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The Influence of Social Media Content and Café Atmosphere on Coffee Shop Brand Equity in Bandung City

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ABSTRACT

The large number of coffee shops in Bandung has implications for increasingly fierce competition. Brand equity is one of the strategic assets that can help ensure the sustainability and competitive advantage of a coffee shop. This study aims to examine the influence of social media content and café atmosphere on coffee shop brand equity in Bandung. The research was conducted using a quantitative approach. Primary data was sourced from questionnaires using a 5-point Likert scale. The sample size in this study is 150 respondents. Sampling was conducted using a purposive sampling technique. The research findings reveal that the café atmosphere has a greater influence than social media content in creating coffee shop brand equity. These findings provide a theoretical contribution to the formation of brand equity in the context of modern retail business, particularly in the coffee shop industry. Practically, the results of this research can serve as input for coffee shop managers in Bandung City and other areas in designing brand marketing strategies. First, the café atmosphere needs to be designed with an emphasis on ambiance, esthetic facilities, lighting, and table layout, making it more attractive and providing a satisfying customer experience. Second, management needs to maximize the use of social media as a means of building emotional interaction and customer engagement thru content created by the company as well as by customers.

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INTRODUCTION

Bandung has long been known as a culinary city in West Java, boasting a variety of unique cuisines and serving as a culinary destination for both local residents and tourists. Bandung's appeal as a culinary city is supported by the presence of numerous restaurants, food stalls, eateries, and cafes scattered across various districts. Bandung City Open Data shows the availability of data on restaurants and cafes in Bandung City for the period 2020 to 2024, indicating the development of culinary business activities in the city (opendata.bandung.go.id).

In line with its culinary reputation, Bandung is also one of the fastest-growing cities for the cafe business. According to data from golali.id, in 2022 there were 594 cafes in Bandung City, spread across five sub-districts: 97 in Bandung Wetan, 68 in Coblong, 65 in Sumur Bandung, 59 in Lengkong, and 39 in Sukajadi. Among those cafes is a coffee shop. The large number of cafes is part of a national trend where the culture of "coffee drinking" and the modern coffee lifestyle are becoming increasingly strong.

The growing number of coffee shops has implications for increasingly fierce competition among coffee shops in Bandung. When many players are competing for the same consumer attention, brand differentiation becomes extremely important. With the rapid pace of competition, brand equity has become one of the strategic assets that can determine the sustainability and competitive advantage of a coffee shop. Brand equity is the added value that a brand provides to a specific product, reflected in the influence of consumer knowledge about the brand on their response to marketing activities, including how strong, positive, and unique the associations consumers remember about the brand are (Balandies et al., 2017). Therefore, research on the factors influencing brand equity in coffee shops in Bandung is important. Currently, social media has become a very important medium for marketers. Social media allows for two-way interaction between business owners and their customers. Previous researchers stated that social media marketing has a positive influence on brand equity thru the roles of word of mouth and e-word of mouth (Dhewi & Kurnianto, 2023). Similarly, the research results of Prameswari & Giri (2022) show that social media marketing has an influence on building brand awareness and image, which can form the basis of brand equity and subsequently affect purchase intention at coffee shops. This is also in line with the research findings of Alkadmani (2024) at coffee shops in Istanbul, Turkey.

On the other hand, café atmosphere, in terms of interior design, ambiance, comfort, lighting, music, layout, aroma, and other physical elements, is also a crucial element in shaping the consumption experience and brand image. A study examining the impact of servicescape found that the physical aspects of coffee shops in Medan can influence perceptions of quality, satisfaction, loyalty, and purchasing decisions (Verinanda et al., 2021). Similarly, the results of similar research at coffee shops in Sidoarjo (Ismail et al., 2025) and Samarinda (Purwadi et al., 2020) indicate that café atmosphere can enhance the brand equity of coffee shops.

However, in the context of coffee shops in Bandung, there is still little empirical research that combines these two variables, namely social media

content and café atmosphere, and directly tests their impact on brand equity. In other words, there is a research gap in the local context, namely that not many people have investigated how social media content and coffee shop atmosphere influence coffee shop brand equity in the city of Bandung. Based on the gap, this study aims to examine the influence of social media content and café atmosphere on brand equity in coffee shops in Bandung. The implications of this research are expected to help coffee shop owners and managers design aligned marketing strategies and space designs to strengthen their brand position in the competition.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Influence of social media content on brand equity

Social media has become a necessity for branding because of a brand's ability to connect with consumers in a more interactive and individual way (Du Plessis, 2017). The large number of social media users worldwide and the increasing amount of time spent by each user on social media daily have made social media an indispensable part of the contemporary marketing mix (Zahoor, 2022). Social media content includes content created by companies as well as content created by other social media users (Zahoor, 2022). Social media marketing, product quality, and store atmosphere have a positive and significant impact on the brand image of coffee shops in Aceh (Susanty & Kenny, 2015). Social media marketing and brand experience positively influence brand equity (Safrudin & Anggarani, 2024). Social media also affects customer equity in fast-food restaurants (Zahoor, 2022). This indicates that social media content can increase brand equity, leading to the formulation of the first hypothesis as follows:

H1: Social media content has a significant effect on brand equity.

The influence of café atmosphere on brand equity

The store atmosphere can be another reason for consumers to be interested in and choose where they will visit and buy, so retailers need to be aware of the importance of store atmosphere in creating a shopping experience, which in turn provides consumer satisfaction (Purwadi et al., 2020). The store atmosphere is not merely an esthetic element but also a driver of customer retention (Ismail et al., 2025). The store atmosphere significantly influences brand equity (Oktaviani & Barusman, 2025). Coffee shop configuration, trends, and attractiveness have a positive impact on brand equity (Kim et al., 2012). This indicates that the café atmosphere can enhance brand equity, leading to the formulation of the second hypothesis as follows:

H2: The café atmosphere significantly influences brand equity.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research was conducted using a quantitative approach, which emphasizes numerical assessment of the phenomena being studied (Malhotra, 2010). Primary data is sourced from questionnaires, which are lists of questions generated from the operationalization of variables used to collect data and

information directly from the research object. In this study, the population consists of coffee shop customers in Bandung City who are over 18 years old. The age limit of over 18 years was chosen because that age is considered to indicate a person's ability to behave (Fishbein & Middlestadt, 1995).

The sample size determination is based on the use of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) as an analytical tool. Generally, using SEM requires a large sample size. According to Ferdinand (2002), the sample size for testing a model using SEM is between 100-200 samples or depends on the number of parameters used across all latent variables. In this study, the sample size was 150 respondents, and sampling was conducted using the purposive sampling technique.

The measurement of social media content variables refers to Zahoor (2022), which includes the dimensions of firm-generated content and user-generated content. The measurement of café atmosphere variables refers to Şahin & Yazıcıoğlu (2025), which includes the dimensions of facility esthetics, ambiance, lighting, and table layout. Meanwhile, the measurement of brand equity variables refers to Justine & Dunhill (2025), which includes brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Outer Model

The measurement model validation was conducted on 50 respondents. This validation process examines the indicators of a construct using convergent validity tests, which are data construct-forming indicators that have high factor loadings with the construct's internal reliability and composite reliability, commonly used to evaluate construct reliability. Convergent validity is achieved through Average Variance Extracted > 0.50 and loadings factor with an expected value > 0.50.

Composite Reliability (CR)

Table 1. Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Cronbach Alpha, dan

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Social media content	0.906	0.925	0.610
User generated content	0.821	0.883	0.657
Firm-generated content	0.800	0.870	0.628
Café atmosphere	0.957	0.963	0.683
Facility aesthetics	0.828	0.897	0.744
Ambience	0.860	0.915	0.782

Lighting	0.890	0.932	0.820
Table layout	0.839	0.903	0.756
Brand equity	0.975	0.977	0.586
Brand Awareness	0.875	0.915	0.729
Brand association	0.913	0.933	0.698
Perceived Quality	0.932	0.943	0.605
Brand Loyalty	0.929	0.941	0.641

The validity and reliability of each construct, both dimensions, are explained in Table 1 above. AVE is an adequate measure of convergent validity. If its value is greater than 0.50, meaning that one latent variable is able to explain more than half of the variance in its indicators on average (Chin & Todd, 1995). Table 1 shows that all constructs have AVE values > 0.5 and composite reliability (CR) is adequate because each latent variable has a value above 0.7, indicating high reliability for all models.

Discriminant Validity

The Fornell-Larcker Criterion is a measure for assessing discriminant validity, which involves evaluating the outer model to ensure that each construct has a concept distinct from other constructs in the same model. The criterion is that the square root of the AVE for each construct must be greater than the correlation of that construct with other constructs.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

	Brand equity	Café atmosphere	Social media content
Brand equity	0.766		
Café atmosphere	0.711	0.827	
Social media content	0.531	0.186	0.781

Table 2 shows that the square root of the AVE for each construct has a value greater than the correlation with other constructs. Suppose the AVE root of brand equity is 0.766, while the correlation with other variables is smaller, at 0.711 and 0.531. This means that the three constructs above have discriminant validity. Another measure of discriminant validity is cross loadings, which describes the correlation between indicators and all constructs in the model. The goal is to ensure that each indicator has the highest correlation only with the construct it represents compared to other constructs, or that the indicator is statistically closer to the construct it measures than to others.

Table 3. Cross Loadings

Indicator	Brand equity	Café atmosphere	Social media content
SMC1	0.409	0.174	0.813
SMC2	0.452	0.121	0.842
SMC3	0.375	0.102	0.638
SMC4	0.400	0.063	0.850
SMC5	0.406	0.153	0.811
SMC6	0.353	0.149	0.824
SMC7	0.366	0.126	0.807
SMC8	0.580	0.299	0.625
Atmo1	0.588	0.833	0.119
Atmo2	0.497	0.831	0.171
Atmo3	0.622	0.800	0.188
Atmo4	0.711	0.913	0.189
Atmo5	0.494	0.812	0.048
Atmo6	0.704	0.843	0.180
Atmo7	0.524	0.826	0.102
Atmo8	0.606	0.877	0.150
Atmo9	0.593	0.844	0.158
Atmo10	0.592	0.877	0.192
Atmo11	0.446	0.604	0.195
Atmo12	0.639	0.822	0.160
BE1	0.684	0.397	0.429
BE2	0.882	0.751	0.353
BE3	0.757	0.467	0.607
BE4	0.859	0.633	0.482
BE5	0.777	0.534	0.594
BE6	0.702	0.420	0.554
BE7	0.835	0.736	0.410
BE8	0.714	0.415	0.550
BE9	0.812	0.655	0.414
BE10	0.819	0.533	0.606
BE11	0.553	0.221	0.575
BE12	0.742	0.469	0.588
BE13	0.820	0.641	0.553
BE14	0.772	0.491	0.352
BE15	0.749	0.560	0.310
BE16	0.672	0.362	0.403
BE17	0.753	0.607	0.316
BE18	0.870	0.647	0.352
BE19	0.842	0.587	0.374
BE20	0.820	0.466	0.502
BE21	0.730	0.610	0.172
BE22	0.681	0.410	0.392
BE23	0.828	0.606	0.298

Indicator	Brand equity	Café atmosphere	Social media content
BE24	0.799	0.652	0.258
BE25	0.716	0.458	0.284
BE26	0.706	0.584	0.229
BE27	0.746	0.500	0.361
BE28	0.654	0.492	0.241
BE29	0.868	0.708	0.334
BE30	0.702	0.510	0.293

Table 3 shows that each indicator only has the highest correlation value with the construct it represents compared to other constructs, indicating that the three constructs above have discriminant validity.

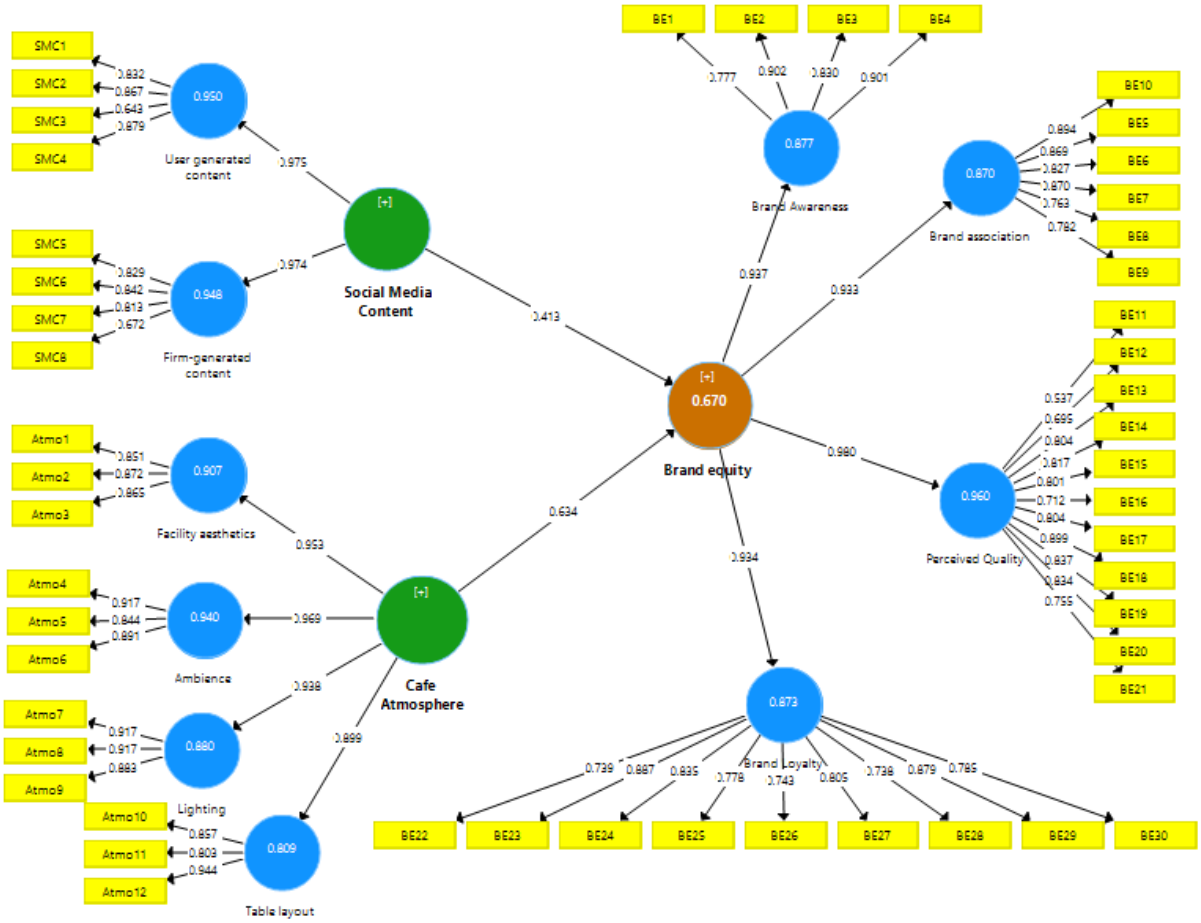


Figure 1. Research Model Diagram

In Figure 1 above, it is known that the loading factor > 0.50, with a t-value > 1.98 (Table 2) at a significance level of 5%. This indicates that the dimensions and indicators are valid in measuring the latent variable.

Table 4. Outer Model-loading factor

Variable	Dimension- Indicator		Loading factor	SE	t value	Prob.
Social media content	User generated content		0,975	0,004	228,336	0,000
		I am satisfied with the user-generated content about my favorite coffee shop on the social media site.	0,832	0,034	24,504	0,000
		The quality of the user-generated content about my favorite coffee shop on the social media site meets my expectations.	0,867	0,023	37,991	0,000
		The user-generated content about my favorite coffee shop is very interesting	0,643	0,069	9,276	0,000
		The user-generated content about my favorite coffee shop on the social media site performs well compared to other brands.	0,879	0,030	29,693	0,000
	Firm-generated content		0.974	0.005	202.946	0.000
		I am satisfied with the social media communication of the company for my favorite coffee shop	0.829	0.031	26.622	0.000
		The level of social media communication of the company for my favorite coffee shop meets my expectations	0.842	0.030	28.146	0.000
		The social media communication of this company for my favorite coffee shop is very engaging.	0.813	0.031	26.499	0.000
		The social media communication of this company for my favorite coffee shop performs well compared to the social media	0.672	0.079	8.465	0.000

Variable	Dimension- Indicator		Loading factor	SE	t value	Prob.
		communication of other companies				
Atmosfer Cafe	Facility aesthetics		0.953	0.008	113.788	0.000
		The interior design of my favorite coffee shop looks interesting and aligns with the brand concept	0.851	0.018	47.448	0.000
		The furniture. decor. and room colors in my favorite coffee shop look harmonious and pleasing to the eye.	0.872	0.020	43.627	0.000
		The cleanliness and tidiness of my favorite coffee shop area are well maintained.	0.865	0.021	40.388	0.000
	Ambience		0.969	0.005	194.586	0.000
		The music played matches the atmosphere and doesn't interrupt conversations	0.917	0.013	71.563	0.000
		The aroma of coffee and the surrounding environment create comfort for visitors	0.844	0.020	41.822	0.000
		The overall atmosphere makes customers feel relaxed and want to stay longer.	0.891	0.023	38.113	0.000
	Lighting		0.938	0.010	94.551	0.000
		The lighting in the coffee shop is quite bright but still comfortable on the eyes.	0.917	0.014	67.033	0.000
		The lighting supports a warm and relaxed atmosphere.	0.917	0.017	54.651	0.000
		Light intensity is appropriate for the function of the area (e.g. reading. working. or relaxing).	0.883	0.013	70.347	0.000

Variable	Dimension- Indicator		Loading factor	SE	t value	Prob.
	Table layout		0.899	0.016	57.382	0.000
		The distance between tables provides ample space and privacy for customers.	0.857	0.017	51.001	0.000
		The table layout makes it easy for customers to move around or interact.	0.803	0.043	18.643	0.000
		Table arrangement is based on room capacity and the type of customer activity (solo. couples. or groups).	0.944	0.012	81.389	0.000
Ekuitas Merek	Brand Awareness		0.937	0.012	79.839	0.000
		I am familiar with my favorite coffee shop brand.	0.777	0.047	16.486	0.000
		I have heard a lot about my favorite coffee shop brand.	0.902	0.018	48.787	0.000
		I feel that most people know my favorite coffee shop brand	0.830	0.028	29.975	0.000
		I chose my favorite coffee shop brand over others.	0.901	0.020	44.358	0.000
	Brand association		0.933	0.012	80.294	0.000
		I have the ability to quickly recall the characteristics of my favorite coffee shop brand.	0.869	0.022	39.561	0.000
		I have strong brand associations with my favorite coffee shop.	0.827	0.032	25.746	0.000
		I have built unique associations with my favorite coffee shop brand.	0.870	0.023	38.189	0.000
		I positively associate myself with my favorite coffee shop brand	0.763	0.052	14.786	0.000
		I quickly recall the symbols. logos. or colors	0.782	0.037	21.022	0.000

Variable	Dimension- Indicator		Loading factor	SE	t value	Prob.
		of my favorite coffee shop brand.				
		I have a clear understanding of what my favorite coffee shop brand represents.	0.894	0.016	54.193	0.000
	Perceived Quality		0.980	0.005	216.755	0.000
		My favorite coffee shop is of good quality.	0.537	0.068	7.868	0.000
		My favorite coffee shop is consistent in quality.	0.695	0.062	11.130	0.000
		My favorite coffee shop has excellent features.	0.804	0.027	29.626	0.000
		My favorite coffee shop is of very high quality compared to other coffee brands.	0.817	0.041	19.952	0.000
		My favorite coffee shop is the best in its category.	0.801	0.016	50.176	0.000
		My favorite coffee shop consistently outperforms all other coffee brands in its category.	0.712	0.051	13.837	0.000
		My favorite coffee shop has consistently high quality.	0.804	0.020	40.724	0.000
		My favorite coffee shop performs well.	0.899	0.020	43.967	0.000
		My favorite coffee shop is effective.	0.837	0.030	27.570	0.000
		My favorite coffee shop keeps its promises.	0.834	0.023	35.850	0.000
		My favorite coffee shop provides good service.	0.755	0.026	29.076	0.000
	Brand Loyalty		0.934	0.014	66.013	0.000
		I am loyal to my favorite coffee shop brand	0.739	0.044	16.656	0.000
		I consider my favorite coffee shop brand my first choice	0.887	0.024	36.905	0.000
		I am willing to pay a higher price for my favorite coffee shop	0.835	0.035	23.846	0.000

Variable	Dimension- Indicator		Loading factor	SE	t value	Prob.
		brand compared to other brands.				
		I intend to continue buying/using my favorite coffee shop brand.	0.778	0.047	16.443	0.000
		I am committed to my favorite coffee shop brand	0.743	0.024	30.666	0.000
		I intend to buy/use my favorite coffee shop brand when they need similar products/services.	0.805	0.026	31.039	0.000
		I consider myself loyal to my favorite coffee shop brand	0.738	0.038	19.361	0.000
		I intend not to buy/use other brands if my favorite coffee shop brand is unavailable.	0.879	0.017	50.929	0.000
		I see myself as loyal to my favorite coffee shop brand	0.785	0.033	23.441	0.000

Inner Model

There are three components used in evaluating the inner model, namely showing the relationship between constructs and evaluated using R-square, predictive relevance value (Q-square value), and effect size with f^2 (f square). According to Chin (2000), an R-Square value of 0.67 is strong, 0.33 is moderate, and 0.19 is weak. GoF is used to validate measurement and structural models, with values of 0-0.25 being small, 0.25-0.36 being moderate, and >0.36 being large. Prediction Relevance (Q-Square) is a test to determine predictive ability using a blindfolding procedure. The Q-Square values are 0.35 (large), 0.15 (moderate), and 0.02 (small). Meanwhile, f^2 is used as the effect size of the independent variable on the dependent variable. According to Cohen (1988), an f^2 value has a small effect if it is less than 0.02, a medium effect if it is between 0.15 and 0.35, and a large effect if it is greater than 0.35.

Table 5. Inner Model Testing

	R Square	f Square	Q Square
Brand equity	0.670		0.416
Social media content		0.170	0.302
Café atmosphere		0.402	0.211

The results of the evaluation of the fit of the theory-based model with empirical data or the model generated accurately reflecting the actual conditions are shown in Table 3, where the R^2 value is 0 (indicating a strong fit), the Q-Square value is between strong and moderate, and the f^2 value is between moderate and large. Therefore, it is concluded that the research model is consistent with the empirical conditions.

The structural model framework (inner model) in this study is formulated as follows:

$$\mathbf{BE = 0.43\ SCM + 0.634CA\ ,\ R^2 = 0.670}$$

Hypothesis Testing

Table 6. Hypothesis Testing

No	Structural Model	Path Coeff.	Std. Error	t-value	p value	R^2	Conclusion
1	Social media content -> Brand equity	0.413	0.061	6.794	0.000	0.170	Significant
2	Café atmosphere -> Brand equity	0.634	0.058	10.860	0.000	0.402	Significant

*significant at α=0.05

The results of the first hypothesis testing showed a significance level of 95% (α = 0.05). In Table 6, it was concluded that social media content has a positive and significant effect on brand equity, with a t-value > 1.98 (Prob < 0.05) and an R^2 value of 0.170. These hypothesis testing results are consistent with previous research (Zahoor, 2022; Susanty & Kenny, 2015; Safrudin & Anggarani, 2024). It is proven that for coffee shop visitors in Bandung City, social media content plays a role in shaping their perception of their favorite coffee shop brands. The more engaging and satisfying social media content is in the eyes of customers, the higher brand equity will be. Both contents created by the company and by other visitors play an important role in creating brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. Therefore, social media has become a necessity for branding because of a brand's ability to connect with consumers in a more interactive and individual way (Du Plessis, 2017).

The results of the second hypothesis testing indicate that the cafe atmosphere also has a positive and significant effect on brand equity, with a t-value > 1.98 (Prob < 0.05) and an R^2 value of 0.402. The store atmosphere can be another reason for consumers to be interested in and choose where they will visit and buy, so retailers need to be aware of the importance of store atmosphere in creating a shopping experience, which in turn provides consumer satisfaction (Purwadi et al., 2020). The store atmosphere is not just an esthetic element but

also a driver of customer retention (Ismail et al., 2025). This result is also consistent with the findings of previous studies (Oktaviani & Barusman, 2025; Kim et al., 2012). Therefore, the café atmosphere plays an important role in increasing the brand equity of coffee shops in Bandung City.

Based on the results of the hypothesis test, the following research findings model was obtained:

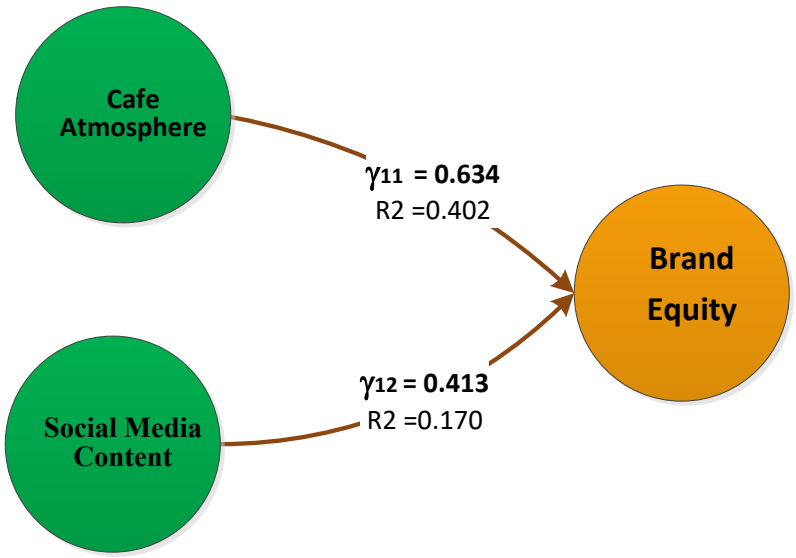


Figure 2. Research Finding Model

The research findings reveal that the café atmosphere has a greater influence than social media content in creating coffee shop brand equity. According to experiential marketing theory, sensory experiences that consumers have directly on-site have a deeper emotional impact on brand perception and loyalty compared to indirect experiences thru social media (Schmitt, 1999). This is because physical experiences are multisensory and can evoke stronger emotional attachment to the brand. In addition, the comfortable and pleasant cafe atmosphere not only enhances the perceived quality of products and services but also strengthens brand association thru positive memories and social interactions that occur there. Consumers who feel "at home" and have a positive experience at a cafe are more likely to have higher loyalty and recommend the brand (Ismail et al., 2025).

Meanwhile, from a social media content perspective, in the context of the customer journey, social media serves as the initial channel that raises brand awareness and interest. However, purchasing decisions and brand loyalty formation typically occur after consumers have directly experienced the café atmosphere. In other words, social media serves as the gateway, but the cafe atmosphere is the main reinforcing factor for brand equity.

In addition, Bandung is known as a culinary tourism city with a strong hangout culture. For the people of Bandung and domestic tourists, choosing a coffee shop is not just about the coffee products, but also about a place to relax, work, or socialize. Therefore, the café atmosphere is a key differentiating factor that increases the brand equity of coffee shops.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study reveal that social media content and café atmosphere have a significant impact on brand equity in coffee shops in Bandung. The atmosphere of a café plays a stronger role in driving brand equity. Social media serves as the gateway, while physical experiences are multisensory, capable of fostering stronger emotional connections to the brand.

The results of this study provide a theoretical contribution to the formation of brand equity in the context of modern retail business, specifically in the coffee shop industry. The finding that social media content and café atmosphere have a positive and significant influence on brand equity expands the understanding that brand equity is not only formed thru marketing communication conducted by the company, but also thru customers' sensory and emotional experiences at the location. This research reinforces the relevance of digital marketing communication theory (Du Plessis, 2017) and the concept of customer experience theory in explaining how digital interactions and physical atmosphere can effectively create strong brand perceptions. Thus, this research strengthens the theoretical foundation that emphasizes the need to view brand equity building in the digital age holistically, by combining online (social media) and offline (store/coffee shop atmosphere) dimensions.

Practically, the results of this research can serve as input for coffee shop managers in Bandung City and other areas in designing brand marketing strategies. First, the café atmosphere needs to be designed with an emphasis on ambiance, facility esthetics, lighting, and table layout, making it more appealing and providing a satisfying customer experience. Second, management needs to maximize the use of social media not just for promotion, but as a means of building emotional interaction and customer engagement thru creative, authentic, and relevant content that aligns with the target market's lifestyle, whether the content is created by the company or by customers. The combination of engaging social media content and a pleasant café atmosphere will strengthen brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty, ultimately increasing overall brand equity.

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