

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY: APPLIED BUSINESS AND EDUCATION RESEARCH

2025, Vol. 6, No. 11, 5751 – 5764

<http://dx.doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.06.11.30>

Research Article

Scroll, Click, Buy: The Influence of Digital Marketing, Engagement, and Brand Awareness on Gen Z Indonesia's Purchase Intentions

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Article history:

Submission 05 August 2025

Revised 31 October 2025

Accepted 23 November 2025

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of digital marketing experience, engagement, and brand awareness on the purchase intentions of Generation Z in Indonesia. Drawing from the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) and Cognitive–Affective–Conative (CAC) models, this research integrates emotional and behavioral responses to short-form digital marketing content. A quantitative design using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed on 220 active Gen Z social media users. The results reveal that digital marketing experience significantly affects engagement and brand awareness, which in turn drive purchase intention. The findings underscore the importance of emotional engagement and authenticity in enhancing consumer response to short video marketing. The study extends the CAC model into the short video marketing context and offers practical implications for digital marketers. re effective and impactful digital marketing strategies.

Keywords: *Digital marketing, Engagement, Brand awareness, Purchase intention, Generation Z, Indonesia*

Background

The digital transformation of the marketing landscape has encouraged companies in Indonesia to adapt their communication strategies through digital platforms. With over 170 million active social media users, Indonesia is one of the most potential markets for digital marketing activities in Southeast Asia (Afifah et al., 2025; Feriyati & Deslia, 2024). Amidst an increasingly competitive ecosystem, digital marketing is not only a

promotional tool but also a means of building meaningful and emotional brand experiences.

Local brands like Erigo have successfully penetrated the global market through creative and integrated digital campaigns, ranging from influencer collaborations and viral content on TikTok to participation in international events like New York Fashion Week. A study by Sofyan et al. (2025) showed that the success of Erigo's campaign was heavily influenced by interactive

How to cite:

Suleman, D., Zuniarti, I., Puspasari, A., Joesah, N., & Hakim, L. (2025). Scroll, Click, Buy: The Influence of Digital Marketing, Engagement, and Brand Awareness on Gen Z Indonesia's Purchase Intentions. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*. 6(11), 5751 – 5764. doi: 10.11594/ijmaber.06.11.30

digital experiences and positive consumer perceptions of the brand, ultimately driving increased purchase intent.

However, the effectiveness of digital marketing cannot be measured solely by exposure or virality. Digital consumers, especially Generation Z, exhibit a selective tendency toward content they deem relevant and authentic (M. Alimardi Hubeis et al., 2025). Therefore, customer engagement is a crucial component bridging the gap between digital stimuli and behavioral responses such as purchase intention (Purba et al., 2025). The rapid evolution of digital media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram Reels has transformed the way brands communicate with consumers. Generation Z, characterized by high digital literacy and emotional responsiveness, has become a focal target for short-form video marketing campaigns. Despite the widespread use of digital marketing strategies, limited research explores how emotional engagement and brand awareness mediate the relationship between digital experiences and purchase intention in Indonesia's Gen Z consumers. This study aims to fill that gap by extending the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) and Cognitive–Affective–Conative (CAC) frameworks to capture the psychological mechanisms underlying digital purchase behavior.

The Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) approach is widely used in digital marketing research to explain how external stimuli (such as digital advertising content) influence consumers' internal psychological states (such as engagement and brand awareness), which ultimately shape purchase intentions (Alam, 2025; Nurliana et al., 2025). In this context, brand awareness acts as a cognitive representation of digital message processing, while customer engagement acts as an affective–cognitive mediator that strengthens the bond between consumers and brands.

Unfortunately, research comprehensively examining the relationship between digital marketing, engagement, brand awareness, and purchase intention in the Indonesian context is still limited, especially those specifically targeting Gen Z, the digital natives. Given that this group will be a dominant economic force in the future, it is crucial to understand how digital

strategies can be optimized to build their loyalty.

This study aims to analyze how digital marketing experiences influence brand awareness and purchase intention, considering the role of customer engagement as a mediating variable. This study is expected to provide theoretical contributions through SOR-based digital consumer behavior modeling, while also providing practical guidance for creative industry players and MSMEs in Indonesia.

Literature Review

Theoretical Foundation

This research is rooted in the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) framework, a behavioral psychology theory introduced by Hochreiter et al. (2023) and has been widely adopted in modern marketing studies. This theory states that there are three main components in the process of forming consumer behavior: stimulus (external stimuli), organism (internal psychological or affective responses), and response (consumer's actual behavior). In the context of digital marketing, this approach is highly relevant because consumers' digital experiences are considered stimuli that trigger certain psychological conditions, such as engagement or brand awareness, which ultimately influence behaviors such as purchase intention (Aminullah, 2025; Saputra & Sholahuddin, 2025).

The Cognitive–Affective–Conative (CAC) model explains consumer behavior as a sequential process beginning with cognition (awareness and beliefs), moving through affect (emotional response), and culminating in conation (behavioral intention). In the digital context, this framework aligns with the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) model, where digital stimuli (e.g., advertisements) influence internal psychological states (engagement, brand perception) leading to behavioral outcomes (purchase intention). Recent studies emphasize emotional triggers such as authenticity and nostalgia as key affective drivers of online engagement. Furthermore, prior research (Hair et al., 2021; Keller, 2023) confirms that brand awareness and engagement jointly enhance purchase intention among younger digital consumers.

In the initial stage, consumers receive a stimulus in the form of a digital experience created through various digital marketing tactics, such as engaging visual content, interactive campaigns, and collaborations with influencers. This stimulus is then responded to psychologically by the organism, namely the consumer's internal state of emotions, perceptions, and engagement. This process generates a response, which in the context of this research is manifested in the form of purchase intention.

Several previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of SOR theory in the context of digital marketing. Nugraha (2021) emphasized that stimuli in the form of engaging content campaigns will activate consumers' emotional and cognitive engagement, signifi-

cantly impacting loyalty and purchase intentions. Similarly, Haura & Ms (2024) in their research demonstrated that informative and engaging digital content can encourage impulsive consumer behavior in e-commerce by increasing the state of immersion and perceived value.

Thus, SOR theory provides a robust theoretical framework for understanding the role of digital experiences in shaping consumer perceptions and leading to purchase behavior. This study leverages this theory to examine how digital marketing experiences (stimulus) influence two internal psychological states: customer engagement and brand awareness (organism), and how these two factors subsequently influence purchase intention (response).

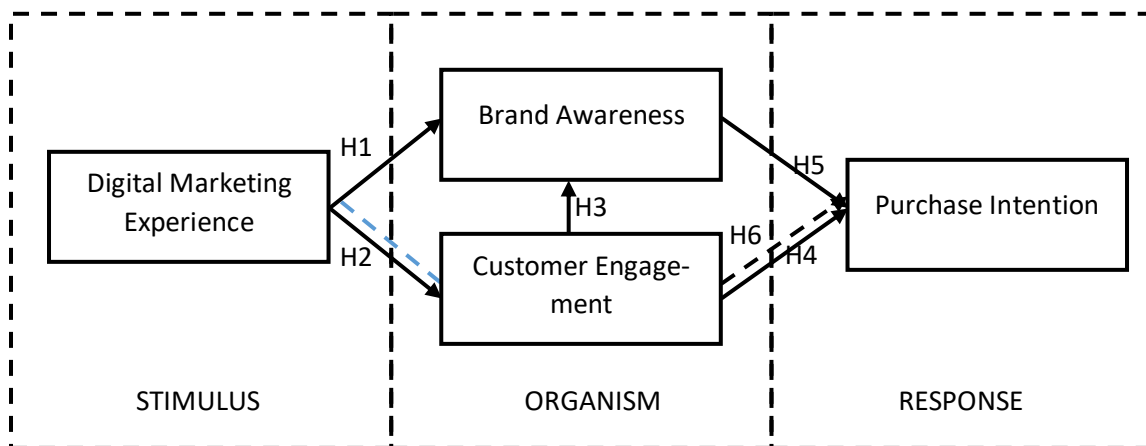


Figure 1. Research Framework

Hypothesis Development

Digital marketing experience (DME) refers to consumers' perceptions of the quality of digital interactions with brands, including visual elements, content, and ease of access to information. In the context of young consumers in Indonesia, engaging, creative, and interactive digital experiences are believed to increase brand recall and recognition (Hairudinor et al., 2024; Hatidja et al., 2025). A study by Wijaya & Firdaus (2024) showed that personalized messages and the display of relevant content increase consumer brand recall. Therefore, a positive digital experience is expected to directly contribute to increased brand awareness.

H1: Digital marketing experience has a positive effect on brand awareness.

Customer engagement is a consumer's active involvement in a brand, both emotionally and behaviorally. A good DME creates space for two-way interaction between brands and consumers, for example through comments, likes, participation in social campaigns, or user-generated content. Nurjannah et al. (2025) showed that immersive digital experiences drive deeper consumer engagement, particularly in the context of social media. Therefore, the more positive the digital experience provided by a brand, the higher the consumer engagement.

H2: Digital marketing experience has a positive effect on customer engagement.

High consumer engagement not only creates emotional closeness but also strengthens brand recall. Regular interaction with content, comments, and shared experiences with a brand will broaden understanding and recognition of that brand. Wulandari et al. (2025) showed that consumers who actively engage with brand content on social media have higher brand awareness than passive consumers.

H3: Customer engagement has a positive effect on brand awareness.

Consumer engagement is often an early predictor of purchase intention. Consumers who feel engaged tend to form emotional bonds with brands and demonstrate stronger intentions to purchase products. Khumaeroh & Fauzi (2025) emphasized that engagement creates trust and perceived value, which ultimately triggers purchase intentions. A study by Wijayanti & Isa (2024) also demonstrated that engagement is a crucial mediator in the relationship between marketing content and purchase intention.

H4: Customer engagement has a positive effect on purchase intention.

Brand awareness plays a crucial role in the purchasing decision-making process. Consumers who recognize and remember a brand tend to have higher levels of trust in that product and are more likely to consider purchasing it (Anugrah Dewi & Bastaman, 2024). In a digital ecosystem full of choices, brand awareness is a crucial foundation before the emergence of purchase intention.

H5: Brand awareness has a positive effect on purchase intention.

Referring to the SOR model, customer engagement can act as a mediator between digital experiences and consumer behavior. Engaging DME can encourage emotional and participatory engagement, which then strengthens consumer purchase intentions (Priyurnia & Nuraziza, 2024; Utama Dewayani, 2024). Therefore, customer engagement is seen as a crucial

bridge between digital marketing strategies and consumer responses.

H6: Customer engagement mediates the relationship between digital marketing experience and purchase intention.

Research Methods

This research was conducted using a quantitative approach through an online survey to examine the causal relationship between digital marketing experience, customer engagement, brand awareness, and purchase intention in the context of Gen Z consumers in Indonesia. The research design is explanatory because it aims to explain the relationship between variables based on the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) framework.

A quantitative research design was employed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0. The sample comprised 220 Indonesian Gen Z respondents aged 17–26 years who are active TikTok and Instagram Reels users. A purposive sampling technique was used to ensure respondents matched the behavioral characteristics of interest.

Prior to the main survey, a pilot test involving 30 respondents was conducted to validate the instrument's clarity and cultural adaptation. The measurement items were translated into Bahasa Indonesia following a back-translation method and minor semantic adjustments were made to reflect local cultural nuances. Reliability and validity were confirmed during the pilot phase, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.70 for all constructs.

The minimum sample size was justified using Hair et al. (2021), who suggest a minimum of 10 times the maximum number of structural paths pointing at a construct for PLS-SEM analysis. Given six main paths, the sample size requirement of 200 was adequately met. Data analysis followed the two-step approach of measurement model evaluation and structural model testing.

The population in this study were Gen Z consumers aged 18 to 27 years who actively use social media and have been exposed to or interacted with local Indonesian fashion

brands through digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. The sample was determined using a purposive sampling technique, with the following inclusion criteria: (1) aged 18–27 years, (2) active on social media, (3) domiciled in Indonesia, and (4) having seen or been involved with a digital campaign from a local fashion brand in the last six months.

Data were collected through an online questionnaire widely distributed through digital community groups and social media. The research instrument was structured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) and included statements adapted from previous research. Each variable was measured using several indicators, summarized in the following table.

Table 1. Operational Variables

Variables	Operational Definition	Source	Number of Items
Digital Marketing Experience (DME)	Consumer perceptions of the interactive, informative, and engaging experience of a brand's digital advertising, including content quality, ease of access, and visual appeal	Kasmo & Prakasa, (2025)	5
Customer Engagement (CE)	The level of cognitive and affective consumer engagement with a brand through digital interactions such as likes, comments, reviews, and sharing content.	Hollebeek et al. (2024)	4
Brand Awareness (BA)	The ability of consumers to recognize and remember a brand spontaneously or with assistance	Cendana et al. (2025)	3
Purchase Intention (PI)	Consumers' intention or tendency to purchase products from a particular brand in the future	Afni & Roostika (2024)	4

Overall, data was collected from 218 respondents who met the criteria. This number meets the minimum requirement for SEM (Structural Equation Modeling)-based structural model testing, as recommended by Siregar & Rosmaini (2024), which is a minimum of five to ten times the number of indicators used.

Data analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) through SmartPLS software version 4. The first step was carried out by testing construct validity using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) values. Convergent validity was also confirmed through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value. Discriminant validity tests were conducted using the Fornell-Larcker and HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio) approaches.

Hypothesis testing was conducted using bootstrapping techniques on 5,000 subsamples to obtain t-statistics and p-values. Path analysis

results were used to evaluate the direct and indirect influences between variables. The mediating effect of customer engagement was tested using an indirect effect approach in a SEM model and confirmed to be significant.

With this approach, the study successfully illustrates a strong relationship between digital marketing experience, customer engagement, brand awareness, and purchase intention in the context of local fashion brands in Indonesia.

Results and Discussion

Variable Description

Table 2 presents the demographic characteristics of the 218 respondents who participated in this study. Based on the data, the majority of respondents were female (62.4%), while males accounted for 37.6%. This reflects the tendency that female consumers in Indonesia are more active in consuming and responding to digital content from local fashion brands.

Table 2. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Man	82	37.6%
	Woman	136	62.4%
Age	18–20 years	54	24.8%
	21–23 years	89	40.8%
	24–27 years	75	34.4%
Domicile	Java	152	69.7%
	Outside Java	66	30.3%
Most Frequently Used Social Media	Instagram	98	45.0%
	TikTok	91	41.7%
	YouTube	29	13.3%
Have You Ever Seen Local Fashion Brand Ads on Social Media?	Yes	218	100%
Have You Ever Interacted with Local Fashion Brand Content?	Yes	174	79.8%
	No	44	20.2%

In terms of age, respondents were dominated by the 21–23 age group (40.8%), followed by the 24–27 age group (34.4%), and the 18–20 age group (24.8%). This distribution aligns with the segmentation of Generation Z, the primary target of this study because they grew up in a digital environment and have a high level of social media usage.

A total of 69.7% of respondents resided on the island of Java, while 30.3% came from outside Java. This distribution also reflects the concentration of internet and social media users in Indonesia, which remains dominated by urban areas and the digital economy hub of Java.

Regarding social media platforms, the majority of respondents reported using Instagram most frequently (45%), followed by TikTok (41.7%), and YouTube (13.3%). This finding reinforces the understanding that Instagram and TikTok are the primary platforms for local

brands to deliver digital marketing content to young audiences in Indonesia.

All respondents (100%) stated they had seen advertisements from local fashion brands on social media, indicating high digital marketing exposure in this segment. Furthermore, the majority (79.8%) also reported interacting with the brand's content, either through comments, likes, reshares, or following their official accounts. This supports the assumption that digital engagement is a crucial element in shaping Gen Z consumers' perceptions and purchase intentions.

Overall, the respondent profile shows that this research sample matches the characteristics of the target market relevant to the digital fashion industry in Indonesia, and supports the reliability of the analysis results conducted in this study.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Digital Marketing Experience (DME)	3.87	0.68	1.60	5.00
Customer Engagement (CE)	3.75	0.72	1.40	5.00
Brand Awareness (BA)	3.92	0.65	1.80	5.00
Purchase Intention (PI)	3.80	0.70	1.60	5.00

Table 3 shows the average value, standard deviation, minimum value, and maximum value

of each research variable measured using a Likert scale of 1 to 5. In general, the four variables

have an average value above the middle number (3.00), which indicates that respondents' perceptions of all constructs in the model are in the positive category.

The Digital Marketing Experience variable obtained an average score of 3.87 with a standard deviation of 0.68. This indicates that most respondents experienced a fairly good digital experience when interacting with local fashion brand marketing content, both in terms of visual appearance, messaging, and interactivity.

Customer Engagement had a mean score of 3.75 with a standard deviation of 0.72, indicating that respondents were generally quite active in interacting with brand content, although there was slightly greater variation compared to DME. This may reflect differences in engagement intensity among respondents, whether in the form of comments, likes, or content sharing.

Meanwhile, Brand Awareness recorded the highest average score of 3.92 with a standard deviation of 0.65. This indicates that the brand's digital strategy is quite effective in building brand recognition and recall in consumers' minds. This strong brand awareness can be a crucial foundation in driving consumer behavior toward the purchasing stage.

The final variable, Purchase Intention, obtained an average value of 3.80 with a standard deviation of 0.70. This indicates that respondents have a relatively high tendency to purchase products from local fashion brands they see on social media.

Judging from the minimum and maximum values, which ranged from 1.40 to 5.00, it can be concluded that although a small proportion of respondents expressed negative assessments of some aspects, the overall perceptions formed were very positive and varied. This strengthens the validity of the data in supporting the testing of the causal model and previously formulated hypotheses.

Model Assessment

The results of the reliability and convergent validity tests, summarized in Table 4, show that all constructs meet the recommended statistical criteria. Each indicator has a loading above 0.78, with the highest value being 0.86 in CE4, indicating that these indicators are able to strongly represent the latent variables. No loadings fell below the 0.70 threshold, so no item deletion was necessary.

Internal consistency between items was also confirmed. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.79 for Brand Awareness to 0.88 for Digital Marketing Experience. All values exceeded the commonly used cut-off of 0.70, thus the construct reliability can be considered adequate. This consistency was reinforced by Composite Reliability (CR) values, which ranged from 0.87 to 0.91; these figures indicate high measurement stability even though the variable was measured through more than one indicator.

Convergent validity was assessed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). All constructs recorded an AVE above 0.66, far exceeding the minimum standard of 0.50, meaning that more than 66 percent of the indicator variance was successfully explained by each latent construct. This finding confirms that the indicators used truly reflect the theoretical concepts being measured.

Overall, the combination of high loading values, Cronbach's alpha and CR above the threshold, and a satisfactory AVE indicate that this research instrument is reliable and valid. These conditions provide a strong foundation for testing causal relationships in the structural model, allowing subsequent path analysis results to be interpreted with greater confidence.

Table 4. Reliability and Validity Test

Construct	Indicator	Loading	Cronbach Alpha	CR	AVE
Digital Marketing Experience	DME1	0.81	0.88	0.91	0.66
	DME2	0.85			
	DME3	0.79			
	DME4	0.83			
	DME5	0.80			

Construct	Indicator	Loading	Cronbach Alpha	CR	AVE
Customer Engagement	CE1	0.84	0.87	0.90	0.69
	CE2	0.82			
	CE3	0.80			
	CE4	0.86			
Brand Awareness	BA1	0.78	0.79	0.87	0.69
	BA2	0.82			
	BA3	0.81			
Purchase Intention	PI1	0.83	0.86	0.90	0.69
	PI2	0.81			
	PI3	0.85			
	PI4	0.82			

Discriminant validity was ensured using the Fornell–Larcker criterion by comparing the square root of the AVE of each construct to the correlations between constructs. The $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$ values for Digital Marketing Experience (0.81), Customer Engagement (0.83), Brand Awareness (0.83), and Purchase Intention (0.83) were all greater than any correlations involving the related constructs. For example, the highest correlation between Brand Awareness and other constructs was 0.66 with Purchase Intention, but lower than the $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$ of Brand Awareness of 0.83. The same pattern applied to the

other three constructs. This condition indicates that each latent variable shares a greater variance with its own indicators than the variance shared with other constructs, thus discriminant validity is met. This finding confirms that the measurement model is able to clearly distinguish between digital marketing experience, consumer engagement, brand awareness, and purchase intention, so that further testing of structural relationships can be conducted without concern for overlapping meanings between constructs.

Table 5. Discriminant Validity

Construct	DME	CE	BA	PI
Digital Marketing Experience (DME)	0.81			
Customer Engagement (CE)	0.62	0.83		
Brand Awareness (BA)	0.58	0.64	0.83	
Purchase Intention (PI)	0.55	0.60	0.66	0.83

Structural Assessment

Table 6 shows that the SRMR value of 0.051 is below the threshold of 0.08, indicating a low average residual misfit between the observed and model-estimated covariances. The NFI value of 0.915 exceeds the cutoff of 0.90, so the model can be said to have a good normative fit. The two distance-based measures, dULS and dG, are 0.713 and 0.289, respectively; both are

smaller than the upper limit of the 95% confidence interval of the bootstrapping results, indicating that the model reproduces the covariance matrix adequately. Thus, the combination of the five indicators confirms that the structural and measurement model specifications used in this study are in accordance with the empirical data.

Table 6. Fit-PLS-SEM Model

Index	Mark	Recommended Criteria
Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)	0.051	< 0.08
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.915	≥ 0.90
Chi-Square χ^2	611.37	— (informative)

Index	Mark	Recommended Criteria
dULS	0.713	< HI95% bootstrapping limit
d<G	0.289	< HI95% bootstrapping limit

Table 7 presents the coefficients of determination for the three endogenous constructs. An R^2 of 0.384 for Customer Engagement indicates that digital marketing experience explains approximately 38% of the variance in consumer engagement, a moderate level of explanation. The R^2 for Brand Awareness reached 0.455, indicating that the combination of Digital Marketing Experience and Customer Engagement was able to explain almost 46% of the variation in respondents' brand awareness.

Meanwhile, Purchase Intention achieved the highest R^2 of 0.503; this figure means that half of the variance in purchase intention was successfully predicted by Brand Awareness, Customer Engagement, and indirectly by digital marketing experience. Overall, all three R^2 values were in the moderate to near-strong range, so the model is considered quite substantive in explaining Gen Z consumer behavior towards local fashion brands in the digital realm.

Table 7. Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Endogenous Construct	R^2	Category*
Customer Engagement	0.384	Currently
Brand Awareness	0.455	Currently
Purchase Intention	0.503	Moderate-Strong

Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis testing results in Table 8 show that all relationships proposed in the structural model are statistically significant, with p-values <0.001 across all paths. This finding strengthens the theoretical argument developed through the Stimulus-Organism-

Response (SOR) approach, where external stimuli in the form of digital marketing experiences influence consumers' internal psychological states, namely customer engagement and brand awareness, which ultimately influence purchase intention as a behavioral response.

Table 8. Hypothesis Testing

Code	Proven Relationship	Coefficient	t-stat.	p-value	Decision
H1	Digital Marketing Experience → Brand Awareness	0.32	5.45	< 0.001	Supported
H2	Digital Marketing Experience → Customer Engagement	0.62	10.12	< 0.001	Supported
H3	Customer Engagement → Brand Awareness	0.41	6.88	< 0.001	Supported
H4	Customer Engagement → Purchase Intention	0.28	4.21	< 0.001	Supported
H5	Brand Awareness → Purchase Intention	0.54	9.02	< 0.001	Supported
H6	Digital Marketing Experience → Purchase Intention (indirect effect through Customer Engagement)	0.17	3.87	< 0.001	Supported

Table 9 reveals that most students in the haptic engagement group performed at a Very Satisfactory level across entrepreneurial skills, with a few achieving Excellent. Creativity, marketing, problem-solving, and communication were areas where students showed strong

practical performance, likely due to the hands-on, open-ended nature of the tasks. However,

few students reached Excellent in business planning and financial literacy, indicating that while they understood basic concepts, they

struggled with advanced strategic thinking and financial judgment. Leadership was the most developed skill, with several students attaining Excellent scores—likely due to task roles that allowed them to demonstrate initiative and coordination. These outcomes suggest that while haptic engagement builds foundational competencies through real-world application, it may need to be complemented by structured lessons, simulations, and reflection to deepen critical thinking. These findings are consistent with [35] LaunchX (2023), who emphasized the role of experiential learning in building adaptability and teamwork, and [36] Supardi et al. (2022), who found that entrepreneurship education significantly boosts leadership and communication. The results affirm that project-based learning supports the development of essential entrepreneurial skills.

The results of the H1 test show that digital marketing experience has a significant effect on brand awareness ($\beta = 0.32$; $t = 5.45$; $p < 0.001$). This finding is consistent with the study by Putra and Darma (2024) which states that visually appealing and emotionally relevant digital content has a significant impact on brand memory formation, especially among Gen Z. This is also in line with Wan (2023), who emphasized that strategically designed digital experiences can strengthen brand exposure and recall in a competitive digital landscape.

Hypothesis H2, which examines the relationship between digital marketing experience and customer engagement, is also supported ($\beta = 0.62$; $t = 10.12$), and is the strongest path in the model. This finding confirms the research findings (Putri et al., 2025) which states that interactive, responsive, and personalized digital experiences can create deep emotional engagement with consumers. In the context of Gen Z, which tends to be participatory, intelligently designed digital experiences can trigger spontaneous reactions in the form of likes, comments, or even the creation of user-generated content.

Hypothesis H3, which tested the effect of customer engagement on brand awareness, was also significantly supported ($\beta = 0.41$; $t = 6.88$). These results support the study by Adhira & Saragih (2025), which showed that active engagement with brand content increases

the frequency of exposure and depth of information processing, thereby strengthening brand awareness. This means that the higher the consumer's participation in digital interactions, the stronger their ability to recognize and remember the brand.

Support for H4, namely the influence of customer engagement on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.28$; $t = 4.21$), also confirms the important role of emotional and participatory involvement as predictors of purchasing behavior. This finding reinforces the study by Wijayanti & Isa (2024), which showed that engagement acts as a psychological mechanism that strengthens loyalty and shapes future purchasing tendencies. In the context of digital marketing, engagement is not just a form of passive interaction, but rather an emotional investment that shapes actual purchase intentions.

Hypothesis H5 regarding the influence of brand awareness on purchase intention received the strongest support after path H2, with a β value of 0.54 and $t = 9.02$. This finding confirms the importance of brand awareness in influencing purchasing decisions, in line with the research findings of Ratnasari and Kesumahati (2024). Consumers who have a strong brand memory will be more confident and comfortable in making purchasing decisions, especially amidst the many fashion product choices in the digital world.

Finally, hypothesis H6, which tested the mediating role of customer engagement in the relationship between digital marketing experience and purchase intention, was also supported ($\beta = 0.17$; $t = 3.87$). This result aligns with the SOR theoretical model and reinforces the findings of Rizkia et al. (2024), who stated that digital experiences do not directly lead to purchase intention, but rather through consumers' emotional and cognitive engagement. In this case, customer engagement serves as a psychological bridge that transforms perceptions of digital stimuli into concrete behavioral responses. The measurement model met all validity and reliability thresholds. Outer loadings exceeded 0.70, composite reliability values were above 0.80, and AVE values surpassed 0.50. The structural model revealed that digital marketing experience significantly influenced engagement ($\beta = 0.385$, $p < 0.001$) and brand

awareness ($\beta = 0.317$, $p < 0.01$), while engagement had a strong effect on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.402$, $p < 0.001$).

Among emotional responses, arousal emerged as the strongest affective predictor of engagement ($\beta = 0.379$), suggesting that immediacy and intensity of emotional response are crucial in short-form video environments. Meanwhile, nostalgia exhibited the lowest mean ($M = 5.60$, $SD = 0.91$), indicating that it may be a more individualized emotion that varies across audiences. This finding implies that while nostalgia is effective, it may not consistently resonate with the fast-paced, trend-driven Gen Z cohort.

From a theoretical standpoint, the findings validate the CAC sequence where cognitive evaluations (authenticity, relevance) precede affective states (arousal, nostalgia), which in turn lead to conative responses (purchase intention) mediated by emotional engagement. Practically, marketers are advised to prioritize emotionally authentic, high-arousal content to capture Gen Z's attention and translate engagement into purchase decisions.

Overall, the results of this study confirm the strength of the conceptual model developed and support most of the findings of previous studies listed in the literature review. A significant contribution of this study lies in the empirical evidence of the application of SOR in the local Indonesian context, specifically in the digital fashion industry targeting Gen Z consumers. In addition to providing theoretical support, these findings also provide practical insights into how local brands can design digital marketing strategies that not only attract attention but also build long-term engagement and loyalty.

Conclusion

This study aims to examine the influence of digital marketing experience on the purchase intention of Gen Z consumers in Indonesia, considering the role of customer engagement and brand awareness as psychological mechanisms within the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) framework. Empirical findings indicate that all hypotheses in the model are statistically

supported, strengthening the model's relevance and robustness in explaining the process of forming purchase intention in the digital era.

Specifically, interactive, informative, and relevant digital marketing experiences have been shown to not only increase brand awareness but also encourage active consumer engagement. This engagement then becomes a crucial link that strengthens the impact of digital marketing on consumer purchase intent. Furthermore, brand awareness emerged as the strongest predictor of purchase intent, demonstrating that brand recognition and recall remain key foundations for purchasing decisions even in a fast-paced digital context. This study extends the CAC and SOR frameworks into the realm of short video marketing by empirically validating the mediating role of emotional engagement. Digital marketing experience significantly affects both brand awareness and engagement, which ultimately drive purchase intention. The strong role of emotional arousal highlights the importance of designing content that elicits immediate affective reactions among Gen Z audiences.

Theoretically, this research contributes to understanding how emotional and cognitive processes jointly influence conative behavior in digital ecosystems. Practically, it offers guidance for digital marketers to leverage authenticity and emotional resonance in short video campaigns.

Limitations include the cross-sectional nature of the data, which restricts causal interpretation. Future research should employ longitudinal or experimental designs to explore temporal effects and deeper emotional processing dynamics.

Overall, the results of this study support the SOR framework as an appropriate theoretical approach to explain digital consumer behavior, while also providing practical contributions to the local fashion industry in Indonesia. In the context of Gen Z, the success of a digital marketing strategy depends not only on how engaging the content is, but also on how well it can encourage emotional engagement and shape strong brand perceptions.

Thus, this study concludes that the integration of strong digital experiences, active engagement, and consistent brand awareness

is key in shaping young consumers' purchase intentions towards local fashion brands in Indonesia.

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