

The Influence of Brand Awareness and Engagement in Increasing MSME Consumer Loyalty Through TikTok Social Media in Malang City

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Abstract

This study investigates the influence of brand awareness and brand engagement on increasing MSME consumer loyalty through TikTok social media in Malang City. In the digital era, brand awareness and brand engagement on social media, particularly TikTok, are crucial for the success of MSMEs. Consumer loyalty is a vital aspect of marketing strategy, significantly influenced by these factors. The research employed a multiple linear regression method to analyze the relationship between brand awareness (X1), brand engagement (X2), and consumer loyalty (Y). Data was collected from 100 respondents via online questionnaires distributed through Google Forms and analyzed using SPSS. The findings indicate a significant positive effect of brand awareness and brand engagement through social media on consumer loyalty towards MSMEs in Malang City. Based on these results, it is recommended that MSMEs continuously develop engaging and authentic content on TikTok, leveraging its creative features. Additionally, collaboration with local influencers is proposed as an effective strategy to enhance brand awareness, brand engagement, and ultimately, consumer loyalty to MSMEs' products or services.

INTRODUCTION

The use of social media has become an integral element in modern marketing strategies, especially for MSME actors in Malang City. Social media marketing, a form of marketing that utilizes social media to create, communicate, deliver information, and promote, plays an important role in influencing consumers, building loyalty, and increasing consumer interaction (Wimsatt, 2018). Amid the development of digital technology, the use of digital platforms holds great potential. In this context, TikTok has

emerged as one of the effective tools to increase brand awareness and consumer engagement.

Key concepts in digital marketing, such as brand awareness and engagement, become the main focus. Brand awareness refers to the extent to which consumers recognize and are aware of a brand, allowing them to identify brand elements in various situations and conditions (Febriani, 2018; Arianty, 2021). Brand awareness is used to measure a potential customer's ability to recognize and associate a brand with specific company products or services (Trackmaven, 2020). Research by Arianty & Ari (2021) and Setiawan & Celia (2019) shows that brand awareness has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions, defined as the decision made by consumers to buy a product (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016).

Engagement, or consumer involvement with a brand on social media, is also an essential aspect of digital marketing. Building engagement with followers on social media, such as Instagram, can increase brand loyalty (Laksamana, 2018; Rohadian & M. Taufiq Amir, 2019). Interaction on social media offers opportunities for two-way communication, encouraging discussions and enhancing the relationship between consumers and brands (Cheung, Pires, & Rosenberger, 2020). Additionally, customer loyalty is another critical factor in overall marketing strategy. Customer loyalty reflects consumer commitment to a brand or product, demonstrated by positive attitudes and consistent repurchase behavior over time (Tjiptono & Candra in Priansa, 2017). Businesses with strong branding and high customer loyalty tend to be more accepted by the market and trusted by consumers (Trackmaven, 2020).

This study aims to address the demand for innovative and effective digital marketing strategies for MSMEs in Malang City. The city was selected as the research location due to its substantial potential in the culinary industry. Therefore, this research aims to analyze the influence of brand awareness and engagement in increasing MSME consumer loyalty through TikTok social media in Malang City. Through this research, it is expected to identify effective strategies that MSMEs can use to maximize the potential of social media in building brand awareness and increasing engagement with consumers, ultimately improving consumer loyalty.

Based on theoretical background, this study aims to:

1. Analyze the influence of brand awareness on consumer loyalty through TikTok in Malang City.
2. Analyze the influence of engagement on consumer loyalty through TikTok in Malang City.
3. Analyze the collective influence of brand awareness and engagement on consumer loyalty through TikTok in Malang City.
4. Identify the variable (brand awareness or engagement) that has the most dominant influence on consumer loyalty through TikTok in Malang City.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand Awareness

Brand awareness is the level of consumer familiarity with a product brand. It refers to how well consumers can recognize or recall a brand associated with a product. Increasing brand awareness improves the chances of the brand being considered by consumers in specific situations (Langaro, Rita & de Fátima Salgueiro, 2018). Brand awareness is a marketing term that describes the level of consumer recognition of a product by its name (Kopp, 2019). In marketing, brand awareness is generally described as the degree of consumer recognition of a business.

Brand awareness is used to measure the potential customer's ability not only to recognize a brand image but also to associate it with a specific company's product or service (Trackmaven, 2020). Research conducted by Haque et al. (2018) shows that brand awareness influences customer loyalty. The study states that the brand awareness variable, which includes aspects such as name, slogan, symbol, price, variety, communication, etc., has a positive influence on consumer loyalty. Specifically, aspects like brand characteristics, price, sponsorship, and brand name have a positive and significant influence on customer loyalty.

Engagement

Engagement is an activity that involves consumers indirectly in searching, evaluating alternatives, and decision-making processes involving brand selection (Shiri D. Vivek, 2012 in Giska Rizki Utami, 2020). According to Kevin Kam Fung So (2014 in Giska Rizki Utami, 2020), customer engagement involves physical, psychological, and emotional involvement that forms a relationship with a brand or company. Therefore, customer engagement is crucial for companies as it builds good relationships between consumers and brands, which in turn influences purchasing decisions.

According to Sashi (2012 in Brian Garda Muchardie, 2016), customer engagement can be structured through seven stages: Connection, Interaction, Satisfaction, Retention, Commitment, Advocacy, and Engagement.

Brand engagement

Refers to the level of cognitive, emotional, and/or behavioral interaction with a brand or company. Engagement represents a proactive activity from the customer's side (Hollebeek, 2011 in Meylani Tuti and Viki Sulistia, 2022). It is a psychological state resulting from interaction and is continuous (Brodie et al., 2011 in Meylani Tuti and Viki Sulistia, 2022). Furthermore, consumer engagement can influence evaluation, trust, loyalty, co-creation, word-of-mouth promotion, and usage (Harrigan et al., 2018 in Meylani Tuti and Viki Sulistia, 2022).

Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty is the consumer's commitment to a product or company, shown through positive behaviors such as repeat purchases and recommending the product or company to others around them (Meithiana Indrasari et al., 2019). According to Kotler (2009 in Meithiana Indrasari et al., 2019), consumer loyalty increases after they make a purchase.

Customer satisfaction is a key indicator in determining customer loyalty. Customer satisfaction is achieved when the purchased product exceeds expectations or matches the

customer's desires. If not, dissatisfaction will arise when the product does not meet expectations.

The word "satisfaction" is derived from the Latin words "satis" meaning adequate and "facio" meaning to make or do. According to Kotler and Keller in Meithiana Indrasari et al., 2019, satisfaction reflects a person's level of evaluation of a product's performance or outcome relative to their expectations. If the product performance or outcome does not meet expectations, the customer will feel dissatisfied or disappointed. Conversely, if the product performance meets expectations, the customer will be satisfied, and if it exceeds expectations, the customer will be delighted. Customer loyalty is the most valuable asset for a company in increasing its profitability. To build consumer loyalty, companies must focus on acquiring new customers while maintaining existing ones. Doing so requires commitment in terms of both financial and human resources, ensuring the quality of products meets customer expectations. If customers feel satisfied, they are expected to remain loyal and continue choosing the same company (Blackwell, Miniard, Engel, 2001:273 in Apri Budiando, 2019).

Based on the conceptual framework and the previously stated research questions, the researchers propose the following hypotheses:

H1: Brand awareness is presumed to have a positive and significant effect on consumer loyalty on TikTok.

H2: Brand Engagement is presumed to have a positive and significant effect on consumer loyalty on TikTok.

H3: Brand awareness and engagement together are presumed to have a positive and significant effect on consumer loyalty on TikTok.

H4: Engagement is presumed to have a more dominant influence on consumer loyalty on TikTok compared to brand awareness.

Based on literature review and hypothesis development above This conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between two independent variables—**Brand Awareness (X1)** and **Brand Engagement (X2)**—on the dependent variable, **Consumer Loyalty (Y)**.

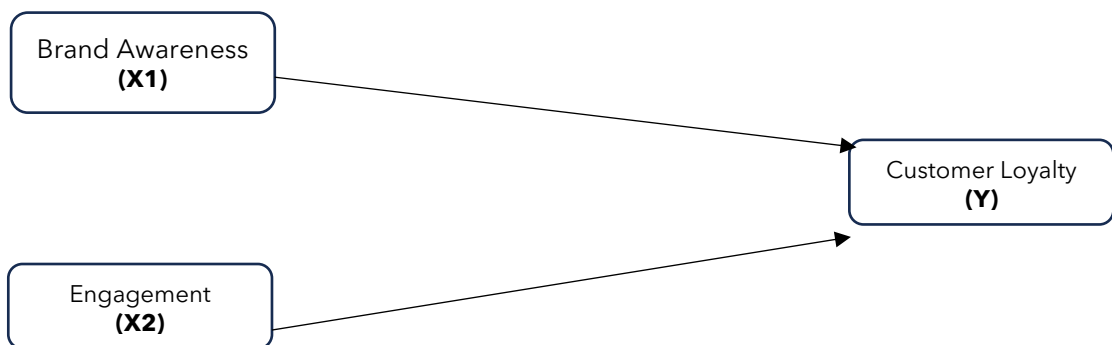


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a **quantitative approach** to examine the influence of brand awareness and engagement on increasing consumer loyalty of MSMEs through TikTok in Malang City. The research was conducted in **Malang City**, and the sample consisted of **100 respondents** residing in the city.

The data was collected through **online questionnaires** distributed via **Google Forms**. The sample criteria included respondents who live in Malang and are active TikTok users. The method of analysis used is **multiple linear regression**, with brand awareness (X1) and engagement (X2) as independent variables and consumer loyalty (Y) as the dependent variable. The **SPSS program** was used for data analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

Category	Details	Percentage
Gender	Male	33%
	Female	67%
Age	15–20 years	71%
	21–25 years	22%
	26–30 years	3%
	31–35 years	2%
	>36 years	2%
Marital Status	Unmarried	95%
	Married	5%
Occupation	Student	7%
	University student	74%
	Housewife	1%
	Entrepreneur	3%
	Business owner	1%
	Private employee	12%
	Civil servant	2%

Source: Data Processing, 2024

The table shows that the majority of respondents were aged 15–20 years (71%), and most were female (67%). The predominant occupation was university students at 74%.

Descriptive Analysis

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis of Brand Awareness (X1)

Indicator	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
X1.1	1	3	26	46	24	15.71
X1.2	1	1	11	48	39	15.37
X1.3	1	5	36	28	30	15.79
X1.4	1	5	21	50	23	15.71
X1.5	1	5	31	41	22	15.82

The highest average score is from indicator X1.5 (15.82), showing that most respondents agree TikTok helps them recognize MSME logos, names, and products. The lowest is X1.2 (15.37), indicating respondents also strongly agree that TikTok effectively introduces MSME brands.

Table 3. Descriptive Analysis of Engagement (X2)

Indicator	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
X2.1	5	16	47	18	14	13.58
X2.2	2	13	56	21	8	13.58
X2.3	3	10	45	31	11	13.41
X2.4	4	9	29	42	16	13.21
X2.5	4	10	38	34	14	13.34

The lowest mean is X2.4 (13.21), which indicates most respondents strongly agree that interaction is easier on TikTok. The highest average is tied between X2.1 and X2.2 (13.58), where most answered disagree or neutral.

Table 4. Descriptive Analysis of Consumer Loyalty (Y)

Indicator	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
Y1	5	12	54	24	5	14.16
Y2	2	12	38	33	15	13.81
Y3	4	11	53	22	10	14.05
Y4	1	2	23	57	17	13.41
Y5	1	7	40	36	16	13.69

The highest mean is Y1 (14.16), with most respondents answering neutral. The lowest is Y4 (13.41), where agree and strongly agree responses dominated.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.749	1.208	–	1.448	0.151
BrandAwareness	0.321	0.081	0.315	3.987	0.000
Engagement	0.550	0.076	0.572	7.251	0.000

Dependent Variable: Consumer Loyalty (Y)

Source: Data Processing, 2024

Regression Equation:

$$Y = 1.749 + 0.321X_1 + 0.550X_2 + e$$

$$eY = 1.749 + 0.321X_1 + 0.550X_2 + e$$

Where:

- Y = Consumer Loyalty
- X₁ = Brand Awareness
- X₂ = Engagement
- e = Error term

Interpretation:

- Brand Awareness (X₁) has a coefficient of 0.321 → moderately strong effect.
- Engagement (X₂) has a coefficient of 0.550 → stronger effect than X₁.

Coefficient of Determination (R²)

Table 6. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square
1	0.817	0.668

Predictors: Brand Awareness (X1), Engagement (X2)

Source: Data Processing, 2024

The R² value = 0.668, meaning 66.8% of the variation in consumer loyalty can be explained by brand awareness and engagement. The remaining 33.2% is influenced by other variables not included in this study.

t-Test (Partial Test)

Table 7. t-Test Results

Variable	t-Value	Sig.
Brand Awareness (X ₁)	3.987	0.000
Engagement (X ₂)	7.251	0.000

Interpretation:

Both X₁ and X₂ have t-values > t-table and sig. < 0.05, indicating significant effects on consumer loyalty.

F-Test (Simultaneous Test)

Table 8. ANOVA (F-Test)

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	813.648	2	406.824	97.554	0.000
Residual	404.512	97	4.170		
Total	1218.160	99			

Interpretation:

F-value (97.554) > F-table (3.09), sig. = 0.000 < 0.05 → both variables jointly have a significant effect on consumer loyalty.

Dominant Variable Test

t-value for Engagement = 7.251

t-value for Brand Awareness = 3.987

Since Engagement has a higher t-value, it is the more dominant factor influencing consumer loyalty on TikTok in Malang.

DISCUSSION

1. Influence of Brand Awareness (X1) on Consumer Loyalty (Y) via TikTok in Malang

The results indicate that increased brand awareness improves the likelihood that a brand is considered by consumers (Langaro, Rita & de Fátima Salgueiro, 2018). Brand awareness reflects a potential consumer’s ability to recognize or recall a brand as part of a product category. Respondents agreed that TikTok helps them discover MSME brands in Malang (X1.1: 3.89), is effective in introducing those brands (X1.2: 4.23), and is a preferred platform for brand discovery over others (X1.3: 3.81). TikTok also helps with advertising (X1.4: 3.89) and recognizing brand logos, names, and products (X1.5: 3.78).

These findings support the idea that brand awareness is essential for repeat purchases. This aligns with research by Haque et al. (2018), which found that brand awareness—through elements like names, slogans, logos, prices, and communication—positively and significantly impacts consumer loyalty.

2. Influence of Engagement (X2) on Consumer Loyalty (Y) via TikTok in Malang

Engagement also has a significant positive effect on customer loyalty. Respondents reported that they often interact with MSME TikTok content (X2.1: 15.71), participate in

discussions or challenges (X2.2: 15.37), and find TikTok a better platform for engagement than others (X2.3: 15.79). They also recommend MSME brands found on TikTok (X2.4: 15.71) and follow their TikTok accounts (X2.5: 15.82).

These responses confirm that engagement strengthens emotional and interactive ties with consumers, increasing loyalty. Previous studies (Rimadiaz et al., 2021; Khoirunnisa & Marlien, 2020) also showed that engagement significantly boosts loyalty due to interactive, two-way communication.

3. Influence of Brand Awareness and Engagement (X1 & X2) on Consumer Loyalty (Y) via TikTok in Malang

The F-test results show a joint significant effect ($F = 97.554$; $\text{Sig.} < 0.05$) of both brand awareness and engagement on consumer loyalty. This implies that MSMEs should use TikTok for engaging content and fast, positive responses. Maintaining visibility (brand awareness) and consistent interaction (engagement) leads to repeat purchases and referrals.

This conclusion is supported by studies such as Miharni Tjokrosaputro (2019) and Haque et al. (2018), which demonstrate that brand awareness and engagement significantly influence customer loyalty.

4. Brand Engagement is More Dominant Than Brand Awareness

Based on the regression results, **Brand Engagement ($t = 7.251$)** has a stronger effect than **Brand Awareness ($t = 3.987$)**. This suggests that engagement is the **dominant factor** influencing consumer loyalty on TikTok.

Research by Marta et al. (2029), Evi Rahmawati (2015), and Rakhi Thakur (2018) supports this, showing that engagement significantly impacts satisfaction and brand loyalty. Effective engagement strategies include entertaining and relevant content, consistent posting, hashtags, influencer collaboration, and real-time interaction, all of which enhance consumer loyalty.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that both brand awareness and engagement play crucial roles in shaping consumer loyalty among MSMEs in Malang through TikTok. Brand awareness helps consumers consistently recognize and recall a brand, making it more likely for them to repurchase products and recommend them to others. Meanwhile, engagement serves as a deeper touchpoint—it enables two-way communication, encourages consumer participation, and fosters emotional connections that lead to long-term loyalty. While both factors are important, the study reveals that engagement holds a more dominant influence over consumer loyalty compared to brand awareness. This indicates that interactive and meaningful engagement strategies are more impactful in retaining customers than mere brand recognition. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that MSMEs not only strive to improve brand visibility but also prioritize building dynamic, authentic, and responsive interactions with their audiences on TikTok. By doing so, they

can strengthen consumer trust, increase satisfaction, and cultivate a loyal customer base in the digital marketplace.

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