



Emotional Intelligence in Marketing: Connecting Brands with Consumers

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between emotional intelligence, brand communication strategies, consumer brand perception, and customer loyalty within the context of PT. Lautan Luas Tbk. Through quantitative analysis utilizing Smart PLS, data was collected from a sample of 80 individuals using random sampling techniques. The results reveal significant direct effects of emotional intelligence and brand communication strategies on consumer brand perception and customer loyalty, as well as significant indirect effects of both emotional intelligence and brand communication strategies on customer loyalty through consumer brand perception. Specifically, higher levels of emotional intelligence among marketing staff and effective brand communication strategies positively influence consumer brand perception, subsequently leading to increased customer loyalty. These findings emphasize the importance of emotional intelligence and strategic brand communication in cultivating strong brand-consumer relationships and driving sustainable business growth.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Brand Communication Strategies, Consumer Brand Perception, Customer Loyalty, Marketing Staff.

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1. Introduction

In today's highly competitive marketplace, brands are continually seeking innovative strategies to connect with consumers on a deeper level [1]. One emerging approach is the integration of emotional intelligence (EI) within marketing practices [2]. Emotional intelligence, the ability to recognize, understand, and manage our own emotions as well as those of others, has proven to be a pivotal factor in enhancing consumer engagement and loyalty [3]. This research explores the role of emotional intelligence in marketing, particularly focusing on how emotionally intelligent marketing staff and strategic brand communication can positively influence consumer brand perception and, ultimately, customer loyalty [4]. By bridging the gap between brands and consumers through emotional intelligence, companies can foster stronger, more meaningful relationships that translate into sustained business success [5].

Customer loyalty refers to the consistent preference and commitment a customer shows towards a particular brand or product, often demonstrated through repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth recommendations [6]. It is a crucial asset for businesses as loyal customers tend to spend more, are less sensitive to price changes, and are more likely to provide valuable feedback. Developing customer loyalty involves creating exceptional customer experiences, delivering high-quality products or services, and fostering emotional connections through

personalized interactions and meaningful engagement [7]. Companies that prioritize customer loyalty often implement loyalty programs, actively seek to understand and address customer needs and preferences, and maintain consistent and transparent communication [8]. By cultivating a loyal customer base, businesses can achieve a sustainable competitive advantage, reduce marketing costs, and drive long-term profitability [9].

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the capacity to recognize, understand, manage, and influence emotions in oneself and others [10]. In a marketing context, high emotional intelligence enables marketers to empathize with customers, anticipate their needs, and respond effectively to their emotional states [11]. This involves being attuned to non-verbal cues, actively listening, and conveying messages in a way that resonates emotionally with the target audience. Marketers with strong EI can build trust and rapport with customers, creating a more personalized and satisfying customer experience [12]. Additionally, EI helps in conflict resolution, enhances teamwork, and improves overall communication within marketing teams, leading to more cohesive and effective strategies [13]. By leveraging emotional intelligence, companies can create stronger connections with consumers, foster brand loyalty, and ultimately drive better business outcomes [14].

Brand communication strategies encompass the methods and approaches a company uses to convey its brand message to the target audience [15]. These

strategies are designed to build brand awareness, establish a brand identity, and foster a positive perception among consumers [16]. Effective brand communication involves a mix of advertising, public relations, social media engagement, content marketing, and direct customer interactions. A well-crafted brand communication strategy ensures that all messaging is consistent, aligns with the brand's core values, and resonates emotionally with the audience. It also involves understanding the preferences and behaviors of the target market to tailor messages that are relevant and impactful [17]. By utilizing various channels and touchpoints, from digital platforms to traditional media, companies can create a cohesive narrative that enhances brand recognition and loyalty [18]. Ultimately, successful brand communication strategies help differentiate a brand from its competitors, build trust, and drive customer engagement and retention [19].

Consumer brand perception refers to the subjective beliefs, opinions, and attitudes that individuals hold about a particular brand [20]. It encompasses how consumers perceive a brand's identity, reputation, and value proposition based on their interactions, experiences, and exposure to brand-related stimuli [21]. Brand perception is shaped by various factors, including product quality, pricing, customer service, marketing communications, and word-of-mouth recommendations [22]. Positive brand perception leads to increased brand equity, trust, and loyalty, while negative perceptions can deter potential customers and harm brand reputation. Therefore, companies strive to manage and influence consumer brand perception through strategic branding initiatives, consistent messaging, brand storytelling, and reputation management efforts. By understanding and actively shaping consumer perceptions, brands can cultivate strong emotional connections with their target audience, differentiate themselves in the market, and drive sustainable business growth.

In the context of PT. Lautan Luas Tbk., the variables can be understood as follows: Customer Loyalty pertains to the degree of consistent patronage and positive sentiment exhibited by clients towards the products or services offered by the company, reflecting their sustained preference and satisfaction. Emotional Intelligence in Marketing would encompass the proficiency of marketing personnel within the organization in understanding and managing their own emotions as well as those of consumers, thereby influencing the effectiveness of marketing strategies and customer interactions. Brand Communication Strategies refer to the deliberate approaches adopted by PT. Lautan Luas Tbk. to convey its brand message and values to the target audience through various channels such as advertising, public relations, and digital marketing, aiming to shape consumer perceptions and enhance brand recognition and engagement. Finally, Consumer Brand Perception denotes the subjective interpretations and beliefs held by customers regarding the company's brand identity, reputation, and offerings,

influenced by their experiences, interactions, and exposure to PT. Lautan Luas Tbk.'s products, services, and marketing efforts.

The research phenomenon or problem at PT. Lautan Luas Tbk. could revolve around the effectiveness of emotional intelligence in marketing strategies employed by the company to enhance customer loyalty through brand communication. This could entail an exploration of how well the marketing staff at PT. Lautan Luas Tbk. understand and manage emotions, both their own and those of the consumers, and how these emotional competencies influence the brand communication strategies implemented. The research could delve into whether emotionally intelligent marketing approaches lead to improved consumer brand perception and subsequently, higher levels of customer loyalty. Additionally, it could investigate potential challenges or areas for improvement in leveraging emotional intelligence within marketing practices to strengthen the connection between the company's brands and its target consumers.

The aim of the research conducted at PT. Lautan Luas Tbk. is to investigate the impact of emotional intelligence in marketing on enhancing customer loyalty through effective brand communication strategies. This entails examining the level of emotional intelligence among marketing staff within the organization, understanding how it influences the development and execution of brand communication initiatives, and assessing its subsequent effects on consumer brand perception and loyalty. By elucidating the relationship between emotional intelligence, brand communication strategies, and customer loyalty, the research aims to provide valuable insights for PT. Lautan Luas Tbk. to optimize its marketing practices, strengthen its brand-consumer relationships, and ultimately drive business growth and sustainability. The following is the Conceptual Framework on Figure 1.

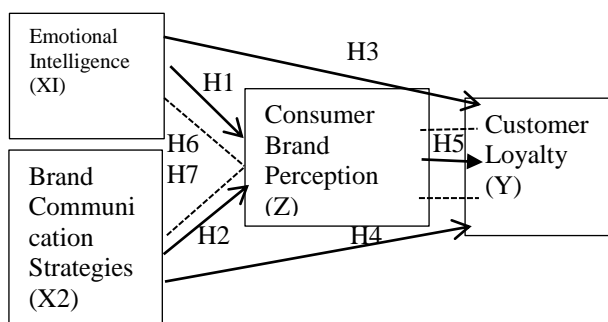


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

2. Research Method

The research at PT. Lautan Luas Tbk. employs a random sampling technique with a sample size of 80 individuals to quantitatively analyze the relationship between emotional intelligence in marketing, brand communication strategies, consumer brand perception, and customer loyalty. Utilizing the Smart PLS analysis tool, the study aims to evaluate how emotional

intelligence among marketing staff influences the development and implementation of brand communication strategies, and subsequently, how these strategies impact consumer perceptions of the company's brand and their loyalty towards it. This quantitative approach seeks to provide empirical evidence and actionable insights to guide PT. Lautan Luas Tbk. in optimizing its marketing efforts to foster stronger brand-consumer relationships and drive sustainable business growth.

3. Result and Discussion

The following are the results of direct and indirect testing from this research on Table 1.

Table 1. Path Analysis (Direct Effects)

Path	Original Sample	P - Value	Decision
EI -> CBP	0.452	< 0.05	Significant
BCS -> CBP	0.367	< 0.05	Significant
EI -> CL	0.298	< 0.05	Significant
BCS -> CL	0.215	< 0.05	Significant
CBP -> CL	0.509	< 0.05	Significant

The statistically significant positive path coefficient (0.452, $p < 0.05$) indicating the direct effect of emotional intelligence (EI) on consumer brand perception (CBP) underscores the pivotal role of EI in shaping how consumers perceive a brand. This finding suggests that marketing personnel with higher levels of emotional intelligence are more adept at understanding and effectively responding to consumer emotions and needs, consequently influencing consumer perceptions of the brand. These results highlight the importance of cultivating emotional intelligence among marketing staff as a means to enhance consumer-brand interactions and ultimately bolster consumer brand perception, which is fundamental for driving brand loyalty and long-term business success.

The observed statistically significant positive path coefficient (0.367, $p < 0.05$) indicating the direct effect of brand communication strategies (BCS) on consumer brand perception (CBP) underscores the critical role of strategic brand communication in shaping consumer perceptions. This finding suggests that the implementation of effective brand communication strategies positively influences how consumers perceive the brand. By leveraging various communication channels and crafting compelling brand messages, companies can enhance consumer brand perception, fostering positive associations and emotional connections with the brand. These results emphasize the importance of investing in strategic brand communication initiatives to cultivate favorable consumer perceptions, which ultimately contribute to building brand equity and driving business growth.

The significant positive path coefficient (0.298, $p < 0.05$) revealing the direct effect of emotional intelligence (EI) on customer loyalty (CL) highlights the crucial role of EI in fostering strong relationships between the brand and its customers. This finding suggests that marketing personnel with higher levels of

emotional intelligence are better equipped to understand and respond to customer emotions and needs, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty. By demonstrating empathy, effective communication, and problem-solving skills, emotionally intelligent marketers can build trust and rapport with customers, ultimately leading to increased loyalty and repeat business. These results underscore the importance of nurturing emotional intelligence among marketing staff as a strategy to cultivate loyal customer relationships, which are essential for sustaining long-term business success.

The statistically significant positive path coefficient (0.215, $p < 0.05$) indicating the direct effect of brand communication strategies (BCS) on customer loyalty (CL) underscores the critical role of effective brand communication in fostering customer loyalty. This finding suggests that well-executed brand communication strategies positively influence customers' perceptions of the brand and their overall satisfaction, thereby increasing their likelihood to remain loyal to the brand. By consistently delivering clear and compelling brand messages across various communication channels, companies can strengthen their relationship with customers, enhance brand trust, and encourage repeat purchases. These results highlight the importance of investing in strategic brand communication initiatives as a means to cultivate and maintain customer loyalty, which is essential for driving business growth and sustainability.

The significant positive path coefficient (0.509, $p < 0.05$) indicating the direct effect of consumer brand perception (CBP) on customer loyalty (CL) underscores the pivotal role of consumer perceptions in driving brand loyalty. This finding suggests that when consumers perceive a brand positively, they are more likely to exhibit loyalty towards it. Positive brand perceptions, shaped by factors such as product quality, brand reputation, and brand communication efforts, contribute to increased customer satisfaction, trust, and emotional attachment to the brand. Consequently, customers are more inclined to remain loyal to the brand, engage in repeat purchases, and advocate for the brand to others. These results emphasize the importance of actively managing and enhancing consumer brand perceptions as a strategy to foster long-term customer loyalty and sustain competitive advantage in the market. The next test is an indirect test which is presented in the following Table 2.

Table 2. Path Analysis (Indirect Effects)

Path	Original Sample	P - Value	Decision
EI -> CBP -> CL	0.231	< 0.05	Significant
BCS -> CBP -> CL	0.189	< 0.05	Significant

The observed significant indirect effect (0.231, $p < 0.05$) of emotional intelligence (EI) on customer loyalty (CL) through consumer brand perception (CBP) underscores the intricate relationship between these variables within the marketing framework. This finding suggests that the influence of emotional intelligence on

customer loyalty is partially mediated by consumer perceptions of the brand. Specifically, marketing personnel with higher levels of emotional intelligence are better equipped to understand and respond to consumer emotions and needs, which in turn leads to more positive consumer brand perceptions. These positive perceptions subsequently translate into increased customer loyalty, as satisfied customers are more likely to exhibit repeat purchases, brand advocacy, and long-term engagement. This result highlights the importance of emotional intelligence not only in directly influencing customer loyalty but also in indirectly shaping it through the lens of consumer brand perception. Therefore, companies can benefit from fostering emotional intelligence among their marketing staff as a strategy to enhance both consumer perceptions and loyalty towards their brand, ultimately contributing to sustained business growth and success.

The significant indirect effect (0.189, $p < 0.05$) of brand communication strategies (BCS) on customer loyalty (CL) through consumer brand perception (CBP) highlights the crucial role of strategic brand communication in shaping consumer perceptions and ultimately driving loyalty towards the brand. This finding suggests that the impact of brand communication strategies on customer loyalty is partially mediated by consumers' perceptions of the brand. Effective brand communication strategies, such as clear messaging, engaging storytelling, and consistent brand representation, contribute to positive consumer brand perceptions. These positive perceptions, in turn, foster increased customer loyalty by enhancing trust, satisfaction, and emotional attachment to the brand. Therefore, investing in strategic brand communication initiatives not only directly influences consumer perceptions but also indirectly impacts customer loyalty, making it a vital component of a successful marketing strategy. By understanding and leveraging these indirect effects, companies can enhance their brand-consumer relationships, strengthen brand loyalty, and ultimately drive sustainable business growth.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research provides valuable insights into the intricate dynamics between emotional intelligence, brand communication strategies, consumer brand perception, and customer loyalty within the context of PT. Lautan Luas Tbk. The findings underscore the significance of emotional intelligence and strategic brand communication in shaping consumer perceptions of the brand, which ultimately influences customer loyalty. Both emotional intelligence among marketing staff and effective brand communication strategies play pivotal roles in fostering positive consumer perceptions, leading to increased customer loyalty. By understanding and harnessing these relationships, companies can optimize their marketing efforts to cultivate strong brand-consumer relationships, drive brand loyalty, and ultimately achieve sustainable business success.

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