

CELEBRITY ENDORSMENT AND ONLINE CUSTOMER REVIEWS ON REPURCHASE DECISIONS 1 ATTITUDES, EWOM, AND BRAND AWARENESS IN CULINARY MSME CONSUMERS

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of celebrity endorsements, online customer reviews, attitude, brand awareness, and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) on the repurchase decisions of culinary MSME consumers in the Barlingmascakeb area (Banjarnegara, Purbalingga, Banyumas, Cilacap, and Kebumen). This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method of 100 respondents obtained through purposive sampling techniques. Data collection was carried out through questionnaires and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS). The results of the study show that online customer reviews have a significant influence on attitude, which in turn positively affects brand awareness and e-WOM. However, celebrity endorsements do not have a significant effect on attitudes or repurchase decisions. Brand awareness has been shown to have a significant effect on repurchase decisions, while e-WOM only shows a marginal influence. These findings emphasize the importance of customer reviews and brand perception in driving consumer loyalty of culinary MSMEs, compared to the use of public figures in promotion. This research provides a practical contribution for MSME actors to focus more on improving service quality and managing customer reviews digitally in an effort to build consumer loyalty.

Keywords: Celebrity Endorsement, Online Customer Review, Brand Awareness, E-WOM, Repurchase Decision.

INTRODUCTION

Culinary MSMEs in Indonesia are an important sector in the national economy, but they face various challenges that hinder business growth and sustainability. One of the main problems is the low adoption of digital technology in operations and marketing. A study by (Fajrul & Sptyana, 2025) shows that only 18% of culinary MSMEs in Indonesia make optimal use of technology, hampering their competitiveness in the digital era (Calvo-Porrall & Lévy-Mangin, 2024). In addition, MSME actors often experience difficulties in accessing microfinance, which is an obstacle in business development. (Wijaya & Prawihatmi, 2017) found that complicated procedures and collateral requirements are the main obstacles in access to microfinance for culinary traders in Indonesia.

Previous research by (Macheka et al., 2024) highlighted the influence of celebrity endorsements on customer loyalty, but focused on the hospitality and restaurant industry in Africa. The study has not considered the role of online customer reviews (eWOM) in influencing repurchase decisions (Farmiati & Ismail, 2021). In addition, the cultural context and consumer behavior in Africa is different from Indonesia, so the results cannot necessarily be applied directly to culinary MSMEs in Indonesia (Haryoko & Suryani, 2023). These limitations open up opportunities for research that is more relevant to local conditions. Thus, a study is needed that integrates factors

such as consumer attitudes, eWOM, and brand awareness in the context of culinary MSMEs in Indonesia.

This study uses *the Theory of Planned Behavior* (TPB) developed by Ajzen as a theoretical framework (Ajzen, 1991). TPB explains that an individual's behavior is influenced by the intention to act, which in turn is influenced by attitudes toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceptions of behavior control. In this context, consumers' attitudes towards celebrity endorsements and online reviews, as well as their perception of the ease of repurchase, are important factors (Spry et al., 2011). The SDGs allow for a comprehensive analysis of the psychological and social factors that influence repurchase decisions (Ajzen, 1991). The selection of this theory is based on its ability to integrate a wide range of relevant variables in consumer behavior.

The novelty of this study lies in the integration between celebrity endorsements and online customer reviews in a single analytical framework mediated by attitudes, eWOM, and brand awareness. There have not been many previous studies that have examined this complex relationship in the context of culinary MSMEs in Indonesia (Jun et al., 2023). In addition, this study expands the use of SDGs by including digital marketing variables that are more relevant in the digital era (Mohan, 2025). Thus, this study not only examines the direct relationship between variables, but also uncovers the psychological processes that occur in the consumer's mind (Irawati & Nursahira, 2025). This makes a significant theoretical and practical contribution to the development of marketing strategies for culinary MSMEs (Afifah, 2022).

This research also makes a practical contribution by offering recommendations for digital marketing strategies that are based on empirical evidence. The results can be used by culinary MSME players to understand how to manage celebrity endorsement campaigns and build positive customer reviews. Furthermore, this research can help MSME actors manage brand awareness more effectively through digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and food delivery services. An in-depth understanding of the relationships between these variables will also improve promotional effectiveness and customer loyalty (Kalam et al., 2023). Thus, the long-term impact of a digital marketing strategy can be maximized.

The presence of celebrities in marketing campaigns is often considered an expensive strategy and is not always effective if it is not supported with the right approach (Tor-Kadioglu & Bozyigit, 2025). Therefore, this research is important in explaining how celebrity endorsements will only be effective when combined with factors such as positive consumer attitudes and strong brand awareness. On the other hand, honest and positive eWOM can strengthen the credibility of celebrity promotions and influence consumer perception of culinary MSME products (Catharina Clara, 2023). The combination between celebrity promotion and the power of online customer reviews makes an interesting combination to be explored further (Nabil et al., 2022). This is an approach that is rarely used as the main focus in Indonesian academic literature.

This research is expected to be able to enrich the digital marketing literature of culinary MSMEs in Indonesia by raising actual and contextual variables. In addition, the use of TPB theory as the basis for analysis makes the results of this research more robust from an academic point of view and can be used as a reference in the development of marketing policies. By targeting culinary MSMEs that actively use social media and influencers, the results of the research will be more applicable and relevant to real business practices. The conclusion of this study can be an important foothold for MSMEs to build a more targeted and efficient marketing strategy. This research also opens up space for further studies in the context of digitalization and consumer loyalty in the culinary MSME sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION

Celebrity Endorsment

Celebrity endorsements are a marketing communication strategy in which public figures are used to promote a product or brand, in hopes of increasing the credibility and attractiveness of

the product in the eyes of consumers. Celebrities who have high popularity, physical attractiveness, and credibility are believed to be able to significantly influence consumer attitudes and decisions. In a study by (Spry et al., 2011), it was found that celebrity endorsements that have high credibility can increase brand equity and strengthen consumers' positive perception of brands.

Online Customer Reviews

Online customer *reviews* (OCR) are a form of communication between consumers that describes experiences, opinions, or evaluations of a product or service delivered through digital platforms. This review is considered a form of *electronic word of mouth* (eWOM) that is highly influential in consumer decision-making, especially because it is considered more authentic and free from commercial interests. According to (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006), positive reviews from consumers can significantly increase product sales because it creates trust and reduces purchase uncertainty.

Attitude

Consumer attitudes refer to positive or negative evaluations of an object, brand, or behavior that can affect the consumer's actual intentions and actions. Attitudes are formed from previous experiences, information received, and beliefs towards certain objects, which then form a tendency to act in a certain way. According to (Ajzen, 1991), attitude is one of the main determinants of behavioral intentions in the SDGs. Research by (Spears & Singh, 2004) found that a positive attitude towards a brand plays an important role in increasing purchase intent and customer loyalty. In addition, a study by (Kim & Chao, 2019) confirms that consumer attitudes towards celebrity endorsements and the credibility of online reviews can increase trust and intention to rebuy. Both studies underscore the important role of attitudes as mediators in the relationship between external stimuli (endorsements and reviews) and purchasing decisions.

Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)

eWOM or electronic word of mouth is a form of disseminating information between consumers through digital media regarding their experience of a product or service. In contrast to traditional WOM, eWOM has a wider reach, longer duration, and more measurable influence because it can be studied through digital platforms. According to (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004), eWOM can influence consumers' perception of risk and form trust in brands. Research by (Erkan & Evans, 2016) also shows that credible and relevant eWOM can increase the effectiveness of digital marketing communications and repurchase intent. In the context of culinary MSMEs, eWOM is very influential because consumers tend to rely on the experience of others in evaluating the quality of food products that cannot be tested beforehand.

Brand Awareness

Brand awareness is the ability of consumers to recognize and remember a brand as part of a certain product category. In marketing, brand awareness serves as the first entrance in shaping consumer perception and preferences for a product. According to (Kim & Chao, 2019), brand awareness is the main foundation of brand equity and influences purchasing decisions significantly. Research by (Huang & Sarigöllü, 2012) shows that brand awareness has a significant impact on consumer purchasing decisions in various product categories. In addition, a study by (Homburg et al., 2010) reveals that brand awareness not only increases purchase intent, but also strengthens emotional relationships with customers that encourage repurchases.

Repurchase Decision

A repurchase decision is the consumer's action to repurchase a product or service after a previous purchase experience, reflecting the level of satisfaction, trust, and loyalty to the brand. These decisions are often influenced by a variety of psychological and social factors, such as positive

attitudes, satisfying experiences, as well as external influences such as eWOM and promotions. Research by (Hellier et al., 2003) states that repurchase intent is strongly influenced by satisfaction and trust in brands. Meanwhile, a study by (Chiu et al., 2012) found that a positive online shopping experience, combined with digital interactions such as reviews and company responses, can significantly increase the likelihood of repurchases. In the context of culinary MSMEs, the decision to buy back is an important indicator for business sustainability because the cost of acquiring new customers is often higher than retaining existing customers (Sudrajat & Rimadiaz, 2025).

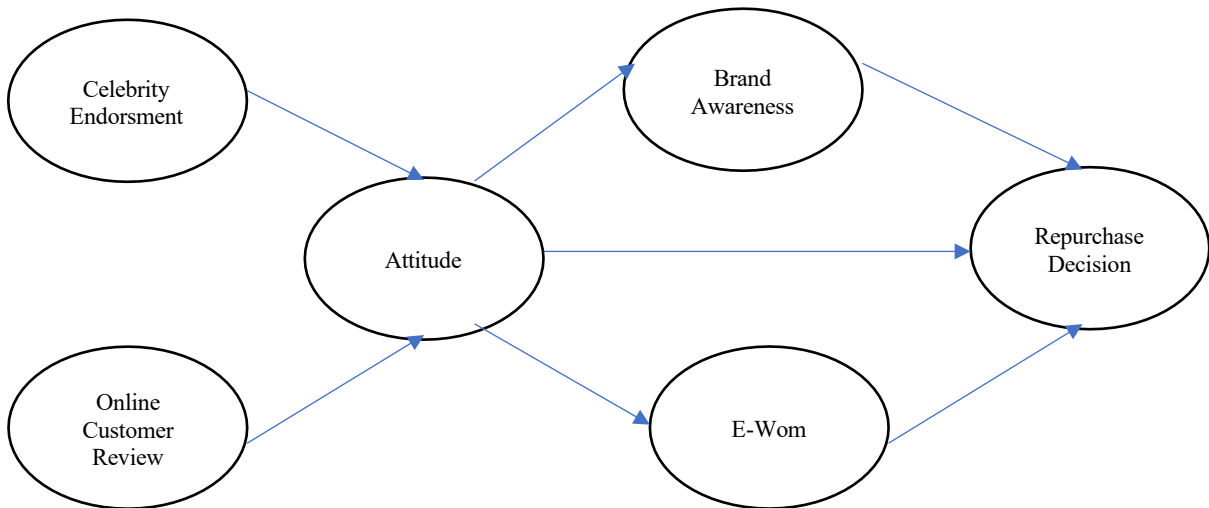


Figure 1. Research Model

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with the type of explanatory research that aims to test the influence of variables such as celebrity endorsements, online customer reviews, attitude, brand awareness, and e-WOM on repurchase decisions. The research was conducted on culinary MSME actors and consumers spread across the Barlingmascakeb area (Banjarnegara, Purbalingga, Banyumas, Cilacap, and Kebumen). The population in this study is active consumers who have made transactions in culinary MSMEs. The sample determination technique was carried out by the purposive sampling method and the number of respondents obtained was 100 people.

The data analysis technique in this study uses the Structural Equation Modeling approach based on Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) with the help of SmartPLS software. SEM-PLS was chosen because it is able to test relationships between latent constructs simultaneously, despite the relatively small sample size. In addition, this technique makes it possible to test the direct or indirect influence of each variable in a structural model. The analysis stage includes outer model tests (validity and reliability), inner models (R-square, F-square tests), and hypothesis tests by looking at t-statistical and p-value.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION RESULT

The validity test in the Structural Equation Modeling analysis based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) aims to measure the extent to which the indicator is able to represent the measured construct. One of the criteria used to assess the validity of the convergence is the outer loading value of each indicator against its construct. In this context, an indicator is said to be valid if the loading factor value is greater than 0.7, indicating that more than 50% of the indicator's variance is explained by the latent construct being measured.

Table 1. Loading Factor

Indicator	Attitude	Brand Awareness	Celebrity Endorsment	E-WOM	Online Customer Review	Repurchase Decision
A1	0,704					
A2	0,870					
A3	0,816					
A4	0,896					
BA1		0,757				
BA2		0,808				
BA3		0,734				
BA4		0,854				
BA5		0,822				
CE2			0,850			
CE3			0,906			
CE4			0,875			
CE5			0,840			
EW1				0,832		
EW2				0,799		
EW3				0,778		
OCR2					0,799	
OCR3					0,773	
OCR4					0,789	
RD1						0,807
RD2						0,848
RD3						0,733
RD4						0,855
RD5						0,819

Source: Data processing results, 2025

The results of the validity test showed that all indicators in each construct had a loading factor value above 0.7, which means that they met the convergent validity criteria in SEM-PLS. Konstruk Attitude has a loading value between 0.704 to 0.896, Brand Awareness ranges from 0.734 to 0.854, and Celebrity Endorsement shows a high value between 0.840 to 0.906. Meanwhile, the E-WOM construct has a value between 0.778 to 0.832, the Online Customer Review between 0.773 to 0.799, and the Repurchase Decision ranges from 0.733 to 0.855. Thus, all indicators in this model proved to be valid as they were able to represent their constructs significantly, reinforcing the quality of measurements in the structural models tested.

The Construct Reliability and Validity test in SEM-PLS aims to assess the extent to which constructs in the research model show internal consistency and convergent validity. There are several indicators used in this test, namely Cronbach's Alpha, rho_A, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability are used to measure the reliability of the construct, where the recommended value is at least 0.7.

Table 2. Construct Reliability and Validity

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Attitude	0,840	0,847	0,894	0,680

Brand Awareness	0,855	0,865	0,896	0,634
Celebrity Endorsment	0,891	0,893	0,924	0,754
E-WOM	0,727	0,733	0,845	0,646
Online Customer Review	0,698	0,707	0,830	0,619
Repurchase Decision	0,872	0,880	0,907	0,662

Source: Data processing results, 2025

Based on the results of the *Construct Reliability and Validity* test, all variables in the model showed results that met the criteria. *Cronbach's Alpha* values range from 0.698 to 0.891, and *Composite Reliability* is in the range of 0.830 to 0.924, which indicates that all constructs have good internal reliability. In addition, the AVE value for all variables has also exceeded the minimum limit of 0.5, with the highest value in the *Celebrity Endorsement* construct of 0.754 and the lowest in the *Online Customer Review* of 0.619. Thus, it can be concluded that all constructs in this model have met the requirements of convergent reliability and validity, making them suitable for further testing in the SEM-PLS model.

The *Discriminant Validity* test on SEM-PLS aims to ensure that each construct in the model actually measures concepts that are different from each other. One commonly used method is the *Fornell-Larcker Criterion*, which compares the square root of the *Average Variance Extracted* (AVE) value of each construct with the correlation between other constructs. Discriminant validity is declared to be met when the value of the square root of AVE (shown in the diagonal of the table) is higher than the correlation between constructs (values outside the diagonal).

Table 3. *Discriminant Validity*

Variable	Attitude	Brand Awareness	Celebrity Endorsment	E-WOM	Online Customer Review	Repurchase Decision
Attitude	0,825					
Brand Awareness	0,803	0,796				
Celebrity Endorsment	0,612	0,674	0,868			
E-WOM	0,671	0,812	0,635	0,804		
Online Customer Review	0,735	0,757	0,804	0,692	0,787	
Repurchase Decision	0,608	0,723	0,599	0,673	0,607	0,814

Source: Data processing results, 2025

The results of the *Discriminant Validity* test based on the *Fornell-Larcker Criterion* show that all constructs in the model have met the criteria of discriminant validity. The entire value of the diagonal (square root of AVE) is greater than the correlation between the constructs in question. For example, the diagonal value for the *Attitude* construct is 0.825, which is higher than its correlation with other constructs such as *Brand Awareness* (0.803) and *Online Customer Reviews* (0.735). The same can be seen in other constructs such as *Celebrity Endorsement* (0.868) and *Repurchase Decision* (0.814), each of which has a diagonal value greater than the correlation with the other constructs. Thus, it can be concluded that all constructs in this study have shown good discriminant validity.

The *F-Square* test in the SEM-PLS approach is used to measure the magnitude of exogenous influence on endogenous by looking at how much a variable contributes to the increase in *R-Square value* of endogenous constructs. The *F-Square* value gives an indication of whether a construct has a small (≥ 0.02), medium (≥ 0.15), or large (≥ 0.35) effect on other constructs in the structural model.

Table 4. F-Square

Variable	Attitude	Brand Awareness	Celebrity Endorsment	E-WOM	Online Customer Review	Repurchase Decision
Attitude		1,815		0,820		0,003
Brand Awareness						0,107
Celebrity Endorsment	0,003					
E-WOM						0,047
Online Customer Review	0,363					
Repurchase Decision						

Source: Data processing results, 2025

Based on the results of the *F-Square* test, the *Attitude* variable had a very large influence on *Brand Awareness* (1.815) and a moderate influence on *E-WOM* (0.820), but had almost no effect on *Repurchase Decision* (0.003). *Online Customer Reviews* had a big effect on *Attitude* (0.363), while *Celebrity Endorsements* had very little effect on *Attitude* (0.003). Meanwhile, *Brand Awareness* and *E-WOM* had a small effect on *Repurchase Decision*, 0.107 and 0.047, respectively. These results show that most of the relationships in the model have a significant influence, especially the influence of *Attitude* on *Brand Awareness* and *E-WOM*, as well as the influence of *Online Customer Reviews* on *Attitude*.

The *R-Square* test in Structural Equation Modeling Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) is used to measure the magnitude of the ability of independent variables to explain dependent variables. The *high R-Square* value indicates that the model has good predictive power. In general, the *R-Square* value of 0.25 is considered weak, 0.50 moderate, and 0.75 strong.

Table 5. R-Square

Variable	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Attitude	0,541	0,532
Brand Awareness	0,645	0,641
E-WOM	0,451	0,445
Repurchase Decision	0,546	0,532

Source: Data processing results, 2025

The results of the *R-Square* test showed that the *Attitude* had a value of 0.541 which belongs to the medium category, indicating that 54.1% of the variability of the *Attitude* can be explained by the independent variables in the model. *Brand Awareness* has an *R-Square* value of 0.645 which is also in the medium category, showing a fairly strong influence of the variables that affect it. The *R-Square* value for *E-WOM* is 0.451 which is classified as medium to below, while the *Repurchase Decision* has a value of 0.546 which belongs to the medium category. Thus, this research model shows that most of the dependent variables can be adequately explained by their independent variables, although there is still room for improved prediction.

Hypothesis tests in Structural Equation Modeling Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) were conducted to test the influence between latent variables in the research model. This process involves analyzing the path coefficient, t-statistic, and p-value values to determine whether the relationships between

variables are statistically significant. A t-statistic value above 1.96 (at a significance level of 5%) indicates that the hypothesis is accepted, meaning that there is a significant influence between the independent variables and the bound variables. In addition, the direction of the coefficient (positive or negative) indicates the type of relationship that occurs.

Table 6. Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Celebrity Endorsment -> Attitude	0,061	0,163	0,372	0,710
Online Customer Review -> Attitude	0,686	0,150	4,559	0,000
Attitude -> Brand Awareness	0,803	0,040	20,223	0,000
Attitude -> E-WOM	0,671	0,078	8,625	0,000
Attitude -> Repurchase Decision	0,064	0,145	0,439	0,661
Brand Awareness -> Repurchase Decision	0,469	0,178	2,632	0,009
E-WOM -> Repurchase Decision	0,249	0,138	1,812	0,071

Source: Data processing results, 2025

DISCUSSION

Celebrity Endorsement to Attitude

The test results showed that celebrity endorsements did not have a significant effect on consumer attitudes, with an original sample value of 0.061, a t-statistic of 0.372 (< 1.96), and a p-value of 0.710 (> 0.05). This indicates that even though celebrities are used in promotion, their influence on consumer attitudes towards culinary MSME products is not statistically significant in this SEM-PLS model.

This phenomenon reflects that in the Barlingmascakeb area, culinary MSME consumers consider product quality and personal experience more than the popularity of public figures used for promotion. Many consumers tend to shape their attitudes based on the taste, service, and price of products rather than the influence of famous figures, especially in the local market that prioritizes authenticity and direct relationships with business actors.

Online Customer Review to Attitude

The hypothesis test showed that online customer reviews had a significant influence on attitude, with an original sample value of 0.686, a t-statistic of 4.559 (> 1.96), and a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05). This indicates that online customer reviews play an important role in shaping consumer attitudes towards MSME culinary products.

Phenomenally in Barlingmascakeb, consumers increasingly rely on online reviews from platforms such as Google Reviews, Instagram, or TikTok in assessing culinary products before making a purchase. The credibility of other customers' experiences is considered more objective and relevant, so that it can influence new consumers' decisions in shaping their attitudes towards the MSME products offered.

Attitude to Brand Awareness

The results of the analysis showed that attitude had a very significant influence on brand awareness, with an original sample of 0.803, a t-statistic of 20.223, and a p-value of 0.000. This shows that the more positive a consumer's attitude towards a product, the more their awareness of the brand also increases significantly.

In the field, culinary MSMEs in Barlingmascakeb who have succeeded in building a positive attitude through friendly service, delicious products, and a pleasant consumer experience, tend to have high brand awareness. Consumers with a pleasant experience usually easily remember a brand, recommend it to others, and even search for it again on digital platforms.

Attitude to Electronic Word of Mouth

Statistical results showed a significant influence between attitudes towards e-WOM, with an original sample value of 0.671, t-statistic of 8.625, and p-value of 0.000. This means that the positive attitude of consumers towards the product contributes greatly to their likelihood of spreading the experience online.

In the Barlingmascakeb area, culinary MSME actors who successfully build a good impression on customers usually get free promotions in the form of uploads and positive stories on social media or review platforms. Satisfied consumers will be more motivated to share their experiences, which then helps with organic marketing through e-WOM.

Attitude to Repurchase Decision

Statistically, attitude had no significant effect on the repurchase decision, with an original sample of 0.064, a t-statistic of 0.439, and a p-value of 0.661. This indicates that even if consumers have a positive attitude towards the product, it does not necessarily guarantee that they will make a repeat purchase.

In the context of Barlingmascakeb's culinary MSMEs, this can happen because other factors such as location, menu variations, prices, or limited access influence repurchase decisions more than just attitudes. Consumers may like the product, but do not make a repeat purchase due to other practical factors such as the proximity of the business location or the availability of similar alternatives that are closer or more economical.

Brand Awareness to Repurchase Decision

The results of the hypothesis test showed that brand awareness had a significant effect on repurchase decisions, with an original sample of 0.469, t-statistic of 2.632, and a p-value of 0.009. This means that the higher the consumer's brand awareness of the product, the more likely they are to make a repeat purchase.

This phenomenon is reflected in the habits of culinary consumers in Barlingmascakeb who tend to return to buying products from MSMEs whose brands they already know well. MSMEs that are consistent in promotion, have a logo or name that is easy to remember, and are active on social media tend to gain consumer loyalty, even when new competitors appear.

E-WOM to Repurchase Decision

Statistically, the influence of e-WOM on repurchase decisions was not significant, with an original sample of 0.249, a t-statistic of 1.812 (< 1.96), and a p-value of 0.071 (> 0.05). This indicates that even if consumers receive information from e-WOM, it does not directly affect their decision to repurchase the product.

In the context of Barlingmascakeb's culinary MSMEs, although consumers may know the product from other people's testimonials or reviews, the decision to buy again is more influenced by personal experience. E-WOM plays more of a role in the first purchase, while the decision to buy again is determined by the consistency of product quality, service, and ease of access from these MSMEs.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of statistical analysis using SEM-PLS, it was found that the variables online customer reviews, attitudes, and brand awareness had a significant influence on other variables in the structural model, while celebrity endorsements had no significant effect on attitude and repurchase decisions. The attitude variable has been proven to be able to mediate the relationship between online customer reviews on brand awareness and e-WOM significantly. Brand awareness is a variable that plays an important role in driving repurchase decisions, outperforming the direct role of attitude and e-WOM. These results show that consumer perception and experience online are more influential than promotions using celebrity figures.

Further research is suggested to expand the scope of respondents and regions so that the results are more representative and robust. Future researchers may also consider adding external variables such as digital promotion, customer satisfaction, and brand loyalty to enrich the model. The mixed method approach can also be used to gain a deeper understanding from the consumer side. In addition, conducting longitudinal studies will be very useful to see changes in consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions towards culinary MSMEs in a sustainable manner over time.

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