
How Does Social Media Marketing Drive Skincare Purchases Through Brand Awareness and Image?

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ABSTRACT

Currently, skincare products are among the most significant categories of cosmetics in the global market. The rapid evolution of the beauty industry has established Indonesia as the most rapidly expanding cosmetics market in Asia, as demonstrated by the surge in new skincare enterprises, both local and foreign, which is heightening market competitiveness. Industry stakeholders frequently employ Social Media Marketing as a principal method to promote skincare products in Indonesia. This study examines the influence of social media marketing on customer purchase intentions for skincare products, utilizing brand awareness and brand image as mediating variables. The researchers used nonprobability and purposive sampling methods for data collection. A total of 287 respondents, proficient in skincare products and active on social media, completed this research questionnaire. Hypothesis testing was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling. The results demonstrate that Social Media Marketing substantially influences Brand Awareness and Brand Image. Moreover, Brand Image has been shown to considerably influence Purchase Intention and consumer perceptions of Social Media Marketing.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Brand Awareness, Brand Image, Purchase Intention, Skincare Product

INTRODUCTION

The cosmetics industry ranks among the world's leading multi-billion-dollar sectors. Beauty product lines in the cosmetics industry are quite numerous, such as toners, facial cleanser, moisturizers, serums, lipsticks, blushers, eye shadows, compact powders, foundations, eyeliners, and mascaras (Lee et al., 2019).

Based on CAGR, in 2021-2027 the cosmetics industry in Indonesia is expected to grow rapidly by 7.5%, making Indonesia as the most rapidly expanding cosmetics market in Asia. This positions Indonesia as the most quickly expanding cosmetics market in Asia. Over the next 5 to 10 years, the country is anticipated to rank among the top five largest cosmetics markets globally (Ferdinand & Ciptono, 2022a). In the global cosmetics industry, skincare products are the most popular cosmetic products (Lee et al., 2019).

The increase in sales of skincare products in Indonesia can be seen through 2020 sales data from Digimind.id on several e-commerce platforms; skincare products such as serums sold 11.18 million, face masks 4.50 million, and toners 5.08 million units (Ellitan et al., 2022)

The rapid growth of skincare sales in Indonesia, marked by the emergence of various new skincare brands—both local and international—raises a significant issue for the industry. While Indonesia presents a promising market to support the development of the cosmetic sector, revenue and profit, as crucial indicators of industrial growth, have started to show a decline as the industry reaches its maturity stage. This situation highlights a research problem where continuous market expansion and maturity have led to heightened market competition. The increasingly intense competition in the skincare market drives businesses to aggressively compete for greater market share. As a result, this influences decisions concerning trade and investment, industrial expansion, and the firm's capability, productivity, and efficiency. Consequently, evaluating industry appeal and profitability is crucial for strategic planning and decision-making. Furthermore, industry profitability is affected by the degree of competition, the firm's standing within the industry, and its competitive edge (Ferdinand & Ciptono, 2022b; Simamora et al., 2023).

Competition in business is unavoidable, and continuous efforts must be made to remain vigilant and understand market dynamics as well as customer needs. The ability to comprehend and effectively manage various available resources to gain a competitive advantage must be consistently developed. The implementation of appropriate marketing strategies is expected to enhance sales volume and ultimately secure a competitive position. In the beauty service industry, it is essential to stay informed about market developments and consumer preferences such as changes within a specific business sector, in order to compete effectively with other beauty care services (Khasanah et al., 2023).

Nowadays, beauty products are significantly influenced by beauty influencers, who play a vital role in attracting public attention to a wide range of products. Influencer marketing is one of the most widely recognized digital marketing strategies that are employed on social media platforms (Kusumawati et al., 2021). The marketing sector of the cosmetics industry is significantly influenced by content creators, including bloggers and vloggers, on social media. In beauty products, social media has the power to influence the buying behavior. Social Media Marketing is transforming the beauty industry by allowing customers to share consumer experiences through comments, ratings and reviews (Kaur & Kumar, 2022).

The application of Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) provides insight into how consumers interact with a brand's social media content and how those interactions can drive marketing outcomes,

especially Purchase Intention. UGT enables insight into how customers select and engage with specific media platforms to satisfy particular needs. These specific needs are associated to the acquisition of rewards, or gratification, such as social interaction, entertainment and relaxation, knowledge enhancement and rewards or economic benefits (Zeqiri et al., 2024). The gratification generated from using social media directly affects purchase and Repurchase Intention through several means, including information seeking and communication (Corrada et al., 2020).

Social media differ from traditional media due to their unrestricted nature of content creation and consumption, allowing users to engage without limitations of time or location. Social Media Marketing are progressively evolving toward incorporating elements such as gamified user interactions, immersive brand experiences facilitated by virtual avatars, and the development of dynamic and engaging brand communities (Li et al., 2025). Social media enables dynamic and deep interactions between consumers and brands. Consumers can now express consumer opinions about a company's services or products directly through social media platforms (Zeqiri et al., 2024). Consumers gain advantages when engaging with companies on social media, including access to discounts, the opportunity to resolve questions, the ability to negotiate prices, and the chance to view product reviews and ratings (Ali & Naushad, 2023). In today's digital era, various new marketing strategies have emerged by utilizing social media, such as Social Media Marketing (Emeralda & Kurniawati, 2022).

Daya et al, (2022) states that Social Media Marketing refers to the strategy where businesses use online platforms to promote their products and services. This strategy also enable consumers to communicate more extensively through communities with a greater reach than traditional channels. Social Media Marketing is employed to encourage consumer engagement with brands online through various activities, including consumption, contribution, and creation of content. These activities affect consumer reactions such as brand equity, emotions, positive word-of-mouth, brand engagement, greater Brand Awareness, Purchase Intention and purchases (Zeqiri et al., 2024).

Social Media Marketing activities make it easy to spread offers quickly and virally to attract consumer attention, which can effectively influence Purchase Intentions (Zeqiri et al., 2024). The fundamental objective of marketing and advertising is to persuade customers to purchase products from a particular company (Macheke et al., 2024). By using social media to share information and engage with both present and prospective clients, businesses can not only survive but also grow. This approach allows companies to enhance Brand Awareness and reinforce their Brand Image, thereby contributing to increased product sales (Aditya Syahputra & Kurniawati, 2023).

Consumers' Purchase Intentions are shaped by Social Media Marketing, with mediating influences including the nature of their relationship with the brand, including Brand Image, which facilitates recognition of products and persuades consumers of product quality (Ali & Naushad, 2023). Brand Image is defined as the overall perception includes objects, advertisements, and, most importantly, customer tendencies and attitudes that shape how consumers view the brand (Win et al., 2024). Social media platforms facilitate the establishment of a company's Brand Image and the dissemination of information online, thereby enabling the company to easily reach a wide range of consumers (Ali & Naushad, 2023).

Social Media Marketing supports the enhancement Brand Awareness among consumers by serving as a trendy element of communication tool that significantly contributing to increased Brand Awareness (Emini & Zeqiri, 2021). Brand Awareness refers to customer's ability to recall a specific brand within a particular product category. Brand Awareness serves as a factor in influencing and enhancing on consumer Purchase Intention. The greater the Brand Awareness, the greater the potential for the company's products to be purchased (Prasetia & Hidayat, 2021).

Previous studies demonstrate that brand interaction and Social Media Marketing, grounded in CBE and UGT theories, affect brand-related outcomes such as Brand Awareness and Purchase Intention (Zeqiri et al., 2024). Purchase intention is profoundly influenced by social media marketing (Salhab et al., 2023). Social Media Marketing significantly influences Brand Image and plays a vital role in influencing Purchase Intention through numerous mediating variables (Ali & Naushad, 2023).

This study aims to investigate social media advertising tactics that enhance Purchase Intention in the highly competitive skincare industry, utilizing Brand Awareness and Brand Image as mediating factors. Previous studies by Zeqiri et al. (2024) investigated the effects of Social Media Marketing, Brand Awareness, and consumer brand engagement on Purchase Intention, while research by Salhab et al. (2023) explored the influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention via the mediators of brand trust and Brand Image. This research distinguishes itself by analyzing the impact of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention, both directly and indirectly, with Brand Awareness and Brand Image acting as mediating variables. This study is pioneering in its analysis of the influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention, employing Brand Awareness and Brand Image as mediators in the skincare product sector.

The Uses and Gratification Theory was implemented to understand the motivations underlying individuals' engagement with media and technology-related behaviors. The theory assumes that individuals utilize media to fulfill a range of needs and desires, thereby encourage continued media

consumption to satisfy the unique needs of consumers engaged with diverse media (Natarajan et al., 2024).

The manner in which customers interact with a brand's social media content and the influence of these interactions on marketing outcomes, particularly Purchase Intentions, can be examined through the lens of the Uses and Gratification Theory. UGT offers insight into how consumers choose and use specific media channels to meet their needs. These demands pertain to acquiring rewards, including social engagement, entertainment, relaxation, knowledge advancement, and economic gains (Zeqiri et al., 2024).

Satisfaction arises from fundamental needs, and emerging platforms like social media can influence users' needs, subsequently leading to various manifestations of satisfaction. Therefore, it is essential to understand the type of gratification associated with social media use, its impact on both purchase and repurchase intentions, and the satisfaction derived from engaging with social media platforms (Santos Corrada et al., 2020).

Social media enables multifaceted and dynamic interactions between brands and consumers, which have evolved significantly over the years (Zeqiri et al., 2024). Social Media Marketing (SMM) represents an innovative approach that encourages companies to promote consumer products and services through online media. This strategy also provides unique opportunities for companies to communicate more broadly with the community and reach a larger audience compared to traditional marketing channels (Daya et al, 2022).

The principal aim of marketing and advertising is to convince people to acquire products from a specific company (Macheke et al., 2024). Social media marketing operations enable the swift and viral distribution of offers, capturing consumer attention and enhancing purchase intention (Zeqiri et al., 2024). Effective social media marketing can enhance consumers' purchase intention (Ho et al., 2024).

The use of social media as a marketing tool to encourage consumer engagement with the brand's website enhances customer interaction and, in turn, improves brand recall (Zeqiri et al., 2024). This condition indicates that increased social media usage correlates with heightened Brand Awareness (Ardiansyah & Sarwoko, 2020).

Social Media Marketing significantly influences Brand Awareness among customers by reflecting communication trends that are essential to its development (Emini & Zeqiri, 2021).

To create valuable and impactful experiences, businesses employ social media platforms as a communication medium, interaction, and relationship-building. The objective is to provide consumers with valueable and meaningful experiences, thereby increasing consumers' tendency of engaging

with the brand (Haudi et al., 2022). Promotional activities on social media will be able to enhance Brand Image (Salhab et al., 2023).

The dissemination of content via social media platforms enables swift access to a vast consumer base, with Social Media Marketing significantly impacting Brand Image (Ali & Naushad, 2023). Social Media Marketing significantly influences Brand Image (Damayanti et al., 2021).

Brand Awareness denotes the extent to which customers can identify, remember, and recollect a brand across diverse contexts or situations. Brand Awareness is universally recognized as the preliminary phase of the customer decision-making process (Emini & Zeqiri, 2021). Elevated brand awareness cultivates familiarity among consumers, subsequently enhancing their trust in the brand (Zeqiri et al., 2024).

Brand Awareness is a significant factor in influencing consumer Purchase Intention. An increase in Brand Awareness is linked with a greater potentiation of consumers purchasing the company's products (Prasetia & Hidayat, 2021). When consumers recognize a brand, they are more inclined to make a purchase or develop an intention to buy. Consequently, Brand Awareness positively influences Purchase Intention (Ihzaturrahma & Kusumawati, 2021). To ensure their survival and growth, businesses can leverage social media as a means for sharing information and engaging with both new and existing customers. By employing this strategy, businesses aim to enhance Brand Awareness, which is anticipated to stimulate increased sales (Aditya Syahputra & Kurniawati, 2023). Businesses that utilize social media platforms to create Brand Awareness and transform impressions into Purchase Intention (Dabbous & Barakat, 2020).

A Brand Image defines the consumer's perception of a brand, formed through experience, interaction, and information received (Parris & Guzmán, 2023). Research indicates that a great Brand Image can reduce the risk perceived by consumers, thereby enhancing their comfort level in making purchases (Hoang & Tung, 2023)

It is of great importance to develop effective strategies to strengthen the Brand Image in order to enhance Purchase Intention. When a positive Brand Image is successfully embedded within the perception of customers through the company's strategic efforts, Purchase Intention will increase (Adi Wibowo & Suhendro, 2021). The Brand Image owned by a brand affects Purchase Intention, both directly and indirectly (Takaya, 2023).

The impact of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention is mediated by the relationships of consumers and the brand, including Brand Image. Brand Image helps consumers recognize products and convinces them of product quality (Ali & Naushad, 2023).

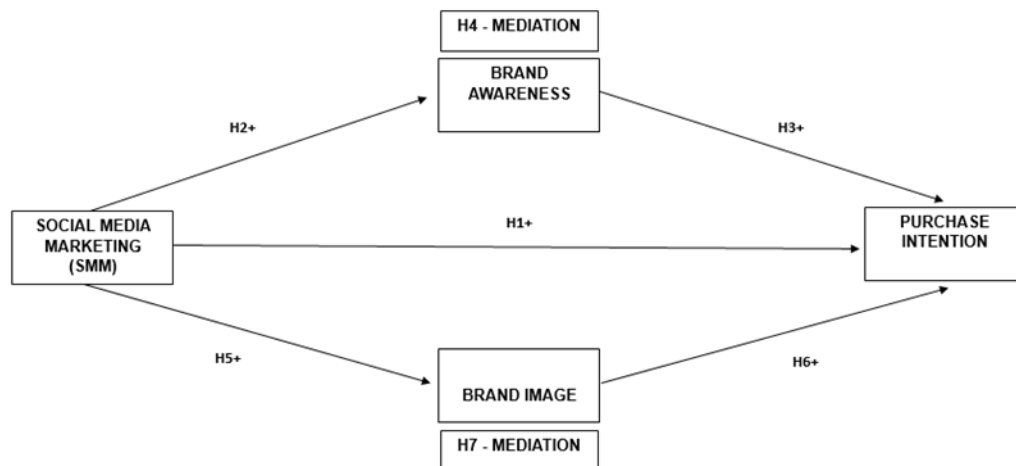


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Source: Author's Framework

METHOD

This study aims to investigate hypotheses on the influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention, with Brand Awareness and Brand Image acting as mediating variables. This research is a cross-sectional study in which the researcher examines the individual at a single point in time by administering concurrent surveys using a quantitative, causal methodology (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

This study relies on primary data, gathered straightaway by researchers using questionnaire instruments. A total of 20 statement indicators were used in the questionnaire. 5-item Likert scale is used to measure all item statements, which spanned from "deeply disagree" to "deeply agree."

This study uses primary data collected through survey methods within a causal research design. The employed sampling method is non-probability sampling. This study employs purposive or judgmental sampling. Data were gathered utilizing a structured questionnaire derived from Zeqiri et al. (2024) and Salhab et al. (2023). The questionnaire comprises a series of statements developed by the researchers for respondents to answer, as elucidated by Sekaran & Bougie (2016).

This study uses an individual unit of analysis, namely social media users who have knowledge about skincare products and are aged between 17 and 55 years. The sample size was determined using the 10-times rule, which follows a 10:1 ratio guideline, as recommended by Hair et al. (2020). Given that this study includes 20 measurement indicators, the minimum required sample size is 200 respondents. The study distributed questionnaires to 500 respondents, 300 of whom completed and

returned them, and 287 of which could be analyzed. The questionnaire was distributed online to ensure diverse geographical representation.

The data analysis employed Structural Equation Modeling, using AMOS 24 to analyze the questionnaire responses. This software enabled the assessment of both direct and indirect links among Social Media Marketing, Brand Awareness, Brand Image, and Purchase Intention, in line with the principles established by Hair et al. (2020). The study conducted validity and reliability assessments, along with goodness-of-fit evaluations, as preliminary measures prior to hypothesis testing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data derived from the survey responses through a questionnaire. A total of 300 participants took part in this study. After sorting the data, 287 valid responses were analyzed. This research use Structural Equation Modeling to examine the hypothesis and utilizes AMOS 24 and SPSS software for questionnaire data analysis. The analysis examines both the direct and indirect impacts of Social Media Marketing on Brand Awareness, Brand Image, and Purchase Intention, adhering to the framework established by Hair et al. (2020).

Tabel 1. Demographic Data

Social Media User					
Social Media User	Amount	Percentage	Length of social media usage.	Amount	Percentage
Yes	287	100%	3 Months	7	3.4%
No	0	0%	>3 Months	280	97.6%
TOTAL	287	100%	TOTAL	287	100%
Skincare					
Familiar with skincare	Amount	Percentage	Length of familiar with skincare product.	Amount	Percentage
Yes	287	100%	3 Months	18	6.3%
No	0	0%	>3 Months	269	93.7%
TOTAL	287	100%	TOTAL	287	100%
Most used social media platforms					
	Platform	Amount	Percentage		
	Tiktok	96	33.4%		
	Instagram	108	37.6%		
	Twitter atau X	31	10.8%		
	Facebook	13	4.5%		

	Youtube	32	11.1%		
	Others	7	2.4%		
	TOTAL	287	100%		
Gender			Age		
Gender	Amount	Percentage	Age	Amount	Percentage
Woman	211	73.5%	17 – 25	85	29.6%
Man	76	26.5%	26 – 34	130	45.3%
			25 – 43	37	12.9%
			>43	35	12.2%
TOTAL	287	100%	TOTAL	287	100%
Job			Monthly Income		
Job	Amount	Percentage	Monthly Income	Amount	Percentage
Student	6	2.1%	< Rp. 3.000.000	55	19.2%
Colleger	65	22.6%	Rp. 3.000.000 – 5.000.0000	60	20.9%
Civil Servants	48	16.7%	Rp. 5.000.000 – Rp. 7.000.000	56	19.5%
Employee	113	39.4%	> Rp. 7.000.000	116	40.4%
Entrepreneur	20	7%			
Others	35	12.2%			
TOTAL	287	100%	TOTAL	287	100%

According to Table 1, the respondents' profile can be delineated as follows: the respondent profile is dominated by social media users and knows skincare products by 287 respondents with a percentage of 100% with the most used social media platform is Instagram by 108 people with a percentage of 37.6%. Most respondents, namely 280 respondents with a percentage of 97.6%, are social media users who have been using the platform for more than 3 months and 269 respondents with a percentage of 94.7% have known skincare for more than 3 months. The majority of respondents are women, 211 respondents constituting 73.5% and 130 respondents representing 45.3%, are aged between 26 and 34 years old.

Occupations are dominated by private workers as many as 113 respondents with a percentage of 39.4% with a dominated income of > Rp. 7,000,000 as many as 116 respondents with a percentage of 40.4%.

Table 2. Outcome Of The Validity and Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Item	Factor Loading	Conclusi on	Cronbach	Mean	Std Deviation
			Alpha		
Social Media Marketing					
I prefer to share content about skincare brands that I like using social media	0.613	Valid	0.84	3.67	1.124
Social Media Marketing enables sharing information about skincare brands.	0.667	Valid		4.34	0.733
Sharing information using social media is trendy	0.634	Valid		4.15	0.848
Advertising using social media draws attention to skincare brands.	0.661	Valid		4.28	0.776
I prefer use social media for sharing skincare brand information with friends.	0.685	Valid		3.86	1.056
Social media gives me information about skincare brands that I am looking for.	0.646	Valid		4.39	0.725
It's interesting to share information on social media about skincare brands.	0.701	Valid		4.05	0.95
Brand Awareness					
Social media increases Brand Awareness and makes me aware of skincare brands.	0.743	Valid	0.884	4.23	0.785
Social media gives me information about the characteristics of a skincare brand.	0.768	Valid		4.3	0.777
Through social media, I can remember skincare brands easily.	0.812	Valid		4.26	0.741
I can easily recognize a skincare brand through social media	0.836	Valid		4.31	0.77
I can easily distinguish differences in skincare brands through social media.	0.744	Valid		4.21	0.834

Brand Image					
Products from skincare brands can meet the needs of consumers.	0.775	Valid	0.862	4.02	0.778
Using products from skincare brands makes me confident.	0.85	Valid		4.12	0.817
Using products from skincare brands makes me confident.	0.849	Valid		4.16	0.777
Products from skincare brands are worth the price.harganya.	0.688	Valid		4.04	0.884
Purchase Intention					
Products from skincare brands are worth the price.	0.783	Valid	0.837	3.8	0.992
I recommend skincare brands that I like through social media.	0.743	Valid		3.79	1.056
I planned to buy a skincare brand that I favor influenced by discussions on social media.	0.788	Valid		4.02	0.891
My intention is to remain loyal to this skincare brand in the future.	0.698	Valid		3.88	0.893

Table 2 presents the results of the validity and reliability tests, along with the descriptive statistics for this study.

In research, validity indicates the extent to which variables accurately reflect the topic they are intended to measure. The study comprises a sample size of 287 respondents, with a standard factor loading of 0.35. Reliability refers to the consistency of measurements of a variable, with a minimum Cronbach's Alpha threshold of 0.6 (Hair et al., 2019). Descriptive statistics aim to elucidate and delineate the attributes of specific data. This study will analyze descriptive statistics utilizing mean and standard deviation (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Table 3 demonstrates that all instruments used to measure the variables are deemed legitimate, as each instrument exhibits a factor loading exceeding 0.35, indicating their suitability for the measurement of the variables. Table 3 indicates that Cronbach's Alpha values for all variables exceed 0.60, indicating that the instruments used in this study are reliable and that the reliability measurements are consistent and satisfactory. Descriptive statistics reveal positive and varied responses for all variables, as each instrument has most scores ranging from 4 to 5 and standard deviation greater than 0.

Tabel 3. Model Suitability Assessment Metric

Measurement Type	Measurement	Fit Model Decision	Processed	Decision
Absolute fit measures	<i>Chi-square</i>	<i>Low chi-square</i>	621.254	
	<i>p-value Chi Square</i>	≥ 0.05	0.000	Poor Fit
	GFI	≥ 0.90	0.798	Marginal Fit
	RMSEA	0.03-0.08	0.098	Marginal Fit
	RMR	$\leq 0,05$	0.05	Model Fit
Incremental fit measures	TLI	$\geq 0,90$	0.847	Marginal Fit
	NFI	$\geq 0,90$	0.828	Marginal Fit
	CFI	$\geq 0,90$	0.867	Marginal Fit
Parsimonius fit measure	CMIN/DF	Between 1 to 5	3.765	Model Fit
	AIC	Approaching the Saturated value compared to the independent.	711.254	Model Fit

The model fit test assesses the appropriateness of the structural model employed in this study (Hair et al., 2019). Table 4 of the assessment results reveals that, of the 10 parameters assessed, three criteria demonstrate a satisfactory model fit: RMR, CMIN/DF, and AIC. Simultaneously, five criteria demonstrate moderate or marginal model fit: GFI, RMSEA, TLI, NFI, and CFI, whilst the remaining criterion, the p-value associated with the chi-square, signifies a poor model fit. Hypothesis testing can be performed, as most model fit criteria have been met based on these results.

Table 4. Research Hypothesis Test Results

	Hypothesis Description	Estimate	p-value	Conclusion
H1	Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention.	0.213	0.066	Not Supported
H2	Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Brand Awareness.	0.740	0.000	Supported
H3	Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Brand Image.	0.719	0.000	Supported
H4	Brand Awareness has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention	0.053	0.308	Not Supported
H5	Brand Awareness mediates the influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention	0.034	0.677	Not Supported
H6	Brand Image has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention.	0.911	0.000	Supported
H7	Brand Image mediates the influence of Social Media Marketing on purchase	0.562	0.001	Supported

Table 4 presents the results of the hypothesis testing conducted in this study. The initial hypothesis test, yielding a p-value of 0.066, exceeds the 0.05 threshold and presents an optimistic estimate of 0.213, suggesting that Social Media Marketing does not significantly influence Purchase Intention, hence refuting the hypothesis. The findings are inconsistent with Zeqiri et al. (2024), who identified a notable impact of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention, yet are congruent with the assertions of Ali & Naushad (2023), Vidyanata (2022), Purwanto et al. (2020), and Emini & Zeqiri (2021), who contend that Social Media Marketing does not significantly affect Purchase Intention.

The ease of finding products on social media does not directly affect Purchase Intention (Kusumo et al., 2021). This result suggests that Social Media Marketing alone is insufficient to cultivate Purchase Intention, as consumers want trust, a favorable Brand Image, and authentic interest in the brand (Umair Manzoor et al., 2020).

The second hypothesis test, with a p-value of 0.000 (≤ 0.05) and an optimistic estimate of 0.740, corroborates the hypothesis that Social Media Marketing positively affects Brand Awareness. The results of this study align with the findings of Zeqiri et al. (2024), Emini & Zeqiri (2021), Fariandi & Ariani (2022), and Reyvina et al. (2024).

Social Media Marketing encourages people to follow brand webpages, facilitating direct engagement with the brand and thereby enhancing brand recall among consumers. (Zeqiri et al., 2024). Social media substantially enhances clients' brand awareness. (Emini & Zeqiri, 2021)

The final hypothesis test indicates a p-value of 0.000 (≤ 0.05) and an optimistic estimate of 0.719, corroborating the hypothesis that Social Media Marketing positively affects Brand Image. The results of this study align with the findings of Ali & Naushad (2023), Salhab et al. (2023), Moslehpour et al. (2022), and Damayanti et al. (2021).

The research findings suggest that Brand Image might improve if the organization effectively manages Social Media Marketing. Social Media Marketing is a highly successful instrument for enhancing Brand Image in consumer perception. This result is predicated on the reality that millions of consumers are interconnected via social media platforms, facilitating access to the newest information about numerous brands (Ali & Naushad, 2023).

The fourth hypothesis test, yielding a p-value of 0.308, exceeds the 0.05 threshold and presents an optimistic estimate of 0.053, providing no support for the hypothesis that Brand Awareness does not directly influence Purchase Intention. These results contradict Zeqiri et al. (2024), who found that Brand Awareness significantly influences Purchase Intention. The results of this study align with

those of Ali & Naushad (2023), Salhab et al. (2023), Moslehpour et al. (2022), and Damayanti et al. (2021), indicating that Brand Awareness does not significantly affect Purchase Intention.

The results of this study suggest that Brand Awareness is merely the initial phase in shaping consumers' views of subsequent elements. Consequently, mere popularity or elevated brand recognition is insufficient to significantly impact Purchase Intention (Azzari & Pelissari, 2020). This study demonstrates that Brand Awareness does not affect consumer Purchase Intention in the skincare sector, as mere familiarity with a skincare brand is insufficient to generate Purchase Intentions; consumers prioritize trust regarding the safety of their skin health before purchasing skincare products.

The fifth hypothesis test yields a p-value of 0.677, which is beyond 0.05, along with an optimistic estimate of 0.039. The findings indicate that the hypothesis is unsupported. The data indicate that Brand Awareness does not mitigate the effect of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention. The results of this study correspond with those of Emini & Zeqiri (2021) and Mahdiah et al. (2024).

Consumer awareness of a brand does not always lead to the intention to buy products from that brand (Mahdiah et al., 2024). Although Social Media Marketing enhances Brand Awareness, this does not always mean that consumers who are aware of a brand will immediately buy it. A new purchase decision will occur if consumers feel connected or have an involvement with the brand (Emini & Zeqiri, 2021). This study proves that Social Media Marketing in the skincare industry is not enough to create consumer awareness of the brand but also needs to create emotional attachment and consumer trust in the brand in order to create Purchase Intention.

The sixth hypothesis test reveals a p-value of 0.000 (≤ 0.05) and an optimistic estimate of 0.911. The findings indicate that the theory is validated. The results demonstrate that Brand Image positively affects Purchase Intention. The findings of this study align with those of Salhab et al. (2023), Ali and Naushad (2023), Adi Wibowo and Suhendro (2021), and Takaya (2023).

Research indicates that a favorable Brand Image might diminish consumers' perception of risk, hence enhancing their confidence and comfort in making purchases (Hoang & Tung, 2023). A robust brand image can yield consumer satisfaction, therefore fostering purchase intention (Ali & Naushad, 2023). Purchase intention typically rises when a favorable brand image is effectively ingrained in consumers' brains through the company's strategic initiatives (Adi Wibowo & Suhendro, 2021).

The seventh hypothesis test indicates a p-value of 0.001 (≤ 0.05) and an optimistic estimate of 0.656. The findings indicate that the theory is validated. The results demonstrate that Brand Image can

mitigate the effects of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention. The findings of this study align with the conclusions of Salhab et al. (2023), Moslehpour et al. (2022), and Ali & Naushad (2023).

A brand's image influences purchase intention, both directly and indirectly (Takaya, 2023). Social Media Marketing influences Purchase Intention through customer interactions, with Brand Image serving as a mediating variable that enhances product recognition and persuades consumers about product quality (Ali & Naushad, 2023). Favorable consumer perceptions of Brand Image enhance Purchase Intention. Before making purchasing decisions, people generally assess a company's brand image (Moslehpour et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

The research findings suggest that Social Media Marketing does not significantly affect Purchase Intention. Social Media Marketing has been shown to impact Brand Awareness and Brand Image positively. This study revealed that Brand Awareness does not directly influence Purchase Intention and is not a significant mediator between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Intention. Conversely, Brand Image exerts a favorable influence on Purchase Intention and serves as an effective mediator between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Intention.

The findings of this investigation reveal that three hypotheses were rejected. Social Media Marketing cannot directly influence Purchase Intention; it requires mediation. Furthermore, it was determined that Brand Awareness does not directly influence Purchase Intention, nor does it mediate the effect of Social Media Marketing on customers' purchasing intentions. Consequently, additional research is required to identify other pertinent mediating variables to understand better how Social Media Marketing might effectively enhance Purchase Intention.

The results demonstrate that Social Media Marketing significantly enhances Brand Awareness and Brand Image; however, it does not directly affect Purchase Intention. Companies are advised to provide compelling social media content, including customer testimonials, product education, and influencer collaborations, to enhance brand awareness and cultivate a favorable brand image effectively. Brand Awareness alone is insufficient to stimulate Purchase Intention, as consumers require trust and an emotional connection with the brand. A robust brand image demonstrably influences purchase intention. Therefore, Social Media Marketing must be refined to establish a Brand Image that embodies quality, innovation, and consumer consideration. This method can improve overall marketing efficacy.

This study investigates skincare items, hence excluding any extrapolation to other categories. The analysis is limited to analyzing Brand Awareness and Brand Image as mediators between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Intention. Future research should incorporate additional pertinent variables, such as brand trust, brand connections, and brand personality, as potential mediators between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Intention. Moreover, using alternative items or examining two products in a single study may yield additional insights.

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