

The Influence of Twice Brand Ambassador and Korean Wave on Scarlett Product Purchase Decisions With Brand Image as a Mediating Variable

Dinda Ayu Valepi^{1*}, Rose Rahmidani²

^{1,2}Department of Economic Education, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia

Email: ¹⁾ dindaayuvalepi@gmail.com, ²⁾ rose_rahmidani@fe.unp.ac.id

Received : 14 July - 2025

Accepted : 21 August - 2025

Published online : 26 August - 2025

Abstract

In recent years, the beauty industry has grown rapidly due to increasing public awareness of self-care and appearance. Demand for skincare and body care products has risen as consumers seek to boost their confidence. To meet these needs, companies must continue developing unique products to stay competitive. One strategy is using famous figures as brand ambassadors, as their popularity helps spread the brand's message more widely. For example, Scarlett appointed TWICE, a South Korean girl group from JYP Entertainment, as its brand ambassador. However, this decision sparked controversy, with some consumers accusing Scarlett of skin color discrimination. This research examines the impact of TWICE as a Brand Ambassador and the Korean Wave on consumers' purchasing decisions regarding Scarlett products, with Brand Image as a mediating variable. The study adopts a quantitative and associative research design. The target population consists of students at Padang State University familiar with both Scarlett products and TWICE. Using purposive sampling, 100 respondents were obtained. Data was collected through questionnaires and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0 software. The findings shed light that Brand Ambassador and Korean Wave significantly influence Brand Image; Brand Image significantly affects Purchasing Decisions; both Brand Ambassador and Korean Wave directly influence Purchasing Decisions; and both have indirect effects on Purchasing Decisions through Brand Image. These findings contribute to understanding celebrity endorsement and consumer behavior in global cultural trends. Practically, companies should carefully choose brand ambassadors and use cultural trends to boost the brand's image and drive sales.

Keywords: Brand Ambassador, Brand Image, Korean Wave, Purchasing Decision.

1. Introduction

Many consumers, especially women, have begun regularly using skincare and body care products to boost their self-confidence. Cosmetics companies are also competing to create unique and innovative products to capture market share (Ferdinand & Ciptono, 2022). Fierce competition forces manufacturers to continuously develop their marketing strategies. This development is clearly illustrated by data on the growth of the Indonesian cosmetics industry from 2021 to 2024. According to Effendy (2003) the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) theory, marketing stimuli such as advertising, brand endorsements, and cultural trends act as external factors (stimulus) that shape consumer perceptions (organism) and lead to behavioral outcomes such as purchasing decisions. This theoretical framework provides the

basis for analyzing how the Brand Ambassador strategy and the Korean Wave phenomenon influence purchasing decisions for Scarlett products.

According to data from the Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs, the number of cosmetics companies in Indonesia increased dramatically, from 913 in 2022 to 1,500 in 2024 (Semet, 2023). One local brand that has emerged rapidly is Scarlett. Founded by an Indonesian celebrity, Scarlett produces a variety of personal care products, including body care, hair care, and skin care. The brand is widely recognized thanks to its aggressive marketing and the selection of public figures as brand ambassadors. However, its performance has fluctuated in recent years. This shows a potential gap between marketing efforts and sustainable consumer loyalty, which needs to be explored more deeply through a theoretical and empirical approach.

In 2022, Scarlett ranked second on the list of best beauty products on Indonesian e-commerce. Unfortunately, in 2023, its position dropped to sixth, and it was no longer even in the top 10 in 2024. This decline indicates a problem maintaining consumer loyalty and interest. It could also indicate that Scarlett's marketing strategy is no longer as effective as before. If not evaluated immediately, Scarlett could lose significant market share. The following figure illustrates this trend visually. From a marketing perspective, this decline reflects a potential shift in consumer behavior patterns influenced by competing brands and evolving beauty standards.

In addition to Scarlett's declining position in the product popularity rankings, sales have also experienced significant fluctuations (Ferdinand & Ciptono, 2022). After peaking in 2019, there was a significant decline due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although sales rebounded in 2022, sales plummeted again in 2023 and 2024. This decline indicates a decline in consumer interest in purchasing Scarlett products. One of the causes is changing consumer preferences and the increasing number of competitors offering better value. The following sales graph shows a significant decline. This aligns with Kotler & Keller's (2016) view that dynamic market environments require adaptive strategies to maintain brand competitiveness.

College students are a key market segment in the cosmetics industry, particularly those aged 18–25. A preliminary survey conducted by researchers on 30 students at Padang State University revealed that only 10% of respondents use Scarlett products. Meanwhile, other brands like Wardah and Maybelline are more widely used. These results indicate that purchasing decisions for Scarlett are quite low among college students. This low interest is an important signal that Scarlett needs to review its marketing strategy. This indicates a market penetration issue in a segment that is trend-sensitive and has a high influence on broader consumer behavior.

One of Scarlett's strategies was to appoint TWICE, a South Korean K-pop group, as its brand ambassador (Natassja & Simamora, 2023). TWICE was chosen because it has a large fan base in Indonesia, especially among Gen Z. This strategy was expected to increase brand awareness and build a strong brand image. However, the selection of TWICE sparked controversy. Some considered the choice of a white Korean girl group to be unrepresentative of the diversity of Indonesian consumers' skin tones. The following image shows TWICE as Scarlett's brand ambassador. The controversy highlights the importance of cultural representation in celebrity endorsement strategies.

Controversy arose because the use of the term "whitening" in Scarlett products was associated with discrimination against dark skin. Many consumers felt the promotion was not inclusive and actually devalued the uniqueness of local skin tones. The selection of TWICE reinforced the impression that Scarlett was promoting beauty standards that prioritized white skin. This sparked widespread criticism on social media and prompted some consumers to

stop using Scarlett products. Negative public reaction to the selection of Brand Ambassadors could significantly impact the brand's image.

Negative comments about Scarlett and TWICE flooded social media. Many users expressed their disappointment and switched to other brands. Negative perceptions of brand ambassadors directly impact purchasing decisions. This proves that selecting public figures who don't align with consumer values can backfire on a brand. Scarlett needs to be more selective in choosing its brand representatives. The following illustration shows consumer responses on social media.

On the other hand, the Korean Wave, or Hallyu, has become a cultural phenomenon influencing the lifestyles of global consumers, including in Indonesia (Suratmi, 2023). The popularity of Korean dramas, K-pop music, and Korean beauty standards is high among teenagers and college students. According to a global survey, Indonesia ranks first in terms of enthusiasm for Korean culture. Many brands are capitalizing on this phenomenon to attract the market, including Scarlett. However, whether this strategy is effective in shaping purchasing decisions remains questionable. Previous research has examined the positive effects of Hallyu on consumer attitudes toward Korean brands, but studies focusing on Indonesian local brands adopting similar strategies remain limited, thus creating a research gap.

Scarlett tried to follow the Korean Wave trend by offering bonus photocards of K-pop idols with every product purchase (Bismo et al., 2024). This strategy successfully attracted K-pop fans, but it created purchasing motivations that weren't based on product needs. Consumers bought solely for the merchandise, not for the quality of the skincare itself. This could negatively impact long-term consumer loyalty. Such gimmicks risk narrowing the market segment and tarnishing the brand's image.

Not only because of the controversy surrounding the Brand Ambassador, Scarlett also faces a major challenge in maintaining its brand image amidst social issues. One issue that has emerged is the call for a boycott from the public due to Scarlett's alleged involvement in global conflicts. Many consumers have expressed their dissatisfaction and chosen to stop using Scarlett products. This call for a boycott shows that consumers are increasingly sensitive to ethical and moral values in choosing products. This directly affects Scarlett's brand image.

Brand image is a perception formed from experiences, communications, and values associated with a brand (Verbeke et al., 2020). In Scarlett's context, brand image is shaped by TWICE's public image, Korean culture, and current issues. If the image is positive, consumers are more likely to make a purchase. However, if the image is negative, purchasing decisions will decrease drastically. Therefore, communication strategies and brand representation are crucial for the final outcome in the market (Munawaroh & Sudarmiati, 2024).

Based on these various phenomena, it can be concluded that Scarlett's purchasing decisions are heavily influenced by Brand Ambassador and the Korean Wave, with Brand Image acting as an intermediary. In this case, Padang State University students are the appropriate population to study because they are in the age range most active in using beauty products. This study aims to determine the extent to which these three variables influence purchasing decisions. Therefore, the research results are expected to provide strategic input for Scarlett and the cosmetics industry in general. The research gap lies in the lack of studies that explore the relationship between Brand Ambassador, the Korean Wave, and Brand Image in the context of Indonesian local brands facing cultural representation issues.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Brand Ambassador (TWICE)

A brand ambassador is a direct representation of a brand, where a public figure is used to build a positive image, attract attention, and influence consumer purchasing decisions (Sari & Wahjoedi, 2022). In this context, TWICE was chosen as Scarlett's brand ambassador due to their global popularity, particularly among Gen Z, the primary market for beauty products. According to Salsabila & Purwanto (2024), brand ambassadors with high popularity and a positive image can increase product appeal and strengthen brand messages in the minds of consumers. This is reinforced by Rajai & Modi (2022) who stated that brand ambassadors can build emotional connections with consumers and create loyalty.

However, the effectiveness of using TWICE as a brand ambassador is not without its socio-cultural risks. Some consumers criticized Scarlett for choosing TWICE, who they considered did not represent the diversity of Indonesian skin tones and reinforced non-inclusive Korean (white) beauty standards. Based on this theoretical perspective, the selection of brand ambassadors should consider cultural congruence to avoid potential negative brand image impacts.

2.2. Korean Wave (Hallyu)

The Korean Wave, or Hallyu, is a global phenomenon reflecting the spread of South Korean culture to various countries through music, drama, fashion, and lifestyle. In Indonesia, this phenomenon has a significant impact, especially on the younger generation exposed to K-pop and K-dramas. According to Saeed (2021) the Korean Wave has changed people's consumption patterns in various aspects, including beauty product choices. Products associated with Korean culture tend to be more popular because they are considered trendier, more modern, and of higher quality. Scarlett capitalized on this phenomenon by partnering with TWICE and incorporating K-pop elements into its marketing strategy.

However, utilizing the Korean Wave as a marketing tool can have a two-pronged impact. On the one hand, it attracts consumers who are passionate about Korean culture. Besides, overemphasizing K-pop elements without considering the needs and characteristics of the local market can lead to brands being perceived as "following the crowd" and lacking authenticity. As demonstrated in several consumer comments, purchase motivation is often not product quality, but rather incentives such as K-pop idol photocards. As such, Korean Wave-based strategies must balance cultural elements with the value of the product being offered.

2.3. Brand Image as an Intervening Variable

Brand image is the perception, beliefs, and impressions formed in consumers' minds about a brand. Mehra & Jain (2021) state that brand image influences how consumers recognize, evaluate, and ultimately decide to purchase a product. If the brand image formed from these two factors is positive, consumers are more likely to purchase Scarlett products.

Conversely, if the brand image is negative for example, due to controversy surrounding the selection of brand ambassadors or the perception that the brand supports discriminatory beauty standards, purchase decisions will be hampered. Brand image holds significant power in shaping consumer loyalty and trust, especially in the highly visual and perception-based beauty industry. Hence, even though TWICE and the Korean Wave carry high popularity values, they must still be strategically directed to strengthen, rather than damage, Scarlett's brand image.

2.4. Scarlett Product Purchase Decision

According to Ningrum & Hayuningtias (2022) purchasing decisions are influenced not only by internal consumer factors but also by external factors such as brand ambassadors and cultural trends. In Scarlett's context, college students aged 18-25 are the consumers most susceptible to public figures and popular culture such as K-pop. Therefore, their purchasing decisions are heavily influenced by perceptions of TWICE and the influence of the Korean Wave, which are integrated into Scarlett's marketing strategy.

However, purchasing decisions also depend heavily on the extent to which Scarlett's brand image is positively shaped. If the brand image is strong, relevant, and reflects consumers' values, purchasing decisions are likely to lead to loyalty. However, if the brand image is weakened by a controversial campaign or one that doesn't align with market expectations, consumers can easily switch to competitors' products. Therefore, it's important to understand how Brand Ambassadors and the Korean Wave work not only as a stimulus but also as image builders that influence overall purchasing decisions.

2.5. Previous Research

In supporting this research, there are several previous studies that are relevant and serve as references to strengthen the theoretical basis and differentiate the scope of the current research. First, research by Haque et al. (2023) shows that brand ambassadors have a significant positive influence on purchasing decisions. The study explains that the presence of public figures as brand ambassadors can increase consumer purchasing interest, especially if the brand ambassador possesses personal appeal, high popularity, and strong credibility in the eyes of the target market. Similarly, Dewi et al. (2024) demonstrated that the Korean Wave significantly influences purchasing decisions, particularly for products associated with Korean culture, such as skincare and cosmetics. The Korean Wave encourages young consumers' purchasing interest by instilling aspirational values such as Korean beauty and the lifestyles of K-pop celebrities, making products increasingly desirable among fans.

Furthermore, research by Waluyan et al. (2023) states that the Korean Wave has significantly influenced Indonesian consumer behavior. Consumers who are heavily exposed to K-pop and K-drama content tend to adopt Korean lifestyles, including beauty product preferences. This strengthens the relationship between interest in Korean culture and purchasing decisions for products associated with Hallyu. Additionally, Pradani & Mangifera (2024) concluded that brand image is a key variable influencing purchasing decisions. A positive brand image can shape consumer trust, perceived quality, and affection for a brand, ultimately encouraging them to purchase and even recommend the product to others.

Based on previous studies, it can be concluded that brand ambassadors, the Korean Wave, and brand image have important roles in shaping consumer purchasing decisions. This study expands on previous studies by focusing on students at Padang State University and placing brand image as an intervening variable between TWICE brand ambassadors and the Korean Wave on Scarlett product purchasing decisions. Based on the problem formulation, research objectives, theoretical framework, and prior studies, the hypothesis of this research is as follows.

1) Direct Effect Hypotheses

H1: TWICE as a Brand Ambassador significantly impacts the brand image of Scarlett products.

H2: The Korean Wave has a notable effect on the brand image of Scarlett products.

H3: Brand image significantly affects consumers' purchasing decisions for Scarlett products.

H4: TWICE as a Brand Ambassador directly influences consumers' purchase decisions regarding Scarlett products.

H5: The Korean Wave has a direct and significant impact on the purchasing decisions of Scarlett products.

2) Indirect Effect Hypotheses-Mediated by Brand Image:

H6: TWICE as a Brand Ambassador significantly influences purchasing decisions for Scarlett products indirectly through brand image as a mediating variable.

H7: The Korean Wave significantly affects purchasing decisions for Scarlett products through the mediation of brand image.

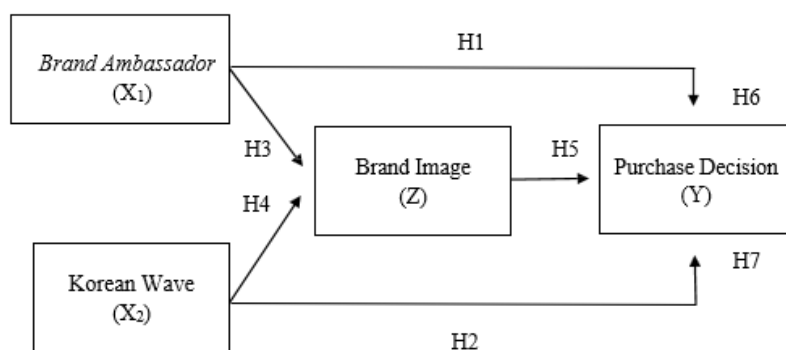


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

3. Methods

This study uses an associative quantitative approach that aims to analyze the relationship between TWICE Brand Ambassador and Korean Wave on Scarlett product purchasing decisions, with Brand Image as an intervening variable. This approach was chosen because it is able to explain the influence between variables through statistical testing. The analysis method used is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS), which is operated with the help of SmartPLS 4.0 software. SEM-PLS is considered appropriate for complex research models with a relatively small number of samples and has latent variables.

This research was conducted at Padang State University (UNP) during the period of April to June 2025, with the research population being all active UNP students who knew Scarlett products and knew the TWICE group as its brand ambassador. The sampling technique used purposive sampling, namely selecting samples based on certain predetermined criteria. The number of samples used in this study was 100 respondents, with the following criteria: (1) active UNP students, (2) have seen or known Scarlett products, and (3) know TWICE as Scarlett's brand ambassador.

The data used are primary data, obtained through the distribution of online questionnaires using a Likert scale of 1-5, from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". The questionnaire was compiled based on indicators from each research variable. Before being distributed, the instrument was first tested to ensure its validity and reliability. The collected data were then analyzed through three main stages, namely: (1) Outer Model testing to see the validity and reliability of the construct; (2) Inner Model testing to see the strength of the relationship between variables through the coefficient of determination (R^2) value and path significance test; and (3) analysis of direct and indirect influences between variables, including the mediating role of brand image.

In this study, there are four main variables: Brand Ambassador (X_1), referring to consumer perceptions of the influence of TWICE as Scarlett's brand ambassador, measured through four indicators: (1) Visibility the popularity and public recognition of the brand

ambassador, (2) Credibility the ambassador's knowledge of the product and ability to convince consumers, (3) Attraction the ambassador's appeal and perceived similarity to the target audience, and (4) Power the charisma and influence to persuade consumers to purchase (Hendarsin et al., 2024). Korean Wave (X2) refers to the level of exposure and influence of Korean culture on consumer preferences, measured through three indicators: (1) Understanding comprehension of the diversity and multicultural aspects of Korean culture, (2) Attitude and Behavior consumer evaluation of product attributes and how they align with purchasing behavior, and (3) Perception the process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting cultural information to form impressions (Puspitasari & Kusuma, 2024). Brand Image (Z), as an intervening variable, represents the perception and mental image of Scarlett formed in the minds of consumers, measured through three indicators: (1) Favorability of Brand Associations the extent to which brand attributes and benefits meet consumer needs, (2) Strength of Brand Associations how strongly brand related information is stored and recalled in consumer memory, and (3) Uniqueness of Brand Associations the distinctiveness of the brand compared to competitors (Better, P., 2017). Purchase Decision (Y) refers to consumer actions in deciding to purchase Scarlett products, measured through six indicators: (1) product selection, (2) brand selection, (3) distributor selection, (4) purchase timing, (5) purchase quantity, and (6) payment method (Hassa, 2023).

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Respondent Overview

This study involved 100 respondents who were active students at Padang State University. Inclusion criteria included: knowledge of Scarlett Whitening products, and knowledge of the group TWICE as Brand Ambassadors. The majority of respondents were in the 18-23 years old age range, which corresponds to the main consumer segment of skincare and bodycare products. Most respondents were female, which is Scarlett's main target market. Respondents came from various majors, indicating diverse educational backgrounds and interests in the product.

Most respondents reported being aware of Scarlett's campaign involving TWICE and expressing an interest in Korean culture (the Korean Wave). This indicates that the study population was suitable for testing the influence of Brand Ambassador, Korean Wave, and Brand Image on Purchase Decisions.

4.2. Research Results

The data obtained was analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0 to examine the relationships between variables through a PLS-based SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) approach.

4.2.1. Outer Model Evaluation (Validity and Reliability Test)

The outer model aims to test the convergent, discriminant, and reliability validity of the construct.

Table 1. Outer Loading (Convergent Validity)

Indicator	Loading
BA1 (Brand Ambassador)	0.849
BA2	0.823
BA3	0.817
BA4	0.803
KW1 (Korean Wave)	0.868
KW2	0.835
KW3	0.82

Indicator	Loading
KW4	0.813
BI1 (Brand Image)	0.857
BI2	0.833
BI3	0.823
BI4	0.807
PD1 (Purchase Decision)	0.859
PD2	0.846
PD3	0.812
PD4	0.809

Source: Smart PLS, 2025

Based on the results of the convergent validity test on the 16 indicators in this study, all loading values are above the minimum value of 0.7, with the highest value in indicator KW1 (0.868) and the lowest in KP4 (0.809). This indicates that each indicator is able to represent its construct strongly and consistently. The Brand Ambassador (BA1-BA4), Korean Wave (KW1-KW4), Brand Image (BI1-BI4), and Purchase Decision (KP1-KP4) indicators are all statistically valid for use in measuring each variable. Thus, all question items in the questionnaire can be said to be valid in explaining respondents' perceptions of the relationship between TWICE brand ambassadors, Korean Wave, Brand Image, and Scarlett product purchase decisions.

Table 2. AVE and Composite Reliability Values

Construct	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Brand Ambassador	0.664	0.888	0.825
Korean Wave	0.688	0.894	0.836
Brand Image	0.682	0.89	0.831
Purchase Decision	0.689	0.892	0.838

Source: Smart PLS, 2025

Based on the results of construct validity and reliability testing through AVE, Composite Reliability, and Cronbach's Alpha values, all variables in this study were proven to meet the instrument's eligibility criteria. AVE values for Brand Ambassador (0.664), Korean Wave (0.688), Brand Image (0.682), and Purchase Decision (0.689) were all above the minimum threshold of 0.5, indicating that these variables have good convergent validity. In addition, Composite Reliability values ranged from 0.888 to 0.894 and Cronbach's Alpha between 0.825 and 0.838, indicating a very strong level of reliability and internal consistency. Thus, all constructs are suitable for use in testing the structural model because the instrument has been proven valid and reliable in measuring respondents' perceptions of the research variables.

4.2.2. Inner Model Evaluation

Table 3. R-Square (R²) Values

Endogenous Variables	R Square
Brand Image	0.65
Purchase Decision	0.732

Source: Smart PLS, 2025

The results of the R-Square analysis indicate that this research model has strong explanatory power. The Brand Image variable has an R-Square value of 0.650, which means that 65% of the variation in Brand Image can be explained by the Brand Ambassador and

Korean Wave variables. Meanwhile, the Purchase Decision has an R-Square value of 0.732, meaning that 73.2% of the variation in purchasing decisions is influenced by the Brand Ambassador, Korean Wave, and Brand Image. Both of these values are included in the high category, so it can be concluded that the model has good predictive ability in explaining the relationship between variables. The framework of inner model calculations was shown in Figure 2.

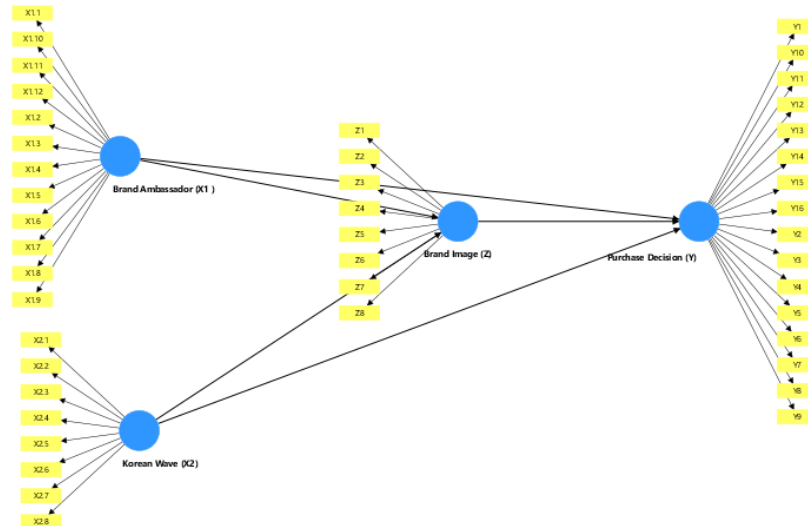


Figure 2. Inner Model Framework

4.2.3. Hypothesis Testing (Bootstrapping SEM-PLS)

This analysis uses the t-statistic and p-value with a significance limit of $\alpha = 0.05$. It is declared significant if $t > 1.96$ and $p < 0.05$.

Table 4. Results of Direct and Indirect Hypothesis Tests

Variable Relationship	t-Statistic	P-Value	Influence
Brand Ambassador → Brand Image	6,987	0	Significant (+)
Korean Wave → Brand Image	5,812	0	Significant (+)
Brand Image → Purchase Decision	7,144	0	Significant (+)
Brand Ambassador → Purchase Decision	4,913	0	Significant (+)
Korean Wave → Purchase Decision	4,521	0	Significant (+)
Brand Ambassador → Brand Image → Purchase Decision	4,257	0	Positive Mediation (Significant)
Korean Wave → Brand Image → Purchase Decision	3,998	0	Positive Mediation (Significant)

Based on the results of the hypothesis test using SEM-PLS, all relationships between variables in the research model show a positive and significant influence. Brand Ambassador has a strong influence on Brand Image and Purchase Decisions, which indicates that the presence of TWICE as brand ambassadors is able to form positive perceptions and encourage purchasing actions from consumers. Likewise, the Korean Wave plays a significant role in shaping Brand Image and directly influencing Purchase Decisions. This indicates that exposure to Korean culture has a real influence on consumption behavior, especially among the younger generation who are the main target market for Scarlett products.

In addition to its direct influence, the research results also show that Brand Image is a significant mediating variable between Brand Ambassador and Korean Wave on Purchase Decisions. This means that positive perceptions of the Scarlett brand formed through the popularity of TWICE and the Korean Wave trend will increase consumers' tendency to make

purchases. Thus, the formation of a strong brand image is a key factor in linking cultural and celebrity-based promotional strategies with consumer behavior. This finding supports the importance of Brand Image management in marketing campaigns targeting young consumer segments exposed to global trends.

4.3. Discussion

The results of this study indicate that TWICE's brand ambassadorship has a positive and significant impact on brand image and purchasing decisions, in line with the findings of Nadila et al. (2022) who stated that the involvement of celebrities as brand ambassadors increases positive consumer perceptions and encourages purchase intentions, especially among K-pop fans. Pradani & Mangifera (2024) also found that the popularity of Korean celebrities has a significant impact on the perception of local brands in the skincare and body care categories.

The influence of the Korean Wave on Brand Image and Purchasing Decisions is also supported by several studies. Nathan et al.(2023) revealed that the Korean Wave creates positive associations in consumers' minds that indirectly strengthen the brand image of products associated with Korean culture. However, they also noted that this influence can vary depending on cultural perceptions and consumer segmentation. Research by Chen et al.(2025) emphasized that exposure to the Korean Wave has a significant influence on brand image and, in certain contexts, also influences purchasing decisions, although its strength depends on brand perceptions mediated by consumers' cultural experiences.

Statistical test results show that brand image significantly influences purchasing decisions, supporting the theory that a strong brand image can increase consumer trust and desire to purchase a product. This also aligns with the findings of Halim & Kiatkawsin (2021) who stated that in the context of Indonesian consumers exposed to Korean pop culture, brand image is a key factor in shaping loyalty and purchase intention for beauty products.

Overall, these findings are consistent with various studies on emotional and cultural marketing in the past five years, where consumer engagement with celebrities and foreign cultures influences their attitudes and purchasing decisions Halim & Kiatkawsin (2021) . This is also supported by the concept of parasocial relationships, where consumers feel emotionally close to public figures they idolize. In the context of Scarlett, the strategy of leveraging TWICE and the Korean Wave has proven effective in shaping brand image and encouraging consumer purchases.

5. Conclusion

The results of the study reveal that Brand ambassadors have a significant influence on Scarlett's brand image, as students who recognize TWICE as the brand ambassador tend to perceive Scarlett more positively. Similarly, the Korean Wave significantly enhances Scarlett's brand image, with students who enjoy Korean culture holding a more favorable perception of the brand. A positive brand image, in turn, has a substantial impact on purchase decisions, as students who view Scarlett positively are more likely to buy its products. Brand ambassadors also directly and indirectly affect purchase decisions through brand image, with TWICE's role strengthening the likelihood of purchase. Likewise, the Korean Wave influences purchase decisions both directly and indirectly via brand image, where the association with Korean culture further amplifies the effect.

6. References

- Better, P., & J. (2017). *Perilaku konsumen dan strategi pemasaran* (9th ed.). Erlangga.
- Bismo, A., Octavia, J., & Sari, Y. K. (2024). Influence of K-Pop Celebrity Endorsements and Premium Promotions on Cosmetics Purchasing Decisions: Evidence from Indonesian Idol Fans. *Journal of System and Management Sciences*, 14(5), 387–400. <https://doi.org/10.33168/jsms.2024.0524>
- Chen, D. D., Yoo, J. W., & Roh, S. (2025). Hallyu marketing in Japan: a configuration approach to K-brand image. *Asia Pacific Business Review*, 00(00), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602381.2025.2478144>
- Dewi, B. N. I., Nuryani, R., & Lindasari, S. W. (2024). Hubungan Dukungan Sosial Dengan Burnout Akademik Pada Siswa Sekolah Menengah Atas. *Jurnal Keperawatan Florence Nightingale*, 7(1), 272–278. <https://doi.org/10.52774/jkfn.v7i1.191>
- Effendy. (2003). *Ilmu, Teori dan Filsafat Komunikasi*. Citra Aditya Bakti.
- Ferdinand, M., & Ciptono, W. S. (2022). Indonesia's Cosmetics Industry Attractiveness, Competitiveness and Critical Success Factor Analysis. *Jurnal Manajemen Teori Dan Terapan | Journal of Theory and Applied Management*, 15(2), 209–223. <https://doi.org/10.20473/jmtt.v15i2.37451>
- Halim, T. M., & Kiatkawsin, K. (2021). Beauty and celebrity: Korean entertainment and its impacts on female indonesian viewers' consumption intentions. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 13(3), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13031405>
- Haque, M. H., Dermawan, R. D., & Amriel, E. E. Y. (2023). Pengaruh Brand Ambassador terhadap Keputusan Pembelian pada Produk Luwak White Koffie di Surabaya dengan Citra Merek sebagai Variabel Intervening. *Al-Kharaj: Jurnal Ekonomi, Keuangan & Bisnis Syariah*, 6(2), 4004–4014. <https://doi.org/10.47467/alkharaj.v6i2.4178>
- Hassa, R. S. (2023). Analisis Pengaruh Display Produk Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian pada Usaha Mikro Kecil dan Menengah Donat Madu di Bandung, Indonesia. *International Journal Administration Business and Organization*, 4(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.61242/ijabo.23.229>
- Hendarsin, A. M. C. A., Reggy, Z., Putri, G., & Widita, A. (2024). Utilizing K-Pop Idols as Brand Ambassadors to Increase Brand Awareness in Social Media. *Procedia Computer Science*, 234, 787–794. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2024.03.065>
- Mehra, A., & Jain, V. (2021). A Review Study on the Brand Image on the Customer's Perspective. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Business and Government*, 27(3). <https://doi.org/10.47750/cibg.2021.27.03.108>
- Munawaroh, N. A., & Sudarmiatin, S. (2024). What's Behind Brand Switching Among Indonesian Customers: Is It All About Brand Image and Customer Satisfaction? *JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES, SOCIAL SCIENCES AND BUSINESS*, 3(3), 695–715. <https://doi.org/10.55047/jhssb.v3i3.1143>
- Nadila, A. P., & Windasari, N. A. (2022). Analyzing the Influence of Korean Celebrities as Brand Ambassadors toward Customer Loyalty in Indonesia. *International Journal of Current Science Research and Review*, 05(12), 4808–4818. <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijcsrr/v5-i12-41>
- Natassja, E., & Simamora, B. (2023). The Effect of Using Twice's Girlband K-pop as The Brand Ambassador on Increasing The Value of The Scarlett Whitening Brand. *Global Research on Economy, Business, Communication, and Information*, 1(1), 43–53. <https://doi.org/10.46806/grebuci.v1i1.975>
- Nathan, R. J., Soekmawati, Jeong, S. W., & Jin, B. E. (2023). K-Wave Fans and Non-Fans: Culture-Specific and Collective Responses To Korean Country and Product Image. *International Journal of Business and Society*, 24(2), 846–866. <https://doi.org/10.33736/ijbs.5968.2023>
- Ningrum, Y. C., & Hayuningtias, K. A. (2022). The Influence of Product Quality, Social Media

- Marketing, and Brand Ambassador on Online Buying Decisions. *Almana : Jurnal Manajemen Dan Bisnis*, 6(2), 316–324. <https://doi.org/10.36555/almana.v6i2.1892>
- Pradani, D. A., & Mangifera, L. (2024). *Purchase Decision Influenced by Brand Ambassador, Korean Wave, Brand Image Mediated by Buying Interest* (Vol. 2024). Atlantis Press International BV. https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-204-0_56
- Puspitasari, A. V., & Kusuma, Y. B. (2024). Pengaruh Korean Wave, Live Streaming Dan Flash Sale Terhadap Minat Pembelian Produk Scarlett Whitening (Studi Kasus Konsumen Produk Pemutih Scarlett Di Media Sosial Tiktok). *Management Studies and Entrepreneurship Journal*, 5(2), 3231–3241.
- Rajai, R., & Modi, V. (2022). Brand Loyalty of Humanized Brands through Emotions. *Energy and Infrastructure Management in Post Covid-19 Era*, 400.
- Saeed, N. (2021). *Western buying behavior of Korean beauty products : passing trend or permanent shift ?* 42 pages + 1 appendix.
- Salsabila, N., & Purwanto, E. (2024). The Influence of Brand Ambassadors and Brand Image on Customer Loyalty Mediated by Purchase Decisions. *MindVanguard: Beyond Behavior*, 2(2), 29–49. <https://doi.org/10.56578/mvbb020202>
- Sari, A. K., & Wahjoedi, T. (2022). The influence of brand image and brand awareness on purchasing decisions is moderated by brand ambassador. *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*, 16(3), 947–957. <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2022.16.3.1462>
- Semet, S. (2023). Corking Russian Gas Global Economic and Political Ramifications. *Policy Analysis*.
- Suratmi, A. (2023). Korean Wave as a Tool of Public Diplomacy: The Impact of South Korean Cultural Globalization in Indonesia from 2018 to 2023. *Eksekusi : Jurnal Ilmu Hukum Dan Administrasi Negara*, 2(1), 303–317. <https://doi.org/10.55606/eksekusi.v2i1.870>
- Verbeke, A., Roberts, R. E., Delaney, D., Zámorský, P., Enderwick, P., & Nagar, S. (2020). International business research. *Contemporary International Business in the Asia-Pacific Region*, 15(2), 252–294. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316999615.010>
- Waluyan, G. A., Lumanauw, B., & Rogi, M. H. (2023). Pengaruh Kualitas Produk, Brand Ambassador Dan Korean Wave Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Pada Mahasiswa S-1 Pengguna Skincare Scarlet Whitening Di Fakultas Ekonomi Dan Bisnis Universitas Sam Ratulangi Manado. *Jurnal EMBA : Jurnal Riset Ekonomi, Manajemen, Bisnis Dan Akuntansi*, 11(1), 42–51. <https://doi.org/10.35794/emba.v11i1.45545>