
**THE INFLUENCE OF EXCITEMENT AND SOPHISTICATION ON BRAND TRUST THROUGH BRAND IMAGE AS AN INTERVENING VARIABLE
(STUDY ON SHOPEE USERS IN SURABAYA)**

Ananda Leony¹

Universitas Pembangunan Nasional “Veteran” Jawa Timur, Surabaya, Indonesia
21042010004@student.upnjatim.ac.id

Rusdi Hidayat Nugroho^{2*}

Universitas Pembangunan Nasional “Veteran” Jawa Timur, Surabaya, Indonesia
rusdi_hidayat.adbis@upnjatim.ac.id



Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of Excitement and Sophistication on Brand Trust through Brand Image in Shopee's users in Surabaya. The research was conducted to determine the representation of consumer personality as described through the dimensions of Excitement and Sophistication. The dimensions of Excitement that please consumers and Sophistication, which is top of mind for consumers, can affect Brand Image with Shopee's efforts to hold massive promotions on certain dates and creative marketing, namely advertisements starring celebrities who are hype. Through a significant increase in Brand Image, we will build Brand Trust through maintaining quality services and attractive offers. Through data taken from 200 Shopee's users in Surabaya and processed using quantitative methods and PLS-SEM analysis. The test results in the finding that Excitement and Sophistication had a significant effect on Brand Trust. Brand Image also succeeds in mediating Excitement and Sophistication to Brand Trust so that it can be stated that Excitement and Sophistication have a positive and significant influence on Brand Trust Through Brand Image as an intervening variable. It is recommended that Shopee needs to improve a more interactive shopping experience to strengthen the excitement model and increase the image of sophistication through premium products and services by creating collaborations with high-class brands.

Keywords: Excitement, Sophistication, Brand Image, Brand Trust, Shopee

INTRODUCTION

Business digitalization has become easy as more consumers use the internet to make purchases on e-commerce. Meanwhile, Surabaya as a metropolitan city has a large population with a fairly dense area. The use of e-commerce for online shopping is done by consumers, not limited to gender and age. The potential for rapid growth of the e-commerce market has given rise to many e-commerce options that are easily accessible to consumers. Competition between e-commerce is inevitable to attract a wide range of consumer interest, therefore, e-commerce has its own strategies that are tailored to the e-commerce branding image. In the research of Alamin et al., (2023) in the third quarter of 2023. Shopee with a large number of visits that beat competitors, such as Tokopedia, Lazada, and Blibli with a visit number of 216.77 million. Shopee is referred to as the prima donna e-commerce that dominates online shopping sites in Indonesia through transformation and technology that develops features on the platform.

To build consumer trust in brands, it is important to pay attention to the influence of Brand Trust by looking at its relationship to Brand Personality. All products in the market have different personalities, and each difference is a representation of each buyer, so that the products consumed by buyers indirectly describe the personality that exists in themselves (Siahaan, 2020). A brand must understand the personality of the buyer, especially in terms of their behavior towards the products consumed. Brand personality has five dimensions, namely The Big Five which include Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication, and Ruggedness. Dimension Excitement is described as a consumer who likes to shop and is supported by profitable offers for consumers through discount vouchers, cashback and free shipping. Meanwhile, the Sophistication dimension describes an attractive and modern individual. In this dimension, Shopee focuses on how a brand provides value and satisfaction to its consumers with the Shopee Mall features (Murwanto, 2020).

The size of a company that sells products with a certain brand can affect consumers' perception of the brand image so that it can affect consumers' lifestyles. The more efforts a company makes to maintain the brand image they sell, the more positive consumer thinking about Brand Trust is built and has a direct impact on consumer loyalty (Stella, 2021). Brand Trust is built on the basis of experiences or more in a series of interactions or transactions, which are demonstrated by the achievement of product performance and consumer satisfaction. So as to form trust that expects that other parties will consider the wants and needs of consumers (Santoso & Mardian, 2020). Through the Excitement dimension that pleases consumers, it can affect the Brand Image with Shopee's efforts to always hold massive promotions on certain dates and its creative marketing, namely advertisements starring celebrities who are hype. Through a significant increase in Brand Image, we will build Brand Trust through maintaining quality services and attractive offers.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the influence of Excitement and Sophistication on Brand Trust through Brand Image, a study on Shopee users in Surabaya. This research is expected to provide insight for e-commerce

companies in designing more effective digital marketing strategies and understanding the factors that influence consumer behavior in e-commerce.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Brand Personality

According to Aaker in (Folorunsho Ajesiyalemi & Nkemdilim Dixon-Ogbeschies, 2020) a brand can easily be described as someone who has certain human characteristics, such as age, gender, social status. In addition, it can be described through certain personality traits, such as a gentle, sensitive, kind, family, and cheerful person. Brands like humans can have a variety of personalities. Brands with personality tend to be more attractive than brands without personality (Tsabitah & Anggraeni, 2021). Aaker said that building brand personality can be influenced by several indicators, namely the dimension of sincerity, the dimension of excitement, the dimension of competence, and the dimension of sophistication.

Excitement

Excitement is one of the most influential emotions in the consumer decision-making process. These consist of positive emotions that create a deep impression in the minds of consumers and encourage them to become loyal customers. (Kent, 2021). In the research Andrade et al., (2024) linked the excitement dimension to the characteristics of being young, creative, active, and alive. Shopee's visual identity, which is dominated by oranges, has succeeded in creating a strong and deep impression in the minds of consumers. Oranges, as a cheerful and striking color, makes Shopee easy to remember and distinguish from competitors.

Sophistication

Kumala & Ali (2023) are of the view that sophistication is a process or change from a basic state to a state of knowledge, or personalized products and services. In the research conducted by Kumala and Ali, informants felt that the dimension of sophistication was the most prominent trait of the upper class, thus making it the most powerful trait of the upper class. While other informants answered with words such as expensive, luxurious, excellent, great, well-made, character, simple, elegant, top-of-mind, and sophisticated. In the world of branding, sophistication is often synonymous with a luxurious, exclusive, and classy brand image.

Brand Image

According to Kotler and Armstrong in Wijaya et al. (2020) who put forward Brand Image as a person's beliefs, concepts, and impressions of a brand. In addition, consumers have an understanding of brands, which means that most subjective perceptions and phenomena are created by their thoughts, both rational and emotional. In line with this opinion, Alexandro (2022) stated that Brand Image as the heart of all marketing and advertising activities has long been the center of attention of academics and practitioners. This concept is fundamental so that almost all research in the field of marketing cannot be separated from its role. Brand image is not just a logo or slogan, but a representation of the overall consumer perception of a brand.

Brand Trust

Kotler and Armstrong in Diana Rosa, Amanda et al. (2022) rightly highlight that brand trust is a solid foundation in building long-term relationships with consumers. More than just a visual identity, brand trust represents a company's consistent promises to deliver the values and quality that consumers expect. This trust is embedded in the minds of consumers through a series of positive experiences that are repeated, ranging from superior product or services quality, excellent customer services, to the company's commitment to values that are relevant to consumers.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with the types of associative research. Associative research is defined as a theory that can explain, predict, and control symptoms will be built through this associative research (Nugroho et al., 2019). In a study written by Afif et al. (2023), Punch presents quantitative research as research that is sourced from empirical studies and collected as a number that can be calculated.

Sampling Strategy

In determining the samples in this study, the non-probability sampling method with the purposive sampling technique was used and processed using SmartPLS version 4.0. Purposive sampling techniques are approaches that strategically select participants or data that have specific characteristics that are relevant to the research objectives. In this study, primary data was collected directly from respondents selected by 200 active consumers who have a purchase history on the Shopee e-commerce platform in the Surabaya area.

Questionnaire Structure

The questionnaire category used in this study is a closed questionnaire in which several statements are made on each variable indicator. Then, respondents or Shopee users who have met the requirements can choose the options provided in the questionnaire in the form of a Likert scale option. In its implementation, the questionnaire was distributed online through a Google Form link that was easily accessible to respondents.

Justification for PLS-SEM

This study uses the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach using SmartPLS 4.0 software. Rahadi (2023) states that PLS-SEM is a popular method for estimating pathway models with latent variables and their relationships because it allows researchers to simultaneously analyze relationships in complex models consisting of many structural pathways, indicator variables, and constructions.

Measurement Validity and Reliability

To test the measurement model, validity and reliability evaluations were carried out: 1) Reliability using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) to confirm internal consistency; 2) Convergent Validity through Average Variance Extracted (AVE), ensuring each construct adequately explains its indicators; 3) Discriminant Validity assessed via the Cross Loading, Fornell-Larcker Criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) to verify that constructs are distinct.

Structural Model Assessment and Hypothesis Testing

The structural model is assessed using: 1) R-squares (R^2) shows the differences between endogenous and exogenous variables; 2) Goodness Fit Model to measure model fit with fit test; 3) Path Analysis makes it possible to analyze the total effects of exogenous variables and divides them into direct effects and indirect effects.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Profile

Table 1.
Descriptive Analysis of Respondents and Variables

Category	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Males	76	38%
	Females	124	62%
	Total	200	100%
Age	18 - 20	44	22%
	21 - 23	87	43.5%
	24 - 27	35	17.5%
	28 - 30	34	17%
	Total	200	100%

Sources: Primary Data, 2025

Table 4.1 shows that out of a total of 200 respondents, there were 76 male respondents with a percentage of (38%) and female respondents as many as 124 people and a percentage of (62%) superior. Furthermore, based on the criteria of the required respondents, namely 18 years old to 30 years old with the calculation of age in 2025. The answer results of respondents aged 18 – 20 years were 44 people with a percentage of (22%), 21 – 23 years old as many as 87 people with a percentage of (43.5%), 24 – 27 years old with a percentage of 35 people with a percentage of (17.5%), and 28 – 30 years old with a percentage of (17%). It is known that the age of Shopee users respondents is dominant at the age of 21-23 years who are superior by 87 people.

Table 2.
Descriptive Analysis of Variables

Variable	Code	Item	Score
Excitement	X1.1	There are products that I don't find on other platforms	Agree (54%)
	X1.2	Enthusiastically participating in promos such as 12.12	Agree (60%)

	X1.3	Shopping inspiration through Shoppes Lives	Agrees (56.5%)
	X1.4	Up-to-date app features such as digital wallets (Shoppes Pay)	Agrees (50.5%)
Sophistication	X2.1	Premium product offerings at competitive prices	Agrees (59.5%)
	X2.2	Attractive app interfaces	Agrees (63.5%)
Brand Images	Z1	Easy to remember Shoppes as an e-commerce	Agrees (46.5%)
	Z2	Prefer Shoppes because of the more attractive offers	Agrees (62.5%)
	Z3	Unique features (Shoppes Games and Shoppes Lives)	Agrees (53.5%)
Brand Trust	Y1	Prioritizing customer satisfaction	Agrees (49.5%)
	Y2	Accurate search features	Agrees (53.5%)
	Y3	Trust product reviews and ratings	Agrees (53%)
	Y4	Secure payment system	Agrees (49.5%)

Sources: Primary Data, 2025

It is known that the excitement variable has an online indicator with 108 agrees, the spirit indicator obtains 120 agrees, the imaginative indicator obtains 113 agreeable answers, and up-to-date obtains 101 agrees. Furthermore, in the sophistication variables in the upper class indicator, 119 yes answers and the charming indicator receives 127 yes answers. So, it can be concluded that respondents agree that Shoppes has reflected independent variables, namely excitement and sophistication.

Respondents' responses relate to the intervening brand image variables described through the strength indicator with 93 agrees, the profit indicator obtained 125 agrees, and uniqueness with 107 agrees. Meanwhile, brand trust has 4 indicators, namely, the trust indicator gets 99 agrees, the reply indicator 107 answers agrees, honest gets 106 agrees, and the safe indicator gets 99 agrees. Through the respondents' responses, it can be seen that the brand image and brand trust variables received a positive response and the results reflected the indicators of these variables.

Data Analysis

This study uses the PLS-SEM approach with SmartPLS 4.0 software which tests the influences of each variable through an outer model and an inner model based on the findings of data processing from 200 respondents.

Outer Model Evaluation or Measurement Model

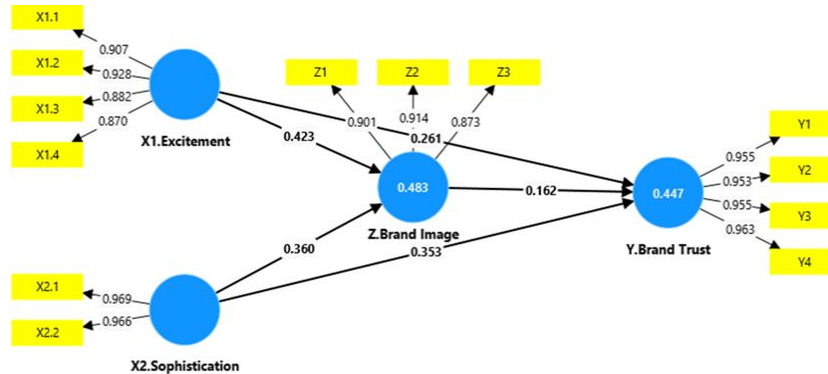


Figure 1
Outer Model

Validity Test

Convergent Validity

Table 3.
Outer Loading Value

Excitement	Outer Loading	AVE
X1.1	0.907	0.804
X1.2	0.928	
X1.3	0.882	
X1.4	0.870	
Sophistication		0.936
X2.1	0.969	
X2.2	0.966	
Brand Image		0.915
Z1	0.901	
Z2	0.914	
Z3	0.873	
Brand Trust		0.803
Y1	0.955	
Y2	0.953	
Y3	0.955	
Y4	0.963	

Sources: Primary Data, 2025

The minimum values specified to see the loading factor at convergent validity is about > 0.7. To be considered valid on each indicator, it must have an AVE values of

at least > 0.5 . It is known that the AVEs values is the averages percentages of the variance scores resulting from a set of latent variables that are assessed by including standardized indicators. If the loading factor and AVEs values have most those values then it is considered valid for convergent validity.

Table 4.
Cross Loading

	X1	X2	Y	Z
X1.1	0.907	0.510	0.482	0.594
X1.2	0.928	0.593	0.621	0.601
X1.3	0.882	0.471	0.459	0.529
X1.4	0.870	0.471	0.446	0.527
X2.1	0.568	0.969	0.601	0.589
X2.2	0.542	0.966	0.560	0.576
Y1	0.555	0.584	0.955	0.493
Y2	0.523	0.566	0.953	0.535
Y3	0.517	0.557	0.955	0.520
Y4	0.567	0.590	0.963	0.515
Z1	0.538	0.487	0.405	0.901
Z2	0.632	0.656	0.617	0.914
Z3	0.498	0.431	0.374	0.873

Sources: Primary Data: 2025

Table 5.
Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	X1	X2	Y	Z
X1. Excitement	0.897			
X2. Sophistication	0.574	0.967		
Y. Brand Trust	0.565	0.600	0.957	
Z. Brand Images	0.629	0.602	0.539	0.896

Source: Primary Data, 2025

Based on table 5, it shows that each AVEs root of each structure has a greater value than the correlation between the other variables. For example, in the Brand Images (Z) variables, there is a greater root value of AVEs, which is 0.896, than the value of the Brand Trust variables of 0.539. So, the results of the Fornell-Larcker criterion analysis can be said to be valid.

Table 6.
HTMT

	X1	X2	Y	Z
X1. Excitement				
X2. Sophistication	0.616			
Y. Brand Trust	0.593	0.631		
Z. Brand Images	0.687	0.646	0.562	

Sources: Primary Data, 2025

The heterotrait-monotrait ratio is the average of all indicator correlations across constructs that measures different constructs compared to the geometric mean of indicator correlations for the same construct (heterotrait-heteromethod correlation). The recommended HTMT correlation value is < 0.9 to be valid. Based on table 6, the values on each variable is below 0.9 so that it can be said to be valid for discriminant validity.

Reliability Test

Composite Reliability

Table 7.
Composite Reliability

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho a)	Composite reliability (rho c)
X1.Excitement	0.919	0.928	0.943
X2.Sophistication	0.931	0.933	0.967
Y.Brand Trust	0.969	0.970	0.977
Z.Brand Images	0.879	0.919	0.924

Sources: Primary Data, 2025

Based on table 7, each variable has crossed the limit of the composite reliability values of > 0.7 and Cronbach's alpha values > 0.6 . For example, the reliability values of the excitement variable is 0.943 and the brand images variable is 0.924 so that the value is above 0.7. Therefore, the composite reliability test can be said to be reliable and has met the measurability feasibility values on each variable.

Inner Model

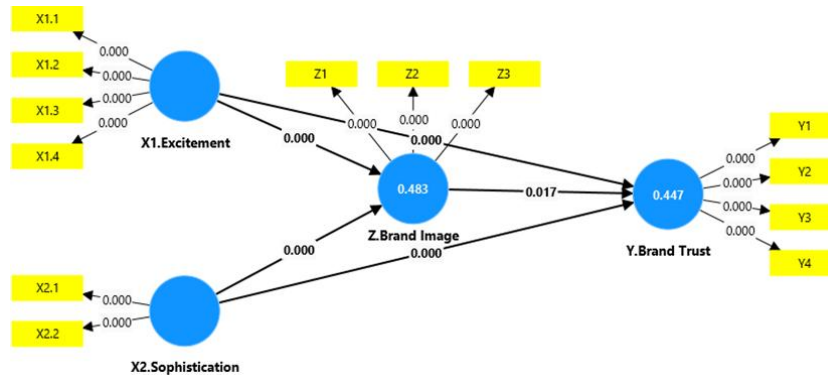


Figure 2
Inner Model

Source: Primary Data, 2025

Coefficient Determination (R2)

Table 8. Coefficient Determination

	R-square
Brand Trust	0.447
Brand Images	0.483

Source: Primary Data, 2025

In table 8, it can be seen that the brand images variable (Z) has a value of 0.483 which means that the brand images variable can be explained by the excitement and sophistication variables with a percentage of 48.3%. So that the remaining 51.7% are influenced by other factors. Furthermore, the brand trust variable (Y) has a value of 0.447 so that 44.7% of the brand trust variable can be explained by the excitement, sophistication and brand images.

Goodness Of Fit Model

GoF values are categorized into 3 categories, namely:

- GoF $\geq 0,36$: Strong (Good fit)
- $0,25 \leq$ GoF $< 0,36$: Moderate
- GoF < 0.25 : Weak

GoF Brand Images (Z) = 0,665 (Good Fit)

GoF Brand Trust (Y) = 0,559 (Good Fit)

Hypothesis Test

Direct Effect

**Table 9.
Direct Effect**

	Path Coefficients	T Statistics	P Values	Information
Excitement -> Brand Images	0.423	6.052	0.000	Significant effect
Excitement -> Brand Trust	0.261	3.702	0.000	Significant effect
Sophistication -> Brand Images	0.360	5.175	0.000	Significant effect
Sophistication -> Brand Trust	0.353	4.858	0.000	Significant effect
Brand Images -> Brand Trust	0.162	2.393	0.017	Significant effect

Source: Primary Data, 2025

Based on the table above, the path coefficient value of the excitement variable to the brand images is $0.423 > 0.20$ so that the excitement variable to the brand images is stated to have a significant relationship. The path coefficient value of the sophistication variable on the brand images is $0.360 > 0.20$ so that the sophistication variable on the brand images is stated to have a significant relationship. The path

coefficient values of the excitement variables to brand trust is $0.261 > 0.20$ so that the excitement variables to brand trust is stated to have a significant relationship.

Furthermore, the path coefficient values of the sophistication variables on brand trust is $0.353 > 0.20$ so that the sophistication variables on brand trust is stated to have a significant relationship. The path coefficient values of the brand images variables on brand trust was $0.162 > 0.10$ with a weak category so that the influence in the brand images variables was stated to have a significant and positive relationship but weak to brand trust.

Indirect Effect

Table 10.
Indirect Effect

	Path Coefficients	T Statistics	P Values	Information
Excitement -> Brand Images -> Brand Trust	0.069	2.056	0.040	Significant effect
Sophistication -> Brand Images -> Brand Trust	0.058	2.180	0.029	Significant effect

Source: Primary Data, 2025

It is known that the indirect effect value of the influence of the excitement variables on brand trust through brand images as an intervening variables produces a positive values of 0.069 with a T-statistic values of 2.056, which is above 1.96 and a p values of 0.040 which does not exceed 0.05. Meanwhile, the values of the indirect effect of the influence of the sophistication variables on brand trust through brand images as an intervening variables produces a positive values of 0.058 with a T-statistic values of 2.180 and a p values of 0.029. The results are relatively weak, however, the effect remains in the model if the effect is positive and significant. Therefore, it can be stated that the brand images variables as an intervening variables has mediated the excitement and sophistication variables to the brand trust variables well.

The Influence of Excitement on Brand Image

The sophistication variables hypothesis test on brand images has a T-statistic values of 3.702 which shows a values of more than 1.96. With a coefficient values of about 0.360, it can be said that the null hypothesis is rejected. The positive and significant influence of sophistication variables on brand images shows that Shopes as an e-commerce with competitive prices encourages consumers to have a pleasant shopping experiences to get more values from every transaction. It can be concluded that the second hypothesis is accepted which states that sophistication affects brand images.

Based on research conducted by Devi & Azizah (2022) which states that Sophistication has a positive and significant influence on Brand Images. This is in

accordance with the findings of this study which states that the Sophistication variable has a significant effect on Brand Image.

The Influence of Sophistication Activities on Brand Image

With a coefficient value of about 0.360, it can be said that the null hypothesis is rejected. The positive and significant influence of sophistication variables on brand image shows that Shopee as an e-commerce with competitive prices encourages consumers to have a pleasant shopping experience to get more value from every transaction. It can be concluded that the second hypothesis is accepted which states that sophistication affects brand image.

Based on research conducted by Devi & Azizah (2022) which states that Sophistication has a positive and significant influence on Brand Image. This is in accordance with the findings of this study which states that the Sophistication variable has a significant effect on Brand Image.

The Influence of Excitement on Brand Trust

With a coefficient value of around 0.261, it can be said that the null hypothesis is rejected. The positive and significant influence of excitement variables on brand trust shows that Shopee is a customer-friendly and trusted e-commerce so that it can encourage increased consumer loyalty. It can be concluded that the third hypothesis is accepted which states that excitement affects brand trust.

Based on research conducted by Devi & Azizah (2022) which states that Excitement has a positive but not significant influence on Brand Trust. This is not in line with the findings in this study which states that the Excitement variable has a significant effect on Brand Trust.

The Influence of Sophistication on Brand Trust

With a coefficient value of about 0.360, it can be said that the null hypothesis is rejected. The positive and significant influence of the sophistication variable on brand trust shows that Shopee is an e-commerce with competitive prices and premium products available on Shopee Mall. It can be concluded that the fourth hypothesis is accepted, which states that sophistication has an effect on brand trust.

Based on research conducted by Devi & Azizah (2022) which states that Sophistication has a positive but not significant influence on Brand Trust. This is not in line with the findings in this study which states that the Sophistication variable has a significant effect on Brand Trust.

The Influence of Brand Image on Brand Trust

With a coefficient value of around 0.162 so it can be said that the zero hypothesis is rejected even though, the influence of brand image on brand trust is weak. The positive and significant influence of brand image variable on brand trust shows that consumers can easily remember Shopee when they want to buy a product online through attractive offers that makes it easier for consumers to make purchasing decisions. It can be concluded that the fifth hypothesis is accepted, which states that brand image affects brand trust.

The results of this study are in line with the research of Kusdayanti & Nugroho (2023) which states that the Brand Image variable has a positive and significant effect

on Brand Trust. In this study, it is hypothesized that brand images and celebrity endorsement has a positive and significant effect on brand trust.

The Influence of Excitement on Brand Trust through Brand Image as an Intervening Variable

With a coefficient value of around 0.069, it can be said that the zero hypothesis is rejected even though the influence of excitement on brand trust through brand images is relatively weak. The positive and significant influence of excitement variables on brand trust through brand images shows that Shopers encourage consumers to shop without planning by building consumer interest through promos and interactive features. It can be concluded that the sixth hypothesis is accepted, which states that excitement affects brand trust through brand images as an intervening variable.

The results of this study are in accordance with research conducted by Devi & Azizah (2022) which states that the indirect influence, namely Excitement, has a positive and significant influence on Brand Trust through Brand Images as an intervening variable. In this study, there are three independent variables, namely Excitement, Sophistication and Rugedness, which have an indirect influence on Brand Trust through Brand Images as an intervening variable.

The Influence of Sophistication on Brand Trust through Brand Image as an Intervening Variable

With a coefficient value of around 0.058, it can be said that the zero hypothesis is rejected even though the influence of sophistication on brand trust through brand images is relatively weak. The positive and significant influence of the sophistication variable on brand trust through brand images shows that Shopers encourage consumers to make purchases with quality considerations so that price becomes a second consideration. Shopers are able to prioritize consumers through high-quality services so as to increase the perspective of consumer exclusivity. It can be concluded that the seventh hypothesis is accepted, which states that sophistication affects brand trust through brand images as an intervening variable.

The results of this study are in accordance with research conducted by Devi & Azizah (2022) which states that the indirect influence, namely Sophistication, has a positive and significant influence on Brand Trust through Brand Images as an intervening variable. In this study, there are three independent variables, namely Excitement, Sophistication and Rugedness, which have an indirect influence on Brand Trust through Brand Images as an intervening variable.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study are known that the first hypothesis (H1) was accepted which states that excitement has a significant effect on the brand images of Shopers e-commerce. The second hypothesis (H2) was accepted which states that sophistication has a significant effect on the brand images of Shopers e-commerce. The third hypothesis (H3) was accepted which states that excitement had a significant effect on brand trust in Shopers e-commerce. The fourth hypothesis (H4) was accepted which states that sophistication has a significant effect on brand trust in Shopers e-commerce. The fifth hypothesis (H5) is accepted which states that brand

images has a significant effect on brand trust in Shopee's e-commerce. The sixth hypothesis (H6) was accepted which states that excitement has a significant effect on brand trust through brand images as an intervening variable in Shopee's e-commerce. The seventh hypothesis (H7) was accepted, which states that sophistication has a significant effect on brand trust through brand images as an intervening variable in Shopee's e-commerce.

Based on the findings of this study, it is hoped that this study will be useful as a reference in analyzing and comparing brand personality models with other e-commerce competitors. For the next study, it is recommended to analyze the roles of influencers or brand ambassadors in the field of digital marketing on the variables of excitement and sophistication.

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