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Brand ambassador power: Can Twice's endorsement boost Scarlett Whitening's brand value?

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ABSTRACT

Brand name plays a crucial role in the sustainability of a business. Business owners continually strive to enhance their brand name to make it more memorable to consumers. Scarlett Whitening is a well-known local skincare brand that utilizes Korean public figures to promote its products to the international market. This study investigates the impact of using a Korean brand ambassador on the brand value of Scarlett Whitening. To achieve this, the author distributed questionnaires to 105 respondents selected through judgmental sampling. The results indicated that the visibility and credibility of Twice girlband had no significant effect on brand value, whereas their attractiveness and power did. This study reveals that brand ambassadors influence brand value due to their attractiveness and power.



INTRODUCTION

Expansion of cultural-related performance among nations is common, including from Korea. Korean culture is growing rapidly through fashion and entertainment. It is undeniable that nowadays all things Korean is in great demand by many people. Korean culture that began to enter the country of Indonesia made everyone flocked to continue to follow the current trends from that country. Whether it's in terms of songs, films (Korean dramas), makeup and skincare, style of dress (fashion), food, idols, and speaking styles, all of them can almost be categorized as having flowed into the Indonesian state. This eventually gave birth to a phenomenon called the 'Korean Wave'. "Originally, the Korean Wave, or Hallyu, is referred as the phenomenon of Korean pop culture, such as TV dramas, films, pop music, fashion, and online games being widely embraced and shared among the people of Japan, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and other Asian countries."

In 2019, Twitter announced a list of countries that tweeted via Media Outreach Newswire that the most about K-Pop artists throughout 2019 and Indonesia was ranked 3rd after Thailand and South Korea. As for viewing K-Pop videos on Youtube by country, Indonesia ranks 2nd with a percentage of 9.9% (Won So, 2020). These data provide evidence that Indonesia is indeed very close and is starting to become thick with Korean culture.

Business entrepreneurs view the above phenomenon as a business opportunity to leverage the popularity of Korean trends to boost sales. By incorporating Korean elements into their business, they aim to attract more consumers who are interested in Korean culture. In today's competitive business landscape, companies are constantly looking for creative and innovative ways to make their brand stand out and capture the public's attention. One strategy is to partner with Korean public figures as brand ambassadors, which can help increase brand visibility and appeal to fans of Korean culture.

The use of a brand ambassador for a brand means that the characteristics of the brand ambassador should be in consideration. Koster and Percy (Royan, 2016:15) stated that those characteristics are visibility, credibility, attraction, and power. By paying attention to these characteristics, it is hoped that the use of brand ambassadors can be successful and work optimally which in the end can help instill the brand in the minds of consumers, generate interest and end up making a purchase.

One of the brands currently using Korean public figures as brand ambassadors is Scarlett Whitening, this is a local brand owned by Indonesian actress, Felicya Angelista. Of the several existing brands, Scarlett is the one that holds this concept with the aim of expanding sales to the global market. Scarlett focuses on producing skin care products to treat dry, dull and dark skin problems.

Scarlett was founded in 2017 and is produced by PT. Sinar Alfa Omega, Tangerang, Banten. They produce skin care such as facecare, bodycare, and haircare with various variants as needed. As we know, the skin is the outermost organ of the body that can be a source of confidence in one's appearance. Not only for women, but men nowadays are also starting to entrust their skin care products to make it look healthier and more well-groomed.

It is evident from the enthusiasm of consumers when buying products in e-commerce, one of which is Shopee. If you look at the category that is most in demand and purchased on the platform, it is the beauty category. This makes businesses engaged in beauty have added value in the eyes of the community, because they see the

Brand ambassador power: Can Twice's endorsement boost Scarlett Whitening's brand value?

importance of self-care at this time. Scarlett as a brand that is included in this category is finally loved by many people.

Even though Felicya Angelista is a fairly well-known public figure in Indonesia and this fame may also influence the sales of her products to increase further, marketing tactics and strategies are still needed to maximize sales. One of the strategies they do is, as mentioned above, they collaborate with brand ambassadors who come from Korea or what they call star ambassadors to be more different from the mention of brand ambassadors in general.

This certainly surprised Scarlett lovers and the public, from the beginning they succeeded in making a Korean actor named 'Song Joong-Ki' then Scarlett made a Korean girl group named 'Twice' their star ambassador. Unmitigated, these two star ambassadors are quite well-known public figures in Korea. Felicya Angelista as the owner of this brand really likes the Korean world so this is what encourages this to happen.

By making 'Twice' as Scarlett's star ambassador, Scarlett hopes that everyone who uses Scarlett products, especially women, can be more confident, show true charm, and become the best version of themselves. Scarlett even issued the latest tagline when collaborating with Twice, namely 'Reveal Your Beauty' to further support this. The collaboration between Scarlett and Twice is planned to last until 2022.

The fans of Twice in Indonesia (also called ONCE) are very large and their enthusiasm is very high for their idol, so it is hoped that this collaboration between Scarlett and Twice can have a good impact on the company and can also provide happiness for fans of the Korean girl group. The good impact in question is in terms of increasing brand value or what is also known as brand value rather than Scarlett. The notion of brand value itself is "The total value of how much people are willing to pay more, or how often they choose, the hopes, memories, stories and relationships of one brand over another." (Seth Godin in Forbes.com)

In this study, the researcher aims to investigate whether the use of Twice as a brand ambassador increases consumers' willingness to buy Scarlett Whitening products. Specifically, this study examines the impact of visibility (popularity), credibility, attractiveness, and power (Kurniawan & Kunto) on the brand value of Scarlett Whitening.

LITERATURE REVIEW

K-Pop

K-Pop or Korean Pop is a type of genre or type of music originating from South Korea, usually this type of genre has the characteristics of cheerful songs with fast tempos and uses Korean lyrics that are also mixed with a little English and accompanied by modern dance Yuanita (2012:3-4). In addition, Korean pop personnel are Koreans, most of whom have beautiful and handsome faces, look fashionable, and always try to show maximum performance. This is what makes many other young people from various countries in Asia participate in imitating the Korean pop style.

Meanwhile, according to Emilie (2012) K-pop is an abbreviation of Korean Pop (Korean Pop Music), which is a type of popular music originating from South Korea. The talented young generation (such as songwriters, producers) have learned a lot about the global music scene by bringing about change and incorporating elements of their

country in their creations. Korean pop is centered on idol groups (usually teenagers) who have greater popularity than solo singers.

From some of the definitions above, it can be concluded that K-Pop is a term for a group of teenage singers between women or men who sing songs accompanied by modern dances with the pop genre using mostly Korean lyrics in it. Many like K-Pop songs sung by Korean girl groups or boy bands because they sound cool to listen to, which in the end brings and makes the group idolized by many people. For the definition of K-Pop girl group itself, it can be defined as a group of female singers who have beautiful faces and slim bodies while singing cheerful songs to attract the attention of many people.

Reference Group

A reference group is a group to which an individual compares themselves or another group, serving as a standard for their own behavior and self-evaluation (Thompson, 2004; Thompson et al., 2017). Reference groups act as benchmarks for comparing and evaluating individual and group characteristics (Bapna & Umyarov, 2015; Escalas & Bettman, 2005). This concept remains relevant in social sciences and psychology today. According to the American Psychological Association (2018), a reference group is "a group or social aggregate that individuals use as a standard or frame of reference when selecting and appraising their own abilities, attitudes, or beliefs."

Marketers generally agree that reference groups can be individuals or groups (Bapna & Umyarov, 2015; Dang Vu et al., 2020; Escalas & Bettman, 2005; Park & Lessig, 1977). Specifically, a reference group is an individual or group used as a comparison or benchmark by someone in forming knowledge, values, attitudes, or behavior (Bapna & Umyarov, 2015). Reference group theory assumes that consumers will adopt the standard values and behaviors of people they consider important, using them as a basis for self-assessments, comparisons, and choices regarding needs and information gathering (Dawson & Chatman, 2001)."

Brand Ambassador

Brand ambassadors are part of reference group. Brand ambassador, also known as supporters of a brand, act as stars of the brand as a form to support promotional and sales activities. The use of brand ambassadors usually aims to influence the audience so that they are interested in buying and using products from a brand. The selection of the brand ambassador usually uses a well-known public figure and has a positive appeal among the public.

Brand ambassadors have their own characteristics or indicators as a reference. The characteristics or indicators used in evaluating the use of brand ambassadors in marketing activities according to Koster and Percy (Royan, 2016:15) which is also known as the VisCAP model, consist of visibility, credibility, attraction and power.

Brand Value

Brand value is also called value equity or value for money (VFM) is a comparison between the benefits obtained and the costs incurred. Equity value answers the question: "What do I get for my money?" (Bigevo, 2022). Kotler and Keller (2016) argue that the value of a brand is directly related to the perception and mind set of prospects and customers. Brand value reflects the direct and indirect brand experience of what they have seen, heard, learned, thought and felt over time.

Brand ambassador power: Can Twice's endorsement boost Scarlett Whitening's brand value?

Brand value correlates positively with the possibility or availability of consumers or audiences in spending more or extra money for a brand or brand. The availability is of course based on the factors that consumers feel about the brand. The success or success of a product to be purchased and finally paid for by consumers is closely related to brand value.

METHODS

The subject of research is actual and potential consumers of Scarlett Whitening products that are familiar with Twice. The research instrument used is several forms of systematically arranged questions or statements addressed to a certain group in accordance with the research objectives required and in the end the data is then recorded, then processed, and analyzed. With this step, researchers can obtain facts from the phenomena that arise and also get factual information. When a series of studies have been carried out, starting from data collection, data processing, to data analysis, then conclusions are made and reports are prepared based on the data that has been obtained to see whether there is a proven relationship or influence relationship between variables.

Brand value is dependent variables and independent variables are visibility (popularity), credibility, attractiveness, and power. Sugiyono (2017:39) explained dependent variable is a variable whose value depends on that of another. The independent is the variable that influence dependent variable.

The data are collected using questionnaires addressed to Scarlett consumers who have long been loyal customers or new consumers who are just interested in buying when they find out 'Twice' as a star ambassador.

The measurements utilize five level Likert scale. Likert scale is used to measure a person's attitude, opinion or perception about an attitude object from a social phenomenon (Sugiyono, 2018: 93). The indicators of the attitude variable towards an object are the starting point in making questions or statements that must be filled out by respondents. Meanwhile, literature study is all efforts made by researchers to collect information relevant to the topic or problem being studied. In this study, the efforts made consisted of searching, reading, and collecting reading materials from books and the internet.

In this study, using a non-probability sampling technique, namely purposive sampling. In this study, the purpose of the research was to find out whether making the K-Pop girl group Twice influential or having an effect on increasing the value of the Scarlett Whitening brand, then consumers who had purchased products from Scarlett after the announcement period of Scarlett made 'Twice' as star ambassador the sample, which is relevant.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Visibility and credibility indicators has a sig value of $0.101 > 0.05$ which means that the variable with the indicator has no significant effect on the Brand Value variable. However, the regression coefficient has a positive value of 0.124 which means that it shows a positive influence given. With this, it shows that H_a with the statement "Visibility (popularity) and credibility (credibility) indicators have a positive effect on increasing the Scarlett Whitening Brand Value" is still accepted.

Based on the data analysis that has been done, it is known that there is a significant relationship between the Attraction and Power indicator variables and the

Brand Value variable in this study. This is supported by the results of the partial test or T test where the variable with the indicator has a Sig value. of $0.000 < 0.05$, which means that the Attraction and Power variables here have a significant effect on the Brand Value variable. Then, for the positive regression coefficient, which is 0.548, it can also be said that there is a positive influence given to this indicator. With this, it shows that H_0 the statement "Attractiveness and power indicators have a positive effect on increasing the Scarlett Whitening brand value" is accepted.

CONCLUSIONS

The visibility and credibility of brand ambassador have a positive but not significant effect on brand value. In other word, the popularity of a brand ambassador has less of an influence on consumer interest and its credibility is less convincing. Brand Ambassador influences brand value positively through attractiveness and power. In other word, the attractiveness and strength of Twice is capable of persuading consumers.

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**Brand ambassador power: Can Twice's endorsement boost Scarlett
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**Brand ambassador power: Can Twice's endorsement boost Scarlett
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