

Analyzing the Impact of Word of Mouth and Customer Testimonials on Consumer Purchase Decisions: A Case Study of KL Space Coffee Shop, Mataram City

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the influence of testimonials and word of mouth on consumer purchase decisions at KL Space Coffee Shop in Mataram City. Employing a quantitative approach and an associative method, data were collected through questionnaires distributed to 100 respondents and analyzed using SmartPLS 4. The findings reveal that both testimonials and word of mouth have a positive and significant impact on purchase decisions. These results indicate that consumer perceptions of reviews and informal recommendations play a critical role in encouraging purchasing behavior in the coffee shop sector. The implications of this study highlight the importance of customer experience-based communication strategies in influencing consumer purchase decisions at KL Space Coffee Shop, Mataram City.

INTRODUCTION

The food and beverage industry in Indonesia has experienced rapid growth in recent years, marked by a shift in consumer behavior – particularly among younger generations – from merely fulfilling physical needs to satisfying social and lifestyle aspects. One sector that exemplifies this phenomenon is the coffee shop industry, which now serves not only as a place to enjoy beverages but also as a venue for social interaction, remote work activities, and an expression of urban lifestyle identity (Suminto, 2022).

As the economic and cultural hub of West Nusa Tenggara Province, Mataram City has shown a significant upward trend in its culinary sector, especially in the proliferation of coffee shops. Data from the Mataram City Investment and Integrated One-Stop Services Agency (DPMPTSP) recorded an increase in the number of cafés and restaurants from 486 businesses in 2023 to 878 in 2024 (Vaneka & Cahaya, 2025). Among the well-known coffee shops in the city is KL Space, which appeals to consumers by offering an aesthetic atmosphere, comfortable seating, and a variety of coffee and snack options. KL Space competes by creating not only functional but also emotional and social experiences.

In modern marketing, consumer purchasing decisions are influenced not only by promotions but also by interpersonal communication such as word of mouth (WOM) and testimonials. WOM refers to information shared by consumers about their experiences (Zundan & Jamiati, 2025). Testimonials are genuine reviews, often shared on social media, and are considered more credible than advertisements (Layyina et al., 2025; Pattiasina et al., 2025; Pratama et al., 2025). At KL Space, many consumers learn about its reputation through recommendations or online reviews, highlighting the crucial role of WOM and testimonials in shaping purchasing behavior.

However, limited WOM or questionable testimonial validity may hinder the conversion of interest into purchase, affecting business performance. This creates the need for effective consumer-to-consumer communication strategies to strengthen purchasing decisions. Understanding how WOM and testimonials affect purchase behavior is therefore essential for marketing strategies.

This study draws upon the Theory of Planned Behavior, which posits that attitudes toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are key determinants of behavioral intentions (Ridha et al., 2025). In this context, WOM and testimonials are seen as external influences that shape these three components, thereby affecting consumer purchasing decisions.

By focusing on a case study of KL Space Coffee Shop in Mataram City, this research offers insights within a specific geographical and cultural context while enriching marketing theory and practice through a behavioral psychology lens. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of the Theory of Planned Behavior and practically by guiding business actors in designing more effective communication strategies to increase consumer conversion.

This study is conducted to examine the influence of word of mouth and testimonials on purchase decisions among consumers of KL Space in Mataram

City. By centering on the dynamics of customer communication in the rapidly evolving coffee shop sector, this research aims to address gaps in the literature and provide actionable recommendations for practitioners within the increasingly competitive local business landscape.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Purchase Decision

A purchase decision is a cognitive and behavioral process undergone by consumers before making a final choice regarding a product or service. This process reflects the integration of consumer knowledge and judgment when choosing between two or more available alternatives, influenced by various factors such as product quality, price, location, promotion, accessibility, and service (Kurniawan et al., 2025). A purchase decision not only involves the act of buying but also encompasses the entire consumer behavior process, from the recognition of needs to post-purchase responses (Haro et al., 2024). According to Kotler & Keller (2010), this process consists of five stages: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior. Consumers first become aware of a need, then search for relevant product information, evaluate the available options, decide whether or not to make a purchase, and finally experience satisfaction or dissatisfaction following the purchase. This decision greatly influences not only the consumption experience but also the likelihood of repeat purchases in the future. Based on this framework, the indicators used to measure the purchase decision variable in this study refer to the dimensions developed by Kotler & Keller (2010), which include: certainty in buying, final decision to purchase, purchase aligned with desires and needs, and purchase influenced by recommendations from others.

Word of Mouth

Word of Mouth (WOM), or interpersonal verbal communication, refers to the process by which individuals convey information, recommendations, or their experiences regarding a product or service to others, either directly or within groups. This form of communication exerts a significant influence on purchase decisions as it is perceived to be more credible than corporate promotions, primarily because it originates from close individuals who have had firsthand experiences (Purwitasari, 2024). WOM can be either positive or negative depending on prior consumer experiences, and it holds strategic value in marketing as it fosters customer loyalty and extends promotional reach at a relatively low cost (Kotler & Keller, 2010). WOM is characterized by three main features: credibility, personal nature, and timeliness, which together make it a powerful promotional tool in shaping consumer perceptions. Therefore, companies must ensure product quality and maintain strong customer relationships so that WOM can develop organically. In this study, WOM is measured using the indicators of communication, promotion, recommendation, and sales, as outlined by (Purwitasari, 2024).

Testimonial

A testimonial is a statement made by customers regarding their experiences with a product, service, or offering, typically shared via websites or social media platforms as a form of persuasive advertising. In the context of marketing, testimonials function as a communication tool that builds credibility and influences potential consumers through third-party endorsements perceived as trustworthy (Kotler & Keller, 2010). By conveying real-life experiences, testimonials assist prospective buyers in making more confident purchase decisions. The effectiveness of testimonials largely depends on the credibility of the source, the appeal of the message sender, and the spontaneity of the conveyed positive experience. Therefore, testimonials used in marketing strategies should originate from genuinely satisfied customers and be published with consent, in order to strongly influence public perception. In this study, the testimonial indicators refer to the dimensions developed by (Muzdalifah & Ilmiah, 2020), which include attractiveness, credibility, and spontaneity.

The Influence of Word of Mouth on Purchase Decisions

Various previous studies have demonstrated that Word of Mouth (WOM) has a significant influence on consumer purchase decisions. WOM communicated through direct interactions or digital media has been proven to enhance consumer trust and confidence in selecting products or services. A study by Yahya & Yuniarto (2024) found that Word of Mouth has a positive and significant effect on the purchase decisions of Warmino consumers. Another study conducted by (Hamdi, 2024) also revealed that Word of Mouth positively and significantly influences purchase decisions at Panama Café. These findings from prior research provide a strong foundation to test the hypothesis that Word of Mouth influences purchase decisions.

H1 : Word of mouth has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions.

The influence of Testimonials on Purchase Decisions

Customer testimonials from individuals who have used a product or service are believed to significantly influence the purchase decisions of potential consumers. As a form of persuasive communication based on real experiences, testimonials help build credibility and confidence in the decision-making process. This is evidenced by the study of Muzaki & Munawaroh (2024), which found that customer testimonials have a positive and significant effect on online purchase decisions in the CIBLON UMKM Cilacap marketplace. Another study by Suarantalla & Rizqi (2024) revealed that testimonials have a positive and significant influence on the purchase decisions of Shopee e-commerce application users in the Sumbawa City community. These findings strengthen the assumption that testimonials play an important role in encouraging purchase decisions, making them relevant to be further examined in this study.

H2 : Testimonials have a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions.

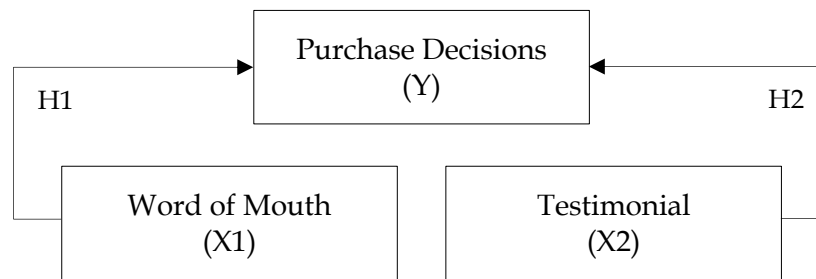


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative approach with a causal associative research design to examine the influence of Word of Mouth and Testimonials on Purchase Decisions. The research was conducted at KL Space coffee shop in Mataram City in 2025. The population of this study consists of all consumers who have made purchases at KL Space. The sample was selected using a non-probability sampling technique with purposive sampling, based on the following criteria: (1) aged 17 years or older, and (2) have received information or testimonials about KL Space from others or via social media. Primary data were collected through the distribution of an online questionnaire using Google Forms. The collected data were analyzed using statistical methods with SmartPLS 4 software to examine the relationships between variables through two main stages: (1) assessment of the outer model, which includes testing validity (convergent and discriminant) and reliability of the constructs, and (2) assessment of the inner model, which evaluates R², predictive relevance (Q²), and the significance of path coefficients to determine the strength and direction of relationships among variables.

RESULTS

Loading Factor

The data processing results using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) Algorithm revealed the loading factor values of each indicator with respect to its construct. According to the outer model evaluation criteria proposed by (Hair et al., 2019), an indicator is considered reliable if it has a loading factor value above 0.70. Therefore, in this analysis, only indicators with loading factor values ≥ 0.70 were retained, while those below the threshold were re-evaluated based on their contribution to the construct’s validity and reliability.

Table 1. Initial Loading Factor Results

Item/Variable	Purchase Decisions	Testimonials	Word of Mouth	Description
X1.01			0.729	Valid
X1.02			0.728	Valid
X1.03			0.718	Valid
X1.04			0.718	Valid
X1.05			0.724	Valid
X1.06			0.717	Valid

X1.07		0.73	Valid
X1.08		0.74	Valid
X1.09		0.738	Valid
X1.10		0.789	Valid
X1.11		0.735	Valid
X1.12		0.752	Valid
X2.01	0.789		Valid
X2.02	0.662		Invalid
X2.03	0.692		Invalid
X2.04	0.81		Valid
X2.05	0.786		Valid
X2.06	0.826		Valid
X2.07	0.802		Valid
X2.08	0.708		Valid
X2.09	0.64		Invalid
Y.01	0.79		Valid
Y.02	0.792		Valid
Y.03	0.757		Valid
Y.04	0.545		Invalid
Y.05	0.605		Invalid
Y.06	0.647		Invalid
Y.07	0.708		Valid
Y.08	0.738		Valid
Y.09	0.679		Invalid
Y.10	0.633		Invalid
Y.11	0.382		Invalid
Y.12	0.501		Invalid

Source: Data processed using SmartPLS 4

Based on the initial loading factor analysis presented in Table 1, it was found that the majority of indicators had values above 0.70 and were declared valid. However, several items had loading factor values below the threshold of 0.70—namely X2.02, X2.03, X2.09, Y.04, Y.05, Y.06, Y.09, Y.10, Y.11, and Y.12—and were therefore deemed invalid and excluded from further analysis. To ensure that all indicators in the model meet the criteria for convergent validity, a second loading factor test will be conducted after eliminating these invalid items from the model.

Table 2. Results of the Second Loading Factor Analysis

Item/Variable	Purchase Decisions	Testimonials	Word of Mouth	Description
X1.01			0.734	Valid
X1.02			0.734	Valid
X1.03			0.723	Valid
X1.04			0.716	Valid
X1.05			0.727	Valid
X1.06			0.71	Valid

X1.07		0.722	Valid
X1.08		0.734	Valid
X1.09		0.732	Valid
X1.10		0.786	Valid
X1.11		0.737	Valid
X1.12		0.754	Valid
X2.01	0.78		Valid
X2.04	0.823		Valid
X2.05	0.807		Valid
X2.06	0.864		Valid
X2.07	0.822		Valid
X2.08	0.723		Valid
Y.01	0.867		Valid
Y.02	0.823		Valid
Y.03	0.799		Valid
Y.07	0.771		Valid
Y.08	0.763		Valid

Source: Data processed using SmartPLS 4

The results of the second loading factor analysis, as presented in Table 2, indicate that all indicators for the constructs of Word of Mouth, Testimonials, and Purchase Decision have values above 0.70. This suggests that all remaining items, following the elimination process in the previous analysis, have met the requirements for convergent validity. Therefore, all indicators at this stage are considered valid and can be used in the subsequent structural model analysis.

Composite Reliability

Construct reliability testing was conducted by examining the Composite Reliability values of each latent variable. According to the guidelines provided by Hair et al. (2019), a construct is considered reliable if its Composite Reliability value exceeds 0.70. This threshold reflects the internal consistency of the indicators that form the construct. Therefore, the Composite Reliability results in this study serve as the basis for evaluating the extent to which the research instrument can be relied upon to measure the intended variables.

Table 3. Composite Reliability Results

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)
Purchase Decisions	0.864	0.867	0.902
Testimonials	0.89	0.896	0.916
Word of Mouth	0.923	0.926	0.934

Source: Data processed using SmartPLS 4

Based on Table 3, all constructs in this study demonstrate Composite Reliability (ρ_c) values exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.70, with 0.902 for Purchase Decision, 0.916 for Testimonials, and 0.934 for Word of Mouth. The Cronbach's Alpha and ρ_a values for all three constructs are also above the accepted cutoff, further reinforcing the evidence that the research instruments possess strong internal consistency. Therefore, all variables in this model are considered reliable and suitable for further analysis.

Average Variance Extracted

Construct validity testing was conducted by examining the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values of each latent variable. According to (Hair et al., 2019), an AVE value greater than 0.50 indicates that a construct is able to explain more than half of the variance of its indicators, thus demonstrating good convergent validity. Therefore, the AVE values in this study are used as the basis for evaluating how well the indicators represent the constructs being measured.

Table 4. Average Variance Extracted Results

Variable	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Purchase Decisions	0.649
Testimonials	0.647
Word of Mouth	0.539

Source: Data processed using SmartPLS 4

The results of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) test presented in Table 4 show that all constructs have AVE values above the minimum threshold of 0.50, namely 0.649 for Purchase Decision, 0.647 for Testimonial, and 0.539 for Word of Mouth. This indicates that each construct is capable of explaining more than 50% of the variance of its respective indicators. Therefore, all variables in this study meet the criteria for convergent validity and are deemed constructively valid.

R-Squares

Evaluation of the structural model (inner model) was conducted to assess the strength of the relationships among latent constructs, one of which is through the R-Square (R^2) value of the endogenous variables. The R^2 value represents the coefficient of determination, indicating the proportion of variance in the endogenous variable that can be explained by the exogenous variables in the model. According to (Hair et al., 2019), an R^2 value of 0.75 is categorized as substantial, 0.50 as moderate, and 0.25 as weak. Therefore, the R^2 values in this study are used to assess the predictive power of the structural model toward the examined endogenous variables.

Table 5. R-Squares Results

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Purchase Decisions	0.498	0.487

Source: Data processed using SmartPLS 4

Based on Table 5, the R-Square value for the Purchase Decision variable is 0.498, with an adjusted R-Square of 0.487. Referring to the guidelines by Hair et al. (2019), an R^2 value of 0.498 falls into the moderate category, indicating that the variables Testimony and Word of Mouth are able to explain approximately 49.8% of the variance in Purchase Decision. Thus, the structural model demonstrates a reasonably adequate predictive power for the endogenous variable in this study.

Predictive Relevance (Q^2)

To assess the model's predictive ability toward the observed indicators of the endogenous construct, a Predictive Relevance (Q^2) test was conducted using the blindfolding procedure. According to Hair et al. (2019), the Q^2 value reflects how well the model can predict the observed data. A Q^2 value greater than 0 indicates that the model has good predictive relevance, while a Q^2 value of 0 or less suggests a lack of predictive capability. Therefore, Q^2 serves as an important metric in evaluating the predictive relevance of the structural model for the endogenous construct.

Table 6. Predictive Relevance (Q^2) Results

	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
Purchase Decisions	500.000	353.617	0.293

Source: Data processed using SmartPLS 4

Based on the results of the blindfolding procedure presented in Table 6, the Q^2 value for the Purchase Decision variable is 0.293. Referring to the criteria of (Hair et al., 2019), this value indicates that the model possesses good predictive relevance for the endogenous variable. Therefore, the exogenous constructs in the model are proven to be relevant in predicting Purchase Decision, thereby supporting the reliability of the developed structural model.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing in the structural model aims to evaluate the significance of the relationships between latent constructs using the bootstrapping method. According to Hair et al. (2019), the t-statistics and p-values generated from bootstrapping are used to test hypotheses in Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). A relationship is considered statistically significant if the t-statistic exceeds 1.96 and the p-value is less than 0.05 at the 5% significance level. This testing provides a basis for assessing the strength and direction of the relationships between variables in the model.

Tabel 7. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values

Testimonial →					
Purchase Decisions	0.346	0.327	0.171	2.022	0.043
Word of Mouth →					
Purchase Decisions	0.395	0.414	0.164	2.411	0.016

Source: Data processed using SmartPLS 4

Based on the bootstrapping analysis presented in Table 7, it is evident that both *Testimonial* and *Word of Mouth* have a positive and significant influence on *Purchase Decision*. This is indicated by the t-statistics value of 2.022 ($p = 0.043$) for *Testimonial* and 2.411 ($p = 0.016$) for *Word of Mouth*, both exceeding the threshold of $t > 1.96$ and $p < 0.05$. These findings suggest that the stronger the testimonials provided by previous consumers and the more intense and positive the word of mouth received, the greater the tendency of consumers to make a purchase decision. Therefore, both exogenous variables are proven to significantly contribute to consumer purchasing behavior in the context of this study.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that testimonials and word of mouth have a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions, particularly relevant in the context of KL Space Coffee Shop in Mataram City. In the competitive culinary business landscape, consumers tend to rely on the experiences of others as a reference before deciding to try a new place. These findings confirm that customer testimonials and word-of-mouth recommendations play a crucial role in attracting buyer interest. When consumers hear positive stories from those close to them or read testimonials and reviews on social media about the ambiance, service, and coffee taste at KL Space, they are more likely to be encouraged to visit and make a purchase. This aligns with social influence theory, which suggests that information from fellow consumers is more trusted than promotional messages from business owners. Therefore, strengthening testimonials and creating customer experiences worth sharing is an effective strategy for KL Space to enhance purchase decisions and retain customer loyalty amid the increasingly dynamic coffee shop industry in Mataram City.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that testimonials and word of mouth significantly influence consumer purchase decisions at KL Space Coffee Shop in Mataram City by shaping trust, credibility, and interest.

It is recommended that management encourage customers to share positive experiences through testimonials and social media, while maintaining consistent quality in service, ambiance, and products. Additional strategies such as customer community management, loyalty programs, and influencer collaborations can further strengthen word of mouth and enhance purchase decisions.

FURTHER STUDY

This study has several limitations that should be considered for future research development. First, the scope of the study was limited to a single location, namely KL Space Coffee Shop in Mataram City, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to other coffee shops beyond this setting. Second, the variables examined were limited to testimonials and word of mouth, while other influential factors such as price, product quality, or customer experience were not explored. Therefore, future research is recommended to expand the study area by involving multiple coffee shops across different cities to obtain more representative results. Additionally, future studies may consider incorporating additional variables that potentially affect purchase decisions and employ a mixed-methods approach to gain a deeper understanding of consumer behavior.

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