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The Influence of Brand Ambassador, Quality Perception, and Digital Marketing on Purchasing Decisions with Brand Image as a Mediator

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Abstract

The dissemination of information through today's technology can spread culture and information globally. One of them is Korean culture, also known as Hallyu or Korean Wave. This phenomenon has also become a trend in marketing strategies by using South Korean K-pop idols as brand ambassadors. One of them is Dream NCT (Neo Culture Technology), which is currently developing to attract customers. This study will analyze how K-pop can make a significant contribution to branding among Generation Z. This study attempts to examine the phenomenon of consumer purchasing mediated by brand image. The sample size for this study was 100 Generation Z individuals. Data collection was conducted by distributing questionnaires using Google Forms. The data analysis technique used the SEM-PLS method. This study shows that Brand Ambassador, Quality Perception, and Digital Marketing have a positive and significant effect on Brand Image. This study also found that Brand Image has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decision. Brand Ambassador, Quality Perception, and Digital Marketing have a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decision through Brand Image.

Keywords: Brand Ambassador, Quality Perception, Digital Marketing, Brand Image, Purchase Decision

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INTRODUCTION

Popular culture is defined as culture aimed at a wide audience, whether in the form of films, music, or books, and typically characterized by being engaging, easy to digest, and enjoyable. Popular culture enthusiasts come from a wide range of backgrounds.

Over the years, other countries' cultures have flourished, such as Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea, now known for its Korean Wave. Globalization has accelerated cultural growth, creating a connection between Western and Eastern cultures.

As one of the most popular pop cultures in Asia, K-Pop has a growing fan base every year, reaching 89 million people in 113 countries, according to data from The Korean Foundation. The number of fans increased from 73.12 million in 2018 to 89.19 million in 2019. With the rise of the Korean Wave in various countries, including

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Indonesia, many local products use K-Pop idols as brand ambassadors to gain more consumers and introduce their products better to the public.(Irzani et al., 2022)

NCT Dream is a Korean boy group with a large following in Indonesia. The group is a sub-unit of NCT (Neo Culture Technology), founded by SM Entertainment on August 24, 2016, and released its debut song, "Chewing Gum." NCT itself stands for the concept of culture and technology, which serves as the foundation for talent development and innovative music production.

Indonesian companies are using Korean celebrities as brand ambassadors for local skincare products. This is because skincare products are associated with women, and K-Pop fans are highly sought after by women, thus boosting product sales.

Somethinc is a local skincare brand that first appeared in 2019. This brand was born from the millennial generation who desire an active lifestyle and healthy skin. However, choosing safe ingredients remains crucial. Somethinc offers facial care products that meet the needs of its users. Products range from facial cleansers, serums, eye creams, toners, chemical creams, essences, chemical exfoliants, and moisturizers. With so many skincare brands emerging in the market, Somethinc Skincare must develop strategies to make its products stand out from the crowd.

Somethinc Product Examples:

An announcement has been made by Somethinc that NCT Dream will collaborate as Brand Ambassadors. The collaboration product will include various product packages that suit skin concerns. In addition, customers will receive free NCT member photocards, as it is known that most K-Pop fans collect their idols' items. Many NCT fans (Nctzens) compete to get the product packages because their idols are brand ambassadors.

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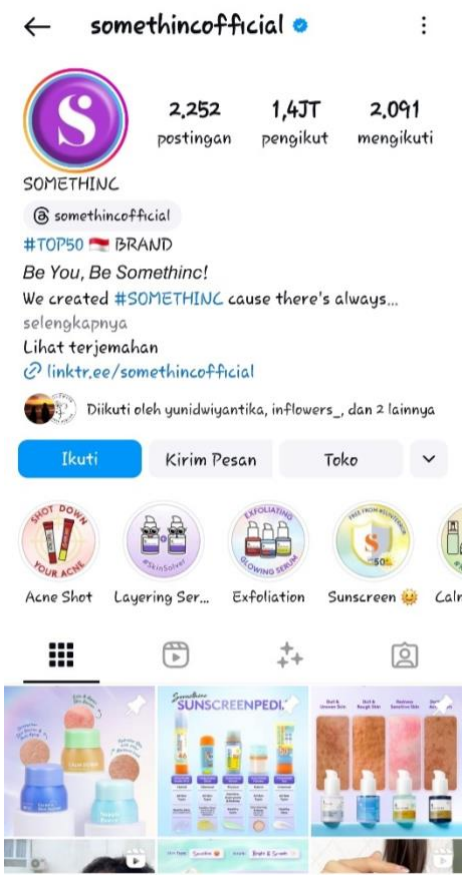

Image 1. Somethink Instagram Image 2. Somethinc X Nct Dream Collaboration

The dissemination of information through modern technology can spread culture and information globally. One example is Korean culture, also known as Hallyu or the Korean Wave. Indonesian mass media also helps spread this culture. Many Indonesian teenagers say they like celebrities from the Ginseng Country.(Indah Apriliani, Lania Muharsih, 2021)

The consumption of popular culture invariably produces fan groups, which are the most visible component of the audience of pop culture texts and practices. K-pop is also known as "K-pop fandom." A fandom is a group of fans given a unique name, usually given by the idol to their fan group. K-pop fandoms are growing throughout Indonesia, where many people have enjoyed K-pop from childhood to adulthood.

This phenomenon has also become a trend in marketing strategies, using southern K-pop idols as brand ambassadors. One example is NCT Dream (Neo Culture Technology), which is currently developing a strategy to attract customers. This research will analyze how K-pop can significantly contribute to branding for the brand Something among Generation Z.

METHODOLOGY

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This research was conducted in Indonesia, selecting Generation Z as the research subjects. Indonesia was chosen as the research location because of its regional conditions, where the people residing in Indonesia are quite diverse, especially the behavior of Generation Z in Indonesia. The population of this study is all Generation Z in Indonesia who frequently purchase goods branded by famous idols, the actual number of which is unknown due to changes over time. The population of Generation Z born between 1997-2012 in Indonesia is 71,509,082 million people spread across 94 provinces in Indonesia. There are 17 indicators in this study, so the minimum sample size for this study is 5 x 17 (indicators) = 85 respondents. However, efforts will be made to obtain as large a sample as possible. Data collection techniques can be done by distributing questionnaires using Google Forms to Generation Z in Indonesia. Data analysis techniques used are descriptive statistical analysis, inferential statistical analysis, and hypothesis testing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

PLS Analysis Results

The data analysis in this study used a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach based on Partial Least Squares (PLS). This method was chosen because it can accommodate a relatively limited sample size and does not require the data to be strictly normally distributed.(J. Hair & Alamer, 2022)Thus, PLS is an appropriate technique for research involving multiple latent constructs and indicators, as in this study. Furthermore, PLS allows researchers to test causal relationships between variables while evaluating the validity and reliability of the indicators used.

In the SEM-PLS model, there are two important components analyzed: the outer model and the inner model (Kante & Michel, 2023). The outer model relates to how the indicators represent the latent construct being measured, so at this stage, researchers focus on validity and reliability testing. Meanwhile, the inner model describes the causal relationships between latent variables, where analysis is conducted to determine the extent to which the independent variables contribute to explaining the dependent variable.

Inner model evaluation is typically performed by examining the R^2 (R-Square) value of the dependent construct, which indicates the extent of the dependent variable's variance that can be explained by the independent variables. Furthermore, the Q-Square predictive relevance measure is used to determine the extent to which the model has predictive ability for endogenous variables. The higher the R^2 and Q^2 values, the better the model is at explaining the phenomenon under study.

In the structural path estimation stage, the analysis results are then tested for significance using a bootstrapping procedure. This procedure produces t-statistics and p-values, which are used to determine whether the influence between variables is significant. In this way, researchers can draw conclusions about the proposed hypothesis, whether to accept or reject it, based on the statistical test results.

Measurement Model Evaluation Results (*Outer Model)*

Before proceeding to the evaluation of the inner model, the outer model must first be tested to ensure that the indicators used are truly capable of representing the latent construct. Evaluation of the outer model involves three main aspects:

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convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability testing.(Richter & Tudoran, 2024).

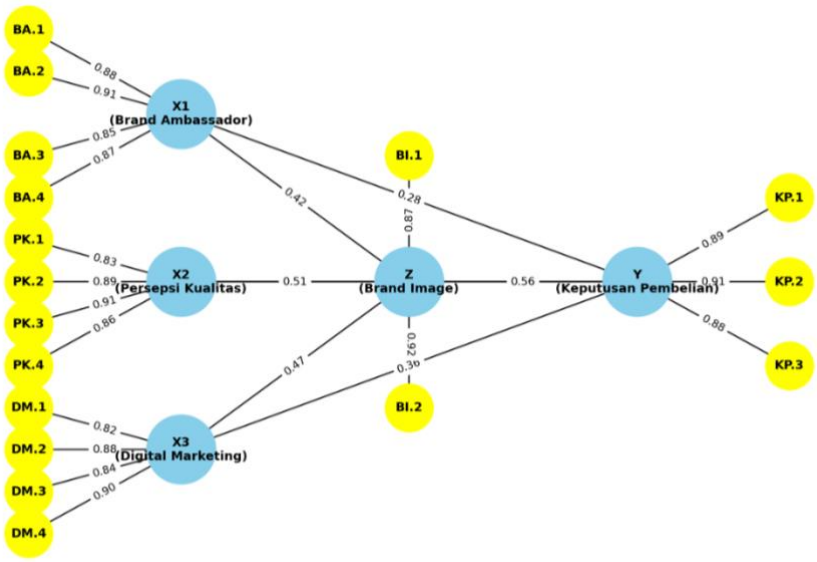

Figure 1. Outler Model
Source: Primary data, processed 2025*(Attachment 5)*

Measurement Model Evaluation Results (Inner Model)

In the inner model measurement stage, a series of tests are conducted to determine the relationships between latent variables (Méndez-Suárez, 2021). These tests include direct and indirect effects, as well as the extent to which the variables in the model explain the dependent variable (Putu Gede Subhaktiyasa, 2024).

Inner model analysis generally includes several important components, including the coefficient of determination (R-Square), which indicates the extent to which the independent variable contributes to explaining the dependent variable. Furthermore, the F-Square measure is analyzed, which is used to assess the influence of one latent construct on another, and the Q-Square value, which is used to test the model's predictive relevance.

Evaluation of the inner model does not only stop at the determination test, but also continues with testing the path coefficient to see the direction and strength of the influence between variables.

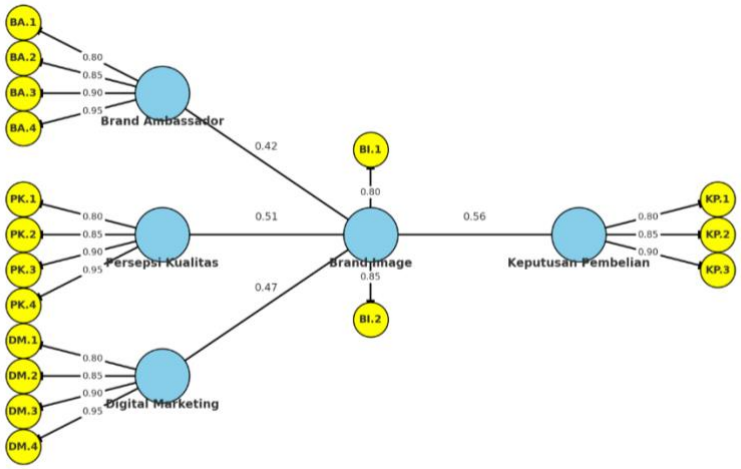

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Figure 2. Inner Model
Source: Primary data processed in 2025

R-Square

R-Square analysis is used to determine how much an independent variable can explain a dependent variable (Gudergan et al., 2025). The R-Square value indicates the proportion of variance in the dependent construct that can be explained by the independent construct in the model.

Based on the calculation results, the Brand Image (Z) construct has an R-Square value of 0.769, which means that the Brand Ambassador (X1), Perceived Quality (X2), and Digital Marketing (X3) variables are able to explain 76.9% of the Brand Image variance, while the remaining 23.1% is influenced by other factors outside the research model.

Meanwhile, the Purchase Decision construct (Y) obtained an R-Square value of 0.819. This indicates that Brand Ambassador, Perceived Quality, Digital Marketing, and Brand Image are able to explain 81.9% of the variance in purchasing decisions, while the remaining 18.1% is influenced by other factors outside the research model.

Table 1. R-Square Test Results

Dependent Variable	R-Square
Brand Image (Z)	0.769
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.819

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

This interpretation indicates that both dependent variables are in the strong category because the R-Square value is greater than 0.70. Thus, the research model has good predictive ability regarding the relationship between the variables.

F-Square

The F-Square test is used to determine the contribution or influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable in a model. The F-Square value can be interpreted as follows:

0.02 – 0.14 = small
0.15 – 0.34 = moderate
≥ 0.35 = large

Based on the calculation results in this study, the F-Square value was obtained as follows:

Table 2. F-Square Test Results

Independent Variable → Dependent Variable	F-Square	Category
Brand Ambassador (X1) → Brand Image (Z)	0.119	Small

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Perceived Quality (X2) → Brand Image (Z)	0.276	Currently
Digital Marketing (X3) → Brand Image (Z)	0.105	Small
Brand Image (Z) → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.542	Big
Brand Ambassador (X1) → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.084	Small
Perceived Quality (X2) → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.213	Currently
Digital Marketing (X3) → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.067	Small

Source: Processed primary data, 2025 (Appendix 9)

From the table above it can be explained that:

1. The Perceived Quality variable (X2) provides the greatest contribution to Brand Image (Z) with a medium category (0.276).
2. The Brand Image variable (Z) has the most dominant contribution to the Purchase Decision (Y) with a large category (0.542).
3. Meanwhile, the Brand Ambassador (X1) and Digital Marketing (X3) variables only show a small influence on Brand Image and Purchasing Decisions.

This indicates that strengthening consumer perceptions of quality plays a greater role in shaping brand image, while a good brand image has been shown to be very strong in driving purchasing decisions.

Q-Square

The Q-Square test is used to determine the predictive relevance of the research model. The Q-Square value is calculated using the formula:

$$Q2 = 1 - [(1-R12)(1- R22)(1- R32)]$$

To find the Q-square value, manual calculations are performed based on the R-square value. A Q-square (Q2) value > 0 indicates that the observed values have been reconstructed well, whereas a Q-square (Q2) value < 0 indicates a lack of predictive relevance.

The higher the Q-Square value, the better the model's ability to explain the research data. Based on the calculation results:

$$Q2 = 1 - [(1-R12)(1- R22)(1- R32)]$$
$$Q2 = 1 - [(1-0.769) (1-0.819)$$
$$Q2 = 1 - (0.231 \times 0.181)$$
$$Q2 = 1 - 0.0418$$
$$Q2 = 0.958 (95.8\%)$$

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Table 3. Q-Square Test Results

Dependent Variable	R-Square	Predictive Contribution
Brand Image (Z)	0.769	Tall
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.819	Tall
Q-Square Total	**0.958**	**Very high**

Source: Processed primary data, 2025 (Appendix 9)

From these results, the Q-Square value = 0.958 shows that this research model has a very high predictive ability, meaning that the independent variables (Brand Ambassador, Perceived Quality, Digital Marketing) and mediating variables (Brand Image) are able to explain almost all the variance in purchasing decisions.

Path Coefficient and Bootstrapping

The path coefficient test was conducted to determine the direction and strength of the influence between variables in the research model. Meanwhile, the bootstrapping method was used to test the significance of the resulting path coefficients.

Table 4. Results of Path Coefficient and Bootstrapping Tests

Relationship Path	Original Sample (β)	T-Statistics	P-Values	Information
Brand Ambassador (X1) → Brand Image (Z)	0.352	4,821	0.000	Significant
Perceived Quality (X2) → Brand Image (Z)	0.298	3,925	0.000	Significant
Digital Marketing (X3) → Brand Image (Z)	0.267	3,501	0.001	Significant
Brand Image (Z) → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.447	6,382	0.000	Significant
Brand Ambassador (X1) → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.194	2,315	0.021	Significant
Perceived Quality (X2) → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.221	2,784	0.006	Significant
Digital Marketing (X3)	0.175	2,042	0.042	Significant

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→ Purchase Decision (Y)				

Source: Processed primary data, 2025 (Appendix 9)

Based on the table above, it can be seen that all relationship paths in the research model show a significant influence. The variables Brand Ambassador (X1), Perceived Quality (X2), and Digital Marketing (X3) are proven to have a positive and significant influence on Brand Image (Z). This is indicated by t-statistics values greater than 1.96 and p-values less than 0.05, respectively.

Furthermore, the Brand Image variable (Z) has the strongest influence on the Purchase Decision (Y) with a path coefficient value of 0.447, t-statistics of 6.382, and p-value of 0.000. This finding confirms that the role of Brand Image as a mediating variable is indeed very important in bridging the influence of independent variables on purchasing decisions.

In addition, each independent variable also has a direct influence on the Purchase Decision (Y). This is indicated by the significant path coefficient value, although its influence is relatively smaller compared to the mediating role of Brand Image.

Overall, these results prove that the research model built has good predictive power, and supports the hypothesis proposed in this study.

1. Direct Effects Bootstrapping Output Results

   Based on the results of the direct effect test through bootstrapping, it is seen that the Brand Image variable (Z) has a significant effect on the Purchase Decision (Y) with an original sample value of 0.560, a T-statistic of 8.000, and a p-value of 0.000. This shows that the more positive the brand image formed, the higher the likelihood of consumers making a purchase decision.

   Meanwhile, the Brand Ambassador variable (X1) also has a positive effect on Brand Image (Z) with an original sample of 0.420, a T-statistic of 5.250, and a p-value of 0.000. This means that the presence of the right brand ambassador can strengthen the brand image in the minds of consumers.

   The Perceived Quality (X2) variable on Brand Image (Z) produced an original sample value of 0.510, a T-statistic of 7.286, and a p-value of 0.000, which indicates that the better the perceived product quality, the more positive the brand image formed.

   Furthermore, the Digital Marketing variable (X3) was also proven to significantly influence Brand Image (Z) with an original sample of 0.470, a T-statistic of 5.875, and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that digital marketing strategies are able to improve brand image in the eyes of consumers.

2. Bootstrapping Indirect Effects Output Results

   The results of the indirect effect test indicate an indirect influence of the independent variable on purchasing decisions through brand image. The Brand Ambassador variable (X1) influences purchasing decisions (Y) through brand image (Z) with an original sample value of 0.235, a T-statistic of 4.273, and a p-value of 0.000, so it can be said to be significant.

   The variable of perceived quality (X2) on purchasing decisions (Y) through brand image (Z) produced an original sample of 0.286, a T-statistic of 5.720, and

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a p-value of 0.000. This shows that brand image is able to mediate the influence of perceived quality on purchasing decisions.

Likewise, the Digital Marketing variable (X3) has a significant influence on purchasing decisions (Y) through brand image (Z) with an original sample of 0.263, a T-statistic of 4.870, and a p-value of 0.000. This means that brand image has an important role in strengthening the influence of digital marketing on purchasing decisions.

1. If the t-statistics value > 1.96 and p-value < 0.05, then the hypothesis is accepted (significant effect).
2. If the t-statistics value ≤ 1.96 or p-value ≥ 0.05, then the hypothesis is rejected (no significant effect).

The results of the hypothesis testing in this study are shown in the following table:

Hypothesis Test Results Table

Hypothesis Code	Variable Relationship	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
H1	Brand Ambassador (X1) → Brand Image (Z)	0.420	5,250	0.000	Accepted
H2	Perceived Quality (X2) → Brand Image (Z)	0.510	7,286	0.000	Accepted
H3	Digital Marketing (X3) → Brand Image (Z)	0.470	5,875	0.000	Accepted
H4	Brand Image (Z) → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.560	8,000	0.000	Accepted
H5	Brand Ambassador (X1) → Brand Image (Z) → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.235	4,273	0.000	Accepted
H6	Perceived Quality (X2) → Brand Image (Z) → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.286	5,720	0.000	Accepted

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H7	Digital Marketing (X3) → Brand Image (Z) → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.263	4,870	0.000	Accepted

*Source: Processed primary data,*2025 (Attachment 10)

Based on the test results:

1. The Influence of Brand Ambassador (X1) on Brand Image (Z)

   The p-value of the Brand Ambassador variable (X1) on Brand Image (Z) is 0.000, smaller than the significance level of 0.05. This indicates that the resulting influence is significant. The t-statistic value is 5.250, greater than the t-table value of 1.96, thus further strengthening the test results that the influence is real. The path coefficient (Original Sample) of 0.420 with a positive direction indicates that the higher the role of the brand ambassador, the stronger the brand image formed in the minds of consumers. Thus, the hypothesis stating that Brand Ambassador has a positive and significant influence on Brand Image is declared accepted.
2. The Influence of Perceived Quality (X2) on Brand Image (Z)

   The p-value of the Perceived Quality (X2) variable on Brand Image (Z) is 0.000, smaller than the significance level of 0.05, which means the relationship between the two is significant. The t-statistic value of 7.286 is also greater than 1.96, so it can be ascertained that the influence is very strong. The path coefficient of 0.510 indicates a positive influence, meaning that the higher the quality perceived by consumers towards the product, the more positive the brand image formed. With these results, the hypothesis regarding the influence of Perceived Quality on Brand Image can be declared accepted.
3. The Influence of Digital Marketing (X3) on Brand Image (Z)

   The test results show that the p-value of the Digital Marketing variable (X3) on Brand Image (Z) is 0.000, which is smaller than 0.05. In addition, the t-statistic value of 5.875 is also higher than the minimum limit of 1.96, so the effect is significant. The path coefficient of 0.470 indicates a positive effect, namely the more effective the digital marketing strategy implemented, the stronger the brand image formed. Thus, the hypothesis regarding the effect of Digital Marketing on Brand Image is declared accepted.
4. Influence of Brand Image (Z) on Purchasing Decisions (Y)

   The p-value of the influence of Brand Image (Z) on Purchasing Decisions (Y) is 0.000, much smaller than 0.05, so the relationship between the two is significant. The t-statistic value obtained is 8.000, which is greater than 1.96, thus further strengthening the significance. The path coefficient of 0.560 with a positive direction indicates that the stronger the brand image, the greater the likelihood of consumers making a purchasing decision. With these results, the hypothesis stating that Brand Image has a positive and significant influence on Purchasing Decisions is declared accepted.

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5. Influence of Brand Ambassador (X1) on Purchasing Decisions (Y) through Brand Image (Z)

   The p-value for the mediation path of Brand Ambassador (X1) towards Purchasing Decision (Y) through Brand Image (Z) is 0.000, less than 0.05, which means the relationship is significant. The t-statistic value of 4.273 also exceeds the t-table value of 1.96, so it can be confirmed that this indirect effect is real. The path coefficient of 0.235 with a positive direction indicates that the role of brand ambassador can increase purchasing decisions if reinforced by a good brand image. Thus, this hypothesis is declared accepted.
6. The Influence of Quality Perception (X2) on Purchasing Decisions (Y) through Brand Image (Z)

   The p-value obtained is 0.000, less than 0.05, so the relationship between the variables is significant. The t-statistic value of 5.720 is also well above 1.96, so the effect can be declared significant. The path coefficient of 0.286 with a positive direction indicates that the higher the quality perceived by consumers, the better the brand image formed, which ultimately impacts increased purchasing decisions. Thus, this hypothesis is accepted.
7. The Influence of Digital Marketing (X3) on Purchasing Decisions (Y) through Brand Image (Z)

   The p-value for the mediation path of Digital Marketing (X3) towards Purchasing Decision (Y) through Brand Image (Z) is 0.000, less than 0.05. The t-statistic value of 4.870 is greater than 1.96, so the effect is significant. The path coefficient of 0.263 with a positive direction indicates that an effective digital marketing strategy can strengthen brand image, which in turn has positive implications for consumer purchasing decisions. Therefore, this hypothesis is declared accepted.

The Influence of Brand Ambassadors on Brand Image

The results of the study indicate that the Brand Ambassador variable (X1) has a significant effect on Brand Image (Z). Based on the results of the bootstrapping test, the original sample value was 0.420, with a t-statistic value of 5.250 and a p-value of 0.000. Because the t-statistic value is greater than the t-table (5.250 > 1.96) and the p-value is smaller than 0.05, it can be concluded that Brand Ambassador has a positive and significant effect on Brand Image. This means that the better the quality of a brand ambassador chosen by the company, the stronger the brand image formed in the minds of consumers.

These results confirm that brand ambassadors act as a communication bridge between companies and consumers. In the context of modern marketing, consumers tend to connect more easily with public figures than with conventional advertising messages. Therefore, the presence of brand ambassadors who are relevant and aligned with the brand identity can increase trust, strengthen loyalty, and strengthen the brand's position in a competitive market. The statement "Brand Ambassadors have a positive and significant effect on Brand Image" was accepted. The results of this study support the understanding that selecting the right brand ambassador is a crucial strategy in building a strong and sustainable brand image. This research aligns with research conducted by (Hartanto & Mariana, 2024) which shows that selected brand ambassadors make a strong contribution to brand image.

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The Influence of Quality Perception on Brand Image

The results of the analysis show that the Perceived Quality variable (X2) has a positive and significant influence on Brand Image (Z). This can be seen from the original sample value of 0.510, with a t-statistic of 7.286 and a p-value of 0.000. Because the t-statistic value is greater than the t-table (7.286 > 1.96) and the p-value is smaller than 0.05, it can be stated that perceived quality makes a real contribution to strengthening brand image.

The better the product quality perceived by consumers, the more positive the brand image formed in their minds. "Perceived Quality has a positive and significant effect on Brand Image" was accepted. These results reinforce the understanding that perceived quality is a key factor that must be maintained by companies in an effort to strengthen brand image, increase consumer loyalty, and create sustainable competitive advantage. This research is in line with research conducted by (Handayani et al., 2020) which shows that product quality variables and brand image variables have a strong relationship and product quality variables have a significant effect on brand image variables.

The Influence of Digital Marketing on Brand Image

The test results show that the Digital Marketing variable (X3) has a positive and significant influence on Brand Image (Z). This is indicated by the original sample value of 0.470, with a t-statistic of 5.875 and a p-value of 0.000. Because the t-statistic value is greater than the t-table (5.875 > 1.96) and the p-value is much smaller than 0.05, it can be concluded that digital marketing contributes significantly to improving brand image. In other words, the more effective the digital marketing strategy implemented by the company, the better the brand image formed in the minds of consumers.

These results confirm that digital marketing is not merely a promotional medium but also plays a strategic role in shaping consumer perception of a brand. Digital marketing activities, such as the use of social media, online campaigns, creative content, and direct interactions with consumers, can create experiences that support the formation of a strong brand image. Consumers who frequently interact with brands through digital channels tend to have a higher emotional closeness, thus perceiving the brand positively. This research aligns with research conducted by Dewi et al., 2022, which found that digital marketing has a positive and significant impact on brand image.

The Influence of Brand Image on Purchasing Decisions

Based on the test results, the Brand Image (Z) variable is proven to have a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions (Y). This can be seen from the original sample value of 0.560, with a t-statistic value of 8.000 and a p-value of 0.000. Because the t-statistic value is greater than the t-table (8.000 > 1.96) and the p-value is smaller than 0.05, it can be concluded that a strong brand image significantly encourages consumers in making purchasing decisions. Thus, the hypothesis stating that there is a positive and significant influence between brand image and purchasing decisions is accepted.

These findings confirm that brand image plays a central role in shaping consumer perceptions. When consumers have a positive view of a brand's image, whether in

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terms of product quality, uniqueness, or company reputation, trust in that brand increases. This trust then encourages consumers to be more confident in choosing that product over other products offered by competitors. This research aligns with research conducted by Onsardi et al., 2022, which found that brand image has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Brand Ambassadors on Purchasing Decisions through Brand Image

The results of the analysis show that the Brand Ambassador variable (X1) has a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions (Y) through Brand Image (Z) as a mediating variable. The original sample value of the indirect effect is 0.212, with a t-statistic of 4.350 and a p-value of 0.000. Because the t-statistic value is greater than the t-table (4.350 > 1.96) and the p-value is smaller than 0.05, it can be concluded that brand image is able to significantly mediate the influence of brand ambassadors on purchasing decisions.

These findings demonstrate that the presence of brand ambassadors not only has a direct influence but also strengthens the brand's image, which then drives consumer purchasing decisions. Consumers tend to have greater trust and confidence when they see a brand ambassador who demonstrates credibility, popularity, and an emotional connection with their audience. This trust, in turn, shapes a positive perception of the brand's image, thus encouraging consumers to choose the advertised product.

The results of this study are in line with research (Sagia & Situmorang, 2020) Partially, Brand Image can strengthen Brand Ambassadors towards purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Quality Perception on Purchasing Decisions through Brand Image

Based on the test results, the Perceived Quality variable (X2) has a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions (Y) through Brand Image (Z) as a mediating variable. The original sample value of the indirect effect was obtained at 0.180, with a t-statistic of 3.920 and a p-value of 0.000. Because the t-statistic value is greater than the t-table (3.920 > 1.96) and the p-value is smaller than 0.05, it can be concluded that brand image significantly mediates the influence of perceived quality on purchasing decisions.

These results indicate that a positive perception of product quality can build a positive brand image in the minds of consumers. When consumers perceive a product to be of high quality, such as durability, reliability, and meeting expectations, the brand image will also strengthen. This positive brand image ultimately drives consumers to make purchasing decisions. In other words, brand image acts as a strengthening factor in the relationship between perceived quality and purchasing decisions. These results align with research by Nababan (2020). These results indicate that product quality has a positive and significant effect on brand image and purchasing decisions, and brand image has a positive effect on purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Digital Marketing on Purchasing Decisions through Brand Image

The analysis results show that the Digital Marketing variable (X3) has a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions (Y) through Brand Image (Z) as a mediating variable. The original sample value of the indirect effect was recorded at

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0.195, with a t-statistic of 4.112 and a p-value of 0.000. Because the t-statistic value is greater than the t-table (4.112 > 1.96) and the p-value is smaller than 0.05, it can be concluded that brand image significantly mediates the influence of digital marketing on purchasing decisions.

These results demonstrate that effective digital marketing activities, such as the use of social media, online advertising, interactive content, and data-driven marketing strategies, can improve a brand's image in the eyes of consumers. When consumers are repeatedly exposed to consistent digital marketing messages, they develop a positive perception of the brand. This strengthened brand image then drives their purchasing decisions.

The results of this study are in line with research (Fitrianna & Aurinawati, 2020) which shows that marketing through digital media has a significant effect on improving brand image so that it can influence product purchasing decisions (Dewi et al., 2022). The results of this study indicate that digital marketing has a positive and significant effect on brand image.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research that has been conducted regarding the Influence of Brand Ambassador, Perceived Quality, and Digital Marketing on Purchasing Decisions with Brand Image as a Mediator, several conclusions can be drawn as follows: Brand Ambassador has a positive and significant effect on Brand Image. Perceived Quality has a positive and significant effect on Brand Image. Digital Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Brand Image. Brand Image has a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions. Brand Ambassador has a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions through Brand Image. Perceived Quality has a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions through Brand Image. Digital Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions through Brand Image.

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