



**LAPORAN HASIL PENELITIAN**

**The elements of brand anthropomorphism: Qualitative investigation  
into brand locals amongst young adult  
consumers**

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## **Abstract**

**Purpose** – This study was aimed to describe the elements of brand anthropomorphism-human body lineaments, human facial physiognomy, and self-brand congruity based on the review of Guido and Peluso's conceptualization.

**Design/methodology/approach** – This study collected the data from young adult respondents through semi-structured depth interviewing.

**Findings** – Data coding resulted in a descriptive process model showing various reasons that would predict the brand choice. The critical finding provides the context of Asian consumers related to the local brands. The emerging local brands can grow if the organization can manage them well.

**Originality/value** – A value of the study lies in describing the elements of brand anthropomorphism associated with the domain of consumer-brand relationships among Asian young adults.

**Keywords** Brand anthropomorphism, human body lineaments, human facial physiognomy, and self-brand congruity, brand personality

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

In academic research, the consumers' tendency to perceive anthropomorphized brand has caught scholars' attention. Previous studies have examined the role of brand anthropomorphism in marketing strategy such as psychological process to perceive products with human like appearance (Aggarwal and McGill, 2007; Kervyn *et al.*, 2012, Kiesler, 2006; Puzakova *et al.*, 2009; Puzakova *et al.* 2013), purchasing behavior (Chandler and Schwarz, 2010), individual differences in anthropomorphism (Waytz *et al.*, 2010; Letheren *et al.*, 2016), anthropomorphism and risk perception (Kim and McGill, 2011), anthropomorphic brand characters (Hosany *et al.*, 2013), the consumer response toward anthropomorphic animal images (Connell, 2013), anthropomorphism and risk perception (Rauschnable and Ahuvia, 2014), the effect of alignment of spoke character personality trait (Folse *et al.*, 2014), the influence of culture on the appeal of anthropomorphic strategies (Aguirre-Rodriguez, 2014), interactive spokes-characters (Letheren and Kuhn, 2014), anthropomorphized brand roles and materialism (Kim and Kramer, 2015), anthropomorphism and human schema (Kwak *et al.*, 2015), anthropomorphism and human self control (Hur *et al.*, 2015), the influence of brand on customers' switching intention (Fan *et al.*, 2016), anthropomorphic product and lonely people (Feng, 2016), consumer identification with corporate brand in social media (Tuškej and Podnar, 2017), the anthropomorphized brand and brand integration (Delgado-Ballester, *et al.*, 2017) the influence of anthropomorphism on brand-consumer relationship (Baksi and Panda, 2018),

After reviewing the previous empirical research, this paper aims to address

anthropomorphism research by using the measurement of brand anthropomorphism in the context of local brands in Indonesia and analyzing the implementation of each dimension of measurement. This paper also describes the perception of informants related to local brands in Indonesia based on the measurement. Guido and Paluso (2015) have conceptualized anthropomorphism as a characteristic of branded products and have developed a scale to measure brand anthropomorphism. The scale is composed of three dimensions. It captures the extent to which a branded product's external appearance resembles the lineaments of a human body, the physiognomy of a human face, and the reflection of how consumers perceive themselves. The scale is already empirically validated scale. No research in brand anthropomorphism has yet discussed such a possible implementation of measurement in local brands with Asian context. This study intends to fill the important gaps by conducting qualitative research in the Asian market and choosing Indonesia as the emerging market. By doing [qualitative research](#), this study can learn about consumers' perceptions as the study can capture a mental image of someone through their experiences concerning local brands. The elements of measurement can be explored to understand the character of local brands.

Globalization provides more openness and interdependence among societies around the world. Consumers worldwide increasingly share similar tastes in clothing, music, food, and lifestyles (Dogerlioglu-Demir and Tansuhaj, 2011). Local marketers aim to satisfy the consumer's needs and wants by offering goods and services with a higher quality of life. The widespread practice of multinational corporations marketing global brands that compete with local brands determines consumers' purchase intentions, especially for Asian consumers. The markets are relatively wide open, with diverse consumers regularly exposed to local and global brands.

Meanwhile, local brands are often perceived as inferior to foreign competitors in terms of social status. Local marketers competing with multinationals have multiple channels available to them, including public relations and media campaigns, to inform consumers about the dynamic improvements of local brands, to improve the social status perceptions associated with these brands (Shi et al., 2016). In the meantime, many local products are already improved (Cui and Liu, 2000). The tendency in social prestige associated with a foreign product has declined, and more consumers tend towards local brands preference over foreign brands (Laforet and Chen, 2012). There is a dynamic change in consumers' perceptions of local and foreign brands in the emerging market, including Asian countries.

Cayla and Eckhardt (2007) argued that there are challenges and opportunities for creating a regional brand in Asia by focusing on Asian modernity, capitalizing on newfound Asian pride and confidence, and signal the brand's viability. The Asian brands should be imbued with modern notions of what it means to be Asian. The ideas and imagery driving this notion of Asian modernity should emanate from within Asia, emphasizing the country-of-origin is having a leading position within the region and a history of positive country of origin associations. It also relies on invoking symbols and associations from different cultures.

This study also provides the managerial thinking that local brands are developed based on uniqueness needs and local wisdom. Local brands are relevant to the country's cultural traditions in which they originated, and they represent them, as well (Özsomer, 2012). These brands focus more on uniqueness, character, originality, and pride in representing the local market. Local brands benefit from a high level of awareness and close relationships with the consumers in their countries. Dimofte *et al.* (2008) opined that these brands reflect and help

define the character of the local market as "local icons" in their markets connected with the symbols of character, culture, heritage, and national identity.

Discussing the brand's character, this study also focuses that the local brands have to build certain characters and should be pervasive widely through the young adult market. The strong character of local brands can attract consumers and build strong awareness (Keller, 2013). Niedrich and Garretson (2005) opined that it could create a strong identity. A trustworthy character has led to a positive brand association. A marketer should communicate product benefits and all related attributes. The related concept of character is anthropomorphism, which is about endowing inanimate objects with human attributes and human motivation (Epley *et al.*, 2009). Guido and Paluso (2014) argued that marketers also attempt to favor anthropomorphism, so consumers tend to associate the character in mind. Anthropomorphism can produce in consumers seeing the agent as deserving of consideration (Epley *et al.*, 2008), leading to moral care and concern for the agent (Waytz, Cacioppo & Epley, 2010). Brands are anthropomorphized; consumers may begin to emulate behaviors that they perceive as consistent with that brand personality (Aggarwal & McGill, 2012). When a mind has been perceived in an object, an individual's responses to this object may become just as complex as responses to another human being (Kim & McGill, 2012).

This study is organized as follows:

- A review of the literature of brand anthropomorphism in the measurement of Guido and Paluso (2015).
- The article also describes the semi-structured depth interview of informants and reports the finding after analyzing the data.

- The managerial implication is developed and discussed.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### *Brand anthropomorphism*

The term anthropomorphism derives from Greek words *ánthropos* (human) and *morfe-* (form) and is defined as a cognitive process of "attribution of human characteristics to non-human things or events" (Guthrie, 1993, p. 3). Anthropomorphism is defined as the individual tendency to perceive inanimate objects as human-like entities (Guthrie, 1993). Guthrie (1993) gives three formats of anthropomorphism—partial, literal and accidental. First, partial anthropomorphism occurs when people perceive objects and events as having human-like traits but fail to see the entity as fully human in its entirety. Second, literal anthropomorphism implies that the product or item is interpreted as being a person due to some mistaken perception. Third, accidental anthropomorphism is coincidental in its intent and is to figure out some elements of the human form in inanimate objects. Individuals tend to anthropomorphize various non-human entities, such as deities and other supernatural beings (Niemyjska and Drat-Ruszczak, 2013), pets (Epley *et al.*, 2008), computers, robots, and other technical objects (Gong, 2008; Eyssel and Kuchenbrandt, 2012), and consumption objects (Delbaere *et al.*, 2011).

According to Brown (2011), anthropomorphism is relevant in a contemporary consumer culture and deeply embedded in the human psyche. Epley *et al.* (2007) explained this phenomenon as the inference process of attributing external characteristics, motivations, behaviors, and underlying states typical of humans to objects and non-human entities. Related to the brand, Epley *et al.* (2007) opined that brand anthropomorphism is defined as the extent

to which a branded product is perceived as an actual human being. It has a perceived similarity between products' external appearance and some human physical attributes-resembling the human body. Fournier (1998) argued that a brand should have human-like characteristics. It can connect with customers emotionally. A marketer can gain mindshare by ascribing human characters to non-human entities. Aaker (1997) used the concept of brand anthropomorphism as the basis for transferring the findings from the interpersonal psychological processes to the processes that can occur between consumers and product brands. Soni and Jain (2017) opined that brands need to humanize themselves to break through the clutter and build a meaningful relationship with the market. Aggarwal and McGill (2011) argued that anthropomorphic brands drive an automatic behavioral response because they act as stimulants to achieve the customer's goals for successful social interactions.

#### *The measurement of brand anthropomorphism*

Guido and Paluso (2015) have conceptualized anthropomorphism as a characteristic of branded products and have developed a scale to measure brand anthropomorphism. Guido and Paluso (2015) offer a conceptualization of brand anthropomorphism that acknowledges the construct's multidimensional nature and proposes a scale that provides reliable and valid measures of the relevant dimensions that characterize the phenomenon. The proposed scale provides an important advancement in the branding literature. The past studies have not shown the robustness of brand anthropomorphism measurement in dimensionality, reliability, and validity tests. There are two major dimensions underlying brand anthropomorphism based on the measurement: one dimension is related to branded products' external appearance, and

the other is regarding the self-brand congruity.

The first dimension is related to anthropomorphic entities, which they have a human-like morphology. Epley *et al.* (2007) opined that there is a tendency for consumers to attribute human-like characteristics to non-human objects, including personalities, intentions, and motives. Brown *et al.* (2003) have found that Beetle automobile had anthropomorphized dimension as something "huggable." Folsle *et al.* (2014) argued that consumers imbue such traits because having a social connection with other humans is a fundamental need. These attributions provide them a means to recognize, control, and anticipate these non-human agents' behavior. Anthropomorphic entities such as human-like morphology, spokes characters can offer information closely related to the brand and reduce perceived risks in purchasing the brand. Marsh *et al.* (2005) argued that facial features, facial expressions, and body positions have informative functions that show the spokescharacter related to the internal state (mood) and personality.

Guido and Paluso (2015) used Epley *et al.* (2007) 's research to develop items such as: 'This branded product behaves as humans' and 'I can establish a social connection with this branded product. Guido and Paluso (2015) also based on the work of Chandler and Schwarz (2010) regarding the extent to which consumers perceive human physical features in branded products such as: 'This branded product seems to have a human face, 'This branded product seems to have a human neck, and trunk, so forth using additional body parts such as a nose, hair, a mouth, hands, arms, legs, feet, eye, and ears. These human physical features are the first dimension and second dimension related to human body lineament and human facial physiognomy.

Human body lineament is relevant to the context of the kinds of anthropomorphic form *structural anthropomorphic form* (Disalvo *et al.*, n.d). Structural anthropomorphic form imitates the construction and operation of the human body with an emphasis on materiality. The shapes, volumes, mechanisms, or arrangements that resemble the human body's appearance or functioning are visible of structural anthropomorphic form. It takes knowledge of human anatomy and physiology and represents the thing-ness of the human body. anthropomorphism of products or brands can correspond to an appreciation of their physical similarities with human beings. Several products are the object of anthropomorphism through their design: WRP Losing Weight by WRP, the advertising (whose curves match a good shape body), the feminine curves of the perfume bottle that reminds consumers of the brand's promise of sensuality. The objective is to encourage brand anthropomorphism. The anthropomorphism of products or brands can correspond to a human being (Ambroise and Valette-Florence, 2010).

There are some aspects of it, namely, is there a body or body parts? does it work like a human body? are the parts universal to all human bodies? and does it have to be anthropomorphic? Guido and Paluso (2015) developed the measurement of human body lineament. There are some indicators of Human Body Lineaments. They are 1) This branded product looks like a person, 2) This branded product seems to have a human neck dan 3) This branded product seems to have a human trunk.

Physiognomy is from the Greek language that has meaning "nature" and gnomon meaning "judge" or "interpreter." It is the practice of assessing a person's character or personality from their outer appearance—especially from the face. Physiognomy

is a theory that defines a way of describing the temperament, moral, and other personality trait characteristics of human beings from an individual's facial features. Physiognomy creates the identity or character of a certain aspect. In this particular context, physiognomy emphasizes the aesthetic visual perception studied with interest in studying human nature, emotional expressions, and human facial characteristics (Parker, 2018). Brickson (2000) argued that physiognomy becomes the saliency and can create group members' collective identity.

A literature review highlighted the facial physiognomic attributes of a message endorser and how these may be a consideration for advertising campaigns (Parker, 2018). Parker (2018) argued that physiognomic attributes would help promotion and marketing professionals identify and select endorsers to optimize messages' uptake. It could also improve the effectiveness of promotional materials utilizing for social media campaigns

Meanwhile, Guido and Paluso (2015) also developed the indicators of Human Facial Physiognomy as follows: 1) This branded product seems to have a human face, 2) This branded product seems to have a nose, 3) This branded product seems to have eyes, 4) This branded product seems to have a mouth, 5) This branded product seems to have ears (Guido and Paluso, 2015).

The second dimension of brand anthropomorphism is self-brand congruity. Sirgy (1982) has evaluated and analyzed the product choice based on the extent to which these products are perceived as congruent with their self-concepts. Consumers tend to choose branded products that enable them to express their actual, ideal, or social self- perspective (Sirgy, 1982). The brand's image can show "self-expressive" aspects where consumers can use visually consumed brands to express their image (Aaker, 1996). A brand's ability to show one's

self-image can be explained by self-congruity theory (Sirgy *et al.*, 1997). The self-congruity theory is derived from psychology and proposes that consumers like to compare themselves with a brand and see if the is brand matching their concept of themselves (Sirgy, 1986). Sirgy ( 1986) has suggested that consumers have a positive attitude towards brands perceived to have strong favorable human characteristics that are linear with their self-concept.

Self-congruity promotes a plethora of positive psychological outcomes related to the self's maintenance and enhancement (Roy and Rabbane, 2015). Self-congruity with the brand affects self-related outcomes and influences attitudes towards the brand. It is related to the research on luxury branding (Liu *et al.*, 2012).

Guido and Peluso (2015) opined that all these psychological processes that occur in consumers' minds. It is related to the assessment of self-brand congruity, the identification with specific branded products, and the 'interpersonal' relationship with them. In this case, it has relations with the anthropomorphizing of inanimate objects. Anthropomorphising is not necessarily based on the external appearance of branded products but is also on a perceived similarity between the internal qualities such as motivations, emotions, and mental states of consumers. This condition will ascribe to themselves and those they ascribe to such products (Fournier and Alvarez, 2012). Aggarwal and McGill (202) opined that the consumers could anthropomorphize branded products based on self-brand congruity, not only based on external appearance. Individuals can have self-congruent in a way that is similar to that typically observed among humans.

Guido and Peluso (2015) developed the self-brand congruity dimension of brand anthropomorphism. The measurement is based on Epley *et al.* (2007) with the item 'This

branded product is similar to me'; Sirgy (1982) with the item 'This branded product is congruent with the image I would like to hold of myself; this branded product is congruent with the image I hold of myself, 'this branded product is congruent with the image others hold of myself' and 'this branded product is congruent with the image I would like others to hold of myself. Guido and Peluso also (2015) developed items, such as 'I see part of myself in this branded product' and 'This branded product is an extension of me, from Belk (1988) and Lam et al. (2013); and items such as 'I consider this branded product as a relationship partner' from Aaker *et al.*, (2004), and from Fournier and Alvarez (2012). After the validation item was used in the questionnaire as a direct measure of the studied construct, Guido and Peluso (2015) have shown valid questionnaires. They are 1) This branded product is congruent with the image I hold of me, 2) This branded product is congruent with the image I would like to hold of myself, 3) This branded product is congruent with the image others hold of myself; 4) This branded product is congruent with the image I would like others to hold of myself.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Research Method**

#### *Respondent's Profile*

The sample size was 20. The age of the respondents was ranging from 20-25 years old. The respondents were recruited based on the previous research that chose the brand as the tool for fulfilling their self-expression (Sarkar *et al.*, 2015; Sarkar and Sarkar, 2016). Grant and Walsh also argued that young consumers are more relatively experimental than older adult consumers, so the segment can be explored to gain much insight (Grant and Walsh, 2009). Fifteen respondents were females; meanwhile, the rest was males. They have medium until high income. They are significant consumers of local brand products and will dominate the target market of the marketing strategy of big companies. Mayasari and Iyus (2018) opined that they are also considered targets with specific purchasing power. Their decision will be necessary for understanding the future prevalence of marketing strategy. The choice of the product, including fashion and accessories, is essential to show that they have achieved a particular position.

#### *Sampling and data collection process*

This study used purposive sampling. The resources were selected purposively. The purposive sampling is used when analyzing a larger population subset, but enumeration will be impossible (Babbie, 2013). The purposive sampling for 30 young adult respondents to be interviewed would be most appropriate in this study. The respondent was recruited based on

the fashion community from various local brands. Once respondents recruited, they were asked to reference further other people who have a favorite local brand.

This study carried out a qualitative collecting method by having an interview. The interview process was the primary method used to collect data. The interviews were semi-structured; a range of topics and specific questions served as a base. Interview questions were adapted from instruments used in the research. The interview process consisted of two parts. The first part included collecting background data such as product or service offered and answers to multiple-choice questions. The second part consisted of recording responses to open-ended, qualitative questions. The guideline for giving an interview is based on the indicators developed by Guido and Paluso (2015). The researchers selected the respondents who were willing to describe their feelings toward the questions such as 1) What local brand do you like the most? 2. What product categories do you choose of the local brand? 3. Can you describe the feeling of selecting the local brand? 4. Can you describe further related to the local brand? a. Do you think that this brand looks vivid as if it has a soul? Why? b. Do you believe that this brand seems to have something like the human body, like a human neck or human trunk? c. Do you think this brand looks vivid in terms of the physical body, including the human face, nose, eyes, mouth, or ears? 5. Is the chosen local brand is congruent with your ideal self-image? 6. Is the local brand selected is congruent with your actual self-image? The research problems in this study were to describe the perception of informants related to local brands in Indonesia based on Guido and Paluso's measurement. All interviews were audiotaped and transcribed for coding purposes.

### *Data coding process and reliability & validity test*

Strauss and Corbin (1999) argued that data coding could use open, axial, and selective coding methodologies. The central concept of brand management and the elements of the brand element were generated and given names with open coding. The emergent ideas were labeled based on the literature's concepts by correlating the ideas emerging from the data collected with the literature's concepts. In this study, the researcher discovered the relationship between the data's concepts and deductively related to the existing literature. In the end, coding was applied to integrate the existing relationships among concepts. Related to reliability and validity tests, this study has adopted the reliability test. It used the member check by going back to each respondent while coding to ensure the researcher's interpretation of data matched with the respondents' answers.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Result & Discussion**

Based on the data analysis, the elements of brand anthropomorphism are identified. The findings are described and explained below. The most relevant statements of the respondents are embedded within the results.

#### *The most preferred brand.*

The descriptions given by the respondents show that they prefer some local brands. These brands have a connection in their life for fulfilling their need. The local brands are usually going through an extraordinary time that demands a change in every aspect of the business cycle. The local brands are Esqa Cosmetics, Rakkan Clothing Line, Ria Miranda, Delamibrands, HNMS, Shopatkey, Bro.do shoes, CottonInk, Shop At Velvet, UNKL347, Koolastuffa, Shop@Velvet, Emina, Berliano, Peter Says Denim, Nipplets Official, Haple.id, Shafira, Polygon, Emina, Sejauh Mata Memandang, Visval, Pixy, Justmiss, Makover, Niion, Orangtua Group, Brunbrun, The Executive, Lizzie Parra, Oldblue, Polygon, Amble, Kopi Kong Djie, Vaia and Pvra, Harlette, The Executive, Indomie, Joger, Emina, Polygon, Duma, Shop at Velvet, Beauty by Lizzie Para, Wardah Cosmetics, Pixy Cosmetics, Purbasari cosmetics, Anomali Coffee, Fore Coffee, Kopi Kenangan, Wardah, BLP, Rollover, Silir, Brodo.

The new and old local brands have inspiration. They are affordable and suitable for all consumers. They are made proudly made by Indonesian marketers. By choosing local brands, consumers can protect the domestic industry. Because they believe that it hurts the prosperity of their own country, in a way that is opting for foreign products threatens the domestic sector

and causes unemployment (Verlegh, 2007). For example, one informant (R1) described:

*Choosing local brands can protect the economy by purchasing domestic products.*

#### *Product categories of the local brand*

The product categories of local brands chosen include make-up or cosmetic products, accessories, clothing, bag, perfume, footwear, bicycle, and coffee. 80% of the respondent has chosen fashion or clothing products. In Indonesia, the fashion industry has evolved remarkably. Indonesian designers have confidently sold their products. The emerging designers in Indonesia come up with creative and new collections. The impression of clothes and accessories on others, concerns about the social aspect, and interest in sharing knowledge and fashion products with friends. Loureiro et al. (2017) argued that the consumers consider themselves as physically attractive and, indeed, judged by others to be physically attractive may also influence the passion for fashion. The respondent also supports this.

*Local brands in fashion can impress others. They are also good. (R 4)*

*The social aspect is essential for my fashion consumption. (R6)*

In Indonesia, the haute couture market's target consumers, such as Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Prada, Hermes, and Cartier, are also available. Consumers enjoy a high level of satisfaction while shopping in boutiques, offering a very considerate service. These international brands are thriving, easily recognized in Indonesia's society. Wearing fashion can show social status and recognition. This is also in line with the study of Hung (2006).

#### *The feeling of choosing the local brand*

Global brands are perceived to be having higher quality (Pappu et al., 2007). Rao and Monroe (1998) also showed that the worldwide brand name has a crucial quality indicator.

However, Roy and Chau (2011) showed that global brand favoritism might be varied over a local brand in terms of purchase activity. The investigation revealed that the local brand was favored in terms of quality among low status-seeking consumers. There is no difference between global brands and local brands. The informant of this study described the feeling.

I am feeling proud of the quality of a local product compared with foreign products or brands. It can be seen by the material they use, design patterns, and the way they sell the products. (R3c)

Another informant explained:

Visval makes me feel confident because many people use the brand too. So people have known of the brand Visval. It also gives me a feeling of pride because of the known product. Coincidentally the product has good quality, so I feel happy to use it. It reflects the needs even though it is a local product. (R8b)

I feel proud when I purchase the product because they have fantastic quality and reputable on the international market. (R11b)

Forsythe et al. (1999) opined that product attribute cues are variables that can influence the purchase decision of consumers. Product cues involve extrinsic cues, e.g., brand name, price, and country origin, while intrinsic signals, e.g., perceived quality and performance. Forsythe et al. (1999) showed that there were no differences among the global brand and local brand in consumer's evaluation of variables examined physical quality, design, overall quality, price, value, or purchase intentions.

I feel happy and satisfied because I cannot believe that there is such a local brand that has a product which has the same quality as the other Branded Makeup. (R1a)

I feel happy and relieved because the price is lower than Pomelo. Also, she thinks that the product's quality is also considered excellent at its affordable price. The choice of clothes material is also suitable for Indonesian. It is not too thin or thick. She feels great overall. (R4a)

*The brand looks vivid as if it has a soul*

The research showed that the local brand chosen has a soul. It is related to the concept of anthropomorphism. Soni and Jain (2017) argued that anthropomorphized brand should be

perceived as having human-like soul & emotions. Fournier (1998) opined that a brand has human-like characteristics to bond and connect with the customers. Brands have human beings character to build good relationships with their target audiences.

Yes, I do think so. This brand not only looks vivid in my eyes, but I also feel like I found my soulmate. I can't imagine myself wearing bright colors. (R1b)

If UNKL347 were a person, he would be a man in his mid-20s, works as a graphic designer in a studio branding company, loves music, and has a visual art hobby such as graffiti works and photography illustration. He loves skateboarding in his spare time or bicycling with his friends on Sunday morning. Sometimes, they might do a night run after office hours. On the outside, UNKL347 can look like a serious person because of his mustache. He might look just like The Marco. Furthermore, he can be impulsive and romantic sometimes, but he sure knows what he wants. (R4b)

If Visval is a person, he will be a simple person but elegant and classy. He is eye-catching and has a high attractiveness that makes people want to look at him. (R8b)

*This brand looks to have something like a human body like*

Guido dan Peluso (2018) argued that brand anthropomorphism is a branded product perceived as an actual human being. Branded products might have a perceived similarity between the external appearance of products and some human physical attributes.

Yes, it represents women bodies in many types, such as; fat, skinny, etc. (R6b)

They don't have looks like a human neck or trunks, but they made some universal products for anyone. In fashion, sometimes we have limited options due to our needs, if I'm too thin, the clothes will look not good or will not fit us. But DUMA helps people who have a specific need for their fashion by making any general size and cutting models. (R15a)

*The brand looks vivid in terms of the physical body*

Chandler and Schwarz's (2010) have developed items regarding the extent to which consumers perceive human physical features in branded products such as the branded product has a human face; human neck, and additional body parts such as a nose, hair, mouth, hands, arms, 'legs,' 'feet' 'eyes' and 'ears.' This research showed that the purchased product has a physical body or human features such as the product has white skin, the bike has legs, the

wrapping has a physical body such as face, eyes, and lips.

In Novita's opinion, Shop At Velvet looks so vivid. Novita thinks that if it were a person, it might look like a South Korean Woman. She imagines that Shop At Velvet would have white skin, with a pink blush on blushing on her cheek, wearing studded earrings, have dark brown eyes with a friendly smile spreading on her lips. She would be using a short skirt and t-shirt, also utilizing a beret. (R4a)

The image in their packaging is a heart with a face, eye, nose, and mouth. Smiling confidently. (R13a)

If I should imagine it as a human body? Well, maybe like, legs? because I use this bike as I "walk" with it. (R14c)

Yes, because Lizzie Parra is a cosmetics brand, they branding and wrap the marketing very near the physical body such as the face, eye, and lips. (R15c)

### *The chosen local brand is congruent with your ideal self-image*

The research showed that the consumer wears unique cloth that has eye-catching and can attract everyone to look at her. The product has a brand personality that matches the ideal self-image. Some products can help consumers achieve the need for being the ideal-self image. The local product also has the quality that can reflect the perfect self-image and follow the trend. An anthropomorphic perception of branded products might perceive congruity between products and some aspects of consumers' self-concept (Fournier, 1998; Aaker et al., 2004). The self-concept construct refers to how consumers view themselves. Self-concept has the ideal self and actual self-concept. The ideal self is who one wishes to be, and while the actual self is that is, who one thinks, he or she is (Sirgy, 1982).

She prefers to wear something ordinary and minimalist in her everyday life. She also feels that she dares to use eye-catching or unique clothes that attract everyone to look at her. They don't have it, or maybe they are still developing on it. This way, this brand does not satisfy her ideal self-image (R4a)

The product also matches her kind of fashion. It will be cool because it might suit Alif's fashion preference, the personality she wants to achieve, and her body. It means that Koolastuffa's brand personality matches her ideal self-image. (R4c)

Visual performs the needs of my ideal self-image. One of the reason is because of the model. The bag that I bought is the bag that is in trend at that moment. The other reason is the quality they have and the function of the product suits. So it reflects my ideal self-image to follow the trend. (R8b)

*The chosen local brand is congruent with your actual self-image*

The local brand has self-brand congruity because it reflects consumers' perceptions of their selves. Self-congruity refers to the likeliness of comparing oneself with other objects and stimuli (Sirgy et al., 1997). The self-congruity concept applied in this study relates to the actual self. Sirgy (1986) claimed that the actual self's effect is often more important than other types of self, such as the ideal self, social self, or ideal social self. The actual self refers to a more realistic appraisal of the qualities consumers do and don't have (Solomon, 2018). In this study, the respondents choose some local brands because they think they are consistent with their actual selves.

As a person who likes to exercise so much, he feels the brand talks about competence, toughness, and independence, 'this is me.' (R2b)

UNKL347's products are congruent to my actual self-image because most of my clothes and fashion are just like any designer's. (R4b)

Yes, I always choose a brand because it suits and represents myself, like Shop at Velvet, they sell basic clothes for work and hang out. I bought it because I like to look chic and straightforward, so I choose that brand for my favorite local brand. (R15b)

## **Discussion**

This study has identified two essential elements of brand anthropomorphism. First, it is related to the external appearance of branded products. Second, it is associated with the dimension of self-brand congruity. Guido and Peluso (2018) have provided the measurement of the dimensional structure of brand anthropomorphism. Related to the first aspect, this study has provided evidence for the existence of an external component of the brand

anthropomorphism construct, as anthropomorphic entities which they have a human-like attribute and morphology. Related to the second dimension of brand anthropomorphism, which concerns self-brand congruity, this study has shown that consumers evaluate and choose local products based on how the product is perceived as congruent with their self-concepts, both ideal and actual concept.

The attribute of the work becomes an aspect of the value proposition. The human physical features in branded products related to human body lineament and human facial physiognomy become the products' attributes. The value proposition does not consist of the whole cluster of the benefits the local brand promises to deliver. It is more than the central positioning of the offering. The value proposition of the local brands here can promise the experience customers can expect from the local company market offering. It becomes the value delivery system that covers the experiences the customer obtain, use, or wear the products. The local company can focus on the core business processes that help create distinctive consumer values.

This research shows that the choice of local brands is influenced by sub-culture as a reference group. In this case, the reference groups that become the influencing factors are family, friends, specific cultural values as trends and religion. It is interesting to analyze that local brands that have anthropomorphism are recognized as something that has attractiveness. This attraction can be advantageous for market managers to strengthen it as an identity attached to the brand. This advantage can be a strong belief from consumers to realize that local brands also have good quality. The constant interaction between the consumer and his reference group reinforces a sense of affection for the local brand. They observe on an

ongoing basis so that they feel attracted to try local brands. In the end, they took action to buy local brands. The strength of this local brand to be accepted by consumers is also in addition to the sources' perceptions and beliefs. The reference group also strengthens them.

## **Chapter V**

### **Conclusion**

#### **Theoretical contribution**

Related to brand equity, the elements of brand anthropomorphism can be a part of the brand equity concept. Keller (2013) argued that customer-based brand equity occurs when the consumer has a high level of awareness and familiarity with the brand and holds strong, favorable, and unique brand associations in memory. The local brand can create brand awareness. Building brand awareness as the first dimension of brand equity for a local brand with brand anthropomorphism elements means increasing the brand's familiarity through repeated exposure to create brand recognition. The more a consumer "experiences" the local brand by observing it, hearing it, or thinking about it, the more likely the consumer is to keep the brand in memory.

The second dimension of brand equity is related to the strength, favourability, and uniqueness of brand associations that play a critical role in determining the differential response that makes up brand equity. As marketers, the local company must also convince consumers that there are meaningful differences among existing local brands. The local brands should be perceived that all brands are not similar in the same category. Establishing a positive brand image of local brands with anthropomorphism elements in consumer memory that are healthy, favorable, and unique should be hand in hand with creating brand awareness to build customer-based brand equity.

The elements of brand anthropomorphism can create brand personality. Aggarwal and McGill (2007) opined that a product should be endowed with human characteristics to

strengthen humans' likelihood that will anthropomorphize the product. Besides, Delbaere et al. (2011) argued that personification of images in marketing communication could create anthropomorphism leading to more positive emotions, more positive attributions of brand personality, and greater brand liking. Anthropomorphism becomes the unique element of brand personality (Puzakova *et al.*, 2009).

### **Managerial implications**

The local brand can become a strong brand as it has a strong point of difference. The attributes or benefits underlying the brand can make consumers associate the product with local brands. Consumers cannot find the same characteristics as other local even foreign brands. The companies can create a strong, favorable, and unique association as an essential brand for competitive brand positioning.

Local brands can provide any activities that cause consumers to experience local brand elements, including the anthropomorphism elements, including name, symbol, logo, character, packaging, or slogan through marketing communication programs. These programs are expected to increase familiarity and awareness of that local brand elements. A local brand can use repetition to improve recognizability. The brand elements like characters can also aid recall. In competitive markets or when the local brand has to compete with other brands, it is more important to emphasize category links in the marketing program. Strong associations between the local brand and the category or other relevant cues may become critical if the brand parity occurs.

## **Limitations and future research directions**

Based on the research results described, there are several limitations in this study, namely in the form of control variables that can provide more in-depth analysis results such as subject demographics, length of use of products and product function categories, and the pyramid of consumer needs. The range of work uses will provide different perceptions in seeing the product as both a beginner and an old consumer. This is inseparable, one of which is related to how well consumers know the outcome. Another limitation of this study is that there is no grouping of products based on product function or the pyramid of consumer needs. This may provide a comprehensive analysis of classifying aspects of the brand anthropomorphism based on product function. The consumer needs to provide a more precise local brand strengthening effect based on the supposed market.

Based on these limitations, for further research, it is possible to add interview questions that target reinforcing variables such as the length of time using the product to perceive a local brand product related to the anthropomorphism brand. Besides, trying to do more in-depth research by making the product function and the pyramid of consumer needs as additional variables in seeing aspects of the brand anthropomorphism.

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