TYPE Original Research
PUBLISHED August 27, 2025
DOI 10.53905/Gimer.v1i03.24

INSPIRETECH GLOBAL INSIGHT
GIMER: Global Insights in Management and Economic Research

OPEN ACCESS

EDITED BY
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RECEIVED: July 2, 2025
ACCEPTED: August 22, 2025
PUBLISHED: August 27, 2025

CITATION
Nurzulia, D., Butar-Butar, D. F. F. D., & Fransiskus, R. (2025). Integrating Price Sensitivity and Social Media Marketing to Predict Consumer Purchase Decisions in Tourism Packages. *Global Insights in Management and Economic Research*, 1(3), 153-160. https://doi.org/10.53905/Gimer.v1i03.24

Integrating Price Sensitivity and Social Media Marketing to Predict Consumer Purchase Decisions in Tourism Packages

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: This study investigates the impact of price sensitivity and social media marketing strategies on consumer purchase decisions for holiday packages in the Indonesian tourism sector, specifically examining PT Bangben Group Indonesia's operations.

Materials and methods: A quantitative research design was employed with a population of 417 holiday package consumers during 2024. Using Slovin's formula, 81 respondents were selected through random sampling. Data collection utilized structured questionnaires measured on a 5-point Likert scale. Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted using SPSS version 22 to examine relationships between variables: price (X_1), social media marketing (X_2), and purchase decisions (Y). Validity testing employed Pearson correlation ($r > 0.218$), while reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha > 0.60$).

Results: The regression model $Y = 6.888 + 0.764X_1 + 0.635X_2 + e$ demonstrated that both price and social media marketing significantly influence purchase decisions. Price showed positive significant effect ($t = 3.616 > t\text{-table } 1.991$, $p = 0.001$), as did social media marketing ($t = 4.402 > t\text{-table } 1.991$, $p = 0.000$). The simultaneous effect was confirmed ($F = 52.730 > F\text{-table } 3.11$, $p = 0.000$). The adjusted R^2 of 0.564 indicates that 56.4% of purchase decision variance is explained by these variables.

Conclusions: Price sensitivity and social media marketing are critical determinants of consumer purchase decisions in tourism packages. The stronger influence of social media marketing ($\beta = 0.452$) compared to price ($\beta = 0.371$) suggests shifting consumer priorities in digital environments. Tourism operators should integrate competitive pricing strategies with robust social media presence to optimize conversion rates.

Keywords
price sensitivity, social media marketing, purchase decision, tourism packages, consumer behavior, digital marketing.

INTRODUCTION

The global tourism industry has undergone substantial transformation, driven by digitalization and evolving consumer behavior patterns (Acharjee & Ahmed, 2023; Warintarawej et al., 2024). In Indonesia, domestic tourism has experienced significant growth, with Statistics Indonesia (BPS) reporting 8.9 million Indonesian tourists traveling abroad in 2024, reflecting increasing demand for organized travel packages. This expansion has intensified competition among tourism service providers, necessitating strategic approaches to influence consumer purchase decisions(Hamdan & Yuliantini, 2021; Nusraningrum, 2022). The tourism sector's unique characteristics—intangibility, perishability, and high involvement—make purchase decisions particularly complex (Decrop & Snelders, 2004). Consumers engage in extensive information search and evaluation processes before committing to holiday packages, with price and promotional strategies playing pivotal roles (Christou, 2005; Chukhray et al., 2025). Simultaneously, the proliferation of social media platforms has revolutionized tourism marketing, creating new channels for consumer engagement and decision influence (Alsoud et al., 2023). These platforms serve as critical conduits for information dissemination, peer recommendations, and direct interaction between providers and potential tourists, profoundly shaping perceptions and purchase intentions (Moslehpour et al., 2020).

Price remains a fundamental factor in consumer decision-making across industries (Zielke et al., 2022). In tourism contexts, price sensitivity varies based on perceived value, quality expectations, and competitive positioning (McCabe & Branco-Illodo, 2018). Research by Chapuis, (2012) demonstrated that price fairness perceptions significantly affect purchase intentions in service industries. However, the price-quality inference suggests consumers may interpret higher prices as quality indicators, complicating the price-decision relationship (Zeithaml, 1988).

Studies in tourism specifically reveal that price competitiveness directly influences destination and package selection (Crouch & Louviere, 2004). Kim, (2024) found that price discounts and promotional pricing significantly impact booking behaviors, particularly in online travel contexts. Yet, (Dang et al., 2023) cautioned that price alone cannot sustain competitive advantage without supporting value propositions.

Social media has emerged as a critical marketing channel in tourism, facilitating peer-to-peer communication, user-generated content sharing, and brand engagement (Arroyo et al., 2023; Mangold & Faulds, 2009) positioned social media as a hybrid element of the promotional mix, combining traditional marketing communications with amplified consumer-to-consumer interactions.

Empirical evidence supports social media's influence on travel decisions. Leung et al., (2013) identified social media as integral to the entire travel experience—from inspiration and planning to sharing post-trip experiences. Fotis et al., (2012) demonstrated that social media exposure significantly affects holiday destination choices. The interactive nature of platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok enables tourism operators to showcase destinations visually, engage with potential customers, and build brand communities (Rasel et al., 2025).

Hussain et al., (2024)developed a social media marketing activities framework encompassing entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word-of-mouth, all positively correlating with purchase intentions. However, Phan et al., (2024)) noted that successful social media marketing requires strategic content development, consistent engagement, and authentic communication.

While individual effects of price and social media marketing have been documented, their integrated influence on tourism purchase decisions remains underexplored. Akbara & Suryantari, (2024) examined electronic word-of-mouth and destination image but did not incorporate pricing strategies. Similarly, Meenakshy et al., (2024) investigated social media and travel planning without considering price interactions.

The decision-making process for tourism packages involves multiple evaluative criteria (Liang et al., 2025). Consumers balance cost considerations with quality perceptions, destination attractiveness, and social validation—elements potentially influenced by both pricing strategies and social media marketing (Liang et al., 2025; Rasel et al., 2025). Understanding how these variables interact provides practical insights for tourism operators navigating increasingly competitive digital marketplaces.

Despite extensive research on consumer behavior in tourism, several gaps persist: 1) Limited integrated analysis: Most studies examine price or social media marketing independently, lacking comprehensive models that assess their combined influence on purchase decisions; 2) Context-specific evidence: Limited research addresses emerging markets like Indonesia, where social media adoption rates are exceptionally high (89.15 million users), yet tourism purchasing patterns may differ from Western contexts (Wibisono & Lale, 2024); Quantitative rigor in tourism SMEs: While large hospitality corporations have been studied extensively, small-to-medium tourism enterprises (SMEs) like regional tour operators lack empirical attention despite constituting significant market share; 3) Post-pandemic behavioral shifts: The COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally altered consumer behaviors and marketing strategies (Afrianto Singgalen, 2021; Erasmus et al., 2010), necessitating updated research reflecting current decision-making patterns.

The rationale for this research emerges from the need to address persistent gaps in tourism marketing literature by providing a more comprehensive and contextually relevant understanding of consumer purchase decisions. This study responds to these gaps by offering an integrated analysis that simultaneously examines the influence of price and social media marketing, enabling a clearer interpretation of their relative and combined effects within a unified framework. By focusing on the Indonesian tourism sector—an emerging market characterized by rapid digital adoption and unique consumer dynamics—the research contributes context-specific insights that enrich scholarly understanding of purchasing behaviors in high-growth Asian environments. Furthermore, the study generates practical implications for small-to-medium tourism enterprises, particularly regional operators seeking evidence-based strategies to strengthen competitive positioning in an increasingly digital marketplace. At a theoretical level, the research advances contemporary discourse by incorporating current digital marketing realities, ensuring that existing frameworks remain aligned with evolving industry practices and consumer decision-making patterns.

In line with this rationale, the study establishes four core objectives to guide its empirical investigation. First, it aims to determine the influence of price on holiday package purchase decisions at PT Bangben Group Indonesia. Second, it seeks to assess the impact of social media marketing on consumer decisions within the same context. Third, it evaluates the simultaneous effects of price and social media marketing to ascertain how these variables interact in shaping purchasing behavior. Finally, the study aims to quantify the proportion of variance in purchase decisions that can be explained by both predictors, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of their combined predictive power. Collectively, these objectives ensure that the research offers meaningful contributions to theory, practice, and context-specific tourism scholarship.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Participants

The study population comprised all consumers who purchased holiday packages from PT Bangben Group Indonesia during 2024, totaling 417 individuals. PT Bangben Group Indonesia operates in North Sumatra, Indonesia, specializing in multi-country tour packages to Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand. The company serves diverse consumer segments through both online and offline channels. Sample size determination employed Slovin's formula with a 10% margin of error:

$n = N / (1 + Ne^2) = 417 / (1 + 417(0.10)^2) = 81$ respondents

Inclusion criteria required participants to have: (a) purchased at least one holiday package from PT Bangben Group Indonesia during 2024, (b) age ≥18 years, and (c) willingness to provide informed consent. Respondents were selected through simple random sampling, ensuring each population member had equal selection probability (Sugiyono, 2018). This approach minimized selection bias and enhanced external validity.

The final sample (n = 81) comprised 43% male and 57% female respondents. Age distribution showed 51% aged 21-30 years, 28% aged 31-40 years, 11% aged 18-20 years, 7% aged 41-50 years, and 3% above 50 years. Educational backgrounds included 60% bachelor's degree holders, 31% high school graduates, 5% diploma holders, and 4% master's degree holders.

Occupational distribution revealed 41% entrepreneurs, 26% private sector employees, 13% students, 11% government employees/military/police, and 9% other professions.

Study Organization

Data collection occurred between May and June 2025 through structured questionnaires distributed both electronically and in person. The research protocol received approval from PT Bangben Group Indonesia management. All participants provided informed consent, and confidentiality was ensured through anonymization procedures.

The questionnaire comprised three sections: 1. Demographic information: Gender, age, education, occupation, and purchase frequency; 2. Independent variables: Price (6 items) and social media marketing (8 items); 3. Dependent variable: Purchase decisions (12 items).

Each item utilized a 5-point Likert scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree. The questionnaire design followed established measurement scales adapted from Kotler and Keller (2019) for purchase decisions, Assauri (2018) for price, and Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2016) for social media marketing. Price indicators included: (1) price affordability, (2) price-budget alignment, (3) price-quality correspondence, (4) price-experience value, (5) competitive pricing, and (6) market standard pricing. Social media marketing indicators encompassed: (1) relationship building, (2) communication effectiveness, (3) information clarity, (4) communication satisfaction, (5) post-purchase interaction, (6) after-sales service, (7) information format preference, and (8) information completeness.

Purchase decision indicators consisted of: (1) product choice, (2) theme selection, (3) brand selection, (4) brand reputation, (5) information search behavior, (6) purchase channel preference, (7) timing flexibility, (8) promotional awareness, (9) purchase purpose, (10) purchase quantity, (11) payment method availability, and (12) payment convenience.

Test and Measurement Procedures

Table 1. Results of Validity and Reliability Testing

Variable	Number of Items	Range of r-count	r-table (α = 0.05)	Validity Decision	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Reliability Decision
Price	6 items	0.601 – 0.813	0.218	All items valid	0.817	Reliable
Social Media Marketing	8 items	0.822 – 0.925	0.218	All items valid	0.951	Highly reliable
Purchase Decision	12 items	0.609 – 0.788	0.218	All items valid	0.910	Highly reliable

Notes: Validity based on Pearson product–moment correlation; items retained when r-count > r-table; Reliability assessed using Cronbach's alpha; α > 0.60 indicates acceptable internal consistency.

Statistical Analysis

Data analysis was carried out through several systematic stages using SPSS version 22 to ensure analytical accuracy and model robustness. The process began with descriptive statistics, where frequency distributions, percentages, means, and standard deviations were computed to describe respondent demographics and the distributional characteristics of each research variable. Prior to conducting regression analysis, a series of classical assumption tests was performed to verify model adequacy. Normality of residuals was assessed using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, supported by visual inspection of normal probability plots, with p-values above 0.05 indicating normally distributed errors. Multicollinearity diagnostics involved examining Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values, which were required to remain below 10, and tolerance values above 0.10 to confirm the absence of problematic intercorrelations among predictors. Heteroscedasticity was evaluated through scatterplot analysis to ensure homogeneity of residual variance across predicted values.

Following these preliminary checks, multiple linear regression analysis was employed using the model specification $Y=\beta0+\beta1X1+\beta2X2+\varepsilon Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \varepsilon Y=\beta0+\beta1X1+\beta2X2+\varepsilon$, where purchase decisions served as the dependent variable (Y), and price (X_1) along with social media marketing (X_2) functioned as independent predictors. Regression coefficients (β_1 and β_2) captured the directional and magnitude effects of each predictor, while β_0 represented the constant term. Subsequent hypothesis testing consisted of partial (t-test) and simultaneous (F-test) evaluations. The t-test assessed the significance of individual predictors at α = 0.05, with null hypotheses rejected when the absolute t-calculated value exceeded the t-table value (df = 78, two-tailed = 1.991). The F-test examined the overall model significance, where F-calculated values exceeding the critical threshold ($df_1 = 2$; $df_2 = 78$; F-critical = 3.11) indicated that price and social media marketing jointly influenced purchase decisions. Additionally, the coefficient of determination (R^2) and adjusted R^2 were computed to quantify the proportion of explained variance while accounting for the number of predictors. Statistical significance for all inferential analyses was established at $p < 0.05$, ensuring the reliability and validity of the findings.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Price Variable (X_1): Analysis of price perceptions revealed generally positive consumer evaluations (Table 2). The majority of respondents agreed that prices were affordable (58.0% agree, 40.7% strongly agree) and aligned with their budgets (59.3% agree, 35.8% strongly agree). Price-quality correspondence received moderate agreement (63.0% agree, 13.6% strongly agree), while price competitiveness showed similar patterns (58.0% agree, 18.5% strongly agree). Overall mean scores ranged from 3.86 to 4.35 on the 5-point scale, indicating favorable price perceptions.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Price Variable (X_1)

Indicator	M	SD	Distribution (%)			
			STS	TS	RR	S
Price affordability	4.35	0.58	0	0	1.2	58.0
Price-budget alignment	4.29	0.62	0	0	4.9	59.3
Price-quality correspondence	3.86	0.65	0	0	23.5	63.0

Price-experience value	3.88	0.67	0	0	23.5	61.7
Competitive pricing	3.90	0.76	0	3.7	19.8	58.0
Market standard pricing	3.79	0.69	0	1.2	27.2	60.5

Note: STS = Strongly Disagree, TS = Disagree, RR = Neutral, S = Agree, SS = Strongly Agree

Social Media Marketing Variable (X_2): Social media marketing effectiveness demonstrated consistently high ratings (Table 3). Respondents strongly endorsed relationship building through social media (71.6% agree, 14.8% strongly agree) and communication satisfaction (71.6% agree, 11.1% strongly agree). Information clarity (67.9% agree, 11.1% strongly agree) and completeness (71.6% agree, 11.1% strongly agree) received similarly positive evaluations. Mean scores ranged from 3.88 to 3.96, reflecting favorable social media marketing perceptions. Notably, neutral responses remained relatively low (12.3-19.8%), suggesting clear consumer attitudes.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Social Media Marketing Variable (X_2)

Indicator	M	SD	Distribution (%)			
			STS	TS	RR	S
Relationship building	3.96	0.58	0	1.2	12.3	71.6
Communication effectiveness	3.88	0.61	0	0	19.8	67.9
Information clarity	3.85	0.63	0	1.2	19.8	67.9
Communication satisfaction	3.90	0.56	0	0	17.3	71.6
Post-purchase interaction	3.96	0.58	0	1.2	12.3	71.6
After-sales service	3.88	0.61	0	0	19.8	67.9
Information format preference	3.88	0.62	0	1.2	18.5	67.9
Information completeness	3.90	0.56	0	0	17.3	71.6

Purchase Decision Variable (Y): Purchase decision indicators revealed strong positive tendencies (Table 4). Product choice flexibility (66.7% agree, 14.8% strongly agree) and brand selection based on reputation (67.9% agree, 3.7% strongly agree) received substantial endorsement. Payment convenience emerged as the highest-rated indicator (82.7% agree, 3.7% strongly agree), suggesting transactional ease influences decisions significantly. Purchase timing flexibility (72.8% agree, 8.6% strongly agree) and promotional awareness (64.2% agree, 9.9% strongly agree) also demonstrated positive evaluations. Mean scores ranged from 3.63 to 3.92, indicating moderately strong purchase decision patterns.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for Purchase Decision Variable (Y)

Indicator	M	SD	Distribution (%)			
			STS	TS	RR	S
Product choice	3.92	0.61	0	1.2	17.3	66.7
Theme selection	3.88	0.70	1.2	2.5	19.8	60.5
Brand selection	3.76	0.62	0	2.5	22.2	69.1
Brand reputation	3.71	0.61	0	2.5	25.9	67.9
Information search	3.75	0.65	0	2.5	25.9	63.0
Purchase channel preference	3.63	0.81	0	6.2	35.8	48.1
Timing flexibility	3.84	0.65	0	3.7	14.8	72.8
Promotional awareness	3.77	0.66	0	1.2	24.7	64.2
Purchase purpose	3.74	0.69	0	2.5	29.6	58.0
Purchase quantity	3.77	0.72	1.2	1.2	27.2	59.3
Payment method availability	3.56	0.78	0	6.2	34.6	51.9
Payment convenience	3.92	0.47	0	2.5	11.1	82.7

Classical Assumption Tests

Normality Test:

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test yielded a significance value of 0.200 ($p > 0.05$), indicating residuals follow normal distribution (Table 5). Visual inspection of the P-P plot confirmed residual points clustered along the diagonal line, supporting normality assumptions. These results validate the appropriateness of parametric regression analysis.

Table 5 Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test Results

Test Statistic	Value
N	81
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	0.067
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.200

Multicollinearity Test:

Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance values indicated absence of multicollinearity (Table 6). Both price (VIF = 1.933, tolerance = 0.517) and social media marketing (VIF = 1.933, tolerance = 0.517) met acceptable thresholds (VIF < 10, tolerance > 0.1). These results confirm predictors are not highly intercorrelated, ensuring stable regression coefficient estimates.

Table 6. Multicollinearity Test Results

Variable	*Tolerance*	*VIF*
Price (X_1)	0.517	1.933
Social Media Marketing (X_2)	0.517	1.933

Heteroscedasticity Test:

Scatterplot examination revealed residuals randomly dispersed around zero without discernible patterns. Points distributed above and below the horizontal axis, confirming homoscedasticity. The absence of systematic variance patterns validates equal error variance assumptions across predicted values.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis: The regression model demonstrated strong explanatory power (Table 7): $Y = 6.888 + 0.764X_1 + 0.635X_2$

Table 7. Multiple Linear Regression Coefficients

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t	Sig.	VIF

Constant	6.888	3.838	-	1.794	0.077	-
Price (X_1)	0.764	0.211	0.371	3.616	0.001	1.933
Social Media Marketing (X_2)	0.635	0.144	0.452	4.402	0.000	1.933

Note: Dependent Variable: Purchase Decisions (Y)

Model Interpretation:

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis indicate that both price (X_1) and social media marketing (X_2) exert positive and significant influences on purchase decisions (Y). The constant value of 6.888 suggests that when price perception and social media marketing effectiveness are set to zero, the baseline level of purchase decisions remains at 6.888, implying the presence of other underlying factors outside the model that contribute to consumer decision-making. The regression coefficient for price is 0.764 (p = 0.001), meaning that each one-unit increase in price perception raises purchase decisions by 0.764 units, assuming the other variable remains constant. The standardized coefficient (β = 0.371) shows that price has a moderate positive effect on purchase decisions. Meanwhile, social media marketing demonstrates a regression coefficient of 0.635 (p = 0.000), indicating that every one-unit increase in the effectiveness of social media marketing enhances purchase decisions by 0.635 units, holding price constant. Its standardized coefficient (β = 0.452) reveals that social media marketing has a stronger relative influence on purchase decisions than price. Additionally, the VIF value of 1.933 for both predictors indicates the absence of multicollinearity, confirming that the regression model is stable and appropriate for explaining the dependent variable.

Hypothesis Testing Results

Partial Test (t-test):

Individual predictor significance was confirmed (Table 8):

Table 8. Partial Hypothesis Test Results (t-test)

Variable	t-calculated	t-table (α=0.05, df=78)	Sig.	Decision
Price (X_1)	3.616	1.991	0.001	H_0 rejected
Social Media Marketing (X_2)	4.402	1.991	0.000	H_0 rejected

Price (X_1): t-calculated = 3.616 > t-table = 1.991, p = 0.001 < 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected, confirming price significantly influences purchase decisions. Social Media Marketing (X_2): t-calculated = 4.402 > t-table = 1.991, p = 0.000 < 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected, demonstrating social media marketing significantly affects purchase decisions.

Simultaneous Test (F-test): The overall model significance was established (Table 9):

Table 9. Simultaneous Hypothesis Test Results (F-test)

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-calculated	F-table	Sig.
Regression	1383.066	2	691.533	52.730	3.11	0.000
Residual	1022.934	78	13.115			
Total	2406.000	80				

F-calculated = 52.730 > F-table = 3.11, p = 0.000 < 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected, confirming price and social media marketing simultaneously and significantly influence purchase decisions.

Coefficient of Determination (R^2): Model goodness-of-fit demonstrated substantial explanatory power (Table 10):

Table 10. Model Summary

R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of Estimate	Durbin-Watson
0.758	0.575	0.564	3.621	2.041

R = 0.758: Strong positive correlation exists between predictors and purchase decisions; Adjusted R^2 = 0.564: Price and social media marketing explain 56.4% of purchase decision variance. The remaining 43.6% stems from unmeasured variables (e.g., service quality, brand image, promotional activities, consumer experience, word-of-mouth, cultural factors); Durbin-Watson = 2.041: Value approximates 2, indicating absence of autocorrelation in residuals.

Significant Discoveries: The analysis yielded several significant discoveries that offer meaningful contributions to the understanding of tourism purchase behavior. First, social media marketing emerged as a stronger predictor of purchase decisions than price (β = 0.452 vs. β = 0.371), a finding that challenges conventional price-centric paradigms commonly emphasized in tourism marketing literature. This result indicates that digital engagement and online brand presence exert a more substantial influence on consumer decision-making than previously assumed. Second, both variables demonstrated statistically significant independent effects on purchase decisions, suggesting that their strategic roles are non-substitutable; tourism operators cannot depend solely on competitive pricing nor exclusively on social media visibility, but must integrate both components to optimize consumer responses. Third, the regression model explained a substantial proportion of variance (56.4%), confirming the relevance of the theoretical framework while signaling that tourism purchase decisions remain multifactorial and shaped by additional contextual influences. Fourth, the absence of multicollinearity between predictors verifies that price and social media marketing represent empirically distinct constructs, granting practitioners the flexibility to design targeted and differentiated strategic interventions. Finally, high internal consistency across all measurement constructs (Cronbach's α > 0.81) reinforces the reliability of the instruments used, thereby strengthening the overall confidence in the empirical findings and supporting their applicability in tourism marketing practice.

DISCUSSION

The interpretation of research outcomes reveals that both price and social media marketing exert significant influences on holiday package purchase decisions, confirming previous calls for integrated analytical approaches in tourism marketing. The regression model demonstrates substantial explanatory power (adjusted R^2 = 0.564), consistent with prior tourism studies positing that consumer decisions emerge from multidimensional considerations. The positive and significant effect of price (β = 0.371, p = 0.001) reinforces the relevance of foundational theories on price–value perceptions, particularly Monroe's price evaluation framework and Zeithaml's conceptualization of price as a quality indicator in high-intangibility services (Monroe, 2012; Zeithaml, 1988). Although affordability was strongly endorsed by respondents, variations in perceived price–quality congruence suggest that

consumers evaluate not only nominal price but also fairness, value correspondence, and competitive positioning. Meanwhile, social media marketing exhibited a stronger influence (β = 0.452, p = 0.000), reaffirming the centrality of digital engagement in tourism decisions. This influence arises through multiple mechanisms—reduction of information asymmetry, trust building through interactive communication, social validation via user-generated content, and enhanced accessibility to information—which collectively enhance consumer confidence and perceived value (Hochstein et al., 2023; Kumar, 2024). High agreement across social media indicators underscores effective implementation; however, the presence of neutral responses indicates opportunities for content innovation and deeper audience engagement.

Simultaneously, the interaction between price and social media marketing was found to be significant (F = 52.730, p = 0.000), supporting integrated marketing communication principles whereby consistent messaging across platforms yields synergistic effects. These findings underscore the necessity for tourism SMEs to adopt holistic strategies that balance competitive pricing with robust digital presence. While social media marketing demonstrates greater relative influence, sustaining competitive pricing remains essential for inclusion in consumer consideration sets (Vu et al., 2025). Furthermore, this study's results align with antecedent research confirming the positive effects of price and social media marketing on purchase decisions, though divergences were noted in relative effect magnitudes and explanatory power (Majid et al., 2023). These deviations likely reflect the evolving digital behavior of Indonesian consumers—characterized by high social media penetration—and the specific context of PT Bangben Group Indonesia's established market positioning (Prananta et al., 2024; Valeriani & Sah, 2024). Interestingly, lower agreement regarding preferred purchase channels suggests that consumers continue to rely on hybrid (online–offline) decision pathways, challenging assumptions about the dominance of fully digital purchasing in tourism.

The ramifications of these findings extend to both theoretical and practical domains. Theoretically, the study affirms the applicability of consumer decision-making frameworks within Southeast Asian tourism markets, while offering refinements to social media marketing theory—particularly regarding relationship-building, interactivity, and information format dimensions (Afren, 2024; Keelson et al., 2024). The results also highlight the multidimensional nature of price perceptions, emphasizing that affordability alone does not guarantee purchase decisions. Practically, tourism operators, especially SMEs, are encouraged to prioritize social media investments, optimize content strategies through visual storytelling and user-generated content, refine pricing strategies to emphasize value communication and dynamic adjustments, and adopt integrated marketing approaches ensuring message coherence across channels (Mauro et al., 2022). Policy implications include the need for digital capacity-building programs for SMEs, establishment of quality standardization mechanisms, and dissemination of market intelligence to support informed managerial decision-making (Sharabati et al., 2024).

Despite these contributions, several limitations must be acknowledged. The single-company focus restricts generalizability, suggesting the need for multi-site studies across diverse tourism settings. The cross-sectional design limits causal interpretations, warranting longitudinal or experimental research. Reliance on self-reported data raises concerns about social desirability bias, indicating the potential value of triangulation with behavioral analytics (Alnagbi et al., 2025). Furthermore, unmeasured variables—such as service quality perceptions, brand equity, electronic word-of-mouth dynamics, travel motivations, perceived risk, and prior experience—likely account for unexplained variance (Orden-Mejía et al., 2025). Measurement limitations also arise from aggregating multiple social media platforms into a single construct and from focusing on perceived rather than objective pricing mechanisms. Cultural contexts and industry-specific characteristics further constrain generalizability, while the post-pandemic recovery period may have shaped consumer behaviors uniquely. Nonetheless, the study provides meaningful empirical insights into tourism marketing dynamics and offers robust directions for future inquiry.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study empirically confirm that both price sensitivity and social media marketing exert significant influences on consumer purchase decisions for holiday packages, with social media marketing demonstrating a stronger predictive effect (β = 0.452) compared to price (β = 0.371). This suggests that while competitive pricing remains a fundamental component of consumer evaluation, digital engagement has become a more dominant driver in shaping tourism purchase behavior. The regression model explains 56.4% of the variance in purchase decisions, highlighting the strategic relevance of both variables while acknowledging that tourism decision-making processes remain inherently multifaceted and shaped by additional experiential, psychological, and contextual factors. These findings reinforce shifts in contemporary consumer behavior, wherein value assessment increasingly integrates digital cues, trust signals, and social validation beyond traditional cost-based considerations.

From a theoretical and practical standpoint, the results provide meaningful contributions to tourism marketing scholarship and industry practice. Theoretically, the study advances understanding of consumer decision frameworks by quantifying relative and combined effects of price and social media marketing within emerging Southeast Asian markets, where rapid digital adoption has reshaped information flows and consumption patterns. Practically, the findings offer actionable insights for tourism operators—particularly SMEs—regarding resource allocation and strategic prioritization. The superior influence of social media marketing justifies stronger investment in digital content creation, customer engagement, influencer partnerships, and online community building. At the same time, maintaining competitive yet value-driven pricing remains essential to avoid overreliance on digital promotion. These results also hold implications for industry associations and policymakers, underscoring the importance of digital competency development, authenticity standards, and consumer protection mechanisms within increasingly online-dominated tourism markets.

Empirical evidence from hypothesis testing further strengthens the study's conclusions. Price was found to positively and significantly influence purchase decisions (t = 3.616 > 1.991; p = 0.001), while social media marketing exhibited an even stronger effect (t = 4.402 > 1.991; p = 0.000), confirming both Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2. The simultaneous significance of both variables (F = 52.730 > 3.11; p = 0.000) supports Hypothesis 3 and highlights the synergistic potential of integrating pricing strategies with

robust social media engagement. The model's adjusted R^2 value of 0.564 indicates a strong explanatory capacity while also recognizing the existence of unobserved factors—such as service quality, brand equity, electronic word-of-mouth, perceived risk, and travel motivations—that warrant exploration in future studies. Taken together, these results emphasize the necessity of adopting integrated, multi-channel marketing approaches to effectively influence consumer purchase decisions within an increasingly digitalized tourism landscape.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors acknowledge the Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi International Business Management Indonesia (STIE IBMI) Medan for institutional support and research facilitation.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare no conflicts of interest related to this research. This study received no external funding, and all authors contributed equally to research design, data collection, analysis, and manuscript preparation.

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