

# The Role of e-Trust in Mediating the Impact of Social Media Marketing via Instagram on e-Purchase Decisions

Ahmad Fahreza<sup>1\*</sup>, Prasetyo Hartanto<sup>2</sup>, Yosita Dwiani Suryaningtias<sup>3</sup>, Silvia Van Marsally<sup>4</sup>, Maliana Puspa Arum<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>Department of Digital Business, Telkom University, Purwokerto, Indonesia.

\*ahmadfahreza@student.telkomuniversity.ac.id

**Abstract.** This research explores how e-trust functions as an intermediary in the connection between marketing efforts on Instagram and customers' decisions to buy online. The study uses a purposive sampling technique with a descriptive verification approach, involving an explanatory survey of 215 followers from the @bloodscllofficial Instagram account, associated with Bloods Distro. Data were analyzed through path analysis using SPSS 25 software. The findings indicate that e-trust plays a significant role in mediating the relationship between Instagram marketing activities and e-purchase choices. These results highlight the need for businesses to enhance the quality of their Instagram-based marketing strategies to attract customers effectively, establish trust, and ultimately improve sales outcomes.

**Keywords:** E-Trust, Instagram Marketing, e-Purchase Decisions, Social Media Marketing, Consumer Behavior

## Introduction

Purchase decisions are a pattern of consumer behavior in determining and following the decision-making process, which consists of various stages to make a choice (Erasmus et al., 2001; Ramirez & Shonkwiler, 2017). Purchase decisions are the result of a series of activities carried out by consumers to identify needs, seek information, evaluate several alternatives, and select the most appropriate option (Rafdinal, 2019). Consumers will evaluate product performance by assessing additional features when making purchase decisions (Lew & Sulaiman, 2014). Along with technological advancements, conventional buying and selling transactions have gradually shifted to using the internet for online purchases (Widodo, Putranti, & Nurchayati, 2016). E-purchase decisions are defined as the buying process conducted by consumers using internet media, which offers higher utility value (Devaraj et al., 2003; Ity et al., 2014; Anggraeni & Madiawati, 2016; Khatib, 2016).

With the advancement of technology and changes in consumer behavior toward online shopping, several distro brands in Bandung City, particularly those in Plaza Parahyangan, have utilized online platforms as a marketing medium to enhance purchase decisions. The competition among various distro brands in Bandung City, especially in Plaza Parahyangan, can be observed based on online market share data from 2021 to 2023, as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Online market share distro in Bandung 2021-2023

No	Brand Distro	Market Share (%)		
		2021	2022	2023
1	Skaters	24,70	26,11	29,78
2	Proshop	17,07	19,32	14,29
3	Evil Army	10,20	9,11	10,11
4	Linkswear	9,96	8,87	9,23
5	Arena Experience	9,47	9,14	9,14
6	Blankwear	9,43	9,01	9,11
7	Bitsnons	9,32	8,76	9,03
8	Wellborn	2,67	2,69	3,14
9	Badger	3,22	2,74	2,17

10	Gummo	1,60	1,31	1,69
11	Cosmic	1,29	1,85	1,25
12	Bloods	1,07	1,18	1,06
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Suave Magazine & bandungcreative.com, 2024

Based on Table 1 regarding the market share of distro brands in Plaza Parahyangan, Bandung City, it is shown that among the twelve distro brands, Bloods ranks last in total online market share. This indicates that Bloods is still lagging behind other distro brands in Bandung City. Bloods Industries is a company operating in the fashion industry and was established in 2002.

Bloods has engaged in online marketing through Instagram. According to data from 2023, the most widely used social media applications are YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, with Instagram rising to third place from its previous fourth position in Indonesia (Tekno.kompas.com, 2023). A survey conducted by Instagram in 2022 revealed that 87% of respondents, consisting of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), reported an increase in sales due to using Instagram (Katadata.co.id, 2022). This indicates that Instagram presents an opportunity as a social media platform for marketing purposes, including for Bloods. Social media marketing through Instagram was chosen by Bloods as an initial step to promote its products online, aiming to create broad product and brand awareness among the public.

Not only has Bloods utilized Instagram as a marketing platform, but other distro businesses in Bandung City, particularly in Plaza Parahyangan Bandung, have also leveraged Instagram to promote their brands and products, ultimately leading to increased purchase decisions. Below are the distro brands that use Instagram as an online marketing platform, as shown in Table 2:

Table 2. Count of followers brand distro Instagram account

No	Brand Distro	Instagram	Count of followers (Thousand)
1	Bloods	@bloodsclothofficial	508
2	Wellborn	@wellborncompany	276
3	Cosmic	@cosmicclothes	211
4	Arena Experience	@arena_xprnc	150
5	Evil Army	@evil___official	159
6.	Badger	@badgerinv	99.8
7.	Blankwear	@blankwear	51.2
8.	Skaters	@skaters.92	39.8
9.	Proshop	@proshoporiginal	35.7
10.	Gummo	@gummolimited	16
11.	Bitsnbobs	@bitsnbobs76_	13.3
12.	Linkswear	@linkswearofficial	1.251

Source: Social Media Instagram (2024)

Based on Table 2, it is evident that Bloods has the highest number of Instagram followers compared to other distro brands. However, this contrasts with the data in Table 1, which shows that Bloods' online market share in 2023 is only 1.06%. This indicates that the quality of Bloods' Instagram account is still low, despite its efforts to utilize Instagram as an opportunity for online marketing. The increasing number of business accounts on Instagram also poses a challenge for businesses to compete with one another. Therefore, it is intriguing to study how to improve the quality of business accounts on Instagram to enhance purchase decisions for a product.

Bloods' Instagram account has utilized several features on the platform as part of its marketing efforts. These include Highlights, which showcase and save various posts categorized by specific topics such as product sizes, reseller terms, online ordering procedures, and instructions for obtaining e-membership for customers. The Shop feature is used to display products available for purchase, integrated with the website, allowing customers to buy products directly online. Bloods also employs Shopping Ads, integrating Instagram with its website so that customers can easily purchase products through the website. The Insight feature provides valuable information about products, promotions, and other activities related to the distro, helping track interaction metrics for each piece of content. Additionally, Hashtags such as “#distrobdg” and “#bloodscloth” are utilized to simplify content searches, facilitate promotional efforts, reach a broader audience, and increase follower counts. To enhance engagement, Bloods uses Reels to share short-duration videos featuring product information, promotions, and community activities related to the distro. Finally,

Instagram Stories are used to post specific photos or videos about product information, promotions, and other content, with a maximum duration of 24 hours.

Purchase decisions, whether made directly or online, are crucial components related to consumer behavior (Ramirez & Shonkwiler, 2017). Consumer behavior is the study of how individuals, groups, and organizations select, purchase, use, and dispose of or refrain from using goods, services, ideas, or experiences to meet their needs and desires (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Companies are required to understand consumer behavior in their target markets to enhance purchase decisions, which ultimately leads to positive impacts and profitability (Nursalam, 2016). Purchase decisions, whether offline or online, represent a pattern of consumer behavior in determining and following the decision-making process, which consists of various stages to make a choice (Erasmus et al., 2001).

Based on previous studies, several factors can influence e-purchase decisions, including trust (Agustiningrum & Andjarwati, 2021; Ilmiyah & Krishernawan, 2020; Hahn et al., 2016; Murwatiningsih & Apriliani, 2013; Mahkota, 2014; Prasad et al., 2017), ease of use (Ardyanto, 2015; Yusran, 2019), security (Alwafi & Magnadi, 2016; Irawan, 2018; Budiono, 2021), online reviews (Chen, 2008; Walsh et al., 2004; Hu et al., 2011), brand image (J. Kim & Park, 2005; Hariyadi et al., 2015; Oladepo et al., 2015; Malik et al., 2013), brand trust (Gurviesz, 2003; Rizan, 2012; Lien et al., 2015), electronic word of mouth (Lopez & Parra, 2016; Bai et al., 2015; Shankar in Paquete, 2013), product quality (Fan, Xi & Liu, 2017; Damardi et al., 2001), lifestyle, promotion, celebrity endorsement, price, perceived value, purchase intention, content, valence of opinion, and intensity (Cheung et al., 2009; Choi et al., 2015; Robert & Lomax, 2008; Jalivand et al., 2012; Lin et al., 2015; Tien & Rivas, 2018; Zhao & Li, 2018), social media marketing (Lubiana & Mileva, 2018; Gunelius, 2011; Khatib, 2016; Suandy, 2017; Kozinets, 2002; Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Bilal, Ahmed & Shehzad, 2014; Yogesh & Yesha, 2014; Gul et al., 2018; Husnain et al., 2017; Jabbar & Chaerudin, 2021), and social media marketing on Instagram (L. Sanny et al., 2020; S. Vinerean, 2019; A.F. Maradona et al., 2022; R. Juliadi et al., 2022; Rotua Purba, 2022; Meruvishnu et al., 2022).

The use of social media marketing is a key component in marketing strategies (Dolan, 2015). Social media marketing has transformed and compelled businesses to adopt new ways of communicating with consumers (Vries, A & Leeflan, 2012). Social media is utilized for seeking information, sharing information, entertainment, relaxation, and social interaction (Whiting & Williams, 2013). Businesses also use social media as a tool for marketing activities, commonly referred to as social media marketing (Lubiana & Mileva, 2018). Social media marketing serves as a connector through social media, considered a means of communication that facilitates consumers in sharing information about products and services (Hanaysha, 2018).

Social media plays a significant role and has an influence on consumers in determining their purchase decisions for products or services (Husnain et al., 2017). The phenomenon of increased marketing through social media, particularly Instagram, continues to evolve. Currently, businesses utilizing social media as their marketing platform have seen growth alongside advancements in digital technology. Thus, social media marketing through Instagram presents an opportunity for businesses to leverage this phenomenon for easier marketing efforts and broader audience reach. Understanding the various dimensions of social media marketing that influence consumers' e-purchase decisions will enable businesses to innovate in developing their marketing strategies. Marketers can also use social media marketing to build e-trust or consumer confidence in the products and brands offered on social media.

The various impacts of social media marketing have been studied by several researchers. However, most researchers focus on the direct influence of social media marketing on purchase decisions. In an online environment, trust plays an important mediating role in purchase decisions (Prasad et al., 2017). Studies on trust in the context of online media have increasingly become the focus of research, particularly in understanding how trust shapes customer behavior (Tang & Liu, 2015). E-trust serves as a mediating variable to examine the influence of social media marketing on e-purchase decisions, as investigated in this study.

In the online environment, trust is paramount in the online shopping process (Hahn et al., 2016). The higher the consumer's trust, the greater the likelihood of making an e-purchase decision for a product (Murwatiningsih & Apriliani, 2013). Studies on trust in the context of online media have increasingly become the focus of research, particularly in understanding how trust shapes customer behavior (Tang & Liu, 2015). Trust plays an important mediating role in purchase decisions (Prasad et al., 2017), as consumer trust significantly influences the decision to purchase a product. E-trust holds a crucial role in e-purchase decisions (Mahkota et al., 2014; Naomi et al., 2016; Hahn et al., 2016; Murwatiningsih & Apriliani, 2013; Prasad et al., 2017).

Research on the relationship between social media marketing, e-trust, and e-purchase decisions needs to be conducted. Social media also has a significant positive influence on trust (Zulfikar, 2017). Trust is considered one of the key factors in strengthening relationships with customers (A. J. Kim & Ko, 2012). Trust is influenced by the use of social media, and social media impacts customers' trust perceptions (Chahal, H., & Rani, A., 2017; Khan, M. I., Rehmani, M., & Mubushar, M., 2016).

The research findings revealed that social media marketing does not have a significant influence on e-purchase decisions, as social media is currently perceived primarily as a platform for information dissemination (Ivane Eka C., 2013; Brotojoyo, 2017; Muslim, 2018). However, other studies show differing results, indicating that social media marketing has a positive effect on e-purchase decisions (Gunelius, 2011). The research by Baskara & Hariyadi (2012) found that among several factors influencing e-purchase decisions, trust was positive but did not have a significant impact. In contrast, Mahkota (2014) found that e-trust had a positive and significant effect on e-purchase decisions. Trust is an important factor that can influence consumers to make a purchase. Marentek's (2013) study showed that trust positively affects e-purchase decisions, although in his research, trust alone was not sufficient to drive consumers to make an e-purchase directly.

The author's analysis of the research gap highlights the effectiveness of e-purchase decisions. Therefore, the development of the research gap in this study aims to provide a precise theoretical solution for the future projection of marketing science, recognizing that businesses today are influenced by the rapid growth of the internet. Consequently, every company must innovate in marketing development, particularly in its ability to manage social media marketing, to establish broad marketing communication. This will enable information dissemination and online purchases to be carried out more easily through online platforms.

Based on the explanation of previous studies, the author assumes that there are inconsistencies in the research findings, specifically differences in results that serve as the foundation for conducting this study. From the background described, it is evident that Social Media Marketing through Instagram and e-Trust can provide solutions to address issues related to e-Purchase Decisions in research studies within the fashion industry, particularly for distro businesses.

#### **Research questions:**

1. What is the overview of social media marketing through Instagram, e-trust, and e-purchase decisions?
2. How does social media marketing influence e-trust?
3. How does social media marketing affect e-purchase decisions?
4. How does e-trust impact e-purchase decisions?
5. How does e-trust mediate the influence of social media marketing on e-purchase decisions?

#### **Methods**

This study analyzes the role of e-Trust in mediating the influence of Social Media Marketing on e-Purchase Decision. The research adopts a marketing management approach, specifically examining the influence of Social Media Marketing (X) with dimensions of Content Creation, Content Sharing, Connecting, and Community Building (Gunelius, 2011) through the mediating variable of e-Trust (M) with dimensions of Ability, Integrity, and Benevolence (Wang et al., 2015) on e-Purchase Decision (Y) with dimensions of Stability in Product, Habits in Buying Products, Providing Recommendations to Others, and Making Repeat Purchases (Kotler & Keller, 2009; Pranata et al., 2020; Herawati, 2021). This study consists of three variables: the independent variable (X), Social Media Marketing; the mediating variable (M), e-Trust; and the dependent variable (Y), e-Purchase Decision. The respondents in this study are consumers of Distro Bloods who are followers of the Bloods Instagram account (@bloodsclothofficial). The method used in this research is the cross-sectional method.

This research is a descriptive-verification study with a quantitative approach. The data obtained in this study are empirical (observable) data that meet specific criteria, namely validity, reliability, and objectivity. The research method used in this study is the explanatory survey method, which aims to explain the relationship between variables through hypothesis testing in the field.

This study utilizes both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected directly through the distribution of questionnaires to respondents considered representative of the population. Secondary data for this study were obtained from external sources, including books, literature, articles, and data from previous relevant scientific research.

The target population in this study consists of consumers of Distro Bloods who are followers of the Bloods Instagram account (@bloodsclothofficial), totaling 504,000 followers as of March 2023. The sample size was

determined using the approach by Hair et al. (2016), where the number of indicators (26) is multiplied by 5. Thus, the minimum sample size required for this study is 185. However, after distributing the questionnaire, a total of 215 respondents were obtained. These respondents are consumers of Distro Bloods who are followers of the Bloods Instagram account (@bloodscllofficial). The questionnaire was distributed through Google Forms to respondents who met the study's criteria. The technique used in this study is probability sampling with the simple random sampling method.

**Validity testing**

The calculation technique used to analyze the validity of this test is the standard correlation technique, which involves correlating the test scores being validated with the benchmark test scores from the same participants. In this study, the validity of the social media marketing (X1), e-trust (X2), and e-purchase decision (Y) instruments will be tested. Based on the validity test, it was found that all items for all variables had an r-value greater than the r-table value. Therefore, all items for each variable in this study are declared valid and can proceed to further testing.

**Reliability testing**

The reliability test of the instrument was conducted using the Cronbach's Alpha formula. The results of the reliability test in this study are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Reliability testing results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Critical point	Information
Social Media Marketing (X)	0.855	0.7	Reliable
e-Trust (Mediation)	0.843	0.7	Reliable
e-Purchase Decision (Y)	0.807	0.7	Reliable

Source: Data processing results, 2024

Based on Table 3 on the reliability test, it can be seen that all three variables exhibit good reliability, as they have reliability coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha) greater than the critical value (0.7). Therefore, all three variables are declared reliable.

**Data Analysis Techniques**

In this study, the instrument used is a questionnaire developed by the researcher based on the variables in the study. The research examines e-Trust (M) as a mediator of the influence of Social Media Marketing (X) on e-Purchase Decision (Y), using a Likert scale for measurement.

**Descriptive Data Analysis Techniques**

This study uses descriptive analysis to describe the research variables. Descriptive analysis techniques are used to determine the strength of the relationship between variables through correlation analysis and to make comparisons by comparing the means of sample or population data without requiring significance testing. To determine the strength of the relationship between variables, the author calculates the correlation between variables using the Pearson Product Moment correlation formula. The correlation values obtained can be interpreted based on Table 4 as follows:

Tabel 4. Interpretation of Correlation Coefficient Values

No	Interval Koefisien	Information
1.	0.00 – 0.199	Very Low
2.	0.20 – 0.399	Low
3.	0.40 – 0.599	Medium
4.	0.60 – 0.799	Strong
5.	0.80 – 1.000	Very Strong

Source: Sugiyono (2016)

**Classical Assumption Test**

**Normality test**

The normality test is conducted to determine whether the data distribution is normal or not. In this study, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is used, which is a goodness-of-fit test that evaluates the conformity between the distribution of a sample set and a specific theoretical distribution. The advantage of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is its simplicity and consistency, minimizing differences in interpretation among observers.

**Heteroscedasticity Test**

The heteroscedasticity test can be observed through a scatterplot, where the distribution of points appears random, without forming any specific pattern, and the spread of points is both above and below the value of 0 on the Y-axis. Thus, there is no indication of heteroscedasticity, making the model suitable for use (Sanusi, 2013:96).

### Multicollinearity Test

The multicollinearity test is used to determine whether there is a deviation from the classical assumption of multicollinearity, which refers to the presence of a linear relationship between variables. The purpose of the multicollinearity test is to examine whether the path analysis model reveals any correlation among independent variables (Sanusi, 2013:91).

### Verification Data Analysis Techniques

The verificative data analysis technique in this study is used to examine e-Trust (M) as a mediator of the influence of Social Media Marketing (X) on Purchase Decision (Y). Verificative analysis in this study employs path analysis with the assistance of IBM SPSS 25 software. The primary analysis is conducted to test whether the path constructs are empirically validated. Further analysis is performed to identify the direct and indirect effects of a set of independent variables on the dependent variable. Additionally, path analysis is a type of multivariate analysis used to study the direct and indirect effects of multiple hypothesized variables. So the purpose of this analysis is to obtain the path coefficient value of each independent variable. Based on the explanation, the path analysis in this study can be seen in Figure 1 below.

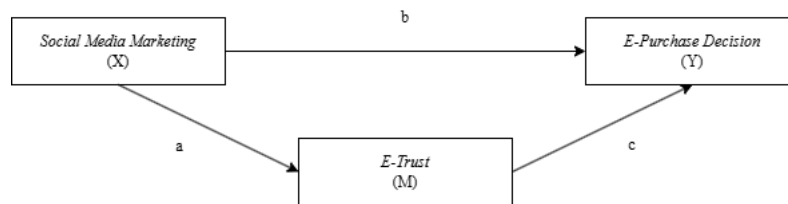


Figure 1. Path Analysis Model

A direct effect occurs when one variable influences another without a third variable mediating the relationship between the two variables. An indirect effect occurs when a third variable mediates the relationship between these variables.

### Sobel Test

The Sobel test is used to determine the effect of the mediating variable, namely e-Trust. According to Baron and Kenny (1986) in Ghozali (2011), a variable is considered intervening or mediating if it influences the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The Sobel test is used to examine the strength of the indirect effect of the independent variable (X) on the dependent variable (Y) through the mediating variable (X2). This is calculated by multiplying  $a$  (the path coefficient from X1 to X2) by  $b$  (the path coefficient from X2 to Y). The assessment in the Sobel test is that if the t-value is greater than the t-table value, it can be concluded that mediation occurs.

### Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses in quantitative research can be single-variable hypotheses and hypotheses of two or more variables known as causal hypotheses (Priyono, 2016). The research object that serves as the independent variable in this study is Social Media Marketing (X), with e-Trust as the mediating variable (M), while the dependent variable is e-Purchase Decision (Y).

The null hypothesis (H0) is a hypothesis stating that there is no significant influence between the independent variable and the dependent variable, while the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is a hypothesis stating that there is a significant influence between the independent variable and the dependent variable. This test is conducted partially (t-test). If H0 is accepted, it indicates that the partial influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable is considered not significant. Conversely, if H0 is rejected, it indicates that the partial influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable is considered significant.

### Coefficient of Determination

The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) indicates the percentage of influence of all independent variables on the dependent variable, both partially and simultaneously.

## Result and Discussion

### Descriptive Test Results

#### Consumer Response to the Use of Social Media Marketing Through Instagram

Overall, the conceptualization of the social media marketing variable is based on the results of an online questionnaire distributed to consumers of Distro Bloods who are followers of the Instagram account @bloodsclothofficial. This variable aims to assess the extent to which social media marketing is perceived by Distro Bloods consumers. The social media marketing variable consists of four dimensions: Content Creation, Content Sharing, Connecting, and Community Building. The recap of scores for the Instagram social media marketing variable, with dimensions of content creation, content sharing, connecting, and community building, is presented in Table 5 below:

Table 5. Recapitulation of Instagram Social Media Marketing Variables

No	Dimension	Count of Steatment	Score Total	Average Score	Category
1.	<i>Content creation</i>	3	2.103	701	Enough
2.	<i>Content sharing</i>	2	1.646	823	Good
3.	<i>Connecting</i>	3	2.171	723	Enough
4.	<i>Community building</i>	2	1.448	724	Enough
<b>Total</b>			<b>7.368</b>	<b>2.971</b>	

Source: Data Processing Result, 2024

Overall, the social media marketing variable, consisting of content creation, content sharing, connecting, and community building, can be assessed based on the scores from the data recap by comparing the standard score criteria through the calculation of the ideal score (criterion) and the smallest score to determine the ideal range of the variable. This is done using the formula proposed by Sugiyono (2016).

The ideal score for the social media marketing variable is based on 10 statement items. The score obtained from data processing for the social media marketing variable is 7,368 or 68.5%. This indicates that the Social Media Marketing conducted through Instagram by Distro Bloods is rated positively by respondents, who are followers of the Instagram account @bloodsclothofficial. It also shows that Distro Bloods has provided information that is well-received by its users on Instagram.

#### Consumer Response to e-Trust

Overall, the conceptualization of the e-trust variable is based on the results of an online questionnaire distributed to consumers of Distro Bloods who are followers of the Instagram account @bloodsclothofficial. This variable aims to assess the extent to which e-trust is perceived by Distro Bloods consumers. The e-trust variable consists of three dimensions: Ability, Integrity, and Benevolence. The recap of scores for the e-trust variable, with dimensions of Ability, Integrity, and Benevolence, is presented in Table 6 below:

Table 6. Recapitulation of e-Trust Variables

No	Dimension	Count of Steatment	Score Total	Average Score	Category
1.	<i>Ability</i>	3	2.246	748	Good
2.	<i>Integrity</i>	2	1.316	658	Enough
3.	<i>Benevolence</i>	3	2.063	687	Enough
<b>Total</b>			<b>5.625</b>	<b>2.093</b>	

Source: Data Processing Result, 2024

The ideal score of the e-trust variable is for 8 statement items. The score obtained based on the data processing results on the e-trust variable is 5,625 or 65.4%. Based on the calculation, it can be observed that the e-trust variable on Distro Bloods' Instagram falls into the moderate category. This indicates that the e-trust on Distro Bloods' Instagram is rated as moderate by respondents, who are followers of the Instagram account @bloodsclothofficial. It also suggests that the information provided by Distro Bloods online through its Instagram has not yet fully succeeded in building consumer trust in Distro Bloods' online product marketing.

### Consumer Response to e-Purchase Decision

Overall, the conceptualization of the e-purchase decision variable is based on the results of an online questionnaire distributed to consumers of Distro Bloods who are followers of the Instagram account @bloodsclothofficial. This variable aims to assess the extent to which e-purchase decisions are perceived by Distro Bloods consumers. The e-purchase decision variable consists of four dimensions: stability in product, habits in buying products, providing recommendations to others, and making repeat purchases.

The recap of scores for the e-purchase decision variable, consisting of the dimensions stability in product, habits in buying products, providing recommendations to others, and making repeat purchases, is presented in Table 7 below:

Table 7. Recapitulation of e-Purchase Decision Variable

No	Dimension	Count of Statement	Score Total	Average Score	Category
1.	<i>Stability in product</i>	2	1.329	664	Enough
2.	<i>Habits in buying products</i>	2	1.260	630	Enough
3.	<i>Provide recommendations to others</i>	2	1.300	650	Enough
4.	<i>Make repeat purchases</i>	2	1.326	663	Enough
<b>Total</b>			<b>5.215</b>	<b>2.607</b>	

Source: Data Processing Result, 2024

The ideal score for the e-purchase decision variable is based on 8 statement items. The score obtained from data processing for the e-purchase decision variable is 5,215 or 60.6%. Based on this calculation, it can be observed that the e-purchase decision variable on Distro Bloods' Instagram falls into the moderate category. This indicates that the e-purchase decision on Distro Bloods' Instagram is rated as moderate by respondents, who are followers of the Instagram account @bloodsclothofficial. It also suggests that the information provided by Distro Bloods online through its Instagram has not yet fully succeeded in generating strong e-purchase decisions. In this case, the social media marketing conducted through Instagram by Distro Bloods serves as the initial stage for consumers to obtain various information about the products offered and sold online. If the social media marketing is created with quality and based on the dimensions of content creation, content sharing, connecting, and community building, it can build consumer e-trust, which is expected to lead to e-purchase decisions.

### Verificative Test Results

#### Classical Assumption Test

Based on the research model, three sub-structures are used for conducting classical assumption tests. These sub-structures are as follows: (1) Sub-Structure 1 examines the influence of Social Media Marketing (X) on e-Trust (M/mediator); (2) Sub-Structure 2 investigates the influence of Social Media Marketing (X) and e-Trust (M) on e-Purchase Decision (Y); and (3) Sub-Structure 3 analyzes the influence of Social Media Marketing (X) on e-Purchase Decision (Y) through e-Trust (M/mediator).

#### Normality Test

The normality test for data distribution in this study uses the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test with a Monte Carlo approach. According to Cyrus (2013), Monte Carlo provides highly accurate estimates of p-values.

Table 8. Normality test results

		Unstandardized Residual
N		215
Normal Parameters	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	1.58813613
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.054
	Positive	.051
	Negative	-.054
Test Statistic		.054
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		<b>.200</b>



Source: Data Processing Result, 2024

Based on Table 8, which presents the results of the normality test, it is shown that the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test values for the variables Social Media Marketing (X), e-Trust (M/Mediator), and e-Purchase Decision (Y) are all 0.200. This value is greater than the data normality threshold of 0.05. Therefore, all three variables can be declared as normally distributed and meet the requirements for further testing.

**Heteroscedasticity Test**

A good regression model is one that is declared homogeneous or homoscedastic based on the test results. Homogeneity indicates that the data aligns with the objectives of this study. A regression model is considered free from heteroscedasticity if the residual scatterplot does not form a specific pattern. Below is the scatterplot result from the heteroscedasticity test:

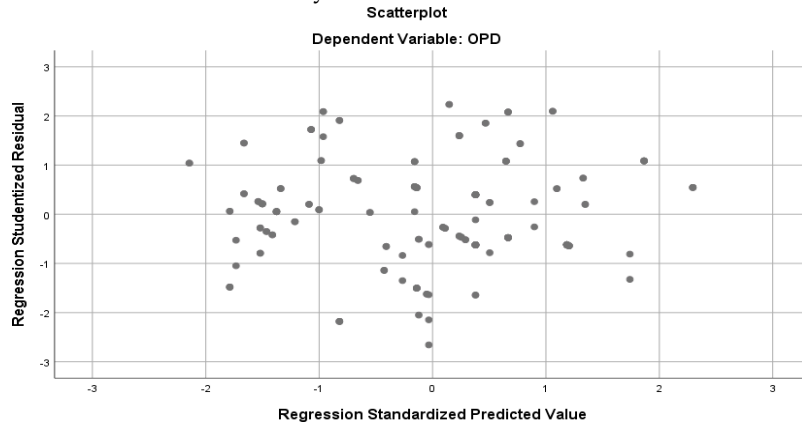


Figure 2. Heteroscedasticity Test Using Scatterplot

Based on Figure 2 regarding the heteroscedasticity test, it can be observed that the residual data distribution appears scattered and does not resemble any specific pattern, indicating that the data distribution meets the requirements of the heteroscedasticity assumption model.

**Multicollinearity Test**

The results of the multicollinearity test can be seen in Table 9 below:

Table 9. Multicollinearity Test Results

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
1	(Constant)	Tolerance	VIF
	Social Media Marketing	.246	4.064
	e-Purchase Decision	.246	4.064

Source: Data Processing Result, 2024

Based on the results of the multicollinearity test shown in Table 9, it can be concluded that all variables have tolerance values above 0.1 and VIF values below 10, indicating that multicollinearity does not occur.

**Verification Research Results**

**The Influence of Social Media Marketing on e-Trust**

To determine the results of the test on the influence of Social Media Marketing on e-Trust, regression analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS 25 software. The hypothesis testing was formulated as follows:

**First Hypothesis**

H0:  $\beta < 0$ , meaning there is a negative influence of Social Media Marketing on e-Trust.

H1:  $\beta > 0$ , meaning there is a positive influence of Social Media Marketing on e-Trust.

Partial hypothesis testing is carried out using the t-test, which is shown through the path coefficient in the following table:

Table 10. Social Media Marketing Coefficient to e-Trust

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	6.922	1.196		5.786	.000

<i>Social Marketing (X)</i>	<i>Media</i>	.956	.024	.941	40.522	.000
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Source: Data processing result, 2024

This indicates that the influence of Social Media Marketing on e-Trust has a positive relationship, as the value of  $b = 0.956$ . If the Social Media Marketing variable is 0, then e-Trust will have a value of 6.922. Conversely, if the Social Media Marketing variable increases by one scale, the e-Trust variable will increase by 0.956. Furthermore, Table 11 presents the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), which is used to measure the extent to which the model can explain the variation in the dependent variable, as follows:

Table 11. Coefficient of Determination of Social Media Marketing on e-Trust

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.868 <sup>a</sup>	.754	.753	1.78266	

Source: Data Processing Result, 2024

Based on Table 11, it is shown that the R value is 0.868 with an R-square value of 0.754. This indicates that the Social Media Marketing variable influences the e-Trust variable by 75.4%. The resulting correlation,  $R = 0.868$ , falls within the "Strong" category, according to Table 4 on the interpretation of coefficient values, as it lies within the range of 0.60–0.799. Therefore, it can be concluded that e-Trust is influenced by Social Media Marketing (Instagram) by 75.4%.

### The Influence of Social Media Marketing on e-Purchase Decisions and e-Trust on e-Purchase Decisions

Testing was conducted to determine the influence of Social Media Marketing on e-Purchase Decision and the influence of e-Trust on e-Purchase Decision. Regression analysis was performed, and partial hypothesis testing was conducted using the t-test, as shown through the path coefficients in the table below:

Table 12. Path Coefficient of X to Y and M to Y

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	7.205	1.286		5.602	.000
Social Media Marketing (X)	.354	.066	.458	5.326	.000
e-Trust (M)	.308	.076	.520	4.082	.000

Source: Data Processing Result, 2024

The hypotheses to be tested are the influence of Social Media Marketing on e-Purchase Decision and the influence of e-Trust on e-Purchase Decision, to evaluate the significance of each variable.

#### Second Hypothesis

H0:  $\beta < 0$ , meaning there is a negative influence of Social Media Marketing on e-Purchase Decision.

H1:  $\beta > 0$ , meaning there is a positive influence of Social Media Marketing on e-Purchase Decision.

#### Third Hypothesis

H0:  $\beta < 0$ , meaning there is a negative influence of e-Trust on e-Purchase Decision.

H1:  $\beta > 0$ , meaning there is a positive influence of e-Trust on e-Purchase Decision.

For the second hypothesis, it is shown that the t-value (5.326) for the Social Media Marketing variable is greater than the t-table value (1.971). Therefore, it can be concluded that H0 is rejected and Ha is accepted, indicating that Social Media Marketing has an influence on e-Purchase Decision.

For the third hypothesis, it is shown that the t-value (4.082) for the e-Trust variable is greater than the t-table value (1.971). Therefore, it can be concluded that H0 is rejected and Ha is accepted, indicating that e-Trust has an influence on e-Purchase Decision.

Furthermore, simultaneous hypothesis testing (F-test) was conducted to examine the influence of Social Media Marketing and e-Trust on e-Purchase Decision. The results of the simultaneous hypothesis testing are obtained from the data analysis table using IBM SPSS 25 software, as presented in the following table:

Table 13. Results of Simultaneous Hypothesis Test (F Test) X and M to Y ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1300.580	2	650.290	168.218	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	819.540	212	3.866		
	Total	2120.121	214			

Source: Data Processing Result

Based on Table 13 regarding the simultaneous hypothesis testing, it is shown that the calculated F-value in this study is 168.218, while the F-table value is 3.038. Thus, it can be concluded that  $168.218 > 3.038$ , confirming that the calculated F-value is greater than the F-table value. Therefore,  $H_0$  is rejected, and  $H_a$  is accepted, indicating that Social Media Marketing and e-Trust have an influence on e-Purchase Decision. To analyze the influence of Social Media Marketing (X) and e-Trust (M) on e-Purchase Decision (Y), regression analysis was conducted. Linear regression analysis is used to determine the magnitude of the influence of an independent variable. Based on the output results in Table 12, it can be seen that the value of  $a = 7.205$ ,  $b_1 = 0.354$ , and  $b_2 = 0.308$ . This indicates that the influence of Social Media Marketing and e-Trust on e-Purchase Decision has a positive relationship, as the  $b$  values are positive. Therefore, it can be concluded that if the Social Media Marketing and e-Trust variables are 0, the e-Purchase Decision value will be 7.205. Conversely, if the Social Media Marketing and e-Trust variables increase by one scale, the e-Purchase Decision variable will increase by 0.662.

Furthermore, Table 4.26 presents the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), which is used to measure the extent to which the model explains the variation in the dependent variable, as follows:

Table 14. Coefficient of determination of X and M against Y

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.783 <sup>a</sup>	.613	.610	1.96615	

Source: Data Processing Result, 2024

Based on Table 14, it can be seen that the R value is 0.783, with an R-square value of 0.613. This indicates that the variables Social Media Marketing and e-Trust influence the e-Purchase Decision variable by 61.3%. The resulting correlation,  $R = 0.783$ , falls into the "Strong" category according to Table 4 on the interpretation of coefficient values, as it lies within the range of 0.60–0.799. Therefore, it can be concluded that e-Purchase Decision is influenced by 61.3% by Social Media Marketing (Instagram) and e-Trust.

#### The Influence of Social Media Marketing on e-Purchase Decisions Through e-Trust

To determine the magnitude of the influence of social media marketing on e-purchase decision through e-trust, the Sobel test is used. The path between the independent variable (X) and the mediating variable (M), as well as the path between the mediating variable (M) and the dependent variable (Y), are analyzed. Below are the path coefficients between the independent variable (X) and the mediating variable (M), and the path coefficients between the mediating variable (M) and the dependent variable (Y).

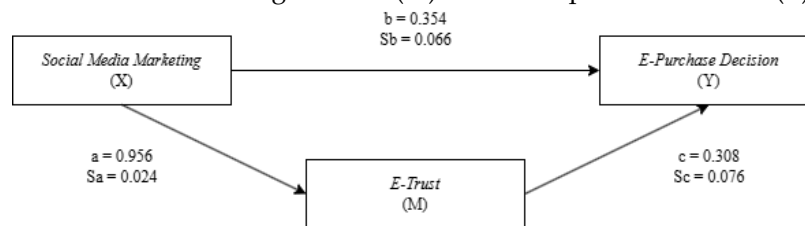


Figure 3. Path Analysis Model

Based on Figure 3, it is shown that the test result for Social Media Marketing (X) on e-Trust (M) is positive, with a value of 0.956 and a significance level of  $< 0.05$ , indicating that Social Media Marketing (X) has a significant positive influence on e-Trust (M). Additionally, the test result for e-Trust (M) on e-Purchase Decision (Y) is 0.308, with a significance level of  $< 0.05$ , meaning that e-Trust (M) has a positive influence on e-Purchase Decision (Y). Subsequently, the Sobel test calculation was performed. The Sobel test calculation is presented as follows:

$$t = \frac{ab}{s_{ab}}$$

$$t = \frac{0.956 \times 0.308}{\sqrt{0.308^2 \times 0.024^2 + (0.956^2 \times 0.076^2)}}$$

$$t = 4.031$$

Based on the calculation above, the t-value is 4.031. This result is compared to the t-table value at a 5% significance level, which is 1.980. The comparison shows that the Sobel test value (4.031) > t-table (1.980), indicating that the e-Trust variable can mediate the influence of Social Media Marketing on e-Purchase Decision.

#### Direct Effect

The direct effect in this study refers to the influence of Social Media Marketing (X) on e-Trust (M), the influence of Social Media Marketing (X) on e-Purchase Decision (Y), and the influence of e-Trust (M) on e-Purchase Decision (Y). The following are the results of the direct effect calculations in this study.

$$X \rightarrow M: 0.941$$

$$X \rightarrow Y: 0.458$$

$$M \rightarrow Y: 0.520$$

From the calculations above, it can be determined that the influence of Social Media Marketing (X) on e-Trust (M) is 0.941, the influence of Social Media Marketing (X) on e-Purchase Decision (Y) is 0.458, and the influence of e-Trust (M) on e-Purchase Decision (Y) is 0.520.

#### Indirect Effect

The indirect effect in this study refers to the influence of Social Media Marketing (X) on e-Purchase Decision (Y), mediated by e-Trust (M). The following are the results of the indirect effect calculations in this study:

$$X \rightarrow Y: (a \times b)$$

$$= (0.941 \times 0.520)$$

$$= 0.489$$

From the calculation above, it can be determined that the magnitude of the indirect effect of the Social Media Marketing (X) variable on the e-Purchase Decision (Y) variable, mediated by the e-Trust (M) variable, is 0.489.

#### Total Influence

The following is the total influence in this study

$$\text{Total Influence} : 0.458 + (0.941 \times 0.520)$$

$$: 0.458 + 0.489$$

$$: 0.947$$

From the calculation, it can be determined that the total effect of the Social Media Marketing (X) variable on the e-Purchase Decision (Y) variable is 0.947. Based on the calculation, the result of the direct effect is compared to the indirect effect. If the indirect effect is greater than the direct effect, then the e-Trust (M) variable mediates the influence of the Social Media Marketing (X) variable on the e-Purchase Decision (Y) variable. As explained earlier, the indirect effect of 0.489 is greater than the direct effect of 0.458. Therefore, the e-Trust (M) variable mediates the influence of the Social Media Marketing (X) variable on the e-Purchase Decision (Y) variable. This indicates that H0 is rejected and Ha is accepted, meaning that the e-Trust (M) variable can mediate the influence of Social Media Marketing (X) on e-Purchase Decision (Y).

### Discussion

#### Discussion of Descriptive Research Results

##### Social Media Marketing Variables Through Instagram

Overall, the calculation results show that the use of social media marketing on Distro Bloods' Instagram falls into the "Good" category. The analysis results indicate that each dimension has different values. The highest score is in the Connecting dimension, with a total score of 2,171. This demonstrates that the use of social media marketing, including Instagram, as a medium for marketing and sales can reach a wide audience. The ease of interaction, both with the business operator (admin) of Distro Bloods' Instagram and with other consumers, helps establish connections on the Instagram platform. Connecting provides a unique way to interact with others who share similar interests. This implies that building online relationships between parties aims to fulfill needs related to a product. In these connections, the interactions influence each party in making decisions to meet their needs.

The dimension of the social media marketing variable with the lowest score is Community Building, with a total score of 1,448. The use of Instagram social media marketing by Distro Bloods in the Community

Building dimension highlights the ease of finding communities of Distro Bloods users and the presence of hashtags in each post as a way to reach a broader audience and make the content easily discoverable. However, the Community Building dimension on Distro Bloods' Instagram has the lowest score due to the relatively low number of followers, which limits the brand and products from being widely recognized by the public. Additionally, the limited number of Distro Bloods communities and the underutilization of hashtags result in a lower perception of the Community Building dimension among consumers. The influence of online communities, as a part of community building, has a strong positive impact and enhances purchase decisions, driven by the interaction with opinion leaders within those communities.

#### **e-Trust Variable**

Overall, the calculation results show that e-Trust in social media marketing through Distro Bloods' Instagram falls into the "Moderate" category. The analysis indicates that each dimension has different values, with the highest score being in the Ability dimension, with a total score of 2,246. This reflects trust in Distro Bloods' capability as an online sales platform, which is rated positively because Distro Bloods' Instagram utilizes various features, including the Shop feature, which displays products for sale and integrates with the website, allowing consumers to purchase products directly online. Additionally, the ability of the admin is trusted by consumers in managing online product sales for Distro Bloods, as they provide information on how to order products online, starting from selecting products and contacting customer support to completing transactions.

The dimension of the e-Trust variable with the lowest score is Integrity, with a total score of 1,316. Integrity reflects the extent to which an online platform can provide information that aligns with reality. In this case, consumers evaluate whether the Distro Bloods Instagram admin can convey honest information about their products. The Integrity dimension of e-Trust has the lowest score because consumers do not fully trust online platforms, especially Instagram, as a medium for selling products. Consumers feel more confident in making online purchases if the online seller is trustworthy and the transaction process is reliable (Camp, 2001 in Cheng and Yee, 2014:1).

#### **e-Purchase Decision Variables**

Overall, the calculation results show that e-Purchase Decision in social media marketing through Distro Bloods' Instagram falls into the "Moderate" category. The analysis indicates that each dimension has different values, with the highest score being in the Stability in Product dimension, with a total score of 1,329. Stability in Product relates to factors associated with e-purchase decisions, such as good quality, which builds consumer trust to make e-purchase decisions. In this context, consumers assess that the quality of information and the presentation of the online platform, Distro Bloods' Instagram, can convince them to make an e-purchase decision. These findings support the studies conducted by Rian Prima (2014) and Suhari (2008), which stated that the quality of an online platform's presentation influences e-purchase decisions. A high-quality online platform presentation can encourage consumers to make e-purchase decisions.

The dimension of the e-Purchase Decision variable with the lowest score is Habits in Buying Products, with a total score of 1,260. This dimension relates to the habit of repeatedly purchasing the same product, where consumers feel the product has become ingrained in their minds. The Habits in Buying Products dimension of e-Purchase Decision has the lowest score, indicating that consumers do not feel satisfied with Distro Bloods, leading to reluctance to make repeat purchases of Distro Bloods products.

### **Discussion of Verification Research Results**

#### **The Influence of Social Media Marketing on e-Trust**

Based on the data processing and statistical tests, it can be determined that the contribution of social media marketing directly influencing e-trust has a t-value of 5.786, which is greater than the t-table value of 1.971. This statistical test result indicates that social media marketing (X) has a positive direct effect on e-trust (M). Based on the calculation of the coefficient of determination, the R-square value was obtained. This R-square value is used to determine the percentage contribution of social media marketing (X) to e-trust (M). The calculation of the coefficient of determination shows that e-Trust is influenced by 75.4% by Social Media Marketing (Instagram).

#### **The Influence of Social Media Marketing and e-Trust on e-Purchase Decisions**

Based on the data processing and statistical tests, it can be determined that the contribution of social media marketing (X) and e-trust (M) in influencing e-purchase decision (Y) is indicated by an F-value of 168.218, which is greater than the F-table value of 3.038. This statistical test result suggests that social media marketing (X) and e-trust (M) simultaneously have a positive influence on e-purchase decision (Y).

Partially, the results of the t-test calculations show a positive influence of social media marketing (X) on e-purchase decision (Y), with a t-value of 5.326 > t-table value of 1.971. The second calculation indicates a positive influence of e-trust (M) on e-purchase decision (Y), with a t-value of 4.082 > t-table value of 1.971.

Based on the calculation of the coefficient of determination, the R-square value was obtained. This R-square value is used to determine the percentage of the influence of social media marketing (X) and e-trust (M) on e-purchase decision (Y). The calculation shows that e-Purchase Decision is influenced by 61.3% by Social Media Marketing (Instagram) and e-Trust.

#### **The Influence of Social Media Marketing on e-Purchase Decisions Through e-Trust**

Based on the results of the path analysis, it was found that e-trust mediates the influence of social media marketing on e-purchase decision. From the Sobel test calculation, the t-value was determined to be 4.031, which is greater than the t-table value of 1.980. Additionally, mediation is established when the indirect effect is greater than the direct effect. In this study, the indirect effect of 0.489 is greater than the direct effect of 0.458. Therefore, the e-Trust (M) variable mediates the influence of the Social Media Marketing (X) variable on e-Purchase Decision (Y).

#### **Conclusion**

Based on the research findings and the discussion grounded in theories related to e-trust mediating the influence of social media marketing on e-purchase decision on Instagram @bloodsclothofficial, the following research conclusions can be drawn:

1. The general overview of Distro Bloods consumers regarding the use of social media marketing on Instagram @bloodsclothofficial falls into the "Good" category, while e-trust and e-purchase decision are both in the "Moderate" category. This is because consumer trust (e-trust) in Distro Bloods' Instagram is still low, and consumers do not fully trust Instagram as a sales medium, which impacts the low e-purchase decision for Distro Bloods through Instagram @bloodsclothofficial.
2. There is an influence of social media marketing on e-trust, meaning that the higher the quality of social media marketing, the more it will enhance e-trust in Distro Bloods' Instagram @bloodsclothofficial.
3. There is an influence of social media marketing on e-purchase decision, meaning that social media marketing provides facilities for the public to leave online reviews, which can influence their thinking when making purchasing decisions for a product.
4. There is an influence of e-trust on e-purchase decision, meaning that the higher the consumer's trust, the more their purchasing decisions for a product will increase.
5. There is an influence of social media marketing through e-trust as a mediating variable on e-purchase decision, meaning that social media marketing has an indirect effect on e-purchase decision through e-trust.

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