



From Likes to Loyalty: How Brand Image Translates Social Media Marketing into Lasting Customer Commitment in the Skincare Industry

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Abstract:

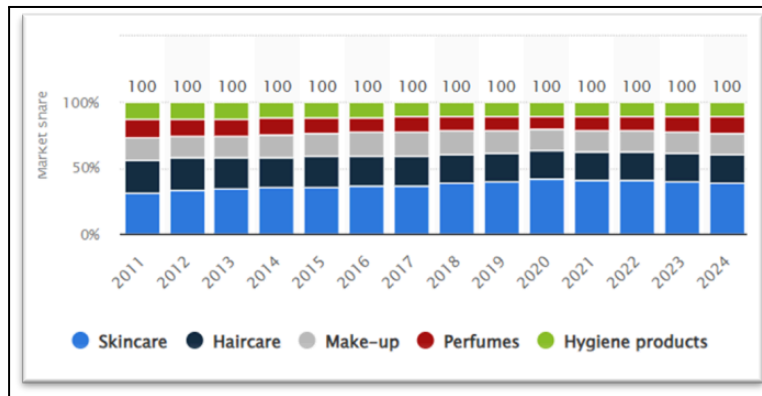
This study investigates the influence of brand experience and social media marketing on brand loyalty, with a specific focus on the mediating role of brand image in the context of skincare product consumption in Batam City. Data were collected from 280 users of Garnier, Pond's, and Skintific skincare products through a questionnaire employing a Likert scale. The research utilized a quantitative methodology with a non-probability sampling technique, and the data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-PLS). The findings reveal that brand experience and social media marketing both exert a significant positive influence on brand image and brand loyalty. Furthermore, brand image demonstrates a significant positive effect on brand loyalty, highlighting its critical role in fostering long-term customer commitment. An analysis of the mediating effects indicates that brand image does not significantly mediate the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. However, it does act as a significant mediator in the relationship between social media marketing and brand loyalty. These results suggest that a powerful brand experience can directly cultivate customer loyalty without a primary dependence on brand image. Conversely, the effectiveness of social media marketing in enhancing brand loyalty is contingent upon the successful establishment of a favorable brand image.

Keywords: Brand Experience; Brand Image; Brand Loyalty; Social Media Marketing.

1. Introduction

The global cosmetics industry has witnessed significant expansion in recent years, characterized by a demographic shift in its consumer base from older to younger generations (Petruzzi, 2025). This trend is partly driven by the early adoption of skincare routines among younger individuals aiming to delay the onset of premature aging. A prominent driver of growth within the Indonesian beauty market is the rising popularity of South Korean beauty products, commonly known as K-beauty. In 2023, Indonesia ranked fifth globally in K-beauty popularity, with cosmetic imports from South Korea reaching a value of 57 million US dollars, positioning it as the second-largest source of skincare imports for the nation (Nurhayati & Wolff, 2025)

Figure 1. World Cosmetics Market From 2011 to 2024



Source: Data from Statista

As illustrated in Figure 1, skincare products accounted for 40% of the total cosmetics market in 2023, with global usage demonstrating a consistent upward trend from 2011 to 2024. Companies operating in this competitive landscape must vie for shelf space not only with established international brands but also with more affordable imitation products. The market is increasingly shaped by non-Western beauty cultures, as consumers outside North America and Europe redefine beauty standards according to their own preferences. This has led to a greater emphasis on ethnic and cultural diversity, making variety and inclusivity the new norm in the global cosmetics market (Petruzzi, 2025). In Indonesia, the rapid proliferation of skincare usage has fueled substantial growth in the beauty and skincare sectors. The Indonesian cosmetics market grew by 7% in 2021 and a further 20.6% in the subsequent year, with the number of businesses in the beauty sector reaching 913 in 2022. According to data from the Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Indonesia, the industry is projected to continue its expansion at an annual rate of 5.91% in the coming years (Sekar Ayu Kartikaning Bonde et al., 2024). The pursuit of healthy, beautiful skin is a shared goal among Indonesian youth, irrespective of gender. Clear and smooth skin is widely regarded as a vital component of beauty, motivating young Indonesians to invest in their appearance and use skincare products to enhance their self-confidence (Idemon & Chairun Nisa, 2024).

For marketers, understanding and nurturing brand loyalty is crucial for establishing sustainable customer relationships. Brand loyalty serves as a key performance indicator for businesses, directly influencing market share (Bae & Kim, 2023). *It represents a consumer's commitment to repurchase a preferred product in the future, indicating that they are unlikely to switch brands even in varying circumstances and perceive the brand as beneficial to their lives* (Idemon & Chairun Nisa, 2024). The advancement of technology and online media has transformed social media into a powerful communication tool that transcends geographical and temporal barriers. It serves as a platform for communication, enabling marketers to direct consumers to product links containing detailed information, thus representing a simple and cost-effective marketing tool (Lutfiani et al., 2024). Marketing experts have long recognized that consumers are drawn to brands that offer memorable experiences. A stronger belief and trust in a brand correlate with a stronger link between brand experience and brand loyalty. A positive brand image significantly influences purchasing decisions. Loyal consumers tend to favor familiar products and are less inclined to switch to other brands, necessitating that brands consistently meet consumer expectations by maintaining and enhancing product quality (Pramesti et al., 2024).

This study aims to evaluate the impact of brand experience and social media marketing on brand loyalty in skincare product purchases, both directly and indirectly through the mediating variable of brand image. The research is expected to provide academic and practical contributions for companies and valuable information for skincare consumers. Theoretically, this study expands the existing literature on brand marketing by examining the relationships between brand experience, social media marketing, and brand loyalty, as mediated by brand image in the skincare context. Practically, the findings can inform skincare companies in designing social media marketing strategies that focus on creating a positive brand experience and leveraging social media effectively to strengthen brand image and, ultimately, enhance brand loyalty. Thus, this research not only enriches the marketing literature but also offers relevant guidance for industry practitioners.

This study distinguishes itself from prior research through its selection of independent variables. Previous studies on brand loyalty have often focused on variables such as Consumer Perceived Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (Bae & Kim, 2023), or a combination of Trust, Self-Image, Quality, and Perceived Ease of Use (Kim & Yang, 2025). Research examining the direct link between social media marketing and brand loyalty remains limited, and the mediating role of brand image in this context is also underexplored. Other mediating variables, such as customer satisfaction, have been more commonly investigated (Kim & Yang, 2025; Zaato et al., 2023). Therefore, this study adopts a different perspective by investigating brand experience and social media marketing as independent variables, brand image as a mediating variable, and brand loyalty as the dependent variable.

2. Literature Review

Brand Experience

Brand experience is defined as the subjective, internal reactions of consumers—encompassing sensations, emotions, thoughts, and actions—that arise in response to brand-related stimuli. These stimuli include aspects of brand design and identity, packaging, communications, and the overall environment. In essence, brand experience constitutes the feelings and emotions generated by a brand (Bae & Kim, 2023). The concept has evolved beyond purely functional, practical, and rational attributes that fulfill basic consumer needs. It now encompasses a broader range of subjective responses and behaviors elicited by brand-related stimuli, including design, communication, environment, and interaction (Liang et al., 2024). Brand experience refers to the cumulative experiences a consumer acquires through direct interaction with a brand, via the use and consumption of its products or services. This experience reflects the consumer's subjective responses, formed through sensory, affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions during product usage. The primary function of brand experience is to provide consumers with a deeper understanding of a product's characteristics, performance, and benefits as they are perceived in the context of daily use. Direct experience enables consumers to evaluate product quality more objectively, including its efficacy, ability to meet their needs, and the value it provides. Consistent positive experiences cultivate a favorable perception of the brand, increase satisfaction levels, and strengthen the emotional bond between the consumer and the brand. Furthermore, a strong brand experience encourages consumers to share their experiences with others, both through interpersonal communication and social media, thereby generating positive word-of-mouth recommendations. Consequently, brand experience plays a strategic role in influencing consumer attitudes, reinforcing brand trust, and supporting a company's efforts to build loyalty and expand its consumer base sustainably (Salsabila & Nurhadi, 2022). Penelitian (Liang et al., 2024) indicates that the brand experience is shaped by both direct and indirect interactions, including product quality, service, communication, and emotional aspects, all of which contribute to building a positive perception. A superior brand experience leads to a more positive brand image (Liang et al., 2024). The same study also suggests that a pleasant, consistent, and meaningful brand experience strengthens consumer perceptions of the brand, fostering trust that ultimately cultivates brand loyalty. Based on this, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H₁: *Brand Experience has a significant effect on Brand Image in the context of skincare product purchases*

H₂: *Brand Experience has a significant effect on Brand Loyalty in the context of skincare product purchases*

Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing refers to a series of strategic actions undertaken by a company to market goods or services online through various social media platforms. This process extends beyond promotional activities to include building and maintaining long-term customer relationships. Social media enables companies to interact more intimately with customers, share relevant information, offer personalized purchase recommendations, and encourage word-of-mouth marketing. The interactive features of these platforms allow users to collaborate, share information, and actively participate in the creation and dissemination of brand-related content. Social media has become a critical component of corporate marketing strategy, serving to enhance product value, improve brand image, and increase competitiveness. Its reach often surpasses that of traditional media such as radio, television, and print (Ali et al., 2024). The use of social media has become an increasingly crucial strategy for promoting brands, regardless of company size. Beyond its function as a communication and promotional tool, social media serves as a strategic instrument for building brand identity to increase market value and competitiveness. A primary objective of social media use is the creation and reinforcement of the brand, as these platforms allow companies to consistently convey their values, image, and uniqueness to a broad audience. Social Media Marketing emphasizes continuous interaction between the company and consumers, fostering a stronger emotional connection. By delivering relevant, informative, and valuable content, companies can increase consumer engagement and build brand trust. Ultimately, intensive and sustained interaction through social media contributes to increased brand loyalty, reflected in consumers' propensity to make repeat purchases and recommend the brand to others (Aditya Syahputra & Kurniawati, 2023). It is essential for every company to showcase the superiority of its products, and social media provides one of the most effective methods for reaching all demographics (Pasaribu & Achmadi, 2024). Research by (Gupta & Singh, 2023) and (Park & Namkung, 2022) supports the notion that social media marketing can forge a psychological connection that triggers an emotional response from consumers, thereby strengthening the brand image. From this, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H₃: Social Media Marketing has a significant effect on Brand Image in the context of skincare product purchases.

H₄: Social Media Marketing has a significant effect on Brand Loyalty in the context of skincare product purchases.

Brand Image

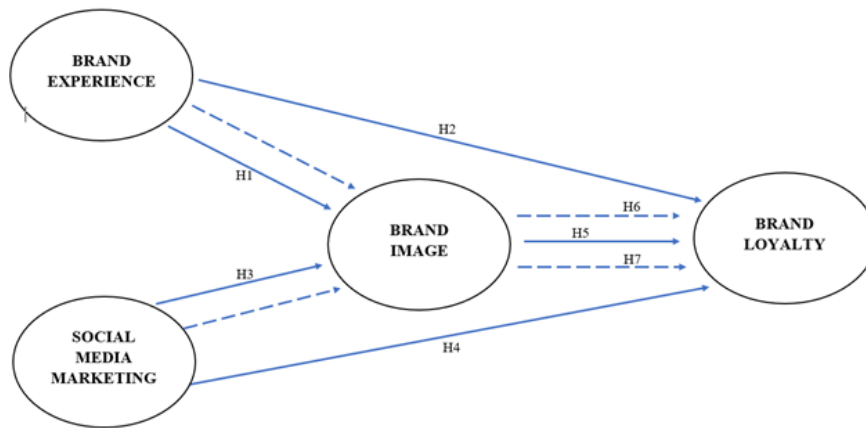
Brand images are the set of beliefs, perceptions, and impressions that form in a consumer's mind regarding a brand, resulting from a repetitive evaluation process. This perception plays a profound role in influencing consumer decisions when choosing a particular product or brand, as it often forms the primary basis for consumer attitudes and behaviors. In other words, a consumer's attitude, purchase intention, and actions toward a brand are highly dependent on how its image is perceived. A positive brand image leads to an enhanced perception of product quality, higher consumer satisfaction, and greater brand trust. Therefore, managing brand image is a strategic aspect that companies cannot afford to overlook. Brand image can be formed and recognized by consumers even before they have direct experience with a product, typically through marketing activities such as promotions, advertising, and integrated marketing communications. A strong brand image provides a clear identity for a business, differentiates it from competitors, and serves as a tool for creating sustainable added value. By building and maintaining a positive and consistent brand image, a company can strengthen its competitive position, increase consumer loyalty, and drive long-term business growth (Park & Namkung, 2022). Brand image is related to brand equity, or the value of a brand, and reflects the various effects a brand has on consumer responses (Kim & Yang, 2025). Research by (Gupta & Singh, 2023; Liang et al., 2024; Park & Namkung, 2022) indicates that building a strong brand image is instrumental in fostering positive brand loyalty. Brand image plays a key role in bridging transient digital interactions with long-term brand loyalty. The perception of social media marketing as informative, coupled with unique and engaging content, results in a better brand image, which in turn enhances the consumer's psychological connection to the product and encourages brand loyalty (Gupta & Singh, 2023). Based on this literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H₅: Brand Image has a significant effect on Brand Loyalty in the context of skincare product purchases.

H₆: Brand Image mediates the relationship between Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty in the context of skincare product purchases.

H₇: Brand Image mediates the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Brand Loyalty in the context of skincare product purchases.

Figure 2. Research Model



3. Method

This study employed a quantitative approach to explain the relationships between several variables and to elucidate the phenomenon by collecting numerical data, which were then analyzed using mathematical and statistical methods (Soesana et al., 2023). The subjects of this research were individuals in Batam City who use skincare products from the brands Garnier, Pond's, and Skintific. The selection of these brands was based on the fact that they are among the most widely used in Indonesia (Snapcart TASC Online Survey, 2023). Primary data were collected through a questionnaire distributed via a Google Form link shared on social media platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp. The target respondents were required to meet specific criteria. The sampling method used was non-probability sampling, where not every individual in the population had an equal chance of being selected as a sample. The sample size was determined using the Hair et al. formula, which is suitable for populations of unknown size. This formula involves multiplying the number of indicators by a factor ranging from 5 to 10. For this study, the number of indicators was multiplied by 10, resulting in a required sample size of 280 respondents. The questionnaire utilized a 5-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). The indicators for each variable are detailed in the tables below:

Table 1. Brand Experience Indicators

No.	Statements
1	I understand the cultural values reflected in this product.
2	The product leaves a deep visual impression on me.
3	The product encourages me to think more carefully when choosing skincare.
4	The product makes me more interested in using it.
5	Using the product makes me feel happy.
6	Using the product makes me feel more relaxed.

Note: (Liang et al., 2024).

Table 2. Social Media Marketing Indicators

No.	Statements
1	I am interested in the content displayed on the product's social media.
2	I enjoy gathering information about the product through social media.
3	It is easy to find the information I need on the product's social media.
4	The product's social media provides the services I need.

- 5 It is easy for me to express my opinion through the product's social media.
- 6 The product's social media allows me to express my opinion and discuss with other users.
- 7 The product's social media enables two-way communication.
- 8 After seeing the social media, I am interested in sharing product information with friends.
- 9 I would post content about the product on my own social media.
- 10 The product's social media is very trendy.
- 11 The content on the product's social media provides up-to-date information.

Note: (Ali et al., 2024)

Table 3. Brand Image Indicators

No.	Statements
1	The product has an up-to-date image.
2	I feel this product is more familiar.
3	The product has a trustworthy image.
4	The product's image provides a glimpse of future trends.
5	The product has a good reputation.

Note: (Kim & Yang, 2025)

Table 4. Brand Loyalty Indicators

No.	Statements
1	I will say positive things about the product to other people.
2	I will shop for the product more often in the next few years.
3	I would advise friends to buy the product.
4	I would recommend the product to community members who ask for advice.
5	This product will be my first choice when I make a purchase.
6	I am willing to pay more for the next product.

Note: (Mim et al., 2022)

4. Findings and discussion

Respondent Demographics

The characteristics of the respondents were measured to obtain a comprehensive overview of the consumer profile for skincare products. This included demographic and behavioral aspects such as gender, age, education level, monthly expenditure on skincare, type of product used, and duration of use. These metrics provide insights into the consumption patterns and purchasing power of the respondents. Table 5 presents the demographic profile of the 280 participants.

Table 5. Respondent Demographics

Gender	Frequency
Male	65
Female	215
Total	280
Usia	Frequency
≤ 17 Years	46
18 – 27 Years	165
28 – 37 Years	57
38 – 44 Years	9
≥ 45 Years	3
Total	280
Education Level	Frequency
Elementary School	0
Middle School	31
High School/Vocational School	60
Diploma (D3)	15
Bachelor's Degree (S1)	165

Master's/Doctorate (S2/S3)	9
Total	280
Monthly Expenditure on Skincare	Frequency
< Rp 250.000,-	111
Rp 250.000,- s/d Rp 500.000,-	41
>Rp 500.000,-	128
Total	280
Skincare Product Used	Frequency
Garnier	70
Pond's	39
Skintific	171
Total	280
Duration of Product Use	Frequency
<1 Years	128
1 s/d 3 Years	101
>3 Years	51
Total	280

Note: Primary data processing (2026)

In Table 5, demographic data shows that the majority of respondents who use skincare products are women, totaling 215 people, while the remaining 65 respondents are men. Furthermore, the age of respondents is dominated by those aged 18-27 years, totaling 165 people, and the minority in using skincare products are those aged 45 years or older, totaling 3 people. In terms of education level, the majority of respondents have a bachelor's degree, totaling 165 people, and there are no respondents with an elementary school education. While the monthly expenditure of respondents to purchase skincare products was predominantly more than Rp. 500,000 for 128 people and for expenditures ranging from Rp. 250,000 to Rp. 500,000 for only 41 people. The most widely used skincare products are, in order: Skintific (171 respondents), Garnier (70 respondents), and Pond's (39 respondents). Regarding the duration of product use, the majority have been using the products for less than 1 year (128 respondents).

2. Reliability and Validity

Validity tests were conducted to evaluate whether the questionnaire data were valid. For convergent validity, the loading factor for each indicator should be greater than 0.6, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) should be greater than 0.5. A questionnaire is considered reliable if the Composite Reliability is greater than 0.6 and the Cronbach's Alpha is greater than 0.6 (Wiyono, 2020). Table 6 presents the results of the reliability and validity analyses.

Table 6. Results of Indicator Reliability, Construct Reliability, Convergent Validity, and R-Square

Variables	Indicators	Loading Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE	R ²
Brand Experience	BE1	0,621	0,850	0,889	0,576	0,583
	BE2	0,716				
	BE3	0,665				
	BE4	0,826				
	BE5	0,859				
	BE6	0,835				
Brand Image	BI1	0,846	0,881	0,913	0,676	0,583
	BI2	0,774				
	BI3	0,846				
	BI4	0,841				
	BI5	0,802				
Brand Loyalty	BL1	0,806	0,913	0,933	0,698	0,588
	BL2	0,846				

Variables	Indicators	Loading Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE	R ²
Social Media Marketing	BL3	0,859	0,899	0,917	0,525	
	BL4	0,833				
	BL5	0,882				
	BL6	0,784				
	SMM1	0,718				
	SMM2	0,623				
	SMM3	0,711				
	SMM4	0,777				
	SMM5	0,716				
	SMM6	0,731				
	SMM7	0,703				
SMM8	0,709					
SMM9	0,512					
SMM10	0,768					
SMM11	0,774					

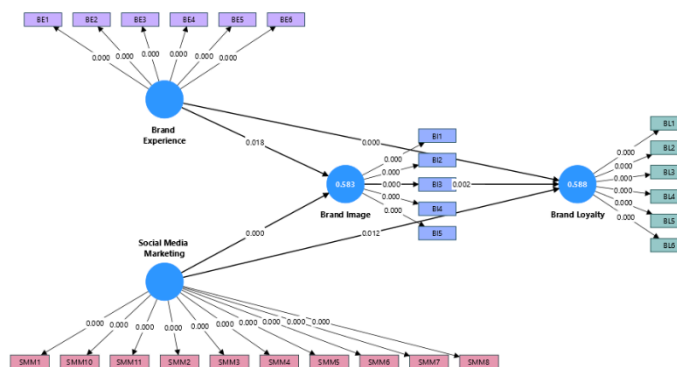
Note: SmartPLS 4 Data Processing (2026)

Table 6 shows that each indicator in the variables of brand experience, brand image, and brand loyalty has a loading factor value of more than 0.6, so each indicator can be considered valid, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value is greater than 0.5. However, for the ninth indicator of social media marketing, the value is 0.512, which is less than 0.6 and is therefore considered invalid. Consequently, this indicator is not included in the hypothesis testing. Each variable has a Cronbach's Alpha value greater than 0.6 and a Composite Reliability value greater than 0.6, so the research questionnaire is considered reliable. The R-Square value for the independent variable of brand loyalty is 0.588 and the mediation variable of brand image is 0.583, indicating that these values are in the range of 0 to 1, meaning that approximately 58% of the variables are able to explain almost all of the information needed to predict the independent variable.

3. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is conducted to understand the direct impact between variables that can be analyzed through path coefficient results, which indicate the direction and strength of the relationship between variables. A relationship is considered significant if the T-statistics value (>) is greater than 1.96 and the P-values (<) are less than 0.05, indicating that the effect is statistically acceptable. In the research model, exogenous variables are variables that act as independent variables where the variables are not influenced by other variables in the model, but serve to influence other variables. Meanwhile, endogenous variables are dependent variables that are influenced by one or more other variables, either directly or indirectly. Meanwhile, indirect effects are used to test the indirect influence of exogenous latent variables on endogenous latent variables through endogenous latent mediators. The relationship is considered significant if the T-statistics value (>) is greater than 1.96 and the P-values (<) are less than 0.05 (Wiyono, 2020).

Figure 3. Research Model



Source: SmartPLS 4 Data Processing (2026)

Table 6. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	T-Statistics	P Values	Result
BE □ BI	2.358	0.018	Sig.
SMM □ BI	9.107	0.000	Sig.
BE □ BL	6.385	0.000	Sig.
SMM □ BL	2.502	0.012	Sig.
BI □ BL	3.147	0.002	Sig.
BE □ BI □ BL	1.879	0.060	No Sig.
SMM □ BI □ BL	2.927	0.003	Sig.

Note: BE = Brand Experience; SMM = Social Media Marketing; BI = Brand Image; BL = Brand Loyalty

Referring to Figure 3 and Table 6, the following explanation can be given regarding the hypothesis formulation:

H1: Brand Experience has a significant effect on Brand Image in the context of skincare product purchases

The relationship between brand experience and the variable *brand image* has a T-Statistics value of 2.358 (>1.96) and a P-Value of 0.018 (<0.05). This value indicates that BE (*Brand Experience*) has a significant effect on BI (*Brand Image*). This is supported by research (Liang et al., 2024), which explains that *brand experience* has a significant effect on the formation of a product's *brand image*. The findings show that consumer experience in using a product plays an important role in shaping their perceptions and assessments of the brand. Directly and indirectly, brand experience is formed through various forms of interaction, including perceived product quality, quality of service received, effectiveness of marketing communication, and emotional aspects that arise during the consumption process. These interactions cumulatively form a deep impression in the minds of consumers regarding the characteristics and value of the brand. The more positive the experience felt by consumers in using a product, the stronger the positive perception formed towards the brand. This indicates that a brand experience that is managed consistently and oriented towards consumer satisfaction will encourage the creation of a good brand image, increase consumer trust, and strengthen the brand's position amid market competition. Thus, companies need to pay special attention to brand experience management as an important strategy in building and maintaining a superior and sustainable brand image.

H2: Brand Experience has a significant effect on Brand Loyalty in the context of skincare product purchases.

The influence between the variable *brand experience* and the variable *brand loyalty* has a T-Statistics value of 6.385 (>1.96) and P-Values of 0.000 (<0.05). This value indicates that BE (*Brand Experience*) has a significant influence on BL (*Brand Loyalty*). The relationship between the two variables is significant because brands that are consistently able to deliver superior product quality and are supported by excellent service tend to more easily gain consumer trust and commitment. Consistency in providing a satisfying experience will shape positive perceptions of the brand, encouraging consumers to continue choosing and using the same brand in the long term. In this context, brand experience plays a key role in influencing brand loyalty, as the experience consumers have during the product usage process will be the main basis for their repurchase decision. When consumers have a positive experience that meets their expectations, their level of satisfaction and emotional attachment to the brand will increase, thereby encouraging the formation of brand loyalty. Various previous studies have stated that brand experience has a positive and significant influence on brand loyalty, where a good brand experience can strengthen the long-term relationship between consumers and brands. Therefore, companies need to focus their marketing strategies on creating consistent and valuable brand experiences to defend consumer loyalty and increase business sustainability amid market competition (Bae & Kim, 2023). Research (Liang et al., 2024) also indicates that brand experience has a significant influence on the formation of brand image, where a pleasant and consistent brand experience will strengthen consumers' views and assessments of a brand. These positive experiences are formed through various consumer interactions with the brand, whether functional, emotional, or symbolic, creating a deep impression on consumers. When consumers repeatedly have satisfying experiences, their perceptions of the brand's quality, reliability, and credibility will increase. These positive perceptions then shape consumer confidence in the brand and become the main foundation for building long-term relationships. A

strong and positive brand image then acts as a mediating factor that encourages brand loyalty, as consumers tend to maintain their preferences and show commitment to brands with a good image. Thus, consistent brand experience management that is oriented towards consumer satisfaction is the best and most important strategy for companies in strengthening their brand image while also fostering consumer loyalty to the products they offer.

H3: Social Media Marketing has a significant effect on Brand Image in the context of skincare product purchases.

The results between the social media marketing variable and the brand image variable have a T-Statistics value of 9.107 (>1.96) and P-Values of 0.000 (<0.05). This value proves that SMM (Social Media Marketing) has a significant effect on BI (Brand Image). In this context, social media marketing affects product sales and can influence brand image. This proves that marketing strategies carried out through social platforms have a significant impact on consumer perceptions of product brands. With the right approach to social media marketing, a favorable brand image can be created among consumers. Every company needs to showcase the advantages of the products they market, and using social media is the most effective method that can reach all groups (Pasaribu & Achmadi, 2024). Research (Gupta & Singh, 2023; Park & Namkung, 2022) In addition, research also supports that Social Media Marketing has a significant influence on the formation of brand image, because this platform shows the possibility for companies to build close psychological relationships between consumers and products. Consumers tend to respond to brands more personally when the messages conveyed through social media are consistent, use the right tone, and present content that is authentic and relevant to their needs and preferences. The delivery of the right message not only increases brand awareness but also triggers an emotional response from consumers, such as trust, satisfaction, and attachment to the brand. This emotional response then reinforces consumers' positive perceptions of a product's brand image, which in turn can encourage loyalty and long-term commitment to the brand. Thus, social media marketing not only serves as a promotional tool, but is also considered an important strategy in building a consistent brand image, creating interactive experiences, and strengthening the emotional connection between consumers and products, thereby increasing the value and competitiveness of brands in the increasingly competitive world of marketing.

H4: Social Media Marketing has a significant effect on Brand Loyalty in the context of skincare product purchases.

The influence between the variable *social media marketing* and the variable *brand loyalty* has a T-Statistics value of 2.502 (<1.96) and P-Values of 0.012 (>0.05). These values indicate that SMM (*Social Media Marketing*) has a significant influence on BL (*Brand Loyalty*). The focus of social media marketing is on the connection to the brand, its value, and brand trust, which will shape the level of brand loyalty among consumers. In a study (Ali et al., 2024) on the relationship between self-brand connection, it was found that this variable is closely related to the formation of brand loyalty. Self-brand connection reflects the level of consumer suitability and attachment to a brand, where the brand is able to represent the values, personality, and identity of consumers. When consumers feel compatible and have a strong connection with a product or brand, this will give rise to positive attitudes that are sustainable, such as trust, preference, and long-term commitment to the brand. Strong brand loyalty is not formed instantly, but through a process that involves consistency in brand messaging, delivery of authentic content, and the creation of deep emotional connections between the company and its customers. Through meaningful and relevant interactions, brands not only become known or attract consumers' attention, but are also able to build harmonious and mutually beneficial relationships with their consumers. This strong relationship between the product and consumers ultimately contributes to strengthening brand loyalty, which is reflected in consumers' tendency to continue using the brand, make repeat purchases, and recommend the brand to others. Thus, strengthening the self-brand connection is an important strategy for companies in creating sustainable brand loyalty amid increasingly competitive markets.

H5: Brand Image has a significant effect on Brand Loyalty in the context of skincare product purchases.

The influence between the *brand image* variable and the *brand loyalty* variable has a T-Statistics value of 3.147 (>1.96) and a P-Value of 0.002 (<0.05). This value indicates that BI (*Brand Image*) has a positive and significant influence on BL (*Brand Loyalty*). The results of this study are in line with (Gupta & Singh, 2023; Liang et al., 2024; Park & Namkung, 2022) that the formation of a strong and positive brand image plays a very important role in creating and increasing consumer brand loyalty. Brand image serves as a key factor that connects various forms of temporary digital interactions with long-term brand loyalty. In the context of digital marketing, consumers are often exposed to various forms of interaction with brands through social media, websites, and other digital

platforms, which cumulatively shape their perceptions of the brand. If the brand image conveyed and perceived by consumers is consistent, positive, and in line with their values and expectations, this will encourage the formation of lasting emotional attachment. This emotional attachment is the main foundation for building a long-term relationship between consumers and brands, which is ultimately reflected in loyal behavior, such as repeat purchases, brand preference, and willingness to recommend products to others. Thus, effective brand image management through various digital interactions not only plays a role in building positive perceptions, but also serves as an important strategy in creating sustainable brand loyalty and strengthening the brand's position amid increasingly competitive market competition.

H6: Brand Image mediates the relationship between Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty in the context of skincare product purchases.

The influence between the *brand experience* variable and the *brand loyalty* variable mediated by the brand image variable has a T-Statistics value of 1.879 (<1.96) and a P-Value of 0.060 (>0.05). This value indicates that BE (Brand Experience) with the mediating variable BI (Brand Image) does not have a significant effect on BL (Brand Loyalty). The role of brand experience in shaping brand perception is a very important aspect for consumers, both cognitively and emotionally. Effective brand experience encompasses various elements, such as product innovation, service quality, brand motivation, and satisfying interactions, which as a whole are able to attract consumers' attention and form a strong relationship with the brand. This positive experience influences consumers' perceptions of brand image, because the perceived value, level of satisfaction, and emotional attachment formed during interactions with the product or brand will encourage consumer loyalty. In other words, consumers who have had rich and satisfying brand experiences tend to exhibit loyal behavior, such as repeat purchases and product recommendations, without relying too much on brand image perceptions or other mediating variables to form that loyalty. This phenomenon shows a different dynamic from several previous studies, which emphasized that brand image plays an important mediating role in the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. This indicates that consistent, authentic, and valuable brand experience management for consumers can directly increase brand loyalty, while emphasizing the importance of companies focusing on creating memorable and relevant brand experiences as a strategy to strengthen their brand position in a competitive market (Liang et al., 2024) which shows that brand image is a key mediator for the development of brand loyalty.

H7: Brand Image mediates the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Brand Loyalty in the context of skincare product purchases.

The influence between the social media marketing variable and the brand loyalty variable, mediated by the brand image variable, has a T-Statistics value of 2.927 (>1.96) and a P-Value of 0.003 (<0.05). This value proves that SMM (Social Media Marketing) has a significant influence on BL (Brand Loyalty) with BI (Brand Image) as a mediating variable. Consumer perceptions of Social Media Marketing that are informative and accompanied by unique, interesting, and relevant content have a significant impact on the formation of a brand's image. Creatively packaged and valuable content not only attracts consumers' attention but also builds a positive brand image in their minds. A brand image that is consistently formed through digital interactions then strengthens the psychological relationship between consumers and products, creating emotional attachment and belief in the brand. This psychological connection is an important foundation in driving brand loyalty, because consumers who feel connected to a brand tend to be more loyal, make repeat purchases, and even recommend the product to others. Thus, if a brand continuously implements a marketing strategy through Social Media Marketing with a focus on building a strong and positive brand image, this will not only increase brand awareness and image, but also directly contribute to increasing consumer loyalty to the product. This strategy emphasizes the importance of integrating digital content quality, communication consistency, and the creation of interactive experiences that can maintain long-term relationships with consumers in an increasingly competitive digital era (Gupta & Singh, 2023).

5. Conclusion and recommendation

This study shows that skin care products have a significant impact on brand image and brand loyalty. This is based on findings and discussions about how brand experience and social media marketing influence brand loyalty and image as mediating variables. There is evidence that brand image directly influences brand loyalty. In

addition, brand image has a significant impact on brand loyalty. However, brand image cannot mediate the relationship between brand loyalty and brand experience.

The suggestion that can be taken from this study for skincare product companies is to focus more on marketing strategies and strengthening brand experience and brand image, because this study shows that these two variables have a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty. Companies need to improve the quality of brand experience, starting from product quality, packaging, and ease of use to service. Furthermore, a strong and consistent brand image will reflect product safety, which can increase consumer trust. Maximizing social media marketing is not only a means of promotion but also a way to build brand image with educational content, user testimonials, and collaboration with credible beauty influencers. Future researchers can add other variables such as customer satisfaction, brand trust, and perceived quality to make this research more complete in creating a research model. This study shows that the theoretical implication can strengthen the theory that brand experience plays an important role in shaping brand image and brand loyalty in skincare products. This study also proves that brand image functions as a mediating variable in the relationship between social media marketing and brand loyalty, but not in the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. The finding that social media marketing does not directly affect brand loyalty shows that brand loyalty is formed through a long-term process that begins with the formation of brand image. For managerial implications, companies need to prioritize improving brand experience because it has been proven to build brand loyalty directly. Social media marketing strategies should focus on forming a positive brand image rather than just increasing sales. A consistently managed brand image has been proven to play an important role in increasing brand loyalty among skincare consumers

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