

THE ROLE OF BRAND CREDIBILITY TOWARDS PASSENGERS' TRUST THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION ON CITILINK DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract: Since a COVID-19 pandemic entered Indonesia, the trust of passengers to use air transportation has decreased. Citilink stabilized its business during the pandemic through social media promotion to increase passengers' trust. This study aims to determine how much influence brand credibility has on passengers' trust mediated by social media promotion during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study used quantitative methods, with a non-probability sampling of 140 respondents, and was analyzed using SEM SMART PLS. The study result shows a significantly positive effect between brand credibility and social media promotion, social media promotion with passenger trust, brand credibility with passengers' trust, and brand credibility towards passengers' trust mediated by social media promotion. Brand credibility on Citilink provides a strong signal with promotions through social media to generate passengers' trust during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Brand Credibility, Social Media Promotion, Passenger Trust

Introduction (Including Literature Review)

Currently, the situation of the airline industry in Indonesia has been increasingly significant. Therefore, each airline in Indonesia creates the best brand credibility to gain trust because it reflects the importance of airline service. However, after the COVID-19 pandemic starts to enter Indonesia and causes an increasing number of deaths, the pandemic impacts the airline industry sector, reducing passenger trust for using air transportation modes.

Citilink Indonesia is a Strategic Business Unit (SBU) of Garuda Indonesia. The company was established in 2001, working as an alternative (Low-Cost Carrier) in Indonesia. Cited from voi.id (11/03/2021) Irfan Meidianto., (2021) based on a report from the Ministry of Transportation, Lion Air Group market share of 60.6 percent and carries up to 21.48 million passengers. Besides that, Garuda Indonesia and Citilink Indonesia market share of 28.3 percent and carries up to 10.04 million passengers. From the data obtained, it could be seen that Citilink Indonesia's market share in 2020 decreased compared to 2019 at 34.5 percent.

Citilink strives to stabilize its business in the pandemic through promotion using social media as one of the technological advances recently. According to (Samosir et al., 2021), social media roles are becoming one of the tools for exchanging information in marketing their product. Therefore, the information on products obtained by passengers

is also balanced with the brand credibility of Citilink airline products.

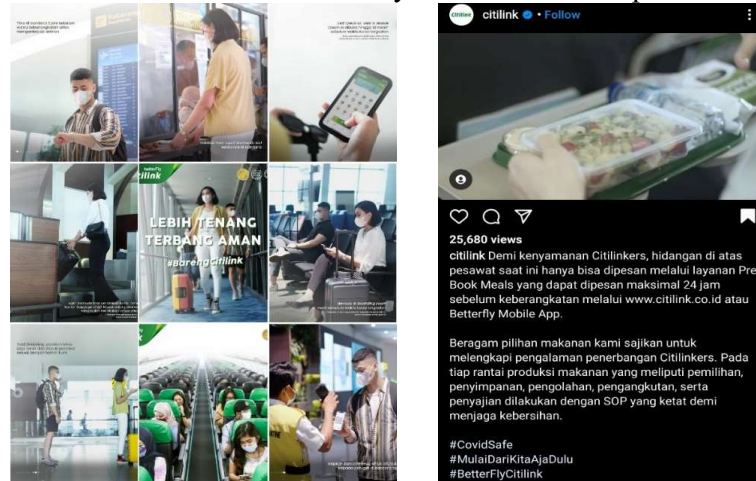


Figure 1. Social Media Promotion on Citilink Indonesia

(source: <https://www.instagram.com/citilink/>)

Through social media, Citilink campaigns to passengers from the arrival to departure flow of passengers to implement clear health protocols so that flights are safe. If the brand credibility and promotions on Citilink airlines consistently meet passenger expectations and promise flight safety, passengers will trust the products or services marketed by the company.

Based on the current problems and references from previous research, the study is focusing on how the role of the brand credibility on Citilink airline towards passenger trust through social media promotions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Brand credibility is an information guide that is reliable and truthful to determine how much confidence passengers have in the company (Tirole, 1994). Therefore, brand credibility is an essential component that contribute to a company's representation (Martín-Consuegra et al., 2018). Brand credibility includes two dimensions of trustworthiness and expertise. Trustworthiness is how the company's readiness to provide what they have promised, while expertise is how the company's capability to prove the commitment of a company brand (Erdem & Swait, 2004). Moreover, brand credibility serves as the key to signaling a brand, generally used by companies as a strategy in building a company's position (Monoarfa et al., 2020; Spry et al., 2011). Brand credibility on airlines that are affectively committed positively impacts on passenger customer response by considering the relationship and the signaling effect of brand credibility. Thus, brand credibility can be created by increasing clarity, consistency over the time through marketing and promotion as customer expectations in a brand (Jeng, 2016).

Social media is an online platform such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and

others that produce content from its users as a modern marketing communication method that is considered to generate views on a brand (Parveen et al., 2015). Research (Seo & Park, 2018) states that social media includes the dimensions of entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and perceived risk. Airlines manage social media efficiently because it plays a primary role as a form of promotion and provides clarity of information that can illustrate its effect on passengers' trust. The extensive attainment will strengthen the interaction between brands and customers of the social media promotion (Cheung et al., 2021). Literature states that social media promotes the products and services of the company by involving users of social media, so that it has a positive effect on the desire to get the product and service being promoted (Leung & Bai, 2013). This study defined three dimensions related to the variable as interaction, trendiness, and perceived risk based on previous research.

Trust is a foundation to business activities (Rofiq & Joseph, 2010). Trust is an attitude that shows a person's willingness to accept things given by other parties and hope other parties will take certain actions on people who trust them. Some dimensions will measure passenger trust, namely ability, benevolence, and integrity. Ability is a skill and competence that a company needs to affect passenger trust. Benevolence refers to how the company wholeheartedly provides services that are beneficial to passengers. Meanwhile, integrity is a company's attitude and actions in running a business to meet passenger needs (Mayer et al., 1995). Trust is built when the passenger believes in the service provider, and the passenger's intention to think the service received will not cause an adverse response (Woon et al., 2015). The things that are needed in providing aviation industry services by paying attention to the level of passengers' trust as the basis for a communication relationship between passengers and the company. Therefore, passengers' trust is essential for the company based on reliability and increasing passenger confidence to build long-term relationships (Sukmawati, 2015). The following is the hypothesis of the variables that have been determined:

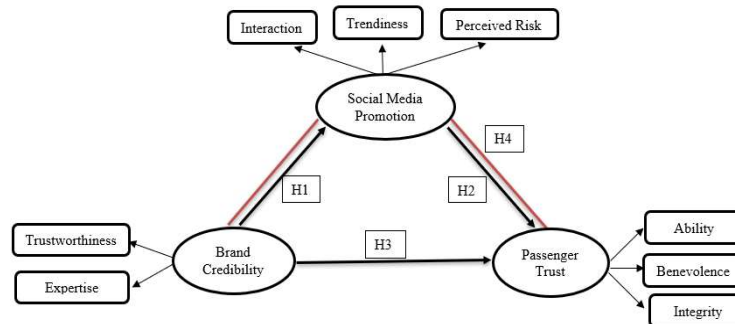


Figure 2. Hypothesis

- H1. Brand Credibility has a significant effect on Social Media Promotion
- H2. Social Media Promotion has a significant effect on Passenger Trust
- H3. Brand Credibility has a significant effect on Passenger Trust

H4. Brand Credibility has a significant effect on Passenger Trust through Social Media Promotion

Methodology

This study is using a quantitative approach method to analyze and measure the role of brand credibility towards passenger trust through social media promotion on Citilink airlines during the COVID-19 pandemic. The data in the study were analyzed using SEM SMART PLS, where the method functioned to test each hypothesis in the study. Researchers were disseminating questionnaires using three identified variables. Non-probability sampling was carried out on travelers who have experience with Citilink Indonesia services during the COVID-19 pandemic, and as a result, a sample of 140 respondents was taken. We used the Likert scale to measure all the indicators start from fully disagree to fully agree as a choice to respondents' answer.

Table 1. Measurement Items

Result and Discussion

Variable	Dimension	Indicator
Brand Credibility (Erdem & Swait, 2004)	Trustworthiness	BC.1 Citilink provides services as promised
		BC.2 Citilink is a trusted airline
	Expertise	BC.3 Citilink service is reliable
		BC.4 Citilink is committed to provide services as its claim
Social Media Promotion (Seo & Park, 2018)	Interaction	SMP.1 Citilink shares various information related to travel promo on social media
		SMP.2 Citilink provides a platform for social media users to give opinions
		SMP.3 Passengers could easily find the promo submitted by Citilink through social media that always provides the latest information to social media users
	Trendiness	SMP.4 Citilink shared the up-to-date information on social media
		SMP.5 The promo offer shared by Citilink's social media is interesting
	Perceived Risk	SMP.6 The caption written by Citilink's social media is interesting
		SMP.7 Flight service information through Citilink social media reduces my worries about choosing this airline during the COVID-19 pandemic
Passenger Trust (Mayer et al., 1995)	Ability	PT.1 Citilink provides a safe guarantee for passengers to fly by this airline
		PT.2 Citilink is able to make sure using this airline through the information provided on social media
		PT.3 Citilink sincerely serves passengers
	Benevolence	PT.4 I got services according to the information provided through Citilink social media
		PT.5 Citilink gives a good and polite response to my complaint
	Integrity	PT.6 Citilink provides accurate information to passengers
		PT.7 Citilink is able to provide passenger needs during the flight

4.1 Evaluation of the Outer Model

This study using three measurement steps by looking at the convergent validity test, discriminant validity test, and reliability test.

Table 2. Convergent Validity and Average Variance Extracted

Construct	Item	Outer Loading	T-Statistics	AVE	Result
Brand Credibility	BC.1	0.719	8.279	0.638	Valid
	BC.2	0.841	18.638		Valid
	BC.3	0.842	30.048		Valid
	BC.4	0.788	18.078		Valid
Social Media Promotion	SMP.1	0.813	25.857	0.612	Valid
	SMP.2	0.775	18.079		Valid
	SMP.3	0.867	34.408		Valid
	SMP.4	0.822	25.764		Valid
	SMP.5	0.729	15.881		Valid
	SMP.6	0.790	21.43		Valid
	SMP.7	0.665	11.364		Valid
Passenger Trust	PT.1	0.742	15.284	0.594	Valid
	PT.2	0.750	18.199		Valid
	PT.3	0.752	19.778		Valid
	PT.4	0.784	23.659		Valid
	PT.5	0.785	20.79		Valid
	PT.6	0.833	29.261		Valid
	PT.7	0.747	14.691		Valid

According to (Hair, J. F. et al., 2017), all indicators of variables will declare valid if the value > 0.5 . Based on Table.2, all outers loading and AVE show the value above 0.5, which can be inferred this study that used all indicators achieved result convergent validity.

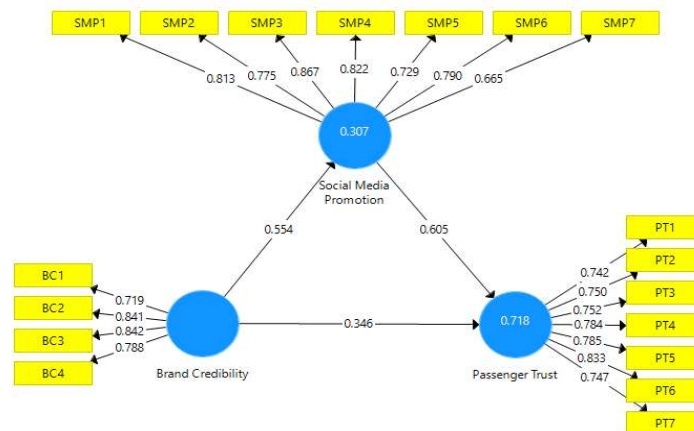


Figure 3. Citilink PLS Algorithm

Table 3. Discriminant Validity

Item	Brand Credibility	Social Media Promotion	Passenger Trust
BC.1	0.719	0.427	0.300
BC.2	0.841	0.506	0.427
BC.3	0.842	0.645	0.560
BC.4	0.788	0.560	0.433
SMP.1	0.449	0.813	0.631
SMP.2	0.320	0.775	0.538
SMP.3	0.513	0.867	0.651
SMP.4	0.443	0.822	0.648
SMP.5	0.497	0.729	0.636
SMP.6	0.410	0.790	0.649
SMP.7	0.369	0.665	0.590
PT.1	0.566	0.459	0.742
PT.2	0.553	0.696	0.750
PT.3	0.574	0.569	0.752
PT.4	0.465	0.695	0.784
PT.5	0.426	0.628	0.785
PT.6	0.558	0.718	0.833
PT.7	0.544	0.474	0.747

Based on Table. 3, each construct that includes all indicators has a strong relationship than the other constructs result and inferred that discriminant validity is high. Reliability test using Composite Reliability and Cronbach Alpha method. According to (Hair, J. F et al., 2017), the instrument in this study will declare if the value is > 0.6 . This is the following reliability test.

Table 4. Reliability Testing

Construct	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Result
Brand Credibility	0.876	0.813	Reliable
Social Media Promotion	0.917	0.893	Reliable
Passenger Trust	0.911	0.886	Reliable

In Table.4, which can be inferred that the Composite Reliability and Cronbach Alpha has a value above 0.6 that means that all latent variables are reliable.

4.2 Evaluation of the Inner Model

Table 5. Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Path	Original Sample	T-Statistics	P Values	Decision
Brand Credibility -> Social Media Promotion	0.554	8.768	0.000	H1 : Support
Social Media Promotion -> Passenger Trust	0.605	11.399	0.000	H2 : Support
Brand Credibility -> Passenger Trust	0.346	5.928	0.000	H3 : Support

Table. 5 shows the direct relationship between each variable of this study. It can be seen that hypothesis 1: Brand Credibility had a significant direct positive effect on Social Media Promotion from the path coefficient calculation. It is explained that the original sample has a value of 0.554, T-Statistics is $8.768 > 1.96$, and P-Value is $0.000 < 0.05$. Hypothesis 2: Social Media Promotion had a significant direct positive effect on Passenger Trust from the path coefficient calculation. It is explained that the original sample has a value of 0.605, T-Statistics is $11.399 > 1.96$, and P-Value is $0.000 < 0.05$. Hypothesis 3: Brand Credibility had a significant positive direct effect on Passenger Trust from the path coefficient calculation. It is explained that the original sample has a value of 0.346, T-Statistics is $5.928 > 1.96$, and P-Value is $0.000 < 0.05$. It can be inferred that all hypothesis of each variable is acceptable.

Table 6. Indirect Effect

Path	Original Sample	T-Statistics	P Values	Decision
Brand Credibility -> Social Media Promotion -> Passenger Trust	0.335	7.448	0.000	H4 : Support

Table. 6 shows an indirect relationship between Brand Credibility towards Passenger Trust through Social Media Promotion as a mediating variable. Considering the original sample has a value of 0.335, T-Statistic is $7.448 > 1.96$, and P-Value is $0.000 < 0.05$. Thus, it shall be inferred that Brand Credibility had a significant positive effect on Passenger Trust through Social Media Promotion.

Table 7. R Square

Construct	R Square	Result
Passenger Trust	0.718	Moderate
Social Media Promotion	0.307	Weak

The criteria for R-Squared values are 0.25 weak, 0.50 moderate, and 0.75 strong. Table.7 shows that the Passenger Trust value of R-Squared is 0.718, which means moderate, and

Social Media Promotion value of R-Squared is 0.307, which means weak.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the study, it can be seen that there are relationships among brand credibility, social media promotion, and passengers' trust. The data analysis result showed that brand credibility had a significant positive effect on social media promotion. Research (Erdem & Swait, 1998) states that brand credibility has a high expectation of information on the product in a brand, whether a brand has the ability to provide service as promised. Citilink is a credible company that provides clear and accurate information through social media promotion. The result shows social media promotion has a significant positive effect on passengers' trust. Research (Seo & Park, 2018) states that social media promotion allows the company to interact with passengers simply and quickly. From a company perspective, social media user participation produces the same positive effect as traditional advertising. Interaction with passengers allows the company to communicate a positive brand image. It means that Citilink's social media provides information with an attractiveness that makes passengers trust the airline positively. Moreover, the study result shows that brand credibility has a significant positive effect on passengers' trust, which means that Citilink is a trusted airline so that passengers are confident and believe in using the airline during the COVID-19 pandemic because the services provided guarantee the safety and comfort of passengers during flights. The study results conclude that brand credibility for passenger trust mediated by social media promotion shows a significant positive effect on Citilink airlines during the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the researchers recommend Citilink airlines to provides reliable and truthful information to the passengers' constantly by promoting their product using social media. Besides that, the implementation of health protocols is still carried out by Citilink from arrival to departure. For further research, it is recommended to use other independent variables as additional variables in the research, for example, e-WOM on passengers' trust.

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