



## Analyzing the impact of viral marketing and brand awareness on crocs' purchase intentions among millennials and gen z

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine how Crocs' viral marketing strategy influences consumer behavior among Millennials and Gen Z. This study explores how Crocs' viral marketing and brand awareness influence purchase intention among Millennials and Gen Z. With the highest penetration rate in 2023, Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi were selected as the research locations. To collect data, the author conducted an anonymous survey via Google Forms, using the Likert Scale for measurement. A total of 197 respondents participated in the survey. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression with IBM SPSS 26 and SmartPLS 4.0 software. Although the findings revealed overlapping variations that led to the merging of independent variables into one construct for hypothesis testing, the results showed that viral marketing and brand awareness had a positive impact on Crocs' purchase intention in the Jabodetabek area. This suggests that Crocs' digital marketing efforts have successfully engaged Millennials and Gen Z, encouraging them to consider purchasing Crocs products. The positive impact of this marketing strategy highlights how targeting specific consumer segments through a tailored approach can be effective. The results underscore the importance of understanding and leveraging digital marketing to connect with younger consumers. For businesses looking to engage Millennials and Gen Z, investing in viral marketing and building strong brand awareness is critical. This study provides valuable insights for businesses and researchers, demonstrating the effectiveness of digital marketing in influencing purchase intent among younger consumers. By focusing on digital and viral marketing strategies, companies can better connect with this influential consumer group and drive future growth.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The footwear market is highly influenced by Millennials and Gen Z, who together form a significant portion of the consumer base (Citradewi et al., 2025). In Indonesia, Gen Z represents the largest generation group with 27.94% of the population, followed closely

by Millennials at 25.87% (IDN Research Institute, 2024). The preferences and behaviors of these consumers have a profound impact on businesses, prompting brands to innovate and cater to their tastes (Awad & Moustafa Aldabousi, 2024). For example, Crocs, once criticized for its unique design, has successfully leveraged viral marketing to reshape its image and appeal to this demographic. Both Millennials and Gen Z place a high value on authenticity and tend to support brands that resonate with their values and foster a sense of community in digital spaces (Wandhe, 2024). Reflecting this influence, the footwear market in Indonesia has seen steady growth, with revenues rising from \$4.3 million in 2022 to \$5.1 million in 2023, and is projected to increase gradually by a total of 23.84% from 2024 to 2028 (Statista Research Department, 2024).

Crocs' trajectory has been characterized by notable hurdles and shifting public attitudes, despite its current success (Islam & Sheikh, 2024). Invented in 2002 and got its first rise to success in the early 2000s, Crocs expanded its stores globally. However, this led to market oversaturation and inventory issues (Hakala, 2021). The company had to experience financial troubles in the late 2000s; in 2009, it reported a net loss of \$42.1 million, down from a net gain of \$168.2 million in 2007 and a loss of \$185.1 million in 2008 due to financial crisis (Fauzi, 2024). Additionally, Crocs' attempt to redesign its iconic clog in response to negative criticism diluted its brand identity and product range, leading to poor sales (Hakala, 2021). Crocs have been featured on Time Magazine's "50 Worst Inventions" list, described as "vermin", and associated with the "ugly" fashion movement. Despite facing negative perceptions, Crocs has shown significant resilience and adaptability. The company invested \$24.5 million in 2014 to restructure its marketing strategy, reducing the number of stores, and refocused on its original product concept of the iconic Crocs clogs (Shivaranjani, 2021, as cited in Halaka, 2021). Learning from their fall in 2008–2009, Crocs re-introduce their products as a brand that were not designed to look good, but designed purely as a practical and comfortable footwear solution (Pane et al., 2024). This made Crocs embrace the "ugliness" as part of their brand image. The company shows its distinctive look into a representation of comfort and self-expression. Embracing its tagline, "Come as you are" the brand has redefined its image (Ao et al., 2023). The effectiveness of these strategies is reflected in its recent sales figures where the business sold 119.6 million pairs of shoes globally, up from 115.6 million in 2022 (Urdea & Constantin, 2021).

Crocs has a product that is considered to have good quality and material, as well as good durability. In terms of price, Crocs products are considered to have a price that is quite appropriate for the quality and benefits provided by the product as a whole. The promotion carried out by Crocs in various media is also considered interesting and informative overall because it is considered capable of reaching all levels of society. In terms of Place, respondents also feel that overall, Crocs outlets are quite accessible and have a comfortable atmosphere and support shopping activities. Crocs has a strategy by combining 4 main variables in the marketing mix, namely product, promotion, place, and price or commonly referred to as 4P. These four variables are the main considerations that are usually used by companies to develop the right marketing strategy.

The clever application of viral marketing by Crocs has been a major contributor to this turnaround. Viral marketing refers to the rapid spread of brand-related content via social media and other online channels, becoming a vital tool for engaging with modern consumers (Zhang & Guo, 2024). Crocs leverages the influence of social media influencers and online communities to raise brand awareness. According to , Crocs uses platforms like Instagram and TikTok to collaborate with other brands, high-profile celebrities, and even small influencers (Sesar et al., 2022) (Muthoharoh et al., 2022). Beyond social media, Crocs also promotes its products through high-rated movies such as *Deadpool* and *The Suicide Squad* (Anas et al., 2023). This approach is particularly effective among digital-savvy Millennials and Gen Z, who actively engage with and rapidly interact with digital content (Wandhe, 2024). Tiktok is one of the applications that is

often used by the public in conducting marketing communication activities. There are various ways that can be done to determine the level of effectiveness of marketing communication through social media (Urdea & Constantin, 2021).

Alongside viral marketing, brand awareness also plays a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior. To boost their visibility, Crocs collaborated with Balenciaga in 2017, resulting in their products selling out within hours and gaining widespread attention. Additionally, collaborations with celebrities like Justin Bieber and Post Malone attracted their fans and followers, further enhancing Crocs' brand presence (Hakala, 2021).

During the 2020 pandemic, Crocs' "A Free Pair for Healthcare" campaign donated over 900,000 pairs of shoes to frontline workers, demonstrating corporate social responsibility and garnering positive attention (Ramadhan & Wiraguna, 2024). Increased consumer inclination to buy a brand's products—in this case, Crocs products—is a result of enhanced brand awareness. Building strong brand awareness among Millennials and Gen Z involves strategic marketing initiatives that emphasize the brand's distinctive attributes and appeal to the lifestyle and values of this demographic (Lin et al., 2023). In a competitive market, well-executed brand awareness campaigns can significantly influence consumer purchase intentions (Karpenka et al., 2021) (Awaliyah & Yuriah, 2024a).

According to Figure 1.1, the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association states that Banten has the highest internet penetration rate in 2023, followed by Jakarta and West Java (Broto et al., 2024). These provinces have the largest number of internet users, providing extensive access to the digital space. Therefore, this paper will target the major cities in these provinces, namely Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi (Jabodetabek). The research focuses on the impact of viral marketing and brand awareness on the purchasing intentions of Millennials and Gen Z in these cities. By examining these demographic groups in Indonesia, the study aims to provide insights for brands seeking to engage with digital-native audiences in a rapidly changing market.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a quantitative method by collecting anonymous data virtually through Google Form surveys. The data will be distributed through social media platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp. Data collection will take place over a period of two weeks. The target audience includes Millennials, born between the early 1980s and mid-1990s, and Generation Z, born between the late 1990s and early 2010s, encompassing individuals aged 12-43 years old living in Jabodetabek. The study will consider both current and potential customers of Crocs products within these demographics.

Additionally, the study will utilize Likert Sample Selection. This study utilizes non-probability sampling, specifically purposive sampling, to choose respondents based on specific criteria: individuals aged between 12 and 43 years old, residents of Jabodetabek, active users of social media platforms (particularly Instagram and TikTok), and individuals who have seen marketing content of Crocs on social media at least once (either from the brand, brand collaborations, celebrities, influencers, or content creators).

The research data will be processed using PLS-SEM following the determination of the minimum sample size for Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) from Hair et al. (2010): Minimum sample = (Number of indicators + number of latent variables) x (estimated parameters) = (35 + 3) x 5 = 190 Respondents.

Discriminant validity, which refers to items measuring different concepts, was ascertained using the Fornell-Larcker technique (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) and the Heterotraitmonotrait ratio (HTMT). Using the first technique, discriminant validity is achieved if the square root of the AVE is greater than the correlation between factors.

With the second approach, discriminant validity is achieved if the observed HTMT value is less than 0.9.

Pilot Test/Pre-Test, before the data collection starts, a pilot test or pre-test will be conducted. A pilot test is a pre-testing of a research instrument, involving trying out a questionnaire before using it in the main study (Anindya & Indriastuti, 2023). A pre-test helps identify potential problems in the research procedure and ensures the instrument will function as expected in the main study (Mustikasari & Widaningsih, 2019). In this procedure, the author will have five individuals test the prepared questionnaire, and request feedback.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 3.1 Fornell-Larcker Criterion

The Fornell-Larcker Criterion is used to assess the discriminant validity in structural equation modeling to ensure that each construct is distinct from the others. According to this criterion, the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct should ideally be greater than its highest squared correlation with any other construct. Table 1. reveals that several constructs did not meet this requirement. Specifically, Brand Awareness, Credibility, Entertainment, Informativeness, Purchase Intention (PI), Recognition, and Viral Marketing (VM) exhibited higher correlations with other constructs than their own square roots of AVEs. This suggests that these constructs are not sufficiently distinct from each other. Conversely, constructs such as Irritation (0.934) and Recall (0.933) have square roots of AVEs that are greater than their correlations with other constructs, demonstrating adequate discriminant validity.

Table 1. Fornell-Larcker Criterion

|                    | BA    | Credibility | Entertainment | Informativeness | Irritation | PI    | Recall | Recognition | VM    |
|--------------------|-------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|------------|-------|--------|-------------|-------|
| BA                 | 0.865 |             |               |                 |            |       |        |             |       |
| Credibility        | 0.918 | 0.908       |               |                 |            |       |        |             |       |
| Entertainment      | 0.911 | 0.912       | 0.910         |                 |            |       |        |             |       |
| Informativeness    | 0.931 | 0.922       | 0.924         | 0.887           |            |       |        |             |       |
| Irritation         | 0.880 | 0.903       | 0.884         | 0.892           | 0.934      |       |        |             |       |
| Purchase Intention | 0.918 | 0.91        | 0.915         | 0.935           | 0.883      | 0.872 |        |             |       |
| Recall             | 0.947 | 0.874       | 0.862         | 0.885           | 0.851      | 0.887 | 0.933  |             |       |
| Recognition        | 0.983 | 0.900       | 0.897         | 0.912           | 0.855      | 0.893 | 0.871  | 0.872       |       |
| Viral Marketing    | 0.946 | 0.965       | 0.969         | 0.977           | 0.939      | 0.948 | 0.901  | 0.927       | 0.875 |

#### 3.2 Heterotrait-monotrait Ratio (HTMT) – Matrix

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a set of statistical techniques that allow testing a relatively complex set of relationships simultaneously. The relationship is built between one or more dependent variables and one or more independent variables. SEM is an approach between factor analysis, path analysis and structural models. In SEM, three activities can be carried out simultaneously, namely confirmatory analysis (Confirmatory Factor Analysis), testing the relationship model between variables (Path Analysis) and obtaining a prediction model (Structural Model and Regression Analysis). The ultimate goal of SEM is in principle to obtain a structural model. SEM is also useful for examining the magnitude of the direct and indirect influence or total influence of independent variables on dependent variables. To ensure the reliability of the structural equation modeling (SEM), the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) was utilized as one of the measures of discriminant validity. Table 2 indicates varying values of discriminant validity between the constructs. Several HTMT values are close to or higher than the threshold of 1, suggesting possible overlaps or insufficient differentiation between some constructs.

Table 2. Heterotrait-monotrait Ratio (HTMT) – Matrix

|                 | BA    | Credibility | Entertainment | Informativeness | Irritation | PI    | Recall | Recognition | VM |
|-----------------|-------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|------------|-------|--------|-------------|----|
| BA              |       |             |               |                 |            |       |        |             |    |
| Credibility     | 1.006 |             |               |                 |            |       |        |             |    |
| Entertainment   | 0.978 | 1.000       |               |                 |            |       |        |             |    |
| Informativeness | 0.998 | 1.010       | 0.991         |                 |            |       |        |             |    |
| Irritation      | 0.986 | 1.034       | 0.992         | 1.000           |            |       |        |             |    |
| PI              | 0.990 | 1.003       | 0.988         | 1.009           | 0.996      |       |        |             |    |
| Recall          | 1.060 | 1.003       | 0.968         | 0.993           | 0.998      | 1.002 |        |             |    |
| Recognition     | 1.078 | 1.007       | 0.983         | 1.000           | 0.978      | 0.983 | 0.999  |             |    |
| VM              | 0.992 | 1.033       | 1.017         | 1.025           | 1.029      | 0.999 | 0.988  | 0.993       |    |

### 3.3 Pearson Coefficient Correlation

The correlation matrix from SPSS 26 provides insight into the relationships between AggregateVM, AggregateBA, and AggregatePI. The Pearson correlation coefficient between AggregateVM and AggregateBA is 0.947, signifying a very strong positive correlation. Likewise, the correlation between AggregateVM and AggregatePI is 0.948, which also indicates a very strong positive relationship, suggesting that an increase in viral marketing is closely associated with a higher purchase intention. Additionally, the correlation between AggregateBA and AggregatePI is 0.918, further demonstrating a very strong positive correlation. This means that brand awareness is closely linked to higher purchase intentions.

However, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.947 between AggregateVM and AggregateBA, the high correlation matrix ( $r > 0.8$ ) indicates that there is a significant overlap in the variation explained by these two variables. Changes in one variable are substantially correlated with changes in the other when the correlation coefficient is very high (Near to 1). This suggests that the variables are not totally independent of one another. It is worth noting that a high correlation indicates a strong relationship between the variables, but it does not mean the variables are identical or that one can replace the other. A high correlation means that the variables tend to change together.

Table 3. Pearson Coefficient Correlation

|             |                     | AggregateVM | AggregateBA | AggregatePI |
|-------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| AggregateVM | Pearson Correlation | 1           | .947**      | .948**      |
|             | Sig. (2-tailed)     |             | 0.000       | 0.000       |
| N           |                     | 160         | 160         | 160         |
| AggregateBA | Pearson Correlation | .947**      | 1           | .918**      |
|             | Sig. (2-tailed)     | 0.000       |             | 0.000       |
| N           |                     | 160         | 160         | 160         |
| AggregatePI | Pearson Correlation | .948**      | .918**      | 1           |
|             | Sig. (2-tailed)     | 0.000       | 0.000       |             |
| N           |                     | 160         | 160         | 160         |

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### 3.4 Demographic Information

This study gathered 197 qualified respondents out of a total of 201 by eliminating respondents who did not meet the survey criteria. The criteria required respondents to be between 18-43 years old, live in Jabodetabek, and have been exposed to Crocs' marketing content. The number of respondents collected exceeds the minimum sample of 190 for this study. The demographic information will display the data for all 201 respondents to specify both respondents who met and did not meet the criteria, distinguishing between those who met the criteria and those who did not.

Jabodetabek has the largest number of internet users. This study focuses on exploring individuals who lived in Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi. Based on the survey results, Jakarta is dominating the respondents' domicile with 123

individuals. Other than that, Bekasi, Tangerang, Depok, and Bogor represent 38, 14, 11, and 11 individuals, respectively.

The survey in this study includes a question regarding the preferred social media platforms among Millennials and Gen Z respondents. This data helps identify the primary platforms through which these demographic groups engage with Crocs' marketing content. that Instagram and TikTok are the most actively used platforms among the respondents. This aligns with Crocs' marketing content, which heavily utilizes Instagram and TikTok as their advertising platforms.

### 3.5 Viral Marketing

The mean values for Viral Marketing items range from 3.95 to 4.03, suggesting an overall positive assessment of Crocs' viral marketing initiatives. Note that VM14 and VM15 are reversed items, which means both items are phrased negatively, so the author needed to reverse the scale for these items. The final mean value of 3.995 represents that, on average, people have a positive perception of Crocs' viral marketing content. The item VM9, which measures how pleasing Crocs' viral marketing content is, received the highest mean value of 4.03. This means that respondents particularly agree that Crocs' viral marketing content is pleasing. On the other hand, item VM8, which measures how worth viewing Crocs' viral marketing content is, has the lowest mean value of 3.95. However, even this lowest value in the descriptive analysis is still close to the highest one. While it may have relatively low values, it suggests that there is still potential to enhance the content to make it more worth viewing.

### 3.6 Brand Awareness

Brand awareness are predominantly 4.00 or higher. Notably, the item BA10, which measures respondents' ability to name the Crocs brand in a footwear conversation, has the highest score, showing strong brand recall among respondents. Conversely, BA3, which reflects how well respondents have come to know the Crocs brand, has a slightly lower value at 3.97. However, it is important to note that the final mean value of brand awareness is 4.057, indicating that overall, respondents exhibit a high level of brand awareness. This suggests that while there is slight variation in some aspects, most respondents are well-acquainted with the Crocs brand.

### 3.7 Purchase Intention

Reveals that the average scores for purchase intention are mostly 4.00 or above. This data indicates that respondents generally have a high intention to purchase Crocs products. This shows that Crocs' marketing strategies are effectively generating a positive purchase intention among Millennials and Gen Z. The highest mean value falls on PI4, which measures the statement "I will purchase Crocs products next time I need that type of product.". This suggests that respondents strongly desire to stick with Crocs when making future purchases in this particular market. Moreover, PI3, which has a score of 3.98, is not much lower than 4.00, suggesting a strong likelihood of purchase even though it's slightly less enthusiastic. With a final mean value of 4.026, it can be said that most respondents generally agree with purchasing Crocs products, which highlights the reliability of these positive purchase intentions.

### 3.8 Viral Marketing to Purchase Intention

From Table 4, it is demonstrated that the graph has a strong linear relationship between viral marketing and purchase intention as it displays a p-value < 0.05 which shows how the linear component is significant.

Table 4. ANOVA Table of Variable X1

|      |                | SS      | df | MS    | F      | Sig  |
|------|----------------|---------|----|-------|--------|------|
| Y*X1 | Between Groups | 126.311 | 25 | 5.052 | 69.443 | .000 |

### 3.9 Brand Awareness to Purchase Intention

Table 5. presents the linearity graph of brand awareness and purchase intention

|      |                | SS      | df | MS    | F      | Sig  |
|------|----------------|---------|----|-------|--------|------|
| Y*X2 | Between Groups | 124.869 | 18 | 6.937 | 87.403 | .000 |

The graph shows a strong linear relationship between these variables

### 3.10 F-Test

Table 6. F-Test Outcome

| ANOVA <sup>a</sup> |            | Sum     | ofdf | Mean Square | F       | Sig.              |
|--------------------|------------|---------|------|-------------|---------|-------------------|
| Model              |            | Squares |      |             |         |                   |
| 1                  | Regression | 122.837 | 2    | 61.418      | 729.234 | .000 <sup>b</sup> |
|                    | Residual   | 13.223  | 157  | .084        |         |                   |
|                    | Total      | 136.060 | 159  |             |         |                   |

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention  
b. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Awareness, Viral Marketing

Table 6. presents an ANOVA table, demonstrating the F-statistics and  $\rho$ -value (Sig.). This linear regression measures the independent variable of Viral Marketing and Brand Awareness, and the dependent variable of Purchase Intention. The result displays that this model has an F-statistic value of 729.234.

Based on the calculation in the F distribution table, the F table value is 3.054. Looking at the data above, this model has an F-statistic value that is higher compared to the F table value, which is 729.234 and 3.054, respectively. It can be said that the null hypothesis should be rejected. Moreover, the data shows that this model has a  $\rho$ -value of 0.000<sup>b</sup>. Since the  $\rho$ -value is less than  $\alpha$  0.05, It is reasonable to conclude that the null hypothesis of this study should be rejected.

### 3.11 T-Test

To analyze the T-Values value in this study, the author used SmartPLS 4 and ran the bootstrapping procedure. The first path involves examining the relationship between viral marketing (the independent variable) and purchase intention (the dependent variable). In the next step, the focus shifts to determining the relationship between brand awareness (the independent variable) and purchase intention (the dependent variable). Moreover, a value of the T table in this study is needed to complete the hypothesis testing. Below is the calculation of the T table:

$$df = 157$$

$$\alpha/2 = 0.025$$

$$t_{0.025,157} \approx 1.975$$

Table 7. T-test Result

|         | Original Sample | T statistics                    | P values                         | Result    |
|---------|-----------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| VM □ PI | 0.754           | 8.893<br>(T statistics > 1.975) | 0.000<br>( $\rho$ -value < 0.05) | Reject H0 |
| BA □ PI | 0.205           | 2.402<br>(T statistics > 1.975) | 0.016<br>( $\rho$ -value < 0.05) | Reject H0 |

Table 7. presents the T-test result of this study, showing that both paths are statistically significant. Considering the path coefficient and T-value, it also signifies that the impact of viral marketing is more powerful than brand awareness.

### 3.12 Hypothesis Testing

#### a. First Hypothesis: Viral Marketing to Purchase Intention

*H0: Viral marketing has a negative effect on the purchase intention of Crocs products.*

*H1: Viral marketing has a positive effect on the purchase intention of Crocs products.*

The first hypothesis of viral marketing (X1) towards purchase intention (Y) has a T-statistics value of 8.893, exceeding the T table of 1.975. Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected. Furthermore, the  $\rho$ -value in this hypothesis has a value of 0.000, lower than alpha 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis can also be rejected. To interpret, viral marketing has a positive effect on the purchase intention of Crocs products.

#### b. Second Hypothesis: Brand Awareness to Purchase Intention

*H0: Brand awareness has a negative effect on the purchase intention of Crocs products. H1: Brand awareness has a positive effect on the purchase intention of Crocs products.*

The second hypothesis of brand awareness (X2) towards purchase intention (Y) has a T-statistics value of 2.402, exceeding the T table of 1.975. Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected. Furthermore, the  $\rho$ -value in this hypothesis has a value of 0.016, lower than alpha 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis can also be rejected. To interpret, brand awareness has a positive effect on the purchase intention of Crocs products.

Take notes that due to the findings from the discriminant validity analysis, it was discovered that there is a significant overlap in the variation explained by viral marketing and brand awareness (Surya Nugraha et al., 2023) (Yuriah et al., 2024). As a result, these two variables are combined into one single variable for the purpose of this hypothesis testing. It is important to highlight that although both variables showed significance, viral marketing and brand awareness not significantly different from each other, leading to their treatment as a single construct.

To summarize the research analysis, several findings are interpreted to make a comprehensive research discussion. Starting from demographic information, it can be concluded that the majority of the qualified respondents are Gen Z aged between 18 and 25 years, followed by Millennials aged between 26 and 35 years. These individuals were made sure that they lived in the Jabodetabek area and had been exposed to Crocs' marketing content. The author used SmartPLS and IBM SPSS 26 software to measure the data. Based on the final regression model, it was found that both independent variables of viral marketing and brand awareness have a positive value of 0.754 and 0.205. These values imply that there are positive relationships between both independent variables towards the independent variable. To interpret, if viral marketing value increases by one unit, the purchase intention will increase by 0.754 units, and if brand awareness increases by one unit, the purchase intention will increase by 0.205 units.

Moreover, the linearity test interprets the strong linear relationship between both variables. This test also shows a p-value of 0.000, indicating a significant linear component. Furthermore, the regression analysis in this study showed an R-square value of 0.903 which explained the dependent variable has the ability to explain 90.3% by the independent variables. The model fit also implies a well-fitting model, highlighting an SRMR value of 0.031 and an NFI value of 0.904.

As for the F-test, the f table value is found to be 3.054 according to the F distribution table. This means that the model's F-statistic value is greater than the F table where F-statistic has a value of 729.234. The data also indicates that the  $\rho$ -value

is 0.000<sup>b</sup>, which is lower than alpha 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected. Other than that, the T-test in this study also shows a great result. Using SmartPLS 4 and the bootstrapping procedure, the result shows significant value.

Furthermore, the testing of discriminant validity revealed a detectable overlap in the variability accounted for by viral marketing and brand awareness (Gong et al., 2020). Therefore, these two factors are considered to be a single variable (Mukherjee et al., 2023). Importantly, despite both variables being individually significant, viral marketing and brand awareness are treated as a unified construct (Wibisana Sudarta & Mahyuni, 2024).

These findings highlight the important role of viral marketing and brand awareness in influencing purchase intentions among Millennials and Gen Z in the Jabodetabek area (Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2021). The notable influence of viral marketing fits perfectly with the earlier discussion about Crocs' successful engagement with Millennials and Gen Z through social media platforms (Nabivi, 2025). Also, as evidenced by Crocs' collaborations with brands and celebrities, there is a strong correlation between brand awareness and purchase intention, which further underlines the significance of creative collaborations and campaigns (Magisa et al., 2024). By harnessing the power of viral marketing and building strong brand awareness, Crocs has managed to reposition itself in the market (Awaliyah & Yuriah, 2024).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that viral marketing has a positive impact on purchase intention, and brand awareness also has a positive impact on purchase intention. There are two theories applied in this study, the first one is the theory of planned behavior by Icek Ajzen in 1985, which explains how individuals may change their minds about planned actions. In the final regression model result, viral marketing (X1) positively influences purchase intention (Y) by 0.754. Brand awareness (X2) positively influences purchase intention by 0.205. From this analysis, it can be concluded that viral marketing has the most significant influence on Millennials and Gen Z's purchase intention. This research offers valuable insights into making use of viral marketing content and raising brand awareness for developing a business strategy that targets Millennials and Gen Z to boost purchase intention.

The consumer behavior of Gen Z and Millennials can be used to design more adaptive marketing strategies, even outside the realm of footwear products. This is because the research can provide insights into the preferences, values, and purchasing habits typical of these generations, which can be applied to various types of products and services. Generation Z and Millennials, who grew up in the digital era, presents significant changes in consumption patterns that influence future business strategies.

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