



# Artificial intelligence and digital marketing on online purchase intention mediating customer experience study on al washliyah university labuhanbatu students

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## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

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This research aims to analyze the influence of artificial intelligence and digital marketing on online purchase intention, with customer experience as a mediating factor among students at Al Washliyah University, Labuhanbatu, North Sumatera. This quantitative descriptive study targets a population comprising all students at Univa Labuhanbatu, from which a sample of 100 students was selected. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed on Google Forms and distributed via WhatsApp to ensure broad reach among participants. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), facilitated by SmartPLS software, was employed to analyze the data. The findings of this study reveal several key insights: first, artificial intelligence has a positive and significant impact on purchase intention. Second, digital marketing similarly exerts a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. Third, customer experience is shown to effectively mediate the relationship between artificial intelligence and purchase intention, indicating that improved customer interactions enhance the AI's impact on purchasing behaviors. Lastly, customer experience also mediates the relationship between digital marketing and purchase intention, demonstrating the importance of customer engagement in optimizing digital marketing effectiveness. These findings underscore the critical role of customer experience as a bridge linking AI and digital marketing efforts to purchasing intentions, especially within a university student demographic in a digital context.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The development of information technology in the 5.0 era is currently influencing market growth in Indonesia significantly, this is demonstrated by the ease with which consumers can obtain goods or services via online platforms anywhere and at any time. Apart from that, changes leading to the development of information technology also show a distinct phenomenon among the millennial generation. According to (Ordun, 2015), currently the

millennial generation is increasingly aware of their purchasing power and prefers to spend their money in the retail industry through online shopping to meet their needs.

The phenomenon that occurs among the millennial generation is currently interesting to study more deeply regarding the behavior of the millennial generation in using e-commerce platforms and artificial intelligence to consume goods and services through online purchases. Artificial intelligence is a technology that allows computers or machines to be as intellectual as humans, able to carry out activities related to activities carried out similarly to the human brain (Thilagavathy & Kumar, 2021).

Currently, marketing practices have also begun to use artificial intelligence as a promotional medium used by sellers in marketing their products. According to Jain “Marketers can process large amounts of information, meeting customer expectations. That is what guarantees customer satisfaction with the help of AI” (Jain et al., 2020). Rapid developments in information technology have also made artificial intelligence one of the contributions of information technology which is also fully utilized by practitioners, especially in the marketing department.

Besides that *artificial intelligence*, another promotional media that is often used is digital marketing, in this case digital marketing is said to be able to attract many consumers and enable businesses to communicate effectively with consumers via online media from various backgrounds and is able to direct consumers in the purchasing process (Lodhi & Shoaib, 2017). Digital marketing also effectively strengthens brand value by eliminating consumer misunderstandings as the exchange of ideas, opinions and consumer experiences leads to greater purchase intentions (Tham et al., 2019).

*Artificial intelligence* increasingly used in operational markets to identify risks, conduct consumer research, and identify business functions (Campbell et al., 2020). While the use of AI in digital marketing will influence marketing strategies, business models, marketing procedures, and consumer service choices, it will also influence customer behavior. The main focus of AI in digital marketing is not based on replacing human dynamics in making important decisions, but on developing a more powerful dynamic digital marketing environment. This will allow marketers to quickly assess potential customer needs and adapt the AI they use in digital marketing to increase sales (Smith, 2018).

*Artificial intelligence* is expected to be important for developing future digital products, especially in digital marketing. According to Juniper Research, in 2018, retailer spending on AI was 2 billion and is expected to increase to \$7.3 billion by 2022 (Keiningham et al., 2017). Various sources, including AI-controlled chatbots, big data, and client information are used in digital marketing to influence consumer behavior. Based on previous research, AI is said to have a significant influence in influencing consumer behavior and is able to increase sales (Alwan & Alshurideh, 2022; Rabby et al., 2021).

AI interactions, such as chatbots and automated product recommendations, influence customer experience in online shopping by enhancing efficiency, personalization, and service quality, which in turn positively impacts customer satisfaction and loyalty. According to a study by Huang and Rust (2018), AI in e-commerce provides rapid and tailored assistance to customers, minimizing the time required to find product information or resolve issues; this efficiency is crucial for improving customer experience. Additionally, research by Gretzel et al. (2020) suggests that AI-based personalization in product recommendations allows customers to feel that their experience is more tailored to personal preferences, fostering long-term relationships between customers and brands. However, another study by Kietzmann et al. (2021) highlights that AI interactions yield positive experiences only when the AI's quality and accuracy are high; AI that fails to deliver relevant answers can reduce customer satisfaction and trust. Thus, AI design focused on speed, accuracy, and relevance is essential in creating a positive online shopping experience for customers.

Based on the background above, this research will focus on how the influence of artificial intelligence and digital marketing influences consumer purchasing intentions, by using media experiences owned by consumers as mediation. This research is important to carry out considering the absence of research that connects three variables, research that has never been carried out before, apart from that, research using a sample of AL Washliyah Labuhanbatu University students has also never been carried out, so this research will examine " Connection Artificial Intelligence And Digital Marketing To Online Purchase Intention With Mediation Customer Experience Study on Al Washliyah Labuhanbatu University Students.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research will be conducted at Al Washliyah University, Labuhanbatu, North Sumatra. This type of research is quantitative descriptive research. The population in this study was all Univa Labuhanbatu students, while the sample used was 100 students. The data collection method used in this research is using a questionnaire, with the stipulation that the questionnaire will be created in a Google form and then distributed via WhatsApp media to students randomly.

The measurement instrument has indeed been designed using a questionnaire in Google Forms. However, it is essential to refine the questionnaire through a pilot test. The pilot test is conducted to ensure that each question is easy to understand, relevant, and appropriate for measuring the research variables. In this process, a small sample of respondents with characteristics similar to the main sample will be asked to complete the questionnaire. The results will be analyzed to identify any questions that are difficult to understand or ineffective in measuring the variable indicators. Based on the pilot test results, the questionnaire will be revised if any questions are found to be unclear or unsuitable. This process helps to improve the validity and reliability of the instrument before it is used in the main research.

Tabel 1 Pilot Testing Questioner

Questioner	Perseption
AI	
AI helps me quickly find the products I am looking for.	4.00
AI-based product recommendations on online shopping sites are relevant to my interests.	3.34
AI services on online shopping sites are available 24/7, which makes it convenient for me.	3.63
I feel that AI on online shopping sites can adjust recommendations based on my preferences.	4.19
Digital Marketing	
The product ads I see online are relevant to my needs..	3.96
I often see digital ads from brands I am interested in across various online platforms.	3.17
The promotions shown in digital ads encourage me to consider buying the product.	3.15
The digital content created by brands feels engaging and informative to me.	3.60
Customer Experinece	
I feel comfortable shopping on sites that use AI and digital advertising	3.88
I am satisfied with my online shopping experience.	3.73
The online shopping transaction process is easy and efficient.	3.87
I feel more confident in brands that effectively use AI and digital marketing.	3.89
Online Purchase Intention	
I have a desire to purchase the products offered after seeing digital ads or AI recommendations.	4.05
I prefer to buy from brands that I frequently see in digital ads	3.91
I tend to make repeat purchases on sites that provide a good shopping experience.	3.94
I am interested in using platforms that offer AI services and digital promotions that match my interests.	3.88

The data analysis technique used in this research is using the Structure Equation Model (SEM) with the help of SmartPLS Version software. *Partial Least Square* (PLS) is assumed to be a fairly strong method for analyzing data, several advantages that emerge are, the data does not have to have a multivariate normal distribution, and the sample used does not have to be large. The measurement model used is an outer model with validity test criteria, namely content validity, convergent validity, average variance extruded, discriminant validity, then reliability testing. Furthermore, this research also carries out structural model or inner model analysis and hypothesis testing.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This research describes the characteristics of respondents based on several provisions which can be seen in table 1 below:

Table 1. Respondent characteristics based on gender, age and major

Characteristics	F	%	Mean
Gender			
Man	62	62	62
Woman	38	38	38
Total	100	100	100
Usian			
19 years old	27	27	27
20 years	34	34	34
20 years	39	39	39
Total	100	100	100
Major			
Management	53	53	53
GOOD	11	11	11
Computer Science	18	18	18
Indonesian Language Education	7	7	7
Biology Education	11	11	11
Total	100	100	100

Source: primary data processed in 2024

#### 3.1 Validity Test

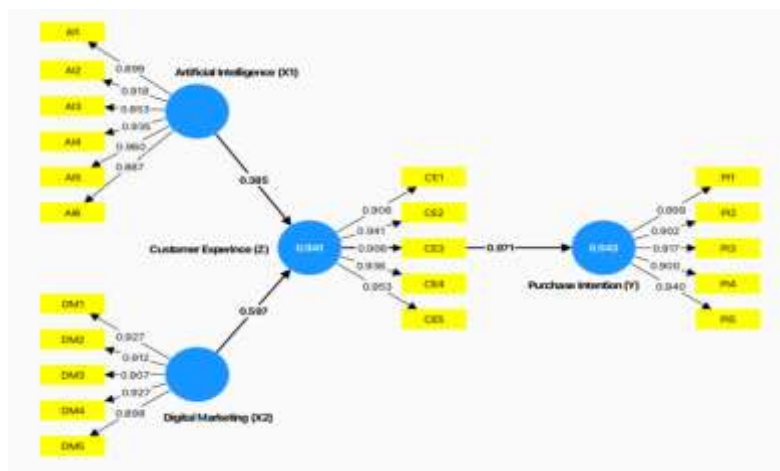


Figure 1. Outer Model Validity Test

Based on Figure 1 above, it is known that a loading value above 0.70 indicates that the construct can explain more than 50% of the indicator variance.

Tabel. 2 Validity Test

	Artificial Intelligence (X1)	Customer Experince (Z)	Digital Marketing (X2)	Purchase Intention (Y)
AI1	0.899			
AI2	0.918			
AI3	0.853			
AI4	0.935			
AI5	0.960			
AI6	0.887			
CE1		0.906		
CE2		0.941		
CE3		0.906		
CE4		0.936		
CE5		0.953		
DM1			0.927	
DM2			0.912	
DM3			0.907	
DM4			0.927	
DM5			0.898	
PI1				0.899
PI2				0.902
PI3				0.917
PI4				0.900
PI5				0.940

Source: primary data processed in 2024

From table 4.10 it can be seen that all values *outer loading* > .70. So it can be concluded that all indicators have met the minimum threshold requirements. Next is the value calculation *Fornell-Larcker Criterion*, if the AVE square root value for each construct is greater than the correlation value between the construct and other constructs in the model, then the model is said to have good discriminant validity values. Following is the output value *fornell-larcker criterion*:

Tabel.3 Fornell-Lacker Criterion

	AI (X1)	CE (Z)	DM (X2)	PI (Y)
Artificial Intelligence (X1)	0.909			
Customer Experince (Z)	0.953	0.929		
Digital Marketing (X2)	0.952	0.963	0.914	
Purchase Intention (Y)	0.969	0.971	0.970	0.912

Source: primary data processed in 2024

Table 3 shows that all the roots of the AVE of each construct are greater than the correlation with other variables. Because the root value of AVE for all latent variables is greater than the correlation with other constructs, the discriminant validity requirements in this model have been met.

### 3.2 Uji Reliabilitas

To ensure that there are no problems related to measurement, the next step in evaluating the outer model is to test reliability by looking *composite reliability* and *cronbach's alpha*. Results *composite reliability* and *cronbach's alpha* will show a good value if it is above 0.70. Following is the output value *composite reliability* and *cronbach's alpha*.

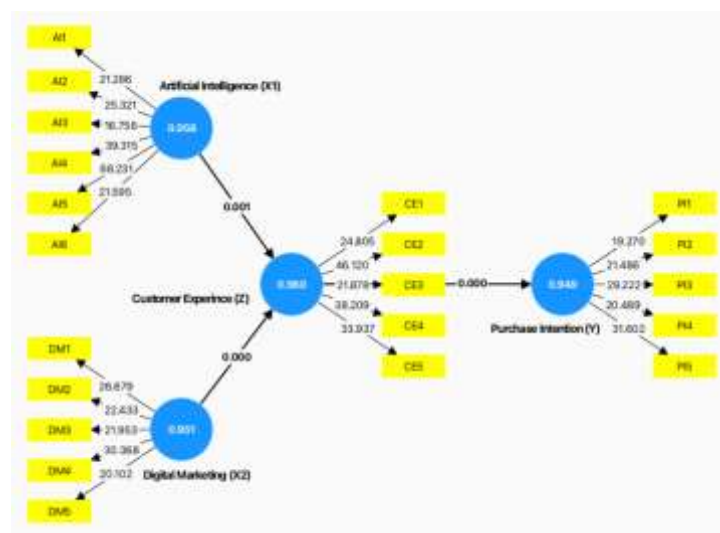
Tabel 4. Reliability Test

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)
Artificial Intelligence (X1)	0.958	0.961
Customer Experince (Z)	0.960	0.961
Digital Marketing (X2)	0.951	0.952
Purchase Intention (Y)	0.949	0.950

Table 4 shows that value *composite reliability* and *cronbach's alpha* for all constructs is above 0.70 which indicates that all variables are declared reliable.

### 3.3 Inner Model and Hipotesis Test

This research hypothesis testing was carried out by looking at the calculated values *Bootstrapping*. In this study, a confidence level of 95% was used so that the limit of inaccuracy ( $\alpha$ ) = 5% = 0.05, the t-table value was 1.96. If the t-statistic value is smaller than the t-table value (t-statistic < 1.96), then H01 accepted and H1 rejected. If the t-statistic value is greater than or equal to the t-table (t-statistic > 1.96), then H01 rejected and H1 accepted. Following are the calculation results *Bootstrapping* in this research:



**Figure 2.** Bootstrapping calculation results

The results of the bootstrapping analysis using SmartPLS are as follows:

Table 5. Path Coefficient Values

	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values
Artificial Intelligence (X1) -> Purchase Intention (Y)	0.115	3.237	0.001
Digital Marketing (X2) -> Purchase Intention (Y)	0.118	4.922	0.000

Source: primary data processed in 2024

Based on the results of the data analysis above, it can be seen that the P value is  $0.001 < 0.05$ , so the first hypothesis is accepted, meaning that artificial intelligence has a positive and significant effect on purchase intentions. The better the use of AI in product marketing, the higher the consumer's intention to make a purchase. The results of this research are in line with research conducted by (Lodhi & Shoaib, 2017; Bhagat et al., 2023; Bilal et al., 2024; Nguyen et al., 2024; Liang et al., 2023; Mittal et al., 2024; Aracchi & Samarasinghe, 2024) who found that digital marketing had a positive impact on online purchase intentions because the researchers viewed promotion through e-marketing as mandatory for most products that will be sold online. Then (Alwan & Alshurideh, 2022; Chowdhury & Kumar Singh Assistant Professor, 2024; Nawaz & Kaldeen, 2020; Watulingas & Permana, 2020; Putri, 2021; Otopah et al., 2024; Dastane,

2020; Sabraz Nawaz & Kaldeen, 2020) also found that digital marketing with well-crafted content and the use of E-WOM can increase consumer purchase intentions.

Tests were also carried out on the relationship between digital marketing and purchase intention. The results showed that the P-Value was  $0.000 < 0.05$ , meaning the second hypothesis was accepted, thus digital marketing had a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. This means that digital marketing has an important role in marketing, the higher the use of digital marketing in marketing products, the higher the consumer's intention to make a purchase. This research is in line with research conducted by (Sharma et al., 2024) who found that artificial intelligence has a strong influence on consumer purchasing intentions.

Table 5. Results of Indirect Relationship analysis

	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values
Artificial Intelligence (X1) -> Customer Experience (Z) -> Purchase Intention (Y)	0.115	3.237	0.001
Digital Marketing (X2) -> Customer Experience (Z) -> Purchase Intention (Y)	0.118	4.922	0.000

Source: primary data processed in 2024

Based on the results of the analysis above, it can be concluded that, the P-value is  $0.001 < 0.05$ , so the third hypothesis is accepted, meaning that customer experience is able to mediate the relationship between artificial intelligence and purchase intention. Thus, consumers who have experience in using AI or purchasing products will strengthen the use of AI in influencing consumer purchasing intentions. Then the results of the data analysis above also found that customer experience was able to mediate the relationship between digital marketing and purchase intention. The use of information technology based on digital marketing is enough to influence consumers' purchasing intentions, but adding to the experience that consumers have previously had in making online purchases will greatly increase the purchases made by consumers on products marketed through digital marketing systems. Thus, this research implies for practitioners to use the role of AI and digital marketing in maximizing product marketing. This research further reveals that AI that is adapted to consumer demand and has the criteria of being safe and easy to use will tend to increase purchases made by consumers. Furthermore, the role of digital marketing is by adding creative content and then, some content that shows product excellence, product quality and product transparency will further increase purchases for consumers.

The research confirms that artificial intelligence (AI) has a positive and significant influence on online purchase intention, consistent with previous studies. AI-driven systems, such as personalized product recommendations and virtual assistants, enhance consumers' decision-making processes by minimizing uncertainty and increasing perceived value (Huang & Rust, 2021). AI also facilitates efficient customer service, through real-time chatbots or automated responses, contributing to convenience and satisfaction, which in turn positively affects purchase intention (Lu et al., 2021). As consumers increasingly prefer fast and personalized services, businesses leveraging AI effectively can improve customer engagement and boost purchasing behavior.

Similarly, digital marketing exerts a significant impact on online purchase intention by shaping customers' perceptions and preferences. Prior research suggests that personalized digital advertising, email campaigns, and content marketing are instrumental in influencing consumer behavior (Kannan, 2017). Digital marketing strategies improve brand visibility and provide tailored product recommendations, increasing both trust and relevance for consumers (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Social media

marketing, in particular, creates opportunities for interactive communication and peer reviews, which further strengthen consumers' intention to make online purchases (Yadav & Rahman, 2018). These platforms allow businesses to cultivate relationships with customers, reinforcing loyalty through consistent and targeted outreach.

A key finding of this research is the mediating role of customer experience in the relationship between AI, digital marketing, and online purchase intention. Previous studies affirm that customer experience plays a crucial role in shaping purchasing behavior, acting as the bridge between technological interventions and consumer outcomes (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). AI-based services, such as dynamic pricing models and personalized product search functions, enhance the overall shopping experience by catering to individual preferences (Buell et al., 2020). At the same time, well-executed digital marketing campaigns complement these efforts by delivering messages aligned with customer needs, creating a seamless end-to-end experience that promotes satisfaction and fosters repeat purchases.

This research aligns with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT), emphasizing that perceived ease of use and satisfaction play critical roles in driving purchase intention. AI enhances these elements by providing fast, accurate, and personalized interactions, while digital marketing builds customer awareness and trust. However, the effectiveness of both depends significantly on the customer's experience throughout the journey. If customers encounter smooth, enjoyable interactions, they are more likely to convert initial interest into purchase decisions (Grewal et al., 2019). Therefore, businesses must ensure that AI tools and marketing campaigns are integrated into a coherent strategy that prioritizes customer satisfaction at every touchpoint.

The study further suggests that companies should focus not only on technological solutions but also on creating emotionally satisfying experiences. While AI and digital marketing provide the necessary tools for personalization and engagement, positive customer experiences ultimately convert these efforts into meaningful outcomes. Offering personalized recommendations, engaging customer service, and seamless shopping interfaces can build emotional connections that inspire loyalty. Therefore, businesses aiming to maximize online purchase intentions should prioritize not only deploying advanced technologies but also delivering high-quality, memorable customer experiences.

This study enriches the existing body of literature by confirming the direct and mediated relationships between AI, digital marketing, and purchase intention. It contributes to the understanding of how customer experience serves as a vital mediator, complementing technological efforts to enhance consumer behavior. The findings also underscore the relevance of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT) in the context of e-commerce, suggesting that purchase intention is shaped by both cognitive and emotional factors. The study bridges gaps in previous research by showing that customer experience transforms the impact of AI and digital marketing into practical outcomes, highlighting the importance of an integrated approach.

For practitioners, the findings indicate that businesses should not treat AI and digital marketing as separate initiatives but rather as complementary tools within a unified strategy. AI-powered features such as chatbots, predictive analytics, and dynamic pricing should be optimized to provide seamless customer experiences. At the same time, companies should employ targeted digital marketing efforts to engage customers across platforms, building brand awareness and trust. Additionally, improving customer experience—through user-friendly interfaces, responsive service, and emotionally satisfying interactions—can increase the effectiveness of both AI and digital marketing. Managers should prioritize consistent quality across all touchpoints to ensure customers have positive experiences, which are critical for driving purchase intentions and long-term loyalty.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion above, the conclusions of this research are, first, artificial intelligence has a positive and significant effect on purchase intent. Second, this research also found that digital marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. Third, this research finds that customer experience is able to mediate the relationship between artificial intelligence and purchase intention. Finally, this research found that customer experience is able to mediate the relationship between digital marketing and purchase intention

This study, while offering valuable insights, has several limitations. First, the research may be limited by the specific context in which the data was collected. Consumer behavior and perceptions toward AI and digital marketing can vary significantly across industries, cultures, and regions. Thus, the generalizability of the findings may be restricted to similar e-commerce environments or geographical regions. Second, the study relies on cross-sectional data, which captures consumer behavior at a single point in time. This limits the ability to assess how AI, digital marketing, and customer experience evolve and impact purchase intention over time. Third, the study focuses primarily on AI and digital marketing without accounting for external factors such as price sensitivity, economic conditions, or brand loyalty, which could also influence online purchase intention. Finally, the mediating role of customer experience is analyzed quantitatively, but a deeper qualitative exploration may provide more nuanced insights into how specific aspects of the customer journey impact purchase behavior.

Future research could address these limitations by exploring the topic across various industries and cultural contexts to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Longitudinal studies are also recommended to track changes in customer behavior over time, providing a more dynamic view of how AI and digital marketing strategies impact online purchase intention. Additionally, future studies could include other variables, such as customer trust, product quality, or brand loyalty, to better understand the comprehensive factors influencing purchase decisions. Researchers may also benefit from employing mixed methods, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to uncover deeper insights into how specific elements of customer experience—such as emotional engagement or post-purchase satisfaction—shape purchase intention. Furthermore, as AI technology continues to advance, future research could examine the role of emerging technologies like augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) in enhancing online customer experiences and driving purchase decisions.

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