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## BRAND COMMUNITY AS AN EFFECTIVE MEANS OF POSITIVE WORD OF MOUTH

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### *Abstract*

Brand provides benefits not only for producers but also consumers. Brand helps identify a product. Brand also can strengthen the relationship between companies and customers through the creation of an emotional relationship. The stronger the emotional relationship that exists between a customer with a brand can create a brand community. Members of a brand community will share the experience and their love towards the top brands nearby. Love of the community for a brand can be used as a positive word of mouth and is very effective for promotion. This study aimed to determine the effect of brand communities for positive word of mouth. Respondents in this study is a member of the Vario Bali Riders totaled 67 people. The analysis technique used in this research is multiple linear regression. The analysis of regression is used to determine the causal relationship that occurs between brand community which consists of a consciousness of a kind, shared rituals and traditions and a sense of moral responsibility towards positive word of mouth. The results of the study show that the consciousness of a kind has a significant effect on positive word of mouth, while the shared rituals and traditions and a sense of moral responsibility has no effect.

Keywords: brand community, word of mouth

### **1. Introduction**

Brand is not just a name. Brand is the identity consisting of a sign, name, logo, or symbol to distinguish one product with other similar products. Brand helps consumers to considering a product that purchase decision easier. Many companies realize that the brand is part of a company that is very valuable and become a strategic marketing tool.

Awareness of the brand has a positive impact for every business. Brand provide good benefits for producers and consumers. Along with the changing environment and the role of brand value has changed the lives of both producers and consumers. The brand has grown from just to identify the goods or services to be an invaluable tool for companies and consumers. Brand maintain relationships with consumer products, so consumers have a closer relationship with the brand and very complex. The company also more aware of the brand as a tool attached can not be separated from a company.

The existence of the brand is currently providing an important role for companies and consumers. Brand has its own position in the social life of the community. Companies and consumers are demanding more than a name brand. Brands that have been fused in the consumer's life will give a meaning to life, creating a sense of

belonging and the opportunity to connect with people who are like-minded. Consumers today are trying to get to know the preferred brand in order to gain more knowledge of the brand. When this is not enough for a brand just trying to satisfy consumer expectations. Brand today is expected to provide education to the consumer, so that can help consumers in their life support.

Companies that want to win the competition should be able to create a brand better than the competitors, so they can look more superior. Good brand will not withhold information or refuse consumer interest in the brand, but provides an opportunity for consumers to connect, learn and get involved. Good and strong brand is a clear differentiator, valuable and sustainable, spearheading the company's competitiveness, and very helpful in marketing strategies. Strong brand is also an adhesive company with customers by creating an emotional connection with customers.

Through the brand community relationship between the company and customer can more closely and continuously. The impact of a community can not be felt in the short term, but in the long-term impact was huge, because the community is not an instant strategy (Marketing, 2014).

According to Muniz Jr. and O'guinn (2001) brand community is a specialized form of community, which is bound in social relationships based on shared indulgence on a particular brand is not on geographical location. Members of the community can come together, support each other even communicate through social interaction online or offline (Dholakia and Algesheimer, 2009).

Muniz Jr. and O'guinn (2001) found three dimensions of brand community is consciousness of a kind is a feeling of belonging to a group that emerges from the relationship of the members and the distinct feeling that is felt by those who are not members of the community, shared rituals and traditions is a form of activities and habits among the members, and a sense of moral responsibility is a form of moral responsibility to the community members, fellow members, and the brand is carried.

Brand community is now grown almost all over the world even in Bali especially. More and more communities that brands can be found be an indication that the community has evolved into a social phenomenon. Usually the brand communities can be categorized community formed by the brand owner company and communities formed from the initiative of its members without companies intervention. One of the brand community in Bali is Vario Bali Riders.

Community Vario Bali Riders abbreviated Viber is a community where members are fond of motorcycles owned Honda's automatic type the vario. This community is not formed by the company, but formed voluntarily by its members as a form of love of their top brands Vario. No element of intervention of company against Vario Bali Riders that deliberately promote the brand Vario. Vario Bali Riders formed as a gathering place, communicating and sharing of experiences in the motorcycles Vario usage. The members exchange information about brand as well as to find solutions to solve the problems related to the motorcycle Vario usage. Mutual aid and

cooperation are woven each member to make the members feel comfortable in the community, they also can gain knowledge about the product.

Promotion can be done through the community word of mouth. Word of mouth through the community is considered as an effective promotion because the community will share their experiences on everyone they meets. Much of the research on brand communities have sprung up. One of them in Indonesia conducted by Basalamah (2010) in her research found that brand community influence on word of mouth, every member of the community can act as an effective brand ambassador. Microsoft says the community can play a role as an ambassador for brand because the community has the ability advocacy as good as having a celebrity as a brand ambassador (marketing, 2014). Costs incurred by the community is relatively lower than using a famous person. Each product and information can be received well because the community help to voice back. They who joining in the community can provide a lot of useful advices about products.

### 1.1 Questions

Brand community has become a social phenomenon who growing in society. Vario Bali Riders is a motorcycle enthusiast community matic brand Honda Vario, who formed voluntarily. As a form of love for the members of the Vario Bali Riders Vario against vario motorcycle, which routinely perform activities that are positive. Although the activities carried out Vario Bali Riders can be categorized indirectly promote the brand Vario, but has yet to determine its effect on positive word of mouth. Therefore, the formulation of the problem in this study include:

- a. Does consciousness of a kind effect on the Positive Word of Mouth?
- b. Is shared rituals and traditions affect on the Positive Word of Mouth?
- c. Is a sense of moral responsibility effect on the Positive Word of Mouth?

### 1.2 Literature Riview

Albert Muniz Jr. and Thomas C. O'guinn (2001) stated Brand Community is a form of community that buffs, have an attachment who not based on geographical location, but rather based on the craze on a particular brand. They divide the community into a brand consciousness of a kind, shared rituals and traditions, and a sense of moral responsibility.

Word Of mouth is interpersonal communication between the two even more individuals as reference group members or consumers and salespeople (Assael, 1995). The shape of word of mouth communication delivered by people who are satisfied can lead to a recommendation to other potential customers, encouragement to fellow to do business with the provider where customers are satisfied and say good things about the service providers where they are satisfied (Zeithmal, 1996). Word of mouth is more reliable when compared with the personal seller. Basalamah (2010) found that brand community influence on word of mouth. Members Predilection of the brand and joined in a community, making them better understand the intricacies

of brand. The predilection that can encourage the community to act as an agent who spread positive stories about the brand.

### 1.3 Hypothesis

H1: consciousness of a kind effect on the Positive Word of Mouth

H2: shared rituals and traditions affect on the Positive Word of Mouth

H3: a sense of moral responsibility affect on the Positive Word of Mouth

## 2. Materials and Methods

Respondents in this study amounted to 67 people who are members of Viber. Data obtained from the completed questionnaires then processed and tabulated. Questionnaires were also tested for validity and reliability before continuing on data processing.

The analysis technique used to determine the effect of brand community on positive word of mouth is multiple regression. Brand community consists of three dimensions, namely consciousness of a kind, shared rituals and traditions, and a sense of moral responsibility. Classic assumption test performed in order to obtain a model which BLUE (Best Linear Unbiased Estimation). Test assumptions used include the normality test, heteroscedasticity test, and multicollinearity test.

## 3. Result and Discussion

The validity testing of using the Pearson correlation the questionnaires is valid. This result is known from r-test of each indicator is greater than r-table is 0.296. Based on the reliability of the questionnaire stated reliable testing. These results can be known from the alpha value cronbach of each variable-value above 0.7.

**Table 1. Cronbach Alpha**

Variabel	Cronbach alpha	Keterangan
x1	0,822	reliabel
x2	0,799	reliabel
x3	0,902	reliabel
y	0,856	reliabel

Source: Data processed

Normality test performed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov analysis. Value-sig asymp produced 0.763 greater than 0.05, then based on these results revealed normal distribution of data.

**Table 2. VIF**

Variabel	VIF
consciousness of a kind	1.279
shared rituals and traditions	1.345
sense of moral responsibility	1.262

Source: Data Processed

Test Multicollinearity seen from VIF. VIF value of each variable is less than 10 then declared multicollinearity is not occur.

**Table 3. Glejser test result**

Variabel	Sig
consciousness of a kind	0.223
shared rituals and traditions	0.924
sense of moral responsibility	0.134

Source: Data Processed

Glejser test is used to test heteroscedasticity. Based on the results of glejser test each variable is not significant at the 0.05 level with absolute residual, so that concluded there is no heteroscedasticity problems.

Based on the classical assumption that the model has been declared BLUE, so testing using multiple linear regression can be done. The regression results are shown in Table 4

**Table 4. Regression result**

Variabel	Unstandardized Coefficients Beta	Sig
consciousness of a kind	0.169	0.001
shared rituals and traditions	0.088	0.314
sense of moral responsibility	0.119	0.135
F = 10.099		Sig. 0.000
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = 0.293		

Source: Data Processed

In Table 4 it can be seen consciousness of a kind significantly has a positive effect on Positive WOM. This result is known from the significant value of 0.001 obtained is less than 0.05, so the first hypothesis can be accepted. A positive influence can be seen from the resulting regression coefficient of 0.169. Consciousness of a Kind as a single unit that collectively create a feeling different from others outside the community once their attachment to the brand, company, among the members of the community and the community itself. Feeling bound will facilitate the emergence of positive word of mouth. Feeling needed and considered a driving force members to spread the positive things about the brand.

The second hypothesis states Share rituals and traditions affect the positive WOM is not proven. Generated significant value of 0.314 is greater than 0.05 concluded shared rituals and traditions no effect. Sharing activities in terms of activities and habits are only able to strengthen unity among the members of the community, but are not able to attract the intention of members to further spread positive information about the brand. Emerging trends is that they not only tell about the brand community activities.

Sense of moral responsibility does not affect the brand. The third hypothesis is not proven seen from the significant value generated by 0.135 greater than 0.05. This result can be caused by a community is accountable only to the community rather than the brand. The basic idea of community formation Viber is a sense of community and equality among members, where they form a community to get together and fun. Responsibility for the brand appears only when there is a threat to the community, so there is not significantly influence on positive word of mouth.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Based on the results and discussion in advance it can be concluded that not all the dimensions of brand community influence on positive WOM. Only one proved the hypothesis that consciousness of a kind significantly affect on the positive WOM. Shared rituals and traditions as well as a sense of moral responsibility does not affect the positive WOM. Judging from the beta coefficients produced consciousness of a kind showed a positive effect on positive WOM. Consciousness of a kind creates an impression that distinguishes the members of the community with people outside the community. The members tend to divide positive information to people outside the community to show that the community has a value followed. Kind also raises awareness of the desires of the community talked about the positive things that can embrace people outside the community to join.

#### **Managerial Implication**

Management companies should pay attention to the existing brand communities. Brand community can assist companies in conveying a positive message about the brand to the public. People who are members of a community to be much more familiar with the brand products that the community carried. Ties were forged between the brand owner company with members of the community will be stronger brand.

This study is limited to only one community so that the results can not really be generalized. Advanced research related to the brand community is urgently needed to clarify the link between brand community with WOM.

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