

The Influence of Korean Celebrity as Brand Ambassador for Indonesian Skincare on Consumer Purchasing Intention

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Abstract: *Companies in the beauty sector employ a variety of strategies to draw clients and achieve a competitive edge. In Indonesia, there has been a phenomenon of several notable local skincare brands using Korean celebrities as their brand ambassador and gaining a lot of attention. The goal of the research was to investigate how Indonesian skincare brand images are impacted by Korean celebrities as brand ambassadors and how it affects Indonesian consumer purchasing intention. This report ought to serve as a reference for businesses looking to maximize endorsements through smart branding. Quantitative method was used and Indonesian customers were surveyed. Purchase intention, brand ambassadors, and brand image are utilized as the independent and dependent variables, and are employed as the main data sources. The research's findings have revealed that Korean celebrities could have an 80.7% brand image effect on Indonesian consumers' propensity to buy, a perceived brand image impact of 24.5% on the willingness of consumers to buy, and an overall image of a brand effect of 23.4% when serving as ambassadors of a brand. Having these celebrities promote Indonesian skincare companies will boost sales and significantly impact Indonesian consumers' purchase intention. Given the study's small sample size and the fact that the majority of the participants were female adolescents and young adults, this result may be difficult to understand. Future studies should include more samples and a wider range of gender and vocations. The results of this study make it abundantly evident that Korean celebrities who represent a brand have a major impact on Indonesian customers' intentions to make purchases and perceptions of that brand. Having Korean celebrities advocate regional skincare enterprises will increase spending by consumers and influence Indonesian consumers' motivation to make a purchase.*

Keywords: Marketing, Influence, Brand Ambassadors, Purchase Intention, Korean Celebrities

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Companies nowadays use a variety of strategies to stand out from the competition, attract customers, and differentiate themselves. Businesses must captivate customers' attention and inspire enthusiasm for purchasing in order to efficiently sell items and accomplish corporate objectives. Marketing relies heavily on brand ambassadors, who are individuals or organizations who get compensation from a business to promote its name and products locally and internationally (Kok et al., 2021). According to Wang and Hariandja (2016), celebrity endorsements and the use of artists for marketing may strengthen the emotional bond between

a business and its customers, impacting both their purchasing behavior and product consumption. In certain circumstances, K-Pop artists work as brand ambassadors.

The term "Korean Wave" or "Hallyu" describes the popularity of Korean culture, notably in Southeast Asia since the 1990s, which includes music, entertainment, movies, clothes, food, and cosmetics. Indonesia cannot ignore the impact of South Korean popular culture, pushed by the Korean Wave, especially on millennials and Generation Z (Siskhawati & Maulana, 2021). Due to their enormous influence over younger demographics using social media, Korean celebrities are in great demand as brand ambassadors for companies in Indonesia (Kumala et al., 2022). Through personality matching and fan engagement, Indonesian businesses may increase consumer loyalty by using K-pop artists as brand ambassadors (Kumala et al., 2022). In this situation, Korean celebrities have been very important in promoting skin care products and trends outside of Korea. An example of a brand ambassador for Somethinc from Indonesia is the well-known Korean boy group NCT Dream and the actress Han So Hee. Celebrity or brand ambassador endorsements can improve how customers perceive the products they are buying and how they decide what to buy and how to use it (Wang & Hariandja, 2016).

This study will cover the research with focus on the impact of Korean celebrities who serve as ambassadors for skincare brands from Indonesia on customers' purchasing intention, with a background that includes how customers build their purchase intention, how brand ambassadors influence brand image, and how the perceived image of a brand affects Indonesian consumers purchase intention.

1.2 Problem Statement

According to Sagia and Situmorang (2018) research, Korean Wave has a remarkable impact on consumers' purchase decisions, improving the perception of a brand and that of any celebrities that advocate it. This study will examine how a Korean star who represents the brand of Indonesian cosmetics affects consumers' willingness to purchase. The results of this research will be very helpful in choosing the best marketing approach in a certain industry, which may assist businesses discover a new, sizable marketplace in favor of growing their brands. The study's results can also be used by other academics for their prospective research endeavors.

1.3 Research Question

In order to determine the relationship between a Korean celebrity who acts as a brand representative in Indonesia and the consumer's intent to purchase, various points that need to be discussed have been made more apparent as a result of the initial study's shortcomings. By figuring out the responses to these additional questions, we will understand the study's findings. Following questions must be addressed by the assessment and study results.

- i. How could Korean celebrities affect the perception of Indonesian skincare companies?
- ii. To what extent do people's intentions to buy local skincare products depend on the brand perceptions produced by Korean celebrities serving as brand ambassadors?
- iii. What effects do Korean brand ambassadors have on consumers' intentions to buy local skincare products?

1.4 Research Objective

Any organization looking for Korean celebrities to endorse them would benefit from knowing the answers to these questions as it will help them concentrate on the key factors. The results of this study should help businesses determine whether strategic branding is effective from an endorsement perspective. Hence, based on the problem formulation as well as the research inquiries, the goals of this paper are:

- i. To investigate how local skincare enterprises' brand perceptions are impacted by Korean celebrities.
- ii. To determine the way Korean celebrities acting as local brand ambassadors affect Indonesian consumers' intention to buy skincare products
- iii. To assess how they affect Indonesian young adults' intention to buy.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Purchase Intention

The idea of purchasing intention is centered on figuring out why customers choose a particular brand or item. It incorporates a number of decision-making phases, including the incorporation process, in which customers acquire data and assess numerous possibilities before making a decision. A buyer's decision to acquire something is significantly influenced by price, value, and quality. Consumers define their needs or problems, research various products or solutions, then assess how effectively each alternative solves their particular problem before making a purchase. The specific requirements that customers are looking to satisfy and how those demands are reflected in their purchase decisions are crucially understood by marketers (Dewi et al., 2020).

People think about all of their alternatives, compare them to one another, then choose which goods to acquire while making purchases. According to Al-Qeisi et al. (2014), a number of factors, including consumer trust in the brand, enjoyment of online shopping, website attractiveness, and dependence on third-party evaluations, affect consumers' decisions to buy skincare items online. Because online reviewers are viewed as competent and objective, user-generated content as well as online ratings have a considerable influence on audience perceptions and decisions (DeAndrea et al., 2018). While customer service, store ambiance and design, personalisation, and in-store shopping experiences all have an impact on customers' offline purchase intentions (Culliney, 2022). In accordance with Lazuardi (2022), seamless customer experience can be provided by using an omnichannel strategy that integrates traditional and digital advertising to connect with customers and deliver consistent messaging from various angles.

2.2 Brand Ambassador

An individual who promotes the goods of a person of note is known as a brand ambassador (Dewi et al., 2020). As promotional tools, brand ambassadors represent the commercialization and monetization of a good or service as well as the attainment of originality and grandeur on a personal level (Sterie et al., 2019). A brand ambassador, as defined by Doucett (2008), is a person who is passionate about the brand, eager to spread the word about it, and goes above and beyond by being willing to pass on brand knowledge. Royan (2004) claims that brand ambassadors are hired by the company with the goal of convincing or luring customers to use the product. According to Lea-Greenwood (2012), ambassadors for brands are a strategy used by businesses to interact and connect with the general public in the hope of boosting sales. Thus, well-known individuals that are renowned to the general population on either an international or national scale were chosen as brand ambassadors.

A further benefit of celebrity endorsements for a company is a boost to its corporate image, which is connected to how well the objectives of the brand representative match those of the company they promote. Brand ambassadors for a company's products are usually chosen celebrities or well-known figures. Notwithstanding the reality that many people are already familiar with them, they might nonetheless draw in clients who are eager to purchase these

things. Thus, the brand ambassador's character will touch on how the public views the company and may encourage buyers to purchase (Probosini et al., 2021).

2.3 Brand Image

An image is a thought, credence, or assumption that a person has of something they construct by fusing information from various sources all at once. If a brand has a good reputation, customers could be happy with it (Indarto & Qomariah, 2018). When individuals think about a certain brand, a specific type of association occurs in their minds. This association is referred to as a brand image. Once customers encounter or hear a brand, they have particular thoughts and feelings and conduct brand research (Lee & Lee, 2018). According to Prayag (2010), a company's image represents a consumer's strong opinion of a good or service that is influenced by their memories of it. The brand image is affected by few external sources, marketing communications being only one of them. In an attempt to encourage a brand that most nearly reflects the way they are as a person or image, the consumer takes an effort. Depending on how someone perceives a corporation, it may have a favorable or negative image. Through the associations that remain in the consumer's memory, this perception has been formed. By relying on the brand's reputation, customers can identify a product, assess its quality, lower their risk of deciding to make a purchase, benefit from the product's uniqueness and feel satisfied after doing so.

2.4 Hypothesis Development

A brand's ambassador has a big impact on how customers view the business. In direct proportion to the brand ambassador's popularity with customers, the brand image improves. Wang and Hariandja (2016) claimed that successful celebrity/brand collaborations have dramatically boosted profitability for brand image. Customers are more likely to make a purchase if they have a favorable impression of the brand ambassador along with the brand image. Companies have to carefully thought about whom they pick to be the representatives of the firms to ascertain the degree to which they are appropriate for the image of the company and how well or not they are going to be well-received among customers considering that Indonesia alone has been heavily touched by the Korean Wave in numerous ways. There is an ongoing phenomena in which many cosmetics businesses in Indonesia began to use Korean Star as their ambassadors for the company. This leads to the formulation of hypotheses as;

- H₁:** The image of the brand of Indonesian skincare is positively affected by Korean celebrities who serve as brand ambassadors.
- H₂:** Indonesian consumers' intention to purchase is positively influenced by the perceived image of a brand.
- H₃:** Indonesian Customer Intention to Purchase are Positively Shaped by Korean Celebrities who Act as Ambassadors of Brands.

3. Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Research Methodology

The goal of the research is to find out more about the influence that Korean celebrities who serve as ambassadors for the brand and the company's image have on Indonesian customers' intents to make purchases. Considering that this study is a descriptive study, a subtype of quantitative research, the data will be evaluated using quantitative methods. A quantitative study, according to Fisher and Buglear (2010), integrates measurement and statistical data to condense the results of the investigation. In order to validate data, forecasts, correlations, and estimates in marketing research, the quantitative technique is used (Hair et al., 2004). The

requirement to validate a number of hypotheses is another argument for employing the quantitative approach in this investigation.

The Indonesian customers who served as the study's primary source of credible data were surveyed. In this research, the connection among the dependent variable—the purchase intent—and the independent variables—such as brand ambassadors and image of a brand—will be examined. Intention to purchase, brand ambassadors, and image of a brand are utilized as the independent and dependent variables, respectively, and are employed as the main data sources to determine whether or not the independent elements have an influence on the dependent variable. By assigning questionnaires to 100 respondents, the survey method was used to collect data for this study in order to obtain exact and thorough information.

3.2 Questionnaire Design

This survey is intended to support the assertion or hypothesis on the impact of K-pop stars endorsing Indonesian beauty care products on customer purchase intentions. Quantitative techniques were applied in this investigation. Each quiz asks respondents to rate how strongly they agree with each statement on a Likert scale from 1 to 5. The following sentences are all no different: Highly Disapprove with 1, Disapprove with 2, Neutral with 3, Approve with 4, and Highly Approve with 5. The 18 items in the questionnaire were created in English and were aimed at Indonesian women customers.

3.3 Data Collection

Indonesian women, distinctly who are included as millennials or gen Z and reside within the major towns of Bandung, Bekasi, Bogor, Jakarta, Tangerang, and Depok, are the focus of this study's data focus in determining the impact of Korean celebrities serving as ambassadors of a brand for Indonesian skincare on customer's intention to purchase. In order to examine the psychological responses and habits tendencies of consumers who are loyal to a brand as well as frequent buyers from businesses that use Korean celebrities as ambassadors for the company, an online poll was conducted. From April 24 to April 28, 2023, participants in the online survey used a Google Form link. The questionnaire asks respondents to answer questions in an online multiple-choice survey. The results of the survey can definitely be measured. A structured survey known as a questionnaire has a predetermined format and order for the survey questions to be delivered, as well as a method and approach for respondents to respond. Because surveys are written, there is less chance that bias will be introduced into the study and alter the survey results. The survey's statistical results can generally be quantified.

The surveys were made available via a number of social media platforms, along with a link to a Google Form that respondents who reach the requirements were instructed to complete. The survey approach is used to gather quantitative data by creating definitive queries for the individuals surveyed who are then approached to obtain the necessary data. A total of 18 questions utilizing the multiple-choice and Likert-scale formats were asked of the respondents. Additionally, this investigation used secondary data from past investigations including books, articles, and journals that discuss subjects such as the influence of ambassadors of a brand on perceptions of a brand and intention to purchase as well as the influence of image of a brand on purchase intent.

4. Data Analysis and Result

4.1 Overview

This paper focused on how the Indonesian beauty market is affected by brand perception, consumer behavior, and Korean celebrity ambassadors for the brands. In order to investigate this, the analysis of variance, or ANOVA, test was employed to determine whether these connections are linear. The data acquired from the study were examined using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences or SPSS. The survey will be distributed to a representative group of Indonesian women who make purchases of Indonesian skin care. The questionnaire's inquiries will ask participants' knowledge of Korean celebrities serving as brand ambassadors, as well as their perceptions of and willingness to purchase from Indonesian skincare companies.

4.2 Demographic and Correspondents

To gather initial data, a survey of 100 Indonesian women was conducted. To provide a simple population selection process, the survey used a straightforward random-sampling approach. According to the demographic information, 9% of respondents were under the age of 16, and 44% of respondents were within the ages of 16 and 20. 34% of the population was between the ages of 21 and 26, while 13% were older than 26. The Jabodetabek region, which includes towns like Bekasi, Bogor, Depok, Jakarta, and Tangerang, took up 59% of the respondents. All 41 of the remaining respondents came from Bandung. Additionally, the majority of those who responded to the survey—44% of participants—identified as college or university students.

4.3 Result

According to the survey, Indonesian women have several alternatives on where to buy skincare products. Most respondents admitted that they use websites like Shopee and Tokopedia to purchase local skincare goods online, while retail stores came in second place. 23% selected pop-up stores, demonstrating that temporary retail sites may be successful in marketing regional skincare items and drawing new customers. Quite a lot of women choose to buy regional skincare products from online retailers, indicating the value of creating an online presence in addition to physical storefronts to reach a larger audience. In addition, some of them acknowledged purchasing regional beauty products during events, demonstrating that taking part in such occasions might increase the exposure and clientele of regional skincare companies.

Several variables affect women's choices of Indonesian skincare products. The majority of women indicated customer evaluations as the most significant aspect, emphasizing the value of social evidence and depending on other people's perspectives and experiences. The importance of word-of-mouth marketing and interpersonal connections in customer behavior was highlighted by the fact that suggestions from friends and family came in second. A lot of them also named brand ambassadors as an important consideration, indicating that owning a famous person connected to the brand might be a victorious marketing strategy for Indonesian skincare firms. Several factors also affect women's tendency to patronize local skincare companies. The main motivating factor is the belief that the items are of excellent quality and include high-grade components, emphasizing how crucial it is for Indonesian businesses to highlight these features. Buyers also give the relative cost a lot of thought, demonstrating the significance of price sensitivity in their decision-making. Accessibility, quality of the brand's image, and the existence of brand ambassadors are other factors that affect purchase intent.

With the hypothesis of: H₁: The image of the brand of Indonesian skincare is positively affected by Korean celebrities who serve as brand ambassadors, a regression analysis was carried out to ascertain the relationship in the middle of the dependent variable, Image of a Brand, and the independent variable, Korean Celebrities as Ambassadors of a Brand. The R square for the present study was 0.234, or 23.4%. This exemplifies the potential 23.4% brand image influence that Korean celebrities may have while acting as ambassador of a company. The impact of ambassadors for a brand on a company's reputation is yet a crucial element as well. There will be a 0.292 times increase in brand image for every extra brand ambassador. Without brand advocates, the perception of a company is 2.056.

For H₂: Indonesian consumers' intention to purchase is positively influenced by the perceived image of a brand, a regression study was carried out to determine the connection between the dependent variable, Indonesian Consumers' Purchase Intention, and the independent variable, The Perceived Brand Image. In the regression analysis performed, the R square for this research was 0.245, or 24.5%. This suggests that the likelihood of a brand being purchased by Indonesian consumers might vary by 24.5% depending on how that brand is viewed. Every enhancement in a good image of a brand that raises customer loyalty would raise Indonesian customers' purchase intents by 0.390 times. Without a good perception of the brand, 2.699 percent of Indonesian consumers are unlikely to make a purchase.

As for H₃, Indonesian Customer Intention to Purchase are Positively Shaped by Korean Celebrities Serving as Ambassadors of Brands, a regression analysis was performed to determine the relationship of the independent variable—Korean celebrities functioning as ambassadors of a brand—and the dependent variable—Indonesian customers' desire to buy. The results of the regression analysis produced a R square of 0.807, or 80.7%, for this investigation. This information suggests that 80.7% of Indonesian consumers' propensity to buy may be influenced by Korean celebrities serving as brand ambassadors. Indonesian customers' intentions to buy will rise by 0.420 times for each point in a company's favor that enhances loyalty of customers. -0.302 percent of shoppers in Indonesia would purchase absent from the existence of Korean celebrities acting as brand ambassadors.

4.4 Discussion

Wang and Hariandja (2016) claim that Korean celebrities are now frequently seen in advertisements for numerous well-known businesses. This study intends to investigate whether the perception of the firm and the Korean celebrities acting as ambassadors of a brand for Indonesian skincare products affects Indonesian consumers' purchasing inclinations. The research conclusions show that Korean celebrities, while acting as brand ambassadors, have a significant influence on Indonesian consumers' propensity to buy, with an 80.7% effect on Indonesian consumers' purchase intentions, a 24.5% effect on consumers' purchase intention based on the perceived brand image, and an overall direct brand image impact of 23.4%. Using Korean celebrities to promote regional skincare brands can boost sales and have a big impact on Indonesian customers' purchasing decisions.

Customers' propensity to purchase skincare goods online in the present online shopping trend is influenced by elements like brand trust, preference for online shopping, website attractiveness, and third-party reviews. The study discovered that Indonesian consumers mostly use online marketplaces to buy local skincare brands, factoring in customer reviews and relative product prices when making decisions. According to the literature, consumers are more inclined to rely on well-known brands, particularly when they haven't used the product yet. As a result, businesses work to build a solid reputation in order to foster a favorable view among

customers and brand evangelists. According to the research findings, brand ambassadors significantly affect a company's reputation. Every additional brand ambassador increases their impact on the business' reputation by 0.292. This calculation's conclusion indicates that a solid reputation influences Indonesian customers' buy intentions and fosters more consumer loyalty. Increased customer loyalty would improve the company's reputation, which would lead to a 0.390 increase in buy intentions from Indonesian customers. The literature review also discusses how the personality of a brand ambassador may affect how the brand is viewed. The public's perception of the company will consequently be influenced by the brand ambassador's personality, which may persuade consumers to buy products (Probosini et al., 2021). The results show how using Korean celebrities as representatives of Indonesian skincare firms will raise customer's expenditure and have a huge impact on Indonesian consumer willingness to buy, lending credence to the claim. For every advantage a business has that increases customer loyalty, the probability that an Indonesian consumer will ultimately make a purchase rises by 0.420 times.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

Celebrity endorsements can increase the emotional tie between firms and their consumers. As the Korean wave has greatly impacted Indonesian society, especially within millennials and Generation Z, businesses are making use of the popularity of K-Pop idols in order to promote strong brand loyalty and influence customers' purchase decisions. The assumption that K-Pop idol endorsers have a greater impact on consumer decisions and that the Korean wave phenomena can affect customer buying habits when it is used successfully is supported by a number of studies reported in this inquiry. The purpose of this study is to ascertain whether Indonesian consumers' intentions to buy are significantly influenced by perceptions of a company's image and Korean celebrities who work as ambassadors of the brand for Indonesian skin care firms.

The results of the study make it abundantly evident that Korean celebrities who represent a brand own a major effect on Indonesian consumers' intentions to purchase and on understanding of that brand. This investigation has demonstrated that every proposed hypothesis is supported. Considering the imagined brand image has a positive impact on Indonesian customers' tendency to buy as well, having Korean celebrities advocate regional skincare enterprises will increase spending by consumers and influence Indonesian consumers' motivation to make a purchase. The most common method to purchase local skincare goods is online, and when making a purchase, customers also consider the product's price and reputation. The personality of a company can be represented through an ambassador who can impact consumer purchase decisions and the brand's reputation.

5.2 Limitations and Recommendations

There are several suggestions provided for up-and-coming researchers. Given the study's small sample size and the fact that the majority of the participants were female adolescents and young adults, this result is difficult to understand. Future studies should include more samples, as well as a wider range of gender and vocations, to get a more precise representation of the study's results. Comparative studies on this subject will be fascinating because they can reveal how people in other countries engage with Korean celebrities serving as ambassadors for the brand and how they view the significance of a brand ambassador and its image on customer behavior in several nations. The design may require to be changed for subsequent investigations, mayhap with including additional variables to be looked at.

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