

## Mediation of Trust Variables: The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Purchasing Decisions at the Scarlet Fitriajaya Banyuwangi Outlet



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**ABSTRACT:** Currently, cosmetic products to brighten the face are trending among teenagers and mothers. Demand for facial brightening products has increased significantly. This research aims to analyze and determine the impact of social media marketing on trust and purchasing decisions at the Scarlet Fitriajaya Banyuwangi Outlet. The research population was all Scarlet cosmetics users at the Scarlet Fitriajaya Banyuwangi Outlet. The number of samples was determined at 180 respondents with a minimum requirement of 10 times the number of variables studied (there are 3 types of variables). Descriptive analysis is used to describe respondents and research variables. Analysis of validity and reliability tests to test research measuring instruments. Hypothesis testing is also carried out to test the impact of independent and intervening variables on the dependent variable. The analysis results show that social media marketing has an impact on trust. Social media marketing has an impact on purchasing decisions. Trust has a positive impact on purchasing decisions.

**KEYWORDS:** social media marketing; trust; buying decision; outlet scarlet.

### INTRODUCTION

The beauty industry has experienced a significant transformation in recent years, especially in this digital era. Changes in consumer behavior, especially in purchasing decision making, are increasingly influenced by factors such as the influence of social media and consumer trust. A well-known brand in this industry is Scarlett Whitening, which is known for its skin care products. However, like many companies, Scarlett Whitening has also been faced with the challenge of declining sales in recent years. A deep understanding of the aspects that influence consumer purchase decisions, especially through social media platforms, is crucial for developing effective marketing strategies (Qomariah 2016). This research has the objective of exploring the role of social media marketing in the context of Scarlett Whitening.

By understanding the interaction between digital marketing activities, consumer trust levels, and their impact on purchasing decisions, we can identify potential improvements to marketing strategies that can be implemented by similar companies. Although the literature has discussed a number of aspects regarding social media marketing, consumer trust, and purchasing behavior, this research is aimed at providing more specific insights regarding the application of these concepts in the Scarlett Whitening context. A case study approach will allow us to explore deeper dynamics and provide contextual understanding of this phenomenon. By conducting this research, it is hoped that findings will be found that can provide added value to the beauty industry in general and become practical guidance for companies like Scarlett Whitening in designing more effective marketing strategies in increasing consumer trust and, in turn, spurring sales growth.

In the ever-growing digital era, changes in consumer behavior patterns are a crucial aspect for companies in maintaining their existence. This research focuses on the context of sales of Scarlett Whitening products at Fitriajaya outlets which have decreased drastically in recent years. Consumer purchasing decisions are considered a key factor in sales dynamics, and for this reason, digital marketing strategies, especially social media marketing, are a vital element.

The success of a company in influencing consumer purchasing decisions not only depends on the complexity of the decision-making process, but also on consumer trust factors. This trust can be built through effective interaction in the realm of social media, such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook and Twitter. It is in this context that this research was conducted, by integrating product sales analysis, consumer behavior and digital marketing strategies. It is hoped that this research can provide a comprehensive understanding of how companies can increase consumer trust through social media marketing, so that they

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can produce a positive influence on consumer purchase decisions. It is hoped that the practical implications of this research will help companies like Scarlett Whitening to optimize their digital marketing strategies, overcome declining sales, and strengthen engagement with consumers in this digital era. Based on the description explained in the previous chapter, the aim of this research is to determine and analyze the impact of social media marketing on trust and purchasing decisions at the Scarlet Fitriajaya Banyuwangi Outlet.

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

### Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing (SMM) is a marketing strategy that is increasingly dominant in the digital era. According to (Kotler 2016), social media marketing is a form of marketing that utilizes social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter to increase awareness, perception and action towards a brand, product or company. According to (Tjiptono 2014), social media marketing includes direct marketing and indirect marketing activities through various web social media tools such as blogging, social networking, social tagging, and content sharing. Social media marketing allows interaction with a larger online community, expanding marketing potential compared to conventional advertising methods.

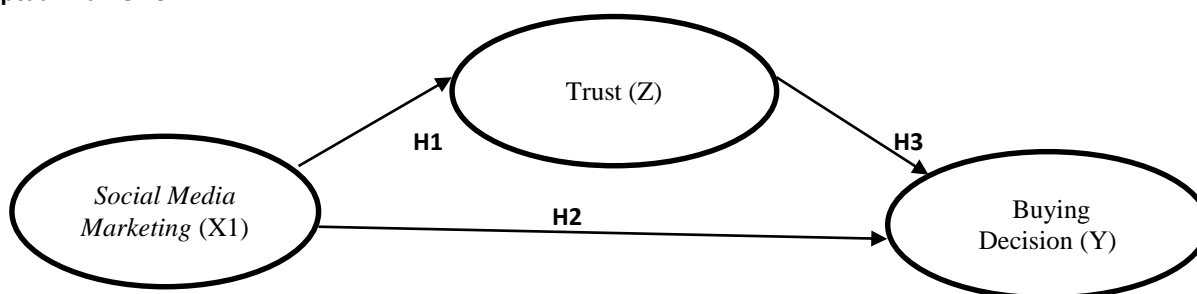
### Trust in a Marketing Context

Trust has an important role in purchasing decisions. According to (Kotler and Keller 2016), trust is a company's willingness to rely on business partners. The classic approach by (Morgan and Hunt 1994) sees trust as the general expectations held by individuals towards other people who are considered trustworthy. In a marketing context, trust can reduce the risk perceived by customers, increase the likelihood of purchase, and have a positive impact on consumer mindsets.

### The Relationship Between Social Media Marketing, Trust, and Purchasing Decisions

Research results (Laluyan, Wibowo, and Setiorini 2019), (Mulyansyah and Sulistyowati 2020), (Ang and Andreani 2022), (Astasari and Sudarwanto 2021), (Fahmi et al. 2020), (Aguspriyani et al. 2023), (Harto, Rozak, and Rukmana 2021) state that digital marketing has an impact on purchasing decisions. Research by (Ramdhani and Masnita 2023), (Hamid 2022), (Yusri and Nadhira 2022), states that social media marketing has an impact on trust. Meanwhile, research (Anwar and Aprillia 2018), (Fauzi, Saputra, and Ningrum 2022), (Mulyadi et al. 2022), (Lailiya 2020), (Nisak and Astutiningsih 2021), (Nasution, Putri, and Lesmana 2019) states that Trust has an impact on purchasing decisions. Thus, further research needs to be conducted to understand whether social media marketing has a direct impact or through intervening variables, such as trust, on purchasing decisions.

### Conceptual Framework



### Research Hypothesis

- H1: Social media marketing has a positive impact on trust.
- H2: Social media marketing has a positive impact on purchasing decisions.
- H3: Trust has a positive impact on purchasing decisions.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research is quantitative research which aims to prove a cause and effect relationship or a relationship that influences and is influenced by the variables studied, in this research namely the influence of social media marketing on purchasing decisions through trust. The population in this study was all Fitriajaya outlet customers, totaling 1,050 people. The sample in this study was chosen randomly by observing and distributing questionnaires with the condition that the number of sample members be at least 10 times the number of variables studied, namely 180 respondents. The sampling technique used in this research is probability sampling, namely a simple random sampling method, where sample members from the population are taken

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randomly without paying attention to the strata in the population. Data analysis using descriptive analysis, validity and reliability tests and hypothesis testing.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Validity test

The results of the research validity test using factor loading criteria are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Validity Test Results**

Indicator	Cross Loading Value	P- value
Indicator X1.1	0.840	<0.001
Indicator X1.2	0.814	<0.001
Indicator X1.3	0.825	<0.001
Indicator X1.4	0.816	<0.001
Indicator Z1.1	0.863	<0.001
Indicator Z1.2	0.837	<0.001
Indicator Z1.3	0.868	<0.001
Indicator Z1.4	0.853	<0.001
Indicator Y1.1	0.878	<0.001
Indicator Y1.2	0.863	<0.001
Indicator Y1.3	0.860	<0.001
Indicator Y1.4	0.908	<0.001

The test results show that the value of the cross-loadings factor is greater than 0.7 and the p value is less than 0.001, it can be concluded that this research has met the criteria.

### Reliability Test

The results of reliability testing in this study are presented in Table 2. The test results show that the Cronbach's alpha criteria have met the requirements.

**Table 2. Reliability Test**

Variable	Composite reliability	Cronbach's alpha
Social media marketing	94	42
Trust	16	78
Buying Decision	30	00

### Hypothesis Test Results

There are 3 (three) research hypotheses that will be tested in this research. In this hypothesis test, the coefficient value and p value for each hypothesis will be known. The path coefficient values and p values are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Hypothesis Test Results**

No.	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Path coefficient (β)	p-value	Results
	Social media marketing	Trust	0,455	0,001	Significant
	Social media marketing	Buying Decision	0,198	0,012	Significant
	Trust	Buying Decision	0,692	0,001	Significant

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## Hypothesis Model

Hypothesis testing is based on the results of the SEM PLS model analysis which contains all supporting variables for hypothesis testing. The PLS model with the addition of the trust variable (Z) as a mediating variable explains that the addition of variables will provide an additional contribution as an explanation of purchasing decisions (Y).

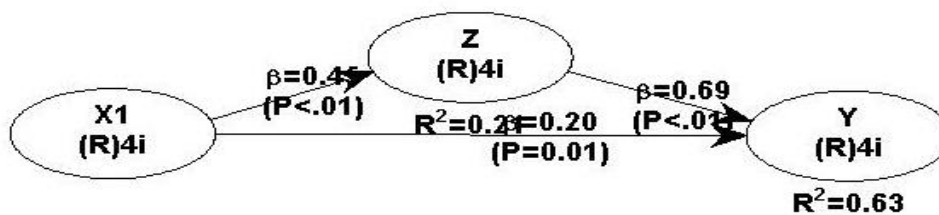


Figure 2. Path Analysis Results

## DISCUSSION

### The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Trust

The results of statistical calculations show that the coefficient value of the social media marketing variable is 0.246 with a p value of 0.001. Thus,  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted. Thus, social media marketing influences trust in the Scarlet Whitening Fitriajaya Outlet. Social media marketing is a form of marketing that is carried out at the Scarlet Whitening Fitriajaya outlet to make it easier to market Scarlet products sold to customers to make it more effective and efficient. So it is hoped that social media marketing will be able to have a positive impact on companies in trying to gain customer trust. The results of this research have significant similarities to previous research conducted by (Nasution, Putri, and Lesmana 2019), (Mulyansyah and Sulistyowati 2020) with research results which state that there is a significant influence between social media marketing variables on trust.

### The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchasing Decisions

The results of statistical calculations show that the coefficient value of the social media marketing variable is 0.198 with a p value of 0.012. Thus,  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_2$  is accepted. Thus, there is a significant influence of social media marketing on purchasing decisions. Social media marketing is a strategic process and method for building a company's influence, reputation, and brand in a company's community of potential customers, readers, or supporters. Social media marketing serves as a good platform in finding customers, creating an environment to engage them, and at the same time, generating promoters for various brands. The emergence of social media networks has had a tremendous impact on the Scarlet Whitening Fitriajaya Outlet in business strategy and has brought drastic changes in marketing strategy and can influence customers' purchasing decisions. Social media marketing aims to help companies increase their market share and customer purchasing decisions.

The results of this research have significant similarities to previous research conducted by (Aguspriyani et al. 2023), (Aguspriyani et al. 2023), (Qomariah and Zaman 2020), (Qomariah, Mahendra, and Hafidzi 2021), (Rahmawati et al. 2021), (Bagaskara, Qomariah, and Izzudin 2021), with research results which state that there is a significant influence between social media marketing variables that influence purchasing decisions.

### The Influence of Trust on Purchasing Decisions

The results of statistical calculations show that the coefficient value of the social media marketing variable is 0.692 with a p value of 0.001. Thus,  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_3$  is accepted. Thus, trust has a significant influence on purchasing decisions at the Scarlet Whitening Fitriajaya Outlet. Consumer trust in transactions and networks influences online shoppers and improves purchasing decisions. Therefore, customer trust plays an important and significant role in the proposed research model. Trust is an important determinant when considering consumer purchasing decisions. This is supported by research conducted by (Nasution, Putri, and Lesmana 2019), with research results stating that there is a significant influence between trust variables which influence purchasing decisions.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research findings that have been described, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The social media marketing variable has a positive and significant effect on customer trust in the Scarlet Whitening Fitriajaya Outlet.
2. Social media marketing variables have a positive and significant effect on customer purchasing decisions at the Scarlet

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Whitening Fitriajaya Outlet.

3. The trust variable has a positive and significant effect on customer purchasing decisions at the Scarlet Whitening Fitriajaya Outlet.

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