

## **The Role of Brand Local Image in Mediating the Effect of Brand Experience and Brand Authenticity on Brand Loyalty: A Study on Customers of Modern Outlets of Aming Coffee**

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### **Abstrak**

Pertumbuhan coffee shop lokal yang semakin pesat menuntut strategi diferensiasi berbasis identitas dan pengalaman merek untuk membangun loyalitas pelanggan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh brand authenticity dan brand experience terhadap brand loyalty dengan brand local image sebagai variabel mediasi pada pelanggan Aming Coffee. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif melalui survei online terhadap 230 responden pelanggan Aming Coffee yang pernah melakukan pembelian. Data dianalisis menggunakan metode Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) dengan bantuan perangkat lunak SmartPLS 4. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa brand authenticity dan brand experience berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap brand local image dan brand loyalty. Selain itu, brand local image terbukti secara signifikan memediasi hubungan antara brand authenticity dan brand experience terhadap brand loyalty. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa keaslian merek yang didukung oleh pengalaman merek yang positif serta diperkuat melalui citra berbasis lokal mampu meningkatkan keterikatan dan loyalitas pelanggan dalam jangka panjang.

**Kata Kunci:** *keaslian merek, pengalaman merek, citra merek lokal, loyalitas merek, kedai kopi lokal*

### **Abstract**

The rapid growth of local coffee shops has intensified competition, requiring differentiation strategies based on brand identity and brand experience to build customer loyalty. This study aims to analyze the effect of brand authenticity and brand experience on brand loyalty, with brand local image as a mediating variable among Aming Coffee customers. This research employs a quantitative approach through an online survey of 230 respondents who have previously made purchases. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4 software. The results indicate that brand authenticity and brand experience have a positive and significant effect on both brand local image and brand loyalty. Furthermore, brand local image significantly mediates the relationship between brand authenticity and brand experience on brand loyalty. These findings suggest that brand authenticity, supported by positive brand experiences and strengthened through a strong local brand image, can enhance long-term customer attachment and loyalty.

**Keywords:** *brand authenticity, brand experience, brand local image, brand loyalty, local coffee shop*

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## INTRODUCTION

The coffee industry in Indonesia has experienced significant growth in recent years, both in terms of domestic consumption and the expansion of coffee shop businesses. Indonesia is recognized as one of the largest coffee-producing countries in the world, with production reaching approximately 565 thousand tons. At the same time, coffee consumption per capita has increased from 0.95 kg in 2022 to 1.03 kg in 2025. This increase has been accompanied by the rapid expansion of coffee shop outlets, which grew from around 8,500 outlets in 2022 to approximately 11,500 outlets in 2025, with the national coffee market value reaching USD 11.5 billion (ICO, 2024; BPS, 2024; Mahendra, 2025). This phenomenon reflects a shift in consumer lifestyle, where coffee consumption is no longer merely functional but has evolved into a social and cultural activity within urban communities, thereby supporting the continuous growth of the coffee shop industry.

A similar trend can also be observed in Pontianak City, where the development of coffee shops has increased significantly alongside the transformation of urban lifestyles. Coffee shops are increasingly perceived by younger generations not only as places to drink coffee but also as social spaces, workspaces, and venues for experiential leisure. Pontianak is even widely known as the “City of 1,000 Coffee Shops,” reflecting the rapid emergence of modern coffee shops characterized by Instagrammable interior designs, innovative menu offerings, and digital connectivity that attract young consumers (Indah & Ahmadi, 2023). The incorporation of modern elements such as coworking-friendly spaces, aesthetic interior design, and technology-based experiences has strengthened the coffee culture in Pontianak, which is now closely associated with urban lifestyle values such as social interaction, creativity, and community engagement (Kapriana et al., 2025).

The modernization of coffee shops in Pontianak has also encouraged local coffee brands to adopt innovative concepts that integrate spatial aesthetics, digital marketing strategies, and enhanced customer experiences as key competitive factors. This transformation indicates a shift from traditional coffee shop concepts toward modern experiential spaces that emphasize atmosphere, aesthetics, and customer engagement (Pasaribu, 2024). Such innovations not only broaden the market segment to include young professionals and students but also create emotional value that strengthens consumer attachment to the brand. Consequently, understanding the determinants of brand loyalty in modern coffee shops has become increasingly important for maintaining business sustainability and competitiveness in the rapidly growing coffee industry.

Within this context, brand-related constructs such as brand experience and brand authenticity have gained considerable attention in marketing research. Brand loyalty is considered a fundamental concept reflecting a consumer’s commitment to maintain a long-term relationship with a brand through repeated purchasing behavior and emotional attachment (Putra & Junaedi, 2022). In the context of modern local coffee shops, loyalty is often shaped by the overall consumption experience, including atmosphere, service quality, spatial aesthetics, and digital interaction with customers. Positive experiences during brand interactions help shape favorable consumer

attitudes and strengthen emotional bonds, ultimately encouraging repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth behavior (Lee, 2022).

Brand experience represents the overall sensory, affective, and behavioral responses that consumers develop through their interactions with a brand (Adji & Sabar, 2025). Meanwhile, brand authenticity refers to the extent to which a brand is perceived as genuine, trustworthy, and consistent with its core values, thereby fostering consumer trust and emotional attachment (Hidayat & Setiawati, 2021). Previous studies suggest that authentic brand values combined with positive customer experiences play a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions and strengthening loyalty toward a brand (Adji & Sabar, 2025; Hidayat & Setiawati, 2021).

Another important factor that may strengthen the relationship between brand authenticity, brand experience, and brand loyalty is brand local image. Brand local image reflects consumer perceptions regarding the identity, values, and unique characteristics of a brand that are closely associated with local cultural contexts. Visual branding elements such as colors, typography, and cultural symbols have been shown to contribute to the formation of a strong brand image that differentiates local coffee shops from competitors (Ulita, 2022). In modern coffee shop environments, the integration of local identity with innovative concepts allows brands to create meaningful and relevant experiences for customers whose coffee consumption is closely linked to lifestyle expression.

However, previous studies have produced inconsistent findings regarding the relationships between brand authenticity, brand image, and brand loyalty. Some studies indicate that the effect of brand authenticity on brand image is not significant (Ligaraba et al., 2023), while other studies report that brand authenticity does not significantly influence brand loyalty (Oenica & Maulida, 2024). These inconsistencies suggest that authenticity values are not always directly translated into brand image perception or consumer loyalty. Conceptually, this situation highlights a gap in understanding how brand authenticity is perceived, interpreted, and transformed into long-term consumer commitment within different contexts. Therefore, examining the mediating role of brand local image may provide deeper insights into how authenticity and experience contribute to customer loyalty, particularly within the context of local coffee shop brands.

One relevant case is Aming Coffee in Pontianak. Amid the rapid emergence of new coffee shops, Aming Coffee has successfully maintained its existence as a well-known local brand. The business originally began in 1970 by producing and distributing local coffee to various stores in Pontianak and later established its coffee shop in 2002 (Syaifudin & Normagiat, 2023). Over time, several outlets have undergone modernization to adapt to changing consumer lifestyles that emphasize comfort, aesthetic spaces, and enhanced customer experiences. Despite this transformation, Aming Coffee continues to preserve its traditional atmosphere and local identity, making it a unique example of a local coffee brand that integrates modernization with authenticity.

Based on this phenomenon, it is important to conduct empirical research that examines the mediating role of brand local image in strengthening the relationship between brand experience, brand authenticity, and brand loyalty. This study aims to analyze the influence of brand authenticity and brand experience on brand loyalty with brand local image as a mediating variable among customers of Aming Coffee in Pontianak. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of

branding literature by integrating authenticity, experience, and local identity perspectives, while also providing practical insights for local coffee shop managers in building sustainable competitive advantages through authentic brand identity and meaningful customer experiences.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative approach using a survey strategy and was categorized as associative causal research, as it aimed to examine the causal relationships between independent variables (brand experience and brand authenticity) and the dependent variable (brand loyalty), with brand local image acting as a mediating variable (Sugiyono, 2013). The research instrument consisted of a structured questionnaire developed based on relevant theories and previous empirical studies. The questionnaire was distributed online through Google Forms and shared via social media and digital communication channels that reach modern coffee shop consumers. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The measurement indicators were adapted from established studies, including brand experience from Kim and Chao (2019), brand authenticity from Helma, Andika, and Apriyana (2024) as well as Dogrul and Kosar (2025), brand local image from Rahmawati, Astuti, and Kusmantini (2023), and brand loyalty from Bernarto et al. (2020).

The population of this study consisted of consumers of modern local coffee shops in Pontianak who had visited both modern and traditional outlets of Aming Coffee. The sampling technique used was non-probability purposive sampling with specific criteria: (1) respondents residing in Pontianak, (2) aged between 17 and 55 years, and (3) having visited both modern and traditional outlets of Aming Coffee within the last month. The minimum sample size was determined using the Cochran formula, resulting in a minimum requirement of 96 respondents. However, to enhance representativeness and the reliability of the findings, this study targeted a total of 200 respondents (Hair et al., 2021). Data collection was conducted online to facilitate broader access to respondents who met the research criteria.

The collected data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the assistance of SmartPLS 4 software. The analysis was conducted in two stages: evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and evaluation of the structural model (inner model). The outer model assessment included convergent validity (outer loading  $> 0.70$  and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)  $> 0.50$ ), discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio, and construct reliability using Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.70. Subsequently, the inner model evaluation assessed the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ), and effect size ( $f^2$ ) to measure the strength of the structural model. The significance of the relationships between variables and the mediating effect of brand local image were tested using the bootstrapping procedure. Mediation effects were considered significant when the p-value was less than 0.05 or the t-statistic exceeded 1.96, and were further classified as partial or full mediation based on the significance of both direct and indirect effects.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The demographic profile of respondents indicates that the majority of Aming Coffee customers in this study are female (54.8%), slightly higher than male customers (45.2%). This finding suggests a shift in the customer segmentation of Aming Coffee, which was traditionally perceived as a male-dominated coffee shop. The dominance of female respondents may reflect the transformation of Aming Coffee outlets into more modern and inclusive spaces that emphasize comfort, aesthetic atmosphere, and social interaction. In terms of age, most respondents fall within the 17–25 years old group (57%), indicating that the primary customer segment consists of young consumers. This is consistent with the respondents' educational background, which is dominated by senior high school graduates (42.2%) and undergraduate students (40.4%), as well as their employment status as students (47.4%). These characteristics represent Generation Z and early Millennials who often perceive coffee shops as social spaces, study environments, and lifestyle-oriented venues that support digital connectivity and aesthetic experiences.

From an economic perspective, most respondents reported monthly expenditures ranging from IDR 1,500,001–3,000,000 (36.5%), followed by IDR 3,000,001–4,500,000 (32.2%). This indicates that Aming Coffee customers are largely from the middle-income segment with relatively stable purchasing power. In terms of visit frequency, the highest proportions were three visits (32.2%) and four visits (31.3%) per month, while more than half of respondents (50.4%) have been customers for over two years. These findings highlight a relatively high level of repeat visitation and long-term customer engagement. Such patterns suggest that Aming Coffee has successfully positioned itself as a coffee shop that offers affordable prices and perceived value for middle-class consumers, thereby encouraging repeated visits and fostering long-term relationships through consistent product quality and brand relevance.

Regarding behavioral preferences, the most frequently visited alternative coffee shop besides Aming Coffee is Kopi Asiang (23.5%), with the primary reason for choosing other coffee shops being a more comfortable atmosphere (38.3%). Similarly, within Aming Coffee outlets, Aming Coffee Gaia Bumi Raya emerged as the most frequently visited location (23.5%), mainly due to its comfortable atmosphere (43.9%). The primary purpose of visiting Aming Coffee is socializing or relaxing (44.8%), followed by working or completing assignments (20.9%), with most customers spending between one to three hours per visit. In terms of product preference, palm sugar milk coffee is the most favored menu item (30.9%), indicating consumers' preference for beverages aligned with popular coffee trends. Overall, these findings confirm that Aming Coffee is perceived not only as a place to consume coffee but also as a social and experiential space that emphasizes comfort, atmosphere, and a holistic customer experience.

**Table 1.** Convergent Validity and Composite Reliability

Variables	Items	Loading Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Brand Experience	BE1 The logo design of the Aming Coffee brand is visually appealing.	0.811	0.942	0.963	0.897
	BE2 I feel familiar with the Aming Coffee brand.	0.810			

	BE3	I always seek information about products from the Aming Coffee brand.	0.800			
<i>Brand Authenticity</i>	BA1	The Aming Coffee brand maintains consistent values over time.	0.947			
	BA2	Aming Coffee is an authentic brand that has been used for a long time.	0.949	0.732	0.848	0.651
	BA3	The Aming Coffee brand offers products that match its promises.	0.944			
<i>Brand Local Image</i>	BLI1	The Aming Coffee brand provides services that reflect the local identity.	0.922			
	BLI2	The Aming Coffee brand consistently delivers services that meet customer expectations.	0.924	0.914	0.946	0.854
	BLI3	The Aming Coffee brand has a distinctive character in the taste of its coffee.	0.926			
<i>Brand Loyalty</i>	BL1	I will repurchase products from the Aming Coffee brand.	0.909			
	BL2	I will recommend the Aming Coffee brand to others.	0.895			
	BL3	I will continue to choose the Aming Coffee brand even when there are many other brand options available.	0.882	0.915	0.940	0.796
	BL4	I consider the Aming Coffee brand as part of my identity.	0.882			

The results of the measurement model evaluation indicate that all constructs in this study meet the required criteria for validity and reliability in SEM-PLS analysis. Brand Experience demonstrates strong indicator reliability with standardized loading factors ranging from 0.800 to 0.949, supported by a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.942, Composite Reliability (CR) of 0.963, and an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of 0.897. These results confirm that the indicators consistently represent the construct of brand experience.

Brand Authenticity also meets the measurement criteria with loading factors ranging from 0.800 to 0.900, a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.732, Composite Reliability of 0.848, and an AVE of 0.651, indicating adequate internal consistency and convergent validity. Similarly, Brand Local Image shows strong validity with loading factors ranging from 0.905 to 0.949, a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.915, Composite Reliability of 0.946, and an AVE of 0.854. These values demonstrate that the indicators reliably capture consumers' perceptions of the brand's local identity and characteristics.

Furthermore, Brand Loyalty also exhibits strong measurement properties with loading factors ranging from 0.856 to 0.918, a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.913, Composite Reliability of 0.939, and an AVE of 0.796. Overall, these results confirm that all constructs in this study satisfy the recommended thresholds for convergent validity and internal reliability. Therefore, the measurement model is considered robust and suitable for further structural model testing and hypothesis analysis

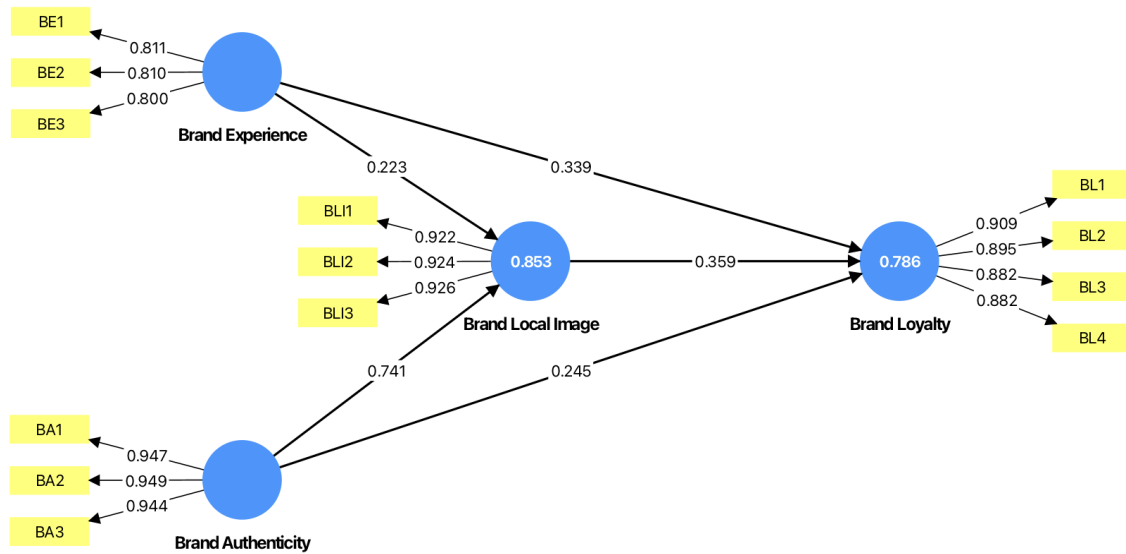


Figure 1: PLS-SEM Algorithm

Table 2. Discriminant Validity – Cross Loading

Indicators	Brand Authenticity	Brand Experience	Brand Local Image	Brand Loyalty
BE1	0.811	0.595	0.631	0.626
BE2	0.810	0.719	0.720	0.657
BE3	0.800	0.535	0.560	0.684
BA1	0.717	<b>0.947</b>	0.849	0.773
BA2	0.710	<b>0.949</b>	0.854	0.776
BA3	0.754	<b>0.944</b>	0.888	0.817
BLI1	0.714	0.818	<b>0.922</b>	0.766
BLI2	0.762	0.859	<b>0.924</b>	0.810
BLI3	0.720	0.851	<b>0.926</b>	0.784
BL1	0.743	0.806	0.813	<b>0.909</b>
BL2	0.728	0.814	0.828	<b>0.895</b>
BL3	0.724	0.694	0.721	<b>0.882</b>
BL4	0.702	0.644	0.661	<b>0.882</b>

Based on the results of the discriminant validity test using cross-loading values, all indicators of the constructs Brand Authenticity, Brand Experience, Brand Local Image, and Brand Loyalty show the highest loading values on their respective constructs. The primary loading values of all indicators exceed the minimum threshold of 0.60, with most indicators demonstrating high loading values ( $\geq 0.80$ ), thereby meeting the recommended criteria for discriminant validity. Furthermore, the cross-loading values of each indicator on other constructs are lower than their loading values on the intended construct. This indicates that there is no overlap among the constructs, and each indicator clearly represents its corresponding latent variable. These findings confirm that each indicator is capable of specifically measuring its respective construct while being clearly distinguishable from other constructs. Overall, the results demonstrate that the measurement model in this study satisfies the requirements of discriminant validity, and all indicators are considered appropriate for further structural model analysis.

**Table 3.** Discriminant Validity – Fornell-Lacrker

	<i>BA</i>	<i>BE</i>	<i>BLI</i>	<i>BL</i>
<i>Brand Authenticity</i>	0.947			
<i>Brand Experience</i>	0.768	0.807		
<i>Brand Local Image</i>	0.913	0.793	0.924	
<i>Brand Loyalty</i>	0.833	0.812	0.852	0.892

Based on the results of the discriminant validity test using the Fornell–Larcker criterion, the square root values of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each variable, as presented on the main diagonal of the correlation matrix, are greater than their correlations with other variables. This finding indicates that all research constructs Brand Experience, Brand Authenticity, Brand Local Image, and Brand Loyalty have met the required criteria for discriminant validity. These results suggest that each construct is able to represent and explain its respective indicators more effectively than other constructs in the model. Therefore, the measurement model in this study can be considered valid and appropriate for further structural model analysis.

**Table 4.** R-Square

<i>Variable</i>	<i>R-square</i>	<i>R-square adjusted</i>
<i>Brand Local Image</i>	0.853	0.852
<i>Brand Loyalty</i>	0.786	0.783

Based on the results of the coefficient of determination test, the adjusted R-square value for Brand Local Image is 0.852, indicating that Brand Experience and Brand Authenticity simultaneously explain 85.2% of the variance in Brand Local Image, which is categorized as a substantial level of explanatory power according to the criteria proposed by Hair et al. (2021). Meanwhile, Brand Loyalty shows an adjusted R-square value of 0.783, suggesting that Brand Experience, Brand Authenticity, and Brand Local Image collectively explain 78.3% of the variance in Brand Loyalty, which also falls within the substantial category. These findings demonstrate that the structural model possesses strong explanatory power and highlight the important role of Brand Local Image as a mediating variable in strengthening the influence of Brand Experience and Brand Authenticity on Brand Loyalty.

**Table 5.** Hypothesis Testing

<i>Path</i>	<i>Original sample (O)</i>	<i>Sample mean (M)</i>	<i>Standard deviation (STDEV)</i>	<i>T Statistics</i>	<i>P Values</i>	<i>Results</i>
H1 BE → BLI	0.223	0.223	0.048	4.646	0.000	Accepted
H2 BA → BLI	0.741	0.742	0.042	17.633	0.000	Accepted
H3 BLI → BL	0.359	0.354	0.091	3.943	0.000	Accepted
H4 BE → BL	0.339	0.342	0.055	6.153	0.000	Accepted
H5 BA → BL	0.245	0.248	0.086	2.861	0.004	Accepted

H6	BE → BLI → BL	0.080	0.079	0.026	3.100	0.002	Accepted
H7	BA → BLI → BL	0.266	0.263	0.07	3.785	0.000	Accepted

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that all research hypotheses (H1–H7) are supported, as each structural path shows T-statistics greater than 1.96 and p-values lower than 0.05, confirming statistically significant relationships between the variables. Brand Authenticity and Brand Experience are found to have positive and significant effects on Brand Local Image, with Brand Authenticity demonstrating the strongest influence ( $\beta = 0.741$ ), indicating that consumers' perceptions of brand authenticity play a dominant role in shaping the local brand image. Furthermore, Brand Local Image has a positive and significant effect on Brand Loyalty ( $\beta = 0.359$ ), highlighting that a strong local brand image can enhance customer loyalty. In addition to indirect effects, Brand Authenticity and Brand Experience also have significant direct effects on Brand Loyalty, with Brand Experience showing a larger coefficient ( $\beta = 0.339$ ) compared to Brand Authenticity ( $\beta = 0.245$ ). Moreover, the mediation analysis reveals that Brand Local Image significantly mediates the effects of Brand Authenticity and Brand Experience on Brand Loyalty, with indirect effect coefficients of 0.266 and 0.080, respectively. These findings suggest that brand loyalty is not only influenced directly by brand authenticity and brand experience but is also strengthened through the strategic role of brand local image as a mediating mechanism in fostering long-term relationships with consumers.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that brand experience and brand authenticity have positive and significant effects on brand local image and brand loyalty in the context of the local coffee brand Aming Coffee. The findings indicate that meaningful consumer experiences, reflected through sensory, affective, and intellectual interactions with the brand, contribute to shaping a favorable perception of the brand's local identity and strengthen consumers' loyalty. In addition, the perception of brand authenticity expressed through continuity, originality, and integrity plays a crucial role in reinforcing the credibility and distinctiveness of the brand, which subsequently enhances both its local image and consumer attachment.

Furthermore, the results confirm that brand local image plays a strategic mediating role in strengthening the relationship between brand experience, brand authenticity, and brand loyalty. This suggests that loyalty toward local brands is not only driven by direct consumer experiences and perceptions of authenticity, but is also reinforced through the development of a strong local brand image that reflects the brand's identity, cultural values, and closeness to the community. The introduction of brand local image as a contextual extension of brand image contributes to the branding literature by highlighting the importance of locality and cultural identity as key mechanisms in fostering long-term consumer loyalty toward local brands.

Despite these contributions, the scope of this study is limited to a single local brand, which restricts the generalizability of the findings across different brands and industries. Future research is therefore encouraged to expand the investigation to multiple local coffee brands or other locally rooted businesses across different regions, while also incorporating broader indicators of brand local image, such as brand communication strategies and community engagement. Such approaches may provide

a deeper understanding of how local brand identity can be strategically managed to sustain consumer loyalty in increasingly competitive markets.

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