

The Impact of Brand Authenticity on Consumer Purchase Decisions in Digital Marketplaces: The Role of Brand Trust as a Mediator

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: This study aims to investigate how brand authenticity influences purchase decisions and its effect on brand trust within the digital marketplace. In addition, the research seeks to determine whether brand trust serves as a mediating factor in the relationship between brand authenticity and purchase decisions.

Methodology: A quantitative research design was employed through a survey approach, gathering responses from 267 Indonesian consumers who had previously made purchases via digital platforms. The study used a purposive sampling technique, ensuring that participants met specific criteria relevant to the research focus. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to test both direct and indirect effects among the study constructs.

Findings: The analysis revealed that brand authenticity has a significant positive effect on purchase decisions, reflected by a path coefficient of 0.995. Moreover, brand authenticity exerts a strong influence on brand trust (path coefficient = 0.863). While brand trust also positively impacts purchase decisions, its effect is comparatively smaller (path coefficient = 0.131). The mediation test further shows that brand trust partially mediates the link between brand authenticity and purchase decisions.

Conclusion: This study shows how being genuine with a brand authenticity in building customer trust and encouraging purchase decisions in the digital marketplace. The findings suggest that marketers should prioritize authenticity-driven branding strategies to reinforce consumer trust, promote brand loyalty, and enhance purchasing outcomes in competitive online environments.

Keywords: Brand authenticity; Brand Trust; Purchase Decision; Digital Marketplace

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INTRODUCTION

Because global competition is getting tougher and the digital world is changing quickly, today's customers care about more than just how good a product is. They also want brands to be honest, open, and real. In today's fast-moving online market, being genuine is very important for building trust and keeping customers loyal (Chalirafi et al., 2021; Dwivedi et al., 2021, 2023; Munandar et al., 2022). This concept has become increasingly important in marketing, especially within highly competitive online environments. Brand authenticity refers to consumers' perception of a brand's genuineness, credibility, and transparency in communicating its identity and core values (Bruhn et al., 2012). Previous research has shown that brand authenticity not only directly affects purchase decisions but also plays a crucial role in reinforcing consumer trust in the brand (Margana et al., 2019; Moulard et al., 2016; Safeer et al., 2023). These findings emphasize the significance of understanding how brand authenticity shapes consumer purchasing behavior, particularly in the context of the rapidly evolving digital marketplace.

Brand authenticity in the digital market is increasingly important to consumers, who are now more selective in choosing brands they trust. In many cases, consumers prioritize the values of authenticity and transparency in the brands they choose (Dachi, 2023; Wahyuni & Zulfikar, 2024). This indicates that while brand authenticity significantly influences consumer purchasing decisions, the relationship is not always direct. In many situations, brand trust acts as a mediator, connecting how authentic a brand is perceived to how likely consumers are to make a purchase. If customers believe a brand is genuine, their confidence in that brand usually grows, which in turn makes them more ready to buy (Bruhn et al., 2012; Fritz et al., 2017).

In any case, in spite of numerous considers examining the impact of brand authenticity on acquiring choices, there's still a theoretical gap that has to be filled regarding how brand believe capacities as a go between within the relationship between brand authenticity and obtaining choices within the advanced advertise (Nabih & Alhosseiny, 2024; Tsalakanidou et al., 2021). Research has found that trust in a brand is very important in the connection between how genuine a brand seems and how loyal customers are to it. It also affects what customers choose to buy. But there aren't many studies that look closely at how brand trust works as a middle step, or mediator, in the online shopping world. Because of this, this study tries to address that lack and add something new to what is already known (Panyekar, 2024).

In light of the previously mentioned discourses, it is pivotal for businesses to recognize that cultivating brand authenticity isn't a standalone methodology but portion of a broader approach to building long-term customer connections (Abed et al., 2016; Walter et al., 2024). With consumers becoming increasingly skeptical and discerning in the digital era, brands must engage in consistent, transparent, and value-driven communication to reinforce their authenticity. This not only enhances brand trust but also encourages emotional connections that influence consumer behavior. Hence, by understanding the perplexing exchange between brand authenticity, brand believe, and acquiring choices, businesses can create more compelling branding procedures that reverberate with present day buyers and guarantee maintainable competitive advantage within the digital marketplace (Abed et al., 2016; Fernandes et al., 2024).

This study is particularly relevant because it provides meaningful insights into how brand authenticity, brand trust, and purchasing decisions interact within the dynamic landscape of the digital marketplace (Dwivedi et al., 2021, 2023; Munandar et al., 2022; Nabih & Alhosseiny, 2024;

Panyekar, 2024; Tsalkanidou et al., 2021). Guèvremont (2018) emphasizes the significance of brand authenticity in making a solid relationship between brands and customers, and how this relationship influences purchasing decisions. As the advanced advertise proceeds to develop, marketers got to be more vital in planning approaches that can improve brand believe and use brand authenticity to make strides acquiring choices.

This study shows how important brand authenticity is for building trust with consumers and influencing what they buy in the online world. It looks at how brand authenticity affects buying choices, both directly and through trust in the brand. The research also explains how trust plays a role in how people make decisions and how it connects authenticity to buying behavior in online shopping. Through this investigation, the study adds to the existing body of knowledge on digital consumer behavior and offers strategic insights for marketers seeking to enhance brand credibility, encourage long-term loyalty, and improve purchasing outcomes in an increasingly competitive online landscape.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand authenticity and Its Role in Shaping Consumer Perception

Brand authenticity has gotten to be a basic calculate in forming buyer recognition and behavior, particularly in exceedingly competitive and digital-driven marketplaces. Characterized as the degree to which a brand is seen as honest to goodness, steady, and adjusted with its expressed values, brand authenticity cultivates passionate associations that impact believe and dependability (Lusianti et al., 2024; Morhart et al., 2013). These emotional bonds reinforce the idea that authenticity is more than just a branding tactic—it plays a central role in the long-term consumer-brand relationship.

One of the most significant outcomes of brand authenticity is its ability to enhance brand trust, which functions as a crucial link between consumers' perceptions and behavioral responses such as purchase intentions. Authentic traits such as integrity and credibility have been shown to enhance emotional attachment, which in turn boosts trust in the brand (Morhart et al., 2013). It was found that authenticity enhances brand equity by increasing brand awareness and strengthening consumer confidence (Panyekar, 2024). Additionally, perceived authenticity increases the perceived value of the brand, making consumers more inclined to engage with and purchase from it (Oh et al., 2019).

The rise of influencer marketing also highlights how authenticity extends beyond the brand itself (Baghel, 2023, 2024; Benevento et al., 2025). Zniva et al. (2023) noted that influencer authenticity can strengthen the perception of brand authenticity, especially when endorsements feel genuine and aligned with the brand's values. In summary, brand authenticity forms the foundation for consumer trust and engagement. To remain competitive and build lasting relationships, brands must prioritize authenticity across their marketing communications and operations, especially in digital contexts where trust is harder to earn but critical for purchase decisions (Safeer et al., 2023).

Brand Trust as a Key Mediator in Consumer Decision-Making

Brand trust may be a vital component in shopper decision-making, particularly as a interfacing calculate between brand authenticity and purchasing behavior. It alludes to consumers' readiness to depend on a brand's unwavering quality and astuteness, which makes a difference

minimize seen dangers and reinforces certainty amid exchanges (Junaidi et al., 2020; Damayanti & Puspita, 2023). In crowded and highly competitive markets, trust often becomes the decisive factor influencing brand preference and loyalty, encouraging consumers to choose brands they consider dependable (Ambarwati et al., 2024).

Trust influences the relationship among satisfaction, loyalty, and purchase intentions. Higher levels of trust tend to lead to stronger consumer commitment and increased likelihood of repeat purchases (Ambarwati et al., 2024). This can be reliable with inquire about appearing that believe is built through cognitive and emotional bonds with a brand, which enhance customer engagement and the willingness to recommend the brand to others (P. Becerra & Badrinarayanan, 2013). Trust helps make customers happier and more loyal, showing how important it is for keeping strong, lasting connections between brands and their customers (Başer et al., 2016).

In digital environments and situations involving higher perceived risk, trust provides a sense of assurance that helps simplify consumer choices. When faced with uncertainty—such as in the hospitality or luxury goods sectors—consumers often depend on trust to guide their decisions (Drennan et al., 2015). Furthermore, in online settings where direct interaction is limited, trust becomes even more vital. Emotional attachment built through trust strengthens consumers' intentions to interact with and purchase from brands in digital spaces (Shabbir et al., 2016). As a result, cultivating trust through consistent messaging, transparent practices, and reliable services is essential for shaping consumer behavior and encouraging brand loyalty.

The Interrelationship Between Brand authenticity, Brand Trust, and Purchase Decisions

The interrelationship between brand authenticity, brand believe, and buy choices has gotten to be a central topic in modern promoting inquire about, reflecting the energetic nature of shopper behavior over both advanced and conventional stages. Brand authenticity—defined as the discernment of a brand being veritable, reliable, and adjusted with its center values—serves as a foundational component in building shopper believe (Chalirafi et al., 2021; Fritz et al., 2017). When a brand's communication and behavior are perceived as congruent with its promises and consumers' personal values, trust is more likely to emerge (Pratomo & Magetsari, 2020). This trust, in turn, plays a critical role in translating positive brand evaluations into actual purchase decisions.

Brand trust often serves as a mediating variable between authenticity and purchase-related outcomes. Empirical studies demonstrate that authenticity significantly contributes to the development of trust, which subsequently enhances loyalty and purchase intent (Beck et al., 2021). In specific contexts such as sustainability, the perceived authenticity of environmental claims fosters green trust, which indirectly drives purchase decisions (Xu et al., 2022). Trust helps reduce perceived risks and uncertainties, thereby making consumers more confident and likely to engage in repeated purchases (Pratomo & Magetsari, 2020). Recent studies also reveal that brand trust play a mediating role between brand authenticity and purchase-related outcomes, particularly in digital marketplaces (Mohanty & Mishra, 2025; Nabih & Alhosseiny, 2024; Rossaliani et al., 2025). This finding underscores that greater perceived authenticity enhances brand trust, which subsequently drives consumers' purchase intentions and decisions in online contexts.

Moreover, authenticity influences consumers' perception of a brand's credibility and reliability, which further strengthens trust and emotional attachment (Fritz et al., 2017). When consumers recognize a brand as authentic, they are more inclined to exhibit higher trust levels, which in turn translate into stronger purchase intentions. Thus, brand trust acts not only as a result

of authenticity but also as a crucial mechanism that facilitates the shift from favorable perceptions to actual buying behavior.

METHOD

Research Design

This study uses a quantitative method called a survey to look at how brand authenticity affects buying choices in the online market. It also looks at how trust in the brand plays a role in this process. The people included in this study are customers in Indonesia who have made online purchases using advanced platforms. The examining strategy utilized is purposive inspecting, selecting respondents who have involvement obtaining items from computerized stages and are commonplace with the brand being considered (Chalirafi et al., 2021; Fajri et al., 2025; Mariana et al., 2018).

Population and Sample

Information was collected through a web survey utilizing Google Shapes. A add up to of 267 substantial reactions were gotten, assembly the set-up criteria, and in this way qualified for advance investigation. The examination strategy utilized is Fractional Slightest Squares Basic Condition Modeling (PLS-SEM) utilizing SmartPLS program (Edeh et al., 2023; Hair et al., 2017; Kinanti & Usman, 2023; Pereira et al., 2024). PLS-SEM was chosen for its capacity to assess models with different inactive builds and recognize intercession impacts viably (Hair et al., 2019; Henseler et al., 2016; Liza & Mariana, 2023; Rahmadhani et al., 2025).

Data Collection

The research utilized a structured questionnaire to measure three key constructs—Brand authenticity (BA), Brand Trust (BT), and Purchase Decision (PD)—using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The instrument was pre-tested with a little pilot gather (n = X) to guarantee clarity and unwavering quality some time recently full dispersion. Participation within the study was deliberate, and reactions were collected namelessly to play down reaction predisposition.

Table 1 Operationalization of Variables

Variable	Definition	Indicators	Scale
Brand authenticity (BA)	Brand authenticity refers to how consumers perceive a brand as being genuine, aligned with its fundamental values, and open in its communication and actions (Morhart et al., 2015).	Value consistency Authenticity Trustworthiness Meaning Commitment	Likert 1–5
Brand Trust (BT)	Brand trust can be defined as the extent to which consumers have confidence in a brand's reliability and integrity to deliver on its commitments and meet their expectations (Delgado-Ballester, 2004).	Honesty Reliability Care Consumer interest Quality	Likert 1–5

Variable	Definition	Indicators	Scale
Purchase Decision (PD)	A purchase decision represents the consumer's process of evaluating, selecting, and buying a product based on their perception of and confidence in the brand (Kotler & Keller, 2016).	Confidence Satisfaction Repurchase intention Brand influence Preference	Likert 1–5

Source: (Data processing, 2025)

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to examine both direct and indirect connections between the variables (Zulkarnaini et al., 2025). The process involved several steps. First, the study checked if the measurements were valid and reliable. Convergent validity was confirmed when all the factor loadings were above 0.7 and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were more than 0.5. Discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell–Larcker criterion to make sure each concept was different from the others (Hair et al., 2012, 2021; Purwanto & Sudargini, 2021; Sarstedt et al., 2022). Composite Reliability (CR) scores higher than 0.7 and Cronbach's Alpha scores above 0.6 showed that the measurements were reliable (M R Ab Hamid et al., 2017).

In order to deal with possible Common Method Bias, Harman's single-factor test was carried out (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Sharma & Lijuan, 2014). The results showed that no one factor explained more than half of the total variation, which suggests that common method bias wasn't a major problem in this study. At last, speculation and intercession testing were carried out. Way coefficients were assessed, with t-values more prominent than 1.96 and p-values less than 0.05 considered factually noteworthy. Intercession examination taken after the methods laid out by Hair et al. (2019) to degree both coordinate and circuitous impacts of Brand authenticity on Buy Choices through Brand Believe.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Validity Test

The validity test is utilized to evaluate how well the pointers for each variable speak to the expecting develop. Construct validity is measured by looking at the stacking values (calculate loadings) of each pointer on its individual build. In the event that the stacking esteem is more prominent than 0.7, the marker is considered substantial since it can successfully speak to the build. Based on the legitimacy test comes about, all markers for the develops of Brand authenticity, Brand Trust, and Purchase Decision have stacking values more prominent than 0.7, showing that these markers are substantial and precisely speak to the builds. The comes about of the legitimacy test can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2 Validity Test Results

Variable	Indicator	Loading Value
Brand authenticity (BA)	B A 1	0.989
	B A 2	0.991
	B A 3	0.994

Variable	Indicator	Loading Value
Brand Trust (BT)	B A 4	0.996
	B A 5	0.983
	B T 1	0.980
	B T 2	0.993
	B T 3	0.996
Purchase Decision (PD)	B T 4	0.988
	B T 5	0.993
	P D 1	0.988
	P D 2	0.991
	P D 3	0.984
	P D 4	0.998
	P D 5	0.986

Source: (Data processing, 2025)

The validity test was conducted to survey how successfully the markers speak to their individual inactive factors. The stacking values show the quality of the relationship between each marker and its comparing inactive variable. Based on the comes about, all the markers appear stacking values more prominent than 0.7, implying tall validity. For Brand authenticity (BA), the indicators (BA1 to BA5) exhibit loading values between 0.983 and 0.996, which reflects strong alignment and consistency with the Brand authenticity construct. Similarly, the indicators for Brand Trust (BT) (BT1 to BT5) have loading values ranging from 0.980 to 0.996, indicating that these indicators effectively measure the Brand Trust construct. Lastly, the indicators for Purchase Decision (PD) (PD1 to PD5) show loading values between 0.984 and 0.998, confirming their validity in measuring Purchase Decision. Since all loading values exceed the threshold of 0.7, it can be concluded that the constructs and their corresponding indicators are both valid and reliable for further analysis.

Reliability Test

The taking after table presents the unwavering quality test comes about for the develops utilized in this think about, to be specific Brand authenticity (BA), Brand Trust (BT), and Purchase Decision (PD). The unwavering quality test incorporates estimations of Cronbach's Alpha, rho_A, Composite Unwavering quality, and Normal Change Extricated (AVE) to evaluate the inner consistency and legitimacy of the develops.

Table 3 Reliability Test Results of Constructs

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Brand authenticity (BA)	0.995	0.995	0.996	0.981
Brand Trust (BT)	0.995	0.995	0.996	0.979
Purchase Decision (PD)	0.995	0.995	0.996	0.980

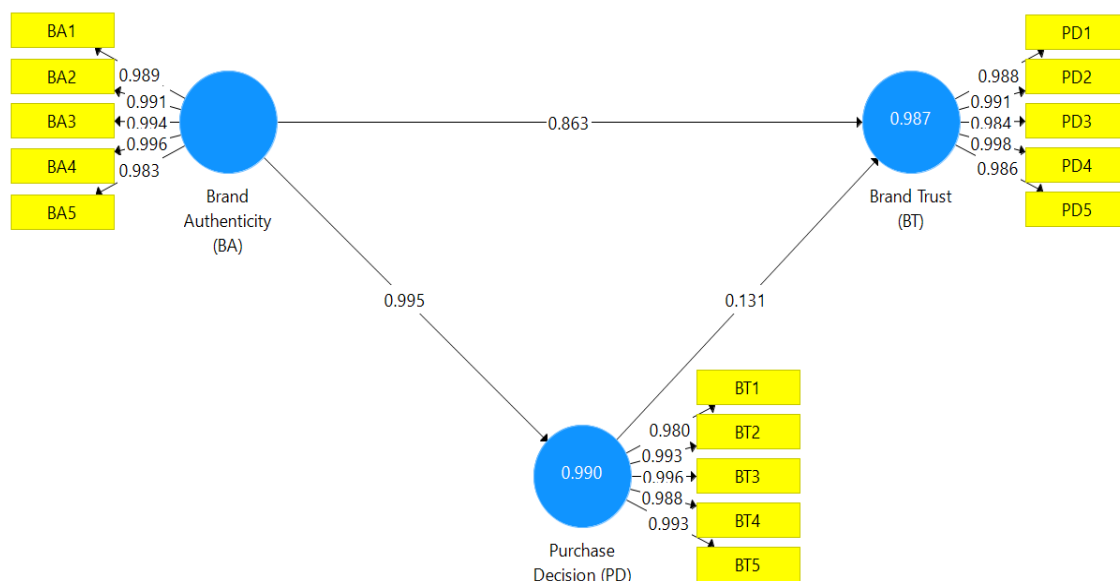
Source: (Data processing, 2025)

The reliability test comes about show that all constructs—Brand authenticity (BA), Brand Trust (BT), and Purchase Decision (PD)—exhibit great inner consistency and unwavering quality, as prove by the Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.995 for each develop. By and large, a Cronbach's Alpha esteem over 0.70 is considered worthy, whereas values surpassing 0.90 reflect exceptionally tall reliability. The rho_A values, which serve as an alternative reliability measure, also show a value of 0.995 for all constructs, confirming their stability. Moreover, the Composite Unwavering quality scores of 0.996 for BA, BT, and PD outperform the standard edge of 0.70, demonstrating that the develops are reliably measured over their pointers. Moreover, the Normal Fluctuation Extricated (AVE) values for BA (0.981), BT (0.979), and PD (0.980) are altogether over the least prescribed esteem of 0.50, illustrating that the develops effectively capture a tall sum of fluctuation from their pointers, subsequently supporting their focalized legitimacy.

Evaluation of the Structural Model (Inner Model)

The evaluation of the basic show (internal show) points to look at the connections between idle builds, specifically Brand authenticity (BA), Brand Trust (BT), and Purchase Decision (PD). The way coefficients demonstrate that Brand authenticity (BA) incorporates a solid positive impact on both Brand Trust (BT) (0.863) and Purchase Decision (PD) (0.995), proposing that higher brand authenticity leads to more prominent believe and more grounded buy choices. In the interim, Brand Trust (BT) moreover emphatically influences purchase decision (PD), in spite of the fact that the impact is moderately weaker (0.131). The R-square values for brand trust (0.987) and Purchase Decision (0.990) illustrate considerable illustrative control, demonstrating that the demonstrate successfully captures the fluctuation in these builds based on the connections modele. Furthermore, the high outer loadings of each indicator confirm strong reliability and validity of the constructs, supporting the robustness of the measurement model. These findings suggest that enhancing brand authenticity can significantly improve both brand trust and consumer purchase decisions.

Figure 1 Evaluation of the Structural Model (Inner Model)



Model Fit Test

The table underneath presents the comes about of the Show Fit Test for the builds Brand Trust (BT) and Purchase Decision (PD), measured using R Square and R Square Adjusted values.

Table 4 Model Fit Test Results

Construct	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Brand Trust (BT)	0.987	0.987
Purchase Decision (PD)	0.990	0.990

Source: (Data processing, 2025)

The R Square values speak to the extent of change within the subordinate factors that's clarified by the autonomous factors within the demonstrate. An R Square esteem of 0.987 for Brand Trust (BT) demonstrates that 98.7% of the changeability in brand believe is clarified by the indicator factors. Similarly, the R Square value of 0.990 for Purchase Decision (PD) shows that 99.0% of the variation in purchase decision is accounted for by the independent constructs, primarily Brand authenticity (BA) and Brand Trust (BT). The R Square Adjusted values are identical to the R Square values in this model (0.987 for BT and 0.990 for PD), suggesting that the model is well-fitted without significant overfitting. This reflects a high level of explanatory power and reliability in predicting the constructs measured in the study.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 5 Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	Description	Result
H1	0.995	Brand authenticity contains a solid positive effect on Purchase Decision.	Supported
H2	0.863	Brand authenticity significantly influences Brand Trust.	Supported
H3	0.131	Brand Trust positively affects Purchase Decision, although the effect is relatively weaker.	Supported
H4	0.131 (Indirect Effect)	The circuitous impact of Brand authenticity on Purchase Decision through Brand Believe is show but humble.	Supported

Source: (Data processing, 2025)

1. H1: Brand authenticity Influences Purchase Decisions in the Digital Marketplace
The analysis shows a very strong and positive connection between brand authenticity and purchase decision, with a path coefficient of 0.995. This result suggests that when consumers perceive a brand as authentic, their likelihood of making a purchase increases significantly. The high coefficient value demonstrates substantial predictive strength, thereby providing empirical support for the first hypothesis.
2. H2: Brand authenticity Influences Brand Trust in the Digital Marketplace
The connection between Brand authenticity (BA) and Brand Trust (BT) has a path coefficient of 0.863, which means that when people feel a brand is authentic, they tend to trust it more. This strong and positive link shows how important brand authenticity is in building consumer trust and backs up the second hypothesis with clear evidence.

3. H3: Brand Trust influences Purchase Decisions in the digital marketplace.
The path coefficient for Brand Trust (BT) influencing Purchase Decision (PD) is 0.131. Although the impact is positive, it is notably smaller compared to the direct effect of Brand authenticity on Purchase Decision. This implies that while trust does contribute to purchase decisions, its influence is more supportive rather than dominant.
4. H4: Brand Trust is capable of mediating the relationship between Brand authenticity and Purchase Decisions in the Digital Marketplace.
The roundabout impact of Brand authenticity on Purchase Decision through Brand Believe is spoken to by the way coefficient of 0.131. This shows that Brand Trust somewhat intercedes the relationship, strengthening the part of believe as an vital but auxiliary way for impacting consumer purchase choices.

Discussion

Brand authenticity influences Purchase Decisions in the Digital Marketplace

The increasing importance of brand authenticity in influencing purchase decisions within the digital marketplace has become a central focus of recent studies. A significant path coefficient of 0.995 between brand authenticity and purchase decisions underscores a strong and positive influence. This indicates that when consumers perceive a brand as genuine and trustworthy, their willingness to make a purchase substantially increases. Research consistently emphasizes the profound impact of brand authenticity on consumer behavior.

Brand authenticity strengthens consumers' emotional attachment to brands, which, in turn, influences their purchasing decisions. Key elements such as integrity, credibility, and symbolic value play crucial roles in fostering emotional connections, thus increasing the likelihood of consumers choosing those brands (Morhart et al., 2013). Additionally, brand authenticity significantly enhances brand equity by boosting brand awareness and consumer confidence, making it more probable for consumers to favor those brands during their purchase journey (Lusianti et al., 2024).

Previous research also supports this perspective, as consumers who are highly engaged with a brand tend to prioritize authenticity in their evaluations (Deng et al., 2025; Kumar & Kaushik, 2022; Oh et al., 2019; Safeer et al., 2023). The study indicates that these assessments of brand authenticity serve as cognitive anchors that influence positive brand associations and guide purchase decisions (Fritz et al., 2017). Attributes of brand authenticity, such as consistency and longevity, foster trust and loyalty—two critical factors that drive consumer purchasing behavior (Moulard et al., 2016). This is in line with previous research, which shows that brands perceived as genuine or authentic over a long period are better able to withstand negative publicity and maintain strong consumer support (Guèvremont, 2018).

The significance of brand authenticity extends across various brand contexts (Fritz et al., 2017; Schallehn et al., 2014; Södergren, 2021). Athwal & Harris (2018) examine how elements like brand heritage and existential cues influence perceptions of authenticity, which substantially impact consumers' purchasing intentions, even for emerging brands. This underscores the idea that authenticity is not only essential for established brands but also plays a pivotal role in helping new brands gain traction in competitive markets (Athwal & Harris, 2018).

Moreover, brand authenticity enhances 'brand love,' which is strongly linked to increased purchasing decisions (Safeer et al., 2023). This perspective aligns with findings indicating that modern consumers often prioritize authenticity, sometimes even over product quality and price (Weiwei Dong, 2024). These insights suggest that brands emphasizing authenticity are better positioned to meet consumer expectations and drive sales growth.

Overall, the literature consistently establishes that brand authenticity is a critical determinant of consumer purchase decisions in the digital marketplace. From building emotional bonds to reinforcing brand credibility, authenticity drives consumer trust and engagement, ultimately influencing their decision to buy.

In the context of the digital marketplace, the role of brand authenticity becomes even more pronounced due to the growing influence of social media and online brand interactions. Authenticity in digital communication such as transparent messaging, genuine storytelling, and consistent brand behavior across platforms enhances consumer trust and fosters stronger engagement (Rossaliani et al., 2025). Studies show that consumers are more likely to make purchasing decisions when they perceive brands as authentic and humanized in their online presence (Abed et al., 2016; Mohanty & Mishra, 2025). This highlights that authenticity not only serves as a symbolic value but also as a strategic tool for differentiation in increasingly saturated digital markets, where emotional connection and perceived sincerity drive long-term consumer relationships.

Brand authenticity influences Brand Trust in the Digital Marketplace

The relationship between brand authenticity and brand trust encompasses a way coefficient of 0.863, recommending that more noteworthy brand authenticity leads to expanded buyer believe. This significant impact highlights the significance of brand authenticity in building believe, hence approving the moment speculation. The association between brand authenticity and brand believe plays a key part in forming customer behavior within the computerized commercial center. A few thinks about emphasize the critical relationship between these two elements, showing that as consumers' discernment of brand authenticity increments, their believe within the brand rises essentially.

Brand authenticity includes basic traits such as astuteness and consistency, which play an basic part in forming buyer discernments (Halwani & Cherry, 2023; Kumar & Kaushik, 2022). These properties reinforce enthusiastic bonds with the brand and, over time, construct believe, setting the relationship between buyers and brands (Morhart et al., 2013). Similarly, other investigate demonstrates that consumer-based brand authenticity specifically impacts brand believe, recommending that realness may be a foundational component for building believe (Kim et al., 2021). The part of brand believes as a go between is additionally vital, because it appears that shoppers who see a brand as true are more likely to create believe, which at that point leads to expanded brand devotion and positive behavioral eagerly.

The direct influence of brand authenticity on perceived value and brand trust (Hendri & Abror, 2021). This study indicates that higher consumer perceptions of authenticity increase perceived value, which in turn strengthens trust (Cinelli & LeBoeuf, 2020; Hendri & Abror, 2021; Monfort et al., 2025). Other studies also support this relationship by identifying brand trust as a mediator between brand authenticity and brand equity, concluding that authenticity influences

trust, which is vital for building long-term consumer relationships and enhancing brand equity (Lusianti et al., 2024).

Additional research supports this by highlighting how a positive brand environment, characterized by authenticity, directly influences consumer attitudes toward trust and loyalty (Dananjoyo & Udin, 2023). Their study indicates that brands that effectively communicate authenticity are more likely to be trusted and preferred by consumers. Moreover, authenticity enhances expectations of quality, which is intrinsically linked to trust. This suggests that consumers are more inclined to trust brands they perceive as authentic, due to the strong association between authenticity and quality perception (Moulard et al., 2016). This is particularly relevant in today's competitive markets, where consumers are increasingly seeking deeper connections with brands rather than mere transactional relationships.

In the context of digital commerce, the mediating role of brand trust becomes increasingly significant. As consumers navigate online environments with limited physical cues, trust serves as the key mechanism that translates perceptions of authenticity into tangible purchasing actions. Studies have shown that when brands consistently communicate authentic values through digital touchpoints—such as social media transparency, ethical messaging, and reliable service delivery—consumers are more inclined to develop trust that drives both initial and repeat purchases (Dwivedi et al., 2023; Rossaliani et al., 2025). Therefore, within the digital marketplace, brand trust not only mediates the relationship between authenticity and purchase decisions but also functions as a vital psychological bridge that reduces uncertainty and enhances consumer confidence in virtual transactions.

Brand Trust influences Purchase Decisions in the Digital Marketplace

The path coefficient for Brand Trust influencing Purchase Decision is 0.131. Although the impact is positive, it is notably smaller compared to the direct effect of Brand authenticity on Purchase Decision. This implies that while trust does contribute to purchase decisions, its influence is more supportive rather than dominant. The relationship between brand trust and purchase decisions is a crucial component of consumer behavior within the digital marketplace. Research demonstrates that brand trust positively influences purchase decisions, although its impact is generally modest compared to other factors such as brand authenticity, which tends to have a stronger direct effect on purchasing outcomes.

Several studies have examined this relationship. Brand trust significantly affects consumer purchasing decisions, supporting earlier findings that consumer trust in a brand substantially influences product choice (Oktaviani et al., 2022). Additionally, other research shows a notable correlation between brand trust and purchase intention, particularly in the fast-food industry, where product quality and brand promise play a key role (Hung et al., 2023).

Because online buyers cannot physically assess products, they depend heavily on trust as a mechanism for reducing perceived risk and validating the credibility of online sellers. Transparent communication, reliable delivery performance, and consistent brand experiences across digital platforms have been identified as key drivers of online trust that ultimately shape purchase decision. Because online buyers cannot physically assess products, they depend heavily on trust as a mechanism for reducing perceived risk and validating the credibility of online sellers. Transparent communication, reliable delivery performance, and consistent brand experiences across digital

platforms have been identified as key drivers of online trust that ultimately shape purchase decisions (Dwivedi et al., 2023; Rossaliani et al., 2025).

Brand trust acts as a mediator, which helps make the link between how much someone likes a brand and their desire to buy from it stronger, especially when special marketing strategies are used (Patel et al., 2024). Similarly, studies have shown that brand trust significantly influences consumer purchasing decisions, particularly regarding environmentally friendly products, underlining its importance across various market segments (Humairoh et al., 2021). Other research indicates that brand trust influences purchase decisions not only by meeting consumer expectations but also by fostering brand loyalty, which in turn encourages repurchase behavior (Shakuntala & Ramantoko, 2023). This result matches earlier studies that show brand trust helps lower the worry about risks when shopping online, making people more likely to buy something (Abouzeid et al., 2023).

However, despite its significance in the purchasing process, the influence of brand trust is often overshadowed by other factors such as brand authenticity. While brand trust does enhance purchase intention, its impact is moderated by broader elements like brand equity and brand image, which may have a more substantial effect on consumer decision-making (Wu & Wang, 2011). Consumers often rely on trust as a substitute for direct product experience, using it as a psychological assurance when making purchase decisions on digital platforms (Mohanty & Mishra, 2025). Transparent communication, consistent online branding, and positive electronic word-of-mouth are among the key factors that enhance trust in the digital environment (Rossaliani et al., 2025). Therefore, while the statistical impact of brand trust may appear modest, its strategic importance in sustaining consumer confidence and driving repurchase behavior within the digital marketplace remains undeniable.

Brand Trust is Capable of Mediating the Relationship between Brand authenticity and Purchase Decisions in the Digital Marketplace.

The relationship between brand authenticity and buy choices within the advanced commercial center is altogether intervened by brand trust, which plays a significant part in affecting buyer behavior. The backhanded impact of brand authenticity on buy choices through brand believe is spoken to buy a way coefficient of 0.131, showing that brand believe in part intervenes this relationship. This highlights the part of believe as a critical figure impacting buyer buy choices, in spite of the fact that it does not act as a coordinate impact.

Brand authenticity is essential in building brand trust, as it embodies qualities such as consistency, reliability, transparency, and sincerity—characteristics that consumers seek in their interactions with brands (Eggers et al., 2013; Holbrook & Chaudhuri, 2001; Morhart et al., 2013; Napoli et al., 2014). Brand authenticity essentially impacts both brand trust and brand devotion, proposing that when buyers see a brand as true, their believe in that brand increments, which in turn influences their buy choices (Kim et al., 2021). This finding supports the notion that brands focusing on authenticity can build trust, which ultimately enhances purchase intentions.

Encourage investigate gives experimental prove that brand believe acts as a go between between brand authenticity and brand mindfulness. The consider shows that when buyers believe a brand, they are more likely to consider that brand amid their buy decision-making handle (Lusianti et al., 2024). This mediation reinforces the importance of trust in building customer loyalty and influencing purchase behavior. Additionally, emotional responses to a brand,

influenced by perceptions of authenticity, positively impact brand trust, which then affects purchasing behavior. The findings suggest that consumers who view a brand as authentic are more likely to trust and buy from that brand (Huaman-Ramirez et al., 2019). These findings imply that consumers who perceive a brand as authentic tend to develop higher trust and a stronger inclination to buy. In the context of digital marketplaces, where interactions are primarily virtual, trust becomes a decisive factor that bridges the gap between perceived authenticity and actual purchase behavior. Hence, reinforcing authentic communication and transparent digital engagement can further amplify trust-based purchasing outcomes.

Moreover, some studies explain how cognitive connections established through brand authenticity strengthen brand trust, which facilitates consumer engagement and increases purchase intentions (Panyekar, 2024; Papadopoulou et al., 2023; Rose et al., 2016). The research indicates that when consumers feel a high level of trust toward a brand, they are more likely to buy and recommend that brand to others (P. Becerra & Badrinarayanan, 2013). Brand trust also mediates the impact of brand experiences on brand loyalty, indicating how trust connects various elements of brand interaction to purchase decisions. These findings further strengthen the idea that increased brand trust, triggered by perceived authenticity, can significantly influence consumer decision-making processes (Huang, 2017).

CONCLUSIONS

Brand authenticity has a significant influence on purchase decisions in the digital marketplace, evidenced by a substantial path coefficient of 0.995, indicating a strong and positive relationship. Consumers' perceptions of brand genuineness and trust enhance emotional attachment, increase loyalty, and drive purchase decisions. Authenticity not only boosts brand equity but also enables brands to withstand market challenges and negative publicity. Both established and emerging brands can leverage authenticity as a key strategy to build consumer trust and drive sales growth. Additionally, brand authenticity significantly influences brand trust, as demonstrated by a path coefficient of 0.863. This substantial effect confirms the importance of authenticity in fostering consumer trust, validating the second hypothesis. Thus, brand authenticity emerges as a crucial factor in strengthening the relationship between brands and consumers, especially in the increasingly competitive digital market.

While brand trust also positively influences purchase decisions, its effect is relatively modest compared to brand authenticity, with a path coefficient of 0.131. Although brand trust plays a supportive role in enhancing consumer confidence and reducing perceived risks, it is overshadowed by the stronger direct effect of brand authenticity on purchasing outcomes. These findings highlight that while trust is indeed important, building brand authenticity remains critical for maximizing purchase decisions. Furthermore, brand trust's role in reducing perceived risks in online transactions enhances the likelihood of purchase decisions, aligning with previous research that suggests consumers are more inclined to buy from brands they trust due to lower risk perceptions and greater confidence in product quality. Thus, while trust contributes positively to purchase behavior, it serves more as a complementary factor, reinforcing the dominant influence of brand authenticity.

Based on these results, brands should treat authenticity as the primary growth lever and operationalize it through transparent storytelling, verified user-generated evidence, and consistent

delivery on clear promises, while using trust as a complementary risk-reducer. Practically, prioritize investments in proof-points (origin disclosures, third-party audits, behind-the-scenes content), align influencers with core values and proper disclosures, and publicly respond to feedback to compound credibility. In digital channels, A/B test authentic narratives against generic promotions and track lift in conversion, repeat purchase, and complaint rates to ensure execution matches the brand's stated identity. For resilience, prepare a crisis playbook that acknowledges issues, outlines concrete fixes, and reports progress openly—turning transparency into trust. For future work, validate the mediation pathway with behavioral metrics (not just intentions) and test segment differences to refine where authenticity drives the biggest purchasing gains.

In conclusion, this study reinforces the theoretical understanding that **brand authenticity** is a foundational driver of consumer trust and purchase behavior in digital markets. Beyond confirming existing models, it extends the discussion by demonstrating the relative strength of authenticity over trust in shaping purchasing outcomes. Future studies are encouraged to integrate longitudinal or cross-cultural analyses to capture evolving consumer perceptions and validate these findings across diverse digital contexts.

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