Understanding the driver of customer purchase decision : The role of customer engagement and brand attachment in Batik Products

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Info Artikel	ABSTRACT
	Engagement has been recognized as one of the most influential aspects of an organization or company. It originally emerged as a concept in the organizational behavior and human resource management literature, as it is known to predict individual commitment, extra-role behavior, and other positive outcomes in organizations. The purpose of this study is to understand the influence of customer engagement and brand attachment in increasing purchase decision of customers. This study is using quantitative approach, with the population of customers of batik products in Sleman and Bantul, two regencies in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The total number of samples is 115 respondents, which is selected using purposive sampling method. The data is collected through distributing questionnaire using online platforms, which is then analyzed using descriptive analysis and path analysis. The results indicate that customer engagement has an influence on brand attachment, brand attachment has an influence on purchase decision, and that brand attachment mediates the influence of customer engagement on purchase behavior.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of engagement has been recognized as one of the most influential aspects in organizations or firms. It initially arises as a concept in the organizational behavior and human resource management literature, as it is known to be able to predict individual commitment, extra-role behavior, and other positive outcomes in the organization (Kwon & Kim, 2020). According (So et al., 2014) defined customer engagement as customer personal connection to a brand as manifested in cognitive, affective, and behavioral outside of the purchase situation. According to (Prentice & Loureiro, 2018), individuals develop their engagement because they also expect to obtain other positive outcomes for themselves, such as product or service with good quality. According (Barhemmati & Ahmad, 2015) suggested that customer engagement can be beneficial for both companies and customers.

Customer engagement is viewed as a means for both companies and customers to strengthen their relationship (Prentice et al., 2018). (Brodie et al., 2013) explained that customers who have engagement to the community of the brand in the social media are likely to grow emotional relationship with the brand. It has also been stated by (So et al., 2014) that customers can develop an attachment toward the brand from the particular firm itself when they feel engaged to the communities that are associated with the brand. Realizing the potential of engagement, this concept has also been brought to the advertising literature in which it is used to understand the relationship between company and its customers. It becomes an important driver for increasing purchase and loyalty of customers. According to the survey from (Rosetta Consulting, 2014); (Alvarez-Milán et al., 2018)), consumers who are highly engaged have larger expenditure in each transaction (60% higher), purchases more from the brand (90%), and are more likely to make time to advocate the brand.

Therefore, in the marketing literature, customer engagement is expected to increase brand equity, sales, and profits of the company (Alvarez-Milán et al., 2018), even lead company to achieve competitive advantage (Kumar & Pansari, 2016). In this regard, the engagement is based on the extent to which customers have build their bonds with a brand (McEwen, 2004). Engagement is also seen as a means to set up stronger emotional bonds between brand and customers (Bowden, 2009). Currently, branding is also seen as an important strategy to face the rapidly changing business environment (Keong & Baharun, 2017), which is manifested in company brand image, brand personality, and brand attachment. Brand attachment is initially developed from the attachment theory (Hew et al., 2017). In this regard, consumers tend to have their own personification toward a brand, while also acknowledge

and affiliate themselves with the brand. According to (Keong & Baharun, 2017), brand attachment consists of two factors, namely brand self-connection and brand prominence. Brand self-connection refers to the bond which links the individual and the brand, and the attachment involves both cognitive and emotional aspect. On the other hand, brand prominence is the positive feelings and memories regarding the object.

Brand attachment is considered as a significant factor that can drive to the close ties of customer-brand relationships (Jain et al., 2017). Currently, companies attempt to grow brand attachment of customers through the use of social media (Barreda et al., 2020). This is because brand can interact with customers without having to meet face-to-face, and even strengthen their relationship with customers through their own characteristics in using social media. It has been known that one of the most crucial things faced by companies is to maintain their position and win the competition in the business. Companies must also find a way to make sure that their product is consumed well by customers, because this ultimately has an influence on their profit. When customers decide to purchase a product, this will influence the position of the best product in the market, and have an implication on how marketers can drive the growth of consumption, hence influencing the company success. Consumer purchase decision is a respond toward a problem they perceived. Before reaching the decision, consumers usually collect and process information, evaluate, and choose the best option to solve their problems or making purchase decision (Krishnakumar, 2018). This concept is defined by (Prasad & Jha, 2014) as an alternative option of the existing choices to finish the variating processes in the purchasing situation.

When purchasing a product, customers are not only buying the product as a commodity, but also looking for values that can satisfy themselves, both in the brand and the quality. Companies must be flexible and quickly adapt to anticipate the threats and seize the opportunities, as well as providing the means to be able to quickly respond the condition in the market (Kotler, 2016). This is important to be noticed, because only then companies are able to take action to increase the purchase decision. In this regard, customer engagement is known to have various positive outcomes to companies, one of which is increasing purchase intention (Prentice et al., 2019). It arises from the emotional and cognitive connection of customers with a brand, which is formed in a special circumstances or context (Hollebeek et al., 2014). In purchasing a product or service, customers are influenced by various aspects, such as attributes, variations, price, quality, and service provided by the company. According (Barhemmati & Ahmad, 2015) found that engaged customers show better purchase behavior of a product from a certain company or brand. Therefore, when customers are engaged and have an attachment to a brand, they will develop high involvement and belongingness towards the brand and the firm (Prentice, 2013) and this will be implemented in their purchase decision towards the product or service ((Prentice et al., 2018); (Prentice et al., 2019)).

Currently, batik MSMEs have also adapt to the technological changes and development. It can be seen that a number of batik MSMEs, starting from the classics such as Danar Hadi Batik (established on 1967), Hamzah/Mirota Batik, and Yudhistira Batik, to the more contemporary one such as Bateeq Shop (launched on 2013), have use social medias and e-commerce, and even build a website to interact with their customers. However, several new brands in batik MSMEs have not been able to catch up with the technologies, and this can affect customers' decision to purchase product from the batik MSMEs. In addition, there is also a need to examine how the process of customer engagement differs in various customer segments and understand more about its outcomes (Creevey et al., 2019). According (Li et al., 2020) mentioned that the psychological mechanism of customer engagement has rarely been examined. Therefore, this study uses the variable of customer engagement to view its relationship with brand attachment to represent the emotional response and psychological mechanism of engagement of local make-up brand customers in making purchase decision.

Research conducted by (Li et al., 2020) proves that customer engagement has a positive effect on brand attachment. A number of previous studies have found that consumers who have an attachment towards a certain brand tend to and have the willingness to purchase products or services from the brand ((Wu et al., 2015); (Hew et al., 2017)). According to (Zhang et al., 2015), customers will also recommend the brand to others, aside from making purchases. When it is linked to the purchase of make up products, customers who already attached to a brand will have more tendency to use and purchase a product from that brand, whether repurchasing products that they have tried beforehand, or purchasing a new product launched by the brand. So based on the description above, the authors want

to conduct research with the aim to determine the effect of customer engagement and brand attachment in increasing consumer purchasing decisions

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses quantitative approach to examine the hypothesis that have been proposed in this study (Sugiyono, 2019). The population is customers of batik MSMEs in Sleman and Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. This study uses purposive sampling method, with the criteria of customers who have social media, and ever use and purchase batik MSMEs. The total number of samples is 115 respondents. The data is collected through distributing questionnaire using online platforms, and is analyzed using descriptive analysis and path analysis. The measurement of each variable is as follows customer engagement is measured using items developed by (Harrigan et al., 2017), brand attachment is measured using items developed by Park (2010) in (Putri, 2014), and purchase decision is measured using items adapted from the study of Shareef (2008) in (Dergibson Siagian, 2017)

Hypothesis

H1: Customer engagement positively influences brand attachment.
H2: Brand attachment positively influences purchase decision.
H3: Brand attachment mediates the influence of customer engagement on purchase decision.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Results
Respondents Characteristics

From the total number of samples in this study, namely 115 respondents, the majority of respondents in this study are female, which is 92 respondents (80%), with the age ranging from 25-27 years old, which is 65 respondents (57%). The respondents mostly have income per month of Rp3,000,000-6,000,000, which is 78 respondents (68%), and most of them uses social media actively, which is 84 respondents (73%).

Validity and Reliability Test Results

In order to assure that the construct and item measurement used in this study can reflect the variable, the researchers conduct validity and reliability test. The results are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Results of Validity Test

Variable	Questionnaire Item	Sig. value of Alpha Count	Sig. value Alpha Table	Conclusion
Customer Engagement	Q1	0.002	0.05	Valid
	Q2	0.001	0.05	Valid
	Q3	0.000	0.05	Valid
	Q4	0.003	0.05	Valid
	Q5	0.000	0.05	Valid
Brand Attachment	Q6	0.000	0.05	Valid
	Q7	0.000	0.05	Valid
	Q8	0.000	0.05	Valid
	Q9	0.000	0.05	Valid
	Q10	0.000	0.05	Valid
	Q11	0.001	0.05	Valid
Purchase Decision	Q12	0.000	0.05	Valid
	Q13	0.000	0.05	Valid
	Q14	0.000	0.05	Valid
	Q15	0.000	0.05	Valid

Source: Processed Data, 2022

Based on the data processing results in Table 1, it can be known that all items have the alpha value of ≤ significance value. The alpha value shows 0.05, thus it can be known that the questionnaire in this study is valid.

Table 2. Results of Reliability Test

No	Variable	Cronbach's Alpha Count Value	Cronbach's Alpha Table Value	Info
1	Customer Engagement (X)	0,812	≥ 0.70	Reliable
2	Purchase Decision (Y)	0,826	≥ 0.70	Reliable
3	Brand Attachment (Z)	0,851	≥ 0.70	Reliable

Source: Processed Data, 2022

According to Hair et al. (2019), reliability can be assessed by looking at the value of Cronbach Alpha, which must be greater than 0.70. From Table 2, it can be known that all constructs used in this study have Cronbach's Alpha value that is greater than 0.70. Therefore, it can be inferred that all questionnaire items in this study are reliable.

Results of Hypothesis Test

Table 3. Results of SPSS R Square

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.713a	.508	.499	2.80989

Source: Processed Data, 2022

Table 4. T-test Path Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	4.076	2,449		1,664	0,099
Customer Engagement (X)	0,444	0,077	0,460	5,783	0,00
Purchase Decision (Y)	0,243	0,056	0,345	4,329	0,00

Source: Processed Data, 2022

Based on Table 3 and Table 4, it is obtained the results of the t-count (5.783), which is greater than t table (1.98) and significance value of 0.000 < 0.05. Therefore, the first hypothesis which stated that customer engagement has an influence on brand attachment is accepted. Furthermore, based on the results of Table 4, it can be known that the t-count is 4.329, which is greater than t-tabel value of 1.98, and significance value of 0.000 < 0.05. Therefore, the second hypothesis regarding the influence of brand attachment on purchase decision is accepted.

Path Analysis
Customer Engagement has an influence on Purchase Decision through Brand Attachment

Table 5 Path Analysis of Customer Engagement on Purchase Decision through Brand Attachment

Variable	Regression Coefficient (beta) Y	Regression Coefficient (beta) Z	Influence Direct (D)	Influence Non-Direct (ND)	Criterion	Decision
X	0,460	0,145	0,145	0,432		
Y		0,619			**TL > L**	**Intervening**

Source: Processed Data, 2022

From Table 5 above, it can be seen that the direct influence between customer engagement on purchase decision is 0.146, while the indirect influence of customer engagement on purchase decision through brand attachment is 0.432 or 43,20%. This means that the third hypothesis regarding the influence of customer engagement on purchase decision through brand attachment is accepted.

DISCUSSION
The Influence of Customer Engagement on Brand Attachment

The results of this study indicates that customer engagement on a brand or a company will have a positive influence on brand attachment. This means that customer who are engaged to a certain brand or company tend to be attached to the brand itself. This can also happen if the customers have an engagement to a community that are associated with the brand (So et al., 2014). Similarly, customers who are engaged to the community of the brand in the social media are likely to develop emotional relationship with the brand (Brodie et al., 2013). Currently, batik MSMEs are establishing their existence through social media, such as Instagram. They have their own way to communicate and build communities with their followers in social media. The way one brand communicates with its followers differs with another, as they know their target market and how their characteristics affects their choice of a brand. These aspects are the initial capital for companies to build engagement with their customers through social media. When customers recognize this and finally engaged to the brands that they follow on social media, they will have a tendency to be attached towards this brand. The results of this study strengthen the previous findings from prior studies ((Brodie et al., 2013); So et al., 2014; Li et al., 2020).

The Influence of Brand Attachment on Purchase Decision

The results of this study indicates that brand attachment of customers will have a positive influence on purchase decision. This means that customers who are attached to a brand is more likely to make purchase decision towards the brand. Brand attachment is customers' own personification towards a brand, and the way they acknowledge and affiliate themselves with the brand. It is also related to customers' feeling towards certain brand (Malar et al., 2011). The results of this study support the findings from Park et al. (2010; Lin et al., 2011; (Hew et al., 2017). In this regard, consumers tend to have their own personification toward a brand, while also acknowledge and affiliate themselves with the brand. Malar et al. (2011) defined brand attachment as the bond that links customer with certain brand and involves the customers' feeling on the brand. It has been recognized that brand attachment is a significant factor that can drive the company growth and profitability (Park et al., 2010), and also predict customer purchase behavior, including repurchase intention and purchase decision (Lin et al., 2011; (Hew et al., 2017)). The results of this study suggest that customers who are attached attachment towards a certain batik brand tend to and have the willingness to purchase products or services from the brand (Wu et al., 2015). When it is linked to the making purchase decision of batik brands, customers who already attached to a brand will have more tendency to use and purchase a product from that brand. Therefore, the higher the brand attachment of customers, the higher their purchase decision will be.

The Influence of Customer Engagement on Purchase Decision through Brand Attachment

The results of this study proved that customer engagement can have indirect influence on purchase decision through the role of brand attachment. In other words, it can also be stated that brand attachment is the path to achieve purchasing decision as an influence of customer engagement. The consequences are that purchasing decision can be obtained by increasing customer engagement, especially through the use of social media, which will ultimately have an influence on brand attachment. The more the customers are engaged with a brand or company, the more they will be attached towards the brand, thus increasing their purchase decision. The results of this study support the findings from (Barhemmati & Ahmad, 2015); (Prentice, 2013); (Prentice et al., 2019)). Customers who are engaged to certain batik brands will have better purchase behavior of a product from a certain company or brands. Furthermore, when customers are engaged and have an attachment to the batik brands, they will feel involved and belonged to the brand and the firm, and this will lead to their decision to purchase batik products from the brand. Finally, the results of this study suggest that the higher the customer engagement of customers, the higher their brand attachment would be, and this will ultimately lead to higher purchase decision.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the relationship between customer engagement, brand attachment, and purchase decision of batik customers in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Based on the analysis, results, and discussion of this study, there are several conclusions that can be drawn. First, customer engagement can have both direct influence on purchase decision. Second, this study also proved that customer engagement has an indirect influence on purchase decision through the role of brand attachment. Aside from that, this study also provides theoretical and managerial implications that can be inferred. It broadens the literatures on marketing study by focusing on customers, and offer an explanation about the psychological mechanism of customer engagement that has rarely been examined.

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