

The Influence Of Brand Ambassadors, Instagram Promotions On Purchasing Decisions In Cirebon

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Abstract

In the digital era, social media platforms such as Instagram have become an important tool for marketing and customer engagement. This research investigates the impact of Brand Ambassador and Instagram Promotion on consumer purchase choices, especially on Skintific skin care products in Cirebon. The purpose of this study is to determine the result of Brand Ambassador and Instagram Promotion on Purchasing Decisions in Cirebon. The study's respondents were Skintific user consumers throughout Cirebon. With a sample of 111 respondents, this study used a quantitative approach by distributing online questionnaires and analyzing the data using multiple linear regression in the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) application. The validity and reliability tests showed high internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.946 (Brand Ambassador), 0.950 (Instagram Promotion), and 0.929 (Purchase Decision). The results showed that both Brand Ambassador and Instagram Promotion significantly influenced purchasing decisions ($R^2 = 0.919$), with Instagram promotion having a stronger influence ($\beta = 0.828$) than brand ambassadors ($\beta = 0.185$). The regression model demonstrates that 91.9% of the variation in purchasing decisions can be clarified by these two variables. This study found that digital marketing strategies, especially those that leverage social media engagement, play an important role in shaping consumer behavior. Companies are advised to optimize Instagram-based promotions while maintaining more effective use of Brand Ambassadors to improve brand image and sales performance.

Keywords: *Brand Ambassador, Instagram Promotion, Purchase Decision, Skintific*

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital era, marketing through social media platforms has become one of the main strategies for businesses to reach consumers. As one of the most popular social media platforms, Instagram provides an opportunity for brands to build their image and promote their products effectively. Brand Ambassadors are individuals who are tasked with promoting a brand as well as products within their network to increase brand awareness and drive sales. Brand ambassadors act as a representation of a company, organization, or institution in conveying brand messages and values to the public. Usually, Brand Ambassadors come from artists, public figures, influencers, or employees who have wide influence and strong networks (Rahmawati, 2022). In Cirebon, marketing strategies through Brand Ambassadors are used to introduce skincare products such as Skintific, given the high public interest in quality products. With the variety of skincare options available, consumers must be careful in choosing products that are safe, reliable, and suitable for their skin needs. Research shows that this factor plays an important part of buying decisions, with 79% of consumers more interested in buying products promoted by individuals they trust. In this case, many beauty influencers and vloggers work with brands to market products through engaging content on Instagram. This strategy has a major influence on the purchases made by consumers in Cirebon.

In addition, advertising and promotional campaigns run through Instagram can strengthen engagement between brands and their consumers. This interaction occurs through various forms of participation, such as comments, likes, and responses to shared content. Based on data from Statista (2023), more than 1 billion active users worldwide make Instagram one of the most effective marketing platforms. Therefore, the combination of the Brand Ambassador strategy and promotion through Instagram is expected to have a positive influence on consumer purchasing

decisions for these products. The intense competition in the cosmetics and skincare industry has prompted a shift in marketing strategies towards social media platforms such as TikTok, Facebook and Instagram.

Many companies in this sector utilize public figures as brand representation to introduce and market their products. Brand ambassadors are seen as a key element in advertising strategies as they are able to influence consumer preferences. As part of a reference group, they play a role in shaping trends and consumer behavior towards the products they promote (Brestilliani & Suhermin, 2020a).

According to Verni and Sumaryanto (2024), brand ambassador is an activity where a brand or product makes a contract with a public figure to represent their brand or product. According to Kotler and Keller (2021), there are several guidelines for determining the public figure who will be used as a brand ambassador so that the message can be conveyed well and on target. First, choose a public figure who is famous and has a good image so that it can be relevant to the brand he represents. Second, there must be a logic match between the public figure and the brand to minimize confusion. Third, the use of advertisements and communication programs using public figures must be made as attractive as possible to give an impression that matches the brand. Finally, marketing research should help identify candidates and facilities for marketing programs by looking at their effectiveness. In using Brand Ambassadors, they usually use well-known people to attract consumers to buy products.

According to Fauzi et al., (2023), Brand ambassadors are used by businesses to influence and attract consumers to use their products. Brand ambassadors are public figures who serve as marketers tools that represent the accomplishment of individualism of a product. Brand ambassadors must be a marketing tool that represents a company's products, which usually come from artists or popular people to connect to consumers in order to target market share and increase sales. The use of brand ambassadors aims to be able to introduce a brand to the wider community, companies will pay public figures as brand ambassadors because they see that they are liked and respected by target audiences and can influence customer attitudes and behavior towards the brand represented (Setiawan, 2019). A product needs the right advertising star to promote a product. Supporting advertising stars can be called brand ambassadors, they can also get support from the public or nicknames from the public in the form of endorsers (Ervilyana, 2024).

Promotion plays a crucial part in the development of e-commerce. As part of the marketing strategy, promotions have a significant impact in increasing brand awareness, sales, and building relationships with consumers in an online environment. Attractive and evocative promotions can encourage consumers to visit e-commerce websites and make purchases (Fasha et al., 2022). Discounts, special offers, coupons, or free gifts are some forms of promotions that can influence consumers to shop online. Promotions assist retain current clients in addition to bringing in new ones. Loyalty programs, exclusive discounts for loyal customers, or repeat purchase incentives are examples of promotions that can help build consumer loyalty and encourage repeat purchases. Promotions are one of the drivers of the change in consumer behavior to shop online because the same promotions are not always available in physical stores. Promotion is a direct invitation that can be made using a variety of incentives arranged to increase product purchases and the number of items to be purchased (Handayani, 2022). According to Rahayu (2023) Promotion is the process of persuading customers to learn about the goods that the business sells to them, become satisfied, and then make a purchase these products.

Consumer behavior includes the decision-making process for purchases. There are various phases that consumers carry out in the purchasing decision process. These stages will result in a decision to buy or not. After buying a product, consumers will feel satisfied or dissatisfied with the product they bought. If consumers are satisfied, they will make repeat purchases, whereas if consumers are dissatisfied, They'll move to another brand. According to Rahmawati (2022) The process of making a purchasing decision involves deciding what to buy and whether to acquire

it. The decision is based on past actions. According to Ramadhani and Anggrainie (2023) Purchasing decisions are a problem-solving approach to human activities to buy a good or service in fulfilling their wants and needs which consists of recognizing needs and wants, searching for information, evaluating purchasing alternatives, purchasing decisions, and behavior after purchase According to Safika and Raflah (2021) Analyzing or identifying needs and goals, gathering information, assessing sources of alternative purchase options, making decisions, and acting after a purchase are all steps in the problem-solving process of buying.

In the world of marketing, understanding how consumers make decisions to buy a product is key to success. This process is known as the *purchase decision*. Purchasing decisions are not spontaneous actions, but the result of a series of complex psychological and rational processes. According to Senjaya (2024), Purchasing decisions are an important consideration for businesses, because they form the basis for designing future marketing strategies. In the buying process, price has a significant role as the exchange rate set based on the goods and services offered. In the era of Generation Z, the decision to buy beauty products does not only depend on the quality of the product itself, but is also strongly influenced by who recommends the product (Anggraini & Ahmadi, 2024).

The purchasing decision process generally occurs through several stages, such as identifying needs or issues, information gathering, alternative analysis, and decision-making, and reassessing decisions after purchase (Brestilliani & Suhermin, 2020b). These stages show the complexity in the mindset of consumers when determining the product they will choose. With so many choices in skincare products, both consumers and businesses need to consider product safety, effectiveness, and quality among the various brands available in the market.

Humans today are very easy to fulfill desires in this modern era, including the need for care and beauty, which is not only used by women but some men also take care. Men and women today are expected to have an attractive appearance about themselves. Competition in the beauty industry today is certainly experiencing very rapid progress and development, especially coupled with the presence of producers from within the country and from abroad. Thanks to the high beauty trends in Indonesia, various manufacturers innovate to enter the market and consumers in Indonesia.

New brands are constantly emerging, bringing high-quality products to the market. One of the most popular cosmetic brands is Skintific, a skincare brand founded by Kristen Tveit and Ann-Kristin Stokke. The brand was first introduced in Oslo, Norway, in 1957, and is now being further developed by a team of scientists in Canada. Skintific offers skincare products with pure active ingredients, with the vision of making innovative solutions accessible to everyone. One of its leading technologies is the Trilogy Triangle Effect (TTE), which is claimed to deliver optimal results. In addition, Skintific products are safely formulated even for sensitive skin. Through a long journey and many challenges, Kristen Tveit and Ann-Kristin Stokke managed to bring Skintific to the international stage. In August 2021, the brand officially entered the Indonesian market, offering a range of skincare products such as face masks, moisturizers, toners, cleansers, and serums. Within a short period of time, Skintific products gained widespread attention in Indonesia, supported by the many positive reviews from users

This research seeks to analyze and brand ambassadors' impact as well as promotions on Instagram on purchasing decisions for Skintific products in Cirebon. This study will use a quantitative data analysis approach to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence consumer decisions to purchase products. By understanding these influences, companies can design more effective marketing strategies to increase competitiveness in the local market.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs a quantitative methodology to investigate the impact of brand ambassador and Instagram promotions on skintific consumer Cirebon purchase decisions. The research method used can be explained according to experts. According to Sugiyono (2020), quantitative research is a method used to research a specific population or sample, collect data using research instruments, analyze quantitative/statistical data, and aim to test the established hypothesis. This study uses a quantitative approach with simple random sampling and statistical analysis using SPSS to test the effect of Brand Ambassador and Instagram Promotion on purchasing decisions. The sampling technique used is Simple Random Sampling, where every individual in the population has an equal chance of being chosen for the sample. Data collection was carried out through questionnaires distributed to 111 participants who were prospective buyers of skintific in Cirebon City. The goal of this research was to analyze the impact of brand ambassadors (X1) and Instagram promotions (X2) on Cirebon City's Skintific buying decisions (Y). All of the participants in this study were prospective Skintific customers in Cirebon City.

According to Sugiyono (2020), the population of this study are all individuals who purchase Skintific goods in Cirebon City. In general, population is a generalization area that includes organisms or elements with specific characteristics that researchers determine to study and analyze in order to draw conclusions. The concept of population is not limited to humans, but also includes other entities in nature, and covers both the number and overall characteristics of the objects under study.

According to Sugiyono (2022), in the context of scientific research, population is defined as a whole group that has specific characteristics. However, implementation studies involving all members of the population are often constrained based on budget constraints, availability of research personnel, and efficient time allocation. Alternatively, researchers can use a sample, which is a sub-group of the population that has essential characteristics and serves as a valid representation.

The selection of the Lameshow Formula as a sampling technique in this study is based on the consideration that it is uncertain who the research population is. This is in line with the views of Verni and Sumaryanto (2024) which state that the formula is suitable for infinite or unknown population conditions.

According to Sugiyono (2021), this method is called simple because the sample selection is carried out randomly without considering strata in the population, provided that the population is considered homogeneous. In this study, the sample size used is 111 potential buyers who have purchased goods from Skintific in Cirebon City.

Sugiyono (2019) explains that simple random sampling is a technique for drawing samples randomly from the entire population. In this method, every member of the population has an equal chance of being chosen for the sample, without any distinction based on certain levels or groups.

Sugiyono (2021) also states that this method is called simple because research uses random sampling techniques, where each member of the population has the same opportunity to choose regardless of strata. This approach is generally applied when the population is considered homogeneous, so that each individual in the population has relatively uniform characteristics.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Validity Test

The purpose of the validity test is to determine whether the research tool (questionnaire or data used) this tool really measures what should be measured. Usually, validity is tested using Pearson's correlation between every item and its (Corrected Item-overall Correlation) overall construct score. If the correlation coefficient (r) is more than 0.3 and meaningful ($p < 0.05$), then the item is considered valid and can be used for further analysis, while items with a correlation below 0.3 should be revised or deleted because they are less valid in measuring the intended construct. According to the findings of the validity test, all items in the research instrument have a significant correlation value ($p < 0.01$), indicating that each question item has a strong relationship with the total construct. The high value of the Pearson correlation proportion that exceeds the 0.3 threshold indicates that the items in the questionnaire have sufficient validity. Therefore, this instrument is considered suitable for use in the next stages of research such as reliability testing or regression analysis.

Table 1. Validity Test

Variables	Indicator	r-count	table-r	Sig. (2-tailed)	Description
Brand Ambassador	X1.1	0.784	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X1.2	0.822	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X1.3	0.793	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X1.4	0.843	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X1,5	0,768	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X1.6	0.843	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X1.7	0.810	0.186	0.	VALID
	X1.8	0.804	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X1.9	0,776	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X1.10	0.814	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X1.11	0.832	0.186	0.000	VALID
Instagram Promotion	X2.1	0.652	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X2.2	0,777	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X2.3	0.853	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X2.4	0.826	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X2,5	0.828	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X2.6	0.773	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X2.7	0,787	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X2.8	0,768	0.186	0.000	VALID

	X2.9	0,788	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X2.10	0.803	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X2.11	0,788	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X2.12	0.715	0.186	0.000	VALID
	X2.13	0.782	0.186	0,000	VALID
	X2.14	0.782	0.186	0.000	VALID
Purchase Decision	Y1	0.783	0.186	0.000	VALID
	Y2	0.807	0.186	0.000	VALID
	Y3	0.698	0.186	0.000	VALID
	Y4	0.763	0.186	0.000	VALID
	Y5	0,776	0.186	0.000	VALID
	Y6	0,789	0.186	0.000	VALID
	Y7	0.628	0.186	0.000	VALID
	Y8	0.792	0.186	0.000	VALID
	Y9	0.842	0.186	0.000	VALID
	Y10	0.850	0.186	0.000	VALID
	Y11	0.792	0.186	0.000	VALID

Considering the validity test's findings using pearson product moment on the third research variable, namely brand ambassadors (X1), promotional campaigns on Instagram (X2), and Purchasing Decisions (Y), The r-count value for every item is higher than the r-table (0.186) and have a level of meaning (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This suggests that every indicator used in the questionnaire are valid and feasible to use in the subsequent data collection process. This shows that all indicators used in the questionnaire are valid and suitable for use in the next research data collection process. Thus, all questions in this study instrument have met the requirements of content validity based on the Pearson correlation approach, so revisions or deletions should be made because they are less valid in measuring the intended construct. Thus, this questionnaire can be used in further research such as reliability test or regression analysis.

Reliability Test

The purpose of the dependability test is to measure the internal uniformity of a research tool, namely the extent to which the questionnaire items provide consistent results when retested.

Cronbach's Alpha is used to assess for reliability, where higher values indicate a better level of consistency. An instrument is deemed dependable and suitable for use in future studies if its Cronbach's Alpha value is greater than 0.70. According to the analysis results, the Cronbach's Alpha value of the brand ambassador variable has a value of 0.946, the promotional campaign variable on Instagram is 0.950, and the Purchasing Decision variable is 0.929, which indicates that this study instrument has a good level of reliability. This means that each question item in the questionnaire has a high consistency in measuring the variable under study, so that it can be trusted and used in further analysis without the need to repair or delete items.

Thus, this study instrument has good reliability and can be used for further research. This value indicates that the questionnaire has high internal consistency in measuring the variables under study, so that the results obtained can be relied upon for further analysis.

Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Table 2. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.959 ^a	.919	.917	1.891	

a. Predictors: (Constant), INSTAGRAM PROMOTION, BRAND AMBASSADORS

ANOVA ^a					
Model	Sum Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	4372.787	2	2186.394	611.614	.000 ^b
Residuals	386.078	108	3.575		
Total	4758.865	110			

a. Dependent Variable: PURCHASE DECISION

b. Predictors: (Constant), INSTAGRAM PROMOTION, BRAND AMBASSADORS

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	4.562	1.124		4.058	.000
	BRAND AMBASSADOR	.153	.030	.185	5.137	.000
	INSTAGRAM PROMOTION	.577	.025	.828	22.974	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PURCHASE DECISION

Based on the results of multiple regression analysis, the regression equation is obtained as follows:

$$Y = 4.562 + 0.153X_1 + 0.577X_2 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

- Y = Purchase Decision
- X₁ = brand ambassador
- X₂ = promotional campaign on Instagram
- ε = error term

The constant value (α value) in the regression equation is 4.562. In the context of regression analysis, this constant has a specific and important interpretation. Technically, the constant shows

the predicted value of the purchasing decision variable, when all independent variables (brand ambassador and Instagram promotion) are zero. In other words, this constant value reflects the base level or initial value of purchasing decisions that are expected to occur if the influence of brand ambassadors and Instagram promotions is removed.

In a practical context, this could be interpreted as other factors beyond brand ambassadors and Instagram promotions that also influence consumer purchase decisions. These factors may include the quality of the underlying product, the company's overall reputation, consumers' previous experiences, or the impact of additional marketing factors excluded from this study model. Therefore, the constant value of 4.562 provides a starting point for understanding purchasing decisions before considering the impact of brand ambassadors and Instagram promotions.

The findings of the regression analysis indicate that Brand Ambassador (X_1) has a coefficient of 0.153 0.000 as the significance threshold ($p < 0.05$). This research suggests that brand ambassadors have a favorable and noteworthy impact on prospective customers choices. This means that the better the implementation of brand ambassadors in the business environment, the higher the level of potential buyer preference perceived by potential buyers.

Conceptually, these findings support the idea that Brand Ambassadors play an important role in shaping buyer preferences. The more effective the implementation of Brand Ambassador strategies in a business environment, the higher the propensity of potential buyers to choose the product or brand. Brand Ambassadors can create positive associations with brands, build trust, and influence consumer perceptions, ultimately driving purchasing decisions.

Meanwhile, the regression coefficient for Instagram promotion (X_2) is 0.577, with a 0.000 (<0.05) value. This demonstrates that Instagram promotion has a positive and meaningful impact on potential buyers' choices, even stronger than brand ambassadors, because the coefficient value is greater. Thus, effective Instagram promotion among potential buyers contributes more to an increase in potential buyers' choice.

In other words, effective Instagram promotion among potential buyers contributed more to the increase in buyer preference than the Brand Ambassador strategy. The Instagram platform, with its features that enable product visualization, direct interaction with consumers, and rapid information dissemination, proves to be a very powerful tool in influencing consumer purchasing decisions.

T test

Based on the partial t test results that have been carried out regression analysis, Thus, the Brand Ambassador variable may be said to (X_1) has a real and significant influence on Purchasing Decisions (Y). This finding is supported by strong statistical evidence. First, The brand ambassador variable's significance value as determined by the T test is 0.000. In hypothesis testing, this significance value is compared to a predetermined critical limit to determine whether the results are statistically significant. With this study, the critical limit of significance was set at 0.005. The likelihood of getting a plausible outcome is lower since the significance value of 0.000 is significantly smaller than 0.05. In other words, there is great trust that brand ambassadors actually affect purchase decisions.

Second, the magnitude of the influence of Instagram Promotion is also supported by the t value. This variable's t-count value is 22.974. The t table value, which is 4.058, is then contrasted with this number. The t-count value (22.974) is significantly higher than the t-table value (4.058), as this comparison demonstrates. In the context of the t test, the t value that far exceeds the t table value provides strong evidence demonstrates the dependent variable (purchase decision) is significantly impacted by the independent variable (instagram promotion). In other words, the effectiveness of promotions carried out through the Instagram platform has a major impact on consumer decisions to buy products.

Collectively, these findings provide strong empirical evidence to reject the null hypothesis

(Ho2). The null hypothesis (Ho2) claims that Instagram promotion has no statistically meaningful impact (X2) on Purchasing Decision (Y). Conversely, the analysis results accept the alternative hypothesis (Ha2). The alternative hypothesis (Ha2) states that Instagram Promotion (X2) has a major impact on decisions about purchases Decisions (Y). Thus, it may be said that the promotional strategy implemented on Instagram plays an important role in shaping consumer decisions to make purchases.

F test

Based on the analysis conducted, a significant result was obtained regarding the combined influence between brand ambassadors (X1) and Instagram promotion (X2) on purchasing decisions (Y). The combined significance value for these two independent variables is 0.000. This figure is sub-substantially smaller than the predetermined significance limit of 0.005. In statistics, a significance value below 0.005 indicates that there is a very low result. In other words, The findings indicate a substantial correlation between the independent factors (Instagram promotion and brand ambassador) and the dependent variable (buying decision). In addition, The magnitude of the combined impact of the two separate variables is also supported by the calculated F value obtained in the analysis. At 611.614, the computed F value was noted. To interpret this F count, it is necessary to compare it with the relevant F table. The F table value in this investigation is 3.93. In this study, the F table value was 3.93. When F count and F table are compared, F count is noticeably higher than F table. In analysis of variance (ANOVA), a larger F value indicates that the variability explained by the regression model (i.e., the variability in decisions to buy that brand ambassadors can explain and Instagram promotions) is significantly greater than the variability that cannot be explained.

These findings collectively provide strong empirical evidence to disprove the null hypothesis (Ho3). The null hypothesis (Ho3) claims that the impact of brand ambassadors is not statistically significant (X1) and Instagram promotion (X2) collaborating on purchasing decisions (Y). Conversely, the analysis results accept the alternative hypothesis (Ha3). The alternative hypothesis (Ha3) states that Brand Ambassador (X1) and Instagram promotion (X2) simultaneously have a significant influence on purchasing decisions (Y). In other words, changes in Brand Ambassador strategies and promotional activities on Instagram together are proven to have a real and measurable impact on consumer decisions to make purchases

CONCLUSION

According to the findings of the quantitative data analysis obtained from 111 Skintific potential buyer participants in Cirebon City, this study concludes that promotion through Instagram has a more dominant and meaningful impact on potential buyers' choices compared to the use of brand ambassadors. The regression analysis's findings indicate that both independent variables, namely brand ambassadors and promotional campaigns on Instagram, have a significant effect on the dependent variable at the same time, namely the choice of potential buyers, The determination coefficient (R^2) is recorded at 0.919, it indicates that 91.9% of the variation in the choice of potential buyers can be explained significantly by both independent variables. promotional campaigns on Instagram have the highest regression coefficient, which is 0.577, indicating that promotional strategies run through interactive content on digital social platforms are more effective in attracting potential buyers. Meanwhile, although brand ambassadors also have a positive impact, their impact is not as great as Instagram promotions. Therefore, in the context of modern digital marketing, companies are advised to further optimize promotional strategies based on digital social platforms to increase the effectiveness of potential buyers' choice of potential buyers, without ignoring the supporting role of brand ambassadors as a reinforcing element of brand identity.

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