

THE IMPACT OF INFLUENCER MARKETING ON BRAND IMAGE, BRAND AWARENESS, AND BRAND TRUST TOWARD PURCHASE DECISIONS FOR SKINCARE PRODUCTS

PENGARUH PEMASARAN INFLUENCER TERHADAP CITRA MEREK, KESADARAN MEREK, DAN KEPERCAYAAN. MEREK TERHADAP KEPUTUSAN PEMBELIAN PRODUK SKINCARE

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Abstract: Influencers are changing the way brands interact with the public, consumers, and other brands, it is a new phenomenon that is having a major impact on everyone's lifestyle. Given this situation, a brand needs to have an in-depth understanding of how significant the impact of influencer marketing is on brand development, causing consumers to buy a skincare product. This research mainly explores the impact of influencer marketing on purchasing decisions for skincare products through brand image, brand awareness, and brand trust in Generation Z at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Sam Ratulangi University. This study has used a quantitative approach with SEM-PLS as method analysis, the sampling technique used cluster sampling with the number of samples obtained as many as 100 respondents. The analysis technique used in this study is the path analysis method. The results find that influencer marketing through TikTok positively impacted brand image, awareness, and trust. Brand image and brand awareness positively impact purchase decisions for skincare products while brand trust negatively impacts purchase decisions for skincare products. Brand image, brand awareness, and brand trust also significantly mediate the impact of influencer marketing on purchase decisions.

Keywords: Influencer Marketing, Brand Image, Brand Awareness, Brand Trust, Purchase Decisions

Abstrak: Influencer mengubah cara merek berinteraksi dengan masyarakat, konsumen, dan merek lain, ini merupakan fenomena baru yang berdampak besar pada gaya hidup setiap orang. Melihat situasi tersebut, maka sangat penting bagi sebuah brand untuk memiliki pemahaman mendalam mengenai seberapa besar dampak influencer marketing terhadap perkembangan brand hingga menyebabkan konsumen membeli suatu produk skincare. Penelitian ini terutama mengeksplorasi pengaruh influencer marketing terhadap keputusan pembelian produk perawatan kulit melalui brand image, brand awareness dan brand trust pada generasi Z di Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnis Universitas Sam Ratulangi. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode analisis SEM-PLS, teknik pengambilan sampel menggunakan cluster sampling dengan jumlah sampel yang diperoleh sebanyak 100 responden. Teknik analisis yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode analisis jalur. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa pemasaran influencer melalui TikTok berdampak positif terhadap citra merek, kesadaran merek, dan kepercayaan merek. Citra merek dan kesadaran merek berdampak positif terhadap keputusan pembelian produk perawatan kulit, sedangkan kepercayaan merek berdampak negatif terhadap keputusan pembelian produk perawatan kulit. Citra merek, kesadaran merek, dan kepercayaan merek juga secara signifikan memediasi dampak pemasaran influencer terhadap keputusan pembelian.

Kata Kunci: Pemasaran Influencer, Citra Merek, Kesadaran Merek, Kepercayaan Merek, Keputusan Pembelian

INTRODUCTION

Research Background

The rapid advancement of the business world, followed by fierce competition between companies, requires management companies to be able to deliver products that have a great brand in other to survive and develop their business continuously. Although technology is continuously developing, businesses need to keep up with digital trends and be prepared to adapt and adjust to them. At the same time, they set modern challenges for business owners and managers in the field of marketing. Within the advanced promoting framework, a product is not as imperative to be given a brand but moreover being able to deliver a great impression on the consumer's mind so that consumers eventually decide to make a purchase. By March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 as a pandemic, prompting many governments around the world to force strict lockdowns on economic and social activities to reduce the spread of COVID-19. These measures are changing the habits of a large portion of the world's population, who now rely on an internet connection at home for work, education, social interaction, and entertainment. Indonesia's total population was 277.7 million in January 2022, and there were 204.7 million internet users in Indonesia in January 2022. Indonesia's internet penetration rate stood at 73.7% of the total population at the start of 2022. Kepios analysis indicates that internet users in Indonesia increased by 2.1 million (+1.0%) between 2021 and 2022. Based on data from the 2020 population census from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), the population in Indonesia is divided into 6 generations with a percentage of 1.87% Pre Boomer (year of birth before 1945), 10.88% Post Gen Z (year of birth after 2013 onwards), 11.56% Baby Boomers (years of birth 1946-1964), 21.88% Gen (years of birth 1996-2012). Meanwhile, one-quarter of Indonesia's population is dominated by Generation Z.

Faced with unprecedented challenges and the “new normal”, the marketing industry has adopted methods to bridge the communication and engagement gaps between their target audiences. Marketing patterns changed during the Covid-19 pandemic. Many businesses today use electronic communication media as a means of advertising their products and services. During this time, brands stay relevant and turn to social media to continue building brand awareness, brand image, and brand trust while helping consumers with positive messages to overcome the current difficulties. Along with the spread of social media, information technology is evolving while innovating.



Figure 1. Top Apps Worldwide | Q1 2023

Source: data.ai

One of the social media that is widely used to carry out marketing activities and is widely used to share product reviews is TikTok. Based on research conducted by data.ai, the TikTok application is the best-selling application with overall downloads ranking first worldwide in early 2023. One of the countries that contribute the most to TikTok downloads is Indonesia. Indonesia’s TikTok users were 109.9 million in January 2023 meaning, Indonesia is the second country that has the most TikTok users in the world after the US of America. Based on data from Kepios Analysis, 51.6% of total internet users are TikTok users. In January 2021 the Tiktok application became the No. 1 application that is often downloaded in Indonesia according to Reportal Data, meaning that TikTok is the fastest-growing social network in the post-pandemic era. It was the most downloaded application globally in 2020 and 2021, achieving 1506 million downloaded in these years, much more than Instagram, with 1048 million downloads (Forbes, 2020, 2021). TikTok is one of the most popular social media platforms for teenagers to adults, which presents videos that are 15 seconds to 3 minutes long with a variety of features offered so that video makers known as 'TikTokers' can express themselves even further. As Mangkunegara (Fardhani and Izzati, 2013), confirms: "Adolescents are consumers who are easily influenced by sellers' seductions, easily persuaded by advertisements, especially on the tidiness of wrapping paper decorated with attractive colors, besides

that teenagers also buyers who don't think about saving and are less realistic and impulsive". There were 409.1 million users aged 18 to 24 (38.9% of TikTok's ad audience aged 18 and above). This means that most TikTok users are users who belong to Generation Z.

Unlike traditional media modes of operation, TikTok has a big difference. From big brands to start-ups, using TikTok to build fan pages and sell products and services is a common marketing move. TikTok is considered to be one of the emerging marketing and communication tools for target customers. It's also a useful tool and the most affordable for start-ups and personal brands by creating fan pages to promote their brand characteristics, shape their brand image, and develop their customer base. In contrast, a poor branding strategy will not be able to influence the purchase decisions of consumers. This means that failed branding strategies cannot create a brand image and cannot influence consumer purchase decisions. Influencer marketing continues to offer advertisers authentic ways to tell the consumers about the brand's stories. By leveraging creative expression and an organically growing audience of influencer partners, brands can reach consumers and increase loyalty. Promoting products and spreading value is what brands do all the time. Every social media influencer has an audience and can resonate with consumers of a particular brand. In this context, TikTok influencers can create value for brands by promoting those products or brand values. During the value exchange between the TikTok influencer and the brands, consumers can change their minds about brands through social media influencers.

Along with the development of the times, human needs are increasingly complex. Not only the need for clothing, food, and shelter, but humans also need various things to support their appearance. One of them is skincare or beauty products. Different beauty products domestically and abroad are now being spread on the market. businesses are trying to attain innovative ways to get customers to purchase skincare products. Using celebrities or influencers as brand ambassadors is also one of the company's strategies to increase the popularity of its products. Like other industries, the cosmetic industry now has to rely on digitalization, skincare products are already familiar among Gen-Z. Besides wanting to look more attractive, they can also make facial skin healthier and fresher even without makeup. Companies are competing to issue skin care products according to their needs. Consumers who are busy using skincare make using skincare a routine to get accurate results. The cosmetics business, which consists of the pharmaceutical, chemical, and traditional medicine industries, grew by 9.61% in the last two years. According to the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2021, the number of business actors in the cosmetic sector will increase by 20.6%. According to BPOM, the cosmetic industry has grown from 819 to 913 cosmetic industries since July 2021, and 83% of them are SMEs (Maknum, 2022). This growth is in line with the increasing interest of the Indonesian people in cosmetic and body care products. The popularity of TikTok's social media has attracted the attention of many groups, from artists, and influencers, to brands as its active users, because this booming application really helps brands in their marketing and sales. Many new brands have sprung up instantly and immediately boomed in demand because of the use of this TikTok influencer who makes videos or live by promoting the brand as creatively and attractively as possible. So that this can be said to increase consumer confidence in the new brand to make purchases. To fully understand the importance of influencers to brand success and their impact on consumer purchase decisions for skincare products, based on the explanations that have been described, researchers are interested in analyzing "The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Brand Image, Brand Awareness, and Brand Trust Toward Purchase Decisions for Skincare Products (Study among Generation Z TikTok users at Faculty of Economics and Business Sam Ratulangi University)".

Research Objective

The objective that is going to be accomplished by this research is to examine the impact of influencer marketing on brand image, brand awareness, and brand trust in purchase decisions for skincare products and to examine the impact of influencer marketing, brand image, brand awareness, and brand trust on purchase decisions for skincare products among Generation Z TikTok users at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Sam Ratulangi University.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Marketing

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2008), marketing is the process by which companies create value for customers and build strong customer relationships to capture value from customers in return. According to Pride and Farrel (2019), marketing is more than simply advertising or selling a product; it involves developing and managing a product that will satisfy customer needs. It focuses on communicating availability in the right

place and at the right price. This definition emphasizes the importance of creating value for customers, establishing strong relationships with them, and ultimately achieving a mutually beneficial exchange of value. It underscores the idea that marketing is not just about selling products or services but about delivering customer satisfaction and building long-term relationships.

Purchase Decisions

Kotler and Armstrong (2018) define purchase decisions as a process of solving problems that includes reviewing or identifying needs, and desires, seeking information, assessing and selecting sources regarding purchase options, purchase needs, and post-purchase behavior. Kotler said four indicators for determining purchase decisions are contained in the form of the AIDA model. The AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action) is known as a marketer designing a message conveyed with the right words to make a product purchase decision. A purchase decision can be interpreted as a choice by consumers for two or more alternatives to meet their needs (Peter and Olson, 2014). Purchase decisions are made based on engaging marketing campaigns that catch consumers' attention, therefore interest in a product will be present once a person has access to sufficient amounts of relevant data. It is important to note that consumer purchase decisions can be influenced by factors such as social factors, personal factors, psychological factors, and situational factors.

Influencer Marketing

According to Brown and Hayes (2008), influencer marketing is the most important new marketing approach involving collaboration between influencers and a brand that influences consumer buying decisions by providing information about brand products or services for increased brand exposure. Influencer marketing is used by companies as the most effective marketing strategy in influencing. According to Sammis et al. (2015), influencer marketing is the science and art of encouraging people who have an impact on their audience to share brand messages with their audience in the form of sponsored content.

Brand Image

Brand image is the positioning of a brand in the consumer's impression, based on what kind of quality, characteristics, and meaning consumers should have for the brand. The brand image also represents the symbol of the connection between the consumers and the brand. Consumers like to purchase branded products whose style fits right the same as themselves (Iversen and Hem, 2007), which contains consumers' opinions and ideas about the brand's features. There will also be different impressions of different products in the same brand.

Brand Awareness

According to Aaker (2008), brand awareness is the ability of customers to recognize or remember that a brand is part of a certain product. A brand can be said to have equity if consumers recognize and remember a brand in one product category beyond another product. The role of brand awareness in brand equity depends on the extent to which level of awareness that achieved by a brand, the faster a consumer recognizes or remembers a brand can be said that the brand has a high-value awareness.

Brand Trust

Trust is an important factor in social relationships and at least a basic level of trust is needed in any interaction between people. Trust is also essential for companies to create a strong relationship between the consumer and the brand. According to Ferrinadewi (2010), brand trust is the ability of a brand to be trusted (brand reliability), which is based on consumer confidence that the product can meet the promised value and brand intention based on consumer confidence that the brand can prioritize interest consumers.

Previous Research

Adiansyah and Sarwoko (2020) provided an understanding and knowledge of how Social Media Marketing Influences Consumers' Purchase Decisions (A Mediation Analysis of Brand Awareness). The study revealed that social media marketing has a positive and significant influence on both brand awareness and purchase decisions. The nature of the wetsuit (sportswear) that can be categorized as a high-involvement product was considered the main reason for the insignificance effect of brand awareness on purchase decisions and the mediation role of brand awareness. In the case of high-involvement products, consumers tend to be rational so they require more time and effort to evaluate specific product performances and characteristics.

Freddy Simbolon, Ridha Nurcholifa, and Mouli Safarina (2020) analyzed and explained the influence of using Instagram as a promotional medium in building brand awareness and its impact on purchase decisions of bulog products in Shopee. The results find that social media marketing through Instagram significantly influences brand awareness. It impacts the purchasing decisions at Perum Bulog in Shopee. Brand awareness also significantly influences purchase decisions and mediates the effect of social media marketing on the purchase decision. Hence, companies must make social media the main tool for marketing programs. It can improve marketing personnel's competence and creativity in creating marketing content on social media.

Pijoh, Kindangen, and Tumewu (2017) aimed to find out the effect of Maybelline social media marketing (Facebook, Youtube, Instagram) on consumer purchase decisions (case study: Sam Ratulangi University students). The research finds that Maybelline social media marketing affects on five stages of purchasing decision process. Maybelline marketing on YouTube and Instagram have positive effect on purchase decision. Otherwise, Maybelline marketing on Facebook has negative effect on purchase decision. Therefore, Maybelline needs to keep up their social media marketing.

Conceptual Framework

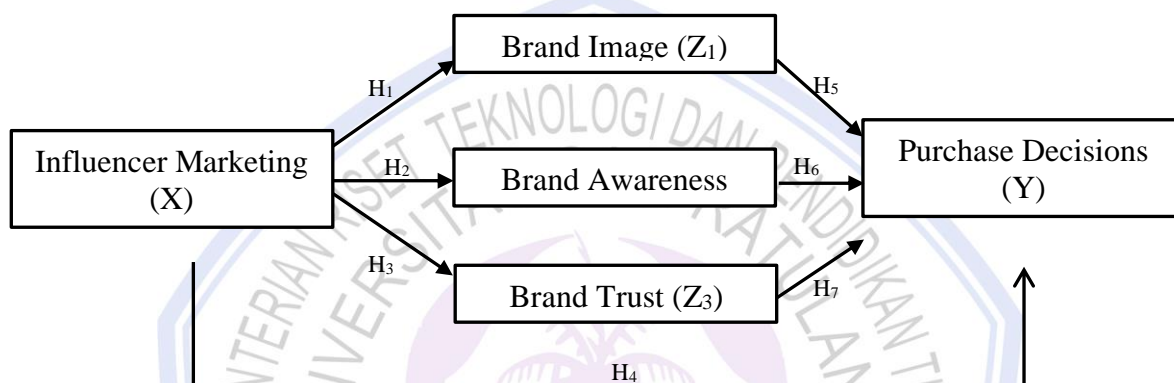


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework

Source: Data Processed (2023)

The hypotheses of this research:

H₁ : The use of Influencer Marketing has a positive impact on Brand Image.

H₂ : The use of Influencer Marketing has a positive impact on Brand Awareness.

H₃ : The use of Influencer Marketing has a positive impact on Brand Trust.

H₄ : Influencer Marketing has a positive impact on consumer Purchase Decisions.

H₅ : Brand Image has a positive impact on consumer Purchase Decisions.

H₆ : Brand Awareness has a positive impact on consumer Purchase Decisions.

H₇ : Brand Trust has a positive impact on consumer Purchase Decisions.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Approach

This research uses quantitative methods. This research involves collecting data using research instruments and data analysis using statistical methods, with the aim of testing the hypothesis that has been formulated.

Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

The target population and sample are explained below, including the sampling technique and sampling size, in order to describe the respondents or informants criteria before doing the research. The population in this study is Generation Z TikTok users (the birth year 1996-2012, meaning their average age. Is between 11-27 years old in 2023) at the Faculty of Economics and Business Sam Ratulangi University with a total of 4.696 active students (covers three majors: management, accounting, and economic development) at FEB Sam Ratulangi University. In this research, the sample size was 100 respondents based on the results using the Slovin formula. The sampling technique in this study used Cluster Sampling. Cluster Sampling is a method of probability sampling that is often used to study large populations or randomization of groups rather than individual subjects. Based on

data from Sam Ratulangi University, out of a total population of 4,696 active students from the Faculty of Economics and Business, which is divided into 2,542 students majoring in management, 1,594 students majoring in accounting, and 560 students majoring in economic development. So it is not possible for researchers to reach every population, therefore this study uses the Random Cluster Technique. In cluster sampling, researchers divide a population into smaller groups known as clusters. They then randomly select among these clusters to form a sample, so the researchers will take 33 students for each of the accounting and economic development majors and 34 students for the management department with a total sample of 100 students.

Data Collection Analysis Method

Data collection in this research used a questionnaire. A questionnaire is a data collection technique where researchers ask respondents several questions to meet data needs in research. In research, data measurement techniques use a Likert scale. The Likert scale is a measurement method in research that is used to assess attitudes and opinions. In this research, questionnaires were distributed to respondents online via Google Forms. In managing the data in this study, the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) analysis with the SmartPLS 4.0 application program will be used. The SEM (Structural Equation Model) was a powerful statistical technique that determined the measurement and structural models, as it was considered the second generation of multivariate analysis.

Evaluation of Measurement Models (Outer Model)

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity aims to determine the validity of each relationship between indicators and constructs or latent variables. An indicator can be declared to meet convergent validity and have a high level of validity when the outer loadings value is more than 0.70.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is carried out to ensure that each concept from each latent model is different from other variables. while the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value is more than 0.50.

Composite Reliability

Composite reliability is a part that is used to test the value of the reliability of indicators on a variable, a variable can be declared to meet composite reliability if it has a composite reliability value of > 0.6 . Reliability tests with composite reliability can be strengthened by using Cronbach's alpha value. A variable can be declared reliable or meets Cronbach's alpha if it has a Cronbach's alpha value > 0.7 .

Structural Model Analysis (Outer Model)

R-Square (R^2)

The coefficient of determination test was carried out to find out how much the endogenous variables were simultaneously able to explain exogenous variables. According to Chin (1998), the R-Square value is categorized as strong if it is more than 0.67, moderate if it is more than 0.33 but weak if it is lower than 0.19.

Goodness of Fit Index (GoF)

The Goodness of Fit Index is used to validate the combined performance of the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model).

Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

Multicollinearity is a phenomenon in which two or more independent variables or exogenous constructs are highly correlated, causing the model's predictive ability to be poor. SmartPLS uses the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) to evaluate collinearity. VIF value < 5 indicates that there is no collinearity problem if VIF > 5 indicates collinearity between constructs or there is a collinearity problem.

Effect Size (F-Square)

F-Square measurement or effect size is a measure used to assess the relative impact of an influencing variable (exogenous) on the affected variable (endogenous).

Prediction Relevance (Q-Square)

Predictive relevance is a test conducted to show how well the observed values are generated using a blindfolding procedure by looking at the Q square value.

Path Analysis

Path analysis is a development technique of multiple linear regression. The technique is used to examine the causal link that happens in multiple regression if factors whose freedom influences variables not only directly

but also indirectly. Path analysis examines the relationship between the dependent variable (Y) and the independent variable (X), determining whether the relationship is caused by the variable X itself or by the other variables in between two variables. Because variable X does not directly affect variable Y, other variables act as intermediate variables (intervening variables).

$$Z1 = p1X + e1$$

$$Z2 = p2X + e2$$

$$Z3 = p3X + e3$$

$$Y = p4X + p5Z1 + p6Z2 + p7Z3 + e4$$

where:

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|------|--------------------|
| p : | Correlation Coefficient | Z3 : | Brand Trust |
| X : | Influencer Marketing | Y : | Purchase Decisions |
| Z1: | Brand Image | e : | Error |
| Z2: | Brand Awareness | | |

Hypothesis Testing

T-Statistic Test

A hypothesis can be accepted or rejected, by looking at statistics that can be calculated through its level of significance, the level of statistical significance used in this study is 10% with a confidence level of 0.05 to reject a hypothesis. p-value or probability value (probability value/opportunity value), that is, with a value that indicates the opportunity for data that is generalized in the population. That is, with a correct decision the value is 95% and the probability of an incorrect decision is 5%. (T-table with a level of 5% (0.05) = 1.65, and t-count is obtained from the results of calculations using Smart PLS 4.0).

- If $t_{count} \geq t_{table}$ then (H1) is accepted and (H0) is rejected. It means that there is an impact between variables.
- If $t_{count} < t_{table}$ then (H1) is accepted and (H0) is rejected. It means that there is no impact between variables.

Sobel Test

The Sobel test requires the assumption that the number of samples is large and the mediation coefficient values are normally distributed (Ghozali, 2018). The Sobel test is calculated using the following formula:

$$S_{ab} = \sqrt{b^2 S_a^2 + a^2 S_b^2 + S_a^2 S_b^2}$$

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Outer Model Result



Figure 3. Final Research Model in SmartPLS 4.0
Data processed (2023)

Convergent Validity Test**Table 1. Convergent Validity Test Result**

Variables	Indicators	Instrument Items	Value	Explanation
INFLUENCER MARKETING (X)	Trustworthiness	X.1	0.870	VALID
		X.2	0.843	VALID
	Expertise	X.3	0.867	VALID
		X.4	0.821	VALID
	Attractiveness	X.5	0.871	VALID
		X.6	0.860	VALID
	Similarity	X.7	0.880	VALID
		X.8	0.868	VALID
BRAND IMAGE (Z1)	Image of the Product	Z1.1	0.833	VALID
		Z1.2	0.808	VALID
	Perceived Value	Z1.3	0.842	VALID
		Z1.4	0.817	VALID
	Image of Service	Z1.5	0.841	VALID
		Z1.6	0.824	VALID
	Durability	Z1.7	0.860	VALID
		Z1.8	0.887	VALID
BRAND AWARENESS (Z2)	Brand Knowledge	Z2.1	0.834	VALID
		Z2.2	0.818	VALID
	Brand Recognition	Z2.3	0.850	VALID
		Z2.4	0.839	VALID
	Brand Recalling	Z2.5	0.860	VALID
		Z2.6	0.854	VALID
	Brand Familiarity	Z2.7	0.855	VALID
		Z2.8	0.844	VALID
BRAND TRUST (Z3)	Credibility	Z3.1	0.858	VALID
		Z3.2	0.806	VALID
	Brand Preference	Z3.3	0.821	VALID
		Z3.4	0.854	VALID
	Brand Competence	Z3.5	0.835	VALID
		Z3.6	0.797	VALID
	Brand Reputation	Z3.7	0.816	VALID
		Z3.8	0.875	VALID
PURCHASE DECISIONS (Y)	Stability in a Prodyct	Y.1	0.879	VALID
		Y.2	0.816	VALID
	Habits in Buying products	Y.3	0.841	VALID
		Y.4	0.837	VALID
	Provide recommendations to others	Y.5	0.813	VALID
		Y.6	0.806	VALID
	Make repeat purchases	Y.7	0.878	VALID
		Y.8	0.860	VALID

Source: Data Processed (2023)

From the results above, all item instruments have a value of > 0.70 , which means that the construct is valid. The next step to evaluate convergent validity apart from looking at the loading factor, can be seen from the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value which is said to be valid if > 0.50 .

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Value

Variable	AVE	Explanation
Influencer Marketing (X)	0.694	VALID
Brand Image (Z1)	0.713	VALID
Brand Awareness (Z2)	0.708	VALID
Brand Trust (Z3)	0.740	VALID
Purchase Decisions (Y)	0.704	VALID

Source: Data Processed (2023)

In table 4.4 it can be seen that the AVE (Average Variance Extracted) value has a value of > 0.50 , which means that the value is valid and meets the requirements for the AVE value.

Discriminant Validity Test**Table 3. Discriminant Validity Test Result**

	Brand Awareness (Z2)	Brand Image (Z1)	Brand Trust (Z3)	Influencer Marketing (X)	Purchase Decisions (Y)
Brand Awareness (Z2)	0.833				
Brand Image (Z1)	0.828	0.844			
Brand Trust (Z3)	0.624	0.734	0.842		
Influencer Marketing (X)	0.682	0.695	0.651	0.860	
Purchase Decisions (Y)	0.793	0.807	0.641	0.693	0.839

Source: Data Processed (2023)

It can be seen that the correlation value of the variable with other variables has a greater value, so it can be concluded that the discriminant validity test has been fulfilled or is valid.

Composite Reliability Test**Table 4. Reliability Test Result**

	Cronbach's alpha	rho_a	rho_c
Brand Awareness	0.937	0.938	0.948
Brand Image	0.942	0.943	0.952
Brand Trust	0.941	0.942	0.951
Influencer Marketing	0.950	0.950	0.958
Purchase Decisions	0.940	0.941	0.950

Source: Data Processed (2023)

From the table above, it can be seen that the calculation results on composite reliability for all constructs are worth more than 0.60. This shows that respondents are consistent in answering questions, so it can be concluded that all constructs have a good level of reliability. The Cronbach alpha values are all > 0.70, so it can be concluded that all variables have good reliability.

Inner Model Result**R-Square (R²) Test Result****Table 5. Output R-Square**

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Brand Awareness	0.464	0.458
Brand Image	0.482	0.477
Brand Trust	0.424	0.418
Purchase Decisions	0.719	0.707

Source: Data Processed (2023)

The R-Square results in Table 5 show that the R-Square values for Brand Awareness are 0.464, Brand Image 0.482, Brand Trust 0.424, and Purchase Decisions 0.719. This value indicates that the Influencer Marketing variable influences brand awareness by 46.6%, brand trust by 42.4%, and brand image by 48.2%. As well as for the variables brand image, brand awareness and brand trust have an effect on the purchase decisions variable by 71.9%. And the rest is influenced by other variables outside the variables in this study.

Goodness of Fit Index (GoF) Test Result

$$GoF = \sqrt{AVE \times R^2}$$

$$GoF = \sqrt{0.711 \times 0.522}$$

$$GoF = \sqrt{0.371}$$

GoF = 0.609

From the results of the GoF calculation above, a value of 0.609 is obtained so that it can be concluded that the model has a large GoF, and the greater the GoF value, the more appropriate it is in describing the research sample.

Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) Test Result

Table 6. VIF Output

	Brand Awareness	Brand Image	Brand Trust	Influencer Marketing	Purchase Decisions
Brand Awareness					3.420
Brand Image					4.321
Brand Trust					2.372
Influencer Marketing	1.000	1.000	1.000		2.264
Purchase Decisions					

Source: Data Processed (2023)

It can be seen in Table 6 above, that the results of the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) show a value of < 5, namely for the variable Brand Awareness to Purchase Decisions 3,420, Brand Image to Purchase Decisions 4,321, Brand Trust to Purchase Decisions 2,372, Influencer Marketing to Purchase Decisions 2,264, and Influencer Marketing to Brand Awareness, Brand Image, and Brand Trust with a VIF value of 1,000 each. So, it can be concluded that there are no problems in multicollinearity, these results strengthen the parameter estimation results in the PLS-SEM which are robust (not biased).

F-Square (F²) Test Result

Table 7. Output F-Square

	F-Square Value	Category
BA -> PD	0.117	Weak
BI -> PD	0.117	Weak
BT -> PD	0.002	Weak
IM -> BA	0.865	Strong
IM -> BI	0.931	Strong
IM -> BT	0.737	Strong
IM -> PD	0.051	Weak

Data Processed (2023)

Based on the results of the F-Square calculation in Table 7 above, it can be concluded that the relationship between Brand Image, Brand Awareness, Brand Trust, and Influencer Marketing variables to Purchase Decisions shows a weak effect. Meanwhile, the Influencer Marketing variable on Brand Awareness, Brand Image, and Brand Trust shows a strong effect.

Q-Square (Q²) Test Result

$$Q^2 = 1 - (1-0.464^2) (1-0.482^2) (1-0.424^2) (1-0.719^2)$$

$$Q^2 = 1 - (0.784) (0.767) (0.820) (0.483)$$

$$Q^2 = 0.761$$

The result of the above calculation for Q-Square is 0.761, which means that the constructed model is relevant/good. That is, the exogenous variables used to predict the endogenous variables are correct.

Path Analysis Test Result

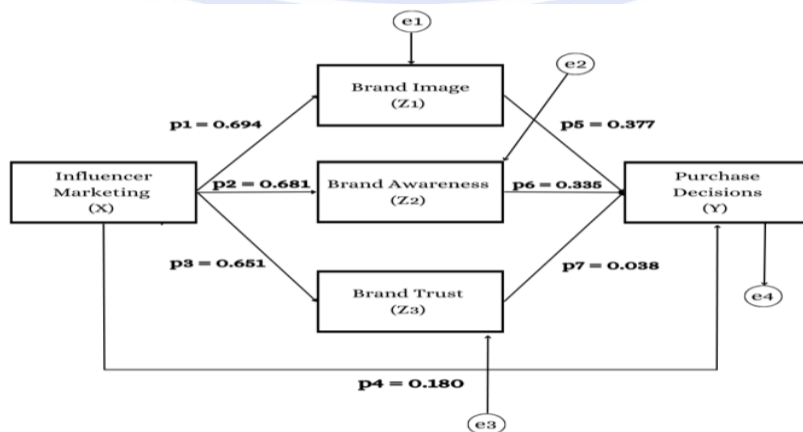


Figure 4. Path Analysis Model

Source: Data Processed (2023)

Table 8. Path Analysis

Variable	Path Coefficient Standardized
Influencer Marketing -> Brand Image	0.694 (p1)
Influencer Marketing -> Brand Awareness	0.681 (p2)
Influencer Marketing -> Brand Trust	0.651 (p3)
Influencer Marketing -> Purchase Decisions	0.180 (p4)
Brand Image -> Purchase Decisions	0.377 (p5)
Brand Awareness -> Purchase Decisions	0.335 (p6)
Brand Image -> Purchase Decisions	0.038 (p7)

Source: Data Processed (2023)

The structural equation model based on these results can be written as follows:

$$Z1 = 0.694X + e1$$

$$Z2 = 0.681X + e2$$

$$Z3 = 0.651X + e3$$

$$Y = 0.180X + 0.377Z1 + 0.335Z2 + 0.038Z3 + e4$$

The meaning of the path analysis equation can be explained as follows:

1. The path coefficient of Influencer Marketing is positive, this shows that if Influencer Marketing improves, then Brand Image will also increase. This means that every time there is an increase in Influencer Marketing, it causes Brand Image to increase by 0.694 or 69.4%.
2. The path coefficient of Influencer Marketing is positive, this shows that if Influencer Marketing improves, then Brand Awareness will also increase. This means that every time there is an increase in Influencer Marketing, it causes Brand Awareness to increase by 0.681 or 68.1%.
3. The path coefficient of Influencer Marketing is positive, this shows that if Influencer Marketing improves, then Brand Trust will also increase. This means that every time there is an increase in Influencer Marketing, it causes Brand Trust to increase by 0.180 or 18%.
4. The path coefficient of Influencer Marketing is positive, this shows that if Influencer Marketing improves, then Purchase Decisions will also increase. This means that every time there is an increase in Influencer Marketing, it causes Purchase Decisions to increase by 0.180 or 18%.
5. The path coefficient of Brand Image is positive, this shows that if Brand Image improves, then Purchase Decisions will also increase. This means that every time there is an increase in Brand Image, it causes Purchase Decisions to increase by 0.377 or 37.7%.
6. The path coefficient of Brand Awareness is positive, this shows that if Brand Awareness improves, then Purchase Decisions will also increase. This means that every time there is an increase in Brand Awareness, it causes Purchase Decisions to increase by 0.335 or 33.5%.
7. The path coefficient of Brand Trust is positive, this shows that if Brand Trust improves, then Purchase Decisions will also increase. This means that every time there is an increase in Brand Trust, it causes Purchase Decisions to increase by 0.038 or 3.8%.

Hypothesis Testing

T-Statistics Test

Table 9. Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
H1 : Influencer Marketing -> Brand Image	0.694	0.687	0.098	7.104	0.000
H2 : Influencer Marketing -> Brand Awareness	0.681	0.677	0.093	7.325	0.000
H3 : Influencer Marketing -> Brand Trust	0.651	0.648	0.104	6.268	0.000
H4 : Influencer Marketing -> Purchase Decisions	0.180	0.177	0.088	2.046	0.041
H5 : Brand Image -> Purchase Decisions	0.377	0.383	0.151	2.499	0.012
H6 : Brand Awareness -> Purchase Decisions	0.335	0.345	0.145	2.306	0.021
H7 : Brand Trust -> Purchase Decisions	0.038	0.021	0.113	0.333	0.739

Source: Data Processed (2023)

- Based on Table 9, for the first hypothesis which is the relationship between Influencer Marketing and Brand Image, shows t-statistics $>$ t-table, namely $7.104 > 1.65$ and p-values $<$ 0.05, then H_0 is rejected, meaning that there is a significant impact between Influencer Marketing on Brand Image.
- Based on table 9, the second hypothesis which is the relationship between Influencer Marketing and Brand Awareness, it shows t-statistics $>$ t-table, namely $7.325 > 1.65$ and p-values $<$ 0.05, then H_0 is rejected, meaning that there is a significant impact between Influencer Marketing on Brand Awareness.
- The third hypothesis which is the relationship between Influencer Marketing and Brand Trust, it shows t-statistics $>$ t-table, namely $6.268 > 1.65$ and p-values $<$ 0.05, then H_0 is rejected, meaning that there is a significant impact between Influencer Marketing on Brand Trust.
- The fourth hypothesis which is the relationship between Influencer Marketing on Purchase Decisions shows t-statistics $>$ t-table, namely $2.046 > 1.65$ and p-values $<$ 0.05, then H_0 is rejected, meaning that there is a significant impact between Influencer Marketing on Purchase Decisions.
- It can be seen in Table 9 above, for the fifth hypothesis which is the relationship between Brand Image on Purchase Decisions showing t-statistics $>$ t-table, namely $2.499 > 1.65$ and p-values $<$ 0.05, then H_0 is rejected, meaning that there is a significant impact between Brand Image on Purchase Decisions.
- The sixth hypothesis which is the relationship between Brand Awareness and Purchase Decisions, it shows t-statistics $>$ t-table, namely $2.306 > 1.65$ and p-values $<$ 0.05, then H_0 is rejected, meaning that there is a significant impact between Brand Awareness on Purchase Decisions.
- Based on Table 9 above, the seventh hypothesis which is the relationship between Brand Trust on Purchase Decisions shows t-statistics $<$ t-table, namely $0.333 < 1.65$ and p-values $>$ 0.05, then H_0 is accepted, meaning that there is no significant impact between Brand Trust on Purchase Decisions.

Sobel Test (Intervening Test)

Sobel Test of Influencer Marketing on Purchase Decisions through Brand Image

The Z value is $17.842 > 1.65$, which means that the mediation parameter is significant. So it can be concluded that brand image can mediate the impact of influencer marketing on purchase decisions.

Sobel Test of Influencer Marketing on Purchase Decisions through Brand Awareness

The Z value is $17.873 > 1.65$, which means that the mediation parameter is significant. So it can be concluded that brand awareness can mediate the impact of influencer marketing on purchase decisions.

Sobel Test of Influencer Marketing on Purchase Decisions through Brand Trust

The Z value is $8.5 > 1.65$, which means that the mediation parameter is significant. So it can be concluded that brand trust can mediate the impact of influencer marketing on purchase decisions.

Discussion

The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Brand Image

Based on the results of data processing that has been done, this study shows that influencer marketing has an impact on brand image. The results of hypothesis testing show that the t-statistic value is $7.104 >$ from the t-table which is 1.65 with a significance obtained of $0.000 < 0.05$. Indicates that the first hypothesis is accepted. These results follow research conducted by Lehofer (2017), that influencer marketing has a positive impact on brand image. This means that influencer marketing can increase the brand image of a brand to consumers, so by understanding this aspect well, advertising marketing through the TikTok platform can increase the selling value of a skincare product effectively in reaching the public. In an era of increasingly developing technology, with the use of influencer marketing, consumers are more aware of the existence and quality of a skincare product so that they can improve their brand image and form a fairly high status among the public. It means that an influencer's assessment of a skincare product results in good interaction with the brand so that brand awareness can be reflected in the relevance of the brand in the minds of consumers.

The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Brand Awareness

Influencer Marketing has a positive impact on Brand Awareness, the results of the research that has been conducted show that this second hypothesis is accepted, as seen in the t-statistics in the analysis results show a value of 7.325 which exceeds 1.65 according to the requirements, with a p-value of 0.000 less than 0.05. The results of the study show that in theory, influencer marketing has a good impact on brand awareness of a skincare product among students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Sam Ratulangi University. According to the

study by Dehghani et al. (2016), when a brand promotes image advertising on social media, the more positive content there is, the more brand awareness it can increase. The research of this study pointed out that not only the content of advertisements but also the influencer's own moral image and public impression will also have an impact on the brands endorsed by them. When the image of social media influencers is more positive, the results presented are the same as those of Dehghani's research. Not only the content of advertisements but also the influencers are the focus of influencing brand awareness. To achieve this objective, influencer marketing who have good relationships with consumers will be able to improve the reputation of a brand, create awareness in the minds of consumers through online activities, and be able to ask for comments or input from consumers (Booth and Matic, 2011).

The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Brand Trust

According to the results of the hypothesis analysis that Influencer Marketing has a positive impact on Purchase Decisions, the results are accepted with a t-statistic of $2.046 > 1.65$ and a p-value of $0.041 < 0.05$. These results were obtained from calculations using SmartPLS software with several indicators for each influencer marketing variable (Trustworthiness, Expertise, Attractiveness, and Similarity) as independent variables and purchase decisions (Stability in a Product, Habits in buying products, providing recommendations to others, and make repeat purchases) as the dependent variable with the accepted hypothesis. This theory is in line with previous research conducted by Lestari and Wahyono (2021), which stated that there was a positive and significant impact of influencer marketing on purchase decisions. According to Shimp (2003) which is contained in the research of Cholifah, Suharyono and Hidayat, explains that the endorser is a supporter of an advertisement which is commonly known as an advertisement star who supports the advertisement. When a brand is known by consumers with good reviews by an influencer, consumers will consider buying the brand, which interprets that the content of Influencers on TikTok plays a major role in this technologically driven era, the strong content will persuade consumers towards the desired results (making purchase decisions for Skincare Products).

The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Purchase Decisions

Hypothesis analysis shows that there is a positive influence from influencer marketing on brand trust with a t-statistic of 6.268 and a p-value of 0.000 . The results of this study are in line with previous research conducted by Lou and Yuan (2019) and Mammadli (2021), which stated that influencers usually create specific content within a theme which usually contains the influencer's education and experience with a skincare brand. Therefore, consumers who have the same interests as influencers will trust the content. Content sharing can lead to direct sales, while the latter can increase brand trust, brand image, and brand loyalty, leading to indirect sales. This signifies that content sharing creates an excellent opportunity to get attention and be remembered by online viewers, leading to increased brand trust.

The Impact of Brand Image on Purchase Decisions

Brand Image has a positive impact on Purchase Decisions. The fifth hypothesis in this study was accepted according to the calculated t-statistics $2.499 > 1.65$ and p-value $0.012 < 0.05$. Based on the results of this hypothesis, it is in line with previous research from Lestari and Suryani (2022) which explains that Brand Image has a positive and significant impact on Purchase Decisions of Skincare products. This means the increasing brand image will increase purchase decisions. Brand image is an assumption about a brand that consumers reflect in the form of consumer memories. Brand image is a vision and belief hidden in the consumers' minds, as a reflection of associations in consumers' memories that affect someone's purchase decisions. These results are in line with Foster (2016), who said brand image is also associated with beliefs and perceptions held by consumers about a brand. Brand image can influence consumer purchase decisions because the stronger the brand image of a product, the higher the purchase decision. In essence, Brand Image is the impression that is inflicted by a brand in the consumer's mind. Placement of Brand Image in the minds of consumers must be done continuously to keep the Brand Image created stronger and accepted positively. This is really reasonable because when a brand has a strong image and a positive image in consumers' minds, the brand always remembers, and the possibility of consumers purchasing the brand increases.

The Impact of Brand Awareness on Purchase Decisions

According to the results of the hypothesis analysis that has been carried out, it can be concluded that Brand Awareness has a positive impact on Purchase Decisions, with the results of calculating t-statistics $>$ t-table, namely $2,306 > 1.65$ with a p-value of $0.021 < 0.05$, based on these results, the sixth hypothesis is accepted. This

research has results that are in line with previous research conducted by Ansari, S., Ansari, G., Ghorri, and Kazi (2019), where the findings of the study resulted in a weak positive significant relationship between brand awareness and consumer purchase decisions. This indicates that if consumers are well aware of the brand then there are higher chances of making a purchase decision since awareness helps them in clearing their doubts regarding the brand.

The Impact of Brand Trust on Purchase Decisions

The final hypothesis in this study is the Impact of Brand Trust on Purchase Decisions. Based on the results of research using SmartPLS software, for this hypothesis, the t-statistic is $0.333 < 1.65$ and the p-value is $0.739 > 0.05$, which means that the hypothesis is rejected. So it was concluded that there was no positive impact between Brand Trust on Purchase Decisions for skincare products for students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Sam Ratulangi University. The results of this study are not in line with previous research conducted by Hapsoro and Hafidh (2018), who found that brand trust has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions. That is, the greater the consumer's trust in the brand, the consumer prefers to choose to buy the product. The quality of the product has a positive and significant indirect influence on purchasing decisions through brand trust. Mediate between product quality and purchasing decisions. Several factors cause this to happen, which can be seen from the subject's answers to each statement (item) given based on indicators that include, Credibility, Brand preference, Brand Competence, and Brand Reputation. It is important to remember that brand trust is not a guaranteed influencer of purchase decisions in every situation. While brand trust generally has a positive impact on purchase decisions, some situations or factors might diminish its influence. Here are some factors that can potentially minimize the positive impact of brand trust on purchase decisions: Negative Experience, if a consumer has had repeated negative experiences with a trusted brand, their trust could erode, for example, product quality issues or unfulfilled promises can lead to a loss of confidence in the brand, which might impact purchase decisions.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study explain the impact of Influencer Marketing between variables on Purchase Decisions on Skincare products with Brand Image, Brand Awareness, and Brand Trust as intervening variables. This research was conducted on Generation Z TikTok Users at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Sam Ratulangi University, with the following conclusions:

1. The results of the study show that the use of Influencer Marketing through TikTok has a positive and significant impact on the brand image of Gen-Z purchase decisions for skincare products.
2. The study revealed that the use of influencer marketing through TikTok has a positive and significant impact on the brand awareness of Gen-Z purchase decisions for skincare products.
3. The results of the study state that the use of influencer marketing through TikTok has a positive and significant impact on the brand trust of Gen-Z purchase decisions for skincare products.
4. The calculation results state that the use of influencer marketing through TikTok has a positive and significant impact on purchase decisions for skincare products.
5. The Study revealed that brand image has a positive and significant impact on purchase decisions for Skincare Products among Gen-Z TikTok users in FEB, Sam Ratulangi University.
6. Based on the calculation results stated that brand awareness has a positive and significant impact on purchase decisions for skincare products among Gen-Z TikTok users in FEB, Sam Ratulangi University.
7. The results of the study found that brand trust does not have a positive and significant impact on purchase decisions for skincare products among Gen-Z TikTok users in FEB, Sam Ratulangi University.

Recommendation

As the result was gained, these were some recommendations for:

1. It is hoped that business actors can maintain consumer confidence in sales made on TikTok social media through influencers and continue to improve the quality of Skincare products being sold, so that consumers are interested and continue to make purchases of these Skincare products. Influencers are expected to be able to maintain the trust of their followers by creating interesting and reliable content. For consumers, especially active students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Sam Ratulangi University, I hope they can be smart consumers in choosing and sorting skincare products according to skin needs.

2. For further research, this research does not select specific influencers to conduct surveys. In the future, research can be conducted on prospective social media influencers, and compare how different impressions of several social media influencers still influence purchasing decisions. Therefore, it can further explore the effects of endorsement and influencer marketing influence mechanisms. In addition, for the brand section, further research can choose brands in certain industries as well as certain social media to compare differences, such as whether beauty brands and information product brands will affect different levels of purchase decisions due to the influence of different social media.
3. The researcher can further develop this research by using different methods in examining influencer marketing on brand image, brand awareness, and brand trust through purchase decisions, for example using a qualitative method with a different type of collecting data such as depth interview, so that the information obtained can be more varied than questionnaire for which the answers are available.

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