

Research Article

The Role of Word of Mouth, Peers, and Promotion on the Decision to Exercise at Gymnasiums in Bandar Lampung City with Hedonic Motivation as a Mediating Variable

Utami Pratiwi ^{1*}, Lestari Wuryanti ², and Ayu Nursari ³

^{1,2,3} Universitas Malahayati, Bandar Lampung, Indonesia

Author: e-mail : upratiwi383@gmail.com, lestariwuryanti@malahayati.ac.id,
ayunursari@malahayati.ac.id

* Corresponding Author : upratiwi383@gmail.com

Abstract: This study examines the effects of word of mouth, peer influence, and promotion on exercise decisions at gymnasiums in Bandar Lampung City, with hedonic motivation as a mediating variable. Drawing on the Theory of Planned Behavior and consumer behavior perspectives, the research employed a quantitative causal-associative design. Data were collected through structured questionnaires from 100 active members of four gymnasiums and analyzed using Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS. The results indicate that word of mouth, peer influence, and promotion have positive and significant effects on hedonic motivation and on exercise decisions. Hedonic motivation also exerts a positive and significant effect on exercise decisions, suggesting that pleasurable and emotionally rewarding fitness experiences reinforce consumers' intention to engage in regular gym-based exercise. Mediation analysis further reveals that hedonic motivation significantly channels the effects of peer influence and promotion on exercise decisions, while the indirect effect of word of mouth is also significant, although its negative coefficient warrants careful interpretation. These findings demonstrate that exercise decisions are shaped not only by utilitarian health considerations but also by social influence, promotional exposure, and affective consumption experiences. The study provides practical insights for gym managers in designing service and marketing strategies that strengthen customer engagement and sustained participation.

Keywords: word of mouth; peer influence; promotion; hedonic motivation; exercise decision

Received: 04 February, 2026

Revised: 18 March, 2026

Accepted: 21 April, 2026

Online Available: 27 April, 2026

Curr. Ver.: 27 April, 2026



Copyright: © 2025 by the authors.

Submitted for possible open

access publication under the

terms and conditions of the

Creative Commons Attribution

(CC BY SA) license (

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)

1. Introduction

The growth of the fitness industry in Indonesia demonstrates that exercise is no longer understood solely as a health-promoting activity, but also as part of a lifestyle, social identity, and emotionally valuable consumption experience. In urban contexts, including Bandar Lampung, the growth of gyms and fitness centers signals a growing public concern for physical fitness, body appearance, and quality of life. However, the increase in the number of sports facilities does not always translate into consistent exercise. Many individuals begin exercising at gyms, but not all are able to maintain a regular exercise routine. This situation demonstrates that the decision to exercise is a complex process, involving evaluation of benefits, perceptions of service, personal experiences, and the influence of the individual's social environment (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2020).

From a consumer behavior perspective, the decision to exercise can be understood as the result of a process of need recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, decision to act, and post-decision behavior. In the gym, this process is evident when someone recognizes the need for a healthier lifestyle, searches for information about fitness facilities, compares several places, and then decides to join and exercise continuously. The Theory of Planned Behavior explains that individual behavior is shaped by intentions, while intentions

are influenced by attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 2020). In the context of physical activity, this theory has been widely used to explain why someone intends to exercise but is not necessarily able to maintain it consistently (Hagger et al., 2002; Rhodes & de Bruijn, 2013). This means that the decision to exercise is not only a rational matter of health benefits, but also related to social motivation, perceived ease, and emotional experiences felt during the activity.

One important factor in forming these decisions is word of mouth (WOM). In the service industry, particularly experience-based services like gyms, WOM is a highly influential source of information because it originates from the real-life experiences of other consumers. Recommendations from friends, family, or acquaintances tend to be perceived as more honest and trustworthy than formal promotional messages from companies. Ismagilova et al. (2020) emphasized that WOM communication has a strong influence on consumer intentions and decisions because it can reduce uncertainty before individuals use a service. In the gym context, WOM can take the form of testimonials regarding the completeness of equipment, the comfortable atmosphere, the quality of instructors, or the success of the exercise program. However, WOM does not always result in stable decisions. Information spread informally is often subjective, selective, and even inaccurate, which can create unbalanced perceptions among potential members. Mursala et al. (2023) showed that the flow of information from consumer communication can strongly shape consumer perceptions, but its influence still depends on how the message is understood and interpreted by the recipient.

In addition to word of mouth (WOM), peers also play a crucial role in influencing exercise decisions. Group norms, the need for acceptance, and social support from friends often encourage individuals to try or maintain certain behaviors. In sports, a friend's invitation to join the gym, train together, or join a fitness community can strengthen the intention to exercise. Social support has even been shown to be associated with increased physical activity participation and more sustained exercise behavior (Huang et al., 2025). However, peer influence can also be situational. Some individuals exercise simply because of a friend's invitation or because they want to fit in with a group, rather than because of a strong personal commitment. Consequently, when this social drive weakens, exercise decisions become inconsistent. This phenomenon suggests that peer influence can be an effective initial motivator, but it may not be sufficient to sustain exercise behavior without the support of internal motivation.

Another equally important external factor is promotion. In service marketing, promotion serves to convey value, build awareness, and encourage consumers to take specific actions. Through social media, discount programs, trial packages, membership bonuses, or digital campaigns, gyms can attract new consumers and expand their market reach. The role of digital media in shaping consumer behavior is also increasingly strong because promotional messages are now delivered quickly, visually, interactively, and personally (Stephen, 2016). However, the effectiveness of promotions in the gym context is often only seen in the initial decision-making stage. Discounts or free trials may encourage someone to try, but they don't necessarily lead to a regular exercise routine. In other words, promotions tend to be effective as an initial trigger of interest, but they are not sufficient to explain why someone ultimately decides to stick with a gym and make exercise a habit.

It is at this point that hedonic motivation becomes relevant in explaining exercise behavior at the gym. Unlike utilitarian motivation, which emphasizes practical functions and benefits, hedonic motivation relates to the pleasure, entertainment, emotional satisfaction, and positive experiences gained from an activity (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). In the gym context, hedonic motivation arises when someone enjoys the atmosphere of the gym, the music, the social interactions, the sensation of physical progress, or the sense of satisfaction after completing a workout. Huta and Ryan (2010) explain that a hedonic orientation drives individuals to pursue experiences that provide pleasure and positive feelings. Thus, the decision to exercise is driven not only by the desire to be healthy, but also by the desire to feel happy, relaxed, confident, and socially connected. Hedonic motivation is thought to act as a psychological mechanism that bridges the influence of word of mouth (WOM), peer influence, and promotions on exercise decisions. Positive recommendations can build expectations of a pleasant experience, peer invitations can make exercise more exciting, and attractive promotions can create the perception that gym activities are both trendy and entertaining.

Based on the above description, there is still a need for a more integrative study of how WOM, peers, and promotions influence exercise decisions, as well as the extent to which hedonic motivation plays a mediating role in this relationship. So far, many studies have

examined the influence of social factors or promotions separately, but not many have tested all three simultaneously in the context of exercise decisions at gyms, especially in Bandar Lampung City. Therefore, this study is important to conduct because it provides theoretical contributions to the study of fitness service consumer behavior, while also providing practical input for gym managers in designing more effective marketing strategies and service experiences. This study aims to analyze the influence of word of mouth, peers, and promotions on exercise decisions at gyms in Bandar Lampung City, with hedonic motivation as a mediating variable.

2. Preliminaries or Related Work or Literature Review

2.1 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is a relevant theoretical framework for explaining how individuals form decisions to engage in behavior, including exercising at the gym. According to Ajzen (2020), a person's behavior is determined by their intention to act, which is shaped by three main components: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Attitude toward a behavior describes the extent to which a person evaluates an action as positive or negative. In the gymnasium context, a positive attitude can emerge when an individual views exercise as healthy, enjoyable, and emotionally satisfying. Subjective norms relate to social influence or pressure from significant others, such as friends, family, and peers, so that individuals feel compelled to engage in certain behaviors. Meanwhile, perceived behavioral control indicates an individual's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior, for example, related to membership fees, access to facilities, time, or available promotions. Thus, the TPB can explain that the decision to exercise is not only determined by personal motivation, but also by social support and perceptions of one's ability to access sports activities. In this study, TPB serves as a basis for understanding how word of mouth, peers, promotions, and hedonic motivations are interconnected in shaping exercise decisions.

2.2 Exercise Decision

The decision to exercise is the process by which an individual chooses to engage in a particular physical activity, determines where to exercise, and builds a commitment to continuing it. Mahmudi (2021) explains that consumer decision-making is essentially a process of selecting among several alternatives based on the evaluation of information, benefits, and perceived value. In the context of exercise, this decision involves not only the act of attending a gym but also includes recognizing the need for a healthy lifestyle, searching for information about fitness facilities, evaluating alternative training venues, deciding to join, and post-decision behaviors, such as satisfaction and loyalty. Adguna and Budisetyani (2020) also emphasized that exercise behavior is strongly influenced by intentions formed from attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. This means that the decision to exercise is the result of an interaction between rational considerations and affective drives. A person may decide to exercise because of the perceived health benefits, but that decision can also be reinforced by positive experiences, the convenience of the venue, social invitations, or attractive promotions. In this study, the decision to exercise is understood as a form of concrete consumer action in choosing and engaging in exercise activities at a gymnasium based on a combination of health, social, and emotional factors.

2.3 Word of Mouth

Word of mouth (WOM) is informal communication between consumers that contains experiences, opinions, or recommendations about a product or service without direct commercial interests (Kurnia, Wuryanti, dan Indriani, 2024; Nursari & Putri, 2024). In service marketing, WOM is considered one of the most credible sources of information because it usually comes from trusted individuals, such as friends, family, or peers. Ismagilova et al. (2020) explain that WOM has a strong influence on consumer attitudes and decisions because it is perceived as more honest than formal marketing communications. In the gymnasium context, WOM can appear in the form of stories about exercise experiences, recommendations about facilities, testimonials about the quality of instructors, or assessments of the comfort of the gym environment. This information can shape potential members' perceptions of service quality and reduce uncertainty before deciding to join. Furthermore, Cheung and Thadani (2012) show that word of mouth communication, including electronic communication, plays a significant role in shaping consumer interest and intention. In the

fitness environment, WOM becomes even more significant because exercise activities are often conducted in a social context, making it easy for one person's experience to influence others. Therefore, WOM in this study is understood as interpersonal communication that is able to influence individual perceptions, interests, and decisions to exercise at a particular gym.

2.4 Peers

Peers are groups of individuals who share similar age, social status, or social circles and influence each other in shaping attitudes and behavior. In social psychology, peers are viewed as powerful agents of socialization because their influence emerges through direct interaction, social support, group norms, and behavioral modeling (Nursari et al., 2025). Santrock (2012) explains that individuals tend to adapt their behavior to that of their peer group to gain social acceptance and avoid rejection. In the context of sports, peer influence can emerge through invitations to exercise together, providing information about gyms, emotional encouragement to stay active, and examples of healthy lifestyle behaviors demonstrated by group members. When someone sees their friends exercising regularly, the opportunity to imitate that behavior becomes greater. This suggests that the decision to exercise is not only based on personal needs but is also influenced by the social dynamics within the friendship circle. Thus, in this study, peers are understood as a social factor that influences an individual's decision to exercise through normative influence, informational influence, social support, and behavioral modeling.

2.5 Promotion

Promotion is a crucial element of the marketing mix, serving as a means of communication between companies and consumers (Nursari et al., 2025). Through promotions, companies convey information, shape perceptions, and encourage consumers to try or use products and services (Putri et al., 2025). According to Kotler et al. (2014) explain that promotions are designed to inform, persuade, and remind consumers, thereby influencing their attitudes and decisions. In the context of gymnasiums, promotions can take the form of social media advertisements, registration discounts, membership packages, free trials, sporting events, or collaborations with fitness influencers. Tjiptono and Diana (2020) emphasize that promotions are not merely a communication tool but also a strategy for building relationships with consumers and creating perceived value. With technological advancements, digital promotions are becoming increasingly dominant because they can reach consumers more quickly, visually, interactively, and precisely (Ramadhan, Indriani, dan Wuryanti, 2024; Ramadhan, Febrianti, dan Wuryanti, 2025). Therefore, in the fitness industry, effective promotions not only attract new consumers but also build a positive image of the gym as an attractive, modern, and lifestyle-friendly exercise venue. Therefore, in this study, promotions are understood as a marketing stimulus that can increase interest, strengthen perceived value, and encourage the decision to exercise at the gym.

2.6 Hedonic Motivation

Hedonic motivation is an individual's internal drive to engage in an activity for pleasure, entertainment, emotional satisfaction, and positive experiences. Unlike utilitarian motivation, which emphasizes functional benefits, hedonic motivation focuses on feelings of pleasure, subjective enjoyment, and affective experiences that arise during or after an activity. In consumer behavior studies, hedonic motivation is closely related to the pursuit of pleasure and pleasurable experiences. Arnold and Reynolds (2003) explain that a hedonic orientation drives individuals to engage in activities that provide a sense of satisfaction and engaging emotional experiences. In the context of sports and fitness, hedonic motivation arises when individuals exercise not only for physical health but also because they enjoy the gym atmosphere, music, social interaction, the sensation of bodily progress, and the sense of pride after completing a workout. Huta and Ryan (2010) add that a hedonic orientation is related to the pursuit of well-being based on pleasure and positive affect. Therefore, hedonic motivation can be an important explanation for why someone is willing to maintain sports activities, especially when the experience is not only beneficial but also enjoyable. In this study, hedonic motivation is positioned as an emotional drive that strengthens the decision to exercise, while also being a mediator between social and marketing influences and consumer behavior in choosing a gymnasium.

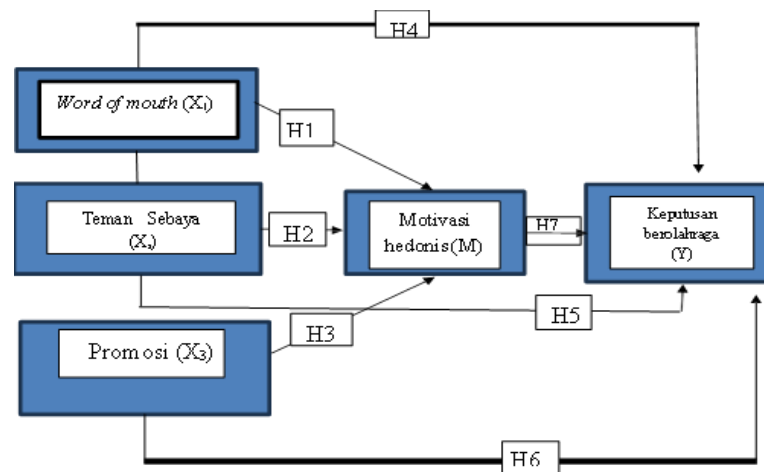


Figure 1. Research Model

3. Materials and Method

3.1 Research Design

This study used a quantitative approach with a causal associative approach. This approach was chosen because the data collected are in the form of numbers or scores from respondents' answers, thus allowing for objective testing of relationships between variables. A causal associative design was used because this study not only describes the phenomenon but also analyzes the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable and examines the role of mediating variables in that relationship. The main focus of the study was to assess how word of mouth, peers, and promotions influence exercise decisions, both directly and through hedonic motivation. This design aligns with the planned behavior framework, which views behavior as the result of the interaction between intention, social influence, and individual perceptions of the action taken (Ajzen, 1991).

3.2 Identification and Operational Definition of Variables

This study uses three independent variables: word of mouth (X1), peers (X2), and promotion (X3), one dependent variable: exercise decision (Y), and one mediating variable: hedonic motivation (M). The determination of these variables is based on a theoretical framework that explains the influence of social and marketing factors on consumer behavior in the fitness sector. Operational definitions are formulated specifically, measurably, and contextually so that each construct can be translated into empirical indicators that are feasible to measure. Hair & Alamer (2022) emphasize that an operational definition is a systematic translation of a concept into observable indicators to support quantitative hypothesis testing. In this study, the word of mouth variable is measured through recommendations, positive experiences, source credibility, and their influence on the decision to try a gym, referring to Ismagilova et al. (2020) and Kotler et al. (2014). The peer variable is measured through friend invitations, social support, peer behavioral influence, and the tendency to follow exercise trends in groups, as referred to by Chen et al. (2021). Promotional variables were measured through the quality of promotional information, content appeal, social media promotion intensity, and discount programs or membership packages (Tovarel et al., 2024; Kotler et al., 2014). Meanwhile, hedonic motivation was measured through feelings of pleasure during exercise, gym activities as entertainment, emotional satisfaction after exercise, and feelings of increased enthusiasm (Hasanah & Pauzi, 2023). The decision to exercise was measured through the decision to choose a particular gym, the desire to exercise regularly, consideration of facilities and comfort, and willingness to renew membership (Ajzen, 1991; Sirait & Silitonga, 2023). All indicators were measured using a five-point Likert scale.

3.3 Population and Sample

The study population included all members or users of gymnasiums in Bandar Lampung City who actively exercise and meet the research criteria. Samples were taken from four gyms, namely Genefit Gym, Fitness Lampung, BE Fit, and Giant's Gym, with a total of 100 respondents. The sampling technique used was non-probability sampling with a saturated sampling method, namely making all members of the population who meet the criteria as research samples. The selection of this technique was based on the consideration that the

population size was relatively limited and all elements of the population could be reached by the researcher. Thus, the use of saturated sampling is expected to provide a more complete empirical picture of the influence of word of mouth, peers, and promotions on the decision to exercise, with hedonic motivation as a mediating variable.

3.4 Research Instruments

The research instrument used was a closed-ended questionnaire structured based on indicators for each variable. The questionnaire was used to systematically collect data regarding respondents' perceptions of word of mouth, peers, promotions, hedonic motivation, and exercise decisions. Each statement item was measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The use of this scale enabled researchers to transform respondents' perceptions into quantitative data for further analysis. The items were structured by adapting concepts developed in the literature, for example, WOM as recommendations and consumer experiences (Ismagilova et al., 2020), peers as social support in exercise (Adguna & Budisetyani, 2020), promotions as marketing communications that influence consumers (Stephen, 2016), and hedonic motivation as experiences of pleasure and emotional satisfaction (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003; Huta & Ryan, 2010).

3.5 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SmartPLS with a Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach. This approach was chosen because the study involved several latent variables measured through a number of indicators. The analysis was conducted in two stages. The first stage was an outer model evaluation to assess the quality of the instrument, including convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability. The second stage was an inner model evaluation to examine the structural relationships between variables, including direct and indirect influences through mediating variables. After the measurement model and structural model met the established criteria, hypothesis testing was conducted based on statistical values from bootstrapping results to determine the significance of the relationships between variables. Through this procedure, the analysis not only explained the influence of WOM, peers, and promotion on exercise decisions but also demonstrated the extent to which hedonic motivation plays a role as a mediating mechanism in the research model.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics respondents served based on type gender, age, and education lastly. In general, respondents study totaling 100 people.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Aspect	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Man	38	38.0
	Woman	62	62.0
Age	18–20 years	40	40.0
	21–30 years	35	35.0
	31–50 years	25	25.0
last education	High School/Vocational School	18	18.0
	Diploma (D3)	3	3.0
	Bachelor degree)	79	79.0

Source: Data processed by the author, 2026.

Based on gender, there were more female respondents than male. Based on age, the 18–20 age group was the largest, followed by those aged 21–30 and 31–50. Meanwhile, based on the highest level of education, the majority of respondents had a bachelor's degree (S1). This pattern indicates that gymnasium users in this study were dominated by young and highly

educated respondents, thus reflecting the relatively active, adaptive, and health-conscious nature of the gym market. The percentages in the following table are adjusted for frequency because the total number of respondents was 100.

4.2 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity testing is carried out to assess the extent to which each indicator is able to represent the latent construct being measured.

Table 2 Convergent Validity Test Results

Variables	Item	Outer Loading	Information
Word of Mouth (X1)	WOM-1	0.886	Valid
	WOM-2	0.897	Valid
	WOM-3	0.903	Valid
	WOM-4	0.841	Valid
Peers (X2)	TS-1	0.886	Valid
	TS-2	0.829	Valid
	TS-3	0.853	Valid
	TS-4	0.875	Valid
Promotion (X3)	PS-1	0.869	Valid
	PS-2	0.869	Valid
	PS-3	0.834	Valid
	PS-4	0.888	Valid
Exercise Decision (Y)	KB-1	0.871	Valid
	KB-2	0.821	Valid
	KB-3	0.800	Valid
	KB-4	0.844	Valid
Hedonic Motivation (M)	MH-1	0.828	Valid
	MH-2	0.898	Valid
	MH-3	0.896	Valid
	MH-4	0.831	Valid

Source: Data processed by the author, 2026.

The results showed that all indicators had outer loading values above 0.70. Therefore, all items in the variables word of mouth , peers, promotions, exercise decisions, and hedonic motivation were deemed convergently valid and suitable for further analysis. These findings indicate that the research instrument has good ability to explain the constructs being measured.

4.3 Composite Reliability Test

Reliability testing aims to determine the level of internal consistency of the research instrument. In this study, reliability was measured using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. According to Ghazali (2017), an instrument is considered reliable if its Cronbach's Alpha value is above 0.70.

Table 3 Reliability Test Results

Variables	Composite Reliability	Information
Exercise Decision (Y)	0.902	Reliable
Hedonic Motivation (M)	0.921	Reliable
Promotion (X3)	0.923	Reliable
Peers (X2)	0.920	Reliable
Word of Mouth (X1)	0.933	Reliable

Source: Data processed by the author, 2026.

Reliability testing showed that all variables had composite reliability values above 0.70. This indicates that each construct has good internal consistency, making the measurement items stable and reliable. Therefore, the measurement model meets reliability requirements and can be used for structural model testing.

4.4 R-Square

R-square value shows the ability of exogenous variables to explain endogenous variables.

Table 4 R-Square Test Results

Endogenous Variables	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Exercise Decision (Y)	0.656	0.641
Hedonic Motivation (M)	0.606	0.594

Source: Data processed by the author, 2026.

The exercise decision variable has an R-square value of 0.656, while hedonic motivation has an R-square value of 0.606. These values indicate that the model has quite strong explanatory power. This means that 65.6% of the variation in exercise decisions can be explained by word of mouth, peers, promotions, and hedonic motivation, while 60.6% of the variation in hedonic motivation can be explained by word of mouth, peers, and promotions. The remainder is explained by other factors outside the research model.

4.5 F-Square

F-square value shows the magnitude of the effect of each exogenous variable on the endogenous variable.

Table 5. F-Square Test Results

Variables	Exercise Decision (Y)	Hedonic Motivation (M)
Hedonic Motivation (M)	0.225	-
Promotion (X3)	0.190	0.200
Peers (X2)	0.076	0.029
Word of Mouth (X1)	0.110	0.290

Source: Data processed by the author, 2026.

Based on table 5, it can be seen that the influence of Word of Mouth on Hedonic Motivation is 0.290 (Large). The influence of Peers on Hedonic Motivation is 0.029 (Medium). The influence of Promotion on Hedonic Motivation is 0.200 (Large), Word of Mouth on the Decision to Exercise is 0.110 (Large), Peers on the Decision to Exercise is 0.076 (Large), Promotion on the Decision to Exercise is 0.190 (Large) and Hedonic Motivation on the Decision to Exercise is 0.225 (Large).

3.6 Direct Hypothesis Testing (Direct Effect)

Results testing hypothesis direct show that all over track influence direct in the model has direction positive And stated significant based on the available output .

Table 6 Results of Direct Hypothesis Testing

Path of Influence	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
Hedonic Motivation (M) → Decision to Exercise (Y)	0.443	3,788	0.000	Significant
Promotion (X3) → Decision to Exercise (Y)	0.322	2,329	0.001	Significant
Promotion (X3) → Hedonic Motivation (M)	0.305	4,081	0.000	Significant
Peers (X2) → Decision to Exercise (Y)	0.307	2,328	0.003	Significant
Peers (X2) → Hedonic Motivation (M)	0.199	7,604	0.000	Significant
Word of Mouth (X1) → Decision to Exercise (Y)	0.298	6,922	0.002	Significant
Word of Mouth (X1) → Hedonic Motivation (M)	0.610	5,718	0.000	Significant

Source: Data processed by the author, 2026.

Word of mouth , peer influence, and promotion were shown to have a positive influence on hedonic motivation. Furthermore, word of mouth , peer influence, promotion, and hedonic motivation also positively influenced the decision to exercise. Overall, these results indicate that social and marketing factors play a significant role in shaping respondents' affective experiences and driving their decision to exercise at the gym.

4.7 Indirect Hypothesis Testing

Indirect hypothesis testing was conducted to see the role of hedonic motivation as a mediating variable.

Table 7 Results of Indirect Hypothesis Testing

Indirect Influence Path	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	STDEV	P Values
X1 → M → Y	-0.051	-0.039	0.070	0.003
X2 → M → Y	0.022	0.035	0.090	0.008
X3 → M → Y	0.035	0.014	0.073	0.003

Source: Data processed by the author, 2026.

Based on the results of the specific indirect effect test using the bootstrapping method in SmartPLS, all indirect influence paths show a p-value below 0.05, so it can be declared significant . In the Word of Mouth → Hedonic Motivation → Decision to Exercise path , a coefficient value of -0.051 with a p-value of 0.003 is obtained. This result indicates that Hedonic Motivation mediates the influence of Word of Mouth on the Decision to Exercise , although the direction of the indirect influence formed is negative. This finding indicates that informal communication or recommendations received by consumers are still related to the decision to exercise through Hedonic Motivation, but the mediation relationship that appears does not strengthen the decision positively. In the Peer → Hedonic Motivation → Decision to Exercise path , the indirect influence coefficient value is 0.022 with a p-value of 0.008. This value indicates that Hedonic Motivation is able to significantly mediate the influence of Peer

on the Decision to Exercise. This means that peer influence not only works directly, but also through increasing the sense of pleasure, comfort, and emotional satisfaction felt by individuals when exercising. Social interaction, togetherness, and support from the friendship environment play a role in shaping positive experiences that then encourage the decision to exercise. On the Promotion → Hedonic Motivation → Decision to Exercise path, a coefficient value of 0.035 was obtained with a p-value of 0.003. These results indicate that Hedonic Motivation also significantly mediates the influence of Promotion on the Decision to Exercise. Thus, attractive promotions, such as discounts, free trials, or other special offers, can shape the perception of pleasure and positive experiences towards sports activities. This perception then encourages individuals to make the decision to exercise.

5. Discussion Discussion

5.1 Word of Mouth has a significant influence on Hedonic Motivation at the Bandar Lampung City Gymnasium

The results of the study indicate that word of mouth has a positive and significant effect on hedonic motivation. This finding suggests that recommendations, stories of experiences, and information from others can shape an individual's emotional drive to view gym activities as enjoyable. In other words, informal communication not only serves as a source of information but also builds affective expectations before individuals experience the service directly. When information comes from a trusted source, enthusiasm, expectations of a positive experience, and emotional attachment to the exercise activity are strengthened. This condition confirms that hedonic motivation can grow through social processes that precede the actual experience at the gym. This finding aligns with Dinar and Solihat (2024), who demonstrated that electronic word of mouth can strengthen consumers' affective responses. However, it should also be interpreted in conjunction with the findings of Nameto and Wardi (2025), who demonstrated that word of mouth's influence does not always operate strongly through the same psychological pathways in every context.

5.2 Peers have a positive and significant influence on Hedonic Motivation at the Bandar Lampung City Gymnasium

Peer groups have been shown to have a positive and significant influence on hedonic motivation. These results indicate that togetherness, direct invitations, and social interactions within friendship groups can increase feelings of enjoyment and comfort during exercise. Gym activities in this context are understood not only as an effort to maintain fitness but also as an enjoyable social experience. When exercising with friends, individuals tend to feel more comfortable, more motivated, and enjoy the activity more. These findings suggest that social influence from peers works by creating positive emotional experiences, making exercise more appealing and more likely to be maintained. These results support Huang et al. (2025), who asserted that social support plays a crucial role in physical activity behavior, and are also in line with Wahyuni and Hidayat (2024), who demonstrated that peer groups can strengthen exercise motivation.

5.3 Promotion has a positive and significant influence on Hedonic Motivation at the Bandar Lampung City Gymnasium

Promotion has a positive and significant effect on hedonic motivation. These findings indicate that gym promotional activities can create an emotional appeal to the exercise experience. Promotional information that is engaging, easy to understand, and provides tangible benefits not only makes potential consumers rationally interested but also affectively motivated. In this context, promotions act as external stimuli that build imaginations about enjoyable experiences, satisfaction, and comfort during exercise. Discount programs, membership packages, and special offers are forms of promotion that not only increase interest but also strengthen expectations of a positive experience. These findings align with Sri Asmirani et al. (2025), who demonstrated that interactive digital promotional strategies can build consumer emotional engagement, and are supported by Hasanah and Fauzi (2023), who emphasized the importance of digital promotions in increasing positive consumer responses.

5.4 Word of Mouth has a positive and significant influence on the decision to exercise at the Bandar Lampung City Gymnasium

The results of the study indicate that word of mouth has a positive and significant influence on exercise decisions. This suggests that information from others serves as a strong consideration when individuals choose a gym. Recommendations based on real-life experiences are perceived as more credible than commercial information, thereby reducing uncertainty and helping individuals narrow down their choices. In the context of fitness services, word of mouth works primarily in the early stages of the decision process, when potential members form a preference for a particular gym before conducting further evaluation. These findings align with Darmawan and Putri (2021), Fitriani and Hadi (2021), and Kusuma and Wijanarko (2023), which demonstrate that word of mouth has a positive contribution to consumer decision-making.

5.5 Peers have a positive and significant influence on the decision to exercise at the Bandar Lampung City Gymnasium

Peer groups have also been shown to have a positive and significant influence on exercise decisions. These findings suggest that an individual's decision to exercise is not solely shaped by personal considerations, but also by the norms, habits, and influence of the surrounding social group. The presence of peers can create a social commitment that strengthens exercise consistency, as individuals feel compelled to follow similar behavioral patterns to stay connected to their group. In this context, peer influence reinforces exercise decisions through a positive process of social conformity. These results align with Wuryanti and Zahara (2019), who demonstrated that the social environment can influence consumer decisions, and are supported by Candra and Wijaya (2023) and Rizky and Fajar (2023), who emphasized the importance of peer groups in shaping exercise interests and habits.

5.6 Promotion has a positive and significant influence on the decision to exercise at the Bandar Lampung City Gymnasium.

Promotion has a positive and significant influence on exercise decisions. These findings suggest that promotion is not only a communication tool but also a mechanism that accelerates the consumer decision-making process. Clear and relevant promotional information helps individuals assess the benefits, facilities, and value offered by the gym, thereby increasing their confidence in making decisions. In the context of this study, promotion works both rationally and persuasively: consumers are attracted by the information they receive, but also feel compelled to act. These results align with Pasaribu et al. (2026), who demonstrated that promotion influences service usage decisions, and are supported by Rahmawati and Hidayah (2022) and Cahyani and Sari (2022), who emphasized the power of digital promotion in influencing consumer decisions.

5.7 Hedonic Motivation plays a significant role in explaining the Decision to Exercise

Hedonic motivation has a positive and significant influence on the decision to exercise. These results indicate that the decision to exercise at a gym is not only driven by functional benefits such as health or facilities, but also by pleasurable emotional experiences. Post-exercise satisfaction, a sense of well-being during the activity, and the drive to gain positive experiences have been shown to be factors that strengthen an individual's decision to continue exercising. Furthermore, the specific indirect effect results indicate that hedonic motivation also plays a significant role as a mediator in the relationship between peer influence and promotion on the decision to exercise, as well as in the relationship between word of mouth and the decision to exercise, based on the p-value . However, the direction of the indirect coefficient on the word of mouth pathway is negative, so mediation on this pathway requires more careful interpretation. Overall, these results confirm that affective aspects are a crucial element in consumer behavior of fitness services. These findings align with Teixeira et al. (2020), who emphasize the importance of positive emotional experiences in the sustainability of exercise behavior, and with Huta and Ryan (2010) and Arnold and Reynolds (2003) regarding the role of hedonic motives in experience-based behavior.

5.8 Research limitations, implications, and elaboration

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. Data were collected through questionnaires, so the results are highly dependent on the subjective perceptions of respondents. The predominantly female respondents also mean that the results do not fully reflect variations in behavior based on gender. Furthermore, the study's

scope was limited to gymnasiums in Bandar Lampung City, so generalizing the results to other regions or other types of fitness services requires caution. Other variables that could potentially influence exercise decisions, such as price, facilities, location, and specific health conditions, were also not included in the model.

Nevertheless, this study provides important theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the results reinforce the view that exercise decisions are simultaneously influenced by social, marketing, and psychological factors. Practically, the results suggest that gym managers need to manage the customer experience more holistically, not only through physical facilities but also through social recommendation strategies, community-based activities, and promotions that deliver tangible benefits. Elaborating on these findings demonstrates that exercise decisions are multidimensional behaviors that are more easily sustained when individuals feel emotionally comfortable, socially supported, and confident in the value offered by gym services.

6. Conclusion

Based on results analysis And discussion , can concluded that Word of Mouth, Friends Peers , and Promotion proven influential positive And significant to Motivation Hedonist and Decision Exercising at a gymnasium in Bandar Lampung City. Findings This show that decision exercising No only formed by consideration rational , but Also by encouragement emotions that arise from experience social And marketing received individual . Recommendation from other people , invitations And support friends , and attractive promotions capable build perception that activity exercising at the gym is an enjoyable , valuable , and enjoyable experience worthy selected . In addition that , Motivation Hedonist Also proven influential positive And significant to Decision Exercising , which means that the more high feeling of pleasure , comfort , and the satisfaction felt individual to activity sports , increasingly strong decision they For exercise . In a way overall , results study This confirm that factor social , promotional , and mechanism psychological need understood in a way integrated in explain behavior consumer service fitness .

Based on these conclusions, gymnasium managers are advised to optimize marketing strategies that are not only informative but also able to build positive emotional experiences. This effort can be done through improving service quality, strengthening positive word of mouth , organizing community-based programs or group exercises, and promoting creative, relevant promotions that provide real benefits to consumers. The use of social media, visual content, and collaboration with trusted figures can also strengthen the appeal of promotions. From an academic perspective, further research is recommended to add other variables such as service quality, brand image, satisfaction, or health motivation to make the research model more comprehensive. Future research can also use a qualitative or mixed methods approach and expand the research location to ensure stronger generalizability of the results.

References

- Adguna, N. W., & Budisetyani, I. G. A. P. W. (2020). Dukungan sosial teman sebaya dan citra tubuh terhadap motivasi melakukan olahraga street workout dalam komunitas Semeton Workout Bali (SWB). *Jurnal Psikologi Udayana*, 000, 201–215.
- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, 50(2), 179–211.
- Ajzen, I. (2020). The theory of planned behavior: Frequently asked questions. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 2(4), 314–324. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.195>
- Arnold, M. J., & Reynolds, K. E. (2003). Hedonic shopping motivations. *Journal of Retailing*, 79(2), 77–95. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-4359\(03\)00007-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-4359(03)00007-1)
- Cahyani, M., & Sari, P. (2022). Pengaruh promosi media sosial terhadap keputusan pembelian produk fitness. *Jurnal Manajemen Digital*, 5(2), 120–132.
- Candra, R., & Wijaya, D. (2023). Pengaruh komunikasi kelompok teman sebaya terhadap minat berolahraga. *Jurnal Pendidikan Jasmani*, 14(1), 55–67.
- Chen, L., Cheng, R., & Hu, B. (2021). The effect of self-disclosure on loneliness in adolescents during COVID-19: the mediating role of peer relationships. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 12, 710515.
- Cheung, C. M. K., & Thadani, D. R. (2012). The impact of electronic word-of-mouth communication: A literature analysis and integrative model. *Decision Support Systems*, 54(1), 461–470. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dss.2012.06.008>
- Darmawan, A., & Putri, L. (2021). Pengaruh word of mouth terhadap keputusan konsumen produk olahraga. *Jurnal Ekonomi dan Bisnis*, 8(1), 77–90.
- Dinar, A. M., & Solihat, A. (2024). Influence of electronic word of mouth on consumer purchase intentions: A brand image perspective. *Business Innovation and Entrepreneurship Journal*, 6(2), 3–4. <https://doi.org/10.35899/biej.v6i>
- Fitriani, A., & Hadi, S. (2021). Word of mouth sebagai faktor pembentuk keputusan konsumen. *Jurnal Ilmu Manajemen*, 9(3), 150–162.
- Hagger, M. S., Chatzisarantis, N. L. D., & Biddle, S. J. H. (2002). A meta-analytic review of the theory of planned behavior in physical activity: Predictive validity and the contribution of additional variables. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 24(1), 3–32. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsep.24.1.3>
- Hair, J., & Alamer, A. (2022). Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) in second language and education research: Guidelines using an applied example. *Research methods in applied linguistics*, 1(3), 100027.
- Hasanah, U., & Fauzi, A. (2023). Peran promosi digital dalam meningkatkan keputusan konsumen. *Jurnal Ekonomi Kreatif*, 9(1), 44–56.
- Hasanah, U., & Fauzi, A. (2023). Peran promosi digital dalam meningkatkan keputusan konsumen. *Jurnal Ekonomi Kreatif*, 9(1), 44–56.
- Holbrook, M. B., & Hirschman, E. C. (1982). The experiential aspects of consumption: Consumer fantasies, feelings, and fun. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9(2), 132–140. <https://doi.org/10.1086/208906>
- Huang, J., Lv, Q., & Zeng, X. (2025). The influence of social support and empowerment on physical exercise behavior in university students: A self-determination theory perspective. *Acta Psychologica*, 257, 105086. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2025.105086>
- Huta, V., & Ryan, R. M. (2010). Pursuing pleasure or virtue: The differential and overlapping well-being benefits of hedonic and eudaimonic motives. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 11(6), 735–762. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-009-9171-4>
- Ismagilova, E., Slade, E., Rana, N. P., & Dwivedi, Y. K. (2020). The effect of electronic word of mouth communications on intention to buy: A meta-analysis. *Information Systems Frontiers*, 22, 1203–1226. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10796-019-09924-y>
- Khotimah, A. K., Nursari, A., & Wuryanti, L. (2026). MARKETING INSTITUTIONS IN THE AGRIBUSINESS VALUE CHAIN: A LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE ROLES OF COOPERATIVES, COLLECTING TRADERS, AND TRADING COMPANIES. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF FINANCIAL ECONOMICS*, 2(7), 1240–1248.
- Kotler, P., Keller, K. L., Ancarani, F., & Costabile, M. (2014). *Marketing management* 14/e. pearson.
- Kurnia, K., Wuryanti, L., & Indriani, W. (2024). Pengaruh E-Commerce, Word of Mouth, Product Inovation Dan Influencer Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Marketplace Shoppe Pada Mahasiswa Program Studi Manajemen Fakultas Ekonomi Dan Manajemen Universitas Malahayati. *Journal of Management and Innovation Entrepreneurship (JMIE)*, 1(3), 620–630.
- Kusuma, A., & Wijanarko, D. (2023). Word of mouth dan keputusan konsumen pada industri olahraga. *Jurnal Pemasaran*, 8(2), 90–102.
- Mahmudi, R. (2021). Pengaruh kualitas produk, harga, dan promosi terhadap keputusan pembelian sepatu futsal dan bola merek Specs di Toko Keranjang Bola Sidoarjo.
- Mursala, F., Nurbaiti, N., & Harahap, M. I. (2023). Pembentukan kultur konsumtif melalui eWOM fashion di Instagram. *Jurnal Administrasi dan Manajemen*, 13(2), 101–117. <https://doi.org/10.52643/jam.v13i2.3057>
- Nameto, M. P., & Wardi, Y. (2025). Electronic word of mouth sebagai determinan niat beli produk skincare: Studi kasus pada Generasi Z di era digital. *Jurnal Informatika Ekonomi Bisnis*, 593–600. <https://doi.org/10.37034/infeb.v7i3.1226>
- Nursari, A., & Putri, F. D. (2024). Opportunities and Challenges: Exemption from Import Duty on Imported Palestinian Products to Indonesia Post Covid-19. *Jurnal Riset Akuntansi dan Manajemen Malahayati (JRAMM)*, 13(2), 85–92.
- Nursari, A., Rahmawati, H. N., Ramadhan, E. O. S., Cahyani, D. A., & Mareta, Y. T. (2025). Transformasi Digital dan Perbaikan Mutu: Program Pendampingan Inovasi Teknologi, Layanan, dan Proses pada UMKM Kuliner di Bandar Lampung. *Jurnal Penelitian dan Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 3(4), 299–307.
- Nursari, A., Rahyono, R., Wuryanti, L., Vani, W. S., Lestari, T., Putri, F. A., ... & Mungkas, I. (2023). MENINGKATKAN BRANDING, PACKAGING, PRODUCT, PRICE, DAN TASTE SEBAGAI PELUANG BISNIS BAGI UMKM. *Jurnal Bakti Masyarakat Manajemen*, 3(1), 179–184.
- Pasaribu, L. N., Gracia, J., Sinaga, D. M. B., & Saputri, K. (2026). The effect of promotion, service quality, online customer rating on purchase decisions for Gojek services in Medan City. *Jurnal Manajemen Motivasi*, 22.
- Rahmawati, D., & Hidayah, N. (2022). Pengaruh promosi media sosial terhadap keputusan pembelian. *Jurnal Komunikasi*, 6(2), 120–133.
- Ramadan, A. R. L., Indriani, W., & Wuryanti, L. (2024). Analisis pengaruh product, price, place, promotion, personel, process, dan physical evidence terhadap kepuasan pelanggan Magerjek (transportasi ojek online Liwa). *Journal of Management and Innovation Entrepreneurship (JMIE)*, 1(4), 771–785.

- Ramadhan, E. L., Febrianti, F., & Wuryanti, L. (2025). PENGARUH PELAYANAN, STORE ATMOSPHERE DAN IKLAN TERHADAP KEPUASAN KONSUMEN DI MC DONALD'S BANDAR LAMPUNG. *Journal of Management and Innovation Entrepreneurship (JMIE)*, 2(4), 2466-2474.
- Putri, A. M., Listyaningsih, E., Nurbaiti, N., & Wuryanti, L. (2025). PENGARUH STRATEGI PROMOSI DAN KUALITAS PELAYANAN TERHADAP MINAT MASYARAKAT SEKTOR INFORMAL DALAM KEIKUTSERTAAN PADA PROGRAM-PROGRAM JAMINAN SOSIAL DI BPJS KETENAGAKERJAAN CABANG BANDAR LAMPUNG. *Journal of Management and Innovation Entrepreneurship (JMIE)*, 2(3), 2147-2155.
- Rhodes, R. E., & de Bruijn, G.-J. (2013). How big is the physical activity intention–behavior gap? A meta-analysis using the action control framework. *British Journal of Health Psychology*, 18(2), 296–309. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjhp.12032>
- Rizky, M., & Fajar, R. (2023). Pengaruh peer group terhadap minat olahraga. *Jurnal Pendidikan Olahraga*, 9(1), 77–89.
- Santrock, J. W. (2012). *Life Span Development : Perkembangan Masa Hidup Jilid 2* (Ed.13). Jakarta: Erlangga.
- Schiffman, L. G., & Wisenblit, J. (2020). *Consumer behavior* (12th ed.). Pearson.
- Sirait, M. P. L., & Silitonga, R. P. S. (2023). Pengaruh Harga, Lokasi, Fasilitas Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Membership di Ikigai Fitness Kartini. *Panorama Nusantara*, 18(2).
- Sri Asmirani, M. N. W., Nursari, A., Setiyarini, E. Y., & Pratama, R. H. (2025). The role of TikTok live streaming in increasing consumer purchasing power and enhancing online shop sales. *Jurnal Teknologi dan Manajemen Industri Terapan*, 4(4), 1390–1399. <https://doi.org/10.55826/wm3j8w83>
- Stephen, A. T. (2016). The role of digital and social media marketing in consumer behavior. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(6), 17–37. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.15.0417>
- Teixeira, P. J., Marques, M. M., Silva, M. N., Brunet, J., Duda, J. L., Haerens, L., La Guardia, J., Lindwall, M., Lonsdale, C., Markland, D., Michie, S., Moller, A. C., Ntoumanis, N., Patrick, H., Reeve, J., Ryan, R. M., Sebire, S. J., Standage, M., Vansteenkiste, M., & Hagger, M. S. (2020). A classification of motivation and behavior change techniques used in self-determination theory-based interventions in health contexts. *Motivation Science*, 6(4), 438–455. <https://doi.org/10.1037/mot0000172>
- Tjiptono, F., & Diana, D. (2020). *Manajemen Pemasaran Modern*. Penerbit Andi.
- Tovarel, M. J. R., Wahidah, N. N., Hidayatullah, W., & Malik, A. (2024). Analisis Strategi Promosi Dalam Meningkatkan Jumlah Pelanggan Ladyfame Shop Di Bandar Lampung. *Al-A'mal: Jurnal Manajemen Bisnis Syariah*, 1(2), 122-132.
- Wahyuni, L., & Hidayat, T. (2024). Pengaruh kelompok teman sebaya terhadap motivasi berolahraga. *Jurnal Pendidikan Jasmani*, 15(1), 30–42.
- Wuryanti, L., & Zahara, Y. (2019). Pengaruh gaya hidup, konsep diri, harga dan kelas sosial terhadap pengambilan keputusan pembelian konsumen di Coffeshop Kedai Kopi Pacar Hitam Lampung. *Jurnal Riset Akuntansi dan Manajemen*, 8(1), 1–3.