

Online Celebrity Endorsement and Brand Image on Customer Purchase Intention with the Mediating Role of Customer Ideal Self

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ABSTRACT

The tight competition in sports shoes industry in Indonesia requires players in this market to be creative in promoting their products to win customers. One strategy is promoting their brand by adopting online celebrating endorsement. However, this strategy needs to be implemented carefully to match customer ideal self. This study aims to investigate the influence of online celebrity endorsement, brand image on purchase intention with the mediating role of customer idea self. A survey using online questionnaire was conducted among 180 private university students in Tangerang, Indonesia, Data was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling Partial Least Square. The study reveals significant influence of celebrity endorsement, brand image and ideal self on purchase intention with a mediating role of customer ideal self.

Keywords: Celebrity Endorsement; Brand Image; Customer Ideal Self; Purchase Intention

INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, the market for sports shoes is becoming more competitive. There are many sports shoe manufacturers in Indonesia, Nike is just one of them. Based on the findings of a nationwide survey carried out by Frontier Consulting (2021), Nike has received the Top Brand Award. Because celebrities will represent the products being advertised, the phenomenon of using celebrities in marketing is a difficult topic for manufacturers to contemplate. Celebrity endorsers include, but are not limited to, athletes, celebrities from television and film, and persons who frequently support corporations (Shimp, 2014). Cristiano Ronaldo, a professional footballer who was born in Portugal and played for Manchester United in the English Premier League, is one of Nike's most prominent brand ambassadors. He was chosen by Nike as endorser of the brand with a life-time contract. Despite increasing investment in celebrity endorsement by top brand like Nike, there is still limited number of studies investigating the effect of celebrity endorsement on consumers' purchase intention, especially in sports shoe industry.

A positive brand image is central to a company's success. Therefore, a company needs to carefully manage the brand image of their product to keep customer loyalty. A brand is more than simply an identity that distinguishes it from its competition. It is the sum of customers' ideas, thoughts and impressions about a certain product or service offered by a company (Kotler & Keller, 2009). Well-maintained brand image will develop brand trust, which is the customers' willingness to take calculated risks associated with the brands of the products they

purchase (Lau & Lee, 1999). When customers trust a brand, they become loyal to the firm that produced it. Customer loyalty, thus, becomes a critical variable to be further investigated in this study.

Customers will relate to a certain brand or follow the advice of a certain celebrity if they find similar attributes of the brand and the celebrity with their ideal self (Ferrinadewi, 2008). Previous studies on brand image revealed a positive influence of brand image on ideal self of customers, which eventually may lead to make customers satisfied and loyal (Hu et al., 2017). Brands with a positive image tend to be better remembered and accepted by consumers. Brand with positive image influences consumers to purchase certain products or services. (Fianto et al., 2014; Shi et al., 2021). Acknowledging the important role of customer ideal self in driving customer's purchase intention, this study analyzed this variable.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Celebrity Endorsement. A celebrity endorser refers to "an individual with wide public recognition and use that recognition to influence a certain group of consumers who are his or her social media followers" (Avery & Rosen, 2005; McCracken, 1989). McCracken (1989) further explains the four elements of celebrity brand: Brand identity (the visual components of a brand), Brand image (the customer perception of the brand), Celebrity image (the customer perception of the celebrity), Brand culture (the cultures attached to the brand).

Brand Image. Brand image is the emotional component that characterizes a company's brand or its products and has a substantial influence on customer purchasing behavior (Arora & Stoner, 2009). It may alter over time and does not necessarily suggest that people will buy or use your product or service. A brand image, according to Kotler, is a person's "collection of beliefs, ideas, and perceptions" about a corporation. Kotler (2005) and Severi & Ling (2013) In addition to brand attitude, brand interests, and brand qualities, brand image is presented as a generalization of brand relationship in buyer's thinking, leading to brand awareness and brand relationship (Severi & Ling, 2013). In this study, the researcher applied Erfan and Kwek's definition of brand image, which contains five indicators: brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior & attitude, and brand competence & benefit.

Ideal Self. Self-concept refers to a person's cognitive and emotional understanding of themselves and their surroundings (Sirgy, 1982). Grubb and Grathwohl (1967) stated that self-concept is the output of an interaction between a person and others that motivates the individual to try to achieve his or her ideal self. Another study used the term Ideal self-congruity, which is defined as the efforts done to improve his self-image and quality of life (Hu et al., 2017). Self-concept comprises three indicators: Self-image, Self-esteem, and ideal self

Purchase Intention. Purchase intention is a type of consumers' evaluation that drives their motivation to buy a certain brand of a product (Shah et al., 2012). Purchase intention is also defined as the consumers' tendency to buy a certain product under specific conditions (Morinez et al., 2007). Another definition of purchase intention is the tendency of a consumer to purchase a brand or take a purchase-related action within their buying power (Belch & Belch, 2006).

This study adopts the definition of purchase intention by Shah et al. (2012). Purchase intention has 5 elements: Tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Hussain and Ali, 2015).

Celebrity Endorsement and Purchase Intention. According to the study, celebrity endorsements in advertising are associated with quicker information processing, higher product ratings, and higher buy inclinations than those without such endorsements (Al-Awadhi, 2020). A Zhongqi research found that celebrity endorsements have no substantial beneficial influence on men's purchasing intentions (Zhongqi, 2020). Munasinghe et al. conducted research. It is stated that celebrity likeability has no effect on buy intention, demonstrating that competence, trustworthiness, beauty, and other characteristics cannot influence purchase intention since influencers are still unsuitable for advertising (Munasinghe et al., 2020). Based on the findings of previous studies, the following hypothesis is developed:

H1: Celebrity endorsement positively influences consumers' purchase intention.

Celebrity Endorsement and Ideal Self. Consumers tend developed behaviors that they believe can help them become their ideal selves. They look up to certain celebrities reflecting customers' ideal self as source of inspiration including in the choice of attire and shoes. (Boon & Lomore, 2001; Escalas & Bettman, 2003b, 2003a). As a result, a celebrity image possessing the characteristics of the target consumers' ideal self-image will drive consumers to mimic the celebrity's attitudes and actions. High congruence between celebrity image and customers' ideal self-images leads to positive buying responses to celebrity-endorsed advertisements on a certain brand. Customers' ideal self-image and celebrity endorsement may lead the way to effective strategies in advertising (Choi & Rifon, 2012). The following hypothesis is developed based on the previously discussed studies:

H2: Celebrity endorsement positively influences consumer behavior

Brand Image and Purchase Intention. Higher perceived quality enhances customers' perceived value, which increases consumers' motivation to buy, according to (Monroe & Krishnan, 1985), (Zeithaml, 1988), (Dodds et al., 1991), and (Petrick, 2004). Brand image characteristics include a considerable influence on purchase intention, according to research by m (Peng & Liang, 2013), (Tandun, 2014), and (Dwipayani & Rahyuda, 2016). According to the preceding assertion, based of finding above the hypothesis are stated as:

H3: Brand image positively influences purchase intention

Ideal Self and Purchase Intention. The degree of interconnectedness with a certain product image can weaken or strengthen purchase intention of a product (Shavitt, 1992). Self-consistency was also found to be a significant factor impacting purchase intention (Jamal & Goode, 2001). Another study revealed an interconnectedness between self-image, product image consistency, and purchase intention (Ericksen, 1997). Belch and Belch (2006) found that both actual and ideal self-concepts influence the intention to purchase a product with varying magnitude. Thus, the more the product image fits the ideal self, the stronger the purchase

intention of a certain product. Considering the findings of the previous studies, the following hypothesis is developed.

H4: Consumer behavior positively influences purchase intention

Ideal Self Mediating the Influence between Celebrity Endorsement and Purchase Intention. Consumers aspire to maintain a stable and cohesive ideal self as a form of self-reflection resulting from celebrity endorsement. This happens because the purchasing process links the celebrity endorsed product information with client self-image (Knoll & Matthews, 2017). Consumers that view a product that is promoted by celebrities as a reflection of their self-image, will buy the product to secure, and develop their ideal self (Hong and Zinkhan, 2010). Choi and Rifon (2012), stated that the congruence of self-image and celebrity endorsements significantly impact customer behavior. When consumers observe greater ideal self-congruity with the product endorsed, they respond more positively to develop higher purchase intention (Choi & Rifon, 2012). Based on these findings, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H5: Consumers’ ideal-self mediates the interaction between celebrity endorsement and purchase intention.

Research Model. The research model of this study is presented below.

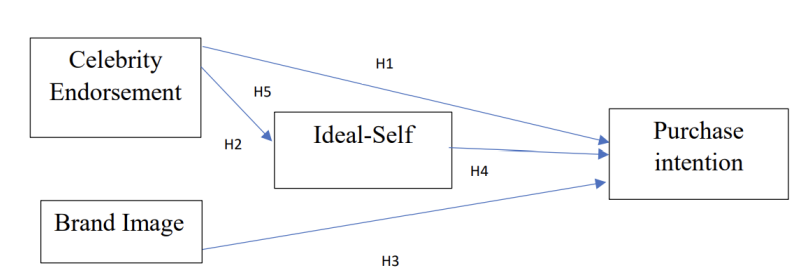


Figure 1. Research Model adopted in this study
Source: Shi et al. (2021)

METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a quantitative type. It involved 180 private university students in Jakarta and its surrounding areas (Jabodetabek area). Respondents were recruited using non-probably, purposive sampling with the following criteria: Private university students in Jabodetabek area, have knowledge about Nike and Nike’s advertisements. Data collection was done in a cross-sectional way, and used Structural Equation Modeling for data processing and analysis. Model mediation is examined using Barron and Kenny method (Barron & Kenny, 1986).

The measure of Celebrity Endorsement was adopted from McCracken (1989). The measure of Brand Image was adopted from Severi & Ling (2013). Ideal Self was adopted from Sigy (1982) and Purchase Intention was adopted from Shah et al. (2012). Questionnaire used 5-point Likert Scale.

RESULTS

A. Profile of Respondents

Table 1 below is the summary of the profile of the respondents in this study.

Table 1. Profiles of Respondents

Demographic Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	73	40.6
	Female	107	59.4
Age	18 years old	7	3.9
	19 years old	8	4.4
	20 years old	26	14.5
	21 years old and older	139	77.2
Domicile	Bekasi	12	6.7
	Bogor	10	5.6
	Depok	5	2.8
	Jakarta	1-4	57.8
	Tangerang	49	27.2

Male and female respondents are almost equal, with female respondents (59.4%) a little bit more than the male respondents (40.6%). They are mostly in the last year of study or 21 years old and older (77.2%). The majority of respondents live in Jakarta (57.8%).

B. The Measurement Model

Table 2 below shows that all variables have met the criteria to be reliable (> 0.7). The highest value is Celebrity Endorsement (0.854) and the lowest value is Customer Ideal Self (0.836).

Table 2. Composite Reliability

Variable	Composite Reliability (>0.7)	Result
Brand Image (BI)	0.852	Reliable
Celebrity Endorsement (CE)	0.854	Reliable
Customer Ideal Self (CIS)	0.836	Reliable
Purchase Intention (PI)	0.843	Reliable

Source: Processed for this study using SMART PLS 3.2.9 (2022)

The next test conducted is validity test. Validity test results in Outer loading and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The results of the validity test (Table 3) show that all indicators are valid with outer loading > 0.7 , and Average Variance Extracted or AVE > 0.5 .

Table 3. Validity Test

Variable	Indicators	Outer Loading (> 0.7)	AVE (> 0.5)	Result
Brand Image (BI)	BI1	0.787	0.591	Valid
	BI2	0.822		Valid
	BI3	0.760		Valid
	BI4	0.700		Valid
Celebrity Endorsement (CE)	CE1	0.751	0.596	Valid
	CE2	0.853		Valid
	CE3	0.712		Valid
	CE4	0.764		Valid
Customer Ideal Self (CIS)	CIS1	0.777	0.629	Valid
	CIS2	0.805		Valid
	CIS3	0.798		Valid
Purchase Intention (PI)	PI1	0.735	0.574	Valid
	PI2	0.767		Valid
	PI3	0.733		Valid
	PI4	0.793		Valid

Source: Processed for this study using SMART PLS 3.2.9 (2022)

The researchers could retain all the 15 indicators that were proven to be valid, meeting all the criteria for valid indicators.

In the Discriminant Validity Test using Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT). The threshold value is < 0.9. Table 4 shows that all values are < 0.9, and thus discriminant validity in this study is established.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity Test (<0.9)

Variable	BI	CE	CIS	PI
BI				
CE	0.748			
CIS	0.745	0.649		
PI	0.706	0.625	0.775	

Source: Processed for this study using SMART PLS 3.2.9 (2022)

The next test to be reported is the Collinearity Test with Inner VIF threshold < 10. Table 5 shows that all VIF values have met the criteria of below 10. This means that there are no collinearity issues. The lowest value is Customer Ideal Self with 1.510 and the highest value is Brand Image with the value of 1.771.

Table 5. Collinearity Test

Inner VIF < 10	
Brand Image (BI)	1.771
Celebrity Endorsement (CE)	1.591
Customer Ideal Self (CIS)	1.510
Purchase Intention	1.530

Source: Processed for this study using SMART PLS 3.2.9 (2022)

B. The Structural Model

R-Square and Hypothesis Test are reported here as part of data analysis under Structural Model Evaluation.

Table 6. R-Square

	R2 Value	Category
Customer Ideal Self	0.230	Weak
Purchase Intention	0.421	Weak to moderate

Source: Processed for this study using SMART PLS 3.2.9 (2022)

R-Square describes the explanatory power of the independent variables in explaining the dependent variable. In this research model, it is found that the independent variables have weak explanatory power of 0.230, while they have weak to moderate explanatory power when explaining Purchase Intention with a value of 0.421. There are other variables influencing Customer Ideal Self and Purchase Intention that are not investigated in this study.

Table 7. Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis	Standard Coefficient	T-Statistics (> 1.645)	P-Value (< 0.05)	Result	Decision
H1: CE → PI	0.176	2.252	0.012	Significant	Supported
H2: CE → CIS	0.480	6.949	0.000	Significant	Supported
H3: BI → PI	0.255	2.948	0.002	Significant	Supported
H4: CIS → PI	0.344	4.757	0.000	Significant	Supported
H5: CE → CIS → PI	0.165	4.619	0.000	Significant	Supported

Source: Processed for this study using SMART PLS 3.2.9 (2022)

Hypothesis test results revealed all hypothesis to be significant and supported. Hypothesis 1 is confirmed significant and supported with T-statistics of $2.252 > 1.645$ and P-value of $0.012 < 0.05$. This means that there is positive influence of Celebrity Endorsement on Purchase Intention. Hypothesis 2 is also found significant and supported with T-statistics of $6.949 > 1.645$ and P-value of $0.000 < 0.005$. This means that there is a positive influence of Celebrity Endorsement on Customer Ideal Self. Next, Hypothesis 3 is also found significant with P-value of 0.002 and supported with T-Statistics of $2.948 < 1.645$. This indicates there is a positive influence of Brand Image on Purchase Intention. Another hypothesis that is significant and supported is Hypothesis 4 that confirms a positive influence of Customer Ideal Self on Purchase Intention with a P-value of 0.000 and T-Statistics of $4.757 > 1.645$. Finally, Hypothesis 5 on the mediating role of Customer Ideal Self in the interaction between Celebrity Endorsement and Purchase Intention of Nike is also found supported with P-value of $0.000 < 0.005$ and T-statistics of $4.619 > 1.645$.

The results of the hypothesis test retrieved after bootstrapping is summarized in the following figure (Figure 1).

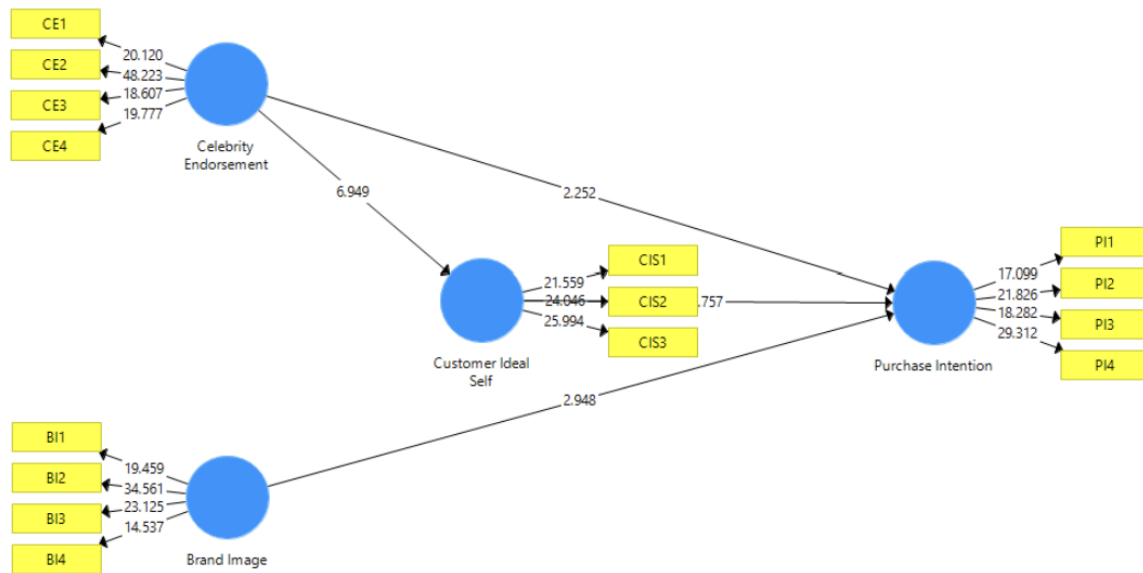


Figure 1. Bootstrapping results of this study.

Source: Processed for this study using SMART PLS 3.2.9 (2022)

DISCUSSION

In this study, Celebrity Endorsement is found to have a significant positive influence on Purchase Intention. A study by Al-Awadhi (2020) also confirms the result of this study the characteristics of celebrity endorser that match up with the brand have a positive influence on purchase intention of the product. Characteristics of celebrity endorsement (e.g. trustworthiness, expertise, familiarity) play a crucial role in driving purchase intention (Ha & Lam, 2016). Thus, sports shoe stores like Nike need to carefully choose celebrity with characteristics that match up with the brand attributes of the product endorsed.

Celebrity endorsement is also found to have a positive impact on clients' ideal selves. The favorable connection of the two variables is also confirmed by Choi & Riffon (2012). Customers have a positive attitude towards certain celebrities reflecting their ideal self as inspiring figures that they tend to follow (Boon & Lomore, 2001; Escalas & Bettman, 2003b, 2003a). Therefore, consumers tend to buy any product endorsed by the celebrity.

The study revealed a positive influence of Brand image on purchase intention. In the context of luxury product, there is also a positive influence of brand image on purchase intention (Monroe & Krishnan, 1985; Zeithaml, 1988; Dodds et al., 1991, and Peterson, 2004). Customers will buy a certain product that they perceived to have a positive brand image which eventually will also boost their ideal self when they use the product. Similar finding was also confirmed by Peng & Liang (2013), Tandu (2014), and Dwipayani & Rahyuda (2016).

Another interesting finding of this result is the positive influence of customer ideal self

on purchase intention. A previous study also confirmed the positive impact of customers' ideal self on purchase intention (Jamal & Goode, 2001). The level of purchase intention depends on the degree of self-identification in the product (Shavitt, 1992). This explains why a solid association between self-image, product image can drive purchase intent (Ericksen, 1997; Belch & Belch, 2006; Landon Jr., 1974)

Finally, the study confirms the mediating role of Ideal Self in the interaction between Celebrity Endorsement and Purchase Intention. This finding suggests there is a favorable link between celebrity endorsement and purchase intention, which is mediated through the customer's ideal self. Hong and Zinkhan (2010) assert that consumers who buy a certain product view that this product is a reflection of their self-image, and that celebrities who evidently reflect the customer ideal self are the inspiring power for the customers to buy the product. As a result, customers may positively respond to advertisements with celebrities endorsing the product (Choi & Rifon, 2012).

CONCLUSION

This study revealed interesting findings concerning the positive impact of Celebrity Endorsement and Brand Image on Customer Ideal Self. The study also found a positive influence of Celebrity endorsement on purchase intention. Finally, the study found a significant mediating role of customer ideal self in the interaction between celebrity endorsement and purchase intention.

As this study was conducted in the context of Sports Shoe industry, with Nike as the subject of assessment, these findings lead to several managerial implications for Sports Shoe industry. First of all, sports shoe businesses should carefully choose celebrity endorsers who have positive or ideal characteristics that match up with the ideal self of the company's target customers. To do this, businesses can do a background check, can get information from target customers and can get recommendations from several top notch advertising agencies.

Another recommendation is using selected celebrity endorsers to endorse the product promoted in an authentic way. This means that businesses should find celebrities who are also genuinely interested in consuming the product endorsed, as customers can tell the difference between genuine and engineered recommendations by celebrities.

Businesses should conduct research to identify target customers' ideal self. Then, they can create programs involving celebrity endorsers to educate and give tips to customers to help them achieve their ideal self, for example with workshops, educational tools, and education games.

This study is not free from limitations. First, the R² of customer ideal self shows a weak explanatory power, and R² of purchase intention shows a moderate explanatory power. This suggests that there are other variables not investigated in this research that may have stronger explanatory power. Thus, it is recommended to future researcher to include other variables such as brand love, brand engagement, and customer loyalty. Another limitation is the fact that respondents come from private university background. Thus, the results cannot be generalized when applied in different groups of respondents, such as private employees, government employees, or public university students). Finally, there is limitation in the cross-sectional data

collection method. Ideal Self may change as customers move from teenage years to adulthood. Thus, future research is recommended to conduct a longitudinal kind of research to see how the change in life cycle may influence ideal self and purchase intention.

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