



**THE INFLUENCE OF BRAND AMBASSADOR AND SHOPPING
LIFESTYLE ON PURCHASE DECISION MEDIATED BY BRAND
AWARENESS ON SCARLETT WHITENING**

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Abstract

The Indonesian beauty industry is growing rapidly as people's attention to appearance increases. This study aims to analyze the influence of brand ambassadors and shopping lifestyle on purchase decisions with brand awareness as a mediating variable for Scarlett Whitening products. A quantitative method was used by distributing questionnaires to 150 respondents aged 15–35 years in Jepara Regency and analyzed using SmartPLS 4. The results showed that brand ambassadors and shopping lifestyle had a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions, with shopping lifestyle as the most dominant factor. Brand awareness was proven to be able to mediate the influence of both variables on purchase decisions. These findings emphasize the importance of marketing strategies that align with consumer lifestyles, selecting the right brand ambassadors, and strengthening brand awareness to increase Scarlett Whitening purchase decisions.

Keywords: Brand Ambassador, Shopping Lifestyle, Purchase Decision, Brand Awareness



INTRODUCTION

In an era of increasingly competitive business, beauty has transformed into a primary need for most people, especially women in Indonesia. Beauty products are no longer merely lifestyle accessories, but crucial instruments for enhancing aesthetic value and individual self-confidence. The massive growth of the cosmetics and personal care market is driven by increasing collective awareness of skin health and aesthetics. This phenomenon is supported by empirical findings showing that the global beauty industry now relies heavily on how a brand aligns its values with consumer aspirations. An effective marketing strategy is a key determinant in winning consumer preference amidst the flood of product choices on the market.

In the Indonesian market, competition among local brands is highly competitive. Based on market research from April to June 2022, Somethinc led the way with total sales of IDR 53.2 billion, followed by Scarlett Whitening in second place with IDR 40.9 billion. Although Scarlett Whitening, founded by Felicya Angelista in 2017, has established itself as a major player, fluctuating sales and the emergence of new competitors require the brand to continuously strengthen its marketing strategy. This intense competition demands a deep understanding of the factors that drive purchasing decisions, including the cognitive and emotional evaluation stages before consumers make their choice.

One of the determining factors that is now a global trend is the use of Brand Ambassadors . This strategy involves public figures with high credibility and appeal to build a positive brand image. Scarlett Whitening itself aggressively utilizes this strategy, including collaborating with international artists to expand market reach. Theoretically, brand ambassadors function as a psychological bridge that strengthens consumer trust in the promoted product. Recent research confirms that the effectiveness of brand ambassadors is highly dependent on the level of match between the figure's persona and the brand identity they carry.

In addition to external factors such as brand ambassadors, consumers' internal behavior, reflected in their shopping lifestyle, also plays a significant role in purchasing decisions (Arswenda, 2024). Shopping lifestyle is a manifestation of how individuals spend their time and money to express their social status and self-worth. Consumers with a high shopping lifestyle tend to be more impulsive and responsive to the latest trends in the skincare market. International studies show that digital lifestyles and the influence of social media have shifted consumers' shopping paradigms, where purchasing decisions are often driven by the desire to meet certain lifestyle standards displayed online.



However, the relationship between brand ambassadors and shopping lifestyles on purchasing decisions is not always direct. An intermediary variable is needed to strengthen consumer confidence, namely Brand Awareness. Brand awareness is the ability of consumers to recognize and remember a brand in various situations. Without a strong level of awareness, marketing messages delivered by brand ambassadors may not convert into purchasing actions. Brand awareness functions as an initial filter in the minds of consumers; the higher their level of recognition of the Scarlett Whitening brand attributes, the greater the chance of choosing the product over its competitors.

A research gap underlies the urgency of this study. While the majority of studies, such as those conducted by Fitria Sheva Yulianti and Tirton Nefianto (2023), indicate a positive influence of brand ambassadors on purchasing decisions, another study by Muinah Fadhilah (2023) showed different results, where shopping lifestyle was found to have no significant influence. This difference in findings indicates the complexity of consumer behavior that requires further study, particularly by including brand awareness as a mediating variable. This aligns with the theory that brand awareness can strengthen or weaken the influence of marketing strategies on final purchasing behavior.

This study aims to identify the influence of brand ambassadors and shopping lifestyle on purchase decisions, both directly and indirectly through the mediation of brand awareness among Scarlett Whitening consumers in Jepara Regency. By understanding which variables are the most dominant, it is hoped that companies can evaluate the effectiveness of their marketing campaigns more precisely. The novelty of this study lies in testing the mediation model in a highly dynamic local market, where the influence of global popular culture (such as the K-Pop trend promoted by brand ambassadors) meets the shopping lifestyle patterns of local residents. The results of this study are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the literature on consumer behavior as well as practical contributions for beauty industry players in maintaining customer loyalty amidst increasingly fierce competition.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer purchasing decisions have become a central topic in marketing studies, particularly in highly competitive industries such as cosmetics and personal care. Purchasing decisions are defined as a series of processes through which consumers identify their needs, search for information, evaluate alternatives, and ultimately decide to purchase a product (Andira, 2021). In this



context, both internal and external factors play significant roles in influencing consumer behavior.

One important external factor is the use of brand ambassadors. A brand ambassador is typically a public figure or celebrity employed by companies to represent and promote a product, aiming to enhance brand image and credibility. According to Prilia (2021), brand ambassadors can create emotional connections with consumers and serve as a symbol of product quality. Similarly, Juarsa Badri and Safitri (2021) argue that credible and attractive ambassadors can strengthen consumer trust and increase purchase intention. Furthermore, the effectiveness of a brand ambassador largely depends on the congruence between the ambassador's image and the brand identity (Ghadani & AM, 2022).

Supporting this argument, previous research by Dewi (2025) found that brand ambassadors significantly influence purchase decisions, especially when mediated by consumer trust. This indicates that the presence of a brand ambassador can strengthen consumer confidence and encourage purchasing decisions.

In addition to external influences, shopping lifestyle represents an important internal factor affecting purchasing behavior. Shopping lifestyle reflects how individuals allocate their time and money in shopping activities and how consumption is used to express identity and social status (Arswenda, 2024). Consumers with a modern and hedonistic lifestyle tend to be more responsive to trends, promotions, and social media influences. Research by Fadhilah (2023) indicates that shopping lifestyle can significantly drive impulsive buying behavior, especially in digital marketplaces. However, some studies show inconsistent findings, suggesting that lifestyle does not always significantly influence purchase decisions, indicating the need for further investigation.

Another crucial variable is brand awareness, which refers to the ability of consumers to recognize and recall a brand under different conditions (Putri, 2021). Brand awareness is considered the foundation of consumer decision-making, as it reduces perceived risk and increases familiarity with a product. According to Andira (2021), higher brand awareness increases the likelihood of a brand being included in the consumer's consideration set. Furthermore, Ghadani and AM (2022) highlight that brand awareness can act as a mediating variable that strengthens the relationship between marketing strategies and purchasing decisions.

Several previous studies have examined the relationships among these variables. Yulianti and Nefianto (2023) found that brand ambassadors positively influence purchase decisions, while Ali (2025) emphasized the role of social media



marketing in enhancing brand image and driving consumer behavior. Meanwhile, Arianto (2024) and Indriana (2022) demonstrated that lifestyle and electronic word-of-mouth significantly contribute to shaping purchasing decisions in the digital era. These studies suggest that consumer behavior is increasingly influenced by a combination of marketing communication and lifestyle alignment.

Despite extensive research, inconsistencies remain regarding the direct effects of brand ambassadors and shopping lifestyle on purchase decisions. Some studies report significant relationships, while others find insignificant results. This gap indicates that additional variables, such as brand awareness, may play a crucial mediating role. Brand awareness helps translate marketing stimuli and lifestyle preferences into actual purchasing behavior by strengthening consumer confidence and memory toward a brand.

Based on the theoretical and empirical review above, it can be concluded that brand ambassadors and shopping lifestyle are key determinants of purchasing decisions, while brand awareness serves as an important mediating variable. Therefore, integrating these variables into a comprehensive research model is essential to better understand consumer behavior, particularly in the dynamic and competitive beauty industry.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research design to examine the causal relationships between the variables studied. Primary data collection was conducted through an online questionnaire distributed using the Google Form platform to consumers of Scarlett Whitening products in Jepara Regency. The research instrument was developed using a five-point Likert scale, with a score of 1 representing "strongly disagree" and a score of 5 representing "strongly agree." All statements in the questionnaire were derived from the operational indicators of each research variable.

The population in this study includes all individuals who have used Scarlett Whitening products and reside in Jepara Regency. The determination of research subjects was carried out using a non-probability sampling technique with a purposive sampling approach. The sample criteria were respondents aged 15 to 35 years who had purchased the product independently. Given the population size that was not precisely identified, the sample size was set at 150 respondents. This number was determined based on the indicator ratio calculation, where the number of research indicators was 20 items multiplied by a constant of 7.5 in



accordance with the recommended sampling procedure for structural equation models (Hair, 2018).

The research variables consist of two independent variables, namely Brand Ambassador (X1) and Shopping Lifestyle (X2), one dependent variable, namely Purchase Decision (Y), and Brand Awareness (Z) as a mediating variable. Brand Ambassador is measured through the dimensions of popularity, credibility, attractiveness, influence, and persona fit with the brand. Shopping Lifestyle is operationalized through advertising monitoring habits, tendencies to follow the latest models, and preferences for well-known brands. Brand awareness is measured through the level of recognition, brand recall, and brand symbol recognition. Meanwhile, the purchase decision includes the stages of need recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, and post-purchase behavior.

The data analysis technique applied was Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the help of SmartPLS software version 4.0. The analysis stages were carried out systematically through two levels of model evaluation. The first stage is the assessment of the outer model or measurement model to ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument through testing the loading factor, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability, and Cronbach's Alpha. The second stage is the evaluation of the inner model or structural model to test the strength of the relationship between variables through the R-square value, f-square, and path coefficient. Hypothesis testing, including the mediation effect, was conducted using the bootstrapping method with a significance level of 5%.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Model testing in this study began with an outer model evaluation to ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument. Convergent validity testing results showed that all statement items had loading factor values above 0.70. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all variables met the minimum threshold of 0.50. Reliability test results, presented through Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values, also showed values above 0.70, thus all variables were declared reliable (Hair et al., 2018).

Table 1.

Outer Model Evaluation Results

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
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Brand Ambassador (X1)	0.845	0.882	0.562
Shopping Lifestyle (X2)	0.812	0.865	0.514
Brand Awareness (Z)	0.876	0.910	0.621
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.892	0.924	0.645

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2024

After the measurement model was fulfilled, an inner model evaluation was conducted to determine the strength of the influence between variables. The R-Square value for the Brand Awareness variable was 0.542, indicating that Brand Ambassador and Shopping Lifestyle were able to explain 54.2% of the variance in brand awareness. Meanwhile, the R-Square value for the Purchase Decision variable was 0.678, indicating the contribution of the independent and mediating variables to the purchase decision was 67.8% (Hair et al., 2018). Hypothesis testing was conducted by examining the path coefficients and P-Values through a bootstrapping procedure. The results of the direct effect test showed that all hypotheses had P-Values less than 0.05, meaning all influences were significant.

Table 2.
Hypothesis Testing Results (Direct Effects)

Relationship between variables	Original Sample	T-Statistics	P-Values
Brand Ambassador -> Purchase Decision	0.245	3,124	0.002
Shopping Lifestyle -> Purchase Decision	0.412	5,432	0,000
Brand Ambassador -> Brand Awareness	0.356	4,211	0,000
Shopping Lifestyle -> Brand Awareness	0.388	4,567	0,000
Brand Awareness -> Purchase Decision	0.210	2,987	0.003

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2024

In addition to the direct effect, this study also examined the mediating role of brand awareness. Based on the results of the specific indirect effects test, it was found that brand awareness significantly mediated the influence of brand ambassadors on purchase decisions (P-value 0.008) and mediated the influence of shopping lifestyle on purchase decisions (P-value 0.004). These findings emphasize the role of brand awareness in bridging lifestyle variables and brand ambassadors towards final consumer decisions (Amelia Ghadani & AM, 2022).



Discussion

Sub 1 Results of Model and Hypothesis Testing

Data analysis in this study was conducted systematically using the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach with the help of SmartPLS 4 software. The first step taken was to evaluate the measurement model or outer model to ensure the validity and reliability of the research instrument. Based on the convergence test that has been conducted, it was found that all statement items representing the variables of Brand Ambassador, Shopping Lifestyle, Brand Awareness, and Purchase Decision had loading factor values above the threshold of 0.70. In addition, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for all variables has exceeded the minimum standard of 0.50. The results of the reliability test through Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability also showed very satisfactory values above 0.70. This indicates that all measuring instruments used in collecting data from respondents in Jepara Regency have strong internal consistency and are scientifically valid (Hair et al., 2018). A summary of the outer model evaluation data is presented in detail in Table 1 below.

Table 3.
Outer Model Evaluation Results

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Brand Ambassador (X1)	0.845	0.882	0.562
Shopping Lifestyle (X2)	0.812	0.865	0.514
Brand Awareness (Z)	0.876	0.910	0.621
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.892	0.924	0.645

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2024

The next stage is the evaluation of the structural model or inner model to answer the research hypothesis. The test results show that Brand Ambassador has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions with a path coefficient value of 0.245 and p-values of 0.002. The Shopping Lifestyle variable also shows the most dominant positive and significant effect with a coefficient value of 0.412 and p-values of 0.000. In addition to the direct effect, this study proves that Brand Awareness plays a significant mediating variable in bridging the influence of



independent variables on purchasing decisions in Jepara Regency. The complete statistical analysis of the hypothesis is summarized in Table 4.

Table 2.

Hypothesis Testing Results (Direct Effects)

Relationship Between Variables	Original Sample	T-Statistics	P-Values
Brand Ambassador -> Purchase Decision	0.245	3,124	0.002
Shopping Lifestyle -> Purchase Decision	0.412	5,432	0,000
Brand Ambassador -> Brand Awareness	0.356	4,211	0,000
Shopping Lifestyle -> Brand Awareness	0.388	4,567	0,000
Brand Awareness -> Purchase Decision	0.210	2,987	0.003

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2024

Sub 2 In-depth Analysis and Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study indicate that brand ambassadors play a crucial role in triggering purchasing decisions for Scarlett Whitening products in Jepara Regency. This reflects the powerful and credible presence of public figures capable of building bonds of trust with potential consumers. The brand ambassador's charm and clean track record are key reasons why consumers feel confident in choosing the product. This aligns with the findings of Prilia (2021) and Juarsa Badri and Safitri (2021), who stated that brand ambassadors act as a guarantee of quality in the eyes of consumers. The use of celebrities relevant to the target market in Jepara has proven effective in transferring a positive image to the product.

On the other hand, the dominant influence of the Shopping Lifestyle indicates a shift in Jepara's shopping behavior toward a more modern and hedonistic one. Cosmetic purchases have now become a way of expressing social identity, with consumers who actively monitor trends on social media tending to be more impulsive in their purchases (Muinah Fadhilah, 2023). This phenomenon is further reinforced by the fact that having a viral product, like Scarlett, provides a sense of relevance within the younger generation's social circles (Arianto, 2024). The product's suitability to consumers' lifestyles is a key factor in maintaining high sales figures despite increasingly fierce competition from local brands.

The mediating role of brand awareness in this study confirms that marketing strategies through brand ambassadors and lifestyle adjustments will not be optimal if they fail to create strong brand awareness. Brand awareness lowers consumer risk perception (Putri, 2021) and bridges initial information into



actual transactional actions (Ghadani, 2022). Scarlett's extensive strategy of building "top-of-mind" through digital content has proven successful in creating a strong foundation of memory in the minds of consumers (Andira, 2021). This success is also supported by intensive marketing activities on social media (Ali, 2025) and the influence of word-of-mouth or digital testimonials that increase collective consumer trust (Indriana, 2022). Thus, the synergy between the brand ambassador's image and the consistent strengthening of brand identity is a fundamental strategic step (Rohmah, 2023).

Sub 3 The Role of Brand Awareness in Mediating External and Internal Influences

The mediation analysis in this study provides crucial findings regarding how purchasing decisions are formed among Scarlett Whitening consumers in Jepara Regency. The results of the *specific indirect effects test* show that Brand Awareness significantly mediates the influence of Brand Ambassadors on Purchase Decisions. This indicates that the presence of brand ambassadors does not immediately generate sales, but rather works first by strengthening brand memory and recognition in consumers' minds. High brand awareness will reduce consumer doubt, allowing the credibility brought by Brand Ambassadors to convert into actual purchases (Ghadani, 2022). In line with Andira's (2021) findings, a brand's strength in the cosmetics market depends heavily on consumers' familiarity with the product's identity amidst the hustle and bustle of digital competition. Furthermore, Brand Awareness has also been shown to mediate the influence of Shopping Lifestyle on Purchase Decisions. For people in Jepara with a high-shopping lifestyle, brand awareness serves as a filter for selecting products deemed most relevant to their social identity. Consumers who actively seek beauty trends tend to more easily remember brands that frequently appear consistently on social media. These findings reinforce the theory that a mature level of brand recognition is a prerequisite for consumers with a hedonistic lifestyle before executing purchase decisions (Putri, 2021). Thus, brand awareness acts as a cognitive bridge connecting shopping motivation and promotional appeal to concrete economic behavior (Rohmah, 2023).

Sub 4 Implications of Research Findings and Novelty

The finding that Shopping Lifestyle is the most dominant factor has strategic implications for the development of the Scarlett Whitening brand, particularly in reaching regional markets such as Jepara Regency. This suggests that marketing strategies must continue to align with the highly dynamic digital lifestyles of consumers. Scarlett's success in capitalizing on "viral" trends on social media has successfully created lifestyle-based needs, where beauty products are seen as



instruments for increasing self-confidence and social status (Fadhilah, 2023). The managerial implication of this research is the importance of companies not only focusing on selecting public figures, but also on creating content that can fit into the scope of consumers' daily lifestyles (Ali, 2025).

The novelty of this research lies in the integration of the Brand Awareness mediation model in the regional market segment, which has unique characteristics between the influence of global popular culture (through international Brand Ambassadors) and local shopping behavior. These results emphasize that in the digital era, the boundaries between urban and regional consumers are increasingly blurred due to equal access to information through social media (Adinda Indriana, 2022). This research's theoretical contribution expands the consumer behavior literature by demonstrating that Brand Awareness remains a vital intermediary variable, even though external variables such as Brand Ambassadors and internal variables such as Shopping Lifestyle already have a strong influence (Arianto, 2024).

Sub 5 Dynamics of Digital Marketing and the Influence of Consumer Testimonials

The effectiveness of Scarlett Whitening's marketing strategy in Jepara Regency is inextricably linked to the role of social media as a primary communication channel. Research shows that social media marketing activities significantly contribute to strengthening product image and triggering collective purchasing decisions among the younger generation (Ali, 2025). Through interactive content and engaging visuals, Scarlett successfully creates emotional engagement with its audience. Furthermore, the phenomenon of electronic word of mouth (E-WOM), or digital testimonials from other users, has proven to be a catalyst that accelerates the conversion process from mere interest to actual transactions. Consumers tend to trust honest reviews from fellow online users more than conventional advertising, as they are perceived as more objective and credible (Adinda Indriana, 2022).

The combination of the Brand Ambassador's credibility and the power of digital testimonials creates a powerful ecosystem of trust for the Scarlett brand. In the local context, perceptions of product quality are often formed through digital conversations, where positive reviews can significantly strengthen brand awareness. Juarsa Badri and Safitri (2021) emphasize that testimonials on platforms like Instagram play a crucial role in shaping public opinion of a brand. This suggests that purchasing decisions for Scarlett Whitening products in Jepara are the result of a synergy between professional brand management strategies



and the social validity provided by the user community (Muinah Fadhilah, 2023). The integration of these various communication channels ensures that the brand message reaches consumers consistently and convincingly (Andira, 2021).

Sub 6 Synergy of Marketing Strategy and Contemporary Consumer Behavior

The integration of the appropriate use of Brand Ambassadors with a deep understanding of the Shopping Lifestyle of consumers in Jepara Regency creates a very strong marketing synergy for Scarlett Whitening. Based on the results of the study, these two variables do not only stand alone, but rather reinforce each other in shaping positive consumer perceptions. The international Brand Ambassador used by Scarlett successfully conveys an impression of exclusivity and high quality, while consumers' active shopping lifestyle on social media becomes the main vehicle that accelerates the spread of this image (Ali, 2025). This shows that purchasing decisions made by respondents are not merely momentary actions, but rather the result of consistent exposure to information that aligns with their lifestyle aspirations (Muinah Fadhilah, 2023).

Furthermore, these findings illustrate that in the modern marketing era, a brand's strength depends heavily on how much it can become part of consumers' "digital conversations." The influence of brand ambassadors is far more effective when consumers perceive the promoted product as part of their desired lifestyle (Prilia, 2021). With the support of strong brand awareness, Scarlett Whitening has successfully positioned itself as a market leader in the youth skincare category in Jepara (Putri, 2021). This success confirms that a marketing strategy that combines external attractiveness (brand ambassadors) and internal psychological factors (lifestyle) is the most effective model for triggering purchasing decisions in a highly competitive market (Muhammad Nanda Arianto & IA, 2024). This analysis makes a significant contribution to the development of consumer behavior theory, particularly in the context of local markets exposed to global trends (Adinda Indriana, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the data analysis and discussion presented previously, this study concludes that all variables studied have a significant contribution to the purchasing decision of Scarlett Whitening products in Jepara Regency. The use of Brand Ambassadors has been proven to be effective in increasing consumer interest and confidence through the positive image they carry. In addition, Shopping Lifestyle was found to be the most dominant factor in driving purchasing decisions, which indicates that people's consumption behavior in Jepara is strongly influenced by modern beauty trends and hedonic



shopping motivations. The role of Brand Awareness as a mediating variable has also been proven significant, where strong brand awareness is the main foundation that connects marketing strategies and consumer lifestyles into actual purchasing actions. Thus, strengthening brand identity through credible brand ambassadors and adjustments to the target market's lifestyle are the main keys to winning the competition in the local cosmetics industry.

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