

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL INFLUENCE AND BRAND AMBASSADOR CREDIBILITY ON PURCHASE INTENTION: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF TRUST

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Abstract. *Practicing self-care from adolescence has become a crucial matter for society, as self-care plays an important role in maintaining health balance, both physically and mentally. One method of self-care is using skincare products. This research aims to determine the influence and significance, both direct and indirect, of social influence, brand ambassador credibility, and trust on purchase intention. The method used to collect samples is purposive sampling, with the criteria being followers of the Instagram account @scarlett_whitening who have never purchased Scarlett Whitening products, and total quota of 100 samples was obtained, which were then analyzed using SEM-PL. The research result show that social influence and Brand Ambassador Credibility have a significant positive effect on trust and Purchase Intention, and Brand Ambassador Credibility also has a significant positive effect on Trust and Purchase Intention. For Trust, it has a significant positive effect on Purchase Intention. However, Trust does not mediate the relationship between either Social Influence and Purchase Intention or Brand Ambassador Credibility and Purchase Intention.*

Keywords: *Brand Ambassador Credibility; Purchase Intention; Social Influence; Trust*

1. INTRODUCTION

Awareness of the importance self-care has been affected due to changes in people's lifestyles. According to data from Goodstats cited by Adisty (2022), in 2020, the cosmetics industry experienced an increase of 5.59%, followed by a 7% increase in 2021. This indicates that there has been a shift in attitudes among the Indonesian population. Since the Covid-19 virus began spreading throughout Indonesia, people have started to realize that they need more self-care than they usually did, leading them to change their lifestyle from doing minimal care to adequately practicing self-care.

The use of skincare is one method of self-care that can be done at home. With skincare, people no longer need to go to beauty salons, specialist, or clinics. There are several advantages to using skincare independently that is considered easy; besides instant, people can easily obtain skincare products at more affordable prices according to their budget, with many product variants to choose from based on their skin condition and needs, and can be used daily without hesitation to spend excessive costs.

In 2023, local skincare products began to be widely sought after by Indonesians, especially among teenage to adult woman, amid the abundance of high-quality foreign products and established brands such as SK II, Lineage, and Olay. According to Pahlavi (2022), 54% of cosmetic consumers prefer local brands. Compared to imported products, Indonesians in 2023 tend to choose local products which are clearly more affordable because they use local ingredients and produced locally. In addition, local products are also specifically designed for Indonesian women's skin.

Mutia (2022) mentioned that based on the Statista report, revenue in the beauty and personal care market reached IDR 111.83 trillion in 2022, with skincare occupying

second place with a market volume of US\$2.05 billion that year. In 2023, skincare market revenue amounted to US\$2.65 billion and is estimated to grow annually by 4.10%, calculated by CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) for 2023-2028.

Scarlett Whitening is one of the fastest-growing local skincare brands in Indonesia since its establishment in 2017. Scarlett Whitening ranked first in highest sales with 11.32% market share in 2022 (Kompas, 2022). According to Joan (2020), Scarlett Whitening's sales revenue reached more than IDR 23.8 billion during the second quarter of 2022.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social Influence

Social Influence is a change within an individual caused by the behaviors or actions of others around them, such as family, neighbors, or the work environment. In the context of online Purchase Intentions, consumers seek information through the opinions of friends or people around them before making a purchase (Victoria & Purwianti, 2022). The more positive opinions received about a particular product or service, the greater the consumer's trust in the seller regarding their online purchase intention. Kotler & Keller (2016) stated that Social Influence can be affected by social factors such as small groups, family, roles, and social status.

According to Eryadi & Yuliana (2016), Social Influence is Considered a major influence in the consumer decision process. A person's attitude can also be influenced by their consideration when deciding interest and intention to buy uses 3 indicators, namely:

- 1) Family
- 2) Reference Group
- 3) Role & Status

2.2 Brand Ambassador Credibility

Credibility is important in marketing because it is a form of motivation within the buying and selling system. A credible reputation can increase sales, attract according to Ferdy (Salsabila et al., 2022), credibility is described in detail as a quality possessed by someone that can generate others' trust in them regarding the truth conveyed in advertisements.

Royan (2005) interprets a Brand Ambassador as someone trusted to represent a particular product. Meanwhile, according to (Lea-Greenwood, 2012), a Brand Ambassador is an instrument used by companies to portray a brand and engage with the public, with the hope of increasing sales. Royan (2004) and Ohanian (Dewantoro & Adidarma, 2019) classify the characteristics of a Brand Ambassador into three aspects, namely:

- 1) Attractiveness

This includes all visible characteristics perceived by the public in a Brand Ambassador, such as capability (intelligence), character, lifestyle, body proportions, and physical appearance.

- 2) Trustworthiness

This covers the degree of public trust in the Brand Ambassador, reliability, and related factors.

- 3) Expertise

This refers to skills related to knowledge, experience, or abilities that Brand Ambassador possesses relevant to the topic they represent.

According to Royan (2005), a Brand Ambassador has several roles, including providing testimonials, offering endorsement and reinforcement, acting as the actor in the topic (advertisement) represented, and serving as a company spokesperson.

2.3 Trust

Trust is a personality trait of a consumer who has believed that an entity is true and reliable. When making online purchases, a consumer already trusts that the according to Kurniawan (Rosdiana et al., 2019), trust is the main factor in the emergence of consumer' online purchase intentions. Trust is formed from a series of behaviors between the person giving trust and the one receiving it. Meanwhile, according to Rotter (Anggraini & Rahardjo, 2016), Trust is A personality characteristic possessed by people who tend to have confidence in others.

Building consumer trust is not easy. It requires a relatively long time and many factors that can build consumer trust. Mayer (Dewi et al., 2021) explains that a person's trust in another entity is formed from three factors, namely:

- 1) Ability, refers to the competence and characteristics of the marketer or organization in influencing and authorizing specific areas. In other words, it relates to the seller's ability to provide, serve, and conduct transactions securely without interference from others.
- 2) Honest, refers to how the seller offers the product honestly and accurately, including truthfull information and the contents of the product being sold.
- 3) Integrity, related to the seller's habits or behavior in conducting their business.

2.4 Purchase Intention

Purchase Intention is the one of the fundamental consumer behaviors. It begins with an interest in something, followed by observing and considering whether it is important for their needs, then evaluating it, which ends with a purchase. According to Abzari in (Fadilla & Purnama, 2023), Purchase Intention is consumer behavior where consumers have the desire to choose and consume a product. Menawhile, Schiffman & Kanuk (Dewi et al., 2021) explain that Purchase Intention arises when a consumer becomes aware of a need, is influenced by external factors, recognizes the product, and evaluates alternatives.

In & Kang in (Dewantoro & Adidarma, 2019) state that Purchase Intention is related to four consumer behaviors: hesitation when planning to by, decisiveness when buying, contemplation of buying a product oe service in the future, and actually making a purchase. Fishbein & Ajzen in (Eryadi & Yuliana, 2016) describe several indicaors of Purchase Intention, namely:

- 1) Interest in seeking information about the product
- 2) Desire to learn more about the product
- 3) Interest in trying the product
- 4) Desire to buy the product
- 5) Desire to onw the product

3. RESEARCH METHODS

The research was conducted using a quantitative approach with an associative research type. Quantitative research is a means of testing objective theories by examining the relationships among variables. These variables can be measured, typically with instruments, so that numerical data can be analyzed using statistical procedures (Creswell, 2014).

The research was conducted online by distributing questionnaires via direct messages to Instagram users for approximately three months, starting from early July 2024 until end of September 2024. Due to the distribution of quesionnaires via Instagram direct messages, the researcher faced time constraints in collecting samples. The population used in this study consisted of instagram users who followed the @scarlett_whitening Instagram account, which has 5.5 million followers (5,543,837 followers). Since the research targeted followers of @scarlett_whitening who have not yet used Scarlett Whitening products, while among the total followers some have made purchases and others have not, the population was considered unknown. An unlimited population refers to a population whose size is difficult to determine or is indefinite. As name suggests, an infinite population is used when the exact population size is unknown.

The sampling technique used was non-probability sampling, because the sample

population size was unknown, and the researcher intended to take a smaller portion of the population to represent the entire population. Non-probability sampling is a sampling technique where each element in a population does not have the same probability or chance of being selected as a sample.

The sampling determination technique was purposive sampling, where the researcher applied specific criteria in sample selection. The criteria set by the researcher were:

1. Instagram users who follow the official @scarlett_whitening account
2. Followers who have never purchased Scarlett Whitening products

The sample size to be analyzed was obtained using the Lemeshow formula, which was chosen because the exact size of the population to be processed was unknown. The formula is as follows:

$$N = \frac{Z^2 \cdot P \cdot (1-P)}{d^2}$$

explanation:

n= Sample size

Z= Standard normal distribution value corresponding to 95% confidence level = 1,96

P= Maximum estimated proportion value = 0,5 q= 1-P

d= Margin of error = 10%

therefore, the calculation for the research sample size used is:

$$n = \frac{1,962 \cdot 0,5 \cdot (1-0,5)}{0,012}$$

n= 96

Thus, the sample size used was determined to be 96 samples, which was then rounded up to 100 samples. The researcher used Structural Equation Model (SEM), specifically Smart-PLS, for data processing, the steps to process data using the SEM technique are explained as follows:

1. Outer Model

1) Convergent Validity

This is used to measure the extend of the correlation between the item score and the construct score. an indicator is considered valid if the correlation value is >0,70

This is used to determine the adequacy of the discriminant value of an indicator in explaining its latent variable compared to other indicators. This test is conducted by measuring the cross-loading with the construct, with a correlation value >0,70.

2) Reliability

This used to obtain reliable measurement instruments. In this test, composite reliability and Crinbach's Alpha are the tools used. The value is considered reliable if composite reliability >0,70, and Cronbach's Alpha >0,70.

2. Inner Model

1) R-Square

R-Square is the coefficient of determination that explains how much the dependent data can be explained by the independent data, or reflects how much the independent variables affect the dependent variables. R-Square is considered acceptable if its value is >0,5, and the higher the value, the better.

2) Q-Square

This test is conducted to measure how well the observed values are predicted by the model and its parameter estimates. If the Q-Square value >0, then the tested model has predictive relevance. however, if the Q-Square value is <0, then the tested model lacks or has no predictive relevance.

3. Bootstrapping

Bootstrapping is the final test carried out on the model that has met the existing

requirements. Hypothesis testing is done by comparing the t-statistic value with t- table value, where the t-table value is 1,96 at a significance level of 0,05. If the t- statistic value is >1.96 with a significance value below or equal to 0,05, then the independent variable has a significant effect on the dependent variable.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Outer Model

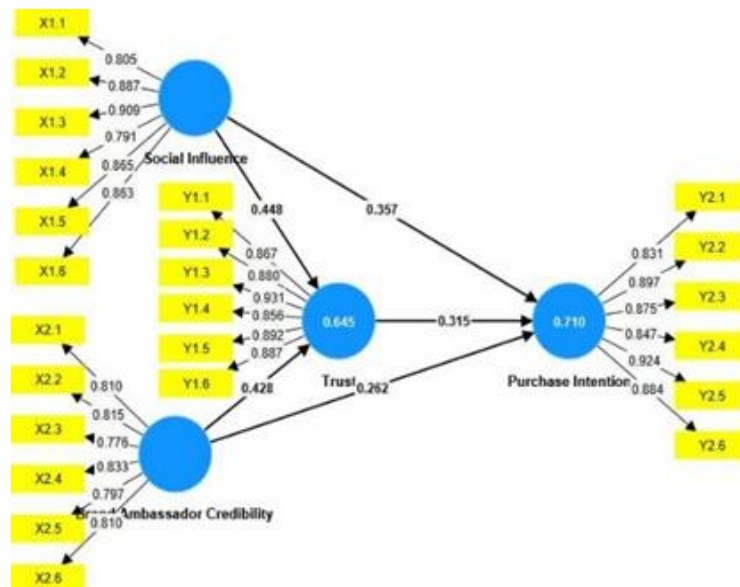


Figure 1.

1) Convergent Validity

The assessment of Convergent Validity in the use of reflective indicators is based on the magnitude of the loading factor value for the indicator measuring the construct. In reflective measurement, reliability can be determined through the loading factor value. In confirmatory research, the loading factor value is considered strong if it exceeds 0,7. Meanwhile, in explanatory research, loading factor values between 0,6 and 0,7 are still acceptable.

In this test result, it is known that all loading factor values from the variables Social Influence (X1), Brand Ambassador Credibility (X2), Trust (Y1), and Purchase Intention (Y2) are considered strong because they are grater than 0,7.

2) Discriminant Validity

The discriminant validity stage is tested through cross-loading factor analysis on each variable. The cross-loading factor value of the construct being tested is compared with the cross-loading factor values of other constructs as a way to assess discriminant validity for the variables.

Based on Table 2, it can be concluded that the cross-loading of the construct being tested has a higher value compared to the cross-loading values of other construct. Therefore, it can be concluded that the indicators of each variable in this study have met the discriminant validity criteria.

3) Reliability

There are two main methods used to measure the reliability of constructs using reflective indicators, namely Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values areconsidered reliable if they exceed 0,7 in the context of confirmatory research. Meanwhile, in explanatory research, values ranging from 0,6 to 0,7 are still acceptable.based on Table 3, the construct as a whole have

Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values greater than 0,7, thus these values are considered reliable. Additionally, the AVE values of the 4 constructs are greater than 0,5, which means they have achieved good discriminant validity.

2. Outer Model

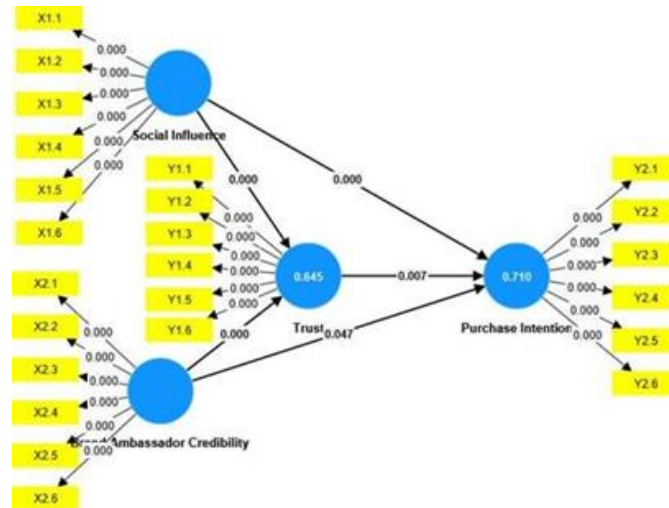


Figure. 2

1) R-Square(R2)

The R-Square value can be used to measure the degree of variation in changes of the independent variables on the dependent variable. If the R-Square value is $\geq 0,70$, it indicates a strong model, and if its $\geq 0,50$, it indicates a moderate model. This study uses the intervening variable Trust (Y1) and the dependent variable Purchase Intention (Y2), which are influenced by the independent variables Social Influence (X1) and Brand Ambassador Credibility (X2).

Based on Table 4, the R-Square (R2) value for the Purchase Intention variable (Y2) is 0,710, indicating that 71% of the Purchase Intention variable (Y2) can be influenced by Social Influence, Brand Ambassador Credibility, and Trust. The remaining 29% is influenced by other variables outside this study. Thus, it can be concluded that the R-Square (R2) value for Purchase Intention (Y2) is moderate.

For the Trust variable (Y1), the R-Square (R2) value is 0,645, which shows that 64,5% of the Trust variable (Y1) can be influenced by Social Influence, Brand Ambassador Credibility, and Purchase Intention. The remaining 35,5% is influenced by other variables outside this study. It can be concluded that the R-Square (R2) value for Trust (Y1) is moderate.

2) Predictive Relevance (Q2)

The Predictive Relevance (Q2) test is used to measure how well the observed values can estimate the parameters of a structural model. If the $Q2 > 0$, the model has predictive relevance, however, if $Q2 < 0$, the model lacks predictive relevance. based on the R-Square (R2) values, the calculation of predictive relevance is as follows:

Q2: Predictive Relevance value

R12: R-Square values of Purchase Intention R22 : R-Square value of Trust

thus,

$$Q2 = 1 - (1 - R12) \times (1 - R22)$$

$$Q2 = 1 - (1 - 0,710) \times (1 - 0,645)$$

$$Q2 = 0,89705$$

From the calculation above, it can be concluded Q2 value is 0,89705, meaning that the observed values can be used to estimate about 89,705% of the parameters in the designed structural model. The remaining 10,295% of the is explained by factors outside

the research model. Since the Q2 value is greater than 0, it indicates that this research model has predictive relevance. based on this result, it can be concluded that the structural model is good because the value is close to 1.

3. Bootstrapping

In this test, researcher examines the original sample value to determine the direction of the hypothesis test. If the original sample shows a positive value, it means the direction is positive, if it shows a negative value, the direction is negative. The qualification for determining a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables is if the T-statistic value exceeds the T-table value, which is 1,96, and the P-value is less than 0,05, it can be concluded that there is a significant effect; otherwise, there is no significant effect.

1) H1

The first hypothesis tests whether there is a positive effect of Social Influence on Trust. Based on the table, the test result shows a positive relationship between Social Influence and Trust, with an Original Sample value of 0,448. It can be concluded that hypothesis 1 is accepted and supported by a T-statistic of 5,265, which is above 1,96, and a P-value of 0,000, which is below 0,05, indicating that the relationship is significant.

2) H2

The second hypothesis tests whether there is a positive effect of Social Influence on purchase Intention. Based on the table, the test result shows a positive relationship between Social Influence and Purchase Intention, with an Original Sample value of 0,357. It can be concluded that hypothesis 2 is accepted and supported by a T-statistic of 3,726, which is above 1,96, and a P-value of 0,000, which is below 0,05, indicating that the relationship is significant.

3) H3

The third hypothesis tests whether there is a positive effect of Brand Ambassador Credibility on Trust. Based on the table, the test result shows a positive relationship between Brand Ambassador Credibility and Trust, with an Original Sample value of 0,428. It can be concluded that hypothesis 3 is accepted and supported by a T-statistic of 5,878, which is above 1,96, and a P-value of 0,000, which is below 0,05, indicating that the relationship is significant.

4) H4

The fourth hypothesis tests whether there is a positive effect of Brand Ambassador Credibility on Purchase Intention. Based on the table, the test result shows a positive relationship between Brand Ambassador Credibility and Purchase Intention, with an Original Sample value of 0,262. It can be concluded that hypothesis 4 is accepted and supported by a T-statistic of 1,983, which is above 1,96, and a P-value of 0,047, which is below 0,05, indicating that the relationship is significant.

5) H5

The fifth hypothesis tests whether there is a positive effect of Trust on Purchase Intention. Based on the table, the test result shows a positive relationship between Trust and purchase Intention, with an Original Sample value of 0,315. It can be concluded that hypothesis 5 is accepted and supported by a T-statistic of 2,714, which is above 1,96, and a P-value of 0,007, which is below 0,05, indicating that the relationship is significant.

In this study, indirect effect that were nor stated in the hypothesis have been identified. These effects can be seen in table 6. Based on the table, two indirect effects were found and are explained as follows:

1) The indirect effect between Social Influence and Purchase Intention. In this study, the original sampel value of the direct was 0,141, which is smaller than the original sampel value of the direct effect, which is 0,357. It can be concluded that Trust does not mediate the relationship between Social Influence and Purchase Intention.

2) The indirect effect between Brand Ambassador Credibility and Purchase Intention. In this study, the original sampel value of the direct was 0,135, which is smaller than the original sampel value of the direct effect, which is 0,262. It can be concluded that Trust

does not mediate the relationship between Brand Ambassador Credibility and Purchase Intention.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis results, the conclusions are as follows: the relationship between Social Influence and Trust has a significant positive direction; the relationship between Social Influence and Purchase Intention has a significant positive direction; the relationship between Brand Ambassador Credibility and Trust has a significant positive direction; the relationship between Brand Ambassador Credibility and Purchase Intention has a significant positive direction; and the relationship between Trust and Purchase Intention has a significant positive direction.

However, the findings indicated that Trust does not mediate the indirect effect between social influence and Purchase Intention. Likewise, Trust fails to mediate the indirect effect between Brand Ambassador Credibility and Purchase Intention.

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Table 1. Outer Loading

	<i>Social Influence (X1)</i>	<i>Brand Ambassador (X2)</i>	<i>Trust (Y1)</i>	<i>Purchase Intention (Y2)</i>
X1.1	0,805			
X1.2	0,887			
X1.3	0,909			
X1.4	0,791			
X1.5	0,865			
X1.6	0,863			
X2.1		0,810		
X2.2		0,815		
X2.3		0,776		
X2.4		0,833		
X2.5		0,797		
X2.6		0,810		
Y1.1			0,867	
Y1.2			0,880	
Y1.3			0,931	
Y1.4			0,856	
Y1.5			0,892	
Y1.6			0,887	
Y2.1				0,831
Y2.2				0,897
Y2.3				0,875
Y2.4				0,847
Y2.5				0,924
Y2.6				0,884

Table 2. Cross Loading

	<i>Social Influence (X1)</i>	<i>Brand Ambassador Credibility (X2)</i>	<i>Trust (Y1)</i>	<i>Purchase Intention (Y2)</i>
X1.1	0,805	0,649	0,563	0,651
X1.2	0,887	0,562	0,697	0,673
X1.3	0,909	0,578	0,677	0,692
X1.4	0,791	0,639	0,526	0,602
X1.5	0,865	0,576	0,632	0,674
X1.6	0,863	0,525	0,683	0,648
X2.1	0,472	0,810	0,566	0,455
X2.2	0,602	0,815	0,575	0,568
X2.3	0,590	0,776	0,555	0,549
X2.4	0,604	0,833	0,662	0,672
X2.5	0,471	0,797	0,573	0,637
X2.6	0,565	0,810	0,611	0,653
Y1.1	0,658	0,701	0,867	0,605
Y1.2	0,680	0,644	0,880	0,678
Y1.3	0,670	0,684	0,931	0,724
Y1.4	0,637	0,634	0,856	0,649
Y1.5	0,657	0,650	0,892	0,738
Y1.6	0,632	0,588	0,887	0,699
Y2.1	0,716	0,659	0,654	0,831
Y2.2	0,664	0,627	0,741	0,897
Y2.3	0,639	0,607	0,665	0,875
Y2.4	0,534	0,639	0,606	0,847
Y2.5	0,684	0,671	0,679	0,924
Y2.6	0,783	0,671	0,702	0,884

Table 3. Construct reliability and Validity

Konstruk	<i>Cronbach' Alpha</i>	<i>rho_A</i>	<i>Composite Reliability</i>	<i>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</i>
<i>Social Influence</i>	0,925	0,929	0,942	0,730

<i>Brand Ambassador Credibility</i>	0,893	0,896	0,918	0,651
<i>Trust</i>	0,945	0,946	0,956	0,785
<i>Purchase Intention</i>	0,925	0,942	0,952	0,769

Table 4. R-Square Value (R2)

	R Square
<i>Purchase Intention</i>	0,710
<i>Trust</i>	0,645

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing Results

Path Coefficients						
Hipotesis	Variabel	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
H1	X1->Y1	0,448	0,444	0,085	5,265	0,000
H2	X1->Y2	0,357	0,364	0,096	3,726	0,000
H3	X2->Y1	0,428	0,434	0,073	5,878	0,000
H4	X2->Y2	0,262	0,261	0,132	1,983	0,047
H5	Y1->Y2	0,315	0,308	0,116	2,714	0,007

Table 6.

	Original Sample (O)	Sampel Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
X1->Y1->Y2	0,141	0,136	0,057	2,480	0,013
X2->Y1->Y2	0,135	0,135	0,058	2,329	0,020