THE INFLUENCE OF BRAND IMAGE AND SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON CAR PURCHASING DECISIONS AT PT. XYZ CIKARANG

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Abstract:

In this digital era, there is more and more brand competition and marketing strategies implemented by companies. This raises many considerations that must be chosen by consumers when deciding to buy a car. Researchers found problems experienced by PT XYZ Cikarang as an automotive retail company engaged in three activities, namely Sales, Maintenance and Repair, and the availability of Nissan brand car parts located in the Lippo Cikarang area. This study aims to determine the causes of the decline in sales for the period 2020 to 2023, especially for Nissan Livina cars at PT XYZ Cikarang and to find a significant relationship between construct variables, namely Brand Image and Social Media Marketing on Purchasing Decisions for Nissan Livina cars at PT XYZ Cikarang. In this study, hypothesis formulation uses non-parametric descriptive analysis by analyzing data using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis - Partial Least Square (PLS). Sampling in this study was carried out using probability sampling and simple random sampling techniques. The results showed that brand image significantly positively affects purchasing decisions for Nissan Livina cars. This study also found that social media marketing significantly positively affects purchasing decisions for Nissan Livina cars.

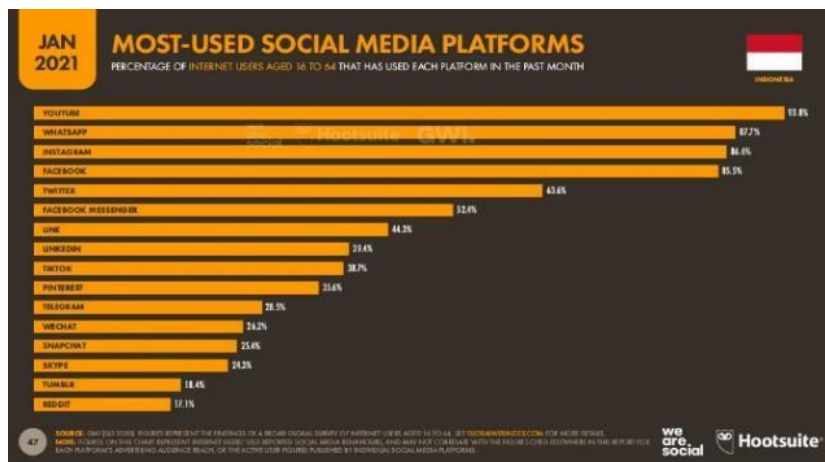**Keywords**: Marketing, Brand Image, Social Media Marketing, Purchasing Decisions, Structural

INTRODUCTION

As science and technology develop, business competition is tight, including in the automotive industry. In addition to automotive industry manufacturers, automotive retail companies compete to increase their competitiveness. Attracting potential customers optimally is one way to achieve this. Therefore, automotive industry companies must be able to make innovations and improvements to achieve their market share. However, achieving this goal takes work; companies must design the right strategy to compete with their competitors.

With the rapid development of technology, the use of social media in digital marketing is currently a trend in the business world. This presents a highly lucrative opportunity for marketers to engage in various marketing activities. According to the survey results uploaded by Hootsuite, several surveys related to digital marketing in Indonesia were available. Figure 1 presents the survey results on the social media platforms most frequently used by Indonesians throughout 2023.

Figure 1. Most-Used Social Media Platforms in Indonesia, 2021

Figure 1 above demonstrates that the YouTube application leads the list of Indonesia's most-used social media platforms in 2021, with WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and others following closely behind. Additionally, data reveals how Indonesian social media users utilized social media in their daily routines in 2021, whether seeking product-related information or gaining knowledge and education. Figure 2, sourced from We Are Social and Hootsuite, displays the following data:

Figure 2. Social Media Behaviours in Indonesia,2021

Social media users typically use these platforms every month to interact with each other through special applications, engage in chats, and actively participate in these activities. Indonesian social media users spend an average of up to three hours on social media each day. However, only some people in Indonesia use social media as a means of finding information or engaging in other activities. This is due to the varying ages of users who utilize social media daily. The data uploaded and processed by Hootsuite, which relates to marketers reaching their target market through social media, is presented in Figure 3.
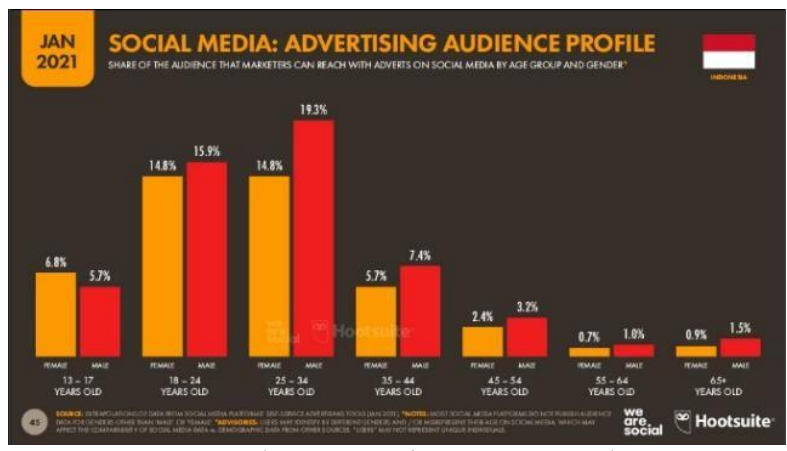
Source: (We Are Social & Hootsuite, 2021)
Figure 3. Social Media: Advertising Audience Profile in Indonesia, 2021

It can be seen in Figure 3 above that the use of social media by marketers in carrying out their marketing activities is for potential customers, where users are male with an age range of 25–34 years and female users with an age range of 18–34 years. Therefore, the use of social media can be used as an opportunity for marketers to research consumer behavior, introduce the image of a product brand, and gain market share by the targets and market segmentation previously set by the company, both in the manufacturing and retail industries (goods and services).

Several industrial companies, particularly in the automotive sector, experienced both declines and increases in sales during 2021. As reported in a website article (Leksana, 2022), data on car wholesales in Indonesia throughout 2021 is sourced from Gaikindo (Association of Indonesian Automotive Industries). This information will be displayed in Figure 4.

YTD Brand Sales			
BRAND	**Jan-Dec 20**	**Jan-Dec 21**	**YoY (%)**
TOYOTA	161.256	295.768	83,4%
DAIHATSU	90.724	164.872	81,7%
MITSUBISHI MOTORS	57.906	107.605	85,8%
SUZUKI	66.130	91.793	38,8%
HONDA	73.315	91.122	24,3%
MITSUBISHI FUSO	21.359	36.518	71,0%
ISUZU	16.422	26.636	62,2%
WULING	6.581	25.564	288,5%
HINO	12.621	20.683	63,9%
MAZDA	2.660	3.392	27,5%
DFSK	1.947	3.242	66,5%
NISSAN	10.849	3.177	-70,7%
HYUNDAI	740	3.166	327,8%
KIA	807	2.895	258,7%
B M W	1.983	2.389	20,5%
MERCEDES BENZ PC	1.684	2.096	24,5%
MERCEDES BENZ CV	673	1.810	168,9%
MORRIS GARAGE	0	1.075	100%
LEXUS	947	972	2,6%
UD TRUCKS	515	660	28,2%
OTHERS	2.908	1.734	-40,4%
GRAND TOTAL	532.027	887.169	66,8%

Source: Refers to Gaikindo processed by (Leksana, 2022)
Figure 4. Car Brand Wholesales Period 2023

Figure 4 above reveals that the Toyota brand holds the top spot in sales from 2020 to 2021, with 295,768 units in 2021 and a YoY (year over year) growth of 83.4%. Then followed Daihatsu, Mitsubishi, Suzuki, Honda, and other branded cars. In the YoY growth column, there was a very high increase in sales experienced by cars with the brands Wuling (YoY 288.5%), Hyundai (327.8%),

and KIA (258.7%). However, Nissan experienced a decline in sales, which can be seen from its YoY growth rate, which decreased by -70.7%.

One of the automotive companies in Indonesia is PT Nissan Motor Indonesia one of Indonesia's automotive companies. At first, PT Nissan Motor Indonesia produced Nissan and Datsun-branded cars. However, in 2020, PT. Nissan Motor Distributor Indonesia stopped producing Datsun-branded cars and started focusing its production on Nissan cars only. Nissan is based in Japan under the name Nissan Motor Corporation Global (Japan). Nissan has two retail companies that market and sell its product units: PT Indomobil Trada Nasional and PT Wahana Wirawan. In its retail activities, Nissan has a dealer network with 3S operational standards (sales, service, and spare parts).

As reported by the Ministry of Industry (Ministry of Industry) of Indonesia on November 11, 2023, in its article entitled "Pandemic Faces, Automotive Industry Performance Accelerates," there was an increase in the growth of the automotive industry's performance in the third quarter, reaching 27.84%. Automotive retail sales increased during the period January 2023–September 2023, reaching 600,344 units from previously only reaching 407,390 units (Ministry of Industry, 2023). However, several articles explain that some brands, including PT Nissan Motor Indonesia (NMI), are experiencing a decline in sales. Throughout 2023, Nissan experienced a decline in sales compared to the previous year. Despite the decline, it can be said that Nissan's sales of motor vehicle units can still survive. However, sales in the first quarter of 2022 are still experiencing a decline. Based on Gaikindo (Association of Indonesian Automotive Industries) wholesale data, total retail sales of Nissan brand cars were only 1,143 units (Gaikindo, 2023). This number decreased by around 69.3 percent compared to the total sales recorded during the 2023 period. As a result, based on these sales figures, Nissan could only gain 0.5 percent of the passenger car market in Indonesia.

The explanation above indicates that consumers are involved in making purchasing decisions. The product assessment can influence purchasing decisions regarding quality, price, form of promotion or where to make purchases (offline or online). Consumers also make purchasing decisions by selecting brands. Each brand has properties or characteristics that are different from those of others. This attribute sets one product apart despite the potential product's similarity. Therefore, consumers have their considerations in deciding which brand to buy.

The following is the sales data for the Nissan All New Livina for the 2023 period, obtained from Gaikindo in the Indonesian automotive industry:

Table 1. Nissan All New Livina Wholesales Data, 2021 GAIKINDO (Indonesian Motor Vehicle Industry Association)

Quarterly Type	Livina EL	Livina VE	Livina VL	Total
I	-	-	-	-
II	12	97	152	261
III	12	305	570	887
IV	10	92	765	867
Total				**2015**

Source: GAIKINDO, 2023. Processed by Researcher

According to the table above, 15 Nissan Livina car units of all types were sold in 2023. The most sold type is the VL type, with 1487 units, and the least is the ELM/T type, with 34 units. Sales

increased significantly from the first to the second quarter and continued to increase until the third quarter, after which they dropped by 20 units in the fourth quarter.

Hondro (2022) found in a previous research journal that brand image positively influences purchasing decisions. In this case, companies must know how consumers choose a brand as a demand for a product (goods or services). According to the core marketing concept, the company must provide an offer if there is a demand. During marketing activities, the company not only sells or offers products but also devises a strategy to introduce these products and attract consumers who align with the target, fostering customer loyalty. This is an effort to ensure that companies can maintain their brand image in the face of current business competition.

A study by Bilgin (2018) revealed that social media marketing activities positively impacted brand image, brand loyalty, and particularly brand awareness. Furthermore, the level of recognition and perception of a brand strongly influences the degree of customer loyalty towards that brand. Furthermore, the study determined that brand awareness had a restricted impact on brand image.

Conducting digital marketing is one of the marketing activities companies use to maintain a brand image and compete in this era of globalization. According to previous research journals by Khoziyah and Lubis (2021), digital marketing positively affects purchasing decisions. Digital marketing is one of the alternative ways for marketers to promote products in this globalization era. Digital tools and supporters, such as internet-connected smartphones, have become indispensable for everyone, enabling access to anything, anywhere, and anytime. Social media marketing is a ubiquitous tool that everyone uses and accesses regularly. According to previous research by Kambali and Masitoh (2021), social media marketing positively and well-conditioned influences purchasing decisions. Social media marketing can be through online chat applications such as Whatsapp, Telegram, and others. In addition, social media needs applications such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, etc. From this, companies can leverage social media to effectively promote their products and attract consumer attention, influencing their purchasing decisions.

It should be noted that according to the results of the report from Prakerin (Industrial Work Practice), carried out from August 31, 2020 - November 30, 2020, at PT XYZ Cikarang, Nissan car sales data for the last 5 years were obtained. The following Nissan car sales data can be seen in the figure presented below:

PT. Indomobil Trada Nasional - Cikarang
Jl. MH. Thamrin, Kav. 200B, Lippo Cikarang
Penjualan Periode 2017-2021

No.	Produk	Tahun				
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
	NISSAN					
1	Grand Livina	77	112	76	0	0
2	Livina	0	121	197	151	98
3	Serena	17	18	34	35	15
4	X-Trail	10	12	22	30	9
5	Teana	1	1	4	2	2
6	Navara	7	11	4	3	2
7	Juke	5	4	8	8	4
8	March	17	15	20	22	15
9	Elgrand	3	2	2	2	1
10	Evalia	15	7	5	6	10
11	Terra	17	25	18	15	5
12	Magnite	0	0	0	0	98
13	Kicks	0	0	0	75	54
		169	328	390	349	313

Source: PT XYZCikarang, 2021
Figure 5. Nissan Car Sales 2017-2021

According to the data, there has been a decrease in total Nissan car sales since 2019. In particular, the sales of Nissan Livina car products in 2021 reached a high of 98 units sold throughout the year. From the total number of Nissan car units sold, PT XYZ Cikarang promoted its sales throughout 2021 by utilizing social media as a medium to share the promotion of sales of its car units. The following images show some of the different social media accounts managed by PT XYZ Cikarang salespeople:
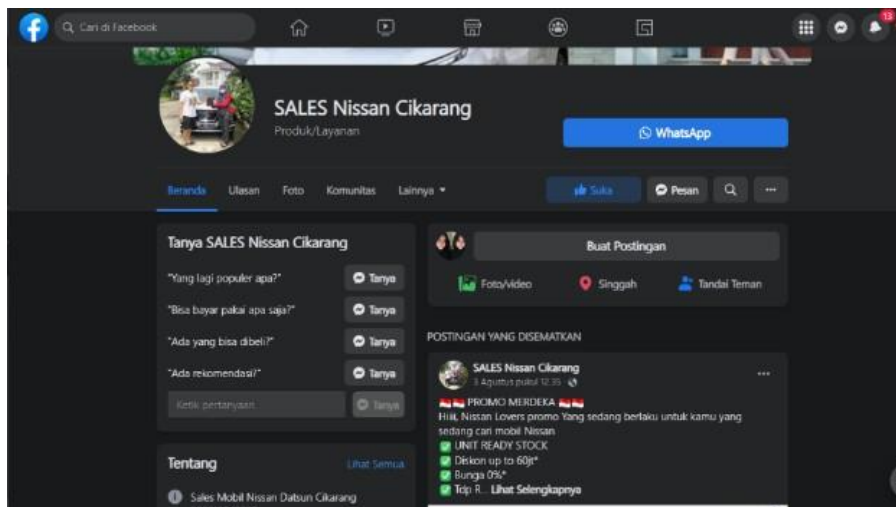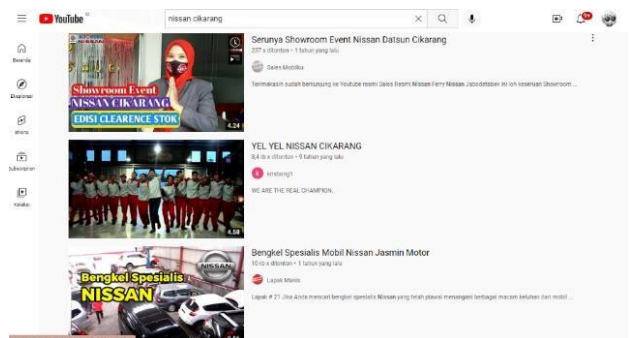

Source: Facebook, Nissan Cikarang (Accessed Agustus, 2022)
Figure 6. Facebook Account Sales Nissan Cikarang
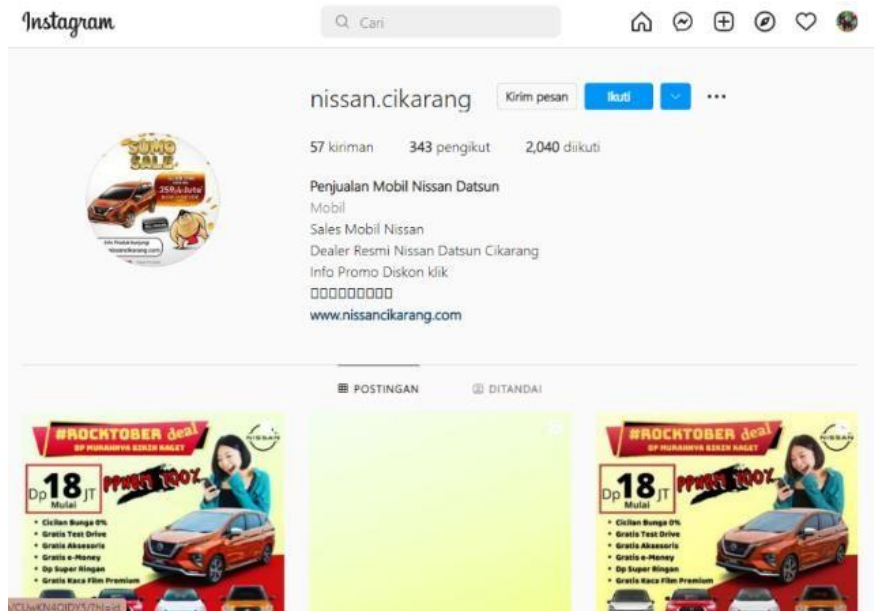
Source: Instagram, Nissan Cikarang (Accessed August, 2022)
Figure 7. Instagram Account Nissan Cikarang

Source: Youtube, Nissan Cikarang (Accessed August 2022)
Figure 8. Youtube Channel Sales Nissan Cikarang

The figure above demonstrates using social media accounts as promotional tools for various Nissan car products. Judging from the period of uploads, Facebook social media is a social media whose uploads are more consistent than the use of Instagram and YouTube social media. The sales team consistently creates content and uploads it each month.

Based on this background, the researcher aims to investigate the potential impact of brand image and social media marketing on consumers' decisions to purchase Nissan Livina cars from PT Indomobil Trada Nasional-Nissan Cikarang.

METHODS

This research uses quantitative methods, with data obtained through primary and secondary data collection. Primary data was obtained through direct observation of the research site and interviews with the car unit sales team of PT XYZCikarang, and questionnaires were continued to be distributed to the respondents studied. Meanwhile, secondary data is obtained from existing inscriptions in the industry, books, journals, reports, repositories, and other sources relevant to the topic of the problem.

Data collection techniques used in this research include interviews, observation, questionnaires, and documentation. This study conducted interview activities to obtain data on broader issues regarding the decline in sales of Nissan All New Livina products at PT Indomobil Trada Nasional-Nissan Cikarang. Furthermore, the observation method is carried out to obtain specific information by direct observation. In Samsu (2021), the observation method is divided into three (3) types: participant observation, systematic observation, and experimental observation.

Researchers made direct observations during the research by participating in Industrial Work Practices at PT XYZ Cikarang. Observations are conducted to find out more broadly related to the subject matter and to collect complementary data such as company documents or archives that can be used as research data to determine the decision to purchase Nissan All New Livina car units in the 2023 period. Furthermore, in the documentation method, the data obtained is in the form of sales data for the last five (5) years, organizational structure, car sales brochures, and others needed in this study.

Then, the questionnaire measurement scale used a Likert scale to collect data through a questionnaire. Junaidi, quoted from Purba et al. (2021), states, "The Likert scale is a scale used to measure the attitudes, opinions or opinions, and views of a person or group of people about a symptom, event, or social phenomenon." Researchers chose this scale because it can answer existing problems more efficiently in terms of time and cost. On the Likert Scale, the variables measured will

be described and made into variable indicators (Purba et al., 2021). The following variable indicators used by researchers as research measuring instruments are as follows:

a. Strongly Agree: ST, scored 4
b. Agree S, given a score of 3
c. Disagree: TS, scored 2
d. Strongly Disagree: STS scored 1

This research used the Structural Equation Model (SEM) approach using Partial Least Square (PLS) software, namely Smart PLS software. The PLS-SEM research model consists of latent and manifest variables (Sugiyono, 2019). Latent variables (unobserved) cannot be measured but have an influence. These latent variables consist of endogenous variables as variables that influence and endogenous variables as variables that are influenced. Meanwhile, manifest variables (observed variables) can be measured and consist of indicators of research variables. The following is a picture of the research model from PLS-SEM is as follows:
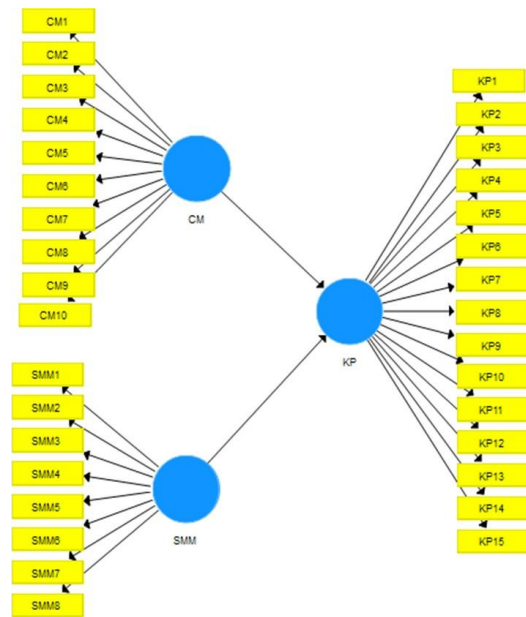
Source: Processed by researchers with SmartPLS 3.0
Figure 9. PLS-SEM Research Model

Description:
CM = Brand Image (Exogenous Latent Variable 1)
SMM = Social media marketing (Exogenous Latent Variable 2)
KP = Purchase Decision (Endogenous Latent Variable)

⬭ = Latent Variable Research Constructs

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Construct a Test before elimination. Figure 10 shows the output of the research construct model from PLS after the first calculation with a known loading factor to see how much the relationship between each indicator or manifest variable is to the latent variable.
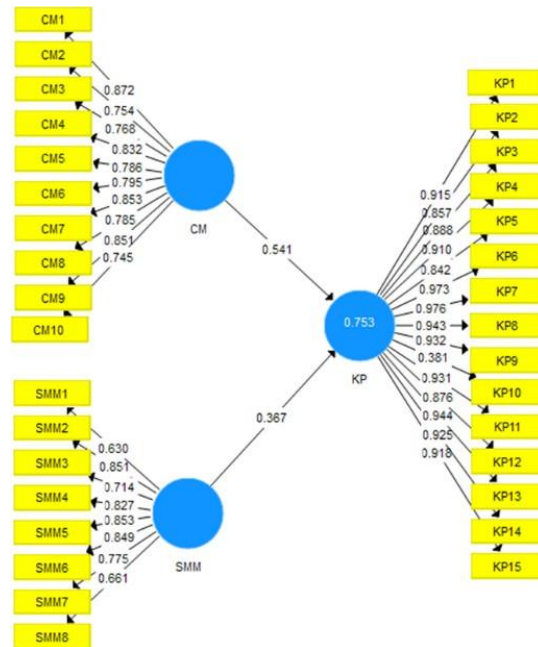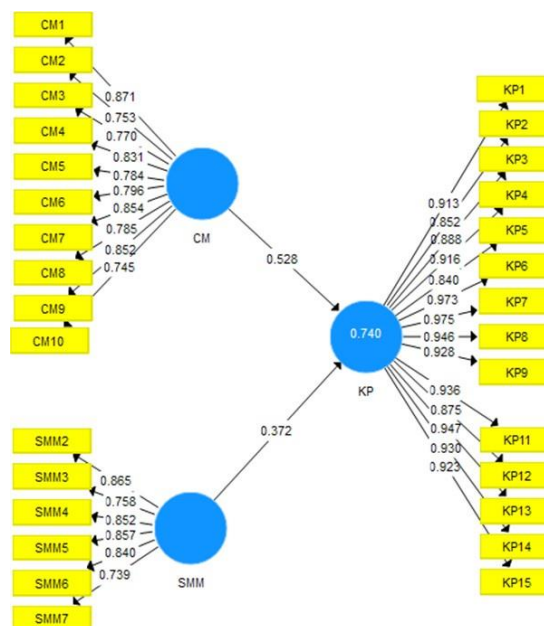
Source: Processed by researchers using SmartPLS 3.2.9, 202
Figure 10. Constructs Before Elimination (Pre-Research)

Construct a test after elimination. Figure 11 above shows indicators or manifest variables that have been eliminated because they do not meet the predetermined loading factor value, which must be greater than 0.7.

Source: processed by researchers using SmartPLS 3.2.9
Figure 11. Constructs After Elimination (Pre-Research)

Construct reliability test

Table 2. Construct Reliability and Validity (Pre-Research)

	Cronbarch's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance
CM	0.939	0.941	0.948	0.648
KP	0.986	0.986	0.987	0.843
SMM	0.902	0.915	0.925	0.672

Table 2 shows the results of the model's reliability and construct validity tests before elimination. These reliability and validity tests include calculating Cronbach's Alpha, rho_A, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values. These values indicate the extent of consistency and reliability of the tested constructs. In the table, all constructs, namely CM (Content Management), KP (Knowledge Platform), and SMM (Social et al.), show Cronbach's Alpha values that exceed 0.7, which means that the constructs have high internal consistency.

Likewise, the Composite Reliability value, which also exceeds 0.7, indicates that the indicators in the construct can represent the latent variable well. AVE, which measures the variance captured by the construct relative to the variance caused by measurement error, also shows adequate values. The overall results of this table state that the data used is reliable and that this research model can be trusted for use in further research.

The Influence of Brand Image on Purchasing Decisions for Nissan Livina Cars. In the increasingly competitive automotive industry, brand image shapes consumer perceptions of products. When a company has a strong brand image, it can attract consumer attention and create product loyalty (Kusumayanti et al., 2022). This becomes a competitive advantage for the company.

The brand image consists of various elements. In the automotive world, in this case, the Nissan Livina brand, this brand image can be vehicle durability, fuel efficiency, modern design, or even a certain social status. When this brand image is positive and robust, consumers will choose Nissan Livina over other brands.

However, building a brand image takes time and effort. Companies must actively build and manage their brand image to remain relevant in the eyes of consumers (Sucidha, 2024). The brand image involves continuous investment in marketing, customer service, product innovation, and consistent brand communication across multiple channels, including social media.

The brand image acts as a filter that can influence consumers' views of the choices available in the market. When faced with multiple product choices, consumers consider rational factors such as price or product features and emotional factors connected to brand image. A positive brand image gives consumers a sense of trust, comfort, and pride when they choose the product (Saleh et al., 2019).

In some cases, when already feeling the added value of a brand, consumers are often willing to overlook some of the product's shortcomings because they see added value in other aspects, such as brand reputation, trust in quality, or the status associated with owning the product. Consumers continue to choose the product because of the attachment. In addition, if the brand image is not managed well, it can damage consumer trust, even if the product is of high quality (Syaidah & Ramadhika, 2023).

Based on the results of the data analysis that has been carried out, it can be seen that in the outer model evaluation (measurement model), the first exogenous latent variable, namely brand image ($\xi1$), has a total of 10 research indicators (manifest variables) as a research measurement tool.

However, after undergoing elimination based on the loading factor (λ) value, only 9 out of 10 indicators remain suitable for research measuring instruments for the brand image variable (ξ1). When viewed at the loading factor (λ) value, the most influential brand image research indicator is the research indicator with the CM7 code of 0.822.

In evaluating the inner model (structural model), the brand image variable (ξ1) produces an F-squared value of 0.123, which means that the brand image variable (ξ1) has a weak effect on purchasing decisions (η). In hypothesis testing, however, the Brand Image variable (ξ1) gives a T-statistic value of 2.787, greater than or equal to 1.96. This value also gives a P-value of 0.006, which is less than 0.05 (significance level 0.05 or 5%).

So, brand image has a significant positive effect on the Nissan Livina car purchasing decision. Thus, the research hypothesis Ha can be accepted and Ho rejected. So, it can be assumed that the better the strategy for building a brand image and creating brand awareness by an organization or company, the more people who are assumed to be potential customers can realize, remember, and be able to distinguish (differentiate) the characteristics, advantages, and benefits of Nissan Livina cars from other brands. These results align with Hondro's (2022) research, which states that brand image influences consumers' purchasing decisions.

The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Purchasing Decisions for Nissan Livina Cars. Of course, companies must be able to adapt to technological advances that continue to develop. Social media allows companies to connect directly with consumers, create more personalized interactions, and strengthen brand attachment (Rahman et al., 2024). In addition, social media provides access to a broad and diverse audience, allowing companies to spread their messages efficiently and effectively (Suryasuciramdhan et al., 2024).

One of social media marketing's main strengths is its ability to build a loyal brand community. When companies create engaging and relevant content, they can strengthen the emotional attachment between consumers and products or brands. This, in turn, encourages repeat purchases as consumers feel more connected and recognized as part of the community.

In addition, social media enables digital word-of-mouth, where reviews, recommendations and user experiences can spread quickly and substantially impact potential buyers (Karina et al., 2022). Consumers tend to trust peer reviews more than traditional advertising, so positive experiences shared on social media can directly influence purchasing decisions.

Through social media marketing, companies can target ads and content specifically to the most relevant market segments based on consumer preferences, behavior, and demographics (Sugiyanti et al., 2023). Thus, marketing messages can be more personalized and relevant, increasing consumers' likelihood of purchasing.

Based on the results of the data analysis that has been carried out on the social media marketing variable, it is known that in the outer model evaluation (measurement model), the second exogenous latent variable, namely social media marketing (ξ2), has a total of 8 research indicators (manifest variables) as a research measurement tool. However, after undergoing elimination based on the loading factor (λ) value, only 6 8 indicators remain suitable for research measuring instruments for the social media marketing variable (ξ2). The most influential social media marketing research indicator, when viewed at the loading factor (λ) value, is the research indicator with the SMM3 code, which is 0.846.

In evaluating the inner model (structural model), the social media marketing variable (ξ2) produces an F-squared value of 0.057, which means that the social media marketing variable (ξ2) has a weak effect on purchasing decisions (η). However, when testing the hypothesis, the Social

Media Marketing (¾2) variable gives a T-statistic value of 2.064, greater than or equal to 1.96. This value also gives a P-value of 0.040, less than 0.05 (significance level 0.05 or 5%).

So, social media marketing has a significant positive effect on the Nissan Livina car purchase decision. Thus, the research hypothesis is that Ha can be accepted and Ho can be rejected. The better the use and utilization of social media in marketing activities, the more people will be interested in finding information related to Nissan Livina's car products and desire to buy the car.

These findings support Khoziyah and Lubis's (2021) research, which states that digital marketing positively affects purchasing decisions. This research also aligns with Kambali and Masitoh's (2021) findings, which show that social media marketing has a positive and well-conditioned influence on purchasing decisions.

CONCLUSION

Several conclusions can be drawn based on the results of the research analysis. First, the exogenous latent variable Brand Image ($\xi 1$) has 9 out of 10 research indicators that are feasible to use as measuring instruments after elimination based on the loading factor (λ) value. The most influential research indicator of brand image is the indicator with the code CM7, with a value of 0.822. The F-squared value of the brand image variable ($\xi 1$) of 0.123 indicates that brand image ($\xi 1$) influences purchasing decisions (η), but this influence is small or weak. However, in hypothesis testing, the brand image variable ($\xi 1$) produces a T-statistic value of 2.787 (2.787 ≥ 1.96) and a P-value of 0.006 (0.006 ≤ 0.05) with a significance level of 5%. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant favorable influence between brand image ($\xi 1$) and the purchase decision (η) of Nissan Livina Cars at PT Indomobil Trada Nasional-Nissan Cikarang.

Second, the exogenous latent variable Social Media Marketing ($\xi 2$) has 6 out of 8 feasible research indicators as measuring instruments after elimination based on the loading factor (λ) value. The most influential social media marketing research indicator is the indicator with the code SMM3, which has a value of 0.846. The F-squared value of the social media marketing variable ($\xi 2$) of 0.057 shows that social media marketing ($\xi 2$) influences purchasing decisions (η), although this influence is also tiny or weak. In hypothesis testing, the Social Media Marketing ($\xi 2$) variable produces a T-statistic value of 2.064 (2.064 ≥ 1.96) and a P-value of 0.040 (0.040 ≤ 0.05) with a significance level of 5%. Therefore, it can be concluded that social media marketing ($\xi 2$) has a significant favorable influence on the purchase decision (η) of Nissan Livina Cars at PT XYZ Cikarang.

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