

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji peran *chatbot* berbasis *Artificial Intelligence* (AI) dalam meningkatkan daya saing UMKM melalui strategi pemasaran digital. Tujuan penelitian adalah untuk menganalisis pengaruh chatbot AI terhadap ekuitas merek dan minat beli, serta menguji peran ekuitas merek sebagai variabel mediasi. Menggunakan metode kuantitatif asosiatif, data dikumpulkan dari 96 konsumen UMKM di Kabupaten Pamekasan yang pernah berinteraksi dengan chatbot AI. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan *Structural Equation Modeling* (SEM-PLS). Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa chatbot AI berpengaruh positif signifikan terhadap ekuitas merek, namun tidak berpengaruh langsung terhadap minat beli. Di sisi lain, ekuitas merek terbukti berpengaruh signifikan terhadap minat beli dan berperan sempurna sebagai variabel mediasi. Disimpulkan bahwa teknologi AI dapat meningkatkan minat beli konsumen secara tidak langsung melalui penguatan nilai dan citra merek. Pelaku UMKM disarankan mengoptimalkan teknologi AI sebagai instrumen penguatan ekuitas merek untuk efektivitas pemasaran jangka panjang.

Kata Kunci: Chatbot AI, Ekuitas Merek, Minat Beli, UMKM.

ABSTRACT

This research examines the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based chatbots in enhancing the competitiveness of MSMEs thru digital marketing strategies. The research aims to analyze the influence of AI chatbots on brand equity and purchase intention, and to test the role of brand equity as a mediating variable. Using an associative quantitative method, data was collected from 96 MSME consumers in Pamekasan Regency who had previously interacted with an AI chatbot. Data analysis was performed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-PLS). The research findings reveal that AI chatbots have a significant positive impact on brand equity, but no direct impact on purchase intention. On the other hand, brand equity is proven to have a significant impact on purchase intention and serves perfectly as a mediating variable. It is concluded that AI technology can indirectly increase consumer purchase interest by strengthening brand value and image. MSME actors are advised to optimize AI technology as an instrument for strengthening brand equity for long-term marketing effectiveness.

Keywords: *AI Chatbot, Brand Equity, Purchase Intention, MSMEs.*