The Effect of Relationship Marketing, Customer Engagement and Brand Trust in Increasing Purchase Decisions in Local Trading Company in Indonesia

Dafrian Nur Rahmat[1], Anita Silvianita[2], Nurafni Rubiyanti[3], Arry Widodo[4]
Telkom University[1,2,3,4]
Jalan Telekomunikasi No.1, 40257, Bandung, Indonesia
Corresponding Author: anidajulianap@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFORMATION

ABSTRACT

A trading company in Bandung experienced a 491% sales increase, prompting research into the factors behind this phenomenon. This study examined the influence of relationship marketing and customer engagement on purchase decisions, mediated by brand trust. The research used a quantitative, causal-descriptive approach with simple random sampling. From a population of product coordinators conducting direct sales and demonstrations, 320 respondents were selected using the Slovin formula. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Smart-PLS 02. Results showed that relationship marketing positively and significantly influenced brand trust (t-statistic 9.845; p-value 0.000) and purchase decisions (t-statistic 32.167; p-value 0.000). Customer engagement also significantly impacted brand trust (t-statistic 10.106; p-value 0.000) and purchase decisions (t-statistic 2.103; p-value 0.036). However, brand trust did not significantly mediate the effects of relationship marketing and customer engagement on purchase decisions. The study concluded that relationship marketing had the strongest direct impact on purchase decisions. Companies are encouraged to prioritize relationship marketing and customer engagement strategies while strengthening brand trust to maximize long-term consumer loyalty.

Keywords: Brand Trust; Customer Engagement; Purchase Decision; Relationship Marketing

INTRODUCTION

In an effort to improve efficiency and inclusive economic growth in Indonesia, the Indonesian government has made various efforts which are then mapped out in strategic steps. The empowerment of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) is one of the initiatives undertaken by the Indonesian government to assist the country's economic growth. This was conveyed by Mr. Hendrar Priari as Head of the Goods/Services Procurement Policy Institute (LKPP) during the press release of the Public Procurement Bill on March 3, 2024. This empowerment is one of the government's commitments to continue to support MSMEs and cooperatives. The goal is that MSMEs continue to upgrade and have strong competitiveness in the global market. The reason is, MSMEs are the largest economic buffer in Indonesia in 2023 with their contribution reaching 61% of Indonesia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Limanseto, 2023).

Apart from being the largest contributor to Indonesia's GDP, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) also play a crucial role in employment, absorbing up to 97% of the national workforce, or more than 119.6 million workers (BPS, 2023). According to the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, there are approximately 67 million MSME actors spread across various provinces, with Java Island dominating the sector. West Java leads with the highest number of MSMEs at 1.49 million business units, followed by Central Java with 1.45 million, and East Java with 1.15 million. Given its large number of MSMEs, competition in West Java is naturally more intense than in other regions. In the context of business management, competition refers to the efforts of two or more parties striving to secure customer preference by offering the most attractive prices or terms. This rivalry may take various forms, such as promotional activities, price discounts, advertising strategies, product quality improvements, market segmentation, product variations, packaging, and innovative product designs (Uddin, 2022).

The high growth of MSMEs in West Java cannot be separated from the high purchasing power of the people. There are several expenditure components that are the main pillars of Indonesia's economic growth in the second quarter of 2023. Indonesia's GDP expanded by 5.32% year over year (yoy) in the second quarter of 2023, with the "household consumption" component accounting for the majority of 53.31% of the country's GDP. According to Mr. Moh. Edy as Deputy for Balance Sheet and Statistical Analysis of (BPS, 2023), there are factors driving household consumption growth such as religious holidays and increasing people's purchasing power that encourage household consumption in 2023. This household consumption group includes transportation, communication equipment, household furniture, clothing, and others. According to data from Bank Indonesia, West Java's economic growth also comes from household consumption. Meanwhile, in terms of business field, positive growth was supported by wholesale and retail trade, transportation, processing industry, and warehousing.

As the province with the largest number of MSMEs in Indonesia, West Java turns out to be very dependent on the household consumption sector which is still the main support for its economic growth, one of which is the household furniture group. Therefore, a good marketing strategy is needed for business actors, especially MSMEs in the field of household furniture in order to survive in the MSME market and achieve competitive advantage. Because according to Porter (1985) one way to achieve competitive advantage is to generate more sales compared to its market competitors. And the number of sales is inseparable from purchasing decision factors that affect consumers.

Consumer purchasing decisions can be influenced by marketing activities carried out by business actors. According to García & Curras-Perez (2019), purchasing decisions are consumer actions in determining a product or service to be consumed or used. Purchasing decision is also interpreted as a decision as the selection of an action from two or more alternative options, in other words in order for someone to make a decision there must be alternative options available (Adnan, 2019). Consumers must consider factors such as needs, preferences, product quality, price, availability, brand reputation, and trust in the dealer in making the right purchasing decisions, purchasing decisions can also occur due to marketing activities carried out by business people (Santoso & Sispradana, 2021). Therefore, many marketing activities are carried out by MSMEs as an effort to improve consumer purchasing decisions and boost sales. Although many MSME business actors do not clearly understand what marketing is and how to implement effective marketing activities to increase sales of their products (Pertiwi & Hendrawan, 2013). Many MSMEs are still groping what kind of marketing strategies can increase their sales so that the sales obtained tend to fluctuate. This phenomenon also occurs in XY Company as one of the MSME business actors in West Java. PD Wibawa Mukti is an MSME that sells household furniture and markets it through sales coordinators who come door-to-door to residents' homes. It is known that the percentage of sales of PD Wibawa Mukti in November rose by 491%. The phenomenon of a fantastic increase in sales is assumed by researchers because of the application of relationship marketing to XY Company. According to Kotler & Keller (2016) relationship marketing is the process of creating, maintaining, and improving strong, high-value relationships with customers where organizations must focus on managing customers for a long time. Meanwhile, according to Listyawati (2013) relationship marketing is a relationship within the company to build and retain customers that can benefit the company.

This relationship marketing strategy is implemented by XY Company with the following scheme explanation. According to Head of Operations, the coordinator who will sell furniture products as well as serving as a reseller. The coordinator will peddle products by approaching resident door-to-door and conducting product demonstrations directly in front of potential customers. So that a relationship is built between the coordinator and local residents from these marketing activities. The coordinator will also provide credit payment options which will later be billed door-to-door also to consumers' homes. From these sales, coordinators will get a special price so that they can benefit from sales. From this marketing activity, a strong marketing relationship is built between the coordinator and consumers so as to influence purchasing decisions and boost sales.

This relationship marketing was implemented in October 2023. So, researchers assume that it is true that one of the causes of this drastic increase in sales and purchase decisions is due to relationship marketing. According to Setiawan et al., (2020) relationship marketing affects purchasing decisions which can be seen directly from increasing sales. Supported by Nikmah (2017) which states that relationship marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. Because marketing science has now undergone an evolution, where now the priority is not only how to get consumers, but also how to foster relationships and retain consumers and various other parties (Nikmah, 2017). So relational marketing (relationship marketing) is one strategy in building long-term relationships with consumers.

In addition to relationship marketing, another variable assumed by researchers to be influential in the phenomenon of purchasing decisions at XY Company is customer engagement. According to Wirtz et al. in (Lisnawati & Ahman, 2019), when customers connect with brands or other customers to learn more about the company or its products, the process of consumer engagement or customer engagement gets underway. This is

certainly very relevant to what happened to XY Company where customer engagement was formed through relationship marketing activities carried out by the coordinator. Consumer engagement and closeness will be built with a relationship marketing approach like this so that researchers assume that customer engagement is also one of the factors that influence purchasing decisions and the phenomenon of drastic sales increases in XY Company. This is supported by research by Syalsabila & Hermina (2023) which says that customer engagement affects purchase decisions.

With high consumer engagement, purchasing decisions become more directed, as consumers are not only driven by needs but also by trust and satisfaction with the brand. With strong marketing and customer engagement relationships built continuously by PD. Wibawa Mukti, the potential for increasing brand trust is also getting higher so that consumers have entrusted their household furniture needs to PD. Wibawa Mukti. In the early stages, PD. Wibawa Mukti faces challenges in creating this perception in the eyes of its consumers. The lack of efforts to build open two-way communication, the lack of strong customer testimonials, and the limited branding activities that support trust are some of the factors that hinder strengthening brand trust.

However, with the relationship marketing strategy implemented, PD. Wibawa Mukti began to fix the problem. A close relationship with consumers not only increases their engagement but also provides space for companies to understand and respond to customer needs more effectively. Consistency in providing good service and product quality has also begun to rebuild consumer trust that had been disrupted. In addition, with the involvement of consumers through various marketing activities, they feel part of the brand journey, which ultimately strengthens their trust in PD. Wibawa Mukti.

Researchers assume that brand trust is an important element that can mediate the relationship between relationship marketing, customer engagement, and purchase decisions. This is supported by Listyawati (2013) brand trust is the expectation of the reliability of a brand, where consumers can feel comfortable and use the product to meet their needs and desires. The researcher assumes that brand trust is one of the factors that mediate relationship marketing and customer engagement to the occurrence of the phenomenon of purchase decisions in PD. Mukti's authority because consumers already trust PD. Mukti's authority through a coordinator who came door-to-door and conducted product demonstrations so that trust in the brand was built. Because according to Kotler & Keller (2016) brand trust has a very big influence on the sustainability of a brand, because if the brand no longer trusts it, it will be difficult for the product to sell and develop in the market. This is supported by research by Wongsansukcharoen (2022) which states that brand trust does have a positive effect on mediating customer engagement and relationship marketing. Several other similar studies also support this statement, including research by (Pandiangan et al., 2021) and (Hanaysha, 2022) which states that brand trust indeed plays a positive role as a mediator for purchase decisions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Purchase Decision
Purchasing decisions are consumers' actual actions in determining a product or service that they will consume or use (García & Curras-Perez, 2019). The step of the decision-making process where consumers actually make a purchase is known as the purchasing decision (Krisna et al., 2024). Before making a purchase, consumers must determine where to shop, what brand and model they want, how many things they want to buy, when they want to buy them, how much money they want to spend, and how they want to pay for it (Wakano et al., 2024). Purchasing decisions are also defined as decisions

as selecting an action from two or more alternative options, in other words for someone to make a decision there must be alternative options available (Adnan, 2019). Consumers must consider factors such as needs, preferences, product quality, price, availability, brand reputation, and trust in suppliers in making the right purchasing decisions (Santoso & Sispradana, 2021). In addition, psychological, social, and economic factors can also influence purchasing decisions. Purchasing decisions are a complex process and are influenced by many interacting factors, and being aware of them might assist businesses in creating more successful marketing plans that cater to the demands and preferences of customers (Hanaysha, 2022)

Relationship Marketing
Relationship marketing or relational marketing is one strategy that is widely applied by companies to gain loyalty from their customers. Relationship marketing is a relationship within the company to build and maintain profitable customers for the company (Widjaja, 2016). Kotler and Armstrong in the research of (Krisna et al., 2024) define relationship marketing as follows: relationship marketing is the process of establishing, preserving, and fortifying valued connections with clients and other believers. The goal of relationship marketing is to establish, nurture, and enhance solid bonds with stakeholders, including customers. Another opinion was expressed by (Karo et al., 2024) that relationship marketing is a policy and a set of tools to develop interactive relationships with consumers in order to create and maintain sustainable relationships between consumers and companies. Relationship marketing is an ongoing process that businesses use to maintain positive relationships with their clients in order to achieve company objectives. A good relationship between the company and customers is not only based on the principle of transactional relationships but also related to long-term relationships that have benefits for the company and customers.

Customer Engagement
Customer Engagement is a relationship between the organization and the audience, customers, or consumers that is established due to the process of communication and interaction between the two parties. Smith and Zook (2019) that if a company knows and understands customer engagement better than its competitors, then it can help the company to develop and build brand loyalty. Customers are consumers who have subscribed to a product or service. While engagement can be defined broadly, engagement can be interpreted as good communication so that the audience pays attention to something.The attention and behavior of consumers to make transactions then loyalty is higher. Good engagement can shape consumer loyalty (Karo et al., 2024). Connolly (2020) that the customer engagement cycle occurs circularly with successive flows of connection, interaction, satisfaction, retention, commitment, advocacy, then engagement and back again to connection. Perkins (2015) in his book states that there are six stages for customers to become part of a brand. The indicators include Awareness, Discovery, Attraction, Interaction, Purchase, and Advocacy.

Brand Trust
Brand trust is the desire of customers to depend on a brand with the risks faced because the expectation of the brand will produce a positive output (Krisna et al., 2024). Customer trust in the brand is also the ability of the brand to convince consumers that the products sold by the brand are able to meet the promised value so that it prioritizes the interests of consumers. In addition, according to Ferrinadewi (2008: 150) trust is a number of specific beliefs about honesty (integrity), attention and motivation that is trusted (benevolence), ability (competency), and consistency of behavior (predictability).

Relationship Between Relationship Marketing and Brand Trust
A study stated that it turns out that relationship marketing can affect brand trust because building relationships with customers can increase customer trust in the brand, but this influence can only occur indirectly because it is mediated by other factors such as customer engagement (Wongsansukcharoen, 2022). The research is in line with research that states that relationship marketing does affect brand trust (Listyawati, 2013).

H1: Relationship marketing have an effect on brand trust.

Relationship Between Customer Engagement and Brand Trust
Customer engagement chooses a positive influence on brand trust because customers who are more involved with the company are proven to have higher trust in the company (Wongsansukcharoen, 2022).

H2: customer engagement have an effect on brand trust.

Relationship Between Relationship Marketing and Purchase Decision
As stated by Widjaja (2016), he defines relationship marketing as a continuation of the reciprocal relationship between service providers and customers that can increase company profitability. From the results of research conducted by previous researchers, namely (Pertiwi & Hendrawan, 2013) that Relationship Marketing has a significant effect on Purchasing Decisions, previous research is in line with research conducted by Setiawan et al., (2020) that relationship marketing has a significant effect on product purchase decisions in his company. It is known that relationship marketing variables have a significant influence on purchasing decisions. Thus, it can be partially stated that the relationship marketing variable has a real effect on purchasing decisions. The results of previous research show that creating a good relationship marketing for consumers means satisfying consumers, considering that satisfied consumers are expected to make purchases. From the previous research, the following hypotheses can be proposed:

H3: Relationship marketing have an effect on purchase decision.

Relationship Between Customer Engagement and Purchase Decision
Customer engagement is believed to have an influence on purchase decisions both directly and indirectly. A study says that customer engagement plays a good role as a mediator for purchase decisions (Syalsabila & Hermina, 2023). Similar research also says that customer engagement has a direct effect on purchase decisions because it will form an emotional connection with the company (Clarence & Keni, 2022).

H4: Customer Engagement have an effect on purchase decision.

Relationship Between Brand Trust and Purchase Decision
There have been many studies that discuss the influence of brand trust on purchase decisions. One of them is research that states that brand trust can have a direct effect on purchase decisions significantly (Pandiangan et al., 2021). Other research also supports this statement that purchase decisions can be directly influenced by brand trust because consumer trust in brands can make consumers decide to buy products from that brand (Wongsansukcharoen, 2022).

H5: Relationship marketing have an effect on customer engagement.

Brand Trust as Mediator
Brand trust disimpulkan oleh beberapa penelitian berhasil menjadi mediator yang baik antara dua variabel. Salah satunya adalah penelitian yang mengkonfirm bahwa brand trust memediasi hubungan antara informativeness dengan purchase decision dengan baik (Hanaysha, 2022). Penelitian lain menyebutkan bahwa memang brand trust memediasi hubungan antara relationship marketing terhadap brand loyalty (Wongsansukcharoen, 2022).

H6-H7: Immersive experience to have an effect on purchase intention.

Conceptual Framework
In this study the conceptual framework can be described as follows:

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
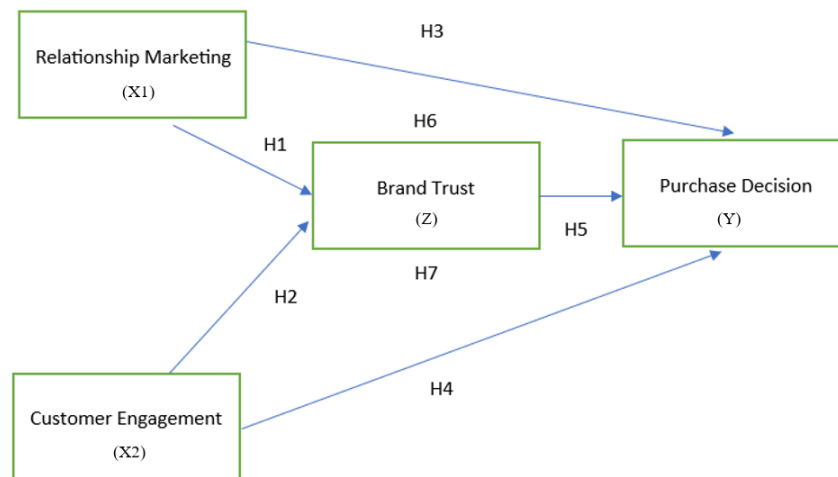
Source: Processed by Researcher (2024)

In order to evaluate and describe the impact of social presence on purchase intention mediated by immersive experience, this conceptual framework offers four hypotheses. The following are the four hypotheses:

H1: Relationship marketing has a significant effect on brand trust.
H2: Customer engagement has a significant effect on brand trust.
H3: Relationship marketing has a significant effect on purchase decisions. H4: Customer engagement has a significant effect on purchase decisions.
H5: Brand trust affects purchase decisions.
H6: Brand trust is influential as a mediator between relationship marketing and purchase decisions
H7: Brand trust is influential as a mediator between customer engagement and purchase decisions.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a quantitative approach with a sampling technique, namely nonprobability-purposive sampling. Data was obtained by distributing forms on social media and then processed using SmartPLS version 3.9 software with a Likert scale starting from 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (agree), 3 (somewhat agree), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree). Once the data is collected, it is then described and interpreted using causal descriptive analysis techniques. This causal descriptive analysis is used to

explain and describe the data, but it is not used to make broader conclusions (Ghozali, 2021).

RESULTS

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is carried out to measure the influence of a variable on other variables. In the process of hypothesis testing, there are two criteria for the results of the data to be tested, namely H1 is accepted and H0 is rejected when the value of t-statistic > 1.96 and the p-value < 0.05. This hypothesis test was carried out by bootstrapping testing on the SmartPLS application Version 3.2.9. The results of hypothesis testing are categorized into two types: direct effects and indirect effects. Path coefficients range from -1 to +1, where values closer to +1 indicate a stronger positive relationship between constructs. On the other hand, values approaching -1 signify a stronger negative relationship. These coefficients help determine the strength and direction of the relationships within the model.

Which is described as follows:

Table 1. Results of Direct Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	*Original Sample*	*Sample Mean*	Standard Deviasi	T *Statistic*	P *Values*
RM -> BT	0.461	0.459	0.047	9.845	0.000
CE -> BT	0.492	0.495	0.049	10.106	0.000
RM -> PD	0.865	0.866	0.027	32.167	0.000
CE -> PD	0.060	0.058	0.028	2.103	0.036
BT -> PD	0.080	0.080	0.044	1.809	0.071

Source: Researcher Processed (2024)

H1: Relationship Marketing has an effect on Brand Trust

After hypothesis testing was carried out on 351 respondents, a statistical t value of 9,845 > 1.96 and p values of 0,000 < 0.05 could be declared H1 accepted and H0 rejected. The results of this study are strengthened by direct influence bootstrapping analysis. Direct influences such as the parameter coefficient for the RM variable on BT of 0.461 shows a positive influence of RM on BT. This means that the higher the RM value, the higher the BT will also increase. Quantitatively, an increase of one unit in RM will increase BT by 46%. The calculation by bootstrap or resampling method yielded an estimated coefficient of 0.461, with a t-count value of 9.845 and a standard deviation of 0.047. The p-value obtained is 0.000 (<0.05), so the hypothesis (H1) is accepted. Thus, the direct influence of RM on BT is statistically significant. So that relationship marketing has a positive and significant effect on brand trust. These results show that building long-term relationships with customers through marketing can affect customer trust in the brand/company.

H2: Customer engagement affects Brand trust
After hypothesis testing was carried out on 351 respondents, it was obtained that the statistical t values of 10,106 > 1.96 and p values of 0.000 < 0.05 could be declared H2 accepted and H0 rejected. The results of this study are strengthened by direct influence bootstrapping analysis.

Direct influences such as the parameter coefficient for the CE variable on BT of 0.492 indicate a positive influence of CE on BT. This means that the higher the CE value, the higher the BT will also increase. Quantitatively, a one-unit increase in CE would increase BT by 49%. The calculation by bootstrap or resampling method yielded an estimated coefficient of 0.492, with a t-count value of 10.106 and a standard deviation of 0.049. The p-value obtained is 0.000 (<0.05), so the hypothesis (H2) is accepted. Thus, the direct effect of CE on BT is statistically significant.

So that the results of customer engagement analysis have a positive and significant effect on brand trust. These results show that the interaction between customers and companies to build relationships can affect brand trust in the minds of customers.

H3: Relationship marketing affects purchase decisions
After a hypothesis test was carried out on 351 respondents, a statistical t value of 32,167 > 1.96 and p values of 0.000 < 0.05 can be stated that H3 was accepted and H0 was rejected. The results of this study are strengthened by the analysis of direct influence bootstrapping.

Direct influences such as the parameter coefficient for the RM variable on PD of 0.865 indicate a positive influence of RM on PD. This means that the higher the RM value, the higher the PD will also increase. Quantitatively, an increase of one unit in RM will increase PD by 86%. Calculations using the bootstrap or resampling method resulted in an estimated coefficient of 0.865, with a t-count value of 32.167 and a standard deviation of 0.027. The p-value obtained is 0.000 (<0.05), so the hypothesis (H3) is accepted. Thus, the direct effect of CE on PD is statistically significant.

So that relationship marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions. These results show that the long-term relationship between customers and companies through marketing is found to influence customer decisions in making purchases and it is also known that this hypothesis has the greatest influence compared to other hypotheses.

H4: Customer engagement has an effect on purchase decision
After hypothesis testing on 351 respondents, it was obtained that the statistical t values of 2,103 > 1.96 and p values of 0.036 < 0.05 can be stated that H4 is accepted and H0 is rejected. The results of this study are strengthened by the analysis of direct influence bootstrapping.

Direct influences such as the parameter coefficient for the CE variable on PD of 0.060 indicate a positive influence of CE on PD. This means that the higher the CE value, the higher the PD will also increase. Quantitatively, a one-unit increase in CE will increase PD by 6%. Calculations using the bootstrap or resampling method resulted in an estimated coefficient of 0.060, with a t-count value of 2.103 and a standard deviation of 0.028. The p-value obtained is 0.036 (<0.05), so the hypothesis (H4) is accepted. Thus, the direct effect of CE on PD is statistically significant, despite having a weak parameter coefficient.

So that customer engagement has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions. These results show that the interaction between customers and the company can influence the customer's decision to make a purchase.

H5: Brand trust affects purchase decisions
After hypothesis testing on 351 respondents, it was obtained that the statistical t value of 1,809 > 1.96 and p values of 0.071 > 0.05 can be declared H5 rejected and H0 accepted. The results of this study are strengthened by the analysis of direct influence bootstrapping.

Direct influences such as the parameter coefficient for the BT variable on PD of 0.080 indicate a positive influence of BT on PD. This means that the higher the BT value, the higher the PD will also increase. Quantitatively, an increase of one unit in BT will increase PD by 8%. The calculation by bootstrap or resampling method yields an estimated coefficient of 0.060, with a t-count value of 1.809 and a standard deviation of 0.08. The p-value obtained is 0.071 (>0.05), so the hypothesis (H5) is rejected. Thus, the direct influence of BT on PD is not statistically significant, because even though it has a positive parameter coefficient, the value is weak and the P-value is greater than 0.05.

So that brand trust does not have a significant effect on purchase decisions. These results show that customer trust has not been able to influence customer purchase decisions, so there are other factors that can influence someone to decide to make a purchase.

Table 2. Results of Indirect Hypothesis Testing:

Hipotesis	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviasi	T Statistic	P Values
RM -> BT -> PD	0.037	0.037	0.021	1.752	0.080
CE -> BT -> PD	0.039	0.040	0.222	1.744	0.082

H6: Relationship marketing influences purchase decisions through brand trust
After hypothesis testing on 351 respondents, a statistical t value of 1,752 > 1.96 and p values of 0.080 > 0.05 can be declared H6 rejected and H0 accepted. The results of this study are strengthened by Bootstrapping analysis of indirect influences.

The parameter coefficient for the variable RM to PD through BT is 0.037, indicating that there is a positive indirect influence of RM on PD through BT. This means that the higher the RM value, the PD through BT tends to increase. Quantitatively, an increase of one unit in RM will increase PD through BT by 3.7%. However, based on calculations using the bootstrap or sampling method, the estimated coefficient of 0.037 with a t-count value of 1.752 and a standard deviation of 0.021 results in a p-value of 0.080 (>0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H6) is rejected. This shows that the indirect influence of RM on PD through BT is not meaningful or statistically significant.

So that relationship marketing does not have a significant effect on purchase decisions through brand trust. These results show that brand trust is not strong enough to act as a mediator in the influence of relationship marketing and purchase decisions. Relationship marketing has a great direct influence on purchase decisions so that if desired, the role of other variables is expected to be a mediator.

H7: Customer engagement influences purchase decisions through brand trust
After a hypothesis test was carried out on 351 respondents, a statistical t value of 1,744 > 1.96 and p values of 0.082 > 0.05 could be declared H7 rejected and H0 accepted. The results of this study are strengthened by Bootstrapping analysis of indirect influences.

The parameter coefficient for the CE variable on PD via BT is 0.038, indicating a positive indirect influence of RM on PD via BT. This means that the higher the RM value, the PD through BT tends to increase. Quantitatively, an increase of one unit in RM will increase PD through BT by 3.9%. However, based on calculations using the bootstrap or sampling method, the estimated coefficient of 0.039 with a t-count value of 1.744 and a standard deviation of 0.222 results in a p-value of 0.082 >0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H7) is rejected. This shows that the indirect effect of CE on PD through BT is not meaningful or statistically significant.

So that customer engagement does not have a significant effect on purchase decisions through brand trust. These results show that brand trust has not played a significant role as a mediator between customer engagement and purchase decisions. Customer trust in brands needs to be revisited as mediators and customer engagement has had a direct influence on purchase decisions.

DISCUSSION

The Effect of Relationship Marketing on Brand Trust
Relationship marketing is a relationship built between a company and a customer with the aim of retaining customers who have the potential to provide benefits for the company (Widjaja, 2016). Relationship marketing is a company's effort to carry out an intense and sustainable marketing process with consumers by providing services oriented to customer satisfaction (Nikmah, 2017). Based on the results of the hypothesis test, relationship marketing has a positive and significant effect on brand trust. These results show that building long-term relationships with customers through marketing can affect customer trust in the brand/company. Similar research states that it turns out that relationship marketing can directly affect brand trust because building relationships with customers can increase customer trust in the brand, but this influence can only occur indirectly because it is mediated by other factors such as customer engagement (Wongsansukcharoen, 2022). This means that PD Wibawa Mukti has succeeded in creating customer trust in its brand significantly thanks to its persistence in building relationships with customers continuously. Relationship marketing built by PD Wibawa Mukmi through its sales and coordinators through door to door, product demonstrations are able to create significant brand trust. This is in line with research by (Wongsansukcharoen, 2022) which highlights that the key factor for the success of relationship marketing orientation is indirect brand trust. These results can increase the effectiveness of the company's sustainable performance

The Impact of Customer Engagement on Brand Trust
According to Smith & Zook (2019), customer engagement is a relationship between consumer organizations that is established due to the process of communication and interaction between the two parties. If a company is able to know and understand customer engagement better than its competitors, then it can help the company to develop and build brand loyalty. Based on the results of the hypothesis test, customer engagement has a positive and significant effect on brand trust. These results show that the interaction between customers and companies to build relationships can affect brand trust in the minds of customers. Similar research also explains the same results, that

customer engagement chooses a positive influence on brand trust because customers who are more involved with the company are proven to have higher trust in the company (Wongsansukcharoen, 2022). This means that all activities from relationship marketing that have been carried out with or without intentionally forming the relationship between sales and coordinators become more engaged with customers so that with this involvement, consumers become more confident in the PD Wibawa Mukti brand. This research is also in line with the research of (Chen et al., 2022) which stated that customer engagement can positively influence consumer behavior through brand trust as the moderator. This means that there is an indirect good relationship between customer engagement and brand trust.

The Influence of Relationship Marketing on Purchase Decision
Relationship marketing is a strategic orientation that focuses on retaining and increasing current customers rather than acquiring new customers. In addition to customers, those who are the center of attention of relationship marketing are suppliers, distributors and other parties related to the company. Based on the results of the hypothesis test, relationship marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions. These results show that the long-term relationship between customers and companies through marketing is found to influence customer decisions in making purchases and it is also known that this hypothesis has the greatest influence compared to other hypotheses. This is supported by a similar study by (Setiawan et al., 2020) which states that relationship marketing is a factor that has a significant influence on purchase decisions. Relationship marketing can help the marketing process effectively because sales are directly facing customers. This means that the relationship marketing activities carried out by PD Wibawa Mukti are significant in making customers decide to buy their products.

The Impact of Customer Engagement on Purchase Decisions
According to Wakano et al., (2024), Customer engagement is the relationship between customers and brands. Customer engagement with the brand can increase every time a customer interacts with a company. For example, when buying something, reading content on social media, or talking about brands. Customer engagement is referred to in content marketing. Based on the results of the hypothesis test, customer engagement has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions. These results show that the interaction between customers and the company can influence the customer's decision to make a purchase. Similar research also says that customer engagement has a direct effect on purchase decisions because it will form an emotional connection with the company (Clarence & Keni, 2022). This means that at PD Wibawa Mukti, all outputs from its relationship marketing activities can make consumers and sales more engaged and bring about product purchase decisions.

The Influence of Brand Trust on Purchase Decision
Brand trust is the desire of customers to depend on a brand with the risks faced because the expectation of the brand will produce a positive output. Customer trust in the brand is also the ability of the brand to convince consumers that the products sold by the brand are able to meet the promised value so that it prioritizes the interests of consumers. Based on the results of hypothesis testing, brand trust does not have a significant effect on purchase decisions. These results show that customer trust has not been able to influence customer purchase decisions, so there are other factors that can influence someone to decide to make a purchase. This is different from previous research which said that purchase decisions can be directly influenced by brand trust because consumer trust in brands can make consumers decide to buy products from the brand (Pandiangan et al., 2021). This means that in PD. Wibawa Mukti Even though consumers already

have a sense of trust in the brand, it is not necessarily that consumers immediately decide to buy PD Wibawa Mukti products due to other factors, such as priority needs and large household expenses.

The Influence of Brand Trust as a Mediator between Relationship Marketing and Purchase Decision
According to Ferrinadewi (2008) trust is a number of specific beliefs about honesty (integrity), attention and motivation that is trusted (benevolence), ability (competency), and consistency of behavior (predictability). Customer trust in the brand is also the ability of the brand to convince consumers that the products sold by the brand are able to meet the promised value so that it prioritizes the interests of consumers. Based on the results of hypothesis testing, relationship marketing does not have a significant effect on purchase decisions through brand trust. These results show that brand trust is not strong enough to act as a mediator in the influence of relationship marketing and purchase decisions. Relationship marketing has a great direct influence on purchase decisions so that if desired, the role of other variables is expected to be a mediator. Indeed, there has been no previous research that discusses the role of brand trust as a mediator of relationship marketing on purchase decisions. However, at PD Wibawa Mukti, this is common because sales often meet potential consumers who already believe and are interested in PD Wibawa Mukti products but do not decide to buy due to many considerations, one of which is because finances are still prioritized for other things

The Influence of Brand Trust as a Mediator between Customer Engagement and Purchase Decision
Based on the results of hypothesis testing, customer engagement does not have a significant effect on purchase decisions through brand trust. These results show that brand trust has not played a significant role as a mediator between customer engagement and purchase decisions. Customer trust in brands needs to be revisited as mediators and customer engagement has had a direct influence on purchase decisions. Regarding the relationship between these three variables, no previous research has been found that discusses the role of brand trust as a mediator of customer engagement on purchase decisions. However, the real conditions in PD Wibawa Mukti can happen for reasons similar to before. Even though potential consumers have trusted the PD Wibawa Mukti brand and products, engaged and witnessed the product demonstration firsthand, it is not yet a determinant that potential consumers will decide to buy right away. This is due to a similar reason, namely economic conditions that still prioritize their spending to buy daily necessities.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that relationship marketing played the most significant role in directly influencing purchase decisions, highlighting the importance of building strong, long-term relationships with customers. Customer engagement also positively impacted both brand trust and purchase decisions, further emphasizing the value of active interactions between companies and consumers. However, brand trust did not effectively mediate the relationship between relationship marketing, customer engagement, and purchase decisions, indicating that its influence on purchasing behavior needs further reinforcement. To sustain and enhance sales performance, companies should focus on implementing effective relationship marketing and engagement strategies while working to strengthen brand trust for long-term customer loyalty and sustained growth.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS
The authors have declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning the study, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

REFERENCES

Adnan, A. (2019). The effect of product quality, brand image, price, and advertising on purchase decision and its impact on customer loyalty of Morinaga milk in Aceh. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change, 9*(4).

Badan Pusat Statistik. (2023). *Posisi kredit usaha mikro, kecil, dan menengah (UMKM) pada bank umum—Tabel statistik.* https://www.bps.go.id/id/statistics-table/2/MTk2MiMy/posisi-kredit-usaha-mikro--kecil--dan-menengah--umkm-sup1-sup-pada-bank-umum.html

Chen, X., Wang, Y., Lyu, X., & Zhang, J. (2022). The impact of hotel customer engagement and service evaluation on customer behavior intention: The mediating effect of brand trust. *Frontiers in Psychology, 13*, 852336. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.852336

Clarence, C., & Keni, K. (2022). The prediction of purchase intention based on digital marketing, customer engagement, and brand preference (pp. 481–486). https://doi.org/10.2991/aebmr.k.220501.073

Connolly, S. L., Miller, C. J., Lindsay, J. A., & Bauer, M. S. (2020). A systematic review of providers' attitudes toward telemental health via videoconferencing. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice, 27*(2), e12311. https://doi.org/10.1111/cpsp.12311

Ferrinadewi, E. (2008). *Pengaruh threat emotion konsumen dan brand trust pada keputusan pembelian produk susu Anlene di Surabaya* [Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Airlangga].

García, I. S., & Curras-Perez, R. (2019). Is satisfaction a necessary and sufficient condition to avoid switching? The moderating role of service type. *European Journal of Management and Business Economics, 29*(1), 54–83. https://doi.org/10.1108/EJMBE-02-2018-0035

Ghozali, I. (2021). *Partial least square: Konsep, teknik, dan aplikasi menggunakan program SmartPLS 3.2.9 untuk penelitian empiris.* Badan Penerbit Universitas Diponegoro.

Hanaysha, J. R. (2022). Impact of social media marketing features on consumer's purchase decision in the fast-food industry: Brand trust as a mediator. *International Journal of Information Management Data Insights, 2*(2), 100102. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jjimei.2022.100102

Karo, P. K., Sulastri, S., & Maulana, A. (2024). Literature review: New wave marketing, marketing performance, and memorable tourism experience in the tourism sector. *Journal of International Conference Proceedings, 7*(4), Article 4. https://doi.org/10.32535/jicp.v7i4.3598

Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management* (15th ed.). Pearson Education.

Krisna, I. P., Anggraini, N. P. N., & Atmaja, N. P. C. D. (2024). The role of brand image in mediating the influence of online customer reviews and perceived ease of use on purchase decisions. *Journal of International Conference Proceedings, 7*(2), Article 2. https://doi.org/10.32535/jicp.v7i2.3471

Limanseto, H. (2023). Dorong UMKM naik kelas dan go export, pemerintah siapkan ekosistem pembiayaan yang terintegrasi. *Kementerian Koordinator Bidang Perekonomian Republik Indonesia.*

https://www.ekon.go.id/publikasi/detail/5318/dorong-umkm-naik-kelas-dan-go-export-pemerintah-siapkan-ekosistem-pembiayaan-yang-terintegrasi

Lisnawati, D., & Ahman, H. E. (2019). Relationship between entrepreneurial characteristics from Islamic perspective and the performance of small and medium-sized businesses (A study of SMEs in Indonesia). *KnE Social Sciences, 3*(13), 576–593. https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v3i13.4232

Listyawati, I. H. (2013). Implementasi relationship marketing sebagai strategi mempertahankan loyalitas pelanggan. *Jurnal Bisnis, Manajemen, dan Akuntansi.* https://jurnal.amaypk.ac.id/index.php/jbma/article/view/12

Nikmah, N. R. (2017). Hubungan relationship marketing, customer satisfaction dan customer loyalty. *Competence: Journal of Management Studies, 11*(2), Article 2. https://doi.org/10.21107/kompetensi.v11i2.3531

Pandiangan, K., Masiyono, M., & Atmogo, Y. D. (2021). Faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi brand equity: Brand trust, brand image, perceived quality, & brand loyalty. *Jurnal Ilmu Manajemen Terapan, 2*(4), 471–484. https://doi.org/10.31933/jimt.v2i4.459

Perkins, S. E. (2015). A review on the scientific understanding of heatwaves—Their measurement, driving mechanisms, and changes at the global scale. *Atmospheric Research, 164*, 242–267.

Pertiwi, A. R., & Hendrawan, D. (2013). Pengaruh relationship marketing terhadap loyalitas pelanggan UMKM (Studi pada CV. Kanthi Harum Surabaya). *Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa FEB, 2*(1). https://jimfeb.ub.ac.id/index.php/jimfeb/article/view/948

Porter, M. E. (1985). Technology and competitive advantage. *Journal of Business Strategy, 5*(3), 60–78. https://doi.org/10.1108/eb039075

Santoso, A., & Sispradana, A. R. (2021). Analysis toward purchase decision determinant factors. *Asian Management and Business Review, 1*(2), 155–164. https://doi.org/10.20885/AMBR.vol1.iss2.art7

Setiawan, O., Simorangkir, E. S., & Purwati, A. A. (2020). Pengaruh kualitas produk, harga, relationship marketing terhadap keputusan pembelian produk di PT Asaba Pekanbaru. *Management Studies and Entrepreneurship Journal (MSEJ), 1*(1), Article 1. https://doi.org/10.37385/msej.v1i1.49

Smith, P. R., & Zook, Z. (2019). *Marketing communications: Integrating online and offline, customer engagement and digital technologies*. Kogan Page Publishers.

Syalsabila, N., & Hermina, N. (2023). The interrelations of celebrity endorsement, social media use, and customer engagement in achieving customer purchase decision. *Jurnal Manajerial, 10*(1), Article 1. https://doi.org/10.30587/jurnalmanajerial.v10i1.4650

Uddin. (2022). *Persaingan usaha*. ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/359367718_PERSAINGAN_USAHA

Wakano, R. A., Mahungo, Y., & Buamonabot, I. (2024). The influence of store atmosphere, location, and price perception on purchase decisions (Study on Arabeauty Stores, Ternate City). *Journal of International Conference Proceedings, 7*(2), Article 2. https://doi.org/10.32535/jicp.v7i2.3706

Widjaja, C. O. (2016). Pengaruh relationship marketing terhadap customer loyalty dan customer satisfaction sebagai variabel intervening pada PT. Fuboru Indonesia di Surabaya. *Jurnal Manajemen Pemasaran, 10*(2), Article 2. https://doi.org/10.9744/pemasaran.10.2.52-58

Wongsansukcharoen, J. (2022). Effect of community relationship management, relationship marketing orientation, customer engagement, and brand trust on brand loyalty: The case of a commercial bank in Thailand. *Journal of Retailing*

and Consumer Services, 64, 102826.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102826

ABOUT THE AUTHOR(S)

1st Author
Dafrian Nur Rahmat is a graduate of the Master of Business Administration program at Telkom University. He enrolled in 2023 through the Fast Track program and completed his studies in the Odd Semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. His academic interests include business strategy, entrepreneurship, and digital business innovation.
Email: dafrian2001@gmail.com

2nd Author
Anita Silvianita is a Senior Lecturer in Business Administration at Telkom University. She holds a Doctor of Philosophy from Universiti Sains Malaysia (2019), a Master of Science in Management from Institut Teknologi Bandung (2008), and a Bachelor of Economics from Universitas Katolik Parahyangan (2002). She is a permanent faculty member and is currently active in teaching and research. Her academic interests include business management, strategic planning, and organizational development.'

3rd Author
R. Nurafni Rubiyanti is a Lecturer in Business Administration at Telkom University. She earned her Ph.D. from Universiti Sains Malaysia in 2021. She also holds a Master's degree from Institut Teknologi Bandung (2011) and a Bachelor's degree from Institut Manajemen Telkom (2008). As a permanent and active faculty member, her academic interests include business strategy, organizational behavior, and innovation management.

4th Author
Arry Widodo is a Lecturer in Business Administration at Telkom University. He received his Ph.D. from Universiti Sains Malaysia in 2019. He also holds a Master of Management from Institut Manajemen Telkom (2010) and a Bachelor of Economics from Universitas Advent Indonesia (2002). As a permanent and active faculty member, his academic interests include marketing strategy, consumer behavior, and digital business.