

The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Purchase Decisions in Klang Valley: The Mediating Role of Brand Awareness

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Abstract

In Malaysia, social media marketing (SMM) has become key tools in helping businesses to engage and attract with their consumer which could lead to purchase decisions. Nowadays, platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook are widely used for product discovery, engagement and making purchases of the product. This study examines the influence of SMM on consumer purchase decisions (CPD) among consumers in Klang Valley, with brand awareness (BA) as a mediating factor. The quantitative approach was used, and data were collected from 404 respondents through a structured questionnaire. The findings indicated that the components of SMM, particularly content quality and influencer collaborations significantly influence CPD with BA serving as mediating factor in these relationships. Nevertheless, BA does not have the mediate relationship between brand interactivity with CPD. However, BA, which could lead to CPD and drive the sales performance of the company. Future research could explore other geographical regions, adopt qualitative method, and investigate additional factors such as economic and psychological factors as well as the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and chatbots in enhancing the effectiveness of SMM.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing (SMM), Content Quality, Brand Interactivity, Influencer Collaborations, Consumer Purchase Decisions (CPD), Brand Awareness (BA)

1. Introduction

The rapid explosion of social media has transformed business communication with consumers. With the rise of Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, online marketing has become the reality, and the companies are now using these platforms to interact with their target markets and sway their purchase decisions. Through the implementation of factors such as influencer collaborations, brand interaction, and high-quality content, SMM facilitates brands to be able to articulate their value proposition to consumers in a better manner. Nevertheless, many Malaysian firms, especially the Klang Valley-based ones, cannot convert web engagement into actual sales despite added investment in SMM (Hasan & Sohail, 2021).

Apart from this, more than 80% of Malaysians use social media in a positive way for communication, entertainment, and buying things online, which has been made an integral part of daily life (Kemp, 2024). Now, businesses are targeting online marketing techniques that can increase brand recognition and influence the behaviour of consumers because of the increased digital consumption. To succeed in the highly competitive virtual market, where firms battle for consumers' attention, they must pursue intense marketing approaches. Literature has especially suggested that the degree to which firms streamline their content strategy to match customers' demands has an implication for social media marketing efficacy (Dhanesh, 2022). Malaysian firms, specifically in the Klang Valley region, have no idea about the most useful SMM techniques that influence the behaviour of their customers. However, the lack of knowledge about the determinants of customer decision-making makes it hard for many businesses to maximize their SMM efforts (Agil et al., 2022). Despite the paucity of research on the mediating effect of BA in this context, specifically in the Klang Valley setting, available literature has investigated the impact of SMM on customer

behaviour (Shien et al., 2023).

Consumers are likely to purchase from companies they recognize and trust, hence BA is an important consideration when making decisions (Alamsyah et al., 2021). Companies that do not have a strong brand may see high social media engagement rates without realizing a corresponding sales conversion increment. Additionally, it is not clear to what degree SMM approaches like brand engagement and influencer collaboration will be efficient in the Malaysian marketplace (Mason et al., 2021).

Brand credibility and trustworthiness have become increasingly vital in line with the augmented consumer usage of digital media to inform purchases (Chen & Qasim, 2020). Witnessing familiar brand names increases the likelihood of consumers rating the brand as being trustworthy, and this affects their purchasing behaviour favourably (Nekmahmud et al., 2022; Palalic et al., 2021). Therefore, it is crucial for firms to understand the function BA has as an intermediary between SMM and CPD to develop more effective marketing strategies.

Moreover, businesses must constantly upgrade strategies due to the extremely competitive Klang Valley digital marketplace. Digital consumers in Malaysia engage actively with interactive content, especially if it contains influencer recommendations and instant interaction with brands (Hosain & Mamun, 2023). Businesses must utilize a fact-based approach in determining the effectiveness of marketing campaigns due to dynamic customer preferences, as well as the fast-changing social media trends. Business companies will be able to effectively allocate resources if they obtain a better idea of what works in SMM towards building BA and influencing CPD.

To bridge this gap, the present research uses BA as a mediator to analyse the impact of SMM on CPD by Klang Valley's consumers. The research will concentrate on three important aspects of SMM which are influencer collaborations, brand interactivity, and content quality. In assisting in bridging the gap in empirical research on the impact of electronic marketing campaigns in the Klang Valley, where this research expands the understanding of marketing. The study also offers strategic advice to companies that wish to achieve the greatest possible return on investment (ROI) for their electronic marketing campaigns. By examining these variables, this study would like to offer useful information that would help marketers, companies, and lawmakers improve their online marketing efforts and better promote customer interaction.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis

2.1 Social Media Marketing and Consumer Behaviour

Social media promotion has completely changed how companies engage with consumers, replacing the conventional methods of promotion with more interpersonal and interactive online methods of promotion. Through the application of interactive content and direct customer interaction, companies use social media to help create relationships with consumers, build BA, and shape CPD (Jamil et al., 2022). Consumer behaviour is determined primarily by several SMM approaches, such as influencer collaborations, content marketing, and engaging brand conversation (Li et al., 2021).

By conducting research, SMM allows consumers to make quality decisions on what to buy through making them have access to easily obtainable product details, live brand interaction, and reviews from valid influencers (Cartwright et al., 2022). Social media is an inherent part of today's consumerism, as can be seen by studies which found that 74% of shoppers will take it into account when making buying decisions about what to buy (Kuzminov, 2024). SMM does not always need to be sale-oriented, although it can be a driver for BA. One of the most significant challenges organizations faces is converting online engagement into actual purchasing decisions, which underscores the importance of determining the mediating role of BA in such a relationship (Hasan & Sohail, 2021).

2.2 Brand Awareness

The degree to which consumers recall and recognize a brand at the time of judging what to buy is described as BA. Consumers are likely to buy products from brands they recognize and trust, and therefore, it plays an important role in affecting their purchasing decision (Shojaee & Azman, 2023). Literature suggests that SMM techniques like collaboration with influencers, brand interaction, and content quality enhance BA, which affects the behaviour of consumers (Ghorbanzadeh et al., 2022).

Social media exposes consumers to a multitude of content, and hence it becomes imperative for companies to provide appealing, visual, and quality content to engage consumers and build BA. Effective SMM will help in enhancing consumer confidence and encourage them to make a purchase by building brand recall and forming favourable attitudes towards the brand (Chen, 2024). Also, studies reveal that consumers exposed repeatedly to messages from brands get more conscious about the brand and increase the probability of them buying from the brand (Hong et al., 2021).

2.3 Content Quality and Consumer Purchase Decision

Since it contributes to the perception of a company by the consumers, content quality is one of the key areas in SMM. High-quality, interesting, and appealing content builds brand perception and customer loyalty (Barta et al., 2022). Content delivered using graphics, relative to verbose blogs, increases engagement by 38%, according to research results (Rosedí et al., 2024). Consumer participation and buying intention were found to be increased by consumer-relevant information like interactive features, personalization, and narrative (Lou & Xie, 2020).

Moreover, quality and creative content has been proven to play a significant role in influencing consumers' purchasing behaviour. According to studies, consumers would rather buy from companies that consistently create excellent content to their liking and taste (Rosedí et al., 2024). Therefore, the hypotheses is proposed as follows:

H1: Content quality positively influences consumer purchase decisions among consumers in Klang Valley.

2.4 Brand Interactivity and Consumer Purchase Decision

The volume of communication and interaction between a consumer and a brand on social

media is referred to as brand interactivity. Commenting back, live sessions, and direct messaging are some of the two-way communications that foster trust from the consumer and deepen the relation between a brand and its consumers (Jia et al., 2022). Companies that make active conversations with customers surpass companies actively participating in a 20% conversion edge (Xu et al., 2020). Evidence indicates customer interaction increases with higher brand interactivity, thus informing consumption behaviours (Wang et al., 2023).

Consumers enjoy buying from companies that talk to them first and make a purchase, are attentive to their needs, and provide unique experiences. Companies that fail to communicate with their audience stand to lose the trust and loyalty of the consumers (Hadi & Valenzuela, 2020). On this basis, the hypotheses is proposed as follows:

H2: Brand interactivity positively influences consumer purchase decisions among consumers in Klang Valley.

2.5 Influencer Collaboration and Consumer Purchase Decision

As influencers possess the power to change the beliefs and purchasing behaviours of consumers, influencer collaborations have also become a part of SMM. According to research, consumers are more acceptant towards recommendations made by influencers as compared to normal ads and therefore, it is an effective method towards increased sales and exposure for the company (Ao et al., 2023). In terms of the Álvarez-Monzoncillo (2022), report on studies, 89% of clients possess high belief for promotion referrals using influencers, in contrast with product referrals rendered through company campaigns.

Influencers and consumers share parasocial relationships that increase the degree of confidence in influencer endorsements among consumers. There is evidence that endorsement by influencers acts as an important individual in influencing purchase decisions of the consumers, especially when influencers are in a close personal relationship with the audience (Chen et al., 2024). The following hypotheses is therefore proposed on this basis:

H3: Influencer collaborations positively influence consumer purchase decisions among consumers in Klang Valley

2.6 The Mediating Role of Brand Awareness

BA is a mediating variable between SMM initiatives like influencer collaborations, brand interaction, and quality content and buyer purchasing decisions. Effective brand recognition is crucial because consumers tend to buy from brands, they are familiar with and trust (Shukri et al., 2023). Thus, the hypotheses are proposed as follows:

H4: Content quality positively influences brand awareness among consumers in Klang Valley.

H5: Brand interactivity positively influences brand awareness among consumers in Klang Valley.

H6: Influencer collaborations positively influence brand awareness among consumers in Klang Valley.

H7: Brand awareness positively influences consumer purchase decisions among consumers in Klang Valley.

H8: BA mediates the relationship between content quality and CPD among consumers in Klang Valley.

H9: BA mediates the relationship between brand interactivity and CPD among consumers in Klang Valley.

H10: BA mediates the relationship between influencer collaborations and CPD among consumers in Klang Valley.

3. Conceptual Framework

In Figure 1 below, it illustrates the conceptual framework which lays the groundwork for further study. It highlights the relationships between the independent variables (IV), mediating variable (MV), and dependent variable (DV). This framework helps researchers to understand the connections between variables and draw a conclusion from these relationships accordingly.

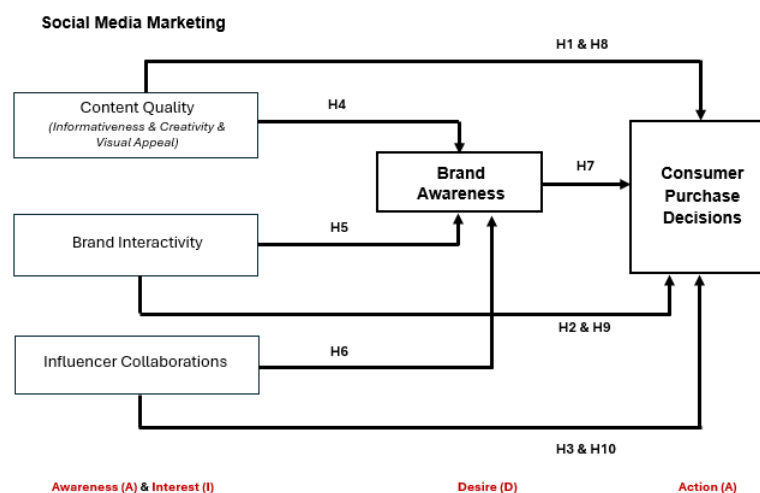


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework above was developed with the purpose of fulfilling the study's research objective. From the conceptual framework above, it shows that SMM is the IV which is measured through the following indicators. The indicator variables include content quality, brand interactivity, and influencer collaborations. Meanwhile, BA serves as the MV in this study. This variable serves as a bridge between the impact of SMM with the DV. Lastly, CPD are identified as the DV. This conceptual framework highlights the relationship between these variables and relations to the AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action) model, which serves as the theoretical foundation of the study.

The AIDA model represents four key stages: Attention (A), Interest (I), Desire (D), and Action (A). This model was proposed by Elias St. Elmo Lewis in 1898, used in marketing

effort to describes four stages that consumers will go through before they are making a purchase decision (Baber, 2022; Browning, 2024). In this study, SMM that aligns with the first and second stages under the AIDA model which are Attention (A) and Interest (I) where attracting consumer attention by showing engaging content and generating interest. The next stage, Desire (D), is influenced by BA. This reflects the trust and emotional connections that influence consumers' feelings with the brand. BA plays a key role in connecting SMM with consumer engagement. Lastly, in the final stage, CPD are aligned with the Action (A) stages under the AIDA model. It shows how BA from using SMM efforts will impact buying behavior of the consumers (Cahyaningsih & Yulianti, 2024; Hanion, 2023; Tristanto et al., 2021). Therefore, this study hypothesizes that SMM (content quality, brand interactivity and influencer collaborations) strongly influences CPD, with BA acting as an important mediator in this relationship.

4. Research Methodology

For this study, the quantitative approach was employed to fulfil its research objectives as well as answers the research questions. It gathers data through distributing questionnaires and following by analysing the data to look at the relationship between variables and testing the proposed hypotheses. The study focuses on the consumers or individuals from Klang Valley who are aged between 18-35 including working adults, students and unemployed adults. This group of respondents was targeted because they are engaging actively with SMM (Howe, 2024; Siddharta, 2023). This study applied a simple random sampling technique which means every respondent giving an equal chance of being selected. This approach ensures fair representation without needing much prior knowledge of the population. By applying randomization for the study, it can achieve strong internal and external validity while reducing the risk of research biases such as sampling bias and selection bias (Noor et al., 2022; Rahman et al., 2022; Thomas, 2020).

There are four sections in the questionnaire which are demographic information (Section A), CPD serves as DV (Section B), SMM serves as IV (Section B), and BA serves as MV (Section D). After the data is collected, then, it has been analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics are the tool that is used to help in summarizing key dataset characteristics, such as demographic profile (Hayes, 2024; Kaliyadan & Kulkarni, 2019). On the other hand, inferential statistics is to analyse relationships between variables and test the hypotheses which help to answer the study's research questions (Kumar, 2024; Sand, 2022). The total of 404 out of 424 respondents contributed to this study represent a response rate of 95 percent. According to Shiyab et al. (2023) and Wu et al. (2022), the average online survey response rate is around or more than 40 percent is considered acceptable.

4.1 Mediation Analysis Procedure

Mediation analysis was conducted to examine whether brand awareness functions as an intermediary variable between social media marketing components and consumer purchase decisions. The analysis followed the standard regression-based approach, where each independent variable was first tested for its direct effect on the dependent variable. In the next

step, the independent variables were regressed against the mediating variable to determine their influence on brand awareness. Finally, the mediating variable was included in the regression model to assess changes in the direct effects and to determine whether the indirect effects were statistically significant. Significance levels were evaluated using p values derived from the regression coefficients. This procedure allowed the study to identify which relationships were mediated by brand awareness and which showed only direct effects.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Demographic Profile

The following findings are based on research conducted during the survey of the effect of SMM on CPD in Klang Valley, with BA as mediating role.

Table 1. Demographic profile

Variables	Items	n = 404	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	190	47.0
	Female	214	53.0
Age	18-24	196	48.5
	25-30	134	33.2
	31-35	74	18.3
Highest Level of Education	SPM	55	13.6
	Diploma	95	23.5
	Bachelor's Degree	183	45.3
	Master's Degree	65	16.1
	PHD	4	1.0
	DBA	2	0.5
Current Occupation	Student	134	33.2
	Working Adult	226	55.9
	Unemployed	44	10.9
Working Experiences	No work experience	101	25.0

Less than 1 year	86	21.3
1 - 3 years	72	17.8
4 - 6 years	65	16.1
7 - 9 years	40	9.9
10 years or more	40	9.9

Table 1 above presented the results of the study's demographic profile. Based on the results, female occupied the most respondents which are 53%, and then, it followed by male respondents of 47 percent. For this study, it only focused respondents from the aged between 18-35 years old where majorities respondents are aged between 18-24 are occupied the most respond rates which is 48.5% followed by the ages of 25-30 which is 33.2% and only 18.3 % are from the aged between 31-35. Most of the respondents hold a qualification of bachelors of degree (45.3%), Diploma (23.5%), master's degree (16.1%), SPM (13.6%), PhD (1%) and DBA (5%). Among the respondents, in terms of current occupations, 55.9% are working adults, followed by students (33.2%) and unemployed adults (10.9%). For years of working experience, 25% of respondents have no working experience, followed by less than 1 year (21.3%), 1-3 years (17.8%), 4-6 years (16.1%), 7-9 years (9.9%) and 10 years or more (9.9%).

5.2 Reliability Test

According to Barbera et al. (2020), the reliability analysis is evaluated based on its strengths, which follow the basic principles known as "Rule of Thumb". There are interpretations suggest that Cronbach's alpha value of 0.7 or higher is generally considered acceptable in most social science research contexts (Institute for Digital Research and Education, n.d.). Taber (2018) also conducted a comprehensive review of reporting practices for Cronbach's alpha across various studies. This work emphasizes the importance of context when interpreting alpha values and suggests that while a value of 0.7 is commonly accepted, higher thresholds may be necessary depending on the specific application.

Table 2. Cronbach's alpha

Variables		Case Summary	Processing	n	%	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Dependent Variable							
Consumer Decision	Purchase	Valid		404	100.0	0.839	7
		Excluded		0	.0		
		Total		404	100.0		
Independent Variables - Social Media Marketing							
Content Quality		Valid		404	100.0	0.805	6
		Excluded		0	.0		
		Total		404	100.0		
Brand Interactivity		Valid		404	100.0	0.816	6
		Excluded		0	.0		
		Total		404	100.0		
Influencer Collaborations		Valid		404	100.0	0.826	6
		Excluded		0	.0		
		Total		404	100.0		
Mediating Variable							
Brand Awareness		Valid		404	100.0	0.878	7
		Excluded		0	.0		
		Total		404	100.0		

Cronbach's alpha for CPD is 0.839, indicating strong reliability and suggesting the construct is effectively measured. This high score shows that the survey item accurately captures the impact of SMM towards CPD. Content quality also demonstrates strong reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.805, showing internal consistency. Brand interactivity, with Cronbach's alpha value 0.816, influencer collaborations also with a value of 0.826. Lastly, BA, with an

alpha value of 0.878, Therefore, the overall Cronbach's alpha value ranged between 0.80 and 0.90, which is regarded as 'very good,' indicating a high level of internal consistency. This demonstrates the reliability, consistency, and dependability of the instrument in measuring the influence of SMM on consumer behavior.

5.3 Correlation Analysis

Table 3 below shows the Pearson Correlation Analysis that identified the outcome of the connection between the three IV (content quality, brand interactivity and influencer collaborations) with DV (CPD), The correlation analysis also examines the relationship between IV with BA (MV) as well as the relationship of BA towards CPD. Schober et al. (2018) has discussed that the correlation coefficients, such as Pearson's r , measure the strength and direction of the association between two variables.

Table 3. Correlation analysis

		Consumer Purchase Decisions	Content Quality	Brand Interactivity	Influencer Collaborations	Brand Awareness
Consumer Purchase Decisions	Pearson Correlation	1	.770**	.683**	.697**	.649**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	404	404	404	404	404
Content Quality	Pearson Correlation	.770**	1	.755**	.682**	.640**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	404	404	404	404	404
Brand Interactivity	Pearson Correlation	.683**	.755**	1	.689**	.595**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001		<.001	<.001
	N	404	404	404	404	404
Influencer Collaborations	Pearson Correlation	.697**	.682**	.689**	1	.604**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001		<.001
	N	404	404	404	404	404

Brand Awareness	Pearson Correlation	.649**	.640**	.595**	.604**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	
	N	404	404	404	404	404

The intensity and direction of the relationship between the variables can be measured by referring to the correlation analysis in Table 3. Based on the correlation analysis, it indicates that three IV, content quality ($r=0.770$, $p<0.001$), brand interactivity ($r=0.683$, $p<0.01$) and influencer collaborations ($r=0.697$, $p<0.01$) show a strong positive correlation with CPD. In addition, it's also demonstrated a strong positive correlation between three IV, content quality ($r=0.755$, $p<0.01$), brand interactivity ($r=0.595$, $p<0.01$) and influencer collaborations ($r=0.604$, $p<0.01$) with BA (MV). Moreover, it also shows the strong positive correlation between BA towards CPD ($r=0.649$, $p<0.01$).

5.4 Regression Analysis

According to Schomaker (2020), the relationship between IV and DV is assumed to be linear. The residuals (errors) of the model are assumed to be normally distributed. Table 4 shows the application of regression analysis to examine the mediating effect of BA on SMM factors (content quality, brand interactivity, influencer collaborations) towards CPD in Klang Valley.

Table 4. Regression coefficient analysis

Coefficients

Coefficients					
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.140	.142		.985
	Content Quality	.471	.054	.424	8.743
	Brand Interactivity	.095	.048	.094	1.983
	Influencer Collaborations	.208	.038	.235	5.417
	Brand Awareness	.197	.043	.180	4.557

Note. a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Purchase Decisions

Pervej (2017) mentioned that the beta percentage value is 10% or higher would represent a direct influence on the MV. This means that if the percentages are beyond 10%, it clearly indicates that the strength of the effect between the variables (Landry et al., 2015). According to Table 4 above, both IV of content quality ($B=0.424$, $p=0.001$) and influencer collaborations ($B=0.235$, $p=0.001$) show direct effect on consumer purchase decisions where the beta value is higher than 10%. However, brand interactivity ($B=0.094$, $p=0.048$) does not show the direct effect on consumer purchase decisions where it is not significant since the beta percentage is 9.4% which is lower than the 10% threshold, and the p-value exceeds the conventional significance level $p<0.01$. In addition, brand awareness ($B=0.180$, $p=0.001$) indicates direct effect toward consumer purchase decisions where it is significant as the beta value is beyond 10%.

5.5 Summary of Hypothesis

Table 5. Summary findings for hypotheses

Hypotheses of Study		Alternate Hypotheses
H1:	There is a relationship between content quality and CPD among consumers in Klang Valley.	Accepted
H2:	There is a relationship between brand interactivity and CPD among consumers in Klang Valley.	Accepted
H3:	There is a relationship between influencer collaborations and CPD among consumers in Klang Valley.	Accepted
H4:	There is a relationship between content quality and BA among consumers in Klang Valley.	Accepted
H5:	There is a relationship between brand interactivity and BA among consumers in Klang Valley.	Accepted
H6:	There is a relationship between influencer collaborations and BA among consumers in Klang Valley.	Accepted
H7:	There is an effect of BA on CPD among consumers in Klang Valley.	Accepted
H8:	BA mediates the relationship between content quality and CPD among consumers in Klang Valley.	Accepted
H9:	BA mediates the relationship between brand interactivity and CPD among consumers in Klang Valley.	Not Accepted
H10:	BA mediates the relationship between influencer collaborations and CPD among consumers in Klang Valley.	Accepted

The main objective of this study is to show the connection between the three IV and CPD, with the mediating effect of BA. The findings of this study demonstrated a substantial positive link between three IV (content quality, brand interactivity and influencer collaborations) and CPD. Based on the findings, BA has mediated the relationship between content quality and influencer collaborations towards CPD, but it does not have the mediate relationship between brand interactivity with CPD.

Based on the findings, it has shown a positive significant connection between content quality and CPD. This is consistent with the research of Ansari et al. (2019) found that social media content marketing has a moderate positive significant relationship with CPD which shows that strong content will persuade consumers towards the desired results, which is their purchase decisions. The result shows that the content quality contributing to the CPD include engaging professionals for creating informative and also entertaining content that able to strengthen CPD. Additionally, through the mediating analysis, it can be confirmed that BA mediates this relationship, where content with high quality enhances the BA of the consumers that lead to their purchase decisions.

For brand interactivity, it also shows a positive significant relationship with CPD. This is consistent with the research of Hanaysha (2022), showing that brand interactivity has a positive significant relationship with CPD. Businesses should utilize social media as a two-way communication channel rather than merely a promotional tool. By fostering interactive engagement, businesses can strengthen relationships with consumers, build trust, and enhance brand loyalty through meaningful connections. Through the mediating analysis, it can be confirmed that BA does not mediate this relationship, where brand interactivity directly influences CPD without requiring BA as a mediator.

Apart from that, the influencer collaborations show that by partnering with influencers who share the same brand values and target audience, it will create a positive significant relationship with CPD. Based on the findings, through the mediating analysis, it can be confirmed that BA mediates this relationship, where influencer plays an important role in enhancing brand perception before influencing consumer purchase decisions. This is consistent with research by Chen et al. (2024), they established that influencer credibility and professionalism significantly enhance consumers' purchase intentions, especially in digital marketing platforms like social media portals and live commerce. They also indicated that consumers are more likely to believe in objective guidance and professional viewpoints of influencers over mere interaction experience when it comes to a purchase decision.

In short, the study has shown that SMM is important strategies in influencing CPD. BA shows the mediates effect between content quality and influencer collaborations in influencing CPD both directly and indirectly. This is consistent with the research conducted by Al-Qudah (2020), where he also found out that quality of the content that has been posted on a brand's social media website has a significant positive relationship with BA. The higher the amount of quality content that is posted, the more users become aware and conscious of the brand. On the other hand, BA does not have the mediate effect between brand interactivity and CPD. Instead, it has a direct impact where brands need to focus on real-time engagement

with their consumers. This finding, therefore, is not consistent with the findings of Al-Qudah (2020), where the findings show that brand interactivity has a statistically substantial positive relationship with BA, so interactive interactions between customers and brands on social websites result in more BA which could lead to purchase decisions.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study examines the connection between three IV (content quality, influencer collaborations and brand interactivity) under SMM and CPD, with the mediating effect of BA. Based on the findings, it shows that BA has a mediating effect on the content quality and influencer collaborations towards CPD, but it does not have the mediating relationship between brand interactivity with CPD.

For businesses, they should focus more on providing useful and easy to understand content together with providing visually appealing content in order to attract consumer interest and lead to CPD. Furthermore, collaborating with influencers who reflect their brand values could help in building trust and encourage consumers to make purchase decisions. While brand interactivity is also important, the study has shown that it has a direct impact on CPD without requiring BA as mediator. Therefore, it would be better that businesses combine it with other marketing strategies rather than only focus on brand interactivity to boost BA and then influence CPD.

Overall, this study investigates the effect of SMM strategies in influencing CPD in Klang Valley, especially through providing engaging content and partnering with influencers, with the BA serving as an important mediator in this process.

7. Limitations of Study and Future Suggestions

This study highlighted several limitations that offer potential areas of future research. First and foremost, with the findings on the interconnectivity between Klang Valley's CPD, BA, and SMM, such a move looks truly imperative. Among the restrictions that are universal is the one that the geographic region was only being researched within the Klang Valley, and that is the urbanized, technologically driven area in Malaysia (Shukri et al., 2023). Therefore, future research could be conducted in different geographical regions or other countries in order to gain a better understanding of the influence of SMM on CPD with BA as mediating factors (Hosain & Mamun, 2023; Shahidi Hamedani et al., 2025; Zeqiri et al., 2025). This is because consumer behaviours may be different due to different cultural preferences, economic factors as well as technology access which could impact the effectiveness of SMM.

Another limitation is that the data collection method only focuses on using quantitative methods (e.g. structured surveys and statistical analysis), where to identify numerical relationships but it does not look into consumer emotions, perceptions, or motivations. Therefore, for future research, the researchers could explore CPD with SMM through observations or in-depth interviews in order to know the psychological and emotional factors that would drive their purchasing decisions. Also, future research could employ the mix of both quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of SMM where it could show how it influences consumer trust and brand

engagement (Ali et al., 2025).

Apart from that, the study did not contemplate other variables such as the state of the economy, the environment of competition, or sudden changes in consumer preferences like changes in online buying behaviors caused by a pandemic (Aghaei et al., 2021). These could interact with a SMM campaign in ways not theorized in this study and influence CPD. Therefore, future studies should include these variables to build a more comprehensive understanding of digital consumer behavior.

Lastly, future research could also investigate how Artificial Intelligence (AI) and chatbots influence the efficiency of SMM. As AI-driven automation becomes more widespread nowadays, businesses are using it to interact with consumers, offer personalized recommendations as well as manage automated chat responses on time in order to enhance customer engagement. However, there is limited research regarding how AI-driven strategies could influence consumer trust and engagement which could lead to their purchase decisions. Therefore, future research could explore whether AI-driven interactions can improve or weaken its brand authenticity. It can also explore how businesses can better use AI marketing strategies to strengthen the relationships with their consumers (Gupta & Khan, 2024; Hollebeek et al., 2024; Vo et al., 2024).

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