

THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON PURCHASING DECISIONS FOR SKINTIFIC PRODUCTS IN DENPASAR CITY WITH BRAND IMAGE AS A MEDIATING VARIABLE

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Abstract: The emergence of counterfeit skincare products containing harmful ingredients has created serious challenges for the beauty industry, including Skintific. Consumers who are increasingly savvy and critical of the products they use have forced Skintific to think hard about how to maintain its business with various strategies, including marketing strategies to increase consumer purchasing decisions for skincare products, especially Skintific products. This study aims to determine and analyze the influence of social media marketing on purchasing decisions with brand image as a mediating variable for Skintific skincare products in Denpasar City. The sample size used was 120 respondents who are users of Skintific skincare products in Denpasar City, Bali, with sampling using Nonprobability Sampling with the Snowball Sampling method. Data was collected using a Likert scale questionnaire and processed using SEM-PLS. The results of the study prove that social media marketing has a positive effect on purchasing decisions, social media marketing has a positive effect on brand image, brand image has a positive effect on purchasing decisions, and brand image is able to mediate the effect of social media marketing on purchasing decisions.

Keywords: social media marketing, brand image, purchasing decision

INTRODUCTION

One of the products that is now widely used by skin care users is Skintific skin care. With the approval of BPOM, Skintific skin care has passed the Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) test, a technique that is usually used to ensure that products are produced sustainably, consistently, and under supervision in accordance with high and good quality standards. According to the Kompas Market Insight Dashboard, the Skintific brand generated nearly Rp 70 billion in sales during the first quarter of 2024. In addition, Skintific's official store has the highest sales, according to Kompas.co.id. Skintific's official store generated sales of Rp 64 billion, while the company's unofficial stores generated Rp 7 billion. However, behind this promising growth, there are worrying problems.

The recent issue involves the widespread circulation of counterfeit skincare products containing harmful ingredients such as mercury. This is evidenced by a statement from the Indonesian Food and Drug Monitoring Agency (BPOM) that there

are 51,791 cases of illegal skincare and cosmetic products in circulation (mediaindonesia.com, 2024). This situation has caused concern among consumers, directly impacting their purchasing decisions, as they tend to prefer products that have been clinically tested, have official distribution permits from BPOM, and come from trusted brands. The emergence of counterfeit skincare products containing harmful ingredients has created serious challenges for the beauty industry, including Skintific. Consumers who are increasingly savvy and critical of the products they use have forced Skintific to think hard about how to maintain its business with various strategies, including tactics such as marketing plans to encourage more people to buy skincare products, especially skincare products.

A purchase decision is a decision where customers truly want and have evaluated a product or service they are looking for, leading them to decide to make a purchase (Tasya et al., 2023). Shopping has become one of the most common ways for people to satisfy their desires, and consumer needs have a significant impact on lifestyle (Surveyandini, 2021). Social media marketing, also known as marketing through social media, is one of the most commonly used strategies by business owners. Social media marketing encourages people to promote their websites, products, or services through online social media platforms and interact with a much larger audience, providing better marketing opportunities than traditional advertising methods (Gunelius, 2011:144-145). When used correctly, social media marketing can increase awareness of products and services, increase the target audience's interest in purchasing and consumption decisions, and at the same time, strengthen customer loyalty.

This is supported by research conducted by Putri & Nilowardono (2021), Geofakta Razali et al., (2023), and Tiufany & Lina (2024), which found that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. However, this differs from the research conducted by Welsa et al. (2022) and Haudi et al. (2022), which found that social media marketing does not have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. Based on these research results, there are indications of a gap in the research findings. To address this gap, the variable of brand image was used. According to Kotler & Keller (2016:315), brand image is consumers' perceptions and beliefs about a brand, represented in associations stored in their memory. Women who want to strengthen their skin protection use a product called Skintific. Based on this background, the researcher is interested in testing the "Effect of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decisions for Skintific Products with Brand Image as a Mediating Variable."

LITERATURE

Theory of Planned Behavior

Ajzen and Fishbein in Pangestu (2019) also define the Theory of Planned Behavior as a theory that emphasizes the rationality of human behavior and the belief that behavior is under the control of individual consciousness. Behavior does not only depend on a person's intention but also on other factors that are not under the control of the individual. According to Rinawati (2021), this theory is based on the assumption that humans are rational beings who will consider the implications of their actions before deciding to carry out a behavior.

Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing is a conversation often initiated by consumers or businesses that circulates among the parties mentioned to drive communication on certain promotional information, or that enables learning from each other's experiences, which ultimately benefits all parties involved. According to Firdiansyah (2022), social media marketing is one of many types of marketing that is widely used. Simply put, these types of marketing require the use of social media as a tool for the marketing process. Social media marketing activities can be defined as an effective marketing communication method that captures the perceptions of consumers involved and an understanding of social media marketing activities (Chen & Lin, 2019).

Brand image

Brand image, according to Adelia & Cahya (2023), is the positive view that consumers have of a company or product, which can influence them to make a purchase. Brand image is an important aspect or element related to consumer purchasing decisions (Sudrajat et al., 2020). Brand image is an impression in the minds of consumers about a brand that is formed by messages and consumer experiences regarding the brand, thereby creating an image that exists in the minds of consumers (Firmansyah, 2019:55). Without a positive and strong brand image, it is very difficult for companies to attract new consumers and retain existing ones (Prastiwi and Rivai, 2022).

Purchase Decision

According to Sandra & Prawoto (2024), purchasing decisions are made by customers when they decide to buy something. Everyone goes through the same purchasing decision-making process, but age, income, lifestyle, and personality will influence it. Consumers have time to make decisions, and they also have the opportunity to choose. Customers make decisions about all aspects of their daily lives every day. However, there are times when these decisions are made without considering what is involved in the decision-making process. Consumer purchasing decisions are an important factor in determining a company's extension (Resa and Andjarwati, 2019). A company has a good extension if it can attract consumers to decide to purchase products from a market that receives a positive response from consumers (Sugiharto and Nurhayati, 2021). Indrasari (2019:70) states that a

purchasing decision is a process in which consumers recognize their problems, seek information about certain products or brands, and carefully evaluate each alternative that can solve their problems, which then leads to a purchasing decision.

Hypothesis

The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Purchasing Decisions

Social media marketing is a process that encourages individuals to promote their websites, products, or services through online social channels and to communicate by utilizing a much larger community that has a greater potential for marketing than traditional advertising channels (Weiberg, 2009:3-4). The proper use of social media marketing will increase purchasing decisions because consumers see our products more often. Social media has become a means of facilitating the sharing of various information and a means for discussion in business activities and various kinds of information. Using social media as a sales medium is effective, both for selling goods and services (Artanti et al., 2019). Putri & Nilowardono (2021), Geofakta Razali et al., 2023, and Tiufany & Lina (2024) found in their research that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. However, this differs from the research conducted by Welsa et al., 2022 and Haudi et al., 2022, which found that social media marketing does not have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. Based on this, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H₁ : Social media marketing has a positive effect on purchasing decisions

The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Brand Image

Social media marketing is a process that encourages individuals to promote their websites, products, or services through online social channels and to communicate by utilizing a much larger community that has a greater potential for marketing than traditional advertising channels (Weinberg, 2009:3-4). Brand image is how a company is perceived by consumers. The proper use of social media marketing will further embed the brand in consumers' minds. Several studies conducted by Damayanti et al. (2021), Swimbawa & M. Lemy (2023), and Akbar & Nurjanah (2023) found that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on brand image, but this differs from the study conducted by Alfira (2022), which showed that social media marketing has a positive but insignificant effect on brand image. Based on this, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H₂ : Social Media Marketing has a positive effect on Brand Image.

The Influence of Brand Image on Purchasing Decisions

Brand image certainly increases purchasing decisions because the better the company's image is embedded in consumers' minds, the more likely they are to trust our products and purchase them. Ningsih & Pradanawati (2021), Solihin (2021), and Wibowo & Santoso (2024) found in their research that brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. However, this differs from the results of

research conducted by Sari Rahayu & Nursanta (2023), whose research found that brand image does not influence purchasing decisions. Based on this, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H₃ : Brand image has a positive effect on purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Brand Image in Mediating Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decisions

Brand image is a major challenge faced by companies, because a positive brand image gives bonus points to goods and institutions in the eyes of consumers, which can increase consumer purchasing decisions. Social media marketing itself can contribute to the creation of brand image, where as a marketing tool, social media marketing also has an impact on brand image (Damayanti et al., 2021). The influence of social media marketing on purchasing decisions can be in the form of indirect influence, because social media marketing can influence one of the brand factors, namely brand image. Effective use of social media marketing can enhance brand image. Companies with a good brand image will naturally make consumers more trusting and more likely to make purchasing decisions. Sahanaya & Madiawati (2023), in their research, found that brand image can mediate the relationship between social media marketing and purchasing decisions. Based on this, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H₃ : Brand Image can mediate the influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchasing Decisions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted on users of Skintific skincare products in Denpasar City. The objects in this study were activities carried out by users of Skintific skincare products related to social media marketing, brand image, and purchasing decisions. The population in this study were users of Skintific skincare products in Denpasar City. The sample size in this study was determined using nonprobability sampling with the snowball sampling method. The data collection method in this study was a questionnaire. The data analysis technique in this study was SEM-PLS.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Instrument Validity Test Results

1. Validity Test

The results of the instrument validity test show that all statement items studied have a coefficient and correlation value > 0.30. Thus, all statement items of the variables studied are valid, so that all instrument items are suitable for use as research instruments.

2. Reliability Test

The results of the reliability test of the research instrument show that the variables studied have a Cronbach's alpha coefficient value above 0.60. Thus, all questionnaire research instruments are reliable and suitable for use as research instruments.

Inferential Statistical Analysis

1. Outer Model Evaluation

a. Convergent Validity Test

Table 1
Convergent Validity

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading Coefficient	AVE
Social Media Marketing (X)	X1	0.786	0.610
	X2	0.808	
	X3	0.651	
	X4	0.817	
	X5	0.829	
Brand Image (M)	M1	0.801	0.620
	M2	0.686	
	M3	0.866	
Purchase Decision (Y)	Y1	0.800	0.628
	Y2	0.729	
	Y3	0.803	
	Y4	0.833	

The following table shows that the loading factor values are between 0.70 and 1.00, which is greater than 0.5 as recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981). This figure shows that all measurement indicators meet the convergent validity requirements and that each indicator is valid in measuring the relevant variable. Table 1 also shows that the AVE values for the constructs range from 0.596 to 1.00. These values are greater than 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), which means that the constructs in this study are capable of measuring the corresponding latent variables.

b. Discriminant Validity

Table 2
Cross Loadings

Variable	Indicators	Y	M	X
Purchase Decision (Y)	Y1	0.800	0.724	0.719
	Y2	0.729	0.675	0.721
	Y3	0.803	0.684	0.716
	Y4	0.833	0.694	0.704
Brand Image (M)	M1	0.729	0.801	0.717
	M2	0.554	0.686	0.633

	M3	0.772	0.866	0.749
Social Media Marketing (X)	X1	0.742	0.694	0.786
	X2	0.747	0.739	0.808
	X3	0.563	0.616	0.651
	X4	0.725	0.731	0.817
	X5	0.735	0.690	0.829

Validity was calculated using discriminant validity through the cross loadings values listed in Table 2. These indicators had the highest correlation with their latent variables compared to other latent variables. The s values showed that all indicators were valid and discriminant validity was fulfilled.

c. Reliability Test

Table 3
Reliability Test

Variable	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Y	0.871	0.628
M	0.829	0.620
X	0.886	0.610

Table 3 below shows that the composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha results are greater than 0.7, which means that the latent variables in this study have consistent and reliable results.

2. Inner Model Evaluation

Table 4
R Square (R²) Value

Variable	R Square
Y	0.842
M	0.793

- The diversity (variance) of the purchase decision variable can be explained by the social media marketing and brand image variables by 84.2 percent. Meanwhile, the remaining 15.8 percent is the contribution of other variables not included in the research model.
- The variance of the brand image variable can be explained by social media marketing by 79.3 percent. Meanwhile, the remaining 20.7 percent is the contribution of other variables not included in the research model.

3. Predictive Relevance

The Q₂ value in this study was calculated using the following formula:

$$\begin{aligned}
 Q^2 &= 1 - (1 - R_{12}) (1 - R_{22}) \\
 &= 1 - (1 - 0.842) (1 - 0.793) \\
 Q^2 &= \mathbf{0.967}
 \end{aligned}$$

This value means that the contribution of social media marketing and brand image variables to the purchase decision variable is 96.7 percent. Meanwhile, the remaining 3.3 percent is the contribution of other variables not included in this model.

4. Goodness of Fit

Table 5
Calculation of Goodness of Fit (GoF) Values

Variable	AVE	R ²
X	0.610	
Y	0.628	0.841
M	0.620	0.729
Average	0.619	0.785
GoF = $\sqrt{0.619 \times 0.785} = 0.697$		

Daryanto et al., (2009) state that GoF is basically divided into small (<0.1), medium (<0.25) and large (>0.36). This study has a GoF of 0.697. Because the GoF value of this study is >0.36, the research model is good and able to represent the data according to the theory used. Table 5.12 below contains the calculation of the Goodness of Fit (GoF) value.

5. Hypothesis Testing

Based on the data analysis results in Table 6, it can be interpreted that the four hypotheses proposed in this study are as follows:

- 1) The results of the first hypothesis test (H1) show a positive and significant direct effect ($\beta = 0.589$; $p = 0.000$). This means that an increase in social media marketing strategies will directly increase the decision to purchase Skintific products in Denpasar City, without going through other variables.
- 2) The results of the second hypothesis test (H2) prove that social media marketing has a positive and highly significant effect ($\beta = 0.890$; $p = 0.000$) on brand image formation. This indicates that social media marketing activities effectively build the brand image (perception, belief, and association) of Skintific products in the minds of Denpasar consumers.
- 3) The third hypothesis (H3) was accepted ($\beta = 0.354$; $p = 0.000$). This finding confirms that a positive brand image directly contributes significantly to encouraging consumers to purchase Skintific products.
- 4) The results of the fourth hypothesis test (H4) regarding the mediating effect show an indirect path coefficient of 0.315 and is significant ($p = 0.000$). This finding confirms that brand image partially mediates the relationship between social media marketing and purchasing decisions.

Table 6
Summary of Research Hypothesis Testing Results

No	Hypothesis	Coefficient	Sig	Conclusion
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1	H1: $X \rightarrow s Y$	0.589	0.000	Accepted
2	H2: $X \rightarrow M$	0.890	0.000	Accepted
3	H3: $M \rightarrow Y$	0.354	0	Accepted
4	H4: $M \rightarrow X \rightarrow Y$	0.315	0.000	Accepted

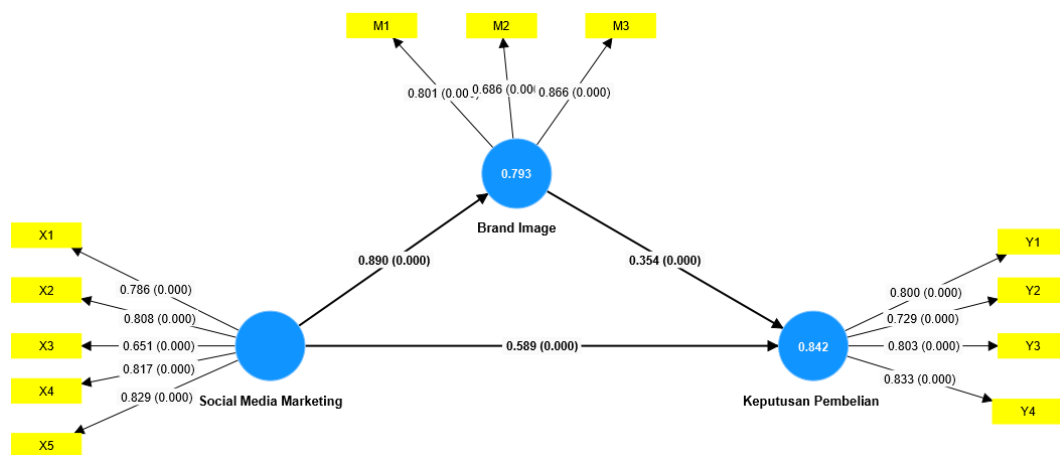


Figure 1
PLS Algorithm Output Results

Discussion of Research Results

The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchasing Decisions

The analysis conducted using the partial least squares approach concluded that organizational culture has a positive effect on employee performance. This means that social media marketing by businesses attracts users to e-commerce applications, enabling them to make purchases. These research results are in line with studies conducted by Putri & Nilowardono (2021), Geofakta Razali et al., 2023, and Tiufany & Lina (2024), who found that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Brand Image

The results of the analysis conducted using the partial least squares approach conclude that organizational culture has a positive effect on job satisfaction. This means that the better Skintific's social media marketing activities are, the better the brand image of Skintific products in the minds of customers. The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Damayanti et al., 2021, Swimbawa & M. Lemy (2023), and Akbar & Nurjanah (2023), who found that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on brand image.

The Influence of Brand Image on Purchase Decisions

The results of the analysis conducted using the partial least squares approach conclude that job satisfaction has a positive effect on employee performance. This

means that the better the brand image attached to a product, the more interested consumers will be in purchasing that product. There are several benefits of a positive brand image, namely that consumers with a positive image of a brand are more likely to make a purchase. The results of this research are in line with research conducted by Ningsih & Pradanawati (2021), Solihin (2021), and Wibowo & Santoso (2024), who found that brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decisions through Brand Image

The results of the analysis conducted using the partial least squares approach conclude that brand image can mediate the influence of social media marketing on purchasing decisions. Social media marketing on brand image obtained positive and significant results because when Skintific can present interesting content on social media, provide clear information about its products, and is able to meet the information needs desired by customers, then customers will be able to distinguish Skintific products from competing brands and consider Skintific products to be of good quality based solely on the information obtained through social media, thereby reflecting a good brand image. The results of this study align with the research conducted by Sahanaya & Madiawati (2023), who found that brand image can mediate the relationship between social media marketing and purchasing decisions.

CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

Conclusion

Based on the discussion in the previous chapter, the following conclusions can be drawn: Social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions for skintific products in Denpasar. Social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on brand image for skintific products in Denpasar. Brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions for skintific products in Denpasar City. Brand image can mediate the effect of social media marketing on purchasing decisions for skintific products in Denpasar City.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, it only focuses on the city of Denpasar, so it cannot describe the actual conditions in the field more broadly, even though Denpasar has a large market share for skin care products and intensive use of social media. Second, this study only examines one independent variable, namely social media marketing, which limits our understanding of other factors that may have a greater influence on purchasing decisions. This indicates that other factors not examined in this study may also play an important role in the consumer decision-making process.

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