. The relationship with fashion brands can be felt and experienced by consumers through optimizing contact points. E.g. social media platforms consumers can enjoy relationships with local fashion brands which have been proven by this study and could drive intention to use the brand.

More diverse efforts are needed from local fashion business actors, however, they need to keep in mind that to grow the brand, the transactional approach should be replaced by relationships with customers. One of the opportunities is to create an online community that attaches to the brand as mentioned by a previous study by Silalahi (2018) since an online community is a good tool and provides space for openness and interaction. Finally, the brand owner needs to realize that in the midst of the digital platforms the user-generated content predominantly affects how costumer perceived the authenticity of the brand, so they need to be more active to listen to the conversation from the customers (Hazari, 2016). In that regard, this study proposed a model that proves its predictability in linking content to brand usage intention. This authenticity in a long-term approach is imperative in brand building of the local fashion brand to improve their business.
8 CONCLUSION

The study came to conclusion in three consecutive parts. Firstly, that both user-generated content and firm-generated content were effective marketing tools to stimulate brand authenticity in the context of local fashion brands. Additionally, brand clarity was uncertain the content well delivered in the midst of social media conversation. Moreover, the higher involvement could be earned by brand owner the stronger those influence on brand authenticity. Secondly, this study contributes new insights into the marketing field, through established the dimensionality of brand authenticity in the context of fashion brands. Lastly but most important finding that this study revealed the brand authenticity as heart of branding process from content, mediated by brand clarity and outflow the impact on brand usage intent through the brand relation quality. The notable of brand building in local fashion is to pursue relationship as the important direction to develop long lasting brand for generation Z.

However, this research has limitations, namely the mapping of content marketing in social media on each brand has not been carried out. Each brand has content with a different style, one brand that uses many micro influencers has a different performance from other brands. In future research, it is necessary to sort and group brands based on their marketing performance when evaluating user-generated content dan firm-generated content. Another limitation that can be found is that the data heterogeneity check procedure has not been carried out through PLS-SEM, so it is recommended that in the next study add a test with latent class analysis, namely PLS Fimix to ensure that the sample data is not extreme heterogeneity.
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