



THE INFLUENCE OF BRAND IMAGE AND BRAND TRUST ON SAMSUNG SMARTPHONE BRAND LOYALTY AMONG MANAGEMENT STUDENTS AT THE FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS, HALU OLEO UNIVERSITY

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<p>Info Article</p> <p>Received : 15 Mei 2025</p> <p>Revised : 19 Juni 2025</p> <p>Accepted : 07 Juli 2025</p> <p>Publication : 30 Juli 2025</p>	<p>Abstract: <i>This study aims to analyze the influence of brand image and brand trust on brand loyalty among Samsung smartphone users who are students of the Management Department, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Halu Oleo Kendari. This research employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design. A total of 30 respondents were selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using multiple linear regression. The results indicate that brand image and brand trust have a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty, both simultaneously and partially. These findings support recent theories stating that in the digital era, brand loyalty is shaped by the strength and uniqueness of brand associations and consumer trust, which are reinforced through digital interactions and electronic word-of-mouth communication. This research is expected to provide practical insights for companies in designing effective marketing strategies to maintain young consumers' loyalty in the increasingly competitive smartphone market.</i></p>
<p>Keywords: <i>Brand Image, Brand Trust, Brand Loyalty.</i></p> <p>Kata Kunci: Citra Merek, Kepercayaan Merek, Loyalitas Merek</p>	<p>Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh citra merek dan kepercayaan merek terhadap loyalitas merek pada pengguna smartphone Samsung di kalangan mahasiswa Jurusan Manajemen Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnis Universitas Halu Oleo Kendari. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain explanatory research. Sampel penelitian berjumlah 30 responden yang dipilih menggunakan teknik purposive sampling. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner dan dianalisis dengan regresi linear berganda. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa citra merek dan kepercayaan merek berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap loyalitas merek, baik secara simultan maupun parsial. Temuan ini mendukung teori terkini yang menyatakan bahwa di era digital, loyalitas merek dibentuk melalui kekuatan asosiasi merek, keunikan, dan kepercayaan konsumen yang diperkuat melalui interaksi digital dan komunikasi dari mulut ke mulut elektronik. Penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan kontribusi praktis bagi perusahaan dalam merancang strategi pemasaran yang efektif untuk mempertahankan loyalitas konsumen muda di era persaingan pasar smartphone yang semakin kompetitif.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has profoundly transformed consumer behavior, particularly among the younger generation. Smartphones are no longer merely devices for communication; they have become primary tools for accessing information, supporting academic activities, maintaining social interactions, consuming entertainment, and even conducting business. This shift has intensified competition within the smartphone industry, compelling manufacturers to not only deliver superior technical features but also to cultivate strong brand value through positive consumer perceptions and sustained emotional connections.

Samsung is one of the global smartphone brands that has successfully maintained a leading market position in Indonesia's competitive smartphone sector. This achievement is closely tied to the company's ability to build a favorable brand image and foster high levels of brand trust. Tahir et al. (2024) emphasize that modern brand image extends beyond visual elements, encompassing emotional and symbolic meanings that reinforce the bond between consumers and the brand. The dimensions of brand image typically include the strength, favorability, and uniqueness of the associations formed in consumers' minds through marketing communication, user experience, and digital interactions. In the digital era, these associations are significantly influenced by electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) and engagement within online brand communities (Jiménez-Marín et al., 2021). A positive brand image differentiates a brand in a saturated market, shapes favorable consumer attitudes, and lays the foundation for loyalty.

Equally important is brand trust, which refers to consumers' confidence that a brand will consistently deliver on its promises and act with integrity. Delgado and Munuera (2021) categorize brand trust into two dimensions: brand reliability, which relates to the brand's ability to meet quality expectations, and brand intentionality, which reflects the brand's goodwill in prioritizing consumer interests. Lau and Lee (2020) highlight that trust is built over time through consistent brand performance, corporate reputation, and the perceived integrity and sincerity of the brand owner. In the context of technology products, where perceived risk and switching costs are high, brand trust is a critical psychological bridge that reduces uncertainty and encourages continued use (Jiménez-Marín et al., 2021).

Brand loyalty, in turn, has become a central focus in modern marketing strategy due to its implications for customer retention and cost efficiency. Oliver (1999) originally

defined loyalty as a deeply held commitment to repurchase or re-use a preferred product or service consistently despite situational influences and marketing efforts from competitors. Luciano et al. (2020) further expand this definition by incorporating not only behavioral dimensions such as repeat purchase but also affective dimensions such as emotional attachment, advocacy, and active participation in co-creation activities. According to Jiménez-Marín et al. (2021), loyalty evolves progressively through cognitive, affective, and conative stages. Among students and young consumers, loyalty is often shaped by emotional experience, the brand's social image, and peer or community influence especially within digital platforms and online communities (Nurjanah & Ariani, 2024).

Empirical studies consistently demonstrate a significant relationship between brand image, brand trust, and loyalty. A strong brand image can enhance consumer confidence and trust in the brand, which, in turn, sustains loyalty (Tahir et al., 2024). Riovaldo and Maulana (2024) confirm that both brand image and brand trust significantly influence loyalty among Samsung smartphone users in South Sumatra. Similarly, Husada and Yobeanto (2024) find that a strong brand experience reinforces trust, which acts as a mediator linking brand image to loyalty (Prasiwi & Suparna, 2021). The extended Brand Resonance model by Jiménez-Marín et al. (2021) also highlights the increasing relevance of digital elements, including social media engagement, brand community involvement, and influencer endorsements, in shaping perceptions and trust.

However, despite extensive research on consumer behavior in western Indonesia, studies focusing on young consumers in eastern regions, such as Sulawesi, remain limited. Halu Oleo University in Kendari, as a prominent higher education institution in Southeast Sulawesi, provides a relevant context to explore how students perceive, trust, and remain loyal to smartphone brands, particularly Samsung. Students, as digital natives, are highly responsive to brand reputation, actively participate in online communities, and are conscious of brand values. Therefore, understanding the interplay between brand image, brand trust, and brand loyalty in this demographic is both timely and significant.

Based on this background, this study aims to examine the influence of brand image and brand trust on Samsung smartphone brand loyalty among Management students at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Halu Oleo University. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to brand management and consumer behavior literature and

provide practical insights for companies seeking to build sustainable brand loyalty within the digitally connected young consumer segment.

METHOD

The research method used in this study is a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design. According to Sugiyono (2019), explanatory research aims to explain the positions of the variables under study and the relationships or influences between one variable and another. This research focuses on testing the proposed hypotheses by analyzing the cause-and-effect relationships among the variables: brand image, brand trust, and brand loyalty. The research object is students of the Management Department at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Halu Oleo Kendari, who are users of Samsung smartphones.

The population in this study consists of students of the Management Department at Universitas Halu Oleo Kendari who currently use Samsung smartphones. Because the exact number of Samsung smartphone users among these students is unknown, the population is considered infinite. A sample is an element of the population selected to represent the population in a study (Cooper and Schindler in Sandy, 2014). The sample size in this study refers to Roscoe's guideline in Sugiyono (2012:91), which states that an appropriate sample size for research ranges from 30 to 500 respondents. Furthermore, for studies involving multivariate analysis (such as correlation or multiple regression), the recommended minimum sample size is at least 10 times the number of variables being studied. This study involves two independent variables and one dependent variable, so the minimum sample size is $10 \times 3 = 30$ respondents. Therefore, the researcher determined a sample size of 30 respondents, which is considered sufficient to represent the population. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, which is a method of selecting respondents based on specific criteria (Sugiyono, 2019). The criteria for respondents in this study are: (1) aged 17 years or older, (2) currently using a Samsung smartphone, and (3) an active student of the Management Study Program at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Halu Oleo Kendari.

Data were collected using three techniques: questionnaire, observation, and documentation. The questionnaire served as the primary data collection instrument. It consisted of structured questions developed based on the operational definitions of the variables and measured using a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from "strongly disagree" to

“strongly agree”). The questionnaire was distributed both online (via Google Forms) and offline to reach a wider range of respondents. Additionally, observation was used to directly observe students’ smartphone usage behavior, providing additional contextual understanding. The documentation technique was employed to collect supporting data from institutional records, reports, and related documents (Sugiyono, 2018).

To ensure the accuracy and quality of the research instrument, both validity and reliability tests were conducted. Validity was tested using Pearson Product Moment correlation, where an item is considered valid if the correlation coefficient (r) is greater than or equal to 0.30 at a significance level of 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$). The reliability test was conducted using Cronbach’s Alpha, with a value above 0.60 indicating that the instrument has adequate internal consistency.

Data analysis was conducted using two approaches: descriptive statistical analysis and inferential statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the characteristics and distribution of respondents’ answers for each variable. Inferential analysis, specifically multiple linear regression analysis, was used to test the influence of the independent variables (brand image and brand trust) on the dependent variable (brand loyalty). All data were processed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS software to ensure accurate and systematic results. This method is expected to produce a comprehensive analysis of the causal relationships among the variables under study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Validity Test

Validity is an essential measure to ensure that an instrument accurately measures what it is intended to measure (Sugiyono, 2019). An instrument is considered valid if each question item is capable of representing the indicators and variables being studied and can produce accurate and relevant data. The validity test in this research was conducted by calculating the correlation coefficient between each item score and the total score of the variable using the Pearson Product Moment correlation method (Hair et al., 2019). An item is considered valid if the correlation coefficient (r) is equal to or greater than 0.30 with a significance level of 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$) (Ghozali, 2021). The results of the validity test are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Instrument Validity Test Results at Significance Level $\alpha = 0.05$

Indicator	r Value	Status
X _{1.1.1}	0,729	Valid
X _{1.1.2}	0,761	Valid
X _{1.1.3}	0,766	Valid
X _{1.1.4}	0,851	Valid
X _{1.2.1}	0,658	Valid
X _{1.3.1}	0,758	Valid
X _{1.3.2}	0,692	Valid
X _{2.1.1}	0,868	Valid
X _{2.1.2}	0,816	Valid
X _{2.2.1}	0,888	Valid
X _{2.2.2}	0,704	Valid
Y _{1.1.1}	0,789	Valid
Y _{1.2.1}	0,925	Valid
Y _{1.3.1}	0,881	Valid
Y _{1.4.1}	0,912	Valid
Y _{1.4.2}	0,823	Valid
Y _{1.4.3}	0,828	Valid
Y _{1.5.1}	0,881	Valid
Y _{1.5.2}	0,887	Valid

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

Based on Table 1. all indicator items have a correlation coefficient greater than 0.30. Therefore, the research instrument can be considered valid and suitable for use in data collection.

Reliability Test

After the validity test, the next step is to test the reliability of the instrument. Reliability refers to the degree of consistency of an instrument in producing the same measurement results when repeated under similar conditions (Hair et al., 2019). According to Ghozali (2021), the reliability of an instrument can be tested using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. A variable is considered reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value is greater than 0.60. The results of the reliability test for this research instrument are presented in Table 1.2.

Table 2. Instrument Reliability Test Results at Significance Level $\alpha = 0.05$

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
Brand Image	0.783	Reliable
Brand Trust	0.820	Reliable
Brand Loyalty	0.797	Reliable

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

Based on Table 2. it can be concluded that all variables have Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.60. Therefore, the research instrument is considered reliable at a confidence level of 95% ($\alpha = 0.05$).

Hypothesis Testing

Simultaneous Model Testing

To test the proposed research hypotheses, multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. The results of the simultaneous test (F-test) are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Results of Simultaneous Regression Analysis
ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1751,330	2	875,665	116,965	,000 ^b
1 Residual	202,137	27	7,487		
Total	1953,467	29			

a. Dependent Variable: Y
 b. Predictors: (Constant), X2, X1
Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

Based on Table 3, the significance value is 0.000, which is smaller than the standard alpha of 0.05. This indicates that brand image (X1) and brand trust (X2) simultaneously have a significant effect on brand loyalty (Y) among students of the Management Department, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Halu Oleo Kendari. This result supports the statement by Hair et al. (2019) and Ghozali (2021) that the F-test is used to determine whether independent variables jointly have a significant impact on the dependent variable.

Partial Model Testing

To test each independent variable individually, partial regression analysis (t-test) was performed. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of Partial Regression Analysis
Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	,902	2,354		,383	,705
1 X1	,873	,113	,723	7,743	,000
X2	,606	,206	,275	2,950	,006

a. Dependent Variable: Y
Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

The interpretation of Table 4 is as follows:

1. The brand image variable (X1) has a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This shows that brand image partially has a significant positive effect on brand loyalty. Thus, brand image can be used as a predictor for brand loyalty among Samsung smartphone users who are students of the Management Department, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Halu Oleo Kendari.

- The brand trust variable (X2) has a significance value of 0.006, which is also smaller than 0.05. This means that brand trust partially has a significant positive effect on brand loyalty. Thus, brand trust can also be used as a predictor variable for brand loyalty in the same research context.

The resulting regression equation is as follows:

$$Y=0.723X1+0.275X2$$

where:

Y = Brand Loyalty

X1 = Brand Image ($\beta_1 = 0.723$)

X2 = Brand Trust ($\beta_2 = 0.275$)

Correlation and Coefficient of Determination

Correlation analysis is used to measure the strength of the relationship between each independent variable and the dependent variable. Meanwhile, the coefficient of determination (R^2) shows how well the model explains the variation in the dependent variable. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Results of Correlation and Determination Coefficient Analysis
Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,947 ^a	,897	,889	2,73616

a. Predictors: (Constant), X2, X1

b. Dependent Variable: Y

Source: *Processed Primary Data, 2025*

The interpretation is as follows:

- The R Square (R^2) value of 0.897 indicates that 89.7% of the variation in brand loyalty can be explained by brand image and brand trust, while the remaining 10.3% is explained by other variables not included in the model.
- The correlation coefficient (R) value of 0.947 shows that the relationship between brand image and brand trust with brand loyalty is very strong. Sugiyono (2019) explains that a correlation coefficient between 0.81 and 1.00 is categorized as very strong. Therefore, the regression model is considered fit and appropriate as a predictor of brand loyalty among Management students at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Halu Oleo Kendari.

The first hypothesis states that brand image and brand trust have a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty. The F-test results show a significance value of 0.000,

which is less than 0.05. This means that brand image and brand trust simultaneously have a significant effect on brand loyalty. Therefore, the first hypothesis is accepted.

The second hypothesis states that brand image has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty. The t-test shows a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Thus, brand image partially has a significant positive effect on brand loyalty. Therefore, the second hypothesis is accepted.

The third hypothesis states that brand trust has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty. The t-test shows a significance value of 0.006, which is less than 0.05. Thus, brand trust partially has a significant positive effect on brand loyalty. Therefore, the third hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

The Influence of Brand Image and Brand Trust on Brand Loyalty

The results of this study confirm that brand image and brand trust have a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty among students in the Management Department, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Halu Oleo Kendari, who use Samsung smartphones. This indicates that the better the brand image and the higher the level of trust perceived by students, the stronger their loyalty to the brand will be.

This finding supports the view of Hair et al. (2019) and Ghozali (2021), who emphasize that brand image and trust are key elements in forming customer loyalty in highly competitive markets. A favorable brand image reflected in the strength, uniqueness, and positive associations related to the brand builds emotional attachment and positive consumer attitudes (Tahir et al., 2024). Likewise, strong trust is built when the brand demonstrates reliability and integrity, creating a psychological sense of security for consumers (Delgado & Munuera, 2021).

Jiménez-Marín et al. (2021) explain that in the digital era, the formation of a brand image and trust is strongly influenced by digital touchpoints, especially electronic word-of-mouth and active engagement in online communities. This is very relevant for students as digital natives, who often rely on peer recommendations and social media information when making purchase decisions.

Empirically, these findings strengthen previous research by Riovaldo and Maulana (2024) and Husada and Yobeanto (2024), which found that a positive brand image and strong brand trust significantly influence loyalty among smartphone users. Prasiwi and

Suparna (2021) further explain that trust can act as a bridge that strengthens the impact of brand image on loyalty.

Therefore, Samsung's strategy to maintain a positive image and high trust through product quality, innovation, and digital engagement is proven to be effective in building sustainable loyalty among students.

The Influence of Brand Image on Brand Loyalty

The partial test results show that brand image independently has a positive and significant influence on brand loyalty. This means that the stronger the image built by the brand through clear positioning, attractive design, and positive associations, the higher the consumer's commitment to continue using the product.

According to Tahir et al. (2024), a strong brand image is formed when consumers perceive the brand as unique and relevant to their identity. This is in line with the view of Jiménez-Marín et al. (2021), who found that among young consumers, especially students, a brand's symbolic meaning often determines loyalty, supported by digital word-of-mouth and community engagement.

Nurjanah and Ariani (2024) further support this by emphasizing that among students, a strong image that resonates with lifestyle and peer influence can enhance emotional ties with the brand and reduce switching intentions.

This study reinforces the importance for companies like Samsung to maintain consistency in their visual identity, innovation, and communication strategies that shape positive brand perceptions. Without a strong image, it will be difficult for companies to attract and retain loyal users in a market with intense competition and rapid technological change.

The Influence of Brand Trust on Brand Loyalty

The results of this study also show that brand trust has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty. This means that when students believe that Samsung will consistently deliver quality and act with integrity, they tend to remain loyal and are less likely to switch to competitors.

Delgado and Munuera (2021) highlight that trust consists of reliability and intentionality consumers expect the brand not only to deliver what is promised but also to have good intentions in prioritizing consumer interests. Hair et al. (2019) also emphasize that for products with high perceived risk, such as smartphones, trust is an important psychological factor in reducing uncertainty.

The findings of this study are supported by Nurjanah and Ariani (2024), who showed that trust is reinforced through digital interactions and positive word-of-mouth in student communities. In line with Riovaldo and Maulana (2024), a strong level of trust increases the tendency to recommend the brand and repurchase.

This confirms that to maintain loyal consumers, companies must be consistent in fulfilling promises, providing transparent information, and ensuring product quality. Samsung's strategy in building trust through reliable performance and after-sales service has proven to be effective in maintaining loyalty among students.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that brand image and brand trust both have a positive and significant influence on brand loyalty among students of the Management Department, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Halu Oleo Kendari who use Samsung smartphones. A strong brand image formed through favorable, unique, and strong associations encourages students to remain loyal, while high brand trust built through reliability and integrity reduces perceived risk and strengthens continued use. These findings reinforce recent theoretical perspectives that in the digital era, brand loyalty is shaped not only by product quality but also by symbolic meanings and digital interactions that build trust and positive perceptions. Therefore, maintaining a positive brand image and consistent trust is essential for companies to sustain loyalty in competitive markets, especially among young, digitally connected consumers.

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