

The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Gen Z Males' Purchase Intention of Facial Wash Product

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Abstract

The worldwide cosmetics sector is expanding quickly in the modern period due to rising consumer demand. More and more people, regardless of gender, strive to achieve visual appeal and good health. The worldwide cosmetics sector has seen tremendous growth in the popularity of skincare products. Male skincare product consumers are growing due to changing lifestyles and heightened self-awareness. Earlier research indicates that social media has a significant role in luring males to purchase skincare products. Knowing how effective social media marketing is towards Gen-Z males' purchase intention is essential. Thus, there is a need for a comprehensive examination to be carried out. The primary objective of this research is to determine whether social media marketing has a direct or indirect impact on the purchase intention of facial wash brands. This research is conducted using a quantitative approach, utilizing a survey distributed towards 306 respondents Gen-Z males who live in Bandung aged 18 - 26, have previously purchased facial wash products from any brand, and use social media frequently. The data that was collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics and PLS-SEM. The result of the analysis shows that social media marketing has a direct and positive impact on purchase intention. However, their relationship seems to be on the low-to-average level. In order to strengthen their relationship, it is found that the mediator variables, which are brand image, brand trust, and brand loyalty, are needed. Therefore, to effectively use social media marketing to influence purchase intention, brands have to consider building a good brand image, brand trust, and brand loyalty. The findings of this research can be utilized by marketers who intend to create purchase intention through social media marketing.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Brand Image, Brand Trust, Brand Loyalty, Purchase Intention.

A. INTRODUCTION

In the present era, driven by growing consumer demand, the global cosmetics industry is experiencing rapid expansion. Increasingly, individuals from diverse backgrounds, irrespective of gender, aspire to attain both health and aesthetic appeal (Khuong & Duyen, 2016). The cosmetics industry is one of the largest and most lucrative sectors globally, encompassing products such as cleansers, toners, serums, moisturizers, foundations, compact powders, lipsticks, eyeliners, eyeshadows, blushers, and mascaras (Chin and Harizan, 2017). Among these, skincare items have emerged as the most popular and have gained significant traction in the global cosmetics market. Research and Markets report indicates that the global market for skincare products witnessed substantial growth, increasing from \$138.9 billion in 2022 to \$150.21 billion in 2023, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 8.1%. It is projected to expand at a CAGR of 7.0% and reach \$197.23 billion by 2027 (Research and Markets, 2023).

On the other hand, due to changing lifestyles and increased awareness of their looks, males increasingly buy skincare products; thus, they are no longer just a market for women (Ho et al., 2020). In Indonesia itself, the emergence of awareness for men's skincare products is continually increasing. A survey conducted by (Barra for Men, 2022) revealed that 7 out of 10 men know the importance of skin care to maintain their health, which impacts a person's initial impression and self-confidence. Furthermore, according to Nielsen's research, from 2010 to 2011, 13.5% more Indonesian men were more interested in skincare, with the fastest-growing market being face cleansers (Herdiyanti & Titus, 2013).

The increasing demand in the male skincare industry in Indonesia has caused brands to attempt to meet the needs of men by releasing several personal care products (men's grooming) (Herdiyanti & Titus, 2013), creating a very competitive market. With the market growing competitively, businesses have to adapt. Many

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businesses have changed their advertising strategy to use a different medium due to the development of technology. Marketers now communicate messages about their products and services utilizing online advertising venues, such as websites, rather than just concentrating on conventional advertising platforms. One popular online advertising medium marketers use is social media (Samat et al., 2015).

Social media has rapidly emerged as a transformative technology, with billions of individuals actively engaging worldwide. As of 2021, more than 4.26 billion people were utilizing social media globally, which is projected to reach nearly six billion by 2027 (Dixon, 2022). To have a place in the market and have a notable impact on consumer brand image, a variety of advertising/marketing strategies must be used.

However, according to (Chairina et al., 2023), the challenge of the male skincare industry in Indonesia is that it is harder to create purchase intention for men than women regarding skincare products. On the other hand, based on a study by (Sanny et al., 2020), it is believed that social media can affect men's purchase intention for skincare products. The research discovered that skincare brands that employ social media marketing strategies are perceived as reliable by male consumers when addressing skin-related issues. This study indicates that social media marketing has the potential to influence male consumers' purchase intention and serve as a crucial reminder for companies to build a relationship with and involve male customers. Social media marketing in that context has been found to influence brand trust positively, and brand trust influences purchase intention.

Additionally, according to (Moslehpour et al., 2020), brand image and trust should be considered in intertwining social media marketing and purchase intention. However, (Laksamana, 2018) determined that social media marketing needs brand loyalty to turn into purchase intention. All this research indicates the need for mediating factors to turn social media marketing into purchase intention.

Knowing how effective social media marketing is towards Gen-Z males' purchase intention is essential. Thus, there is a need for a comprehensive examination to be carried out. Therefore, the primary objective of this research is to determine whether there is a direct or indirect impact of social media marketing on the purchase intention of facial wash brands. Additionally, the findings will provide valuable insights to develop recommendations for suitable marketing strategies and the enhancement of the social media marketing activities that skincare brands can implement to increase their customer's purchase intention.

B. RESEARCH METHODS

This study aims to determine whether facial wash brands' social media marketing has a direct or indirect impact on purchase intention. Based on that, the author has developed a conceptual framework, as seen in the figure below.

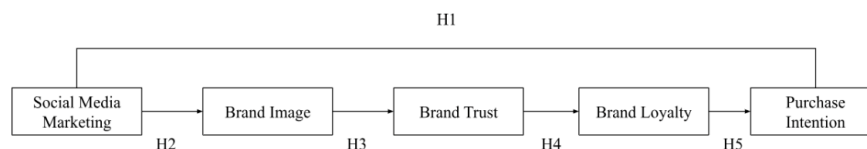


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
source: (Moslehpour et al., 2020; Laksamana, 2018; AlHaddad, 2016)

Furthermore, a questionnaire was used as the research methodology, which includes a prearranged set of questions to complement the survey administration. This research uses an online survey as the quantitative method. The quantitative method helps determine whether there is a direct or indirect effect (helped by the variables of brand image, brand trust, and brand loyalty) of social media marketing on purchase intention. Therefore, the hypotheses that are analyzed in this research are:

H1: Social Media Marketing Positively Impacts Purchase Intention

H2: Social Media Marketing Positively Impacts Brand Image

H3: Brand Image Positively Impacts Brand Trust

H4: Brand Trust Positively Impacts Brand Loyalty

H5: Brand Loyalty Positively Impacts Purchase Intention

This research is focused on Gen-Z males who live in Bandung aged 18 - 26, have previously purchased facial wash products, and use social media frequently. However, since that particular population is undetermined,

a minimum sample size of 200 is advised for marketing test studies, including the current research, according to the (Malhotra, 2010) criterion.

The questionnaire design of this particular research is based on previous literature. The questionnaire was written in English and Bahasa Indonesia (as the subtitle). All questions regarding the variables are close-ended. The close-ended questions use a Likert scale of 1 - 5. To further create a context for the facial wash brands, the author asks the respondents to use the facial wash brand that the respondents currently use as the main subject for the variable-related questions. The following table consists of a set of measurements for the operational variable.

Table 1. Operation Variable Questionnaire

No.	Variable	Label	Indicators	Source
1	Social Media Marketing	SMM1	Sharing information with others regarding the brand that I currently use is easy.	Kim & Ko, 2012
		SMM2	Delivering my opinions on social media about my current brand is easy.	
		SMM3	I like the social media marketing strategy that the brand uses.	
2	Brand Image	BI1	Using this facial wash brand makes me feel confident.	Foster (2017)
		BI2	In my opinion, this brand is unique.	Kartika Sari (2022)
		BI3	The image of this brand is planted in my mind.	
3	Brand Trust	BT1	The brand that I currently use never lies about its claims.	Kim et al. (2019)
		BT2	I can trust this brand completely.	Na et al. (2023)
		BT3	This brand is reliable	
4	Brand Loyalty	BL1	I am committed to this brand	Aaker (1991) and Yoo et al. (2000)
		BL2	I am willing to pay more for this brand than other brands the next time I purchase facial wash products.	
		BL3	I am willing to keep buying from this brand for the foreseeable future	Na et al. (2023)
5	Purchase Intention	PI1	I recommend purchasing this brand via social media to my friends.	Hermawan & Matusin (2023)
		PI2	I prefer to buy facial wash from this brand more than other brands.	Husnain & Toor (2017)
		PI3	The next time I am in the market for facial wash products, I plan to buy from this brand.	Bolton and Drew (1991)

Source: research data, 2023

After the data from the questionnaire was gathered, PLS-SEM was used. It includes the reliability test, validity test, collinearity test, structural path significance test, Coefficient of Determinants (R²) and Stone-Geisser (Q²) Test, F square effect size test, and hypothesis testing.

C. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A total of 306 respondents were gathered, and only 227 fit the criteria. (Kaur et al., 2018) The link between each variable is described and summarized in a descriptive analysis.

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis Results

Variable	Item	Mean	STDEV	Min – Max
Social Media Marketing	SMM1	4.176	0.782	2 - 5
	SMM2	4.093	0.826	1 - 5
	SMM3	4.269	0.809	2 - 5
Brand Image	BI1	4.304	0.791	2 - 5
	BI2	4.110	0.757	2 - 5
	BI3	4.110	0.786	2 - 5
Brand Trust	BT1	4.225	0.761	2 - 5
	BT2	4.278	0.755	2 - 5
	BT3	4.269	0.735	2 - 5
Brand Loyalty	BL1	4.251	0.711	2 - 5
	BL2	4.181	0.790	2 - 5
	BL3	4.229	0.696	2 - 5
Purchase Intention	PI1	4.295	0.725	2 - 5
	PI2	4.238	0.731	2 - 5
	PI3	4.251	0.717	2 - 5

Source: research data, 2023

As seen in Table 4.1, BI1 has the highest mean score of 4.304, which indicates the reliability of the respondents with the statement "using this facial wash brand makes me feel confident", furthermore suggesting the respondents' perception of the brand image of their current facial wash. On the other hand, the lowest mean score goes to SMM2 with 4.093. It is still a pretty high score; however, it indicates that the statement "delivering my personal opinions on social media about the brand I currently use is easy" has the lowest reliability with the respondents. It can be seen that SMM2 has the highest standard deviation of 0.826, which means that the statement "delivering my personal opinions on social media about the brand I currently use is easy" has the most variety when it comes to the respondents' responses, in which some agree, and some do not. On the flip side, BL3 has the lowest standard deviation of 0.696, therefore indicating that the statement "I am willing to keep buying from this brand for the foreseeable future" has the lowest variety when it comes to the respondents' response, which means on average, respondents have similar answers.

After analyzing the descriptive analysis, the reliability, validity, and collinearity test was done. Every variable was deemed reliable and valid, except for SMM2. After thoroughly analyzing the discriminant validity test, it is determined that SMM2 needs to be eliminated. Then, the hypothesis testing was done through PLS. T-values and the inner model path coefficient are the other criteria used to determine the relevance of the hypothesis.

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Structural Path	T Value	P Value	Result
H1	SMM → PI	3.798	0.00	Accepted
H2	SMM → BI	19.257	0.00	Accepted
H3	BI → BT	19.711	0.00	Accepted
H4	BT → BL	18.660	0.00	Accepted
H5	BL → PI	8.832	0.00	Accepted

Source: research data, 2023

According to Wong (2013), a T-statistic of 1.96 or above is often considered appropriate at a 5% significance level. It can be seen in Table 3 that all hypothesis has been accepted since all of the t-values are above 1.96 and the p-values are 0. Following the hypothesis testing, the author did a f^2 effect size test.

Table 3. F Square Effect Size Result

	BI	BL	BT	PI	SMM
BI			1.300		
BL				0.456	
BT		1.277			
PI					
SMM	1.097			0.095	

Source: research data, 2023

Cohen (1988) described an effect size of 0.35 specifies high effects. Looking at the F Square Effect Size table above, almost all the numbers are ≥ 0.35 , which signifies that the following variable highly influences each variable. However, SMM towards PI has a score of 0.095, which signifies low influence. This means that Social Media Marketing, in this research, is proven to have low effects on Purchase Intention if their relationship is direct.

D. CONCLUSIONS

The primary objective of this research is to determine whether social media marketing has a direct or indirect impact on the purchase intention of facial wash brands. The indirect impact is being helped with mediating variables: brand image, trust, and loyalty. After the data from the questionnaire was gathered, PLS-SEM was used, and the author employed the reliability test, validity test, collinearity test, structural path significance test, Coefficient of Determinants (R^2) and Stone-Geisser (Q^2) Test, F square effect size test, and also hypothesis testing. It can be concluded that there is a direct impact between social media marketing and purchase intention; however, the relationship has low effects, which means the relationship is rather weak. When mediating variables (brand image, brand trust, and brand loyalty) were employed, the relationship seemingly got stronger, which means that the indirect relationship is way stronger than the direct one. This means it is important to establish a good brand image, trust, and customer loyalty when trying to turn social media marketing into purchase intention.

Furthermore, after analyzing all the findings, the author recommends that brands employ social media marketing to create a good brand image, trust, and loyalty, including influencers and real testimonies from previous customers. Creating a safe space for the customers to share their opinions regarding the brand is also

very important, as it is found in this research that the customers sometimes feel like sharing their true opinions about the brand is rather hard. Brands need to succeed in making the previously mentioned recommendations to increase the customers' brand loyalty since it is known that men are prone to switching brands.

Future research might be conducted to determine what kind of social media marketing can effectively create purchase intention. So far, in this research, the author uses the social media marketing strategy of the brand that the respondents currently use, which is very general. Furthermore, another future research that could be beneficial is specifying the brands into local brands only. This can help local brands grow and continuously improve. Additionally, adding other variables supporting social media marketing and purchase intention may also be beneficial to create more detailed research. Another future research that could be done is to assess the different behaviours of males and females regarding social media marketing and purchase intention. This will help marketers in the future to identify what kind of marketing is suitable for the gender that they are targeting.

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