

# The Role of Brand Attachment to the Antecedents of Brand Passion

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## ABSTRACT

Indonesia's fashion sector has recently seen remarkable growth. The rise of several local brands that drawing attention of the public, particularly the younger generation, is indicative of this. This study was conducted to determine how brand passion, mediated by brand attachment, is affected by brand image self-congruity and social media content marketing. Self-congruity variable was assessed by using the dimension of actual self- congruity, ideal self-congruity, and social self-congruity. At the same time, content marketing has been measured by user-generated content and firm-created content. This quantitative research used the data gathered from questionnaire distribution through *Google Form*. The number of samples is 290. Data manipulation and testing used the *SmartPLS* version 3. The results showed that self-congruity and content marketing positively affect brand passion through brand attachment. Moreover, the results of this study also prove that content marketing could directly affect brand passion.

**Keywords:** *Self-Congruity, Content Marketing, Brand Attachment, Brand Passion, Local Brand Fashion Industry*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian fashion industry is assumed to have substantial market potential. Currently, local firms are established to fulfill the product image and customer personality. Several long-established local brands have received significant public attention in recent years. Promotional efforts seem to be more effective and efficient while using social media. Social media offer numerous advantages over traditional marketing [1], including the ability to establish and strengthen two- way communication. Moreover, by using social media platforms, marketers may target more specific potential clients, hence increasing their propensity to purchase and consume the advertised products. In addition, because many local firms began their existence online, they frequently advertise themselves by creating social media content. This phenomenon is a trendy communication medium Content marketing can be categorized as either firm- created or user-generated [2]. The content producer makes the difference. Firm-produced content (FCC) is created solely by the brand/company. In contrast, user-generated content (UGC) is made without the brand/interference. company's According to attachment theory, communication is a crucial element in the formation of intimate relationships. In addition, according to self-theory [3], an individual would seek ways to adapt to his environment, including the use of things that are deemed capable of allowing him to express himself as he desires. Based on this concept, multiple studies have demonstrated that Attachment can influence an individual's ongoing attitude and behavior toward a brand [4, 5, and 6]. in the modern era. Various businesses, both large and small, now use social media as a marketing tool.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Attachment is defined as the disposition to develop intimacy with others. In marketing or consumer behaviour, the brand or product of the brand can be characterized as an object of Attachment. In addition, Attachment is the tendency to form a close bond with someone. In the context of marketing or consumer behaviour, the brand or product of the brand may be characterized as an object of Attachment [3]. Among the different means of communication by which businesses can engage with their clients is using social media for marketing purposes. [7]

### **2.1. Self-Congruity**

Self-congruity was initially employed to study how the relationship between brand image and self-concept may influence consumer behavior. This variable reveals that brand attitude is directly proportional to the degree of self-concept and brand image compatibility [8]. According to [9], self-congruity is the belief that one's personality corresponds with that of a particular brand. Actual self-congruity is when a person's true nature and the brand's image are compatible. Ideal self-congruity is when a person wants to change his or her self-perception into what he or she can achieve by using a specific brand or product. Social self-congruity is how the social environment perceives that person. Lastly, ideal social self-congruity is a person's expectations of how the social environment will perceive them. Consequently, self-congruity can be defined as the state in which a person believes they match the brand image of the product they use.

### **2.2. Content Marketing**

Marketers use interactive media such as websites, blogs, social media, and other kinds of communication to keep their products current and accessible to the general audience [11]. Considered the optimal method for developing and disseminating product information to persons with pertinent interests. Moreover, this strategy has a significant effect on how a brand is viewed, how customers interact to it, and even how they make decisions. Social media marketing is defined by [12] as "a sort of Internet marketing that uses social networking sites as marketing tools to acquire traffic, brand exposure, and customer involvement through social media." According to this definition, content marketing is a component of social media marketing. According to [13]'s book, content marketing is a sequence of marketing actions designed to attract and retain customers by the continual creation and distribution of valuable and relevant material. This variable is divided into two categories based on the concept: user-generated content (UGC) and firm-created content (FCC) (Mukherjee). FCC are marketing materials created by affiliated companies or brands, generally in the form of fan sites, social media uploads, and banner adverts on social media platforms. User-generated content (UGC), unlike the FCC, refers to responses by social media users to marketing content provided by the company, generally in the form of comments and debate. UGC can also take the shape of product-related video or image uploads. Based on the explanations, content marketing might be described as a marketing strategy that distributes its content through social media.

### **2.3. Brand Attachment**

Brand attachment is defined as the strength of a person's affinity with a certain brand [14]. The resulting relationship may influence the person's cognitive and affective capabilities. When such a relationship is developed, the brand will receive benefits from its customers, such as repeat purchases, increased brand trust, and a willingness to pay a relatively higher price [15]. Moreover, brand attachment is an emotional tendency that can rapidly influence buyers' impressions of a particular brand [5].

### **2.4. Brand Passion**

Passion is defined as the sporadic consequence of an intimate relationship. In marketing, "brand passion" refers to consumers' robust and positive attitude toward a brand because of a long-standing

connection. According to [16], brand passion is "a psychological construct consisting of arousal, desire, and obsession with a brand." According to this definition, brand passion is a psychological condition characterized by feelings of euphoria, insanity, and obsession with a brand. This interpretation is comparable to [17]'s description of passion as the disposition to enjoy and value one thing or activity more than others, to the extent that one is willing to devote additional resources. Based on these ideas, brand passion is described as a favourable disposition toward a brand that encourages a person to devote more resources to it gradually.

### **3. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT**

#### **3.1. Self-Congruity & Brand Attachment**

The relationship between self-congruity and brand attachment is how the level of conformity between the consumer's personality and the brand's image can result in personal and emotional bonds. This research divides self-congruity into three dimensions: actual self-congruity (ASC), ideal self-congruity (ISC), and social cell-congruity (SCC) (SSC). Different findings have emerged from research undertaken by [9], [18], and [19] concerning the link between these two variables.

H1: Self-congruity has a positive effect on brand attachment.

#### **3.2. Content Marketing & Brand Attachment**

A significant influence in enticing consumers is played by marketing strategy. In the current era, marketing through social media is regarded as a highly effective method. It has been demonstrated that content marketing can impact consumers. Consumers who are frequently exposed to marketing content tend to have stronger brand attachments [20], [21], and [22]. The findings of these studies indicate that content marketing can alter prospective and current consumers' emotional and cognitive states.

H2: Content marketing has a positive influence on brand attachment

#### **3.3. Content Marketing & Brand Attachment**

A person's extremely enthusiastic attitude and behavior toward a brand are exemplified by brand attachment. As a result, they are willing to spend more money on linked things. The results of research [4] indicate that brand attachment and brand passion are favorably connected. In addition, two other studies conducted with the same variables [5 and 6] strengthen this finding.

H3: Brand attachment has a positive influence on brand passion.

H4: Self-congruity has a positive influence on brand passion through brand attachment.

H5: Content marketing has a positive influence on brand passion through brand attachment.

#### **3.4. Self-Congruity & Brand Passion**

The relationship between self-congruity and brand passion demonstrates that self-congruity can directly influence a person's brand passion.

According to research by [23], self-congruence and brand passion are positively associated. In addition, [24] research indicates that the two factors have a positive correlation. Lastly, [25]'s investigation revealed the same outcomes.

H6: Self-congruity has a positive influence on brand passion.

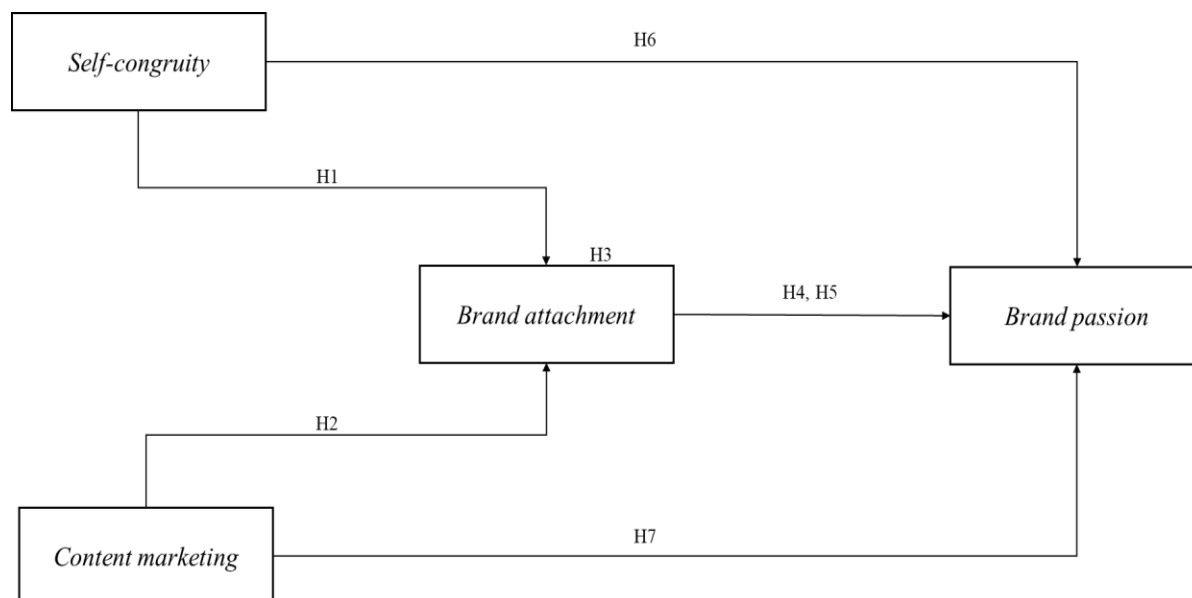
#### **3.5. Content Marketing & Brand Passion**

The connection between content marketing and brand passion. Content marketing has been shown to have a direct effect on Brand passion. This is supported by [25], which demonstrates that exposure to marketing content on social media can influence the attitudes and behaviours of consumers. Other research using the same variables [25, 2], and [8] support the association between

these factors. H7: Content marketing has a positive influence on brand passion.

### 3.6. Research Model

This research model can be displayed as follow:



**Figure 1** Research Model

## 4. METHOD

The population of this study consists solely of Erigo customers. Because the researcher has respondent requirements, such as people who follow at least one social media account and who have purchased local products using a Google form, convenience sampling is employed as a sampling approach in this study. At least 290 respondents comprised the sample size for this investigation. The response to the questionnaire is formatted as a Likert scale. Smart PLS applies the structural equation modeling technique to the data. This is a cross-sectional study. Cross-sectional research is conducted when the data collection technique is performed only once, and data are collected in the form of the responses of samples to research questions. The operationalization of the self-congruity variable was measured by nine indications [19], while the content marketing variable has eight indicators [2], the brand attachment variable has six indicators [19], and the brand passion variable has five indicators [19 and 27].

## 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 5.1. Results

After distributing questionnaires for three weeks from June 8, 2022, it was found that 290 respondent data could be used in this study. The demographics of the respondents are grouped into four categories, namely gender, age, occupation, and monthly expense, as seen in Table 1 below.

**Table 1** Sociodemographic of the sample (n = 290)

	Profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	132	45.5
	Female	158	54.5
<b>Age</b>	17-25	90	31
	26-35	50	17.2
	36-45	68	23.4
	>45	82	26.3
<b>Occupation</b>	Student/College Student	88	30.3
	Employees	59	20.3
	Civil servant	46	15.9
	Entrepreneur	58	20
	Household	37	12.8
	Others	2	0.7
<b>Monthly Expense (IDR)</b>	< 1.500.000	43	14.8
	1.500.000-3.000.000	45	15.5
	3.000.001-5.000.000	45	15.5
	5.000.001-10.000.000	87	30
	>10.000.000	70	24.1

**Table 2** Outer Model

Variabel	Indicator	Loading	CR	AVE	HTMT			
					SC	CM	BA	BP
<b>Self-congruity (SC)</b>	ASC1	0,840	0.745	0.592	-	0.580	0.741	0.758
	ASC2	0,783						
	ASC3	0,815						
	ISC1	0,818						
	ISC2	0,815						
	ISC3	0,856						
	SSC1	0,662						
	SSC 2	0,717						
SSC3	0,769							
<b>Content Marketing (CM)</b>	FCC1	0.779	0.839	0.567	-	-	0.605	0.841
	FCC2	0.791						
	FCC3	0.796						
	UGC1	0.734						
	UGC2	0.801						
	UGC3	0.777						
<b>Brand Attachment (BA)</b>	BA1	0.894	0.847	0.525	-	-	-	-
	BA2	0.845						
	BA3	0.747						
	BA4	0.695						
	BA5	0.742						
	BA6	0.747						
<b>Brand Passion (BP)</b>	BP1	0.725	0.878	0.649	-	-	0.842	-
	BP2	0.853						
	BP3	0.656						
	BP4	0.756						
	BP5	0.737						

Notes: Loading: Standardized loading, CR: Composite Reliability, AVE: Average Variance Extracted, HTMT: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations

Each variable has passed the convergent validity test because its AVE value is more significant than 0.5 [28] and the discriminant validity test. After all, the AVE root value of each construct is greater than the correlation between each construct. The variables employed in this study met the standards for composite reliability and discriminant validity based on Heteroit-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) analysis. Due to the indicators' dependability, the variables have passed the reliability test.

## 5.2. Reliability Test

In this study, reliability tests were conducted. The loading factors for each indicator range between 0.60 and 0.70, which is still adequate. [29].

## 5.3. Inner Model

### 5.3.1. R-Square ( $R^2$ ) Test

$R^2$  can explain the effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The three components of the determinant coefficient value are 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 — describe a level that is either strong, moderate, or mild [29]. The value of the brand attachment variable is 0.760. This implies that self-congruity and content marketing have a 76 percent effect on brand attachment, with self- congruity as the mediating variable. The value of the dependent variable brand passion was 0.826%. Consequently, brand attachment, self-congruity, and content marketing influence 82,6 percent of brand passion.

### 5.3.2. f-Square ( $f^2$ ) Test

$F^2$  test results are divided into three categories (0.02 for a minimal model effect, 0.15 for a moderate model effect, and 0.35 for a significant model effect), which determines the magnitude of the influence [29]. Suppose the path coefficients fall within -1 to +1 and the p-value is less than 0.05 (0.05). In that case, the hypothesis is supported. Multicollinearity testing is utilized to examine the association between model variables. The results of this study's multicollinearity analysis, which tests for a correlation between variables in the regression model, are deemed satisfactory because the VIF is less than 5 [29]. According to the test results, there is no multicollinearity among independent variables.

### 5.3.3. Hypothesis Tests

The hypotheses tested in this study fall into two categories: the direct effect and the mediation effect. Hypotheses testing H1, H2, H3, H6, and H7 are direct effect hypotheses, while H4 and H5 are indirect effect hypotheses. The t- statistic and p-value must both be larger than 1.96 and less than 0.05 for a hypothesis to be accepted. The path coefficient is a measurement depicting the relationship between variables. A relationship with a range of -1 to +1 can be described using a path coefficient value. The direction indicated by a negative or positive sign clarifies the link between variables better. Table 3 displays the t- statistics, p-values, and path coefficients for the direct effect hypotheses.

**Table 3** Inner Model

<i>Variable Relationship</i>	<i>Path</i>	$f^2$	t-Statistics	p-Values	Explanation	
H1	$SC \rightarrow BA$	0.732	1.134 (Strong)	3.623	0.000	Accepted
H2	$CM \rightarrow BA$	0.184	0.072 (Weak)	2.235	0.026	Accepted
H3	$BA \rightarrow BP$	0.600	0.318 (Moderate)	3.103	0.000	Accepted
H6	$SC \rightarrow BP$	-0.113	0.011 (Weak)	8.596	0.337	Not Accepted
H7	$CM \rightarrow BP$	0.427	0.317 (Moderate)	2.885	0.002	Accepted

Notes: SC: Self-congruity, CM: Content Marketing, BA: Brand Attachment, BP: Brand Passion

All hypotheses have path coefficients larger than 0 and t- statistics higher than 1.96 except H6. H1, H2, H3, and H7 may be accepted based on path coefficients, t- statistics, and p-values. The fourth hypothesis test result reveals that the p-value is 0.000 (0.05), the t-statistics is 4.440 (> 1.96), and the path coefficient of H4 is 0.440 (> 0). Based on these factors, brand passion may be positively impacted by self-congruity through brand attachment. The outcome of the fifth hypothesis test reveals that the t-statistics is 3.256 (> 1.96), the p-value is less than 0.05, and the path coefficient of H5 is 0.440 (> 0). The fifth hypothesis is thus determined to be partially mediated based on the mediation analysis' findings, since the independent variable can affect the dependent variable whether mediation is used. This means that content marketing can generate passion directly and through brand attachments.

**Table 4** Mediation-Test Result

<b>Variable Relationship</b>	<b>Path</b>	<b>f2</b>	<b>t-Statistics</b>	<b>p-Values</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	
H4	SC → BA → BP	0.440	4.044	0.000	Accepted	Accepted
H5	CM → BA → BP	0.151	3.256	0.001	Accepted	Accepted

Notes: SC: Self-congruity, CM: Content Marketing, BA: Brand Attachment, BP: Brand Passion

#### 5.3.4. Discussions

Most hypotheses can be accepted following the testing of these hypotheses in this study. This indicates that the hypothesis is consistent with studies that have become references. Nonetheless, there is one linked variable that contradicts the idea. According to the first hypothesis test results, self- congruity has a positive (= 0.732) and statistically significant (p = 0.000) effect on brand attachment. The results of this test of hypotheses are consistent with the findings of [19], which in this investigation also demonstrated the same outcomes. In addition, the findings of this study are consistent with those of two other investigations [9] and [18]. In this study, the self-congruity variable positively and substantially affects brand attachment. Based on the findings of this study, it can be inferred that the greater the degree of congruence between the brand image and the personality of its consumers, the closer they will be to the brand in question.

The results of the second hypothesis test also indicate a positive association (: 0.184) between content marketing and statistically significant brand attachment (p-value: 0.026). The results of this hypothesis test are consistent with past studies utilized as a guide. Additionally, [20] in their investigation observed the same outcomes. Moreover, [22]'s research indicates a positive correlation between these two characteristics. In addition, [22], who researched the impact of social media on brands, found the same outcomes. With the above explanation, it can be inferred that the stronger the link between customers and associated brands will be, the more appealing the brand's content marketing. This study also demonstrated that brand attachment can considerably and favourably affect brand passion (: 0.60). (p-value: 0.000). In their research, [4] have demonstrated that there is a correlation between these two characteristics. The next year, [6] also explored comparable variables in the link between consumers and a brand and found comparable results to earlier research. Lastly, [5] discovered the same outcomes in their research. This study enhances the idea that both brand attachment and brand passion can rise simultaneously. Based on this research, it is also known that self-congruity and content marketing can influence brand passion through the mediating role of brand attachment. As a mediating variable, brand attachment can completely mediate the effect of self-congruity (= 0.439; p = 0.001). This indicates that self-congruence cannot directly affect brand loyalty. In contrast, the relationship between content marketing and brand passion as mediated by brand attachment is rather distinct. Since both p-values are less than 0.05, brand attachment mediation is only partial or partial. This indicates that content marketing can still greatly influence brand passion without the need for mediating characteristics. In line with the preceding rationale, this study indicated that self-congruity did not affect brand passion positively (: -0.113) and did not have a statistically significant effect (p-value: 0.337). This indicates that it contradicts earlier research utilized as a basis for this study [22, 23], and [24]. This study has enhanced the evidence that content marketing can directly have a positive (: 0.427) and statistically significant (p-value: 0.001) impact on brand passion. The results of hypothesis testing indicate that content marketing has a moderately

positive and substantial effect on brand passion. This indicates that these findings are consistent with those of prior investigations [2, 8, and 26].

In this study, consumers experience the establishment of a personal and emotional link when they see a match between the brand image and their personality. They develop an attachment to. This also applies to social media users who are frequently exposed to promotional content. Those who are satisfied with the substance and way they communicate via social media will be unintentionally more interested in the activities of this brand. As for businesses, their items will be positioned favourably in the minds of consumers. These factors are likely to influence customer attitudes and behaviour, such as the formation of strong preferences and even impulsive buying. That is, when the correct brand image and marketing plan can establish a powerful and good relationship between the brand and its customers.

All hypotheses in this study are supported by the results of hypothesis testing, except for the fourth hypothesis, which claims that pricing perception has no beneficial effect on customer loyalty.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS & SUGGESTIONS**

Through brand attachment mediation, this study indicated that self-congruity and content marketing as independent variables can affect brand passion as the dependent variable. Brand attachment can fully moderate the effect of self-congruity as a mediating variable. This indicates that self-congruence cannot directly affect brand loyalty. In contrast, the relationship between content marketing and brand passion as mediated by brand attachment is rather distinct. Companies are advised to maintain and enhance their established brand image. This research has demonstrated that strong connections with customers can be built when brand image and consumer personality are congruent. Moreover, as the number of social media users in Indonesia continues to rise, businesses need to maintain consistency in their social media marketing strategies. Following the local fashion industry's rapid expansion, it is advised that future studies incorporate other variables such as brand image, celebrity endorsement, and brand prestige. In addition, it is possible to increase the number of samples and area restrictions so that the data results closely mimic the conditions in the field.

According to the findings of this study, when brand consumers perceive a connection between the brand image and their personality, they experience the establishment of a personal and emotional relationship. They become attached to the brand. This also applies to those frequently exposed to the brand's promotional content on social media. Those who are pleased with the content and how the brand communicates on social media will unconsciously become attracted to the brand's activities. Brand's products will be well positioned in the thoughts of consumers. These factors are likely to influence consumer attitudes and behavior, such as making the brand a top preference or making impulsive purchases.

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