

The Influence of Social Media Marketing and Marketplace Marketing on Buying Interest with Customer Engagement as Mediating Variable

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effects of social media marketing and marketplace marketing on purchase intention and customer engagement. A quantitative approach was employed, involving 100 active social media and marketplace users aged 19–35 years. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using SmartPLS 4. The results indicate that social media marketing has positive and statistically significant effects on customer engagement ($\beta = 0.339$, $p < 0.001$) and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.273$, $p = 0.012$). Marketplace marketing also has positive and statistically significant effects on customer engagement ($\beta = 0.295$, $p = 0.009$) and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.289$, $p = 0.005$). In contrast, purchase intention has a negative and statistically significant effect on customer engagement ($\beta = -0.224$, $p = 0.035$). The indirect effects of social media marketing and marketplace marketing on customer engagement through purchase intention are not statistically significant ($p = 0.122$ and $p = 0.138$, respectively). These findings highlight the importance of social media and marketplace marketing in shaping consumer purchase intention and engagement, while indicating that the proposed mediating role of purchase intention is not supported by the results.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Marketplace Marketing, Purchase Intention, Customer Engagement.

I. Introduction

The development of digital technologies has fundamentally changed how businesses communicate with consumers, distribute products, and develop marketing strategies. Social media and online marketplaces have become important components of the digital marketing environment, providing firms with opportunities to disseminate information, interact with audiences, and facilitate online transactions. Unlike traditional marketing channels, digital platforms enable consumers to participate actively in brand-related communication, share opinions, and access information from other users. These changes have made digital marketing more than a promotional tool; it has become an important mechanism for shaping consumer perceptions, relationships, and purchase decisions (Appel et al., 2020; Dwivedi et al., 2021). Within this environment, social media marketing and marketplace marketing represent two related but distinct approaches. Social media marketing emphasizes the strategic use of social platforms to communicate brand messages, facilitate interactions, and develop relationships with consumers. Li et al. (2021) explain that social media marketing strategy encompasses different approaches through which firms use social media to achieve marketing objectives. Marketplace marketing, in contrast, operates within digital platforms that facilitate

product discovery, comparison, and purchasing transactions. Although both approaches can support online sales, their mechanisms may differ: social media can encourage engagement through communication and content, whereas marketplace activities can reduce friction in product search and purchasing. Understanding their respective contributions is therefore important for businesses seeking to coordinate digital marketing activities effectively.

Previous research provides evidence that digital interactions can influence consumer responses. Hajli (2015) demonstrates that social commerce mechanisms can strengthen consumer trust and purchase intention. Similarly, Cheung et al. (2008) show the importance of electronic word-of-mouth in the adoption of online opinions, highlighting how consumer-generated information can contribute to online decision-making. Erkan and Evans (2016) further demonstrate the relevance of information adoption in explaining how electronic word-of-mouth on social media influences purchase intention. These findings suggest that consumers' purchasing decisions are shaped not only by promotional messages but also by the information, social interactions, and evaluations available through digital channels. However, the effectiveness of such mechanisms may depend on the characteristics of the platform and the nature of consumer interactions. Purchase intention is an important construct in understanding consumer behavior because it reflects consumers' willingness or likelihood to purchase a product. In digital environments, purchase intention may be influenced by the perceived usefulness and credibility of information, brand-related perceptions, and interactions with other users. For example, Sokolova and Kefi (2020) found that influencer credibility and parasocial interaction were positively associated with purchase intention. Nevertheless, purchase intention should not be treated as equivalent to actual purchasing behavior. A consumer may express an intention to buy without completing a transaction, making it necessary to examine the factors associated with intention rather than assume that promotional exposure directly produces sales.

Another important construct in digital marketing is customer engagement. Brodie et al. (2011) conceptualize customer engagement as a multidimensional phenomenon arising through interactive experiences and relationships between consumers and firms or brands. In social media contexts, Hollebeek et al. (2014) operationalize consumer brand engagement through cognitive processing, affection, and activation. These dimensions indicate that engagement involves more than exposure to marketing content; it also encompasses consumers' psychological responses and behavioral participation. Lemon and Verhoef (2016) similarly emphasize that customer experience develops across multiple touchpoints and channels throughout the customer journey. Accordingly, customer engagement provides a useful perspective for examining how digital marketing activities may contribute to consumer relationships beyond immediate purchasing considerations.

Despite these developments, an important empirical question remains regarding how social media marketing and marketplace marketing operate together in relation to purchase intention and customer engagement. Existing studies have examined social media marketing strategies, social commerce, electronic word-of-mouth, influencer credibility, and customer engagement from different perspectives (Appel et al., 2020; Dwivedi et al., 2021; Li et al., 2021). However, the simultaneous examination of social media marketing and marketplace marketing, together with the proposed mediating role of customer engagement, requires further empirical assessment in the specific context of this study. In particular, the relationship between engagement and purchase intention should not be assumed to be uniformly positive, because the constructs represent distinct consumer responses and may operate differently across digital contexts. This study addresses this issue by examining the relationships among the two marketing approaches, purchase intention, and customer engagement within a single analytical framework. The study focuses on 100 active social media and marketplace users in Indonesia aged 19–35 years. This population provides a relevant context for investigating consumer responses among individuals who use digital platforms for social interaction and shopping. Nevertheless, the findings should be interpreted within the boundaries of the sample and should not automatically be generalized to all Indonesian consumers. Using questionnaire data and partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS 4, this study examines the effects of social media marketing and marketplace marketing on purchase intention and customer

engagement. It also evaluates the proposed indirect relationships involving customer engagement as the mediating variable. By examining these relationships simultaneously, the study seeks to contribute empirical evidence to digital marketing research and provide practical insights for businesses designing integrated social media and marketplace strategies.

II. Literature Review

2.1. Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing refers to the strategic use of social media platforms to communicate brand messages, facilitate consumer interactions, and support marketing objectives. Unlike traditional promotional channels, social media enables consumers to respond to brand communications, share experiences, and generate content that may influence other consumers. Li et al. (2021) conceptualize social media marketing strategy as a structured process involving strategic drivers, inputs, activities, and outputs. Their framework emphasizes that social media should be integrated into a firm's broader marketing strategy rather than treated merely as an additional promotional channel. The effectiveness of social media marketing depends on how businesses develop and manage interactions with their audiences. Kim and Ko (2012) demonstrate the relevance of social media marketing activities to consumer responses in the luxury fashion context. Godey et al. (2016) similarly examine social media marketing efforts and their relationships with brand equity and consumer behavior. These studies suggest that social media marketing can contribute to brand-related outcomes by facilitating communication, information exchange, and consumer participation. However, the strength of these relationships may depend on the platform, product category, audience characteristics, and quality of the marketing activities. Social media marketing may also influence purchase intention by providing information, facilitating electronic word-of-mouth, and enabling consumers to evaluate products through other users' experiences. Erkan and Evans (2016) demonstrate the importance of information adoption in explaining how electronic word-of-mouth on social media relates to purchase intention. Accordingly, social media marketing is expected to be positively associated with purchase intention and customer engagement, although these relationships require empirical testing within the specific research context.

2.2. Marketplace Marketing

Marketplace marketing concerns marketing activities conducted through online marketplace platforms, where businesses present products to consumers who can search, compare, evaluate, and purchase available offerings. Unlike social media environments, which often emphasize communication and social interaction, marketplace platforms are closely connected to product discovery and transaction-related activities. Nevertheless, the two channels may complement each other because consumers can encounter promotional content on social media before searching for or purchasing products through a marketplace. Research on electronic commerce provides a theoretical basis for understanding consumer responses to marketplace activities. Pavlou (2003) integrates trust and perceived risk into an acceptance model of electronic commerce, demonstrating the importance of consumer beliefs in online transaction decisions. Gefen et al. (2003) also establish the relevance of trust in online shopping environments. These studies indicate that consumers' willingness to engage in online transactions depends not only on product information but also on their perceptions of the online environment and the reliability of the transaction process. Social commerce research further demonstrates that digital platforms can influence purchasing decisions through social support, information exchange, and consumer interaction. Hajli (2015) examines the relationships between social commerce constructs, trust, and consumers' intention to buy. Hajli and Sims (2015) also discuss how social commerce can change the relationship between sellers and buyers by empowering consumers to access and share information. Although these studies provide relevant theoretical foundations, marketplace marketing should not be assumed to operate identically to social commerce. In this

study, marketplace marketing is examined as a distinct marketing approach whose relationships with purchase intention and customer engagement require empirical assessment.

2.3. Purchase Intention

Purchase intention represents a consumer's stated likelihood or willingness to purchase a particular product or service. It is an important outcome in consumer research because it captures a behavioral tendency that may precede an actual transaction. However, intention and behavior are conceptually distinct, and purchase intention should not be interpreted as direct evidence of completed purchases. Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior provides a foundational explanation of behavioral intention. The theory proposes that intention is shaped by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In digital marketing contexts, these factors may be associated with consumers' evaluations of products, recommendations from other users, and perceptions of their ability to complete online transactions. Although the theory was not developed specifically for marketplace marketing, it offers a useful basis for explaining why consumer evaluations and social influences may contribute to purchase intention.

Empirical research on electronic word-of-mouth further demonstrates the relevance of online information to purchasing decisions. Cheung et al. (2008) investigate the adoption of online opinions in customer communities, while Erkan and Evans (2016) examine information adoption and purchase intention in social media environments. Sokolova and Kefi (2020) also show that influencer credibility and parasocial interaction are relevant to purchase intentions in social media contexts. Taken together, these studies indicate that consumers' purchase intentions may be shaped by the information and relationships they encounter online. Within the present framework, purchase intention is treated as the dependent variable influenced by social media marketing and marketplace marketing. The proposed relationships reflect the expectation that useful marketing information, accessible product offerings, and relevant digital interactions may strengthen consumers' willingness to purchase. Nevertheless, the magnitude and statistical significance of these relationships must be established empirically.

2.4. Customer Engagement

Customer engagement is a multidimensional construct describing consumers' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral investment in interactions with a brand or firm. Brodie et al. (2011) conceptualize engagement through interactive experiences and value co-creation, distinguishing it from related concepts such as participation and involvement. This perspective is particularly relevant to digital marketing because social media and online marketplaces provide multiple opportunities for consumers to interact with brands, respond to content, and participate in brand-related activities. Hollebeek et al. (2014) develop and validate a consumer brand engagement scale for social media contexts, identifying cognitive processing, affection, and activation as important dimensions. Their work supports the view that engagement extends beyond exposure to promotional messages. Consumers may process brand-related information, develop emotional responses, and undertake actions such as commenting, sharing content, or interacting with brand accounts. Vivek et al. (2012) similarly conceptualize customer engagement as a broader form of participation in organizational offerings and activities. Customer engagement is also relevant to the customer experience across digital touchpoints. Lemon and Verhoef (2016) explain that customer experience develops throughout the customer journey, involving multiple interactions across channels. Dessart et al. (2015) examine consumer engagement in online brand communities and distinguish its cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions. These perspectives suggest that digital marketing activities may contribute to engagement when they provide relevant information and opportunities for meaningful interaction. However, engagement should not automatically be equated with purchase intention, because consumers can actively interact with a brand without necessarily intending to buy its products.

2.5. Relationships Among the Constructs

Social media marketing may influence customer engagement by providing opportunities for interaction, content sharing, and participation in brand-related activities. The strategic framework developed by Li et al. (2021) emphasizes the importance of integrating social media activities into marketing strategies to build consumer relationships. Evidence from Kim and Ko (2012) and Godey et al. (2016) also supports the relevance of social media marketing activities to consumer and brand-related outcomes. Accordingly, a positive relationship between social media marketing and customer engagement is theoretically plausible. Marketplace marketing may also be associated with customer engagement when platform features encourage consumers to explore products, access information, and interact with sellers or other users. However, because marketplace activities often emphasize product search and transactions, the relationship may differ from that of social media marketing. The effect of marketplace marketing on customer engagement therefore requires empirical examination rather than being inferred solely from the broader social media literature.

The relationship between marketing activities and purchase intention can be explained through the availability of information, consumer evaluations, and the reduction of uncertainty during online decision-making. Pavlou (2003), Gefen et al. (2003), and Hajli (2015) provide theoretical and empirical foundations for understanding how trust, perceived risk, and social commerce mechanisms relate to online purchasing decisions. Cheung et al. (2008) and Erkan and Evans (2016) further demonstrate the relevance of information adoption in online consumer behavior. These findings support testing the direct relationships of social media marketing and marketplace marketing with purchase intention. Customer engagement may also be considered a potential mechanism linking marketing activities to purchase intention. Engaged consumers may pay greater attention to brand-related information and participate more actively in brand interactions, which could be associated with stronger purchase intentions. Nevertheless, engagement does not necessarily result in purchase intention, and purchase intention does not guarantee a transaction. The proposed mediating role of customer engagement must therefore be evaluated using a model in which the indirect effects are explicitly specified and tested.

III. Research Method

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research approach to examine the relationships between social media marketing, marketplace marketing, purchase intention, and customer engagement. The proposed relationships among the constructs were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.

3.2. Population and Sample

The study involved 100 respondents aged 19–35 years who actively used social media and marketplace platforms in Indonesia. The target population comprised users who engaged with these platforms for social interaction and shopping. However, the sampling technique and the procedure used to determine the sample size were not specified.

3.3. Data Collection and Measurement

Primary data were collected directly from respondents through questionnaires administered online or offline. The questionnaire used a Likert scale to measure responses to the research constructs. The independent variables were social media marketing (X1) and marketplace marketing (X2), while purchase

intention (Y) was designated as the dependent variable and customer engagement (Z) as the mediating variable. The questionnaire responses were used to assess the relationships among the four constructs. Details regarding the number of Likert-scale categories, the operational definitions of the constructs, the sources of the measurement items, and the data collection period should be reported to ensure methodological transparency and facilitate replication.

3.4. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using SmartPLS 4. The analysis involved evaluating the measurement model and examining the relationships among the research constructs. The measurement model was assessed using indicator outer loadings, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, while convergent validity was assessed using the average variance extracted (AVE). Discriminant validity was examined using the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT). The structural model was evaluated using variance inflation factor (VIF) values, coefficients of determination (R^2), effect sizes (f^2), model-fit indices, and path coefficients. The significance of the hypothesized relationships was assessed using t-statistics and p-values. The proposed indirect effects were also examined to determine whether the specified mediating relationships were statistically supported.

IV. Result and Discussion

4.1. Results

The structural model was assessed to examine the relationships between social media marketing, marketplace marketing, purchase intention, and customer engagement. The path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values were used to evaluate the statistical significance and direction of the hypothesized relationships. The results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Structural relationship	Original sample (β)	Sample mean	Standard deviation	t-statistic	p-value
Marketplace marketing → Customer engagement	0.295	0.304	0.114	2.595	0.009
Marketplace marketing → Purchase intention	0.289	0.301	0.103	2.821	0.005
Purchase intention → Customer engagement	-0.224	-0.230	0.106	2.115	0.035
Social media marketing → Customer engagement	0.339	0.349	0.088	3.855	< 0.001
Social media marketing → Purchase intention	0.273	0.282	0.108	2.522	0.012
Social media marketing → Purchase intention → Customer engagement	-0.061	-0.065	0.039	1.546	0.122
Marketplace marketing → Purchase intention → Customer engagement	-0.065	-0.070	0.044	1.482	0.138

The results show that marketplace marketing has a positive and statistically significant relationship with customer engagement ($\beta = 0.295$, $t = 2.595$, $p = 0.009$). Marketplace marketing also has a positive and statistically significant relationship with purchase intention ($\beta = 0.289$, $t = 2.821$, $p = 0.005$). These findings indicate that higher evaluations of marketplace marketing are associated with stronger customer engagement and purchase intention within the estimated model. Social media marketing demonstrates a positive and statistically significant relationship with customer engagement ($\beta = 0.339$, $t = 3.855$, $p < 0.001$). It

also has a positive and statistically significant relationship with purchase intention ($\beta = 0.273$, $t = 2.522$, $p = 0.012$). Among the positive direct relationships reported in the model, the coefficient for social media marketing and customer engagement is the largest.

In contrast, purchase intention has a negative and statistically significant relationship with customer engagement ($\beta = -0.224$, $t = 2.115$, $p = 0.035$). This result differs from the positive relationships observed for the two marketing variables and warrants further theoretical and methodological examination. The indirect effect of social media marketing on customer engagement through purchase intention is negative but not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.061$, $t = 1.546$, $p = 0.122$). Similarly, the indirect effect of marketplace marketing on customer engagement through purchase intention is negative and not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.065$, $t = 1.482$, $p = 0.138$). Therefore, the results do not provide sufficient statistical evidence to support either indirect relationship at the 5% significance level. The explanatory power of the model also requires consideration. The reported coefficient of determination for customer engagement is approximately $R^2 = 0.180$, while the value for purchase intention is approximately $R^2 = 0.169$. These values suggest that the model explains a limited proportion of the variance in the endogenous constructs. In addition, the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) is 0.083, slightly above the commonly used reference value of 0.08. Accordingly, the model-fit result should be interpreted cautiously rather than presented as unequivocal evidence of good fit.

4.2. Discussion

a. The Relationship Between Social Media Marketing and Customer Engagement

The results indicate that social media marketing has a positive and statistically significant relationship with customer engagement ($\beta = 0.339$, $p < 0.001$). This finding suggests that social media marketing activities are associated with greater customer engagement in the context examined. Social media can provide opportunities for consumers to interact with brands, respond to content, share information, and participate in brand-related conversations. These activities are consistent with the view that social media marketing has evolved beyond one-way promotion toward more interactive and participatory communication (Appel et al., 2020; Dwivedi et al., 2021). The finding also corresponds with the conceptualization of customer engagement as a multidimensional construct involving cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses to brand-related interactions. Brodie et al. (2011) explain that customer engagement develops through interactive experiences and the co-creation of value, while Hollebeek et al. (2014) operationalize consumer brand engagement in social media through cognitive processing, affection, and activation. From this perspective, marketing content may encourage engagement when it provides consumers with meaningful information and opportunities to interact with a brand.

The result is also broadly consistent with empirical research on social media marketing. Godey et al. (2016) demonstrate that social media marketing efforts are associated with brand equity and consumer behavior, while Kim and Ko (2012) identify the relevance of social media marketing activities to customer responses in the luxury-brand context. However, these studies examine specific settings and constructs. Their findings provide theoretical support for interpreting the present relationship, but they do not establish that every form of social media marketing will produce the same effect in all markets. The practical implication is that businesses should evaluate social media marketing not only in terms of reach or posting frequency but also in terms of the quality of consumer interaction. Relevant content, opportunities for dialogue, and consistent brand communication may help encourage engagement. Nevertheless, because the present study does not separately estimate the effects of individual content characteristics, these mechanisms should be treated as plausible explanations rather than as directly tested causal pathways.

b. The Relationship Between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Intention

Social media marketing also has a positive and statistically significant relationship with purchase intention ($\beta = 0.273$, $p = 0.012$). The finding suggests that consumers who evaluate social media marketing more favorably tend to report stronger purchase intention. One possible explanation is that social media provides product information, brand-related content, and opportunities to encounter other consumers' opinions, which may contribute to purchase-related evaluations. This interpretation is compatible with the broader digital marketing literature. Dwivedi et al. (2021) identify social media as an important area of

contemporary marketing research because of its capacity to shape consumer journeys and interactions. Godey et al. (2016) also report relationships between social media marketing efforts and consumer behavior. In addition, Cheung and Thadani (2012) explain how electronic word-of-mouth can influence consumer responses by providing information and social cues that help individuals evaluate products and services.

Purchase intention can also be understood through the Theory of Planned Behavior, which identifies intention as an important proximal predictor of behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In the present context, favorable exposure to social media marketing may contribute to more positive evaluations and stronger intentions to purchase. However, purchase intention should not be equated with actual purchasing behavior. The current analysis measures the relationship with intention, and it does not demonstrate that respondents subsequently completed transactions. The positive coefficient therefore supports the relevance of social media marketing to purchase intention in the study sample. It does not establish that social media marketing alone determines purchasing decisions. Other factors, including perceived risk, trust, product attributes, price, and consumers' available resources, may also influence whether an intention is translated into an actual purchase (Pavlou, 2003).

c. The Relationship Between Marketplace Marketing and Customer Engagement

Marketplace marketing has a positive and statistically significant relationship with customer engagement ($\beta = 0.295$, $p = 0.009$). This result suggests that marketplace marketing is associated with greater customer engagement in the estimated model. Unlike social media environments, which commonly emphasize content circulation and social interaction, marketplace platforms integrate product discovery with shopping-related information and transaction functions. This combination can create multiple opportunities for consumers to interact with sellers, evaluate product information, and participate in purchase-related activities. Research on social commerce provides a useful theoretical context for this finding. Hajli (2015) explains that social commerce features enable consumers to interact and generate content, with implications for trust and purchase intention. Similarly, Gefen et al. (2003) demonstrate the importance of trust and perceived usefulness in online shopping contexts. These studies suggest that consumers' responses to digital shopping environments may depend on both the information available and the quality of the online experience.

Nevertheless, the present study does not separately test trust, perceived usefulness, usability, or seller responsiveness as explanatory mechanisms. Consequently, these factors cannot be identified as the specific causes of the observed relationship. The coefficient establishes a positive association between marketplace marketing and customer engagement within the specified model, while the precise mechanisms remain open to further investigation. From a managerial perspective, marketplace marketing should be considered part of the overall customer experience rather than merely a product-listing activity. Clear product information, consistent presentation, and responsive communication are potential areas for managerial attention. Future research could test these characteristics as separate dimensions to determine which aspects of marketplace marketing are most closely associated with customer engagement.

d. The Relationship Between Marketplace Marketing and Purchase Intention

The results reveal a positive and statistically significant relationship between marketplace marketing and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.289$, $p = 0.005$). This finding indicates that more favorable marketplace marketing evaluations are associated with stronger purchase intention among the respondents. Marketplace platforms can support consumer decision-making by bringing product information, alternatives, seller information, and transaction facilities together in one environment. Hajli (2015) finds that social commerce constructs are relevant to consumers' intention to buy, while Pavlou (2003) highlights the importance of trust and perceived risk in electronic commerce acceptance. These studies provide a basis for understanding why marketplace-related experiences may be associated with purchase intention. When consumers can access useful product information and evaluate available alternatives, they may feel better equipped to consider a purchase.

The result should nevertheless be interpreted in relation to the variables actually measured. It does not demonstrate that trust, transaction security, convenience, or product quality mediated the relationship in this study. Such explanations remain theoretically plausible but require direct measurement and statistical testing. Furthermore, the cross-sectional survey design does not establish temporal precedence, so the

reported relationship should not be interpreted as definitive evidence of causality. The managerial implication is that marketplace marketing should support consumers throughout the information-search and evaluation stages. Future studies could examine whether trust, perceived risk, information quality, and perceived usefulness help explain the relationship between marketplace marketing and purchase intention.

e. The Negative Relationship Between Purchase Intention and Customer Engagement

An important and unexpected finding is the negative relationship between purchase intention and customer engagement ($\beta = -0.224$, $p = 0.035$). The coefficient indicates that, after accounting for the other relationships specified in the model, higher purchase intention is associated with lower customer engagement. This result should not be interpreted as evidence that purchase intention generally reduces customer engagement across consumer settings. Rather, it represents the relationship estimated within the particular model and sample used in this study. One possible theoretical consideration is that purchase intention and customer engagement represent different aspects of consumer responses. Purchase intention concerns a consumer's stated readiness or likelihood of buying, whereas customer engagement concerns brand-related cognitive, emotional, and behavioral activity. Brodie et al. (2011) and Hollebeek et al. (2014) emphasize the relational and interactive nature of engagement, which is conceptually distinct from an intention to complete a transaction. A consumer may therefore intend to purchase a product without actively interacting with a brand, while another consumer may engage extensively with brand content without having an immediate intention to buy.

Customer engagement can also vary across stages of the customer journey. Lemon and Verhoef (2016) explain that customer experience develops through multiple touchpoints and across pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages. Verhoef et al. (2010) similarly discuss the importance of managing the customer experience across channels. These perspectives suggest that engagement and purchase intention may not move in parallel in every context. However, they do not, by themselves, explain why the relationship is negative in the present study. The negative coefficient therefore requires additional scrutiny. First, the researchers should verify whether the items measuring customer engagement and purchase intention were coded and interpreted consistently. Second, the measurement model should be reviewed to ensure that the constructs are empirically distinct. Third, the researchers should check the specification and direction of the structural paths, particularly because the conceptual framework describes customer engagement as a mediator while the reported indirect paths place purchase intention between marketing and customer engagement. The finding may also reflect unobserved variables or sample-specific characteristics. For example, consumers may engage with brands for information, entertainment, or social interaction without intending to purchase immediately. Yet these explanations cannot be confirmed using the current results alone. Accordingly, the negative relationship should be reported transparently as an unexpected finding that requires replication rather than presented as a universal consumer behavior pattern.

f. The Indirect Effects of Purchase Intention

The indirect effect of social media marketing on customer engagement through purchase intention is not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.061$, $p = 0.122$). The indirect effect of marketplace marketing on customer engagement through purchase intention is also not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.065$, $p = 0.138$). Because both p-values exceed the 0.05 significance threshold, the results do not provide sufficient evidence to support either proposed indirect relationship. Mediation analysis concerns whether an independent variable is associated with an outcome through an intervening variable. The significance of individual direct paths does not automatically establish a significant indirect effect. The indirect relationship must be assessed directly using an appropriate inference procedure, such as bootstrapping (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Therefore, the positive direct relationships between the two marketing variables and purchase intention, together with the negative relationship between purchase intention and customer engagement, do not justify a conclusion that purchase intention significantly mediates the marketing–engagement relationships.

The findings are important because they distinguish direct associations from the proposed explanatory mechanism. Social media marketing and marketplace marketing are each positively associated with customer engagement and purchase intention through their respective direct paths. However, the available results do not support the claim that the relationship between either marketing variable and customer engagement operates indirectly through purchase intention. This interpretation must remain

conditional on the direction of the model. If customer engagement was originally intended to mediate the relationship between marketing and purchase intention, the indirect effects reported in the current table do not test that hypothesis. The researchers must verify the conceptual framework, hypotheses, SmartPLS model, and bootstrapping output before making a definitive statement about mediation. This step is essential for ensuring consistency between the theoretical model and the empirical analysis.

g. Explanatory Power and Model Evaluation

The reported R^2 value for customer engagement is approximately 0.180, while the R^2 value for purchase intention is approximately 0.169. These values indicate that the model accounts for a limited proportion of the variance in the two endogenous constructs. Although several path coefficients are statistically significant, statistical significance should not be confused with strong explanatory or predictive performance. The distinction is important in partial least squares structural equation modeling. Hair et al. (2022) emphasize that PLS-SEM assessment involves more than testing path significance; researchers should also examine the measurement model, explanatory power, effect sizes, and predictive relevance where appropriate. In this study, the reported R^2 values suggest that additional variables may be needed to explain consumer engagement and purchase intention more comprehensively.

The reported SRMR value is 0.083, slightly above the commonly used reference value of 0.08. This difference is small, but it warrants cautious interpretation. The SRMR should be considered alongside other model-assessment evidence rather than used in isolation to declare the model acceptable or unacceptable. Moreover, Henseler et al. (2015) discuss the use and limitations of model-fit assessment in PLS path modeling, underscoring the need to interpret fit statistics in the context of the model and its purpose. Overall, the findings indicate that social media marketing and marketplace marketing have positive and statistically significant relationships with both customer engagement and purchase intention in the tested direct paths. However, the negative relationship between purchase intention and customer engagement, the nonsignificant indirect effects, the limited explanatory power, and the inconsistency in the specified mediation direction require careful interpretation. The main contribution of the findings is therefore not that all proposed relationships are supported, but that the results distinguish the direct associations from the unsupported indirect pathways and identify important issues for further theoretical and methodological examination.

V. Conclusion

This study examined the relationships between social media marketing, marketplace marketing, purchase intention, and customer engagement. The findings indicate that social media marketing is positively and significantly associated with customer engagement ($\beta = 0.339$, $p < .001$) and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.273$, $p = .012$). Marketplace marketing also demonstrates positive and significant relationships with customer engagement ($\beta = 0.295$, $p = .009$) and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.289$, $p = .005$). However, purchase intention has a negative and significant relationship with customer engagement ($\beta = -0.224$, $p = .035$). Furthermore, neither the indirect effect of social media marketing nor that of marketplace marketing on customer engagement through purchase intention is statistically significant. These findings highlight the importance of distinguishing direct relationships from indirect effects when evaluating the role of digital marketing in consumer responses.

The findings suggest that businesses should integrate social media marketing and marketplace marketing while recognizing that the two channels may serve different functions in the consumer journey. Social media marketing can support brand interaction and engagement, whereas marketplace marketing can facilitate product discovery and purchase-related evaluation. However, the negative relationship between purchase intention and customer engagement suggests that an intention to purchase should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of stronger brand engagement. Businesses should therefore assess engagement and purchase intention as distinct outcomes and evaluate their digital marketing strategies using measures appropriate to each objective. The results also indicate that purchase intention did not

significantly mediate the relationships between either marketing variable and customer engagement in the tested model.

This study has limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. The sample consisted of 100 social media and marketplace users aged 19–35 years in Indonesia, which limits the extent to which the results can be generalized to other consumer groups and contexts. The model also explains a relatively limited proportion of the variance in customer engagement and purchase intention, indicating that other relevant factors may not have been captured. Future research should use larger and more diverse samples, examine additional constructs such as trust, perceived risk, information quality, product quality, and electronic word-of-mouth, and investigate the conditions under which purchase intention and customer engagement may be positively or negatively related. Researchers should also verify the theoretical direction of the mediation model and test the corresponding indirect paths consistently. These steps would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how digital marketing strategies relate to consumer engagement and purchase intention.

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