

The Effectiveness of Using Sandy Walsh as a Brand Ambassador for Mills on Instagram @millssportid

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of Sandy Walsh as a brand ambassador for the local sportswear brand Mills through its official Instagram account, @millssportid. The research is grounded in the significance of Marketing Public Relations (MPR) strategies in enhancing the brand image and competitiveness of local brands amidst the dominance of global players. The rising role of social media, particularly Instagram, in influencing consumer behavior among Generation Z is also a key consideration. Sandy Walsh was selected due to his relevance to the brand's target market and his positive public persona as a professional footballer. A descriptive quantitative method was applied, involving 100 respondents aged 18–28 who follow @millssportid on Instagram. The research utilized the VisCAP model Visibility, Credibility, Attraction, and Power to evaluate ambassador effectiveness. Findings show that all four VisCAP indicators fall into the “effective” category, with the “Power” dimension achieving the highest average score of 4.12. This suggests that Sandy Walsh has a strong impact on shaping audience perception and interest in the Mills brand. The study concludes that Sandy Walsh is an effective brand ambassador, capable of enhancing Mills' brand presence and influence among young consumers through the Instagram platform.

Keywords: *Effectiveness, Brand Ambassador, VisCAP, Instagram, Sandy Walsh, Mills*

INTRODUCTION

Communication is a fundamental element in all aspects of human life. As stated by Harold D. Lasswell (1948), communication is defined as "Who says what in which channel to whom with what effect?" This statement highlights the fundamental elements of communication: communicator, message, media, audience, and effect. Effective communication occurs when the intended message is received and interpreted correctly by the audience, leading to an expected response. In today's interconnected world, communication has evolved far beyond traditional methods. With the rise of digital

technologies, the way brands interact with their consumers has shifted significantly, especially in the realm of marketing.

One of the major developments in marketing communication is the emergence of social media platforms as powerful tools for Marketing Public Relations (MPR). MPR itself refers to the process of planning and evaluating programs that encourage customer purchase and satisfaction through credible information and impressions that link the organization and its products with the needs and interests of customers (Ruslan, 2010). The primary goals of MPR are to create a positive brand image, increase brand awareness, and support sales through effective public and media relations. As media consumption habits shift, marketers have increasingly turned to social media platforms, such as Instagram, to reach wider and more targeted audiences.

Instagram, launched in 2010 and later acquired by Meta Platforms (formerly Facebook Inc.) in 2012, has grown into one of the most popular social media platforms worldwide. As of early 2024, Instagram ranks as the second most used social media platform in Indonesia, with over 85.3% of active social media users engaging with the platform. Its visual-centric nature and features such as Stories, Reels, IGTV, and Collaboration Posts make it an ideal platform for brands to showcase their products and communicate directly with their audience.

In this digital ecosystem, brand ambassadors play a crucial role in bridging the gap between brands and their target audience. A brand ambassador is a person who is hired by a company to represent a brand in a positive light and help increase brand awareness and sales. According to Lea Greenwood (2012), a brand ambassador is an individual or group recruited by a company to promote products and engage with the public. These ambassadors can range from celebrities and influencers to everyday consumers with a strong social media presence. The selection of a brand ambassador must be aligned with the brand's values and image, ensuring that the ambassador resonates with the target audience and strengthens the brand's positioning in the market.

Mills, an Indonesian sportswear brand founded in 2018 under PT. Mitra Kreasi Garmen, has positioned itself as a notable local brand in the sports apparel industry. The brand gained significant recognition when it replaced Nike as the official apparel sponsor of the Indonesian national football team in 2020. Although this sponsorship ended in 2024, Mills continues to maintain a strong presence in the market by partnering with professional athletes as brand ambassadors. Among these ambassadors, Sandy Walsh stands out as a prominent figure who aligns well with the brand's image and target market.

Sandy Walsh is a professional footballer born on March 14, 1995, in Brussels, Belgium. With a mixed heritage of Dutch, English, Irish, Swiss, and Indonesian descent, Walsh represents the ideal blend of international appeal and local relevance. His football career includes stints with the Netherlands U-15 to U-18 teams and notable success in winning the UEFA U-17 Championship in 2012. In November 2022, Walsh officially became an Indonesian citizen, allowing him to represent the Indonesian national football team. His

naturalization and active participation in the national team have made him a beloved figure among Indonesian football fans.

In June 2024, Sandy Walsh was officially introduced as a brand ambassador for Mills through the brand's Instagram account, @millssportid. The announcement was accompanied by the slogan "MANYALA ABANGKU!" – a phrase associated with Walsh that further humanized the collaboration. The partnership signifies a strategic move by Mills to utilize Walsh's popularity and positive public image to promote their products, particularly their football line. The increasing importance of social media as a marketing channel necessitates the evaluation of how effective these brand ambassador partnerships are, particularly in driving engagement, enhancing brand perception, and influencing purchasing behavior. For this reason, the present research seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of Sandy Walsh as a brand ambassador for Mills on Instagram using the VisCAP model.

The VisCAP model, developed by Rossiter and Percy (2018), provides a framework for assessing the effectiveness of a brand ambassador based on four key dimensions: Visibility, Credibility, Attraction, and Power. Visibility refers to how well-known the brand ambassador is and the extent to which their presence can attract attention to the brand. Credibility assesses the ambassador's trustworthiness and expertise, which contribute to the brand's perceived reliability. Attraction focuses on the physical and emotional appeal of the ambassador, including likability and similarity with the audience. Power measures the influence the ambassador has over the audience's attitudes and behaviors, including purchase intentions. Each of these components plays a significant role in determining how effectively a brand ambassador can represent and promote a brand. The VisCAP model has been used in various academic studies and has demonstrated its reliability and validity in measuring celebrity endorsement and ambassador effectiveness.

Although numerous studies have explored the use of brand ambassadors in industries such as beauty, cosmetics, and skincare, there remains a lack of academic focus on their application in the sportswear industry. A search conducted on Google Scholar revealed that most research on brand ambassadors centers around the beauty and cosmetic sectors, with significantly fewer studies examining their impact in sports branding. Given this gap, the current study aims to provide valuable insights into the underexplored area of sportswear branding, particularly in the Indonesian context.

Furthermore, this research adopts the S-O-R (Stimulus-Organism-Response) theory as its communication framework. Introduced by Hovland et al. (1953), the S-O-R model posits that a stimulus (in this case, Instagram content featuring Sandy Walsh) is processed by an organism (the audience) and leads to a response (such as brand awareness or purchase intention). The theory is particularly suitable for studying the psychological impact of marketing messages delivered through social media, as it emphasizes the internal cognitive and emotional processing that precedes behavioral outcomes.

The study targets Generation Z consumers aged 18-28, a demographic that dominates Instagram usage in Indonesia. According to upgraded.id (2024), individuals aged 18-24 and

25-34 represent the largest segments of Instagram users in Indonesia, accounting for 32.7% and 39.9% respectively. These users are not only highly active on social media but are also more responsive to influencer marketing and brand ambassador campaigns. Hence, focusing on this group offers valuable insights into the effectiveness of Mills' social media strategy.

To assess the effectiveness of Sandy Walsh as a brand ambassador for Mills, the study employs a quantitative descriptive method using an online survey distributed to Instagram followers of @millssportid. The questionnaire is designed based on the four VisCAP indicators, with questions tailored to evaluate respondents' perceptions and attitudes toward the ambassador and the brand. The results are analyzed to determine the extent to which Sandy Walsh's endorsement influences brand recognition, credibility, attractiveness, and influence.

The findings of this research are expected to contribute both academically and practically. Academically, the study enriches the body of knowledge in communication and marketing studies by providing empirical data on the application of the VisCAP model in the sportswear industry. It also bridges the research gap in the use of brand ambassadors in sports branding within the Indonesian market. Practically, the insights derived from the study can be used by marketers and brand managers to make informed decisions regarding ambassador selection and social media strategies. The findings can also serve as a reference for future campaigns seeking to leverage athlete endorsements to enhance brand equity and consumer engagement.

In conclusion, the current digital landscape requires brands to adapt and innovate in their communication strategies. The use of social media platforms, particularly Instagram, has opened new avenues for brands to connect with their audience. Partnering with well-known and trusted individuals such as Sandy Walsh allows brands like Mills to enhance their visibility, credibility, and appeal. By applying the VisCAP model and the S-O-R theory, this study provides a comprehensive evaluation of how effective such partnerships can be in influencing consumer perceptions and behaviors. As the sportswear industry continues to grow and evolve, understanding the dynamics of brand ambassador effectiveness will remain a critical component of successful marketing communication strategies.

Several prior studies have examined the effectiveness of brand ambassadors across different industries and platforms, offering valuable comparative insight for the current research. For instance, a study by Moses Korano (2024) analyzed the effectiveness of Agung Hapsah as a celebrity endorser for the game Valorant on Instagram @valorantid using the TEARS model. The study found that Agung Hapsah's endorsement was effective in enhancing brand engagement and awareness, particularly among gaming audiences. Another study conducted by Irzani, Masrurroh, and Roikhan (2022) explored the effectiveness of NCT Dream as a brand ambassador for the skincare brand Somethinc. The research utilized consumer trust and advertising strength indicators, finding that the K-pop group significantly influenced consumer trust, brand perception, and purchase intention.

In a different context, Zidni Ayu Muflifah (2023) investigated the influence of BTS (Bangtan Sonyeondan) as a brand ambassador for Tokopedia among Korean pop culture communities in Yogyakarta. The study applied the VisCAP model and confirmed that all four components positively contributed to increased consumer interest and purchasing behavior. Lastly, Rachel Ade Suryaning Kalla (2024) from Universitas Kristen Petra assessed the effectiveness of Tzuyu as a brand ambassador for Pond's Bright Miracle on Instagram. The research highlighted attractiveness as the most impactful VisCAP dimension in driving engagement and positive brand reception. These studies collectively underscore the importance of matching brand ambassadors with target demographics and utilizing appropriate evaluation frameworks, such as VisCAP and TEARS. While most focus on beauty and tech-related products, there is limited research examining the sportswear industry in depth. This strengthens the relevance and novelty of the current study, which aims to fill this gap by evaluating Sandy Walsh's impact as a sports-focused brand ambassador using the VisCAP framework on Instagram.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketing Public Relations

Marketing Public Relations (MPR) is a communication strategy aimed at building a positive image, increasing brand awareness, and supporting sales by maintaining good relationships with the public and the media. According to Thomas L. Harris (1991) in his book *The Marketer's Guide to Public Relations*, MPR is a process of planning and evaluating programs that encourage purchase and customer satisfaction through trusted information and impressions that connect the company and its products with the interests and desires of customers. Ruslan (2008) outlines several tools within MPR that support marketing and communication strategies:

1. Publications and Publicity: MPR distributes information about company activities through various media to stimulate positive public responses.
2. Events: MPR organizes public events (scheduled, special, or moment-based) to shape public opinion and reach target audiences.
3. News: MPR disseminates press releases and newsletters using journalistic standards (5W+1H, inverted pyramid structure).
4. Community Involvement: MPR fosters positive relationships through community relations and humanity relations to build public trust.
5. Inform or Image: MPR strengthens brand awareness and positive perception by providing strategic information.
6. Social Responsibility: MPR includes CSR programs to align organizational and societal interests, improving public goodwill.

Brand Ambassador (with VisCap Model)

According to Lea Greenwood (2012), a brand ambassador is an individual or group recruited by a company to increase sales by communicating and interacting with the public. Brand ambassadors can be influencers, celebrities, or even ordinary consumers who have influence within a social media community. The role of a brand ambassador is not limited to advertising a product; they serve as long-term representatives of the brand, shaping how the brand is seen by the public.

According to Royan (2004), brand ambassadors are used by companies to influence consumers and make them more interested in using a product. These ambassadors often serve several functions giving testimonials, endorsing the product or brand, appearing in advertising campaigns, and acting as company spokespersons. The selection of a brand ambassador must consider whether their image and values match those of the brand. A good fit can create emotional engagement and strengthen the company's marketing efforts especially on platforms like Instagram, where visual and personal identity are key to effective communication. To measure how effective a brand ambassador is, this research uses the VisCAP model developed by Rossiter and Percy (2018). This model contains four indicators:

1. Visibility (Popularity)

Visibility refers to how well-known or popular the brand ambassador is. A highly visible ambassador can reach wider audiences and make the brand more recognizable. The more people are exposed to the ambassador, the greater the likelihood they will become aware of the brand.

2. Credibility

Credibility is the impression formed by the audience regarding the qualities of the ambassador, making them respected and followed. It includes two sub-indicators:

- Expertise: How much knowledge and skill the ambassador has related to the brand, based on intelligence, ability, knowledge, or experience.
- Trustworthiness: How honest the ambassador appears in delivering the brand message.

3. Attraction (Appeal)

Attraction is how much the audience finds the ambassador appealing, thus increasing their interest in the brand. An attractive brand ambassador makes the product more desirable and helps build emotional engagement. It includes:

- Likability: The ambassador's likable personality and charm.
- Similarity: The emotional connection or relatability between the ambassador and the audience.

4. Power (Influence)

Power refers to how much influence the brand ambassador has over the audience. This could come from their popularity, achievements, or authority. A

powerful ambassador can strongly impact audience attitudes, memory, and even their purchasing behavior.

METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a descriptive quantitative approach, which aims to objectively describe a phenomenon based on measurable data. According to Umar (2001), quantitative descriptive research is used to explain the characteristics of a population using numerical analysis. Hamdi and Bahruddin (2014) emphasize that within the positivist paradigm, researchers observe and describe phenomena without testing hypotheses or establishing causal relationships.

The method used in this study is a survey, using a structured questionnaire to collect data from respondents. The questionnaire was developed based on the VisCAP model introduced by Rossiter and Percy (2018), which includes four indicators for evaluating a brand ambassador: Visibility, Credibility, Attraction, and Power. Each indicator consists of four statements, totaling sixteen items. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement on each item using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”, which is appropriate for measuring perceptions (Sugiyono, 2016).

The population in this study includes followers of the official Instagram account @millssportid, which had approximately 469,000 followers as of February 2025. The sampling technique used is non-probability purposive sampling, in which the researcher selects participants based on specific characteristics. The criteria for participation include being aged 18 to 28 years and following the @millssportid Instagram account. According to Sugiyono (2016), purposive sampling is suitable when respondents must meet certain conditions relevant to the study. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula, applying a 10% margin of error, resulting in a total of 100 respondents. This number was considered sufficient to represent the target population in the context of descriptive quantitative analysis.

To ensure data quality, the questionnaire underwent validity and reliability testing before distribution. The validity test was conducted using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation, where items were considered valid if the correlation coefficient exceeded 0.195 (Sugiyono, 2016). The reliability test was conducted using Cronbach’s Alpha, and a score of 0.6 or higher indicated acceptable internal consistency (Sugiyono, 2016). The results confirmed that all 16 items in the questionnaire were both valid and reliable. After data collection, the results were processed using descriptive statistical analysis, which involved calculating the frequency, percentage, and mean for each of the four VisCAP variables. These results were then interpreted to evaluate the effectiveness of Sandy Walsh as a brand ambassador for Mills on Instagram based on the perceptions of the selected respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study address the effectiveness of Sandy Walsh as the brand ambassador appointed by Mills. The effectiveness was assessed using the VisCAP model, which includes four key dimensions: visibility, credibility, attraction, and power. This study employed a Likert scale to measure respondents' reactions to statements related to the effectiveness of Sandy Walsh as a brand ambassador on the Instagram account @millssportid. The questionnaire was designed based on the VisCAP model, which evaluates brand ambassador effectiveness through the four indicators mentioned above. Each item was measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” (1) to “Strongly Agree” (5). To analyze the results, this study applied a classification scale where scores ranging from 1.00 to 3.00 indicate “ineffective” and scores from 3.01 to 5.00 indicate “effective.”

Table 1.1 Validity Test Results

Indicator	Code	r Count	r Table	Result
<i>Visibility</i>	X1	0,488	0,3061	VALID
	X2	0,337	0,3061	VALID
	X3	0,802	0,3061	VALID
	X4	0,672	0,3061	VALID
<i>Credibility</i>	X5	0,521	0,3061	VALID
	X6	0,653	0,3061	VALID
	X7	0,657	0,3061	VALID
	X8	0,733	0,3061	VALID
<i>Attraction</i>	X9	0,559	0,3061	VALID
	X10	0,582	0,3061	VALID
	X11	0,521	0,3061	VALID
	X12	0,628	0,3061	VALID
<i>Power</i>	X13	0,559	0,3061	VALID
	X14	0,625	0,3061	VALID
	X15	0,725	0,3061	VALID
	X16	0,692	0,3061	VALID

Source : Processed by the Researcher, 2025

In this study, a validity test was conducted to determine whether the measurement instrument could be considered appropriate for use. The validity test was performed using the SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solutions) software to analyze the correlation value (r) of each item. If the correlation value exceeds the critical value in the r -table, the item is considered valid. Conversely, if the correlation value is lower than the r -table, the item is deemed invalid. In this test, the number of respondents was limited to 30, and the level of significance used was 10%, resulting in an **r -table value of 0.3061**. Therefore, it is expected that the **r -count value** for each item exceeds 0.3061 to be considered valid. The results shown in Table 1.1 confirm that all statement items in the questionnaire met the validity requirement.

Table 1.2 Reliability Test Results

Cronbach's Alpha	Nilai Acuan	Jumlah Item	Keterangan
0,890	0,6	16	Reliabel

Source : Processed by the Researcher, 2025

The next step after conducting the validity test is the reliability test, which aims to measure the internal consistency of the instrument used. Reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha, with a total of 16 statement items covering the four VisCAP indicators: visibility, credibility, attraction, and power. According to Sugiyono (2017), a reliability test measures the extent to which the results of measurements from the same object are consistent and produce uniform data. The higher the level of reliability, the more trustworthy the results will be. Reliability testing in this study was carried out using SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solution) software by applying Cronbach's Alpha. If the Cronbach's Alpha value is greater than 0.60, the instrument is considered reliable. Based on the results of the analysis, the questionnaire used in this study achieved a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.890, which is significantly higher than the minimum requirement. Therefore, the instrument can be concluded to be reliable and suitable for use in the research.

Table 1.3 Total Mean Score of Visibility Indicator

Visibility Indicator	
Statement	Mean Score
I know that Sandy Walsh is a popular football player in Indonesia.	4,23
I have seen Sandy Walsh appear on the Mills Instagram account.	4,20
I recognize Sandy Walsh as the brand ambassador of the local sports brand Mills.	3,89
I can easily remember Sandy Walsh as the brand ambassador and the new face of	4,15

Visibility Indicator	
Mills.	
Total mean	4,12

Source : Processed by the Researcher, 2025

According to Rossiter and Percy (2018), visibility refers to how well-known and popular a brand ambassador is. Greater popularity can significantly increase public awareness and recognition of a brand. This study examines the visibility of Sandy Walsh as the brand ambassador of Mills, a local Indonesian sportswear brand, based on responses from 100 participants. The overall mean score for visibility is 4.12, which falls into the effective category based on the interpretation scale of 3.01 to 5.00. The statement "I know that Sandy Walsh is a popular football player in Indonesia" received the highest mean score of 4.23 . This indicates that the majority of respondents are aware of Sandy Walsh's reputation and popularity in the Indonesian football scene. This is followed by the statement "I have seen Sandy Walsh appear on the Mills Instagram account," which achieved a mean score of 4.20. This shows that many respondents have seen Sandy Walsh featured on Mills' official Instagram content. The next statement, "I can easily remember Sandy Walsh as the brand ambassador and the new face of Mills," earned a mean score of 4.15, suggesting strong visual recall among audiences when it comes to associating Sandy Walsh with the Mills brand. However, the lowest mean score was recorded in the statement "I recognize Sandy Walsh as the brand ambassador of the local sports brand Mills," which received a mean score of 3.89 . Although still categorized as effective, this lower score reflects a gap in public recognition of Sandy Walsh's formal role as Mills' brand ambassador.

Sandy Walsh's popularity is supported by his record of 19 appearances with the Indonesian national football team since his debut in 2023, as well as his personal Instagram account which had 2.9 million followers as of May 29, 2025. Mills has utilized his public image through Marketing Public Relations (MPR), particularly by employing publicity as a tool. The brand introduced Sandy Walsh as its ambassador through a video reel on the official Instagram account, @millssportid. Public reactions to the reel were largely positive, which reinforces the earlier finding that most respondents see him as a prominent public figure. Despite this success, it was found that between March and May 2025, Sandy Walsh only appeared in 2 out of 33 posts on Mills' Instagram. This low level of representation could contribute to the limited awareness of his official ambassadorial status. This finding is consistent with Royan (2004) and the study by Hantoro and Yulianita (2023), which emphasize the importance of consistent and repeated exposure of a brand ambassador to strengthen brand association in the minds of consumers. In conclusion, while visual recognition of Sandy Walsh as a representative of Mills is strong, the formal communication regarding his role as brand ambassador has not yet been maximized. Therefore, Mills should

consider increasing both the frequency and clarity of messaging to fully leverage Sandy Walsh’s potential in its Marketing Public Relations strategy.

Table 1.4 Total Mean Score of Credibility Indicator

Credibility Indicator	
Statement	Mean Score
I trust Sandy Walsh as a brand ambassador who has knowledge about sports products.	4,22
I think Sandy Walsh is a brand ambassador who can effectively deliver messages about Mills.	3,95
Sandy Walsh’s reputation as a professional athlete increases my trust in the Mills brand.	3,97
I think Sandy Walsh does not exaggerate when delivering information about Mills products.	4,08
Total mean	4.06

Source : Processed by the Researcher, 2025

Credibility refers to the public's perception of the qualities that make a brand ambassador respected and influential. According to Rossiter and Percy (2018), credibility consists of two main components: expertise and trustworthiness. Expertise indicates the ambassador’s knowledge and skill related to the product, while trustworthiness reflects how honest and sincere the ambassador is perceived in delivering brand messages. In this study, the researcher analyzed responses from 100 participants regarding Sandy Walsh’s credibility as Mills’ brand ambassador. The total mean score for the credibility indicator is 4.06, which falls within the effective range of 3.01–5.00, indicating that most respondents agreed with the statements related to Sandy Walsh’s credibility.

The highest mean score of 4.22 was found in the statement “I trust Sandy Walsh as a brand ambassador who has knowledge about sports products.” This suggests that a large majority of respondents believe Sandy Walsh possesses relevant expertise, reinforcing his credibility in representing a sportswear brand like Mills. The statement “I think Sandy Walsh does not exaggerate when delivering information about Mills products” followed with a mean score of 4.08, showing that respondents find his communication to be honest and believable. Additionally, the statement “Sandy Walsh’s reputation as a professional athlete increases my trust in the Mills brand” received a mean of 3.97, indicating that his background contributes positively to consumer trust. The lowest score was 3.95, for the statement “I think Sandy Walsh is a brand ambassador who can effectively deliver messages about Mills.” While still within the effective range, this result suggests that some respondents are less convinced of his ability to communicate brand messages clearly.

Sandy Walsh’s credibility is further supported by his consistent use of Mills products during professional matches, both with the Indonesian national team and his club, Yokohama F. Marinos. For example, a post by @sneakerzoneid shows him wearing the Mills Triton Deisler 1.2 elite FG boots, which reinforces the impression that he is not just a promoter but also a genuine user of the brand. This aligns with Lim and Zhang’s (2022) finding that consumers are more likely to trust influencers who authentically use the products they promote. In the context of Marketing Public Relations (MPR), a credible brand ambassador plays a crucial role in building trust and a strong brand image. As noted by Greenwood (2012), a credible ambassador must be perceived as having relevant expertise or experience. While Sandy Walsh meets this requirement through his career as a professional athlete, the data shows that communication of brand messages could be enhanced to further strengthen his role. In conclusion, Sandy Walsh is seen as a credible ambassador for Mills due to his expertise and authenticity, though there is room for improvement in how effectively he delivers promotional messages.

Table 1.5 Total Mean Score of Attraction Indicator

Attraction Indicator	
Statement	Mean Score
I am interested in the positive image that Sandy Walsh has as Mills’ brand ambassador.	4,20
I agree that Sandy Walsh is a brand ambassador who has an attractive appearance (both physical and visual).	4,08
I see that Sandy Walsh’s appearance reflects the good quality of Mills products.	3,98
I agree that Sandy Walsh is a suitable brand ambassador for Mills because he aligns with Mills’ target market.	4,16
Total mean	4,11

Source : Processed by the Researcher, 2025

Attraction refers to the extent to which a brand ambassador is perceived as appealing and capable of drawing attention to a brand. According to Rossiter & Percy (2018), this concept includes two dimensions: likability, which reflects how pleasant and emotionally engaging a brand ambassador is; and similarity, which refers to how closely audiences feel aligned with the ambassador’s values, lifestyle, or cultural background. Based on responses from 100 participants, the overall mean score for the attraction indicator is 4.11, indicating an effective level of agreement based on the 3.01–5.00 interpretation scale. This suggests that most respondents agree that Sandy Walsh is an appealing figure who positively influences the image of Mills.

The statement with the highest mean score is “I am interested in the positive image that Sandy Walsh has as Mills’ brand ambassador” with a score of 4.20. This indicates that Sandy Walsh successfully builds a positive image and captures the interest of the public, fulfilling the likability aspect of attraction. His friendly and relatable personality is evident from his social media activities, such as singing Indonesian children’s songs for teammates, participating in viral dances like the “Daboy Dance,” and initiating playful challenges with fellow naturalized players. These activities humanize him and enhance his emotional closeness with the Indonesian public. Following this, the statement “I agree that Sandy Walsh is a suitable brand ambassador for Mills because he aligns with Mills’ target market” received a mean score of 4.16, showing strong agreement that he connects well with Mills’ intended audience particularly the younger, socially active demographic. The next statement, “I agree that Sandy Walsh is a brand ambassador who has an attractive appearance (both physical and visual)”, earned a mean score of 4.08, confirming that respondents see him as visually appealing, which contributes to his effectiveness as an ambassador.

The lowest mean score was 3.98, for the statement “I see that Sandy Walsh’s appearance reflects the good quality of Mills products.” Although still within the effective range, this slightly lower score suggests that not all respondents directly associate his physical appearance with the product’s quality. This perception may be influenced by recent sports-related injuries, such as one sustained while playing for Yokohama F. Marinos in the J1 League 2025 season (as reported by sport.detik.com), which might have impacted his physical presence or performance and, subsequently, how well he visually represents the brand’s toughness or comfort.

Nonetheless, this minor difference does not significantly diminish Sandy Walsh’s impact. His strong likability and similarity with the target audience outweigh any concerns related to visual representation. As a naturalized player actively involved in the national team and Indonesian pop culture, Sandy presents himself as grounded, relatable, and culturally engaged. In the context of Marketing Public Relations (MPR), this emotional connection is a vital asset. According to Ruslan (2010), a brand ambassador’s alignment with the brand’s identity and audience significantly enhances communication effectiveness. Sandy Walsh’s personality and social interaction continue to reinforce a strong brand image for Mills, making him a highly effective brand ambassador from the attraction perspective.

Table 1.6 Total Mean Score of Power Indicator

Power Indicator	
Statement	Mean Score
Sandy Walsh has a strong influence as a brand ambassador in encouraging me to recognize the Mills brand.	4,15
As a brand ambassador, Sandy Walsh plays a major role in shaping my memory of the	4,12

Power Indicator	
Mills brand.	
I feel the impact of Sandy Walsh as a brand ambassador that makes me like the Mills brand even more.	4,33
Sandy Walsh has the power as a brand ambassador to influence my decision to use Mills products.	4,15
Total mean	4,19

Source : Processed by the Researcher, 2025

The Power indicator reflects the extent to which a brand ambassador can influence the audience, often rooted in their popularity, reputation, or social standing (Rossiter & Percy, 2018). Sandy Walsh’s power as the brand ambassador of Mills received an overall mean score of 4.19, which indicates an effective level of influence according to the 3.01–5.00 interpretation scale. This suggests that most respondents agree that Sandy Walsh plays a significant role in shaping perceptions and preferences related to Mills. The highest-rated statement was “I feel the impact of Sandy Walsh as a brand ambassador that makes me like the Mills brand even more,” with a mean score of 4.33. This demonstrates that Walsh’s presence has a tangible emotional effect, enhancing respondents’ fondness for the brand. This is consistent with Lea Greenwood’s (2012) view that a brand ambassador should foster emotional closeness while boosting brand recognition and sales. Walsh’s popularity as a professional football player for both the Indonesian national team and Japan’s Yokohama F. Marinos reinforces his credibility and influence. Supporting statements such as “Sandy Walsh has a strong influence as a brand ambassador in encouraging me to recognize the Mills brand” and “Sandy Walsh has the power as a brand ambassador to influence my decision to use Mills products” both received high scores of 4.15, indicating that his public image plays a key role in motivating awareness and potential purchasing decisions.

However, the lowest-rated statement was “As a brand ambassador, Sandy Walsh plays a major role in shaping my memory of the Mills brand,” which received a mean score of 4.12. Although still effective, this suggests a relatively weaker association between Sandy Walsh and long-term brand recall. One possible reason is that Sandy does not frequently appear on Mills’ official Instagram account, reducing the brand exposure tied directly to his image. Additionally, a unique social phenomenon may be affecting brand recall Walsh is sometimes nicknamed “*Mas Es Krim*” by Indonesian netizens due to the phonetic similarity between “Walsh” and the popular ice cream brand “Walls.” Comments such as “menyala mas es krim” or “mang es krim emang keren” from Instagram users show that the public often remembers him through this humorous alias, which may divert brand association from Mills to a more personal or entertainment-based impression.

This observation is supported by research from Rifat, Putri, Dedees, and Kania (2024), which notes that brand ambassadors with strong personal branding or viral nicknames may overshadow the brands they represent. While this nickname contributes to emotional closeness and likability, it can dilute the ambassador’s direct influence on brand memory. Despite this, the overall perception of Sandy Walsh remains very positive. Social media responses such as “*Mills gak rugi pake Sandy Walsh karena dia selalu pake produknya dimanapun kapanpun*” (Instagram @bychoixe) and “*Wajib check out buat fans Bang Sandy Walsh*” (@maschanym) illustrate strong consumer trust and admiration. These public endorsements highlight Sandy’s perceived authenticity, consistency, and dedication to using Mills products, which collectively reinforce his power as a persuasive and credible brand figure. In conclusion, Sandy Walsh demonstrates high effectiveness in the power dimension, particularly through his public influence, emotional resonance, and credibility. While minor gaps exist in brand recall due to social media dynamics and meme culture, his overall impact significantly contributes to building brand preference and trust in Mills.

Table 1.7 Total Mean Score of VisCAP Indicator

Indicator	Mean
Visibility	4,12
Credibility	4,06
Attraction	4,11
Power	4,19
Total	4,12

Source : Processed by the Researcher, 2025

This study measured the effectiveness of Sandy Walsh as a brand ambassador for Mills through the VisCAP framework developed by Rossiter and Percy (2018), which includes four key indicators: Visibility, Credibility, Attraction, and Power. Based on responses from 100 participants, the overall mean score was 4.12, which falls within the "effective" range (3.01–5.00), indicating that Sandy Walsh meets the criteria for an effective brand ambassador on Instagram (@millssportid). Among the four indicators, Power received the highest mean score of 4.19. This suggests that Sandy Walsh's influence is largely driven by his public reputation, social status, and professional achievements. As a well-known footballer representing the Indonesian National Team and Yokohama F. Marinos in Japan, Walsh is widely trusted and admired, which positively impacts public perception of the Mills brand. This aligns with Wulandari's (2021) findings that brand ambassadors can enhance brand image and consumer interest.

Visibility ranked second with a mean score of 4.12. His visibility is supported by a strong online presence, including 2.9 million Instagram followers and 19 caps for the

Indonesian National Team since his debut in 2023 (Saputro, 2025). According to Vilkanora (2023), high visibility contributes to the ambassador’s power, enabling greater influence over brand perception and awareness. Attraction received a mean score of 4.11, showing that respondents find Sandy Walsh appealing and likable, which contributes to their positive feelings toward the brand. Credibility, while the lowest among the four indicators at 4.06, still falls within the effective range. This score reflects a minor limitation in Sandy Walsh’s role as a communicator of brand messages. As a professional athlete, his primary strength lies in performance rather than promotional communication. This finding mirrors Joeyceline Kai (2024) study on Maudy Ayunda, where credibility was also the weakest dimension due to a perceived lack of expertise in the product’s domain.

However, Sandy Walsh’s credibility is still considered effective due to his consistent use of Mills products during matches, demonstrating authenticity and trust in the brand. According to Rossiter and Percy (2018), credibility is built on trustworthiness and expertise, both of which Sandy fulfills through his genuine representation and loyalty to the brand. In conclusion, all VisCAP indicators for Sandy Walsh as a brand ambassador for Mills on Instagram fall within effective ranges, with Power and Visibility being the strongest contributors. Despite a slightly lower score in Credibility, Walsh’s overall impact on the brand is strong, trusted, and positively received by the audience.

Table 1.8 Gender Crosstab

Gender	Visibility	Credibility	Attraction	Power
Male	4,3	4,31	4,16	4,32
Female	3,8	3,66	4,02	3,97

Source : Processed by the Researcher, 2025

This section analyzes the relationship between gender and the VisCAP indicators (Visibility, Credibility, Attraction, and Power) in evaluating Sandy Walsh's effectiveness as a brand ambassador for Mills. Based on the crosstab results, male respondents gave higher average scores across all four indicators compared to female respondents. For male respondents, the highest average score was in the Power indicator (4.32), followed by Credibility (4.31), Visibility (4.30), and Attraction (4.16). This suggests that Sandy Walsh is perceived by male audiences as a highly influential figure who significantly strengthens their interest in Mills. As a professional football player representing the Indonesian National Team and Yokohama F. Marinos, his athletic credentials contribute to his strong credibility and appeal among sports-oriented male audiences. In contrast, female respondents gave their highest rating to the Attraction indicator (4.02), followed by Power (3.97), Visibility (3.80), and Credibility (3.66).

Although the scores are slightly lower than those from male respondents, they still indicate a positive perception of Sandy Walsh as a brand ambassador. Female audiences are

likely drawn to his likable personality, approachable demeanor, and overall positive public image, which align with the likability aspect of the Attraction indicator. The dominance of male respondents in the sample (61 out of 100) corresponds with broader trends, such as those reported by goodstats.id, which show that Gen Z males are more active in sports than females. This aligns with the nature of the Mills brand, which targets a sport-oriented audience. The relatively high scores from male respondents further confirm that Sandy Walsh resonates effectively with this demographic, especially in terms of credibility and power, given his consistent use of Mills products in professional settings. Overall, the crosstab analysis highlights that while both male and female respondents perceive Sandy Walsh positively as a brand ambassador, his impact is more pronounced among male audiences especially in terms of influence, trust, and brand alignment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of a study involving 100 respondents aged 18–28 (Generation Z) who follow the Instagram account @millssportid, the use of Sandy Walsh as Mills' brand ambassador is proven to be effective. This is evidenced by the average scores of all four VisCAP indicators Visibility, Credibility, Attraction, and Power which all fall within the “effective” category, with an overall mean score of 4.12.

The Power indicator scored the highest (4.19), showing that Sandy Walsh has a strong influence in shaping audience perceptions and purchase decisions. The Attraction indicator followed (4.11), indicating that Sandy possesses strong appeal, not only due to his athletic image but also because of his approachable and friendly personality on social media. Visibility received a score of 4.12, meaning Sandy is well-known among respondents, though his exposure as a brand ambassador on Instagram could still be enhanced. The Credibility indicator had the lowest score (4.06), yet still within the effective range, as Sandy is seen as a trustworthy and skilled athlete who consistently uses Mills products.

However, the study has limitations, particularly in its sample, which only includes followers of @millssportid within a specific age group. This means the findings may not fully represent the perceptions of the broader Mills consumer base. Additionally, data was collected within a specific time frame, so the results may not reflect possible changes in perception over time.

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