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WHEN BOYCOTTS MATTER: THE ROLE OF BRAND AMBASSADORS AND RELIGIOSITY IN INFLUENCING FMCG PURCHASE INTENTION IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of brand ambassador and religiosity on brand image and purchase intention of products in Indonesia amid boycott issues. The phenomenon of global boycott movements against multinational products considered to support Israel has affected brand image and consumer purchase intention, including fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) products in Indonesia. The strategy of using brand ambassadors and consumer religiosity factors became the main focus of this research. The study uses a quantitative approach with Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) method to test causal relationships between variables. Data collection was conducted through surveys of 400 respondents who are consumers of products in Bandar Lampung City using purposive sampling technique. The research instrument was a questionnaire with a Likert scale 1-5 that has been tested for validity and reliability. These findings provide important managerial implications that celebrity endorsement strategies are less effective in the context of reputation crisis, while approaches that emphasize religiosity values and brand image strengthening through product quality and halal certification are more relevant. This research enriches consumer behavior literature in the context of boycott movements in countries with majority Muslim populations.

KEYWORDS: Brand Ambassador, Religiosity, Brand Image, Purchase Intention, Boycott, Consumer behavior, PLS-SEM.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Israel-Palestine conflict has triggered a global boycott movement against multinational products considered to support Israel, with various large companies such as McDonald's, Starbucks, and Nestlé becoming primary targets (Islam et al., 2025). Some multinational companies faces serious challenges with declining consumer loyalty and brand image due to boycott movements in Indonesia that have spread through social media platforms (Nurfaedah et al., 2025). Concrete data reveals that shares of PT Akasha Wira Internasional Tbk (ADES), producer of Nestlé Pure Life mineral water, experienced a decline of up to 7% in the first two months of the boycott movement with the lowest value of Rp 8,725 per share in mid-November 2023. The boycott impact on Nestlé also caused the company to terminate employment (layoffs) of 126 workers at the Kejayan factory, Pasuruan, East Java, which produces Dancow and Bear Brand products, although Nestlé stated that the layoff decision was taken based on business adjustments. Market research conducted by Nielsen Retail Measurement Services recorded that the boycott impact in the retail sector for Nestlé products in Indonesia overall reached a sales decline of up to 30% in December 2023, with the worst prediction of up to 50% in the first quarter of 2024 if there is no effective marketing communication strategy (KumparanNEWS, 2023).

In responding to these challenges, PT. Nestlé Indonesia implemented a brand ambassador strategy by appointing Nicholas Saputra for Bear Brand and Ji Chang Wook for Nescafe. The selection of Nicholas Saputra as Bear Brand's brand ambassador in 2024 was Nestlé's strategy to use the influence of local celebrities who had been trusted by Indonesian society, although this decision sparked controversy amid calls to boycott Nestlé products considered to have affiliations with Israel (Safhira, 2024). Meanwhile, the appointment of Ji Chang Wook as Nescafé Ala Cafe's brand ambassador was a marketing strategy that responded to the popularity of Korean Wave in Indonesia, as revealed by Sherif Hani, Business Executive Officer Coffee PT Nestlé Indonesia, "The Korean Wave (K-Wave) trend that swept Gen Z became our reason for partnering with Ji Chang Wook as Nescafé Indonesia's Brand Ambassador" with hopes of attracting the increasingly influential Generation Z segment in the Indonesian market (Vedhitya, 2024).

In the context of product marketing in Indonesia, the religiosity factor becomes an important aspect that influences consumer behavior towards Nestlé products, especially amid boycott issues. Nestlé has

recognized the importance of this religious dimension by ensuring its products have halal certification from LPPOM MUI, including Bear Brand and Nescafe. Research shows that consumers with high religiosity tend to be more sensitive to multinational brands considered to have relationships with parties in conflict (Abdullah et al., 2021). Populix research (2024) found that 65% of Muslim respondents in Indonesia stated their compliance with MUI Fatwa No. 83 on Legal Support for the Palestinian struggle, with awareness levels reaching 94% among Indonesian society.

Based on the background described, this study aims to analyze the influence of brand ambassador and religiosity on brand image and purchase intention of Bear Brand and Nescafe products PT. Nestlé Indonesia amid boycott issues. The research gap lies in studies regarding the effectiveness of brand ambassador and religiosity as independent variables in the context of recovering purchase intention and brand image for products facing controversial issues such as boycott movements. The urgency of this research lies in the need for in-depth analysis of how brand ambassador and religiosity as independent variables influence purchase intention of Bear Brand and Nescafe products PT. Nestlé Indonesia with brand image as a mediator amid the complexity of boycott issues.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Source Credibility Theory

Source Credibility Theory was first proposed by Hovland, Janis, and Kelley in 1953 in their book titled "Communication and Persuasion: Psychological Studies of Opinion Change". This theory explains that source credibility refers to the communicator's or message recipient's views about the communicator or message deliverer, which can influence people's or message recipients' responses to what the communicator conveys (Elita et al., 2024). This theory is based on the assumption that a communicator with high credibility will more easily change opinions or persuade the audience they target, however in the context of reputation crisis, this dynamic can change fundamentally.

According to Ohanian (1990), Source Credibility is a measure of the extent to which message recipients believe that the communicator has a relevant level of knowledge or expertise in conveying information so that their credibility can be trusted (Kalla et al., 2024). Hovland, Janis, and Kelley stated that there are three aspects that influence source credibility: expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness, which were later developed by Ohanian (1990) into a model for

measuring brand ambassador effectiveness. In the context of brand ambassadors, credibility becomes a very important determining factor in shaping consumer perceptions of brand image and influencing purchase intention, but its effectiveness can decrease when faced with controversial issues involving consumers' fundamental beliefs.

The expertise dimension is explained as the extent to which the communicator is considered a valid source of statements, knowledgeable and experienced (Rahayu & Ramadaniar, 2024). The trustworthiness dimension explains the extent to which the communicator conveys statements considered valid or accurate, including assessments of honesty, integrity, and believability. The attractiveness dimension is a measure of how the communicator is evaluated in terms of familiarity, likability, and similarity that can influence the effectiveness of message delivery. In crisis situations such as boycott movements, these three dimensions can experience decreased effectiveness because consumers become more skeptical of commercial motives and prioritize ideological considerations.

B. Brand Ambassador

A brand ambassador is someone used by a company as a tool to communicate and connect with the public regarding a product or service to increase sales (Lea-Greenwood, 2012 in Dispar & Anggarawati, 2024). Similarly, Nofiawaty et al. (2020) explain that a brand ambassador is someone who has extensive connections or celebrities used to promote and advertise a product or service, acting as a diplomat or organizational representative. Brand ambassadors play an important role in shaping the public image of a brand and become the spearhead of companies in conveying messages to society.

According to Supriyadi et al. (2022), a brand ambassador is someone marketed or contracted by an organization or company to promote brands in the form of products or services, both national and international relations. Companies usually use brand ambassadors as tools to promote products or services by utilizing famous people to attract potential consumers' attention. Prastiwi et al. (2020) state that the key aspect of brand ambassadors lies in their skills to implement promotional strategies that can encourage customers to buy a product with greater frequency or larger volume.

According to Rossiter and Percy (1985) in Nofiawaty et al. (2020), brand ambassadors can be measured using the VisCAP model with indicators: Visibility, which refers to how famous or familiar a brand ambassador is in society, including popularity, achievements, and being known as a brand

ambassador; Credibility, which is an indication of how trustworthy the source is, consisting of knowledge, skills, honesty, experience, and trust; Attraction, which emphasizes the star's attractiveness, personality, level of public preference for the ambassador and similarity to target users; and Power, which is the ability to attract consumers to buy, besides being famous and attractive, brand ambassadors must also be idolized by the audience.

In crisis situations such as boycott movements, brand ambassadors play an important role in crisis management. Alfattah & Adawiyah (2024) reported that Bank Syariah Indonesia partnered with Putri Ariani as a brand ambassador to form a positive image after a cyber-attack crisis, where the brand ambassador's life story was used to motivate internal parties and give positive impressions to customers. Febriani & Khairusy (2020) affirm that the credibility of an advertising star is viewed from their ability to be a good, objective communicator with honesty that can be accepted by society. However, in the context of boycott issues involving religious and political dimensions, brand ambassador effectiveness can decrease significantly because consumers prioritize fundamental value considerations over celebrity appeal.

C. Religiosity

Religiosity is a multidimensional concept that describes the extent to which individuals are committed to religion and its teachings, as well as how these beliefs influence attitudes and behavior in daily life. Religiosity is defined as beliefs containing values in guiding life (Romadi, 2020). Religiosity does not only occur when someone performs worship rituals, but also when performing other activities driven by supernatural forces, including in consumption decision-making.

According to Rohaya et al. (2024), religiosity is defined as a person's level of trust in religious values practiced in daily life and serves as a guide in decision making. Religiosity can also be understood as a situation within a person that encourages them to behave according to their level of religious devotion (Sayyidah et al., 2022). In the context of consumer behavior, religiosity becomes an important filter in product and brand evaluation, especially when facing issues related to religious values.

Several indicators used to measure religiosity according to Sayyidah et al. (2022), include: Aqidah Dimension (Belief), which is something that requires the heart to believe it, something that makes the soul calm and becomes a belief far from doubt and uncertainty, in Islam called faith or belief in Allah SWT; Worship Dimension (Sharia), which is an effort

to follow Allah SWT's laws and rules in life, where someone lives from adolescence to death according to His commands, including five daily prayers, fasting, zakat, and hajj; and Akhlaq Dimension, which has the meaning of character or spiritual personality, in Islam often associated with Ihsan, meaning humans are commanded by Allah SWT to always do good to achieve victory and happiness.

Religiosity has a significant influence on consumer behavior, especially in decision-making contexts. Rosyidah & Handayati (2022) found that religiosity contributes significantly to Muslim consumer behavior in Lombok, with 98% of respondents stating that in seeking and consuming wealth must be halal and good as gratitude to Allah SWT. In the context of boycott movements, Rohaya et al. (2024) identified that religiosity becomes a dominant factor influencing decisions to boycott Israeli products among generation Z students, with the most significant influence with t-value of 2.512 and significance of 0.014. This shows that religiosity can be a factor that encourages rejection of certain products, but can also be the basis for positive evaluation when products are considered in accordance with religious values.

D. Brand Image

Brand image is a collection of brand associations formed in consumers' minds (Aaker, 1991 in Amelfdi & Ardyan, 2021). This is consistent with Keller's (1993) opinion in Parris & Guzmán (2023) who defines brand image as perceptions about brands reflected from brand associations stored in consumer memory. Brand image plays an important role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions and becomes a strategic asset for companies in building competitive advantage (Rubiyanti et al., 2023).

Brand image plays an important role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions. Bernarto et al. (2020) state that good brand image can give a good impression to consumers and will increase consumer loyalty to products. Andrianto & Fianto (2020) also explain that brand image is a series of visitor perceptions arising from visitor evaluation results about information regarding a brand, and this perception can be the basis for visitors in determining purchasing decisions. Brand image formation can be influenced by several factors such as marketing communications, product quality, and consumer experience.

Brand image indicators according to Park, Jaworski, and MacInnis (1986) in Amelfdi and Ardyan (2020) are: Symbolic image, which is the brand's ability to enhance consumers' self-esteem/social status/self-recognition; and

Experiential image, which is the brand's ability to provide pleasant experiences for consumers. Both dimensions work synergistically to form consumers' holistic perception of the brand, where symbolic image relates to aspirational aspects and self-identity, while experiential image relates to functional and emotional satisfaction.

Boycott movements show impacts that fundamentally change the brand image of boycotted products. Utama et al. (2023) found that 73 out of 100 respondents reported decreased brand image perception of Israeli products, with transformation of brand associations that were previously neutral or positive becoming predominantly negative post-boycott. Boycotts also create paradoxical visibility, where brand image experiences decreased quality perception affecting consumer skepticism about product value and quality, while brand discussion and awareness increase significantly although not translated into positive equity. However, strong brand image can show resilience to external pressure through previously built brand equity (Rubiyanti et al., 2025).

E. Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is consumers' desire to own a product, which arises after consumers are influenced by quality, quality, and information about the product (Durianto in Aprianty & Basuki, 2021). Purchase intention occurs at the alternative evaluation stage in the purchasing decision process, where consumers make a series of choices about products to be purchased based on brand or interest (Kotler, Bowen and Makens in Aprianty & Basuki, 2021). Similarly, Rismawan & Purnami in Amanda et al. (2021) define purchase intention as the information evaluation stage received by consumers, which is an important step before actual purchasing decisions are made.

According to Pavlou in Peña-García et al. (2020), purchase intention can be understood as the level of consumer desire to buy products through various distribution channels. Purchase intention is understood as consumer tendency to shop after obtaining information from various sources (Amanda et al., 2021). According to Prastiwi et al. (2019), consumer purchase intention can be influenced by various factors including cultural trends and brand ambassadors that can shape consumer perceptions of offered products.

Purchase intention indicators according to Ferdinand in Aprianty & Basuki (2021) consist of four dimensions: Transactional interest, which is a person's tendency to buy products; Referential interest, which is a person's tendency to refer

products to others; Preferential interest, which is interest describing a person's behavior who has main preference for the product; and Exploratory interest, which is interest describing a person's behavior who always seeks information about products they are interested in. These four dimensions work interactively to form comprehensive purchase intention.

Boycott movements show direct and strong negative impacts on consumer purchase intention. When boycott actions begin, participating consumers show significant decreases in purchase intention toward targeted products or brands. Hisan et al. (2025) found that 73 out of 100 data showed negative rankings in brand image and 71 data showed decreased purchase intention for McDonald's, with the majority of respondents (75.6%) reporting negative changes. However, purchase intention responses to boycotts are not homogeneous and can vary depending on how consumers perceive boycott actions and how companies respond to them.

F. Hypothesis

Based on comprehensive literature review and theoretical framework, there are complex dynamics in the relationships among studied variables, especially in the context of reputation crisis due to boycott movements. Previous research shows different relationship patterns between normal conditions and crisis conditions, where factors such as religiosity and brand image become more dominant in influencing consumer behavior.

Research on brand ambassador and brand image relationships in normal conditions shows positive and significant results. Dewi et al. (2020) show that brand ambassadors significantly influence brand image, and Kirana et al. (2020) found the influence of Zaskia Adya Mecca as brand ambassador on Instagram Meccanismofficialshop on Meccanism brand image with a contribution value of 73.8%, showing very strong and positive impact. Hartanto and Mariana (2024) also confirm that using Laudya Chintya Bella as brand ambassador influences Zoya Muslim Fashion Product brand image with a contribution of 39.9%. However, in the context of boycott issues, this dynamic can change due to consumer skepticism toward commercial motives of celebrity endorsement.

The relationship between religiosity and brand image shows interesting complexity in the context of boycott movements. Abosag & Farah (2014) show that religiously motivated boycotts have significant negative impact on brand image in studies conducted on Saudi Arabian consumers toward Danish company Arla Foods. Studies involving 165 Tunisian

respondents also revealed that religiosity has positive influence on decisions to participate in boycotts. However, in the context of products with religious legitimacy such as halal certification, this relationship can reverse to positive through religious accommodation mechanisms (Zahra et al., 2021).

Research on brand ambassador and purchase intention shows varied results depending on context. Putri et al. (2021) found that brand ambassadors simultaneously have positive influence on Shopee purchase intention, particularly the attractiveness variable has positive and significant effect on purchase intention. Prastiwi et al. (2020) state that brand ambassadors have significant influence on Korean instant noodle purchase intention. However, research by Wahyuningtyas and Aquina (2023) shows different results where brand ambassadors do not influence Somethinc beauty product purchase intention, showing that brand ambassador effectiveness can vary depending on context and consumer characteristics.

The relationship between religiosity and purchase intention in boycott contexts shows complex patterns. Tariki & Shukor (2018) show that religiosity has positive relationship with willingness to boycott among 402 Malaysian student respondents, showing that higher religiosity levels lead to greater desire to avoid purchasing certain products. Mirza et al. (2020) also found that religious animosity has significant impact on French product boycotts, showing decreased purchase intention among consumers with high religious commitment. However, in halal product contexts, this relationship can become positive when religiosity encourages consumption of products aligned with religious values.

Brand image and purchase intention show consistently strong relationships across various research contexts. Haro et al. (2020) show that brand image influences purchase intention for Samsung smartphones. Andarista et al. (2022) reveal that brand image mediates between brand ambassador and promotion toward Erigo brand purchase intention. Ali and Cuandra (2023) also found that brand image significantly influences Erigo Apparel fashion brand purchase intention. Maftukhah & Wahyuning (2024) show that brand image provides significant positive influence of 72.5% on consumer purchasing decisions even for boycotted products, confirming brand image resilience in crisis situations.

The mediating role of brand image in brand ambassador and purchase intention relationships has been confirmed in various studies. Alinda et al. (2020) state that brand image influences purchase intention and mediates between brand ambassador and purchase intention for Shopee as Liga 1 sponsor and

Cristiano Ronaldo as brand ambassador. Andarista et al. (2022) show that brand image mediates between brand ambassador and promotion toward Erigo purchase intention. Sabella et al. (2022) also confirm that brand image mediates the relationship between brand ambassador and purchase intention among "Sang Dewa Snack" consumers. However, in boycott issue contexts, this mediation path effectiveness can decrease due to consumer resistance to celebrity endorsement.

Based on the literature review, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Brand ambassador has a positive effect on brand image.

H2: Religiosity has a negative effect on brand image.

H3: Brand ambassador has a positive effect on purchase intention.

H4: Religiosity has a negative effect on purchase intention.

H5: Brand image has a positive effect on purchase intention.

H6: Brand image mediates the relationship between brand ambassador and purchase intention.

H7: Brand image mediates the relationship between religiosity and purchase intention.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study uses a quantitative approach with causal research type. Causal research aims to test hypotheses about causal relationships between studied variables (Winarni, 2021). The population in this study consists of Bear Brand and Nescafe product consumers in Bandar Lampung City who know about Nicholas Saputra and Ji Chang Wook as brand ambassadors of their respective products.

The selection of Bandar Lampung City as research location was based on several strategic considerations. PT. Nestlé Indonesia has a factory in Panjang, Lampung, which shows the economic significance of Nestlé products in this region. Based on BPS Bandar Lampung City data (2024), the population of Bandar Lampung City on December 31, 2024 was 1,077,664 people. Bandar Lampung City has demographic characteristics relevant to this study, where most of its population (87%) are Muslims (Afifah et al., 2024), making this city an appropriate location to measure the influence of boycott issues with religious dimensions.

Sample size determination in this study uses the Slovin formula with 5% margin of error, yielding a sample of 400 respondents. This study uses purposive sampling technique with respondent criteria: domiciled in Bandar Lampung City, aged at least 17

years (adult), consumed Bear Brand and/or Nescafe products in the last 3 months, know Nicholas Saputra as Bear Brand's brand ambassador, know Ji Chang Wook as Nescafe's brand ambassador, and know about boycott issues affecting Nestlé products.

Data collection in this study was conducted through questionnaire distribution to respondents who are Bear Brand and Nescafe product consumers in Lampung region. Questionnaires were compiled based on research variables operationalized into measurable indicators using Likert scale 1-5. Validity testing in this study was conducted to ensure research instruments can measure what should be measured using Pearson Product Moment correlation technique. Reliability testing in this study aims to measure internal consistency of research instruments using Cronbach's Alpha method.

Data analysis technique uses Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Partial Least Square (PLS) approach used in this study to analyze causal relationships between brand ambassador, religiosity, brand image, and purchase intention variables simultaneously. SmartPLS version 3.0 software was used for data analysis due to its capability in handling complex models and comprehensive result visualization. Hypothesis testing was conducted through bootstrapping procedures with criteria t -statistics > 1.96 and p -values < 0.05 to declare significant relationships at 95% confidence level.

4. RESULTS

The research respondents totaled 400 people domiciled in Bandar Lampung City and met established criteria, namely having consumed Bear Brand and/or Nescafe products in the last 3 months, knowing the brand ambassadors of each product, and having awareness of boycott issues affecting Nestlé products. The selection of Bandar Lampung City as research location was based on strategic significance of this region, where PT. Nestlé Indonesia has a factory in Panjang, Lampung producing various products including Bear Brand (Nestle, 2022b). The demographic characteristics of Bandar Lampung society where the majority (87%) are Muslims (Afifah et al., 2024) make this city representative for analyzing the impact of boycott issues with religious dimensions.

Respondent distribution by gender shows that the majority of respondents are female with 242 people (60.5%), while male respondents numbered 158 people (39.5%). This composition is consistent with characteristics of packaged food and beverage consumers, where women tend to be more active in household consumption product purchasing

decisions (hendrayati et al., 2025). This female respondent dominance is consistent with Bear Brand's target market positioning itself as premium sterile milk for family health and Nescafe segmentation targeting adult consumers who prioritize practicality in coffee consumption.

Respondent age composition shows that the 17-25 years age group dominates with 175 respondents (43.8%), followed by the 26-35 years age group with 124 respondents (31.0%), 36-45 years age group with 77 respondents (19.3%), and over 45 years age group with 24 respondents (6.0%). This young age group dominance is relevant to Nestlé's marketing strategy appointing Ji Chang Wook as Nescafe brand ambassador to utilize Korean Wave phenomenon among Generation Z. This aligns with Sherif Hani's statement, Business Executive Officer Coffee PT Nestlé Indonesia that "The Korean Wave (K-Wave) trend sweeping Gen Z became our reason for partnering with Ji Chang Wook as Nescafé Indonesia's Brand Ambassador" (Vedhitya, 2024).

Respondent education profile shows diverse distribution with the majority having SMA/SMK/Equivalent education with 173 people (43.3%), followed by Bachelor's (S1) graduates with 112 people (28.0%), Diploma graduates with 82 people (20.5%), and Postgraduate (S2/S3) graduates with 33 people (8.3%). Nevertheless, when combined, highly educated respondents (Diploma, S1, and Postgraduate) reach 56.8% showing that the majority of respondents have the ability to process complex information related to boycott issues and make consumption decisions based on rational and emotional considerations.

The majority of respondents are students with 147

people (36.8%), followed by private employees with 131 people (32.8%), then entrepreneurs and other categories each with 61 people (15.3%). The dominance of students and private employees shows that respondents are mostly in demographic groups active in consuming social media and having high awareness of social and political issues. This aligns with findings by Afifah et al. (2024) showing that productive age communities in Bandar Lampung have high tendency to participate in boycott movements as expression of aspirations and concern for social and economic issues.

Respondent distribution shows nearly balanced distribution between Bear Brand and Nescafe consumers, with 203 respondents (50.7%) choosing to evaluate Bear Brand products and 197 respondents (49.3%) choosing Nescafe products. This balanced distribution shows that both products have strong consumer bases in Bandar Lampung City. This aligns with Top Brand Index data showing Bear Brand consistently maintains TOP status in liquid milk category with TBI value of 18.5% in 2025, while Nescafe successfully returned to TOP 5 instant coffee category with TBI value of 9.1% in the same period.

A. Measurement (Outer) Model

Evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) in this study was conducted to assess validity and reliability of indicators in measuring latent variables, following Hair et al. (2019) recommendations that outer model evaluation is a critical step in PLS-SEM to ensure measurement quality before conducting structural analysis. Outer model testing includes three main aspects: convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite reliability.

Table:

Variable	Loading Factor Range	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Brand Ambassador (X1)	0.819-0.891	0.749	0.970	0.973
Religiosity (X2)	0.828-0.861	0.716	0.950	0.958
Brand Image (Z)	0.865-0.879	0.763	0.938	0.951
Purchase Intention (Y)	0.855-0.891	0.768	0.973	0.976

The Brand Ambassador variable shows highest loading factor on indicator BA5 (honesty in facing sensitive issues) with value 0.891, while lowest loading factor is on indicator BA2 (achievement relevance to current issues) with value 0.819. Nevertheless, all Brand Ambassador indicators have loading factors above 0.8, showing strong contribution in measuring the construct. This aligns with Source Credibility Theory emphasizing that trustworthiness becomes a key dimension in brand ambassador credibility (Ohanian, 1990 in Kalla et al.,

2024).

The Religiosity variable shows highest loading factor on indicator REL6 (applying religious recommendations toward controversial products) with value 0.861 and lowest on REL4 (compliance with religious rules in product selection) with value 0.828. Overall, all indicators have loading factors above 0.8, showing excellent convergent validity. This finding supports the concept of religiosity as a multidimensional construct including aqidah, worship, and akhlaq dimensions as explained by

Sayyidah et al. (2022).

All variables show AVE values above 0.5, which is the minimum limit for convergent validity according to Fornell and Larcker (1981). Purchase Intention variable has highest AVE value of 0.768, followed by Brand Image (0.763), Brand Ambassador (0.749), and Religiosity (0.716). These high AVE values show that each construct explains more than 70% of its indicator variance, confirming excellent convergent validity according to Hair et al. (2019) standards.

The Fornell-Larcker criteria show that all variables have good discriminant validity, where square root AVE values for each construct are greater than inter-construct correlations. Inter-variable correlation patterns show interesting findings contrasting with initial expectations. There are negative correlations between Brand Ambassador and all other variables, showing that in boycott issue contexts, higher respondent religiosity levels lead to lower perceptions of brand ambassadors. This indicates

consumer skepticism phenomenon toward celebrity endorsement in ideological crisis situations, as explained by Wang et al. (2022).

All variables show excellent reliability levels with composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values above 0.9, far exceeding the minimum limit of 0.7 recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). These very high reliability values show that all indicators in each construct have excellent internal consistency, providing confidence that research instruments can measure constructs consistently and reliably.

B. Structural (Inner) Model

Structural model (inner model) evaluation aims to assess structural model quality and test relationships between latent constructs in research, following PLS-SEM analysis framework developed by Hair et al. (2019). Inner model testing includes coefficient of determination (R-Square), predictive relevance (Q-Square), and path coefficients.

Table:

Endogenous Variable	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Q-Square
Brand Image (Z)	0.471	0.468	0.358
Purchase Intention (Y)	0.679	0.676	0.518

Brand Image variable shows R-Square value of 0.471, indicating that 47.1% of variance in Brand Image can be explained by exogenous variables Brand Ambassador and Religiosity. According to Cohen's (1988) interpretation criteria, R-Square value of 0.471 is categorized as moderate, showing that the model has good predictive ability to explain brand image formation. Purchase Intention variable shows higher R-Square value of 0.679, indicating that 67.9% of variance in Purchase Intention can be explained by exogenous

variables Brand Ambassador, Religiosity, and Brand Image. According to Cohen's (1988) criteria, R-Square value of 0.679 is categorized as strong (substantial).

Q-Square values for both constructs show adequate results, with Q-Square Brand Image = 0.358 and Purchase Intention = 0.518. Both values are above 0, meaning the model has good predictive relevance for endogenous variables, according to Geisser (1974) and Stone (1974) criteria.

Table:

Path	Original Sample	Standard Deviation	T-Statistics	P-Values	Decision
Brand Ambassador → Brand Image	0.056	0.055	1.014	0.311	H1 Rejected
Brand Ambassador → Purchase Intention	0.009	0.038	0.242	0.809	H3 Rejected
Brand Image → Purchase Intention	0.606	0.099	6.111	0.000	H5 Accepted
Religiosity → Brand Image	0.710	0.061	11.668	0.000	H2 Accepted*
Religiosity → Purchase Intention	0.285	0.104	2.749	0.006	H4 Accepted*

*Note: H2 and H4 were initially hypothesized to have negative effects, but results show significant positive effects.

Testing results show interesting patterns contrasting with initial theoretical expectations. Brand Ambassador has no significant effect on Brand Image and Purchase Intention. These findings differ from research in normal conditions such as Dewi et al. (2020) showing significant brand ambassador influence on brand image, and Putri et al. (2021) finding positive influence on purchase intention. This insignificance can be explained through consumer resistance theory in reputation crisis contexts, where consumers become more skeptical of commercial

celebrity endorsement motives when facing ideological issues (Dahle & Wæraas, 2020).

Conversely, Religiosity shows very strong and significant influence on Brand Image ($\beta = 0.710$, $t = 11.668$, $p = 0.000$) and significant influence on Purchase Intention ($\beta = 0.285$, $t = 2.749$, $p = 0.006$). These results contrast with initial hypotheses predicting negative influence, but can be explained through religious accommodation concept where religious consumers can separate product quality evaluation from surrounding political issues. Brand

Image proves to have strongest influence on Purchase Intention ($\beta = 0.606$, $t = 6.111$, $p = 0.000$), confirming

brand equity theory that strong brand image can survive crisis situations.

Table:

Mediation Path	Indirect Effect	Standard Deviation	T-Statistics	P-Values	Decision
Brand Ambassador → Brand Image → Purchase Intention	0.034	0.038	0.902	0.368	H6 Rejected
Religiosity → Brand Image → Purchase Intention	0.430	0.084	5.136	0.000	H7 Accepted

Mediation effect testing results show that brand image does not mediate the relationship between brand ambassador and purchase intention (H6 rejected) because the first path (brand ambassador → brand image) is not significant. Conversely, brand image mediates the relationship between religiosity and purchase intention (H7 accepted) with indirect effect of 0.430 which is highly significant. The high indirect effect value (0.430) is even greater than religiosity's direct effect on purchase intention (0.285), showing that brand image is the main mechanism through which religiosity influences consumer purchase intention.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion of this study is to measure how Brand Ambassador and Religiosity variables affect purchase intention with brand image as a mediating variable in the context of Bear Brand and Nescafe products amid boycott issues in Indonesia. In hypothesis testing, the Brand Ambassador variable shows insignificant results on both brand image and purchase intention, indicating that celebrity endorsement strategies do not necessarily create effective persuasion during reputation crisis. This could be due to various factors not directly examined in this study, such as consumer scepticism toward commercial motives during ideological conflicts, dominance of religious considerations, or contextual experiences of boycott movements that prioritize moral values over celebrity appeal.

However, indirect effect measurement results show that Religiosity has an indirect effect on purchase intention through brand image. In other words, positive religious perceptions toward product origin will impact satisfaction only if they influence brand image first. This means that religious values must be converted into positive brand image formation before they can produce strong purchase

intention among Muslim consumers. Meanwhile, Brand Image and Religiosity variables are proven to have positive influences both directly on purchase intention and on brand image. These results confirm that brands with strong images based on halal certification, product quality, and alignment with religious values will be more effective in building loyalty and pleasant experiences for consumers. In this context, brand image becomes an important bridge between religious expectations and product reality, ultimately forming final perceptions and purchasing decisions.

Other findings show that religiosity plays a significant role in bridging the relationship between religious values and purchase intention through brand image formation. This means that Muslim consumers will have strong purchase intention when their religious considerations lead to positive brand image evaluation, such as halal certification, product quality, and company reputation in respecting Islamic values. Therefore, it is not sufficient for communication and marketing strategies to use celebrity endorsement, but must also direct consumers toward religious value alignment and strong brand image formation. The researcher hopes that the results of this study can contribute to the development of marketing strategies for FMCG products, particularly for multinational brands like Nestlé, in order to manage religious perceptions more strategically, build authentic brand image based on religious values, and develop crisis communication that respects local religious considerations while maintaining product quality standards. Additionally, for consumers, this research is expected to increase awareness that religious-based decision making can be compatible with quality product consumption when brands demonstrate genuine commitment to Islamic values and halal standards.

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