

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Research Background

Along with the development of the universality, human needs are growing and diverse according to their tastes and needs. Human is increasingly vying to perfect their lifestyle according to their time. There are many types of products that they need and want such as automotive, fashion, electronics, food, beverage, and others. Consumers use branded products to be more perfect in completing their needs and desires, even many consumers do not feel confident if they do not use branded and well-known products in their circles. According to Batra et al. (2012), more recent studies demonstrate that consumers can experience a feeling of love for their brand. Regarding the brand that someone loves, it plays an important part in an individual's construction of identity, thus spreading positive word of mouth can be associated with brand love (Batra, Ahuvia, & Bagozzi, 2012). Relationship marketing is one tool that seeks to create and maintain long-term relationships with consumers and considered a strategic resource for a company, a trend toward modern marketing and successful relationships (Laroche et al., 2012). It is not always easy to maintain long-lasting relationships with customers, and brand communities are a strong tool for reinforcing these relationships.

Communities have an important role for the company to get love from consumers toward the brand. According to Rodrigues et al. (2015), the sense

of community is another element of brand love and can be defined as a relationship between consumers, other people, and a brand. Brand communities have an important role in building brand love and strengthening relationships with brands (Coelho & Bairrada, 2019).

There are a lot of communities from various good sectors in Indonesia. In the automotive industry, there is Bimmer Benz Indonesia (BBI) which the community consists of Mercedes-Benz and BMW car lovers ([oto.detik.com](http://oto.detik.com)). Moreover, according to The Daily Oktagon website, there is a community called Mi Fans Indonesia. It is a community that consists of people who use the Xiaomi smartphone brand. On the other hand, they are not only using the brand but they also claim that they love it ([daily.oktagon.co.id](http://daily.oktagon.co.id)). In the fashion industry, there is Converse Head Indonesia Yogyakarta (CHIYK) as community Converse sneakers shoe brand in Yogyakarta ([jogja.tribunnews.com](http://jogja.tribunnews.com)). That is a community that consists of people (mostly adults) who love the Converse sneaker shoe brand. CHIYK does not only gather with Converse shoe lovers, but they also share knowledge about Converse products and do social activities.

Brand love is the attitude of the consumer towards a particular brand, including their ability to think, feel and act in relation to the particular brand (Rubin, 1973). Brand love can boost consumer willingness to integrate a brand into the identity of the consumer (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). Love for the brand will make consumers have a sense of desire and decide to consume a product on a particular brand. Consumers have a passion for using products that make

them more confident with what is used. According to Bairrada et al. (2018), brand love has a key factor to increase the emotional relationship between consumers and products with brand personality. Consumers love the brand of a product because the brand is able to improve the consumers' appearance in accordance with their characters (Aaker, 1997).

Brand personality is a set of human traits connected with a brand (Aaker, 1997). Brand fashion products have symbolic meaning compared to other products (Bettman & Escalas, 2005) because they can represent the identity of the wearer and can provide emotional benefits to the wearer (Morgan-thomas & Veloutsou, 2013). This brand personality can lead to a relationship between customers and a person-like brand (Aaker, Fornier, and Brakel, 2004). The dimensions of the brand personality mention several things that make the consumer feel the brand is able to explain their personality. There are five generic dimensions of brand personality scale: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness (Aaker, 1997). One of those dimensions is excitement. Excitement plays a role in mastering the emotions of consumers to feel comfortable and happy when consuming these products. A feeling of happiness from consumers who use a brand will lead to a love of the brand. According to Aaker (1997), brand personality is closely related to consumer personality, because the brand explains how the personality of an individual. It means when the brand has a great image, consumers will feel proud when using that product.

Brand image is an important element of the behavior of buyers because when consumers have their favorite brand, the brand message has a stronger impact on consumers compared to their competitors (Hsieh, 2007). Excitement makes consumers think that the products consumed are good (Ismail & Spinelli, 2012). It means that the assumption will improve the brand image of a company. The phenomenon of brand love that is happening emerges the sense of competition among companies to produce better products than competitors. Experience and perception of consumers after using the product will show an image of the brand. The stronger brand image in the minds of consumers will result in more intelligent customers in distinguishing products they consume with other similar products from different companies. According to Yavas and Shemwell (1996), word of mouth is one of the main sources of strong brand image formation.

Word of mouth (WOM) is a marketing communication strategy to motivate a person to transmit messages to others (Berger, 2014). This strategy will effectively spread the message. The companies will compete to increase consumer love for their brands. If customers are satisfied or impressed with the brand, they will spread the message about their positive product or service experiences and offer other people the brand recommendation. WOM can come from numerous sources, including family and expert friends, etc. Communicating about brands that someone loves plays a key role in building an identity for that individual, so it can be associated with brand love to spread positive word of mouth (Batra et al., 2012). Bairrada et al. (2018) shows that

brand love has a positive and significant impact on word-of-mouth, and resistance to negative information. According to Albert et al. (2013) there are strong and positive relationship among brand love and word of mouth. In the context of dressing, someone needs a suitable fashion according to their needs and characters. Fashion that is usually used is not arbitrary, and someone usually buys equipment that has been suggested by the people around him. Similarly, consumers who have never used the brand will be more confident in the use suggested by someone influential for him. Some consumers use products with particular brands because they are following what is suggested by the influential person.

According to the explanation above, this research has held a preliminary study with 22 people to test the phenomenon if it happened, the proper setting and the appropriate respondents. The finding shows that most respondents have fallen in love with a brand. This is proven by 95.5% of respondents falling love for a brand. Further, the result shows that most respondents have felt excitement for a brand. This is evidenced by 95.5% of respondents felt excitement for a brand. The finding shows that most respondents agreed if the brand image is an important thing for them. This is proven by 72.7% of respondents agreed with it. The result also shows respondents have recommended the brand to other people with a percentage of 100%. The result shows that 86.4% of respondents agreed if brand love, excitement, and brand image can influence them to recommend to others. Based on those results, it can be concluded that a meaningful phenomenon occurs. Based on the results

of preliminary study, respondents who have filled out questionnaires were mostly 18-21 years old students. It means the students are the proper respondents for this study. According to the preliminary study, the setting results showed that most of the respondents already knew, bought and wore Converse shoes as a global brand. The result showed that 95.5% of respondents already knew the Converse shoes and 59.1% of respondents had bought and also wore the Converse shoes. It can be concluded that Converse shoes are a proper setting for this study.

Converse is an American shoe company based in North Andover, Massachusetts. The company was found in February 1908 by Marquis Mills Converse. At the beginning of the establishment of this company, the company was able to produce 4000 shoes each day. Converse had become the official basketball shoes (NBA). Converse became the king of Sneakers in 1923 and became the most famous shoe brand throughout history with 744 million sales in 144 countries. More than 100 artists all around the world took part in creating Converse shoe creations ([sepatukeren123.blogspot.com](http://sepatukeren123.blogspot.com)).

Based on the explanation above, this study chose Converse shoe products as the setting. Converse Shoes have a strong image in consumer memory and consumers are willing to spend more money to enjoy the products issued by Converse Shoes. Converse shoe products themselves are quite well known among shoe lovers in Indonesia and the quality can compete with other international products. Converse shoe products also make people feel more confident after using them so as to create word-of-mouth marketing.

Based on existing phenomena, this study uses different setting from previous research. This study takes the topic of global fashion products of Converse Shoes in Yogyakarta. This study applies the replication of Ismail & Spinelli (2012).

## **B. Research Questions**

According to the background above, the research questions investigated in this study are:

1. Does excitement affect brand love toward Converse shoes?
2. Does excitement influence brand image toward Converse shoes?
3. Does brand image impact brand love toward Converse shoes?
4. Does brand love influence word of mouth marketing toward Converse shoes?
5. Does brand image affect word of mouth toward marketing Converse shoes?
6. Does excitement impact word of mouth toward marketing Converse shoes?

## **C. Research Objectives**

The objective of this research is to provide guidelines to research the basis of background and formulation, this study aims to:

1. Analyze and explain the effect of excitement toward brand love in Converse Shoes.

2. Analyze and define the effect of excitement toward the brand image in Converse Shoes.
3. Analyze and emphasize the effect of brand love toward the word of mouth marketing in Converse Shoes.
4. Analyze and explain the effect of the brand image toward the word of mouth marketing in Converse Shoes.
5. Analyze and define the effect of the brand image toward brand love in Converse Shoes.
6. Analyze and emphasize the effect of excitement toward the word of mouth marketing in Converse Shoes.

#### **D. Research Benefits**

The results of this research can be expected to provide several benefits:

1. Business Field

The result of this research could be the sources of information about the effect of brand personality, brand image, and brand love toward word-of-mouth marketing. It could be also used to evaluate the marketing strategies and references for the related business sector.

2. Researchers

The result of this study is expected to increase future researchers' insight about the effect of brand personality, brand image and brand love



toward word-of-mouth marketing of brands in Indonesia, especially for Converse Shoes and other related product brands.

### 3. Readers

The results of this study are expected to provide as a reference and information regarding the role of brand personality, image, and love toward word-of-mouth marketing.