

BAB V

PENUTUP

5.1. Kesimpulan

Berdasarkan penelitian yang telah dilakukan dengan pembahasan hasil penelitian, maka dapat disimpulkan:

1. Asosiasi Merek memengaruhi Ekuitas Merek

Pada hasil pengujian variabel Asosiasi merek terhadap variabel Ekuitas merek didapatkan bahwa asosiasi merek memengaruhi ekuitas merek secara positif

2. Loyalitas Merek memengaruhi Ekuitas Merek

Pada hasil pengujian variabel Loyalitas merek terhadap variabel Ekuitas merek didapatkan bahwa Loyalitas merek memengaruhi Ekuitas merek secara positif.

3. Kesadaran Merek memengaruhi Ekuitas Merek

Pada hasil pengujian variabel Kesadaran merek terhadap variabel Ekuitas merek didapatkan bahwa Kesadaran merek memengaruhi Ekuitas merek secara positif

4. Citra Merek memengaruhi Ekuitas Merek

Pada hasil pengujian variabel Citra merek terhadap variabel Ekuitas merek didapatkan bahwa Citra merek memengaruhi Ekuitas merek secara positif

5.2. Implikasi Manajerial

Berdasarkan hasil penelitian yang telah dilakukan, peneliti dapat memberikan saran kepada perusahaan Vans agar dapat meningkatkan pembelian produk sepatu Vans oleh konsumen, berikut beberapa saran untuk dapat meningkatkan pembelian produk sepatu Vans:

1. Vans dapat sering memperhatikan bentuk periklanan mereka pada media sosialnya, seperti memberikan pesan pemasaran yang berisi informasi yang menarik mengenai sepatu Vans itu sendiri. Sehingga *audience* langsung

mengenali dan mengetahui mengenai bahwa itu merupakan produk sepatu dari Vans yang banyak orang gunakan.

2. Vans dapat mempertimbangkan dalam memberikan inovasi pada produk mereka, seperti mengeluarkan produk sepatu dengan desain yang menarik dan mengikuti tren jaman sekarang. Sehingga konsumen Vans menjadi loyal dan akan merekomendasikan produknya kepada kerabat ataupun orang lain.
3. Vans dapat sering memperhatikan kesadaran konsumen pada merek mereka dalam bentuk logo maupun simbol, seperti dengan memberikan aksesoris berupa stiker atau gantungan kunci pada setiap pembelian produk sepatu Vans. Agar konsumen dengan cepat mengingat simbol ataupun logo produk sepatu Vans.
4. Vans dapat mempertimbangkan citra mereka sebagai penghasil produk sepatu “*streetwear*”, seperti memberikan edukasi dan berbagi informasi seputar fitur sepatu Vans yang khas pada media sosial mereka, sehingga konsumen akan tetap memilih produk Vans dibandingkan dengan produk lain walaupun memiliki fitur yang sama.

5.3. Keterbatasan Penelitian

Berdasarkan penelitian yang dilakukan, terdapat kelemahan dalam penelitian ini, yaitu Penyebaran kuisisioner yang hanya melalui beberapa media seperti instagram, Line, dan Whatsapp yang membuat penyebaran kuisisioner kurang luas. Hal ini membuat data kuisisioner yang ada masih dikatakan belum menyeluruh dan mencakup populasi masyarakat indonesia yang ada.

5.4. Saran Untuk Penelitian Selanjutnya

Berdasarkan penelitian yang telah dilakukan dan melihat kelemahan penelitian, berikut merupakan saran untuk penelitian selanjutnya yaitu pada penyebaran kuisisioner dapat dimaksimalkan dalam penyebarannya, dengan menggunakan media sosial yang lain seperti facebook, telegram, dan media yang lain. Sehingga data kuisisioner dapat mencakup populasi yang lebih luas.

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LAMPIRAN



Profiling

Jenis Kelamin

- Pria Wanita

Umur

- >18 18 – 28
 29 – 39 40 – 50
 51 - 60

Filter

Apakah Anda mengenali merek sepatu VANS?

- Ya Tidak

Apakah anda pernah membeli produk sepatu VANS?

- Pernah Tidak pernah

Kuesioner

Responden dimohon menjawab pertanyaan yang diajukan dengan memilih salah satu jawaban yang relevan dengan opini responden. Jawaban akan diklasifikasikan menjadi beberapa pilihan, yaitu **1** (sangat tidak setuju), **2** (tidak setuju), **3** (netral), **4** (setuju) dan **5** (sangat setuju).

Asosiasi Merek

No.	Pertanyaan	Alternatif Jawaban				
1.	Saya mempercayai produk sepatu VANS yang muncul di media sosial	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Produk sepatu VANS yang muncul di media sosial ini sudah tidak asing lagi bagi saya	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Ada alasan untuk membeli produk sepatu VANS dibandingkan produk/merek pesaing yang muncul di media sosial	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Produk sepatu VANS yang muncul di media sosial ini memiliki ciri khas tersendiri	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Produk sepatu VANS ini berbeda dengan produk/merek pesaing lainnya yang muncul di media sosial	1	2	3	4	5

Loyalitas Merek

No.	Pertanyaan	Alternatif Jawaban				
1.	Saya puas dengan produk sepatu VANS yang muncul di media sosial	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Saya akan merekomendasikan produk sepatu	1	2	3	4	5

	VANS ini kepada orang lain melalui media sosial					
3.	Saya tidak akan beralih ke produk/merek lain yang muncul di media sosial	1	2	3	4	5
4	Saya biasanya menggunakan produk sepatu VANS ini sebagai pilihan pertama saya dibandingkan dengan produk/merek lain	1	2	3	4	5
5	Saya biasanya secara teratur mengiklankan / mempromosikan produk sepatu VANS ini melalui media sosial	1	2	3	4	5

Kesadaran Merek

No.	Pertanyaan	Alternatif Jawaban				
1.	Saya dapat dengan cepat mengingat simbol atau logo produk sepatu VANS yang muncul di media sosial	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Beberapa karakteristik produk sepatu VANS yang muncul di media sosial muncul di benak saya dengan cepat	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Saya mengetahui produk sepatu VANS yang muncul di media sosial	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Saya dapat mengenali produk sepatu VANS dibandingkan dengan produk/merek pesaing lainnya yang muncul di media sosial	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Saya tahu seperti apa produk sepatu VANS ini	1	2	3	4	5

Citra Merek

No.	Pertanyaan	Alternatif Jawaban				
1.	Produk sepatu Vans sudah mapan	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Produk sepatu VANS memiliki citra yang bersih	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Produk sepatu VANS memiliki citra yang berbeda dibandingkan dengan brand lain	1	2	3	4	5

Ekuitas Merek

No.	Pertanyaan	Alternatif Jawaban				
1.	Masuk akal untuk membeli merek sepatu VANS daripada merek lain, meskipun produk tersebut sama	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Meskipun merek lain memiliki fitur yang sama dengan merek sepatu VANS, saya lebih memilih untuk membeli merek sepatu VANS	1	2	3	4	5



LAMPIRAN 2 FORMULIR GOOGLE FORM



PENGARUH ASOSIASI MEREK, KESADARAN MEREK, CITRA MEREK, DAN LOYALITAS MEREK TERHADAP EKUITAS MEREK(STUDI KASUS SEPATU VANS)

Hallo Semua!

Salam sejahtera bagi kita semua.

Perkenalkan nama saya Francesco marc nicosta., mahasiswa Program Studi Manajemen, Fakultas Bisnis dan Ekonomika, Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta. Saat ini saya sedang melakukan penelitian sebagai tugas akhir saya mengenai "PENGARUH ASOSIASI MEREK, KESADARAN MEREK, CITRA MEREK, DAN LOYALITAS MEREK TERHADAP EKUITAS MEREK" (STUDI KASUS SEPATU VANS). Saya mohon kesediaan saudara/i untuk meluangkan waktu mengisi kuesioner penelitian tugas akhir ini.

Dalam penelitian kuesioner ini tidak ada jawaban benar dan salah. Sehingga, saudara/i diharapkan dapat mengisi kuesioner dengan jujur.

Terima Kasih atas bantuan kalian semua.

managementleadership2@gmail.com [Ganti akun](#)



Tidak dibagikan

* Menunjukkan pertanyaan yang wajib diisi

Apakah anda mengenali merek sepatu VANS? *

Ya

Tidak





PENGARUH ASOSIASI MEREK, KESADARAN MEREK, CITRA MEREK, DAN LOYALITAS MEREK TERHADAP EKUITAS MEREK(STUDI KASUS SEPATU VANS)

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Tidak dibagikan

* Menunjukkan pertanyaan yang wajib diisi

Apakah anda pernah membeli produk sepatu VANS? *

- Pernah
- Tidak pernah

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[Berikutnya](#)

[Kosongkan formulir](#)

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VANS

PENGARUH ASOSIASI MEREK, KESADARAN MEREK, CITRA MEREK, DAN LOYALITAS MEREK TERHADAP EKUITAS MEREK(STUDI KASUS SEPATU VANS)

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Terima Kasih atas bantuan kalian semua.

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Tidak dibagikan

* Menunjukkan pertanyaan yang wajib diisi

Apakah anda mengenali merek sepatu VANS? *

Ya

Tidak





PENGARUH ASOSIASI MEREK, KESADARAN MEREK, CITRA MEREK, DAN LOYALITAS MEREK TERHADAP EKUITAS MEREK(STUDI KASUS SEPATU VANS)

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Tidak dibagikan

* Menunjukkan pertanyaan yang wajib diisi

Bagian Tanpa Judul

Jenis Kelamin *

- Pria
- Wanita

Umur *

- >18
- 18 - 28
- 29 - 39
- 40 - 50
- 51 - 60



Kembali

Berikutnya

Kosongkan formulir

PENGARUH ASOSIASI MEREK, KESADARAN MEREK, CITRA MEREK, DAN LOYALITAS MEREK TERHADAP EKUITAS MEREK(STUDI KASUS SEPATU VANS)

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Tidak dibagikan

* Menunjukkan pertanyaan yang wajib diisi

Bagian Tanpa Judul

Saya mempercayai produk sepatu VANS yang muncul dimedia sosial *

1 2 3 4 5

Sangat Tidak Setuju Sangat Setuju

Produk sepatu VANS yang muncul di media sosial ini sudah tidak asing lagi bagi saya *

1 2 3 4 5

Sangat Tidak Setuju Sangat Setuju

Ada alasan untuk membeli produk sepatu VANS dibandingkan produk/merek pesaing yang muncul di media sosial *

1 2 3 4 5

Sangat Tidak Setuju Sangat Setuju

Produk sepatu VANS yang muncul di media sosial ini memiliki ciri khas tersendiri

1 2 3 4 5

Sangat Tidak Setuju Sangat Setuju

Produk sepatu VANS ini berbeda dengan produk/merek pesaing lainnya yang muncul di media sosial *

1 2 3 4 5

Sangat Tidak Setuju Sangat Setuju

Saya puas dengan produk sepatu VANS yang muncul di media sosial *

1 2 3 4 5

Sangat Tidak Setuju Sangat Setuju

Saya akan merekomendasikan produk sepatu VANS ini kepada orang lain melalui media sosial *

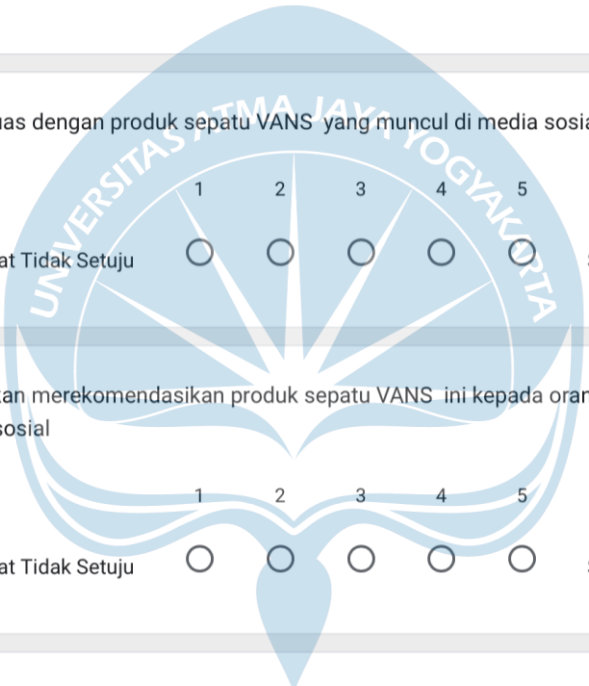
1 2 3 4 5

Sangat Tidak Setuju Sangat Setuju

Saya tidak akan beralih ke produk/merek lain yang muncul di media sosial *

1 2 3 4 5

Sangat Tidak Setuju Sangat Setuju



Saya biasanya menggunakan produk sepatu VANS ini sebagai pilihan pertama *
saya dibandingkan dengan produk/merek lain

1 2 3 4 5

Sangat Tidak Setuju Sangat Setuju

Saya biasanya secara teratur mengiklankan / mempromosikan produk sepatu *
VANS ini melalui media sosial

1 2 3 4 5

Sangat Tidak Setuju Sangat Setuju

Saya dapat dengan cepat mengingat simbol atau logo produk sepatu VANS yang *
muncul di media sosial

1 2 3 4 5

Sangat Tidak Setuju Sangat Setuju

Beberapa karakteristik produk sepatu VANS yang muncul di media sosial muncul *
di benak saya dengan cepat

1 2 3 4 5

Sangat Tidak Setuju Sangat Setuju

Saya mengetahui produk sepatu VANS yang muncul di media sosial *

1 2 3 4 5

Saya mengetahui produk sepatu VANS yang muncul di media sosial *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Sangat Tidak Setuju	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Sangat Setuju

Saya dapat mengenali produk sepatu VANS dibandingkan dengan produk/merek * pesaing lainnya yang muncul di media sosial

	1	2	3	4	5	
Sangat Tidak Setuju	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Sangat Setuju

Saya tahu seperti apa produk sepatu VANS ini *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Sangat Tidak Setuju	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Sangat Setuju

Produk sepatu Vans sudah mapan *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Sangat Tidak Setuju	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Sangat Setuju

Produk sepatu VANS memiliki citra yang bersih *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Sangat Tidak Setuju	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Sangat Setuju



Produk sepatu VANS memiliki citra yang bersih *

1 2 3 4 5

Sangat Tidak Setuju Sangat Setuju

Produk sepatu VANS memiliki citra yang berbeda dibandingkan dengan brand lain *

1 2 3 4 5

Sangat Tidak Setuju Sangat Setuju

Masuk akal untuk membeli merek sepatu VANS daripada merek lain, meskipun produk tersebut sama *

1 2 3 4 5

Sangat Tidak Setuju Sangat Setuju

Meskipun merek lain memiliki fitur yang sama dengan merek sepatu VANS, saya lebih memilih untuk membeli merek sepatu VANS *

1 2 3 4 5

Sangat Tidak Setuju Sangat Setuju

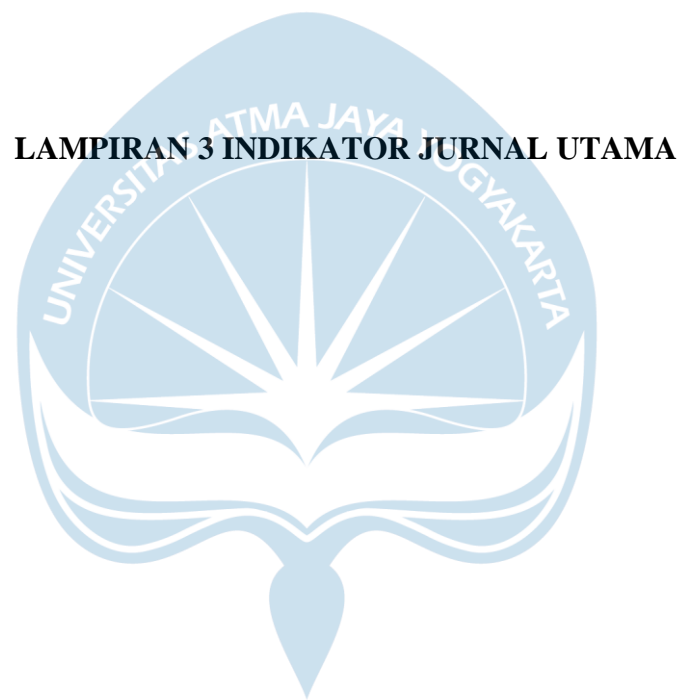
Kembali

Kirim

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LAMPIRAN 3 INDIKATOR JURNAL UTAMA

Variabel	Indikator pertanyaan
Brand Association	I trust the company who owns the particular product/brand that appeared in the social media
	This particular product/brand that appeared in the social media is familiar to me
	There are reasons to buy this particular product/brand over the competing product/brand that appeared in the social media
	This particular product/brand that appeared in the social media has its own personality
	This particular product/brand is different in comparison with the other competing product/brand that appeared in the social media
Brand loyalty	I am satisfied with product/brand that appeared in the social media
	I would recommend this particular product/brand to others through the social media
	I will not switch to another product/brand that appeared in the social media next time
	I usually use this particular product/brand as my first choice in comparison with the other product/brand
	I regularly refer this particular product/brand through the social media
Brand awareness	I can quickly recall symbol or logo of the particular product/brand that appeared in the social media
	Some characteristics of the particular product/brand that appeared in the social media come to my mind quickly
	I aware this particular product/brand that appeared in the social media
	I can recognize this particular product/brand in comparison with the other competing product/brand that appeared in the social media
	I know how this particular product/brand looks like
Brand image	This particular product/brand is well established
	This particular product/brand has a clean image
	This particular product/brand has a differentiated image in comparison with the other product/brand
Brand equity	It makes sense to buy this purchased brand instead of any other brand, even if they are the same
	Even if another brand has the same features as this purchased brand, I would prefer to buy this brand

The logo of Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta is a light blue emblem. It features a stylized open book at the base, with a sunburst or starburst pattern above it. The text "UNIVERSITAS ATMA JAYA YOGYAKARTA" is written in a semi-circle along the top edge of the emblem.

LAMPIRAN 4 HASIL PENGISIAN RESPONDEN

Apakah anda mengenali merek sepatu VANS?	Apakah anda pernah membeli produk sepatu VANS?	Jenis Kelamin	Umur
Ya	Pernah	Pria	<18
Ya	Pernah	Pria	<18
Ya	Pernah	Pria	<18
Ya	Pernah	Pria	<18
Ya	Pernah	Pria	<18
Ya	Pernah	Pria	<18
Ya	Pernah	Pria	<18
Ya	Pernah	Pria	<18
Ya	Pernah	Pria	<18
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	<18
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	<18
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	<18
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	<18
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	<18
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	<18
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	<18
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	<18
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	<18
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	<18
Ya	Pernah	Pria	18 - 28

Ya	Pernah	Wanita	18 - 28
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	18 - 28
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	18 - 28
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	18 - 28
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	18 - 28
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	18 - 28
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	18 - 28
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	18 - 28
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	18 - 28
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	18 - 28
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	18 - 28
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	18 - 28
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	18 - 28
Ya	Pernah	Pria	29 - 39
Ya	Pernah	Pria	29 - 39
Ya	Pernah	Pria	29 - 39
Ya	Pernah	Pria	29 - 39
Ya	Pernah	Pria	29 - 39
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Ya	Pernah	Pria	29 - 39
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Ya	Pernah	Pria	29 - 39
Ya	Pernah	Pria	29 - 39

Ya	Pernah	Pria	29 - 39
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	29 - 39
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	29 - 39
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	29 - 39
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	29 - 39
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	29 - 39
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	29 - 39
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	29 - 39
Ya	Pernah	Pria	40 - 50
Ya	Pernah	Pria	40 - 50
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	40 - 50
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	40 - 50
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	40 - 50
Ya	Pernah	Wanita	40 - 50

AM1	AM2	AM3	AM4	AM5	LM1	LM2	LM3	LM4	LM5	KM1	KM2	KM3	KM4	KM5	CM1	CM2	CM3	EM1	EM2
4	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
4	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	3	1	1	2	1	4	2	1	2	1	4	1
4	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3
4	4	3	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	1	4	4	3	3	4	4	3
4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4
3	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	5	3	2	2
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LAMPIRAN 5 HASIL SPSS

Validitas dan Reliabilitas Asosiasi Merek

Reliability Statistics		
	Cronbach's Alpha Based on	
Cronbach's Alpha	Standardized Items	N of Items
.901	.904	5

Item-Total Statistics					
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
AM1	15.87	10.611	.740	.603	.883
AM2	15.87	10.223	.836	.723	.864
AM3	15.85	10.141	.779	.636	.874
AM4	15.88	9.814	.726	.534	.887
AM5	16.07	10.080	.712	.538	.890

Validitas dan Reliabilitas Loyalitas Merek

Reliability Statistics		
	Cronbach's Alpha Based on	
Cronbach's Alpha	Standardized Items	N of Items
.933	.937	5

Item-Total Statistics					
	Scale Mean if Item	Scale Variance if	Corrected Item-Total	Squared Multiple	Cronbach's Alpha if Item

	Deleted	Item Deleted	Correlation	Correlation	Deleted
LM1	15.37	12.002	.791	.629	.929
LM2	14.75	13.768	.804	.678	.921
LM3	14.82	13.666	.847	.737	.915
LM4	14.92	13.225	.839	.727	.914
LM5	14.88	12.667	.869	.765	.908

Validitas dan Reliabilitas Kesadaran Merek

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.926	.928	5

Item-Total Statistics					
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
KM1	15.13	15.339	.862	.765	.898
KM2	15.15	15.511	.864	.778	.898
KM3	15.20	14.533	.791	.669	.916
KM4	14.75	17.319	.699	.554	.929
KM5	14.93	15.352	.838	.730	.903

Validitas dan Reliabilitas Citra Merek

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.859	.860	3

Item-Total Statistics					
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
CM1	7.92	2.490	.754	.569	.784
CM2	7.96	2.859	.709	.503	.827
CM3	8.02	2.503	.744	.556	.793

Validitas dan Reliabilitas Ekuitas Merek

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.761	.762	2

Item-Total Statistics					
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted

EM1	4.03	.836	.616	.379	.
EM2	4.04	.952	.616	.379	.

Uji Regresi Linear Berganda

Variables Entered/Removed ^a			
Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	CitraMerek, KesadaranMerek, AsosiasiMerek, LoyalitasMerek ^b	.	Enter
a. Dependent Variable: EkuitasMerek			
b. All requested variables entered.			

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.923 ^a	.852	.847	.33193
a. Predictors: (Constant), CitraMerek, KesadaranMerek, AsosiasiMerek, LoyalitasMerek				

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	79.322	4	19.831	179.992	.000 ^b

Residual	13.772	125	.110		
Total	93.094	129			

a. Dependent Variable: EkuitasMerek

b. Predictors: (Constant), CitraMerek, KesadaranMerek, AsosiasiMerek, LoyalitasMerek

Coefficients^a						
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.096	.158		.606	.546
	AsosiasiMerek	.555	.102	.514	5.450	.000
	LoyalitasMerek	.374	.107	.394	3.495	.000
	KesadaranMerek	.389	.082	.448	4.726	.000
	CitraMerek	.418	.100	.385	4.181	.000

a. Dependent Variable: EkuitasMerek



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Young consumers' insights on brand equity

Article in *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management* · March 2015
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Jumiati Sasmita Norazah Mohd Suki

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Young consumers' insights on brand equity

Effects of brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand image

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine the effects of brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand image on brand equity among young consumers.

Design/methodology/approach – Data from 200 young consumers were analysed using descriptive, correlation and multiple regression analysis via the Statistical Package for Social Sciences computer programme version 21.

Findings – Empirical results via multiple regressions authenticated that brand awareness predominantly affects brand equity among young consumers. These young consumers get input and awareness of the particular product or brand from the social media. They can clearly recognize the particular product or brand in comparison to competing products or brands and know how it looks and its characteristics from the social media.

Research limitations/implications – Respondents were randomly drawn from the population of the full time students in a public university in Malaysia. Consequently, they may not represent the entire population of Malaysia.

Practical implications – Input regarding the effects of brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand image on brand equity among young consumers would help marketers and practitioners to formulate strategies to enhance their brand equity in order to obtain competitive advantage and business sustainability, particularly among young consumer markets.

Originality/value – Empirical findings offer academic contributions to the existing body of knowledge of consumer behaviour as the sophisticated quantitative data analyses used will eventually allow future researchers to explicate the contribution of the current study to understand the importance of brand equity among young consumers in Malaysia.

Keywords Malaysia, Brand image, Brand awareness, Brand loyalty, Brand equity, Brand association

Paper type Research paper

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1. Introduction

Brand is the most valuable asset for any company and has been widely recognized as an essential reason for consumer choice which serve as a tool for consumers to check the differentiation of the products and their uniqueness whereby it enrich consumers trust and confidence in facilitating their decision-making process which alleviate some of the problems associated with their experience and credence qualities (Aaker, 1991; Chung *et al.*, 2013; Emari *et al.*, 2012; Huang and Sarigollu, 2011; Kremer and Viot, 2012). Brand equity is related to consumers place greater confidence in a particular brand than competitors' brands which enhances consumers' loyalty and willingness to pay a premium price for the brand (Lassar *et al.*, 1995). In essence, firms with high

brand equity gain more competitive advantage and enjoy the opportunity for successful extensions, resilience against competitors' promotional pressures, and creation of barriers to competitive entry (Ling, 2013).

Earlier research on brands by Chan *et al.* (2013), Fleck *et al.* (2012), Luitjen and Reijnders (2009), Tantiseenpong *et al.* (2012), and Thwaites *et al.* (2012) were conducted in non-Asian countries whereby results generated are less likely to be comparable to Asian countries like Malaysia. Further, little attention has been dedicated to understanding factors such as brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand image that influence brand equity in Malaysia, particularly among young consumers. Jacob and Isaac (2008) stated that university students, i.e. young consumers, are among the highest contributors to the increasing number of smartphone sales, the main users of social media, and highly expose to wide array of product brands. They often look at web sites, check e-mail and spend much of their time on social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and LinkedIn most often via their smartphones (Norazah and Norbayah, 2013; Peterson and Low, 2011). Thus, this study aims to examine the effects of brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand image on brand equity among young consumers. The idiosyncratic contribution of this research arises from integration of the effects of these factors on brand equity which the study enhanced with additional information to narrow the research gap. The research makes a novel empirical contribution and provides useful insights by testing the proposed theoretical framework on young consumers in Malaysia.

The paper is organized as follows: the next section presents an overview of relevant literature and then proceeds to outline the proposed model. The ensuing section describes the methodology used to conduct the research and answer research objectives. Then, data analysis and discussion of findings are detailed. The final section concludes on the research findings and summarizes the implications of the study with directions for future research.

2. Literature review and research hypotheses

Factors such as brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, brand image, and brand equity are further elaborated in this section, which are based on guiding principle of Aaker (1991) Model (see Figure 1). Foregoing research by Chan *et al.* (2013), Fleck *et al.* (2012), Luitjen and Reijnders (2009), Tantiseenpong *et al.* (2012), and Thwaites *et al.* (2012) found that a consumer who has a positive perception of the brand, will be inclined to develop a greater willingness to purchase the product and subsequently actively seek out the product in a store. Undeniably, attitudes positively affect customers' intention to spread positive word-of-mouth commendation and willingly pay more for the products (Choi *et al.*, 2009; Han *et al.*, 2009, 2011; Han and Kim, 2010).

2.1 Brand association

Brand association is related to information on what is in the customer's mind about the brand, either positive or negative, connected to the node of the brain memory (Emari

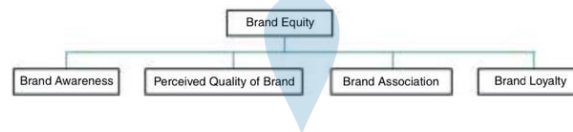


Figure 1.
Aaker (1991) model

et al., 2012). Brand association acts as an information collecting tool to execute brand differentiation and brand extension (Osselaer and Janiszewski, 2001). Principally, any information come across in brand association is connected to the brand name in consumer recall, and reflect the brand's image (Keller, 1993; Romaniuk and Sharp, 2003). The higher the brand associations in the product, the more it will be remembered by the consumer and be loyal towards the brand. Previous research by Pouromid and Iranzadeh (2012) shows that the relationship between brand association and brand equity is positive and significant. Based on the above, the following hypothesis is developed:

H1. Brand association has a positive impact on brand equity.

2.2 Brand loyalty

Brand loyalty is related to the users' repetitive buying behaviour over time with a positively biased emotive, evaluative and/or behavioural tendency towards a branded, labelled or graded alternative or product choice (Jagdish and Sheth, 1974). Integrated marketing communications plays indispensable role in convincing consumers' brand loyalty (Šerić and Gil-Saura, 2012). Consumers rebuying or repatronizing a preferred product consistently has initiated repetitive purchasing of the same-brand or same brand-set (Luarn and Lin, 2003). Likewise, brand loyalty influences their purchasing decisions to the same product (Ahmed, 2011; Huang and Huddleston, 2009; Lam, 2007; Martenson, 2007). In other words, they become loyal with their preferred product brands and stick to well-known brand names (Sun *et al.*, 2004), as well as used it for social recognition (Manrai *et al.*, 2001). Consumers developed brand loyalty by creating a positive output of brand equity which positively engenders brand preference over other brands (Atilgan *et al.*, 2005; Binninger, 2008; Ling, 2013; Vogel *et al.*, 2008; Zhang *et al.*, 2014). Hence, the following hypothesis is posited:

H2. Brand loyalty has a positive impact on brand equity.

2.3 Brand awareness

Brand awareness is how consumers associate the brand with the particular product that they aim to own. Brand awareness is indispensable for the communications process to emerge i.e., a top-of-the-mind awareness (Macdonald and Sharp, 2003; Netemeyer *et al.*, 2004). Consumer receives brand awareness via effective marketing communication channel such as television, hand phone and online advertising as it give assurance of product quality and its credibility which helps to reduce risk in product evaluation and selection while buying a product (Aaker, 1996; Buil *et al.*, 2013; Keller and Lehmann, 2003; Rubio *et al.*, 2014). Brand awareness significantly impacts consumer decision making where consumers generally use it as a decision heuristic which benefits the management of customer-based brand equity (Chung *et al.*, 2013; Huang and Sarigollu, 2011; Norazah, 2013a). Indeed, brand awareness has direct effects on brand's equity (Pouromid and Iranzadeh, 2012). Thus, the following hypothesis is postulated:

H3. Brand awareness has a positive impact on brand equity.

2.4 Brand image

Brand image is related to the consumers' use of the brand to reflect their symbolic meaning of consumption and identity in self-expression (Lau and Phau, 2007). Consumers ascribe high quality to esteemed brands (Rubio *et al.*, 2014). Brand image that is familiar to consumer eye can help the companies to host new brands and pick up

the sales of current brands (Burt and Davies, 2010; Diallo *et al.*, 2013; Martenson, 2007; Wu *et al.*, 2011). Consumer's awareness of brand image with green marketing elements influences consumer's purchasing decision of green product where they used the product brand image with green elements as the primary sources of information about green products (Norazah, 2013a). They are unlikely to purchase green products if they unfamiliar with the brand image (Norazah, 2013b). Consumers also regularly associate the brands with celebrities or famous historical figures (Lau and Phau, 2007). Besides, integrated marketing communications and word of mouth strongly influence brand image (Romaniuk and Sharp, 2003; Serić and Gil-Saura, 2012). In another study, researchers like Faircloth *et al.* (2001), Rubio *et al.* (2014), and Vahie and Paswan (2006) affirmed that brand image has a positive effect on brand equity. Hence, this study proposes:

H4. Brand image has a positive impact on brand equity.

The proposed theoretical framework is illustrated in Figure 2.

3. Research methodology

Data for this study were collected via a self-administered questionnaire. Out of 250 questionnaires distributed and restrained among full time students in a public university in Penang, Malaysia within a two week period (from 16 July 2013 to 30 July 2013), 200 questionnaires were gathered with 80 per cent response rate utilizing the convenience sampling technique. This sample size is reasonable as Roscoe (1975) stated that the sample size between 30-500 samples is considered satisfactory. The study sample included those who were young consumers among full time students, were holding smartphone and were considered as members of a digital generation who actively involved in online social networking and had experience purchasing products on types of favourite brands either Adidas, Nike, Puma, or Levi's in the past one year. The brands' selection must be founded based on specific criteria like casual wear or sport attires and belonging to a single sector of analysis. Their participation is purely voluntary.

The structured close-ended questionnaire comprises three sections. Section A consisted of demographic profile, gender, age, race and school. Section B required the respondents to

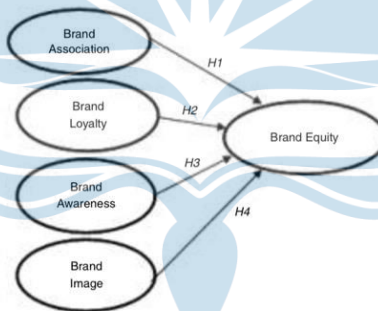


Figure 2.
Proposed
theoretical
framework

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provide responses on their personal experiences with the brand product itself. Section C examined the factors affecting the brand equity, which were adapted from Ling (2013) and all the items were modified according to the domain of the study by including aspects of social media rather than traditional media in the question items. The questionnaire items, as shown in Appendix, were measured on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, factor analysis, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis via the computer programme known as Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 21. Factor analysis is set out to categorize and summarize the related information to a smaller set of underlying factors, while Pearson correlations are executed to check the correlations between the variables. Further, multiple regression analysis is performed to examine the effects of independent variables (i.e. brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand image) on dependent variable (i.e. brand equity among young consumers).

4. Analysis and results

Table I presents the distribution of respondents' demographic characteristics. Out of 200 respondents, 60 per cent were female and 40 per cent were male. Respondents were mainly Chinese. All of the respondents were young consumers where more than three-quarters of them (83 per cent) were 21-25 years old, and 17 per cent were 18-20 years old. This means that the survey was conducted on a population of scholarly young consumers who were very open and literate to information technology and more likely to purchase newly introduced product.

4.1 Consumer experience of brand product

Table II displays respondents' experiences with brand product. More than half of the respondents (66 per cent) have spent between RM100 and RM400 to buy a brand product in a year. In terms of frequency of purchasing brand product, about three-quarters of the respondents (72 per cent) have purchased brand products two to six times in a year and these young consumers more preferred Adidas to Nike, Puma, and Levi's in product selection, of which these brand are referred on as types of favourite brands preferred by youngsters worldwide, including Malaysians and belonging to a single sector of analysis.

	Frequency	%
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	81	40.5
Female	119	59.5
<i>Age</i>		
18-20 years old	33	16.5
21-25 years old	167	83.5
<i>Race</i>		
Malay	59	29.5
India	22	11.0
Chinese	56	28.0
Bumiputra	49	24.5
Others	14	7.0

Table I.
Demographic profile
of respondent

	Frequency	%	Young consumers' insights on brand equity
<i>Money spent for buying brand product in one year</i>			
Less than RM50	26	13.0	
RM100-RM200	72	36.0	
RM300-RM400	60	30.0	
RM500 and above	42	21.0	
<i>Frequency of buying product in one year</i>			
2-3 times	100	50.0	
4-6 times	43	21.5	
7 and above times	57	28.5	
<i>Type of favourite brand</i>			
Nike	52	26.0	
Puma	13	6.5	
Adidas	109	54.5	
Levi's	26	13.0	

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Table II.
Consumer prior experience on brand product

4.2 Construct validity

The construct validity was evaluated via factor analysis using principal component analysis with varimax rotations. Factor analysis, a data reduction technique, is deployed to reduce a large number of variables to a smaller set of underlying factors, which categorize and summarize the needed particulars contained in the variables. Principal component analysis with varimax rotation was chosen as the extraction method to test the validity of the constructs for the 20 items. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was used to confirm the appropriateness of proceeding with the analysis to reduce the number of items, and identify the dimensions of latent variables. Any item that failed to load on a single factor at 0.50 or less will be dropped but there was none of items were dropped in this analysis. The factor analysis process of dropping an item was repeated until all items loaded at 0.50 or greater on one and only one factor (Hair *et al.*, 2010). Results of factor analysis for brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, brand image, and brand equity are shown below.

4.3 Brand association

The KMO measure of the sampling adequacy for the brand association factor was 0.735 and none of five statements were dropped from the analysis since the factor loadings > 0.50 (see Table III). The Bartlett test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 183.049, p < 0.01$). Inspection of the anti-image of the correlation matrix was well beyond the acceptable level of 0.50. There was only single factor was extracted with the eigenvalue = 2.358, which was larger than 1, and 47.150 per cent of the variance has been explained. Rotation was not necessary for this case, as only a single factor extracted. This single factor was used for further analysis. All five brand association statements which were rated positively includes "I trust the company who owns the particular product/brand that appeared in the social media" (0.771), "This particular product/brand that appeared in the social media is familiar to me" (0.689), "There are reasons to buy this particular product/brand over the competing product/brand that appeared in the social media" (0.678), "This particular product/brand that appeared in the social media has its own personality" (0.665), and "This particular product/brand is different in comparison with the other competing product/brand that appeared in the social media" (0.622). The first emerged as the most domineering item in this factor as compared to the four remaining items.

IJRDM	Measure	Loadings
43,3	I trust the company who owns the particular product/brand that appeared in the social media	0.771
	This particular product/brand that appeared in the social media is familiar to me	0.689
	There are reasons to buy this particular product/brand over the competing product/brand that appeared in the social media	0.678
282	This particular product/brand that appeared in the social media has its own personality	0.665
	This particular product/brand is different in comparison with the other competing product/brand that appeared in the social media	0.622
Table III.	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of the sampling adequacy	0.735
Factor loading for brand association	Percentage of variance explained	47.150

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4.4 Brand loyalty

There were five items contained in the brand loyalty factor. Principal component analysis was used in this factor analysis with 48.737 per cent of variance and an eigenvalue of 2.437. As illustrated in Table IV, KMO measure of the sampling adequacy for this factor was 0.759 and all five statements had factor loading larger than 0.50 without any exception. The Bartlett test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 191.787$, $p < 0.01$). Inspection of the anti-image of the correlation matrix was also well above the acceptable level of 0.50. There was only single factor with the eigenvalue > 1 was extracted. Rotation was not necessary for this case, as only a single factor extracted. This single factor was used for further analysis. Specifically, the factor loadings for all items range from 0.659 to 0.728 exceeded 0.50, a threshold suggested by Hair *et al.* (2010). The most important statements claimed by the respondents was "I am satisfied with product/brand that appeared in the social media" (0.728), followed by "I would recommend this particular product/brand to others through the social media" (0.711) and "I will not switch to another product/brand that appeared in the social media next time" (0.711). The least important statements was "I regularly refer this particular product/brand through the social media." (0.659).

4.5 Brand awareness

There were five statements loaded in brand awareness factor. Table V depicts that all items loadings range between 0.660 and 0.740, which was above the benchmark value of 0.50. The first refers to statement "I know how this particular product/brand looks like" and the latter refers to statement "I can quickly recall symbol or logo of the particular product/brand that appeared in the social media". The ensuing vital item is "I aware this particular product/brand that appeared in the social media"

Measure	Loadings
I am satisfied with product/brand that appeared in the social media	0.728
I would recommend this particular product/brand to others through the social media	0.711
I will not switch to another product/brand that appeared in the social media next time	0.711
I usually use this particular product/brand as my first choice in comparison with the other product/brand	0.680
I regularly refer this particular product/brand through the social media	0.659
Table IV.	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of the sampling adequacy
Factor loading for brand loyalty	Percentage of variance explained
	48.737

Measure	Loadings
I can quickly recall symbol or logo of the particular product/brand that appeared in the social media	0.740
Some characteristics of the particular product/brand that appeared in the social media come to my mind quickly	0.710
I aware this particular product/brand that appeared in the social media	0.700
I can recognize this particular product/brand in comparison with the other competing product/brand that appeared in the social media	0.682
I know how this particular product/brand looks like	0.660
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of the sampling adequacy	0.766
Percentage of variance explained	48.864

Young consumers' insights on brand equity

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Table V.
Factor loading for brand awareness

(loadings = 0.700), followed by "I can recognize this particular product/brand in comparison with the other competing product/brand that appeared in the social media." (loadings = 0.682). The Bartlett test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 190.043$, $p < 0.01$) and the KMO measure of the sampling adequacy was greater than 0.50, which was 0.766. Inspection of the anti-image of the correlation matrix was also well above the acceptable level of 0.50. There was only single factor with the eigenvalue > 1 was extracted, and 48.864 per cent of the variance has been explained. Rotation was not necessary for this case, as only a single factor extracted. This single factor was used for further analysis.

4.6 Brand image

The brand image factor comprised three items and no items were deleted as all loadings exceed the threshold value of 0.50, suggested by Hair *et al.* (2010) (see Table VI). The Bartlett test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 207.240$, $p < 0.01$). Inspection of the anti-image of the correlation matrix was also well exceeding the acceptable level of 0.50. There was only single factor with the eigenvalue bigger than 1 was extracted, and 72.663 per cent of the variance has been explained. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy = 0.691 which exceeds 0.50 with total explained variance 2.180, hence apposite to perform factor analysis. Rotation was not necessary for this case, as only a single factor extracted. This single factor was used for further analysis. Three item measurement ranges from 0.830 to 0.892 and all items have loadings more than 0.50, thus corroborating that the constructs are one-dimensional and factorially idiosyncratic. The first refers to statement "This particular product/brand has a differentiated image in comparison with the other product/brand" and the latter refers to statement "This particular product/brand is well established" which was the most vital item in this factor.

Measure	Loadings
This particular product/brand is well established	0.892
This particular product/brand has a clean image	0.834
This particular product/brand has a differentiated image in comparison with the other product/brand	0.830
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of the sampling adequacy	0.691
Percentage of variance explained	72.663

Table VI.
Factor loading for brand image

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4.7 Brand equity

Table VII indicates that the Bartlett test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 120.168$, $p < 0.01$) and the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin measures of the sampling adequacy was far superior to 0.50, which was 0.796 signifying sufficient inter-correlations. Igbaria *et al.* (1995) noted that only variables with the item loading more than 0.50 and cross loading less than 0.35 were concluded to have a unique relationship with the factor. Inspection of the anti-image of the correlation matrix was also well exceeding the acceptable level of 0.50. There was only single factor was extracted with the eigenvalue = 1.244 due to meeting the benchmark value of above 1. Further, there was 62.222 per cent of the variance has been explained. Rotation was not necessary for this case, as only a single factor extracted. This single factor was used for further analysis. Results revealed that brand equity factor consisted of two items. All items had factor loading greater than 0.50, with none of the items was dropped from the analysis. Both items, i.e. "It makes sense to buy this purchased brand instead of any other brand, even if they are the same", and "Even if another brand has the same features as this purchased brand, I would prefer to buy this brand" had factor loadings 0.789.

4.8 Reliability analysis

Reliability analysis is used to measure the internal consistency of the scales via Cronbach's α . All constructs had no problems in reliabilities if the Cronbach's α values exceeded the criterion of 0.700 (Hair *et al.*, 2010). Table VIII depicts that all variables' Cronbach's α range between 0.703 to 0.812 which is above the cut-off value of 0.70, implying the survey instrument is reliable to measure all constructs consistently and free from random error.

4.9 Correlation analysis

Pearson correlations are performed to check the correlation between the five variables (i.e. brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, brand image, and brand equity). The average score of the multi-items for a construct was computed and the score was used in correlation analysis and multiple regressions. Lind *et al.* (2010) stated

Table VII.
Factor loading for brand equity

Measure	Loadings
It makes sense to buy this purchased brand instead of any other brand, even if they are the same	0.789
Even if another brand has the same features as this purchased brand, I would prefer to buy this brand	0.789
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of the sampling adequacy	0.796
Percentage of variance explained	62.222

Table VIII.
Reliability analysis

Variable	No. of item	Cronbach's α
Brand association	5	0.719
Brand loyalty	5	0.735
Brand awareness	5	0.738
Brand image	3	0.812
Brand equity	2	0.703

that the correlations is strong when the value is $r = 0.50$ to 1.0 or $r = -0.50$ to -1.0 , indicate a highly dependable relationships. Table IX detailed that the inter-correlations between brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand image with the brand equity were significant at the 0.01 level and were positively correlated, ranging 0.343 to 0.772. Brand awareness having the strongest correlation with brand equity (i.e. $r = 0.772$, $p < 0.01$), followed by brand image ($r = 0.731$, $p < 0.01$), brand association ($r = 0.619$, $p < 0.01$), and brand loyalty ($r = 0.343$, $p < 0.01$). Hence, there is no multicollinearity problem detected in this research. Further, the means for all constructs range from 3.538 to 3.775 on a five-point Likert scale of 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

4.10 Effects of brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand image on brand equity

Multiple regressions were performed with brand equity entered as the dependent variable, and brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand image as independent variables. The regression output is shown in Table X. The adjusted R^2 of 0.48 indicated that the independent variables explained 48 per cent of the variance of the dependent variable. The F value of 72.553 is significant at the level of 0.001, which indicates that the model is appropriate and fits the collected data. The collinearity statistics showing each of the variance inflation factor (VIF) values below ten and tolerance values above 0.10, validated that there were no multicollinearity issues among independent variables. Thus, the model fit the collected data.

A closer examination of the standardized β coefficients of the multiple regressions revealed that all posited hypotheses were supported at $p < 0.05$. More specifically, $H1$ posited that brand association has a positive impact on brand equity. Table X demonstrated that the results were significant ($\beta_1 = 0.240$, t -value = 3.302, $p < 0.05$). Thus, $H1$ was sustained and brand association does have an impact on brand equity

	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
(1) Brand awareness	1					3.773	0.546	0.166	0.293
(2) Brand loyalty	0.471**	1				3.573	0.599	0.182	0.348
(3) Brand association	0.544**	0.592**	1			3.683	0.538	0.084	0.075
(4) Brand image	0.564**	0.485**	0.569**	1		3.775	0.68	0.223	0.628
(5) Brand equity	0.772**	0.343**	0.619**	0.731**	1	3.538	0.551	0.036	0.404

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)

Table IX.
Correlation analysis

	Standardized β coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity statistics	
				Tolerance	VIF
Brand association	0.240*	3.302	0.021	0.514	1.944
Brand loyalty	0.231*	3.436	0.043	0.603	1.659
Brand awareness	0.424*	3.905	0.017	0.594	1.684
Brand image	0.369*	3.890	0.036	0.570	1.755
Adjusted R^2	0.48				
F value	72.553*				

Notes: VIF, variance inflation factor; constant, 0.627 with $p = 0.015$. * $p < 0.05$

Table X.
Effects of brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand image on brand equity

among young consumers. *H2* proposed that brand loyalty had a positive impact on brand equity. Results were also significant ($\beta_2 = 0.231$, t -value = 3.436, $p < 0.05$), implying *H2* was maintained. Next, *H3* hypothesized that brand awareness had a positive impact on brand equity. A significant result was also found ($\beta_3 = 0.424$, t -value = 3.905, $p < 0.05$). Its p -value was < 0.05 , implying *H3* was supported by the data. Further, *H4* posited that brand image had a positive impact on brand equity. Results were $\beta_4 = 0.369$, t -value = 3.890. Its $p < 0.05$, hence, *H4* was significant and secured. Based on these figures, the highest standardised β coefficient appeared for brand awareness, followed by brand image, brand association, and brand loyalty, respectively. That is, if young consumers attach higher brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, or brand image to a product, the possibility that they will choose the product brand is higher, supporting *H1-H4*.

5. Discussion

This study examined the effects of brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand image on brand equity among young consumers in Malaysia. Empirical results via multiple regressions confirmed that brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand image jointly influence brand equity among young consumers in Malaysia. More specifically, results demonstrated that the relationship between brand association and brand equity as hypothesized in *H1* is positive and significant which supports the results of Pouromid and Iranzadeh (2012). Young consumers trust the company that owns a particular product or brand that appears in the social media and is familiar to them. While browsing the social media using smartphones, they notice that a particular product or brand has its own personality and differs from other competing products or brands.

Further investigation of the study discovered that brand equity is also affected by brand loyalty, which sustained *H2* (see Table X). Results are in tandem with prior research findings (Atilgan *et al.*, 2005; Bininger, 2008; Ling, 2013; Vogel *et al.*, 2008; Zhang *et al.*, 2014). Young consumers usually put the familiar and product or brand as their first choice for evaluation and selection in comparison with other products or brands to minimize the perceived risks. Based on positive product usage experience, they would recommend this product or brand to others through the social media via private message. Encouragingly, when they are satisfied with a product or brand that appears in the social media, they will not switch to another product or brand next time. Social influences such as pressure from friends and family also influence students' use of social media via smartphones (Norazah and Norbayah, 2013).

Next, hypothesis three postulates that brand awareness significantly influences brand equity among young consumers. The results showed that brand awareness predominantly affects brand equity in the sense that young customers' decisions to buy a product or brand depends on their awareness of the product or brand knowledge. These young consumers get input and awareness of the particular product or brand from the social media. They can clearly recognize the particular product or brand in comparison to competing products or brands and know how it looks and its characteristics from the social media. Indeed, they can quickly recall the symbol or logo of the particular product or brand as seen in the advertisements available in the social media. The findings are consistent with preceding research (i.e. Chung *et al.*, 2013; Huang and Sarigollu, 2011; Pouromid and Iranzadeh, 2012) where brands are more likely to be considered or chosen based on the consumers' brand awareness.

Likewise, the results of multiple regression analysis for *H4* as presented in Table X also has significant impact on brand equity, and in the anticipated direction, which is

brand image ($p < 0.05$). Results confirmed that young consumers who had some concern about brand image exhibited positive brand equity. The results are consistent with Faircloth *et al.* (2001), Rubio *et al.* (2014), and Vahie and Paswan (2006) who indicated that brand image has a positive effect on brand equity. When the product has positive brand image, young consumers are aware that the particular product or brand is well established and has a unique, differentiated image in comparison with other products or brands. Further, an intention to buy a brand is based on a consumer's attitude towards the brand image as well as the influence of social norms and other people's expectations (Jamil and Wong, 2010).

6. Conclusion and recommendations

Results have shed some light on which factors strongly influence brand equity among young consumers, which is not much covered in the literature within the Malaysian context. Findings would help marketers and practitioners to formulate strategies to enhance their brand equity in order to obtain competitive advantage and business sustainability, particularly among young consumer markets. Results of multiple regressions concluded that all postulated hypotheses were supported of which brand awareness has the strongest effect on brand equity among young consumers, followed by brand image.

Empirically, marketers and practitioners should put more emphasis on brand awareness in inducing brand equity among young consumers and should make use of technology in the social networking media such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. in order to improve the brand awareness of young consumers through the presentation of creative and informative product advertisements that could stimulate their purchase intention based on the effective message content. It is also noted that a company with a favourable brand image gains a better position in the market and can sustain competitive advantage and enlarge its market share (Park *et al.*, 1986). Further, earlier research by Chung *et al.* (2013), Huang and Sarigollu (2011), Norazah (2013a) found that consumer awareness of brand image with green marketing elements affects consumers' purchasing decisions of green products when the product brand image with green elements was used as the primary source of information about green products.

Next, it is worthy to note that young consumers' brand equity is also affected by factors such as brand association and brand loyalty. Hence, brand association and brand loyalty are the other vital factors for consideration by marketers and practitioners in gaining young customer positive acceptance of the product or brand. Prior research by Norazah and Norbayah (2013) noted that students are concerned whether their friends like the brand of smartphone they are currently using and would buy a smartphone if it helped them to fit in with their social group in the social media. Hence, marketers and practitioners may need to give emphasis to loyalty programmes in the social media in an attempt to retain customers and foster business sustainability. Moser and Uzzell (2003) stated that the media play a major role in educating consumers on the seriousness of environmental problems. Young consumers strongly and actively use knowledge in evaluating products during purchasing decisions (Norazah, 2013b). Results are helpful for better market segmentation, targeting and positioning of product or brand and could promote consumer demand.

Importantly, the empirical findings offer academic contributions to the existing body of knowledge of consumer behaviour. First, the sophisticated quantitative data analyses used will eventually allow future researchers to explicate the contribution of the current study to understand the importance of brand equity among young

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consumers in Malaysia. However, the size of the sample coverage is too small. Thus, careful attention should be paid in generalizing the implications, findings and the discussion to other studies. Second, the results of this study add a new forward motion to the findings of prior studies on the effects of brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand image on brand equity among young consumers in Malaysian context. Finally, further research could replicate the current framework to input additional variables like mediating variables and moderating variables.

This empirical study has several limitations. First, research was conducted among 200 full time students who study in a public university in Penang, Malaysia which infers the sample used is very narrow to generalize the whole population in Malaysia. Further research is deemed desirable to expand the sample size to improve the generalizability issue. Finally, the findings of this study depend largely on the honesty of the respondents to provide answers to the questionnaire that covered brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, brand image and brand equity, besides questions on demographic characteristics and experience of purchasing brand products.

Future research can be carried out to advance the analysis by using multivariate data analysis such as structural equation modelling technique in order to investigate the hypothesized relationships simultaneously with confirming the factor via confirmatory factor analysis, check the model fitness via goodness of fit indices, and examine the discriminant and convergent validity at first hand.

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Appendix. Measurement of instruments

Brand association

This particular product/brand that appeared in the social media has its own personality.
 This particular product/brand is different in comparison with the other competing product/brand that appeared in the social media.
 I trust the company who owns the particular product/brand that appeared in the social media.
 This particular product/brand that appeared in the social media is familiar to me.
 There are reasons to buy this particular product/brand over the competing product/brand that appeared in the social media.

Brand loyalty

I regularly refer this particular product/brand through the social media.
 I usually use this product/brand as my first choice in comparison with the other product/brand.
 I would recommend this product/brand to others through the social media.
 I will not switch to another product/brand that appeared in the social media next time.
 I am satisfied with product/brand that appeared in the social media.

Brand awareness

I aware this particular product/brand that appeared in the social media.
 I can recognize this particular product/brand in comparison with the other competing product/brand that appeared in the social media.
 I know how this particular product/brand looks like.

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Some characteristics of the particular product/brand that appeared in the social media come to my mind quickly.
I can quickly recall symbol or logo of the particular product/brand that appeared in the social media.

Brand image

This particular product/brand has a differentiated image in comparison with the other product/brand.
This particular product/brand has a clean image.
This particular product/brand is well established.

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Brand equity

This particular product/brand is well established.
Even if another brand has the same features as this purchased brand, I would prefer to buy this brand.

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