

THE INFLUENCE OF VIRAL MARKETING, BRAND AWARENESS, AND FEAR OF MISSING OUT (FOMO) ON SKINCARE PURCHASE DECISIONS (SKINTIFIC SKINCARE USERS IN MADIUN CITY)

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of Viral Marketing, Brand Awareness, and Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) on Purchase Decision for Skintific skincare products in Madiun City. This study employed a quantitative approach using a survey method. Primary data were collected through questionnaires from 385 respondents selected using non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling technique. The respondents were Skintific consumers aged 17–45 years who had purchased Skintific products at least once and resided in Madiun City. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS. The results show that Viral Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decision, with a path coefficient of 0.523, a t-statistic of 17.806, and a p-value of 0.000. Brand Awareness also has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decision, with a path coefficient of 0.462, a t-statistic of 15.980, and a p-value of 0.000. Furthermore, Fear of Missing Out has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decision, with a path coefficient of 0.462, a t-statistic of 17.806, and a p-value of 0.000. The R-square value of 0.736 indicates that Viral Marketing, Brand Awareness, and FoMO collectively explain 73.6% of the variance in Purchase Decision. These findings indicate that digital information dissemination, consumers' awareness of the Skintific brand, and psychological responses to current trends are important factors associated with consumers' purchasing decisions.

Keywords: *Viral Marketing; Brand Awareness; Fear of Missing Out; Purchase Decision; Skintific.*

A. INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of digital technology has transformed the way businesses communicate with consumers and conduct marketing activities. The widespread use of the internet and social media has encouraged companies to utilize digital platforms to disseminate information and interact with consumers. Through digital marketing, businesses can reach broader audiences

in a relatively fast and interactive manner, which may subsequently shape consumer perceptions and purchasing behavior (Aprilia et al., 2023; Aqila et al., 2023).

The transformation of consumer lifestyles has also contributed to the continued development of the beauty and skincare industry in Indonesia. Growing attention to personal appearance and skin care has created increasing demand for skincare products, while the diversity of products available in the market has intensified competition among brands (Arsya et al., 2024). Under these circumstances, skincare companies need to understand consumer preferences and develop marketing strategies that can attract and retain consumers (Apriliani & Ekowati, 2023).

One brand that has received substantial attention in the Indonesian skincare market is Skintific. The brand entered the Indonesian market in late 2021 and subsequently achieved strong sales performance and several awards. According to the data presented in the study, Skintific ranked first in skincare sales in 2024, with sales exceeding IDR 70 billion, while its official store generated approximately IDR 64 billion. In the first quarter of 2025, the brand was also reported to hold a 4.10% market share.

The popularity of Skintific can also be observed in Madiun City. The Google Trends data presented in the study indicate that Skintific obtained a search-interest value of 56%, higher than Glad2Glow at 30%. The relatively strong search interest suggests that Skintific has considerable visibility among consumers in Madiun City and provides a relevant context for examining the factors associated with skincare purchase decisions.

Purchase Decision represents an important component of consumer behavior because consumers generally move through several stages before deciding to purchase a product, including recognizing a need, searching for information, and evaluating available alternatives (Burta, 2018). For skincare products, these stages can involve searching for product information through social media, reviews, and recommendations before comparing different alternatives.

One factor potentially associated with Purchase Decision is Viral Marketing. This marketing approach facilitates the distribution of product-related information through digital

networks, allowing reviews, testimonials, recommendations, and promotional content to circulate rapidly among consumers. Social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram provide an environment in which such content can be consumed and shared, potentially increasing consumer exposure to a brand and its products (Sopini & Susanti, 2024; Utami et al., 2025; Widjaja & Alexandra, 2019).

Nevertheless, previous empirical findings concerning Viral Marketing and Purchase Decision remain inconsistent. Utami D et al. (2025) reported a positive and significant relationship between the two variables, whereas Muhammad N et al. (2025) found that Viral Marketing did not significantly influence purchasing decisions. The contrasting results indicate that the relationship between Viral Marketing and Purchase Decision warrants further examination in different research settings.

Brand Awareness represents another factor that may influence consumers' purchasing decisions. It refers to consumers' capacity to recognize and remember a particular brand based on their perceptions and attitudes toward that brand (Prajogo & Purwanto, 2020). When consumers are familiar with a brand, the brand may become easier to recall when they are faced with several alternatives. For Skintific, repeated exposure through digital media may strengthen consumers' familiarity with the brand and increase the likelihood that it will be recalled when they are considering skincare products.

However, research findings concerning the influence of Brand Awareness on Purchase Decision are likewise not uniform. Sulaiman and Nurtjahjani (2023) found a positive and significant influence, whereas Ningrum and Tobing (2022) reported that Brand Awareness did not significantly affect Purchase Decision. These differences provide an empirical basis for reassessing the relationship between Brand Awareness and Purchase Decision, particularly among skincare consumers in a specific local market.

Apart from marketing and brand-related factors, consumers' psychological conditions may also play a role in purchasing behavior. Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) describes feelings of anxiety

or concern about being left behind from information, experiences, or trends perceived as important, particularly in environments characterized by intensive social media use (Ikhwanda & Giyana, 2025). Within the skincare market, exposure to viral products, recommendations, and trending content may generate concerns about missing current developments and potentially encourage consumers to respond more quickly to purchasing opportunities.

The empirical evidence regarding FoMO and Purchase Decision is also mixed. Fauziah et al. (2025), Dudi Permana (2025), and Irma and Mutiara (2024) reported positive and significant effects of FoMO on Purchase Decision. In contrast, Mukhroji et al. (2025) found that FoMO did not significantly influence Purchase Decision. These inconsistent findings suggest that the relationship between FoMO and purchasing behavior requires further empirical testing.

The preliminary survey conducted in this study provides additional empirical grounds for examining the three variables. The Content Forwarding indicator obtained the highest mean score for Viral Marketing at 4.37, indicating respondents' tendency to share or forward skincare-related information through social media. For Brand Awareness, Recall recorded the highest mean score of 4.46, suggesting that respondents could remember skincare brands relatively easily. Meanwhile, the Concern indicator of FoMO obtained a mean score of 4.06, reflecting respondents' concern about missing current skincare information or trends. In relation to Purchase Decision, Information Search achieved the highest mean score of 4.25, indicating that respondents tended to seek product information before making a purchase.

These empirical conditions, combined with the inconsistent findings reported by previous studies, establish a research gap that warrants further investigation. Although Skintific demonstrates substantial consumer attention in Madiun City, purchasing decisions may not be determined solely by product popularity or viral trends. Consumers may simultaneously respond to the extent to which product information circulates through social media, their ability to recognize and recall the brand, and psychological concerns associated with being left behind by current trends.

Therefore, examining Viral Marketing, Brand Awareness, and Fear of Missing Out simultaneously may provide a more comprehensive explanation of the factors associated with consumers' Purchase Decision toward Skintific skincare products. Based on the identified phenomenon, preliminary survey results, and inconsistencies in previous empirical findings, this study aims to examine the influence of Viral Marketing, Brand Awareness, and Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) on Purchase Decision among Skintific skincare users in Madiun City.

B. METHOD

This research adopted a quantitative approach and employed a survey design to investigate the relationships between Viral Marketing, Brand Awareness, Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), and Purchase Decision among Skintific skincare consumers in Madiun City. Primary data were obtained directly from respondents through a structured questionnaire.

The research population comprised consumers of Skintific skincare products residing in Madiun City. A total of 385 respondents were selected through non-probability sampling using purposive sampling. Respondents were required to meet the predetermined criteria, namely being male or female consumers aged 17–45 years, having purchased Skintific products at least once, and residing in Madiun City. The required sample size was obtained from the calculation of 384.16 respondents and rounded to 385 respondents.

Data collection was conducted using an online questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. The questionnaire was disseminated through social media and community groups to reach respondents who satisfied the established sampling criteria. Each statement was measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2), to Strongly Disagree (1).

The research model comprised Viral Marketing (X1), Brand Awareness (X2), and Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) (X3) as independent variables, while Purchase Decision (Y) served as the dependent variable. Viral Marketing was operationalized through Affection-Altruism, Curiosity, Content Forwarding, and Content Consumption. Brand Awareness was measured using Recall,

Recognition, Purchase, and Consumption. FoMO consisted of Fear, Concern, and Anxiety, whereas Purchase Decision was represented by Need Recognition, Information Search, and Alternative Evaluation.

Data processing and hypothesis testing were performed using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS. The evaluation involved two stages, namely the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model).

The outer model assessment was conducted to determine whether the indicators adequately measured their respective constructs. The evaluation included convergent validity, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), discriminant validity, and reliability. Convergent validity was assessed based on the outer loading values and AVE. Discriminant validity was examined through cross-loading values to determine whether each indicator demonstrated a stronger association with its corresponding construct. Construct reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability.

The inner model was subsequently evaluated to examine the relationships among the latent variables. R-square (R^2) was used to assess the explanatory capability of the model, while Q-square (Q^2) was employed to evaluate its predictive relevance. Hypothesis testing was performed through the bootstrapping procedure, with the assessment based on path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values. A relationship was considered statistically significant when the t-statistic exceeded 1.96 and the p-value was below 0.05.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Respondent Characteristics

The study obtained responses from 385 Skintific skincare consumers who fulfilled the sampling requirements. Female respondents represented the larger proportion of the sample, accounting for 311 respondents (80.8%), while male respondents accounted for 74 respondents (19.2%). In terms of domicile, respondents were distributed across Manguharjo, Kartoharjo, and

Taman Districts, with 112 respondents (29.1%), 132 respondents (34.3%), and 141 respondents (36.6%), respectively.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics	Category	n	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	74	19.2%
	Female	311	80.8%
Domicile	Manguharjo	112	29.1%
	Kartoharjo	132	34.3%
	Taman	141	36.6%
Total		385	100%

Source: Processed primary data, 2026.

The respondent distribution shows that the sample was dominated by female consumers. The domicile distribution, however, was relatively spread across the three districts of Madiun City, with Taman contributing the largest proportion of respondents.

2. Measurement Model Evaluation

The measurement model was examined to determine whether the indicators adequately represented their respective constructs. The evaluation involved outer loading, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability.

The outer loading results indicate that the indicators used in the model met the required validity criteria. For Viral Marketing, for example, the reported outer loading values ranged from 0.774 to 0.792 for the indicators presented in the measurement results. The cross-loading assessment further demonstrated that the indicators showed stronger relationships with their respective constructs than with the other constructs. Therefore, the indicators were considered appropriate for measuring the variables included in the research model.

Table 2. Construct Reliability

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Viral Marketing	0.903	0.922
Brand Awareness	0.916	0.932
Fear of Missing Out	0.888	0.915
Purchase Decision	0.910	0.930

Source: SmartPLS output.

The reliability assessment demonstrates that all constructs achieved Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values above 0.70. These results indicate that the measurement instruments possess adequate internal consistency. Among the constructs, Brand Awareness obtained the highest Composite Reliability value of 0.932, whereas FoMO recorded the lowest value of 0.915. Both values nevertheless exceed the required threshold.

3. Structural Model Evaluation

The structural model was assessed using R-square (R^2) and Q-square (Q^2). The analysis produced an R^2 value of 0.736 and an adjusted R^2 of 0.734 for Purchase Decision.

Table 3. Structural Model Results

Endogenous Construct	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Q^2
Purchase Decision	0.736	0.734	0.498

Source: SmartPLS output.

An R^2 value of 0.736 indicates that Viral Marketing, Brand Awareness, and FoMO collectively account for 73.6% of the variance in Purchase Decision. The remaining 26.4% is associated with other factors that are not incorporated into the research model. The model also produced a Q^2 value of 0.498, indicating that the structural model possesses predictive relevance for Purchase Decision.

4. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS. The decision criterion applied in the study was a t-statistic greater than 1.96 and a p-value below 0.05.

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Original Sample (O)	T-Statistic	P-Value	Decision
H1	Viral Marketing → Purchase Decision	0.523	17.806	0.000	Accepted
H2	Brand Awareness → Purchase Decision	0.462	15.980	0.000	Accepted
H3	FoMO → Purchase Decision	0.462	17.806	0.000	Accepted

Source: SmartPLS output.

The results indicate that all three independent variables had positive and significant relationships with Purchase Decision. Viral Marketing had a path coefficient of 0.523, Brand Awareness had 0.462, and FoMO had 0.462, with all p-values reported as 0.000.

5. Discussion

The Influence of Viral Marketing on Purchase Decision

The first hypothesis examines the relationship between Viral Marketing and Purchase Decision. The analysis produced a path coefficient of 0.523, with a t-statistic of 17.806 and a p-value of 0.000. Since the t-statistic is substantially higher than 1.96 and the p-value is below 0.05, H1 is supported.

The positive coefficient indicates that greater exposure to Viral Marketing is associated with a stronger tendency among consumers to make purchasing decisions. In the context of Skintific, product information that circulates through social media may increase consumers' exposure to the brand and encourage them to seek, consume, or share information concerning the products.

This relationship is relevant to the dimensions used to measure Viral Marketing, namely Affection-Altruism, Curiosity, Content Forwarding, and Content Consumption. The preliminary survey also showed that Content Forwarding obtained the highest mean score among the Viral Marketing indicators, suggesting that information-sharing behavior represents an important characteristic of respondents in this research.

The result is consistent with previous findings cited in the study, including research by Utami et al. (2025), Zharifah et al. (2025), and Rayyan Aqila Praditya (2024), which reported a positive and significant relationship between Viral Marketing and Purchase Decision.

The Influence of Brand Awareness on Purchase Decision

The second hypothesis concerns the influence of Brand Awareness on Purchase Decision. The results show a path coefficient of 0.462, a t-statistic of 15.980, and a p-value of 0.000. These values satisfy the predetermined significance criteria; therefore, H2 is supported.

The positive relationship suggests that consumers who possess stronger awareness of the Skintific brand tend to demonstrate a greater tendency toward purchasing the product. Brand familiarity can help consumers identify a particular brand when they encounter several alternatives in the skincare market.

This finding can be interpreted in relation to the four Brand Awareness indicators applied in the study: Recall, Recognition, Purchase, and Consumption. The preliminary survey showed that Recall achieved the highest mean score, indicating that respondents were relatively capable of remembering skincare brands when considering products.

The finding is consistent with previous studies cited in the research, including Rayyan (2024), Alfian et al. (2024), and Sulaiman and Nurtjahjani (2023), which found a positive and significant relationship between Brand Awareness and Purchase Decision.

The Influence of Fear of Missing Out on Purchase Decision

The third hypothesis evaluates the relationship between Fear of Missing Out and Purchase Decision. FoMO obtained a path coefficient of 0.462, a t-statistic of 17.806, and a p-value of 0.000. Based on the statistical criteria, H3 is supported.

The positive coefficient indicates that stronger FoMO is associated with a greater tendency to make purchasing decisions. In the context of skincare consumption, consumers may respond to the rapid development of product trends, recommendations, and discussions circulating through social media. Feelings of fear, concern, or anxiety about being left behind may increase consumers' attention toward products that are currently popular.

The FoMO construct in this study is represented by Fear, Concern, and Anxiety. The preliminary survey indicates that the Concern indicator obtained a relatively high mean score, suggesting that concerns regarding current trends and information are relevant among the respondents.

The result is in line with previous research cited in the study, including Fauziah et al. (2025), Dudi Permana (2025), and Irma and Mutiara (2024), which reported positive and significant effects of FoMO on Purchase Decision. However, the result differs from Mukhroji et al. (2025), who reported that FoMO did not significantly affect Purchase Decision. This difference reinforces the relevance of examining FoMO within the specific context of Skintific consumers in Madiun City.

The Simultaneous Influence of Viral Marketing, Brand Awareness, and FoMO on Purchase Decision

The results indicate that Viral Marketing, Brand Awareness, and Fear of Missing Out collectively contribute to Purchase Decision. The explanatory power of the model is reflected in the R^2 value of 0.736, meaning that the three independent variables jointly account for 73.6% of the variation in Purchase Decision.

The combined finding suggests that consumer purchasing behavior in this research context cannot be viewed from a single perspective. Viral Marketing represents the role of information dissemination and consumer interaction through digital media, Brand Awareness reflects consumers' familiarity with the brand, while FoMO represents psychological responses associated with rapidly developing trends.

The interaction of these factors provides a broader explanation of why consumers may decide to purchase Skintific products. Consumers may first encounter product information through viral content, recognize or recall the Skintific brand, and subsequently experience psychological

responses associated with current skincare trends. These processes may contribute to the eventual Purchase Decision.

D. CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study demonstrate that Viral Marketing, Brand Awareness, and Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) each have a positive and significant influence on Purchase Decision among Skintific skincare consumers in Madiun City.

Viral Marketing shows a positive relationship with Purchase Decision, as indicated by a path coefficient of 0.523, a t-statistic of 17.806, and a p-value of **0.000**. These results indicate that greater exposure to product information disseminated through digital channels is associated with stronger purchasing decisions among respondents.

Brand Awareness also demonstrates a positive and significant relationship with Purchase Decision. The analysis produces a path coefficient of 0.462, a t-statistic of 15.980, and a p-value of 0.000. This finding indicates that consumers' ability to recognize and recall Skintific may contribute to their tendency to select the brand when making skincare purchasing decisions.

Similarly, Fear of Missing Out has a positive and significant relationship with Purchase Decision. The path coefficient is 0.462, accompanied by a t-statistic of 17.806 and a p-value of 0.000. This result suggests that psychological responses related to fear, concern, and anxiety about missing current trends may be associated with consumers' decisions to purchase Skintific products.

When considered simultaneously, the three independent variables provide substantial explanatory power for Purchase Decision. The model produces an R-square value of 0.736, meaning that Viral Marketing, Brand Awareness, and FoMO collectively explain 73.6% of the variation in Purchase Decision, while the remaining 26.4% is attributable to factors outside the model.

Overall, the findings indicate that Purchase Decision among Skintific consumers in Madiun City is associated with both digital marketing exposure and brand-related awareness, as well as consumers' psychological responses to current trends.

E. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings, several recommendations can be proposed for practitioners and future researchers.

First, Skintific should continue developing its Viral Marketing strategy by producing relevant, informative, and engaging content that encourages consumers to interact with and distribute product information. Content that stimulates consumer interest and facilitates information sharing may help strengthen the brand's visibility across digital platforms.

Second, Brand Awareness should be maintained and strengthened consistently. Skintific can emphasize its distinctive brand identity, product characteristics, and benefits across various digital communication channels. Consistent brand exposure may help consumers recognize and recall Skintific when comparing skincare alternatives.

Third, marketing activities may take into account the role of Fear of Missing Out in consumer behavior. Information concerning product trends, consumer experiences, and product popularity can be incorporated into promotional communication. However, such communication should remain informative and responsible rather than relying excessively on psychological pressure.

For future researchers, the findings provide an opportunity to examine additional factors that may contribute to Purchase Decision. The current model explains 73.6% of the variance in Purchase Decision, meaning that 26.4% remains associated with factors not included in this study. Future studies may therefore introduce other relevant variables and examine whether they provide additional explanatory power.

Future research may also broaden the research setting by involving consumers from different cities, regions, or demographic groups. Such expansion could provide a broader understanding of the factors associated with skincare purchasing behavior and allow comparisons across different consumer contexts.

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