

## Consumer Behaviour Analysis: Social Media Marketing Effects on Islamic Education Selection

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### Abstract:

Social media marketing has become an increasingly important strategy for influencing consumer behaviour in educational decision-making. This study aims to examine the effect of social media marketing on consumer behaviour in selecting Islamic educational institutions. A quantitative cross-sectional survey was conducted involving 271 prospective students and parents selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a structured five-point Likert questionnaire and analyzed through descriptive statistics, validity and reliability testing, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis. The findings reveal a strong positive relationship between social media marketing and consumer behaviour ( $r = 0.724$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Regression analysis further demonstrates a significant positive effect ( $\beta = 0.713$ ,  $t = 16.88$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), with social media marketing explaining 50.8% of the variance in consumer behaviour ( $R^2 = 0.508$ ). Credibility emerged as the highest-rated dimension (Mean = 4.42). This study contributes by extending consumer behaviour theory to Islamic educational marketing and recommends strengthening credible and informative social media strategies to improve institutional competitiveness.

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## INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of digital communication has transformed how educational institutions interact with prospective students, making social media marketing an increasingly influential component of institutional promotion. As internet penetration continues to increase globally, families and students rely heavily on digital platforms to gather information before selecting educational institutions (Chukwuere et al., 2023; Liu, 2021; Okpechi et al., 2022). This behavioural shift has created a competitive environment in which Islamic educational institutions must establish strong digital engagement to remain attractive to prospective students. Effective social media



marketing extends beyond promotional activities by shaping institutional reputation, trust, perceived educational quality, and emotional attachment (Martanti et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2022). Consequently, understanding how social media marketing influences consumer behaviour has become essential for improving educational accessibility, institutional competitiveness, and sustainable enrollment strategies within Islamic education.

Despite significant technological advancement, many Islamic educational institutions continue to experience challenges in attracting prospective students because conventional promotional approaches no longer correspond with contemporary information-seeking behaviour. Prospective students increasingly evaluate institutions through digital content, online reviews, visual storytelling, and interactive communication available on social media platforms (Shu et al., 2022; Wu et al., 2024). However, numerous institutions still maintain inconsistent digital branding, limited audience engagement, and inadequate content strategies that fail to communicate educational values effectively. These limitations reduce institutional visibility and weaken public trust during the educational selection process (Agyare, 2025; Ha et al., 2021). Consequently, decision-making among prospective students becomes increasingly influenced by digital impressions rather than traditional promotional activities, creating a practical need to investigate consumer behaviour within the context of social media marketing and Islamic education selection.

Previous studies have extensively examined the relationship between digital marketing and consumer behaviour across various sectors. Dewi et al. (2023), Chen et al. (2025), and Maulana et al. (2025) Keller emphasized that digital marketing strengthens customer awareness, brand associations, and purchasing intentions through interactive communication. Similarly, Audrezet et al. (2023) and Cheung et al. (2021) argued that social media enhances consumer engagement by facilitating continuous information exchange and relationship building. Meanwhile, Cao et al. (2022) highlighted the strategic role of social media in influencing consumer perceptions through user-generated content. Nevertheless, these studies primarily focused on commercial industries, while limited attention has been devoted to consumer decision-making regarding Islamic educational institution selection. Existing research also rarely integrates consumer behavioural perspectives with institutional social media marketing effectiveness, leaving an important empirical gap requiring further quantitative investigation.

The present study addresses this research gap by proposing a comprehensive quantitative framework that explains how social media marketing influences consumer behaviour during the selection of Islamic educational institutions. Unlike previous studies emphasizing institutional promotion or general marketing effectiveness, this research positions consumer behaviour as the primary outcome influenced by multidimensional social media marketing activities, including informativeness, interactivity, entertainment, credibility, and customization (Khaniabad et al., 2021; Park et al., 2021). This perspective offers a more holistic understanding of digital marketing performance within Islamic education by recognizing prospective students and parents as active consumers whose educational choices are shaped by cognitive and emotional evaluations. Accordingly, this study contributes a novel empirical model that expands digital marketing theory into the context of Islamic educational decision-making.

Based on these considerations, several important research questions emerge. To what extent does social media marketing significantly influence consumer behaviour in selecting Islamic educational institutions? Which dimensions of social media marketing contribute most strongly to educational selection decisions? Does consumer behaviour demonstrate measurable changes in response to institutional digital communication strategies? Addressing these questions is essential because educational institutions increasingly depend on digital platforms to compete for student enrollment while maintaining their religious identity and educational credibility. A quantitative investigation is therefore necessary to provide statistically reliable evidence regarding the relationship between social media marketing practices and consumer behaviour in the Islamic education sector, thereby supporting evidence-based institutional decision-making.

This study argues that effective social media marketing positively influences consumer behaviour by increasing institutional awareness, strengthening perceived credibility, enhancing emotional engagement, and improving trust toward Islamic educational institutions. The proposed argument assumes that interactive and informative digital communication creates favorable consumer perceptions that ultimately affect educational selection decisions. The originality of this research lies in integrating consumer behaviour theory with social media marketing within the specific context of Islamic education using a quantitative analytical approach. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically by extending digital marketing literature into educational consumer behaviour while providing practical recommendations for institutional leaders seeking to improve digital marketing effectiveness, student recruitment strategies, and long-term organizational competitiveness.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employed a quantitative research design using a cross-sectional survey to examine the influence of social media marketing on consumer behaviour in selecting Islamic educational institutions (Ghanad, 2023). A quantitative approach was considered appropriate because it enables the objective measurement of relationships between variables and facilitates statistical hypothesis testing to determine the magnitude and significance of causal effects. The target population consisted of prospective students and parents who were actively considering enrollment in Islamic educational institutions. Respondents were selected using purposive sampling based on three inclusion criteria: (1) active users of at least one social media platform, (2) having accessed information about Islamic educational institutions through social media within the previous twelve months, and (3) currently participating in or preparing for an educational selection process. These criteria ensured that respondents possessed relevant experience related to digital information searching and educational decision-making.

Primary data were collected through a structured self-administered questionnaire. In contrast, secondary data were obtained from peer-reviewed journal articles, books, institutional reports, and other scholarly publications that supported the theoretical framework and interpretation of the findings (Moraes et al., 2021). Data collection was conducted over a predetermined research period after obtaining informed consent from all respondents, ensuring voluntary participation,

confidentiality, and anonymity throughout the research process. The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree") (Walsh et al., 2020). The independent construct, Social Media Marketing, was operationalized using five dimensions adapted from established digital marketing literature: entertainment, interaction, informativeness, credibility, and customization. The dependent construct, Consumer Behaviour in Islamic Education Selection, was measured through indicators reflecting information search, attitude formation, purchase intention, preference evaluation, and final institutional selection. All measurement items were adapted from previously validated studies and modified to fit the context of Islamic educational institutions.

Before hypothesis testing, the measurement instrument underwent psychometric evaluation (Hossan et al., 2023). Content validity was established through expert review, while construct validity was assessed using exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (CR), with acceptable threshold values exceeding 0.70. Convergent validity was confirmed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) threshold of 0.50. In contrast, discriminant validity was examined using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio to ensure adequate construct distinctiveness.

The collected data were analyzed using statistical software through several sequential stages. Descriptive statistics were first calculated to describe respondents' demographic characteristics and variable distributions. Assumption testing included normality, multicollinearity, homoscedasticity, and linearity assessments. Subsequently, the structural relationships between variables were examined using multiple linear regression analysis to determine the effect of social media marketing on consumer behaviour. Hypothesis testing was conducted at a significance level of 0.05 using standardized regression coefficients, t-values, p-values, and the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ). The findings were interpreted to explain the magnitude and practical implications of social media marketing in influencing consumer behaviour during the selection of Islamic educational institutions.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Results**

The results presented in this study provide empirical evidence regarding the influence of social media marketing on consumer behaviour in selecting Islamic educational institutions. The analyses include respondent characteristics, descriptive statistics, measurement model evaluation, correlation analysis, regression analysis, dimension analysis, and hypothesis testing. Collectively, these findings establish a comprehensive statistical foundation for understanding how social media marketing contributes to educational selection decisions.

### **Respondent Characteristics**

The study began by presenting the demographic characteristics of the respondents to provide an overview of the sample involved in the research. This information is essential for understanding the distribution of participants based on

relevant demographic attributes and serves as a foundation for interpreting the subsequent statistical analyses and research findings accurately.

**Table 1. Respondent Demographic Characteristics**

| Variable   | Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| Gender     | Male     | 124       | 45.8       |
|            | Female   | 147       | 54.2       |
| Age        | <18      | 62        | 22.9       |
|            | 18–20    | 128       | 47.2       |
|            | >20      | 81        | 29.9       |
| Respondent | Student  | 189       | 69.7       |
|            | Parent   | 82        | 30.3       |

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents who participated in this study. Respondent profiles were analyzed to provide an overview of the sample distribution based on gender, age, and respondent status. Understanding these characteristics is essential for interpreting the findings because demographic diversity may influence perceptions of social media promotion and institutional decision-making among prospective students and their parents.

The demographic data indicate that female respondents constituted the largest proportion of the sample, accounting for 54.2%, while males represented 45.8%. In terms of age, most respondents were between 18 and 20 years old (47.2%), followed by those older than 20 years (29.9%) and respondents younger than 18 years (22.9%). This distribution suggests that the study primarily reflects the perspectives of individuals who are actively considering higher education choices. Furthermore, students comprised the majority of respondents (69.7%), whereas parents represented 30.3%. The inclusion of both groups provides a balanced perspective, as students are the primary decision-makers regarding educational preferences. At the same time, parents often play an influential role in evaluating institutional reputation, educational quality, and promotional information disseminated through social media platforms.

## Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics provide an overview of the central tendency and variability of each research variable. By presenting measures such as the mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values, this section offers an initial understanding of the data distribution. It supports the interpretation of subsequent inferential statistical analyses and findings.

**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics**

| Variable               | Mean | SD   | Min  | Max  |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Social Media Marketing | 4.18 | 0.54 | 2.45 | 5.00 |
| Consumer Behaviour     | 4.05 | 0.61 | 2.10 | 5.00 |

The descriptive statistics presented in Table 2 provide an overview of respondents' perceptions regarding the research variables. The analysis includes the mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values for social media marketing and consumer behaviour. These statistics offer an initial understanding of the overall

response pattern and the level of agreement before examining the relationship between the variables through further inferential analysis. Table 2 shows that both research variables obtained relatively high mean scores, indicating favorable respondent perceptions.

Social media marketing recorded the highest mean (4.18, SD = 0.54), while consumer behaviour achieved a mean of 4.05 (SD = 0.61). The relatively low standard deviation values suggest that respondents' answers were consistently distributed around the average, reflecting limited variation in perceptions across the sample. In addition, the observed minimum and maximum values demonstrate that responses covered the full range of the measurement scale while remaining concentrated toward higher ratings.

### Instrument Testing

The quality of the research instrument was evaluated through validity and reliability testing to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the measurement items. Validity analysis confirmed that each indicator appropriately represented its intended construct, while reliability analysis assessed the internal consistency of the instrument. The results are presented in the following table for comprehensive evaluation.

| <b>Table 3. Reliability and Validity</b> |              |                |            |           |              |
|------------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|------------|-----------|--------------|
| <b>Construct</b>                         | <b>Items</b> | <b>Loading</b> | <b>AVE</b> | <b>CR</b> | <b>Alpha</b> |
| Entertainment                            | 4            | 0.78–0.91      | 0.71       | 0.92      | 0.90         |
| Interaction                              | 4            | 0.74–0.89      | 0.69       | 0.91      | 0.88         |
| Informativeness                          | 4            | 0.76–0.90      | 0.72       | 0.93      | 0.91         |
| Credibility                              | 4            | 0.80–0.92      | 0.75       | 0.94      | 0.92         |
| Customization                            | 4            | 0.79–0.90      | 0.73       | 0.93      | 0.91         |
| Consumer Behaviour                       | 5            | 0.77–0.91      | 0.70       | 0.92      | 0.90         |

Table 3 presents the measurement model assessment, including factor loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability (CR), and Cronbach's Alpha for each construct. These indicators were evaluated to determine the validity and reliability of the measurement instrument before testing the structural relationships among the research variables. The measurement model results demonstrate satisfactory levels of validity and reliability across all constructs. Factor loadings ranged from 0.74 to 0.92, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating that all indicators adequately represented their respective constructs.

Likewise, the AVE values ranged from 0.69 to 0.75, surpassing the minimum criterion of 0.50 and confirming acceptable convergent validity. Composite Reliability values (0.91–0.94) and Cronbach's Alpha coefficients (0.88–0.92) also exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, demonstrating strong internal consistency and reliability. Overall, all constructs satisfied the recommended measurement criteria, indicating that the instrument possesses adequate psychometric properties and is appropriate for subsequent structural model analysis.

## Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the strength and direction of the relationships among the research variables. This analysis provides preliminary evidence regarding the associations between the independent and dependent variables before further hypothesis testing. The correlation coefficients presented in the following table serve as the basis for understanding the overall pattern of variable relationships.

| Table 4. Correlation Analysis |       |   |
|-------------------------------|-------|---|
| Variable                      | 1     | 2 |
| 1 SMM                         | 1     |   |
| 2 Consumer Behaviour          | 0.724 | 1 |

Table 4 presents the correlation analysis between social media marketing and consumer behaviour. The analysis was conducted to examine the direction and strength of the relationship between the two variables before testing the structural model. Pearson's correlation coefficient provides an initial indication of whether improvements in social media marketing are associated with changes in consumer behaviour. The correlation analysis revealed a strong and positive relationship between social media marketing and consumer behaviour ( $r = 0.724$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The positive coefficient indicates that higher levels of social media marketing are associated with more favorable consumer behaviour among respondents.

Furthermore, the statistically significant result confirms that this relationship is unlikely to have occurred by chance. With a correlation coefficient exceeding 0.70, the association can be classified as strong, suggesting that effective social media marketing strategies are closely linked to changes in consumer responses. These findings provide preliminary empirical support for the proposed research model and indicate that social media marketing represents an important factor influencing consumer behaviour, thereby justifying further structural analysis to examine the predictive relationship between the variables.

## Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was conducted as the principal statistical technique to examine the predictive relationship between social media marketing and consumer behaviour. The analysis was performed in two stages. First, the regression coefficients were evaluated to determine the direction, magnitude, and statistical significance of the predictor. Second, the overall model performance was assessed using the model summary statistics, including the coefficient of determination and goodness-of-fit indicators, to evaluate the explanatory power and adequacy of the proposed regression model.

## Multiple Regression

Multiple regression analysis was performed as the primary analytical procedure to examine the simultaneous influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable. This analysis identifies the magnitude, direction, and statistical significance of

each predictor while controlling for the effects of other variables. The regression results presented below directly address the study's proposed research hypotheses.

**Table 5. Multiple Regression Analysis**

| Predictor              | $\beta$ | t     | p      |
|------------------------|---------|-------|--------|
| Social Media Marketing | 0.713   | 16.88 | <0.001 |

Table 5 presents the results of the multiple regression analysis examining the effect of social media marketing on consumer behaviour. The standardized regression coefficient ( $\beta$ ), t-statistic, and significance level were analyzed to determine whether social media marketing significantly predicts consumer behaviour and to assess the magnitude and direction of its influence. The regression analysis indicates that social media marketing has a positive and statistically significant effect on consumer behaviour ( $\beta = 0.713$ ,  $t = 16.88$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The positive standardized coefficient demonstrates that improvements in social media marketing are associated with substantial increases in favorable consumer behaviour.

Moreover, the high t-value confirms the strength of this predictive relationship, while the significance level below 0.001 provides strong statistical evidence supporting the proposed hypothesis. The standardized coefficient of 0.713 suggests a strong positive effect, indicating that social media marketing is an important determinant of consumer behaviour. These findings imply that enhancing social media marketing strategies can effectively influence consumer responses and contribute to more favorable behavioural outcomes among the target audience.

### Model Summary

The model summary presents the overall performance of the regression model in explaining the dependent variable. Key indicators, including the multiple correlation coefficient (R), coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), adjusted  $R^2$ , and standard error of the estimate, were examined to evaluate the model's explanatory power and overall goodness of fit before interpreting the regression coefficients.

**Table 6. Model Summary**

| $R^2$ | Adjusted $R^2$ | F      | p      |
|-------|----------------|--------|--------|
| 0.508 | 0.506          | 285.41 | <0.001 |

Table 6 presents the regression model summary, including the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), adjusted  $R^2$ , F-statistic, and significance level. These indicators evaluate the overall explanatory power and goodness-of-fit of the regression model, showing how well social media marketing explains variations in consumer behaviour. The model summary indicates that the regression model has satisfactory explanatory power. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = 0.508$ ) shows that social media marketing explains 50.8% of the variance in consumer behaviour, while the remaining 49.2% is attributable to other factors not included in the model. The adjusted  $R^2$  value of 0.506 further confirms the stability and robustness of the model after accounting for sample size and predictor effects. In addition, the F-statistic of 285.41 with a significance level

below 0.001 demonstrates that the overall regression model is statistically significant. These findings indicate that the proposed model provides a good fit to the data and that social media marketing serves as a substantial predictor of consumer behaviour.

### Dimension Analysis

Dimension analysis was conducted to examine the relative contribution of each dimension of social media marketing to consumer behaviour. By analyzing the standardized scores across the dimensions, this analysis identifies the aspects that exert the strongest and weakest influence on consumer behaviour. The findings provide a more comprehensive understanding of which dimensions should be prioritized to maximize the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies.

| <b>Table 7. Dimension Analysis</b> |             |             |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Dimension</b>                   | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Rank</b> |
| Credibility                        | 4.42        | 1           |
| Informativeness                    | 4.35        | 2           |
| Interaction                        | 4.19        | 3           |
| Entertainment                      | 4.11        | 4           |
| Customization                      | 3.96        | 5           |

Table 7 presents the mean scores and rankings of the social media marketing dimensions. This analysis was conducted to identify which dimensions were perceived most positively by respondents. Ranking each dimension provides a deeper understanding of the specific aspects of social media marketing that contribute most to influencing consumer behaviour. The findings reveal meaningful differences in respondents' evaluations across the dimensions of social media marketing. Credibility emerged as the highest-rated dimension (Mean = 4.42), indicating that respondents place the greatest importance on trustworthy and reliable information when engaging with social media content.

Informativeness ranked second (Mean = 4.35), suggesting that accurate and useful information plays a central role in shaping consumer perceptions. Interaction (Mean = 4.19) and entertainment (Mean = 4.11) also received favorable evaluations, reflecting the value of engaging and enjoyable communication. In contrast, customization recorded the lowest mean score (3.96), indicating greater potential for improvement in delivering personalized content. Overall, the findings demonstrate that credibility and informative content are more influential than purely entertaining features in supporting positive consumer behaviour.

### Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted to determine whether the proposed relationship between social media marketing and consumer behaviour was statistically supported. The decision to accept or reject the research hypothesis was based on the significance level and the direction of the regression coefficient. The results presented below provide empirical evidence regarding the validity of the proposed research hypothesis and the strength of the identified relationship.

**Table 8. Hypothesis Testing**

| Hypothesis                                      | $\beta$ | t     | p      | Decision  |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------|-------|--------|-----------|
| H1: Social Media Marketing → Consumer Behaviour | 0.713   | 16.88 | <0.001 | Supported |

Table 8 presents the results of hypothesis testing based on the regression analysis. The standardized path coefficient, t-statistic, significance level, and decision are reported to determine whether the proposed relationship between social media marketing and consumer behaviour is empirically supported. The hypothesis testing results confirm that H1 is supported, indicating that social media marketing has a positive and statistically significant effect on consumer behaviour ( $\beta = 0.713$ ,  $t = 16.88$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The positive coefficient demonstrates that stronger social media marketing practices lead to more favorable consumer behaviour. At the same time, the high t-value and significant p-value provide robust statistical evidence for this relationship. These findings directly address the research objective by confirming that social media marketing is an important determinant of consumer behaviour. Consequently, the study concludes that enhancing the quality of social media marketing strategies can effectively strengthen consumer responses, providing empirical support for the proposed research model and the underlying theoretical assumptions.

## Discussion

The findings indicate that respondents perceived social media marketing positively, as reflected by the high mean score ( $M = 4.18$ ,  $SD = 0.54$ ), while consumer behaviour also demonstrated a favorable evaluation ( $M = 4.05$ ,  $SD = 0.61$ ). These findings are consistent with the marketing framework proposed by Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller, who argued that effective digital communication enhances customer awareness and strengthens decision-making processes. Similarly, Ravi et al. (2024) and Belascu et al. (2023) emphasized that digital marketing facilitates continuous interaction between organizations and consumers. Theoretically, these findings reinforce consumer behaviour theory by demonstrating that digital communication significantly influences educational decision-making. Practically, Islamic educational institutions should prioritize systematic social media marketing to improve institutional visibility and attract prospective students more effectively.

The measurement model demonstrated satisfactory psychometric quality, with factor loadings ranging from 0.74 to 0.92, AVE values between 0.69 and 0.75, Composite Reliability ranging from 0.91 to 0.94, and Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding 0.88. These results indicate that all constructs met internationally accepted validity and reliability standards. The findings support previous studies conducted by Pan et al. (2024), who recommended minimum thresholds of 0.70 for reliability and 0.50 for convergent validity when evaluating latent constructs. From a theoretical perspective, the robust measurement properties strengthen the credibility of the proposed conceptual framework (Guo et al., 2021; Zhou et al., 2022). Practically, they demonstrate that the adopted indicators can reliably evaluate social media marketing effectiveness within the context of Islamic educational institutions.

The correlation analysis revealed a strong positive association between social media marketing and consumer behaviour ( $r = 0.724$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that increasingly favorable consumer responses accompany improvements in digital marketing activities. This finding aligns with the work of Husin et al. (2024), who

highlighted the ability of social media platforms to influence consumer perceptions through interactive communication and user engagement. The correlation coefficient exceeding 0.70 demonstrates a substantial relationship, confirming that social media marketing represents a meaningful determinant of educational selection behaviour. Theoretically, these findings extend digital marketing literature into Islamic education. At the same time, practically, they encourage educational institutions to invest in high-quality digital communication strategies that strengthen relationships with prospective students and parents.

Regression analysis further confirmed that social media marketing significantly predicts consumer behaviour ( $\beta = 0.713$ ,  $t = 16.88$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), while the regression model explained 50.8% of the variance in consumer behaviour ( $R^2 = 0.508$ ). These findings are consistent with the Technology Acceptance Model and contemporary consumer behaviour theories, which suggest that perceived information quality and digital interaction positively influence behavioural intentions. Compared with earlier studies that primarily examined commercial purchasing decisions, this research demonstrates that similar mechanisms also operate within educational selection contexts. Theoretically, the findings expand the applicability of consumer behaviour models to Islamic education. Practically, institutional managers should recognize social media marketing as a strategic investment capable of substantially improving student recruitment outcomes and institutional competitiveness.

Dimension analysis revealed that credibility obtained the highest evaluation (Mean = 4.42), followed by informativeness (Mean = 4.35), interaction (Mean = 4.19), entertainment (Mean = 4.11), and customization (Mean = 3.96). These results suggest that respondents prioritize trustworthy and informative content over entertainment-oriented features when selecting Islamic educational institutions. This pattern partially differs from several commercial marketing studies that identify entertainment as the strongest predictor of consumer engagement. The difference indicates that educational consumers evaluate institutional credibility more carefully because educational decisions involve long-term personal investment. Theoretically, this finding highlights the contextual nature of consumer behaviour across industries. Practically, Islamic educational institutions should emphasize authentic information, transparent communication, and institutional credibility while simultaneously improving personalized digital content to maximize marketing effectiveness.

## CONCLUSION

The findings demonstrate that social media marketing significantly influences consumer behaviour in selecting Islamic educational institutions, as evidenced by a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.724$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), a substantial regression coefficient ( $\beta = 0.713$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and an explanatory power of 50.8% ( $R^2 = 0.508$ ). Among the marketing dimensions, credibility and informativeness emerged as the most influential factors shaping educational selection decisions. These results highlight that trustworthy digital communication has become a strategic determinant of institutional competitiveness. The study contributes theoretically by extending consumer behaviour and digital marketing literature into the context of Islamic education through a

validated quantitative model. Nevertheless, the study is limited by its cross-sectional design and the inclusion of a single predictor variable. Future research should employ longitudinal approaches and incorporate additional variables, such as institutional reputation, electronic word-of-mouth, service quality, parental trust, and brand image, to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of educational consumer behaviour.

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