

# The Effect of Digital Marketing and Brand Awareness on Purchase Decisions through Engagement with Promotion as Moderator

Mediating Effect of  
Engagement on  
Purchase Decision

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## ABSTRACT

*This study is motivated by the rapid growth of e-commerce in Indonesia, where digital interactions increasingly shape consumer purchasing decisions, while prior findings regarding digital marketing, brand awareness, customer engagement, and promotion remain partially contradictory. The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of digital marketing and brand awareness on customer engagement and purchase decisions, as well as to test the mediating role of customer engagement and the moderating role of promotion. A quantitative approach was employed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with 234 respondents selected through purposive sampling. The results indicate that digital marketing and brand awareness have significant positive effects on both customer engagement and purchase decisions. Customer engagement is identified as the most dominant variable and partially mediates these relationships. In contrast, promotion shows no significant direct effect on purchase decisions and does not moderate the relationship between customer engagement and purchase decisions. The findings imply that e-commerce strategies should prioritize engagement-driven approaches and brand strengthening rather than relying heavily on promotional incentives. In conclusion, purchase decisions in digital marketplaces are more strongly driven by customer engagement and brand-related factors than by promotional stimuli.*

**Keywords:** Brand Awareness, Customer Engagement, Digital Marketing, E-Commerce Promotion, Purchase Decision.

## INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of e-commerce in Indonesia, particularly through platforms such as Tokopedia, has transformed consumer decision-making into a digitally mediated and interaction-driven process. Contemporary behavior is shaped by multiple digital touchpoints, including social media, content marketing, online advertising, and search engines across the purchase journey. Innovations such as live commerce enhance real-time interaction and personalization, increasing engagement and purchase intention (Kim, 2020; Dwivedi et al., 2021). Social commerce further leverages relational and cognitive social capital (Yang et al., 2025). Younger consumers, especially Generation Z and millennials, display hedonic and impulsive tendencies, encouraging firms to adopt data-driven personalization strategies (Roye & Mohan, 2024).

Aligned with digital transformation, brand awareness functions as a critical cognitive foundation shaping consumer purchase decisions in online marketplaces. In environments characterized by information overload and high product substitutability, it reduces perceived uncertainty and simplifies choices by enhancing recognition, recall, and familiarity with platforms or sellers (Keller, 1993). Theoretical perspectives such as the hierarchy of effects and associative network theory explain how consumers process brand

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information and form mental associations that influence behavior. In digital contexts, strong brand awareness fosters trust and encourages interaction with platform content. Simultaneously, customer engagement reflects consumers' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral involvement, driving active participation and ultimately influencing purchase decisions (Hollebeek et al., 2014).

However, while digital marketing, brand awareness, and customer engagement have been widely acknowledged as key determinants of consumer behavior, the role of promotion in e-commerce remains theoretically complex. Promotional tools such as discounts, cashback, vouchers, and seasonal campaigns are extensively used to stimulate consumer response, yet their effectiveness as drivers of long-term purchasing behavior is increasingly debated. In highly competitive marketplace environments, frequent exposure to promotions may lead to their normalization, thereby reducing their marginal impact on consumer decision-making. Empirical evidence by Chandon et al. (2000) suggests that while promotion can influence purchasing behavior, its role as a moderating variable is not always significant, indicating that promotions may function more effectively as complementary rather than primary drivers of purchase decisions. This raises an important question regarding whether promotional strategies genuinely strengthen consumer engagement or merely act as short-term transactional incentives.

From a scholarly perspective, state-of-the-art research has extensively explored the individual roles of digital marketing, brand awareness, customer engagement, and promotion in influencing online consumer behavior (Brodie et al., 2011; Ahmed et al., 2024). Recent studies by Zheng et al. (2021) and Zhou et al. (2023) highlighted the importance of engagement as a mediator in digital environments, particularly in social media and live commerce contexts. Nevertheless, existing literature largely treats these constructs in isolation or examines them through direct relationships, with limited attention given to their integrated and conditional effects within a single comprehensive framework. Moreover, the interaction between engagement and promotion as a moderating mechanism remains underexplored, particularly in emerging e-commerce markets such as Indonesia.

A critical research gap persists in understanding how digital marketing and brand awareness jointly influence purchase decisions through customer engagement, and whether promotion strengthens or alters this relationship within marketplace-based e-commerce settings. It remains unclear whether engagement acts as the primary behavioral mechanism translating marketing stimuli into purchase decisions, and whether promotional intensity enhances or diminishes this effect in real-world consumer contexts such as Tokopedia.

To address this gap, this study develops and empirically tests an integrated moderated mediation model using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The model positions customer engagement as a mediating variable between digital marketing, brand awareness, and purchase decision, while incorporating promotion as a moderating variable on the relationship between customer engagement and purchase decision. This approach enables a more comprehensive understanding of both direct and indirect relationships among key constructs in digital consumer behavior.

This study contributes to the literature in several important ways. First, it extends customer engagement theory by demonstrating its central role as a behavioral mechanism linking digital marketing and brand awareness to purchase decisions. Second, it enriches brand equity literature by highlighting the continued relevance of brand awareness in digital marketplace environments. Third, it challenges conventional assumptions regarding the effectiveness of promotion by providing empirical evidence on its limited role as a moderating factor. This study offers context-specific insights into consumer behavior in Indonesia's e-commerce ecosystem, thereby contributing to the broader understanding of digital consumption patterns in emerging markets.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW & HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT**

### **The Influence on Customer Engagement**

Digital marketing has become a central strategic capability in e-commerce because it enables firms to communicate, interact, personalize, and deliver value through multiple digital touchpoints (Anita et al., 2025; Simanjuntak et al., 2025). In online marketplace settings, consumers are exposed to brand messages through social media marketing, content marketing, online advertising, direct digital communication, and search visibility. These digital channels do not merely transmit information; they create repeated interaction opportunities that shape consumer attention, emotional responses, and behavioral participation. Prior research by Godey et al. (2016) and Dwivedi et al. (2021) emphasizes that digital and social media marketing activities can strengthen consumer–brand relationships by increasing interaction, perceived relevance, and engagement with digital content. In this study, digital marketing is therefore expected to enhance customer engagement among Tokopedia users.

Brand awareness refers to consumers' ability to recognize, recall, and distinguish a brand from competing alternatives (Abdullah, 2020; Wan, 2023). In e-commerce environments where consumers face many sellers, products, and promotional messages, brand awareness functions as a cognitive anchor that reduces uncertainty and simplifies decision-making. According to customer-based brand equity theory, brand awareness is a foundational element of brand equity because it shapes consumer memory, brand associations, and consideration sets (Keller, 1993; Rahimi et al., 2023). When consumers are familiar with a marketplace brand, they are more likely to pay attention to its content, interact with its digital features, and develop stronger engagement. Therefore, brand awareness is expected to increase customer engagement.

H1: Digital marketing has a positive influence on customer engagement.

H2: Brand awareness has a positive influence on customer engagement.

### **The Influence on Purchase Decisions**

Customer engagement represents the level of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral investment that consumers exhibit in their interactions with a brand or platform (Ansari et al., 2019). Highly engaged consumers are more attentive to brand-related information, more emotionally connected to digital experiences, and more inclined to interact with brand content. Theoretical perspectives on customer engagement suggest that such involvement enhances relational outcomes and significantly influences purchase-related behavior (Adelia et al., 2024). Within digital commerce environments, engagement shifts consumers from passive recipients of information to active participants in the purchasing process, thereby increasing the probability of purchase decisions.

In addition, digital marketing and brand awareness serve as key determinants of consumer decision-making. Digital marketing facilitates product visibility, enhances access to information, and lowers search costs, allowing consumers to efficiently identify, compare, and evaluate available options. Empirical studies by Hutter et al. (2013) and Dwivedi et al. (2021) indicate that digital and social media marketing shape brand evaluations, purchase intentions, and decision-making processes. Similarly, brand awareness exerts a direct influence on purchase decisions by increasing familiarity and reducing perceived risk (Hamdan & Tajuddin, 2024). Consumers are more likely to choose brands that are easily recognized and recalled, as these are more likely to be included in their consideration set (Keller, 1993).

Promotion is another widely employed strategy in e-commerce to stimulate consumer responses through mechanisms such as discounts, cashback, vouchers, and seasonal campaigns. These promotional tools can generate immediate value perceptions and encourage short-term purchasing behavior. However, their effectiveness is not always consistent or enduring, particularly in highly competitive marketplace environments where similar incentives are frequently offered. Sales promotions may provide both utilitarian and hedonic benefits, but their impact depends on consumers' perceived value

of the offer (Chandon et al., 2000). Therefore, while promotion can influence purchase decisions, its effectiveness may vary depending on contextual conditions within e-commerce settings.

H3: Customer engagement has a positive influence on purchase decisions.

H4: Digital marketing has a positive influence on purchase decisions.

H5: Brand awareness has a positive influence on purchase decisions.

H6: Promotion has a positive influence on purchase decisions.

### **Promotion as a Moderating Variable**

Promotion can be conceptualized as a moderating factor in the relationship between customer engagement and purchase decision (Bismo & Putra, 2019; Evania et al., 2023). When promotional incentives such as discounts, cashback, or vouchers are perceived as valuable, they may intensify the likelihood that engaged consumers convert their involvement into actual purchasing behavior. In this regard, promotion enhances the perceived economic benefits associated with a transaction and reinforces the motivation generated through consumers' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement. Promotion may serve as a contextual stimulus that strengthens the behavioral effect of customer engagement by encouraging consumers to act upon their existing interest in a brand or platform (Brodie et al., 2011; Vivek et al., 2012).

Nevertheless, the moderating influence of promotion may be limited in highly competitive and mature e-commerce environments (Kaveh et al., 2021; Syalsabila & Hermina, 2023). The widespread and repetitive use of similar promotional strategies across platforms can lead to consumer habituation, reducing the distinctiveness and perceived value of such offers. As a result, promotional activities may lose their effectiveness in amplifying the relationship between engagement and purchase behavior. Under these conditions, promotion is more likely to function as a routine transactional mechanism rather than a differentiating driver of consumer decisions (Retnosari & Nadlifatin, 2024). This study investigates whether promotion significantly strengthens the effect of customer engagement on purchase decisions within contemporary e-commerce contexts (Thakur, 2019).

H7: Promotion strengthens the relationship between customer engagement and purchase decision.

### **Customer Engagement as a Mediating Variable**

Customer engagement may function as an underlying mechanism through which digital marketing and brand awareness influence purchase decisions (Khalifa et al., 2022; Rather et al., 2023). Digital marketing provides consumers with a range of stimuli, including information, interactive features, and communication channels. However, its effectiveness is significantly enhanced when these elements generate active consumer engagement. Through engagement, consumers are more likely to process marketing messages in depth, interact with digital content, and build meaningful connections with the platform. The effect of digital marketing on purchase decisions is not purely direct but also depends on its ability to stimulate consumer involvement within the digital environment (Khashan et al., 2023; Dananjoyo et al., 2024).

In a similar vein, brand awareness can affect purchase decisions both directly and indirectly via customer engagement (Kumar et al., 2023; Yu et al., 2024). While recognition and familiarity increase the probability of a brand being considered, their influence becomes stronger when consumers actively engage with the brand and its associated content (Dewantara & Lulita, 2024). Engagement supports the formation of cognitive linkages and emotional attachment, which ultimately reinforces purchasing behavior. Existing literature highlights that customer engagement serves as a critical mechanism connecting marketing stimuli with consumer behavioral outcomes (Brodie et al., 2011; Vivek et al., 2012). Customer engagement is expected to mediate the

relationship between digital marketing, brand awareness, and purchase decisions in digital marketplace settings.

H8: Customer engagement mediates the relationship between digital marketing and purchase decision.

H9: Customer engagement mediates the relationship between brand awareness and purchase decision.

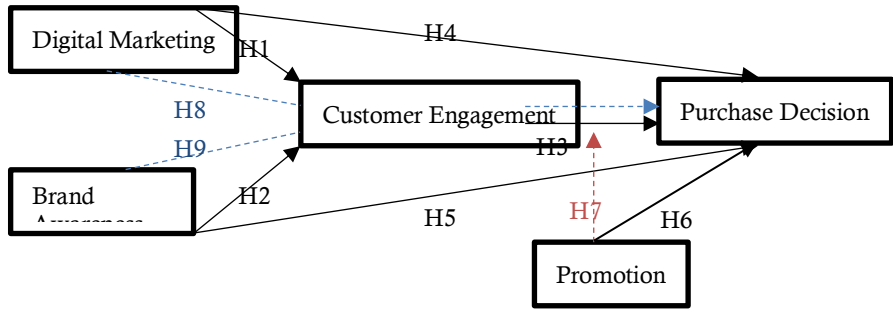


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 illustrates that a purchase decision is influenced by several key factors, namely digital marketing, brand awareness, customer engagement, and promotion. Digital marketing and brand awareness directly influence customer engagement (H1 and H2), while customer engagement subsequently has a direct effect on purchase decision (H3). In addition, digital marketing and brand awareness also have direct effects on purchase decisions (H4 and H5). Promotion acts as a moderating variable that strengthens the relationship between customer engagement and purchase decision (H7). Furthermore, customer engagement serves as a mediating variable in the relationships between digital marketing and purchase decision as well as between brand awareness and purchase decision (H8 and H9).

**RESEARCH METHODS**

This study adopts a quantitative explanatory research design to examine the relationships among digital marketing, brand awareness, customer engagement, promotion, and purchase decisions in the context of Tokopedia users. The proposed model is developed to test both direct and indirect relationships, incorporating customer engagement as a mediating variable and promotion as a moderating variable. This approach is appropriate for predictive analysis and theory testing in marketing and consumer behavior research. The population consists of individuals who have experience using Tokopedia as an e-commerce platform. A purposive sampling technique is applied to ensure that respondents meet specific criteria, including being at least 17 years old, having made at least one purchase on Tokopedia, being exposed to its digital marketing activities, and having encountered promotional programs such as discounts, cashback, vouchers, or seasonal campaigns. A total of 234 valid responses were collected and considered sufficient for analysis using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).

The variables in this study include digital marketing (X1), brand awareness (X2), customer engagement (Y1), promotion (M), and purchase decision (Y2). Digital marketing is measured through indicators such as social media marketing, content marketing, online advertising, email or WhatsApp communication, and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) visibility. Brand awareness is assessed using brand recognition, brand recall, top-of-mind awareness, brand familiarity, and brand differentiation. Customer engagement is measured through cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement, as well as content interaction and participation. Promotion is evaluated based on discount, cashback, voucher, or bonus, seasonal promotion, and attractiveness of promotional offers. Purchase decisions are measured through stages of consumer

decision-making, including need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior. All constructs are measured using a five-point Likert scale.

Data collection is conducted using an online questionnaire distributed through digital platforms. The instrument consists of two sections: respondent characteristics, including demographic and behavioral information, and measurement items for each variable. Participation is voluntary, and respondent anonymity is maintained throughout the process. The data are analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which is suitable for analyzing complex models involving mediating and moderating variables and does not require strict normality assumptions (Hair et al., 2021). The analysis is carried out in two stages. First, the measurement model is evaluated to assess reliability and validity using outer loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). Second, the structural model is assessed using path coefficients ( $\beta$ ), t-statistics, p-values, coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), and effect size ( $f^2$ ). Mediation effects are tested through indirect effect analysis, while moderation effects are examined using interaction terms. Bootstrapping procedures are applied to determine the statistical significance of all hypothesized relationships.

## RESULTS

An overview of respondent characteristics is provided to illustrate the profile of the sample and to confirm its suitability for addressing the research objectives. The data encompass both demographic factors, including gender, age, education level, and occupation, and behavioral factors, such as income, frequency of shopping on Tokopedia, length of platform usage, commonly purchased product categories, information sources, and the extent of promotion usage. This description is important for contextualizing the analysis and for supporting a clearer interpretation of how digital marketing, brand awareness, customer engagement, and promotion relate to purchase decisions among Tokopedia users.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristic

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	91	38.9
	Female	143	61.1
Age	< 20 Years	28	12.0
	21–30 Years	132	56.4
	31–40 Years	52	22.2
	> 40 Years	22	9.4
Education	High School	64	27.4
	Diploma	31	13.2
	Bachelor	118	50.4
	Postgraduate	21	9.0
Occupation	Student	61	26.1
	Private Employee	89	38.0
	Civil Servant/Military/Police	24	10.3
	Entrepreneur	43	18.4
	Others	17	7.3
Monthly income/allowance	< IDR 1,500,000	49	20.9
	IDR 1,500,000–3,000,000	78	33.3
	IDR 3,000,001–5,000,000	67	28.6
	> IDR 5,000,000	40	17.1
Shopping frequency on Tokopedia	1–2 Times/Month	83	35.5
	3–5 Times/Month	104	44.4
	> 5 Times/Month	47	20.1
Duration of Tokopedia use	< 1 Year	37	15.8

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Product category often purchased	1–3 Years	112	47.9
	> 3 Years	85	36.3
	Fashion	58	24.8
	Electronics/Gadgets	41	17.5
	Household Needs	69	29.5
	Beauty/Personal Care	44	18.8
Information source about Tokopedia	Others	22	9.4
	Social Media	96	41.0
	Digital Advertising	49	20.9
	Tokopedia Application/Website	52	22.2
	Friends/Family	25	10.7
	Search Engine	12	5.1
Promotion usage	Very Often	71	30.3
	Often	86	36.8
	Sometimes	59	25.2
	Rarely	18	7.7
Total		234	100.0

Table 1 illustrates the demographic and behavioral characteristics of the respondents included in this study. The sample is largely dominated by female participants (61.1%) and individuals aged 21–30 years (56.4%), indicating a strong presence of young adult users. In terms of education and occupation, most respondents have a bachelor’s degree (50.4%) and work as private employees (38.0%), with income levels primarily between IDR 1,500,000 and 3,000,000 (33.3%). Regarding platform usage, respondents typically shop on Tokopedia 3–5 times per month (44.4%) and have been using the platform for 1–3 years (47.9%). Household needs (29.5%) and fashion (24.8%) emerge as the most commonly purchased product categories. Social media is identified as the main source of information (41.0%), and a large proportion of respondents frequently utilize promotional offers.

Table 2. Measurement Test

Construct	Item	Loading Factor	Cronbach’s Alpha	Composite Reliability (Rho_A)	AVE
Brand Awareness	BA1	0.893	0.958	0.959	0.856
	BA2	0.921			
	BA3	0.928			
	BA4	0.925			
	BA5	0.958			
Digital Marketing	DM1	0.938	0.962	0.963	0.869
	DM2	0.933			
	DM3	0.929			
	DM4	0.950			
	DM5	0.911			
Customer Engagement	CE1	0.926	0.948	0.948	0.828
	CE2	0.934			
	CE3	0.871			
	CE4	0.909			
	CE5	0.907			
Purchase Decisions	PD1	0.900	0.948	0.948	0.829
	PD2	0.937			
	PD3	0.919			
	PD4	0.897			
	PD5	0.898			
Promotion	P1	0.935	0.964	1.046	0.870
	P2	0.948			
	P3	0.944			
	P4	0.908			
	P5	0.928			

Table 2 indicates that all constructs meet the required standards of reliability and validity. All indicators have loading factors above 0.87, reflecting strong indicator reliability. The Cronbach's alpha values, ranging from 0.948 to 0.964, along with composite reliability (rho\_a) values exceeding 0.70, demonstrate a high level of internal consistency. Furthermore, all AVE values are above 0.80, surpassing the minimum threshold of 0.50 and confirming adequate convergent validity. These findings suggest that the measurement model is robust and appropriate for subsequent analysis (Sarstedt et al., 2022).

Table 3. HTMT Test

Construct	Brand Awareness	Customer Engagement	Digital Marketing	Purchase Decision	Promotion
Customer Engagement	0.535				
Digital Marketing	0.361	0.498			
Purchase Decision	0.539	0.669	0.511		
Promotion	0.131	0.036	0.030	0.052	
Promotion × Customer Engagement	0.080	0.041	0.026	0.013	0.340

Table 3 reports the results of the discriminant validity test using the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) approach. All HTMT values fall below the recommended threshold of 0.90, indicating that the constructs are clearly differentiated from one another. The associations among brand awareness, customer engagement, digital marketing, and purchase decision show moderate HTMT values, whereas promotion and its interaction term display relatively low values across all constructs. These findings confirm that discriminant validity is achieved, meaning each construct captures a distinct concept and the measurement model is appropriate for subsequent analysis.

Table 4. Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Construct	Brand Awareness	Customer Engagement	Digital Marketing	Purchase Decision	Promotion
Brand Awareness	0.925				
Customer Engagement	0.510	0.910			
Digital Marketing	0.347	0.477	0.932		
Purchase Decision	0.514	0.635	0.488	0.911	
Promotion	0.124	0.015	0.009	0.051	0.933

Table 4 displays the Fornell–Larcker criterion results used to assess discriminant validity among the study constructs. The diagonal elements, which represent the square root of the AVE, are greater than the correlations between constructs, indicating that each construct captures more variance from its own indicators than from other constructs. Brand awareness, customer engagement, digital marketing, purchase decision, and promotion all meet the requirements of discriminant validity, as shown by the clear difference between diagonal and off-diagonal values. These findings confirm that the constructs are empirically distinct and that the measurement model satisfies the necessary validity standards for further analysis.

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesized Relationship	Original Sample ( $\beta$ )	Sample Mean	STDEV	t-statistics	p-value	Result
Brand Awareness $\rightarrow$ Customer Engagement	0.392	0.391	0.090	4.343	0.000	Supported
Digital Marketing $\rightarrow$ Customer Engagement	0.340	0.341	0.090	3.789	0.000	Supported
Customer Engagement $\rightarrow$ Purchase Decision	0.421	0.425	0.096	4.398	0.000	Supported
Brand Awareness $\rightarrow$ Purchase Decision	0.226	0.222	0.080	2.813	0.005	Supported
Digital Marketing $\rightarrow$ Purchase Decision	0.209	0.205	0.075	2.803	0.005	Supported
Promotion $\rightarrow$ Purchase Decision	0.023	0.020	0.074	0.305	0.760	Not supported
Promotion $\times$ Customer Engagement $\rightarrow$ Purchase Decision	-0.011	-0.009	0.036	0.314	0.753	Not supported

Table 5 summarizes the results of hypothesis testing conducted in this study. The results show that brand awareness significantly and positively influences customer engagement ( $\beta = 0.392$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), as does digital marketing ( $\beta = 0.340$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Customer engagement also has a strong and significant effect on purchase decision ( $\beta = 0.421$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Furthermore, both brand awareness ( $\beta = 0.226$ ,  $p = 0.005$ ) and digital marketing ( $\beta = 0.209$ ,  $p = 0.005$ ) have a significant direct impact on purchase decision. In contrast, promotion does not show a significant effect on purchase decision ( $\beta = 0.023$ ,  $p = 0.760$ ), nor does the interaction between promotion and customer engagement ( $\beta = -0.011$ ,  $p = 0.753$ ). The majority of hypotheses are supported, except those involving promotion.

Table 6. Indirect Effect

Indirect Path	Original Sample ( $\beta$ )	Sample Mean	STDEV	t-statistic	p-value	Result
Brand Awareness $\rightarrow$ Customer Engagement $\rightarrow$ Purchase Decision	0.165	0.169	0.060	2.737	0.006	Supported
Digital Marketing $\rightarrow$ Customer Engagement $\rightarrow$ Purchase Decision	0.143	0.148	0.057	2.529	0.011	Supported

Table 6 reports the results of the indirect effect testing. The findings show that customer engagement plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between brand awareness and purchase decision, indicated by a positive indirect effect ( $\beta = 0.165$ ,  $p = 0.006$ ). Likewise, customer engagement also significantly mediates the relationship between digital marketing and purchase decision, with an indirect effect of  $\beta = 0.143$  ( $p = 0.011$ ). These results demonstrate that both brand awareness and digital marketing influence purchase decisions indirectly through customer engagement, emphasizing their crucial role as mediating variables in the model.

## DISCUSSION

The findings show that digital marketing and brand awareness significantly enhance customer engagement, which subsequently becomes the strongest predictor of purchase decisions. This pattern suggests that in e-commerce environments, consumers do not merely respond to digital exposure or promotional incentives but develop purchasing decisions through active cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement with the platform. According to Vivek et al. (2012) and Hollebeek et al. (2014), customer engagement theory explains engagement as a multidimensional mechanism that strengthens consumers' relational, experiential, and behavioral connections with brands, while Dwivedi et al. (2021) emphasized that digital and social media marketing activities can further enhance these relationships.

The significant influence of digital marketing on customer engagement indicates that digital marketing operates beyond a mere communication instrument. In the Tokopedia context, social media marketing, content marketing, online advertising, direct digital

communication, and search engine visibility generate continuous digital interactions that prompt consumers to pay attention, engage with content, and participate in platform activities. This finding supports the notion proposed by Hutter et al. (2013) and Dwivedi et al. (2021) that digital marketing enhances customer engagement when it provides relevant information, interactivity, and value-added experiences rather than merely delivering promotional messages. Accordingly, digital marketing can be conceptualized as an engagement-building mechanism that guides consumers from awareness and exposure toward a purchase decision. Similarly, brand awareness significantly influences both customer engagement and purchase decisions, suggesting that consumers who recognize and are familiar with Tokopedia are more likely to engage and purchase. Brand awareness functions as a cognitive anchor that reduces uncertainty and facilitates decision-making, consistent with brand equity theory (Keller, 1993). The indirect effect through engagement is slightly stronger than digital marketing.

Customer engagement emerges as the central mechanism in the model. Its strong effect on purchase decision confirms that engagement plays a behavioral conversion role by transforming digital marketing exposure and brand cognition into actual purchase-related decisions. In e-commerce, engagement reflects more than passive interest, it involves attention to information, emotional attraction, interaction with brand content, and participation in digital activities. These engagement processes help consumers build confidence, reduce perceived uncertainty, and strengthen their intention to complete purchases. This result is consistent with the studies conducted by Brodie et al. (2011) and Zheng et al. (2022), who found that customer engagement has a significant impact on purchase intention and consumer purchasing behavior within digital and online retail contexts.

The mediation findings further strengthen this interpretation. Customer engagement significantly mediates the relationship between digital marketing and purchase decision, as well as between brand awareness and purchase decision. Since the direct effects remain significant, the mediation is partial. This means that digital marketing and brand awareness influence purchase decisions through two pathways: directly, by shaping consumer perception and evaluation, and indirectly, by creating engagement. These findings advance digital consumer behavior literature by showing that the effect of digital marketing and brand awareness is not purely stimulus-response based. Instead, as explained by Ho (2025), purchase decision formation is filtered through customer engagement as an intermediate psychological and behavioral mechanism.

A key finding shows that promotion has no significant effect on purchase decision and does not moderate the relationship between customer engagement and purchase decision. As explained by Chandon et al. (2000), promotional incentives such as discounts, cashback, vouchers, and seasonal deals are not always consistently effective in influencing purchasing behavior within mature e-commerce settings because consumers tend to become accustomed to frequent promotions and no longer perceive them as unique value signals. In addition, the absence of a moderating effect suggests that customer engagement influences purchase decisions independently of promotional factors. Thus, purchase behavior is more strongly determined by digital experiences, brand familiarity, and interaction with the platform rather than promotional appeals.

This study demonstrates that purchase decisions in Tokopedia are shaped more strongly by customer engagement and brand-related mechanisms than by promotional stimuli. Digital marketing and brand awareness create the foundation for engagement, while engagement serves as the central pathway that converts consumer attention and brand cognition into purchase decisions. The non-significant role of promotion highlights a critical insight for e-commerce research and practice: in highly competitive digital marketplaces, sustainable purchase decisions may depend less on repeated promotional offers and more on the ability of platforms and sellers to create meaningful, engaging, and trusted consumer experiences.

## CONCLUSION

This study indicates that purchase decisions among Tokopedia users are mainly shaped by customer engagement rather than the level of promotional activity. Digital marketing and brand awareness significantly contribute to increasing customer engagement, which serves as the most influential determinant of purchase decisions. Customer engagement also functions as a mediating mechanism between digital marketing and brand awareness and purchase decisions, showing both direct and indirect effects. Conversely, promotion has no significant effect on purchase decisions and does not moderate the relationship between customer engagement and purchase decisions. This implies that in a mature e-commerce setting, promotional incentives such as discounts, cashback, and vouchers have become routine features and thus are less effective in driving consumer purchasing behavior.

From a practical standpoint, these results emphasize that engagement-oriented marketing strategies are more effective than promotion-centered approaches in influencing purchase decisions. Tokopedia and other e-commerce actors are advised to enhance digital interactions, strengthen emotional connections with consumers, and build consistent brand awareness through relevant content, personalized communication, and improved user experiences. Nevertheless, this study is limited by its single-platform focus, cross-sectional design, and the broad measurement of promotion. Future research is encouraged to compare multiple e-commerce platforms, adopt longitudinal approaches, and examine more specific forms of promotional strategies. Further inclusion of variables such as trust, perceived value, and customer experience is also recommended to achieve a more comprehensive explanation of purchase decision formation in digital marketplaces.

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