



NCT Dreams Fanbase Purchase decision on Somethinc: Korean Wave, Brand Image, and Brand Ambassador

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Abstract. Purpose-The Korean wave is still a hot and interesting topic this decade. From the group, Exo switched to BTS and recently to NCT Dream. There is concern in Indonesia regarding consumer behavior regarding products from Korea or those carrying Korean ambassadors such as Somehinc. Therefore, this research aims to examine the determinants of purchasing decisions for Somethinc products, namely the Korean wave, brand image, and brand ambassador. Methodology-The population in this study were Somehinc product users on the NCT Dream fanbase on Twitter. The convenient sampling technique was used for 100 respondents. Data processing uses the SEM model with SmartPLS software version 3.0. Findings-The results of this research show that the influence variables of the Korean wave, brand image, and brand ambassador have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. The variables significantly contributing to the decision to purchase Somethinc products are brand ambassador, brand image, and Korean wave. Suggestions-There is a need to continue the increased Korean wave to be conditioned to improve purchasing decisions..

Keywords: Korean Wave; Brand Image; Brand Ambassador; Purchase Decision.

1 Introduction

Purchasing decisions are actions buyers take in obtaining a good or service, resulting from the efforts of various strategies carried out by producers to influence consumer choices.

Purchasing decisions are made after considering several options and involve evaluating various options, reflecting the extent of the marketer's efforts in introducing the product to consumers. This process involves considering various available alternatives and selecting one of the many options based on the buyer's judgment.

Based on data from the sales growth rate of Somethinc products during the last three months in 2022 (February-May), there have been fluctuations due to many Somethinc brand competitors. Studies examining cosmetic products have found that recent purchasing decisions on cosmetic products are influenced by, among others, advertising appeal (Rahmayanti et al., 2019), brand ambassador/celebrity endorser (Rahmayanti et al., 2019), brand images (Aspan et al., 2017; Hermiyanti & Werdi, 2019; Rahmayanti et al., 2019; Tjahjono et al., 2021) and also price (Aspan et al., 2017; Hermiyanti & Werdi, 2019).

Marketing science has explained that the type of product or item, and different sectors will influence customers' purchasing decisions differently. The factors that influence customers to buy an item, for example, consumer goods, are different from purchasing substitute goods. It will be different for manufacturing or services such as food. Studies regarding purchasing decisions for Korean products are influenced by, among other things, the Korean wave/Hallyu (Siskhawati & Maulana, 2021; Truong, 2018) and Social media (Truong, 2018).

Meanwhile, research that links the Korean wave with the presence of Korean artist endorsers for several other Korean products gives different results. Research by Fuadi et al. (2023) shows that the decision to buy local cosmetic products is not influenced by the artist

who carries them and is not due to the Korean wave but rather due to the quality of the product. Meanwhile, research conducted by Hijra (2022) showed that Korean artist brand ambassadors and the Korean wave influence consumer's decision to purchase Scarlet cosmetic products.

This research hopes to contribute by providing support to the consumer behavior literature. There is still no research that tests products that are not local and not from Korea but feature Korean artists as their ambassadors, which include the three factors, namely Korean wave, brand image, and brand ambassador, in influencing purchasing decisions. Therefore, this research aims to test the three factors of Korean Wave, brand image, and brand ambassador on purchasing decisions

2 HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Marketing management involves elements of art and science in target market selection, aiming to acquire, retain, and increase the number of customers. This is achieved through creating, communicating, and delivering superior value in evaluating consumer needs and desires and presenting and selling products or services.

Marketing management is a component of business activities that develops and implements the marketing strategy of a company or organization. The core focus of marketing management is on the practical aspects of marketing orientation, methods, and techniques in organizational structure, resource allocation, and company marketing activities. In the marketing journey, companies work to understand consumers, create value for them, and build solid relationships with consumers.

Purchasing decisions that consumers have considered essentially reflect a series of choices or decisions that have been arranged or considered previously (Aldi, 2012). Korean wave or Hallyu is a form of spreading Korean culture internationally. Brand Image refers to consumers' responses when they think about a particular brand. Therefore, companies need to create awareness regarding the existence of product or service brands aimed at attracting consumer attention by producing quality products.

2.1 The Relationship of the Korean Wave to Purchasing Decisions

The Korean Wave is a marketing and business phenomenon involving great efforts from promoters and companies to market Korean culture as a product. The Korean wave, also called Hallyu, is increasingly being studied in research, especially in the consumer behavior literature. As is the case with consumer decisions, Scarlet consumers increasingly decide to buy when these consumers become more attached to the Korean wave (Arimbi & Wulandari, 2023). Likewise, what happens to consumers in Vietnam regarding Korean products shows that the Korean wave is a factor that can increase purchasing decisions (Pham & Ton, 2023).

H1: The Korean Wave positively and significantly affects Purchase Decisions for Something products on the NCT Fanbase on Twitter.

2.2 The Relationship of Brand Image to Purchasing Decisions

Brand Image must be designed to create opportunities to attract consumer attention and make the brand perceived by the target market. In the cosmetic product market, brand image is an interesting thing to continue studying (Hermiyanti & Wardi, 2023), especially those specializing in proving certain products. The brand image of cosmetic products has been proven to influence consumers in purchasing decisions, such as Mustika Ratu products (Fadila et al., 2021), L'Oreal Paris (Situmorang et al., 2022), Nature Republic (Wardani & Nugraha, 2022), Ponds (Wardani & Nugraha, 2022), and products that carry the halal label (Zukhrufani & Zakiy, 2019).

H2: Brand Image positively and significantly affects Purchase Decisions for Something products on the NCT Fanbase on Twitter.

2.3 The Relationship of Brand Ambassadors to Purchasing Decisions

Brand ambassadors can represent successful individuals and commodify and market products effectively. Research from Situmorang et al. (2022) shows that consumers of L'Oreal Paris products in Medan consider the brand image and brand ambassador when making purchasing decisions. Likewise, the results of research conducted by Mani et al. (2022) on a sample of 400 respondents who were consumers of beauty products on the YouTube platform showed that brand ambassadors influenced purchasing decisions. Therefore, whether consumers buy

cosmetic products or not is influenced by their choice of brand ambassador (Pebriyanti & Kusmayadi, 2022; Wardani & Nugraha, 2022) or celebrity endorser (Lestari & Wahyono, 2021).

H3: Brand Ambassadors positively and significantly affect Purchase Decisions for Somethingnc products on the NCT Fanbase on Twitter.

2.4 Research Model

The research model developed in this research can be seen in Figure 1.

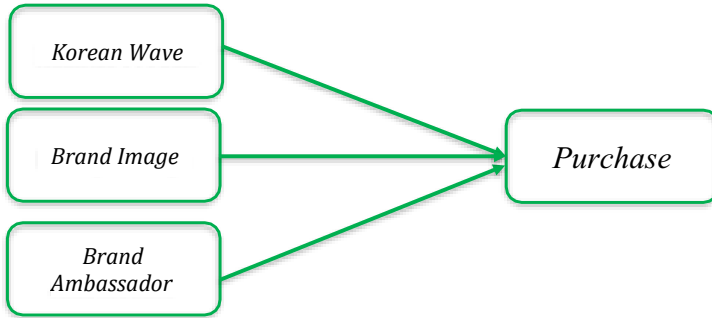


Figure 1. Research Model

3 Methodology

3.1 Sample and Data Collection

The object of research in this study is the decision to purchase Somethingnc products on the NCT Dream fanbase on Twitter, which is influenced by the Korean wave, brand image, and brand ambassador. This research used primary data by distributing questionnaires as a data source. The type of data in this research is descriptive, using a data collection method in the form of a questionnaire distributed to consumers who have purchased Somethingnc products via e-commerce or directly in offline stores.

3.2 Measurement

Korean wave variables measurement was adapted from Sumiati (2019). Likewise, the brand image variable measurement was adapted from Keller (2019). Meanwhile, brand ambassadors were measured using an adaptation of Royan's (2016) measurements. Purchasing decision variables adapted from Kotler (2016).

3.3 Data Analysis

Data collected from the questionnaire will be grouped based on variables and type of respondent and must be processed. Researchers used Structural Equation Modeling or SEM to analyze data and measure the impact of the research. This multivariate analysis technique combines aspects of factor analysis and multiple regression, allowing researchers to test several interrelated dependencies simultaneously (Hair et al., 2014). In this research, researchers used a PLS approach using SmartPLS 3.0 software. There are two PLS-SEM models. The first, the measurement model (outer model), is used to determine validity and reliability values. The second is a structural (inner) model, which shows how constructs or variables relate.

4 Results

A brand's image is a perception that is created through time, is largely consistent, and lasts a long period. Therefore, the Service Quality received by consumers will have an impact on brand image, if the service quality is good, then the brand image will also be good.

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4.1 Result

Measurement Model Test (Outer Model)

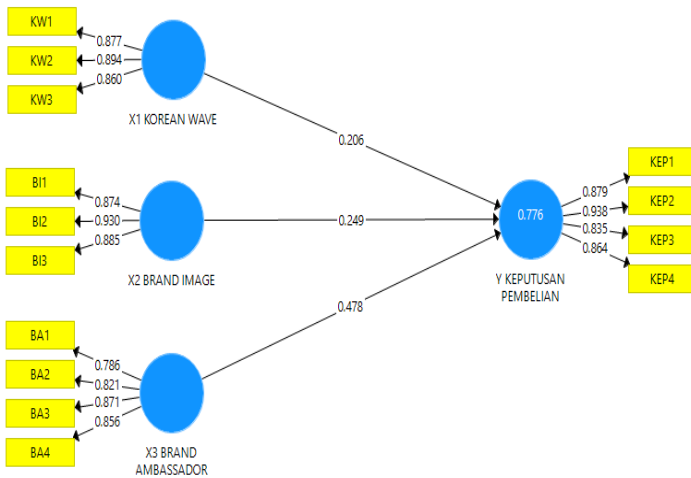


Figure 2. Measurement Model Test Results (Outer Model)
Source: Processed, 2023

Tabel 1. Loading Factor Results

	Variable			
	Korean Wave	Brand Image	Brand Ambassador	Purchase Decision
KW1	0,877			
KW2	0,894			
KW3	0,860			
BI1		0,874		
BI2		0,930		
BI3		0,885		
BA1			0,786	
BA2			0,821	
BA3			0,871	
BA4			0,856	
KEP1				0,879
KEP2				0,938
KEP3				0,835
KEP4				0,864
AVE	0,769	0,804	0,696	0,774

Source: Processed, 2023

An indicator is said to be valid if the correlation value exceeds > 0.7 . Based on Table 1, each statement instrument on the purchase decision, Korean wave, brand image, and brand ambassador variables whose loading factor value is < 0.5 will be removed from the path diagram and not included.

The calculation results in Table 1 show that all indicators are valid. That is, they have a value ≥ 0.7 . Table 1 shows that all variable values have values > 0.5 , so they meet the convergent validity requirements.

	Korean Wave	Brand Image	Brand Ambassador	Purchase Decision
Korean Wave	0,877			
Brand Image	0,768	0,897		
Brand Ambassador	0,810	0,861	0,834	
Purchase Decision	0,785	0,818	0,859	0,880

Tabel 2. Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Source: Processed, 2023

The calculation results in table 2 measure the extent to which the indicators connected to the latent variable actually measure the same concept and should have a strong relationship.

Apart from measuring the outer model by looking at the convergent validity and discriminant validity values, it can also be measured by assessing reliability as measured by Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values. The reliability test results were obtained as follows:

Table 3. Reliability Test Result

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Keterangan
Korean Wave	0,909	0,850	Reliabel
Brand Image	0,925	0,878	Reliabel
Brand Ambassador	0,901	0,855	Reliabel
Keputusan Pembelian	0,932	0,904	Reliabel

Source: Processed, 2023

Table 3 shows the results of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values for all constructs above 0.70. With these results, all constructs show good reliability in accordance with the required values.

Tabel 4. Output Bootstapping SmartPLS

	Purchase Decision		
	Original Sample (O)	P Values	Result
Korean Wave	0,206	0,020	Significant
Brand Image	0,249	0,027	Significant
Brand Ambassador	0,478	0,000	Significant
R Square	0,776		
R Square Adjusted	0,769		
	f^2		
Korean Wave	0,062		
Brand Image	0,068		
Brand Ambassador	0,209		

Source: Processed, 2023

The R Square (R2) value for the Purchasing Decision variable is 0.776, ranging from 0.75, which means strong. This shows that 77.6% of the Purchasing Decision variables can be influenced by the Korean Wave, Brand Image, and Brand Ambassador variables, while other variables outside those studied influence the remaining 22.4%.

Based on the F2 calculation above, no large effect size exists with the criteria $F2 > 0.35$. Those with a medium effect, namely $F2 > 0.20$, are brand ambassadors. Furthermore, the Korean wave and brand image are those with small effects, namely $F2 > 0.02$.

Based on the information contained in the table above, it can be seen that the Q2 value for the dependent variable is 0.584. Considering this value, this research shows a positive or satisfactory observation value because the Q2 value is greater than 0.35. In this case, a value of $0.584 > 0.35$ indicates that this research has good observation quality or can be considered good.

By referring to the table above and calculating according to the formula provided, it was found that the Goodness of Fit (GoF) value was 0.767. Based on this value, this model falls into the " Large " category in the evaluation criteria.

5 Discussion

5.1 The Influence of the Korean Wave on Purchasing Decisions

The results of testing the Korean wave's influence on purchasing decisions show that the Korean wave, as measured by the indicators proposed by Sumiati (2019), namely understanding, attitudes and behavior, and perception, have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. These results are under the hypothesis developed in this research.

The results of this research have strong relevance to previous research conducted by Hanny and Lestari (2022) regarding "The Influence of the Korean Wave on Purchase Decisions for BTS Official Albums." This previous research indicates an important relationship between the high Korean Wave and the decision to purchase BTS Official albums among the BTS fanbase on Social Media. In the context of this research, the findings also show a similar relationship between the Korean wave of Somethinc products and purchasing decisions. As observed by Hanny and Lestari, consumers identify the Korean wave as following the standards and benefits promised, positively impacting consumers in deciding to buy a product. With the appeal of good Korean cultural elements, the Korean wave can increase consumer confidence in purchasing products.

5.2 The Influence of Brand Image on Purchasing Decisions

The results of testing the influence of brand image on purchasing decisions show that brand image as measured by the indicators proposed by Keller (2019), namely the manufacturer's image (corporate image), user image (user image), product image (product image) have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. These results are under the hypothesis developed in this research.

The results of this research have a significant relationship with previous research conducted by Cicilia and Willem (2022) regarding "The Influence of Brand Image on Purchase Decisions for Converse brand Shoe products." This previous research illustrates that positive price perceptions significantly impact increasing purchasing decisions in e-commerce. In the context of this research, the findings also show a similar relationship between the brand image that corresponds to Somehinc products and purchasing decisions.

5.3 The Influence of Brand Ambassadors on Purchasing Decisions

The results of testing the influence of brand ambassadors on repurchase interest show that brand ambassadors are measured using the indicators proposed by Royan (2016), namely popularity (visibility), credibility (credibility), attractiveness (attention), and strength (power). These results are in accordance with the hypothesis developed in this research.

The findings from this research are very relevant to research conducted by Kharisma and Hutasuhut (2019) on "The Influence of Brand Ambassadors on Innisfree Product Purchasing Decisions in E-commerce." This previous research shows the important role of well-known brand ambassadors who have a good reputation in shaping product purchasing decisions in e-commerce.

6 Conclusion

6.1 Conclusion

There is a positive and significant influence of the Korean wave on purchasing decisions for Something products, which means that if the appeal of Korean culture is stronger and is well received by consumers, it can increase consumer decisions to purchase Something products. There is a positive and significant influence of the brand image on purchasing decisions for Something products, which means that the better and more positive the brand image conveyed to consumers can increase purchasing decisions for Something products. Brand ambassadors have a positive and significant influence on decisions to purchase Something products, which means that selecting the right brand ambassador can help maximize decisions to purchase Something products.

6.2 Policy Implication

The research shows that a large contribution is found in the brand ambassador variable, then brand image, and then the Korean wave. Something can maintain the Korean wave, which means that the stronger the appeal of Korean culture that is well received by consumers can increase purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, purchasing decisions will decrease if the Korean Wave Something product provided to consumers is less attractive or needs to meet consumer expectations.

SOMETHINC is advised to maintain its brand image, which means that the better the brand image of Something products in the eyes of consumers, the more purchasing decisions will increase. Meanwhile, if the Something product's brand image is bad in consumers' eyes, purchasing decisions will decrease.

SOMETHINC pays more attention to the brand ambassadors used, which means that the bigger and more famous the brand ambassadors used by Something, the more consumers can have purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, if Something's brand ambassador is bad in the eyes of consumers, purchasing decisions will decrease.

6.3 Limitations of Research and Suggestions

The limitation of the research, which only covers Something products, is a limitation in this research. Expanding coverage to all types of Something skincare (serum) for future research will provide a more meaningful contribution to supporting increased purchases of Something skincare (serum). The coverage area is too small, only on Twitter. While the skincare coverage is also specialized, the scope is increasingly narrow. In the future, if you only specialize in Something skincare (serum), you should look for a wider area, such as all of Indonesia.

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