

Halal Label, Digital Marketing, and Brand Image: Drivers of Purchasing Decisions in Malang's MSME Food Products

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Abstract: *The aim of this study is to examine how halal labeling, digital marketing, and brand image influence purchasing decisions in the context of packaged food products produced by MSMEs in Malang. A quantitative approach was employed using a survey method, involving 250 respondents who were consumers at retail outlets in Malang and were selected through incidental sampling at the research sites. The analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the support of the AMOS application to assess the relationships among the variables. The findings indicate that both halal labeling and digital marketing have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. In addition, brand image plays a mediating role in the relationship between halal labeling and digital marketing on purchasing decisions. These results suggest that consumers' perceptions of halal labeling contribute to strengthening brand image, which in turn enhances their likelihood of making a purchase. Academically, this study expands the application of consumer behavior theory in the context of halal product marketing, while practically providing guidance for MSMEs to integrate halal labeling and digital marketing strategies in an effort to build a strong brand image. The results of the study fill the existing gap by presenting brand image variables as a mediator.*

Keywords: *Halal Labeling; Digital Marketing; Brand Image; Purchasing Decisions; Marketing of MSME Products*

Abstrak: *Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji pengaruh labelisasi halal, pemasaran digital, dan citra merek terhadap keputusan pembelian, khususnya pada produk makanan dalam kemasan yang dihasilkan oleh UMKM di Kota Malang. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif melalui metode survei yang dilakukan terhadap 250 responden yang merupakan konsumen gerai ritel di Kota Malang yang kebetulan ditemui di lokasi penelitian. Penelitian ini menerapkan metode Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) sebagai teknik analisis data dengan bantuan aplikasi AMOS untuk menguji hubungan antarvariabel yang diteliti. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa labelisasi halal dan pemasaran digital memberikan pengaruh positif serta signifikan terhadap keputusan pembelian. Di sisi lain labelisasi halal dan pemasaran digital juga ditemukan berpengaruh pada citra merek. Citra merek memiliki peran mediasi terhadap hubungan antara labelisasi halal dan pemasaran digital terhadap keputusan pembelian. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa persepsi konsumen terhadap label halal dan efektivitas komunikasi digital dapat meningkatkan citra merek dan pada akhirnya memperkuat keputusan pembelian. Secara akademik, penelitian ini memperluas penerapan teori perilaku konsumen dalam konteks pemasaran produk halal, sementara secara praktis memberikan panduan bagi UMKM untuk mengintegrasikan strategi labelisasi halal dan pemasaran digital dalam upaya untuk membangun citra merek yang kuat. Hasil penelitian mengisi gap yang ada dengan menghadirkan variabel citra merek sebagai mediator.*

Kata kunci: *Labelisasi Halal; Pemasaran Digital; Citra Merek; Keputusan Pembelian; Pemasaran Produk UMKM*

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INTRODUCTION

Halal certification is crucial for Muslim consumers in Indonesia, especially considering Indonesia's large Muslim population of approximately 240 million (Mastuki HS, 2020). Halal labeling can provide assurance and legal certainty, particularly when associated with packaged food products. The government, through Law No. 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance (UU JPH), regulates the obligation to obtain halal certification to ensure that food products circulating in the community are truly halal and safe for consumption in accordance with Islamic law. Amidst government efforts to raise public awareness of the importance of halal certification and digital marketing for MSMEs (Fahmi et al., 2025), this study takes an important step in explaining how halal labeling and digital marketing influence brand image and contribute to purchasing decisions for packaged food products. With sufficient literacy, MSMEs can capitalize on Indonesia's market potential as the country with the world's largest Muslim population. Furthermore, this study highlights the importance of adapting to developments in digital technology to maintain a competitive edge. The government has implemented mandatory halal certification regulations for food and beverage products starting in October 2024 (BPJPH, 2024), so the results of this study are crucial for providing education and increasing literacy to raise public awareness.

The development of e-commerce in Indonesia has significantly changed consumer purchasing behavior. Small, Micro, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) face highly competitive conditions, further exacerbated by the entry of foreign products into the Indonesian retail market. It is now common to find imported packaged food and beverage products circulating in minimarkets and supermarkets in Malang City. Some of these products lack halal information or adequate composition information. Meanwhile, the government requires packaged food and beverage products to have halal certification. In 2023, 1,118,490 halal certificates were issued, bringing the total to 3,494,693 (BPJPH, 2024). Halal labels are expected to position products to shape brand image and influence purchasing decisions, given Indonesia's large Muslim population (Pratiwi et al., 2024). Halal labeling has a positive effect on attitudes and purchasing decisions (Amriadi, 2025).

Digital marketing and labeling influence purchasing decisions and consumer loyalty, as does brand and image, which significantly affects them (Sartien et al., 2022). A good brand image can encourage consumers to purchase a product (Genoveva & Utami, 2020). Brand image is a consumer's perception of a brand, formed from their experiences and interactions (Fahmi, 2017), while digital marketing is the marketing of products or services using digital media such as social media and websites (Ennala Deepa & M. Geeta, 2021).

Given the existing problems, the following questions arise: How does halal labeling affect brand image, and what are its implications for purchasing decisions?

How does digital marketing impact brand image and its implications for purchasing decisions? Moreover, how does the image of packaged food products produced by MSMEs in Malang City impact purchasing decisions? This study aims to address issues related to the Rencana Induk Riset Nasional (RIRN) on the theme of economics and human resources, with a focus on the PRN Social Humanities, Education, Arts, and Culture, covering entrepreneurship, cooperatives, and MSMEs. Digital marketing has become a crucial component of modern marketing strategies (Al-Azzam & Al-Mizeed, 2021). The use of social media, marketplaces, online reviews, and other digital platforms offers significant opportunities for MSMEs to reach a wider consumer base and increase product visibility. The combination of effective digital marketing and a strong brand. An image and a clear halal label are expected to boost consumer trust and influence purchasing decisions. However, the scale and characteristics of MSMEs differ from those of large companies, so the effectiveness of these elements needs to be studied in a local context such as Malang City.

Several previous researchers have addressed halal labeling, but primarily from a religious perspective, focusing on Islamic law regarding the consumption of non-halal products and the broader trade context. This research specifically links halal labeling to brand and image formation and purchasing decisions for packaged food products produced by MSMEs in Malang. The approach is to examine consumers' religiosity when they shop and make purchasing decisions. The research's strength lies in the benefits it will provide, as well as its timely timing amid the urgent need for halal literacy to support the implementation of the Government Regulation on mandatory halal certification for all food and beverage products, effective October 2024. The research findings are also expected to help the public and MSMEs understand the importance of halal label information for Muslim consumers in Indonesia. Furthermore, this research is expected to fill gaps and deficiencies in empirical data, thereby making a positive contribution to government programs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Halal Labeling and Purchase Decision

Halal labeling refers to the affixing of a halal label on product packaging, such as the placement of a halal logo, halal certification information, or an explanation regarding the composition of the basic ingredients used to make the product, which are free from non-halal substances (Pratiwi *et al.*, 2024). Several empirical studies have found that halal labeling can increase consumer trust in a product and encourage purchase intention (Millatina *et al.*, 2022). Several other factors, such as religiosity, the credibility of the certification body, and other product attributes, also influence this effect. Other studies have found that halal certification and halal awareness contribute to purchase intention and purchasing decisions (Amriadi, 2025).

H1. Halal labeling influences purchasing decisions

Digital Marketing and Purchase Decision

Digital marketing refers to promotional activities that utilize various digital platforms, including websites, social media, and online marketplaces. Often described as online marketing, it involves efforts to introduce and promote brands, products, or services through internet-based channels. More broadly, digital marketing encompasses a range of strategies carried out via digital media with the primary goal of boosting sales while ensuring customer satisfaction (Al-Azzam & Al-Mizeed, 2021;

Ennala Deepa & M. Geeta, 2021). Digital marketing has now become part of the retail industry's efforts in Indonesia to reach consumers and market products widely. By implementing digital marketing, companies can introduce and market products more efficiently and effectively, seen from the speed of time and accuracy of the target segment. Research results show that digital marketing has a positive influence on purchase intentions and purchasing decisions (Dahiya, 2018; Kurdi *et al.*, 2022).

H2. Digital marketing influences purchasing decisions

Halal Labeling and Brand image

This emphasizes the need for socialization and regulatory credibility to strengthen the label's effect. Other findings highlight that the size and visibility of labels on packaging also impact consumer responses, including among non-Muslim groups in certain contexts (Fahmi *et al.*, 2025; Genoveva & Utami, 2020). Theoretically, signaling theory explains how halal labels convey trust signals that influence perceptions, product image, and purchasing decisions. Halal labeling has a positive impact on brand image (Susilowati & Lumban Toruan, 2024).

H3. Halal labeling influences brand image

Digital Marketing and Brand Image

Several studies have found that these effects are direct and indirect, namely through improving brand image, which then strengthens brand trust and encourages purchasing decisions. Digital marketing contributes to shaping brand image and fostering trust (Fachrozi *et al.*, 2023; Zulfikar *et al.*, 2022).

H4. Digital marketing influences brand image

Brand Image and Purchase Decisions

Brand image is a consumer's perception of a brand (Ennala Deepa & M. Geeta, 2021). Brand image is formed from various information and experiences consumers have, both directly and indirectly, when interacting with a particular brand (Fachrozi *et al.*, 2023). A positive image will emerge when consumers feel they have had a positive experience with a particular brand, and conversely, a negative experience will form a negative image (W. G. P. A. Hidayat, 2023). In the context of food products, brand image is a determining factor when consumers face many choices. Brand image is formed from the accumulation of a set of consumer associations, perceptions, and beliefs about the brand, usually based on factors such as product quality, design, brand name, label, packaging, price, direct customer experience of using the product, as well as emotions and values that consumers associate with the brand. Brand image influences consumers' interpretation of the value they will obtain from a product or service. Research results show that brand image significantly influences attitudes and purchase intentions (Aspan *et al.*, 2017; Jaiyeoba *et al.*, 2019). Brand image is also considered a factor influencing consumer decisions in choosing products. For example, studies on food and F&B brands show that storytelling, brand equity, and consumer reviews enhance brand image, which, in turn, influences purchases (Sartien *et al.*, 2022). Brand image is defined as consumer perception of a brand (Ennala Deepa & M. Geeta, 2021). Brand image is formed from the various information and experiences consumers have, both directly and indirectly, when interacting with a particular brand (Fachrozi *et al.*, 2023).

H5. Brand image influences purchasing decisions

Brand Image and Purchasing Decisions

Purchasing decisions are the process of choosing to acquire and use a product. It is the final stage of the consumer decision-making process, in which an individual decides whether to purchase a product. Decisions can also be defined as the process by which consumers select one alternative from several available options after going through the stages of identifying needs, searching for information, evaluating alternatives, and finally making a purchase (W. G. P. A. Hidayat, 2023; Kurdi et al., 2022). Research shows that in the context of packaged food products, purchasing decisions are influenced by brand image and product value (Aspan et al., 2017). For Muslims, halal labeling and certification are important factors influencing purchasing decisions, as they are considered to provide legal certainty and confidence that the food product being purchased is safe for consumption (Millatina et al., 2022). Brand image plays a mediating role in shaping purchasing decisions (Aspan et al., 2017; Genoveva & Utami, 2020; Zulfikar et al., 2022).

H6. Brand image moderates the influence of halal labeling on purchasing decisions.

H7. Brand image moderates the influence of digital marketing on purchasing decisions.

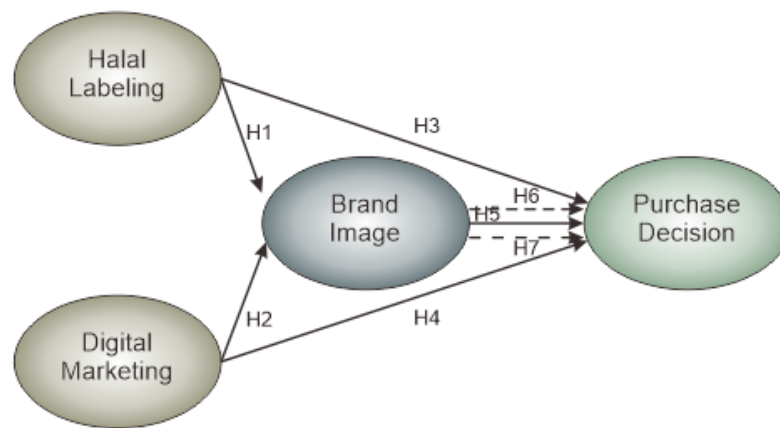


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis

Source: Authors Work, 2025

RESEARCH METHOD

A confirmatory quantitative method was used in this study; specifically, SEM. This approach was chosen to analyze the influence of halal labeling, digital marketing, and brand image on purchasing decisions for MSME packaged food products in Malang City. The research population consisted of all consumers who had purchased MSME food products from retail stores in Malang City. To select respondents who met the criteria, the sample was taken using a purposive sampling technique. The sample size was 250 people, determined using the assumption of an ideal or sufficient sample size for SEM analysis, namely 200-400 (Hair, J. F., et al., 2017). Primary data were collected through a Likert-scale questionnaire (1-5), while secondary data were obtained from government publications, journals, and previous research reports. The research instrument was compiled from relevant literature on halal labeling, digital marketing, brand image, and purchasing decisions. Data analysis was carried out in several stages, starting with testing and SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) Analysis. The analysis was carried out in four stages, namely: First, a feasibility test through an examination of classical assumptions. Second, the measurement model was tested using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to determine whether the indicators reflected the

intended constructs validly and reliably (R. Hidayat & Patricia Wulandari, 2022). Third, the structural model was tested to examine the relationships between constructs and test the formulated hypotheses. In the fourth stage, the model's suitability was assessed through a Goodness of Fit (GOF) evaluation. In SEM analysis, this stage assesses how well the constructed model fits the collected data.

Tabel 1. Variables, Indicators and Items

Variables	Indicators	Statement Item
Halal Labeling	Clarity of the halal label	I easily recognize the halal label on MSME food product packaging.
	Credibility of the institution	I trust the institutions that issue halal certification (MUI/BPJPH).
	Trust in the label	The halal label makes me more confident in the halal status of the product.
	Ease of finding the label	I quickly find the halal label on packaged food products.
	Legal certainty	The halal label provides legal certainty for me as a Muslim consumer. I often see promotions for MSME food products through digital media.
Digital Marketing	Promotion intensity	Promotional content for MSME food products on digital media catches my attention.
	Content quality	I can interact with MSME sellers through digital media.
	Digital interaction	Information about MSME food products is easily accessible through digital media.
	Ease of access to information	Digital media makes it easy for me to make purchases.
	Ease of transactions	MSME sellers respond quickly to my inquiries through digital platforms.
	Speed of response	I am motivated to buy MSME food products because of online reviews/recommendations.
	Online recommendations	I assess a particular MSME food product as having a good reputation.
Brand Image	Brand reputation	I have a positive impression of a particular MSME food product brand.
	Positive impressions	The MSME food product brand meets my expectations.
	Conformity to expectations	I find the MSME food product brand attractive.
	Brand appeal	The MSME food product brand has unique characteristics compared to competitors.
	Brand differentiation	I buy MSME food products because they meet my needs.
Purchase Decision	Need recognition	I compare several MSME food products before purchasing.
	Evaluation of alternatives	I ultimately decide to buy a particular MSME food product.
	Final decision	Statement Item

References:

(Aspan et al., 2017; Ennala Deepa & M. Geeta, 2021; Fachrozi et al., 2023; Fahmi et al., 2025;

Genoveva & Utami, 2020; W. G. P. A. Hidayat, 2023; Kurdi et al., 2022; Sartien et al., 2022; Zulfikar et al., 2022)

Source: Data processed, 2025

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Overall, the demographic characteristics of respondents indicate that consumers of packaged food products from MSMEs in Malang are predominantly young women, active workers, and digital media users who are concerned about product halal certification and brand reputation. Their purchasing decisions are driven not only by functional needs but also by psychological and social factors, such as trust in halal labels and a strong brand image built through information in the digital space. Detailed demographic data for respondents is shown in Table 2 below.

Tabel 2. Demographics

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	96	38,4%
Female	154	61,6%
Total	250	100%
Age	Frequency	Percentage
< 20 years	30	12%
21-30 years	80	32%
31-40 years	70	28%
41-50 years	50	20%
> 50 years	20	8%
Total	250	100%
Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Student	40	16%
Civil Servant	50	20%
Private Employee	70	28%
Self-Employed	60	24%
Other	30	12%
Total	250	100%
Retail Shopping Places	Frequency	Percentage
Minimarkets	83	24%
Supermarkets	50	20%
Hypermarts	55	22%
MSME Stores	45	18%
Other	17	16%
Total	250	100%

Source: Data processed, 2025

The descriptive analysis in Table 2 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Of the 250 respondents, the majority were female (61.6%), while men accounted for 38.4%. This finding indicates that women have an important role in

shopping activities and purchasing decisions for packaged food products, especially those produced by MSMEs in Malang City. Women are generally more careful in paying attention to product information, such as ingredients, halal labels, and other details, before deciding to buy. In terms of age, the study respondents were dominated by the 21–30-year age group (32%), followed by the 31–40-year age group (28%). These results indicate that the majority of consumers of MSME packaged food products in Malang are in the productive age group, are digitally active, and have a sufficient level of technological literacy. In terms of occupation, the respondents mostly came from the private sector (28 percent), followed by the self-employed (24 percent) and civil servants (20 percent). Regarding shopping locations, the research results show that the majority of respondents purchase packaged food products at minimarkets (24 percent), followed by hypermarkets (22 percent), supermarkets (20 percent), MSME stores (18 percent), and online shops (16 percent). These findings indicate that modern distribution channels such as minimarkets and hypermarkets remain the primary choice for Malang residents.

Structural Equation Model

Measurement Model

The measurement model is part of the SEM analysis that provides an overview of the relationship between latent variables (constructs) and indicator variables (observed variables). This analysis stage explains how each research construct is measured using questionnaire items that represent its dimensions. The primary purpose of the measurement model is to ensure that each indicator accurately reflects the construct being measured, both in terms of validity and reliability. The results of the validity and reliability tests are shown in Table 2.

Table 3. Validity and Reliability Test

			Loading Faktor	S.E.	AVE	CR	Sig.
LAB1	<---	Halal_Labeling	0,686	0,226	0,627	0,893	0.00
LAB2	<---	Halal_Labeling	0,699	0,213			
LAB3	<---	Halal_Labeling	0,617	0,244			
LAB4	<---	Halal_Labeling	0,579	0,271			
LAB5	<---	Halal_Labeling	0,605	0,259			
DGT1	<---	Digital Marketing	0,592	0,282	0,618	0,902	0.00
DGT2	<---	Digital Marketing	0,838	0,144			
DGT3	<---	Digital_Marketing	0,752	0,258			
DGT4	<---	Digital_Marketing	0,618	0,305			
DGT5	<---	Digital_Marketing	0,619	0,276			
DGT6	<---	Digital_Marketing	0,174	0,248			
DGT7	<---	Digital_Marketing	0,699	0,265			
IMG_1	<---	Brand_Image	0,656	0,238	0,696	0,918	0.00
IMG_2	<---	Brand_Image	0,841	0,141			
IMG_3	<---	Brand_Image	0,689	0,244			
IMG_4	<---	Brand_Image	0,553	0,294			
IMG_5	<---	Brand_Image	0,715	0,142			
BHA_1	<---	Purchase Decision	0,787	0,184	0,596	0,851	0.00

BHA_2 <---	Purchase_Decision	0,628	0,289
BHA_3 <---	Purchase_Decision	0,674	0,302
BHA_4 <---	Purchase_Decision	0,442	0,351

Note. SE = *Standard Error*; AVE = *Average Variance Extract*; dan CR = *Composite Reliability*.
Source: Data processed, 2025

Based on the results in Table 3, it is known that the Standardized Loading Estimate or loading factor value for each statement item has partially met the criteria, which is greater than 0.5, and is declared valid. Two statement items were found to have values below 0.5: the purchasing decision variable item 4 (BHA4) and the digital marketing variable item 6 (DGT6), so they are considered invalid. Validity and reliability are typically assessed using two main indicators: Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). A construct is considered reliable if its CR value meets or exceeds 0.70, while validity is supported when the AVE value is at least 0.50. In this study, all variables demonstrate AVE values above the required threshold, confirming their validity. Specifically, the AVE values are 0.627 for Halal Labeling, 0.618 for Digital Marketing, 0.696 for Brand Image, and 0.596 for Purchasing Decisions. In terms of reliability, each construct also shows strong performance, with CR values exceeding 0.70. The CR values are 0.893 for Halal Labeling, 0.902 for Digital Marketing, 0.918 for Brand Image, and 0.851 for Purchasing Decisions. Overall, these results indicate that the measurement instruments used in this study are both valid and reliable, with all indicators meeting the required standards at the 0.01 significance level.

Structural Model

Uji Goodness of Fit (GOF)

The Goodness-of-Fit test is a crucial step in SEM analysis with AMOS, as it indicates the extent to which the model fits the empirical data. The measurement model in this study includes four constructs: Halal Labeling (X1), Digital Marketing (X2), Brand Image (M), and Purchase Decision (Y).

Table 4. Goodness of Fit Test

Goodness Of Fit Indices	Cut-off value	Result	Model Evaluation
Chi Square	Expected to be small	146,6	Marginal Fit
Significan probability	≥	0,05	0,091 Fit
RMSEA	≥	0,08	0,058 Fit
GFI (Goodness Of Fit Index)	≥	0,9	0,983 Fit
AGFI (Adj. Goodness Of Fit Index)	≥	0,9	0,882 Marginal Fit
CMIN/DF	≤	2	1,937 Fit
TLI (Tucker Lewis Index)	≥	0,95	0,973 Fit
CFI (Comparative Fit Index)	≥	0,94	0,989 Fit

Source: Data processed, 2025

The Goodness of Fit (GOF) assessment indicates that the model generally satisfies the recommended criteria across most indices. The Chi-square (χ^2) value is 146.6, which may be considered marginal; however, this statistic is highly sensitive to large sample sizes, so this result is still acceptable in this context. The CMIN/DF value

is below 2.0, suggesting that the measurement model is well-suited and meets the expected standards. Furthermore, the GFI (Goodness-of-Fit Index) is 0.983, while the AGFI (Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index) is 0.882, indicating an acceptable level of fit between the proposed model and the observed data. Although the AGFI value falls slightly below the conventional cutoff of 0.90, it remains tolerable within the scope of social science research. The TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index) and CFI (Comparative Fit Index), with values of 0.973 and 0.989, respectively, demonstrate an excellent incremental fit, indicating that the proposed model performs substantially better than a null or independence model. These indices also confirm that the observed indicators meaningfully represent the latent constructs in the study.

In addition, the RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) is 0.058, indicating a relatively low level of approximation error. Since this value is close to 0.05 and well below 0.08, it provides evidence of a good model fit, indicating that the model adequately represents the empirical data. Overall, given that most fit criteria are met, the measurement model is appropriate and can be reliably used for subsequent analyses, including structural model evaluation and hypothesis testing.

Direct Effect

The direct influence test was conducted to determine the extent of influence between latent variables in the developed structural model. The first regression equation is the influence of Halal Labeling (X1), Digital Marketing (X2), and Brand Image (M) on Purchasing Decisions (Y) of packaged food products of MSMEs in Malang City. The second is the influence of Halal Labeling (X1) and Digital Marketing (X2) on Brand Image.

Table 5. Results of the Direct Effect Test

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Kesimpulan
Digital Marketing	-->	Brand_Image	0,798	0,168	4,74	***0,00	Signifikan
Halal_Label	-->	Brand_Image	0,422	0,123	3,616	***0,00	Signifikan
Brand_Image	-->	Purchase_Decision	0,29	0,119	3,854	***0,00	Signifikan
Digital Marketing	-->	Purchase_Decision	1,505	0,382	3,94	***0,00	Signifikan
Halal_Label	-->	Purchase_Decision	0,318	0,157	3,027	***0,00	Signifikan

Note. *** is $p < 0,01$

Source: Data processed, 2025

The analysis presented in Table 5 indicates that all relationships within the structural model meet the criteria for statistical significance, as reflected by C.R. values above 1.96 and p-values below 0.01. The positive values of the path coefficients (β) suggest that a corresponding rise follows an increase in each independent variable in the dependent variable. More specifically, halal labeling shows a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions ($\beta = 0.318$; $p < 0.001$), implying that clearer halal information enhances consumer confidence when choosing products. Digital marketing also demonstrates a strong, significant positive impact on purchasing decisions ($\beta = 1.5052$; $p < 0.001$), underscoring its effectiveness in shaping consumer interest and buying behavior toward MSME food products. Likewise, brand image significantly affects purchasing decisions ($\beta = 0.29$; $p < 0.001$), indicating that

favorable consumer perceptions of a brand increase the likelihood of purchase. When consumers perceive a brand positively, they are more inclined to select that product. Additionally, the findings reveal that both halal labeling and digital marketing significantly contribute to shaping brand image, with significance levels below 0.01.

Indirect Effect

The structural model yields satisfactory results, with all relationships between variables statistically significant. The next stage examines indirect effects by incorporating Brand Image as a mediating variable in the relationship between Halal Labeling and Digital Marketing on purchasing decisions. To evaluate this mediating role, the Sobel Test is employed, a statistical test used to determine whether the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable via a mediator is statistically significant. This test relies on the estimated path coefficients and their standard errors from two key relationships: the path from the independent variable to the mediator and the path from the mediator to the dependent variable

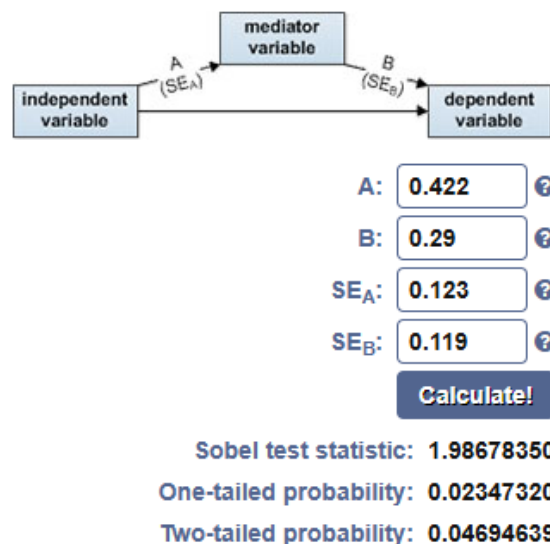


Figure 2. Indirect Effect (Sobel Test Results)
Halal Labeling → Brand Image → Purchase Decision

The Sobel test results, as illustrated in Figure 2, show that the Z-value for the mediation pathway exceeds the critical threshold of 1.96, specifically reaching 1.986. The corresponding significance level is $p < 0.05$, indicating statistical significance. These findings confirm that Brand Image plays a meaningful mediating role in the relationship between Halal Labeling and purchasing decisions for MSME packaged food products in Malang City. In practical terms, more consistent and credible implementation of halal labeling by MSMEs contributes to a stronger brand image in consumers' perceptions, which in turn encourages their intention to purchase.

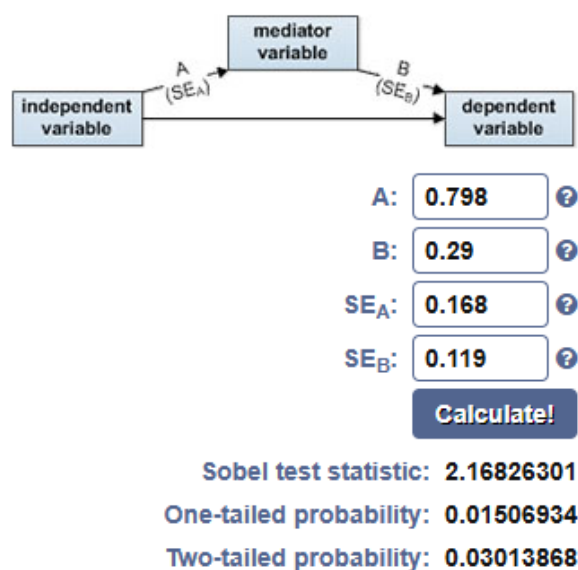


Figure 3. Indirect Effect (Sobel Test Results)
 Digital Marketing → Brand Image → Purchase Decision

The results of the Sobel Test as shown in Figure 3, explain that the calculated Z value for the mediation path is above 1.96, which is 2.168 with a significance level of $p < 0.05$. This means that the Brand Image variable significantly mediates the relationship between the Digital Marketing variable and the Purchase Decision of MSME packaged food products in Malang City. This means that the better MSME actors use digital technology in marketing their products, the stronger the brand image formed in the minds of consumers, and ultimately will also drive purchasing decisions.

Discussion

The research results generally indicate that halal labeling, digital marketing, and brand image directly and indirectly influence purchasing decisions for packaged food products by MSMEs in Malang City. These findings strengthen the theoretical framework and provide empirical implications for consumer behavior theory, digital marketing theory, and the concept of brand equity. Theoretically, these findings support the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which posits that beliefs, attitudes, and intentions influence consumer purchasing behavior. In the context of this research, halal labeling reflects consumer confidence in a halal and safe product for consumption; digital marketing shapes consumer intentions and awareness; and brand image reinforces positive attitudes and perceptions toward the product. All variables in this research model work together to explain the psychological mechanisms underlying the formation of purchasing decisions among retail consumers.

Halal labeling has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, indicating that MSME consumers in Malang place a high value on halal aspects as a form of assurance of safety, certainty, and adherence to religious values. These results align with research conducted by (Fachrozi et al., 2023; Millatina et al., 2022) found that halal certification can increase consumer trust and strengthen product purchasing preferences. In the socio-cultural context of Indonesia, a predominantly Muslim

country, the halal label serves not only as a product attribute but also as a symbol of the producer's moral values and integrity. Therefore, this study expands the empirical evidence that halal labeling plays a crucial role in shaping purchasing decisions in the MSME sector.

Digital marketing has a significant positive effect on purchasing decisions. This further confirms that digital media-based marketing activities play a crucial role in shaping consumer awareness and preferences. These findings support the research of (Al-Azzam & Al-Mizeed, 2021; Ennala Deepa & M. Geeta, 2021; *Zulfikar et al.*, 2022), which states that digital marketing can enhance brand image, strengthen customer engagement, and accelerate information processing, thereby enhancing consumer brand experiences. For MSMEs, digital marketing is not simply a promotional tool but a strategy that can overcome the physical limitations of traditional marketing through the speed and breadth of digital access. Thus, this study reinforces the view that digital marketing has a positive effect on shaping attitudes and encouraging consumers to make purchases, particularly in the MSME sector.

Brand image significantly influences purchasing decisions. This finding reinforces the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) theory proposed by Keller (Bakhshizadeh & Aliasghari, 2023). where a strong brand image can create positive perceptions that influence consumer purchasing decisions, these results align with the findings of (*Muhammad Owais et al.*, 2025; *Zulfikar et al.*, 2022), who stated that brand image plays a mediating role connecting product attributes and purchasing behavior. A favorable brand image does more than build consumer confidence; it also helps a product stand out in a market that is becoming more crowded and uniform. Beyond its direct influence, the findings reveal that brand image also plays an indirect role in shaping the link between halal labeling and purchasing decisions. The results of the Sobel test further confirm that brand image functions as a mediating factor in the relationship between halal labeling and digital marketing with consumers' purchasing decisions. This finding supports the research findings of (*Aspan et al.*, 2017; Genoveva & Utami, 2020; Wibowo & Juhara, 2021), which demonstrate that brand image can strengthen the relationship between halal perceptions and purchasing loyalty. These findings offer fresh empirical support for the idea that brand image serves as an important mediating factor, particularly for halal packaged food products produced by MSMEs in Malang. The results also suggest that the proposed conceptual model aligns well with the observed data. This alignment reinforces the notion that the relationships among the variables can explain purchasing decisions strongly and consistently. This fit not only supports the empirical validity of the conceptual framework but also confirms that the phenomenon of MSME consumer purchasing behavior can be explained through a combination of cognitive (halal labeling), affective (brand image), and conative (purchase decisions) factors, in accordance with the concept of the hierarchy of effects developed by Lavidge and Steiner.

The results of this study strengthen the understanding that halal labeling provides a basis for trust; digital marketing expands exposure and engagement; and brand image acts as an emotional stimulus that can influence purchasing behavior. Overall, the results of this study contribute theoretically by expanding the application of consumer behavior theory to the context of digital-based halal product marketing in the MSME sector, as well as providing an empirical contribution in the form of a new conceptual model that explains the mediating role of brand image in linking halal labeling, digital marketing, and purchasing decisions. The practical contribution lies in

recommending that MSMEs pay more attention to halal labeling and consistent digital promotions to build brand image and ultimately shape purchasing decisions.

CONCLUSION

The findings reveal that halal labeling, digital marketing, and brand image each play a meaningful role in shaping purchasing decisions for packaged food products offered by MSMEs in Malang City. Their influence is evident not only in a direct sense but also indirectly through the mediating function of brand image. Halal labeling has been shown to increase Muslim consumer trust and provide legal certainty. On the other hand, digital marketing strengthens product understanding and provides easy access to information. At the same time, brand image shapes emotional values that build positive perceptions and drive purchasing decisions. Theoretically, these findings enrich the literature on the mediating role of brand image in consumer behavior in the context of marketing packaged food products. In practice, the study's results imply that MSMEs should pay closer attention to the need for halal labeling on marketed products, as well as to increasing digital marketing activities to build a strong brand image and ultimately drive purchasing decisions. For further research, it is recommended to expand the research object and add variables such as brand trust and consumer satisfaction, thereby making the conceptual model more comprehensive and applicable to the development of the halal industry in Indonesia, especially in Malang.

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