WORLD WIDE JOURNAL OF
MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT

Yahui Rao
Faculty of Art, Sustainability & Creative Industry, Universiti Perguruan Sultan Idris, Tanjung Malim, Malaysia.

Muhammad Zaffwan Idris
Faculty of Art, Sustainability & Creative Industry, Universiti Perguruan Sultan Idris, Tanjung Malim, Malaysia.

Haoyu Jing
Faculty of research, Beijing national capital committee, Beijing, China.

The Relationship between Brand Equity and Consumer Willingness to Purchase-A Case Study of POPMART Blind Box

Yahui Rao, Muhammad Zaffwan Idris, Haoyu Jing

Abstract
Recently, blind boxes have seen rising popularity, with POPMART blind box products standing out among the various brands. This study seeks to examine whether there is a relationship between brand equity and consumer willingness to purchase. This study utilizes quantitative research approach, the researcher conducted a questionnaire survey on 238 blind box consumers between the ages of 18-25 through cross-sectional sampling. And the data collected was analyzed using Smart-PLS tool (PLS SEM). The results indicate a strong relationship between the four dimensions of BAV theory, as assessed by Khan's brand equity tool, and the customers' willingness to purchase.

Keywords: POPMART, blind box, brand equity, willingness to purchase, customers.

1. Introduction
In recent times, blind box items have gained significant popularity not only in China but also in several other nations like the US, Italy, Australia, Malaysia, etc. In contrast to toys intended for children, blind box toys are a type of style toy often referred to as art toy. Their target market is larger. Consumers purchase blind boxes; however, they don't always purchase the same brand. There are other blind box brands available, including POPMART, 52TOTS, TOPTOY, 1983, SONEYANGLE, and others. Nonetheless, in the Chinese market, POPMART has consistently remained the favored brand of blind box (Ruiyuan Qi et al., 2021).

The POPMART blind box brand is appealing because of its distinctive designs, superb craftsmanship, collaborations with well-known companies and artists, and encouraging consumer interaction. These elements have influenced POPMART's brand equity, making it the preferred blind box brand for a large number of customers and maintaining its leadership position in the industry. According to Yutong Shi (2021), POPMART is a newcomer to the industry and needs both more customers and buy intent to sustain its brand position over the long run.

Given the context provided, this study's authors raise the question: Does a link exist between POPMART's brand equity and the purchasing intent of customers?

2. Research hypotheses and research model
Aaker (1991) found that brand equity influences consumers' likelihood to purchase. Customers who have a high brand equity are more likely to buy the product regularly or at a higher price, indicating a positive relationship between the two. Numerous earlier studies (Sarfraz Ashraf et al.,2019; Subhankar Das.,2020; Chinnasamy Agamudainambhi Malarvizhi et al.,2022; Denise Louvet.,2023) have shown a connection between brand equity and consumers' propensity to buy. Therefore, alternative hypotheses will be utilized.

The BAV (Brand Asset Valuator) brand equity model is widely used in analyzing brand equity and customer willingness to pay (Clemens Bechter et al., 2016; Jenkins, M. E. F.,2021). According to Khan (2009), the model measures the equity value of a brand by evaluating different dimensions of the brand (Differentiation, relevance, esteem and

Correspondence:
Yahui Rao
Faculty of Art, Sustainability & Creative Industry, Universiti Perguruan Sultan Idris, Tanjung Malim, Malaysia.

knowledge). Past research has not thoroughly dissected the link between the individual components of brand equity theory and customer willingness to purchase. Thus, this study aims to explore the relationship between Khan's (2009) four brand equity dimensions and consumer willingness to purchase.
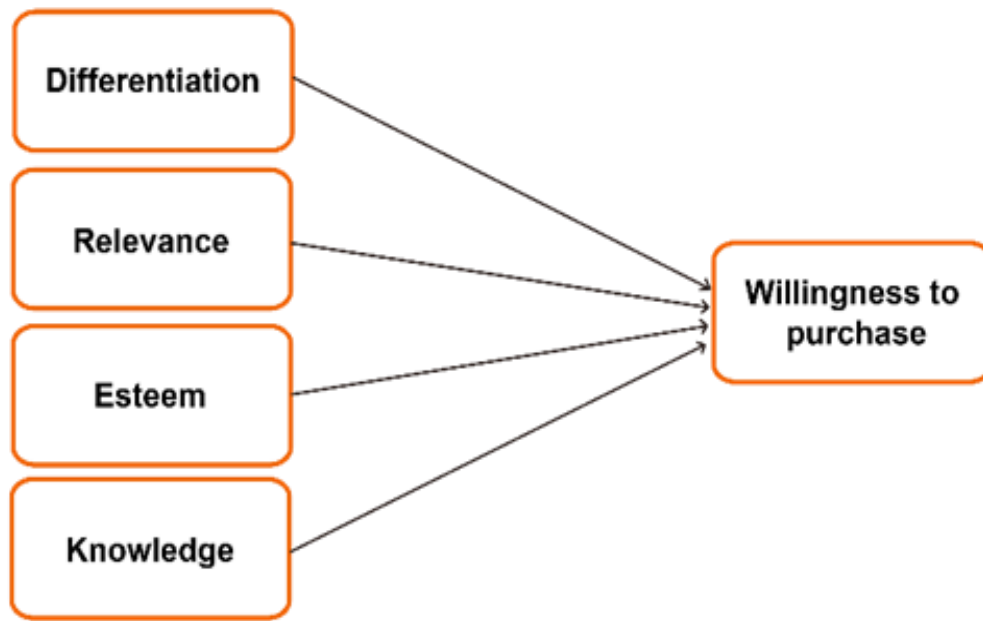

Fig. 2.1: Research Framework.

Therefore, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: There is a relationship between Differentiation dimension and customer's willingness to purchase.

H2: There is a relationship between Relevance dimension and customer's willingness to purchase.

H3: There is a relationship between Esteem dimension and customer's willingness to purchase.

H4: There is a relationship between Knowledge dimension and customers' willingness to purchase.

1. Methodology

In this research, a quantitative approach was utilized, surveying 238 blind box users aged 18-25 using cross-sectional sampling. Data analysis was conducted through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS SEM) using Smart PLS version 3.
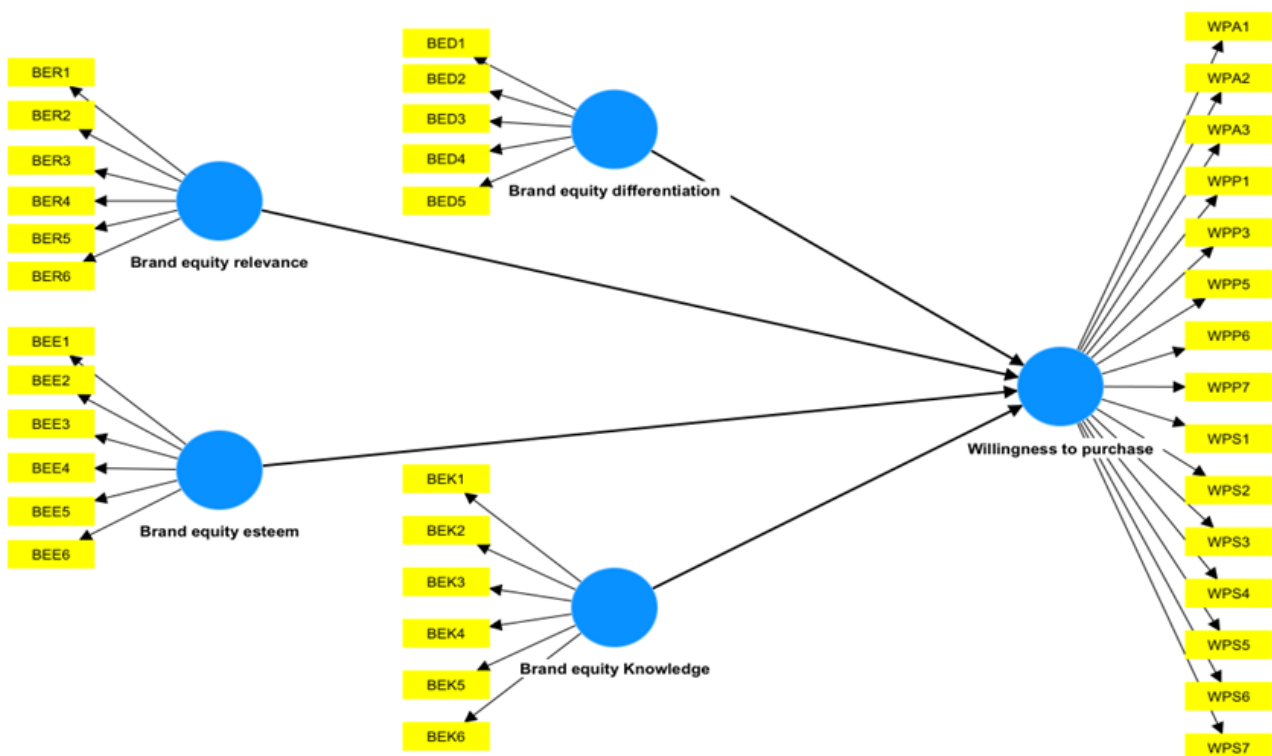
2. Findings and discussion

Fig. 4.1: Research Model

4.1. Reliability and validity.

Table 4.1: Results for Cronbach's Alpha and Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

	Cronbach's alpha	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Brand equity Knowledge	0.932	0.695
Brand equity differentiation	0.930	0.724
Brand equity esteem	0.938	0.717
Brand equity relevance	0.908	0.623
Willingness to purchase	0.957	0.597

The findings showed that all Cronbach's Alpha (CA) values exceeded 0.80. As per Cronbach (1951), the range is from 0 (entirely unreliable) to 1 (fully reliable), with a recommended threshold for confirmatory studies being CA > 0.800.It can be assumed that all constructs are fully consistent with internal consistency reliability.

Construct validity comprises two elements: convergent validity and discriminant validity. Fornell and Larcker (1981) aimed to quantify the proportion of variance the latent variable (LV) captures from its indicators relative to the variance from measurement error. Suggested threshold:

AVE > 0.50. it can be assumed that all constructs are fully consistent with consistent validity.

4.2 In this study, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to test the hypotheses and the Alternative hypothesis was chosen for this study. Therefore, hypothesis testing was conducted with the aim of confirming whether the Alternative hypothesis is acceptable or not. The researcher opted to employ the logarithmic value or "r" interpretation as recommended by Schober et al. (2018) to gauge the strength of relationships between the independent variables.

Table 4.2: Correlation Results.

	Brand equity knowledge	Brand equity differentiation	Brand equity esteem	Brand equity relevance	Willingness to purchase
Brand equity Knowledge	1.000				
Brand equity differentiation	0.717	1.000			
Brand equity esteem	0.667	0.686	1.000		
Brand equity relevance	0.740	0.867	0.911	1.000	
Willingness to purchase	**0.833**	**0.707**	**0.786**	**0.846**	1.000

According to Schober et al. (2018), r-value of 0.70-0.89 represents strong correlation. The above table shows that (i) Differentiation and Willingness to purchase have an r-value of 0.707 within the 95% confidence interval for a strong correlation.(ii) Relevance and Willingness to purchase have an r of 0.846 at 95% confidence interval for strong correlation.(iii) Esteem and Willingness to purchase have

an r-value of 0.786 at 95% confidence interval for a strong correlation.(iv) Knowledge and Willingness to purchase have an r-value of 0.833 at 95% confidence interval for a strong correlation.

4.3 R-square.

Table 4.3: R-square Results.

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Willingness to purchase	**0.827**	0.825

The coefficient of determination of R2 for willingness to purchase is 0.827, which according to Cohen (1989) represents large coefficient determination. In essence, brand equity accounts for 82.7% (a value of 0.827) of the variance in the pair of brand equity, while the remaining 17.3% is attributed to variables not considered in this research. This implies that the brand equity variable and the corresponding indicator can be utilized to clarify the percentage change in the Willingness to purchase variable and the corresponding indicator.

4.4 Discussion
Therefore, according to this model, all hypotheses are accepted and can be explained as follows: (i) There is a strong relationship between brand equity Differentiation dimension and customers' willingness to purchase. (ii) There is a strong relationship between brand equity Relevance dimension from willingness to purchase. (iii)

There is a strong relationship between brand equity Esteem dimension and customers' willingness to purchase. (iv) There is a strong relationship between the brand equity Knowledge dimension and customers' willingness to purchase. In conclusion, there is a strong relationship between all four dimensions of Khan's brand equity BAV and customers' willingness to purchase.

We reside in the digital era. The emergence of the internet, smartphones, and other tech innovations marks this period (J. H. Gao, & Chen, R. 2022). Publicity from POPMART can be seen being placed on various social platforms and video sites, and this type of publicity gives young people a quick sense of identification with the brand. Recognition and comfort are sought in virtual communities and self-identity is built through imaginative and ostentatious consumption (J.W. Hu, 2020). Consumer behavior has a significant impact on purchase (Aulia Asmarani & Jonathan Sarwono, 2023). Making positive consumer

behavior by building strong brand equity (Mohammad Hakkak et al.,2015) is conducive to increase consumer willingness to purchase.

3. Conclusion

The study reveals pronounced correlations between various dimensions of Khan's BAV brand equity and consumer willingness to purchase. Specifically, there are strong relationships between the Differentiation, Relevance, Esteem, and Knowledge dimensions and consumer willingness to purchase. In essence, all these four dimensions collectively have a compelling influence on customer willingness to purchase.

References

1. Aaker, D. (1991). Brand equity. La gestione del valore della marca, 347, 356.
2. Al Mamun, A., Matsuzaki, K., Islam, R., Hossain, S., Hossain, M. E., Katakura, M., ... & Hashimoto, M. (2022). Chronic administration of thymoquinone enhances adult hippocampal neurogenesis and improves memory in rats via regulating the BDNF signaling pathway. Neurochemical Research, 1-19.
3. Bechter, C., Farinelli, G., Daniel, R. D., & Frey, M. (2016). Advertising between archetype and brand personality. Administrative Sciences, 6(2), 5.
4. Cohen, I. J. (1989). Structuration theory: Anthony Giddens and the constitution of social life (p. 17). London: Macmillan.
5. Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. psychometrika, 16(3), 297-334.
6. Das, S. (2020). Innovations in digital banking service brand equity and millennial consumerism. In Digital transformation and innovative services for business and learning (pp. 62-79). IGI Global.
7. Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error: Algebra and statistics.
8. Gao, J., & Chen, R. (2022). Understanding consumer behaviors of Generation Z under China's blind box economy: case company: POP MART.
9. J. W. Hu. (2020). Media use and identity of the hipster group. Graduate School of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, (1), 58.
10. Jian, X. (2022). Business Strategy and Risk Analysis in Blind Box Economy-a Case Study of POP MART. In 2022 2nd International Conference on Economic Development and Business Culture (ICEDBC 2022) (pp. 1257-1264). Atlantis Press.
11. Jenkins, M. E. F. (2021). Brand Equity and Consumer Willingness to Pay Higher Prices for Angus Beef in Fast-Food Restaurants (Doctoral dissertation, Grand Canyon University).
12. Hakkak, M., Vahdati, H., & Nejad, S. H. M. (2015). Study the role of customer-based brand equity in the brand personality effect on purchase intention. International Journal of Asian Social Science, 5(7), 369-381.
13. Khan, B. M. (2009). Operationalising Young and Rubicam's BAV™ as a consumer-based brand equity measure. J. For International Business and Entrepreneurship Development, 4(4), 314.
14. Louvet, D. (2023). The effects of brand equity on millennials' purchase decision for sports nutrition products in Ireland. DBS Business Review, 5.
15. Malarvizhi, C. A., Al Mamun, A., Jayashree, S., Naznen, F., & Abir, T. (2022). Modelling the significance of social media marketing activities, brand equity and loyalty to predict consumers' willingness to pay premium price for portable tech gadgets. Heliyon, 8(8).
16. Qi, R. (2021, December). Strategic Direction for the Development of SMEs-Based on the Successful Experience of POP MART. In 2021 3rd International Conference on Economic Management and Cultural Industry (ICEMCI 2021) (pp. 2750-2754). Atlantis Press.
17. Schober, P., Boer, C., & Schwarte, L. A. (2018). Correlation coefficients: appropriate use and interpretation. Anesthesia & analgesia, 126(5), 1763-1768.
18. Sehar, R., Ashraf, S., & Azam, F. (2019). The influence of social media's marketing efforts on brand equity and consumer response. IUP Journal of Marketing Management, 18(2), 30-53