From Embarrassment to Brand Hate: A Netnography of Negative Emotions, Detachment, and Consumer Arrogance in Foreign F&B in Aceh

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how brand embarrassment escalates into detachment and hate among Acehnese consumers toward foreign F&B brands perceived to be affiliated with Israel. Using qualitative netnography, we observed public discourse across Instagram, TikTok, X, Facebook, YouTube, Google Maps reviews, and food-delivery apps from July 2024 to August 2025. The corpus comprised 512 discourse units and eight focal incidents; 378 units explicitly invoked geopolitical ties. Event-centered coding shows primary triggers were geopolitical affiliation/solidarity (41.3%) and corporate stance/donation controversies (16.1%), followed by service humiliation (19.6%), status threat/face loss (10.3%), and pricing opacity (7.7%); halal-certification uncertainty appeared mainly as a secondary co-argument (12.2% of the geopolitical subset). Embarrassment—direct (in-store) or vicarious (online)—was typically followed by early detachment (unfollow/avoidance/switching within <48 hours) and, when coupled with moralized framing and slow/defensive corporate replies, escalated into brand hate with boycott calls (71.8% of geopolitical-triggered units). Consumer entitlement cues (16.4%) acted as an escalator, prolonging threads. Fast, empathic responses and clear statements about local franchise autonomy shortened escalation. The study contributes an episode-based process model and offers a practical playbook for risk monitoring and recovery in value-sensitive markets.

Keywords: Aceh; Brand detachment; Brand embarrassment; Brand hate; Consumer entitlement; Foreign F&B brands; Netnography

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of boycotts and negative emotions toward brands becomes more prominent when consumers perceive geopolitical affiliations that conflict with their values, particularly in Muslim markets. This makes the foreign F&B sector vulnerable to a wave of rejection rooted in consumers' morality and social identity (Sameeni, Qadeer, et al., 2024). In this context, brand hate is understood as an intense emotion that drives NeWOM, boycotts, and even retaliation, with strategic consequences for brand performance across categories, including fast-food restaurants and international franchise chains (Sameeni, Ahmad, et al., 2024; Sameeni, Qadeer, et al., 2024).
At the same time, research shows that vicarious shame resulting from inappropriate brand mentions or posts on social media can trigger disengagement, pushing customers away from the brand without experiencing direct service failure (Villanova & Matherly, 2024). Thus, the escalation from embarrassment to detachment to hate is relevantly mapped to the issue of geopolitical affiliation—rather than solely to the issue of halal (permissible)—because the public moral-value dimension accelerates the diffusion of discourse and the mobilization of collective action (Sameeni, Ahmad, et al., 2024; Villanova & Matherly, 2024).

Theoretically, recent brand hate literature maps a consistent consequential pathway to NeWOM intensity, boycott intentions, and sabotage. It emphasizes the role of moral meaning as a key driver in consumer-brand relationships (Sameeni, Qadeer, et al., 2024). Furthermore, consumer-brand relationship studies position detachment as a distinct relational state—distinct from indifference—that can emerge between brand love and hate, thus positioning it as a processual transition point (Robertson et al., 2022).

Furthermore, research on self-conscious emotions suggests that embarrassment (shame/loss of face)—both direct and mediated—can trigger distancing and avoidance, particularly when the episode occurs in a public space and is visually exposed (Sangwan et al., 2024; Villanova & Matherly, 2024). However, the full integration of embarrassment and detachment from hate in geopolitical (non-halal) situations in the F&B sector has rarely been tested on an episode-based basis within natural digital footprints, thus opening up opportunities for empirical contributions (Sameeni, Qadeer, et al., 2024; Villanova & Matherly, 2024).

The dimension of consumer arrogance is also relevant because it has been shown to increase the likelihood of WOM—both positive and negative—and thus potentially escalate the transition from embarrassment to hate when expectations of "preferential treatment" are not met at public service points (Ruvio et al., 2020). Despite this, a small portion of the discourse still touches on the uncertainty surrounding halal certification for certain imported products already in circulation—but in this study, this issue is positioned as a secondary co-argument, not a primary driver of geopolitical escalation (BPJPH, 2024; Tilleke & Gibbins, 2025).

Aceh's religious context makes it easy to mobilize public values and solidarity, making netnography-based observation appropriate for capturing natural narratives across platforms without interfering with discourse (Kozinets & Gretzel, 2024). Methodologically, netnography has evolved with immersion procedures, platform triangulation, and robust audit trails, enabling researchers to link event triggers, socio-moral judgments, expressed emotions, and actions (e.g., unfollows, boycott calls) in a single, documented process (Kozinets & Gretzel, 2024).

This approach aligns with the fitness for purpose research requirement because it can reconstruct episodes across channels—for example, from short videos (TikTok/Instagram) to discussions (X/Facebook) and long reviews (Google Maps)—to map the transition from embarrassment to detachment and then hate (Kozinets & Gretzel, 2024; Villanova & Matherly, 2024). Thus, netnography provides a strong foundation for examining geopolitically nuanced escalation mechanisms in foreign F&B in Aceh, rather than emphasizing halal as the driving force, while still observing halal co-arguments as part of the context (Kozinets & Gretzel, 2024; Sameeni, Qadeer, et al., 2024).

Based on the aforementioned research gaps, this study has three novel contributions. First, it maps the episode-based process pathway from embarrassment to detachment to hate in the case of geopolitical affiliation of foreign fast-food and beverage (F&B) companies in Aceh—a relatively neglected focus in the literature on the consequences of brand hate (Sameeni, Qadeer, et al., 2024; Villanova & Matherly, 2024). Second, it integrates consumer pride as an escalator that explains the heterogeneity of trajectories—why some threads stop at detachment while others solidify into hate (Ruvio et al., 2020). Third, it contextualizes the halal issue as a secondary co-argument (e.g., uncertified imported products) without positioning it as the primary trigger, thereby allowing the process map better to reflect the dominant geopolitical drivers in public discourse (BPJPH, 2024).

In line with these objectives, this study aims to: (1) identify the triggers and expressions of brand embarrassment related to geopolitical affiliation in foreign F&B in Aceh; (2) reconstruct the pathway of embarrassment to detachment to hate and the conditions that strengthen or weaken it; (3) analyzing the role of consumer arrogance as an escalator

from shame to hatred; and (4) mapping the position of the halal issue as a supporting factor that is sometimes used by discourse actors but is not the leading locomotive.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Politics in Consumption and Boycotts

The current of political consumerism suggests that consumers use boycotts/buycotts to express their political values and positions, with the powerful mediation of social media facilitating the exposure of information, group bonding, and coordination of collective action across borders (Boulianne, 2022). In the context of geopolitical conflict, consumer animosity (including vicarious animosity when the conflict occurs abroad) leads to more negative product evaluations and higher boycott intentions, thus expanding the realm of consumption decisions from functional to moral-political considerations (Zdravkovic et al., 2021). Recent findings further suggest that place solidarity and affinity/animosity toward conflicting parties play a role in triggering boycotts of tourism and hospitality services/products, demonstrating a mechanism of place solidarity that is easily mobilized digitally (Josiassen et al., 2024).

The "dark side" of consumer-brand relationships: brand hate and its consequences

Recent brand hate literature highlights consistent behavioral consequences—negative eWOM (NeWOM), boycotts, and retaliation—and the importance of moralizing brand actions/affiliations as drivers of hate intensity (Roy et al., 2022). Recent causal evidence suggests that brand hate directly increases NeWOM intensity, boycott intentions, and anti-brand behavior, and interacts with consumer characteristics that amplify its negative impact in the digital space (Sameeni, Qadeer, et al., 2024). A synthesis of studies also underscores that brand hate is rooted in ideological/symbolic incongruence, as well as negative experiences, making it sensitive to geopolitical issues that trigger public moralization (Roy et al., 2022).

Embarrassment as a Trigger for Social Media Distancing

Recent experimental research shows that socially inappropriate brand mentions induce vicarious shame in audiences and motivate disengagement from the brand, even when the brand's prior attitude was not hostile, thus "intermediate shame" becomes the initial trigger for distancing (Villanova & Matherly, 2024). In the highly public/visual context of F&B, humiliating episodes are easily documented as short videos, magnifying face loss and triggering avoidance/unfollowing as a protective measure for social identity (Villanova & Matherly, 2024).

Detachment as a Processual Transition Stage

The consumer-brand relationship framework suggests that brand detachment is a distinctive relational state—separate from indifference—that can exist between brand love and hate, and this shift in status impacts equity and purchase/advice behavior (Robertson et al., 2022). Empirically, brand love and loyalty do not always align, and betrayal/value violations can accelerate the erosion of both, creating space for detachment before it solidifies into hate in a moral-political context (Robertson et al., 2022).

Consumer Arrogance as a negative escalator

Consumer arrogance—the tendency to claim superiority and privilege—increases the likelihood of WOM, including in negative situations when service expectations are not met in public spaces, thus accelerating the shift from embarrassment to negative WOM and potential hate (Ruvio et al., 2020). These findings suggest that in viral food and beverage (F&B) service incidents, entitlement cues can prolong the lifespan of the thread

and amplify moralized anger when geopolitical narratives are present (Ruvio et al., 2020).

Social, Political, and Boycott Intentions

A recent cross-national study found that social/political animosity weakens product evaluations and strengthens boycotts, with social animosity acting as a moderator that amplifies the adverse effect on purchase intentions (Krüger et al., 2024). In the realm of everyday consumption, social media accelerates the coordination of boycott actions through group symbolism, calls-to-action, and message repetition, thereby amplifying New Word of Mouth (NEWOM) on geopolitical issues perceived as relevant to the brand (Boulianne, 2022).

Research Questions

RQ1: How do Acehnese consumers experience and express brand embarrassment toward foreign food and beverage products perceived as geopolitically affiliated?
RQ2: How are the processes of embarrassment, brand detachment, and brand hate interpreted and demonstrated (distancing/boycotting practices) across different platforms?
RQ3: How does consumer arrogance emerge in discursive interactions and act as a trigger/escalator of negative emotions?

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative netnography design (Kozinets & Gretzel, 2024) to investigate how brand embarrassment escalates into brand detachment and brand hate, and how consumer entitlement/arrogance acts as an escalator in the context of a foreign F&B brand in Aceh perceived as affiliated with Israel. This design was chosen because it allows researchers to observe the trail of public discourse across platforms in a naturalistic manner, linking triggering episodes to moral/identity judgments, expressed emotions, and actions (such as unfollowing, avoidance, switching, and boycott calls) without intervening in the conversation. The geopolitical focus was established because public discourse demonstrated mobilization of solidarity and boycotts beyond the halal issue; the halal issue was retained as a co-factor when it appeared in the data (e.g., imported products without halal certification being circulated). The online field sites comprised Instagram, TikTok, X (Twitter), Facebook (public pages/groups), Google Maps Reviews, YouTube (comments), and reviews of delivery apps (GoFood/GrabFood/ShopeeFood). The observation period was set from July 2024 to August 2025 to capture peak geopolitical dynamics and their resonance on F&B consumption. The scope was limited to discourse mentioning foreign F&B brands with references to Aceh (e.g., Banda Aceh geotags, mentions of local outlets) or discussed by users associating the brands with Israeli affiliations.

The unit of analysis was defined as a discourse unit (post, review, comment, thread) that (a) references a foreign F&B brand in Aceh, and (b) contains one of the following themes: embarrassment/loss of face, detachment (unfollow/avoidance/switching/withholding purchase), hate/boycott, entitlement/arrogance, and/or halal counter-argument. A key incident was defined as a series of conversations across comments/platforms that exhibited an apparent trigger and extended discussion (e.g., lasting more than 72 hours or spanning multiple platforms).

A purposive sampling strategy with platform triangulation was applied until thematic saturation was reached. The search used a combination of keywords (global brand name + "Aceh/Banda Aceh"), trigger terms (e.g., "boycott," "shame/embarrassment," "unfollow," "no longer buying," "cashier/waitress," "price/promo"), and relevant geopolitical phrases. The corpus target was multiple cross-platform searchable key incidents and hundreds of relevant discourse units after deduplication. Negative cases

(dissatisfaction that did not escalate to hate speech/boycott) were included to test the robustness of the patterns.

Inclusion criteria included public content accessible without permission and content that included one of the research themes. Exclusion criteria included content from private accounts/DMs, material potentially violating the platform's TOS, spam, pure promotions, and accounts suspected of being bots (unusual activity, repetitive posting patterns, and temporal inconsistencies). Halal co-arguments (e.g., imported products without certification) were included when present in the discourse, but were not considered a primary exclusion criterion.

Data collection was conducted in three stages. Stage 1 (scoping) mapped frequently mentioned foreign F&B brands, local community channels, and relevant hashtags/geotags. Stage 2 (systematic capture) documented discourse units with permalinks, timestamps, basic metrics (likes/comments/views), and screenshots/HTML archives to maintain an audit trail. Stage 3 (case tracing) traced key incidents across platforms (e.g., TikTok video ↔ X/Facebook discussion ↔ Google Maps review) to reconstruct the sequence of trigger → judgment → emotion → action.

Table 1. Trigger Typology in Geopolitical Subsets

Primary trigger (geopolitical subset)	n	%	Dominant Platform
Geopolitical affiliation/solidarity (perceived corporate ties/supply networks with Israel; calls for solidarity)	156	41.3	X, Facebook
Corporate stance/donation controversy (perceived corporate attitudes/support/philanthropy)	61	16.1	X, Facebook
Service humiliation (perceived demeaning treatment/communication by staff)	74	19.6	TikTok, Instagram Reels
Status threat/face loss (corrections/procedures in public spaces trigger a feeling of "losing face")	39	10.3	TikTok, YouTube Shorts
Pricing/benefit opacity (unclear pricing/promotions)	29	7.7	Google Maps Reviews
Halal certification uncertainty (certification issues for some imported products; not a primary focus)	19	5.0	Google Maps Reviews, Facebook
Total	378	100	

Source: Primary Data (processed), 2025

Netnographic searches conducted between July 2024 and August 2025 yielded 512 relevant discourse units (posts/reviews/comments) across six major platforms—Instagram, TikTok, X, Facebook, Google Maps Reviews, and YouTube—plus reviews of delivery apps. Of the total corpus, 378 units explicitly discussed foreign F&B brands perceived to have ties to Israel; eight key incidents were identified as triggering cross-channel chain responses and link traversals.

In the geopolitical subset (N = 378), the primary drivers of negative conversations were dominated by narratives of geopolitical affiliation/solidarity (41.3%; 156 units) and controversies over corporate attitudes/philanthropy (16.1%; 61 units). Below that, service humiliation—the experience of feeling treated demeaningly or unfairly in public spaces—contributed 19.6% (74 units), followed by status threat/face loss 10.3% (39 units) and pricing/benefit opacity 7.7% (29 units). Halal certification uncertainty was present in only 5.0% (19 units) as the primary trigger. However, as a supporting co-argument, it appeared in 12.2% of units (46/378), typically in the form of a note stating that some imported products did not display halal certification, despite already being in circulation.

RESULTS

Indicators of brand embarrassment are evident through two channels. Users directly report reprimands or communication tones from staff members that are deemed embarrassing at busy service points; this type of content is often visualized through short videos that amplify the feeling of "losing face." Indirectly, vicarious embarrassment arises when users witness brand mentions or news reports perceived as biased in geopolitical conflicts; the embarrassment is expressed not solely due to personal experience, but also due to self-identification as a customer or follower of the brand in the digital space. Example paraphrases (disguised):

- "[TT-U07] 'Seeing the video, I'm embarrassed I ever promoted that brand.'"
- "[FB-U22] 'If the claim is neutral, why does the post feel like it supports a particular party? I'm embarrassed to be a customer too.'"

Brand detachment behaviors—unfollowing, avoidance, switching, or withholding purchases—emerge early after an embarrassment episode. In the geopolitical subset, 89% of units containing embarrassment are followed by unfollow or avoidance signals, with switching explicitly mentioned in 58% of key incidents. The time lag from trigger to signal of detachment is generally less than 48 hours on fast-moving platforms like X and TikTok; in two incidents, detachment was recorded less than 24 hours after the service video went viral.

Table 2. Summary per incident

Incident	Primary trigger	Unfollow/avoidance	Switching called	Break to detachment
I-01	Geopolitical affiliation	Yes	Yes	< 24 hours
I-02	Corporate stance	Yes	No	1–3 days
I-03	Service humiliation	Yes	Yes	< 24 hours
I-04	Geopolitical affiliation	Yes	Yes	2–4 days
I-05	Status threat	Yes	No	1–2 days
I-06	Geopolitical affiliation	Yes	Yes	< 24 hours
I-07	Corporate stance	Yes	Yes	1–3 days
I-08	Pricing opacity (+ko-tag halal)	Yes	No	0–2 days

Source: Primary Data (processed), 2025

Expressions of brand hate intensified as geopolitical moralizing dominated the discourse. Of the 156 units triggered by geopolitical affiliation, 112 (71.8%) contained explicit calls for boycotts. These narratives spread across platforms through stitches/duets, video compilations, and review excerpts; in five of the eight key incidents, the thread lifespan exceeded 72 hours, indicating high thread longevity when brand responses are perceived as slow or ambiguous.

Indicators of consumer entitlement/arrogance were present in 16.4% of units (62/378). The most common symptoms included claims of entitlement to priority, the use of imperative language toward staff, and the degradation of frontline workers' status. When entitlement is coupled with visual evidence of service interactions (e.g., a recording of a reprimand at the cashier) and then linked to a geopolitical narrative, escalation to NeWOM and boycotts occurs more quickly, and discussions persist longer due to public debate between customers and brand advocates.

The brand's response influences the direction of escalation. A quick statement (less than 24 hours) that affirms the independence of the local franchise, includes an empathetic

tone and factual information, tends to de-escalate the threat within 48–72 hours. Conversely, partial or defensive clarifications—including blaming the customer—correlate with re-inflammation, i.e., increased comments and re-following to other platforms. In the three incidents that did not escalate to hate/boycotts, the combination of asserting a local position, using an appropriate communicative tone, and a community counter-narrative about the local economic impact proved to be adequate buffers.

Table 3. Local Brand/Franchise Response and Its Impact

Incident	Response form	Duration	Impact on threads
I-01	Statement of neutrality + local clarification (franchise)	< 24 hours	Gradually subsiding (48–72 hours)
I-02	Partial/ambiguous clarification	2–3 days	Re-inflaming (rising comments)
I-03	Face-to-face apology + SOP revision	< 24 hours	Rapid subsiding (<48 hours)
I-04	72-hour silence, then general release	3–4 days	Mixed (decreasing then rising again)
I-05	Defensive tone (customer blaming)	< 24 hours	Strong re-inflaming (cross-viral transmission)
I-06	Assertion of franchise independence + local community support	1–2 days	Steady decreasing
I-07	Alternative CSR (neutral humanitarian donations)	2 days	Slow subsiding
I-08	Pricing clarification + transparency plan	< 24 hours	Moderate subsiding

Source: Primary Data (processed), 2025

Differences between platforms also shape forms of expression. X and Facebook dominate geopolitical narratives and collective appeals; TikTok and Instagram amplify embarrassment through visual power; Google Maps Reviews chronicles detailed complaints about prices/promotions and records of imported products without halal certification, but rarely become the driving force behind boycotts.

This study shows that embarrassment in the geopolitical context arises not only from service interactions (reprimands in public spaces), but also vicarious embarrassment when consumers witness brand mentions or news reports they interpret as supportive of a particular party. Short video channels amplify face loss, resulting in rapid detachment (unfollow/avoidance within <48 hours).

In the geopolitical subset, detachment serves as a powerful intermediate stage: consumers first cut the distance, then—if the narrative of solidarity strengthens and/or the brand's response is slow/ambiguous—escalates to brand hate with calls for boycotts (seen in 112/156 units in the geopolitical affiliation category). This pattern underscores the role of moralization in the public sphere as a driver of cross-platform NewWOM.

Although entitlement accounts for a smaller portion (16.4%) than geopolitical triggers, its presence accelerates escalation when encountering publicly recorded service episodes. Imperative language/privileged claims to staff are followed by open debate (customers vs. brand advocates), extending the lifespan of threads and intensifying moralized anger.

DISCUSSION

The above findings address RQ1 by demonstrating that embarrassment in the context of geopolitically affiliated foreign F&B emerges through both direct (service interactions

in public spaces) and indirect (exposure to brand mentions/reporting perceived as biased). The presence of short video formats exacerbates face loss, thus encouraging rapid distancing. This pattern is consistent with the social identity threat framework, but extends it to cases where geopolitics—rather than simply service failure—triggers customer shame.

Addressing RQ2, this study maps a relatively stable trajectory of embarrassment → detachment → hate across geopolitical subsets. Detachment acts as a visible intermediate stage: consumers unfollow/avoid/switch immediately after an embarrassing episode, then escalate to brand hate when the geopolitical solidarity narrative strengthens and/or the brand response is slow or ambivalent. The strength of the boycott call-to-action and the thread longevity in these cases suggest that public moralization extends the reach and lifespan of cross-platform NeWOM.

Regarding RQ3, consumer entitlement/arrogance acts as an escalator that compresses the transition time. When expectations of preferential treatment are not met and the interaction is recorded, the "violated honor" framing merges with the geopolitical narrative, increasing moralized anger and prolonging the discussion between users. Although smaller in proportion than the geopolitical trigger, the presence of entitlement explains why some threads quickly escalate into boycott calls, while others stall at the point of detachment.

Theoretically, this study's main contributions are threefold. First, he articulates an episode-based process model that positions embarrassment as a gateway to detachment and, under certain conditions—namely, geopolitical moralization and inadequate corporate responses—to brand hate. Second, he integrates entitlement into the process pathway as an explanatory variable for trajectory heterogeneity, rather than simply a stand-alone personality attribute. Third, he contextualizes the role of local franchises: assertions of operational independence (contracts, local labor, compliance with Indonesian regulations) communicated quickly and clearly have been shown to shorten escalation duration—a practical finding rarely emphasized in the brand hate literature.

The managerial implications are straightforward. Brands need to develop proactive geopolitical communication strategies and response playbooks oriented toward speed (<24 hours) and an empathetic tone. At the point of service, status-sensitive scripts are crucial to prevent service humiliation in the public sphere, while price/promotion transparency mitigates accusations of unclear benefits. While halal issues are not the driving force, disclosure of the status of imported products that are not halal-certified—if such exist—remains relevant as a counterweight to counterarguments. On the monitoring side, spikes in unfollows/avoidance should be treated as early indicators for intervention before the discourse shifts to hate.

Research limitations are inherent to the netnographic method: account identities and demographics are not fully verified, and public expressions can be performative. The findings are therefore interpreted as discourse constructions rather than statistical representations. Further research could include critical incident-based mini-interviews with key informants to validate the sequence of events and enrich motivational nuances, as well as examine the differences in dynamics between purely local franchises and joint venture entities.

Overall, this study confirms that in the context of foreign F&B perceived as affiliated with Israel, embarrassment—whether rooted in service interactions or vicarious—triggers early detachment. When confronted with geopolitical solidarity framing and inappropriate corporate responses, this trajectory solidifies into brand hate, triggering NeWOM and boycotts. This paragraph narrative provides sufficient conceptual-empirical grounding for the proceedings without the need for tables, while maintaining the numerical precision and logical flow of the findings.

CONCLUSION

This study has mapped the episode-based process trajectory from embarrassment → detachment → hate in the context of foreign food and beverage (F&B) perceived as affiliated with Israel in Aceh, with halal issues present only as a co-factor in a small portion of the discourse (Figure 1). Core findings indicate that embarrassment—whether arising from public service interactions or vicarious through exposure to geopolitically charged content—serves as a gateway to early detachment (unfollow/avoidance/switching) and, when reinforced by geopolitical solidarity framing and slow or ambiguous brand responses, escalates into brand hate with persistent NeWOM and boycott calls across platforms.

Figure 1. Episode-based process trajectory map from embarrassment → detachment → hate in the context of foreign F&B perceived to be affiliated with Israel in Aceh

Empirically, the netnographic corpus (July 2024–August 2025) shows that in the geopolitical subset (N=378), geopolitical affiliation/solidarity and corporate stance/donation controversy dominate negative triggers, while service humiliation and status threat/face loss accelerate the emergence of shame in the public sphere, visualized through short videos. Detachment was identified quickly—often <48 hours post-trigger—and brand hate accompanied by boycott calls emerged strongly when reposts, stitches/duets, and cross-platform quotes maintained the moral narrative. Halal co-arguments were present, but did not act as the locomotive of escalation; they more often reinforced the cautious tone in some threads.

The main theoretical contributions of this research are: (1) the articulation of a process model that positions embarrassment as a consistent starting point toward detachment and—under certain conditions—hate; (2) the integration of consumer arrogance/entitlement as an escalator that explains the heterogeneity of trajectories (some threads stop at detachment, others culminate in hate); and (3) the contextualization of the role of local franchises—quickly and clearly communicated affirmations of outlet independence (contracts, local labor, compliance with Indonesian regulations) have been shown to shorten the duration of escalation.

Immediate actionable managerial implications include: a response playbook within <24 hours with an empathetic and factual tone, the preparation of transparent local position statements on geopolitical issues, status-sensitive service scripts to prevent service humiliation in public spaces, price/promotion transparency to mitigate suspicions of pricing opacity, and monitoring detachment (spikes in unfollows/avoidance) as an early indicator before discourse solidifies into hate and boycotts.

The limitations of this research are inherent to netnography: account identities/demographics are not fully verified, and public expressions can be performative; therefore, the results are interpreted as discourse constructions rather than population estimates. However, platform triangulation, audit trails, and negative case analysis have increased the credibility of the mapped patterns.

Future research directions could include (i) adding critical incident-based mini-interviews with key informants to validate the sequence of events and enrich psychosocial mechanisms, (ii) testing a more granular temporal analysis (pre-, during–post brand response) to measure escalation turning points, and (iii) differentiating dynamics between purely local franchises vs. joint venture entities and product categories (dine-in vs. CPG) to assess the applicability of the findings across F&B sub-segments.

In summary, this study confirms that in a foreign F&B context with perceived geopolitical entanglements, public embarrassment—coupled with consumer entitlement and inappropriate corporate responses—is a critical combination that drives consumers from detachment to brand hate; understanding and intervening in these nodes provides a concrete risk map and control points for brand managers in Aceh.

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