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The Effect of Online Brand Experience and Online Brand Community on Brand Leadership in E-Commerce: The Role of Brand Relationship Quality

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ABSTRACT

This research focused on studying the influence of online brand experiences and online brand communities on brand leadership through the role of an intermediary in brand relationship quality on e-commerce business context. The data were collected using an online questionnaire with 400 Thai consumers and analyzed using structural equation model analysis. The results showed that the online brand experience, directly and indirectly, influences brand leadership through brand relationship quality. At the same time, online brand communities indirectly influence brand leadership through brand relationship quality. The research results could explain 88% of the relationship with brand leadership, which e-commerce businesses can apply as a guideline for online marketing in the current era.

Keywords: Online Brand Experience, Online Brand Community, Brand Leadership, Brand Relationship Quality
JEL Classifications: M31, L81, L15

1. INTRODUCTION

The internet's technological advancement in commercial benefits is constantly evolving. Businesses need to emphasize changing trade patterns, including various types of transactions, by integrating the use of technology in the operation or presentation of goods and services to customers (Kumar et al., 2020; Arromdee and Suntrayuth, 2020; Mitchev and Nuangjamnong, 2021; Singh et al., 2021). This integration also includes developing an online shopping channel known as electronic commerce (e-Commerce), which has become a massive industry with billions of dollars in sales. The growth of electronic device use, particularly mobile phones that support trading, is also high. This phenomenon resulted in a continuous high growth rate of online shopping, causing businesses to compete against each other to offer the most comfortable experience to their customers (Mohsin, 2020; Kitjaroenchai and Chaipoopiratana, 2022). When consumers' behaviors change due to the reasons mentioned above, using electronic devices to support their lifestyles has gained much attention. Especially in the post-COVID-19 era, society has undergone a significant transformation, fully transitioning into the digital age (Nosike et al., 2024). Consumers increasingly require laptops, iPads, or computers to meet their needs. Additionally, they are purchasing accessories to enhance the comfort and efficiency of their work environments, including speakers, headphones, webcams, and various electronic devices or gadgets (Halim and Dinaroe, 2019; Kumar et al., 2020). The gadget market has demonstrated sustained growth in the post-pandemic era, driven by evolving consumer behaviors and advancements in technology, especially online purchase channels. Therefore, managing branding strategies to stay ahead of today's high competition is exceptionally crucial.

In today's competitive business era, creating brands with brand leadership is another important strategy that can create a long-term

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competitive advantage. Focusing solely on brand leadership seems to be the desired outcome for businesses. However, it can be difficult and time-consuming. Brand owners should integrate other marketing concepts to create effective leadership strategies. In the globalized business world and with the latest advancement in information technology, customer expectations have increased, making brand management even more complicated (Thomas and Veloutsou, 2013; Khan et al., 2016; Vashisht, 2019), as well as innovation, competition, and consumer demand (Hamzah et al., 2014). Therefore, online brand creation is discussed in almost every book on electronic commerce (Quan et al., 2020). In an online environment, when consumers interact with brands, they do not just interact with the brand, but they can also be more responsive to different content. Moreover, they might even create brand content of their own. This fact shows an ever-increasing level of interaction (Hollebeek and Macky, 2019; Kaur et al., 2019) that impacts the study on consumer engagement in communication and activity with the brand, including the concept of creating a good experience for the target customers and supporting customer interactions on online platforms, which are gaining much attention today.

It can be seen that marketers are interested in using brands to build long-term relationships with customers (Fournier, 1998; Aaker et al., 2004; Carlson et al., 2008). A new important concept emerged in building relationships and building consumer support, which is brand community concept. The brand community concept is a large platform for consumers to share product experiences, expand word-of-mouth communication, and build brand awareness (Muñiz and Schau, 2005; Bowden, 2009; Adjei et al., 2010; Parrott et al., 2015; Zhou et al., 2020). Many users are involved in brand communication, whether because they already have experience with that brand's product or service or because the product is so complex that they want to learn more about it from both the company and other users (Rosenthal and Brito, 2017). Therefore, the importance of brand community marketing relates to all parties who are attracted to a particular brand and the relationship they form within the context of the brand (McAlexander et al., 2005), making the brand community concept gain more attention and expand. Marketers who recognize the value of brand communities have begun to create or facilitate the development of the communities in both offline and online environments, which is a key challenge (Weiger et al., 2017) to drive customer engagement and enhance brand loyalty (Chang, et al., 2013; Marzocchi et al., 2013).

Moreover, the marketing perspective shifted the concept from traditional marketing, which focuses on the study of marketing mix factors, to focus on the relationship marketing paradigm discussed above. Therefore, building a quality relationship between the brand and its consumers is crucial to the success of the brand. For this reason, academics have put much effort into studying the relationship between brands and consumers, while marketers tried to build more positive relationships between brands and consumers. This fact reflects the marketing concept of relationship quality, the Brand Relationship Quality concept (Francisco-Maffezzolli et al., 2014; Tho et al., 2016). The brand relationship quality model was first proposed in the context of the retail industry (Xie and Heung, 2012), and since then, it has been explored on a growing number of causal and influencing factors in various dimensions (MacInnis et al., 2009; Tho et al., 2016). Therefore, the study of the building of online brand experience and brand community, including relationship quality between brands and consumers in the e-commerce context, is an important opportunity to help brands overcome this challenge and become brand leaders. This model will serve as an example to the study under different contexts to support the concept development for the academic community and can further be applied to the success of business administration circles.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Online Brand Experience

The emergence of online shopping has become an increasingly important channel for marketers to understand and provide a quality customer experience (Shankar and Jebarajakirthy, 2019). The increased amount of online shopping that allowed customers to shop easily came with the challenges for marketers to understand consumers' online shopping behaviors and offer a positive online brand experience that has been applied in today's business (Khan et al., 2020). Consumers are exposed to brands by contacting them through various media, so companies should explore new technologies to build a meaningful brand experience for consumers (Gabisch and Gwebu, 2011). Consequently, brands began to use online presence as a contact point with customers (Cleff et al., 2018; Ramirez and Merunka, 2019; Quan et al., 2020). Therefore, this topic had caught the attention of researchers and the concept of online brand experience emerged at the beginning of this century in the role of a new research topic that has received much attention today (Cleff et al., 2018). It is believed that adapting the brand experience framework to align with the online brand experience will provide additional benefits and insights in this area of research. The researcher used sensory, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions and was also aware of the website's functions and tools on online platforms, which is an essential source of satisfaction on online channels. In addition, the measurement of website usability has consistently been gaining interest in brand experience studies for many years (Thomas and Veloutsou, 2013; Lee and Jeong, 2014; Khan et al., 2016; Pratomo and Magetsari, 2018; Quan et al., 2020; Yasin et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2020). The platform's usability ensures that consumers use it with ease in browsing, navigating, and accessing information (Cleff et al., 2018). Therefore, the usability dimension is included in the framework of this research.

2.2. Online Brand Community

Online brand communities represent a consumer-brand relationships network (Baldus et al., 2015; Alden and Kelley, 2016; Yuan et al., 2020). The online communities were designated as a group of people taking part in online interactions in a virtual space created by combining communication with content developed by community members (Jang et al., 2008) who share common interests, such as brand admiration, and communicate through a computer mechanism or the internet as a medium, which helps encourage social interactions among online community members (Chang et al., 2013; Weiger et al., 2017). Therefore, online brand

communities is an efficient intermediary that allows consumers to comfortably interact with on another (Sloan et al., 2015). These interactions include sharing, communicating, information seeking, relaxing, and working (Kaur et al., 2018). Thus, to achieve the sustainability of online brand communities, brands need to consistently engage their members (Nambisan and Baron, 2009; Kamboj and Rahman, 2017) and try to understand how to build and maintain communities to increase customer value. (Martínez-López et al., 2016) by promoting brand communities (Martínez-López et al., 2017).

The indicator of online brand communities emphasizes the questions related to a sense of belonging, the relationship between group members, and community activities created for their existence. Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) research identified three components to indicate brand communities, which several researchers further studied. These components consist of (1) shared consciousness of kind, (2) shared rituals and traditions, and (3) a sense of moral responsibility (Sohn, 2005; Carlson et al., 2008; Stokburger-Sauer, 2010; Brodie et al., 2011; Laroche et al., 2012; Wirtz et al., 2013; Marzocchi et al., 2013; Habibi et al., 2014; Dessart et al., 2015)

2.3. Brand Relationship Quality

Brand relationship quality is an emotional value resulting from the interaction between the brand and the consumers, which is considered the best concept in terms of being an indicator of the strength and depth of the relationship between people and brands (Smit et al., 2007; Nguyen and Nguyen, 2011; Hudson et al., 2015). Brand relationship quality is also associated with future brand intentions for their functions. In other words, the higher the quality of the relationship, the less need there is to switch to another brand. Brand relationship quality also improves consumer attitudes about the brand. Moreover, the concept of brand and consumers also relates to the concept of brand relationship, which relates to the relationship between the brand and the consumer-brand relationship. This brand and consumer relationship concept is an important research topic since it benefits many aspects of the businesses, such as reducing marketing costs, easier access to merchandising, finding new customers for the brand, retaining existing customers, brand value creation, and many other advantages business (Smit et al., 2007).

The study of the relationship quality components revealed that the most accepted measurements of relationship quality by past researchers were trust, commitment, and satisfaction (Lages et al., 2005; Walsh et al., 2010; Clark and Melancon, 2013; Lo and Im, 2014; Prayag et al., 2019). However, many researchers noticed that under the context of brand creation, there is a deeper dimension of emotion. In addition, more research focuses on explaining the relationship between brands and consumers (Roberts et al., 2003; Aaker et al., 2004; Palmatier et al., 2006; Papista and Dimitriadis; 2012). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to study the components in measuring the quality of brand relationships in five dimensions: 1. self-connection attachment, 2. satisfaction, 3. behavioral commitment, 4. trust, and 5. emotional intimacy (Smit et al., 2007; Nguyen and Nguyen, 2011; Xie and Heung, 2012; Tho et al., 2016).

2.4. Brand Leadership

Brand leadership occurs when companies can differentiate and create differences in their products or services offered by competitors. The leadership position is built by continuously responding to the needs of consumers, including driving the market by using innovative products and being able to develop content in marketing communications as leaders or educate consumers about the consumption (Hanaysha, 2016). However, maintaining the leadership position does not just require brand creation power but also the constant development of innovative products or services (Gehlhar et al., 2009). In addition, companies also need to create strategies for developing their brands by integrating different concepts.

Chang and Ko (2014) describe the definition of brand leadership with an emphasis on consumers' perspectives, which defines the concept as consumers' perception of the brand's remarkable ability to consistently pursue excellence through effective integration of trend-setting and brand positioning within the industrial group (Chang and Ko, 2014; Chang et al., 2016). The study on brand leadership found limited studies on the cause and effect factors and results of brand leadership building. Thus, the study of cause and effect factors with a focus on experience marketing and brand community marketing, combined with the relationship marketing concepts mentioned in the introduction, will significantly enhance the academic knowledge in brand leadership. The main components and measurements studied under various contexts concluded that brand leadership consists of four key dimensions: perceived quality, perceived innovativeness, perceived value, and perceived popularity (Gehlhar et al., 2009; Zhu and Zhang, 2010; Chang and Ko, 2014; Chang et al., 2016; Chiu and Cho, 2021).

2.5. Conceptual Framework and Research Hypothesis

The literature review and relevant research have found that brand experience positively affects the relationship quality between brands and consumers (Lee and Kang, 2012; Lishan et al., 2014). The research emphasized the importance of understanding the brand-customer relationship in building brand experience (Schembri, 2009; Beckman et al., 2013; Xie et al., 2017; Lou et al., 2021). Additionally, studies have shown that customers' experience with the product (Francisco-Maffezzolli et al., 2014) influences the quality of their relationship with the brand. Therefore, enhancing customers' experience in product or service usage will create a high-quality relationship between the customer and the brand and can lead to future loyalty and participation (Lo, 2020; Lou et al., 2021).

Moreover, according to research by Ding and Tseng (2015), the perception of quality, a crucial component of brand leadership, is the mediator that influences the relationship between the brand experience and emotional intimacy. This finding is consistent with research by Iglesias et al. (2011), which states that brand experiences vary in strength and intensity. Brands with a high capability of prooving to customers with superior experience or higher quality tend to have higher customer engagement and to be leader brand positioning. Additionally, the research by Chang et al. (2016) found that by running a business with a unique level of experience by building superior quality to the competitors

and providing innovative services beyond just creating value in sales and reputation, consumers will recognize the quality and recommend these brands to others. The statement above led to the hypothesis 1 and 2 as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Online brand experiences positively influence brand relationship quality.

Hypothesis 2: Online brand experiences positively influence brand leadership.

Studies have shown that consumers' commitment to the brand community can help strengthen the brand relationship quality and maintain a psychological connection with consumers. This finding is a current marketing strategy that is difficult for competitors to imitate as it is a sustainable competitive advantage by creating a sustainable advantage through building a brand community with a strong relationship (Akrout and Nagy, 2018) and the quality of interaction and the communication within the brand community can also build a positive brand product awareness (McAlexander et al., 2002; Hutter et al., 2013). Moreover, within the brand community context on social media, brands do not just directly interact with members but also facilitate the interaction of group members to meet the needs of effective social interaction. This interaction promotes group interpersonal relationships and the relationship between the customers and the brand (Lou et al., 2021). As for the influence of the relationship on brand leadership, the literature review found few empirical research examining the relationship between online brand communities and brand leadership. However, Kirkup and Illes (2019) state that brands with good leadership preserve organizational values, support and empower the people, drives the communities forward, and provide valuable knowledge to customers. In addition, brand communities influence the perception of quality, a crucial component of brand leadership characteristics (Muniz and O'guinn, 2001; Nadeem et al., 2020). Therefore, the research established hypotheses 3 and 4 as follows:

Hypothesis 3: Online brand communities positively influence brand relationship quality.

Hypothesis 4: Online brand communities positively influence brand leadership.

Currently, there is limited empirical research on the relationship between brand relationship quality and brand leadership. However, a study by Shaari et al. (2015) states that brand commitment is essential to brand leadership. Chiu and Cho (2021) research also adds that consumers will appreciate brands with brand leadership because they offer better quality relationship and value than other brands, and leading brands reflect their image very well. In addition, popularity of brand leadership has the potential to connect brand value and consumer self-esteem (Chang and Ko, 2014). This finding aligns with the component related to self-connective attachment and the brand under the concept of brand relationship quality, especially in the online context. Consumers under the online context assess and perceive a brand's value through emotional engagement, which is consistent with the components of the customer's attachment and emotional intimacy to the brand. Satisfaction is also related to consumer perception of brand popularity (Chang and Ko, 2014; Chiu and Cho, 2021). Therefore, brands that create a trust can convey consumers' identities and become leading brands. Thus, the above relationship led to the establishment of hypothesis 5.

Hypothesis 5: Brand relationship quality positively influences brand leadership.

The research has set the conceptual framework of the research as shown in Figure 1.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

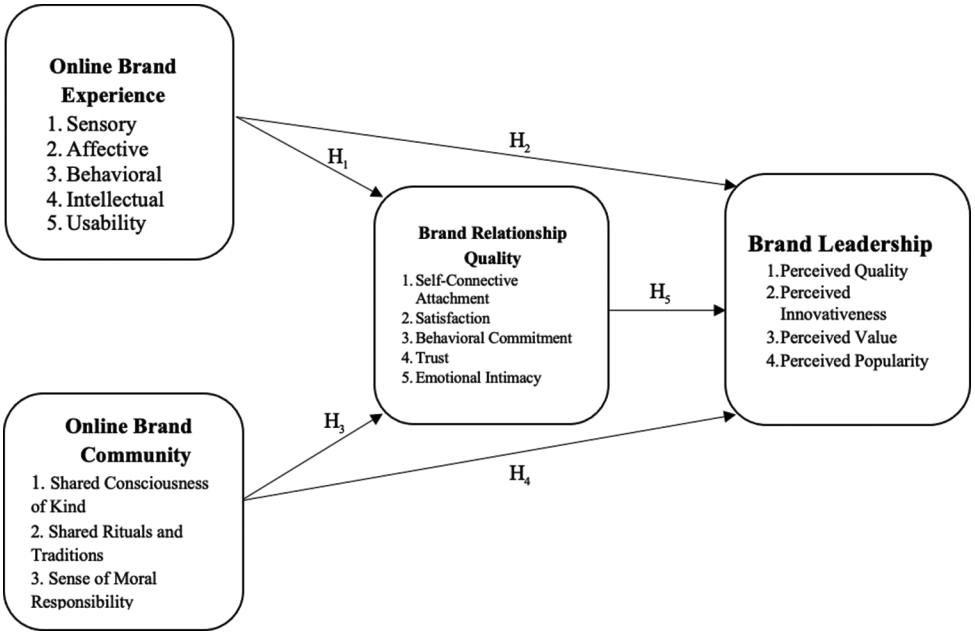
3.1. Research Tools

The tool used in this research was an online questionnaire that consisted of six questions: Part 1. Introductory question, Part 2. General information of respondents, Part 3. Online brand experience, adapted from Brakus et al. (2009) and Cleff et al. (2018), Part 4. Online brand community, adapted from Laroche et al. (2012), Sohn (2005), Jiao et al. (2018), and Kumar (2019), Part 5. Brand Leadership, adapted from Chang and Ko (2014), and Part 6. Brand relationship quality, adapted from Kim et al. (2005). The researcher used a 7-level Likert scale, ranging from level 1 (strongly disagree) to level 7 (strongly agree) (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

3.2. Research Target Group and Data Collection

The sample group used in this research included 400 people who have purchased products of leading brands, electronic accessories, or gadgets on electronic commerce platforms and are members of or follow at least one online community to receive and exchange information about electronic accessories or gadgets. A majority of the sample group are female (71%), 21–37 years old (63.75%), employees of a private company (31.75%), bachelor's degree (83%), and average monthly personal income between 10,000–20,000 baht (63.50%). All participants of the sample group had bought gadgets through online platforms. A majority purchased through Shopee/Lazada (86.50%), direct brand websites (35.75%), and social media (28.25%), respectively. Most members purchased mobile gadgets, such as power banks, wireless chargers, Bluetooth headphones, camera accessories (68.75%), followed by computer gadgets such as mouse pads, headphones/speakers (56.00%), beauty/beauty gadgets, such as face-washing devices, automatic facial massagers devices (41.50%), educational/work gadgets, such as laptops/iPads pens (35.00%), health gadgets, such as smartwatches and headphones for exercising (22.75%), gaming gadgets, such as joysticks (21.25%), and other gadgets, such as digital cameras and tripods (20.25%), respectively. The brands being purchased were Apple (68.75%), Samsung (32.75%), Xiaomi (21.75%), and Huawei (11.00%). The frequency of online gadgets purchased for most participants within the sample group was 1–3 times/month (78.75%). As for the platforms for information sharing on gadgets that the sample group has joined or followed, the majority of the sample group followed Facebook Fanpage (56.25%), followed by Youtube Channel (53.50%), closed Facebook group (40.25%),

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



website Webboard (20.00%), and Line OA/Line Open Chat (18.00%) respectively.

3.3. Data Analysis

The researcher analyzed the data using descriptive statistics and inference statistics, consisting of (1) Measurement Model Analysis and (2) Structural Model Analysis (Hair et al., 2010; Kline, 2010).

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

From the data distribution analysis by analyzing the skewness and kurtosis, it was found that the lowest skewness was −0.799 and the highest was −0.330. The lowest kurtosis was −0.750 and the highest was 0.679, all of which were between −2 and 2, indicating a normal distribution (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). Discriminative validity was tested by comparing the square root AVE of the observed variables with the correlation coefficiency between the observed variables (Correlation Matrix) and it was found that the square root of AVE for all factors was higher than the correlation coefficient between the observed variables with the values between 0.317 and 0.777 with a statistically significant level of 0.01, indicating that the variables in the research had good discriminative accuracy as shown in Table 1. The variance inflation factor of the parameter coefficient (VIF) is between 2.50 and 6.06 and the tolerance is between 0.16 and 0.40, indicating that the data does not have any multicollinearity issue (Stevens, 2009).

4.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The results of the confirmatory factor analysis showed that the online brand experience consists of five components, which include sensory experience, emotional experience, behavioral experience, intellectual experience, and usability experience; the online brand community consists of three components: 1. Shared consciousness of kind, 2. Shared rituals and traditions, and 3. Sense of moral responsibility; brand relationship quality consists of five components: 1. Seld-connective attachment, 2. Satisfaction, 3. Behavioral commitment, 4. trust, and 5. Emotional intimacy; and brand leadership consists of four components: 1. Perceived quality, 2. Perceived innovativeness, 3. Perceived value, and 4. Perceived popularity.

Convergence validity and reliability analysis showed that the highest factor loading value was 0.893 and the lowest value was 0.699, which is >0.50, indicating that the data was of high accuracy (Hair et al., 2010). The reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha coefficient analysis showed that the highest value was 0.900 and the lowest value was 0.770, which is >0.70, indicating that the data was highly reliable (Zikmund et al., 2010). The results of the composite reliability (CR) analysis of the latent variables and the average variance extracted (AVE) showed that the composite reliability of the latent variables has the highest value of 0.899 and the lowest value of 0.711, which is >0.60. The average variance extracted (AVE) had the highest value of 0.705 and the lowest value of 0.590, which was >0.50, indicating that each latent variable was able to describe the variance of the observed variable unanimously. Diamantopoulos and Siguaw (2000), as shown in Table 2.

4.2. Structural Equation Model Analysis and Research Hypothesis Testing

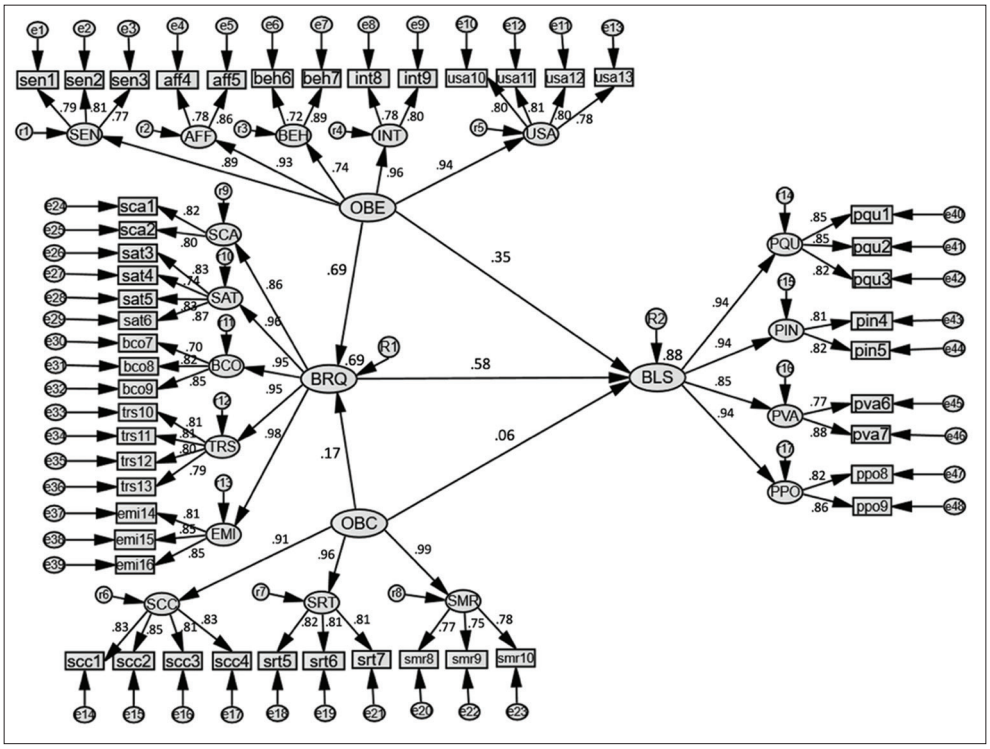
The analysis of the structural equation model revealed that the structural equation model was consistent with the empirical data, considering the five following goodness of fit indices that passed the acceptance criteria $\chi^2/df = 1.206$, GFI = 0.906, CFI = 0.988, RMSEA = 0.023 and SRMR = 0.035. The result showed that four hypotheses were accepted with statistical significance ($\beta = 0.69$; $P < 0.001$, $\beta = 0.35$; $P < 0.001$, $\beta = 0.17$; $P < 0.01$; $\beta = 0.58$; $P < 0.001$) and 1 hypothesis was rejected, as shown in Table 3.. The structural equation model was able to describe 69% of the relationship and brand relationship quality and 88% of brand leadership, as shown in Figure 2.

Table 1: Discriminant validity assessment

	SEN	AFF	BEH	INT	USA	SCC	SRT	SMR	PQU	PIN	PVA	PPO	SCA	SAT	BCO	TRS	EMI
SEN	0.801																
AFF	0.758	0.817															
BEH	0.423	0.552	0.812														
INT	0.648	0.738	0.589	0.792													
USA	0.676	0.760	0.459	0.767	0.796												
SCC	0.538	0.638	0.683	0.669	0.598	0.829											
SRT	0.450	0.543	0.689	0.596	0.504	0.756	0.812										
SMR	0.485	0.602	0.607	0.630	0.587	0.643	0.674	0.768									
PQU	0.704	0.699	0.413	0.630	0.691	0.582	0.511	0.572	0.840								
PIN	0.643	0.688	0.368	0.620	0.671	0.554	0.485	0.572	0.674	0.819							
PVA	0.580	0.636	0.493	0.604	0.612	0.557	0.524	0.579	0.679	0.725	0.831						
PPO	0.635	0.662	0.317	0.586	0.651	0.507	0.440	0.548	0.635	0.616	0.728	0.839					
SCA	0.562	0.650	0.551	0.620	0.591	0.679	0.644	0.583	0.625	0.591	0.628	0.566	0.810				
SAT	0.617	0.683	0.449	0.601	0.696	0.583	0.519	0.523	0.730	0.727	0.667	0.750	0.741	0.831			
BCO	0.513	0.623	0.481	0.563	0.590	0.617	0.567	0.515	0.674	0.658	0.586	0.667	0.690	0.662	0.791		
TRS	0.612	0.677	0.487	0.651	0.651	0.639	0.566	0.575	0.745	0.724	0.680	0.720	0.711	0.674	0.677	0.802	
EMI	0.589	0.665	0.398	0.590	0.663	0.545	0.460	0.493	0.704	0.685	0.625	0.730	0.672	0.672	0.777	0.698	0.835

The bold diagonal elements are the square root of the average variance extracted. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 2: The result of structural equation modeling analysis



The results of the influence path of variables analysis in the structural equation model by analyzing direct effect (DE), indirect effect (IE), and total effect (TE), found that online brand experience had a direct influence on brand leadership (DE = 0.36, P < 0.01) and online brand experience indirect influence on brand leadership through brand relationship quality (IE = 0.30, P < 0.01). The direct effect analysis of online brand community and brand leadership showed that the online brand community had a direct influence on brand leadership, but with no statistically significant (DE = 0.07). However, the online brand community had a significant indirect effect on brand leadership through brand relationship quality (IE = 0.18, P < 0.05), as shown in Table 4.

4.3. Discussion of Research Result

From the research results, it can be seen that the online brand experience variables and the online brand community positively influence brand leadership through brand relationship quality. The model was able to describe 88% of correlation with brand leadership. The online brand experience factors are directly and indirectly correlated with brand leadership through brand relationship quality, which is consistent with research by Lee and Kang (2012), Yoon and Youn (2016), Xie, Poon, and Zhang (2017), and Febriandika et al., (2020) which stated that brand experience is a key factor in building customer-brand relationships. If consumers have a positive experience with the brand, they tend to have

Table 2: Result analysis of S.D., Factor Loading, CR, AVE, and Cronbach's alpha

Variables	Loading	AVE	CR	α
Online Brand Experience				
Sensory		0.641	0.842	0.811
1. I am very impressed with the online media of my favorite gadget brands, such as images, colors, videos, and composition (SEN1).	0.812			
2. I found that the online media of this brand is very interesting, from seeing pictures, videos, or hearing the sound (SEN2).	0.8			
3. This brand is attractive, including the fact that the pictures and videos of this brand caught my eyes very much (SEN3).	0.789			
Affective		0.667	0.8	0.825
4. This brand gives me enjoyment and a good mood (AFF4).	0.775			
5. I feel very good about this brand (AFF5).	0.856			
Behavioral		0.659	0.792	0.78
6. I participated in various activities through the brand's online platform, such as postings, reviews, comments, and ikes (BEH6).	0.721			
7. This brand provides me with physical experiences such as participating in various online activities, posting, commenting, liking, or sharing (BEH7).	0.893			
Intellectual		0.627	0.711	0.77
8. I find this brand's online material valuable and thought-provoking (INT8).	0.779			
9. When I listened to this brand's offers, I gained a better understanding (INT9).	0.805			
Usability		0.633	0.874	0.888
10. This brand's online shopping platform has an efficient and fast performance (USA10).	0.797			
11. This brand has a consistent and easy-to-use online service (USA11).	0.813			
12. The brand's online service is easy to understand and use (USA12).	0.797			
13. This brand's content is easy to read and understand (USA13).	0.776			
Online Brand Community (OBC)				
Shared Consciousness of Kind		0.688	0.898	0.9
14. I feel a mental connection between this brand community members (SCC1).	0.825			
15. I feel like a part of this brand community (SCC2).	0.85			
16. I feel like a member of this brand community (SCC3).	0.815			
17. I feel the 'we' in the relationship with other members of this brand community (SCC4).	0.828			
Shared Rituals and Traditions		0.659	0.853	0.854
18. I think these activities contribute to the creation of a specific community culture (SRT5).	0.821			
19. I have many opportunities to express my opinions about this brand community activity (SRT6).	0.809			
20. Spending time with other members of this brand community can make me happy (SRT7).	0.806			
Sense of Moral Responsibility		0.59	0.812	0.844
21. The brand community members participated in maintaining the group and retaining members in the community (SMR8).	0.773			
22. I will not hesitate to inform this brand community if I see something unusual (SMR9).	0.749			
23. I will ask about the direction and information of this brand community to ensure everything goes right (SMR10).	0.782			
Brand Leadership				
Perceived Quality		0.705	0.877	0.861
1. This brand offers high-quality service (PQU1).	0.851			
2. This brand is excellent in service quality (PQU2).	0.848			
3. This brand offers superior products and services to competitors (PQU3).	0.819			
Perceived Innovativeness		0.671	0.803	0.826
4. This brand is very active in service or innovation improvements (PIN4).	0.816			
5. This brand is very creative in its products and services (PIN5).	0.822			
Perceived Value		0.69	0.816	0.828
6. This brand offers reasonable prices (PVA6).	0.774			
7. This brand has cost-effective product or service characteristics (PVA7).	0.884			
Perceived Popularity		0.704	0.826	0.834
8. Customers are very fond of this brand (PPO8)	0.821			
9. The customer group has a high acceptance of this brand (PPO9).	0.857			
Brand Relationship Quality				
Self-Connective Attachment		0.656	0.792	0.789
1. I am interested in this brand because it reflects who I am (SCA1).	0.825			
2. This brand fits my lifestyle well, and I would regret if I did not use it (SCA2)	0.794			
Satisfaction		0.69	0.899	0.869
3. This is the brand I really want (SAT3).	0.813			
4. I do not refuse to choose this brand at all (SAT4).	0.809			
5. This brand's operating system is better than I thought (SAT5).	0.831			
6. I feel fun using this brand (SAT6).	0.869			

(*Contd...*)

Table 2: (*Continued*)

Variables	Loading	AVE	CR	α
Behavioral Commitment		0.626	0.833	0.84
7. I will not think of any other brand because I already have this brand (BCO7).	0.699			
8. I want to continue using this brand (BCO8).	0.818			
9. I am satisfied with my relationship with this brand, which made me want to buy it again (BCO9).	0.849			
Trust		0.643	0.878	0.889
10. This brand always takes care of customer needs (TRS10).	0.81			
11. This brand keeps its promises (TRS11).	0.808			
12. I believe this brand will meet my needs and solve my problems (TRS12).	0.8			
13. This brand was designed to help me have a better life (TRS13).	0.79			
Emotional Intimacy		0.698	0.874	0.845
14. I am familiar with this brand (EMI14).	0.807			
15. I feel comfortable using this brand (EMI15).	0.849			
16. This brand is a natural fit for me (EMI16).	0.85			

Table 3: Summary of the findings using SEM

Hypothesis	β	t-value
OBE -------> BRQ	0.69	9.430***
OBE -------> BLS	0.35	5.365***
OBC -------> BRQ	0.17	3.064**
OBC -------> BLS	0.06	0.136
BRQ -------> BLS	0.58	9.609***

*R^2_{BRQ}=0.69, R^2_{BLS}=0.88. *P<0.05, **P<0.01, ***P<0.001

Table 4: The mediation analysis results

Indirect Effect	DE	IE	TE	P	Result
OBE -> BRQ -> BLS	0.36**	0.30**	0.66**	0.001	Partial Mediation
OBC -> BRQ -> BLS	0.07	0.18*	0.25*	0.040	Full Mediation

*P<0.05, **P<0.01, ***P<0.001

more confidence in it, resulting in a satisfying relationship and a commitment to the brand. In particular, e-commerce businesses must focus on delivering a virtual experience to consumers and create interactions that will further increase the satisfaction and credibility of the brand and lead to the awareness of brand leadership. At the same time, research shows that online brand communities have a positive influence on brand relationship quality, which is consistent with research by Laroche et al. (2012) and Muniz and O'Guinn (2001), which stated that members of the brand community have strong connections with other members, especially within social media community groups that can build trust in the brand. Consumers who interact with brand community members will develop close relationships and create long-term interaction value. However, brand communities have no direct impact on brand leadership. In the context of gadget brands, it was found that building a successful brand community and being a brand leader also requires building quality relationships in that community. Singh et al. (2021) stated that the brand's constant presence and interaction with its customers through its online platforms greatly increase satisfaction and is an influential means of communication to maintain community membership and perception level of brand quality and value.

It can be seen that the vital factor in creating brand leadership in the e-commerce business is the brand relationship quality factor, which is consistent with a study by Hanaysha (2016) that identified relationship quality as a crucial indicator of brand leadership. The brand with leadership will try to develop a good relationship with consumers by offering value-added products and services that are different from competitors. Moreover, a study by Beverland et al. (2004) suggests that building a quality relationship between customers and brands makes it easier to build a good connection. This connection is essential to the long-term success of the brand and will promote the leadership position of the brand. Other relevant research also confirmed that the various components of brand relationship quality affect brand leadership (Chang and Ko, 2014; Hanaysha and Hilman, 2015; Chiu and Cho, 2021). The context of e-commerce differs from traditional trades because customers cannot see the product before making a purchase. Customers only judge by seeing the information and images available on the platforms (Febriandika et al., 2020; Mitchev and Nuangjamnong, 2021). For customers to have good experiences in this context of virtual society, brand trust, online media, and quality relationships are, therefore, of great importance (Abyad, 2017; Singh et al., 2021), especially in building a brand community. It can be seen from the research results that brand communities have no direct positive effect on brand leadership. Nevertheless, the brand must continually focus on creating community satisfaction and activities where members or customers can learn how the products are connected to their identities. Brands need to build customers' confidence that they will consistently meet customers' needs, which will lead to the awareness of brand leadership and will require the efforts of marketers through experiences that occur within the community. When all three variables are created, they will effectively lead to the opportunity to be a leader in the market.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This research presents new findings for improving brand leadership. The study found a positive relationship between the concept of online brand experience, online brand community, and brand relationship quality. Past studies of the relationship between these variables are still limited, especially in the context of e-commerce business, an important marketing channel nowadays. The findings also show the influence of the central variables of brand relationship quality on brand leadership. Brand owners and product-related entities that operate electronic commerce businesses can apply the research findings from the online brand experience concepts and building of brand relationship quality. Brand owners should focus on developing touch points through

the five senses of consumers who will be experiencing the brand, such as websites or various advertising media designs, creating creative activities (Henry and Greenhalgh, 2006; Hulten, 2011; Xie et al., 2017), creating activities on the brand media to create positive emotions. These activities can include suggestions of new ways to use the products, new product reviews, giveaway activities, and offered services through online service providers or admins, who are prepared to provide information, and politely and consistently solve problems for customers. Another essential variable is the development of the brand community concept by creating an atmosphere that can fulfill the needs of people in the community and create and maintain rules together as a guideline to maintain the group's identity.

Some rules can include not sharing links that are not affiliated with the group brand, do not post for sale, or do not post about various sensitive social issues. Managing an online brand community does not only involve members' interactions and participation but also facilitates members' activities and participation to fulfill the needs for social interaction. Relationships formed in this group fulfill the need for social relations and significantly influence the customer-brand relationship, including satisfaction, behavioral commitment, trust, emotional intimacy, and self-connective attachment of customers. This research is considered to help enhance modern marketing concepts, especially on the development of the relationship between brands and consumers in e-commerce business.

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