

## The mediating role of brand trust in the effect of social media marketing on repurchase behaviour

### Sosyal medya pazarlamasının yeniden satın alma davranışına etkisinde marka güveninin aracılık rolü

Mehmet Gökerik<sup>1</sup> 

<sup>1</sup> Assist. Prof. Dr., Karabük University,  
Karabük, Türkiye,  
[mehmetgokerik@karabuk.edu.tr](mailto:mehmetgokerik@karabuk.edu.tr)

ORCID: 0000-0002-0827-5805

Submitted: 25/03/2024

Revised: 9/05/2024

Accepted: 20/05/2024

Online Published: 25/06/2024

#### Abstract

This study investigates the impact of social media marketing activities on consumer repurchase behaviours and the mediating role of brand trust in this process. Analyses indicate that the use of social media platforms enhances consumers' trust in brands, and this trust, in turn, strengthens their intentions to repurchase, creating a positive effect. The findings underscore that social media marketing activities can generate significant value for businesses by boosting consumer interaction and brand trust. This research provides substantial evidence of brand trust's positive and meaningful impact in the relationship between social media marketing and repurchase behaviour and how social media marketing strategies can indirectly influence consumer behaviours. Hence, the study suggests that businesses should design their social media marketing strategies to establish solid and trust-based relationships with consumers, highlighting that this approach can positively affect consumers' repurchase behaviours. These findings demonstrate the strategic importance of social media marketing activities for businesses and how brand trust can be leveraged to maximize benefits from these activities.

**Keywords:** Social Media Marketing, Brand Trust, Repurchase Behaviour, Digital Marketing, Social Media

**Jel Codes:** M30, M31

#### Öz

Bu çalışma, sosyal medya pazarlama aktivitelerinin tüketici yeniden satın alma davranışları üzerindeki etkisini ve bu süreçte marka güveninin aracılık rolünü incelemektedir. Analizler, sosyal medya platformlarının kullanımının tüketicilerin markalara olan güvenini artırdığını ve bu güvenin yeniden satın alma niyetlerini güçlendirerek pozitif bir etki yarattığını göstermektedir. Bulgular, sosyal medya pazarlama faaliyetlerinin işletmeler için önemli bir değer yaratabileceğini, tüketici etkileşimini ve marka güvenini artırabileceğini vurgulamaktadır. Bu çalışma, marka güveninin, sosyal medya pazarlaması ile yeniden satın alma davranışı arasındaki ilişkide pozitif ve anlamlı bir etkisinin yanı sıra, sosyal medya pazarlama stratejilerinin, tüketici davranışları üzerinde dolaylı yollardan da etkili olabileceğini gösteren önemli kanıtlar sunmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, işletmelerin sosyal medya pazarlama stratejilerini, tüketicilerle sağlam ve güvene dayalı ilişkiler kuracak şekilde tasarlamaları gerektiğini belirten çalışma, bu yaklaşımın tüketici yeniden satın alma davranışlarını olumlu yönde etkileyebileceğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu bulgular, işletmeler için sosyal medya pazarlama faaliyetlerinin stratejik önemini ve marka güveninin bu faaliyetlerden maksimum fayda sağlamak için nasıl kullanılabileceğini göstermektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sosyal Medya Pazarlaması, Marka Güveni, Yeniden Satın Alma, Dijital Pazarlama, Sosyal Medya

**Jel Kodları:** M30, M31

**Citation:** Gökerik, M., The mediating role of brand trust in the effect of social media marketing on repurchase behaviour, *tujom* (2024) 9 (2):36-51, doi: <https://doi.org/10.30685/tujom.v9i2.195>

## **Introduction**

Social media, a critical component in modern business strategy, encompasses a range of Internet-based applications built on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, facilitating the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Unlike traditional digital communication tools like email, social media represents a distinct context that influences cognition, affect, and behaviour within organizations, fundamentally altering how businesses interact internally and externally (McFarland & Ployhart, 2015). Strategic social media marketing extends beyond mere communication tactics, encompassing dimensions such as marketing scope, culture, structures, and governance. It allows firms to align their social media strategies with broader corporate missions and objectives (Felix, Rauschnabel, & Hinsch, 2017). Furthermore, integrating social media into business practices offers significant opportunities for knowledge management, customer relationship building, and marketing, promoting a deeper connection between firms and their stakeholders through collaborative and interactive digital platforms (Nicholson, Nugroho & Rangaswamy, 2016). These theoretical frameworks highlight the transformative potential of social media, underscoring its role as a dynamic and multifaceted tool in contemporary business environments.

Social media marketing is how businesses engage with their target audiences, increase brand awareness, and promote their products or services using social media platforms and websites. This approach is closely related to e-marketing and digital marketing concepts and is gaining popularity among businesses and researchers (Ibrahim & Ganeshbabu, 2018). Social media marketing strategies allow brands to fully utilize their creativity and innovation capacities with modern technological tools, helping organizations recognize social networks' benefits and encourage global interactions, overcoming geographical barriers (Fan, 2023). Furthermore, social media analysis, especially using rapidly evolving platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, can be applied to online business marketing strategies, offering business owners new ways to promote their products and services (Rahardja, 2022). Additionally, social media marketing provides a powerful tool for businesses to interact directly with their target audiences, promote their brands at relatively low costs, and remain competitive in the digital age (Ballabh, 2024). Therefore, social media marketing plays a vital role in shaping the future success of businesses and brands.

Social media marketing has become an indispensable strategy for businesses in today's digital age. Content design is critical in capturing users' attention and increasing brand loyalty, making social media marketing an effective tool for businesses (Pallavi & Sowmya, 2023). This form of marketing holds a significant place between necessity and preference, especially in the digital era. Businesses that promote their products and services through social media platforms gain substantial benefits in attracting consumer interest and enhancing brand awareness (Khanom, 2023). Moreover, implementing social media marketing strategies is vital in reaching and engaging target audiences, highlighting social media's abstract benefits in achieving marketing communication objectives (Rosário & Dias, 2023). In this context, the importance of social media marketing is increasingly recognized as a strategic tool that allows businesses to make the most of their digital assets and interact with their target audiences more meaningfully and effectively.

Brand trust denotes the degree to which consumers find a brand reliable and trustworthy. This concept is built on individuals' belief in the brand and their expectations that it will fulfil its promises. Brand trust is one of the cornerstones of the relationship between the consumer and the brand, laying the groundwork for developing emotional bonds such as brand loyalty and brand love (Marmat, 2023). Furthermore, it has been observed that the perception of corporate social responsibility plays a significant role in both the direct and indirect effects on consumers' brand advocacy behaviours, underscoring the importance of brand trust (Fatma & Khan, 2023). In the context of media brands, it is necessary to reassess the dimensions of brand trust, which play a significant role in consumers' brand choices (Chan-Olmsted & Kim, 2023). For example, in healthcare service companies, factors such as brand characteristics, company characteristics, and customer-brand characteristics have been found to have positive effects on brand loyalty, with brand trust playing a central role in this relationship (Munawaroh & Rianto, 2022). In this context, it is evident that brand trust is effective across a broad spectrum, from purchasing decisions to brand advocacy, which is a critical factor in creating a sustainable competitive advantage for brands.

Brand trust has become increasingly evident in consumers' purchasing decisions today. Consumers tend to make informed choices while shopping, and these choices are often directed towards brands they trust. Brand trust has become a valuable business asset by triggering behavioural outcomes such as consumer loyalty and word-of-mouth marketing (Masriani & Sanica, 2022). Furthermore, brand trust acts as a bridge in consumers' relationships with the brand, facilitating the transformation of brand experiences into brand loyalty (Bernarto, Berlianto, Meilani, Masman, & Suryawan, 2020). Brand trust is also a critical factor in increasing consumers' interest in green brands and strengthening their intentions to make green purchases, as consumers believe that the brands they trust will fulfil their environmental responsibilities (Wang, Zaman, & Alvi, 2022). Therefore, brand trust occupies a significant position for both businesses and researchers in understanding the impact of brands on consumer behaviour and deepening the relationship between consumers and brands.

This study aims to examine the impact of social media marketing on consumers' repurchase behaviours and identify the mediating role of brand trust in this process. In today's digital age, the significance of social media platforms in marketing strategies is increasingly growing. In this context, it is believed that the trust relationship brands establish with consumers significantly affects the effectiveness of marketing activities conducted through social media. This study aims to uncover how and to what extent brand trust affects the relationship between social media marketing activities and consumers' repurchase behaviours towards the brand. The problem of this study lies in understanding the impact of social media marketing strategies on consumers' repurchase behaviours and how brand trust plays a mediating role in this process.

The study has five main sections: introduction, literature review, method, findings, conclusion, and discussion. In the introduction section, the subject and significance of the research, as well as the research objectives and problem, are defined. The literature review section deeply examines theoretical information related to social media marketing and brand trust. The method section provides information about the research design, sample selection, data collection methods, and analysis techniques. In the findings section, an analysis of the collected data is presented. The conclusion includes a summary of the research findings, inferences related to the mediating role of brand trust, and an evaluation of the impact of social media marketing on repurchase behaviour. The discussion section interprets the findings in light of the literature, outlines the study's limitations, and offers suggestions for future research.

## **Literature review**

### **Social media marketing**

Social media marketing has become a significant strategy for businesses today. As part of digital transformation, social media activities significantly impact retail website traffic, orders, and sales (Dolega, Rowe, & Branagan, 2021). As an online marketing tool, social media marketing enables businesses to communicate more effectively with their target audiences and better respond to their needs (Rahardja, 2022). Social media marketing also allows businesses to conduct market research and access crucial data to support business decisions (Ausat, Permana, Angellia, Subagja, & Astutik, 2023). Therefore, social media marketing is seen as a central element in the digital transformation strategies of businesses in the retail sector.

Studies within the realm of digital and social media marketing forecast that advancements in technology, including artificial intelligence, augmented reality marketing, digital content management, and mobile marketing, will mould the future landscape of this sector (Dwivedi, Ismagilova, Hughes, Carlson, Filieri, Jacobson, & Wang, 2020). The definition, conceptualization, classification, and validation of social media marketing strategies assist businesses in developing more informed and effective strategies in this area (Li, Larimo, & Leonidou, 2021; Gökteş & Gökerik, 2024). The influence of marketing activities on social media and customer experience upon consumer behaviour is critical in enhancing business customer loyalty (Wibowo, Chen, Wiangin, Ma, & Ruangkanjanases, 2020; Gökerik, 2024). Moreover, current trends in social media marketing strategies provide significant insights into how businesses should adapt to the dynamic digital marketing environment (Maitri, Suherlan, Prakosos, Subagja, & Ausat, 2023). Therefore, integrating new technologies requires businesses to continuously reassess and innovate their marketing strategies.

The challenges of marketing on social networks require businesses to understand how to create an effective presence on these platforms (Golzadeh & Gharachorloo, 2021; Gökerik, Gürbüz, Erkan, Mogaji, & Sap, 2018). The impact of social media marketing in the digital age becomes evident as the messages conveyed are better understood by target audiences compared to traditional marketing methods, and businesses base their strategies on scientific data (Sudirjo, Praja, & Rijal, 2023; Gökerik, 2024). The future of the social media industry depends on how platforms evolve with user behaviours and technological advancements (Zhang, Nguyen, Jung, & Ren, 2023). In the fashion industry, for example, the impact of social media has become more pronounced with the use of trend-tracking tools, significantly affecting consumer shopping behaviours (Rudniy, Rudna & Park, 2023). Creating an effective social media presence is critical for businesses to overcome these challenges and become leaders in digital marketing.

Social media marketing is a potent tool for businesses to promote their services and products online (Iastremska, Feshchur, Lysytsia, Martynenko, & Losheniuk, 2023). Marketing strategies implemented on social media platforms are reshaping how businesses engage with their target audiences and enhance brand loyalty (Rosário & Dias, 2023). An examination of social media advertising in terms of its impact on consumer demographics has revealed the importance of providing content tailored to the target audience (Yadav, 2023). A case study on social media marketing campaigns in India demonstrates that the success of these strategies is closely related to the cultural context and understanding of the target audience (Manju, 2023). In this context, an in-depth examination of cultural context and target audience understanding is shown to increase the success of social media campaigns and assist businesses in optimizing their marketing strategies.

Social media is considered a valuable resource for businesses to conduct market research and access critical data for guiding business decisions (Ausat et al., 2023; Erkan, Gökerik, & Acikgoz, 2019). These platforms allow businesses to reach a broad audience, increase brand awareness, and strengthen customer loyalty. An effective social media marketing strategy can assist businesses in achieving their digital marketing goals, thereby enabling them to gain a competitive advantage and achieve long-term success (Kalinová & Kovaříková, 2023; Tao, 2023). This demonstrates that social media platforms are more than just a marketing tool for businesses; they represent a strategic asset.

### **Brand trust**

Brand trust is a concept based on consumers' beliefs, expectations, and perceptions towards a brand. Trust plays a significant role in the consumer-brand relationship and depends on the brand's ability to fulfil the promised values (Cheng, 2017). Brand trust articulates consumers' faith in the quality, reliability, and consistency of the brand's products and services, significantly impacting long-term brand loyalty and customer satisfaction. It facilitates shopping decisions and fosters a deeper connection with the brand by enhancing the consumer's sense of safety towards the brand and reducing the perception of risk (Laequddin, Waheed & Dikkatwar, 2019). In the online environment, where consumers do not interact directly, brand trust becomes even more critical. For instance, a study in online education revealed that brand trust is associated with corporate and course design assurance factors, site quality, and public awareness, functioning as quality cues (Chung, 2009). In this context, brand trust is directly related to the realization of the brand's value propositions, alongside consumers' belief in the brand, encouraging them to choose the brand repeatedly.

Creating and maintaining brand trust is critically important, especially for high-risk products. Products with high risk in brand images, such as baby care, brand reliability, innovation, and family influence, are seen as significant precursors to cognitive brand trust. Conversely, brand intimacy and family influence are the key factors affecting emotional brand trust (Srivastava, Dash, & Mookerjee, 2016). These findings indicate that consumers' trust in a brand is related to the quality of the products and services offered and the emotional bonds formed with the brand. A brand meeting consumers' functional and emotional value expectations form the foundation of brand trust, increasing the likelihood of consumers choosing and remaining loyal to the brand (Chernatony & Riley, 1998). These dimensions of brand trust strengthen the relationship between the brand and the consumer, deepening consumers' loyalty. This, in turn, enhances the brand's position in the market and its competitive advantage.

Within the economic domain, the construction of brand trust is a crucial element that facilitates regional development, technology transfer, and community economies. Trust strengthens business

relationships, contributing to the development and potential of business partnerships (Murphy, 2006). Moreover, the significance of brand trust as a moderating factor between brand trust and loyalty has become more pronounced in competitive market environments. This aids in better understanding the relationships between customer-brand interaction, customer loyalty, and brand trust (Zaidun, Muda, & Hashim, 2020). In the online context, trust extends beyond security and privacy to encompass a multidimensional structure that includes reliability/reputation, emotional comfort, and quality, creating more trustworthy websites and electronic networks among various stakeholders (Shankar, Urban & Sultan, 2002). This multifaceted structure of brand trust enables brands to establish more robust and meaningful relationships with consumers, thereby supporting the brand's long-term success.

## Methodology

### Research model

The research model is designed to demonstrate the relationships between social media marketing, brand trust, and repurchase behaviour and how these relationships interact. It proposes a model to examine how social media marketing affects consumers' trust in the brand and how this trust impacts consumers' repurchase behaviours. In this context, social media marketing is assumed to directly affect brand trust. It is hypothesized that brand trust positively influences consumers' repurchase behaviours. The relationship between these two variables highlights the mediating role of brand trust and reveals the indirect effect of social media marketing on repurchase behaviour. In the research model, social media marketing is considered the independent variable, brand trust is the mediating variable, and repurchase behaviour is the dependent variable. Quantitative data collection methods examine the relationships between social media marketing, brand trust, and repurchase behaviour to analyse the model. In this context, data collected from 236 individuals living in Karabük through convenience sampling were tested in mediation and regression analysis via the AMOS 20 statistical analysis program. This study was granted ethical approval by the Karabuk University Social Sciences and Humanities Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee on 01/03/2024, document number E. 322816, allowing the conduct of the research.

In the study, the first part of the questionnaire used for data collection employed a classification scale to determine the demographic characteristics of the participants (gender, age, educational status, frequency of internet use, and the most frequently used social media tool). The second part includes interval scale statements related to electronic social media marketing assessments, brand trust, and repurchase. These statements are based on the perspectives of the social media marketing scale by Godwin (2019), the repurchase scale by Tayfun, Olcay, Buse & Pektaş (2019), and the brand trust scale by Delgado-Ballester (2004). The questionnaire data were collected from 236 participants using face-to-face survey techniques in the first week of March 2024. The number of participants being more than five times the number of statements in the survey form is considered sufficient for the sample size to be deemed appropriate for analysis (Brown, 2015; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

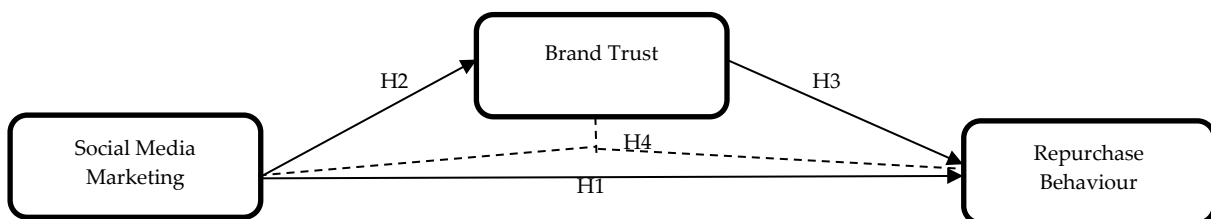


Figure 1: Research Model

### Hypotheses and their theoretical background

This study aims to determine the significance of social media marketing. The research problem is formulated as "the effect of social media marketing on repurchase behaviour and the mediating role of brand trust in this effect." In the proposed model of the study, the concept of social media marketing is considered the independent variable, brand trust is the mediating variable, and repurchase behaviour is the dependent variable. The hypotheses to be tested and their theoretical backgrounds are as follows:

The impact of social media marketing on repurchase behaviour holds critical importance in today's digital marketing landscape. A study conducted by Reski Nofrialdi (2021) focused on examining the

factors affecting online shopping behaviours and repurchase intentions, indicating that e-commerce players view repurchase intention as a determining factor in business continuity. This study deepens the understanding of the impact of social media marketing on customer behaviours. In contrast, another study by Mudondo (2021) developed a relationship model to examine the effects of social media marketing on bank customers' behaviours. From the social exchange theory perspective, it theoretically proposed the (potential) effects of social media marketing on customer satisfaction, loyalty, and repurchase intentions. Çil, Erkan, and Mogaji (2023) emphasized the significant impacts of social media marketing activities on consumer behaviours, noting how consumers show behavioural changes due to social media. Research by Le, Tiwari, Behl, and Pereira (2021) examined the impact of perceived cause-related marketing on repurchase intention, associating brand image and customer satisfaction as mediating variables in this relationship and examining the role of perceived corporate social responsibility in this context. Finally, a study by Kim, Lim, and Jung (2013) investigated the impact of social commerce consumers' price fairness perception on repurchase intention, finding that the social commerce experience significantly affects the perception of price fairness and, in turn, significantly influences repurchase intention. Across these studies, it is observed that social media marketing creates a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention through mediating factors such as customer satisfaction and brand loyalty, highlighting the critical role and potential of social media marketing on customer behaviours. These studies contribute to understanding the effect of social media marketing on repurchase behaviour, leading to the formulation of hypothesis H<sub>1</sub> in this context.

*H<sub>1</sub>: There is a positive and significant effect between social media marketing and repurchase behaviour.*

When examining the effect of social media marketing on brand trust, the study by Siriwardana and Hewapathirana (2022) indicated that social media platforms, especially Facebook and Twitter, play a significant role in strengthening relationships with consumers and providing information about brands. They emphasized the critical importance of these interactions in creating brand trust, satisfaction, and loyalty. Gensler, Völckner, Liu-Thompkins, & Wiertz (2013) explored the dynamic impact of social media on brand management, noting that consumers have become influential authors of brand stories and that the ease of sharing brand experiences on social media has led to the formation of new consumer-brand networks. Another study by Magdalena (2017) mentioned that brand-customer interaction through social media occurs through stages such as connection, engagement, satisfaction, retention, commitment, advocacy, and customer interaction, contributing to the formation of brand trust. Tiwary, Kumar, Sarraf, Kumar, and Rana (2021) assessed the impact of social media use in B2B marketing, revealing how social media could assist B2B marketers in building brand presence and trust globally. Barreda, Bilgihan, and Kageyama (2015) examined the role of trust in generating positive word-of-mouth and behavioural intentions on online social networks. Their study revealed that trust in online environments positively affects satisfaction. It also demonstrated the partial mediating effect of satisfaction and trust on brand behavioural intentions and positive word-of-mouth. All these findings indicate that social media marketing can potentially enhance consumers' trust in brands, leading to the formulation of hypothesis H<sub>2</sub> in this context.

*H<sub>2</sub>: There is a positive and significant effect between social media marketing and brand trust.*

The critical bridging role of brand trust between brand loyalty and repurchase intention was demonstrated in the study by Rahman and Ronny (2017), where it was found that brand trust positively influences brand loyalty and, consequently, repurchase intention in collaboration with brand image and brand satisfaction. In the research conducted by Wang, Doong, Shih, Pallister, and Foxall (2008), trust and satisfaction were identified as the main factors affecting consumers' repurchase loyalty in the e-marketplace, emphasizing that brand trust has a direct effect and plays a critical role in consumers' decisions to repurchase repeatedly. Another study by Thaichon and Quach (2015) examined how marketing communications could affect repurchase intention by enhancing customer satisfaction, trust, and value perception, finding that brand trust significantly impacts this process. In the study by Nofrialdi (2021), it was shown that e-commerce players see repurchase intention as a decisive factor in business continuity and how e-trust affects repurchase intention, with brand trust playing a significant role by reducing perceived risks and thereby increasing repurchase intentions. The study by Laeequddin et al. (2019) found that brand trust and brand risk have similar perspectives in terms of brand characteristics, brand rationality, and brand loyalty. Risk reduction contributes to building brand trust, and brand trust is more about building confidence rather than reducing brand risk, indicating that

brand trust is a critical factor in increasing consumers' repurchase intentions. Based on all these studies, hypothesis H<sub>3</sub> has been formulated.

*H<sub>3</sub>: There is a positive and significant effect between brand trust and repurchase behaviour.*

In studies examining the mediating role of brand trust in the positive and significant relationship between social media marketing and repurchase behaviour, it has been demonstrated how this mediating role can be realized through the impacts of perceived corporate social responsibility and perceived cause-related marketing on customer satisfaction, brand image, and repurchase intention (Le et al., 2021). The fundamental role of brand trust has been emphasized while examining the effect of marketing communications on improving factors such as brand personality, brand image, and brand awareness, thereby affecting customer satisfaction and, ultimately, repurchase intention (Thaichon & Quach, 2015). In studies addressing the dynamic effect of social media on brand management, it has been noted that consumers becoming significant authors of brand stories can affect brand trust (Gensler et al., 2013). Research analyzing the impact of social media marketing activities on E-brand Trust has investigated how these activities can enhance consumers' trust in the brand and how this trust can affect customers' repurchase intentions (Siriwardana & Hewapathirana, 2022). Studies examining the mediating role of customer trust in customer loyalty have shown how social media marketing can affect customer trust through factors like corporate identity and firm reputation and how this trust can increase customers' repurchase intentions (Nguyen, Leclerc & LeBlanc, 2013). These studies highlight the critical mediating role of brand trust in the relationship between social media marketing and repurchase behaviour. This demonstrates how this interaction shapes consumers' loyalty to the brand and their decisions to repurchase repeatedly, leading to hypothesis H<sub>4</sub> in this context.

*H<sub>4</sub>: Brand trust mediates the positive and significant relationship between social media marketing and repurchase behaviour.*

## Findings

The presence of relationships between variables has been extensively analyzed using structural equation modelling in AMOS 20 software. Additionally, hypothesis test results formulated based on the relationships among variables in the model and other findings obtained have been interpreted.

### Demographic features of the participants

Table 1 presents the demographic features of the sample included in the study. When examining gender distribution, female participants constitute 58.9% of the sample, surpassing the male ratio of 41.1%. This indicates that women are more heavily represented in the study than men. Our findings on age distribution reveal that the largest group, comprising 40.7% of the sample, falls within the 31-42 age range, while individuals aged 55 and above represent the least represented group at 6.8%. This suggests that most of our research population comprises young and middle-aged adults.

Analyses regarding education level show that individuals with a Bachelor's degree make up the most significant proportion of our study group, at 47.9%. This indicates that a substantial portion of the participants have attained a higher education level, which may imply a higher propensity for participation in academic research. Concerning internet usage time, it has been determined that most participants (56.4%) spend between 1 and 3 hours per day on the internet, indicating moderate activity in digital environments. Among the most utilized social media platforms, Instagram leads at 49.6%, while TikTok is the least preferred platform at 1.7%. This highlights significant differences in social media usage habits and preferences, underscoring Instagram's dominant role within the general population. A detailed examination of these demographic characteristics allows a deeper analysis of individuals' social media usage tendencies and internet habits.

**Table 1:** Demographic Features

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	139	58,9
Male	97	41,1
<b>Age</b>		
18 - 30	83	35,2
31 - 42	96	40,7
43 - 55	41	17,3
55 and above	16	6,8
<b>Education level</b>		
Primary education	4	1,7
Secondary Education	26	11
Associate Degree	51	21,6
Bachelor's Degree	113	47,9
Postgraduate	42	17,8
<b>Internet usage time</b>		
0 - 1 hour	19	8,1
1 – 3 hours	133	56,4
3 – 5 hours	43	18,2
5 hours and above	41	17,3
<b>The most used social media platform</b>		
Instagram	117	49,6
Facebook	45	19,1
X	22	9,3
Youtube	39	16,5
Tiktok	4	1,7
Other	9	3,8

### Measurement model

The analysis of the research model was conducted through Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), a recognized method for estimating models. Before delving into the interconnections among the hypotheses, the reliability and validity of the scale underwent evaluation. Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) metrics were employed to assess the convergent validity, elucidating the coherence and relationships among items within a unified measurement framework. According to the findings presented in Table 2 of the investigation, all variables demonstrated satisfactory convergent validity, with CR values exceeding 0.6 (fluctuating between 0.83 and 0.86) and AVE values surpassing 0.5 (varying from 0.587 to 0.644), as delineated by Fornell and Larcker (1981) and Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson (2010). In addition, the factor loadings for every variable in this study surpass the recognized threshold of 0.30 (ranging from 0.689 to 0.877), according to Stevens (2002). The formulation of scale statements leveraged insights from preceding research. After this study's validity and reliability assessments, four statements were discarded (including one related to social media marketing and three about brand trust), culminating in a streamlined set of 11 items upon excluding demographic-related statements. Details of these statements and their analytical outcomes are disclosed in Table 2.



**Table 2:** Factor Loadings and Credibility

	Items	Factor Loading	CR	AVE
Social media marketing (SD = 1.05 , M = 3.96)	SMM2	0.746	0.83	0.621
	SMM3	0.853		
	SMM4	0.761		
Repurchase behaviour (SD = 1.04 , M = 3.67)	RB1	0.698	0.843	0.644
	RB2	0.822		
	RB3	0.877		
Brand trust (SD = 0.98 , M = 4.14)	BT1	0.844	0.86	0.587
	BT2	0.774		
	BT4	0.689		
	BT5	0.789		
	BT6	0.727		

The results of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) must meet various fit indices to support the validity of the analysis. However, while examining fit indices, the adequacy of a single index alone is insufficient to guarantee the validity of the confirmatory factor analysis. In this research, the focus was on fit criteria such as the Chi-Square (X2/Df), Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). After necessary adjustments were made to the statements, Table 3 presents the confirmatory factor analysis's calculated fit indices and their acceptability conditions (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004; Schreiber, Nora, Stage, Barlow & King, 2006).

**Table 3:** Goodness of Fit Values of CFA

Fit Indexes	Excellent Fit	Acceptable Fit	Result
X2/Df	1:3	3:5	1.675
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.90 ≥ 0.80	0.954
AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.90 ≥ 0.80	0.923
CFI	≥ 0.95	0.95 ≥ 0.90	0.979
RMSEA	< 0.05	0.08 ≥ 0.05	0.054

After implementing adjustments to the model, a detailed review of the calculated fit indices for the confirmatory factor analysis has been conducted. This review has highlighted that the model demonstrates an excellent fit with a chi-square value maintained below the threshold of 3, coupled with both GFI and AGFI indices registering values above 0.90 and a CFI value exceeding 0.95. Furthermore, the RMSEA value, by positioning itself at acceptable levels, further underscores the adequacy of the model's fit. These findings collectively suggest that the model meets and exceeds the standard criteria for fit, indicating a robust and well-aligned structure that accurately represents the underlying data.

## Hypothesis tests

### Structural model tests

After validating the measurement model, the research hypotheses were tested through a mediation-variable structural model. The analysis results are presented in Table 4 and Figure 2. Initially, H1 (Social media marketing → Repurchase behaviour) was tested, and it was determined that marketing activities on social media influence repurchase behaviour ( $\beta = 0.62$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ), thereby supporting H1. Subsequently, H2 (Social media marketing → Brand trust) was tested. According to the results, social media marketing affects brand trust ( $\beta = 0.63$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ); hence, H2 is supported.

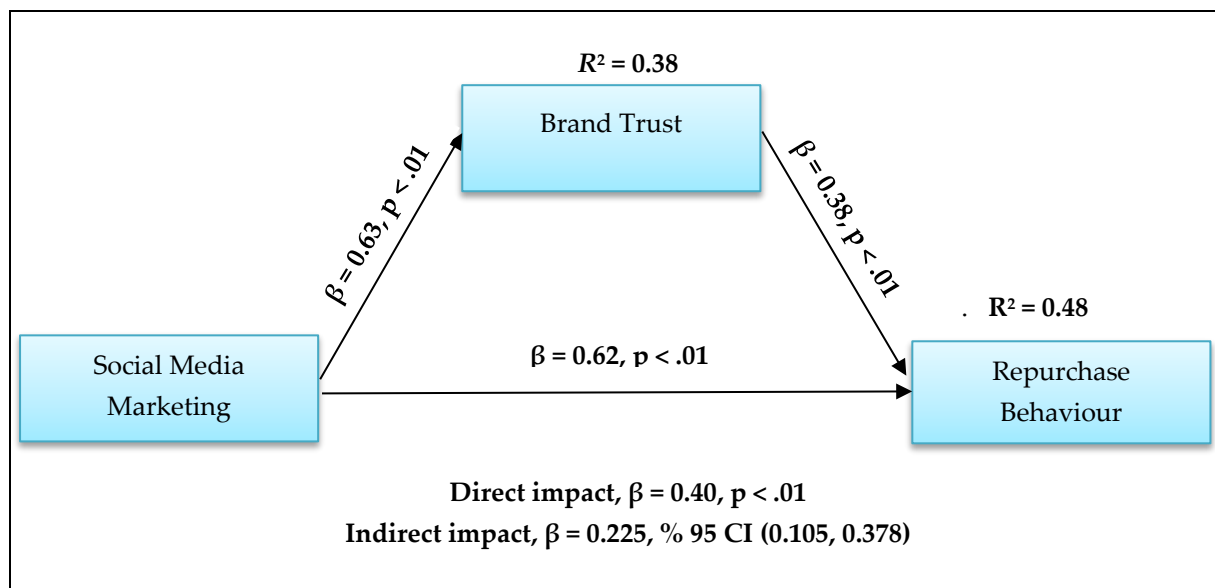
A separate model was established to test the study's additional hypotheses where brand trust was a mediating variable. In this context, the effect of brand trust (as a mediating variable) on repurchase behaviour was found to be significant ( $\beta = 0.38$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ), leading to the acceptance of H3. However, including brand trust as a mediating variable showed that the path coefficient from social media marketing to repurchase behaviour was significant ( $\beta = 0.47$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). Combined with social media marketing, brand trust explained 22.5% of the variance in repurchase behaviour. Since each variable

consisted of a single dimension, the fit indices obtained from the path analysis showed similarities with the goodness-of-fit values from the confirmatory factor analysis presented in Table 3, indicating the model's compatibility and acceptability with the data. Furthermore, bootstrap results identified the indirect effect of social media marketing on repurchase behaviour through brand trust as significant ( $\beta = 0.225$ , 95% CI [0.105, 0.378]). These outcomes suggest the mediating role of brand trust in the relationship between social media marketing and repurchase behaviour. Thus, H<sub>4</sub> is supported.

**Table 4:** Structural Model Analysis Results

Estimation Variables	Result Variables			
	Brand Trust		Repurchase Behaviour	
	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE
H <sub>1</sub> (Smm $\longrightarrow$ Repurchase behaviour)	---	---	0.62***	0.090
R <sup>2</sup>	---	---	0.51	---
H <sub>2</sub> (Smm $\longrightarrow$ Brand trust)	0.63***	0.080	---	---
R <sup>2</sup>	0.40	---	---	---
H <sub>3</sub> (Brand trust $\longrightarrow$ Repurchase behaviour)	---	---	0.38***	0.095
R <sup>2</sup>	---	---	0.48	---
H <sub>4</sub> (Smm $\longrightarrow$ Brand trust $\longrightarrow$ Repurchase behaviour)				
Smm $\longrightarrow$ Repurchase behaviour	---		0.40***	0.100
Brand trust $\longrightarrow$ Repurchase behaviour	---		0.38***	0.095
R <sup>2</sup>	---		.48	---
Indirect effect	---		0.225, (0.105, 0.378)	---
Smm $\longrightarrow$ Brand trust $\longrightarrow$ Repurchase behaviour				

**Note:** \*\*\* p < .001., n = 236, the values in brackets indicate the upper and lower confidence interval values., Bootstrap resampling = 2000, Smm = Social media marketing



**Note:** Unstandardized  $\beta$  coefficient values are reported. R<sup>2</sup> values indicate variance explained by the CI: confidence interval.

**Figure 2:** Measurement Model and Results (N = 236)

### Conclusion and discussion

The study reveals that social media marketing significantly affects repurchase behaviour, with brand trust playing a critical intermediary role in this process. The analyses show that the use of social media

platforms increases consumers' trust in brands, and this trust, in turn, strengthens their intentions to repurchase, creating a positive effect. The findings emphasize that social media marketing activities can create significant value for businesses by enhancing interaction with consumers and increasing brand trust. Moreover, the quality and frequency of interactions conducted through social media significantly affect the levels of trust consumers have in a brand. This study presents substantial evidence of the positive and meaningful effect of brand trust in the relationship between social media marketing and repurchase behaviour and how social media marketing strategies can indirectly influence consumer behaviours. Therefore, this study suggests that businesses should design their social media marketing strategies to establish solid and trust-based relationships with consumers, as this approach can positively affect consumers' repurchase behaviours. These findings demonstrate the strategic importance of social media marketing activities for businesses and how brand trust can be utilized to maximize benefits.

The research findings indicate that social media marketing activities significantly and positively affect consumer repurchase behaviours through brand trust. Specifically, the relationship between social media marketing and brand trust shows a strong and positive correlation, pointing to the potential of social media marketing to increase brand trust. Furthermore, it has been found that brand trust has a direct and positive effect on consumer repurchase behaviour, thus enhancing repurchase behaviour through social media marketing activities mediated by brand trust. Additionally, this study contributes valuable insights to the marketing literature by demonstrating the strategic importance of social media marketing activities and their effects on consumer behaviours, mainly through the mediation of brand trust. These findings guide businesses and marketers in developing effective social media marketing strategies to enhance consumer trust and brand loyalty.

When comparing the research findings with the existing literature, studies by Suleman, Suyoto, Sjarief, Sabil, Marwansyah, Adawia, & Puspasari (2023) and Manzoor, Baig, Hashim & Sami (2020) indicate that social media marketing activities directly affect consumer behaviour, which can be further strengthened through consumer trust. These findings align with this study's results, emphasizing the importance of brand trust in repurchase behaviours and how social media marketing strategies can enhance consumer trust. The study by Asyhari, Ayuni, Pramananda, Saputri, & Salleh (2022) examines the effect of social media marketing on repurchase intention through consumer-brand interaction, offering an approach similar to the mediating role of brand trust in this study. However, while Asyhari and colleagues' work focuses on the importance of consumer-brand interaction, this study takes a broader perspective on how brand trust is a critical factor in the relationship between social media marketing activities and repurchase behaviour. Research by Guo & Li (2022) and Simbolon & Law (2022) has examined the effects of social media marketing activities on consumer behaviours regarding perceived value and customer engagement. These studies demonstrate the potential of social media marketing activities to increase perceived value and promote customer engagement. At the same time, this research reveals how social media marketing activities can impact repurchase behaviour through brand trust. This difference highlights the importance of different research approaches in understanding the effects of various dimensions of social media marketing on consumer behaviours. Studies by Sindhuja, Panda and Krishna (2023) and Lăzăroiu, Neguriță and Grecu (2020) focus on the overall effects of social media marketing and the roles of factors such as trust and perceived risk on consumer behaviours. These studies demonstrate the broad effects of social media marketing activities on consumer behaviours and how consumer trust is a critical factor in this process. The findings of this study focus on the specific role of brand trust within this general framework, examining in more detail the impact of social media marketing strategies on consumer repurchase behaviours. The findings of different studies provide a broad perspective for understanding the complex interactions between various dimensions of social media marketing activities and consumer trust in consumer behaviours. These comparisons offer insights into how social media marketing strategies can enhance consumer trust and thus positively affect repurchase behaviours.

This study contributes significantly to both the theoretical and practical fields by profoundly examining the effect of social media marketing on consumer repurchase behaviours and how brand trust plays a mediating role in this process. Theoretically, the research offers a different perspective to the social media marketing literature on understanding the effects of brand trust on consumer behaviours and how social media marketing activities can shape this trust. It develops a theoretical framework that

details how brand trust can serve as a critical bridge between social media marketing strategies and consumer repurchase behaviours. Practically, this study provides insights into how businesses can implement trust-building strategies while interacting with consumers on social media. By offering strategic recommendations that can help businesses plan and implement more effective social media marketing activities, it guides businesses in enhancing consumer trust and thereby strengthening consumer loyalty and repurchase intentions. In this context, the research presents valuable information for academics and marketing professionals seeking to understand the complex interactions between social media marketing activities, brand trust, and consumer behaviours.

Among the limitations of this study is the geographically limited sample used in the data collection process, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. The research focused exclusively on social media platforms, not offering a broader perspective on the effects of different digital marketing platforms on consumer behaviours. Additionally, the study primarily utilized a quantitative methodology without conducting qualitative research that could provide a deeper understanding of the underlying reasons and motivations behind consumer behaviours. Future research should enhance the generalizability of findings by utilizing samples from different geographic regions, various digital marketing tools, and broader sample groups. This could help better understand the effects of different cultural contexts on social media marketing and brand trust. Furthermore, future studies could focus on different sectors and product categories to better understand the sector-specific effects of social media marketing strategies. Lastly, exploring the underlying psychological processes and motivations behind consumer trust and social media marketing interactions using qualitative research methods could offer more in-depth contributions to the literature in this field.

**Peer-review:**

Externally peer-reviewed.

**Conflict of interests:**

The author has no conflict of interest to declare.

**Grant Support:**

The author declared that this study has received no financial support.

**Ethics Committee Approval:**

This study received ethics committee approval from Karabuk University's Social Sciences and Humanities Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee on 01/03/2024, document number E. 322816.

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