



The Effect of Attractiveness and Credibility of Bangtan Boys (BTS) as Brand Ambassadors on Brand Image on the Tokopedia Site in Makassar

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Abstract

This study aims to analyse (1) the influence of Bangtan Boys' attractiveness on brand ambassadors (2) the influence of Bangtan Boys' credibility on brand ambassadors, (3) the influence of Bangtan Boys' attractiveness on brand image, (4) the influence of Bangtan Boys' credibility on brand image, (5) the influence of Bangtan Boys as brand ambassadors on brand image, (6) the influence of Bangtan Boys' attractiveness on brand image through brand ambassadors, (7) the influence of Bangtan Boys' credibility on brand image through brand ambassadors. This study used a non-probability sampling technique with a sample of 384 respondents. This research is quantitative research. The data were analyzed using SEM analysis. The results show that (1) the attractiveness of Bangtan Boys affects brand ambassadors (2) the credibility of Bangtan Boys affects brand ambassadors, (3) the attractiveness of Bangtan Boys affects brand image, (4) the credibility of Bangtan Boys affects brand image, (5) Bangtan Boys as brand ambassadors affect brand image, (6) Bangtan Boys' attractiveness affects brand image through brand ambassadors, (7) Bangtan Boys' credibility affects brand image through brand ambassadors.

Keywords: *Attractiveness, Credibility, Bangtan Boys, Brand Ambassador, Brand Image.*

INTRODUCTION

In the condition of COVID-19 pandemic, people are faced with many risk factors, so they must avoid direct transactions in order to avoid the spread of the coronavirus.

In contrast, these risk factors also brought a positive impact for the company in terms of significantly increased sales and company's purchased products in this pandemic condition. Aside from that, this condition also gave the company the ability to switch the function of the sales and buyer system to a digital-based one and it can be seen from the surge of e-commerce transactions which has greatly increased; purchase transactions have drastically increased as an impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A survey conducted by Hootsuite and We Are Social, service provider agencies that assist companies in the utilization of social media by providing the data that can be used to formulate their marketing strategies, deliver targeted messages across several social media, and identifying the audiences from the total population is 7,676,000,000 or 57% all around the world actively use the internet every day, and this result was 4% increased from 2018 results which was 4,021,000,000.

The growing number of business initiatives creates a fierce competition for e-commerce in Indonesia. According to the data released by the Start-up Rank as of February 2020, Indonesia ranks fifth in the world with the number of start-ups reaching 2,179 business units. Among those start-ups, there are e-commerce such as Tokopedia, Bukalapak, Blibli, Zalora, Bhinneka, Qlapa and so on (Nur, 2020)

In addition to the list of local e-commerce mentioned earlier, there are also regional e-commerce in Indonesia, such as Shopee, Lazada, JD.ID, and others. The competition between the two, both local and regional e-commerce, is quite fierce. However, based on the number of visits to each e-commerce website, local e-commerce stays.

iPrice Group, in collaboration with App Anne and Similar Web, conducted research on consumer visits to each e-commerce website. The data presented shows that, based on the average value of visits, Tokopedia comes in first with the quarterly number of visits reaching more than 100 million visitors from the first quarter of 2018 to the third quarter of 2019. The number is followed by Bukalapak, which comes in second after Tokopedia, then Shopee in the third position, Lazada in the fourth position, while Blibli and JD.ID come in the fifth and sixth positions consecutively.

iPrice Group acclaimed Tokopedia as an e-commerce with the largest number of monthly web visitors in the third quarter of 2019. Tokopedia's number of total monthly web visitors is 66 million. Although it still led the market, Tokopedia's dominance in this quarter has decreased by 4% compared to the previous quarter. In Q2 2019, Tokopedia dominated 29 percent of the market.

Tokopedia online shop (E-Commerce) start-up.

In 2020, iPrice reported that Shopee surpassed Tokopedia successfully in various achievements throughout 2020, including the total average visits throughout the year, monthly visits, ratings on AppStore and PlayStore, and the number of followers on popular social media accounts.

From the total average visits in Indonesia only throughout 2020, Shopee attracted more than 90 million visits, while Tokopedia was at 80 million. Looking at monthly visits, it was the highest recorded in Q4 2020 compared to the previous quarter. In this benchmark, Shopee is again surpassing the competition with almost 130 million visits while Tokopedia is at 114 million.

The promotion strategy to collaborate with brand ambassadors is nothing new. This strategy has been used by many companies and it is effective to introduce the products to the public. According to Royan (in Lestari, et al. 2019), an advertisement that is delivered by an interesting source (a popular celebrity) will get great attention, beside the fact that it will also be easily remembered by the public. It also explains why brand ambassadors will significantly affect the brand image. The reason is none other than because the popularity, attractiveness, credibility, and strength of a brand ambassador will affect the personality of a brand. The personality of the brand ambassador will affect the public's perception of the brand ambassador and can attract consumers to buy the product.

The presence of brand ambassadors, such as Bangtan Boys, is to represent the product or the company concerned, in this case the e-commerce company Tokopedia.

Therefore, it is not a surprise when the advertised product uses many celebrities, each of them will represent the targeted market segment (Royan in Nabila Shifa, 2020). Advertising is designed to convey a message and provide and introduce information of product and service to the consumers.

The presence of brand ambassadors, such as Bangtan Boys who was chosen as an icon, is to represent the product or the company concerned, in this case Tokopedia. The company's strategy, which is now partnering with a brand ambassador, is intended to communicate a product and form the identity of a company, which later is expected to attract lots of buyers' interest to shop at Tokopedia.

The popularity, attractiveness, credibility, and strength possessed by Bangtan Boys as celebrities can be seen from the various major world brands that compete to make them their brand ambassadors in various companies, such as Coca cola, Puma, Adidas, Samsung, Hyundai, Bank, and others.

Based on a press release quoted from the official website of Tokopedia, William Tanuwijaya as the Co-Founder and CEO of Tokopedia stated that the journey and the vision of Bangtan Boys were in line with Tokopedia's vision and the messages that is consistently

delivered by Bangtan Boys. Therefore, Bangtan Boys was the right partner to convey Tokopedia's message. to the whole world.

After the collaboration in 2019 between Tokopedia and Bangtan Boys, Tokopedia partnered up again with Bangtan Boys as its brand ambassador in 2021 for a year. Tokopedia continued to employ Bangtan Boys as brand ambassadors in 2021 even though in 2020 Tokopedia was in the second position as the most visited e-commerce in Indonesia. Tokopedia hopes that, through this campaign, Tokopedia could encourage people to always fight and always strive to do the best in every business they do every day together with Tokopedia.

The results of a previous research found the differences between the research's outcome that affected and did not affect brand ambassadors to brand image. Therefore, the existence of these contradictions is one of the reasons to conduct this research. There is also a significant change in the conditions before and after the collaboration between Tokopedia and Bangtan Boys. It is interesting to analyse the change and this analysis can also be used as an evaluation material to be further applied in the company's marketing strategy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand Ambassador

A brand ambassador, according to Shimp (2003: 455), is an ad supporter, or also known as a commercial star, who supports the advertised product. According to Royan in R. Yogi Prawira W et al (2012:4), a brand ambassador is someone who is trusted to represent a specific product. The utilization of brand ambassadors is done by companies to influence or persuade the consumers to use a product.

Brand Ambassador's Characteristics

In brand ambassador selection, it is important for marketers to pay attention to the characteristics of a celebrity who will affect the success or failure of the company's promotions.

The characteristics of brand ambassadors according to Rossiter and Percy in Kertamukti (2015: 70) can be seen by using the VisCAP model. VisCAP consists of four elements, namely Visibility, Credibility, Attraction, and Power. The explanation of the four elements of the VisCAP model is as follows:

1. **Visibility**
Visibility is the popularity attached to the celebrity who represents the product.
2. **Credibility**
Credibility is the skill and trust that is given by the star.
3. **Attraction**
Attraction is the similarity, familiarity, and linking of the star.
4. **Power**
Power is the level of the celebrity's power to persuade consumers in the advertised product.

Bangtan Boys (BTS)

Bangtan Boys (BTS) is a popular boy group from South Korea who has successfully expanded their career in the world and has recently broken the records in their musical works. BTS consists of 7 members, namely Jin, RM, Suga, J-hope, Jimin, V, and Jungkook. BTS made their career debut in 2013 under Big Hit Entertainment Agency. BTS is a music group that can change the music industry, even though they have faced various challenges and limitations during their career's journey. BTS has a very strong commitment to innovate and spread the positive messages in their work. (Lailiya Nisfatul, 2020)

Bangtan Boys (BTS) became the most tweeted celebrity in 2017, becoming "the most liked or tweeted, more than half a billion (502 million)" worldwide. In 2018, BTS came in first in Forbes' Korea Power Celebrity list, which ranks the most powerful and influential celebrities in South Korea, and also became the youngest artist to be awarded the Order of Cultural Merit from the South Korean government. In September 2018, BTS gave a speech at the United Nations as ambassadors for UNICEF. In October 2018, BTS was featured on the cover of Time magazine, and Time called them the 'Next Generation Leaders'.

Bangtan Boys has a strong reputation for their unique vocals and the personality of the group members, and was praised by Billboard as the best charting Korean male artist in history. BTS was also awarded as Top Social Artist at the Billboard Music Awards in 2017 and 2018. BTS is known as the Sold-Out King by ARMY all over the world, while ARMY itself is a designation for the BTS fanbase that has spread all over the world. (Nasri Hilmi, 2020)

Brand Image

According to Tjiptono (2011:112), brand image is a description of the association and the consumer's confidence in a specific brand. Meanwhile, according to Setiadi (2003: 180), brand image is a representation of the brand's overall perception which is formed from information and past experiences of the brand.

Brand Image Factors

Brand Schiffman and Kanuk (1997) mentions that the factors that formed a brand image are as follows:

1. Quality, related to the quality of products offered by manufacturers of specific brands.
2. Trusted or reliable, related to the opinions and agreements formed by the community about a consumed product.
3. Usefulness or benefits, which are related to the function of a product that can be utilized by the consumers.
4. Service, which is related to the role of manufacturers in serving their consumers.
5. Risks related to the profit and loss experienced by the consumers.
6. Price, in this case, is related to the high or low or the least amount of money spent by consumers to affect the product, and also can affect the long-term image.
7. Image, which is owned by the brand itself, which are customers, opportunities and information related to a brand of specific product.

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model of this research is as follows: Brand Ambassador, Attractiveness, Credibility, Brand image and SEM analysis.

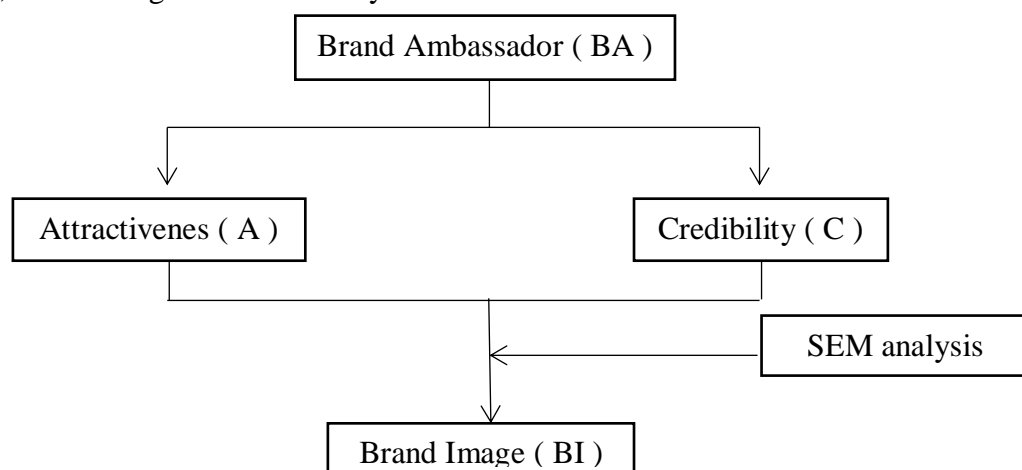


Figure 1 The Conceptual Model

Hypothesis 1: Brand Ambassador positively and significantly affects Brand Image.

Hypothesis 2: Attractiveness positively and significantly affects Brand Image through Brand Ambassadors.

Hypothesis 3: Credibility positively and significantly affects Brand Image through Brand Ambassadors

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Location and Design

This research was conducted in Makassar City, South Sulawesi. This type of research is descriptive quantitative research. This research was conducted from September to November 2020.

Population and Sample

The population is Tokopedia's consumers and prospective consumers spread across Makassar City. Due to the fact that the total population of Tokopedia users in Makassar is unknown, the sample determination is carried out using a formula. According to Djarwanto, et al (2000), the formula for calculating the sample in an unknown population is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}n &= 0,25 (Z / E)^2 \\&= 0,25 (1,96 / 0,05)^2 \\&= 384,16\end{aligned}$$

Information:

n = number of samples

Z = normal distribution table value above the trust level of 95% = 1.96.

e = error (error limit = 5%)

The sample taken to fill out the online questionnaire through the google form was 384 respondents. The margin of error in this study is 5%, so the accuracy rate is 95%.

Data Collection Method

Data collection methods used in this study are primary and secondary data. collection methods.

1. Primary Data

Primary data is the data which is obtained directly from the source, the process of data obtaining. It is obtained by collecting data quantitatively, through a questionnaire. The questions are arranged in question sentences with the answer criteria provided and measured by a Likert scale.

2. Secondary Data

Secondary data can be obtained from literature studies, in the form of data collection. This data is used in this study in the form of literature scale data, books, journals, and other scientific publications.

DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

The data analysis method used in this research is a descriptive quantitative method. This method is to explain the impact of the attractiveness and credibility of Bangtan Boys to brand image through brand ambassadors for consumers and potential customers in Makassar City. This research uses:

1. Validity Test

The Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) analysis with Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is to measure the validity of the construct that can be seen from the value of the loading factor. A high loading value on a factor (latent construct) indicates that they converge at a point. Some conditions that must be fulfilled are, first the loading factor must be significant, and the second, the standardized loading estimate must be equal to 0,50 or more and ideally it should be 0.70.

2. Reliability Test

The data reliability test used indicators based on the Variance Extracted (AVE) and Construct Reliability (CR) formulas. The indicator of the variable is stated reliable if the value of $AVE \geq 0,5$ and $CR \geq 0,7$

3. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Analysis

Data analysis method is a method used to process the research results in order to obtain a conclusion. The data analysis method used in this research is Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) using AMOS software. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) is a combination of two separate statistical methods, namely factor analysis that is developed in psychology and psychometry, and simultaneous equation modelling that is developed in econometrics. SEM can be described as an analysis that combines the approaches of factor analysis, structural model, and path analysis.

EMPIRICAL RESULT

Validation & Reliability Test

Validity test an indicator has fulfilled the criteria if the value of the loading factor or standardized loading estimate is more than 0,50. In this study, which is shown in the table, all the indicators have minimum criteria above 0,50.

Reliability test shows how far a measuring instrument can provide relatively the same results when repeated measurements are made on the same object. The acceptable value is 0.70, while the measurement of variance extract shows the number of variance indicators extracted by the developed latent construct/variable. The minimum acceptable variance extract value is 0,50.

Tabel 1 : Validity And Reliability Test Of Exogenous Variables

Variables	Indicators	λ	λ^2	e	CR	VE
Attractiveness	A1	0,728	0,530	0,470	0,807	0,512
	A2	0,780	0,608	0,392		
	A3	0,654	0,428	0,572		
	A4	0,694	0,482	0,518		
Credibility	C1	0,753	0,567	0,433	0,876	0,542
	C2	0,693	0,480	0,520		
	C3	0,700	0,490	0,510		
	C4	0,717	0,514	0,486		
	C5	0,822	0,676	0,324		
	C6	0,726	0,527	0,473		

Tabel 2 : Validity And Reliability Test Of Endogenous Variables

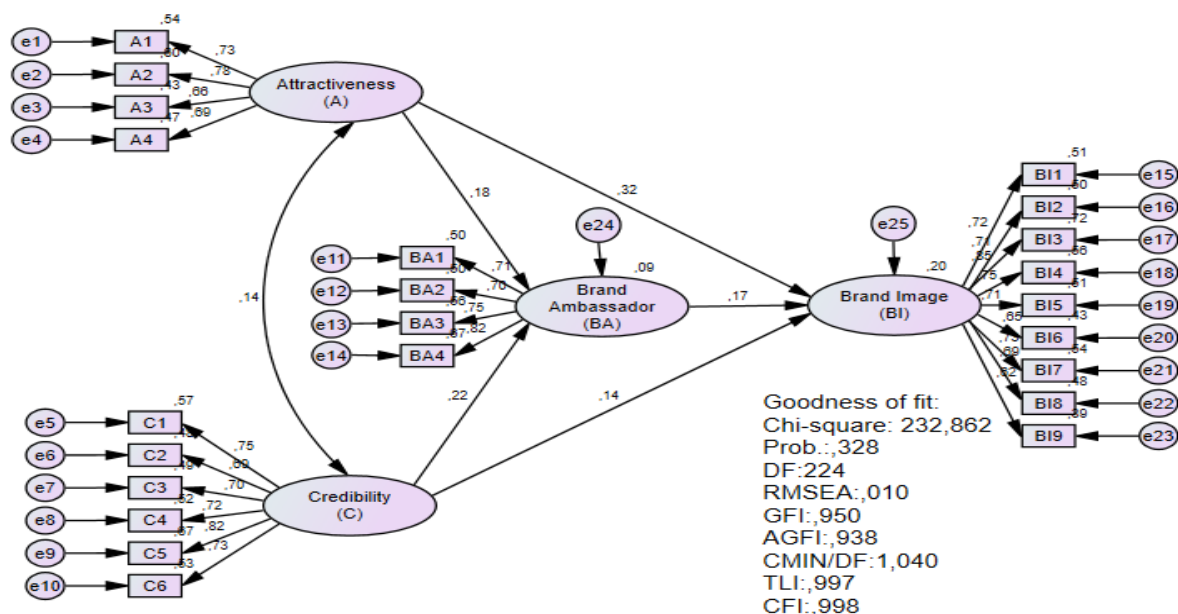
Variables	Indicators	λ	λ^2	e	CR	VE
Brand Image (BI)	CM1	0,717	0,514	0,486	0,905	0,515
	CM2	0,707	0,500	0,500		
	CM3	0,846	0,716	0,284		
	CM4	0,751	0,564	0,436		
	CM5	0,715	0,511	0,489		
	CM6	0,656	0,430	0,570		
	CM7	0,735	0,540	0,460		
	CM8	0,690	0,476	0,524		
	CM9	0,621	0,386	0,614		
Brand Ambassador (BA)	DM1	0,707	0,500	0,500	0,833	0,556
	DM2	0,703	0,494	0,506		
	DM3	0,756	0,572	0,428		
	DM4	0,812	0,659	0,341		

Based on the table above, each indicator has a loading factor value greater than 0,5, so it can be concluded that all indicators are valid.

The results of data processing's reliability and variance extract are shown in the following table.

The results of data processing's reliability and variance extract shows that all variables have a reliable measurement because each of them has a reliability value greater than 0,70. While the results of data processing's variance extract shows that each variable is 0,50.

Structural Equation Model Analysis



Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1: Brand Ambassador (BA) affects Brand Image (BI).

Statistical Hypothesis:

$H_{01} = 0$: BA does not affect BI

$H_{11} \neq 0$: BA affects BI

The calculation gives the results that the path of coefficient value = 0.168 with t value = 2,871. The path coefficient value from above shows a unidirectional relationship between BA and BI, because it is a positive value ($0.168 > 0$). It means that if BA increases, so BI will also increase, and vice versa.

The value of t table with a significance level of 0.05 is ± 1.96 , so that t count (2.871) > t table (1.96). Thus, the significant coefficient H_{05} is rejected and H_{15} is accepted. It means that **Brand Ambassador (BA) affects Brand Image (BI).**

For the next hypothesis test is to test the effect of A and C on BI through BA.

Tabel : 3 Bootstrapping method Mediation Test

		C	A	BA	BI
BA	Path Coefficient	0	0	0	0
	p-value
BI	Path Coefficient	0,037	0,030	0	0
	p-value	0,003	0,004

Hypothesis 2: Attractiveness (A) affects Brand Image (BI) through Brand Ambassadors (BA).

Statistical Hypothesis:

$H_{02} = 0$: A does not affect BI through BA

$H_{12} \neq 0$: A affects BI through BA.

The calculation gives the results that the path of coefficient value = 0.030 with t value = 0.004. The path coefficient value from above shows a unidirectional relationship between A and BI through BA, because it is a positive value ($0.030 > 0$). It means that if A increases, so BI through BA will also increase, and vice versa.

At a significance level 0.05, so that p value (0.004) < 0.05. Thus, the significant coefficient H_{02} is rejected and H_{12} is accepted. It means that **Attractiveness (A) affects Brand Image (BI) through Brand Ambassadors (BA).**

Hypothesis 3: Credibility (C) affects Brand Image (BI) through Brand Ambassadors (BA).

Statistical Hypothesis:

$H_{03} = 0$: C does not affect BI through BA

$H_{13} \neq 0$: C affects BI through BA

The calculation gives the results that the path of coefficient value = 0.037 with t value = 0.003. The path coefficient value from above shows a unidirectional relationship between A and BI through BA, because it is a positive value ($0.037 > 0$). It means that if A increases, so BI through BA will also increase, and vice versa.

At a significance level 0.05, so that p value $(0.003) < 0.05$. Thus, the significant coefficient H_{03} is rejected and H_{13} is accepted. It means that **Credibility (C) affects Brand Image (BI) through Brand Ambassadors**

DISCUSSION

Brand Ambassadors affects Brand Image

The results of the analysis shows that the variable Bangtan Boys as brand ambassadors affects brand image. It is indicated by the resulting path coefficient value = 0.168 with the value of t count = 2.871. The path coefficient value above shows a unidirectional relationship between BA and BI, because it is positive value $(0.0,618 > 0)$. This means that if BA increases then BI will increase, and vice versa.

The brand ambassador variable in this study is translated into indicators that consist of popularity, attractiveness, credibility, and strength. The best perceived indicator is strength with a path coefficient of 0.506, which is the highest value of path coefficients. The path coefficient values for the attractiveness indicator BA1 (credibility) is 0.500, BA3 (strength) is 0.428, and BA4 (attractiveness) is 0.341.

The distribution answer of the respondents, informed that the average of respondent's answer is 3.553, which means that respondents generally agree with the statement regarding brand ambassadors from the BA4 indicator about Bangtan Boys that having popularity characteristics make them suitable as brand ambassadors.

If this figure has the expertise and appearance that can attract the attention of consumers, the consumer's perception of the brand will be good. The results of this study also support the previous research conducted by Putra (2014) and Wang (2016), which states that brand ambassadors significantly affect Brand Image. According to Royan (2005), brand ambassadors themselves have four indicators to be assessed for becoming a good or bad brand ambassador, namely visibility, credibility, attractiveness, and power.

Attractiveness affects Brand Image through Brand Ambassador

The calculation gives the results that the path of coefficient value = 0.030 with t value = 0.004. The path coefficient value from above shows a unidirectional relationship between A and BI through BA, because it is a positive value $(0.0,030 > 0)$. It means that if A increases, so BI through BA will also increase, and vice versa.

At a significance level 0.05, so that p value $(0.004) < 0.05$. Thus, the significant coefficient H_{02} is rejected and H_{12} is accepted. It means that Attractiveness (A) affects Brand Image (BI) through Brand Ambassadors (BA).

The attractiveness of Bangtan Boys which consists of physical, work, fashion, and achievements greatly affects the brand image. The attractiveness of Bangtan Boys as Tokopedia's brand ambassadors can attract the attention of consumers and potential consumers through the delivery information by the advertisements in various media, such as TV, print media, YouTube, and other media that greatly influence the perception or brand image given by consumers in the future. Lea-Greenwood (2012) states that one of the characteristics to be a brand ambassador is attractiveness, and attractiveness itself is an attractive non-physical appearance that can support a product or an advertisement.

The higher the attractiveness given by Bangtan Boys as brand ambassadors, the higher the brand image's perception of Tokopedia given by the consumers.

Credibility affects Brand Image through Brand Ambassadors

The calculation gives the results that the path of coefficient value = 0.037 with t value = 0.003. The path coefficient value from above shows a unidirectional relationship between A

and BI through BA, because it is a positive value ($0.037 > 0$). It means that if A increases, so BI through BA will also increase, and vice versa.

At a significance level 0.05, so that p value ($0.003 < 0.05$). Thus, the significant coefficient H_{03} is rejected and H_{13} is accepted. It means that Credibility (C) affects Brand Image (BI) through Brand Ambassadors.

The credibility of Bangtan Boys, which consists of relevant knowledge, skill, or experience, as well as providing reliable information, greatly influences the brand image. The credibility of Bangtan Boys as the brand ambassador of Tokopedia can attract the attention of consumers and potential consumers through the trust given by the consumers to Tokopedia through the information delivered by advertisements with Bangtan Boys.

The theory of credibility explains that the higher the credibility of a communicator, the higher the probability of making the audience influenced, because they will believe more and even receive the message well-spoken by interesting people or even experts (Nuraini, 2015). Besides that, according to Tjiptono (2011), brand image is a description of association and consumer beliefs about specific brands. Both theories show there is a relationship, wherein the higher the credibility of a person, the greater the impact on the audience because they have trust in that person. This will greatly affect the perception that will be generated by the consumers on the purchased goods. So, it can be concluded that the higher the credibility of Bangtan Boys, the higher the impact on the brand image, and vice versa.

CONCLUSION

The results of the analysis show that this study gives some conclusions, in which Bangtan Boys as brand ambassadors give a significant positive impact to the brand image, while that the improvement of brand ambassadors will increase the brand image and vice versa. Besides that, the attractiveness of Bangtan Boys has a positive effect and significantly affects the brand image through brand ambassadors, and so does the credibility of Bangtan Boys give a positive effect and significantly affects the brand image through brand ambassadors. For further research, it is recommended to verify the indicators of other variables that affect attractiveness, credibility, brand ambassadors, and also brand image given by the consumers as well as potential consumers who will help the development of Tokopedia in the future.

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