



The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decision: Exploring the Moderating Role of Brand Awareness among Instagram Users

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Abstract

The rapid development of digital technology has significantly transformed consumer behavior in accessing information and making purchasing decisions. Among various platforms, Instagram has emerged as a dominant medium where social media marketing (SMM) strategies are widely employed to reach and influence consumers. However, the effectiveness of SMM is not always straightforward, as its impact on purchase decisions can be strengthened or weakened by other factors, particularly brand awareness. Consumers tend to favor brands they recognize, making brand awareness a critical element in the decision-making process. This study investigates the influence of SMM on purchase decisions with brand awareness as a moderating variable. The population consisted of 1,196 customers of Teman Publikasi – Research Synergy Institute (RSI) within the period of November 2024 to April 2025. Using Krejcie and Morgan's sampling table, 64 respondents were selected and surveyed with a Likert scale questionnaire. Data were analyzed through multiple linear regression and moderated regression analysis (MRA) to assess both direct and moderating effects. The findings reveal that the five SMM dimensions; entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth positively and significantly influence purchase decisions. Furthermore, brand awareness significantly moderates this relationship but in a negative direction, suggesting that higher consumer brand awareness tends to reduce the effectiveness of SMM strategies. This research contributes to the literature by offering empirical evidence on the dual role of brand awareness in digital marketing effectiveness. For practitioners, the study highlights the importance of designing SMM strategies that align with consumer familiarity to avoid diminishing returns.

Keywords *Social Media Marketing; Purchase Decision; Brand Awareness; Instagram; Moderated Regression Analysis*

INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, consumer behavior has undergone significant transformation, with social media playing a strategic role in influencing purchase decisions. Purchasing processes are no longer determined solely by price or product quality but are also shaped by interaction, emotional value, and digital experiences facilitated through social media (Kotler and Armstrong, 2020; Chowdhury, 2019). Indonesia, with more than 139 million active social media users, represents a potential market for social media marketing strategies. Instagram, in particular, has proven effective in building engagement and brand image. However, the case of Teman Publikasi – Research Synergy Institute (RSI) highlights an important challenge: despite consistent content creation, the number of followers and engagement levels remain relatively low compared to competitors, resulting in limited brand awareness. From an academic perspective, prior studies have widely examined the influence of social media marketing on purchase decisions (Bilal et al., 2021). Yet, most have not considered brand awareness as a moderating variable. In fact, brand awareness is assumed to strengthen the effectiveness of digital marketing in driving consumer decision-making (Alwan and Alshurideh, 2022). Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effect of social media marketing on purchase decisions with brand awareness as a moderating variable, using the Instagram account of Teman Publikasi – RSI as a case study. Theoretically, this research contributes by addressing the literature gap concerning the moderating role of brand awareness. Practically, the findings are expected to provide insights for digital academic enterprises in designing more effective social media marketing strategies.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media Marketing

Social Media Marketing (SMM) is a strategic approach that leverages social platforms to promote products, services, and brands while enhancing consumer engagement and loyalty. Prior studies highlight its significant role in shaping consumer perceptions and purchase intentions. According to [Bessie and Wie \(2024\)](#), social media marketing comprises multiple strategic dimensions including entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) which collectively influence consumer buying interest, while [Appel et al. \(2020\)](#) emphasized its function as a two-way communication tool that fosters stronger brand-consumer relationships. Furthermore, successful SMM integrates interactive campaigns, visual content, and data analytics to deliver personalized digital experiences. With its interactive and real-time nature, platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok strengthen brand visibility and consumer connections ([Kietzmann et al., 2020](#)). Overall, SMM serves as a strategic driver of consumer engagement and brand positioning ([Kumar et al., 2020](#)).

Purchase Decision

Purchase Decision refers to the final stage of the consumer decision-making process, influenced by various considerations prior to purchase. It is the selection among available alternatives based on individual needs and preferences. In digital contexts, decisions are dynamic and shaped by online information comparison ([Zhang et al., 2021](#)). Moreover, brand equity plays an essential role in reinforcing positive product perceptions, thereby increasing the likelihood of purchase. Studies confirm that while consumers generally select their most preferred brand, discrepancies may exist between purchase intention and actual decision-making ([Hanaysha, 2022](#)).

Brand Awareness

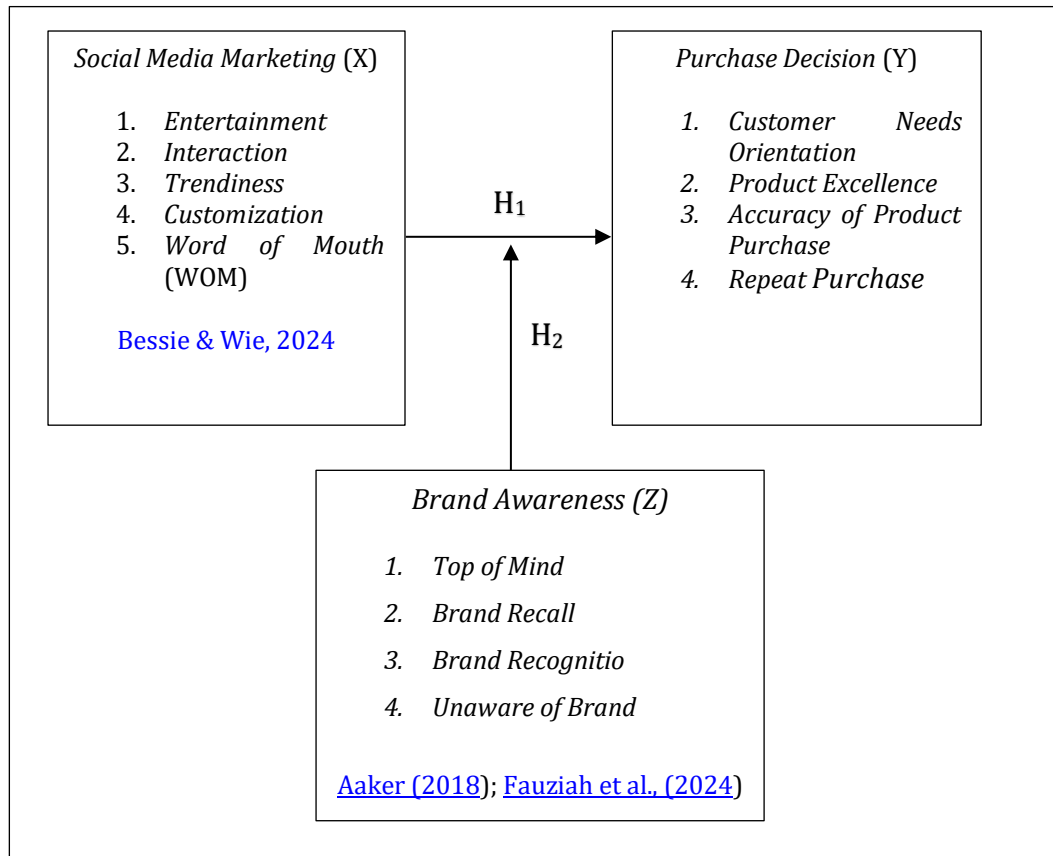
Brand Awareness is the ability of consumers to recognize or recall a brand within a product category ([Aaker, 2018](#)). It serves as the foundation for building recognition, trust, and consumer loyalty. High awareness fosters brand preference and stronger consumer commitment. An awareness as an essential driver of consumer choice, while stress its role in enhancing brand liking and attachment. Well-known brands with strong reputations create differentiation and competitive advantage.

Theoretical Benchmark and Hypotheses Development

Based on prior research, SMM is expected to positively influence purchase decisions by engaging consumers and shaping brand perception. Brand awareness, however, plays a complex role: while it can strengthen consumer trust, it may also alter the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies. Thus, this study positions SMM as the independent variable, purchase decision as the dependent variable, and brand awareness as the moderating variable. The hypotheses are:

H1: Social media Marketing positively influences Purchase Decision.

H2: Brand Awareness moderates the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Decision.



RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study applied a **quantitative descriptive and verificative research design**. The descriptive approach was used to provide an overview of Social Media Marketing, Purchase Decision, and Brand Awareness among Instagram users of *Teman Publikasi – RSI*. The verificative approach was intended to test hypotheses regarding the effect of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decision and the moderating role of Brand Awareness. The quantitative method was selected because it allows for measurable analysis and statistical testing of relationships between variables ([Sinambela & Sinambela, 2021](#)).

The questionnaire items were adapted and adopted from established dimensions in previous studies, namely **Social Media Marketing** based on [Bessie and Wie \(2024\)](#), **Purchase Decision** and **Brand Awareness** derived from [Aaker \(2018\)](#) and [Fauziah et al., \(2024\)](#), to ensure the conceptual validity and reliability of the measurement instruments.

Data Collection Methods

Two methods of data collection were employed:

1. **Questionnaires** – A structured online questionnaire was distributed to respondents. It used a **four-point Likert scale** (1 = strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree) to capture the intensity of respondents' perceptions without allowing neutral answers. The questionnaire items measured three variables: Social Media Marketing, Purchase Decision, and Brand Awareness.
2. **Documentation** – Secondary data were obtained from company records, official websites, and digital sources related to the Research Synergy Institute (RSI) to complement primary data and provide contextual understanding.

Population and Sampling

The research population consisted of **1,196 customers** who had purchased services from the Instagram account *Teman Publikasi – RSI* between November 2024 and April 2025. To determine the sample, a **purposive sampling technique** was used with the following criteria:

1. Respondents must be active Instagram users,
2. Followers of the RSI account who had made at least one purchase,
3. Aged between 20 and 55 years.

The age range of 20-55 years was selected because it represents a productive age group with a high level of adaptability to social media usage and active engagement in digital activities. This group is also more likely to require academic and publication services and has the capacity to make independent purchasing decisions, thereby ensuring the relevance, validity, and accuracy of the study's findings.

Based on [Krejcie and Morgan \(1970\)](#) **sample size formula**, with a 90% confidence level and 10% margin of error, the sample size was calculated using the following formula:

$$\begin{aligned}
 S &= \frac{X^2 \cdot N \cdot P(1 - P)}{d^2 (N - 1) + X^2 \cdot P(1 - P)} \\
 S &= \frac{2.71 \cdot 1.196 \cdot 0.5 \cdot 0.5}{0.10^2 \cdot (1.196 - 1) + 2.71 \cdot 0.5 \cdot 0.5} \\
 S &= \frac{2.71 \cdot 1.196 \cdot 0.25}{0.01 \cdot 1.195 + 0.6775} \\
 S &= \frac{810.29}{11.95 + 0.6775} \\
 S &= \frac{810.29}{12.6275} \\
 S &= 64.16
 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the minimum sample size required is **64 respondents**.

Instrument Testing

Prior to hypothesis testing, the research instrument underwent:

1. **Validity Test:** Conducted using Pearson's product-moment correlation. Items with correlation values greater than r-table were considered valid.
2. **Reliability Test:** Conducted using Cronbach's Alpha. An alpha value greater than 0.6 indicated that the instrument was reliable.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis consisted of two stages:

1. **Descriptive Analysis** – to describe respondent demographics and provide an overview of each research variable.
2. **Inferential Analysis** – applied to test the hypotheses, including:
 - a. **Simple Linear Regression Analysis**, to examine the effect of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decision.
 - b. **Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA)**, to assess whether Brand Awareness moderates the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Decision.

Classical Assumption Tests

To ensure the robustness of regression analysis, classical assumption tests were conducted, including:

1. **Normality Test** using Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk methods,
2. **Multicollinearity Test** using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance values,

3. Heteroscedasticity Test using scatterplot analysis.

Hypothesis Testing

The hypotheses were tested using:

1. **t-tests**, to assess the significance of each independent variable,
2. **Coefficient of Determination (R^2)**, to evaluate the explanatory power of the model,
3. **MRA**, to determine whether Brand Awareness functions as a pure or quasi moderator.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The validity test was conducted to evaluate whether the questionnaire items effectively measured the intended constructs. Validity was assessed using a statistical approach by examining the Corrected Item-Total Correlation values derived from the Cronbach's Alpha output. An item was considered valid if its correlation coefficient exceeded the critical r-value of 0.2461 ($n = 64$). The results indicate that all items measuring Social Media Marketing, Purchase Decision, and Brand Awareness consistently show correlation coefficients higher than the r-table value ($r\text{-calculated} > r\text{-table}$). Therefore, it can be concluded that all questionnaire items are valid and suitable for further analysis.

Table 1. Validity Test Results for Variables X, Y, and Z

Item	r	r tabel	Sig.	Alpha	Keputusan
X1	0,7829	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
X2	0,7815	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
X3	0,7211	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
X4	0,7546	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
X5	0,8139	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
X6	0,7878	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
X7	0,7555	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
X8	0,8649	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
X9	0,7538	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
X10	0,6737	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Y1	0,7696	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Y2	0,7329	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Y3	0,8420	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Y4	0,8454	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Y5	0,8903	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Y6	0,7960	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Y7	0,8125	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Y8	0,8482	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Y9	0,6965	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Y10	0,7911	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Z1	0,816	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Z2	0,786	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Z3	0,779	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Z4	0,815	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Z5	0,797	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Z6	0,786	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Z7	0,675	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Z8	0,482	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Z9	0,651	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid
Z10	0,318	0,2461	0,000	0,05	Valid

Regarding the significance values shown as Sig. = 0.000, this does not indicate a true zero probability. Instead, SPSS rounds very small p-values to three decimal places; thus, Sig. = 0.000 should be interpreted as $p < 0.001$. This indicates that all questionnaire items are statistically significant at a high confidence level, further confirming the robustness of the measurement instruments.

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 2 summarizes the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The majority of respondents were aged 21-35 years (40.63%), followed by 35-45 years (25.00%), 45-50 years (18.75%), and above 50 years (15.63%), indicating that most respondents are within the productive age group. In terms of profession, respondents were predominantly lecturers (53.13%) and students (37.50%), which aligns with the target market of Teman Publikasi-RSI. Regarding product usage, webinar services (57.81%) were the most frequently purchased.

Table 2. Respondent Demographics (n = 64)

Category	Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	21–35 years	26	40.63
	35–45 years	16	25.00
	45–50 years	12	18.75
	>50 years	10	15.63
Profession	Lecturer	34	53.13
	Student	24	37.50
	Civil Servant	4	6.25
	Researcher	1	1.56
	Private Employee	1	1.56
Product Purchased	Webinar	37	57.81
	SLR	19	29.69
	Ethnography	7	10.94
	Training	1	1.56

Descriptive Statistics

To facilitate the evaluation process of respondents' answers, the assessment criteria were established based on the average score obtained for each indicator:

Table 3. Categorization of Research Variables

Lebar Interval	Mean	Kategori
64–111,9	1,00 – 1,75	Very Low
112–159,9	1,76 – 2,50	Low
160–207,9	2,51 – 3,25	High
208–256	3,26 – 4,00	Very High

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics of the research variables. The results show that all dimensions of Social Media Marketing are perceived at a high to very high level, with the Trendiness dimension recording the highest mean values (3.34–3.35). For Purchase Decision, the highest mean is observed in the Need Orientation dimension (3.40), indicating that service suitability strongly drives purchasing decisions. Brand Awareness also shows generally high mean values, while the Unaware of Brand dimension records lower mean values (as low as 2.46), indicating limited unfamiliarity with the brand.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	Dimension	Mean Range	Category
Social Media Marketing	Entertainment	3.09–3.31	High-Very High

Variable	Dimension	Mean Range	Category
	Interaction	3.20–3.21	High
	Trendiness	3.34–3.35	Very High
	Customization	3.07–3.25	High
	Word of Mouth	2.76–3.04	High
Purchase Decision	Need Orientation	3.09–3.40	High-Very High
	Product Superiority	3.06–3.21	High
	Purchase Accuracy	3.10–3.20	High
	Repeat Purchase	2.95–3.12	High
Brand Awareness	Top of Mind	2.73–2.79	High
	Brand Recall	2.76–2.79	High
	Brand Recognition	2.70–2.95	High
	Unaware of Brand	2.46–2.93	Low-High

Regression Analysis Results

Table 8 presents the results of the regression analysis examining the effect of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decision.

Table 5. Model Fit and Regression Results

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.612 ^a	.375	.365	4.948

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media Marketing

Sumber: Olah Data, 2025

The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.375 indicates that 37.5% of the variance in Purchase Decision is explained by Social Media Marketing, while the remaining 62.5% is influenced by other variables not included in the model.

The regression coefficient for SMM

Table 9 presents the results of the regression coefficient shows that Social Media Marketing has a positive and statistically significant effect on Purchase Decision ($B = 0.466$; $p = 0.001 < 0.05$). Thus, H1 is accepted.

Table 6. Coefficients of Social Media Marketing

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	9.280	3.535		2.625	.011
	Social Media Marketing	.466	.137	.428	3.408	.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media Marketing

Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA)

To examine the moderating role of Brand Awareness, a Moderated Regression Analysis was conducted. The results are presented in Table 10.

Table 7. Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	9.280	3.535		2.625	.011

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Social Media Marketing	.466	.137	.428	3.408	.001
Brand Awareness	.299	.142	.273	2.098	.040
Social Media Marketing*Brand Awareness	-.050	.019	-.276	-2.657	.010

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

The regression equation is formulated as follows:

Purchase Decision

$$= 9,280 + 0,466 * \text{Social Media Marketing} + 0,299 * \text{Brand Awareness} - 0,050 * (\text{Social Media Marketing} * \text{Brand Awareness})$$

The interaction term shows a negative and statistically significant coefficient ($B = -0.050$; $p = 0.010 < 0.05$), indicating that Brand Awareness weakens the positive effect of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decision. Therefore, Brand Awareness fulfills the criteria as a quasi-moderating variable.

Thus, Hypothesis 2 is rejected.

Classical Assumption Test Results

Prior to hypothesis testing, classical assumption tests were conducted to ensure the validity of the regression model.

Table 8. Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Unstandardized Residual	.074	64	.200*	.974	64	.193

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Based on Test of Normality in the output above, two normality test methods were used, namely the Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests. The Kolmogorov–Smirnov test is more appropriate for small to moderate sample sizes ($n \leq 50$), although it can still be applied to larger samples. The test results show a significance value of 0.200, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the residual data are normally distributed and meet the normality assumption required for linear.

Table 9. Multicollinearity Test

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)		
Social Media Marketing	.578	1.729
Brand Awareness	.540	1.853
Social Media Marketing*Brand Awareness	.845	1.183

Based on The Multicollinearity Test above, the multicollinearity test was conducted by

examining the Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. A regression model is considered free from multicollinearity if the Tolerance value is greater than 0.10 and the VIF value is less than 10. Based on the test results presented in the table, all independent variables have Tolerance values greater than 0.10 and VIF values less than 10. This indicates that there is no multicollinearity in the regression model, meaning that each independent variable is able to contribute uniquely to the dependent variable.

Heteroscedasticity Test

Based on the results of the heteroscedasticity test, all independent variables show significance (Sig.) values greater than 0.05. This indicates that the regression model does not suffer from heteroscedasticity, meaning that the variance of the residuals is constant across observations. Therefore, the homoscedasticity assumption is fulfilled, confirming that the regression model is appropriate for further analysis.

Table 10. Asumsion Homoscedasticity

		Coefficients ^a				
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	7.204	2.060		3.497	.001
	Social Media Marketing	-.029	.080	-.058	-.362	.719
	Brand Awareness	-.111	.083	-.224	-1.342	.185
	Social Media Marketing*Brand Awareness	.020	.011	.244	1.830	.072

a. Dependent Variable: ABS_RES

Based on the results table above, all independent variables in the regression model have significance values greater than 0.05. This indicates that there is no heteroscedasticity in the model. Therefore, it can be concluded that the regression model meets the homoscedasticity assumption; in other words, the model errors are evenly distributed and the regression model is sufficiently stable. Consequently, the regression model used in this study can be considered reliable and appropriate for further analysis.

DISCUSSION

The results indicate that Social Media Marketing has a significant positive effect on Purchase Decision, which is consistent with previous studies by [Bessie and Wie \(2024\)](#). However, the moderating role of Brand Awareness contradicts findings by [Aaker \(2018\)](#) and [Fauziah et al. \(2024\)](#), as Brand Awareness weakens rather than strengthens the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Decision. This suggests that consumers with high Brand Awareness may experience promotional saturation, reducing responsiveness to intensive social media marketing, whereas consumers with low Brand Awareness remain more influenced by such strategies.

CONCLUSIONS

The hypothesis testing results indicate that Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decision. However, Brand Awareness is found to significantly and negatively moderate the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Decision, indicating a quasi-moderation effect, whereby higher levels of Brand Awareness weaken the

influence of social media marketing activities on consumers purchase decisions. This study contributes novelty by demonstrating that Brand Awareness does not always strengthen marketing effectiveness but may instead reduce the impact of Social Media Marketing when consumers already possess high familiarity with the brand. This finding provides empirical evidence that intensive social media promotion may lead to saturation effects among highly aware consumers, thereby decreasing its influence on purchase decisions. Practically, the findings suggest that Social Media Marketing strategies should be differentiated according to consumers' Brand Awareness levels. Social media campaigns are more effective for attracting new or less familiar consumers, whereas consumers with high Brand Awareness require alternative approaches, such as improving service quality, strengthening customer relationships, or implementing loyalty programs, to sustain purchase decisions.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

Despite the contributions of this study, several limitations should be acknowledged. This study focuses on Social Media Marketing and Brand Awareness as determinants of Purchase Decision; therefore, other relevant determinants remain unexplored. These determinants include perceived service quality, price perception, customer trust, customer satisfaction, and perceived value, which may also influence consumers purchase decisions. Future research is recommended to incorporate these variables in order to enhance the explanatory power of the research model. In addition, future studies may apply different research contexts, platforms, or analytical methods to further validate and extend the findings of this study.

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