Strategic Analysis of Brand Loyalty in TikTok Shop: The Role of Brand Trust and Customer Satisfaction in Indonesia's E-Commerce Landscape

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ABSTRACT

The return of TikTok Shop to Indonesia through the acquisition of Tokopedia in December 2023 provides a significant opportunity for expansion. The integration of these platforms aims to enhance user experience, expand product offerings, and strengthen e-commerce competition in Indonesia. However, the impact of brand experience, brand trust, and customer satisfaction on brand loyalty within TikTok Shop remains an important research area. This study aims to analyze the influence of brand experience, brand trust, and customer satisfaction on brand loyalty in TikTok Shop. Specifically, it examines the mediating role of brand trust and customer satisfaction in these relationships. This research adopts a quantitative approach using Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed to 81 respondents, measuring variables including brand experience, brand trust, customer satisfaction, and brand loyalty. The findings indicate that brand experience significantly affects brand trust and customer satisfaction but does not directly influence brand loyalty. Brand trust plays a key mediating role between brand experience and brand loyalty. Similarly, customer satisfaction significantly influences brand trust but does not have a direct effect on brand loyalty. Furthermore, brand trust mediates the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. This study highlights the importance of brand trust in fostering brand loyalty among TikTok Shop users. While brand experience and customer satisfaction contribute to trust, they do not directly drive loyalty. Strengthening brand trust through consistent product quality, reliable customer service, and transparent communication is essential for maintaining user loyalty in the competitive e-commerce landscape.

Keywords: Brand Experience, Brand Trust, Customer Satisfaction, Brand Loyalty, TikTok Shop

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid evolution of e-commerce has significantly transformed consumer purchasing behaviors, positioning brand loyalty as a critical determinant of sustained business success. In December 2023, TikTok Shop re-entered the Indonesian market through the acquisition of Tokopedia, marking a strategic initiative to strengthen its foothold in the competitive e-commerce landscape. This integration aims to leverage the synergies between social media engagement and online retail, offering consumers a seamless and interactive shopping experience. Prior research has highlighted the growing role of social commerce in shaping consumer behavior and loyalty. For instance, Molinillo et al. (2021) found that perceived value is an important driver of customer loyalty toward social commerce websites. Additionally, a meta-analytic study by Zhao et al. (2022) demonstrated that trust significantly influences consumers' purchase intentions in social commerce platforms. Furthermore, Lou and Yuan (2019) indicated that influencer marketing significantly impacts consumer trust and purchase intentions, emphasizing the importance of interactive shopping experiences in enhancing brand attachment and customer engagement.

Brand loyalty, defined as a consumer's consistent preference and commitment to repurchase a particular brand, is influenced by various interrelated factors. Brand experience encompasses the sensations, feelings, and responses evoked by brand-related stimuli, playing a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions and loyalty. Brand trust refers to the confidence consumers have in a brand's reliability and integrity, serving as a foundation for long-term relationships. Customer satisfaction, the fulfillment of consumer expectations, directly impacts their likelihood to continue engaging with a brand.

Research has shown that brand experience positively affects customer satisfaction and brand trust, which in turn enhance brand loyalty. For instance, a study by Başer et al. (2015) found that brand experience directly and positively influences consumer satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty. Additionally, Sumarmi and Wijayanti (2023) demonstrated that while brand experience does not directly affect brand loyalty, it significantly influences brand trust, which then mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. These findings suggest that creating positive brand experiences can foster trust and satisfaction, ultimately leading to increased customer loyalty.Existing literature underscores the importance of these factors in fostering brand loyalty. For instance, Iglesias et al. (2019) found that positive brand experiences enhance brand trust and loyalty. Similarly, a study by Rather (2018) highlighted that customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between service quality and brand loyalty in the hospitality industry. In the context of e-commerce, Bilgihan (2016) demonstrated that trust and satisfaction are critical determinants of online customer loyalty. Despite these insights, there remains a need to explore these relationships within the unique framework of social commerce platforms like TikTok Shop, especially in emerging markets such as Indonesia. Understanding how brand experience influences customer satisfaction and brand trust, and subsequently how these factors affect brand loyalty, is essential for developing effective strategies in this domain. This study aims to analyze the strategic determinants of brand loyalty in TikTok Shop, focusing on the impact of brand experience, brand trust, and customer satisfaction. By employing a quantitative approach, this research seeks to provide insights into how these factors interact to foster brand loyalty, offering valuable implications for businesses operating in the evolving e-commerce landscape.
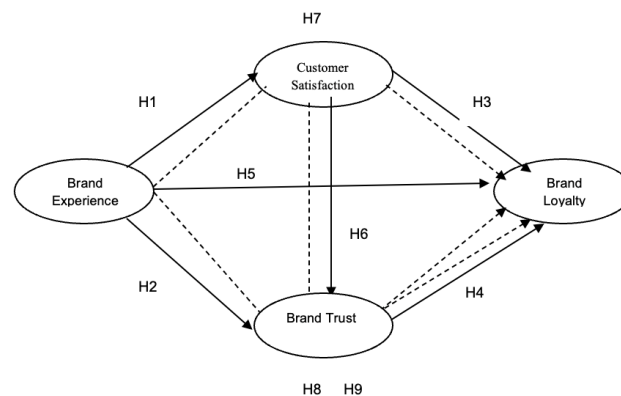
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a quantitative design using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to examine the relationships between brand experience, customer satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty among TikTok Shop users in Indonesia. Respondents were purposively selected based on three criteria: having purchased from TikTok Shop in the past three months, being active on social media and e-commerce platforms, and having awareness of trust and satisfaction in online shopping. A target of 100 respondents was set, exceeding the minimum required for PLS-SEM based on the 10-times rule.

A structured questionnaire was distributed online via Google Forms and social media. It consisted of five parts measuring demographics and four key constructs: Brand Experience (9 items) from Brakus et al. (2009), Customer Satisfaction (4 items) from Oliver (1999) and Fornell et al. (1996), Brand Trust (7 items) from Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001), Delgado-Ballester et al. (2003), Brand Loyalty (5 items) from Aaker (1991), Zeithaml et al. (1996) All items used a 5-point Likert scale. Instrument validity and reliability were ensured via expert review, a pilot test, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and reliability checks (CR and Cronbach's Alpha > 0.7). Data Collection and Ethics: The online survey ran for two weeks with reminders and a data cleaning phase. Ethical protocols—such as informed consent and confidentiality—were strictly followed. Data were analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0. The analysis included descriptive statistics, measurement model evaluation (validity and reliability), and structural model testing for direct, indirect, and mediation effects.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS,

Descriptive analysis was conducted to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents, including age, gender, occupation, education level, and income distribution. The analysis provides an overview of the sample composition, ensuring that the collected data represents the targeted TikTok Shop user group. The demographic analysis indicates that the majority of TikTok Shop users in this study are female (71.8%) and predominantly from Generation

Z (61.7%), followed by Millennials (37%). Most respondents are students (53.1%), with government employees (22.2%) also forming a significant portion. Regarding education, nearly half hold a high school diploma (48.1%), while bachelor's degree holders account for 29.6%. In terms of income, 54.3% earn ≤ Rp 2,000,000 per month, highlighting that TikTok Shop appeals largely to young consumers with moderate-to-low purchasing power. These findings suggest that affordable pricing, promotions, and interactive shopping experiences are key factors influencing consumer engagement on TikTok Shop. These demographic characteristics align with previous research on social commerce adoption, where young consumers (particularly Gen Z and Millennials) are the most active users of platforms like TikTok Shop (Zhu et al., 2022).

3.1 Measurement Model (Outer Model) Evaluation – Reliability and validity

The validity and reliability assessment of the measurement model was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Convergent validity was evaluated through outer loadings, with the majority of indicators demonstrating loadings above 0.70, and all indicators exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.50, indicating that the items adequately capture their respective latent constructs. This confirms that each indicator shares a high proportion of variance with its underlying factor. In addition, discriminant validity was assessed using cross-loading analysis, where each item loaded highest on its corresponding construct compared to other constructs in the model. This confirms that each construct is distinct and not unduly influenced by indicators from other constructs, thereby ensuring conceptual clarity and discriminant integrity.

Furthermore, composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha were used to evaluate internal consistency reliability. All constructs reported composite reliability (CR) values exceeding 0.70, specifically: brand experience (0.916), brand loyalty (0.914), brand trust (0.894), and customer satisfaction (0.892). These values indicate strong internal consistency among the items within each construct. Likewise, Cronbach's alpha values also surpassed the recommended threshold, confirming that the items consistently measure the intended concepts. Collectively, these results affirm that the measurement model satisfies the required psychometric standards, and the constructs used in this study exhibit both validity and reliability. Consequently, the model is considered robust and suitable for further hypothesis testing and structural model analysis in the context of examining consumer behavior on TikTok Shop.

3.2 Coefficient of Determination (R²)

Based on the data analysis using Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM), the R^2 values for the constructs in the model are as follows. The R^2 value for Brand Loyalty is 0.549, indicating that 54.9% of the variance in Brand Loyalty can be explained by Brand Trust, Customer Satisfaction, and Brand Experience, while the remaining 45.1% is influenced by other factors not included in this study.

Similarly, the R^2 value for Brand Trust is 0.789, meaning that 78.9% of its variance is explained by Customer Satisfaction and Brand Experience, while 21.1% is attributed to other external factors not covered in this research. For Customer Satisfaction, the R^2 value is 0.576, suggesting that 57.6% of the variance is explained by Brand Experience, whereas the remaining 42.4% is due to other unexamined variables. According to Chin (1998), R^2 values of 0.19, 0.33, and 0.67 are classified as weak, moderate, and substantial, respectively. Based on these results, the model demonstrates moderate-to-high explanatory power, particularly for Brand Trust (0.789) and Customer Satisfaction (0.576), indicating that the predictor variables strongly influence these constructs.

3.3 Hypothesis Testing Results

The hypothesis testing was conducted using bootstrapping, where statistical significance was determined based on p-values (< 0.05). The following table presents the bootstrapping results for the direct effects:

Table 1. Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Brand Experience -> Brand Loyality	0,180	0,187	0,154	1,174	0,241

Brand Experience -> Brand Trust	0,363	0,376	0,096	3,791	0,000
Brand Experience -> Costumer Satisfaction	0,759	0,767	0,045	16,815	0,000
Brand Trust -> Brand Loyality	0,467	0,478	0,182	2,565	0,011
Costumer Satisfaction -> Brand Loyality	0,135	0,117	0,157	0,859	0,391
Costumer Satisfaction -> Brand Trust	0,581	0,566	0,098	5,931	0,000

Based on the p-values, the hypothesis testing results are as follows:

H1: Brand Experience significantly influences Customer Satisfaction → Supported (p = 0.000 < 0.05)

H2: Brand Experience significantly influences Brand Trust → Supported (p = 0.000 < 0.05)

H3: Customer Satisfaction significantly influences Brand Loyalty → Not Supported (p = 0.391 > 0.05)

H4: Brand Trust significantly influences Brand Loyalty → Supported (p = 0.011 < 0.05)

H5: Brand Experience significantly influences Brand Loyalty → Not Supported (p = 0.241 > 0.05)

H6: Customer Satisfaction significantly influences Brand Trust → Supported (p = 0.000 < 0.05)

These results suggest that Brand Experience has a strong and direct impact on both Customer Satisfaction and Brand Trust, while Brand Trust plays a crucial role in influencing Brand Loyalty. However, Brand Experience does not directly influence Brand Loyalty, and Customer Satisfaction does not significantly impact Brand Loyalty either.

In addition to the direct effects, mediation effects were tested to determine if Brand Trust or Customer Satisfaction mediates the relationship between Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty. The results are as follows:

Table 2. Mediation Effects

	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Brand Experience -> Brand Trust -> Brand Loyality	1,987	0,048
Costumer Satisfaction -> Brand Trust -> Brand Loyality	2,414	0,016
Brand Experience -> Costumer Satisfaction -> Brand Loyality	0,847	0,398

The mediation results indicate:

H7: Brand Experience significantly influences Brand Loyalty through Customer Satisfaction → Not Supported (p = 0.398 > 0.05)

H8: Brand Experience significantly influences Brand Loyalty through Brand Trust → Supported (p = 0.048 < 0.05)

H9: Customer Satisfaction significantly influences Brand Loyalty through Brand Trust → Supported (p = 0.016 < 0.05)

These findings highlight that Brand Trust is a critical mediator in the relationship between Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty, as well as between Customer Satisfaction and Brand Loyalty. However, Customer Satisfaction does not mediate the effect of Brand Experience on Brand Loyalty, indicating that having a positive brand experience alone is not enough to directly enhance customer loyalty—it requires the development of brand trust.

3.4 Discussion

The findings of this study provide important insights into the complex relationships among brand experience, customer satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty in the context of TikTok Shop as a growing e-commerce platform. The results indicate that brand experience significantly enhances both customer satisfaction and brand trust, suggesting that consumers who perceive TikTok Shop as engaging, responsive, and reliable are more likely to feel satisfied and

develop confidence in the platform. These findings are consistent with prior studies, emphasizing the importance of delivering positive and consistent experiences through product quality, user-friendly interfaces, and attentive customer service.

Interestingly, the study reveals that customer satisfaction alone does not directly lead to brand loyalty. This outcome suggests that although consumers may be satisfied with their experience, satisfaction by itself is not enough to foster long-term loyalty—especially in a digital marketplace where users are exposed to numerous alternatives. External factors such as competitive pricing, promotional offers, ease of transaction, and availability of similar products may reduce the impact of satisfaction on loyalty. Therefore, e-commerce platforms like TikTok Shop must not only focus on fulfilling expectations but also ensure that trust is developed as a more enduring emotional and psychological bond with consumers.

On the other hand, brand trust demonstrates a strong and significant influence on brand loyalty, affirming its role as a key mediator in consumer retention. The results confirm that trust mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty, as well as between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. These findings imply that brand trust acts as the missing link that converts a positive experience and satisfaction into loyal behavior. Consumers who trust TikTok Shop are more likely to repurchase, recommend it to others, and remain committed despite competitors' offers.

Furthermore, the study found that brand satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty, reinforcing the view that while satisfaction contributes positively to the customer journey, it must be supported by trust to influence loyalty. Conversely, the mediating role of brand trust is statistically significant, both for the path from brand experience and from customer satisfaction, to brand loyalty. This underlines the strategic importance of trust-building measures such as consistent product performance, secure transactions, transparent return policies, and seller verification systems.

In conclusion, this study highlights that brand experience and brand trust are the most critical drivers of consumer loyalty in the context of TikTok Shop. While customer satisfaction remains relevant, its impact is most effective when it reinforces trust. For TikTok Shop to build a sustainable user base and strengthen customer retention, it must continuously invest in improving the consumer experience and, more importantly, in strategies that nurture long-term trust. These include maintaining transparency, ensuring reliability in service delivery, and actively managing user concerns. As the platform grows within a highly competitive digital market, establishing strong trust-based relationships will be essential for long-term success.

4. CONCLUSION

This study confirms that brand trust is the key driver of brand loyalty, while customer satisfaction alone does not guarantee long-term commitment. Brand experience positively influences customer satisfaction and trust, but it does not directly impact loyalty. Instead, brand trust mediates the relationship between brand experience, customer satisfaction, and brand loyalty, emphasizing the need for trust-building strategies. For TikTok Shop, enhancing product authenticity, customer service, and transparent policies is crucial to fostering trust and loyalty. Overall, this study highlights that while brand experience and satisfaction shape consumer perceptions, trust is essential for sustaining brand loyalty in the competitive e-commerce landscape.

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