

Role of Brand Trust in Mediating the Influence of Brand Image on Brand**Loyalty JNT Extras: Trisakti Institute of Transport and Logistics****Student Perspective****Muhammad Abdu Rafi^a, Nova Septia Perdana Putra^b, Sandriana Marina^c, Nunuh^d**^{a,b, c, d} Faculty of Management and Business, Institut Transportasi dan Logistik Trisakti,
Jakarta, IndonesiaCorresponding author: abdurafi007@gmail.com

Abstract: The Covid-19 period has not only been destructive to some service sectors but also made some service businesses increase rapidly. One of them is the courier service business. The data shows that the growth of courier services has increased significantly, the frequency of using courier services when compared to before the pandemic was recognized by 39% of respondents to have increased significantly. The objective of this research is to investigate the impact of Brand Image on Brand Trust in order to boost Brand Loyalty at PT JNT Ekspres. Using non-probability sampling techniques and questionnaire data collection, this study tested four hypotheses about the relationship between brand image and brand trust to increase brand loyalty. Data was collected from 129 respondents out of 151 Logistics Management 2021 ITL Trisakti students who had used courier services. The result show that brand loyalty is positively impacted by brand image and brand trust. And Brand Image has a positive influence on Brand Loyalty through Brand Trust.

Keywords: *brand image, brand trust, brand loyalty, expedition, jnt express*

1. Introduction

The Covid-19 period has not only caused destructive effects on some service sectors but also made some service businesses increase rapidly. One of them is the courier service business (Umi Azizah et al., 2022). The data shows that the growth of courier services has increased significantly, the frequency of using courier services when compared to before the pandemic was recognized by 39% of respondents to have increased significantly and another 39% claimed to have increased slightly. The majority of people use courier services to deliver goods purchased from e-commerce as much as 85.2%. Meanwhile, 50.8% sent their purchases from online shopping on social media. During the pandemic, people have become more selective in choosing expedition services, namely 72% (Laoli, Amalia Nur Fitri, 2020). In Indonesia today, business competition in courier services is increasingly competitive. In 2021, the growth and contribution of warehousing and supporting services for postal and courier transportation to the economy grew by 5.03%, but in 2022, it increased by 40.53%, which is a significant increase of 35.50%, the highest in the last 10 years (Datanesia, 2023).

These companies are competing to serve the increasingly massive distribution of online businesses as internet technology encourages people to shop not in traditional ways but

online (Berliana et al., 2020). This is demonstrated by the emergence of online businesses owned by public companies and online stores that sell and buy goods and services (Firmansyah et al., 2023).

Seeing the number of goods delivery services in Indonesia makes business people need to determine the right delivery service to use (Nugraha, 2023). In 2021, J&T Express ranked No.1 and became the most popular Indonesian shipping company with 33.40% of users, among other expedition services such as JNE, TIKI, Sicepat, and Ninja Express (Taufik et al., 2023). JNT Express is one of the many shipping brands that has a good existence and achievement (Rahmah & Utami, 2021).

This peak achievement encourages companies to maintain Brand Loyalty so that consumers remain loyal to use their services and do not switch to competitors, because the company will incur more expensive costs to reclaim customers who have switched than the costs required to get new customers (Mabkhot et al., 2017). A brand is a collection of both tangible and intangible characteristics intended to raise awareness, establish an identity, and enhance a service's reputation (Sammot-Bonnici, 2014). Therefore, in this fierce competitive situation, it is important for JNT Express to build brand loyalty in order to attract and retain customers. Brand loyalty can be described as consistent activity behavior when making purchases continuously as long as these consumers are satisfied and confident in the same brand that the brand used is able to answer their wants and needs (Junaidi et al., 2021). With the company having a strong Brand Image, it will result in Brand Loyalty to the company obtained from the assessment of consumers who have used the brand (Iswanto et al., 2021).

Brand Image itself is an effort to form a sense of emotional attraction between customers and product brands and companies and efforts to differentiate themselves from competitors. By having a good Brand Image, it will be easier to make a strong first impression (Aeni & Lestari, 2021). Its influence on a product is closely related to consumer beliefs and preferences. Built brand image could be used as an identity and a reflection towards the brand's vision, service or their quality as a whole brand (Hakim et al., 2022). A strong brand reputation can help the business because consumers will typically recommend the goods (Natasiah, 2024). to cultivate a favorable perception of the company, J&T Express must have open communication. This is so that J&T Express is able to win the competition with companies engaged in services. The price offered by J&T Express is very sloping. Although the price is cheap, the service provided by J&T Express is still the best. In other words, low prices do not reduce the quality of service provided such as on time delivery and safety of goods from damage. That way it will build a Brand Image on JNT Ekpsress as a service that is cheap, on time, and goods are safe from damage compared to other competitors. A strong brand image will also have a positive effect on Brand Trust in consumers.

Brand Trust is a brand value that can be created through several aspects that can lead to consumer satisfaction, where each individual consumer connects Brand Trust with brand experience (Oktaviasari et al., 2020). To gain brand trust and for consumers to be more confident in a brand, the management of a company must emphasize Brand Trust approaches

such as brands that are able to fulfill promises and brands that are able to create interest and repurchase intentions (Lenggono et al., 2019).

Based on previous studies conducted by Syarifah Alfa Fajrina in 2019 (Sinica et al., 2019), that in general, research examining the effect of Brand Image on Brand Loyalty is said to have no direct and significant effect in increasing it and Brand Trust as its mediation. According to Annisa Marliawati & Dwi Cahyaningdyah 2020 (Marliawati & Cahyaningdyah, 2020), Research generally shows that brand image does not directly and significantly increase brand loyalty, but the role of brand trust as a mediator can strengthen this relationship.

2. Literature review

2.1 Relationship between Brand Image and Brand Trust

People's perception of a brand is determined by the associations they have with it. This is known as Brand Image. A pleasant mental link between a brand and its customers is established by a strong Brand Image (Nurkhalis et al., 2023). This positive association will build customer trust in the brand's capabilities.

Brand Trust is a brand value that can be created through several aspects that can direct consumer satisfaction, where each individual consumer connects brand trust with brand experience. In order to establish Brand Trust and boost consumer confidence, a company must offer high-quality products or services that align with consumer wants. That way consumers will give a positive assessment that the company has fulfilled promises and customer expectations (Julian & Ferdinan, 2021).

H1: Brand Image has a positive and significant influence on Brand Trust

2.2 Relationship between Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty

Brand trust is an important factor that can encourage the formation of brand loyalty among consumers. The establishment of brand loyalty and brand trust are correlated when a brand can satisfy or even beyond customer expectations, deliver quality assurance to its users consistently, and become an integral part of the customer's identity. (Aulia et al., 2019). Consumers who believe in a brand tend to continue to be loyal to use the brand and do not easily switch to another brand. Strong trust in the brand will make consumers feel safe and confident in using products or services from the brand, thus encouraging the formation of brand loyalty (Innosensius Bernardo, Margaretha Pink Berlianto, Yohana F. Cahya Palupi Meilani, Ronnie Resdianto Masman, 2020).

Brand loyalty is the loyalty that consumers have to a product brand. Even though products from other brands are comparable, brand-loyal customers will always repurchase items from one brand. Consumers who already have loyalty to a brand will

find it difficult to switch to another brand because they already believe that the brand can meet their needs and expectations (Afiftama & Nasir, 2024).

H2: Brand Trust has a positive and significant influence on Brand Loyalty

2.3 Relationship between Brand Image and Brand Loyaltitas

Companies are always competing in building a good brand image. In the sense that the company provides support to consumers in its services and has the strength of company management to build a good image. A good image can be obtained from consumer assessments where the brand is quality, unique, easier to use on the brand than other competitors and in accordance with consumer expectations. That way the brand can maintain its image to be better than competitors to get a place in the hearts of consumers and will always be used continuously by consumers. In the sense that consumers will be loyal to the brand (Marda & Rachmad, 2024).

A strong desire to purchase or continue using a favored good or service in the future, despite the possibility of brand switching due to external factors including promotional campaigns, is known as brand loyalty. We may conclude that brand loyalty is positively impacted by brand image. The better the brand image of a product, the higher the consumer loyalty to the brand (Bastian, 2014).

H3: Brand Image has a positive and significant influence on Brand Loyalty

2.4 Relationship between Brand Image and Brand Trust to Increase Brand Loyalty

Brand image is a perception and belief held by consumers, in the sense that consumers can feel or see whether a brand is good or bad based on the experience and assessment of previous consumers of brand use. A good brand image will lead to consumer trust in the brand (brand trust). The more positive the brand image of a company, the higher the level of consumer confidence in the brand (Huda Prayolanda et al., 2022). If a brand can already have consumer trust and make consumers feel that the brand is the only reliable and trusted one from other competitors, there will be a high probability of consumers who are loyal to the brand and will continue to use the brand if needed. Thus, it may be said that, with brand trust acting as a mediator, brand image positively influences brand loyalty.

H4 : Brand Image has a positive and significant influence on Brand Loyalty through Brand Trust

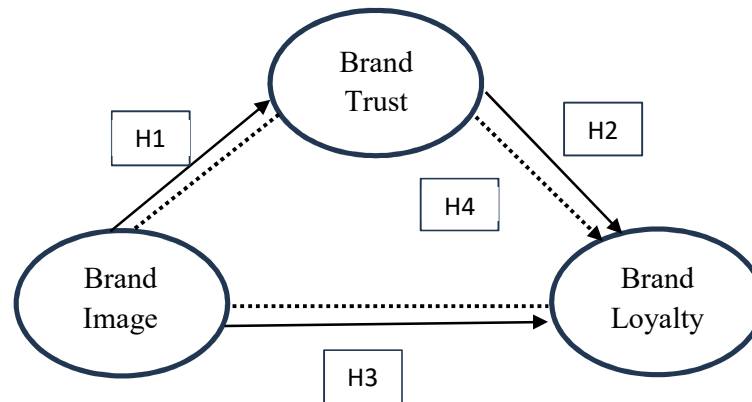


Fig.1 Conceptual Framework

3. Research method

3.1 Research Instruments

The survey instrument was adopted from (Fatma & Khan, 2024), (Kwon et al., 2020), (Watson et al., 2024) for data collection from JNT Ekspres customers. The final questionnaire totaled 14 items, of which 6 items were included in Brand Image, namely 1. JNT Ekspres has high brand quality, 2. JNT Ekspres has better characteristics than competitors, 3. JNT Ekspres brand is good, 4. JNT Ekspres has a personality that distinguishes it from competitors, 5. JNT Ekspres brand does not disappoint its customers, 6. JNT Ekspres is one of the best brands in the expedition sector.

Furthermore, Brand Trust which consists of 3 items, namely 1. I always trust my favorite JNT Ekspres expedition compared to other expeditions, 2. JNT Ekspres has never let me down, 3. JNT Ekspres gives me peace of mind in expeditions. Brand Loyalty which consists of 5 items, namely 1. I think I am loyal to JNT Ekspres, 2. I often recommend JNT Ekspres to my friends and relatives, 3. I prefer JNT Ekspres over other expedition brands, 4. I will continue to recommend JNT Ekspres, 5. I will prioritize JNT Ekspres if I need an expedition.

Tabel 1. Indikator

Variabel	Operational definition	Indicator	Source
Brand image	Brand image and reputation owned by the company in the eyes of consumers	1. JNT Express has high brand quality. 2. JNT Express has better characteristics than competitors. 3. JNT Ekspres brand is good. 4. JNT Express has a personality that distinguishes it from competitors. 5. The JNT Ekspres brand does not disappoint its customers. 6. JNT Ekspres is one of the best brands in the expedition sector	(Fatma & Khan, 2024)
Brand Trust	Consumer trust in the brand and the promises made by the company	1. I always trust my favorite JNT EKSPRESS expedition over other expeditions. 2. JNT	(Kwon et al., 2020)

		EKSPRESS has never let me down. 3. JNT EKSPRESS gives me peace of mind in expedition.	
Brand Loyalty	Consumer loyalty to the brand and the tendency to continue using the company's products or services	1. I think I am loyal to JNT EKSPRESS. 2. I often recommend JNT EKSPRESS to my friends and relatives. 3. I prefer JNT EKSPRESS over other expedition brands. 4. I will continue to recommend JNT Express. 5. I will prioritize JNT Express if I need an expedition.	(Watson et al., 2024)

3.2 Sampling Design and Data Collection

The purpose of this study is to ascertain how brand image affects brand trust in order to boost brand loyalty at JNT Express. To achieve these objectives, the target population of this study was identified to Logistics Management students in 2021 at ITL Trisakti who have used JNT Express services. This research uses a quantitative approach method. Data collection was carried out descriptively using a questionnaire method,

data analysis, and multiple linear regression analysis modeling using SMART-PLS 4.0. The variables to be tested in this study are X1: Brand Image, Z: Brand Trust and Y: Brand Loyalty as the dependent variable. The sample size of this study was 129 respondents, namely, Logistics Management students class of 2021 at ITL Trisakti who have used JNT Express services. The population in this study were 2021 class Logistics Management students at ITL Trisakti who had used JNT Ekspres services, whose population size was already known. A survey was conducted to collect data on students majoring in logistics management class of 2021 at ITL Trisakti, and respondents based on demographics and semester level. This study used the convenience sampling method to collect data from 129 respondents out of 151 Logistics Management 2021 at ITL Trisakti students who have used J&T Express courier services. A sample of 129 respondents was obtained from Table Krejcie-Morgan the formula. This study analyzes multiple linear regression modeling data using SMART-PLS 4.0.

3.3 Analysis Method

Data were analyzed using SmartPLS4. PLS SEM is used to build and test statistical models that are generally in the form of causal relationship models. PLS SEM combines aspects of regression analysis, path analysis, and confirmatory factor analysis so that it can cover the limitations of these models. SEM is used to evaluate the relationship between latent and manifest variables and evaluate the quality of the model built. In addition, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a powerful multivariate statistical analysis technique that combines factor analysis and multiple regression analysis. SEM can examine a model's latent constructs' relationships with one another at the same time. These latent constructs are measured using a number of items in a questionnaire. Covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) or full SEM has become the choice for many researchers in various disciplines due to its ability to evaluate complex relationships using parametric statistical approaches (Rahadi, 2023).

4. Results and discussion

4.1 Respondent Characteristics

Both descriptive and multiple linear regression analysis modeling were used to analyze the data. The analysis is divided equally into the outer model: validity test consisting of convergent validity and discriminant validity, reliability calculation and inner model. Then at the final stage, testing will be carried out using the bootstrapping method.

Tabel.2 Karakteristik Responden

Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Woman	62	48,1%
Man	67	51,9%
Age		
21-25	103	79,8%
17-20	62	20,2%
Visit Frequency		
1 times	10	7,8%
2-4 times	47	36,4%
5-7 times	28	21,7%
>7 times	44	31,1%
Destinaton of delivery ever done		
In town	73	56,6%
Out of town	55	42,6%
Abroad	1	0,8%

Based on the demographics of the respondents in the table above, 51.9% of the respondents were male and 48.1% were female. 79.8% of respondents are around 17 to 25 years old, 20.2% of respondents are 17 to 20 years old. Visit The frequency of use of services for 1 time use was 7.8%, 2 to 4 times use was 36.4%, 5 to 7 times use was 21.7% and also use more than 7 times was 31.1%. Then the delivery destination that has been done is 56.6% of respondents sending within the city, 42.6% shipping outside the city, 0.8% shipping abroad.

4.2 Convergent Validity and Reability Test

From the results of calculations that have been carried out with SmartPLS 4.0, the following results are obtained:

Table.3 Convergent Validity and Reability Tests

Path	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Brand Image	0.870	0.872	0.902	0.607
Brand Trust	0.930	0.932	0.947	0.783
Brand Loyalty	0.893	0.897	0.933	0.824

Determining the validity of each link between indicators and their latent variables is the goal of convergent validity. Correlations between the item score or component score and the latent variable score or construct score computed by PLS are used to evaluate convergent variables from the measurement model using reflecting indicators. Loading factor can be said to be valid if the loading factor value is > 0.50 . This is because the loading factor value > 0.50 is considered sufficient as research under development. Therefore, based on the validity of the loading factor, it is stated that all items or indicators have valid item validity, because the loading factor can be said to be valid if the loading factor value is > 0.50 (Syarifah et al., 2020). From table 3 it can be seen that the Brand Image variable. Brand Trust, and Brand Loyalty can reflect each valid variable because the AVE value > 0.5 .

The most commonly used method for reliability testing is to look at the Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha and Composite Reliability values. The instrument can be said to be reliable if the Cronbach's coefficient Alpha value is greater than 0.70 according to Ghozali in his study (Nurcahyo & Riskayanto, 2018). While the value of the composite reliability method is well accepted if the value is $< 0.70 - < 0.95$ (Hair et al., 2019). Based on the calculation of the table above, it can be said to be reliable, because the results of the Cronbach's coefficient Alpha value are greater than 0.70 according to Ghozali in his study. Meanwhile, the value of the composite reliability method is well acceptable because the value is greater than 0.70 and the result is not greater than 0.95.

4.3 Diskriminan Validitas (Crosst Loading Test)

Discriminant validity is a construct that is judged to be different from other constructs based on empirical standards. To evaluate discriminant validity, researchers consider the cross-loadings factor. Cross-loadings is a measure that shows the value of the outer loadings of indicators on the related construct must be greater than the cross-loading value on other constructs (Alkalah, 2016). Based on data processing using Smart PLS-4.0, the crosst loading table below is obtained.

Tabel.4 Cross Loading

	BI	BL	BT
BI1	0.767	0.501	0.569
BI2	0.823	0.702	0.669
BI3	0.810	0.614	0.569
BI4	0.703	0.626	0.588
BI5	0.764	0.623	0.604
BI6	0.800	0.637	0.652
BL1	0.679	0.895	0.789
BL2	0.676	0.837	0.689
BL3	0.757	0.887	0.784
BL4	0.722	0.907	0.799
BL5	0.694	0.896	0.762
BT1	0.759	0.838	0.910
BT2	0.672	0.731	0.891
BT3	0.699	0.781	0.921

Based on the test results of the cross-loading, it shows that all outer loadings of indicators on the related constructs are greater than the cross-loading values on other constructs. It can be concluded that all constructs have good discriminant validity.

4.4 Analisis model struktural

4.4.1 Direct

Tabel.5 Direct

Model	Original Sample (O)	T-Statistics	P-Values	F Square	Desicion
Brand Image → Brand Loyalty	0.309	3.909	0.000	0.172	H1: Supported(+)
Brand Image → Brand Trust	0.785	19.925	0.000	1.601	H2: Supported(+)
Brand Trust → Brand Loyalty	0.623	7.817	0.000	0.698	H3: Supported(+)

Based on hypothesis testing in this study using the T statistical value and the T table, if the T statistical value obtained is greater than the T table, the hypothesis is supported (accepted). From table 5 we can see, Brand Image directly affects Brand Loyalty with Tstatistics of $3.909 > 1.97$ and a P-Value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Next is Brand Image directly affects Brand Trust with T-statistics of $19.925 > 1.97$ and P-Value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Furthermore, Brand Trust directly affects Brand Loyalty with a T-statistic of $7.817 > 1.97$ and a P-Value of $0.000 < 0.05$.

H1 : Brand Trust is positively and significantly impacted by Brand Image

The test results show that there is a direct effect of Brand Image on Customer Trust of 0.785, Tstatistic 19.925 is greater than Ttable 1.97. It can be concluded that these findings provide credence to the theory that Brand Image influences Brand Trust. Brand Trust is positively and significantly impacted by the findings of the Brand Image research. This is supported by the existence of research that has been previously researched on (Putri et al., 2019). In testing Fsquare Brand Image in increasing Brand Trust has an influence of 1.601 (strong).

H2 : Brand Loyalty is positively and significantly impacted by Brand Trust

According to the test results, there is a 0.623 direct relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty. Tstatistic 7.817 is greater than Ttable 1.97. It can be stated that the hypothesis of Brand Trust on Brand Loyalty is supported by these results. The Brand Trust research findings have a favorable and significant impact on Brand Loyalty. This is supported by the existence of research that has been previously researched on (Junaidi et al., 2021). In the Fsquare test, the existence of Brand Trust in increasing Brand Loyalty has an influence of 0.698 (strong).

H3 : Brand Loyalty is positively and significantly impacted by Brand Image

The test results show that there is a direct effect of Brand Image on Brand Loyalty of 0.309. Tstatistic 3.909 is greater than Ttable 1.97. It can be stated that the hypothesis of Brand Image on Brand Loyalty is supported by these results. The results of the Brand Image analysis have a positive and significant impact on Brand Loyalty. This is supported by the existence of research that has been previously researched on (Nurkhalis et al., 2023). In the Fsquare test, the existence of Brand Trust in increasing Brand Loyalty has an influence of 0.172 (medium).

4.4.2 Indirect

From table 6, it can be seen that Brand Image has an indirect impact on Brand Loyalty Brand Trust with Tstatistics of $7.101 > 1.97$, p-value $0.000 < 0.005$.

Tabel.6 indirect

Model	Original Sample (O)	T-Statistics	P-Values	Upsilon V	Desicion
Brand Image → Brand Trust → Brand Loyalty	0.489	6.853	0.000	0.213	H1: Supported(+)

H4 : Brand Image has a positive and significant influence on Brand Loyalty through Brand Trust

The test results show that it can be stated that there is an indirect impact of Brand Image on Brand Loyalty through Brand Trust of 0.463, Tstatistic 7.101 is greater than Ttable 1.97. It can be stated that the hypothesis of the impact of Brand Image on Brand Loyalty through Brand Trust is supported by these results. The test results of the impact of Brand Image on Brand Loyalty through Brand Trust have a positive and significant impact. This is supported by the existence of research that has been researched previously contained in (Huda Prayolanda et al., 2022). In testing the effect size of the existence of Brand Image in increasing Brand Loyalty through Brand Trust has an influence of 0.213 (strong).

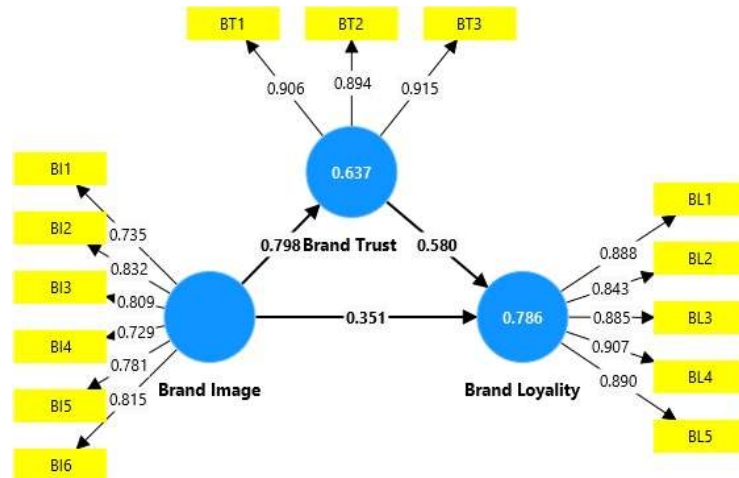


Fig.2 Structural Model Full Bootstrapping

5. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that while brand image positively impacts brand trust, brand trust also positively influences the growth of brand loyalty at J&T Express. A strong and good Brand Image that is formed in consumers will create a sense of calmness and security in using the shipping services offered by the company. Those who wish to employ these

delivery services will feel more confident in the brand if it has a positive image in their eyes. The results of the research conducted indicate that JNT Express already has a strong Brand Image and is considered positive. Therefore JNT Express has a good sense of Brand Trust in the hearts of consumers, they believe that by using delivery services at JNT Express consumers feel calm and safe. That way consumers will reuse the delivery service. And JNT Ekspres can maintain and create Brand Loyalty at JNT Ekspres.

6. Implications

The study's findings support the conclusion that every variable significantly improves each variable's typing, both directly and indirectly. Based on the above conclusions, in this study the authors provide useful suggestions as follows:

1. Brand Trust is positively impacted by Brand Image. It is anticipated that J&T Express will continually uphold a positive perception of its brand in the eyes of the public, fostering a sense of brand trust that is seen as secure and provides customers with comfort when utilizing its delivery services..
2. Brand Loyalty is positively impacted by Brand Trust. JNT Express must have a sense of Brand Trust in the hearts of consumers, because in the research results Brand Trust is most influential in increasing the company's Brand Loyalty. So JNT Ekspres is expected to continue to improve its Brand Trust for the future, that way JNT Ekspres will always be trusted by consumers who have good shipping services and consumers use its services again or are loyal to the brand.
3. Brand Loyalty directly benefits from a positive brand image. So it is hoped that JNT Ekspres will create a strong Brand Image, because it can maintain loyal consumers and even create loyal consumers to the company.
4. Through brand trust, brand loyalty is directly impacted by brand image. Where Brand Image must be able to create a sense of Brand Trust in the heart first to increase Brand Loyalty to shipping services at JNT Express.

Then this research is expected to be a benchmark and could be a solution for JNT Express in taking further action. This research can also raise awareness of the company to maintain and enhance Brand Experience because it is the most powerful to increase Brand Loyalty. This study shows that a positive Brand Image increases Brand Loyalty among university students, with Brand Trust as an important mediator. Trust strengthens emotional and cognitive commitment, so university students prefer JNT Express. Effective communication and good service quality also strengthen trust and loyalty. To increase loyalty, JNT Express should focus on quality service, transparent communication, and community involvement. Next, JNT Express must empower the Brand Image in the mind of the public, because there is a direct influence to create Brand loyalty.

7. Research limitations

Overall, J&T Express has built brand loyalty well y influenced by brand image through brand trust. However, this research has some limitations that can be used as a measure for future researchers to obtain better research results, namely:

1. This study involved only 129 respondents who used the J&T Express delivery service in the Logistics Management Students in 2021.
2. This study collected their data during the semester holidays where there were barriers to collecting respondent data in the field.
3. This research uses only 3 variables, where one free variable is Brand Image, next one intervening variables is Brand Confidence, and one dependent variabel is Brand Loyalty.

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