

## Implementing Social Media Marketing Tactics to Boost Preschool Enrollment Intentions

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### Abstract

In today's competitive business landscape, digital technology and digitalization are crucial for enhancing a business's online visibility. This is particularly true for educational services such as preschools. The emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in decreased purchase intentions for these services, presenting a challenge that needs urgent attention. The objective of this study is to investigate the factors that could potentially elevate the purchase intention for preschool services within the Malaysian context. To achieve this, a research framework was devised to examine the correlation between social media marketing elements—namely entertainment and interaction—along with trust, perceived value, and purchase intention. Employing a quantitative research approach, data were collected from 200 participants selected through purposive sampling. Participants were invited to complete an online questionnaire aimed at gauging their responses to various marketing strategies. The findings reveal that entertainment, interaction, trust, and perceived value all bear a positive and significant relationship with the purchase intention for preschool services. Capitalizing on these insights, a practical intervention was implemented: creating and maintaining a Facebook page for a particular preschool to bolster its online presence. Throughout the intervention, engaging and relevant content was posted regularly on the page. The outcome was noteworthy. The preschool's Facebook page notably improved potential consumers' purchase intentions. In conclusion, this study has formulated an effective social media strategy for preschools, demonstrating that a well-managed social media presence can significantly enhance trust, perceived value, and ultimately, purchase intentions among consumers.

**Keywords:** Social Media Marketing, Trust, Perceived Value, Purchase Intention, Preschool

### Introduction

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) officially characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic, citing it as a grave threat to global health (World Health Organization, 2020).

This pronouncement precipitated sweeping changes worldwide, most notably the enforcement of lockdowns in numerous nations. According to Adedoyin and Soykan (2020), the extraordinary surge of the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated the shuttering of various sectors globally, including education. In Malaysia, a Movement Control Order (MCO) came into effect on March 18, 2020, compelling a complete lockdown that left businesses worldwide with no option but to temporarily cease operations for safety reasons, impacting numerous industries, among them preschool services.

Preschool education is a critical foundation that prepares children for the compulsory education that awaits them in primary school. In Malaysia, this early education phase caters to children aged 4 to 6, with the aim of fostering essential skills like socialization and personality development (MOE - Pre-School Education Goals, 2021). The Ministry of Education in Malaysia recognizes early education as a fundamental segment of the nation's formal educational structure.

The enforced suspension of preschool activities has created significant challenges for parents selecting new preschools for their children. Research by Tahaa et al (2019) has highlighted that parents weigh various factors in their decision-making process, including the programs offered, location, teacher quality, and school environment. They typically conduct thorough research, visiting prospective preschools to make informed comparisons. Furthermore, Alsauidi (2016) observed that class size, instructional quality, and student-teacher relationships are pivotal considerations for parents in their search for the ideal preschool.

However, the constraints imposed by COVID-19 have restricted parents from personally visiting preschools, due to stringent adherence to standard operating procedures (SOPs) (Nazari, 2020). This limitation has adversely affected parents' intentions to enroll their children, as they are unable to physically assess the preschools. Consequently, parents have turned to online sources, such as comments and reviews, as an alternative means of evaluation (Pütter, 2017). In light of these developments, it is crucial for businesses to focus on their social media communications to enhance consumer engagement and maintain competitiveness (Irshad and Ahmad, 2020).

Social media marketing, as defined by Tuten and Solomon (2018), involves leveraging social media technologies and channels to create and exchange valuable offerings for an organization's stakeholders. Go and You (2016) suggest that social media facilitates a bidirectional dialogue between firms and their customers, thereby serving as an essential communication tool (Kumar et al., 2016; Gazal et al., 2016). As Felix et al (2017) noted, social media not only forges new business opportunities but also strengthens customer relationships.

In the face of intense market competition, embracing digital technology has become a strategic imperative for businesses, as noted by (Rajahonka and Villman, 2019). With 6,111 preschools reported in Malaysia as of January 31, 2018 (Quick Facts, 2018, 2018), the sector is experiencing growth due to heightened demand for early childhood education (Lydia et al., 2018). Social media adaptation can offer significant advantages, enhancing visibility and fostering consumer purchasing intentions (Ismail, 2017). Effective content marketing on

platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter can not only increase brand awareness but also spur consumer interest, as evidenced by (Zhang and Du, 2020).

Statista (2021) reports that Facebook, Instagram, and Facebook Messenger are among the most frequented social media platforms in Malaysia. As of December 2020, the nation boasted 29.16 million internet users and 27.05 million social media users (Internet World Stats, 2021). In this highly digitized landscape, preschools are increasingly incorporating social media into their marketing strategies to stand out in a competitive field.

For preschools, including kindergartens, social media marketing presents an opportunity to foster trust and add perceived value to their services. A well-crafted social media strategy can disseminate useful information to potential clients, while engaging content can build trust and enhance prospective customers' perceived value of the services offered, ultimately influencing their intent to purchase.

### **Case Description and Problem Statement**

The preschool in question currently has a diverse student body of 80, encompassing various ethnicities such as Chinese, Malay, and Indian, with a teaching staff of 10. Instruction at the preschool is multilingual, with lessons conducted in Bahasa Malaysia, Chinese, Tamil, and English. To accommodate different schedules, the preschool offers both morning and afternoon sessions.

However, the preschool is confronting a significant marketing challenge: its limited presence on social media. Despite having a Facebook page since September 19, 2012, the preschool has not utilized it effectively for engagement or information dissemination. The page lacks frequent updates from the business owner, with most content coming from teachers or through parents' tags. Crucial business details like contact information and service descriptions are notably absent from the page, which only lists the preschool's address. The absence of an integrated Facebook Messenger contact option further impedes direct communication with interested parties. Observations show that the page has garnered only a couple of reviews, which could lead to a decrease in customer inquiries. In an era where online reviews significantly influence consumer behavior (Pütter, 2017; Alalwan, 2018), the scarcity of feedback on the preschool's page could erode trust and diminish the intention to purchase its services.

Additionally, the preschool suffers from a lack of visible online background information. Google searches yield no direct website links or substantial details. Essential insights such as operational hours, course offerings, facilities, and feedback from students and parents are not readily available online. As Chugh and Ruhi (2017) highlight, social media has become a primary source of information, displacing traditional communication channels. Without an online presence, prospective parents are limited to obtaining information through word-of-mouth recommendations or by physically visiting the preschool. This absence of readily accessible information could result in the loss of potential customers.

To address these marketing deficiencies, this study suggests an active and strategic use of the preschool's Facebook presence. Moslehpour et al. (2021) emphasize that social media can deliver engaging content and foster interactions between consumers and businesses. By enhancing its social media profile, the preschool should aim to provide comprehensive and

engaging information to prospective customers. This approach could cultivate trust and increase the perceived value of the preschool's services, thereby boosting purchase intent. Social media engagement is particularly crucial in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, as parents are compelled to rely on digital resources to identify the best preschool options for their children. Therefore, this study seeks to identify the factors that can elevate the purchase intention for preschool services. Utilizing survey data, the effectiveness of targeted social media marketing strategies will be assessed, aiming to enhance the preschool's appeal to potential clients.

## **Literature Review**

### **Purchase Intention**

Mirabi and colleagues (2015) define purchase intention as the consumer's willingness and determination to buy a product. It embodies the consumer's behavior and focus on a specific product, as well as their readiness to make a purchase, as further elaborated by Schmalfuß and others in 2017. Gautam and Sharma (2017) described purchase intention as the likelihood of a consumer making a purchase in the near future, while Garg and Joshi (2018) linked it to the consumer's inclination to act upon their interest in a product or brand. Thus, Liu et al. (2019) suggest that purchase intention encompasses both the motivation behind a purchase and the likelihood of its occurrence.

Lee and Phang (2015) observe that numerous businesses utilize social media to market their products and services, recognizing its role as a collection of online tools, platforms, and media that facilitate communication and content sharing among individuals (Erkan & Evans, 2016). Social media, therefore, has a moderating effect on consumer purchase intentions, a finding supported by multiple studies including (Huang, 2016; Zhang et al., 2018; Sun and Wang 2019). Naeem (2019) provided evidence that social media boosts service awareness and fosters traits such as responsiveness, assurance, and reliability, which in turn amplify customer purchase intention. Further research by Irshad and Ahmad (2020) suggests that retailers who consistently engage with customers on social media can significantly increase purchase intention. Pütter (2017) concludes that the global rise in social media usage enhances consumer-brand engagement, leading to increased brand loyalty and purchase intentions.

According to Widyanto and Sitohang (2021), attitude is a pivotal factor shaping a person's intentions toward a product. The positive correlation between attitude and purchase intention is well-documented: a favorable view of a brand often corresponds with heightened purchase intention (Akroush et al., 2019; Sun and Wang, 2019; Olšanová et al., 2021). Mirabi et al (2015) note that purchase intention is usually deeply interconnected with consumers' behaviors, perceptions, and attitudes. Göçer and Sevil (2017) add that the more favorable a consumer's attitude towards a product or service, the stronger their buying intention. Sun and Wang (2019) further assert that information on social media contributes to this positive attitude, thus leading to an uptick in purchase intention.

Rana and Paul (2017) identified perceived value as a critical aspect of consumer attitude that affects purchase intention. As Watanabe et al (2020) argue, consumers are more likely to exhibit strong purchase intentions when they perceive a higher value in a brand. Furthermore, consumer trust is a significant factor that influences purchase intention Chong et al (2018), enhancing the emotional connection between consumers and sellers and leading to greater

buying intent. Amin and Tarun (2020) contend that limited trust can diminish customer purchase intention, while research by Watanabe et al (2020); Moslehpour et al (2021) demonstrates that bolstering both trust and perceived value can elevate it.

Soh et al (2017) pinpoint a direct correlation between consumer purchase intention and behavior, suggesting that increased purchase intention is predictive of actual buying behavior. This relationship is corroborated by Garg and Joshi (2018); Singh and Verma (2017), with Chen et al (2021) confirming that purchase intention has a positive and significant effect on consumers' actual purchasing actions. Therefore, it is established that purchase intention can indeed mediate consumer behavior.

This study aims to delve into how entertaining and interactive content on social media impacts consumers' attitudes, particularly in terms of trust and perceived value, and to understand how these attitudes, in turn, influence purchase intention. It posits that by leveraging effective social media marketing strategies, preschools can boost their consumers' inclination to purchase.

### **Trust**

According to Chong et al (2018), trust is characterized as the confidence consumers have that a seller will meet their expectations. This trust is integral to an individual's, team's, or organization's readiness to rely on others when faced with opportunities and risks, as discussed by (Graebner et al., 2017). Trust is comprised of two distinct elements: cognitive and affective trust. Nyffenegger et al (2015) describe cognitive trust as based on the perceived reliability and value of a product or service, while affective trust pertains to the emotional bond that transcends cognitive understanding in a relationship.

Sun and Zhao (2019) note that trust is susceptible to environmental factors and may fluctuate over time. Trust is deemed essential by Zheng et al (2017) in helping consumers navigate uncertainty, fostering the intention to repurchase, and cultivating successful long-term relationships. The quality of human interactions is significantly influenced by trust, as suggested by (Cao et al., 2018). Consequently, marketers are increasingly focusing on trust-building as a means to forge robust and profitable connections with consumers, as Kumar et al (2020) have found.

Watanabe et al (2020) highlight that the information provided about a product or service can engender consumer trust. Sun and Zhao (2019) support this by asserting that trust can be established through transparent information sharing and the creation of communication platforms for engaging with the target audience. Furthermore, Kulangara et al (2016) have demonstrated that online information about a product or service can lay the foundation for consumer trust. Therefore, it is imperative for businesses to disseminate comprehensive and accessible information to the public.

In light of this, trust assumes a critical role in the online sphere, serving as a cornerstone for any preschool's social media presence. It is beneficial for a preschool to proactively share detailed information about its operations on social media to elevate consumer trust. This could include providing the preschool's contact details, physical address, business background, and information about the curriculum structure on its social media platforms.

Such transparency can effectively bolster the relationship between the preschool and its potential customers.

### **Perceived Value**

Wu and Chang (2016) articulated perceived value as the consumer's assessment and preference for brand attributes that facilitate the achievement of their goals. Expanding on this concept, Shapiro et al (2019) described perceived value as the customer's comprehensive appraisal of a product or service, which encompasses both monetary and non-monetary factors like cost, price, and benefits. Juliana et al (2021) further delineated perceived value into two distinct categories: utilitarian and hedonic. Utilitarian value arises from fulfilling specific obligations, whereas hedonic value is derived from the experiential rewards that elicit joy and excitement. These dimensions play a pivotal role in enhancing customer satisfaction and the inclination to purchase.

Moslehpour et al (2021) observed that perceived value is a byproduct of consumers' recognition of benefits. Gan and Wang (2017) contended that this value is shaped by the balance of perceived benefits and risks associated with a product or service. Similarly, Chen et al (2018) found that both enjoyment and perceived risk significantly sway perceived value. Consumers are inclined to select and purchase products or services that augment their perception of value; therefore, enhancing consumer perceived value is crucial. Moreover, Chung and Koo (2015) identified a negative correlation between perceived value and perceived sacrifice, indicating that when the required sacrifice surpasses a consumer's threshold, the value of the product or service in their eyes diminishes.

Chen et al (2018) determined that on social media, perceived value is predicated on the customer's multifaceted perception of the platform. Tonder et al (2018) supported the notion that perceived value fosters positive word-of-mouth and discovered a direct link between perceived value and the quality of the relationship between a business and its consumers. A robust and positive relationship emerges when there is a strong perceived value associated with the brand. Carlson et al (2015); Juliana et al (2021) corroborated the significant impact of the perceived value of online channels on user satisfaction, which in turn, can bolster brand loyalty and promote repeat purchases.

To leverage this insight, the preschool must strategically utilize social media to communicate its unique strengths. It should clearly outline the benefits it offers to parents and children, encompassing both monetary advantages, like complimentary transportation or incentives for early registration, and non-monetary benefits, such as the use of psychological assessments to tailor a child's learning experience. By elucidating these advantages, the preschool can enhance potential customers' perception of value, thereby elevating their satisfaction and potentially increasing their propensity to enroll their children.

### **Entertainment**

Choshaly and Mirabolghasemi (2020) define entertainment as the degree of enjoyment that various stimuli can provide. Sari and colleagues (2020) suggest that advertisements on social media are more impactful when they combine informative, credible, and entertaining content. Wamba et al (2017) observed that creative and engaging social media ads garner greater attention from customers. Merrilees (2016) supports this view, noting that



entertaining content on social media captures consumer attention more effectively. Furthermore, Bianchi and Andrews (2018) argue that consumers are more likely to interact with a business on social media if the brand provides playful and enjoyable experiences.

Dehghani et al (2016) found that social media advertising can fulfill consumers' hedonic needs by delivering pleasure, emotional relief, diversion, and enjoyment. According to Sari et al (2020), entertainment content has the power to elevate users' enjoyment and pleasure beyond what other media content can offer. Hsu et al (2015) add that entertainment on social media not only engages users but also provides an escape from stress, making it a significant factor in their continued browsing on these platforms.

Given these insights, it is imperative for preschools to leverage entertaining content to capture the attention of potential customers. Preschools must therefore craft their social media advertising to be more captivating, engaging, and delightful for parents. This could include sharing videos and photos that showcase the preschool's activities, both online and in-person, allowing prospective clients to gain a richer understanding of what the preschool has to offer.

### **Interaction**

The interaction on social networking sites refers to the dynamic platforms that facilitate a reciprocal exchange of opinions and the sharing of information, as outlined by (Go and You, 2016). Chen et al (2018) observed that online social media platforms create avenues for businesses to engage with their customers about specific product details. Dessart and Duclou (2019) found that these platforms enable consumers to effortlessly obtain and disseminate information on topics of their interest among each other. Pütter (2017) notes that such interactions often take the form of comments and the sharing of content among consumers. Furthermore, Algharabat et al (2020) suggest that social media encourages users to share their views with others online about product attributes, brand narratives, and advantages, enhancing the dialogue.

Pongpaew et al (2017) posited that real-time interactions and feedback exchanges between customers can bolster confidence in a brand. This confidence is critical for forging and cementing long-term customer relationships, as Kao et al (2016) advocate. Accordingly, Achen (2019) concluded that communication via social media significantly improves the quality of the relationship between businesses and their clientele. In essence, Merrilees (2016); Yadav and Rahman (2018) argue that interaction is a key strategy for reinforcing consumer-brand ties.

Algharabat et al (2020) further elucidate that social media interactions foster strong and positive brand perceptions among consumers. This in-depth brand awareness correlates with an increased likelihood of purchase, as consumers feel more informed and confident in their buying decisions. Liu et al (2019) reinforced this view, highlighting that interaction is a pivotal factor in cultivating consumers' intention to purchase on social media platforms. Businesses have the opportunity to disseminate precise and direct product or service information to targeted users, as described by (Chen et al., 2018). Naeem (2019) discovered that features like live chat on social media platforms are particularly effective in generating purchase intent. Moslehpour et al (2021) mentioned that through interaction, businesses could collect

valuable information that aids in the more effective promotion of their offerings. Thus, enhanced social media interaction is directly associated with heightened consumer purchase intent (Moslehpour et al., 2021).

For a preschool looking to leverage these insights, frequent interaction with their audience on social media is advised. The institution could innovate with more interactive review mechanisms, such as emoji voting, to foster increased engagement. Moreover, encouraging current parents to share their experiences and feedback on social media could further stimulate interaction and provide valuable endorsements.

### **Hypotheses Development**

#### **Entertainment and Trust**

Wang et al (2019) posit that entertainment plays a beneficial role in shaping consumer attitudes. This sentiment is echoed by Gupta and Syed (2021), who suggest that entertainment fosters positive emotions and feelings toward a brand. Similarly, Bianchi and Andrews (2018) highlight that consumers' enjoyment of a company's social media content can lead to a favorable perception of the brand. Schivinski and Dabrowski (2016) argue for the strategic use of social media by businesses to craft entertaining posts that engage a broader audience and, in turn, bolster brand trust. Moreover, entertainment is strongly linked to the perceived value of advertisements; as Hamouda (2018) asserts, higher advertisement value can enhance consumers' trust in a product or service. Consequently, this research proposes the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Entertainment has a significant and positive effect on trust.

#### **Entertainment and Perceived Value**

Entertainment plays a pivotal role as an independent variable that significantly enhances the perceived value of advertising, according to (Dehghani et al., 2016; Sari et al., 2020). In a similar vein, Chen et al (2018) discovered a direct correlation between entertainment and perceived value: the more consumers enjoy content on social media, the higher the value they ascribe to a product or service. Gupta and Syed (2021) have pointed out that entertaining content not only engages consumers with a brand but also heightens their awareness of the advertised product or service. Furthermore, the research by Sari et al (2020) provides evidence that entertainment exerts the most substantial impact on augmenting consumer's perceived value, especially when compared to other elements of social media marketing. Oakley and Bush (2016) suggest that by offering entertainment, businesses lay the groundwork for a stronger customer relationship and simultaneously boost the perceived value of their offerings. In light of these findings, this study asserts the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 2:** *Entertainment has a significant and positive effect on perceived value.*

#### **Interaction and Trust**

Customer interactions and the exchange of feedback have been shown to bolster confidence in brands (Pongpaew et al., 2017). When consumers engage in high-quality interactions on social media platforms, their trust in the brand is likely to grow. Jakic et al (2017) underscore that such interactions on social media not only enhance consumer trust but also, as further evidence suggests, lead to customer satisfaction. This satisfaction, in turn, greatly strengthens the consumers' trust in the brand. Moreover, online interactions have been identified as a



key factor influencing consumer trust in a brand (Chen et al., 2015). In a similar vein, Koranteng et al (2020) discovered that features on social networking sites, such as the ability to comment and provide feedback, foster consumer trust. Graebner et al. (2017) assert that frequent communication and the sharing of ideas among users heighten this trust level. Based on these findings, the present study advances the following hypothesis

Hypothesis 3: Interaction has a significant and positive effect on trust.

### **Interaction and Perceived Value**

Effective engagement on social media platforms significantly enhances consumer satisfaction and helps dispel any negative sentiments they may harbor towards a brand, as identified by (Zamani et al., 2019). The research by Xie et al (2021) identifies three distinct forms of interaction that are instrumental in amplifying the customer's perceived value: interactions between the customer and the environment, between the customer and service employees, and among customers themselves. Interactions with employees can shape a customer's view of the service staff as being trustworthy and amiable, whereas interactions among customers can foster a sense of collective value creation. Gan and Wang (2017) suggest that during these social interactions, the perceived value a consumer places on a brand can grow, particularly as the brand receives more acknowledgment from others. Furthermore, Juliana et al (2021) have demonstrated that the perceived value of online channels is heightened by regular interactions between businesses and consumers. Therefore, consistent engagement on social media is correlated with an increase in consumers' perceived value of a brand, as supported by the findings of (Jakic et al., 2017). In light of these insights, the present study proposes the following hypothesis

Hypothesis 4: Interaction has a significant and positive effect on perceived value.

### **Trust and Purchase Intention**

Trust is a pivotal factor that significantly impacts customer purchasing decisions, as outlined by (Kaur and Khanam, 2015; Liu and Tang, 2018). Its importance extends to strengthening the ties between consumers and companies, as emphasized by Moslehpour et al. (2021). Companies that provide accurate and relevant information about their products or services online can cultivate trust with their customers, which, in turn, can elevate the likelihood of purchases, as Chen et al (2018) have identified. Teng and Wang's (2015) research corroborates the positive influence of consumer trust on purchasing behavior. Moreover, trust is instrumental in fostering enduring, long-term relationships with customers, according to (Zhu et al., 2020). Nadeem et al (2015) argue that trust is an essential element in transactions, particularly in the context of social media where the plethora of user-generated content can influence perceptions and behavior. Echoing this sentiment, Zheng et al (2017) suggest that trust not only fosters future purchasing intentions but also facilitates the formation of successful, ongoing relationships. Based on these insights, this study proposes the following hypothesis

Hypothesis 5: Trust has a significant and positive effect on purchase intention.

### Perceived Value and Purchase Intention

Perceived value is closely linked to consumer purchase intention (Persaud and Schillo, 2017). This perceived value reflects the consumers' assessment of a product's appeal, potentially increasing their intent to buy (Wu and Chang, 2016). Perceived value divides into two main types: hedonic and utilitarian. Gan and Wang (2017) suggest that consumers who perceive higher value in a product or service are more likely to experience greater satisfaction, which in turn amplifies their purchase intentions. Additionally, the advantageous perceptions created by social media platforms significantly bolster consumers' intentions to make a purchase (Chen et al., 2018). Furthermore, Nyffenegger et al (2015) identified perceived value as a crucial determinant of consumer purchase intention. Echoing this, Chen et al. (2018) found that elevated perceived value diminishes the perceived risk associated with a product or service, thereby increasing the probability of purchase. In light of these findings, the proposed hypothesis is as follows

Hypothesis 6: Perceived value has a significant and positive effect on purchase intention.

### Research Framework

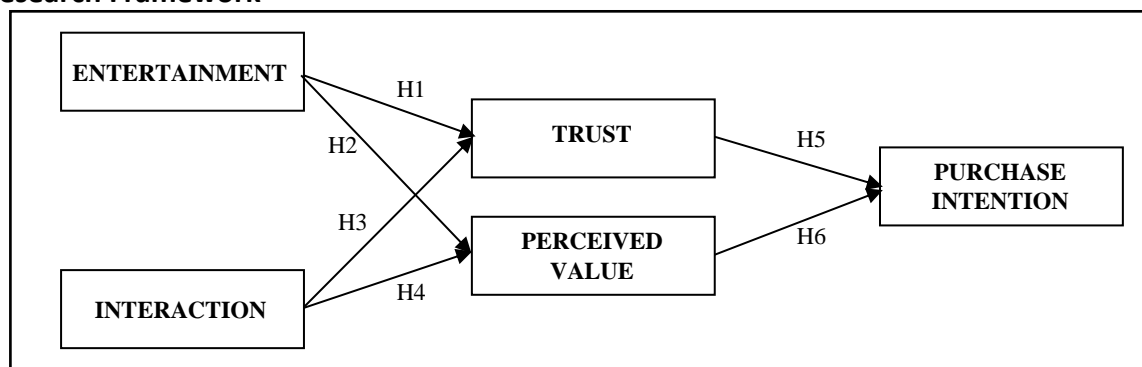


Figure 1: Research Framework

Figure 1 presents the research framework for the study, which is based on the model proposed by (Moslehpour et al., 2021). It illustrates how entertainment and interaction on social media correlate with trust and perceived value among consumers. These factors collectively influence the intention to purchase preschool services.

### Research Methodology

A preliminary survey was conducted to investigate the factors that could increase the purchase intention of a preschool service. Further, the survey findings were used as a guideline to implement the social media marketing strategies for the preschool to increase the purchase intention from parents. The following section discusses the research design and analysis methods for the survey.

### Research Design

alhotra and Malhotra (2012) describe a research design as the framework or blueprint for executing a marketing research project. It outlines the crucial steps required to gather necessary information to construct or solve issues related to marketing research. In contrast, Stapleton (2018) views research design as a strategic plan that provides a structure to unify all facets of a quantitative study, ensuring that its findings are reliable, unbiased, and as

generalizable as possible. This plan guides researchers in selecting participants, manipulating variables, and collecting and analyzing data. It effectively manages extraneous variability, allowing for a comprehensive addressal of the research problem. Therefore, crafting an apt research design is a pivotal phase in any study.

According to Leavy (2017), research design is comprised of two primary components: exploratory and conclusive. The key distinction between them lies in their objectives: exploratory research is aimed at garnering insights and understanding, whereas conclusive research is designed to test hypotheses and explore relationships between variables. A notable feature distinguishing these designs is their approach to data analysis (Malhotra and Malhotra, 2012). Exploratory research typically involves qualitative data analysis, while conclusive research predominantly relies on quantitative data analysis.

Conclusive research design is further categorized into descriptive and causal research. Descriptive research bifurcates into cross-sectional and longitudinal designs. A cross-sectional design assesses the outcomes and exposures of the study's participants simultaneously, whereas a longitudinal design involves repeated observations of the same variables over a period (Setia, 2016).

In the present study, a conclusive research design was utilized to investigate the links between the elements of entertainment and interaction in social media marketing, trust, perceived value, and the purchase intention within a preschool service context. Specifically, the study employed a descriptive approach using a cross-sectional design.

### **Population and Sampling**

A population, as Rahi (2017) explains, comprises the individuals or entities that a researcher is interested in studying. Typically, a research population is characterized as a group of individuals or elements that possess specific, shared traits. For the purposes of this study, the target population consisted of parents with children aged 3 to 6 who are considering enrolling their offspring in preschool education.

Sampling, according to Rahi (2017), involves selecting a representative subset from the larger population for detailed analysis. It entails choosing a small number of sample units from the population to examine characteristics like their attitudes or beliefs. Sampling methods fall into two main categories: probability and non-probability sampling. Taherdoost (2016) defines probability sampling as a method where each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected. This type of sampling is further classified into five subcategories: simple random sampling, systematic random sampling, stratified random sampling, cluster sampling, and multistage sampling, as detailed by (Sharma, 2017). On the other hand, non-probability sampling is an approach where the selection chances of each unit are not predetermined. According to Malhotra and Malhotra (2012), non-probability sampling is segmented into convenience sampling, purposive sampling, quota sampling, and snowball sampling.

Moslehpour et al (2021) advocate that a sample size of 200 is typically adequate for conducting meaningful research. Similarly, Siddiqui (2013) maintains that to achieve a credible level of results, a minimum of 200 participants should be included in the sample. In

alignment with these guidelines, this study adopted a sample size of 200, utilizing the purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling, also referred to as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, relies on the researcher's discretion when choosing participants (Etikan, 2016). Participants in this study were selected based on the criterion that they are parents intending to send their children aged 3 to 6 to preschool education.

### **Research Instrument**

This study utilized a quantitative method to gather primary data from participants. We disseminated surveys via Google Forms to our selected sample. The survey was organized into two main parts: Section A focused on collecting demographic information from respondents, such as age, gender, educational attainment, employment status, and monthly income. Conversely, Section B comprised 18 questions designed to capture participants' perceptions of social media in terms of entertainment, interaction, trust, perceived value, and purchase intentions.

The objective of this research was to explore the determinants that affect consumer purchase intentions. To this end, we included three questions each to assess opinions on social media entertainment, interaction, and trust. Additionally, we evaluated consumer perceived value through three questions and purchase intentions through four. These questions were carefully crafted based on the constructs used by (Moslehpour et al., 2021).

We designed a five-point Likert scale for responses in Section B, with options ranging from 'strongly disagree' (1) to 'strongly agree' (5). Upon gathering the data, we employed the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for data processing and analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

#### **Response Rate**

This study employed a quantitative research approach, utilizing online questionnaires designed via Google Forms to collect data. The focus was on parents with children aged 3 to 6 who intended to enroll their offspring in preschool education. These questionnaires were disseminated across social media platforms, including Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and Instagram, aiming for a sample size of 200 participants.

Upon the conclusion of the data collection phase, a total of 264 responses were gathered. However, 47 of these were deemed ineligible based on the criteria set by the qualifying questions. Consequently, the study amassed 217 valid questionnaires, resulting in an overall response rate of 82.2%.

#### **Data Screening**

The study conducted a comprehensive outlier detection across various variables, including Entertainment (ENT), Interaction (INT), Trust (TR), Perceived Value (PV), and Purchase Intention (PI). We utilized SPSS software to scrutinize the dataset for anomalies. Subsequent to the analysis, outliers were identified within several cases.

Specifically, within the Interaction variable, outliers were present in 5 instances: cases 143, 149, 155, 159, and 198. As for Perceived Value, outliers were found in 8 different cases: 9, 145, 149, 152, 159, 166, 204, and 244. Regarding Purchase Intention, 7 cases contained

outliers: 9, 145, 149, 198, 204, 209, and 224. In summary, a total of 13 cases—9, 143, 145, 149, 152, 155, 159, 166, 198, 204, 209, 224, and 244—were identified with outliers and subsequently excluded from the dataset. This elimination resulted in a refined sample size of 204 cases, which were retained for further analysis.

### **Profile of Respondents**

The survey included eight questions designed to profile the respondents. These questions covered a range of demographic and behavioral data, including gender, age, educational level, employment status, monthly income, the number of children aged 3-6 years, average daily social media usage, and the type of social media platforms used to visit preschool or kindergarten pages.

Analysis of the collected data revealed that women constituted the majority of the survey participants, accounting for 65.2% (133 individuals). The predominant age group was 31-40 years, representing 63.7% of the respondents (130 people). The most common educational attainment was a bachelor's degree, held by 50.5% of participants (103 respondents). The private sector emerged as the primary employment setting for most respondents, with 59.3% (121 individuals) reporting this as their workplace. Regarding monthly income, 21.1% of participants (43 individuals) fell into the RM 3001 to RM 4000 bracket. When it came to family demographics, 63.7% of the respondents (130 individuals) reported having one child between the ages of 3 and 6. In terms of social media engagement, the majority of respondents (49%, amounting to 100 individuals) spent 2-3 hours on social media daily. Finally, Facebook was the preferred platform for visiting preschool or kindergarten pages, with 66.2% of the respondents (135 individuals) utilizing it for this purpose.

### **Descriptive Analysis**

The results indicated that purchase intention exhibited the highest average score at 4.09, whereas trust recorded the lowest with an average of 3.95. Additionally, the averages for entertainment, interaction, and perceived value were 4.00, 4.05, and 4.01, respectively. Furthermore, trust had the greatest variability, as reflected by the highest standard deviation of 0.64, while purchase intention demonstrated the least variability with a standard deviation of 0.53. The standard deviations for entertainment, interaction, and perceived value followed closely, with values of 0.62, 0.59, and 0.60, respectively.

### **Scale Measurement**

#### **Normality Test**

Table 1 presents the outcomes of the normality tests conducted on all variables within the study. According to George and Mallery (2016), a distribution can be considered approximately normal if its skewness lies between -2 and +2 and its kurtosis falls within the range of -7 to +7. The results of this study indicated that skewness values ranged from -0.674 to -0.239, and kurtosis values spanned from -0.636 to 0.071. Consequently, all the variables met the criteria for normality in terms of both skewness and kurtosis.

Table 1

*Normality Test*

| Variable           | Number | Skewness   |                | Kurtosis   |                |
|--------------------|--------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|
|                    |        | Statistics | Standard Error | Statistics | Standard Error |
| Entertainment      | 204    | -0.549     | 0.170          | -0.204     | 0.339          |
| Interaction        | 204    | -0.674     | 0.170          | 0.071      | 0.339          |
| Trust              | 204    | -0.239     | 0.170          | -0.636     | 0.339          |
| Perceived Value    | 204    | -0.334     | 0.170          | -0.430     | 0.339          |
| Purchase Intention | 204    | -0.381     | 0.170          | -0.517     | 0.339          |

**Reliability Test**

A reliability test evaluates the dependability of the questionnaire constructs in a study, assessing aspects such as internal consistency and stability over time. This form of test is crucial for confirming that the data gathered are free from bias and errors, thereby ensuring that measurements remain consistent throughout the research. Reliability is quantified through the use of internal consistency reliability measures, notably the alpha coefficient, or Cronbach's Alpha, as cited by Ghazali (2016). Cronbach's Alpha serves as a gauge for scale reliability by measuring the degree to which a set of items are interrelated.

Mohajan (2017) posits that employing a reliability test is essential to validate that the results of a study are both stable, in the sense of being error-free, and consistent. Cronbach's Alpha is particularly favored for its ability to ascertain internal consistency, that is, it assesses how closely related items are within a group. The threshold for Cronbach Alpha's acceptability, as stated by Taber (2017), is a value above 0.7, indicating adequate reliability.

In the current study, the Cronbach's Alpha values for the five variables ranged from 0.735 to 0.791, demonstrating that all the constructs meet the criteria for internal consistency reliability, thus confirming their reliability within the context of this research.

**Multiple Regression Analysis**

Multiple regression analysis, as detailed by Kutner (2015), stands as one of the foremost statistical methods in contemporary research. This method rigorously assesses the relationships between multiple independent (or explanatory) variables and a single dependent (or outcome) variable. Statistics Solutions (2021) elucidates that the beta coefficient measures the extent of impact on the dependent variable resulting from a one-unit shift in an independent variable. A standardized beta coefficient then allows for a direct comparison of the influence exerted by each independent variable on the dependent variable. The relative strength of this effect is gauged by the absolute value of the beta coefficient, with a larger absolute value indicating a stronger impact, as described by (Kliestik and Spuchlakova, 2016).

Upon performing the regression, analysts compute the  $R^2$  statistic or the coefficient of determination, which quantifies the percentage of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables in the model. Additionally, the p-value in multiple regression analysis gauges the significance of findings in relation to the null hypothesis, per (McLeod, 2019). Representing the probability of obtaining at least as extreme



results given that the null hypothesis is true, the p-value ranges between 0 and 1. A smaller p-value suggests stronger evidence against the null hypothesis, leading to its rejection.

The analysis revealed that trust's relationship with purchase intention had the most substantial standardized beta coefficient at 0.378, indicating trust as the most influential factor on purchase intention. This study adopted a one-tailed test at a significance level of 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ) to evaluate the hypotheses, a method corroborated by (Kock, 2016). The results affirmed support for all postulated hypotheses, with the singular exception of the relationship between entertainment and perceived value (Hypothesis 2), which did not align with the predictive assumption.

Table 2

*Multiple Regression Analysis*

| Hypothesis | Relationship | Standardized Coefficients Beta | T Statistics | P-value      | Result               |
|------------|--------------|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|
| H1         | ENT – TR     | 0.267                          | 3.956        | 0.000        | Supported            |
| H2         | ENT – PV     | 0.098                          | 1.282        | <b>0.201</b> | <b>Not Supported</b> |
| H3         | INT – TR     | 0.353                          | 5.224        | 0.000        | Supported            |
| H4         | INT – PV     | 0.237                          | 3.108        | 0.002        | Supported            |
| H5         | TR – PI      | 0.378                          | 5.707        | 0.000        | Supported            |
| H6         | PV – PI      | 0.248                          | 3.750        | 0.000        | Supported            |

**Social Media Marketing Strategies****Marketing Strategy Timeline**

Figure 2 presents the marketing strategy deployed for the preschool over a two-month period, from September to October 2021. Insights from a recent survey indicated that a social media marketing strategy could enhance potential customers' intent to purchase. Consequently, we established a Facebook page to bolster the preschool's online presence, inaugurating this initiative on September 1, 2021.

Throughout the two-month campaign, we curated content aligned with survey insights. The data highlighted that trust significantly influences consumer purchasing intentions. In line with this, and supported by the research of Sun and Zhao (2019); Watanabe et al (2020), we understand that transparent brand information on social media is crucial in fostering consumer trust. To this end, we meticulously updated the preschool's business details — including the name, description, contact and WhatsApp numbers, and address — on our newly created Facebook page.

The survey also revealed that perceived value positively affects purchasing intentions. Perceived value, as defined by Wu and Chang (2016), is the consumers' assessment of the brand's features and the benefits they provide. To amplify this perceived value, we shared enriching content about the kindergarten's background, such as teaching resources and available courses.

Entertaining content has been shown to cultivate trust among consumers Sari et al (2020), positing that social media entertainment is most effective when it imparts valuable information. With this in mind, we regularly posted photos and videos showcasing preschool

activities, capturing followers' attention and strengthening their trust in the brand. The content highlighted various kindergarten events, including competitions, themed activities, online camps, and festival celebrations, updated periodically.

Engagement on the Facebook page was a priority, as frequent interaction is known to bolster consumer confidence in a brand (Pongpaew et al., 2017). We consistently posted interactive content, encouraging active participation and dialogue. Between September 1 and October 30, 2021, the page was refreshed with new posts at least once weekly.

The campaign culminated on October 31, 2021, with an observation and evaluation phase. The Facebook page had achieved significant milestones, amassing 318 likes and followers. Daily engagement peaked at 111 users, with a maximum reach of 336 individuals in a single day. Additionally, throughout the campaign, the page served as an informational conduit for parent inquiries regarding student enrollment for the year 2022.

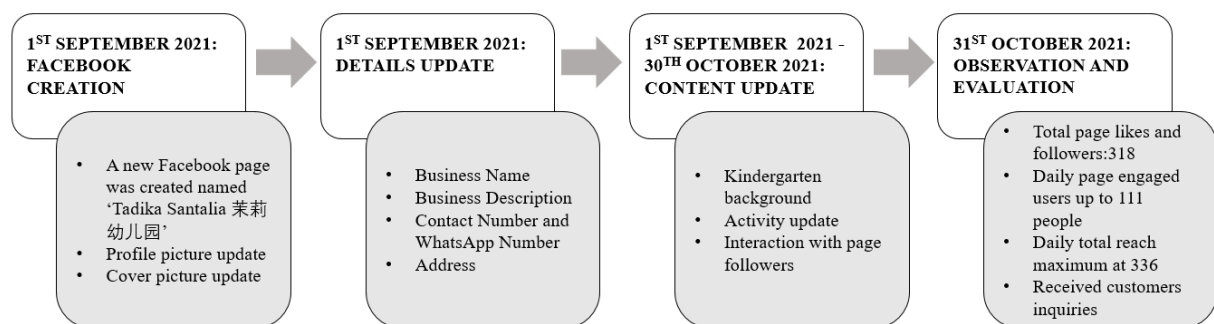


Figure 2: Marketing Strategy Timeline

### Impact from Intervention

Figure 3 illustrates the strategies implemented on the preschool's Facebook page, tailored to specific variables—entertainment, interaction, trust, perceived value, and purchase intention—as well as the outcomes of these initiatives. Initially, the page focused on blending informative content about the kindergarten with entertaining elements. This was achieved by frequently updating the page with photos and videos showcasing kindergarten activities. Insights from Facebook revealed that videos, in particular, garnered a higher engagement rate compared to other types of posts.

Interaction was facilitated by encouraging users to engage with the content through reactions, comments, sharing, and tagging on the preschool's Facebook page. One notable interactive feature was the emoji voting post, allowing followers to engage indirectly with the kindergarten. Additionally, the page received comments in the form of parents' stickers and was mentioned in five shares by followers and tagged once by an external party.

To cultivate trust in the preschool, critical updates were made to the page, including contact information, physical address, and details about the business's background. These updates provided essential information and helped form a positive impression of the preschool among parents. Content highlighting the preschool's courses, teaching style, and educational resources was shared to further this trust. It was observed that followers were more inclined to share posts that were informative and beneficial to others.

Lastly, with the aim of converting interest into enrollment, the page leveraged direct communication channels by linking to Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp, making it convenient for potential customers to reach out with inquiries. Posts announcing enrollment periods and detailing available courses were also connected to these messaging platforms. This approach proved effective, with the page receiving five inquiries from parents through Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp regarding enrollments for the year 2022.

|               | ENTERTAINMENT   | INTERACTION   | TRUST  | PERCEIVED VALUE  | PURCHASE INTENTION   |
|---------------|---|---|--|--|--|
| KEY DIMENSION | Allow delivering of entertaining content while posting useful information | Allow people to interact with each other in various way   | Allow people to gain trust towards this kindergarten   | Allow the building of positive perception among people   | Allow people to contact with the kindergarten for further inquiries  |
| ACTIONS       | Photo and video content posted on the Facebook page                       | People can easily react, comment, share and tag on the Facebook page  | Contact number, address and business background updated on the Facebook page   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content posted to deliver the kindergarten's characteristics on courses and teaching style</li> <li>Content posted to acknowledge followers on the teaching and learning resources</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The page was linked with Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp</li> <li>Relevant post was linked with Facebook Messenger</li> </ul> |
| RESULTS       | Video post had a higher engagement rate as compare to other post          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Followers reacted on the relevant emoji voting post</li> <li>Received parents sticker comments</li> <li>Total of 5 posts shared</li> <li>Page tagged by other by once</li> </ul> | Followers got some key information about the kindergarten (background, contact number, location) through social media platform | Followers shared the post that deliver useful information  | Received parents private message on Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp  |

Figure 3: Impact from Intervention

## Discussion and Conclusion

### Discussion of Findings Based on Research Question

#### RQ1: What are the factors that could increase the purchase intention of a preschool service?

In the current study, the primary research question explores the determinants that may bolster the likelihood of purchasing a preschool service. The results indicate that five of the six proposed hypotheses demonstrate significant and positive correlations. Trust emerges as the most influential factor on purchasing intent, where increased levels of trust correspond to heightened purchase intentions. This observation is consistent with the findings of Kaur and Khanam (2015); Liu and Tang (2018); Chen et al (2018), thereby supporting hypothesis 5 of this study.

Moreover, perceived value is validated as a crucial element in augmenting consumer purchase intention, which aligns with the outcomes of research conducted by (Nyffenegger et al., 2015; Wu and Chang, 2016; Persaud and Schillo, 2017; Gan and Wang, 2017). These studies collectively affirm the positive nexus between perceived value and purchasing intent, substantiating hypothesis 6 of the present study.

Conversely, the data reveal that entertainment significantly boosts trust, suggesting that engaging content is instrumental in cultivating trust among consumers, which in turn, enhances their purchasing intentions. This finding is consistent with previous research from Hamouda (2018); Wang et al (2019); Gupta and Syed (2021), and thus supports hypothesis 1.

Unexpectedly, however, the study discloses that entertainment via social media does not exert a noteworthy positive impact on perceived value. With a p-value exceeding 0.05, hypothesis 2 is not upheld, a conclusion that diverges from studies by (Dehghani et al., 2016; Chen et al., 2018; Sari et al., 2020).

The study further reveals a significant and positive relationship between social media interaction and trust, which corroborates the findings of Chen et al (2015); Pongpaew et al (2017); Graebner et al (2017); Koranteng et al (2020), thereby supporting hypothesis 3. Additionally, the results indicate that interaction also positively influences perceived value, resonating with the results of prior studies by Jakic et al (2017); Zamani et al (2019); Xie et al (2021); Juliana et al (2021), which upholds hypothesis 4.

In summary, the survey data validates that while entertainment plays a significant role in fostering trust, interactions enhance both trust and perceived value among consumers, which are pivotal to their purchase intentions for a preschool service. These insights suggest that preschools could leverage entertaining content to elevate perceived value and engage with users on platforms like Facebook to build trust and perceived value, thereby encouraging purchase intentions. However, the study also identifies a disconnect between entertainment and perceived value in the context of preschool services. It appears that entertaining content alone may not effectively communicate the essential attributes of a preschool brand. According to Wu and Chang (2016), perceived value encompasses the consumers' assessment and preference for brand features that aid in fulfilling their purchasing goals. The lack of significance found in this study may indicate that parents in Malaysia do not equate the quality of a preschool with the entertainment value of its Facebook content.

### **RQ2: What are the social media marketing efforts that could increase the purchase intention of the preschool?**

The second research question was crafted to explore and implement effective social media marketing strategies that could bolster the purchase intentions toward the preschool. The findings indicated that tailored social media engagement is a potent tool in enhancing these intentions. In response to these insights, a targeted intervention was initiated, involving the creation of a Facebook page for the preschool.

Over a two-month period, the page was consistently updated with content designed to entertain, engage, and foster trust and perceived value among prospective customers. This approach was validated by the research results, which confirmed that trust and perceived value significantly influence consumer purchase intentions. As part of our strategy, we shared detailed company information and insights into the preschool's teaching methodologies, aligning with research by Watanabe et al (2020); Shapiro et al (2019) which posits that accessible business information online is crucial for building consumer trust and perceived value. Promptly after the page's inception, essential information such as the preschool's history, location, and contact details were posted to establish trust with our audience. Updates on the available courses and teachers' qualifications were also made to enhance the preschool's perceived value.

Furthermore, the survey findings revealed a strong link between entertainment and the building of consumer trust. To leverage this, we enriched the Facebook page with engaging

photos and videos showcasing the preschoolers' activities, capitalizing on the joy and entertainment these visuals evoke, as supported by (Wamba et al., 2017). Additionally, the study affirmed the importance of social media interactions in fostering trust and perceived value. In keeping with these findings, the intervention phase included interactive enhancements to the Facebook page. We facilitated connections among followers through integrated features such as linking posts to Facebook Messenger and enabling post tags and emoji reactions. These interactive elements not only allowed for deeper connections but also provided a platform for disseminating valuable information, thereby strengthening trust and perceived value (Pütter, 2017).

By diversifying the content on the Facebook page, we provided a comprehensive understanding of the preschool, which, in turn, is anticipated to positively influence potential customers' purchase intentions.

### **RQ3: Are the social media marketing efforts effective to increase the purchase intention of the preschool?**

The third research question of this study aimed to evaluate the impact of social media marketing on enhancing purchase intentions for a preschool. The findings indicate that integrating social media practices within the preschool's strategy can bolster trust, perceived value, and ultimately, the intent to purchase. The establishment of a Facebook page allowed the preschool to engage with existing and prospective clients through a digital channel. This online presence afforded parents a window into the preschool's environment, showcasing its culture, activities, and events through regular updates.

Moreover, the content detailing the courses offered and the teaching methodologies provided parents with a transparent perspective, enabling them to gain a comprehensive understanding of the preschool's ethos and daily operations. The information disseminated acted as a navigational tool for parents, assisting them in determining whether the preschool's offerings aligned with their expectations and the needs of their children.

During the period of this social media initiative, there was a notable increase in purchase intentions, as evidenced by parents' commitment to the student enrollment for the year 2022. The preschool's Facebook page played a pivotal role in this upturn, receiving a total of five private inquiries from parents eager to learn more about the institution via direct communication through Facebook Messenger and a WhatsApp number linked to the Facebook page. This interaction underlines the conclusion that parents, after engaging with the content and gaining insight into the preschool on Facebook, showed a clear intention to enroll their children by reaching out to the preschool for additional information on pricing and course packages.

### **Research Implication**

This study has yielded insights with both theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, the research broadens the scope of existing literature by exploring the dynamics between social media marketing, trust, perceived value, and consumer purchase intentions within the context of preschool services. Prior research predominantly focused on sectors like airline products and services Mosehpour et al (2021), luxury fashion brands Gautam & Sharma (2017), and organic food (Watanabe et al., 2020). This study contributes to the academic

discourse by demonstrating that in the preschool sector, elements such as entertainment are crucial for fostering trust. It also shows that interaction not only enhances trust but also perceived value, both of which are instrumental in amplifying consumers' intentions to purchase preschool services. Nevertheless, the lack of a significant correlation between entertainment and perceived value warrants additional empirical scrutiny.

From a practical standpoint, the findings are pivotal in aiding businesses, particularly those offering preschool services, to formulate effective marketing strategies. The research underscores the positive correlations between entertainment, interaction, trust, perceived value, and purchase intentions. It suggests that preschool marketing teams should concentrate on these dimensions and tailor their social media content accordingly. The survey identifies trust as the paramount factor influencing consumers' intent to enroll their children in preschool services. Therefore, preschool providers should prioritize the dissemination of trustworthy and credible information on social media platforms. Given that parents are inclined to opt for reputable kindergartens for their children, establishing trust and perceived value through regular interaction with social media followers is essential. Engaging and entertaining content, particularly on platforms like Facebook, has been shown to cultivate trust among users, which, in turn, can drive purchase intentions.

Moreover, the survey results offer practical guidance for preschool management and marketing teams, particularly in adjusting their strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic. A well-crafted marketing approach has the potential to boost enrollment rates by fostering inquiries and purchase intentions among parents. The study revealed that regular updates to the preschool's Facebook page could significantly enhance consumer trust. Keeping business information current is crucial, as it provides parents with a fundamental reference point for assessing preschool options. The intervention also yielded insights into the types of content that resonate most effectively on social media, with video posts, for instance, engaging users more effectively than photo posts. This information is invaluable for preschools aiming to engage more deeply with their target audience and optimize their social media outreach.

### **Limitation And Recommendation for Future Studies**

This study holds significant implications for the current business landscape, yet it is not without its limitations, which warrant attention and rectification in subsequent research. Notably, the sample size—comprising parents of children aged 3 to 6—does not encapsulate the entire demographic. While the study achieved its minimum sample requirement with 200 participants, a larger sample would provide a more comprehensive representation of the population in Malaysia. Future studies should, therefore, consider expanding the sample size to enhance representativeness.

Additionally, the research relied solely on quantitative methods. To achieve a more nuanced understanding, future studies should integrate both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This mixed-methods strategy could enrich the findings and address the limitations inherent in relying on a single method, as noted by (Östlund et al., 2011). Moreover, an alternative to the purposive sampling technique used here is advisable to mitigate potential biases in primary data collection. For instance, employing simple random sampling would ensure each population member has an equal chance of selection, potentially leading to more accurate data.



The scope of this study was also restricted in terms of variables—it examined only two social media factors, entertainment and interaction, and their influence on a single dependent variable. Subsequent research could broaden this scope to include additional factors such as customization, word-of-mouth, and trendiness. Furthermore, different measurement scales like customer satisfaction, brand credibility, and perceived risk may provide deeper insights when assessing the impact of social media marketing factors. Expanding the range of dependent variables to include brand awareness and brand loyalty could also yield valuable information.

Regarding the study's findings, the non-support of hypothesis 2, as indicated by a p-value greater than 0.05 for the one-tailed test, stands in contrast to previous research that has identified a significant positive effect of entertainment on perceived value (e.g., Dehghani et al., 2016; Sari et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2018; Oakley and Bush, 2016). To reconcile these disparities, future research might employ varied research designs to delve deeper into the entertainment-perceived value relationship.

Finally, the intervention designed for preschools in this study should be tested across other service providers and industries, such as fashion, hospitality, restaurants, and universities, to assess its efficacy and applicability in different business contexts.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study offers valuable insights for preschool service providers seeking to bolster consumer purchase intentions. The research has demonstrated a correlation between social media factors—namely entertainment, interaction, trust, and perceived value—and the purchase intentions for preschool services. Although the findings indicate that entertainment and perceived value do not yield significant results on their own, suggesting the need for further investigation into these relationships.

Most importantly, the study has established trust as the paramount factor in enhancing consumers' intention to purchase preschool services. Preschools are therefore advised to prioritize building trust with their social media audiences as a means to improve purchase intentions. Engaging and consistent interaction on social media platforms is shown to foster trust, which, in turn, can amplify the perceived value of the service to consumers.

Practical application of these insights has been demonstrated through effective marketing strategies tailored for a preschool, which led to an increase in parents' purchase intentions. A notable outcome of the marketing interventions was the engagement on the preschool's Facebook page, which resulted in a total of five private inquiries from parents seeking further information via Facebook Messenger and a WhatsApp number linked to the page.

These results, along with the strategic responses implemented, provide a blueprint for preschools and marketers across various sectors to refine their marketing approaches in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

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