



The Relationship Between Digital Marketing of Brand X and Purchase Interest

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the relationship between digital marketing of Brand X and the purchase intention of female students participating in the 2024 Indonesian International Student Mobility Awards (IISMA) vocational program who studied in the United Kingdom. Brand X is a UK-based cosmetic brand that actively utilizes various digital marketing channels, including social media, websites, search engine optimization, pay-per-click advertising, affiliate marketing, and online public relations. This research employs a quantitative approach with data collected through questionnaires distributed to 37 respondents. The analysis was conducted using the Spearman correlation test since the data did not follow a normal distribution. The results show a strong and significant positive relationship between digital marketing and purchase intention, with a correlation coefficient of 0.630 and a significance value below 0.001. Additionally, the coefficient of determination indicates that 39.69 percent of the variance in purchase intention is explained by digital marketing. These findings suggest that higher perceptions of Brand X's digital marketing are associated with higher purchase intention among the IISMA students in the United Kingdom.

Introduction

The rapid evolution of global business has intensified competition across various industries, making effective marketing a crucial determinant of brand success (Ahmad et al., 2022; Kotler & Keller, 2012; Salam et al., 2025). This competitive landscape, coupled with advancements in technology, has significantly shifted marketing paradigms from traditional methods to more interactive, dynamic, and measurable digital approaches (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019; Ryan, 2020; Mirzaei et al., 2025). Digital marketing, which leverages digital technologies across channels like social media, websites, and search engines, allows companies to not only reach broader markets but also to segment them with greater precision and measure campaign effectiveness in real-time. This capability makes digital marketing an indispensable tool in today's data-driven business environment (Martin, 2020; Todor, 2016; Khan et al., 2024).

In the cosmetics industry, the relevance of digital marketing is particularly pronounced due to the visual and trend-driven nature of its products, which are deeply intertwined with consumer identity and lifestyle (Suwardhana, 2023; Sri, 2025). This sector heavily relies on perception and visual narratives that are effectively conveyed through digital content. Furthermore, contemporary beauty consumers are increasingly digital-savvy, often relying on online reviews and digital channels as crucial touchpoints in their purchase journey (Chrisna & Risdwiyanto, 2023; Sari, 2020). Brand X, a UK-based cosmetics brand, actively utilizes a comprehensive array of digital marketing tools, including SEO, PPC advertising, affiliate marketing, online PR, and social media. Despite lacking an official physical presence in Indonesia, Brand X enjoys significant recognition among young Indonesian consumers, particularly those exposed

to global information through internet access, international influencers, and global online communities. This widespread exposure highlights the brand's sustained visibility even without local distribution channels (Wiweko & Anggara, 2025; Theodorakopoulos et al., 2025; Theocharis & Tsekouropoulos, 2025).

A particularly relevant demographic for understanding this phenomenon comprises female recipients of the 2024 Indonesian International Student Mobility Awards (IISMA) vocational program who studied in the United Kingdom. These students represent a young Indonesian demographic with substantial exposure to international cultures and markets, actively engaging with products and information via digital platforms (Tarigan et al., 2023; Bejaoui et al., Machfud et al., 2024). Their direct experience with digital marketing strategies in developed countries offers valuable insights into the efficacy of global brands like Brand X. From a psychological standpoint, female students in late adolescence are undergoing identity formation and lifestyle exploration, rendering them highly receptive to personalized, visually appealing, and mobile-accessible digital promotions. They frequently seek product information, user reviews, and comparisons online before making purchase decisions, all of which are facilitated by robust digital marketing efforts (Ferdinand, 2020; Antczak, 2024; Macías et al., 2024).

Based on this background, this study aims to thoroughly analyze the relationship between Brand X's digital marketing efforts and the purchase intention of IISMA vocational students in the UK (Affandi et al., 2025; Goswami & Ghosh, 2024; Ong, 2025). This research is expected to offer both academic and practical contributions by deepening the understanding of how various digital marketing elements influence the buying interest of young consumers within a globalized context. Furthermore, this study offers novelty by focusing on a unique demographic Indonesian international students and their exposure to international digital marketing strategies, thereby providing a foundation for future research exploring the effectiveness of digital marketing on international market segments or among Indonesian student diaspora abroad (Syafitri et al., 2025; Damayanthi & Tukiran, 2025; Yatusman & Mulyasari, 2024)

Methods

Type and Method of Research

This study employed a quantitative approach using a survey method to investigate the relationship between Brand X's digital marketing and the purchase intention of female students from the 2024 Indonesian International Student Mobility Awards (IISMA) vocational track who studied in the United Kingdom. This quantitative methodology was selected for its suitability in measuring the strength of relationships between variables through numerical data, collected via standardized instruments, and for its capacity to test hypotheses objectively and systematically (Sugiyono, 2018; Emzir, 2021). The survey method, specifically, allowed for the collection of data from a defined population to describe attitudes, opinions, or characteristics, providing a snapshot of the relationship between the variables at a specific point in time (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Sudaryono, 2017).

Population and Sample

The population for this study consisted of all 61 female IISMA vocational students from the 2024 cohort who studied in the United Kingdom. Given the specific and accessible nature of this population, a non-probability sampling technique was utilized, specifically convenience sampling. This approach resulted in a sample size of 37 respondents, who were selected based on their ease of access and willingness to participate by completing the research questionnaire. While convenience sampling offers practicality in data collection, it is acknowledged that this

method may limit the generalizability of the findings to broader populations beyond the specific group studied (Etikan et al., 2016; Taherdoost, 2018).

Instruments and Data Analysis Techniques

The primary instrument for data collection was a closed-ended questionnaire designed with a 5-point Likert scale. This questionnaire measured two main variables: digital marketing and purchase intention. The digital marketing variable was assessed across six dimensions, drawing upon the theoretical framework of Ryan and Jones (2009): website, search engine optimization (SEO), pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, affiliate marketing, online public relations (PR), and social media. Meanwhile, the purchase intention variable was measured using four indicators derived from Ferdinand's theory (2006): transactional intention, referential intention, preferential intention, and exploratory intention.

Before full distribution, the questionnaire underwent validity and reliability testing. Pearson Product Moment correlation was used for the validity test to ensure that the instrument accurately measured the intended constructs, while Cronbach's Alpha was employed for the reliability test to ascertain the consistency and stability of the measurements. The results from both tests confirmed that all items within the questionnaire were both valid and reliable, thus ensuring the quality of the collected data.

Following data collection, a normality test was conducted to determine the appropriate statistical analysis technique. The results indicated that the digital marketing variable did not follow a normal distribution (significance = 0.015). Consequently, the Spearman correlation test was selected for analyzing the relationship between the variables. Spearman's correlation is particularly suitable for ordinal-scale data and is robust for non-normally distributed data, making it an appropriate choice for measuring the relationship in non-parametric conditions (Field, 2018; Pallant, 2020). Additionally, the coefficient of determination was calculated to quantify the proportion of variance in purchase intention that could be explained by the digital marketing variable.

Research Procedures

The research was conducted in adherence to ethical research principles. This included ensuring the confidentiality of all respondents' identities, obtaining their voluntary consent to participate in the study, and guaranteeing that all collected data would be used exclusively for academic purposes. Data collection involved distributing the questionnaires to the identified IISMA vocational female students in the UK, ensuring they had ample time to provide their responses. Once collected, the data underwent rigorous cleaning, followed by the aforementioned validity, reliability, and normality tests. The final analysis, utilizing the Spearman correlation test and calculation of the coefficient of determination, was performed to address the research question and test the formulated hypotheses. This systematic procedure ensured the integrity and scientific rigor of the study's findings.

Results and Discussion

This study investigated the relationship between Brand X's digital marketing efforts and the purchase intention of female students from the 2024 IISMA vocational program in the United Kingdom. Our descriptive analysis revealed a high perception of Brand X's digital marketing among respondents, with 75.6% scoring highly. This suggests that Brand X's digital strategies encompassing social media, websites, SEO, PPC advertising, affiliate marketing, and online public relations have effectively reached and positively influenced this young, digitally-savvy international audience. This aligns with modern marketing principles that emphasize the broad

reach and precise segmentation capabilities of digital channels (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019; Ryan, 2020).

Further breakdown of the digital marketing dimensions showed that social media had the highest average score, underscoring its pivotal role in shaping respondents' positive perceptions of Brand X. This effectiveness can be attributed to factors such as frequent exposure, visually engaging content, the presence of influencers, and direct interaction on platforms like Instagram and TikTok (Todor, 2016). The inherent accessibility of these platforms via mobile devices also makes social media the most relevant communication channel for younger generations, who are constantly connected and actively seek out visual and interactive content. In contrast, dimensions such as websites and affiliate marketing received relatively lower scores, likely due to their more static nature and less direct interactive capabilities compared to dynamic social media platforms (Martin, 2020).

Despite the high perception of digital marketing, the data on purchase intention showed more varied results, with most respondents (67.6%) demonstrating moderate purchase intention (scores of 49 or below). This indicates that while students are highly exposed to Brand X's digital promotions, this exposure doesn't always translate into a high level of direct purchase intention. This finding suggests that a positive perception of digital marketing activities is a crucial first step, but not the sole determinant of purchasing behavior. Purchase decisions involve a multifaceted interplay of factors such as actual need, personal product preferences, pricing, perceived utility value, and existing product experiences, which often go beyond mere exposure to marketing efforts (Ferdinand, 2020; Sari, 2020).

The normality test results confirmed that the digital marketing variable was not normally distributed (significance = 0.015), which led us to employ the Spearman correlation test for analysis. The test yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.630 with a significance level of less than 0.001. This indicates a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between Brand X's digital marketing and the purchase intention of IISMA students in the UK. The coefficient of determination (ρ^2) was 0.3969, or 39.69%, suggesting that nearly 40% of the variance in purchase intention can be explained by perceptions of digital marketing. The remaining variance is likely influenced by other external factors not examined in this study, such as economic conditions, prior brand experiences, competitive offerings, or social influences within their peer groups (Kotler & Keller, 2012).

These findings strongly align with established theories emphasizing that effective digital marketing enhances consumer engagement and drives purchasing behavior. For late adolescents like the IISMA students, constant exposure to visually rich digital content, readily available information, and consistent brand imagery plays a significant role in shaping their purchase intentions (Ahmad et al., 2022). Interactive, visually engaging, and emotionally resonant marketing is proven to be more effective in influencing consumer attitudes and purchasing interest, as widely discussed in digital marketing literature (Ryan, 2020). Furthermore, content that emphasizes authenticity, leverages user testimonials, and promotes diversity and inclusivity tends to resonate powerfully with younger consumers, who are often socially aware and critically engaged (Suwardhana, 2023).

Our research is also supported by previous studies. For instance, Tarigan et al. (2023) found a significant influence of digital marketing on cosmetic product purchase intention. While their correlation was higher, the differing population context (local consumers versus international students) is a critical distinction. Similarly, Suwardhana (2023) highlighted the importance of content marketing, influencer marketing, and online reviews all integral elements of Brand X's strategy that were positively perceived by our respondents. This positive response illustrates

the effective alignment between Brand X's marketing approaches and the characteristics of its target audience.

However, it is also important to consider these results in light of other research. Chrisna and Risdiyanto (2023) found that the effectiveness of digital marketing significantly increases when mediated by consumer trust. While our study did not explore mediating variables, the demonstrated significant direct relationship suggests that digital marketing can have both direct and indirect effects depending on the specific context and target audience. Brand trust, the credibility of information disseminated through digital channels, and overall company reputation are crucial mediators that could be valuable areas for future research.

In conclusion, this study reinforces the understanding that digital marketing is a highly effective strategy for shaping consumer perceptions and fostering purchase intention. Its impact, however, can still be optimized, especially when targeting young consumers with international backgrounds. These findings provide a valuable foundation for cosmetic industry players to refine their digital strategies, making them more personalized, relevant, and engaging for international student audiences. Moving forward, data-driven, emotional, and value-based marketing approaches will become increasingly vital in addressing the evolving behaviors and preferences of the next generation of consumers.

Conclusion

Based on the Spearman correlation analysis, this study consistently demonstrates a strong and significant positive relationship between Brand X's digital marketing and the purchase intention of female IISMA students in the UK, where higher perceptions of digital marketing were associated with higher purchase intention. This finding is supported by a correlation coefficient of 0.630 with a significance level below 0.001, and a coefficient of determination of 39.69%, indicating that nearly 40% of the variance in purchase intention can be explained by digital marketing. Nevertheless, this research has limitations due to the use of *convenience sampling* with a small number of respondents (N=37), which restricts the generalizability of the findings to broader populations, and it did not explore other mediating or moderating factors that might influence this relationship. Therefore, it is suggested that future research expand the scope of the population and sampling techniques to enhance generalizability, consider external variables such as economic conditions, prior brand experiences, competitive offerings, or social influences, and investigate the role of consumer trust as a mediating variable to provide a more comprehensive understanding of purchase intention dynamics within a globalized digital marketing context.

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