

ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER TASTE AND DIGITAL MARKETING ON THE GROWTH OF TAHU GO MSME

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ABSTRACT

The growth of Tahu Go MSME in Baubau City has not been optimal due to limitations in adapting products to consumer tastes and a simple digital marketing strategy. This study aims to analyze the influence of consumer tastes and digital marketing on the growth of Tahu Go MSME. The research method uses a quantitative approach with an associative-causal design. The study population included 4,334 consumers, with a sample of 65 respondents determined using the Lemeshow formula. Data were obtained through questionnaires and analyzed using validity tests, reliability tests, classical assumptions, multiple linear regression, t-tests, F-tests, and coefficients of determination (R^2) using SPSS version 27. The results showed that consumer tastes did not significantly influence MSME growth, while digital marketing had a positive and significant influence. Simultaneously, both variables influenced MSME growth, with digital marketing as the dominant factor. These findings indicate the importance of strengthening digital marketing strategies that are more creative, integrated, and supported by market research so that products are more in line with consumer preferences and support sustainable growth.

INTRODUCTION

Consumer taste is one of the main factors that influences business success. According to (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2020) Consumer preferences are influenced by cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors that shape consumption patterns. For businesses, understanding consumer tastes means being able to provide products that meet market needs and expectations. In the context of culinary MSMEs, consumer preferences for taste, price, packaging, and product variety are key to attracting attention and maintaining customer loyalty.

As technology advances, the concept of digital marketing has become an important strategy in increasing business competitiveness. (Kotler & Keller, 2021) explains that digital marketing utilizes internet-based media such as social media, websites, and marketplaces to reach a wider range of consumers at relatively efficient costs. (Appel et al., 2020) He added that social media not only serves as a promotional tool but also fosters two-way interactions that strengthen emotional bonds between consumers and producers. Thus, digital marketing serves as a tool capable of accelerating business growth in the era of digital transformation.

The growth of MSMEs is a crucial indicator for measuring the small business sector's contribution to the national economy. Data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs (2023) shows that MSMEs contribute 61.07% to GDP and employ up to 97% of the workforce. MSME growth is measured not only by increased turnover and number of customers, but also by market expansion, increased production capacity, and business innovation. Therefore, the success of MSMEs is determined by their ability to adapt products to consumer preferences while optimizing digital marketing strategies.

The SME Tahu Go, located on Bataraguru Street in Baubau City, is one culinary business facing these challenges. Tahu Go's products are well-known to the public, but the variety of flavors and product innovations have not yet been fully developed to adapt to the dynamics of consumer tastes. The digital marketing strategy employed is also still rudimentary, limited to the use of Instagram social media without utilizing marketplaces or other broader digital platforms. This situation results in Tahu Go's market reach being suboptimal and interaction with consumers remaining limited.

Previous research has shown mixed results. (Pratiwi, 2024) found that consumer preferences significantly influence the competitiveness of MSMEs, while Hadiwijaya and Yustini (2023) emphasized that digital marketing is a dominant factor in improving MSME performance. The

difference in these research results indicates a research gap that requires further examination, particularly in the context of local culinary MSMEs. The novelty of this study is the simultaneous examination of the influence of consumer preferences and digital marketing on the growth of the Tahu Go MSME, thus providing a new perspective on how these two variables can complement each other in strengthening the competitiveness of traditional and modern culinary businesses.

Although Tahu Go is well-known, the business is still limited in adapting its products to the dynamics of consumer tastes, which tend to change with culinary trends. Flavor variations and product innovation have not been fully developed, potentially decreasing consumer purchasing interest in the long term. The digital marketing strategy implemented is still very rudimentary, relying solely on Instagram without utilizing marketplaces or other broader digital platforms. This situation has resulted in Tahu Go's market reach being suboptimal and interaction with consumers being hampered.

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze the influence of consumer preferences and digital marketing on the growth of the Tahu Go MSME in Baubau City. The results are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of marketing management science and practical implications for MSMEs in formulating adaptive and competitive business strategies in the digital era.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with an associative-causal design that aims to analyze the influence of consumer preferences and digital marketing on the growth of Tahu Go MSMEs. The research data consists of primary data obtained through distributing questionnaires to Tahu Go consumers, as well as secondary data collected through literature studies from relevant journals, books, and scientific articles.

The population in this study was all 4,334 consumers of Tahu Go MSMEs in Wajo Village. Due to the relatively large population, the sample size was determined using the Lemeshow formula, resulting in 65 respondents. Purposive sampling was used based on the criteria of respondents who had previously purchased Tahu Go products.

This research was conducted at the Tahu Go MSME, Wajo Village, Baubau City, in 2025. The research instrument was a questionnaire compiled based on variable indicators of consumer tastes, digital marketing, and MSME growth, which were measured using a five-point Likert scale.

Data collection techniques were conducted through direct questionnaire distribution to respondents. The data obtained were then analyzed using validity and reliability tests, classical assumption tests (normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity), and multiple linear regression analysis. Furthermore, a t-test was used to test partial effects, an F-test to test simultaneous effects, and the coefficient of determination (R^2) to determine the contribution of independent variables to MSME growth. Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 27 software.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 Multiple linear regression analysis

		Coefficients ^a			t	Sig.
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4,066	2,547		1,597	.115
	X1	.114	.170	.118	.668	.507
	X2	.427	.135	.558	3.165	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Y

Source: Data processed with SPSS 27 (2025)

Based on the output of multiple linear regression analysis, the following regression equation was obtained: $Y = 4.066 + 0.114 (X1) + 0.427 (X2)$

The constant value of 4.066 indicates that if variables X1 and X2 are zero, then variable Y is predicted to be 4.066. The significance value is 0.115 (> 0.05) which means the constant is not statistically significant. The regression coefficient of X1 is 0.114 with a significance value of 0.507 (> 0.05). This means that every 1 unit increase in X1 will increase Y by 0.114, but the effect is not significant. Thus, X1 has no real contribution to Y. The regression coefficient of X2 is 0.427 with a

significance value of 0.002 (< 0.05). This shows that every 1 unit increase in X2 will increase Y by 0.427, and the effect is statistically significant. This means that X2 has a positive and real contribution to Y. The results of the analysis show that the independent variable that really influences the dependent variable Y is only X2. Variable X1, although it has a positive direction of influence, is not significant so it cannot be concluded that it has a real effect. Thus, this regression model confirms that changes in Y are explained more by the presence of X2 than X1.

Table 2 Coefficient of determination (R^2)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	.660a	.436	.418	2.63975

a. Predictors: (Constant), X2, X1
b. Dependent Variable: Y

Source: Data processed with SPSS 27 (2025)

The multiple correlation value between independent variables X1 and X2 with the dependent variable (Y) is 0.660. This means that the relationship between variables X1 and X2 to Y is in the strong category. R Square = 0.436. The R^2 value of 0.436 means that 43.6% of the change in Y can be explained by X1 and X2 together, while the remaining 56.4% is influenced by other factors outside this regression model. Adjusted R Square = 0.418

This value has been adjusted for the number of independent variables in the model. The Adjusted R^2 of 0.418 indicates that if the model is tested on a wider population, approximately 41.8% of the variation in Y can still be explained by X1 and X2. Std. Error of the estimate = 2.63975 This value describes the magnitude of the standard error in predicting Y. The smaller the value, the better the model is in predicting the dependent variable.

The results of the coefficient of determination test show that the regression model built with variables X1 and X2 has a fairly good ability to explain the dependent variable Y. The R^2 value of 0.436 indicates that the contribution of the independent variables in predicting Y is moderate to strong, although there are still other factors outside the model that are more dominant (56.4%).

Table 3 T-Test (Partial)

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4,066	2,547		1,597	.115
	X1	.114	.170	.118	.668	.507
	X2	.427	.135	.558	3.165	.002
Dependent Variable: Y						

Dependent Variable: Y

Source: Data processed with SPSS 27 (2025)

1. Constant (4.066, Sig. 0.115)

The constant value indicates that if X1 and X2 = 0, then Y is predicted to be 4.066. However, the significance value of 0.115 > 0.05 indicates that the constant is not statistically significant.

2. Variable X1 (B = 0.114, t = 0.668, Sig. 0.507)

- The regression coefficient of X1 is 0.114, meaning that every 1 unit increase in X1 will increase Y by 0.114.
- Significance value 0.507 > 0.05 → X1 has no significant effect on Y.
- This means that the hypothesis that X1 has an effect on Y is rejected.

3. Variable X2 (B = 0.427, t = 3.165, Sig. 0.002)

- The regression coefficient of X2 is 0.427, meaning that every 1 unit increase in X2 will increase Y by 0.427.
- Significance value 0.002 < 0.05 → X2 has a significant effect on Y.
- This means that the hypothesis that X2 has an effect on Y is accepted.

So it can be concluded that variable X1 does not have a significant effect on Y, even though the direction of the relationship is positive. Variable X2 has a positive and significant effect on Y, so it can be concluded that X2 is the dominant factor that influences Y. Thus, partially only X2 is proven to provide a real contribution to the dependent variable Y.

Table 4 F Test (Simultaneous)

ANOVA						
	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	334,033	2	167,107	23,981	.000b
	Residual	432,033	62	6,968		
	Total	766,246	64			
a. Dependent Variable: total growth of Tahu Go MSMEs						
b. Predictors: (Constant), total consumer tastes, total digital marketing						

Source: Data processed with SPSS 27 (2025)

1. The calculated F value = 23.981 with significance = 0.000
 - a. Because the significance value is $0.000 < 0.05$, the regression model is declared significant simultaneously.
 - b. This means that the independent variables (total consumer tastes and total digital marketing) together have a significant effect on the dependent variable (total growth of Tahu Go MSMEs).
2. Sum of Squares and Mean Square
 - a. The Regression Sum of Squares value = 334.033 shows the magnitude of the variation in Y that can be explained by the model (X1 and X2).
 - b. The Residual Sum of Squares value = 432.033 indicates that the variation in Y cannot be explained by the model.
 - c. This supports the previous results that most of the variation in Y is influenced by the two independent variables, although there are still other factors outside the model.

Based on the F-test results, it can be concluded that consumer taste and digital marketing variables simultaneously have a significant influence on the growth of the Tahu Go MSME. Therefore, the regression model developed is suitable for predicting MSME growth based on these two variables.

This study involved 65 respondents who were consumers of the Tahu Go MSME. Based on the respondents' characteristics, the majority were in the productive age group of 21–30 years (53.85%), and the majority were women (75.38%). This indicates that the primary market segment of the Tahu Go MSME is young people, particularly women, who tend to be more active in purchasing fast food products.

The results of the multiple linear regression test indicate that the consumer taste variable (X1) does not significantly influence the growth of the Tahu Go MSME with a significance value of $0.507 > 0.05$ and a t-count of $0.668 < t\text{-table of } 1.998$. This finding indicates that taste preferences, price, and product variety have not been the dominant factors in driving business growth. This is in line with Pratiwi's (2024) research which states that consumer preferences can have different influences depending on the product innovation offered by business actors.

In contrast, the digital marketing variable (X2) was proven to have a positive and significant effect on MSME growth with a significance value of $0.002 < 0.05$ and a t-test of $3.165 > t\text{-table of } 1.998$. These results support the theory of Kotler & Keller (2021), which asserts that digital media-based marketing strategies can increase reach, interaction with consumers, and brand awareness. This finding is also consistent with research.(Hadiwijaya & Yustini, 2023)which found that digital marketing is a major factor in driving the performance of culinary MSMEs in the digital era.

Simultaneously, the F test results show that consumer tastes (X1) and digital marketing (X2) have a significant effect on the growth of Tahu Go MSMEs with an F-count value of $23.981 > F\text{-table } 2.70$ and a significance of $0.000 < 0.05$. This means that even though consumer tastes do not have a partial effect, their existence remains relevant when combined with digital marketing strategies. In other words, digital marketing strategies can strengthen product positions in the market even though consumer preferences for flavor variations have not yet fully become the main factor.

Thus, the results of this study answer the research objective: consumer preferences and digital marketing influence the growth of the Tahu Go MSME, although the greatest influence comes from digital marketing. For MSME practitioners, these findings emphasize the importance of consistent digital media management, not only for promotion but also for building long-term relationships with consumers. Furthermore, product innovation remains necessary to meet the dynamics of consumer preferences and strengthen business competitiveness.

CLOSING

The research results show that the growth of the Tahu Go MSME is more influenced by digital marketing strategies than consumer preferences. Digital-based marketing strategies have been shown to make a positive and significant contribution to business development, while consumer preferences have not yet significantly influenced the business. However, when analyzed simultaneously, both variables still play a role in driving MSME growth.

This study still has limitations, including the relatively small sample size, which makes the results unable to be broadly generalized to other MSME contexts. Furthermore, the study only included two variables: consumer preferences and digital marketing, while other factors such as product innovation, service quality, price, and conventional promotional strategies were not taken into account. The questionnaire-based research instrument also has the potential to introduce subjective bias in respondents' responses.

Based on these limitations, further research is recommended to use a larger sample size, expand the research object to various types of MSMEs, and add other relevant variables. This will ensure a more comprehensive and representative depiction of the factors influencing MSME growth.

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