

Digital Engagement and Brand Experience as Drivers of Purchase Intention in the Packaged Bread Market

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Abstract

In response to the growing importance of digital engagement in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector, this study examines the impact of social media engagement and sales promotion on brand awareness, customer experience, and purchase intention in Indonesia's packaged bread market. Employing the AISAS model as a theoretical lens and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) using SmartPLS, data were gathered from 200 consumers across Java. Findings reveal that social media engagement and sales promotion significantly enhance brand awareness, which in turn has a strong influence on the customer experience. Importantly, how customers feel about their experience is the most significant factor in determining whether they will purchase, and product specifications do not matter. Because the study's findings indicate that digital interaction influences consumer behaviour more than product qualities, a gap in existing quantitative research on low-involvement products in emerging markets is addressed. The outcomes give academic insight and advice on tactics brands can use to earn steady customer loyalty.

Keywords: Digital Engagement; Social Media Marketing; Brand Awareness; Customer Experience; Purchase Intention

A. INTRODUCTION

Modern technology has significantly altered consumer habits and the marketing strategies of companies. According to (Kotler and Keller, 2001), digital transformation enables companies to interact more closely with customers, customise experiences, and utilise data more effectively to engage consumers. Nowadays, consumers have begun searching, comparing, and sharing their experiences in the digital world, a trend that was not prevalent previously (Cahyadi & Tunjung Sari, 2023; Susanto & Ruswanti, 2024). Brands need to adapt their communication and branding to align with the expectations of today's digital customers.

Consumers in Indonesia tend to purchase packaged bread frequently, which demonstrates the significant impact of consumer behaviour on industry trends. Due to city living and busier schedules, bread has become a staple food for students and professionals, as noted by (Kuntjoro and Alvin, 2023). The amount of bread produced has increased consistently every year, according to (BPS, 2023). Although packaged bread companies are experiencing growth, they continue to struggle with raising brand awareness and maintaining interest in purchasing (Reyvina & Tjokrosaputro, 2024; Zhu, 2024). This suggests that brands must utilise digital marketing to evoke emotions and create meaningful experiences that go beyond their product features.

Using digital approaches, such as social media engagement and discount promotions, is common; however, few studies have been conducted on how this influences brand awareness, customer satisfaction, and interest in purchasing FMCG products. Most of the literature focuses on involved consumers and established countries, which means we do not understand well how digital engagement tools are used in places such as Indonesia. The authors examine this area using the AISAS model (Attention, Interest, Search, Action, Share), which illustrates how social media and advertising influence consumer decisions. It also examines how the experience a customer feels is influenced by customer service, product appearance, and overall quality (Gigauri & Palazzo, 2023; Su & Wang, 2024).

For analysis, the model is applied using Structural Equation Modelling with SmartPLS, as it best suits exploratory research and measures constructs such as brand awareness and customer experience (Pereira, 2024). To investigate how digital strategies influence consumer behaviour in purchasing packaged bread, this study utilised survey data from consumers across various regions in Java. The

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findings support AISAS, with the theory being broader in scope for low-involvement FMCG products and the practice being helpful to marketers in markets where experiences matter.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital Engagement and Social Media Marketing

When people view brand content online, digital engagement refers to their interaction through activities such as liking, sharing, commenting, and creating their own content. Due to this interaction, a new emotional connection is formed, enabling the brand and the consumer to remain loyal to each other in the long run. Thanks to sites like Instagram and TikTok, businesses can engage with people more easily using multimedia, collaborate with influencers, and receive instant feedback. They indicate a broader effort to shift marketing away from just transactions and toward involving customers emotionally. International research has confirmed that engaging with social media can tremendously benefit a brand and influence what customers want to buy. When brands utilise interactive content, people become more engaged, which in turn affects their perception of the brand and the actions they take. (Leung et al., 2022) found that having influencers lead advertising has a positive impact, especially when the ads are perceived as authentic, which raises trust among buyers and increases conversion rates. This reveals that being seen online also depends on being seen as credible and important to the audience.

More companies are now utilising digital storytelling, which combines brand messages, consumer self-identification, and evocative emotions to create a compelling narrative. (Mandung, 2024) notes that sharing brand stories enables people to form stronger emotional connections with a brand. This method becomes even more effective when reviews, testimonials, and user experiences are included by other viewers, making it both more visible and reliable (Nguyen et al., 2024). So, brands no longer share information; instead, they engage in conversations with their users. Raising brand awareness largely depends on social media engagement, which draws customers' attention, encourages them to share posts, and helps them form a connection with the brand (Barreda et al., 2020; Mulyani & Hermina, 2023). Today, most people rely on digital channels to find and verify information, which means that engagement has become a primary factor driving consumer behaviour. The term 'digital engagement' is core to the AISAS framework, signifying that the transition from attention and interest to interaction and loyalty occurs in the digital era.

Sales Promotion and Consumer Activation

Sales promotion involves utilising various marketing activities, such as discounts, coupons, bundling, and point-of-sale items, to encourage customers to make a purchase immediately. Long considered only valid for selling, these instruments have now become crucial strategies to boost sales, increase brand visibility, and engage customers from the outset. When sales promotions are executed well, especially when linked to a positive customer experience, they can help clients remember a brand and encourage future loyalty. Recent studies highlight that sales promotions have a more substantial impact in competitive retail settings and situations where product differences are modest, such as those involving packaged food. When advertising in this way, those that connect with people's values or their need to act now have had better results (Shneor & Munim, 2019; Tran et al., 2022). Offers that are only available for a limited time, packaging items together, or providing personalised discounts have been shown to encourage impulsive purchases, increase consumer satisfaction, and enhance brand perception (Bandyopadhyay, 2024; Li & Chen, 2024). Getting excited about promotions turns them from price actions to ways to build a strong brand.

Moreover, the use of digital media has enabled sales promotions to reach a wider audience and leave a more lasting impression. With the help of TikTok and Instagram, companies can create engaging and informative marketing content that keeps people entertained and informed (Hanum et al., 2023; Sahai et al., 2023). Evidence has shown that commenting, liking, and sharing promotional marketing content can increase the likelihood that people will like a brand and encourage them to make a purchase (Darmawan & Fachira, 2023; Tulipa et al., 2023). This suggests that companies are now utilising digital strategies to influence consumer behaviour in their marketing efforts. Although the primary purpose of sales promotions is to encourage immediate purchases, they also play a crucial role in shaping how buyers

perceive the brand, fostering an emotional connection, and enhancing the company's reputation. For them to be effective, design, timing, integration of different channels, and matching with main engagement strategies are important (Gardner, 2022; Yang, 2025). Since sales are not strongly affected by involvement in packaging and bread, brands must view sales promotions as vital facets of a strategy that combines emotions and technology.

Brand Awareness as a Mediator

Having high brand awareness is considered key in the consumer decision-making process and significantly influences how people make purchasing decisions. Lots of awareness about a brand makes choosing it easier and less risky. Because brand recognition provides a psychological boost, customers in categories such as packaged bread are more likely to make swift decisions among products that appear similar (Herliani & Hegiarto, 2024; Kotler & Keller, 2016). Researchers have conducted several studies, some employing Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), which suggest that brand awareness serves as a mediating factor in how digital activities influence people's responses to brands. Using social media for marketing helps people become familiar with the brand, resulting in stronger loyalty and increased purchasing. Similar results were found by Baltaci et al. (, indicating that when a brand's messages are delivered across multiple channels, it can increase the likelihood of a purchase. This aligns with the AISAS model, as "Awareness" directly connects paying attention and being interested with activities such as searching for, taking in, and disseminating information.

Brand awareness in the digital world can be enhanced through collaborations with influencers, sharing brand stories, and featuring user-generated content. According to a study by (Faisal & Ekawanto, 2022), running personalised and engaging campaigns on Instagram and TikTok can not only boost the brand's recognition but also enhance its reputation. It is especially noticeable in developing countries, where digital tools greatly influence what consumers believe and think (Rochimah et al., 2023; Zulfikar, 2023). They underscore the fact that simply having a digital presence is not enough; what helps is producing creative, dependable, and authentic content that is remembered and appreciated. It is not one-directional; brand awareness acts inside the process, connecting digital exposure and loyalty to a business. It is clear from the retail, cosmetic, and FMCG industries that increasing brand awareness through digital strategies enhances a consumer's level of engagement, trust, and willingness to take action (Sudirjo et al., 2023; Yahya et al., 2024). Thus, awareness should be viewed as a crucial target, not something that occurs by accident, when shaping customer-focused ways brands engage with people.

Customer Experience and Emotional Drivers

Customer experience refers to the entire set of feelings and mental reactions that customers experience when interacting with a brand. The idea was further highlighted by (Schmitt, 1999), who pointed out the importance of sensory, emotional, and interactional elements in influencing purchasing decisions. When buying bread or similar products, feelings are usually more important to buyers than facts, meaning they will consider how a brand affects them emotionally above what it offers functionally. This aligns with the new trend in marketing, which prioritises emotion over branding when influencing buyer decisions. It has been found through studies that people decide to repurchase based more on their emotional experience with the brand than on the quality of the product. When a brand evokes trust, joy, or comfort, it significantly impacts our satisfaction and loyalty toward the company (Carmo et al., 2022; Sianipar et al., 2023). Therefore, marketing experiences crafted to evoke emotions are vital tools for building closer ties between customers and the brand, which in turn ensures their preferred buying behaviour continues. This is particularly important in the digital age, as storytelling, design, and engagement are shaping how people perceive and interact with brands.

Many industries have demonstrated that customer experience serves as a bridge between recognising a brand and making a purchasing decision. Using emotional methods online, such as immersive stories and interactive elements, makes people feel that brand experiences matter, which helps change awareness into action (Liestyana & Hara, 2023; Sianipar et al., 2023). The broaden-and-build theory supports this by arguing that such emotions broaden consumers' ideas and actions, engaging them more deeply with brands. Focusing on making users feel satisfied ensures that their journey from initial interest in the brand to becoming a repeat customer becomes stronger. When a company focuses on providing a good customer experience, it has a significant impact on the connection between brand

awareness and customer actions, especially when the experience evokes emotions. Emphasising experiential marketing enables brands to communicate emotionally, leveraging trust, nostalgia, and enjoyment to influence consumers' buying habits. It shows marketers that building experiences that are both accessible and present a meaningful emotion matter the most (Arief et al., 2022; Hidayah et al., 2023). Evidence from recent studies proves that emotional value strongly contributes to creating loyal customers in digitally crowded, low-engagement industries.

Product Attributes and Packaging Perception

Traditionally, the taste, freshness, and design of an item's packaging were related to the idea that it had value and high quality. Their impact on our choices, especially with low-involvement goods like bread, is more pronounced. While the method of production and taste are significant, studies now suggest that visual and sensory packaging aspects can alter consumer assumptions without their notice (Malekpour et al., 2022; Saraswati et al., 2023). In crowded retail spaces, packaging often becomes the primary means by which customers first encounter the brand. Emotional branding occurs when packaging colours, typeface, and the feel of the material can evoke emotions in the buyer, thereby making the product more appealing (Su & Wang, 2024). Simply changing the colour of the packaging can alter the way people perceive and enjoy what they are eating or drinking. Even so, when it comes to things we often buy, such as bread, these design elements do not typically catch our attention unless something emotional or digital happens (Gigauri & Palazzo, 2023). Thus, rather than acting independently, product features work in concert with the overall brand experience to influence consumer intentions.

Additionally, people are now paying close attention to the sustainability and ethics of packaging. Results from (Leão et al., 2022; Tu & Halab, 2024) demonstrate that using environmentally friendly materials with appealing designs encourages consumers concerned about the environment to pay more attention. As a result, nowadays, people expect packaging to be both functional and visually appealing, and they also check for any messages or ideas embedded in the experience, meaning that consumer ethics are influencing design. Although features drive consumer opinion about product quality, purchase intention improves when emotional branding and digital factors are also taken into account. Describing taste or packaging alone may not reveal their true importance, which is often influenced by brand recognition and a customer's perception of the brand (Kresova et al., 2022; Su & Wang, 2024). This means a broad approach should be taken, including product values within the context of feelings and experiences, to accurately link them to consumer purchases in low-involvement FMCG fields.

Hypothesis Development

This research is founded on the AISAS model (Attention, Interest, Search, Action, and Share), which views the consumer journey as a sequence of actions triggered by digital interactions. Based on this structure, the use of digital marketing, such as utilising social media and promoting offerings, is believed to increase brand awareness. This, in turn, shapes the customer experience and ultimately increases the likelihood of a purchase. The hypotheses drawn for this study are supported by prior research and theory applicable to fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and to products like packaged bread, which people often purchase without much deliberation. Through storytelling, content from influencers, and user-generated media, social media helps brands make a lasting impression on their audience. The results of works by (Barreda et al., 2020; Leung et al., 2022) show that when content appeals to people, engagement behaviors like likes and shares help make the brand familiar and easy to remember. Being engaged in digital spaces is now considered a key strategy for raising awareness.

Sales promotions help expose people to a brand for the first time, even if it is only a brief, one-time experience. Discounts, combining several offers and limited availability, appear to enhance brand recognition and encourage people to try a product for the first time. They encourage people to act immediately and help a brand be remembered over time if it can be found in regular campaigns. Emotions and visual design in promotions help them be noticed better in busy stores. After someone becomes aware of a brand, it influences their perception of what the brand represents in every situation. It is argued by (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Zhao et al., 2022) that familiar brands promote easy thinking and positive feelings that influence consumers' judgment of products. Well-known brands have a better chance of making customers feel positively, which enhances the overall experience.

The potential impact on customer experience from product attributes, including taste, freshness, and packaging aesthetics, is studied. In line with this, (Su & Wang, 2024) explain that packaging factors affect perception, but (Gigauri & Palazzo, 2023) confirm that with regular purchases, bread, for example, the features of the product have little impact unless there is emotional reinforcement. That is why product features are not considered the primary reason for purchase, but rather are contextualised within the overall experience provided. Both reasoning and emotion play a role in how customers experience a product, which is an integral part of their overall customer experience and a significant factor in their purchasing decisions. (Schmitt, 1999) argued that using experience, emotion, and community helps a consumer make a decision. How customers feel about a product is more important for making them want to repurchase it than just focusing on product performance, mainly in competitive markets.

These hypotheses are formed with the help of today's theory and observation:

H1: Social media engagement positively influences brand awareness.

H2: Sales promotion positively influences brand awareness.

H3: Brand awareness has a positive influence on customer experience.

H4: Product attributes positively influence customer experience.

H5: Customer experience positively influences purchase intention.

C. METHODS

This project utilises data to examine the impact of digital engagement, brand experience, and intention to purchase on packaged bread markets in Indonesia. The six constructs included in the research study are rooted in the AISAS model: social media engagement, sales promotion, brand awareness, product attributes, customer experience, and purchase intention. The study employs Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) in conjunction with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method, utilising SmartPLS 4.0 software, to examine these interrelationships. If samples are small to medium in size and the model incorporates both mediated and mixed-type constructs, PLS-SEM is the appropriate method (Hair et al., 2021).

An interview questionnaire was developed, and people were interviewed both online and offline. To ensure the survey could be completed both online and offline, online forms were utilised, and trained sales representatives and enumerators conducted face-to-face surveys in Jabodetabek, West Java, Central Java, and East Java. The locations chosen met a specific criterion because they have both a large number of biscuit buyers and a varied population. Researchers collected 200 replies by using a non-probability purposive sampling approach. The number of cases included in this sample is more than sufficient, as the threshold for PLS-SEM indicates that each indicator should be associated with a construct using at least 10 samples in the model (Hair et al., 2021).

The questionnaire was constructed using a set of multi-item scales from prior well-established studies, with some modifications made to align with the current study. Responses were given on a five-point scale, where one means "strongly disagree" and five means "strongly agree." Social media engagement consists of frequency of participation, content sharing, and emotional connection. Sales promotion items include elements such as discount offers, bundle deals, and ensuring customers notice them while shopping. To measure brand awareness, we used measures from (Kotler & Keller, 2016), which look at brand recall and recognition. Following (Su and Wang, 2024), taste, freshness, and packaging were considered important characteristics. (Schmitt, 1999)'s concept of experiential marketing guided our understanding of customer experience by accounting for both the satisfaction and the quality of these experiences. Lastly, the researchers used indicators from (Su & Wang, 2024) to determine purchase intention, such as wanting to repurchase the brand and recommending it to others.

The process was divided into two main parts for data analysis. The first part involved assessing the measurement model, focusing on its reliability and validity. Outer loading thresholds (> 0.7) guaranteed indicator dependability, and Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability assessments (both above 0.7) checked consistency within the indicators. We established convergent validity by comparing mean-variance (AVE > 0.5) and built discriminant validity by checking Fornell-Larcker criteria and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. At this step, the structural model was evaluated, creating path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values with a bootstrapping procedure using 5,000 examples. Apart from

hypothesis testing, the influence of endogenous variables was evaluated through their R^2 values, and the significance of each predictor's influence was measured using effect size (f^2) metrics.

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Measurement Model Evaluation

To ensure the robustness of the measurement model, this study assessed convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability for all constructs using SmartPLS 4. Convergent validity was evaluated by checking the outer loading of each indicator and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values. According to (Hair et al., 2021), loadings above 0.70 indicate strong item reliability, while AVE values above 0.50 confirm that a construct explains more than half of the variance in its indicators (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As shown in Table 1, all 18 indicators from the six constructs—Sales Promotion, Social Media Engagement, Brand Awareness, Product Attributes, Customer Experience, and Purchase Intention—met the required thresholds. Most loading values are above 0.90, indicating excellent convergent validity. Furthermore, Cronbach's Alpha was used to evaluate internal consistency. All six constructs recorded Alpha values above 0.875, confirming strong reliability and internal consistency across the measurement items (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Table 1. Convergent Validity and Reliability of Constructs

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	Result	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability
Brand Awareness (BA)	BA1	0.930	Valid	0.928	Reliable
	BA2	0.929	Valid		
	BA3	0.945	Valid		
Customer Experience (CE)	CE1	0.960	Valid	0.919	Reliable
	CE2	0.923	Valid		
	CE3	0.899	Valid		
Product Attributes (PA)	PA1	0.931	Valid	0.901	Reliable
	PA2	0.920	Valid		
	PA3	0.889	Valid		
Purchase Intention (PI)	PI1	0.940	Valid	0.915	Reliable
	PI2	0.925	Valid		
	PI3	0.909	Valid		
Social Media Engagement (SME)	SME1	0.965	Valid	0.938	Reliable
	SME2	0.943	Valid		
	SME3	0.921	Valid		
Sales Promotion (SP)	SP1	0.954	Valid	0.875	Reliable
	SP2	0.876	Valid		
	SP3	0.853	Valid		

Source: Research data, 2025

To further assess discriminant validity, the Fornell-Larcker criterion was used. As shown in Table 2, the square roots of AVE for each construct are higher than the inter-construct correlations, confirming that each construct is distinct and not redundant with others.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

	BA	CE	PA	PI	SME	SP
BA	0.93					
CE	0.95	0.92				
PA	0.92	0.79	0.91			
PI	0.88	0.99	0.73	0.93		
SME	0.96	0.98	0.69	0.91	0.94	
SP	0.98	0.91	0.90	0.78	0.98	0.93

Source: Research data, 2025

Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

Once the measurement model demonstrated satisfactory validity and reliability, the structural model was assessed by examining R-squared values, path coefficients, and p-values.

Table 3. R-square Values

Endogenous Variable	R ²	Adjusted R ²
Brand Awareness (BA)	0.842	0.841
Customer Experience (CE)	0.780	0.778
Purchase Intention (PI)	0.834	0.833

Source: Research data, 2025

The model explains 84.2% of the variance in brand awareness, 78.0% in customer experience, and 83.4% in purchase intention, indicating strong predictive relevance. The path coefficient analysis further revealed that Social Media Engagement ($\beta = 0.509$, $p < 0.001$) and Sales Promotion ($\beta = 0.434$, $p < 0.001$) significantly influenced Brand Awareness. Brand Awareness positively impacted Customer Experience ($\beta = 0.938$, $p < 0.001$). Customer experience had a strong influence on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.913$, $p < 0.001$). Product Attributes, however, showed an insignificant and adverse effect on Customer Experience ($\beta = -0.066$, $p = 0.379$).

Table 4. Path Coefficient and Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	β	t-value	p-value	Conclusion
H1: SME $\rightarrow$ Brand Awareness	0.509	9.383	0.000	Supported
H2: Sales Promotion $\rightarrow$ Brand Awareness	0.434	7.848	0.000	Supported
H3: Brand Awareness $\rightarrow$ Customer Experience	0.938	15.519	0.000	Supported
H4: Product Attributes $\rightarrow$ Customer Experience	-0.066	0.879	0.379	Not Supported
H5: Customer Experience $\rightarrow$ Purchase Intention	0.913	70.687	0.000	Supported

Source: Research data, 2025

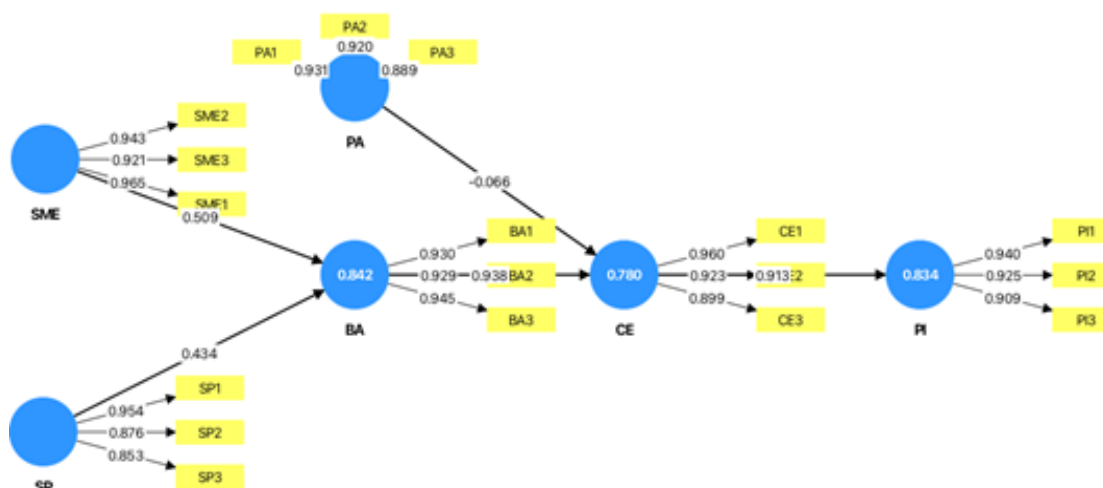


Figure 1. SEM-PLS Structure

Source: Research data, 2025

These results reinforce the central role of brand awareness and customer experience in shaping consumer purchase intention. While digital engagement and promotion strategies significantly elevate brand recognition, and brand awareness enhances the consumer experience, product attributes alone are insufficient to drive emotional satisfaction in low-involvement products, such as packaged bread.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal a compelling narrative about how digital marketing stimuli, specifically social media engagement and sales promotion, influence brand awareness, which in turn enhances customer experience and drives purchase intention in the packaged bread industry—a typically low-involvement product category. These insights reinforce and extend current literature on digital consumer behaviour and experiential marketing. The strong effect of social media engagement on brand awareness ($\beta = 0.509$, $p < 0.001$) aligns with prior studies that underscore the role of interactive digital content in shaping consumer cognition (Barreda et al., 2020; Brodie et al., 2013). Platforms such as Instagram and TikTok provide not only visibility but emotional resonance through storytelling and

influencer collaboration, thereby amplifying consumer recall and preference. These findings substantiate AISAS theory, particularly the Attention and Search stages, where consumers encounter and explore brands through social interactions and digital exposure.

Similarly, sales promotion demonstrates a significant and positive impact on brand awareness ($\beta = 0.434$, $p < 0.001$), affirming that well-designed promotional strategies can elevate brand salience even in commodified categories. While such tactics are typically transactional, their combination with digital engagement adds emotional and experiential dimensions to the value offering, thus reinforcing earlier arguments (Gardner, 2022) regarding the emotional reinforcement required in low-involvement contexts. Notably, the study identifies brand awareness as a crucial mediator between external stimuli and internal consumer evaluation. The strong linkage between brand awareness and customer experience ($\beta = 0.938$, $p < 0.001$) suggests that familiarity with a brand enhances trust and reduces cognitive effort, facilitating positive emotional interactions. This supports the (Kotler & Keller, 2016) model, which posits that brand recognition primes consumers for favourable brand experiences.

In turn, customer experience emerges as the most potent driver of purchase intention ($\beta = 0.913$, $p < 0.001$), exceeding the influence of product-related factors. This echoes the framework of experiential marketing (Schmitt, 1999), wherein emotional satisfaction often outweighs rational utility in many consumption scenarios. For packaged bread, elements like emotional familiarity, convenience, and brand association appear to shape intent more strongly than product attributes alone. Interestingly, product attributes exhibit a statistically insignificant and negative relationship with customer experience ($\beta = -0.066$, $p = 0.379$), challenging the conventional assumption that sensory or functional product benefits directly translate into consumer satisfaction. This aligns with (Gigauri & Palazzo, 2023), who argue that in routine, habitual purchases, product features require emotional or narrative reinforcement to become meaningful. These findings underscore that in digital and low-involvement markets, the emotional ecosystem created by marketing strategies—engagement, familiarity, and affective experience—matters more than product features alone. The interplay among these constructs validates the integrated use of AISAS and experiential marketing theory, offering a comprehensive view of the modern consumer journey from digital exposure to intention.

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the expanding discourse on digital consumer behaviour by integrating the AISAS model with experiential marketing theory in the context of a low-involvement product category. The empirical findings reaffirm the central role of brand awareness as a cognitive-affective mediator that connects digital stimuli—namely social media engagement and sales promotion—to customer experience and purchase intention. This supports prior research emphasising the psychological mechanisms that underlie consumer responses to interactive marketing (Kotler & Keller, 2016), while also introducing nuance to the understanding of how habitual purchase behaviour can be disrupted or enhanced through emotional branding. Furthermore, the non-significant effect of product attributes on customer experience adds a novel insight to the literature: functional quality is insufficient in isolation; emotional reinforcement and digital storytelling are necessary to make such attributes salient, especially in saturated FMCG markets.

In practical terms, the study provides key managerial implications for brand managers, digital strategists, and product developers operating in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector. First, investment in interactive and emotionally resonant digital content should be prioritised over traditional product-centred advertising. Brand campaigns should leverage short-form video platforms, user-generated content, and influencer partnerships to drive engagement and ultimately build brand awareness. Second, sales promotion efforts—while effective in boosting brand visibility—must be strategically integrated with digital channels to deliver not just value but also brand personality and emotional relevance. For instance, digital coupons or limited-time bundle offers can be delivered with interactive narratives or gamification techniques to enhance emotional appeal.

Third, customer experience should be treated as a strategic asset, not merely as a consequence of purchase. Every digital and in-store interaction—ranging from packaging design to post-purchase messaging—should be carefully curated to evoke positive emotional responses, foster trust, and cultivate brand affinity. In addition, marketers should be cautious in over-relying on product features (e.g., taste or freshness) without framing them within an emotionally engaging brand narrative. Finally, the use of PLS-

SEM in this research also demonstrates a methodological implication: it affirms the robustness of SmartPLS as a modelling tool for exploring multidimensional consumer behaviour, particularly when dealing with latent constructs and medium-sized samples. These implications provide both theoretical enrichment and actionable strategies for firms seeking to navigate digital ecosystems, enhance brand value, and drive purchase intention, particularly in markets where rational evaluation gives way to habitual and emotional decision-making.

E. CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the dynamic interplay between digital engagement, brand experience, and purchase intention in the packaged bread market by integrating the AISAS framework and experiential marketing theory. The results confirm that social media engagement and sales promotion significantly enhance brand awareness, which in turn has a strong positive effect on customer experience. Most notably, customer experience emerged as the most potent predictor of purchase intention. At the same time, product attributes were found to have an insignificant effect, suggesting that emotional and digital touchpoints outweigh functional product characteristics in shaping consumer decisions, especially in low-involvement categories. These findings contribute to the literature on digital marketing and consumer behaviour by highlighting the critical mediating roles of brand awareness and emotional experience in the customer journey. The study also highlights the need for brands to shift from transactional marketing to emotionally driven strategies that build relationships and resonate with consumers' lived experiences.

Despite these contributions, the study has limitations. The cross-sectional design limits causal inference, and the focus on a single product category in Indonesia may restrict generalizability to other sectors or cultural contexts. Moreover, this study relies on self-reported data, which may be susceptible to response bias. Future research should consider longitudinal approaches to observe changes in behaviour over time and explore cross-cultural comparisons to test the model's applicability across different markets. Additionally, the integration of AI-driven personalisation, augmented reality (AR), or green branding strategies could further enhance the understanding of emotional and behavioural responses in digital ecosystems. Digital marketing strategies centred on emotional engagement and brand experience are crucial for cultivating loyalty and purchase intention in today's fragmented and hyper-connected consumer landscape. Businesses that invest in digital storytelling, meaningful brand interactions, and data-informed experiences are better positioned to thrive in increasingly competitive FMCG markets.

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