

# How Does Brand Awareness Mediate the Influence of TikTok Shop Testimonials and Brand Image on Purchase Intention? A Case Study of DKI Jakarta

Tanto Adi Pangestu, Ilza Febrina\*, Mas Sridjoko Darodjatun  
Universitas Teknologi Muhammadiyah Jakarta, Indonesia

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## Abstract

The rapid rise of TikTok Shop as an e-commerce channel has introduced new dynamics in how consumers interact with brands and make purchasing decisions. With its integration of short-form video content and seamless in-app shopping features, TikTok Shop has transformed traditional online shopping into a more interactive, content-driven experience. This evolution has heightened the importance of user testimonials and brand presentation within the platform, especially in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviors. Given this shift, it is essential to explore how such factors operate in specific market contexts. Accordingly, this study aims to examine the influence of TikTok Shop testimonials and brand image on brand awareness and online purchase intention among consumers in DKI Jakarta. A self-administered survey was conducted with a sample of 140 respondents and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings reveal that brand image significantly enhances brand awareness but does not directly impact purchase intention. Meanwhile, brand awareness plays a crucial mediating role, positively influencing purchase intention. Social media testimonials contribute to brand awareness but have an insignificant direct effect on purchase intention. These results highlight the importance of brand awareness in shaping consumer decisions and provide valuable implications for businesses to optimize their digital marketing strategies by leveraging customer testimonials and strengthening brand identity to enhance consumer engagement and purchasing behavior.

**Keywords** *TikTok Shop, Brand Image, Social Media Testimonials, Brand Awareness, Purchase Intention, PLS-SEM*

## INTRODUCTION

The digital world has been rapidly evolving, driving a societal shift toward a more digitalized lifestyle. The Internet and technology have simplified various aspects of life, particularly altering consumer shopping behaviors. Traditionally, people relied on in-person shopping or traditional media, such as television, radio, and newspapers, for product information. However, with the rise of digital platforms, businesses are increasingly adapting their retail strategies and marketing approaches. Websites and social media platforms have become essential tools for promoting products and services, transforming consumer engagement and purchasing patterns (Priyono & Sari, 2023).

The widespread use of smartphones across all age groups, from teenagers to older adults, has significantly contributed to the growth of the online marketplace. This rapid digital adoption not only enhances connectivity but also leads to profound changes in business and economic sectors. More consumers are turning to e-commerce platforms such as TikTok Shop, where user-generated testimonials play a crucial role in shaping product perception and strengthening brand image. These testimonials provide social proof, helping businesses build trust and credibility among potential buyers.

Social commerce, where consumers purchase products directly through social media platforms like TikTok, is growing rapidly, making it critical for businesses to understand how testimonials and brand image impact consumer decisions. However, the exploration of the relationship between TikTok Shop social media testimonials, brand image, and brand awareness is

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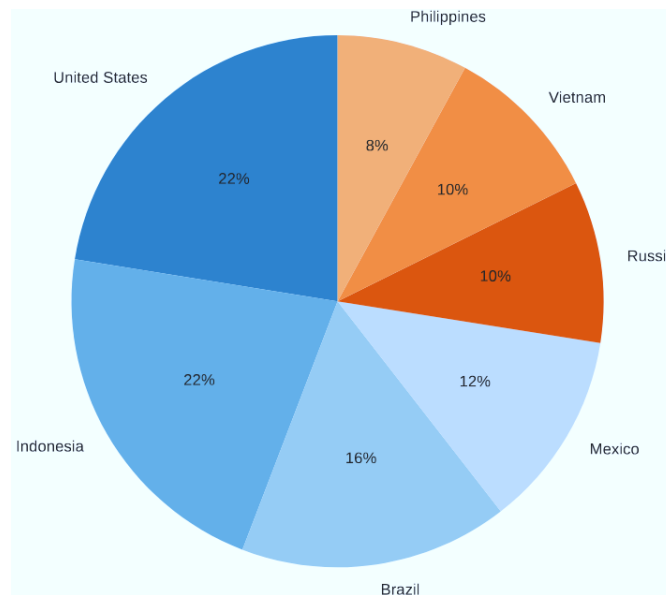
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Corresponding author's email: [ilza.febrina@utmj.ac.id](mailto:ilza.febrina@utmj.ac.id)

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globally relevant due to TikTok's widespread influence as one of the most popular social media platforms worldwide. With millions of active users across various countries, TikTok shapes consumer behavior on a global scale.

According to Statista (2025), Indonesia ranks second globally in terms of TikTok users, with 113 million users (22%), following the United States (117 million, 22%) and ahead of Brazil (85 million, 16%), Mexico (62.4 million, 12%), Russia (51.2 million, 10%), Vietnam (50.6 million, 10%), and the Philippines (41.4 million, 8%) (See Figure 1). This vast user base highlights the potential of TikTok as a powerful platform for digital marketing and consumer influence, making it essential for businesses to understand the factors driving purchase decisions in this dynamic online marketplace.



**Figure 1.** Number of Tiktok User by country  
Source: Statista (2025)

A populix survey entitled "The Social Commerce Landscape in Indonesia" shows that 86% of respondents have made purchases through social media, with 45% using the TikTok Shop platform (Yusra, 2022).

Understanding the relationship between social media testimonials, brand image, and brand awareness is essential for businesses planning to refine their marketing strategies and enhance consumer engagement. In the online marketplace, testimonials and brand image serve as powerful tools in shaping consumer perceptions and building trust.

However, the importance of understanding the relationship between social media elements (testimonials, brand image, brand awareness) while considering TikTok's growing role in influencing consumer behavior can be explained in detail as follows:

First, TikTok has emerged as a powerful platform for businesses to connect with a wide audience and enhance brand visibility. User-generated testimonials and viral content significantly influence consumer behavior, building trust and authenticity. By leveraging TikTok's dynamic features, brands can craft a strong image that resonates with their target audience, standing out in a crowded marketplace.

Second, active engagement on TikTok fosters loyalty and deeper connections with consumers, as real-time interaction enhances brand credibility. The platform's ability to quickly adapt to trends allows businesses to capitalize on viral moments, shaping consumer perceptions and driving purchase decisions with speed and precision. Understanding these dynamics is

essential for businesses aiming to succeed in today's digital age.

User testimonials significantly shape brand image by providing authentic and relatable feedback from real customers. These testimonials act as social proof, enhancing the brand's credibility and making it easier for potential buyers to trust the brand. Unlike traditional advertising, testimonials offer genuine stories that help consumers connect emotionally and see the brand as reliable and customer-focused (Isidro, 2024).

Moreover, testimonials reduce the perceived risk associated with purchasing by reassuring hesitant customers that others have had positive experiences. This builds confidence and strengthens the brand's reputation, encouraging greater brand awareness and increasing the likelihood of online purchase intentions. In this way, testimonials play a crucial role in shaping both trust and overall brand perception (Lumansik & Kusuma, 2025).

However, previous research has presented mixed findings regarding their direct impact on purchase intention. From a practical perspective, such mixed evidence creates uncertainty for managers regarding whether investments should prioritize stimulating user testimonials, building brand image, or increasing visibility through awareness campaigns.

Most existing research also tends to examine these variables in isolation, focusing on direct effects while neglecting their potential interrelationships and indirect mechanisms. For instance, Sarsono et al. (2021) found that social media testimonials significantly influence purchase intention. In contrast, Cahyani et al. (2023) reported no correlation between social media testimonials and purchase intention. Similarly, while Purwati and Cahyanti (2022) demonstrated that brand image has a significant impact on purchase intention, Sari et al. (2022) found no such relationship. Likewise, Suryati et al. (2024) identified a significant effect of brand awareness on purchase intention, whereas Hosfiar et al. (2021) found no such influence.

Mixed findings in prior studies likely arise from contextual differences such as respondent characteristics, product categories, and digital platforms rather than from unreliability in earlier research. Variations in measurement approaches, survey instruments, and research designs may also contribute to inconsistent results. Recognizing these issues, this study takes an objective approach and reduces possible sources of variation by focusing on a specific population, using previously validated measurement scales, and applying a unified model that examines how social media testimonials, brand awareness, and brand image simultaneously influence consumer responses, both directly and indirectly.

Despite these conflicting findings, research on social media, including testimonials associated with brand awareness, is rather limited. However, limited research explores the direct impact of brand awareness on consumer decisions specifically within TikTok Shop (Wiranata & Hardy, 2023). Also, no prior research has specifically examined the interplay between TikTok Shop social media testimonials, brand image, and brand awareness in influencing purchase intention in online products, particularly within the DKI Jakarta market. Several studies have tested different concepts (Abetha et al., 2020; Apriliani & Kusumastuti, 2019; Kurniawan, 2017; Priyono & Sari, 2023; Salsabila & Rusdi, 2022), but none have focused on this context.

Addressing this research gap is crucial because understanding the interplay between testimonials, brand image, and consumer decision-making on TikTok Shop can provide actionable insights for brands or businesses to optimize their digital marketing strategies. As TikTok Shop continues to reshape e-commerce, clarifying these relationships will help businesses tailor their approaches to build stronger brand awareness and drive purchase intentions in a highly competitive environment. At the same time, it empowers consumers to make more confident and informed purchase decisions based on trustworthy testimonials and a clear brand reputation. Moreover, it promotes transparency and ethical marketing practices in social commerce, contributing to a fairer and more trustworthy digital marketplace for society as a whole.

Studying these variables jointly, therefore, allows the analysis to capture synergistic and mediating effects, for example, whether testimonials influence purchase intention directly or indirectly through improvements in brand image and awareness. This integrated approach provides more useful guidance for managers because it shows that consumer decisions are shaped by multiple interacting factors rather than by a single factor alone.

Thus, this study responds to the gap by specifically analyzing the influence of TikTok Shop testimonials and brand image on both brand awareness and online purchase intention among consumers in DKI Jakarta. DKI Jakarta was chosen because it is one of Indonesia's most digitally active urban markets, with high e-commerce use and strong exposure to TikTok Shop promotions, testimonials, and branding content, making it well-suited for studying these variables. While the study focuses on a single setting, the findings may still inform similar metropolitan contexts. However, generalization should be made cautiously, and future studies should test the model in other regions or platforms to strengthen external validity.

Given these considerations, this study proposes the following key research questions:

1. How do social media testimonials, brand image, and brand awareness influence purchase intention?
2. How does social media testimonials influence brand awareness?
3. How does brand image influence brand awareness?
4. Does brand awareness mediate the relationship between social media testimonials and purchase intention?
5. Does brand awareness mediate the relationship between brand image and purchase intention?

Following the research questions, this study outlines its expected theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it extends existing social commerce and branding literature by examining how social media testimonials, brand image, and brand awareness simultaneously influence purchase intention and by testing the mediating role of brand awareness. Practically, the findings are expected to provide useful insights for online sellers and retailers in designing testimonial-based promotions, strengthening brand positioning, and also help them to decide where to focus their promotional efforts in order to increase purchase intention in competitive online marketplaces.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **The Hierarchy of Effects Model**

The Hierarchy of Effects Model, introduced by [Lavidge and Steiner \(1961\)](#), explains the stages individuals go through before making a decision to obtain a product or service. This model provides a framework for understanding how external influences, such as brand perception and testimonials, shape decision-making.

The model consists of three stages:

1. Cognitive Stage (Awareness & Knowledge) – Individuals first become aware of a product or brand and seek information about it. Social media testimonials and brand perception contribute to recognition at this stage.
2. Affective Stage (Liking & Preference) – Individuals develop attitudes, opinions, and preferences based on their perceptions. Positive testimonials and a strong brand identity can enhance trust and preference.
3. Conative Stage (Conviction & Purchase Decision) – Individuals form a desire to obtain the product and ultimately decide whether to proceed with the transaction. When awareness and perceived value are strong, individuals are more likely to make a decision.

Prior studies have adapted the Hierarchy-of-Effects logic to digital contexts by modelling how

online stimuli progress from cognitive to behavioural responses. [Dwivedi et al. \(2021\)](#) conceptualised social-media marketing activities as drivers of consumer awareness and attitudes that subsequently influence behavioural intentions, reflecting HOE's sequential structure. [Mikalef et al. \(2023\)](#) similarly examined mediated pathways in digital environments, showing how perceptions and evaluations formed at earlier stages transmit effects to later behavioural outcomes through SEM. [Kite et al. \(2018\)](#) reviewed and empirically demonstrated how communication exposure shapes awareness, affective reactions, and subsequent actions, reinforcing the continued relevance of HOE-type processes in contemporary online decision-making.

In the context of this study, the Hierarchy of Effects Model helps explain how social media testimonials and brand perception contribute to brand awareness, which in turn affects individuals' interest in obtaining products online. Unlike traditional methods of influencing consumer behavior, social media testimonials serve as peer-generated endorsements, making them a significant factor in shaping decisions.

### **Purchase intention**

Purchase intention refers to a consumer's evaluation of a product or brand, influenced by both internal attitudes and external stimuli ([Yanti et al., 2023](#)). It reflects a buyer's willingness to engage in a transaction based on their perception of a product's value and suitability to their needs. Consumers constantly reassess their preferences due to changing demands for goods and services, which directly impacts their purchasing behavior.

Decision-making in purchasing involves considering multiple factors, including what to buy, when to buy, how much to buy, and why to buy. Consumers process available information to compare different options before making a final choice. Purchase interest, therefore, represents the likelihood that a consumer will proceed with a purchase based on their preferences and external influences ([Lusyana, 2020](#)).

### **Social Media Testimonials**

Testimonials serve as a form of social proof, helping consumers evaluate a product or service based on previous users' experiences. Consumers tend to trust third-party recommendations more than direct promotional efforts, making testimonials a critical factor in influencing purchase intent. By providing authentic feedback, testimonials enhance credibility and assist potential buyers in making informed decisions ([Lumban Batu et al., 2020](#)). Testimonials function as unstructured, user-generated content, often shared on social media platforms. These personal experiences provide valuable insights to a broader audience, helping individuals make purchasing decisions beyond their own knowledge. Social media testimonials offer unlimited access to diverse opinions, making them highly influential in the consumer decision-making process ([Jayanti et al., 2023](#)).

Social media testimonials significantly influence brand awareness through various mechanisms, primarily by enhancing engagement and credibility. When someone reads a testimonial, it grabs their attention and creates a sense of urgency (FOMO), making them more curious about your brand. This can boost brand awareness and even encourage them to try your products or services ([Ilyas et. al, 2022](#)). [Raghil and Riofita \(2024\)](#) stated that testimonials and reviews also play an important role in shaping consumers' perceptions of a brand's reputation and product quality. When consumers see many positive testimonials, they are more likely to perceive the product as high-quality and aligned with the promised expectations, which strengthens brand awareness. Thus, the following hypothesis can be derived:

H1 : Social media testimonials influence purchase intention

H2 : Social media testimonials influence brand awareness

H7 : Social media testimonials indirectly influence purchase intention through brand awareness

## Brand Image

Brand image, often referred to as brand perception, is how consumers interpret and respond to a brand based on their experiences and interactions. A strong brand image helps businesses establish a distinct identity, increasing the likelihood that consumers will recall and prefer their products when making purchasing decisions ([Rosdiana & A'idia, 2022](#)).

Brand image encompasses a company's name, values, product range, reputation, and the quality of communication with its customers. It reflects the overall impression formed in the consumer's mind based on factors such as design, product performance, customer service, and corporate culture. A well-established brand image fosters trust and loyalty, positively influencing consumer preferences and purchase decisions ([Sanita et al., 2019](#)).

A study conducted by [Dhaefina et al. \(2021\)](#) found that people care more about the brand when buying noodles on Instagram. Another study finding by [Prasetyo et al. \(2022\)](#) indicated that purchase decisions are positively and significantly influenced by brand image on Tokopedia, suggesting that a strong brand image can enhance brand recognition and recall. Similarly, [Arianty and Andira \(2021\)](#) reported that brand image positively and significantly affects purchase decisions. Their study also highlights that both brand image and brand awareness contribute to purchasing decisions, indicating that brand awareness reinforces the impact of brand image.

[Arianty and Andira \(2021\)](#) proved that brand image and brand awareness have a favourable and substantial impact on purchase decisions, and both also have a relevant impact. These findings collectively suggest that brand image and brand awareness are interconnected, with brand awareness acting as a reinforcing factor that strengthens the influence of brand image on consumer purchase decisions. These findings form the basis for the development of the following research hypothesis:

H3 : Brand image influences brand awareness

H4 : Brand image influences purchase intention

H6 : Brand image indirectly influences purchase intention through brand awareness

## Brand Awareness

Brand awareness is the extent to which consumers can recognize and recall a particular brand and its products. A high level of brand awareness enables consumers to associate a brand with specific product attributes, reducing the time and risk involved in decision-making ([Merek et al., 2024](#)). Consumers tend to favor brands they are familiar with, making brand awareness a crucial factor in influencing purchase behavior.

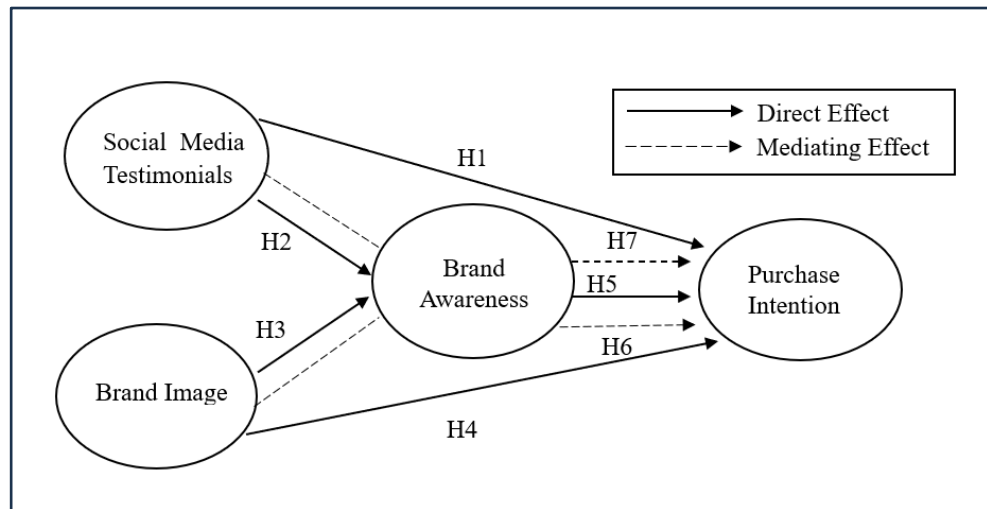
In the context of online marketplaces, brand awareness plays a decisive role in shaping purchasing decisions. Buyers on digital platforms, such as TikTok Shop, often recall brands based on previous interactions, product visibility, and social influence. A Study on JNE Express Users in South Surabaya by [Rachmawati and Andjarwati \(2020\)](#) obtained results that brand awareness has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions. Similarly, the connection between brand awareness and intention in purchasing Dunkin' Donuts Indonesia products is very close and positively correlated ([Sunjaya & Erdiansyah, 2019](#)). [Prasetyo et al. \(2022\)](#) found that brand awareness influences purchase intention in Tokopedia. Thus, the following hypothesis can be developed:

H5: Brand awareness influences purchase intention

In this study, the framework is developed based on prior literature and empirical findings, identifying key relationships between social media testimonials, brand image, brand awareness, and purchase intention. By synthesizing previous research, this framework aims to provide a systematic approach to analysing the factors influencing consumers' purchasing decisions within



TikTok Shop (See Figure 2).



**Figure 2.** Conceptual Framework  
Source: Author's Own

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs an explanatory research approach to analyze the influence of TikTok Shop testimonials and brand image on brand awareness and online purchase intention in DKI Jakarta. A non-probability sampling method, specifically purposive sampling, was used to select 140 respondents who have made an online purchase on TikTok Shop. Data was collected through an online questionnaire using a Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) to measure the variables.

However, the total population is unknown; thus, the sample size was determined using a common rule of thumb in SEM analysis. It suggests multiplying the number of study indicators by a factor of 5 to 10 (Hair et al., 2014). This study includes 14 indicators. Therefore, the required sample size is calculated as  $14 \times 10 = 140$  respondents. Additionally, given that the recommended sample size for SEM analysis is 75 to 140 respondents, the final sample size was set at 140. The selected respondents are TikTok Shop users in DKI Jakarta, ensuring the study meets the necessary analytical requirements.

The Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analytical approach is more suitable for achieving the study's objectives. PLS-SEM is particularly advantageous for handling non-normal data distributions and addressing issues related to data inadequacy, such as heterogeneity. Additionally, it enables researchers to simultaneously test multiple relationships among variables, making it well-suited for analyzing complex and multivariate phenomena (Hair et al., 2014).

The study variables are presented in Table 1 as follows:

**Table 1.** Variables and Indicators

Variable	Indicator	Source
Social Media Testimonials (X1)	1. Attractiveness	(Jayanti et al., 2023)
	2. Credibility	
	3. Spontaneity	
(A'idia Ruseli & Rosdiana, 2022)	1. Product Attributes	(Rosdiana & A'idia, 2022)
	2. Consumer Benefits	
	3. Brand personality	
Brand Awareness (Z)	1. Brand Recall	(Wiranata & Hardy, 2023)

Variable	Indicator	Source
Purchase Interest (Y) Independent Variable	2. Brand Recognition	(Yanti et al., 2023)
	3. Purchase decision	
	4. Consumption	
	1. Interest in transactions	
	2. Interest in Reference	
	3. Professional Interest	
	4. Interest in Exploration	

The following equations (1) and (2) represent the hypothesized relationships in the structural model.

$$\text{Purchase\_Intention} = \beta_1 \text{Social\_Media\_Testimonials} + \beta_2 \text{Brand\_Image} + \beta_3 \text{Brand\_Awareness} + e$$

**Outcome Path (1)**

$$\text{Brand\_Awareness} = \beta_4 \text{Social\_Media\_Testimonials} + \beta_5 \text{Brand\_Image} + \varepsilon$$

**Mediation Path (2)**

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for the study variables based on 140 respondents. All constructs show relatively high mean scores, ranging from 30.60 to 31.04, indicating generally positive perceptions of social media testimonials, brand image, brand awareness, and purchase intention among participants. The standard deviations are modest (2.54–2.99), suggesting limited dispersion and consistent responses across respondents, while the minimum and maximum values indicate sufficient variability for subsequent statistical analysis.

**Table 2.** Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social Media Testimonials	140	24.00	36.00	30.60	2.543
Brand Image	140	24.00	36.00	30.89	2.842
Purchase Intention	140	24.00	36.00	30.95	2.991
Brand Awareness	140	23.00	36.00	31.04	2.923

Table 3 displayed the characteristics of 140 respondents who are TikTok Shop users in DKI Jakarta. Most of the respondents aged in 17-24 (64.29 %), with Senior High School Level (81.43%) and bachelor's degree (15.71%) educational background. The majority resided in Central Jakarta (75.71%).

Most of the respondents' income is less than 1 million Rupiah (30.71%), and only 44.29% The range of incomes between 1 to 3 million rupiah for the respondents. Regarding marital status, the majority were single, comprising 116 individuals or 82.86%. dominate this study. This showed that shopping on TikTok is more attractive to young individuals looking for affordable products that suit their needs.

**Table 3.** Respondent Characteristics

Respondents Based on Age			
No	Age	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	17 - 24	90	64.29
2	25 - 32	32	22.86



Respondents Based on Age			
3	33 - 40	11	7.86
4	41 - 48	3	2.14
5	49 - 56	4	2.86
	Total	140	100.00
Respondents Based on Final Education			
No		Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Elementary School Level	0	0.00
2	Junior High School Level	0	0.00
3	Senior High School Level	114	81.43
4	Diploma	3	2.14
5	Bachelor's Degree (S1)	22	15.71
6	Master's Degree (S2)	1	0.71
7	Doctoral Degree (S3)	0	0.00
	Total	140	100.00
Respondents Based on Domicile			
No		Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Central Jakarta	106	75.71
2	East Jakarta	4	2.86
3	West Jakarta	7	5.00
4	North Jakarta	9	6.43
5	South Jakarta	14	10.00
	Total	140	100.00
Respondents Based on Occupation			
No		Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Student/Students	77	55.00
2	Private Officer	30	21.43
3	State Civil Apparatus	8	5.71
4	Entrepreneur/Entrepreneur	24	17.14
5	Other	1	0.71
	Total	140	100.00
Respondents Based on Income			
No		Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	< 1 Million	43	30.71
2	1- 3 Million	62	44.29
3	3-5 Million	25	17.86
4	5-7 Million	6	4.29
5	7-10 Million	2	1.43
6	> 10 Million	2	1.43
	Total	140	100.00
Respondents Based on Marriage			
No		Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Married	24	17.14
2	Single	116	82.86
	Total	140	100.00

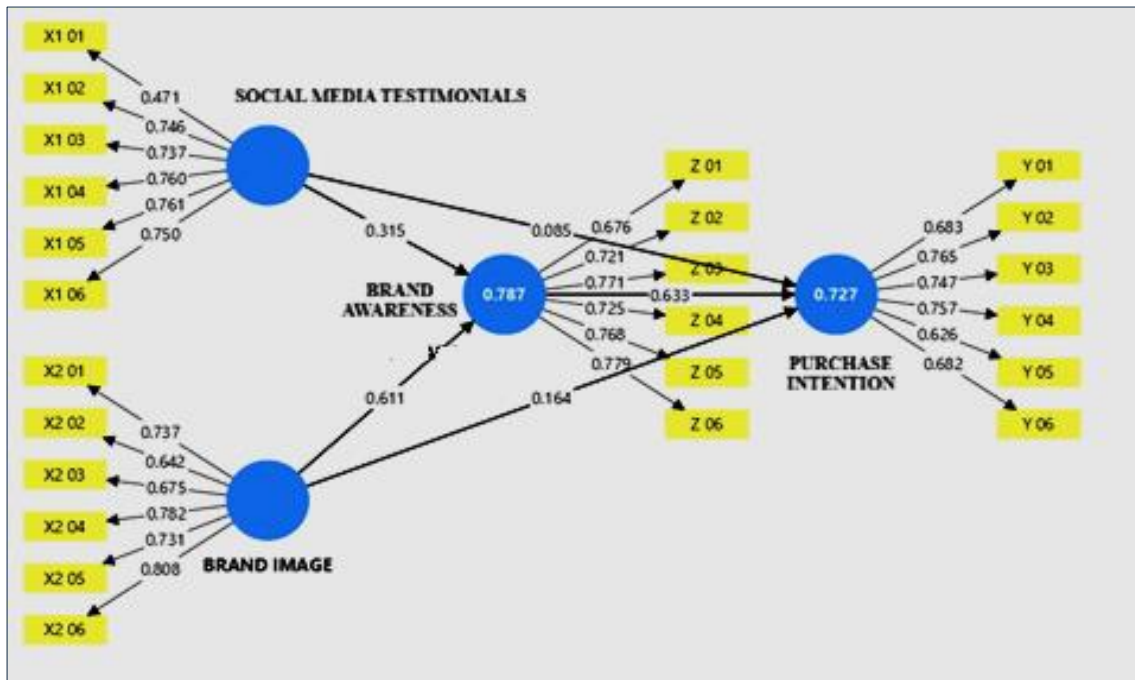


Figure 3. Measurement Model (Initial Test)

### Validity Test

As shown in Figure 3, the loading values exceed the 0.5 threshold. The external loading test results confirm the validity of all constructs, indicating strong indicator validity and verifying that all indicators satisfy the criteria for convergent validity. However, Table 4 presents the loading values for each indicator:

Table 4. Results of Validity Test

Variable	Indicator	Loading	Information
Social Media Testimonials	X1.02	0.750	Valid
	X1.03	0.745	Valid
	X1.04	0.772	Valid
	X1.05	0.769	Valid
	X1.06	0.748	Valid
	X2.01	0.737	Valid
Brand Image	X2.02	0.642	Valid
	X2.03	0.675	Valid
	X2.04	0.782	Valid
	X2.05	0.731	Valid
	X2.06	0.808	Valid
	Z.01	0.676	Valid
Brand Awareness	Z.02	0.721	Valid
	Z.03	0.771	Valid
	Z.04	0.725	Valid
	Z.05	0.768	Valid
	Z.06	0.780	Valid
	Y.01	0.683	Valid
Purchase Intention	Y.02	0.765	Valid
	Y.03	0.748	Valid
	Y.04	0.757	Valid
	Y.05	0.626	Valid
	Y.06	0.682	Valid

### Reliability Test

Reliability testing was conducted to evaluate the internal consistency of the measurement instrument. Reliability reflects the precision, accuracy, and consistency of the instrument in capturing measurements. Two common methods for assessing reliability are Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha. Typically, the Composite Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) should exceed 0.6 to be considered acceptable.

Table 5 presents the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability values for four constructs: Social Media Testimonials, Brand Image, Brand Awareness, and Purchase Intention. The measurement model demonstrates adequate reliability. The AVE values range from 0.403 to 0.632, with Social Media Testimonials having the highest AVE (0.632) and Purchase Intention the lowest (0.403). Composite Reliability values range from 0.769 to 0.801, all of which are above the acceptable threshold.

**Table 5.** Reliability Test

Variable	Average variance extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliability	Information
Social Media Testimonials	0.507	0.858	Reliable
Brand Image	0.535	0.873	Reliable
Brand Awareness	0.549	0.879	Reliable
Purchase Intention	0.517	0.860	Reliable

### Inner Model (R-Square)

The  $R$ -squared value ( $R^2$ ) value measures the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variables in the model, indicating the model's explanatory power. A higher  $R^2$  suggests that the independent variables effectively account for variations in the dependent variable. Meanwhile, the predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ) value is used to assess the model's predictive accuracy, providing insight into its Goodness of Fit and its ability to predict outcomes beyond the sample data. The following formula is utilized to determine the predictive relevance value ( $Q^2$ ):

$$Q^2 = 1 - (1 - R_1^2) (1 - R_2^2)$$

$$Q^2 = 1 - (1 - 0,534) (1 - 0,582)$$

$$Q^2 = 1 - (0,468) (0,418)$$

$$Q^2 = 1 - 0,1956$$

$$Q^2 = 0,980$$

The  $Q^2$  value of 0.980 (98%) indicates a high level of predictive relevance, suggesting that the model has strong predictive accuracy. The remaining 2% represents unexplained variance, which may be attributed to factors not included in the model.

### Hypothesis Testing Result and Discussion

The hypothesis testing result demonstrates the significance level based on  $t$ -statistic values and  $p$ -values that must be less than 0.05. The mediation test in this study was seen through the indirect effect by using the bootstrapping technique.

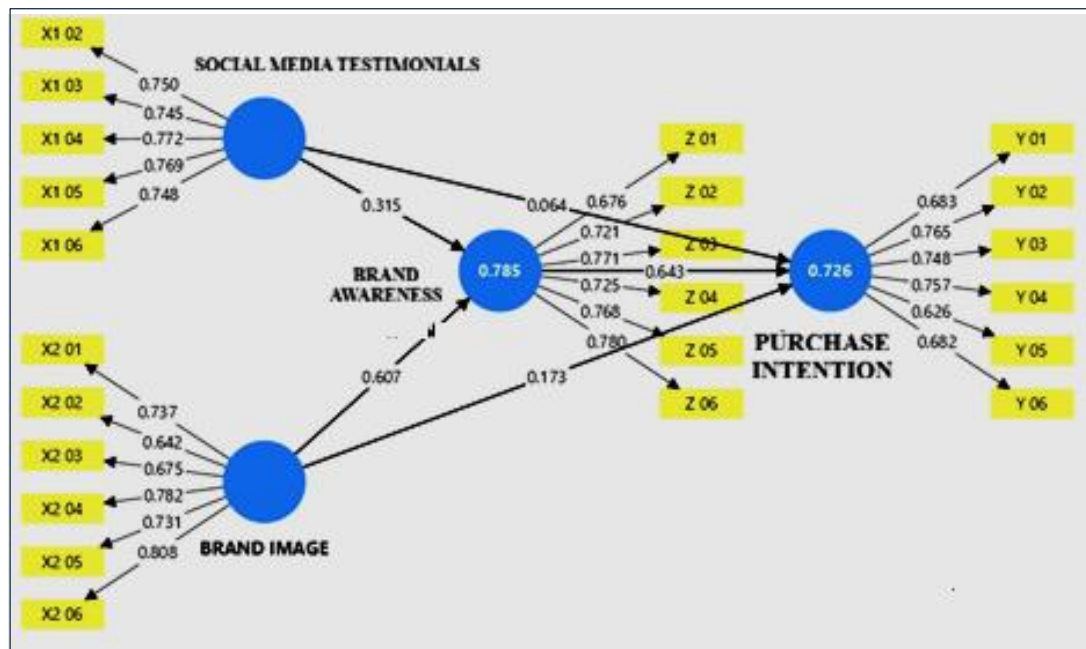


Figure 4. Structural model through Bootstrapping Process

Table 6. Direct Effect

Hypothesis	Relationship	Coefficient	t-Stat	p-value	Remark
H1	Social Media Testimonials → Purchase Intention	0.035	0.383	0.351	Not Supported
H2	Social Media Testimonials → Brand Awareness	0.284	4.191	0.000*	Supported
H3	Brand Image → Brand Awareness	0.577	9.186	0.000*	Supported
H4	Brand Image → Purchase Intention	0.117	1.408	0.080	Not Supported
H5	Brand Awareness → Purchase Intention	0.620	7.880	0.000*	Supported

Note : \*significant at the 1% level

Table 6 shows the direct effects of independent variables on the dependent variables, and the strength or significance of these relationships is identified by referring to coefficient values, t-statistics, and p-values. The findings provide valuable insights into the factors influencing purchase intention on TikTok Shop. It indicates that social media testimonials do not directly impact purchase intention (H1,  $\beta = 0.035$ ,  $p = 0.351$ ), suggesting that while customer reviews and testimonials may shape perceptions, they alone are not strong enough to drive purchasing decisions. This finding is consistent with the study by [Suhendra et al. \(2024\)](#), which also found that social media testimonials did not have a significant effect on purchase intention.

Similarly, brand image has a strong positive effect on brand awareness (H3,  $\beta = 0.577$ ,  $p < 0.00$ ), but it does not directly influence purchase intention (H4,  $\beta = 0.117$ ,  $p = 0.080$ ). This suggests that consumers associate a strong brand image with greater brand recognition, but it does not necessarily translate into immediate purchase behaviour. This finding is consistent with [Nel and Andira \(2021\)](#), indicating a positive and significant relationship between brand image and brand awareness. Also, comparable results were reported by [Farrel and Sunaryo \(2022\)](#), who also found that brand image does not directly influence purchase intention.

The non-significant direct effects of social media testimonials and brand image on purchase

intention may reflect the nature of TikTok Shop, where users are exposed to large amounts of promotional content and often rely on practical cues such as price discounts, delivery speed, platform trust, or seller ratings when making quick decisions. Many users also encounter products casually while browsing for entertainment rather than actively searching for brands, which reduces careful evaluation and makes brand awareness an important first step before purchase. As a result, testimonials and brand image may influence purchase intention mainly through awareness rather than through immediate buying responses.

However, testimonials significantly enhance brand awareness ( $H2, \beta = 0.284, p < 0.00$ ), indicating that positive consumer feedback increases brand recognition and familiarity. This finding aligns with the results of [Lukita et al. \(2021\)](#), who found that social media testimonials significantly affect brand awareness through increased exposure and perceived credibility.

The strong and significant effect of brand awareness on purchase intention ( $H5, \beta = 0.620, p < 0.00$ ) indicates that consumers who recognize and are familiar with a brand are more likely to develop purchase intention. This means that while testimonials and brand image may not directly lead to purchases, they contribute indirectly by enhancing brand awareness, which, in turn, strengthens purchase intention. This finding reflects the conclusions of [Sunjaya and Erdiansyah \(2019\)](#), who identified brand awareness as a significant positive predictor of purchase intention.

**Table 7. Mediating Effect**

Hypothesis	Relationship	Coefficient	t-Stat	p-value	Remark
H6	Brand Image → Brand Awareness → Purchase Intention	0.358	5.856	0.000	Supported
H7	Social Media Testimonials → Brand Awareness → Purchase Intention	0.176	3.410	0.000	Supported

The indirect effect analysis presented in Table 7 confirms that brand awareness mediates the relationship between consumer purchase intentions and TikTok Shop. The findings indicate that brand image indirectly influences purchase intention through brand awareness ( $H6, \beta = 0.358, p < 0.00$ ). This suggests that while brand image alone does not directly lead to purchase intention, it significantly enhances brand awareness, which in turn drives purchasing decisions. Consumers who perceive a brand positively are more likely to recognize and trust it, ultimately increasing their intention to make a purchase. Similar evidence was documented by [Sari and Sudarwanto \(2022\)](#), demonstrating that the effect of brand image on brand awareness is transmitted through purchase intention.

Similarly, social media testimonials also have an indirect effect on purchase intention through brand awareness ( $H7, \beta = 0.176, p < 0.00$ ). This finding implies that while testimonials may not immediately lead to purchase decisions, they play a crucial role in enhancing brand awareness, which later influences consumer buying behavior. The significant positive effect indicates that social proof, in the form of customer reviews and testimonials, strengthens consumer familiarity and confidence in a brand, making them more likely to engage in purchasing activities. This finding is consistent with prior studies by [Cynthia et al. \(2019\)](#) and [Andarista et al. \(2022\)](#), which report that social media testimonials have a positive and significant effect on brand awareness through purchase intention.

A key insight from these findings is the critical role of brand awareness as a mediator in the relationship between social media testimonials, brand image, and purchase intention. These findings emphasize the importance of brand awareness as a bridge between marketing efforts and

consumer behaviour. Businesses looking to improve sales on TikTok Shop should focus on strategies that enhance brand visibility and recognition. Strengthening a brand's image and encouraging customer testimonials can increase brand awareness, ultimately driving purchase intent.

Overall, these findings reinforce the importance of brand awareness as a critical mediating variable. Both brand image and social media testimonials contribute significantly to purchase intention, but their effects are channeled through increased brand awareness. This highlights the necessity for businesses to prioritize brand-building efforts and leverage consumer testimonials strategically to maximize their impact on customer purchase decisions.

Although this study focuses on DKI Jakarta, the practical recommendations may be applied to TikTok Shop sellers in other regions that share similar conditions, such as high platform usage, strong exposure to livestream commerce, intense competition, and consumers who actively engage with testimonials and short-form promotional content. Sellers operating in large urban or digitally advanced markets are therefore more likely to benefit from these strategies. However, in areas with lower platform adoption or different consumer profiles, the recommendations should be adapted, and further studies are needed to test their applicability in other geographical settings.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study answers all five research questions posed at the outset. The findings highlight the important roles of brand image and social media testimonials in shaping brand awareness and influencing online purchase intention on TikTok Shop. Specifically, brand image and social media testimonials significantly enhance brand awareness but show limited direct effects on purchase intention, while brand awareness plays a crucial role in driving purchase intention and mediates the relationships between brand image, testimonials, and purchase intention. These results extend the Hierarchy-of-Effects framework to a social-commerce setting by demonstrating that consumer decisions on TikTok Shop follow a multi-stage process in which awareness acts as a central mechanism linking online stimuli to behavioural outcomes. Practically, the findings suggest that businesses should strengthen brand image and strategically leverage customer testimonials to build recognition and ultimately stimulate online sales.

## LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

Future studies are encouraged to expand the sample size by including consumers from multiple regions beyond Jakarta, such as Greater Jakarta, allowing for broader generalizability of the findings. Additionally, future researchers can explore other variables that influence purchasing decisions, such as trust, perceived value, and consumer engagement, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of online shopping behaviour. A mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative analysis and in-depth interviews, could provide richer insights into consumer motivations and decision-making processes.

Moreover, conducting longitudinal studies at different time intervals could help track changes in purchasing behavior and identify evolving factors influencing consumer decisions. Future research could also examine the impact of demographic variables, such as age, gender, and income level, on purchase intentions. Furthermore, a deeper exploration of the mediating role of brand awareness alongside trust and perceived value could enhance our understanding of how TikTok Shop testimonials and brand image shape consumer behaviour in the digital marketplace.

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