

The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention through Brand Awareness among Generation Z TikTok Users of The Body Shop Body Butter/Cream Products: Evidence from the Greater Bandung Area

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Brand Awareness, Purchase Intention

Received : 27, July

Revised : 23, August

Accepted: 25, September

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effect of social media marketing on purchase intention mediated by brand awareness among Generation Z TikTok users of The Body Shop Body Butter/Cream products in the Greater Bandung area. The research was motivated by the decline in The Body Shop's Top Brand Index in the body butter/cream category, indicating weakened brand awareness and purchase intention. A quantitative descriptive-associative approach was employed using convenience sampling with 120 respondents. Data were collected through validated and reliable questionnaires and analyzed using SPSS software type 25. Hypothesis testing included simple linear regression, multiple linear regression, and the Sobel test. The findings indicate that social media marketing positively and significantly affects brand awareness and purchase intention, brand awareness positively and significantly affects purchase intention, while brand awareness significantly mediates the relationship between social media marketing and purchase intention. The management of The Body Shop Indonesia is encouraged to prioritize optimizing promotional content on TikTok by ensuring the informative, interactive, and entertaining to align with Generation Z's communication style, including the use of authentic testimonials to strengthen brand awareness.

INTRODUCTION

Self-care is no longer perceived as a secondary activity but has become an essential aspect of maintaining both physical and psychological well-being, particularly among young consumers. According to Beccanulli and Biraghi (2024), body care practices are closely associated with psychological well-being, as they enhance self-confidence and strengthen individuals' social identity. As digital natives, Generation Z perceives skincare and body care routines not only as means of improving physical appearance but also as expressions of personal values related to authenticity and sustainability. DataReportal (2025) reported that more than 73.8% of Generation Z in Indonesia actively follow beauty and body care accounts on social media, particularly TikTok, which has become a primary source of inspiration and product information before making purchasing decisions. This trend reflects a shift in consumer behavior, with young consumers becoming increasingly conscious of personal care and more selective in choosing products that align with healthy and ethical lifestyles.

The growing interest in body care products is also reflected in the expansion of Indonesia's personal care market. According to Statista (2025), Indonesia's body care market is projected to generate revenue of approximately US\$180.03 million in 2025, with a compound annual growth rate of 7.8% through 2028. Similarly, ECDB (2025) reported that Indonesia's e-commerce sales in the creams and body lotions category reached IDR 1.68 trillion in 2025, indicating consumers' increasing preference for purchasing body care products through digital platforms. Furthermore, Wardhana (2025) found that online searches for body lotion and body butter increased by more than 15% over the previous year, driven by social media trends promoting self-care routines. These findings suggest that body care has become an integral component of modern lifestyles, particularly among urban youth with high levels of social media engagement.

Despite these favorable market conditions, The Body Shop has experienced a substantial decline in brand performance within the body butter category. According to the Top Brand Award (2025), The Body Shop's Top Brand Index (TBI) for Body Butter/Cream declined from 44.40% in 2021 to 41.20% in 2023, further decreased to 38.40% in 2024, and dropped significantly to 27.5% in 2025. This downward trend indicates weakening brand awareness and declining consumer preference relative to competitors such as Vaseline, Scarlett, and Nivea, which have adopted more aggressive digital marketing strategies, particularly on TikTok and other social media platforms. Moreover, Le News (2025) reported that The Body Shop has faced significant global business challenges, including the closure of 33 stores in Switzerland and major restructuring across North America and Europe due to declining sales. Similarly, The Associated Press (2024) attributed these challenges to weakening consumer purchase intention in the premium body care segment and intensifying competition from local brands that are more responsive to social media-driven marketing strategies. These developments suggest that, despite the growing self-care trend, The Body Shop faces increasing difficulty in maintaining its relevance among Generation Z consumers, especially on TikTok, which has become one of

the most influential platforms for beauty product promotion and purchasing decisions.

Given this phenomenon, it is important to examine the effectiveness of social media marketing in strengthening brand awareness and subsequently enhancing purchase intention among Generation Z consumers. This study therefore investigates the influence of social media marketing on purchase intention, with brand awareness serving as a mediating variable, among Generation Z TikTok users of The Body Shop Body Butter/Cream products in the Greater Bandung area. The findings are expected to contribute to the literature on digital marketing and consumer behavior while providing managerial insights for cosmetic brands seeking to improve their marketing effectiveness in highly competitive digital environments.

Table 1. Top Brand Index of *Body Butter/Cream*, 2021–2025

Tahun	The Body Shop	Scarlett Whitening	Vaseline
2021	45,8%	30,2%	11,0%
2022	43,2%	33,5%	11,6%
2023	40,6%	35,4%	12,1%
2024	38,4%	36,9%	13,2%
2025	27,5%	40,8%	14,0%
+/- the previous year	-10,9%	+3,9%	+0,8%

Source: Adapted from Frontier Group – Top Brand Award Report (2021–2025), <https://www.topbrand-award.com>.

Based on the body butter/cream market share data from 2021 to 2025, The Body Shop experienced a substantial decline, with its market share decreasing from 45.8% in 2021 to 27.5% in 2025. In contrast, Scarlett Whitening demonstrated a significant increase, rising from 30.2% to 40.8%, while Vaseline also recorded moderate but steady growth, increasing from 11.0% to 14.0% over the same period. These changes indicate a shift in consumer preferences, which is closely associated with the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies, particularly social media marketing activities.

Based on Tiktoshop (2025) the observations conducted during several TikTok Shop live streaming sessions, a considerable difference in the number of concurrent viewers was identified across the three brands. Live streaming sessions hosted by The Body Shop's official TikTok account (@thebodyshopindo) attracted a relatively small audience, with approximately five concurrent viewers. In comparison, Vaseline recorded approximately 16 concurrent viewers, while Scarlett Whitening attracted a substantially larger audience, with approximately 193 concurrent viewers during its live streaming sessions in 2025.

These differences indicate varying levels of audience interest and engagement with each brand's live streaming activities. The relatively lower viewership of The Body Shop suggests that its live streaming content is less

effective in attracting and engaging TikTok users than that of its competitors. Given that TikTok has become one of the primary platforms for product discovery and consumer interaction among Generation Z, lower audience engagement may reduce the effectiveness of social media marketing in strengthening brand awareness and stimulating purchase intention.

The Top Brand Index (TBI) measures brand strength in the market using three key dimensions: Top-of-Mind, Last Usage, and Future Intention (Top Brand Award, 2025). Top-of-Mind refers to the brand that consumers spontaneously recall first within a particular product category, reflecting brand awareness. Last Usage represents the brand most recently used by consumers, indicating their actual product experience. Future Intention reflects consumers' likelihood of using or purchasing the brand again in the future. In the context of this study, purchase intention is closely related to the Future Intention dimension, as both assess consumers' willingness to engage with a brand in the future. However, purchase intention specifically focuses on consumers' readiness and intention to make a purchase rather than merely their tendency to reuse the same brand (Kotler & Keller, 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical foundation of this study is grounded in the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Model, which provides a comprehensive framework for explaining how external environmental stimuli influence consumers' internal cognitive states and ultimately shape their behavioral responses. In the context of digital marketing, Social Media Marketing serves as the primary stimulus that actively influences consumers' attitudes and behavioral intentions through the creation of interactive and engaging content on platforms such as TikTok (Watonia, 2024). The organismic variable refers to the internal processes or cognitive states that mediate the relationship between external stimuli and the final behavioral response (Mehrabian, 2017). In this study, Brand Awareness functions as the organismic variable, representing the cognitive foundation that is indispensable for subsequent consumer decision-making processes (Keller, 2013). Putri and Suprapti (2025) further demonstrated the mediating role of brand awareness in connecting social media promotional content with consumers' purchase intention. Accordingly, the S-O-R Model fundamentally explains that the influence of social media marketing on purchase intention is not direct but must be effectively mediated by brand awareness (Bibi, 2025). This theoretical perspective is consistent with the conceptual framework of the present study, in which Social Media Marketing (stimulus) enhances Brand Awareness (organism), which subsequently drives Purchase Intention (response) am

Social media marketing is defined as a strategic activity that utilizes social media platforms to create, communicate, and deliver brand value through two-way interactions with consumers (Hawkins, 2024). According to David Meerman Scott (2024), the primary dimensions of social media marketing include informativeness, interactivity, entertainment, credibility, and consistency. Kotler and Keller (2021) argue that social media marketing is an effective tool for

enhancing both brand awareness and purchase intention, particularly among digital-native consumers such as Generation Z, who rely heavily on social media when making purchasing decisions. In Indonesia's beauty industry, this is especially relevant because the primary target market for products such as The Body Shop's Body Butter/Cream consists of young consumers who actively use platforms such as TikTok. Consequently, social media marketing has become an important determinant in assessing the extent to which digital marketing activities influence consumers' perceptions and purchase intentions toward a brand.

Despite the widespread adoption of social media by beauty brands, differences remain in the effectiveness of their digital marketing strategies. The Body Shop, for example, has demonstrated lower consumer engagement than several of its competitors, suggesting that its social media marketing efforts have not generated comparable levels of consumer attention. Supporting this observation, Kemp (2025) reported that although approximately 92% of beauty brands in Indonesia actively utilize social media, only 48% successfully convert digital engagement into increased purchase intention. Furthermore, Prasetya et al. (2025) highlighted that social media marketing has evolved substantially over the past five years, expanding beyond promotional activities to encompass data analytics, brand engagement, and digital community building. Similarly, Rahmah and Tuti (2025) found that social media marketing activities exert a positive and significant influence on brand identity and brand awareness within the skincare industry, reinforcing its strategic role in creating holistic brand experiences in digital environments.

Brand awareness denotes the extent to which consumers are able to identify or remember a particular brand as part of a specific product category. (Aaker, 1991). Strong brand awareness is therefore considered essential for maintaining brand competitiveness amid digital innovation and increasingly intense online competition. According to Amalia and Adialita (2024), digital marketing activities utilize third parties, specifically social media-based websites, to achieve marketing objectives by engaging in social media networking through web posts, images, and videos regarding goods, services, or trademarks for sale. According to Kotler (2019), brand awareness can be measured through four dimensions: brand recall, brand recognition, purchase decision, and consumption. Meltareza et al. (2025) explained that greater consumer awareness of a brand's identity including its logo, name, and brand associations increases the likelihood that consumers will consider purchasing the product. Likewise, Bagus et al. (2023) demonstrated that engaging social media content, including videos, images, and storytelling, effectively enhances brand awareness.

Overall, informative, consistent, and engaging social media marketing activities improve brand visibility, particularly among Generation Z consumers who depend on social media as their primary source of brand-related information. Based on the theoretical and empirical evidence presented above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Brand Awareness.

Purchase intention refers to consumers' intention to purchase a product in the future, reflecting both their cognitive and affective evaluations of the product (Susanto & Siagian, 2025). In the digital era, purchase intention is increasingly influenced by data analytics and consumers' digital experiences (Prasetyoputra et al., 2025). According to Kotler (2019), purchase intention represents the subjective probability and willingness of consumers to purchase a particular product or service in the future. It reflects consumers' decisions to try or repurchase a brand after completing their evaluation process. Similarly, Respati et al. (2024) define purchase intention as consumers' desire and willingness to purchase a product. Measuring purchase intention is essential because it helps determine whether consumers are likely to remain loyal to a brand or switch to competing products or services (Agustin & Hafidh, 2025). According to Ferdinand (2014), purchase intention can be measured comprising four dimensions, namely transactional intention, referential intention, preferential intention, and exploratory intention.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated the positive impact of social media marketing on consumers' purchase intention. Carissa (2025) found that the effectiveness of social media marketing is reflected in content quality, interactivity, and message credibility, all of which significantly enhance consumers' purchase intention. Likewise, Cao (2025) reported that informative, entertaining, and credible social media content creates positive perceived value, thereby increasing consumers' intention to purchase. Furthermore, Carissa (2025) emphasized that well-executed social media strategies particularly those incorporating storytelling, compelling visual content, and credible influencers significantly improve consumers' purchase intention, especially within the beauty and personal care industry.

Drawing on the theoretical arguments and empirical findings discussed above, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H2: *Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention.*

Brand awareness is widely recognized as an important predictor of consumers' purchase intention in consumer behavior research. Engel et al. (1990) argued that brand awareness can be quantitatively measured through survey-based research, and empirical findings consistently demonstrate a positive relationship between brand awareness and purchase intention. Consumers who are more familiar with and aware of a brand are more likely to develop an intention to purchase it. High levels of brand awareness, particularly at the brand recall and top-of-mind stages, ensure that a brand becomes part of consumers' consideration set, thereby increasing the likelihood of purchase.

Similarly, Yadin (2002, as cited in Tsabitah, 2021) stated that a high level of brand recognition indicates that consumers have developed strong brand awareness even before making a purchase decision. In line with this view, Amalia and Adialita (2024) found that higher levels of brand awareness significantly increase consumers' intention to purchase a product. These findings suggest that consumers who can easily recognize and recall a brand are more likely to consider and ultimately purchase that brand.

Drawing on the theoretical and empirical evidence presented above, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H3: Brand Awareness has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention.

Social media marketing not only directly influences consumers' purchase intention but also indirectly affects it through brand awareness. According to Evans (2021), the effective use of social media platforms enables firms to promote their brands, strengthen consumer awareness, and ultimately stimulate purchasing behavior. Social media facilitates continuous interactions between brands and consumers, thereby increasing brand visibility and familiarity, which are essential for influencing consumers' purchase decisions.

Supporting this perspective, Dabbous (2021) found that brand awareness plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between social media marketing activities particularly content quality and brand interactivity and purchase intention. This finding suggests that effective social media marketing enhances consumers' awareness of a brand, which subsequently increases their intention to purchase the brand's products. Therefore, the impact of social media marketing on purchase intention is not only direct but also indirect through the enhancement of brand awareness.

Based on the theoretical arguments and empirical evidence discussed above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Brand Awareness mediates the effect of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention.

Based on the theoretical foundation and previous empirical studies, this study proposes a conceptual framework illustrating the relationships among the research variables. The framework depicts the influence of Social Media Marketing represents independent variable, Brand Awareness as the mediating variable, and Purchase Intention as the dependent variable. The proposed relationships among these variables are presented in the following conceptual model.

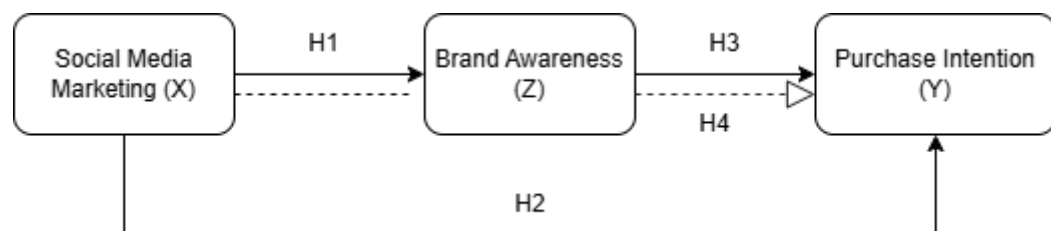


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a quantitative approach using a descriptive-associative research design to investigate the relationships among Social Media Marketing, Brand Awareness, and Purchase Intention. The research followed seven stages: operationalizing the variables, developing the questionnaire, testing the validity and reliability of the instrument, collecting data from

respondents, processing the data, analyzing the data, and testing the proposed hypotheses.

The target population consisted of Generation Z consumers aged 18–28 years residing in the Greater Bandung area, Indonesia, who actively use TikTok and are familiar with The Body Shop Body Butter/Cream products. The Greater Bandung area was selected because The Body Shop has an established market presence in this region, making it appropriate for examining consumers' purchase intentions.

A total of 120 respondents participated in this study. This sample size exceeds the minimum recommendation proposed by Sekaran and Bougie (2016), who propose that the minimum sample size should be no less than ten times the number of research variables. Since this study examined three variables Social Media Marketing, Brand Awareness, and Purchase Intention the sample size was considered adequate. Respondents were selected using a non-probability convenience sampling technique.

The data collection process involved a structured questionnaire employing a five-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The measurement items for Social Media Marketing were adapted from Yadav and Rahman (2017), Brand Awareness from Aaker (1991), and Purchase Intention from Ferdinand (2014). Prior to hypothesis testing, all questionnaire items were subjected to validity and reliability testing. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, simple and multiple linear regression, as well as the Sobel test with SPSS Software to evaluate the mediating role of Brand Awareness.

RESEARCH RESULT

Validity and Reliability Test

Table 2. Validity and Reliability Test Results

No	Questionnaire Item	Validity Test	Reliability
		Pearson Correlation (r-value)	Cronbach's <i>alpha</i>
Social Media Marketing (X)			
1	X.1	0.723	0,762
2	X.2	0.716	
3	X.3	0.650	
4	X.4	0.757	
5	X.5	0.746	
Brand Awareness (Z)			
1	Z.1	0.869	0,771
2	Z.2	0.648	
3	Z.3	0.708	
4	Z.4	0.848	
Purchase Intention (Y)			
1	Y.I	0.838	0,704
2	Y.2	0.750	
3	Y.3	0.801	

The validity and reliability of the measurement instrument were assessed prior to hypothesis testing. Pearson correlation analysis showed that all measurement items for Social Media Marketing (X), Brand Awareness (Z), and Purchase Intention (Y) were statistically significant (one-tailed $p < 0.05$), indicating that all questionnaire items were valid. Reliability analysis further demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.762 for Social Media Marketing, 0.771 for Brand Awareness, and 0.704 for Purchase Intention. Since all reliability coefficients exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019), the measurement instrument was considered reliable and appropriate for subsequent statistical analyses.

Descriptive Analysis Results

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of the Social Media Marketing Variable

Item	N	Mean	Overall Mean Score	Category
X.1	120	4.0000	3.9700 (High)	High
X.2	120	4.0500		High
X.3	120	3.8417		High
X.4	120	3.8917		High
X.5	120	4.0667		High

The descriptive analysis of the Social Media Marketing variable indicates that the mean scores ranged from 3.84 to 4.07, with an overall mean score of 3.97, suggesting that respondents perceived the Social Media Marketing activities of The Body Shop Body Butter/Cream on TikTok positively. Overall, the variable was categorized as high, indicating that TikTok marketing activities were generally well received by Generation Z users. Among the indicators, X.5 ("The information presented in The Body Shop Body Butter/Cream TikTok content is consistent with the product benefits described") obtained the highest mean score ($M = 4.07$), indicating that respondents considered the information shared through TikTok to be credible and consistent with the product's actual benefits. Conversely, X.3 ("The Body Shop Body Butter/Cream TikTok content attracts my attention to watch it") recorded the lowest mean score ($M = 3.84$). Although this indicator remained within the high category, the finding suggests that the attractiveness of The Body Shop's TikTok content could be further enhanced to capture greater audience attention and engagement.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of the Brand Awareness Variable

Item	N	Mean	Overall Mean Score	Category
Z.1	120	3.9833	3.97915 (High)	High
Z.2	120	3.9833		High
Z.3	120	4.0083		High
Z.4	120	3.9417		High

The descriptive analysis of the Brand Awareness variable revealed that the mean scores ranged from 3.94 to 4.00, with an overall mean score of 3.98. This result indicates a high level of Brand Awareness toward The Body Shop Body Butter/Cream products among Generation Z TikTok users. Among the indicators, Z.3 ("I consider The Body Shop Body Butter/Cream as one of my choices for treating dry skin") achieved the highest mean score ($M = 4.01$), suggesting that respondents regard the product as a favorable option for dry skin care. In contrast, Z.4 ("The Body Shop Body Butter/Cream is my first choice when purchasing skincare products for dry skin") recorded the lowest mean score ($M = 3.94$). Although this indicator remained within the high category, the finding suggests that while respondents are familiar with the brand, The Body Shop has not yet become their primary choice compared with competing brands.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of the Purchase Intention Variable

Item	N	Mean	Total Mean Statistic	Std. Deviation
Y.1	120	3.9167	3.9389 (High)	High
Y.2	120	3.8083		High
Y.3	120	4.0917		High

The descriptive analysis of the Purchase Intention variable revealed that the mean scores ranged from 3.81 to 4.09, with an overall mean score of 3.94, indicating a high level of purchase intention toward The Body Shop Body Butter/Cream products among Generation Z TikTok users. Among the indicators, Y.3 ("I am interested in seeking more information about The Body Shop Body Butter/Cream products through TikTok") achieved the highest mean score ($M = 4.09$), suggesting that TikTok content effectively stimulated respondents' interest in obtaining additional product information. In contrast, Y.2 ("The Body Shop Body Butter/Cream is my first choice when purchasing skincare products for dry skin") recorded the lowest mean score ($M = 3.81$). Although this indicator remained within the high category, the finding indicates that respondents have not yet fully considered The Body Shop as their primary choice for dry skin care products, highlighting the need for more effective marketing strategies to strengthen consumers' purchase preferences and intentions.

Classical Assumption Test

Classical assumption tests were carried out to confirm that the regression model fulfilled the required assumptions, including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity.

Table 6. Classical Assumption Test Results

No	Test	Model	Criteria	Result	Interpretation
1	Normality	Model 1 ($X \rightarrow Z$)	(Sig) > 0,05	(Sig) = 0,200	Normal distribution
		Model 2 ($X, Z \rightarrow Y$)	(Sig) > 0,05	(Sig) = 0,200	
2	Multicollinearity	Model 1 ($X \rightarrow Z$)	Tolerance value > 0,1 dan VIF < 10	Tolerance value = 1.000 dan VIF = 1.000	No multicollinearity
		Model 2 ($X, Z \rightarrow Y$)	Tolerance value > 0,1 dan VIF < 10	<i>Social Media Marketing</i> (X) Tolerance value = 0.210 dan VIF = 4.770 <i>Brand Awareness</i> (Z) Tolerance value = 0.210 dan VIF = 4.770	
3	Heteroscedasticity	Model 1 ($X \rightarrow Z$)	(Sig) > 0,05	(Sig) = 0,622	No heteroscedasticity
		Model 2 ($X, Z \rightarrow Y$)	(Sig) > 0,05	(Sig) = 0,825 (Sig) = 0,857	

The classical assumption tests were conducted prior to regression analysis to ensure that the proposed models satisfied the assumptions of the Best Linear Unbiased Estimator (BLUE). The normality test showed that both regression models were normally distributed, with significance values of 0.200 ($p > 0.05$). The multicollinearity test indicated tolerance values ranging from 0.210 to 1.000 and variance inflation factor (VIF) values ranging from 1.000 to 4.770, all of which met the recommended criteria (Tolerance > 0.10; VIF < 10), confirming the

absence of multicollinearity. Furthermore, the heteroscedasticity test produced significance values of 0.622, 0.825, and 0.857, all exceeding the 0.05 threshold, indicating that heteroscedasticity was not present. Overall, these results confirm that the regression models satisfied the classical assumptions and were appropriate for subsequent regression and mediation analyses.

Simple and Multiple Regression Analysis

The direct effects of Social Media Marketing on Brand Awareness and Purchase Intention, as well as the combined effects of Social Media Marketing and Brand Awareness on Purchase Intention, were examined using simple and multiple linear regression analyses.

Table 7. Results of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T Value	Sig
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.021	.762		.028	.978
	<i>Social Media Marketing (X)</i>	.801	.038	.889	21.091	.000

a. Dependent Variable : *Brand Awareness (Z)*

The simple linear regression analysis produced the following regression equation

$$Z = 0,021 + 0,801X$$

As presented in Table 8, Social Media Marketing has a positive and statistically significant effect on Brand Awareness ($B = 0.801$, $\beta = 0.889$, $t = 21.091$, $p < 0.001$). The positive regression coefficient indicates that improvements in Social Media Marketing activities are associated with higher levels of Brand Awareness among Generation Z TikTok users of The Body Shop Body Butter/Cream products. Specifically, a one-unit increase in Social Media Marketing is associated with a 0.801-unit increase in Brand Awareness. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is supported.

Subsequently, multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the direct effects of Social Media Marketing and Brand Awareness on Purchase Intention.

Table 8. Results of the Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T Value	Sig
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-0,164	.644		-0,255	.799
	<i>Social Media Marketing</i>	.445	.070	.635	6.350	.000
	<i>Brand Awareness</i>	.198	.078	.254	2.539	.012

a. Dependent Variable: *Purchahse Intention (Y)*

The multiple linear regression analysis produced the following regression equation:

$$Y = -0,164 + 0,445X + 0,198Z$$

As presented in Table 9, Social Media Marketing has a positive and statistically significant effect on Purchase Intention ($B = 0.445$, $t = 6.350$, $p < 0.001$). Likewise, Brand Awareness also has a positive and statistically significant effect on Purchase Intention ($B = 0.198$, $t = 2.539$, $p = 0.012$). These findings indicate that stronger Social Media Marketing activities on TikTok and higher Brand Awareness are associated with greater Purchase Intention toward The Body Shop Body Butter/Cream products among Generation Z consumers. Specifically, a one-unit increase in Social Media Marketing is associated with a 0.445-unit increase in Purchase Intention, while a one-unit increase in Brand Awareness is associated with a 0.198-unit increase in Purchase Intention. Therefore, Hypotheses 2 and 3 are supported.

Table 9. Sobel Test Results

Hypothesized Relationship Between Variable	a	b	Sa	Sb	Sobel Test Results (Z-count)	Criteria	P Value	Interpretation
Social Media Marketing → Brand Awareness → Purchase Intention	0,801	0,198	0,038	0,078	2,520	Z count > Z tabel (1,9803)	0,0117	Brand Awareness successfully mediates the effect of social media marketing on purchase intention

The Sobel test was performed to determine the significance of the mediating role of Brand Awareness (Z) on the relationship between Social Media Marketing (X) and Purchase Intention (Y). Based on the statistical analysis, the mediation effect yielded a Z-value of 2.520, which is greater than the critical Z-table value of 1.9803. Furthermore, the associated p-value was 0.0117, which is below the significance threshold of 0.05. These results provide empirical evidence that Brand Awareness significantly mediates the influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention for The Body Shop's body butter/cream products among Generation Z users in the Bandung Raya region. Consequently, the fourth hypothesis (H4) is supported, indicating that social media marketing activities effectively drive purchase intent by first successfully building and strengthening brand recognition in the minds of the consumers

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Brand Awareness

The findings of this study demonstrate that social media marketing exerts a positive and significant effect on brand awareness for The Body Shop's body butter/cream products among Gen Z TikTok users in the Bandung Raya region. This is evidenced by a t-value of 21.091, which significantly exceeds the critical t-value of 1.6579, and a significance value of 0.000, which is well below the 0.05 threshold. Within the S-O-R framework, social media marketing functions as the stimulus the external environmental input that actively exposes consumers to brand-related information through informative, interactive, entertaining, credible, and consistent TikTok content (Watonia, 2024). This stimulus is subsequently processed by the consumer's cognitive system, resulting in heightened brand recognition and recall. Specifically, the consistency and informativeness of TikTok content help consumers recognize and recall The Body Shop brand more effectively, thereby strengthening the organismic (cognitive) dimension of the S-O-R chain. These findings suggest that the better the social media marketing activities characterized by informativeness, interactivity, entertainment, credibility, and consistency the higher the brand awareness among the target audience. Specifically, the consistency and informativeness of TikTok content help consumers recognize and recall the brand more effectively. These results are consistent with the research by Cheung et al. (2021) and Bagus et al. (2023), which stated that interactive and entertaining social media content can significantly stimulate brand awareness. Therefore, the findings support H1 and emphasize that TikTok is a powerful tool for building a strong brand presence in the minds of young consumers.

The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention

The analysis reveals that social media marketing also exerts a positive and significant influence on purchase intention. This is supported by a t-value of 6.350, which is higher than the critical t-value of 1.6579, and a significance level of 0.000. From the perspective of the S-O-R Model, this finding confirms that social media marketing as an external stimulus is capable of directly triggering a behavioral response namely, purchase intention – even without full mediation, provided the stimulus is sufficiently strong and credible (Mehrabian, 2017). These results indicate that effective marketing strategies on TikTok, such as utilizing credible influencers and engaging storytelling, can directly encourage Gen Z consumers to consider purchasing The Body Shop products. The high interactivity of the platform allows brands to communicate value propositions that resonate with the personal values of Gen Z. These findings align with the studies of Cao (2025), which found that informative and credible social media content forms a positive perceived value that drives purchase intention. Thus, H2 is supported, confirming that strategic TikTok campaigns are vital for converting digital engagement into potential sales.

The Influence of Brand Awareness on Purchase Intention

The results demonstrate that brand awareness has a positive and significant impact on purchase intention. This is indicated by a t-value of 2.539 and a

significance value of 0.012, which is lower than 0.05. Within the S-O-R framework, brand awareness represents the organismic variable the internal cognitive state shaped by prior exposure to social media marketing stimuli. This finding implies that when consumers have a high level of brand recognition and recall, they are more likely to include the brand in their consideration set when making a purchase decision. For The Body Shop, being the "top of mind" brand for body care products directly correlates with a consumer's willingness to buy. This result is in line with the theories of Aaker (2020) and the findings of Amalia & Adialita (2024), which state that higher brand awareness leads to a greater desire to make a purchase. Therefore, H3 is supported, highlighting that brand recognition is a critical precursor to consumer action.

The Mediating Effect of Brand Awareness on the Relationship between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Intention

Based on the Sobel Test results, brand awareness is proven to significantly mediate the influence of social media marketing on purchase intention. The test yielded a Z-value of 2.520, which is greater than the required 1.9803, and a p-value of 0.0117, which is less than 0.05. This confirms that social media marketing on TikTok does not only drive purchase intention directly but also works effectively by first strengthening the brand's presence in the consumer's memory. In the context of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model used in this study, social media marketing acts as the stimulus that enhances the consumer's cognitive state (brand awareness), which subsequently triggers the behavioral response (purchase intention). These findings support H4 and are consistent with research by Dabbous (2021), which identified brand awareness as a crucial mediator in the digital marketing ecosystem. This suggests that to overcome the "Market Paradox" and declining indices, The Body Shop must prioritize building awareness through TikTok to effectively drive long-term purchase intent

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results and discussion, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the influence of social media marketing on the purchase intention of The Body Shop's products among Gen Z in Bandung Raya.

1. Social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on brand awareness, indicating that TikTok activities effectively enhance brand recognition among young consumers.
2. Social media marketing positively and significantly influences purchase intention, proving that appropriate content strategies can directly drive consumer desire to buy.
3. Brand awareness is shown to have a positive and significant impact on purchase intention, as higher brand recognition ensures the product remains in the consumer's consideration set.
4. Brand awareness successfully mediates the relationship between social media marketing and purchase intention, confirming that digital marketing is most effective when it first succeeds in building strong brand recognition

RECOMMENDATIONS

The management of The Body Shop Indonesia is encouraged to prioritize optimizing promotional content on TikTok by ensuring it is informative, interactive, and entertaining to align with Generation Z's communication style, including the use of authentic testimonials to strengthen brand recall. Furthermore, it is essential for the company to design more accurate campaign evaluation metrics, incorporating systematic monitoring of likes, views, and engagement rates to ensure that every digital strategy effectively impacts and drives purchase intention. Additionally, the company needs to cultivate a more active digital community on TikTok through interactive challenges and two-way engagement, a strategy vital for enhancing brand loyalty and fostering deeper brand awareness within the Generation Z market segment.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

This study has several limitations that provide opportunities for future investigation. First, the research scope was limited to the Bandung Raya region; therefore, future researchers are encouraged to expand the geographical coverage to obtain more generalizable results across different market characteristics. Second, this study focused exclusively on the TikTok platform. Future research could provide a comparative analysis of other short-form video platforms such as Instagram Reels or YouTube Shorts. Third, it is suggested that future studies incorporate additional variables not covered in this model, such as brand trust, customer engagement, or perceived quality, to offer a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing digital-native consumer behavior.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author would like to express the deepest gratitude to Hariyadi Triwahyu Putra, S.E., M.M., as the supervisor, for his invaluable guidance, insights, and time dedicated to the completion of this research. Special thanks are also extended to the examiners, Siti Herawati, S.E., M.P., and Abdul Ahmad Hafidh Nurmansyah, S.E., M.M., for their constructive reviews and suggestions. The author also acknowledges the support from the Dean and the Faculty of Economics and Business at Universitas Jenderal Achmad Yani. Lastly, heartfelt appreciation goes to the author's parents, Wawan Hermawan and Imas Cucu Seniawati, for their endless prayers and support throughout this academic journey.

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