

# THE ROLE OF DIGITAL MARKETING INTERVENTIONS IN E-ADVOCACY LEVERAGE CAPACITY: A CULINARY BUSINESS BREAKTHROUGH TO COUNTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction/Main Objectives:** This research aims to study the important factors behind achieving the e-advocacy leverage capacity that determines the success of a business in the sphere of digital marketing. **Background Problems:** In response to the increasing competition in the world of online culinary businesses due to the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses have to enhance strategic marketing to improve consumer loyalty. **Novelty:** This research model contributes to the development of a concept about consumer advocacy from the perspective of strategic marketing, which is still a limited area of study. **Research Methods:** The research model was applied to 220 respondents (Indonesian culinary business owners) using a survey that was processed with AMOS SEM. **Finding/Results:** This research convincingly identifies two significant building factors for e-advocacy leveraged capacity, namely promotional attractiveness and digital affinity direction. **Conclusion:** Companies' marketing strategies focus not only on maintaining close customer relations but also on ways to intervene with customers so that they are willing to advocate products or brands through digital media.

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## ARTICLE INFO

**Article information:**

Received on 13 February 2022. Received in revised form 11 April 2022. Accepted 11 April 2022

**Keywords:**

e-advocacy leverage capacity, digital marketing intervention, COVID-19 pandemic

**JEL Code:**

M31, L66

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## INTRODUCTION

In the era of digital marketing, consumer advocacy, which is an expression of satisfaction and defense of a business, has a strong impact on convincing other consumers about the quality of a product or brand. Social media content which contains a review about the strengths and weaknesses of a product is an effective advertising weapon for business operators, and it plays a more powerful role than other more conservative forms of promotion that are broadcast through electronic and printed media (Kwon et al., 2020). The dissemination of information via social-media in a way that is massive, rapid, and without the constrictions of social structure gives consumer advocacy an important role in encouraging consumers to notice and purchase a product (Urban, 2005). The ultimate goal of digital marketing is no longer simply to persuade consumers to make a decision to purchase a product, but, further than that, it aims to encourage consumers to refer, persuade, and advocate a product.

Digital consumer advocacy viewed from the perspective of strategic management, which explains how business operators influence consumers so that they are willing to advocate to other consumers, is still a limited area of study. The majority of researchers discuss consumer advocacy from the consumer's point of view, describing how consumers advocate to other consumers about the quality of a product or brand (Fullerton, 2011; Jayasimha et al., 2017; Lawer & Knox, 2006; Wilk et al., 2020). Kotler et al. (2017) have outlined clearly how consumer advocacy behavior follows the concept of the 5As, in which the process of the purchase decision in the digital era passes through five stages: aware, appeal, ask, act and advocate. Other research has examined the types of behavior that need to be reinforced in employees in order for them to serve customers directly

and, of course, advocate to them (Badrinarayanan & Sierra, 2018; Gau, 2019; Lacey & Morgan, 2008). Nevertheless, these studies do not illustrate coherently the different stages of strategies designed by business owners to encourage their consumers to advocate to other consumers, nor do they explain advocacy in the context of online business.

Digital consumer advocacy behavior is a fascinating subject to study in the culinary business, which is currently experiencing a boom. On one hand, a large number of culinary businesses have transformed themselves from offline to online services due to the impact of the social restrictions enforced during the COVID-19 pandemic (Sostero et al., 2020). On the other hand, people's income has also decreased as a result of the closure of numerous business venues, tourism sites, and offices, with the aim of preventing a further rise in COVID-19 cases (Nurani et al., 2020). This situation really illustrates what Indonesia's businesses and the general public have experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic during which the government imposed restrictions on community activities (policies referred to as PPKM) (Budiarani et al., 2021). These circumstances have been followed by a shift in consumer behavior, with an increasing preference for ordering and consuming food via online applications such as Gofood, Grabfood, or Shopeefood due to considerations of safety, convenience, and speed of service (Amankwah-Amoah et al., 2021). Therefore, consumers' reviews and invitations on social media to purchase a particular product play a huge role in influencing other people who are currently engaging in relatively more online activities, such as learning, meetings, and coordinating various activities (Fullerton, 2011).

This research attempts to identify and establish a number of variables that influence e-advocacy leverage capacity, which is positioned

as the end goal for most business owners. Some of the important variables included in this research, which are related to the way business operators advocate to consumers, are promotional attractiveness, market preference enhancement, digital affinity direction, and consumer retention quality (Badrinarayanan & Sierra, 2018; Bilro et al., 2018; Castro-González et al., 2019). This research also endeavors to reinforce the importance of exploring e-advocacy leverage capacity in developing a concept of consumer advocacy from the perspective of the business operator or strategic marketing, an area of study which is still limited.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT**

### **1. Promotional Attractiveness**

Promotion is a range of activities carried out by producers to communicate product excellence and set targets in persuading consumers to purchase their products (Kotler et al., 2017). Promotion, which is the main factor in determining the continued existence of a product, has transitioned to the use of digital channels. In an effort to retain customers, companies not only determine prices and market products but must also have the ability to attract customers with the quality of the promotion. Consumers who are drawn to promotions on social media and repeatedly receive information about the benefits and advantages of a product will enjoy viewing the content. Such connections can create a reaction among networks of social media users, which will cause a large number of users to appear in their network of followers. Attractive promotions that can be accessed via social media are an important step for marketers to ensure that information will spread by word of mouth to the consumers (Xie & Stevenson, 2019). Companies can use a variety of promotional media, both online and offline, to entice customers through

products that are launched on digital media. With the use of online social media, such as Facebook and Instagram, companies can establish more intensive relations with customers to form a brand community (Ananda et al., 2018).

### **2. Market Preference Enhancement**

Market preference enhancement is a business strategy that is used to direct consumer preference by building product quality. Market preference can be shaped by paying attention to product quality, price, and ease of access. Abdullah et al. (2011) defined market preference as a strategy implemented by businesses to create consumer priority.

Market preference can be directed effectively by establishing a relationship between a company and broader range of consumers that can be implemented through digital channels. It is essential, therefore, for a business to pay attention to a number of factors which influence public preference when making a decision to purchase a product. These factors include designing and planning a product, which is a form of digital promotion innovation (Nurhayati et al., 2021; Rahadi et al., 2012). A research study by Sornakumari (2019) showed that market preference for purchasing a product is more effectively directed through digital promotion. Therefore, the hypothesis developed is as follows:

H1: Promotional Attractiveness has a positive impact on Market Preference Enhancement

### **3. Digital Affinity Direction**

Digital affinity direction is the effort made by a company to establish closer relations with its customers. Companies can use a variety of social media, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and blogs to connect with customers (Andersson & Wilkström, 2017). According to Eckel and Kezar (2002), digital

media allows users to become involved in the content by liking and commenting on it. This involvement enables users to express their positive attitude, for example by liking the post of another person.

The capacity of a business to create an attractive promotion via social media has the potential to improve its business through the marketing of its products and services. A business can utilize digital technology to communicate and interact with the consumer, which is evident from the extent to which the business is able to bind the consumer (Leonidou, 2004). An attractive promotion is easier for the consumer to remember, and this makes the content and the benefit of the product more acceptable (Kotler et al., 2017). Therefore, the hypothesis developed is as follows:

H2: Promotional Attractiveness has a positive impact on Digital Affinity Direction

Businesses that manage to sustain interaction with the customers through digital channels are able to create bonds which will help the business to retain those customers. Customer relationships that start with conviction will develop into a loyalty between the customer and the company. Loyal customers will also be more profitable for a company (Dowling, 2002). Activities that involve the consumer through digital channels are one of the ways to retain customers. Therefore, the hypothesis developed is as follows:

H3: Digital Affinity Direction has a positive impact on Consumer Retention Quality

An attitude of affinity originates from the positive feelings of a consumer towards a particular referent that will result in certain behavior on the part of the consumers (Bernard & Karoui, 2014). Emotional affinity between the consumer and a particular product is needed to preserve the sustainability of a business. A

consumer's positive attitude displayed through digital channels will appear if the particular brand has good product quality, image, and reputation (Salinas, 2009). Affinity management through digital channels can increase effectiveness in directing market preference, which in turn will enhance an attitude of advocating through digital channels (Kotler et al., 2017). Therefore, the hypothesis developed is as follows:

H4: Digital Affinity Direction has a positive impact on E-Advocacy Leverage Capacity

#### 4. Consumer Retention Quality

Consumer retention quality is the improvement in the quality of a business in an effort to retain consumers. The greater number of users involved in the evaluation of a business through expressions of satisfaction of social is one of the main factors in consumer retention quality (Jung & Yoon, 2013). Research between the company and the customer reveal that The company's focus is on providing the best quality for the customer through its products and services. Many customers will then respond by making repeat purchases and giving positive recommendations to other people. It is considered easier to maintain the relationship between a business and its customers rather than seeking new customers (Dowling, 2002).

A company that manages to direct its consumers through various contact media, such as social media and brand communities, will be able to increase customer loyalty (Schnaars, 1991). Consumers who are satisfied, as a result of a company's consumer retention efforts, will make recommendations by word of mouth (about their preferences) which can benefit the business (Ayuni, 2020). Market preference indicates a liking for various choices of products that exist. Market referencing is the ability of a company to guide consumer trends so that the

consumer prioritizes their preference for a particular product (Kotler et al., 2017). Therefore, the hypothesis developed is as follows:

H5: Market Preference Enhancement has a positive impact on Consumer Retention Quality

**5. E-Advocacy Leverage Capacity**

E-advocacy leverage capacity refers to a company’s ability to encourage a proactive attitude in customers, to appreciate, persuade, advocate, and refer its products to other people through digital media. Advocacy is a voluntary act by consumers to give convincing and proud recommendations to other consumers about a product or service (Hill et al., 2006). When consumers focus on giving a positive recommendation about a product, service, or brand, they will behave as though they are advocating the product (Fullerton, 2011). Mazzarol et al. (2007) showed that the act of advocating is a strong indicator of customer satisfaction.

Satisfied customers will support a business and defend a product brand because they experience compatibility with the quality of the product, pride in the brand, and convenience with the service (Fullerton, 2011). Advocacy is the key for a loyal customer in forming a working relationship with a business (Ganesh et

al., 2000). A good working relationship can be built through trust and commitment (Fullerton, 2011). If a consumer has already placed commitment and trust in a product, it will be easier for the consumer to recommend the product to other people.

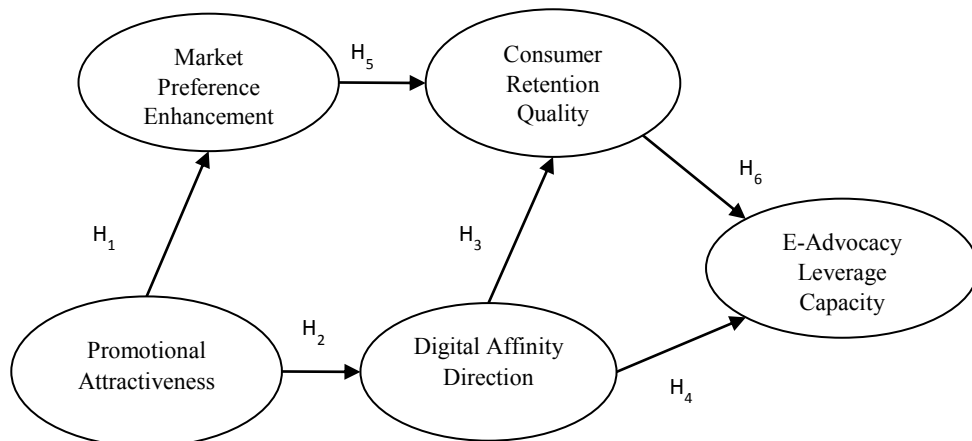
Companies that are successful in maintaining consumer satisfaction will encourage the consumer to advocate their products (Bhati & Verma, 2020). A business that is able to manage customer loyalty to an optimum level is considered to have the potential to develop a customer attitude that can persuade others. A business that can preserve ongoing customer loyalty has the ability to influence its customers to persuade other people to use the same product. An experience that is satisfying to the consumer, which the consumer then shares with family, friends, colleagues, and other connections, will generate advocacy to purchase the particular product (Dowling, 2002). Therefore, the hypothesis developed is as follows:

H6: Consumer Retention Quality has a positive impact on E-Advocacy Leverage Capacity.

**6. Research Framework**

Based on the theoretical arguments above, the research framework is depicted in figure 1.

**Figure 1.** Research Framework



## METHODOLOGY

### 1. Population and Sample

The respondents' data underwent a process of validation to ensure that the data collected was complete. Initially, the respondents consisted of 350 culinary business owners, who were found through documentation from the Indonesian Department of Cooperatives and MSMEs (2021), and a field survey. However, 51 questionnaires submitted by the respondents were subsequently eliminated for a variety of reasons, including because the questionnaires were incomplete, the respondents' criteria were not suitable, or the answers were deemed to be biased. The data from the 299 remaining respondents were checked to ascertain the level of normality by identifying the Mahalanobis value of the variable indicators so that the data could be processed with AMOS software. This process eliminated 79 more respondents which had the potential to produce outliers and interfere with the normal distribution of the data. The number of samples was also selected based on the stipulations which state that the minimum number of samples for a Structural Equation Model (SEM) is 200 (Hair et al., 2010).

The types of culinary businesses owned by the respondents were very diverse (Table 1). Of the 220 of culinary business operators in the sample, 24% had chicken-based menus, 17.2% had juice and coffee menus, 13.1% had fish and meat-based menus, 10.1% had noodle-based menus, 5% had pancake menus, and 30% had various kinds of snacks and light meals.

The use of digital promotional media, either through social media or marketplace-based business partnerships, was seen to have a high level of intensity (table 2). The data collected from the 220 respondent exhibit the following distribution: 96.8% partner with Grabfood/Gofood; 94.1% use Instagram as promotional

media for their culinary businesses; 53.4% have an official website; 5.4% use of Facebook; 0.9% use TikTok; 0.5% use YouTube; and 1.9% use various other promotional media (Shopee, Leaflets, and WhatsApp Business).

**Table 1.** Percentages of Culinary Business Types

Culinary Business Type	Percentage
Chicken	24%
Juice and Coffee	17.2%
Fish and Meat	13.1%
Noodles	10.1%
Pancakes	5%
Snacks	30.6%

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2021

**Table 2.** Distribution of Business Promotion Media

Type of Promotion Media	Percentage
Grabfood/Gofood	96.8%
Instagram	94.1%
Official website	53.4%
Facebook	5.4%
TikTok	0.9%
YouTube	0.5%
Other	1.9%

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2021

### 2. Research Instrument

The indicator measurements are based on existing literature for each variable. The variables are measured using a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Initial reliability test using SPSS on 100 culinary businesses indicates an ability of the indicator to explain the variables that shade it, where their Cronbach's alpha value is above 0.6 (Table 3, in Cronbach's alpha column). Promotional attractiveness is measured based on four indicators: promotional color mix, synchronization of advertisement image, clarity of promotion editorial, and change in promotional display (Kotler et al., 2017; Young-Kim & Kim, 2004).

Market preference enhancement is measured based on three indicators: strengthening consumer awareness, reinforcement of positive attitude, and prioritizing selection (Kotler et al., 2017).

Digital affinity direction is measured based on three indicators: inclusion of consumer comments, openness to consumer criticism, and interaction between company and consumers (Oberecker et al., 2008). Consumer retention quality is measured based on three indicators: reinforcement of consumer loyalty, strengthening consumer satisfaction, and increasing purchase frequency (Qaiser Danish et al., 2015; Kotler et al., 2017). Finally, e-advocacy leverage capacity is measured based on four indicators: ability to encourage the consumer to persuade other consumers, capacity to motivate the consumer to share appreciation of a product with other consumers, ability to improve consumer attitude in advocating a product to other people, and ability to encourage the consumer to reference to others (Walz & Celuch, 2010).

### **3. Validity and Reliability**

The available data from the 220 respondents showed an increase in validity and reliability after carrying out a number of interventions. The cr-skewness and cr-kurtosis values of the data improved; while previously many of the indicators had a value of more than 2.354 or less than -2.354 (with a cut off value of  $-2.58 < \text{cr-skewness and cr-kurtosis} < 2.58$ ), after eliminating respondents who had the potential to create outliers, based on the small Mahalanobis value, the cr-skewness and cr-kurtosis values were in the range of -0.4 to +0.3. This was also the case with the normality multivariate value, which showed an increase from an original value of -7,809 to a value of -2,819.

The intervention of the data to achieve normality can be carried out by eliminating

variable indicators that are not distributed normally. Data without normal distribution may make it impossible to process some of the important parameters in an AMOS calculation. AMOS software has the ability to confirm complex models in which the research model uses five latent variables. A number of these variables have different roles: one exogenous variable (Promotional Attractiveness), one indigenous variable (E-Advocacy Leverage Capacity) and three moderator variables (Consumer Retention Quality, Market Preference Enhancement, Digital Affinitive Direction). In this case, five variable indicators were eliminated from the AMOS statistical processing because they contributed to a data abnormality situation (see the results column in Table 3). This process succeeded in improving the factor loading of each variable and the average variance extracted (AVE) of each indicator. Previously, many of the indicators showed a value of less than 0.5, but after the intervention, most of the values increased to above 0.6. This relatively new research model, which still needs to be confirmed by further studies, provides flexibility of factor loading and AVE values in a range of 0.5 to 0.6, which means that these variable indicators are conclusively accepted as measuring tools.

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

The research model hypotheses show that they are in accord with the empirical conditions. The goodness of fit parameters of the model, obtained using the AMOS software, such as  $p < 0.001$  and chi-square: 282.37 illustrate that the model is valid. This condition is also supported by other goodness of fit parameters such as AGFI:0.908, GFI: 0.947, CFI:0.895, RMSEA:0.037 which affirm the validity of the research model (see in note section, Table 4). The Hoelter value of 235, above the last number

of processed respondents (220 samples), indicates that the amount of data is sufficient to be analyzed by AMOS.

The probability level used in determining the acceptance of hypothesis is 0.1 because the research model uses several research variables that are under development. As suggested by Hair et al.(2010), research models that are still in the development stage are allowed to use a longer probability level ( $p=0.1$ ). Meanwhile, the research model that is already well established and have been replicated in various objects can use a more stringent probability level, which is 0.05

The result from the AMOS processing also confirm that five of the six proposed hypotheses are accepted. The relationship between promotional attractiveness and market preference enhancement produces a standardized regression value of 0.381 and  $p = 0.002$  which means that H1 is supported (Table 4). Promotional attractiveness has a significant effect on market preference. The results of the testing show that market preference for purchasing a particular product is more effective when the product is promoted attractively through digital media (Sornakumari, 2019). Companies need innovation excellence that combines the ability of art design and multimedia technology to produce the latest promotional work (Nurhayati et al., 2021).

The relationship between promotional attractiveness and digital affinity direction produces a standardized regression value of 0.242 and  $p=0.001$  which means H2 is supported. Promotional attractiveness has a significant impact on digital affinity direction. The ability of a business to create attractive promotions through social media has the potential to improve its business. Therefore, digital technology can help to develop closer communication and interaction

between a business and its consumers (Ayuni, 2020; Leonidou, 2004).

Promotional media that are easily accessible to all groups, so as to attract the attention of potential customers such as image and appearance, slogans, promo offers or discounts and so on (Ayuni, 2020). Online promotion using various social media is actually very cost-effective. The attractiveness of an online promotion can be increased by designing them with graphic design applications that are now widely used, such as Canva, Photoshop, FaceArts, and others. These applications are available for free and for purchase. This allows culinary entrepreneurs to continue to design attractive promotional media with minimal costs. The attractiveness of promotion is not only supported by graphic design applications, but also requires skilled human resources in making those designs. In terms of promotion costs with skilled graphic designers, culinary entrepreneurs do not always have to pay for advertising service bureaus. Currently, many professional graphic designers provide services independently at affordable prices. Thus, the attractiveness of online promotion is not hindered by high costs, so there is no reason for culinary entrepreneurs not to create attractive promotional media.

The connection between digital affinity direction and consumer retention quality produces a standardized regression value of 0.757 and  $p =0.000$  which means H3 is supported. Digital affinity direction has a significant influence on consumer retention quality. Activities involving consumers through digital media can be one way of retaining them. Businesses that are able to maintain interaction with the consumers through digital channels will create bonds that help the business to retain its consumers (Dowling, 2002).



Table 3. Validity of Instrument Measurement

Variable Indicators	Initial test of indicators					Final test of indicators				
	AVE	Cr-skewness	Cr-kurtosis	Factor Loading	AVE	Result	Cr-skewness	Cr-kurtosis	Factor Loading	AVE
E-Advocacy leverage capacity					0.511					0.612
- Encouraging the consumer to persuade others to purchase a product through online social media	0.729	-0.719	-1.994	0.549		processed	-0.432	-1.934	0.610	
- Persuading the consumer to express appreciation for the benefit of a product through online social media	0.743	-0.309	-3.625	0.597		processed	-0.206	-3.592	0.623	
- Influencing the consumer to defend a product from criticism by netizens through online social media	0.732	-0.131	-1.477	0.413		processed	0.138	-1.705	0.641	
- Inspiring the consumer to refer a product to others through online social media	0.723	0.197	-4.321	0.569		Eliminated				0.603
Consumer retaining quality					0.538					
- Maintaining consumer loyalty	0.671	-4.171	0.985	0.412		eliminated				
- Increasing consumer satisfaction	0.721	0.317	-3.741	0.131		processed	0.367	-3.741	0.592	
- Growing repurchasing interest	0.711	0.041	-3.291	0.651		processed	0.041	-3.246	0.610	
Market preference Enhancement					0.631					
- Positioning a product as an important choice	0.721	1.538	-1.919	0.712		processed	1.542	-1.935	0.703	
- Strengthening positive consumer attitude	0.682	-3.214	-1.888	0.112		eliminated				
- Making a product a high priority	0.761	2.372	-1.487	0.589		processed	2.263	-1.431	0.631	



**Table 4.** Structural Relationship Output

No	Relationship Between Variables	Standardized estimate	P	Result
1.	Promotion attractiveness → Market preference enhancement	0.381	0.002	H <sub>1</sub> supported
2.	Promotion attractiveness → Digital affinity direction	0.242	0.001	H <sub>2</sub> supported
3.	Digital affinity direction → Consumer retention quality	0.757	0.000	H <sub>3</sub> supported
4.	Digital affinity direction → E-Advocacy leverage capacity	0.688	0.004	H <sub>4</sub> supported
5.	Market preference Enhancement → Consumer retention quality	0.219	0.095	H <sub>5</sub> Supported
6.	Consumer retention quality → E-Advocacy leverage capacity	0.141	0.450	H <sub>6</sub> not supported

**Notes:** Goodness of fit of model =  $p < 0.001$ ; chi-square: 282.37, AGFI:0.908, GFI: 0.947, CFI:0.895, RMSEA:0.037, Hoelter = 235

The relationship between digital affinity direction and e-advocacy leverage capacity produces a standardized regression value of 0.688 and  $p = 0.004$  which means H<sub>4</sub> is supported. Digital affinity direction has a significant effect on e-advocacy leverage capacity. According to Kotler et al. (2017) and Bernard and Karoui (2014), building affinity with the consumer through digital media can develop an attitude of consumer advocacy to other consumers.

The relationship between market preference enhancement and consumer retention quality produces a standardized regression value of 0.219 and  $p = 0.095$  which means H<sub>5</sub> is supported. Market preference enhancement has a significant effect on consumer retention quality. Market preference can increase the ability of a company to direct consumer trend in prioritizing preference for a particular product that will make consumers loyal (Kotler et al., 2017).

The relationship between consumer retention quality and e-advocacy leverage capacity produces a standardized regression value of 0.141 and  $p = 0.450$  which means H<sub>6</sub> is not supported. Consumer retention quality does not

have a significant effect on e-advocacy leverage capacity. This phenomenon is caused by the characteristic of the culinary consumer which is to have a preference for changing menus. A total of 30% of the culinary business operators in the study choose to sell snacks such as burgers and toast, Thai tea, and other light meals (see Table 1). This variety of snack foods has the potential to influence consumer taste, which means consumers do not always remain loyal to one particular type of food. The tendency of consumers to change menus regularly and not stick to the same type of food makes business owners' efforts to retain consumer loyalty less effective. Consumers who are not always loyal and do not have a strong commitment to a particular culinary business will also be less likely to refer a culinary product to their acquaintances.

## CONCLUSION

The hypothesized model is able to provide an illustration about the behavior of culinary business operators in managing their digital marketing activities. Looking at the phenomenon of Indonesia's culinary businesses

during the COVID-19 pandemic, it can be seen that many culinary businesses are transforming from offline services to online services. The existence of government regulations imposing restrictions on community activities (PPKM) resulted in tremendous pressure on culinary businesses, tourism, and other services, many of which have subsequently closed down (Patma et al., 2021). In addition, there has been a change in consumer behavior in buying culinary products, move from offline services to online services. The marketing dynamics during the pandemic can be clearly explained through the results of research. The two main variables that play an important role in building e-advocacy leverage capacity are promotion attractiveness and digital affinity direction. Meanwhile, the two other variables, market preference enhancement and consumer retention quality, do not play a significant role in companies' efforts to encourage consumer advocacy.

Promotional attractiveness is one of the main components for business operators in enhancing market preference. Promotional attractiveness, such as improving the quality of promotions on websites or digital channels, can be the key for business operators in doing this. Business operators who pay attention to the attractiveness of their product promotions will more easily capture the interest of consumers. Digital involvement of customers in a company can increase the customers' commitment to continue purchasing a particular culinary product, which in turn will encourage them to recommend the same culinary product to other people.

Companies can also develop close connections with the consumer through digital channels by determining the direction of market preference. A strategic choice of location for a culinary business has the potential to create intensive relations between the culinary business and the consumer. A culinary business that is

able to maintain market preference will be successful in retaining customer loyalty. Nevertheless, loyal customers are not always capable of referring other people to a culinary product. This inability to make a referral may be due to the consumer's lack of commitment to the culinary business, in terms of advocating or making such a referral. Another factor may be that the Consumers have a tendency to change their choice of menu on a frequent basis. As stated by Bramson (2005), only 5% of customers truly have the commitment to continue supporting business product quality and have the potential to recommend a product to other people.

E-advocacy leverage capacity develops a concept of consumer advocacy that is highlighted in digital marketing. The primary goal of marketers in the digital era does not end with the customer's purchase but is also concerned with finding ways to make the customer willing and able to refer other people to a company's product or even defend it, as is described in the concept of the 5As (Kotler et al., 2017). The development of a concept of consumer advocacy from the point of view of the business operator, which is known as e-advocacy leverage capacity, enriches the field of strategic marketing, in particular studies related to digital marketing.

## MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Promotional attractiveness, which is the first point of entry to digital marketing, has a strong influence on culinary product sales. The research results show that over 90% of the culinary business respondents in the study use social media as a practical way of interacting with their customers. Product promotion that is designed attractively and distributed through social media with a broad marketing outreach will strengthen the direction of market preference.

As time goes on, transactions are becoming easier as a result of digitalization. Business owners who manage to maintain their existence by joining with digital culinary partners (Gofood/Grabfood) will make it easier for consumers to interact with the business and also to give an evaluation. Strategic choice of location also leads consumers to prioritize the purchase of a product from a particular culinary business. Based on the observations of the researchers, 60% of the respondents in the sample had already chosen a strategic business location to facilitate outreach to the consumer.

Culinary businesses that manage to maintain the continued involvement of consumers via social media are expected to be successful in sustaining the existence of their businesses. Social media gives customers more freedom to evaluate a culinary business in order to help preserve the quality of a particular culinary product. An honest review on social media by a customer about a culinary business is an expression of the customer's satisfaction and appreciation which can strengthen the emotional connection and build loyalty (Patma et al., 2021). Every comment a consumer makes on social media which not only reviews a product but also includes criticism or even defamation is regarded as an indication of the consumer's concern to which the company responds in a wise, proportional and suitable manner.

A consumer's inability, or reluctance, to reference a product may be due to the absence of a strong bond between the consumer and the culinary business, which is a way of supporting product quality. This research discovered that consumers who are satisfied are not always willing to refer other people to a product (Budiarani et al., 2021). This situation is due to the unique characteristics of culinary consumers, which include the tendency to try various different kinds of food, the desire to seek

interesting experiences by consuming newly launched food products, and the ease with which consumers can explore a wide range of culinary choices through marketplace application technology. Therefore, it is important for culinary business owners to involve the customer in improving the quality of their culinary products through the evaluation that the customer gives of the service. It is hoped that the emotional bond between the consumer and the business operator will make it easier for the consumer to advocate or defend the product of a particular culinary business to other people.

Culinary business owners can develop close relationships with consumers through various promotions that actively involve the consumer. Price discount programs for loyal customers or various types of bonuses and giveaways can be offered on a regular basis. Companies can also support activities held by communities that use or are familiar with the company's products, to ensure that a good emotional connection is maintained between the company and its customers (Susilo et al., 2022). Promotions that include testimonies about consumer satisfaction can be designed in an editorial, audio, or video format as a way of involving the consumer in the promotion.

#### **LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

A number of shortcomings in the findings of this study should be used as inputs for future research. The relationship between consumer retention quality and e-advocacy leverage capacity, which in theory has a causal relationship, was found to be insignificant according to the results of the statistical analysis. Therefore, this model could be retested in sectors other than the culinary business, such as clothing, tourism, and electronic goods. Another shortcoming was the large number of respondents who were eliminated from the study due to their failure to

provide all the necessary data, which meant that there was an incomplete picture of all the different varieties of culinary businesses. However, the sample used in this study still meets the requirements for an adequate the number of samples, because the Hoelter value (235) is bigger than the number of samples or the response rate (220). Further research could optimize guidance for completing the questionnaires, and telephone interviews with the respondents since direct contact was not allowed due to the restrictions caused by the pandemic to improve the level of return and eligibility of data to be processed statistically.

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