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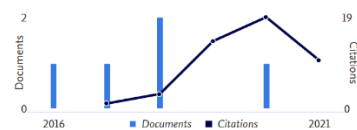
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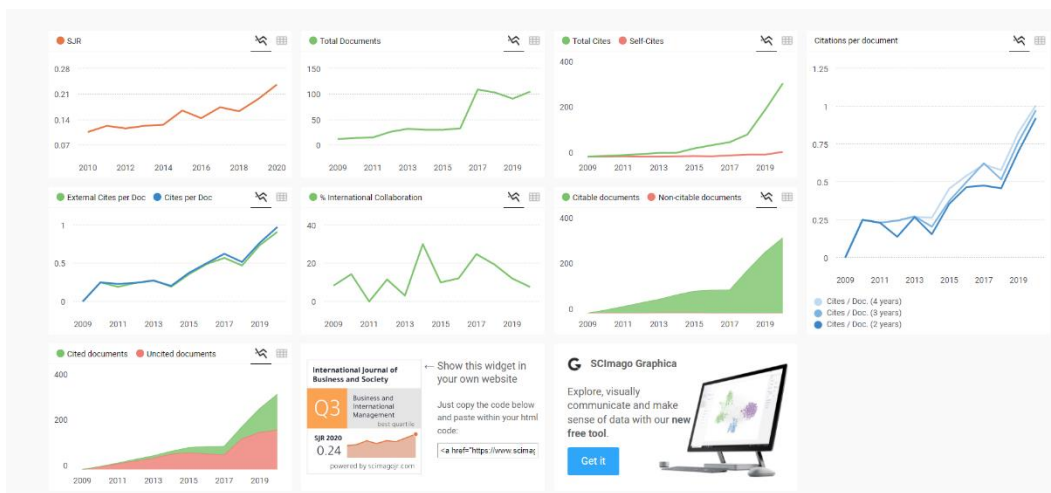
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WORD OF MOUTH FOR CONSUMERS: ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT JAPANESE RESTAURANTS

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine and analyze the effect of word of mouth on the purchasing decisions of consumers of all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurants. The type of research was causal quantitative analysis tested using a linear regression test. The sampling technique was purposive sampling. The samples were 100 all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurants consumers in Surabaya, Indonesia. The results showed that word of mouth had a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions. It was a new study. Thus, this research could help manage the restaurant business, thereby improving the existing marketing performance.

Keywords: Word of mouth, Restaurant, Purchasing decisions, Japanese, Behavior.

1. INTRODUCTION

The restaurant business in Surabaya continues to grow and become more popular. The restaurants' growth in Surabaya is almost 20 percent per year (Restoran di Surabaya tumbuh 20 persen per tahun, 2018, para. 1). It has demanded business people to improve marketing performance, especially regarding consumer behavior.

The number of Japanese restaurants in Surabaya has increased by 204 restaurants during the period of 2012–2018. Japanese restaurants have some uniqueness. That is not typical in other countries' restaurant standards. Such as waiters who use Kimono and Hachimaki; how waiters greet guests by shouting the word "Irasshaimase"; the use of Chochin and Noren as room decorations; as well as the use of fresh, raw food ingredients that are processed using Japanese special spices such as Shoyu, Dashi, and Mirin. Some of the restaurants have an all-you-can-eat sales system. All-you-can-eat is a sales system with the concept of a buffet that gives consumers the freedom to enjoy the entire menu within a specific time limit. Consumers only need to pay once with a flat-rate payment system (Akhmad, 2016, para. 2).

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The all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurant proved immensely popular among Surabaya's people. The 2017 BRI Jawa Pos Culinary Award survey proved that the three restaurants that won the Best All-You-Can-Eat category in Surabaya are those that sell Japanese cuisine. The three restaurants are Cocari, Kintan Buffet, and Shaburi Shabu Shabu (@Jawaposculinary, 2018). Why do all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurants become more prevalent in Surabaya, Indonesia? This phenomenon helps explain the attraction by consumers to these types of restaurants.

Aslam, Jadoon, Zaman, and Gondal (2011) stated that the benefits obtained by studying consumer behavior include helping managers in the making make providing theory-based marketing research. It analyzes consumers in making better purchasing decisions. One of the consumer behavior topics that needs to be the focus of business attention is consumer purchasing decisions. Having more excellent knowledge of how consumers make their purchasing decisions will benefit restaurants as to the most efficient marketing strategies.

Research on consumer purchasing decisions in the restaurant business has been standard. These studies show the numerous factors that influence the restaurant consumer purchasing decision variable. These factors include product quality, trust in halal status, service quality, restaurant atmosphere, price, and location in full-service restaurants in Seri Iskandar, Perak, Malaysia (Akbar & Alaudeen, 2012); cultural, social, personal, and psychological aspects of McDonald's restaurant in Surabaya, Indonesia (Adipradja & Listiani, 2015); word of mouth, marketing communication, cultural learning, image, and social status, different experiences, the value of money in upscale ethnic restaurants in New Zealand (Sriwongrat, 2008). Existing research on all-you-can-eat restaurants, especially restaurants that sell Japanese cuisine in Indonesia, has never been done.

Word of mouth (WOM) is one of the factors that affect consumer restaurant purchasing decisions is word of mouth (WOM). Hasan (2010) stated that WOM could be a powerful source of information in influencing purchasing decisions (Pratiwi & Lubis, 2017). Personal verbal communication through choice words and recommendations from trusted friends, family, coworkers, and other consumers tend to be more credible than those from commercial sources, such as advertisements or salespeople (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). WOM can affect one's views, thoughts, and decisions. WOM will be instrumental in marketing products or services for an extended period if the marketers use it properly (Ahmad, Vveinhardt, & Ahmed, 2014). Word of mouth is the ultimate driver of the success of a restaurant, and few studies have examined in detail the focus attributes of WOM towards purchasing decisions (Basri, Ahmad, Anuar, & Ismail, 2016). Schabbink (2019) mentioned that when a customer expresses its customer experience online, it can influence a restaurant either positively or negatively. The effects of negative online reviews on the number of sales and the restaurant's image are well known. While Siddiqui et al. (2021) show that Social Networking Sites (SNSs) activities play a significant role in creating eWOM credibility, this can lead to shaping the brand image and purchasing intentions. The findings would help companies create a positive brand image to enhance their purchasing intentions through eWOM aroused via SNSs. In contrast, previous studies have studied the restaurant setting. What is interesting about the all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurants to examine is the Japanese culture and hospitality demonstrated in the restaurants.

The above research gap motivates us to know what makes the all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurants in Surabaya, Indonesia become, more popular with their consumers. This research will also examine how WOM influences consumer purchasing decisions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. *Consumer Behavior*

Rani (2014) stated consumer behavior as the selection, purchasing, and use of products and services to satisfy consumer desires. Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015) stated that consumer behavior was a study of consumer behavior or actions in searching, buying, using, evaluating, and depleting products and services to satisfy consumer needs. These notions indicate that consumer behavior is the act of consumers choosing, buying, using, evaluating, and spending products and services to satisfy the desires and needs of consumers. Zhong and Moon (2020) also found that perceived price, food, service, and physical environment quality positively affected customer satisfaction. Perceived price can significantly influence customers' judgment of the quality dimensions of a restaurant.

Moreover, customer satisfaction and happiness can lead to a sense of loyalty. Happiness is a mediator between satisfaction and loyalty. Additionally, Uslu (2020) determined that the service quality dimensions of the restaurants have effects on satisfaction and eWOM and noted that restaurant atmosphere has a moderating effect on the outcome of service quality dimensions on eWOM in restaurants.

2.2. *Word of Mouth*

Malau (2017) stated WOM was a form of communication that involves individuals to share information directly with others in verbal form, including face-to-face, telephone, and internet regarding the use of a product. Kotler and Keller (2009) stated that WOM was oral, written, or electronic communication from person to person relating to the benefits or experience of buying or using a product or service. Another point, according to Lovelock and Wirtz (2011), said that WOM was an opinion and recommendation made by consumers about service experience, which had a strong influence on consumer decisions or purchasing behavior (Andari & Napu, 2016). The above definitions emphasize that WOM is a communication of sharing opinions and recommendations on the use/purchasing of a product/service from one consumer to other consumers through face-to-face, via telephone, and on the internet. WOM means the extent to which (activity level) communication of sharing opinions and recommendations is carried out and affects others' decision-making process. Huete-Alcocer (2017) highlighted that the rise and spread of internet have led to the emergence of a new form of word of mouth and effectively impacted consumer behavior. Jeong and Jang (2011) also found that restaurant experiences triggered customers to engage in positive electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), where the quality of restaurant service (food quality, service quality, atmosphere, and price fairness) was the antecedent of eWOM communication. While Jalilvand, Salimipour, Elyasi, and Mohammadi (2017) suggested that food quality, personal interaction quality, environmental quality, and perceived value indirectly influenced WOM behavior of customers through relationship quality as well. Further, Basri et al. (2016) concluded that the physical environment quality significantly impacted word of mouth. Ferdinand (2014)

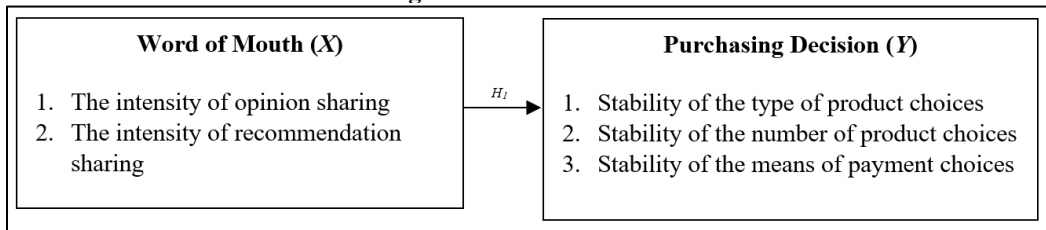suggested indicators of WOM, such as intensity of opinion sharing and intensity of recommendation sharing.

2.3. Purchasing Decision

According to Schiffman, Kanuk, and Wisenblit (2010), a decision is the choice of two or more choices. In other words, choices must be available to someone when deciding. If someone chooses between making a purchase or not, that person is in a decision-making position. Paendong and Tielung (2016) suggested that purchasing decisions were actions by consumers, whether or not to buy a product. Pertiwi, Yulianto, and Sunarti (2016) said purchasing decision was a process when consumers made an assessment of various choices and chose one or more alternatives needed based on specific considerations in purchasing. This understanding emphasizes that the purchasing decision has two meanings. Purchasing decisions can be a process and result in the selection of various choices of products or services. This understanding shows that the purchasing decision has real value from the consumers' perspective in the selection process. Aslam, Farhat, and Arif (2019) find the positive impact of eWOM and receivers' perspective on customer satisfaction and brand image. Also, customer satisfaction and brand image significantly impact purchasing intention. Their research provides valuable information to marketers, demonstrating how quality websites generate positive word of mouth, which leads to purchasing intention. The purchasing decision is measured by indicators suggested by Arda (2017), which are stability of the type and kind of product choice, stability of the number of product choice, and stability of the means of payment choice.

2.4. WoM Relationship to Purchasing Decision

Several research results have shown that the WOM variable has a positive and significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions. These studies include Rahayu and Edward (2014), Oktaviano (2013), Nugraha, Suharyono, and Kusumawati (2015), Rembon, Mananeke, and Gunawan (2017), and Arda (2017). The research results by Arda (2017) showed that the relationship between WOM and consumer purchasing decisions was quite strong. In the research of Rahayu and Edward (2014), Nugraha et al. (2015), and Rembon et al. (2017), the level of relationships were relatively strong. Further, Oktaviano's (2013) study showed that relationships are powerful. Huete-Alcocer (2017) highlighted that the rise and spread of internet had led to the emergence of a new form of word of mouth and effectively impacted consumer behavior. Siddiqui et al. (2021) also find that Social Networking Sites (SNSs) activities play a significant role in creating eWOM credibility, which leads to shaping the brand image and purchasing intentions. The studies described above support the development of the following research hypothesis (Figure 1).

H_1: WOM has a positive effect on purchasing decisions.

Figure 1. Research Model

Word of Mouth (X)	**Purchasing Decision (Y)**
1. The intensity of opinion sharing 2. The intensity of recommendation sharing	1. Stability of the type of product choices 2. Stability of the number of product choices 3. Stability of the means of payment choices

Source: Ferdinand (2014), Arda (2017).

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Sample Selection and Data Collection

The population used in this study included all consumers of all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurants in Surabaya. The sampling technique used in this research is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique with specific considerations. The consideration used is that the respondent must be over 17 years old and have eaten at an all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurant in Surabaya at least once. Respondents are over the age of 17 because they are considered able to understand and evaluate the statements in the questionnaire. The selected respondents have eaten at an all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurant in Surabaya at least once. It relates to the operational definition of WOM, namely communication, sharing opinions, and recommendations to use/purchasing of a product from one consumer to another through face-to-face, telephone, and the internet. According to Ferdinand (2014), the size of the sample if the total population is unknown can be determined using the following formula:

$$n = (Z^2\alpha)\left\{\frac{(P \times Q)}{d^2}\right\} = (Z^2\alpha)\left\{\frac{50 \times 50}{10^2}\right\} = 96.04$$

Remarks:
n = Number of samples
$Z^2\alpha$ = Z table with a certain level of significance
P = Proportion of the population expected to have certain characteristics
Q = Proportion of the population that is expected not to have certain characteristics
d = Tolerable error rate (expressed in %)

The calculation shows that the minimum number of samples must be 96.04 samples. Therefore, the number of samples in this study is 100 samples. The 100 samples are obtained by distributing 120 questionnaires. It aims to anticipate the existence of returned questionnaires that do not meet the criteria, or the data provided by the respondent is incomplete.

3.2. Measures

The research variables are measured using a Likert scale of five points, ranging from 1 - strongly disagree to 5 - strongly agree. The research model used can be seen in Figure 1.

3.2.1. Measures of Word of Mouth (X)

WOM is a communication of sharing opinions and recommendations on the purchasing/using of a product from one consumer to another through face-to-face, telephone, and internet so that WOM has meaning to what extent (activity level) the communication of sharing opinions and recommendations is carried out and influences other consumers. So, in this study, the WOM variable will be measured from the level of activity of sharing opinions and recommendations made by consumers, as suggested by Ferdinand (2014). The indicators used are:

1. **Intensity of opinion sharing (X_1)**
   The higher the intensity of consumers' sharing opinions regarding the purchasing/using of a product, the higher the level of WOM activity. The higher the intensity of consumers' sharing opinions regarding the purchasing/using of a product does not cause a higher level of WOM activity (there is no logical causal relationship). This indicator has three statement items, namely:
   a. I talked about the restaurant to my family more than once ($X_{1.1}$)
   b. I talked about the restaurant to my friends more than once ($X_{1.2}$)
   c. I talked about the restaurant to other people more than once ($X_{1.3}$)

2. **Intensity of recommendation sharing (X_2)**
   The higher the intensity of consumers' recommendation sharing on the purchasing/using of a product, the higher the level of WOM activity. The higher the intensity of consumers' recommendation sharing on purchasing/using a product, the higher the WOM activity level (there is no logical causal relationship). This indicator has three statement items, namely:
   a. I recommend eating at the restaurant with my family more than once ($X_{2.1}$)
   b. I recommend eating at the restaurant to friends more than once ($X_{2.2}$)
   c. I recommend eating at that restaurant to others more than once ($X_{2.3}$)

3.2.2. Measures of Purchasing Decision (Y)

The purchasing decision is a process resulting from various alternative product choices. It will measure the purchasing decision from the extent to which (level) the process and the results of the selection are carried out by the consumer. Arda (2017) suggested that the indicators to measure purchasing decisions are:

1. **Stability in choosing the type of product (Y_1)**
   The more stable a person is in choosing the product type, the higher the purchasing decision for the product will be. This indicator has three statement items, namely:
   a. I feel good about choosing to eat Japanese BBQ ($Y_{1.1}$)
   b. I feel good about choosing to eat Shabu-shabu ($Y_{1.2}$)
   c. I feel good about choosing to eat Sukiyaki ($Y_{1.3}$)

2. **Stability in choosing the number of products (Y_2)**
   The more stable a person chooses the number of products, the higher the purchasing decision for the product will be. This indicator has two statement items, namely:
   a. I feel confident in choosing the amount of food and drink that I want ($Y_{2.1}$)
   b. I feel confident in choosing the amount of food and drink according to what I need ($Y_{2.2}$)

3. **Stability in choosing payment instruments (Y_3)**

The more stable a person chooses the means of payment for the product, the higher the purchasing decision will also be. This indicator has three statement items, namely:
a. I feel confident in making payments by cash ($Y_{3.1}$)
b. I feel good about making payments with a debit card ($Y_{3.2}$)
c. I feel confident in making payments by credit card ($Y_{3.3}$)

4.   DATA ANALYSIS

4.1.   Validity Test

The validity test in this study is on statement items obtained from 100 respondents. The statement is valid if the value of Sig is less than 0.05 (Sugiyono & Susanto, 2015).

Table 1 shows that the statements have a sig value below 0.05, except for the statement item $Y_{3.1}$, which has a value of sig 0.063, so the statement is declared invalid. Item $Y_{3.1}$ is invalid because the prices offered by all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurants in Surabaya are premium, so consumers choose to make payments by debit or credit cards. If the consumer makes a payment with cash, the consumer must retake cash at the Automatic Teller Machine to fill the cash supply in the wallet. It discards invalid statements ($Y_{3.1}$), so it does not include in the next test.

Table 1: The Result of the Validity Test

| Variable	Indicator	Items	Sig.	Remarks
Word of Mouth (X)	The intensity of opinion sharing	$X_{1.1}$	0.000	Valid
		$X_{1.2}$	0.000	Valid
		$X_{1.3}$	0.000	Valid
	The intensity of recommendation sharing	$X_{2.1}$	0.000	Valid
		$X_{2.2}$	0.000	Valid
		$X_{2.3}$	0.000	Valid
Purchasing Decision (Y)	Stability in choosing the type of product	$Y_{1.1}$	0.000	Valid
		$Y_{1.2}$	0.000	Valid
		$Y_{1.3}$	0.000	Valid
	Stability in choosing the number of products	$Y_{2.1}$	0.000	Valid
		$Y_{2.2}$	0.000	Valid
	Stability in choosing payment instruments	$Y_{3.1}$	0.063	Invalid
		$Y_{3.2}$	0.025	Valid
		$Y_{3.3}$	0.041	Valid

4.2.   Reliability Test

The reliability test determines the reliability and consistency of the statement items in the questionnaire. Reliable means that the existing statement items produce the same data when used several times to measure the same object. The questionnaire is reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha

value exceeds 0.6 (Sugiyono & Susanto, 2015). Table 2 shows the validity test results for the variable word of mouth and purchasing decisions.

Table 2: The Result of the Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Alpha	Remarks
Word of Mouth	0.880	0.6	Reliable
Purchasing Decision	0.612	0.6	Reliable

Figure 2. Respondent Profile
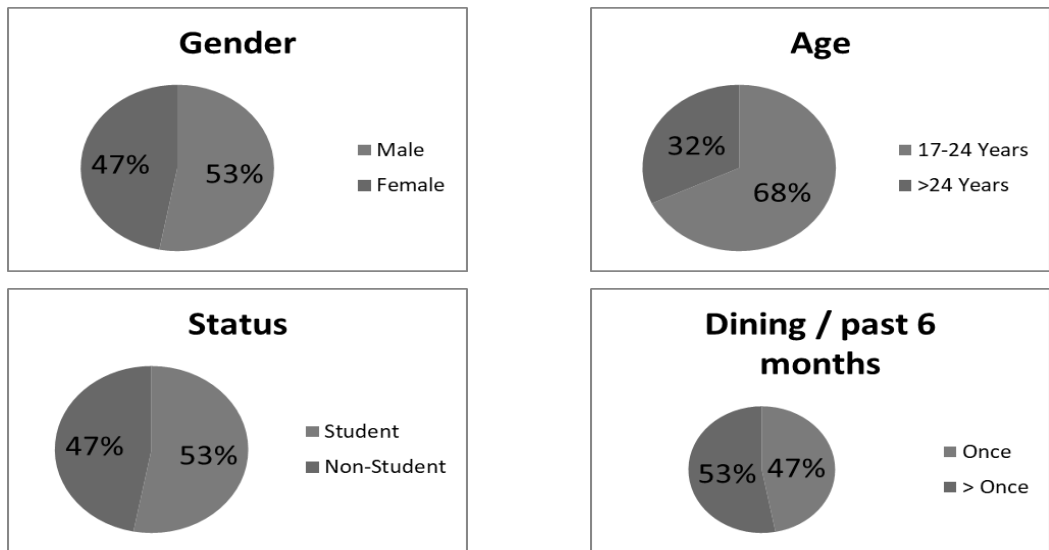
4.3. Respondent Profile

The profile of respondents showed that the number of female respondents was 53 percent, while the number of the male was 47 percent. The majority age of respondents was from 17 to 24 years old. 54 percent were students. Forty-seven percent of respondents were one-time eating in all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurants in the past six months (See Figure 2). The Japanese restaurants had been visited such as Gyu-Kaku (46 respondents), Cocari (37 respondents), Shaburi Kintan Buffet (24 respondents), Hanamasa (13 respondents), Shaburi (6 respondents), Shabu-Shabu on Yasai (2 respondents), Sendai (2 respondents), Mr. Sumo (1 respondent), and Kizahashi (1 respondent). The data shows that some respondents may visit more than one restaurant.

4.4. Measurement Model

Before conducting a simple linear regression test, it is necessary to test the validity and reliability, as well as the classic assumption test. The classic assumption test consists of tests such as normality, heteroscedasticity, and linearity. Existing tests use SPSS 22 software. The validity test results show that item $Y_{3.1}$ does not meet the criteria. It is invalid and is not included in subsequent tests,

while the reliability test results and all classic assumptions have met the existing criteria. It can continue in the test of simple linear regression.

A simple linear regression test looks at the value of the coefficients of regression, correlation (R), determination (R^2), the results of the model feasibility test, and the results of the hypothesis testing. The simple linear regression test in Table 3 shows the magnitude of the constant regression coefficient of 2.251 and the WOM regression coefficient of 0.407. The value of the constant regression coefficient indicates the value of the purchasing decision variable if the value of the WOM variable is 0. In contrast, the regression coefficient value of the WOM variable shows the magnitude of the change in the value of the purchasing decision variable if the value of the WOM variable changes to one unit. The value of the regression coefficient is positive. It shows the direct relationship between WOM and purchasing decisions.

Table 3: Regression Result

Model	Coefficient of Regression	T_{count}	Sig.
Constant	2.251	9.775	0.000
Word of Mouth (X)	0.407	6.930	0.000

4.5.   *Correlation Relationship Analysis*

Table 2 shows the correlation coefficient (R) of 0.573, meaning that the level of closeness of the relationship between WOM and purchasing decisions is quite strong because it is at an interval of 0.400-0.599 (Sugiyono & Susanto, 2015). Table 4 also shows that the coefficient of determination (R^2) in this regression model is 0.322 or 32.2 percent, meaning that the WOM variable's ability to explain or predict changes in the purchasing decision variable is 32.2 percent. The remaining 67.8 percent of other variables include product quality, service quality, and restaurant atmosphere.

Table 4: Result of Coefficient of Correlation and Determination

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Estimation of Standard Error
1	0.573	0.329	0.322	0.42876

Table 5 shows the results of the feasibility tests of the existing models. A significant value of the regression model of this study is 0.000. This number is smaller than the significance level, which is 0.05, meaning that the regression model used is feasible to explain the effect of the WOM variable on the purchasing decision variable.

Table 5: Model Feasibility Test Results

Variable	Sig.	Criteria	Conclusion
Word of Mouth (X)	0.000	< 0.05	Model is feasible

Table 6 shows that the Sig. of the hypothesis test results obtained are smaller than 0.05, equal to 0.000. It means that WOM has a significant influence on purchasing decisions.

Table 6: Hypothesis Test Result

Variable	Sig.	Criteria	Conclusion
Word of Mouth (*X*)	0.000	< 0.05	Rejected

5. DISCUSSION

The results show that word of mouth positively and significantly influences purchasing decisions. The results of the regression test prove the positive effect, which shows the magnitude of the regression coefficient of the word-of-mouth variable is equal to 0.407. It means that if the value of the word-of-mouth variable increases by one unit, the value of the purchasing decision variable will increase by 0.407 or 40.7 percent. In other words, the higher the value of the word-of-mouth variable, the value of the purchasing decision variable will also be higher. The result of hypothesis testing shows the value of Sig of 0.000 is ≤ 0.05. So, the result has answered the hypothesis in this study. It proves the existence of significant influence. It only fulfills the research gap mentioned in the introduction in the available restaurants.

The result confirms the importance of WOM in influencing consumers' purchasing decisions, especially in the all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurants in Surabaya, Indonesia. It implies that the Japanese restaurant management should consider the role of WOM in the success of their businesses. The Japanese culture and hospitality practiced in those restaurants are essential to their customers in Surabaya, Indonesia, to want to share their experiences and recommend them to others. Creating positive WOM becomes a key role in marketing strategy. The all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurant managers need some factors, as suggested by Zhong and Moon (2020), such as perceived price, food, service, and physical environment quality. These will positively affect customer satisfaction. Perceived price can also significantly influence customers' judgment of the quality dimensions of a restaurant.

Moreover, customer satisfaction and happiness can lead to a sense of loyalty. Moreover, Uslu (2020) also determined that the service quality dimensions of the restaurants affect satisfaction and eWOM. Further, restaurant atmosphere moderates the effect of service quality dimensions on eWOM in restaurants.

This study suggests what Akhmad (2016, para. 2) said previously. Japanese restaurants had some uniqueness. Such as waiters who use Kimono and Hachimaki; how waiters greeted guests by shouting the word "Irasshaimase"; the use of Chochin and Noren as room decoration; as well as the use of fresh raw food ingredients that were processed using Japanese special spices such as Shoyu, Dashi, and Mirin. Some of the restaurants had an all-you-can-eat sales system. All-you-can-eat was a sales system with the concept of a buffet that gave consumers the freedom to enjoy the entire menu within a specific time limit, and consumers only needed to pay once with a flat-rate payment system.

The result of this study is in line with previous studies conducted by Hasan (2010); Pratiwi and Lubis (2017); Rahayu and Edward (2014); Oktaviano (2013); Nugraha et al. (2015); and Rembon et al. (2017) which show that word of mouth has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions. The level of closeness of the relationship between word of mouth with purchasing decisions in this study is also in line with research conducted by Arda (2017), which shows a

reasonably strong level of closeness of the relationship. Therefore, the result of this study strengthens previous research.

6.   CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

6.1.   *Conclusion*

The result of the analysis and hypothesis testing indicates that word of mouth positively affects the purchasing decisions of all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurant consumers in Surabaya.

6.2.   *Managerial Implications*

This study provides several managerial implications that can be applied by all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurant managers, especially in Surabaya, Indonesia. So, the existing restaurants can further improve their marketing performance through WOM conducted by consumers. Restaurant management should consider WOM's strong influence. Restaurant managers must ensure that every consumer gets a satisfying dining experience. The opinions expressed by consumers are positive and can increase the willingness of consumers to provide recommendations to others.

The more positive opinions and recommendations shared help all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurants to get more consumers. Several methods in the research can be applied to increase the service speed of the waiter in presenting menus to consumers. Another method that can be applied is to ensure the amount of food and drinks for the self-service menu is sufficient. Moreover, sold-out menus should be available on the display table. More and more menus or portions that consumers can enjoy will make these consumers not feel overwhelmed at "All you can eat restaurants." The restaurant manager, especially of the all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurants, is expected to be able to create promotions or family meal menus so that it can increase information-sharing activities about the restaurants among families. The results of this study indicate that the mean values for statement items $X_{1.1}$ and $X_{2.1}$ are lower than the mean values for other WOM statement items; so, the activity of sharing opinions and recommendations to families tends to be lower than to friends and others. Management should include family discount packages (kids under ten eat for free, for example) on their menus to encourage and increase the weekend foot traffic into the restaurant.

6.3.   *Limitations*

One limitation of this study relates to the generalization of the findings. This study only examined nine all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurants in Surabaya, namely GyuKaku, Cocari, Shaburi Kintan Buffet, Hanamasa, Shaburi, Shabu-Shabu on Yasai, Sendai, Mr. Sumo, and Kizahashi. Nevertheless, there are still many all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurants in Surabaya that have not been studied. Another limitation is that this study only examined the influence between WOM and purchasing decisions. So, the result also shows that WOM can only explain purchasing decisions by 32.2 percent.

6.4.   *Future Research Directions*

This study provides several suggestions for further research. Future studies can research the other all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurants. Conceivably expanding the study to nearby or non-Asian countries may present a different result on WOM. It may also suggest other factors. Further research can develop further research related to purchasing decisions, especially for all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurant consumers, not only in Surabaya. Future studies can examine other variables besides WOM so that the results of existing studies vary more.

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