

**SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AND TRUST IN DIGITAL  
PLATFORMS AS DETERMINANTS OF PURCHASE  
DECISIONS: THE MEDIATING  
EFFECT OF CUSTOMER  
ENGAGEMENT**

**FINAL ASSIGNMENT**

*Submitted to Fulfill Partial Requirements for Obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in  
Management*



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**MEDAN**  
**2026**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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The Undergraduate Examination Committee of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara, in a session held on Friday, April 10, 2026, at 08.30 WIB until finished, after hearing, seeing, paying attention, and so on.

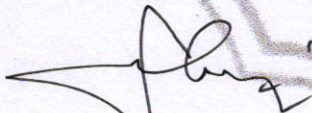
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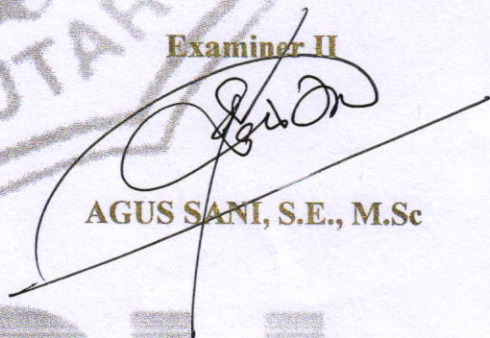
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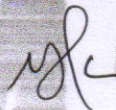
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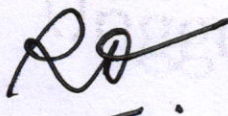
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Item	Evaluation Results	Date	Supervisor's Initial
Chapter I	-		
Chapter II	-		
Chapter III	-		
Chapter IV	- Use adjusted R-square for result (Path Analysis) - Add explanation about direct and indirect effect	30/ march-26	ylc
Chapter V	- make a good conclusion for not significant variable	30/ march-26	ylc
References	- make references with friendly style	30/ march-26	ylc
Approval for Final Examination	- Approved for Final Exam	31/ march-26	ylc

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AND TRUST IN DIGITAL PLATFORMS AS DETERMINANTS OF PURCHASE DECISIONS: THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT**

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The rapid development of digital technology and the increasing use of online platforms in the culinary MSME sector require businesses to implement effective marketing strategies to influence consumer purchasing decisions. However, the utilization of social media marketing, consumer trust, and customer engagement has not been fully optimized. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effect of social media marketing and trust on purchase decisions, both directly and indirectly through customer engagement as an intervening variable. This research uses a quantitative approach with a sample of respondents who have experience purchasing culinary products through digital platforms in Medan City. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using the SEM-PLS (SmartPLS) method. The results show that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions and customer engagement. Trust has a positive and significant effect on customer engagement but does not have a significant effect on purchase decisions. Customer engagement has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions. Furthermore, customer engagement is not able to mediate the relationship between social media marketing and purchase decisions, but it is able to mediate the relationship between trust and purchase decisions. The model demonstrates strong predictive power, indicating that the variables used are able to explain consumer behavior in digital purchasing decisions.

**Keywords:** Social Media Marketing, Trust, Customer Engagement, Purchase Decisions

## PREFACE



*Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh*

*Alhamdulillahirabbil'alamin*

All praise and gratitude are extended to Allah Subhanahu wa ta'ala for His grace, blessings, and guidance. Also, to my beloved father Suprayitno and dear mother Sulastri, who have continuously provided unwavering motivation and support, as well as moral, enthusiasm, material, and advice, who have raised the author with full affection and prayers that always accompany these steps which have enabled the author to complete this thesis entitled “Social Media Marketing and Trust in Digital Platforms as Determinants of Purchase Decisions: The Mediating Effect of Customer Engagement”. This thesis is prepared to fulfill one of the requirements for completing the undergraduate (S1) program in Management at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara.

The author realizes that this thesis is still far from perfect due to limitations in knowledge and ability. However, with the assistance, guidance, and support of various parties, this thesis was completed properly. Therefore, the author would like to express sincere gratitude and appreciation to:

1. Prof. Dr. Agussani, M.AP as the Rector of Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara.
2. Dr. Radiman, S.E., M.Si. as the Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara.

3. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hasrudy Tanjung, S.E., M.Si as Vice Dean I of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara.
4. Muhammad Shareza Hafiz, SE., M.Acc. as Vice Dean III of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara.
5. Agus Sani, S.E., M.Sc as the Head of the Management Study Program, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara.
6. Arif Pratama Marpaung, S.E., M.M as the Secretary of the Management Study Program, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara.
7. Eri Yanti Nasution, S.E., M.Ec as the Supervising Lecturer who has spent considerable time providing guidance and direction that helped the author in completing this thesis.
8. Rini Astuti, S.E., M.M., as my academic advisor whose invaluable mentorship and academic support have greatly shaped my journey.
9. All lecturers at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara, who have imparted all knowledge and experience to the author, as well as all staff and employees who have assisted the author both during the education period and in the preparation of this thesis.
10. To the OIC UMSU team, who have supported and encouraged the author throughout the completion of this research.
11. My dearest friends, Fara Aulia Syifa Azzahra, who has been a constant companion through the highs and lows of my university years.

12. To Doni Pratama, Malikul Hamdan, Ahmad Fauzan Zhafran, Thasyah Rezky, and Annisa Mawaddah, who have accompanied me through every joy and sorrow, and for always supporting me throughout my university years.
13. All my colleagues from the Class of 2022, especially the Management International Class. While I cannot mention every name, I am deeply grateful for the camaraderie and support we shared.
14. To myself, thank you for not giving up and for fighting through the storms. Thank you for staying strong and continuing to try even when you felt behind. Be happy, wherever life takes you.

Medan, March 2026  
Author

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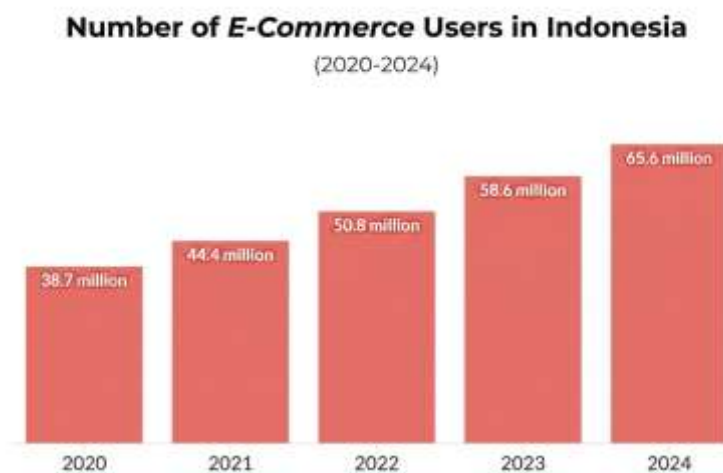
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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of The Study

The current development of the era, where technology is increasingly advanced, has led to the creation of a digital era that makes humans increasingly dependent on technology, especially in terms of internet usage. Currently, the internet can be easily accessed anywhere and anytime through mobile devices commonly known as smartphones. The use of the internet has made daily life easier, one example being online transactions. In the past, transactions were carried out directly in markets or stores, but now people have switched to online shopping, better known as e-commerce. According to data from Tech in Asia, the number of e-commerce users in Indonesia has continued to increase from 38,7 million users in 2020 to 65,5 million users in 2024. This significant increase shows that online shopping has become a major trend in the consumption behavior of Indonesians in the digital era.



Source: <https://id.techinasia.com/data-ecommerce-indonesia>

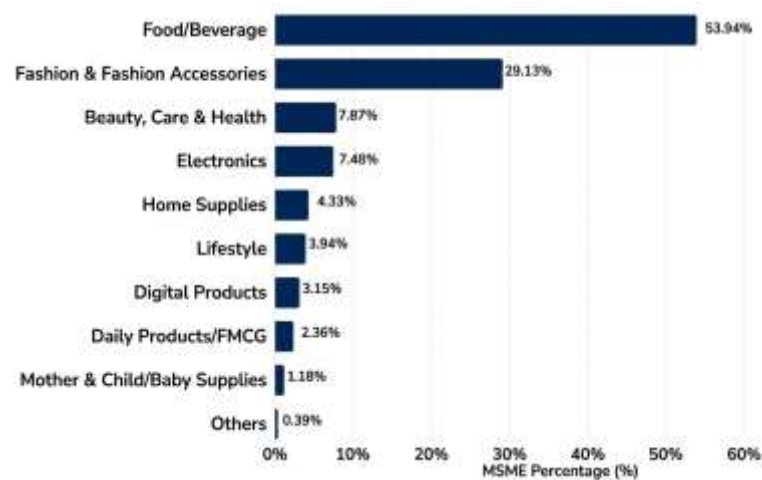
**Figure 1.1 E-commerce Users in Indonesia**



order to survive and compete amid the rapid development of modern business systems (Yuniar, 2020).

*E-commerce* is a strategic tool for SMEs to expand their market reach without being limited by geographical location. By utilizing platforms such as Grab, GoJek, and similar services, SMEs can market their products more effectively, reach a wider range of consumers, and increase transaction efficiency. Therefore, integrating SMEs into digital platforms through e-commerce is an important step in strengthening business competitiveness and sustainability in the digital economy era.

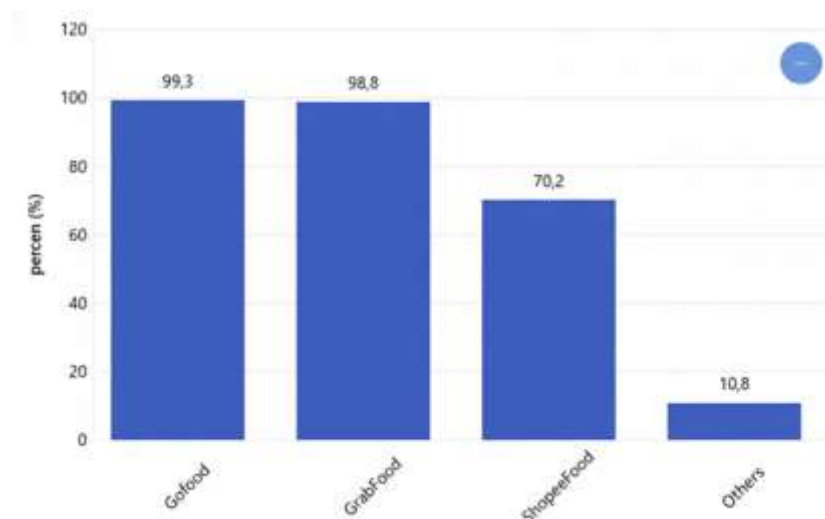
Based on INDEF research, as many as 56,3% of SME players utilize social media such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok as a means of selling in 2024. Because so many people are active Instagram users, Instagram has become one of the social media platforms that can help SMEs market their businesses. In addition to having a large Instagram user base, SMEs benefit from easy access to promotions and the ability to share company information (Aulia et al., 2022).



Source: <https://indef.or.id/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/>

**Figure 1.3 Types of Products Sold by SMEs**

Based on data from the *Institute for Development of Economics and Finance (INDEF)*, SME data in 2024 indicate that the Food and Beverage sector is the most dominant business sector, accounting for 53,94% of the total number of SMEs. This figure demonstrates that more than half of SME actors in Indonesia operate within this sector. The high level of interest in the food and beverage industry is driven by strong market demand as well as its flexible nature and ease of adaptation across diverse segments of society. Consequently, this sector serves as a key backbone in the growth and development of SMEs in Indonesia.



Source: <https://databoks.katadata.co.id>

**Figure 1.4 Digital Platforms Used by Culinary SMEs**

The 2023 graph above indicates that GoFood is the most popular digital platform used by SMEs to sell food products, with a usage rate of 99.3%. This is followed closely by GrabFood at 98.8%, demonstrating that these two platforms dominate as the primary choices for food delivery services. Other platform categories are utilized by only 10.8% of SMEs, suggesting that culinary business operators tend to prefer well-established platforms with extensive market reach. These findings highlight the crucial role of digital platforms in supporting the online sales of SME food products by enabling businesses to leverage platforms that are

most frequently accessed by consumers. This phenomenon further suggests that success in digital platform-based sales is not solely determined by service availability, but is also influenced by consumer behavior and purchasing decisions in the online environment.

In the field of marketing, purchase decisions constitute an integral component of consumer behavior, encompassing the processes by which individuals, groups, and organizations select, purchase, and use products, goods, or services to satisfy their needs and achieve consumer satisfaction (Kotler & Keller, 2016). The purchase decision process encompasses the stages undertaken by consumers before ultimately deciding to purchase a product (Wiridjati & Roesman, 2024). Such decisions are not spontaneous; rather, consumer purchase decisions occur when a product aligns with consumers' needs and preferences (Pangestu & Brabo, 2025). Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior throughout the purchasing process is essential, as it provides a foundation for developing strategies capable of generating positive stimuli and influence on consumers, thereby encouraging purchase actions. One effective strategy for influencing such behavior in the digital era is the implementation of social media marketing.

Social media marketing is a technique that enables individuals and businesses to promote their goods and services through online social media platforms in order to reach a broader audience (Yong & Hassan, 2019). It facilitates collaboration, communication, and the collective use of user intelligence for marketing purposes (Eliza et al., 2023). Social media marketing is applied in various forms and exerts influence not only at the individual level but also across industries more broadly (Ardiansyah & Sarwoko, 2020). In practice, social media marketing encompasses

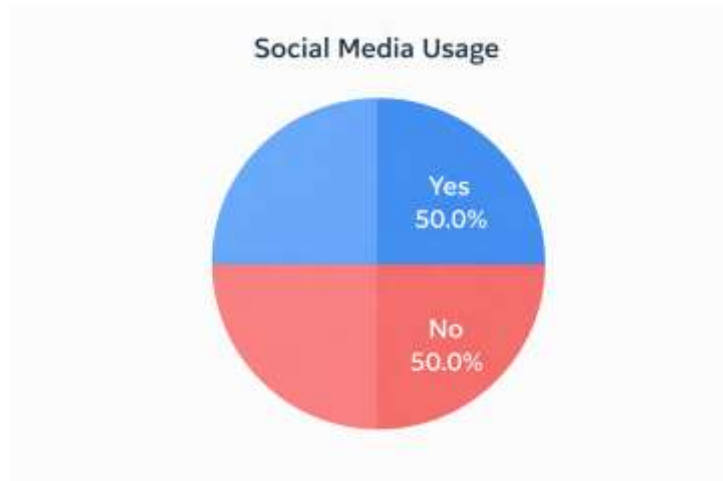
a range of organizational efforts aimed at attracting consumer interest in a brand through digital channels such as blogs, websites, and social media platforms (Magassic, 2016). The use of social networking sites such as Instagram as a marketing tactic enables companies to communicate their competitive advantages in an effective and efficient manner (Ardiansyah & Sarwoko, 2020). As social media usage among the public continues to increase, the implementation of this strategy has become increasingly relevant for businesses seeking to enhance brand visibility and influence consumer purchase decisions. However, the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies cannot be fully realized without the presence of consumer trust in the brand or seller operating in the online environment.

Trust is one of the key factors that can influence purchase decisions (Kim et al., 2012). Trust is defined as a subjective probability whereby consumers expect sellers to carry out transactions in accordance with consumers' trust expectations (Retnowati & Mardikaningsih, 2021). In the digital context, where physical interaction is absent, trust becomes a crucial element influencing consumers' willingness to share personal information and engage in online transactions (Febriyantoro, 2020). Therefore, trust plays an essential role in creating a secure and reassuring online shopping experience (Napitupulu & Supriyono, 2023). Consumer trust reflects an individual's belief that the seller possesses integrity and reliability and will fulfill all obligations in conducting transactions as expected (Nurrahmanto, 2017). In the current digital era, trust not only serves as the foundation of the relationship between sellers and buyers but also acts as a fundamental element in strengthening long-term customer engagement.

Customer engagement is a critical element that must be understood and effectively implemented by business practitioners, as active consumer involvement can create substantial opportunities for business success (Saputra & Fadhilah, 2022). Customer engagement is not only expressed through the provision of reviews but also through active interactions such as comments, recommendations, and participation in forums discussing products and services. Customers who feel engaged tend to provide more honest feedback and develop stronger relationships with the company (Pangestu & Brabo, 2025). According to Willems (2011), customer engagement refers to the process of involving customers by interacting with them through dialogue and experiences in order to optimally support them and influence their purchase decisions. Particularly in the culinary industry, customer engagement constitutes an essential component of marketing strategies aimed at building customer loyalty, retaining customers, and strengthening a firm's competitive position in an increasingly competitive market (Parinsi et al., 2025).

The advancement of digitalization in the culinary sector has not only occurred at the national level but has also been significantly experienced in Medan City, as one of the major centers of economic growth on the island of Sumatra. Empirical observations indicate that culinary SME actors in Medan have begun to adapt to digital technological developments by utilizing various platforms such as GrabFood, GoFood, and Instagram to reach a wider consumer base. However, in managing digital promotional strategies effectively, many of these businesses have not yet been able to optimally leverage social media to build meaningful interactions and sustainable relationships with consumers. In addition, a relatively low level of consumer trust in online transactions is still evident, particularly with

regard to product quality, payment security, and seller authenticity. These conditions contribute to low levels of consumer engagement in online brand or product interactions, which ultimately influence consumers' purchase decisions.

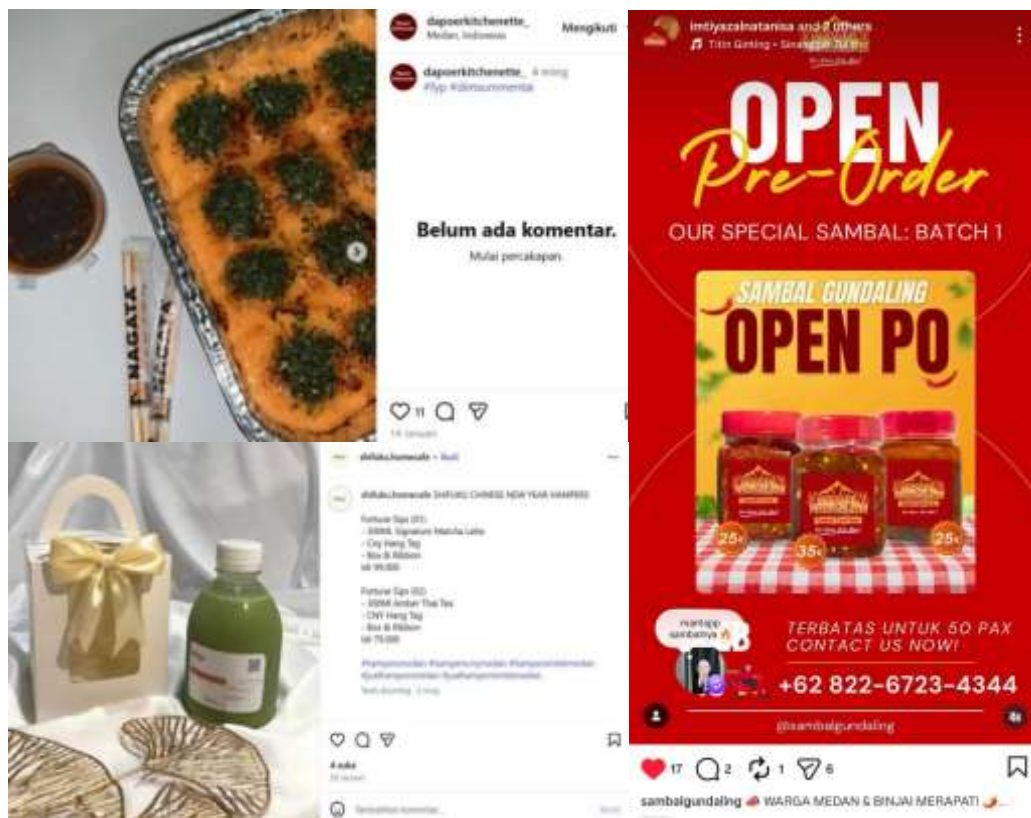


Source: <https://djournals.com/jpm/article/view/2458/1253>

**Figure 1.5 Social Media Implementation among Culinary SMEs in Medan**

Based on the findings of (Purnama et al., 2025), it can be understood that digital platforms play a strategic role in supporting the sales performance of culinary SMEs in Medan. However, the dominant use of food delivery platforms has not been fully complemented by the optimal utilization of social media as a sustainable marketing tool. Data on social media usage indicate that SME actors remain relatively divided in their adoption of social media for marketing activities, suggesting that the implementation of social media marketing has not yet been maximized. This condition reveals a gap between the high dependence of SMEs on digital food delivery platforms and the limited use of social media as a means of building consumer trust and fostering interaction. Therefore, this phenomenon strengthens the indication that culinary SMEs in Medan have not fully optimized social media marketing as an integral component of their digital marketing strategy.

The gap between the high utilization of digital platforms and the suboptimal use of social media indicates that the digital transformation of culinary SMEs has not yet been fully comprehensive. The reliance on transaction-based platforms without being supported by a well-planned social media marketing strategy has resulted in limited interaction, reduced information transparency, and weaker consumer trust formation in online transactions. This condition is further reinforced by the limited digital knowledge and readiness of SME actors, who still tend to rely on traditional transaction methods due to concerns regarding data security, potential fraud, and digital financial management systems. In line with this issue, a pre-survey was conducted involving 30 respondents, and the results reveal that the level of consumer trust in online transactions among culinary SMEs in Medan is not yet fully strong. This is reflected in the relatively high proportion of neutral responses on several indicators, including transaction security (26.7%), online payment management (33.3%), product information accuracy (43.3%), data security (46.7%), and problem resolution (36.7%). These findings indicate that consumer trust in the digital services of culinary SMEs in Medan still needs to be strengthened. On the other hand, the advancement of information and communication technology has shifted economic activities toward digital transactions as part of modern economic dynamics, making the optimization of digital media utilization an essential requirement for business sustainability (E. Y. Nasution, 2020). Therefore, the suboptimal implementation of social media marketing affects not only promotional performance but also the development of consumer trust and the sustainable adoption of digital transactions among culinary SMEs.



*Source: Medan's Culinary SMEs on the Instagram Platform*

### **Figure 1.6 Limited Customer Engagement on Instagram**

In line with the findings regarding the suboptimal development of consumer trust in digital transactions, this condition is also reflected in the relatively limited level of consumer engagement in the digital activities of culinary SMEs in Medan. Based on observations of promotional content shared by culinary SMEs on Instagram, as illustrated in the figure, user interaction appears to be relatively low, as indicated by the minimal number of comments, limited audience responses, and the dominance of one-way informational content that does not stimulate active consumer participation. This phenomenon suggests that the utilization of social media has not yet fully succeeded in fostering customer engagement in the form of two-way communication, feedback, or emotional involvement with the brand. In fact, consumer engagement is a crucial element in strengthening long-term

relationships, enhancing trust, and supporting the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies. Therefore, the limited interaction observed in these digital activities further reinforces the indication that the social media marketing strategies of culinary SMEs in Medan have not yet been optimized to generate sustainable consumer engagement.

Based on the foregoing discussion, the author is motivated to conduct a study entitled **“Social Media Marketing and Trust in Digital Platforms as Determinants of Purchase Decisions: The Mediating Effect of Customer Engagement”**.

## **1.2 Problem Identification**

Based on the background of the study described above, the problems addressed in this research are identified as follows:

1. The implementation of social media marketing strategies by culinary SMEs in Medan City has not yet been optimal.
2. The level of consumer trust in online transactions among culinary SMEs in Medan City remains relatively low.
3. Customer engagement with the digital activities of culinary SMEs in Medan City is still limited.
4. The relationship between social media marketing, trust, and purchase decisions through customer engagement has not been strongly established among culinary SMEs in Medan City.

### **1.3 Problem Limitations**

To ensure that the research remains focused and does not become overly broad, the limitations of this problem is defined as follows:

1. This study is limited to culinary SMEs in Medan City that utilize the GrabFood, GoFood, and Instagram platforms.
2. The variables examined in this study include Social Media Marketing (X1), Trust (X2), Purchase Decision (Y), and Customer Engagement (Z) as the intervening variable.
3. Data are collected from consumers of culinary SMEs, rather than from SME owners.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The problems to be examined by the author are as follows:

1. Does social media marketing on digital platforms influence the purchase decisions of culinary SME consumers in Medan?
2. Does trust in digital platforms influence the purchase decisions of culinary SME consumers in Medan?
3. Does customer engagement influence the purchase decisions of culinary SME consumers in Medan?
4. Does social media marketing influence customer engagement among culinary SME consumers in Medan?
5. Does trust influence customer engagement among culinary SME consumers in Medan?

6. Does social media marketing on digital platforms influence purchase decisions through customer engagement as an intervening variable among culinary SME consumers in Medan?
7. Does trust in digital platforms influence purchase decisions through customer engagement as an intervening variable among culinary SME consumers in Medan?

### **1.5 Research Objectives**

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To examine and analyze the effect of social media marketing on digital platforms on the purchase decisions of culinary SME consumers in Medan.
2. To examine and analyze the effect of trust in digital platforms on the purchase decisions of culinary SME consumers in Medan.
3. To examine and analyze the effect of customer engagement on the purchase decisions of culinary SME consumers in Medan.
4. To examine and analyze the effect of social media marketing on customer engagement among culinary SME consumers in Medan.
5. To examine and analyze the effect of trust on customer engagement among culinary SME consumers in Medan.
6. To examine and analyze the effect of social media marketing on purchase decisions with customer engagement as an intervening variable among culinary SME consumers in Medan.
7. To examine and analyze the effect of trust on purchase decisions with customer engagement as an intervening variable among culinary SME consumers in Medan.

## 1.6 Benefits of the Study

The expected benefits of this study are as follows:

### 1. Theoretical Benefits

This study is expected to contribute to the development of scientific knowledge, particularly in the field of marketing management, by enriching insights into the influence of social media marketing and trust in digital platforms on purchase decisions, as well as the role of customer engagement as an intervening variable.

### 2. Practical Benefits

From a practical perspective, the findings of this study are expected to serve as a reference for SME practitioners in the culinary sector, particularly those utilizing platforms such as GrabFood, GoFood, and Instagram, in designing effective digital marketing strategies. By understanding the roles of social media marketing, trust, and customer engagement, business practitioners may enhance customer loyalty and stimulate purchase decisions.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

##### **2.1.1 Purchase Decision**

###### **2.1.1.1 Definition of Purchase Decision**

In consumer behavior, purchase decisions constitute a critical aspect influenced by various considerations prior to the actual purchase. (Kotler & Keller, 2016) define a purchase decision as the stage at which consumers determine the brand or product to be purchased based on their level of involvement in the decision-making process. This process reflects consumers' evaluation of the available alternatives before arriving at a final choice. Consistent with this view, (Kotler & Armstrong, 2017) explain that the purchase decision is a process that begins with problem recognition, followed by information search, evaluation of alternatives, and culminates in the purchase action.

According to (Fahmi, 2017) a purchase decision refers to a consumer's action in selecting a product that is perceived to be capable of fulfilling the consumer's needs and desires. This view is consistent with (Arianty & Andira, 2021) who similarly emphasize that a purchase decision represents a consumer's action in determining a product that is considered an appropriate solution to their needs and wants.

According to (Tjiptono, 2015) purchase decisions constitute an integral component of consumer behavior. Furthermore, (Tjiptono, 2008) explains that a purchase decision is made after consumers go through a product selection stage

among various available alternatives, which ultimately results in a decision to either purchase or not purchase the product.

Based on the perspectives above, a purchase decision can be concluded as a stage within consumer behavior in which individuals evaluate available alternatives and select a product or brand that they believe best satisfies their needs and desires. This decision is not an isolated action, but rather the result of a structured process involving problem recognition, information search, and evaluation of options before reaching a final choice to purchase or not purchase. Therefore, purchase decisions reflect both cognitive assessment and behavioral action, representing the culmination of consumers' involvement in determining the most suitable solution to their consumption needs.

#### **2.1.1.2 Factors Influencing Purchase Decision**

Consumer purchase decisions do not occur in a simple or isolated manner; rather, they are influenced by various interrelated factors. Therefore, it is essential to examine the factors that drive consumers in determining their product choices. According to (Tjiptono & Diana, 2016), there are several factors influence consumer behavior in making purchase decisions, namely:

1. Personal Factors

Personal factors are related to individual consumer characteristics, such as age, gender, occupation, income, lifestyle, and economic conditions, which influence needs and preferences in purchase decision-making. In digital marketing contexts, these factors are reflected through customer engagement, namely consumer involvement based on the alignment of personal values and emotional attachment to a brand. Such active engagement encourages greater

consumer confidence and increases the likelihood of making a purchase decision.

## 2. Psychological Factors

Psychological factors in purchase decisions include perception, motivation, learning, as well as consumer beliefs and attitudes. In this regard, social media marketing influences consumer perceptions and learning processes through the presentation of visual content, product information, promotions, and testimonials that shape brand image and enhance consumer motivation and positive attitudes. In addition, trust plays a direct role in psychological factors by shaping consumer beliefs, attitudes, and risk perceptions regarding seller credibility, transaction security, and information reliability. High levels of trust reduce uncertainty and foster a sense of security, thereby strengthening consumers' confidence to proceed with and make purchase decisions.

## 3. Social Factors

Social factors influence consumers through three primary mechanisms:

- a. Pressure on individuals to conform and comply with social norms (*normative compliance*).
- b. The need to achieve psychological association with specific groups (*value-expressive influence*).
- c. The need to seek information about particular product categories from specific groups (*informational influence*).

In digital marketing, social media marketing serves as a medium of social interaction that exposes consumers to others' opinions, recommendations, and purchasing behaviors through comments, reviews, likes, and shares. These

social media marketing activities generate social pressure, fulfill affiliation needs, and facilitate information seeking from reference groups, thereby encouraging consumers to align with and reinforce their purchase decisions.

#### 4. Cultural Factors

##### a. Culture

Culture refers to a set of values, perceptions, desires, and behaviors learned by members of society through family and other social institutions.

##### b. Sub-culture

Subculture represents a group of individuals who share a common value system based on shared experiences and life situations.

##### c. Social Class

Social class reflects societal groupings whose status is determined by indicators such as income, occupation, education, wealth, and other related factors.

Furthermore, (Irawan & Satrio, 2015) argue that several additional factors influence purchase decisions, including:

#### 1. Product Quality

Consumers tend to feel satisfied after purchasing and using products of high quality. Products with superior quality are more likely to attract consumer interest and encourage purchase decisions.

#### 2. Price

For price-sensitive consumers, lower prices often serve as a significant source of satisfaction. Consumers are generally more responsive to

affordable prices, which can stimulate purchase interest that may not have previously existed.

### 3. Service Quality

Satisfaction derived from service quality is typically difficult to imitate, making it a strong determinant of customer satisfaction.

### 4. Emotional Factors

Customers may experience satisfaction as a result of the emotional value provided by a brand or product.

### 5. Cost and Convenience

Customers tend to be more satisfied when they experience comfort and ease in obtaining a product.

## 2.1.1.3 Purchase Decision Process

Purchase decisions do not occur instantaneously; rather, they involve a series of stages that consumers go through before determining their choice of a product. These stages illustrate how consumers recognize their needs, search for information, and evaluate available alternatives before ultimately making a purchase decision. According to (Kotler & Armstrong, 1997) the purchase decision process consists of several stages, namely:



**Figure 2.1 The Process of Purchase Decision**

### 1. Need Recognition

This is the initial stage in which consumers become aware of a discrepancy between their current perceived condition and their desired condition. Awareness of this problem or need motivates consumers to seek solutions, which subsequently serves as the foundation for initiating the purchase decision process.

## 2. Information Search

At this stage, consumers attempt to obtain relevant information to satisfy their needs. Information may be acquired from various sources, including personal experience, family, friends, media, advertising, and other commercial sources.

## 3. Evaluation of Alternatives

After gathering information, consumers compare various product alternatives based on specific criteria such as price, quality, brand, features, and perceived benefits. During this stage, consumers assess the extent to which each alternative is capable of fulfilling their needs and desires.

## 4. Purchase Decision

This stage occurs when consumers select a particular product or brand from the set of alternatives that have been evaluated. The decision may be influenced by the attitudes of others, situational factors, as well as internal consumer factors such as preferences and level of involvement.

## 5. Post-Purchase Behavior

This stage describes consumer behavior after the purchase has been made, which relates to the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the purchased product. Consumer satisfaction may encourage repeat purchases and foster

loyalty, whereas dissatisfaction may lead to complaints or rejection of the product.

According to (Schiffman, 2007) there are three types of decision-making processes, namely:

1. Extensive problem solving

This process occurs when consumers face purchases that are complex, high-risk, or infrequently made. Under these conditions, consumers exhibit a high level of involvement, requiring extensive information search and comprehensive evaluation of alternatives before making a purchase decision.

2. Limited problem solving

This process occurs when consumers have prior experience with the product to be purchased but still require additional consideration. Information search and evaluation of alternatives are conducted in a limited manner, as consumers already possess basic knowledge of the product. Consequently, the decision-making process is shorter than in extensive problem solving.

3. Routinized response behavior

This process occurs when consumers make routine and repeated purchases of the same product. Purchase decisions are made with a low level of involvement, as consumers are familiar with and have developed trust in a particular brand or product, thereby requiring little to no information search or evaluation of alternatives.

#### **2.1.1.4 Indicators of Purchase Decisions**

According to (Kotler & Keller, 2009), purchase decisions consist of six main dimensions that can be used as indicators to assess consumer purchase decisions.

1. Product Choice

Product choice refers to the consumer's decision to purchase a particular product or to allocate available resources to other needs. At this stage, consumers evaluate the suitability of the product in relation to their needs, the benefits offered, and the product's quality in fulfilling their desires.

2. Brand Choice

Brand choice reflects the consumer's decision in determining which brand to purchase. Consumers typically consider brand reputation, brand image, previous experience, and the level of trust in the brand before making a purchase.

3. Dealer or Distribution Channel Choice

Dealer or distribution channel choice relates to the consumer's decision regarding where or through which channel the purchase is made, such as physical stores, online stores, or specific distributors. Factors such as convenience, product availability, service quality, and location are key considerations in selecting a distribution channel.

4. Timing of Purchase

The timing of purchase refers to when consumers decide to make a purchase. This decision may be influenced by urgent needs, promotional offers, financial conditions, or supportive environmental circumstances.

5. Purchase Quantity

Purchase quantity reflects the consumer's decision regarding how many units of a product are purchased in a single transaction. This decision is influenced by consumer needs, price, product availability, and economic considerations.

#### 6. Payment Method

Payment method refers to the way consumers conduct transactions, such as cash payments, debit or credit cards, bank transfers, or digital payment systems. The convenience, security, and flexibility of payment methods can influence consumers' decisions to complete a purchase.

In addition, (Hahn & Mangun, 2002) propose other relevant indicators for assessing consumer purchasing behavior, including:

##### 1. Consumer Purchase Routine

This indicator reflects consumers' habitual behavior in repeatedly purchasing and using a product because it has become a necessity and is used on an ongoing basis.

##### 2. Perceived Quality Derived from a Purchase Decision

Perceived quality relates to consumers' evaluation of the benefits and satisfaction obtained after making a purchase, indicating that the purchase decision delivers value consistent with consumer expectations.

##### 3. Consumer Commitment or Loyalty to Maintain the Purchase Decision

Consumer commitment or loyalty reflects the willingness of consumers to maintain their purchase decision and not switch to competing products, as long as the product continues to provide satisfaction and meet consumer needs.

## **2.1.2 Social Media Marketing**

### **2.1.2.1 Definition of Social Media Marketing**

In an effort to influence consumer purchase decisions, companies are required to implement marketing strategies that align with advancements in digital technology. One strategy that has been increasingly adopted is the use of social media as a marketing medium. Therefore, it is important to understand the concept of social media marketing as a foundational framework for explaining the role of social media in shaping consumer behavior and influencing purchase decisions.

(Kotler & Keller, 2016) explain that advancements in digital technology encourage companies to adopt interactive marketing, a form of marketing that enables two-way communication between firms and consumers. Within the context of interactive marketing, social media marketing emerges as an approach that utilizes social media platforms to deliver marketing information, build relationships with consumers, and shape consumer perceptions and attitudes toward a brand.

Social media marketing is defined as a process that enables individuals and organizations to promote websites, products, or services online through social media platforms, while simultaneously establishing communication with a broader community compared to traditional advertising channels (Untari & Fajarina, 2018). Consistent with this perspective, (As' ad & Alhadid, 2014) state that social media marketing is a marketing strategy employed by businesses to build engagement and become part of an online social network, thereby influencing consumer attitudes, behaviors, and purchase decisions.

(Santoso et al., 2022) describe it as the use of social web tools such as blogs, microblogs, and social networking sites to create awareness and encourage

engagement either directly or indirectly. Similarly, (Ariadi, 2021) emphasize that social media marketing involves leveraging digital social platforms to influence consumers in favor of a company, product, or service through networks, blogs, and related online channels. Complementing these perspectives, (Qurniawati, 2022) highlights that social media marketing is designed to engage customers within online social environments where they naturally spend their time, underscoring the importance of interaction and participation. Taken together, these views indicate that social media marketing functions not only as a promotional tool but also as a strategic medium for building relationships and influencing consumer behavior through digital engagement.

Based on the perspectives above, social media marketing can be concluded as a strategic marketing approach that utilizes social media platforms to promote products or services, facilitate interactive two-way communication, and build relationships with consumers within digital environments. It involves leveraging social web tools to create awareness, foster engagement, influence perceptions and attitudes, and ultimately shape consumer behavior and purchase decisions. Therefore, social media marketing extends beyond promotional activities, functioning as an interactive and relational medium that integrates communication, participation, and engagement to achieve marketing objectives in the digital era.

### **2.1.2.2 Factors of Social Media Marketing**

Social media marketing constitutes a marketing strategy comprising various supporting factors that determine its effectiveness in influencing consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions. Therefore, (Gunelius, 2010) asserts that there are several factors influencing marketing via social media, namely:

1. Purchasing Decision

Social media marketing plays a role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions through the delivery of product information, promotions, and interactions between companies and consumers. Engaging and relevant content on social media can increase purchase interest and encourage consumers to make purchasing decisions regarding the offered products.

2. Trust

Trust is a crucial factor in social media marketing, as consumers tend to trust brands that can provide information consistently, transparently, and responsively. Positive interactions, active brand presence, and two-way communication on social media can enhance consumer trust in both the company and its products.

3. Online Customer Review

Online customer reviews are a form of consumer feedback provided through social media or other online platforms. Positive reviews can strengthen brand image and increase consumer confidence in making purchasing decisions, whereas negative reviews can influence perceptions and reduce consumer purchase interest.

Meanwhile, according to (Subeno & Soesanto, 2016) there are several factors influencing marketing, namely:

1. Dependence

Dependence refers to the extent to which consumers feel the need for and rely on a product, brand, or marketing channel, thereby encouraging sustained use and responsiveness to marketing activities.

## 2. Commitment

Commitment reflects consumers' willingness to maintain a long-term relationship with a brand, as demonstrated through loyalty and engagement in marketing activities.

## 3. Trust

Trust refers to consumers' belief in the credibility and reliability of a brand or company, playing a crucial role in enhancing the acceptance of marketing messages and purchasing decisions.

### **2.1.2.3 Benefits of Social Media Marketing**

Social media marketing offers various strategic benefits for companies in reaching consumers and supporting the achievement of marketing objectives. According to (Kotler & Keller, 2016) the benefits of online marketing are as follows:

#### 1. Benefits for Buyers or Customers:

##### 1) Convenience

Consumers can make purchases at any time and from any location without the need to visit a physical sales outlet.

##### 2) Information

Consumers gain more comprehensive and accessible information regarding products, companies, and competing products.

##### 3) Comfort

Consumers do not face sales pressure or queues, making the purchasing process more comfortable.

##### 4) Need Customization

Consumers can directly communicate their needs and preferences to the company, ensuring that the selected products or services are better aligned with their requirements.

## 2. Benefits for Marketers:

### 1) Market Flexibility

Companies can quickly adjust products, pricing, and marketing information in response to market conditions.

### 2) Lower Costs

Online marketing reduces operational costs such as venue rental, printing, and catalog distribution.

### 3) Relationship Building

Marketers can establish direct communication with consumers and receive feedback more effectively.

### 4) Performance Measurement

Companies can more accurately measure visitor numbers, consumer responses, and the effectiveness of promotional activities.

In addition, (Boone, 2015) states that the benefits of social media marketing are as follows:

## 1. Assists in Finding New Consumers and Expanding Market Reach

Social media marketing enables companies to reach a broader audience of potential consumers through online networks and content-sharing features.

## 2. Facilitates Direct Feedback

Social media provides a platform for two-way interaction, allowing consumers to submit responses, complaints, or suggestions in real time.

3. Enables Faster Information Sharing

Information regarding products, promotions, or company activities can be disseminated rapidly, reaching a large number of users within a short period.

4. Helps Consumers Access Your Business

Social media makes it easier for consumers to discover, contact, and obtain information about a company or brand.

5. Brings Businesses Closer to Consumers

Ongoing interaction through social media helps build more personal relationships and enhances the closeness between the company and its consumers.

#### **2.1.2.4 Indicators of Social Media Marketing**

To assess the effectiveness of social media marketing, specific indicators are required to illustrate its implementation and capture consumer responses to marketing activities conducted via social media platforms. Furthermore, (Gunelius, 2010) identifies the following indicators for social media marketing:

1. Entertainment

Entertainment refers to the extent to which social media content provides amusement and enjoyment to consumers, thereby capturing their attention and increasing their interest in the brand.

2. Interaction

Interaction represents the degree of two-way communication between the company and consumers through social media—such as comments, messages, and responses—which can strengthen relationships and consumer involvement.

3. Trendiness

Trendiness pertains to the company's ability to present current, relevant, and trend-responsive information, which enhances consumer interest and trust.

4. Customization

Customization refers to the company's ability to tailor content, information, or offers according to consumer needs and preferences, making marketing messages more personalized and effective.

Meanwhile, (Pradiptarini, 2011) suggests four indicators of social media marketing, as follows:

1. Content Quality

Content quality refers to the degree to which information presented via social media is engaging, relevant, informative, and easily understood by consumers.

2. Building Trust (Relationships)

This indicator reflects the company's ability to foster positive relationships and trust with consumers through consistent, transparent, and responsive communication.

3. Engagement

Engagement describes the level of active consumer participation in response to social media content, such as commenting on, liking, or sharing the presented material.

4. Integration with Other Media Platforms

Integration illustrates the extent to which social media is interconnected with and supports other marketing channels, such as websites, e-commerce

platforms, or other digital media, thereby reinforcing the overall effectiveness of marketing communication.

### **2.1.3 Trust**

#### **2.1.3.1 Definition of Trust**

Trust is a fundamental psychological factor that plays a significant role in influencing consumer purchase decisions. The level of trust a consumer places in a brand or company shapes positive attitudes and perceptions, thereby encouraging them to make a purchase choice. According to (Kotler & Keller, 2016), trust in a marketing context relates to consumer confidence in the credibility, reliability, and capability of a company to fulfill its promises, which constitutes an integral part of consumer beliefs and attitudes within the purchase decision-making process.

(Priansa, 2017) defines trust as the expectation of an individual or group that the words, promises, and statements of another party can be realized. In relation to purchase decisions, trust arises when consumers believe that a company can consistently deliver product value and benefits as promised, thus reducing uncertainty and increasing the conviction to proceed with a purchase.

Meanwhile, (Mowen & Minor, 2002) explain that consumer trust encompasses the collective knowledge and conclusions held by customers regarding an object, including its attributes and benefits. This knowledge and evaluation form the basis of consumer consideration in determining purchase decisions, as consumers tend to select products or brands perceived as trustworthy and capable of fulfilling their specific needs and desires.

(Lita, 2020) conceptualizes trust as the belief that a company is capable of maintaining long-term relationships with customers, as well as the willingness of

exchange partners to engage in sustained cooperation that yields positive outcomes. In the context of online commerce, (Hakim & Islandsript, 2011) emphasize that trust represents a fundamental principle in sales activities, particularly because online stores are expected to provide reputation features that allow consumers to evaluate sellers before making transactions. The stronger and more favorable the seller's reputation, the higher the level of consumer trust toward the online store. Collectively, these perspectives suggest that trust functions as a critical relational and transactional foundation that supports long-term interaction and reduces uncertainty in digital purchasing environments.

Based on the perspectives presented above, trust can be concluded as a psychological and relational belief in which consumers have confidence in the credibility, reliability, and capability of a company or brand to fulfill its promises and deliver expected value. This confidence is formed through knowledge, evaluation, and reputation, and functions to reduce uncertainty while encouraging long-term relationships and cooperative interactions. Therefore, trust represents a critical foundation in consumer decision-making, as it shapes attitudes, perceptions, and willingness to engage in transactions, particularly within digital and online purchasing environments.

### **2.1.3.2 Factors Influencing Trust**

Consumer trust is not formed instantaneously; rather, it is influenced by several factors that reflect the consumer's assessment of a brand or company. According to (Yuniarti, 2016), there are three primary factors that constitute consumer trust:

1. Ability

Ability refers to the extent to which a company or brand is perceived to possess the competence, expertise, and capacity to provide high-quality products or services. Consumers are more likely to trust companies deemed capable of consistently meeting their needs and expectations.

## 2. Benevolence

Benevolence reflects the company's goodwill in prioritizing consumer interests, such as providing sincere and responsive service that is not solely profit-oriented. This perception can enhance the consumer's sense of security and confidence in the brand.

## 3. Integrity

Integrity relates to honesty, consistency, and the alignment between a company's promises and its subsequent actions. Companies that demonstrate high integrity are more trusted because they are perceived as reliable and accountable.

According to (Iskandar & Nasution, 2019), several other factors can influence consumer trust, including:

### 1. Product Information

Product information comprises essential details that serve to inform and educate consumers regarding the products or services offered by a company. Clear, comprehensive, and accurate information assists consumers in understanding the value and benefits of a product, thereby increasing consumer trust.

### 2. Competitive Pricing

Competitive pricing is a strategic approach to setting prices by evaluating them against competitors in the market. Fair pricing that is commensurate with product quality fosters positive perceptions, leading consumers to feel confident and trust the company.

### 3. Delivery Services

Delivery services are a form of provision that facilitates the secure and accountable transportation of goods from one location to another. The reliability of delivery services, including punctuality and product safety, plays a pivotal role in establishing consumer trust.

#### **2.1.3.3 Types of Trust**

(Sangadji, 2013) explains that trust represents associations formed by consumers between objects, attributes, and benefits based on cognitive learning processes. Furthermore, consumer trust can be classified into three types, namely:

##### 1. Object-Attribute Belief

This type of trust refers to consumers' beliefs that associate a product, service, or object with specific attributes it possesses.

##### 2. Attribute-Benefit Belief

Attribute-benefit belief refers to consumers' perceptions of the extent to which product attributes are able to deliver the expected benefits.

##### 3. Object-Benefit Belief

Object-benefit belief is defined as consumers' beliefs that a product or service as a whole is capable of providing benefits that align with their needs.

In addition, (Ferrinadewi, 2012), categorizes consumer trust in a brand into two main types, namely:

1. Brand Reliability

Brand reliability indicates the degree to which consumers believe that a brand is capable of delivering consistent product performance and fulfilling consumer expectations in accordance with the promises made.

2. Brand Intention

Brand intention reflects consumers' beliefs that a brand possesses goodwill and prioritizes consumer interests, particularly when problems arise during product usage.

#### **2.1.3.4 Indicators of Trust**

To measure the level of consumer trust, it is necessary to employ indicators that reflect consumers' beliefs in a company or brand. Accordingly, (Soegoto, 2013) proposes the following indicators of trust:

1. Probability

Probability refers to the degree of consumer confidence in the integrity, sincerity, and reputation of a company or brand. This indicator reflects the extent to which consumers believe that the company will act honestly and can be relied upon.

2. Equity

Equity relates to the company's fairness and concern toward consumers. This indicator reflects consumers' perceptions that the company prioritizes and safeguards their interests and well-being.

3. Reliability

Reliability denotes the company's ability to consistently deliver products or services in accordance with its promises. This indicator is associated with dependability, accuracy, and consistency in the company's performance in meeting consumer expectations.

Meanwhile, according to (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001), there are four indicators that can be used to measure consumer trust, namely:

1. Trust

This indicator represents a consumer's confidence in a product that is perceived to meet their expectations and satisfy the criteria established by the consumer.

2. Rely

This indicator reflects the level of consumer confidence in a product's characteristics, its dependability, and its ability to fulfill consumer needs.

3. Honesty

Honesty refers to the degree of consumer trust in the quality of a product based on the truthfulness and accuracy of the promises made to consumers.

4. Safety

Safety reflects the level of consumer trust in a product's security, whereby consumers feel assured and free from concern when using the product due to guaranteed safety.

## **2.1.4 Customer Engagement**

### **2.1.4.1 Definition of Customer Engagement**

In modern marketing processes, the relationship between companies and consumers is no longer limited to transactional exchanges but has evolved into

sustained interactions. The level of consumer engagement in interactions with a brand has become a crucial factor in shaping consumer attention, attitudes, and responses toward a product. Such engagement plays a significant role in strengthening consumers' emotional and cognitive connections, which ultimately influence their considerations in making purchase decisions.

In line with this perspective, (Kotler & Keller, 2021) define customer engagement as the degree of consumers' attention and active involvement in communication with a brand, reflecting responses that go beyond passive impressions and generating value for the company. This view is further supported by (Sunyoto, 2012) who asserts that customer engagement is closely related to consumer decisions formed through strong relationships between consumers and brands.

(Brodie et al., 2011) define it as a psychological state that emerges from interactive and co-creative experiences between customers and a focal object, such as a brand, within service relationships. (Pansari & Kumar, 2017) further explain that customer engagement represents a mechanism that generates value for firms through both direct and indirect interactions, driven by customer satisfaction and trust. Similarly, (Hollebeek, 2011) conceptualizes customer engagement as the level of customer motivation connected to a brand, reflected in cognitive, emotional, and behavioral activation during brand-related interactions. Taken together, these views indicate that customer engagement encompasses psychological involvement and active participation that contribute to meaningful interactions and value creation between customers and brands.

Based on the perspectives discussed, customer engagement can be concluded as a multidimensional construct that reflects consumers' level of psychological involvement, motivation, and active participation in their interactions with a brand. It encompasses cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses that arise from interactive and co-creative experiences, contributing to the development of strong relational bonds between consumers and firms. Through both direct and indirect interactions driven by satisfaction and trust, customer engagement generates value for companies while influencing consumer attitudes and decision-making processes. Therefore, customer engagement represents not merely attention toward a brand, but a dynamic relational process that strengthens connections and supports long-term marketing outcomes.

#### **2.1.4.2 Factors Influencing Customer Engagement**

The concept of customer engagement emphasizes behavioral aspects that are formed through interactions between consumers and companies. The focus of this engagement is not solely directed toward achieving corporate image and profitability, but also toward encouraging consumers to maintain commitment and loyalty to the company. In line with this perspective, (Mowen & Minor, 2016) identify several important factors that influence the level of customer engagement, as follows:

1. Type of Product Considered

Products that are complex or of high value tend to increase consumer involvement.

2. Characteristics of Communication Received by Consumers

Clear and engaging messages encourage consumers to become more involved.

### 3. Characteristics of the Consumer Situation

Consumers' conditions and needs influence their level of engagement.

### 4. Consumer Personality

Differences in personality lead to variations in the level of customer engagement.

According to (Kumar & Pansari, 2016), the factors influencing customer engagement include:

#### 1. Customer Feedback

Responses, suggestions, and complaints provided by customers reflect their level of engagement and assist companies in improving products and services.

#### 2. Incentivized Referrals

The provision of incentives encourages customers to recommend products to others, indicating active engagement and brand loyalty.

#### 3. Influence in Social Media

Customer activities on social media, such as sharing, liking, or commenting on brand content, demonstrate levels of engagement and consumers' influence on other consumers.

#### 4. Own Purchases

Repeated purchases indicate strong consumer engagement and an ongoing relationship with the brand.

### 2.1.4.3 Stages of Customer Engagement

According to (Kotler et al., 2017) in *Marketing 4.0*, consumer engagement can be understood through the 5A customer path model, which illustrates the consumer journey from initial brand awareness to active and sustained engagement.

1. Aware

Consumers begin to recognize and become aware of a brand through various marketing activities, including social media.

2. Appeal

Consumers develop interest and form positive impressions of the brand based on the information and initial experiences they receive.

3. Ask

Consumers actively seek additional information, engage in discussions, read reviews, and interact with both the brand and other consumers. This stage reflects consumers' cognitive and social engagement.

4. Act

Consumers take concrete actions, such as making a purchase or trying a product, as a result of the engagement that has been formed.

5. Advocate

Satisfied and engaged consumers recommend the brand to others, either directly or through social media, representing the highest level of customer engagement.

Meanwhile, according to (Brodie et al., 2015), the stages involved in implementing customer engagement include:

1. Co-developing

This stage describes consumer involvement in the process of co-creating value with the company. Consumers do not merely act as product users but also contribute ideas, suggestions, or feedback that can be utilized by companies in developing products, services, and marketing strategies.

#### 2. Influencing

At this stage, consumers begin to influence other consumers through opinions, recommendations, or shared experiences, either directly or via social media.

#### 3. Augmenting

The augmenting stage reflects consumer involvement in enhancing brand value through positive usage experiences. Actively engaged consumers provide reviews, testimonials, or content that strengthens the brand's image and product value.

#### 4. Mobilising

Mobilising represents the highest stage of customer engagement, in which consumers voluntarily support and advocate for the brand. At this stage, consumers not only recommend the product but also actively encourage others to use the product or service.

### **2.1.4.4 Indicators of Customer Engagement**

According to (Dessart et al., 2015), there are seven indicators that can be used to measure the level of customer engagement, namely:

#### 1. Enthusiasm

This indicator reflects the level of consumers' enthusiasm and excitement in interacting with a brand, as evidenced by their interest and positive responses to brand-related activities or content.

## 2. Enjoyment

Enjoyment describes the feelings of pleasure or comfort experienced by consumers when interacting with a brand, which encourages voluntary engagement.

## 3. Attention

Attention reflects the extent to which consumers devote focus and awareness to information, content, or communications delivered by the brand.

## 4. Absorption

Absorption indicates a deep level of consumer engagement in which consumers feel fully immersed and intensely focused during interactions with the brand.

## 5. Sharing

Sharing describes consumers' willingness to disseminate information, experiences, or brand-related content to others, particularly through social media platforms.

## 6. Learning

Learning reflects the process through which consumers acquire knowledge and understanding about a brand, product, or service through their interactions, thereby enhancing consumer awareness and comprehension.

## 7. Endorsing

Endorsing represents consumers' support for a brand through recommendations, testimonials, or encouragement directed toward others to use a particular product or service.

Meanwhile, according to (Cao et al., 2022), several indicators also determine customer engagement, including:

1. Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's awareness of and belief in their capacity to perform specific behaviors or actions.

2. Perceived value

Perceived value represents consumers' overall evaluation of the benefits obtained from a product purchase based on the feedback and experiences received.

3. Product

Product refers to goods or services produced by a company that possess value, utility, and benefits and are consumed by consumers.

4. Effectiveness

Effectiveness serves as a measure of a company's success in achieving its objectives and operating efficiently and effectively.

## **2.2 Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework is a structure that illustrates the relationships among the main concepts in a study or theoretical review. The presence of a conceptual framework enables the research conducted by the author to be more focused and systematically organized, ensuring that each component is interrelated.

### **2.2.1 The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decisions**

Social media marketing has evolved into a key element of modern marketing strategies, particularly for culinary SMEs that actively utilize digital platforms such as GrabFood, GoFood, and Instagram. According to research by (Avila et al., 2021), social media marketing plays a crucial role for companies as it enables more effective communication channels with customers, supports product promotion, strengthens brand equity, and enhances consumer loyalty. These findings suggest that social media is not merely a promotional tool but also a strategic instrument for building long-term relationships with customers.

As a consequence of the expanding role of social media in marketing activities, numerous studies have demonstrated the positive impact of this strategy on consumer behavior. Based on various empirical findings, social media marketing has generally been shown to have a positive and significant effect on consumer purchase decisions. Social media provides an interactive communication space that transforms the way companies communicate and offers opportunities for producers to engage more effectively with customers (Ardiansyah & Sarwoko, 2020). This perspective is reinforced by (Putri, 2020), who concluded that social media marketing has a significant influence on purchase decisions, highlighting its role in shaping consumer choices in digital environments.

In line with this, (Maulid et al., 2022) report that social media marketing has a significant influence on the structure of purchase decisions when considered collectively. Similarly, the findings of (Putra & Budiman, 2024), indicate that social media marketing serves as a strong predictor influencing consumers' purchase intentions and final purchasing actions. These results highlight the important role

of social media-based marketing strategies in driving consumers toward purchase decisions.

### **2.2.2 The Influence of Trust on Purchase Decisions**

Trust constitutes a fundamental pillar in business transactions, particularly within the e-commerce environment, where the willingness of two parties to engage in transactions materializes only when mutual trust exists (Badir & Andjarwati, 2020). Research conducted by (Rivaldo, 2021) indicates that trust has a positive and significant effect on consumer purchase decisions. This finding is further supported by (Iskandar & Nasution, 2019), who conclude that trust significantly influences purchase decisions. Similarly, (Nasution et al., 2019) report that trust has a meaningful impact on consumers' purchasing decisions. In addition, (Anggraeni, 2016) also find that trust plays a significant role in shaping purchase decisions. This influence is critical, as strong trust provides consumers with confidence in the seller's honesty and reliability, thereby reducing the perceived risks inherent in online transactions. In the absence of an adequate level of trust, consumers are more likely to experience hesitation and seek alternative options, which ultimately hinders the formation of purchase decisions.

In line with the importance of trust in shaping consumer decisions, strategic efforts to build and maintain trust are essential for both digital platforms and business actors. Such efforts may be undertaken through transparent product information, assurances of transaction security, and the provision of features that enhance credibility, such as valid review and seller rating systems. Collectively, these measures aim to strengthen consumer confidence prior to making a purchase (Lailiya, 2020).

### **2.2.3 The Influence of Customer Engagement on Purchase Decisions**

Customer engagement refers to the active and intensive interactions between customers and a brand that involve cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions. It extends far beyond the act of purchasing, reflecting the extent to which customers care about and feel connected to a brand. Amid the rapid growth of digital platforms and social media, fostering high levels of customer engagement has become increasingly important (Saputra, 2020). Companies that successfully establish emotional closeness and encourage active customer participation are more likely to cultivate customer loyalty and enhance customers' readiness to make purchase decisions regarding products or services. Consequently, customer engagement functions as a bridge that connects consumers' initial interest with their final purchase actions.

Moreover, (Pradana et al., 2024) emphasize that in the digital culinary sector, customer engagement acts as a catalyst that transforms brand awareness into transaction conviction by reducing consumer hesitation. This is further supported by (Widiastuti & Santoso, 2025), who found that high intensity in digital interaction creates a sense of psychological belonging, which significantly increases the probability of immediate purchase decisions compared to passive browsing.

Consistent with this perspective, research by (Parinsi et al., 2025) indicates that customer engagement strengthens the relationship between service quality and consumer purchase decisions. Similarly, a study by (Pangestu & Brabo, 2025) demonstrates that customer engagement serves as a significant mediating variable in the relationship between online reviews and purchase decisions. This suggests that the higher the level of customer engagement, the greater the likelihood that

consumers will proceed with a purchase, even when influenced by external factors such as online reviews (Shafiq et al., 2023).

#### **2.2.4 The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Customer Engagement**

Social media marketing has increasingly become a fundamental component of modern brand communication strategies. Through social media marketing, companies not only deliver marketing messages but also seek to build communities and foster intensive two-way interactions with their customers. The primary objective of these activities is to capture customer attention and stimulate customer engagement (Ferliansyah, 2022). Social media marketing activities are defined through five key dimensions—online communities, interaction, content sharing, accessibility, and credibility—which collectively aim to establish long-term relationships with consumers. Empirical evidence from (Ferliansyah, 2022) demonstrates that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on customer engagement, indicating that more effective implementation of social media marketing leads to higher levels of consumer engagement.

In line with this, (Hidayat & Pratama, 2024) emphasize that the entertainment and trendiness dimensions of social media content are the strongest drivers in stimulating emotional engagement, especially in the fast-paced culinary industry. Furthermore, (Rahmawati & Wijaya, 2025) highlight that perceived interactivity on platforms like Instagram and TikTok allows consumers to feel heard, which directly increases their cognitive and behavioral participation with the brand.

Customer engagement successfully cultivated through social media marketing is highly valuable because it extends beyond mere interaction and serves as a crucial bridge to broader business outcomes. Customer engagement functions as a key variable that not only reflects the quality of customer–brand relationships but also mediates the impact of social media marketing on a firm’s primary business objectives. This engagement involves customers’ cognitive, emotional, and behavioral participation in their interactions with a brand and plays a critical role in shaping consumer behavior and satisfaction levels (Patterson et al., 2006). The mediating role of customer engagement positions it as an essential stage that must be achieved before brands can expect long-term loyalty. Supporting this argument, (Kirana, 2024) finds that social media marketing exerts a significant influence on brand loyalty through customer engagement as an intervening variable. Thus, customer engagement is not merely an outcome of social media marketing, but a mechanism that transforms digital marketing efforts into enduring and profitable customer loyalty.

### **2.2.5 The Influence of Trust on Customer Engagement**

Trust serves as a fundamental foundation for building long-term relationships between customers and firms, particularly within the context of digital interactions. When customers are confident that a platform or seller possesses integrity, competence, and a strong commitment to delivering secure and high-quality services, such trust encourages stronger levels of engagement. In digital environments, trust extends beyond transaction security to include customers’ perceptions of honesty, consistency, and the seller’s goodwill in fulfilling service promises (Agyei et al., 2020).

According to (Suman, 2024), trust plays a critical role in fostering emotional relationships between consumers and brands. Consumers who trust a brand are more willing to engage in interactive activities such as providing reviews, recommending products to others, and actively participating in a brand's digital campaigns. Therefore, trust not only influences purchasing behavior but also strengthens sustained interactions that lie at the core of customer engagement.

Empirical findings by (Rajesh, 2025) indicate that trust and security are key factors influencing the level of customer engagement. When consumers perceive that digital platforms ensure data protection, uphold transparency, and provide accurate product information, they feel more comfortable engaging in deeper interactions. Similarly, (Wardoyo, 2023) reports that consumer trust in online transactions encourages greater participation in digital activities, including providing feedback and engaging in loyalty programs.

In conclusion, trust has a positive and significant influence on customer engagement. The higher the level of consumer trust in digital platforms or culinary business operators, the greater the likelihood that consumers will actively engage, interact, and establish long-term relationships with the brand. This is reinforced by the findings of (Al-Adwan et al., 2024), which state that cognitive trust in a platform's technical competence significantly reduces the psychological barriers for users to participate in brand-led social activities. Additionally, (Kurniawan & Maftukhah, 2025) argue that trust acts as a 'social lubricant' in digital ecosystems, where perceived benevolence from the seller encourages customers to transition from mere followers to active advocates who engage through high-quality feedback.

### **2.2.6 The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decisions through Customer Engagement**

Customer engagement plays a crucial mediating role in linking social media marketing strategies to consumers' purchase decisions. When firms effectively implement social media marketing—by providing engaging, interactive, and informative content while fostering emotional connections with their audiences—it not only enhances brand visibility but also encourages active consumer involvement (Ferliansyah, 2022). Such interactions subsequently increase the likelihood of purchase decisions.

Research by (Kirana, 2024) demonstrates that customer engagement mediates the relationship between social media marketing and customer loyalty, indicating that the success of digital marketing depends largely on a firm's ability to build interactive relationships with its consumers. These findings are consistent with the study by (Matin & Laksamana, 2021) which reveals that social media marketing influences purchase decisions not only directly but also indirectly through the enhancement of customer engagement.

When consumers feel involved and develop an emotional connection with a brand through social media activities, they tend to exhibit greater confidence in product quality, perceive a closer relationship with the company, and feel more assured in making purchase decisions. Interactions such as commenting, following brand content, sharing posts, and regularly accessing product information represent forms of engagement that strengthen purchase intentions and final purchasing decisions (Shafiq et al., 2023).

Therefore, social media marketing affects purchase decisions not only directly but also indirectly through customer engagement as an intervening variable. The higher the level of consumer engagement generated by digital marketing activities, the greater the likelihood that consumers will proceed to make a purchase decision. This mechanism is further elucidated by (Zhang & Ahmed, 2025), who found that customer engagement acts as a "behavioral bridge"; social media marketing provides the initial stimulus, but it is the resulting engagement that reduces perceived purchase complexity and builds the final conviction needed for transaction completion.

### **2.2.7 The Influence of Trust on Purchase Decisions through Customer Engagement**

Trust is a critical factor in fostering customer engagement, which ultimately contributes to purchase decisions. Consumers who trust a platform or seller tend to feel more comfortable and are more willing to engage actively in digital interactions. This increased interaction subsequently strengthens consumers' emotional relationships with the brand, thereby encouraging them to make purchase decisions. In other words, customer engagement serves as a mechanism that explains how trust influences purchase decision (Parinsi et al., 2025).

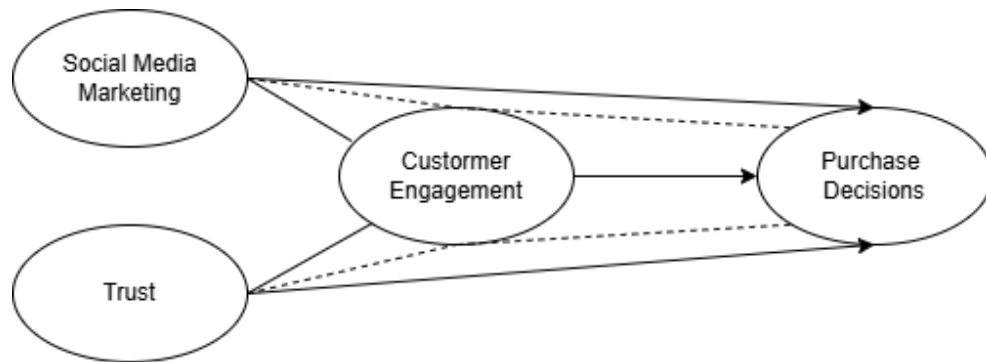
Research by (Pangestu & Brabo, 2025) indicates that customer engagement acts as a mediating variable in the relationship between online reviews and purchase decisions. This finding suggests that customer engagement plays a pivotal role in transforming psychological factors, including trust, into actual purchasing behavior. Consumers who trust transaction security, product quality, and seller integrity are

more predisposed to interact, provide feedback, and ultimately make purchase decisions.

Furthermore, a study by (Sari & Utami, 2023) emphasizes that high levels of trust create psychological comfort, reduce perceived risk, and strengthen customer commitment to taking purchasing actions. When such trust generates intensive engagement through digital interactions—such as reading reviews, posting comments, and participating in loyalty programs—it significantly increases the likelihood of purchase decisions (Suman, 2024).

Thus, it can be concluded that customer engagement mediates the effect of trust on purchase decisions. The higher the level of consumer trust, the stronger their engagement, which ultimately enhances purchase decisions on digital platforms used by culinary SMEs. This is supported by the study of (Nguyen & Habibi, 2025), which highlights that trust alone only creates a 'passive' intention to buy, but when mediated by customer engagement, it transforms into an 'active' purchase decision as consumers feel a deeper social and emotional obligation to support the brand.

Based on the foregoing discussion, there is an interrelationship between social media marketing and trust in digital platforms and purchase decisions, with customer engagement serving as an intervening variable, as illustrated in the following research framework.



**Figure 2.2 Conceptual Framework**

### 2.3. Hypothesis

Based on the conceptual framework described above, the following hypotheses are formulated:

1. Social media marketing on digital platforms has an influence on the purchase decisions of culinary SME consumers in Medan.
2. Trust in digital platforms has an influence on the purchase decisions of culinary SME consumers in Medan.
3. Customer engagement has an influence on the purchase decisions of culinary SME consumers in Medan.
4. Social media marketing has an influence on customer engagement among culinary SME consumers in Medan.
5. Trust has an influence on customer engagement among culinary SME consumers in Medan.
6. Social media marketing on digital platforms has an influence on purchase decisions through customer engagement as an intervening variable among culinary SME consumers in Medan.

7. Trust in digital platforms has an influence on purchase decisions through customer engagement as an intervening variable among culinary SME consumers in Medan.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Type of Research**

This study employs a quantitative approach, which is a research method grounded in the philosophy of positivism and aimed at testing hypotheses through the objective measurement of variables and statistical data analysis (Sugiyono, 2016). This approach is applied to examine a specific population or sample by collecting data using structured research instruments, thereby enabling the data obtained to be analyzed quantitatively.

In addition, this study adopts an associative research approach, which seeks to identify and analyze the relationships and influences between two or more variables (Sugiyono, 2016). This approach is used to examine the effects of social media marketing and trust on purchase decisions on digital platforms, with customer engagement serving as an intervening variable among culinary SME consumers in the city of Medan who use GrabFood, GoFood, and Instagram platforms.

#### **3.2. Operational Definitions**

Research variables are characteristics, attributes, or values inherent in individuals, objects, or specific activities that exhibit variation and are determined by the researcher to be analyzed in order to draw conclusions (Sugiyono, 2016). Therefore, operational definitions of variables are necessary to provide clear boundaries regarding the meaning, type, and indicators of each variable used in this

study, so that they can be measured systematically. The operational definitions of the variables in this research are explained as follows.

**Table 3.1 Operational Definitions**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Operational Definitions</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Scale</b>
Social Media Marketing (X1)	Social Media Marketing refers to marketing activities that utilize social media platforms to disseminate information, build communication, and create interactions between companies and consumers with the aim of influencing consumer attitudes and behaviors.	(Gunelius, 2010) 1. Entertainment 2. Interaction 3. Trendiness 4. Customization	Likert
Trust (X2)	Trust refers to consumers' confidence in the credibility, reliability, and integrity of a party in fulfilling its promises and delivering products or services in accordance with expectations.	(Soegoto, 2013) 1. Probability 2. Equity 3. Reliability	Likert
Purchase Decision (Y)	Purchase Decision refers to the consumer decision-making process of selecting and determining a particular product or service from among various available alternatives to be purchased or used.	(Kotler & Keller, 2009) 1. Product Choice 2. Brand Choice 3. Distributor Choice 4. Purchase Time 5. Purchase Amount 6. Payment Method	Likert
Customer Trust (Z)	Customer engagement is the level of consumer involvement reflected through consumers' attention, participation, and active interactions with a brand or company, encompassing emotional, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions.	(Dessart et al., 2015) 1. Enthusiasm 2. Enjoyment 3. Attention 4. Absorption 5. Sharing 6. Learning 7. Endorsing	Likert

### 3.3. Research Location and Period

#### 3.3.1 Research Location

This study was conducted in Medan City, with the research subjects comprising consumers of culinary small, and medium enterprises (SMEs) who utilize digital platforms such as GrabFood, GoFood, and Instagram as media for information searching, interaction, and the purchase of culinary products.



are widely distributed and their exact number cannot be precisely identified, this study employs a sampling method for data collection.

### 3.4.2 Research Sample

According to (Sugiyono, 2016), a sample is a subset of the population that possesses the same characteristics as the population. In this study, because the exact number of SME culinary consumers in Medan City who use the GrabFood, GoFood, and Instagram platforms is unknown, the sample size is determined using the Lemeshow formula. The use of this formula aims to ensure that the study remains representative despite the population size not being precisely identified. The Lemeshow formula applied in this research is as follows:

$$n = \frac{Za^2 x PxQ}{L^2}$$

Where:

n = the minimum required sample size

Za = the standard value from the normal distribution corresponding to a significance level of  $\alpha = 5\% = 1.96$

P = *Prevalensi outcome*, since the data are not yet available, a value of 50% = 1-P-

L

Q = the level of precision 10%

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{1.96^2 x 0,5 x (1 - 0,5)}{0.01} \\ &= 96 \end{aligned}$$

Based on the results of the calculation, the sample size required for this study is 96 respondents. The sample consists of residents of Medan City who have

purchased culinary SME products through digital platforms such as GrabFood, GoFood, and Instagram. This study employs a non-probability sampling technique, combining purposive and incidental sampling methods. The purposive approach ensures respondents meet specific criteria, Medan residents, aged 17–30, and active users of GrabFood, GoFood, or Instagram for culinary transactions, while the incidental method allows for the selection of any respondent encountered by chance who fulfills these requirements. This combination ensures that the conveniently gathered sample remains relevant to the research objectives.

### **3.5. Data Collection Techniques**

Data collection techniques refer to the methods or procedures employed by researchers to obtain the data required for a study. Therefore, data collection must be conducted in a planned and systematic manner to ensure that the data obtained are accurate, valid, and reflective of actual conditions. In this study, the data collection techniques used include interviews and questionnaires as the primary data collection instruments.

#### **3.5.1 Interview**

An interview is a data collection technique involving direct communication between the researcher and the respondent, aimed at obtaining in-depth information relevant to the research focus. Interviews may be conducted in either a structured or unstructured manner, and can be carried out face-to-face or through other communication media. In this study, interviews were conducted with consumers of culinary SMEs in the city of Medan who use digital platforms such as GrabFood,

GoFood, and Instagram, in order to gather supporting information regarding consumer behavior in the purchasing decision process.

### 3.5.2 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a data collection technique conducted by distributing a set of written questions or statements to respondents in order to obtain research data. In this study, the questionnaire was administered to culinary SME consumers in Medan City who have made purchases through GrabFood, GoFood, and Instagram. The research instrument was developed using a Likert scale to measure respondents' perceptions of social media marketing, trust, customer engagement, and purchase decisions.

**Tabel 3.3 Likert Scale Index**

No.	Description	Skor
1	Strongly Agree (SA)	5
2	Agree (A)	4
3	Slightly Disagree (SD)	3
4	Disagree (D)	2
5	Strongly Disagree (SD)	1

### 3.6. Data Analysis Techniques

The data in this study will be analyzed using a quantitative approach through statistical analysis, specifically Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). This method aims to estimate the values of all latent variables (constructs) through an iterative procedure (Sarwono, 2022). PLS-SEM is a variance-based analytical technique that allows for the simultaneous testing of both the measurement model and the structural model. The measurement model is used

to assess validity and reliability, while the structural model is employed to examine causal relationships or predictive hypotheses.

The primary objective of using PLS is prediction, particularly in estimating the relationships among constructs and obtaining latent variable scores for forecasting purposes. Latent variables themselves are defined as linear aggregates of their indicators. The weight estimates used to construct latent variable scores are determined based on the specifications of the inner model (relationships among latent variables) and the outer model (relationships between indicators and their corresponding constructs). This process aims to minimize residual variance in the dependent variables, both at the latent variable level and the indicator level.

PLS is a robust analytical method because it requires relatively few assumptions and does not require the data to follow a multivariate normal distribution. This method is capable of integrating indicators measured on different scales (categorical, ordinal, interval, and ratio) within a single model. The structural model testing in this study was conducted using SmartPLS version 4 for Windows.

There are two main stages in SEM–PLS analysis, namely the measurement model (outer model) analysis and the structural model (inner model) analysis. The measurement model analysis consists of: (a) convergent validity; (b) construct reliability and validity; and (c) discriminant validity. Meanwhile, the structural model analysis includes: (a) the coefficient of determination (R-square); (b) f-square; and (c) hypothesis testing (Hair, 2014). The parameter estimates obtained using Partial Least Squares (PLS) can be classified into three categories. The first category comprises weight estimates, which are used to construct latent variable scores. The second category includes path estimates, which represent the

relationships among latent variables as well as between latent variables and their indicator blocks (loadings). The third category relates to the estimation of means and location parameters (regression constants) for both indicators and latent variables. To obtain these three types of estimates, Partial Least Squares (PLS) employs a three-stage iterative process, with each stage producing the following estimates:

1. Generation of weight estimates.
2. Estimation of the inner model and outer model.
3. Estimation of means and location parameters (constants).

According to (Juliandi, 2018) Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis consists of two model components, namely the structural model (inner model) and the measurement model (outer model), as follows:

### **3.6.1 Outer Model Analysis**

The outer model analysis is conducted to ensure that the measurement instruments used are appropriate and meet the criteria of validity and reliability. This analysis specifies the relationships between latent variables and their respective indicators. The evaluation of the outer model can be assessed through several indicators, as proposed by (Hair, 2014).

1. Convergent Validity refers to the extent to which an indicator is evaluated based on the correlation between item scores (or component scores) and construct scores. This can be observed through the standardized loading factor, which represents the magnitude of the correlation between each measurement item (indicator) and its underlying construct. An individual reflective measure is considered adequate when it demonstrates a loading

greater than 0.7; however, loadings of 0.6 or 0.5 may still be acceptable depending on the research context.

2. Discriminant Validity in a measurement model with reflective indicators is assessed by examining the cross-loadings between indicators and constructs. Discriminant validity is achieved when the correlation between a construct and its measurement items is higher than their correlations with other constructs, typically exceeding 0.60, indicating that the measurement block better represents its intended construct than others. Another approach to assessing discriminant validity is by comparing the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of each construct with the correlations among constructs.
3. Composite reliability is an indicator used to assess the reliability of a construct and can be examined through the latent variable coefficient view. Two measures are commonly used to evaluate composite reliability, namely internal consistency and Cronbach's alpha. A construct is considered to have high reliability when the composite reliability value reaches or exceeds 0,70.
4. Cronbach's Alpha is a reliability test derived from composite reliability analysis. A variable is considered reliable if it has a Cronbach's alpha value greater than 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency among the measurement items.

### **3.6.2 Inner Model Analysis**

Inner model analysis, also referred to as the inner relation, structural model, or substantive theory, describes the relationships among latent variables based on

the underlying theoretical framework. The evaluation of the inner model is commonly conducted using the coefficient of determination (R-square) and the effect size (F-square) to assess the explanatory power and the strength of relationships between constructs.

- 1) R-Square is a measure of the proportion of variance in the dependent (endogenous) variable that can be explained by the independent (exogenous) variables. This measure is useful for predicting whether a model demonstrates good or poor explanatory power (Juliandi, 2018).

According to (Juliandi, 2018) the criteria for evaluating R-square values are as follows:

- a) An R-Square value = 0,75 indicates a strong model
  - b) An R-Square value = 0,50 indicates a moderate model
  - c) An R-Square value = 0,25 indicates a weak model
- 2) F-Square atau  $F^2$  effect size is a measure used to assess the relative impact of an exogenous (independent) variable on an endogenous (dependent) variable. The  $F^2$  measure is also referred to as the effect of changes in  $R^2$ , meaning that the change in the  $R^2$  value when a specific exogenous variable is removed from the model can be used to evaluate whether the omitted variable has a substantive impact on the endogenous construct (Juliandi, 2018). According to (Juliandi, 2018), the criteria for interpreting F-square values are as follows:
    - a) An  $F^2$  value of 0.02 indicates a small effect of the exogenous variable on the endogenous variable.
    - b) An  $F^2$  value of 0.15 indicates a medium effect of the exogenous

variable on the endogenous variable.

- c) An  $F^2$  value of 0.35 indicates a large effect of the exogenous variable on the endogenous variable.

### **3.6.3 Hypothesis Testing**

A hypothesis represents a tentative answer to the research problem formulation. Hypothesis testing is a crucial stage of data analysis, as it serves to address the research questions and to empirically verify the proposed research hypotheses.

#### **3.6.3.1 Direct Effect**

Direct effect refers to a form of influence that occurs directly between an independent variable and a dependent variable without involving an intervening (mediating) variable in the causal path. In path analysis or Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), a direct effect indicates the extent to which changes in the dependent variable are directly caused by changes in the independent variable. The purpose of testing the direct effect is to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between variables within the model. This effect is determined by the value of the path coefficient obtained from data processing using statistical software such as SmartPLS. If the p-value of the relationship is statistically significant, it can be concluded that there is a strong direct effect between the two variables (Ghozali, 2018). The first criterion is the P-value, where a value of less than 0.05 indicates that the relationship is statistically significant, meaning that the independent variable has a significant effect on the dependent variable. Conversely, if the P-value is greater than 0.05, the relationship is considered not significant.

### **3.6.3.2 Indirect Effect**

An indirect effect occurs when an independent variable influences a dependent variable through another variable that functions as a mediator. Testing the indirect effect aims to determine whether the relationship between the independent and dependent variables remains strong, weakens, or becomes insignificant after accounting for the role of the mediating variable. The magnitude of the indirect effect is typically calculated by multiplying the path coefficient from the independent variable to the mediator and the path coefficient from the mediator to the dependent variable (Ghozali, 2018). If the P-value is less than 0.05, it indicates that the indirect effect is statistically significant, meaning that the mediating variable is able to mediate the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. On the other hand, if the P-value is greater than 0.05, the indirect effect is not significant, indicating that the mediating variable does not play a significant role.

### **3.6.3.3 Total Effect**

The total effect (total effect test) is a statistical analysis method used to assess the overall influence of an independent variable on a dependent variable within a model. The primary purpose of the total effect test is to identify the magnitude of the independent variable's impact on the dependent variable as a whole, encompassing both direct effects and indirect effects mediated through other variables included in the model. This value is obtained by summing the direct effect of the construct and its indirect effects through other constructs, with all paths being considered regardless of their statistical significance (Juliandi, 2018).

### **3.6.4 Descriptive Statistical Analysis**

According to (Sugiyono, 2011) descriptive statistical analysis is conducted to provide an overview of respondent characteristics and response patterns before SEM-PLS testing. This analysis includes calculation of minimum and maximum values, mean scores, standard deviations, and distribution percentages of responses. These statistics serve to describe the data characteristics without making generalizations beyond the sample.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH RESULTS

#### 4.1 Data Description

##### 4.1.1 Respondent Identity Characteristics

In this study, the research subjects consisted of consumers in Medan City who had previously purchased culinary products from local SMEs through digital platforms such as GrabFood, GoFood, or Instagram. Data processing was conducted using a questionnaire instrument consisting of statement items for each research variable, including 11 statement items for variable X1 (Social Media Marketing), 9 statement items for variable X2 (Trust), 21 statement items for variable Z (Customer Engagement), and 17 statement items for variable Y (Purchase Decision). The questionnaire was distributed to 96 respondents who met the research criteria, with a minimum sample size determined based on the sampling technique used in this study. All responses were measured using a Likert scale to ensure the validity and reliability of the research data.

##### 4.1.2 Respondent Characteristic

The respondents in this study were consumers in Medan City who had purchased culinary products from local SMEs through digital platforms such as GrabFood, GoFood, or Instagram, with a minimum total of 96 participants based on the calculated sample size. To provide a general overview of the respondents, their characteristics are described based on several demographic factors, including purchase experience, gender, age, occupation, and frequency of purchasing culinary products through digital platforms, as follows:

#### 4.1.2.1 Based on Gender

**Table 4.1 Respondent's Gender**

No	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
1	Male	45	46,9%
2	Female	51	53,1%
Total		96	100%

*Source: Data Processed by the author, 2026*

Based on Table 4.1, the majority of respondents were female, totaling 51 individuals (53.1%), while male respondents accounted for 45 individuals (46.9%). This indicates that the respondents in this study were slightly dominated by female consumers. The higher proportion of female respondents may reflect that women tend to be more active in exploring culinary products and engaging with food-related promotions on digital platforms such as Instagram, GrabFood, and GoFood. In addition, female consumers are often more responsive to promotional content, product information, and online interactions provided by culinary SMEs. This condition suggests that female consumers may have a stronger interest in purchasing culinary products through digital platforms, which can influence their level of engagement and ultimately their purchase decisions.

#### 4.1.2.2 Based on Age

**Table 4.2 Respondent's Age**

No	Age	Number	Percentage
1	17 – 25	67	69,8%
2	25 – 30	29	30,2%
Total		96	100%

*Source: Data Processed by the author, 2026*

Based on Table 4.2, the majority of respondents were aged 17–25 years, totaling 67 individuals (69.8%), while respondents aged 25–30 years accounted for

29 individuals (30.2%). The dominance of respondents in the 17–25 age range indicates that most consumers involved in this study belong to the Generation Z category. This age group is generally characterized by high engagement with digital technology, frequent use of social media, and strong familiarity with online platforms such as Instagram, GrabFood, and GoFood. Such conditions suggest that younger consumers are more accustomed to accessing information, interacting with brands, and making purchasing decisions through digital platforms. Therefore, social media marketing, consumer trust, and customer engagement may play an important role in influencing their purchase decisions for culinary SME products in Medan City.

#### 4.1.2.3 Based on Platform Used

**Table 4.3 Respondent's Platform Used**

No	Platform	Frequency	Percentage
1	GrabFood	61	63,5%
2	GoFood	70	72,9%
3	Instagram	27	28,1%
4	Never	9	9,4%

*Source: Data Processed by the author, 2026*

Based on Table 4.3, the majority of respondents had experience ordering culinary SMEs products through the GoFood platform, totaling 70 individuals (72.9%), followed by GrabFood with 61 individuals (63.5%). Meanwhile, 27 respondents (28.1%) had ordered culinary products through Instagram, and 9 respondents (9.4%) stated that they had never ordered culinary SMEs products through these platforms. These findings indicate that digital food delivery platforms such as GoFood and GrabFood are widely used by consumers in Medan City for purchasing culinary products. The popularity of these platforms may be influenced by convenience, accessibility, and the variety of culinary options available. In

addition, Instagram also plays a role as a promotional medium that allows consumers to discover culinary SME products before making purchase decisions through digital platforms.

### 4.1.3 Description of Research Variables

The variables in this study consist of 4 variables, namely Social Media Marketing (X1), Trust (X2), Customer Engagement (Z), Purchase Decision (Y). The description of the statements will display the answer options of each respondent to each statement item provided by the author to the respondents.

#### 4.1.3.1 Social Media Marketing Variable (X1)

Based on the distribution of questionnaires to consumers of culinary SMEs in Medan, the frequency values of respondent's answers regarding the Social Media Marketing variable are as follows:

**Table 4.4 Questionnaire Scores for Social Media Marketing Variable (X1)**

No	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	10	10,40	10	10,40	11	11,50	40	41,70	25	26,00
2	8	8,30	10	10,40	8	8,30	41	42,70	29	30,20
3	10	10,40	14	14,60	13	13,50	35	36,50	24	25,00
4	8	8,30	6	6,30	17	17,70	43	44,80	22	22,90
5	10	10,40	7	7,30	20	20,80	38	39,60	21	21,90
6	9	9,40	7	7,30	18	18,80	39	40,60	23	24,00
7	11	11,50	3	3,10	13	13,50	33	34,40	36	37,50
8	10	10,40	5	5,20	9	9,40	40	41,70	32	33,30
9	8	8,30	8	8,30	18	18,80	34	35,40	28	29,20

No	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F		F	%	F	%
10	7	7,30	8	8,30	19	19,80	41	42,7	21	21,90
11	7	7,30	9	9,40	15	15,60	38	39,60	27	28,1

*Source: Data Processed by the author, 2026*

Based on the table above, the results can be explained as follows:

1. In the first statement, "Promotional content from culinary SMEs on Instagram feels entertaining," the majority of respondents answered agree with 40 people (41.7%), followed by strongly agree with 25 people (26.0%).
2. In response to the second statement, "Content displayed on Instagram is interesting to look at," most respondents answered agree with 41 people (42.7%), while 29 respondents (30.2%) answered strongly agree.
3. In the third statement, "I can interact with the seller through Instagram," the majority of respondents answered agree with 35 people (36.5%), followed by strongly agree with 24 people (25.0%).
4. In the fourth statement, "Culinary SMEs sellers respond to consumer questions via Instagram," the majority of respondents answered agree with 43 people (44.8%), while 22 respondents (22.9%) answered strongly agree.
5. In the fifth statement, "Culinary SMEs sellers respond to consumer comments via Instagram," most respondents answered agree with 38 people (39.6%), followed by strongly agree with 21 people (21.9%).
6. In response to the sixth statement, "Product information displayed on Instagram is always up-to-date," the majority of respondents answered agree with 39 people (40.6%), while 23 respondents (24.0%) answered strongly agree.

7. In the seventh statement, “Culinary SMEs on Instagram help me stay informed about current culinary trends,” the majority of respondents answered strongly agree with 36 people (37.5%), while 33 respondents (34.4%) answered agree.
8. In the eighth statement, “Promotions displayed on Instagram follow market developments,” most respondents answered agree with 40 people (41.7%), followed by strongly agree with 32 people (33.3%).
9. In the ninth statement, “Promotional content that appears from culinary SMEs matches my interests,” the majority of respondents answered agree with 34 people (35.4%), while 28 respondents (29.2%) answered strongly agree.
10. In response to the tenth statement, “Product information displayed by culinary SMEs is relevant to my needs,” most respondents answered agree with 41 people (42.7%), while 21 respondents (21.9%) answered strongly agree.
11. In the eleventh statement, “Culinary SMEs promotions that appear match my preferences,” the majority of respondents answered agree with 38 people (39.6%), followed by strongly agree with 27 people (28.1%).

Based on the results of the respondent data processing, the majority of respondents tended to give agree responses to statements related to social media marketing activities. This indicates that respondents generally perceive that the social media marketing carried out by culinary SMEs through Instagram is able to provide interesting promotional content, facilitate interaction with consumers, present up-to-date information, and offer promotional content that is relevant to

consumer preferences. Therefore, social media marketing is considered to have an important role in attracting consumer attention and influencing consumer engagement with culinary SMEs products in Medan City.

#### 4.1.3.2 Trust Variable (X2)

Based on the distribution of questionnaires to consumers of culinary SMEs in Medan, the frequency values of respondent's answers regarding the Trust variable are as follows:

**Table 4.5 Questionnaire Scores for Trust Variable (X2)**

No	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	6	6,30	8	8,30	25	26,00	46	47,90	11	11,50
2	5	5,20	8	8,30	21	21,90	45	46,90	17	17,70
3	9	9,40	7	7,30	22	22,90	41	42,70	17	17,70
4	7	7,30	7	7,30	18	18,80	41	42,70	23	24,00
5	6	6,30	9	9,40	18	18,80	39	40,60	24	25,00
6	6	6,30	9	9,40	17	17,70	40	41,70	24	25,00
7	7	7,30	9	9,40	9	9,40	48	50,00	23	24,00
8	8	8,30	8	8,30	14	14,60	43	44,80	23	24,00
9	7	7,30	9	9,40	17	17,70	42	43,80	21	21,90

*Source: Data Processed by the author, 2026*

Based on the table above, the results can be explained as follows:

1. Regarding the first statement, "I am confident the seller fulfills the promises they offer," the majority of respondents gave positive responses. A total of 46 respondents (47.9%) agreed and 11 respondents (11.5%) strongly agreed.

2. For the second statement, “I am confident the product received matches what was promoted,” most respondents also showed positive evaluations. A total of 45 respondents (46.9%) agreed and 17 respondents (17.7%) strongly agreed.
3. In response to the third statement, “The seller treats consumers fairly,” the majority of respondents answered agree, totaling 41 respondents (42.7%), while 17 respondents (17.7%) strongly agreed.
4. Regarding the fourth statement, “The seller provides honest service,” 41 respondents (42.7%) agreed and 23 respondents (24.0%) strongly agreed.
5. For the fifth statement, “The seller provides transparent service,” most respondents answered agree, totaling 39 respondents (40.6%), while 24 respondents (25.0%) strongly agreed.
6. In response to the sixth statement, “The price offered matches the quality of the product,” 40 respondents (41.7%) agreed and 24 respondents (25.0%) strongly agreed.
7. For the seventh statement, “Culinary MSME sellers can be relied upon to provide products,” the majority of respondents answered agree, totaling 48 respondents (50.0%), followed by 23 respondents (24.0%) who strongly agreed.
8. Regarding the eighth statement, “I believe the quality of the food and drinks sold is consistent,” 43 respondents (44.8%) agreed and 23 respondents (24.0%) strongly agreed.

9. For the ninth statement, “The seller is able to provide service according to expectations,” the majority of respondents answered agree, totaling 42 respondents (43.8%), while 21 respondents (21.9%) strongly agreed.

Based on the results of the respondent data processing, the majority of respondents tended to give agree responses to the statements related to trust in culinary SMEs sellers operating through digital platforms. This indicates that respondents generally perceive that culinary SMEs sellers are able to fulfill their promises, provide fair treatment to consumers, and deliver reliable services and consistent product quality. In addition, respondents also believe that the information provided by sellers is honest and transparent, which helps strengthen consumer confidence when making purchase decisions. Therefore, trust is considered to have an important role in increasing consumer confidence and encouraging purchase decisions for culinary SMEs products through digital platforms in Medan City.

#### 4.1.3.3 Customer Engagement Variable (Z)

Based on the distribution of questionnaires to consumers of culinary SMEs in Medan, the frequency values of respondent’s answers regarding the Customer Engagement variable are as follows:

**Table 4.6 Questionnaire Scores for Customer Engagement Variable (X2)**

No	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	8	8,30	11	11,50	12	12,50	38	39,60	27	28,10
2	8	8,30	9	9,40	13	13,50	39	40,60	27	28,10
3	9	9,40	9	9,40	6	6,30	46	47,90	26	27,10
4	6	6,30	12	12,50	6	6,30	41	42,70	31	32,30

No	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F		F	%	F	%
5	6	6,30	10	10,40	10	10,40	40	41,70	30	31,30
6	6	6,30	11	11,50	8	8,30	43	44,8	28	29,20
7	6	6,30	11	11,50	10	10,40	44	45,80	25	26,00
8	11	11,50	9	9,40	5	5,20	40	41,70	31	32,30
9	7	7,30	9	9,40	14	14,60	38	39,60	28	29,20
10	7	7,30	9	9,40	19	19,8	40	41,70	21	21,90
11	9	9,40	13	13,50	17	17,70	39	40,60	18	18,80
12	8	8,30	8	8,30	18	18,80	43	44,80	19	19,80
13	8	8,30	10	10,40	9	9,40	41	42,70	28	29,20
14	9	9,40	8	8,30	8	8,30	41	42,70	30	31,30
15	10	10,40	7	7,30	9	9,40	39	40,60	31	32,30
16	9	9,40	9	9,40	6	6,30	40	41,70	32	33,3
17	11	11,5	5	5,20	10	10,40	40	41,70	30	31,30
18	12	12,50	4	4,20	7	7,30	47	49,00	26	27,10
19	10	10,40	7	7,30	11	11,50	37	38,50	31	32,30
20	12	12,50	5	5,20	6	6,30	43	44,80	30	31,30
21	11	11,50	5	5,20	7	7,30	38	39,60	35	36,50

*Source: Data Processed by the author, 2026*

Based on the table above, the results can be explained as follows:

1. Regarding the first statement, "I feel enthusiastic seeing culinary SMEs promotions," the majority of respondents answered agree, totaling 38 respondents (39.6%), followed by strongly agree with 27 respondents (28.1%).

2. For the second statement, “I feel excited when viewing culinary SMEs promotional content,” most respondents answered agree, totaling 39 respondents (40.6%), followed by 27 respondents (28.1%) who strongly agreed.
3. In response to the third statement, “Culinary SMEs promotions make me interested in learning more about the products,” the majority of respondents answered agree, totaling 46 respondents (47.9%), while 26 respondents (27.1%) strongly agreed.
4. Regarding the fourth statement, “I enjoy culinary SMEs promotional content,” 41 respondents (42.7%) agreed and 31 respondents (32.3%) strongly agreed.
5. For the fifth statement, “I feel happy when I see culinary SMEs product promotions,” most respondents answered agree, totaling 40 respondents (41.7%), while 30 respondents (31.3%) strongly agreed.
6. In response to the sixth statement, “Culinary SMEs promotional content is pleasant for me,” the majority of respondents answered agree, totaling 43 respondents (44.8%), followed by 28 respondents (29.2%) who strongly agreed.
7. For the seventh statement, “I pay attention to the product information displayed,” most respondents answered agree, totaling 44 respondents (45.8%), while 25 respondents (26.0%) strongly agreed.
8. Regarding the eighth statement, “I read the product details before making a purchase,” 40 respondents (41.7%) agreed and 31 respondents (32.3%) strongly agreed.

9. For the ninth statement, “I focus on the content of promotions that appear on Instagram,” 38 respondents (39.6%) agreed and 28 respondents (29.2%) strongly agreed.
10. In the tenth statement, “I feel involved when viewing culinary SMEs product promotions,” most respondents answered agree, totaling 40 respondents (41.7%), followed by 21 respondents (21.9%) who strongly agreed.
11. Regarding the eleventh statement, “I spend time viewing culinary SMEs promotional content,” 39 respondents (40.6%) agreed and 18 respondents (18.8%) strongly agreed.
12. For the twelfth statement, “I am fully focused/interested when seeing culinary SMEs promotions,” 43 respondents (44.8%) agreed and 19 respondents (19.8%) strongly agreed.
13. In response to the thirteenth statement, “I am willing to share culinary SMEs product information I know with others,” the majority of respondents answered agree, totaling 41 respondents (42.7%), followed by 28 respondents (29.2%) who strongly agreed.
14. Regarding the fourteenth statement, “I recommend culinary SMEs products I know to other people,” 41 respondents (42.7%) agreed and 31 respondents (31.3%) strongly agreed.
15. For the fifteenth statement, “I send culinary SMEs promotional information to those closest to me,” most respondents answered agree, totaling 39 respondents (40.6%), followed by 31 respondents (32.3%) who strongly agreed.

16. In response to the sixteenth statement, “I gain new information about culinary SMEs products via Instagram/GrabFood/GoFood,” 40 respondents (41.7%) agreed and 32 respondents (33.3%) strongly agreed.
17. For the seventeenth statement, “I understand the advantages of culinary SMEs products through promotions,” 40 respondents (41.7%) agreed and 31 respondents (31.3%) strongly agreed.
18. Regarding the eighteenth statement, “I find out price information for culinary SMEs products through promotions,” 47 respondents (49.0%) agreed and 26 respondents (27.1%) strongly agreed.
19. For the nineteenth statement, “I am willing to provide positive reviews,” most respondents answered agree, totaling 37 respondents (38.5%), while 31 respondents (32.3%) strongly agreed.
20. In the twentieth statement, “I give good ratings to the products,” 43 respondents (44.8%) agreed and 31 respondents (31.3%) strongly agreed.
21. For the twenty-first statement, “I support product promotions through social media,” the majority of respondents answered agree, totaling 38 respondents (39.6%), followed by 35 respondents (36.5%) who strongly agreed.

Based on the results of the respondent data processing, the majority of respondents tended to give agree responses to the statements related to customer engagement toward culinary SMEs promotions on digital platforms. This indicates that respondents generally show a positive level of engagement with culinary SMEs content on Instagram, GrabFood, and GoFood. Consumers tend to feel interested in promotional content, pay attention to product information, enjoy interacting with the content, and are willing to share information or provide positive

recommendations to others. In addition, respondents also tend to gain new information and understanding about culinary products through promotional activities on these digital platforms. Therefore, customer engagement is considered to play an important role in strengthening consumer interaction with culinary SMEs brands and encouraging their purchase decisions in Medan City.

#### 4.1.3.4 Purchase Decision (Y)

Based on the distribution of questionnaires to consumers of culinary SMEs in Medan, the frequency values of respondent's answers regarding the Purchase Decisions variable are as follows:

**Table 4.7 Questionnaire Scores for Purchase Decision Variable (Y)**

No	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	12	12,50	4	4,20	10	10,40	40	41,70	30	31,30
2	11	11,50	4	4,20	6	6,30	43	44,80	32	33,30
3	12	12,50	6	6,30	6	6,30	37	38,50	35	36,50
4	9	9,40	10	10,40	14	14,60	34	35,40	29	30,20
5	10	10,40	7	7,30	9	9,40	38	39,60	32	33,30
6	9	9,40	8	8,30	10	10,40	42	43,80	27	28,10
7	9	9,40	8	8,30	14	14,60	42	43,80	23	24,00
8	10	10,40	7	7,30	15	15,60	41	42,70	23	24,00
9	10	10,40	9	9,40	21	21,90	35	36,50	21	21,90
10	11	11,50	5	5,20	8	8,30	43	44,80	29	30,20
11	10	10,40	8	8,30	10	10,40	37	38,50	31	32,30
12	10	10,40	7	7,30	7	7,30	42	43,80	30	31,30
13	9	9,40	9	9,40	8	8,30	39	40,60	31	32,30

No	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F		F	%	F	%
14	9	9,40	7	7,30	7	7,30	39	40,60	34	35,40
15	13	13,50	5	5,20	6	6,30	29	30,20	43	44,80
16	12	12,50	6	6,30	6	6,30	35	36,50	37	38,50
17	10	10,40	7	7,30	7	7,30	36	37,50	36	37,50

Source: Data Processed by the author, 2026

Based on the table above, the results can be explained as follows:

1. Regarding the first statement, "I choose culinary SMEs products according to my needs," the majority of respondents answered agree, totaling 40 respondents (41.7%), followed by 30 respondents (31.3%) who strongly agreed.
2. For the second statement, "I consider the quality of the product before buying," most respondents answered agree, totaling 43 respondents (44.8%), while 32 respondents (33.3%) strongly agreed.
3. In response to the third statement, "I choose culinary SMEs products based on my taste preferences," the majority of respondents answered agree, totaling 37 respondents (38.5%), followed by 35 respondents (36.5%) who strongly agreed.
4. Regarding the fourth statement, "I choose specific culinary SMEs over others," 34 respondents (35.4%) agreed and 29 respondents (30.2%) strongly agreed.
5. For the fifth statement, "I have a preference for certain culinary SMEs," most respondents answered agree, totaling 38 respondents (39.6%), while 32 respondents (33.3%) strongly agreed.

6. In response to the sixth statement, "I feel confident with the choice of culinary SMEs I buy from," 42 respondents (43.8%) agreed and 27 respondents (28.1%) strongly agreed.
7. For the seventh statement, "I choose the GrabFood platform to make purchases," most respondents answered agree, totaling 42 respondents (43.8%), followed by 23 respondents (24.0%) who strongly agreed.
8. Regarding the eighth statement, "I choose the GoFood platform to make purchases," 41 respondents (42.7%) agreed and 23 respondents (24.0%) strongly agreed.
9. For the ninth statement, "I choose the Instagram platform to make purchases," the majority of respondents answered agree, totaling 35 respondents (36.5%), while 21 respondents (21.9%) strongly agreed.
10. In the tenth statement, "I determine the purchase time of the products myself," 43 respondents (44.8%) agreed and 29 respondents (30.2%) strongly agreed.
11. Regarding the eleventh statement, "I buy culinary SMEs products at the time I want," 37 respondents (38.5%) agreed and 31 respondents (32.3%) strongly agreed.
12. For the twelfth statement, "I consider the timing before purchasing a culinary SMEs product," 42 respondents (43.8%) agreed and 30 respondents (31.3%) strongly agreed.
13. In response to the thirteenth statement, "I buy products according to consumption needs," the majority of respondents answered agree, totaling

39 respondents (40.6%), followed by 31 respondents (32.3%) who strongly agreed.

14. Regarding the fourteenth statement, “I consider the order quantity before buying,” 39 respondents (40.6%) agreed and 34 respondents (35.4%) strongly agreed.

15. For the fifteenth statement, “I choose the payment method that is easiest for me,” most respondents answered strongly agree, totaling 43 respondents (44.8%), followed by 29 respondents (30.2%) who agreed.

16. In response to the sixteenth statement, “I decide on the payment method before completing the order,” 37 respondents (38.5%) strongly agreed and 35 respondents (36.5%) agreed.

17. For the seventeenth statement, “I choose the payment method according to my preference,” the majority of respondents answered agree, totaling 36 respondents (37.5%), while 36 respondents (37.5%) strongly agreed.

Based on the results of the respondent data processing, the majority of respondents tended to give agree and strongly agree responses to statements related to purchase decisions. This indicates that respondents generally show a positive tendency when making purchase decisions for culinary SMEs products through digital platforms such as Instagram, GrabFood, and GoFood. Consumers tend to consider product suitability, brand preference, platform convenience, timing of purchase, purchase quantity, and payment methods when deciding to buy culinary products. Therefore, the purchase decision variable reflects that consumers in Medan City are actively influenced by digital platforms and marketing activities of culinary SMEs when determining their purchasing choices.

## 4.2. Data Analysis

### 4.2.1 Outer Model Analysis

Outer model analysis is carried out to evaluate the quality of the research instruments by examining construct validity and reliability. This assessment is intended to describe the relationship between latent variables and their corresponding indicators. In this context, the outer model identifies how well each indicator represents the construct being measured and demonstrates the strength of the relationship between the indicators and the latent variables within the research model.

#### 4.2.1.1 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is applied to determine the extent to which a measurement is positively correlated with other measures representing the same construct. To evaluate whether an indicator of a construct variable is valid, the outer loading value is examined. An indicator is considered valid when the outer loading value exceeds 0.6 (Sihombing, 2024).

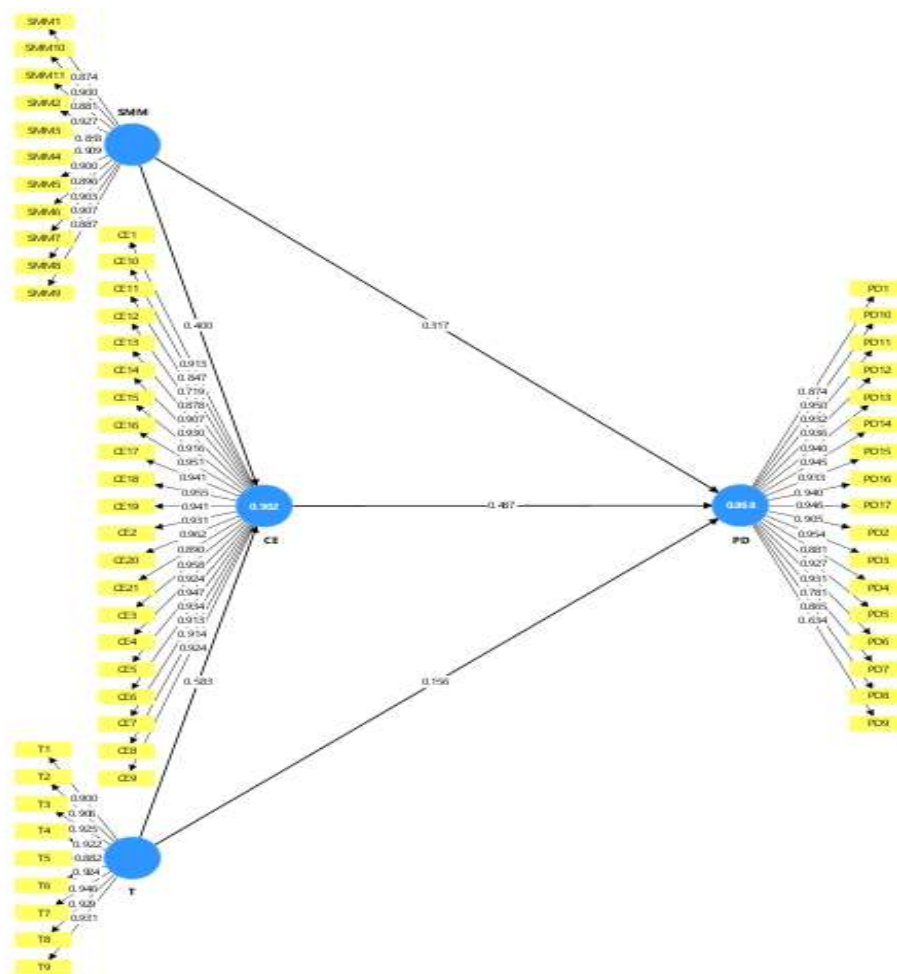
**Table 4.8 Outer Loadings**

Indicator	Social Media Marketing (X1)	Trust (X2)	Customer Engagement (Z)	Purchase Decisions (Y)	Ket.
X1.1	0.874				Valid
X1.2	0.927				Valid
X1.3	0.853				Valid
X1.4	0.909				Valid
X1.5	0.900				Valid
X1.6	0.896				Valid
X1.7	0.904				Valid
X1.8	0.907				Valid
X1.9	0.887				Valid
X1.10	0.900				Valid
X1.11	0.881				Valid

Indicator	Social Media Marketing (X1)	Trust (X2)	Customer Engagement (Z)	Purchase Decisions (Y)	Ket.
X2.1		0.900			Valid
X2.2		0.906			Valid
X2.3		0.925			Valid
X2.4		0.922			Valid
X2.5		0.882			Valid
X2.6		0.924			Valid
X2.7		0.946			Valid
X2.8		0.929			Valid
X2.9		0.931			Valid
Z.1			0.913		Valid
Z.2			0.931		Valid
Z.3			0.958		Valid
Z.4			0.924		Valid
Z.5			0.947		Valid
Z.6			0.934		Valid
Z.7			0.913		Valid
Z.8			0.914		Valid
Z.9			0.924		Valid
Z.10			0.847		Valid
Z.11			0.719		Valid
Z.12			0.878		Valid
Z.13			0.907		Valid
Z.14			0.930		Valid
Z.15			0.916		Valid
Z.16			0.951		Valid
Z.17			0.941		Valid
Z.18			0.955		Valid
Z.19			0.942		Valid
Z.20			0.962		Valid
Z.21			0.890		Valid
Y.1				0.879	Valid
Y.2				0.912	Valid
Y.3				0.960	Valid
Y.4				0.877	Valid
Y.5				0.927	Valid
Y.6				0.929	Valid
Y.7				0.768	Valid
Y.8				0.858	Valid
Y.10				0.950	Valid
Y.11				0.935	Valid
Y.12				0.936	Valid
Y.13				0.940	Valid
Y.14				0.951	Valid
Y.15				0.939	Valid
Y.16				0.944	Valid
Y.17				0.946	Valid

Source: Research Data (processed) using SmartPLS, 2026.

Based on the results of the Convergent Validity analysis presented in Table 4.7 above, it can be observed that all indicator loading factor values for each construct are above 0.6. Since all loading factor values exceed the minimum threshold of 0.6, it can be concluded that all indicators used in this study meet the requirements of convergent validity and are considered valid for measuring their respective constructs. The graphical output of the outer loading values can be seen in the figure below:



Source: Research Data (processed) using SmartPLS, 2026

Figure 4.1 Structural Model for Algorithm Testing

#### 4.2.1.2 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is used to confirm that each construct in the research model is clearly distinguished from other constructs. This evaluation is performed by examining the cross loading values, where each indicator is expected to show a stronger correlation with its own construct compared to other constructs. In reflective measurement models, a cross loading value greater than 0.70 is generally regarded as acceptable (Ghozali, 2021).

**Table 4.9 Discriminant Validity – Cross Loading**

Indicator	Social Media Marketing (X1)	Trust (X2)	Customer Engagement (Z)	Purchase Decisions (Y)	Ket.
X1.1	<b>0.874</b>	0.749	0.811	0.854	Valid
X1.2	<b>0.927</b>	0.810	0.842	0.843	Valid
X1.3	<b>0.853</b>	0.744	0.787	0.750	Valid
X1.4	<b>0.909</b>	0.803	0.819	0.758	Valid
X1.5	<b>0.900</b>	0.772	0.780	0.737	Valid
X1.6	<b>0.896</b>	0.767	0.780	0.735	Valid
X1.7	<b>0.904</b>	0.745	0.800	0.823	Valid
X1.8	<b>0.907</b>	0.752	0.818	0.821	Valid
X1.9	<b>0.887</b>	0.730	0.791	0.774	Valid
X1.10	<b>0.900</b>	0.767	0.793	0.767	Valid
X1.11	<b>0.881</b>	0.831	0.850	0.821	Valid
X2.1	0.776	<b>0.900</b>	0.842	0.810	Valid
X2.2	0.766	<b>0.906</b>	0.838	0.793	Valid
X2.3	0.788	<b>0.925</b>	0.851	0.790	Valid
X2.4	0.769	<b>0.922</b>	0.820	0.782	Valid
X2.5	0.774	<b>0.882</b>	0.802	0.729	Valid
X2.6	0.786	<b>0.924</b>	0.859	0.797	Valid
X2.7	0.835	<b>0.946</b>	0.909	0.874	Valid
X2.8	0.816	<b>0.929</b>	0.875	0.829	Valid
X2.9	0.805	<b>0.931</b>	0.864	0.827	Valid
Z.1	0.815	0.839	<b>0.913</b>	0.830	Valid
Z.2	0.827	0.846	<b>0.931</b>	0.829	Valid
Z.3	0.851	0.882	<b>0.958</b>	0.871	Valid
Z.4	0.837	0.867	<b>0.924</b>	0.858	Valid
Z.5	0.864	0.873	<b>0.947</b>	0.886	Valid
Z.6	0.831	0.856	<b>0.934</b>	0.851	Valid
Z.7	0.807	0.882	<b>0.913</b>	0.864	Valid
Z.8	0.802	0.845	<b>0.914</b>	0.869	Valid
Z.9	0.822	0.875	<b>0.924</b>	0.854	Valid
Z.10	0.788	0.828	<b>0.847</b>	0.754	Valid

Indicator	Social Media Marketing (X1)	Trust (X2)	Customer Engagement (Z)	Purchase Decisions (Y)	Ket.
Z.11	0.646	0.703	<b>0.719</b>	0.529	Valid
Z.12	0.801	0.832	<b>0.878</b>	0.726	Valid
Z.13	0.839	0.827	<b>0.907</b>	0.812	Valid
Z.14	0.867	0.848	<b>0.930</b>	0.846	Valid
Z.15	0.843	0.842	<b>0.916</b>	0.822	Valid
Z.16	0.872	0.871	<b>0.951</b>	0.887	Valid
Z.17	0.840	0.856	<b>0.941</b>	0.892	Valid
Z.18	0.854	0.886	<b>0.955</b>	0.912	Valid
Z.19	0.839	0.850	<b>0.942</b>	0.897	Valid
Z.20	0.880	0.891	<b>0.962</b>	0.907	Valid
Z.21	0.797	0.819	<b>0.890</b>	0.846	Valid
Y.1	0.783	0.811	0.852	<b>0.879</b>	Valid
Y.2	0.832	0.822	0.876	<b>0.912</b>	Valid
Y.3	0.814	0.809	0.865	<b>0.960</b>	Valid
Y.4	0.819	0.829	0.847	<b>0.877</b>	Valid
Y.5	0.807	0.841	0.869	<b>0.927</b>	Valid
Y.6	0.831	0.891	0.885	<b>0.929</b>	Valid
Y.7	0.717	0.760	0.753	<b>0.768</b>	Valid
Y.8	0.749	0.797	0.790	<b>0.858</b>	Valid
Y.10	0.834	0.801	0.854	<b>0.950</b>	Valid
Y.11	0.824	0.784	0.838	<b>0.935</b>	Valid
Y.12	0.864	0.779	0.821	<b>0.936</b>	Valid
Y.13	0.858	0.767	0.821	<b>0.940</b>	Valid
Y.14	0.809	0.806	0.850	<b>0.951</b>	Valid
Y.15	0.773	0.772	0.838	<b>0.939</b>	Valid
Y.16	0.787	0.771	0.835	<b>0.944</b>	Valid
Y.17	0.850	0.799	0.837	<b>0.946</b>	Valid

Source: Research Data (processed) using SmartPLS, 2026.

Based on Table 4.8, the cross loading results show that each indicator has a higher loading value on its own construct than on other constructs. This indicates that the variables Social Media Marketing (X1), Trust (X2), Customer Engagement (Z), and Purchase Decision (Y) meet the discriminant validity criteria, meaning all indicators are valid and can properly measure their respective constructs.

#### 4.2.1.3 Composite Reliability

Composite reliability is used to evaluate the internal consistency of measurement items within the same construct. This analysis examines whether the

indicators in a test produce consistent results. A construct is considered reliable when the composite reliability value exceeds 0.50 (Hair Jr et al., 2023).

**Table 4.10 Composite Reliability**

	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Composite Reliability (rho_a) - Bar chart</b>	<b>Composite Reliability (rho_c) - Bar Chart</b>	<b>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</b>
<b>Social Media Marketing (X1)</b>	<b>0.975</b>	<b>0.975</b>	<b>0.978</b>	<b>0.800</b>
<b>Trust (X2)</b>	<b>0.977</b>	<b>0.977</b>	<b>0.980</b>	<b>0.843</b>
<b>Customer Engagement (Z)</b>	<b>0.990</b>	<b>0.991</b>	<b>0.991</b>	<b>0.838</b>
<b>Purchase Decisions (Y)</b>	<b>0.987</b>	<b>0.988</b>	<b>0.988</b>	<b>0.841</b>

*Source: Research Data (processed) using SmartPLS, 2026.*

Based on Table 4.9, the composite reliability test results show that all research variables have reliability values above the recommended threshold. In addition, the Cronbach's Alpha values for all variables are also above 0.70, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are all above 0.50. These results indicate that all constructs in the research model meet the reliability requirements and demonstrate good internal consistency, meaning that the indicators used are reliable for measuring their respective variables.

#### **4.2.2 Inner Model Analysis**

Structural model testing is performed to examine and evaluate the relationships between exogenous and endogenous variables in the study (Ghozali & Kusumadewi, 2021). These relationships are analyzed to address the research objectives by testing the proposed hypotheses. The evaluation of the structural model is conducted through several stages as outlined below.

#### 4.2.2.1 R – Square

The coefficient of determination (R-Square) is used to measure the predictive accuracy of a model. In other words, it explains how much variation in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables within a path model (Hair Jr et al., 2023).

1. An R-Square value of 0.75 indicates a strong PLS model.
2. An R-square value of 0.50 indicates a moderate PLS model.
3. An R-square value of 0.25 indicates a weak PLS model.

**Table 4.11 R-Square**

	<b>R - square</b>	<b>R - square adjusted</b>
<b>Customer Engagement (Z)</b>	0.902	0.900
<b>Purchase Decisions (Y)</b>	0.860	0.856

*Source: Research Data (processed) using SmartPLS, 2026*

Based on Table 4.10, the R-square adjusted value for Customer Engagement (CE) is 0.900, meaning that 90.0% of its variation is explained by the variables in the model. Meanwhile, the R-square adjusted value for Purchase Decision (PD) is 0.856, meaning that 85.6% of its variation is explained by the model. These results show that the model has strong predictive power.

#### 4.2.2.2 F – Square

The F-Square test is used to assess the relative effect size of an exogenous variable on an endogenous variable. This test evaluates how strongly an independent variable contributes to explaining the dependent variable. The interpretation criteria indicate that an F-Square value of 0.02 represents a small

effect, 0.15 represents a moderate effect, and 0.35 represents a large effect (Setiabudhi et al., 2025).

**Table 4.12 F-Square**

	<b>Customer Engagement (Z)</b>	<b>Purchase Decisions (Y)</b>	<b>Social Media Marketing (X1)</b>	<b>Trust (X2)</b>
<b>Customer Engagement (Z)</b>		0.200		
<b>Purchase Decisions (Y)</b>				
<b>Social Media Marketing (X1)</b>	0.421	0.108		
<b>Trust (X2)</b>	0.891	0.017		

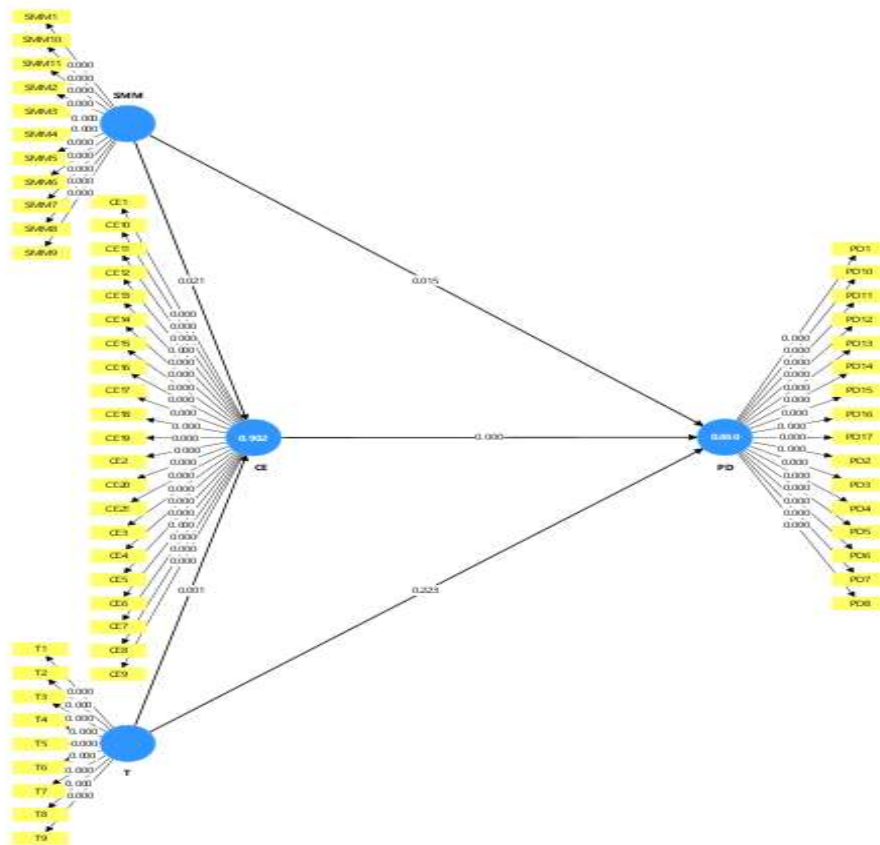
*Source: Research Data (processed) using SmartPLS, 2026*

Based on Table 4.11, the F-Square test results show the effect size of the exogenous variables on the endogenous variables in the model. Social Media Marketing (X1) has a large effect on Customer Engagement (Z) with an F-square value of 0.421, while its effect on Purchase Decision (Y) is categorized as small with a value of 0.108. Meanwhile, Trust (X2) has a large effect on Customer Engagement (Z) with an F-square value of 0.891, but its effect on Purchase Decision (Y) is very small with a value of 0.017. In addition, Customer Engagement (Z) shows a moderate effect on Purchase Decision (Y) with an F-square value of 0.200. These results indicate that the strongest influence in the model occurs in the relationship between Trust and Customer Engagement.

### **4.2.3 Hypothesis Testing**

This test was carried out to examine whether there is a relationship between the variables being studied. The acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis is determined based on the significance values between constructs, including the t-

statistics and p-values. The testing procedure was conducted through several steps, as explained below.



Source: Research Data (processed) using SmartPLS, 2026

**Figure 4.2 Bootstrapping Result**

#### 4.2.3.1 Direct Effect Analysis

The direct effect hypothesis test is conducted to examine whether one variable directly influences another variable without the involvement of a mediating variable, as follows:

1. If the path coefficient value is positive, it indicates that an increase in one variable is associated with an increase in another variable.
2. If the path coefficient value is negative, it indicates that an increase in one variable is followed by a decrease in another variable (Hair Jr et al., 2023).

For the probability value, the criteria are as follows:

1. If the probability value (P-Value) < Alpha (0.05), then  $H_0$  is rejected, meaning that the effect of one variable on another variable is significant.
2. If the probability value (P-Value) > Alpha (0.05), then  $H_0$  is accepted, meaning that the effect of one variable on another variable is not significant.

**Table 4.13 Direct Effect – Path Coefficients**

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values
<b>Customer Engagement (Z) -&gt; Purchase Decisions (Y)</b>	0.533	0.545	0.145	3.671	0.000
<b>Social Media Marketing (X1) -&gt; Customer Engagement (Z)</b>	0.401	0.444	0.174	2.305	0.021
<b>Social Media Marketing (X1) -&gt; Purchase Decisions (Y)</b>	0.288	0.286	0.119	2.428	0.015
<b>Trust (X2) -&gt; Customer Engagement (Z)</b>	0.583	0.539	0.176	3.312	0.001
<b>Trust (X2) -&gt; Purchase Decisions (Y)</b>	0.134	0.124	0.110	1.218	0.223

*Source: Research Data (processed) using SmartPLS, 2026*

Based on the table above, the following can be obtained:

1. The path coefficient value is 0.533, indicating a positive relationship between Customer Engagement and Purchase Decision. The t-statistic value is 3.671 ( $> 1.96$ ) and the p-value is 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ). This indicates that Customer Engagement has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decision. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that Customer Engagement influences Purchase Decision is accepted.

2. The path coefficient value is 0.401, showing a positive relationship between Social Media Marketing and Customer Engagement. The t-statistic value is 2.305 ( $> 1.96$ ) and the p-value is 0.021 ( $< 0.05$ ). This indicates that Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Customer Engagement. Thus, the hypothesis is accepted.
3. The path coefficient value is 0.288, indicating a positive influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decision. The t-statistic value is 2.428 ( $> 1.96$ ) and the p-value is 0.015 ( $< 0.05$ ). This shows that Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decision, so the hypothesis is accepted.
4. The path coefficient value is 0.583, indicating a positive relationship between Trust and Customer Engagement. The t-statistic value is 3.312 ( $> 1.96$ ) and the p-value is 0.001 ( $< 0.05$ ). This means that Trust has a positive and significant effect on Customer Engagement, therefore the hypothesis is accepted.
5. The path coefficient value is 0.134, indicating a positive relationship between Trust and Purchase Decision. However, the t-statistic value is 1.218 ( $< 1.96$ ) and the p-value is 0.223 ( $> 0.05$ ). This indicates that Trust does not have a significant effect on Purchase Decision, so the hypothesis is rejected.

#### **4.2.3.2 Indirect Effect Analysis**

The indirect effect hypothesis test is conducted to examine whether a variable influences another variable through a mediating variable, as follows:

1. If the indirect effect coefficient is greater than the direct effect coefficient, it indicates that the mediating variable is able to mediate the relationship between the two variables.
2. If the indirect effect coefficient is smaller than the direct effect coefficient, it indicates that the mediating variable does not mediate the relationship between the two variables (Hair Jr et al., 2023).

**Table 4.14 Indirect Effect**

	<b>Original Sample (O)</b>	<b>Sample Mean (M)</b>	<b>Standard deviation (STDEV)</b>	<b>T statistics ( O/STDEV )</b>	<b>P values</b>
<b>Social Media Marketing (X1) -&gt; Customer Engagement (Z) -&gt; Purchase Decisions (Y)</b>	0.213	0.240	0.118	1.812	0.070
<b>Trust (X2) -&gt; Customer Engagement (Z) -&gt; Purchase Decisions (Y)</b>	0.310	0.296	0.131	2.367	0.018

*Source: Research Data (processed) using SmartPLS, 2026*

1. The indirect effect coefficient value is 0.213, indicating a positive indirect relationship between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Decision through Customer Engagement. However, the t-statistic value is 1.812 ( $< 1.96$ ) and the p-value is 0.070 ( $> 0.05$ ). This indicates that Customer Engagement does not significantly mediate the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Decision. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that Customer Engagement mediates the effect of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decision is rejected.
2. The indirect effect coefficient value is 0.310, indicating a positive indirect relationship between Trust and Purchase Decision through Customer

Engagement. The t-statistic value is 2.367 ( $> 1.96$ ) and the p-value is 0.018 ( $< 0.05$ ). This indicates that Customer Engagement significantly mediates the relationship between Trust and Purchase Decision. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that Customer Engagement mediates the effect of Trust on Purchase Decision is accepted.

#### **4.2.4 Discussions**

##### **4.2.2.1 The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decisions**

The results of testing the structural model using PLS show that the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Decisions has a path coefficient of 0.288 with a positive direction and a P-value of  $0.015 < 0.05$ . This value indicates that the resulting effect is statistically significant. Thus, the hypothesis stating that social media marketing influences purchase decisions is accepted. This means that the better the implementation of social media marketing carried out by culinary SMEs through digital platforms, the higher the level of consumer purchase decisions.

These results indicate that social media marketing has become an important factor influencing consumer behavior before making purchasing decisions. Through social media platforms such as Instagram and digital food delivery platforms, consumers can easily access product information, promotional content, and visual representations of culinary products. Attractive and informative marketing content encourages consumers to evaluate products more positively and increases their willingness to make a purchase. Social media marketing enables businesses to communicate product value effectively and influence consumer perceptions toward the brand (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

When linked to respondent characteristics, the majority of respondents in this study belong to the productive age group who actively use digital media and social networking platforms. Consumers within this group tend to rely on social media as a primary source of information before deciding to purchase a product. The increasing use of digital media has changed consumer behavior, where purchasing decisions are often preceded by searching for information through social media platforms (Ardiansyah & Sarwoko, 2020).

The distribution of respondents' answers regarding the social media marketing variable also supports these statistical results. Most respondents agreed with statements related to the attractiveness of social media content, the availability of up-to-date information, and the ease of interaction between consumers and businesses. The dominance of positive responses indicates that consumers perceive social media marketing as useful in helping them obtain information and evaluate products before making purchase decisions. According to (Gunelius, 2010), social media marketing can influence consumer decisions through elements such as entertainment, interaction, trendiness, and customization.

When linked to the phenomenon described in Chapter 1, the utilization of social media marketing among culinary SMEs in Medan has not yet been fully optimized. However, the presence of social media platforms still provides opportunities for businesses to communicate with consumers and promote their products effectively. Social media allows SMEs to reach wider markets and build direct relationships with consumers through interactive communication (Aulia et al., 2022).

From a theoretical perspective, social media marketing is defined as a marketing strategy that utilizes social media platforms to promote products, deliver information, and build relationships with consumers in digital environments. Social media allows companies to engage in interactive communication with consumers and influence their perceptions toward a brand or product. When consumers perceive social media marketing content as informative, entertaining, and relevant, they tend to develop a positive attitude that leads to purchase decisions (Untari & Fajarina, 2018).

The results of this study are consistent with the findings of several previous studies which state that social media marketing has a significant influence on consumer purchase decisions. Research conducted by (Putri, 2020) shows that social media marketing significantly influences consumer purchase decisions. Similarly, (Maulid et al., 2022) found that social media marketing has a significant effect on the structure of purchase decisions in digital markets.

Furthermore, (Putra & Budiman, 2024) also concluded that social media marketing serves as a strong predictor influencing consumers' purchase intentions and final purchasing actions. These findings confirm that effective social media marketing strategies can shape consumer perceptions, increase product attractiveness, and ultimately encourage consumers to make purchasing decisions.

Thus, it can be concluded that social media marketing is a strategic factor in influencing consumer purchase decisions. When culinary SMEs are able to provide attractive content, interactive communication, and relevant information through social media platforms, consumers tend to develop greater interest and confidence in the products offered. Consequently, optimizing social media

marketing strategies can increase consumer purchase decisions and strengthen the competitiveness of culinary SMEs in the digital market.

#### **4.2.2.2 The Influence of Trust on Purchase Decisions**

The results of testing the structural model using PLS show that the relationship between Trust and Purchase Decisions has a path coefficient of 0.134 with a positive direction and a P-value of  $0.223 > 0.05$ . This value indicates that the resulting effect is not statistically significant. Thus, the hypothesis stating that trust influences purchase decisions is rejected. This means that the level of consumer trust in digital platforms does not significantly determine the purchase decisions of consumers toward culinary SMEs in Medan.

These findings suggest that although trust is considered an important factor in online transactions, it does not always directly influence consumers when deciding to purchase products through digital platforms. Consumers may consider other factors such as product attractiveness, promotional offers, and convenience when making purchasing decisions. In the context of online food purchasing, consumers often prioritize product information, menu variety, and delivery convenience rather than trust considerations alone (Kim et al., 2008).

When linked to respondent characteristics, the majority of respondents in this study belong to the younger generation who actively use digital platforms such as GrabFood and GoFood. Consumers who are familiar with the digital ecosystem tend to have a basic level of trust in online transaction systems. As a result, trust may no longer be the primary factor influencing their purchasing decisions because digital platforms already provide standardized systems and transaction security (Pavlou, 2003).

The distribution of respondents' answers regarding the trust variable also shows that most respondents gave positive responses to statements related to credibility, reliability, and honesty of sellers. However, these positive perceptions do not necessarily translate into direct purchasing decisions. Consumers may still evaluate other aspects such as product quality, price, and promotions before deciding to purchase culinary products through digital platforms.

When linked to the phenomenon described in Chapter 1, the increasing use of digital platforms in the culinary sector has made online transactions more common among consumers. Many consumers are already familiar with the systems provided by digital platforms, which reduces concerns regarding transaction security. Therefore, trust becomes a basic expectation rather than the main determinant of purchasing decisions.

From a theoretical perspective, trust is defined as consumers' confidence in the credibility, reliability, and integrity of a seller in fulfilling promises and delivering products or services according to expectations (Soegoto, 2013). In digital transactions, trust plays an important role in reducing uncertainty and perceived risks associated with online purchasing behavior (Gefen et al., 2003).

However, the results of this study indicate that trust does not significantly influence purchase decisions. This finding suggests that although consumers may trust digital platforms and sellers, their purchasing decisions are more strongly influenced by other factors such as marketing communication or consumer engagement with the brand.

These findings are not entirely consistent with several previous studies which suggest that trust significantly influences purchase decisions in online

environments. Research by (Gefen et al., 2003) and (Kim et al., 2008) found that trust can increase consumer confidence and reduce perceived risks in online transactions, which ultimately encourages consumers to make purchasing decisions.

Thus, it can be concluded that trust does not have a significant direct influence on purchase decisions among consumers of culinary SMEs in Medan. Although consumers generally have positive perceptions regarding the credibility and reliability of sellers, their purchasing decisions are more influenced by other factors such as marketing strategies, promotional activities, and engagement with digital content.

#### **4.2.2.3 The Influence of Customer Engagement on Purchase Decisions**

The results of testing the structural model using PLS show that the relationship between Customer Engagement and Purchase Decisions has a path coefficient of 0.533 with a positive direction and a P-value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . This value indicates that the effect is statistically significant. Thus, the hypothesis stating that customer engagement influences purchase decisions is accepted. This means that the higher the level of customer engagement toward culinary SMEs on digital platforms, the higher the likelihood that consumers will make purchase decisions.

These findings indicate that customer engagement plays an important role in shaping consumer behavior in the digital environment. Consumers who actively interact with brands through social media or digital platforms tend to develop stronger interest and emotional attachment toward the brand. Such interactions encourage consumers to become more confident in evaluating products and eventually influence their purchasing decisions.

When linked to respondent characteristics, the majority of respondents in this study are digital platform users who frequently interact with online content such as promotional posts, product photos, reviews, and recommendations. Consumers who are actively involved in these digital interactions are more likely to develop familiarity with the brand and become more confident in purchasing products offered by culinary SMEs.

The distribution of respondents' answers regarding the customer engagement variable also supports these results. Most respondents agreed with statements related to enthusiasm, enjoyment, attention, and sharing activities when interacting with culinary SME content on digital platforms. This indicates that respondents tend to show positive engagement behavior, which reflects their interest and involvement in the products promoted through digital channels.

In the context of the digital culinary industry in Medan, customer engagement becomes increasingly important because consumers often rely on online platforms to obtain information and evaluate products before making purchasing decisions. Through digital interactions such as comments, likes, shares, and reviews, consumers develop a closer relationship with brands, which ultimately influences their willingness to purchase.

From a theoretical perspective, customer engagement refers to the level of consumers' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral involvement in their interactions with a brand (Brodie et al., 2011). When consumers feel engaged with a brand, they tend to develop stronger relationships and a higher level of commitment, which can lead to positive behavioral outcomes such as purchase decisions.

The results of this study are consistent with previous research which shows that customer engagement significantly influences consumer purchasing behavior. Research conducted by (Pansari & Kumar, 2017) indicates that customer engagement creates value for firms through direct and indirect interactions that encourage consumers to purchase products. Similarly, (Hollebeek, 2011) explains that strong customer engagement can strengthen emotional relationships between consumers and brands, which ultimately increases the likelihood of purchasing behavior.

Furthermore, studies conducted by (Parinsi et al., 2025) and (Pangestu & Brabo, 2025) also found that customer engagement plays an important role in encouraging consumer purchase decisions in digital environments. These studies highlight that consumers who actively interact with brands through digital platforms tend to develop stronger confidence and motivation to purchase products.

Thus, it can be concluded that customer engagement has a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions. The higher the level of consumer interaction, attention, and participation toward culinary SMEs on digital platforms, the stronger the consumer's tendency to make purchasing decisions. Therefore, businesses need to create strategies that encourage consumer engagement through interactive content, responsive communication, and meaningful digital experiences.

#### **4.2.2.4 The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Customer Engagement**

The results of testing the structural model using PLS show that the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Customer Engagement has a path coefficient of 0.401 with a positive direction and a P-value of  $0.021 < 0.05$ . This

value indicates that the effect is statistically significant. Thus, the hypothesis stating that social media marketing influences customer engagement is accepted. This means that the better the implementation of social media marketing by culinary SMEs through digital platforms, the higher the level of consumer engagement with the brand.

These findings indicate that social media marketing plays an important role in encouraging consumer interaction with businesses in the digital environment. Through social media platforms such as Instagram, businesses can share product information, promotional content, and interactive posts that attract consumer attention. Such marketing activities allow consumers to interact with brands through comments, likes, and shares, which reflects the presence of customer engagement.

When linked to respondent characteristics, the majority of respondents in this study are active users of digital platforms and social media. Consumers who frequently access social media are more likely to encounter marketing content related to culinary SMEs. As a result, consumers tend to become more involved in interactions with the brand, such as paying attention to promotional content, exploring product information, and participating in online discussions.

The distribution of respondents' answers regarding the social media marketing variable also supports these findings. Most respondents agreed with statements related to entertainment, interaction, trendiness, and customization in social media content. This indicates that respondents perceive social media marketing activities conducted by culinary SMEs as engaging and capable of stimulating their interest to interact with the brand.

In the context of culinary SMEs in Medan, social media marketing plays a crucial role in strengthening relationships between businesses and consumers. Through consistent marketing activities on social media platforms, businesses are able to maintain communication with consumers and encourage active participation in brand-related content. This interaction creates opportunities for consumers to become more involved in the brand experience.

From a theoretical perspective, social media marketing enables companies to build relationships with consumers through interactive communication and digital engagement (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Social media platforms allow companies to create marketing content that is not only informative but also engaging, which can encourage consumers to actively participate in brand-related activities.

The results of this study are consistent with previous research which shows that social media marketing has a significant influence on customer engagement. Research conducted by (Brodie et al., 2011) states that digital interaction between brands and consumers can strengthen consumer involvement and engagement with the brand. Similarly, (Hollebeek, 2011) explains that social media activities can stimulate cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement among consumers.

Furthermore, (Ferliansyah, 2022) found that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on customer engagement because it encourages interaction and communication between businesses and consumers. Social media platforms provide opportunities for businesses to create meaningful experiences that motivate consumers to participate in brand-related activities.

Thus, it can be concluded that social media marketing has a positive and significant influence on customer engagement. The more effectively culinary SMEs utilize social media marketing through attractive content, interactive communication, and relevant information, the higher the level of consumer engagement that can be created. Therefore, optimizing social media marketing strategies is essential for businesses to build stronger relationships with consumers in the digital era.

#### **4.2.2.5 The Influence of Trust on Customer Engagement**

The results of testing the structural model using PLS show that the relationship between Trust and Customer Engagement has a path coefficient of 0.583 with a positive direction and a P-value of  $0.001 < 0.05$ . This value indicates that the effect is statistically significant. Thus, the hypothesis stating that trust influences customer engagement is accepted. This means that the higher the level of consumer trust toward digital platforms and culinary SMEs, the higher the level of consumer engagement with the brand.

These findings indicate that trust plays an important role in encouraging consumers to interact more actively with brands in digital environments. When consumers perceive that a business is credible, reliable, and honest in providing products or services, they tend to feel more comfortable engaging in various interactions with the brand. Such engagement can be reflected through activities such as paying attention to promotional content, providing feedback, sharing information, and recommending products to others.

When linked to respondent characteristics, the majority of respondents in this study are active users of digital platforms who are accustomed to conducting

online transactions. Consumers who have positive experiences with online platforms tend to develop higher levels of trust toward the platform and the sellers operating within it. This trust encourages consumers to participate more actively in brand-related interactions.

The distribution of respondents' answers regarding the trust variable also supports these findings. Most respondents agreed with statements related to credibility, reliability, and fairness of sellers on digital platforms. These positive perceptions reflect that consumers feel confident about the security and reliability of online transactions, which motivates them to engage more actively with culinary SMEs through digital platforms.

In the context of culinary SMEs in Medan, trust becomes an important foundation for building long-term relationships between businesses and consumers. When consumers trust the integrity and reliability of a brand, they are more likely to interact with the brand through digital platforms. This interaction may include following social media accounts, responding to promotional content, and sharing product experiences with other consumers.

From a theoretical perspective, trust represents consumers' confidence in the credibility, reliability, and integrity of a company in fulfilling its promises and delivering expected value (Kotler & Keller, 2016). In digital environments, trust plays a crucial role in reducing uncertainty and perceived risks, which encourages consumers to participate more actively in brand-related interactions (Gefen et al., 2003).

The results of this study are consistent with previous research which shows that trust has a significant influence on customer engagement. Research conducted

by (Brodie et al., 2011) explains that trust can strengthen consumer relationships with brands and encourage higher levels of engagement. When consumers believe that a brand is trustworthy, they are more willing to participate in interactions and maintain relationships with the brand.

Furthermore, (Agyei et al., 2020) found that trust plays an important role in fostering emotional connections between consumers and digital platforms, which subsequently increases the level of customer engagement. Consumers who trust a brand are more likely to provide reviews, share experiences, and recommend products to others.

Thus, it can be concluded that trust has a positive and significant influence on customer engagement. The higher the level of consumer trust toward culinary SMEs and digital platforms, the stronger the consumer's willingness to interact, participate, and build relationships with the brand. Therefore, businesses need to maintain transparency, credibility, and service quality in order to strengthen consumer trust and encourage greater customer engagement.

#### **4.2.2.6 The Influence Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decisions through Customer Engagement as an Intervening Variable**

The results of testing the indirect effect using PLS show that the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Decisions through Customer Engagement has a path coefficient of 0.213 with a P-value of  $0.070 > 0.05$ . This value indicates that the indirect effect is not statistically significant. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that social media marketing influences purchase decisions through customer engagement as an intervening variable is rejected. This means that customer engagement is not able to significantly mediate the relationship

between social media marketing and purchase decisions among consumers of culinary SMEs in Medan.

These findings indicate that although social media marketing can directly influence consumer purchase decisions, the mediating role of customer engagement in this relationship is not statistically significant. Consumers may directly respond to promotional content or product information presented through social media without necessarily forming deeper engagement with the brand before making a purchase decision.

When linked to respondent characteristics, most respondents in this study are active users of digital platforms who frequently access social media for information related to culinary products. In many cases, consumers may directly decide to purchase products after seeing promotional content or attractive product visuals without engaging further with the brand through interactions such as commenting or sharing content.

The distribution of respondents' answers also supports these findings. Although respondents generally agreed that social media marketing content is attractive and informative, their level of active participation in brand-related interactions is relatively moderate. This suggests that consumers may still make purchasing decisions even with limited engagement activities on digital platforms.

In the context of culinary SMEs in Medan, social media marketing often functions primarily as a promotional tool rather than as a medium for building deep interactive relationships with consumers. Many SMEs use social media mainly to display product photos, promotions, and menu information. As a result, consumers

may obtain sufficient information to make purchasing decisions without necessarily engaging actively with the brand.

From a theoretical perspective, social media marketing can influence consumer behavior by providing information, entertainment, and communication through digital platforms (Kotler & Keller, 2016). However, the effectiveness of customer engagement as a mediating variable depends on the extent to which consumers actively participate in brand-related interactions.

The results of this study differ from several previous studies that suggest customer engagement mediates the relationship between social media marketing and purchase decisions. Research conducted by (Hollebeek, 2011) explains that customer engagement can strengthen the relationship between marketing activities and consumer behavior through emotional and cognitive involvement.

Similarly, (Pansari & Kumar, 2017) found that customer engagement can act as a mechanism that transforms marketing interactions into behavioral outcomes such as purchase decisions. However, in the context of this study, the mediating role of customer engagement may be weaker because consumers tend to make quick purchasing decisions based on visual and promotional information presented on social media platforms.

Thus, it can be concluded that social media marketing has a direct influence on purchase decisions, but customer engagement does not significantly mediate this relationship among consumers of culinary SMEs in Medan. Therefore, businesses should not only focus on creating engaging social media content but also develop strategies that encourage deeper consumer interactions in order to strengthen the role of customer engagement in influencing purchase decisions.

#### **4.2.2.7 The Influence of Trust on Purchase Decisions through Customer Engagement as an Intervening Variable**

The results of testing the indirect effect using PLS show that the relationship between Trust and Purchase Decisions through Customer Engagement has a path coefficient of 0.310 with a P-value of  $0.018 < 0.05$ . This value indicates that the indirect effect is statistically significant. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that trust influences purchase decisions through customer engagement as an intervening variable is accepted. This means that customer engagement successfully mediates the relationship between trust and purchase decisions among consumers of culinary SMEs in Medan.

These findings indicate that trust alone may not directly encourage consumers to make purchase decisions; however, when trust leads to higher levels of engagement with the brand, it can significantly influence consumer purchasing behavior. Consumers who trust a brand or digital platform are more likely to interact with the brand, follow its content, and pay attention to the information provided, which eventually encourages them to make purchasing decisions.

When linked to respondent characteristics, the majority of respondents in this study are active users of digital platforms who frequently interact with online content related to culinary products. Consumers who perceive sellers as credible and reliable tend to feel more comfortable engaging with the brand through digital interactions such as reading reviews, viewing promotional content, or sharing product information with others.

The distribution of respondents' answers regarding the trust variable also supports these findings. Most respondents agreed with statements related to

credibility, fairness, and reliability of sellers on digital platforms. These positive perceptions create a sense of security and confidence among consumers, which encourages them to become more involved in brand-related interactions.

In the context of culinary SMEs in Medan, customer engagement becomes an important mechanism that connects consumer trust with purchasing behavior. Consumers who trust a brand are more likely to follow the brand's social media accounts, interact with promotional content, and pay attention to product updates. Such interactions gradually strengthen the relationship between consumers and the brand and increase the likelihood of purchase decisions.

From a theoretical perspective, trust plays an essential role in reducing uncertainty and perceived risk in digital transactions (Gefen et al., 2003). When consumers trust a brand or digital platform, they are more willing to participate in interactions and maintain relationships with the brand. These interactions represent the formation of customer engagement, which ultimately influences consumer behavior.

The results of this study are consistent with previous research which shows that customer engagement can mediate the relationship between trust and purchase decisions. Research conducted by (Brodie et al., 2011) explains that trust strengthens relational bonds between consumers and brands, which encourages greater engagement and behavioral outcomes such as purchasing.

Similarly, (Pansari & Kumar, 2017) found that customer engagement acts as a mechanism through which psychological factors such as trust can influence consumer behavior. Consumers who feel confident in a brand tend to engage more

actively in interactions with the brand, which ultimately leads to stronger purchase intentions and purchasing decisions.

Thus, it can be concluded that trust influences purchase decisions indirectly through customer engagement. The higher the level of consumer trust toward culinary SMEs and digital platforms, the stronger the level of customer engagement that is formed, which subsequently increases the likelihood of purchase decisions. Therefore, businesses need to build consumer trust through transparency, credibility, and reliable services while simultaneously encouraging consumer engagement through interactive digital marketing strategies.

## CHAPTER 5

### FINAL REMARKS

#### 5.1 Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and discussion on Social Media Marketing and Trust in Digital Platforms as Determinants of Purchase Decisions: The Mediating Effect of Customer Engagement, the following conclusions can be drawn:

**1. Social media marketing has a significant effect on purchase decisions.**

Effective social media marketing through attractive content, interactive communication, and relevant information can increase consumer interest and encourage consumers to make purchase decisions for culinary products offered by SMEs on digital platforms.

**2. Trust does not have significant effect on purchase decisions.** This

indicates that although consumers may have confidence in the credibility, reliability, and security of digital platforms, such trust does not directly influence their decision to make a purchase. In this context, consumers tend to consider other factors such as product attractiveness, price, promotions, and convenience when deciding to buy culinary products.

**3. Customer engagement has a significant effect on purchase decisions.**

Active consumer involvement in brand interactions such as commenting, sharing information, and participating in digital content increases emotional connections with the brand and strengthens consumers' willingness to purchase the product.

4. **Social media marketing has a significant effect on customer engagement.** Social media marketing activities that provide interactive, informative, and entertaining content can encourage consumers to interact more actively with the brand. This interaction strengthens the relationship between consumers and businesses and increases engagement levels.
5. **Trust has a significant effect on customer engagement.** Consumers who trust digital platforms and sellers tend to interact more actively with the brand, participate in online discussions, and provide feedback or recommendations, which strengthens the level of customer engagement.
6. **Social media marketing does not significantly influence purchase decisions through customer engagement as an intervening variable.** Although social media marketing encourages interaction and engagement, these interactions do not necessarily lead consumers directly to purchase decisions. This indicates that consumers may still consider other factors such as price, product quality, or convenience before making a purchase.
7. **Trust has a significant influence on purchase decisions through customer engagement as an intervening variable.** Consumer trust in digital platforms can encourage stronger engagement with the brand, which ultimately leads to higher purchase decisions. This finding shows that customer engagement plays an important role in transforming trust into actual purchasing behavior.

## 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn, the author offers the following recommendations:

1. It is recommended that culinary SMEs in Medan optimize the use of social media platforms such as Instagram to provide more attractive, informative, and interactive promotional content in order to increase consumer interest and encourage purchase decisions.
2. Businesses are expected to strengthen consumer trust by ensuring transaction security, providing accurate product information, and maintaining transparency in digital transactions.
3. Culinary SMEs should increase customer engagement by creating interactive content, responding actively to customer comments and messages, and encouraging consumers to share their experiences through reviews or testimonials.
4. Digital platforms and SME actors should develop strategies to build stronger relationships with consumers, such as loyalty programs, promotional campaigns, or community-based marketing activities that encourage consumers to interact more actively with the brand.
5. It is recommended that SMEs continue to improve product quality, service responsiveness, and delivery reliability in order to maintain consumer satisfaction and strengthen long-term relationships with customers.

### **5.3 Research Limitations**

This study has several limitations that need to be considered in interpreting the research results, including:

1. The research sample is limited to consumers of culinary SMEs in Medan City who use digital platforms such as GrabFood, GoFood, and Instagram,

so the results of this study may not fully represent consumers in other regions or industries.

2. This study only examines four variables, namely social media marketing, trust, customer engagement, and purchase decisions. Other factors that may influence purchase decisions, were not included in this research.
3. Data collection in this study was conducted using questionnaires, which rely on respondents' perceptions and subjective judgments. Therefore, responses may not fully reflect actual consumer behavior.
4. The study focuses on consumers of culinary SMEs and does not include perspectives from SME owners or digital platform providers, which may provide additional insights regarding digital marketing strategies.
5. Future research is expected to expand the scope of the study by including additional variables, larger samples, and broader geographical areas in order to obtain more comprehensive research results.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **KUESIONER PENELITIAN TUGAS AKHIR**

*Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh*

Responden yang terhormat, saya Nazli Auliya (2205160101) memohon kesediaan Bapak/Ibu Saudara/i untuk mengisi daftar kuesioner yang diberikan. Informasi yang diberikan sebagai data penelitian dalam rangka penyusunan tugas akhir pada program Sarjana Manajemen Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnis Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara dengan judul *“Social Media Marketing and Trust in Digital Platforms as Determinants of Purchase Decisions: The Mediating Effect of Customer Engagement”*.

Dalam penelitian ini, yang dimaksud dengan Social Media adalah Instagram UMKM kuliner yang Anda ikuti (follow), sedangkan Digital Platform yang dimaksud adalah aplikasi GrabFood dan GoFood yang digunakan untuk melakukan pembelian. Seluruh informasi yang diberikan akan dijaga kerahasiaannya dan hanya digunakan untuk kepentingan akademik.

Atas kesediaan dan partisipasi Bapak/Ibu/Saudara/i, saya ucapkan terima kasih.

*Wassalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh*

Hormat Saya

Nazli Auliya

### A. Petunjuk Pengisian

1. Bacalah setiap pernyataan dengan cermat sebelum memberikan jawaban.
2. Pilihlah salah satu jawaban yang paling sesuai dengan pengalaman dan pendapat Saudara/i.
3. Tidak ada jawaban benar atau salah, semua jawaban bersifat pribadi dan akan dijaga kerahasiaannya.
4. Pilihlah jawaban dari tabel daftar pernyataan dengan memberi tanda *checklist* (√) pada salah satu jawaban yang paling sesuai menurut Saudara/i. Adapun makna tanda jawaban tersebut sebagai berikut:
  - a. SS : Sangat Setuju : dengan Skor 5
  - b. S : Setuju : dengan Skor 4
  - c. KS : Kurang Setuju : dengan Skor 3
  - d. TS : Tidak Setuju : dengan Skor 2
  - e. STS : Sangat Tidak Setuju : dengan Skor 1

### B. Identitas Responden

1. Nama :
2. Jenis Kelamin :  Laki-Laki  Perempuan
3. Usia :  17 – 25 Tahun  25 – 30 Tahun
4. Apakah Anda pernah memesan makanan UMKM kuliner melalui:
  - GrabFood
  - GoFood
  - Instagram
  - Tidak pernah

### C. Daftar Pertanyaan

#### 1. *Social Media Marketing (X1)*

NO.	PERTANYAAN	JAWABAN				
		SS	S	KS	TS	STS
<i>Entertainment</i>						
1.	Konten promosi UMKM kuliner di Instagram terasa menghibur.					
2.	Konten yang ditampilkan di Instagram					

	menarik untuk dilihat.					
<b>Interaction</b>						
3.	Saya dapat berinteraksi dengan penjual melalui Instagram.					
4.	Penjual UMKM Kuliner merespons pertanyaan konsumen melalui Instagram.					
5.	Penjual UMKM Kuliner merespons komentar konsumen melalui Instagram.					
<b>Trendiness</b>						
6.	Informasi produk yang ditampilkan di Instagram selalu terbaru.					
7.	UMKM Kuliner di Instagram membantu saya mengetahui tren kuliner terkini.					
8.	Promosi yang ditampilkan di Instagram mengikuti perkembangan pasar.					
<b>Customization</b>						
9.	Konten promosi UMKM Kuliner yang muncul sesuai dengan minat saya.					
10.	Informasi produk UMKM Kuliner yang ditampilkan relevan dengan kebutuhan saya.					
11.	Promosi UMKM Kuliner yang muncul sesuai dengan preferensi saya.					

## 2. Trust (X2)

NO.	PERTANYAAN	JAWABAN				
		SS	S	KS	TS	STS
<b>Probability</b>						
1.	Saya yakin penjual memenuhi janji yang ditawarkan.					
2.	Saya yakin produk yang diterima sesuai dengan yang dipromosikan.					
<b>Equity</b>						
3.	Penjual memperlakukan konsumen secara adil.					
4.	Penjual memberikan pelayanan yang jujur.					
5.	Penjual memberikan pelayanan yang transparan.					
6.	Harga yang ditawarkan sesuai dengan kualitas produk.					
<b>Reliability</b>						
7.	Penjual UMKM Kuliner dapat diandalkan dalam menyediakan produk.					

8.	Saya percaya kualitas makanan dan minuman yang dijual konsisten.					
9.	Penjual mampu memberikan pelayanan sesuai harapan.					

### 3. *Customer Engagement (Z)*

NO.	PERTANYAAN	JAWABAN				
		SS	S	KS	TS	STS
<b><i>Enthusiasm</i></b>						
1.	Saya merasa antusias melihat promosi UMKM kuliner.					
2.	Saya merasa bersemangat saat melihat konten promosi UMKM Kuliner.					
3.	Promosi UMKM kuliner membuat saya tertarik untuk mengetahui produk lebih lanjut.					
<b><i>Enjoyment</i></b>						
4.	Saya menikmati konten promosi UMKM Kuliner.					
5.	Saya merasa senang saat melihat promosi produk UMKM Kuliner.					
6.	Konten promosi UMKM Kuliner menyenangkan bagi saya.					
<b><i>Attention</i></b>						
7.	Saya memperhatikan informasi produk yang ditampilkan.					
8.	Saya membaca detail produk sebelum melakukan pembelian.					
9.	Saya fokus pada isi promosi yang muncul di Instagram.					
<b><i>Absorption</i></b>						
10.	Saya merasa terlibat saat melihat promosi produk UMKM Kuliner.					
11.	Saya menghabiskan waktu untuk melihat konten promosi UMKM Kuliner.					
12.	Saya merasa tertarik secara penuh saat melihat promosi UMKM Kuliner.					
<b><i>Sharing</i></b>						
13.	Saya bersedia membagikan informasi produk UMKM Kuliner yang saya ketahui kepada orang lain.					
14.	Saya merekomendasikan produk UMKM yang saya ketahui Kuliner kepada orang lain.					
15.	Saya mengirimkan informasi promosi UMKM Kuliner kepada					

	orang terdekat.					
<b>Learning</b>						
16.	Saya memperoleh informasi baru mengenai produk UMKM Kuliner melalui promosi di Instagram/GrabFood/GoFood.					
17.	Saya memahami keunggulan produk UMKM Kuliner melalui promosi.					
18.	Saya mengetahui informasi harga produk UMKM Kuliner melalui promosi.					
<b>Endorsing</b>						
19.	Saya bersedia memberikan ulasan positif.					
20.	Saya memberikan penilaian baik terhadap produk.					
21.	Saya mendukung promosi produk melalui media sosial.					

#### 4. Purchase Decisions (Y)

NO.	PERTANYAAN	JAWABAN				
		SS	S	KS	TS	STS
<b>Product Choice</b>						
1.	Saya memilih produk UMKM Kuliner sesuai dengan kebutuhan saya.					
2.	Saya mempertimbangkan kualitas produk UMKM Kuliner sebelum membeli.					
3.	Saya memilih produk UMKM Kuliner berdasarkan kesesuaian selera.					
<b>Brand Choice</b>						
4.	Saya memilih UMKM Kuliner tertentu dibandingkan UMKM Kuliner lain.					
5.	Saya memiliki preferensi terhadap UMKM Kuliner tertentu.					
6.	Saya merasa yakin dengan pilihan UMKM Kuliner yang saya beli.					
<b>Distributor Choice</b>						
7.	Saya memilih platform GrabFood untuk melakukan pembelian.					
8.	Saya memilih platform Gofood untuk melakukan pembelian.					
9.	Saya memilih platform Instagram untuk melakukan pembelian.					

<b><i>Purchase Time</i></b>						
10.	Saya menentukan sendiri waktu pembelian produk UMKM Kuliner.					
11.	Saya membeli produk UMKM Kuliner pada waktu yang saya inginkan.					
12.	Saya mempertimbangkan waktu sebelum melakukan pembelian produk UMKM Kuliner.					
<b><i>Purchase Amount</i></b>						
13.	Saya membeli produk sesuai kebutuhan konsumsi.					
14.	Saya mempertimbangkan jumlah pesanan sebelum membeli.					
<b><i>Payment Method</i></b>						
15.	Saya memilih metode pembayaran yang paling mudah bagi saya.					
16.	Saya menentukan cara pembayaran sebelum menyelesaikan pesanan.					
17.	Saya memilih metode pembayaran sesuai preferensi.					

### TABULATED RESULTS OF RESPONDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

Social Media Marketing (X1)										
X1.1	X1.2	X1.3	X1.4	X1.5	X1.6	X1.7	X1.8	X1.9	X1.10	X1.11
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Purchase Decisions (Y)																
Y. 1	Y. 2	Y. 3	Y. 4	Y. 5	Y. 6	Y. 7	Y. 8	Y. 9	Y. 10	Y. 11	Y. 12	Y. 13	Y. 14	Y. 15	Y. 16	Y. 17
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**PERMOHONAN JUDUL PENELITIAN**

No. Agenda: 5133/JDL/SKR/MAN/FEB/UMSU/28/5/2025

Medan, 28/5/2025

Kepada Yth.  
**Ketua Program Studi Manajemen**  
Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnis  
Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara  
di Medan

Dengan hormat,  
Saya yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini,

Nama : Nazli Auliya  
NPM : 2205160101  
Program Studi : Manajemen  
Konsentrasi : Pemasaran

Dalam rangka proses penyusunan skripsi, saya bermohon untuk mengajukan judul penelitian berikut ini:

Identifikasi Masalah : 1. Promosi AQUA melalui media sosial belum maksimal dalam menarik minat beli konsumen. Konten yang disampaikan mungkin kurang menarik atau belum menyentuh kebutuhan konsumen.  
2. Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) berperan penting dalam memengaruhi keputusan pembelian konsumen terhadap produk Maybelline. Banyak konsumen yang menjadikan ulasan, testimoni, dan komentar online sebagai acuan sebelum membeli. Jika informasi yang tersebar bersifat positif, hal ini dapat meningkatkan kepercayaan dan mendorong pembelian. Sebaliknya, e-WOM yang negatif bisa menurunkan minat beli konsumen.  
3. Endorsement selebriti membantu menarik perhatian dan membangun kepercayaan awal terhadap produk. Namun, hal ini tidak cukup jika kualitas produk tidak sesuai harapan. Konsumen cenderung membeli jika produk yang dipromosikan selebriti juga terbukti berkualitas. Jadi, keputusan pembelian terbentuk dari kombinasi daya tarik selebriti dan kepuasan terhadap kualitas produk.

Rencana Judul : 1. Pengaruh Social Media Marketing Terhadap Niat Beli Dimediasi Brand Awareness Pada Produk Aqua  
2. Pengaruh Electronic Word Of Mouth (E-Wom) Dan Brand Image Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Produk Kosmetik Maybelline  
3. Pengaruh Celebrity Endorsement Dan Product Quality Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Produk Skincare Glad2Glow

Objek/Lokasi Penelitian : 1. Umsu 2. Feb Umsu

Demikianlah permohonan ini saya sampaikan. Atas perhatiannya saya ucapkan terimakasih.

Hormat Saya  
Pemohon

  
(Nazli Auliya)



MAJELIS PENDIDIKAN TINGGI MUHAMMADIYAH  
UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH SUMATERA UTARA  
**FAKULTAS EKONOMI DAN BISNIS**

Jl. Kapten Mukhtar Basri No. 3, Medan, Telp. 061-6624567, Kode Pos 20238

**PERSETUJUAN JUDUL PENELITIAN**

Nomor Agenda: 5133/JDL/SKR/MAN/FEB/UMSU/28/5/2025

Nama Mahasiswa : Nazli Auliyah

NPM : 2205160101

Program Studi : Manajemen

Konsentrasi : Pemasaran

Tanggal Pengajuan Judul : 28/5/2025

Nama Dosen Pembimbing\*) :

Eri Yanti Nst, E, M. Sc, PA

Judul Disetujui\*\*)


The Influence of Social Media Marketing and Trust in Digital Platforms on Purchase Decisions with customer Engagement as an Intervening Variable  
(A study on Culinary taste consumers in Medan on Grabfood, Gofood, and Instagram Platforms)

Medan, .....

Disahkan oleh:  
Ketua Program Studi Manajemen

  
(Jasman Sarifuddin Hasibuan, SE., M.Si.)

Dosen Pembimbing

  
(Eri Yanti Nst, M. Sc, PA)

**Keterangan:**

\*) Ditisi oleh Pimpinan Program Studi

\*\*\*) Ditisi oleh Dosen Pembimbing

Setelah disahkan oleh Prodi dan Dosen pembimbing, scan/foto dan uploadlah lembar ke-2 ini pada form online "Upload Pengesahan Judul Skripsi"



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MAJELIS PENDIDIKAN TINGGI PENELITIAN & PENGEMBANGAN PIMPINAN PUSAT MUHAMMADIYAH  
**UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH SUMATERA UTARA**  
**FAKULTAS EKONOMI DAN BISNIS**

UMSU Terakreditasi Unggul Berdasarkan Keputusan Badan Akreditasi Nasional Perguruan Tinggi No. 174/SK/BAH-PT/Ak.Pj/PT/02/2024  
Pusat Administrasi: Jalan Mukhtar Basri No. 3 Medan 20238 Telp. (061) 6622400 - 66224567 Fax. (061) 6625474 - 6631003

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**PENETAPAN DOSEN PEMBIMBING  
PROPOSAL / SKRIPSI MAHASISWA**

**NOMOR : 216/TGS/IL3.AU/UMSU-05/F/2026**

*Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh*

Dekan Fakultas Ekonomi Dan Bisnis Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara, berdasarkan Persetujuan permohonan judul penelitian Proposal / Tugas Akhir / Jurnal / dari Ketua / Sekretaris :

**Program Studi** : **Manajemen**  
**Pada Tanggal** :

Dengan ini menetapkan Dosen Pembimbing Proposal / Tugas Akhir / Jurnal Mahasiswa :

**Nama** : **Nazli Auliya**  
**N P M** : **2205160101**  
**Semester** : **VII (Tujuh)**  
**Program Studi** : **Manajemen**  
**Judul Proposal / Skripsi** : **Social Media Marketing and Trust in Digital Platforms as Determinants of Purchase Decisions: The Mediating Effect of Customer Engagement**

**Dosen Pembimbing** : **Eri Yanti Nasution, S.E., M.Ec**

Dengan demikian di izinkan menulis Proposal / Tugas Akhir / Jurnal dengan ketentuan :

1. Penulisan berpedoman pada buku panduan penulisan Proposal/ Tugas Akhir / Jurnal / Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnis UMSU.
2. Pelaksanaan Sidang Tugas Akhir harus berjarak 3 bulan setelah dikeluarkannya Surat Penetapan Dosen Pembimbing Tugas Akhir
3. **Proyek Proposal / Tugas Akhir / Jurnal dinyatakan " BATAL " bila tidak selesai sebelum Masa Daluarsa tanggal : 22 Januari 2027**
4. Revisi Judul.....

*Wassalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.*



Ditetapkan di : Medan  
Pada Tanggal : 03 Sya'ban 1447 H  
22 Januari 2026 M



Dekan

**Dr. Radiman, S.E., M.Si**  
**N I D N : 0107087801**

**Tembusan :**

1. Pertinggal.





**MUHAMMADIYAH HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL,  
MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF NORTH SUMATRA  
FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS**  
Jl. Kapten Mukhtar Basri No. 3, Medan, Tel. 061-6624567, Postal Code 20238

**PROPOSAL GUIDANCE MINUTES**

Student Name : Nazli Auliya  
 NPM : 2205160101  
 Supervisor : Eri Yanti Nasution, S.E., M.Ec.  
 Study program : Management  
 Concentration : Management Marketing  
 Research Title : Social Media Marketing and Trust in Digital Platforms as Determinants of Purchase Decisions: The Mediating Effect of Customer Engagement

Item	Evaluation Results	Date	Lecturer's Initials
Chapter 1	- Revision of background, research limitations, Problem formulation, and formulation of Problems - Improvement of Writing Structure and word usage	27/10/2025	
Chapter 2	- Use of references - Adjustment of the theory used - Improvement in word usage	12/12/2025	
Chapter 3	- Revision of the research methodology used	12/01/2026	
Bibliography	- Addition of relevant and up to date international Journal references.	12/01/2026	
Research Data Collection Instrument	- Adjustment of variable indicators to the theory used	12/01/2026	
Proposal Seminar Approval	- The proposal is approved to proceed with revisions in accordance with the examiner's suggestions.	21/01/2026	

Known by:  
head of the study program

  
Agus Sani, SE, M.Sc.

Medan, January 2026

Approved by:  
Supervisor

  
Eri Yanti Nasution, S.E., M.Ec.

**BERITA ACARA SEMINAR PROPOSAL PROGRAM STUDI MANAJEMEN**

Pada hari ini Selasa 03 Februari 2026 telah diselenggarakan seminar Proposal Program Studi Manajemen menerangkan bahwa :

N a m a : Nazli Auliya  
 Konsentrasi : Man. Pemasaran  
 N .P.M. : 2205160101  
 Tempat / Tgl. Lahir : MEDAN, 16 JUNI 2004  
 Alamat Rumah : JL. GARU II-B GG. DAMAI NO.55-K MEDAN LING XIV  
 Judul Proposal : Social Media Marketing and Trust in Digital Platforms as Determinants of Purchase Decisions: The Mediating Effect of Customer Engagement

(Disetujui / tidak disetujui \*)

Item	Komentar
Judul	-
Bab I	limitation of proposal / research must be clear.
Bab II	add some resource for theory
Bab III	add some journals article for references in conceptual framework
Lainnya	-
Kesimpulan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lulus <input type="checkbox"/> Tidak Lulus

Medan, Selasa 03 Februari 2026

**TIM SEMINAR**

Ketua  
  
 Agus Sani, S.E., M.Sc.  
 Pembimbing  
  
 Eri Yanti Nasution, S.E., M.Ec

Sekretaris  
  
 Arif Pratama Marpaung, S.E., M.M.  
 Pembanding  
  
 Dr. Mutia Arda, S.E., M.Si.



**PENGESAHAN PROPOSAL**

Berdasarkan hasil seminar Proposal Program Studi Manajemen yang diselenggarakan pada hari *Selasa 03 Februari 2026* menerangkan bahwa:

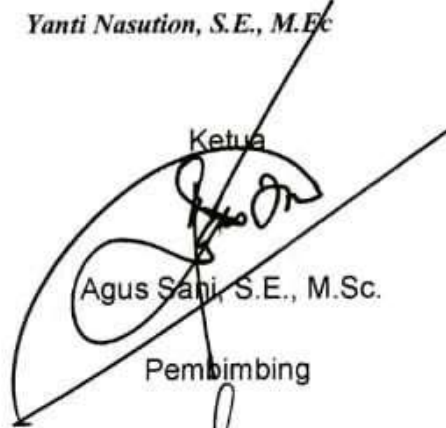
Nama : Nazli Auliya  
Konsentrasi : Man. Pemasaran  
N.P.M. : 2205160101  
Tempat / Tgl.Lahir : MEDAN, 16 JUNI 2004  
Alamat Rumah : JL. GARU II-B GG. DAMAI NO.55-K MEDAN LING XIV  
JudulProposal : Social Media Marketing and Trust in Digital Platforms as Determinants of Purchase Decisions: The Mediating Effect of Customer Engagement.

Proposal dinyatakan syah dan memenuhi Syarat untuk menulis Tugas Akhir dengan pembimbing: *Eri Yanti Nasution, S.E., M.Ec*

Medan, Selasa 03 Februari 2026

TIM SEMINAR

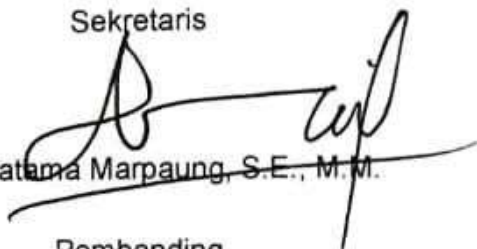
Ketua

  
Agus Sani, S.E., M.Sc.

Pembimbing

  
Eri Yanti Nasution, S.E., M.Ec

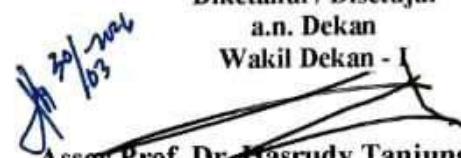
Sekretaris

  
Arif Pratama Marpaung, S.E., M.M.

Pembanding

  
Dr. Mutia Arda, S.E., M.Si.

Diketahui / Disetujui  
a.n. Dekan  
Wakil Dekan - I

  
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hasrudy Tanjung, S.E., M.Si.  
NIDN. 0118127401

## RESEARCH STATEMENT LETTER/FINAL ASSIGNMENT

I, the undersigned below :

Name : Nazli Auliya  
NPM : 2205160101  
Concentration : Management Marketing  
Faculty : Economics and Business  
Title : Social Media Marketing and Trust in Digital Platforms as Determinants of Purchase Decisions: The Mediating Effect of Customer Engagement  
College : Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara (UMSU)

State that:

1. I am willing to conduct research for the preparation of the FINAL ASSIGNMENT on my own, both in terms of preparing the research proposal, collecting research data, and preparing the final research report/ Final Assignment.
2. I am willing to be subject to sanctions to conduct re-research if it is proven that my research contains the following:
  - Plagiarizing/ copying other people's research work.
  - Engineer the questionnaire, interview, observation, or documentation.
3. I am willing to be sued in court if I am proven to have falsified stamps, letterheads, or other company identities.
4. I am willing to attend a green table hearing as soon as possible 3 months after the date of issuance of the letter "determination of the proposal project/ paper/ final project and appointment of the Supervisor" from the Faculty of Economics and Business, UMSU.

Thus, I make this statement of my own free will.

Medan, January 2026  
Statement Maker



Nazli Auliya

Note:

- The original statement letter is submitted to the Study Program at the time of title submission.
- A photocopy of the statement letter is attached to the proposal and FINAL ASSIGNMENT