

The Mediation Role of Brand Image and Perceived Risk in the Relationship Between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Intention of Ready-To-Eat Product (Eatsambel)

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ABSTRACT

The development of social media as an increasingly massive promotional media today can encourage future consumer behavior to buy a product. This study aims to analyze the influence of SMM, brand image, and perceived risk on consumer purchase intention of ready-to-eat products, Eatsambel. The data collection process was carried out by distributing questionnaires using a 5-point Likert scale to Eatsambel consumers in Indonesia. This study uses SEM-PLS to test the causal relationship between variables. The results showed that SMM had a significant effect on purchase intention, brand image, and perceived risk. SMM and brand image had a significant effect on purchase intention and brand image also successfully mediated the relationship between SMM and purchase intention. While, perceived risk has no effect on purchase intention and also does not mediate the relationship between SMM and purchase intention.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing; Brand Image; Perceived Risk; Purchase Intention

1. Introduction

Currently, social media is one of the marketing and sales tools that is widely used by companies in various industrial scales, one of which is micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), especially in the culinary industry (Alika, 2020). Eatsambel is one of the businesses that started from MSMEs in the Indonesian food industry. Eatsambel itself was first established in 2018. Although it is still classified as a newcomer, the popularity and sales of Eatsambal cannot be underestimated, this is evident from the sales results of Eatsambal which reached 51 thousand products and became the market leader for chili sauce in two major e-commerce in Indonesia in the sales period September 1-15, 2022 (Sutiani, 2022). However, based on a report from Compas Dashboard, in 2023 there was a decline in Eatsambel's popularity and sales, namely in the period March 17-31, 2023 and April 1-15, 2023. This decline in sales and popularity can be a challenge for Eatsambel.

Eatsambel uses social media in promoting its products including Instagram and Tiktok. Creating effective social media marketing content can enable companies to predict their customers' future purchasing behavior more precisely, one of which affects purchase intention (Alalwan, 2018; and Chen & Lin, 2019). The use of social media as a communication and

promotion tool can also affect the image of a brand (Moslehpour et al., 2022). This means that the better the marketing activities carried out through social media, the more positive the brand image will be (Faisal & Ekawanto, 2022). Fernandes & Srivastava (2023) stated that brand image can be observed through actions such as likes, comments, and shares on social media platforms. Consumers' views on a brand greatly influence consumers' future purchase intentions (Sanny et al., 2020). This shows that the better the company's image in the eyes of consumers, the higher their intention to buy a product (Putri & Yasa, 2022).

When companies market or sell their products, it sometimes creates risks that can be perceived by customers. Consumers' perceived risk of online shopping has also become an important issue to research because it will directly affect consumers' attitudes towards online purchases, and their attitudes will have a significant impact on online shopping behavior (Ariffin et al., 2018). This is because customers' perceived risk arises from uncertainty about the losses that may be caused by their purchasing decisions. This is where the role of social media is able to accommodate information that can make consumers have confidence in the product or service they will want (Isip & Lacap, 2021). The more information or the better the social media content used by companies to market their products, the less perceived risk consumers have of these products so that it can be used as a reference for security in transactions (Xue et al., 2020).

Several previous studies have shown a significant relationship between SMM and consumer purchase intention, including research from Choedon & Lee (2020) and Moslehpour et al. (2022). But in contrast to the research findings from Chen & Lin (2019) and Wijaya et al. (2021) which shows no significant effect or influence between SMM and purchase intention. Due to differences in research results from several previous researchers, the purpose of this study is to re-analyze the relationship between SMM and purchase intention among eatsambel consumers in Indonesia using the mediating role of brand image and perceived risk.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Social Media Marketing (SMM)

According to Kotler & Keller (2016) SMM is online activities and programs designed to engage customers or potential customers and directly or indirectly increase awareness, improve image, or generate sales of products and services through social media platforms. Marketing activities through social media can also support organizations/companies to communicate with their customers more easily, quickly, and cheaply (Moslehpour et al., 2022). Social media is changing the way consumers make purchasing decisions. Consumers almost all over the world use social media to learn about other consumers' experiences, find more information about brands, products and services, and to discover deals and purchase incentives (Perera & Perera, 2016). In addition to attracting consumers to turn to social media for information on specific products and services, effective SMM content creation can also have an impact on increasing consumer purchase intentions (Moslehpour et al., 2022). Kim & Ko (2012) stated that there are five indicators used to measure social media marketing activities, including:

- Entertainment: is a form of communication that gives users a certain pleasure when using social media.
- Interaction: the ability of users to actively exchange information online on social media.
- Trendiness: provision of updated information about products or services on social media.
- Customization: the ability to provide a place for users to find information that can be customized to their needs on social media.

- Word-of-Mouth: consumer activity in sharing experiences and recommending a product on social media.

2.2. Brand Image (BI)

Brand image refers to the perceptions and associations that consumers have of a brand (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Brand image is the physical structure formed in the consumer's mind; it is a combination of the consumer's feelings toward the product itself and the indirect factors associated with it (Seo & Park, 2018). The mental image that consumers have of a particular brand is formed through a variety of factors, including marketing communications, experiences interacting with the product, and also the impact of social interactions (Bilgin, 2018). Brand image is the basis for consumers' perceptions of products, where the higher the brand image, the more positive their assessment of product quality and value. A strong perception of brand image also has great potential to influence consumers' intention to buy products that have a high brand image (Sanny et al., 2020). Therefore, companies should pay attention to how they shape their brand image. When consumers are dedicated to a brand, they will continue to follow its development and avoid competitors, thus benefiting the company.

2.3. Perceived Risk (PR)

Perceived risk reflects the user's perception of the uncertainty factor during the use of products or services from a company purchased via the internet (Gan & Wang, 2017). Jordan et al. (2018) also explains that perceived risk consists of consequences and uncertainties such as unclear product information available on the web, and possible losses that customers may experience in terms of privacy, money, time, and identity. Consumers' perception of risk is very important in determining their evaluation and purchase behavior. Consumers tend to perceive a higher level of risk when buying online compared to buying in physical stores (Ariffin et al., 2018). The greater the expected loss, the higher the level of risk perceived by consumers. Thus, perceived risk is seen as one of the significant barriers to online transactions and an intermediary in the development of online purchases (Isip & Lacap, 2021).

2.4. Purchase Intention (PI)

Purchase intention is the strength of a consumer's intention to perform a certain purchase behavior in the future, and it can be classified as one of the components of consumer cognitive behavior about how a person intends to buy a certain brand (Jordan et al., 2018). In other words, PI is considered a key predictor of actual behavior that provides a better chance of predicting purchase behavior (Moslehpour et al., 2022). Consumers will decide to buy a product after searching for information to buy the right product to meet their needs and desires.

2.5. Hypothesis Development

2.5.1. The Relationship between SMM, Purchase Intention, Brand Image, and Perceived Risk
Several previous studies have shown a significant effect of SMM on purchase intention, including research from Choedon & Lee (2020) and Aji et al. (2020). Promotional activities through social media can also affect the image of a brand in the minds of consumers. This is supported by several previous studies, namely research from Faisal & Ekawanto (2022), Moslehpour et al. (2022), and Bilgin (2018) which states that SMM has a significant effect on brand image. In addition, marketing through social media can also reduce the risks that may arise regarding online shopping. This is because the more information or the better the social

media content used by companies to market their products, the less the consumer's perceived risk of the product so that it can be used as a reference for security in transactions (Xue et al., 2020). Finding from Isip & Lacap (2021) shows that the use of social media has a significant and negative influence on customer perceived risk. Based on some of the explanations above, so the researcher proposes:

H1: SMM has a significant effect on Purchase Intentions

H2: SMM has a significant effect on Brand Image

H3: SMM has a significant effect on Perceived Risk

2.5.2. The Relationship between Brand Image and Perceived Risk with Purchase Intention

Several previous studies have shown a significant relationship between BI and PR on PI. Study results from Sanny et al. (2020) shows that brand image significantly influences consumer purchase intention for men's skincare products in Indonesia. Research from Faisal & Ekawanto (2022) also supports the positive relationship between brand image and purchase intention. Research from Cui et al. (2019) found that perceived risk has a negative influence on consumer purchase intention on the dissemination of food safety information through social media. Perceived risk was also found to reduce consumers' intention to buy goods from the internet (Jordan et al., 2018). Based on some of the explanations above, so the researcher proposes:

H4: BI has a significant effect on Purchase Intention

H5: PR has a significant effect on Purchase Intention

2.5.3. The influence of Brand Image and Perceived Risk on the relationship between SMM and Purchase Intention

Some previous studies such as research from Moslehpour et al. (2022), Faisal & Ekawanto (2022), and Tariq et al. (2017) shows that brand image successfully mediates the relationship between SMM and consumer purchase intention. Perceived risk also has an indirect role that affects consumer purchasing decisions, especially in online transactions. When the level of use of social media as a promotional medium increases, users' perceptions of risk decrease. So this can increase consumer interest in making purchases in the future because they feel safer thanks to the amount of information that has been available on social media (Xue et al., 2020). And also vice versa, the higher the risk perceived by consumers, the less consumer intention to buy a product / service (Jordan et al., 2018). So, the researcher proposes:

H6: BI mediates the relationship between SMM and PI

H7: PR mediates the relationship between SMM dengan PI

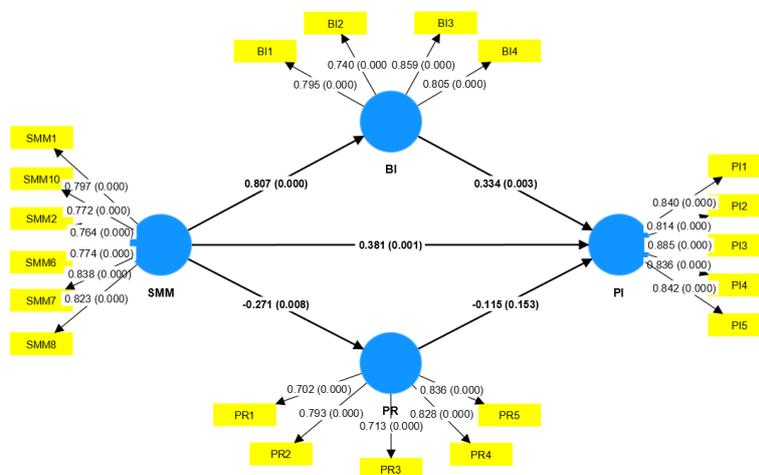


Figure 1. Research Model

3. Research Methodology

This research uses quantitative research methods. Data collection was carried out by distributing survey questionnaires online using google forms to active social media users who know Eatsambel products in Indonesia. A total of 100 data were used as samples in this study. The measurement items/indicators used for each variable were adopted from several previous studies. SMM variable measurement items are adopted from research by Kim & Ko (2012), Bilgin, (2018), and Moslehpour et al. (2022). BI variables adopted from Godey et al. (2016) and Seo & Park (2018). PR variables adopted from Ariffin et al. (2018) and Jordan et al. (2018). And the last PI variable is adopted from research by Aji et al. (2020) and Moslehpour et al. (2022). A Likert scale was used to measure responses, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Data analysis was conducted using SEM-PLS in the SmartPLS 4 application.

4. Results

4.1. General Description of Respondentss

From a total of 130 questionnaires distributed online, only 100 data could be used further for data analysis. The majority of respondents were female with 77 (77%) while only 23 (23%) were male. The majority of respondents are aged 17-26 years with a total of 80 (80%) respondents and the remaining 20 (20%) respondents aged 27-42 years. Or we can conclude that out of a total of 100 respondents, all of them belong to the millennial generation as the most active users of social media in Indonesia and all of them know Eatsambel products.

Table 1. Respondent Profile

Gender			Occupation			Domocile		
Male	23	23%	Students/Colleger	34	34%	Java Residents	94	94%
Female	77	77%	Privat Sector Employee	35	35%			
Age			Government/BUMN employee	5	5%			
17 - 26	80	80%	Entrepreneur	12	12%	Outside Java Residents	6	6%
			Housewife	8	8%			
27 - 42	20	20%	Others	6	6%			

4.2. Outer Model Evaluation

4.2.1. Convergent Validity

The convergent validity test is used to measure whether the indicators of each variable used are valid or not. Indicators are declared valid if the outer loading value of all indicators is more than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2019). During the first validity test with a total of 25 indicators, there were five indicators whose outer loading value was less than 0.7 or invalid, namely SMM3, SMM4, SMM5, SMM9, and PR6 so that these indicators could not be used. After the invalid indicators were removed, a retest was carried out with a total of 20 indicators. The second test results in an outer loading value > 0.7 in all indicators, so that in the second stage of testing all indicators can be said to be valid and can be used to measure variables.

4.2.2. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is part of the measurement model used to test the validity of a research model. The discriminant validity test in this study uses the Fornell-Larcker criteria, namely, a model can be said to have sufficient discriminant validity if the AVE root of each construct is

greater than the correlation between constructs (Hair et al., 2019). The following discriminant validity analysis results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Result of the Discriminant Validity

Variables	Brand Image	Perceived Risk	Purchase Intention	SMM
Brand Image	0,801			
Purchase Intention	0,677	0,844		
Perceived Risk	-0,307	-0,321	0,776	
SMM	0,807	-0,682	0,271	0,795

The discriminant validity results above show that the root AVE value of all variables is greater than the correlation value between constructs. Thus, the data has fulfilled the discriminant validity test so that it can proceed to the next testing stage.

4.2.3. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability

Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are used to measure the extent to which a collection of questions or items that represent constructs in a measurement instrument are consistent and reliable. Question items that represent constructs can be said to be reliable if the Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values are > 0.7 (Hair et al., 2019). The results of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Result of the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Brand Image	0.812	0.877
Purchase Intention	0.899	0.925
Perceived Risk	0.838	0.883
SMM	0.884	0.912

Based on Table 3, the Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values of the five variables (BI, PI, PR, and SMM) all exceed 0.7. So that the items that represent the constructs/variables in the measurement instrument are consistent and reliable.

4.3. Inner Model Evaluation

Inner model evaluation refers to the process of evaluating a structural model that includes the relationship between constructs in a model. The evaluation process of the inner model is by looking at the R-square value on the affected variables. The higher the R-square value, the stronger the relationship between constructs in the model. The R-square value of the brand image variable is 0.651, these results indicate that 65.1% of the brand image is influenced by SMM. The results of the R-square value of perceived risk show that SMM only affects 0.073 or 7.3% or the effect is small. Then the R-square value of the purchase intention variable is 0.489 or it can be said that SMM, brand image, and perceived risk affect purchase intention by 52.3%. The R-square of brand image and purchase intention are both moderate influences because their values are > 0.50 and < 0.75 , while the R-square of perceived risk is very weak because its value is below 0.25 (Hair et al., 2019).

4.4. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is used to see the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The effect of the independent variable can be said to be significant if the p-value < 0.05 or the t statistical value > 1.96. The results of hypothesis testing obtained from the bootstrapping procedure are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Result of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Coefficient	T-value	P-value	Conclusion
H1. SMM → PI	0,381	3,311	0,001	Accepted
H2. SMM → BI	0,807	27,180	0,000	Accepted
H3. SMM → PR	-0,271	2,663	0,008	Accepted
H4. BI → PI	0,334	3,004	0,003	Accepted
H5. PR → PI	-0,115	1,431	0,153	Rejected
H6. SMM → BI → PI	0,269	2,981	0,003	Accepted
H7. SMM → PR → PI	0,031	1,053	0,292	Rejected

5. Discussion

The results of hypothesis testing above show that SMM has a significant effect on purchase intention. The results of this study are in line with several previous studies, namely research from Moslehpour et al. (2022), Alalwan (2018), and Choedon & Lee (2020). For this reason, companies need to manage their SMM better, as the increasing trend of social media usage in Indonesia may encourage consumers to shift their attention to social-media platforms to seek information about certain products and services they want, and this can also potentially influence an increase in consumers' purchase intentions.

SMM also has a significant effect on brand image, this shows that the better the marketing activities carried out through social media, the more positive the brand image will be. This research supports several previous research results, namely research from Moslehpour et al. (2022), Seo & Park (2018), and Perera & Perera (2016). The main goal of companies in their marketing activities is to have a good brand image, and social media is one of the efficient means to develop a positive brand image.

In addition, the results show that SMM also has a significant negative effect on consumers' perceived risk. This is in line with research from Isip & Lacap (2021) which shows that SMM has a significant and negative effect on the perceived risk of Filipino social media users. These results indicate that the more information or the more effective the promotional content created by the company, the lower the level of risk perceived by customers.

This study also found a direct effect of brand image on purchase intention and this is in line with the research findings from Moslehpour et al. (2022), Sanny et al. (2020), and Faisal & Ekawanto (2022). The effect of brand image on purchase intention shows that if a company does not have a good and strong BI, consumers will not buy its products, resulting in a low market share. This proves that the better the image of a company, the higher the demand for consumers to buy products / services from that company.

Contrary to the study from Cui et al. (2019) and Jordan et al. (2018), perceived risk does not have a significant effect on purchase intention. This finding suggests that higher or lower perceived risk has no impact on purchase intention among social media users. In this case, a

possible explanation is that consumers feel that the perceived risk is low or manageable. They feel that the possible negative impact of their purchase decision is not so significant. Moreover, if consumers have access to adequate information about the product or service, including reviews, recommendations, and detailed information, they will feel safer and have higher purchase intentions so as to reduce customer perceived risk.

Furthermore, regarding the mediating role of brand image, the results show that brand image successfully mediates the relationship between SMM and purchase intention. This supports the research findings from Moslehpour et al. (2022), Faisal & Ekawanto (2022), and Tariq et al. (2017). This means that an increase in social media marketing activities by companies can result in a better brand image in the eyes of the public. With an improved brand image, consumers will be more interested in buying the goods or services offered.

The results of this study also show that perceived risk does not mediate the relationship between SMM and purchase intention. These results indicate that respondents' perceptions of risk do not affect customers' purchase intentions and social media usage. The results of this study are in line with research from Isip & Lacap (2021), but contradicts the research from Rachbini, (2018) which suggests that when consumers use social media to reduce perceived risk, this may influence shoppers' willingness to conduct online transactions through social media platforms.

6. Conclusion

In today's digital era, social media has become an important part of communication in everyday life. Many companies and businesses are starting to create their own brand profiles on social media communication channels and develop activities that will engage consumers by sharing content such as product information, discounts, advertisements and promotions. For this reason, this research was conducted to develop an understanding of social media marketing activities in the context of Instagram and Tiktok users in Indonesia. The results showed a significant influence of SMM on consumer purchase intention, brand image, and perceived risk. In line with that, brand image also has a direct effect on purchase intention and at the same time mediates the relationship between SMM and purchase intention.

In addition, the results of this study also show that there is no direct effect or significant mediating role of perceived risk on purchase intention. By focusing on product promotion activities through social media, it will increase the brand image of a product and reduce the risk perceived by customers, so that high consumer intention will be created to use products or services from a company. For this reason, companies must understand how important social media, especially Instagram and Tiktok, are in Indonesian society as an effective tool for marketing products. Because most Indonesian users get information and buy products through these channels.

This study has several limitations, first, this study only uses a small sample size of only 100 samples. Future research is expected to add more research samples to achieve better consumer perceptions of the impact of social media marketing on purchase intentions in various regions and industries. Second, this study only variables brand image and perceived risk as mediating variables. For future research, it is hoped that other mediating variables can influence purchase intention. Third, this research only focuses on the food industry, it is hoped that further research can develop research into other industries, especially the service industry.

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