

The Influence of Celebrity Endorser and Price on Consumer Purchase Interest With Brand Image as A Mediation Variable

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Abstract

This study examines how price and celebrity endorsements affect consumers' desire to buy, using brand image as a mediating factor. A hundred respondents were surveyed with a non-probability sampling technique combined with a purposive sampling method was used. The data analysis method used is the SEM-PLS model. The research results show that celebrity endorsers significantly influence brand image, price significantly influences brand image, and brand image affects purchasing interest. Celebrity endorsers do not significantly affect purchasing interest directly but through brand image as a mediating variable. Price has a significant effect on purchasing interest both directly and through brand image as a mediating variable. This result shows that brand images play crucial roles in purchase interest, Celebrity endorsers can't just boost the sales of products if the brand image is poor.

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1. Introduction

In the contemporary era of globalization, the landscape of business competition has evolved into a dynamic, intricate, and inherently uncertain environment. The intensifying competition within the business realm presents a formidable challenge for enterprises to devise marketing strategies that are not only unique but also efficacious and efficient (Morgan et al., 2019). This strategy is anticipated to have substantial implications, particularly if the company aligns itself with the ongoing technological advancements (Grewal et al., 2020). The utilization of Instagram as a social media platform for marketing strategies has been adopted by several individuals to engage in online buying and selling activities by posting images of the products they are offering for sale (Li et al, 2021). The adoption of Instagram as a social media conduit has rendered it an enticing platform for entrepreneurs to broaden their market horizons and effortlessly reach potential consumers (Teo et al, 2019). Business owners employ digital marketing strategies via the social media platform Instagram for endorsements, engaging celebrity endorsers to utilize and feature their company's products subsequently disseminating them across social media to support advertising efforts on social media (Schimmelpennig and Hunt, 2020).

Celebrity endorsement stands out as a powerful tool for influencing consumer perceptions (Forces et al., 2019). Celebrities often carry strong personal brands that evoke trust, admiration, and aspiration (Takaya, 2017). When these public figures endorse a product, they transfer some of their credibility and emotional appeal to the brand, which can enhance its attractiveness in the eyes of consumers (Adiba et al, 2020). This association often fosters a sense of familiarity and social validation, encouraging consumers to view the endorsed product more favorably (Adiba et al, 2020; Forces et al, 2019; Takaya, 2017). The effectiveness of such endorsements is particularly evident when there is a strong match between the celebrity's image and the brand's identity, reinforcing brand values and shaping consumer attitudes.

In parallel, price continues to play a critical role in shaping consumer purchase decisions (Faith and Edwin, 2014; Hrustić and Gregurec, 2015) It is one of the most direct indicators of value and quality, influencing how consumers assess whether a product meets their needs and expectations (Hsu et al, 2017). A well-positioned price can signal affordability or exclusivity, depending on the brand's target market. Consumers often interpret pricing not only in economic terms but also in relation to the perceived status and quality of the product (Fang, 2017). Therefore, pricing strategies must be carefully aligned with brand positioning and consumer expectations (Fay et al, 2014). Together with celebrity endorsement, pricing can either enhance or undermine a brand's appeal, making its strategic integration essential for driving consumer purchase interest.

Despite the widespread use of celebrity endorsements and pricing strategies in marketing, their effectiveness is not always guaranteed (Bennet et al, 2021; Wang et al, 2019). Various

underlying factors can influence how these strategies are received by consumers, and one of the most critical among them is brand image (Liu et al., 2020). Brand image refers to the set of perceptions, beliefs, and associations that consumers form about a brand over time (Plumeyer et al., 2017). It encompasses how consumers emotionally and cognitively relate to the brand, based on past experiences, marketing communications, and social influence. A strong and favorable brand image can significantly enhance the effectiveness of both celebrity endorsements and pricing strategies by reinforcing positive perceptions and increasing consumer trust (Bennett et al., 2021; L. Liu et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2019). Conversely, a weak or inconsistent brand image may diminish the impact of these efforts, as consumers may struggle to connect with the brand or question its credibility. In this regard, brand image functions as a mediating variable, shaping how consumers interpret and react to promotional tactics. Understanding this mediating role is essential for marketers seeking to design more integrated and effective strategies that resonate with their target audience.

Previous studies have examined the individual effects of celebrity endorsers and price on consumer purchase interest (Adiba et al., 2020; Faith & Edwin, 2014; Forces et al., 2019; Hsu et al., 2017; Li et al., 2021; Takaya, 2017). However, limited research has been conducted on the mediating role of brand image in these relationships. This creates a knowledge gap in understanding how brand image interacts with and potentially enhances the impact of these marketing strategies. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the influence of celebrity endorsers and price on consumer purchase interest, with a specific focus on brand image as a mediating variable. By examining these relationships, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how companies can strategically leverage celebrity figures and pricing, while simultaneously building a strong brand image to foster consumer interest and drive sales.

2. Literature Review

Celebrity Endorser

Celebrity endorser is a figure renowned for their ability to proficiently endorse products, leveraging their expertise in digital marketing strategies. The presence of a celebrity can capture consumer attention, enhance brand recall, and influence perceptions of product quality, ultimately impacting purchase interest (Osei-Frimpong et al., 2019). Celebrity endorsers are a big consideration as communicators in advertising who can generate more attention to a product, so that it can increase sales of the product being marketed (Tanjung & Hudrasyah, 2016). Celebrities who are seen as knowledgeable and honest can transfer their credibility to the endorsed product, increasing consumer confidence and purchase intention (Gupta et al., 2015). The effectiveness of a celebrity endorser increases when there is a good "fit" between the celebrity and the product (McCormick, 2016). For example, an athlete endorsing sportswear may generate greater purchase interest than an unrelated celebrity, due to perceived authenticity and relevance.

Research has shown that celebrity endorsement can evoke positive emotional responses and create aspirational value, especially among younger demographics (Chan et al., 2021). This symbolic association often leads consumers to project the celebrity's traits onto themselves, thus increasing their desire to purchase the product (Saini et al., 2021). Furthermore, repeated exposure to celebrity endorsements can strengthen brand associations and familiarity, leading to a higher likelihood of purchase (Kwon & Shin, 2020). However, the impact of celebrity endorsement is not universally positive. Poor celebrity behavior, lack of authenticity, or weak product-celebrity alignment can reduce the effectiveness or even damage the brand image (Sääksjärvi et al., 2016). Therefore, marketers must carefully select endorsers whose image aligns with the brand values and target market preferences. So we propose our hypothesis:

H1: Celebrity Endorsers Influence Customer Purchase Intention

H2: Celebrity Endorser Influence Brand Image

Price

Price is a key factor in consumer decision-making and can significantly influence purchase intention (Ghali-Zinoubi & Toukabri, 2019). From a consumer psychology perspective, price often serves as a cue for product quality and value (Voros, 2019). When prices are perceived as fair and aligned with consumer expectations, they can enhance the likelihood of purchase (Konuk, 2018). Consumers associate higher prices with better quality, especially when other product information is limited (Voros, 2019). Conversely, excessively low prices may raise concerns about product reliability, leading to reduced purchase intention. Price sensitivity also varies across market segments, while some consumers prioritize affordability, others may use price as a benchmark for exclusivity or prestige (Konuk, 2018; Voros, 2019).

In addition to its role in shaping purchase intentions, price also affects brand image (Djatkiko & Pradana, 2016). Premium pricing can position a brand as luxurious, high-status, or exclusive, reinforcing a perception of superior quality (Taleizadeh et al., 2019; Zhong & Moon, 2010). This strategy is commonly used in fashion, cosmetics, and technology industries, where price contributes to the symbolic value of ownership (Liu & Lee, 2016). On the other hand, consistent discounting or low pricing may lead consumers to perceive a brand as budget-friendly but potentially lower in quality (Liu & Lee, 2016). Therefore, pricing decisions must align with the brand's positioning strategy. A mismatch between price and perceived brand value can dilute brand image or confuse consumers, ultimately affecting long-term loyalty and market performance. So we propose our hypothesis:

H3: Price Influence Customer Purchase Interest

H4: Price Influence Brand Image

Mediating Effect of Brand Image

Brand Image is a distinctive characteristic of a product that possesses positive value, thereby enhancing its recognition, reputation and fostering strong consumer awareness (Liu et al.,

2020). Consumer's perception of a product is known as its brand image, and it needs to be able to be communicated through the media that is currently in use and then continuously spread to use a promotional mix to keep current customers (Iglesias & Vázquez, 2001). Chan et al., (2021) define the brand image indicator as being Strength, Uniqueness, and Favorable.

Celebrity endorsers often serve as influential figures who shape consumer perceptions not only of the product but of the brand itself. When a celebrity is perceived as credible, attractive, and trustworthy, these qualities may transfer to the brand in the consumer's mind, thereby enhancing the brand image. This enhanced brand image can then influence the consumer's purchase decision (Raji et al., 2019). The effectiveness of a celebrity endorsement depends not only on the characteristics of the endorser but also on how well these characteristics align with the brand (Mabkhot et al., 2017). This alignment can strengthen brand associations, which in turn influence consumer behaviour (Ramesh et al., 2019). Thus, the brand image becomes a critical pathway through which the celebrity endorser impacts the consumer's intention to purchase.

Previous studies have suggested that brand image functions as a psychological bridge between marketing efforts (such as endorsement) and consumer responses (like purchase behavior) (Mabkhot et al., 2017; Nugraha, 2024; Raji et al., 2019; Ramesh et al., 2019). A positive brand image can increase consumer trust, reduce perceived risk, and enhance the perceived value of the product, all of which contribute to a higher likelihood of purchase.

H5: Brand images mediate the relationship between the celebrity endorser and purchase interest

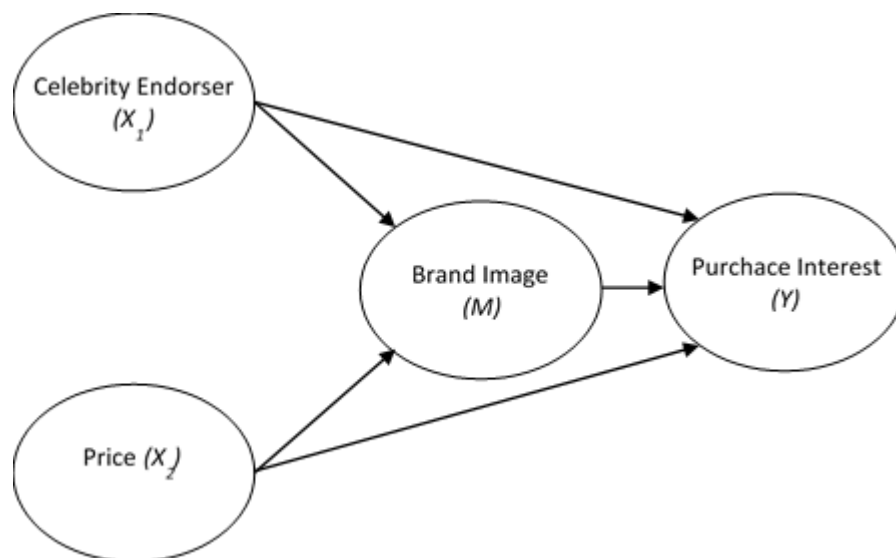
Brand image serves as a critical mediating variable in the relationship between price and consumer purchase intention (Nyadzayo & Khajehzadeh, 2016). It shapes consumers' perceptions of value and quality, thereby influencing how they interpret pricing cues (Dwivedi et al., 2018). When a brand possesses a strong and positive image associated with attributes such as trustworthiness, prestige, and high quality consumers are more likely to perceive higher price points as justified and reflective of superior product standards (Ansary & Nik Hashim, 2018). This positive perception mitigates price sensitivity and increases the likelihood of purchase, particularly in markets where symbolic value and emotional attachment play a significant role in consumer decision-making (Pereira et al., 2016)

Conversely, in the absence of a well-established or favorable brand image, pricing may fail to convey value, even when competitive or discounted (Dwivedi et al., 2018; Nyadzayo & Khajehzadeh, 2016). A weak brand image can lead to skepticism regarding product quality or authenticity, thereby reducing consumer confidence and dampening purchase intention. In this regard, brand image acts as a perceptual filter through which consumers assess the appropriateness and attractiveness of a product's price (Nyadzayo & Khajehzadeh, 2016;

Pereira et al., 2016). This highlights the importance for marketers to align pricing strategies with brand positioning efforts to ensure that consumer responses to price are positively influenced through a strong and coherent brand image.

H6: Brand images mediate the relationship between price and purchase interest

Based on the background elucidated by the researcher, the conceptual framework of this study is structured as follows:



Source: Data Processed by Author, 2024

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

3. Research Methods

The population of this research is Beeme Official Instagram followers in December 2023, namely 186 thousand followers. The sample size utilized consists of 100 respondents who meet the criteria of being familiar with or using the local product Beeme Official, possessing an Instagram account, or at least following the celebrity endorser Dwihandaanda, with respondents aged between 22-35 years. The researcher selected and used 100 respondents to meet the necessary sample size, even though the questionnaire distribution yielded a sample of 183 respondents. A Google Form was used to distribute the questionnaire, and each statement was scored on a Likert scale from 1 to 4.

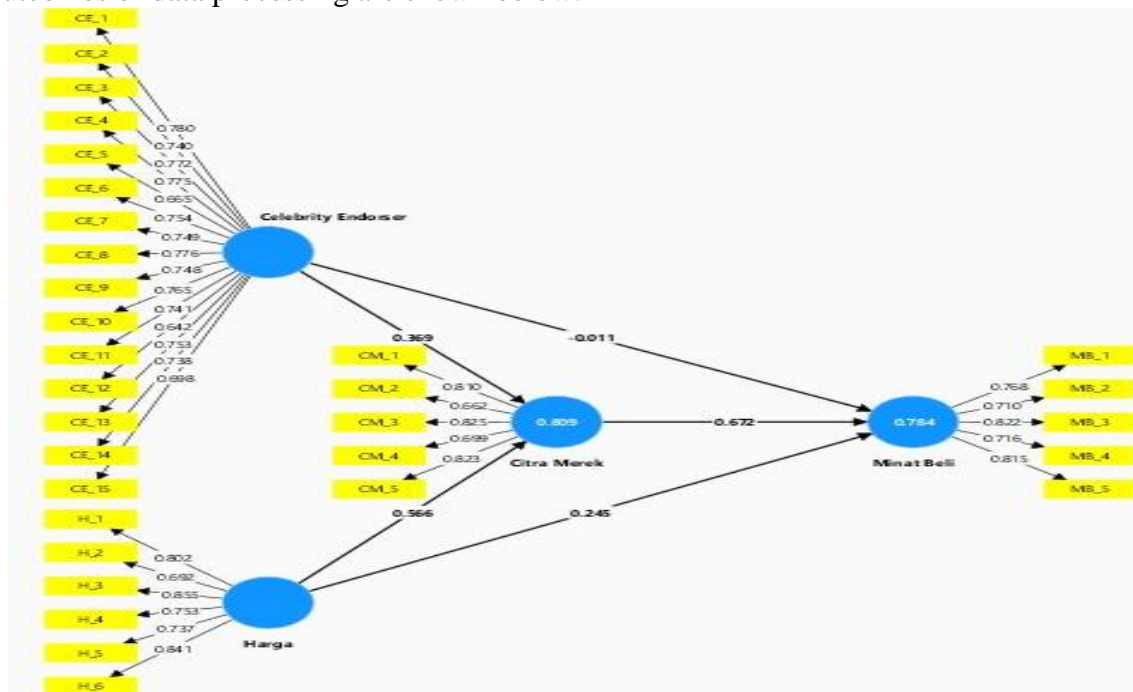
Data is analyzed by structural equation modeling (SEM) with partial least squares (PLS) analysis using SMART-PLS software as its data analysis method. This choice is made

because the positioning of variables within the research framework is clearly delineated, and it aims to elucidate the relationships among latent variable.

4. Results and Discussion

Analysis of Outer Model

Convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability testing are the three components of construct validity testing in PLS-SEM (Hamid & Anwar, 2019). Convergent validity aims to evaluate or quantify the validity of every correlation between variables and indicators. The outcomes of data processing are shown below.



Source: Data Processed by Author, 2024

Figure 2. Smart PLS Data Processing Results

Convergen Validity

Table 1. Outer Model

Variable	Indicator	Loading Factor	Rule of Thumb	Conclusion
<i>Celebrity Endorser</i>	CE_1	0.779	0.700	Valid
	CE_2	0.742	0.700	Valid
	CE_3	0.767	0.700	Valid

Variable	Indicator	Loading Factor	Rule of Thumb	Conclusion
	CE_4	0.778	0.700	Valid
	CE_6	0.757	0.700	Valid
	CE_7	0.749	0.700	Valid
	CE_8	0.779	0.700	Valid
	CE_9	0.747	0.700	Valid
	CE_10	0.766	0.700	Valid
	CE_11	0.741	0.700	Valid
	CE_13	0.751	0.700	Valid
	CE_14	0.740	0.700	Valid
<i>Brand Image</i>	BI_1	0.812	0.700	Valid
	BI_3	0.825	0.700	Valid
	BI_5	0.826	0.700	Valid
<i>Price</i>	P_1	0.803	0.700	Valid
	P_3	0.855	0.700	Valid
	P_4	0.753	0.700	Valid
	P_5	0.737	0.700	Valid
	P_6	0.842	0.700	Valid
<i>Purchase Interest</i>	PI_1	0.768	0.700	Valid
	PI_2	0.711	0.700	Valid
	PI_3	0.822	0.700	Valid
	PI_4	0.716	0.700	Valid
	PI_5	0.815	0.700	Valid

Source: Data Processed by Author, 2024

The outer loading table above satisfies convergent validity, specifically <0.7 , and is regarded as valid based on the outcomes of convergent validity data processing. Convergent validity is used to determine or quantify the validity of each correlation between variables and indicators (J. F. Hair et al., 2021)

Cross Loading

Table 2. Cross Loading

Indicator	Celebrity Endorser	Brand Image	Price	Purchase Interest
CE_1	0.779	0.643	0.663	0.540
CE_2	0.742	0.594	0.624	0.564
CE_3	0,767	0,672	0,586	0,636

Indicator	Celebrity Endorser	Brand Image	Price	Purchase Interest
CE_4	0,778	0,614	0,652	0,565
CE_6	0,757	0,617	0,658	0,558
CE_7	0,749	0,573	0,598	0,507
CE_8	0,779	0,626	0,657	0,548
CE_9	0,747	0,618	0,627	0,586
CE_10	0,766	0,614	0,606	0,546
CE_11	0,741	0,675	0,667	0,669
CE_13	0,641	0,600	0,558	0,532
CE_14	0,751	0,659	0,625	0,561
BI_1	0,685	0,812	0,736	0,706
BI_3	0,720	0,825	0,728	0,707
BI_5	0,659	0,826	0,739	0,740
P_1	0,723	0,709	0,803	0,649
P_3	0,725	0,756	0,855	0,720
P_4	0,653	0,711	0,753	0,677
P_5	0,558	0,597	0,737	0,537
P_6	0,645	0,665	0,842	0,654
PI_1	0,578	0,678	0,666	0,768
PI_2	0,452	0,603	0,535	0,711
PI_3	0,639	0,722	0,708	0,822
PI_4	0,563	0,649	0,564	0,716
PI_5	0,681	0,710	0,679	0,815

Source: Data Processed by Author, 2024

The cross-loading factor values, which guarantee that each concept within the corresponding latent models differs from other variables, are used to determine discriminant validity based on the analysis. Comparing the cross-loading values on the intended constructs—which

ought to be greater than those of other constructs—allows for this (Sihombing and Arsani, 2022).

Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability and AVE

Table 3. Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and AVE

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Celebrity Endorser	0,941	0,948	0,549
Brand Image	0,823	0,876	0,588
Price	0,872	0,904	0,612
Purchase Interest	0,825	0,877	0,590

Source: Data Processed by Author

Combination The accuracy, consistency, and correctness of instruments used to measure constructs are demonstrated through reliability or reliability testing (Hamid and Anwar, 2019). Cronbach's Alpha and Composite reliability are two methods for assessing a construct's dependability. While values greater than 0.60 are still acceptable, the Rule of Thumb for evaluating construct reliability is > 0.70 . All composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values are known to be above 0.8, and the AVE values are above 0.5. This indicates that all items can be considered reliable based on these three calculation methods.

Table R-Square

Table 4. R-Square

Variables	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Brand Image	0,807	0,803
Purchase Interest	0,784	0,777

Source: Data Processed by Author

The Brand Image variable's R-Square value is 0,807. Thus, it can be said that price and celebrity endorsers account for 80.7% of brand image, with other factors not covered in this study accounting for the remaining 19.3%. This suggests that the study is classified as a strong model. For the Purchase Interest variable, the R-Square value is 0.784. Thus, it can be said that 78.4% of purchase interest is explained by the factors of celebrity endorser, price, and brand image, with the remaining 21.6% being explained by other factors not covered in this study. This suggests that the study is classified as a strong model.

Hypothesis Testing Result

Table 5. Path Coefficient

Relationship	Coefficient	T Statistics	P Value
Celebrity Endorser -> Brand Image	0,369	5,363	0,000
Price -> Brand Image	0,566	5,578	0,000
Brand Image -> Purchase Interest	0,672	2,880	0,005
Celebrity Endorser -> Purchase Interest	-0,011	1,622	0,108
Price -> Purchase Interest	0,245	4,698	0,000

Source: Data Processed by Author

By comparing the t-statistics with the t-table ($>1,96$) or the p-value with alpha ($0,05$), one can analyze the analysis using the bootstrapping method for path coefficients to ascertain the hypothesis results. The hypothesis is accepted if the t-statistics are greater than the t-table of 1,96. However, the hypothesis is rejected if the t-statistics are less than the t-table of 1,96 (J. Hair et al., 2017). The Influence of Celebrity Endorser on Brand Image, according to the hypothesis test results, the t-statistics value is $5.363 > t\text{-table } 1.96$ and the p-value is $0.000 < 0.05$. This suggests that the Brand Image variable is significantly impacted by celebrity endorsers. The Influence of Price on Brand Image, according to the hypothesis test results, the t-statistics value is $5.578 > t\text{-table } 1.96$ and the p-value is $0.000 < 0.05$. This suggests that the brand image variable is greatly influenced by price. The Influence of Brand Image on Purchase Interest, according to the hypothesis test results, the t-statistics value is $2.880 > t\text{-table } 1.96$ and the p-value is $0.005 < 0.05$. This suggests that the variable of Purchase Interest is highly influenced by Brand Image. The Influence of Celebrity Endorsers on Purchase Interest, hypothesis test results indicate that the t-statistics value is $1.622 < t\text{-table } 1.96$ and the p-value is $0.108 > 0.05$. This suggests that the Purchase Interest variable is not significantly impacted by the Celebrity Endorser. The Influence of Price on Purchase Interest According to the hypothesis test results, the t-statistics value is $4.698 > t\text{-table } 1.96$ and the p-value is $0.000 < 0.05$. This suggests that the variable of Purchase Interest is highly influenced by Price.

Table 6. Indirect and Total Effect

Relationship	Coefficient	Description
Celebrity Endorser -> Brand Image -> Purchase Interest	0,278	Full Mediation Effect
Price -> Brand Image -> Purchase Interest	0,626	Partial Mediation Effect

Source: Data Processed by Author

Discussion

The aim of this study is to examine how price, brand image, and celebrity endorsements affect purchase interest. The study uses SmartPLS version 4 software to analyze data using

the Partial Least Squares (PLS) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) techniques. According to the hypothesis test results, brand image is significantly impacted by the celebrity endorser variable. The study's findings support those of Nurtiah, Abdillah, and Akbar (2021), who found that the public's opinion of the celebrity endorser in the advertisement was favorable in the Dramaga Bogor District and that this had a favorable impact on the tea product's brand image.

According to the hypothesis test results, brand image is significantly impacted by the price variable. The study's findings support the notion that price significantly affects brand image (Leksono and Herwin, 2017). Therefore, the brand image increases with price. Purchase Interest is significantly impacted by the Brand Image variable, according to the hypothesis test results. According to the findings of Dhaefina, et al (2021) that Brand Image influences Purchase Interest. If a brand maintains a positive image, It can successfully increase consumer interest in making a purchase because customers are more likely to trust, want, and have confidence in the goods sold by such a brand. Beeme Official is believed to offer products of high quality, appealing product designs, diverse product offerings, and products that are easy to get anywhere. This indicates that Beeme Official has the capability to innovate to maintain market share and adapt to the ever-changing consumer needs.

According to the hypothesis test's findings, there is no discernible direct relationship between the Purchase Interest and Celebrity Endorser variables. The results of this research are in line with Laraswanti and Setyawati (2022) that Celebrity Endorser has no effect on Purchase Interest. This phenomenon occurs because consumers are now more selective in their product choices, thus diminishing the necessity for celebrity endorsers. The implementation of celebrity endorsers for the local product Beeme Official merely attracts customers to become acquainted with the product; however, there are no prospective consumers intending to purchase the product. However, using Brand Image as a mediation variable, Celebrity Endorser has a significant indirect impact on the Purchase Interest variable. The results of this research are in line with Alessandro, et al (2023) which states that brand image had mediation role on the significant effects of celebrity endorsement on purchase intention.

The results of the hypothesis test state that the Purchase Interest variable is impacted by Price. The results of this research are in line with Lestari, et al (2019) that Price influences Purchase Interest. In this research, affordable pricing tends to increase purchase interest. Other factors such as pricing parity with other products and pricing commensurate with the benefits offered by the product can also influence consumer purchase interest. Therefore, Beeme Official must pay attention to and adjust prices according to consumer purchasing power, setting appropriate prices to remain competitive with other competitors. The results of this research are in line with Putra and Aksari (2018) which states that price has an impact on consumers' intentions to buy iPhone products in Denpasar, but brand image can mitigate this effect.

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

The analysis shows that Celebrity Endorser does not significantly affect Purchase Intention. This may be due to the fact that although celebrity endorsers can attract consumers' attention to be aware of and familiarize themselves with the product, it does not make consumers interested in making a purchase. Brand Image significantly influences Purchase Interest. The Brand Image of the local product Beeme Official aligns with consumer expectations of strength, uniqueness, and superiority, thus influencing purchase interest. Price has a significant influence on Purchase Interest. The pricing strategy employed by the local product Beeme Official tends to be affordable, thereby enhancing purchase interest among consumers.

To augment consumer purchase interest, Beeme Official could consider choosing a celebrity endorser who not only possesses popularity but also aligns with the company's core values. Furthermore, it's imperative to ensure that the selected celebrity endorser reflects positive values and enhances the company's image. In addition, it is advisable to consider providing competitive pricing that corresponds with the perceived benefits of the product, thereby fostering trust, increasing attractiveness, and stimulating purchase interest. Researchers suggest the importance of focusing on pricing strategies, as pricing plays a pivotal role in facilitating and reaching purchase decisions. Price can be oriented toward brand image, consumer loyalty, consumer choices, and consumer satisfaction. Furthermore, pricing serves as a tool for conducting competitor analysis and market research to stay informed about consumer preferences and market trends.

Based on the research results, It is determined that there is no discernible impact of the celebrity endorser variable on purchase interest. Therefore, potential actions could involve increasing the number of respondents or altering the respondent criteria, which could potentially affect the relationship between celebrity endorser and purchase interest. This study is expected to serve as a reference for future research endeavors exploring alternative celebrity endorsers or other variables that may influence purchase interest for the local product Beeme Official.

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