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### The Influence of Brand Ambassador on Consumer Purchase Decisions: A Study of Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy and K-Pop Enthusiasts in Bandung

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email: <sup>1)</sup> [muhammadriefla@gmail.com](mailto:muhammadriefla@gmail.com) <sup>2)</sup> [annynurbasari@gmail.com](mailto:annynurbasari@gmail.com)

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article History:</b> Submitted: 14 January 2024 Reviewed: 11 February 2024 Revision: 27 April 2024 Accepted: 7 May 2024 Publish: 29 September 2024</p> <hr/> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Brand Ambassador; Purchase Decision; Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy</p> <hr/> <p><b>Corresponding Author:</b> Anny Nurbasari email: <a href="mailto:annynurbasari@gmail.com">annynurbasari@gmail.com</a></p>	<p>The objective of this study is to determine and analyze the influence of the brand ambassador on purchase decisions. The research methods use quantitative with a descriptive and verificative approach. The sampling technique in this research uses purposive sampling. The sample for this study consists of 106 respondents who are over 17 years old, K-pop fans in Bandung and have purchased Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy. The results showed that the variables of brand ambassador and purchase decisions are in the good category. Furthermore, the brand ambassador has an influence on purchase decisions. And then, there is still needs improvement, especially when launching the new product. Consideration of launching new products in the future is expected to make consumers buy the product at the time of the product launch or close to the product launch date. With a successful product launch that convinces purchases, of course this will attract the attention of other potential consumers.</p>

### INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, competition in the food industry is an interesting competitive. This industry includes various companies that produce and sell various types of food, from ready-to-eat foods to processed foods. Every company strives to offer food with high quality, affordable prices and appetizing tastes in order to achieve competitive advantage (Hutabarat et al., 2023). To compete effectively, companies in the food sector in Indonesia continue to innovate by creating creative food products and increasing efficiency in the production process (Ahmad & Azizah, 2021; Dewi et al., 2021; Hutabarat et al., 2023). The aim of this effort is to reduce product selling prices, strengthen competitiveness, and meet increasingly dynamic consumer demands. Instant noodles are a processed food that has a potential market because it is liked by almost all groups. According to data on instant noodle consumption in various countries, Indonesia in second place in instant noodle consumption with 12.64 billion packs in 2020 (World Instant Noodles Association, 2020).

This phenomenon is exploited by many companies to take market share in the instant noodle industry, which causes increased competition in the industry. This is proven by the emergence of

various instant noodle brands. According to Top Brand Index (TBI) data, there are five instant noodle brands that occupy the top ranking, namely Indomie with a percentage of 72.50%, Mie Sedaap with 16.20%, Sarimi with 2.60%, Gaga 100 with 1.70 % and Supermi at 1.30% (Top Brand Index, 2023). Based on TBI 2023 data, Indomie was able to win the competition compared to its four competitors, even controlling more than half of the market share. This comparison encouraged the other four competitors to improve their marketing strategies with the aim of gaining a larger market share compared to previous years. Understanding consumer behavior is very important for companies to be able to offer products or services that encourage consumers to make purchasing decisions and switch from other competitors (Kotler & Keller, 2016a). This makes consumer purchasing decisions an interesting topic for researchers, because complex changes in consumer preferences require a strategic approach from companies (Amanah et al., 2018; Drechsler et al., 2017; Nash, 2019; Papafotikas et al., 2014).

Mie Sedaap has been effective in understanding consumer behavior through innovative marketing strategies, such as launching the Sedaap Korean Spicy Instant Noodle product by collaborating with Siwon Choi from Super Junior as brand ambassador. Brand ambassadors function as cultural representation and product commercialization, and this role has been widely researched by academics (Dewi et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2020). Siwon Choi, who has a positive image among Indonesian K-poppers, was chosen to strengthen the Mie Sedaap brand image. The worldwide K-pop phenomenon, including in Indonesia with around 15 million fans, is utilized in this strategy. Wings Food even held a Virtual Fan Event with Siwon Choi, which was attended by more than 500 Mie Sedaap Selection Korean Spicy consumers from all over Indonesia, as part of a digital marketing campaign ([www.wingscorp.com](http://www.wingscorp.com) diakses Desember 2023).

Previous research emphasizes that effective brand ambassadors have the potential to increase product attractiveness (Liya et al., 2021). Besides that, the results of this research are also in line with another research as stated by (Daulay, 2021; Dewi et al., 2021; Ghadani et al., 2022). The effectiveness of brand ambassadors is not only limited to introducing products, but also in building emotional relationships with consumers. The brand ambassador's credibility and sincerity in representing the brand are also key factors that motivate purchasing decisions.

Differences findings occur in other research that brand ambassadors do not have a significant influence on purchasing decisions (Edrin & Fhatiyah, 2022; Yuliwati, 2022). Of course, these results are contradictory or inconsistent with research findings (Liya et al., 2021; Daulay, 2021; Dewi et al., 2021; Ghadani et al., 2022) due to differences in research context and research analysis techniques. In (Yuliwati, 2022), conducted research on Mie Lemonilo in North Bekasi with the brand ambassador NCT Dream, while in (Edrin & Fhatiyah, 2022) conducted research on the BTS Tokopedia Free Photocard Event where the brand ambassador was BTS. These differences create a research gap regarding the influence of brand ambassadors on purchasing decisions and the aim of this research is to fill this gap by testing the market segmentation of K-Pop fans in Bandung.

(Barnes & Lea-Greenwood, 2018) defines a brand ambassador as a tool or individual represented by a company to communicate with the public or consumers. Its function involves increasing sales through brand or product representation. According to (Daulay, 2021) brand ambassadors are a means of interacting and communicating with the public, with the aim of increasing sales volume. This aims to make consumers interested in using the product, (Kertamukti, 2015) revealed that using brand ambassadors makes the delivery of advertising messages more attractive to consumers. (Edrin & Fhatiyah, 2022) stated that measuring brand ambassadors can be done using the VisCAP method. VisCAP is an abbreviation for: 1) visibility, 2) credibility, 3) attraction, and 4) power.

(Kotler & Keller, 2016a) explain purchasing decisions as a cognitive process where consumers identify needs, make choices, and ultimately choose a particular product or brand. This process includes steps in which buyers determine the choice of products and services to purchase, which involves the act of choosing from two or more available options. There are six indicators used to

measure purchasing decisions, including: 1) product choice, 2) brand choice, 3) seller choice, 4) purchase time, 5) purchase amount, and 6) payment method. Based on the background that has been explained, the following is a research model and a description of the hypothesis that can be formulated to support the research.

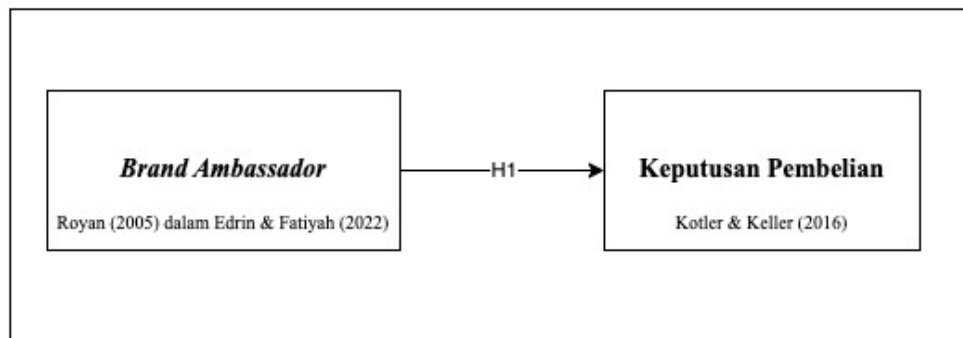


Figure 1. Research Model

H1: Brand ambassadors have a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses quantitative methods with descriptive and verification approaches. The questionnaire was distributed to 106 respondents based on sample formula calculations (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013) with a Likert scale as the measuring scale. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling with the specified criteria, namely consumers who had purchased Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy products in Bandung City, fans of Korean idols (K-poppers) and over 17 years old.

This research uses descriptive analysis to determine the description of brand ambassadors and purchasing decisions based on continuum lines. The verification analysis uses simple analysis to test the influence of brand ambassadors on purchasing decisions. Following are the operational variables used

Table 1. Operational Variables

Variable	Dimensions	Indicator	Statement Items
A Brand Ambassador is defined as a tool or individual represented by a company to communicate with the public or consumers.	Visibility	Popularity	I decide to buy Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy because Siwon Choi is the brand ambassador
		Visibility	I decide to buy Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy because Siwon Choi is the brand ambassador and promotes it through advertising
	Credibility	Skill	Siwon Choi is able to convey product-related information to consumers
		Trust	I believe that Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy is a good product because Siwon Choi is the brand ambassador and willing to advertise it
Attraction	Similarity	I decide to buy Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy because I want to use the same product that Siwon Choi uses	

Variable	Dimensions	Indicator	Statement Items
	Power	Favorite	I was interested and decided to buy Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy because I saw that Siwon Choi liked the product
		Power	Siwon Choi is one of the strong reasons that convinced me to buy Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy products
		Motivation	Siwon Choi is one of the strong reasons motivating me to buy Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy products
Purchasing decisions are defined as a cognitive process that involves consumers in identifying needs, generating choices, and ultimately choosing a particular product or brand	Product Choice		I choose Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy product because there are several flavor that available
	Brand Choice		I choose Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy because I like Mie Sedaap brand
	Dealer Choice		I bought the product at an official shop that collaborates with Mie Sedaap
	Purchase Amount		I bought at least two units of Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy products
	Purchase Timing		I bought the Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy product when this product was launched (give a high score if it is close to the launch date and a low score if it is far from the launch date)
	Payment Method		I bought Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy products because of the availability of various payment methods

Source: Data processed by researchers (2024)

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

All variable indicators are tested using validity and reliability tests. The validity test is aimed at determining whether an item is suitable for use, while the reliability test is used to see whether a measuring instrument can be confirmed to be correct. The results of the validity test are presented in Table 2 and the results of the reliability test in Table 3.

Table 2. Validity Test

Variable	Item number	R value	R table	Information
Brand Ambassador	BA1	0,903	0,361	Valid
	BA2	0,941	0,361	Valid
	BA3	0,814	0,361	Valid
	BA4	0,884	0,361	Valid
	BA5	0,934	0,361	Valid
	BA6	0,930	0,361	Valid
	BA7	0,933	0,361	Valid
	BA8	0,909	0,361	Valid
Purchase Decision	KP1	0,704	0,361	Valid
	KP2	0,741	0,361	Valid

Variable	Item number	R value	R table	Information
	KP3	0,783	0,361	Valid
	KP4	0,775	0,361	Valid
	KP5	0,688	0,361	Valid
	KP6	0,860	0,361	Valid

Source: Data processed by researchers (2024)

The results of instrument validity testing show the validity of all statement items consisting of brand ambassador and purchasing decisions variables. It can be seen that all the calculated r values for each statement item for all variables have values above the r table, namely 0.361, therefore the test results for all statement items are valid and do not require revision of the questionnaire.

Table 3. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	N of item	Information
Brand Ambassador	0,969	8	Reliabel
Purchase Decision	0,850	6	Reliabel

Source: Data processed by researchers (2024)

It can be seen that the results of the level of reliability in this research, for brand ambassadors are 0.969 and for purchasing decisions are 0.850. So it can be concluded that the questionnaire question items are reliable because Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ )  $\geq$  0,700.

After being proven valid and reliable, descriptive analysis was then carried out to determine the perception of 106 respondents regarding the influence of brand ambassadors on purchasing decisions.

Table 4. Descriptive Analysis

Variable	Percentage	Category
Brand Ambassador	65,4%	Good
Purchase Decision	70,1%	Good

Source: Data processed by researchers (2024)

The results obtained regarding descriptive analysis for each variable, brand ambassador with a percentage of 65.4% in the good category, and purchasing decisions with a percentage of 70.1% in the good category.

Next, test the correlation coefficient and determination to see the level of the model's ability to explain the dependent variable. In this research, the coefficient of determination is intended to see the influence or level of relationship between X and Y.

Table 6. Simple Regression Test

Model	Regression Coefficients	t	Sig.
Constant	13.434	9.023	.000
Brand Ambassador	.291	5.379	.000

Source: Data processed by researchers (2024)

The results show that the constant is 13.434, so the brand ambassador is 0 (zero) and has not changed, so the purchasing decision remains 13.434. The brand ambassador regression coefficient is 0.291 with a positive value, so that if brand ambassador increases by one unit, purchasing decisions will increase by 0.291. To test the influence of brand ambassadors on purchasing decisions, it is known that the t-calculated value of brand ambassadors is 5.379 which is greater than the t-table value of 1.966 and has a significance below 0.05. It can be concluded that brand

ambassadors have a positive and significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions for Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy products in Bandung City, therefore the research hypothesis is accepted.

### **Discussion**

The findings of this research show that brand ambassadors have a significant influence on purchasing decisions for Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy products. This means that consumers tend to prefer Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy products because of the brand ambassador. Conceptually, the influence of brand ambassadors on purchasing decisions refers to their role as catalysts in shaping consumer preferences and motivating purchasing actions. An effective brand ambassador can create a strong attraction to the product, create an emotional bond, and inspire consumer trust.

This research is in line with previous research by which emphasized that effective brand ambassadors have the potential to increase product attractiveness. Apart from that, the results of this research are also in line with other research as stated by (Daulay, 2021; Dewi et al., 2021; Ghadani et al., 2022). The effectiveness of brand ambassadors is not only limited to introducing products, but also in building emotional relationships with consumers. The brand ambassador's credibility and sincerity in representing the brand are also key factors that motivate purchasing decisions.

In other research, it is stated that brand ambassadors do not have a significant influence on purchasing decisions (Edrin & Fhatiyah, 2022; Yuliwati, 2022). Of course, this contradicts the findings of this study due to differences in research context and research analysis techniques. In (Yuliwati, 2022) research, conducted research on Mie Lemonilo in North Bekasi with its brand ambassador NCT Dream using multiple regression analysis techniques. Meanwhile in (Edrin & Fhatiyah, 2022) research, conducted research on the BTS Tokopedia Free Photocard Event where BTS was the brand ambassador. The comparison of the context of this research reflects that the selection of Choi Siwon as the brand ambassador of Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy significantly increases purchasing decisions, especially for K-Poppers in Bandung City.

### **Managerial Implications**

Following the discussion, the researcher found the relevance of the respondents' answers in the form of indicators that best represent each variable, namely the value with the highest values. Besides that, there are also components that company needs improve. From the description of this indicator, the research implications that can be taken are:

1. For Brand Ambassador variable, based on the answer with the highest score is "visibility" indicator that consumer decide to buy Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy because Siwon Choi is the brand ambassador and promotes it through advertising. This can be utilized by creating marketing campaigns through various promotional media to be seen more often by customers, so will attract the attention of other potential consumers and especially Kpop fans. Meanwhile, the lowest score is the "skill" indicator regarding Siwon Choi being able to convey product-related information to consumers. This can be a consideration for companies to create methods for delivering product information that are easier for consumers to understand and remember.
2. For Purchase Decision variable, based on the answer with the highest score is "dealer choice" indicator that consumers bought the product at an official shop that collaborates with Mie Sedaap. This can be utilized by collaborating with more distributors or retailers so that it can be closer and easier to reach by consumers. Meanwhile, the lowest score is the "purchase timing" indicator regarding purchasing Mie Sedaap products when this product was launched. These findings show that the launching strategy for the next product needs to be thought through carefully to convince consumers to buy the product when it is launched. By holding an event or bazaar can attract consumers' interest in buying new products during the product launch.

## CONCLUSION

From the analysis that has been tested to determine and analyze the influence of brand ambassadors on purchasing decisions, the conclusion is that the implementation of brand ambassadors and purchasing decisions is seen from the results of the descriptive analysis method, the results obtained for brand ambassadors are in the "good" category, and purchasing decisions are in the "good" category.

The decision to purchase Mie Sedaap Korean Spicy products can be improved by increasing brand ambassadors. Of course, this still needs improvement, especially when launching the new product. Consideration of launching new products in the future is expected to make consumers buy the product at the time of the product launch or close to the product launch date. With a successful product launch that convinces purchases, of course this will attract the attention of other potential consumers.

This research is limited to brand ambassadors and purchasing decisions. The results of this research prove that brand ambassadors have an influence of 21.8% on purchasing decisions, then the remaining 78.2% comes from other factors outside this research. Therefore, it is hoped that future researchers can examine these other factors. This research also still has a limited number of question items used to measure the brand ambassador variable, so the insignificant results could be due to a lack of question items and not being able to comprehensively describe the variables being tested. Therefore, it is hoped that future researchers can find out and test other question items to measure the brand ambassador variable.

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