

THE INFLUENCE OF BRAND AWARENESS AND BRAND AMBASSADORS ON BUYING INTEREST WITH BRAND IMAGE AS AN INTERVENING VARIABLE

Nabila Nurhuwaida

Faculty Of Economics And Business,
Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Indonesia

Muhammad Sholahuddin

Faculty Of Economics And Business,
Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Indonesia
Corresponding Email: muhammad.sholahuddin@ums.ac.id

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to analyze the effect of brand awareness and brand ambassadors on buying interest with brand image as an intervening variable. This research method is quantitative. The data source in this study uses primary data. This study uses a questionnaire data collection method. The population in this study were all Skintific Skincare users in Surakarta city. The sampling technique used was Nonprobability sample with purposive sampling method. The number of samples in this study were 150 respondents. The data analysis technique in this study uses Partial Least Square (PLS) using the help of Smart PLS software. The results of this study are that Brand Awareness has a positive and significant effect on Brand Image. Brand Ambassador has a positive and significant effect on Brand Image. Brand Awareness has a positive and significant effect on buying interest. Brand Ambassador has a positive and significant effect on buying interest. Brand Image variable has a positive and significant effect on buying interest.

Keywords: Brand Awareness, Brand Ambassador, Buying Interest, Brand Image

INTRODUCTION

In the face of this competition, it is important for skincare companies to retain existing customers through buying interest. (Santoso et al., 2019) the interest that exists in potential buyers will often contradict their financial condition. The skincare industry has experienced rapid growth in recent years. Demand for skincare products continues to increase, and with a variety of brands available in the market, competition has become increasingly fierce (Santoso & Mardian, 2020). Consumer buying interest is a desire hidden in consumers (Christian, 2022). Consumer buying interest is always hidden in each individual where no one can know what consumers are interested in and expect.

It is important for skincare companies to build strong brand awareness and use effective brand ambassadors (Wulandari, 2021). However, in the context of "Skintific" Skincare consumers in Surakarta, the role of brand image as an intervening variable in the relationship between brand awareness, brand ambassadors, and buying interest has not been widely explored. Skintific is a skincare brand for all people with new breakthroughs that are relevant to today's needs. Presented with HydroBalance technology as a series of halal, quality, and nature-inspired products for skin care, as well as personal hygiene. Skintific is a range of products consisting of Cleanser, Toner, Serum, Moisturizer Gel, and

Sunscreen. The ability of consumers to remember a brand or product from e-commerce is called brand awareness. Meanwhile, according to (Fajri et al., 2021) brand awareness is the ability of consumers to remember a brand by brand recognition or recalling a brand.

Brand image provides assurance to consumers about the product and then consumer buying interest with certain products and brands increases due to consumers having no worries about brand products (Wedayanti & Ardani, 2020). Brand ambassadors can be used by companies to increase their sales, whether in the form of goods or services (Justica & Lestari, 2021). Purchase interest is an attitude of consumers to act before making a purchase of a product purchase interest is obtained through a thought process that forms perceptions (Utama & Ambarwati, 2022). Purchase interest creates a motivation for the consumer's mind which in the end when the consumer has to meet his needs, he will actualize what is in his mind. According (Mauludi AC et al., 2023) to find a brand ambassador that suits what they want, companies will first assess the characteristics of the public figure they will choose as their brand ambassador. They usually have a good relationship with the public (Pradani & Mangifera, 2024).

The assessment includes: visibility is a characteristic that the public figure brand has that makes them popular, credibility is the ability and knowledge possessed by the public figure, attraction is the advantage possessed to make the audience interested, power is the encouragement of the public figure to make consumers buy the product (Ratnasari, 2021). Some of the problems that can arise in brand ambassadors include a celebrity or someone who is contracted for a brand is not suitable, so the company is forced to terminate the contract with the celebrity.

Previous research (Ardian & Mardhotillah, 2023) that has explored the influence of brand awareness and brand ambassadors on consumer purchasing behavior. Previous studies may not have specifically examined this relationship in the context of skincare products and by involving the intervening variable of brand image. Therefore, there is a need to fill this knowledge gap by conducting in-depth research on the effect of brand awareness and brand ambassadors on buying interest with brand image as an intervening variable for "Skintific" Skincare consumers in Surakarta. Research that examines the role of brand image as an intervening variable in the relationship between brand awareness, brand ambassadors, and buying interest is still limited. This kind of research can provide insight into how brand image mediates the influence of brand awareness and brand ambassadors on consumer buying interest.

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of brand awareness and brand ambassadors on consumer buying interest, with brand image as an intervening variable. This research aims to gain a better understanding of the factors that influence consumer repurchase intentions and the role of brand image in the relationship.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

The Effect of Brand Awareness on Brand Image

Research conducted by (Wedayanti & Ardani, 2020) suggests that the higher the level of awareness, the more dominant the brand becomes. Brand awareness refers to the consumer's ability to remember and recognize a specific brand when faced with various options during a purchase decision. Successful brands exhibit two key characteristics: being top of mind and being the first choice for consumers (Sarah et al., 2021). A brand is considered successful in building awareness if it is consistently mentioned by consumers when asked to identify a brand within a specific product category (Hendi et al., 2022).

The findings by (Wedayanti & Ardani, 2020), that there is a positive and significant influence between brand awareness on brand image. The results showed that increasing the recognition of Oriflame cosmetics through brand awareness leads to an increase in brand image. Once consumers identify a brand, they assign meaning to it and build associations. Brand awareness plays an important role in driving the formation of these associations, leading to the expectation that greater awareness will increase perceptions of brand equity (Rasmiko et al., 2022).

Based on the above analysis, the research hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

H1: Brand Awareness has a positive and significant effect on brand image.

The Influence of Brand Ambassador on Brand Image

In human life, certain decisions are often determined and influenced by idols or trendsetters. In the realm of marketing, these trendsetters are commonly utilized as brand ambassadors (Lestari et al., 2020). A brand ambassador is an individual who possesses a passion for a brand and can influence or persuade consumers to purchase or use a product (Achmad et al., 2021). As noted by Lea-Greenwood (2021), companies utilize brand ambassadors as tools to communicate and build relationships with the public, aiming to enhance sales.

Research conducted by (Aulia & Wardhana, 2018) found that the Brand Ambassador variable exerts a positive and significant effect on the brand image variable. (Alinda et al., 2022) indicates that Shopee Brand Ambassadors indeed have an impact on the Shopee Brand Image variable. Based on the above analysis, the research hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

H2: Brand Ambassador has a positive and significant effect on brand image.

The influence of Brand Awareness on buying interest

According to (Santoso et al., 2019) Brand awareness is the ability of a prospective buyer to recognize or recall a brand as part of a certain product category. Purchase interest is another important stage that marketers must pay attention to. This is because interest is a condition that

precedes an individual considering or making a decision to choose a product or service.

According to research from (Santoso & Mardian, 2020) states that Brand Awareness has a significant influence on buying interest. In line with research (Utama & Ambarwati, 2022) states that brand awareness has a positive effect on buying interest. based on the above analysis, the research hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

H3: Brand Awareness has a positive and significant effect on buying interest.

The influence of Brand Ambasadddor on buying interest

According to (Kotler & Keller, 2016) Purchase interest is a consumer behavior where consumers have the desire to buy or choose a product, based on experience in choosing, using and consuming or even wanting a product. Consumer buying interest is always hidden in each individual where no one can know what consumers are interested in and expect (Faradilla & Andarini, 2022).

According to research conducted by (Christian, 2022; Munawaroh & Nurlinda, 2023), it is observed that Shopee Brand Ambassadors indeed have an impact on buying interest. Similarly, research by (Pradani & Mangifera, 2024; Simanjuntak, 2023) suggests that brand ambassadors exert influence on the buying interest variables. Based on the above analysis, the research hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

H4: Brand Ambassador has a positive and significant effect on buying interest.

The influence of Brand Image on buying interest

Kotler & Keller (2016) brand image is shaped by the associations individuals make with a particular brand. In line with this definition, brand image can be described as the associations that arise in the minds of consumers when they recall a specific brand. Brand image is the consumer's perception of a brand, reflecting the associations present in the minds of consumers (Annisssa & Paramita, 2021).

Research conducted by (Santoso & Mardian, 2020), which assert that brand image significantly and positively impacts buying interest. These findings align with the results of (Wulandari, 2021) suggests that the brand image of local products positively influences buying interest in those products. For example, the existence of a brand image for the Inisfree skin care brand has been found to enhance consumer buying interest in the product (Wulandari, 2021). Based on the above analysis, the research hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

H5: Brand Image has a positive and significant effect on buying interest

RESEARCH METHOD

This research method is quantitative. A quantitative approach is a study whose results are presented in the form of descriptions using numbers. This approach was chosen because quantitative research is one

type of research activity whose specifications are systematic, planned, and structured from the start starting from the making of the research design, be it about research objectives, research subjects, research objects, data samples, data sources, and methodology (Sugiyono, 2019).

The data source in this study uses primary data. Primary data is a research data source obtained directly from the original source in the form of interviews, questionnaires to respondents who use skincare Skintific in Surakarta city.

This study uses a questionnaire data collection method. Researchers distributed questionnaires to Surakarta people who were interested in buying skincare Skintific. To measure respondents' perceptions, this study uses a Likert Scale to give scores based on their answers.

The population in this study were all Skintific Skincare users in Surakarta city. Therefore, it is necessary to take a sample in this study. This research sample calculation uses the Malhotra formula, namely the question indicator multiplied by 4 to 10. In this study there were 15 question indicators then multiplied by 10 so that the minimum number of respondents in this study was 150.

The sampling technique used is a Nonprobability sample with purposive sampling method because not all samples have criteria that are in accordance with what the researcher has determined, one of which is the determination of respondents using certain procedures. By examining part of the population, it is hoped that it can obtain results that can describe the nature of the population concerned.

The data analysis technique in this study uses Partial Least Square (PLS) using the help of SMARTPLS software. SMARTPLS is able to test SEM models with various forms of scales such as ratio, likert and others (Harahap, 2020). PLS-SEM analysis consists of two Outer model and Inner model (Ghozali, 2019).

Research Framework

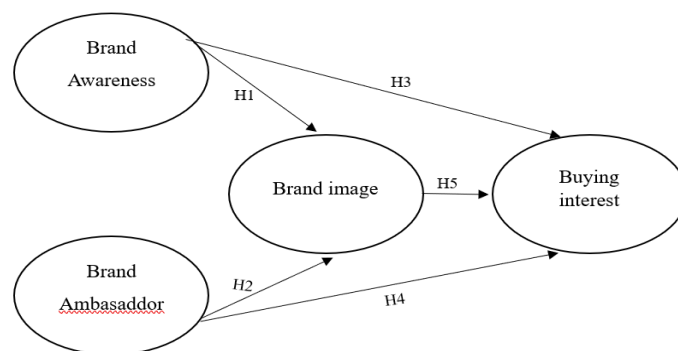


Figure 1. Research Framework

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The respondent's profile is a description of the characteristics possessed by a respondent himself obtained from the beginning of the questionnaire distributed, including gender, age, occupation, income, how many times he bought Skintific skincare products and how many times he

used Skintific skincare products.

The profile of respondents in this study is based on gender, 13 male respondents with a presentation of 8.7%, 137 female respondents or 91.3%. Based on age < 17 years as many as 15 people or 10%. Respondents aged 17-25 years were 126 people or 84%. Furthermore, the age of 26 - 35 years was 4 people or 2.7%. Respondents aged 36 - 45 years were 3 people or 2%. Aged > 45 years as many as 2 people or 1.3%.

Based on occupation, 136 people or 90.7% are students. Self-employed, namely 6 people or 4%. Civil servants amounted to 4 people or 2.7%. Professionals amounted to 1 person or 0.7%. Other occupations are 3 people or 2.1%.

Based on income, respondents with income < Rp. 1,000,000 were 105 people or 70%. Rp. 1,000,000 - Rp. 3,000,000 as many as 36 people or 24%. Respondents with a salary of Rp. 3,000,000 - Rp. 5,000,000 as many as 6 people or 4%. Respondents with a salary of > Rp. 5,000,000 amounted to 3 people or 2%.

Based on how many times they bought Skintific skincare products, respondents who bought less than 3 times were 35 respondents or 23.3%. Respondents who bought 3 - 6 times were 69 respondents or 46%. Respondents who bought 7 - 10 times were 39 respondents or 26%. Respondents who bought more than 10 times were 7 respondents or 4.7%.

Based on the number of times using Skintific skincare products, respondents who used Skintific skincare products less than 3 times were 32 respondents or 21.3%. Respondents who used Skintific skincare products 3 - 6 times were 72 respondents or 48%. Respondents who used Skintific skincare products 7 - 10 times were 38 respondents or 25.3%. Respondents who used Skintific skincare products more than 10 times were 8 respondents or 5.3%.

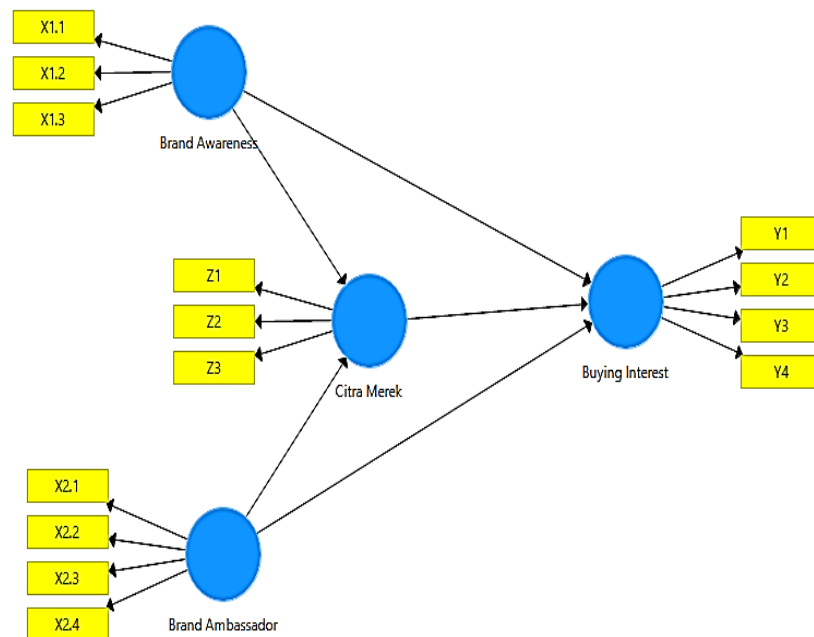


Figure 2. Outer Model

Outer Model Validity Test

Testing convergent validity with a loading factor or correlation between the item score / component score and the latent variable score. Convergent validity can be measured using the AVE value with the provisions of the AVE value > 0.7 (Ghozali, 2019).

Table 1. Outer Loading

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading
Brand Awareness	X1.1	0,803
	X1.2	0,775
	X1.3	0,812
Brand Ambassador	X2.1	0,889
	X2.2	0,727
	X2.3	0,758
	X2.4	0,796
Brand Image	Z1	0,833
	Z2	0,787
	Z3	0,815
Buying Interest	Y1	0,710
	Y2	0,796
	Y3	0,772
	Y4	0,769

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

Based on Table 1, it shows that each indicator of the Brand Awareness, Brand Ambassador, Brand Image, and Buying Interest variables has good convergent validity which can be seen from the outer loading value of > 0.7 so that each indicator is declared valid and eligible for research.

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted

Variabel	Average Variance Extracted
Brand Awareness (X1)	0,635
Brand Image (Z)	0,659
<i>Buying Interest</i> (Y)	0,581
<i>Brand Ambassador</i> (X2)	0,632

Source: Processed Primary Data (2023)

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value that meets the criteria of > 0.5 must be seen to determine whether the variable is valid or not. Based on the table above, it can be seen that all AVE values of each variable are > 0.5 so that all variables have good discriminant validity.

Reliability Test

Reliability test shows the level of consistency and stability of measuring instruments or research instruments in measuring a concept or construct (Ghozali, 2019). Reliability testing in this study uses Composite Reliability and Cronbach Alpha.

Composite reliability is the part used to test the reliability value of indicators on a variable. A variable can be declared to meet composite reliability if it has a composite reliability. value > 0.7 (Ghozali, 2019). The construct is said to be reliable if the Cronbach alpha and Composite Reliability value is more than 0.60 (Ghozali, 2019). The following is the Cronbachs Alpha values in this study.

Table 3. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability
Brand Awareness (X1)	0,713	0,839
Brand Image (Z)	0,743	0,853
Buying Interest (Y)	0,762	0,847
Brand Ambassador (X2)	0,803	0,872

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

The reliability test is needed to evaluate the stability and consistency of the research instrument used to measure variables. The table shows the Cronbach's Alpha value or the reliability value of the reliability composer > 0.7 so that all variables are said to be reliable.

Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity test is used to determine whether there is a correlation between independent variables or not. The criterion in this test is the VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) value < 0.5, which means that the regression model is free from multicollinearity (Ghozali, 2019).

Table 4. Multicollinearity Test (VIF)

Variable	Brand Awareness	Brand Image	Buying Interest	Brand Ambassador
Brand Awareness		3.246		
Brand Image				
Buying Interest				
Brand Ambassador		3.246	3.557	

Source: Processed Primary Data (2023)

From the results of table 4, the VIF value to see the multicollinearity test of the Brand Awareness variable on Brand Image is 3.246, Brand Ambassador on Brand Image is 3.246 Brand Ambassador on Buying Interest is 3.557.

Inner Model

The inner model is used to test the influence between one latent variable and another latent variable. Inner model testing can be done with three analyses, namely measuring the R^2 (R-square) value, Godness of Fit (Gof) and Path Coefficient. The results of the inner model analysis are as follows:

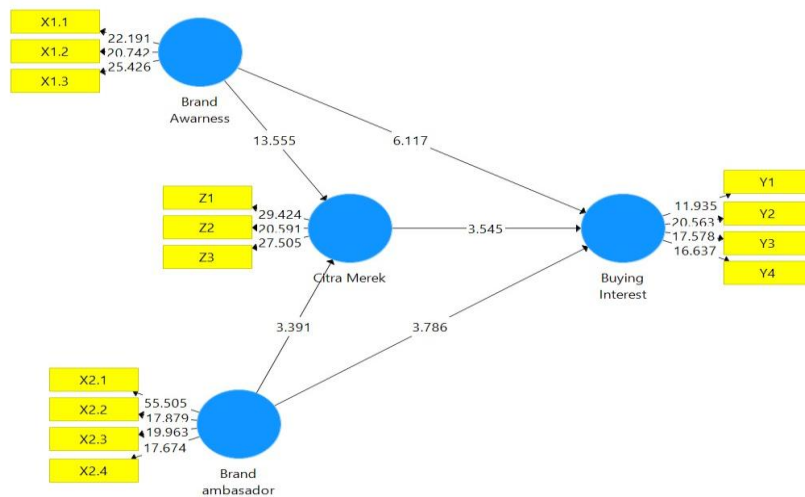


Figure 3. Inner

Model

R square analysis

The coefficient of determination (R^2) is a way to assess how much endogenous constructs can be explained by exogenous constructs. The higher the predictive accuracy value of the model with criteria of 0.75 high, 0.50 medium, and 0.25 low (Ghozali, 2019).

Table 5. R-square

Contract	R-square	R-square Adjusted
Buying Interest	0,725	0,719
Brand Image	0,861	0,859

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

The results of table 5, the R-square of the Buying Interest variable is 0.725, which means that the Brand Awareness and Brand Ambassador variables together affect trust by 0.725 or 72.5% of the high category, the rest is explained by other independent variables outside the model. While the value of Brand Image involvement is 0.861 or 86.1%, which means that the independent variables, namely the Brand Awareness and Brand Ambassador variables, jointly affect trust by 86.1% of the high category, the remaining 27.5% is explained by other independent variables outside the research discussed.

Goodness of fit

Good of fit research can be known from the Q square value. Based on the calculation results, the value of Q-square is 0.9617 or 96.17%, this indicates that the data that can be explained by the research model is 96.17%, while the remaining 3.38% is explained by other factors outside of this study. Thus, these results mean that this research model can be said to have a good fit.

Hypothesis Test

Direct effects

The p value < 0.05 indicates that there is a direct influence between variables while the p value > 0.05 indicates that there is no direct influence

between variables. In this study, the significance value used is t-statistic 1.96 (significant level = 5%). If the t-statistic value > 1.96 then there is a significant influence (Ghozali, 2019). Hypothesis testing was carried out with the help of SmartPLS (Partial Least Square) 3.0 software. Below is the path coefficient value of the test results.

Table 6. Hypothesis Test

	Tstatistic	P value	Decesion
Brand Awareness(X1) -> <i>Buying Interest</i> (Y)	6,403	0,000	Support
<i>Brand Ambassador</i> (X2) -> <i>Buying Interest</i> (Y)	3,691	0,000	Support
Brand Image (Z1) -> <i>Buying Interest</i> (Y)	3,505	0,000	Support

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

Based on table 6, it can be concluded that the results of hypothesis testing from the effect of Brand Awareness on Buying interest have a positive influence, this can be seen from the original sample of 0.978 and has a significant effect with a P value of 0.000 < 0.05. Brand Ambassador on Buying interest has a positive and significant influence with an original value of 0.380 and P values of 0.000 < 0.05. Hypothesis testing of Brand Image on Buying Interest has an original positive effect value of 0.520 and has a significant effect with P values of 0.000 < 0.05.

Indirect effects

If the P-values < 0.05 then it is significant. This means that the mediator variable mediates the effect of an exogenous variable on an endogenous variable, in other words, the effect is indirect. If the P-Value > 0.05 then it is not significant. This means that the mediator variable does not mediate the effect of an exogenous variable on an endogenous variable. In other words, the effect is direct (Ghozali, 2019). Table 7, is the specific indirect model value.

Table 7. Indirect effects

<i>Brand Ambassador</i> -> Citra Merek -> <i>Buying Interest</i>	2,528	0,012	Support
Brand Awareness -> Citra Merek -> <i>Buying Interest</i>	3,359	0,001	Support

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

The results of hypothesis testing from the influence of Brand Ambassador on Buying Interest with Brand Image as an Intervening variable have a significant influence and the original sample is 0.108 and has a P value of 0.012 < 5. the influence of Brand Awareness on Buying Interest with Brand Image as an Intervening variable has a significant influence and the original sample is 0.389 and has a P value of 0.001 < 5.

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Brand Awareness on Brand Image

This study shows that there is a positive and significant influence between Brand Awareness on the Brand Image of skincare Skintific in Surakarta community. The effect on brand image shows that the more consumers recognize Skintific, the more positive image they have about the brand. This could mean that the Skintific brand becomes more trusted, perceived as quality, or valued among consumers. This research is in line with the results found by (Wedayanti & Ardani, 2020). For Users These results suggest that users may be more likely to choose Skintific because of its increasingly recognized brand and positive image. This could also motivate them to be more loyal to the brand. For the Company Skintific could use this information to strengthen its marketing strategy. They may want to focus on increasing brand awareness through advertising, promotions, or through social media. Maintaining a positive image is also important, which means they need to ensure product quality and good customer service.

The novelty of the study lies in the specific context of Skintific in Surakarta. It is perhaps the first study to explore the relationship between brand awareness and brand image within the region's skincare market. This is important because each market has its unique characteristics. With this, it can be seen that Brand Awareness can help build a positive brand image, because Surakarta people are more likely to trust and choose brands that they are familiar with.

Effect of Brand Ambassador on Brand Image

The effect of Brand Ambassador on Brand Image shows positive and significant results. Brand Ambassadors, who act as the face and representative of the brand, have a positive and significant impact on how the Skintific brand is seen by the public. This means that the presence and activities of these ambassadors effectively increase the positive perception of the brand in the eyes of consumers. In simpler language, if Skintific has a Brand Ambassador that the public knows, likes or trusts, then people tend to have a more favorable view of Skintific. An effective Brand Ambassador can make a brand feel more appealing, trusted or qualified. Brand Ambassadors can increase the trust of the Surakarta community and help the skincare Skintific brand to build the desired image. The results of this study are in line with previous research showing the effect of research conducted by (Aulia & Wardhana, 2018). The novelty could lie in the specific context of Skintific in Surakarta. This could be one of the first studies to explore the effects of Brand Ambassadors on brand image in the context of the region's skincare market, providing unique insights into the dynamics of marketing in that region. For Users It suggests that their decision to use Skintific products may be influenced by the presence and reputation of the Brand Ambassador. This shows the importance of choosing ambassadors that are relevant and trustworthy to the target market. For the Company Skintific may need to carefully consider who they choose as Brand Ambassadors, ensuring that they reflect the values and image they want to reinforce. Also, this shows the importance of maintaining a good relationship with the ambassador to ensure a positive and consistent brand image.

Effect of Brand Awareness on Buying Interest

Brand Awareness has a significant influence on buying interest. Brand Awareness means that the higher the level of Skintific brand awareness among consumers, the more likely they are to be interested in buying its products. When people hear about Skintific more often and are familiar with its products, they are more likely to want to buy it. It's like when someone hears about a good movie often from many friends, he then becomes more interested in watching it. Brand Awareness can increase consumer buying interest. These results are in line with research conducted (Santoso et al., 2019). The novelty of this study may lie in its geographical context and specific industry, namely the skincare industry in Surakarta. While not many studies have explored this area before, your findings offer new and relevant insights for the local market. For Users The findings suggest that users tend to be influenced by brand awareness in their purchasing decisions. This could help them understand how brand perception influences their choices. For Companies Skintific can use these findings to develop more effective marketing strategies. Increasing brand awareness through advertising, social media, and marketing campaigns can be an important step to increase purchase intention. It also underscores the importance of maintaining a positive and consistent brand image.

Effect of Brand Ambassador on Buying Interest

The next result shows that Brand Ambassadors have a positive effect on Buying Interest. Brand Ambassadors, who are the representatives and faces of a brand, have a positive and significant impact on buying interest in Skintific products. This means that the presence and activities of Brand Ambassadors increase consumers' desire to buy Skintific products. This means that if Skintific has a Brand Ambassador who is known, liked, or respected, people tend to be more interested in buying their products. As an analogy, imagine a famous actor you like recommending a movie. You would probably be more interested in watching the movie because of a recommendation from someone you trust or admire. Supported by research conducted (Alinda et al., 2022; Azazi et al., 2023). With this, it can be seen that Brand Ambassadors can motivate the Surakarta community to purchase skincare Skintific. The novelty aspect of this study may lie in the specific location and industry studied, namely the skincare market in Surakarta. If this is one of the first studies to investigate the influence of Brand Ambassadors in this context, then your results make an important contribution to the understanding of the local skincare market and its marketing dynamics. For Users The findings suggest that users may be more influenced by Brand Ambassadors in their purchasing decisions. This can help them realize how external factors such as endorsements can influence their choices. For Skintific Company The findings are valuable for Skintific in crafting its marketing strategy. They may want to invest more in selecting and working with the right brand ambassadors to attract purchase interest. It also shows the importance of maintaining a good relationship with the Brand Ambassador to ensure a positive and consistent brand image.

Effect of Brand Image on Buying Interest

This study shows that there is a positive and significant influence between Brand Image on Buying Interest. Brand Image, namely consumers' perceptions and opinions of a brand, has a significant positive impact on their desire to buy the product (Kusdayanti & Nugroho, 2023). This means that the more positive Skintific's brand image is in the eyes of consumers, the more likely they are to be interested in buying its products. In simpler terms, if people see Skintific as a brand that is quality, trusted, and meets their needs, they will be more likely to want to buy skincare products from Skintific. It's like when someone prefers a certain restaurant because they believe it provides good and quality food. This research is in line with the results found by (Manalu & Akbar, 2020) stating that the Kuningan Regency community's perception of the brand has a strong impact on buying interest decisions. The novelty may lie in the specific context of the skincare industry in Surakarta. If this is one of the first studies to investigate this relationship in that context, then your research makes a new and relevant contribution to the local market and understanding of consumer behavior there. For Users The findings indicate that their perception of the brand plays an important role in their purchasing decisions. This helps consumers understand how brand image can influence their choices. For Skintific Company These results are valuable for Skintific in designing its branding and marketing strategies. They may want to focus on building and maintaining a strong brand image to attract and retain customers. It also confirms the importance of maintaining product quality and good customer service.

CONCLUSION & SUGGESTION

Based on the results of research on the effect of Brand Awareness and Brand Ambassador on Buying Interest as an Intervening Variable, it can be concluded that Brand Awareness has a positive and significant effect on Brand Image. Brand awareness plays a key role in shaping a positive brand image. The higher the level of brand awareness among Surakarta city, the better the brand image formed. This suggests that efforts to increase brand awareness, such as through advertising or promotion, can significantly strengthen positive perceptions of the brand. Brand Ambassador has a positive and significant effect on Brand Image. Brand Ambassadors have a strong influence in building and strengthening brand image. Their presence and activities can enhance a positive brand image, given that they are often considered a reflection of the brand's value and quality. Choosing the right Brand Ambassador, who is aligned with the values and image to be strengthened, is very important in the marketing strategy of Skintific products among the city of Surakarta. Brand Awareness has a positive and significant effect on buying interest. A high level of brand awareness increases consumer buying interest in Skintific products in the city of Surakarta. This shows that when consumers are more familiar with a brand, they are more likely to be interested in buying its products. Strategies that increase brand awareness, such as marketing campaigns and social media presence, are essential in attracting buying interest. Brand Ambassador has

a positive and significant effect on buying interest. Brand Ambassadors play an important role in stimulating buying interest. They not only strengthen the brand image, but also directly influence consumer purchasing decisions in Surakarta city. Effective brand ambassadors, with strong reputation and influence, can increase consumers' desire to buy products. Brand Image has a positive and significant effect on buying interest. A positive brand image has a direct impact on buying interest. Consumers tend to be interested in buying products from brands that they see positively. Therefore, building and maintaining a strong and positive brand image is very important to attract and retain customers of Skintific skincare products in the city of Surakarta.

Suggestions for this research are, discussion, and conclusions obtained, so the advice that can be given to the author is for further research, can use a multi-level approach to investigate other factors that can affect buying interest. Further research can use more samples from various regions. As well as adding other variables that can affect buying interest such as brand trust, brand equity, price, and other factors.

REFERENCES

- Achmad, N., Nestri, M. S., & Sholahudin, M. (2021). The Influence of Brand Ambassador & Eletronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) on Consumer Buying Interest in Lazada Marketplace With Brand Image as a Mediator. *The 14 Th University Research Colloqium*, 7
- Alinda, D. N., Herman, & Hambalah, F. (2022). Pengaruh Sponsorship dan Brand Ambassador terhadap Purchase Intention dengan Brand Image sebagai Variabel Intervening: Shopee sebagai Sponsor Utama Liga 1 Indonesia dan Cristiano Ronaldo sebagai Brand Ambassador. *Journal Of Accounting and Business*, 1(2), 69–81.
- Annisia, A. N., & Paramita, E. L. (2021). Brand Promotion: The Effects of Celebrity Endorsement and Brand Image on Consumer Buying Decision. *Jurnal Bisnis Dan Manajemen* , 8(1), 417–423. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.26905/jbm.v8i1.5413>
- Ardian, I. N. S., & Mardhotillah, R. R. (2023). Influence of Brand Ambassador, Brand Awareness, and Price on Brand Image and Purchasing Decision in Halal Skincare Product (Study on MS Glow Skincare Products in Surabaya). *Journal Of Halal Research, Policy, And Industry* , 2(2).
- Aulia, M. K., & Wardhana, A. (2018). Pengaruh Brand Ambassador Terhadap Brand Image Pada Mamahke Jogja. *EProceedings of Management*, 5(2).
- Azazi, A., Bagus Purmono, B., Rosnani, T., & Irfan Hendri, M. (2023). The influence of korean celebrities as brand ambassador and product quality on purchase decision with brand image as the mediating variable on Scarlett Whitening. *Enrichment: Journal of Management*, 13(5), 3137–3148.

- Christian, A. (2022). *Pengaruh Brand Ambassador terhadap Minat Beli konsumen melalui Brand Image Shopee*. Universitas Multimedia Nusantara.
- Fajri, I., Rizkianfi, M. W., & Ismaya, R. (2021). The Effect Of Social Media Marketing On Purchase Decisions With Brand Awareness As An Intervening Variables In Praketa Coffee Shop Purwokerto. *The Journal Gastronomy Tourism*, 8(2), 97–110. <https://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/gastur>
- Faradilla, M. A., & Andarini, S. (2022). Pengaruh Brand Ambassador Terhadap Minat Beli Produk Maybelline New York Melalui Sikap pada Iklan Sebagai Variabel Mediasi. *Jurnal Administrasi Bisnis (JAB)*, 12(1), 2022. www.fda.gov, 2016
- Ghozali, I. (2019). *Aplikasi Analisis Multivariate*. Universitas Diponegoro.
- Hendi, D., Rini, E. S., & Silalahi, A. S. (2022). The Influence of Integrated Marketing Communication, Brand Ambassador on Purchase Decisions through Brand Awareness, and Brand Image as Intervening Variables at Tokopedia in Medan City. *International Journal of Research and Review*, 9(4), 217–229. <https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20220427>
- Justica, A., & Lestari, M. T. (2021). Pengaruh Brand Ambassador Nct 127 Terhadap Brand Image Produk Nu Green Tea. *EProceedings of Management*, 8(3).
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing Management. 15th Edition*. Pearson Education Limited.
- Kusdayanti, P. A., & Nugroho, R. H. (2023). The Effect of Brand Image and Celebrity Endorser on Purchase Intention Through Brand Trust as an Intervening Variable (Study on Scarlett Whitening Consumers in Surabaya). *Management Studies and Entrepreneurship Journal*, 4(3), 3143–4251. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.37385/msej.v4i4.1570>
- Lestari, W. D., Mukharomah, W., Kusumastuti, A. R., & Sholahuddin, M. (2020). Panel Data Analysis: Supply Chain Strategy Effects on Capital Structure of Companies Listed in the Jakarta Islamic Index. *Int. J. Sup. Chain. Mgt*, 9(4). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.59160/ijscm.v9i4.5223>
- Manalu, V. G., & Akbar, Ilham. (2020). Analisis Pengaruh Brand Awareness Dan Brand Image Terhadap Minat Pembelian Dan Kaitanya Dengan Inisiasi One Village One Product Di Kabupaten Kuningan. *Derivatif: Jurnal Manajemen*, 14(2).
- Mauludi AC, A., Haryanti, N., & Putri, I. N. K. (2023). The Influence of Brand Ambassadors and Promotions on Purchase Decisions Through Brand Image as an Intervening Variable in Tokopedia E-Marketplace in East Java. *International Journal of Social Science and Business*, 7(3), 713–724. <https://doi.org/10.23887/ijssb.v7i3.58889>
- Munawaroh, I., & Nurlinda, RA. (2023). Pengaruh Social Media Marketing dan Brand Ambassador Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Melalui Brand Image Pada Produk Skincare Whitelab. *Journal of Applied in Business Management and Accountin*, 2(1), 13–33.

<https://intropublica.org/index.php/jabma>

- Pradani, D. A., & Mangifera, L. (2024). Purchase Decision Influenced by Brand Ambassador, Korean Wave, Brand Image Mediated by Buying Interest. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Economics and Business Studies (ICOEBS-22-2)*, 670–685. https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-204-0_56
- Rasmiko, L. A., Jatmiko, R. D., & Novianti, K. R. (2022). The Effect of Advertising on Repatronage Intention with Brand Awareness and Brand Image as Intervening Variable. *Jamanika (Jurnal Manajemen Bisnis Dan Kewirausahaan)*, 2(04), 310–323. <https://doi.org/10.22219/jamanika.v2i04.22757>
- Ratnasari, I. E. (2021). The Influence of Brand Ambassadors, Brand Image, Product Quality, And Price Perceptions on Purchasing Decisions For Madame Gie Cosmetic Products On Students At Duta Wacana Christian University. *Msdj: Management Sustainable Development Journal*, 5(2), 36–46.
- Santoso, D. A., Erdiansyah, R., & Pribadi, M. A. (2019). Pengaruh Brand Awareness dan Brand Image terhadap Minat Beli Produk Kecantikan Innisfree. *Prologia*, 2(2), 286–290.
- Santoso, T. A., & Mardian, I. (2020). Pengaruh Brand Image Dan Brand Trust Terhadap Minat Beli Pada Produk Avocado Mantul. *Jurnal Ekonomi Manajemen ETIS*, 1(1), 28–34.
- Sarah, K. S., Hurriyati, R., & Hendrayati, H. (2021). Analisis Social Media Marketing Melalui Instagram Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Pada Produk Clothing Linkswear. *Jurnal Manajemen (Edisi Elektronik)*, 12(3), 397–411.
- Simanjuntak, D. (2023). Influence Of Advertising Campaign, Brand Ambassador and Country of Origin on Consumer Buying Interest Through Shopping Satisfaction At The Marketplace. *International Journal of Quantitative Management (IJQM)*, 1(1), 1–11.
- Sugiyono. (2019). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Alfabeta.CV.
- Utama, A. P., & Ambarwati, A. N. (2022). The Effect of Brand Awareness, Brand Image and Trust on Consumer Buying Interest. *Devotion: Journal Of Research and Community Service*, 3(13), 2310–2330. www.astraisuzu.co.id
- Wedayanti, K. A., & Ardani, I. G. A. K. S. (2020). Peran Brand Image Memediasi Pengaruh Electronic Word of Mouth Dan Brand Awareness Terhadap Niat Beli. *E-Jurnal Manajemen*, 9(6), 2434–2454.
- Wulandari, K. (2021). Pengaruh Brand Image, Brand Trust, Dan Iklan Terhadap Minat Beli Konsumen Produk Kosmetik (Studi Pada Pengguna E-Commerce Sociolla). *Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Fakultas Ekonomi Dan Bisnis*, 9(2), 8–18.