International Journal of Economics, Business and Innovation Research
https://e-journal.citakonsultindo.or.id/index.php/IJEBIR
E-ISSN : 2964-0865
IJEBIR

The Role Of Brand Image In Mediating Brand Awareness, Social Media Marketing And Price Perception Towards The Purchase Intention Of Customers Wedding Organizer Renjana Project

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the influence of brand awareness, social media marketing, and price perception on purchase intention, with brand image as a mediating variable in the context of the wedding organizer industry. The core research problem addressed is the low conversion of purchase intention despite active social media engagement and growing brand exposure. Unlike previous studies that typically examine these variables in isolation or focus solely on direct effects, this research positions brand image as a central psychological mechanism that explains consumer decision-making. A quantitative approach was employed using Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modeling (CB-SEM) via AMOS, with data collected from 190 respondents through an online questionnaire. CFA results confirmed that all constructs are valid and reliable, and the data met the normality assumption. The findings reveal that brand awareness, social media marketing, and price perception significantly affect brand image; brand image, in turn, has the strongest direct influence on purchase intention and mediates the indirect effects of the three antecedents. This study contributes novel theoretical insights to the service marketing literature by emphasizing the pivotal role of brand image in translating brand communication strategies into consumer purchase behavior.

Keywords: Brand awareness, social media marketing, price perception, brand image, purchase intention.

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INTRODUCTION

The service industry in Indonesia continues to grow rapidly, including the social event organizer sector, especially wedding organizers (WO), which deliver highly personalized and emotionally charged experiences. Renjana Project, a local wedding organizer in Situbondo, faces increasing competition in the digital era and must address challenges related to building brand awareness, maintaining a positive brand image, and enhancing customer purchase intention. In high-involvement service industries, purchasing decisions are heavily influenced by customer perceptions, trust, and emotional experiences, making perception-based marketing strategies essential.

Previous studies (Al Faruq Abdullah et al., 2023; Balakrishnan et al., 2021; Tariq et al., 2017) suggest that brand awareness, social media marketing, and price perception influence purchase intention. However, research findings remain inconsistent, with several studies indicating that brand awareness and price perception do not directly affect purchase decisions (Chotimah & Nazori, 2024; Febriyantoro, 2020; Lie et al., 2022). Moreover, empirical studies investigating the mediating role of brand image remain limited and have not comprehensively examined how brand image mediates the impact of marketing variables on purchase intention—especially in emotionally driven industries like wedding organizing.

This gap reveals a critical research need to develop a theoretical and empirical approach that integrates brand image as a central mediator linking brand awareness, social media marketing, and price perception to purchase intention. Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap by analyzing a structural model that includes brand image as a mediating variable and answering whether brand image can bridge the influence of these variables on consumer purchasing decisions. The study contributes novel insights to the body of knowledge by extending the application of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework and Maslow's hierarchy of needs, positioning brand image as a key cognitive-emotional mechanism in high-involvement service contexts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer behavior plays a central role in understanding purchase decisions, especially in high-involvement service industries like wedding organizers (WO), where emotional and perceptual factors strongly influence customer choices. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs remains a fundamental theoretical lens for explaining consumer motivation. Recent studies suggest that social and esteem needs significantly drive

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service selection, especially when consumers perceive the brand positively (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019; Solomon & Russell, 2024).

Brand awareness has been widely investigated as a predictor of purchase intention. (Balakrishnan et al., 2021) emphasized its cognitive function in shaping consumer recognition and eventual purchase intention. However, other studies (Febriyantoro, 2020; Lie et al., 2022) revealed that brand awareness does not always yield significant direct effects, suggesting its impact is moderated by context and brand experience.

Social media marketing (SMM) has emerged as a dominant promotional tool in digital environments. Studies by (Ali & Naushad, 2023) and (Savitri et al., 2021) demonstrate that entertainment and customization features of SMM significantly shape brand image. Nonetheless, SMM does not consistently predict purchase intention directly unless mediated by brand image, highlighting the role of emotional connection over mere exposure.

Price perception is another relevant variable. While (Cakici & Tekeli, 2022; Nugraha, 2018) argue that fair and competitive pricing enhances brand image and drives purchase intention, (Chotimah & Nazori, 2024) found that perceived high pricing reduces intention to buy, even in the presence of a strong brand image. This suggests price perception is highly contextual and influenced by personal expectations and value judgments.

Brand image emerges as a critical construct mediating the relationship between marketing strategies and consumer intention. According to Keller & Swaminathan (2020) and Firmansyah (2019), brand image is formed through brand associations, favorability, and uniqueness in consumer memory. While many studies (Ali & Naushad, 2023; Ekasari et al., 2024) found direct influence of brand image on purchase intention, others (Febriyantoro, 2020) reported non-significant results, reinforcing the need to consider contextual variables.

In summary, despite growing research interest over the past decade, inconsistencies remain regarding the strength and nature of these relationships—particularly the mediating role of brand image and the reciprocal link between brand awareness and brand image. This study aims to fill that research gap using CB-SEM to simultaneously test direct, and test indirect in the underexplored setting of wedding organizer services.

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RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design, aiming to examine causal relationships among the variables: brand awareness, social media marketing, price perception, brand image, and purchase intention. The object of the study is Instagram users who follow local wedding organizer accounts in Situbondo, particularly followers of Renjana Project.

The research uses primary quantitative data collected through online surveys. The data sources consist of respondents who meet the criteria—individuals familiar with Renjana Project via Instagram but who have never used its services. Respondents were selected using non-probability sampling with a convenience sampling technique. A total of 190 samples were determined based on Hair et al. (2017), requiring 10 times the number of measurement indicators.

The research instrument is a structured questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale. Variables and indicators were adapted from previous studies: brand awareness (Firmansyah, 2019), social media marketing (Chen & Lin, 2019), price perception (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021), brand image (Keller & Swaminathan, 2020), and purchase intention (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). All indicators were adjusted to the context of wedding organizer services.

Data collection was conducted via Google Forms distributed through direct messages (DM) to Renjana Project's Instagram followers. The theoretical framework is based on the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) model and Maslow's hierarchy of needs, where brand awareness, SMM, and price perception act as stimuli, brand image represents the organism, and purchase intention is the behavioral response.

Data analysis was performed using Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modeling (CB-SEM) with AMOS. Construct validity was tested via Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha. Normality tests were conducted to meet CB-SEM assumptions. The Sobel test was applied to assess the significance of mediation effects through brand image. Data credibility was ensured through validated constructs from prior literature, pre-testing of the questionnaire, and adequate sample size for model estimation.

RESULT

This chapter describes the study's results, using data obtained by the researcher from the respondents' responses to the questionnaire about the influence of brand awareness, social media marketing and price perception on purchase intention, with

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brand image as an intervening variable for followers account Renjana project in Instagram. Here are the test results and analysis:

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) in AMOS is conducted to confirm whether the indicators (statements in the questionnaire) truly represent the constructs/latent variables measured, in accordance with the theory or model that has been previously established. The following is a measurement model for analyzing the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) of the study:

Based on the results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) from Figure 1, the

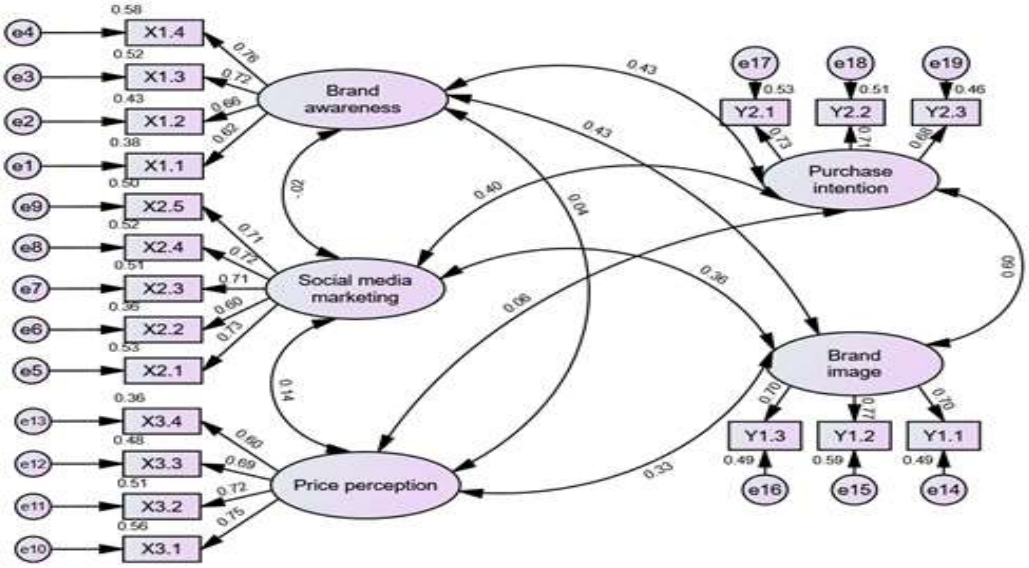


Figure - 1 Full Model CFA

results of the standardized regression weights in Table 1 can be calculated, so that the AVE and CR values from the correlation model can be calculated.

Table 1 - Standardized Regression Weights

Indikator	Simbol	Estimate	Keterangan
Recall	$X_{1.1}$	.620	Valid
Recognition	$X_{1.2}$	.657	Valid
Purchase	$X_{1.3}$	.721	Valid
Consumption	$X_{1.4}$	.763	Valid

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Indikator	Simbol	Estimate	Keterangan
Entertainment	$X_{2.1}$	.728	Valid
Interaction	$X_{2.2}$	.598	Valid
Trendiness	$X_{2.3}$	.711	Valid
Customization	$X_{2.4}$	.719	Valid
Word-of-mouth	$X_{2.5}$	.707	Valid
Keterjangkauan Harga	$X_{3.1}$	.750	Valid
Kesesuaian Harga dengan Kualitas	$X_{3.2}$	.715	Valid
Daya Saing Harga	$X_{3.3}$	.691	Valid
Kesesuaian Harga dengan Manfaat	$X_{3.4}$	.604	Valid
Strength	$Y_{1.1}$	.701	Valid
Favorability	$Y_{1.2}$	.769	Valid
Uniqueness	$Y_{1.3}$	.701	Valid
Awareness	$Y_{2.1}$	.727	Valid
Interest	$Y_{2.2}$	.712	Valid
Evaluation	$Y_{2.3}$	.679	Valid

The results of calculating AVE and CR by accumulating the loading factor values and error values can produce the following values:

Table 2 - AVE and CR Results

Variabel		BA			SMM			PP			BI			PI		
Indikator		Loading	Loading^2	Error	Loading	Loading^2	Error	Loading	Loading^2	Error	Loading	Loading^2	Error	Loading	Loading^2	Error
X1.1		0.620	0.384	0.176												
X1.2		0.657	0.432	0.101												
X1.3		0.721	0.520	0.132												
X1.4		0.763	0.582	0.129												
X2.1					0.728	0.530	0.144									
X2.2					0.598	0.358	0.186									
X2.3					0.711	0.506	0.152									
X2.4					0.719	0.517	0.148									
X2.5					0.707	0.500	0.184									
X3.1								0.750	0.563	0.141						
X3.2								0.715	0.511	0.152						
X3.3								0.691	0.477	0.163						
X3.4								0.604	0.365	0.216						
Y1.1											0.701	0.491	0.165			
Y1.2											0.769	0.591	0.132			
Y1.3											0.701	0.491	0.148			
Y2.1														0.727	0.529	0.168
Y2.2														0.712	0.507	0.170
Y2.3														0.679	0.461	0.167
Sum of std Loading		2.761			3.463			2.76			2.171			2.118		
Sum of std Loading^2			1.918			2.410			1.916			1.574			1.497	
Sum of error				0.628			0.814			0.672			0.45			0.505
VARIANCE EXTRACT		0.753			0.748			0.740			0.780			0.748		
CONSTRUCT RELIABILITY		0.924			0.936			0.919			0.914			0.899		

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Standardized loading values were above 0.50, and the AVE values exceeded 0.50 for all constructs. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to test the validity and reliability of the measurement model prior to structural model estimation. Based on Table 1 and Table 2, all observed indicators demonstrated standardized loading values above 0.60, indicating that each item significantly reflects its intended construct (Hair et al., 2014) and Mia et al. (2019).

For the Brand Awareness (BA) construct, indicator loadings ranged from 0.620 to 0.763. The construct achieved an AVE of 0.753 and Construct Reliability (CR) of 0.924, suggesting excellent convergent validity and internal consistency. The strongest indicator was X1.4 (consumption), affirming that experiential awareness shapes brand perception. In the Social Media Marketing (SMM) construct, loading values ranged from 0.598 to 0.728. With an AVE of 0.748 and CR of 0.936, the construct demonstrates that dimensions such as entertainment and customization effectively capture consumers' perceptions of digital engagement.

Price Perception (PP) also exhibited strong measurement properties, with its highest loading at X3.1 (0.750), AVE of 0.740, and CR of 0.919. This indicates that fair and transparent pricing is a valid and reliable dimension in the consumer's evaluation process. The Brand Image (BI) construct, comprising favorability, strength, and uniqueness, had loadings between 0.701 and 0.769. Its AVE was 0.780 and CR was 0.914, confirming that the brand image dimensions are well-represented in the minds of consumers evaluating wedding organizer services. The Purchase Intention (PI) construct reported loadings between 0.679 and 0.727, with AVE of 0.748 and CR of 0.899, indicating that customer intention is validly captured by indicators of awareness, willingness, and intent.

Overall, all constructs in this model met the criteria for convergent validity (AVE > 0.5) and strong construct reliability (CR > 0.7). These findings confirm that the research instrument is statistically sound and capable of capturing the nuances of consumer perceptions in high-involvement services like wedding organizing. Thus, the measurement model is valid and reliable for subsequent SEM analysis.

The multivariate normality test yielded a kurtosis critical ratio within the acceptable range (±2.58), indicating that the data were normally distributed and suitable for CB-SEM analysis using AMOS (Ghozali, 2017). The following are the results of the normality test in this study:

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Table 3 - Normality Test Results

Variable	skew	c.r.	kurtosis	c.r.
$Y_{2.3}$	.004	.023	.226	.651
$Y_{2.2}$	.001	.005	.907	2.618
$Y_{2.1}$	.123	.709	.203	.586
$Y_{1.3}$	.037	.216	-.756	-2.181
$Y_{1.2}$	-.197	-1.138	-.754	-2.176
$Y_{1.1}$	-.163	-.943	-.694	-2.003
$X_{3.4}$	-.273	-1.578	-.698	-2.016
$X_{3.3}$	-.007	-.041	-.438	-1.265
$X_{3.2}$	-.051	-.293	-.606	-1.750
$X_{3.1}$	-.147	-.850	-.685	-1.976
$X_{2.5}$	-.185	-1.069	-.560	-1.617
$X_{2.4}$	.035	.201	-.304	-.877
$X_{2.3}$	.022	.127	-.387	-1.119
$X_{2.2}$	.077	.444	-.611	-1.764
$X_{2.1}$	.009	.053	-.469	-1.355
$X_{1.4}$	-.191	-1.101	-.872	-2.516
$X_{1.3}$	.095	.546	-1.096	-3.164
$X_{1.2}$	-.173	-.996	-.627	-1.810
$X_{1.1}$	-.152	-.875	-1.162	-3.356
Multivariate			6.357	1.591

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Based on the results of the normality test in table 3, it shows that most of the indicators in this study have skewness and kurtosis CR values below ±2.58, suggesting symmetrical distributions without excessive skew or kurtosis. Although a few indicators—such as $X_{1.1}$ (CR kurtosis = -3.356) and $X_{1.3}$ (CR kurtosis = -3.164)—slightly exceed the threshold, these deviations are still tolerable in SEM, especially with a large sample size (n = 200).

The result for multivariate normality yielded a CR value of 1.591, which is well below the critical value of 2.58, indicating no significant multivariate normality violations. Therefore, the data in this study satisfy both univariate and multivariate normality assumptions, supporting the appropriateness of applying covariance-based SEM for model testing.

Goodness-of-Fit (GOF) Result

These results indicate an acceptable model fit (Machali, 2021), thus supporting the adequacy of the structural model for hypothesis testing. The following are the goodness of fit results from the model measurements in Figure 1:

Table 4 Goodness of Fit

Indeks Fit	Nilai	Kriteria Baku	Keterangan
Chi-square	142.293	233.994	Fit
Probability	0.477	≥ 0.05	Fit
CMIN/DF	1.002	< 2.00	Fit
GFI	0.930	> 0.90	Fit
AGFI	0.906	> 0.90	Fit
CFI	1.000	> 0.95	Fit
TLI	1.000	> 0.95	Fit
RMSEA	0.003	< 0.08	Fit

Based on the results of the measurement and evaluation of the structural model using Covariance-Based SEM, all Goodness of Fit (GOF) indices in Table 4 indicate that the proposed measurement and structural models show very good fit, validating the reliability of the research findings and supporting the use of this model to explain the relationships between variables. All goodness of fit indices, including Chi-square

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(142.293), Probability (0.477), RMSEA (0.003), GFI (0.930), AGFI (0.906), TLI (1.000), and CFI (1.000), indicate that the model fits the empirical data exceptionally well.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Prior to interpreting the structural model, the study conducted Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to ensure that all constructs demonstrated strong validity and reliability. The dataset also passed the normality test and model measurement fit criteria. With these conditions met, the structural model was analyzed using Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The following is a structural research model used to analyze data using AMOS software:

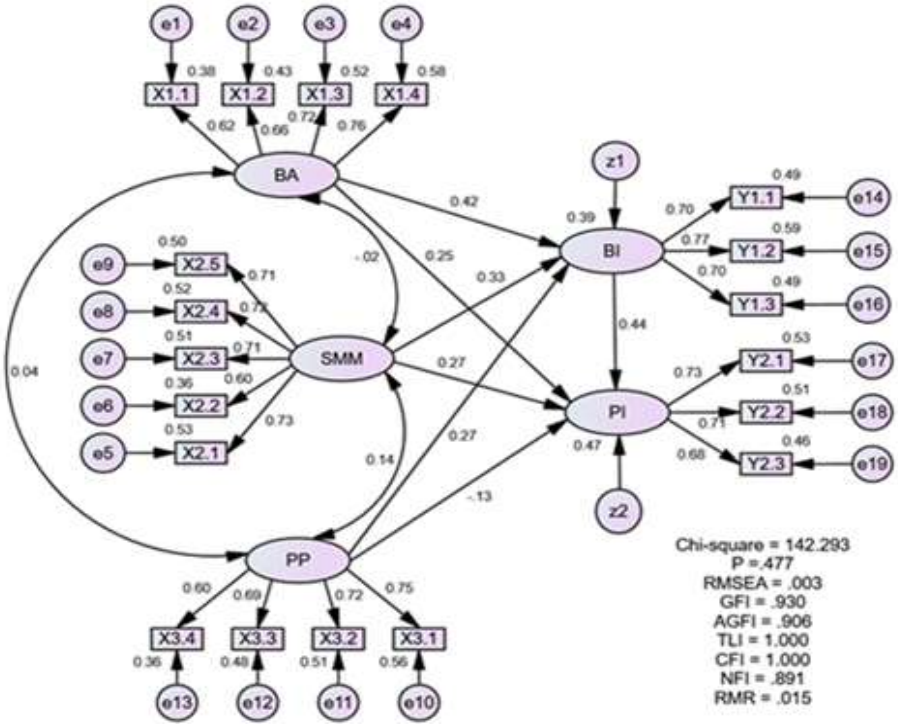


Figure 2 Full Model Struktural

The SEM results demonstrated significant relationships between the constructs, with both direct and indirect paths tested. Sobel tests were used to evaluate mediation effects. The SEM analysis reveals that most hypothesized paths in the structural model are statistically significant, either directly or through the mediating variable, brand image. These findings offer comprehensive insights into the consumer decision-making process in the context of Renjana Project's wedding organizer services.

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DISCUSSION

The results of this study demonstrate that in high-involvement service industries such as wedding organizing, real-life experiences, emotional imagery, and consumer perceptions play a dominant role in shaping purchase intention. In the case of Renjana Project, brand awareness not only influences brand image ($p = 0.000$; $\beta = 0.510$), but also directly affects purchase intention ($p = 0.014$; $\beta = 0.322$). This implies that brand awareness, when formed through meaningful exposure or consumption experience, can directly trigger a consumer's intention to purchase, even without the mediation of brand image.

This finding supports the arguments of (Al Faruq Abdullah et al., 2023; Balakrishnan et al., 2021), who noted that awareness grounded in authentic experiences—such as attending events or viewing client testimonials—can immediately connect consumers with a brand on an emotional level. In high-involvement contexts, where purchase decisions relate to life milestones like weddings, customers tend to develop early preferences for brands that carry personal or social meaning.

Likewise, social media marketing was found to have a direct effect on purchase intention ($p = 0.004$; $\beta = 0.290$). This shows that emotional and engaging content on social media platforms can motivate consumer decisions directly, without relying on brand image as a mediator. This supports (Ali & Naushad, 2023; Savitri et al., 2021), who emphasized that entertainment, interactivity, and customization in social media marketing foster strong emotional bonds that drive behavior.

At Renjana Project, emotionally driven content such as behind-the-scenes videos, couple testimonials, and creative process narratives created psychological engagement between potential clients and the brand. This confirms that social media is not merely a communication tool but an affective medium that significantly shapes purchase intention—particularly in emotional services like wedding organizing.

Interestingly, price perception had no significant direct effect on purchase intention ($p = 0.131$) but exhibited a significant indirect influence through brand image ($p = 0.002$; indirect effect = 0.119). This suggests that in high-involvement services, price becomes relevant only when filtered through perceptions of quality, professionalism, and emotional assurance (Heti et al., 2024; Nugraha, 2018). At Renjana Project, price transparency in the form of well-designed packages proved more effective when combined with emotional storytelling and visual cues that enhanced the brand image.

Consequently, brand image plays a pivotal mediating role, bridging the relationship between brand awareness, social media marketing, and price perception to purchase

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intention. More than a visual identity, brand image becomes a symbol of emotional value and consumer trust. These findings strengthen the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) framework (Foti & Devine, 2019), positioning brand image as the psychological filter through which external stimuli become internalized and transformed into behavioral responses.

Theoretically, this study contributes by revealing that in personal service contexts, brand awareness and social media marketing serve not only as initial stimuli but also exert direct influence on purchase behavior. This adds nuance to existing literature, which has often overemphasized mediation without acknowledging the emotional potency of direct exposure. For practitioners, this is a call to create impactful first impressions that not only raise awareness but also cultivate emotional trust and relevance from the first interaction.

Mediation Analysis

A key finding of this study is the significant mediating role of brand image in linking brand awareness, social media marketing, and price perception to purchase intention. Sobel test results confirmed that all indirect effects involving brand image are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), positioning brand image as a central psychological construct that translates consumer perceptions into buying decisions.

The mediation of brand awareness on purchase intention through brand image ($p = 0.002$; indirect effect = 0.188) suggests that awareness alone does not lead to purchase unless it is supported by a strong, favorable image. This supports previous research by (Al Faruq Abdullah et al., 2023; Tariq et al., 2017), which argued that awareness must be reinforced by trust, credibility, and emotional appeal to influence intention. For Renjana Project, customers familiar with the brand through social media or peer recommendations were only likely to buy if they perceived the brand as professional, elegant, and trustworthy.

The mediation effect of social media marketing on purchase intention through brand image ($p = 0.002$; indirect effect = 0.145) reveals that interactive media alone does not directly influence buying decisions but contributes to building a strong brand perception. (Savitri et al., 2021) emphasized that emotionally engaging content—such as cinematic visuals and client testimonials—creates psychological closeness, which translates into purchase intention. In the high-involvement wedding organizer industry, emotional experiences facilitated through social media matter more than informational content or price offers.

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Interestingly, price perception showed no significant direct effect on purchase intention but had a significant indirect effect through brand image (p = 0.002; indirect effect = 0.119). This indicates that consumers consider pricing only when it aligns with a convincing brand image that reflects value and quality (Heti et al., 2024; Nugraha, 2018). At Renjana Project, price transparency conveyed through package simulations only resonated when paired with emotionally meaningful client stories and service visuals. These findings contribute to advancing the Stimulus–Organism–Response framework (Foti & Devine, 2019), positioning brand image as the organism that filters marketing stimuli before generating a behavioral response. In emotionally sensitive and high-involvement industries such as wedding organizing, brand image becomes essential—not just as a representation of the brand, but as the emotional and cognitive lens through which consumers interpret value, quality, and trust. This affirms the strategic importance of emotional branding and experience-driven marketing in shaping consumer behavior.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine how brand awareness, social media marketing, and price perception influence purchase intention among Renjana Project's customers, with brand image as a mediating variable. The findings confirm that all direct and indirect relationships in the model are statistically significant. Brand awareness, social media marketing, and price perception positively affect brand image, while brand image directly influences purchase intention. Moreover, brand image plays a crucial mediating role in linking the three independent variables (BA, SMM, PP) to consumer intention. Notably, price perception did not have a direct effect on purchase intention, yet it contributed significantly through the mediation of brand image.

This finding aligns with the real-world dynamics in high-involvement service industries like wedding organizing, where consumer decisions are rarely based solely on price, but rather on emotional assurance and perceived value. While price remains a rational factor, in the context of weddings—a deeply personal and emotionally loaded event—customers prioritize brand trust, quality, and emotional connection over affordability. Nevertheless, price perception exerts an indirect influence through brand image. This suggests that consumers' view of pricing only impacts their intention to purchase when the brand is perceived as professional, trustworthy, and high-quality. At Renjana Project, simply showcasing price packages is not persuasive enough. What makes the pricing acceptable is the presence of testimonials, behind-the-scenes stories,

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and creative process visuals that demonstrate value beyond cost. Thus, brand image serves as the critical bridge that transforms price perception into buying behavior.

In the context of high-involvement and emotionally driven services like wedding organizers, these results contribute to consumer behavior literature by reinforcing the role of brand image as a bridge between initial consumer perceptions and final decision-making. Emotional marketing strategies, personalized social media content, and transparent value communication emerge as key factors in building trust and influencing consumer purchase intention.

However, this study is not without limitations. First, the quantitative approach may not fully capture the emotional depth of consumer decisions. Second, the use of cross-sectional data restricts the ability to examine reciprocal relationships over time. Future researchers are encouraged to adopt qualitative methods (e.g., in-depth interviews with clients) or longitudinal SEM models to uncover deeper psychological insights and understand the two-way dynamics among variables more comprehensively.

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