



From Fandom to Purchase Intention: The Role of Parasocial Relationship, Celebrity Admiration, and Fan Identification in Korean Celebrity Influence

Vicky Immanuela Sumangando¹, Juniarty^{2*}

^{1,2}Universitas Pelita Harapan, Tangerang, Indonesia

Email: 01011230156@student.uph.edu¹, juniarty.fe@uph.edu²

*Corresponding author: juniarty.fe@uph.edu

Abstract. The global expansion of the Korean Wave (Hallyu) has increased the use of Korean celebrities in K-Beauty marketing, yet the pathway from fandom involvement to purchase intention remains unclear. This study examines a sequential model linking audience involvement, parasocial relationship, celebrity admiration, brand awareness, perceived product quality, fan identification, and purchase intention among Indonesian consumers. A quantitative cross-sectional survey involved 133 respondents aged 17 years or older who had followed Korean celebrities for at least six months and encountered celebrity-endorsed products. Data were analyzed using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS 4 through a disjoint two-stage approach. The measurement model met reliability and validity criteria after refinement. Five of seven hypotheses were supported. Audience involvement positively influenced celebrity admiration and parasocial relationship; celebrity admiration influenced brand awareness; brand awareness influenced perceived product quality; and perceived product quality influenced purchase intention. Parasocial relationship did not significantly influence celebrity admiration, while fan identification did not significantly moderate the admiration–brand awareness relationship. The model explained 39.3% of purchase intention variance. The findings highlight brand awareness and perceived product quality as key mechanisms linking celebrity-based fandom engagement to purchase intention.

Keywords: Celebrity Admiration; Fan Identification; K-Beauty; Parasocial Relationship; Purchase Intention.

1. INTRODUCTION

The global diffusion of the Korean Wave (Hallyu) has connected Korean entertainment, celebrities, fandom communities, and consumer brands across national markets. Through television programs, music, streaming platforms, and social media, Korean celebrities provide opportunities for brands to reach audiences beyond conventional advertising. In Indonesia, Sudhana and Iskandar (2024) find that Korean celebrity endorsement positively influences purchase intention toward Korean products, demonstrating the commercial relevance of celebrity influence (Jin & Ryu, 2020; Wang & Liu, 2023). Within the beauty sector, Lasse et al. (2024) show that Korean celebrity endorsement contributes to brand image and perceived quality in the context of an Indonesian skincare brand. Although local skincare brands endorsed by Korean celebrities differ from Korean-origin K-Beauty products, this evidence provides a relevant basis for examining how celebrity-related responses translate into product evaluations (Sudhana & Iskandar, 2024; Lasse et al., 2024).

Indonesia provides a relevant setting for examining this phenomenon because fandom offers a social context in which celebrity-related interests intersect with commercial activities. Tertiano and Salehudin (2023), using data from 1,016 respondents familiar with collaborations between Indonesian companies and K-Pop idols, find that customer-to-community

identification positively influences both attitudinal and behavioral engagement. They also find that attitude toward the celebrity predicts purchase intention, whereas attitude toward the brand does not. These findings indicate that identification, engagement, and evaluations of celebrities and brands play different roles in fandom-related consumption. They therefore raise an important question: how does involvement with a celebrity become a response toward the endorsed brand and, subsequently, an intention to purchase its products? (Tertiano & Salehudin, 2023).

Addressing this question requires distinguishing the psychological responses associated with audience involvement. Some consumers develop a perceived sense of intimacy with a celebrity, commonly described as a parasocial relationship, whereas others develop admiration for the celebrity or define part of their social identity through membership in a fandom. Research on social media influencers identifies parasocial relationships as part of sequential mechanisms connecting source influence with purchase intention, including pathways involving benign envy and perceived brand–influencer fit (Sharkasi & Rezakhah, 2023; Bi, 2023; Burnasheva & Suh, 2022; Chung & Cho, 2020; Nadroo et al., 2025). Research on Indonesian K-Pop collaborations also distinguishes interpersonal identification from identification with the wider community (Tertiano & Salehudin, 2023). Drawing on these perspectives, the present study differentiates parasocial relationship as perceived interpersonal closeness, celebrity admiration as a favorable affective evaluation of the celebrity, and fan identification as a sense of belonging to the fan community. (Sharkasi & Rezakhah, 2023; Tertiano & Salehudin, 2023)

Existing evidence suggests that celebrity-related involvement can influence behavior beyond media consumption. Li et al. (2025) show that fans construct one-sided relationships with idols through media information and that these relationships can inform decisions involving travel and idol-related consumption. Similarly, Sinambela et al. (2024) find that celebrity involvement shapes evaluations of celebrity-associated destinations through celebrity worship. These studies provide evidence from tourism contexts that involvement with celebrities can have consequences beyond entertainment. In a product context, however, the mechanisms connecting celebrity responses to brand evaluations require separate examination. Lasse et al. (2024) demonstrate the relevance of brand image and perceived quality in Korean celebrity endorsement of local skincare, suggesting that attention to the celebrity should be considered alongside consumers' evaluations of the endorsed product. (Lasse et al., 2024).

This distinction is important because prior findings in the Indonesian Korean-entertainment context are not fully consistent. Using data from 221 Indonesian K-Pop fans,

Siahaan et al. (2024) identify a sequential process in which audience involvement strengthens celebrity worship, celebrity worship increases brand awareness, brand awareness improves perceived product quality, and perceived product quality increases purchase intention. In contrast, Nurhayati and Prastyani (2023), based on 290 Korean-entertainment fans, find that audience involvement increases celebrity worship, but celebrity worship does not significantly affect brand awareness or purchase intention. Their results instead identify brand awareness and perceived product quality as significant predictors of purchase intention. Taken together, these findings suggest that the transfer from celebrity-focused attachment to brand response is not consistent across the studies reviewed. Differences in research contexts, construct definitions, and model specifications therefore warrant closer examination.

Two issues require further investigation. First, the celebrity-worship models examined by Siahaan et al. (2024) and Nurhayati and Prastyani (2023) do not separately test perceived interpersonal closeness and affective admiration in the configuration proposed here. Meanwhile, Sharkasi and Rezakhah (2023) examine parasocial relationships through a different set of sequential mechanisms. Building on these approaches, the present study tests whether audience involvement generates both parasocial relationship and celebrity admiration, and whether parasocial relationship subsequently reinforces admiration. This distinction allows the study to examine whether feeling close to a celebrity and admiring that celebrity represent related but empirically separable responses. (Sharkasi & Rezakhah, 2023)

Second, the relationship between celebrity admiration and brand awareness may depend on fan identification. Tertiano and Salehudin (2023) establish the relevance of community identification to customer engagement. Building on that finding, the present study proposes that identification with a fandom may condition how admiration translates into awareness of an endorsed brand. Fans who identify strongly with their community may encounter additional brand-related discussions and shared promotional content, potentially increasing the salience of celebrity-endorsed brands. This moderating role is an extension proposed in the present study and requires empirical testing. (Tertiano & Salehudin, 2023)

The present study addresses these issues by examining a sequential model that begins with audience involvement and ends with purchase intention toward K-Beauty products promoted by Korean celebrities. Specifically, the model proposes that audience involvement influences both celebrity admiration and parasocial relationship; parasocial relationship influences celebrity admiration; celebrity admiration influences brand awareness; brand awareness influences perceived product quality; and perceived product quality influences purchase intention. Fan identification is positioned as a moderator of the relationship between

celebrity admiration and brand awareness. This specification examines fandom identification as a potential condition affecting the transfer of admiration from the celebrity to the endorsed brand.

This study seeks to make three contributions. Theoretically, it differentiates perceived interpersonal closeness, affective admiration, and community identification within an integrated model of celebrity influence. Empirically, it addresses inconsistent Indonesian findings concerning the relationship between celebrity-focused attachment and brand awareness, while examining fan identification as a potential boundary condition. Managerially, it assesses how celebrity-related involvement connects with brand awareness and perceived product quality in the formation of purchase intention. Accordingly, the study aims to provide a more precise account of how fandom-related engagement may translate into product-related intention in the Indonesian K-Beauty market.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Audience Involvement

Audience involvement refers to the degree of psychological response and engagement that individuals develop toward mediated content and media personae. It is expressed through behaviors such as repeatedly consuming celebrity content, searching for information, and discussing that content with others, as well as through emotional absorption in the narrative or persona. Siahaan et al. (2024) explain that involvement in Korean entertainment is rooted in identification, transportation, and parasocial processes. Thus, audience involvement represents the starting condition through which a celebrity becomes sufficiently salient to evoke stronger interpersonal and evaluative responses.

Greater involvement provides consumers with more frequent and personally relevant information about a celebrity. This repeated exposure can increase perceived familiarity and generate admiration by making the celebrity's achievements, personality, appearance, and lifestyle more cognitively accessible. Empirical studies in Indonesia consistently show that audience or celebrity involvement increases celebrity worship or admiration (Nurhayati & Prastyani, 2023; Siahaan et al., 2024; Sinambela et al., 2024). Although the present study uses the term celebrity admiration to emphasize a positive and non-pathological evaluation, the broader celebrity-worship literature remains relevant because its entertainment-social dimension captures fans' interest, enjoyment, and appreciation of a favored celebrity. Audience involvement can also encourage the formation of a parasocial relationship. A parasocial relationship is a one-sided perceived bond in which audiences experience familiarity,

closeness, and intimacy with a media figure despite the absence of reciprocal interaction. Li et al. (2025) explain that fans construct a subjective celebrity persona from television, magazines, internet content, and social media, creating an imagined interpersonal connection. The more actively audiences follow and process celebrity-related content, the more opportunities they have to interpret the celebrity's communication as personal and relational. Hence:

H1: Audience involvement positively influences celebrity admiration.

H2: Audience involvement positively influences parasocial relationship.

Parasocial Relationship and Celebrity Admiration

Parasocial relationship and celebrity admiration capture different aspects of the fan-celebrity connection. Parasocial relationship concerns perceived interpersonal closeness, whereas celebrity admiration concerns respect, appreciation, and a favorable affective judgment of the celebrity. The distinction matters because familiarity does not necessarily equal admiration. Nevertheless, a stronger perceived relationship can provide an affective basis for admiration: when fans feel that they know and understand a celebrity, they may evaluate the celebrity more favorably and regard the celebrity as personally meaningful or aspirational.

Li et al. (2025) demonstrate that perceived parasocial ties influence how fans interpret their connection with idols and how they make celebrity-related decisions. Sinambela et al. (2024) likewise show that involvement develops into stronger celebrity worship, which then transfers to evaluations of celebrity-associated objects. Applied to the present model, perceived intimacy should make positive celebrity attributes more personally relevant and thereby reinforce admiration. However, because parasocial closeness and admiration are not identical responses, this relationship requires direct empirical testing. Therefore:

H3: Parasocial relationship positively influences celebrity admiration.

Celebrity Admiration and Brand Awareness

Celebrity admiration is a favorable emotional and evaluative response to a celebrity whom consumers perceive as appealing, accomplished, credible, or inspiring. In this study, the construct is deliberately labeled admiration rather than pathological worship. It captures the positive component of celebrity attachment that can be relevant to marketing: admired celebrities attract attention, increase message elaboration, and provide recognizable cues that consumers can connect to endorsed brands. When fans repeatedly encounter an admired celebrity with a K-Beauty brand, the association should improve brand recognition and recall.

Evidence regarding this transfer is mixed. Siahaan et al. (2024) find that celebrity worship positively increases brand awareness among Indonesian K-Pop fans. In contrast, Nurhayati and Prastyani (2023) report no significant effect of celebrity worship on brand

awareness, suggesting that attachment to the celebrity may remain focused on the person rather than transferring to the promoted brand. This inconsistency makes the admiration-to-awareness link theoretically important to retest using a more specific celebrity-admiration construct. Accordingly:

H4: Celebrity admiration positively influences brand awareness.

Brand Awareness and Perceived Product Quality

Brand awareness is the consumer's ability to recognize or recall a brand as belonging to a particular product category. In celebrity endorsement, awareness is the first brand-level outcome because the celebrity can attract attention and provide a retrieval cue for the endorsed brand. Awareness does not itself prove objective quality; however, a familiar brand is easier to process and may be perceived as more established, credible, and differentiated, particularly when consumers have limited direct product experience.

The relationship between brand awareness and perceived product quality is supported across the attached Indonesian evidence. Siahaan et al. (2024) find that greater awareness of K-Beauty brands leads to higher perceived product quality, while Nurhayati and Prastyani (2023) similarly identify brand awareness as a significant antecedent of perceived product quality. These findings suggest that awareness serves as a cognitive bridge between celebrity-based attention and product-based evaluation. Therefore:

H5: Brand awareness positively influences perceived product quality.

The Moderating Role of Fan Identification

Fan identification refers to the extent to which individuals define themselves as members of a fandom and experience belonging, emotional significance, and shared identity with other fans. It differs from parasocial relationship because its primary referent is the fan community rather than the celebrity alone. Identification can make fandom-related symbols and consumption practices more self-relevant. Within strongly identified fandoms, members repeatedly exchange celebrity news, discuss endorsements, and recognize brands as part of a shared cultural vocabulary. Li et al. (2025) show that fan affiliations and community participation differ across fans and are associated with distinct celebrity-oriented preferences, underscoring the importance of social identity as a boundary condition of celebrity influence (Lintumäki & Koll, 2024).

Fan identification is therefore expected to shape whether admiration becomes brand awareness. When identification is high, an admired celebrity's endorsement is more likely to be noticed, rehearsed in community interaction, and incorporated into the fan's identity-relevant knowledge. When identification is low, admiration may remain a private feeling with

weaker consequences for brand recall and recognition. Positioning fan identification as a moderator, rather than as a direct predictor of purchase intention, captures this amplifying role. Thus:

H6: Fan identification positively moderates the relationship between celebrity admiration and brand awareness, such that the relationship is stronger when fan identification is high.

Perceived Product Quality and Purchase Intention

Perceived product quality is the consumer's subjective judgment of a product's overall excellence or superiority relative to alternatives. It differs from objective quality because it is formed from accessible information, experience, brand cues, and expectations. In the K-Beauty context, celebrity endorsement may create initial attention and favorable associations, but consumers still consider whether the product appears effective, reliable, safe, and worth purchasing. Perceived quality therefore represents the product-evaluation mechanism closest to purchase intention in the proposed sequence.

Purchase intention reflects a consumer's willingness or likelihood to buy a product. Siahaan et al. (2024) show that perceived product quality has a strong positive effect on intention to purchase K-Beauty products. Nurhayati and Prastyani (2023) also find a positive relationship, even though celebrity worship itself does not directly predict purchase intention. Collectively, these findings indicate that celebrity-related responses are commercially meaningful when they are converted into a credible judgment of the endorsed product. Hence:

H7: Perceived product quality positively influences purchase intention.

Conceptual Integration

The proposed model integrates personal, social, brand, and product-level mechanisms into one process. Audience involvement initiates two personal responses—parasocial relationship and celebrity admiration—while parasocial relationship is expected to deepen admiration. Celebrity admiration then transfers attention from the celebrity to the endorsed brand through brand awareness, with fan identification conditioning the strength of this transfer. Finally, brand awareness informs perceived product quality, which drives purchase intention. This sequence explains why substantial fandom activity or emotional attachment may not automatically produce buying intention: conversion depends on successful transfer across each stage of the model.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a quantitative approach and a cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationships among Audience Involvement, Parasocial Relationship, Celebrity

Admiration, Brand Awareness, Perceived Product Quality, and Purchase Intention toward K-Beauty products endorsed by Korean celebrities. The model also examines whether Fan Identification moderates the relationship between Celebrity Admiration and Brand Awareness. Data are collected at a single point in time using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS 4 (Ringle et al., 2024). PLS-SEM facilitates the estimation of relationships among latent constructs and accommodates higher-order measurement models (Hair et al., 2027; Juniarty & Wijayanti, 2025). Given the cross-sectional design, the findings are interpreted as statistical relationships consistent with the proposed theoretical model rather than definitive evidence of causality.

The target population consists of fans of Korean celebrities in Indonesia, including K-Pop idols, Korean actors, and Korean actresses. Eligible respondents are Indonesian citizens aged 17 years or older who have followed at least one Korean celebrity for a minimum of six months and actively consume Korean entertainment content, such as music, dramas, films, variety shows, or social media content. Respondents must also have encountered products endorsed by Korean celebrities and have purchased or considered purchasing celebrity-related products. These criteria are intended to ensure that respondents possess relevant experience with Korean celebrity content and endorsement activities.

A non-probability purposive sampling technique is employed to recruit respondents who meet the eligibility criteria. The final sample comprises 133 respondents. Sample adequacy should be evaluated in relation to model complexity, the smallest effect of interest, the significance level, and the desired statistical power (Hair et al., 2027). It should not be inferred solely from the ten-times rule, which can produce imprecise minimum sample-size estimates (Kock & Hadaya, 2018).

Audience Involvement is specified as a higher-order construct and estimated using the disjoint two-stage approach (Juniarty & Wijayanti, 2025; Sarstedt et al., 2019). In the first stage, the higher-order construct is omitted, and its lower-order components are estimated using their respective questionnaire indicators. The initial model includes Behavioral Involvement, Emotional Involvement, and Referential Reflection. These components are connected to the endogenous constructs predicted by Audience Involvement, namely Parasocial Relationship and Celebrity Admiration. The lower-order measurement models are assessed for indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity before their latent variable scores are used in the second stage (Hair et al., 2027; Juniarty & Wijayanti, 2025).

In the second stage, the latent variable scores of the retained lower-order components are used as indicators of Audience Involvement, following the procedure described by Juniarty and Wijayanti (2025) and Sarstedt et al. (2019). In the final model presented, Audience Involvement is represented by the scores of Behavioral Involvement and Emotional Involvement and is specified as a reflective higher-order construct. The other constructs retain their original questionnaire indicators. The higher-order measurement model is subsequently evaluated before the structural relationships are interpreted.

The second-stage model examines the relationships from Audience Involvement to Parasocial Relationship and Celebrity Admiration, from Parasocial Relationship to Celebrity Admiration, from Celebrity Admiration to Brand Awareness, from Brand Awareness to Perceived Product Quality, and from Perceived Product Quality to Purchase Intention. The moderating role of Fan Identification is assessed through the interaction between Celebrity Admiration and Fan Identification in predicting Brand Awareness, alongside the corresponding main effects. Following measurement-model assessment, structural-model evaluation considers collinearity, the magnitude and significance of path coefficients, explanatory power, and effect sizes. Bootstrapping is used to obtain confidence intervals and assess the statistical significance of the estimated effects (Hair et al., 2027; Juniarty & Wijayanti, 2025).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

At Stage 1 of the disjoint two-stage approach, the lower-order constructs (LOCs) were assessed for reliability and validity. During the initial assessment, EAI3 was removed because its outer loading was below 0.708 and an HTMT value exceeded 1, indicating a discriminant validity problem. Although indicators with loadings between 0.40 and 0.708 may be retained when reliability and validity remain adequate, acceptable AVE, composite reliability, and Cronbach's alpha alone do not establish discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2027; Juniarty & Wijayanti, 2025). Following refinement, all LOCs met the assessment criteria, with retained indicator loadings above 0.708, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability above 0.70, AVE above 0.50, and HTMT below 0.90, allowing the analysis to proceed to Stage 2.

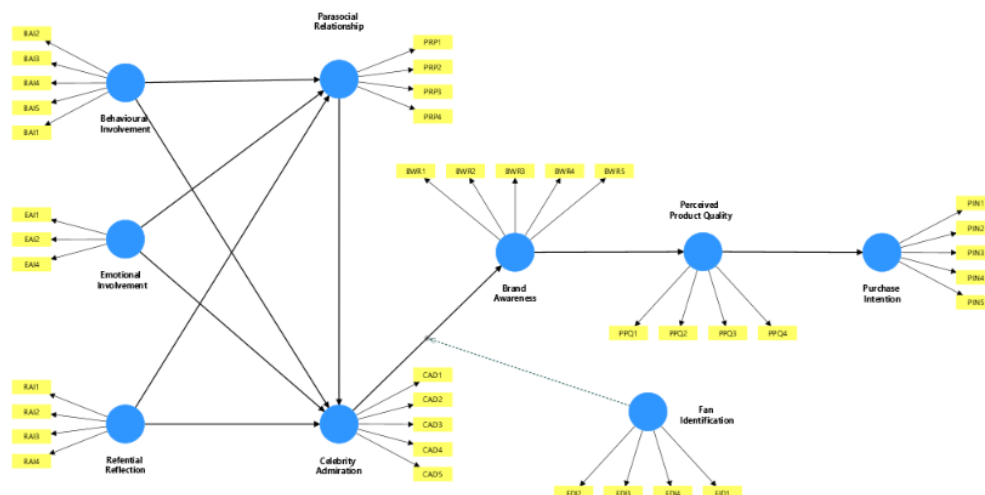


Figure 1. Lower Order Construct Stage.

At Stage 2 of the disjoint two-stage approach, the Referential Reflection latent variable score was removed from Audience Involvement because its outer loading was below 0.708. The final HOC retained Behavioral Involvement and Emotional Involvement, with loadings of 0.940 and 0.926, respectively. Cronbach's alpha (0.853), composite reliability (0.931), AVE (0.871), and HTMT values below 0.90 supported the reliability and validity of the revised measurement model (Hair et al., 2027; Juniarty & Wijayanti, 2025). Substantively, this pattern suggests that audience involvement in the present Indonesian K-Beauty context may be reflected more strongly in behavioral participation and emotional engagement than in referential reflection. This represents a potentially context-specific finding requiring further validation, rather than conclusive evidence that referential reflection is theoretically irrelevant.

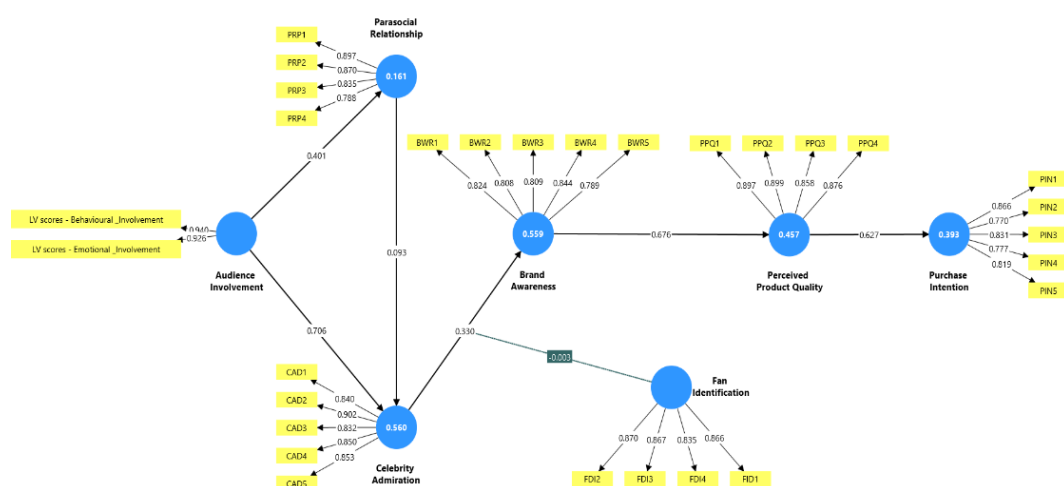


Figure 2. Lower Order Construct Stage.

The results demonstrate satisfactory measurement reliability and validity. Cronbach's alpha (0.853–0.908) and composite reliability (0.907–0.934) exceeded 0.70, while AVE values (0.662–0.871) exceeded 0.50, supporting internal consistency reliability and convergent validity. All HTMT values were below 0.90, supporting discriminant validity, and structural

VIF values (1.000–1.730) indicated no substantial collinearity concerns (Hair et al., 2027; Juniarty & Wijayanti, 2025). The model explained 55.9% of the variance in Brand Awareness, 56.0% in Celebrity Admiration, 16.1% in Parasocial Relationship, 45.7% in Perceived Product Quality, and 39.3% in Purchase Intention. Finally, all Q^2_{predict} values were positive (0.148–0.550), indicating predictive performance above the mean-based benchmark. However, these values alone do not establish high predictive power; comparison of prediction errors against an appropriate benchmark is also required (Hair et al., 2027).

Table 1. HOC Results.

Constructs	CA	CR	AVE	R ²	Q ² _{predict}
Audience Involvement	0,853	0,931	0,871	—	—
Brand Awareness	0,874	0,908	0,664	0,559	0,531
Celebrity Admiration	0,908	0,932	0,732	0,560	0,550
Fan Identification	0,882	0,919	0,739	—	—
Parasocial Relationship	0,870	0,911	0,720	0,161	0,148
Perceived Product Quality	0,905	0,934	0,779	0,457	0,442
Purchase Intention	0,872	0,907	0,662	0,393	0,265

Table 2. HTMT – HOC Results.

Constructs	AI	BA	CA	FI	PR	PPQ	PI	FI × CA
Audience Involvement (AI)	—							
Brand Awareness (BA)	0,666	—						
Celebrity Admiration (CA)	0,840	0,671	—					
Fan Identification (FI)	0,561	0,788	0,589	—				
Parasocial Relationship (PR)	0,464	0,556	0,422	0,798	—			
Perceived Product Quality (PPQ)	0,795	0,751	0,692	0,679	0,550	—		
Purchase Intention (PI)	0,567	0,779	0,436	0,665	0,656	0,695	—	
Fan Identification × Celebrity Admiration (FI × CA)	0,475	0,438	0,590	0,452	0,286	0,458	0,317	—

The structural model results supported five of the seven hypotheses, demonstrating that audience involvement, celebrity admiration, brand awareness, and perceived product quality contribute to explaining purchase intention within the proposed model. However, the relationship between parasocial relationship and celebrity admiration and the moderating role of fan identification were not statistically significant.

Audience Involvement positively predicted Celebrity Admiration ($\beta = 0.706$, $t = 12.026$, $p < .001$), with a large effect size ($f^2 = 0.949$). This finding is consistent with the involvement–worship relationship reported by Siahaan et al. (2024), as well as Nurhayati and Prastyani (2023). Sinambela et al. (2024) similarly found that celebrity involvement positively predicted celebrity worship in a Chinese-film tourism context. Although celebrity worship is broader than celebrity admiration, these studies support the general proposition that involvement with celebrity-related content is associated with stronger favorable responses toward celebrities. In the present study, this relationship specifically concerns Audience Involvement represented by behavioral and emotional involvement following the Stage 2 measurement refinement.

Audience Involvement positively predicted Parasocial Relationship ($\beta = 0.401$, $t = 5.146$, $p < .001$), with a medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.191$). This result is consistent with prior evidence connecting audience involvement with stronger celebrity-related responses (Siahaan et al., 2024). Li et al. (2025) also explain how fans construct subjective interpersonal connections with celebrities through information obtained from television, the internet, and other media. The present finding extends this reasoning to the Indonesian K-Beauty context: behavioral participation and emotional engagement with celebrity content are associated with a stronger perceived bond with the celebrity. However, Li et al. (2025) examined tourism decisions rather than the identical structural relationship tested here.

Parasocial Relationship did not significantly predict Celebrity Admiration after accounting for Audience Involvement ($\beta = 0.093$, $t = 1.277$, $p = .101$; $f^2 = 0.017$). Thus, perceived closeness did not provide a substantial additional explanation of admiration in this model. Li et al. (2025) emphasize that fans interpret their parasocial connections differently, suggesting that perceived intimacy need not produce uniform responses. One possible interpretation is that familiarity with a celebrity and admiration for that celebrity involve different psychological evaluations. This explanation requires further investigation; the nonsignificant path does not establish that parasocial relationships are generally unimportant. Instead, it supports examining closeness and admiration separately rather than if one necessarily strengthens the other.

Celebrity Admiration positively predicted Brand Awareness ($\beta = 0.330$, $t = 4.740$, $p < .001$), although its effect size was small and close to the conventional medium threshold ($f^2 = 0.143$). This finding aligns with the positive celebrity worship–brand awareness relationship reported by Siahaan et al. (2024), while differing from Nurhayati and Prastyani (2023), who found that relationship nonsignificant. The present result suggests that favorable evaluations of celebrities can extend to awareness of the brands they endorse. A plausible explanation is that admiration encourages attention to endorsement content, making associated brands more memorable. Nevertheless, differences in construct definitions and research settings mean that these findings should be regarded as contextual comparisons rather than direct replications.

Brand Awareness positively predicted Perceived Product Quality ($\beta = 0.676$, $t = 10.827$, $p < .001$), with a large effect size ($f^2 = 0.843$). This result is consistent with Siahaan et al. (2024) and Nurhayati and Prastyani (2023). In the present context, greater brand familiarity may function as a cue supporting favorable quality judgments. However, this association concerns perceived quality and does not demonstrate that greater awareness improves the product's objective quality.

Fan Identification did not significantly moderate the relationship between Celebrity Admiration and Brand Awareness ($\beta = -0.003$, $t = 0.060$, $p = .476$; $f^2 = 0.000$). Consequently, the data provide no evidence that stronger fandom identification changes the strength of this relationship. Tertiano and Salehudin (2023) found that community identification contributes to customer engagement in Indonesian K-Pop collaborations. The present finding qualifies the application of that evidence: identification may be relevant to engagement without necessarily amplifying the association between admiration and brand awareness. This result does not contradict their study directly because the two studies examine different roles and outcomes of identification. It also does not establish the absence of a direct effect of Fan Identification, which requires separate interpretation.

Perceived Product Quality positively predicted Purchase Intention ($\beta = 0.627$, $t = 11.137$, $p < .001$), with a large effect size ($f^2 = 0.646$). This finding is consistent with Siahaan et al. (2024) and the hypothesis-testing results reported by Nurhayati and Prastyani (2023). For K-Beauty marketers, the result suggests that celebrity endorsement should be accompanied by credible communication of product benefits and quality. The supported paths are consistent with the proposed sequence from involvement to brand-related evaluations and purchase intention; establishing mediation along that sequence, however, requires separate bootstrapped tests of the indirect effects.

Table 3. Structural Model Assessment and Hypothesis.

Hypothesis	Structural Relationship	Inner VIF	β	t-value	p-value	f ²	Decision
H1	Audience Involvement → Celebrity Admiration	1.191	0.706	12.026	0.000	0.949	Supported
H2	Audience Involvement → Parasocial Relationship	1.000	0.401	5.146	0.000	0.191	Supported
H3	Parasocial Relationship → Celebrity Admiration	1.191	0.093	1.277	0.101	0.017	Not Supported
H4	Celebrity Admiration → Brand Awareness	1.730	0.330	4.740	0.000	0.143	Supported
H5	Brand Awareness → Perceived Quality	1.000	0.676	10.827	0.000	0.843	Supported
H6	Fan Identification × Celebrity Admiration → Brand Awareness	1.519	-0.003	0.060	0.476	0.000	Not Supported
H7	Perceived Product Quality → Purchase Intention	1.000	0.627	11.137	0.000	0.646	Supported

The IPMA results complement the hypothesis tests by identifying where managerial attention is most valuable. Perceived Product Quality had the highest importance (0.627) and above-average performance (73.961), consistent with its significant relationship with Purchase Intention (H7). It therefore represents a strength to maintain. Brand Awareness is the main improvement priority because its importance was relatively high (0.424), while performance (69.598) was slightly below the mean of 70.054. Its significant relationship with Perceived Product Quality (H5) further supports strengthening brand recognition and communicating product benefits.

Celebrity Admiration and Audience Involvement showed high performance but comparatively low importance for Purchase Intention. Although H1, H2, and H4 were supported, additional investment in celebrity engagement may offer less value than improving brand awareness. The supplied survey profile—characterized by sustained fandom, frequent celebrity-news searches, and prominent use of TikTok and Instagram—provides a plausible context for this strong engagement. These platforms could therefore be used to connect existing celebrity interest more clearly with endorsed brands and credible quality information.

Parasocial Relationship and Fan Identification occupied the low-priority quadrant. The nonsignificant H3 and H6 suggest limited support for increasing parasocial closeness or relying on fandom identification to strengthen the admiration–awareness relationship. However, the nonsignificant moderation does not establish that Fan Identification has no other influence. Overall, the findings demonstrate that Audience Involvement plays an important role in developing Celebrity Admiration and Parasocial Relationship. However, the insignificant

relationship between Parasocial Relationship and Celebrity Admiration suggests that emotional closeness and admiration are distinct psychological responses.

The findings also show that Celebrity Admiration contributes to Brand Awareness, while Brand Awareness strongly influences Perceived Product Quality. Furthermore, Perceived Product Quality has a strong positive effect on Purchase Intention. These results suggest that Korean celebrity endorsement can attract consumer attention and strengthen brand awareness, but consumers' perceptions of product quality remain important in converting brand perceptions into purchase intention.

The insignificant moderating effect of Fan Identification indicates that strong identification with a fandom does not necessarily strengthen the effect of celebrity admiration on brand awareness. Therefore, K-Beauty brands should not rely solely on celebrity popularity or fandom strength but should also emphasize brand recognition and product quality to encourage purchase intention.

Table 4. IPMA.

Construct	Importance	Performance	Performance Category	Quadrant Recommendation
Perceived Product Quality	0.627	73.961	High importance, High Performance	Keep Up the Good Work
Brand Awareness	0.424	69.598	High Importance, Low Performance	Concentrate Here
Fan Identification	0.219	61.251	Low Importance, Low Performance	Low Priority
Celebrity Admiration	0.140	83.699	Low Importance, High Performance	Possible Overkill
Audience Involvement	0.104	78.840	Low Importance, High Performance	Possible Overkill
Parasocial Relationship	0.013	52.973	Low Importance, Low Performance	Low Priority

Note: Mean Importance = 0.254; Mean Performance = 70.054

5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that audience involvement plays an important role in shaping consumers' relationships with Korean celebrities and their perceptions of K-Beauty products. Audience Involvement has a significant positive effect on Celebrity Admiration and Parasocial Relationship. Celebrity Admiration also significantly influences Brand Awareness, while Brand Awareness significantly affects Perceived Product Quality. Furthermore, Perceived Product Quality has a significant positive effect on Purchase Intention, indicating that consumers' perceptions of product quality are an important factor in encouraging their intention to purchase K-Beauty products.

However, Parasocial Relationship does not significantly influence Celebrity Admiration, and Fan Identification does not significantly moderate the relationship between Celebrity Admiration and Brand Awareness. These findings suggest that celebrity attachment and fan identification alone may not be sufficient to strengthen consumers' perceptions of K-Beauty brands. Therefore, K-Beauty brands are recommended to combine celebrity-based marketing with strong brand awareness and clear communication of product quality and benefits. Korean celebrities can be utilized to attract attention and build consumer engagement, while consistent branding and convincing product quality should be maintained to strengthen purchase intention. Future research is recommended to examine other factors, such as brand trust, perceived value, celebrity credibility, and authenticity, as well as use larger and more diverse samples to provide broader insights into consumer behavior.

REFERENCES

- Bi, N. C. (2023). "I will buy what my 'friend' recommends": The effects of parasocial relationships, influencer credibility and self-esteem on purchase intentions. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 17(2), 157–175. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-08-2021-0214>
- Burnasheva, R., & Suh, Y. G. (2022). The moderating role of parasocial relationships in the associations between celebrity endorser's credibility and emotion-based responses. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 28(4), 343–359. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2020.1862894>
- Chung, S., & Cho, H. (2020). Celebrity endorsement in social media contexts: Understanding the role of parasocial interactions and the need to belong. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 37(7), 895–908. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCM-10-2019-3462>
- Hair, J. F., Jr., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2027). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)* (4th ed.). Sage.
- Jin, S. V., & Ryu, E. (2020). "I'll buy what my megastar buys": Exploring the impact of K-pop celebrity endorsement on consumer brand engagement and purchase intention. *International Journal of Advertising*, 39(6), 801–822. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2019.1678222>
- Juniarty, & Wijayanti, C. A. (2025). *PLS-SEM SmartPLS 3 dan 4: Panduan praktis bagi pemula*. Penerbit NEM.
- Kock, N., & Hadaya, P. (2018). Minimum sample size estimation in PLS-SEM: The inverse square root and gamma-exponential methods. *Information Systems Journal*, 28(1), 227–261. <https://doi.org/10.1111/isj.12131>
- Lasse, G. J., Elizabeth, M., Soehadi, A. W., & Sirad, D. A. (2024). Pengaruh Korean celebrity endorsement terhadap persepsi kualitas, brand image, dan intensi pembelian merek skincare lokal. *Kajian Branding Indonesia*, 6(2), 87–106. <https://doi.org/10.21632/kbi.6.2.87-106>

- Li, C., Yang, T., Liu, H., & Li, X. (2025). A para-social perspective: The influence of idol worship on fans' tourism decision-making. *Journal of Travel Research*, 64(1), 189–205. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875231207860>
- Lintumäki, P., & Koll, O. (2024). Sport team identification: A social identity perspective comparing local and distant fans. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, 25(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSMS-08-2022-0158>
- Nadroo, Z. M., Islam, J. U., & Naqshbandi, M. A. (2025). Parasocial interaction in marketing domain: Offering insights through a systematic literature review. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 49(4), e70079. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.70079>
- Nurhayati, N., & Prastyani, D. (2023). Korean entertainment: Pengaruh penggemar Korean entertainment terhadap purchase intention dan visit intention. *COMSERVA: Jurnal Penelitian dan Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 3(8), 3175–3188. <https://doi.org/10.59141/comserva.v3i08.1108>
- Ringle, C. M., Wende, S., & Becker, J.-M. (2024). SmartPLS 4. Bönningstedt: SmartPLS. <https://www.smartpls.com/>
- Sarstedt, M., Hair, J. F., Jr., Cheah, J.-H., Becker, J.-M., & Ringle, C. M. (2019). How to specify, estimate, and validate higher-order constructs in PLS-SEM. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 27(3), 197–211. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ausmj.2019.05.003>
- Sharkasi, N., & Rezakhah, S. (2023). Sequential mediation of parasocial relationships for purchase intention: PLS-SEM and machine learning approach. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2307.00005*. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2307.00005>
- Siahaan, J., Sari, Y. Y., & Wijayanti, C. A. (2024). Unveiling the impact of audience involvement, celebrity worship, brand awareness, and perceived product quality on purchase and visit intentions. *Journal of Management and Business Review*, 21(2), 200–220. <https://doi.org/10.34149/jmbr.v21i2.566>
- Sinambela, F. A., Shelvina, & Fahlevi, R. (2024). How celebrity involvement affect destination image, the mediating role of celebrity worship. *International Journal of Applied Sciences in Tourism and Events*, 8(2), 76–85. <https://doi.org/10.31940/ijaste.v8i2.76-85>
- Sudhana, P., & Iskandar, D. A. (2024). The moderating role of social media marketing in the relationship between Korean celebrity endorsement and purchase intention of Korean products in Indonesia. *Ultima Management: Jurnal Ilmu Manajemen*, 16(1), 42–53. <https://doi.org/10.31937/manajemen.v16i1.3132>
- Tertiano, R. F., & Salehudin, I. (2023). Fandom power: Examining customer engagement, attitudes, and purchase intentions in K-Pop fandom-brand collaborations. *ASEAN Marketing Journal*, 15(1), 21–42. <https://doi.org/10.7454/amj.v15i1.1208>
- Wang, S. W., & Liu, A. (2023). The influence of celebrity endorser attractiveness and credibility on brand awareness and purchase intention. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 29(2), 211–235. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10496491.2022.2108182>