

The Influence of Appearance-Uniforms and Attitude on Repurchase Intention through Brand Imagery on Citilink Airline Customers in Bandung

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Abstract

This study examines the effects of appearance-uniforms and flight-attendant attitude on repurchase intention through brand imagery among Citilink customers in Bandung. A quantitative cross-sectional survey was conducted with 150 respondents aged at least 17 years who had used Citilink services at least once during the previous 12 months. Respondents were recruited through non-probability convenience sampling, and the data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 25. The analysis included descriptive statistics, validity and reliability tests, classical assumption tests, multiple linear regression, ANOVA, coefficients of determination, and Sobel mediation tests. The findings show that appearance-uniforms and attitude positively affect brand imagery. Appearance-uniforms, attitude, and brand imagery also positively affect repurchase intention. Brand imagery significantly mediates the effects of both appearance-uniforms and attitude on repurchase intention. The two regression models explain 45.1% of the variance in brand imagery and 48.0% of the variance in repurchase intention. These findings indicate that consistent visual identity and professional interpersonal service work jointly to strengthen the airline brand and encourage customers to reuse the service. Scientifically, the findings support the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework by demonstrating that appearance-uniforms and attitude as service stimuli influence repurchase intention both directly and indirectly through brand imagery as an internal psychological response. Citilink should therefore maintain grooming and uniform standards, reinforce service-excellence training, and integrate customer feedback into brand-management practices.

1. INTRODUCTION

The aviation industry plays a strategic role in strengthening interregional connectivity, community mobility, trade, and tourism activities. This role is increasingly crucial for Indonesia, an archipelagic nation, as air transportation can reduce geographical barriers and accelerate the movement of people and economic activity (Mafrudoh et al., 2025). Technological developments and innovations are also driving changes in consumer behavior and increasing demands for fast, safe, accessible, and consistent services (Sihombing et al., 2024). In this context, airline competition is determined not only by ticket prices and route networks, but also by the company's ability to build a service experience and brand image that encourages repeat customers.

Citilink operates in the low-cost carrier segment and faces intense competition from both low-cost and full-service airlines. Top Brand Index data shows that Citilink's index increased from 12.30 in 2021 to 23.00 in 2022, but then declined to 17.40 in 2023, 15.90 in 2024, and 15.50 in 2025 (Top Brand Award, 2025). The decline after 2022 is important to note because the Top Brand Index combines top of mind, last usage,

and future intention. Future intention relates to consumers' tendency to reuse a brand in the future, so the index's movement indicates the need to strengthen the factors that shape repurchase intention.

Table 1. Citilink Top Brand Index, 2021-2025

Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Citilink index	12.30	23.00	17.40	15.90	15.50

Source: Top Brand Award (2025).

In service marketing, consumers evaluate companies through observable cues during the service process. The servicescape concept positions physical evidence and the service environment as cues that help consumers evaluate the quality of a service provider (Bitner, 1992). In airline service, the appearance of cabin crew uniforms is part of this physical evidence. Neat, attractive, easily recognizable, and consistent uniforms with the company's identity can communicate professionalism, credibility, and brand character before customers assess more complex service aspects. Research on work attire also shows that the level of formality and consistency of employee appearance influences consumers' assessments of organizational competence and image (Adomaitis & Johnson, 2005; Park, 2019).

In addition to visual appearance, cabin crew attitude provides interpersonal cues received by customers through friendliness, politeness, empathy, responsiveness, communication skills, and consistent professional behavior. In high-contact services, the customer experience is largely shaped by the service encounter, or direct interaction with personnel. Positive interactions can enhance customer comfort, trust, and brand evaluation, while inconsistent behavior can weaken the impression established through the company's marketing communications (Ko et al., 2021; Le & Khuong, 2023). Therefore, appearance, uniforms, and attitude are not merely operational attributes, but marketing stimuli that have the potential to shape brand imagery and post-purchase responses.

The relationship between variables in this study is explained using the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theory. Mehrabian and Russell (1974) explain that environmental stimuli are processed within an individual's internal state before producing a behavioral response. In this study, appearance-uniforms and attitude serve as stimuli because both are observed by customers during flight service. Brand imagery becomes an organism because it reflects customers' perceptions, associations, evaluations, and mental images of Citilink. Repurchase intention is a response seen in the desire to reuse the service, recommend the airline, and maintain Citilink as a choice. This placement also aligns with the concept of brand equity, which emphasizes that associations stored in consumers' memories influence evaluations and behaviors toward a brand (Keller, 1993).

Previous empirical evidence has not been entirely consistent. Aslan et al. (2025) showed that cabin crew appearance and attitude can be related to brand imagery and repurchase intention, but the strength of each pathway is not always equal. Park (2019) found that color and cabin crew uniform elements are related to airline image, while Le and Khuong (2023) emphasized the role of cabin crew appearance and attitude.

Service experience plays a role in shaping brand image and brand trust. On the other hand, Nugraha and Ramadhanti (2021) showed that the decision to reuse airline services can be influenced by a broader combination of factors, so visual attributes or service interactions are not always the dominant explanatory factors. Lestari et al. (2024) also showed that the influence of brand image on repurchase intentions can work alongside service quality, price, and customer satisfaction.

These discrepancies in findings highlight two research gaps. First, the direct influence of appearance-uniforms and attitude on repurchase intention remains to be tested in the context of low-cost carrier customers in Indonesia. Second, the psychological mechanisms explaining how these two stimuli shape repurchase intention are not fully understood. Brand imagery is thought to be an important mechanism because customers can summarize appearance, interactions, and service experiences into more stable brand associations. A positive brand image reduces doubt, facilitates the evaluation process, and increases customer confidence in choosing an airline again (Canitez, 2016; Tahir et al., 2024).

The novelty of this research lies in the integrated examination of appearance-uniforms, attitude, brand imagery, and repurchase intention among Citilink customers in Bandung. The study not only assesses the direct effect but also examines brand imagery as a mediating variable through two indirect pathways. The model contributes to the services marketing literature by demonstrating how visual evidence and personnel interactions work together to shape behavioral responses. Practically, the results can be used to assess whether investments in uniform design, grooming standards, service excellence training, and brand identity consistency have the potential to increase customers' intention to reuse Citilink.

Based on these arguments, the study tested seven hypotheses: H1 appearance-uniforms has a positive effect on brand imagery; H2 attitude has a positive effect on brand imagery; H3 brand imagery has a positive effect on repurchase intention; H4 appearance-uniforms has a positive effect on repurchase intention; H5 attitude has a positive effect on repurchase intention; H6 brand imagery mediates the effect of appearance-uniforms on repurchase intention; and H7 brand imagery mediates the effect of attitude on repurchase intention. The purpose of the study was to analyze all direct and indirect relationships among Citilink customers in Bandung City.

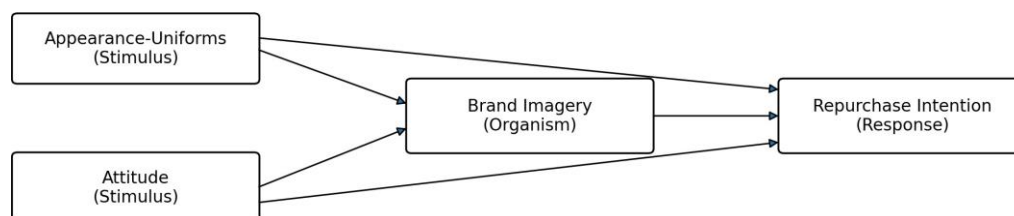


Figure 1. Conceptual model based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response framework

2. METHODS

The study employed a quantitative approach with a causal design and a cross-sectional survey. The quantitative approach was chosen because the study tested the relationships formulated in the hypothesis using numerical data and statistical analysis

(Sugiyono, 2018). The unit of analysis was Citilink customers residing in Bandung City. Respondents must be at least 17 years old and have used Citilink flight services at least once in the past 12 months to be able to evaluate cabin crew appearance, service attitude, brand image, and intention to reuse the service.

The sample size was set at 150 respondents. This determination was based on a minimum of ten times the number of indicators, as the research instrument consisted of 15 indicators. The sampling technique used non-probability convenience sampling, selecting respondents who were easily accessible, met the criteria, and were willing to participate. This technique was used because a complete list of Citilink's customer population in Bandung City was not available to the researchers. However, filtering questions were applied to ensure that all answers came from respondents who were relevant to the research object (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Primary data were collected through an online questionnaire using Google Forms. Each indicator was measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Appearance uniforms and attitude were each measured using four items, brand imagery using four items, and repurchase intention using three items. The instruments were adapted from the literature used in this thesis and adapted to the context of Citilink's services. A summary of the operationalization of the variables is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Operationalization of Research Variables

Variable	Operational definition	Main indicators	Scale	Source
Appearance uniforms (X1)	Customer assessment of the appearance of cabin crew uniforms as a visual identity and symbol of professionalism.	Visual aesthetics; positive impression; professionalism; ease of recognition.	Likert 1-5	Aslan et al. (2025); Park (2019)
Attitude (X2)	Interpersonal and professional behavior of cabin crew during interactions with passengers.	Helpful attitude; positive communication; friendliness; professional consistency.	Likert 1-5	Aslan et al. (2025); Le & Khuong (2023)
Brand imagery (Z)	Perceptions and symbolic associations stored in customers' memories regarding Citilink.	Positive association; brand recall; character fit; emotional impression.	Likert 1-5	Keller (1993); Canitez (2016)
Repurchase intention (Y)	The tendency of customers to return to choose and recommend Citilink services.	Reuse intention; recommendation; brand choice commitment.	Likert 1-5	Zeithaml et al. (1996); Aslan et al. (2025)

Source: Processed research data, 2026.

The analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 25. The first stage was

descriptive statistics to describe the respondent profile and the tendency of answers on each construct. Instrument validity was evaluated using item-total correlation with r table 0.1603, while reliability was assessed through Cronbach's Alpha with a minimum limit of 0.70. Classical assumption tests included residual normality through Kolmogorov-Smirnov, multicollinearity through tolerance greater than 0.10 and VIF less than 10, and heteroscedasticity through Glejser test with p greater than 0.05 (Ghozali, 2013).

Hypothesis testing uses two multiple linear regression models. Model 1 tests the effect of appearance-uniforms and attitude on brand imagery with the equation $Z = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + e$. Model 2 tests the effect of appearance-uniforms, attitude, and brand imagery on repurchase intention with the equation $Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3Z + e$. The feasibility of the model is assessed using the F test, while the model's explanatory ability is assessed through R Square and Adjusted R Square. The decision on direct influence uses a significance level of 5% and a critical t value of 1.655. Mediation testing is carried out with the Sobel test using path coefficients a and b and their respective standard errors; mediation is declared significant if z is greater than 1.960 and p is less than 0.05 (Preacher & Hayes, 2004; Sugiyama, 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Respondent Characteristics

A total of 150 respondents met the research criteria. The sample composition was dominated by women (93 people or 62.0%), while men numbered 57 people or 38.0%. The 17-25 age group was the largest group with 91 respondents or 60.7%. Almost all respondents resided in Bandung City, namely 148 people or 98.7%. Based on occupation, students were the largest group with 44 people or 29.3%, followed by private employees and other categories with 25 people or 16.7% each. All respondents were aware of Citilink and had used its flight services, thus fulfilling the requirements for evaluating the research construct

Table 3. Respondent Characteristics (n = 150)

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	57	38.0
Gender	Female	93	62.0
Age	17-25 years	91	60.7
Age	26-35 years	30	20.0
Age	> 35 years	29	19.3
Residence	Bandung City	148	98.7

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Residence	Outside Bandung City	2	1.3
Occupation	Student (university)	44	29.3
Occupation	Student (school)	16	10.7
Occupation	Private employee	25	16.7
Occupation	Civil servant	20	13.3
Occupation	Entrepreneur	20	13.3

Occupation	Other	25	16.7
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Source: Processed research data, 2026.

The predominance of respondents aged 17-25 indicates that the study results largely represent young customers who actively use digital services and have relatively high mobility. The diverse employment mix still provides a variety of experiences, but the substantial proportion of students should be considered when generalizing the results. Furthermore, the high percentage of respondents residing in Bandung reinforces the sample's suitability for the study area.

3.2. Descriptive Statistics

The average appearance-uniforms score of 3.15 is in the moderate or sufficient category. Item scores range from 3.09 to 3.21, indicating that customers consider the cabin crew uniforms to be quite attractive, professional, and representative of Citilink's identity, but with room for improvement. Attitude averaged 3.02 with a range from 2.98 to 3.03, also in the moderate category. These results indicate that customer experience with helpfulness, communication, friendliness, and professional consistency has not been rated very strongly.

Brand imagery scored an average of 3.90, or good, with a range of 3.87–3.96. This means that respondents generally had positive associations, could remember Citilink, and assessed the brand as having characteristics that suited their needs. Repurchase intention scored the highest average of 4.66, or very good. This score indicates that respondents had a strong tendency to reuse, recommend, and maintain Citilink as their preferred choice. The difference between moderate service stimulus scores and very high repurchase intentions suggests that customer decisions are likely also influenced by other factors, such as price, route network, schedule, previous experience, and ease of access.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	Number of items	Item mean range	Overall mean	Category
Appearance uniforms	4	3.09-3.21	3.15	Moderate
Attitude	4	2.98-3.03	3.02	Moderate
Brand imagery	4	3.87-3.96	3.90	Good
Repurchase intention	3	4.62-4.70	4.66	Very good

Source: Processed research data, 2026.

3.3. Instrument Quality and Classical Assumptions

All items had an item-total correlation above r table of 0.1603. The correlation range for appearance uniforms was 0.763-0.793, attitude 0.779-0.856, brand imagery 0.761-0.838, and repurchase intention 0.816-0.874. The Cronbach's Alpha values for each construct were 0.777; 0.832; 0.812; and 0.790. Since all alpha values were greater than 0.70, the instrument was declared to have adequate internal consistency. These results indicate that the items used were able to measure the constructs validly and reliably.

Table 5. Validity and Reliability Results

Construct	Items	Item-total r range	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
Appearance uniforms	4	0.763-0.793	0.777	Valid and reliable

Attitude	4	0.779-0.856	0.832	Valid and reliable
Brand imagery	4	0.761-0.838	0.812	Valid and reliable
Repurchase intention	3	0.816-0.874	0.790	Valid and reliable

Source: Processed research data, 2026.

The normality test yielded a significance value of 0.200 for both Models 1 and 2, indicating that the residuals of both models were normally distributed. In Model 1, the tolerance value was 0.999 and the VIF was 1.001 for both predictors. In Model 2, the tolerance ranged from 0.549 to 0.769, and the VIF ranged from 1.300 to 1.821. All values met the criteria for the absence of multicollinearity. The Glejser test also yielded p values above 0.05 for all predictors, namely 0.370 and 0.348 for Model 1, and 0.518, 0.094, and 0.643 for Model 2. Thus, both models showed no symptoms of heteroscedasticity and were suitable for hypothesis testing.

Table 6. Classical Assumption Test Summary

Model	Test	Result	Decision
Model 1: DV Brand imagery	Normality	KS p = 0.200	Normal residuals
Model 1: DV Brand imagery	Multicollinearity	Tolerance = 0.999; VIF = 1.001	No multicollinearity
Model 1: DV Brand imagery	Glacier	p X1 = 0.370; p X2 = 0.348	No heteroscedasticity
Model 2: DV Repurchase intention	Normality	KS p = 0.200	Normal residuals
Model 2: DV Repurchase intention	Multicollinearity	Tolerance = 0.549-0.769; VIF = 1,300-1,821	No multicollinearity
Model 2: DV Repurchase intention	Glacier	pX1 = 0.518; pX2 = 0.094; pZ = 0.643	No heteroscedasticity

Source: Processed research data, 2026.

3.4. Regression, Model Fit, and Mediation Tests

Model 1 produces the equation $Z = 4.265 + 0.409X_1 + 0.513X_2$. The appearance-uniforms coefficient is 0.409 with $t = 6.633$ and $p < 0.001$, while the attitude coefficient is 0.513 with $t = 8.904$ and $p < 0.001$. Both coefficients are positive and significant. The standardized beta value of attitude of 0.544 is greater than the appearance-uniforms beta of 0.406, so attitude is a relatively stronger predictor of brand imagery in this model.

Table 7. Multiple Regression Model 1: Predictors of Brand Imagery

Predictor	B	SE	Beta	t	p
Appearance uniforms	0.409	0.062	0.406	6,633	<0.001
Attitude	0.513	0.058	0.544	8,904	<0.001

Source: Results of processing SPSS 25, 2026. Dependent variable: Brand imagery.

Model 2 produces the equation $Y = 6.011 + 0.202X_1 + 0.239X_2 + 0.163Z$. Appearance-uniforms has a positive effect with $t = 4.589$ and $p < 0.001$. Attitude has a positive effect with $t = 5.320$ and $p < 0.001$. Brand imagery also has a positive effect

with $t = 3.139$ and $p = 0.002$. Based on standardized beta, attitude has the largest relative effect on repurchase intention at 0.394, followed by appearance-uniforms at 0.312 and brand imagery at 0.253.

Table 8. Multiple Regression Model 2: Predictors of Repurchase Intention

Predictor	B	SE	Beta	t	p
Appearance uniforms	0.202	0.044	0.312	4,589	<0.001
Attitude	0.239	0.045	0.394	5,320	<0.001
Brand imagery	0.163	0.052	0.253	3,139	0.002

Source: Results of processing SPSS 25, 2026. Dependent variable: Repurchase intention.

Simultaneous test shows that Model 1 is significant with $F(2,147) = 60.317$ and $p < 0.001$. The R Square value of 0.451 indicates that appearance-uniforms and attitude explain 45.1% of the variation in brand imagery. Model 2 is also significant with $F(3,146) = 44.894$ and $p < 0.001$. The R Square value of 0.480 indicates that appearance-uniforms, attitude, and brand imagery explain 48.0% of the variation in repurchase intention. The rest is explained by factors not included in the model, such as price, timeliness, operational quality, satisfaction, trust, customer experience, and perceived value.

Table 9. ANOVA and Coefficients of Determination

Model	Dependent variable	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	SEE	F	p
Model 1	Brand imagery	0.671	0.451	0.443	1,526	60,317	<0.001
Model 2	Repurchase intention	0.693	0.480	0.469	0.959	44,894	<0.001

Source: Processed research data, 2026.

The Sobel test shows that brand imagery mediates both indirect relationships. On the appearance-uniforms path to repurchase intention through brand imagery, the z value is 2.831 with $p = 0.004$. On the attitude path to repurchase intention through brand imagery, the z value is 2.955 with $p = 0.003$. Because the z value exceeds 1.960 and p is less than 0.05, H6 and H7 are accepted. The direct effects of X1 and X2 on Y remain significant when brand imagery is entered into Model 2, so the pattern formed is partial mediation.

Table 10. Sobel Mediation Test Results

Indirect path	a	SEa	b	SEb	z	p	Decision
H6: X1 -> Z -> Y	0.409	0.062	0.163	0.052	2,831	0.004	Significant
H7: X2 -> Z -> Y	0.513	0.058	0.163	0.052	2,955	0.003	Significant

Source: Processed research data, 2026.

Table 11. Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Statistics	Critical value	p	Decision
H1	Appearance-	$t = 6.633$	$t = 1.655$	<0.001	Supported

	uniforms -> Brand imagery				
H2	Attitude -> Brand imagery	t = 8.904	t = 1.655	<0.001	Supported
H3	Brand imagery -> Repurchase intention	t = 3.139	t = 1.655	0.002	Supported
H4	Appearance- uniforms -> Repurchase intention	t = 4.589	t = 1.655	<0.001	Supported
H5	Attitude -> Repurchase intention	t = 5,320	t = 1.655	<0.001	Supported
H6	Appearance- uniforms -> Brand imagery -> Repurchase intention	z = 2.831	z = 1.960	0.004	Supported
H7	Attitude -> Brand imagery -> Repurchase intention	z = 2.955	z = 1.960	0.003	Supported

Source: Processed research data, 2026.

3.5. Discussion

3.5.1. Effect of Appearance-Uniforms on Brand Imagery

The results of the study show that appearance-uniforms have a positive and significant effect. on brand imagery. This finding indicates that the more attractive, neat, professional, and recognizable the cabin crew uniform, the more positive the Citilink brand image formed in customers' minds. Uniforms serve as nonverbal communication that conveys the company's identity and standards. When the cabin crew's appearance is consistent with the brand's colors, character, and positioning, customers receive visual cues that make it easier to connect the service experience with Citilink.

These findings support the servicescape concept, which positions physical evidence as an important cue in shaping customer evaluations of service providers (Bitner, 1992). The result is also consistent with Adomaitis and Johnson (2005), Park (2019), and Aslan et al. (2025), who found that employee appearance and cabin crew uniforms can influence customers' perceptions of professionalism, organizational image, and airline-

related evaluations. In particular, Park (2019) showed that airline uniform color can communicate the characteristics and identity that an airline seeks to convey, while Aslan et al. (2025) found that cabin crew appearance is significantly related to brand-related outcomes and repurchase intention. Therefore, the significant effect found in this study indicates that visual characteristics of cabin crew uniforms can function as an important source of brand imagery among Citilink customers.

3.5.2. Effect of Attitude on Brand Imagery

Attitude has a positive and significant effect on brand imagery, even having the largest standardized beta in Model 1. These results indicate that customers form an image. Citilink's reputation stems not only from corporate communications but also from the way the cabin crew treat passengers. Helpfulness, positive communication, friendliness, and professional behavior serve as a reflection of the brand's values in real-life experiences. Customers tend to generalize their experiences with cabin crew into their overall assessment of the company.

These findings are consistent with Ko et al. (2021), who found that positive interpersonal experiences among low-cost carrier customers contribute to more favorable evaluations of the airline brand and are associated with positive brand image formation. The findings are also in line with Le and Khuong (2023), who demonstrated that in-flight service experiences contribute to the formation of customers' perceptions of airline brand image and trust. Aslan et al. (2025) further showed that cabin crew attitudes and behaviors are significantly related to brand imagery and passenger repurchase intention. Therefore, the significant effect of attitude on brand imagery in this study confirms that the way cabin crew interact with passengers can become an important source of customers' overall perceptions and associations with Citilink.

3.5.3. Effect of Brand Imagery on Repurchase Intention

Brand imagery has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention. When customers... Consumers who view Citilink as a memorable, reputable, relevant brand, and positive emotional impact are more likely to use the service again. Brand image serves as a summary of experiences, helping consumers reduce the complexity of choosing between multiple airlines. Strong associations can also reduce perceived risk because customers feel familiar with the brand's quality and character.

These findings are consistent with Keller (1993), Canitez (2016), and Tahir et al. (2024), who emphasize the importance of brand associations and brand image in shaping customer evaluations, satisfaction, and loyalty. Tahir et al. (2024), through a systematic literature review, found that brand image has a significant role in fostering customer loyalty, while Le and Khuong (2023) showed that strong airline brand perceptions are related to customer satisfaction and loyalty. In the airline context, Rumondang Banjarnahor et al. (2025) also highlighted the relationship between service quality, brand image, loyalty, and repurchase intention. Therefore, the significant effect of brand imagery found in this study indicates that positive and memorable associations with Citilink can strengthen customers' intention to reuse the airline service. This finding is also supported by Ruhananta and Nurmansyah (2025), who found that brand image has a direct influence on consumers' repurchase intention. Although their study was conducted in a different product context, the result similarly indicates that favorable brand-related perceptions can encourage consumers to repurchase a product or service.

3.5.4. Direct Effect of Appearance-Uniforms on Repurchase Intention

Appearance-uniforms have a direct, positive effect on repurchase intention. This means,

The appearance of cabin crew not only shapes brand image but can also generate behavioral responses without having to rely solely on brand imagery. Neat and professional visual evidence can enhance a sense of security, order, and trust in a company's operational standards. In aviation, this professional impression is crucial because customers are dealing with a service that carries a high level of risk and involvement.

These findings are consistent with Bitner (1992) and Zeithaml et al. (1996), who emphasize that physical evidence and service cues can influence customers' evaluations and behavioral responses. The result also directly supports Aslan et al. (2025), who found that the appearance and uniforms of cabin crew significantly affect passengers' repurchase intention. Park (2019) further demonstrated that cabin crew uniform characteristics can communicate the identity and intended image of an airline to customers. Therefore, the significant effect of appearance-uniforms on repurchase intention found in this study indicates that professional and recognizable cabin crew appearance can contribute not only to brand evaluation but also to customers' intention to reuse Citilink services.

3.5.5. Direct Effect of Attitude on Repurchase Intention

Attitude has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention and has the largest beta in Model 2. This finding indicates that interpersonal experience is an important driver for customers to return to Citilink. Customers who feel helped, appreciated, and served professionally tend to have positive evaluations of the trip and have a higher desire to choose the same airline. In consumer behavior, pleasant experiences can shape attitudes, beliefs, and future behavioral intentions (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019).

These findings support Aslan et al. (2025), who found that cabin crew attitudes and behaviors significantly influence passengers' repurchase intention. The findings are also consistent with Ko et al. (2021), who showed that positive interpersonal experiences among low-cost carrier customers contribute to more favorable evaluations of the airline. However, the result differs from Nugraha and Ramadhanti (2021), who indicated that service-related factors are not always the dominant determinant of repurchase decisions when customers strongly consider other factors such as price and route availability. In the present study, attitude remained significant after appearance-uniforms and brand imagery were included in the model, indicating that positive cabin crew interactions make a distinct contribution to customers' intention to reuse Citilink services.

3.5.6. Mediating Role of Brand Imagery in the Appearance-Uniforms Relationship

Brand imagery mediates the influence of appearance-uniforms on repurchase intention. This result is in accordance with the SOR flow: uniform appearance is the stimulus, brand imagery is the internal process, and repurchase intention as a response. Professional uniforms reinforce the association that Citilink is an organized, trustworthy airline with a clear identity. This association then increases customer confidence in using the service again. Because the direct effect of appearance and uniforms remains significant, brand imagery acts as a partial mediator.

The mediation result is consistent with Aslan et al. (2025), who found that brand imagery mediates the relationship between cabin crew appearance and passenger repurchase intention. This finding strengthens the argument that the influence of visual service cues does not operate only through an immediate behavioral response but can also work

through customers' internal associations with the airline brand. In the context of Citilink, the significant Sobel test indicates that professional and recognizable cabin crew appearance contributes to positive brand imagery, which subsequently strengthens customers' intention to reuse the service. Because the direct effect remains significant, the mediation is partial, indicating that appearance-uniforms influence repurchase intention through both a direct pathway and a brand-imagery pathway.

A related finding was reported by Hilmy and Ernawadi (2024), who examined appearance perception as an antecedent of repurchase intention and found that appearance-related perceptions can also influence repurchase intention indirectly through brand-related psychological variables, including brand experience and brand trust. Although the mediating variables differ from those used in the present study, their findings support the broader argument that customers' perceptions of appearance can influence repurchase intention not only directly but also through internal brand-related evaluations.

3.5.7. Mediating Role of Brand Imagery in the Attitude Relationship

Brand imagery also mediates the influence of attitude on repurchase intention. This result is consistent with Aslan et al. (2025), who found that cabin crew attitudes and behaviors influence passenger repurchase intention and that brand imagery plays a mediating role in this relationship. The finding is also in line with Ko et al. (2021), who demonstrated that positive interpersonal experiences among low-cost carrier customers can contribute to positive brand image formation. In the context of this study, friendly, helpful, and professional cabin crew behavior can create positive customer experiences that become part of the customer's overall perception of Citilink. This strengthened brand imagery subsequently contributes to higher repurchase intention, confirming the SOR mechanism in which attitude functions as a stimulus, brand imagery as an internal psychological process, and repurchase intention as a behavioral response. This finding is also supported by Euis and Nurtjahjadi (2024), who found that brand image has a significant effect on repurchase intention. Although their study was conducted in a different product context, the result similarly indicates that favorable brand-related perceptions can encourage consumers to make repeat purchases.

The partial mediation results indicate that attitude improvements generate both immediate and longer-term benefits through brand image. Therefore, companies need to maintain consistent service behavior across flights, routes, and cabin crew. Inconsistency can hinder image formation because customers receive different signals in each experience. Service standards need to be complemented by coaching, service observations, passenger feedback, and behavioral indicator-based evaluations to ensure brand values are truly reflected in interactions.

3.5.8. Theoretical Implications, Managerial Implications, and Limitations

Theoretically, research supports the application of SOR in aviation services marketing. Appearance-uniforms and attitude have been shown to influence the organism in the form of brand imagery and the response in the form of repurchase intention. Partial mediation results show that consumers can respond directly to service stimuli while simultaneously processing them into brand associations. These findings also indicate that visual and interpersonal elements complement each other; attitude has a relatively stronger influence, but appearance-uniforms still makes a significant contribution.

Managerially, Citilink needs to integrate appearance management, interaction quality, and brand strategy. First, the company needs to conduct regular evaluations of uniform design, comfort, color matching, grooming standards, and consistency of implementation. Second, service-excellence training needs to emphasize positive

communication, empathy, promptness to help, and complaint resolution. Third, the results of satisfaction surveys, complaints, and digital feedback need to be mapped to brand imagery indicators so the company knows which touchpoints strengthen or weaken the image. Fourth, marketing campaigns need to showcase experiences that cabin crew can truly realize to eliminate the gap between brand promise and actual service.

The study has several limitations. The sample was selected through convenience sampling, and almost all respondents came from Bandung. Therefore, the results cannot be directly generalized to all Citilink customers in Indonesia. Data were collected through self-perception with a cross-sectional design, thus not capturing changes in customer evaluations over time and not proving actual repurchase behavior. The study also only included appearance—uniforms, attitude, and brand imagery, while 52.0% of the variation in repurchase intention was explained by factors outside the model. Future research could expand the scope, compare low-cost carriers and full-service carriers, use probability sampling, combine surveys with transaction data, and include service quality, customer satisfaction, trust, perceived value, price, punctuality, and customer experience.

CONCLUSION

The study proves that appearance-uniforms and attitude have a positive and significant effect on the brand imagery of Citilink customers in Bandung City. Appearance-uniforms, attitude, and brand imagery also have a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention. Brand imagery partially mediates the effect of appearance-uniforms and attitude on repurchase intention. The first model explains 45.1% of the variation in brand imagery, while the second model explains 48.0% of the variation in repurchase intention. These findings indicate that the professional appearance and quality of cabin crew interactions not only elicit immediate responses but also form brand associations that strengthen customers' desire to reuse the service.

Citilink needs to maintain a consistent visual identity through uniform and grooming standards, as well as strengthen service behavior through training in communication, empathy, responsiveness, and service recovery. Customer experience management should be linked to brand image evaluation so the company can identify the service aspects that most strongly drive repurchase intention. Because the research was limited to a non-probability sample in one region and used data perception, future research needs to expand the population, use longitudinal designs or actual behavioral data, and include other relevant operational and psychological factors.

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