

From Stage to Skin: Unpacking K-Pop's Power as Ambassadors for Scarlett Skincare in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the impact of K-Pop celebrity endorsements on consumer purchase decisions within the Indonesian skincare market, specifically focusing on Scarlett Skin Care products. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected from 350 Indonesian consumers and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS. The results demonstrate that promotional activities exert the strongest and most statistically significant influence on purchase decisions, positioning promotion as a crucial driver of consumer interest in Scarlett products. While K-pop endorsements achieved high visibility and appeal among respondents, they displayed a negligible direct effect on purchase decisions, with a slight negative influence detected. Moreover, the interaction between income level and celebrity endorsement was found to be non-significant, indicating that the appeal of K-Pop endorsements does not vary substantially across income segments. Viral marketing also showed no significant moderation by income, with only a marginally significant interaction observed between income and promotion.

Keywords - **celebrity endorsement, income, promotion, purchase decision, viral marketing**

INTRODUCTION

The global cosmetics industry has experienced substantial growth in recent years, fueled by advances in product innovation, changing consumer lifestyles, and heightened awareness of personal care and self-expression. This rapid expansion has created a fiercely competitive market, prompting brands to adopt distinctive marketing strategies that resonate with diverse consumer segments. Particularly among younger consumers, there is an increased focus on brand image, endorsements, and digital engagement as critical factors influencing purchase behaviour. (Chekima et al., 2016). One example of a brand successfully navigating these dynamics is Scarlett Whitening. This cosmetics company has employed celebrity endorsements, notably through KPOP brand ambassadors, alongside viral marketing and promotions to capture the attention of its target demographic.

In today's digital age, celebrity endorsements have become more than mere promotional tools; they are potent connections that build brand authenticity and emotional resonance. For cosmetics brands, KPOP idols offer a compelling medium for fostering a positive brand image and a loyal consumer base, as they often attract dedicated fans who identify with their favourite celebrities' lifestyles and preferences. Research shows that celebrity ambassadors can positively influence consumer attitudes and increase brand trust, especially in beauty and fashion products. (Kim & Na, 2007). However, the potential impact of celebrity endorsements on purchasing decisions may vary by demographic factors, particularly income level, as consumer responses can differ based on perceived relevance, affordability, and aspirational appeal. (de Mooij & Hofstede, 2011; Hofstede, 2016; Karim & Rampersad, 2017). Viral marketing, often driven by social media

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platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, further amplifies these endorsements, leveraging social sharing to create broader awareness and social proof for products. (De Jans et al., 2018).

Despite the strategic benefits of KPOP brand ambassadors and viral marketing, studies have yet to systematically examine how income level influences consumer responses to these marketing efforts. Income level has been identified as a moderating variable in consumer behaviour studies, as it can shape attitudes toward brand ambassadors and promotional content based on perceived value and spending capacity (Song et al., 2021). For instance, studies suggest that consumers with higher income levels may respond more positively to aspirational marketing featuring high-profile celebrities. Consumers with lower incomes might prioritise affordability and practicality in purchasing decisions (Chekima et al., 2016). However, this perspective has not been explored extensively in cosmetics, where income levels could create distinct consumer segments with unique purchasing motivations.

This study aims to fill this research gap by exploring how KPOP brand ambassadors, viral marketing, and promotional strategies impact the purchasing decisions of Scarlett Whitening products, focusing on income level as a moderating factor. By examining a sample of university students, this research seeks to determine the extent to which income level shapes the effectiveness of these marketing strategies in influencing purchasing behaviour. The insights generated from this study could guide cosmetics brands in tailoring their marketing approaches, ultimately enhancing their ability to engage diverse demographics effectively and achieve sustained brand loyalty.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. The Role of Celebrity Endorsements in Consumer Purchasing Decisions

Celebrity endorsements are a widely used marketing strategy for building brand trust and creating an emotional connection with consumers. Research shows that endorsements can significantly impact consumer perceptions by aligning the brand's image with aspirational figures, thereby increasing purchase intentions. (Dwivedi et al., 2015). In the cosmetics industry, celebrity endorsements add perceived value, especially when endorsers resonate strongly with target demographics (Kim & Na, 2007). The concept of "image congruence" plays a vital role. Consumers are more likely to purchase products if they identify with the endorser's persona. (Choi & Rifon, 2012).

For younger consumers, KPOP idols uniquely influence purchasing behaviour due to their immense popularity and cross-cultural appeal. KPOP celebrities often cultivate dedicated fanbases through platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, allowing them to establish solid parasocial relationships with fans who perceive a personal connection to them (Sung, 2021). These relationships foster loyalty that extends to the products these idols endorse. This is especially powerful in cosmetics, where brand loyalty and personal image alignment are significant factors (Jin & Phua, 2014). Thus, KPOP idols serve as brand ambassadors and symbols of a lifestyle, attracting consumers across different income levels who aspire to the image they represent.

Income level, however, plays a critical moderating role in consumer responses to celebrity endorsements. High-income consumers often respond more positively to endorsements from luxury or high-status celebrities, as these align with their purchasing capacity and lifestyle (Sung,

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2021; Sung & Huddleston, 2018). This alignment is crucial in aspirational marketing, where brands like Scarlett Whitening collaborate with KPOP idols to appeal to consumers who view such figures as lifestyle goals (de Mooij & Hofstede, 2011). Conversely, lower-income consumers may prioritise practical benefits over aspirational appeals, responding more to endorsements that highlight product affordability or value rather than luxury (Muralidharan et al., 2016; Muralidharan & Xue, 2016). Research suggests that the effectiveness of these endorsements depends on how well the celebrity's image and lifestyle resonate with the consumer's economic reality, especially within the beauty industry, where both status and quality play essential roles (Lee & Thorson, 2008).

B. Viral Marketing and Social Proof in Digital Consumer Behavior

Viral marketing leverages social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok to amplify brand visibility through social sharing and engagement (Appel et al., 2020). In the cosmetics industry, viral campaigns are particularly effective because they harness visually engaging content that resonates with consumers on an emotional level. Social proof plays a significant role here, as consumers often view widely shared content or peer endorsements as indicators of a product's quality and popularity, driving increased purchase intentions (De Veirman et al., 2019; Tafesse & Wien, 2018).

Income level critically moderates responses to viral marketing efforts. High-income consumers often prefer campaigns that emphasise exclusivity, luxury, and premium aesthetics, which align with their purchasing power and desire for prestige (Chekima et al., 2016). These consumers are drawn to campaigns featuring high-profile influencers or aspirational content that reflects their lifestyle preferences, as seen in research on social media's impact on luxury consumer behaviour (Jin & Ryu, 2020). Conversely, lower-income consumers tend to prioritise affordability and trustworthiness over aspirational imagery, finding more value in campaigns that highlight practical product benefits, discounts, or relatable user-generated content (UGC) (Bonilla-Quijada et al., 2023; Torregrosa et al., 2023).

User-generated content (UGC) has emerged as a powerful driver of social proof in viral marketing. It showcases real user experiences, which are particularly influential among lower-income consumers who rely on peer endorsements to validate their purchases (Alalwan, 2018). UGC, such as testimonials, product reviews, and tutorials, provide authenticity that consumers often trust more than brand-generated content (Schouten et al., 2020). While higher-income consumers may also engage with UGC, they are generally more responsive to influencer-generated content that mirrors their aspirational lifestyle (De Veirman et al., 2019).

Emotional appeal is another critical factor in viral marketing, with responses varying across income levels. Lower-income consumers tend to engage more with campaigns that use humour, personal stories, or relatable narratives, which make the brand feel approachable and accessible (Torregrosa et al., 2023). On the other hand, high-income consumers often resonate more with campaigns that evoke exclusivity or sophistication, enhancing the brand's perceived value and aligning with their lifestyle (Appel et al., 2020). Tailoring viral marketing campaigns to address different income segments' emotional and practical needs can thus maximise engagement and conversion across consumer demographics (Tafesse & Wien, 2018).

C. Promotions and Income-Sensitive Consumer Responses

Promotional strategies, such as discounts, product bundles, loyalty programs, and limited-time offers, are essential in reducing the perceived financial risk of purchasing new products (Xiao et al., 2019). This approach is convenient in the cosmetics industry, where promotional activities make products more accessible to a broad, income-diverse consumer base (Sinha & Verma, 2020). Price-sensitive promotions—such as percentage-off discounts or seasonal sales—appeal to lower-income consumers. They allow them to access unattainable products while maximising immediate savings (Gauri et al., 2017). Financial considerations often drive these consumers to perceive discounts as an opportunity to experience premium offerings without a high price tag (Grewal et al., 2017).

Product bundling is another effective promotional strategy that enhances perceived value and encourages consumers to buy multiple items at a reduced price. For lower-income segments, bundling offers provide more excellent product value by increasing affordability, while for higher-income consumers, value-added bundles that include exclusive products can be more attractive, aligning with their interest in unique or premium experiences (Meyer-Waarden et al., 2023). This approach fosters consumer satisfaction and creates stronger brand connections, particularly when the bundled items complement each other and enhance the overall consumer experience (Demoulin & Willems, 2019).

Loyalty programs and retention incentives also have considerable appeal across income levels, though the specific features that resonate may differ. For higher-income consumers, loyalty programs that offer exclusive rewards and tiered membership benefits align well with their desire for premium and personalised experiences, which can encourage sustained brand engagement. (Sallaku & Vigolo, 2024) In contrast, lower-income consumers may find better value in loyalty programs that provide direct financial savings, such as cash-back or points-based systems (Pantano et al., 2018).

Limited-time offers add a sense of urgency to consumer decision-making, effectively leveraging scarcity to drive sales across demographics. High-income consumers often see these offers as opportunities to access exclusive products. In contrast, lower-income consumers feel motivated to take advantage of immediate savings, reducing the risk of missing a desired product or sale. (Belanche et al., 2021). The “fear of missing out” (FOMO) effect of these offers capitalises on psychological drivers, encouraging spontaneous purchases that appeal to distinct income segments (Flecha Ortiz et al., 2024; Japutra et al., 2025).

Finally, digital and personalised marketing has transformed traditional promotional approaches, enabling brands to reach income-diverse audiences with tailored messages. Personalised promotions allow brands to offer relevant discounts or incentives based on consumer data, appealing to high-income groups with exclusive digital offers and VIP access while providing lower-income consumers with practical, budget-friendly options (Hallikainen et al., 2022). Tailoring promotional strategies enhances customer satisfaction and maximises engagement by aligning offers with consumer motivations across income levels (Chen et al., 2024; Grewal et al., 2017; Lin & Huang, 2018).

D. Purchase Decision

The purchase decision is a central aspect of both consumer behaviour and marketing, where selecting a brand is the culmination of the decision-making process (Han, 2021). This process involves various stages, including problem recognition, information search, evaluation, purchase intention, and the final act of buying (Mani, 2023). Psychological factors, such as tradition, culture, beliefs, and the consumer's environment, play a significant role in guiding these stages (Diksha Panwar et al., 2019). Consumers evaluate numerous elements, including product quality, brand reputation, and price competitiveness, to make informed decisions. They engage in this process to maximise satisfaction, often conducting detailed research and comparing options before purchase (Vogrincic-Haselbacher et al., 2021).

Several models explain consumer purchase decisions. The Rational Decision-Making Model, for instance, emphasises logical evaluation, while the Hierarchy of Effects model outlines steps from awareness to purchase (Sivakumar, 2021). Cognitive and interdisciplinary models further illustrate how memory, psychology, and social factors influence purchase behaviors. Additionally, complex models integrate economic and psychological perspectives to provide a comprehensive view of consumer choice (Makepa & Chihobo, 2024).

Various motivators, including emotional connection, perceived value, and the influence of personal preferences shape purchase decisions. Consumers aim to fulfil specific needs, and their purchase journey involves active comparison of features, prices, and reviews (Vaidya & Kalita, 2021). Ultimately, this process reflects a quest for utility and value, driven by a desire for high satisfaction and alignment with personal preferences.

Therefore, the hypothesis is as follows:

H1: There is a positive effect between Celebrity Endorsement and purchase decision

H2: There is a positive effect between Viral Marketing towards purchase decision

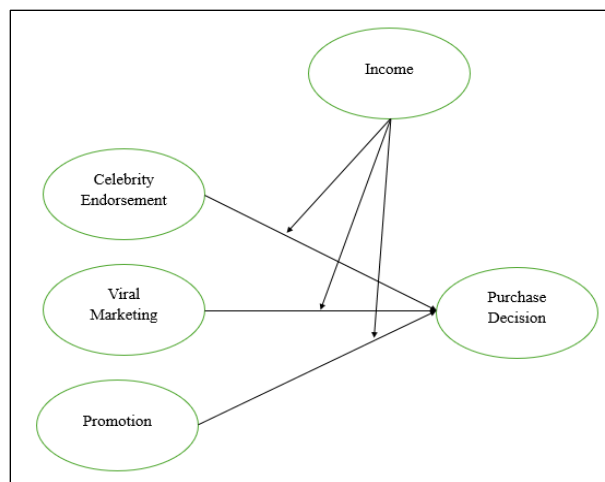
H3: There is a positive effect between Promotion towards purchase decision

H4: Income moderates Celebrity Endorsement and purchase decision

H4: Income moderates Viral Marketing and purchase decision

H4: Income moderates Promotion and purchase decision

E. Conceptual Framework



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Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

This study investigates the impact of three independent variables of Celebrity Endorsement, Viral marketing and Promotion on Purchase Decision as the dependent variable, with Income Level as a moderating variable. This methodology is designed for analysis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS due to its capability to handle complex models and its suitability for exploratory research involving latent constructs. (J.F. Hair et al., 2019). This study follows a quantitative research design with a cross-sectional survey approach to gather data from a sample of respondents. SmartPLS was selected for data analysis because it allows path coefficients and interactions to be tested, making it particularly appropriate for models with moderating effects (Sarstedt et al., 2023).

The target population for this research comprises consumers actively involved in purchasing decisions within the skincare industry. The sample comprises 351 respondents, which aligns with the recommended minimum for PLS-SEM analyses and provides adequate statistical power to detect relationships between variables. (Chin & Newsted, 1998; Hair et al., 2020) The sample size also adheres to the 10-times rule for SmartPLS, which requires that it be at least 10 times the maximum number of structural paths directed at any construct in the model. (Hair et al., 2022). The sampling method used is non-probability convenience sampling. This approach was chosen due to practical limitations in accessing an entirely random sample of skincare consumers. Online surveys distributed via social media and consumer forums ensure efficient data collection from individuals familiar with or actively purchasing skincare products. (J. Henseler et al., 2015) Data will be collected using a structured questionnaire with Likert scale items (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) designed to measure the constructs (Sugiyono, 2019). The questionnaire is distributed through online platforms to reach a broad audience efficiently.

The analysis will proceed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS software. PLS-SEM is appropriate for testing complex models with moderating effects and is effective for handling smaller sample sizes compared to covariance-based SEM (Memon et al., 2020). Measurement Model Assessment: The validity and reliability of constructs will be tested through Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) for internal consistency, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for convergent validity, and HTMT for discriminant validity (Kock & Hadaya, 2018). Structural Model Assessment: The hypothesised relationships between independent variables, the moderating effect, and the dependent variable will be tested. Path coefficients, t-values, and p-values will be examined to confirm significant relationships. The moderating effect of Income Level will be assessed by reviewing interaction terms in SmartPLS. Hypothesis Testing: The model will include hypotheses related to each independent variable's impact on purchase decisions and the moderating effect of Income Level. Significance levels ($p < 0.05$) will be used to confirm or reject each hypothesis. (Hair et al., 2018).

RESULTS

A. Demographic

The respondents' demographic and socioeconomic profile shows from Table 1 that 23.9% are aged 25-34, 20.7% are 35-44, while the 45-54 and over 55 age groups each make up 27.7%. Gender distribution is nearly balanced, with 50.1% male and 49.9% female respondents. Education

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levels reveal that a majority, 55.6%, hold a Bachelor's degree, 35.0% have a Master's degree, and 9.4% hold a Doctoral degree. Regarding income, 18.2% earn less than 5 million, 44.7% fall within the 5-10 million range, 20.8% earn 10-15 million, and 16.2% have an income above 15 million.

TABLE 1
RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHIC

Criteria	Description	Percentage
Age	25-34 Years Old	23,90%
	35-44 Years Old	20,70%
	45-54 Years Old	27,70%
	> 55 Years Old	27,70%
Gender	Male	50,14%
	Female	49,86%
Education Level	Bachelor Degree	55,60%
	Master Degree	35,00%
	Doctoral Degree	9,40%
Income Level	Less than 5 million	18,24%
	5 - 10 million	44,73%
	10 - 15 million	20,80%
	> 15 million	16,23%

Source: Questionnaire (2024)

B. Credibility and Validity test

Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of internal consistency, indicating how closely related a set of items are as a group. A generally accepted threshold for reliability is 0.70 or higher. Moreover, composite reliability is another measure of reliability that accounts for the loadings of the items, often preferred in Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Lastly, AVE is a measure of convergent validity, which indicates the extent to which a construct explains the variance of its items. The generally accepted threshold for AVE is 0.50 or higher.

TABLE 2
CREDIBILITY AND VALIDITY OUTPUT

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Celebrity Endorsement	0,77	0,84	0,51
Promotion	0,71	0,81	0,51
Purchase Decision	0,76	0,84	0,51
Viral Marketing	0,75	0,83	0,50

Source: Smart-PLS Results (2024)

Table 2 shows that all variables have Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.700, indicating satisfactory internal consistency and reliability. Each variable is consistent in measuring the

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underlying construct. Furthermore, the CR values for all variables are above the recommended threshold of 0.700, with values ranging from 0.81 to 0.84. This further confirms that the scales used for these variables are reliable. For Celebrity Endorsement, Promotion, and Purchase Decision, the AVE values are 0.51, which meets the minimum threshold, indicating adequate convergent validity. Viral Marketing has an AVE of 0.50, which is at the borderline but still acceptable. These results suggest that each construct explains an adequate proportion of variance in its items, supporting the validity of these measures.

C. R Square

R-square (R^2), known as the **coefficient of determination**, measures the proportion of variance in the dependent variable explained by the independent variables in a regression model. R-square also indicates how well the model fits the data. A higher R-square value suggests that the model can explain a more significant proportion of the variance in the dependent variable, indicating a better fit. According to Hair et al., (2020), the R-square (R^2) value can be categorised as follows: R^2 Values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 mean substantial, moderate, and weak.

TABLE 3
R-SQUARE OUTPUT

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Purchase Decision	0,235	0,220

Source: Smart-PLS Results (2024)

Given that the R-square (R^2) value of 0.235 for purchase decision has weak explanatory power for the model. (Hair et al., 2022). This suggests that approximately 23.5% of the variance in the purchase decision construct is explained by the independent variables included in the model, such as celebrity endorsement, viral marketing, and promotion, while factors outside the model influence the remaining 76.5%. Next, the adjusted R-square of 0.220 adjusts for the number of predictors in the model, indicating a slight reduction in explanatory power when accounting for model complexity but still aligning with weak explanatory power.

D. Discriminant Validity

HTMT is a method for assessing discriminant validity in Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). It evaluates whether two constructs are distinct by measuring the ratio between-trait correlations (heterotrait) to within-trait correlations (monotrait). According to HTMT theory, discriminant validity is established if the HTMT values are below a certain threshold. (Jörg Henseler, 2021). Commonly used thresholds are 0.85 for conceptually similar constructs and 0.90 for conceptually dissimilar constructs.

TABLE 4
HTMT OUTPUT

	Celebrity Endorsement	Income	Promotion	Purchase Decision	Viral Marketing	Income x Celebrity	Income x Viral	Income x Promotion
Celebrity Endorsement								

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Income	0,09							
Promotion	0,48	0,07						
Purchase Decision	0,11	0,12	0,59					
Viral Marketing	0,48	0,05	0,92	0,45				
Income x Celebrity Endorsement	0,03	0,10	0,09	0,10	0,08			
Income x Viral Marketing	0,06	0,02	0,10	0,07	0,06	0,41		
Income x Promotion	0,05	0,05	0,10	0,13	0,08	0,37	0,71	

Source: Smart-PLS Results (2024)

Based on the HTMT matrix in table 4, they are all below the threshold of 0.85, supporting the conclusion that discriminant validity is achieved for these constructs. This implies that each construct is sufficiently distinct from the others, and there is no evidence of overlap between constructs. This result aligns with the recommendations in HTMT literature by Roemer et al., (2021), suggesting that the constructs are well-defined and can be used confidently in further model analysis. Furthermore, the HTMT analysis in this model confirms that the constructs, including Celebrity Endorsement, Promotion, Purchase Decision, and Viral Marketing, demonstrate adequate discriminant validity, ensuring that they measure unique aspects of the overall framework being studied.

E. Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis testing is a structured method for making statistical decisions. It is widely used in research and industry to validate theories and make data-driven decisions by evaluating the likelihood of observed outcomes, assuming the null hypothesis is true. (Malhotra, 2019). It helps researchers determine whether observed results are due to chance or indicate a natural effect.

TABLE 7
HYPOTHESIS OUTPUT

	Original sample	T statistics	P values	Confidence Interval	
				Lower 5.0%	Upper 95.0%
Celebrity Endorsement -> Purchase Decision	-0.119	1.777	0.038	-0.172	0.048
Income -> Purchase Decision	0.065	1.278	0.101	-0.023	0.145
Promotion -> Purchase Decision	0.344	4.633	0.000	0.218	0.461
Viral Marketing -> Purchase Decision	0.193	2.689	0.004	0.061	0.297
Income x Celebrity Endorsement -> Purchase Decision	-0.087	1.328	0.092	-0.183	0.031
Income x Viral Marketing -> Purchase Decision	0.049	0.561	0.287	-0.102	0.187
Income x Promotion -> Purchase Decision	-0.134	1.589	0.056	-0.264	0.012

Source: Smart-PLS Results (2024)

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Based on Table 7, Celebrity endorsement hurts purchase decisions with a small effect size (-0.119). The p-value (0.038) is below the ordinary significance level of 0.05, indicating that this effect is statistically significant. However, the negative direction suggests that K-pop endorsements might not have the intended positive influence on purchase decisions in this sample, potentially reflecting a complex consumer response. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is accepted. The following variable is viral marketing, which significantly and positively affects purchase decisions ($p = 0.004$). The positive effect size (0.193) indicates that viral marketing campaigns are beneficial for driving consumer purchase decisions. So, hypothesis 2 is accepted.

Promotion is pivotal in influencing purchase decisions, demonstrating a strong positive impact on consumer behaviour toward Scarlett products (effect size = 0.344, $p < 0.001$). This finding highlights the effectiveness of promotional efforts in driving sales, affirming Hypothesis Three as accepted and emphasising promotion as a critical lever for purchase motivation. On the other hand, the study's income level is a moderating variable, but its interactions reveal exciting nuances.

Specifically, Income and Celebrity Endorsement: This interaction shows no significant effect on purchase decisions ($p = 0.092$), indicating that celebrity endorsements influence consumers similarly across income levels; income and Viral Marketing: The effect of viral marketing on purchase decisions also remains unaffected by income, with a non-significant interaction ($p = 0.287$). This suggests that viral marketing resonates consistently across income groups. Income and Promotion: The interaction here is close to statistical significance ($p = 0.056$), hinting that income may subtly influence promotions' effectiveness, though it's not a definitive impact.

DISCUSSION

For the first hypothesis, the analysis indicates that celebrity endorsement harms purchase decisions for Scarlett products in Indonesia. This counterintuitive result suggests that while celebrity endorsements are often used to drive purchase intention, they may sometimes alienate or deter specific segments of consumers. This could occur if the celebrity lacks credibility, if there is a mismatch between the endorser and product, or if consumers perceive the endorsement as insincere or overly commercial.

The results of the finding supported that inappropriate celebrity associations could reduce brand credibility and negatively impact purchase intentions (Trivedi & Sama, 2020). Similarly, this meta-analysis from prior research supports the idea that not all celebrity endorsements are practical; their impact varies based on product fit and audience perception (Knoll & Matthes, 2017). Furthermore, current finding supported by prior research indicates that celebrity endorsement effectiveness depends on several factors, including product type and cultural fit (Amos et al., 2008).

The following variable is viral marketing, which significantly positively affects purchase decisions. This indicates that word-of-mouth or user-generated content shared through social media platforms can influence Scarlett's product purchases. Viral marketing leverages social proof and often creates a sense of trust and authenticity, making it a powerful tool in the Indonesian market. Next, the research highlights viral marketing's effectiveness in creating consumer engagement and influencing purchase decisions (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2012). The prior research result also aligns with the current finding that viral marketing favourably affects purchase decisions, especially for Scarlett products in Greater Jakarta. In addition, there are other studies

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found that viral and word-of-mouth marketing have a significant positive impact on purchase intention compared to traditional advertising (Trusov et al., 2009).

Another variable discussed in the study is promotions, which positively and significantly impact purchase decisions. This suggests that promotional activities are a key driver of purchase decisions for Scarlett products. Consumers may be more likely to buy Scarlett products when incentivised by discounts, offers, or other promotional strategies, which can reduce the perceived cost and increase the product's value proposition. Further analysis, current study findings supported by prior studies state that promotion in conjunction with web celebrity endorsement enhances purchase decisions (Liao et al., 2021). According to Peng et al., (2019), mentioned that promotion is increasing purchase decisions in online sales. The finding supported by prior research stated that promotions are shown to drive short-term purchase behavior and influence consumer decision-making effectively (Ataman et al., 2010).

In addition, the study analyse income as a moderate variable between celebrity endorsement and purchase decision. The interaction between income and celebrity endorsement does not significantly affect purchase decisions. This suggests that income level does not alter how consumers perceive celebrity endorsements, possibly indicating that both higher- and lower-income groups respond similarly to celebrity influences. Next, the finding supported by prior study indicates that while celebrity endorsement can impact purchase decisions, the effectiveness is inconsistent across different income groups, often showing reduced significance among certain income brackets (Nyamakanga et al., 2019). Previous study has similar outcome about celebrity endorsements can influence purchasing behavior, however income level variations do not consistently alter this effect, particularly in low-involvement product categories (Khan et al., 2019).

Furthermore, the non-significant result suggests that income does not meaningfully moderate the effect of viral marketing on purchase decisions. Viral marketing's effectiveness appears consistent across income levels, indicating it appeals broadly, likely due to the trust and authenticity of peer recommendations (Sharma & Kaur, 2020). The finding of current study supported by prior research mentioned that viral marketing messages increase consumer awareness but do not significantly impact purchase intentions, aligning with findings where the effect of income on viral marketing remains inconclusive (Ahmad & Lasi, 2020). Consequently, the research that by Hosseinikhah Choshaly & Mirabolghasemi, (2022) shows that while viral marketing boosts brand perception, its influence on purchase decisions is limited across income groups, with purchase intention varying based on product type rather than income level.

Lastly, the interaction of income as moderate variable between promotion and purchase decision is close to significance, it suggests that income might have some influence on how consumers perceive promotions, with potentially lower-income consumers being more influenced. However, given the p-value, this effect cannot be conclusively determined. One of the study found that while promotions generally influence purchase decisions, the effect varies based on consumer income, with less pronounced effects among higher-income groups (Hanaysha, 2018). The study align with the current results that income does not affect promotion and purchase decision. Other findings indicate that while promotions generally add value, income disparities can lead to differing perceptions, with higher-income consumers showing lower sensitivity to price-related promotions (Sinha & Verma, 2020). Additionally, to strengthen the finding of current study, it is

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also supported by prior study that explores how promotional strategies affect consumer decisions and reveals that income moderates these effects, as lower-income consumers are more sensitive to promotions than higher-income ones (Hamilton et al., 2019).

CONCLUSION

The study provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of K-Pop celebrity endorsements, viral marketing, and promotions on purchase decisions within the Indonesian market, with a focus on Scarlett Whitening products. The findings reveal that promotion is the most influential factor driving purchase decisions, as consumers respond significantly to discounts, bundling, and loyalty incentives (Al-Mutairi & Siddiqui, 2023; Gauri et al., 2017). Viral marketing also shows a positive and significant impact, highlighting the power of social proof and user-generated content in influencing consumer behavior, especially through platforms like Instagram and TikTok (Gabucayan et al., 2022; Osei-Frimpong et al., 2019).

Conversely, while celebrity endorsements with K-Pop idols perform well in terms of visibility, they exhibit a slightly negative influence on purchase decisions. This outcome suggests that celebrity appeal alone may not directly lead to purchases, possibly due to perceptions of inauthenticity or misalignment with consumer values (Ahmed et al., 2015). Income, as a moderating factor, showed minimal impact on altering the effectiveness of these strategies. The only marginally significant effect was observed between income and promotion, indicating a potential but inconclusive trend where lower-income consumers may be slightly more responsive to promotional efforts (Nabil et al., 2022).

Investigate Other Demographic Moderators: Future studies could explore variables such as age, education level, and regional differences to understand how these demographics interact with promotional strategies and endorsements in influencing purchase decisions (Chattopadhyay, 2019). **Examine Authenticity in Celebrity Endorsements:** Given the slightly negative impact of celebrity endorsements, further research could focus on identifying the elements of authenticity that enhance the effectiveness of endorsements, particularly in culturally diverse markets like Indonesia (Imtiyaz et al., 2022) (Soni, 2021). This could involve testing different types of celebrities, including local influencers, to compare results.

Conduct Longitudinal Studies: To observe changes in consumer responses over time, a longitudinal approach could track the impact of K-Pop endorsements, viral marketing, and promotions on brand loyalty and purchase decisions (Panwar et al., 2019). **Explore Alternative Social Media Channels:** Since viral marketing demonstrated strong effectiveness, further studies could examine the impact of different social media platforms to identify where Scarlett's consumer base is most active and receptive (Jeseviciute-Ufartiene, 2019). **Income-Sensitive Promotions Analysis:** Given the near-significance of income's moderating role in promotional effectiveness, future research could focus on tailoring promotions for different income segments, assessing which types (e.g., loyalty points vs. discounts) resonate most effectively across income levels (Sivakumar, 2021)

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