

THE INFLUENCE OF VIRAL MARKETING AND ONLINE CUSTOMER REVIEWS ON TIKTOK ON PURCHASING DECISIONS FOR UNIQLO FASHION PRODUCTS AMONG GENERATION Z IN INDONESIA : A STUDY OF THE MEDIATING ROLE OF CONSUMER TRUST

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ABSTRACT

The globalization and advancement of the e-commerce industry especially in Indonesia has been always on the rise according to information from Central Statistics Agency (BPS). The industry showed the 17% growth rate and the general quantity of firms engaged in e-commerce was 26. 2 million units. The objective of this study is to analyze the influence of TikTok viral marketing and online customer reviews on purchasing decision for Generation Z UNIQLO fashion products in Indonesia, considering the mediating role of consumer trust. This study uses quantitative methods by distributing questionnaires to 160 Generation Z respondents who actively use TikTok. SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) was employed to process this research data using SmartPLS4 application. The results indicate that, Viral marketing significantly impacts consumer trust, as does online consumer reviews. This established trust, in turn, significantly influences purchasing decisions. Moreover, viral marketing directly affects purchasing decisions and does so indirectly through the mediation of trust. Similarly, online consumer reviews also significantly impact purchasing decisions through the establishment of trust. However, the Online Consumer Reviews variable did not significantly affect purchasing decisions. The implication of this research for UNIQLO is that utilizing viral marketing and encouraging positive customer reviews on platforms such as TikTok can be an effective strategy to increase purchase decisions. UNIQLO also needs to communicate values that align with Generation Z preferences, such as sustainability and ethical practices in the fashion industry.

Keywords : Purchase Decisions; Costumer Trust; Viral Marketing; Online Consumer Reviews

ABSTRAK

Globalisasi dan kemajuan industri e-commerce khususnya di Indonesia selalu meningkat menurut informasi dari Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS). Industri ini menunjukkan tingkat pertumbuhan 17% dan jumlah umum perusahaan yang bergerak di bidang e-commerce adalah 26,2 juta unit. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis pengaruh viral marketing TikTok dan ulasan pelanggan online terhadap keputusan pembelian produk fashion UNIQLO Generasi Z di Indonesia, dengan mempertimbangkan peran mediasi kepercayaan konsumen. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kuantitatif dengan menyebarkan kuesioner kepada 160 responden Generasi Z yang aktif menggunakan TikTok. SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) digunakan untuk mengolah data penelitian ini menggunakan aplikasi SmartPLS4. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa, Viral marketing berdampak signifikan terhadap kepercayaan konsumen, begitu pula ulasan konsumen online. Kepercayaan yang terbentuk ini, pada gilirannya, secara signifikan mempengaruhi keputusan pembelian. Selain itu, viral marketing secara

langsung mempengaruhi keputusan pembelian dan melakukannya secara tidak langsung melalui mediasi kepercayaan. Demikian pula, ulasan konsumen online juga berdampak signifikan terhadap keputusan pembelian melalui pembentukan kepercayaan. Namun variabel Online Consumer Review tidak berpengaruh signifikan terhadap keputusan pembelian. Implikasi penelitian ini bagi UNIQLO adalah memanfaatkan viral marketing dan mendorong ulasan positif pelanggan di platform seperti TikTok dapat menjadi strategi yang efektif untuk meningkatkan keputusan pembelian. UNIQLO juga perlu mengkomunikasikan nilai-nilai yang selaras dengan preferensi Generasi Z, seperti keberlanjutan dan praktik etika dalam industri fesyen.

Kata Kunci : Keputusan Pembelian; Kepercayaan Konsumen; Viral Marketing; Online Consumer Review

INTRODUCTION

The globalization and advancement of the e-commerce industry especially in Indonesia has been always on the rise according to information from Central Statistics Agency (BPS). The industry showed the 17% growth rate and the general quantity of firms engaged in e-commerce was 26. 2 million units. (Yolanda & Putri (2021). This surge in e-commerce activity reflects the changing consumer behavior in Indonesia, particularly among the younger demographic, who are increasingly turning to online platforms for their shopping needs (Bailusy et al., 2022). TikTok has gained significant traction among these platforms, especially among Generation Z, due to its engaging and interactive nature (Zheng, 2023).

Generation Z, individuals born between 1997 - 2012, is a demographic group known for its unique characteristics and behaviors, especially in the digital world (Bulut, 2021). This generation grew up in a highly digitized world, making them adept at using social media platforms such as TikTok for various purposes, including seeking entertainment information and making purchasing decisions (Rahim, 2023).

TikTok, a new generation social media platform that has a method of sharing short videos, has indeed become famous all over the world especially among young people, generation Z. (Zheluk et al., 2022). The platform's unique algorithm presents videos in a loop, allowing users to interact with various content until they pause or swipe to the next video (Dias & Duarte, 2022). In addition, TikTok has introduced a new section that can be utilized for purchasing and selling products, namely TikTok Shop. The integrated TikTok Shop enables customers to access products, details about the product, and make a purchase within the application, meaning consumers' journey to purchase is made easier due to convenience (Hussain et al., 2017).

UNIQLO, a leading fashion brand, has leveraged the popularity of TikTok to connect with the younger demographic and showcase its products in innovative ways that align with Generation Z preferences (Su et al., 2020). By utilizing TikTok's short video format and engaging content, UNIQLO can showcase the latest fashion trends, collaborations, and promotions visually appealing and creatively (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2020). In addition, UNIQLO's presence on TikTok will likely include initiatives that align with Generation Z values, such as sustainability and ethical practices in the fashion industry. By communicating its commitment to these values through TikTok content, UNIQLO showcases its products and aligns with the socially conscious mindset of many young consumers (Andon & Annuar, 2023). UNIQLO's strategic use of TikTok is an essential factor influencing the purchase decisions of its target audience. (Tham, 2023).

Purchasing decisions represent a stage in the consumer buying process where individuals decide which brand and type of product to select. This stage focuses on recognizing their needs, seeking information, assessing information available in the market, making purchases, and assessing decisions after purchases are made (Kotler & Keller, 2016). The purchase decision involves the buyer determining which product to buy, whether to make the purchase, where and when to buy it, how to carry out the purchase, and which payment options to use, as described by Sumarwan (2003).

Purchasing decisions are influenced by various marketing strategies, where viral marketing plays a vital role in shaping consumer behavior (Tannady & Alvita, 2023). As companies continue to navigate the digital landscape, they need powerful tools to reach and engage with target audiences in dynamic and impactful ways. Viral marketing is a strategic approach that utilizes social media and online platforms to create interest and generate buzz around a product or service. It involves spreading marketing messages through social networks, encouraging individuals to share content with their networks, thus amplifying its reach and impact (Liu & Yu-ning, 2019). Viral marketing depends on customers to share digital products with potential customers within their social circles, thus creating a ripple effect that can lead to broad exposure and engagement (Liu & Yu-ning, 2019). This form of marketing is characterized by its ability to spark conversations, evoke emotions, and quick actions among consumers, ultimately influencing their purchasing decisions (Liu & Yu-ning, 2019).

When a product or service goes viral, it attracts significant consumer attention and interest. This heightened visibility is complemented by online customer reviews, which provide a platform for individuals to share their experiences and opinions about these products or services, offering valuable insights to potential customers (Shaheen et al., 2019). These reviews act as electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) marketing, allowing customers to express their satisfaction, concerns, or recommendations based on their interaction with the viral content. (Zhao et al., 2019). Positive reviews can amplify the positive sentiment generated by viral marketing efforts, while negative reviews can raise concerns and impact consumer trust and confidence in the product or service. Ultimately, these reviews can influence potential customers to purchase or deter them based on the feedback provided (AlMana & Mirza, 2013).

When customers encounter online customer reviews after a viral marketing campaign, their trust in other consumers' information can significantly influence their perceptions and purchase intentions (Menidjel & Bilgihan, 2022). Customer trust is a fundamental element that significantly influences consumer behavior and decision-making processes, particularly in the digital realm, where online platforms often mediate interactions (Chang et al., 2014). Trust plays a mediating role in determining the credibility of a product or service based on the information communicated through reviews (Kempa et al., 2020). Positive reviews can increase customer trust in the brand, increasing confidence in purchasing decisions. In contrast, negative reviews can raise doubts and erode trust, influencing consumers to look for other options (Herlambang, 2023). Therefore, trust built through online customer reviews is essential in guiding consumers in making informed and confident purchasing decisions (Oluwabiyi, 2022).

Although several studies have touched on topics such as the effect of trust on online purchasing decisions (Mahliza, 2020), the impact of flash sale promos and viral marketing on purchasing decisions (Fardani, 2023), and the model of trust and purchase intention of Generation Z Muslim consumers on e-commerce platforms in Indonesia (Marits & Zaerofi, 2023), these studies do not directly address the relationship between consumer trust and purchasing decisions. Given that existing studies do not specifically investigate the interplay among consumer trust, viral marketing, online customer reviews, and purchasing behavior concerning UNIQLO fashion products on TikTok among Generation Z consumers in Indonesia, there is a call for research to delve into

the explicit mediation role of consumer trust within this context. By examining how viral marketing and online reviews influence purchasing decisions, particularly in the realm of fashion products on TikTok, among the Generation Z demographic in Indonesia, this research endeavor can address gaps in the current literature. Such exploration will not only contribute to a deeper understanding of consumer behavior but also inform future marketing strategies within the fashion industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Purchase Decision

Al-Sulaiti (2022) defines a purchase decision as a judgment made by a potential buyer after evaluating the characteristics of an offer to satisfy a need or desire. This definition emphasizes the critical role of judgment and assessment in decision-making. Genoveva & Samukti (2020) outline the process of purchasing entails recognizing a problem, seeking information, evaluating alternatives, and ultimately making the decision to buy. Kotler (2008) classified the primary determinant that affect the purchasing decisions into cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors. There are several indicators of purchasing decisions: consistency in a product, customers' repetition in purchasing a specific product, endorsing similar products to others, and purchasing products consecutively (Kotler & Keller 2008).

The process of making purchasing decisions, as outlined by (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008), involves several stages: (1) identifying needs, wherein consumers recognize their needs driven by desires or societal trends; (2) seeking information, where consumers show interest in information garnered from sources like word-of-mouth recommendations and social media about a specific brand; (3) evaluating alternatives, as consumers start to assess the information they've gathered; (4) making the purchase decision, where consumers settle on a particular product; and (5) post-purchase behavior, wherein consumers act based on the satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their decision.

Consumer Trust

Consumer trust refers to a belief or psychological state wherein customers hold positive expectations regarding the intentions or conduct of a company or brand. (Coulter & Coulter, 2002). This trust is influenced by empathy, politeness, competence, reliability, and timeliness (Coulter & Coulter, 2002). Research indicate that customer

trust results in heightened customer loyalty, favorable word-of-mouth promotion, and enduring relationships with brands (Kihan & Shin, 2010).

Consumer trust significantly influences purchasing decisions. Dwidienawati et al. (2020) found that trust positively affects customer purchase intentions, with higher trust leading to more excellent purchase intentions. Subsequently, Issock et al. (2020) proposed and affirmed the mediating effect of trust for affecting the degree of purchase intention and developing loyalty towards green products. Suhardi & Taufik (2018) also confirmed that trust, ease of use, and website quality significantly influence purchasing decisions.

Furthermore, Hidayanto et al. (2014) support the idea that customer trust is essential in influencing purchasing decisions, especially in e-commerce settings. Doney & Cannon (1997) identified the following indicators of trust: Reliability, Honesty, Caring, and Credibility.

Viral Marketing

Viral marketing is a strategic approach where marketing messages are disseminated from sender to recipient online to influence recipient behavior. Hsieh et al. (2012). This strategy relies on customers to share digital content within their social circles, creating a chain reaction of sharing and interaction (Liu & Yu-ning, 2019). Fitriani et al. (2022) conducted research examining the influence of viral marketing on purchase intention among TikTok users, with a specific focus on consumer behavior mediation. The findings revealed a notable positive impact of viral marketing on consumer purchase intention through the TikTok platform, underscoring the significant role viral marketing plays in shaping consumer purchasing behavior. This aligns with previous studies demonstrating the considerable influence of viral marketing on purchasing decisions. Mustikasari & Widaningsih (2019) found that viral marketing via social media platforms can enhance brand awareness and have a positive impact on purchasing decisions.

Furthermore, Fatah & Arsyad (2022) emphasized the notable positive effects on e-trust, highlighting how viral marketing can bolster trust in electronic platforms. These findings underscore the critical role of viral marketing in fostering trust among consumers in the digital realm. In addition, the research also identified a positive correlation between viral marketing and purchase decisions, underscoring the crucial

role of trust in shaping consumer behavior. Similarly, Moslehpour et al. (2020) found that social media marketing factors can influence trust and perceived value, influencing purchase intention.

According to Wiludjeng and Nurlela (2013), indicators of viral marketing can be categorized into several elements: (1) electronic media, referring to the channels through which messages are conveyed; (2) involvement of prominent, influential figures, aiding in expanding the reach of viral messages; (3) product knowledge, encompassing information about products disseminated through advertisements and descriptions; (4) clarity of information, a strategy employed by marketers to ensure consumers possess thorough understanding of the product being promoted, thereby minimizing the likelihood of dissatisfaction upon selection; (5) product discussion, this increases the degree of trust in a marketed product because someone will always be willing to make a purchase every time he sees other consumers using the same product.

Online Customer Reviews

Online customer reviews are evaluations and opinions consumers post about products or services they have experienced in online marketplaces (Li et al., 2013). represent electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), enabling customers to openly share their opinions and experiences without reliance on conventional advertising. (Naomi & Ardhiyansyah, 2021). Online customer reviews influence consumer behavior, especially in the fashion industry, by providing social proof and valuable insights into product quality and benefits (Matute et al., 2016). The attributes of online customer reviews, including their credibility, quantity, and quality, are pivotal elements that impact consumers' intentions to repurchase (Matute et al., 2016). The credibility and utility of such reviews are essential for fostering trust and encouraging customer interaction with e-commerce platforms (Shaheen et al., 2019).

Online customer reviews are crucial in shaping purchasing choices, as evidenced by numerous studies examining their impact on consumer behavior. Sénécal & Nantel (2004) underscored the significance of online product recommendations in guiding consumer decisions, establishing a clear link between online reviews and purchase choices. Moreover, Wang et al. (2019) demonstrated that the emotional tone of online reviews contributes positively to perceived product quality, subsequently influencing purchase decisions. In addition, research by Jayanti et al. (2022) indicated that online

customer reviews partially influence e-commerce purchase decisions, this further reinforces the notion that reviews contribute to shaping consumer decisions.

Previous research has shown that online customer reviews significantly influence consumer trust in online platforms. Research has shown that online customer reviews play an essential role in shaping consumer trust, impacting various aspects of consumer behavior, such as purchase decisions, loyalty, and satisfaction (Fileri et al., 2015; Danish et al., 2019). Positive online reviews have been shown to reduce the risk and uncertainty perceived by consumers, leading to increased trust in the platform or product (Danish et al., 2019). Additionally, both the quantity and sentiment of online reviews directly affect consumer confidence. (Danish et al., 2019). Research has also highlighted the indirect influence of trust on consumer behavior. For example, trust has been found to indirectly influence purchase intention through attitude toward online shopping (Raman, 2019).

Online customer reviews have been shown to influence purchasing decisions through consumer trust significantly. Elwalda et al. (2016) explore the effects of perceived characteristics of online customer reviews on consumer behavior. Dwidienawati et al. (2020) highlighted the beneficial impact of online trust on customer purchase intentions. Manzoor et al. (2020) and Kempa et al. (2020) both support the idea that trust positively influences online purchase intentions, with consumer trust being a critical factor in decision-making. Research by Mahliza (2020) and Tegowati (2023) confirmed the significant positive effect of consumer trust on purchasing decisions. This finding aligns with research by (Setiawan & Sukardi, 2022), which shows that online customer reviews directly affect trust, affecting purchasing decisions. Putri & Wandebori (2016) identified the indicators of online consumer reviews, which include Perceived Usefulness, Source Credibility, Argument Quality, and Valence.

After explaining the supporting theory and logical arguments about the variables to be studied, , the hypothesis in this study is outlined as follows:

H1: Consumer trust positively influences purchasing decisions.

H2: Viral marketing has a significant positive effect on purchasing decisions

H3: Online customer reviews have a significant positive influence on purchasing decisions.

H4: Viral marketing positively affects consumer trust.

H5: Online customer reviews positively and significantly influence consumer trust.

H6: Viral marketing significantly indirectly affects purchasing decisions by mediating consumer trust.

H7: Online customer reviews significantly indirectly affect purchasing decisions through the mediation of consumer trust.

RESEARCH METHODS

Method is a method of work that can be used to obtain something. While the research method can be interpreted as a work procedure in the research process, both in searching for data or disclosing existing phenomena (Zulkarnaen, W., Amin, N. N., 2018:113). This study employs a quantitative methodology utilizing a survey approach. The research design is geared towards investigating the impact of viral marketing and online customer reviews on TikTok concerning the purchasing decisions of UNIQLO fashion products among Generation Z in Indonesia, along with exploring the mediating function of customer trust within this dynamic.

The target demographic for this study comprises individuals from Generation Z in Indonesia, specifically aged between 18 and 25 years, who actively follow or engage with content related to UNIQLO's fashion products on TikTok. Generation Z is a generation born in 1997 - 2012 (Bulut, 2021). Sampling was conducted through purposive sampling, which entails selecting samples based on predetermined criteria (Palinkas et al., 2013). The selected criteria encompass Generation Z consumers who have purchased UNIQLO fashion products at least once on TikTok. Following the guidelines put forth by Jr et al. (2010), the minimum sample size required should be at least five times the number of indicators for each parameter estimate, with a maximum of ten times the number of indicators. In this study, 17 indicators were investigated. Precisely, with 17 indicators, the minimum number of samples required is calculated as $17 \times 5 = 85$. This study's sample size was initially determined as $17 \times 9 = 153$. However, the sample size was rounded up to 160 to improve accuracy.

Data were collected through an online questionnaire distribution. The questionnaire consisted of several sections covering respondent demographics, viral marketing influence, customer reviews, consumer trust, and purchase decisions. The metrics utilized in this study were derived from previous research and assessed on a five-point Likert scale, spanning from "strongly disagree = 1" to "strongly agree = 5".

The analysis of the data was conducted using SmartPLS 4.0. SmartPLS, or Smart Partial Least Squares, is statistical software designed to examine the relationships among variables, both among latent variables and with indicator variables. (Wang, 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description of Respondent Characteristics

Based on the tests that have been carried out, the obtained data reveals a distribution of 60% female participants and 40% male participants. . Most respondents are 18-22 years old by 58.8% and 23-27 years old by 35%. From the information obtained, it can be concluded that most respondent participants are 18-22 years old, followed by 23-27 years of age. It is dominated by women, who tend to shop more than men.

Testing the Measurement Model (Outer Model)

generates a path diagram depicting the interrelationship among Viral Marketing, Online Customer Reviews, Consumer Trust, and Purchasing Decisions within the scope of this research. Viral Marketing has a factor loading value that ranges from 0.771 to 0.864, while Online Customer Reviews have a factor loading value between 0.725 to 0.850. Both of these variables positively affect Consumer Trust, which has a factor loading value of 0.775. Furthermore, consumer trust significantly influences purchase decisions, with a factor loading value between 0.790 and 0.854. This diagram also shows that Viral Marketing positively influences Purchase Decisions with a path value of 0.374. In contrast, Online Customer Reviews have a negative direct influence of -0.168 on Purchase Decisions.

Validity Test

According to the data presented in Table 1 encompassing variables of Viral Marketing (X1), Online Customer Reviews (X2), Consumer Trust (Z), and Purchase Decision (Y), and in accordance with the criteria outlined by Jr. et al. (2021), individual reflective measures are deemed substantial if the correlation surpasses 0.70. In analyzing the convergent validity of the Viral Marketing variable (X1) of the five indicators tested, indicator X1.2 shows a loading factor value of 0.649, below the general threshold of 0.70, so it is declared invalid. Conversely, the remaining indicators, specifically X1.1, X1.3, X1.4, and X1.5, demonstrate loading factor values surpassing

0.70, thereby affirming their validity. In the Online Customer Reviews (X2), Consumer Trust (Z), and Purchase Decision (Y) variables, all indicators show a loading factor value that exceeds 0.70, so they are all considered valid. To increase the construct validity of Viral Marketing (X1), indicator X1.2 needs to be removed because it has a loading factor below 0.70. Overall, the convergent validity for the other variables is considered good because all indicators meet the established validity criteria.

Based on Table 2, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for each variable employed in this investigation must surpass 0.5, as suggested by Ghazali (2021, p. 69). Therefore, it can be concluded that each variable has a satisfactory discriminant value. Meanwhile, the Viral Marketing variable (X1) displays the lowest AVE value at 0.640, while the Consumer Trust variable (Z) exhibits the highest AVE value at 0.711.

Reliability Test

According to the data in Table 3, a measurement is considered reliable if it attains a Composite Reliability value above 0.7 and a Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.70 (Jr. et al., 2021). For all four variables in this study, the values for both Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability meet these standards.

Inner Model

R Square is a statistical metric indicating the extent to which the independent variables in a model account for the variation in the dependent variable. Based on Table 4, Consumer Trust has an R Square value of 0.775, indicating that 77.5% of the variation in consumer trust can be explained by the independent variables in the model. This shows that the model is robust in predicting consumer confidence. In contrast, the Purchase Decision has an R Square value of 0.673, signifying that the independent variables account for 67.3% of the variation in purchasing decisions. This shows that the model is quite good at predicting purchasing decisions. A higher R Square value signifies a model with greater predictive accuracy.

Direct Effect

Table 5 reveals that variable Z has a significant direct impact on Y (0.633), variable X1 significantly influences both Y (0.374) and Z (0.362), and variable X2 significantly affects Z (0.551). However, variable X2 does not have a significant effect on Y (-0.168). These findings indicate that variables Z and X1 significantly influence variable Y, while variable X2 more significantly influences variable Z than variable Y.

Indirect Effect

Table 6 demonstrates that variables X1 and X2 exert a significant indirect effect on Y via the mediator variable Z. Specifically, the indirect effect of X1 on Y through Z is 0.229 with a P value of 0.002, and the indirect effect of X2 on Y through Z is 0.349 with a P value of 0. These findings confirm that Z is crucial in mediating the influence of X1 and X2 on Y, indicating that the relationship between these variables is not only direct but also through the mediation path.

Before interpreting the hypothesis testing results, it is important to note that at a significance level of 5% (0.05), the T statistic value must be 1.960. An effect is deemed significant if the T statistic exceeds 1.960 and the P value is less than 0.050.

Discussion

The Effect of Consumer Trust (Z) on Purchasing Decisions (Y)

Consumer Trust significantly influences Purchasing Decisions. The statistical results show a T value of 5.300 for Trust's effect on Purchasing Decisions and a P value of 0.000, leading to the acceptance of H1. This indicates that Trust has a substantial positive impact on Purchasing Decisions for UNIQLO Fashion Products on TikTok.

UNIQLO must continue to gain customer trust. For example, by ensuring the quality of products marketed is good and providing exemplary service to consumers. Therefore, paying attention to this trust is essential because it affects purchasing behavior. This discovery aligns with prior research (Dwidienawati et al., 2020; Issock et al., 2020; Suhardi & Taufik, 2018; Hidayanto et al., 2014), affirming the substantial impact of trust on consumer purchasing decisions.

The Effect of Viral Marketing (X1) on Purchasing Decisions (Y)

The impact of viral marketing on purchasing decisions is found to be statistically significant. The analysis yielded a t-value of 3.158 and a corresponding p-value of 0.002 for the relationship between viral marketing and purchasing decisions. Consequently, the hypothesis H2 is supported, indicating that viral marketing significantly influences purchasing decisions for UNIQLO fashion products on TikTok.

Since the information or content shared by the product or the source is more precise or reliable, there will likely be a higher purchase decision. By sharing information about the various products offered at UNIQLO with the help of viral content that is widely available on the TikTok platform, this kind of Viral Marketing

directly impacts UNIQLO consumers in their purchasing decisions. These results align with previous findings (Fitriani et al., 2022; Mustikasari & Widaningsih., 2019), These studies indicate that when more viral messages are spread, consumers tend to buy more.

Effect of Online Customer Reviews (X2) on Purchasing Decisions(Y)

According to the findings of the hypothesis test, the statistical analysis of the direct influence of the Online Customer Reviews variable (X2) on the Purchasing Decision variable (Y) yields a result of 1.495, which is less than the critical value of 1.640, and a p-value of 0.135, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. Consequently, it can be concluded that H3 is rejected. This means that the variable Online Customer Reviews (X2) has no significant effect on Purchasing Decisions (Y) in this study.

The implications of these findings suggest that, in the context of this study, Factors other than online customer reviews might wield greater influence over purchase decisions. UNIQLO fashion products may need to focus on additional or alternative strategies to influence consumer purchasing behavior, as relying on online customer reviews alone may not be enough to drive significant changes in purchasing decisions.

The Effect of Viral Marketing (X1) on Consumer Trust (Z)

Viral marketing has a significant effect on consumer trust. The analysis reveals a t-statistic value of 3.714 and a corresponding p-value of 0.000 for the relationship between Viral Marketing (X1) and Consumer Trust (Z), leading to the acceptance of hypothesis H4. This signifies that Viral Marketing exhibits a noteworthy positive influence on Consumer Trust. These results are consistent with prior research, affirming the significant impact of Viral Marketing on enhancing consumer trust. (Fatah & Arsyad, 2022; Moslehpour et al., (2020). If the content in Viral Marketing is good, then trust also increases; trust is something that consumers look forward to when buying the product or information provided as used in Viral Marketing. This is evident in the realm of viral marketing, where the message effectively reaches a broader audience, thereby elevating the popularity of UNIQLO fashion products and fostering consumer trust in them.

The Effect of Online Customer Reviews (X2) on Consumer Trust (Z)

Online Customer Reviews have a significant effect on consumer trust. The statistical analysis reveals a t-value of 5.666 and a corresponding p-value of 0.000 for

the relationship between Online Customer Reviews and Consumer Trust, leading to the acceptance of hypothesis H5. This indicates that, within the scope of this study, Online Customer Reviews significantly and positively influence trust, which is consistent with prior research (Fileri et al., 2015; Danish et al., 2019).

This therefore implies that each time consumers of UNIQLO products come across these given reviews, they develop confidence to purchase products from this company. To make sure that they are in possession of the best quality product, it is not unusual for a consumer to look at some of the comments concerning the product online. Thus, it is required for UNIQLO company to ensure that to produce the clothes offered by its sellers as unbeatable to the market so that the progressively increasing number of consumers provide the most appropriate ratings. The other strength of this company, is that if consumer have already have trusted products it will be good to the company.

The Effect of Viral Marketing (X1) on Purchasing Decisions (Y) through Consumer Trust (Z)

The findings of the study reveal that purchasing decisions serve as a mediator in the relationship between viral marketing and purchasing choices, with a mediation coefficient of 3.148 and a P value of 0.002. This underscores the significant influence of viral marketing on purchasing decisions, facilitated by the intermediary role of purchasing decisions.

Referring to the viral marketing indicators identified by Wiludjeng and Nurlela (2013), such as the use of electronic media, involvement of key influential people, product knowledge, clarity of information, and product discussion, it can be understood that an effective viral marketing strategy can increase consumer trust in the product. This trust, influenced by reliability, honesty, caring, and credibility, as outlined by Doney & Cannon (1997), further influences consumer purchasing decisions. In other words, well-managed viral marketing directly encourages consumers to buy products and builds trust that mediates the purchase decision-making process.

Therefore, to increase purchasing decisions through viral marketing, UNIQLO companies need to ensure that the messages conveyed through electronic media are clear and informative, involve influential figures who can expand the reach of the message, and build strong product knowledge so that consumers will have more confidence in the products offered and are more likely to make a favorable purchasing

decision. Research (Fatah & Arsyad, 2022; Moslehpour et al., 2020) supports this finding, demonstrating that trust plays a mediating role between Viral Marketing and purchasing decisions.

The Effect of Online Customer Reviews (X2) on Purchasing Decisions (Y) through Consumer Trust (Z)

According to the study's findings, it was determined that consumer trust acts as an intermediary in the relationship between online customer reviews and purchasing decisions, with a mediation coefficient of 3.781 and a P value of 0.000. Referring to the trust indicators identified by Doney & Cannon (1997), namely reliability, honesty, caring, and credibility, as well as the indicators of online consumer reviews according to Putri & Wandebori (2016), namely perceived usefulness, source credibility, argument quality, and valence, it can be understood that positive and reliable online customer reviews can increase consumer trust in the product.

Valuable online customer reviews from credible sources with solid arguments and positive valence build consumer trust in the product. This trust, determined by reliability, honesty, care, and credibility, influences consumers' purchasing decisions. In other words, well-managed online customer reviews containing trustworthy information directly influence consumers to purchase products and build trust that mediates the purchase decision-making process.

Therefore, to increase purchasing decisions through online customer reviews, UNIQLO company needs to ensure that the reviews presented are helpful, come from credible sources, have quality arguments, and have positive valence. Thus, consumers will be more confident in the products offered and more likely to make positive purchasing decisions. This finding is supported by research (Shukla Dwidienawati et al., 2020; Manzoor et al., 2020; Kempa et al., 2020; Mahliza, 2020; Setiawan & Sukardi, 2022; Tegowati, 2023) showing that Consumer Trust acts as a mediator between Online Customer Reviews and Purchasing Decisions.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examines how viral marketing and online customer reviews influence consumer purchasing decisions through consumer trust in UNIQLO fashion products on the TikTok platform. The results indicate that, Viral marketing significantly impacts consumer trust, as does online consumer reviews. This established trust, in turn,

significantly influences purchasing decisions. Moreover, viral marketing directly affects purchasing decisions and does so indirectly through the mediation of trust. Similarly, online consumer reviews also significantly impact purchasing decisions through the establishment of trust. However, the Online Consumer Reviews variable did not significantly affect purchasing decisions. In other words, although online customer reviews are considered necessary, in the case of UNIQLO fashion products on the TikTok platform, other factors, such as viral marketing or trust elements, may have a more dominant role in influencing consumers' purchase decisions.

It is recommended that UNIQLO consistently enhance the quality of its products and services to uphold and enhance consumer trust. UNIQLO also needs to communicate values that align with Generation Z preferences, such as sustainability and ethical practices in the fashion industry, to strengthen relationships with young consumers.

Future research should explore how different elements of viral marketing and online customer reviews can be optimized to increase consumer trust and purchase decisions. Further research could also consider other variables that influence purchase decisions, such as the influence of influencers or the role of direct interaction between consumers and brands on social media. Research across other social media platforms could also provide more comprehensive insights into the dynamics of digital marketing in the fashion industry.

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FIGURES AND TABLES

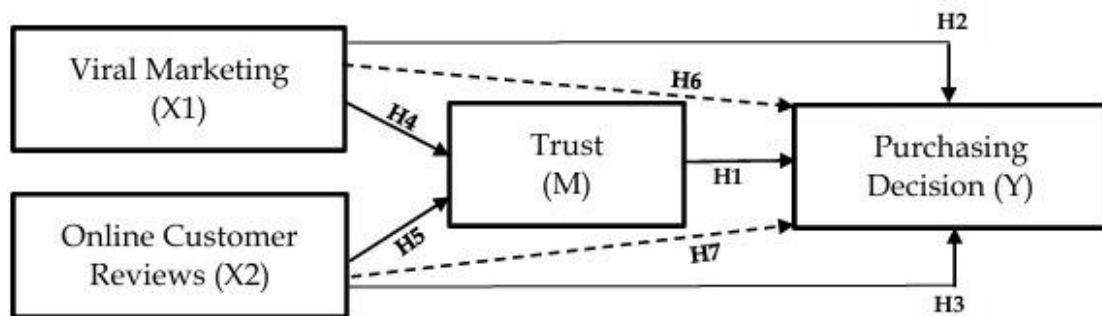


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

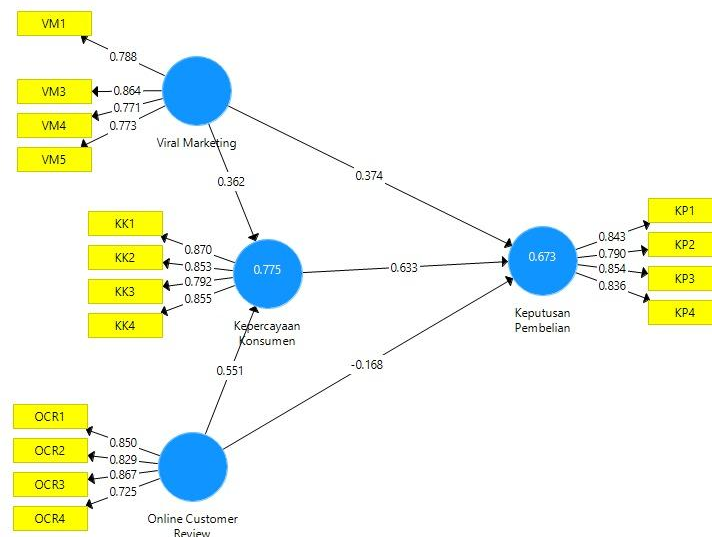


Figure 2. SMART-PLS Data Processing Results

Table 1. Convergent Validity Test Results

Variables	Indicator	Loading Factor	Description
Viral Marketing	X1.1	0.774	Valid
	X1.2	0.649	Invalid
	X1.3	0.844	Valid
	X1.4	0.768	Valid
	X1.5	0.742	Valid
Online Customer Reviews	X2.1	0.850	Valid
	X2.2	0.829	Valid
	X2.3	0.867	Valid
	X2.4	0.725	Valid
Consumer Trust	Z1.1	0.87	Valid
	Z1.2	0.853	Valid
	Z1.3	0.792	Valid
	Z1.4	0.855	Valid
Purchase Decision	Y1.1	0.838	Valid
	Y1.2	0.796	Valid
	Y1.3	0.855	Valid
	Y1.4	0.835	Valid

Table 2. Discriminant Validity Test (AVE)

Variables	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Viral Marketing	0.575
Online Customer Reviews	0.671
Consumer Trust	0.711
Purchase Decision	0.691

Table 3. Reliability Test

Variables	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Viral Marketing	0.807	0.813
Online Customer Reviews	0.891	0.835
Purchase Decision	0.900	0.851
Consumer Trust	0.908	0.864

Table 4. R-Square Test

Variables	R Square
Consumer Trust	0.775
Purchase Decision	0.673

Table 5. Direct Effect Hypothesis Test Results

Variables	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Description
Z > Y	0.633	0.615	0.119	5.300	0	Significant
X1 > Y	0.374	0.388	0.118	3.158	0.002	Significant
X2 > Y	-0.168	-0.166	0.113	1.495	0.135	Not Significant
X1 > Z	0.362	0.366	0.097	3.714	0	Significant
X2 > Z	0.551	0.545	0.097	5.666	0	Significant

Table 6. Indirect Effect Hypothesis Test Results

Variables	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Description
X1 > Z > Y	0.229	0.225	0.073	3.148	0.002	Significant
X2 > Z > Y	0.349	0.336	0.092	3.781	0	Significant