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MEASUREMENT MODEL: INTERESTS OF BUYING A SAMSUNG BRAND SMARTPHONE WITH CELEBRITY ENDORSER AS AN ANTECEDENT VARIABLES IN THE ERA OF COVID-19

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Abstract: *The occurrence of the Covid-19 Pandemic around the world has had an impact on changing consumer patterns and behavior. This study aims to analyze the impact of price on the buying interest of Samsung smartphones with Celebrity endorsers as an antecedent variable. The sample in this study were 98 students of the Putra Indonesia University YPTK Padang. This study uses structural equation modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS 3 as an analysis tool. The results of the study found that celebrity endorser is a factor that influences price and buying interest. Meanwhile, the price does not influence buying interest, nor does it play a role in strengthening the influence of Celebrity endorsers on buying interest. For this reason, producers must improve the quality of competitive prices while also maintaining the use of celebrity endorsers in supporting the marketing of their products.*

Keywords: *Celebrity endorser, Price, Buying interest.*

INTRODUCTION

The massive spread of the coronavirus in all corners of the world, which we know as the Covid-19 Pandemic, has changed the pattern of life and behavior of the wider community. Both in work activities, production, marketing, and consumer behavior in meeting their daily needs. The number of restrictions on work activities in public spaces that must be done at home (Work from home) is a form of the government's way of breaking the chain of the spread of Covid-19. Besides wearing a mask, keep your distance and wash your hands every time. Some activities that also experience the impact of this condition are the teaching and learning process in schools and even up to universities. Teaching and learning activities are carried out at home online using the help of internet technology and the development of communication tools changing to cellphones or smartphones. This learning model is very useful and effective in helping educational institutions to be able to improve services and learning processes more flexibly without being limited by time, geographic location, and student or student attendance at school and on campus, (Bayu Putra dkk. 2019; Ramadhanu dkk. 2019; Fitri & Putra, 2019).

The government also implements large-scale social restrictions (PSPB) to restrain the rate of movement of the deadly virus for areas or areas that enter the red zone. As an area that has a high spread of Covid-19, West Sumatra has also implemented PSPB from 22 April 2020 to 29 May 2020 and extended it until 7 June 2020. However, after 8 June 2020 West Sumatra, started to implement the normal life (new normal). Until August 2020 there were 2,751 cases of positive Covid-19 patients infected with Covid-19, (Wikipedia.com).

Apart from these problems, the phenomenon of changing the consumption behavior pattern of the very consumptive people has suddenly changed drastically, due to restrictions on social intersection within the community. Indirectly, the marketing concept related to the marketing mix has also experienced a shift, due to an extraordinary change in the external environment outside the company as a result of Covid-19, (Kotler, 2012; Limakrisna & Susilo, 2012). People prioritize basic needs over other needs.

As explained above, the use of technology and communication tools plays a very important role in supporting the implementation of everyone's work activities. Also, in conditions that are full of technological developments, it is very possible to influence a person's behavior patterns, including consumptive behavior towards certain products, (Andhika Putra et al., 2019). One of the communication tools that are very developed and have advantages in terms of human mobility today is a Smartphone. Smartphones are mobile smart devices that are useful as communication tools but also have the ability for various activities, such as internet access, social media applications, and document management, (Firmansyah, dkk 2020; Kacetl and Klímová 2019). The use of smartphones has experienced an increasing trend since the Covid-19 Pandemic, because it allows all activities to be carried out easily, anytime, and anywhere. The following is the global growth data for the smartphone market share in the past 2 years:

Table 1. Global Smartphone Quarterly Market Data (2019Q1 – 2020Q2)

No	Brands	2019				2020	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
1	Huawei#	17%	16%	18%	14%	17%	20%
2	Samsung	21%	21%	21%	18%	20%	20%
3	Apple	12%	10%	12%	18%	14%	14%
4	Xiaomi	8%	9%	8%	8%	10%	10%
5	Oppo	8%	9%	9%	8%	8%	9%
6	vivo	7%	8%	8%	8%	7%	8%
7	Lenovo##	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%
8	Others	24%	24%	21%	23%	22%	16%

Source: www.counterpointresearch.com/global-smartphone-share/, the Year 2020

The data above illustrates the global market share of some of the top smartphone brands, where Huawei occupies the top place throughout the 2019 to 2020 quarter with the fluctuating marketing trend and in 2020 the marketing of its products is up to 20%. In the second place, the Samsung brand smartphone can be said to be relatively stable in the 2019 quarter and decreased in the 2020 quarter with a range of 20% in 2020, third place and so on followed by Apple, Xiaomi, Oppo, Vivo, Lenovo, and other brands where product marketing is below 20%. This data shows that the impact of Covid-19 is more pronounced on small branded smartphones that tend to have a lower online presence and tend to serve the entry-level segment more. Meanwhile, Huawei's presence in China has surpassed Samsung to lead the global smartphone market. For smartphone marketing at the national level, it can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. Indonesia: Top Smartphone Vendors in Q3 2019

No	Vendor	Q1 2020 Shipments Volume	Q1 2020 Market Share	Q1 2019 Shipments Volume	Q1 2019 Market Share
1	Samsung	58.3	21.1%	71.9	23.0%
2	Huawei	49.0	17.8%	59.1	18.9%
3	Apple	36.7	13.3%	36.8	11.8%
4	Xiaomi	29.5	10.7%	27.8	8.9%
5	Vivo	24.8	9.9%	23.2	7.4%
6	Others	77.5	28.1%	93.5	29.9%
	Total	275.8	100.0%	312.3	100.0%

Source: IDC Quarterly Mobile Phone Tracker, the Year 2020

Based on the data above, the smartphone market share in the country for the last 2 (two) years in 2019 and 2020, the top places are led by smartphones from the Samsung brand, followed by Huawei, Apple, Xiaomi, Vivo, and other brands. When compared to the global level market share is led by the Huawei brand, but nationally the Samsung brand gets more attention from the public or smartphone users. The impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic was also seen in the decline in the smartphone market share, such as Samsung in 2019 the market share was 23% and decreased in 2020 to 21.1%, likewise for the Huawei brand, which also experienced a decrease in market share from 18.9 in 2019 to 17.8% in 2020. This also happened to certain other brands, but Apple, Xiaomi, and Vivo brands experienced an increase in market share in 2020. This data indicates and proves that the marketing strategy used by the Samsung brand smartphone is more competitive than other competitors by using

celebrity endorser services at affordable prices that have been proven effective in increasing prices and consumer buying interest.

Research on buying interest has been carried out, such as Research (—The Appeal of Celebrity Endorsers and Halal Certificates on Customers' Buying Interest, 2015), which examines The Appeal of Celebrity Endorsers and Halal certificates on Customers' Buying Interest, which examines The Appeal of Celebrity Endorsers and Halal certificates on Customers' Buying Interest, while Madiawati and Pradana (2016) also research on Celebrity and halal certificates factors influence on customers. 'buying interest. Research that also examines the buying interest of Samsung brand smartphones using factors that influence it, such as country of origin and global brand image, (Annisa, 2017; Sopiyan & gun Gumelar, 2019; Tati, 2015). Furthermore, research by Andi et al. (2020); Sopiyan and Gumelar (2019), examined purchase interest on smartphones using celebrity endorsement factors, product quality, product design, brand equity, country of origin, brand image, ad attractiveness, and price. Another study by Foster (2019) assesses the effect of product quality and price on purchase intention with risk as an intervening variable, while Rahmanullah (2018) examines the effect of product quality, price, and supporting infrastructure on perceived value and interest in buying electric motorbikes. Furthermore, research (Ali, 2019) examines building repurchase intention and purchase decision: brand awareness and brand loyalty analysis.

Based on the problems and differences in research models both in terms of the use of variables and products understudy, this study focuses on celebrity endorsers as factors that influence the interest in buying Samsung brand smartphones, either directly or indirectly through the price variable as an intervening variable.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The development and advancement of technology and information systems today have had an impact on changing the behavior and lifestyle of all people in the world. Especially after the outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic around the world, it has had an impact on the use of technology and communication tools in the form of smartphones and has increased their use at all levels of society. Thus, smartphones are said to be smart devices that are useful for humans in addition to communicating, but also capable of carrying out various activities, such as internet access, social media applications, and document processing, (Jeng et al., 2010), (Lin et al., 2017). Starting from elementary school children (SD) to universities for online learning needs, to business people, employees, and the wider community to support their work activities. Especially in the field of education, online distance learning (PJJ) using smartphones for students is very helpful in following all the learning processes that have been given by the teacher (Jeng et al., 2010). Through smartphones, students can search for learning resources more optimally and use learning applications whenever and wherever, (Lan et al., 2010), (Cha & Seo, 2018).

Buying interest

Purchase interest is something that arises after receiving stimulation from the product he sees, then the desire to buy and own it appears (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018), (Limakrisna & Supranto, 2007; Limakrisna & Susilo, 2012) . The decision to consume the product or service arises after the consumer takes a series of actions such as trying the product and after that, there is a desire to like or dislike the product or service. Love and pleasure towards the product or service, when consumers find good quality and high satisfaction with their expectations of the product. Others argue that purchase intention is a component of consumer behavior, and the tendency to act before a decision is made. This decision process is obtained through learning and thinking that shapes perceptions and creates motivation, which ends with meeting their needs or making purchases (Zou, 2018). Assessment of purchase interest variables uses indicators consisting of, a). transactional interest, b). referential interest, c). preferential interests and d). explorative interest, (Japarianto & Adelia, 2020).

Celebrity Endorser

Celebrity endorsers are an advertising approach that can provide the power to enhance the image and identification of a celebrity in promoting a product or company, (Dharma & Iskandar, 2017). Another opinion Andi et al. (2020), states that the use of celebrities or artists in advertisements is intended to make the advertised products (goods or services) easier for consumers to remember. Besides, the use of celebrity endorsers also aims to convey advertising messages from products through famous personal figures such as actors, artists, or athletes who are known to the public and become idolized because of their achievements (Jatmika, M., A, 2017). The celebrity endorser variable in this study was measured using the indicators in Sarah, dkk (2019) which include a). credibility, b). attractiveness and d). suitability.

Price

Prices are monetary units or other measures (including other goods and services) that are exchanged to obtain ownership rights or use of certain goods or services, (Tjiptono, 2019). Price is also said, the amount of money needed to get a combination of products and services, (Amron, 2018). In other words, consumers will consider the price along with the benefits or the level of satisfaction they get. Another opinion states that consumers at a certain price level will compare the benefits with the price level, if the benefits felt by consumers increase, the value or price to be paid will increase as well (Li, 2013), (Novansa & Ali, 2017). Price is also said to be one of the determinants of a company's success because price determines how much profit a company will get from selling its products in the form of goods or services (Brata et al., 2017). Often in determining the value of a good or service, consumers compare the ability of a good or service to meet their needs with the substitute ability of the goods or services. The price assessment in this study refers to the indicators in research Anon (2018), namely a). Range of prices with consumer purchasing power b). Price competitiveness with similar products and c). Price match with quality.

The following is a research conceptual framework that describes the relationship between variables as well as an overview of existing research hypotheses:

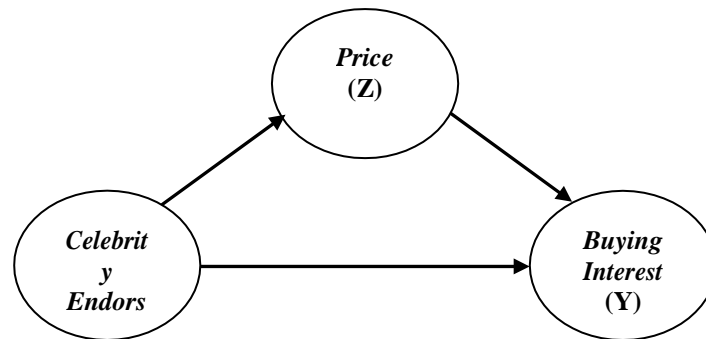


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

Based on the problems and theoretical study and conceptual framework, the research hypothesis is as follows:

- 1) Celebrity endorsers have a positive and significant effect on buying interest.
- 2) Celebrity endorser has a positive and significant effect on the price
- 3) Price has a positive and significant effect on buying interest.
- 4) Celebrity endorsers have a positive and significant effect on buying interest through price.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research model is causal, namely research that assesses the causal relationship between a certain independent variable and a certain dependent variable. The research data collection was conducted using a survey method by distributing questionnaires to respondents who have been determined by the researcher. To provide an understanding of research, research variables include the variable Celebrity endorser (X_1), price (Z), and purchase interest (Y). The population of this study was all students of the Management Department of the Putra Indonesia University YPTK Padang, with a total of 4,213 people. While the sample in this study was determined using the Slovin formula with a precision level of 10%, the number of samples can be obtained:

The data testing technique in this study uses structural equation modeling (SEM) using SmartPLS 3 in testing the research hypothesis. Data testing techniques using SmartPLS 3, divided into two parts. The first part of testing the Outer model, namely the measurement model to assess the validity of all indicators in each research variable. The second part of the

results of data testing is related to the assessment of the research hypothesis (Abdillah & Jogyanto, 2015).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the results of data testing using SmartPLS 3, the output includes visuals or images that explain the relationship between research variables or research hypotheses. In the picture, we will also be able to find out each loading factor value or the validity of each question item or indicator of each research variable. Can be seen the value of the regression coefficient to measure each of the existing research hypotheses. While the second form of output is in the form of a table that explains whether the research hypothesis is accepted or not. The following is a summary of the results of data testing with SmartPLS 3:

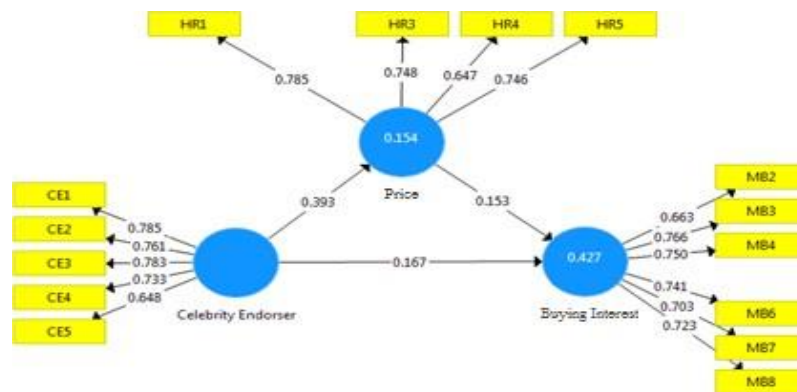


Figure 2. Full Model

From the picture of the full model above, it can be seen that all research variables which include the celebrity endorser variable, price, and purchase interest variables have indicators or statement items that form each variable. Where already has a loading factor value greater than 0.5 which indicates all question items or indicators are valid or measurable. Meanwhile, the value of the regression coefficient that is shown from a variable to another variable is the value of the magnitude of the influence given by that variable to other variables following the research hypothesis that has been prepared. Furthermore, the second output is the table of results for inner weights to assess or answer the hypothesis:

Table 3. Result for Inner Weights

Description	Original Sample	T Statistics	P-Value	Information
<i>Celebrity endorser -> Buying interest</i>	0.167	2.018	0.044	Hypothesis Accepted
<i>Celebrity endorser -> Price</i>	0.393	4.444	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
<i>Price -> Buying interest</i>	0.153	1.352	0.177	Hypothesis Rejected
<i>Celebrity endorser -> Price -></i>	0.060	1.178	0.240	Hypothesis Rejected

Buying interest			
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Source: Data from SmartPLS Processing 3

The influence of Celebrity endorsers on buying interest

The findings of the SmartPLS 3 test results found the regression coefficient value of 0.167 celebrity endorser on purchase interest with a statistical T value of 2.018 and P-value of 0.044. Where the T statistical value is greater than T table ($2.018 > 1.96$) and the P-value < 0.05 ($0.044 < 0.05$). This states that there is a significant effect of celebrity endorsers on the interest in buying Samsung brand smartphones in students of the Putra Indonesia University YPTK Padang in online learning in the Covid-19 Pandemic era so that the research hypothesis can be accepted or proven. These results explain it turns out that celebrity endorsers in this study have a good role in conveying the message of the value of the product or service expected by the seller or product. In other words, students have high attention from the use of celebrity endorsers in a smartphone product in determining their buying interest in the Samsung brand smartphone. This finding is in line with the opinion of Andi et al. (2020), who states that the use of celebrities or artists in advertisements is intended to make the advertised products (goods or services) easier for consumers to remember. Other literature also reveals that the effectiveness of celebrity endorsers in marketing communication can be increased by matching celebrity images with product attributes (McCormick 2016; Parmar, Ghuman, and Mann 2020; Roy 2018; Um 2018). The results of the study support the research of Madiawati and Pradana (2016); Rachmat, at al (2019); Andi et al. (2020) which states that celebrity endorsers have an influence and role in increasing and influencing purchase interest.

The Influence of Celebrity Endorsers on Prices

The results of testing with SmartPLS 3 showed that there was a significant effect of celebrity endorsers on the price of Samsung brand smartphones for students at Putra Indonesia University YPTK Padang. Where the regression coefficient is 0.393 with a T-statistic value of 4.444 and a P-value of 0.000. Where the T statistical value is greater than the T table ($4.444 > 1.96$) and the P-value < 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$), so that the research hypothesis can be accepted or proven. This finding states that product prices also depend on the ability of celebrity endorsers to form good product characters and convey messages of the value of the product. Chan, Leung ng, and Luk (2013), said that celebrity endorser is a common marketing communication strategy to build a brand image. Rismawan and Purnami (2017) state that the use of the Celebrity Endorser and the determination of Price Discounts as promotional tools are expected to increase sales. Varghese (2019), who says celebrity endorsers are considered a modern marketing today and in the future that targets main targets such as teenagers or certain groups who are considered to have awareness of brands and prices. The findings of this hypothesis are different from previous studies that assessed the influence or relationship of celebrity endorsers with the brand image, such as research by Abirami and Krishnan (2015); Anon (2013); Megayani and Marlina (2019); Mukherjee (2011); Sam and Rajagiri (2019); Shoeb and Khalid (2014); Varghese (2019), (Putra et al., 2020).

Effect of Price on Buying Interest

The results of the calculations in the results for inner weights table show that price does not have a significant effect on buying interest in Samsung brand smartphones for students at Putra Indonesia University YPTK Padang. With a regression coefficient value of 0.153 with a statistical T value of 1.352 and a P-value of 0.177. Where the T statistical value is small from T table ($1.352 < 1.96$) and the P value > 0.05 ($0.177 > 0.05$), so the hypothesis cannot be proven or not accepted. These results also indicate that the price as a monetary unit that consumers must accept and pay for a product does not have a significant effect on purchase intention. This condition is of course directly related to the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, many restrictions on community interaction in carrying out their work to break the chain of spreading this virus. However, it has also had an impact on the income or income of the majority of the community, so that people are more concerned with meeting their primary or basic needs compared to meeting other complementary needs. Goyal et al. (2013), said that price perceptions determine consumer buying interest in an item. This research is in line with the research of Foster and Johansyah (2019), which states that prices do not affect purchase intention and contradicts the research of Rahmanullah and Nurjanah (2018), (Putra et al., 2020), which found that price is a factor that determines purchase interest.

The influence of Celebrity endorser on Buying interest through Brand image

This hypothesis assesses the indirect effect of celebrity endorsers on purchase interest through price or assesses the extent to which the role of price as an intervening variable in strengthening the influence of celebrity endorsers on the purchase interest of Samsung brand smartphones in students of Putra Indonesia University YPTK Padang. Where the regression coefficient is 0.060 with a statistical T value of 1.178 and a P-value of 0.240. It can be seen that the T statistical value is small from the T table ($1.17 < 1.96$) and the P value > 0.05 ($0.240 > 0.05$). It can be concluded that the research hypothesis cannot be proven or the hypothesis is not accepted. Therefore it can be concluded that celebrity endorsers under certain conditions are not proven to be mediated by price in increasing purchase interest. Jatmika, M., A (2017) states that celebrity endorsers basically aim to convey advertising messages from products through well-known personal figures such as actors, artists, or athletes who are known to the public and become idolized because of their achievements, which in turn can accompany consumers' thoughts to have an interest in the product. The results of this study are different from the findings of Rismawan and Purnami (2017), which make price a moderating variable in strengthening the influence of celebrity endorsers on purchase interest. Where the research findings state that the price is not able to moderate the effect of celebrity endorsers on buying interest.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study found that the celebrity endorser is a factor that influences and determines the price and interest in buying Samsung brand smartphones for students of the Putra Indonesia University YPTK Padang in supporting online learning in the Covid-19 Pandemic era. However, this study also found that price was not a determining factor for purchase interest and

was also not a factor capable of mediating or strengthening the influence of celebrity endorsers on the purchase interest of Samsung brand smartphones in students of Putra Indonesia University YPTK Padang. These findings indicate that the Covid-19 Pandemic has changed consumer behavior patterns in meeting their needs, especially those related to online learning. Producers or vendors must try to take into account the correct pricing as well as being a factor that supports the role of celebrity endorsers and shapes consumer patterns and behavior through the messages they convey.

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