



THE IMPACT OF INFLUENCER MARKETING, TESTIMONIALS, AND PROMOTIONAL DISCOUNTS ON THE PURCHASE INTENTION OF WARDAH COSMETIC PRODUCTS : THE ROLE OF BRAND IMAGE MEDIATION IN MASAMBA

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ABSTRACT

The development of digital marketing is driving changes in consumer behavior in determining cosmetic product purchasing decisions. This study aims to analyze the influence of influencer marketing, testimonials, and promotional discounts on Wardah product purchase intentions with brand image as a mediating variable in Masamba, North Luwu. The study used a quantitative approach with a survey method on 170 Wardah product user respondents. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results showed that testimonials ($\beta = 0.218$; $p = 0.022$), promotional discounts ($\beta = 0.221$; $p = 0.017$), and brand image ($\beta = 0.394$; $p = 0.000$) had a positive and significant effect on purchase intentions. In contrast, influencer marketing did not have a significant effect on purchase intentions ($\beta = 0.086$; $p = 0.222$). The mediation results indicate that brand image mediates the effect of promotional discounts on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.112$; $p = 0.007$), but does not mediate the effect of influencer marketing and testimonials. This study confirms that effective marketing strategies in non-urban areas emphasize testimonials and price promotions more than the use of influencers. The originality of this study lies in testing the integrated model in the context of non-urban consumers, which is still limited in the marketing literature.

1. INTRODUCTION

Current developments in information technology and communication have significantly changed consumer behavior, including in the purchase of Wardah cosmetic products. According to Maszudi (2018), the rapid growth of information technology has created new business opportunities in the pursuit of business success. Digital transformation has resulted in consumers no longer relying solely on company information but also being influenced by various external sources such as influencers, testimonials, digital promotions, and brand image. This phenomenon is increasingly evident in the Indonesian cosmetics industry, which is experiencing rapid growth along with the increasing use of social media and e-commerce platforms. Wardah is a local cosmetic brand with a strong market position in Indonesia, particularly in the halal cosmetics segment. As a pioneer in halal cosmetics, Wardah has successfully built a brand image synonymous with safe, high-quality products that align with the values of Indonesian Muslim consumers. Wardah's popularity is also supported by an active digital marketing strategy through social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook. According to Satiawan et al. (2023) noted that social media has enabled the emergence of individuals with large followings, known as influencers, who are able to influence consumer opinions and purchasing decisions. Influencers are considered to have high social closeness and persuasive power, so their recommendations are often used as references in evaluating a product (Shofi & Kholilurrohman, 2025).

In North Luwu Regency, particularly in Masamba District, the development of the internet and social media has changed consumer consumption patterns when purchasing cosmetic products. Consumers are increasingly actively seeking information through testimonials, user reviews, and digital promotions before making a purchase. This situation demonstrates the crucial role of digital marketing in shaping consumer purchasing decisions. Furthermore, Wardah's brand image as a trusted and halal cosmetic product

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strengthens consumer confidence, supported by the use of Muslim brand ambassadors and product quality that maintains consumer loyalty (Widodasih et al., 2023) . The quality of Wardah products is one of the components in improving the brand image of cosmetic products (Desfitriady et al., 2025) . Changes in consumer behavior in Masamba, along with increased access to social media and digital technology, are encouraging consumers to more actively seek information before making a purchase. User testimonials help increase confidence in the quality of Wardah products. Positive customer testimonials can help build trust and strengthen a positive brand image (Widodasih et al., 2023) .

Research by Tamara et al. (2021) and Hermanda et al. (2019) highlighted the influence of influencer marketing and brand image on purchase intention without considering testimonials or promotions. Research by Desfitriady et al. (2025) and Sari et al. (2024) focused on urban consumer contexts, so the results may not be generalizable to consumers in other areas, such as Masamba. Several studies have shown inconsistent results regarding the effectiveness of influencer marketing on purchase intention, necessitating further testing in different social contexts and consumer characteristics. Based on these gaps, this study offers several novelties. First, it simultaneously examines the influence of influencer marketing, testimonials, and promotions on purchase intention within a single integrated model. Second, it positions brand image as a mediating variable linking these three variables to purchase intention, providing a more comprehensive understanding of consumer purchasing decision mechanisms. Third, this study was conducted with consumers in a non-urban area, namely Masamba, which has rarely been the focus of digital marketing research.

This research has high urgency, both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the marketing literature, particularly regarding the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies in the context of non-urban consumers. Practically, the results of this study can be a basis for companies, especially Wardah, in designing more targeted marketing strategies according to consumer characteristics in the region. Based on the description, the purpose of this study is to analyze the influence of influencer marketing, testimonials, and promotions on purchase interest in Wardah products, as well as to examine the role of brand image as a mediating variable in this relationship among consumers in Masamba, North Luwu Regency.

Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing is a digital marketing strategy that leverages influential individuals on social media to influence audience consumption behavior. Influencers are considered to have high social proximity, credibility, and persuasive abilities, thus influencing consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions (Koay et al., 2022) . In the context of influencer marketing, source credibility theory explains that the effectiveness of influencers as a promotional medium is largely determined by the level of credibility of the influencer as the source of the message. Influencers not only act as information disseminators but also as reference sources that shape consumer perceptions, attitudes, and behavior.

Theoretically, influencers can be measured using the source credibility model theory introduced by Corina (2006). This model states that the effectiveness of the message conveyed depends on three main dimensions: expertise (influencer expertise), which refers to the extent to which the influencer is perceived to have knowledge, experience, or competitiveness related to the product or category being promoted. Trust (trust in the influencer), which relates to the level of honesty, sincerity, and objectivity of the influencer, who is perceived to be transparent, honest, and not exaggerating in making claims. These three influencer appeals make it easier for the audience to identify with the influencer, making the promotional message more easily accepted.

Testimony

Testimonials are a powerful marketing strategy that can increase business profits (Alfiansya & Nurhadi, 2022) . Meanwhile, according to Maulana Firli et al. (2021), testimonials help consumers decide whether to use a product/service because they receive recommendations from third parties, which can be more convincing when customers who have used the product/service share their experiences. Positive customer testimonials are not only important because they can build trust with other consumers but also encourage them to make a purchase immediately (Tololiu & Roring, 2022) .

Testimonials can be measured using the Electronic Word-of-Mouth (e-WOM) Theory developed by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) which explains how consumers spread, seek, and influence the decisions of

others through reviews, comments, recommendations, and shared experiences. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) in the e-WOM theory explain that consumers not only receive information, but also play an active role in sharing experiences and opinions that can influence the views and purchasing decisions of other consumers. Before making a purchase, consumers generally seek and consider testimonials to reduce doubts about product quality. Testimonials that are delivered in a positive, relevant, and trustworthy manner can form a good brand image and increase consumer trust and purchase interest, while negative testimonials can decrease purchase interest. Therefore, based on the e-WOM Theory, testimonials have an important role in influencing the consumer purchasing decision-making process.

Promotional Discount

Promotion is a pricing strategy that offers customers price reductions to encourage purchasing decisions. Consumers perceive price savings, resulting in a higher perceived product value compared to the normal price. This encourages consumers to make immediate purchases, particularly for Wardah products. Research by Halimah & Musadad Anwar (2025) demonstrated that discounts significantly influence purchasing decisions for beauty products. Furthermore, research by Mirinda et al. (2024) demonstrated that price promotions in e-commerce can increase purchasing interest, particularly among price-sensitive consumer groups. Based on research by Budi et al. (2023), the sales promotion theory developed by Philip Kotler & Kevin Laner Keller (2016) explains that sales promotions are short-term incentives provided by companies to accelerate consumer purchasing decisions. These incentives can take the form of discounts, coupons, bundles, cashback, or special gifts that create perceived value for customers. The main goal is to encourage immediate purchases, attract new consumers, divert attention from competing brands, and increase sales during the promotional period.

Brand Image

Brand image is a consumer's perception of a brand based on consistent experiences, beliefs, and impressions (Arianty & Andira, 2021). A positive brand image can create trust, loyalty, and purchase decisions. In the cosmetics industry, brand image plays a crucial role because consumers tend to choose products based on the reputation, quality, and values associated with the brand. Wardah is known as a pioneer of halal cosmetics in Indonesia, thus building a strong image among Muslim consumers (Latoki et al., 2025). The halal and quality image makes Wardah more easily accepted by consumers in areas such as Masamba. Furthermore, research by Sari et al. (2022) shows that brand image is a dominant factor influencing beauty product purchasing decisions.

This study uses the Customer Based Brand Equity (CBBE) theory developed by Keller (1993), which explains that a brand's value is determined by how consumers perceive, feel, know, and respond to the brand. The more positive consumer associations and experiences with the brand, the higher the brand equity formed. This model emphasizes that brand image, experience, and consumer emotional relationships are the main foundations for forming brand value. The CBBE model emphasizes that consumer experience and emotional bonds are important factors in maintaining and strengthening brand value in the long term. Consumers who have positive experiences and feel emotionally attached to a brand tend to show more positive attitudes, such as choosing that brand and having the intention to make repeat purchases. Therefore, the better the perceptions, experiences, and associations formed in consumers, the stronger the brand equity.

Purchase Interest

Purchase intention is a consumer's tendency or desire to purchase a product. Purchase intention is a consumer's intention to take purchasing action after being influenced by perceptions, experiences, and information received. This study uses the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by Ajzen (1991). This theory states that a person's intention to perform a behavior is influenced by three main factors: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. These three factors together determine how likely a person is to perform the behavior. The more positive the attitude, the stronger the social support, and the greater the perceived behavioral control, the higher the intention to perform the behavior. Purchase intention reflects a consumer's intention to make a purchase after being influenced by perceptions, experiences, and information received. Octavia & Handayani (2025) showed that the TPB is effective in explaining environmentally friendly purchasing behavior, including cosmetics. In the

context of Wardah, purchase intention can be influenced by the perceived quality of social influencer recommendations, testimonials, and price promotions.

Hypothesis

Marketing on Purchase Interest

Influencer marketing is a marketing strategy that leverages individuals with significant influence on social media to convey product information and recommendations to consumers. Influencers with high levels of trust and appeal can shape consumers' positive perceptions of a brand. According to Corina (2006), messages delivered by credible sources are more easily accepted and trusted by consumers, thus forming a positive perception of the brand. This perception plays a crucial role in increasing consumer interest and purchasing intention for the promoted product. Research by Stevani & Junaidi (2021) shows that influencer marketing has a positive and significant influence on consumer purchasing intention.

H1: Influencer marketing has a positive and significant influence on purchasing interest in Wardah cosmetic products in Masamba, North Luwu.

Testimonials Regarding Purchase Interest

Testimonials are opinions or experiences shared by consumers after using a product. Positive and honest testimonials can increase consumer trust because they come from actual user experiences, not company claims. In the context of digital marketing, testimonials are a form of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), which plays a crucial role in shaping consumer attitudes and perceptions of a product. The trust formed through these testimonials can further stimulate interest and increase consumer purchase intention. Research by Alfiansya & Nurhadi (2022) and Tololiu & Roring (2022) shows that customer testimonials have a positive and significant impact on purchase intention.

H2: Testimonials have a positive and significant influence on interest in purchasing Wardah cosmetic products.

Promotion for Purchase Interest

Promotion is a sales strategy that involves offering discounts, cashback, and other incentives to consumers to attract their attention and interest. Promotions make consumers feel like they are receiving additional benefits, thereby increasing the perceived value of the product. These discounts or cashback can stimulate consumer interest and purchase intention, especially since consumers tend to be sensitive to price changes. Halimah & Musadad Anwar (2025) showed that promotions increase purchasing decisions for beauty products, while Mirinda et al. (2024) and Budi et al. (2023) found that price promotions have a positive effect on consumer purchase intention.

H3: Promotion has a positive and significant influence on purchasing interest in Wardah cosmetic products.

Brand Image Against Purchase Intention

Brand image is the image or impression consumers have of a brand based on the information and experiences they receive. A positive brand image can foster consumer trust and interest in the products offered. For Wardah cosmetics, a positive brand image is often associated with product quality, safety, and suitability to user needs. A strong brand image will make consumers more confident in making choices, thus encouraging increased purchase intention. Research by Fadilla & Putri (2024) found that brand image has a significant influence on purchase intention.

H4: Brand image has a positive and significant influence on purchasing interest in Wardah cosmetic products.

The Relationship Between Influencer Marketing and Purchase Intention

Influencer marketing is a marketing strategy that utilizes individuals with high levels of influence on social media to convey brand information and messages to consumers. Influencers have credibility, attractiveness, and trustworthiness, which can shape consumers' positive views of the promoted brand. This positive view plays a role in creating a positive brand image, which in turn increases consumer trust and interest in the product, thereby driving purchase intention. The influence of influencer marketing on purchase intention occurs not only directly, but also through brand image as an intermediary variable. Based on research by Gilang et al. (2025), brand image plays a mediating role in the relationship between influencer marketing and purchase intention.

H5: Brand image mediates influencer marketing on purchase intention.

Brand Image Between Testimonial Relationship and Purchase Intention

Consumer testimonials are a method based on actual user experiences with a product or service. Testimonials delivered honestly and positively can increase potential customers' trust and reduce pre-purchase losses. Through these testimonials, consumers begin to form views and judgments about a brand. Brand image itself reflects the messages and associations consumers have with the brand stored in their memories. Brand image can be formed from direct experience or indirect information, including consumer testimonials. A good brand image will foster consumer trust and interest in a product. In this case, brand image acts as an intermediary linking the influence of testimonials with consumer purchase intentions. According to research by Wardhana et al. (2021), brand image plays a mediating role in this relationship. H6. Brand image mediates the relationship between testimonials and purchase intention.

Image on the Relationship Between Promotion and Purchase Intention

Promotion is a form of promotion used by companies to attract consumers by offering more affordable prices. Promotions are not only related to price benefits but also positively influence how consumers perceive a brand's quality. Meanwhile, excessive or frequent promotions can damage consumer perceptions of the brand. A positive brand image will increase consumer trust and interest in a product, ultimately driving consumer purchase intention. Research by Tan et al. (2021) found that brand image significantly mediates promotions and purchase intention. H7. Brand image mediates the relationship between promotion and purchase intention.

H7. Brand image mediates the relationship between promotion and purchase intention.

Research Framework

The research framework shows that influencer marketing, testimonials, and promotions influence consumer purchase intention for Wardah products in Masamba, both directly and indirectly through brand image as a mediating variable. Brand image plays a role in bridging the influence of these three factors, so the more positive the brand image, the higher the consumer purchase intention.

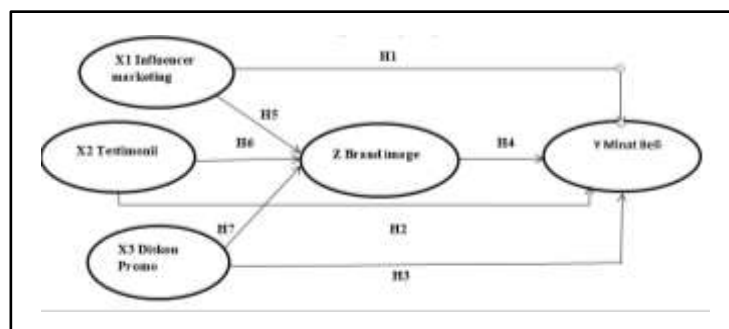


Figure 1. Research Framework.

2. METHOD

Types of research

This study uses a quantitative approach with an exploratory research design, namely research that aims to explain the causal relationship between independent variables, mediating variables, and dependent variables. The analytical method used in this study is Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), data were analyzed using SmartPLS 3 software. PLS-SEM was chosen because it is able to analyze complex relationships in this study that have many direct and indirect relationships, and does not require strict data normality assumptions.

Population and Sample

The population of this study is all Wardah product users in Masamba. the exact number is unknown. The sample in this study is a portion of the population. The sampling technique in this study is purposive sampling, Purposive sampling is a sampling technique in research conducted by selecting respondents based on certain criteria or considerations that are in accordance with the research objectives. This technique was chosen because not all Wardah users have the same opportunity to become respondents, the criteria are as follows: using Wardah products in the last 6-12 months, at least 15 years old, willing to fill out the questionnaire honestly and completely. The number of samples is determined based on the PLS-SEM rules, which is 10 times the number of indicators. The sample in this study was 170 respondents, with

a Likert scale of 1-5 (1 strongly disagree - 5 strongly agree) . This research was conducted in Masamba District, North Luwu Regency in 2025. Data collection was carried out from June to January 2026 through direct and online questionnaire distribution.

Data Types and Sources

The type of data used in this study is primary data. Primary data were obtained through a questionnaire with a Likert scale of 1-5 containing statements regarding Wardah products, in which respondents provided their assessments of the statements given. Data collection techniques were carried out through the distribution of questionnaires using two methods: online distribution via WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook, and directly (offline) to consumers encountered in shopping centers and community activity areas in Masamba. Each respondent was given an explanation of the purpose of the study, and filling out the questionnaire was done voluntarily.

Operational Variables

Operational variables contain descriptions of indicators of each research variable using a Likert scale of 1-5 (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

Table 1. Operational Research Variables

NO		Programming	Operational	Scale	Source
1.	Influencer marketing (X1)	IM1. Expertise	IM1. Influencers are considered experts or competent in the product category.	Likert Scale (1-5)	Corina, (2006) .
		IM2. Trust	IM2. The influencers don't seem to be overly explicit or deceptive in their promotions.		
		IM3. Attraction	IM 3. The influencer's communication style makes me interested in listening to him.		
2.	Testimonial (X2)	T1. Clarity of the content of the testimony	T1. Testimonials are presented clearly and are easy to understand.	Likert Scale (1-5)	Hennig-Thurau et al., (2004)
		T2. Relevance of testimony	Q2. The content of the testimonials regarding Wardah products is in accordance with my needs as a consumer.		
		T3. Suitability of experience	T3. Testimonials reflect the realistic and true experiences of Wardah product users.		

NO		Programming	Operational	Scale	Source
3.	Promo (X3)	<p>DP1. Discount Benefit Value</p> <p>DP2. Clear price reduction</p> <p>DP3. Promotional appeal</p> <p>DP4. Urge to buy quickly</p>	<p>DP1. The discounts offered on Wardah products give me added value.</p> <p>DP2. The discount offered by Wardah makes this product feel more affordable to me.</p> <p>DP3. The discount offered by Wardah looked attractive, so it encouraged me to consider purchasing it.</p> <p>DP4. The discount encouraged me to buy Wardah products sooner than usual.</p>	Likert Scale (1-5)	Budi et al. (2023)
4.	Brand image (X4)	<p>BI1. Brand awareness</p> <p>BI2. Brand performance</p> <p>BI3. Consumer Assessment</p>	<p>BI1. I easily recognize the Wardah brand when I see cosmetic products.</p> <p>BI2. Wardah delivers consistent and reliable product performance.</p> <p>BI 3. I consider Wardah as a trusted brand.</p>	Likert Scale (1-5)	(Keller, 1993)
5	Purchase Interest (Y)	<p>MB1. Attitude towards behavior</p> <p>MB2. Subjective norms</p> <p>MB3. Perceived control of behavior</p> <p>MB4. Behavioral intention</p>	<p>MB1. I feel that buying Wardah products is the right choice.</p> <p>MB2. I feel influenced by the opinions of those closest to me when choosing Wardah products.</p> <p>MB3. I feel I can afford Wardah products at affordable prices and they're easy to find.</p> <p>MB4. I plan to use Wardah products as my main choice.</p>	Likert Scale (1-5)	(Ajzen, 1991)

Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis technique uses partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM), with the help of SmartPLS 3, which goes through three stages, namely: first, the outer model test, to see the reliability and validity of the construct, second, the inner model test to see how strong the influence between variables can be seen in the path coefficient, and R-square, as well as the mediation test that can be seen in the specific indirect effect. The indicator is said to be valid if the loading factor value is ≥ 0.70 and the AVE value is > 0.50 . The indicator is said to be reliable if the composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha value are > 0.70 . The discriminant validation test is carried out by looking at HTMT < 0.90 . The inner model is used to see how strong the influence between variables is. The influence is tested through the path coefficient value, the result is significant if the t statistic value is > 1.96 and the P value is < 0.05 , while the R² value is used to assess how much the variable is able to explain purchasing interest (0.25 = low, 0.50 = medium, 0.75 = high). Q square tests the relevant predicted value Q square > 0 .

A mediation test is used to determine whether brand image acts as an intermediary bridging the relationship between influencer marketing, testimonials, and promotions on purchase intention. In SmartPLS analysis, this process is carried out by examining two forms of influence: direct and indirect. The direct influence shows the relationship between the independent variable and purchase intention without involving brand image, while the indirect influence describes the influence through brand image as a connecting variable. If the analysis results show that the indirect path has a significance value below 0.05, then it can be concluded that mediation occurs. The type of mediation found can be full or partial mediation. Full mediation occurs when the direct effect is insignificant but the indirect path is significant, while partial mediation occurs when both paths are equally significant.

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics to determine the mean, median, standard deviation, and range.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Indicator	Means	Median	Standard Deviation	Range
IM1	3,918	4,000	0.625	1-5
IM2	3,819	4,000	0.814	1-5
IM3	3,994	4,000	0.705	1-5
T1	3,988	4,000	0.749	1-5
T2	3,982	4,000	0.721	1-5
T3	4,018	4,000	0.820	1-5
DP1	3,994	4,000	0.737	1-5
DP2	3,819	4,000	0.814	1-5
DP3	3,842	4,000	0.790	1-5
DP4	3,936	4,000	0.766	1-5
BI1	3,895	4,000	0.838	1-5
BI2	3,965	4,000	0.837	1-5
BI3	3,965	4,000	0.823	1-5
MB1	3,918	4,000	0.812	1-5
MB2	4,000	4,000	0.733	1-5
MB3	3,930	4,000	0.784	1-5
MB4	4,047	4,000	0.815	1-5

Source processed by Smart PLS 3.0, 2025

The descriptive statistics table shows that all indicators have a mean value ranging from 3.819 to 4.047, indicating that respondents tend to give a high rating (agree category) to all statements asked. The median value of all indicators is 4.000, indicating that respondents' answers are centered around a score of 4 (agree). Furthermore, the standard deviation value ranges from 0.625 to 0.838, which is considered low to moderate, indicating that the level of variation in respondents' answers is relatively small.

Exterior Model

External model evaluation is conducted to ensure construct validity and reliability. According to Hair et al. (2019), the first stage in a measurement model is convergent validity, which can be seen from the outer loading and average variance extracted (AVE) values. Indicators with an outer loading value >0.7 and an AVE value ≥0.5 are considered reliable. Reliability testing can be seen from the Cronbach's alpha value (>0.7) and the composite reliability value (>0.7).

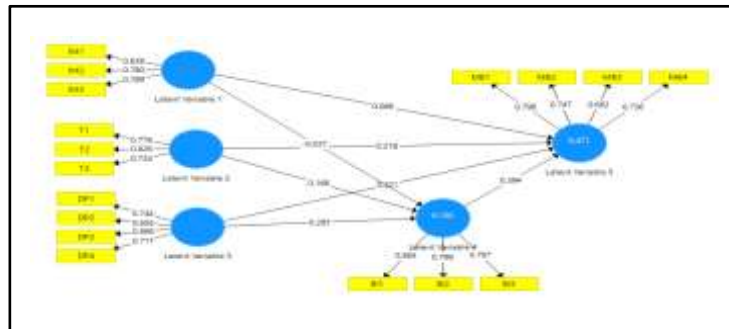


Figure 2: External Load Source processed by Smart PLS 3.0, 2025

The outer loading test results showed that all indicators had values ≥ 0.60, thus meeting the convergent validity criteria. The majority of indicators showed values ≥ 0.70, indicating that they were able to represent the latent constructs strongly and reliably. According to Hair et al. (2019), indicators with outer loading values between 0.60–0.69 are still acceptable due to their theoretical relevance. Thus, all indicators were declared valid and worthy of being retained for further structural model analysis.

Table 3. Reliability and Validity

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
I	0.724	0.723	0.845	0.644
T	0.677	0.681	0.823	0.608
DP	0.743	0.793	0.836	0.563
TWO	0.782	0.895	0.861	0.674
MB	0.724	0.750	0.826	0.544

Source processed by Smart PLS 3.0, 2025

The test results show that all constructs have Composite Reliability (CR) > 0.70, thus meeting the internal reliability criteria. The Cronbach's Alpha and rho_A values for all constructs are at an acceptable level, with the Cronbach's Alpha for construct T below 0.70 but still maintainable because the values for all constructs have an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value > 0.50, indicating that convergent validity has been met. Thus, the measurement model is declared reliable and valid for further analysis (Hair et al., 2019)

Table 4. Heterotrait-Monotrait Correlation Ratio (HTMT).

Variables	TWO	DP	I	MB	T
T	0.391	0.769	0.492	0.709	
MB	0.625	0.665			
DP	0.423	0.636			
I	0.203	0.636			
TWO					

Sources processed by Smart PLS 3.0, 2025.

According to Henseler et al. (2015), an HTMT threshold of >0.9 indicates that there are no overlapping indicators. The results of the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) test show that all HTMT values between constructs are below the 0.85 threshold, with a range of values between 0.203 and 0.769. This indicates that each construct has good discriminatory validity and can be empirically distinguished from other constructs. Thus, there is no problem of conceptual overlap between constructs in the measurement model.

Table 5. R-squared and Q-squared

Variables	R Square	Adjusted R Squared	Q ²
TWO	0.150	0.134	0.082
MB	0.471	0.458	0.230

Sources processed by Smart PLS 3.0, 2025.

The R Square (R²) value shows that the BI variable is able to be explained by its independent variables by 15.0%, which is classified as weak, while the MB variable has an R² value of 47.1%, which indicates the model's explanatory ability at a moderate level. The Adjusted R Square value which is relatively close to R² indicates that the model has good stability and is not biased due to the number of predictors. Furthermore, the Q² value for BI is 0.082 and MB is 0.230, both greater than 0, indicating that the model has good predictive relevance, especially for the MB variable which has stronger predictive ability than BI.

Table 6. Hypothesis

Connection	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P value
IM -> MB	0.086	0.088	0.071	1,223	0.222
T -> MB	0.218	0.217	0.095	2,290	0.022
DP -> MB	0.221	0.220	0.092	2,401	0.017
BI -> MB	0.394	0.397	0.053	7,435	0,000
IM -> BI	-0.037	-0.025	0.081	0.462	0.645
T -> BI	0.168	0.161	0.091	1,844	0.066
DP -> BI	0.285	0.292	0.097	2,944	0.003
IM -> BI -> MB	-0.015	-0.011	0.033	0.452	0.651
T -> BI -> MB	0.066	0.064	0.037	1,767	0.078
DP -> BI -> MB	0.285	0.292	0.097	2,944	0.003

Source processed by Smart PLS 3.0, 2025.

The path test results show that BI has a positive and significant influence on MB ($\beta = 0.394$; $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, DP has a positive and significant influence on BI ($\beta = 0.285$; $p = 0.003$) and on MB ($\beta = 0.221$; $p = 0.017$). In addition, T also has a positive and significant influence on MB ($\beta = 0.218$; $p = 0.022$). In contrast, IM has no significant influence on BI or MB, and T has no significant influence on BI ($p > 0.05$). In the mediation test, BI was shown to significantly mediate the relationship between DP and MB ($\beta = 0.112$;

$p = 0.007$), while the mediation of BI on the relationship between IM and MB and T on MB was not significant. Thus, only DP has an indirect influence through BI on MB, while other variables did not show a significant mediating effect.

Discussion

The Influence of Influencer Marketing on Purchase Interest.

The test results show that influencer marketing does not have a significant influence on the purchase intention of Wardah products in Masamba, as indicated by a path coefficient value of 0.086 with a p-value of 0.222. This finding indicates that consumers in Masamba tend to be more rational and cautious in making cosmetic product purchasing decisions. Consumers do not only rely on the popularity of influencers on social media, but rather consider personal needs, product benefits, price, and the real experiences of other users through testimonials. In addition, local cultural characteristics in non-urban areas make consumers more trusting of recommendations from their immediate social environment than promotions from digital public figures.

Corina's (2006) theory of source credibility explains that influencer effectiveness depends on the levels of trustworthiness, expertise, and emotional connection established with the audience. In this study, influencers may not have been able to build strong emotional connections with consumers in Masamba, resulting in a limited impact on purchase intention. These findings support previous studies suggesting that influencer marketing is not always effective among consumers with high product involvement. However, the results differ from Koay et al. (2022) and Stevani and Junaidi (2021), who found that influencers positively influence purchase intention, particularly among consumers in urban areas and among more active social media users.

The Influence of Testimonials on Purchase Intentions

The analysis results show that testimonials have a positive and significant influence on purchase intention for Wardah products in Masamba. The path coefficient value of 0.218 with a p-value of 0.022 indicates that the more positive and relevant testimonials consumers receive, the higher their purchase intention for Wardah products. The significant influence of testimonials indicates that consumers in Masamba pay close attention to the real experiences of other users before making a purchasing decision. Testimonials are considered more credible because they come from ordinary consumers who are considered to have no commercial interests. In the context of cosmetic products, testimonials help reduce consumer uncertainty regarding product quality, safety, and suitability for personal needs. The results of this study are consistent with the Electronic Word-of-Mouth theory of Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004), which states that reviews and other consumers' experiences have a strong influence on purchasing decisions. These findings also align with research by Alfiansya & Nurhadi (2022) and Tololiu & Roring (2022), which found that customer testimonials have a significant influence on purchase intentions.

The Effect of Promotion on Purchase Interest

The test results show that promotions have a positive and significant influence on Wardah product purchase interest. The path coefficient value of 0.221 with a p-value of 0.017 indicates that the discount strategy is able to encourage increased consumer purchase interest in Masamba. The influence of promotions shows that Masamba consumers have a fairly high level of price sensitivity. Discounts provide the perception of added value and economic benefits, so consumers feel they are getting an advantage when making a purchase. In addition, discounts also create a psychological urge to buy faster to take advantage of limited promotional opportunities.

These findings support the theory based on research by Budi et al. (2023) on sales promotion theory developed by Philip Kotler & Kevin Laner Keller (2016), which states that sales promotions are short-term stimuli to accelerate purchasing decisions. The results of this study also align with research by Mirinda et al. (2024) and Budi et al. (2023), which prove that discounts have a significant influence on purchasing interest, particularly for beauty products.

The Influence of Brand Image on Purchase Intention

The analysis results show that brand image has a positive and significant influence on the purchase intention of Wardah products, with a coefficient value of 0.394 and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that a strong brand image can be a dominant factor in shaping consumer intention to purchase Wardah products. Wardah's brand image as a halal, safe, and trusted cosmetic provides a sense of security and confidence for consumers. This positive image creates a perception of product quality and reliability, so that consumers are more confident in choosing Wardah over other brands. In areas such as Masamba, trust in brands is an important factor because consumers tend to avoid risks in using cosmetic products.

research results align with the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) theory developed by Keller (1993), which states that positive consumer perceptions of a brand will increase behavioral responses, including purchase intentions. These findings also support research by Sari et al. (2022), which showed that brand image significantly influences cosmetic product purchase decisions and intentions.

The Mediating Role of Brand Image in the Relationship Between Promotional Discounts and Purchase Intentions

The results of the mediation test show that brand image significantly mediates the relationship between promotion and purchase intention, with an indirect coefficient value of 0.112 and a p-value of 0.007. This indicates that promotion not only has a direct influence on purchase intention, but also can increase purchase intention through the formation of a positive brand image. Promotions that are carried out consistently and transparently can strengthen consumer perceptions of Wardah as a brand that provides attention and added value to its consumers. Discounts are not only seen as price reductions, but also as a form of benefit and brand concern for consumer needs. In the context of Masamba consumers, price promotions are an important factor because consumers tend to consider economic benefits before purchasing cosmetic products.

This finding is in line with the Customer-Based Brand Equity theory developed by Philip Kotler & Kevin Laner Keller in 1993, which states that effective marketing activities can shape positive consumer perceptions of a brand, thereby increasing consumer behavioral responses, including purchase intentions. The results of this study also support the research of Tan et al. (2021) and Budi et al. (2023) who found that promotions and discounts have a positive influence on brand image and consumer purchasing decisions.

The Role of Brand Image in Mediating the Influence of Influencer Marketing on Purchase Intention

The results of the mediation test indicate that brand image does not mediate the influence of influencer marketing on Wardah product purchase intention in Masamba. The indirect effect coefficient value of -0.015 with a p-value of 0.651 indicates that the mediation path is not statistically significant. Furthermore, the direct effect of influencer marketing on brand image and purchase intention is also insignificant, thus it can be concluded that the mediating role of brand image in this relationship has not been empirically proven. The insignificant mediating role of brand image indicates that influencer marketing has not been able to shape the perception of Wardah's brand image in the minds of Masamba consumers. Consumers tend not to associate messages conveyed by influencers with the brand's identity and core values. This could be caused by the low level of fit between influencers and Wardah's brand character or the influencer's lack of closeness to the local consumer's social and cultural context. Consequently, influencer marketing is not strong enough to influence purchase intention either directly or through brand image formation. This finding can be explained through Corina's (2006) Source Credibility theory, which states that influencer effectiveness is highly dependent on the level of trust, attractiveness, and expertise perceived by the audience. In this study, influencers likely lack sufficient credibility to influence brand image and consumer purchase intentions in non-urban areas. The results of this study differ from those of other studies. Gilang et al. (2025) which found that influencers can shape brand image and significantly increase purchase intentions. These differences in results indicate that influencer effectiveness is significantly influenced by consumer characteristics, local culture, and the intensity of social media use in each study area.

The Role of Brand Image in Mediating the Influence of Testimonials on Purchase Intention

The results of the mediation analysis indicate that brand image does not significantly mediate the influence of testimonials on purchase intention for Wardah products. The indirect effect coefficient of 0.066 with a p-value of 0.078 is above the 0.05 significance level. Although testimonials have a significant direct influence on purchase intention, their influence on brand image is not significant, so the role of brand image as a mediating variable in this relationship is not proven. These results indicate that testimonials play a more informative role that directly influences consumer decisions, without going through the brand image formation process. Masamba consumers tend to use testimonials as a practical reference regarding product

quality and user experience, rather than as a basis for forming long-term perceptions of the brand. Thus, testimonials directly drive purchase intention rather than strengthen brand image.

This finding is in accordance with the Electronic Word of Mouth theory, Hennig-Thurau et al., (2004) explains that reviews and other users' experiences can directly influence consumer behavior by conveying information that is perceived as more real and trustworthy. These results differ from research by Wardhana et al. (2021), which found that testimonials can strengthen brand image. This difference indicates that the influence of testimonials on brand image is significantly influenced by the intensity of information dissemination, message consistency, and consumer characteristics in each study area.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that consumer purchase intention for Wardah products in Masamba is significantly influenced by testimonials, promotional discounts, and brand image, while influencer marketing has no significant effect. Brand image is also shown to mediate the relationship between promotional discounts and purchase intention, but does not mediate the influence of influencer marketing and testimonials. These findings indicate that consumers in non-urban areas place more importance on other users' real-life experiences, price benefits, and brand trust than on the influence of social media influencers. Therefore, Wardah's marketing strategy should be more focused on strengthening consumer testimonials and price promotions to increase purchase intention. Future research is recommended to expand the research area and include other variables, such as consumer trust, brand loyalty, or product quality for more comprehensive research results.

3. CONFESS

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