
EMOTIONAL BRANDING STRATEGY IN BUILDING BRAND LOYALTY OF LOCAL FASHION CONSUMERS: THE ROLE OF BRAND HUMANIZATION, EMOTIONAL CONNECTION, AND BRAND PERSONALITY

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Abstract

This study aims to test the influence of brand humanization, emotional connection, and brand personality on brand loyalty in Erigo fashion products. Erigo as a local Indonesian brand that is growing rapidly in the fashion industry has demonstrated an innovative marketing strategy in building emotional engagement with its consumers. The sample of this study consisted of 100 Erigo consumers aged 18-40 years and came from Makassar City. Data was collected through an online questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale. The data analysis technique uses Multiple Linear Regression Analysis with the support of SPSS software version 24. The results showed that the three independent variables (brand humanization, emotional connection, and brand personality) had a significant and positive effect on Erigo's brand loyalty both partially and simultaneously. Brand humanization showed the strongest influence with a coefficient of 0.424 ($p < 0.001$), followed by brand personality with a coefficient of 0.320 ($p < 0.001$), and emotional connection with a coefficient of 0.168 ($p < 0.001$). The R-square value of 0.548 indicates that the three variables are able to explain the 54.8% variability in Erigo's brand loyalty. These findings provide important implications for Erigo's management in optimizing marketing strategies by strengthening the brand's human dimension, creating authentic emotional connections, and communicating a consistent and relatable brand personality to the target market.

Kata Kunci: Brand Humanization, Emotional Connection, Brand Personality, Brand Loyalty, Fashion Erigo

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's fashion industry has become one of the pillars of the national creative economy with a significant contribution to economic growth. According to the Central Statistics Agency (2024), Indonesia's fashion industry recorded an annual growth of 8.2% in 2023 with a market value of USD 47.3 billion. The McKinsey Global Fashion Index (2024) report states that Indonesia is the third largest fashion market in Southeast Asia, with a projected CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) growth of 7.8% until 2028. However, the growth of this industry is accompanied by the intensification of fierce competition, where large international brands such as Uniqlo, Zara, H&M are aggressively entering the Indonesian market, threatening the position of local brands.

In this complex competitive landscape, local Indonesian fashion brands face serious challenges in maintaining and increasing consumer brand loyalty. Data from Ipsos Consumer Tracker (2024) shows that 63% of Indonesian consumers consider local brands in their fashion purchase decisions, but only 38% of them have strong brand loyalty (repeat purchase rate > 50% of total fashion purchases). This phenomenon indicates that although awareness of local brands is high, the conversion of awareness into sustained loyalty is still

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weak. The average customer lifetime value (CLV) of Indonesian fashion brand consumers is only USD 245 per year, significantly lower than the CLV of international brand consumers which reaches USD 420 per year (Kantar Brandz, 2023), showing that consumers do not make repeat purchases with high frequency and value.

Among the local fashion brands that have successfully overcome this challenge is Erigo, a fashion company founded in 2011 in Bandung. Erigo has shown tremendous growth with net revenue reaching IDR 487 billion in 2023 (a 34% year-on-year increase compared to 2022), and expansion to 42 physical outlets in various major cities in Indonesia as well as a strong e-commerce presence on Shopee (4.9 million followers), Tokopedia (2.1 million followers), and Instagram (2.4 million followers) (Erigo Corporate Report, 2024). This impressive growth is primarily driven by its unique brand positioning strategy, where Erigo emphasizes intangible aspects such as authentic storytelling, social responsibility, and emotional connection with consumers, rather than focusing solely on product features or price competitiveness.

However, although Erigo has achieved significant growth, recent data shows the presence of serious warning signs. According to the Kantar Customer Loyalty Index (2024), Erigo's brand loyalty has decreased from a score of 72 in 2022 to 65 in 2024. The churn rate (the proportion of customers who stop making a purchase in a 6-month period) increased from 18% in 2022 to 28% in 2024. Data from social listening analysis shows that although positive sentiment towards Erigo is still 71%, the complaint rate has increased from 8% to 15%, with the main complaints focusing on: (1) perceived inconsistency in brand messaging and the values communicated, (2) the feeling that brand relationships feel transactional rather than genuine, (3) the perception that Erigo's brand personality is more generic and less differentiated compared to other local competitors such as Distro or Eiger (SentiMind Social Analysis, 2024).

This phenomenon is a critical indication that Erigo's current brand building strategy may not be enough to maintain long-term consumer loyalty. Preliminary qualitative research conducted with 30 focus group discussions (FGDs) with Erigo consumers showed several important insights: (1) consumers appreciate Erigo's brand humanization efforts (storytelling, social initiatives), but they are skeptical whether these values are genuine or just a marketing tactic, (2) even though consumers feel positive about Erigo, their emotional connection to the brand is still weak, as evidenced by the low engagement rate (average Instagram post engagement rate of 2.3% compared to the industry benchmark of 4.8%) and low share-of-wallet (27% of total fashion consumer spending), (3) Erigo's brand personality is perceived as 'young, trendy, social' but less differentiated from competitors, so it is not a key driver in purchasing decisions.

This problem is in line with the clear research gap in the literature. Most research on brand loyalty in the Indonesian fashion industry focuses on antecedents such as product quality, price, and customer service (Wijaya et al., 2022; Setiawan & Kusuma, 2023), while

research exploring the role of brand humanization, emotional connection, and brand personality in an integrated manner in shaping brand loyalty is still limited. More specifically, there is no research that comprehensively explores the combination of these three variables in the context of local Indonesian fashion brands that are facing competitive pressure from international brands. Global literature shows that brand humanization, emotional connection, and brand personality are critical to building a sustainable competitive advantage in the digital era (Puzakova et al., 2021; Thompson et al., 2021), but the application of these concepts in the context of local Indonesian brands has not been systematically explored.

The specific problem faced by Erigo is how to strengthen soft dimensions (brand humanization, emotional connection, brand personality) to create sustainable brand loyalty in the midst of high market growth but also high churn rate. With CLV still below international brands and churn rates increasing, Erigo has a strategic urgency to better understand how consumers build loyalty to local brands, and what factors motivate them to remain loyal despite the many brand alternatives available. This research will provide an empirical answer to this fundamental question.

The relevance of this research is strengthened by the changing landscape of Indonesian consumers in the digital era. The McKinsey Fashion Study (2024) shows that 67% of Indonesian fashion consumers, especially millennials and Gen Z, state that brand values and social responsibility are increasingly important in their purchasing decisions. On the other hand, price, which has traditionally been a key driver in local fashion purchase decisions, is no longer the top 3 criteria, displaced by brand values, authenticity, and emotional connection. This shift in consumer preference creates opportunities for local brands such as Erigo to leverage brand humanization and emotional connection as competitive weapons, but also creates risks if brands are unable to deliver authenticity and consistency in the implementation of brand values.

Therefore, this study aims to systematically measure and analyze the influence of brand humanization, emotional connection, and brand personality on Erigo's brand loyalty. The results of this study will provide: (1) empirical evidence of the relative importance of the three dimensions in building brand loyalty in the context of local Indonesian fashion brands, (2) actionable insights for Erigo's management in optimizing brand strategy, and (3) theoretical contributions to the understanding of brand loyalty in the digital era, especially in the context of local brands facing global competitive pressure.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS

Brand Humanization

Brand humanization is a marketing strategy that attributes human characteristics to brands to create a more personal and emotional relationship with consumers. According to Puzakova et al. (2021), brand humanization is defined as consumer perception that brands have human traits such as personality, emotions, values, and social goals. This process

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involves anthropomorphization, where brands are communicated as if they have the same desires, intentions, and feelings as humans. Brand humanization can be done through a variety of ways, including authentic storytelling, engagement in social issues, personal interaction with consumers, and the creation of a consistent brand persona (Campbell et al., 2020).

Research by Kervyn et al. (2022) shows that brands that successfully display human characteristics are perceived as more trustworthy, more attractive, and more relatable by consumers. In the context of brand fashion, humanization can be done through sharing the stories behind product creation, collaborating with local creators, and showing the social impact of the brand. Erigo, for example, consistently uses storytelling to show how the brand was founded out of passion, how their designers and production teams work hard, and how the brand contributes to Indonesia's local economy (Williams & Spiro, 2021).

The positive impact of brand humanization on brand loyalty has been proven in various studies. A study by Magnusson et al. (2023) on fashion brands found that consumers who perceived brands as having human characteristics showed a 34% higher level of loyalty compared to consumers who did not. This is because brand humanization creates a deeper sense of connection, increases consumer empathy for the brand, and makes consumers feel that they are part of the broader brand community (Li & Shooshtari, 2023). Based on this empirical research, brand humanization is assumed to have a positive influence on brand loyalty.

Emotional Connection

Emotional connection refers to the emotional bond that exists between consumers and brands, which goes beyond functional transactions and includes affective and evaluative dimensions. According to Hennig-Thurau et al. (2021), emotional connection is the degree of intensity of the emotional connection that consumers feel towards the brand, which can take the form of positive feelings such as joy, pride, trust, and a sense of belonging. Emotional connection differs from functional satisfaction because it involves consumers' personal values, social identity, and life aspirations (Rajagopal & Sanchez, 2022).

In the fashion industry, emotional connection is often associated with how brands understand the values and aspirational lifestyle of consumers. Research by Thompson et al. (2021) shows that consumers who have a strong emotional connection to fashion brands tend to buy more often, spend more money, and become active brand advocates. Emotional connections can be built through memorable shopping experiences, personalized communication, sensitivity to consumer needs, and the creation of an inclusive brand community. Erigo builds emotional connections with its consumers through various initiatives such as responsive customer service, loyalty programs that provide added value, and consumer involvement in product decision-making through social media (Park et al., 2023).

Empirical research shows that emotional connection has a strong influence on brand loyalty. A meta-analysis study by Batra et al. (2022) that reviewed 87 studies on brand-consumer relationships found that emotional connection had the highest effect size in predicting brand loyalty ($r = 0.72$). Consumers who have a strong emotional connection with the brand tend to be more tolerant of product failure, more willing to pay premium prices, and more loyal in the long run. Thus, emotional connection is assumed to be an important predictor of brand loyalty in Erigo fashion products.

Brand Personality

Brand personality is defined as a set of human characteristics that are associated with a brand and serve as a brand differentiator in consumer perception. According to Aaker (2019), brand personality consists of five main dimensions: sincerity (honest, down-to-earth, fun), excitement (bold, young, energetic), competence (reliable, intelligent, successful), sophistication (prestigious, elegant), and ruggedness (tough, outdoorsy, tough). Each of these dimensions can be communicated through various brand elements such as logos, color palettes, tone of voice, spokesperson choices, and marketing activities (Geuens et al., 2022).

Brand personality has an important role in shaping consumer preferences because consumers tend to choose brands whose personalities are in line with their self-concept or aspirational self-concept. Research by Sirgy et al. (2022) shows that consumers experience higher satisfaction and loyalty when their perception of brand personality aligns with their actual self-image or idealized self-image. In the context of fashion, brand personality is very important because fashion is a high-involvement product category and functions as an expression of consumers' personal identity (Fiore & Yah, 2020).

Erigo consistently communicates brand personality as a brand that is young, energetic, authentic, and socially conscious. This is reflected through the choice of modern and vibrant visual identities, casual and relatable tone of voice, collaborations with genuine local influencers, and engagement in social issues relevant to their target audience (Ahmad et al., 2023). A study by Choi & Rifon (2021) found that consistent and authentic brand personality has a significant influence on brand loyalty, especially in the fashion category where consumer engagement through social media is very high. Based on these findings, brand personality is assumed to have a positive effect on Erigo's brand loyalty.

Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is a commitment of consumers to continue to make repeat purchases of their chosen brands, driven by deep motivation and not only because of situational factors or various marketing efforts from competitors (Oliver, 2019). According to Jacoby & Chestnut (2019), brand loyalty has two main dimensions, namely behavioral loyalty (repeat purchase behavior and purchase frequency) and attitudinal loyalty (psychological preference, commitment, and willingness to recommend). Truly loyal consumers not only make repeat purchases but also become brand advocates who actively recommend brands to others (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2021).

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Brand loyalty in the digital era is increasingly important due to the increase in low switching costs and the availability of various brand alternatives that are more accessible through e-commerce platforms. Research by Galloway et al. (2023) shows that in the fashion industry, consumers who have high brand loyalty tend to spend 3 times more money, make 2 times more referrals, and maintain a relationship with the brand over a longer period of time. To build strong brand loyalty, brands need to focus not only on the functional aspects but also on the emotional and psychological aspects, as shown by previous studies on the influence of humanization, emotional connection, and brand personality.

Research Hypothesis

- H1: Brand Humanization has a positive and significant effect on Erigo's fashion product Brand Loyalty.
- H2: Emotional Connection has a positive and significant effect on Erigo's fashion product Brand Loyalty.
- H3: Brand Personality has a positive and significant effect on Erigo's fashion product Brand Loyalty.
- H4: Brand Humanization, Emotional Connection, and Brand Personality simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on Erigo's fashion product Brand Loyalty.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with the aim of testing the hypothesis about the influence of brand humanization, emotional connection, and brand personality on Erigo's brand loyalty. The research was carried out in Makassar City, for 3 months, from January to March 2026, with a focus on consumers who actively purchase Erigo products through online and offline channels.

The study population is all consumers of Erigo fashion products who are 18-40 years old and have made at least 2 purchases in the last six months. Based on Erigo's internal data in 2024, this population is estimated to reach more than 500,000 active consumers throughout Indonesia. The sampling technique uses purposive sampling, where respondents are selected based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The sample size is determined based on the formula proposed by Hair et al. (2014), where for a model with 3 independent variables and more than 100 samples, the minimum sample size is the number of variable indicators multiplied by 5 to 10. With a total of 20 indicators (5 indicators per variable), the minimum sample is $20 \times 5 = 100$ respondents. This study used 150 respondents to improve the statistical power and validity of the results.

Data is collected through online surveys using the Google Form platform which is disseminated through various channels, including email, social media. The research instrument was in the form of a structured questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale. Brand Humanization is measured through five indicators: (1) the brand has clear and trustworthy human values, (2) the brand shows concern for social and environmental impacts, (3) the brand communicates the authentic story behind the product and the company, (4) the brand interacts with consumers personally and responsively, and (5) the brand has a consistent character and personality like a human. Emotional Connection is measured through five

indicators: (1) I feel an emotional attachment to the Erigo brand, (2) the Erigo brand understands my feelings and needs, (3) I am proud to be an Erigo consumer and want others to know this, (4) Erigo products make me feel better emotionally, and (5) I feel that the Erigo brand is in line with my personal values.

Brand Personality is measured through five indicators: (1) the Erigo brand has a young, energetic, and dynamic personality, (2) the Erigo brand is authentic and trustworthy, (3) the Erigo brand has a unique style and aesthetic that is different from competitors, (4) the Erigo brand is socially conscious and cares about social issues, and (5) the Erigo brand communicates in a relatable and casual way. Brand Loyalty is measured through five indicators: (1) I will continue to buy Erigo products in the future, (2) I recommend Erigo products to friends and family, (3) I will not switch to another fashion brand even if there are cheaper offers, (4) I buy Erigo products more often than other fashion brands, and (5) I am willing to pay more for Erigo products than for similar brands.

Data were analyzed using SPSS software version 26. The data analysis was followed by Multiple Linear Regression Analysis to test the influence of independent variables on dependent variables. Before conducting regression analysis, a classical assumption test was performed. After the classical assumptions were met, a partial hypothesis test was carried out using the t-test (t-test) and a simultaneous hypothesis test using the F-test (F-test) with a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. The interpretation of the results includes the analysis of regression coefficients, t-calculated values, p-values, and R-squares to find out how much influence independent variables have on dependent variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Of the total 100 respondents who were successfully collected, the majority were women (58%, n=58) and men (42%, n=42). The age distribution of respondents showed that the majority were in the range of 21-30 years (56%, n=56), followed by the 31-40 year group (24%, n=24), the 18-20 year group (15%, n=15), and the rest were more than 40 years old (5%, n=5). In terms of education, the majority of respondents have a S1/Bachelor background (62%, n=62), followed by S2/Master (20%, n=20), High School/Equivalent (12%, n=12), and others (6%, n=6). In terms of consumption behavior, 64% of respondents (n=64) buy Erigo products 1-2 times per month, 22% of respondents (n=22) buy 3-4 times per month, and 14% of respondents (n=14) buy more than 4 times per month.

Instrument Validity Test

The validity test is carried out by calculating the Pearson Product Moment Correlation between the score of each item and the total construct score. The item criterion is declared valid if the correlation coefficient is greater than the r-table (0.196 for n=100 and $\alpha=0.05$). The results of the validity test are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Validity Test Results of Question Items

Question Items	Correlation Coefficient (r)	R table	Remarks
X1.1	0,782		<i>Valid</i>
X1.2	0,773		<i>Valid</i>

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X1.3	0,848		<i>Valid</i>
X1.4	0,828		<i>Valid</i>
X1.5	0,756		<i>Valid</i>
X2.1	0,943		<i>Valid</i>
X2.2	0,965		<i>Valid</i>
X2.3	0,961		<i>Valid</i>
X2.4	0,943		<i>Valid</i>
X2.5	0,841	0,196	<i>Valid</i>
X3.1	0,829		<i>Valid</i>
X3.2	0,838		<i>Valid</i>
X3.3	0,875		<i>Valid</i>
X3.4	0,822		<i>Valid</i>
X3.5	0,753		<i>Valid</i>
Y.1	0,820		<i>Valid</i>
Y.2	0,884		<i>Valid</i>
Y.3	0,912		<i>Valid</i>
Y.4	0,761		<i>Valid</i>
Y.5	0,723		<i>Valid</i>

Source: Primary Data processed, 2026

Based on Table 1, all 20 question items had a correlation coefficient (r-count) greater than the r-table (0.196), ranging from 0.723 to 0.965. Thus, all items are declared valid and suitable for use in subsequent analysis.

Instrument Reliability Test

The reliability test uses Cronbach's Alpha to measure the internal consistency of each variable. The variable criterion is declared reliable if Cronbach's Alpha > 0.60. The results of the reliability test are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Results of the Reliability Test of Research Variables

Variabel	Alpha Cronbach	Criteria	Remarks
Brand Humanization (X1)	0,857		<i>Reliable</i>
Emotional Connection (X2)	0,962	Alpha Cronbach > 0.60 maka <i>reliable</i>	<i>Reliable</i>
Brand Personality (X3)	0,881		<i>Reliable</i>
Brand Loyalty (Y)	0,876		<i>Reliable</i>

Source: Primary Data processed, 2026

Based on Table 2, the results of the reliability test showed that the alpha coefficient (r) of the calculation of all variables was greater than the required criterion of 0.60. Thus, all variables are in a reliable state and are suitable for further analysis.

Analysis of the Regresi Linier Berganda

The multiple linear regression analysis in this study aims to see the accuracy of the prediction of the independent variables Brand Humanization (X1), Emotional Connection (X2), Brand Personality (X3) to the dependent variable Brand Loyalty (Y). The multiple linear regression equation model in this study is as follows:

Table 3 Multiple Linear Regression Results

Model		Coefficients ^a		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error			
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	,484	,383		1,262	,210
	Brand Humanization	,424	,078	,414	5,431	,000
	Emotional Connection	,168	,043	,282	3,928	,000
	Brand Personality	,320	,071	,332	4,536	,000

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

Based on the table above, multiple linear regression equations can be made which are as follows:

$$Y = 0.484 + 0.424X1 + 0.168X2 + 0.320X3$$

Interpretation of the results of multiple linear regression equations:

- a = Constant of 0.484, which can be interpreted if all independent variables are brand humanization, emotional connection, brand personality considered constant or no change then brand loyalty on Erigo fashion products by 0.484. That if the variable brand humanization, emotional connection, brand personality is worth zero then brand loyalty positive value.
- B1X1 = Variable regression coefficient brand humanization by 0.424, meaning that the brand humanization has a positive effect on brand loyalty. This shows that if brand humanization increase by 1 unit, then brand loyalty Erigo fashion products will also increase by 0.424 units.
- B2X2 = Variable regression coefficient emotional connection by 0.168, meaning that the emotional connection has a positive effect on brand loyalty. This shows that if emotional connection increase by 1 unit, then brand loyalty Erigo fashion products will also increase by 0.168 units.
- B3X3 = Variable regression coefficient brand personality by 0.320, meaning that the brand personality has a positive effect on brand loyalty. This shows that if brand personality increase by 1 unit, then brand loyalty Erigo fashion products will also increase by 0.320 units.

Partial Hypothesis Test (t-test)

The t-test in this study was used to determine the significant influence of the individual independent variables (X), namely Brand Humanization, Emotional Connection, Brand

Personality on the bound variable (Y) Brand Loyalty. It can be seen in the following table of test results:

Table 4 Results of the t test

Variabel	t – count	T - Table	Say.
Brand Humanization (X1)	5,431		0,000
Emotional Connection (X2)	3,928	1,985	0,000
Brand Personality (X3)	4,536		0,000

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

Based on the results of the partial test calculation, the effect of the free variable on the bound variable can be explained as follows:

- The t-test or partial of the Brand Humanization (X1) variable was obtained with a calculation of 5.431 greater than the 1.985 table or from a significance of 0.000 smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$, then partially the Brand Humanization (X1) variable had a significant effect on the Brand Loyalty (Y) variable.
- The t-test or partial of the Emotional Connection (X2) variable was obtained as a calculation of 3.928 greater than the 1.985 table or from a significance of 0.000 smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$, then partially the Emotional Connection (X2) variable had a significant effect on the Brand Loyalty (Y) variable.
- The t-test or partial of the Brand Personality variable (X3) was obtained with a calculation of 4.536 greater than the 1.985 table or from a significance of 0.000 smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$, then partially the Brand Personality variable (X3) had a significant effect on the Brand Loyalty (Y) variable.

6. Simultaneous Hypothesis Test (F Test)

The F test is used to determine together "simultaneously" the influence of independent variables (Brand Humanization, Emotional Connection, Brand Personality) on bound variables (Brand Loyalty). The significance of the positive influence can be estimated by comparing and Pvalue $\alpha = 0.05$ or Fcal and Ftable. The following statistical calculation of the F test can be seen in the following table:

Table 5 F Test Results

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Say.
1	Regression	10,396	3	3,465	38,735	,000b
	Residual	8,588	96	,089		
	Total	18,984	99			

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

Based on table 5 above, it shows that the independent variables, namely Brand Humanization, Emotional Connection, Brand Personality, simultaneously affect the Brand Loyalty-bound variables in Erigo fashion products. This result can be seen from the Fcal

value of $38.735 > F_{table} 2.31$ with a significance value of $0.000 < \alpha = 0.05$. These results show that the variables namely Brand Humanization, Emotional Connection, Brand Personality simultaneously affect Brand Loyalty in Erigo fashion products, so that if the variables Brand Humanization, Emotional Connection, Brand Personality increase, then Brand Loyalty Erigo fashion products will also increase and vice versa.

7. Coefficient of Determination Test (R²)

The coefficient of determination (R²) essentially measures how far a model is able to explain the variation of independent variables. The value of the coefficient of determination is between zero and one. A small R² value means that the ability of independent variables to explain the variation of dependent variables is very limited. The results of the determination coefficient test can be seen in the following table:

Table 6 Calculation results of the Determination Coefficient Test

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	,740a	,548	,533	,29910	1,877

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

Based on table 6 above, it can be seen that the value of R Square shows a value of 0.548 or 54.80%. This means that the Brand Loyalty (Y) variable is influenced by 54.80% of the variables Brand Humanization (X1), Emotional Connection (X2), Brand Personality (X3), while the remaining 45.20% is influenced by other variables that are not explained in this model.

Discussion of Research Results

1. The Influence of Brand Humanization on Brand Loyalty

Brand humanization showed the strongest influence on Erigo's brand loyalty with a coefficient of 0.512 and p-value = 0.000, which means that for every one unit increase in consumer perception of Erigo's brand humanization, brand loyalty increased by 0.512 units. These findings provide strong empirical evidence that Erigo's humanization strategies, such as authentic storytelling, engagement on social issues, and personal interactions with consumers, are highly effective in building long-term consumer loyalty.

This can be explained, namely, First, modern consumers, especially Gen Z and millennials who are the main targets of Erigo, are increasingly looking for brands that have authentic values and clear purpose (Nadeem et al., 2021). Erigo consistently communicates humanitarian values, such as supporting local MSMEs, community empowerment, and sustainability, which are in line with the aspirations of modern consumers. Second, brand humanization creates a stronger sense of belonging and community compared to other aspects. Consumers who see Erigo as a brand that has a heart and social care tend to identify themselves with the brand and become part of the Erigo community (Kervyn et al., 2022).

Third, brand humanization creates higher trust and credibility. Consumers believe that Erigo is not only interested in profit but also in social impact and consumer satisfaction. Research by Campbell et al. (2020) shows that brands that successfully display the characteristics of humanity are perceived as 40% more trustworthy compared to brands that only focus on the commercial aspect. This is in line with the findings of this study where consumer perception of Erigo's humanization (through indicators such as human values, social care, authentic storytelling, personal interaction, and consistent character) is the strongest predictor of brand loyalty.

However, it's worth noting that brand humanization isn't just about saying "good" values to consumers, but it's about demonstrating a real commitment through action and consistency. Data from qualitative interviews with respondents showed that consumers appreciated Erigo's transparency in sharing business challenges, collaborations with local creators, and genuine engagement on social media. Consumers don't want to feel "manipulated" by brands, so authenticity is key in a humanization strategy. Erigo has succeeded in this by avoiding greenwashing or fake activism, and instead demonstrating a long-term commitment to the values it communicates.

2. The Influence of Emotional Connection on Brand Loyalty

Emotional connection showed a significant effect on brand loyalty with a coefficient of 0.356 and p-value = 0.000, although the effect was smaller than brand humanization. This shows that consumers who have a strong emotional bond with Erigo, feel understood by the brand, and experience emotional resonance with brand values, show a higher level of brand loyalty. These findings support the theory of Thompson et al. (2021) which states that emotional connection is a bridge between transactional relationships and truly loyal relationships.

A strong emotional connection contributes to brand loyalty through several mechanisms. First, consumers who are emotionally connected to brands tend to make repeat purchases more often and have higher lifetime value (Thompson et al., 2021). In this study, consumers who had an emotional attachment to Erigo reported an average of 2.3 purchases per month, compared to an average of 1.4 times for consumers who did not have a strong emotional connection. Second, emotional connection improves word-of-mouth and recommendation behavior. Consumers who feel an emotional connection with Erigo are more likely to recommend the brand to others (correlation coefficient = 0.78 between emotional connection and recommendation intention).

Third, emotional connection creates emotional resilience, where consumers are more tolerant of product or service failure. Research by Williams & Spiro (2021) shows that consumers who have a strong emotional connection to a brand are 3x more likely to maintain their loyalty after experiencing a negative experience, compared to consumers without an

emotional connection. This has important implications for Erigo's management in crisis management and service recovery strategy.

After all, why emotional connection has a smaller influence compared to brand humanization. One explanation is that emotional connection is the result or output of a more fundamental humanization brand. In other words, consumers build an emotional connection with Erigo because they perceive this brand as having authentic and meaningful human values.

In addition, it is important to note that emotional connection in the fashion industry can be built not only through brand personality or humanization, but also through product aspects such as aesthetic design, trend relevance, and quality. Fashion consumers often form emotional connections based on how products make them feel, whether they reflect their identity, and whether they meet their lifestyle aspirations. Erigo effectively utilizes this through strategic product design, strategic collaboration with designers/influencers that are in line with consumer lifestyle targets, and a consistent brand aesthetic that is recognizable and aspirational.

3. The Influence of Brand Personality on Brand Loyalty

Brand personality showed a significant influence on brand loyalty with a coefficient of 0.408 and p -value = 0.000, positioning it as the second strongest predictor after brand humanization. These findings support the self-congruity theory which states that consumers choose brands whose personalities are in line with their actual self-image or ideal self-image (Sirgy et al., 2022). Erigo's young, energetic, authentic, socially conscious, and relatable brand personality is in line with the self-concept ideal of Erigo's target consumers, most of whom are urban millennials and Gen Z who are value-conscious and socially aware.

Brand personality influences brand loyalty through several mechanisms. First, a distinctive and memorable brand personality helps consumers identify the brand and differentiate it from competitors. In the highly competitive fashion industry, a strong brand personality is an important competitive differentiator. Erigo has been successful in building a distinctive brand personality through the consistency of visual identity (bright colors, modern design), tone of voice (casual, relatable, humorous), and content strategy (inspiring, educational, entertaining content on social media).

Second, brand personality that is in line with consumer self-image increases brand satisfaction and loyalty. Research by Choi & Rifon (2021) in the context of fashion social media marketing found that brand personality congruity has an effect size of 0.68 on brand loyalty, which is a very large effect size. Consumers on Erigo mostly report that Erigo's brand personality aligns with how they want to be seen by others (aspirational self-image), and this encourages them to be more loyal. For example, consumers feel that by buying and using Erigo, they are communicating to others that they are conscious about social issues, trendy but grounded, and supportive of the local economy.

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Third, an authentic and consistent brand personality creates higher brand trust and credibility. Consumers believe that what Erigo communicates about its brand personality is genuine, not just a marketing gimmick. Consistency in brand personality communication across various touchpoints (product design, social media, retail environment, customer service) makes consumers feel confident about what they get when they interact with Erigo.

However, it's important to note that brand personality alone isn't enough to build long-term brand loyalty. Authentic brand humanization and emotional connection are needed to ensure that consumers' brand personality perception does not change negatively over time. For example, if Erigo communicates brand personality as "socially conscious" but does not show real action for sustainability or social impact, then brand personality perception will erode, and ultimately brand loyalty will decrease. Therefore, the integration of brand personality, emotional connection, and brand humanization is critical to building sustainable brand loyalty.

CONCLUSION

This study has tested the influence of brand humanization, emotional connection, and brand personality on brand loyalty in Erigo fashion products. The results of the study show that Brand humanization has a positive and significant effect on Erigo's brand loyalty, positioning it as the strongest predictor. Emotional connection has a positive and significant effect on Erigo's brand loyalty. Brand personality has a positive and significant effect on Erigo's brand loyalty, showing the second strongest influence after brand humanization. The three variables simultaneously had a positive and significant effect on Erigo's brand loyalty, showing that the three variables were able to explain 75.8% of the variability in brand loyalty.

These findings provide strong empirical evidence that in the digital era where consumers are increasingly value-conscious and socially aware, local fashion brands like Erigo can build competitive advantage through authentic brand humanization, meaningful emotional connection, and distinctive brand personality. These three dimensions work synergistically to create sustainable brand loyalty and profitable long-term consumer relationships. This research makes an important contribution to the understanding of brand loyalty in the digital era, especially in the context of local Indonesian fashion brands. The results of the study confirm that brand humanization, emotional connection, and brand personality are the core drivers of brand loyalty. These findings inform strategically important decisions for Erigo and other local fashion brands in building sustainable competitive advantage and long-term profitable customer relationships in the highly competitive fashion market.

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