The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention Through Brand Image and Brand Trust as Mediating Variables in Local Bandung Clothing

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the effect of Social Media Marketing (SMM) on Purchase Intention through Brand Image and Brand Trust as mediating variables for the clothing brand "Take A Chill Pill" (TACP). Although the level of interaction on TACP's Instagram is high, sales conversion is not yet optimal. Using quantitative methods and Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) analysis on 247 Instagram followers of @take___chillpill, the results show that SMM has a significant positive effect on Brand Image ($\beta=0.544$) and Brand Trust ($\beta=0.599$). Brand Trust has the strongest influence on Purchase Intention ($\beta=0.425$), followed by Brand Image ($\beta=0.146$), while the direct influence of SMM on Purchase Intention is also significant ($\beta=0.270$). The model explains 54.5% of the variance in Purchase Intention with a Goodness of Fit of 0.534. These findings emphasize the importance of building trust and brand image through effective social media marketing strategies to increase consumer purchase intention. This study provides practical guidance for fashion businesses in maximizing the potential of Instagram as a digital marketing platform in Indonesia.

Keyword: Social Media Marketing, Purchase Intention, Brand Image, Brand Trust, Instagram, Clothing Brand.

INTRODUCTION

Social media has become an important part of modern marketing strategies, especially for new fashion brands that want to build relationships and interactions with young consumers. Take A Chill Pill (TACP), as one of the local clothing brands based in Bandung, Indonesia, utilizes Instagram as its main platform to promote products and communicate with its target audience, namely Generation Z, who are mostly aged 18-24 years old (Indrawati, 2017). Statistics show that while the number of followers and interaction rates such as likes, comments, and messages on TACP's Instagram account are quite high, there has been no significant increase in purchase conversions on e-commerce platforms. This phenomenon highlights a gap between digital interaction and consumer purchase intent that requires further analysis.

Social Media Marketing (SMM) is the use of social media platforms to promote products or services and interact with consumers (Kim & Ko, 2012; Godey et al., 2016). In the context of digital marketing, SMM not only serves as a promotional tool but also as a means to build brand image and brand trust, which can influence consumers' purchase intentions (Salhab et al., 2023). Brand image is the customer's perception of a brand formed through affective, cognitive, and evaluative processes (Foster, 2017), while brand trust refers to the level of consumer confidence in a brand's ability to meet expectations and fulfill promised commitments (Kim et al., 2019). Purchase intention itself is the tendency of consumers to buy products influenced by motivation, expectations, and the influence of perceptions and trust in the brand (Priansa, 2017).

The Indonesian fashion industry has undergone a remarkable transformation, particularly in the high-end streetwear segment, driven by the increasing prominence of social media as a primary marketing channel. According to industry reports, the global fashion influencer market was valued at approximately USD 6.82 billion in 2024 and is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 33.8% through 2030 (Launchmetrics, 2025). This growth trajectory reflects the fundamental shift in how fashion brands, especially emerging ones, engage with their target audiences through digital platforms.

Indonesia has experienced significant digital transformation, characterized by substantial increases in internet penetration and social media usage. The Association of Indonesian Internet Service Providers (APJII) reported that internet penetration reached 79.5% in 2024, with approximately 221 million internet users out of a total population of 278.7 million (ANTARA News, 2024). As of January 2025, internet users are estimated to reach 212 million, representing a penetration rate of 74.6% (DataReportal, 2025). Social media usage has also surged dramatically, with 143 million social media user identities in Indonesia as of January 2025, equivalent to 50.2% of the total population (DataReportal, 2025).

Instagram has emerged as a particularly influential platform, especially among Generation Z and young adults, with more than 173 million users in Indonesia in 2025 (The Global Statistics, 2025). Users spend an average of 3 hours and 28 minutes per day on social media, with primary activities including accessing instant messages, following trends, and seeking brand information (OOSGA, 2023). This data underscores the potential of social media as a powerful marketing channel, particularly for the fashion industry, which relies heavily on visual content and direct interaction with consumers.

Within this context, new fashion brands like "Take A Chill Pill" (TACP), launched on November 26, 2024, have become heavily dependent on social media platforms, particularly Instagram, to build brand awareness and establish consumer relationships. TACP embodies a high-end streetwear concept that combines comfort, exclusivity, and personal identity, targeting teenagers (35%), young adults (50%), and segments over 30 years old (15%). With an Instagram following of 637 as of February 2025, the majority of followers are in the 18-24 age range, typically high school students or recent graduates actively seeking fashion information.

Social media marketing is defined as the use of social media platforms to promote products or services and interact with consumers (Kim & Ko, 2012). According to Godey et al. (2016), social media marketing activities can be classified into five key dimensions that serve as measurement indicators: (1) Entertainment - the enjoyment users derive from using social media platforms, which is essential for encouraging positive behaviors and responses from followers by creating positive emotions or feelings toward the brand on social media; (2) Interaction - the capability of social media to facilitate brand-consumer communication, allowing users to share information, exchange opinions, and engage in conversations; (3) Trendiness - social media serves as the primary source of breaking news, covers current events, and acts as the main search channel for products; (4) Customization - the ability to

provide personalized content and services tailored to individual customer preferences; and (5) Word-of-mouth - the facilitation of information sharing and recommendation behaviors among users.

Research by Solomon et al. (2018) emphasizes that social media marketing aims to provide benefits (something valuable for consumers delivered through communication) and to increase awareness and consumer knowledge about products from a company or brand. Additionally, Li et al. (2020) found that social media marketing strategies can influence perceived value through increased engagement and interaction to achieve specific strategic goals for businesses or companies. The flexibility, omnichannel nature, and highly personal characteristics of online relationship work provide social media marketing with significant advantages (Steinhoff et al., 2019).

Brand trust represents consumers' confidence in a specific brand's ability to satisfy their desires and needs (Kim et al., 2019). According to Ngo et al. (2020), brand trust encompasses two primary dimensions: (1) Brand credibility - the believability and expertise of the brand in delivering promised benefits, and (2) Brand reputation - consumer perceptions of the brand's outstanding characteristics, which can be interpreted as consumer attitudes and overall evaluations toward the brand. Developing brand reputation means more than just maintaining customer satisfaction; it involves building long-term relationships based on reliability and competence.In the digital marketing context, brand trust has emerged as a critical mediator influencing consumer behavior. Research by Lee & Hong (2016) demonstrated that interactivity, content credibility, and brand responsiveness on social media play crucial roles in building consumer trust. This is particularly important in competitive markets where consumers face uncertainty about product quality and brand authenticity.

Brand image represents customer perceptions of a brand, formed through affective, cognitive, and evaluative processes (Foster, 2017; Leong et al., 2019). It becomes the buyer's perception when they encounter a particular brand. Previous research by Siddiqui et al. (2021) revealed that positive brand image portrays the brand as unique and different from other brands. Building a good brand image is the goal of every entity, whether individual, organizational, or corporate, as a good brand image will provide many benefits for the brand itself (Handriana et al., 2021).When consumers have difficulty distinguishing a product from competing products, marketers use brand image as a way to capture consumer attention so that consumers can understand the differences between a product and competing products. This indicates that consumer attitudes and actions toward brands tend to depend on brand image (Park & Namkung, 2022). In the context of social media marketing, visual content, consistent branding, and engagement strategies significantly contribute to shaping positive brand image perceptions among target audiences.

Purchase intention represents consumers' tendency to buy desired products, involving personal processes such as motivation and desire (Toor et al., 2017). Purchase intention can be measured through several dimensions: (1) Transactional interest - the tendency to buy products; (2) Referential interest - the tendency to recommend products to others; (3) Preferential interest - behavior of someone who has preferences for certain products; and (4) Exploratory interest - behavior describing the search for information about products of interest.

Research has consistently demonstrated the significant role of social media marketing in driving purchase intention. Studies by Athapaththu & Kulathunga (2018) defined purchase intention as consumers' willingness to buy products or services from certain websites, highlighting the importance of digital platforms in contemporary consumer behavior.

Based on extensive literature review and theoretical foundations, this study proposes six hypotheses examining the relationships among social media marketing, brand trust, brand image, and purchase intention:

H1: Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention

Previous research by Salhab et al. (2023) found that social media marketing significantly influences purchase intention, explaining 70% of variance when mediated by brand trust and brand image. Similarly, Abdullah et al. (2025) demonstrated that social media marketing activities significantly enhance purchase intention both directly and indirectly in Indonesia's FMCG sector. The interactive nature of social media platforms allows brands to engage directly with consumers, building relationships that translate into purchase behaviors.

H2: Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Brand Trust

Research by Kim et al. (2019) and Ngo et al. (2020) established that social media marketing activities significantly build brand trust through transparent communication, consistent messaging, and responsive customer service. When brands effectively provide product information, maintain good communication, and fulfill brand promises on social media, consumer trust in the brand increases substantially.

H3: Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Brand Image

Studies by Godey et al. (2016) and Kim & Ko (2012) demonstrated that effective social media marketing strategies significantly enhance brand image through visual content, interactive engagement, and consistent branding across platforms. The entertainment, interaction, and trendiness dimensions of social media marketing contribute to positive brand image formation among target audiences.

H4: Brand Trust has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention

Research by Oliveira et al. (2017) showed that trust plays an important role in influencing purchase intention, with overall consumer trust determining transaction decisions in digital marketplaces. Brand trust creates confidence in brand reliability and reduces perceived risk, thereby encouraging purchase behaviors.

H5: Brand Image has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention

Studies by Hien et al. (2019) stated that brands with high brand image can increase purchase intention significantly. Positive brand image helps differentiate products in competitive markets and creates emotional connections that drive consumer purchase decisions.

H6: Brand Trust and Brand Image mediate the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Intention

The mediation effects have been supported by multiple studies, including Fakhriyah & Abdurrahman (2024), who found that both brand trust and brand image positively mediate the relationship between social media marketing and purchase intention, though through different pathways and strengths.

Despite extensive research examining the impact of Social Media Marketing on Brand Trust, Brand Image, and Purchase Intention, most studies have focused on established industries such as fast food or beauty, with limited exploration of new fashion brands in emerging markets like Indonesia. Furthermore, few studies have specifically examined the

mediating roles of Brand Trust and Brand Image in the relationship between SMM and Purchase Intention for high-end streetwear brands operating on social media platforms.

This research aims to address the identified literature gap by providing theoretical and practical insights into how TACP can optimize SMM strategies to enhance brand trust, brand image, and consumer purchase intention. The study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on social media marketing effectiveness in emerging markets, particularly focusing on the unique challenges and opportunities faced by new fashion brands in Indonesia's competitive digital landscape.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative method with a descriptive explanatory approach and a causal type to examine the effect of Social Media Marketing (SMM) on Purchase Intention through the mediation of Brand Image and Brand Trust. The study population consists of all 632 Instagram followers of Take A Chill Pill, with a sample of 245 respondents selected using the Slovin formula and completing a Likert-scale questionnaire. Data were collected online and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which enables the testing of both direct and indirect relationships between variables.

The research instruments were tested for validity and reliability, and hypothesis analysis was conducted using the bootstrapping technique to ensure the significance of the variables' influence. This method provides a comprehensive overview of how SMM can increase consumer purchase intent by strengthening brand image and trust on the Instagram platform. The research results are expected to provide theoretical contributions as well as practical guidance for fashion brands in optimizing their digital marketing strategies.
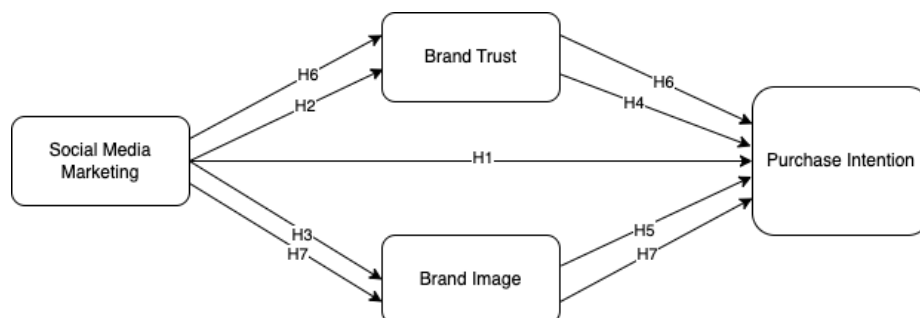
Source: Salhab et al., 2023
Figure 1. Research Model

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The questionnaire was distributed online via Google Forms, successfully collecting responses from 247 participants who met the criteria. The criteria for respondents required for this study are respondents who actively use Instagram social media and are familiar with the clothing brand Take A Chill Pill, follow the Take A Chill Pill Instagram social media account, and are interested in purchasing Take A Chill Pill clothing products.

Table 1. Respondee Profile

No	Profile	Category	Frequency	Percentage	Total
1	Gender	Male	119	48,2%	247
		Female	128	51,8%	
2	Age	< 15 years old	7	2,8%	247
		15 – 24 years old	121	49,0%	
		25 – 34 years old	95	38,5%	
		35 – 44 years old	14	5,7%	

		45 – 54 years old	8	3,2%	
		> 54 years old	2	0,8%	
3	Occupation	Student	24	9,7%	247
		University Student	84	34,0%	
		Private Employee	69	27,9%	
		Civil Servant	12	4,9%	
		Entrepreneur or Business Owner	28	11,3%	
		Others	30	12,1%	
4	Monthly Income	< Rp. 1.000.000	19	7,7%	247
		Rp 1.000.001 – Rp 5.000.000	155	62,8%	
		Rp 5.000.001 – Rp. 10.000.000	48	19,4%	
		> Rp 10.000.001	13	5,3%	
		Others	12	4,9%	

Source: Data Processing Results, 2025

The characteristics of the respondents in this study include several demographic aspects. Based on gender, the sample consists of both male and female participants, though exact percentages are not specified in the given content. Regarding age, the majority of respondents (49%) are aged between 15 and 24 years old, followed by 38% aged 25 to 34 years, with smaller proportions in the 35 to 44, 45 to 54, under 15, and over 54 age groups, indicating a predominantly young adult population. In terms of occupation, respondents come from diverse employment backgrounds, reflecting a broad spectrum of professional and non-professional roles, though specific occupational categories and their proportions are not detailed here. Monthly income levels among respondents vary, with representation across different income brackets, capturing the economic diversity of the Instagram followers of the *Take A Chill Pill* brand. This demographic diversity provides a well-rounded view of the target consumer base engaged with the brand on social media.

The descriptive analysis of the data collected from 247 respondents, followers of the Instagram account of the clothing brand "Take A Chill Pill" (TACP), provides an overview of each variable responses.

Social Media Marketing Variable

The respondents' perceptions of social media marketing activities conducted by TACP on Instagram were highly positive. For example, 87.04% of respondents strongly agreed that they found it easy to share opinions or comments about the brand on Instagram. Respondents also agreed highly that TACP provides updated product information and attractive advertisement styles through Instagram posts. This suggests that the brand's social media marketing content is effective in engaging followers and facilitating communication.

Purchase Intention Variable

Purchase intention among respondents was notably strong. The average score for the purchase intention variable was 90.30%, indicating that most respondents were enthusiastic about buying TACP products. Specifically, 90.20% strongly agreed that they preferred to buy TACP products over other similar brands, and 88.83% were willing to recommend TACP products to others. These findings signify a positive purchase intention consistent with effective social media marketing and brand building efforts.

Brand Trust Variable

Brand trust showed a high level of confidence among respondents, with 90.53% strongly agreeing that they trusted TACP's competence in delivering products and services. Additionally, respondents felt secure about the brand's commitment to data confidentiality and fulfilling promises to customers. This high trust level is critical in a competitive fashion market where consumer confidence influences purchase decisions.

Brand Image Variable

Respondents perceived TACP's products as well-aligned with their needs, reliable, and providing value for money. The positive responses to brand image items indicate that TACP has effectively built a favorable brand perception among its Instagram followers, reinforcing the brand's exclusivity and comfort positioning in the high-end streetwear segment.

1. **Outer Model**
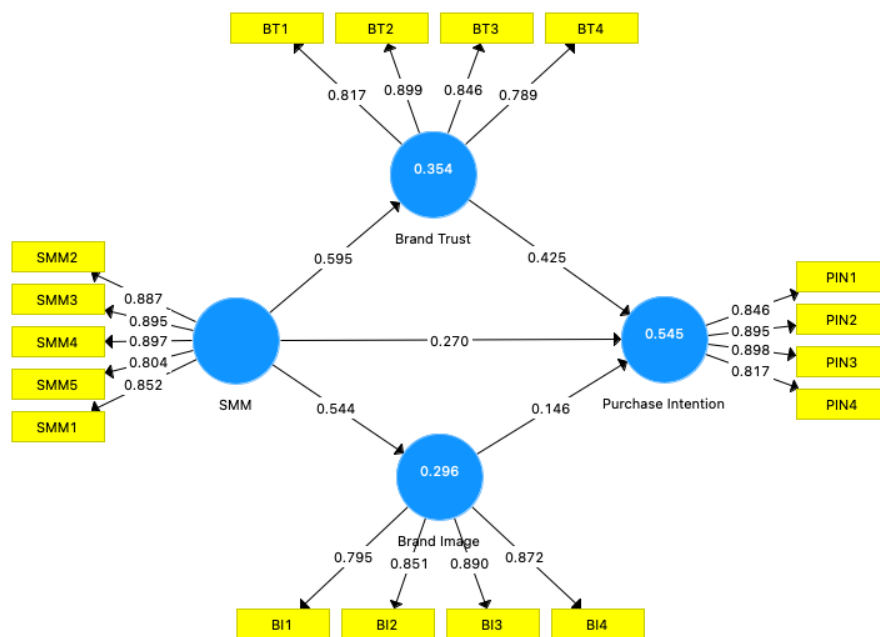
Source: SMART PLS, 2025
Figure 2. Research Paradigm

All measurement indicators for Social Media Marketing (SMM), Brand Trust, Brand Image, and Purchase Intention met validity and reliability criteria. The majority of factor loadings exceeded 0.7, Composite Reliability values were above 0.7, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) surpassed 0.5, indicating strong construct measurement quality. Discriminant validity confirmed that the constructs were distinct and non-overlapping.

Table 2. Construct Validity and Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
SMM	0.918	0.920	0.938	0.753
Purchase Intention	0.887	0.891	0.922	0.748
Brand Trust	0.859	0.867	0.904	0.704
Brand Image	0.874	0.877	0.914	0.727

Source: SMART PLS Output, 2025

All constructs have a Composite Reliability above 0.7 and Cronbach's Alpha above 0.6, so all constructs can be categorized as reliable. This means that the research instrument has adequate internal consistency when used to measure respondents' perceptions of SMM, Brand Trust, Brand Image, and Purchase Intention. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value

also exceeds 0.5, proving that the variance explained by the indicators is greater than the error that may arise.

2. Inner Model

Table 3. R-Square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Brand Image	0.296	0.293
Brand Trust	0.354	0.351
Purchase Intention	0.545	0.540

Source: SMART PLS Output, 2025

The R² value indicates that brand image (0.296) and brand trust (0.354) can only be explained by approximately 30–35% by Instagram SMM (weak–moderate category), while purchase intention (0.545) can be explained by more than 50% by the combination of SMM, brand image, and brand trust (moderate–strong category), confirming the predictive power of the model on purchase intention.

Table 4. Effect Size

	Brand Image	Brand Trust	Purchase Intention	SMM
Brand Image			0.021	
Brand Trust			0.164	
Purchase Intention				
SMM	0.420	0.547	0.099	

Source: SMART PLS Output, 2025

The results of the f² test in PLS-SEM show that Instagram TACP Social Media Marketing (SMM) has a significant influence on brand image (0.420) and brand trust (0.547), but its direct influence on purchase intention is relatively small (0.099). Brand image contributes little to brand trust (0.021), but it has a significant effect on purchase intention (0.164, moderate effect). Overall, SMM is more effective in strengthening brand image and trust, while its influence on purchase intention primarily occurs through the mediating pathways of brand image and brand trust.

Table 5. Q² Predict

	SSO	SSE	Q² (=1-SSE/SSO)
Brand Image	988.000	778.072	0.212
Purchase Intention	988.000	592.465	0.400
Brand Trust	988.000	747.864	0.243
SMM	1235.000	1235.000	

Source: SMART PLS Output, 2025

The Q² predictive relevance results show that the model has positive predictive power for all endogenous constructs: brand image (0.212) and brand trust (0.243) in the moderate category, and purchase intention (0.400) in the high category. Overall, the model not only explains the data but also effectively predicts, especially for purchase intention.

Table 6. Path Coefficient

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Brand Image -> Purchase Intention	0.146	0.147	0.077	1.901	0.057
Brand Trust -> Purchase Intention	0.425	0.427	0.080	5.290	0.000
SMM -> Brand Image	0.544	0.545	0.056	9.667	0.000
SMM -> Brand Trust	0.595	0.596	0.056	10.664	0.000
SMM -> Purchase Intention	0.270	0.268	0.066	4.101	0.000

Source: SMART PLS Output, 2025

The SmartPLS bootstrapping results show that all paths are significant (p < 0.001). SMM → Brand Image (β=0.544) and SMM → Brand Trust (β=0.599) have a strong influence, while SMM → Purchase Intention (β=0.270) is significant but weaker. In terms of purchase intention, Brand Trust (β=0.425) has the greatest influence, followed by Brand Image (β=0.146). Overall, Instagram SMM TACP is proven to significantly enhance brand image, trust, and purchase intention, with brand trust as the most dominant factor.

$$\text{GoF} = \sqrt{\text{AVE}_{\text{avg}} \times R^2_{\text{avg}}} = \sqrt{0{,}733 \times 0{,}389} \approx 0{,}534$$

The GoF value obtained is 0.534. According to the criteria proposed by Hair et al. (2011), a GoF value is categorized as small if it is below 0.10, moderate if it is around 0.25, and large if it is above 0.36. Therefore, the GoF value of 0.534 in this study indicates that the combined performance of the outer model and inner model falls into the category of high Goodness of Fit, meaning that the model used has a very good fit with the analyzed data.

The results confirm that SMM has a significant positive effect on Brand Trust and Brand Image, highlighting the critical role of Instagram marketing activities in building consumer perceptions and confidence. The largest effect was observed on Brand Trust, indicating that transparent communication, reliable information, and interactive engagement foster strong consumer trust in the brand. These findings align with prior research emphasizing trust as a key driver in digital consumer relationships (Kim et al., 2019; Ngo et al., 2020).

Brand Trust and Brand Image both significantly and positively influenced Purchase Intention, with trust exerting a stronger impact. This suggests that while consumers value the brand's image and identity, their willingness to purchase is most strongly linked to the confidence they place in the brand's credibility and reliability.

Although there was a direct positive effect of SMM on Purchase Intention, this relationship was weaker compared to the mediating effects. This underscores the importance of brand-related constructs as mechanisms through which social media marketing translates into actual purchase intention. Effective content strategies and influencer collaborations on Instagram enhance brand image and trust, which in turn drive consumer intent to buy.

The study advances understanding of social media marketing dynamics in emerging fashion markets, offering practical guidance for new brands like TACP to optimize their Instagram marketing to strengthen consumer trust and brand perception. This is especially pertinent given the digital transformation and high social media usage within Indonesia's youthful demographic.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the influence of Social Media Marketing (SMM) on Purchase Intention among Instagram followers of the clothing brand "Take A Chill Pill" (TACP) in Indonesia, with Brand Trust and Brand Image serving as mediating variables. The findings demonstrate that SMM significantly enhances Brand Trust and Brand Image, which in turn positively affect consumers' Purchase Intention. Although SMM has a direct positive effect on Purchase Intention, this effect is relatively smaller compared to the mediated pathways through Brand Trust and Brand Image.

The results underscore the vital role of building consumer trust and a positive brand image on social media platforms to strengthen purchase intentions, especially in digitally savvy and competitive fashion markets. Instagram marketing activities such as transparent communication, consistent content, and influencer collaborations help achieve these outcomes.

These findings are consistent with prior research. For example, Salhab et al. (2023) found that social media marketing significantly impacts brand image, brand trust, and purchase intention in a beauty center context. Fakhriyah and Abdurrahman (2024) also confirmed the mediating role of brand trust and brand image between social media marketing and purchase intentions in cosmetic products. Lastly, Abdullah et al. (2025) reported that social media marketing activities enhance purchase intention directly and indirectly through brand trust and brand image in Indonesia's FMCG sector.

These consistent patterns across diverse industries validate the critical mediating roles of Brand Trust and Brand Image in translating social media marketing efforts into consumer purchase intentions. Hence, new fashion brands like TACP should prioritize strategies that foster trustworthiness and cultivate a strong brand image to succeed in the social media-driven marketplace.

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