

The Influence of TikTok Content and Digital Testimonials on Gen Z's Purchasing Decisions in the Culinary Sector: A Stimulus-Organism-Response Approach

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of TikTok content and testimonials on consumer purchasing decisions at the Pisang Goreng Topping culinary business in Talasalapang, Makassar City, both partially and simultaneously. The research variables consist of TikTok content (X1) and testimonials (X2) as independent variables, and purchasing decisions (Y) as the dependent variable. This study uses an associative quantitative approach with an accidental sampling technique on 288 consumers who have made purchases at the business. Data were collected through a five-point Likert scale questionnaire and analyzed using validity tests, reliability tests, classical assumption tests, multiple linear regression analysis, and hypothesis tests with the help of SPSS 26. The results showed that TikTok content and testimonials each had a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, with testimonials proving to be the most dominant variable. Simultaneously, both variables also had a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. This finding confirms that interesting TikTok content, when supported by convincing testimonials, can increase consumer purchasing decisions at the Pisang Goreng Topping culinary business in Talasalapang, Makassar City.

Keywords: TikTok Content, Testimonials, Purchasing Decisions, Culinary Business

INTRODUCTION

Human behavior patterns in the digital era are heavily influenced by advances in information technology and various digital services. Numerous, digital technology use in Indonesia is far greater than in other ASEAN countries (Rakib et al., 2023). Advances in information and communication technology have brought significant changes to the way consumers interact with products and services. One emerging technological advancement is mobile marketing, a multi-channel digital marketing strategy designed to reach consumers via smartphones, tablets, and other mobile devices by utilizing various applications such as websites, email, instant messaging, and social media (Rakib et al., 2025).

The success of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the digital era is determined not only by entrepreneurial skills, but also by the level of digital literacy and the ability to implement sustainable business practices. Business actors who are able to utilize digital technology effectively will have a higher competitiveness compared to businesses that still rely on conventional marketing (Rakib et al., 2025). One of the most widely used digital marketing platforms today is TikTok. According to GoodStats data as of July 2024, the number of TikTok users in Indonesia reached 157.6 million, with Indonesia recorded as the country with the most TikTok users in the world in 2024. This condition shows that TikTok is no longer just an entertainment medium, but has transformed into a social interaction space as well as a digital marketing tool.

Through features like short videos, live broadcasts, and comment sections, TikTok is able to build closeness between creators and audiences, making it one of the most influential platforms in shaping public opinion, trends, and purchasing behavior. TikTok users in Indonesia are recorded to spend an average of 44 hours and 54 minutes

per month on the app, far exceeding the global average of 34 hours and 56 minutes. This high intensity of usage strengthens TikTok's role as a medium capable of influencing consumer purchasing decisions, including in the culinary business sector, which relies heavily on visual appeal and the power of testimonials from other users (Rakib et al., 2024).

TikTok users tend to be drawn to try a culinary product simply by seeing a viral review, an enticing presentation, or positive testimonials from fellow users. This makes TikTok a primary source of culinary recommendations, especially among young people. However, consumers are easily influenced by circulating content and testimonials, even though not all reflect actual experiences. This leads to purchasing decisions that are no longer solely based on product needs or quality, but rather driven by viral content trends and testimonials on social media.

This phenomenon is also found in local culinary businesses that use social media as a promotional tool, one of which is the Pisang Goreng Topping culinary business in the Talasalapang area, Makassar City. This business offers a variety of fried bananas with various toppings that have strong visual appeal to be promoted through TikTok video content, from the production and presentation process to consumer reviews. Initial observations through a pre-research questionnaire showed that consumer ratings of TikTok content and testimonials tended to be higher than the level of purchasing decisions, indicating that positive ratings of content and testimonials do not fully encourage consumers to make purchasing decisions.

A significant positive influence of TikTok content on purchasing decisions was observed at the younger generation (Gen Z) (Hadi et al., 2024). The crucial role of informative and honest testimonials in building trust and influencing purchasing decisions was also identified in the context of TikTok Shop (Nuryanti et al., 2026; Salsabila et al., 2025). While these studies have demonstrated the impact of TikTok content and testimonials on purchasing behavior, there has been limited research examining both factors simultaneously within local culinary businesses—specifically, businesses selling fried bananas with toppings in the Talasalapang area of Makassar City. This research gap serves as the primary basis for conducting the present study.

Based on the description above, this study aims to analyze the influence of TikTok content on consumer purchasing decisions, analyze the influence of testimonials on consumer purchasing decisions, and analyze the simultaneous influence of TikTok content and testimonials on consumer purchasing decisions at the Pisang Goreng Topping culinary business in the Talasalapang area, Makassar City. The results of this study are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of literature on the influence of social media on consumer behavior, as well as provide practical benefits for business actors in formulating more effective digital marketing strategies.

Method

This study uses an associative quantitative design with a correlational approach, aiming to test and analyze the influence of TikTok content (X1) and testimonials (X2) on consumer purchasing decisions (Y) in the Pisang Goreng Topping culinary business. This approach was chosen because it is able to provide a systematic, factual, and accurate picture of the phenomenon being studied, while also allowing hypothesis testing through statistical analysis. The study was conducted at the Pisang Goreng Topping culinary business located in Talasalapang, Makassar City, a location chosen due to the high growth of culinary businesses in the area and the widespread use of TikTok as a means of promotion and dissemination of customer testimonials.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Questionnaire items were arranged based on indicators of each construct: TikTok content was measured through frequency of media use, viewing duration, content content, creator appeal, and communication; testimonials were measured through appeal, credibility, spontaneity, recognition, and confidence; while purchasing decisions were measured through needs and desires for the product, desire to try, confidence in the product, purchasing based on needs, and evaluation of alternatives. In addition to primary data from the questionnaire, this study also used secondary data in the form of business activity documentation and field observations to strengthen contextual understanding of the research object.

Research Instruments

The main instrument in this study was a structured questionnaire based on the indicators of each variable. Respondents' answers were measured using a five-point Likert scale, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Likert Scale

No	Category	Score
1	Strongly agree	5
2	Agree	4
3	Quite Agree	3
4	Don't agree	2
5	Strongly Disagree	1

The questionnaire items were arranged based on indicators representing each research variable, as summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Research Instrument Grid

Variables	Indicator	Number of Items
TikTok Content (X1)	Frequency of media use; Duration of viewing; Content; Creator appeal; Communication	15 items
Testimony (X2)	Attraction; Credibility; Spontaneity; Recognition; Confidence	15 items
Purchase Decision (Y)	Product needs and wants; Desire to try; Product beliefs; Purchasing as needed; Evaluation of alternatives	15 items

Overall, the questionnaire consisted of 45 statements compiled in the form of a Google Form and distributed both online and in person to respondents. The study population included all consumers who made purchases at the Pisang Goreng Topping culinary business in Talasalapang, Makassar City, with an estimated population of 1,040 consumers per month. The sample was determined using the Lameshow formula with a margin of error of 5.77%, resulting in a sample size of 288 respondents selected through accidental sampling with purposive criteria, namely TikTok users aged at least 17 years who had purchased Pisang Goreng Topping products at least once in the past month.

Validity of Research Instruments

Before the instrument was used to collect data from 288 respondents, a pilot test was conducted on 30 respondents who met the research population criteria to determine its validity. The initial pilot test identified several items with correlation values below the criteria, leading to editorial revisions to clarify the meaning of the statements and reduce overlapping meanings between items. The revised instrument was then piloted again on 30 respondents to ensure its feasibility before being distributed widely.

Validity, according to Subhaktiyasa (2024), is the level of accuracy and precision of an instrument in measuring what it is supposed to measure. Testing is carried out by comparing the calculated r value (item correlation to the total score). An item is declared valid if the calculated r is greater than the table r (Fitriyani et al., 2025). In this validity test, the calculated r value is compared with the table r value. For 30 respondents, the table r value was 0.361 (Puspasari & Puspita, 2022).

Table 3. Pilot Test Validity Results

Variables	Item	r Count	Information
TikTok Content (X1)	1	0.905	Valid
	2	0.880	Valid
	3	0.865	Valid
	4	0.931	Valid
	5	0.819	Valid
Testimony (X2)	1	0.920	Valid
	2	0.856	Valid
	3	0.884	Valid
	4	0.877	Valid
	5	0.837	Valid
Purchase Decision (Y)	1	0.923	Valid ID
	2	0.872	Valid
	3	0.837	Valid
	4	0.907	Valid
	5	0.927	Valid

Source: Results of data processing in SPSS 26 for Windows

The test results show that all calculated r values for the three variables are far above the r table (0.361), so that all items are declared valid and suitable for use.

The reliability test was conducted using the Cronbach's Alpha method, with the instrument criteria being declared reliable if the value is greater than 0.60 (Novrinando & Onsardi, 2025)

Table 4. Pilot Test Reliability Test Results

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Criteria	Information
TikTok Content (X1)	0.924	0.60	Reliable
Testimony (X2)	0.922	0.60	Reliable
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.935	0.60	Reliable

Source: Results of data processing in SPSS 26 for Windows

All variables have a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.60, so the instrument is declared reliable and suitable for use in collecting data on 288 respondents as the main research sample.

Data analysis was carried out quantitatively using SPSS 26 software. The analysis stages included instrument validity and reliability tests, descriptive statistical analysis, classical assumption tests (normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity), multiple linear regression analysis, and hypothesis testing through t-test (partial), F-test (simultaneous), and coefficient of determination (R^2).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) Theory

This study uses the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theory as its grand theory. This theory explains that the stimulus received by an individual will influence the internal processes within that individual (organism), resulting in a response in the form of a change in attitude. The SOR theory contains three main elements: the stimulus as the message being conveyed, the organism as the recipient of the message, and the response as the

effect expressed in the form of like or dislike towards the message after going through the processes of attention, understanding, and acceptance (Ohorella et al., 2022) .

Behavior is a person's response or reaction to external stimuli. The process of attitude change through the SOR model consists of several stages: the organism's acceptance of the stimulus, understanding the stimulus, willingness to form an attitude, and finally, the effect of a real behavioral change (Hochreiter et al., 2023). In the context of this research, TikTok content and testimonials act as stimuli received by consumers as organisms, which are then processed through stages of attention, understanding, and acceptance, resulting in a response in the form of a purchasing decision.

TikTok Content

Content is information available through electronic media or products, which can be delivered through various media, both directly and indirectly, including through mobile devices (Dalimunthe et al., 2024) . TikTok itself is an application that provides unique and interesting special effects, making it easier for users to create short videos that can attract the attention of many people (Rahmadhani et al., 2023). Thus, TikTok content can be defined as information in the form of short videos presented through the TikTok application by utilizing various unique and interesting special effects that can attract the attention of users.

There are four content indicators: media usage frequency, viewing duration, content substance, and creator appeal (Rakhmat in Trianita et al., 2021). Meanwhile, another set of four indicators—covering creator credibility, appeal, content, and communication—has also been proposed (Molinillo et al., 2022; Cahyani et al., 2025). These perspectives underscore that the effectiveness of TikTok content as a promotional medium is determined by exposure intensity, message quality, and the creator's credibility and appeal. Furthermore, aspects such as interaction, entertainment, and trends within TikTok content have been shown to significantly influence consumer purchase intention (Angelique & Ryan, 2025).

Testimony

In the context of social media, testimonials are understood not only as promotional support, but also as a form of review containing consumer assessments, experiences, and opinions after using a product or service. Testimonials are a credible source of advertising material that supports a product, and are more effective when consumers themselves provide the testimony (Tocila & Cara, 2016). Testimonials are essentially consumer reactions to products they have purchased, which are then published through social media (Nafiisah et al., 2021).

Indicators of testimonials are specifically attractiveness, credibility, and spontaneity (Jasmine & Hs, 2025). Similarly, indicators such as recognition, recommendation, and credibility have been highlighted (Rosaria & Rizal, 2020), while indicators including attention, needs and wants, conviction, and action were introduced in another study (Sembada & Hotimah, 2022). Furthermore, the significant role of information credibility in social media testimonials or consumer reviews regarding the formation of online purchase intentions has also been revealed (Thuy et al., 2024).

Buying decision

A purchasing decision is a stage in the purchasing decision-making process where consumers actually decide to purchase (Mihajlovic, M., Savic, A., Sarcevic, 2025). Schiffman & Kanuk (2010) explain that a purchasing decision is essentially a choice between two or more alternative choices, while Kotler & Keller (2016) emphasize that a purchasing decision is a consumer's decision after evaluating various factors such as brand, place of purchase, quantity, time of purchase, and payment method.

Consumers' tendency to make purchases is reflected through transactional interest, referential interest, and preferential interest, where the higher the consumer's interest in a product, the greater the likelihood of a purchase (Rakib et al., 2023). According to Selviani et al (2024) , there are four indicators of purchasing decisions, namely confidence in the product, product purchasing habits, providing recommendations to others, and purchasing according to needs. Meanwhile, purchasing decision indicators are broken down into problem recognition,

information search, alternative evaluation, purchasing decisions, and post-purchase behavior (Mihajlovic, M., Savic, A., Sarcevic, 2025).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

Respondents in this study were consumers who used the TikTok app and had purchased Banana Fritters with Topping in Talasalapang, Makassar City, with a sample size of 288 respondents. Respondent characteristics by gender are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Amount	Percentage
Man	119	41.3%
Woman	169	58.7%
Total	288	100%

The majority of respondents were female (58.7%), in line with Valkenburg's view. & Piotrowski (2017) that women tend to be more sensitive to visuals and social expectations in digital media, so they are more susceptible to being influenced by content and testimonials circulating on social media.

Table 6. Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age	Amount	Percentage
17-20	254	88.2%
21-25	22	7.6%
26-30	12	4.2%
Total	288	100%

The dominance of the 17-20 age group (88.2%) shows that consumers of Banana Fritters with Topping are dominated by active social media users, especially TikTok, who are easily exposed to promotional content and product testimonials.

Respondents in this study were consumers who used the TikTok app and had purchased Banana Fritters with Topping in Talasalapang, Makassar City, with a sample size of 288 respondents. Based on gender, there were 169 female respondents (58.7%) and 119 male respondents (41.3%), indicating that the majority of consumers are female. This dominance aligns with Valkenburg's view . & Piotrowski (2017) that young adult women tend to be more sensitive to visuals and social expectations in digital media, making them more susceptible to being influenced by content and testimonials circulating on social media.

Based on age, the majority of respondents were between 17 and 20 years old (254 people, or 88.2%), followed by those aged 21 and 25 (22 people, or 7.6%), and those aged 26 and 30 (12 people, or 4.2%). This dominance of young age groups indicates that consumers of Banana Fritters with Topping are predominantly active social media users, particularly TikTok users, who are easily exposed to promotional content and product testimonials.

Research Instrument Test Results

Validity test done with compare calculated r value with r value of the table at the level significance of 5% and the number respondents as many as 288 people, obtained r table value of 0.115 with degrees freedom (df = n – 2 = 286). Test results show that all statement items in the three variables , namely TikTok content , testimonials

, and decisions purchase , have calculated r value range between 0.392 to 0.622, which is all more big than r table value , so that all items are declared valid and eligible used in study .

Table 7. Summary of Validity Test Results

Variables	Range r Count	r Table	Conclusion
TikTok Content (X1)	0.392 - 0.586	0.115	All items are valid
Testimony (X2)	0.396 - 0.592	0.115	All items are valid
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.407 - 0.622	0.115	All items are valid

Source: Results of data processing in SPSS 26 for Windows

The reliability test was conducted using the Cronbach's Alpha method, with the criteria that the instrument is declared reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value is greater than 0.60 (Novrinando & Onsardi, 2025).

Table 8. Reliability Test Results

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Criteria	Information
TikTok Content (X1)	0.791	0.600	Reliable
Testimony (X2)	0.798	0.600	Reliable
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.802	0.600	Reliable

Source: Results of data processing in SPSS 26 for Windows

The results of the descriptive statistical analysis show that the TikTok content variable has an average value of 55.36 with a standard deviation of 6.23; the testimonial variable has an average value of 57.01 with a standard deviation of 6.21; while the purchasing decision variable has an average value of 56.35 with a standard deviation of 6.33. The relatively high average values for the three variables indicate that respondents generally gave a positive assessment, while the standard deviation value is smaller than the average value indicates that respondents' answers are relatively homogeneous.

Classical Assumption Test Results

To ensure the regression analysis produces accurate interpretations, classical assumption tests are performed to assess whether the regression framework meets statistical criteria. The tests used in this study include normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity.

Table 9. Normality Test Results

Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test Statistics	Mark
N	288
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.200

Source: Results of data processing in SPSS 26 for Windows

Table 10. Multicollinearity Test Results

Variables	Tolerance	VIF
TikTok Content (X1)	0.223	4,486
Testimony (X2)	0.223	4,486

Source: Results of data processing in SPSS 26 for Windows

Table 11. Heteroscedasticity Test Results

Model	Sig.
TikTok Content (X1)	0.766
Testimony (X2)	0.126

Source: Results of data processing in SPSS 26 for Windows

Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis was used to measure the influence of TikTok content and testimonials on purchasing decisions.

Table 12. Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	1,117	1,257	-	.889	.375
TikTok Content (X1)	0.411	0.046	0.404	9,021	.000
Testimonials (X2)	0.570	0.046	0.559	12,477	.000

Source : Results of data processing using SPSS 26 for Windows

Based on Table 5, the multiple linear regression equation is $Y = 1.117 + 0.411X_1 + 0.570X_2 + e$. The TikTok content regression coefficient of 0.411 indicates that every one unit increase in TikTok content will increase purchasing decisions by 0.411 units, assuming other variables remain constant. Meanwhile, the testimonial regression coefficient of 0.570, which is greater than TikTok content, indicates that testimonials have a more dominant influence on purchasing decisions. This indicates that consumers tend to trust other people's real experiences conveyed through testimonials more than promotional content created directly by business actors.

Hypothesis Test Results

The partial t-test was used to test the significance of the influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable. With a sample size of 288 respondents and a significance level of 0.05, the t-table value was 1.968 (Priyatno, 2023).

Table 13. Results of the t-Test (Partial)

Variables	t Count	Sig.	Information
TikTok Content (X1)	9,021	0,000	Significant
Testimony (X2)	12,477	0,000	Significant

Source: Results of data processing in SPSS 26 for Windows

The calculated t-values for both variables were greater than the table t-values with a significance value of 0.000 (<0.05), indicating that TikTok content and testimonials partially had a significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions. Furthermore, the F-test was used to examine the simultaneous influence of both independent variables, with an F-table value of 3.03 at a significance level of 0.05.

Table 14. Results of the F-Test (Simultaneous) and the Coefficient of Determination

F Count	Sig.	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
976,946	0,000	0.934	0.873	0.872

Source: Results of data processing in SPSS 26 for Windows

The calculated F value of 976.946 is much greater than the F table value of 3.03 with a significance value of 0.000, which means that TikTok content and testimonials simultaneously have a significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.872 indicates that 87.2% of the variation in consumer purchasing decisions can be explained by TikTok content and testimonials, while the remaining 12.8% is explained by other factors outside this study, such as product price, taste quality, and service quality.

DISCUSSION

The Influence of TikTok Content on Consumer Purchasing Decisions

Hypothesis testing results indicate that TikTok content has a positive and significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions. Conceptually, TikTok content operates by presenting information visually in a concise, engaging, and easily understandable manner; this stimulates user attention and fosters a desire to try the promoted products. This finding is in line with the SOR theory, which serves as the grand theory of this research, in which TikTok content acts as a stimulus that is processed through consumer attention, understanding, and acceptance, resulting in a response in the form of a purchasing decision. (Ohorella et al., 2022).

These findings reinforce the applicability of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theoretical framework pioneered by Mehrabian and Russell (1974). In this context, the visual and audio elements within TikTok's short-form videos serve as external stimuli. Exposure to these stimuli triggers internal responses within the consumer (the organism)—such as curiosity, emotional interest, and a perception that the product is easy to understand. These cognitive and affective processes ultimately guide the consumer toward a tangible action (the response): the decision to make a purchase. Beyond the S-O-R theory, the mechanism behind TikTok content also aligns with Lewis's (1898) AIDA marketing hierarchy-of-effects model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action). The dynamic, short-duration video format proves highly effective at capturing initial attention and building interest. The delivery of concise yet informative messages minimizes the audience's cognitive load, rapidly converting attention into a purchase desire and, ultimately, a transaction.

These results are consistent with international research findings by Wu & Su, (2025) and Tang et al., (2025) regarding short-form video marketing. They argue that media richness and visual engagement on short-form video platforms significantly enhance product attractiveness and reduce consumer hesitation. Rich, easily digestible visual information allows consumers to grasp a product's superior value more quickly than text-based media or static images. Furthermore, these findings reinforce studies by Brien et al., (2025) and Meng and Tian et al., (2025) regarding consumer behavior on social media. TikTok's recommendation algorithms and visual aesthetics create an immersive user experience. This triggers spontaneous emotional urges that shorten the consumer decision-making process, thereby increasing the likelihood of purchase decisions—whether planned or impulsive..

The Influence of Testimonials on Consumer Purchasing Decisions

Hypothesis testing results indicate that testimonials have a positive and significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions. The larger regression coefficient for testimonials than for TikTok content indicates that testimonials are the most dominant variable influencing purchasing decisions. Within the SOR theoretical framework, testimonials act as a stimulus derived from the real experiences of fellow consumers, making them perceived as more authentic and credible than one-way promotional content created by business owners.

This finding is in line with research by Cheung et al., (2009), Nhat et al., (2025) and Jin et al., (2026) regarding Information Adoptability, which states that consumer reviews or Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) have a

much higher level of source credibility and perceived diagnosticity than marketing messages made by business owners. Consumers consider testimonials to be information that is authentic, honest and not promotionally biased, so it is more effective in validating product expectations.

Apart from that, the dominance of the testimonial variable also strengthens the study conducted by Valentin et al., (2025) and Bo et al., (2023), who stated that in experience goods industries such as culinary businesses, consumers face a high level of uncertainty (perceived risk) regarding taste, quality and cleanliness. In this situation, TikTok's visual content functions to attract initial attention (awareness), but objective testimonials from other customers function as the final decision maker which triggers convincing purchasing actions.

The Simultaneous Influence of TikTok Content and Testimonials on Consumer Purchasing Decisions

The simultaneous hypothesis test results (F-test) indicate that TikTok content and testimonials collectively exert a positive and significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions. These findings demonstrate that combining an audio-visual social media marketing strategy with the establishment of social proof creates a powerful synergy that drives transaction decisions.

Theoretically, these results reinforce the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework proposed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974). In this context, TikTok content and testimonials function as a combination of dual stimuli. TikTok content provides stimuli in the form of visual appeal and information accessibility, while testimonials offer stimuli regarding credibility and social validation from fellow users. Exposure to these dual stimuli simultaneously affects the consumer's internal state (the Organism) by fostering emotional engagement, enhancing brand trust, and minimizing perceived risk. These comprehensive cognitive and affective reactions ultimately trigger a Response in the form of a purchasing decision.

Beyond the S-O-R theory, this synergistic mechanism aligns with the Dual-Coding Theory developed by Paivio (1986). This theory posits that information processing in human memory is significantly more effective when verbal and non-verbal (visual) stimuli are presented concurrently. TikTok content provides dynamic visual stimuli, while testimonials reinforce this with verbal or textual confirmation narratives. The collaboration between these two factors reduces the consumer's cognitive load when evaluating products, thereby accelerating the decision-making process.

These findings are consistent with international research by Mohamed (2025) and Romadayanti & Wulandari, (2025) regarding eWOM (Electronic Word-of-Mouth) and source credibility. They found that digital marketing effectiveness increases dramatically when company-produced promotional media is combined with User-Generated Content (UGC) or independent reviews. TikTok content serves as an initial attention trigger, while testimonials act as a validation mechanism for the information's authenticity.

Furthermore, the integration of these two variables reinforces the findings of Rawangngam et al. (2025) and Wahyudi et al. (2025) regarding consumer behavior in the social commerce era. Both studies confirm that the combination of message attractiveness on short-form video platforms and the social proof provided by customer reviews creates a complementary psychological effect. The visual appeal generated by TikTok content does not automatically translate into a purchase decision unless supported by the confidence instilled through consumer testimonials.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study shows that TikTok content has a positive and significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions. This means that the more engaging and high-quality TikTok content displayed by a culinary business, the more likely consumers are to make a purchase. Testimonials are also proven to have a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions, even becoming the most dominant variable compared to TikTok content. Simultaneously, TikTok content and testimonials have a positive and significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions, while the remaining influence is explained by other factors outside this study, such as product price, taste quality, and service quality. These findings confirm that the combination of engaging TikTok

content and compelling testimonials creates a strong synergy in driving consumer purchasing decisions in the digital marketing era.

Based on the conclusions above, this study recommends several things. For the Entrepreneurship Study Program, the results of this study can serve as an academic reference for developing learning on digital marketing and consumer behavior. For Pisang Goreng Topping business owners in Talasalapang, it is recommended to continue improving the quality and consistency of TikTok content and actively encourage satisfied consumers to provide open testimonials, considering that testimonials have been shown to be the most dominant factor influencing purchasing decisions. For future researchers, it is recommended to expand the scope of the study by adding other variables such as price, product quality, brand trust, or influencer influence, as well as expanding the research location to various similar culinary businesses in other regions.

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