

CITATION

Rasyidin, A., Hurriyati, R., & Dirgantari, P. D., (2026) Social Media Marketing and Repurchase Intentions in Sharia Hotels: The Mediating Influence of Brand Awareness. *Sinergi International Journal of Management and Business*. 4(1), 8-15.
doi: 10.61194/ijmb.v4i1.923

TYPE Original Research

PUBLISHED 28 February 2026
DOI 10.61194/ijmb.v4i1.923
VOL 4 Issue 1 February 2026

COPYRIGHT

© 2026 Rasyiddin, Hurriyati, Dirgantari and Mac-Doqu. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.

Social Media Marketing and Repurchase Intentions in Sharia Hotels: The Mediating Influence of Brand Awareness

Ahmad Rasyiddin¹, Ratih Hurriyati², Puspo Dewi Dirgantari³, Francis Kortey Mac-Doqu⁴

¹²³Indonesia University of Education, Indonesia, ⁴Ghana Education Service, Ghana
Correspondence: rasvidahmad@upi.edu¹

Abstract

The Islamic hospitality industry faces a tough challenge in maintaining repurchase intentions amid increasingly fierce competition. Although social media marketing activities (SMMA) have become the dominant strategy, the psychological mechanisms that explain the conversion of these activities into repetitive buying behaviors are still not optimally internalized; This is reflected in the empirical paradox in which increased digital investment successfully attracts new visitors, but fails to prevent a drastic decline in retention rates. This causal explanatory research aims to analyze the role of brand awareness (BA) mediation in the relationship between SMMA and buyback intention (RI) in the context of Islamic boarding houses, as well as validate relevant theoretical frameworks. Using the Partial Smallest Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) on a sample of 98 respondents who are actual customers of Islamic boarding schools in West Java, the results of the study prove that SMMA has a significant effect on the Republic of Indonesia, both directly and indirectly through the mediation of BA. In particular, Brand Awareness has been shown to act as a significant partial mediation mechanism, while also confirming the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Framework in the sharia hospitality market. These findings provide crucial practical implications for sharia lodging managers to shift the focus of their social media content strategy: optimizing efforts that consistently build brand recall and brand recognition instead of simply pursuing reach metrics), thus being able to transform brand awareness into continuous repeat buying behavior.

KEYWORDS

social media marketing activities; brand awareness; repurchase intent; sharia friendliness; partial mediation.

Introduction

Digital transformation has fundamentally revolutionized marketing, characterized by global social media ad spending projected to reach USD 276.72 billion by 2025, confirming the platform's strategic role in the marketing ecosystem ([Hotkar et al., 2023](#)). The tourism industry is the sector most responsive to this shift, with 71% of travel professionals making social media their primary marketing method, a trend that translates into the concrete effectiveness of Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) in the hospitality industry ([De Las Heras-Pedrosa et al., 2020](#); [Koerner et al., 2024](#); [Sánchez Jiménez et al., 2024](#)). In the national context, although halal tourism has placed Indonesia in first place in the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) 2023–2024 and already has 510 halal-certified hotels, the country faces a significant paradox: despite investments in social media marketing continuing to increase and successfully attracting new consumers, many Islamic hospitality businesses face serious challenges in maintaining customer loyalty and encouraging repeat purchasing behaviors ([Hotkar et al., 2023](#); [Jeaheng et al., 2020](#)). This contradictory condition is clearly reflected in GS

Table 1. Data on Visitors and Buybacks of GS Rumah Kayu Cottage Syariah (2022-2024)

Year	Total Visitors	First-Time Visitors	Recurring Purchases	Buyback (%)	Decline (%)
2022	4.850	3.200	1.650	34,02	-
2023	5.420	3.950	1.470	27,12	-6,90
2024	6.180	4.780	1.400	22,65	-4,47

Source: GS RK Cottage Sharia Internal Data, 2022-2024

Rumah Kayu Cottage Syariah where internal data for the period 2022 to 2024 recorded an increase in the number of visitors by 27.42% (from 4,850 to 6,180), but the repurchase rate actually decreased drastically

by 33.4% (from 34.02% to 22.65%). This paradoxical trend of high acquisition versus low retention indicates that the dominant digital marketing activity in acquisition has not been effective in building sustainable retention, with detailed data presented in Table 1 below.

To understand this retention phenomenon, this study builds on the foundation of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Framework, which positions SMMA as an external stimulus, and Repurchase Intention (RI) as a behavioral response. This study specifically examines the role of Brand Awareness (BA) as an Organism variable, which is an important foundation of Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) and includes the dimensions of brand recall and brand recognition (Jiang & Lyu, 2024; Keller, 1999). Although other studies confirm that Brand Awareness is an important mediator that bridges digital marketing activities and behavioral intent (Ho-Mai et al., 2024; Koay et al., 2023; Singh et al., 2023), the literature shows a fundamental gap, especially regarding the mediation mechanism of Brand Awareness in the SMMA-RI relationship in the context of sharia cottages; most research tests BA only for loyalty results or first purchase intent, not on repurchase intent sustainable; and the geographical context of research in Indonesia that integrates Islamic values in Muslim consumer behavior is still neglected (Bergkvist & Taylor, 2022; ElSayed & Md Saad, 2024; Shu et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2022). In addition, sharia hospitality research also tends to focus on large hotels, so small-medium scale sharia cottages have not been adequately developed, and real empirical paradoxes such as those experienced by GS Rumah Kayu show the need for a natural investigation into the role of Brand Awareness as a connecting mechanism (Bazin et al., 2025; Han et al., 2020; Singh et al., 2023). Therefore, this study aims to systematically analyze the mediating role of Brand Awareness in the relationship between Social Media Marketing Activities and Repurchase Intention in the context of sharia cottages. The original contribution of this study lies in three main pillars: the validation of the Brand Awareness mediation model in the context of Islamic hospitality, the use of primary data from customers of small-medium scale sharia cottages who experience real paradoxical cases, and the focus on the Brand Awareness mediation mechanism against repeat purchasing behavior.

Methods

Types of Research

This study adopts a causal-explanatory quantitative research design, which aims to explicitly test and explain the cause-and-effect relationship between Social Media Marketing Activities, Brand Awareness, and Repurchase Intention in the context of sharia cottages. Data were collected through a cross-sectional survey, i.e. at a single

point in time, using a structured questionnaire distributed online. The conceptual framework of this research is presented in Figure 1 below:

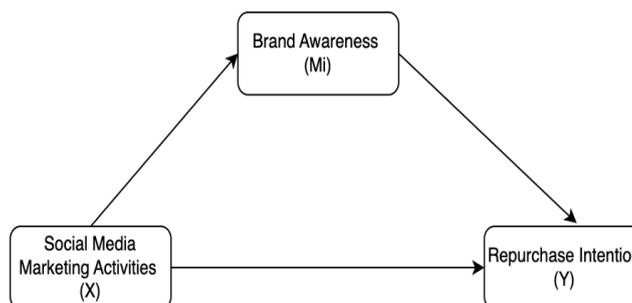


Figure 1. Research Model

Population and Sample

The population of this study includes all customers who stayed at GS Rumah Kayu Cottage Syariah in the period from January 2022 to December 2024, with a total of 16,450 customers. The sampling technique applied is purposive sampling, which is the selection of respondents who meet the criteria for having stayed at the property. The number of final samples analyzed was 98 respondents. This figure far exceeds the minimum limit recommended for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis, which is 10 times the number of paths entering a single latent variable.

Research Location

The analysis unit of the study is a customer of GS Rumah Kayu Cottage Syariah in West Bandung Regency, West Java, who have stayed and been exposed to social media marketing activities in the period from January 2022 to December 2024.

Research Instruments

The main instrument in this study was a structured questionnaire compiled using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree with 5 = strongly agree). The questionnaire consists of three main constructions:

1. Social Media Marketing Activities (X) covers five dimensions namely Entertainment, Interaction, Trendy, Customization and word-of-mouth, total 8 items (Ibrahim & Aljarah, 2023; Park & Namkung, 2022; Rehman et al., 2025).
2. Brand Awareness (M), measured using the Keller (1993; 2020) scale adapted by Foroudi (2019) and Tarabieh (2022), includes two main dimensions, namely Brand Recall and Brand Recognition, as many as 6 items
3. Repurchase Intent (Y), measured using the Wu et al. (2020) and Zhang et al. (2018) scales that have been validated in the hospitality context by Majeed et al. (2022), includes four items that measure customer intent to return to stay in the future.

Data Collection Procedure

The data was collected through a Google Form questionnaire with a Likert scale of 1-5, disseminated through a database of sharia tourism customers and communities on social media in September-November 2025. which are disseminated online through various platforms, including,

Instagram groups, and WhatsApp. The collected data is then compiled and tidied up using Excel.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out using the Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach using SmartPLS 4.0 software. The analysis steps include:

1. Evaluation of external models to test convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability (via AVE, CR, and load values > 0.7).
2. Internal model evaluation to test the relationship between latent variables through path analysis, as well as significance test using the bootstrapping method (5000 subsamples).
3. Test the influence of Brand Awareness mediation between Social Media Marketing Activities and Repurchase Intent by looking at the value of certain indirect effects.

This model is considered good if it meets the criteria of an outer loading value above 0.70 and an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of more than 0.50 in each construction, a Composite Reliability (CR) value above 0.7 and an Alpha Cronbach value above 0.80, as well as a differentiating test using the Fornell-Larcker and HTMT criteria (<0.85), Sarstedt et al (2021).

Result and Discussion

Evaluation of Measurement Models (Outer Models)

Evaluation of the Measurement Model shows satisfactory results, validating the quality of the instrument. All indicators have an outer loading value above the threshold of 0.70, thus confirming the fulfillment of convergent validity for all constructs (Social Media Marketing Activity, Brand Awareness, and Repurchase Intent) [Table 2](#). In the construct of Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA), the most prominent indicators were "I tagged my friend in a sharia cottage post" (0.872) and "a sharia cottage actively interacts with followers" (0.808). This substantially shows that the

word-of-mouth and interaction dimension is the main driver of social media marketing activities in the sharia cottage segment ([Anas et al., 2023](#)). Meanwhile, in the construct of Brand Awareness, the indicators with the highest scores are related to brand recognition: "I can quickly remember the logo or symbol of the sharia cottage" (0.788) and "I can recognize the sharia cottage among competing brands" (0.784), which confirms that the brand recognition aspect plays a central role. The strongest Repurchase Intention is manifested through preferential and exploratory intentions, with the indicators "I am interested in visiting sharia hospitality again to see the latest facilities" (0.814) and "I make sharia hospitality the top choice when I want to stay" (0.800). In addition to validity, the reliability of the construct has also proven to be excellent, demonstrated by the Composite Reliability (CR) and Alpha

This section presents the main findings of a quantitative study that analyzes the influence of Social Media Marketing Activities on Repurchase Intention in GS Rumah Kayu Cottage Syariah in West Bandung Regency, with Brand Awareness as a mediating variable. The analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) based on 98 respondents, who are customers of GS Rumah Kayu Cottage Syariah in West Bandung Regency ([Cheah et al., 2023](#)).

In the Brand Awareness variable, the highest scores were found on indicators related to brand recognition: "I can quickly remember the logo or symbol of the sharia lodge" (0.788) and "I can recognize the sharia lodge among competing brands" (0.784). These findings confirm that the brand recognition aspect plays a central role in shaping brand awareness in consumers ([Rocklage et al., 2025](#)). Meanwhile, the Buyback Intention is most strongly manifested through "I am interested in visiting sharia hospitality again to see the latest facilities" (0.814) and "I make sharia hospitality the top choice when I want to stay" (0.800). Both indicators reflect the strength of preferential and exploratory intent in repetitive buying behavior. Overall, the convergent validity fulfilled for all three constructs provides a strong measurement foundation for hypothesis testing.

Table 2. Outer Loading

Variable	Outer Loading	Conclusion
SMMA:		Legitimate
Pondok syariah's social media content is fun to watch	0.725	Legitimate
Cottage Entertainment Sharia Social Media Content	0.769	Legitimate
Pondok Syariah facilitates two-way conversations on social media	0.764	Legitimate
This sharia pond actively interacts with followers	0.808	Legitimate
Cottage syariah shares the latest information on social media	0.739	Legitimate
Pondok Syariah's social media content is always up-to-date	0.732	Legitimate
Cottage sharia provides social media content that suits my preferences	0.750	Legitimate
I tag my friend in a sharia pondok post	0.872	Legitimate
Brand Awareness:		Legitimate
I can easily remember the name of the sharia boarding school	0.726	Legitimate
The first sharia cottage brand that comes to my mind when I think of sharia accommodation	0.769	Legitimate
I can quickly remember the logo or symbol of this sharia pondok	0.788	Legitimate
I am familiar with this sharia lodge	0.769	Legitimate
I can recognize this sharia pondok among competing brands	0.784	Legitimate
I know the unique characteristics of this sharia cottage	0.768	Legitimate
Buyback Intent		Legitimate
I will be staying in sharia hospitality again after my first experience	0.741	Legitimate
I would recommend sharia hospitality to my family and friends	0.737	Legitimate
I made sharia hospitality my top choice when I wanted to stay	0.800	Legitimate
I am interested in visiting sharia hospitality again to see the latest facilities offered	0.814	Legitimate
I feel comfortable and satisfied so I will stay again in sharia hospitality	0.758	Legitimate

Variable	Outer Loading	Conclusion
I want to return to sharia hospitality to try new services or facilities offered	0.779	Legitimate

Source: SmartPLS processed data, 2025

Evaluation of Measurement Models (Outer Models)

Evaluation of the Measurement Model shows satisfactory results, validating the quality of the instrument. All indicators have an outer loading value above the threshold of 0.70, thus confirming the fulfillment of convergent validity for all constructs (Social Media Marketing Activity, Brand Awareness, and Repurchase Intent) [table 3](#). In the construct of Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA), the most prominent indicators were "I tagged my friend in a sharia cottage post" (0.872) and "a sharia cottage actively interacts with followers" (0.808). This substantially shows that the word-of-mouth and interaction dimension is the main driver of social media marketing activities in the sharia cottage segment ([Anas et al., 2023](#)). Meanwhile, in the construct of Brand Awareness, the indicators with the highest scores are related to brand recognition: "I can quickly remember the logo or symbol of the sharia cottage" (0.788) and "I can recognize the sharia cottage among competing brands" (0.784), which confirms that the brand recognition aspect plays a central role. The strongest Repurchase Intention is manifested through preferential and exploratory intentions, with the indicators "I am interested in visiting sharia hospitality again to see the latest facilities" (0.814) and "I make sharia hospitality the top choice when I want to stay" (0.800). In addition to validity, the reliability of the construct has also proven to be excellent, demonstrated by the Composite Reliability (CR) and Alpha Cronbach values that far exceed the recommended limits (above 0.70 and 0.80).

However, the evaluation of discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker criterion presents a challenge, as the correlation between latent constructs (especially between Repurchase Intention-Brand Awareness (0.882) and Repurchase Intention-SMMA (0.893) is shown to be higher than the square root of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) on the diagonal [table 4](#). This very high correlation value indicates a conceptual proximity between variables and provides a warning about discriminant validity, although the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) test shows discriminant validity is met, providing a strong measurement basis for hypothesis testing.

The discriminant validity using Fornell-Larcker shows that the square root of each construct (diagonal value) is greater than the correlation between constructs. HTMT testing showed a < value of 0.85 for all construct pairs, confirming the discriminant validity was met.

Table 3. Construct Reliability and Validity

Build	Alpha Cronbach	rho_A	CR	AVE
Brand Awareness	0,861	0,861	0,896	0,589
Buyback Intent	0,864	0,866	0,898	0,596
Social Media Marketing Activities	0,902	0,902	0,921	0,595

Source: SmartPLS processed data,

Table 4. Discriminant Validity

Build	BA	RI	SMMA
Brand Awareness	0,768		
Buyback Intent	0,882	0,772	
Social Media Marketing Activities	0,846	0,893	0,771

Source: SmartPLS processed data, 2025

[Figure 2](#) shows the results of the research measurement model consisting of three latent constructions, namely Social Media Marketing Activities, Brand Awareness, and Repurchase Intention along with their reflective indicators. Social Media Marketing activity was measured through eight indicators (SMM1-SMM8) with an external load of 0.725-0.872, Brand Awareness was measured through six indicators (BA1-BA6) with an external load of 0.726-0.788, and Repurchase Intention was measured through six indicators (REPIN1-REPIN6) with an external load of 0.737-0.814. The structural model shows the coefficient of the Social Media Marketing Activity to Brand Awareness path of 0.846, Social Media Marketing Activity for Repurchase Intent of 0.516, and Brand Awareness for Repurchase Intent of 0.445.

Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

Analysis of the determination coefficient (R Square) shows a very high explanatory power of the model. Separately, Social Media Marketing Activities are able to explain 71,6%variance on Brand Awareness. Most importantly, together, Brand Awareness and Social Media Marketing Activities are able to explain 85,3%of the variance of the Repurchase Intention (Repurchase Intention), a very strong figure and confirms that this research model has a high explanatory power in predicting consumer repeat purchasing behavior (See Table 6). This remarkable predictive power (R² = 0.853) specifically emphasizes that Brand Awareness and digital marketing efforts are huge drivers in shaping buyback intent in the context of sharia cottages.

Hypothesis testing using bootstrapping of 5,000 subsamples yielded the following path coefficients: SMMA → RI (β = 0.516, t = 4.382, p < 0.001), SMMA → BA (β = 0.846, t = 29.061, p < 0.001), and BA → RI (β = 0.445, t = 3.738, p < 0.001). The indirect effect yielded a coefficient of 0.376 (t = 3.739, p < 0.001).

Hypothesis testing using bootstrapping confirmed that all paths have a statistically significant influence [table 5](#). Social Media Marketing Activities have a significant direct influence on Repurchase Intent (H1 accepted), and are a very strong predictor of Brand Awareness (H2 accepted). Crucially, Brand Awareness has a significant effect on Repurchase Intent (H3 accepted). The results of the indirect effects analysis of SMMA → BA → RI showed that Brand Awareness acts as a significant partial mediator in the relationship between Social Media Marketing Activity and Repurchase Intent (H4 received), proving that this cognitive mechanism is critical to converting digital engagement into repeat purchase decisions.

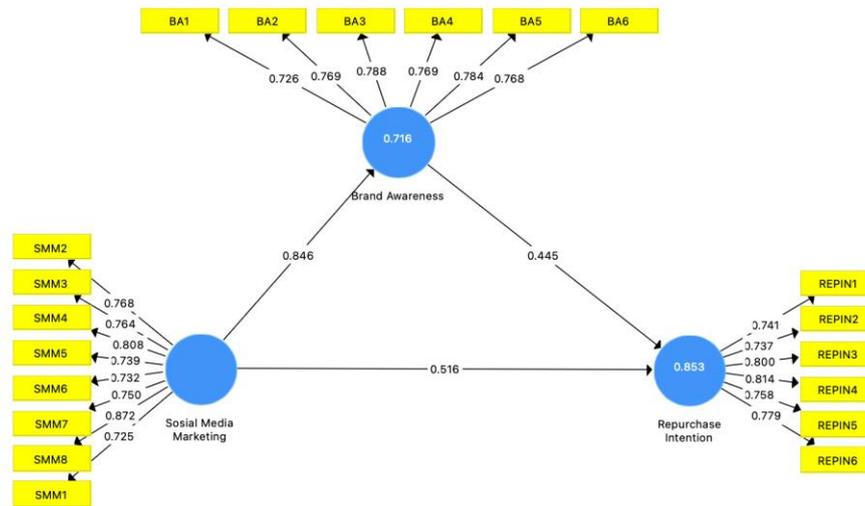


Figure 2. Measurement Model

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hi p.	Line	β	T-Statistics	p-value	Decision
H 1	SMMA → RI	0,516	4,382	< 0.001	Accepted
H 2	SMMA → BA	0,846	29,061	< 0.001	Accepted
H 3	FOR → RI	0,445	3,738	< 0.001	Accepted
H 4	SMMA → BA → RI	0,376 *	3,739	< 0.001	Accepted

Source: SmartPLS processed data, 2025

Table 6. Effects Analysis

Original Example	β	Average Sample (M)	STEDV	Statistics T	P value	Decision
SMMA → BA → RI	0,376	0,384	0,101	3,739	0.000	Accepted

Source: SmartPLS processed data, 2025

Table 7. Coefficient of Determination

	R Square	R Square Customized
Brand Awareness	0.716	0.713
Buyback Intent	0.853	0.850

Source: SmartPLS processed data, 2025

Indirect effects

The R² value for Brand Awareness is 0.716 and Repurchase Intention is 0.582. The Q² value for Brand Awareness is 0.418 and Repurchase Intention is 0.340. The effect size (f²) of SMMA → BA is 2.520 (very large), SMMA → RI is 0.516 (large), and BA → RI is 0.382 (large).

The results of the indirect effect showed that Brand Awareness mediated the relationship between Social Media Marketing Activity and Repurchase Intent with a coefficient of 0.376 (t-statistically = 3.739, p < 0.001), confirming a very statistically significant mediation table 6. The consistency between the original sample (0.376) and the sample average bootstrapping (0.384) with a small standard deviation (0.101) indicates high stability and estimation precision. These findings confirm Hypothesis 4 that Brand Awareness acts as a mediator in relationships, showing that any increase of one

unit of Social Media Marketing Activity will increase Repurchase Intent by 0.376 units through the Brand Awareness formation pathway, emphasizing the importance of building brand awareness as a key mechanism in transforming social media marketing activities into sustainable repurchase intent in sharia cottages.

The determination coefficient showed that Social Media Marketing Activities were able to explain 71.6% of the Brand Awareness variance (R² = 0.716, R² Adjusted = 0.713), showing that social media marketing activities are a very strong predictor in building brand awareness table 7. Together, Social Media Marketing and Brand Awareness activities were able to explain 85.3% of the variance of Repurchase Intention (R² = 0.853, R² Adjusted = 0.850), showing that the research model has a very high and strong explanatory power in explaining the mechanism of forming repurchase intention.

The Influence of Social Media Marketing Activities on Brand Awareness

Social Media Marketing activities have a very significant influence on Brand Awareness (β = 0.846, t = 29.061, p < 0.001) with R² = 0.716 and f² = 2.520. These findings confirm H2 and are consistent with previous studies (Ibrahim & Aljarah, 2023). Very large effect size (f² = 2,520) shows that SMMA is the dominant driver of the formation of brand awareness of Islamic boarding schools, supporting the Integrated Marketing Communication Theory and the Stimulus-Organism-Response Framework (Aljuhmani et al., 2022). The five dimensions of SMMA—entertainment, interaction, Trendiness, customization, and word-of-mouth—proven effective in building brand awareness in the context of sharia cottages (Cheung et al., 2020). Content that communicates functional and symbolic attributes (sharia compliance) simultaneously strengthens memory (Brand recall) and brand recognition (Brand Recognition) to Muslim consumers. This strong influence is crucial for small to medium-sized hospitality businesses that have limited conventional advertising budgets (Kholilah et al., 2024).

The Influence of Social Media Marketing Activities on Repurchase Intent

SMMA had a significant influence on Direct Repurchase Intent (β = 0.516, t = 4.382, p < 0.001) with f² = 0.515. These findings confirm H1 and are in line with Kim & Baek (2025) and (Ibrahim & Aljarah, 2023). These results support the Resource-Based View and the Social Exchange Theory which emphasize that high-quality interactions through social media create reciprocal relationships

that encourage repeat purchasing behaviors (Onofrei et al., 2022). Significant direct effects suggest that SMMA has a dual mechanism: a cognitive pathway through awareness (indirect) and an emotional-behavioral pathway through direct acquisition (vanity metrics) rather than building meaningful engagement and ongoing brand awareness.

The Influence of Brand Awareness on Repurchase Intent

Brand Awareness had a significant effect on Repurchase Intention ($\beta = 0.445$, $t = 3.738$, $p < 0.001$) with $f^2 = 0.382$ (Du et al., 2022). These findings confirm H3 and are consistent with these Results consistent with the existing literature. These results support the Associative Network Theory (Associative Network Theory) (Bergkvist & Taylor, 2022) which explains that brand awareness creates memory nodes that facilitate the retrieval of brand information during the purchase decision. In the context of sharia cottages as a *Good experience*, strong brand awareness creates confidence and reduces perceived risk in repeat purchase decisions. Thus, Brand Awareness serves as a mental shortcut that reduces cognitive effort and facilitates positive brand associations (du Plessis et al., 2024). These findings explain why despite increased customer acquisition in GS Rumah Kayu Cottage Syariah (from 3,200 to 4,780 first-time visitors), *Brand recall* weak reason for the cottage not to be considered at the next purchase opportunity, resulting in a decrease in the buyback rate from 34.02% to 22.65%.

The Role of Brand Awareness Mediation in Social Media Marketing Activities on Repurchase Intent

Brand Awareness mediated the relationship between SMMA and partial Repurchase Intent with indirect effects of $\beta = 0.376$ ($t = 3.739$, $p < 0.001$) and VAF = 42.2 percent. These findings confirm H4 and are consistent with (Ibrahim & Aljarah, 2023). These results support the SOR Framework (Arslan, 2025) where SMMA as a stimulus affects brand awareness (organism) which then affects the intention to buy back (response). Partial mediation showed that SMMA influences Repurchase Intent through two pathways: direct effects ($\beta = 0.516$) through engagement and persuasion, and indirect effects ($\beta = 0.376$) through brand awareness formation. The total effect of $\beta = 0.892$ indicates a very strong effect. VAF 42.2 percent indicated that brand awareness development is an important mechanism but not the only path. This finding provides an explicit solution to the paradox of GS Rumah Kayu Cottage Syariah. Social media marketing activities that focus only on superficial metrics (*Vanity Metrics*) without a sustainable Brand Awareness development strategy, similar to the findings in further research (Bushara et al., 2023; Li et al., 2024). Social media marketing activities that focus only on vanity metrics without an ongoing brand awareness development strategy fail to generate repeat buying behavior. Islamic boarding schools need to allocate resources to activities that build brand memory and recognition, consistent branding, distinctive visual identities, storytelling that strengthens brand associations, and ongoing engagement, not just viral content that generates temporary spikes without a long-term impact on brand awareness (Cao & Nguyen, 2025). The value of $Q^2 = 0.340$ confirms that the model has good predictive relevance and can be generalized to other sharia schools.

Core Theoretical Contributions

Theoretically, this study makes a substantial contribution by enriching the *Customer-Based Brand Equity* (CBBE) literature. This study empirically validates the Brand Awareness mediation mechanism as a cognitive bridge (*missing link*) between Social Media Marketing Activities and Repurchase Intent in the unique context of sharia hospitality. In addition, these findings extend the application of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Framework to explain

involvement. These findings shed light on the GS Rumah Kayu paradox where SMMA investment increased but repurchase rates decreased marketing activities focused on customer

Muslim consumer behavior, confirming the role of the Organism variable (Brand Awareness) as an important prerequisite for achieving sustainable repeat purchase intent in the halal tourism market (Hariani et al., 2024; Jia & Chaozhi, 2021).

Research Limitations

This study has several limitations that need to be considered in the interpretation and generalization of the findings. These limitations simultaneously provide an explicit basis for Recommendations for Further Research to improve the robustness of causality, generalizability, and depth of mediation mechanisms. First, the cross-sectional design used collects data at a single point in time, so it cannot capture the temporal dynamics of brand awareness formation over time and definitively confirm causality. These limitations underscore the need for longitudinal studies. Second, the research sample was limited to GS Rumah Kayu Cottage Syariah customers in Indonesia, so generalization of the findings to the broader context of sharia hospitality (such as sharia hotels) or other countries requires caution, supporting the need for comparative research. Third, the use of self-reported measures (*self-reported measures*) potentially lead to general method bias (*Common Method Bias*); Nonetheless, procedural and statistical improvements have been implemented to minimize this potential bias. Fourth, this study only examined Brand Awareness as a single mediator, when there may be other cognitive or affective mediators (such as brand trust, perceived value, or customer satisfaction) that may also explain the mechanism of the relationship between Social Media Marketing Activity and Repurchase Intent, which is the direction for the integration of multiple mediators in the future. Fifth, the study did not distinguish between the effectiveness of various social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, WhatsApp) in building brand awareness, even though the characteristics of the platform and user behavior are very different, which requires a multi-group analysis in future research.

Recommendations for Further Research

For future research, longitudinal studies need to be conducted to strengthen causality confirmation and capture the temporal dynamics of brand awareness formation. In addition, comparative research between sharia cottages and conventional hotels is recommended to identify whether the Brand Awareness mediation mechanism differs significantly between sharia and non-sharia hospitality, as well as test the religiosity of consumers as a moderator of the power of such mediation (Alhouti et al., 2025; Sunesti & Putri, 2022). Future research also needs to integrate other mediators (such as brand trust and perceived value) in a serial or parallel mediation model to identify the relative importance of each linking mechanism. Furthermore, an in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of various social media platforms (including Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp) in building Brand Awareness through multi-group analysis is recommended. Finally, experimental research can be conducted to test the most effective types of social media marketing content (e.g., user-generated vs. brand-generated content) in building brand awareness and driving repurchase intent.

Conclusion

This study proves that *Social Media Marketing Activities* (SMMA) have a significant influence on *Repurchase Intention* (RI), both directly and indirectly through *Brand Awareness* (BA)

as a partial mediator in Islamic boarding schools. This partial mediation mechanism confirms that SMMA influences RI through two simultaneous channels: the direct pathway through emotional engagement and the indirect pathway through the formation of Brand Awareness, which serves as a mental shortcut to reduce the cognitive effort and risk that metrics (*vanity metrics*) without a sustainable Brand Awareness building strategy.

Theoretically, this study makes a substantial contribution by enriching the *Customer-Based Brand Equity* (CBBE) literature. This study successfully validates empirically the mediation mechanism of Brand Awareness in SMMA-RI relations in the unique context of sharia hospitality in Indonesia, an area that is under-explored in the global literature. Further, these findings expand the application of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Framework, emphatically positioning the development of Brand Awareness as the *missing link* between investing in Social Media Marketing Activities and achieving sustainable buyback intent.

The main managerial implications emphasize the importance for sharia pondok managers to allocate resources to activities that consistently build brand recall and brand recognition. This is achieved through consistent *branding*, distinctive visual identity, and ongoing engagement that strengthens brand associations, rather than just chasing viral content or temporary reach metrics (Acar et al., 2024). This strategy is critical to ensure the Brand Awareness formed can transform into stable repetitive buying behaviors.

However, this study has limitations, including the use of a cross-sectional design that limits the confirmation of definitive causality and a limited sample of the Rumah Kayu Cottage Syariah GS which influences the generalization of the findings. Therefore, future research is recommended to conduct longitudinal studies, integrate other mediators (*multi-mediators*), as well as conduct comparative sharia vs conventional studies to expand the scope and robustness of

consumers perceive in repeated purchase decisions. These findings explicitly provide a solution to the GS paradox of Rumah Kayu Cottage Syariah where digital marketing investment increases but repurchase rates decrease, confirming that the failure to convert customer acquisition into repetitive buying behavior is due to an excessive focus on reach the findings.

Author contributions

The author contributes collaboratively at all stages of this research. The author is responsible for conceptualizing the research, designing conceptual models, and drafting theoretical frameworks. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the article, and are solely responsible for the content and scientific integrity of this research.

Funding

This research does not receive any special funding support from any institution, be it government, private, or non-profit organizations. All research costs are borne independently by the author. The funding institution has no role in the design of the research, the collection and analysis of data, the interpretation of the results, or the preparation of the manuscript.

Conflict of interest

The authors state that there are no potential conflicts of interest, either financial or non-financial, that could affect the objectivity, interpretation, or conclusions of this study. No personal, institutional, or commercial relationship can be considered a conflict of interest. This statement is made to ensure the transparency and integrity of the research results.

References

- Acar, A., Büyükdag, N., Türten, B., Diker, E., & Çalışır, G. (2024). The role of brand identity, brand lifestyle fit, and brand satisfaction on repurchase intent: A multi-group structural equation model. *Communication in the Humanities and Social Sciences*, 11(1), 1102. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03618-w>
- Alhouthi, S. (Sa'arah), Bao, Y., & Zhang, S. (2025). Brand inclusivity in faith-based marketing: The role of religiosity and appreciation of diversity. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-06-2024-5279>
- Aljuhmani, H.I., Elrehail, H., Bayram, P., & Samarah, T. (2022). Connect social media marketing efforts to customer brand engagement in driving brand loyalty. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 35(7), 1719–1738. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-08-2021-0627>
- Anas, A. M., Abdou, A. H., Hassan, T. H., Alrefae, W. M. M., Daradkeh, F. M., El-Amin, M. A.-M. M., Kegour, A. B. A., & Alboray, H. M. (2023). Satisfaction in the driver's seat: exploring the influence of social media marketing activities on follower purchase intent in the context of the restaurant industry. *Sustainability*, 15(9), 7207. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15097207>
- Arslan, Y. (2025). Dismantling Organic Food Purchase Intentions in the SR Framework: The Multidimensional Moderate Role of Consumer Knowledge and Belief. *Food Science & Nutrition*, 13(6), e70447. <https://doi.org/10.1002/fsn3.70447>
- Bazin, D., Bhukuth, A., Dragasevic, M., & Faviandhani, Q. (2025). From halal tourism to sharia economy: The case of Lombok honeymoon halal tourism. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 25(4), 699–717. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14673584241257085>
- Bergkvist, L., & Taylor, C.R. (2022). Reviving and Increasing Brand Awareness as a Construction in Advertising Research. *Journal of Advertising*, 51(3), 294–307. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2022.2039886>
- Bushara, M.A., Abdou, A.H., Hassan, T.H., Sobaih, A.E., Albohnayh, A.M., Alshammari, W.G., Aldoreeb, M., Elsaed, A.A., & Elsaied, M.A. (2023). The Power of Social Media Marketing: How Does Perceived Value Mediate the Impact on Restaurant Follower Purchase Intent, Willingness to Pay a Premium Price, and E-WOM? *Sustainability*, 15(6), 5331. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15065331>
- Cao, T., & Nguyen, T.H. (2025). The impact of TikTok ad content on purchase intent: The role of brand awareness, brand image, age, and revenue group. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-11-2024-1700>
- Cheah, J.-H., Amaro, S., & Roldán, J.L. (2023). Multigroup analysis of more than two groups in PLS-SEM: Overview, illustrations, and recommendations. *Journal of Business Research*, 156, 113539. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.113539>
- Cheung, M.L., Pires, G., & Rosenberger, P.J. (2020). The influence of perceived social media marketing elements on consumer-

- brand engagement and brand knowledge. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 32(3), 695–720. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-04-2019-0262>
- De Las Heras-Pedrosa, C., Millan-Celis, E., Iglesias-Sánchez, P. P., & Jambriño-Maldonado, C. (2020). The Importance of Social Media in Shaping the Image of Tourist Destinations from a Stakeholder Perspective. *Sustainability*, 12(10), 4092. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12104092>
- Du, H.S., Xu, J., Tang, H., & Jiang, R. (2022). Repurchase Intent in Online Knowledge Services: A Brand Awareness Perspective. *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, 62(1), 174–185. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08874417.2020.1759159>
- du Plessis, C., D'Hooge, S., & Sweldens, S. (2024). The Science of Creating Brand Associations: A Sustainable Trinity Model That Connects Brand Associations with the Learning Process. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 51(1), 29–41. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucad046>
- EISayad, G., & Md Saad, N. H. (n.d.). Uncover the power of social media marketing activities in growing customer equity, loyalty, and repurchase intent. *Journal of Marketing Communication*, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2024.2432029>
- Han, J.A., Feit, E.M., & Srinivasan, S. (2020). Can negative buzz increase awareness and purchase intent? *Marketing Letters*, 31(1), 89–104. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11002-019-09501-y>
- Hariani, D., Hanafiah, M. H., Anuar, N. A. M., & Ahmad, K. N. (2024). Promoting halal tourism in sharia-compliant destinations: Insight into Aceh's competitiveness and perceived values and behaviors of tourists. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 14673584241283902. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14673584241283902>
- Ho-Mai, N. T., Tran, V. T., Nguyen, V. K., Do, U. T. T., Truong, T. B., & Tran, P. T. K. (2024). Online celebrity brand equity improvement pathway and follower hotel booking intent: Serial double mediation model. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 18(6), 1155–1177. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-08-2023-0265>
- Hotkar, P., Garg, R., & Sussman, K. (2023). Strategic social media marketing: An empirical analysis of sequential advertising. *Production and Operations Management*, 32(12), 4005–4020. <https://doi.org/10.1111/poms.14075>
- Ibrahim, B., & Aljarah, A. (2023). The era of Instagram expansion: Matching social media marketing activities and brand loyalty through quality customer relationships. *Journal of Marketing Communication*, 29(1), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2021.1984279>
- Jeaheng, Y., Al-Ansi, A., & Han, H. (2020). The impact of Halal-friendly services, facilities, and food and beverages on Muslim travelers' perceptions of service quality attributes, perceived pricing, satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 29(7), 787–811. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19368623.2020.1715317>
- Jia, X., & Chaozhi, Z. (2021). Turning barriers into attractions: A supplier's perspective on Halal food in non-Islamic destinations. *Journal of Marketing & Destination Management*, 19, 100517. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2020.100517>
- Jiang, Z., & Lyu, J. (2024). The role of augmented reality app attributes and customer-based brand equity on consumer behavioral responses: A perspective of the SIR framework. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 33(6), 702–716. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-09-2023-4706>
- Keller, KL (1999). Managing Brands for the Long Term: Brand Strengthening and Revitalization Strategies. *California Management Review*, 41(3), 102–124. <https://doi.org/10.2307/41165999>
- Kholillah, S., Maminirina Fenitra, R., Hati, S. R. H., & Thurasamy, R. (n.d.). Food for the soul: Religious identity and ethical halal labeling in the application of the sharing economy. *Identity*, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2024.2444105>
- Kim, M., & Baek, T. H. (2025). Grow brand love through branded memes on social media. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 34(4), 486–499. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-02-2024-5002>
- Koay, K. Y., Cheah, C. W., & Goon, S. W.-U. (2023a). How do perceived social media marketing activities foster purchase intent? A Double Sequential Mediation Model. *Journal of Global Marketing*, 36(3), 210–224. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08911762.2023.2207072>
- Koerner, B., Sushartami, W., & Spencer, D.M. (2024). Assessment of tourism policy and planning in Indonesia. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 49(6), 1500–1511. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2023.2214030>
- Li, X. (Leah), Alahmari, A., & Schivinski, B. (2024). Place branding: Religion in shaping the three-dimensional essence of the city's brand through stakeholder engagement. *PLOS SATU*, 19(1), e0296162. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0296162>
- Onofrei, G., Filieri, R., & Kennedy, L. (2022). Social media interactions, purchase intent, and behavioral engagement: The mediating role of source and content factors. *Journal of Business Research*, 142, 100–112. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.12.031>
- Taman, C.I., & Namkung, Y. (2022). The Effect of Instagram Marketing Activities on Customer-Based Brand Equity in the Coffee Industry. *Sustainability*, 14(3). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14031657>
- Rehman, F.W., Zahid, H., Qayyum, A., & Jamil, R.A. (2025). Building Relationship Equity: The Role of Social Media Marketing Activities, Customer Engagement, and Relational Benefits. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 20(3), 223. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jtaer20030223>
- Rocklage, M.D., Berger, J., & Boghrati, R. (2025). EXPRESS: The Trust Journey: Consumer Experience, Certainty, and Choice. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 00222437251372928. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00222437251372928>
- Sánchez Jiménez, M. Á., Gómez Carmona, D., & Moral Moral, M. (2024). The evolution of social media's impact in hospitality: A bibliometric analysis. *Journal of Marketing & Destination Management*, 31, 100868. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2024.100868>
- Shu, C., Hashmi, H.B.A., Xiao, Z., Haider, S.W., & Nasir, M. (2022). How Do Islamic Values Affect CSR? Systematic Literature Review of Studies from 1995–2020. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 181(2), 471–494. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-021-04964-4>
- Singh, V., Kathuria, S., Puri, D., & Kapoor, B. (2023). Corporate social responsibility and behavioral intent: Brand Recognition mediation mechanisms. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 30(4), 1698–1711. <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.2445>
- Sunesti, Y., & Putri, A.K. (2022). Sharia and Millennial Housing in Indonesia: Between Religious and Economic Motives. *HTS Theological Studies*, 78(4). <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v78i4.7062>
- Yang, Q., Hayat, N., Al Mamun, A., Makhbul, Z. K. M., & Zainol, N. R. (2022). Continuous customer retention through social media marketing activities using a hybrid SEM-neural network approach. *PLOS SATU*, 17(3), e0264899. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0264899>