
Korean Wave Moderation Role in The Korean Celebrity Brand Ambassador Influence on Repurchase Intention Through Brand Image On Blibli Online Marketplace: Study in Banda Aceh City

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DOI - <http://doi.org/10.37502/IJSMR.2025.8206>

Abstract

This study examines the Korean wave as a moderation in the model of the Korean celebrity brand ambassadors' effect on repurchase intention through the brand image on the Blibli online marketplace. The research involved 315 respondents in Banda Aceh city, who have used the Blibli online marketplace more than twice for online shopping. Data was collected using a questionnaire, and data was analyzed using Partial Least Squares (PLS) with SmartPLS software. The results reveal that significantly, the Korean celebrity brand ambassador positively affects repurchase intention and brand image, brand image positively affects repurchase intention, brand image positively mediates the Korean celebrity brand ambassador effect on repurchase intention (partially), and the Korean wave negatively moderates the Korean celebrity brand ambassador effect on repurchase intention. These findings indicate that the model of enhanced repurchase intention is influenced by the strengthening of the Korean celebrity brand ambassador and brand image, reinforced by an optimal Korean wave.

Keywords: Korean Celebrity Brand Ambassador, Repurchase Intention, Brand Image, Korean Wave

1. Introduction

The internet serves as a vast communication network that seamlessly connects a variety of electronic media, facilitating rapid and accurate information exchange (Imawan, 2021). In today's highly digitalized world, it has emerged as an essential component of daily life, influencing how people communicate, access information, and interact with one another. Its ubiquity and speed have transformed it into a fundamental necessity, shaping modern society and our interactions within it. According to a survey by "We Are Social" in January 2023, 64.4% of Indonesia's total population uses the internet. This data illustrates that nearly the entire population of Indonesia relies on the internet, both for individual and organizational purposes. Beyond being a communication medium, the internet plays a pivotal role in buying and selling transactions. Today, these transactions can be conducted either directly or indirectly through e-commerce platforms. Based on data from "We Are Social" in January 2023, 62.6% of Indonesia's population engaged in online product and service purchases. This statistic highlights the growing interest of Indonesians in online shopping via e-commerce platforms. The growth of e-commerce in Indonesia continues to accelerate. According to Merchant Machine, Indonesia was one of the fastest-growing e-commerce markets globally, with a 78%

growth rate in 2018. The increasing interest in online shopping has led to the emergence of numerous e-commerce platforms in Indonesia, intensifying competition among providers.

The success of an online marketplace is heavily influenced by its ability to retain existing customers—essentially, how well it can encourage repurchase intention. Repurchase intention refers to a consumer's response to a product or service when their past experiences were positive (Singgih et al., 2024). According to Katadata.co.id (2023), Shopee ranks first for monthly web visitors with 2.349 billion visits, while Blibli ranks fourth, following Tokopedia and Lazada, with 337.4 million visits. A unique and creative brand strategy can foster a positive image in consumers' minds, serving as a key competitive strategy. Brand image is a significant factor influencing consumer purchase intentions on online marketplaces (Kotler & Keller, 2018). Building a strong brand image is a way to ensure consumers recognize the product. However, based on data from the Top Brand Award website in 2021, Blibli ranked lowest in the Top Brand Index with a score of 8.10. Blibli's position remained at the bottom of the rankings up to 2024, demonstrating its weak image in customers' eyes.

The Korean Wave refers to the global spread of South Korean culture across various countries, including Indonesia. Its influence in Indonesia began in 2002 after the South Korea-Japan FIFA World Cup (Putri et al., 2019). When discussing the Korean Wave, the most widely recognized phenomenon is K-Pop. Additionally, its popularity is reflected in Indonesians' consumption patterns for Korean beauty products. According to (Wahidah et al., 2020), Korean fans in Bandung are willing to spend substantial amounts to purchase Korean beauty products endorsed by their idols as brand ambassadors. Some even endure long queues to participate in campaigns featuring their idols. Amid the Korean Wave phenomenon, several e-commerce companies in Indonesia have incorporated Korean celebrities as brand ambassadors. Tokopedia collaborated with South Korean boybands and girl groups such as BTS and Blackpink in 2019. Shopee partnered with Red Velvet and GOT7 in 2019 and Stray Kids in 2020. Lazada appointed South Korean actors Lee Min Ho in 2020 and Hyun Bin in 2021. Blibli also followed this trend, collaborating with South Korean actor Park Seo Joon in 2021 and the boyband NCT 127 in 2022.

Research by (Muslim, 2020) revealed that utilizing brand ambassadors could enhance Tokopedia's brand image and shape consumer attitudes towards the company. Brand ambassadors serve as tools to build consumer trust and communicate the company's products, ultimately forming the company's identity (Wulandari et al., 2019). A brand ambassador essentially represents the brand, delivering information that captivates and leaves a lasting impression on consumers. In February 2021, Blibli introduced Park Seo Joon as its brand ambassador, followed by NCT 127 in July 2022, announced via its social media platform, @blibliidotcom. These appointments targeted Blibli's primary customers Millennials and Generation Z who lead dynamic lifestyles and are deeply engaged in the digital sphere. Park Seo Joon and NCT 127 embody the enthusiasm of young Millennials, encouraging creativity and talent utilization. Park Seo Joon was chosen because of the spirit of optimism and productivity he inspires in Millennials, who constitute Blibli's primary user base (Supriadi, 2021).

Tabel 1. Top Brand Index Blibli

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
8.40	8.10	10.10	10.60	6.60

Source: Top Brand Award, 2024 (www.topbrand-award.com)

The Top Brand Index (TBI) is an award for the best brands based on consumer surveys. The performance of these brands is measured through mind share, market share, and commitment share. A higher TBI score indicates that consumers highly favor the brand's products. Since Park Seo Joon and NCT 127 were appointed as Blibli's brand ambassadors, consumer interest in Blibli has increased significantly from 2021 to 2023. Based on the above data, it is evident that employing a Korean celebrity brand ambassador strategy can enhance a company's reputation, revenue, and sales. This is because consumers tend to show interest and attraction toward engaging in transactions on such online marketplaces. Research by (Yuliadewi, 2021) revealed that brand ambassadors have a positive and significant influence on purchase intention. However, this finding contrasts with the study conducted by (Nuriyah et al., 2023), which concluded that brand ambassadors do not affect purchase intention. Similarly, (Lestari et al., 2019) stated that brand ambassadors positively influence brand image, while (Puspita et al., 2023) argued that brand ambassadors have no significant positive effect on brand image. Furthermore, research by (Hermanda et al., 2019) found that brand image positively and significantly influences purchase intention, which contradicts the findings of (Haitao, 2022), who claimed that brand image does not impact purchase intention. Due to inconsistencies in previous research findings analyzing the influence of brand ambassadors on repurchase intention, the author includes a moderating variable, namely the Korean Wave. This aligns with the perspective of (David & Salman, 2022), who stated that the Korean Wave could amplify the effect of brand ambassadors as a determinant variable of repurchase intention. Although Blibli utilizes similar strategies, such as Korean celebrity brand ambassadors and social media marketing, it consistently ranks at the bottom compared to competitors such as Tokopedia, Shopee, and Lazada. Therefore, this research aims to investigate the factors contributing to Blibli's lower ranking, involving the variables namely Korean wave, Korean celebrity brand ambassadors, brand image, and repurchase intention.

2. Literature

Repurchase Intention

Repurchase intention refers to the intention to repurchase, defined as an individual's evaluation of the decision to repurchase goods or services from the same company, considering their current situation and positive feelings (Hellier et al., 2003). Repurchase intention is commonly used by academics and marketing practitioners to measure purchasing responses and monitor customer loyalty (Dong et al., 2022). According to (Memarista & Wijaya, 2024), repurchase intention refers to the likelihood of consumers repurchasing a product based on factors such as perceived convenience and perceived value in the context of online shopping. Similarly, (Algazali et al., 2024) describe repurchase intention as the interest of consumers to make purchases again based on previous satisfactory experiences, leading to the likelihood of repeated purchasing behavior. So, from these explanations, it can be revealed that repurchase intention is the desire of consumers to repurchase a product or service after conducting an overall evaluation of the product or service. According to (Meilatinova, 2021), the indicators

for measuring repurchase intention are: transactional intention, referential intention, preferential intention, and exploratory intention.

Korean Celebrity Brand Ambassador

A brand ambassador is a tool used by companies to communicate and connect with the public with the goal of increasing sales (Gani, 2021). In a highly competitive business environment, companies adopt various strategies to enhance public interest in their brand. According to (Ambroise et al., 2014), a brand ambassador can shift consumer preferences from rational preferences to stronger and more emotional preferences for a brand. By utilizing brand ambassadors, companies can convey their messages socially and commercially to consumers. The use of brand ambassadors is a marketing strategy employed by companies to develop and introduce their products in the global market. According to (Chukwu & Pius, 2021), a brand ambassador is an individual who has a strong connection with a product or a public figure, such as a celebrity, used to promote and advertise that product. The primary role of a brand ambassador is to cultivate and enhance consumer awareness of the brand they represent. With a multitude of product categories and brands inundating the market, the inherent quality and value of goods cannot always be readily assessed. Brand ambassadors play a crucial role in facilitating marketing activities both locally and globally (Chukwu & Pius, 2021). Their presence helps bridge the information gap between companies and target consumers, ensuring that consumers receive adequate information about the products. Additionally, a brand ambassador strengthens consumer engagement with the product itself. The brand itself is the most valuable asset for a company in promoting its products. A brand ambassador helps create a stronger emotional connection between the brand or company and its consumers. According to (Suleman et al., 2023), the indicators of a brand ambassador are: transference, congruence, credibility, attractiveness, and power.

Brand Image

The brand image represents the overall perception of a brand, shaped by the information and experiences associated with it. It refers to the perceptions, impressions, and associations that customers hold about a brand. The brand image evolves over time, influenced by various factors such as previous experiences with the brand, its products or services, and the extent to which customers personally relate to the brand's identity (Mishael, 2021). According to (Simamora, 2015), brand image refers to the perceptions and feelings that consumers associate with a brand name, essentially reflecting what they have learned about it. This image is shaped by the accumulation of various information that consumers receive, which they interpret in their own ways. A brand's image can be encapsulated in the logos or symbols that a company uses to represent its products. These visual elements not only distinguish the brand from its competitors but also convey the quality and values of the company. According to (Fausan, 2020), brand image is used by consumers to decide which goods or services they will purchase. The brand image consists of consumer perceptions or beliefs that a particular brand is distinct from others, such as its symbol, typography, or specific colors. Based on (Sembiring, 2020), the indicators of brand image are: corporation image, user image, and product image.

Korean Wave

Korean Wave, also known as Hallyu, refers to the wave of Korean culture encompassing television dramas, films, music, games, food, fashion, beauty products, and even tourism (Jang

& Paik, 2012). According to (Siskhawati & Maulana, 2021), Hallyu is defined as a phenomenon of popular culture from South Korea that spreads through mass media and has gained widespread popularity across Asia. Korean Wave, as described by (Karya et al., 2021), represents a popular cultural phenomenon that is disseminated widely via mass media and has successfully expanded its influence throughout Asia. The admiration for Korean celebrities, Korean television dramas, and K-pop positively influences Korea's image. This positive perception often extends to Korean brands. For instance, individuals who enjoy Korean movies, dramas, or music are more likely to purchase related products such as CDs, concert tickets, and other merchandise. A study conducted by (Kozhakhmetova, 2012) revealed that the majority of fans of Korean culture prefer to buy beauty products originating from South Korea. According to (Storey, 2008), the consumption of popular culture often leads to the emergence of fandoms. Korean culture enthusiasts frequently form communities based on shared interests and passions. The growth of these communities and the popularity of the Korean Wave have led to a lifestyle modeled on Korean culture (Wahidah et al., 2020). The impact of the Korean Wave transcends popular culture, becoming a benchmark for positive lifestyles among many Asians. Based on (Lita & Cho, 2012), the indicators of the Korean Wave are : understanding, attitude and behavior, and perception.

3. Method

The population in this study comprises all residents of Banda Aceh City who have used the online marketplace Blibli as a platform for online shopping. The sample includes residents of Banda Aceh City who have used the Blibli online marketplace for shopping more than twice. According to (Azizah et al., 2021), the minimum sample size for a study can be determined by multiplying the number of questionnaire statements by five (5) to ten (10). Thus, the sample size in this study is calculated as follows: 45 statements \times 7 = 315 Therefore, the study sample comprises 315 respondents. To analyze the data, this study uses Partial Least Squares (PLS) by performing SmartPLS software. According to (Yuniarti et al., 2023), the analysis steps using PLS involve five stages: conceptualizing the model, determining the algorithm, determining the resampling method, drawing the path, and evaluating the model. The hypothesis tested in this research is as follows.

H1: significantly Korean celebrity brand ambassador affects repurchase intention

H1: significantly Korean celebrity brand ambassador affects brand image

H3: significantly brand image affects repurchase intention

H4: significantly brand image mediates the Korean celebrity brand ambassador effect on repurchase intention

H5: significantly Korean wave moderates the Korean celebrity brand ambassador effect on repurchase intention

4. Result

Respondent Characteristics

The information below presents data on the respondents' profiles, viewed from several aspects such as gender, age, education, occupation, and income.

Tabel 2. Respondent Characteristics

	Freq.	Percentage
Sex :		
▪ Man	122	38.7%
▪ Woman	193	61.3%
Total	315	100,0%
Age (years old):		
▪ <20	96	30.5%
▪ 20-29	143	45.4%
▪ 30-39	59	18.7%
▪ >40	17	5.4%
Total	315	100,0%
Education:		
▪ Junior High School	34	10.8%
▪ High School	177	56.2%
▪ College/University	104	33.0%
Total	315	100,0%
Occupation :		
▪ Student	211	67.0%
▪ Government Staff/Civil Servant	41	13.0%
▪ State Own Enterprise Staff	28	8.9%
▪ Entrepreneur	15	4.8%
▪ Private Sector Staff	20	6.3%
Total	315	100.0%
Revenue (IDR):		
▪ < 500,000	38	12.1%
▪ 500,000 – 1,500,000	135	42.9%
▪ 1,500,000 – 3.000,000	48	15.2%
▪ 3,000,000 – 5.000,000	51	16.2%
▪ >5,000,000	43	13.7%
Total	315	100.0%

Compared to male respondents, the number of female respondents is higher, with 193 female respondents and 122 male respondents. In terms of age, the majority of respondents fall within the 20 to 29 age group, totaling 143 individuals. This is followed by respondents under the age of 20, numbering 96, and respondents aged 30 to 39, totaling 59 individuals. Regarding education, most respondents have a high school education, with 177 individuals, followed by 104 respondents with a college education and 34 respondents who graduated from junior high school. From the perspective of occupation, the majority of respondents identified as students, totaling 211 individuals, followed by civil servants (PNS) and employees of state-owned enterprises, with 41 and 28 respondents, respectively. Additionally, 20 respondents were private-sector employees.

Measurement Model

The following image is obtained from the results of measurement model testing.

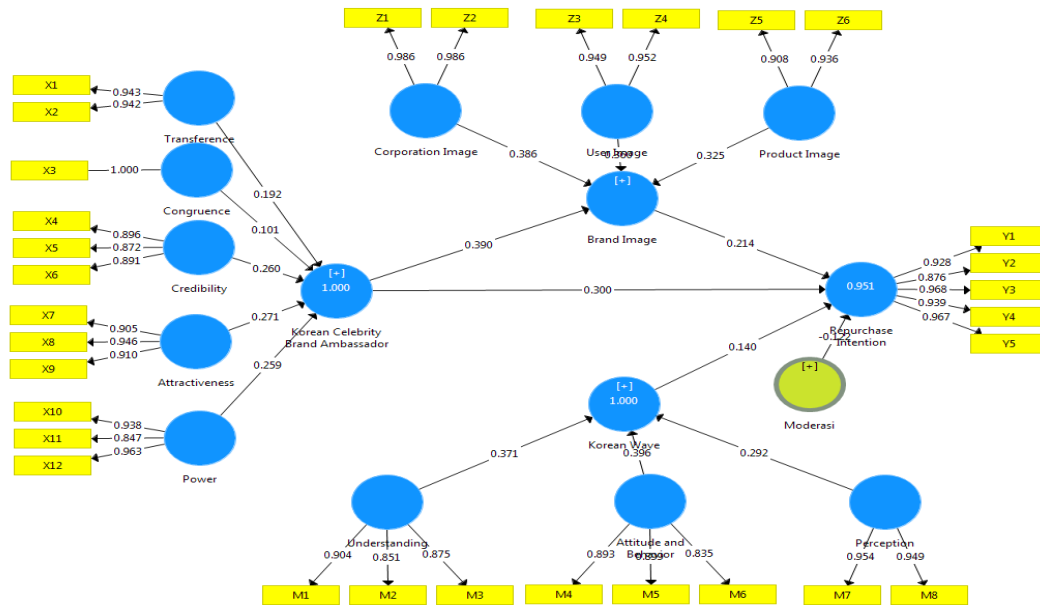


Figure 1. PLS Diagram

Validity Test

To test validity, it can be assessed through discriminant validity, where the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value should be > 0.50 for it to be considered valid.

Table 3. AVE

Variable	AVE
Korean Celebrity Brand Ambassador	0,725
Korean Wave	0,715
Brand Image	0,790
Repurchase Intention	0,877

Reliability Test

The reliability is explained by evaluating Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability values. If both values are > 0.7, the research data is considered to have sufficient reliability.

Table 4. Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Korean Celebrity Brand Ambassador	0,965	0,969
Korean Wave	0,942	0,952
Brand Image	0,946	0,943
Repurchase Intention	0,964	0,973

Structural Test (Inner Model)

The structural test in this study is to test existing hypotheses, which reveal the results with the following explanation.

Table 5. Hypothesis Test

Variable	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Stand. Dev.	t- statistics	p-values
X → Y	0.300	0.297	0.066	4.511	0.000
X → Z	0.390	0.390	0.010	3.212	0.000
Z → Y	0.214	0.210	0.058	3.683	0.000
X → Z → Y	0.083	0.083	0.022	3.695	0.000
X → M → Y	-0.122	-0.132	0.041	2.943	0.003

H1: Korean Celebrity Brand Ambassador on Repurchase Intention

The evidence shows the Korean celebrity brand ambassador's effect on repurchase intention is positive and significant. This is explained by a t-statistic of 4.511 (>1.96), meaning hypothesis 1 is accepted. This finding explains that the more appropriate the Korean celebrity brand ambassador, the more repurchase intention will increase.

H2: Korean Celebrity Brand Ambassador on Brand Image

The evidence shows the Korean celebrity brand ambassador's effect on brand image is positive and significant. This is described by a t-statistic of 3.212 (>1.96), meaning hypothesis 2 is accepted. This finding explains that the more precise the Korean celebrity brand ambassador, the more precise the brand image will be.

H3: Brand Image on Repurchase Intention

The evidence shows the brand image effect on repurchase intention is positive and significant. It is revealed by a t-statistic of 3.683 (>1.96), meaning hypothesis 3 is accepted. These findings explain that the more precise the brand image, the more repurchase intention will increase.

H4: Brand Image in Mediating the Korean Celebrity Brand Ambassador on Repurchase Intention

The evidence shows the brand image mediation effect on Korean celebrity brand ambassador effect on repurchase intention is positive and significant. It is described by a t-statistic of 3.695 (>1.96), meaning hypothesis 4 is accepted. These findings explain that the right brand image will mediate the impact of Korean celebrity brand ambassador on repurchase intention.

H5: Korean Wave in Moderating the Korean Celebrity Brand Ambassador on Repurchase Intention

The evidence shows the Korean wave effect as a moderating variable on the Korean celebrity brand ambassador effect on repurchase intention is significant but negative. It is explained by a t-statistic of 2.943 (>1.96), meaning hypothesis 5 is accepted. Negative moderation means the possibility that an excessive Korean wave will weaken the Korean celebrity brand

ambassador's effect on repurchase intention, conversely with an appropriate Korean wave it will support the performance of the Korean celebrity brand ambassador to influence repurchase intention.

5. Conclusion

The discussion above concludes that significantly, the Korean celebrity brand ambassador positively affects repurchase intention and brand image, brand image positively affects repurchase intention, brand image positively mediates the Korean celebrity brand ambassador effect on repurchase intention (partially), and the Korean wave negatively moderates the Korean celebrity brand ambassador effect on repurchase intention. These findings indicate that the model of enhanced repurchase intention is influenced by the strengthening of the Korean celebrity brand ambassador and brand image, reinforced by an optimal Korean wave. These insights contribute to the academic field and can serve as a valuable reference for further research on current trends in marketing. Research limitations lie in the variables and subject settings studied. Furthermore, from the findings, several recommendations for the research subject were also mapped out. Therefore, Blibli can focus its strategy more on determining the right brand ambassador by considering the Korean wave, and strengthening its brand image as needed.

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