

*Research Article*

## What Drives Customers to Buy? The Dominant Role of Menu Variation at Cafe Rumakadua, Indonesia

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of social media marketing and menu variety on purchase decisions, with price as a mediating variable, at Cafe Rumakadua. The rapid growth of the culinary MSME industry in Indonesia has intensified competition, prompting cafes to optimize their digital marketing strategies and innovate their products simultaneously. This research employed a quantitative approach, using survey data collected from 200 Cafe Rumakadua customers via purposive sampling. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). The findings indicate that menu variety has a positive, significant effect on both price perception and purchase decisions, demonstrating that diverse menu offerings strengthen consumer value perception and encourage purchase behavior. Social media marketing significantly influences price perception but does not directly affect purchase decisions. Furthermore, price does not significantly influence purchase decisions and fails to mediate the relationship between social media marketing, menu variation, and purchase decisions. These results suggest that consumers are more attracted to product diversity and experiential value than to price alone. This study contributes to the digital marketing and consumer behavior literature by emphasizing the strategic importance of menu innovation in shaping customer purchasing decisions in the culinary MSME sector.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Menu Variation, Price Perception, Purchase Decision, Culinary MSMEs

JEL Classification: M31, D12, L83

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## 1. Introduction

The culinary industry in Indonesia has experienced significant growth in recent years, particularly within the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector. According to data from Badan Pusat Statistik, the food and beverage industry contributes substantially to the national economy and remains one of the largest contributors to Indonesia's non-oil and gas manufacturing sector (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023).

The rapid development of digital technology and changing consumer lifestyles have intensified competition among culinary businesses, especially cafés and restaurants. In this highly competitive environment, business actors are required to develop innovative marketing strategies and improve product offerings to maintain consumer interest and purchasing behavior. One of the most widely adopted strategies in the digital era is social media marketing, which allows businesses to interact directly with consumers and promote products efficiently through platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook (Alalwan, 2018).

Social media marketing has become an essential promotional tool because consumers increasingly rely on digital content and online reviews before making purchasing decisions. Mangold and Faulds (2009) argued that social media is a hybrid element of the promotion mix that enables firms to communicate with consumers more interactively than traditional media do. Furthermore, Kim and Ko (2012) emphasized that social media marketing activities positively influence customer engagement, brand awareness, and purchase intention. In the culinary business context, visual content such as food photography, short videos, and customer-generated reviews can stimulate consumer curiosity and influence dining decisions. Recent studies also indicate that effective social media marketing strategies can improve perceived product value and strengthen customer trust toward culinary brands (Leung et al., 2022). Therefore, social media marketing is considered a strategic factor influencing consumer purchasing decisions in the café industry.

In addition to digital marketing, menu variation also plays a crucial role in attracting consumers and encouraging repeat purchases. Menu variety reflects a company's ability to offer diverse products that cater to different consumer preferences and expectations. Kivetz and Simonson (2002) stated that consumers generally prefer businesses that offer a wider range of choices because this increases perceived flexibility and satisfaction. In the café industry, menu innovation and diversity are important competitive advantages because consumers tend to seek new culinary experiences and unique product offerings. Berger and Schwartz (2011) further explained that product diversity can stimulate consumer interest and increase word-of-mouth communication, ultimately affecting purchase decisions. Therefore, cafés that can continuously develop attractive, varied menu options are more likely to maintain customer loyalty and improve sales performance.

Another important factor affecting consumer behavior is price perception. Price is considered not only a monetary sacrifice but also a representation of product quality and the value perceived by consumers (Zeithaml, 1988). Consumers often evaluate whether the price is appropriate relative to the benefits they receive from the product or service. Kotler and Armstrong (2018) argued that pricing strategies significantly influence customer satisfaction and purchasing decisions because consumers tend to compare prices with product quality, service experience, and alternative offerings available in the market. In the context of cafés, consumers may tolerate relatively higher prices when they perceive superior menu quality, attractive ambiance, or strong social media branding. Consequently, price can serve as a mediating variable that links marketing activities and product attributes to consumer purchasing decisions.

Several previous studies have examined the relationships among social media marketing, product attributes, price perception, and purchasing decisions. Alalwan (2018) found that social media advertising positively affects customer purchase intention through increased consumer engagement. Similarly, Kim and Ko (2012) concluded that social media marketing activities significantly influence customer equity and consumer responses. Meanwhile, research conducted by Berger and Schwartz (2011) highlighted the importance of product diversity in shaping consumer behavior. However, previous studies generally examined these variables separately and focused primarily on large companies or international brands. Research discussing the simultaneous influence of social media marketing and menu variation on purchasing decisions with price as a mediating variable, particularly in local café businesses in Indonesia, remains limited. This indicates a research gap that warrants further investigation.

The business phenomenon occurring at Cafe Rumakadua reflects these issues. As a local café operating in an increasingly competitive culinary market, Cafe Rumakadua actively uses social media to promote its offerings and attract customers. The café also offers a variety of menu options to meet diverse consumer preferences. Nevertheless, fluctuations in consumer purchasing decisions suggest that digital promotion and menu diversity alone may not be sufficient to drive purchases without accounting for consumers' price perceptions. Some consumers may perceive the café's pricing as appropriate and valuable, while others may compare prices with competing cafés offering similar products. Therefore, understanding the relationships among social media marketing, menu variation, price perception, and purchasing decisions is essential for improving business competitiveness and customer satisfaction.

Based on the explanations above, this study aims to analyze the influence of social media marketing and menu variation on purchasing decisions with price as a mediating variable at Cafe Rumakadua. Specifically, this study seeks to determine whether social media marketing significantly affects price perception and purchasing decisions, whether menu variation influences purchasing decisions, and whether price acts as a mediating variable between the independent variables and purchasing decisions. The findings of this study are expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of marketing and consumer behavior literature, particularly in the culinary MSME sector. In practice, the results may serve as strategic guidance for café managers and culinary business owners in designing effective digital marketing strategies, menu innovation, and pricing policies to influence customer purchasing decisions.

The novelty of this research lies in integrating social media marketing and menu variation into a single conceptual framework, with price as a mediating variable, in the context of a local Indonesian café. Unlike previous studies that mostly focused on direct relationships between marketing activities and purchasing behavior, this study examines the mediating mechanism of price perception in influencing consumer decision-making. In addition, the use of Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) enables a more comprehensive analysis of complex relationships among variables. Therefore, this study offers a more contextual and practical understanding of consumer purchasing behavior in Indonesia's growing culinary industry.

Despite the growing body of research on social media marketing, product attributes, and consumer purchase decisions, existing studies have not sufficiently explained why high levels of social media engagement do not always translate into actual purchasing behavior, particularly in the context of local café businesses. Furthermore, while menu variation is widely recognized as an important marketing strategy, limited evidence exists regarding its relative influence compared to promotional activities in experiential consumption settings, where consumers often prioritize novelty, variety, and dining experiences over economic considerations. Therefore, this study addresses this gap by examining whether social media marketing and menu variation directly and indirectly influence purchase decisions through price perception at Cafe Rumakadua, thereby providing a more nuanced understanding of consumer decision-making in Indonesia's culinary MSME sector.

## **2. Literature Review and Hypothesis**

### **Literature Review**

#### **Social Media Marketing**

Social media marketing has become one of the most important promotional strategies in the digital era because it enables businesses to communicate interactively with consumers through online platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and Twitter. Mangold and Faulds (2009) explained that social media serves as a hybrid element of the promotion mix, where companies and consumers simultaneously exchange information and opinions about products and services. In addition, Kim and Ko (2012) stated that social media marketing activities involving entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and electronic word of mouth significantly influence customer engagement and brand perception. The rapid growth of digital technology has also changed consumer behavior, particularly in the culinary industry, where consumers rely heavily on online content before making purchasing decisions. Alalwan (2018) found that features of social

media advertising positively affect purchase intention because consumers perceive social media content as attractive, informative, and trustworthy. Furthermore, Leung et al. (2022) emphasized that visual content and customer interaction through social media platforms strengthen consumer trust and perceived value toward culinary businesses. Therefore, social media marketing is considered a strategic factor that can influence consumer purchasing behavior and improve business competitiveness in the digital marketplace.

### **Menu Variation**

Menu variation refers to the diversity of products offered by a business to satisfy different consumer preferences and needs. In the culinary industry, menu diversity is considered a competitive advantage because consumers tend to seek unique dining experiences and broader product choices. Kivetz and Simonson (2002) argued that consumers generally prefer businesses that offer more diverse product alternatives because this increases flexibility and perceived satisfaction during the purchasing process. Berger and Schwartz (2011) also explained that product diversity stimulates consumer curiosity and encourages word-of-mouth communication, which positively affects consumer interest and purchasing behavior. In addition, Kotler and Keller (2016) stated that product strategy, including menu variation and innovation, plays an important role in attracting customers and maintaining long-term loyalty. Consumers are more likely to revisit cafés that continuously introduce new menu items and adapt to changing consumer trends. Solomon (2020) further emphasized that consumers in experiential industries such as cafés often prioritize novelty and product uniqueness when making purchasing decisions. Therefore, menu variation is an essential factor influencing consumer satisfaction, loyalty, and purchasing decisions in the culinary business sector.

### **Price**

Price is one of the most influential factors in consumer purchasing behavior because consumers assess whether the benefits they receive from a product are proportional to the monetary sacrifice they make. Kotler and Armstrong (2018) defined price as the amount of money charged for a product or service that reflects the value consumers exchange to obtain benefits. Zeithaml (1988) argued that consumers evaluate price not solely from an economic perspective but also from psychological and perceptual perspectives, in which price can represent product quality and value. In the culinary industry, consumers often compare prices with menu quality, service experience, and café atmosphere before making purchasing decisions. Anderson and Simester (2003) found that pricing strategies significantly influence consumer perceptions of value and business credibility because consumers often associate higher prices with better product quality. Moreover, pricing policies are closely related to marketing communication and product offerings, as consumers interpret price fairness based on information from promotions and product attributes. Therefore, price plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions, influencing purchase decisions, and mediating the relationship between marketing strategies and consumer behavior (Chandra & Mansur, 2024).

### **Purchase Decision**

The purchase decision is the process by which consumers select and buy products or services based on their needs, preferences, and evaluations of available alternatives. Kotler and Keller (2016) described the purchase decision as a process involving problem recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchasing action, and post-purchase behavior. Consumer decisions are influenced by factors such as marketing communication, product quality, social influence, and price perception. Solomon (2020) explained that consumer behavior in experiential industries, such as cafés, is strongly influenced by emotional and psychological factors, as consumers are not only purchasing products but also seeking comfort, social interaction, and memorable experiences. In addition, Alalwan (2018) found that digital marketing activities significantly influence purchase intention by increasing consumer engagement and brand awareness. Berger and Schwartz (2011) also argued that product diversity encourages consumers to explore more choices and increases the likelihood of purchasing behavior. Therefore, understanding the determinants of purchase decisions is essential for businesses seeking to improve customer satisfaction, loyalty, and competitive advantage in the culinary industry (Putra & Budiman, 2024).

## Hypothesis

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

Social media marketing enables businesses to communicate directly with consumers through engaging digital content, influencing consumer perceptions and purchasing behavior. Consumers increasingly rely on social media platforms to obtain information regarding products, promotions, and customer reviews before making purchasing decisions. Kim and Ko (2012) found that social media marketing activities significantly enhance customer engagement and positively influence consumer responses toward brands. Similarly, Alalwan (2018) stated that social media advertising features positively affect purchase intention because consumers perceive online content as attractive and informative. Mangold and Faulds (2009) also explained that social media enables stronger communication between businesses and consumers than traditional marketing channels. Furthermore, Leung et al. (2022) highlighted that visual content and social media interactions strengthen consumer trust and increase purchasing motivation. Based on these theoretical and empirical findings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H1: Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decisions.**

### **The Influence of Menu Variation on Purchase Decisions**

Menu variation is considered an important determinant of consumer purchasing decisions because consumers generally prefer businesses that offer diverse product choices and unique dining experiences. Kivetz and Simonson (2002) argued that product diversity increases consumer satisfaction and the flexibility to select products based on preferences. Berger and Schwartz (2011) further explained that product variety stimulates consumer curiosity and increases the likelihood of purchase. In addition, Kotler and Keller (2016) stated that innovative and varied product offerings strengthen customer attraction and loyalty. Solomon (2020) also emphasized that consumers in experiential industries such as cafés tend to seek novelty and unique experiences, making menu diversity an important factor influencing purchasing behavior. Therefore, based on these arguments and previous studies, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H2: Menu Variation has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decisions.**

### **The Influence of Price on Purchase Decisions**

Price plays a significant role in consumer purchasing decisions because consumers assess whether the value they receive from a product is proportional to the price paid. Kotler and Armstrong (2018) stated that consumers are more likely to purchase products when prices are perceived as fair and reasonable relative to product quality. Zeithaml (1988) also argued that price perception significantly affects consumer value evaluation and purchase intention. Anderson and Simester (2003) found that pricing strategies influence consumer trust and purchasing behavior because consumers often associate price with product quality and business credibility. In the culinary industry, consumers commonly compare prices with menu quality, service quality, and overall dining experience before making purchasing decisions. Therefore, based on theoretical and empirical evidence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H3: Price has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decisions.**

### **The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Price**

Social media marketing can shape consumer perceptions of price and product value by providing information on product quality, promotions, and brand image. Kim and Ko (2012) explained that social media marketing activities positively influence customer perceptions and brand value. Alalwan (2018) also found that digital marketing communication enhances consumers' perceived value toward products and services. Furthermore, Kotler and Keller (2016) argued that marketing communication helps consumers evaluate whether prices are appropriate based on the information received through promotional activities. Leung et al. (2022) additionally emphasized that attractive social media content can strengthen positive perceptions regarding price fairness and product quality. Therefore, based on these findings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H4: Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Price.**

### **The Influence of Menu Variation on Price**

Menu variation can influence consumer perceptions regarding price because diverse product offerings increase perceived value and flexibility in product selection. Berger and Schwartz (2011) argued that product diversity enhances product attractiveness and consumer interest. Kivetz and Simonson (2002) also stated that consumers tend to perceive higher value when businesses offer more diverse choices. Moreover, Kotler and Keller (2016) explained that product strategy significantly affects consumers' perceptions of value and their willingness to pay. Solomon (2020) further emphasized that consumers in experiential industries are more tolerant of higher prices when they receive broader product choices and unique experiences. Therefore, based on theoretical and empirical arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H5: Menu Variation has a positive and significant effect on Price.**

### **The Mediating Role of Price Between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Decisions**

Price is expected to mediate the relationship between social media marketing and purchase decisions, as consumers often evaluate product value and price fairness based on information from marketing activities. Zeithaml (1988) explained that consumers form value perceptions through the interaction between marketing communication and price evaluation. Kotler and Armstrong (2018) also stated that promotional communication can enhance perceived value and reduce consumer price sensitivity. In addition, Alalwan (2018) found that digital marketing positively affects consumer purchase intention through perceived product value. Therefore, social media marketing is expected to indirectly influence purchase decisions by shaping price perceptions. Based on these arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H6: Price mediates the influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decisions.**

### **The Mediating Role of Price Between Menu Variation and Purchase Decisions**

Menu variation is expected to influence purchasing decisions indirectly by shaping price perception: consumers who perceive diverse menu offerings as valuable are more likely to consider the price reasonable and acceptable. Zeithaml (1988) argued that perceived value significantly affects consumers' evaluation of price fairness and purchasing behavior. Berger and Schwartz (2011) found that product diversity increases perceived value and consumer interest. In addition, Kotler and Keller (2016) explained that product strategy influences willingness to pay and consumer purchasing decisions. Solomon (2020) also stated that consumers in the culinary industry prioritize experiential value when evaluating product prices. Therefore, based on these theoretical and empirical arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H7: Price mediates the influence of Menu Variation on Purchase Decisions.**

## **3. Data and Method**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a quantitative, explanatory research design to examine the influence of Social Media Marketing and Menu Variation on Purchase Decisions, with Price as a mediating variable, at Cafe Rumakadua. Explanatory research is appropriate because this study aims to analyze causal relationships among variables using statistical tests and hypothesis testing. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), quantitative explanatory research is used to identify relationships between variables using measurable data and statistical procedures. The study employed a cross-sectional design, collecting data at a single point in time via questionnaires distributed to consumers of Cafe Rumakadua.

### **Population and Sample**

The population of this study consisted of all consumers who had visited Cafe Rumakadua and purchased products at least twice within the last three months. The population was selected because repeat consumers were considered to have sufficient experience and understanding regarding the café's social media activities, menu variety, pricing, and service quality. The sampling technique used in this study was purposive sampling, where respondents were selected based on specific criteria determined by the researcher. According to Hair et al. (2019), purposive sampling is suitable

for studies requiring respondents with specific experiences relevant to the research objectives. The criteria for respondents in this study included consumers aged at least 17 years old, having visited Cafe Rumakadua more than once, and actively using social media platforms such as Instagram or TikTok. The total sample used in this study consisted of 200 respondents, which fulfilled the recommended minimum sample size requirement for Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) analysis.

### **Data Collection Technique**

The data used in this study were primary data obtained directly from respondents through structured questionnaires. The questionnaire was distributed both online and offline to Cafe Rumakadua consumers. The measurement scale used in this research was a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), the Likert scale is commonly used in behavioral and marketing research because it effectively measures attitudes, perceptions, and consumer opinions. The questionnaire items were adapted from previous studies and adjusted to fit the context of the culinary business. Before the main survey was conducted, a pilot test was administered to ensure the validity and reliability of the research instrument.

### **Variable Measurement**

This study comprised four variables: Social Media Marketing (X1), Menu Variation (X2), Price (Z), and Purchase Decision (Y). Social Media Marketing was measured using indicators adapted from Kim and Ko (2012), including entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and electronic word of mouth. Menu Variation was measured using indicators adapted from Kivetz and Simonson (2002), including menu diversity, menu innovation, product uniqueness, and suitability to consumer preferences. Price was measured using indicators adapted from Kotler and Armstrong (2018), including price affordability, price fairness, price competitiveness, and value for money. Meanwhile, Purchase Decision was measured using indicators adapted from Kotler and Keller (2016), including purchase intention, product preference, confidence in purchasing, and repeat purchase intention. All indicators were measured using a five-point Likert scale.

### **Data Analysis Technique**

The data analysis technique used in this study was Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS), with SmartPLS software version 4. SEM-PLS was selected because it is suitable for analyzing complex relationships among variables, including mediating effects, and can be applied to relatively small sample sizes without strict normality assumptions (Hair et al., 2019). The analysis consisted of two stages, namely the evaluation of the outer model and the inner model. The outer model evaluation was conducted to test the validity and reliability of the measurement model using outer loading, Composite Reliability (CR), Cronbach's Alpha, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Indicators were considered valid if the outer loading value exceeded 0.70 and AVE exceeded 0.50, while reliability was confirmed if Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values exceeded 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019).

The inner model evaluation examined relationships among latent variables using path coefficient analysis, coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ), and hypothesis testing via bootstrapping. Hypothesis testing was evaluated using t-statistics and p-values; hypotheses were considered significant if the t-statistic exceeded 1.96 and the p-value was less than 0.05 at the 95% confidence level. In addition, mediation analysis was performed to determine whether Price mediated the relationships between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Decisions, and between Menu Variation and Purchase Decisions.

## 4. Results

**Table 1. Outer loading - PLS Algorithm**

	Price	Buying decision	Social Media Marketing	Menu Variations
H.1	0.816			
H.2	0.778			
H.3	0.799			
H.4	0.885			
KP.2		0.901		
KP.4		0.907		
SMM.1			0.755	
SMM.3			0.876	
SMM.4			0.868	
VM.1				0.755
VM.2				0.833
VM.3				0.780
VM.4				0.727

Source: Processed data, 2026

Table 1 shows the outer loading values of the measurement model (outer model) in the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis. Outer loading is used to assess the extent to which each indicator represents its corresponding latent construct: Price (Z), Purchase Decision (Y), Social Media Marketing (X1), and Menu Variety (X2). Based on the test results, all indicators have outer loadings above 0.70, ranging from 0.727 to 0.907, thus meeting the convergent validity criteria and indicating that each indicator represents its construct well and reliably. The Purchase Decision construct has the highest loading, while the indicators in the Price, Social Media Marketing, and Menu Variety variables also show strong and adequate loadings. Thus, all indicators are declared valid and suitable for use in further structural model analysis.

**Table 2. Collinearity Statistics (VIF)**

	VIF
H.1	2.599
H.2	2.019
H.3	2.134
H.4	2.999
KP.2	1.676
KP.4	1.676
SMM.1	1.143
SMM.3	37.066
SMM.4	36.674
VM.1	2.163
VM.2	2.328
VM.3	2.101
VM.4	2.053

Sumber: Data diolah, 2026

Table 2 presents the results of the collinearity test using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) in the PLS-SEM model to detect multicollinearity between indicators. In general, a VIF value below 5 indicates that the indicators do not experience serious collinearity problems and can be used reliably in the research model. The test results show that most indicators have VIF values within acceptable limits, indicating no multicollinearity problems in the Price, Purchase Decision, and Menu Variety constructs. However, indicators SMM.3 and SMM.4 in the Social Media Marketing variable exhibit very high VIF values, indicating strong multicollinearity. This condition indicates that the two indicators may measure very similar aspects or have too high a correlation. Therefore, further evaluation of the questionnaire items or the removal of one indicator is necessary to maintain the validity and stability of the measurement model.

**Table 3. Validity and Reliability - PLS Algorithm**

	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>rho_A</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>	<b>Average Variance Extracted</b>
Price	0.838	0.842	0.891	0.673
Purchase Decision	0.777	0.777	0.900	0.818
Social Media Marketing	0.790	0.796	0.873	0.697
Menu Variety	0.777	0.783	0.857	0.600

Source: Processed data, 2026

Table 3 presents the results of the reliability and validity tests on the PLS-SEM measurement model, which include Cronbach's Alpha, rho\_A, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each research construct, namely Price (Z), Purchase Decision (Y), Social Media Marketing (X1), and Menu Variety (X2). The test results show that all constructs have Cronbach's Alpha, rho\_A, and Composite Reliability values above 0.70, thus meeting the reliability criteria and indicating that the indicators can measure the constructs consistently. In addition, all AVEs are above 0.50, indicating that each construct has good convergent validity, as it explains more than half of each indicator's variance. Thus, all variables in the study are declared valid and reliable, making them suitable for use in the structural model analysis in the next stage.

**Table 4. Path Coefficient – Bootstrapping**

	<b>Original Sample (O)</b>	<b>Sample Mean (M)</b>	<b>Standard Deviation (STDEV)</b>	<b>T Statistics ( O/STDEV )</b>	<b>P Values</b>
Price -> Purchase Decision	0.223	0.255	0.159	1.403	0.163
Social Media Marketing -> Price	0.163	0.166	0.073	2.229	0.028
Social Media Marketing -> Purchase Decision	0.112	0.117	0.084	1.334	0.185
Menu Variety -> Price	0.646	0.651	0.087	7.443	0.000
Menu Variety -> Purchase Decision	0.474	0.436	0.140	3.393	0.001

Source: Processed data, 2026

Table 4 presents the results of structural model testing using the bootstrapping procedure in PLS-SEM to assess the significance of the relationships among latent variables. The test results indicate that Price does not have a significant effect on Purchasing Decisions, so price factors do not entirely determine consumer decisions. Social Media Marketing has been shown to have a positive, significant effect on Price, indicating that digital marketing activities can shape consumer perceptions of value and price fairness. However, Social Media Marketing does not have a significant direct effect on Purchasing Decisions. Meanwhile, Menu Variety shows a positive and significant effect on both Price and Purchasing Decisions. These findings indicate that menu diversity is the most powerful factor shaping consumer perceptions and driving purchasing decisions, making product variety an important strategy for increasing the attractiveness and competitiveness of culinary businesses.

**Table 5. Specific Indirect Effect - Bootstrapping**

	<b>Original Sample (O)</b>	<b>Sample Mean (M)</b>	<b>Standard Deviation (STDEV)</b>	<b>T Statistics ( O/STDEV )</b>	<b>P Values</b>
Social Media Marketing -> Price -> Purchase Decision	0.036	0.040	0.030	1.212	0.228
Menu Variation -> Price -> Purchase Decision	0.144	0.172	0.119	1.202	0.232

Source: Processed data, 2026

Table 5 presents the results of the specific indirect effects test in the PLS-SEM model to determine the role of Price as a mediating variable in the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Menu Variety on Purchasing Decisions. The test results indicate that Price is unable to mediate the influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchasing Decisions, as the indirect relationship is not statistically significant. This indicates that although social media marketing can influence price perception, this influence is not strong enough to drive purchasing decisions through the Price variable. Furthermore, Price also does not mediate the relationship between Menu Variety and Purchasing Decisions. This finding indicates that the influence of Menu Variety on consumer decisions is more dominant directly than through price perception. Thus, Price cannot act as an effective intermediary variable in this research model.

## 5. Discussion

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

The findings of this study indicate that Social Media Marketing does not significantly influence Purchase Decisions at Cafe Rumakadua. This finding suggests that although social media platforms are effective at attracting consumer attention and increasing brand visibility, they are not sufficient to prompt consumers to make purchasing decisions. Consumers may perceive social media content merely as a source of information or entertainment rather than a determinant of actual purchasing behavior. In the culinary industry, purchasing decisions are often influenced more strongly by direct consumer experiences such as menu quality, taste, service quality, and café atmosphere. This result implies that digital promotion alone cannot fully convert consumer engagement into purchasing actions without support from other business factors. The finding is consistent with research by Leung et al. (2022), which found that social media marketing primarily strengthens consumer awareness and interaction rather than directly influencing purchase behavior. Similarly, Solomon (2020) emphasized that consumers in experiential industries tend to prioritize emotional and experiential value over promotional exposure when making purchase decisions.

### **The Influence of Menu Variation on Purchase Decisions**

The results show that Menu Variation has a positive and significant influence on Purchase Decisions. This finding demonstrates that consumers are more likely to make purchasing decisions when cafés offer diverse, innovative menu options. Menu diversity provides consumers with greater flexibility and increases the likelihood that products will match their preferences and expectations. In addition, varied menu offerings create a more attractive dining experience, which encourages consumers to revisit the café and try different products. This finding indicates that product strategy plays an important role in influencing consumer purchasing behavior in the culinary sector. The result supports the study conducted by Berger and Schwartz (2011), which found that product diversity stimulates consumer curiosity and increases purchasing behavior. Furthermore, Kivetz and Simonson (2002) argued that broader product choices enhance consumer satisfaction because consumers perceive greater freedom and convenience during the purchasing process. Therefore, menu innovation and variation are considered important competitive strategies for cafés seeking to improve customer purchasing decisions.

### **The Influence of Price on Purchase Decisions**

This study found that Price does not significantly influence Purchase Decisions. This finding indicates that consumers at Cafe Rumakadua do not consider price the primary factor in deciding whether to purchase products. Consumers may place greater emphasis on factors such as menu quality, café atmosphere, product uniqueness, and the overall dining experience rather than solely on price. In the context of cafés and experiential businesses, consumers often perceive the price as acceptable as long as the value and experience they receive meet their expectations. This result supports Zeithaml's (1988) theory, which posits that consumers evaluate price based on perceived value rather than absolute monetary cost. In addition, Solomon (2020) explained that consumers in lifestyle-oriented industries tend to prioritize emotional satisfaction and social experience over economic considerations when making purchasing decisions. Therefore, the findings suggest that price alone is insufficient to influence consumer purchasing behavior at Cafe Rumakadua significantly.

### **The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Price**

The findings indicate that Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant influence on Price perception. This result suggests that effective digital marketing activities can shape consumers' perceptions regarding price fairness and product value. Through engaging content, promotional information, and interactive communication, consumers develop a better understanding of the café's products, which may lead them to perceive the prices as more reasonable and acceptable. Social media platforms also allow businesses to communicate product quality, café atmosphere, and unique selling points, thereby strengthening consumers' perceived value. This finding aligns with Kim and Ko (2012), which found that social media marketing activities positively affect consumer perceptions and brand value. Similarly, Kotler and Keller (2016) argued that marketing communication significantly influences consumers' evaluation of product value and price fairness. Therefore, social media marketing can strengthen positive price perceptions even if it does not directly encourage purchasing decisions.

### **The Influence of Menu Variation on Price**

This study reveals that Menu Variation has a positive and significant influence on Price perception. This finding indicates that consumers perceive cafés with more diverse menus as offering greater value, making prices appear more acceptable and reasonable. Consumers tend to associate menu diversity with business creativity, innovation, and product quality. As a result, broader menu choices can increase consumers' willingness to tolerate higher prices because they feel they receive more benefits and options. This finding supports the study conducted by Berger and Schwartz (2011), which emphasized that product diversity enhances perceived value and consumer attraction. In addition, Kotler and Keller (2016) explained that product strategy strongly influences consumers' perceptions of value and their willingness to pay. Therefore, menu variation not only influences purchasing behavior directly but also shapes consumers' perceptions of price fairness and appropriateness.

### **The Mediating Role of Price Between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Decisions**

The results of this study indicate that price does not mediate the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Purchase Decisions. This finding suggests that although social media marketing can positively influence consumers' perceptions of price, these perceptions are not strong enough to drive actual purchase decisions. Consumers may appreciate the promotional content and perceive the prices as reasonable. However, their purchasing behavior is still influenced by other factors such as menu quality, product uniqueness, and overall dining experience. In the café industry, purchasing decisions are often driven by experiential and emotional considerations rather than price evaluation alone. This finding differs from the theoretical perspective proposed by Zeithaml (1988), which argued that price perception plays an important role in shaping consumer purchasing behavior. However, the result supports Solomon's (2020) argument that consumers in experiential industries are more influenced by emotional satisfaction and lifestyle factors than by economic considerations alone. Therefore, price cannot serve as an effective intermediary between social media marketing and purchasing decisions in this study.

### **The Mediating Role of Price Between Menu Variation and Purchase Decisions**

The findings also show that Price does not mediate the relationship between Menu Variation and Purchase Decisions. This result indicates that menu variation directly influences consumer purchasing behavior, without requiring price perception as an intermediary. Consumers appear to value menu diversity itself as an important determinant of purchasing decisions because varied menu offerings provide flexibility, novelty, and greater satisfaction. Although menu variation positively shapes consumers' perceptions of price fairness, these perceptions do not significantly influence the final purchasing decision. This finding suggests that consumers are primarily motivated by the desire for diverse culinary experiences rather than by price considerations. The result is consistent with the findings of Kivetz and Simonson (2002), which emphasized that product diversity directly enhances consumer satisfaction and purchasing interest. In addition, Solomon (2020) argued that consumers in the culinary industry often prioritize experiential value and uniqueness over price-related factors. Therefore, menu variation plays a stronger direct role in influencing purchase decisions than it does through price perception.

## 6. Conclusion

This study concludes that menu variation is the most influential factor in customers' purchase decisions at Cafe Rumakadua. In contrast, social media marketing does not show a statistically significant relationship with purchase decisions. These findings suggest that customers place greater emphasis on tangible consumption experiences, particularly the diversity and attractiveness of menu offerings, when making purchasing decisions. However, given the survey's cross-sectional design, the results Putra & Budiman, (2024) should be interpreted as associations rather than causal effects. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the consumer behavior and hospitality literature by highlighting that product-related attributes may play a more prominent role than social media engagement in shaping purchase decisions within local café settings. The findings may be most transferable to independent cafés and similar experiential consumption environments, and should be generalized with caution to other industries or larger hospitality chains.

From a managerial perspective, café operators should prioritize continuous menu innovation through seasonal product launches, limited-edition offerings, and experiential menu bundles that enhance customer value. Social media activities should focus on communicating product quality, uniqueness, and customer experience rather than relying primarily on promotional discounts. To evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies, managers are encouraged to monitor key performance indicators, including conversion rates from digital campaigns, repeat-visit rates, customer retention, menu-level sales performance, and the success of newly introduced products. By combining systematic menu innovation with data-driven performance tracking, cafés can strengthen customer engagement and improve purchasing outcomes over time.

## Recommendation

For future research, the model should be strengthened by incorporating additional variables such as perceived value, brand trust, service quality, and café atmosphere as mediating or control variables to provide a more comprehensive explanation of consumer purchase decisions. Future studies are also encouraged to examine price sensitivity as a moderating variable, considering that consumer responses to menu innovation and social media marketing may vary across market segments. Furthermore, researchers should revalidate the social media marketing scale by removing redundant indicators and considering a second-order construct approach. Robustness checks across demographic and behavioral segments are also recommended to improve the generalizability, reliability, and explanatory power of the research model.

## Limitations and avenues for future research

This study is limited to Cafe Rumakadua consumers, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other culinary businesses or regions. In addition, the study examined only Social Media Marketing, Menu Variation, Price, and Purchase Decisions, while other factors, such as service quality, café atmosphere, and customer satisfaction, were not included. The use of a cross-sectional design also limits the ability to observe changes in consumer behavior over time. Future research is recommended to involve broader samples, additional variables, and comparative studies across different café concepts or culinary industries to provide more comprehensive insights into consumer purchasing behavior.

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