Original Research

Exploring Gen Z Social Media Marketing Engagement on Brand Experience, Brand Equity, and Brand Trust: The Context of Muslim Fashion

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Abstract

Objective: This research aims to analyze how social media marketing activities (SMMA) affect brand equity in Muslim fashion brands among Gen Z. Additionally, the study aims to determine the mediating role of brand experience and brand trust in the relationship between SMMA and brand equity.

Design/Methods/Approach: The research participants were selected through purposive sampling based on the research objective. A total of 322 respondents who met the criteria were included in the study, and Smart PLS 3 software was used to test the hypotheses. Partial least squares (PLS) structural equation modeling was the analytical technique employed in this research.

Findings: The findings indicate that social media marketing activities (SMMAs) are strongly linked to brand equity, brand experience, and brand trust. Moreover, both brand experience and brand trust are also significantly associated with brand equity. Brand experience and brand trust play a partial mediating role in the relationship between SMMAs and brand equity.

Originality/Value: This research study offers several contributions to marketing literature and managerial implications. Firstly, the research findings can make a valuable addition to the existing marketing literature, particularly in consumer behavior in the digital era. Secondly, the study aims to examine the impact of brand experience and brand equity on customers' purchasing behavior in the Muslim fashion industry.

Practical/Policy implication: It is recommended for marketers to manage social media pages, as these platforms facilitate the exchange of information and ideas among consumers. Effective management of social media pages can lead to positive outcomes and provide superior value and brand experience.

Keywords: Social media marketing activities (SMMAs), Brand experience, Brand trust, Brand equity

JEL Classification: : M31, M37

1. Introduction

Throughout history, fashion clothing has been linked to a symbolic representation of social status, enabling individuals to convey their unique personal identity, image, and moral character (Craik, 2003; Michaelidou & Dibb, 2006). Previous studies argued that an inherent connection exists between religion and consumption to a certain degree (Khan & Kirmani, 2018). The determination of morality can play a significant role in regulating consumption behavior, encompassing decisions regarding dietary choices, clothing preferences, and other facets of lifestyle and personal identity (Arli et al., 2016; Veer & Shankar, 2010). Studies in the context of fashion have shown that religiosity influences consumers' purchasing decisions, with religious individuals tending to make decisions (Farrag & Hassan, 2015; O'Cass & Siahtiri, 2013). Religiosity strongly correlates with the clothing worn by Muslim customers (Aruan & Wirdania, 2020).

The modern Muslim lifestyle is undergoing swift transformations due to urbanization, evolving consumption habits, technological progress, and educational development (Williams & Kamaludeen, 2017). The Muslim lifestyle, which was originally governed by religious law, has the potential to evolve into a fashion trend and even a new culture. Muslim fashion enthusiasts are not like those from the older Generation X, who only prefer dull clothes. However, the younger generations, Y and Z, have more fashionable and up-to-date clothing styles (Aprianto et al., 2021). Generation Z is the next up-and-coming group in fashion (*Hodgson*, 2018; Meola, 2022). Gen Z has unique characteristics compared to other generations, such as self-awareness, persistence, realism, innovativeness, and self-reliance (Merriman, 2015). They are an open-minded generation that spends most of their time on their phones. This generation embraces inclusiveness and diversity. They are mobile-first, tech-savvy, and have high expectations for how they wish to spend their time online, which is also characterized by the widespread use of the internet and social media platforms (Kaplan, 2020; Kardaras, 2016).

Through promotion and advertising, social media has significantly changed public attitudes toward Islamic head covering (Arab, 2022). Social media marketing (SMM) is a relatively new part of digital marketing. SMM is a marketing channel that is growing the fastest and has the most promise for building a brand (Zarei et al., 2021). Almost all industries are shifting their marketing strategies to use SMM for external advertising, promotional activities, customer relationship management, and internal employee interactions as it becomes more practical and crucial for business growth (Seo & Park, 2018). Social media marketing (SMM) refers to the practice of disseminating brand-related information via social networking platforms, including but not limited to Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, MySpace, and WeChat, to engage with a wide range of stakeholders (Albanna et al., 2022; Carlson et al., 2021; Chatterjee et al., 2021).

Nowadays, in the marketing context, a company's brand's interaction with consumers via social media is a potent tool for increasing brand equity (BE) (Martillo Jeremías & Polo Peña, 2021; Tran & Nguyen, 2022; Wang et al., 2021). Brand experiences in the context of social media predominantly occur through online platforms, facilitating the exchange of multisensory communications between consumers and brands (Yang et al., 2019). Consumers acquire brand equity (BE) using various brand cues, including brand logos, characters, colors, tunes, jingles, and slogans associated with the brand (Morgan-Thomas & Veloutsou, 2013; Nysveen et al., 2013). When customers are educated on the utilization of a brand through social media platforms to fulfill their desires and requirements, it strengthens a favorable brand experience (Akaka et al., 2015). Previous research conducted by Beig and Khan (2018) stated that social media marketing significantly impacts brand equity. Furthermore, Khajeh Nobar et al. (2020) asserted that social media marketing activities positively correlate to brand equity. For long-term success, understanding how to build and manage brand equity is crucial to creating a competitive advantage(Shaalan et al., 2020; Votto et al., 2021).

Brand experience is essential for developing brand equity (Brakus et al., 2009a). Brand experience shapes the consumer's emotional connection to the brand, which in turn affects brand equity (Bapat, 2017). A previous study by Ding and Tseng (2015) asserted that brand equity (BE) has a significant and direct influence on various aspects of brand equity, including brand loyalty, brand awareness/association, and perceived quality. According to Koay et al. (2021), brand equity (BE) serves as an intermediary between social media marketing activities (SMMAs) and consumer-based brand equity (CBBE). Similarly, Zollo et al. 's (2020) study identified both direct and indirect effects of social media marketing activities (SMMAs) on brand equity (BE) through the mediating factor of brand experience.

The attributes of the online environment are also regarded as factors that influence trust (Salo & Karjaluoto, 2007). Consumer responses to various brand interactions in the virtual realm are contingent upon trust and brand knowledge. Calefato et al. (2015) stated that social media interactions are crucial for cultivating brand trust. Similar to a study by Tatar and Eren-Erdoğmu (2016), the study supported the notion that the characteristics of social media marketing positively impact brand trust. Companies utilize social media platforms to communicate, interact, and engage with consumers by delivering value and experiences, increasing their brand-related behavioral responses (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

Moreover, Martillo Jeremías, and Polo Peña (2021) asserted that a good brand experience could positively affect brand equity. Similarly, Zollo et al. (2020) found a direct and indirect influence of SMMAs on BE via brand experience. Based on a study by Hafez (2021), the findings also indicated that brand experience significantly influences the link between SMMAs and BE. Thus, brand trust was found to mediate SMM activities and brand equity partially. Based on the previous research, we can conclude that SMMAs directly affect brand equity; thus, brand experience and trust can mediate such a relationship. Prior studies have primarily examined specific brands, whereas our research delves into

Muslim fashion, an area that has not yet been explored, particularly within social media. We also employ Generation Z, who has not been the topic of any research in earlier investigations. Since brand experience and trust have not been employed in the modern fashion research setting, we also use them as a mediating variable.

This research aims to investigate the impact of social media marketing activities (SMMA) on brand equity in Muslim fashion brands among Gen Z and try to figure out the mediating effect of brand experience and brand trust toward brand equity. This study offers multiple contributions in both marketing literature and managerial implications. First, the research findings have the potential to make a valuable contribution to the existing body of marketing literature, particularly in the realm of consumer behavior within the context of the digital era. Second, an examination can be conducted to determine the extent to which brand experience and brand equity impact customers' purchasing behavior in the Muslim fashion industry. Third, it is essential to elucidate the role of social media as a medium that possesses the potential to serve as an efficacious marketing tool. For managers, incorporating social media is a crucial factor to consider when developing a marketing strategy.

This study is structured into several distinct sections. Section 1 of the manuscript comprises introductory details. Section 2 undertakes a literature review and hypothesis formulation. Section 3 delineates the methodologies employed during data collection. Section 4 encompasses the results and discussions. Section 5 concludes the work by providing academic implications and practical implementations.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1. Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs)

The advent of social media has brought about substantial transformations in marketing strategies. The exponential growth of this social media marketing channel has revolutionized how businesses can interact, engage, and connect with their customers (Ebrahim, 2020). Social media were defined by Zahoor, Syed Zeeshan and Qureshi (2017) as web technologies used to interact with public communities. The marketing industry has witnessed a growing interest in the impact of social media on consumer behavior, leading to increased attention in this area (Almohaimmeed, 2019). Moreover, the inclination of organizations toward social media is driven by many advantages that can be attained, including cost reduction, enhanced profitability, knowledge sharing, and the establishment of business partnerships (SI, 2015). Recent social media marketing (SMM) research has identified several influential factors. Social media marketing (SMM) pertains to the commercial activities initiated and executed through various social media platforms (Harvey et al., 2011; Zhang & Daugherty, 2009). Meanwhile, Li et al. (2020) state that social media marketing activities (SMMAs) can be broadly defined as organizations' sophisticated digital marketing operations. These operations involve integrating social media networks and the interactions of all relevant stakeholders. The primary objective of SMMAs is to leverage these interactions to achieve targeted marketing productivity strategically (Koay et al., 2021a). In their study, Kim and Ko (2012) identified several factors contributing to the success of social media marketing activities (SMMAs), including entertainment, customization, trendiness, interactivity, and word-of-mouth. Similarly, Seo and Park (2018) examined the components of SMMAs and found that trendiness, customization, interaction, entertainment, and perceived risk are significant factors in determining their effectiveness. Based on Malarvizhi et al. (2022), brands can cultivate robust brand equity and brand loyalty through social media marketing activities (SMMAs). This can be achieved by promoting entertainment, customization, trendiness, and positive electronic word-of-mouth.

2.2. Brand Equity (BE)

Brand equity can be analyzed from two perspectives, specifically the consumer and financial perspectives (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993). Aaker (1991) explained BE from the consumer standpoint, namely that BE is a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to the brand's name and symbol, which can add or take away from the value of products or services. BE conceived the idea by considering aspects such as brand recognition, brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand association, and other distinctive assets. Otherwise, Keller (1993) examines the differential impact of brand knowledge on customer response to brand marketing efforts. From a financial perspective, brand equity is a concept that pertains to the augmented financial worth attributed to a brand (Simon & Sullivan, 1993). This study will examine the relationship between SMMAs and brand equity. SMMAs positively correlate to brand equity (Khajeh Nobar et al., 2020). Furthermore, It has been suggested that the firm's BE can be effectively improved by implementing social media marketing activities (SMMAs) (Chen & Qasim, 2021). Additionally, it can be argued that Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) possess a significant and direct impact on Brand Equity (BE) (Sharma et al., 2022). Based on the previous study, we proposed the following hypotheses:
H1: SMMAs have a significant relationship with brand equity

2.3. Brand Experience (BEx)

Within the literature on brand marketing, the term "BEx" is used to denote the subjective internal consumer responses, encompassing sensations, feelings, and cognitions, as well as the behavioral responses that are elicited by brand-related stimuli (Brakus et al., 2009b). These stimuli are integral to a brand's design, identity, packaging,

communications, and environments (Brakus et al., 2009a). The conceptual definition of brand experience pertains to the subjective and internal response of consumers, as well as their behavioral response, which is elicited by stimuli associated with the brand (Bapat, 2017). These stimuli serve to represent the brand's identity and may include elements such as well-designed packaging, effective communication, or positive encounters with the brand's services (Islam et al., 2019; I. Khan et al., 2020). Prior research indicates that brand experience generates a variety of positive outcomes for the brand, including emotional ties to the brand (Brakus et al., 2009b; Kumar, Vikas, and Kaushik, 2020), brand love (Roy et al., 2013), satisfaction, and loyalty (Marinova et al., 2008). Brand experiences in the context of social media predominantly occur through online platforms, facilitating multisensory interactions between consumers and brands (Yang et al., 2019). Social media brand pages employ rich media and facilitate interactivity, fostering brand experience (Tafesse, 2016). When customers are provided with information on how to effectively utilize a brand through social media platforms to satisfy their needs and desires, it strengthens a positive brand experience (Akaka et al., 2015). Beig & Khan (2018)demonstrated evidence that the utilization of Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) exerts a substantial influence on brand experience. Furthermore, Zollo et al. (2020) found a robust positive correlation between social media marketing activities (SMMAs) and the perception of brand experience. Similar to Khan (2022), it has been demonstrated that the online brand experience is derived from implementing practical social media marketing activities.

Brand experience is indispensable for establishing brand equity (Brakus et al., 2009b). The emotional connection that a customer has with a brand is developed via their experience with the brand, which has an effect on brand equity (Bapat, 2017). Ding & Tseng (2015) it has been asserted that brand equity (BE) has a significant and direct influence on various elements of brand equity, including brand loyalty, brand awareness/association, and perceived quality. Brand Experience is hypothesized to significantly impact perceived quality, brand awareness, and brand image (Eslami, 2020). Salem & Salem (2019) it is argued that customer loyalty to a brand can be derived from successful SMMAs. From this standpoint, we proposed the following hypotheses:

H2: SMMAs have a significant relationship with brand experience
H3: Brand Experience has a significant relationship with brand equity

2.4. Brand Trust (BT)

Brand trust can be defined as the extent to which consumers believe a company can deliver products and services that satisfy consumer needs and wants (Keller & Aaker, 1992). Fournier (1998) describes brand trust as the brand delivering what is desired versus what is feared. Furthermore, Lassar et al. (1995) the confidence a consumer places in the firm and the firm's communications and whether the firm's actions would be in the consumer's interest. The consumer's inclination to place confidence in a brand's capacity to fulfill its expected performance. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the organization to demonstrate benevolence by prioritizing the well-being of its customers and striving to improve trust-related aspects such as safety, dependability, and consistency (Chaudhuri & Morris,2001). Morgan & Hunt (1994) consumer responses to various brand interactions in the virtual realm are contingent upon the factors of trust and brand knowledge. Calefato et al. (2015) asserted that interactions on social media platforms play a crucial role in fostering trust in a brand. Khong et al. (2013) Trust in social media platforms is established through consumer empowerment and the existence of psychological and structural factors. This is evident in users' perceptions of increased capability to share information, as well as their ease of access and execution of transactions on social media. Based on the previous study, we proposed the following hypotheses:

H4: SMMAs have a significant relationship with brand trust
H5: Brand trust has a significant relationship with brand equity

2.5. Brand Experience and Brand Trust Mediates between SMMAs and Brand Equity

Koay et al. (2021) it has been hypothesized that SMMAs and brand equity can be connected through the brand experience. Similarly, Zollo et al. (2020) discovered that SMMAs exert both a direct and indirect influence on BE through brand experience. Likewise, Kim & Park (2013) examine the role of trust as a mediator between social commerce attributes and behavioral intentions. Users are more likely to trust social commerce if it offers a favorable online environment regarding communication, reputation, transaction security, size, information quality, and word-of-mouth referrals. Similarly, Hafez (2021) discovered that brand trust plays a role in partially mediating the relationship between social media marketing (SMM) activities and brand equity. Based on the previous study, we proposed the following hypotheses:

H6: Brand experience mediates the association between SMMAs and brand equity
H7: Brand trust mediates the association between SMMAs and brand equity
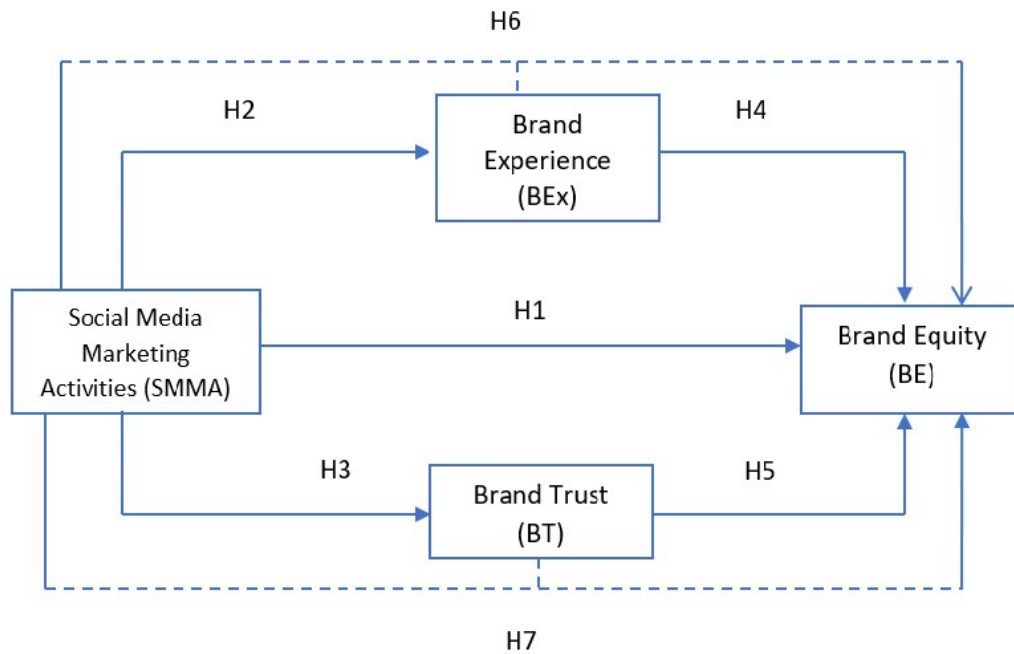
Figure 1. Research Framework

3. Method

This research can be classified as exploratory research with a quantitative approach. We received 335 data in total. However, 13 were discarded since they did not meet our requirements. So, we processed 322 of the data. We used Gen Z in Indonesia because Generation Z makes up 27.9% of the population and millennials make up 25.87%, more than 50% of Indonesians are of working age (Rahardjo, 2021), and Gen Z Moslem have great purchase intention (Febriandika et al., 2023).

As we mentioned before, we used Generation Z as our respondent. We used an online questionnaire to collect data. The sample was classified by middle social economic status at 71,1% and upper social class status at 28,9%. Moreover, this study follows males 30,4% and females 69,6% in which spread over the city in Indonesia such as Surabaya, Jakarta, Malang, Banyuwangi, Madura, Pasuruan, Sulawesi, Lampung, Jambi, Riau, Bali, Kalimantan, NTB, Lombok, NTT, Maluku, Papua Etc.

The study employed purposive sampling, whereby research participants were selected based on predetermined criteria aligned with the research objectives. The primary data collection tool employed in this study was a questionnaire. We used an online questionnaire to ensure the collected data's relevance and appropriateness, and a set of inclusion criteria was established. These criteria were determined based on the research objectives, and multiple factors were considered during their formulation. Consequently, the following inclusion criteria were established: (1) They must have been born in 1997-2012, (2) living in Indonesia, (3) They have Bought Muslim clothes through social media more than three times, (4) they must have a monthly income, and (4) they must have their own mobile devices with internet connectivity. All the items of each construct were answered on a five-point Likert Scale (5- Strongly Agree, 4- Agree, 3–Neutral, 2- Disagree, and 1- Strongly Disagree.

Table 1. Definition of operational variable

Variable	Measurement	Source
Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA)	(SMMA1) Entertainment: Content of moslem brand's social media seems interesting (SMMA2) Interaction: Moslem brand's social media enable information-sharing with others. (SMMA3) Trendiness: The contents shown in the social media of this moslem brand is up to date (SMMA4) Customization: Moslem brand's social media provide customized service (SMMA5) Word of mouth: I would like to pass information on moslem brand, product, or services from X brand's social media to my friends.	Kim & Ko, 2012
Brand Equity (BE)	(BE1) Perceived Quality: trust the quality of products from moslem brand	Aaker, 1996

Variable	Measurement	Source
	(BE2) Brand Awareness: I can recognize moslem brand quickly among other competing brands	
	(BE3) Brand Association: moslem brand has very unique brand image, compared to competing brands	
	(BE4) Brand Loyalty: When buying Moslem brand, this Moslem brand would be my first choice	Brakus et al 2009
	(BEx4) Intelectual Stimuli: when I think about a particular Moslem clothing brand, I think about how the brand succeeds in its creative strategy	
Brand Trust (BT)	(BT1) Moslem brand is honest	
	(BT2) Moslem brand works for my happiness	Ebrahim, 2019
	(BT3) Moslem brand works hard to satisfy me	
	(BT4) Moslem brand promises are real	

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Respondent Characteristics

We have distributed online questionnaires to Gen Z in the city of Indonesia. As shown in Table 2, the ages of respondents in our study were in the age range of 17-24 years. Where the distribution is aged 17 - 20, as much as 57.7%, while in the age range 21 - 24, as much as 42.3%. The respondents were almost dominated by female with 69.6% and male as much 30.4 %. Furthermore, for education background, most widely undergraduate with 75.3%, followed by diploma 7.4 % and lastly by high school with 17.3 %. The income of respondents is dominated by income in the range IDR 1.500.000 – 3.000.000, thus less than IDR 1.500.000.

Table 2. Description of respondent

Description		Frequency		%	
Age	17 – 20	186		57.7	
	21 – 24	136		42.3	
	Total		322		100
Gender	Male	98		30.4	
	Female	224		69.6	
	Total		322		100
Education Background	High School	56		17.3	
	Diploma	24		7.4	
	Undergraduate	242		75.3	
	Total				100
Monthly Income	Less Than IDR 1.500.000	75		23.4	
	IDR 1.500.000 – 3.000.000	195		60.7	
	IDR 3.000.000 – 4.500.000	52		15.9	
	Total		322		100

4.2 Result
4.2.1. Assessment of Measurement Model

Conducting an assessment for convergent validity was initiated at the outset of the inquiry. Subsequently, an evaluation of the item loadings factor, average variance extracted (AVE), and composite reliability (CR) is conducted to ensure the validity of the measurement model. Table 3 presents the outcomes of the measurement model. As per the table provided, the loadings of the item have surpassed the recommended threshold of 0.6, as suggested by Hair et al. (2017). The present study yielded AVEs that fell within the acceptable range, ranging from 0.640 to 0.714. Furthermore, the composite reliability (CR) exhibited a range of 0.876 to 0.926, aligning with the value posited by Joe F. Hair et al. (2014) that stipulates the average variance extracted (AVE) should surpass 0.5. Based on the result in Table 1, we can conclude.

Following the completion of the convergent validity assessment, the subsequent stage involved the evaluation of discriminant validity. This test was employed by Fornell and Larcker (1981) based on the existing literature. Table 4 demonstrates that the square root of AVE (diagonal) is higher than the correlations (off-diagonal) for all reflective constructs.

Table 3. Results of the measurement model

Construct	Items	Loadings	AVE	CR
Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA)	SMMA1	0.862		
	SMMA2	0.874	0.714	0.926
	SMMA3	0.850		
	SMMA4	0.842		
	SMMA5	0.793		
Brand Equity (BE)	BE1	0.814		
	BE2	0.841	0.713	0.908
	BE3	0.892		
	BE4	0.829		
Brand Experience (BEx)	BEx1	0.823	0.640	0.876
	BEx2	0.745		
	BEx3	0.839		
	BEx4	0.790		
Brand Trust (BT)	BT1	0.821		
	BT2	0.858	0.714	0.909
	BT3	0.851		
	BT4	0.850		

Table 4 Discriminant validity using Fornell and Lacker criterion

	SMMAs	Brand Equity	Brand Experience	Brand Trust
SMMAs	**0.845**			
Brand Equity	0.680	**0.844**		
Brand Experience	0.649	0.720	**0.800**	
Brand Trust	0.570	0.755	0.701	**0.845**

4.2.2. Assessment of Structural Model

Prior to conducting the following procedure, we also evaluate the R2. The accuracy of the structural model can be evaluated using the R2 value. According to Hair et al. (2014), utilizing R2 to determine the coefficient of determination and significance level of the beta values associated with a given route is possible. The coefficient of determination (R^2) for the brand equity outcomes obtained was 0.686, indicating that the factors of social media activities account for 68.6%. Thus, the brand experience obtained outcome was 0.422, indicating that the factor of social media marketing activities was able to account for 42.2%. Furthermore, brand trust obtained an outcome of 0.325, indicating that social media marketing activities were able to account for 32.5%.

Table 5. The R square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Brand Equity	0.686	0.683
Brand Experience	0.422	0.420
Brand Trust	0.325	0.323

The study conducted a statistical analysis to estimate the path coefficients of the structural model and employed bootstrap analysis to ascertain the statistical significance of the results. Table 6 demonstrates that there is a statistically significant value for the whole variable. We used 5% (0.005) of the significance level to test the hypotheses. H1 mentions the direct relationship between SMMAs and brand Equity, as evidenced by a t statistic of 5.167 and a significance level of 0.00, so we accepted H1. Thus, H2 stated the direct relationship between SMMAs and brand experience with a significance level of 0.000 and a t statistic of 13.459, so we accepted H2. The next is H3, which states that SMMAs have a significant effect on brand trust with a t statistic of 12.478 and a significance level of 0.000, so we decided to accept H3.

Furthermore, we tested for H4, stating that brand experience has a significant effect on brand equity with a t statistic of 3.598 and a significance level of 0.000. As a result, we accepted H4. Therefore, we tested for H5 and mentioned that brand trust significantly affects brand equity with a t statistic of 8.275 and a significance level of 0.000, so we accepted H5.

Table 6. Results of the structural model

	Relationship	Std Error	T Statistic	Sig	Decision
H1	SMMAs -> Brand Equity (Direct Effect)	0.055	5.167	0.000	Support
H2	SMMAs -> Brand Experience	0.048	13.459	0.000	Support
H3	SMMAs -> Brand Trust	0.046	12.478	0.000	Support
H4	Brand Experience -> Brand Equity	0.066	3.598	0.000	Support
H5	Brand Trust -> Brand Equity	0.052	8.275	0.000	Support

In the next phase, we tested for H6, stating that brand experience mediates the association between SMMAs and Brand equity. If the direct and indirect effects were significant, the conclusion would be partial mediation. Based on the table that showed in Table 7, H6 has a significant direct effect (t: 5.167 and sig:0.00) and an indirect effect (t: 3.226 and sig: 0.001), so we can take the conclusion that H6 has a partial mediation effect from SMMAs toward Brand equity with brand experience as a mediation variable. Furthermore, we tested for H7 displayed that have significant direct effect (t: 5.167 and sig:0.00) and indirect effect (t: 6.790 and sig: 0.000), so we can take the conclusion that H7 has a partial mediation effect from SMMAs toward Brand equity with brand trust as a mediation variable.

Table 7. Mediation Effect

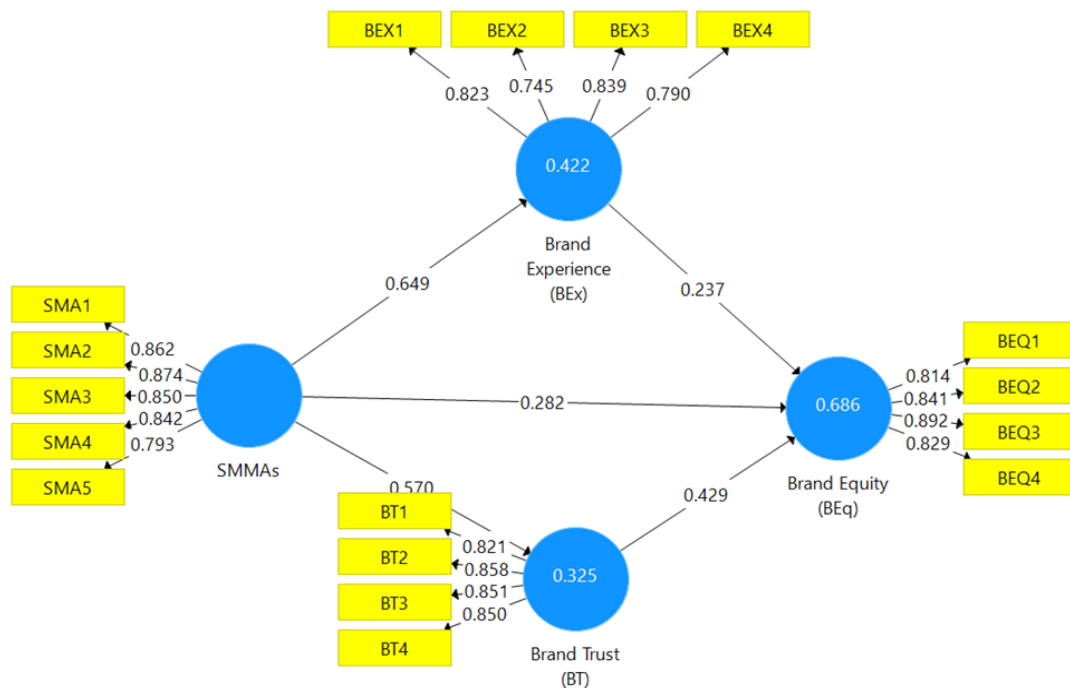|	Mediation Analysis	Direct Effect		Indirect Effect		Decision
		t	Sig	t	Sig	
H6	SMMAs -> Brand Experience -> Brand Equity	5.167	0.000	3.226	0.001	Support (Partial Mediation)
H7	SMMAs -> Brand Trust -> Brand Equity	5.167	0.000	6.790	0.000	Support (Partial Mediation)

Figure 2. Inner Model

4.3. Discussion

The results of this research offer valuable contributions to the existing body of knowledge in social media marketing. Specifically, it examines the impact of social media marketing activities on key branding objectives such as brand equity, brand trust, and brand experience. This research investigates the impact of social media marketing activities (SMMA) on brand equity in Muslim fashion brands among Gen Z. The mediating effect of brand experience and brand

trust was also investigated. Prior research has been limited in terms of the number of studies conducted on the association between Generation Z and social media marketing activities (SMMAs) context. Consequently, the research focuses on Generation Z and takes into account the fact that this technologically advanced generation conducts every aspect of their lives—including shopping online (Kaplan, 2020b)

Our findings generally indicated that social media marketing activities (SMMAs) significantly influence brand equity. Previous studies reveal that social media marketing activities can influence brand equity (Hafez, 2021; Kim & Ko, 2012; Koay et al., 2021b; Zollo et al., 2020). This research study provides evidence that consumers' perception of social media marketing (SMM) activities significantly impacts brand equity, particularly when digital consumers have positive experiences with the brand. The Generation Z consumer demands high uniformity and coherence across various channels and devices (Kardaras, 2016). This implies that the user's experience should exhibit a high degree of seamlessness and consistency to the extent that it becomes difficult to discern the specific channel through which they engage with the brand. Social Media Marketing Activities also serve as a means for consumers to share information with other users, similar to word of mouth. If consumers are satisfied with a brand, they recommend it to others. The results of this study suggest that consumers' favorable emotions towards social media marketing activities (SMMAs) play a role in enhancing a positive brand experience (BE), specifically in terms of entertainment and trendiness. This, in turn, contributes to the development of strong brand equity. Strong BE means that consumers have a high degree of brand image, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and perceived quality. This finding is also similar to previous research by Hafez (2021). Social media marketing campaigns make consumers believe that they provide greater value, influencing their brand equity. Furthermore, Zollo et al. (2020) SMMAs perceived by consumers influence brand equity, particularly effective if they can gratify specific consumer benefits and provide positive experiences.

Furthermore, our finding shows that SMMAs also have a significant relationship with brand experience. In this research for the brand experience, we used indicators by Brakus et al. (2009b). We divided individual experiences into sensory experiences (sense), affective experiences (feel), cognitive experiences (think), and behavioral (action). Brand experience is a factor that triggers customers' desire to affiliate with a particular brand and demonstrates varying levels of engagement when they are exposed to it. Positive brand experiences are associated with increased social interactive engagement with a brand (Akaka et al., 2015). Brand experiences occur in several contexts when individuals engage in activities such as searching for, shopping for, and consuming brands. This study defines brand experience as the subjective reactions of consumers elicited by particular experiential features associated with a brand within specific contexts (Islam et al., 2019). We also examined the relationship between brand experience and brand equity, and we found that there is a significant relationship. An effective brand experience can make customers more aware, and customers who favorably perceive a brand are more likely to engage in higher levels of social interaction with a brand's page. In this study, similar to Zollo et al. (2020), a robust positive correlation has been identified between social media marketing activities (SMMAs) and the perception of brand experience. Similar to Khan (2022), it has been demonstrated that the online brand experience is derived from the implementation of effective social media marketing activities.

Social media marketing activities have had a significant relationship with brand trust. Social media marketing is a communication instrument to engage consumers and provide them with valuable brand information. Due to user privacy and information-sharing violations, trust plays a central role in the use and intensity of social media participation (Khong et al., 2013). Hence, consumers must place their trust in digital information, which is cultivated via their many encounters in the realm of social media. Previous research findings reveal that trust engagements on social media platforms are pivotal in cultivating trust in a company (Calefato et al., 2015b). Therefore, trust is crucial in establishing favorable brand connections and enduring relationships. Brand trust also has a significant effect on brand equity. When a product fails or receives negative press, consumers are more willing to forgive and forget when the brand in question is one in which they have placed their faith (Ebrahim, 2020). Furthermore, Khong et al. (2013) One could posit that the establishment of trust on social media platforms is contingent upon consumer empowerment and the presence of psychological and structural elements.

This study also examines brand experience and how brand trust mediates the link between social media marketing activities (SMMAs) and brand equity. Brand experience has a mediating role in the proposed conceptual mode, and the findings reveal a partial mediation role in the relationship between SMM activities and brand equity. This finding is similar to previous research by Zollo et al. (2020), who discovered that brand experience could mediate the relationship between SMMAs and brand equity. Hence, the role of trust as a mediating variable in this study has a partial mediation impact on SMM activities on brand equity. Social media marketing is a strategic approach employed to effectively communicate with consumers and provide them with important information pertaining to various brands. The issue of user privacy breaches and the sharing of personal information significantly impacts the level of trust and the extent of engagement in social media platforms. This finding validated the previous research by Kim and Park (2013), which considered the role of trust as a mediator between social commerce characteristics and behavioral intentions. Users are more likely to trust social commerce if the online environment is favorable regarding communication, reputation, transaction security, size, information quality, and word-of-mouth recommendations. Similarly, Hafez (2021) discovered that brand trust plays a role in partially mediating the relationship between social media marketing (SMM) activities and brand equity.

5. Conclusion

This research investigates the impact of social media marketing activities (SMMA) on brand equity in Muslim fashion brands among Gen Z. The mediating effect of brand experience and brand trust was also investigated. In general, our findings indicated that social media marketing activities (SMMAs) play a significant role in brand equity. Furthermore, our finding also reveals that social media marketing activities (SMMAs) can also influence brand experience and brand trust. This study also examines brand experience and how brand trust mediates the link between social media marketing activities (SMMAs) and brand equity. The results show that both variables can be mediated between SMMAs and brand equity. This research offers theoretical implications, such as advancing the literature on the relationship between social media marketing activities and brand equity, especially in modern fashion. Moreover, the literature about the mediating role of brand experience and brand trust will be enhanced by the current empirical data about the modern fashion industry.

We found that our research in SMMAs plays a significant role in brand equity; thus, marketers should manage social media pages, as these platforms facilitate the exchange of information and ideas among consumers. Effective management of social media pages can provide positive outcomes and will leverage superior value and brand experience (Beig & Khan, 2018). Brand experience can also enhance the relationship between SMMAs toward brand equity. Thus, marketers should pay attention to fashion. Muslims should offer media interactive, more trendy, entertaining content and good interaction regarding new products and encourage other consumers to willingly endorse and distribute said information (Kim & Ko, 2012). On the other hand, brand trust can be mediated between SMMAs toward brand equity, so marketers ought to design SMMAs efficiently to capitalize on a more favorable brand experience for consumers, thereby increasing brand loyalty, brand awareness, and perceived quality (Ebrahim, 2020).

We also have limitations of research. First, we used focused subjects, which are the Z generation, because there are also other generations, such as baby boomers and millennials, who have been involved in digital technologies throughout their lives (Aikat, 2019). For further research, we recommend using other subjects, such as the millennial generation and baby boomers, which may get comprehensive results. Both baby boomers and millennials tend to purchase items currently trending on social media. They keep up to date with the latest trends and strive to follow them to assert their presence on social media (Syah et al., 2022). Our focus of this research is limited to the relationships between SMMAs, brand equity, brand experience, and brand trust. Further research should expand the research model by incorporating additional significant constructs that may potentially influence each brand equity driver, such as brand love, brand loyalty, and perceived uniqueness (Bilgin, 2018; Hafez, 2021).

Author Contribution
Author 1: conceptualization, writing original draft, data curation, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, visualization, writing review and editing.
Author 2: review and editing, writing review and editing, supervision.

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Conflict of Interest
The authors declare that the research was conducted without any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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