



Battle Royale Game Player's Commitment and Branding Outcomes: Exploring Role of Brand Tribalism and Community

Dr. Prerana Baber

Lecturer, School of Studies in Management,
Jiwaji University, Gwalior, India

Dr. Francesca Di Virgilio

Associate Professor of Organization Theory and Human Resource Management,
Department of Economics - University of Molise

ABSTRACT

The current research investigates the influence of players' commitment on brand tribalism among battle royale game players. The function of brand tribalism in mediating the relationship between player commitment and consumption-related outcomes were also examined. The data were collected using online survey from 396 individuals who played online battle royale games. PLS-SEM was used to test the suggested model. The findings indicated that players commitment positively influenced brand tribalism. The results also indicated that brand tribalism partially mediated the relationship between player's commitment, brand tribalism, brand relationship, brand pride, brand love and brand loyalty. The findings of this piece of research would help BRG developers to augment their efforts directed toward the brand building. For instance, players' commitment positively influences BRG brand tribalism. The current research is first in its kind which explores the role of brand tribalism as a mediator between players' commitment and consumption-specific outcomes for battle royale games.

Keywords: Brand tribalism; Battle royale games; Players' commitment; Brand love; Brand relationship; Brand loyalty

1. Introduction

Online video games offer a unique social experience where individuals can interact and compete online (Arbeau et al., 2020; Badrinarayanan et al., 2014; Badrinarayanan et al., 2015). Generally, hedonistic outcomes attract consumers to play online video games (Badrinarayanan et al., 2014). More than 3.24 billion players are playing online games (Clement, 2021). Since the first online battle royale game was released in 2015, it has been one of the most popular online games (Choi & Kim, 2018; Rosenbusch et al., 2020, p. 462). Over the years, revenue from battle royale games has increased exponentially to \$6.9 billion in 2019 (Clement, 2021a).

Battle Royale Games (henceforth, BRGs) represent a genre of online multiplayer games usually involving hundreds of players (as a team or an individual). BRGs are generally played in a team (Cai et al., 2019). The objective of players/teams is to eliminate opponents while surviving in a shrinking safe

zone using a variety of weapons and strategies (Carter et al., 2020). The surviving team/individual is declared the winner. The team members/players often know each other. They are either friends or are part of an online community that organizes the BRG competitions (Anderson, 2019). The team members continuously communicate while playing and exhibit a great sense of commitment while playing a BRG to win the battles and complete a set of given objectives (Carter et al., 2020; Dupuis & Ramsey, 2011; Harwood & Ward, 2013). The belief of commitment is often linked with a sentiment, which is exhibited by the players who want to be allied with or acknowledged by a team (Hera, 2019, p. 54; King & de la Hera, 2020). The players display a great sense of commitment while playing battle royale games, anticipating forming a closely-knit group known as a tribe (Badrinarayanan & Sierra, 2018). The battle royale games offer an environment that acts as a medium for online consumption among the communities. Various

auxiliary game-related online collectives also offer a platform for BRGs-centred brand communities to progress and flourish (Badrinarayanan et al., 2014; Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006; Jeong et al., 2020, McAlexander, et al., 2002; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001; Stokburger-Sauer, 2010). BRGs have been downloaded more than two billion times through Apple AppStore and the Android Play Store (Mohanty, 2021). BRGs developers are expected to earn revenue of more than USD 10 billion by 2025 (Lindlahr, 2021). Gamers usually played BRGs 6.33 hours per week, and mobile phones were the primary gaming devices (Limelight Networks, 2021, p. 5).

BRGs have observed colossal popularity and success among online gamers (Rosenbusch et al., 2020). The young adults are visible consumer groups of BRGs as players are offered a rich social experience and unique opportunity to stay connected and build community (Carter et al., 2020; Sanderson et al., 2020). BRG players customarily form, participate in, and accomplish assignments in terms of recognition, adoration, and authority within a team and, ultimately, assist this association in competing with and defeating other teams to achieve the game's goals (Badrinarayanan et al., 2014; Dupuis & Ramsey, 2011; Harwood & Ward, 2013). Over the years, popular BRGs have evolved as brands (such as PUBG, Fortnite, Garena FreeFire, Call of Duty: Warzone). Jevons et al. (2005) suggested the presence of an interrelationship between consumers and brands. The loyal consumers of brands are generally also considered admirers of the product. When an admirer of a specific brand is in a relationship with other admirers, it forms a brand community (Veloutsou & Moutinho, 2009, p. 314). Brand communities that are informal and loose are termed brand tribes (Taute & Sierra, 2014; Veloutsou & Moutinho, 2009). Generally, products with similar values evolve into tribal brands (Cova & Cova, 2002; Cova & White, 2010; Jeong et al., 2020; Veloutsou & Moutinho, 2009).

From the marketing perspective, the knowledge of outcomes and nature of BRG consumption communities as brand tribes is relatively unexplored (Firmansyah, 2020; Ghosh, 2021; Marlatt, 2019). Considering the economic, social, and rational aspects which

are ubiquitous in BRGs, researchers have agreed that BRG communities inherit the characteristics same as other online brand communities and tribes (Cova & Cova, 2002; Kristiansen & Tempelhaug, 2020, p. 16; MacCallum-Stewart, 2014; O'Sullivan et al., 2011). The theoretical framework of the existing literature on brand tribalism research has concomitantly examined variables representing specific consumption-based antecedents and consumer-intrinsic outcomes on self-expressive brands or massively multiplayer online role-playing games (Badrinarayanan & Sierra, 2018; Choi & Kim, 2004; Goncalves Filho et al., 2021; Lee & Kim, 2018; Jeong et al., 2020; Sierra et al., 2016; Sierra & Taute, 2018).

Although, few studies have attempted to explore the variety of relationships pertaining to BRGs with player characteristics, design of the game, gameplay, player commitment, and brand tribalism (Badrinarayanan et al., 2014). The understanding of the relationship between players' commitment, brand tribalism, and consumption-specific outcomes (i.e., brand loyalty, brand love, brand pride, and brand relationship) for BRG consumers is intriguingly low. The current research explores the role of brand tribalism as a mediator between players' commitment and consumption-specific outcomes for BRGs. Thus, testing the proposed model from the perspective of BRGs expedites the answers to the following research questions:

RQ1: Whether players' commitment of BRGs influences brand tribalism?

RQ2: Whether brand tribalism influences brand love, brand relationship, brand pride, and brand loyalty?

RQ3: Whether brand tribalism mediates relationship between players' commitment, brand love, brand pride, and brand loyalty?

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Players' Commitment and Brand Tribalism.

Commitment is associated with the physiological state, where a favourable relationship develops between a product and a consumer (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005). As consumers build a strong bond with a brand, they create a barrier that prevents other similar brands from getting into the customer's mind (Desai & Raju, 2007; Stratton

& Northcote, 2016). Commitment is a feeling which carries a sense of belonging that connects us to our surroundings (Booker, 2016). Active participation is a must for enhancing commitment (Colquitt et al., 2011). The paper of Badrinarayanan, Sierra, and Taute (2014), examined the players' cognitive involvement positively affects commitment and positively affects brand tribalism. So, in this research, the participation of players' and commitment to their games tried to measure. Based on the literature reviewed above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₁: Players' commitment significantly affects Brand Tribalism.

2.2 Brand Tribalism and Brand Relationship player's commitment

Different researchers explain brand relationship meaning in the literature from their different perspectives. The brand relationship can be measured with brand love (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006), commitment, satisfaction, and immediacy (Gaus et al., 2006). Some researchers pointed out that brand satisfaction, brand attachment, and brand trust were the components of brand relationships (Esch et al., 2006). Fournier's 1995; Fournier and Yao's (1997) research suggested that brand relationships are formed through actual participation in brand communities. Swaminathan et al., 2007, explored that when consumers participate in brand communities' reference groups, they develop a relationship with the brand. The brand reference communities' groups often are influenced by brand relationships (Sierra & Taute, 2016). Veloutsou and Moutinho (2009) figured out that brand relationships were more maintainable when tribal brands were 'bottom-up' tribal brands. The emphasis in this study is on the commitment of players' to BRGs; thus, commitment is described as a resilient emotional bond and pledge of support for online games (Desai & Raju, 2007). Commitment to an individual is defined as a psychological state that results in positive behavior toward that entity (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000).

Brand tribalism behaved like a predictor of a strong brand relationship (Veloutsou & Moutinho, 2009; Kim & Yang, 2018; Jurisic & Azevedo, 2011). Players' commitment related positively to brand tribalism (Badrinarayanan

et al., 2014). Therefore, based on the above literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H₂: Brand Tribalism significantly affects Brand Relationship

H_{2a}: Brand Tribalism significantly affects the relationship between players' commitment and Brand Relationship

2.3 Brand Tribalism and Brand Loyalty and Players' commitment

The study investigates the association between brand tribalism and brand loyalty. Veloutsou and Moutinho (2009) suggested that further research was required to explore the relationship between brand tribalism and brand loyalty. As per Schau et al. (2009), consumption of a brand increases its value, resulting in loyalty (Taute & Sierra, 2014). Brand tribes form internal relationships with group members and foster a strong loyalty tie among group members (Cova & Cova, 2002). Brand tribes, on the other hand, have a lot of meaning and importance for their members (Mitchell & Imrie, 2011). This high customer passion and commitment to the brand shows that tribes may exist. Taute and Sierra (2014) revealed a positive association between brand tribalism and loyalty in recent smartphone users' research. However, there is still a scarcity of studies on this critical area. So, this study wants to determine whether brand loyalty, which acts as an outcome of being a member of a brand community, is also essential for brand tribes. This research will also attempt to identify the mediating role of brand tribalism between players' commitment and brand loyalty. Psychological commitment leads positively to the loyalty of an individual (Iwasaki and Havitz 1998).

According to Tuominen (2011), companies that support customer tribes, aim to build long-term loyalty by making emotional bonds and intellectual justifications for strengthening individuals' commitment. Based on the above discussion, we propose following hypotheses:

H₃: Brand Tribalism significantly affects Brand Loyalty

H_{3a}: Brand Tribalism significantly affects the relationship between players' commitment and Brand Loyalty.

2.4 Brand Tribalism and Brand Love Players' commitment

Brand love is defined as "the degree of passionate, emotional attachment a satisfied consumer has for a particular brand" (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006, pg. no 79). These emotions lead to consumer behaviors such as seeking out information about the brand and fostering favourable views toward it. Consumers who enjoy and love a certain brand are fully involved (Murray et al., 1996). Consumers also create a long-term relationship with the brand and are keen to show their passion and individuality through the incorporation of the brand. Consumers foster a strong association with a brand (Abrams & Hogg, 1998).

Recently, literature published on brand love has attempted to deliberate some variables associated with the behavior of the community (Sierra et al., 2016). A brand community is developed when a consumer has an emotional relationship with a product or brand, and there is a shared love for it among community members (Cova 1997). The emotional link referred to as brand love positively affects the proclivity for collective behaviors such as tribalism. Consumers are happy when they have a strong attachment to a certain brand or group of brands (Kim & Yang, 2018). There was a positive correlation between the terms "brand love" and "brand tribalism" (Kim & Yang, 2018). When customers were linked to the brand and began to love it, they also became a part of the community (Badrinarayanan et al., 2014).

Consumers' emotional attachment to a brand is examined in several research (Sierra et al., 2017). Sierra et al. (2017) discovered that brand tribalism is positively correlated with brand love. Brand communities have developed methods for categorizing brand users directly (Kamat & Parulekar, 2007), providing an essential context for many researchers. Social interaction within the brand community strengthens a brand user's commitment to their brands (Schau et al., 2009). As a result, grounded on this theory, the research assumes that love intended for a brand and a player's commitment will have a substantial effect. Therefore, the current study examines the mediating impact of brand tribalism on players' commitment and brand love. Thus, we propose following hypotheses:

H₄: Brand Tribalism significantly affects brand love

H_{4a}: Brand Tribalism significantly affects the relationship between players' commitment and Brand love

2.5 Brand Tribalism, Brand Pride Players' commitment

Brand communities or tribes have been referred to as strong brand relationships (Cova, 1997), where the establishment of a community or tribe is triggered by an emotional attachment to a product or brand (Jurisic & Azevedo, 2011). Members of brand tribes are highly supported by their peers (Luedicke & Giesler, 2007). They are tied by shared interpersonal and social experiences (Cova, 1997), as seen by a swarm of smartphone brand users congregated at a storefront in anticipating the release of a new model of smartphone. Many research studies on brand communities and tribalism reveal that brand membership benefits customer attitudes and behavior. Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006) established that team participation influences brand identification and purchasing patterns. Schau et al. (2009) found that brand communities are utilized to build typologies of participation that benefit brand and the customer. Taute et al. (2017) explained that brand pride significantly affects brand tribalism, especially among smartphone users. Various studies examined the relationship between brand tribalism, brand pride, and commitment separately, but none of the research studies discussed it linearly or directly (Taute et al., 2017; Badrinarayan & Sierra, 2018; Goncalves et al., 2021). First time examining the brand tribalism relationship with brand pride and players' commitment. Thus, based on the above relationship, we hypothesize:

H₅: Brand Tribalism significantly affects brand pride.

H_{5a}: Brand Tribalism significantly affects the relationship between players' commitment and Brand Pride.

3. Methodology

3.1 Development of instrument

The instrument was developed using measures adopted from various sources. Players' commitment was measured using a five-item scale adopted from Badrinarayanan et al. (2015). Brand tribalism and brand

relationship were measured using an eight-item scale and thirteen-item scale adopted from Veloutsou and Moutinho (2009). Brand loyalty was measured using a three-item instrument developed by Upadhyay et al. (2022). Brand love was measured using a five-item scale developed by Bagozzi et al. (2016). A three-item scale developed by Taute et al. (2017) was used to measure brand pride.

Table 1: Sources of Instrument

Construct	Source	No. of Items
Player's commitment	Badrinarayanan et al. (2015)	05
Brand tribalism	Veloutsou & Moutinho (2009)	08
Brand relationship		13
Brand love	Bagozzi et al. (2016)	05
brand pride	Taute et al. (2017)	03

3.2 Data collection method

An online survey where BRG players were respondents was used to collect data. Access to this customer segment was difficult reason being the importance placed on player privacy and scattered memberships in numerous online message boards. As a result, the assistance of a corporation that owns a prominent online forum dedicated to battle royale games was requested as suggested by Badrinarayanan et al. (2014); they also broadcast a daily podcast to interested BRG listeners with global reach. For sponsoring two podcasts, a link to the survey could be posted on the forum wall for three weeks. The survey link was active from February 10, 2022, to March 5, 2022. Respondents were offered the chance to win two \$100 Sodexo gift cards to entice them to participate in the study. Over 800 people clicked on the survey link, yielding 396 fully completed surveys.

3.3 Sample profile

From the sample, 255 respondents were male (64.39%), and 141 respondents were females (35.61%). BattleGrounds Mobile/PUBG was the most played game, with 176 respondents playing it (44.44%). Call of duty was second-ranked, with 145 respondents (36.62%) playing the game. Respondents least played the Garena Free Fire game, with only 75

respondents (18.94%) playing the game. 166 respondents (41.92%) played 11 to 15 hours per week. 211 respondents (53.28%) were between 15 years to 25 years. Whereas 211 respondents (55.81%) were undergraduates. 176 respondents (44.4%) spent less than \$10 per month on expenses other than subscription charges for the game.

Table 2: Sample Profile

		N	%age
Gender	Male	255	64.39
	Female	141	35.61
Game played	BattleGrounds Mobile/PUBG	176	44.44
	Call of Duty	145	36.62
	Garena Free Fire	75	18.94
Hours played per week	Less than 5 hours per week	44	11.11
	6 hours to 10 hours per week	121	30.56
	11 hours to 15 hours per week	166	41.92
	more than 16 hours per week	65	16.41
Age group	15 years to 25 years	211	53.28
	26 years to 35 years	145	36.62
	36 years and above	40	10.10
Education	Undergraduate	221	55.81
	Postgraduate	78	19.70
	Others	97	24.49
Expenditure on BRG other than subscription	Less than \$10 per month	176	44.44
	\$11 to \$30 per month	167	42.17
	\$31 and above	53	13.38
N= 396			
<i>Computed by Authors</i>			

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Reliability and Validity Analysis

Harman's single-factor analysis was employed to establish whether or not this investigation has Common Method Bias (CMB). The operation is carried out by loading all statements into a single factor with a computed factor loading of less than 50%. As a consequence, zero indications of common

method bias were found by researchers (Fuller et al., 2016; Podsakoff et al., 2003).

The reliability and validity of constructs were computed and shown in table no 3. The value of Cronbach's alpha of all constructs was more than 0.70, and it established the reliability of a proposed model. All the six constructs were positively inter-correlated and reliable with proposed relationships. Furthermore, table 4 showed the composite reliability values of constructs measured more than 0.70 (Hair et al., 2021). The values in table 3 depicting composite reliability ranged between 0.8 and 0.9. Convergent validity values are displayed in table no 1, and all the AVE values were more than 0.5, which were all acceptable. All the values of standardized loadings were more than 0.70, and it also supports the construct's convergent validity.

Table 4 depicted the cross-loadings, indicating the presence of convergent validity. The values of cross-loadings should be more than 0.5 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). In table 5, cross-loading values of constructs (in bold) showed

more than 0.6, which was all acceptable. And the fact that all the standardized values established by more than 0.6 supported the convergent validity of that constructs.

4.2 Structural Model Assessment

Table 5 shows the structural model's path coefficients and supports measuring the proposed model (Hair et al., 2011). Table 1 path analysis of this structural model depicts the path between players' commitment and brand tribalism was positive and significant (H₁) ($r^2=0.302$, $\beta=0.549$, $p=0.00$). Brand tribalism and brand relationship have a positive and significant relationship (H₂) ($r^2=0.174$, $\beta=0.665$, $p=0.00$). A positive and significant relationship was found between brand tribalism and brand love (H₃) ($r^2=0.201$, $\beta=0.312$, $p=0.00$). Brand tribalism and brand loyalty also showed a positive and significant relationship (H₄) ($r^2=0.065$, $\beta=0.448$, $p=0.00$). Along with this, brand tribalism and brand pride also showed a significant and positive relationship ($r^2=0.125$, $\beta=0.417$, $p=0.00$) (H₅).

Table 3: Construct reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity

	BT	BLO	BL	BP	BR	PC	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
BT	0.649						0.800	0.852	0.721
BLO	0.448	0.848					0.903	0.928	0.72
BL	0.312	0.669	0.851				0.812	0.888	0.725
BP	0.417	0.827	0.608	0.874			0.846	0.907	0.764
BR	0.665	0.677	0.566	0.67	0.713		0.918	0.93	0.708
PC	0.549	0.691	0.692	0.651	0.818	0.809	0.868	0.904	0.755
BT= Brand Tribalism; BLO= Brand Love; BL= Brand Loyalty; BP= Brand Pride; BR= Brand Relationship; PC= Player Commitment									
Fornell-Larcker Criteria was computed using PLS-SEM									
Source: Computed by authors using Smart PLS-SEM 3.28									

Table 4: Cross-Loadings and outer model loadings

	BLO	BL	BP	BR	BT	PC
BLO_1	0.850	0.559	0.644	0.533	0.351	0.545
BLO_2	0.842	0.500	0.610	0.507	0.376	0.488
BLO_3	0.867	0.543	0.715	0.604	0.410	0.588
BLO_4	0.847	0.588	0.745	0.587	0.366	0.620
BLO_5	0.835	0.647	0.787	0.633	0.391	0.686
BL_1	0.613	0.874	0.568	0.527	0.296	0.641
BL_2	0.563	0.862	0.497	0.475	0.276	0.592
BL_3	0.525	0.817	0.480	0.436	0.216	0.522
BP_1	0.754	0.534	0.892	0.589	0.384	0.571
BP_2	0.727	0.554	0.841	0.572	0.33	0.566
BP_3	0.690	0.510	0.888	0.597	0.375	0.572
BR_1	0.405	0.276	0.357	0.766	0.517	0.397
BR_2	0.571	0.389	0.465	0.728	0.520	0.570

	BLO	BL	BP	BR	BT	PC
BR_3	0.498	0.534	0.502	0.709	0.435	0.716
BR_4	0.52	0.549	0.554	0.711	0.457	0.686
BR_5	0.492	0.536	0.502	0.695	0.411	0.734
BR_6	0.453	0.299	0.456	0.679	0.397	0.502
BR_7	0.495	0.402	0.526	0.741	0.456	0.579
BR_8	0.230	0.235	0.307	0.745	0.432	0.416
BR_9	0.510	0.370	0.538	0.766	0.508	0.598
BR_10	0.467	0.253	0.447	0.731	0.491	0.49
BR_11	0.548	0.484	0.502	0.723	0.455	0.584
BR_12	0.520	0.431	0.502	0.802	0.500	0.615
BR_13	0.524	0.496	0.536	0.791	0.522	0.691
BT_1	0.200	0.200	0.243	0.362	0.755	0.292
BT_2	0.206	0.200	0.262	0.337	0.706	0.336
BT_3	0.356	0.247	0.306	0.482	0.710	0.398
BT_4	0.376	0.238	0.342	0.471	0.749	0.409
BT_5	0.338	0.198	0.287	0.486	0.686	0.406
BT_6	0.250	0.208	0.217	0.415	0.647	0.322
BT_7	0.300	0.144	0.249	0.437	0.650	0.310
BT_8	0.251	0.180	0.24	0.437	0.658	0.357
PC_1	0.599	0.603	0.565	0.728	0.483	0.833
PC_2	0.535	0.559	0.516	0.626	0.342	0.784
PC_3	0.460	0.466	0.432	0.589	0.448	0.778
PC_4	0.615	0.587	0.613	0.659	0.462	0.831
PC_5	0.582	0.585	0.505	0.667	0.461	0.818
Source: Computed by authors using Smart PLS-SEM 3.28						

Table 5: Structural Model Results

Relationship	Path Coefficient	T Statistics	Bootstrap at 95% Confidence Level		Standard Deviation (STDEV)	p-value	Result
			Lower %tile	Upper %tile			
PC -> BT	0.549	12.964	0.359	0.539	0.042	0.000	Accepted
BT -> BR	0.665	17.92	0.220	0.415	0.037	0.000	Accepted
BT -> BL	0.312	6.240	0.327	0.507	0.05	0.000	Accepted
BT -> BLO	0.448	9.653	0.594	0.738	0.046	0.000	Accepted
BT -> BP	0.417	9.026	0.467	0.635	0.046	0.000	Accepted
Variance Explained r ²	Brand Tribalism= 0.302; Brand Love= 0.201; Brand Loyalty= 0.098; Brand Pride= 0.125; Brand Relationship= 0.174						
Stone-Geisser's Q ²	Brand Tribalism= 0.317; Brand Love= 0.335; Brand Loyalty= 0.365; Brand Pride= 0.325; Brand Relationship= 0.305						
Source: Computed by authors using Smart PLS-SEM 3.28							

Table 6: Assessing the Indirect Effects

Mediating effects	Direct Effect	P Values	Indirect effect	S.E	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	95% bias-corrected CI	Result
PC -> BT -> BLO	Significant	0.000	0.252	0.006	6.310	[0.166; 0.316]	Partial Mediation
PC-> BT -> BL	Significant	0.000	0.178	0.007	4.596	[0.095; 0.241]	Partial Mediation
PC-> BT -> BP	Significant	0.000	0.235	0.006	6.049	[0.151; 0.298]	Partial Mediation
PC-> BT -> BR	Significant	0.000	0.372	0.007	8.037	[0.267; 0.447]	Partial Mediation
Source: Computed by authors using Smart PLS-SEM 3.28							

Table 6 depicts the indirect relationship proposed in the study. The mediating relationship results revealed that partial mediation existed between the variables. Brand tribalism have its partially mediating effect on players' commitment and brand relationship (H1a) (Indirect effect = 0.252, 95% C.I. [0.267; 0.447]). Additionally, Brand tribalism partially mediates the relationship between player's commitment and brand loyalty (H2a) (Indirect effect = 0.178, 95% C.I. [0.095; 0.241]). Furthermore, brand tribalism partially mediates the relationship between players' commitment and brand loyalty (H3a) (Indirect effect=0.235, 95% C.I. [0.166; 0.316]). Lastly, brand tribalism partially mediates the relationship between players' commitment and brand pride (H4a) (Indirect effect=0.235, 95% C.I. [0.151;0.298]).

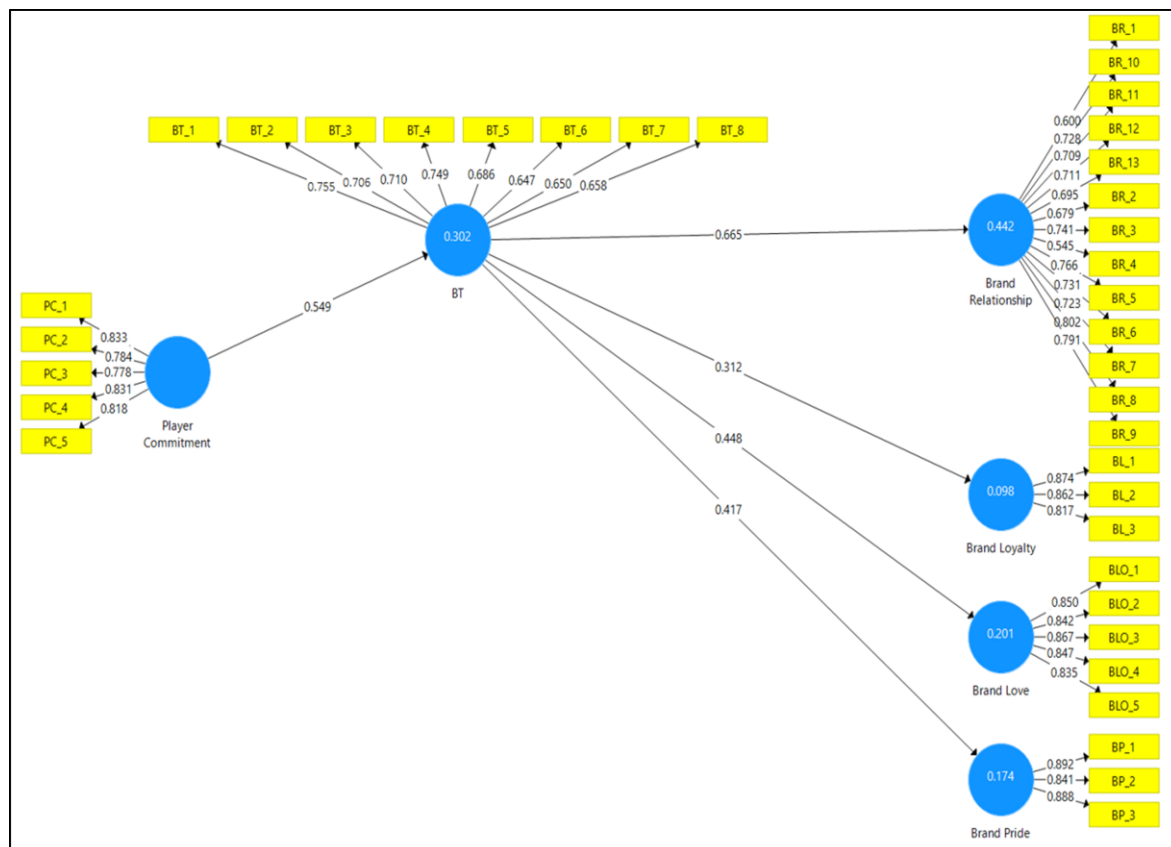
Also, the research model showed predictive significance since the values of Stone-Geisser's Q^2 were greater than 0.30. Figure 1 shows the final research model derived from the PLS algorithm. It includes the overall measurement analysis, structural analysis, and r^2 values of

the inner and outer model. This last figure reveals the positive relationship between the constructs of the study.

5. Discussion

Battle royale games are surprisingly understudied by marketing experts, considering their rapid expansion, widespread acceptance, and universal applicability to other brand communities (including on and off-line). Other domains, like computer science, information systems, psychology, and sociology, have built blooming study programs on various elements of MMORPGs in recent years. Despite BRGs' social, relational, and economic implications, marketing academics have yet to develop solid frameworks for BRGs' consumption. This research work has taken aspects into consideration that have never been examined previously. And it is critical to demonstrate brand tribalism from a fresh perspective, which is why we have suggested our hypothesis in this research article as part of our endeavour to accomplish this goal.

Figure 1: Structural Equation Model



Source: Developed by authors using SMART-PLS 3.2.8

This research study uses brand tribalism as a link between the commitment of a player and battle royale games player Behavioural intents to provide vital insight into this. Consequently, our research model establishes that the brand tribalism dimensions with commitment, love, loyalty, relationship, and pride as antecedents and consequences answering the research questions. The results revealed that all the proposed relationships had a significant and positive association. Specifically, this study found a significant and positive association between Players' commitment to brand tribalism. The players' commitment positively affects the players' brand tribalism (Badrinarayan et al., 2014). The study postulated that brand tribalism was significantly associated with the brand relationship, and as a result, it was found to have a significant effect (Veloutsou & Moutinho 2009). Results here shed light on battle royale game players' and brand-related Behavioural responses and the role these elements play in affecting motivational needs and retention intentions, respectively, as well. The study's findings revealed that brand tribalism has a significant association with brand relation, brand loyalty, brand pride, and brand love. The consequence of the research study is reliable to other studies (Veloutsou & Moutinho 2009; Ruane & Wallace 2015; Taute et al.; Sierra et al. 2019). As a result, the findings can be used to explain the causes and consequences of BRGs' brand tribalism. The proposed research model's findings illuminate online players' brand-related Behavioural intention practices and aid as standards for illuminating consumption habits in brand communities and tribal settings of a brand. In this way, finding and explaining effect sizes encourages the evolution of research streams and theoretic understanding (Peterson and Jolibert, 1995). Further, the results should help researchers study online gaming and players' behavior. The results provide a proportional yardstick for investigating online/offline brand communal and brand tribe-based decisions and marketing practitioners in their strategic attempts to boost brand value. Thus research questions posited have been answered through this piece of research.

6. Managerial Implications

The study attempts to identify the role of players' commitment and how they immerse themselves in the battle royale game and

advocate brand tribes. Interestingly, the reasons behind brands creating a tribal-like following by consumers still perplex the practitioners (Badrinarayana et al., 2014; Cova & Cova, 2002). The results suggest that players' commitment leads to brand tribalism and influences favourable brand-related effects when tribal tendencies are directed towards BRG brands. The findings of this piece of research would help BRG developers to augment their efforts directed toward the brand building. For instance, players' commitment positively influences BRG brand tribalism. Therefore, the developers of BRGs may emphasize that participating in these games would help users get recognition, confidence benefits, and preferential treatment. Overall, participating in BRGs would offer a virtual experience that cannot be attained in reality.

Regarding favourable outcomes of BRG brand tribalism, the results indicate increased affinity by BRG players towards the game. Thus, a brand relationship, brand love, brand loyalty, and brand pride (brand-related decisions) are sparked due to BRGs brand tribalism. Therefore, BRG developers are suggested to pursue various tactics which can further enhance the value of the BRG tribe. BRG developers should further enact the integrated marketing communications campaign to strengthen the bonds among the tribe members. The BRG developers may also use social media efficiently to entice avid gaming among the gamers, an essential precursor to tribal behavior.

7. Limitations and Future Research Directions

Few limitations also plague this piece of research. First, even though the BRG model development offers essential insights into this type of exchange, helping in the establishment of external validity (Winer, 1999). Secondly, the instruments utilized to record the responses may not be valid among all the other tribal gaming contexts. The sampling procedure was non-probability, non-quota. The majority of the respondents were young, and their behavior and responses might differ from older respondents.

The research in the future can explore the evolution of brand tribalism over the period. Future research studies may be longitudinal.

Further, future research can also examine the role of the demographic profile (such as expenditure pattern, stage in the family life cycle, marital status, etc) and psychographic attributes (psychological prerequisites like recognition, preferential treatment and search for differentiation, etc) of the BRG gamers. Future studies may use experimental research design to gain insights into using a BRG's tribal images effectively as a stimulus among customers. Additionally, possible use of neural network topologies may be used in the future.

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