

Analysis of e-WOM and Product Quality on Online Purchase Intention Through Brand Image Mediation (Case Study: Tokopedia Online Buying Interest in Sukabumi City)

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to examine the impact of Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) and product quality on online purchase intention, with brand image serving as a mediating variable. The focus of the research is users of the Tokopedia e-commerce platform in Sukabumi City. This study uses a quantitative approach by collecting data through questionnaires from 100 respondents who have made at least two purchases on Tokopedia. The data analysis approach employed was the Structural Equation Modelling Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) method. The findings indicate that electronic word-of-mouth and product quality significantly impact brand image, although do not directly affect online purchase intention. The brand image has been demonstrated to buffer the relationship between e-WOM and product quality with online purchase intention. Positive reviews and a strong brand image increase consumer trust and drive purchase decisions. This research provides practical implications for e-commerce businesses to take advantage of positive reviews, maintain product quality, and build a brand image to increase consumer loyalty.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Technological advancements have brought changes and shifts to daily life. How is society required to consume the pattern of technological advances every year both to meet needs and lifestyles, likewise in the business world, companies have switched or added market functions in their business by creating websites or e-commerce that facilitate entrepreneurs in executing company operations and provide the best service to today's consumers [1], [2].

As per the We Are Social study, in January 2024, Indonesia had 185 million internet users, representing 66.5% of the entire population of 278.7 million. Internet users in Indonesia earlier this year were recorded to have increased by around 1.5 million people, an increase of 0.8% compared to January 2023. Over time, people's lifestyles in conducting business transactions or buying and selling activities have changed and updated following the trend of technological advances that are currently widely consumed by the public. Therefore, business people are renewing their way of doing business, such as

the use of e-commerce platforms and businesses in running their businesses [3], [4].

E-commerce is a platform utilised for doing all online purchasing and selling transactions. Furthermore, e-commerce facilitates marketing and promotion, while payments can be executed via bank transfers, and product delivery is conducted through services such as JNE, JNT, and others. E-commerce is experiencing rapid growth, because almost all needs can be bought and sold on the platform. One of the Indonesia is a country that utilizes e-commerce for buying and selling activities, evidenced by the emergence of several online marketplaces such as Tokopedia, Lazada, Blibli, Bukalapak, Shopee, and others [5], [6].

The increase in people's purchasing power in the use of E-commerce Platforms cannot be separated from the improvement of services carried out by E-commerce Platform companies such as Tokopedia which collaborates with Tiktok in adding service features to make it easy for E-commerce consumers to carry out the purchasing and selling process [7], [8] By using online shops, business people and consumers may more readily shop, explore, and vend any and anywhere products and services.

In 2024, the trend of Tokopedia has decreased significantly so that the problem that occurs on the Tokopedia e-commerce platform is the influence of E-WOM reviews, consumers rely on negative or positive online reviews which can affect purchase decisions, including product quality factors where consumers cannot see or try the product directly, bad reviews are not only on product quality but bad reviews Regarding slow delivery or unsuitable products can reduce consumers' purchase intention even if the product is of high quality. Poor reviews on e-commerce platforms have led to a decline in consumer trust in the brand image that consumers use [9].

Therefore, the intention to purchase online is significantly affected by online reviews (E-WOM) and brand image because they interact with each other in influencing consumer purchase intention. A positive E-WOM can strengthen the brand image, while

a strong brand image can increase the positive impact of E-WOM. Consumers who are exposed to positive E-WOM about a brand typically exhibits elevated buying intentions, especially if the brand already has a good image [10].

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Electronic Word of Mouth*

Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) constitutes a marketing communication modality encompassing assertions, both favorable and unfavorable, articulated by prospective or previous consumers concerning a product, with the information accessible to numerous individuals via social media platforms on the internet [11], [12].

2.2 *Product Quality*

Kotler and Keller [13] define Product quality refers to a product or service that has fulfilled or beyond client expectations. According to expert definitions, product quality is characterized by items or services evaluated against criteria of reliability, added features, levels, taste, and performance capabilities that fulfil consumer the expansion of customers [14].

2.3 *Brand Image*

Brand image encompasses the extent of the science of business management communication. There are also a number of definitions of brand image according to experts that can strengthen the implementation of this concept in the business world. According to Philip Kotler, the definition of brand image is an idea, impression, or even an individual's conviction in a brand. The definition of brand image, according to Keller, is the consumer's perspective on a brand perceived through brand linkages in their minds [15]–[17].

2.4 *Online Purchase Intention*

[18] define online purchase intention as a state in which a person shows a desire and interest in buying a certain product or service through a website. Meanwhile, according to [19],

Online purchasing purpose pertains to how strong the consumer's impulse to make a certain purchase action through the internet [20], [21].

2.5 Hypothesis Development

According to [22] in his research explained that One of the determinants influencing online purchasing intention is electronic word of mouth. Based on research conducted by [23] in his research e-WOM shows that it exerts a considerable influence on customer purchasing intentions. In contrast to research [20], [24] that e-WOM does not significantly influence internet purchasing intention.

H1: The influence of Electronic Word of Mouth on Online Purchase Intention

According to [25] in their research, one of the determinants influencing online purchasing intention is product quality. It is the same with the research conducted [26] The quality of the goods significantly impacts online buying intention. It differs from the conducted research [27], [28] that quality of the goods does not significantly affect online purchasing intentions.

H2: The Influence of Product Quality on Online Purchase Intention

In research [29] it is shown that one of the factors that The impact brand image include electronic word-of-mouth communication. Similar to research conducted by [30], Electronic word of mouth substantially impacts brand image. In contrast to the research conducted [31] Electronic Word of Mouth exerts a favourable influence, albeit its effect on brand image is not sufficiently strong.

H3: The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth on Brand Image

In research [32] it is shown that a factor influencing brand image is product quality. It is the same with research conducted by [33], [34] the product quality possesses a big influence on brand image, as well as research [26], [35].

H4: The Influence of Product Quality on Brand Image

In research [32] Research demonstrated The brand image substantially influences online purchasing intentions. Conversely to the research conducted [36] that brand image in mediating product quality in increasing online buying intention does not have a substantial effect, the same is the case with research [22], [37], [38].

H5: The Influence of Brand Image on Online Purchase Intention

3. METHODS

This study utilizes a quantitative methodology. As per Sugiyono [39] stated that quantitative research is a quantitative research approach grounded on positivist philosophy, utilizing research equipment for data gathering, and employing quantitative/statistical analysis to evaluate established hypotheses. Meanwhile, the objects of this research are electronic word of mouth (X1), product quality (X2), brand image (Y1), and online purchase intention (Y2).

3.1 Data Collection Methods

This study utilizes two categories of data: primary data and secondary data. Fundamental data was obtained through the completion of questionnaires by respondents. In primary data collection, a 1-5 Likert scale was employed, requiring participants to express their level of agreement with the assertions in the questionnaire, ranging from strongly disagreeing to strongly agreeing. Meanwhile, Secondary data was obtained from many sources, including books,

journals, and articles, previous research reports, and online references relevant to the research topic [40].

3.2 Population and Sample

The demographic in this research is Tokopedia users in Sukabumi City. Because the researcher is unaware of the precise quantity of consumers who shop online using the online shop application in the city of Sukabumi, the researcher used the Lame show formula, so a sample of 96 was obtained and rounded up to 100 respondents with the criterion of having online shopping experience through the Tokopedia online shop application as many as 2 times in the city of Sukabumi.

3.3 Data Analysis Techniques

The study utilizes Structural Equation Modelling Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) for data analysis. to evaluate the linear relationships among latent variables. The evaluation includes the outer model, which includes convergence validity, discriminatory validity, AVE, construct reliability, multicollinearity test,

and model suitability, as well as the inner model, which involves R² analysis, path coefficient, and T-Statistic. The analysis process is carried out Using SmartPLS software version 4.1.0.9 [41].

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

a. Construck Realiability dan Validity

Construct reliability and validity are part of the reliability and validity tests carried out on the outdoor model. Reliability tests measure the degree to which a measurement equipment can deliver consistent results in measuring constructs. The tools used to assess this reliability are Composite dependability ratings surpassing 0.6 and Cronbach's alpha surpassing 0.7, which is considered to indicate good reliability. As for measuring validity, an AVE value of > 0.5 is used, which indicates that convergent validity has been fulfilled well [42].

Tabel 1. Construck Realiability dan Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Brand Image	0.976	0.976	0.98	0.872
Electronic Word Of Mouth	0.962	0.963	0.971	0.869
Product Quality	0.98	0.98	0.982	0.875
Online Purchase Intention	0.946	0.947	0.961	0.861

Source: Data Processed, 2024

Cronbach's alpha is considered good or valid if the value exceeds 0.7. The value of rho_c is declared reliable if it is >0.7, while the AVE value of >0.5 indicates that the convergent validity has been met.

According to the test results presented in Table 3 above, Cronbach's alpha, rho_c, and AVE values have met these criteria, so they can be declared valid.

Tabel 2. Inner VIF

	BRIGHT
Brand Image -> Online Purchase Intention	8.983
Electronic Word Of Mouth -> Brand Image	1.01
Electronic Word Of Mouth -> Online Purchase Intention	5.506
Product Quality -> Brand Image	1.01
Product Quality -> Online Purchase Intention	5.354

Source: Data Processed, 2024

VIF > 5: Indicates a high indication of multicollinearity, but in some literature, a score of up to 10 is still acceptable. VIF value ≤ 5: No significant multicollinearity issues. In general, most VIF values are within reasonable limits, except for The correlation between Brand Image and Online Purchase Intention a high VIF value. This may require special attention to reduce multicollinearity,

such as considering changes to models or indicators.

b. Uji Model Fit

SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual) is an indicator utilised to evaluate the suitability of a model. An SRMR score under 0.08 signifies a congruent model, however an SRMR value ranging from 0.08 to 0.10 remains acceptable.

Table 3. Model Fit

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.031	0.031

Source: Data Processed, 2024

As per the findings shown in Table 5, it can be inferred that the SRMR value has met the criteria, namely $0.031 < 0.08$.

c. Inner Model

Relationship of Variable Influence

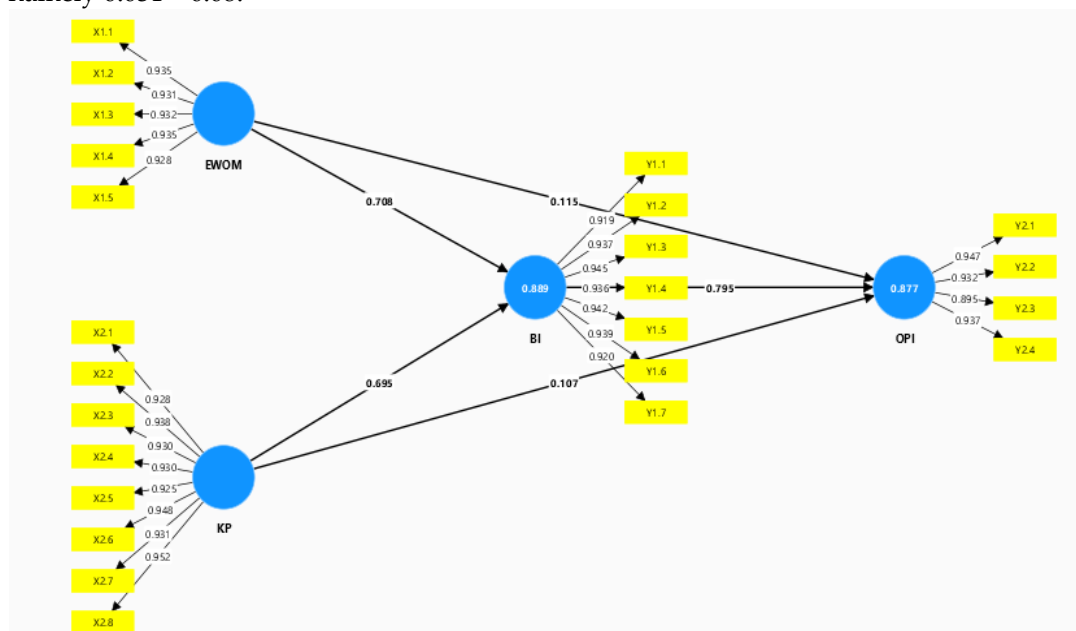


Figure 1. Path Coefficients

This study applies the bootstrap resampling method, then measurements are made against path coefficients, also known as direct effects to evaluate the importance and

intensity of the relationship between constructs. Furthermore, hypothesis testing was conducted using The requirements of $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ and $T\text{-statistic} > 1.96$ [43].

Tabel 4. Path Coefficients

			T Statistic	P Values	Information
Electronic Word Of Mouth	→	Online Purchase Intention	1,548	0,122	Rejected
Kualitas Produk	→	Online Purchase Intention	1,462	0,144	Rejected
Electronic Word Of Mouth	→	Brand Image	14,014	0,00	Accepted
Product Quality	→	Brand Image	11,851	0,00	Accepted
Brand Image	→	Online Purchase Intention	8,678	0,00	Accepted

Source: Data Processed, 2024

The results of table 6 above explain as follows:

1. Electronic Word of Mouth → Online Purchase Intention

This relationship is not significant, since the T value is inferior to 1.96 and the P value is more than 0.05. This suggests that the Electronic Word of Mouth does not directly affect Online Purchase Intention.

2. Product Quality → Online Purchase Intention

This relationship is not significant, since T value < 1.96 and the P value > 0.05. This indicates that product quality does not exert a substantial direct impact on Online Purchase Intention.

3. Electronic Word of Mouth → Brand Image

This relationship is significant, since T value > 1.96 and the P Value < 0.05. This indicates that Electronic Word of Mouth has a substantial impact on Brand Image. Positive online reviews can improve the brand image.

4. Product Quality → Brand Image

This relationship is significant, because the T Value exceeds 1.96 and the P-value is less than 0.05. This signifies that good product Quality significantly impacts brand image. High product quality will improve the customer perception of brand image.

5. Brand Image → Online Purchase Intention

This relationship is significant, because the T value > 1.96 and the P Value < 0.05 This indicates that Brand Image has a substantial impact on Online Purchase Intention. Consumers with a favourable opinion of the brand image are more inclined to have the intention to buy online.

d. R-Square (R²)

The R-Square value quantifies the extent to which an independent variable accounts for the variance in the dependent variable, as well as determine whether the influence is substantive. Referring to Chin (1998), as quoted by [44] [44] the R-Square criteria are divided into three classifications: 0.67 (strong), 0.33 (moderate), and 0.19 (weak).

Table 5. R-Square

	R-Square	Ket
Brand Image	0,886	Strong
Online Purchase Intention	0,873	Strong

According to Table 7, The R-squared value for brand image (BI) is 0.886, equivalent to 88.6%. This indicates the brand's image (BI) performance variable is influenced by electronic word of mouth (EWOM) and product quality (KP) by 88.6%, The remaining 11.4% is influenced by variables not examined in this study. Meanwhile, the R-Square value for online purchase intention (OPI) is 0.873 or 87.3%, which means that online purchase intention (OPI) is influenced by electronic word of mouth (EWOM) and product quality (KP) by 87.3%, the remaining 11.3% is affected by additional variables not investigated in this study.

4.2 Discussion

a. The Influence Electronic Word of Mouth on Online Purchase Intention

Electronic word of mouth exerted little influence and was statistically insignificant regarding online purchase intention with a P Value of $0.122 > 0.05$ and a T Statistic value of $1.548 < 1.96$. This outcome aligns with studies undertaken by [20] which states There is no substantial impact of the Electronic word-of-mouth variable influencing online buying intention.

b. The Effect of Product Quality on Online Purchase Intention

Product quality had exhibited no influence and the results indicated no significant effect on online purchase intention, evidenced by a P value of 0.144 (more than 0.05) and a T Statistic value of 1.462 (less than 1.96). This outcome aligns with studies undertaken by [27] indicates that product quality characteristics do

not significantly affect online buying intention.

c. The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth on Brand Image

Electronic word of mouth significantly affects brand image, evidenced by P-value of 0.00, which is below 0.05, and a T-statistic value of $14.014 < 1.96$. This outcome aligns with research conducted by [29] indicating a substantial impact of the Electronic word-of-mouth variable affecting brand image.

d. The Influence of Product Quality on Brand Image

The quality of the product significantly impacts brand image, evidenced by a P Value of $0.00 < 0.05$ and a T Statistic of $11.851 < 1.96$. This outcome aligns with studies undertaken by [32] indicating a substantial impact of the Electronic word-of-mouth variable affecting brand image.

e. The Influence of Brand Image on Online Purchase Intention

Brand image exerts influence and importance on online purchase intention, evidenced by a P Value of $0.00 < 0.05$ and a T Statistic value of $8.678 < 1.96$. This outcome aligns with research conducted by [32] indicating a substantial Impact of brand image components on online purchasing intention.

5. CONCLUSION

The study found e-WOM component and product quality did not exert a substantial direct influence on online purchases intent. This shows that while product quality and online reviews are important, they are not enough to encourage buyers to buy. It is

evident that additional elements, such as brand reputation, play a crucial role in establishing this relationship. Therefore, companies must concentrate on strengthening the brand image to maximize the effectiveness of e-WOM and product quality to encourage consumers to make purchasing decisions.

Moreover, brand image is a crucial mediating variable in the relationship between electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM)

and product quality with respect to the desire to buy goods online. Positive comments and good product quality can improve customer perception of the brand, which in turn increases the brand's attractiveness in the market. Therefore, to increase consumers' purchase intent online, integrated marketing strategies, such as incorporating e-WOM, product quality management, and brand image strengthening, are essential.

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