

The Influence of Brand Ambassador and Brand Image on Skintific Skincare Purchase Decisions in Gen Z Management Study Program, University of Sumatera Utara

Esty Murniawaty Br Situmorang, Alfifto*, Eka Dewi Setia Tarigan, Irwansyah Putra, Amrin Mulia Utama Nasution

Faculty of Economics and Business, Management Study Program, Universitas Medan Area, Medan, Indonesia

Jl. Kolam No. 1, Medan Estate, Medan 20223, Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

Email: ¹emurniawatybrsitumorang@gmail.com, ^{2,*}alfifto@staff.uma.ac.id, ³ekadewi@staff.uma.ac.id,

⁴irwansyahputra@staff.uma.ac.id, ⁵amrinmulia@staff.uma.ac.id

Correspondence Author Email: alfifto@staff.uma.ac.id

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Abstract—This study aims to determine the influence of brand ambassadors and brand image on purchasing decisions for Skintific skincare among Gen Z students at the Management Study Program, University of Sumatera Utara. The sample in this study used purposive sampling consisting of 100 respondents who use Skintific. The data analysis techniques used were descriptive analysis and statistical analysis, with data collected through questionnaires. The results of the study show that the influence of brand ambassadors and brand image simultaneously has a significant effect on purchasing decisions with an F-count value of 81.314 > F-table value of 3090. The test conducted shows that brand ambassadors and brand image partially have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. The Adjusted R Square value obtained from testing the coefficient of determination (R) on purchasing decisions was 0.619, meaning that 61.9% can be explained by brand ambassadors and brand image, while the remaining 38.1% can be explained by other factors not examined in this study.

Keywords: Brand Ambassador; Brand Image; Purchase Decision

1. INTRODUCTION

The modern world today is getting closer to the era of modernity. Over time, the development of telecommunication technology has spread to all corners of the world making work easier for anyone who uses it (Maharani and Achmad, 2024). In recent years, skincare trends (skincare) in particular has become dominant, driven by consumer behaviors that prioritize their time to take care of the skin (Verni and Sumaryanto, 2024). This is driven along with the increase in people's purchasing power, more and more people are willing to spend money on skincare products. This trend opens up huge business opportunities in the beauty industry, especially in product development and marketing skincare innovative and quality. One of Skintific's products occupies the first position in the sale of beauty care packages. The five others that are ranked 2nd after Skintific consist of MS Glow, The Originote, Daviena Skincare, and Benings Indonesia. The sales value generated by the official Skintific store is Rp. 64 billion while the sales value obtained from non-official stores such as Rp. 7 billion. This achievement proves the high level of consumer trust in Skintific, both in terms of quality, product effectiveness, and consistent and responsive customer service. Product Skintific is a variant of a 5 pcs beauty package consisting of moisture gel, cleanser, toner, serum, and sunscreen.

Skintific stands out as a brand that focuses on long-term skin health by providing five different variants of beauty packages according to specific skin needs. The 5 pcs package variant is the main contributor to sales in official stores, showing the high interest of consumers in complete skincare packages. On the other hand, the 2 pcs package recorded the lowest sales of IDR 5 billion. Therefore, Skintific needs to develop a variety of new beauty packages to meet the diverse needs of customers. Understanding consumer needs is the key to making them decide to buy Skintific products. According to Arista & Fikriyah (2022) The purchase decision is an important stage for consumers where they have to choose one product from a variety of options that must be available, according to their needs. Thus, consumers need to consider various factors before making a decision to buy a product. Especially for generation Z.

According to Jasmine et al., (2023) Generation Z or often referred to as Gen Z is a group born after generation Y, namely those born between 1995 and 2010. There are several factors that affect the purchase decision, one of which is brand ambassador. According to Yolanda & Soesanto, (2017) Pemilihan brand ambassador The right one can help consumers to more easily remember the brand, while maintaining brand stability in a competitive environment. In this case, Skintific implements a strategy to increase awareness Public to the existence of Skintific by choosing Nicholas Saputra as brand ambassador. The selection of celebrities as Brand Ambassadors aims to make the brand easier to recognize and remember by consumers, so that it can encourage their interest in buying promoted products (Sagia & Situmorang, 2018). According to Arista & Fikriyah (2022) A brand ambassador is an individual, generally a celebrity or public figure, who has the ability to influence consumer perception and psychology of the brand he represents. Their presence can foster a strong attachment in the minds of consumers. Meanwhile, according to Maharani and Achmad, (2024) brand ambassador is someone who has enthusiasm in representing a company or product with the aim of promoting the brand directly to the public. Not only brand ambassador, Brand Image also drives the purchase decision. according to Naomi & Ardhiyansyah (2021) Brand Image is the impression that consumers or the public have of a brand, which reflects their assessment of the brand. According to Jasmine et al., (2023) Brand image reflects beliefs and perceptions imprinted in consumers' memories, including associations formed over time.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach to determine the extent of the influence of the free variable on the bound variable. The data analysis method used is in the form of quantitative analysis with data in the form of numbers. The data is then simplified to make it easier to read and interpret. The data processing process is carried out by grouping data according to the variables used in this study.

Table 1. Variable Operational Definition

Variabel	Defenisi	Variable Indicators	Scale
Brand Ambassador (X1)	<i>A brand ambassador</i> is a person who has a good relationship or a celebrity who is used to promote and advertise products or services (Nofiwaty et al., 2020).	1. Visibiity 2. Kredibiitas 3. Attraction 4. Power (Astika & Nurfebiaraning, 2022)	<i>Likert</i>
Brand Image (X2)	<i>Brand Image</i> is the perception that consumers have about a product, which can be both positive and negative (Amelia & Riva'i, 2022).	1. The strength of brand association 2. . The uniqueness of the brand association 3. Advantages of brand association (Oktavia et al., 2022)	<i>Likert</i>
Purchase Decision (Y)	Purchasing decisions are a process that involves making decisions about whether or not a good or service will be purchased. This process begins with awareness of a need or desire that needs to be fulfilled (Ragatirta & Tiningrum, 2020)	1. Product selection 2. Product selection 3. Distributor selection 4. Time of purchase 5. Purchase amount 6. Payment Methods (Kotler & Amstrong 2018)	<i>Likert</i>

From the results of the operationalization of the variables to be tested, the value of the variable will be included in the SPSS (statistical program for social science) test. The location of this research was carried out at the Management Study Program, University of Sumatra. The population in this study is students of the Management Study Program of the University of Utra from 2022-2024 which totals 7 students. The sampling technique used is a non-probability sampling technique, namely the purposive sampling technique. So the sample in this study is 100 respondents with the following criteria: Active students of the management study program at the University of North Sumatra, Gen Z (born between 1995-2010), Stambuk 2022-2024 and have bought and used Skintific skincare.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Data Analysis Results

3.1.1 Classic Assumption Testing

a. Histogram

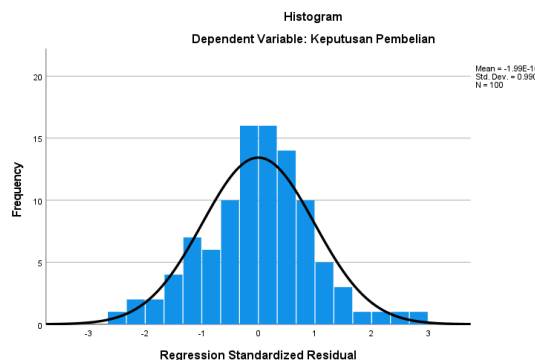


Figure 1. Normality Test with Histogram

Based on the Figure, it can be seen that the variable is normally distributed, this is indicated by the distribution of data that is bell-shaped and does not deviate to the left or right.

b. Normal P-P Plot

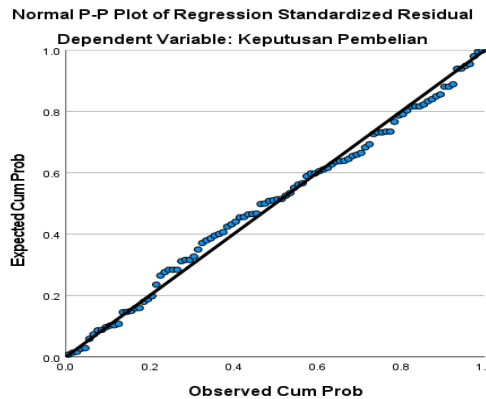


Figure 2. Test Normality with Normal P-P Plot

The image shows that the point that follows the data along the diagonal line is visible in the image. This shows that the residual researcher is normal. However, to further ensure that along the diagonal line is normally distributed, the *Kolmogorov-Smirnov test* is performed.

c. Pendekatan *Kolmogorov-Smirnov*

Table 2. Uji *Kolmogorov-Smirnov*

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
Unstandardized Residual		
N		100
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	4.08440805
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.050
	Positive	.044
	Negative	-.050
Test Statistic		.050
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) ^c		.200 ^d

In the Table it can be seen that the value *Asymp.Sig.(2-tailed)* is 0.200 and is greater than the significance level, which is 0.05 ($0.200 > 0.05$), indicating that the data is normally distributed.

d. Multicollinearity Test

Table 3. Multicollinearity Test

Model	Coefficients ^a					Collinearity Statistics		
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta					
1 (Constant)	6.962	3.135			2.221	.029		
Brand Ambassador	.380	.124	.266		3.068	.003	.512	1.954
Brand Image	1.176	.175	.582		6.712	.000	.512	1.954

a. Dependent Variable: Keputusan Pembelian

In the table, it can be concluded that in the regression model used, there are no symptoms of multicollinearity between independent variables. The calculation results showed that the *Tolerance* value of the *Brand Ambassador* variable (X1) was 0.512 and the *VIF* value was 1.954, and the *Tolerance* value of the *Brand Image* (X2) variable was 0.512 and the *VIF* value was 1.954. Thus, it can be seen that the *Tolerance* value of each independent variable is ≥ 0.1 with a *VIF* value of < 10 . Therefore, based on the test criteria, it can be concluded that multicollinearity does not occur.

e. Heteroscedasticity Test

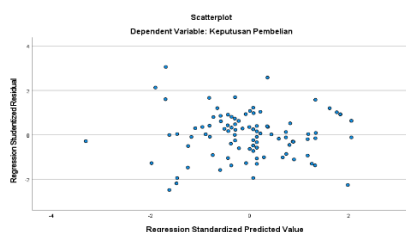


Figure 3. Heteroscedasticity with Scatterplots

Based on the figure, it is known that the dots are scattered randomly, scattered both above and below the zero on the Y axis and do not form a definite pattern. Therefore, the regression model is said to have undergone heteroscedasticity.

Table 3. Glejser Test Results

Model	Coefficients ^a				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	5.964	1.981		3.010	.003
Brand Ambassador	.033	.078	.060	.427	.670
Brand Image	-.162	.111	-.205	-1.465	.146

a. Dependent Variable: absut

In Table 3, it is known that no independent variable or statistically significant independent variable affects the bound variable or dependent variable. This is shown by the value of the Sig. Variable – an independent variable that is greater than the significance value of 0.05. So this regression model can be concluded that it does not experience heteroscedasticity.

f. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Table 4. Linear Regression

Model	Coefficients ^a				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	6.962	3.135		2.221	.029
Brand Ambassador	.380	.124	.266	3.068	.003
Brand Image	1.176	.175	.582	6.712	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Keputusan Pembelian

Based on the multiple linear regression equation, it can be explained as follows:

The constant (β_0) = 6.962 indicates that if the *Brand Ambassador* and *Brand Image* are considered constant, then the Purchase Decision variable has a value of 6.962.

1. The constant (β_1) = 0.380 indicates a positive influence which means that if the *Brand Ambassador* variable increases by one unit, the value of the Purchase Decision also increases by 0.380 units and vice versa.
2. Constant (β_2) = 1.176 shows a positive influence which means that if the *Brand Image* variable increases by one unit, the value of the Purchase Decision also increases by 1.176 units and vice versa.

g. Hipotesys

Partial test (t test)

Table 5. Partial Test

Model	Coefficients ^a				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	6.962	3.135		2.221	.029
Brand Ambassador	.380	.124	.266	3.068	.003
Brand Image	1.176	.175	.582	6.712	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Keputusan Pembelian

Based on the results of the partial test (t-test) described above, it can be concluded that:

1. Independent Variable X1 (*Brand Ambassador*)
The *Brand Ambassador* variable has a significant effect on the Purchase Decision. This can be seen from the significant value (0.003) < of 0.05 and t-count (3.068) > compared to the t-table (1.984).
2. Independent Variable X2 (*Brand Image*)
Brand Image variables have a significant effect on Purchase Decisions. This can be seen from the significant value (0.000) < from 0.05 and t-count (6.712) > compared to the t-table (1.984).

h. Simultaneous Test Results (f-test)

Table 6. Simultaneous Test Results (f-test)

Model	ANOVA ^a				
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	2768.953	2	1384.477	81.314	.000 ^b
Residual	1651.557	97	17.026		
Total	4420.510	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Keputusan Pembelian

b. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Image, Brand Ambassador

It is known that the value of f_{is} calculated as $81.314 >$ from f_{table} 3.090 and with a Sig value that is smaller than the alpha value ($0.000 < 0.05$), based on the hypothesis testing criteria if the $f_{cal} > f_{of\ the\ table}$, then H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted, meaning that the independent variable consists of *Brand Ambassador* (X1) and *Brand Image* (X2) simultaneously has a significant effect on the Purchase Decision (Y).

i. Coefficient of Determination (R2)

Table 7. Coefficient of Determination

Model	R	R Square	Model Summary ^b	
			Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.791 ^a	.626	.619	4.126

a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Image, Brand Ambassador
b. Dependent Variable: Keputusan Pembelian

It is known that the *Adjusted R Square* value of 0.619 means that 61.9% of Purchase Decisions can be explained by *Brand Ambassadors* and *Brand Images*. While the remaining 38.1% can be explained by other factors that were not studied in this study.

3.2 Discussion

3.2.1 The Influence of Brand Ambassadors on Purchase Decisions

Based on the t-test, the brand ambassador variable had a positive and significant effect on the purchase decision of Skintific in Gen Z of the Management Study Program, University of North Sumatra, which can be seen from the significant value ($0.003 < 0.05$) and t-count ($3.068 >$ of the t-table ($1,984$). This shows that Brand Ambassadors are influential in order to improve purchasing decisions.

Based on the distribution of answers on the Brand Ambassador variable distributed to 100 respondents, it shows that 43 respondents agree. In the statement "I know Skintific Brand Ambassador from various social media" means that skintific has a brand ambassador known by respondents who are Gen Z students of the Management Study Program at the University of North Sumatra. Furthermore, in the statement "Nicholas Saputra as a Brand Ambassador of skintific products has high popularity" with 29 respondents answering in the affirmative. This shows that many people know and the presence of Nicholas Saputra is able to provide a positive image for the product and increase consumer attraction and trust in the Skintif brand.

However, based on the analysis of the distribution of answers, there were some respondents who stated that they disagreed. With 28 respondents answering No. to the statement "Nicholas Saputra as a brand ambassador influenced my decision in choosing Skintific products". This shows that Nicholas Saputra as a Brand Ambassador has not been able to fully influence consumer purchasing decisions for Skintific products. Although he has popularity and a positive image." Furthermore, in the statement, I felt interested in trying Skintific products because I saw Nicholas Saputra as a Brand ambassador". With 26 respondents answering in disagreement. This shows that consumers' interest in trying Skintific products is not solely influenced by the presence of Nicholas Saputra as a brand ambassador. This means that even though Nicholas Saputra is widely known and has a positive image, this factor is not strong enough to encourage some consumers to make purchase decisions.

The results of this study are in line with the research conducted by Herawati & Putra, (2023) and Maharani & Achmad, (2024) Shows that the Brand Ambassador variable has a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions.

3.2.2 The Influence of Brand Image on Purchase Decisions

Based on the t-test, the brand Image variable had a positive and significant effect on the purchase decision of Skintific Skincare in Gen Z of the Management Study Program, University of North Sumatra, which can be seen from the significant value ($0.000 < 0.05$) and t-count ($6,712 >$ of the t-table ($1,984$). This shows that brand image has an important role in influencing the purchase decision of Skintific products in Gen Z of the Management Study Program, University of North Sumatra. The more positive the brand image that Skintific has in the eyes of consumers, the higher they will be to buy the product. Thus, a company's efforts in building and maintaining a good brand image can be an effective strategy to increase consumer interest and purchasing decisions. Based on the distribution of answers on the Brand Image variable distributed to 100 respondents, it shows that 29 respondents agree. In the statement "I believe skintific offers reliable product quality" means

Most respondents believe that Skintific is able to provide products with good quality and trustworthiness. This shows that Skintific's brand image is positively valued by consumers, because they believe in the reliability and quality of the products offered. This trust is also one of the important factors that can drive consumer purchasing decisions for Skintific products. Furthermore, in the statement "Skintific as a brand presents innovation in skincare products" with 21 respondents answering in the affirmative. This shows that some respondents consider Skintific as an innovative brand in developing skincare products. This view is in line with consumers' confidence in the quality of Skintific products, which are considered to be able to present new formulas and technologies according to the needs of the skin. The innovations carried out have also strengthened the positive image of the brand and increased consumer trust and interest in Skintific products.

However, based on the analysis of the distribution of answers, there were some respondents who stated that they disagreed. With 17 respondents answering no to the statement "I feel skintific is the right choice for my skin". This shows that although some consumers consider Skintific to be an innovation in skincare products, not all feel that the product is right for

their skin needs. Furthermore, on the statement "I feel I get satisfactory results after using skintipic" with 20 respondents answering in disagreement. This shows that although many respondents consider Skintific to have trustworthy quality and bring innovation, not all consumers are satisfied with the results of using the product.

The results of this study are in line with the research conducted by (Sinaga et al., 2023) and Laili et al., (2024) Indicates that the Brand Image has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions.

3.2.3 The Influence of Brand Ambassador and Brand Image on Purchase Decisions

Based on the f-test, the variables of brand ambassador and brand image have a poignant and significant effect on the purchase decision. This can be known as f-count of 81,314 > from f-table 3,090 and a sig value that is smaller than the alpha value (0.000<0.05), meaning that the brand ambassador (X1) and brand Image (X2) variables simultaneously have a significant effect on the purchase decision (Y) of Skintific skincare in Gen Z of the Management Study Program, University of North Sumatra to improve purchase decisions.

Statement on variable (brand ambassador and brand image) tends to get a yes answer. It can be concluded that Brand Ambassador dan Brand Image Skintific plays an important role in shaping positive consumer perceptions and influencing purchasing decisions. The presence of Nicholas Saputra as Brand Ambassador which is widely known and has high popularity is able to increase the attractiveness and trust of Skintific products. Meanwhile, the image of the Skintific brand, which is considered to have reliable and innovative quality, also strengthens consumer confidence in product excellence. Thus, the two variables together reflect that Skintific has succeeded in building trust and interest among Gen Z, especially students of the Management Study Program at the University of North Sumatra.

However, based on the analysis of the distribution of answers, some respondents assessed that brand ambassador and brand image on the purchase decision One of the aspects assessed is the attractiveness of Nicholas Saputra as a Brand Ambassador which has not been able to fully influence consumer perception of Skintific products. This can be seen from some respondents who stated that they did not agree that the popularity and positive image of Brand Ambassadors were the main factors in their decision to buy products. In addition, in terms of Brand Image, there are some respondents who consider that even though Skintific is known for its innovation and good quality, the product is not fully in accordance with their skin needs. Some respondents also feel that they have not received satisfactory results after using Skintific products. This condition shows that although the brand image and the figure of the Brand Ambassador play a role in increasing consumer appeal, both have not fully shaped the purchase decision for all respondents. Therefore, companies need to continue to improve product quality and strengthen marketing strategies so that Brand Ambassadors and Brand Images can have a more significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions.

The results of this study are in line with the research conducted by Kristian et al., (2021) and Astika & Nurfebriaraning, (2022) Indicates that the Brand Image has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion that has been carried out in this study, it can be concluded that the brand ambassador variable partially has a positive and significant effect on the decision to purchase skintific skincare in Gen Z of the Management Study Program, University of North Sumatra. Furthermore, the brand image variable also partially had a positive and significant effect on the decision to purchase Skintific skincare in Gen Z of the Management Study Program, University of North Sumatra. Simultaneously, brand ambassadors and brand image have a positive and significant effect on the decision to purchase Skintific skincare in Gen Z of the Management Study Program, University of North Sumatra. The results of this study contribute to the development of marketing science, especially in understanding the influence of brand ambassadors and brand image on purchasing decisions among Gen Z. This finding strengthens the theory of consumer behavior that states that a positive brand image and the involvement of public figures who have high appeal can increase consumer interest and trust in a product. In addition, this research can also be a reference for future researchers who want to research other factors that influence purchasing decisions in the digital age. Practically, the results of this study provide input for skincare companies, especially Skintific, to continue to pay attention to the selection of brand ambassadors that are in line with the characteristics and values that are in line with the target market of Gen Z. In addition, companies need to maintain and strengthen their brand image through product quality, consistent brand communication, and creative promotion on various digital platforms in order to improve decisions consumer purchases. From a strategic perspective, the results of this research can be the basis for Skintific in developing a more effective marketing strategy by integrating the power of brand ambassadors and brand image to build emotional relationships with consumers. Companies can also strengthen their brand differentiation strategy through strengthening visual identity, brand values, and engaging digital interactions to maintain customer loyalty and increase competitiveness in the skincare industry.

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