

The Role of Brand Image, Brand Ambassadors and Korean Wave on Intention to Purchase of K-poppers Customers

Hendy Tannady* & Adelia Putri Maulidna

Universitas Pembangunan Jaya, Universitas Multimedia Nusantara*

Correspondence Email: hendytannady@gmail.com*

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate how brand ambassadors and the Korean wave affect brand perception and how that affects consumer choice. Using non-probability selection approaches, a sample of 100 respondents was chosen from a population of K-poppers as part of this quantitative research study. Direct data searches, online research, and questionnaires were used to gather data. Structural equation modeling (SEM) statistical approaches are used in data analysis. The analysis's findings indicate that neither the Korean wave nor brand ambassadors alone significantly affect a company's reputation. Together, nevertheless, they significantly and favorably impact brand image. In addition, the Korean wave and brand image, as well as brand ambassadors, have a big impact on buying decisions. In general, the Korean wave and brand ambassadors have a big impact on brand perception and can influence consumer decisions separately or in tandem. These findings highlight the value of using brand ambassadors and the Korean wave in marketing tactics to create a strong brand identity and influence consumer decisions to buy, particularly among K-pop enthusiasts.

Keywords: brand ambassador, Korean wave, brand image, intention to purchase.

INTRODUCTION

In today's globalization, the world of online shopping is no longer strange to hear about. Marketplace companies are one of the platforms that make it easier for consumers to shop. Just by ordering using a cellphone, and of course through the application or website of the marketplace company, consumers can easily get what they want or need. It is important to think about how the marketplace survives in the world of business competition (Kotler, 2015). One thing that must be considered is how to build or create the brand image of the marketplace itself so that it grows strong in the face of similar competition. The stronger the consumer brand image, the more opportunities it will provide for attracting consumers (Tannady & Dewi, 2024). The corporate world takes into account more than just brand image; purchase decisions are also crucial. Consumer decisions regarding whether or not to make a purchase have a significant impact on firms that are already in operation. If, in business terms, you don't think about this, it won't be possible for consumers to buy the product (Gita & Setyorini, 2016).

Various factors can influence consumer purchasing decisions, a crucial step in the consumption cycle. Brand image plays an important role in influencing purchasing decisions. Consumers form their perceptions of the brand through personal experience, information from others, or through the brand's marketing activities. When the brand image of a brand is strong, consumers tend to have a positive perception of the brand. This can increase

consumers' tendency to choose and buy products offered by the brand. Conversely, if the brand image is weak or negative, consumers may be reluctant to choose the products offered by that brand (Sri Handayani, 2024). Good management of brand image is very important in making consumer purchasing decisions. Efforts to build, maintain, and improve the brand image must continue to be made so that the brand remains relevant and attractive to consumers. By managing brand image well, companies can increase their chances of success in directing consumer purchasing decisions in a positive direction (Tanuwijaya & Tannady, 2019).

Purchasing decisions are important steps taken by consumers when choosing to buy or not buy a product. Consumers make important purchasing decisions. Various factors, including key psychological aspects of consumers like perception, beliefs, and stance, influence this decision (Greenwood, 2012). There are several indicators that influence purchasing decisions. First, the key factor is attention, and the conveyed message must be able to capture the consumer's attention. For example, creative and interesting advertising can make consumers want to know more about the product. Second, interest is also very important. The chosen medium must effectively pique consumer interest by disseminating pertinent and captivating information (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Furthermore, desire also plays an important role. Product information from promotions or advertisements must be able to create a desire in consumers to own or try the product. Factors such as product benefits, uniqueness, and superiority compared to other products can also influence consumers' desire to buy. Apart from these factors, there are also other factors that influence purchasing decisions, such as economic, social, cultural, and previous experience factors. Therefore, in designing marketing strategies, companies must understand and consider these various factors to create effective messages that influence consumer purchasing decisions (Wartoyo et al., 2024).

Brands often use their image as a way to differentiate themselves from competitors. One commonly used method is to use a logo or icon that consumers can recognize and stick in their minds. Brands often use brand ambassadors in the business world to promote their products or services (Tannady, 2018). Many marketplaces use artists as brand ambassadors because of the artist's popularity and influence. Choosing the right brand ambassador is very important because there must be a match between the brand ambassador and the brand, especially in terms of personality such as popularity, availability, physical attractiveness, and profession that suits the product (Lestari et al., 2019). This ensures that the brand ambassador can effectively represent the brand values and resonate with the target audience. Creativity also plays an important role in the use of celebrity endorsements, as innovative and engaging campaigns tend to have the most positive impact. Previous research shows that the strategic use of brand ambassadors can have a significant impact on consumer perceptions and purchasing behavior (Pratama et al., 2017).

Brand image plays a very important role in shaping consumer perceptions of a brand. Consumers' experiences and perceptions of the brand strongly influence this image. In the context of current developments in consumer lifestyles, especially related to the Korean wave phenomenon, brand image is becoming increasingly significant. The Korean wave, is a phenomenon where Korean culture, especially through K-pop music and dramas, is gaining great influence in various countries (Piliang & Jejen, 2018). K-pop fans and Korean drama fans tend to be open to various aspects of Korean culture, including products associated with Korean celebrities or brands associated with Korean pop culture. In this instance, there is a connection between the brand image and the Korean wave. The popular image of Korean celebrities can shape fans' perceptions of a product or brand (Firmansyah et al., 2024). Therefore, companies often use Korean celebrities as brand ambassadors or in their marketing

campaigns to take advantage of the positive influence of the Korean wave in shaping their brand image. Thus, the right marketing strategy can help brands stay relevant and stick in consumers' minds, especially among Korean wave fans (Gita & Setyorini, 2016).

By seeing the increasingly widespread development of the South Korean industry in Indonesia, brand owners see this as an opportunity to use the services of South Korean artists to attract consumer interest. It is believed that the presence of K-pop artists can provide benefits for brand owners by opening up opportunities to reach previously untapped consumers, namely K-pop fans or K-poppers. One of the marketplaces that first took advantage of the Korean Wave trend in Indonesia was Shopee. Shopee has officially appointed the South Korean girl group, Blackpink, as its brand ambassador. Apart from that, Shopee also adopted a second marketing strategy by making Gfriend a brand ambassador. This strategy was carried out by inviting Gfriend to attend an event held specifically for Gfriend fans. With the marketing strategy used, Shopee succeeded in creating a special market share for K-pop fans, showing success in utilizing the Korean Wave trend to support their business growth.

METHOD

The purpose of the research is to test established hypotheses, and the methodology utilized in this study includes quantitative research, which is used to study specific populations or samples, research tools for data collecting, and quantitative statistics for data analysis. K-poppers that plan to make purchases in the marketplace are the subject of this study. K-pop fans will be the population this study uses. Researchers looked through Instagram for active K-pop fandoms. The structural equation model (SEM), which was the analysis method employed in this study, was used to alter the values. One hundred samples were used in this study. The researchers used non-probability sampling strategies in their investigation. According to Sugiyono (2017), a non-probability sampling strategy is one in which not every element or member of the population has an equal chance of being chosen as a sample.

In conducting this research. For primary data, researchers used questionnaires, internet research (online research), and direct data searches. Meanwhile, for secondary data, researchers conducted literature studies using books that were relevant to the variables and research methods, as well as referring to journals and previous research articles that were appropriate to the problem topic. A 5-point Likert scale that is, (5) Strongly Agree, (4) Agree, (3) Neutral, (2) Disagree, and (1) Strongly Disagree was used to measure the respondents' response levels. Validity and reliability tests are used to measure the variables. This quantitative study's data analysis method applies statistics through the use of the structural equation modeling (SEM) technique. The measurement model (CFA), structural model, goodness of fit test, coefficient of determination (R²), and hypothesis testing (T test and F test) are among the procedures in data analysis that are used to examine the relationship between variables (Hair et al., 2014). This technique is used to identify and measure relationships between variables and test the suitability of the model for existing data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the goodness of fit test results, several values were obtained, which indicate the level of model suitability. A GFI value of 0.80 indicates that the model has marginal fit because it is in the range of 0.80-0.90. However, the RMSEA calculation result of 0.097 indicates that the model has a good fit because this value is smaller than 0.08. However, the AGFI value of 0.74 indicates a lack of fit in the model. In the

meantime, given the CFI value of 0.97 is higher than 0.90, it suggests that the model has a strong fit. Aside from that, the computation yields a value of 620.22 and a degree of freedom of 203, with a result of 3.05. It is possible to conclude that the chi-square model fits the data well because the p value is more than 0.05. Overall, the test results show that the model has a good fit, although there are several values that indicate marginal fit. Further review of the factors influencing these results is needed to obtain a more accurate picture.

The partial-variable connection hypothesis was tested using the t test. The hypothesis was subsequently accepted by the t test results, which were obtained by utilizing Lisrel 8.8 and $t\text{-count} > t\text{-table}$ computations.

Table 1. T-Test Results

Hypothesis	Hypothesis Statement	T-Count	T-Table	Description
H1	Brand ambassadors influence brand image	1.91	1.96	Rejected
H2	The Korean wave influences brand image	-0.40	1.96	Rejected
H4	Brand ambassadors influence purchasing decisions	2.24	1.96	Accepted
H5	The Korean wave influences purchasing decisions	3.01	1.96	Accepted
H6	Brand image influences purchasing decisions	4.44	1.96	Accepted

Numerous inferences about the impact of the factors in this study on brand perception and purchase decisions can be made based on the findings of the t test that was conducted. The results of the t-test indicate that neither the Korean wave nor brand ambassadors have any impact on brand perception. Nonetheless, the Korean wave and brand ambassadors have a big say in what people buy. In addition, purchasing decisions are significantly influenced by brand image. Therefore, it can be said that through brand image, brand ambassadors and the Korean wave indirectly impact consumer decisions to buy. Despite not having a direct impact on brand image, they nevertheless have a big impact on consumer decisions. Therefore, companies can consider using brand ambassadors and taking advantage of the Korean wave in an effort to influence consumer purchasing decisions, although their role is more of an indirect influence through brand image.

The F-calculated value of 18,600, which was obtained from the F test findings, indicates a considerable combined or simultaneous influence of brand ambassadors and the Korean wave on the image of the Tokopedia brand. This suggests that these two factors work together to assist one another in forming the perception of the Tokopedia brand. Additionally, the F test results, which have an F-calculated value of 120,632, demonstrate that brand ambassadors and the Korean wave have a considerable impact on brand image, which in turn influences decisions to buy jointly or separately. This shows that both have a significant role in influencing the decisions that consumers make about what to buy, and that one of the things that mediates their influence on decisions is brand image. Therefore, our findings offer compelling evidence in favor of putting brand ambassadors and the Korean wave to good use

in developing a strong brand image marketing tactics that can influence consumers' decisions to buy goods and services from the marketplace.

CONCLUSION

It is clear from the data analysis that brand ambassadors don't significantly affect a company's reputation. Still, brand image is not much impacted by the Korean wave. Nonetheless, the combined impact of brand ambassadors and the Korean wave on brand image suggests that both play mutually reinforcing roles in the process of forming brand image. Additionally, brand ambassadors have a big impact on decisions made about purchases, which suggests that having brand ambassadors can affect what consumers decide to buy. Similar to how the Korean wave has a big impact on decisions about what to buy, the Korean wave phenomena can also have an impact on consumer choices. In addition, a strong brand image can boost customers' propensity to purchase the good or service. This suggests that brand image has a big impact on purchasing decisions. In general, the Korean wave and brand ambassadors have a big impact on brand perception, which can affect consumers' decisions to buy either concurrently or separately. This demonstrates the value of using brand ambassadors and the Korean wave in marketing techniques to create a strong brand image and influence consumer decisions to buy, particularly among K-poppers.

REFERENCES

- Kotler, A. (2015). *Marketing an Introducing Prentice Hall twelfth edition*. England: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Tannady, H., & Dewi, C. S. (2024). Exploring Role of Technology Performance Expectancy, Application Effort Expectancy, Perceived Risk and Perceived Cost on Digital Behavioral Intention of GoFood Users. *Jurnal Informasi Dan Teknologi*, 80-85.
- Gita, D., & R. Setyorini. (2016). The Influence of Brand Ambassadors on the Brand Image of the Online Company Zalora.co.id. *e-proceeding*, 3(1) 620-630.
- Sri Handayani. (2024). The Impact of Advantages and Comfort on Consumers' Desire to Continue Doing Business Online in E-Commerce. *Journal of Social Science and Business Studies*, 2(1), 140-145. <https://doi.org/10.61487/jssbs.v2i1.53>
- Tanuwijaya, C., & Tannady, H. (2019, August). Evaluasi Produk dan Pelayanan di Toko Buku Gramedia Emporium Pluit Mall Jakarta Utara Menggunakan Service Quality. In *Seminar Nasional Sains dan Teknologi Informasi (SENSASI)*, 2(1).
- Greenwood, L. (2012). *Fashion Marketing Communication E-Book*. New York: Somerset.
- Hair, J. et al. (2014). *A Promer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)*. SAGE Publications, Inc. California.USA.
- Kotler, P & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing Management, 15th Edition*. New Jersey: Pearson Pretice Hall, Inc.
- Wartoyo, Novi Nur Azizah, & Rita Kusumadewi. (2024). How Does Investment Risk Mediate the Effect of Investment Literacy on Online Interest in Investing Among Generation Z?. *Journal of Social Science and Business Studies*, 2(1), 146-155. <https://doi.org/10.61487/jssbs.v2i1.64>
- Tannady, H. (2018). Mengkaji kepuasan pelanggan terhadap kualitas layanan e-commerce dengan menggunakan metode Importance Performance Analysis 3 Dimensi. *Journal of Business & Applied Management*, 11(2).
- Lestari, H., Sunarti, & Bafadhal, A. (2019). The influence of brand ambassadors and the Korean wave on brand image and impact on purchasing decisions. (*JAB*), 1, 66.

- Pratama, B., Tannady, H., & Jodiawan, P. (2017). Analisis Pengaruh Kualitas Terhadap Kepuasan Pelanggan (Studi Kasus di NN Laundry, Jakarta Selatan). *Jurnal teknik dan ilmu komputer*.
- Piliang, Y. A. & Jejen, j. (2018). *Contemporary Cultural Theory Exploring Signs and Meaning*. Yogyakarta: Aurora.
- Firmansyah, Fikri Alfatih, & Radit Nugroho. (2024). Green Tourism: A Sustainable Tourism Marketing Approach for Tourism Services. *Journal of Social Science and Business Studies*, 2(1), 170–175. <https://doi.org/10.61487/jssbs.v2i1.55>
- Sugiyono. (2017). *Quantitative, Qualitative, and R&D Research Methods*. Bandung: PT Alfabeta.