

The Effect of Celebrity Endorser Raffi Ahmad and Testimonial on Consumer Buying Interest of Lemonilo Products on Social Media

Survey on Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta Students

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ABSTRACT

Humans become inseparable from communication technology, transferring and disseminating information via the internet and social media. Entrepreneurs are competing to create marketing communication strategies to attract the attention of potential consumers to product purchasing decisions. To increase consumer interest in buying products, it considers the quality of the product from consumers' testimonials and programs that play a role in promoting the product to make them sell fast. In this study, the theory of SOR was used. This research aims to explore the influence of celebrity endorsers and testimonials on consumer buying interest in products offered on social media. The research method used quantitative explanatory research with a positivistic approach. The sampling technique is probability sampling, which is a random sampling technique. Data collection techniques were carried out through field research; a survey was conducted with help of questionnaires. The data analysis technique applied multiple linear regression data analysis, which analyzed the influence of celebrity endorser on the independent variables and testimonials on the dependent variable of consumer buying interest. The results showed that the attractiveness of *celebgram* or celebrity endorser Raffi Ahmad and testimonials had a positive effect on consumer buying interest in Lemonilo products and the contribution of influence posed by the attractiveness variable of celebrity endorser Raffi Ahmad and testimonials of purchase interest of Lemonilo products was 68.1%, while the remaining 31.9% was modified by other variables.

Keywords: *Celebrity Endorser, Digital Era, Social Media, Consumer Buying Interest, Testimonial.*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of Study

Indonesia is one of the countries with constantly growing online shopping activity. This is especially supported by fast customer service, easy access to online stores, and ease of purchase with various accesses, all done via mobile phones [1]. Enforced by Good News From Indonesia accessed on Tuesday, 13 October 2020, it shows that 64% of Indonesia's population is connected to the internet. Research published in January 2020 reveals that the number of internet users in Indonesia has reached 175.4 million people. The number of internet users in Indonesia is increasing every day [2].

The rise of competition among companies is becoming increasingly fierce in the offline and online business markets so companies must strive to lure consumers' attention to their products. Every entrepreneur will do marketing communication activities that can be used to promote their products

and improve the company's reputation to consumers [3]. Marketing communication activity aims to introduce products and services to consumers by understanding the product. Product ideas are formulated based on the entrepreneur's creativity, following times and updating the latest products to attract consumers' attention [4].

Marketing communication is a means to directly or indirectly provide, remind, and convince information about the products and brands offered by the company [5]. Marketing communication is a process of integrating all marketing activities, from planning, developing, implementing, to evaluating which is done in a marketing communication program by every entrepreneur [6].

Instagram is a common social media used by celebrities (celebrity endorsers) to promote products. Goods and services purchased by a celebrity can make a huge impact on consumers. A powerful marketing tool will attract consumers or celebrities, and many marketers opt for celebrities marketing their products.

According to Shimp in 2010 [7], endorsers are advertising media known as advertising figures who approve products. On the other hand, celebrities are characters (actors, entertainers, or athletes) who are known for their achievements in fields other than the products they endorse. Celebrities are considered as people who are adored by society and have interesting advantages that distinguish them from other people.

Communication technology develops rapidly from time to time and heavily influences society. This development corresponds to the development of internet technology in human life, which allows communication without boundaries of distance and time [8]. In today's digital age, life does not only change fast but is also extraordinary. This approach has the potential to change people's consumption of shared information in order to adapt to the evolution of communication technology [9].

The study of brand endorsement can help companies determine communication decisions, failed studies can produce clearer and more consistent guidelines that will assist marketers in communication decisions [10]. Social networks were initially only used as a means of communication with close relatives and friends, but now the intuition has penetrated personal communication [11]. The impact of using social media in Indonesia is significantly growing and is estimated to increase every year due to advances in internet technology that supports various types of addictive social media platforms [12].

The fast development of the internet this year has shaped social networking sites into one of the important media for internet use [13]. The characteristics of the internet tend to be very flexible and allow users to use it continuously to find the limit in technology in order to gain maximum benefits before it is considered obsolete or inappropriate and new technologies that are more adapted to the times and user needs are discovered [14].

Instagram is an effective medium for promoting sales since many users market their products through these platforms. One of the most popular media for social commerce in Indonesia is Instagram [15]. Currently, Instagram users in Indonesia from January to May 2020 have reached 69.2 million people. Based on the data, it can be observed that the use of Instagram in Indonesia skyrockets every month so that business activities through social media gain unlimited access which can help companies or individuals increase their contacts with customers and suppliers [16].

Instagram can inspire and even enhance its use due to the features to make video and photos more beautiful, more artistic, and enhanced [17]. The

popularity of celebgrams (Instagram Celebrities) is known as Celebrity Endorser, a benchmark for promoting products on social media. Celebrity endorser is assigning well-known artists, celebrities, or public figures who are experts in their field and therefore can help promote products [18].

Assigning celebrity in promoting the product is an important subject because it can affect the consumer buying interest. The celebrity endorsers involved have shared their personal life stories on their social media as a form of self-disclosure and fostering a sense of intimacy. With the increasing number of endorsers, social media has emerged as a powerful medium to form parasocial interactions in the new digital era [19].

An instance of a celebrity endorser is Raffi Ahmad. His name is familiar to Indonesian people, a popular and handsome Muslim artist named Raffi Ahmad. This is proven by his followers on Instagram, whooping 57.7 million followers (as of 13 December 2021). One of Raffi Ahmad's endorsement products currently known by the public is Lemonilo. PT Lemonilo Indonesia Sehat or Lemonilo was founded in 2017 as a healthy lifestyle ecosystem product that collaborates with Small and Medium Enterprises from all over Indonesia to present a variety of natural products at affordable prices that meet all needs and are 100% free of harmful synthetic ingredients.

The promotion of Lemonilo products, which offers a wide variety of healthy lifestyle products and the consumption of natural ingredients, can encourage purchasing decisions. The highest sales figure for Lemonilo products is in the upper-middle class demographic segment. However, researchers surveyed and proved with questionnaires involving samples as research respondents to obtain data. Celebrity endorsements are efficient due to the positive feelings from the endorser that can be channeled to the product, as well as news about the endorser outside of the offered product; therefore, it provides free advertising by bringing the connection between the endorser and the product in consumers' minds. Product evaluation support is the effect when viewing advertisements for products that show attitudes towards endorsers associated with the attitude model towards products, consistent with previous findings based on the persuasion model of celebrity attractiveness [20].

Research on celebrity endorsers is important and fascinating to study. Based on previous research conducted by [21] showed that promotion is inseparable from business to attract consumers which many marketers use to promote products through advertising. The use of celebrity endorsers of celebrities and comics affected the purchase decision of Sedaap Cup noodles. The sample used as

respondents consisted of students in the setting of the Faculty of Economics Unmas. Celebrity endorsers had a significant influence on purchasing decisions so the company evaluated the characteristics of the celebrity endorser it used. The model is very important in convincing consumers that the brand is attractive and trustworthy [22]. Companies must be able to choose celebrity endorsements according to the target market. This study is based on previous research on the impact of celebrity on consumer buying interest by giving evidence of the independent variable testimony.

Based on the discussion above, there are reasons why this interesting phenomenon should be investigated. The problem formulation that can be drawn is; does the attractiveness of celebrity endorser and testimonial by Raffi Ahmad have a significant effect on consumer buying interest in Lemonilo products on social media using respondent survey? The purpose of this study was to explore how the influence of Raffi Ahmad's celebrity endorser and testimonials on consumer buying interest in Lemonilo products on social media surveys among students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta.

1.2. Stimulus-Organism-Response Theory

The theory used in this study is based on the S-O-R. S-O-R stands for Stimulus-Organism-Response. It is because the object of the research is anyone who associates attitude, opinion, behavior, awareness, feeling, and desire. According to stimulus-response theory, the communication process for attitude change is not only "what" or "why" aspect, but also "how" aspect. Change in attitude depends on the ongoing process within a person.

The incentives or information provided to the communicator can be received or declined. Communication occurs when there is interest, understanding, and acceptance from the communicator. This triggers a reaction to a change in attitude. The S-O-R theory has the same name as the hypodermic needle theory or the magic bullet theory. This is because the theory contains information-giving activities similar to injecting drugs that can penetrate the receiver's spirit. The elements of the Stimulus-Response-Organism model, in this case, comprise [23]:

- a. Message: the contents of the statement, namely Stimulus (S).
- b. Recipient: receiving, namely Organism (O).
- c. Effect: influence, namely Response (R).

The relationship between elements can be explained as follows.

- a. S (Stimulus): Stimulus, the effect of using celebrity endorsers and testimonials.
- b. O (Organism): Communication, the research target is students of the Faculty of Communication and Informatics, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta who use Instagram.
- c. R (Response): Response, which is the effect of the use of celebrity endorser and testimonial that can be accepted by the audience so that they can change attitudes (in terms of purchase interest).

Stimulus in the S-O-R model theory according to Mehrabian and Russel in 1974 suggests that the environment can modify the emotional state of customers. The stimulus with the atmosphere is mediated by consumer behavior which includes three emotional bases, such as excitement, passion, and dominance [24]. The Stimulus-Organism-Response model is external and consists of several physical components. Organism is an internal process and structure that interacts with external stimuli and customer reactions [25].

According to Hetharie's research in 2019, the basic assumption of SOR explains that changes in the organism's behavior are influenced by the quality of the stimulus which is similar to the learning process [26]. Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model theory explores the relationship between consumer emotion models and consumer behavior. Stimulus plays an important role in shaping consumer buying behavior towards the environment [27]. Purchase intention is the customer's important plan used to buy a brand. Purchase interest is a decision to understand why consumers afford certain brands [28].

The support of celebrity endorsers with immense popularity can be utilized as a marketing communication tool. In the last decades, companies and marketers have appointed celebrities to promote their products services. Likewise, celebrities are currently gaining influence among consumers given their increasing presence on social media and the evidence shows that celebrity recommendations on social networking platforms are increasingly important for updating consumer behavior [29]. Celebrity endorsement is active participation by celebrities to communicate campaign messages [30].

2. METHODS

This research used the quantitative explanatory research method. The quantitative approach explains that the approach is based on positivist thinking and is the opposite of experimentation, which is the natural state of the research under the study. The population in this study was obtained from data of BTI UMS in 2020 - 2021. The research sample totaled 95 students who were active in 2018 gathered from 2014 - 2018 batches. The calculation of the number of samples applied the Slovin formula, with the calculation t as follows:

$$n = \frac{2104}{22,04} = 95 \quad (1)$$

The measurement consists of two variables, celebrity endorser and testimonial as to the independent variable (X), while the dependent variable (Y) is consumer buying interest in Lemonilo products. The celebrity endorser variable was measured by indicators of trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, respect, and similarity. The testimonial variable was calculated by indicators of recognition, credibility, spontaneity, and recommendation. The variable of consumer buying interest was measured as an indicator of attention, interest in seeking information, interest in relationships, and desire to immediately purchase. The data collection technique is based on data sources in this study, the first is primary data obtained from the results of closed questionnaires administered to respondents, responses to the interest in celebgram's attractiveness, and testimonials to consumer buying interest in Lemonilo products on social media. Secondary data were obtained from previous research articles in the form of journals, scientific papers, books, and the internet. The data collection method was conducted using a Likert scale of 1 to 5, in which each score 5 implies strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for fairly agree or neutral, 2 for disagree, and 1 for strongly disagree. To prove the data reliability, it was obtained through the survey, validity, and reliability tests.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Research Results

It can be explained that the results of the validity test for the attractiveness variable of Raffi Ahmad's celebrity endorser as measured, five indicators all together acquired data feasibility because they are declared valid, discovered with the SPSS version 18.0 application. For the testimonial variables and purchase interest obtained that four items were completely declared valid, with p-value > 0.05. Thus, all statements for the testimonial variables and purchase interest are feasibly used as research instruments. Thus, it can be explained that the results of the validity test for the testimonial variable as measured by 4 indicators were feasible as all of them are declared valid.

The results of reliability testing on the attractiveness variable of celebrity endorser of Raffi Ahmad which were processed in the SPSS version 18.0 application program obtained a Cronbach alpha value of more than 0.60, which is 0.702. This indicates that the level of reliability is high since it obtained the 0.60 category < r_{11} 8.00. The results of the reliability test of the testimonial variable which was processed with the SPSS version 18.0 application program obtained a Cronbach alpha value above 0.60, which is 0.815. This shows that the level of reliability is very high because it is in the 0.80 category < r_{11} 1.00. The results of reliability testing on the variable purchase interest of Lemonilo products obtained the Cronbach alpha value above 0.60, which is 0.683. This signifies that the reliability level is very high because it is in the 0.60 category < r_{11} 8.00. Once the data is declared valid and reliable, the next step is to perform multiple linear regression analysis. The analysis was used to test the effect of the independent variable, namely the attractiveness of the celebrity endorser and the testimony by Raffi Ahmad on the dependent variable, which is the purchase interest of Lemonilo products. Based on the results of the analysis that has been processed, below is the explanation provided.

Table 1. Multiple linear regression test results (Coefficients^a)

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1,148 | 1,060 | | 1,082 | ,282 |
| | Attractiveness of Celebgram | ,439 | ,072 | ,497 | 6,107 | ,000 |
| | Testimonial | ,396 | ,081 | ,397 | 4,870 | ,000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Buying interest in Lemonilo product

Based on the results of simple linear regression analysis, the regression line equation obtained following:

$$Y = 1,148 + 0,439X_1 + 0,396X_2 \quad (2)$$

The interpretation of the regression equation is:

- a : 1.148 indicates the attractiveness of celebrity endorser and testimonial by Raffi Ahmad is equal to zero, then the interest in buying Lemonilo products is positive, which is 1.148.
- b₁ : 0.439 implies that the influence of the attractiveness of celebrity endorser of Raffi Ahmad on interest in purchasing Lemonilo products is positive; if the attractiveness of celebrity endorser of Raffi Ahmad increases, it will increase buying interest in Lemonilo products. Based on the results of these tests, it can be interpreted that the better the attractiveness of the celebrity endorser Raffi Ahmad, the higher the interest in buying Lemonilo products on the respondents.
- b₂ : 0.396 denotes that the effect of the testimonial variable on interest in buying Lemonilo products is positive, therefore if the testimonial increases, it will increase interest in buying Lemonilo products. The test results can be translated that the better the testimonials, the higher the interest in buying Lemonilo products on the respondents.

Based on the results of multiple linear regression analysis shows that the attractiveness of celebrity endorser and testimonial of Raffi Ahmad had a positive effect on buying interest in Lemonilo products. Furthermore, to test the effect of the attractiveness of celebrity endorser of Raffi Ahmad on buying interest in Lemonilo products, t-test analysis was carried out. The results of the t-test analysis obtained t_{count} of 6.107 with a p-value of 0.000 < 0.05, thus H_0 is rejected. In other words, there is a positive and significant influence on the attractiveness of celebrity endorser of Raffi Ahmad on respondent buying interest in Lemonilo products.

To test the effect of testimonials on buying interest in Lemonilo products was conducted through a t-test analysis. The results of the t-test analysis obtained t_{count} of 4.870 with a p-value of 0.000 < 0.05, then H_0 is rejected. So, there was a positive and significant effect of testimony on the respondents' buying interest in Lemonilo products. The next test is the F test, which examined the effect of the attractiveness of the celebrity endorser and testimony of Raffi Ahmad simultaneously on buying interest in Lemonilo products. Based on the results of the analysis with the SPSS version 18.0 application, the following results were obtained.

Table 2. F test results (Anova^b)

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|---------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 432,676 | 2 | 216,338 | 106,894 | ,000 ^a |
| | Residual | 196,314 | 97 | 2,024 | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-------|---------|----|--|--|--|
| | Total | 628,990 | 99 | | | |
|--|-------|---------|----|--|--|--|

a. Predictors: (Constant), Testimonials, Celebrity Attractiveness

b. Dependent Variable: Consumer Buying Interest of Lemonilo Products

The results of the F test analysis obtained F_{count} of 106.894 with a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$, then H_0 is rejected. This implies that there was a positive and significant effect of the attractiveness of celebrity endorser and testimonial of Raffi Ahmad concomitantly on respondent buying interest in Lemonilo products. The results of the F test analysis can be explained that the attractiveness of celebrity endorser and testimonial by Raffi Ahmad had a positive and significant effect on buying interest in Lemonilo products, and thus, the high attractiveness of celebrity endorser and testimonial of Raffi Ahmad perceived by consumers will have a positive effect on buying interest in Lemonilo products and vice versa, the low sense of attractiveness of celebrity endorser and testimonials of Raffi Ahmad will have a negative effect on consumer buying interest in the Lemonilo product.

The next test is the analysis of the coefficient of determination. This analysis is used to determine the contribution or influence of the independent variable, namely the attractiveness of celebrity endorser and testimonial of Raffi Ahmad on the dependent variable, which is buying interest in Lemonilo products. The results of the analysis of the coefficient of determination are as follows.

Table 3. Results of the coefficient of determination

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | ,829 ^a | ,688 | ,681 | 1,42262 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Testimonial, Celebrity Attractiveness

Analysis of the coefficient of determination obtained by adjusted r square (R^2) of 0.681 shows the effect of the attractiveness variable of celebrity endorser and testimonial of Raffi Ahmad on buying interest in Lemonilo products was 68.1%, while 31.9% of the rest was influenced by other variables.

3.2 Discussion

The results indicate that the attractiveness and review by celebgrams had a positive effect on buying interest in Lemonilo products, comparable to the

results of the t-test analysis. The results of the first t-test analysis secured t_{count} of 6.107 with a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Therefore, H_0 deviated, meaning there was a positive and significant influence of attractiveness of celebrity endorser of Raffi Ahmad on respondent buying interest in Lemonilo products. The study also confirmed the results of research conducted by Osei [32] on 500 respondents, showing the results of celebrity endorsers had a positive effect on consumer buying interest, brand loyalty, and consumer perceptions of quality.

The results of this study correspond to [33] which affirm that endorsers can be more familiar with consumers because they feel they have similar self-esteem, values, personality, lifestyle, and actual demographics. The use of endorsers is intended for consumer acceptance of the advertising message and to increase the credibility of the advertised product. The theory expressed by Shimp in 2010 [7] suggests that the potential to influence celebrities in generating interest and behavior is related to the purchase or use of selected goods and services based on recognition of praise, inspiration, or empathy.

Advertising always acts as a means to attract consumers' attention. The goal is to receive enough attention from the audience. Marketers have to use different methods. The results of this study support research by that the use of celebgram in advertising is the most significant and widely practiced way. The significance of the use of celebrity endorser in advertising has a positive impact on consumers' purchase intentions. Celebrity endorser support has a positive correlation between the attractiveness and credibility of the celebrity towards the product being promoted. The criteria of an attractive and trustworthy celebrity will influence consumers' purchase intentions more robust [34].

Advertising should use suitable celebrity endorser to promote the product, require a precise strategy, and advertising practitioners are demanded to be able to accomplish it [35]. Therefore, it is not surprising that Lemonilo as a new brand in the instant noodle market assigns Raffi Ahmad as an endorser considering the large market of Raffi Ahmad's fans, starting from the children segment with Rafatar and women with the Nagita Slavina brands. Companies should choose celebrity endorser who can be trusted before consumers, thus choosing attractive celebrities is an

important consideration to influence the consumer base [36].

Research conducted by Arora in 2019 [37], showed the results that attitudes towards advertising and celebrity attractiveness had an effect on buying interest. The results of this study also corroborate the findings that the results of the second t-test analysis obtained t_{count} of 4.870 with a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$, so H_0 is rejected. There was a significant positive effect of testimonials on respondent buying interest in Lemonilo products.

According to Nam's research in 2020 [38], if the identification of consumers with celebrity endorsers is high, it will result in attractive evaluations of advertisements and brands and affect buying interest. This statement fosters this research, which results of research on the attractiveness of celebgram and testimonial had a good impact on consumer buying interest in Lemonilo on social media.

4. CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that the attractiveness of celebgram or celebrity endorser and testimonial of Raffi Ahmad had a positive and significant effect on consumer buying interest in Lemonilo products and the contribution of influence given by the attractiveness variable of celebrity endorser and testimonial of Raffi Ahmad on buying interest in Lemonilo products was 68,1%, while the remaining 31.9% was influenced by other variables.

The results of this study signify that the attractiveness of celebgram or celebrity endorsers and testimonial had a positive impact on students' interest in buying Lemonilo products. Celebrity endorser support makes students prefer and be interested in Lemonilo products by looking at testimonials that have been circulating and recommended by celebgram. Celebrity endorser is deemed an effective communication tool in marketing Lemonilo products, which can influence consumer buying interest and provide broader and useful insights for consumers. The existence of other factors, more testimonials of Lemonilo products can persuade the students' consumer behavior to purchase these products.

This study entails weakness in subjects, which only involved respondents. All in all, this research is less extensive, so further research is encouraged with advertising variables on brands of food, beverage, service products with different promotional media or other variables and should be probed in-depth manner to understand each variable that more precise. Large and diverse sample size with various demographics can be tested to make the study more general.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The authors have made a substantial contribution to the concept or design of the article by collecting, obtaining, analyzing, interpreting data for the article, and designing the article or critically approving revisions to examine important intellectual content, approving version for publication, and taking responsibility for all aspects that have contributed significantly to concepts and articles in ascertaining those related to accuracy or integrity.

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