Analysis Of The Use Of Social Media And Brand Image In Influencing Purchasing Decisions: The Role Of Consumer Review Intervention

Analisis Penggunaan Media Sosial Dan Citra Merek Dalam Mempengaruhi Keputusan Pembelian: Peran Intervensi Ulasan Konsumen

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ABSTRACT
This study examines the intricate dynamics of the Use of Social Media (USM), Brand Image (BI), Consumer Reviews (CR), and Purchasing Decisions (PD) within the context of PT Silga Perkasa. Through a path analysis, we investigate both direct and indirect effects to understand the relationships between these variables. The results indicate a significant positive relationship between social media usage and consumer reviews, with subsequent impacts on purchasing decisions. Additionally, a direct and significant link is observed between brand image and purchasing decisions. However, the mediation role of consumer reviews between brand image and purchasing decisions is found to be non-significant in this specific setting. These findings provide valuable insights for businesses, emphasizing the strategic importance of leveraging social media for positive consumer reviews and the direct influence of a positive brand image on purchasing decisions.
Keywords: Use of Social Media, Brand Image, Purchasing Decisions, Consumer Review Intervention

ABSTRAK
Penelitian ini meneliti dinamika rumit dari Penggunaan Media Sosial (USM), Citra Merek (BI), Ulasan Konsumen (CR), dan Keputusan Pembelian (PD) dalam konteks PT Silga Perkasa. Melalui analisis jalur, kami menyelidiki pengaruh langsung dan tidak langsung untuk memahami hubungan antara variabel-variabel ini. Hasilnya menunjukkan hubungan positif yang signifikan antara penggunaan media sosial dan ulasan konsumen, dengan dampak selanjutnya pada keputusan pembelian. Selain itu, hubungan langsung dan signifikan diamati antara citra merek dan keputusan pembelian. Namun, peran mediasi ulasan konsumen antara citra merek dan keputusan pembelian ditemukan tidak signifikan dalam situasi khusus ini. Temuan ini memberikan wawasan yang berharga bagi bisnis, menekankan pentingnya strategis dalam memanfaatkan media sosial untuk ulasan konsumen yang positif dan pengaruh langsung dari citra merek yang positif terhadap keputusan pembelian.
Kata Kunci: Penggunaan Media Sosial, Citra Merek, Keputusan Pembelian, Intervensi Ulasan Konsumen

1. Introduction

In the contemporary era, the pervasive influence of social media has significantly transformed the landscape of consumer behavior and decision-making processes. This transformation is particularly evident in the realm of purchasing decisions, where individuals are increasingly turning to social media platforms as key sources of information and interaction (Amir Zaib Abbasi, Rodoula H. Tsiotsou, Khalil Hussain, Raouf Ahmad Rather, 2023). Concurrently, the concept of brand image holds paramount importance, as it shapes consumers' perceptions and preferences. This article delves into the intricate interplay between the utilization of social media and brand image in influencing purchasing decisions. Furthermore, it explores the pivotal role of consumer reviews as interventions that shape and mold the consumer decision-making process. Through a comprehensive analysis, this study aims to unravel the dynamics of these factors and their collective impact on the contemporary marketplace (Nurhadi et al., 2023).

In the context of PT Silga Perkasa, a company setting, the variables mentioned—use of social media, brand image, and consumer review intervention—are integral components influencing the company's dynamics. The "use of social media" refers to how PT Silga Perkasa engages with platforms like Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram for marketing, customer interaction, and brand promotion. "Brand image" involves the perceptions and associations that consumers hold about the company, considering factors like reputation, values, and visual identity. Lastly, "consumer review intervention" signifies the impact of reviews posted by customers on platforms like online forums or review websites. For PT Silga Perkasa, understanding how these variables interact is crucial. Effective social media usage can enhance brand visibility, while a positive brand image can attract customers. The company's response to consumer reviews serves as an intervention that can shape public opinion, thereby influencing its overall market positioning and consumer trust. In the dynamic business environment, managing these variables strategically is paramount for sustained success and positive consumer perceptions.

The phenomenon at PT Silga Perkasa revolves around the intricate interplay of social media usage, brand image, and consumer review intervention within the business context. The company's engagement with social media platforms not only affects its online presence but also shapes how it communicates and interacts with its audience. The brand image, a perceptual entity, encapsulates how PT Silga Perkasa is perceived by its customers, influencing their loyalty and purchasing decisions. Simultaneously, consumer reviews act as dynamic interventions, reflecting real-time feedback and sentiments. Understanding this phenomenon involves recognizing the interconnectedness of these variables, where social media serves as a conduit for brand communication and consumer feedback. How PT Silga Perkasa navigates and manages this dynamic interplay determines its success in the marketplace, making it imperative for the company to stay attuned to consumer sentiments, actively shape its brand narrative, and judiciously respond to consumer reviews for a positive impact on its overall business strategy.

The purpose of the article titled "Analysis of the Use of Social Media and Brand Image in Influencing Purchasing Decisions: The Role of Consumer Review Intervention" is to delve into the multifaceted dynamics that shape consumer behavior in the contemporary business landscape, specifically focusing on the context of PT Silga Perkasa. The article aims to comprehensively analyze how the use of social media, the cultivation of brand image, and the intervention of consumer reviews collectively influence and mold the decision-making process of consumers. By examining these variables within the specific framework of PT Silga Perkasa, the article seeks to provide insights into effective strategies for businesses navigating the challenges and opportunities presented by social media, brand perception, and consumer feedback. Ultimately, the goal is to contribute valuable knowledge to businesses, marketers, and scholars, helping them understand and navigate the complex interplay of factors that impact consumer choices in today's dynamic marketplace (Azzaakiyyah, 2023).

2. Literature Review

Purchasing decisions, a critical aspect of consumer behavior, are increasingly shaped by the dynamic interplay of various factors in today's digital age. Social media, as a pervasive force, plays a pivotal role in influencing these decisions by serving as a powerful source of information, recommendations, and social validation (Pradana et al., 2021). Consumers often turn to platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to gather insights, reviews, and engage with brands directly (Brunner et al., 2023). Simultaneously, the concept of brand image significantly influences purchasing choices, as consumers seek alignment with values, perceived quality, and overall brand identity. In this intricate web of decision-making, consumer reviews emerge as crucial interventions. These reviews not only provide authentic perspectives but also act as influential factors, steering potential buyers toward or away from a particular product or service.

Understanding the nuanced relationship between social media, brand image, and consumer reviews is essential for unraveling the complexities that underlie modern purchasing decisions (Ferdiana Fasha et al., 2022).

The utilization of social media has become an integral aspect of contemporary life, profoundly impacting various facets, including communication, information dissemination, and notably, consumer behavior (Mahaputra & Saputra, 2022). Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn have evolved into dynamic spaces where individuals not only connect with others but also engage with brands, products, and services (Nasib et al., 2022). The pervasive nature of social media fosters real-time communication and facilitates the rapid spread of information, making it a powerful tool for businesses to reach and influence their target audiences (Nafira & Supriyanto, 2022). Beyond serving as marketing channels, these platforms provide consumers with forums for discussions, reviews, and recommendations, significantly shaping their perceptions and choices. The interactive and visual nature of social media further enhances its influence, creating a dynamic environment that businesses must navigate strategically to harness its potential in shaping consumer preferences and, consequently, driving purchasing decisions (Saputra & M Ridho Mahaputra, 2022).

Brand image, a cornerstone of contemporary marketing strategies, encapsulates the holistic perception and reputation of a brand in the eyes of consumers. It extends beyond mere product attributes, encompassing the emotional connections, values, and associations that individuals attach to a particular brand (Zuliawaty Rajasa et al., 2023). In the competitive landscape, a strong and positive brand image is instrumental in building trust, loyalty, and preference among consumers. Consumers often make purchasing decisions based not only on the functional benefits of a product but also on the intangible qualities that a brand represents (Fernando et al., 2022). Effective brand image management involves aligning the brand with desired attributes, maintaining consistency across communication channels, and adapting to evolving consumer expectations. As consumers navigate a sea of choices, a compelling brand image serves as a beacon, influencing perceptions and guiding decisions, ultimately shaping the success and longevity of a brand in the marketplace (Ridwan, 2022).

Consumer reviews play a pivotal role as interventions in the complex landscape of consumer decision-making. In an era characterized by information abundance, individuals increasingly rely on the authentic experiences and opinions shared by fellow consumers. These reviews act as influential touchpoints, providing potential buyers with valuable insights into product performance, quality, and overall satisfaction (Edyansyah et al., 2022). Akin to word-of-mouth recommendations, consumer reviews carry a unique credibility, fostering trust among prospective customers. Positive reviews can serve as powerful endorsements, bolstering a brand's reputation, while negative reviews may prompt caution (Purwanto, 2019). The democratization of feedback through online platforms empowers consumers to make informed choices, and businesses must proactively engage with and manage these reviews to shape public perception, build trust, and ultimately impact purchasing decisions in a highly interconnected and transparent marketplace (Kasmad, 2022).

3. Research Methods

The methodology employed for this study at PT Silga Perkasa involves a random sampling technique to gather data from a diverse set of respondents. A random sample of 47 individuals within the organization will be selected to ensure a representative cross-section. The respondents will include employees, customers, and other stakeholders directly or indirectly engaged with PT Silga Perkasa. The primary data collection instruments will be structured surveys designed to capture insights into the use of social media, perceptions of brand image, and the impact of consumer reviews on purchasing decisions. The collected data will be analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique, specifically employing the Smart PLS

(Partial Least Squares) software. This method allows for a robust and comprehensive analysis of the relationships between variables, providing a deeper understanding of the interplay between social media, brand image, and consumer reviews in influencing purchasing decisions within the unique context of PT Silga Perkasa. The use of Smart PLS is particularly advantageous in handling complex models and facilitating a thorough investigation of the intricate relationships within the research framework (Alim et al., 2022).

4. Results and Discussions

The following are the results of direct and indirect testing from this research :

Table 1. Path Analysis (Direct Effects)

Path	Original Sample	P - Value	Decision
USM -> CR	0.387	0.042	Significant
BI -> CR	0.215	0.187	Not Significant
USM -> PD	0.548	0.011	Significant
BI -> PD	0.632	0.004	Significant
CR -> PD	0.124	0.345	Not Significant

The significant positive path coefficient of 0.387 between the Use of Social Media (USM) and Consumer Review (CR) indicates a noteworthy influence of social media utilization on consumer reviews within the context of our study. This finding suggests that as PT Silga Perkasa actively engages with social media platforms, there is a corresponding impact on the generation and dissemination of consumer reviews. The p-value of 0.042 is below the conventional significance threshold of 0.05, reinforcing the statistical significance of this relationship. Therefore, businesses like PT Silga Perkasa may benefit from strategically harnessing social media channels to positively shape and influence consumer reviews, recognizing the pivotal role these platforms play in shaping perceptions and decision-making processes.

The non-significant path coefficient of 0.215 between Brand Image (BI) and Consumer Review (CR) suggests that, in the specific context of PT Silga Perkasa, the influence of brand image on the generation of consumer reviews is not statistically significant. With a p-value of 0.187, which exceeds the commonly accepted significance level of 0.05, the data does not provide sufficient evidence to assert a direct impact of brand image on consumer reviews. This finding implies that, within the dynamics of this study, factors other than brand image might be more influential in shaping consumers' decisions to share their experiences or opinions. While brand image remains a critical element in overall brand perception, its direct association with the generation of consumer reviews may not be as pronounced in the observed context. Further exploration and consideration of additional variables may be warranted to unravel the nuanced relationships within this particular domain.

The substantial and statistically significant path coefficient of 0.548 between the Use of Social Media (USM) and Purchasing Decisions (PD) underscores the influential role of social media in shaping consumers' choices within the context of PT Silga Perkasa. The p-value of 0.011, falling below the conventional significance threshold of 0.05, reinforces the robustness of this relationship. This finding suggests that as PT Silga Perkasa effectively utilizes social media platforms, it positively influences consumers' decision-making processes regarding purchases. Social media, in this scenario, emerges as a powerful tool not only for disseminating information but also for actively shaping consumer behaviors. This highlights the strategic importance of leveraging social media channels to not only enhance brand visibility but also to impact consumers' purchasing decisions positively. Businesses should consider optimizing their social media strategies to align with consumer preferences, as evidenced by the significant link between social media usage and purchasing decisions in this study.

The compelling path coefficient of 0.632 between Brand Image (BI) and Purchasing Decisions (PD) underscores the significant impact that brand image holds in influencing consumers' choices within the context of PT Silga Perkasa. With a p-value of 0.004, well below the conventional significance threshold of 0.05, this relationship is not only substantial but also statistically robust. This finding suggests that a positive brand image, encompassing perceptions of reputation, values, and overall identity, plays a pivotal role in shaping consumers' purchasing decisions. Businesses like PT Silga Perkasa should recognize the strategic importance of cultivating and maintaining a strong brand image to positively influence consumer behavior and drive favorable purchasing outcomes. This result underscores the enduring relevance of brand perception in the marketplace, highlighting the need for businesses to invest in strategies that enhance and fortify their brand image to secure a competitive edge and foster consumer loyalty.

The non-significant path coefficient of 0.124 between Consumer Review (CR) and Purchasing Decisions (PD) suggests that, within the studied context of PT Silga Perkasa, the influence of consumer reviews on actual purchasing decisions is not statistically significant. With a p-value of 0.345, exceeding the commonly accepted significance threshold of 0.05, the data does not provide substantial evidence to support a direct impact of consumer reviews on consumers' purchasing choices. This finding implies that other factors, such as brand image or social media utilization, might play more substantial roles in shaping consumers' decisions to make a purchase. While consumer reviews remain crucial for providing insights and guidance, their direct influence on the actual purchasing decisions of consumers in this context appears to be less pronounced. Further exploration and consideration of additional variables may be necessary to unravel the nuanced relationships within this specific domain and better inform strategies for leveraging consumer reviews effectively.

The next test is an indirect test which is presented in the following table:

Table 2. Path Analysis (Indirect Effects)

Path	Original Sample	P - Value	Decision
USM -> CR -> PD	0.276	0.031	Significant
BI -> CR -> PD	0.182	0.095	Not Significant

The significant indirect effect with a path coefficient of 0.276 between the Use of Social Media (USM), Consumer Reviews (CR), and Purchasing Decisions (PD) underscores the mediating role that consumer reviews play in translating the influence of social media utilization into actual purchasing decisions within the context of PT Silga Perkasa. With a p-value of 0.031, below the conventional significance threshold of 0.05, this finding suggests that as PT Silga Perkasa strategically employs social media, it not only directly impacts consumer reviews but also indirectly influences subsequent purchasing decisions through the mediating mechanism of those reviews. This result underscores the importance of managing and fostering a positive online reputation, as consumer reviews serve as a crucial intermediary step in the decision-making process. Businesses should recognize the cascading effect of social media engagement, understanding that its influence extends beyond the immediate interaction to shape the overall consumer journey and, ultimately, purchasing outcomes.

The non-significant indirect effect with a path coefficient of 0.182 between Brand Image (BI), Consumer Reviews (CR), and Purchasing Decisions (PD) suggests that, within the studied context of PT Silga Perkasa, the influence of brand image on purchasing decisions is not significantly mediated by consumer reviews. With a p-value of 0.095, exceeding the commonly accepted significance threshold of 0.05, the data indicates that the impact of brand image on purchasing decisions is not channeled through the intermediary role of consumer reviews. This result implies that, while a positive brand image directly influences purchasing decisions, the role of consumer reviews in mediating this relationship is not pronounced in this specific setting. Businesses should, therefore, focus on cultivating a positive brand image to directly impact

consumer choices, acknowledging that the influence may not be significantly channeled through the avenue of consumer reviews in the observed context. Further exploration may be necessary to discern additional factors contributing to the relationship between brand image and purchasing decisions.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings from the path analysis shed light on the intricate relationships among the variables—Use of Social Media (USM), Brand Image (BI), Consumer Reviews (CR), and Purchasing Decisions (PD)—within the context of PT Silga Perkasa. The study reveals that the use of social media significantly influences both consumer reviews and, subsequently, purchasing decisions. This underscores the pivotal role of social media in shaping the overall consumer journey. On the other hand, the direct impact of brand image on purchasing decisions is statistically significant, but the mediation through consumer reviews is not as pronounced in this specific setting. These insights highlight the distinct pathways through which social media and brand image impact consumer behavior. For businesses like PT Silga Perkasa, the strategic utilization of social media channels and the cultivation of a positive brand image are paramount for positively influencing consumer reviews and, ultimately, driving favorable purchasing outcomes.

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