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## Analyzing the Impact of Social Media Marketing, Word of Mouth and Price Perception on Customer Behavioral Intentions through Perceived Interaction

Hamed Ghorban Tanhaei<sup>1</sup>, Payam Boozary<sup>1</sup> and Sogand Sheykhan<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Management, Science and Technology, Amir Kabir University of Technology.

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### Address for Correspondence:

Payam Boozary, Amir Kabir University of Technology, No 350, Hafez Ave, P.O.Box: 1591634311, Tehran, Iran. ([payam.boozary@aut.ac.ir](mailto:payam.boozary@aut.ac.ir))

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### Abstract

The increase in the audience of the Internet caused the owners of goods and service providers to think about marketing on the Internet, and one of the most important of them is social media marketing. The research aims to Analyzing the impact of social media marketing, word of mouth and price perception on customer behavioral intentions through perceived interaction. This research is quantitative and in terms of survey method and data measurement method is through questionnaire. The random sampling method was simple and in terms of the structural equation approach, it is based on Lisrel software. The statistical sample included 357 respondents and the results showed that there is a relationship between social media marketing and word-of-mouth advertising with perceived interaction. But the relationship between perceived price and perceived interaction was not significant. Also, the relationship between perceived interaction and customer's behavioral intentions was positively significant.

### Keywords

Social Media Marketing, Word of Mouth Advertising, Price Perception, Customer Behavioral Intentions, Perceived Interaction

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## 1. Introduction

Behavioral intentions indicate whether a customer will continue to use a company's services or switch to another provider (Zhongqing, Shuai, Shizheng, & Luting, 2019). Therefore, with a better understanding of customer behavior, marketers and managers can prepare themselves to find appropriate marketing strategies and adapt their products and services to attract new customers and retain existing customers (Lai & Chen, 2011). Considerable research shows that when behavioral intentions are properly measured, they predict many customer behaviors. In this context, the theory of rational action assumes a causal chain of attitudes, intentions and behavior (Baker & Crompton, 2000). According to this theory, attitudes create a positive or negative intention about action, and the intention to act determines actual behavior. For example, a more positive attitude about a supplier is more likely to lead to repeat purchases. The theory of reasoned action assumes that behavior is predictable through intentions that directly lead to behavior (Ajzen & Fishben, 1980). Customers often form their attitude to purchase based on previous experiences. They also create a cognitive decision-making process about whether to continue using a company's services or not (Ryu, Han, & Kim, 2008).

One of the concepts that can influence behavioral intentions in customers is social media marketing. Social media are a new generation of web features that are in the focus of internet users' attention today (Mittelman & José Rojas-Méndez, 2018). Such sites operate based on the formation of online communities, and each one brings together a handful of Internet users who have common interests or characteristics. Such media are actually a type of social media that have enabled a new way of communicating and sharing information on the Internet. Hundreds of millions of internet users are members of hundreds of different social media and part of their daily online activity is spent on these sites (Zaremozhzabieh, Ahrari, & Steven, 2019). Social media is made up of people or organizations, each of them is present as a person or group in this media and can have direct or indirect connection with other people and groups. These media have been used by many users due to the abundance and variety of content and numerous software and internet capabilities. Social media marketing is an attempt to use social media to persuade a company's consumers to use valuable products or services. The main problem in social media marketing is the business perspective. Social media marketing is extremely time-consuming and the competition in it is expanding and developing over time (Azami & Aineh, 2019).

Word-of-mouth marketing is valuable to businesses and customers alike. This is because buyers invest in the opinions and experiences of the people they trust (Haudi, Rahadjeng, Santamoko, & Putra, 2022). It has shown the importance of word-of-mouth advertising in the formation of attitudes, in the field of purchasing decisions, as well as in reducing the risk associated with customers' purchasing decisions (Yuliantoro, Goeltom, Juliana, & Pramo, 2019). Recently, they use positive word-of-mouth advertising as a very powerful tool in promoting product sales, so that unknown and unknown products quickly become famous. Many marketers have also paid attention to positive word-of-mouth advertising as one of the oldest forms of marketing communication. In many situations, it can be one of the most powerful forms of communication, especially when it comes from someone we know and trust. People receive information from their surroundings, from mass media and through their transactions with others (Savitri, Hurriyat, Wibowo, & Hendraya, 2022).

Price perception from the consumer's point of view is the amount of money they spend to obtain a product or service (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). Many customers consider price as a sign and reflection of the usual quality of products and services. In fact, price is easier to see than quality. Brands that have a high special value in the eyes of customers can demand higher prices for their products and services (Kim & Park, 2010). In addition, consumers show a more balanced reaction to price increases, and in other words, they have a lower price elasticity. Instead, they react faster and more positively in exchange for price reductions or offers discounts, and they have a higher elasticity in exchange for price reductions. Research has shown that consumers who are loyal to a brand are less likely to change their choice and tend to other brands when prices increase, and increase the volume of their purchases when prices decrease. In other words, in the field of competition, leading brands gain more share than their nameless competitors (Hariani & Sinambela, 2020).

A factor that can affect the behavioral intention of buyers is the perceived interaction between the market and the buyer or consumer. Customer interaction is actually the relationship established between a brand and a customer. Prior to this interaction with customers was limited by the presence between a customer and a salesperson or representative who supported it (Zubaidullina, 2017). Currently, the same technologies that give buyers the ability to purchase products and services online with their mobile phones, computers, or other devices, allow them to talk or exchange information with their representatives. In addition, these connections are far beyond the limitations of a

store or e-commerce site. On the other hand, customers can easily communicate with different companies through communication channels such as internet groups, social media, even live chat or email (Gabdullina, 2012). According to the past literature, the researchers in this article want to check whether buyers in Iran often use social media for shopping and whether these consumers use price invoices or word-of-mouth advertising to buy goods such as branded clothes. Considering that in Iran, LC Waikiki products have many fans and also there are fewer researches dealing with the subject of this research, so it seems necessary to conduct this research.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Theoretical and Conceptual Background**

#### **2.1.1 Social media marketing**

Recently, social media has been widely recognized as a popular contemporary tool in marketing. A company can achieve success by using a fan page on social media and maintain a positive customer (consumer) relationship with the brand by offering special benefits to members who are liked on their social media page (Tafesse & Wien., 2018a). Accordingly, brands should focus on marketing through social media. Based on the current trend, social media is increasingly accepted as a space for direct interaction with customers and faster interaction, information sharing and customer participation. The process of customer participation in the online environment includes searching and collecting information about brand services and products, and word of mouth advertising activities for a brand (Sedalo, Boateng, & Basewe, 2021). Therefore, social media marketing helps to create a free exchange of ideas and information among consumers and also allows them to establish two-way communication with business brands. This helps to reduce the consumer's prejudice against commercial brands, and as a result, the brand equity increases. Social media marketing is the use of tools such as brand journalism to increase traffic or website input or gain attention to an issue through social media. Social media marketing programs are usually focused on trying to create content that can capture the attention of audiences on those platforms and encourage readers to share it across social media (Trattner & Kappe, 2013).

#### **2.1.2 Word of mouth advertising**

Word of mouth marketing is growing very fast. Word-of-mouth marketing is one of the common marketing and advertising tools whose effectiveness is also seen in service marketing. In fact, word-of-mouth marketing is an activity that guides other customers by giving information about one customer (Gildin, 2022). Word-of-mouth marketing is providing motivation and a reason to people in the community to talk about the company's services and products (Prahawan, Juliana, & Purba, 2021). The only type of marketing that is based on what the customer really thinks about the company's brand is word-of-mouth marketing. This marketing is more honest and noble than other types of marketing, in fact, it tries to satisfy people by satisfying their needs in order to share their experiences with family, friends and society is the existential philosophy of this type of marketing (Praharjo & Kusumawati, 2016). Also, word of mouth is communication about products and services among people who are considered independent of the company supplying the product or service. These communications can take the form of conversations or one-way testimonies; But the essential element is their occurrence among people who have received little commercial interest in persuading another person to use the product and therefore lack a specific incentive to change reality in favor of the product or service. Word of mouth is thousands of times more powerful than conventional marketing; Because word of mouth marketing basically uses the traditional marketing technique to talk positively about the service (Ponggeng & Mulia, 2020).

#### **2.1.3 Price perception**

Price perception generally refers to the value of money (monetary) and sacrifice (non-monetary) given by customers to get a product (Petrick, 2004). Price becomes the extrinsic cue of consumers in forming a prominent aspect of 'monetary value. Price perception can also describe a customer's emotional experience to get a product, that could be a positive or negative signal to behave (Lichtenstein, Ridgway, & Netemeyer, 1993). The pricing strategy of the organization affects the consumers' attitude about the brand and thus shapes their thinking about the flexibility of product prices based on the number of discounts and repetition of auction seasons (Yoon, Oh, Song, Kim, & Kim, 2014). Consumers often rank brands based on the product price levels in their minds. In fact, the price is an important factor affecting the buyer's decision. Many economists believe that consumers are price sensitive and simply accept the offered prices and give in. Despite this, according to Keller, consumers often actively seek product

price information based on their knowledge from past purchase experiences, formal communication methods (such as corporate advertising activities), informal communication such as information from friends or family members, or business information. processed and interpreted from the Internet or at the moment of purchase. Consumer purchase decisions are based on their perception of product price, not the value stated by sellers or marketers (Keller, 1993).

#### 2.1.4 Customer behavioral intentions

In the research of Zeitamel et al. (1996), a model of behavioral intentions was presented in which repurchase intention, word of mouth, loyalty, complaint behavior and price sensitivity can be observed. Most of the time, service quality stimulates favorable behavioral intentions. On the other hand, if the quality of service is low, adverse intentions are achieved. He classified behavioral intentions into two appropriate and inappropriate categories. Appropriate behavioral intentions are the same as conventional loyalty, which includes positive word of mouth, premium payment, more money with the company, and loyalty (Chen and Chen, 2010). In past researches, behavioral intentions can be proposed with 3 variables: intention to return, willingness to recommend, and word of mouth. In the research of Wayan et al. (2019), it was found that customer experience is related to intentions. The more positive a customer's experience is, the more likely they are to use the service again. Favorable intentions often indicate habitual customer loyalty. One of the most important goals in the consumer marketing community is customer loyalty. Identifying loyalty can provide us with better customer retention results. It usually costs less to keep a customer than to find a new one. Also, loyal customers usually offer a product to relatives, friends and other customers by word of mouth and for free. (Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999).

#### 2.1.5 Perceived interaction

In order to understand the roles of customers in the process of production and service provision, one must first deal with customer interactions in services (Medlin, 2003). In general, three types of interactions can be imagined for customers in the service delivery process, which include the customer's interaction with the service provider, the customer's interaction with the service environment, and the customer's interaction with other customers. In order to understand the roles of customers in the process of production and service provision, one must first deal with customer interactions in services (Vinoski, 2002). In general, three types of interactions can be imagined for customers in the service delivery process, which include the customer's interaction with the service provider, the customer's interaction with the service environment, and the customer's interaction with other customers:

**Customer with the service provider:** The customer in the interaction with the service provider is considered as a productive partner in the service encounter. In this confrontation, the roles of each of the actors are determined in such a way that they know when to participate in the service interaction scene. In this role, the information provided by the customer affects the quality of the services received and subsequently, his satisfaction (Turner, 1988).

**Customer with the service environment:** The service environment refers to the physical characteristics of the environment, such as music, scent, interior design, environment lighting and the number of employees who can influence the behavior of customers. In general, researchers have confirmed the opinion that more pleasant spaces lead to a greater tendency to stay in the environment and increase the number of purchases (Turner, 1988).

**Customer to customer:** Many services are performed in the presence of other customers. Therefore, the influence of other customers' behavior on the satisfaction/dissatisfaction of the experienced services is inevitable. The importance of customer interactions is to the extent that it has been programmed in some services and is a complementary part of the service experience (Turner, 1988).

A summary of some of the researches conducted in relation to the research topic is given in Table 1.

**Table 1: Summary of Literature Review**

Author (Date)	Subject	Variables	Methods	Findings
YM Tang, Y Lau, UL Ho (2023)	Empowering Digital Marketing with Interactive Virtual Reality (IVR) in Interior Design:	Digital Marketing, Interactive Virtual Reality, Customer Satisfaction, Behavior Intention	Regression Model	Relatively little work has been done to determine customer perceptions of a digital marketing approach using virtual interior design and its

	Effects on Customer Satisfaction and Behaviour Intention			interactive features.
B Pranata, HB Winarko (2023)	Social Media Marketing in Shaping Behavioral Intentions	Social Media Marketing, Behavioral Intentions	Regression Model	The research findings indicate that this men's facial skincare product exhibits a distinct treatment approach, differing in terms of the habits and strategies employed by the brand compared to the skincare marketing targeted towards women
MA Bushara, AH Abdou, TH Hassan, AEE Sobaih , et al., (2023)	Power of Social Media Marketing: How Perceived Value Mediates the Impact on Restaurant Followers' Purchase Intention, Willingness to Pay a Premium Price, and E-WoM?	Social Media Marketing, Perceived Value, Purchase Intention, E-WoM	Regression Model	This research provides restaurant operators and marketers with valuable insights into how SMMAs influence followers' behavioral intentions and enhances their understanding of how perceived value can be utilized to capitalize on the benefits of social media
Chih, et al., (2022)	Antecedents and consequences of new technology application behavior on word of mouth: The moderating roles of perceived interactivity	behavior on word of mouth, perceived interactivity	Regression Model	The multiple mediation results show that expectancy may indirectly influence WOM through motivation, perceived values, and behavioral intention

Source: Authors

From the various studies above, the research model is presented as follows in Figure 1.

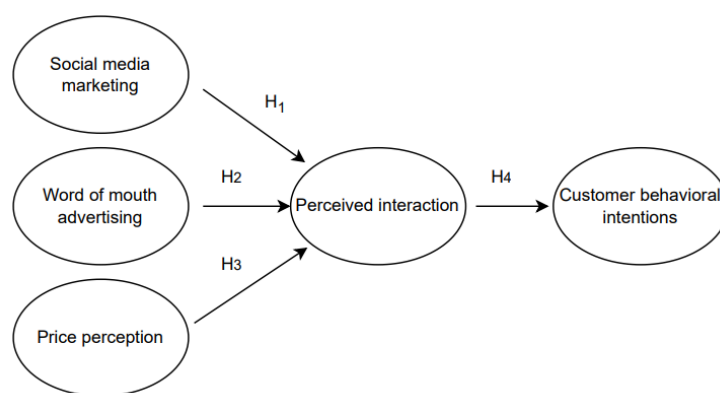


Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Study; Source: Authors

From the research model in figure 1, several research hypotheses were developed:

- H1: Social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on Perceived interaction
- H2: Word of mouth advertising has a positive and significant effect on Perceived interaction
- H3: Price perception has a positive and significant effect on Perceived interaction
- H4: Perceived interaction has a positive and significant effect on Customer behavioral intentions

### 3. Research and Methodology

The method of this research is quantitative and it is descriptive and correlational. The sampling method was also targeted and the respondents were those who bought LC Waikiki products. A questionnaire was used to collect research data. These data were conducted from October 2023 to December 2023. The questionnaire included 2 parts, in the first part, gender, age, education and expenses were asked from the statistical sample. In the second part of the lot related to the test of the research model, the data was analyzed using the structural equation model and with the help of Lisrel software. The goodness of fit criteria of the model are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Goodness of model fit criteria

Criteria	Value
CMIN / df	2-5
GFI	> 0,9
AGFI	> 0,9
RMSEA	< 0,08

Sources: (Hair et al., 2014)

### 4. Findings and Discussions

#### 4.1 Respondent Profile

The results of the questionnaires completed by 357 respondents who were completed in Google form are given.

Table 3: Respondent Profile

Description	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	168	52.9
	Female	189	47.1
Age	< 20 years old	60	16.8
	20-30 years old	135	37.8
	31-40 years old	46	12.9
	> 40 years old	116	32.5
Education	Student	39	10.9
	Diploma or associate degree	96	26.9
	Masters	150	42
	Other	72	20.2
Income	Up to IRR 500 million /month	30	8.4
	> IRR 200-500 million /month	120	33.6
	> IRR 100-200 million /month	126	35.3
	< IRR 100 million /month	81	22.7
Purchase method	Online	93	26.1
	In person	105	29.5
	Both	159	44.4

As can be seen, most of the female respondents were between 20 and 30 years old, and the income of most of them was between 100 and 200 million Rials per month, and their purchasing method was both in person and online (both).

#### 4.1.1 Hypothesis Testing Result

The results of the model test in this research with the help of Lisrel software are shown in the figure below:

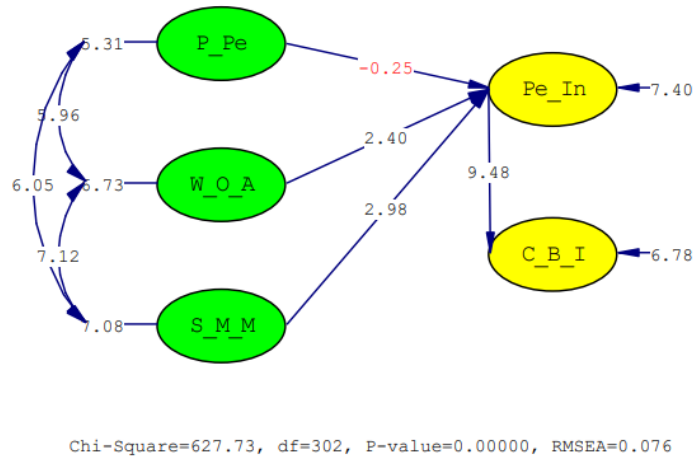


Figure 2: The research model (T\_value)

Also, the results of goodness of fit of the model are shown in the table below:

**Table 4: Goodness of Fit Criteria**

Criteria	Value	Note
CMIN / df	2.079	Fit
GFI	0.813	Marginal
AGFI	0.821	Fit
RMSEA	0.076	Fit

The results in the table below were analyzed with the help of Lisrel software and these results show that CMIN/DF is 2.079, RMSEA 0.076, GFI 0.813, and AGFI 0.821. It can also be concluded that the obtained results are acceptable and the model has a good fit, so the hypotheses can be tested with the relationships between the variables of the model.

In this research, the t-value method was used to test hypotheses, which was equal to 1.96. If the factor load values are more than 1.96 in the statistical model of the research, the hypotheses will be accepted and otherwise the hypotheses will be rejected.

**Table 5: "T value" values in the model**

Hypothesis	T_Value	Note
Social media marketing → Perceived interaction	2.98	Significant
Word of mouth advertising → Perceived interaction	2.40	Significant
Price perception → Perceived interaction	-0.25	Not Significant
Perceived interaction → Customer behavioral intentions	9.48	Significant

From the results of the research, we can see that one of the research hypotheses was confirmed and one hypothesis was rejected.

Considering that hypothesis one was accepted, therefore, there is a significant relationship between social media marketing and perceived interaction, and its factor load was 2.98 in a significant state, and because it was more than 1.96, this hypothesis was accepted. This result shows that when buyers use social media marketing to learn about products, there is an acceptable interaction between them and the products, which increases their perceived



interaction with the product. This result is consistent with the research results of Parshara et al. (2023) and Ajina (2019).

On the other hand, in the relationship between word-of-mouth advertising and perceived interaction, the factor load was significant at 2.40, and because it was more than 1.96, this hypothesis was accepted. When buyers of LC Waikiki products share their shopping experience with others, this increases their perceived engagement with these products and, as a result, shows a willingness to purchase. Exploratory Rahman et al., (2015) study demonstrates that WOM has a positive impact both on customers' emotional reaction in the service context and on brand perceptions.

Also, in the third hypothesis, the relationship between price perception and perceived interaction was significantly less than 1.96, so this hypothesis was not confirmed. This result is probably because the LC Waikiki brand is a foreign brand and the buyers do not have a correct understanding of the price of this brand's products, which makes them unable to make a proper interaction with the price of these products.

The fourth hypothesis was also accepted because the factor loading between perceived interaction and customer behavioral intentions was 9.48 in a significant state. The research results of Liang and Zhang (2012) showed that interaction orientation positively affects behavioral intentions in people who eat regularly. Also, the results of research of Jahng Jain and Ramamurthy (2007) show that interaction richness has positive impact on consumers' attitude towards business-to-consumer electronic-commerce.

## 5. Conclusions

The results of the research showed that most of the female respondents were between 20 and 30 years old, and their income was between 100 and 200 million Rials per month, and most of them shopped in person and online per month. From hypotheses testing results, the relationship between social media marketing and word of mouth with perceived engagement is significant. But the relationship between perceived price and perceived interaction was not significant. Also, the relationship between perceived interaction and customer's behavioral intentions was positively significant.

According to the results of the research, it is suggested that advertising activities in LC Waikiki company should be managed well and their quality should be improved through social media marketing. Also, since many consumers have access to digital media, digital marketing platforms should be expanded. On the other hand, LC Waikiki Company should manage the product pricing policy according to the price offered by the competitors and periodically measure the opinions of the customers and make sure that these products are affordable from the point of view of the buyers. LC Waikiki Company should help create word of mouth advertising by creating special conditions and various discounts for its products to increase interaction between customers and improve their buying behavior. It is also suggested for future researchers to analyze new independent variables that can be effective on behavioral goals. The side of the questionnaire should be short, clear and understandable.

**Conflict of Interest:** None declared.

**Ethical Approval:** Not applicable.

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