Journal of Economics and Business (JECOMBI)
https://doi.org/10.58471/jecombi.v7i02
ESSN, 2746-8887(Online)
https://jecombi.seaninstitute.or.id/index.php/JECOMBI/issue/view/18

The Influence of Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing, and Influencer Marketing on Snack MSME Sales on Instagram Social Media (A Case Study of MSMEs in Medan City)

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Article Info
Keywords:
Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Influencer Marketing, Sales, Snack MSMEs, Instagram

ABSTRACT
The development of snack MSMEs in Medan City is growing rapidly, increasing business competition and requiring business actors to implement effective marketing strategies. Based on observation results, snack sales still experience fluctuations and even year-on-year declines, which can hinder business sustainability and growth. On the other hand, the utilization of Instagram as a marketing medium is not yet optimal, particularly in implementing engaging and consistent content marketing, targeted and interactive social media marketing, and influencer marketing aligned with the target consumers. Therefore, the implementation of these three marketing strategies needs attention to enhance product appeal, expand market reach, and drive sales growth. This study employs a quantitative approach with 96 snack MSME respondents in Medan City. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using multiple linear regression, classical assumption tests, and hypothesis testing to determine the influence of content marketing, social media marketing, and influencer marketing on sales. This study concludes that content marketing, social media marketing, and influencer marketing have a significant effect, both partially and simultaneously, on snack MSME sales via Instagram. Business actors are advised to optimize engaging and consistent content, increase interaction through Instagram features, and select influencers aligned with their target market. Future researchers can incorporate other variables, such as price, product quality, brand awareness, and online customer reviews.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Medan City is accelerating alongside the growing public demand for various consumer products, including light meals or snacks. High consumer interest in snacks has encouraged an increasing number of business owners to enter and expand in this sector. However, the rise in business competitors has intensified market competition (Harianto et al., 2025). With numerous similar

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products offered, consumers have a wide range of options, forcing entrepreneurs to maintain product quality while implementing effective marketing strategies to attract customers (Nurbayan et al., 2025).

Based on observations of several snack entrepreneurs, sales performance remains unstable. Some businesses experience fluctuating sales showing increases during certain periods only to decline in the next. In fact, some enterprises face continuous sales declines year after year (Lubis et al., 2023). This condition threatens business sustainability, as sales represent a crucial indicator of business growth. Unstable sales also complicate an entrepreneur's ability to forecast revenue, manage product inventory, and plan future business expansion (Djohan et al., 2025).

Alongside technological advancements, Instagram has emerged as a key social media platform for MSMEs to market their products (Arjang et al., 2024). Through features such as photos, videos, Reels, Stories, comments, and direct messages, Instagram enables business owners to introduce products, convey information, build customer engagement, and expand market reach. However, the utilization of Instagram by many snack entrepreneurs remains sub-optimal, lacking structured planning and consistency. Therefore, appropriate digital marketing strategies must be implemented through content marketing, social media marketing, and influencer marketing (Fatorachian, 2025).

In terms of content marketing, many business owners still struggle to produce engaging, informative, relevant, and consistent marketing content (Sakas et al., 2023). Published content often consists merely of product photos without clear information regarding features, quality, flavor profiles, packaging, or product benefits (Abdou, 2025). A lack of content variety makes marketing efforts feel monotonous and fails to capture consumer attention. Consequently, consumers do not receive sufficient information to understand or differentiate the offered products from those of competitors (Pira & Fleet, 2023)

The implementation of social media marketing via Instagram also faces various obstacles (Thuy et al., 2024). Some entrepreneurs treat Instagram purely as a gallery to post product photos, neglecting promotional planning and meaningful customer interaction (Wisessathorn et al., 2022). Furthermore, inconsistent posting schedules and underutilization of Instagram features prevent product information from reaching potential customers effectively. This limits marketing reach and reduces the business's ability to acquire new customers (Godara et al., 2024).

Additionally, influencer marketing has not been fully leveraged by many snack MSMEs. This is evident from poor influencer selection that fails to align with product characteristics and target consumer demographics (Novitasari, 2022). Unplanned promotional collaborations and unengaging product messaging result in marketing campaigns that fail to capture attention or build trust among potential buyers. Consequently, the promotional expenses incurred do not yield optimal returns in terms of consumer interest or sales growth.

Based on the points above, the intensifying competition in the snack industry and unstable sales performance require MSME owners to optimize their digital marketing

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strategies. Content marketing, social media marketing, and influencer marketing serve as critical strategies to attract consumer attention, expand market reach, build brand trust, and highlight product advantages (Zaman, 2023).

METHODS

This study adopts a quantitative approach using associative research with an explanatory design. This approach aims to test hypotheses and analyze the causal relationships and impacts between the independent variables content marketing, social media marketing, and influencer marketing and the dependent variable, which is snack business sales via Instagram. The population of this study comprises all snack MSMEs in Medan City, the exact number of which is unknown (unknown population). Therefore, the sample size was determined using the Lemeshow formula, resulting in 96 respondents selected as research samples. The collected data were subsequently analyzed using statistical techniques to examine the extent of the impact of each independent variable on the dependent variable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variables	N	Mean	Median	Mode	SD
Content Marketing	96	24.35	24.00	19	4.801
Social Media Marketing	96	26.27	27.00	27[a]	3.813
Influencer Marketing	96	24.88	24.00	21[a]	5.135
Sales Increase	96	27.06	27.00	22	5.434

Based on Table 1, all research variables consist of 96 valid respondent data with no missing values. The Content Marketing variable has a mean value of 24.35, a median of 24.00, a mode of 19, and a standard deviation of 4.801. Next, Social Media Marketing has a mean of 26.76, a median of 27.00, a mode of 27, and a standard deviation of 3.813. The Influencer Marketing variable exhibits a mean of 24.88, a median of 24.00, a mode of 21, and a standard deviation of 5.135. Meanwhile, the Sales variable has a mean of 27.06, a median of 27.00, a mode of 22, and a standard deviation of 5.434.

Accordingly, based on the mean values, the Sales variable demonstrates the highest mean score at 27.06, followed by Social Media Marketing at 26.76, Influencer Marketing at 24.88, and Content Marketing at 24.35. The Sales variable also shows the largest data dispersion based on the standard deviation value of 5.434, whereas Social Media Marketing has the lowest data dispersion with a standard deviation of 3.813.

Validity Test

Table 2. Validity Test

Variable	Statement.	R-Valuer-tabel		Description
Content Marketing (X1)	X1.1	0,760	0,361	Valid

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	X1.2	0,893	0,361	Valid
	X1.3	0,769	0,361	Valid
	X1.4	0,771	0,361	Valid
	X1.5	0,965	0,361	Valid
	X1.6	0,888	0,361	Valid
	X1.7	0,830	0,361	Valid
	X1.8	0,773	0,361	Valid
Social Media Marketing (X2)	X2.1	0,664	0,361	Valid
	X2.2	0,897	0,361	Valid
	X2.3	0,923	0,361	Valid
	X2.4	0,767	0,361	Valid
	X2.5	0,671	0,361	Valid
	X2.6	0,912	0,361	Valid
	X2.7	0,876	0,361	Valid
	X2.8	0,987	0,361	Valid
Influencer Marketing (X3)	X3.1	0,776	0,361	Valid
	X3.2	0,877	0,361	Valid
	X3.3	0,765	0,361	Valid
	X3.4	0,721	0,361	Valid
	X3.5	0,812	0,361	Valid
	X3.6	0,832	0,361	Valid
	X3.7	0,834	0,361	Valid
	X3.8	0,845	0,361	Valid
Sales Increase (Y)	Y1	0,765	0,361	Valid
	Y2	0,865	0,361	Valid
	Y3	0,823	0,361	Valid
	Y4	0,889	0,361	Valid
	Y5	0,767	0,361	Valid
	Y6	0,891	0,361	Valid
	Y7	0,765	0,361	Valid
	Y8	0,880	0,361	Valid

Based on the validity test results, all statement items for the Content Marketing (X1), Social Media Marketing (X2), Influencer Marketing (X3), and Sales Increase (Y) variables have an R-value greater than the R-table value of 0.361. The R-values range from 0.664 to 0.987. Therefore, all 32 statement items are declared valid and suitable for use as research instruments to collect data for further analysis.

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Reliability Test

Table 3. Reliability Test.

Variabel	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Keterangan
Content Marketing	0,895	8	Reliabel
Social Media Marketing	0,913	8	Reliabel
Influencer Marketing	0,873	8	Reliabel
Sales Increase	0,856	8	Reliabel

Based on the reliability test results, all research variables have Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.70. Content Marketing has a value of 0.895, Social Media Marketing 0.913, Influencer Marketing 0.873, and Sales Increase 0.856. Therefore, all variables are declared reliable, indicating that the research instruments have good internal consistency and are suitable for further analysis.

Normality Test Results

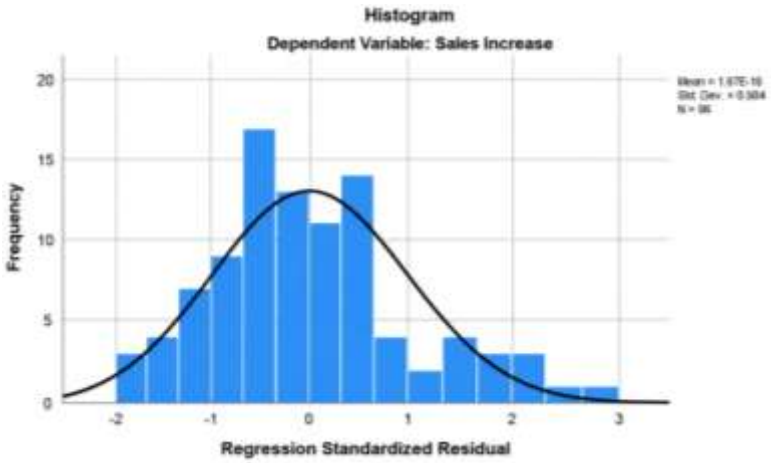


Figure 1. Results of Data Normality Test

Based on Figure 1, the histogram shows that the regression standardized residuals are distributed approximately normally. The histogram bars follow a bell-shaped pattern and are generally aligned with the normal distribution curve. Therefore, it can be concluded that the residuals are approximately normally distributed, indicating that the normality assumption of the regression model is fulfilled.

Multicollinearity Test

Table 4. Multicollinearity Test

Model	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)		
Content Marketing	0.866	1.154

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Model	Tolerance	VIF
Social Media Marketing	0.905	1.106
Influencer Marketing	0.884	1.132

Based on the multicollinearity test results, Content Marketing has a tolerance value of 0.866 and a VIF value of 1.154, Social Media Marketing has a tolerance value of 0.905 and a VIF value of 1.106, while Influencer Marketing has a tolerance value of 0.884 and a VIF value of 1.132. All variables have tolerance values greater than 0.10 and VIF values below 10. Therefore, it can be concluded that the regression model does not exhibit multicollinearity, indicating that all independent variables are suitable for further regression analysis.

Heteroscedasticity Test

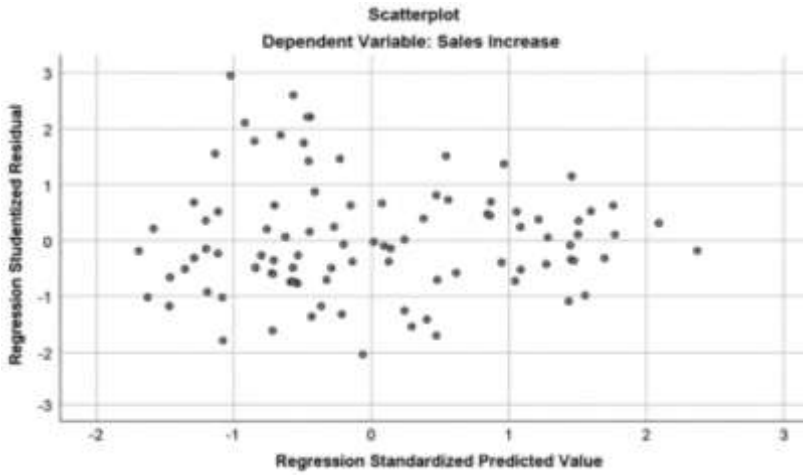


Figure 2. Scatterplot of Heteroscedasticity Test

Based on Figure 2, the data points are randomly distributed above and below the zero line and do not form a specific pattern. Therefore, the regression model does not exhibit heteroscedasticity, indicating that the homoscedasticity assumption is fulfilled.

Multiple Linear Regression Test

Tabel 5. Multiple Linear Regression Test

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	*(Constant)*	.482	3.415		.141	.888
	Content Marketing	.507	.093	.448	5.457	.000
	Social Media	.234	.114	.164	2.046	.044

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Coefficients[a]					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Marketing Influencer Marketing	.321	.086	.303	3.732	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Sales Increase

Based on the multiple linear regression test results, the regression equation is:

$$Y = 0.482 + 0.507X1 + 0.234X2 + 0.321X3$$

The constant value of 0.482 indicates that when all independent variables are zero, Sales Increase has a value of 0.482. Content Marketing has a positive regression coefficient of 0.507, indicating that an increase in Content Marketing will lead to an increase in Sales Increase, assuming other variables remain constant. Social Media Marketing has a positive coefficient of 0.234, meaning that improvements in Social Media Marketing contribute positively to Sales Increase. Similarly, Influencer Marketing has a positive coefficient of 0.321, indicating that better Influencer Marketing can contribute to higher sales.

These results show that all three independent variables have a positive relationship with Sales Increase. Among the three variables, Content Marketing has the largest standardized regression coefficient (Beta = 0.448), indicating that it has the strongest relative influence on Sales Increase compared to Social Media Marketing and Influencer Marketing. Therefore, improving the quality of marketing content, optimizing social media activities, and selecting appropriate influencers are important strategies for supporting sales growth.

Coefficient of Determination Test

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.681[a]	.464	.446	4.043

Based on Table 6, the R-value is 0.681, indicating a strong relationship between Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Influencer Marketing, and Sales Increase. The R Square value of 0.464 indicates that the three independent variables simultaneously explain 46.4% of the variation in Sales Increase, while the remaining 53.6% is explained by other factors not included in this study. Furthermore, the Adjusted R Square value of 0.446 indicates that after adjusting for the number of independent variables, the model explains 44.6% of the variation in Sales Increase. Therefore, the regression model provides a moderate level of explanatory power in explaining Sales Increase among snack businesses in Medan City.

Table 7. F Test

ANOVA[a]					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1301.473	3	433.824	26.534	.000[b]

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1	Residual	1504.152	92	16.349
	Total	2805.625	95	

Dependent Variable: Sales Increase
Predictors: (Constant), Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Influencer Marketing

Based on Table 7, the F-test results show an F-value of 26.534 with a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing, and Influencer Marketing simultaneously have a significant effect on Sales Increase. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted. These results demonstrate that the three independent variables collectively contribute significantly to increasing sales among snack businesses in Medan City. Thus, the regression model is statistically significant and suitable for explaining the relationship between the independent variables and Sales Increase.

t-test

Table 8. t-test

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	*(Constant)*	.482	3.415		.141	.888
	Content Marketing	.507	.093	.448	5.457	.000
	Social Media Marketing	.234	.114	.164	2.046	.044
	Influencer Marketing	.321	.086	.303	3.732	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Sales Increase

Based on Table 8, the t-test results indicate that Content Marketing has a t-value of 5.457 with a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that Content Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Sales Increase. Social Media Marketing has a t-value of 2.046 with a significance value of 0.044, which is also less than 0.05, indicating a positive and significant effect on Sales Increase. Meanwhile, Influencer Marketing has a t-value of 3.732 with a significance value of 0.000, indicating a positive and significant effect on Sales Increase.

Therefore, all three independent variables partially have a positive and significant effect on Sales Increase. Among these variables, Content Marketing has the strongest relative influence, as indicated by its highest standardized Beta coefficient of 0.448, followed by Influencer Marketing (0.303) and Social Media Marketing (0.164). These findings suggest that improving marketing content quality is particularly important in supporting sales growth among snack businesses in Medan City.

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Discussion

The Effect of Content Marketing on Snack Sales of MSMEs through Instagram

Based on the research findings, Content Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Snack Sales of MSMEs through Instagram. This is evidenced by the t-value of 5.457, which is greater than the t-table value of 1.986, and a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. The regression coefficient of 0.507 indicates a positive relationship, meaning that improvements in Content Marketing lead to increased Sales, assuming other variables remain constant. These findings indicate that attractive, informative, relevant, and consistent content can help MSMEs attract consumer attention and encourage purchasing decisions. Through photos, videos, reels, and stories, consumers can obtain clearer information about product quality, prices, variations, and advantages. Therefore, good content quality can increase product attractiveness and encourage consumers to make purchases.

This finding is consistent with previous research by (Setiawan et al., 2026)(Priani, 2025)(Sihombing et al., 2024). Which found that Content Marketing influences consumer purchasing decisions. Thus, Content Marketing is an important digital marketing strategy for increasing product attractiveness and supporting sales growth among MSMEs. Therefore, H1, stating that Content Marketing has a significant effect on Snack Sales of MSMEs through Instagram, is accepted.

The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Snack MSME Sales on Instagram

Based on the research findings, Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Snack MSME Sales on Instagram. This is evidenced by the t-test result, which shows a t-count value of 2.046, exceeding the t-table value of 1.986, with a significance level of 0.044, which is lower than 0.05. The regression coefficient of 0.234 indicates that every one-unit increase in Social Media Marketing leads to a 0.234 unit increase in Sales, assuming Content Marketing and Influencer Marketing remain constant. These findings indicate that Instagram serves as an effective marketing platform for MSMEs to expand their market reach and introduce their products to a wider audience. Through Social Media Marketing, business owners can provide product information, interact with consumers, establish customer relationships, and utilize various Instagram features, including feeds, stories, reels, comments, and direct messages. Consistent engagement through these features enables MSMEs to strengthen consumer interaction, increase product awareness, and attract potential buyers.

For snack MSMEs, visual content plays an important role in attracting consumer interest, as product characteristics can be presented through appealing photographs and videos. Attractive product displays, informative captions, and interactive communication can encourage consumers to develop an interest in the products and make purchasing decisions. This finding is consistent with (Butarbutar et al., 2026)(Nurhidayah et al., 2025)(Salqaura & Nasib, 2025) who found that Social Media Marketing significantly influences purchasing decisions. Similarly, (Nasib et al., 2023) demonstrated that Social Media Marketing through Instagram has a

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positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. (Tezar Arianto et al., 2021) also confirmed that Social Media Marketing on Instagram serves as an effective promotional strategy for culinary MSMEs in attracting consumer attention.

Furthermore, consumer purchasing decisions generated through effective Social Media Marketing activities can contribute to increased sales volume. When consumers receive relevant product information, develop an interest in the products, and engage with businesses through social media, their likelihood of making purchases increases. These purchasing activities are subsequently reflected in the number of products sold. Therefore, effective Social Media Marketing not only strengthens consumer engagement and purchasing interest but also contributes to improved sales performance. Based on these findings, H_2, which states that Social Media Marketing has a significant effect on Snack MSME Sales on Instagram, is accepted.

The Influence of Influencer Marketing on Snack MSME Sales on Instagram

Based on the research findings, Influencer Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Snack MSME Sales on Instagram. The t-test results show that the t-count value of 3.732 is greater than the t-table value of 1.986, with a significance level of 0.000, which is lower than 0.05. The regression coefficient of Influencer Marketing is 0.321, indicating a positive relationship. This means that every one-unit increase in Influencer Marketing leads to a 0.321-unit increase in Sales, assuming Content Marketing and Social Media Marketing remain constant. These findings indicate that the use of influencers as part of a marketing strategy can help MSMEs introduce their products to potential consumers through recommendations, reviews, and personal product experiences shared with their followers. Influencers whose profiles align with the product characteristics and target market can communicate product information in a more relatable and engaging manner. Furthermore, communication delivered by influencers can attract consumer attention and provide additional information that helps consumers evaluate products before making purchasing decisions.

For snack MSMEs, collaborating with influencers on Instagram can increase product exposure by reaching a broader audience through the influencers' established follower networks. This finding is consistent with (Wijaya et al., 2026)(Nasib et al., 2026)(Manurung et al., 2025)who found that Influencer Marketing has a positive and significant effect on TikTok users' purchasing decisions. Similarly, (Zai et al., 2026) demonstrated that Influencer Marketing influences purchasing decisions for local cosmetic products on TikTok Shop. Furthermore, (Zourrig, 2025) found that Influencer Marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions during TikTok LIVE sessions. These previous findings support the results of this study by demonstrating that influencers can serve as effective channels for delivering marketing information and increasing consumer awareness of products.

Moreover, purchasing decisions influenced by recommendations and information provided through Influencer Marketing can contribute to an increase in the number of products sold. The more consumers are encouraged to purchase products after being exposed to in-

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fluencer promotions and recommendations, the greater the potential for increased sales volume among snack MSMEs. Therefore, the more effectively snack MSMEs utilize Influencer Marketing, the greater their opportunities to increase sales through Instagram. Based on these findings, H_3, which states that Influencer Marketing has a significant effect on Snack MSME Sales on Instagram, is accepted.

The Influence of Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing, and Influencer Marketing on Snack MSME Sales on Instagram

Based on the research findings, Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing, and Influencer Marketing simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on Snack MSME Sales on Instagram. This is evidenced by the F-test result of 26.534, which exceeds the F-table value of 2.70, with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.001$). The positive direction is reflected in the regression coefficients of Content Marketing (0.507), Social Media Marketing (0.234), and Influencer Marketing (0.321), which are all positive. Furthermore, the Adjusted R Square value of 0.446 indicates that the three independent variables jointly explain 44.6% of the variation in Sales, while the remaining 55.4% is explained by other factors outside the research model. These findings suggest that increasing snack MSME sales through Instagram requires an integrated digital marketing strategy. Content Marketing provides relevant and attractive product information, Social Media Marketing expands market reach and strengthens consumer interaction, while Influencer Marketing increases product exposure through influencer recommendations. These strategies complement one another in attracting consumer attention and encouraging purchasing decisions.

This finding is consistent with (Abdou, 2025)(Todua, 2022)(Asad, 2024) who found that Social Media Marketing, Influencer Marketing, and Content Marketing influence purchasing decisions for Somethinc products among university students in Surabaya. (Joshi et al., 2023) also highlighted the role of Influencer Marketing and Content Marketing in influencing purchasing decisions through Instagram. Therefore, the combined implementation of these digital marketing strategies can contribute to improved consumer purchasing behavior and sales performance. As more consumers are encouraged to make purchases, the potential for increased sales volume also becomes greater. Thus, H_4, which states that Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing, and Influencer Marketing simultaneously have a significant effect on Snack MSME Sales on Instagram, is accepted.

Research Limitations and Robustness Agenda

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the research focuses specifically on snack MSMEs using Instagram as their primary marketing platform. Therefore, the findings may not be fully generalizable to MSMEs operating in other business sectors or using different social media platforms. Second, the study examines only three independent variables: Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing, and Influencer Marketing. Other factors that may influence sales, such as product quality, pricing strategies, customer satisfaction, brand awareness, and consumer purchasing

behavior, were not included in the research model. Third, the use of questionnaire-based data may involve subjective responses from respondents, potentially affecting the accuracy of the findings.

Future research is recommended to expand the research scope by involving MSMEs from different business sectors and social media platforms, such as TikTok, Facebook, and other digital marketing channels. Additional variables should also be considered to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing MSME sales. Furthermore, future studies could employ larger sample sizes, different research methods, and additional statistical testing to assess the consistency and robustness of the findings. These efforts are expected to strengthen the validity, reliability, and generalizability of future research results.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing, and Influencer Marketing have positive and significant effects on Snack MSME Sales on Instagram, both partially and simultaneously. Among the three variables, Content Marketing has the largest regression coefficient (0.507), followed by Influencer Marketing (0.321) and Social Media Marketing (0.234). Furthermore, the Adjusted R Square value of 0.446 indicates that these three marketing strategies explain 44.6% of the variation in sales. These findings highlight the importance of implementing integrated digital marketing strategies to expand market reach, increase consumer engagement, and improve sales performance among snack MSMEs.

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