

The role of self-brand connection to mediate the effect of customer satisfaction on repurchase intention in moderation of lovemark

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ABSTRACT

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Repurchasing in the future reflects the success of a business that can build customer loyalty, which happens because the company can meet the needs and expectations of consumers. The dynamics of changes in consumer behavior in choosing products encourage companies to be able to provide satisfying products. Satisfied consumers will feel a bond with the product. Purpose of the study is to examine Self-Brand Connection (SBC) as a mediating variable between customer satisfaction on repurchase intention and the role of love mark in moderating SBC for intention to repurchase. The sample used in the study was 210 and analysed quantitatively via SmartPLS3. The study found that customer satisfaction affects repurchase intentions. Customer satisfaction positively affects self-brand connection. The SBC affects repurchase intention. Love for culinary brands cannot moderate self-brand connection on repurchase intention. Brand respect can moderate SBC on repurchase intention.

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1. Introduction

Competition in the culinary business sector requires entrepreneurs to work hard for their businesses. In the culinary industry selling a variety of foods, culinary entrepreneurs must be good at creating menus that suit consumer tastes and be able to make consumers intend to buy again. Repurchase is a consumer decision to repurchase a product or service based on what has been obtained from the same company, awareness of the expenditure to acquire goods and services, and the tendency to do so regularly (Hellier et al., 2003; Liang, 2018). Intention grows along with the beliefs that a person has in products and brands after receiving a positive experience with a brand, especially when consumers feel satisfied with their purchase (Chandran et al., 2020; Batra, 2012)

Simultaneously, satisfaction arises after consumers complete transactions, that is, after consumers buy a product (Duarte et al., 2018; Nguyen et al., 2021; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020; Prahiawan et al., 2021). Kotler and Keller (2016) stated that satisfaction reflects a person's assessment of the performance of consumers who have consumed culinary products and they taste good, and it is certain that consumers are satisfied. Customer satisfaction is the difference between pre-shopping expectations and post-shopping performance (Sari & Giantari, 2020; Giao et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2021). If performance falls short of expectations, the customer is disappointed. Apart from fulfilling consumer satisfaction, one of the ways that marketers can maintain consumer loyalty is by changing consumer behavior, such as echoing a healthy lifestyle with food that is suitable for consumption. This, at the same time, encourages culinary businesses to be able to serve quality food adapted to their abilities, lifestyle, outlook on life, and so on. Sukla is a food categorized as fit for consumption by the Balinese people.

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The word Sukla in the life of the Hindu community in Bali is defined as something that is not hand-me-down (has been offered as offerings), not used (eaten by leftovers), or something that has been used. The food offered as Prasadam in Balinese is called Lungsuran or paridan (Jumari, 2017). In some literature, Sukla means healthy, clean, and useful in purifying oneself throughout the ages (Kiswardi & Priadnya, 2018:15); holy (Titib, 2006: 108). Based on this term, a certification brand appears that presents products according to Hindu philosophy in Bali, namely the brand Sukla Satyagraha.

Culinary stalls using the Sukla Satyagraha brand are spread widely in Bali. Stalls that get certification are stalls that meet sukla standards. In short, the custom that must encounter by a business to obtain Sukla Satyagraha certification (Kiswardi & Priadnya, 2018: 51) are: (1) the product is processed properly and correctly; (2) processed materials are obtained in a way that based on dharma which is not contrary to the teachings of Hinduism; (3) the place and business equipment used are not dirty (dirty or worn out); and (4) mantra (for Hindus at least offering Canang Sari at the place of business). Sukla is a certification brand that helps to raise awareness for the Balinese people to buy products with the Sukla Satyagraha brand. Awareness of the existence of the Sukla Satyagraha brand can be the main gateway for the repurchase intention to occur.

Consumers can make repurchases when there is an attachment and a link to a brand (Suetrong et al., 2018). Self-Brand Connection (SBC) is the existence of a relationship between consumers and brands because brands can represent consumer identities from the community or because there is a match between how individuals perceive themselves and the brands that build (Chaplin & John, 2005; Yu & Kim, 2020). Consumers will view a brand as crucial and closely related to themselves (Escalas, 2004) is a form of motivation inherent in consumers to link a brand to their self-concept (De Kerviler & Rodriguez, 2019; Fazli et al., 2020). Park et al. (2010) stated that SBC encourages love for brand behavior like recommending, maintaining, and intending to buy new models from that brand.

Sarkar et al. (2021) believe customers establish different attitudes for brands due to their different identities toward brands. The theory of relationship between customer-brand argues the ability of customers to develop valuable relationships with chosen brands. SBC is formed if customers associate themselves with a particular brand (Gaustad et al., 2018) otherwise if consumers perceive the association between brand and self is lower, they think it is irrelevant for SBC. The strong association between customer and brands formed into strong emotional attachment, such as how consumers find it easier to recognizing brand, eager to own the product from particular brand, loving the brand, if brand create mistake, it will be easier to forgive, and there is not a single reason to replace the brand (Otero & Wilson, 2018; Suetrong et al., 2018; Joshi & Garg, 2021). Consumers hold a special place for a particular brand, it is because of their love for the brand (Jahanvi and Sharma: 2021).

The Theory Lovemark is bought not out of necessity but by how consumers express their love toward the brand (Jahanvi & Sharma, 2021). Roberts (2004) and Shuv-Ami (2017) state Lovemarks as the mark of the consumer's mind that represents how consumers adore specific brands in the form of loving and respecting. According to Roberts (2004), brand love is defined as consumer attachment in establishing a valuable relationship with a brand (Bairrada et al., 2018). The research draws on Brand Love Theory by Batra et al. (2012), consumers perceive objects they like as integrated into their identities when they have a broadly shared history and when brands express themselves, influence, or change someone in some way.

Furthermore, other than loving the brand, consumers form respect for the brand through the positive awareness of certain brands (Roberts, 2004). Brand Respect is part of Lovemarks which represents consumer perception for quality, reliability, trustworthiness, and the overall respect for a particular brand (Shuv-Ami, 2017). The high state of respect for specific brands influence consumer loyalty (Pawle & Cooper, 2006). Brand respect is at the heart of creating a strong reciprocal relationship to form a relationship that benefits both the brand and the consumer (Frei & Shaver, 2002; Hendrick & Hendrick, 2006). In addition, it also reviews how to measure emotions based on the thoughts included in the "love marks" theory, namely that brands today need not only to be respected but also to build loving relationships with consumers.

2. Theory Development

The model conceptual (Fig. 1) developed to answer the role of SBC in mediating the relationship of customer satisfaction on repurchase intention moderated by love mark (Sukla Satyagraha Culinary Products in Bali).

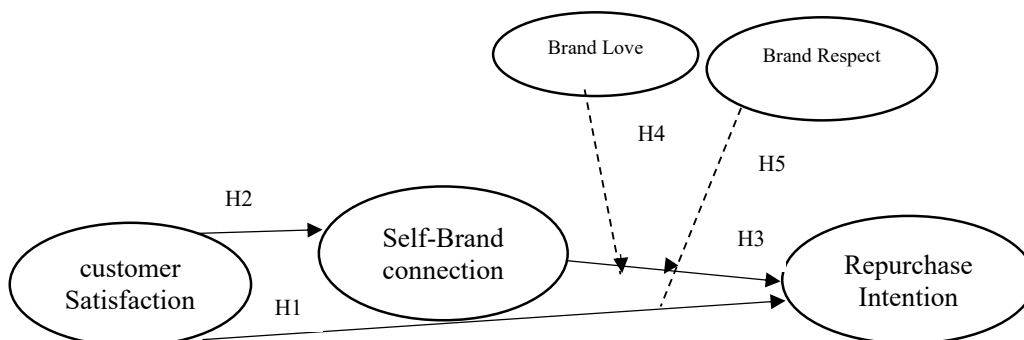


Fig. 1. Research concept model

Repurchase intention is a clear motivational statement from consumers to repeat a buying behavior from a product brand (Tsai, 2005). Repurchase intention is a dimension of loyalty in the form of consumer intentions to repurchase certain products or services after consumers feel satisfied with a product or service. Satisfaction is the pleasure or disappointment resulting between perceived performance and expectations of a product or service (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Research by Bernardo et al. (2012) revealed customer satisfaction insignificantly affecting repurchase intention. However, a recent study found the satisfaction of customers positively affects e-commerce consumers in Indonesia, it explains the important effect of customer satisfaction in affecting intention to repurchase (Sari et al., 2020; Ilyas et al., 2020). Customer satisfaction positively affects intention to repurchase (Arlanda & Suroso, 2018; Du et al., 2020; Yuliantoro et al., 2019). The study believes consumers who are satisfied with specific brands have a high intention to repurchase, the hypothesis proposes as follows.

H₁: *Customer Satisfaction has a positive effect on Repurchase Intention.*

The feeling of satisfying experience with a particular brand impact how consumers perceive SBC, because of the ability of a brand to help consumers express personality individually (Escalas, 2004). The establishment of an individual persona requires the feeling of satisfaction of brand performance – how a brand meets consumer initial expectation and its overall experience with the brand. If consumers found brand performance below their initial expectation, they choose to ignore the relationship with the brand (Markus, 1977). Usually, a brand is the reflection of the consumer, they categorize the brand under ‘it’s me’ or ‘it isn’t me’ (Kleine et al., 1995).

Performance of a brand has a crucial role in developing SBC. Satisfied consumers continue to use preferred brands to maintain and strengthen their desired self-identity (Dolich, 1969). Recent study found a positive connection between customer satisfaction with the SBC (Dwivedi et al., 2016). Based on these statements, the hypothesis is formulated as below.

H₂: *Customer satisfaction has a positive effect on SBC.*

When consumers hold a deep commitment to repurchase a preferred product from a certain brand in the future to form brand loyalty that refers to devotion towards brand by repeat purchase (Piroz et al., 2020). Prior studies found the establishment of brand loyalty determined by consumer relationship formed attachment toward brand which indicated positive identification related to brand loyalty (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012; Japutra et al., 2018). Attachment toward brands develops the quality of relationship between consumer and brand (Suthongwan, 2020), likewise how SBC affects brand loyalty (Lin et al., 2017; Lin & Zhou, 2020). Based on the literature review, the hypothesis proposed as below.

H₃: *SBC has a positive effect on repurchase intention.*

Lovemarks are expressed emotionally through the pillars of Lovemarks brand respect and brand love, beyond these reasons lovemarks become the crucial determinant to the level of consumers to establish strong emotional affection for the brand chosen. The love for brands goes deeper to grow consumer interest and dependency on specific brands (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). Consumer love for brand explains the way consumer satisfaction of brand becomes a strong explanatory predictor to form desires post-consumption behavior (Nikhashemi et al., 2019). Hutauruk's research (2020) stated the Lovemark dimension (brand love), namely brand commitment, brand passion, and brand intimacy, influenced repurchase intentions. In the study, both pillars of Lovemarks become the moderating variables in the relationship between SBC and repurchase intention. Based on this, the hypothesis is formulated as follows.

H₄: *The relationship between SBC and repurchase intention is positively and significantly moderated by brand love.*

The other pillar of Lovemark is Brand Respect. Similar to brand love, brand respect is expressed emotionally through positive consumer awareness for the brand (Hutauruk, 2020). Another important finding is the ability of brand respect to maintain long-term relationships such as brand loyalty because consumer's love without respect does not last for a long term between brands and customers (Song et al., 2019). These underlie the formulation of the following hypothesis.

H₅: *The relationship between SBC and repurchase intention is moderated positively and significantly by brand respect.*

Marketers should be concerned about the process of consumer satisfaction because it plays a crucial role as the important determinant of loyalty. The condition when a consumer is satisfied with a certain brand led to the loyalty relationship between brand and consumer, likewise the self-brand connection. The positive relationship between the quality of relationship and SBC is associated with consumer intention to repurchase. The study argues SBC can mediate the relationship between consumer satisfaction and repurchase intention. The hypothesis proposed as follows.

H₆: *The role of SBC mediates customer satisfaction on repurchase intention.*

3. Research methods

The study used the quantitative method and then analyzed it by structural equation model or SEM (structural equation modeling). It was conducted on the culinary business of Sukla Satyagraha in all districts in Bali. The study used 210 respondents that were all consumers of Sukla Satyagraha culinary products in Bali. The sample selection method used was purposive sampling, consumers aged eighteen and over who had shopped and consumed culinary products labeled Sukla Satyagraha at least twice in the last four months.

The indicators used in this study refer to previous studies. Table 1 shows the indicators of each variable in this study.

Table 1
Indicators of each variable

Variable	Indicator	Resources
Customer Satisfaction	- Best product guarantee - The right choice - An experience that puts you in a better mood - Overall satisfaction	Ilyas et al. (2020), Chandran et al. (2020)
Self-Brand Connection	- The brand is a self-reflection - Brands can identify themselves - There is a personal relationship with the brand - Brand compatibility - Brands can form what they want themselves - Brands can communicate themselves	Escalas, (2004), Fazli et al. (2020), Suthongwan (2020)
Repurchase Intention	- Frequent use - Positive testimony - Referring to others	Du et al. (2020), Ilyas et al. (2020), Yuliantoro et al. (2020), Nguyen et al. (2021)
Brand Love	- Love for brands - Brand is happiness - The brand is something extraordinary - Brands help to feel alive	Otero and Wilson (2018), Zhou et al. (2018), Song et al. (2019), Chen <i>et al.</i> (2020), Suetrong et al. (2021), Joshi and Garg (2021), Kumar et al. (2021)
Brand Respect	- Respect for the brand - Attached to the brand - Sincerity towards the brand - Brands can lead the development	Song et al. (2019), Chen et al. (2020)

4. Discussion

This study was conducted as a follow-up to the development of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to see its relationship with the marketing strategy for Sukla Satyagraha branded products. The development of consumer behavior theory in the new normal era of the COVID-19 pandemic is related to marketing strategies regarding customer satisfaction, SBC, love mark (brand love and brand respect, and repurchase intention for culinary products labeled Sukla Satyagraha in Bali. Consumers intend to repurchase culinary delights Sukla for reasons, both those that can be disclosed and those that are not fully under the consumer's control. Consumers who are satisfied with Sukla's culinary products will intend to repurchase. The measurement model evaluates the indicator validity and reliability to help determine whether the variable is latent or constructed. Convergent validity was applied to measure the indicator's validity. As a result, based on the outer loading value in Fig.2, the path coefficient's result shows that all construct indicators are valid, marked by the value of the t-statistic resulting from all first-order constructs is > 1.96.

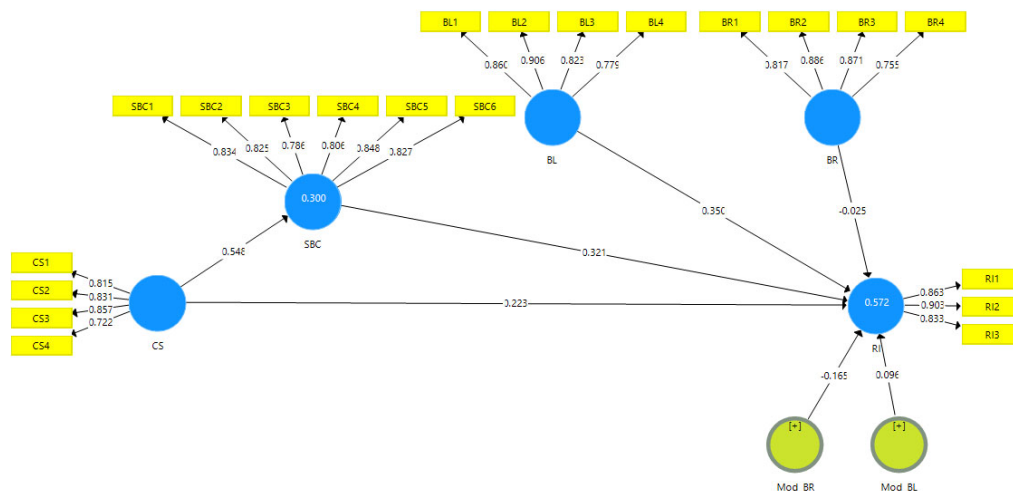


Fig. 2. Result Path Analysis

Table 2 shows the test of discriminant validity based on Average Variance Extracted (AVE) with more than 0.50 for all constructs, it means the indicator explains fifty percent (50%) of its variants. Furthermore, the study found the square root of value of the AVE meets all the discriminant validity criteria.

Table 2
The Value of AVE

Variables	AVE
Customer Satisfaction	0.653
SBC	0.674
Brand Love	0.711
Brand Respect	0.695
Repurchase Intention	0.751

The second test of composite reliability shows good results of the reliability value for each indicator formed by the constructs with value more than 0.70 (Chin, 1988). However, a value above 0.95 is an undesirable composite reliability test result, as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3
Reliability Test Result

Variables	Construct Reliability
Customer Satisfaction	0.882
SBC	0.925
Brand Love	0.907
Brand Respect	0.901
Repurchase Intention	0.900

Furthermore, the evaluation of the structural/inner model is a measurement conducted to evaluate the level of accuracy of the whole research model formed through some variables and their indicators. The analysis for R-square (R^2) is shown in Table 4 as follows.

Table 4
The Value of R-Square

Variable	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
SBC	0.300	0.925
Repurchase Intention	0.572	0.900

Table 4 shows the result for the R-square (R^2) values of the SBC and the repurchase intention are 0.300 and 0.572, respectively. Therefore, the research model meets the moderate to strong model criteria. It means that customer satisfaction can account for the SBC 30 percent, and the rest of the 70 percent is accounted for by other variables outside the model. Furthermore, the customer satisfaction, SBC, brand respect, and brand love variables to account for the repurchase intention is 57.20 percent, with the rest, 43.80 percent, accounted for by other variables outside the model.

Next, Q-square predictive relevance (Q^2) is a measurement used to see how good the observation conducted in the research is in giving a result to the research model. Q^2 is based on the determinant coefficient of all dependent variables. The general equation of Q-square is $Q^2 = 1 - (1 - R12) (1 - R22)$. The structural model evaluation shows that the value of Q^2 is 0.700 or approaching 1. It proves that the structural model is good. In other words, it can interpret that the information in the data can explain from the model for 70 percent, and the remaining 30 percent explain by error and other variables outside the model.

Moreover, the statistical test of the direct and indirect influences among the research variables (customer satisfaction, SBC, brand love, brand respect, and repurchase intention) uses T-test, as shown in Table 5. The influence of several variables on others seems positive; however, it does not mean that all of them can influence significantly. The influence which is not significant happens at brand love as a moderating variable between SBC and repurchase intention as the t-statistical test value is 1.273, which is less than 1.96. The p-value is 0.203, which is more than 0.05.

For the mediation effect of a SBC between customer satisfaction & repurchase intention can be seen from the specific indirect effect in Table 4, as the t-statistical test value is 4.250, above 1.96, and the p-value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05—stated that there is a mediation effect.

They were based on the indirect effect between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention by SBC (VAF Variance Accounted For). The criteria of the mediation effect can be based on the VAF value. The mediation variable is considered a full mediator if the VAF is more than eighty percent ($VAF > 80\%$). The mediation variable is partial if the VAF is between twenty and eighty percent ($20\% \leq VAF \leq 80\%$). Moreover, if the VAF is less than twenty percent ($VAF < 20\%$), the mediation variable is not considered a mediator. The VAF test results show that the mediation variable considered is the partial mediator.

For the role of moderating effects shown on Table 5 used a permutation-based approach by concerning the direct influence of brand love and brand respect. The role of brand love and moderator showing no sign of moderating relationship between SBC and repurchase intention. Otherwise, brand respect shows signs of moderating effect, however indicating a negative impact. The results show the role of brand respect on weakening the relationship between SBC and repurchase intention. Fig. 3 visualizes the interaction for moderating effect in a simple slope.

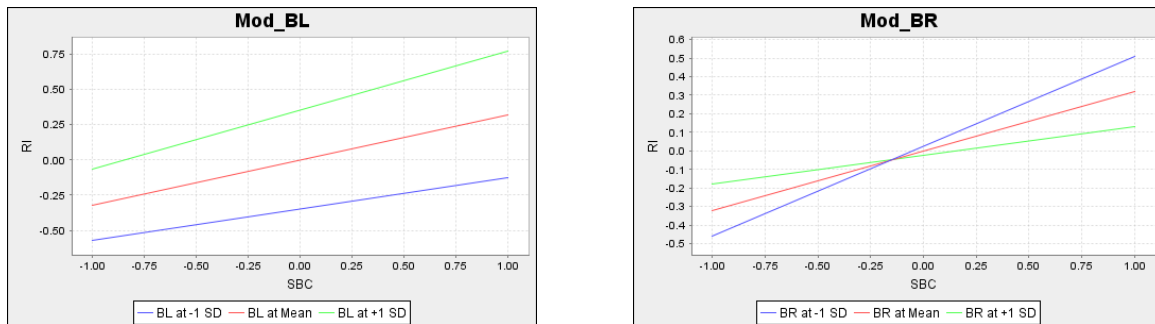


Fig. 3. Visualization of Moderating Variable

Mod_BL represents the role of brand love as a moderating variable between SBC (x-axis) and Repurchase Intention (y-axis) in simple slope analysis. The middle line represents the relationship at the mean level by the moderating variable (brand love). In contrast, the other two lines represent the relationship of SBC and repurchase intention in the condition of higher (average value at brand love plus SD – one-unit standard deviation) and lower (mean- the mean value on brand love minus SD – one-unit standard deviation) at the level of brand love moderating variable. Meanwhile, Mod_BR represents the relationship between SBC (x-axis) and Repurchase Intention (y-axis). Line in the middle represents the relationship at the mean level by the moderating variable (brand respect). In contrast, the other two lines represent SBC and brand respect at the higher (mean values at brand respect plus SD – one-unit standard deviation) and lower (means the mean value of brand respect minus the SD – one-unit standard deviation) at the brand respect moderation variable level.

Table 5
The Statistical Test of the Influence among Variables

Variables	Direct Influence					
	(O)	(M)	(STDEV)	T Statistic (O/STERR)	P Value	Status
Customer Satisfaction → Repurchase Intention	0.223	0.221	0.060	3.734	0.000	Supported
Customer Satisfaction → SBC	0.548	0.550	0.070	7.796	0.000	Supported
SBC → Repurchase Intention	0.321	0.319	0.064	5.020	0.000	Supported
SBC → Brand Love → Repurchase Intention	0.096	0.102	0.076	1.273	0.203	Not supported
SBC → Brand Respect Repurchase Intention	-0.165	-0.176	0.078	2.126	0.034	Supported
	Indirect Influence					
Customer Satisfaction → Repurchase Intention	0.176	0.175	0.041	4.250	0.000	Supported
	Specific Indirect Influence					
Customer Satisfaction → SBC → Repurchase Intention	0.176	0.175	0.041	4.250	0.000	Supported
VAF: Indirect Influence/Total Influence = 0.176/ 0.399				= 0.441		

5. Discussion of results

Talking about culinary cannot be separated from consumer satisfaction. The results of this study have indicated the effect of consumer satisfaction on repurchase intentions. Customer satisfaction is the key that determines the intention to repurchase the culinary labeled Sukla Satyagraha. Customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on self-brand connections. Satisfied consumers feel there is a match and will associate themselves with the brand. The results of this study confirm the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). Repurchase intention is influenced by previous conditions, namely feeling satisfied enjoying culinary offerings (as a subjective norm) and forming a strong bond with the brand. The existence of quality relationships and self-brand connections is a driving force for repurchasing behavior (Suthongwan, 2020).

Brand love has not been able to moderate the effect of self-brand connection on repurchase intention. Brand love requires time and mechanisms to form an emotional connection to the Sukla Satyagraha brand. Lovemark theory has shown that brand love is one of the main pillars in forming consumer love marks for the Sukla Satyagraha brand. Brand love deserves to be created because of its ability to shape consumer repurchase intentions toward the Sukla Satyagraha brand. The position of brand respect for Sukla Satyagraha's culinary products weakens the influence of self-brand connection on repurchase intentions. The equivalent of the word Sukla which is opposite to what is found by consumers in products with the Sukla Satyagraha brand is weakened by brand respect because of the negative awareness that what is perceived and found is different. Even

though it is closely related to culture, respect for products with brands that carry the equivalent of the word Sukla has not been well received by respondents, especially when it comes to business.

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