

## **SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING, INFLUENCER ENDORSEMENTS, AND CONSUMER PURCHASE DECISIONS : THE MEDIATING ROLE OF BRAND AWARENESS IN CIAO MIE, BANGKALAN REGENCY**

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze the impact of Social Media Marketing and Influencer Endorsement on Consumer Purchase Decision, with Brand Awareness as a mediating variable, using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as the theoretical framework. TPB is applied to understand how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence consumer intentions and purchase decisions. The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling - Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). The results show that Social Media Marketing and Influencer Endorsement do not have a direct effect on consumer purchase decisions. However, Brand Awareness has a positive and significant impact on purchase decisions. Furthermore, mediation analysis reveals that Social Media Marketing and Influencer Endorsement have a positive and significant effect on consumer purchase decisions through the mediating role of Brand Awareness.

**Keywords:** *Social Media Marketing, Influencer Endorsement, Brand Awareness, Purchase Decision, SEM-PLS*

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### **1. Introduction**

The rapid advancement of digital technology has significantly transformed various industries, including the culinary sector. Social media has emerged as a highly effective marketing channel, enabling businesses to reach a wider audience quickly. In Indonesia, internet users reached 185.3 million in early 2024, with East Java recording a high penetration rate of 81.26%. This creates substantial opportunities for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), including Ciao Mie in Bangkalan Regency, to leverage digital platforms for marketing purposes.

Social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok serve not only as communication tools but also as strategic business channels. Ciao Mie utilizes these platforms through digital campaigns and collaborations with local influencers to strengthen brand awareness and drive purchase decisions for its flagship products. However, the business faces challenges, including unstable revenue patterns declines of up to 20–30% after promotional periods indicating potential issues in marketing effectiveness and consumer brand awareness.

Brand awareness plays a critical role in the consumer decision-making process, particularly during information search and alternative evaluation stages. For low-involvement products such as food, purchase decisions are often impulsive, influenced by visual appeal,

trends, and social media promotions. Previous research has shown that consistent social media marketing can enhance brand awareness, while authentic customer reviews may have a stronger impact on purchase decisions compared to influencer endorsements. This highlights the need for a strategic combination of digital marketing approaches to attract and retain customers.

Given the identified gaps between digital marketing potential and current implementation, this study aims to examine the influence of social media marketing and influencer endorsements on consumer purchase decisions, with brand awareness as a mediating variable, in the context of Ciao Mie. The findings are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically, particularly in supporting the growth of local culinary businesses in Bangkalan Regency.

## **2. Literature Review**

Qalbi et al. (2024) examined the impact of social media marketing on purchase decisions in TikTok Shop among students of Universitas Negeri Makassar from the 2020–2023 cohorts. Using a quantitative approach, the study collected data from 140 respondents selected through purposive sampling, requiring participants to have made at least two purchases on TikTok Shop per month. The findings revealed a positive and significant effect of social media marketing on purchase decisions, emphasizing the importance of effective digital marketing strategies.

Hamidah et al. (2024) investigated the influence of social media marketing, electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), and brand awareness on purchase decisions for Npure skincare products in Pasuruan City. Adopting a quantitative method with purposive sampling, the study involved 75 respondents who completed a structured questionnaire. Results indicated that social media marketing, e-WOM, and brand awareness collectively affected purchase decisions.

Saputra et al. (2024) investigated the mediating role of brand awareness in the relationship between beauty influencer reviews and purchase decisions for Somethinc products in Solo City. The study employed a quantitative approach, utilizing non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling technique. A total of 110 participants, all active social media users who had purchased Somethinc products, took part in the research. Data were analyzed using the Structural Equation Model (SEM) with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach. The findings revealed that brand awareness serves as a mediating variable linking influencer marketing to purchase decisions. This suggests that higher levels of brand awareness, combined with high-quality reviews from beauty influencers, facilitate more confident consumer purchase decisions.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), introduced by Ajzen (1991), provides a solid framework for analyzing the relationships between social media marketing, influencer endorsements, brand awareness, and consumer purchase decisions. TPB posits that consumer behavior is shaped by attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, all of which influence purchase intentions and actual behavior. In this context, social media marketing and influencer endorsements directly shape positive consumer attitudes toward Ciao Mie through engaging promotional content and influencer reviews, which enhance perceptions of quality, price, and value. Brand awareness reinforces these attitudes by making consumers more inclined toward familiar brands.

Subjective norms refer to social pressures that influence consumer actions. Influencers, seen as trusted sources, can create social validation for purchasing Ciao Mie, making consumers feel supported in their decision. Perceived behavioral control relates to consumers' perceptions of the ease or difficulty of making a purchase. Factors such as online shopping convenience, product availability, competitive pricing, and flexible payment options communicated effectively through social media marketing reduce purchase barriers and enhance control perceptions.

In TPB, purchase intention is the most immediate predictor of actual behavior. Within this study's framework, social media marketing and influencer endorsements influence purchase decisions through the mediating role of brand awareness. Higher brand awareness increases consumer trust and the likelihood of choosing the product, ultimately driving purchase decisions.

Social media marketing (SMM) is a promotional strategy that utilizes online social platforms to reach a wider audience while fostering direct interaction between companies and consumers, enabling the collection of valuable feedback to improve services (Ardiansyah & Sarwoko, 2020). Platforms such as Instagram facilitate effective and efficient communication regarding product benefits, while relevant and consistent content has been shown to enhance brand visibility and support the development of a positive brand image (Majhi, 2020). The use of analytics tools and algorithms allows companies to monitor campaign effectiveness in detail, enabling the design of more targeted and data-driven strategies. Furthermore, social media plays a vital role in strengthening brand–consumer relationships, enhancing customer experience, and extending the customer lifecycle (Sashi, 2012). According to Upadana and Pramudana (2020), SMM indicators include building relationships, communication, post-purchase interaction, and information format.

Influencer endorsement is a marketing strategy that leverages the popularity and influence of individuals on social media to promote products or services, functioning as third-party endorsements that can shape consumer perceptions and purchase intentions (Yodi et al., 2020). Influencers with large audiences can enhance brand credibility, build emotional connections, and foster trust in the promoted product (Liu & Zheng, 2024). Perceived authenticity plays a key role, as audiences are more receptive to recommendations they view as genuine rather than purely promotional, with greater effectiveness achieved when the influencer's image aligns with the product's values (De Veirman et al., 2017). Psychological attachment, facilitated by active engagement such as comments or direct messages, further strengthens the endorsement effect by increasing perceived relevance and emotional closeness between influencer and audience (Ki & Kim, 2020). Overall, influencer endorsements not only raise brand awareness but also stimulate purchase intentions through psychological and social mechanisms. The effectiveness of influencer endorsements can be measured using the VisCAP model, which includes four indicators: Visibility, Credibility, Attraction, and Power (Bakker & others, 2018).

Brand awareness refers to the extent to which consumers can identify or recall a brand when seeking a relevant product, and it plays a critical role in influencing purchase decisions. As Setiawan and Rabuani (2019) highlight, it is the initial stage in establishing a relationship between a brand and consumers, where insufficient awareness may lead to the brand being overlooked in the decision-making process. The level of brand awareness can shape brand preference and ultimately affect purchasing behavior. Moreover, brand awareness is closely linked to customer loyalty, as consumers are more likely to repurchase familiar and trusted

brands. A higher degree of awareness not only increases short-term sales potential but also contributes to building a long-term loyal customer base. According to Anita and Ardiansyah (2019), brand awareness can be measured through five indicators: familiar, recognized, automatically know, remember the end, and heard about the brand.

According to Upadana and Pramudana (2020), a purchase decision is a series of processes undertaken by individuals to select an alternative through careful evaluation, representing the final stage of the consumer decision-making process in actually buying a product. Purchase decisions can be assessed using four main indicators: (1) deciding to choose — selecting Ciao Mie over other noodle restaurants as a place to dine or gather with friends; (2) priority — placing higher preference on purchasing Ciao Mie products compared to competitors; (3) willingness to sacrifice — investing time, cost, and effort to obtain Ciao Mie products; and (4) liking the product — the sense of satisfaction and enjoyment experienced after purchasing Ciao Mie products.

### **The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Purchase Decisions**

Several studies indicate that social media marketing has a positive impact on consumer purchase decisions. Qalbi et al. (2024) found that marketing strategies through social media platforms, such as TikTok Shop, can influence purchase decisions, particularly among university students. Their findings suggest that intensive promotion on social media can strengthen consumer awareness and interest in products, highlighting the crucial role of social media in shaping consumer behavior.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Social media marketing has a significant effect on consumer purchase decisions.

### **The Effect of Influencer Endorsement on Consumer Purchase Decisions**

Afandi et al. (2021) found that influencer endorsements significantly influence consumer purchase decisions, especially among Generation Z. The study shows that trust and brand image built by influencers play a critical role in encouraging consumers to purchase the promoted products. Influencers with substantial social media influence can establish trust among their followers, which ultimately increases purchase decisions.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Influencer endorsement has a significant effect on consumer purchase decisions.

### **The Effect of Brand Awareness on Consumer Purchase Decisions**

Upadana and Pramudana (2020) revealed that brand awareness affects consumer purchase decisions. The higher the level of consumer awareness of a brand, the greater the likelihood of purchase. Brand awareness plays a crucial role in facilitating decision-making, as consumers are more likely to buy products from brands they already know and trust. This study emphasizes the importance of building strong brand awareness to drive purchase decisions.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Brand awareness has a significant effect on consumer purchase decisions.

### **The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Purchase Decisions Mediated by Brand Awareness**

Upadana and Pramudana (2020) found that brand awareness acts as a mediator in the relationship between social media marketing and purchase decisions. This means that while social media promotions can influence purchase decisions, brand awareness plays a key role in the process. Consumers who are more familiar with brands promoted on social media tend

to make purchasing decisions more easily. The study suggests that effective social media marketing strategies can enhance brand awareness, which in turn positively impacts purchase decisions.

**H4:** Social media marketing has a significant effect on consumer purchase decisions when mediated by brand awareness.

### **The Effect of Influencer Endorsement on Consumer Purchase Decisions Mediated by Brand Awareness**

Setiawan and Rabuani (2019) revealed that brand awareness mediates the relationship between influencer endorsements and purchase decisions. The study found that endorsements from influencers can increase brand awareness, which subsequently influences consumer purchase decisions. Consumers who are more familiar with brands promoted by influencers tend to have greater trust and interest in purchasing those products. Brand awareness serves as a link between the influence of influencer endorsements and stronger purchase decisions.

**H5:** Influencer endorsement has a significant effect on consumer purchase decisions when mediated by brand awareness.

### **3. Research Method**

This study employed a quantitative approach, utilizing Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) as the primary analytical tool due to its ability to accommodate the study's objectives. SEM-PLS enables direct testing of mediation effects through intervening variables, aligning with the main aim of this research: to examine how brand awareness mediates the relationship between social media marketing or influencer endorsement and consumers' purchase decisions. The research was conducted at Ciao Mie, a restaurant located in Bangkalan Regency, East Java, from September 2024 to January 2025. The process included thesis proposal preparation, online questionnaire distribution, data collection and analysis, and the final report writing. The study population comprised all followers of Ciao Mie's Instagram and TikTok accounts in Bangkalan Regency. A purposive sampling method, a form of non-probability sampling, was applied, whereby respondents were specifically selected to match the research objective. Data were collected using a closed-ended online questionnaire designed to measure social media marketing, influencer endorsement, brand awareness, and purchase decision variables. Responses were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 indicated "strongly disagree" and 5 indicated "strongly agree."

### **4. Results and Discussion**

#### **4.1 Results**

Validity measures the extent to which an instrument can accurately assess what it is intended to measure. In research, there are two methods for testing validity: convergent validity and discriminant validity. The convergent validity test requires that the outer loading value exceed 0.7 and the average variance extracted (AVE) value exceed 0.5 for an indicator to be considered valid. Meanwhile, the discriminant validity test is conducted by ensuring that the loading value of each item on its respective construct is higher than its cross-loading values, with the standard that loadings should be above 0.7 within the same variable. The results of the convergent validity test, which include the outer loading and AVE values, are presented in Tables 3.1 and 3.2.

**Table 1. Outer Loading Results**

Indicator	Social Media Marketing	Influencer Endorsement	Brand Awareness	Purchase Decision
X1.1	0,772			
X1.2	0,860			
X1.3	0,819			
X1.4	0,840			
X2.1		0,809		
X2.2		0,871		
X2.3		0,858		
X2.4		0,864		
M <sub>1</sub>			0,804	
M <sub>2</sub>			0,794	
M <sub>3</sub>			0,725	
M <sub>4</sub>			0,848	
M <sub>5</sub>			0,818	
Y <sub>1</sub>				0,823
Y <sub>2</sub>				0,849
Y <sub>3</sub>				0,850
Y <sub>4</sub>				0,811

**Table 2. Average Variance Extracted Results**

Variable	Average Variance Extracted
Social Media Marketing (X1)	0,678
Influencer Endorsement (X2)	0,724
Brand Awareness (M)	0,638
Purchase Decision (Y)	0,695

Based on the results of the outer loading test presented in Table 3.1, all indicators for each variable have values greater than 0.7, indicating that these indicators are valid for measuring the intended constructs. Furthermore, the results of the average variance extracted (AVE) test in Table 3.2 show that the AVE values for all variables exceed 0.5, confirming their validity. In addition, discriminant validity was assessed by examining the cross-loading values. According to Ghazali (2021), the desired cross-loading value is greater than 0.7. If each item has a higher loading value on its respective construct than its cross-loading value on other constructs, then the discriminant validity is considered to be met.

**Table 3. Cross Loading Results**

Indicator	Social Media Marketing	Influencer Endorsement	Brand Awareness	Purchase Decision
X1.1	0,772	0,625	0,678	0,579
X1.2	0,860	0,635	0,623	0,584
X1.3	0,819	0,592	0,565	0,485
X1.4	0,840	0,650	0,664	0,594
X2.1	0,673	0,809	0,712	0,663

X2.2	0,668	0,871	0,734	0,657
X2.3	0,612	0,858	0,696	0,632
X2.4	0,639	0,864	0,759	0,617
M1	0,604	0,726	0,804	0,666
M2	0,640	0,640	0,794	0,656
M3	0,611	0,522	0,725	0,584
M4	0,616	0,780	0,848	0,734
M5	0,622	0,711	0,818	0,709
Y1	0,588	0,638	0,736	0,823
Y2	0,580	0,675	0,723	0,849
Y3	0,558	0,642	0,645	0,850
Y4	0,555	0,559	0,695	0,811

Based on the results of the cross-loading test presented in Table 3.3, each indicator has a loading value greater than 0.7 on the measured construct and higher than its cross-loading values on other constructs. This meets the requirements for discriminant validity, where the loading value on the main construct must be greater than 0.7 and higher than its cross-loading values. Therefore, it can be concluded that all indicators for each construct meet the discriminant validity criteria and are valid for use in subsequent analyses.

Reliability is measured using two main indicators: composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. A variable is considered reliable if both the composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values exceed 0.7. The results of the composite reliability test for the variables in this study are presented in Table 3.4.

**Table 4. Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha Results**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
Social Media Marketing (X1)	0,894	0,841
Influencer Endorsement (X2)	0,913	0,873
Brand Awareness (M)	0,898	0,857
Purchase Decision (Y)	0,901	0,853

Based on the test results presented in Table 3.4, all variables in this study exhibit composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values above 0.7. This indicates that all variables have met the reliability criteria and can be considered dependable for use in subsequent analyses.

The inner model assessment is a crucial stage in SEM-PLS analysis, used to evaluate the relationships among latent variables. The primary objective of this assessment is to determine the strength and direction of the effects between variables, thereby providing deeper insights into the underlying relationship mechanisms.

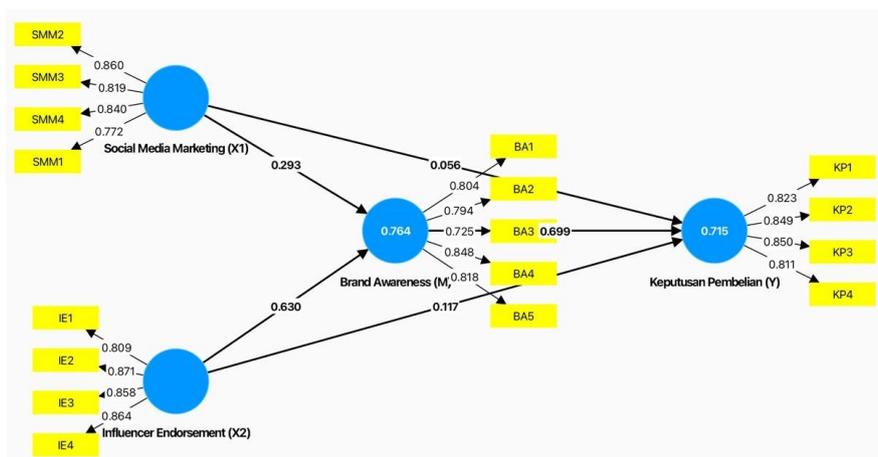


Figure 1. Inner Model Results

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing Results

Relationships Among Variables	T Statistic	P Value	Results
X <sub>1</sub> → Y	0,588	0,556	Not Significant
X <sub>2</sub> → Y	1,106	0,269	Not Significant
M → Y	6,858	0,000	Significant

Based on the data analysis results, the variables social media marketing (X<sub>1</sub>) and influencer endorsement (X<sub>2</sub>) did not show a significant effect on purchase decision (Y), with T-statistics of 0.588 (P = 0.556) and 1.106 (P = 0.269), respectively. This indicates that both variables do not have a direct significant impact on purchase decision. On the other hand, the variable brand awareness (M) was found to have a significant effect on purchase decision (T-statistic = 6.858, P = 0.000), revealing that brand awareness plays a substantial role in influencing consumers' purchase decisions.

Table 6. R-Square

Variable	R-Square
Brand Awareness (M)	0,764
Purchase Decision (Y)	0,715

The R-square results indicate that the variable brand awareness (M) has a value of 0.764, meaning that 76.4% of the variation in brand awareness can be explained by the independent variables in the model. Meanwhile, the variable purchase decision (Y) has an R-square value of 0.715, indicating that 71.5% of the variation in purchase decision can be explained by brand awareness and other independent variables. These R-square values demonstrate that the model used possesses a high explanatory power.

Table 7. F-Square

Variable	F-Square	Criteria
X <sub>1</sub> → Y	0,004	Very Weak
X <sub>2</sub> → Y	0,012	Very Weak
M → Y	0,405	Strong

Based on the F-square results, the effect of social media marketing ( $X_1$ ) on purchase decisions (Y) shows a value of 0.004, and the effect of influencer endorsement ( $X_2$ ) on purchase decisions (Y) has a value of 0.012. Both values fall into the very weak category. In contrast, the effect of brand awareness (M) on purchase decisions (Y) shows a value of 0.405, indicating a significant influence.

**Table 8. Q-Square**

Variable	Q-Square	Criteria
Brand Awareness (M)	0,751	Strong
Purchase Decision (Y)	0,579	Strong

The Q-square test results show that brand awareness (M) has a value of 0.751, indicating that the model has strong predictive relevance for this variable. Purchase decision (Y) also has a Q-square value of 0.579, which likewise reflects strong predictive relevance. These results indicate that the model, as a whole, possesses an excellent predictive capability for the dependent variables.

The mediation effect test was conducted to identify the role of the mediating variable in linking the independent and dependent variables. The primary objective of this analysis is to determine whether the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable occurs directly, indirectly, or through a combination of both. Mediation analysis is essential as it provides deeper insights into the underlying mechanisms within the research model, particularly when the mediating variable is believed to play a crucial role in clarifying or strengthening the observed relationships. Consequently, the results of this test can enhance theoretical understanding and offer more relevant practical implications.

**Table 9. Direct Effects**

Relationships Among Variables	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standar Deviation	T statistic	P value
$X_1 \rightarrow Y$	0,056	0,061	0,095	0,588	0,556
$X_2 \rightarrow Y$	0,117	0,114	0,106	1,106	0,269
$M \rightarrow Y$	0,699	0,699	0,102	6,858	0,000

Based on the results of the direct, indirect, and total effect analyses, several key findings were identified. As shown in Table 3.9 on direct effects, the direct influence of the independent variable social media marketing ( $X_1$ ) on purchase decision (Y) was found to be insignificant, with a p-value of 0.556 (T-statistic = 0.588). A similar result was observed for the direct influence of influencer endorsement ( $X_2$ ) on purchase decision (Y), which was also insignificant, with a p-value of 0.269 (T-statistic = 1.106). In contrast, the mediating variable brand awareness (M) demonstrated a significant direct effect on purchase decision (Y), with a p-value of 0.000 (T-statistic = 6.858).

**Table 10. Indirect Effects**

Relationships Among Variables	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standar Deciation	T statistic	P value
$X_1 \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$	0,205	0,211	0,060	3,435	0,001
$X_2 \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$	0,440	0,435	0,082	5,357	0,000

As presented in Table 3.10 on indirect effects, social media marketing ( $X_1$ ) exhibited a significant indirect effect on purchase decision (Y) through brand awareness (M), with a p-value of 0.001 (T-statistic = 3.435). Similarly, influencer endorsement ( $X_2$ ) also demonstrated a significant indirect effect on purchase decision (Y) via brand awareness (M), with a p-value of 0.000 (T-statistic = 5.357). These findings indicate that the mediating role of brand awareness is crucial in the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

**Table 12. Total Effects**

<b>Relationships Among Variables</b>	<b>Original Sample</b>	<b>Sanple Mean</b>	<b>Standar Deviatuon</b>	<b>T statistic</b>	<b>P value</b>
$X_1 \rightarrow Y$	0,261	0,271	0,101	2,586	0,010
$X_2 \rightarrow Y$	0,557	0,548	0,096	5,797	0,000
$M \rightarrow Y$	0,699	0,699	0,102	6,858	0,000

In the total effects analysis, which encompasses both direct and indirect effects, social media marketing ( $X_1$ ) exhibited a significant influence on purchase decision (Y) with a p-value of 0.010 (T-statistic = 2.586). Influencer endorsement ( $X_2$ ) also showed a significant effect on purchase decision (Y) with a p-value of 0.000 (T-statistic = 5.797). Furthermore, brand awareness (M) consistently demonstrated a significant impact on purchase decision (Y) with a p-value of 0.000 (T-statistic = 6.858).

### **3.2. Discussion**

#### **The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Purchase Decisions**

The findings of this study reveal that social media marketing does not have a significant influence on consumer purchase decisions at Ciao Mie, Bangkalan Regency. This result contradicts previous research by Haryanto et al. (2022), which concluded that social media marketing significantly affects consumer purchase behavior. The rejection of the first hypothesis stating that social media marketing has a significant effect on purchase decisions can be explained by several factors. Despite Ciao Mie's active use of Instagram and TikTok for promotional activities, the descriptive statistics indicate that the majority of respondents, aged 19–24 years (38.6%) and over 24 years (47.2%), are already highly accustomed to promotional content on social media and tend to filter such information selectively. While these respondents possess relatively high purchasing power, as indicated by their monthly spending on food and beverages outside the home, their decisions are more strongly influenced by factors such as price, product quality, and personal consumption experience rather than digital marketing strategies.

In the context of Ciao Mie, the promotional content shared through Instagram and TikTok appears insufficient to generate strong customer engagement that directly translates into purchase behavior. This aligns with Xiao and Chen (2025), who argue that only consumers with high engagement levels are likely to make purchases after exposure to social media marketing. Grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), the study highlights that purchase decisions are shaped by attitudes toward the product, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. When social media marketing fails to enhance positive product perceptions or purchasing convenience, its impact on consumer decisions becomes minimal. These findings are consistent with Ayuningtyas (2020), both of which found no significant relationship between social media marketing and purchase decisions.

Moreover, prior studies suggest that brand loyalty, social influence, and prior consumption experiences may serve as stronger determinants of consumer purchasing behavior than exposure to digital promotional content alone.

### **The Effect of Influencer Endorsement on Consumer Purchase Decisions**

This study found that influencer endorsement does not have a significant effect on consumer purchasing decisions at Ciao Mie, Bangkalan Regency, contradicting prior research such as Trianasari et al. (2023). Although Ciao Mie employs influencer marketing, other factors—such as brand trust, personal product experience, and social influence from friends or family—play a more dominant role.

The descriptive data indicate that most respondents are digitally literate, have strong purchasing power, and spend considerably on food and beverages, yet remain selective in making purchases. The mismatch between influencer audiences and the brand's target market, combined with low perceived authenticity, may explain the lack of significant impact.

### **The Effect of Brand Awareness on Consumer Purchase Decisions**

The findings of this study confirm and support previous research by Upadana and Pramudana (2020), which stated that brand awareness has a positive and significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions. Accordingly, the third hypothesis—"brand awareness significantly affects consumer purchasing decisions"—is accepted. As suggested by Upadana and Pramudana (2020), higher consumer awareness of a brand increases the likelihood of purchase. Brand awareness plays a vital role in simplifying consumer decision-making, as consumers tend to buy from brands they already recognize and trust. This study employed brand awareness indicators proposed by Anita and Ardiansyah (2019), including familiarity, recognition, automatic recall, end recall, and brand exposure.

Empirical results indicate that brand awareness significantly influences purchasing decisions for Ciao Mie in Bangkalan Regency. The higher the level of brand awareness, the greater the likelihood of consumers choosing and purchasing the brand's products. Descriptive statistics (Table 5.1) reveal that most respondents were female (52.8%), while males accounted for 47.2%. According to Aaker (2012), women tend to focus more on emotional and relational aspects of a brand, whereas men tend to emphasize functional aspects. This may explain why brand awareness is particularly influential in the food and beverage industry, such as in the case of Ciao Mie.

Furthermore, Table 5.2 shows that most respondents were aged over 24 years (47.2%) and 19–24 years (38.6%), age groups generally possessing broader brand experience and a tendency to choose familiar and trusted brands. Table 5.4 also reveals that 44.9% of respondents spend over IDR 1 million per month on food and beverage consumption outside the home, suggesting strong purchasing power and a preference for known brands. Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), brand awareness contributes to shaping positive attitudes toward a product and fostering subjective norms that encourage consumers to purchase products widely recognized within their social environment. Consumers with high brand awareness of Ciao Mie tend to believe in the product's quality and are thus more inclined to make purchases compared to lesser-known brands.

### **The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Purchase Decisions Mediated by Brand Awareness**

The study reveals that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on consumer purchasing decisions through brand awareness as a mediating variable. Consequently, the fourth hypothesis—“social media marketing significantly influences purchasing decisions through brand awareness”—is accepted. The findings indicate that the effect of social media marketing on purchase decisions is indirect and fully mediated by brand awareness. This supports previous studies by Upadana & Pramudana (2020) which also identified brand awareness as a mediator between social media marketing and consumer purchasing decisions.

In the case of Ciao Mie, direct social media marketing activities such as regular Instagram and TikTok posts, creative content, and active audience engagement do not directly influence purchase decisions but successfully enhance brand awareness. Recognition of the brand, recall of the product name, and familiarity with Ciao Mie play a decisive role in driving purchase behavior. The descriptive statistics (Table 5.2) show that the majority of respondents are aged 19–24 (38.6%) and over 24 (47.2%), groups that are highly active on social media and more susceptible to digital marketing influence. Moreover, income data (Table 5.3) indicate that most respondents are salaried workers or students with sufficient purchasing power, making them more likely to buy products when brand awareness is high. Aligned with the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), social media marketing increases consumers’ perceived behavioral control by providing promotional content and influencer reviews that strengthen confidence in making the right purchase decision. Therefore, effective digital marketing strategies that enhance brand awareness are essential for influencing purchasing decisions in Ciao Mie’s target market.

### **The Effect of Influencer Endorsement on Consumer Purchase Decisions Mediated by Brand Awareness**

The study found that influencer endorsement has a positive and significant impact on consumer purchase decisions through brand awareness as a mediating variable. This indicates that the effect of influencer endorsement on purchase decisions is fully mediated by brand awareness, as the direct effect is not significant. These results align with previous studies by Setiawan and Rabuani (2019), which demonstrated that influencer endorsement enhances brand awareness, subsequently influencing purchase decisions.

In the case of Ciao Mie, local influencers promoting the product through reviews and testimonials on social media successfully strengthened brand awareness among the audience. Influencer credibility and alignment with the lifestyle of consumers in Bangkalan played a key role in shaping brand perception. The resulting brand awareness then became the primary driver of purchase decisions. Therefore, while influencer endorsement remains a relevant strategy for Ciao Mie, it should focus on collaborations with highly appealing influencers to further enhance brand awareness among the core target market.

## **5. Conclusion**

The findings of this study reveal that social media marketing and influencer endorsement, in their direct forms, do not significantly influence consumer purchase decisions for Ciao Mie in Bangkalan Regency. However, when mediated by brand awareness, both variables exert a positive and significant effect, indicating that their effectiveness in driving purchase decisions

relies heavily on their ability to enhance consumer awareness of the brand. Specifically, social media marketing only becomes impactful when it successfully increases brand awareness, while influencer endorsement influences purchase decisions solely through the same mechanism. Furthermore, the study confirms that brand awareness itself has a strong and significant positive relationship with purchase decisions, underscoring its role as a key determinant in consumer behavior. The results also demonstrate that brand awareness functions as a full mediating variable in the relationship between social media marketing and influencer endorsement with purchase decisions, as neither variable exerts a direct influence without it. In the context of Ciao Mie, this suggests that marketing efforts should prioritize strategies that strengthen brand awareness—such as engaging content on social media and collaborations with credible influencers aligned with the target audience’s lifestyle—in order to effectively translate marketing activities into actual consumer purchases.

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