

THE INTERRELATIONS OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT, SOCIAL MEDIA USE, AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT IN ACHIEVING CUSTOMER PURCHASE DECISION

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Abstract

Background – *The awareness and massive adoption towards internet has motivated companies to include it into their marketing strategies, such as by using celebrity endorsement and social media use, as this will enable them to increase customer engagement and their purchase decision.*

Aim – *This study investigates the effect of celebrity endorsement and social media use on customer engagement and consumer purchasing decisions.*

Design / Methodology / Approach – *This research was conducted on consumers of culinary and fashion products of SMEs in West Java Province, with a total sample of 185 respondents. The data was collected using the survey method of distributing questionnaires to respondents. Furthermore, the data obtained were processed using PL S Software-Structural Equation Modeling.*

Findings – *The research results show that: (1) the use of social media has a positive effect on customer engagement; (2) The role of celebrity endorsement has a positive effect on customer engagement; (3) Customer engagement has an impact on purchasing decisions; (4) Customer engagement mediates the relationship between social media use and consumer purchasing decisions, and (5) Customer engagement mediates the relationship between celebrity endorsement and consumer purchasing decisions.*

Conclusion - *The study show the positive influence of the use of social media and celebrity endorsement on customer engagement, and customer engagement on purchasing decisions*

Research Implication – *MSMEs need to understand the important role of the influence of social media in increasing engagement with consumers. The use of celebrity endorsement must also be considered as an important aspect that can encourage consumer engagement.*

Limitations – *This research was specifically conducted on SMEs in the handicraft and culinary industry in West Java. Future studies require to be carried out in different settings to ensure generalizability of the present study.*

Keyword: *Media, Social, Celebrity, Endorsement, Customer, Purchase.*

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Abstrak

Latar Belakang – Kesadaran dan adopsi internet secara masif telah memotivasi perusahaan untuk memasukkannya dalam strategi pemasaran mereka melalui penggunaan *celebrity endorsement* dan media sosial, karena ini akan membuat mereka meningkatkan keterikatan konsumen dan keputusan pembelian.

Tujuan – Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji pengaruh *celebrity endorsement* dan penggunaan media sosial dalam meningkatkan keterikatan pelanggan dan keputusan pembelian.

Desain / Metodologi / Pendekatan – Penelitian ini dilakukan pada konsumen produk *fashion* dan kuliner UKM di Provinsi Jawa Barat dengan jumlah sampel sebesar 185 responden. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan metode survey dengan mendistribusikan kuesioner pada responden. Data yang diperoleh diolah dengan SEM-PLS.

Hasil dan Pembahasan – Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa: (1) penggunaan media sosial berpengaruh positif pada keterikatan pelanggan; (2) *celebrity endorsement* berpengaruh positif pada keterikatan pelanggan; (3) keterikatan pelanggan berpengaruh positif pada keputusan pembelian; (4) Keterikatan pelanggan memediasi hubungan antara penggunaan media sosial dan keputusan pembelian; (5) Keterikatan pelanggan memediasi hubungan antara *celebrity endorsement* dan keputusan pembelian.

Kesimpulan - Studi ini menunjukkan pengaruh positif penggunaan media sosial dan dukungan selebriti pada keterlibatan pelanggan, dan keterlibatan pelanggan pada keputusan pembelian

Implikasi Penelitian – UMKM perlu memahami peran penting dari penggunaan media sosial dalam meningkatkan keterikatan pelanggan. Adanya *celebrity endorsement* juga perlu dipertimbangkan sebagai aspek penting yang dapat meningkatkan keterikatan pelanggan dan keputusan pembelian mereka.

Batasan Penelitian – Penelitian ini dilakukan pada UMKM kuliner dan *fashion* di Jawa Barat. Penelitian selanjutnya perlu dilakukan pada *setting* yang berbeda untuk memastikan generalisasi dari penelitian ini.

Kata Kunci : Media, Sosial, *Celebrity*, *Endorsement*, Pelanggan, Pembelian,

INTRODUCTION

Celebrity support in conducting marketing and promotional activities leads to a phenomenon that is currently widely used by companies or organizations to promote products and services (Clarence and Keni, 2022). Recently, many companies or small and medium-sized (SME) businesses are using celebrities to promote their products and services as a strategic step to achieve excellence. According to Danniswara et al. (2020) celebrity endorsements may play an important role in the promotion process, whether it includes new or established products. This trend is being famous to some

developing countries along with advances in technology and information (Danniswara et al., 2020). Celebrity endorsements are beneficial to companies financially through platforms or advertisements that frequently appear on social media services (Danniswara et al., 2020). The unprecedented development of social media in everyday life has provided many opportunities to connect with customers through platforms (de Oliveira et al., 2020). In addition, along with its development, social media advertising gradually causes an increase in user fatigue, it is seen that many people ignore the ads

that appear from the platform (Hays et al., 2013).

Apparently, SMEs in culinary area in Indonesia have not already involved in the digital realm. The data from ESB Restaurant Technology (Soehandoko, 2022) indicates that in 2021, 64 million culinary SMEs in Indonesia have developed, yet only 15 million of them have utilized the digital realm. This fact indicates that the number is minimal, only 25% of SMEs in the culinary section actually utilize digital technology, including considering the use of celebrity endorsements and social media as promotional tools. In addition, the fashion industry is also experiencing the same problems. Sinaga (2022) mentions that many fashion craftsmen in West Java, especially Bogor City, still need professional publication and marketing development because they are not digitally literate. In fact, the development of technology and information that currently exists has been adopted by consumers who have begun to switch to using social media as a tool to seek knowledge, exchange information, and shop online.

Among those innovative approaches that have been tried by organizations and companies today refer to marketing system through social media which emerged as a successful approach to connect with potential customers on social media and improve relationships with consumers (Jashari and Rrustemi, 2017). Social media turns to be a tool that consumers can use to

find information, especially when they want to make a purchase. The role of social media and the use of celebrities can forge deeper psychological bonds with their followers by sharing content that revolves around their lifestyle and interests (Yu et al., 2018). Followers' positive perception of these celebrities makes their message very effective in terms of creating desired brand impact and engagement on consumers (Khan and Lodhi, 2016).

Using celebrity endorsements and social media in promotional activities can have an impact on consumer attachment to the product and its impact on purchasing decisions (Khan and Lodhi, 2016). The findings of Belanche et al. (2020) which states that celebrity content on Instagram provides an impetus to increase a company's sales and increase its engagement. This study acknowledges the suggestions and limitations of previous research that has been conducted on the concept of consumer attachment. Alvarez-Milan et al. (2018) mentions the importance of examining the antecedents of consumer attachment, and state the need to explore the mechanisms by which consumer attachment can lead to purchase decisions. In addition, de Oliviera et al. (2020) and Ho and Chung (2020) suggest testing the concept of consumer engagement in different settings. So, this study answers these suggestions and limitations by looking at celebrity endorsement and social media use as an

antecedent of consumer attachment, as well as purchasing decisions as a consequence, then testing it in the context of the culinary and fashion SME industry in West Java.

This study aims to investigate the role of celebrity endorsement and social media on consumer engagement and their impact on online purchasing decisions. Based on this premise, the formulation of the research problem is: 1) Does the role of celebrities affect customer engagement, 2) Does the role of social media use affect customer engagement? and 3) Does customer engagement mediate the relationship between celebrity endorsement and social media use on consumer purchasing decisions?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media Use

Recently, the internet and social media have changed the custom of companies and consumers communication. In recent years, it can be seen that the development of social media is very rapid. The unique aspects of social media influence marketing practices as well as advertising and promotion of companies (de Oliveira et al., 2020). Kotler (2019) defines social media as a tool or method used by consumers or companies to share information in the form of text, images, audio, or video with others in support of business performance. According to Shawky et al. (2019), social media is a form of media that contains online resources that are

generated, explored, utilized and disseminated. It can be an application or a site built on technology and networks (Hays et al., 2013). Social media refers to activities, practices, and behaviors among communities of people who gather online to share information, knowledge, and opinions using conversational media (web-based applications) (Jashari and Rrustemi, 2017). Social media has changed the way we communicate and the way we share information. Around 75% of people have used social media to search for information before making a purchase and have an attachment between consumers and sellers. This shows the growing popularity of social media as an information tool (Yogesh and Yesha, 2014). Yu et al. (2018) found several characteristics of consumers in using social media, namely; the existence of interesting and entertaining content, the interaction between consumers and sellers, the interaction between consumers and other consumers, the ease of finding information, and the level of trust. Previous research conducted by Tauran et al. 2022; Pop et al., 2022 have found that consumers who have a high intensity on the use of social media can influence the attachment of a product or service. Based on this, the hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H₁. *The use of social media has a positive effect on customer engagement.*



Celebrity Endorsement

Currently, with the development of digital marketing and the use of online shop applications, it has changed the way consumers behave, including in purchases. According to Khan and Lodhi (2016), many companies have incurred costs and formulated their marketing strategies in order to successfully improve their performance. One of them is to use the role of celebrities to promote (Ifeanyichukwu, 2016). Danniswara et al. (2020) adds that the use of celebrities is considered an effective promotional tool by marketers both large and small. Gupta (2014) states that one in four advertisements using celebrity endorsements can affect advertising effectiveness, brand recognition, brand recall, purchase intensity and even buying behavior. A celebrity endorser is an artist, entertainer, athlete, and public figure who is widely known by many people for the success of the product being supported (Rahmawati, 2022). Gabucayan et al. (2022) stated that there are several indicators of Celebrity Endorser: Attractiveness, Trust, and Expertise. Included in this celebrity group are television and film stars, sports stars, politicians, businessmen, and artists. According to Santos et al. (2022), consumer engagement can increase if a celebrity uses the same product that consumers use. Qiu et al. (2021) and Tanwar et al. (2021) found that the role of celebrities can increase consumer attachment to the products and services

used. This indicates a positive relationship. Based on this, the second hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H₂. *The role of celebrity endorsement has a positive effect on customer engagement.*

Customer Engagement

According to Saputra and Fadhilah (2022), customer engagement refers to a psychological condition that has a level of intensity and plays an important role in the process of exchanging products or services. Zheng et al. (2022) argues that customer engagement as a manifestation of customer behavior towards brands (companies) outside of purchasing activities has the meaning that the embodiment of consumer behavior towards brands outside of transaction or purchase activities resulting from individual customer motivation, such as word of mouth, recommendations, interactions between consumers, writing reviews, blogging and other similar activities. Handayani and Sari (2022) divide Customer Engagement indicators: (1) Enthusiasm (2) Attention (3) Absorption (4) Interaction (5) Identification.

Customer engagement is an activity which indirectly involves related consumers to search, evaluate alternatives, and make decisions that involve brand selection (Sukma et al., 2022). In addition, according to customer engagement is physical, cognitive, and emotional involvement that will build relationships with the company (Panjaitan, 2022). Therefore, customer

engagement is very important for companies because it will build a strong relationship between consumers and companies whose impact refers to purchasing decisions. According to Clarence and Keni (2022), customer engagement can be formed through seven stages, namely: Connection, Interaction, Satisfaction, Retention, Commitment, Advocacy, and Engagement. Previous research found that customer engagement has an influence on consumer purchasing decisions. Based on this, the hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H₃. *Customer engagement affects purchasing decisions.*

Customer Engagement as Mediator

According to Saputra and Fadhilah (2022), purchase decision is a form of selection and a person's interest in buying the most preferred brand among a number of different

brands. Agrawal and Mittal (2022) describe five stages in the decision-making process, including problem recognition, information seeking, alternative evaluation, purchasing decisions and post-purchase behavior. In this case, when consumers use social media in searching for product information, it can affect purchasing decisions. But it will be strong if the consumer himself has an attachment between the product or service he will buy. Likewise with the use of celebrity endorsements, this will be strong if the consumer has an attachment to the product he will buy. Based on this, the final hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H_{4a}. *Customer engagement mediates the relationship between social media use and consumer purchasing decisions.*

H_{4b}. *Customer engagement mediates the relationship between celebrity endorsement and consumer purchasing decisions.*

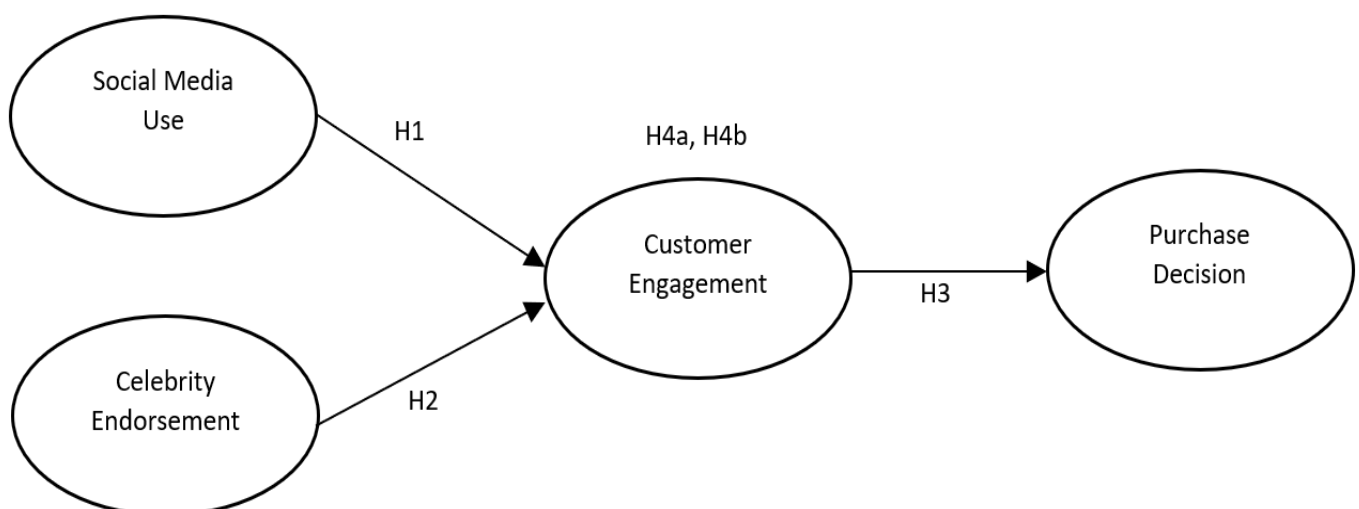


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted using a quantitative approach by the purpose of measuring the causal relationship between variables. The population of this study are consumers of culinary and fashion products produced by the handicraft and culinary industry in West Java Province, with a total sample of 185 respondents. Data was collected by survey method, by distributing questionnaires to respondents. The final number of questionnaires that were returned and used for data processing was 185 questionnaires. Data analysis was carried out using Structural Equation Modelling using PLS software.

The measurement of this research variable is explained as follows:

1. Social media variables are measured using the scale developed by Yu et al. (2018) using 4 items.
2. The celebrity endorsement variable is measured using a scale developed by Danniswara et al. (2020)
3. The customer engagement variable was measured using the scale developed by Zheng et al. (2022) using 3 items.
4. The purchase decision variable is measured using a scale designed by Kotler (2019) using 5 items.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis

From the results of research on demographic characteristics, it can be seen that

respondents are dominated by men (63%), in the age group 36-45 years (51%), with undergraduate education (74%). More details on the demographic characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Measurement Model Analysis

The results of the outer model analysis for validity and reliability tests, as well as the path coefficient equation model are presented in Figure 2.

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is reviewed to check the validity of each indicator by using the loading factor value. Based on Figure 2, there are no indicators that must be lowered because all indicators have met the requirements with a loading factor value of > 0.70 (valid), so that convergent validity is equal.

Discriminant Validity

The model has good discriminant validity if the square root of the Average Variance Extracted for each construct is greater than each construct in the model. The results of the discriminant validity test are presented in Table 2. Based on Table 2, it can be seen that the square root value of AVE is 0.582, 0.669, 0.654, 0.702 which is greater than the value of each construct, or the square root value of $AVE > 0.5$. Therefore, the measurement model of this study has good discriminant validity.



Construct Reliability

The reliability test is seen from Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability, and AVE values. The construct is said to be reliable if the AVE value > 0.50 , composite reliability > 0.70 , and Cronbach's alpha > 0.60 . The output for SmartPLS for the composite reliability value can be seen in Table 3. From the SmartPLS output results in Table 3, all constructs have an AVE value of AVE $> > 0.50$, composite reliability > 0.70 , and Cronbach's alpha > 0.60 . Therefore, it can be concluded that the construct has good reliability.

Structural Model Evaluation

Based on the results of the outer model test, it is confirmed that the model has met the criteria. The next step is to evaluate the structural model (inner model) by looking at the value of the indicator reliability (R2) in the dependent variable construct and the results of the path coefficient test which are known from the t-statistical value. Another evaluation is done by looking at the predictive relevance of Q2 and to determine the effect between variables through bootstrap.

Determinant Coefficient

The determinant coefficient (R2) was conducted to review the goodness of the predicted model. The predicted model is good if the R2 value is higher. The value of the determinant coefficient is shown in Table 4. Based on Table 4, the model has a good model prediction.

Predictive Relevance

The model fit test was conducted using Q2 analysis by looking at the Q2 value. If the value of Q2 is greater than zero, the model is said to be good or fit. The estimation results are presented in Table 5. In Table 5 it can be seen that the Q2 values for customer engagement and purchase decisions are 0.221 and 0.270. Thus it can be said that the model in this study is good, and is able to represent the facts and conditions that occur in the market area.

Bootstrapping Test

The significance test of the predictive model in the evaluation of the inner model can be seen from the p-value. If the p-value > 0.05 or 5% means that the value is not significant, but if the P-value < 0.05 or 5% means that the variable has a significant relationship. Hypothesis testing is shown in Table 6 as follows.

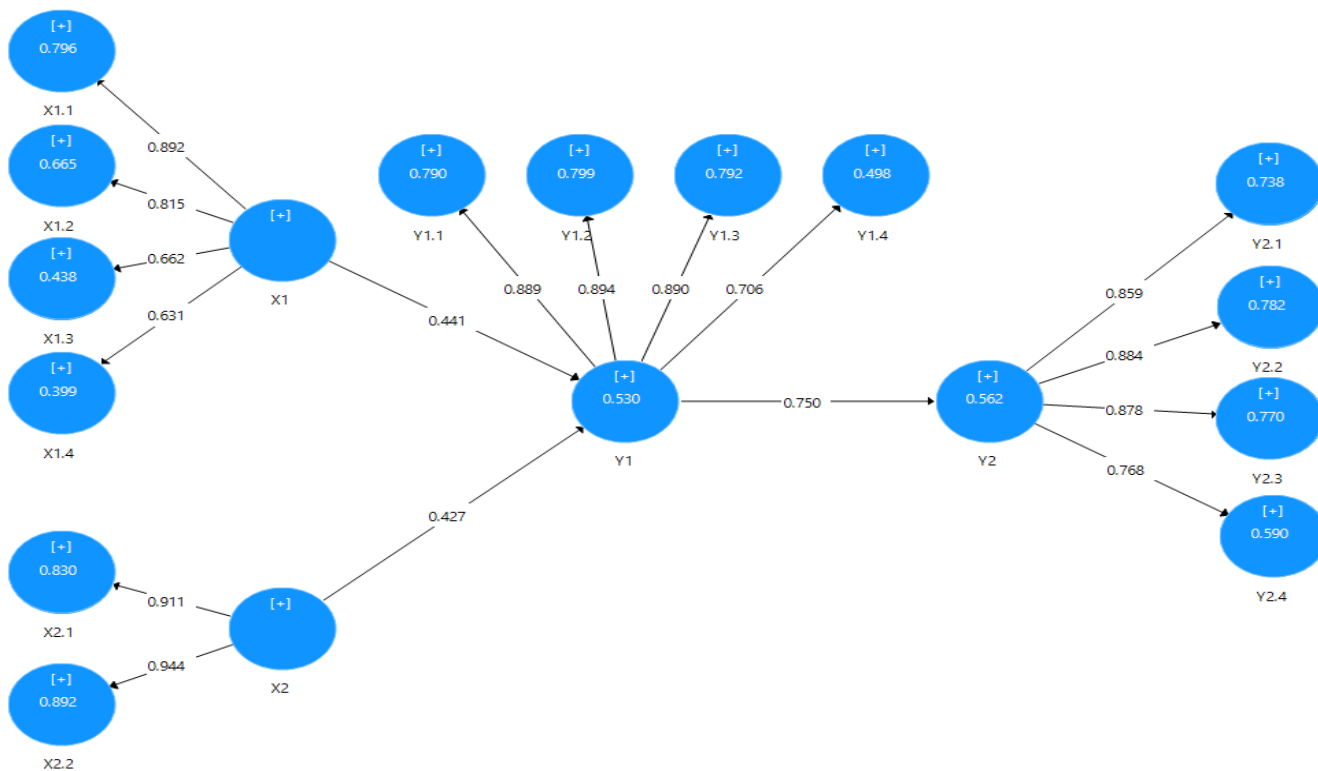


Figure 2. Measurement Model Evaluation Results

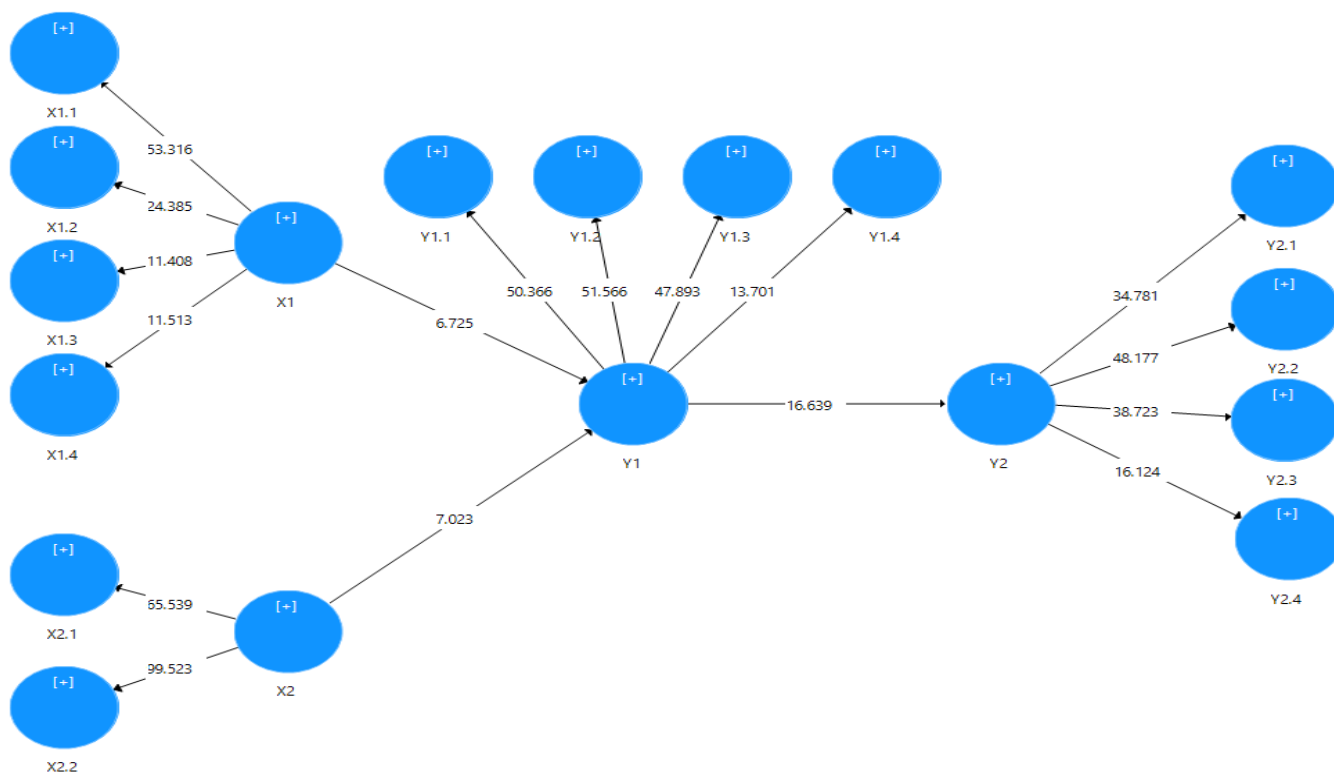


Figure 3. Structural Model Evaluation Results

Table 1
 Respondents' Characteristics

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	117	63%
Female	68	37%
Age		
18-25 years old	12	6%
26-35 years old	37	20%
36-45 years old	94	51%
46-55 years old	42	23%
Education		
High School or equivalent	40	7%
Bachelor's degree	136	74%
Others	9	5%

Source: Research Data, 2022

Table 2
 Value of Square Root AVE

	TL	SL	PE	AP
Social Media Use	0.884			
Celebrity endorsement	0.406	0.774		
Customer engagement	0.614	0.606	0.811	
Purchase decision	0.473	0.448	0.750	0.876

Source: Research Data, 2022

Table 3
 Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and AVE Value

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Social media use	0,857	0,877	0,781
Celebrity endorsement	0,906	0,897	0,599
Customer engagement	0,931	0,883	0,658
Purchase decision	0,929	0,908	0,767

Source: Research Data, 2022

Table 4
 Determinant Coefficient Value

	R Square	Results
Customer engagement	0.530	Model Moderate
Purchase decision	0.562	Model Moderate

Source: Research Data, 2022

Table 5
 Predictive Relevance Results

	SSO	SSE	Q ² (=1-SSE/SSO)	Results
Customer engagement	3885,000	3026,786	0,221	strong predictive relevance value
Purchase decision	2960,000	2161,393	0,270	strong predictive relevance value

Source: Research Data, 2022

Table 6
 Results of Hypothesis Test

	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Results	Hypothesis
SM => CENG	0,441	6,725	0,000	Significant	H1 accepted
CE => CENG	0,427	7,023	0,000	Significant	H2 accepted
CENG => PD	0,750	16,639	0,000	Significant	H3 accepted
SM => CENG => PD	0,330	6,383	0,000	Significant	H4a accepted
CE => CENG => PD	0,320	6,282	0,000	Significant	H4b accepted

Source: Research Data, 2022

Discussion

The results showed that social media use had a significant positive effect on customer engagement. In other words, if the use of social media is perceived well by consumers, then consumer engagement will also be better. This finding supports the results of previous research which found that social media use can affect customer engagement (Santoz et al., 2022). The use of social media has now become a trend for all consumers, especially in the millennial generation. In addition, when consumers will make a purchase, they will use social media as a tool to find information. According to Hays et al. (2013) social media is an inseparable part of everyday life and has an important position in the buying process. According to Jashari and Rrustemi (2017) social media can also be used as a way to share knowledge, information, and opinions. Yogesh and Yesha

(2014) and Yu et al. (2018) state that social media is increasingly seen as a source of information that is more objective and influential on many aspects of consumer behavior, including buying behavior. The impact of this social media can provide hope that creates feelings, especially in today's millennial generation. Therefore, the first hypothesis in this study proved to be influential and acceptable.

The results of the study prove that celebrity endorsement reached a significant positive effect on customer engagement. In other words, the better the use of celebrity endorsements, the higher the customer engagement. This is in accordance with the findings of several studies that have been conducted which found that the use of celebrity endorsements can affect customer engagement (Zheng et al., 2022). According to Handayani and Sari (2022) in conducting

marketing activities on social media, it is important for companies or organizations to use celebrities who have many followers. This is because its role can have an impact on consumer engagement. Many studies, such as Panjaitan (2022) and Clarence and Keni (2022) have found a strong influence between celebrity endorsement on customer engagement. Based on this, the second hypothesis can be accepted.

The findings of this study also show that customer engagement has a significant positive effect on purchasing decisions. The higher the consumer's engagement, the higher their purchase decision. The findings of this study also strengthen the results of Sukma et al. (2022). When consumers have an attachment to a product or service, the purchase decision will increase. This is because when consumers have an attachment, they will no longer look for information on the product or service to be purchased. Likewise, according to Saputra and Fadhilah (2022) when consumers feel that they have an attachment, then they have a match with the product or service itself so that they decide to make a purchase. According to Clarence and Keni (2022) customer engagement is a psychological condition of individuals who play an important role in the exchange or purchase process. Therefore the second hypothesis can be accepted.

In addition, customer engagement has also been shown to have a mediating role in

the relationship between social media use and purchase decisions. The results are significant in a positive direction, so customer engagement can be a mediator in the relationship between the two variables. In this study, we did not examine the direct influence of celebrity endorsements and social media use on customer purchase decision. Following the suggestion from Edwards and Lambert (2007), we concluded that the mediation in this study as full mediation, as the direct influence of the x and y variable is not examined. The use of celebrity endorsements can encourage consumer confidence to make purchases. This is because the figure attached to the celebrity itself. However, according to Saputra and Fadhilah (2022) if the company or organization is wrong in choosing a celebrity, it will have a negative impact on consumer purchasing decisions. for example, when the celebrity has a bad reputation.

In this regard, the role of customer engagement is to provide a sense of attachment to consumers to make purchases. This attachment that arises from consumers will have an impact on purchases. When individuals realize that they have a strong attachment. Thus, the last hypothesis can be accepted.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the role of the use of social media and celebrity endorsement in determining purchase decisions through

customer engagement. The results of the study show the positive influence of the use of social media and celebrity endorsement on customer engagement, and customer engagement on purchasing decisions. In this study, customer engagement is seen as a mediating variable between the use of social media and celebrity endorsement. This research was specifically conducted on SMEs in the handicraft and culinary industry in West Java. Future studies require to be carried out in different settings to ensure generalizability of the present study. In addition, this study uses the use of social media and celebrity as predictors of customer engagement and purchase decisions. Therefore, further research is also recommended to explore and consider other antecedents of these two variables, to better understand the mechanisms that can drive purchasing decisions during changes or crises.

IMPLICATIONS

There are several practical implications that can be drawn from this research. First, MSMEs need to understand the important role of the influence of social media in increasing engagement with consumers. This is because social media is a variable that can build relationships with consumers, especially in providing information. When experiencing a pandemic crisis, it is very important for organizations to integrate their business activities on social media platforms.

Therefore, the use of social media can be considered as a suitable approach that emphasizes customer engagement and purchase decisions. Second, the use of celebrity endorsement must also be considered as an important aspect that can encourage consumer engagement. Celebrity endorsements will encourage individuals to respond to the products or services offered. Therefore, organizations should be well aware that celebrity selection can increase consumer engagement.

This study has been carried out through the appropriate scientific approach. However, it is undeniable that there are a number of limitations that can be further addressed by future studies. First, the number of samples in this study is adequate for carrying out SEM-PLS analysis. However, when it is seen from the geographical aspect, this study is only conducted in West Java Regency, thus it needs to be broadened in terms of geographical area by future studies. Furthermore, this study has not yet grouped the type of consumers, as it aims to depict consumers of both culinary and fashion products. It is suggested for future studies to distinguish the types of consumers and their preferences, in order to be able to dig deeper into this subject. Finally, it is suggested for future studies to considerate the use of moderating variable, to understand more about the underlying condition that enable social media use and celebrity endorsement to influence consumer purchase decisions.

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