

The Influence of Brand Super-Recovery Effort, Online Brand Community Engagement, and Empathy on Repurchase Intention Among Generation Z Who Actively Shop for Local Fashion Online on the Shopee Platform through Consumer Forgiveness as a Mediation Variable

Mutiara Dias Faradisa ^{1*}, Ratna Listiana Dewanti, S.E., M.M. ²
mutiaradias9@gmail.com ^{1*} ratna.listiana@uty.ac.id ^{2*}

Management, Universitas Teknologi Yogyakarta, Indonesia ^{1*,2}

Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the influence of brand super-recovery effort, online brand community engagement, and empathy on repurchase intention among Generation Z consumers who actively shop for local fashion online through the Shopee platform, with consumer forgiveness as a mediating variable. The sampling in this research was purposive sampling technique, with a sample size of 153 respondents. The research employs quantitative data, with primary data collected through an online questionnaire that was tested for validity and reliability. The analysis tool used in this study was Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). Hypothesis testing was conducted through path analysis. The result of the study indicated that brand super-recovery effort had a positive and significant influence on consumer forgiveness, online brand community engagement had a positive and significant influence on consumer forgiveness, empathy had a positive and significant influence on consumer forgiveness, brand super-recovery effort had a positive and significant influence on repurchase intention, online brand community engagement had a positive and significant influence on repurchase intention, empathy had a positive and significant influence on repurchase intention, consumer forgiveness had a positive and significant influence on repurchase intention, consumer forgiveness mediated the relationship between brand super-recovery effort and repurchase intention, consumer forgiveness mediated the relationship between online brand community engagement and repurchase intention, consumer forgiveness mediated the relationship between empathy and repurchase intention.

Keywords: *brand super-recovery effort; brand community engagement; empathy; repurchase intention; consumer forgiveness*

 This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

Introduction

Digital technology in Indonesia is experiencing very rapid development, this has made changes in various sectors, especially in the e-commerce industry sector. According to the BPPTIK of the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (2023), the digital society index in Indonesia will increase in 2024, this will encourage an increase in smartphone use and a shift in customer preferences from conventional shopping to a more flexible and fast shopping experience through e-commerce platforms. Suhartadi (2024), stated that many local and international e-commerce platforms are present and compete fiercely. One of them is Shopee, data obtained that during the January-March period this

year, the Shopee website achieved an average of 157.9 million visits per month, far exceeding its competitors (Ahdiat, 2023). This reflects the popularity of Shopee as the top choice for customers to shop online, which is driven by various factors such as ease of use, wide variety of products, and attractive promotions and discounts.

Online shopping behavior has many advantages, but on the other hand there are also disadvantages. This emphasizes that although online shopping offers convenience and efficiency, it is important for companies to pay attention to the quality of service and the quality of the products they provide to their customers. Without proper management and control, it can lead to the loss of both customers, new customers, and old customers. Of course, customers will feel disappointed if the expected perception is not appropriate, which will later affect the intention of repurchase. Therefore, companies need to carry out several strategies to persuade and obtain consumer forgiveness from customers for errors or failures of the services provided.

The consumer forgiveness strategy can be done in several ways, including brand super-recovery efforts. According to Harrison-Walker (2019), to recover from a crisis successfully, managers must strive to obtain customer forgiveness, as well as it was found that apologies, compensation, and votes positively affect customer forgiveness in service failure scenarios. This brand super-recovery effort is the same as service recovery which is a company process when handling customer complaints or problems that occur during service. This brand recovery effort aims to increase positive perception and customer trust.

In addition, online brand community engagement also has an important role in obtaining consumer forgiveness. According to Quan and Li (in Wei et al., 2022), it shows that in service recovery, brand trust, and brand intimacy have a significant positive impact on customer forgiveness and customer forgiveness play a significant intermediary effect in the path of brand trust and brand intimacy to repurchase intent. When a brand experiences problems, such as product defects, customer engagement in the online community can help to rebuild customer trust in the brand.

Empathy is also a factor that affects consumer forgiveness. Hasan (2020), stated that empathy is providing sincere and individual or personal attention given to customers by trying to understand customer desires. Empathy allows companies to rebuild positive relationships with customers who may have felt disappointed. Empathy can be done by acknowledging the mistakes that have occurred and showing sincere regret, as well as showing the intention to improve.

Previous research on super-recovery brand efforts and online brand community engagement towards repurchase intention through consumer forgiveness conducted by Muryanto and Haryono (2022), at the e-commerce company Tokopedia, shows that super-recovery brand efforts and online brand community engagement significantly influence repurchase intention mediated by consumer forgiveness. Research on the effect of empathy on repurchase intention through consumer forgiveness conducted by Wei et al. (2022), in an online store study, shows that empathy has a positive influence on repurchase intention mediated by consumer forgiveness. The novelty of this research is that the researcher adds empathy as an independent variable.

This novelty examines the synergy between super-recovery effort brands, online brand

community engagement, and empathy towards repurchase intention through consumer forgiveness. The synergy of these three variables is still rarely studied because research is often conducted separately; therefore, the researcher wants to understand the effects that arise from the combination of these three variables, especially in the context of local fashion brand products. Qiscus (2024), states that empathy plays a role in strengthening brand super-recovery efforts by showing sincere apologies and empathy can ease heated situations, empathy is a form of appreciation for the discomfort experienced by customers in order to build an emotional relationship with customers. In addition, the empathy variable in this study can deepen engagement in online brand communities, which has a positive impact on customer loyalty and repurchase intention.

According to Siomkos and Kurzbard (in Yuan et al., 2020), brand super-recovery efforts are a viable option when manufacturers face potential product recalls and must take some extra measures for consumers even though they are not required by law to resolve the issue. So this is an effort or strategy made by the company to restore the image, reputation and trust of the brand that has been damaged due to crises or failures to prevent the long-term impact on business sustainability. According to Souiden and Pons (in Muryanto and Haryono, 2022), to measure brand super-recovery effort can be done through indicators, including: (1) Denial, (2) Involuntary Recall, (3) Voluntary Recall, (4) Super Effort.

Chandra et al. (2020), stated that empathy in a service is the existence of attention, seriousness, sympathy, understanding and involvement of parties interested in the service to develop and carry out service activities according to the level of understanding and understanding of each of these parties. So that it is as if someone is in the person's position so that it allows people to interact well. According to Davis (in Muss et al., 2024), there are 4 indicators to measure empathy variables, including: (1) Perspective Taking, (2) Fantasy, (3) Empathic Concern, (4) Personal Distress.

McAlexander et al. (in Yuan et al., 2020), stated that an online brand community can be defined as a network of relationships between consumers and brands, products, fellow consumers, and marketers. Vivek et al. (Yuan et al., 2020), define customer engagement as the intensity of individual participation and relationship with the organization's offerings and activities initiated by the customer or organization. According to Zhang et al. (2017), stating that the indicators of measuring online brand community engagement include: (1) Conscious Participation, (2) Enthusiasm, (3) Social Interaction.

According to Xie and Peng (in Yuan et al., 2020), stating forgiveness is defined as a consumer's willingness to let go of retaliation, alienation, and other destructive behaviors, and to respond in a constructive way after a breach of the organization's trust and related remedial efforts. According to Finkel et al. (in Wei et al., 2022), consumer forgiveness measurement uses three measurement indicators, including: (1) Positive Behavioral Tendencies, (2) Positive Cognitive Interpretations, (3) Positive Emotional Reactions.

Zeithaml (in Wei et al., 2022) states that consumer repurchase intention is a tendency for consumers to decide to continue purchasing a company's products or services in the future, which generally includes two dimensions: repurchase and willingness to recommend. This reflects a customer's tendency to buy back products or services from the same brand in the future influenced by previous experiences. According to the opinion expressed by Putri et al. (in Ginting et al., 2022), the indicators for measuring the variable of repurchase

intention include: (1) Transactional Interest, (2) Referral Interest, (3) Preferential Interest, and (4) Exploratory Interest.

Methods

This study uses a quantitative approach that aims to test the hypotheses that have been formulated previously and to analyze the influence between the variables studied in this study. The population in this study is Generation Z who actively shop for local fashion online on the Shopee platform. To determine the research sample, on probability sampling was used. The sample in this study consisted of 153 respondents. Respondents were selected based on the criteria that had been set, namely: (1) The respondents are generation Z who are 17 years old and above, (2) The respondent is a user of the Shopee platform and has experience buying local fashion products at least twice in the last three months, (3) Respondents who have experienced recovery efforts from local fashion brands, and (4) Respondents who are active in online communities related to local fashion brands.

Data collection was carried out through questionnaires that were shared online using Google Forms. In the use of the Likert scale, the variables to be measured, are described into indicators of variables that will be made into a question/statement that will be used as an item on the instrument (Widodo et al., 2023). The questionnaire was designed using a likert scale with 5 points which aimed to measure respondents' perceptions.

The software used to perform data analysis is SmartPLS 4.0. Data processing employs the Structural Equation Modelling-Partial Least Square (PLS-SEM) technique to test the validity and reliability of the data, referred to as outer model testing. This outer model testing includes convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite reliability. Then, inner model testing is conducted, which includes testing the coefficient of determination (R²) and testing the significance of parameters or hypothesis testing.

Results and Discussion

Research Results

The hypothesis testing process in this study uses the Structural Equation Modelling-Partial Least Square (PLS-SEM) technique in SmartPLS software version 4.0. This test starts from evaluating the model through a validity test and a reliability test known as the outer model. Outer model or model measurement aims to assess the results of validity and reliability tests based on indicators from variables.

This validity test is based on 2 methods, namely convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity is used to find out that the indicators of a variable are highly correlated. The indicator is declared valid if the loading factor value is > 0.7 and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value is > 0.5 (Ghozali and Latan, 2015). Validity discriminant is used to know that indicators of a different variable should not be highly correlated (Ghozali and Latan, 2015). Validity discriminant by looking at the value of the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). And it is declared valid if the HTMT value < 0.85 .

Table 1. Outer Model Test Results

Variable	Nilai	Cronbach's	Composite	Composite	Results
----------	-------	------------	-----------	-----------	---------

	AVE	Alpha	Reliability	Reliability	
Brand Super-Recovery Effort	0.582	0.761	0.767	0.847	Valid and reliable
Online Brand Community Engagement	0.727	0.813	0.817	0.889	Valid and reliable
Empathy	0.51	0.769	0.781	0.852	Valid and reliable
Repurchase Intention	0.718	0.868	0.871	0.91	Valid and reliable
Consumer Forgiveness	0.689	0.773	0.776	0.869	Valid and reliable

Source: SmartPLS data analysis, 2025

Based on the results of the PLS-SEM analysis above, it is known that all indicators in the variables of brand recovery efforts, online brand community engagement, empathy, repurchase intention, and consumer understanding have loading factor values above 0.7 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values above 0.5. The reliability test in this study was conducted by measuring variables through indicators that can be observed by looking at the cronbach alpha values and composite reliability values. This shows that the instruments used in this study have good validity and reliability, making them trustworthy for measuring the constructs being studied.

Table 2. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Test Results

Variable	Brand Super-Recovery Effort	Consumer Forgiveness	Empathy	Online Brand Community Engagement	Repurchase Intention
Brand Super-Recovery Effort					
Consumer Forgiveness	0.817				
Empathy	0.849	0.837			
Online Brand Community Engagement	0.661	0.770	0.745		
Repurchase Intention	0.732	0.789	0.763	0.662	

Source: SmartPLS data analysis, 2025

Meanwhile, the results of discriminant validity showed that the HTMT value < 0.85 , indicating that all variables had adequate discriminant validity. In addition, the reliability test showed that all variables had a composite reliability value and cronbach's alpha above 0.7, which means that each indicator in the variable had a high level of consistency. Therefore, the measurement model in this study can be declared valid and reliable, so it is suitable for future hypothesis testing.

The next step is to evaluate the inner model using the determinant coefficient. The detemization coefficient test is used to determine the extent of the influence of independent variables on the dependent variables as a whole. The R-Square (R²) values of

0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 can be concluded that the model is strong, moderate, and weak (Ghozali and Latan, 2015).

Table 3. Determination Coefficient Test Results

Variable	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Consumer Forgiveness	0.550	0.541
Repurchase Intention	0.530	0.517

Source: SmartPLS data analysis, 2025

The R-Square value of 0.550 for the consumer forgiveness variable indicates that 55% of the variation in consumer forgiveness can be explained by super brand recovery efforts, online brand community engagement, and empathy. This means that these three factors together have a significant impact. The remaining 45% is influenced by other factors not discussed in this study. The R-Square value of 0.530 for the repurchase intention variable indicates that 53% of the variation in repurchase intention is explained by super brand recovery efforts, online brand community engagement, and empathy. Meanwhile, the remaining 47% is influenced by other factors not examined in this research. In other words, consumer forgiveness acts as a mediating variable that bridges the influence of these factors on repurchase intention.

After testing the inner model, the next stage is to test the hypothesis using bootstrapping path coefficient. This test is used as a basis to accept or reject a hypothesis by looking at several criteria such as original sample, t-statistic, and p-values. The criteria in this hypothesis test are that if the p-value results with a significance level of ≤ 0.05 and a t-value of ≥ 1.96 , then the indicator variable is declared significant. Meanwhile, if the p-value result has a significance level of ≥ 0.05 , then the indicator variable is declared insignificant (Haryono, 2016).

Table 4. Significance Test Results Parameter (Hypothesis Test)

Direct Effect	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Results
Brand Super-Recovery Effort > Consumer Forgiveness	0.283	3.319	0.000	Accepted
Online Brand Community Engagement > Consumer Forgiveness	0.292	3.515	0.000	Accepted
Empathy > Consumer Forgiveness	0.296	3.932	0.000	Accepted
Brand Super-Recovery Effort > Repurchase Intention	0.185	2.090	0.018	Accepted
Online Brand Community Engagement > Repurchase Intention	0.145	1.679	0.047	Accepted
Empathy > Repurchase Intention	0.245	2.794	0.003	Accepted
Consumer Forgiveness > Repurchase Intention	0.282	3.105	0.001	Accepted
Indirect Effect	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Result
Brand Super-Recovery Effort > Consumer Forgiveness > Repurchase Intention	0.080	1.954	0.025	Accepted

Online Brand Community Engagement > Consumer Forgiveness > Repurchase Intention	0.082	2.595	0.005	Accepted
Empathy > Consumer Forgiveness > Repurchase Intention	0.083	2.366	0.009	Accepted

Source: SmartPLS data analysis, 2025

Based on the results of the hypothesis test using the bootstrapping path coefficient, all hypotheses submitted in this study were declared to be fully accepted, the results of the study showed that:

- Brand super-recovery effort has a significant positive effect on consumer forgiveness (H1 accepted).
- Online brand community engagement has a significant positive effect on consumer forgiveness (H2 accepted).
- Empathy has a significant positive effect on consumer forgiveness (H3 accepted).
- Brand super-recovery effort has a significant positive effect on repurchase intention (H4 accepted).
- Online brand community engagement has a significant positive effect on repurchase intention (H5 accepted).
- Empathy has a significant positive effect on repurchase intention (H6 accepted).
- Consumer forgiveness has a significant positive effect on repurchase intention (H7 accepted).
- Brand super-recovery effort has a significant positive effect on repurchase intention through consumer forgiveness (H8 accepted).
- Online brand community engagement has a significant positive effect on repurchase intention through consumer forgiveness (H9 accepted).
- Empathy has a significant positive effect on repurchase intention through consumer forgiveness (H10 accepted).

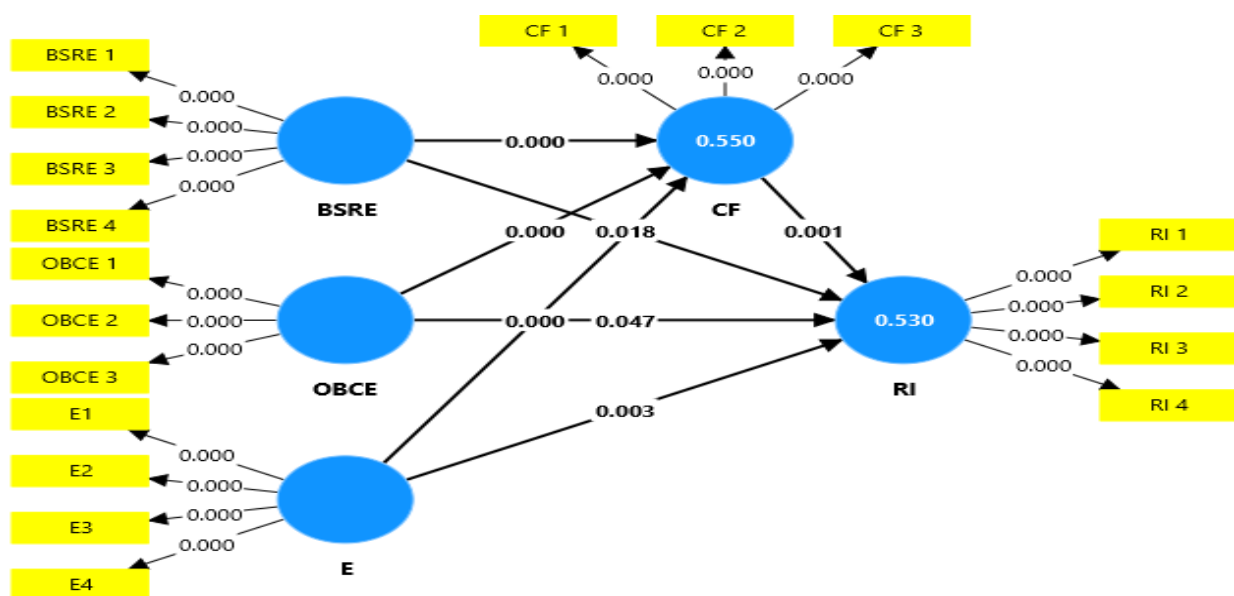


Figure 1. Significance Test Results Parameter (Hypothesis Test)

Source: SmartPLS data analysis, 2025

Discussion

Brand super-recovery effort shows the extent to which brands are able to make maximum recovery after a mistake or service failure. For generation Z who tend to be critical and active on social media, fast, sincere, and solutive recovery efforts greatly affect their perception of brands. When brands show significant recovery efforts, this can trigger the intention to make a repeat purchase because consumers feel valued and prioritized. This opens up opportunities for consumers to remain loyal and consider repurchase even though they had previously experienced disappointment.

Meanwhile, online brand community engagement also plays an important role in shaping positive consumer experiences. Active involvement in the online brand community on stages such as Shopee or social media creates a sense of belonging, increases trust, and strengthens the emotional connection between the brand and consumers. For Gen Z who are very active in a computerized manner, this community experience can be a source of information and support that increases tolerance for brand mistakes, making it easier for shopper forgiveness and ultimately having a positive impact on repurchase intentions.

In addition, empathy from brands, namely the ability of brands to understand and respond to consumers' feelings and needs emotionally, also plays a big role in creating a sense of comfort and trust. When consumers feel emotionally understood, they are more likely to forgive mistakes and rebuild broken trust. When consumers feel emotionally understood, they are more likely to forgive mistakes and rebuild broken trust. Consumers who feel empathy from brands tend to have stronger emotional connections, which ultimately positively influences deliberate repurchases. With customer absolution as the go between, the relationship between brands and consumers can be effectively restored, creating a sustainable cycle of loyalty among Gen Z who shop for local designs online.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The results of this study aim to determine the influence of brand super-recovery effort, online brand community engagement, empathy, and consumer forgiveness on repurchase intention among Generation Z who are active in shopping for local fashion online on the Shopee platform as measured by Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis. All hypotheses in this study are declared accepted. The most significant and dominant hypothesis in this study is the influence of empathy on repurchase intention, both directly and through consumer forgiveness. This is indicated by the highest t-statistics value among all paths of influence on repurchase intention and very significant p-values (< 0.05), thus leading to the acceptance of all hypotheses involving empathy. This proves that good management of a consumer forgiveness strategy will be able to influence brand super-recovery effort, online brand community engagement, and empathy, which will later have an impact on repurchase intention. Building trust and restoring relationships with consumers through an emotional approach and digital community is key to maintaining customer loyalty on e-commerce platforms like Shopee.

The findings of this study are limited to generation Z, so they cannot be used in other age ranges. In addition, the data collection in the study only used questionnaires that were shared online, so there was a possibility of bias. Future research is recommended to conduct

research on other industries such as technology or services, to see if the relationships that have been found will remain consistent even in different sectors. As well as being able to conduct research involving other age groups, such as millennials or baby boomers, as well as consider other e-commerce platforms such as Lazada, Zalora or Tokopedia to obtain more comprehensive findings.

Reference

- Ahdiat Adi. (2023). 5 E-Commerce with the Most Visitors in the First Quarter of 2023. Databox.
- BPPTIK Ministry of Communication and Informatics. (2023). Indonesia's Digital Society Index 2023 Has Increased. National.
- Chandra, T., Chandra, S., and Hafni, L. (2020). Service Quality, Consumer Satisfaction, and Consumer Loyalty: A Theoretical Overview. CV IRDH.
- Ghozali, I. (2021). Multivariate Analysis Application with IBM SPSS 26 Program. Semarang: Publishing Agency of Diponegoro University.
- Ginting, Y. M., Chandra, T., Miran, I., and Yusriadi, Y. (2022). Repurchase Intention of E-Commerce Customers in Indonesia: An Overview of the Effect of E Service Quality, E-Word of Mouth, Customer Trust, and Customer Satisfaction Mediation. *International Journal of Data and Network Science*, 7, 329-340.
- Harrison-Walker, L. J. (2019). The Critical Role of Customer Forgiveness in Successful Service Recovery. *Journal of Business Research*, 95, 376–391. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.07.049>
- Hasan, S. (2020). The Key to Successful Customer Satisfaction (Efforts to Build BUMD). Banten: Media Madani.
- Muryanto, M. A., and Haryono, T. (2022). Intention to Repurchase After a data Leak on Tokopedia: Mediated by Consumer Forgiveness. *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*, 14(3), 551–559. <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2022.14.3.0605>
- Muss, C., Tüxen, D., & Fürstenau, B. (2025b). Empathy in leadership: a systematic literature review on the effects of empathetic leaders in organizations. *Management Review Quarterly*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11301-024-00472-7>
- Qiscus. (2024). 10 Ways to Handle Customer Complaints Effectively and Professionally. Qiscus.
- Suhartadi Imam. (2024). E-Commerce Growth Will Accelerate the Digital Economy. Investor ID.
- Wei, J., Wang, Z., Hou, Z., dan Meng, Y. (2022). The Influence of Empathy and Consumer Forgiveness on the Service Recovery Effect of Online Shopping. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.842207>
- Widodo, S., Ladyani, F., Asrianto, L. O., Dalfian, Nurcahyati, S., Devriany, A., Khairunnisa, Lestari, S. M. P., Rusdi, Wijayanti, D. R., Hidayat, A., Sjahriani, T., Armi, Widya, N., and Rogayah. (2023). Research Method Textbook. Resume Science Techno Direct.

- Yuan, D., Lin, Z., Filieri, R., Liu, R., dan Zheng, M. (2020). Managing the Product-Harm Crisis in the Digital Era: The Role of Consumer Online Brand Community Engagement. *Journal of Business Research*, 115, 38–47. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.04.044>
- Zhang, M., Guo, L., Hu, M., dan Liu, W. (2017). Influence of Customer Engagement with Company Social Networks on Stickiness: Mediating Effect of Customer Value Creation. *International Journal of Information Management*, 37(3), 229–240.