The Influence of Word of Mouth, Taste Quality, and Promotion on Purchasing Decisions for Snacks Through Digital Media

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Abstract: Digital technologies such as social media and e-commerce are used to promote and sell MSME products, including in the culinary industry. The packaged food and beverage industry is experiencing development in Indonesia, as shown by the increasing number of sales, especially snack foods in the form of snacks and crackers. Research was conducted to see the influence of word of mouth, product quality, and promotions on purchasing decisions to purchase snack products through digital media. The survey results from 196 respondents selected using a simple random sampling method with several criteria were then analyzed using a multiple linear regression test using SPSS. The regression analysis showed that the t-value and f-value of word of mouth, product quality, and promotion are more significant than the t-table and f-table, with a significance value of less than 0.05. This illustrated that word of mouth, taste quality, and promotion significantly influence purchasing snack products via digital media. This indicated that MSMEs can use Tokopedia to increase snack sales.

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A. INTRODUCTION

According to data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs (2024), the number of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) reached 65.5 million business units, an increase of 1.7% from the previous year. The contribution of MSMEs to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reached 61% or approximately 9,580 trillion rupiah, up 2.3% compared to last year (Kementerian Koperasi Dan Ukm Republik Indonesia, 2024). MSMEs also absorb 97% of the total national workforce, highlighting their significant economic role. MSMEs are not just players in the Indonesian economy. They are the pillars that contribute significantly to its growth (Nurmala et al., 2022). The role of MSMEs can be increased by growing an entrepreneurial ecosystem with efforts to foster interest in entrepreneurship. The Indonesian economy is primarily dominated by increased household consumption (Moerdijat, 2023), especially in the food and beverage sector (Sari, 2022). The food and beverage processing industry in Indonesia is not just growing. It is

thriving, as evidenced by the culinary industry's most prominent contribution to GDP of 41 percent (Aminah, 2019). The culinary industry will continue to grow because it produces products in great demand by the wider community. People's lifestyle is also one of the factors that cause the culinary industry to rank first in the creative economy. According to (Tiwa et al., 2022), a consumptive lifestyle can cause people to buy food outside the home more intensely. Therefore, culinary business actors, especially snacks, must innovate in providing raw materials, packaging, and launching new products (Andi, 2021; Nurmala et al., 2022).

Indonesian people are increasingly consuming processed snacks. Market demand for snack products continues to increase (Rozi et al., 2023). The sales growth of packaged food and beverages from 2021 to 2022 reached 11.9% (Ahdiat, 2023). This allows business actors to take advantage of opportunities to innovate in creating packaged foods. The advantages of packaged foods include longer shelf life, more practical presentation, and better maintenance of cleanliness compared to unpackaged alternatives (Subadmin, 2020).

In line with this, the food and beverage industry is also supported by the development of Industry 4.0 technology. Industry 4.0 technology, one of which is the internet, dramatically helps business actors to expand market segmentation. Using the Internet for economic activities such as selling food, drinks, and goods on e-commerce is a marketing method in the culinary industry (Alt, 2021). Food shopping on e-commerce has increased fourfold, making Indonesia the third largest e-commerce market globally because the trend of online shopping for Indonesians continues to increase (Reardon et al., 2020). This can be an opportunity to develop a culinary business through online media or applications. Internet technology can be used for promotion through social media (Firmandani et al., 2021; Hasugian & Indallah, 2022). However, apart from using social media, the most optimal and very productive marketing is the word-of-mouth process (Matila et al., 2023). Therefore, business actors need to understand the factors influencing consumer purchasing decisions in choosing products to increase business sales, including implementing marketing strategies with Word of Mouth (Majid, 2023). In addition, business people need to pay attention to product quality, price, and promotion (Ernawati & Prakoso, 2020; Rozi et al., 2023). The research was conducted to determine the influence of word of mouth, taste quality, and promotion on snack product sales through digital media.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW
1. Word of Mouth

Word of mouth results from an individual's evaluation of a brand, product, or service that they have used by spreading information to others (Li & Jaharuddin, 2021). According to (Sun et al., 2021), word of mouth is informal communication by individuals or groups in online or offline forms that provide information on a product they have used.

2.   Product Quality

Product quality is a product's position, achieved by providing innovation using the best materials (Akbar et al., 2020). According to (Ci & Raymond, 2021) there are five indicators of product quality: product characteristics, compliance with specifications, durability, reliability, and design.

3.   Promotion

Promotion is a tool used to stimulate and motivate consumers to get a response to wanting to buy the products offered (Gorji & Siami, 2020). According to (Ci & Raymond, 2021), promotion is a variable companies use to market products to consumers to make them make purchases or use products according to their needs. According to (Ci & Raymond, 2021), there are five promotion indicators: advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations, and direct selling.

C.   METHODS

This study used a quantitative approach with a survey method. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to respondents, namely consumers of salmon skin snacks. The research sample was taken randomly using the simple random sampling method. The samples used in this study were selected based on specific criteria, such as being between 15 and 35 years old, living in JABODETABEK, and purchasing snacks, especially salmon skin snacks, online at least twice a month. The questionnaire, meticulously compiled using a five-point Likert scale, was designed to measure respondents' perceptions of the variables studied. This study also involved instrument test analysis, classical assumption test analysis, and multiple linear regression test analysis, with statistical software such as SPSS used to facilitate data analysis, as shown in Figure 1.
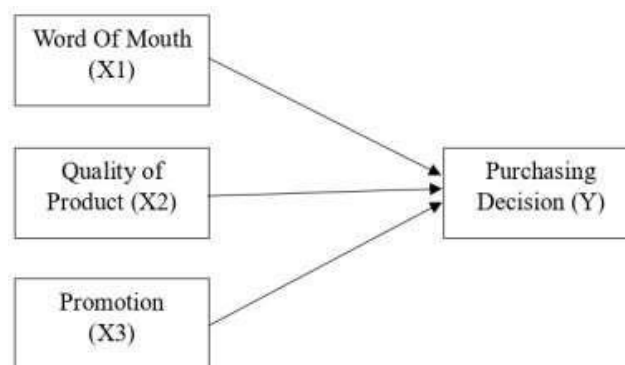

Figure 1. Research Framework

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Characteristics of Respondent

The study involved 196 respondents who were asked to provide information through a Google Form survey. It aimed to explore the influence of word of mouth, product quality, and promotion on purchasing decisions for snack products. Based on data analysis from respondents, the majority of them(87%) were aged between 21 and 25 years, indicating that this age group is dominant in purchasing snack products. Geographically, most respondents (67%) came from the Tangerang area. The social media platform most often used to search for information about snacks or snacks is Instagram (58%). In comparison, Tokopedia is the online marketplace most widely used to make purchases (57%) and is considered the most convenient (58%). In addition, Tokopedia was also chosen because of the ease of its payment methods (58%). The most important factor for respondents when buying snacks or snacks is the variety of flavors (48%). This analysis shows consumers' clear preferences regarding online platforms and essential criteria for choosing products.

2. Research Instrument Testing

A validity test measures and provides results from the variable data in each statement list. A reliabilitytest determines the consistency or level of reliability in a study, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Research Instrument Testing

Component	Test Results	Conclusion
Validity Test Results	r value of all variables > α = 5%	valid
Reliability Test Results	Cronbach alpha of all variables ≥ 0,60	reliable

The results of this study, as depicted in the table, indicate that word of mouth, product quality, and promotion have a significant favorable influence on purchasing decisions. The t-test results for each variable reveal t-values greater than the critical t-value, with significance levels (p-values) below 0.05, confirming their substantial impact on decision-making. Specifically, the promotion has the highest regression coefficient, suggesting that promotional efforts are the most influential factor in driving purchases of snack products through digital platforms. The word-of-mouth and product quality variables also exhibit positive relationships with purchasing decisions, highlighting the importance of consumer opinions and the product's perceived quality in shaping buying behavior.

These findings are consistent with previous research that underscores the importance of these variables across various industries. For example, Li & Jaharuddin (2021) showed that word of mouth moderates consumer purchase intentions in the organic food market, primarily when consumers rely on recommendations from peers. Similarly, Juliana et al. (2024) found that word of mouth and a positive environment significantly impact purchasing decisions in the food service sector, particularly among

millennial consumers. Emphasized the strong influence of promotion, demonstrating that promotional activities, price competitiveness, and brand image significantly affect consumer purchasing decisions on e-commerce platforms (Adelia et al., 2024). These studies collectively reinforce the significant role of word of mouth, product quality, and promotion in shaping consumer behavior, emphasizing the need for businesses to prioritize these elements in their marketing strategies, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Reliability Test Result

Variable	Cornbach's Alpha	Note
Word of Mouth	0,778	Reliable
Kualitas Produk	0,836	Reliable
Promosi	0,759	Reliable

Source: Data Processed (2024)

Based on the results of research instrument testing in Table 2, it can be said that all statements in the questionnaire are valid and reliable in describing each variable used.

3. Classical Assumption Test

Normality testing in this study used the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test with a significance level of α of 0.05.The data results from the normality test showed that the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) results were 0.200 > 0.05, so it can be concluded that the data is usually distributed, and further testing can be carried out. Multicollinearity testing was carried out to evaluate the correlation between independent variables in the regression model. A good regression model is considered not to experience multicollinearity with atolerance value of > 0.1 and a VIF value of <10. The multicollinearity test results showed that each variable's tolerance value was > 0.10, and the VIF value of each variable was <10. Therefore, there is no multicollinearity in each independent variable.

Heteroscedasticity testing was carried out to evaluate whether the regression model had an inequality of variance. The test results showed no heteroscedasticity, with a significance value of > 0.05, perthe criteria for a good regression model. The following are the results of the heteroscedasticity test thatwas carried out. The significance value is > 0.05 for Word of Mouth, Product Quality,and Promotion variables. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no heteroscedasticity in each of these variables.

4. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

$$Y = 2,365 + (0,025)X_1 + (0,079)X_2 + (0,371)X_3$$

From the multiple linear regression equation model above, it can be concluded as follows: (1) The constant value of 2.365 indicates that if the independent variables (Word of Mouth, ProductQuality, and Promotion) are considered 1, then the Product Purchase Decision value is 2.365; (2) The regression coefficient of the independent variable (Word of Mouth), with a value of 0.025,indicates a positive relationship in the same direction

between the Word of Mouth variable and the Product Purchase Decision. This clear direction helps focus on Word of Mouth's impact on purchase decisions; (3) The regression coefficient of the independent variable (Product Quality) is 0.079. This value indicates a positive relationship in the same direction between the Product Quality variable and the Product Purchase Decision; and (4) The regression coefficient of the independent variable (Promotion) is 0.371. This value indicates a positive relationship in the same direction between the Promotion variable and the Product Purchase Decision.

5. T-test and F-test Results

The data from the t-test show that each variable, Word of Mouth, Product Quality, and Promotion, produces a calculated t value more significant than the t table value, with a significance value (Sig.) of less than 0.05. Therefore, Word of Mouth (Juliana et al., 2024; Nurgiyantoro, 2021; Yasin & Achmad, 2021), Product Quality (Prihartono, 2021; Yasin & Achmad, 2021), and Promotion (Adelia et al., 2024; Adiawaty et al., 2022; Maulana, 2022). Variable spartially influence the Product Purchase Decision variable, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. T-Test Result

Variable	t-value	t-tabel	Sig.	Note
Word of Mouth	8,691	1,66	0,001	Signifikan
Kualitas Produk	3.151	1,66	0,002	Signifikan
Promosi	5,434	1,66	0,001	Signifikan

Source: Data Processed (2024)

The following are the data results obtained from the calculated F value, which is more significant than the F table value with a Sig. Value of 0.001, which is smaller than alpha of 0.05. Therefore, word of mouth, product quality, and promotion variables significantly influence purchase decisions, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. F-Test Result

Variable	f-value	f-tabel	Sig.	Note
Word of Mouth, Kualitas Produk, Promosi	9,990	2,70	0,001	Signifikan

Source: Data Processed (2024)

6. Coefficient of Determination Results

The coefficient of determination (R^2) is used to assess the level of certainty of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The R^2 value that is getting closer to 1 indicates that the independent variable almost wholly explains the variation in the dependent variable. The following are the data results from the coefficient of determination, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Coefficient of Determination Result

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0,496	0,246	0,221	0,33712

Source: Data Processed (2024)

From the test results, the coefficient of determination (R2) of the variables Word of Mouth, Product Quality, and Promotion on Purchasing Decisions is 0.246. This means that the variables Word of Mouth, Product Quality, and Promotion influence Purchasing Decisions by 24.6%. Most of the variations in Purchasing Decisions, which is 75.4%, are influenced by other factors not included in this study.

E.   CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study demonstrates that word of mouth, product quality, and promotional efforts significantly influence consumer purchasing decisions for snack products sold through digital platforms. The results emphasized the importance of these factors in shaping consumer preferences in the online snack market. As MSMEs continue to play a pivotal role in Indonesia's economy, especially within the food and beverage sector, adopting effective digital marketing strategies becomes crucial. Furthermore, integrating digital technologies in marketing and sales processes can enhance the competitiveness of MSMEs, allowing them to capitalize on the growing demand for snack products in the e-commerce landscape. This underscores the need for comprehensive support mechanisms, including training and technological access, to empower MSMEs to leverage digital platforms for sustainable business growth.

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