

# THE INFLUENCE OF WORD OF MOUTH AND INFLUENCER MARKETING ON PURCHASE DECISIONS OF AQUA PRODUCTS IN MEDAN CITY

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*Abstract: This research investigates how Word of Mouth and Influencer Marketing affect the purchase decisions of Aqua products in Medan City. Employing a quantitative method, data were gathered through surveys from 50 Aqua consumers. The analysis, conducted with SPSS version 26 using multiple linear regression, showed that Word of Mouth alone does not significantly influence purchase decisions, whereas Influencer Marketing has a significant impact. Together, these variables significantly affect consumers' buying choices. The Adjusted R Square of 0.130 indicates that 13% of the variation in purchase decisions is explained by these factors, while the remaining 87% is attributed to other variables outside the scope of this study. The results underscore the crucial role of Influencer Marketing in influencing consumer behavior in today's digital landscape.*

*Keywords: Word of Mouth, Influencer Marketing, Purchasing Decisio*

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini mengkaji pengaruh Word of Mouth dan Influencer Marketing terhadap keputusan pembelian produk Aqua di Kota Medan. Dengan menggunakan metode kuantitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui survei yang diberikan kepada 50 konsumen Aqua. Analisis yang dilakukan menggunakan regresi linier berganda dengan bantuan SPSS versi 26 menunjukkan bahwa Word of Mouth secara individu tidak berpengaruh signifikan terhadap keputusan pembelian, sedangkan Influencer Marketing memiliki pengaruh yang signifikan. Ketika kedua variabel tersebut digabungkan, keduanya secara bersama-sama memberikan pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap keputusan pembelian konsumen. Nilai Adjusted R Square sebesar 0,130 menunjukkan bahwa 13% variasi keputusan pembelian dapat dijelaskan oleh kedua variabel ini, sedangkan 87% sisanya dipengaruhi oleh faktor lain yang tidak dibahas dalam penelitian ini. Hasil penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya peran Influencer Marketing dalam membentuk perilaku konsumen di era digital saat ini.

**Kata Kunci:** *Word of Mouth, Influencer Marketing, Keputusan Pembelian*

## INTRODUCTION

In this digital age, advancements in information and communication technology have led to substantial transformations in the way consumers obtain information before making a purchase. Consumers no longer rely solely on conventional advertising but tend to trust recommendations from others, whether through direct conversation or social media. This has made Word of Mouth (WOM) along with influencer marketing is becoming more influential over time dominant and influential strategies in shaping purchasing decisions, including for basic necessities such as bottled drinking water.

Bottled drinking water has become an essential need in modern daily life, where people demand practicality and hygiene. A prominent bottled water brand in the Indonesian market is Aqua. As pioneer in the industry since 1973, Aqua has successfully established a reputation as a high-quality and trustworthy product. Despite its solid reputation, the company continues to face intense competition and shifting consumer behavior, as consumers are now more careful and selective in choosing products. Purchasing decisions are influenced not only by product quality but also by information received from their surroundings or public figures they follow on social media.

Word of Mouth, as a form of interaction between consumers, occurs informally yet is highly effective in shaping perceptions and purchase decisions. When someone recommends or gives a positive review about a product like Aqua, it can increase the interest of potential consumers to try the



product. On the other hand, Influencer Marketing also plays a significant role, where public figures or social media personalities with large followings promote products through digital platforms. Consumers who idolize these influencers tend to trust and be more inclined to purchase the products they recommend.

This phenomenon is increasingly evident among urban communities, including in the city of Medan, where social media usage is highly active and digital interaction has become part of the lifestyle. Marketing strategies based on WOM and influencers are now important considerations for companies targeting urban consumers.

## **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

### **Purchase Decision**

Tjiptono (as cited in Dewi & Gunanto, 2023) states that a purchase decision is a An aspect of consumer behavior that starts prior to the final purchase decision and continues through to the point when the decision is carried out, involving direct actions to obtain and determine which products or services to buy.

Nurfajrina Handayani (as cited in Dewi & Gunanto, 2023) argues that consumer purchase decisions are based on what products fulfill the consumer's needs or desires, which may change over time. The purchase decision process helps consumers choose a product from among the many options available.

Kotler & Armstrong (as cited in Nasir et al., 2018) define a purchase decision as the process Involving the comparison of several options leading to the selection of a specific product. Meanwhile, Tjiptono (as cited in Nasir et al., 2018) describes it as the concrete stage when a consumer decides to make a purchase. This process is also influenced by consumers' habitual shopping patterns.

### **Purchase Decision Indicators**

According to Kotler and Keller (as cited in Nasir et al., 2018), the indicators of a purchase decision include the following:

1. Selection of product type
2. Determination of the desired brand
3. Choice of purchase location or channel
4. Determination of the time of purchase
5. Determination of the quantity to be purchased
6. The method or payment system used

### **Word of Mouth**

According to Rahmadani (as cited in Daryanti et al., 2025), Word of Mouth Communication refers to the process of sharing product recommendations either individually or within groups or service after it has been consumed or used, with the aim of providing personal information.

Meanwhile, Hasan (as cited in Ulya et al., 2023) defines Word of Mouth as an action taken by consumers to share personal information with other consumers regarding their experience with a product or service.

Firmansyah (2020) explains that Word of Mouth is a form of communication between individuals about a product or service, which is independent and does not originate directly from the providing company. Febriani & Dewi (2018) state that WOM includes all types of conversations between individuals about a product, service, or company within a certain period.

T. Ningsih & Sugnam (2024) add that WOM is a conversation that occurs between one person and many others regarding a product, where the message is often delivered spontaneously and unconsciously by both the sender and receiver of the information.

In line with that, Sahir et al. (2020) explain that WOM can be in the form of personal or indirect messages conveyed by individuals to the service provider.

### **Indikator Word of Mouth**

According to Barry (as cited in Daryanti et al., 2025), the indicators of Word of Mouth consist of:

1. Consumers' desire to share positive experiences
2. Consumers giving recommendations

### **Influencer Marketing**



Influencer marketing is a promotional approach that engages individuals with significant influence over their audience individuals to reach target audiences, boost sales, and build relationships with consumers (Jailani et al., 2025). According to Lim and Kesumahati (as cited in Yulia, 2024), this strategy is effective because it can build trust with followers and drive sales.

Weismueller et al. (as cited in Nasir et al., 2018) further explain that Influencer Marketing continues to evolve and has become a major trend in the current marketing landscape.

### **Influencer Marketing Indicator**

The indicators used to evaluate an influencer as an endorser based on the VisCAP model by Royan (as cited in Dewi & Gunanto, 2023) are as follows:

1. *Credibility*
2. *Attraction*

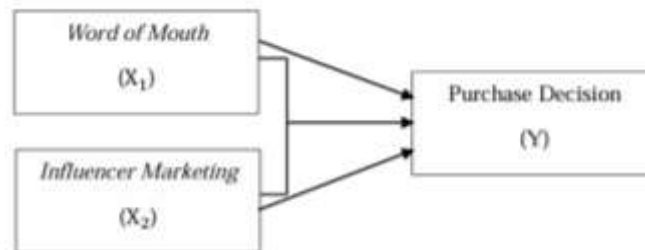
### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework is a conceptual foundation that explains the logical relationship between the variables being studied. This explanation is constructed based on theories, concepts, and findings from previous researchers.

The study by Kumar and Gupta (as cited in Daryanti et al., 2025) shows that consumers exposed to word of mouth tend to make purchase decisions more quickly and can create a network effect that amplifies the impact of purchases. Word of mouth can also enhance product popularity, and when managed effectively, it becomes a competitive advantage in the market.

The study by Jailani et al. (2025) on Mayshopping Tente Branch proved that Influencer Marketing and Word of Mouth jointly influence purchase decisions. This evidence is reinforced by a study by Getri Yulia (2024), which also shows that both strategies affect purchase decisions at Titha Fashion Solok, with price acting as an intervening variable.

Based on the aforementioned previous studies, a theoretical This framework may be represented as follows:



**Figure 1. Theoretical Framework**

### **Research Hypothesis**

A research hypothesis represents a preliminary assumption about how independent variables affect dependent variables, which must be examined through systematic investigation (Teta, 2024).

- H1: Word of Mouth has a significant influence on the purchase decision of Aqua products in Medan City.
- H2: Influencer Marketing has a significant influence on the purchase decision of Aqua products in Medan City.
- H3: Word of Mouth and Influencer Marketing simultaneously have a significant influence on the purchase decision of Aqua products in Medan City.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research employs a quantitative methodology. As described by Sugiyono (2019), quantitative research is grounded in positivist philosophy and is regarded as a scientific approach because it adheres to principles that are tangible, measurable, objective, rational, and systematic, emphasizing empirically verifiable data. To calculate the sample size, the researcher applies Hair's (2019) formula, which involves multiplying the number of indicators by five. Since this study has 10 indicators, the sample size totals 50 respondents. The sampling method utilized is accidental sampling. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires to consumers of Aqua bottled drinking

water in Medan City. Instrument testing included validity and reliability assessments, while classical assumption tests comprised normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity evaluations. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression, followed by t-tests, F-tests, and determination coefficient ( $R^2$ ) analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Validity Test Results

The results of the validity test are presented below.

**Table 1. Validity Test Results**

Variable	Instrumen	r-hitung	r-tabel	Kerangan
Word of Mouth ( $X_1$ )	Statement 1	.482	.361	Valid
	Statement 2	.673	.361	Valid
	Statement 3	.654	.361	Valid
	Statement 4	.657	.361	Valid
	Statement 5	.510	.361	Valid
	Statement 6	.456	.361	Valid
Influencer Marketing ( $X_2$ )	Statement 1	.715	.361	Valid
	Statement 2	.715	.361	Valid
Purchase Decision (Y)	Statement 1	.746	.361	Valid
	Statement 2	.746	.361	Valid

Source: Data Processing by SPSS Version 26

The validity test results indicate that every item within the WOM ( $X_1$ ), Influencer Marketing ( $X_2$ ), and Purchase Decision (Y) variables has an r-calculated value exceeding the r-table threshold of 0.361, confirming the validity of all the statements.

### Reliability Testing

The reliability test in this study was performed to determine the consistency of each item in the questionnaire. Presented below are the findings from the reliability assessment conducted.

**Table 2. Reliability Test Results**

Variabel	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
WOM ( $X_1$ )	.811	6
Influencer Marketing ( $X_2$ )	.833	2
Purchase Decision (Y)	.855	2

Source: Data Processing by SPSS Version 26

The reliability test results reveal that the variables Word of Mouth ( $X_1$ ), Influencer Marketing ( $X_2$ ), and Purchase Decision (Y) each have a Cronbach's Alpha value exceeding 0.6, which signifies excellent reliability.

### Normality Test Results

This study performed the normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov technique. The outcomes of the test are shown in the table below:

**Table 3. Normality Test Results**

		Unstandardized Residual
N		50
Normal Parameters <sup>a,b</sup>	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	1.80933696
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.100
	Positive	.059
	Negative	-.100
Test Statistic		.100
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 <sup>c,d</sup>
a. Test distribution is Normal.		

Source: Data Processing by SPSS Version 26



According to the table above, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test produced a significance value of 0.200, which exceeds the 0.05 threshold. Thus, it can be concluded that the data in this study follow a normal distribution.

### Multicollinearity Test Results

Presented below are the findings of the multicollinearity test carried out in this study:

**Table 4. Multicollinearity Test Results**

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	Word of Mouth	.962	1.039
	Influencer Marketing	.962	1.039

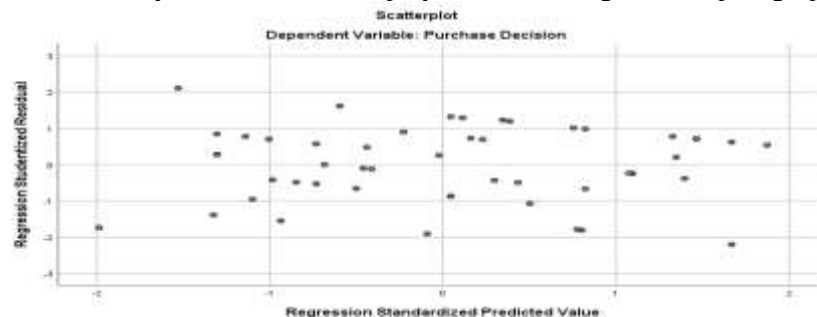
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

Source: Data Processing by SPSS Version 26

Based on the table above, each variable exhibits a tolerance value greater than 0.1 and a VIF value less than 10, indicating that there is no multicollinearity issue in this study.

### Heteroscedasticity Test Results

The heteroscedasticity test results are displayed below using a scatterplot graph.



**Figure 1. Scatterplot Graph**

Source: Data Processing by SPSS Version 26

From the scatterplot graph above, the data points appear to be randomly dispersed without any discernible pattern and are evenly spread both above and below the zero line on the Y-axis. Hence, it can be concluded that the regression model does not exhibit signs of heteroscedasticity.

### Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Presented below are the findings from the multiple linear regression analysis carried out in this study.

**Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.725	1.509		3.131	.003
	Word of Mouth	.055	.071	.106	.778	.440
	Influencer Marketing	.314	.103	.414	3.052	.004

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

Source: Data Processing by SPSS Version 26

Referring to the table above, the multiple linear regression equation can be expressed as follows:

$$Y = 4,725 + 0,055 + 0,314$$

The interpretation is:

1. The constant (a) value of 4.725 implies that if the Word of Mouth and Influencer Marketing variables remain unchanged, the purchase decision score will be 4.725.
2. The Word of Mouth coefficient ( $b_1$ ) of 0.055 indicates that each additional unit increase in Word of Mouth results in a 0.055 rise in the purchase decision.
3. The Influencer Marketing coefficient ( $b_2$ ) of 0.314 means that a one-unit increase in Influencer Marketing corresponds to a 0.314 increase in the purchase decision.



### t-Test Results

The results of the t-test conducted in this study are shown below:

**Table 6. t-Test Results**

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.725	1.509		3.131	.003
	Word of Mouth	.055	.071	.106	.778	.440
	Influencer Marketing	.314	.103	.414	3.052	.004

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

Source: Data Processing by SPSS Version 26

Table 6 shows that Word of Mouth has a t-value of 0.778 and a significance of 0.440 ( $>0.05$ ), indicating no significant effect on Aqua's purchase decision in Medan. Meanwhile, Influencer Marketing has a t-value of 3.052 with a significance of 0.004 ( $<0.05$ ), meaning it significantly influences the purchase decision.

### F-Test Results

The purpose of the F-test is to determine if the independent variables jointly have an effect on the dependent variable. The results of the test are shown below:

**Table 7. F-Test Results**

	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	31.909	2	15.954	4.675	.014 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	160.411	47	3.413		
	Total	192.320	49			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

b. Predictors: (Constant), Influencer Marketing, Word of Mouth

Source: Data Processing by SPSS Version 26

Table 7 shows an F-value of 4.675 with a significance of 0.014 ( $<0.05$ ), indicating that Word of Mouth and Influencer Marketing together significantly affect Aqua's purchase decision in Medan.

### Results of the Coefficient of Determination Test

The findings of the test are presented as follows.

**Table 8. Results of the Coefficient of Determination Test**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.407 <sup>a</sup>	.166	.130	1.84743

a. Predictors: (Constant), Influencer Marketing, Word of Mouth

b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

Source: Data Processing by SPSS Version 26

The table shows an Adjusted R Square of 0.130, indicating that Word of Mouth and Influencer Marketing explain 13% of the purchase decision, with the remaining 87% influenced by other factors not covered in this study.

### Discussion

1. Word of Mouth shows no significant partial influence on consumers' purchase decisions for Aqua products in Medan City.

Word of Mouth, on its own, does not have a significant effect on the purchase decision of Aqua products in Medan City. This indicates that verbal information delivery has not yet become a major factor in influencing consumers possibly because consumers are more affected by other elements beyond personal recommendations or informal reviews.

2. Influencer Marketing Significantly impacts the purchase decision of Aqua Products in Medan City

Influencer Marketing is proven To significantly influence purchase decisions. This demonstrates that promotions through influencers on social media or digital platforms can positively shape consumer perceptions of Aqua products and encourage them to make a purchase.





3. Word of Mouth and Influencer Marketing Jointly Significantly impact the buying decisions related to Aqua products

Word of Mouth and Influencer Marketing, when considered simultaneously, significantly influence the purchase decision of Aqua products. Overall, these results indicate that in the marketing context of Aqua products in Medan City, Influencer Marketing strategies should be prioritized as they are more effective in influencing consumer behavior. Meanwhile, Word of Mouth strategies can still be maintained but may require further optimization.

## CONCLUSION

From the findings and data analysis of this study, the following conclusions are derived:

1. Word of Mouth has not been proven to exert a significant impact on the purchase decision of Aqua products in Medan City.
2. Influencer Marketing has been proven to significantly influence the purchase decision of Aqua products in Medan City.
3. Jointly, Word of Mouth and Influencer Marketing have a significant influence on the purchase decision of Aqua products in Medan City.

## Suggestions

Based on the results, it is advised that the company, particularly the Aqua product marketing department, focus on optimizing Influencer Marketing as an effective promotional channel to influence consumer purchase decisions. The company should collaborate with influencers who have credibility, appeal, and a close relationship with the target audience, especially in Medan City. Although Word of Mouth did not show a significant partial effect, this strategy should still be maintained and strengthened, for example, by encouraging customer testimonials, building a loyal user community, or offering incentives for consumers who recommend the product to others. For upcoming studies, It is recommended to include additional variables that could affect purchase decisions, such as price, product quality, or brand image. Researchers may also expand the scope and increase the number of respondents to produce results that are more representative and can be generalized more widely.

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