

## **Analysis of the Impact of Perceived Image, E-WOM, Sales Promotion, and Restaurant Popularity on User Preferences and Consumer Purchase Intentions at Seafood Restaurants X and Y in Manado City**

**Efraim Stelino Leonardo Juni<sup>1\*</sup>, Elia Ardyan<sup>2</sup>, Teofilus<sup>3</sup>**

Universitas Ciputra Surabaya, Indonesia

Email: [elia.ardyan@ciputra.ac.id](mailto:elia.ardyan@ciputra.ac.id)\*

---

### **Abstract**

---

#### **Keywords:**

Perceived Image, e-WOM, Sales Promotion, Restaurant Popularity, Consumer Preference, Purchase Intention

Digital transformation has significantly reshaped consumer behavior in the culinary industry, particularly in seafood restaurants where purchasing decisions are increasingly influenced by restaurant image, electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), sales promotion, and restaurant popularity. This study aims to examine the effects of Perceived Image, Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM), Sales Promotion, and Restaurant Popularity on User Preference, as well as the influence of User Preference on Repurchase Intention at two seafood restaurants in Manado City, namely Restaurant X and Restaurant Y. A quantitative approach was employed using a survey method involving 155 respondents aged 21–40 years. Data were collected through Likert-scale questionnaires and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The results indicate that Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) and Restaurant Popularity have a positive and significant effect on User Preference at both restaurants. Perceived Image significantly influences User Preference at Restaurant X but does not have a significant effect at Restaurant Y. Meanwhile, Sales Promotion does not significantly affect User Preference at either restaurant. Furthermore, User Preference has a positive and significant impact on Repurchase Intention, with a stronger effect observed at Restaurant Y. These findings highlight differences in the influence patterns among variables, which are shaped by restaurant characteristics and consumption context. This study provides practical implications for seafood restaurant managers to prioritize digital marketing strategies focused on strengthening e-WOM and restaurant popularity in order to enhance user preference and encourage repurchase intention.

---

### **INTRODUCTION**

The phenomenon of declining consumer purchase intention is one of the main challenges faced by many culinary industry players, including seafood restaurants in Manado City. In the context of increasingly fierce competition, changing consumer behaviors that are now more selective and critical of digital information require businesses to understand what really influences purchasing decisions (Ghimire et al., 2022; Nandan & Kumar, 2023; Rais et al., 2024). Purchase intention reflects how likely a consumer is to buy a product or service, and is an important indicator of the success of a digital marketing strategy (Adhitama et al.,

2023; Budiman, 2021; Wardoyo, 2023). However, building purchase intent is not a simple process because it is influenced by a variety of complex psychological and social factors.

One effective approach to understanding this phenomenon is to look at it through user preferences, which are individual preferences for certain attributes of a product or service. Consumer preferences can be a bridge between perception and actual purchasing behavior, but their application in practice often faces complexity. User preferences are shaped by various marketing stimuli that can affect their perceptions, attitudes, and ultimately purchase intentions (Tran, 2022; Prayitno, 2023). In this study, the complexity is analyzed through four main factors, namely perceived image, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), sales promotion, and restaurant popularity (Yang & Luo, 2021; Handani & Kim, 2023; Debataraja et al., 2024).

To strengthen the conceptual basis of this research, the S–O–R (Stimulus–Organism–Response) theory was first introduced by Mehrabian and Russell (1974). This theory explains that consumer behavior is the result of a psychological process that starts from an external stimulus (S), is processed in an internal organism (O), and produces a behavioral response (R).

In the context of this study:

1. Stimulus (S) includes external factors such as e-WOM, sales promotion, perceived image, and restaurant popularity conveyed through digital media.
2. The organism (O) represents the internal process of the consumer, that is, the formation of perception and preference for the restaurant.
3. Response (R) is manifested in the form of purchase intention or consumer purchase intention for a particular seafood restaurant.

The S–O–R model is relevant because it is able to explain how various digital stimuli can shape consumer perceptions and preferences to ultimately influence their purchasing behavior. This approach is also in line with the phenomenon of marketing digitalization that places consumer emotional and cognitive interactions at the center of brand communication strategies. Massive digital transformation globally has changed the patterns of consumer interaction with brands, especially in the culinary industry (Fusté-Forné, 2022). Consumers now rely not only on traditional promotions, but are also heavily influenced by visual content, online reviews, and recommendations from influencers on various social media platforms. With the number of social media users increasing from 2.73 billion in 2017 to 4.26 billion in 2021 and projected to reach six billion by 2027, social media has become a major channel in shaping perceptions and purchasing decisions.

In the context of Manado City as a marine culinary tourism destination, the use of digital strategies is a differentiating factor for arrestors. Consumers tend to do online exploration before deciding where to eat. The credibility of an influencer's upload also plays an important role, as the perception of the authenticity of the content affects purchase intention (Untari & Satria, 2022). Previous research has shown that e-WOM has a significant influence on consumer confidence and purchase intent. Similarly, sales promotion has been proven to be effective in increasing buying interest, especially when combined with digital media. In addition, perceived image acts as an important mediator between external stimuli and consumer buying intent, while restaurant popularity strengthens the perception of trust and social value towards restaurants.

To dig deeper into how these factors affect purchase intention, this study uses a comparative approach to two seafood restaurants in Manado City with different geographical characteristics and digital strategies:

1. Restaurant X, located in the beach area, relies on the appeal of the natural atmosphere and visual content as the main elements of the promotional strategy.
2. Restaurant Y, located near the airport, highlights service efficiency and digital strategy targeting mobile and time-sensitive consumers.

These differences reflect variations in the implementation of digital stimulus that have an impact on consumer perceptions and preferences. The results of the analysis are expected to provide practical insights for restaurant business actors in designing location-based digital promotion strategies, which not only attract the attention of consumers but also increase purchase intention in a sustainable manner.

### **Electronic Word of Mouth**

Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) refers to the activity of sharing information and experiences regarding products or services through online platforms among consumers. e-WOM includes various forms of communication that occur on the internet, where customers submit their opinions, reviews, or testimonials regarding a brand or service. Along with the rapid development of social media and online marketplaces, these channels are increasingly influential in shaping consumer purchasing decisions. Nonetheless, e-WOM also has a downside, especially when negative reviews are widespread. The spread of negative e-WOM can deter potential customers and adversely impact brand image (Lis & Fischer, 2020; Satifa Putri & Widyastuti, 2023).

Several studies reveal that brands that experience a negative wave of e-WOM can significantly experience a decrease in consumer trust and interest, ultimately leading to financial losses (Balqis et al., 2023; Rezeki et al., 2023). Therefore, marketing strategies need to include effective efforts in managing and responding to online feedback to maximize the benefits of e-WOM while minimizing its risks. Overall, the impact of e-WOM is multidimensional, contributing to increased consumer trust and brand credibility, but also bringing challenges through the potential for negative publicity. The integration of e-WOM in marketing strategies is becoming increasingly important for businesses that want to survive and thrive in today's digital era (Thirusanku & Kumar, 2023).

### **Sales Promotion**

Sales promotion is an important strategy to increase sales and customer loyalty through financial incentives (discounts, coupons) and non-financial incentives (gifts, contests, loyalty programs). Effective promotion has been shown to increase consumer satisfaction and brand equity, as well as strengthen customer attachment (Brar et al., 2022; Viana & Oliveira, 2023; Antara & Rastini, 2022).

### **Restaurant Popularity**

The popularity of restaurants, reflected in images on social media and online reviews, influences consumer purchase intent. Positive reviews increase visibility, loyalty, and repeat visits. Social media is the main channel for restaurant interaction with consumers, especially the younger generation (Kosli et al., 2023; Shah et al., 2023).

### **User Preference**

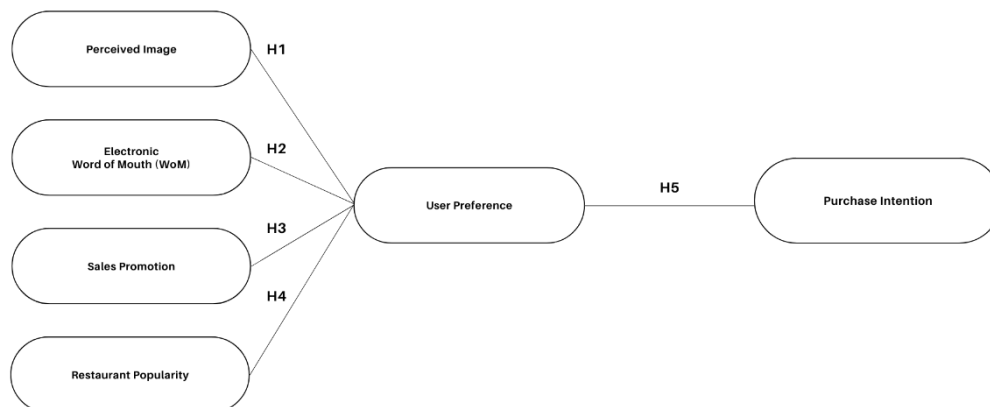
User preferences determine the experience and interaction with digital systems. Adaptive systems that understand changing interests and social contexts are able to provide relevant personalized services, increasing user engagement and satisfaction (Zhao, 2021; Ji et al., 2022; Chen et al., 2023).

### Purchase Intention

Purchase intent reflects the willingness of consumers to buy a product and is influenced by psychological, social, product quality, brand reputation, and influencer influence. Understanding these factors allows companies to design effective marketing strategies (Jayanto et al., 2022; Dinh & Lee, 2022; Rizaldi, 2022; Valerie et al., 2023).

### Research Concept

This study examines the relationship between sales promotion, restaurant popularity, user preferences, and purchase intent, with the aim of providing strategic guidance in designing effective marketing.



**Figure 1.** Research Model

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a quantitative approach with a survey method to examine the influence of *Perceived Image*, *Electronic Word of Mouth* (E-WOM), sales promotion, and restaurant popularity on the preferences and purchase intentions of seafood restaurant consumers in Manado City. Data collection was carried out through a questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale, which was considered appropriate to measure respondents' perceptions quantitatively. Data analysis was carried out using *Structural Equation Modeling* (SEM) to test the relationships between variables simultaneously and in a structured manner.

This study involved 155 respondents who were consumers of Seafood X and Y Restaurants in Manado City, who were selected using the purposive sampling method. The determination of the sample count refers to the guidelines of Hair et al. (2022) for the analysis of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using the inverse square root method approach. Assuming a statistical strength of 80%, a significance level of 5%, and an estimated minimum path coefficient of 0.20, it was obtained that 155 respondents were sufficient to test this research model. Respondents were selected based on age and status criteria, namely Generation Z and Millennial consumers aged 21–40 years who have worked. This group is considered representative as digital consumers who are responsive to online

marketing strategies. Data collection was carried out through questionnaires distributed online and offline with a purposive sampling approach.

The selection of restaurants X and Y as the object of the research also used purposive sampling, focusing on the activities and digital existence of each restaurant. Restaurant selection criteria include presence on digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Google Maps, and online ordering apps; the intensity of digital promotion through social media, influencers, paid ads, and creative content; the number and quality of online reviews; social media interactions in the form of likes, comments, and shares; and relevance to digital market segmentation, especially Gen Z and Millennials. The process of determining the two restaurants was carried out without physical observation, but through digital profiling, namely social media content analysis, online review statistics, and recording digital promotional activities carried out in the last three months. This approach ensures that the research focuses on the influence of digital marketing strategies on consumers who are active in the digital world.

### **Determination of Research Objects: Restaurant X and Restaurant Y**

In this study, the researcher used a comparative approach to two seafood restaurants that have different geographical and strategic characteristics in Manado City, namely Restaurant X located in the beach area and Restaurant Y located near the airport. The determination of these two objects is carried out based on the following considerations:

#### **1. Variety of Strategic Locations**

Restaurant X (beach area) was chosen because it represents restaurants with natural tourist attractions (such as sea views, sunset, and relaxed atmosphere) that are usually visited by tourists and local customers for a pleasant dining experience. Restaurant Y (near the airport) represents a restaurant with high accessibility, which is often visited by customers who need fast, practical, and strategic service, such as business people or travelers coming or departing from the airport.

#### **2. Different Market Segmentations**

Restaurant X tends to cater to a group of customers looking for a complete and relaxing dining experience, suitable for families, tourists, and large groups while restaurant Y tends to cater to consumers with high mobility, such as young professionals, business people, or travelers who need time efficiency.

#### **1. Contrasting the Context of the Consumer Experience**

By strategically choosing two different restaurants, researchers were able to compare how variables such as Perceived Image, Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM), Sales Promotion, and Popularity influenced consumers' preferences and purchase intent in two different contexts: tourist location-based culinary experiences vs. mobility locations.

#### **2. Similarities of Business Types for Variable Control**

Although the locations are different, the two restaurants have the same product category (seafood restaurant) and target the younger and adult generations, so that they can be used as a control in the comparison between the variables tested, without being influenced by different types of businesses.

#### **3. Data Accessibility and Research Feasibility**

The selection was made based on easy access to consumer data, observations, and permits for data collection through questionnaires and direct observation from both restaurants.

### Variable Operationalization

In this study, all variables used were operationalized so that they could be measured quantitatively through questionnaire instruments. The operationalization of variables is compiled based on theories and indicators that have been developed in previous studies and adjusted to the context of this study, namely seafood restaurants in Manado City. Each variable will be described through a conceptual definition, operational definition, indicators, and question items measured using a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

**Table 1.1** Variables and Operational Definitions

| Variable                               | Indicator                                                         | Items (Questions)                                                                                                               | Source                      |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Perceived Image</i>                 | Quality of Service                                                | I perceive this restaurant as having a fast and responsive service image.                                                       | (Akgunduz et al., 2025)     |
|                                        | Authenticity                                                      | I see this restaurant as having a unique and distinctive menu image.                                                            | Ellitan (2021)              |
|                                        | Reputation and Branding                                           | In my view, this restaurant has a good image because it is frequently recommended by many people.                               | (Nagy et al., 2021)         |
|                                        | Expectation Conformity                                            | In my view, the quality of service and food at this restaurant matches the image I had in mind.                                 | A(Akgunduz et al., 2025)    |
|                                        | Emotional Connection                                              | In my view, the image of this restaurant creates a sense of emotional closeness for me.                                         | (Debataraja et al., 2024)   |
| <i>Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)</i> | <i>Volume of Online Reviews</i>                                   | I am more interested in trying restaurants that have many positive reviews and ratings on online platforms such as Google.      | (Ghimire et al., 2022)      |
|                                        | <i>Use of Social Media</i>                                        | I am attracted to a restaurant when I frequently see reviews or experience content on social media such as Instagram or TikTok. | (Shah et al., 2023b)        |
|                                        | <i>The Restaurant's Advertising Strategies</i>                    | I tend to visit a restaurant after seeing user recommendations or reviews widely shared on digital platforms.                   | (Yu & Liu, 2024)            |
|                                        | <i>Crowdedness Perception</i>                                     | When a restaurant is widely discussed or goes viral on social media, I feel it is worth trying.                                 | (Adhitama et al., 2023)     |
|                                        | <i>Customer-Generated Content</i>                                 | UCustomer reviews on digital platforms influence my perception and decision regarding a restaurant.                             | (Zhang et al., 2021)        |
| <i>Sales Promotion</i>                 | <i>Brand Image and Customer loyalty</i>                           | Promotions offered by the restaurant make me more likely to choose it over other options.                                       | (Afridhianika et al., 2024) |
|                                        | <i>Sales Promotion Impact on Purchase Decision</i>                | I have made unplanned purchases due to attractive promotional offers.                                                           | (Prayitno, 2023)            |
|                                        | <i>Promotional Effectiveness &amp; Location-Based Advertising</i> | Restaurant promotion information that I see on social media attracts my attention.                                              | Ryu, (2023)                 |
|                                        | <i>Psychological Impact of Promotions</i>                         | Attractive price offers greatly influence my purchase decision.                                                                 | (Huo et al., 2023)          |
|                                        | <i>Promotional Strategies</i>                                     | Discounts or coupons offered by the restaurant motivate me more to visit.                                                       | (Tran, 2022)                |

|                              |                                                   |                                                                                                                   |                         |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Restaurant Popularity</i> | <i>Volume of Online Reviews</i>                   | I see this restaurant as having many reviews and ratings on online platforms such as Google or other review apps. | (Ghimire et al., 2022)  |
|                              | <i>Crowdedness Perception</i>                     | In my opinion, a restaurant with many visitors reflects a high level of popularity.                               | (Adhitama et al., 2023) |
|                              | <i>Social Media Engagement Level</i>              | I often see this restaurant tagged or mentioned by users and influencers on social media.                         | (Shah et al., 2023a)    |
|                              | <i>Actual Visit Count</i>                         | I notice that this restaurant is often full, leading me to consider it quite popular.                             | (Lyu et al., 2023)      |
|                              | <i>Community Restaurant Reputation</i>            | This restaurant is widely known and frequently discussed by many people.                                          | (Lyu et al., 2023)      |
| <i>User Preference</i>       | <i>The Characteristics of Recommender Systems</i> | I tend to follow restaurant recommendations from sources that match my taste.                                     | (Uta et al., 2024)      |
|                              | <i>Trust Based Recommendations</i>                | I prefer restaurants recommended by people I trust.                                                               | (Shambour et al., 2022) |
|                              | <i>User Emotional Response</i>                    | I am more likely to consider a restaurant when the reviews I read align with my personal preferences.             | (Nandan & Kumar, 2023)  |
|                              | <i>Historical Interactions</i>                    | I have a preference for certain types of cuisine based on previous dining experiences.                            | (Santhosh et al., 2024) |
|                              | <i>Group Dining Preference</i>                    | I have different dining place preferences for certain situations, such as when with family or friends.            | (Rais et al., 2024)     |
| <i>Purchase Intention</i>    | <i>Social and Personal Factors</i>                | I intend to visit this restaurant in the near future.                                                             | (Budiman, 2021)         |
|                              | <i>Credibility of Endorsements</i>                | I am willing to try the food or menu offered by this restaurant.                                                  | (Tsen & Cheng, 2021)    |
|                              | <i>Social Networks and Peer Influence</i>         | I plan to recommend this restaurant to others.                                                                    | Yida & Esther (2023)    |
|                              | <i>Brand Image and Celebrity Endorsements</i>     | I am more inclined to choose products from well-known brands with a good reputation.                              | (Santoso, 2022)         |
|                              | <i>Pricing and Product Quality</i>                | I intend to purchase products that I consider to have appropriate quality and price.                              | (Wardoyo, 2023)         |

Source: Compiled from various literature sources by the researcher (2025).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Respondent Overview (Demographics)

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method to examine the influence of Perceived Image, Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM), sales promotion, and restaurant popularity on consumer preferences and purchase intentions in seafood restaurants X and Y in Manado City. The study respondents were consumers who had visited each restaurant, with a sample of 300 respondents, consisting of 150 respondents from seafood restaurant X and 150 respondents from seafood restaurant Y. Data collection was carried out through a questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale that was appropriate to measure consumer perception quantitatively. Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) approach through SmartPLS 4.0 software, which allows simultaneous and structured testing of intervariable relationships. This

approach is used to obtain an empirical picture of the factors that influence consumer preferences and purchase intentions at the two seafood restaurants.

**Table 1.2** Respondent Profile

| Respondent Profile                 | Category              | Frequency (n) |              | Percentage (%) |              |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
|                                    |                       | Restaurant X  | Restaurant Y | Restaurant X   | Restaurant Y |
| Age                                | 17-20 years old       | 39            | 27           | 25.16%         | 17.42%       |
|                                    | 21-24 years old       | 47            | 63           | 30.32%         | 40.65%       |
|                                    | 25-28 years old       | 39            | 48           | 25.16%         | 30.97%       |
|                                    | >28 years old         | 36            | 17           | 23.23%         | 10.97%       |
| Activity Status                    | School                | 11            | 22           | 7.10%          | 14.19%       |
|                                    | Lecture               | 38            | 42           | 24.52%         | 27.10%       |
|                                    | Work                  | 88            | 66           | 56.77%         | 42.58%       |
|                                    | Others                | 18            | 27           | 11.61%         | 17.42%       |
| Monthly Income (Rp)                | <1,000,000            | 26            | 30           | 16.77%         | 19.35%       |
|                                    | 1.000.001-3.000.000   | 41            | 53           | 26.45%         | 34.19%       |
|                                    | 3.000.001-5.000.000   | 41            | 38           | 26.45%         | 24.52%       |
|                                    | >5.000.001            | 47            | 34           | 30.32%         | 21.94%       |
| Frequency of Eating Out Eating Out | 1 time/month          | 19            | 22           | 12.26%         | 14.19%       |
|                                    | 2 times/month         | 37            | 35           | 23.87%         | 22.58%       |
|                                    | 3 times/month         | 99            | 98           | 63.87%         | 63.23%       |
|                                    | >3 times/month        | 72            | 58           | 46.45%         | 37.42%       |
| Dining Out Expenses (Rp)           | <Rp. 100,000          | 19            | 11           | 12.26%         | 7.10%        |
|                                    | IDR 100,001-250,000   | 37            | 36           | 23.87%         | 23.23%       |
|                                    | IDR 250,001-500,000   | 49            | 49           | 31.61%         | 31.61%       |
|                                    | IDR 500,001-1,000,000 | 21            | 38           | 13.55%         | 24.52%       |
|                                    | >Rp 1.000.001         | 29            | 21           | 18.71%         | 13.55%       |

Source: Primary data processed by the researcher (2025).

Based on the results of data processing, the characteristics of respondents in seafood restaurants X and Y in Manado City showed the dominance of the productive age group, especially in the age range of 21–24 years and 25–28 years. These findings indicate that the main consumers of both restaurants come from the socially and economically active age segment, making them relevant in shaping preferences and purchase intentions for seafood restaurants. In terms of activity status, the respondents of seafood restaurant X are dominated by working consumers, while in seafood restaurant Y the distribution of respondents is relatively more diverse. This difference indicates that restaurant locations also affect consumer profiles, where restaurants located near the sea tend to attract consumers with a pattern of recreational visits, while restaurants located in the airport area are more likely to be visited by consumers with a more heterogeneous background of activities.

Based on monthly income, the majority of respondents in both restaurants are in the middle-income category, namely IDR 1,000,001 to IDR 5,000,000. However, the proportion of respondents with income above IDR 5,000,000 is relatively higher in seafood restaurant X than in seafood restaurant Y. This indicates that the location and atmosphere factor of the restaurant has the potential to affect the attractiveness of consumers with higher income levels. In terms of consumption behavior, respondents to both restaurants had a relatively high frequency of eating out of the home, with the majority making visits at least three times

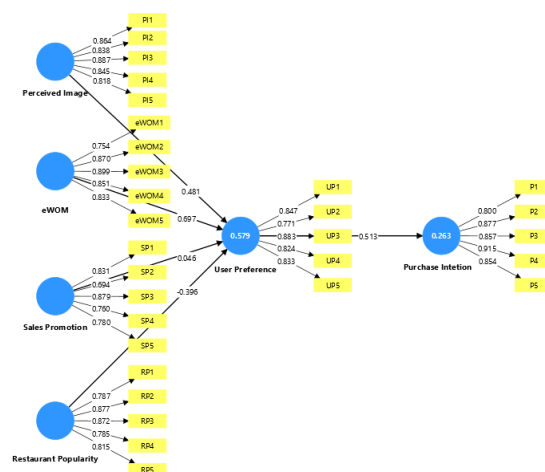
per month. The pattern of eating out is also dominated by the range of IDR 250,001 to IDR 500,000 per month. The similarity of this pattern suggests that the two restaurants serve a segment of consumers with relatively comparable consumption habits, thus supporting a comparative analysis in testing the influence of the study variables.

### Statistical Data Analysis

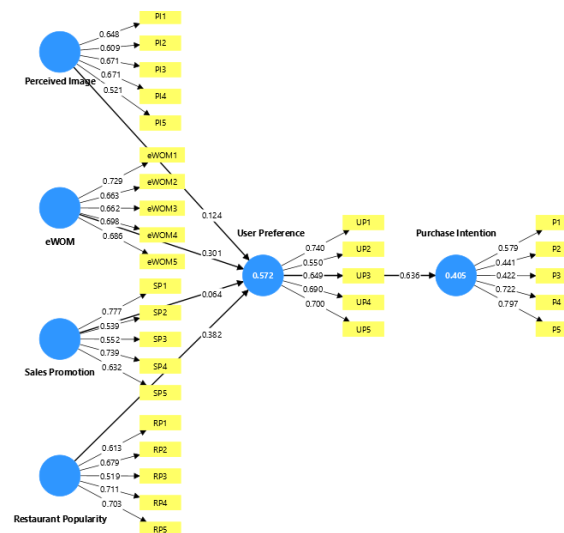
The statistical method used to test the hypothesis in this study is Partial Least Square (PLS). PLS is one of the analysis approaches in Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on variance. This method was chosen because it has high flexibility, does not require strict data distribution assumptions, and is able to provide reliable estimates despite using a relatively limited sample size. In the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach, the analysis model consists of two main components, namely the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model). The measurement model is used to explain the extent to which the manifest variable (indicator) is able to represent the latent variable being studied. Through the testing of the measurement model, it is possible to identify indicators that have a dominant contribution in forming each latent construct. Once the validity and reliability of the latent construct are met, the analysis is continued on the structural model.

The structural model aims to test the causal relationship between latent variables, specifically the influence of exogenous latent variables on endogenous latent variables. In this study, the variables Perceived Image, Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM), Sales Promotion, and Restaurant Popularity played a role as exogenous latent variables that were tested for their influence on User Preference as an intervening variable, as well as on Purchase Intention as the main endogenous latent variable. User preferences were also tested for their role in mediating the relationship between exogenous variables and consumer purchase intentions. Overall, this research model consists of six latent variables, each of which is measured through several manifest variables compiled based on literature review and previous research. Model estimation was carried out using SmartPLS software version 4, which is specifically designed for variance-based SEM data processing. The structural model of this study is presented in Figure 1, which illustrates the direction and relationship between constructs in the study.

### Outer Model Analysis



**Figure 2.** Results of the Structural Model (Restaurant X)



**Figure 3.** Results of the Structural Model (Restaurant Y)

The purpose of convergent validity is to ensure that there is a strong relationship between the indicator and the latent construct or variable being measured. In the PLS-SEM approach, validity testing includes convergent validity and discriminant validity. The validity of the convergence can be declared fulfilled if the factor loading value of each indicator reaches or exceeds 0.708, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value is at least 0.50 (Cheung et al., 2024)

### Assessing Structural Model

Multicollinearity testing in the structural model was carried out by analyzing the value of the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) in each of the relationship paths between latent variables, both in Restaurant X and Restaurant Y. The results of the analysis showed that all predictor variables in both models had VIF values below the recommended tolerance limit, which was less than 5.

In Restaurant X, the VIF value is in the range of 1,000 to 4,998, with the highest value in the Restaurant Popularity to User Preference path (VIF = 4,998). Meanwhile, in Restaurant Y, the VIF value is in the range of 1,000 to 2,286, which indicates a relatively lower level of collinearity than Restaurant X. Thus, the causal relationship between latent variables in this study can be analyzed and interpreted validly and reliably.

**Table 4.** Hypothesis Testing

| Restaurant X                                 |                                      |                  |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Hypothesis                                   | Result                               | Reject/ Accepted |
| H1 = Perceived Image → User Preference       | t-statistic = 5.142; p-value = 0.000 | H1 Accepted      |
| H2 = eWOM → User Preference                  | t-statistic = 4.891; p-value = 0.000 | H2 Accepted      |
| H3 = Sales Promotion → User Preference       | t-statistic = 0.422; p-value = 0.673 | H3 Rejected      |
| H4 = Restaurant Popularity → User Preference | t-statistic = 2.387; p-value = 0.017 | H4 Accepted      |
| H5 = User Preference → Repurchase Intention  | t-statistic = 4.695; p-value = 0.000 | H5 Accepted      |
| Restaurant Y                                 |                                      |                  |
| Hypothesis                                   | Result                               | Reject/ Accepted |
| H1 = Perceived Image → User Preference       | t-statistic = 1.252; p-value = 0.211 | H1 Rejected      |
| H2 = eWOM → User Preference                  | t-statistic = 2.997; p-value = 0.003 | H2 Accepted      |

|                                              |                                       |             |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| H3 = Sales Promotion → User Preference       | t-statistic = 0.626; p-value = 0.532  | H3 Rejected |
| H4 = Restaurant Popularity → User Preference | t-statistic = 3.819; p-value = 0.000  | H4 Accepted |
| H5 = User Preference → Repurchase Intention  | t-statistic = 11.436; p-value = 0.000 | H5 Accepted |

Source: Primary data processed using SmartPLS (2025).

Based on the results of the hypothesis test presented in Table 4, the test was carried out by analyzing the t-statistical and p-value values in each relationship between latent variables in the structural model. A hypothesis is declared acceptable if the t-statistic value  $> 1.96$  and the p-value  $< 0.05$ . In Restaurant X, the test results show that the Perceived Image has a positive and significant effect on User Preference (t-statistic = 5.142; p-value = 0.000). These findings indicate that consumer perception of restaurant imagery has an important role in shaping user preferences. In addition, Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) was also shown to have a significant effect on User Preference (t-statistic = 4.891; p-value = 0.000), which shows that information and reviews circulating online also affect consumer preference for Restaurant X.

In contrast, the Sales Promotion variable did not show a significant influence on User Preference (t-statistic = 0.422; p-value = 0.673), so the related hypothesis was rejected. These results indicate that sales promotion has not been the main factor in shaping user preferences in the context of Restaurant X. Meanwhile, Restaurant Popularity has a significant effect on User Preference (t-statistic = 2.387; p-value = 0.017), which shows that the level of restaurant popularity also strengthens consumer preferences. Furthermore, User Preference was shown to have a positive and significant influence on Repurchase Intention (t-statistic = 4.695; p-value = 0.000), which confirms the role of user preference in driving repurchase intent. In Restaurant Y, the results of the hypothesis test showed a different pattern. Perceived Image had no significant effect on User Preference (t-statistic = 1.252; p-value = 0.211), so the hypothesis was rejected. These findings indicate that restaurant image is not the dominant factor in shaping user preferences at Restaurant Y. Nevertheless, Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) has been shown to have a significant effect on User Preference (t-statistic = 2.997; p-value = 0.003), which confirms the importance of the role of online information and recommendations in shaping consumer preferences.

Similar to Restaurant X, Sales Promotion on Restaurant Y also did not show a significant effect on User Preference (t-statistic = 0.626; p-value = 0.532). In contrast, Restaurant Popularity has a positive and significant influence on User Preference (t-statistic = 3.819; p-value = 0.000). Furthermore, the test results showed that User Preference had a very strong and significant effect on Repurchase Intention (t-statistic = 11.436; p-value = 0.000), which indicated that user preference was the main determinant in driving repurchase intention in Restaurant Y. Overall, the results of the hypothesis test showed that there was a difference in the influence pattern between the variables in Restaurant X and Restaurant Y. Restaurants, consumer experiences, as well as different marketing contexts can influence the strength of relationships between variables in the research model.

## CONCLUSION

This study compared the influence of Perceived Image, E-WOM, Sales Promotion, and Restaurant Popularity on User Preference and Repurchase Intention across two seafood

restaurants in Manado City, finding that E-WOM and Restaurant Popularity consistently and positively influenced User Preference in both contexts, while Perceived Image was only significant in Restaurant X, and Sales Promotion had no meaningful effect in either setting. User Preference emerged as the primary mediating variable linking digital marketing factors to Repurchase Intention, with particularly strong predictive power in Restaurant Y, confirming that quality dining experiences and hedonic value are key drivers of consumer loyalty. The divergence in results between the two restaurants underscores that marketing strategies must be tailored to each restaurant's specific context, consumer segment, and dominant communication channels rather than applied universally. Future research should expand the geographical scope beyond Manado City to test the generalizability of these findings across culturally and demographically diverse Indonesian cities, while also incorporating variables such as digital platform engagement and service quality to more comprehensively capture the factors shaping consumer preferences and repurchase intentions in the competitive seafood restaurant industry.

## REFERENCES

- Adhitama, A. B., Kurniawati, K., & Masnita, Y. (2023). Attracting Consumer Food: The Effect of Perceived Crowdedness. *Journal of Social Research*, 2(9), 3196–3208. <https://doi.org/10.55324/josr.v2i9.1374>
- Antara, I. M. R. S., & Rastini, N. M. (2022). The Influence of Brand Image, Sales Promotion and Quality of Service on Customer Satisfaction Car Rental Service. *European Journal of Business and Management Research*, 7(2), 223–226. <https://doi.org/10.24018/ejbmr.2022.7.2.1273>
- Balqis, P., Dharta, F. Y., & Oxygentri, O. (2023). Pengaruh e-WOM Terhadap Minat Beli Produk Kecantikan. *Da'watuna: Journal of Communication and Islamic Broadcasting*, 4(2), 681–686. <https://doi.org/10.47467/dawatuna.v4i2.4856>
- Brar, V., Kumar, A., & Ramgade, A. (2022). Problems in Evaluating the Effectiveness of Sales Promotion Activities. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*, 3(7), 1239–1243. <https://doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.03.07.02>
- Budiman, S. (2021). The Effect of Social and Personality Factor on Attitude Toward Brand and Purchase Intention. *Jurnal Dinamika Manajemen*, 12(1), 41–52. <https://doi.org/10.15294/jdm.v12i1.28866>
- Chen, P., Wu, J., & Li, N. (2023). A Personalized Navigation Route Recommendation Strategy Based on Differential Perceptron Tracking User's Driving Preference. *Computational Intelligence and Neuroscience*, 2023(1). <https://doi.org/10.1155/2023/8978398>
- Debataraja, S. M., Wong, W. K., Pandiangan, C. B., & Darsono, S. N. A. C. (2024). Investigating the e-WOM Features Influencing Purchase Intention at Korean Restaurants based on SOR Theory. *Journal of Economics Research and Social Sciences*, 8(1), 70–86. <https://doi.org/10.18196/jerss.v8i1.21517>
- Dinh, T. C. T., & Lee, Y. (2022). “I want to be as trendy as influencers” – how “fear of missing out” leads to buying intention for products endorsed by social media influencers. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 16(3), 346–364.

- <https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-04-2021-0127>
- Fusté-Forné, F. (2022). Seafood ‘speaks’ in Costa Daurada’s Michelin-starred restaurants (Catalonia, Spain). *Journal of Marine and Island Cultures*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.21463/jmic.2022.11.1.20>
- Ghimire, B., Shanaev, S., & Lin, Z. (2022). Effects of official versus online review ratings. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 92, 103247. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2021.103247>
- Handani, N. D., & Kim, H.-S. (2023). Unlocking Customer Satisfaction of Halal Restaurant in South Korea through Online Review Analysis. *Environment and Social Psychology*, 7(2). <https://doi.org/10.18063/esp.v7.i2.1501>
- Jayanto, V., Fabiola, J., Hasim, H. A. binti, & Tunjungsari, H. K. (2022). The Influence of Online Influencers on Consumer Purchase Intention. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.220404.301>
- Ji, W., Meng, X., & Zhang, Y. (2022). STARec: Adaptive Learning with Spatiotemporal and Activity Influence for POI Recommendation. *ACM Transactions on Information Systems*, 40(4), 1–40. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3485631>
- Kosli, J., Yuwono, V. K., & Soediro, M. (2023). The Influence of Brand Image, Product Quality, and Restaurant Atmosphere on Consumer Repurchase Intention (A Study of Restaurant X in Makassar). *JMBI UNSRAT (Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen Bisnis Dan Inovasi Universitas Sam Ratulangi)*, 10(2), 1317–1326. <https://doi.org/10.35794/jmbi.v10i2.49387>
- Lis, B., & Fischer, M. (2020). Analyzing different types of negative online consumer reviews. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 29(5), 637–653. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-05-2018-1876>
- Nandan, M., & Kumar, G. P. (2023). Designing an Efficient Restaurant Recommendation System Based on Customer Review Comments by Augmenting Hybrid Filtering Techniques. *Universal Journal of Operations and Management*, 59–79. <https://doi.org/10.37256/ujom.2220232998>
- Prayitno, S. B. (2023). Analysis of the perception of free shipping promotions on purchasing decisions on the Shopee marketplace. *Journal of Management Science (JMAS)*, 6(2), 199–205. <https://doi.org/10.35335/jmas.v6i2.230>
- Rais, R. N. Bin, Noman, M., Khalid, O., & Khan, I. A. (2024). A Hybrid Group-Based Food Recommender Framework for Handling Overlapping Memberships. *Applied Sciences*, 14(13), 5843. <https://doi.org/10.3390/app14135843>
- Rezeki, S. R. I., Fani Sartika, Tengku Kespandiar, Ita Nurcholifah, & Wenny Desty Febrian. (2023). Analysis of The Influence of Brand Image and Negative Electronic Word of Mouth on Repurchase Intention of Ice Cream Aice Consumers. *JEMSI (Jurnal Ekonomi, Manajemen, Dan Akuntansi)*, 9(5), 2050–2054. <https://doi.org/10.35870/jemsi.v9i5.1538>
- Rizaldi, H. (2022). The influence of brand popularity, perceived quality, price, and need on purchase intention iPhone products in Purwokerto. *Jurnal Akuntansi, Manajemen Dan Ekonomi*, Vol 24 No 2. <https://doi.org/10.32424/1.jame.2022.24.2.5427>
- Satifa Putri, Y., & Widyastuti, H. (2023). The Effect of Electronic Word of Mouth, Destination Image on Tourist Visiting Decisions at Nagari Tuo Pariangan Tourism Object. *TIJAB (The International Journal of Applied Business)*, 7(1), 104–114.

<https://doi.org/10.20473/tijab.v7.i1.2023.43333>

- Shah, P., Bhusal, N., & Chettri, K. K. (2023a). Influence of Social Media Usage on Generation Z's Choice in Selecting Restaurants in Kathmandu. *Journal of Business and Social Sciences Research*, 8(1), 95–110. <https://doi.org/10.3126/jbssr.v8i1.56592>
- Shah, P., Bhusal, N., & Chettri, K. K. (2023b). Influence of Social Media Usage on Generation Z's Choice in Selecting Restaurants in Kathmandu. *Journal of Business and Social Sciences Research*, 8(1), 95–110. <https://doi.org/10.3126/jbssr.v8i1.56592>
- Thirusanku, J., & Kumar, R. (2023). The Power Of Electronic Word Of Mouth. *Paripex Indian Journal Of Research*, 127–132. <https://doi.org/10.36106/paripex/0409735>
- Tran, V. D. (2022). Consumer impulse buying behavior: the role of confidence as moderating effect. *Heliyon*, 8(6), e09672. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e09672>
- Untari, D. T., & Satria, B. (2022). Exploring Conventional Models of Purchase Intention: “Betawi Ora” Restourants in Bekasi. *International Journal of Professional Business Review*, 7(4), e0586. <https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2022.v7i4.e586>
- Valerie, C., Purnomo, D., & Kamal, I. (2023). Determining Supporting Factors For Green Purchase Intentions In Agro-Industrial Products With The Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP). *International Journal of Management and Business Economics*, 2(1), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.58540/ijmebe.v2i1.426>
- Viana, D. B., & Oliveira, B. B. (2023). The Art of the Deal: Machine Learning Based Trade Promotion Evaluation (pp. 229–251). [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-20788-4\\_15](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-20788-4_15)
- Wardoyo, S. A. (2023). The Influence Of Trust, Product Quality And Price Perception On Purchase Decisions Mediated By Purchase Intention. *Jurnal Locus Penelitian Dan Pengabdian*, 2(10), 1010–1019. <https://doi.org/10.58344/locus.v2i10.1770>
- Yang, M., & Luo, S. (2021). Effects of Rural Restaurants' Outdoor Dining Environment Dimensions on Customers' Satisfaction: A Consumer Perspective. *Foods*, 10(9), 2172. <https://doi.org/10.3390/foods10092172>
- Zhao, L. (2021). Personalized recommendation by using fused user preference to construct smart library. *Internet Technology Letters*, 4(3). <https://doi.org/10.1002/itl2.273>