

## THE ROLE OF BRAND AWARENESS IN MEDIATING THE INFLUENCE OF KEY OPINION LEADERS (KOL) ON PURCHASE INTENTION FOR MUSTIKA RATU FACE MASK PRODUCTS (A STUDY ON TIKTOK USERS IN DENPASAR CITY)

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### Abstract

This study aims to examine the role of brand awareness in mediating the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on purchasing intention in Mustika Ratu face mask products, focusing on TikTok users in Denpasar City. The number of respondents in this study was 107 people, who were selected using a non-probability sampling method with a purposive sampling technique through a questionnaire distributed via Google Form. The results of the study showed that key opinion leaders had a positive and significant effect on consumer purchasing intention. In addition, brand awareness also had a positive and significant effect on purchasing intention. This study also proves that brand awareness can mediate the influence of key opinion leaders on purchasing intention, so that the higher consumer awareness of the Mustika Ratu brand, the stronger the influence of KOL on purchasing intention of the product. The implications of this study indicate that companies can maximize the use of KOL in Mustika Ratu's marketing strategy, especially on social media platforms such as TikTok. In addition, increasing brand awareness is an important key in strengthening the effectiveness of KOL on consumer purchasing intention.

**Keywords:** KOL, Purchase Intention, Brand Awareness

### INTRODUCTION

One of the leading facial mask skincare products in Indonesia today is Mustika Ratu. Mustika Ratu is a cosmetics and beauty care company from Indonesia. This company has been established since 1978 and has a factory located in Ciracas, East Jakarta. There are many products that have been released by Mustika Ratu, ranging from Skin Care Series, Make Up, to herbal drinks (Nugroho, 2023). One of Mustika Ratu's leading cosmetic products is a facial mask which is included in the skincare product category. Mustika Ratu provides two choices of masks, namely facial masks in powder and cream form (Nurlitasanti & Yoestini, 2020).

**Table 1. Top Brand Index of Face Mask Category 2019-2023**

| Brand Name   | Brand Index |      |      |      |      |
|--------------|-------------|------|------|------|------|
|              | 2019        | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
| Garnier      | 11,5        | 10,6 | 18,4 | 27,2 | 30,5 |
| Mustika Ratu | 25,5        | 21,2 | 20,6 | 20,4 | 15,6 |
| Ovale        | 14,4        | 16,8 | 14,8 | 18,5 | 16,7 |

Sariayu                      12,7    15    14,7    13,8    10,4  
 Sumber: Top Brand Award.com

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that over the past 5 years, namely 2019-2023, the Mustika Ratu Facial Mask Brand Index has tended to decline. The decline in the brand index reflects the decline in the brand existence value owned by the Mustika Ratu Facial Mask. Although the Mustika Ratu Facial Mask is a superior product favored by many consumers in 2019, its sales volume has declined in the past five years. This decline in sales will clearly have an impact on the company's profits. The assessment is based on three criteria for measuring brands as a reference for Top Brand. The three parameters are mind share, market share and commitment share. Mind share shows the strength of a brand in positioning itself in the minds of customers in a particular category. Market share shows the strength of a brand in the market and is closely related to customer purchasing behavior. Then, commitment share shows the strength of a brand in encouraging customers to repurchase in the future (Top Brand Award, 2023).

**Table 2. Percentage of Google Trends Data for Mustika Ratu in Denpasar City 2019-2024**

| Brand Name   | Trends Value |
|--------------|--------------|
| Garnier      | 79%          |
| Mustika Ratu | 11%          |
| Sariayu      | 6%           |
| Ovale        | 4%           |

Sumber: trends.google.com (2024)

Google Trends is a service from Google that presents visualized data on the extent to which a particular keyword is searched on the Google search engine within a certain time period. Google Trends data is a sample of real-time data based on Google searches (Wirabattana, 2021). Based on Google Trends data in Table 2, it can be seen that the average percentage of intention in the Mustika Ratu brand in Denpasar City is higher than the other two competitors, namely Ovale and Sari Ayu, but lower than Garnier. The percentage of intention in Mustika Ratu products based on Google Trends data is 11 percent, this reflects that Mustika Ratu is still less popular than its competitor, namely Garnier, which has a very high percentage of 79 percent.

Related data concludes that there is a decrease in purchasing intention among Mustika Ratu Face Mask consumers. However, efforts to increase purchasing intention among Mustika Ratu face mask consumers are a challenge for the company. Studies show that high purchasing intention has the potential to increase company revenue, in line with the results of research by Rosita & Sosianika (2019) which revealed that the greater the consumer intention in a product, the greater the possibility of increasing revenue. Purchase intention in

a product can arise because of trust in the product, accompanied by the ability to buy the product. Purchase intention is the attitude of customers who want to make purchases or choose goods according to experience through choosing, wearing, and consuming or wanting the goods (Kotler and Keller, 2016). In increasing a person's purchasing intention, it can be seen from several things, for example marketing carried out by the company.

Marketing is carried out by companies to continue to innovate and adapt to market dynamics. One of them is through influencer marketing. Influencer marketing is a marketing strategy that is often used by a brand because it can provide a win-win situation for the company to reach the target audience and for the influencer to maintain relationships with followers or increase followers (Geysler, 2023). There is a new phenomenon in the term influencer which is often called Key Opinion Leader (KOL). KOL can be considered the same as an influencer because it has an influence on consumer behavior like an influencer. However, the difference is that a KOL has expertise in a particular field so that KOL can reach a more specific target audience compared to influencers (Xiong et al., 2021). The high level of public trust and enthusiasm for KOL can have an impact on public purchasing intention (Safitri & Barkah, 2023).

The implementation of this KOL marketing strategy has been implemented in the skincare industry. The collaboration aims to reach the target audience and have an impact on consumer purchasing intention in the Mustika Ratu brand. In this case, the use of Key Opinion Leaders (KOL) in Mustika Ratu brand skincare products can be a key factor in increasing consumer purchasing intention. Mustika Ratu implements the use of KOL through social media platforms, one of which is TikTok.

Utilization of Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) has the potential to significantly increase the number of views and likes on content compared to not using KOL. The increase in the number of views and likes can strengthen consumer intention in a product or service promoted through the platform. This shows that the marketing strategy by utilizing KOL has a significant impact in achieving promotional goals and increasing interaction with the audience. However, the use of KOL in Mustika Ratu products has not succeeded in significantly increasing public intention in buying Mustika Ratu Face Masks. This can be seen in Table 1 which shows that the Mustika Ratu Face Mask brand index has decreased from 2019 to 2024. This condition indicates a negative phenomenon that has occurred (Source: Views and Likes Generated by KOLs on TikTok Regarding Mustika Ratu Facial Mask Content).

One of the main causes is the lack of fit between the selected KOL and the characteristics of the target audience. According to research by Lee & Watkins (2016), the effectiveness of KOL is greatly influenced by the level of credibility, relevance, and attractiveness of the KOL to the target market segment. If the KOL used does not have a strong relationship with the values or preferences of the Mustika Ratu audience, then the promotional message tends not to be well received. In addition, inconsistency in the content strategy delivered by the KOL can also be an inhibiting factor. As stated by Lou & Yuan

(2019), audiences tend to be more responsive to content that is authentic and consistent with brand identity. In the case of Mustika Ratu, this inconsistency can cause the audience to lose trust or intention in the promotion being carried out. Another possible contributing factor is the increasing competition in the beauty product market, where other brands are more aggressive in using KOLs who have greater influence on digital platforms. According to Chen et al. (2021), brands with larger marketing budgets tend to be able to attract KOLs who have a wider reach, thus creating higher competitive pressure for brands with limited resources.

Lack of intention in buying a product is also influenced by brand awareness. Brand awareness, defined as the extent to which consumers recognize and remember a brand in a particular product category (Aaker, 1991), plays an important role in driving the effectiveness of marketing strategies, including the use of KOLs. A high level of brand awareness not only helps consumers remember the brand but also influences purchasing decisions by creating positive associations with the brand (Keller, 2013). In the context of Mustika Ratu, the decline in the brand index from 2019 to 2024 may indicate that Mustika Ratu's brand awareness has decreased significantly.

One of the factors that influence Mustika Ratu brand awareness is the issue of product placement and brand visual elements. The Mustika Ratu logo that is similar to the Sari Ayu brand can create confusion among consumers. According to a study by Walsh et al. (2010), visual elements such as logos that do not have clear differentiation can reduce consumer recall of the brand and weaken brand awareness. In this case, the similarity of the logos between Mustika Ratu and Sari Ayu has the potential to cause the audience to fail to distinguish between the two brands, thus affecting consumer perception and purchasing intention. Therefore, strengthening visual elements that are unique and different from competitors is an important step to increase Mustika Ratu brand awareness in an increasingly competitive market.

The results of a study conducted by Cantika & Kurnia (2023) found that Key Opinion Leaders (KOL) have a positive and significant effect on the purchase intention of Somethinc cosmetics. In line with this, research by Faticha & Sekarsari (2023) stated that KOL has a positive and significant effect on the purchase intention of Looke cosmetics consumers. However, this statement differs from research conducted by Khoirunnisa & Pinandito (2023) which states that KOL has no effect on the purchase intention of online bootcamp consumers. In line with this, research conducted by Ekyawan & Rahman (2022) also stated that KOL has no effect on the purchase intention of Wuling vehicle consumers.

Previous studies have shown that there is still a lack of consistency in the results regarding the influence of KOL on purchase intention, so a mediating variable is needed that can indirectly influence the influence of KOL on purchase intention. The variable that can be used as a solution to this research gap is brand awareness which acts as a mediating variable. Brand awareness is the beginning of forming a brand (Wulandari et al., 2021). According to Faticha &

Sekarsari (2023), brand awareness is the ability of customers to recognize or remember that a brand is part of a particular product. Every marketing activity always makes serious efforts to gain a deeper level of brand awareness as top of mind from competing brands with the hope that brand placement can increase consumer purchasing intention in a product (Faticha & Sekarsari, 2023).

In order to explore the role of brand awareness as a mediator between the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) and purchase intention, a pre-survey was conducted in Denpasar City involving 20 respondents.

**Table 3. Pre-Survey on Mustika Ratu Facial Mask Products in Denpasar City**

| No | Question   | Respondent's Answer<br>(person) |    |       | Percentage<br>(%) |    |
|----|--|---------------------------------|----|-------|-------------------|----|
|    |  | Yes                             | No | Total | Yes               | No |
| 1  | Do you know the Mustika Ratu facial mask product?  | 19                              | 1  | 20    | 95                | 5  |
| 2  | Can you differentiate the Mustika Ratu brand from other facial mask brands?  | 18                              | 2  | 20    | 90                | 10 |
| 3  | Have you ever received information from KOL who was chosen by Mustika Ratu Facial Mask on TikTok?                          | 16                              | 4  | 20    | 80                | 20 |
| 4  | Did the KOLs chosen by Mustika Ratu Facial Mask on TikTok make you interested in buying Mustika Ratu Facial Mask products? | 8                               | 12 | 20    | 40                | 60 |
| 5  | Will you make Mustika Ratu your first choice brand when you want to buy a facial mask product?                             | 9                               | 11 | 20    | 45                | 55 |
| 6  | Are you interested in purchasing Mustika Ratu Facial Mask products in the future?  | 7                               | 13 | 20    | 35                | 65 |

Source: Processed data, 2024

It can be seen that as many as 95 percent of respondents know the Mustika Ratu Face Mask product. Then, 90 percent of respondents can distinguish the Mustika Ratu brand from other face mask brands. Then, 80 percent of respondents have received information from KOLs chosen by Mustika Ratu Face Mask on TikTok. However, there are 55 percent of respondents who do not make Mustika Ratu their first choice brand when they want to buy a face mask product and 60 percent of respondents feel that the KOL chosen by Mustika Ratu Face Mask on TikTok does not make respondents interested in buying the product. This is supported by the following data,

namely that 65 percent of respondents are not interested in purchasing Mustika Ratu Face Mask products in the future. Although some consumers receive information from Mustika Ratu KOLs, this still cannot influence consumer intention in buying Mustika Ratu Face Mask products. This shows that there is a problem in consumer buying intention in Mustika Ratu Face Masks in Denpasar City.

The use of mediating variables, namely brand awareness. This study is also supported by Bismo et al. (2022) who stated that key opinion leaders have a positive and significant influence on brand awareness. This shows that the presence of key opinion leaders (KOL) will build the brand awareness because KOL has an important role in conveying the product brand message to consumers, so that the brand will always be in the minds of consumers. According to Prayogo et al. (2023) brand awareness has a positive and significant influence on purchasing intention. This shows that brand awareness can influence consumer intention in making purchases of a product. Another study by Safitri & Barkah (2023) also stated that brand awareness is able to mediate the influence of KOL on purchasing intention.

Based on the phenomena described above and the existence of a research gap in previous research, it is necessary to conduct further research with the title "The Role of Brand Awareness in Mediating the Influence of Key Opinion Leaders (KOL) on Purchase Intention in Mustika Ratu Facial Mask Skincare Products in Denpasar City)".

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study uses a quantitative method with a causal associative approach. The causal associative approach is used to identify the influence between two or more variables that have a reciprocal relationship. This approach was chosen because this study aims to examine the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on purchase intention, the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on brand awareness, the influence of brand awareness on purchase intention, and the mediating role of brand awareness in the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on purchase intention.

This research was conducted in Denpasar City, Bali. Denpasar City was used as the research location considering that Denpasar City is the capital city of Bali Province and there are also many facial care shops and distributors that sell Mustika Ratu brand facial care products. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency of Bali Province (2023), Denpasar City is ranked first as the largest number of internet users in Bali Province as much as 87.54 percent, so Denpasar City is very easy to find respondents who fit the category studied.

The population in this study consists of consumers of Mustika Ratu Facial Mask products in Denpasar City, including individuals who have an intention in making purchases online or offline. The number of this population is not known for sure. The number of respondents in this study was 107 people, who were selected using the non-probability sampling method with purposive sampling technique through a questionnaire distributed via Google Form.

Studies that conduct multivariate analysis (correlation or multiple regression) the number of samples is determined from 5-10 times the number of indicators because it is considered to represent the population and can produce more reliable results in multivariate analysis (Rahyuda, 2017: 173). In this study there are 11 indicators that will be used, so a conservative approach is used using five times the number of indicators as a reference.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Inferential Statistical Analysis Results

#### Path Analysis Results

**Table 4. Results of Sub-structural Path Analysis 1**

| Model                    | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | T     | Sig.  |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
|                          | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |       |       |
| (Constant)               | 6.371                       | 1.194      |                           | 5.337 | 0.000 |
| Key Opinion Leader (KOL) | 0.793                       | 0.095      | 0.633                     | 8.372 | 0.000 |
| R <sup>2</sup> : 0.400   |                             |            |                           |       |       |

Source: Processed data, 2024 (Appendix 9)

Based on the results of the path analysis in table 4, the structural equation formed can be formulated as follows:

$$M = \beta_2 X + e_1$$

$$M = 0,633X$$

The structural equation is intended if the key opinion leader (KOL) variable has a coefficient of 0,633, which means that the key opinion leader (KOL) has a positive influence on brand awareness, this means that if the key opinion leader (KOL) increases, brand awareness will increase, and vice versa.

**Table 5. Results of Sub-structural Path Analysis 2**

| Model                    | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t     | Sig.  |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
|                          | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |       |       |
| (Constant)               | 0.277                       | 1.136      |                           | 0.244 | 0.808 |
| Key Opinion Leader (KOL) | 0.608                       | 0.103      | 0.440                     | 5.895 | 0.000 |
| Brand Awareness          | 0.500                       | 0.082      | 0.454                     | 6.075 | 0.000 |
| R <sup>2</sup> : 0.652   |                             |            |                           |       |       |

Source: Processed data, 2024 (Appendix 9)

This study calculates the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) and brand awareness on purchase intention through the IBM SPSS program. Table 5 shows the results of the second sub-structural calculation. The results of the path analysis in Table 5 can be formulated as follows.

$$Y = \beta_1 X + \beta_3 M + e_2$$

$$Y = 0,440X + 0,454M$$

The structural equation can be interpreted if the key opinion leader (KOL) variable has a coefficient of 0.440 which means that the key opinion leader (KOL) has a positive influence on purchasing intention, this means that if the key opinion leader (KOL) increases, purchasing intention will increase, and vice versa. The brand awareness variable has a coefficient of 0,454 which shows that brand awareness has a positive influence on purchasing intention, this means that if brand awareness increases, purchasing intention will increase, and vice versa.

### 1) Path coefficient diagram form

#### a) Direct effect

Direct influence occurs when a variable influences another variable without any mediating variable.

(1) The influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on purchasing intention is 0,440.

(2) The influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on brand awareness is 0,633.

(3) The influence of brand awareness on purchasing intention is 0,454.

#### b) Indirect effect

Indirect influence occurs when there is another variable that mediates the relationship between the two variables.

(1) The influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on purchasing intention with brand awareness mediation is  $(\beta_2 \times \beta_3) = (0,633 \times 0,454) = 0,287$ .

#### c) Total effect

The total influence occurs if it is done by adding the direct influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on purchasing intention of 0,440 and the indirect influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on purchasing intention through brand awareness of 0,287, then the result is  $\beta_1 + (\beta_2 \times \beta_3) = 0,440 + 0,287 = 0,727$ .

### 2) Testing the value of the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) and the error variable (e)

This test can show the value of each determination coefficient for substructure 1 and substructure 2 as well as the value of each error variable in each structure with the aim of compiling the following final path diagram model which is the result of calculating the value of the error variable in each structure.

$$e_i = \sqrt{1 - R_i^2}$$

$$e_1 = \sqrt{1 - R_1^2} \sqrt{1 - 0,400} = 0,774$$

$$e_2 = \sqrt{1 - R_2^2} \sqrt{1 - 0,652} = 0,590$$

The calculation of the influence of error (e) then obtained the results for the influence of error structure 1 (e<sub>1</sub>) of 0,774 and the influence of error structure 2 (e<sub>2</sub>) of 0,590. Next, the total determination coefficient will be calculated as follows.

$$\begin{aligned} R^2_m &= 1 - (e_1)^2 - (e_2)^2 \\ &= 1 - (0,774)^2 - (0,590)^2 \\ &= 1 - (0,600) - (0,348) \\ &= 1 - 0,208 = 0,791 \end{aligned}$$

The calculation of the total determination coefficient value obtained was 0,791, so the conclusion is that 79.1% of the purchase intention variable for Mustika Ratu facial mask products is influenced by key opinion leaders (KOL) and brand awareness, while the remaining 20.9% is influenced by other factors that are not included in the research model or outside the research model.

The magnitude of the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on brand awareness and purchase intention variables, as well as the magnitude of the influence of the brand awareness variable on purchase intention, each of which is obtained from the standardized Beta coefficient and the magnitude of each error variable from each structural equation.

### 3) Summarize and conclude

**Table 6. Direct Influence, Indirect Influence of Key Opinion Leader (X), on Brand Awareness (M) and Purchase Intention (Y)**

| Influence of variables | Direct influence | Indirect influence through M | Total Influence | Significant t | Results     |
|------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------|
| X→M                    | 0,633            |                              | 0,633           | 0,000         | Significant |
| M→Y                    | 0,454            |                              | 0,454           | 0,000         | Significant |
| X→Y                    | 0,440            | 0,287                        | 0,727           | 0,000         | Significant |

Source: Processed primary data, 2024

#### a) The influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on brand awareness

The results of the calculation of the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on brand awareness, show that key opinion leaders (KOL) have a direct influence on positive brand awareness of 0,633 and a significance value of 0,000.

#### b) The influence of brand awareness on purchasing intention

The calculation results of the influence of brand awareness on purchasing intention show that brand awareness has a direct influence on positive purchasing intention of 0,454 and a significance value of 0,000.

#### c) The influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on buying intention

The results of the study on the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on purchasing intention, showed that key opinion leaders (KOL) have a direct influence on positive purchasing intention of 0,440 and a significance of 0,000.

**d) Brand awareness in mediating the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on buying intention**

The results of the calculation of brand awareness in mediating the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on purchasing intention, then get the results that key opinion leaders (KOL) have a direct influence on purchasing intention is positive at 0,440 and a positive indirect influence of 0,287 with a total influence is positive at 0,727.

**Classical Assumption Test Results**

**1) Normality Test**

**Table 7. Normality Test Results**

| Equality         | Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z |
|------------------|---|
| Sub-structural 1 | 0,200                                       |
| Sub-structural 2 | 0,200                                       |

Source: Processed data, 2024 (Appendix 8)

Based on the normality test using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test shown in Table 7, it shows that the value of Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) Kolmogorov-Smirnov is 0,200 and 0,200 respectively in sub-structural 1 and sub-structural 2. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov value is greater than the alpha value of 0,05, indicating that the data used in this study is normally distributed, so it can be concluded that the model meets the assumption of normality.

**2) Multicollinearity Test**

**Table 8. Multicollinearity Test Results**

| Equality         | Model                    | Collinearity Statistics |       |
|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------|
|                  |                          | Tolerance               | VIF   |
| Sub-structural 1 | Key Opinion Leader (KOL) | 1.000                   | 1.000 |
| Sub-structural 2 | Key Opinion Leader (KOL) | 0.600                   | 1.668 |
|                  | Brand Awareness          | 0.600                   | 1.668 |

Source: Processed data, 2024 (Appendix 8)

Based on Table 8, it is shown that there are no independent variables that have a tolerance value of less than 0,10 and there are also no independent variables that have a VIF value of more than 10. Therefore, the regression model is free from multicollinearity symptoms.

### 3) Heteroscedasticity Test

**Table 9. Heteroscedasticity Test Results**

| Equality         | Variables                | t      | Sig.  |
|------------------|--------------------------|--------|-------|
| Sub-structural 1 | Key Opinion Leader (KOL) | 1.111  | 0.269 |
| Sub-structural 2 | Key Opinion Leader (KOL) | 0.828  | 0.410 |
|                  | Brand Awareness          | -0.958 | 0.340 |

Source: Processed data, 2024 (Appendix 9)

Based on Table 9, it is shown that each has a significance value greater than 5% (0,05). This shows that the independent variables used in this study do not significantly affect the dependent variable, namely the absolute residual, therefore, this study is free from heteroscedasticity symptoms.

### Sobel Test Results

According to Utama (2016: 169), testing the mediation hypothesis can be done using a procedure developed by Sobel (1982) and known as the Sobel Test. This Sobel Test is done by testing the strength of the indirect influence of the exogenous variable (X) on the endogenous variable (Y) through the mediation variable (M). Testing the mediation hypothesis can be done using the Sobel Test. The Sobel test is used to test the strength of the indirect influence of the key opinion leader variable (X) on purchase intention (Y) through the brand awareness variable (M). The indirect effect of key opinion leaders (X) on purchase intention (Y) through the brand awareness variable (M) is calculated by multiplying the path coefficient of X on M (a) by the path coefficient of M on Y (b) or ab. The standard error of the coefficients a and b are written as Sa and Sb, the magnitude of the indirect standard error (indirect effect). If the Z calculation value is greater than 1,96 (with a 95 percent confidence level), then the mediation variable is considered to significantly mediate the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable, indicating that Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted..

Ho: Brand awareness does not mediate the influence of key opinion leaders on purchase intention.

Ha: brand awareness mediates the influence of key opinion leaders on purchase intention.

$$Z = \frac{ab}{\sqrt{b^2 S_a^2 + a^2 S_b^2 + s_a^2 s_b^2}}$$

**Information :**

a = 0,633

$$\begin{aligned}
S_a &= 0,095 \\
b &= 0,454 \\
S_b &= 0,082 \\
Z &= \frac{0,633 \cdot 0,454}{\sqrt{(0,454^2 \cdot 0,095^2) + (0,633^2 \cdot 0,082^2) + (0,095^2 \cdot 0,082^2)}} \\
Z &= \frac{0,287}{0,068} \\
Z &= 4,230
\end{aligned}$$

Based on the results of the Sobel Test, it shows that the result of  $Z = 4,230 > 1,96$ , it can be said that  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted, which means that the brand awareness variable is a mediating variable with a significant influence between key opinion leaders on purchasing intention in Mustika Ratu facial mask products, so that the fourth hypothesis in this study is proven true.

### **VAF Test Results**

Based on the VAF test, the calculated value of 39,51 percent, which is between 20 percent - 80 percent, can be categorized as a partial mediation (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2013:82), so it can be concluded that brand awareness partially mediates the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on purchasing intention in Mustika Ratu facial mask products.

## **Discussion of Research Results**

### **The Influence of KOL on Purchase Intention**

Based on the results of the first hypothesis test in this study regarding the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on purchase intention, it can be seen that there is a positive and significant influence between key opinion leaders (KOL) on purchase intention in Mustika Ratu facial mask products. The results of this study indicate that the better the key opinion leader (KOL) obtained by Mustika Ratu facial mask products, the more it will increase purchase intention in Mustika Ratu facial mask products. So that the first hypothesis in this study can be proven true.

Key opinion leader (KOL) can be considered the same as influencers because they have an influence on consumer behavior like influencers. However, the difference is that a KOL has expertise in a particular field so that KOL can reach a more specific target audience compared to influencers (Xiong et al., 2021). When a KOL recommends a product through their positive reviews, potential buyers tend to be more inclined to buy the product. KOLs can also provide consumers with personal experiences with a product, making it more convincing for consumers who are looking for certainty before buying (Ilmi & Mahendri, 2023).

This is in line with the TPB Theory model which explains the influence of subjective norms on intention. According to Montano and Kasprzyk (2015) subjective norms refer to an individual's perception of the expectations or hopes of people who are considered important in their social environment. Subjective norms can include direct influences such as comments or

suggestions from others as well as indirect influences through observing the behavior of others. Mustika Ratu facial mask products are recommended and reviewed well by key opinion leaders (KOL) so that prospective buyers will be more confident in buying Mustika Ratu facial mask products.

The results of this study are in line with the results of research by Tran & Uehera (2023) which stated that KOL has a positive and significant effect on consumer purchasing intention. Research conducted by Ilmi and Mahendri (2022) showed similar results. The results of the study revealed that the key opinion leader (KOL) variable has a positive influence on purchasing intention in Ms Glow beauty products in Jombang Regency. This is in line with research conducted by Le (2022) which stated that the KOL variable has a positive and significant influence on purchasing intention.

### **The Influence of KOL on Brand Awareness**

Based on the results of the second hypothesis test in this study regarding the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on brand awareness, it can be seen that there is a positive and significant influence between key opinion leaders (KOL) on brand awareness of Mustika Ratu facial mask products. The results of this study indicate that the better the key opinion leader (KOL) obtained by Mustika Ratu facial mask products, the more it will increase brand awareness of Mustika Ratu facial mask products. So that the second hypothesis in this study can be proven true.

Key opinion leaders (KOL) are people who are considered as the key to controlling the public opinion of their social media account followers (Safitri & Ramadanty, 2019). The selection of celebrities, in this case the right KOL, can influence and have an impact on product engagement (Jaakonmaki et al., 2017). High product engagement can increase brand awareness of a product.

The results of this study are in line with the results of the study by Bismo et al. (2022) which stated that KOL has a positive and significant effect on brand awareness. Research conducted by Patria et al. (2022) stated the same thing where the results of the study showed that there was a positive influence of the KOL variable on brand awareness in Wonderful Indonesia. This is in line with research conducted by Safitri & Barkah (2023) which stated that the KOL variable has a positive and significant influence on brand awareness.

### **The Influence of Brand Awareness on Purchase Intention**

Based on the results of the third hypothesis test in this study regarding the effect of brand awareness on purchasing intention, it can be seen that there is a positive and significant influence between brand awareness and purchasing intention in Mustika Ratu facial mask products. The results of this study indicate that the higher the brand awareness obtained by Mustika Ratu facial mask products, the higher the purchasing intention in Mustika Ratu facial mask products. So that the third hypothesis in this study can be proven true.

Brand awareness or brand awareness is the ability of a potential buyer to recognize or remember a brand that is part of a product category (Maulida &

Hermawan, 2022). Brand awareness is the key for a brand to be in a brand equity position (Setiawan & Aksari, 2020). With the increasing level of brand awareness of a product, the product has reached a high level of awareness in the minds of consumers and can influence purchasing intention in the product (Hayati & Dahrani, 2022).

The results of this study are in line with the results of the study by Prayogo et al. (2023) which stated that brand awareness has a positive and significant effect on purchasing intention. Research conducted by Prasetyo et al. (2022) stated the same thing where the results of the study showed that there was a positive effect of the brand awareness variable on purchasing intention in online products in the Tokopedia marketplace.

### **The Role of Brand Awareness in Mediating the Influence of KOL on Purchase Intention**

Based on the results of the fourth hypothesis test in this study, brand awareness is proven to have a positive and significant role in mediating the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on purchasing intention in Mustika Ratu facial mask products. The results of the Variance Accounted For (VAF) test show that the mediation role that occurs is partial mediation, with VAF values ranging from 20–80 percent. This VAF test strengthens the finding that good reviews from key opinion leaders (KOL) of Mustika Ratu facial mask products can increase consumer brand awareness of the product. Furthermore, this increase in brand awareness has a significant contribution in driving consumer purchasing intention. Thus, the fourth hypothesis in this study can be accepted, which states that brand awareness mediates the relationship between key opinion leaders (KOL) and purchasing intention in Mustika Ratu facial mask products.

The results of this study are in line with the results of the study by Safitri & Barkah (2023) which stated that brand awareness is able to mediate the influence of KOL on purchasing intention. Research conducted by Prayogo et al. (2022) stated the same thing where the results of the study showed that brand awareness is able to mediate the influence of KOL on purchasing intention. This is in line with research conducted by Hayati & Dahrani (2022) which stated that the brand awareness variable is able to mediate the influence of KOL on purchasing intention.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion presented in the previous chapters, several conclusions can be drawn as follows.

- 1) Key opinion leader (KOL) has a positive and significant effect on purchasing intention in Mustika Ratu facial mask consumers in Denpasar City. This shows that the better the key opinion leader (KOL) strategy used by Mustika Ratu, the more it will increase purchasing intention in Mustika Ratu facial mask products.

- 2) Key opinion leader (KOL) has a positive and significant effect on brand awareness of Mustika Ratu facial mask consumers in Denpasar City. This shows that the better the key opinion leader (KOL) strategy used by Mustika Ratu, the more it will increase brand awareness of Mustika Ratu facial mask products.
- 3) Brand awareness has a positive and significant effect on buying intention in at consumers of Mustika Ratu facial masks in Denpasar City. This shows that the higher the brand awareness perceived by consumers will increase the intention in buying Mustika Ratu facial mask products.
- 4) Brand awareness able to mediate the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on purchase intention. The role of brand awareness as a partial mediation is seen in the relationship between key opinion leaders (KOL) and purchase intention in Mustika Ratu facial mask consumers in Denpasar City. This shows that the influence of key opinion leaders (KOL) on purchase intention will be more effective if consumers have a high perception of brand awareness of Mustika Ratu facial mask products. This partial mediation role means that KOL does not fully rely on brand awareness to influence purchase intention, but the existence of brand awareness provides a significant additional contribution. In other words, although KOL can directly influence purchase intention, the existence of brand awareness strengthens the relationship by creating positive associations with the brand in the minds of consumers.

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