

Consumer engagement dynamics: The role of social media marketing in building brand awareness and purchase intention among UMKM Bachiro

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the extent to which social media marketing strategies influence brand awareness and consumers' desire to purchase products from Bachiro MSMEs, with consumer involvement as a mediating variable. The approach used is quantitative, analyzing data using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method through SmartPLS 4 software. There were 110 respondents, all of whom were active social media users who had interacted (liked, commented, shared, etc.) with Bachiro SME content. The results of the analysis prove that social media marketing activities have a positive and significant impact on consumer engagement, brand awareness, and purchase intention. Consumer engagement has a significant effect on brand awareness and purchase intention and functions as a bridge that strengthens the relationship between social media marketing and these two aspects.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Engagement, Brand Awareness, Purchase Intention, MSME.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Advances in digital technology have completely changed how businesses communicate with their customers. Social media, which used to be just a place to chat with friends, is now a powerful tool for cheap and fast promotion of products. Businesses can build their brand image, spread product information, and build closer relationships with consumers using exciting and interactive content on Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook. This change is particularly helpful for SMEs, which typically lack capital and market reach. Using social media marketing (SMM), they can increase brand awareness and encourage people to buy more. [Viliaus and Matusin \(2023\)](#) showed that SMM makes people more familiar with brands and want to buy, especially if the content encourages people to participate. However, promotion alone is insufficient. The difference is how much consumers are involved—liking, commenting, and sharing. The more active they are, the stronger their emotional bond with the brand becomes. [Awalia \(2024\)](#) also found that this engagement acts as a “bridge” that strengthens the effect of SMM on purchase intention, because people who like to interact with brands are usually more loyal and trusting.

Bachiros is a new culinary SME in Samarinda that has only been operating for two months, selling chicken and banana rolls with unique shapes—the chicken rolls have a hole in the middle for sauce, while the banana rolls are filled with sweet jam. In Samarinda, there are almost no other businesses selling such items, with only one competitor, Chikuro, at Bigmall. That’s why Bachiros chose to open on Jl. Pramuka near Unmul is close to its main target audience: young people aged 17–30. Before seriously engaging in social media, their daily revenue was only Rp200–400 thousand. It was clear that they needed an appropriate digital strategy. [Purnomo \(2025\)](#) also stated that for new businesses, brand awareness is the key that connects SMM with purchase intent.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the extent of the influence of social media marketing on brand awareness and purchase intent at Bachiros, with consumer engagement as a connecting factor. The hope is to provide theoretical insights as well as practical solutions for other culinary SMEs in Indonesia. The full title is: “The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Brand Awareness and Purchase Intentions at Bachiros SMEs with Consumer Engagement as a Mediating Variable.”

2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

2.1 Social Media Marketing

In today's digital age, almost everything has changed, including how businesses market their products; one of the most popular methods is using social media. [Kim and Ko \(2012\)](#) state that social media marketing is a two-way communication that makes social media users feel “connected” and empathetic towards brands. Meanwhile, [Tuten and Solomon \(2017\)](#) add that this is a type of digital marketing that relies on interactive content, two-way conversations with consumers, and active community involvement. Essentially, it is not just promotion but also inviting consumers to participate with the brand. [Kaplan and Haenlein \(2010\)](#) emphasized that social media provides opportunities for companies to create dialogue and build long-term relationships with consumers on a more personal level.

2.2 Brand Awareness

Brand awareness is the first step a company takes to introduce its brand to consumers. [Kotler and Keller \(2016\)](#) emphasize that brand awareness is important because the higher the consumer awareness of a brand, the greater the chance of that brand being chosen over competitors. According to [Zeqiri et.al, \(2024\)](#), brand awareness refers to the ability of consumers to recognize a product under various different conditions. Strong brand awareness can be created through several series such as advertising, promotions, and how the public generally uses or recognizes the product. Brand awareness is the initial stage that a brand must take to create loyal consumers.

2.3 Purchase Intention

Consumer purchase intention must be cultivated in various ways to create greater opportunities for consumer purchasing decisions. Kotler and Keller (2016) stated that purchase intention is an important indicator of consumer behavior because it shows how likely someone is to buy a product. According to Ghazali et al. (2019), successful continuous use makes users want to consistently use an item. Users with a positive attitude towards a product tend to have a strong intention to use it, thus giving rise to purchase intention (Hossain et al., 2020). Purchase intention is also part of purchasing behavior, caused by the suitability between the performance of the product or service offered by the company, and subsequently resulting in the user's intention to use it again in the future (Putri and Sukaatmadja, 2018).

2.4 Customer Engagement

According to Brodie et al. (2021), customer engagement is the level of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral involvement of consumers with a brand or company, which is reflected through active interaction, loyalty, and advocacy. Customer engagement is a means by which a company creates relationships with its customer base to foster loyalty and brand awareness (Hapsari et al., 2020). Customer engagement can be achieved through marketing campaigns, new content created for and posted on websites, and outreach through social media and mobile and wearable devices, among other methods (Rasool et al., 2021). The main goal of customer engagement is to increase customer loyalty while encouraging them to tell their friends about the business, also known as word-of-mouth marketing (Ng et al., 2020).

3. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The relationship between social media marketing and consumer engagement

Social media marketing is essentially a two-way conversation between brands and consumers through social media, with the aim of bringing people closer to the brand and making them feel more comfortable (Kim & Ko, 2012). If the content is engaging, relevant, and encourages interaction, people will be more enthusiastic about liking, commenting on, or sharing it (Tuten & Solomon, 2017).

Awalia (2024) states that consistent social media activity that makes people feel “understood” directly increases their engagement. Brodie et al. (2021) also agree: people engage because they feel emotionally connected to the content they enjoy. Therefore, the better the strategy, the more people engage with the brand.

H1: Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on consumer engagement in Bachiro MSME.

3.2 The relationship between social media marketing and brand awareness

Social media marketing is highly effective in increasing brand awareness because brands can spread quickly and widely (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Pahlevi and Trianasari (2023) also found that promotion on social media significantly increased brand awareness of local skincare products. Kotler and Keller (2016) also state the same thing: the more often people see the same brand message, the more it sticks in their minds. Matusin and Viliaus (2023) add that if promotions are creative and encourage people to participate, they will remember and like the brand image more quickly. In essence, if social media is used wisely, brand awareness will increase immediately.

H2: Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Brand Awareness in Bachiro MSMEs

3.3 The relationship between social media marketing and Purchase Intention

Social media not only makes people aware of a brand, but also makes them want to buy it. Hossain et al. (2020) state that if the content experience is enjoyable, people will be tempted to shop. Awalia (2024) also found that promotions that align with consumers' needs and lifestyles immediately encourage their intention to buy. Purnomo (2025) adds that for new brands, social media can make people trust and want to try the product. In essence, if the content is good, consumers' wallets will open.

H3: Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention at Bachiro MSMEs.

3.4 The relationship between Engagement Konsumen and Brand Awareness

Consumer engagement is key to making a brand stick in the minds of consumers. If they regularly like, comment on, or share content, the brand will be easier to remember and recognize (Brodie et al., 2021). Zeqiri et al. (2024) state that the higher the interaction, the more often people are exposed to brand messages, instantly increasing brand awareness. Hapsari et al. (2020) add: ongoing conversations with a brand make people feel that “wow, this brand is valuable,” which ultimately makes the brand truly stick in their hearts. The more actively people interact with content, the more difficult it is for them to forget the brands.

H4: Consumer engagement has a positive and significant effect on Brand Awareness in Bachiro MSMEs.

3.5 The relationship between Engagement Konsumen and Purchase Intention

People who actively interact with brand content on social media not only become more familiar with the brand but are also more likely to want to buy it (Ng et al., 2020). Hossain et al. (2020) simply summed it up: if consumers enjoy interacting with the brand, their wallets will usually open up too. Rasool et al. (2021) state that digital engagement plays a key role in shaping purchasing behavior through word of mouth and online social interactions. Therefore, the higher a consumer's engagement with a brand's content, the greater their likelihood of purchasing that product.

H5: Consumer engagement has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention at Bachiro MSMEs.

3.6 The relationship between Social Media Marketing, Brand Awareness through Consumer Engagement

Consumer engagement is a psychological mechanism that links social media marketing activities to brand awareness. According to Brodie et al. (2021), engagement acts as a bridge that transforms brand exposure on social media into a strong brand recall.

As stated by Awalia (2024), engagement plays a partial mediating role in the relationship between media marketing and brand awareness. The higher the level of consumer engagement with brand content, the stronger the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness.

H6: Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant influence on Brand Awareness through Consumer Engagement as a mediating variable in Bachiro MSMEs.

3.7 The Relationship between Social Media Marketing, Purchase Intention through Consumer Engagement

Engagement is like turbo fuel for social media marketing. If people only see advertisements, the impact is mediocre. However, if they actively interact, like, and share content, the impact on their purchase intention increases immediately (Ng et al., 2020). Purnomo (2025) and Rasool et al. (2021) also state that consumer engagement is the “golden bridge” that makes the impact of social media on consumers' wallets much stronger. In essence, without engagement, promotions just pass by. With engagement, promotions go directly into the shopping cart.

H7: Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention through consumer engagement as a mediating variable in Bachiro MSMEs.

4. METHOD

4.1 Instruments Detail

Data were collected using a closed questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). All questions were taken and adapted from previous studies and checked for validity and reliability so that the results could be relied upon.

4.2 Context

The questionnaire was distributed online via Google Forms for a month, specifically to people who had interacted with Bachiro's Instagram and TikTok accounts. Before it was officially distributed, I tested it on several people to ensure that the questions were comprehensible. All data are guaranteed to be confidential, and participation is entirely voluntary. This study was conducted in Samarinda, East Kalimantan, where Bachiro operates.

4.3 Sampling Technique

The population consisted of everyone who was familiar with and interacted with Bachiro's social media content. I used a purposive sampling method—selecting respondents who met the following criteria: active on Instagram/TikTok, have liked/commented on/shared Bachiro's content, and are at least 17 years old.

Google Forms was chosen because it is practical, inexpensive, and can reach a large number of people. The data were monitored daily to ensure completeness and accuracy. This method is also in line with the recommendations of Etikan et al. (2016) for research that requires respondents with specific characteristics.

4.4 Sample Size

Hair et al. (2019) stated that for PLS-SEM, the ideal sample size is 100–200 people, at least 10 times the number of the most indicators. In the end, we obtained 110 respondents who perfectly met the criteria. Their profiles were as follows: aged 17–30 years (Bachiro's target market), 58% female, and 42% male, most of whom interact with Bachiro content 1–5 times a week. All of them live in Samarinda, with only a few people knowing about Bachiro from outside the city through social media. Why Samarinda? This is because micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the food sector are growing rapidly, and people are very active in using their mobile phones.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULT

5.1 Outer Model

5.1.1 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity testing was conducted to ensure that each indicator adequately represented the construct being measured. One measure used is the outer loading value, which is the correlation between the indicator and latent variable. According to Hair et al. (2019), an indicator is considered valid if its outer loading value exceeds 0.70.

Tabel 1. Nilai Outer Loading

Variabel	Social Media Marketing (X1)	Engagement (M)	Brand Awareness (Y1)	Purchase Intention (Y2)
SMM1	0.835			
SMM2	0.734			
SMM3	0.820			
SMM4	0.829			
SMM5	0.764			
SMM6	0.735			
SMM7	0.861			
SMM8	0.758			
ENG1		0.870		
ENG2		0.800		
ENG3		0.837		
ENG4		0.875		
ENG5		0.841		
ENG6		0.867		
ENG7		0.807		
ENG8		0.815		
ENG9		0.824		
BA1			0.873	
BA2			0.897	
BA3			0.845	
BA4			0.814	
BA5			0.850	
BA6			0.899	
PI1				0.949
PI2				0.948
PI3				0.915
PI4				0.959
PI5				0.929
PI6				0.922
PI7				0.961
PI8				0.939
PI9				0.926

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.2.9, 2025

The results in Table 1 show that all indicators have outer loading values above 0.7, except for SMM9 = 0.689, which is still acceptable because it is close to 0.7. This resulting value indicates that all indicators are valid in measuring their constructs and are worthy of being retained for further analysis.

5.1.2 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was tested through a cross-loading analysis to ensure that each indicator correlated more strongly with its own construct than with other constructs. The following are the cross-loading values for each indicator:

Tabel 2. Nilai Cross Loading

	Social Media Marketing (X1)	Engagement (M)	Brand Awareness (Y1)	Purchase Intention (Y2)
SMM1	0.835	0.591	0.444	0.826
SMM2	0.734	0.514	0.355	0.737
SMM3	0.820	0.534	0.437	0.812
SMM4	0.829	0.527	0.432	0.831
SMM5	0.764	0.674	0.500	0.762
SMM6	0.735	0.543	0.469	0.747
SMM7	0.861	0.527	0.393	0.860
SMM8	0.758	0.647	0.466	0.736
ENG1	0.768	0.870	0.789	0.637
ENG2	0.626	0.800	0.684	0.550
ENG3	0.726	0.837	0.754	0.559
ENG4	0.716	0.875	0.754	0.618
ENG5	0.786	0.841	0.714	0.702
ENG6	0.786	0.867	0.692	0.627
ENG7	0.635	0.807	0.778	0.571
ENG8	0.669	0.815	0.657	0.567
ENG9	0.707	0.824	0.745	0.609
BA1	0.873	0.725	0.873	0.747
BA2	0.897	0.807	0.897	0.814
BA3	0.845	0.748	0.845	0.662
BA4	0.814	0.683	0.814	0.725
BA5	0.850	0.737	0.850	0.723
BA6	0.899	0.719	0.899	0.807
PI1	0.615	0.827	0.949	0.949
PI2	0.610	0.829	0.948	0.948
PI3	0.618	0.807	0.915	0.915
PI4	0.622	0.831	0.959	0.959
PI5	0.626	0.812	0.929	0.929
PI6	0.649	0.825	0.922	0.546
PI7	0.614	0.828	0.961	0.505
PI8	0.641	0.804	0.939	0.526
PI9	0.603	0.801	0.926	0.502

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.2.9, 2025

Based on Table 2, each indicator has the highest loading value on its original construct compared to the other constructs. This finding indicates that all the indicators in this study accurately described the construct being measured. Therefore, the discriminant validity of each variable was considered to be well met.

Another method used to analyze discriminant validity is the average variance extracted (AVE) method. Discriminant validity is considered to be met if the square root of the AVE value is higher than the correlation between the variables in the model. A good AVE value is > 0.50 . The AVE values are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Average VariantExtracted

Variabel	Rata-rata Varians Diekstrak (AVE)
X1 (Social Media Marketing)	0.629
M (Engagement)	0.702
Y1 (Brand Awarness)	0.745
Y2 (Purchase Intention)	0.881

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.2.9, 2025

Based on Table 3, it can be concluded that all constructs have met the reliability standards because all AVE values obtained are above 0.50.

5.1.3 Composite Reliability dan Cronbach's Alpha

Composite Reliability and Cronbach's alpha were used to assess the extent to which indicators of a variable demonstrate consistency and measurement reliability. A variable is considered reliable if its Composite Reliability value is above 0.70 and its Cronbach's alpha value is above 0.60.

Table 4. Composite Reliability dan Cronbach's Alpha

	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliabilitas Komposit
X1 (Social Media Marketing)	0.915	0.931
M (Engagement)	0.947	0.955
Y1 (Brand Awarness)	0.931	0.946
Y2 (Purchase Intention)	0.983	0.985

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.2.9, 2025

The Composite Reliability and Cronbach's alpha values in Table 4 show that all constructs are above 0.7, indicating that the instruments used have good reliability and are consistent in measuring the constructs.

5.2 Inner Model

The inner model aims to evaluate the relationships between the latent variables in the research model. This test includes assessing the R-squared (R^2) value, path coefficient, and significance values (T-statistic and p-value). The structure of this study is shown in Figure 2.

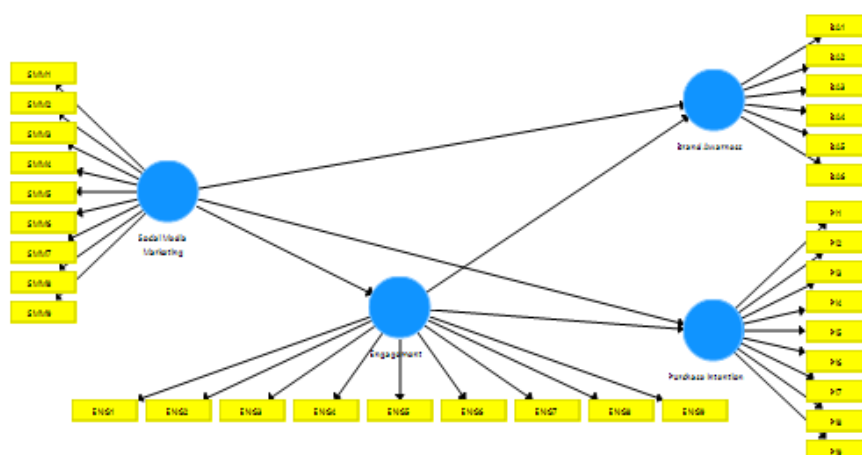


Figure 2: Research Model

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.2.9, 2025

5.2.1 Analysis of Variance (R^2) or Determination Tes

The R-squared test is used to measure how much the independent variables can explain the dependent variables in a structural model. The R-squared values are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. R-Square

	R Square
Brand Awareness	0.859
Engagement	0.525
Purchase Intention	0.772

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.2.9, 2025

Based on the results of data processing using SmartPLS in Table 5, the R^2 value for Brand Awareness is 0.859, which indicates that 85.9% of the variability in Brand Awareness can be explained by Social Media Marketing. The analysis results show that 52.5% of consumer engagement can be explained by Bachiro's social media marketing activities. Meanwhile, 77.2% of consumer purchase intent is influenced by a combination of social media marketing, engagement, and brand awareness. This means that social media plays a big role, but when combined with engagement and a brand that is already firmly established in the minds of consumers, its impact on purchase intention becomes much stronger.

5.3 Hypothesis Testing

This hypothesis test is used to examine whether the relationship between variables is truly strong or merely coincidental. Using bootstrapping in SmartPLS, we examined the T-statistic and P-value. The rule is simple: if the T-statistic > 1.96 and $P < 0.05$, the relationship is highly significant, that is, the hypothesis is accepted. Here are the results:

Table 6. Path Coefficient

Hipotesis	Pengaruh	T Statistik	P Values
H1	Social Media Marketing -> Engagement	14.938	0.000
H2	Social Media Marketing -> Brand Awareness	5.833	0.000
H3	Social Media Marketing -> Purchase Intention	2.333	0.020

H4	Engagement -> Brand Awareness	5.499	0.000
H5	Engagement -> Purchase Intention	17.397	0.000
H6	Social Media Marketing -> Engagement -> Brand Awareness	5.173	0.000
H7	Social Media Marketing -> Engagement -> Purchase Intention	8.769	0.000

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.2.9, 2025

The results of the analysis are very clear: Bachiro's social media marketing has proven to be very effective in increasing engagement ($T = 14,938$; $P = 0.000$). The more interesting and interactive the content, the more people enjoy interacting with the account. Social media also directly and significantly increased brand awareness ($T = 5.833$, $P = 0.000$) and had a direct effect on purchase intention ($T = 2.333$, $P = 0.020$). Engagement has a strong influence on brand awareness ($T = 5.499$, $P = 0.000$) and purchase intent ($T = 17.397$, $P = 0.000$). This indicates that those who frequently interact with Bachiro content are much more likely to make a purchase. Essentially, all hypothetical pathways were found to be significant: active social media, high engagement, brand recognition, and immediate purchase intent.

The results are also impressive: in addition to the direct effect, Bachiro's social media has an indirect impact on brand awareness through interaction ($T = 5.173$; $P = 0.000$) and on purchase intention through the same channel ($T = 8.769$; $P = 0.000$). So, engagement really acts as a “signal amplifier.” Without active interaction, the effects of social media are average. However, if they participate, the impact immediately doubles in terms of increasing brand awareness and the desire to purchase. Mediation proved to be very strong

6. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATION

This study aims to prove the extent to which social media plays a role in increasing public awareness of Bachiro and ultimately encouraging them to buy its products, as well as examining whether engagement is an important bridge in the process. Using PLS-SEM, the results of the study show that all hypotheses are significantly valid—very good results.

Essentially, social media strategies that encourage people to interact are highly effective in increasing brand awareness and purchase intent. Engaging content, regular posts, and inviting conversations are the key. If Bachiro remains consistent, consumer response will certainly be more positive.

Engagement itself is the star: not only does it make people more familiar with the brand and want to buy, but it also acts as a “power switch” that instantly amplifies the effects of social media. Its influence is partial—meaning that social media still has its own appeal, but when engagement is active, the impact immediately doubles. For new SMEs like Bachiro, using social media to actively engage people is a surefire recipe for quick recognition and success.

The R-Square results are also excellent: 85.9% for brand awareness and 77.2% for purchase intent. This means that the model is robust, and almost all movements of both variables can be explained through social media and interactions.

Essentially, if social media content is engaging, relevant, and encourages people to participate in conversations, the effects are immediately visible—the brand becomes quickly recognized, and people immediately want to buy. Polls, giveaways, and quick responses to comments all strengthen the relationship with consumers. For Bachiro (or other SMEs), the message is clear: using social media in a truly creative and consistent way is not just about “staying relevant,” but actually increasing sales.

6.1. Limitation

This study still has limitations: the sample size was only 110 people and was only conducted in Samarinda, so it cannot be directly applied to all MSMEs. Although the results are good, it would be

better if a follow-up study with a larger sample and broader coverage were conducted so that these findings would be stronger and more reliable.

Ethical Approval

Ethical approval was not required for this study.

Informed Consent Statement

All participants were informed of the purpose of the study, and informed consent was obtained prior to data collection. Participation was voluntary, and all responses were kept confidential and used solely for academic research purposes.

Authors' Contributions

NFS acted as the lead author, developed the research idea and design, coordinated respondent collection, and supervised the entire research process. She also prepared, revised, and finalized the manuscript for submission. NH contributed to constructing the research instruments, distributing questionnaires, organizing respondent data, and assisting in building the theoretical framework and literature review. JF was responsible for processing and analyzing the data using the PLS-SEM approach through SmartPLS 4, and contributed to interpreting the statistical results. KM assisted in structuring the methodology section, validating the measurement and structural model, and ensuring the accuracy of the analytical procedures. Y contributed to refining the discussion section, linking empirical findings with previous research, and strengthening the coherence of the argumentation in the manuscript. R assisted in proofreading, editing, and ensuring that the manuscript followed academic writing conventions and met the journal's formatting requirements.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Data Availability Statement

The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author due to privacy reasons.

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