

ABSTRACT

In the rapidly evolving digital era, brand coolness has become a crucial factor in shaping brand perception and purchasing decisions, especially among Generation Z. As a premium brand, iPhone has successfully built a strong coolness image that reflects not only technological innovation but also social status and self-expression. However, there remains a gap in research examining the relationship between brand coolness and willingness to pay, particularly with emotional brand attachment as a mediating variable. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effect of brand coolness on willingness to pay, with emotional brand attachment acting as a mediator, in the context of Generation Z iPhone users in Semarang.

This study adopts a quantitative approach using a survey method. Data were collected from 200 respondents who are Generation Z iPhone users in Semarang through an online questionnaire. The analysis technique employed is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using AMOS software to test the relationships between variables. Brand coolness was measured through dimensions of aesthetic appeal, authenticity, and high social status, while emotional brand attachment was assessed through affection, emotional connection, and passion for the brand. Willingness to pay was evaluated based on financial sacrifice, premium pricing justification, and repurchase intention despite the availability of cheaper alternatives.

The results indicate that brand coolness has a positive and significant effect on emotional brand attachment, with a strong coefficient value. Emotional brand attachment also positively and significantly influences willingness to pay, meaning that the stronger a consumer's emotional attachment to iPhone, the more willing they are to pay a premium price. Additionally, brand coolness has both a direct and indirect positive and significant effect on willingness to pay, with emotional brand attachment acting as a partial mediator. These findings confirm that brand coolness not only attracts consumers but also fosters emotional bonds that strengthen their willingness to pay more. The implications of this study highlight the importance of marketing strategies that reinforce brand coolness elements to enhance brand loyalty and perceived value among Generation Z consumers.

Keywords: Brand Coolness, Emotional Brand Attachment, Willingness to Pay, Generation Z, iPhone.