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THE INFLUENCE OF NCT 127'S BRAND AMBASSADOR, LIFESTYLE, AND BRAND IMAGE ON NATURE REPUBLIC'S SUSTAINABLE PURCHASE DECISION OF NCT 127 FANS (Study on Generation Z in Jakarta)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the influence of NCT 127 Brand Ambassador, Lifestyle and Brand Image on Sustainable Purchase Decision for Nature Republic Skincare Products by fans. The object in this study is Generation Z fans in DKI Jakarta who have purchased and used Nature Republic skincare products. The sample that will be used is 175 respondents, obtained by the purposive sampling method. The study method that will be be used is a quantitative method with data collection using a survey method. The data analysis method used in this study is SEM (Structural Equation Mode) using SmartPLS 4.0 software. Using a quantitative approach with a survey method and SEM-PLS techniques, this study examines the relationship of the three variables to sustainable purchase decisions. The results of the study are expected to provide theoretical contributions as well as theoretical contributions to increase insight and knowledge about the influence of Brand Ambassador, Lifestyle, Brand Image on Sustainable Purchase Decision on Nature Republlic Skincare products.

***Keywords**: NCT 127 brand ambassador, lifestyle, brand image, sustainable purchase decision, nature republic skincare products, NCT 127 fans*

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INTRODUCTION

The modern digital era, advances in information technology (IT) and communication have brought about significant changes in nearly every aspect of life. The internet and social media have become platforms connecting individuals worldwide, transforming the way people interact, shop, and consume information. This is evident in the increasing trend of internet and social media use, which has now become an integral part of daily life. In Indonesia, in this modern era, cosmetics have become a necessity, especially for women. The desire to look beautiful and attractive is every woman's desire, and one way to enhance this attractive appearance is through the use of beauty products. Women, as the primary consumers of beauty products, have a strong desire to purchase, and therefore, they typically use products that suit their skin type.

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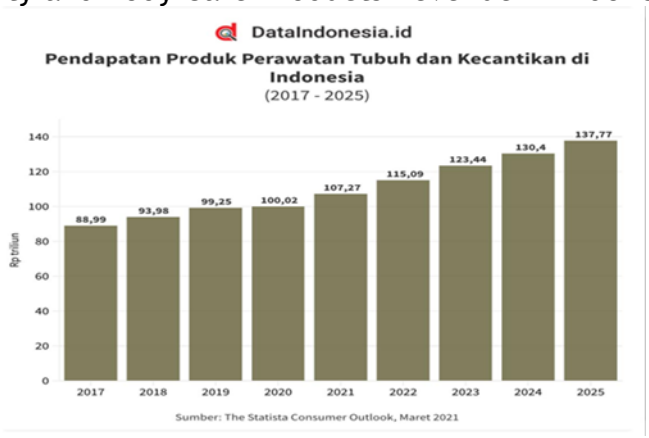
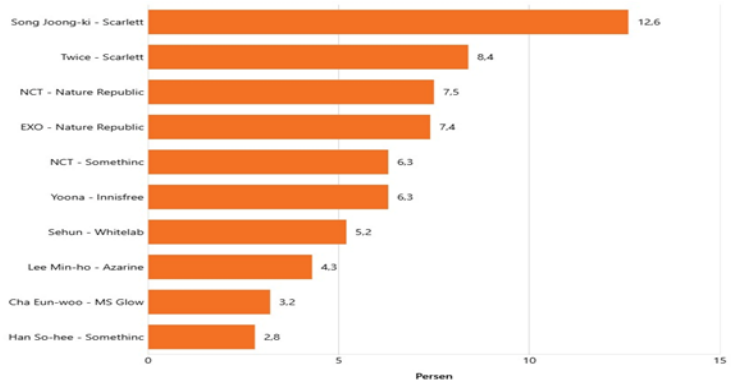
Image 1.1 Beauty and Body Care Products Revenue in Indonesia 2017-2025



Sumber: DataIndonesia

The Korean Wave has penetrated various levels of society, especially the younger generation. The Hallyu phenomenon has also contributed significantly to the beauty and fashion industry, creating widespread interest in the Korean lifestyle. Beauty trends known as K-Beauty, such as layered skincare routines and natural makeup looks, are highly sought after. Korean beauty products are widely loved for their innovative, effective, and affordable nature, creating a large market in Indonesia. Korean brands such as Nature Republic, Innisfree, and Laneige have successfully attracted consumers by presenting products tailored to local needs while remaining authentic in concept and ingredients. The influence of Hallyu is more than just a trend; it has created a cross-border culture that connects people from diverse backgrounds and countries through shared interests. In Indonesia, Hallyu has inspired various community activities, from concerts to fan meetings, and sparked the development of local industries adapting to Korean trends. It has also fostered international collaboration, paving the way for new business opportunities and strengthening cultural ties between Indonesia and South Korea.

Image 1.2 Skincare & cosmetics most remembered by Korean fans



Sumber: databoks.katadata.co.id

Based on the data graph above, it shows that Nature Republic is ranked third with a percentage of 7.5 with Brand Ambassador NCT 127 in addition to the boy group EXO who previously became Brand Ambassador for 11 years from Nature Republic is ranked fourth with a percentage of 7.4% chosen by respondents. Based on the results of Katadata (2022), the skincare market in Indonesia is dominated by several big brands, both local and international. The highest ranking is occupied by the Scarlett brand with Song Joong Ki and Twice as their Brand Ambassadors.

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On the other hand, the sixth rank is Innisfree, a Korean brand that is also popular in Indonesia and has a premium image, there is also a Korean brand that is no less popular among the younger generation that has a premium concept, namely Laneige. In addition, Some By Mi and Etude House are also important players who have captured the attention of young consumers in Indonesia. After successfully attracting EXO as a brand ambassador since 2013, and ending their exclusive contract with EXO in February 2020. Nature Republic made NCT 127 their Brand Ambassador who came from the same agency. They officially introduced NCT 127 as their Brand Ambassador in April 2020. Nature Republic chose NCT 127 as their Brand Ambassador because of the positive attitude and energy displayed by the members of NCT 127 which is in line with the philosophy of Nature Republic itself. The presence of this competitor shows that even though Nature Republic has an advantage through Brand Ambassador NCT 127, there is still stiff competition that must be faced.

Pop NCT 127 fans, often referred to as NCTzens/Czennies, are known for their loyalty and are often influenced by the group members' activities and recommendations. Nature Republic is one of many companies that has appointed NCT 127 as brand ambassadors for its products. This decision was made not only because of NCT 127 fans' impulsive purchasing behavior, but also because NCT 127 is considered to align with Nature Republic's energetic, healthy, and friendly image. Sustainable purchasing decisions refer to consumers' choices to consistently purchase a particular product or service over a long period. This decision is often influenced by various factors, including satisfaction levels, brand trust, product quality, and how relevant the product is to consumers' needs and tastes. The link between impulsive buying and sustainable purchasing decisions lies in the consumer's post-purchase experience.

Korean popular culture has penetrated many aspects of Indonesian life, especially among young consumers (Gen Z) and millennials. Beauty products popularized by the Korean lifestyle trend are considered to offer uniqueness, quality, and the image desired by many consumers. Lifestyle not only impacts beauty product preferences, but also how consumers perceive ideal beauty and healthy skin. This phenomenon is interesting to understand more deeply, considering how foreign cultural influences can influence local consumer preferences and behavior. Fans are often captivated by fandom merchandise and are happy to spend some of their time, energy, and money to show their love for their idols by purchasing their idol group's products (Andina, 2019).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The theory of Planned Behavior explains that perceptions about an action are the primary predictor of behavior. However, it is important to consider an individual's perspective when assessing subjective norms and measuring their perceived behavioral control. If an individual has a positive attitude, receives support from their environment, and feels there are no obstacles to acting, their intention to act will increase (Ajzen, 1991)

The theory of planned behavior is based on the assumption that humans are rational and process relevant information in a structured manner. Individuals consider the consequences of their actions before deciding whether or not to perform a particular behavior. TPB is a person's desire to perform a certain action, where in TPB, subjective views and norms regarding behavior are said to influence interest and add the factor of behavioral perception control as another factor that influences action as something that influences consumer interest.

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Consumer Behavior

Consumer behavior refers to the actions or behaviors of both individuals and groups (consumers) in purchasing or using goods or services, including the decision-making process. This allows them to obtain the products or services they desire (Nugraha, 2021). In other words, Consumer behavior refers to the steps a customer takes when making a purchase decision, as well as when utilizing and consuming purchased goods and services, including the factors that influence their purchasing and product usage choices (Firmansyah, 2020).

The Influence of Brand Ambassador on Purchase Decision

Companies use brand ambassadors to influence, attract, or even persuade consumers. The purchasing decision-making process is also influenced by the individuals involved, including influencers who influence product choices, both consciously and unconsciously. Therefore, brand ambassadors often come from well-known public figures. A brand ambassador is a well-connected individual or public figure who plays a role in promoting and advertising a product or service. They function as representatives and diplomats of an organization, institution, or company that best represents the product or service. (Putra, 2022).

Hypothesis H1: Brand Ambassadors have a positive and significant influence on Purchase Decision.

The Influence of Lifestyle on Purchase Decision

People's lives continue to change with the changing times and modernity. With continuous technological advances, this also influences the lifestyles of most people. Lifestyle reflects the patterns of interaction and behavior of individuals throughout their lives. This includes how consumers manage their budgets and time (Sinambela, 2021).

Hypothesis H2: Lifestyle has a positive and significant influence on Purchase Decision

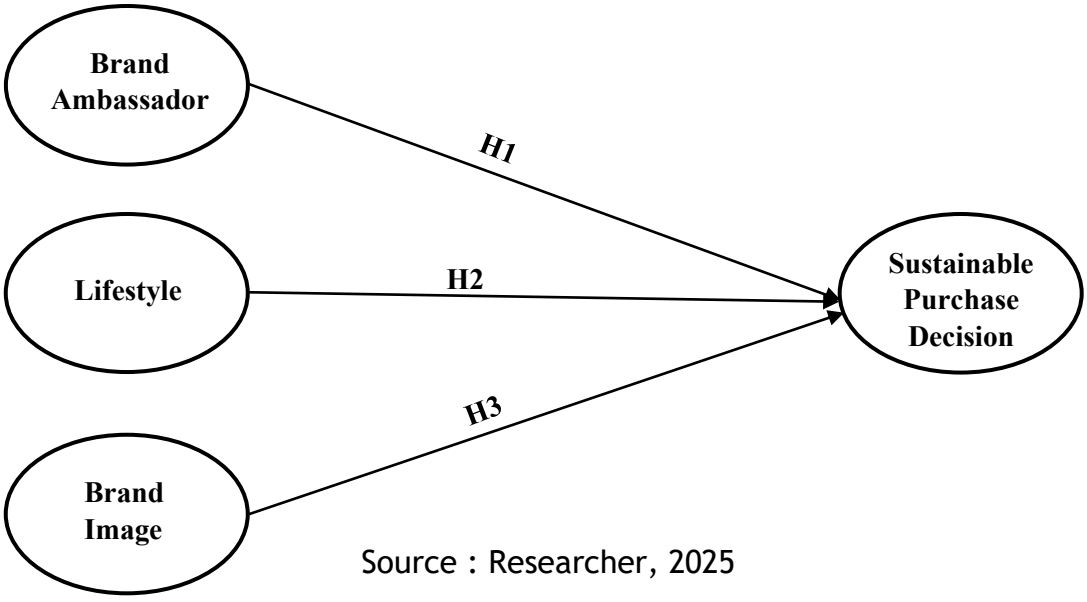
The Influence of Brand Image on Purchase Decision

Product quality has a positive influence on purchasing decisions. A product is considered high quality if it meets consumer expectations. This is because consumers will purchase a product based on the quality it offers (Deviyanti, 2021).

Hypothesis H3: Brand Image has a positive and significant influence on Purchase Decision

Conseptual Framework

Figure 2.1 Research Framework



Source : Researcher, 2025

H1: Brand Ambassadors has a positive and significant influence on Purchase Decision
H2: Lifestyle has a positive and significant influence on Purchase Decision
H3: Brand Image has a positive and significant influence on Purchase Decision

METHODS

Research Time and Place

This research begins by identifying existing phenomena, formulating appropriate and relevant problems, and collecting theories that can strengthen the basis of the variables to be applied. After that, the method is formulated by collecting data and determining the statistical techniques that will be used for testing. The duration of this research will last from December 2024 to June 2025. The research is aimed at Nature Republic consumers, especially NCT 127 Generation Z fans who have purchased Nature Republic products at least once. For data collection, researchers chose a location in the DKI Jakarta area. The research subjects included respondents from Generation Z fans in the DKI Jakarta area who have used Nature Republic skincare products. The DKI Jakarta area was chosen as the location because this area has good accessibility, and most of its residents already understand information and communication about the importance of skin care and based on secondary data from BPS 2023 shows that Generation Z (born 1997-2012) is the largest demographic group in Indonesia with 74.93% of the population or 27.94% of the population. The 2020 Population Census reported that Generation Z in Jakarta represented approximately 2.68 million people, or 25.36% of the total population at that time. With strategic timing and location selection, along with systematic data collection methods, this study is expected to provide valid, relevant, and representative data to support its objectives.

Research Design

Research design can be understood as a technique for collecting accurate data with the aim of discovering, developing, and proving certain knowledge, so that it can ultimately help in understanding, solving, and anticipating problems. In this study, the author used a quantitative research method using causal analysis and a survey approach that aims to determine the influence of one or more independent variables on the dependent variable (Sugiyono, 2019). This study uses a quantitative approach. A quantitative approach is a systematic method in science that focuses on collecting data in numerical format or variables being studied. In this study, the independent variables considered are the brand ambassador, lifestyle, and brand image of Nature Republic skincare products. Meanwhile, the dependent variable studied is sustainable purchase decision. The researcher wants to know the influence between these variables, and the analytical tool used is a questionnaire. This means that this study has a focus on (numerical) analysis which will be processed using this research method to obtain significant relationships between the variables studied.

Population and Sample

Population

A population is a generalized area consisting of objects or subjects with specific quantities and characteristics determined by the researcher to be analyzed and then conclusions drawn. (Sugiyono, 2019)

Sample

A sample is the total number and characteristics of a population. The sampling method used in this study was non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling technique (Sugiyono, 2019). Purposive sampling is a sampling method with specific considerations. In using the purposive sampling technique, sample selection is carried out with special considerations,

because not all samples have characteristics that match the phenomenon being studied (Sugiyono, 2019). In this case, the author used a purposive sampling technique to determine specific criteria that the sample must meet, thus leading to the selection of a sample that meets the desired criteria for this study. The following are the criteria for sampling:

a. Born between 1997 and 2012 (Generation Z)
b.Users of Nature Republic skincare products and have used Nature Republic skincare products at least once.

Because the population is drawn from unlimited data, the next step is to determine how many samples will be taken from that population. Ferdinand (2014) states that by multiplying the number of indicators by the number of parameters, a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 10 can be estimated. The appropriate sample size is between 100 and 200 samples.
In this study, there are three independent variables: brand ambassador (9 indicators), lifestyle (6 indicators), and brand image (8 indicators). There is also a dependent variable, namely sustainable purchase decision (12 indicators). From this, it can be concluded that the total of all indicators in this study reaches... indicators. The following is the calculation based on Ferdinand's formula for the estimated minimum and maximum values:

5 (minimum value) X 35 = 175
10 (maximum value) X 35 = 350

According to Ferdinand (2014), the appropriate sample size ranges from 100 to 200 samples. From these calculations, it can be concluded that the researcher decided to use the minimum value, with an estimate of 5 times, so that the number of respondents needed was 175 respondents.

Data Collection Methods
Data sources are obtained from primary and secondary sources. Primary data is information obtained directly through interviews and observations. Meanwhile, secondary data is taken from company documents, books, and scientific journals. Data collection methods are the most crucial step in research, as the primary goal of research is to obtain data. Without an understanding of data collection methods, a researcher will not be successful in obtaining data that meets established standards (Sugiyono, 2019). The questionnaire was conducted directly to selected respondents, in the form of a series of questions aimed at measuring the impact of the influence of brand ambassadors, lifestyle, and brand image on the sustainable purchase decision of Nature Republic skincare products. The questionnaire was compiled based on research variable indicators and distributed online via Google Form. Distribution was carried out through social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Twitter/X, and Instagram to reach consumers of Nature Republic products. Each statement was measured using a five-point Likert scale, from Strongly Agree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The questionnaire has been tested for validity and reliability to ensure that the data obtained is suitable for use in the analysis.

Data Analysis Methods
The method applied to analyze the data in this study is the Structural Equation Model (SEM), which focuses on components or variations.The data analysis method used in this study is Partial Least Square (PLS). Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 25. The data analysis in this study used the Partial Least Square (PLS) method, which is a Variance-Based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach used to model the relationship between latent

variables and indicators and analyze causal relationships in complex models, unnormally distributed data, relatively small sample sizes, and multicollinear data (Hair et al., 2021). The PLS analysis consists of two stages, namely the outer model and the inner model. The evaluation of the external model aims to test the validity and reliability of the indicators through testing factor loading (≥0.70), composite reliability (≥0.70), convergent validity using Average Variance Extracted (AVE ≥0.50), discriminant validity with Fornell-Larcker and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT <0.85) criteria, and collinearity test using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF ≤5) values (Hair et al., 2021). Furthermore, the internal evaluation of the model was used to assess the relationship between latent variables and the predictive ability of the structural model through testing the R-Square (R^2) value, effect size using f-Square (f^2: 0.02 small; 0.15 medium; 0.35 large), and predictive relevance through the Q-Square value (Q^2 >0) obtained from the blindfolding procedure (Hair et al., 2021). Hypothesis testing was carried out using the bootstrapping technique to assess the significance of the direct relationship and the mediated relationship, with the criteria of a t-statistical value >1.96 at a significance level of 5% (bilateral), which indicates that the relationship between variables is declared significant and the hypothesis is accepted (Hair et al., 2021).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Discussion

The results of the study indicate that Brand Ambassador Involvement does not significantly influence Sustainable Purchase Decisions. This finding can be understood for several reasons, one of which is because consumer decisions tend to be formed through attitudes first (Al Mamun et al., 2023). Celebrity influence usually strengthens attitudes toward advertising and attitudes toward brands, and these positive attitudes ultimately drive purchase intentions, not the final decision. Therefore, if the formation of attitudes among respondents is not strong enough in this study, it is natural that the direct influence of Brand Ambassadors on sustainable purchasing decisions is very small and insignificant. On the other hand, trust in environmental claims also significantly determines the direction of purchasing decisions. When consumers suspect the authenticity of claims, interest in purchasing green-labeled products tends to decrease. This factor is explained in the study by (Pillo et al, 2025), which showed that perceptions of greenwashing among Gen Z suppress green purchase intentions. Therefore, even though Brand Ambassadors can increase attention, sustainable purchasing decisions still require consistent and verifiable evidence of environmental practices. Thus, if such evidence is not strong, pro-environmental drivers can easily weaken, so that fan enthusiasm does not automatically turn into environmentally friendly purchasing decisions. These three factors—indirect influence through attitude formation, the need for clear and credible sustainability messages, and sensitivity to greenwashing—collectively explain why the direct influence of Brand Ambassadors on Sustainable Purchase Decisions in this study was small and insignificant. Therefore, product communication strategies need to strengthen attitude formation through credible and measurable messages, present auditable evidence of sustainability, and ensure the image aligns with the issues raised so that the message doesn't stop at attention but flows into intention and ultimately a decision.

Furthermore, the results of this analysis indicate that Lifestyle has a significant positive influence on Sustainable Purchase Decisions. This phenomenon occurs because consumers make Nature Republic skincare products part of their lifestyle, prioritizing Nature Republic as their primary choice for skincare solutions. As a result, consumers develop the perception that Nature Republic is a reliable brand to meet their daily skincare needs.

These research findings align with research conducted by (Bimantara, 2022), which also concluded that lifestyle has a positive and significant impact on purchasing decisions. For

Generation Z, a lifestyle that supports sustainability (e.g., a preference for environmentally friendly products, awareness of climate change issues, and ethical consumption habits) is the foundation for product purchase choices. Sustainable purchasing decisions tend to be driven by a product's alignment with their lifestyle principles and personal preferences.

Furthermore, the analysis results show that Brand Image does not have a significant positive influence on Sustainable Purchase Decisions. This finding is understandable because the influence of brand image in the context of green purchases usually works through the formation of attitudes first. As shown by the study of (Chen et al, 2020), where image and affection towards the brand tend to strengthen brand associations and attitudes towards the brand, then from that positive attitude the purchase intention is formed, not directly the final decision. Therefore, if the intermediary attitude of Nature Republic consumers is not strong enough, it is natural that the direct influence of Brand Image on sustainable decisions is small and insignificant. In addition, decisions at the point of purchase are strongly influenced by considerations of value and cost. Consumers may like Nature Republic's sustainable image, but they still calculate whether the perceived benefits are worth the price to be paid. This is in line with the study of Chen et al. (2024), which states that the way companies display information about additional prices for sustainability features can change preferences, so that decisions are more determined by concrete value calculations during transactions and not solely positive images. This argument aligns with a study by (Wijekoon & Sabri, 2021), which highlighted a gap between attitudes and actions in sustainable purchasing, due to price barriers and perceived value, which hinder consumers from converting from intention to actual decision. Therefore, while Nature Republic's brand image can improve perceptions, sustainable purchasing decisions still depend on clear benefits and perceived reasonable costs.

On the other words, purchasing behavior in the cosmetics category is also heavily influenced by situational factors such as ease of processing, product availability, perceived purchasing power, and shopping habits. As a study by Dwivedi et al. (2025) showed, a gap exists between intentions and actions. Even when attitudes and intentions improve, purchases don't always occur when the benefits aren't clearly perceived or the shopping experience isn't easy. Considering these three factors: the influence that tends to be formed through attitudes, considerations of value and price at the point of purchase, and situational factors in the cosmetics category, it's understandable that the direct influence of brand image on sustainable purchasing decisions appears small and insignificant. This means that Nature Republic's brand image also needs to be supported by strengthening consumer attitudes, explaining perceived benefits that justify the cost, and providing a seamless and hassle-free shopping experience. Therefore, concrete and easily verifiable evidence of sustainability is crucial for positive perceptions to truly translate into consumer purchasing decisions.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Brand Ambassadors do not have a significant influence on Sustainable Purchase Decisions, indicating that the presence of public figures such as NCT 127 has not been able to directly encourage purchasing decisions that consider sustainability aspects. In contrast, Lifestyle involvement is proven to have a positive and significant influence on Sustainable Purchase Decisions, indicating that product suitability with consumer lifestyles, values, and habits is a major factor in encouraging sustainable purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, Brand Image shows a positive but insignificant direction of influence, so that a good Nature Republic brand image is not strong enough to directly influence sustainable purchasing decisions without being supported by tangible benefits, value and price considerations, and an easy shopping experience. Overall, the results of this study confirm that Lifestyle is the most dominant factor in influencing Sustainable Purchase Decisions, while

Brand Ambassadors and Brand Image have not shown a convincing direct influence, so that sustainable marketing strategies should emphasize more on suitability with consumer lifestyles and the delivery of concrete and easy-to-understand evidence of sustainability. These findings provide evidence that brand image and brand ambassadors are not always able to directly encourage sustainable purchasing decisions without being supported by values, tangible benefits, and relevance to consumer lifestyles. The results of this study can be a reference for companies in designing more effective sustainable marketing strategies by emphasizing product adjustments and marketing communications that are in line with consumer lifestyles.

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