



The Effect of Word of Mouth and Product Quality on Customer Satisfaction Through Purchase Decisions of Milih Roti in Kebobang Village

Suci Lestari¹

Fathorrahman¹

Murtianingsih¹

¹Affiliation: Institut Teknologi dan Bisnis Asia Malang, Indonesia

Correspondence email: sucivisioner58@gmail.com

Abstract

Introduction/Main Objectives: This study examines the influence of Word of Mouth (WOM) and product quality on customer satisfaction through purchase decisions among Milih Roti consumers in Kebobang Village, Malang Regency. The objective is to analyze both direct and indirect relationships among these variables within the context of a local food MSME.

Background Problems: Customer satisfaction in local food businesses is strongly influenced by interpersonal recommendations and perceived product quality. However, the role of purchase decisions as an intervening variable linking WOM and product quality to satisfaction requires further empirical examination.

Research Methods: Quantitative research design was employed. Data were collected from 90 respondents who had purchased Milih Roti products. The analysis was conducted using SPSS 26.0, including validity and reliability testing, classical assumption tests, multiple regression analysis, and mediation testing.

Findings/Results: The findings show that WOM and product quality have positive and significant effects on purchase decisions and customer satisfaction. Purchase decisions partially mediate the relationship between WOM and customer satisfaction, as well as between product quality and customer satisfaction.

Conclusion: The study concludes that strengthening positive WOM and maintaining consistent product quality are essential for improving purchase decisions and customer satisfaction, thereby supporting the sustainability of Milih Roti as a local MSME.

Keywords: Word of Mouth; Product Quality; Purchase Decisions; Customer Satisfaction



Introduction

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a significant role in Indonesia's economic structure, especially in rural areas where traditional ceremony culture drives demand for bakery products. In Malang Regency, the growth of MSMEs—particularly local home-industry bakeries—has intensified competition. Milih Roti, established in 2022, is a growing local bread manufacturer specializing in ceremonial bread and snack-box products.

The company's market is driven heavily by WOM communication and perceptions of product quality. As a rural community with strong social ties and frequent ceremonial events, Kebobang Village provides a unique environment where recommendations spread rapidly, influencing customer behavior. Understanding how WOM and product quality shape purchase decisions and customer satisfaction is essential to strengthen Milih Roti's competitiveness.

In the field, the phenomenon related to consumer behavior toward Milih Roti's ceremonial bread shows that the community of Kebobang Village and its surrounding areas has become increasingly selective in choosing bread providers for traditional events. Consumers do not only consider price but are also influenced by positive stories from neighbors or family members, making Word of Mouth a major factor in purchase decisions. In addition, product quality—such as bread softness, shape neatness, serving durability, and topping completeness—is frequently mentioned by customers in their reviews. Although demand continues to rise, some consumers still compare Milih Roti with other producers. This condition strongly affects the level of customer satisfaction after purchasing Milih Roti products, making it essential to examine the influence of WOM and product quality on customer satisfaction through purchase decisions.

Prior empirical studies show that WOM and product quality significantly influence purchase decisions and satisfaction (Sari, 2021); (Maghfiroh, 2019); (Yusuf & Nurmahdi, 2020). However, research focusing on rural bakery MSMEs remains limited. Therefore, this study investigates how WOM and product quality affect customer satisfaction through purchase decisions among Milih Roti consumers.

This study is important because competition among ceremonial bread providers in Kebobang Village is increasing, while consumer behavior is becoming more selective and strongly driven by social recommendations. A deeper understanding of how WOM and product quality influence purchase decisions and customer satisfaction can help local businesses particularly Milih Roti develop more effective and data-driven marketing strategies. The findings of this research can serve as a foundation for improving service quality, product consistency, and strengthening local branding to ensure sustainability and growth in an evolving market.

The novelty of this study lies in its empirical examination of the influence of WOM and product quality on customer satisfaction by incorporating purchase decisions as a mediating variable within the context of the rural ceremonial bread industry, an area that has been rarely explored. The focus on a rural environment, where social dynamics are strongly shaped by community-based recommendations offers a new perspective that differs from previous studies, which have predominantly centered on urban settings. Moreover, this research presents an analytical model relevant to local MSMEs, providing both practical and theoretical contributions that enrich the literature on community based marketing.

Research Methods

This study employed a quantitative approach using non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling technique. To examine the causal relationships among Word of Mouth, Product Quality, Purchase Decision, and Customer Satisfaction, the analysis was conducted using SPSS for Windows Release 26.0. This software was selected because it is capable of analyzing both direct and indirect relationships simultaneously and is suitable for sample sizes below 100 (Ghozali, 2018). The research model consists of two independent variables Word of Mouth (X_1) and Product Quality (X_2); one mediating variable Purchase Decision (Z); and one dependent variable Customer Satisfaction (Y).

The research was conducted at Milih Roti, located at Jl. Raya Bumirejo No. 43, Bumirejo Hamlet, Kebobang Village, Wonosari District, Malang Regency, from September 2025 to November 2025. The population consisted of 100 Milih Roti customers who met the following criteria: residents of Kebobang Village, purchased Milih Roti products within the last 6 months, made at least one purchase, and male or female aged 18–65 years. Because the population was fewer than 100 individuals, all were included as samples (Sugiyono, 2019). Nonprobability purposive sampling was used to select respondents based on specific criteria.

Primary data collected directly using questionnaires, interviews, and observations and secondary data obtained from journals, books, and other relevant literature. Questionnaire: Distributed via Google Forms (25 respondents) and offline forms (75 respondents). A 5-point Likert scale was used to measure agreement levels. A five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) was administered to Milih Roti customers who met the predetermined criteria.

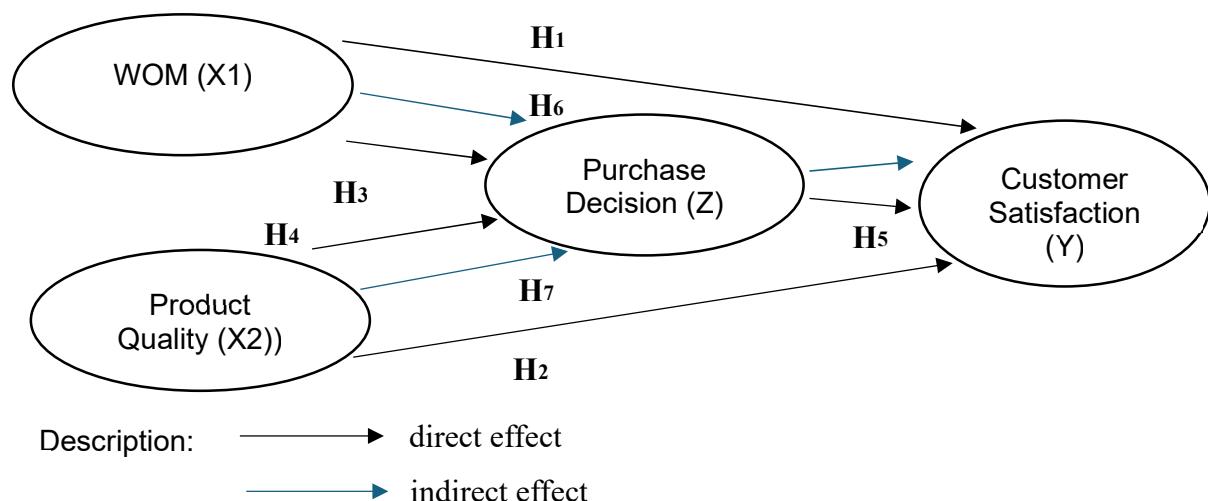
Each variable in this study was measured using indicators adapted from previous research and adjusted to the context of this study. The Word of Mouth variable, based on (Ratnasari, 2016), was measured using three indicators: positive stories, recommendations, and encouragement. Product Quality, following (Untari, 2019), was measured using indicators of performance, durability, conformance to specifications, features, reliability, aesthetics, and perceived quality. Purchase Decision, as defined by (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016), was measured using indicators of product confidence, purchasing due to need, purchasing based on recommendations, and repeat purchase. Customer Satisfaction, also adapted from (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016), was measured using indicators of expectation conformity, revisit intention, and willingness to recommend.

The data analysis process in this study using SPSS 26.0 was carried out through several key stages. First, descriptive statistical tests were employed to illustrate respondent characteristics and the distribution trends of the WOM, product quality, purchase decision, and customer satisfaction variables. This was followed by classical assumption tests, including the normality test (significance value > 0.05), multicollinearity test ($VIF < 10$ and $Tolerance > 0.1$), and heteroscedasticity test (significance value > 0.05), to ensure that the regression model met statistical requirements before further analysis. The next stage involved path analysis to examine the magnitude of both direct and indirect effects among variables, accompanied by the t-test to determine the significance of each relationship using the criteria of t -calculated $>$ t -table or significance < 0.05 . To test the mediating role of purchase decisions, the Sobel test was applied to determine whether the mediating variable significantly transmitted the effects of WOM and product quality on customer satisfaction.

Result

A. STATISTIC TEST RESULT

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework of the Study



Source: data processed by the researcher, 2025

According to (Yusuf & Nurmahdi, 2020), a concept is a theoretical construction intended to organize reality and is not something that has a visual representation. Meanwhile, a conceptual framework is a constructed model that explains how a theory relates to several elements of the research.

Table 1 Research Instrument Validity Test

Variable	X1	X2	Z	Y
X1.1	0,805			
X1.2	0,893			
X1.3	0,780			
X1.4	0,918			
X1.5	0,928			
X1.6	0,922			
X1.7	0,840			
X1.8	0,818			
X2.1		0,828		
X2.2		0,803		
X2.3		0,927		
X2.4		0,891		
X2.5		0,884		
X2.6		0,748		
X2.7		0,895		
X2.8		0,734		
X2.9		0,926		
Z1			0,548	
Z2			0,536	
Z3			0,490	
Z4			0,711	
Z5			0,646	

Z6	0,732
Z7	0,749
Y1	0,607
Y2	0,675
Y3	0,642
Y4	0,625
Y5	0,646
Y6	0,619

Source: SPSS version 26.0., data processed, 2025

Based on the validity test results presented in Table 1, all statement items across all variables show r-calculated values greater than the r-table value of 0,207 ($n = 90$; $\alpha = 0.05$). The correlation values (r-calculated) for each indicator range from 0.490 to 0.928, indicating that each item has a sufficiently strong relationship. Therefore, all indicators are declared valid because they meet the criterion of $r\text{-calculated} > r\text{-table}$ (0.207). This means that each statement in the questionnaire is able to accurately and consistently measure aspects of customer satisfaction.

Table 2 Research Instrument Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha Value
WOM	0,950
Product Quality	0,951
Purchase Decision	0,751
Customer Satisfaction	0,714

Source: SPSS version 26.0., data processed, 2025

Based on the reliability test results presented in Table 2, the Word of Mouth (WOM) variable obtained a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.950, the Product Quality variable 0.951, the Purchase Decision variable 0.751, and the Customer Satisfaction variable 0.714. These values indicate that all variables have good reliability, as they exceed the minimum required threshold of 0.70. Therefore, it can be concluded that all questionnaire items are consistent and appropriate for measuring the research variables, and the analysis can proceed to the next statistical stages, such as classical assumption testing and multiple linear regression analysis.

B. CLASSICAL ASSUMPTION TEST RESULT

The normality test results using SPSS 26 through the Normal Q–Q Plot for each variable show that the distribution of data points does not perfectly follow the diagonal line. Although there are slight deviations in the lower part of the plot, the overall pattern of the data points remains close to the diagonal line. This indicates that the data for each variable tends to be normally distributed, and thus the normality assumption can be visually accepted.

The multicollinearity test results show that the three variables—WOM, product quality, and customer satisfaction—have VIF values below 10, indicating that no multicollinearity occurs among the independent variables. For variables X1 and X2, the tolerance values are greater than 0.10, namely 0.245, and the VIF values are less than 10, at 3.933.

The scatterplot test shows data points spread above and below the horizontal line at the zero axis as predicted. This indicates that heteroscedasticity does not occur, as no clear heteroscedasticity pattern is observed, meaning the assumption is fulfilled.

C. PART ANALYSIS

Table 3 The Influence of Word of Mouth (WOM) on Customer Satisfaction Mediated by Purchase Decisions

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
1 (Constant)	11.569	2.167		5.339	.000
WOM	-.096	.048	-.194	-1.987	.050
Purchase Decisions	.577	.080	.704	7.208	.000

Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Source: SPSS version 26.0., research data analysis results, 2025

Table 4 The Influence of Word of Mouth (WOM) on Customer Satisfaction Mediated by Purchase Decisions

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.626 ^a	.392	.378	2.537

Predictors: (Constant), Purchase Decisions, WOM

Source: SPSS version 26.0., research data analysis results, 2025

Referring to the output of Regression Model I, it can be concluded that in Regression Model I, variable X1 has an indirect effect on Y, while variable X2 has a direct effect on Y. The R² (R Square) value presented in the Model Summary table is 0.406, indicating that the contribution or influence of X1 and X2 on Y is 40.6%, while the remaining 59.4% is the contribution of other variables not included in this study.

Table 5 The Influence of Product Quality on Customer Satisfaction Mediated by Purchase Decisions

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
1 (Constant)	11.260	2.231		5.048	.000
Product Quality	-.053	.057	-.102	-.926	.357
Purchase Decisions	.548	.090	.669	6.058	.000

Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Source: SPSS version 26.0., research data analysis results, 2025

Table 6 The Influence of Product Quality on Customer Satisfaction Mediated by Purchase Decisions

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.609 ^a	.370	.356	2.582

Predictors: (Constant), Purchase Decisions, Product Quality Source: SPSS version 26.0., research data analysis results, 2025

Based on the output of Regression Model II, it can be concluded that in Regression Model II, variable X1 has an indirect effect on Z, variable X2 has an indirect effect on Z, whereas variable Y has a significant effect on Z. The R² (R Square) value presented in the Model Summary table is 0.396, indicating that the contribution of X1, X2, and Y to Z is 39.6%, while the remaining 60.4% is the contribution of other variables not included in this study.

D. SOBEL TEST RESULT (MEDIATION CRITERIA)

The analysis was conducted using the Calculator for the Sobel Test: An Interactive Calculation Tool for Mediation Analysis.

Table 7 Results of the Coefficient Test of the Effect of WOM on Customer Satisfaction Through Purchase Decisions

Hypothesis	Variable	Unstandarized	Standart Error
H ₆	. WOM on Purchase Decisions	0,313	0,055
	. Purchase Decisions on Customer Satisfaction	0,495	0,070

Source: SPSS version 26.0., data processed, 2025

Table 8 Sobel Test Results for the Effect of WOM on Customer Satisfaction Through Purchase Decisions

WOM	Statistical Test	p-value	Result
a 0,313			
b 0,495			
Sa 0,055	4,433	0,000	Significant effect H ₆ accepted
Sb 0,070			

Source: SPSS version 26.0., data processed, 2025

Based on the calculations in Table 8, the p-value for the effect of purchase decisions as a mediating variable between WOM and customer satisfaction is 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This indicates a significant mediating effect. These findings are consistent with the previous path analysis results, confirming that the mediation hypothesis is supported.

Table 9 Results of the Coefficient Test of the Effect of Product Quality on Customer Satisfaction Through Purchase Decisions

Hypothesis	Variable	Unstandarized	Standart Error
H ₇	. Product Quality on Purchase Decisions	0,169	0,053
	. Purchase Decisions on Customer Satisfaction	0,495	0,070

Source: SPSS version 26.0., data processed, 2025

Table 10 Sobel Test Results for the Effect of Product Quality on Customer Satisfaction Through Purchase Decisions

WOM	Statistical Test	p-value	Result
a 0,169			
b 0,495			
Sa 0,053	2,906	0,003	Significant effect H ₇ accepted
Sb 0,070			

Source: SPSS version 26.0., data processed, 2025

Based on the calculations in Table 10, the p-value for the mediating effect of purchase decisions between product quality and customer satisfaction is 0.003 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a significant mediation effect. These results are consistent with the previous path analysis, confirming that the mediation hypothesis is supported.

The study reveals several significant relationships among the research variables. Word of Mouth (X1) has a direct and significant effect on customer satisfaction (Y), indicating that more positive WOM about Milih Roti leads to higher customer satisfaction. Product quality (X2) also

shows a direct and significant influence on customer satisfaction, meaning that better product quality enhances customer satisfaction levels.

Both WOM (X1) and product quality (X2) demonstrate direct and significant effects on purchase decisions (Z). This suggests that positive WOM and high product quality strengthen customers' decisions to purchase Milih Roti products. Furthermore, purchase decisions (Z) exert a direct and significant impact on customer satisfaction (Y), showing that stronger purchasing decisions lead to higher satisfaction after consumption.

The mediation analysis indicates that purchase decisions (Z) significantly mediate the relationship between WOM (X1) and customer satisfaction (Y). Likewise, purchase decisions also mediate the effect of product quality (X2) on customer satisfaction (Y). These findings confirm that purchase decisions function as an intervening variable in both relationships.

Discussion

The test results for the WOM variable on Customer Satisfaction show that all three Word of Mouth indicators obtained mean scores above 4.00, indicating positive responses from the respondents. The positive story indicator recorded an average score of 4.38, the recommendation to others indicator reached 4.41, and the encouragement to others to purchase indicator achieved 4.35. These high values indicate that most customers feel satisfied and willingly act as natural promotional agents for Milih Roti. WOM influences customer satisfaction because it originates from the real experiences of other customers, making the messages conveyed more honest and credible. When customers receive positive recommendations from people they trust, they feel more confident that the product is truly worth purchasing. The findings of this study confirm that the hypothesis is accepted, indicating that WOM has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction with Milih Roti in Kebobang Village.

The Product Quality variable toward Customer Satisfaction shows that all seven product quality indicators obtained mean scores above 4.00, reflecting positive responses and a high level of satisfaction among the respondents. One of the indicators that received the highest score was the product appearance, with an average score of 4.58 making it the most dominant indicator influencing customer satisfaction. This finding demonstrates that the visual aspect of Milih Roti's products plays an important role in shaping consumers' perceptions of quality and overall satisfaction. The results of this study confirm that the hypothesis is accepted, indicating that product quality has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction with Milih Roti in Kebobang Village.

For the testing of the WOM variable on Purchase Decision, the highest score among the four purchase decision indicators was 4.53, indicating that product quality becomes the main factor driving purchase decisions. Consumers perceive that Milih Roti offers appealing product appearance, texture, and taste that meet their expectations, particularly for ceremonial events. The stronger the positive stories and interpersonal communication shared among customers, the greater the likelihood that consumers will decide to purchase Milih Roti products. The findings of this study confirm that the hypothesis is accepted, indicating that WOM has a positive and significant effect on the purchase decision of Milih Roti customers in Kebobang Village.

The testing of the Product Quality variable on Purchase Decision shows that among the seven product quality indicators, aesthetics obtained the highest score, while among the four purchase decision indicators, certainty (confidence in choosing the product) achieved the highest score. This indicates that the better the product quality perceived by customers, the

stronger their motivation to decide to purchase Milih Roti's ceremonial bread products. The visually appealing appearance of the product further enhances purchase decisions, as it reflects quality and provides a sense of pride for customers when serving it at important events. Thus, it can be concluded that the hypothesis is accepted, indicating that product quality has a positive and significant effect on the purchase decisions of Milih Roti customers in Kebobang Village.

The testing of the Purchase Decision variable on Customer Satisfaction shows that Milih Roti customers generally demonstrate a high level of confidence in the products they purchase. They are already familiar with the characteristics of Milih Roti bread—soft texture, balanced sweetness, and long-lasting freshness—making them unhesitant to place repeat orders. This aligns with the highest indicator of the purchase decision variable, namely product certainty. Meanwhile, the three highest indicators of the customer satisfaction variable relate to expectation fulfillment, indicating that when customers feel that their decision to purchase Milih Roti products aligns with their expectations, they experience a higher level of satisfaction. Purchase decisions that are based on considerations of product quality, positive experiences, and alignment with customer expectations have been proven to enhance customer satisfaction with Milih Roti products in Kebobang Village. The findings of this study confirm that the hypothesis is accepted, indicating that purchase decision has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction among Milih Roti customers in Kebobang Village.

The testing of the WOM variable on Customer Satisfaction through Purchase Decision shows that the descriptive indicators of the Word of Mouth variable reveal recommendation to others as the highest indicator, with a score of 4.41. This indicates that customers actively serve as natural promotional channels for Milih Roti. On the other hand, among the Purchase Decision indicators, product certainty achieved the highest score of 4.56, indicating that purchase decisions influenced by WOM are capable of creating positive experiences and enhancing customer satisfaction. The findings of this study confirm that the hypothesis is accepted, meaning that WOM has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction through purchase decision among Milih Roti customers in Kebobang Village. This indicates that Purchase Decision functions as a partial mediator, meaning that Word of Mouth continues to influence customer satisfaction both directly and indirectly through purchase decisions.

The testing of the Product Quality variable on Customer Satisfaction through Purchase Decision shows that the highest indicator of product quality lies in the item appearance, while the highest indicator of customer satisfaction is found in the item product firmness. Meanwhile, the highest indicator of purchase decision appears in the item product conformity. These findings indicate that the good product quality of Milih Roti not only strengthens customers' purchase decisions but also enhances their satisfaction after the purchase is made. This result demonstrates that the Purchase Decision functions as a partial mediator, meaning that Product Quality continues to influence customer satisfaction both directly and indirectly through purchase decisions. Therefore, it can be concluded that the hypothesis is accepted, namely that the Product Quality variable has a positive and significant effect on Customer Satisfaction through Purchase Decision.

Conclusion

Overall, the study emphasizes that strengthening Word of Mouth strategies, maintaining superior product quality, and understanding customer purchasing behavior are essential for sustaining customer satisfaction and supporting business growth at Milih Roti. The findings confirm that purchase decision acts as a mediating variable between Word of Mouth and product quality on customer satisfaction. This means that positive WOM and high product

quality not only have a direct impact on satisfaction but also influence customers' decisions to purchase before ultimately feeling satisfied.

For Milih Roti, it is essential to strengthen positive WOM through pleasant customer experiences, testimonials, and engaging content. Product quality must be consistently maintained through raw material control, baker training, and flavor innovation. The purchasing process should be made easier, such as through online ordering and fast service. In addition, friendly and responsive service will enhance customer satisfaction, which will lead to greater loyalty and stronger positive WOM within the community.

Acknowledgement

The author expresses deep gratitude to all Milih Roti customers in Kebobang Village who were willing to participate as respondents and provide valuable data and field insights for this study. The author also extends sincere appreciation to the university and academic supervisors for their guidance, scholarly input, and academic support throughout the preparation of this journal. Special thanks are also addressed to fellow students and research colleagues who continuously offered assistance, encouragement, and motivation, enabling this research to be completed successfully.

References

Ghozali, I. (2018). Aplikasi Analisa Multivariate dengan Program IBM SPSS 25 (9 ed.). universitas Diponegoro.

Kotler, P., & Amstrong, G. (2016). Prinsip-prinsip Pemasaran (13 ed.). Erlangga.

Maghfiroh, K. (2019). PENGARUH HARGA, KUALITAS PRODUK DAN WORD OF MOUTH TERHADAP KEPUASAN KONSUMEN SERTA IMPLIKASINYA PADA KEPUTUSAN PEMBELIAN SMARTPHONE XIAOMI. *Business Management Analysis Journal (BMAJ)*, 2(2), 34–44. <https://doi.org/10.24176/bmaj.v2i2.4075>

Ratnasari, I. (2016). Pengaruh Kualitas Pelayanan Dan Citra Institusi Terhadap Kepuasan Mahasiswa Yang Berpengaruh Pada Word Of Mouth (Studi Kasus Pada Mahasiswa Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang. 1.

Sari, D. P. (2021). Faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi keputusan pembelian, kualitas produk, harga kompetitif, lokasi (Literature Review Manajemen Pemasaran). (2(4)). *Jurnal Ilmu Manajemen Terapan*.

Untari, D. T. (2019). *Manajemen Pemasaran: Kasus Dalam Mengembangkan Pasar Wisata Kuliner Tradisional betawi*. Jakarta. Pena Persada.

Yusuf, R., & Nurmahdi, A. (2020). Analisis Kualitas Produk, dan Kualitas Pelayanan terhadap Keputusan Pembelian dan Implikasinya pada Kepuasan Pelanggan Two Way Cake Claresta Karawang (4 ed.).