THE INFLUENCE OF BRAND IMAGE ON ONLINE PURCHASE DECISIONS FOR SCARLETT STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY OF ECONOMICS, UNIVERSITY OF NIAS

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Abstract

This research aims to examine and analyze the influence of brand image on the purchasing decisions of students at the Faculty of Economics, Nias University, in the context of online shopping. The background of this study stems from the rapid growth of e-commerce in Indonesia, which has significantly changed consumer shopping behavior, particularly among students who are highly adaptive to digital technology. In online shopping situations, where consumers cannot physically assess the product, brand image becomes one of the main factors influencing consumer trust, perceived quality, and confidence in making purchasing decisions. The type of research employed is quantitative research with a survey approach. The study population consisted of 1,959 active students of the Faculty of Economics, Nias University, with a sample of 95 respondents determined using the Slovin formula. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire covering brand image indicators (strength, favorability, and uniqueness of brand association) as well as purchasing decision indicators (problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior). The data were analyzed using validity and reliability tests, simple linear regression analysis, t-test, and determination test with the aid of SPSS software. The results of the study indicate that brand image has a positive and significant effect on students' purchasing decisions in online shopping. This finding implies that the stronger the brand image, the higher the tendency of students to make online purchases. Therefore, companies or online businesses need to develop and strengthen their brand image through consistent marketing communication strategies, clear product information, and credible brand reputation to increase consumer loyalty and purchase intention.

Keywords: Brand Image, Purchasing Decision, Students, Online Shopping

1. INTRODUCTION

Advances in information and communication technology have transformed the way consumers interact with brands. Online shopping has become an increasingly popular phenomenon, especially among students. According to Statista (2021), the number of e-

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commerce users in Indonesia continues to increase annually, with students being a significant market segment.

With the rapid growth of e-commerce, consumers are increasingly faced with a wide variety of product choices. In this environment, consumer decisions are influenced not only by price or product quality, but also by various other factors, one of which is brand image. Brand image is a consumer's perception of a brand, formed through experiences, communication, and interactions with that brand (Keller, 2013). A positive brand image can increase consumer trust and influence their purchasing decisions.

In Indonesia, the student segment is a significant consumer group in the e-commerce market. Students are known to be highly open to technology and digitalization. According to a survey by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), almost all students in Indonesia are connected to the internet, and many actively shop online. This behavior indicates that students represent a significant market potential for e-commerce platforms, making it crucial for companies to understand the factors that influence their purchasing decisions.

On e-commerce platforms, where consumers cannot see and feel the product in person, brand image serves as a substitute for that physical experience. A strong brand image can create a sense of trust and security for consumers when making purchasing decisions. This is particularly relevant for students, who often rely on digital information to assess a product or brand.

One local brand that has successfully captured the attention of Indonesian consumers, especially among the younger generation, is Scarlett Whitening. Scarlett is a local skincare brand founded by Felicya Angelista in 2017. Scarlett products, such as body lotion, body wash, facial wash, serum, and shampoo, have successfully won a place in the hearts of consumers because they are known to be safe to use, good quality, and have an affordable price. Scarlett's popularity is increasing thanks to a massive marketing strategy through social media, celebrity and influencer endorsements, and online distribution through major e-commerce platforms such as Shopee, Tokopedia, TikTok Shop, and Lazada.

For college students, self-care is no longer just a secondary need, but an essential part of a modern lifestyle. Scarlett has been able to build a strong brand image through product innovation, attractive packaging design, and branding messages that emphasize healthy skin care for all groups, both women and men. With this strong brand image, Scarlett has successfully created a positive perception and increased consumer confidence in making purchases, especially online.

Initial observations of students from the Faculty of Economics at Nias University indicate that many students prefer skincare products with a good reputation and frequent social media appearances. Scarlett products are among the most well-known brands, frequently appearing in digital reviews and recommended by public figures. This suggests

that brand reputation and visibility significantly influence students' online skincare purchasing decisions.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The type of research used in this study is quantitative research, which uses numbers. According to Sugiyono (2013), quantitative research methods are used to examine specific populations or samples, with the aim of testing predetermined hypotheses. This study aims to determine the influence of brand image on online purchasing decisions among students at the Faculty of Economics, Nias University.

In this study, the population was all active students of the Faculty of Economics, Nias University, totaling 1,959 people.

The sampling technique used is simple random sampling, where samples are taken from the population randomly without paying attention to the strata in the population.

The instrument used in this study is intended to produce accurate data, namely by using a Likert scale.Sugiyono (2018: 134) states that "The Likert scale is used to measure the attitudes, opinions and perceptions of a person or group of people regarding a social phenomenon."

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.2.2.1 Validity Test

1. Validity Test of Variable X (Brand Image)

Correlations

Variable X		Amount
Question 1	Pearson Correlation	,638**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Questions	Pearson Correlation	,603**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Question 3	Pearson Correlation	,812**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Question 4	Pearson Correlation	,801**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Question 5	Pearson Correlation	,659**

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	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Question 6	Pearson Correlation	,430**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Question 7	Pearson Correlation	,436**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Question 8	Pearson Correlation	,812**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Question 9	Pearson Correlation	,801**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Question 10	Pearson Correlation	,659**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Amount	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	N	95

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.1 Validity Test of Variable X

Item No.	*Pearson Correlation*	r-table	Information
1	0.638	0.201	*Valid*
2	0.603	0.201	*Valid*
3	0.812	0.201	*Valid*
4	0.801	0.201	*Valid*
5	0.659	0.201	*Valid*
6	0.430	0.201	*Valid*
7	0.436	0.201	*Valid*
8	0.812	0.201	*Valid*
9	0.801	0.201	*Valid*
10	0.659	0.201	*Valid*

Based on the results of the validity test using Pearson correlation, the correlation coefficient (r-count) for each item ranged from 0.430 to 0.812. When compared with the r-table value = 0.201 (N-df = 93, α = 0.05), all statement items had r-count > r-table. Thus, it can be concluded that all items (1–10) were declared valid and therefore suitable for use as research instruments.

2. Validity Test of Variable Y (Purchase Decision)

Correlations

Variable Y		Amount
Question 1	Pearson Correlation	,612**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Questions	Pearson Correlation	,649**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Question 3	Pearson Correlation	,657**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Question 4	Pearson Correlation	,629**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Question 5	Pearson Correlation	,626**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Question 6	Pearson Correlation	,664**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Question 7	Pearson Correlation	,654**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Question 8	Pearson Correlation	,657**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	95
Question 9	Pearson Correlation	,629**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000

	N	95
Question	Pearson Correlation	,349**
10	Sig. (2-tailed)	,001
	N	95
Amount	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	N	95

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.2 Validity Test of Variable Y

Item No.	Pearson Correlation	r-table	Information
1	0.612	0.201	*Valid*
2	0.649	0.201	*Valid*
3	0.657	0.201	*Valid*
4	0.629	0.201	*Valid*
5	0.626	0.201	*Valid*
6	0.664	0.201	*Valid*
7	0.654	0.201	*Valid*
8	0.657	0.201	*Valid*
9	0.629	0.201	*Valid*
10	0.349	0.201	*Valid*

Based on the results of the validity test using Pearson correlation, the correlation coefficient (r-count) value for each item ranged from 0.349 to 0.664. When compared with the r-table value = 0.201 (N-df = 93, $\alpha = 0.05$), all statement items had r-count > r-table.

Thus, it can be concluded that all items (1–10) are declared valid and therefore suitable for use as research instruments.

4.2.2.2 Data Reliability Test

Reliability testing in this study used Cronbach's Alpha. Data is considered reliable if the Alpha value is greater than 0.60.

a. Reliability test of variable X

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,857	10

Table 4.3 Reliability test results for Variable X

b. Reliability test of variable Y

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,797	10

Table 4.4Reliability test results for variable Y

The results of the reliability test showed that all variables had relatively high alpha coefficient values, above 0.60. This indicates that each construct or concept measured by the questionnaire exhibits good consistency. Therefore, the questionnaire used in this study can be considered reliable, meaning that the measuring instrument can be relied upon to measure the variables studied.

4.2.3 Correlation Coefficient Test

Correlations

		Brand Image	Buying decision
Brand Image	Pearson Correlation	1	,606**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,003
	N	95	95
Buying decision	Pearson Correlation	,606**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,003	
	N	95	95

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on the table above, a correlation coefficient (r) value of 0.606 was obtained between the Brand Image and Purchase Decision variables, with a significance value (p-value) of 0.003. The correlation coefficient value of 0.606 is in the range of 0.60 – 0.799, which according to the interpretation criteria indicates a strong level of relationship. In addition, the significance value of $p = 0.003$ is smaller than the specified significance limit ($\alpha = 0.05$), so this relationship is statistically significant. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a strong and significant relationship between Brand Image and Purchase Decision. This

means that the better the brand image of a product, the higher the consumer's decision to make a purchase.

Coefficientsa

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	ig.
1	(Constant)	23,428	3,590		6,526	
						000
	Brand Image	,619	,103	,606	3,103	003

a. Dependent Variable: Purchasing Decision

4.2.4.1 Simple linear regression

Based on the results of the simple linear regression analysis, the regression equation $Y = 23.428 + 0.619X$ is obtained. The constant value of 23.428 indicates that if Brand Image is considered non-existent or has a value of zero, then the value of the Purchase Decision is 23.428. The Brand Image regression coefficient of 0.619 is positive, which means that every one unit increase in Brand Image will increase the Purchase Decision by 0.619 units.

4.2.4.2 Coefficient of determination

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	,606a	,694	,684	3,356

a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Image

Based on the analysis results in the Model Summary table, an R value of 0.606 was obtained, indicating a fairly strong relationship between Brand Image and Purchasing Decisions. An R Square value of 0.694 means that Brand Image is able to explain 69.4 percent of the variation in Purchasing Decisions, while the remaining 30.6 percent is explained by other factors outside this research model.

4.2.5 Hypothesis Testing

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	ig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	23,428	3,590		6,526	,000
Brand Image	,319	,103	,306	3,103	,003

a. Dependent Variable: Purchasing Decision

Based on the results of the t-test, the calculated t-value was 3.103 with a significance level of 0.006. Meanwhile, the t-table value at a significance level of 5% with degrees of freedom (df) = 93 was 1.985. Thus, the calculated t-value (3.103) is greater than the t-table (1.985). This indicates that Brand Image has a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions. This means that the better the brand image of a product, the higher the consumer's decision to make a purchase.

4.2.6.1 Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Unstandardized Residual
N		95
Normal Parametersa,b	Mean	,0000000
	Standard Deviation	3.337907 68
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	,100
	Positive	,100
	Negative	-,078
Test Statistics		,100
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		,201c

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

Based on the results in the table above, the significance value is above 0.05, namely 0.201 (0.200>0.05). This means that the residual data is normally distributed. This can also be explained by the results of the graphical analysis, namely the Normal Probability Plot graph as follows:

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual
Dependent Variable: Y
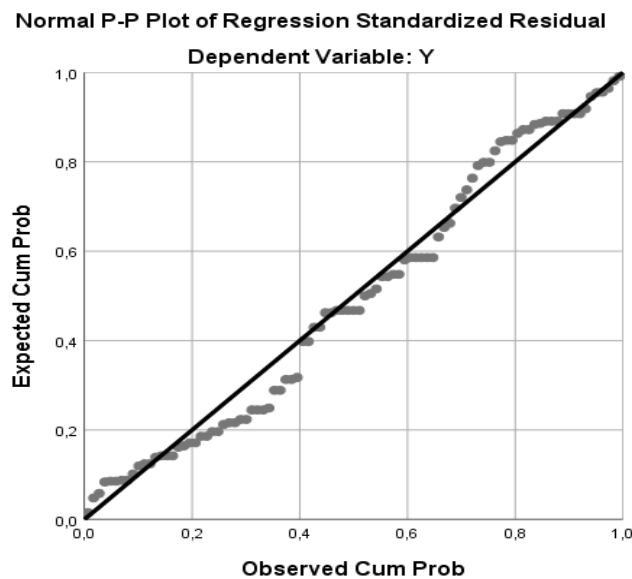
Discussion Results

The results of this study indicate that brand image has a positive and significant influence on online purchasing decisions of students at the Faculty of Economics, Nias University. This means that the better the brand image instilled in students' minds, the higher their tendency to make online purchases. These findings confirm that brand image plays a crucial role in building trust, reducing perceived risk, and increasing students' confidence in selecting products through digital platforms.

The results of this study are in line with the research of Dhea Serly Selviyanti & Ni Luh Wayan Sayang Telagawathi (2023) which shows that brand image has a significant influence on the purchasing decision of Asus laptops by students, where a strong brand image is the main consideration for students in choosing technology products.

However, the results of this study differ from those of Tania Oktavia Lestari & Palupi Permata Rahmi (2025), who stated that brand image had no significant partial influence on purchasing decisions for Vans shoes on e-commerce platforms. This difference may be due to the different research subjects and product categories. For fashion products like shoes, students prioritize quality and trends over brand image alone. Meanwhile, in this study, students at the Faculty of Economics, Nias University,

considered brand image more as a guarantee of quality and trustworthiness in online purchases.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results obtained from data analysis and hypothesis testing, the researcher can draw the following conclusions:

1. Brand image has been shown to have a positive and significant influence on online purchasing decisions among students at the Faculty of Economics, Nias University. The better a product's brand image, the more likely students are to purchase through digital platforms.

2. The analysis showed that brand image explained 69.4 percent of the variation in students' purchasing decisions, while the remainder was influenced by factors outside the study, such as price, promotion, user reviews, product quality, and other external factors. This confirms that brand image is a dominant factor in determining online purchasing decisions.

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