



Customer Loyalty on Digital Device : The Impact of Hexaco Personality on Brand Evangelism

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ABSTRACT

Smartphone companies are racing to swiftly release various specifications of gadgets to enhance customer loyalty. This research aimed to analyze brand evangelism as a crucial mediating factor in increasing the influence of Hexaco personality on customer loyalty in the Indonesian smartphone market. A quantitative method was used for the research based on primary data with a sample of 358, and the obtained data were further analyzed using SEM Amos software. The results showed that brand evangelism served as a highly effective mediating factor in enhancing the influence of Hexaco personality on customer loyalty in the Indonesian smartphone market. Consequently, attention to brand evangelism was essential to excel in the market competition by enhancing customer loyalty. This was achieved by providing specific incentives to customers who attract new customers and developing a referral strategy, focusing on the the safety of customer information on devices and administration systems.

Keywords: Customer Loyalty, Hexaco Personality, Brand Evangelism, Smartphone Market Competition

1. INTRODUCTION

The era of globalization in the Asian region has become very competitive in all fields (Tung, 2024). Intense competition prompts various organizations to adopt diverse strategies for business sustainability (Susita et al., 2023). This includes Indonesian companies that incorporate a variety of innovations to sustain the business (Richard S Hutajulu, 2021). Similarly, smartphone companies are planning to release products with new and diverse specifications. The new specifications are expected to correlate with customer preferences, thereby fostering brand loyalty (Li et al., 2023).

Customer loyalty is the steadfast commitment and satisfaction with a brand's products and services (Ismail, 2023). This loyalty is expected to increase profits, prompting companies to compete in releasing products with diverse specifications. However, numerous products remain unsold due to the rapid introduction of various specifications leading to decreased profits (Güsser-Fachbach et al., 2023) and potential losses (Giachetti & Mensah, 2023).

Based on previous results, numerous research suggests that product specifications are not the primary factors influencing customer loyalty. However, active customers spreading positive information about brand to maintain and enhance customer loyalty is essential (Magatef et al., 2023; Nadzri et al., 2023; Panda et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2024; Yu et al., 2023). Some research further explained that the action of spreading positive information about a product was referred to as brand evangelism (Rungruangjit et al., 2023; Safer & Le, 2023; Wiebe, 2024).

Referring to the expert opinions, a crucial factor influencing customer loyalty in smartphone market competition is brand evangelism. Therefore, the business competition in smartphone market relies on companies' abilities to enhance brand evangelism (Ndhlovu & Maree, 2023). Increased evangelism is expected to influence prospective customers in

the purchasing choices (Amenuvor et al., 2023), leading to improved customer loyalty (Chan, 2024; Hussain et al., 2023; Safer & Le, 2023).

Previous research has not explained the formation of brand evangelism in customers who willingly distribute positive information about a brand. However, understanding the evolution of brand evangelism in customers is crucial as it does not occur suddenly. Research conducted on 250 smartphone e-commerce customers proved that Hexaco personality significantly influences brand evangelism (Tiwari, 2024). This correlates with other research asserting that Hexaco personality of individuals will determine the willingness to actively provide positive information about a brand (Lee & Ashton, 2020; Singh et al., 2021).

The question arises about the influence of Hexaco personality smartphone customer loyalty, as previous research has not empirically proven the problem. Empirical examination eliminates the need for smartphone companies to continuously compete in releasing new gadget specifications, preventing losses from unsold products. Therefore, this research evolves as a reference for smartphone companies to enhance customer loyalty in the Indonesian market. The companies should not competitively release products with new and diverse specifications flooding smartphone market, leading to decreased profits or even losses.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Loyal customers included those who regularly purchased from the same product or service lines, referred others and showed resistance to competitor allure (Chou et al., 2023). Loyalty was measured by the percentage of individuals who made repeated purchases in a specific timeframe following the initial transaction (Zaato et al., 2023). The focus of loyalty was not on the percentage of previous customers but on repeated purchases. Repurchase intention was influenced by the individuality of a brand reflecting the identity of customers (Mohammadi et al., 2021). The individuality toward a brand was reflected in Hexaco personality (Espinoza et al., 2020). Therefore, Hexaco personality was identified as a factor influencing repurchase intention also known as customer loyalty. Some fashion companies conducted research to build public opinion, fostering fanaticism about brand (Wang, 2021). The objective was to develop customer enthusiasm for brand to succeed in the business sphere (Pourazad et al., 2020). Enthusiasm for a brand observed in the fashion industry was also known as brand evangelism (Mansoor & Paul, 2022). It could be concluded that brand evangelism served as a key factor influencing customer loyalty (Nyadzayo et al., 2020). Brand evangelism was similarly anticipated to be a significant factor in increasing customer loyalty in smartphone industry (Tiwari, 2024). Therefore, brand evangelism evolved as another key factor influencing customer loyalty alongside Hexaco personality.

2.1. Customer Loyalty

The success of companies' marketing efforts in increasing sales reflected in the number of loyal customers of business (Garcia et al., 2020). The higher number of loyal customers directly impacted the profit growth (Khan et al., 2022). Loyalty essentially comprised faithfulness, dedication, and trust directed toward an individual or institution. This also

included the feelings of love and responsibility to provide the best service as well as behavior (Oliver, 1999), practically given by someone to a specific brand (Mostafa & Kasamani, 2021). Therefore, it was concluded that individuals' faithfulness, dedication, and trust toward a specific brand were called customer loyalty, serving as the primary objectives of companies to achieve profits. Referring to Abbasi et al. (2023), customer loyalty to a brand was measured using self-reported methods with indicators such as (1) Would only recommend this brand to others, (2) Would only repurchase products from this brand in the future, (3) Satisfied with the after-sales service from this brand, and (4) Preferred the quality of this brand compared to others. Consequently, understanding and fostering customer loyalty through various means was crucial for businesses striving for long-term success and profitability.

2.2. Brand Evangelism

The most effective marketing method was when customers unconsciously promoted a brand to potential users based on the experiences and satisfaction (Nuseir et al., 2023). This marketing method was carried out by individuals who informed others, continuing the chain and further spreading the messages (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011). The method became more effective when individuals expressed the information positively, thereby influencing others to make a purchase. The marketing network would continue to thrive when the purchase occurred, developing loyal customers for brand (Al Nawas et al., 2021). The act of spreading positive messages about a brand by existing customers who had consumed a product was referred to as brand evangelism (Rungruangjit et al., 2023). Through brand evangelism, a business could also attract new customers by disseminating positive messages with the hope of influencing potential users in purchasing decisions. Brand evangelism originated from customers who had purchased a product or service and recommended it to others through various media platforms, thereby fostering faithfulness, dedication, and trust of others to brand (Sharma et al., 2022). Companies could subsequently optimize this evangelist marketing strategy or brand evangelism when customer loyalty was to be enhanced. Self-reported methods could be used with indicators adopted from Guanqi & Nisa (2023) to measure brand evangelism such as (1) Purchasing brand, (2) Giving positive recommendations about brand, (3) Recommending brand to close friends, (4) Advised acquaintances to select brand when searching for a specific product, and (5) Expressed positive word-of-mouth information about brand superiority compared to others. Consequently, leveraging brand evangelism could be a powerful tool for companies or brands aiming to foster customer loyalty and enhance market presence.

2.3. Hexaco Personality

The Planned Behavior Theory explained that attitude toward behavior was a significant predictor of an action, emphasizing the importance of considering individuals' attitudes in testing subjective norms and control measures to regulate cognitive behavior (Beck & Ajzen, 1991). With support from others and a comfortable perception, the intention to behave was higher which reflected individuals' personalities through the actions (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996). Individuals' personalities could influence fanaticism toward certain perspectives (Redden & Steiner, 2000), such as brand affection (Babić-Hodović et al., 2023). This could potentially result in highly loyal behavior from prospective customers

(Mansoor & Paul, 2022). Further clarification showed that individuals' behavior reflected personality, potentially fostering brand affection and loyalty (Konjkav Monfared et al., 2021). This personality made individuals fanatic about a brand occasionally, prompting the products to actively persuade others to love brand adored (Sohail, 2023). Individuals' personalities played a crucial role in loyalty toward a particular brand, as fanaticism formed the basis for brand evangelism (Lin et al., 2023). This act further served as a mediating factor for individuals' loyalty toward a specific brand (Nobi et al., 2021). Behavior reflecting individuals' personalities was often assessed using self-report or observer-report inventories, consisting of six dimensions (Misiuro et al., 2022). These six dimensions were measured through a series of questions designed to assess individuals based on the level of each indicator. Ashton & Lee (2017) developed self-report and observer-report forms of Hexaco Personality Inventory-Revised (HEXACO-PI-R). According to Bowes et al. (2023), HEXACO-PI-R assessed the six personality factors of Hexaco, each containing six facets, namely Honesty-humility (H), Emotionality (E), Extraversion (X), Agreeableness (A), Conscientiousness (C), and Openness to Experience (O). Self-reported methods were used to assess Hexaco personality by adopting the International Personality Item Pool developed by Goldberg et al. (2006), as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Hexaco Personality Indicators

Hexaco Personality	Statement indicators	Code
Honestly-Humility	Never took things that were not mine	HX1
	Avoided pretense to be more than what was	HX2
	Disliked cheating	HX3
Emotionality	Showed concern about information security	HX4
	Easily got stressed out	HX5
	Remained calm under pressure	HX6
Extraversion	Engaged with a lot of different individuals at parties	HX7
	Took charge	HX8
	Smiled frequently	HX9
Agreeableness	Typically a patient person	HX10
	Rarely complained	HX11
	Was nice to the individual who deserved anger	HX12

Hexaco Personality	Statement indicators	Code
Conscientiousness	Got started promptly	HX13
	Worked hard	HX14
	Made plans and implemented critically	HX15
Openness	Developed new ideas	HX16
	Recognized beauty in unnoticed things	HX17
	Participated in philosophical discussions	HX18

Model and Hypothesis Development

2.4. The Influence of Hexaco Personality

Previous research proved the relationship between Hexaco personality and customer loyalty (Tiwari, 2024). This suggested that the personality of smartphone customers directly influenced loyalty to a specific product (H1). Other research stated that Hexaco personality was related to brand evangelism (Singh et al., 2021). The articles further signified that Hexaco personality of smartphone customers directly impacted brand evangelism (H2). Other articles claimed that Hexaco personality only enhanced customer loyalty (Leal, 2021). However, it was hypothesized that Hexaco personality directly impacted customer loyalty only when mediated by brand evangelism (H3). Further investigation into these relationships was essential to better understand the dynamics between Hexaco personality, brand evangelism, and customer loyalty in smartphone market.

2.5. The Influence of Brand Evangelism

Businesses had evangelists who were highly loyal customers, typically purchasing a specific product from a brand and would not attempt to switch to competitors (Loken & John, 2023). Evangelists leveraged satisfaction with a particular business to convert others into loyal customers (Elsäßer & Wirtz, 2017). Considering the benefits provided by brand evangelists to companies, efforts to inspire loyalty were important factors for businesses. Therefore, the research hypothesized that brand evangelism directly influenced customer loyalty (H4).

2.6. Conceptual Model Research

Based on previous research, a model framework with four hypotheses was established for testing in this research, as depicted in Figure 1. The relationship between brand evangelism and customer loyalty was examined in detail based on the established framework.

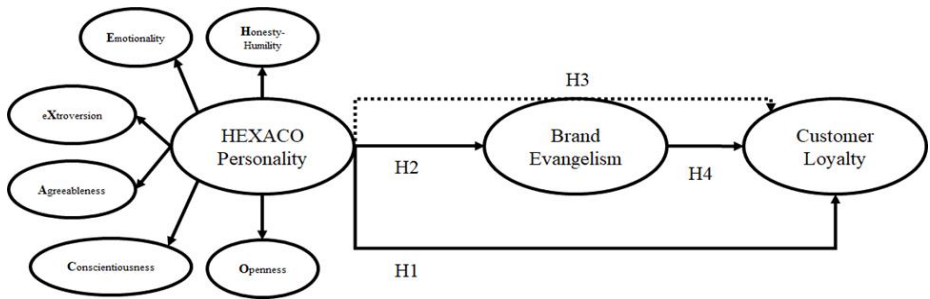


Figure 1: Research Model

3. METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted to showcase the influence of Hexaco personality and brand evangelism on customer loyalty. Therefore, the quantitative method was selected for analysis and verification in this research. A purposive non-probability sampling method was also used to facilitate random sample collection. The sample group was targeted to possess specific attributes with the data sourced from LinkedIn social media platform (Hutajulu et al., 2021). Consequently, the sampling frame in this research consisted of 532 LinkedIn members who had owned smartphone for over three years. Questionnaires were distributed and only 472 were returned, resulting in a total of 88.72% of respondents from the sampling frame. The instrument used a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Subsequently, the collected data were analyzed through SEM Amos software to address the research hypotheses. The instrument was developed into a questionnaire using Google Forms, comprising five items on social media marketing and customer trust, as well as seven on purchase intention. The research adopted the method of measuring Hexaco personality with indicators such as HX1, HX2, HX3, HX4, HX5, HX6, HX7, HX8, HX9, HX10, HX11, HX12, HX13, HX14, HX15, HX16, HX17, and HX18. To measure brand evangelism, the indicators used were (1) Purchased brand (BE1), (2) Gave positive recommendations about brand (BE2), (3) Recommended brand to close friends (BE3), (4) Advised acquaintances to select brand when searching for a specific product (BE4), and (5) Expressed positive word-of-mouth information about brand superiority compared to others (BE5). Measuring customer loyalty in this research, the adapted indicators were (1) Would only recommend brand to others (CL1), (2) Would only repurchase products from brand in the future (CL2), (3) Satisfied with the after-sales service from brand (CL3), and (4) Prefer the quality of brand compared to others (CL4).

4. Results

A modification indices process was conducted to achieve a model fit by gradually eliminating indicators with the highest errors until the P-value reached > 0.05 (Hair et al., 2014). Following obtaining a P-value > 0.05 , other critical values were followed including $GFI > 0.09$, $AGFI > 0.9$, and $TLI > 0.9$ (Ge et al., 2024). Fourteen indicators were

eliminated in the modification indices process, namely HX1, HX3, HX5, HX6, HX8, HX9, HX10, HX11, HX12, HX13, HX14, HX15, HX17, and HX186. The analysis resulted in a P-value of 0.064, surpassing the threshold of 0.05. Other critical values was fulfilled, namely GFI = 0.967 > 0.9, AGFI = 0.952 > 0.9, and TLI = 0.932 > 0.9. Therefore, the research model was considered to be a good fit, as shown in Figure 2.

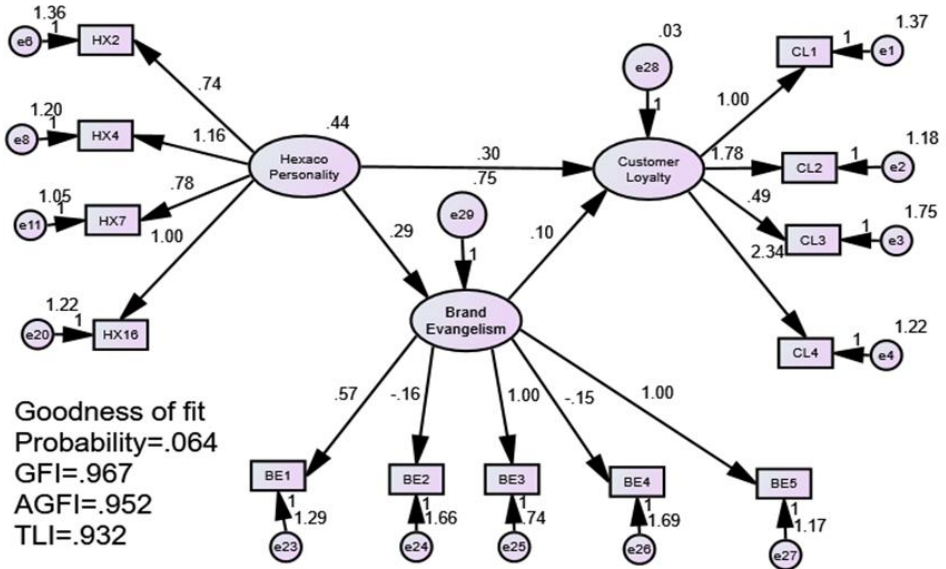


Figure 2: Full Model Fit (Unstandardized Estimates Type)

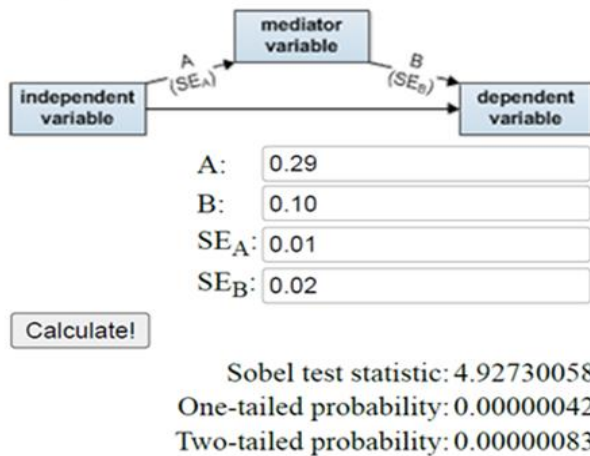
Hypothesis analysis was conducted based on CR values of regression weights after the model was considered to be fit. According to the guidelines, CR values greater than 1.96 signified acceptance of the hypothesis and rejected when lower than 1.96. The analysis results were depicted in the estimated output navigation presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Hypothesis Analysis Results

	Hypothesis			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Result
H1	Customer Loyalty	<---	Hexaco Personality	.303	.104	2.918	.004	Accepted
H2	Brand Evangelism	<---	Hexaco Personality	.285	.001	3.312	.021	Accepted
H4	Customer Loyalty	<---	Brand Evangelism	.099	.002	2.251	.024	Accepted

Source: Primary Data, Processed (2024)

Table 2 showed that H1, H2, and H4 were accepted, with CR values of $2.918 > 1.96$, $3.312 > 1.96$, and $2.251 > 1.96$. The hypothesis regarding direct relationships between variables was also accepted, with H2 being the highest compared to H1 and H4. The Sobel test was used through an online calculator to determine CR value on the influence of mediation (H3). Consequently, the significance of the Sobel test for mediation was obtained from <https://www.danielsoper.com/statcalc/calculator.aspx?id=31> and the results showed CR value of 4.927, as seen in Figure 3.

**Figure 3:** Calculation Results for H3 Using Online Sobel Test Calculator

Based on the results, all hypotheses were accepted with the highest CR value observed in H3 at 4.927. However, H1, H2, and H4 had CR values of 2.918, 3.312, and 2.251, respectively. Reflection values were obtained for each indicator in the standardized model fit, providing information regarding the indicators that best-reflected variables and the weakest (Collier, 2020). The indicators with the highest values were considered the best

and retained, while others with the lowest figures needed improvement (Salem, 2019). By using the standardized model fit as shown in Figure 4, information regarding the best and weakest indicators in reflecting each variable was obtained.

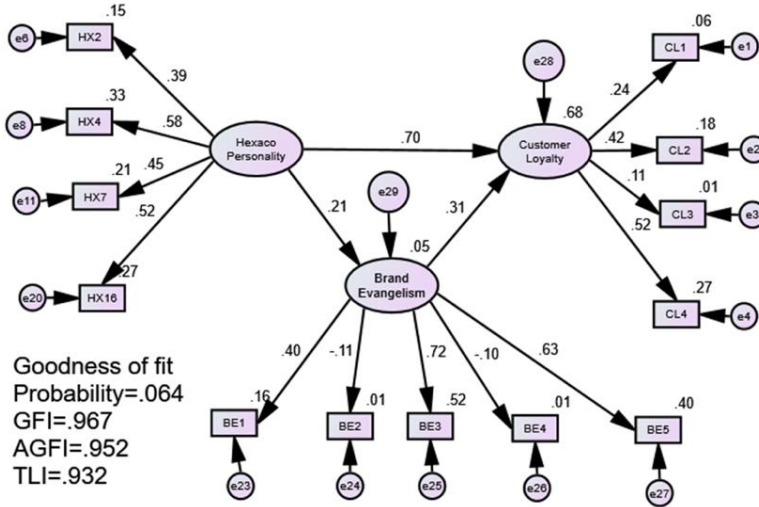


Figure 4: Full Model Fit (Standardized Estimates Type)

Following the analysis of the standardized model fit, a summary of the best and weakest indicators reflecting each variable in Figure 4 was summarized, as shown in Table 3. This provided valuable insights into the strengths and areas for improvement in the model.

Table 3: Overall Indicators

Variable	Indicator	Reflection	Remarks
Brand Evangelism	BE1	0.16	
	BE2	0.01	
	BE3	0.52	Highest
	BE4	0.01	Lowest
	BE5	0.40	
Hexaco Personality	HX2	0.15	Lowest
	HX4	0.33	Highest
	HX7	0.21	
	HX16	0.27	
Customer Loyalty	CL1	0.06	
	CL2	0.18	
	CL3	0.01	Lowest
	CL4	0.27	Highest

The highest indicator values for brand evangelism, Hexaco personality, and customer loyalty were $BE3 = 0.52$, $HX4 = 0.33$, and $CL4 = 0.27$, respectively. Therefore, $BE3$, $HX4$, and $CL4$ were identified as the best indicators to reflect brand evangelism, Hexaco personality, and customer loyalty.

5. DISCUSSION

Based on the data processing results, Hexaco personality has a direct and significant influence on customer loyalty with CR value of $2.918 > 1.96$. The results support Tiwari (2024) signifying a relationship between Hexaco personality and customer loyalty. Similarly, Singh et al. (2021) stated that Hexaco personality is related to brand evangelism, a relationship validated by this research with CR value of $3.312 > 1.96$. Brand evangelism is significant in influencing customer loyalty, as evidenced by this research with CR value of $2.251 > 1.96$. This correlates with Loken & John's (2023) results, suggesting that individuals who consistently purchase products from a particular brand are unlikely to try competitors' brands. Acting as a mediating factor for the influence of Hexaco personality, brand evangelism is highly effective in enhancing customer loyalty. This is evidenced by this research with CR value of $4.927 > 3.312 > 2.251$. The results are consistent with Elsäßer & Wirtz (2017) that individuals will use satisfaction with a particular business to convert others into loyal customers. The research identifies indicators requiring attention to maintain and improve customer loyalty. The highest and lowest indicators value for brand evangelism, Hexaco personality, and customer loyalty are ($BE3$ and $BE4$), ($HX43$ and $HX22$), as well as ($CL4$ and $CL3$), respectively.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In conclusion, the results supported previous research developed as a conceptual model that was tested empirically among smartphone users in Indonesia. The results proved that brand evangelism was a highly effective mediating factor in enhancing the influence of Hexaco personality on customer loyalty in smartphone market. Attention to brand evangelism was essential for smartphone companies aiming to succeed in the market competition by increasing customer loyalty, which was reflected by the indicator $BE3$. This was achieved by focusing on customers willing to recommend brand to acquaintances. Another effort should be made to implement specific incentives for customers who attract communities or new customers. Additionally, companies should develop a referral strategy that motivated customers to invite new users. Hexaco personality required attention in enhancing customer loyalty among smartphone customers. Efforts should be made to consider Hexaco personality, particularly the Emotionality dimension reflected in indicator $HX4$ with the highest value. This suggested that smartphone customers in Indonesia tend to prioritize information security. Therefore, smartphone companies aiming to enhance customer loyalty prioritize customer information security both on devices and in administration systems. This research was limited to respondents who were members of LinkedIn only. Therefore, future research on the same topic should expand the scope to include more extensive locations or communities.

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