

# Brand Expertise and Unhealthy Lifestyle Behaviors Drive Instant Noodle Purchase Decisions Among University Students, with Materialism as a Moderating Variable

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## Abstract

Instant noodles are classified as fast food and are widely favored among university students due to their ease of preparation, affordability, availability, and long shelf life. This study aims to examine the influence of brand expertise and unhealthy lifestyle behaviors on the purchase of instant noodles among university students, with materialism serving as a moderating variable. The research used a survey method with a probability sampling technique, specifically simple random sampling. The data were analyzed using regression analysis methods with a statistical approach, employing descriptive and inferential analyses such as regression tests and moderation tests to examine the research hypotheses. The analytical techniques include multiple linear regression analysis and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The findings indicate that brand expertise, unhealthy lifestyle behaviors, and materialism significantly influence the decision to purchase instant noodles among university students.

**Keywords:** Brand Expertise, Materialism, Unhealthy Lifestyle Behavior.

## 1. Introduction

Instant noodles are a processed food product created using advanced technology and various additives designed to enhance their shelf life and flavor profile. Classified as a type of fast food, instant noodles are widely popular, particularly among university students, due to their ease of preparation, affordability, availability, and extended shelf life ([Efrizal, 2021](#); [Fahira et al., 2024](#); [Pratiwi et al., 2021](#)).

Despite their popularity, instant noodles are often regarded as unhealthy and categorized as junk food due to their high fat and sodium content and low levels of fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Consequently, excessive consumption of instant noodles has been associated with abdominal obesity, hypercholesterolemia, and other health issues ([Prihartono, 2021](#)). Prolonged and frequent consumption may lead to the accumulation of carcinogenic substances in the body, increasing the risk of miscarriage, cancer, impaired metabolism, and digestive disorders ([Novitarus et al., 2024](#)).

University students represent a demographic group with a high consumption rate of instant noodles. This group is characterized by a transitional phase from adolescence to adulthood,

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during which individuals face demanding routines and new experiences. The combination of a busy academic schedule and an inclination toward convenience often results in irregular eating habits and a preference for quick meals such as instant noodles. Studies indicate that students frequent eateries specializing in instant noodles up to 7–10 times per week ([Zaezatun & Rimiati, 2022](#)). Such behavioral changes often emerge at the onset of university life when students are adapting to intense schedules ([Prihartono, 2021](#)).

The demanding nature of university life often leads students to neglect healthy living practices, favoring instant noodles as a practical, inexpensive, and filling food option. This study focuses on students of Universitas Bina Darma in Palembang, a location where students gather, engage in activities, and socialize. Moreover, instant noodles are readily available around campus in food stalls, convenience stores, and cafeterias.

Despite awareness of the unhealthy nature of instant noodles, their high consumption among students is influenced by the interplay of brand expertise and materialism. Brand expertise refers to an individual's capability and experience in making informed product decisions ([Vidyanata, 2019](#)). It also plays a role in shaping consumer opinions and preferences ([Widyaningrum, 2016](#)). With the diverse range of instant noodle products in the market, brand expertise aids consumers in selecting their preferred brands ([Kadek et al., 2020](#)). It is an essential marketing tool that facilitates the transfer of goods from producers to consumers, ensuring satisfaction ([Hadi, 2019](#)). The role of brand expertise in promoting instant noodles is evident through advertising ([Rachmah, 2022](#)) and internet usage ([Julianto et al., 2023](#)).

Materialism also drives instant noodle consumption among students. Materialism is characterized by the continuous desire to acquire or try new products ([Cantikasari & Basiya, 2022](#)) and serves as a value determinant in consumer behavior. It emphasizes the importance of possessions, where ownership signifies status and often involves purchases beyond necessity ([Adityawan & Kusuma, 2018](#)).

The phenomenon of increased instant noodle consumption among students highlights the influence of brand expertise and unhealthy lifestyle behaviors, with materialism acting as a moderating factor. The convenience and affordability of instant noodles make them a common substitute for staple foods like rice ([Na'im et al., 2020](#)). Brand expertise enhances purchase decisions by establishing a strong mind share among consumers, influenced by marketing mix factors (distribution, product quality, pricing, and promotion) as well as uncontrollable social and individual factors ([Laras & Firmanayah, 2019](#)). On the other hand, frequent consumption of instant noodles, driven by these factors, contributes to unhealthy eating habits characterized by high fat and sodium intake ([Utami et al., 2017](#)).

This study aims to explore the extent to which brand expertise and unhealthy lifestyle behaviors influence instant noodle consumption among university students, with materialism serving as a moderating variable.

## 2. Literature Review

Brand equity refers to the assets and liabilities associated with a brand, symbol, and name, which serve to protect and enhance the value offered by goods or services to consumers. Changes in a brand's name or symbol may lead to alterations or even the loss of its associated assets, although some of these assets may transition to the new name or symbol. Brand equity also encompasses the strength of a brand in the market, adding value to the company's products

or services. Establishing a memorable brand identity among the public is a critical task for marketers ([Pradipta et al., 2016](#)).

Business marketing relies on two main theories of Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE). According to CBBE theory, brand loyalty and attachment are outcomes of consumers' evaluations of brand equity. CBBE is defined as the differential effect of consumer responses and knowledge about a brand on marketing efforts. It facilitates a deeper understanding of brand connotations, which are essential for building strong customer-brand relationships ([Lisnawati & Gunarto, 2021](#); [Ramadhan & Gunarto, 2021](#); [Regi et al., 2023](#)).

Expertise refers to an individual's experience and ability to assist consumers in making informed decisions. It is linked to qualifications, mastery, and competence in a particular field ([Gunarto, 2024](#)). Expertise in information provided by a source requires prior preparation regarding the product being represented. For instance, in advertisements, endorsers must possess relevant experience, knowledge, and expertise about the endorsed product to ensure that the message is credible and well-received by consumers ([Hartaroe et al., 2016](#)).

A purchase decision is the process by which consumers determine a choice based on their needs, desires, and expectations, potentially resulting in satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the product (Faozi & Handayani, 2019). Consumers' purchase decisions may involve intentions to buy preferred products but can be modified, delayed, or avoided due to perceived risks ([Brama Kumbara, 2021](#)).

Excessive consumption of fast food can lead to health problems. The habitual consumption of fast food negatively affects the health of individuals across age groups, from children to adults. Factors influencing adolescents to consume fast food include peer influence, nutritional knowledge, socializing at eateries, convenience, recognizable brands, and low cost ([Laksono et al., 2022](#)).

Fast food, characterized by its instant preparation and affordability, has become a preferred choice among consumers ([Katmawanti & Ulfah, 2019](#)). Instant noodles, for example, are a popular fast food product due to their low cost and ease of preparation ([Marliyana & Suharti, 2023](#)).

Materialism is the belief that owning material goods is essential for achieving happiness. Possessions are often seen as symbols of status, representing increased self-identity, social impressions, and personal satisfaction ([Cantikasari & Basiya, 2022](#)).

### *2.1. Brand Expertise Influences Purchase Decisions*

The term "expertise" refers to the experience and knowledge of a brand that supports an endorser's credibility. An endorser perceived as a brand expert is more likely to attract and influence the audience. Research by ([Widyaningrum, 2016](#)) hypothesizes that celebrity endorsers significantly affect purchase decisions. The findings indicate a positive and significant relationship between purchase decisions and celebrity endorsers, suggesting that effective advertising increases purchase decisions.

H1: Brand expertise influences the purchase decision of instant noodles.

### *2.2. Unhealthy Lifestyle Influences Purchase Decisions*

An unhealthy lifestyle includes poor nutritional habits, irregular eating schedules, and a preference for instant or fast food. Research by ([Anggie Annisa Permatasari et al., 2024](#)) shows

that adolescents are more inclined to consume practical and instant products, leading to an increase in unhealthy lifestyles. Despite awareness of the low nutritional value of instant food, such as low fiber and high sodium, students continue to purchase fast food. This aligns with studies by ([Sulastri & Pelinda Puspasari, 2022](#); [Syaifulloh & Iriani, 2013](#)), indicating that purchase decisions for food products are not influenced by healthy lifestyle considerations.

H2: Unhealthy lifestyles influence the purchase decision of instant noodles.

**Materialism Influences Purchase Decisions** Materialism is a significant consumption value, particularly among young consumers. For those with high levels of materialism, possessing products such as food and other items serves as a means of self-expression ([Adityawan & Kusuma, 2018](#)). Materialism drives individuals to make purchases based solely on desire, leading to impulsive buying behavior ([Hariyana, 2022](#)).

H3: Materialism influences the purchase decision of instant noodles.

### *2.3. Materialism as a Moderator of Brand Expertise and Purchase Decisions*

Materialism is an orientation that prioritizes individual comfort through material possessions over aesthetic fulfillment and quality of life. Materialism influences consumers' attraction to endorsers perceived as experts ([Koay et al., 2022](#)). Research by ([Green et al., 2014](#)) highlights the positive relationship between materialism and individual attraction to celebrities, while ([Lou & Kim, 2019](#)) indicate that materialism fosters social comparison among followers, which subsequently drives purchase decisions. Therefore, materialism strengthens the relationship between brand expertise and purchase decisions, particularly among materialistic consumers who tend to emulate endorsers.

H4: Materialism moderates the relationship between brand expertise and the purchase decision of instant noodles.

### *2.4. Materialism as a Moderator of Unhealthy Lifestyles and Purchase Decisions*

Materialism fosters impulsive consumer behavior, leading to increased vulnerability to unhealthy food choices, including fast food. Studies by ([Effertz et al., 2014](#)) indicate that materialism amplifies unhealthy food purchase decisions among adolescents. Similarly, ([Tarka, 2020](#)) reveals that materialism among young adults drives compulsive buying behavior. This suggests that materialism strengthens the relationship between unhealthy lifestyles and purchase decisions by encouraging consumers to choose products that may pose health risks.

H5: Materialism moderates the relationship between unhealthy lifestyles and the purchase decision of instant noodles.

## **3. Research Methods**

This study employed a survey method, distributing questionnaires to 188 students at Bina Darma University in Palembang. The respondents included all students of Bina Darma University in Palembang who possessed relevant knowledge and experience related to the consumption of instant noodles. The sampling technique employed in this study was probability sampling with a simple random sampling approach.

The collected data will be analyzed using regression analysis methods with a statistical approach. The statistical analysis techniques applied include descriptive analysis and inferential analysis, such as regression tests and moderation tests, to examine the research hypotheses. The data analysis methods implemented in this study involve multiple linear regression analysis and

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Multiple linear regression analysis will be utilized to evaluate the relationships between variables, while SEM will be employed to model the relationships between brand expertise and unhealthy lifestyle behavior, specifically the purchase decision of instant noodles, with materialism as the moderating variable. Based on statistical theory, multiple linear regression analysis is an effective method for measuring complex relationships between variables and considering the effects of moderation variables.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Data collected from respondents

The study's results indicate that the majority of respondents were aged 18–22 years, accounting for 78% of the total respondents. In contrast, the smallest percentage of respondents was in the 23–24 age group, comprising only 8% of the total respondents. Most respondents were male, constituting 55% (103 individuals) of the total, while female respondents accounted for only 45% (85 individuals). Based on faculty affiliation, the majority of respondents were from the Faculty of Science and Technology, representing 46% (87 individuals), followed by the Faculty of Humanities at 36% (67 individuals). The lowest percentage of respondents came from the Graduate School, comprising 7% (14 individuals). In terms of residence status, the highest percentage of respondents lived in rented rooms (49%, 93 individuals), followed by those living with their parents (42%, 79 individuals). A smaller proportion of respondents neither lived in rented rooms nor with their parents, amounting to 9% (16 individuals). The frequency of instant noodle consumption within one week varied: 10% (19 individuals) consumed instant noodles once per week, 17% (32 individuals) twice per week, 38% (72 individuals) three times per week, 23% (43 individuals) four times per week, and 12% (22 individuals) fifteen or more times per week. This indicates that the highest proportion of respondents consumed instant noodles three times per week, with 72 individuals (38%).

Table 1. Data collected from respondents

| No | Description                                      | The Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|----|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------|
| 1  | Age                                              |                           |            |
|    | 18 to 22 Years old                               | 146                       | 78%        |
|    | 23 to 24 Years old                               | 15                        | 8%         |
|    | >25 Years old                                    | 27                        | 14%        |
| 2  | Gender                                           |                           |            |
|    | Male                                             | 103                       | 55%        |
|    | Female                                           | 85                        | 45%        |
| 3  | Faculty                                          |                           |            |
|    | Sains Teknologi                                  | 87                        | 46%        |
|    | Sosial Humaniora                                 | 67                        | 36%        |
|    | Vokasi                                           | 20                        | 11%        |
|    | Pascasarjana                                     | 14                        | 7%         |
| 4  | Residential Status                               |                           |            |
|    | Living With Parents                              | 79                        | 42%        |
|    | Boarding House                                   | 93                        | 49%        |
|    | Others                                           | 16                        | 9%         |
| 5  | Frequency of Instant Noodle Consumption per Week |                           |            |

| No      | Description | The Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|---------|-------------|---------------------------|------------|
| 1 Time  |             | 19                        | 10%        |
| 2 Time  |             | 32                        | 17%        |
| 3 Time  |             | 72                        | 38%        |
| 4 Time  |             | 43                        | 23%        |
| ≥5 Time |             | 22                        | 12%        |

Source: Primary data processed, 2025

#### 4.2. Measurement Model (Outer Model)

The results of the SEM-PLS data analysis from the Outer Model Analysis indicate that the convergent validity value is represented by the outer loading of the latent variables with their respective indicators. The expected value is  $>0.70$ . However, according to Ghazali (2015), during the initial stages of scale development, a load value between 0.5 and 0.6 is considered adequate. In this study, a factor loading threshold of  $>0.70$  will be applied (Table 2).

Table 2. Convergent Validity Values

| Variable                        | Indicator | Outer Loading | Description |
|---------------------------------|-----------|---------------|-------------|
| Brand Expertise (BE)            | BE1       | 0.778         | Valid       |
|                                 | BE2       | 0.748         | Valid       |
|                                 | BE3       | 0.817         | Valid       |
|                                 | BE4       | 0.707         | Valid       |
|                                 | BE5       | 0.732         | Valid       |
|                                 | BE6       | 0.776         | Valid       |
|                                 | BE8       | 0.74          | Valid       |
|                                 | BE9       | 0.723         | Valid       |
| Unhealthy Living Behavior (ULB) | ULB2      | 0.765         | Valid       |
|                                 | ULB3      | 0.783         | Valid       |
|                                 | ULB4      | 0.753         | Valid       |
|                                 | ULB5      | 0.839         | Valid       |
|                                 | ULB6      | 0.786         | Valid       |
|                                 | ULB7      | 0.752         | Valid       |
|                                 | ULB8      | 0.809         | Valid       |
| Buying Decision (BD)            | BD1       | 0.768         | Valid       |
|                                 | BD2       | 0.889         | Valid       |
|                                 | BD3       | 0.865         | Valid       |
|                                 | BD4       | 0.806         | Valid       |
|                                 | BD5       | 0.836         | Valid       |
|                                 | BD6       | 0.766         | Valid       |
| Materialism (M)                 | M3        | 0.757         | Valid       |
|                                 | M4        | 0.737         | Valid       |
|                                 | M6        | 0.738         | Valid       |
|                                 | M7        | 0.714         | Valid       |

Source: Output of SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Based on Table 2, it is known that the data processing results with a loading factor value  $> 0.70$ , indicating that the Outer Model demonstrates Convergent Validity, as the loading factor

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exceeds 0.70.

In this study, the items that did not meet the validity criteria and had to be removed from the research diagram are BE7, BE10, ULB1, BD7, BD8, M1, M2, M5, and M8

The Outer Model analysis also examines Discriminant Validity to determine whether the variables exhibit adequate discriminant ability. This can be assessed by comparing the loading values of the target variable, which should be higher than the loading values of other variables (Table 3).

Table 3. *Cross Loading*

| Variable | Brand Expertise<br>(BE) | Unhealthy Living<br>Behavior (ULB) | Buying Desicion<br>(BD) | Materialism<br>(M) |
|----------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| BE1      | 0.794                   | 0.411                              | 0.385                   | 0.443              |
| BE2      | 0.769                   | 0.445                              | 0.319                   | 0.367              |
| BE3      | 0.841                   | 0.428                              | 0.378                   | 0.437              |
| BE4      | 0.736                   | 0.238                              | 0.217                   | 0.25               |
| BE5      | 0.756                   | 0.387                              | 0.302                   | 0.32               |
| BE6      | 0.804                   | 0.374                              | 0.322                   | 0.32               |
| BE8      | 0.722                   | 0.487                              | 0.29                    | 0.372              |
| BE9      | 0.706                   | 0.416                              | 0.268                   | 0.426              |
| ULB2     | 0.457                   | 0.739                              | 0.418                   | 0.41               |
| ULB3     | 0.337                   | 0.781                              | 0.432                   | 0.533              |
| ULB4     | 0.44                    | 0.759                              | 0.356                   | 0.424              |
| ULB5     | 0.449                   | 0.832                              | 0.503                   | 0.543              |
| ULB6     | 0.471                   | 0.804                              | 0.421                   | 0.567              |
| BD1      | 0.293                   | 0.458                              | 0.81                    | 0.624              |
| BD2      | 0.363                   | 0.471                              | 0.912                   | 0.589              |
| BD3      | 0.371                   | 0.492                              | 0.897                   | 0.633              |
| BD4      | 0.308                   | 0.44                               | 0.818                   | 0.618              |
| BD5      | 0.318                   | 0.443                              | 0.832                   | 0.642              |
| BD6      | 0.447                   | 0.47                               | 0.758                   | 0.477              |
| BD1      | 0.293                   | 0.458                              | 0.81                    | 0.624              |
| BD2      | 0.363                   | 0.471                              | 0.912                   | 0.589              |
| M3       | 0.438                   | 0.574                              | 0.441                   | 0.742              |
| M4       | 0.379                   | 0.44                               | 0.454                   | 0.77               |
| M6       | 0.411                   | 0.486                              | 0.357                   | 0.734              |
| M7       | 0.302                   | 0.507                              | 0.748                   | 0.778              |

Source: Output of SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Based on Table 3, it can be observed that all indicators subjected to the Cross Loadings test (Discriminant Validity) are valid, as they exceed the threshold of 0.70 and are greater than the values of other variables. Meanwhile, another method to assess Discriminant Validity is by examining the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), as presented in Table 4 below:

Table 4. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Values

| Variable                        | AVE   | Criteria | Description |
|---------------------------------|-------|----------|-------------|
| Brand Expertise (BE)            | 0,588 | >0.50    | Valid       |
| Unhealthy Living Behavior (ULB) | 0,624 | >0.50    | Valid       |
| Buying Desicion (BD)            | 0,705 | >0.50    | Valid       |
| Materialism (M)                 | 0,572 | >0.50    | Valid       |

Source: Output of SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Based on Table 4, it is evident that all constructs have Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for each variable exceeding 0.50, as per the recommended criteria. This indicates that each construct demonstrates good validity.

Furthermore, a variable is considered to meet the Composite Reliability requirements if its Composite Reliability value is >0.70. For explanatory research, a value within the range of 0.60–0.70 is still acceptable (Table 5). The analysis results indicate that all latent variables have Composite Reliability values >0.60. These findings suggest that each variable satisfies the Composite Reliability criteria, leading to the conclusion that all variables exhibit a high level of reliability.

Table 5. Composite Reliability Values

| Variabel                        | Composite Reliability | Criteria | Description |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|----------|-------------|
| Brand Expertise (BE)            | 0,919                 | > 0,60   | Reliabel    |
| Unhealthy Living Behavior (ULB) | 0,921                 | > 0,60   | Reliabel    |
| Buying Desicion (BD)            | 0,919                 | > 0,60   | Reliabel    |
| Materialism (M)                 | 0,842                 | > 0,60   | Reliabel    |

Source: Output of SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

The Cronbach's Alpha test was employed to assess reliability, with a satisfactory result indicated by a Cronbach's Alpha value >0.60 (Table 6). Based on the data presented in Table 6, it is evident that the Cronbach's Alpha values for each research variable exceed 0.60. These findings demonstrate that each variable exhibits a high level of reliability.

Tabel 6. Nilai Cronbach's Alpha

| Variable                        | Cronbach's Alpha | Kriteria | Description |
|---------------------------------|------------------|----------|-------------|
| Brand Expertise (BE)            | 0,900            | > 0,60   | Reliabel    |
| Unhealthy Living Behavior (ULB) | 0,899            | > 0,60   | Reliabel    |
| Buying Desicion (BD)            | 0,915            | > 0,60   | Reliabel    |
| Materialism (M)                 | 0,767            | > 0,60   | Reliabel    |

Source: Output of SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

The results of the Outer Model analysis on the Coefficient of Determination indicate that R-square values of 0.67, 0.33, and 0.19 represent strong, moderate, and weak models, respectively (Table 7). The R-square value for Materialism (M) is 0.468, which is greater than 0.33, indicating that the model exhibits a moderate level of coefficient of determination. Similarly,

the R-square value for Purchase Decision (BD) is 0.471, which is also greater than 0.33, signifying that the model has a moderate level of coefficient of determination.

Table 7. R-Square ( $R^2$ ) Values

| Variable             | R- Square | Model Strength |
|----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Buying Desicion (BD) | 0,524     | Marginal       |

Source: Output of SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

In the analysis of prediction relevance, it was found that the  $Q^2$  value is greater than 0 (zero), indicating that the model has predictive relevance. Conversely, if the  $Q^2$  value is less than 0 (zero), the model exhibits limited predictive relevance (Table 8). The calculation results show that the  $Q^2$  value is greater than zero (0), which allows the conclusion that the model possesses strong predictive relevance.

Table 8. Construct Crossvalidated Redundancy Value

| Konstruk             | $Q^2$ |
|----------------------|-------|
| Buying Desicion (BD) | 0,501 |

Source: Output of SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

The hypothesis testing was conducted by examining the structural model through the estimation of path coefficients, which represent the relationships in the structural model obtained using the bootstrapping procedure. The results were considered significant if the t-statistic value was less than 1.96 or the p-value was greater than  $\alpha = 0.05$ , indicating that the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is accepted and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is rejected. Conversely, if the t-statistic value was greater than 1.96 or the p-value was less than  $\alpha = 0.05$ , it indicates that the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is accepted.

### Model Structural (Inner Models)

Table 9: Bootstrapping Results of the Direct Effect Test

| Variable  | Original Sample (O) | Sample Mean (M) | Standard Deviation (STDEV) | T-Statistic ( O/STDEV ) | P Values | Description |
|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------|-------------|
| BE -> BD  | 0.181               | 0.188           | 0.083                      | 2.179                   | 0.029    | Accepted    |
| ULB -> BD | 0.458               | 0.456           | 0.077                      | 5.911                   | 0.00     | Accepted    |

Source: Output of SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Based on Table 9, the results of the hypothesis testing are as follows:

1. First Hypothesis: Brand Expertise (BE) has a significant effect on Purchase Decision (BD) with a P value of 0.029, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that Brand Expertise positively and significantly influences the Purchase Decision of Instant Noodles among University Students.
2. Second Hypothesis: Unhealthy Lifestyle Behavior (ULB) has a significant effect on Purchase Decision with a P-value of 0.00, which is less than 0.05. Hence, it can be

concluded that unhealthy lifestyle behavior positively and significantly affects the purchase decision for instant noodles among university students.

Table 10: Bootstrapping Results of Direct Effect Test with the Addition of Materialism as a Moderator

| Variable | Original Sample (O) | Sample Mean (M) | Standard Deviation (STDEV) | T-Statistic ( O/STDEV ) | P Values | Description |
|----------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------|-------------|
| BE>BD    | 0.054               | 0.068           | 0.07                       | 0.775                   | 0.439    | Rejected    |
| M>BD     | 0.611               | 0.608           | 0.076                      | 8.023                   | 0.000    | Accepted    |
| ULB>BD   | 0.115               | 0.109           | 0.079                      | 1.446                   | 0.148    | Rejected    |
| MxBE>BD  | 0.005               | -0.004          | 0.063                      | 0.078                   | 0.938    | Rejected    |
| MxULB>BD | -0.013              | 0.002           | 0.063                      | 0.198                   | 0.843    | Rejected    |

Source: Output of SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Based on Table 10, the research findings obtained from hypothesis testing are as follows:

1. Third Hypothesis: Materialism (M) influences Purchase Decision (BD), with a P-value of 0.000 or  $\leq 0.05$ . Therefore, it can be concluded that Materialism has a positive and significant effect on the Purchase Decision of instant noodles among university students.
2. Fourth Hypothesis: Brand Expertise (BE) does not influence Purchase Decision (BD) through Materialism (M), with a P-value of 0.938 or  $> 0.05$ . This indicates that Brand Expertise does not have a positive and significant effect on the Purchase Decision of instant noodles among university students through Materialism. In other words, Materialism weakens the influence of Brand Expertise (BE) on Purchase Decision (BD).
3. Fifth Hypothesis: Unhealthy Lifestyle Behavior (ULB) does not influence Purchase Decision (BD) through Materialism (M), with a P-value of 0.843 or  $> 0.05$ . This suggests that Unhealthy Lifestyle Behavior does not have a positive and significant effect on the Purchase Decision of instant noodles among university students through Materialism. In other words, Materialism weakens the influence of Unhealthy Lifestyle Behavior (ULB) on Purchase Decision (BD).

#### 4.3. Discussion

The results obtained from hypothesis testing indicate that Brand Expertise influences the purchasing decisions of instant noodles among university students. This finding suggests that students are more likely to purchase instant noodles from brands they perceive as having a good reputation in terms of quality and taste. Furthermore, brands with strong brand expertise are more easily recognized and trusted by consumers, particularly among students, leading to faster purchasing decisions.

The purchasing decisions of students are influenced by brand expertise, as they tend to trust brands they are familiar with and have used previously. In summary, brand expertise plays a crucial role in shaping purchasing decisions because it fosters trust, enhances emotional attachment, and provides a deeper understanding of the product, which can be further supported by endorsers with brand expertise. The findings align with the research by [\(Widyaningrum, 2016\)](#), which suggests that celebrity endorsers have a significant impact on purchasing decisions.

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The findings also reveal that Unhealthy Lifestyles significantly influence the purchasing decisions of instant noodles among students. This is due to the unhealthy lifestyle behaviors among students, particularly their consumption habits of instant noodles, which are related to their routines, eating patterns, and preferences for practical and fast food. Moreover, unhealthy lifestyles among students contribute to purchasing decisions for instant noodles, especially due to the pressures of busy schedules filled with lectures, assignments, and other activities, which lead them to prefer foods that are easy and quick to prepare. This aligns with the research of ([Anggie Annisa Permatasari et al., 2024](#)), which found that adolescents are more likely to choose practical and instant consumption options.

The study also shows that materialism positively and significantly influences the purchasing decisions of instant noodles among students. This is driven by several factors, including the tendency of students with high materialistic orientations to focus on consuming practical, affordable goods that provide certain comfort or emotional satisfaction. This ultimately makes instant noodles an attractive option in their purchasing decisions.

Students with high materialistic values tend to seek to display their social status through the goods they consume, including food. Instant noodles, often perceived as practical, affordable, and easily accessible, may be a food choice for students who wish to purchase something within their budget while still being able to exhibit their dynamic lifestyle. Materialistic students are more susceptible to instant noodle advertisements that emphasize convenience, affordability, or even appealing flavor variations, making them more likely to purchase the product. The findings of a study by ([Maison & Adamczyk, 2020](#)) state that materialism significantly influences purchase decisions for items influenced by fashion, brand, quality, and habits. Materialism can encourage impulsive consumer purchasing behavior, particularly for luxury purposes within certain social environments ([Gaur, 2023](#)).

The research findings also indicate that the presence of materialism as a moderating variable weakens the influence of Brand Expertise on purchase decisions, meaning that Brand Expertise does not significantly affect instant noodle purchase decisions among university students. This is due to several factors, including that instant noodles are an affordable, frequently consumed product considered a daily necessity. As such, instant noodles do not embody the values associated with materialism, as they lack prestige attributes, psychological satisfaction, and the status that comes with ownership of more luxury goods. On the other hand, materialism as a moderator can make Brand Expertise influence purchase decisions for branded and high-value products. This aligns with the research by ([Adityawan & Kusuma, 2018](#)), which found that materialism as a moderating variable strengthens the effect of Consumer Innovativeness on purchase decisions for iPhone products in Denpasar City. The results obtained diverge from previous studies that suggest materialism influences consumer attraction to individuals perceived to have expertise in a particular brand, or those referred to as endorsers ([Koay et al., 2022](#)).

The presence of materialism as a moderating variable weakens the influence of unhealthy lifestyle behaviors on instant noodle purchase decisions among students. Consequently, materialism as a moderating variable results in unhealthy lifestyle behavior not having a significant impact on purchase decisions. This is because students who already have the habit of consuming instant noodles as part of an unhealthy lifestyle typically choose the product due to convenience, affordability, and habit. They tend to buy instant noodles even though they are aware of its health impacts. Meanwhile, more materialistic students are inclined to seek

products that provide them with emotional satisfaction or social status, including brands of instant noodles considered "popular" or with attractive advertisements. The results obtained do not align with previous research, which suggests that materialism can increase the purchase decision of unhealthy food among adolescents ([Effertz et al., 2014](#)).

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and discussion on the impact of Brand Expertise and Unhealthy Lifestyles on Instant Noodles Purchase Decisions among University Students, with Materialism as a Moderating Variable, supported by previous theories and research as discussed in the preceding chapters, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Brand expertise significantly influences the purchase decision of instant noodles among university students.
2. Unhealthy lifestyle behaviors significantly influence the purchase decision of instant noodles among university students.
3. Materialism significantly influences the purchase decision of instant noodles among university students.
4. Brand expertise, through materialism, weakens and has no significant impact on the purchase decision of instant noodles among university students.
5. Unhealthy lifestyle behaviors, through materialism, weaken and have no significant impact on the purchase decision of instant noodles among university students.

## SUGGESTIONS

1. Further research should be conducted by expanding the study area to include multiple universities or schools.
2. Future studies may incorporate additional relevant and up-to-date variables beyond those included in the present research.

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