



The Role of Brand Awareness as an Intervening Influence of Product Placement in the Drama "Today's Webtoon" on Interest in Buying Scarlett Whitening Products

Anna Triwijayati^{1*}, Gladys Lugracia Nathania², Chatarina Aprilia Hellyani³
Universitas Ma Chung

Corresponding Author: Anna Triwijayati anna.triwijayati@machung.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to analyze the effect of Scarlett Whitening's product placement in the drama "Today's Webtoon" on buying interest with brand awareness as an intervening variable. This research uses a quantitative method with explanatory research. The sampling procedure is non-probability sampling using purposive sampling technique. The study was conducted on 272 respondents who had watched the drama Today's Webtoon and used Scarlett Whitening products. This research uses primary data, and the survey collects data through Google Forms. The type of research analysis is the path analysis method. Hypotheses are tested using T-Test and Sobel Test. The results indicate that product placement has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention with brand awareness as the intervening variable.

INTRODUCTION

Public awareness of the use of beauty products is also increasing, especially in Indonesia. As time goes by, today's lifestyle requires people to pay more attention to their appearance, so that beauty products continue to develop into various products tailored to consumer needs (Adisty, 2022). Changes in people's lifestyles that are aware of taking care of themselves, especially beauty, have also encouraged an increase in the choice of beauty care products.

The 2020 Central Statistics Agency (BPS) report shows that the cosmetics industry has increased by 5.59%. According to statistical data, in 2021 the growth of beauty products globally will grow by around 6.46%, this is also strongly driven by online sales which reached 25%, so that in 2021 the use of beauty products will grow by 7% (Adisty, 2022) Industry revenue beauty is expected to increase 7.26% to US\$ 8.6 billion in 2023 and grow 5.64% to US\$ 9.07 billion in 2024 (Mahdi, 2022).

In early January 2021, Indonesian people trusted local Indonesian products to care for themselves. According to sales data, the Scarlett Whitening brand is at the top of sales with a market share of 57%, followed by Vaseline with 15% and Lifebuoy with 8% (Joan, 2021). Uniquely, Scarlett Whitening is a facial and body care product from Indonesia which was founded in 2017 by Felycia Angelista. Scarlett Whitening products focus on skin brighteners containing Glutathione and Vitamin E which can provide benefits for skin health (Scarlett Whitening, 2021). In the second quarter of 2022, Scarlett Whitening succeeded in entering the third top local brand in e-commerce in the facial and body care product category. Based on sales data in April-June, Scarlett Whitening products have reached sales figures of IDR 40.9 billion (Kompas, 2022).

The large number of beauty brands in Indonesia has caused competition to become increasingly fierce, so companies must have the right strategy as the main guideline in the marketing sector. A marketing strategy is a comprehensive, integrated, and integrated plan with the activities that the company will carry out to achieve marketing goals (Laia, 2022). When companies implement the right strategy, consumers can develop feelings and interest in buying which can be prevented by making purchases (Dimasakti & Hussein, 2020). Therefore, to increase purchasing interest, it is necessary to understand consumer awareness of the brands and/or products offered (Dimasakti & Hussein, 2020).

Marketing activities must always adjust and be able to adapt to a dynamic market so that they can achieve purchasing interest or purchase intention. One marketing strategy that is usually used is advertising (Meidianti & Nugrahani, 2022). However, there are still many marketers who market their products through advertising in general and it looks very monotonous. This causes many people to switch to more interesting shows, one of which is Korean drama. This media has been widely used so that many companies have changed their marketing strategy through product placement in Korean dramas (Galingging & Budiman, 2022).

Product placement is a method used to increase promotion by displaying a product in a broadcast with the impression that the product is part of the event being broadcast. The product placement process in Korean dramas is shown through scenes performed by the actors. Many well-known brands have implemented their marketing strategies through product placement, such as Kopiko in the drama Vincenzo, Samsung in the drama Crash Landing on You, Hyundai in the drama Descendants of The Sun and many other brands (Galingging & Budiman, 2022). One of Indonesia's dairy products, Indomilk, also implemented a product placement strategy in the Tokopedia X BTS video; Therefore, many marketers are interested in using this method to increase consumer attraction to products (Pramesthi, 2021). The appearance of the Scarlett Whitening product in the Korean drama entitled "Today's Webtoon" immediately became a hot topic of conversation in Indonesia (Efrilla, 2022)



Figure 1. Scarlett Whitening product in the drama "Today's Webtoon"
Source: Detik.com (2022)

Based on the background description, the research objective taken is what is the role of Brand Awareness as an intervening variable in the influence of Product Placement Scarlett Whitening in the Drama "Today's Webtoon" on Purchase Interest?

Product placement aims to increase brand awareness and change consumer attitudes towards products. Placing a product in a drama scene can increase consumer awareness of a product which will later lead to the purchasing process (Pancaningrum & Ulani, 2020). The emergence of trust in product quality will lead to changes in consumer attitudes and interest in a product. High brand awareness shows that the product has reached a high level of awareness in the minds of consumers so that it can influence someone's buying interest (Dimasakti & Hussein, 2020). Therefore, brand awareness is the initial stage of consumers which can influence consumers' purchasing intentions for a product (Pancaningrum & Ulani, 2020). Placing a product in a drama can increase brand awareness, which can create consumer purchase intentions for a product.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Product Placement

Product placement is one of the media used by marketers as a marketing strategy to market their products through advertising. The aim is to provide a positive impression and brand image in the minds of consumers. Usually, product placement is found in films, dramas, and TV shows, in some cases the actors or actresses will interact with the product in a scene or place the product somewhere in the scene (Clive, Lopian, & Maria, 2022).

According to Belch and Belch (2021), product placement is a form of advertising and promotion that places products in TV shows or films to gain exposure. Product placement has similarities to subliminal advertising or subliminal advertising, where marketers try to involve exposing individuals to subtle messages embedded in other things that aim to influence the target audience without knowing that they are being influenced. Product placement is characterized by the designation of brands, logos and products that appear without information or products or brands that follow the story line and some product information appears (Mardha and Lailiyah, 2019). The main aim of product placement is to attract audience attention such as brand awareness, increase memory about the brand/product, influence attitudes and purchasing interest. Proper product placement can attract the audience's attention so that the product or brand seen can be processed in the audience's memory. Appropriate product placement is shown by placing the product in a layer that is not too prominent and is in accordance with the story being developed (Neale and Corkindale, 2022).

According to Russell (Purnomo, 2022), there are three dimensions to measure product placement, namely visual, verbal and plot. Visual Dimension or screen placement shows the appearance of a brand on the screen or what is usually called screen placement. Auditory/verbal Dimension shows how the product is placed so that consumers can recognize it verbally and auditorily by mentioning the brand. Plot Dimension/ Placement places the product focused on the storyline. This dimension has two types of product placement in the plot, namely non-plot placement and pointing and mentioning brands outside the context of the dialogue flow. In this type, displays products with implicit properties.

In the drama Today's Webtoon there is a scene that shows the actress in the drama using the Scarlett Whitening product. The Scarlett Whitening product in the drama is described as a product used to care for the skin and has a fragrant aroma. This scene is included in the drama storyline, so the indicators for measuring product placement use visual dimensions and plot dimensions. Second, full plot placement is placing a product that is completely determined by the dialogue contained in the scenario so that it is explicit.



Figure 2. Product Placement Scarlett Whitening in Drama Today's Webtoon
Source: Wolipop (2022)

Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is the stage of consumer behavior in wanting a product before deciding to buy it after knowing the information (Silaningsih & Utami, 2018; Yasmin & Saputri, 2019). This was then confirmed by Belch and Belch (2021) that the tendency that consumers must buy a brand or product is in accordance with their purchasing motives and the attributes or characteristics of the brand or product being considered. According to Vranesevic and Stanandccaronec (in Harsono & Widjanarko, 2019), purchase intention is a personal intention to buy a brand option chosen for him after conducting an evaluation. Interest drives consumers to decide to buy or not the desired product (Maulana & Alisha, 2020). If consumers already have confidence in the product, they will decide to buy (Dewi, 2019).

Purchase interest is influenced by the motives a person must have a product that is needed and desired. Consumers' interest in owning is influenced by the consumer's urge to own and buy the product (Maulana & Alisha, 2020). The opportunity for buying interest to occur will be greater because the product matches the level of interest (Febriyantoro, 2020). According to Mardiasika in Iskandar & Halim (2019), buying interest is influenced by great attention, interest, desire, a feeling of belonging, and belief or conviction, a feeling of trust in the quality, usability, and benefits of the product to be purchased.

According to Ferdinand in Japariato & Adelia (2020), buying interest or purchase intention has four indicators, namely: transactional interest, referential interest, preferential interest, and exploratory interest. Meanwhile, Dachyar & Banjarnahor (2017) and Sivaram, Munawar, & Ali (2019) show indicators of the possibility of buying, recommending, providing information, and transacting in the future.

Brand Awareness

Brand awareness is the presence or memory of a brand where the media used not only strengthens the relationship between consumers and the company, but the company can access directly to its consumers (Febriyantoro, 2020; Novrian & Rizki, 2021). Creating brand awareness can reactivate the brand to appear in memory which will be used in decision making (Priana, 2019).

Trust in a product will be one of the basic keys for a person in determining the choice to use a product or service (Novrian & Rizki, 2021). Consumers can remember or be aware of the presence of a product or brand, so that it can have a strong influence on consumers in making decisions. The more well-known a product or brand is or the information about a product or brand is understood by consumers, the higher the chance of consumers buying that product or brand (Cuomo et al, 2019).

There are several levels of awareness indicators starting from the lowest to the highest level. According to Aaker (in Sagita & Siswahyudianto, 2022), the levels shown in a picture of the brand awareness pyramid are Unware of brand, Brand recognition, Brand recall, and Top of mind. This indicator was also found in research by Purnamasari, Hurriyati, & Dirgantari (2020) and Bakator, Đorđević, & Čočkaló (2018).

Brand awareness is an important factor in influencing consumer purchasing intentions, this is because the purpose of brand awareness is to differentiate a product or brand (Purnomo, 2022). Brand awareness can show a consumer's impression or assessment of the product, which means that consumers will remember the brand and realize that the product used is the best brand of similar products on the market (Sagita & Siswahyudianto, 2022).

Research Hypothesis

The Influence of Product Placement on Purchase Intention

Product placement is used by companies with the aim of increasing consumer brand knowledge which will influence consumer purchasing intentions. Based on previous research, there is a positive and negative relationship between product placement and purchase interest. Research by Juliana & Sihombing (2019); Saman (2019); Lin & Cheng-Yue (2018); Raza, Amber; Jalees, Tariq (2016) show that there is a positive relationship between product placement and purchase intention. So the first hypothesis in this research is:

H1: Scarlett Whitening's product placement has a positive effect on purchasing interest in the drama Today's Webtoon

The Influence of Product Placement on Brand Awareness

Product placement in a scene can attract the attention of the audience so that the product gets more recognition, attention and exposure from the audience (Dimasakti & Hussein, 2020). The aim of product placement is to increase brand awareness. Research by Steven & Sudrajat (2018); Lydda, Saerang, & Arie (2023); Rarassati & Hariwan (2015); Kumar (2017); Nadeak & Setiawan (2024) show that there is a positive and significant influence between product placement on brand awareness. The second hypothesis in this research is:

H2: Scarlett Whitening's product placement has a positive effect on brand awareness in the drama Today's Webtoon

The Influence of Brand Awareness on Purchase Intention

Brand awareness is one of the factors that influences consumer buying interest where the brand will be embedded in the consumer's mind which will then influence the consumer's decision to make a purchase (Pancaningrum & Ulani, 2020). Purchase interest is influenced by the level of consumer recognition of a brand (Kurniasari & Budiarmo, 2018). Previous researchers have shown that there is a positive relationship between product placement and brand awareness. Research by Budiono, et al (2021); Hameed, Malik, Hadi, & Raza (2023); Azzari (2020); Ellitan (2022) shows that brand awareness influences consumer buying interest. Apart from that, research conducted by Santoso et al (2018) also shows that brand awareness has a significant influence on purchasing interest. The third hypothesis in this research is:

H3: Brand Awareness Scarlett Whitening has a positive effect on purchasing interest in the drama Today's Webtoon

The Influence of Product Placement on Purchase Interest through Brand Awareness as an Intervening Variable

Product placement can increase brand awareness of a product which will later be followed by a purchasing process (Pancaningrum & Ulani, 2020). Previous research shows the influence of product placement on purchase interest with brand awareness as a mediating variable. Research conducted by Purnomo (2022) proves that product placement has a positive influence on purchasing interest which is mediated by brand awareness. Apart from that, research conducted by Pancaningrum & Ulani (2020) also showed similar results. Based on this statement, the fourth hypothesis in this research is:

H4: Scarlett Whitening product placement has a positive effect on purchasing interest through brand awareness as an intervening variable in the drama Today's Webtoon.

METHODOLOGY

The method used in this research is a quantitative method. The type of research used is explanatory research. Explanatory research is research that intends to explain the relationship between the variables studied (Kurniasari & Budiarmo, 2018). This research uses three variables, namely dependent variables, independent variables, and intervening variables. Operational definitions in this research include:

Table 1. Operational Definition

No.	Variable	Indicator
1.	Product Placement	1. Visual Dimension (Screen Placement) 2. Plot Dimension (Plot Placement) (Purnomo, 2022)
2.	Purchase intention	1. Transactional interest 2. Referential interest 3. Preferential interest 4. Exploratory interest (Japariato & Adelia, 2020)
3.	Brand Awareness	1. Top of Mind 2. Brand Recall 3. Brand Recognition 4. Unware of Brand (Indrojarwo & Abdulloh, 2020)

The population in this study are Indonesian people who have watched the drama "Today's Webtoon" aged 18 to 35 years (Khoiri, 2018) and use Scarlett Whitening products. The total sample was 272 people. The sampling procedure used in this research was non-probability with a purposive sampling technique. This research uses quantitative data obtained from primary data.

The data collection technique used is a survey using a questionnaire. The questionnaire tool used Google Form. Questionnaires were distributed to viewers of the drama Today's Webtoon and those who have used the Scarlett Whitening product. The variable measurement scale that researchers use is the Likert Scale.

Validity testing was carried out using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Method. Reliability testing was carried out using the Cronbach Alpha test. The classical assumption test is a method used to find out whether there is a classical assumption problem or not. The classical assumption test consists of the normality test, multicollinearity test, autocorrelation test and heteroscedasticity test.

Data analysis in this research uses path analysis techniques, because this research uses one independent/dependent variable (X), one dependent/independent variable (Y) and one intervening variable (Z). The following is a picture of the path analysis model in this research:

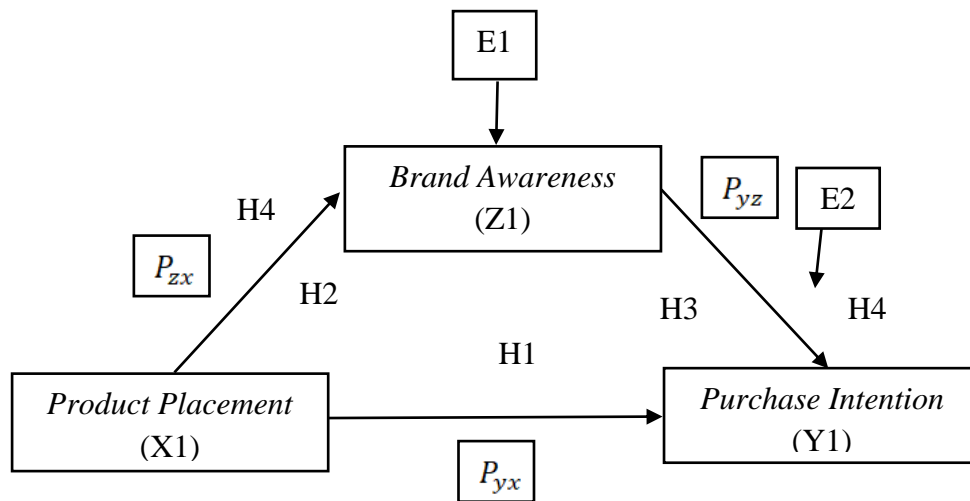


Figure 3. Path Analysis

Information:

X1: exogenous independent variable product placement

Z: endogenous dependent variable that mediates brand awareness

Y: endogenous dependent variable purchase intention

E1: Standard error 1

E2: Standard error 2

Based on the path diagram above, it has two structural equations, namely:

$$(i) Z = P_{zx}X + e1 \text{ (substructure equation 1) } \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

$$(ii) Y = P_{yx}X + P_{yz} + e2 \text{ (substructure equation 2) } \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

RESULT

Description of respondent characteristics

The following is a brief description of the characteristics of respondents based on several demographic indicators.

Table 2. Descriptive data

Items	Number of respondents	Percentage
Gender/sex		
Male	55	20,2%
Female	217	79,8%
Age		
19-24 yr	208	76,4%
25-30 yr	64	23,5%
Occupation		
Employee	65	23,9%
Freelancers	10	3,7%

Student/Students	165	60,7%
Part-Time Worker	21	7,7%
Doesn't work	3	1,1%
Parents/Housewives	5	1,8%
Content Creator	2	0,8%
Businessman	1	0,4%
Number of respondents	272	100%

Based on the research results, it shows that the majority of Scarlett Whitening consumers and viewers of the drama Today's Webtoon are dominated by women aged 19-24 years and with student status.

Validity and Reliability Test

Instrument testing in research uses validity tests and reliability tests. All indicators are valid. Reliability testing is carried out on questions that have passed the validity test. All of variables are reliable.

Classic assumption test

The classic assumption tests in this research are the normality test, multicollinearity test and heteroscedasticity test. The normality test in this research used the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The significance level used is $\alpha = 0.05$. The normality test results show all probability values p or Exact. Sig. (2-tailed) is greater than the significance level, namely 0.05, which indicates that the data is normally distributed. The multicollinearity test is seen from the variance inflation factor (VIF) value. If the VIF value is more than 10 then the independent variable has multicollinearity. The VIF (variance inflation factor) value of the product placement variable (X) is 1.005 and the VIF (variance inflation factor) value of the brand awareness variable (Y) is 1.005. This shows that all VIF values are <10 , so it can be concluded that there is no multicollinearity between the two variables. The heteroscedasticity test is explained by the Glejser test which is indicated by the significance coefficient value. Sig value. The Glejser of the product placement variable (X) is $0.977 > 0.05$ and Sig. The Glejser of the brand awareness variable (Z) is $0.347 > 0.05$, so it is concluded that heteroscedasticity does not occur.

Path Analysis

Path analysis testing is used to test the significance of direct and indirect effects.

1. Testing direct influence

Substructure I: Product Placement (X) to Brand Awareness (Z)

Table 3. Substructure Testing II

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	20.406	3.263		6.254	.000

<i>Product Placement (X)</i>	.378	.150	.151	2.509	.013
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a. Dependent Variable: *Brand Awareness (Z)*

Based on the t test results in the table, the results are:

$$Z = 20.406 + 0.378X + e$$

Based on Table 3, the regression coefficient value for variable e is 0.378 and the product placement sig value is $0.013 < 0.005$ so that product placement has a positive influence on brand awareness. It is known that the calculated t or t statistic from product placement is $2.509 > t$ table 1.969, then product placement (X) has a significant effect on brand awareness (Z). So, it can be concluded that product placement (X) has a positive and significant effect on brand awareness (Z) (H2 Accepted)

Substructure Testing II

Substructure II: Product Placement (X) and Brand Awareness (Z) on Purchase Interest (Y)

Table 4. Substructure Testing II

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
1 (Constant)	13.273	.995		13.345	.000
<i>Product Placement (X)</i>	.164	.043	.188	3.790	.000
<i>Brand Awareness (Z)</i>	.186	.017	.533	10.726	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention (Y)

Based on t-test in Table 6, equation is obtain:

$$Y = 13,273 + 0,164X + 0,186Z + e$$

Based on Table 4, the regression coefficient value for the product placement variable is 0.164 with a product placement sig of $0.000 < 0.005$. It is known that the product placement t statistic is $3.790 > t$ table 1.969, so it can be concluded that product placement (X) has a positive and significant effect on purchasing interest (Y) (H1 Accepted)

The regression coefficient value of the brand awareness variable is 0.186 and is positive with a product placement sig of $0.000 < 0.005$. It is known that t calculated from product placement is $10.726 > t$ table 1.969, so it can be concluded that brand awareness (Z) has a positive and significant effect on purchasing interest (Y) (H3 Accepted)

2. Indirect Effect Testing

The figure below presents the results of mediation tests as direct and indirect effects.

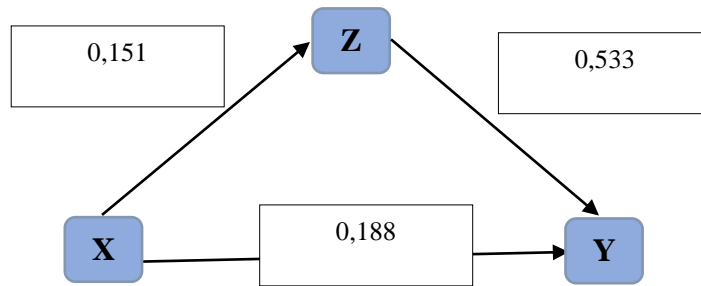


Figure 4. Intervening Testing
Source: Research result (2023)

The results of the path analysis show that there is an indirect influence of the product placement variable on purchasing interest through brand awareness with an indirect influence of:

$$\begin{aligned} & \beta_{ZX} \times \beta_{YZ} \\ & = 0.151 \times 0.533 \\ & = 0.080 \end{aligned}$$

Information:

β_{ZX} = beta value of product placement on brand awareness
 β_{YZ} = beta value of brand awareness on purchasing interest

Meanwhile, the total influence of product placement on purchasing interest is:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total influence} & = \beta_{YX} + (\beta_{ZX} \times \beta_{YZ}) \\ & = 0.188 + (0.151 \times 0.533) \\ & = 0.268 \end{aligned}$$

Information:

β_{YX} = beta value of product placement on buying interest
 β_{ZX} = beta value of product placement on brand awareness
 β_{YZ} = beta value of brand awareness on purchasing interest

It is known that the value of the direct influence of product placement on purchasing interest is 0.164, while the indirect influence of product placement on purchasing interest through brand awareness is 0.080 and the total influence is 0.234. Indirect influence has a smaller value than direct influence. The indirect effect will be tested using the Sobel test.

$$\begin{aligned} t & = p2p3 / Sp2p3 \\ t & = 0.070 / 0.024 \\ t & = 2.853 \end{aligned}$$

Based on the analysis above, the calculated t value is 2.853 > t table 1.969, so product placement has a significant effect on purchase interest with brand awareness as an intervening variable (H4 is accepted).

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Product Placement on Purchase Intention

The results of the Hypothesis 1 test show a positive and significant influence between the product placement variable on purchasing interest with a coefficient value of 0.164 with a Sig value. = 0.000 < 0.05 and t value 3.790 > t table 1.969. The results of this research are in line with the results of research by Juliana & Sihombing (2019) showing that there is a positive relationship between product placement and purchase interest. Research from Natasha & Ikhma (2022) on the Kopiko product in the drama Vincenzo is also in line with the results of this research which shows that product placement has a positive effect on buying interest. In this case, viewers of the drama Today's Webtoon can be aware of the product placement of Scarlett Whitening in the drama, which will have a positive impact on interest in purchasing this product.

According to Mardha and Lailiyah (2019), one of the main objectives of product placement is to influence consumers' attitudes and buying interest. The right product placement can attract the attention of the audience. Scarlett Whitening can target the audience appropriately, where Korean dramas have a demographic target of young viewers and women. Scarlett Whitening, which offers products for skin care, makes product placement in dramas to help reach the right target demographic.

Korean dramas have high popularity and a wide fan base, so Korean dramas have a strong influence on trends and habits. The Scarlett Whitening product in the drama is used by a famous Korean actress who is idolized by many people, so it can create a sense of trust and credibility towards Scarlett Whitening.

The Influence of Product Placement on Brand Awareness

Based on the results of the second hypothesis test, product placement has a positive and significant value on brand awareness (coefficient value 0.378 and significant with a Sig. value = 0.013 < 0.05 and the statistical value t is 2.509 > t table 1.969). The results of this research are in line with those conducted by Steven & Sudrajat (2018) and Emilia, Chan, & Tresna (2021) that there is a positive and significant influence between product placement on brand awareness.

The aim of product placement is to increase brand awareness. Product placement in dramas can attract the attention of the audience so that the product gets more recognition, attention and exposure from the audience. Korean dramas have become a global phenomenon with huge fans all over the world and often become a reference for trends and habits, especially in Indonesia. Korean dramas often succeed in building strong emotional engagement with the audience. This can reach a wider audience and gain significant exposure, thereby increasing brand awareness among the audience.

The Korean drama Today's Webtoon is played by popular actresses and actors and is idolized by many fans. When actresses use Scarlett Whitening products in dramas, fans or viewers will pay attention to the brand, so they will trust the brand, which can increase brand awareness and have a positive effect

on brand awareness. This research shows that product placement in dramas can increase brand awareness of Scarlett Whitening.

The Influence of Brand Awareness on Purchase Intention

Based on the results of the hypothesis test, brand awareness has a positive and significant influence on purchase interest (coefficient value 0.186 and significant with a Sig. value = 0.000 < 0.05 and it is known that the t value is 3.790 > t table 1.969). The results of this research are in line with those conducted by Budiono, Purba, & Adirineksi (2021) and Santoso, Erdiansyah, & Pribadi (2018) which show that brand awareness influences consumer buying interest.

Consumers will buy products with brands that are already known. This is also strengthened by the AIDA concept (Awareness, Interest, Desire, Action), where Scarlett Whitening is able to create an attraction for consumers to find out about its products. After successfully attracting consumers' attention, consumers will develop an interest in Scarlett Whitening which will arouse consumers' buying interest and ultimately consumers will decide to purchase the product.

The Influence of Scarlett Whitening Product Placement on Purchase Intention through Brand Awareness as an Intervening Variable.

Based on the results of the indirect influence test using the Sobel test, it shows that the calculated t value is 2.853 > t table 1.969, indicating that brand awareness has an influence in mediating product placement on purchasing interest. The results of this research are in line with those conducted by Purnomo (2022) and Pancaningrum & Ulani (2020) showing that product placement has a positive influence on purchasing interest which is mediated by brand awareness.

When Scarlett Whitening is featured in a Korean drama, viewers can form positive associations between the brand and the story, characters or emotional moments produced by the drama. This can influence the audience's perception of Scarlett Whitening and create a positive tendency to consider or purchase the product. Consumers who can remember or be aware of the presence of a product or brand will have a strong influence on consumer buying interest. Purchase interest will encourage consumers to decide to make a purchase or not.

CONCLUSSION AND RECOMENDATION

The research results show that Scarlett Whitening product placement has a positive and significant effect on purchasing interest. The results of the second research show that product placement has a positive and significant effect on brand awareness. Meanwhile, the third result shows that brand awareness has a positive and significant effect on consumer buying interest. The fourth result shows that Scarlett Whitening's product placement in the drama Today's Webtoon has a positive and significant effect on consumer buying interest with brand awareness as an intervening variable.

Based on the research results, it is proven that product placement (independent variable) mediated by brand awareness (intervening variable) cannot influence purchasing interest (dependent variable). This is because there are other factors besides brand awareness that are more significant in influencing purchasing interest. These variables include product or service quality, price, brand reputation, customer reviews and a sense of need for the product. The results of this research are in line with research conducted by Nitami & Asnawi (2023) which shows that brand awareness is not strong enough to influence consumer buying interest because there are other factors that are stronger in generating consumer buying interest.

Korean dramas are an interesting spectacle for the public so they can be used as a forum to promote a product, namely through product placement. This aims to increase awareness of a brand, by placing a product in a drama scene it can increase consumer awareness of a product which will influence consumer buying interest.

There are several indicators of brand awareness that Scarlett Whitening must increase. Scarlett Whitening must create a strategy that can increase top of mind brand awareness indicators, not only focusing on product placement but also using or maximizing other promotional strategies such as the use of influencers, brand ambassadors, and so on. So that when consumers see the product placement carried out by Scarlett Whitening, it can provide consumer brand awareness which can later influence consumer buying interest.

LIMITATION AND FURTHER RESEARCH

This research has the limitation that this research only took samples from Indonesian society, while the drama Today's Webtoon also has audiences outside Indonesia. Therefore, further research can be developed to a broader scope involving more diverse samples to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between product placement, brand awareness and purchasing interest in various cultures or regions. There are still many other variables that influence buying interest that are not used in this research, because the author examines variables based on previous studies which are used as references. Future research needs to include other variables that can influence purchasing interest which were not examined in this study. The aim is to gain a more complete and holistic understanding of the factors that influence buying interest.

It is hoped that this research will be of interest to companies and marketers to try to pay attention to further product placement strategies by identifying dramas that are relevant to consumer demographics and interests, that have influence and a strong fan base, so that the product placements carried out can reach a wide audience. The actors or actresses used in the drama must have a big influence on Scarlett Whitening's target market so that it can strengthen brand awareness and consumer buying interest.

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