

The Role of Experiential and Viral Marketing Strategies in Increasing Brand Equity in Consumer Purchase Decisions for Tasikmalaya City Online Food Delivery Services

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ABSTRACT

This study uses a descriptive quantitative approach with data collection through questionnaires and interviews from 400 respondents. Data analysis was carried out with a combination of exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and model feasibility testing using SEM-AMOS with the Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) approach. The results of the study indicate that experiential marketing and viral marketing have a positive and significant influence on brand equity and consumer purchasing decisions. In addition, increasing brand equity also has a positive impact on purchasing decisions. This study provides a practical contribution to the development of marketing strategies in the online food delivery service industry by emphasizing the importance of integration and interaction in creating value for customers.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif deskriptif dengan pengumpulan data melalui kuesioner dan wawancara terhadap 400 responden. Analisis data dilakukan dengan kombinasi analisis faktor eksploratori dan konfirmatori (CFA) serta pengujian kelayakan model menggunakan SEM-AMOS dengan pendekatan Service-Dominant Logic (SDL). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa experiential marketing dan viral marketing memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap brand equity dan keputusan pembelian konsumen. Selain itu, peningkatan brand equity juga berdampak positif terhadap keputusan pembelian. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi praktis bagi pengembangan strategi pemasaran di industri jasa pesan-antar makanan daring dengan menekankan pentingnya integrasi dan interaksi dalam menciptakan nilai bagi pelanggan.



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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of the digital era highlights that marketing strategies play a crucial role in shaping and maintaining a brand's competitiveness and value. In the culinary industry, particularly in online food delivery services, increasing competition requires business partners to better understand and implement effective marketing strategies. In consumer behavior, perception is key in the decision-making process. Products that successfully create a positive perception are more likely to be considered and purchased by consumers. Consumerist behavior is often influenced by economic status and dynamic lifestyles, especially in Tasikmalaya. The research problem stems from the evident unmet consumer needs, particularly in the food sector. Additionally, there is a lack of comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior in online food delivery services in Tasikmalaya.

Business players capitalize on consumer tendencies toward consumption to test marketing strategies, especially in the F&B sector. Intense competition raises consumer perception standards, making them more selective in choosing products or services. Success in reaching consumers involves creating positive perceptions and emotional comfort through experience-based marketing. Experiential marketing strategies generate individual experiences, while viral marketing spreads information through viral channels. Ultimately, these two approaches reinforce brand equity and consumer purchasing decisions.

Essentially, experiential marketing is regarded as an approach within marketing that creates positive and emotional experiences for consumers, aiming to build a deeper relationship between the consumer and the brand (Fitriani et al., 2023). Meanwhile, viral marketing is defined as a strategy that leverages engaging content to encourage consumers to widely share it through viral means, thereby reaching a larger audience quickly (Purnomo et al., 2023). Brand equity refers to the value added by a brand to a product or service, formed through positive perception, consumer trust, and loyalty (El-Haq & Nurtjahjani, 2023). Integrated approaches ultimately lead to the purchase decision, which is defined as the final result of the consumer's deliberation process, influenced by various factors including marketing experiences, brand strength, and the perceptions built through consumer interactions with the brand and product (Fauziyah et al., 2023).

The relationship between experiential and viral marketing should theoretically have a positive impact on consumer purchase decisions, influenced by factors such as economy, technology, culture, and promotion. Consumer purchase decisions require a positive attitude to build confidence and loyalty. A well-constructed consumer paradigm leads to purchase decisions (Algista et al., 2022), which begin with positive marketing approaches and the appropriate strategies. Viral marketing, often encountered and employed in the digital era, spreads information to reach brand equity (As'ad, 2020). Consumer satisfaction, as measured through two-way communication, can be evaluated through experiential marketing (Kasakeyan et al., 2022). Viral marketing, much like a virus, spreads information quickly. When experiential and viral marketing values are achieved, the likelihood of a purchase decision increases, as the consumer opts for products that meet their needs and preferences (Salina & Sudaryanto, 2020). Ultimately, brand equity is achieved as a competitive advantage, drawing in consumers (Salina & Sudaryanto, 2020). The relationship between experiential marketing and viral marketing to achieve brand equity must be supported by positive consumer attitudes toward the product.

This study focuses on exploring how various marketing approaches, such as experiential and viral marketing, can enhance brand equity and influence consumer purchasing decisions through the analysis of Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), which emphasizes the integration, interaction, and service-oriented marketing approach. Although these two strategies have great potential in shaping consumer perceptions of a brand, there is little research examining their synergistic interactions and contributions in online food delivery services.

Moreover, this research incorporates the SDL approach to observe service performance holistically and interactively, aiming to deepen the understanding of consumer behavior and the development of relevant marketing strategies. The focus is on how the interaction between experiential and viral marketing influences purchasing decisions, introducing new theoretical descriptions and providing practical contributions to the online food delivery industry. It aims to

understand the mechanisms of consumer perception formation, identify effective marketing strategies, and build consumer trust and purchasing decisions.

Experiential marketing is an approach that focuses on creating emotional and memorable interactions between consumers and brands (Bayir, 2022; Zavaleta Salazar et al., 2023). These experiences can be through product demonstrations, immersive events, or personalized customer interactions that leave a lasting impression (Bayir, 2022). When consumers have positive experiences with a brand, they are more likely to develop a stronger emotional connection, which contributes to a more favorable perception of the brand (Yunpeng & Khan, 2023). This positive perception enhances the brand's equity, as consumers begin to associate the brand not just with the products it offers but with the positive emotions they experienced (Porto et al., 2024). Over time, these experiences build trust and loyalty, making the brand more valuable in the eyes of consumers, which strengthens its overall equity in the marketplace (Singh, 2017).

H1: Experiential marketing has a positive effect on brand equity

Viral marketing works by leveraging the power of social sharing and digital platforms to spread brand-related content rapidly across large audiences (Rathakrishnan et al., 2023). The success of viral marketing lies in its ability to engage consumers in ways that prompt them to share the content with their networks, thereby increasing the brand's exposure and credibility (Wolter et al., 2016). As the content circulates widely, the brand gains more visibility and becomes more familiar to a broader audience (Al-Shuaili et al., 2023). When consumers repeatedly encounter engaging content associated with a brand, it enhances their perception of the brand's value (Lo & Hsieh, 2024). This increased visibility, along with the positive associations generated through viral content, significantly boosts brand equity by embedding the brand in the consciousness of potential consumers, who begin to view it as trustworthy, relevant, and innovative (Akpınar & Berger, 2017; Chinelato et al., 2023).

H2: Viral marketing has a positive effect on brand equity

Brand equity, which encompasses consumer perceptions of brand strength, trustworthiness, and value, plays a critical role in shaping purchase decisions (Chahal, 2020; Van Thuy et al., 2022). A brand with high equity has a competitive advantage because consumers tend to view it as more reliable, superior, and capable of fulfilling their needs compared to brands with lower equity (Veselinova & Samonikov, 2018). When a brand consistently delivers on its promises and maintains a positive image, it instills confidence in consumers (Salniza et al., 2016). This trust reduces the perceived risk associated with purchasing from the brand, making consumers more likely to choose its products over those of competitors (Wang, 2017; Cai et al., 2019). As a result, brand equity becomes a key determinant in the decision-making process, as consumers are more inclined to make a purchase from brands they perceive as having higher value and credibility (Alam & Anis, 2016; Baalbaki & Guzmán, 2016; Chahal, 2020).

H3: Brand equity has a positive effect on purchase decisions

Experiential marketing can directly influence consumer purchase decisions by creating impactful interactions that leave a lasting impression on the consumer (Bayir, 2022; Hamdani et al.,

2023). These experiences, whether through product trials, events, or personalized services, often evoke strong emotional responses that align the consumer more closely with the brand (Long-Tolbert & Lai, 2019). When consumers feel personally connected to a brand because of positive experiences, they are more likely to favor that brand during the purchasing process. This connection can also differentiate the brand from competitors, increasing the likelihood of purchase. The emotional attachment formed through experiential marketing makes the consumer feel more confident in their choice (Mostafa & Kasamani, 2020), as the positive interaction serves as a reassurance that the brand understands and values their needs (Zavaleta Salazar et al., 2023).

H4: Experiential marketing has a positive effect on purchase decisions

Viral marketing influences consumer purchase decisions by generating widespread exposure and interest in a brand or product (Amperawati & Rusmawan, 2024). The virality of content allows consumers to repeatedly encounter a brand in various contexts, often shared by people they trust. This repeated exposure can create a sense of familiarity and social proof, which significantly impacts consumer confidence in making a purchase decision. The excitement and buzz generated by viral marketing also tap into consumers' desire to be part of current trends, further motivating them to purchase the product or service (Rezvani et al., 2013). Additionally, viral marketing's ability to quickly build trust and credibility through peer sharing means that consumers are more likely to act on these purchase impulses when they see others in their social networks endorsing the brand (Esmaeilpour & Aram, 2016).

H5: Viral marketing has a positive effect on purchase decisions

The relationship between experiential marketing and purchase decisions is also mediated through the enhancement of brand equity (Beig & Nika, 2019; Cambra-Fierro et al., 2021). As experiential marketing fosters deeper consumer engagement and emotional connections with the brand, it strengthens the brand's overall equity by building trust, loyalty, and a positive brand image (Cambra-Fierro et al., 2021). When brand equity is strong, it serves as a signal to consumers that the brand is reliable, which can significantly influence their purchasing behavior (Liao et al., 2020; Macias et al., 2024). Consumers are more inclined to choose brands with high equity because they feel more confident in the brand's ability to meet their expectations (Chahal, 2020; Van Thuy et al., 2022). In this way, experiential marketing indirectly drives purchase decisions by first enhancing brand equity, which subsequently encourages consumers to make confident, informed choices when selecting products or services from the brand.

H6: Experiential marketing has a positive effect on purchase decisions through brand equity

Viral marketing can also influence purchase decisions indirectly by enhancing brand equity (Sawaftah et al., 2020). As viral marketing campaigns generate widespread visibility and positive brand associations, they contribute to a stronger perception of the brand's value among consumers (Amara & Albinali, 2021). This increased brand equity, in turn, positively affects consumer behavior (Pham, 2019). When consumers perceive a brand as having strong equity—due to its visibility, credibility, and social endorsement through viral content—they are more likely to consider purchasing its products (Macias et al., 2024). The increased trust and familiarity generated through

viral marketing bolster brand equity, which then acts as a key factor in the consumer’s decision-making process (Amperawati & Rusmawan, 2024). As a result, viral marketing not only attracts attention but also reinforces brand equity, leading to greater purchase intentions.

H7: Viral marketing has a positive effect on purchase decisions through brand equity

RESEARCH METHODS

This research utilizes a descriptive quantitative approach to examine the impact of marketing strategies on brand equity and consumer purchase decisions. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews with 400 respondents who use online food delivery services in Tasikmalaya City. The study measures four variables: experiential marketing, viral marketing, brand equity, and purchase decisions, using a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree. Data analysis was conducted using a combination of exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test the construct validity and model fit. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the AMOS 26 software was used to examine the relationships between the variables. Additionally, the study employs a Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) approach to understand how marketing strategies interact to create value for both the brand and the consumer. Model fit testing was performed to ensure the robustness of the findings.

Table 1. Operational Definitions

Research Variable	Indicator	Measurement
Experiential Marketing	- Sense	- Hundreds of creative and appealing menu options with diverse products tailored to consumer needs, distinguishing the food delivery service from competitors.
	- Feel	- Complete service features with a system that is easy for consumers to understand.
	- Think (Creative cognitive experience)	- A continuously evaluated and innovatively improved system, making the service superior to competitors.
	- Act	- Digital transaction ease with affordable price ranges.
	- Relate	- Positive relationship access between the online food delivery merchant community and consumers.
Viral Marketing	- Diffusion characteristic	- Speed of information dissemination by the company.
	- Peer-to-peer information conduit	- Appropriateness of the product channel and credibility of the message source.
	- Message content	- The extent to which the online food delivery service communicates creative and imaginative language.
	- Product characteristic	- The ability of food delivery merchants to market effectively and in alignment with viral marketing campaigns.
	- Overall campaign structure	- Efforts by food delivery merchants to make their services viral.
Brand Equity	- Brand Awareness	- Brand recall and recognition of the online food delivery application.
	- Brand Association	- Price attribute alignment that creates a sustainable lifestyle pattern between business owners, consumers, and merchants.
	- Perceived Quality	
	- Brand Loyalty	

		- Perceived quality measured through the dimensions of product quality offered by the food delivery service, deemed good by consumers.
		- The ease provided by the application is reflected in the high number of users of the food delivery service, especially in Tasikmalaya.
Purchase Decision	- Previous purchase frequency	- Consumer certainty in purchasing a product based on past evaluations.
	- Current purchase frequency	- Consumer readiness to rate and spread positive word-of-mouth (WOM) for satisfying food delivery services.
	- Interest	- Consumers' willingness to make purchases and recommend the service.
	- Recommendation	

Source: Data Processed by Researchers, 2024

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The following section presents the findings of the study, analyzing the data collected from 400 respondents regarding the effects of experiential and viral marketing on brand equity and consumer purchasing decisions in the online food delivery sector. The results are discussed in relation to the theoretical framework and previous studies, highlighting key insights into the role of marketing strategies in influencing consumer behavior. The analysis includes both descriptive statistics and inferential analysis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), providing a comprehensive view of the relationships between experiential marketing, viral marketing, brand equity, and purchase decisions. These findings are further interpreted through the lens of the Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) approach, offering valuable implications for both academic research and practical marketing strategies.

The validity test was conducted by examining the loading factors for each indicator, while reliability was evaluated using Composite Reliability (CR) and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The results of these tests provide critical insights into the quality of the measurement model, ensuring it is both statistically valid and reliable before proceeding to the structural model analysis.

Table 2. Validity and reliability test results

Variable	Indicators	CFA	Loading Factors	Construct Reliability	Variance Extracted	Measurement Model Equations
Experiential Marketing	EM1	0.822	0,822	0,891	0,621	EM1 = 0,822 EM + 0,324 e
	EM2	0.759	0,759			EM2 = 0,759 EM + 0,424 e
	EM3	0.805	0,805			EM3 = 0,805 EM + 0,352 e
	EM4	0.777	0,777			EM4 = 0,777 EM + 0,396 e
	EM5	0.777	0,777			EM5 = 0,777 EM + 0,396 e
Viral Marketing	VM1	0.789	0,789	0,886	0,608	VM1 = 0,789 VM + 0,377 e
	VM2	0.771	0,771			VM2 = 0,771 VM + 0,406 e
	VM3	0.797	0,797			VM3 = 0,797 VM + 0,365 e
	VM4	0.760	0,760			VM4 = 0,760 VM + 0,422 e
	VM5	0.782	0,782			VM5 = 0,782 VM + 0,388 e
Brand Equity	BE1	0.706	0,706	0,857	0,601	BE1 = 0,706 BE + 0,502 e
	BE2	0.789	0,789			BE2 = 0,789 BE + 0,377 e
	BE3	0.770	0,770			BE3 = 0,770 BE + 0,407 e

	BE4	0.830	0,830			BE4 = 0,830 BE + 0,311 e
	KP1	0.852	0,837			KP1 = 0,837 KP + 0,299 e
Purchase Decision	KP2	0.813	0,882	0,867	0,623	KP2 = 0,882 KP + 0,222 e
	KP3	0.721	0,716			KP3 = 0,716 KP + 0,487 e
	KP4	0.712	0,707			KP4 = 0,707 KP + 0,500 e

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

Based on Table 2, it can be observed that all the indicators or statement items for the variables Experiential Marketing, Viral Marketing, Brand Equity, and Purchase Decisions have a loading factor value greater than 0.50, indicating that all indicators or items are valid. Additionally, the table shows that the variables Experiential Marketing, Viral Marketing, Brand Equity, and Purchase Decisions have Construct Reliability values greater than 0.70 and Variance Extracted values greater than 0.50, confirming that these variables are reliable. Based on the results of the CFA test in the table above, it was found that the estimate values for all variable indicators are greater than the cut-off value of 0.5.

The goodness-of-fit test is used to evaluate the model applied in the research. This test assesses the impact of product, price, promotion, and distribution on the quality of marketing services. According to Ghozali (2017), in Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis, several statistical tests are applied to test the developed model hypotheses. These statistical tests are used to assess the extent to which the model fits the research data after SEM assumptions have been met.

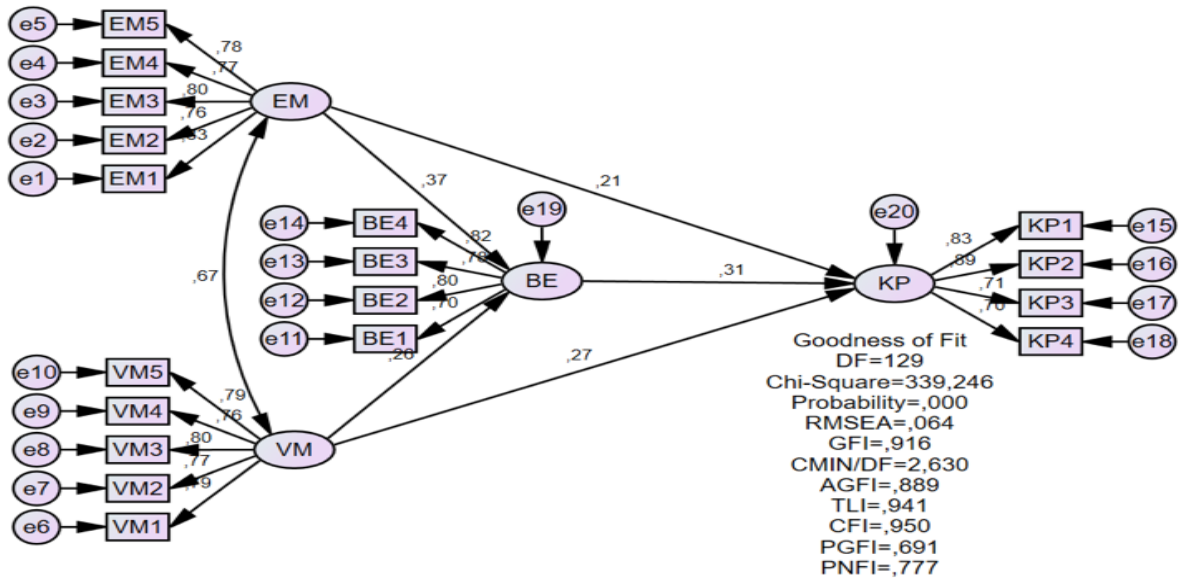


Figure 1. The Goodness-Of-Fit Test

The goodness-of-fit test is conducted in seven steps, including χ^2 (df), Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI), Incremental Fit Index (IFI), Tucker Lewis Index (TLI), Normalized Fit Index (NFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), using the established measurement criteria.

Table 3. Results of Goodness of Fit Indices

Goodness of Fit Indices	Result	Cut - Off Value	Decision
Absolute Fit Measures			
Chi Square (df=34, $\alpha=0,05$)	108,022	$\leq 48,60$ (Chi Square tabel)	Unfit
Probability	0,000	$\geq 0,05$	Good Fit
RMSEA	0,074	$\leq 0,08$	Good Fit
GFI	0,948	$\geq 0,90$	Good Fit
CMIN/DF	3,177	$\leq 2,00$	Unfit
Incremental Fit Measures			
AGFI	0,915	$\geq 0,90$	Good Fit
TLI	0,957	$\geq 0,90$	Good Fit
CFI	0,968	$\geq 0,90$	Good Fit
Parsimonious Fit Measures			
PGFI	0,586	$\geq 0,50$	Good Fit
PNFI	0,721	$\geq 0,60$	Good Fit

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

Based on the Table 3, it can be concluded that the model in the study is fit. According to Haryono (2016: 76) the model is said to be feasible if each criterion of goodness of fit, namely absolute fit indices, incremental fit indices, and parsimony fit indices is represented. In absolute fit indices there are two criteria that are good fit, in incremental fit indices there are three criteria that are good fit, while in parsimony fit indices there are two criteria that are good fit. Therefore, it is concluded that the model is fit, because each criterion of goodness of fit is represented.

The structural model in SEM is used to examine the relationships between latent variables, such as Experiential Marketing, Viral Marketing, Brand Equity, and Purchase Decisions. These relationships are represented using structural equations that quantify the direct and indirect effects of independent variables on dependent variables.

Table 4. The Structural Model

Variable	Coefisien
EM --> BE	0,280
VM --> BE	0,223
EM --> KP	0,200
VM --> KP	0,297
BE --> KP	0,394

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

Based on the structural model, several relationships between variables were identified. The path coefficient for Experiential Marketing (EM) to Brand Equity (BE) is 0.280, indicating that a one-unit increase in Experiential Marketing, assuming other variables remain constant, will result in a 0.280 increase in Brand Equity. Similarly, the path coefficient for Viral Marketing (VM) to Brand Equity is 0.223, meaning a one-unit increase in Viral Marketing will increase Brand Equity by 0.223, all else being equal. Furthermore, the path coefficient from Experiential Marketing to Purchase Decisions (KP) is 0.200, suggesting that a one-unit increase in Experiential Marketing leads to a 0.200 increase in Purchase Decisions. The path coefficient from Viral Marketing to Purchase Decisions is

0.297, indicating that a one-unit increase in Viral Marketing results in a 0.297 increase in Purchase Decisions. Finally, the path coefficient from Brand Equity to Purchase Decisions is 0.394, showing that a one-unit increase in Brand Equity will lead to a 0.394 increase in Purchase Decisions, assuming other factors remain unchanged.

The results of the hypothesis testing were obtained through Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which evaluated the significance of the relationships between the variables. The Critical Ratio (CR) and p-values were used to determine whether the hypotheses were supported.

Table 5 Hypothesis Testing Results

Variable	Coefficient	CR	P-Value	Decision
EM --> BE	0,280	4,916	0,000	H1 Accepted
VM --> BE	0,223	3,529	0,000	H2 Accepted
EM --> KP	0,200	2,925	0,003	H3 Accepted
VM --> KP	0,297	3,928	0,000	H4 Accepted
BE --> KP	0,394	4,983	0,000	H5 Accepted

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

Table 6 Sobel Test Results

Path	a	b	SEa	SEb	Sobel Test Statistic	Two-Tailed Probability	Decision
EM --> BE --> KP	0,280	0,394	0,057	0,079	3,4997	0,0005	H6 Accepted
VM --> BE --> KP	0,223	0,394	0,063	0,079	2,8866	0,0039	H7 Accepted

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

Based on the table 5, the following conclusions can be drawn: The Critical Ratio (CR) for the relationship between Experiential Marketing and Brand Equity is 4.916, greater than 2.0, and the P-value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that H1 is accepted, meaning that Experiential Marketing significantly influences Brand Equity among online food delivery consumers. Similarly, the CR for the relationship between Viral Marketing and Brand Equity is 3.529, with a P-value of 0.000, confirming that H2 is accepted, showing that Viral Marketing also significantly affects Brand Equity. For the relationship between Experiential Marketing and Purchase Decisions, the CR is 2.925, and the P-value is 0.003, which supports H3, meaning that Experiential Marketing significantly influences Purchase Decisions. The CR for the relationship between Viral Marketing and Purchase Decisions is 3.928, with a P-value of 0.000, confirming H4, indicating that Viral Marketing significantly affects Purchase Decisions. The CR for the relationship between Brand Equity and Purchase Decisions is 4.983, with a P-value of 0.000, meaning H5 is accepted, showing that Brand Equity significantly influences Purchase Decisions. Furthermore, the Sobel test for the indirect relationship between Experiential Marketing, Brand Equity, and Purchase Decisions shows a test statistic of 3.4997 and a two-tailed probability of 0.0005, confirming H6, meaning that Experiential Marketing affects Purchase Decisions through Brand Equity. Lastly, the Sobel test for the indirect relationship between Viral Marketing, Brand Equity, and Purchase Decisions gives a test statistic of 2.8866 and a two-tailed probability of 0.0039, supporting H7, indicating that Viral Marketing also affects Purchase Decisions through Brand Equity.

Discussion

The findings of this study supported the hypothesized relationships between Experiential Marketing, Viral Marketing, Brand Equity, and Purchase Decisions in the context of online food delivery services. These results aligned with previous research and provided valuable insights into how marketing strategies influenced consumer behavior. First, the significant impact of Experiential Marketing on Brand Equity validated H1. This result was consistent with studies by Bayir (2022) and Zavaleta Salazar et al. (2023), which suggested that emotional and memorable consumer experiences helped enhance the perception of the brand. Positive interactions, whether through product demonstrations or personalized experiences, allowed consumers to develop stronger emotional connections, leading to a more favorable view of the brand (Yunpeng & Khan, 2023). Over time, these experiences built trust and loyalty, which in turn strengthened Brand Equity (Porto et al., 2024).

Similarly, the positive relationship between Viral Marketing and Brand Equity confirmed H2. Viral marketing worked by amplifying brand visibility through content shared across social platforms, a process that previous research had also emphasized (Rathakrishnan et al., 2023; Wolter et al., 2016). As viral content circulated, it increased the brand's familiarity and credibility, reinforcing the consumer's perception of its value (Lo & Hsieh, 2024). These findings were in line with studies by Akpınar & Berger (2017) and Chinelato et al. (2023), who showed that viral content embedded brands more deeply in consumers' consciousness, thereby boosting Brand Equity. The significant effect of Brand Equity on Purchase Decisions provided support for H3. This result highlighted the importance of brand strength in consumer decision-making, as seen in earlier research by Chahal (2020) and Van Thuy et al. (2022). Brands with high equity were perceived as more trustworthy and capable of meeting consumers' needs, which reduced the perceived risk of making a purchase (Veselinova & Samonikov, 2018). The findings demonstrated that strong Brand Equity played a critical role in shaping purchase decisions, echoing studies by Salniza et al. (2016) and Wang (2017).

Furthermore, Experiential Marketing directly influenced Purchase Decisions, as reflected in the acceptance of H4. This finding aligned with studies by Bayir (2022) and Hamdani et al. (2023), who found that engaging and impactful consumer experiences encouraged consumers to choose the brand during the purchasing process. When consumers felt emotionally connected to a brand through positive experiences, they were more likely to make confident purchase decisions (Mostafa & Kasamani, 2020). These results underscored the power of experiential strategies in differentiating a brand from its competitors (Zavaleta Salazar et al., 2023). Similarly, Viral Marketing significantly affected Purchase Decisions, confirming H5. Viral content increased consumer exposure to the brand, creating a sense of familiarity and social proof that encouraged consumers to act on their purchase intentions (Amperawati & Rusmawan, 2024; Rezvani et al., 2013). The findings were consistent with previous research by Esmailpour & Aram (2016), which suggested that viral marketing built consumer trust and motivated purchasing decisions through peer endorsements and social sharing.

The mediating role of Brand Equity in the relationship between Experiential Marketing and Purchase Decisions supported H6. As experiential marketing fostered deeper emotional connections with the brand, it enhanced brand equity, which in turn influenced consumers'

purchasing behavior (Beig & Nika, 2019; Cambra-Fierro et al., 2021). When Brand Equity was strong, consumers felt more confident in their purchase decisions, which reinforced the findings of Liao et al. (2020) and Macias et al. (2024). Finally, the study confirmed H7, demonstrating that Viral Marketing indirectly affected Purchase Decisions through Brand Equity. As viral marketing increased the brand's visibility and positive associations, it strengthened Brand Equity, which then influenced consumer behavior (Sawaftah et al., 2020; Amara & Albinali, 2021). The trust and familiarity generated by viral content played a crucial role in shaping purchase intentions, as also suggested by Pham (2019) and Macias et al. (2024).

CONCLUSION

The results of this study demonstrated that experiential marketing and viral marketing are effective strategies in enhancing brand equity and purchase decisions in online food delivery services. This understanding highlights the important roles of both strategies in optimizing marketing approaches for business units, leading to improved outcomes. Practically, companies should focus on enhancing customer experiences through experiential marketing and leveraging the power of viral marketing to strengthen brand equity, ultimately increasing purchase decisions. The descriptive analysis also showed that the variables of experiential marketing, viral marketing, brand equity, and purchase decisions are in a good category but can be further improved to a very good level. Each hypothesis was supported, showing that increases in experiential marketing and viral marketing positively influenced brand equity, while both also significantly impacted purchase decisions. Additionally, brand equity itself played a strong role in enhancing purchase decisions, and it mediated the indirect effects of both experiential marketing and viral marketing on purchase decisions. Based on these findings, several recommendations can be made. First, more attention should be given to consumer experiences, addressing negative experiences that reduce purchasing interest, such as system maintenance or server downtime. Continuous system upgrades are essential. Second, companies should focus on service innovation to maintain competitive advantages, such as offering faster food delivery options, more accurate tracking, and features like social connect to integrate with social media platforms. Additionally, efforts to reduce delivery fees should be prioritized to retain consumers. Third, improving service standards is crucial, with innovations like food delivery pickup and Turbo services to enhance the overall consumer experience. Finally, applying the Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) approach can help businesses create value through interaction and collaboration with consumers, leading to improved brand equity and purchase decisions. SDL emphasizes the importance of understanding consumer needs and working together to enhance customer experiences, ultimately driving better marketing outcomes.

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