

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON McD PURCHASING DECISIONS DURING THE ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN CONFLICTS

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Abstract: After providing assistance in the form of 4,000 free food packages to Israeli soldiers, McDonald's or McD fast food restaurants were widely boycotted in various countries, including Indonesia. This happened because this company from the United States (US) was considered inhumane. McD is considered to support Israel's actions. In several of its latest uploads, the McDonald's Indonesia Instagram account itself has been widely commented on by netizens with calls of disappointment, boycott and support for Palestine. Several accounts also commented using #boycotmcdonalds. This research aims to determine the influence of social media, especially Instagram, on McD purchasing decisions. The sample for this research was 100 students at the Muhammadiyah University of North Sumatra. The data analysis technique used is simple regression analysis. The results of this research show that social media had a positive and significant influence on McD purchasing decisions during the Israeli and Palestinian conflict. Based on the R^2 value, it is known that 25,3% of social media influences McD purchasing decisions

Keywords: *Social Media, Purchase Decisions, Boycotts*

Introduction

Social media has a big role in the conflict in Gaza this time. Apart from being a platform for support applications, social media is also a place for citizens to obtain information regarding the conflict that is occurring. Observers monitor that there is a shift in support due to good social media content in Indonesia. McDonald's or McD in Israel reportedly donated thousands of meals to Israeli Defense Force (IDF) soldiers in their conflict with Palestinian Hamas. This made many people around the world start a boycott movement against these fast food restaurants. In its statement, McD Israel revealed that it had donated 4,000 meals to hospitals and military units. McD Israel will also provide special discounts of up to 50 percent for Israeli soldiers who come to eat at McD. McD Israel even prepared five restaurants specifically opened for this purpose. After news of McD's food donation to Israel spread, many people began to voice a boycott of the fast food restaurant. In Indonesia, for example, the hashtag #BoycottMcDonalds appeared as a form of criticism for McD. In fact, food donations to Israeli soldiers are only carried out unilaterally by McD Israel and are not a policy made by McDonald's itself. In contrast to what McD Israel is doing, McDonald's in several countries actually provides support to Palestine. McD Oman, for example, supports Gaza by donating 100,000 dollars to help the people of Gaza. McDonald's in the United Arab Emirates also donated 1 million AED as a form of support to Gaza. The same thing was also done by McD Turkey which donated 1 million dollars to the people of Gaza who were victims of war, especially women, children and the elderly.

Social media is now an inseparable part of the daily lives of many consumers (Gul. et al, 2014). Social media is deeply embedded in consumers' daily communication and has taken an important position in people's lives. Social media is activities and behavior among communities of people who gather online. Social media can be used as a way to share knowledge, information and opinions using web-based applications/media (Jashari, 2017).

A post circulated on social media Facebook and Instagram claiming that the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) issued a fatwa that it was haram to buy Israeli products. The upload is accompanied by images of various types of products which are claimed to be haram products to purchase based on the MUI fatwa. The large influence of social media causes polarization among Indonesian netizens, which is normal because international problems often trigger two camps, aka binaries, on social media. A number of Indonesian netizens are encouraging people to boycott products made in Israel and companies deemed affiliated with Israel. However, there are also users who highlight the losses that could arise if the Indonesian people choose to boycott Israeli-affiliated companies whose processors are domestic.

Social media will influence consumers from information search to purchasing behavior (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram and Google make it very easy for users to communicate, interact, search for information or share information. (Kozinets, 2010) researched that social media is increasingly seen as a more objective source of information and has an influence on many aspects of consumer behavior, including purchasing behavior. (Khatib, 2016) proves that the greatest influence of social media occurs at the information search stage and the purchasing decision stage. Positive reviews in the media have also been proven to encourage purchasing decisions and negative reviews will deter users from purchasing decisions. Based on the description above, researchers want to conduct research regarding the influence of social media on McD purchasing decisions during the Israeli and Palestinian conflict.

Literature Review

Social media is a form of media that contains online resources that are generated, explored, utilized and distributed with the intention of educating other people about products, services, brands, topics and other interesting events (Rehmood & Khan, 2011). Social media is a group of internet-based applications built on the ideology and technological foundations of web 2.0 that enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Social media refers to activities, practices and behavior among communities of people who gather online to share information, knowledge and opinions using conversational media (web-based applications) (Jashari, 2017). Social media has changed the way we communicate and how we share information and interests. Around 75% of people have used social media to search for information before making a purchase. This shows the growth in popularity of social media as an information tool (Yogesh & Yesha, 2014). Social media has several indicators, namely (Khatib, 2016) and (Indriani & Suri, 2020): There is interesting content, There is interaction between consumers and sellers, There is interaction between consumers and other consumers, Ease of searching for product information, Ease of communicating information to the public, Level of trust in social media.

Purchasing decisions are the decision-making process and physical activities carried out by individuals when evaluating, acquiring, using or disposing of goods and services (Khuong & Duyen, 2016). Consumers always face the choice of canceling the process or delaying the purchasing decision. This is due to many factors, including changing motivations and circumstances, new information received or a lack of available products. In the purchasing

decision process, consumers must consider several things (Blackwell. et. al, 2012). These considerations include whether to buy, when to buy, type and product to buy, where to buy, and how to pay. This research uses indicators to measure purchasing decisions compiled by Ilmaya and (Ilmaya & Hidayati, 2011) as follows: Habits in buying products, Desire to buy products, Priority in purchasing a particular product, Willingness to make sacrifices in getting a product, Purchasing products based on product benefits.

(Yogesh & Yesha, 2014) research proves that social media plays an important role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions in Mumbai, India. Most (75%) people in Mumbai use social media to search for information before deciding to purchase a product. Research conducted by (Gul. et al, 2014) explains that social media has an influence on consumer purchasing behavior. (Khatib, 2016) further explained that the greatest influence of social media occurs at the information search stage and the purchasing decision stage. Other research by (Madni, 2014) shows that 53% of consumers will look for information and reviews on social media first before making a purchase. Reviews and information from forums, social media accounts and websites will influence consumer purchasing decisions.

Method

Quantitative research is testing and analyzing data by calculating numbers and then drawing conclusions from the test (Sugiyono, 2017). This research aims to determine the influence of social media on McD purchasing decisions during the Israeli and Palestinian conflict. The population in this research is UMSU students who are active in FY 2023 and 2024. The sample in this research is 100 students consisting of 8 faculties. The analysis technique used is multiple linear regression using SPSS. Validity tests were carried out on 100 respondents. It can be declared valid if the calculated r value is greater than r table. The result of the validity value of each response received after submitting or distributing a list of questions is greater than 0.1966, so the question item can be declared valid, (Sugiyono, 2017).

Table 1: Validity Test Results

Variable	Item	R-Count	Result
Social Media	X1.1 (There is interesting content)	0,875	Valid
	X1.2 (There is interaction between consumers and sellers)	0,708	Valid
	X1.3 (There is interaction between consumers and other consumers)	0,834	Valid
	X1.4 (Ease of searching for product information)	0,721	Valid
	X1.5 (Ease of communicating information to the public)	0,657	Valid
	X1.6 (Level of trust in social media)	0,638	Valid
Purchasing Decision	Y.1 (Habits in buying products)	0,736	Valid
	Y.2 (Desire to buy products)	0,723	Valid

Y.3 (Priority in purchasing a particular product)	0,894	Valid
Y.4 (Willingness to make sacrifices in getting a product)	0,793	Valid
Y.5 (Purchasing products based on product benefits)	0,721	Valid

Source : Data processed by researchers using SPSS, 2023

According to (Sugiyono, 2017), if a variable shows a Cronbach's Alpha value > 0.60, it can be concluded that the variable can be said to be reliable or consistent in measuring.

Table 2: Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach Alpha	N of Items	Result
Social Media	,875	6	Reliabel
Purchasing Decision	,751	5	Reliabel

Source : Data processed by researchers using SPSS, 2023

In the table above it can be seen that each variable has a Cronbach Alpha greater than 0.60, so it can be concluded that each variable is consistent/reliable.

Result and Discussion

Based on the results of descriptive statistics, it is known that all 100 respondents were aware of the boycott movement of McD fast food restaurants on social media with the hashtag #BoycottMcDonalds. Most of the respondents were 18 years old (25 people), 19 years old (23 people), 20 years old (19 people), 21 years old (18 people), and 22 years old (15 people). They are the first generation who are truly digital natives, born and raised in the era of social media and smartphones, so it is not surprising that the business they run prioritizes online media rather than offline. In the current era of rapidly developing technology and information, especially social media, many business people use this to promote and introduce their businesses (Arda, et.al, 2022).

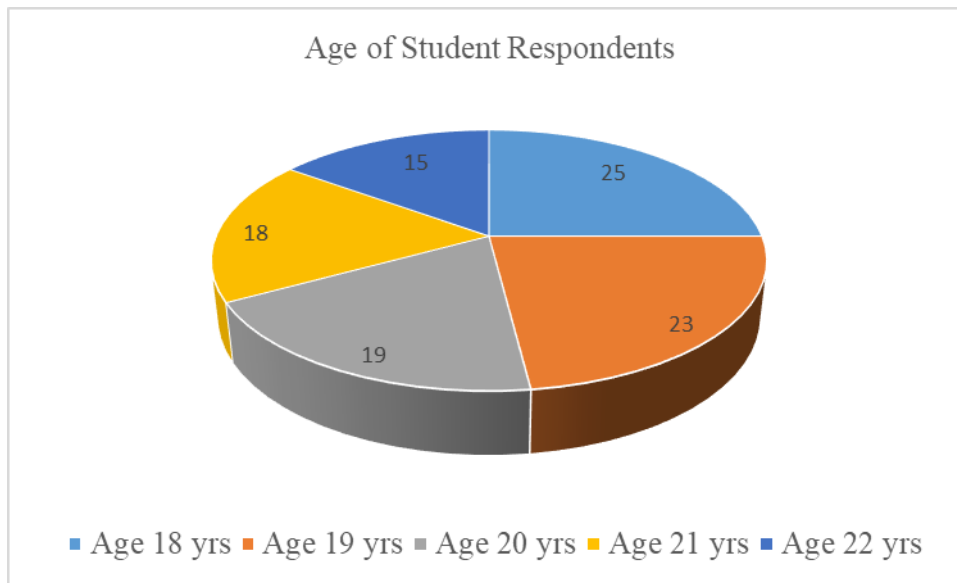


Figure 1: Age of Student Respondents
Source : Data processed by researchers using SPSS, 2023

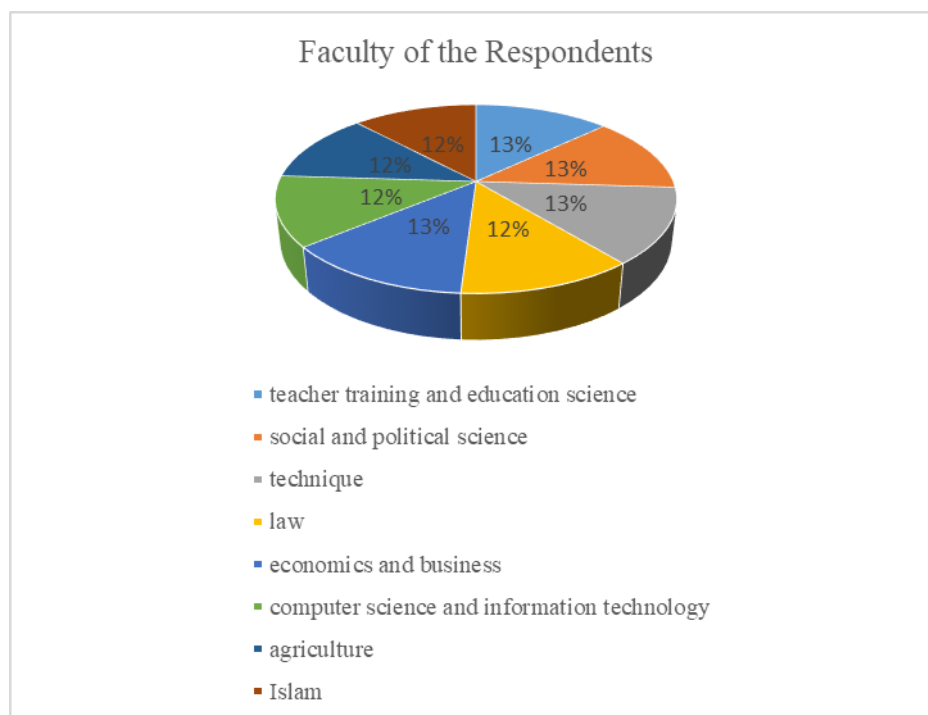


Figure 2: Faculty of Respondents
Source : Data processed by researchers using SPSS, 2023

Based on the answers to the questionnaire, it is known that the teacher training and education science, social and political science, engineering, economics and business faculties each have 13 people. The faculties of law, computer science and information technology, agriculture, Islam have 12 people.

Data normality testing is carried out to see whether in the regression model, the dependent variable has a normal distribution or not. If the data spreads around the diagonal line and follows the direction of the diagonal line, the regression model meets the normality assumption.

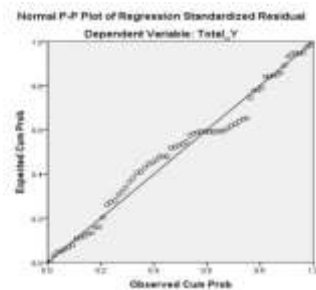


Figure 3: Normality

Source : Data processed by researchers using SPSS, 2023

The image above identifies the regression model as meeting the assumptions stated previously, so that the data in this research's regression model tends to be normal.

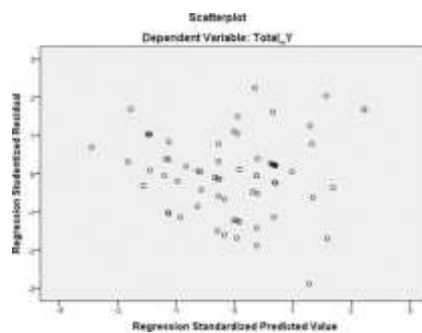


Figure 4: Heteroscedasticity

Source : Data processed by researchers using SPSS, 2023

The heteroscedasticity test aims to determine the error in the statistical model, whether the variance is influenced by other factors or not. Heteroscedasticity occurs when the scatter results of data do not show a clear data pattern and the points will spread above and below the number 0 on the y-axis. Meanwhile, heteroscedasticity occurs if the scatter of data shows a data pattern that is unclear and not spread out. In the scatter plot results above, it can be seen that the data points have a clear pattern and are spread above and below the number 0 on the y-axis, so it can be concluded that this regression model has symptoms of heteroscedasticity.

Table 3: Multicollinearity Test Results

Model	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)		
Social Media	,455	2,816

Source : Data processed by researchers using SPSS, 2023

The multicollinearity test was carried out to test whether there was a significant correlation between the independent variables. Symptoms of multicollinearity are said to not exist if the tolerance value is > 0.1 and the VIF value is < 10 . Based on the 'Coefficients' table, the tolerance value for the social media variable (X) is 0.455 and the VIF value is 2.816. It can be seen from the table above that the tolerance value for variable.

The t statistical test is carried out to test whether the independent variable (X) partially has a significant relationship or not with the dependent variable (Y).

Table 4: T-test results

Model	B	Std.Error	T	Sig.
1 (Constant)	11.641	1.498	7.771	.000
Social Media	.427	.139	2.675	.003

Source : Data processed by researchers using SPSS, 2023

Based on partial test results, the influence of social media on purchasing decisions shows that the tcount is 2.675, while the ttable is 1.660 and has a significant number of $0.003 < 0.05$. This means that H_a is accepted (H_0 is rejected), this shows that there is a significant influence between social media on purchasing decisions. The social media variable indicators in this research have several indicators, namely: There is interesting content, There is interaction between consumers and sellers, There is interaction between consumers and other consumers, Ease of searching for product information, Ease of communicating information to the public, Level of trust in social media.

Good and bad news that spreads on social media will influence consumer purchasing decisions, (Daulay & Frastian, 2023). Currently, more and more Indonesians are participating in boycotting a number of companies or brands that originate from and/or support Israel. McDonald's is one of the companies targeted for a boycott by the Indonesian public because it is suspected of supporting Israel's genocide in Gaza, Palestine. It is known that Indonesian people who support Palestine agreed to start boycotting McDonald's after McDonald's Israel provided free food to the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). This is in line with the indicator of the level of trust in social media which is the answer most frequently answered by respondents. In order to influence online purchasing decisions, sellers and marketers are advised to offer products with good quality, affordable product prices, create accounts on various media such as social media (Facebook and Instagram), and marketplaces (Tokopedia, Shopee, Bukalapak), and guarantees for consumers, (Arda & Andriany, 2019).

Table 5: F-test results

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	110.313	1	55.157	9.285	.000 ^a
Residual	327.758	98	4.892		
Total	438.071	99			

Source : Data processed by researchers using SPSS, 2023

Based on the results of the Fcount test in the table above, the value of $F_{count} > F_{table}$ $9.285 > 3.14$ or can be seen from the results of a significant probability value of $0.000 < 0.05$, then H_a is accepted and (H_o is rejected). From the results of the SPSS calculations above, it shows that there was a significant simultaneous influence of social media on purchasing decisions during the ongoing Israeli and Palestinian conflict. Social media is not only a means of socializing in cyberspace, currently we can see that various business fields are using social media as a channel to develop their business wings (Arda, et.al, 2023), including spreading news regarding the boycott of McD's which fed the Israeli soldiers who bombed Gaza in Palestine.

Tabel 6: Coefficient of Determination

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.501 ^a	.253	.378	2.21177	1.479

Source : Data processed by researchers using SPSS, 2023

In this case, the correlation value is 0.501. This value can be interpreted as indicating that the relationship between the research variables is quite good, because the value is close to 1. Through this table, the 'R Square' value or coefficient of determination (KD) is also obtained which shows how good the regression model created is based on the interaction between the independent variables and the variables. not independent (dependent) being studied. The KD value obtained is 25.3%, which means that the independent variable has a contribution effect of 25.3% on variable Y and the remaining 74.7% is influenced by factors other than the independent variable. The standard error of the estimate functions to measure the distribution of data around the regression line. The table produces a standard error of the estimate value of 2.211, which means the data is spread as far as 2.211.

Conclusion

Based on the results of descriptive statistics, it is known that all 100 respondents were aware of the boycott movement of McD fast food restaurants on social media with the hashtag #BoycottMcDonalds. Most of the respondents were aged 18 to 22 years. There were 8 faculties that were respondents, namely teacher training and education science, social and political science, engineering, economics and business, law, computer science and information technology, agriculture, Islam. Based on the research results, it is known that there is a significant influence between social media on purchasing decisions partially and simultaneously. Currently, more and more Indonesians are participating in boycotting a number of companies or brands that originate from and/or support Israel. McDonald's is one of the companies targeted for a boycott by the Indonesian public because it is suspected of supporting Israel's genocide in Gaza, Palestine. It is known that Indonesian people who support Palestine agreed to start boycotting McDonald's after McDonald's Israel provided free food to the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). This is in line with the indicator of the level of trust in social media which is the answer most frequently answered by respondents.

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Thank-you note

The researcher would like to thank the Muhammadiyah University of North Sumatra for providing assistance so that this article can be presented at the 6th International Seminar of Islamic Studies (INSIS) 2024.