Jurnal Ilmiah *Poli Bisnis*
https://ejournal2.pnp.ac.id/index.php/jipb
Volume 15 No. 2 Oktober 2023
p-ISSN : 1858-3717
e-ISSN : 2656-1212
Sinta 4 : SK Nomor 85/M/KPT/2020

K-Beauty Craze in Indonesia: A Study of Consumer Purchase Intentions

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Abstract

This study investigates how brand ambassadors, digital marketing and brand image influences consumer purchase intention for beauty products in South Korea with brand trust as a mediating variable. This research involved 230 people from Indonesia who had bought beauty products from South Korea in which purposive sampling method is applied in the collection of relevant data. Partial Least Square (PLS) data analysis method is applied which is then processed in the SmartPLS software. It is found that brand ambassadors and digital marketing does have a positive and significant effect on brand trust. On the other hand, brand ambassador, brand image and brand trust have a significant positive effect on purchase intention as well. The mediation results show that brand trust as a mediator can mediate significantly and positively between brand ambassadors on purchase intention, which means that through well-known brand ambassadors with a good reputation, they can help company brands in maintaining consumer trust in brands and encourage interest in buying products indirectly.

Keywords: Purchase Intention, Brand Ambassador, Digital Marketing, Brand Image, Brand Trust.

Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah menganalisa pengaruh brand ambassador, digital marketing dan brand image terhadap niat beli konsumen pada produk kecantikan Korea Selatan dengan brand trust sebagai variabel mediasi. Penelitian ini melibatkan 230 orang di seluruh Indonesia yang pernah membeli produk kecantikan asal Korea Selatan dan penelitian ini menggunakan metode purposive sampling. Teknik analisis data dalam penelitian ini adalah Partial Least Square (PLS) yang kemudian diproses dalam software SmartPLS. Hasil penelitian ini membuktikan brand ambassador berpengaruh positif dan signifikan pada brand trust. Brand ambassador berpengaruh signifikan positif pada purchase intention. Brand image berpengaruh signifikan positif pada purchase intention. Brand trust berpengaruh positif dan signifikan pada purchase intention. Digital marketing berpengaruh secara signifikan pada brand trust. Hasil mediasi menunjukkan brand trust sebagai mediator dapat memediasi secara signifikan dan positif antara brand ambassador terhadap purchase intention, yang berarti bahwa melalui brand ambassador yang terkenal dengan reputasi baik dapat membantu merek perusahaan dalam menjaga kepercayaan konsumen pada merek serta mendorong minat beli produk secara tidak langsung.

Kata Kunci: ***Purchase Intention, Brand Ambassador, Digital Marketing, Brand Image, Brand Trust.***

Informasi Artikel
Diterima Redaksi: 01 Agustus 2023 | Selesai Revisi: 27 Oktober 2023 | Diterbitkan Online: 31 Oktober 2023

INTRODUCTION

Technology is developing rapidly in the whole world, hence pushing the knowledge of internet users to become more advanced due to the ease of getting information. The positive effects of advances in technology and information are the ease of communication and faster information exchange, the creation of online services and the creativity of marketing and promotional activities for a product (Christiarini and Rahmadila 2021). Currently, online media is not only for seeking information but also for buying and selling activities which is known as online business (E-commerce). Digital marketing is one of the crucial aspects and understands consumer behavior in product advertising (Purwati and Cahyanti 2022). Digital marketing adds various marketing techniques to the market such as social networking, e-mail marketing and so on (Umair et al. 2021). The digital era will continue to change social trends in society overtime which will directly affect consumer behavior and consumer purchasing decisions (Laura and Nasution 2021). Encouraging consumer purchase intention is a crucial stage for marketers because it is one of the key in determining the success of a marketing program (Hidayat and Norvelita 2022).

Purchase intention is a consumer activity to consider or take action to purchase a product or service. Various attitudes, behaviors and consumer perceptions related to consumer purchase intentions (Hermanda, Sumarwan, and Tinaprillia 2019). Companies must be able to attract attention and increase consumer purchase intentions to provide products to consumers and with the hope of achieving the company's goal of selling as many products as possible (Suwuh, Kindangen, and Saerang 2022). The importance of conducting a research on consumer purchase intentions has the aim that companies in the market can pay attention to consumer purchase intentions so they can compete with each other and maintain business continuity (Clarence and Keni 2022).

Marketing activities can affect on consumer behavior (Nazarov 2020). It's not easy for companies to understand consumer behavior but at the same time, there is sufficient information about all possible factors to influence consumers, it can be new political or cultural events that will shift consumer attention and potentially cause a decrease in sales (Nazarov 2020). The increasing popularity of Korean brands has contributed significantly to the growth of culture in South Korea (Siregar, Angin, and Mono 2021). Lately, Korean culture has received a lot of attention from the world. In the past, Korean media was seldom seen in various places. Korean culture is growing rapidly and successful in international exports such as the success of the film Squid Game on Netflix and the film Parasite which won an Academy Award (Huang 2022).

Korean culture which is growing rapidly with global scale has encouraged the Korean Wave phenomenon to spread in various countries and one of the countries is Indonesia. There are many people who are interested in part of the Korean Wave, one of which is K-Beauty where people take care of their skin health so that the Korean Wave is one of the key factors driving the development of the industry (Suwuh et al. 2022). As a result, business people associate consumers' minds with utilizing Korean celebrities as brand ambassadors, so that consumers become interested in making purchases of products being marketed (Suwuh et al. 2022). A brand ambassador is someone who is able to convey a company's brand well and has an obligation to convey messages from an organization clearly to consumers (Wulandari et al. 2021).

In addition to various aspects that affect product sales, consumers are now also assessing the brand image that exists on these products. Brand image is considered an

important aspect for the success of a product, because when consumers purchase a product, consumers will tend to buy the brand (Wulandari et al. 2021). The characteristics of a brand image must be a long-term goal and a driving force for the success of a company. When a company is growing, the competition that will be faced will also become increasingly stringent (Firmanza and Artanti 2022).

A product that has a good brand image will increase consumer confidence in the product of a brand (Ayu and Ketut 2021). Brand trust is a key factor to push consumer's loyalty to the company's brand. Trust is one of the key factors that can affect the value of a brand and will enhance the sense of ownership in consumers toward the brand (Puspaningrum 2020). As brand trust grows among consumers in the target market by the company, the company can convey the desired marketing message more easily and create a good and efficient brand impression about the company's brand in the minds of consumers (Ebrahim, 2020).

RESEARCH METHODS

The purpose of this study is to investigate how brand ambassadors, brand image and digital marketing influence consumer purchase intentions for Korean beauty products in Indonesia. The existence of several well-known Korean beauty products such as Innisfree, Nature Republic and so on is the focus of this research. This research is a basic research or basic research conducted with the aim of research because this research is carried out to understand a problem in a particular object in depth without the desire to apply the results (Sugiyono 2014).

However, if you do a review in terms of the problem, then this research utilizes casual comparative research (Casual-Comperative Research). This research is considered part of the research with the nature of the problem in the form of relationship between several independent variables on one dependent variable (Indriantoro and Supomo 2012). The purposive sample method (non-probability sampling method) is applied to collect sample data in line with the purpose of study.

The objects to be examined in this study are enthusiasts of Korean beauty products with a research population of people who are interested in or have purchased Korean beauty products in Indonesia. The sample that is the focus of this research is people who have made purchases of Korean beauty products or have searched for information about Korean beauty products because of interest in brand ambassadors, brand image or digital marketing by Korean beauty brands so that purchase intentions arise. The author chose this sample because of the ease of finding information due to the advancement of science and technology in today's era which encourages consumer buying intentions for products. Data collection from the respondents who were involved in this study was by distributing questionnaires online. Sample used in this research is Indonesian people who have used Korean beauty products such as cosmetics or skincare. The number of samples taken is based on a comparison which is using a parameter of one to ten (1:10), which means that for each question the question variable represents ten (10) respondents (Hair et al. 2010). So, with a total of 20 questions, the minimum sample required for this research is 200 respondents, but with the aim of avoiding data reduction, 260 questionnaires will be distributed. In total, the total number of respondents obtained was 240 respondents, however there were 14 respondents which are included in the outlier data and only 226

respondents could be processed. The required respondent criteria are that they are fans of Korean beauty products and live in Indonesia.

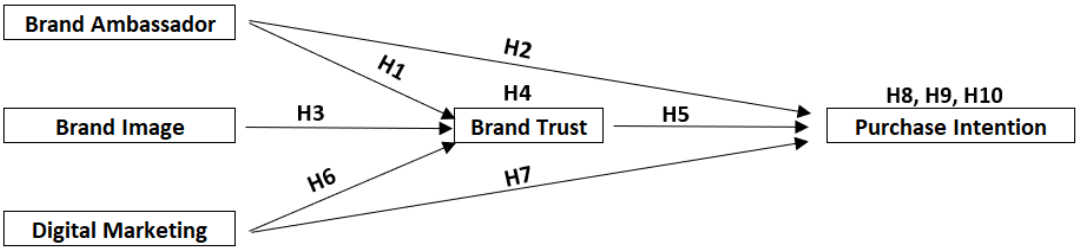

Figure 1. Research Model

The attached research model including three independent variables which are Brand Ambassador (X1), Brand Image (X2) and Digital Marketing (X3), one dependent variable which is Purchase Intention (Y) as well as the mediating or intervening variable is Brand Trust (Z).

Result and Discussion

1. Measurement Model (Outer Model)

1.1 Validity Test

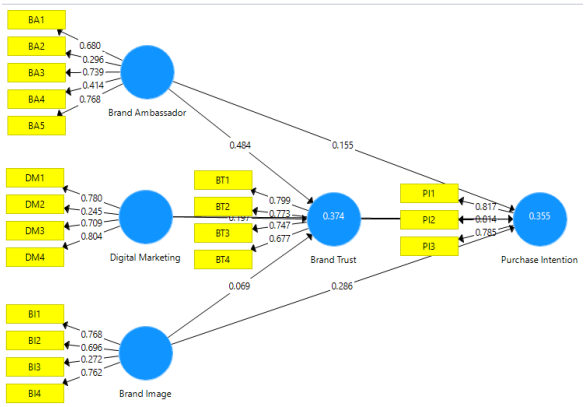

Figure 2. Result of PLS Algorithm 1

The results of testing the data using SmartPLS 3.0 are shown in Figure 4.1 which shows that there are 4 questions from variables that have an outer model value below 0.60 which do not meet the requirements or rule of thumb, namely question number 2 and number 4 from the Brand Ambassador variable, question number 3 from the Brand Image variable and question number 2 from the Digital Marketing variable.

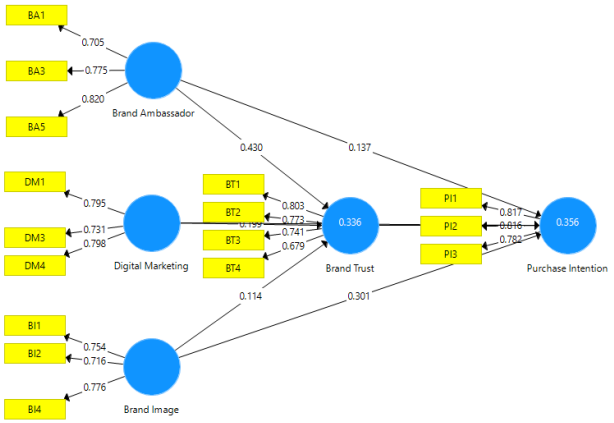

Figure 3. Result of PLS Algorithm 2

The results of testing the data show that there are several indicators that produce a loading factor value below 0.6, so the research model will be modified by removing indicators that do not meet the requirements. After these indicators were removed, testing was carried out and Figure 4.2 illustrates that all loading factor indicators have a value above 0.60 which proves that they have met the requirements. So, the model construct meets the requirements.

2. Model Evaluation

2.1 Convergent Validity Test

Outer Loadings

Table 1. Outer Loadings

Variable	Convergent Validity	Validity
BA1	0.705	Valid
BA3	0.775	Valid
BA5	0.820	Valid
BI1	0.754	Valid
BI2	0.716	Valid
BI4	0.776	Valid
BT1	0.803	Valid
BT2	0.773	Valid
BT3	0.741	Valid
BT4	0.679	Valid
DM1	0.795	Valid
DM3	0.731	Valid
DM4	0.798	Valid
PI1	0.817	Valid
PI2	0.816	Valid
PI3	0.782	Valid

Source: Primary Data (2023)

The conclusion from the test results is that all indicators of each variable in the study have a value above 0.60, thus proving that all indicators in the model obtained are declared reliable or have consistent data.

Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

The AVE test is used to evaluate variables or constructs related to discriminant validity. The results of the AVE test are attached below:

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variable	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Validity
Brand Ambassador	0.590	Valid
Brand Image	0.561	Valid
Brand Trust	0.563	Valid
Digital Marketing	0.601	Valid
Purchase Intention	0.648	Valid

Source: Primary Data (2023)

Table 2 shows the AVE value of the Brand Ambassador of 0.590 > 0.50, so the items from the questionnaire distributed are proven to be valid. The AVE value on the Brand Image is 0.561 > 0.50, so the items from the questionnaire distributed are proven to be valid. The AVE value on the Brand Trust is 0.563 > 0.50, so the items from the questionnaire distributed are proven to be valid. The AVE value in the Digital Marketing is 0.601 > 0.50, so the items from the questionnaire distributed are proven to be valid. The AVE value in the Purchase Intention is 0.648 > 0.50, so the items from the questionnaire distributed are proven valid.

The AVE value of each variable already has a value above 0.50 which means that there are no problems with convergent validity of the five variables and is declared valid.

2.2 Discriminant Validity

Cross-Loadings

Table 3. Cross-Loadings

	Brand Ambassador	***Brand Image***	***Brand Trust***	***Digital Marketing***	***Purchase Intention***
BA1	0.705	0.254	0.301	0.170	0.231
BA3	0.775	0.245	0.445	0.116	0.276
BA5	0.820	0.277	0.451	0.397	0.408
BI1	0.279	0.754	0.226	0.130	0.333
BI2	0.242	0.716	0.240	0.157	0.338
BI4	0.235	0.776	0.234	0.313	0.363
BT1	0.442	0.256	0.803	0.360	0.373
BT2	0.422	0.256	0.773	0.209	0.375
BT3	0.350	0.263	0.741	0.269	0.343
BT4	0.371	0.151	0.679	0.246	0.277
DM1	0.266	0.206	0.297	0.795	0.282
DM3	0.256	0.226	0.238	0.731	0.263
DM4	0.210	0.199	0.307	0.798	0.281
PI1	0.345	0.390	0.395	0.306	0.817
PI2	0.355	0.376	0.376	0.334	0.816
PI3	0.285	0.343	0.333	0.208	0.782

Source: Primary Data (2023)

Cross loading values for Brand Ambassadors with 3 measurement indicators, namely BA1 = 0.705, BA3 = 0.775, and BA5 = 0.820. The cross-loading value for Brand Image with 3 measurement indicators, namely BI1 = 0.754, BI2 = 0.716, and BI4 = 0.776. The cross-loading value for Brand Trust with 4 measurement indicators, namely BT1 = 0.803, BT2 = 0.773, BT3 = 0.739, and BT4 = 0.680. The cross-loading value for Digital Marketing with 3 measurement indicators, namely DM1 = 0.795, DM3 = 0.731, and DM4 = 0.798. The last one is the cross-loading value for Purchase Intention with 3 measurement indicators namely PI1 = 0.817, PI2 = 0.816 and PI3 = 0.783.

Based on the results of the data test, there is one indicator, namely BT4, which does not meet a correlation value above 0.7, but the indicators have gathered and have a high correlation with each variable. Apart from these indicators, the values of other instruments have fulfilled the criteria above number 0.7.

2.3 Reliability Test

Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha

Table 6. Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Reliability
Brand Ambassador	0.660	0.812	Reliable
Brand Image	0.608	0.793	Reliable
Brand Trust	0.740	0.837	Reliable
Digital Marketing	0.668	0.818	Reliable
Purchase Intention	0.730	0.847	Reliable

Source: Primary Data (2023)

Each result of the test has reached more than 0.6 so that it is concluded that all constructs are declared reliable.

2.4 Inner Model

Path Coefficients / Direct Effect

Table 7. Path Coefficients

Model	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P-Value	Description
Brand Ambassador -> Brand Trust	0.430	4.722	0.000	Accepted
Brand Ambassador -> Purchase Intention	0.137	1.659	0.097	Not Accepted
Brand Image -> Brand Trust	0.114	1.249	0.212	Not Accepted
Brand Image -> Purchase Intention	0.301	4.120	0.000	Accepted
Brand Trust -> Purchase Intention	0.240	2.399	0.017	Accepted
Digital Marketing -> Brand Trust	0.199	2.678	0.008	Accepted
Digital Marketing -> Purchase Intention	0.144	1.480	0.139	Not Accepted

Source: Primary Data (2023)

Hypothesis 1: Brand Ambassador has a significant effect on Brand Trust

As stated in results of table 4.16, the results of the path coefficients test show that the t-statistic value between brand ambassadors on brand trust is 4.722 and the value of the p-value is 0.000. Thus, H1 proposed in this study is accepted, means that brand ambassadors have a positive and significant influence on brand trust in the number of consumers who are interested in beauty products from South Korea. The role of brand ambassadors has proven to be important for increasing consumer confidence in brand beauty products. The research results obtained are in line with the results of previous research (Digdowiseiso et al. 2021) and (Fransiska and Candy 2023) which proves that the a brand ambassador who promotes a product will directly affect consumer trust in the brand.

Hypothesis 2: Brand Ambassador has a significant effect on Purchase Intention

As stated in the test result, it is known that the t-statistic value between brand ambassadors and purchase intention is 1.659 and the p-value is 0.97. Thus, it is proven that brand ambassadors are not significantly affecting on purchase intention from the number of consumers who are interested in beauty products from South Korea, a brand ambassador cannot directly influence consumer buying interest. Thus, the H2 proposed in this study was rejected. This result is similar with the research results of (Wulandari et al. 2021) and (Purwati and Cahyanti 2022) which proves that the role of brand ambassadors does not significantly influencing on consumer purchase intention.

Hypothesis 3: Brand Image has a significant effect on Brand Trust

In the brand image model on the brand trust variable, it is known that the t-statistic value between the brand image variable and brand trust is 1.249 and the p-value is 0.212. Thus, it is proven that brand image is not positively and significantly affecting on brand trust in the number of consumers who are interested in beauty products from South Korea. Thus, the H3 proposed in this study was rejected. The results of this study are in contrast to the results of previous research by (Febrian and Fadly 2021), (Benhardy et al. 2020), and (Bernarto et al. 2020) which proves brand image will help increase consumer trust in brands.

Hypothesis 4: Brand Image has a significant effect on Purchase Intention

As stated in the test result, it is known that the t-statistic value between the brand image variable and purchase intention is 4.120 and the p-value is 0.000. Thus, brand image has a positive and significant influence on purchase intention for people who are interested in beauty products from South Korea. Thus, H4 proposed is acceptable. The results of this study are in line with the results of previous research by (Wulandari et al. 2021), (Purwati and Cahyanti 2022), (Hien et al. 2020), (Savitri et al. 2021), (Hermanda et al. 2019), (Adiba et al. 2020), (Sanny et al. 2020) which states that a great brand image from the brand will directly effect on consumer buying interest, clients may be curious or interested to try the products.

Hypothesis 5: Brand Trust has a significant effect on Purchase Intention

As stated in the test result, it is known that the t-statistic value between brand trust and purchase intention is 2.399 and the p-value is 0.017. Thus, brand trust is significantly affecting on purchase intention in the number of people who are interested in beauty

products from South Korea. Thus, the H5 is acceptable. The results are similar with the research by (Cuong 2020), (Sanny et al. 2020), (Benhardy et al. 2020), (Rafqi Ilhamalimy and Ali 2021) and (Natalia et al. 2021) which states that brand trust from consumers will affect consumer buying interest. The results of this study proved if there is lack of consumer trust on the brand, that consumers will not have intention to purchase the product. A poor relationship between consumer and brand may affect client's intention to purchase an item.

Hypothesis 6: Digital Marketing has a significant effect on Brand Trust

In the digital marketing model for brand trust, it is known that the t-statistic value between digital marketing and brand trust is 2.678 and the p-value is 0.008. Thus, digital marketing has a significant effect on brand trust in the number of consumers who are interested in beauty products from South Korea. Thus, H6 proposed in this study is acceptable. The results of this study are similar with results of studies by (Haudi et al. 2022) and (Sanny et al. 2020). The results of this study contradicts with (Digdowiseiso et al. 2021). The results of this study explain that digital marketing with techniques that attract consumers' attention and are following with target market will increase consumer confidence in both the product and the company brand.

Hypothesis 7: Digital Marketing has a significant effect on Purchase Intention

In the digital marketing model for the purchase intention variable, it is known that the t-statistic value between the brand image variable and brand trust is 1.480 and the p-value is 0.139. Thus, digital marketing has no significant effect on purchase intention on the number of consumers who are interested in beauty products from South Korea. Thus, H7 proposed in this study was rejected. The results are in line with the results of studies by (Zulfikar et al. 2022) and (Savitri et al. 2021). The results are in contrast to research by (Clarence and Keni 2022), (Alwan and Alshurideh 2022) and (Umair et al. 2021). The results explain that digital marketing will help reach the target market for brands and introduce products or brands to the public but cannot stimulate consumer buying interest directly.

Indirect Effect

Table 8. Specific Indirect Effects

Model	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P-Values	Description
Brand Ambassador -> Brand Trust -> Purchase Intention	0.103	2.243	0.025	Accepted
Brand Image -> Brand Trust -> Purchase Intention	0.027	0.954	0.340	Not Accepted
Digital Marketing -> Brand Trust -> Purchase Intention	0.048	1.755	0.080	Not Accepted

Source: Primary Data (2023)

Based on table 4.17, the results of the Specific Indirect Effects test obtained are as follows:

Hypothesis 8: Brand Ambassador has a significant effect on Purchase Intention through Brand Trust as a mediator

The result shows t-statistic value of 2.243 and a p-value of 0.025 between brand ambassadors and purchase intention mediated by brand trust. So, it can be concluded that brand ambassadors have a significant and positive effect on purchase intention through brand trust. The result are similar with the results of research by (Fransiska and Candy 2023), but the results of this study are in contrast to the results of research by (Firman et al. 2021) and (Wijaya and Keni 2022). The results of this study indicate that if the brand ambassador carries out the promotion, it will certainly generate brand trust in consumers so that the interest in making a purchase will increase.

Hypothesis 9: Brand Image has a significant effect on Purchase Intention through Brand Trust as a mediator

The result shows t-statistic value of 0.954 and a p-value of 0.340 between brand image and purchase intention mediated by brand trust. So, it is concluded that brand image doesn't have any positive significant effect on purchase intention through brand trust. The research results obtained are in line with previous research (Benhardy et al. 2020) but the results of this study contradict previous research by (Sidharta, Sari, and Suwandha 2018) and (Budiman and Hartoko 2022) which state that high brand trust and brand image will help in encouraging consumer buying interest. Any brand image will not increase nor decrease nor increase the trust of consumer to the brand and trigger consumer buying intention is the result of the studies.

Hypothesis 10: Digital Marketing has a significant effect on Purchase Intention through Brand Trust as a mediator

The result shows the t-statistic value of 1.755 and a p-value of 0.080 between digital marketing and purchase intention mediated by brand trust. So, it is concluded that digital marketing is not significantly affecting purchase intention through brand trust. The results of this study are similar the results of (Salhab et al. 2023) and (Putri and Anggarawati 2022) which states that a great marketing strategy is not enough to build trust between consumer and the brand since client won't feel like to trust by only aware about the brand and consumer won't feel any purchase intention.

2.5 R Square

Table 9 *R Square*

Variable	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)
Brand Trust	0.336	0.351
Purchase Intention	0.356	0.377

Source: Primary Data (2023)

The brand trust variable obtained an R squared value of 0.351, which proves that the independent variables, namely brand ambassadors, brand image and digital marketing, can explain the brand trust variable by 35.1%, while the remaining 64.9% can only be explained by various other factors not included in the model. this research. According to the criteria, the R square value > 0.25 indicates the predicted results are in the "moderation" category (Hair et al. 2019).

The purchase intention variable obtains an R squared value of 0.377, which proves that the independent variables, namely brand ambassadors, brand image and digital

marketing, can provide an explanation for the purchase intention variable of 37.7%, while the remaining 62.3% can only be explained by various other factors that are not included in this research model. According to the criteria, the R square value > 0.25 indicates the predicted results are in the "moderation" category (Hair et al. 2019).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, brand ambassadors affect brand trust which states that a brand ambassador that is already trusted by the target market is great at influencing consumer's purchase intention. Consumers will feel a sense of security when the brand ambassador is someone reliable or trustable and will instill brand trust in the minds of the consumers. Brand image affects purchase intention, which proved that a positive brand image from the brand will encourage consumer to be curious to try products which is one of the keys on purchase intention. On the other side, brand trust is also affecting on purchase intention, which states that a brand or a company which is already trusted by the public will increase the purchase intention of the consumer because there is consumer feel safe when buying products from the brand that is trusted. Digital marketing is also proven to have a significant effect on brand trust, this can be explained that if a brand attracted consumer and encourages the confidence of consumer in buying the product from several e-media such as social media, email marketing and else is efficient in having clients interested to purchase the items of the brand. Lastly, this study also proves that brand ambassador is positively affecting purchase intention with the mediation of brand trust, which can be explained because the role of the brand ambassador as a promotion or a "face" of a brand creates sense of trust in consumers who is already familiar with the brand ambassador, and it will directly increase consumer's purchase intention for using the same item with the brand ambassador.

RECOMMENDATION

From the results of the discussion of the research and the conclusions described above, recommendations that can be proposed for researchers who wish to carry out further research, namely: Future research can involve a wider community to increase the number of respondents so as to expand the reach of research and can add research objects that affect the dependent variable significantly so as to provide a broader picture of the factors that influence buying interest. Based on the results of brand trust analysis which has successfully mediated the relationship between brand ambassadors and purchase intention, it is suggested that distributors, both South Korean beauty product companies, should consider brand ambassadors during the promotional period so that brand trust is maintained and attracts consumers so that the possibility of new buyers will be even higher. Brand ambassador role must be someone who is reliable and trusted by the public to enhance more brand trust in order to trigger purchase intention of old and new consumer as well. This research is expected to be a consideration for distributors and sellers of South Korean beauty products in order to find out the factors that influence consumer buying interest.

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