

Research Article

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Social Media Marketing Activities in Enhancing Brand Image and Driving Consumer Purchase Decisions in the Fashion Industry

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Abstract: *This study investigates the role of Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) in influencing purchase decisions, with purchase intention as a mediating variable and brand image as a moderating variable, focusing on Sweet Mango, a local fashion brand in Jepara, Indonesia. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 97 respondents through online surveys and interviews, employing a purposive non-probability sampling method. The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0. The results reveal that SMMA significantly enhances purchase intention, which in turn strongly influences purchase decisions. Furthermore, purchase intentions mediate the relationship between SMMA and purchase decisions. While brand image does not directly affect purchase intention, it plays a significant moderating role by strengthening the relationship between SMMA and purchase intention. Additionally, SMMA indirectly impacts purchase decisions through its influence on purchase intention. These findings underscore the critical importance of leveraging social media marketing strategies to drive consumer behavior while simultaneously building a strong brand image to maximize effectiveness. The study contributes to the literature by addressing inconsistencies in the relationship between brand image and consumer behavior and offers practical insights for local businesses aiming to optimize their digital marketing efforts. Limitations include the small sample size and focus on a single brand, suggesting opportunities for broader future research.*

Keywords: Brand Image, Fashion Industry, Moderating Effect, Purchase Decision, Purchase Intention, Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA).

Introduction

Social media has become one of the primary platforms in modern marketing strategies. According to (Alalwan et al., 2017), in the business sector, social media is essential because it enables organizations to reach a large audience at a lesser cost than traditional marketing strategies like billboards, newspapers, and television commercials. Nowadays, almost 89% of studies back up the idea that social media may improve consumers' perceptions and awareness of a product (Khan et al., 2019). Therefore, utilizing social media as a marketing strategy is essential for businesses to remain competitive and attract customers' purchase interest.

One of the local fashion brands in Jepara that has successfully utilized social media in its marketing strategy is Sweet Mango. Founded in 2016 by Yusniar and her husband, Sweet Mango initially sold hijabs exclusively online. As customer demand grew, the brand expanded by opening offline stores in Pecinan and Ngabul, Jepara, Central Java. Through social media marketing, Sweet Mango has gained significant customer attention and evolved into a business offering not only hijabs but also Muslim fashion for both men and women. Many customers become interested in viewing and purchasing Sweet Mango's products

after seeing positive testimonials on social media, which ultimately influences their purchase decisions (Trisa & Roosdhani, 2024)

In the context of digital marketing, Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) play a crucial role in shaping customers' purchase intention. According to (Liu et al., 2023) one of the main objectives of marketing is to capture customers' purchase intent toward a brand. Purchase intention has been widely studied across various fields such as marketing and advertising and is defined as the customer's willingness to buy a product. This intention is influenced not only by marketing strategies but also by how a company interacts with its customers (Montano et al., 2015)

Another key factor influencing purchase decisions is brand image. According to Wang and Tsai, as cited in (Seo et al., 2020), brand image is a critical determinant of whether a customer decides to purchase a product. A strong brand image can enhance customers' purchase intentions, whereas a weak brand image may hinder purchase decisions. However, research conducted by (Sikteubun et al., 2022) presents contradictory findings, suggesting that brand image negatively affects purchase intention. This inconsistency highlights a research gap that warrants further investigation.

Based on these phenomena, this study aims to analyze the influence of Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) on Purchase Decision, with Purchase Intention as a mediating variable and Brand Image as a moderating variable among Sweet Mango Jepara customers. The findings of this study are expected to provide insights into the effectiveness of social media marketing in building brand image and driving customer purchase decisions.

Literature Review

Social media marketing activity

Using social media platforms and online networks to promote products, services, information, and ideas is known as social media marketing (Ibrahim et al., 2021). Social media marketing activities (SMMAs) encompass various strategies such as customization, entertainment, trendiness, and interaction that significantly impact the behavioral intentions of customers and the perceived value of followers. (Bushara et al., 2023). SMMA are instrumental in shaping perceived brand equity by fostering brand awareness and image, which in turn affect repurchase intentions and brand loyalty. Social media marketing activity refers to the strategies and actions taken by firms to engage consumers through social media platforms (Yang et al., 2022).

Brand Image

Brand image is recognized in the minds of customers by the strength, distinctiveness, and favorability of brand connections (Mitra & Jenamani, 2020). Brand image in marketing refers to the perception and associations that consumers hold about a brand, shaped by their experiences, communications, and interactions with it (Chanavat et al., 2010). Brand image, in the context of marketing, is defined as a set of attributes that indicate how a brand is perceived by various stakeholders, including consumers and competitors (Srivastava et al., 2021). Brand image can be strengthened by fulfilling brand promises (Safeer et al., 2023).

Purchase intention

Purchase intention is a process where consumers plan to make a purchase, based on considerations they have (Clarence & Keni, 2022). Purchase intention, which is the probability that a customer would

intend to purchase a good or service in the future, is a crucial idea in consumer behavior research (Ajzen, 2020). Moreover, purchase intention serves as a precursor to actual buying behavior, acting as a reliable predictor of consumer actions (Bhatti & Rehman, 2019).

Purchase decision

The concept of purchase decision refers to the process through which consumers evaluate their options and ultimately decide whether to buy a product or service (Tjahjono et al., 2021). This process is influenced by various factors, including product quality, brand image, price perception, and promotional strategies. The purchase decision is often seen as a culmination of a series of cognitive and emotional evaluations that consumers undergo before making a final choice (Khotimah & Soliha, 2023). Emphasize that a purchase decision is not merely a single action but a comprehensive process that includes selecting a product based on prior evaluations and experiences (Tjahjono et al., 2021).

The Effects of Social Media Marketing Activity on Purchase Intention

SMMA increases perceived value, which impacts purchase intention (Bushara et al., 2023). This research highlights the role of social media marketing in shaping customer purchase intention through strategies like influencer marketing, online brand communities, and advertising (Phan et al., 2024). Social media marketing activities (SMMAs) significantly impact consumer purchase intentions, these activities include customization, entertainment, trendiness, and interaction, which can enhance customer satisfaction and subsequently influence purchase intentions (Anas et al., 2023). Brand awareness, brand image, and purchase intention are all positively impacted by social media marketing initiatives that emphasize entertainment, interactivity, trendiness, customisation, and word-of-mouth (Faisal et al., 2021).

H1: Social Media Marketing Activity has a positive and significant impact on Purchase Intention

The Effects of Purchase Intention on Purchase Decision

Purchase intention often serves as a mediating factor between various influences and the final purchase decision (Satriawan et al., 2020). E-word-of-mouth and social media marketing have a favorable impact on both purchase intentions and decisions, with the latter affecting decisions through buy intention (Romadhoni et al., 2023).

H2: Purchase Intention has a positive and significant impact on Purchase Decision

The Effects of Social Media Marketing Activity on Purchase Decision

Social media marketing dimensions directly influence purchasing decisions in small and medium enterprises in Pontianak, suggesting the need for creative and innovative strategies (Romadhoni et al., 2023). Social media marketing, online customer reviews, and e-SERVQUAL positively influence purchase decisions and trust, with trust playing a mediating role in these relationships (Permana et al., 2024).

H3: Social Media Marketing Activity has a positive and significant impact on Purchase Decision

The Effects of Brand Image on Purchase Intention

A positive brand image enhances perceived quality and self-congruity, which in turn boosts purchase intentions (Chen et al., 2021). Brand image has the largest influence on consumer purchase intention, followed by product quality and price (Usman et al., 2020). Brand image and advertising positively

influence purchase intention and decision-making, with purchase intent also influenced by brand image and advertising (Hidayat et al., 2023).

Hypothesis 4: Brand Image has a positive and significant impact on Purchase Intention

Method

This research used quantitative techniques. The research participants were customers of Sweet Mango Jepara. Online surveys and in-person interviews were used to collect primary data. The rating scale on the questionnaire ranged from 1 to 10. (Harpe & learning, 2015) The sample method was made using a purposive nonprobability sample method, including 97 informants. For data analysis, tests such as the outer model, inner model test, and hypothesis testing were carried out using the SmartPLS version 4.0 and the Structural Equation Equation Modeling, or SEM, approach.

Results and Discussion

Outer Model (Measurement Model)

In this model there are two measurement models, namely the test:

1. Convergent Validity

When the outside loading is greater than 0.7 and the AVE value is at least 0.5, this measurement is deemed completed (Ulum et al., 2008). Table 1 displays the findings of the study model's convergent validity test.

Table 1. Convergent Validity Test

Indicator	Outer loading	AVE	Result
SMMA1	0.724	0.598	Valid
SMMA2	0.770		
SMMA4	0.698		
SMMA5	0.799		
SMMA6	0.823		
SMMA7	0.824		
SMMA8	0.767		
BI1	0.777	0.602	Valid
BI2	0.823		
BI3	0.806		
BI4	0.799		
BI5	0.714		
BI6	0.729		
PI1	0.733	0.611	Valid
PI2	0.836		
PI3	0.799		
PI4	0.754		
PD1	0.810	0.571	Valid
PD2	0.743		
PD3	0.731		
PD4	0.736		

Source: Data Processed (2024)

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the indicators measuring social media marketing activity, brand image, buy intention, and purchase decision are legitimate since they have an AVE value above 0.5 and a convergent validity test score over 0.7.

2. Reliability Test

Although it is not a strict criterion, Composite dependability (Cr) is a measure of variable dependability that indicates a trustworthy value of more than 0.7. Cronbach's Alpha is a number that ranges from zero to one and represents the dependability of all indications. It can be considered dependable if the number is higher than 0.7.

Table 3. Composite reliability & Cronbach's alpha

Variabel	Composite reliability	Croncach' alpha	Result
SMAA	0.912	0.888	Reliabel
BI	0.900	0.868	
PI	0.862	0.787	
PD	0.842	0.756	

Source: Data Processed (2024)

Inner Model (Measurement Model)

Projecting causal linkages between hidden variables and variables that are not immediately measurable is done with the inner model.

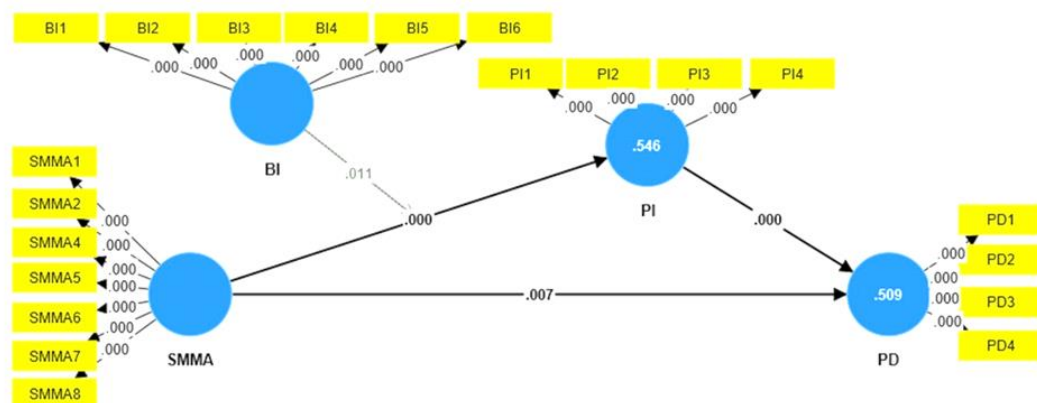


Figure 1. Structural Model

R-square

An indicator of the degree to which the independent variable influences the dependent variable is the R-squared test. An R-squared value of 0.67 indicates a high effect, 0.33 indicates a moderate influence, and 0.19 indicates a weak influence.

Table 4. R-square

Variabel	R-square	R-square adjusted
PI	0.546	0.533
PD	0.509	0.500

Source: Data Processed (2024)

The R-squared value for purchase intention derived from the data table is 0.546, whereas the value of the Adjusted R-squared is 0.533. This suggests that PI has a moderate influence on the model, with a 54.6% impact. This study does not cover all the variables and indications that account for the remaining 45.4%.

The Adjusted R-squared value is 0.500, but the R-squared value for PD is 0.509. This suggests that PD has a modest influence on the model, with a 50.9% impact. Other factors and indicators not covered in this study can account for the remaining 49.1%.

Hypothesis Test

In hypothesis testing, T statistics and P value can be seen. The hypothesis can be accepted if the P value < 0.05 . To find out, it can be found in the Path Coefficient obtained through the Bootstrapping technique in the SmartPLS version 4.0 program.

Table 5. *Path Coeffien*

Variabel	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P value
SMMA -> PI	0.513	0.531	0.108	4.752	0.000
SMMA -> PD	0.247	0.250	0.092	2.683	0.007
BI -> PI	0.018	0.015	0.097	0.185	0.853
PI -> PD	0.519	0.519	0.104	4.988	0.000
BI x SMMA -> PI	0.147	0.131	0.058	2.542	0.011

Source: Data Processed (2024)

Table 6. *Specific Indirect Effects*

Variabel	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P value
SMMA -> PI -> PD	0.266	0.274	0.078	3.428	0.001
BI -> PI -> PD	0.009	0.007	0.051	0.184	0.854
BI x SMMA -> PI -> PD	0.076	0.069	0.034	2.259	0.024

Source: Data Processed (2024)

Here is the explanation for the 8 hypotheses based on the path coefficient analysis results.

Hypothesis H1 states that Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) positively influence Purchase Intention (PI). Based on the path coefficient analysis, the path coefficient between SMMA and PI is 0.513, indicating a significant positive relationship. The t-statistic value is 4.752, which is greater than 1.96, and the P-value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This shows that Hypothesis H1 is supported, indicating that the relationship between SMMA and PI is significant.

Hypothesis H2 tests the relationship between SMMA and Purchase Decision (PD). The path coefficient shows that SMMA positively affects PD with a coefficient of 0.247. The t-statistic value is 2.683, which is greater than 1.96, and the P-value is 0.007, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, Hypothesis H2 is supported, showing that SMMA significantly influences PD.

Hypothesis H3 tests the effect of Brand Image (BI) on PI. The path coefficient between BI and PI is 0.018, which indicates a very small and insignificant relationship. The t-statistic value is 0.185, which is less than 1.96, and the P-value is 0.853, which is greater than 0.05. Thus, Hypothesis H3 is rejected, meaning that Brand Image does not significantly affect Purchase Intention.

Hypothesis H4 states that PI influences PD. Based on the path coefficient analysis, PI positively influences PD with a coefficient of 0.519. The association is significant and Hypothesis H4 is supported by the t-statistic value of 4.988, which is larger than 1.96, and the P-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05.

Hypothesis H5 tests the moderation effect of Brand Image (BI) interacting with SMMA on PI. The analysis shows that the interaction between Brand Image and SMMA positively affects PI with a coefficient of 0.147. The t-statistic value is 2.542, which is greater than 1.96, and the P-value is 0.011, which is less than 0.05. This shows that the moderation relationship is significant. Therefore, Hypothesis H5 is supported, meaning that Brand Image moderates the relationship between SMMA and PI.

Hypothesis H6 tests the indirect effect of SMMA on PD through PI. Based on the path coefficient analysis, SMMA positively influences PD through PI with a coefficient of 0.266. The t-statistic value is 3.428, which is greater than 1.96, and the P-value is 0.001, which is less than 0.05. Thus, Hypothesis H6 is supported, and the relationship is significant.

Hypothesis H7 tests the indirect effect of BI on PD through PI. The analysis shows that the indirect effect of BI on PD through PI is very small, with a coefficient of 0.009. The t-statistic value is 0.184, which is less than 1.96, and the P-value is 0.854, which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, Hypothesis H7 is rejected, and the relationship is not significant.

Hypothesis H8 tests the indirect moderation effect of Brand Image interacting with SMMA on PD through PI. The analysis shows that the indirect effect is 0.076, with a t-statistic value of 2.259, which is greater than 1.96, and a P-value of 0.024, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that the relationship is significant. Thus, Hypothesis H8 is supported, meaning that Brand Image interacting with SMMA influences PD through PI. In conclusion, most of the hypotheses in this analysis are supported, with the exceptions of Hypothesis H3 and H7, which do not show significant relationships.

Conclusion

The purpose of this quantitative study is to examine the impact of social media marketing activities (SMMA), brand image, and purchase intention on the purchase decision of Sweet Mango Jepara customers. Data were collected through online surveys and direct interviews from 97 respondents selected by purposive nonprobability sampling method, then analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0.

The analysis's findings provide compelling evidence in favor of the first hypothesis (H1), according to which social media marketing initiatives significantly and favorably influence consumers' intentions to make purchases. This indicates that the marketing strategy implemented by Sweet Mango Jepara on social media platforms has succeeded in increasing consumer interest in making purchases. In fact, the R-square value shows that SMMA has a moderate influence on purchase intention.

Another interesting finding is that, although brand image does not directly affect purchase intention, brand image has an important role as a moderator. The association between SMMA and buy intention can be moderated by brand image, which means that brand image can either increase or decrease SMMA's ability to generate purchase intention.

It has been demonstrated that purchase intention itself significantly and favorably influences purchase decisions, demonstrating the importance of purchase intention in persuading customers to actually purchase the goods. Furthermore, purchase intention also acts as a significant mediator between SMMA and purchase decision. This means that SMMA not only has a direct impact on purchase decision, but also indirectly through increasing purchase decision.

Overall, this study confirmed that social media marketing activities are an effective strategy in increasing purchase intention and purchase decision of Sweet Mango Jepara customers. However, it is important to note that brand image also has a significant impact, especially in moderating the effect of SMMA on purchase intention. These findings underscore the importance for Sweet Mango Jepara, and perhaps other similar businesses, to optimize their social media marketing activities strategy and simultaneously build a strong brand image.

It is crucial to remember that this study has a number of shortcomings, focusing on a single brand and using a comparatively small sample size. Future research could expand the scope of brands and respondent demographics to test the generalizability of these findings.

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