

THE INFLUENCE OF PROMOTION ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY THROUGH BRAND AMBASSADORS OF NABATI PRODUCTS ON GENERATION Z IN DKI JAKARTA



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Abstract

The objectives of this study are (1) to determine the effect of promotion on customer loyalty. (2) To determine the effect of promotion on the brand ambassador. (3) To determine the effect of the brand ambassador on customer loyalty. (4) To determine the effect of promotion on customer loyalty through a brand ambassador. The population in this study was Nabati consumers in DKI Jakarta. The sample used was the accidental sampling formula with a total sample of 300 samples. The data was processed using the Partial Least Square (PLS) method. From the analysis results, it was found that 65.9% of customer loyalty was influenced by promotions and brand ambassadors.

Keywords: Promotion, Brand Ambassador, Customer Loyalty

INTRODUCTION

Snacks are one of the foods that are very popular with Indonesian people, especially the younger generation (Citra et al., 2024). One of the industries that is growing rapidly in every country, including Indonesia, is the snack industry (Jacob et al., 2018). According to data from (Islandsun, 2022) consumers of the snack industry in Indonesia mainly consist of millennials and Gen Z, who prefer to try new things. One of the most popular snack products today is Nabati (Rohana et al., 2023). One way of promotion to introduce a brand and reach a larger target customer is to use the brand ambassador strategy (Zakiyyah & Kurniawati, 2023). By collaborating with brand ambassadors from artists from South Korea, it shows that collaboration between local brands and international stars can have an impact on building customer loyalty.

The creation of customer loyalty shows satisfaction with the company's services (Gazi et al., 2024). Customer loyalty is reflected in repeat purchases, increased sales, and the desire to maintain relationships with the company (Orazgaliyeva et al., 2024). In the behavioral approach, many studies state that frequent acquisition of products or services effectively shows customer loyalty to a particular brand (Ehrenberg, 2000). Then the foundation of customer satisfaction and loyalty is formed (Nguyen, 2024). Customer loyalty is very important for business success, especially because it attracts new customers (Puspitasari et al., 2023).

A company's goals are achieved effectively if consumers feel satisfied and have the potential to be loyal to the products offered (Juwaini et al., 2022). To build consumer loyalty, business actors need to realize the importance of building trust, which is related to confidence and credibility in offering products or services to consumers (Choi & Mai, 2018). Customer value, which is determined by consumer perceptions of better service quality than competitors, affects the level of loyalty. Brand ambassadors help companies in terms of quality, marketing, and product innovation in increasing customer loyalty (Salsabeela & Handrito, 2023).

A marketing strategy using brand ambassadors as a promotional tool provides added value to the product (Ghadani et al., 2022). The reason a product uses artists from South Korea as brand ambassadors is because fans tend to want to have items used by their idols (Influence et al., 2021). The Korean entertainment industry is at the peak of success in terms of strong brand loyalty (Nadila & Windasari, 2022). A brand ambassador who has a good image or reputation will easily get a positive response from potential buyers (Syahnita, 2021).

Sales promotion techniques are instruments that aim to increase product and brand sales (Wierenga & Soethoudt, 2010). Therefore, sales promotions are believed to have a positive influence on purchasing interest (Perin, 2015). Promotion is an activity to introduce a product's benefits, its goodness, additional benefits, and low prices to consumers (Suryani & Syafarudin, 2021). Sales promotions vary depending on the situation and needs, and have a direct effect on product purchases (Familmaleki et al., 2015). Sales promotions can add value to a product by offering incentives such as discounts, prizes, contests, and events to encourage consumer purchases within a limited period of time (Neha & Manoj, 2013). Sales promotions usually also involve additional costs (planning, logistics, sales promotion materials such as brochures and displays, etc. (Wierenga &

Soethoudt, 2010). Business actors must choose the most effective sales promotions to increase sales (Chang, 2017).

Based on previous research, promotions can affect customer loyalty through brand ambassadors. This is evidenced by research conducted by (David Humala Sitorus & Sugianto, 2023) in this study, the promotion variable has a positive and significant impact on customer loyalty. And also proven by research conducted (Nadila & Windasari, 2022) in this study, the use of brand ambassadors has an effect on customer loyalty. Based on the explanation above, several things were found that must be considered from customer loyalty, brand ambassadors, and promotions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty is defined as a deep commitment to repurchase or patronize a particular brand's products or services in the future, despite situational marketing influences and efforts that may cause switching (Oliver, 1999). Loyal customers will view the company positively and will engage in repeat purchases (Dimitriades, 2006). In such a situation, the company and customers develop a social exchange relationship where the company can receive payment from customers by offering products and services that meet the needs and wants of customers. Customers provide positive feedback and reactions to the company. Meanwhile, the company can gain customer trust, which can develop individual loyalty (Kim et al., 2024).

Customer loyalty can also help businesses save marketing costs because consumers who are loyal to a brand often recommend others or invite them to buy the brand's goods and services (Chaysiri et al., 2023). Loyalty is not only shown in behavior but also in attitudes (Rai & Srivastava, 2012). This attitude is considered by many researchers as a major factor determining repeat purchases and investments in a brand (Uncles et al., 2003).

Brand Ambassador

The term brand ambassador refers to a person or group employed by an organization to promote a brand's products or services across a country or around the world (Kok et al., 2021). Usually Brand ambassadors are chosen from celebrities or other famous people (Delliana, 2022). Brand ambassadors are brand representatives who confirm the brand through its reputation and serve as mediators between internal and external brand management that influence how customers view the brand and company (Goutam, 2013; Harris & De Chernatony, 2001). Brand ambassadors will later provide information about the uses and benefits of a product, as well as provide reasons why consumers should buy the product (Mudzakir, 2018).

According to (Ibne-Ali Jaffari et al., 2014), the selection of celebrities as brand ambassadors must consider their popularity, because this can increase awareness, image, and positive responses to the brand. Attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness are three key characteristics that determine source credibility and are essential to the effectiveness of persuasion (Ohanian, 1990).

Promotion

Sales promotion is a short-term marketing strategy to generate demand and provide special offers that generate more profit from a product's sales position and have a sharper impact on sales (Banerjee, 2009). According to (Kotler & Keller, 2009), promotion is a

type of marketing communication in which companies try to inform, persuade, and remind customers about the goods and brands they sell, either directly or indirectly. Promotion consists of a variety of tools such as coupons, gifts, free samples, discounts, product advertising, and so on (Rahmani, 2012).

The main purpose of promotion is to provide added value that encourages purchasing decisions, increases product trials, and encourages repeat purchases (Mohamed & Fait, 2024). In addition, promotions have potential benefits that include attracting new customers from competitors, encouraging customers to switch to brands with higher profit margins, and increasing the frequency of purchases from existing customers (Fam et al., 2008).

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Model

This study uses a quantitative approach. In this case, data is obtained from collecting questionnaire results. The sampling technique used is accidental sampling (Sugiyono, 2007). Accidental sampling is a sampling technique based on respondents who can be found spontaneously. The samples taken are based on questionnaires filled out by respondents who are buyers and consumers of Nabati products, who can be found during the study. The data analysis technique uses PLS (Partial Least Square) which is based on the specific characteristics of the dataset and the purpose of the study. PLS is used in the context of structural equation modeling, regression analysis, and factor analysis.

Population

Population is a generalization area consisting of objects or subjects that have certain qualities and characteristics determined by researchers to be studied, and then conclusions drawn (Prof. Dr.Sugiyono, 2012). The population in this study is the people of DKI Jakarta who consume Nabati products.

Sample

The samples taken were based on questionnaires filled out by respondents who were buyers and consumers of Nabati products, who could be found during the research. According to (Hair et al., 2010), the number of respondent samples needed in the research must be adjusted to the number of indicators used. Assuming $n \times 5$ observed variables (indicators) up to $n \times 10$ observed variables (indicators).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Profile

Respondent characteristics

Table 1.
Respondent Profile

Characteristics	Frequency	Persentation
Age		
12 - 20 Year	120	40%
21 - 27 Year	180	60%
Total	300	100%
Gender		

Male	57	19%
Female	243	81%
Total	300	100%
Domicile		
DKI Jakarta	300	100%
Knowing about Nabati Products		
Yes	300	100%
No	0	0
Total	300	100

Data processed by researchers in 2024

Based on Table 1 above, it can be seen that in terms of age, the majority of respondents are between 21 and 27 years old, which is 180 respondents (60%). Then, based on gender, the majority of respondents are female, which is 243 respondents (81%), and the rest are male, which is 57 respondents (19%). Next, based on domicile, all respondents are domiciled in DKI Jakarta (100%). And finally, based on plant-based products, all respondents know about plant-based products (100%).

Outer Model Test

The evaluation of the measurement model is tested with several indicators, including convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability. The measurement model is calculated using the PLS Algorithm.

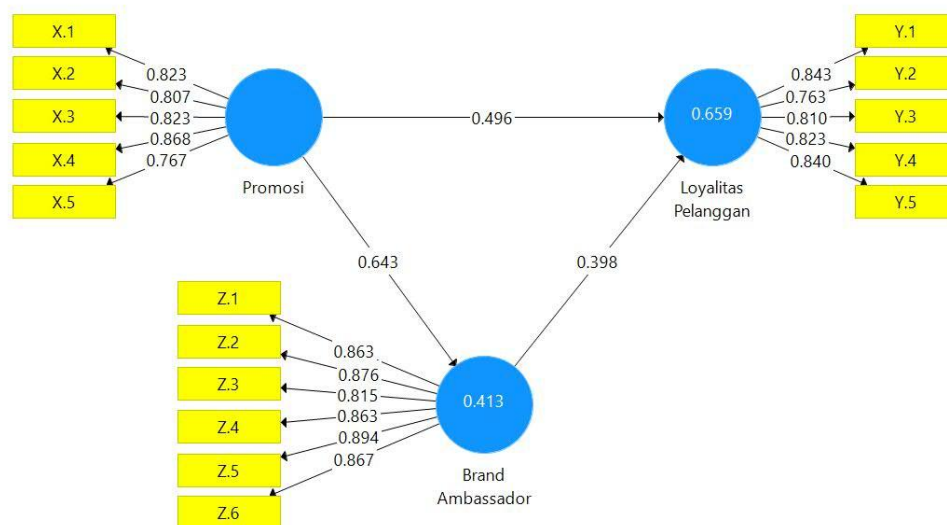


Figure 1.
Outer Model Result

Data processed by researchers in 2024

Convergent Validity Test

An indicator is said to be valid if the loading factor of an indicator has a positive value and is greater than > 0.7 . The loading factor value shows the weight of each indicator/item as a measure of each variable. Indicators with large loading factors indicate that the indicator is the strongest (dominant) measure of the variable. The following are the results of the convergent validity test:

Table 2.
Convergent Validity Test

Indicator	Loading Factor	Information
X.1	0.823	Valid
X.2	0.807	Valid
X.3	0.823	Valid
X.4	0.868	Valid
X.5	0.767	Valid
Y.1	0.843	Valid
Y.2	0.763	Valid
Y.3	0.810	Valid
Y.4	0.823	Valid
Y.5	0.840	Valid
Z.1	0.863	Valid
Z.2	0.876	Valid
Z.3	0.815	Valid
Z.4	0.863	Valid
Z.5	0.894	Valid
Z.6	0.867	Valid

Data processed by researchers in 2024

Based on Table 2 above, it is known that the loading factor value produced by each indicator is more than 0.7. This indicates that these indicators are declared valid as a measure of their latent variables.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is used to test the validity of a model. Discriminant validity is seen through the cross-loading value, which shows the magnitude of the correlation between the construct and its indicators and indicators from other constructs. The standard value used for cross-loading must be greater than 0.7, and by comparing the cross-loading value of each construct is compared with the correlation between the construct and other constructs in the model. If the cross-loading value of each construct is greater than the correlation value between the construct and other constructs in the model, then it is said to have a good discriminant validity value.

Table 3.
Output Loading Factor

	Brand Ambassador	Customer Loyalty	Promotion
X.1	0.544	0.638	0.823
X.2	0.519	0.557	0.807
X.3	0.508	0.658	0.823
X.4	0.589	0.647	0.868
X.5	0.462	0.573	0.767
Y.1	0.649	0.843	0.685
Y.2	0.437	0.763	0.511

Y.3	0.595	0.810	0.631
Y.4	0.678	0.823	0.640
Y.5	0.524	0.840	0.576
Z.1	0.863	0.586	0.541
Z.2	0.876	0.617	0.570
Z.3	0.815	0.580	0.479
Z.4	0.863	0.658	0.592
Z.5	0.894	0.657	0.635
Z.6	0.867	0.611	0.496

Data processed by researchers 2024

Based on table 3, it can be seen that the cross-loading value on each indicator has a value > 0.7 , and also that each indicator has the largest value when connected to its latent variable compared to when connected to other latent variables. This shows that each manifest variable in this study has correctly explained its latent variable and proves that the discriminant validity of all indicators is valid.

Construct Reliability and Validity

Reliability in PLS uses cronbach alpha and composite reliability values. It is stated as reliable if the composite reliability value is above 0.7 and the Cronbach's alpha value is recommended above 0.6. And good validity has an AVE value of more than 0.5. The following are the cronbach alpha and composite reliability values that have been obtained:

Table 4.

Construct Reliability and Validity Results

	Cronbach 's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Brand Ambassador	0.932	0.934	0.946	0.745
Customer Loyalty	0.875	0.883	0.909	0.666
Promotion	0.876	0.880	0.910	0.669

Data processed by researchers 2024

Based on table 4 above, it can be seen that the composite reliability value of all research variables is > 0.7 and Cronbach alpha > 0.6 . These results indicate that each variable has met the composite reliability and Cronbach alpha so that it can be concluded that all variables have a high level of reliability. Then, based on the AVE value, the average of all variables has been more than 0.5, so it shows that the validity has been met properly.

Inner Model

After conducting the outer model test, the next step is to conduct an inner model test. Inner model or structural model testing is carried out to see the relationship between constructs. Inner model tests include R Square, F Square, Fit Model, and Path Coefficient. The results of the inner model test can be seen in the following table:

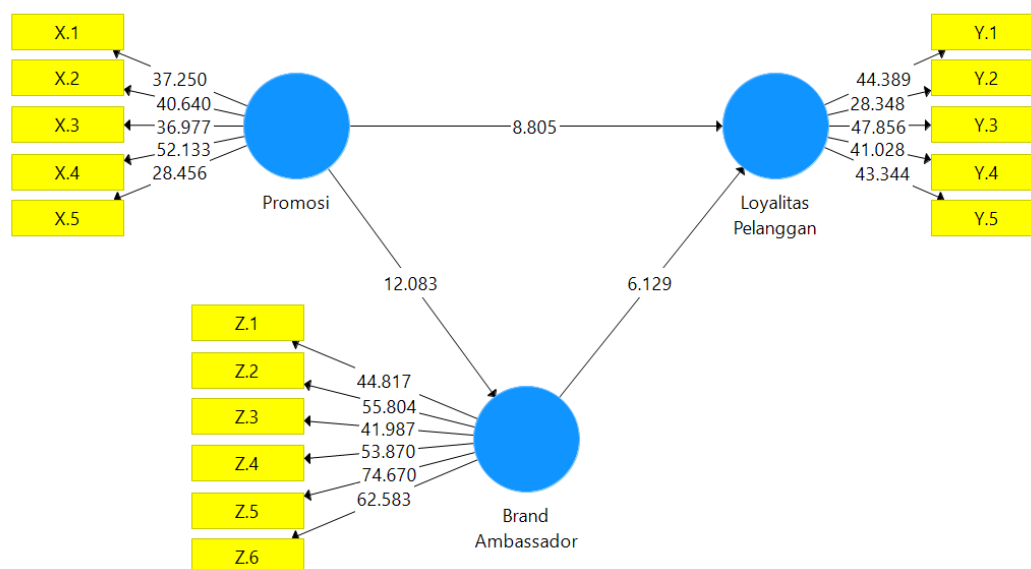


Figure 2.
Inner Model

Data processed by researchers 2024

Goodness of Fit Model Test

The model feasibility testing stage aims to evaluate the predictive power and feasibility of the model. The model fit results output can be seen in the following table:

Tabel 5
Model Fit

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.063	0.063
d_ULS	0.538	0.538
d_G	0.276	0.276
Chi-Square	472.564	472.564
NFI	0.868	0.868

Data processed by researchers 2024

Based on table 5 above, it can be seen that the SRMR value produced is 0.063 and has been less than 0.1. This shows that the feasibility of the resulting model is good.

R Square (R2)

The R Square value is used to see the influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables. The following are the results of the R Square test:

Table 6.

R Square

Variable	R-square	R-square adjusted
Brand Ambassador	0.413	0.411
Customer Loyalty	0.659	0.657

Data processed by researchers 2024

Based on table 6 above, the R-Square value of the brand ambassador variable is 0.413. This value can be concluded that brand ambassadors are influenced by promotions by 41.3%, and the remaining 58.7% is influenced by other variables outside the research.

Furthermore, the R-Square value of the customer loyalty variable is 0.659; this value can be concluded that customer loyalty is influenced by promotions and brand ambassadors by 65.9%, and the remaining 34.1% is influenced by other variables outside the study.

F Square

F-square (f) is used to evaluate the degree of interaction between latent variables as compared to only the relevance of the variables (Wong, 2018). An f-square value of 0.02 is considered small, 0.15 is considered medium, and 0.35 is considered large. Values less than 0.02 can be ignored or considered to have no effect.

Table 7.

F Square

	Brand Ambassador	Customer Loyalty	Promotion
Brand Ambassador		0.273	
Customer Loyalty			
Promotion	0.704	0.424	

Data processed by researchers in 2024

Based on Table 7 above, the large effect size with the criteria of F Square > 0.35 is the influence of promotion on brand ambassadors and promotion on customer loyalty. While for brand ambassadors on customer loyalty has a medium f-square because it has a value of 0.273 (0.15 - 0.35).

Hypothesis Testing

Structural relationship model testing is used to explain the relationship between variables in the study. Structural model testing is carried out through testing using PLS software. The basis used in testing the hypothesis directly is the image output or the value contained in the path coefficients output. The basis used to test the hypothesis directly is if the p-value <0.05 (significance level = 5%) and the t-statistic value > 1.96, then it is stated that there is a significant influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables. The following is a complete explanation of hypothesis testing:

Table 8.

Path Coefficients

Direct Effects (Coefficient, T-Values, P-Values)

Variable	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values
Promotion -> Customer Loyalty	0.496	8.805	0.000
Promotion -> Brand Ambassador	0.643	12.083	0.000
Brand Ambassador -> Customer Loyalty	0.398	6.129	0.000

Data processed by researchers in 2024

In PLS, statistical testing of each hypothesized relationship is done using simulation. In this case, it is done using the bootstrapping method on the sample. The following are the results of the PLS bootstrapping analysis:

1. The Influence of Promotion on Customer Loyalty.

The results of the first hypothesis test, namely the effect of promotion on customer loyalty, showed a p-value of 0.000 <0.05 and a t-statistic value of 8.805 > t-table 1.960.

These results indicate that promotion has an effect on customer loyalty. So the hypothesis that states that "promotion has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty" is **accepted**.

2. The Influence of Promotion on Brand Ambassadors.

The results of the second hypothesis test, namely the influence of promotion on brand ambassadors, show p-values of $0.000 < 0.05$ and t-statistics of $12.083 > t\text{-table } 1.960$. These results indicate that promotion has an effect on brand ambassadors. So the hypothesis that states that "promotion has a positive and significant effect on brand ambassadors" is **accepted**.

3. The Influence of Brand Ambassadors on Customer Loyalty.

The results of the third hypothesis test, namely the influence of brand ambassadors on customer loyalty, show a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$ and a t-statistic value of $6.129 > t\text{-table } 1.960$. These results indicate that brand ambassadors have an effect on customer loyalty. So, the hypothesis that states that "brand ambassadors have a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty" is **accepted**.

Mediation Test Results

The next step is to conduct a mediation effect test to determine whether the brand ambassador is suitable as a mediating variable. The basis used to test the hypothesis indirectly is if the p-value < 0.05 (significance level = 5%) and the t-statistic value > 1.96 , then it is stated that the brand ambassador variable can mediate the influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables.

The following is a complete explanation of mediation hypothesis testing:

Table 9.

Specific Indirect Effects

Variable	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values
Promosi -> Brand Ambassador -> Customer Loyalty	0.256	5.893	0.000

Data processed by researchers in 2024

1. Brand Ambassador Mediates the Influence of Promotion on Customer Loyalty.

The results of the fourth hypothesis test, namely the influence of promotion on customer loyalty through brand ambassadors, show p-values of $0.000 < 0.05$ and t-statistics of $5.893 > t\text{-table } 1.960$. These results indicate that promotion affects customer loyalty through brand ambassadors. So, the hypothesis that states that "brand ambassadors are able to mediate the influence of promotion on customer loyalty" is **accepted**.

Hypothesis 1: The Influence of Promotion on Customer Loyalty

Promotions have a significant impact on customer loyalty because they can create positive experiences that encourage customers to stay loyal to a product or service. Just as a quality system delivers high performance and stability, well-designed promotions can have a similar impact in building long-term relationships between customers and the company.

One of the key components in fostering customer loyalty is promotion. An effective promotional strategy is not only able to attract new customers but also retain old customers by creating emotional connections and added value for customers. Strategically designed promotions, such as discounts, loyalty rewards, or reward programs, can improve customer perceptions of a brand and influence repeat purchase decisions. This makes promotion an important component of a company's marketing strategy aimed at increasing customer loyalty.

Research by (Meitiana & Tuwuh Sembhodo, 2022) which examines the impact of promotions on customer loyalty. This study found that promotions have a positive and significant influence on customer loyalty. This finding underscores the importance of ensuring that promotions are not only superficially attractive but also create a positive experience for customers.

Another study was conducted by (Tang & Maro, 2023), which analyzed the effect of promotion on customer loyalty in the traditional ikat weaving industry. This study shows that promotion has a significant positive impact on customer loyalty. These results highlight the importance of promotion as a key element in marketing strategies, even in the traditional sector, to drive greater customer loyalty.

Hypothesis 2: The Influence of Promotion on Brand Ambassador

Promotion plays an important role in strengthening the influence of brand ambassadors as the face of the brand. Brand ambassadors, as brand representatives in front of the audience, need support from the right promotional strategy to strengthen the brand image and message. Promotion not only increases their visibility but also helps them appear more relevant in the eyes of the audience.

One of the effects of promotions on brand ambassadors is increased credibility. When a brand involves brand ambassadors in strategic promotional campaigns, such as new product launches or exclusive collaborations, audiences tend to see the brand ambassadors as an integral part of the brand. This also creates a positive perception of the brand ambassador, strengthening their relationship with the audience, who already believe in the quality of the brand they represent. Research by (Pardede & Aprianingsih, 2023), shows that promotional collaborations with famous K-Pop artists increase the appeal and relevance of brand ambassadors in skincare product marketing campaigns.

In addition to increasing credibility, promotions also help expand the reach of the audience that can be reached by brand ambassadors. Promotions on various social media platforms, for example, allow brand ambassadors to reach larger and more diverse market segments. This also helps brands build recognition in new markets, especially if promotions are carried out strategically to suit local audience preferences. Research by (Rahmawati et al., 2022) found that brand ambassadors supported by planned promotions can strengthen brand presence in various market segments.

Promotions also serve to strengthen the emotional connection between brand ambassadors and their audiences. When brand ambassadors are involved in campaigns that convey a strong message or relevant narrative, they not only help convey the brand's values but also create a deep emotional connection with their audiences. Promotions like this leverage the power of brand ambassadors to connect brands with their audiences in a more personal and meaningful way. This ensures that brand ambassadors are not just the face of the brand but also effective messengers.

Hypothesis 3: The Influence of Brand Ambassador on Customer Loyalty

Brand ambassadors play a vital role in building customer loyalty by creating a strong emotional connection between customers and the brand. They are not only the face of the brand but also the representatives of the values, quality, and message that the company wants to convey to customers. Through an emotional and inspiring connection, brand ambassadors can strengthen customer loyalty to a particular product or service.

One way brand ambassadors increase customer loyalty is through the trust they bring to the brand. Brand ambassadors who have high credibility help create a positive perception of the brand. For example, research by (Astika & Nurfebiaraning, 2022) shows that brand ambassadors, such as the music group Stray Kids, improve Shopee's image in the eyes of customers. The trust created by Stray Kids as brand ambassadors results in higher customer loyalty to the e-commerce platform.

In addition to increasing trust, brand ambassadors also help create unique emotional experiences for customers. They often tell personal stories or use images that are relevant to the target audience, which helps build an emotional connection between customers and the brand. Research (Nadila & Windasari, 2022) found that brand ambassadors contribute significantly to customer loyalty. Effective brand ambassadors are able to connect audiences with brand values, thereby strengthening customer loyalty to products or services.

The consistent presence of brand ambassadors also increases customer loyalty by strengthening brand identity. When brand ambassadors are consistently associated with a brand in various promotional campaigns, they create stronger brand recognition. This helps customers associate the brand with certain qualities, which encourages repeat purchases and positive recommendations. Brand ambassadors who are popular among the target audience, such as celebrities or inspirational figures, can also expand the brand's reach to a wider market segment.

Hypothesis 4: The Influence of Promotion on Customer Loyalty Through Brand Ambassador

Promotion is an important strategy in attracting customers, but its impact on customer loyalty can be amplified when mediated by brand ambassadors. Brand ambassadors give a face and voice to the brand, making promotions more personal and relatable to the audience. Their presence creates a strong emotional connection between the brand and the customer, leading to long-term engagement. When brand ambassadors are trusted and relevant, customers feel more confident in the brand they represent, making promotions more effective.

A study by (Haryadi & Syharuddin, 2023) found that promotions have a significant influence on GrabFood customer loyalty, especially when combined with the presence of brand ambassadors. Brand ambassadors not only increase the attractiveness of promotions but also strengthen the emotional connection between customers and brands. The results of this study indicate that promotional strategies involving brand ambassadors can increase customers' positive perceptions of the brand, thereby creating stronger loyalty. This study emphasizes the importance of integration between promotions and brand ambassadors to strengthen trust and relationships with customers.

In addition, research by (Mostafa & Kasamani, 2021) highlights how promotions mediated by brand ambassadors can create a deep emotional experience for customers.

Brand ambassadors help create a more personal emotional connection through promotions, which ultimately increases customer loyalty to the brand. This study shows that the presence of brand ambassadors makes customers feel more emotionally connected to the brand, thus encouraging them to remain loyal to the products or services offered.

The combination of promotions and brand ambassadors not only increases the effectiveness of marketing campaigns but also creates long-term relationships with customers. Brand ambassadors bring credibility and trust to promotions, making them more effective in building customer loyalty. With a well-planned strategy, companies can leverage the synergy between promotions and brand ambassadors to achieve better marketing results and sustainable customer relationships.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that promotion has a significant influence on customer loyalty and brand ambassadors. The results of the study indicate that effective promotion can increase customer loyalty through strengthening brand ambassadors. Thus, brand ambassadors play an important role as mediators in the relationship between promotion and customer loyalty. From the analysis, it was found that 65.9% of customer loyalty was influenced by promotion and brand ambassadors, which shows how important a marketing strategy involving these two variables is. This study contributes to marketing theory, especially in the context of using brand ambassadors to increase customer loyalty in the snack food industry.

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