

The influence of social media endorsement on local fashion brands: Evidence from university students in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of social media endorsement on local fashion brands as perceived by university students. Focusing on three Indonesian local brands—Erigo Apparel, Rawtype Riot, and Guten Inc—the research investigates whether endorsement activities generate significantly different impacts across brands within a young, digitally savvy consumer segment. A quantitative, cross-sectional survey was conducted among students of Bina Nusantara University Alam Sutera. Using non-probability purposive sampling, 150 questionnaires were distributed and 120 valid responses were retained for analysis. Endorsement-related perceptions were measured on Likert-type scales, and data were analyzed using the Kruskal–Wallis H test because normality assumptions were not met. The results show that there is no statistically significant difference in endorsement ratings among the three brands, indicating that students perceive the overall influence of endorsement for Erigo Apparel, Rawtype Riot, and Guten Inc at a similar level. These findings suggest that, within this segment, endorsement has become a baseline expectation rather than a clear source of competitive differentiation between local fashion labels. Managerially, the results imply that brand owners should move beyond merely “using influencers” and instead strengthen endorser–brand congruence and distinctive brand associations to stand out in a crowded social media environment. The study also highlights the need for further research that decomposes endorsement into specific credibility dimensions and includes broader and more diverse samples.

Keywords: endorsement, local fashion brands, social media marketing, brand perception, Kruskal–Wallis, university students

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1. INTRODUCTION

Endorsement, understood as a paid collaboration between a brand and a public figure in the form of text, photos, or videos, has become one of the most widely used tools in digital marketing to shape brand image and stimulate purchase intention (Adiba, 2020; Firdaus et al., 2022). On social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Twitter (X), and Facebook, endorsement content is now embedded in everyday browsing, making it difficult for young consumers to distinguish between organic and paid messages. Recent empirical studies consistently show that celebrity and influencer endorsements can strengthen brand image and increase purchase intention when the endorser is perceived as credible and congruent with the product (Adiba, 2020; Firdaus et al., 2022). For local brands operating in highly competitive categories such as fashion, endorsement is therefore not only a promotional tactic but a strategic instrument for survival and growth.

One of the key marketing outcomes expected from endorsement campaigns is higher brand awareness. Brand awareness plays a foundational role in guiding consumers' first trial, repeat purchase, and overall brand preference; it is often used as an indicator of brand performance in competitive markets. Evidence from social media-based campaigns shows that interactive content and influencer collaborations can significantly enhance brand awareness and, in turn, purchase intention, especially for lifestyle and fashion products. In the context of local brands, endorsement is expected to create positive associations in the minds of consumers, positioning the brand as trendy, trustworthy, and relevant, which then translates into higher willingness to purchase and recommend the products.

The effectiveness of endorsement is strongly linked to the credibility of the endorser. Classical work by Ohanian (1990) conceptualizes endorser credibility in terms of attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness; these dimensions have been widely validated as critical predictors of advertising persuasiveness and purchase intention. More recent studies in the Indonesian and regional context confirm that source credibility—manifested in perceived attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness of celebrities or influencers—significantly shapes consumer attitudes and purchase intention for products promoted via social media (Adiba, 2020; Saskara & Achmad, 2024). In addition to credibility, factors such as authenticity, perceived honesty, and the perceived fit between the endorser and the brand have been shown to mediate the impact of endorsement on brand image and purchase intention (Firdaus et al., 2022).

Indonesian studies further indicate that influencer credibility and social media marketing activities are particularly effective among young, digitally savvy consumers. Research on Generation Z and university students finds that they rely heavily on social media content, including endorsements, when evaluating brands and forming purchase intentions. Indonesian evidence also shows that influencer credibility and consumer attitudes mediate the relationship between social media marketing and purchase intention, highlighting that endorsement is not merely about visibility but about building trustworthy, appealing personas that resonate with young audiences (Saskara & Achmad, 2024). These findings suggest that university students represent a strategically important segment for local brands that invest heavily in endorsement-based campaigns.

In the Indonesian fashion industry, local brands such as Erigo Apparel, Rawtype Riot, and Guten Inc illustrate how endorsement and social media exposure can accelerate brand growth. Erigo has evolved from a small local label into a national and international player, supported by aggressive digital marketing and high-profile exposure such as participation in New York Fashion Week, which strengthens its positioning among young, urban consumers. Rawtype Riot and Guten Inc similarly build their brand image around streetwear aesthetics and collaborations, relying on social media buzz and associations with public figures to compete against global brands. Endorsements by well-known personalities—ranging from national leaders to digital influencers—are expected to generate positive associations, increase brand awareness, and signal quality and trendiness for these local fashion brands.

At the same time, the Indonesian market is characterized by very high internet and social media penetration among young people. Survey data show that Generation Z and students are among the most intensive users of the internet and digital platforms in Indonesia, and they frequently rely on online reviews, influencer content, and social media campaigns when making purchase decisions. This pattern places

university students, including those at Bina Nusantara University Alam Sutera, at the center of digital marketing and endorsement strategies. As digital natives, they are not only exposed to endorsement content daily but also actively engage with endorsers through likes, comments, and shares, potentially reinforcing the impact of endorsement on their brand perceptions and purchase intentions.

Despite the growing body of research on celebrity endorsement, influencer marketing, and brand awareness in Indonesia, most empirical studies focus on beauty products, skincare, or national and international brands, rather than on local fashion labels targeting university students (Adiba, 2020; Firdaus et al., 2022; Indriana et al., 2022). There is still limited evidence on how endorsement influences brand awareness and purchase intention for local fashion brands such as Erigo Apparel, Rawtype Riot, and Guten Inc specifically within the segment of university students who dominate social media usage and represent a key future market. Addressing this gap, the present study analyzes the influence of endorsement on local fashion brands among students of Bina Nusantara University Alam Sutera. Focusing on these three brands, the study aims to determine whether endorsement has a significant impact on brand perceptions and purchase intention among university students, and to what extent endorser-related factors contribute to the effectiveness of endorsement in the local fashion context.

2. LITERATUR REVIEW

2.1 Endorsement

Endorsement is a form of promotion carried out through social media and involving public figures who are considered influential. A public figure is any individual who enjoys public recognition and uses that recognition for the benefit of consumer products by appearing together with the product in an advertisement. Such public figures can also be referred to as endorsers. An endorser is an advertising supporter, also known as an advertising star, who supports the promotion of a product. There are two types of endorsers, namely: (1) Typical person endorser, namely an ordinary, non-famous individual who is engaged to advertise or promote a product; (2) Celebrity endorser, namely a well-known person or public figure who supports a particular advertisement.

Collaboration between an endorser and a brand is expected to attract and increase consumers' purchase intention. Brands usually select credible and well-known figures in order to achieve broader reach, although this requires substantial financial cost. Consequently, many brands now also choose ordinary individuals to promote their products or services so that the advertisement appears more honest and natural.

2.2 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is an interest that arises within an individual as a result of observation and learning about a particular product, service, or brand, followed by taking actions related to purchasing, which can be measured through various levels of likelihood.

There are several types and levels of purchase intention, namely: (1) Transactional intention, which occurs when an individual has the intention to make a purchase of the desired product; (2) Referential intention, which occurs when an individual encourages others to purchase the same product; (3) Preferential intention, which occurs when an individual has a primary preference for a particular product and will only switch if something happens to that main preference; (4) Exploratory intention, which occurs when an individual continuously seeks information about a product of interest to support their decision to purchase that product.

There are two factors that influence an individual's purchase intention, namely the environment and marketing stimuli. The surrounding environment can influence a person's purchase intention in choosing certain products, while marketing stimuli are efforts aimed at attracting purchase intention. Quality, brand, packaging, price, product availability, and reference groups are factors that influence an individual's purchase intention.

3. METHOD

This study employs a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design to examine the influence of endorsement on students' perceptions of three Indonesian local fashion brands—Erigo Apparel, Rawtype Riot, and Guten Inc—among undergraduate students at Bina Nusantara University, Alam Sutera. The focus is to test whether there are statistically significant differences in students' evaluations of endorsement effectiveness and brand responses across these three brands.

3.1 Population and Sample

The target population consists of all active Bina Nusantara University Alam Sutera students who know at least one of the three local brands and have been exposed to endorsement content related to these brands. In line with standard methodological definitions, a population is understood as the total set of units or individuals whose characteristics are of interest, while a sample is a subset of that population selected for measurement (Djarwanto & Subagyo, 1994; Nursalam, 2003; Majid, 2018).

Sampling in survey research is used to reduce cost and time while still producing data that can reasonably represent the target group if the sample is selected and defined carefully (Elfil & Negida, 2017; Majid, 2018). In this study, a non-probability sampling approach is applied, specifically purposive/convenience sampling, because respondents must be (1) enrolled students at Bina Nusantara University Alam Sutera, and (2) aware of at least one of the three brands and its related endorsement activities. This type of non-probability sampling is commonly used when the research aims at a specific subgroup and when a complete sampling frame of the population is not practically available, particularly in consumer and social media-based studies (Elfil & Negida, 2017).

Questionnaires were distributed online to approximately 150 students. After data cleaning to remove incomplete or invalid responses, 120 valid questionnaires were retained for analysis. This sample size is adequate for non-parametric group comparison tests and aligns with general guidance on sample size planning for survey-based quantitative studies (Majid, 2018).

3.2 Data Collection

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire that measured: (1) students' exposure to endorsement content for Erigo Apparel, Rawtype Riot, and Guten Inc, and (2) their reactions to these endorsements, especially in terms of brand perception and behavioral intention (e.g., interest in the brand and intention to purchase). Items were presented on Likert-type scales suitable for ordinal analysis. The instrument was administered once (one-shot cross-sectional survey), consistent with the research objective to capture students' current responses to ongoing endorsement activities.

3.3 Data Analysis: Kruskal–Wallis Test

Because the key variables are measured on ordinal scales and preliminary checks indicated that the normality assumption required for one-way ANOVA might not be fully satisfied, the Kruskal–Wallis H test was chosen as the main inferential procedure. The Kruskal–Wallis test is a rank-based, non-parametric alternative to one-way ANOVA used to determine whether there are statistically significant differences in the median ranks of a dependent variable across two or more independent groups (Kruskal & Wallis, 1952; Conover, 1999).

In this study, the independent grouping variable is the brand (Erigo Apparel, Rawtype Riot, Guten Inc), and the dependent variables are students' ratings related to endorsement and brand response (for example, perceived endorsement effectiveness or purchase intention). The Kruskal–Wallis test evaluates the null hypothesis that the three brand-related groups are drawn from the same population distribution with equal medians. The H statistic is computed from the sum of ranks for each group and follows an approximate chi-square distribution with $k-1$ degrees of freedom, where k is the number of groups (Kruskal & Wallis, 1952; Conover, 1999).

A significance level of 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$) is used. If the Kruskal–Wallis test indicates a significant difference across brands, post-hoc pairwise comparisons with appropriate adjustments are conducted to identify which brand pairs differ in terms of endorsement influence. This analytical strategy directly addresses the research question of whether endorsement for Erigo Apparel, Rawtype Riot, and Guten Inc exerts significantly different effects on brand responses among Bina Nusantara University Alam Sutera students, in line with the study's introduction and objectives.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Descriptive Overview of Endorsement Ratings

Data were collected from 120 students who provided ratings for each of the three brands based on their perception of endorsement-related influence. The ratings used a 1–5 scale, where higher scores indicate a stronger positive response to endorsement for the respective brand (for example, stronger brand liking, perceived attractiveness of the endorsement, or increased intention to purchase). Each respondent rated all three brands, so the dataset contains 120 observations per brand.

Visual inspection of the raw data shows that scores for Erigo Apparel, Rawtype Riot, and Guten Inc are distributed across the full range from 1 to 5, with a concentration of responses in the mid to high categories (3, 4, and 5). This pattern suggests that, overall, students perceive endorsement for these three brands as moderately to strongly positive, consistent with earlier evidence that influencer and celebrity endorsement can reinforce brand image and stimulate purchase intention among young, digitally active consumers (Adiba et al., 2020; Firdaus et al., 2022; Saima & Khan, 2021). At the same time, the presence of low scores (1 and 2) for all three brands indicates that not all students respond favorably to endorsement, which aligns with the view that endorsement effectiveness depends on perceived fit, credibility, and audience–endorser congruence (Ohanian, 1990; Saskara & Achmad, 2024).

Before conducting the Kruskal–Wallis test, the normality of the data distribution for each brand was examined using SPSS. The significance values for Erigo Apparel, Rawtype Riot, and Guten Inc were all below 0.05, indicating that the assumption of normality was violated and that the data did not follow a normal distribution.

This finding justifies the choice of the Kruskal–Wallis test as a non-parametric alternative to one-way ANOVA, as explained in the methods section (Kruskal & Wallis, 1952; Conover, 1999).

4.2 Kruskal–Wallis Test Results

The main objective of the inferential analysis was to test whether there are statistically significant differences in endorsement-related ratings among the three brands. The Kruskal–Wallis H test was applied with brand (Erigo Apparel, Rawtype Riot, Guten Inc) as the grouping variable and the endorsement rating as the dependent variable.

The hypotheses were formulated as follows:

H_0 : There is no significant difference in the effect of endorsement among Erigo Apparel, Rawtype Riot, and Guten Inc as perceived by Bina Nusantara University Alam Sutera students.

H_1 : There is a significant difference in the effect of endorsement among the three brands.

The Kruskal–Wallis analysis produced a chi-square (H) value of 1.364 with 2 degrees of freedom and an associated significance level (p-value) of 0.506, based on a 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$).

Because the p-value exceeds 0.05 and the test statistic is smaller than the chi-square critical value for $df = 2$ (5.99 at $\alpha = 0.05$), the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. In other words, the analysis indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in the median endorsement ratings among Erigo Apparel, Rawtype Riot, and Guten Inc within this student sample.

For clarity, the main test result can be summarized as follows in Table 1.

Table 1. Kruskal–Wallis Test of Differences in Endorsement Ratings Across Local Brands

Test	H (χ^2)	df	p-value	Decision at $\alpha = 0.05$
Kruskal–Wallis (brand)	1.364	2	0.506	Fail to reject H_0 (no difference)

Source: SPSS output, processed by researchers.

This finding implies that, from the perspective of Bina Nusantara University Alam Sutera students, endorsement for Erigo Apparel, Rawtype Riot, and Guten Inc is perceived to have broadly similar impact on their attitudes and behavioral intentions. Even if the brands differ in their specific endorsement strategies, the resulting perceived influence does not diverge enough to produce statistically significant differences in this sample.

4.3 Interpretation and Discussion

The absence of a significant difference among the three brands is an important result when seen in light of the literature on endorsement and local fashion brands. Prior research indicates that endorsement can substantially enhance brand image, brand awareness, and purchase intention, particularly when the endorser is perceived as credible, attractive, and congruent with the product and target audience (Ohanian, 1990; Adiba et al., 2020; Firdaus et al., 2022; Saima & Khan, 2021). The findings of this study do not contradict that general pattern; rather, they suggest that all three brands may already be benefiting from endorsement to a comparable degree in this particular student segment.

Several explanations can be considered: First, convergent positioning and similar endorsement quality. Erigo Apparel, Rawtype Riot, and Guten Inc are all local fashion brands targeting young, urban consumers with strong presence on social media. It is plausible that they rely on similar types of endorsers—such as lifestyle influencers and public figures whose credibility, attractiveness, and audience overlap—as well as similar content formats (Instagram posts, TikTok videos, and collaboration campaigns). If the perceived credibility and fit of endorsers for these brands are roughly equivalent, then students’ endorsement-related ratings would naturally cluster at similar levels, leading to non-significant differences across brands (Saima & Khan, 2021; Saskara & Achmad, 2024).

Second, high baseline exposure to endorsement among digital natives. Generation Z and university students are heavy users of social media and are continuously exposed to endorsement content (Pinto & Paramita, 2021; Persada et al., 2021). In such an environment, students may have developed relatively stable cognitive schemas for interpreting endorsement across brands. Once a certain threshold of exposure and perceived professionalism is reached, marginal differences in execution between brands may no longer translate into marked differences in perceived impact. This “ceiling effect” is consistent with the finding that most ratings lie in the moderate to high range for all three brands, with no extreme dominance by any single brand.

Third, brand-level rather than endorsement-level differentiation. It is also possible that students view these three brands as belonging to the same general category of “cool local streetwear” and therefore evaluate them more in terms of overall category preference rather than specific endorsement campaigns. In such a case, brand image and product design may be the primary basis of differentiation, while endorsement is perceived as a generic requirement for competitiveness rather than a distinctive advantage. Studies on social media marketing show that once brands adopt broadly similar strategies—consistent visual identity, influencer partnerships, and interactive content—the incremental effect of endorsement on purchase intention can become similar across competitors (Hutter et al., 2013).

Fourth, measurement focus on overall effect rather than endorser attributes. The measurement approach in this study concentrates on the overall influence of endorsement as perceived by students, rather than decomposing it into specific dimensions such as endorser attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness, and perceived fit (Ohanian, 1990). While this is suitable for detecting broad differences among brands, it may obscure more subtle variations. For example, Erigo might be stronger on perceived trendiness, Rawtype Riot on authenticity, and Guten Inc on uniqueness of collaborations, but these

nuances may average out when respondents provide a single overall rating per brand. This is in line with previous research showing that different aspects of endorser credibility can have differentiated effects on brand image and purchase intention (Firdaus et al., 2022; Adiba et al., 2020).

Fifth, taken together, the non-significant Kruskal–Wallis result suggests that, for students of Bina Nusantara University Alam Sutera, endorsement has become a standardized expectation rather than a differentiating factor among these three local brands. All three appear to be performing adequately in their endorsement practices, but none is perceived as significantly superior or inferior in this respect.

5. CONCLUSION

Overall, this study concludes that endorsement is perceived as a generally positive and relevant marketing tool for local fashion brands among Bina Nusantara University Alam Sutera students, but it does **not** differentiate clearly between Erigo Apparel, Rawtype Riot, and Guten Inc. The survey of 120 students, analyzed using a non-parametric Kruskal–Wallis test, shows no statistically significant difference in endorsement-related ratings across the three brands, indicating that endorsement for these brands is evaluated at a similar level by this key youth segment. This finding is consistent with prior literature that confirms the importance of endorsement and endorser credibility for shaping brand image and purchase intention, yet it also suggests that, in a highly saturated social media environment, endorsement has become a baseline expectation rather than a strong point of differentiation among comparable local fashion labels targeting digital natives. For managers, the implication is that simply using influencers or public figures is no longer sufficient; what matters is how well the endorser fits the brand and how endorsement is integrated into broader efforts to build distinctive brand associations and meaningful engagement with student audiences. From an academic perspective, the results highlight the need for future research that dissects specific dimensions of endorsement (such as attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness), incorporates experimental or longitudinal designs, and extends the sample beyond a single campus to better understand how endorsement can be leveraged more strategically by local brands competing in Indonesia's dynamic digital marketplace.

Ethical Approval

Not Applicable

Informed Consent Statement

Not Applicable

Authors' Contributions

MA led the conceptualization, formulated the research design, and supervised the overall project execution. She also coordinated the manuscript development and served as the corresponding author during the submission and review process. RNA contributed to the construction of the survey instrument, data collection, and initial data cleaning. MFH was responsible for conducting the statistical analysis, particularly the Kruskal–Wallis H test, and interpreting the analytical results. TAH assisted in the literature review process, theoretical framework development, and drafting specific sections of the manuscript. KSJ contributed to revising the manuscript, organizing tables and figures, and ensuring consistency with journal formatting requirements.

Disclosure Statement

The Authors declare that they have no conflict of interest

Data Availability Statement

The data presented in this study are available upon request from the corresponding author for privacy.

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