

THE INFLUENCE OF PRODUCT PLACEMENT, CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT, AND BRAND INTEGRATION IN KOREAN DRAMAS ON BRAND RECOGNITION AT KOPIKO PRODUCT AND BRAND IMAGE AS MEDIATING VARIABLES

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the influence of product placement, celebrity endorsement, and brand integration in Korean dramas on brand recognition using a brand image as a mediating variable. This research responds to the growing popularity of Korean dramas as a cross-cultural marketing platform, especially for the Indonesian coffee candy brand Kopiko. The research approach used was quantitative, with a total of 230 respondents who watched Korean dramas featuring Kopiko, and the data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). The results show that product placement, celebrity endorsement, and brand integration have a positive impact on brand recognition, with brand image playing an important mediating role. This research provides valuable insights for international marketers, demonstrating that strategic placement in high-engagement media can enhance brand image and recognition. Future research could explore broader applicability in digital media and evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies in different cultural markets.

Keywords: *Product Placement, Celebrity Endorsement, Brand Integration, Brand Recognition, Brand Image*

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1. Introduction

Nowadays, the world of entertainment, such as Korean drama, has become one of the most important fields that are becoming increasingly popular worldwide. One of the trendiest phenomena is the Korean wave, which is seen through various forms of entertainment such as K-drama, K-pop, make-up, and fashion (Alvisca et al., 2023). Based on data from the Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (KOFICE) (Jannah & Soemantri, 2023), Indonesia is the fourth most interested country in the world in the Korean Wave, as fans of Korean entertainment content are quite large, from young people to the elderly, and they have active fan community accounts on social media.

Supported by survey data in research conducted by (KIC: Mayoritas Indonesia Dengarkan Musik & Tonton Drama Korea Hingga 3 Jam Per Hari Rata-Rata Durasi Mengakses Konten Idola Korea Selatan Dalam Sehari (Juni 2022), the majority of fans in Indonesia who access South Korean content such as music or watch Korean movies reached 41.1% which averages out to 1 to 3 hours per day. Up to 24.7% of people spend an average of less than 1

hour per day accessing Korean content. And up to 18.9% of people spend an average of 3 to 6 hours a day listening to Korean music or watching Korean movies. In addition, up to 10.2% of people spend an average of more than 6 hours a day accessing Korean content. Meanwhile, 5.1% of people did not report how long it took them to access the Ginseng Country's content.

As a result of this phenomenon, Korean dramas are not only attracting the attention of viewers with their high-quality plots and acting but are also becoming an effective way for companies to promote products and brands through the implementation of product placement strategies. Product placement refers to the benefits of using a product or brand in a film that gives the impression of the product's presence, including the need for event programs to increase brand recognition. This strategy increases visibility through the frequency of ad impressions (Jannah & Soemantri, 2023). The product is included in the story and becomes part of the drama so that the audience is not distracted by the advertising attached to the drama, which is usually shown through drama characters, whether the product is used directly or just mentioned (Permata Millenia et al., 2021).

Product placement strategies are widely used in several Korean dramas that currently have high ratings, such as Kopiko, one of Indonesia's original coffee flavored candies produced by PT Mayora Indah, Tbk (Susanti, 2022). (Thomas Manggalla, 2021) stated that Kopiko is one of the local Indonesian products that first appeared as a sponsor in Korean dramas, with its debut in several popular Korean dramas such as Vincenzo, Mine, Yumi Cells, Hometown Cha Cha, Little Woman, Adamas, and Today's Webtoon, which managed to become a highlight and trending topic on social media. This proves that product placement is a better product marketing strategy, which is in line with Steven's research, which states that respondents' reactions to product placement are highly influential (Steven & Sudrajat, 2019). Previous research shows that product placement can increase brand recognition and improve the brand image of a product (Jannah & Soemantri, 2023). In addition, celebrity endorsement significantly increases marketing effectiveness because it can increase the emotional connection with consumers and increase product appeal (Wijaya & Keni, 2022). It is also believed that celebrity endorsement is a commonly used marketing strategy today to build a brand because celebrities can influence the effectiveness of advertising (Callista Alessandro et al., 2023). This is supported by Kopiko's premiere in the Korean drama Vincenzo, which is considered a successful marketing technique because it was pushed directly by the show's star actor, Song Joong Ki. Kopiko candy appears four times in episodes 14, 15, 17, and 19 (Jannah & Soemantri, 2023). The influence of advertising, which can be done through integration or product placement on brand image, is also evolving into a process that refers to consumer reactions to advertised brands. As a result, the right consumer response is expected to maintain the brand image (Indahsari et al., 2023). The brand image itself is also considered the most important asset and has a great impact on the way the audience perceives Kopiko (Akbari et al., 2024).

One factor that can also affect brand recognition is brand integration. Brand integration is a more integrated strategy in which the Kopiko candy brand is incorporated into the storyline of Korean dramas, such as in episodes 14, 15, 17, and 19 of the Korean drama Vincenzo, where the main character of the series is played by "Song Joong Ki," and in the Korean drama Hometown Cha Cha, the main character consumes Kopiko candy, which is used as a substitute for caffeinated drinks such as coffee.

Brand recognition refers to the level of awareness and ability of consumers to respond to a brand and can be measured by recognizing the physical characteristics of the brand and product characteristics (Sutrisno, 2020). Meanwhile, brand image is the perception of a brand based on brand associations embedded in consumer memory (Ordalia et al., 2023). So,

increasing brand recognition and a positive brand image, is hoped to have an impact on increasing sales of Kopiko products.

In the era of globalization and rapid digitalization, the Korean drama industry is experiencing a significant impact that can affect consumer behavior. As the effectiveness of traditional advertising declines, companies are interested in using Korean dramas as advertising media to execute their product placement strategies (Permata Millenia et al., 2021). Korean dramas, with their wide global reach, provide a potential platform for product integration and create a great opportunity for Kopiko to enter the international market. This research is indispensable due to the need for a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of cross-cultural marketing strategies, especially in the context of Kopiko products embedded in Korean dramas. This research provides valuable insights into how these marketing strategies impact brand perception, taking into account changing media consumption patterns and global consumer preferences.

This study aims to comprehensively analyze the effects of three key marketing strategies: product placement, celebrity endorsement, and brand integration on brand recognition of Kopiko products in Korean dramas. Specifically, this study evaluates the effectiveness of each strategy in increasing Kopiko brand recognition. This study also aims to find out how brand image becomes a mediating variable in the relationship between the marketing strategies used and brand recognition. This research is also an important update in marketing and branding research as it integrates three key marketing strategies into one research model and provides a more thorough understanding of the relative effectiveness of each offering.

2. Research Method

In this research, the survey method is used with a quantitative descriptive approach. According to Singarimbun dan Effendi (2011), quoted by (Sanita et al., 2019) It is emphasized that survey research refers to research that takes samples from a population (collecting data from a portion of the population sample to represent the entire population) and uses a questionnaire as a sampling tool. This research is causal in nature and observes the causal properties between variables without the intervention of the researcher himself. Based on the explanation above, this research uses a questionnaire survey method, which will be distributed to respondents who are deemed to meet the criteria. The population in this study were Indonesian people who had watched Korean dramas in which Kopiko products were integrated by taking a research sample of 230 respondents. The assessment on the questionnaire uses a Likert scale of 1 to 5 with the categories: Strongly Agree with a value of 5; Agree with a value of 4; Undecided with a value of 3; Disagree with a value of 2; Strongly Disagree with a value of 1.

The sampling technique used was purposive sampling with the following criteria: 1) Domiciled in Indonesia; 2) Millennials (Y) and Z who like to watch Korean dramas; 3) Have watched Korean dramas involving Kopiko in their promotions; 4) Have bought or consumed Kopiko. The data analysis technique used was Partial Least Square (PLS) with the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) statistical method.

The variables of Product Placement in this research refer to concepts (Alvisca et al., 2023), which are based on three indicators: Visual Dimension, Auditory Dimension, and Plot Connection Dimension (PCD). Furthermore, Celebrity Endorsements are measured based on three indicators: Attractiveness, Likeability, and Expertise. Then, the Brand Integration variable is measured based on two indicators: Attitude Toward the Brand Integration and Attitude Toward the Brand (Rifon et al., 2014). The mediating variable Brand Image in this research refers to the concept (Widiyan & Aminah, 2023), measured based on two indicators:

Advantages and Uniqueness. Meanwhile, the dependent variable Brand Recognition is calculated based on four indicators: Product price, superiority, and product instructions (Sutrisno, 2020).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Results

Respondent Characteristics

The characteristics of the 230 respondents in this survey were dominated by respondents who were female (67.2%), aged 17-25 years (62.8%), domiciled in Java (33.6%), and had at least a high school/high school education (49.6%). The majority of respondents are students (44.4%), earn Rp. 4,000,000-Rp. 6,000,000 per month, and have pocket money of Rp. 1,000,000-Rp. 1,500,000 per month.

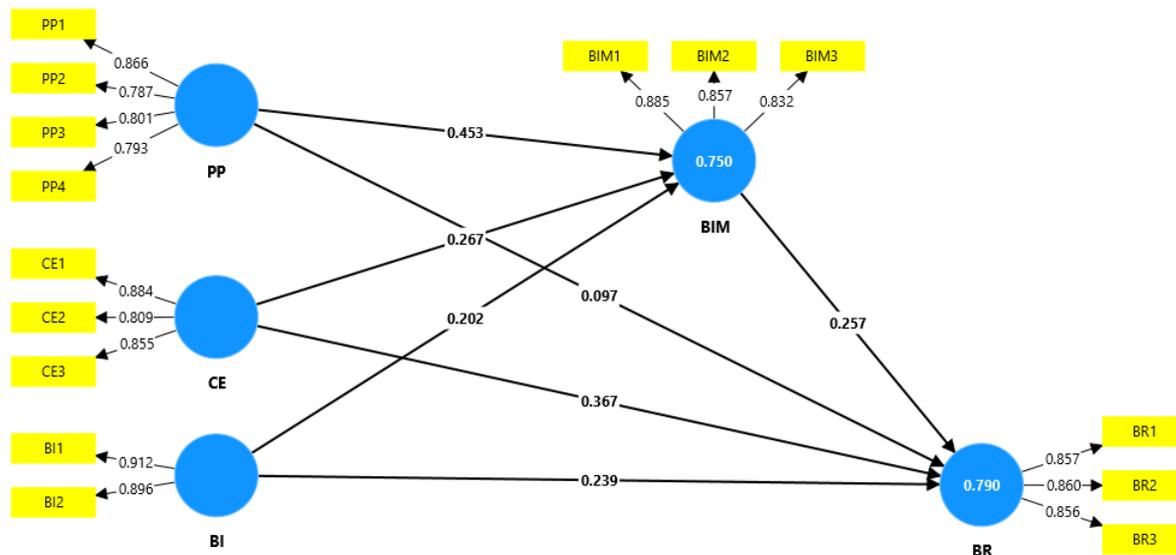


Figure 1. Research Model Design

Caption:

- PP = Product Placement
- CE = Celebrity Endorsement
- BI = Brand Integration
- BR = Brand Recognition
- BIM = Brand Image

Outer model

Validity and reliability are the two components of outer model testing. Validity analysis is used to determine whether it is appropriate to measure a concept. In contrast, reliability tests the consistency of the measuring devices employed in study (Vania & Tommy., 2023).

Indicator Reliability

Indicator reliability is used to determine the reliability of latent variable measurement indicators by examining each indicator's outer loading findings. A loading value greater than 0.7 suggests that the construct can account for more than half of the variance in the indicators

(Furadantin NR, 2018). Table 1 displays the results of the outer loading above 0.7, indicating that it met the criteria and can be deemed dependable.

Table 1. Loading Factor

	BI	BIM	BR	CE	PP
BI1	0.912				
BI2	0.896				
BIM1		0.885			
BIM2		0.857			
BIM3		0.832			
BR1			0.857		
BR2			0.860		
BR3			0.856		
CE1				0.884	
CE2				0.809	
CE3				0.855	
PP1					0.866
PP2					0.787
PP3					0.801
PP4					0.793

Convergent validity

The convergent validity test is judged valid when the AVE (Average Variance Extracted) score is more than 0.5 (Hair et al., 2019). Table 2 displays the findings of the AVE (Average Variance Extracted) value extracted from each variable, which has a value greater than 0.5, indicating that it meets the criteria and can be considered genuine.

Internal Consistency Reliability

Internal Consistency Reliability assesses the indicator's capacity to measure each variable. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are two measures used to assess this. Composite reliability values greater than 0.7 are regarded strong reliability, as are Cronbach's alpha values (Furadantin, 2018). Table 2 demonstrates that the composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values are both greater than 0.7, indicating that they meet the criterion for good dependability.

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
BI	0.777	0.781	0.900	0.818
BIM	0.821	0.822	0.893	0.736
BR	0.820	0.821	0.893	0.736
CE	0.807	0.812	0.886	0.722
PP	0.828	0.832	0.886	0.660

Discriminant Validity

Discriminative validity seeks to evaluate whether a reflective indicator is a good measure of its construct by requiring that each indicator be substantially associated with its construct (Furadantin NR., 2018).

Cross Loading

Each variable's cross-loading value is checked to ensure that the correlation with the measurement items is greater than the other variables and the predicted value is more than 0.7 (Furadantin NR., 2018). Table 3 shows that the correlation of variables with measurement items is greater than other variables with values above 0.7, so it can be stated that they have met the criteria.

Table 3. Cross Loading

	BI	BIM	BR	CE	PP
BI1	0.912	0.731	0.763	0.715	0.761
BI3	0.896	0.682	0.695	0.707	0.718
PP1	0.722	0.736	0.728	0.746	0.866
BIM1	0.707	0.885	0.730	0.705	0.733
BR1	0.702	0.688	0.857	0.750	0.678
CE1	0.700	0.698	0.758	0.884	0.723
BR2	0.697	0.724	0.860	0.717	0.696
PP2	0.680	0.673	0.652	0.655	0.787
BR5	0.678	0.692	0.856	0.692	0.710
BIM6	0.676	0.832	0.729	0.699	0.710
PP4	0.661	0.637	0.615	0.628	0.793
CE3	0.652	0.647	0.638	0.809	0.690
CE4	0.652	0.690	0.739	0.855	0.688
BIM3	0.627	0.857	0.642	0.648	0.713
PP3	0.592	0.672	0.630	0.641	0.801

Fornell-Lacker Criterion

The Fornell-Lacker Criterion is another way for assessing discriminant validity; it compares the square root value of each variable's AVE to the correlation between the variables in the model. Assume the AVE square root value for each variable exceeds the correlation value between the variable and the other variables. In this situation, it is considered to have a good discriminant validity value (Furadantin NR., 2018). Table 4 shows that the AVE square root value each variable's is greater than the correlation value between the variable and other variables, so it can be stated that it meets the criteria and has good validity values.

Table 4. Fornell-Lacker Criterion

	BI	BIM	BR	CE	PP
BI	0.904				
BIM	0.782	0.858			
BR	0.808	0.818	0.858		
CE	0.786	0.798	0.840	0.850	
PP	0.818	0.838	0.810	0.824	0.812

Inner Model

R-square Test (R2)

The R-square test determines how much influence the independent variable has on the dependent variable; the greater the R2 score, the better the research model. The coefficient of determination (R2) value is split into three categories: strong (0.75), medium (0.5), and weak (0.25) (Vania & Tommy., 2023).

Table 5. R-square

	R-square	Description
BIM (Brand Image)	0.750	Strong
BR (Brand Recognition)	0.790	Strong

Table 5 reveals an R-square value of 0.750, or 75%, indicating that in this study, brand image has a significant influence. Meanwhile, the R-square value for brand recognition is 0.79, or 79%, indicating that brand integration had a significant impact in this study.

F-square (F2)

The F-square test (F2) is used to determine the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The F2 score is classified into three categories: weak (0.02), medium (0.15), and high (0.35) (Vania & Tommy., 2023).

Table 6. F-square

	BIM	BR
BI	0.048	0.076
BIM		0.078
CE	0.081	0.168
PP	0.201	0.009

Table 6 reveals that brand integration and celebrity endorsement have a weak influence on brand image, with F2 values of 0.048 and 0.081, respectively. In contrast, product placement has a significant impact on brand image. Brand integration, brand image, and product placement have a low impact on brand recognition, however celebrity endorsement has a moderate impact.

Standardized Loading Factor (SFL), Construct Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Values on Overall Model Fit.

	ITEM	SFL	AVE	CR
Product Placement	Kopiko candy is often featured in drama scenes.	0.866		
	Conspicuous placement of Kopiko candy in drama scenes.	0.787	0.660	0.828
	The sound of the Kopiko candy packaging being opened is clearly heard in the scene.	0.801		
	The use of Kopiko candy by the characters in the drama seems natural.	0.793		
Celebrity Endorsement	I feel that the influence of the drama character's appearance can increase the attractiveness of Kopiko candy.	0.884		
	The influence of the audience's liking for the drama character can affect the attractiveness of Kopiko candy.	0.809	0.722	0.807
	The background of the drama character, who is recognized as a coffee drinker while completing his activities, can influence consumers by changing coffee with Kopiko	0.855		

	candy to be more practical and quick in treating sleepiness and weariness.			
Brand Integration	The placement of Kopiko candy in the scene feels natural and unobtrusive.	0.912	0.818	0.777
	I have a positive impression of the Kopiko candy brand.	0.896		
Brand Recognition	The price of Kopiko candy is in line with its quality.	0.857	0.736	0.820
	The flavor of Kopiko candy is superior to other coffee candy brands.	0.860		
	The packaging contains clear information about the caffeine content of Kopiko candy.	0.856		
Brand Image	Kopiko candy gives me extra energy when I need it.	0.885	0.736	0.821
	Eating Kopiko candy helps me to stay focused without having to drink coffee.	0.857		
	I can easily recognize Kopiko candy packaging among other candies.	0.832		

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing with path coefficients is carried out to show the direction between variables. The path coefficient value ranges from -1 to +1, so it can be explained that -1 indicates that the variables have a negative relationship and +1 indicates a positive relationship with a T-statistic value >1.90 (Furadantin NR., 2018; Kristanto & Karina M.R. Brahmana, 2016).

Table 7. Hypothesis Test

Hypohotesis	Path	Path Coeffisien (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistic (O/STDEV)	P Values	Description
1	PP - > BIM	0.453	0.458	0.062	7.295	0.000	Significant
2	CE - > BIM	0.267	0.266	0.063	4.206	0.000	Significant
3	BI -> BIM	0.202	0.197	0.057	3.550	0.000	Significant
4	PP - > BR	0.213	0.219	0.080	2.659	0.004	Significant
5	CE - > BR	0.435	0.432	0.062	6.974	0.000	Significant
6	BI -> BR	0.291	0.287	0.062	4.726	0.000	Significant
7	BIM -> BR	0.257	0.257	0.068	3.783	0.000	Significant

Table 8. Hypothesis Mediation Test

Hyphotesis	Path	Path Coeffisien	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistic (O/STDEV)	P Values	Description
8	PP -> BIM	0.116	0.117	0.034	3.416	0.000	Significant
9	BR -> CE	0.068	0.069	0.026	2.604	0.005	Significant
10	BI -> BIM	0.052	0.051	0.020	2.576	0.005	Significant

3.2. Discussion

In this research, brand image is a mediating variable, while product placement, celebrity endorsement, and brand integration are assessed from brand recognition. Based on the explanation presented in Table 7 and Table 8 regarding hypothesis testing, it was found that hypothesis product placement has a positive influence on brand image with a path coefficient value of 0.453 and a T-statistic value of 7.295 with P values of 0.000. This refers to supported by previous research by (Ordedia et al., 2023) that if a product looks good and the product placement in a film seems attractive, consumers will form a good brand image of the product being promoted. The results of testing the hypothesis that celebrity endorsement positively affects on brand image with a path coefficient value of 0.267 and a T-statistic value of 4.206 with P values of 0.000. This is in line with previous research by (Ananda et al., 2024), namely that the celebrities advertising a product can increase the brand's attractiveness in the eyes of consumers. This means that selecting the right celebrity is very important to build and strengthen the brand image of a product.

The result of brand integration has a positive influence on brand image with a correlation path coefficient value of 0.202 and a T-statistic value of 3.550 with P values of 0.000. This is also supported by the results of previous research conducted by (Ihzaturrahma & Kusumawati, 2021). Brand integration, namely efforts to advertise a product in TV show content, films, or other forms of entertainment, can naturally and smoothly increase the brand image of a product indirectly through the characters and plot of the TV show's story. Then, in the Hypothesis testing product placement has a positively effects on brand recognition with a path coefficient value of 0.213 and a T-statistic value of 2.659 with P values of 0.004. This is in line with previous research by (Kristanto & Karina M.R. Brahmana, 2016) that product placement in a film can generate brand recognition because there is high attention to a product shown in the film.

The results of the celebrity endorsement hypothesis have a positive effect on brand recognition with a path coefficient value of 0.435 and a T-statistic value of 6.974 with P values of 0.000 which is in line with previous research by (Christian C et al., 2018) which states that the effectiveness of using celebrities to promote a product is a driver of awareness. real brand and have a positive impact on ensuring brand recognition. Furthermore, it was found that brand

integration had a positive influence on brand recognition with a path coefficient value of 0.291 and a T-statistic value of 4.726 with P values of 0.000. This is in line with previous research by (Jensen et al., 2017) that considering that fans who are highly identified as often being the target of event sponsors will be more likely to recognize brands that are integrated into TV broadcasts. Then the research results also stated that brand image had a positive effect on brand recognition with a path coefficient value of 0.257 and a T-statistic value of 3.783 and with P values of 0.000. This is in line with research by (Ghadani et al., 2022) which states that to strengthen a product so that it creates a positive brand image and is always remembered by consumers because of the brand image, it is necessary to develop advertising with several media to make people aware of it a brand of the product.

Based on table 8, the results of hypothesis testing on the relationship between mediating variables, it can be seen that it was proven that the role of brand image as a mediator can strengthen the influence of product placement on brand recognition with a path coefficient value of 0.116 and a T-statistic value of 3.416 with P values of 0.000. This is in line with previous research by (Rohma et al., 2023). A brand image can be produced when product placement in a drama influences the audience because it is employed by the artist in scenes depicted in an interesting storyline, which subsequently has an impact on brand recognition owing to the audience's level of focus and attention. Furthermore, it was found that celebrity endorsements have a positive influence on brand recognition through brand image as mediation with a path coefficient value of 0.068 and a T-statistic value of 2.604 with P values of 0.005, which is also supported by previous research by (Tulili, Fitria Anjani., 2022) if the product those introduced by a celebrity will be more easily known and remembered by consumers, as well as forming a brand image and increasing consumer trust. In the next hypothesis test, brand image positively influences brand integration on brand recognition with a path coefficient value of 0.052 and a T-statistic value of 2.576 with P values of 0.005. This is in line with previous research by (Rasmiko et al., 2022) that brand image comes from the identity component, using brand integration advertising on a TV show, which functions to inform consumers about the benefits of the product, can position the brand image in consumers' memories and encourage consumers to recognize the product.

4. Conclusion

This study was done to explore and assess the influence of product placement, celebrity endorsement, and brand integration on brand recognition as mediated by brand image. This research is contributes to understanding how brand image can be the primary driver and amplifier in increasing marketing and establishing widespread brand recognition, especially for Kopiko as an Indonesian coffee candy that has successfully penetrated international advertising. The findings of this research can provide practical implications that entrepreneurs and kopiko can use in developing business and marketing strategies. This is recommended so that product placement can be appropriate and strategically positioned in the frame so that the audience is aware of the existence of the product, choose celebrities who match the image of a product, so that this can also improve brand image, increase brand integration which can also encourage and increase recognition and brand image of the product, as well as strengthening a positive brand image for consumers.

The conclusion of this research itself states that the objectives contained in the "Introduction" chapter have been successfully achieved, as can be proven in the "Results and Discussion" chapter. This research shows that product placement, celebrity endorsement, and brand integration influence brand recognition through brand image as a mediating variable.

Also, the relationship between these variables supports the hypothesis that has been proposed with brand image proven to be an important link in building strong brand awareness through celebrities and non-conventional marketing strategies in entertainment media.

From these results, research and development prospects include applying deeper brand integration and further studying brand image interactions in various media. Further research could also explore the impact of more diverse product characteristics and product placement on increasingly popular digital entertainment platforms, which could provide insight into the effectiveness of cross-cultural marketing strategies in global markets.

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