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### The Effect of Korean Celebrity Endorsement on Perceived Product Quality and Brand Loyalty: Case of Indonesian Skincare Brand in DKI Jakarta

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#### ABSTRACT ARTICLE INFO

According to Indonesian Cosmetic Association, the beauty industry in Indonesia has rapidly increased as the number of brands varied. To attract more customers, many local brands adopt a celebrity endorsement strategy with Korean stars. In recent years' Korean celebrity endorsement has brought the eye of the public and has benefited businesses in increasing the awareness from fans and sometimes even selling out. However, it becomes a concern whether this strategy can bring the intended result and bring actual buying behavior. The purpose of this research is to examine the impact of celebrity endorsement on perceived product quality and brand loyalty among 100 young-adult women exposed to Somethinc skincare brand and NCT who have previously purchased the product in DKI Jakarta. This study uses quantitative analysis with Partial Least Square Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to analyze the data. The result of this study shows that Celebrity Endorsement shows a positive relationship with Perceived Product Quality. And Perceived Product Quality positively affects Brand Loyalty. This study provides empirical evidence that the above-mentioned relationships do exist, and companies can strategically leverage the facts to their advantage and drive customer perceptions of quality and loyalty through the promotion of appropriate celebrity endorsements.

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#### INTRODUCTION

The beauty industry in Indonesia is rapidly growing along with the increasing number of brands every year. According to the Indonesian Cosmetics Association (2019), domestic cosmetic manufacturers have developed 153 companies, bringing the total cosmetic business in Indonesia to 760 brands. Throughout the year, skincare product has always dominated the beauty industry as skincare product contributed the most to the overall revenue in a year, accounting for 38% or equivalent to IDR 25 trillion compared to other beauty (Statista, 2019).

It is found that there is a link between role models and beauty industry. Markplus, Inc. and Zap Clinic (2020) discovered that 45 percent of the total respondents considered Indonesian and foreign celebrities to be their role models in the world of beauty. This surely cannot be separated from the fact that the influence of many businesses invests to adopt celebrity endorsements as their advertising strategy (Baniya, 2017). As mentioned by Leonnard & Alicia (2021) the use of brand ambassadors or celebrity endorsement to represent the brand is also a way to compete with other brands. In recent years, Parc (2021) mentioned that the collaboration between brands and Korean pop artists has brought the eye of the public. The celebrity endorsement between brands and Korean celebs has been benefiting businesses by increasing the awareness from fans and sometimes even being sold out. Due to the rising popularity of Korean popular culture in Indonesia, several local brands implemented a marketing plan that uses Korean celebrities as Brand Ambassadors and Endorsers. Depicted to Kumparan (2022) there are at least twelve brands at the moment that pursue a Korean star as their celebrity endorser from 2019 to 2022, in which five of them come from skincare brands. Something is one of the skingare brands that settle a celebrity endorsement using K-star. As for their first-ever Korean celebrity endorsement project, Somethinc officially announced its collaboration

with NCT Dream (South Korean boy group).

### LITERATURE REVIEW Celebrity Endorsement

Celebrity endorsements are defined as an agreement between a well-known individual (a celebrity) and a company (e.g., a brand) to use the celebrity to promote a product and or services (Bergkvist & Khou, 2016). According to Ha and Lam (2016) factors determining celebrity endorsement falls into two, source based theory and management based theory. The source based theory is considering source credibility and source attractiveness. The credibility of the celebrity endorsements influences consumers' attitudes toward advertisements. A prior study has found that celebrity's credibility, trust and expertise increases a positive attitude toward brands (Khan et al., 2019). While source attractiveness is determined by the celebrity's familiarity, likeability, and relation to the consumer. By using a well-known and attractive faces transforms the advertisement into a pleasant experience for its target audience. On the other hand, the management based theories consist of the brand match-up theory and the meaning transfer theory. For Brand Match-up refers to the characteristics of a celebrity and brand attributes should be matched. This helps brands achieve the main goal of advertising which is to successfully convey the meaning of the advertisement (Baniya, 2017).

#### **Perceived Product Quality**

According to Keller and Swaminathan (2020) Perceived Product Quality (PPQ) is the perception of customers towards the product overall quality as compared to another possible option on the market. As stated by Keller (2020) the dimensions of perceived product quality are, product performance, product feature, product reliability, product durability and product aesthetics. Customers believe that the aforementioned dimensions often define quality and, in turn, influence attitudes and behavior on

a brand. Ultimately, past studies show that PPQ is able to influence buying behavior (Das, 2014; Yazdanifard, 2015).

#### **Brand Loyalty**

Brand Loyalty can be depicted from the behavior of the customers who feel satisfied with the product by willing to pay a premium from a company with a good reputation while also buying other product lines and eventually recommend it to their relatives (Leonnard et al, 2021). Furthermore, Leonnard (2018) classified brand loyalty into two, firstly the attitudinal loyalty which covers emotional commitment and switching cost. Secondly, Behavioral loyalty refers as a loyalty of consumers who make purchases. This type of loyalty can be representative as the intention to repurchase and word-of-mouth (WOM).

## Relationship between Celebrity Endorsement and Perceived Product Quality

It has been proven by previous studies celebrity endorsement has a positive impact on perceived product quality. This is supported by a study done by Kanwar and Huang (2021) they discovered the positive effect of celebrity endorsement toward perceived quality of an Indian cosmetics brand. A study done in South Korea has shown that celebrity endorsement attributes (familiarity and expertise) has a positive impact on perceived product quality (Kim et al., 2018). Thus, the hypothesis in this study are as follow:

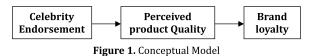
**H1:** Celebrity Endorsement has a positive effect towards Perceived Product Quality

## Relationship between Perceived Product Quality and Brand Loyalty

Falahat et al. (2018) evaluated the brand loyalty and the factors associated with perceived quality and willingness to order in the context of hardware retailers in Malaysia. The outcome of the research confirms the past findings that brand loyalty is strongly associated with perceived quality and willingness to order. Aquinia et al. (2020) carried

out an experiment to investigate the effect of perceived quality on repurchase intention that is also mediated by brand loyalty of Starbucks products. The conclusion of this study stipulated that perceived quality and brand loyalty have a positive effect on repurchase intention. Specifically, perceived quality has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty. Thus, the hypothesis in this study are as follow:

**H2:** Perceived Product Quality has a positive effect towards Brand Loyalty



RESEARCH METHOD

#### **Research Population and Sample**

This study's population involved the consumers of Somethinc skin care brand who have purchased the products and been exposed to the celebrity endorsement which is the NCT as the celebrity endorser. However, the total population of this study is unknown. Therefore, a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) will be used to analyze this study. The minimum amount of SEM is 100 samples (Ghozali, 2014). A non-probability, purposive sampling was utilized with 100 participants collected within young adult consumers in DKI Jakarta, ranging from 16 - 30 years old (BPS, 2019).

#### **Operational Definition**

Independent variable is one that influences the dependent variable in a certain way (Bougie & Sekaran 2020). The variable that work as independent variable is Celebrity Endorsement. While Dependent variable, the primary interest to the researcher, is the variable brand loyalty. (Bougie & Sekaran, 2020). Last but not least, this study adds mediating variable, as a surface between the time the independent variables start operating to influence the dependent variable and the time their impact is felt on (Bougie & Sekaran,2020). The variable that works as the mediating variable is the perceived product quality.

#### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### **Respondents Profile**

A total of 100 participants were collected from DKI Jakarta. Table 1 shows the summary of respondent profile. The first section is earned educational level which ranges from junior high school to master's degree. The second section, domicile which consists of East, South, West, North, and Central Jakarta. The third section, monthly expenses which ranges up to IDR 5,000,0000.

**Table 1.** Respondents Profile

Earned Educational Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Junior High School	2	2
High School	36	36
Bachelor's Degree	54	54
Master's Degree	3	3
Other	5	5
Domicile		
East Jakata	20	20
South Jakarta	40	40
West Jakarta	14	14
North Jakarta	10	10
Central Jakarta	16	16
<b>Monthly Expenses</b>		
< Rp. 1,250,000	32	32
Rp. 1,250,000 – Rp. 2,500,000	21	21
Rp. 2,500,000 – Rp. 3,750,000	21	21
Rp. 3,750,000 – Rp. 5,000,000	11	11
> Rp. 5,000,000	15	15

#### **Descriptive Statistic**

This section describes the data based on the collected data. Mean and standard deviation of each indicator are being further analyzed to assess descriptive statistics. Based on average interval value from Durianto (2004), it is cover as follows:

Table 2. Average Interval Value

Average Interval Score	Description
1.00 - 1.80	Strongly Disagree
1.80 - 2.60	Disagree
2.60 - 3.40	Neutral/Uncertain
3.40 - 4.20	Agree
4.20 - 5.00	Strongly Agree

#### **Mean and Standard Deviation**

Table 4 shows the summary of Mean and Standard Deviation of each of variables' indicators. The overall average score of the variable, Celebrity Endorsement, is a high mean of 4.62 and a standard deviation of 0.68 - indicating that the respondents strongly agreed with the statements given. The second variable, Perceived Product Quality scored a high mean of 4.61 and a standard deviation of 0.62 - indicating that the respondents strongly agreed with the statements given. Lastly, the third variable, Brand Loyalty scored a mean of 4.18 and a standard deviation of 0.86 - indicating that the respondents agreed with the statements given.

Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviation

Variable	Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation
Celebrity Endorsement	Ce1	4.70	0.608
	CE2	4.61	0.691
	CE3	4.54	0.741
	CE4	4.65	0.698
Variable Average Score		4.62	0.68
Perceived Product Quality	PPQ1	4.59	0.634
	PPQ2	4.63	0.627
	PPQ3	4.61	0.662
	PPQ4	4.62	0.613
	PPQ5	4.61	0.564
Variable Average Score		4.61	0.62
Brand Loyalty	BL1	4.27	0.847
	BL2	4.26	0.808
	BL3	4.48	0.714
	BL4	3.95	0.984
	Bl5	3.98	0.969
Variable Average Score		4.18	0.864

#### **Outer Model**

Convergent Validity - Loading Factor

According to Sekaran & Bougie (2016), in testing convergent validity, it can be assessed based on outer loadings or also known as loading factors. The expected loading value is not lower than 0.7 (Ghozali, 2016).

Table 4. Outer Loading Result

Variable	Indicators	Loading Factor	Result	
Celebrity Endorsement	Ce1	0.885	Valid	
	CE2	0.854	Valid	
	CE3	0.900	Valid	
	CE4	0.773	Valid	
Perceived Product Quality	PPQ1	0.856	Valid	
	PPQ2	0.837	Valid	
	PPQ3	0.861	Valid	
	PPQ4	0.721	Valid	
	PPQ5	0.845	Valid	
Brand Loyalty	BL1	0.887	Valid	
	BL2	0.817	Valid	
	BL3	0.819	Valid	
	BL4	0.766	Valid	
	Bl5	0.820	Valid	

Table 4 shows the results of the measurement analysis of outer loadings. Overall, the loading factors of the indicators are all above the value of 0.7, indicating that all indicators are fulfill the satisfactory and have properly measure the latent variables. The Specification and Indirect Measurement Model (Outer Model) can be seen in Figure 2.

Convergent Validity - Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Average Variance Extracted is the second analysis of convergent validity. AVE is used to find discriminant validity for each construct and

latent variable. Ghozali and Latan (2014) stated that the value of AVE must be > 0.5.

Table 5. Average Variance Extracted

Variable	AVE	Result	
Celebrity Endorsement (CE)	0.731	Valid	
Perceived Product Quality (PPQ)	0.681	Valid	
Brand Loyalty (BL)	0.677	Valid	

From Table 6 it can be depicted that all AVE of the variables are above 0.5. Thus, the validity of the variables is considered acceptable.

#### Discriminant Validity - Cross Loading

The use of discriminant validity is to ensure that each indicator of each latent variable is different from other variables (Ghozali, 2016). Discriminant validity testing can be assessed based on cross loading. The cross loading test must show a higher indicator value from each construct compared to the indicators in the other constructs to accepted (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Table 3 displayed the results of the cross loading values of each indicator and its latent variable as well as other latent variables

In summary, each of the indicator shows a higher cross loading value with its associated latent variable than with other latent variables. Thus, the result indicates to have a good discriminant validity value.

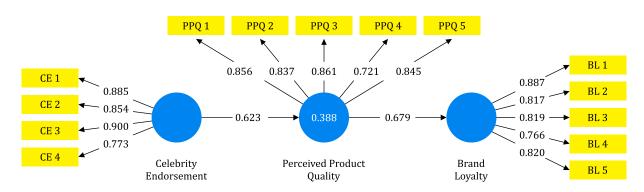


Figure 2. Loading Factor Analysis

Table 3. Cross Loading Result

	CE	PPQ	BL
Ce1	0.885	0.586	0.381
CE2	0.854	0.467	0.327
СЕЗ	0.900	0.598	0.419
CE4	0.773	0.456	0.349
PPQ1	0.516	0.856	0.595
PPQ2	0.640	0.837	0.573
PPQ3	0.499	0.861	0.598
PPQ4	0.363	0.721	0.518
PPQ5	0.519	0.845	0.514
BL1	0.378	0.662	0.887
BL2	0.249	0.603	0.817
BL3	0.549	0.605	0.819
BL4	0.272	0.406	0.766
B15	0.301	0.439	0.820

#### **Composite Reliability**

Composite reliability is considered preferable in estimating the internal consistency of a construct (Ghozali, 2016). The value of composite reliability considered acceptable if it is between the value of 0.60 and 0.70, and the value between 0.70 to 0.95 indicate a satisfactory level of reliability (Hair et al., 2017).

 Table 4. Composite Reliability Result

Variable	Composite Reliability
Celebrity Endorsement	0.915
Perceived Product Quality	0.914
Brand Loyalty	0.913

Table 4 shows the result of composite reliability. It can be seen that all variables scored above 0.70. Thus, all variables a high composite reliability.

#### Cronbach's Alpha

Cronbach's alpha is a method of measuring internal consistency; it is interpreted as the number between 0 and 1 (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The benchmark for Cronbach's alpha is at the value of 0.7 and above.

Table 5. Cronbach's Alpha Result

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
Celebrity Endorsement	0.882
Perceived Product Quality	0.876
Brand Loyalty	0.882

Table 5 shows the result of Cronbach's Alpha. In summary, all variables scored above 0.7. Thus, this study has an acceptable value of Cronbach's alpha.

#### **Inner Model**

Coefficient of Determination  $(R^2)$ 

(R<sup>2</sup>) measures the model's explanatory power by representing the variance explained by each of the endogenous constructs (Shmueli & Koppius, 2011). R2 values range from 0 to 1, with higher numbers implying stronger influence. According to Hair et al. (2011) R2 values of 0.75 means it's substantial, while a value of 0.50 as moderate and a value of 0.25 indicate as weak.

Table 6. R-square Result

Variable	R-Squared
Perceived Product Quality (PPQ)	0.388
Brand Loyalty (BL)	0.461

Table 6 shows the result of R-square analysis. As the values converted to percentage, each of the variable respectively amounted to 38.8% and 46.1%. The value of Perceived Product Quality (0.388) is classified as moderate, this indicate that 38.8% of the variation in Perceived Product Quality can be explained by its antecedent variable, Celebrity Endorsement, and the remaining 61.2% can be explained by variables outside the research model. While the R2 for variable Brand Loyalty (BL) is 46.1% which classified as moderate as well. Although the remaining 53.9% can be explained by variables outside the research model.

### Predictive Relevance (Q2) Results

According to Hair et al. (2013) the predictive relevance  $(Q^2)$  recognized as a predictive

relevance. If the value of Q2 above the value of 0 means that the model has a predictive relevance. Hair et al (2011) develop the formula as follows:

Q2 = 1 - (1-R12)(1-R22) [R1 = 0.388, R2 = 0.461]

Q2 = 1 - (1-0.3882)(1-0.4612)

= 1 - (0.849456)(0.787479)

= 1 - 0.668928761

Q2 = 0.331 (rounded to the nearest 0.001)

Based on the calculation above, the sufficient predictive relevance of this study is 33.1%, which is accepted as it is score above the value of 0.

#### **Hypothesis Testing Results**

Hypothesis testing is the final statistical analysis of this study. In this section, the method measures whether the hypotheses are supported or not supported. To begin with, the hypothesis testing is first measured through path coefficient value (see Figure 3) or also known as original sample (O), in which the value between 0 and 1 is categorized as positive, while value between -1 and 0 are classified as negative. The second analysis is the P-Values method. P-Value determine whether or not the hypothesis tested are supported. Hypothesis categorized as supported

when the P-value of the hypothesis is below 0.05, and anything above the aforementioned value is rejected. The summary of Path Coefficient Results and Hypothesis Results can be seen in Figure 3 and Table 4.17 respectively.

#### **DISCUSSION**

The first hypothesis of this study is Celebrity Endorsement (CE) has a positive effect on Perceived Product Quality (PPQ). The statistical result shows that this hypothesis original sample (0) valued at 0.623, indicating that the hypothesis is positive. While for the T-statistic scored 4.494 (> 1.96), hence proves the significance of the hypothesis. The P-value of this hypothesis is at rate of 0.000 which is below the value of 0.0005, meaning that the hypothesis is true and should be accepted. In conclusion, Celebrity Endorsement (CE) has been proven to have a positive effect on Perceived Product Quality (PPQ). Previous study done by (Osei-Frimpong et al., 2019; Kesturi & Rubiyanti, 2020; Kanwar & Huang, 2021) exhibits an in-line result toward the supported hypothesis in this study. It is found that the celebrity endorser's able to affect consumer's perception of brand quality positively.

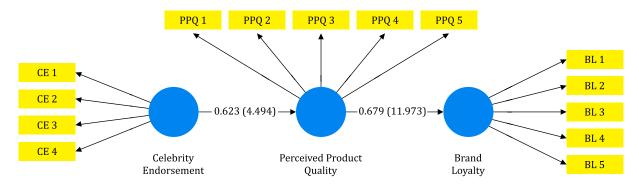


Figure 3. Path Coefficient Results

Table 7. Hypothesis Result

Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	T-Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P-Values	Result
<b>H1:</b> Celebrity Endorsement has a positive effect towards Perceived Product Quality	0.623	4.494	0.000	Hypothesis Supported
<b>H2:</b> Perceived Product Quality has a positive effect towards Brand Loyalty	0.679	11.973	0.000	Hypothesis Supported

The second hypothesis of this study is Perceived Product Quality (PPQ) has a positive effect on Brand Loyalty (BL). The statistical result shows that this hypothesis original sample (0) valued at 0.679, indicating that the hypothesis is positive. While for the T-statistic scored 11.976 (> 1.96), hence proves the significance of the hypothesis. The P-value of this hypothesis is at a rate of 0.000, meaning that the hypothesis is true and should be accepted. In conclusion, Perceived Product Quality (PPQ) has been proven to have a positive effect on Brand Loyalty (BL). According to previous research (Khan et al., 2019; Zhafar & Ghouri, 2011; Aquina et al, 2020), this research holds a similar result toward the supported hypothesis. The perception of customers toward a brand has proven to be effect of the loyalty of the customers positively.

#### **CONCLUSION**

This research provides empirical evidence in support of understanding celebrity endorsement on perceived product quality and brand loyalty in skincare industry. The statistical result of SEM-PLS shows that Celebrity Endorsement (CE) has positive effect on Perceived Product Quality (PPQ), the coefficient of determination (R-square) is scored in 0.388 or 38.8 in percentage. Hence, it is classified as moderate. Thus, the remaining

61.2% of the variation in Perceived Product Quality (PPQ) has the potential to be explained by other variables outside the research framework. Similarly, referring to the previous section, the Brand Loyalty's (BL) coefficient of determination (R-square) with Perceived Product Quality (PPQ) is 46.1% (moderate), the remaining 53.9% of the variation in Brand Loyalty (BL) might have the possibility to be discussed by variables outside the scope of the study.

This study validates the positive effect of Celebrity Endorsement (CE) on Perceived Product Quality (PPQ) and Perceived Product Quality (PPQ) on Brand Loyalty (BL). Somethinc's marketing department and other companies can use these results as empirical evidence that the above-mentioned relationships do exist, and that they can strategically leverage the facts to their advantage and drive customer perceptions of quality and loyalty through the promotion of appropriate celebrity endorsements.

Future research is suggested to expand the study to a wider area of other cities in Indonesia in order to get more diverse data and include more antecedent with the following variables: Purchase Intention (Khan et al. 2019); Brand Trust (Kanwar & Huang, 2021).

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