

## THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL MARKETING ON BRAND AWARENESS AND PURCHASING BEHAVIOR OF MILLENNIALS IN ISTANBUL

DOI: 10.17261/Pressacademia.2025.1986

PAP- V.21-2025(5)-p.18-21

Nour Alhuda Obeido<sup>1</sup>, Suat Teker<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>Isik University, Graduate School, Executive MBA Program, Istanbul, Turkiye.[24IMBA5004@isik.ed.tr](mailto:24IMBA5004@isik.ed.tr), ORCID: 0009-0006-9823-6709<sup>2</sup>Isik University, Department of Business, Istanbul, Turkiye.[suat.teker@isikun.edu.tr](mailto:suat.teker@isikun.edu.tr), ORCID: 0000-0002-7981-3121

### To cite this document

Teker, S., Obeido, N.A., (2025). The impact of social media and digital marketing on brand awareness and purchasing behavior of millennials in Istanbul. PressAcademia Procedia (PAP), 21, 18-21.

Permanent link to this document: <http://doi.org/10.17261/Pressacademia.2025.1986>

Copyright: Published by PressAcademia and limited licensed re-use rights only.

### ABSTRACT

**Purpose-** This study aims to investigate the impact of social media and digital marketing on brand awareness and purchasing behavior of millennials residing in Istanbul. The research focuses on how digital platforms, particularly social media, influence consumer perceptions, shape buying decisions, and foster brand loyalty among this key demographic.

**Methodology-** A quantitative research approach was utilized, employing a structured online questionnaire distributed among 403 millennials in Istanbul. Data collection was based on validated scales measuring perceived product quality, product perception, brand recall, brand recognition, and purchasing behavior. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and multiple regression analysis through SPSS version 21 to determine the relationship between brand awareness measures and purchasing behavior.

**Findings-** The results reveal that perceived product quality, product perception, brand recall, and brand recognition all have a significant positive impact on the purchasing behavior of millennials. The analysis showed no significant differences in purchasing behavior according to gender, age, or education. The findings highlight that millennials are highly influenced by digital marketing strategies and social media campaigns, which enhance brand awareness and drive purchase decisions.

**Conclusion-** The research concludes that social media and digital marketing play a critical role in shaping brand awareness and influencing the purchasing decisions of millennials. Brands that focus on effective digital marketing strategies and active social media engagement are more likely to increase customer loyalty and boost sales among this demographic. The study suggests that digital marketers should develop creative and targeted content, collaborate with influencers, and leverage data analytics to further enhance engagement with millennials.

**Keywords:** Social media, digital marketing, brand awareness, purchasing behavior, brand recall.

**JEL Codes:** M31, D12, D46

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The dynamic nature of social media and digital marketing has fundamentally reshaped how brands interact with consumers, especially among millennials. As digital platforms become increasingly integrated into daily life, understanding their effect on customer behavior and brand engagement becomes essential. This research explores the influence of social media and digital marketing on brand awareness and purchasing behavior, focusing on millennials in Istanbul.

In recent years, the expansion of digital marketing has transformed traditional marketing strategies, emphasizing the significance of online advertising, content creation, and real-time engagement. Millennials, being the first generation raised in a fully digital environment, exhibit distinct purchasing patterns, prioritizing authenticity, brand values, and personalized experiences. Marketers now target this demographic through tailored digital campaigns, recognizing that social media interactions have a direct impact on brand perception and loyalty.

The study addresses how digital and social media platforms affect brand awareness, consumer perceptions, and purchase decisions. Special emphasis is placed on the case of the renowned Turkish brand Mavi, assessing how digital marketing strategies and social media activities influence millennials' attitudes and buying behavior. By examining the relationships between perceived product quality, product perception, brand recall, and brand recognition, this research provides insights into the evolving landscape of digital consumer behavior.

This introduction sets the stage for a comprehensive analysis of the interplay between digital marketing, social media, and millennial consumer behavior in Istanbul, highlighting the necessity for brands to adapt to emerging trends in digital engagement to remain competitive and relevant.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital technology has significantly transformed marketing and consumer engagement, placing social media and digital marketing strategies at the core of brand-customer interactions. As noted by Kaplan & Haenlein (2010), social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn have revolutionized communication between brands and their audiences, enabling two-way interactions and fostering real-time engagement. The increasing prevalence of digital marketing is closely linked to advancements in technology and consumer digital literacy (Al-Azzam & Al-Mizeed, 2021).

Empirical studies emphasize that digital marketing directly shapes brand awareness and consumer purchasing behavior (Iblasi et al., 2016; Dhore & Godbole, 2019). For millennials, who are considered digital natives, social media usage is integral to their brand experience and decision-making (Erlangga, 2021). Digital marketers target millennials by offering personalized and interactive content, as such strategies have been shown to significantly affect brand engagement and loyalty (Ford & Alwan, 2018; Ariipek, 2023). Social media marketing not only enhances brand recognition and recall but also helps develop trust and long-term consumer relationships (Bernarto et al., 2020; Srivastava et al., 2021).

The main dimensions of brand awareness—perceived product quality, product perception, brand recall, and brand recognition—are critical in shaping purchasing decisions (Xu et al., 2022; Frigenti, 2024). Perceived product quality and brand recognition, in particular, have a strong impact on consumers' willingness to buy and their level of brand loyalty (Toha & Supriyanto, 2023; Diktas & Akgün, 2021). Millennials often value authenticity, social responsibility, and peer recommendations in digital marketing campaigns (Bell et al., 2022; Krishna, 2018).

Despite the wide acknowledgment of digital marketing's effectiveness, some gaps persist in the literature. For instance, there is limited research examining how digital marketing and social media strategies specifically affect millennials living in Istanbul or how Turkish brands like Mavi deploy unique digital tactics (Cukul, 2011; Tokatli & Kizilgun, 2004). Additionally, the interplay between demographic variables and brand awareness within the context of digital marketing remains underexplored (Obilor, 2023).

In summary, the reviewed literature demonstrates the transformative effect of digital and social media marketing on consumer behavior, particularly among millennials. However, there remains a need for more context-specific research focusing on the Turkish market, which this study seeks to address.

## 3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research approach to investigate the impact of social media and digital marketing on brand awareness and purchasing behavior among millennials in Istanbul. The research followed a deductive approach, aiming to test hypotheses derived from the existing literature (Bohk-Ewald et al., 2018).

A structured online questionnaire was developed based on validated measures from previous studies (Al-Azzam & Al-Mizeed, 2021; Srivastava et al., 2021). The survey included items assessing perceived product quality, product perception, brand recall, brand recognition, and purchasing behavior. Participants were asked to respond using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The target population consisted of millennials residing in Istanbul, aged between 26 and 45 years, who actively use social media platforms. The sampling technique employed was non-probability convenience sampling, allowing for the recruitment of 403 participants (Obilor, 2023). Data collection was conducted via an online survey distributed through social media channels.

Collected data were analyzed using SPSS version 21. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation, and multiple regression analyses were performed to examine the relationships among the variables and to test the research hypotheses. The reliability of the measurement scales was confirmed with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding the recommended threshold (Hair et al., 2016).

Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the research process. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, and respondents were informed about the study's objectives and their right to withdraw at any time.

This methodology provides a systematic framework for exploring the effects of digital marketing and social media on the purchasing behavior of Istanbul's millennials, following established procedures in consumer behavior research (Al-Azzam & Al-Mizeed, 2021; Srivastava et al., 2021).

## 4. FINDINGS

The analysis of the collected data from 403 millennial participants in Istanbul revealed several key findings. Descriptive statistics showed that the majority of respondents were aged 26-35 and had at least a graduate-level education. The reliability analysis confirmed the internal consistency of the scales used to measure perceived product quality, product perception, brand recall, brand recognition, and purchasing behavior, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding the accepted threshold.

Correlation analysis indicated a significant and positive relationship between all measures of brand awareness and purchasing behavior. Specifically, perceived product quality, product perception, brand recall, and brand recognition each demonstrated moderate positive correlations with purchase decisions. Multiple regression analysis further established that these variables collectively explained a substantial proportion of the variance in purchasing behavior ( $R^2 = 0.813$ ), and all were found to have a statistically significant positive impact. It was concluded that the consumers' purchasing behavior is highly influenced by the perceived product quality, it is also concluded from the findings of the research that brand recall also has an impact on the purchasing decisions of consumers.

The brands use social media and digital platforms to advertise the products and promote the products effectively on different marketing mediums to retain the brand in the minds of the consumers. In addition to this, the study has found that the gender roles, age factors, and education status of the consumers who are millennials of Istanbul do not impact brand awareness. The study has observed no difference in the brand awareness of consumers belonging to different demographics.

**Table 1: Summary of Correlation Coefficients between Brand Awareness Measures and Purchasing Behavior**

Variable	Correlation with Purchase Decision (PD)	Significance (p-value)
Perceived Product Quality (PPQ)	0.311	<0.001
Product Perception (PP)	0.298	<0.001
Brand Recall (BR)	0.354	<0.001
Brand Recognition (BRG)	0.364	<0.001

Difference tests showed that purchasing behavior did not vary significantly by gender, age, or education level among the participants. This suggests that the impact of social media and digital marketing strategies on brand awareness and purchasing behavior is consistent across different demographic groups within the millennial generation.

**Table 2 Regression Analysis**

Coefficients					
		B	Std. Error	t-value	Sig. value
1	(Constant)	.657	.176	3.736	<.001
	PPQ	.166	.058	2.858	.004
	PP	.071	.052	1.367	.022
	BR	.179	.055	3.223	.001
	BRG	.336	.051	6.562	<.001

Overall, the study has observed no difference in the brand awareness of consumers belonging to different demographics. . The case of Mavi, as examined in this study, confirms the effectiveness of targeted digital campaigns and active social media engagement in shaping consumer attitudes and driving purchase decisions.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This study examined the impact of social media and digital marketing on brand awareness and purchasing behavior among millennials in Istanbul, using the Mavi brand as a case study. The analysis revealed that key measures of brand awareness—perceived product quality, product perception, brand recall, and brand recognition—each have a significant positive effect on millennials' purchasing decisions. Among these, brand recognition and recall were found to be particularly influential.

The findings also indicated that demographic factors such as gender, age, and education level did not lead to significant differences in purchasing behavior. This suggests that digital marketing and social media strategies are effective across all segments of the millennial population.

Overall, the research confirms that well-designed digital marketing campaigns and active social media engagement can enhance brand awareness and strongly influence purchasing behavior among millennials. Brands seeking to increase their market share and customer loyalty should focus on developing creative and targeted digital content, leveraging influencer partnerships, and using data analytics to better understand and engage this key demographic.

## REFERENCES

- Al-Azzam, A.F. ve Al-Mizeed, K. (2021). The effect of digital marketing on purchasing decisions: A case study in Jordan. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 8(5), 455-463.
- Ariipek, T. (2023). Relationship Between Brand Awareness Levels, Brand Loyalty Behaviors, Brand Function Perceptions, Factors Influencing Brand Loyalty, and Preferred Criteria in Product Purchasing Among Secondary School Students Engaged in Sports. *Journal of Education and Recreation Patterns*, 4(2), 431-446.
- Bell, E., Bryman, A. ve Harley, B. (2022). *Business research methods*. Oxford University Press.
- Bernarto, I., Berlianto, M.P., Meilani, Y.F.C.P., Masman, R.R. ve Suryawan, I.N. (2020). The influence of brand awareness, brand image, and brand trust on brand loyalty. *Jurnal Manajemen*, 24(3), 412-426.
- Bohk-Ewald, C., Li, P. ve Myrskylä, M. (2018). Forecast accuracy hardly improves with method complexity when completing cohort fertility. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 115(37), 9187-9192.
- Cukul, D. (2011). Social media as a tool for fashion marketing: Success of Mavi Jeans. *Akdeniz Sanat*, 4(8).
- Dhore, A. ve Godbole, S. (2019). A Descriptive Study of the Effectiveness of Internet Advertising on Consumer Buying Behavior in Nagpur City. *SSRN Electronic Journal*.

- Diktas, M. ve Akgün, V.Ö. (2021). The Relationship Between Logo Changes and Brand Equity in Creating Brand Awareness. In *Eurasian Business Perspectives: Proceedings of the 29th Eurasia Business and Economics Society Conference* (s. 265-277). Springer International Publishing.
- Erlangga, H. (2021). Effect of digital marketing and social media on purchase intention of Smes food products. *Turkish Journal of Computer and Mathematics Education (TURCOMAT)*, 12(3), 3672-3678.
- Ford, A.J. ve Alwan, N.A. (2018). Use of social networking sites and women's decision to receive vaccinations during pregnancy: a cross-sectional study in the UK. *Vaccine*, 36(35), 5294-5303.
- Frigenti, P.P. (2024). The Behavior of the Digital Consumer. In *Digital Marketing* (s. 38-63). CRC Press.
- Hair, J., Page, M. ve Brunsveld, N. (2019). *Essentials of business research methods*. Routledge.
- Iblasi, W., Bader, D. ve ALqurini, S. (2016). The Impact of Social Media as a Marketing Tool on Purchasing Decisions. *International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research*, 4(1), 14-28.
- Kaplan, A.M. ve Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), 59-68.
- Krishna, K. (2018). Influence of digital marketing on consumer purchase behavior. *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development*, 3(1), 839-842.
- Obilor, E.I. (2023). Convenience and purposive sampling techniques: Are they the same? *International Journal of Innovative Social & Science Education Research*, 11(1), 1-7.
- Srivastava, R., Rathore, J.S. ve Singh, H. (2021). An empirical study on channel attributes of online and offline channels based on the Engel-Kollat-Blackwell (EKB) model. *World Review of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development*, 17(6), 864-882.
- Toha, M. ve Supriyanto, S. (2023). Factors Influencing The Consumer Research Process: Market Target, Purchasing Behavior and Market Demand (Literature Review Of Consumer Behavior). *Danadyaksa: Post Modern Economy Journal*, 1(1), 1-17.
- Tokatli, N. ve Kizilgun, Ö. (2004). Upgrading in the global clothing industry: Mavi jeans and the transformation of a Turkish firm from full-package to brand-name manufacturing and retailing. *Economic Geography*, 80(3), 221-240.
- Xu, Z., Zhu, G., Metawa, N. ve Zhou, Q. (2022). Machine learning-based customer meta-combination brand equity analysis for marketing behavior evaluation. *Information Processing & Management*, 59(1), 102800.