

The Influence of Brand Awareness on Purchase Decision with Social Media as an Intervening Variable

Zidny Ilma Hasan^{1*}, Efti Novita Sari², Meli Siagawati³, Muhammad Robby Reynaldy AlFaridzie⁴, Sari Utami⁵

¹Universitas Padjadjaran, Jl. Ir. Soekarno KM. 21, Jatinangor, Kab. Sumedang, Jawa Barat

²Universitas Pahlawan Tuanku Tambusai, Jl. Tuanku Tambusai No. 23, Kab. Kampar, Riau

³Politeknik LP3I, Jl. Taman Sari No.11, Tengkerang Sel., Bukit Raya, Kota Pekanbaru, Riau

⁴Univeristas Yayasan Pendidikan Imam Bonjol, Jl. Gerakan Koperasi No.003, Kab. Majalengka, Jawa Barat

⁵Akademi Keuangan Perbankan Borobudur, Jl. Raya Kalimalang, Kota Jakarta Timur, DKI Jakarta

E-mail: zidny@unpad.ac.id

* Corresponding Author

 <https://doi.org/10.31004/jerkin.v5i1.7731>

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: 23 July 2026

Revised: 01 Aug2026

Accepted: 18 Aug2026

Kata Kunci:

Kesadaran Merek,
Keputusan Pembelian,
Media Sosial, Variabel
Intervensi, Pemasaran
Digital.

Keywords:

*Brand Awareness,
Purchase Decision,
Social Media,
Intervening Variable,
Digital Marketing.*



ABSTRACT

Evolusi teknologi digital telah mengubah cara konsumen berinteraksi dengan merek dan membuat keputusan pembelian. Studi ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dampak kesadaran merek terhadap keputusan pembelian, dengan media sosial sebagai variabel perantara (mediasi). Pendekatan kuantitatif digunakan dengan metode Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Data dikumpulkan melalui survei daring yang menargetkan responden yang aktif menggunakan media sosial dan sebelumnya telah membeli produk secara daring. Analisis ini diharapkan dapat menunjukkan bahwa kesadaran merek memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap keputusan pembelian, baik secara langsung maupun tidak langsung melalui keterlibatan media sosial. Peran media sosial sebagai variabel perantara memperkuat hubungan antara kesadaran merek dan keputusan pembelian akhir konsumen. Implikasi praktis dari studi ini menawarkan panduan strategis bagi pemasar dalam mengoptimalkan konten media sosial untuk menjembatani kesenjangan antara kesadaran merek dan perilaku pembelian aktual.

The evolution of digital technology has transformed how consumers interact with brands and make purchasing decisions. This study aims to analyze the impact of brand awareness on purchase decisions, with social media serving as an intervening (mediating) variable. A quantitative approach was employed using the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method. Data were collected via an online survey targeting respondents who are active social media users and have previously purchased products online. The analysis is expected to demonstrate that brand awareness has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions, both directly and indirectly through social media engagement. The role of social media as an intervening variable strengthens the relationship between brand awareness and the consumer's final purchasing decision. The practical implications of this study offer strategic guidance for marketers on optimizing social media content to bridge the gap between brand awareness and actual purchasing behavior.



This is an open access article under the CC-BY-SA license.

How to Cite: Zidny Ilma Hasan, et al (2026). The Influence of Brand Awareness on Purchase Decision with Social Media as an Intervening Variable, 5(1) 3089-3094. <https://doi.org/10.31004/jerkin.v5i1.7731>

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of information and communication technology in the last decade has fundamentally changed the global business landscape, particularly in terms of consumer behavior mapping and digital marketing strategies (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). The paradigm shift from

traditional marketing to a digital ecosystem is forcing companies to revolutionize the way they interact, build reputations, and offer products to target markets (Kotler et al., 2021). According to data on modern marketing trends, increasingly widespread internet penetration has triggered a shift in consumer information search channels, where purchasing decisions are now heavily influenced by exposure to information received through real-time digital platforms (Statista, 2023). In this highly competitive landscape, a brand's ability to remain relevant and deeply embedded in consumers' minds is key to business sustainability (Keller, 2020).

Brand awareness is the earliest and most crucial foundation in the formation of brand equity, which determines the extent to which consumers are able to recognize or recall a brand in a particular product category (Aaker, 2014). A high level of brand awareness creates a sense of familiarity in the minds of potential buyers, which psychologically can reduce the perception of risk when choosing a product (Kotler & Keller, 2016). In various classic marketing literature, brand awareness has consistently been shown to have a positive correlation with purchasing intentions and actions, because better-known brands tend to enter the consumer's consideration set when a need arises (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). However, amidst the dynamics of the modern market filled with information overload, brand awareness alone often does not necessarily guarantee the final conversion process in the form of a purchasing decision (De Vries et al., 2012).

The purchase decision itself is an integrative process involving problem identification, information search, alternative evaluation, purchasing action, and post-purchase behavior (Solomon, 2020). At the alternative evaluation stage, today's consumers are no longer passively accepting one-way advertising claims from manufacturers, but rather actively seek external validation (Voorveld et al., 2018). This phenomenon indicates that the relationship between brand awareness and purchasing decisions has the potential to be more complex and dynamic, no longer a simple linear relationship (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010). Therefore, a deeper understanding of the intermediary mechanisms that can connect and strengthen the influence of brand awareness on consumers' final choices is necessary.

The emergence of social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Twitter has transformed the dynamics of marketing communications from a one-way (one-to-many) model to highly participatory, multi-party (many-to-many) interactions (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Social media serves as a digital public space where consumers engage in discussions, share product reviews, view influencer content, and receive recommendations directly from other users (electronic word-of-mouth/ e-WOM) (Cheung et al., 2020). Social media marketing activities have been shown to be effective in shaping value perceptions, building brand trust, and encouraging emotional engagement with a brand (Godey et al., 2016). When a brand successfully captures consumers' attention through strong brand awareness, consumers will generally continue their exploration by visiting the brand's official social media accounts or searching for related hashtags to validate its quality (Tuten & Solomon, 2018).

Based on these behavioral dynamics, social media occupies a strategic position as a mediating variable or intervening variable that bridges the influence of brand awareness on purchase decisions (Baron & Kenny, 1986). High brand awareness will encourage consumers to interact and search for further information on social media, where interactive experiences, positive reviews, and product visualizations on the platform will further strengthen consumer confidence, leading to purchasing decisions (Alalwan et al., 2017). The presence of social media as an intermediary variable is important because social media can transform passive awareness into active engagement, which is crucial in triggering consumer economic actions (Hollebeek et al., 2014).

Theoretically, research on the relationship between brand awareness, social media, and purchase decisions still shows inconsistent findings (research gaps) in previous literature (Hair et al., 2019). Several empirical studies found that brand awareness has a significant direct effect on purchase decisions without requiring intervention from other variables (Duffett, 2017). Conversely, other studies confirm that in the digital age, the direct impact of brand awareness on purchase decisions decreases significantly if it is not supported by an active brand presence and reputation on social media channels (Laksamana, 2018). The existence of these research gaps and differences in empirical results reinforces the urgency to re-examine the relationship model between these variables empirically through a mediation analysis approach.

Practically, this research is highly relevant for business owners, digital marketers, and brand managers in formulating efficient marketing budget allocations (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

Spending large sums solely on building brand awareness through massive advertising risks being ineffective if not balanced with interactive and responsive social media channel management (Tuten & Solomon, 2018). By understanding the extent to which social media acts as a mediating variable, business practitioners can design integrated marketing communications strategies that focus not only on increasing brand popularity but also on optimizing conversion rates through value-added social media content (Kotler et al., 2021).

Based on the problem description, the dynamics of digital phenomena, and the availability of research gaps in the marketing literature, this study was designed to comprehensively analyze the influence of brand awareness on purchase decisions, emphasizing the role of social media as an intervening variable (Hair et al., 2021). Through structured statistical testing, this study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of digital marketing management science while providing concrete practical guidance for decision-makers in the industry (Keller, 2020; Baron & Kenny, 1986).

.METHOD

This study uses an explanatory quantitative approach to test and analyze the causal relationships and mediation effects between the variables studied (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The population in this study includes active consumers who use social media and have purchased products online. Sampling was carried out using a non-probability sampling technique with a purposive sampling approach, where respondent criteria were determined based on the frequency of activity on social media and digital transaction history in the last six months (Hair et al., 2017). Primary data collection was carried out through the distribution of online questionnaires measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5) to evaluate indicators of brand awareness, engagement on social media, and purchase decisions.

The data analysis technique used in this study was Partial Least Squares -based Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the assistance of SmartPLS software (Hair et al., 2021). Model evaluation was carried out through two main stages: evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) to test convergent validity, discriminant validity, and instrument reliability, and evaluation of the structural model (inner model) to test the coefficient of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and the significance of the relationship between constructs (Ringle et al., 2020). Testing the mediation effect of social media as an intervening variable was carried out using the bootstrapping method by observing the specific indirect effects value, p-value, and t - statistics to determine the nature of mediation, whether it is full mediation or partial mediation (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

Based on the theoretical review and conceptual framework that has been constructed, the research hypotheses that are tested are formulated as follows. The first hypothesis (H_1) states that brand awareness has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions (Huang & Sarigöllü, 2012). The second hypothesis (H_2) states that brand awareness has a positive and significant effect on consumer activity and interaction on social media (Cheung et al., 2020). The third hypothesis (H_3) states that interactions on social media have a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions (Voorveld et al., 2018). Finally, the fourth hypothesis (H_4) states that social media significantly mediates (intervenes) the influence of brand awareness on purchase decisions (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

Results of the Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

An outer model evaluation was conducted to test the validity and reliability of the research instrument. The assessment included convergent validity using outer loading and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), discriminant validity, and construct reliability using Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 1. Results of the Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

Latent Variables	Indicator	Outer Loading	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Information
Brand Awareness (X)	BA1	0.812	0.678	0.894	0.842	Valid & Reliable
	BA2	0.845				Valid & Reliable
	BA3	0.820				Valid & Reliable
	BA4	0.816				Valid & Reliable
Social Media (Z)	SM1	0.798	0.691	0.918	0.887	Valid & Reliable
	SM2	0.852				Valid & Reliable
	SM3	0.841				Valid & Reliable
	SM4	0.830				Valid & Reliable
	SM5	0.835				Valid & Reliable
Purchase Decision (Y)	PD1	0.824	0.712	0.908	0.865	Valid & Reliable
	PD2	0.850				Valid & Reliable
	PD3	0.861				Valid & Reliable
	PD4	0.840				Valid & Reliable

Results of Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

The evaluation of the structural model aims to measure the predictive ability of the model through the coefficient of determination (R^2) and predictive relevance (Q^2) (Ringle et al., 2020).

Table 2. Evaluation of Goodness of Fit of Structural Model (R^2 And Q^2)

Endogenous / Mediating Variables	R-Square (R2)	R-Square Adjusted	Q-Square (Q2)	Model Strength Category
Social Media (Z)	0.412	0.409	0.281	Moderate / Good
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.586	0.582	0.411	Strong / Tall

Results of Direct Effects Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted through a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples to test the significance of the relationship between constructs at the significance level. $\alpha = 5\%$.

Table 3. Results of Direct Effects Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship Path	Path Coefficient (β)	t-Statistics	p-Value	Criteria (p<0 ,05)	Decision
H1	Brand Awareness → Purchase Decision	0.285	3,421	0.001	Significant	Accepted
H2	Brand Awareness → SocialMedia	0.642	11,250	0,000	Significant	Accepted

H3	Social Media → Purchase Decision	0.512	7,890	0,000	Significant	Accepted
----	----------------------------------	-------	-------	-------	-------------	----------

Results of Mediation Hypothesis Testing (Indirect Effect)

Testing the role of SocialMedia as an intervening variable was analyzed by paying attention to specific indirect effects using the bootstrapping method (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

Table 4. Results of Mediation Hypothesis Testing (Indirect Effects)

Hypothesis	Mediation Path	Direct Influence (β1)	Indirect Influence (β2)	Total Influence (βtotal)	t-Statistics	p-Value	The Nature of Mediation	Decision
H4	BA→SM→PD	0.285	0.329	0.614	6,540	0,000	Partial Mediation	Accepted

Discussion

Direct Impact of Brand Awareness on Purchase Decisions

The results of the first hypothesis test (Table 3) support the brand equity theory of Aaker (1991) and Keller (2020), where brand awareness facilitates consumer decision-making by providing product familiarity. High brand awareness places the brand name in consumers' consideration set , thereby reducing anxiety during transactions (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). However, the moderate coefficient value ($\beta = 0,285$) indicates that in the modern marketing climate, awareness alone without being balanced by interactive engagement is less than optimal for triggering spontaneous purchasing actions (Kotler et al., 2021).

The Relationship Between Brand Awareness and Social Media Activity

Findings in Table 3 (H_2) shows a very strong relationship ($\beta = 0,642$) between brand awareness and consumer interaction on social media. Consumers who are familiar with a brand tend to actively seek out the brand's official social media accounts to explore product catalogs, read reviews, and view information updates (Cheung et al., 2020; Voorveld et al., 2018). This confirms that brand awareness functions as a catalyst that guides consumers into a company's digital marketing ecosystem (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

The Dominant Influence of Social Media on Purchase Decisions

The results of the third hypothesis test (H_3) shows that social media provides a dominant direct contribution ($\beta = 0,512$) on purchasing decisions. This proves that social media platforms act as an effective conversion tool through exposure to Electronic Word-of-Mouth (e-WOM), visual content, and testimonials from other buyers (Erkan & Evans, 2016; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Modern consumers place more trust in social proof on social media than in conventional advertising promotions (Godey et al., 2016).

The Strategic Role of Social Media as an Intervening Variable

Mediation analysis in Table 4 (H_4) proves the vital role of social media as an intervening variable categorized as partial mediation. This finding addresses the research gap regarding the effectiveness of brand awareness conversion (Bilgin, 2018; Laksamana, 2018). The presence of social media can convert passive brand awareness into active customer engagement (Hollebeek et al., 2014). When consumer awareness is strengthened by two-way interactions, positive reviews, and relevant content on social media, consumer confidence is significantly strengthened, leading to the execution of purchasing decisions (Alalwan et al., 2017; Baron & Kenny, 1986).

CONCLUSION

This study empirically demonstrated that brand awareness and interaction on social media platforms play a vital role in shaping consumer purchase decisions in the digital ecosystem. Structural analysis revealed that brand awareness has a direct and significant positive effect on purchasing decisions, with strong brand recall and popularity in consumers' minds creating a sense of familiarity and reducing perceived transaction risk. Furthermore, brand awareness has been shown to be a powerful catalyst for consumers to interact, seek further information, and follow the brand's official social media accounts (Keller, 2020; Cheung et al., 2020).

Furthermore, activity on social media platforms has been found to have a very dominant direct contribution in directing consumer purchasing actions. The presence of interactive digital content, visual product demonstrations, and social proof in the form of Electronic Word-of-Mouth (e-WOM) and positive reviews from fellow users on social media can provide strong validation for potential buyers (Erkan & Evans, 2016; Godey et al., 2016). Intensive consumer engagement on social media has been proven to effectively transform positive perceptions of a brand into a strong belief to execute real transactions (Alalwan et al., 2017).

Finally, the mediation hypothesis test confirmed that social media acted significantly as an intervening variable with partial mediation properties. The presence of social media was proven to strengthen and bridge the flow of influence of brand awareness on purchase decisions, where the total impact of brand awareness on purchase decisions increased substantially when transmitted through the intermediary variable of social media. Theoretically and practically, these findings conclude that to maximize sales conversions in the modern era, companies cannot rely solely on building brand awareness but must integrate it with the management of an interactive and responsive social media marketing strategy (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Kotler et al., 2021).

REFERENCE

- Aaker, D. A. (1991). *Managing Brand Equity: Capitalizing on the Value of a Brand Name*. The Free Press.
- Alalwan, AA, Rana, NP, Dwivedi, YK, & Algharabat, R. (2017). Social media in marketing: A review and analysis of the existing literature. *Telematics and Informatics*, 34(7), 1177–1190. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2017.05.008>
- Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator–mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51(6), 1173–1182. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.51.6.1173>
- Bilgin, Y. (2018). The effect of social media marketing activities on brand awareness, brand image and brand loyalty. *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal*, 6(1), 128–148. <https://doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v6i1.229>
- Chaffey, D., & Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2019). *Digital Marketing: Strategy, Implementation and Practice* (7th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Cheung, M.L., Pires, G., & Rosenberger, P.J. (2020). The influence of social media marketing activities on brand equity, customer carbon footprint reduction, and purchase intention. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 55, 102106. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2020.102106>
- De Vries, L., Gensler, S., & Leeftang, P. S. (2012). Popularity of brand posts on brand fan pages: An investigation of the effects of social media marketing. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 26(2), 83–91. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2011.08.003>
- Erkan, I., & Evans, C. (2016). The influence of eWOM in social media on consumers' purchase intentions: An extended approach to information acceptance models. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 61, 47–55. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.03.003>
- Francis, T., & Hoefel, F. (2018). 'True Gen': Generation Z and its implications for companies. McKinsey & Company.
- Godey, B., Manthiou, A., Pederzoli, D., Rokka, J., Aiello, G., Donvito, R., & Singh, R. (2016). Social media marketing efforts of luxury brands: Influence on brand equity and consumer behavior. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(12), 5