The Effect of Brand Awareness on Decisive Customer Intention and Purchase Behavior of Shopee Gen Z Customers

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Abstract

The pervasive influence and evolution of social media continue to reshape societal dynamics. Accordingly, the current study endeavors to scrutinize whether brand awareness (BA), brand knowledge (BK), and brand preference (BP) serve as independent variables influencing customer intention (CI), with Purchase Decision (PD) serving as the dependent variable with CI as mediating factor in the relationship between BA, BK, BP, and PD. Against the backdrop of the Shopee marketplace, the study was conducted through a survey targeting Shopee customers specifically Generation Z or millennials who had a history of purchasing or frequent platform usage in West Java, Indonesia. The quantitative dataset was compiled from responses provided by 91 participants, employing purposive sampling technique, the collected data were subjected to Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using SmartPLS software for analysis. The outcomes indicated that BA and BK had insignificant effects on CI and PD. Conversely, BP demonstrated a significant and positive influence on customer intention and purchase decision. Moreover, the analysis revealed that CI acts as a significant mediator between BP and purchase decision. Thus, leveraging social media can augment brand preference, with an associated increase in customer intention leading to heightened purchase decisions. These findings furnish valuable insights to businesses, aiding them in making informed decisions regarding the selection of the most suitable social media strategy.

Keywords— Customer Intention, Purchase Decision, Brand Awareness

1. INTRODUCTION

The pervasive influence and evolution of social media continue to reshape societal dynamics. Over the past two decades, the surge of interactive digital technologies has profoundly altered the daily routines of younger generations [44]. This paradigm shift, often termed the "interactive revolution," is propelled by the exponential growth of the internet, now boasting over 3 billion users, and the advent of the information superhighway [11]. Presently, the technological landscape has transitioned into the digital era, dominated by online platforms and the internet. In today's virtual realm, interpersonal interactions transcend geographical boundaries, unfolding within digital spaces [28]. The ascent of social media platforms has democratized content-sharing, empowering billions to influence and be influenced by others [5]. This digital milieu offers a novel perspective on established theories of social influence.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the rapid expansion of interactive digital technology, particularly affecting young consumers [23]. [8] observed a marked increase in global internet usage, with a notable emphasis on young demographics. This heightened reliance on digital platforms facilitated a shift towards interactive learning environments. [15] research underscores the swift integration of online learning tools by educational institutions worldwide, exposing young consumers to diverse interactive educational resources and communication avenues. The consequences of this transition are likely to endure long-term. Even amid the

resumption of in-person classes, it is probable that young consumers will persist in adopting interactive components within their learning experiences. [2] investigation indicates that a blended learning model, amalgamating digital tools, is poised to become standard practice. This integration of conventional and interactive learning methodologies holds promise for customizing education, amplifying engagement, and fostering self-directed learning among young consumers. Nonetheless, obstacles persist, including the imperative to ensure equitable access to technology and to mitigate potential issues related to excessive screen time.

The internet, alongside the forces of globalization, has expedited the proliferation of social networking, catalyzing the emergence of innovative communication channels such as social media. Nonetheless, the inclination to connect and disseminate information is not a novel phenomenon [47]. It comes as no surprise that a majority of young internet users actively participate in social media engagement, prompting businesses to strategically navigate this digital landscape [40]. For young consumers, particularly Generation Z (also referred to as iGen, Millennials, or Gen Next), social media has become an indispensable facet of daily life. These adolescents and teenagers have readily embraced this new online realm [26].

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have assumed a pivotal role in the lives of young individuals. These platforms provide a myriad of features, including personalized profiles, communication with peers, and the sharing of user-generated content or brand-related information [39]. Unlike preceding generations that depended on traditional media outlets like TV, radio, and print media for information, today's youth predominantly rely on social media platforms. This paradigm shift presents both challenges and opportunities for organizations seeking to engage with this demographic [3].

Marketers are progressively turning to social and mobile platforms as key avenues for engaging with young consumers. Crafting captivating and contemporary content has the potential to spark user interactions and facilitate the sharing of information (word-of-mouth) among friends, recognized as a potent marketing strategy [39]. Indeed, there is a dearth of international research specifically targeting Generation Z's perspectives on social media marketing, especially within the context of Indonesia. Suporting evidence includes the Indonesia-Gen Z Report 2022 by the IDN Research Institute, which underscores the scant availability of studies focusing on Indonesian Gen Z. The report underscores the necessity for a more comprehensive comprehension of their values, aspirations, and behaviors. This underscores the inadequacy of existing research concerning various facets of Gen Z, encompassing their attitudes towards social media marketing.

Prior investigations by [13], predominantly explore how Generation Z in Indonesia is swayed by social media personalities. While insightful, this research primarily delves into the role of influencers rather than delving into Generation Z's broader attitudes toward social media marketing strategies or their preferences regarding content types. Recognized research gaps concerning social media and Generation Z's purchase behavior in Indonesia underscore the necessity to comprehend how they interact with social media content and make purchasing decisions, as mentioned earlier. This highlights a broader insufficiency of research regarding Generation Z's attitudes toward social media marketing. Consequently, the emphasis on influencers, coupled with limited research on Indonesian Generation Z as a whole and the noted gaps in purchase behavior research, collectively indicate a scarcity of international research specifically addressing Generation Z's perspectives on social media marketing in Indonesia. Therefore, it is no brainer that the research selected participants who were regular users of one of the prominent marketplace, Shopee, and use its consumer and as target respondent, and limit the respondent by identifying Generation Z or millennials who had a history of purchasing or frequent platform usage. Recruitment spanned various West Java regions, including Bandung, Bekasi, Bogor, and Depok, targeting individuals aged 18 and above who met the study's criteria.

Indonesia's unique economic standing is noteworthy on the global stage, the country holds the distinction of being the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation, with a population exceeding 279 million. This sizable and expanding population represents a substantial consumer market with distinct preferences and demands for halal products [38]. Indonesia, categorized as a lower-middle-income nation by the World Bank, displays

attributes of an emerging economy characterized by a burgeoning middle class and escalating foreign investments. Its inclusion in the G20 group of major economies underscores its escalating significance in the global economic arena [32].

Additionally, as the founding member and the largest economy within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Indonesia holds a pivotal position in the regional economic landscape. Within the Southeast Asian region, Indonesia serves as a linchpin for economic integration and free trade agreements, fostering a collective market encompassing over 600 million individuals. Indonesia's influential role in shaping economic policies and development strategies within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) underscores its significance [30]. Moreover, Indonesia actively engages with the World Trade Organization (WTO), leveraging its membership to influence global trade regulations and expand market access for its exports [46]. Addressing these challenges while capitalizing on its strengths positions Indonesia to emerge as a significant economic force in the forthcoming decades. In conclusion, Indonesia's economic trajectory is shaped by its populous demographic, strategic location, participation in influential organizations, and rich natural resources. While challenges persist, the nation's economic prospects remain promising [21].

A robust theoretical framework underpinning social media marketing is imperative for organizations to devise effective strategies, particularly in light of the prevalence of mobile technology usage. A holistic approach encompassing various facets of social media is warranted to facilitate informed decision-making in marketing communication endeavors. In the realm of business, the ascendancy of social media has ushered in new avenues for brands to engage with consumers in a more direct and organic manner. Recognizing the necessity for meticulous planning and strategic deployment of social media tactics is essential for businesses to thrive amidst the dynamic digital landscape [34]. By aligning marketing communication efforts with authentic consumer interactions within the online sphere, companies can position themselves as trailblazers in social media marketing [37]. Despite burgeoning interest among researchers and practitioners in brand awareness, empirical research integrating brand awareness, brand knowledge, and brand preference remains sparse and warrants further exploration. Accordingly, the current study endeavors to scrutinize whether brand awareness (BA), brand knowledge (BK), and brand preference (BP) serve as independent variables influencing customer intention (CI), with Purchase Decision (PD) serving as the dependent variable. The study's problem formulation encapsulates inquiries into the effects of BA, BK, and BP on CI and PD, as well as the mediating role of CI in the relationship between BA, BK, BP, and PD.

Brand awareness represents a crucial initial phase in the consumer journey [10]. Its significance lies in its capacity to establish trust and familiarity with consumers [45]. Picture a scenario where a shopper navigates a supermarket aisle teeming with options. A familiar brand stands out like a trusted companion amidst the crowd. This underscores the potency of brand awareness. Consumers are inclined to choose a recognized brand, perceiving it as a safer option, thereby reducing the perceived risk associated with trying new products. However, brand awareness transcends mere recognition. Robust brand awareness enables companies to articulate their unique value proposition and foster a favorable brand image [48]. These positive associations are cultivated through astute marketing and consistent messaging, fostering connections based on desirable attributes such as reliability, innovation, or environmental consciousness [7]. Such favorable associations serve as cognitive shortcuts for consumers during the decision-making process. If a brand consistently delivers on its promises and resonates with their values, it emerges as the preferred choice, even amidst competing alternatives [24].

Nevertheless, brand awareness serves as just the initial stride. It serves as a potent tool for capturing consumer attention, laying the groundwork for subsequent stages such as purchase intention and eventual purchase decisions [22]. Previous research underscores the pivotal role of brand awareness in influencing customer intention and purchase decisions. For instance, [30] study revealed a link between brand awareness and followers' inclination to seek product information. Similarly, other studies have found that brand awareness on social media platforms enhances customer intention (36]. However, some studies suggest that brand awareness exerts no

significant effect on customer intention [42]. Likewise, [6] demonstrated that brand awareness constitutes a comprehensive strategy for optimizing purchase decisions. Furthermore, brand awareness has been acknowledged as a significant determinant of key variables in purchase decisions [29]. Nonetheless, studies such as [4] propose that while brand awareness exerts a positive influence, its impact on purchase decisions among Gen Z in Surabaya is statistically insignificant.

H1: Awareness positively influences customer intention.

H4: Awareness positively influences purchase decision.

Brand knowledge serves as the cornerstone of a customer's relationship with a brand [33]. It encompasses the entirety of what a customer knows or recalls about a brand, spanning its name, logo, products, services, reputation, and overall image. This reservoir of knowledge plays a critical role in shaping both customer intention and purchase decisions. Imagine strolling down a grocery aisle brimming with unfamiliar cereal brands. You might pause, grappling with indecision as you weigh your options. However, your gaze falls upon a brand name you recognize, perhaps from previous encounters or advertisements. This familiarity triggers a sense of recognition and trust. Since you're acquainted with the brand, you're more inclined to consider it, likely forming an initial impression based on past experiences or advertising. This reservoir of brand knowledge can subsequently sway your purchase intention, increasing the likelihood of selecting that familiar brand over a completely unknown alternative. Furthermore, robust brand knowledge can influence the purchase decision itself. Favorable past experiences, coupled with associations of quality or reliability, often lead to a preference for familiar brands over lesser-known competitors. Essentially, brand knowledge serves as a cognitive shortcut in the decision-making process, mitigating perceived risk and rendering familiar brands more appealing choices.

Previous research underscores the pivotal role of brand knowledge in shaping customer intention and purchase decisions. For instance, studies by [25] revealed a positive correlation between brand knowledge and purchase intention. Subsequent investigations concluded that brand knowledge enhances customer intention [20]. Similarly, brand knowledge is also can be seen as a comprehensive strategy for optimizing purchase decisions. Thus, brand knowledge has been acknowledged as a significant determinant of key variables in purchase decisions [1].

H2: Knowledge positively influences customer intention.

H5: Knowledge positively influences purchase decision.

Consumer preference reflects the unique bonds consumers form with brands, diverging from traditional participation models [12]. [12] shed light on how customer look at a friendly brand there are familiar in the crowd. This deep connection enhances the positive impact of familiarity on brand engagement among customers. Moreover, empirical evidence from [27] illustrates that customer preference directly and positively affects customer intention. Additionally, [41] found a positive link between brand preference among cosumers to increase customer intention to purchase. Previous research has underscored the significant role of brand preference in shaping customer intention and purchase decisions. For instance, [27] demonstrated how the how customer brand preference impacted customer intention to purchase. The study concluded that brand preference on social media platforms enhances customer intention [35]. Similarly, [9] revealed that brand preference is a crucial aspect of strategies aimed at optimizing purchase decisions. Furthermore, brand preference has been identified as a key determinant of various variables in purchase decisions [9].

H_3: Preference positively influences customer intention.

H_6: Preference positively influences purchase decision.

Customer intention on social media marketplaces encompasses the myriad goals and behaviors individuals exhibit when engaging with products, services, or brands within these

digital platforms. It encompasses actions such as purchasing, seeking information, engaging with content and brands, recommending products to others, comparing options, and building relationships [31]. This intention is shaped by factors including product information quality, user experience, social proof, brand reputation, promotions, and peer recommendations. Understanding and catering to customer intention is vital for businesses operating on social media platforms to effectively engage their audience, drive conversions, and cultivate lasting customer relationships [19].

Customer intention serves as a critical mediator in the relationship between brand awareness, brand knowledge, brand preference and purchase decisions within the realm of consumer behavior on social media platforms [11]. As consumers become more aware of a brand through various marketing efforts and exposure on social media, their subsequent intentions to engage with the brand, such as seeking information, evaluating alternatives, and forming preferences, significantly influence their ultimate purchase decisions [31]. This mediated effect underscores the pivotal role of customer intention as a bridge between brand awareness and actual purchase behaviors [19], highlighting the importance of cultivating positive brand perceptions and fostering meaningful interactions to drive conversions in the dynamic landscape of social media marketplace [14].

H7: Customer intention positively influences purchase decision.

H8: Customer intention mediates the relationship between brand awareness and purchase decision.

H9: Customer intention mediates the relationship between brand knowledge and purchase decision.

H10: Customer intention mediates the relationship between brand preference and purchase decision.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

To fulfill our study objectives, we chose a descriptive quantitative design to evaluate hypotheses and address research questions. Descriptive designs, use deductive methods to validate or challenge theories and hypotheses. Descriptive studies aim to clarify relationships between variables in a sample or population. We also conducted a quantitative survey to gather primary data from participants and utilized structural equation modeling (SEM) for data analysis. Our study focused on customers of Shopee in West Java province, chosen for its prominent tourist attractions like the Pasar Baru market and culinary spots. Given the dynamic nature of social media, effective brand positioning on these platforms is crucial. Using purposive sampling, we selected participants who were regular users of Shopee, identifying as Generation Z or millennials, and who had a history of purchasing or frequent platform usage. Recruitment spanned various West Java regions, including Bandung, Bekasi, Bogor, and Depok, targeting individuals aged 18 and above who met the study's criteria.

We utilized a five-point Likert Scale questionnaire as our primary assessment tool for all variables in this study, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Our questionnaire encompassed two sections: the first gathered demographic information such as age, gender, occupation, and location, while the second measured all five variables, comprising a total of 20 item indicators. Measures for brand awareness, brand knowledge, and brand preference, each with four items, were adapted from [11], as were customer intention (CI) and purchase decision (PD), each comprising four measurement items. Data collection involved distributing the questionnaire to main respondents online via Google Form, clearly outlining the objectives. Responses were then organized in a spreadsheet and analyzed using SmartPLS software.

Finally, we used structural equation modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS to analyze our data, integrating various components into a single model of linear equations [16]. After conducting data analysis using SEM, we assessed convergent and discriminant validity. We ensured all indicators

had loading factors above 0.7 and met criteria for discriminant validity by comparing correlations between variables and their indicators. Following this, we assessed reliability using Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and AVE, ensuring values exceeded 0.7 for reliability. Once validity and reliability were confirmed, we tested the structural model, examining the significance of path coefficients with bootstrapping to determine the relationships between variables [17].

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Before we delve into testing our hypotheses, we need to ensure the validity and reliability of our measurement model. This step is crucial for accurately assessing the constructs we're investigating. In this study, we used the Partial Least Square (PLS) technique within the SmartPLS 3 software to evaluate our measurement model. Most of the 20 initial indicators we used in our research show loading factor values greater than the minimum cut value of 0.7.

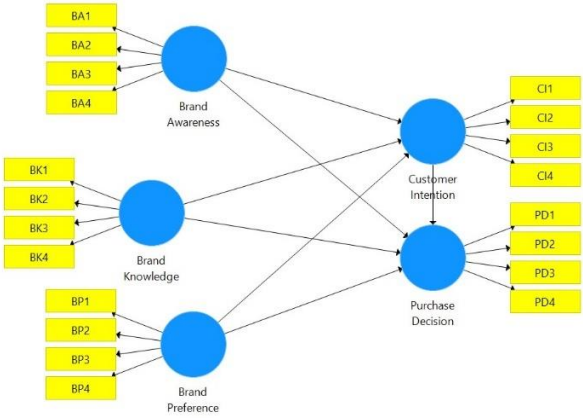

Figure 1. Model Test

After removing indicators that fell below this threshold, Figure 2 and Table 1 provide a summary of our measurement model results. These visuals demonstrate that all indicators for variables have loading factors greater than 0.70, indicating a high level of validity in our model.

Table 1. Factor Loading

Variable	Indicator	Factor Loading
BA	BA1	0.792
	BA2	0.803
	BA3	0.834
	BA4	0.796
BK	BK1	0.850
	BK2	0.902
	BK3	0.865
	BK4	0.906
BP	BP1	0.917
	BP2	0.893
	BP3	0.907
	BP4	0.869
CI	CI1	0.923
	CI2	0.932
	CI3	0.944

	CI4	0.890
PD	PD1	0.881
	PD2	0.880
	PD3	0.907
	PD4	0.899

In this study, several methods were employed to assess discriminant validity, including the, cross-loading, and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio

We performed cross-loading analysis test. This test helps us identify any instances where indicators might be associated with more than one variable. The values we found reflect how closely each indicator is related to its respective variable, with values above 0.7 indicating strong relationships. Table 2 shows that each variable correlates more strongly with its own indicators than with indicators of other variables, which confirms that our data has good discriminant validity.

Table 2. Cross-loading

Indicator	BA	BK	BP	CI	PD
BA1	0.792	0.564	0.547	0.458	0.493
BA2	0.803	0.567	0.611	0.520	0.529
BA3	0.834	0.792	0.613	0.491	0.533
BA4	0.796	0.699	0.672	0.587	0.625
BK1	0.690	0.850	0.700	0.586	0.588
BK2	0.772	0.902	0.819	0.609	0.713
BK3	0.718	0.865	0.740	0.592	0.633
BK4	0.702	0.906	0.784	0.719	0.749
BP1	0.713	0.815	0.917	0.784	0.810
BP2	0.727	0.804	0.893	0.694	0.779
BP3	0.657	0.762	0.907	0.802	0.812
BP4	0.640	0.723	0.869	0.828	0.743
CI1	0.584	0.659	0.802	0.923	0.783
CI2	0.637	0.660	0.832	0.932	0.777
CI3	0.611	0.685	0.829	0.945	0.805
CI4	0.538	0.634	0.741	0.890	0.796
PD1	0.616	0.674	0.783	0.875	0.881
PD2	0.585	0.693	0.746	0.690	0.879
PD3	0.675	0.682	0.821	0.762	0.908
PD4	0.548	0.684	0.774	0.714	0.899

To assess the reliability of constructs in this study, Composite Reliability (CR), Cronbach's Alpha (CA), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were employed. A construct is considered reliable if CR and CA exceed 0.7, and AVE surpasses 0.5. As depicted in Table 3, all indicators exhibit values exceeding the recommended threshold. Specifically, each indicator surpasses 0.7, indicating high reliability across all constructs in the study.

Table 3. Reliability Test

Variable	CA	rho_A	CR	AVE
BA	0.822	0.826	0.882	0.651
BK	0.904	0.912	0.933	0.776

BP	0.918	0.920	0.942	0.804
CI	0.942	0.943	0.958	0.852
PD	0.914	0.916	0.940	0.795

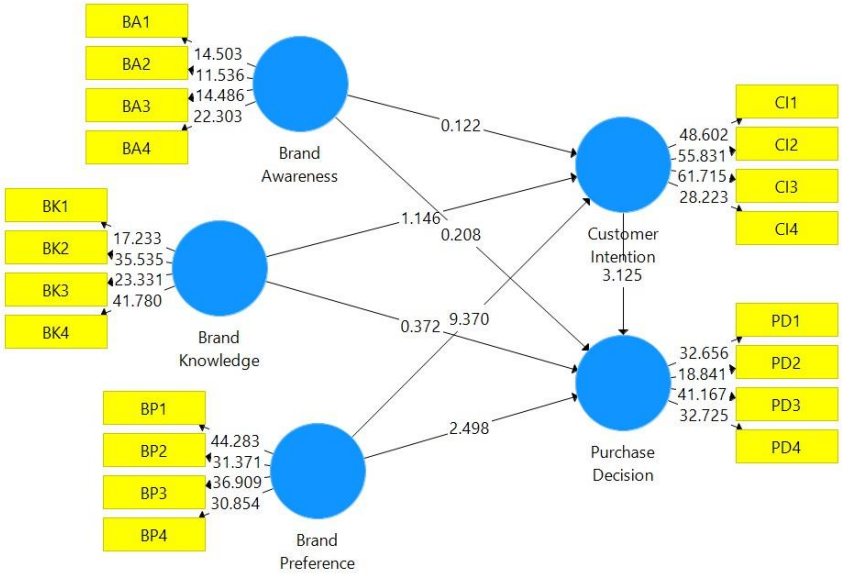

Figure 2. PLS Bootstrapping Structural Model

Following the validation of the measurement model to ensure the reliabiity and validity of constructs, the stuctural model was evauated. This phase facilitated by SmartPLS 3 employing Partial Least Squares (PLS) technique, focused on hypothesis testing. Utilizing the PLS Bootstrapping feature, the significance of the path coefficient was examined to test each hypothesis. Figure 2 and Table 4 present the outcomes of the structural model assessment.

Table 4. Structural Model Results

Path	β	T	Prob.	Decision
BA -> CI	0.011	0.122	0.903	Not support
BA -> PD	0.021	0.208	0.836	Not support
BK -> CI	-0.151	1.146	0.252	Not support
BK -> PD	0.074	0.372	0.710	Not support
BP -> CI	0.991	9.370	0.000	Support
BP -> PD	0.453	2.498	0.013	Support
CI -> PD	0.397	3.125	0.002	Support

The findings presented in Table 4 validate all hypotheses posited in the study. Concerning the first hypothesis (H1) and second hypothesis (H2), the results indicate that brand awareness (β= 0.011, p-value 0.903) and brand knowledge (β= -0.151, p-value 0.252) have an insignificant effect on purchase intention. Conversely, the third hypothesis (H3) findings reveal a significant positive impact of brand preference on customer intention (β= 0.991, p-value 0.000). Furthermore, the fourth hypothesis (H4) and fifth hypothesis (H5) test outcomes demonstrate the negligible influence of brand awareness (β= 0.021, p-value 0.836) and brand knowledge (β= 0.074, p-value 0.710) on purchase decision. Conversely, the results pertaining to the sixth hypothesis (H6) reveal a significant positive impact of brand preference on purchase decision (β= 0.453, p-value 0.013).

Table 5. Mediating Analysis Results

Path	Est.	T	Prob.	Decision
BA -> CI -> PD	0.004	0.116	0.908	Not support
BK -> CI -> PD	-0.060	0.926	0.355	Not support
BP -> CI -> PD	0.393	2.726	0.007	Support*

Upon further investigation into the mediating effect of customer intention (CI) on the relationship between brand awareness (BA) and purchase decision (PD) (H8), as well as between brand knowledge (BK) and purchase decision (PD) (H9), the results revealed insignificance (β= 4.01, p-value 0.001), suggesting that CI does not significantly mediate the BA-PD and BK-PD relationships. However, the analysis of the tenth hypothesis (H10) indicated that CI indeed serves as a significant mediator of brand preference (BP) and purchase decision (PD), demonstrating a positive and significant impact (β= 0.393, p-value 0.007).

Subsequent to hypothesis testing, the model's goodness of fit was evaluated to assess its compatibility with the data. The Q-Square statistic was utilized for this purpose, which provides insight into the model's fit akin to the coefficient of determination (R-Square) in regression analysis. A higher Q-Square value signifies a better fit. Various goodness of fit indicators were considered, each with specific requirements. For instance, the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) should be less than 0.08, and the normed fit index (NFI) tends to be more appropriate the closer it is to 1 [43].

As depicted in Table 6, the structural model demonstrated a high level of suitability with the research sample's data, as the majority of the goodness of fit indicators fell within the suggested range of values (SRMR = 0.062; d ULS= 0.816; d G = 0.891; NFI = 0.793). These results affirm the strong compatibility between the input data and the structural model employed in this study.

Table 6. Test the Goodness of Fit Model

Test	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.062	0.062
d_ULS	0.816	0.816
d_G	0.891	0.891
Chi-Square	421.868	421.868
NFI	0.793	0.793

4. CONCLUSION

This study delved into the intricate dynamics involving brand awareness (BA), brand knowledge (BK), brand preference (BP), customer intention (CI), and purchase decision (PD). Utilizing a quantitative survey-based approach and analyzing the data with PSPP and SmartPLS version 3 software, the aim was to explore these relationships and evaluate various hypotheses. The findings provide robust support for all the hypotheses. Initially, the analysis underscores that brand preference (BP) significantly and positively impacts customer intention with probability of 0.000 at t-value 2.726. This finding echoes previous research [9], emphasizing the pivotal role of brand preference as a determinant of customer intention. Essentially, customers' preferences expressed on social media platforms reflect their distinct emotional attachments to products, consequently bolstering satisfaction and fostering stronger connections with the brand, as the result shows a 0.007 probability at t-value 2.726.

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