
**THE PURCHASING DECISION OF ACCOUNTING EDUCATION STUDENTS ON
THE SHOPEE E-COMMERCE PLATFORM, EXAMINED FROM BRAND
AMBASSADOR, BRAND IMAGE, AND E-WOM PERSPECTIVES**



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Abstract

This study aimed to find out how Brand Ambassadors, Brand Image, and Electronic Word of Mouth influenced the decision to purchase Shopee Accounting Education Students at the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. This comparative causal research uses a quantitative approach. The sample was taken from 134 people who responded with a simple random sample method. Data is collected through a questionnaire, and the data analysis method used is double linear regression analysis. The results of the test hypothesis showed that brand ambassadors, brand images, and e-WOM influenced purchasing decisions together. However, in part, Brand Image and e-WOM had a significant positive influence on buying decisions. Whereas Brand Ambassadors did not have a substantial influence on purchasing decisions. The size of the contribution of brand Ambassadors, Brand images, and e-WOM to shopping decisions on Shopee's e-commerce, was 60.2%, while the remaining 39.8% was a constitution of influence upon shopping decisions depending on other variables outside the study.

Keywords: Brand Ambassador, Brand Image, E-WOM, Purchase Decision

INTRODUCTION

With the advancement of information and communication technology, various human activities have become easier and more practical. One of the most prominent advancements is seen in technology gadgets and trends like online shopping. E-commerce provides a platform for buying and selling products through social media (Bastian & Rino, 2023). One of the emerging marketplace companies today is Shopee. Shopee holds the most popular position in the e-commerce category, frequently visited and used. According to data from Katadata.com (2023), the Shopee marketplace ranks first in terms of the number of visitors, and has 157.9 million monthly visits, significantly more than its rivals, followed by Tokopedia, Lazada, Blibli, and Bukalapak. This indicates that the Shopee marketplace is highly favored by consumers.

The phenomenon of online shopping has led to shopping behavior across all segments of society, with the increasing number of online shops prompting more people to prefer shopping online. When shopping online, consumers need to consider what factors to consider before purchasing goods. Purchase decision is the basis for determining consumer actions when buying a product (Pratiwi et al., 2022). Probosini et al. (2021) found that the usage of brand ambassadors by businesses, who are supposed to represent the requirements and preferences of potential customers, is one of the deciding elements influencing purchase decisions. Additionally, according to Kotler & Keller (2016:322), factors influencing purchase decisions include brand image, which establishes a company's responsibility to create a positive experience for buyers to consider when selecting a product. Another factor influencing purchase decisions, according to Sari et al. (2017), is the electronic word of mouth, which can quickly spread information about products or services from other customers who have used or purchased them. Therefore, companies adopting marketing strategies need to consider consumer behavior and factors influencing purchase decisions such as brand ambassadors, brand image, and electronic word of mouth so that companies can maximize marketing to meet the expectations of their prospective buyers.

A brand ambassador is an important component of product marketing. An individual who promotes a brand on behalf of multiple well-known public figures is known as a brand

ambassador. In addition to well-known individuals, brand ambassadors can also receive support from ordinary individuals, generally known as endorsements (Fitri et al., 2023). Choosing the right brand ambassador for a product is crucial because brand ambassadors can influence brand awareness, which ultimately affects future purchase decisions. Brand ambassadors are expected to act as advertisers and representatives who help represent the brand to consumers, arousing consumer interest and encouraging them to make purchases (Fasha et al., 2022). According to Utomo & Prabawani (2017), factors influencing brand ambassadors include ambassador reputation, attractiveness, skills, trust, and ambassador strength.

Consumers, before deciding to purchase a product, not only consider brand ambassadors but also pay attention to the company's brand image. As stated by Arianty & Andira (2021), high levels of competition identify the proliferation of similar product brands in the market. Given the tight brand competition, it is essential to build a good brand reputation in the minds of customers. The way that consumers view a brand is reflected in the brand image, which is an impression that they have of the company (Dewi et al., 2020). Customer trust in a brand or product can rise with a positive brand image. Consumers tend to prefer brands or products considered to have a good and trustworthy image (Erida & Rangkuti, 2017). According to Ellitan et al. (2022), brand image refers to how people view and believe in a brand based on the associations that are ingrained in their memories. According to Schiffman & Kanuk (2008), factors influencing brand image include consumer perceptions of product recognition, quality, size, durability, design, product color, and price, as well as consumer perceptions of location.

According to Amin & Yanti (2021), electronic word of mouth is the factor that has the greatest impact on product marketing strategies, particularly in the context of today's rapidly advancing technology. Electronic word-of-mouth can be either favorable or negative depending on what customers who have previously purchased the product through media on the internet have left behind. This can hurt other consumers' decisions to purchase the product or not. Lamba & Aggarwal (2014) define electronic word-of-mouth as a method of information dissemination in a semi-formal way from consumer to consumer through online

media or websites. When this happens, consumers will evaluate the product. The effectiveness of e-WOM is higher than that of offline word of mouth due to greater availability and more extensive reach. Consumers use social media to share personal experiences they have with products, services, or other products they have already used, resulting in more substantial recommendations (Rumagit et al., 2023).

Based on initial interviews with several accounting education students at the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, many of them make purchases on Shopee e-commerce influenced by the brand ambassadors used by Shopee to attract buyers. According to one interviewee, "I initially chose Shopee because of the advertisements from brand ambassadors used by Shopee, such as popular figures like Blackpink and JKT48." The interviews also explained that not only in terms of brand ambassadors, but some students also consider the brand image of the product they will purchase. One student I interviewed said that she makes purchases on the Shopee e-commerce platform because Shopee provides quality products compared to other e-commerce platforms and offers monthly promotions. Furthermore, Shopee is easy to use and known for its affordable prices. This makes the image of a product very important for a company. The interviews also explained that e-WOM also plays an important role. Based on interviews I conducted with students, one of them said that they shop on Shopee due to the effect of electronic word-of-mouth. After reading reviews from previous customers, they are more interested in making decisions about what they should buy, which helps them feel more confident when making a purchase.

The aim of this study based on the above issues is to determine whether brand ambassadors, brand image, and e-WOM have a positive and significant impact on the decision-making of accounting education students at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta on the Shopee e-commerce platform. Several previous studies have analyzed factors influencing purchase decisions, including brand ambassadors, brand image, and e-WOM conducted by Rahma & Setiawan (2021); Purwati & Cahyanti (2022); Naja & Budiarti (2024). Previous research has only focused on researching the object of research, which is Shopee users in general. The novelty of this research lies in focusing on Shopee users among accounting education students at the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. It is expected

that this research will encourage students and the general public to be more careful when shopping online, especially in Shopee's e-commerce. Additionally, this study is anticipated to offer valuable perspectives to corporations regarding policy formulation and business operations development, particularly about brand ambassadors, brand image, and electronic word-of-mouth.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand Ambassador

A public figure who enjoys widespread recognition serves as a brand ambassador. They are trusted as guides, motivators, and connectors in marketing campaigns aimed at introducing products or services to consumers and influencing their perceptions of the products (Lailiya, 2020). Samosir et al. (2016) define: "A brand ambassador is an individual capable of representing a product or company, having the ability to communicate comprehensive information about the represented product, to positively impact product sales and increase consumer interest in the product or service. Generally, companies utilize brand ambassadors as a marketing strategy." An indicator that is used to quantify brand ambassadors includes popularity (visibility), credibility, attractiveness, and power (Sagia & Situmorang, 2018).

Brand Image

Brand image, or brand perception, can be described as the impression formed in consumers' minds when they think about a brand. It encompasses consumers' perceptions of the brand and how the brand is viewed by them (Fitrianna & Aurinawati, 2020). A favorable brand image potentially increases consumer loyalty, which in turn affects purchasing decisions. Therefore, shaping brand image not only impacts consumer needs fulfillment but can also maximize their satisfaction. A good brand image acts as a guide for customers to consider when choosing what to buy because the brand has built a positive reputation (Bramantya & Jatra, 2016). Kussudyarsana & Irawati (2018) state that a product's brand image helps customers recognize it, judge its quality, lower the risk of making a purchase, and develop a positive relationship with it. According to Kotler & Keller (2016:347), an

indicator that is used to quantify brand image includes favorability of brand association, strength of brand association, and uniqueness of brand association.

Electronic Word of Mouth

Charo et al. (2015) stated that e-WOM is a method of sharing information and knowledge over the Internet. Electronic word-of-mouth is the primary informal consumer communication channel that influences consumers' purchasing decisions, both in terms of price and quality for a particular product. Therefore, e-WOM plays a key role in shaping consumer behavior. Word-of-mouth communication can influence several conditions, such as awareness, perceptions, attitudes, intentions, and behavior. This indicates that information conveyed through word of mouth can affect various aspects, including awareness, expectations, perceptions, attitudes, desires to act, and ultimately consumer behavior in making purchase decisions, that result from their attitude toward a particular product or service (Eriza, 2017). According to Lin et al. (2013), indicators to measure e-WOM include electronic word-of-mouth quality, electronic word-of-mouth quantity, and sender's expertise.

Purchase Decision

Tjiptono & Diana (2016) stated purchasing decisions are a component of consumer behavior. Consumer behaviors include actions taken before and after buying and identifying goods and services, as well as decision-making processes. Consumer purchase decisions involve selecting one of several problem-solving options considered by consumers, followed by concrete action taken. Consumers can evaluate their choices and decide on the next course of action (Husen et al., 2018). According to Nasution et al. (2019), purchase decisions involve the process of selection among two or more alternative options. The decision-making action includes the type and value of the product, evaluation of product form, brand evaluation, consideration of product quantity, seller selection, and consideration of time and payment method. Some indicators used in measuring purchase decisions include product choice, brand choice, purchase channel choice, purchase time, and purchase quantity (Widokarti & Priansa, 2019).

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a quantitative approach and a design of comparative qualitative research. Causal-comparative research means collecting data after the event being studied has occurred. Then the researcher selects one or more effects to be retested by tracing time, looking for causes, examining relationships, and understanding their meanings, without altering anything (Azwar, 2017). According to Creswell (2014), the quantitative approach method is used to objectively test theories by investigating the relationship between variables. By measuring these variables with measuring instruments so that the data is analyzed using statistical methods.

This research is being conducted from September 2023 to December 2023. In this research, the population is the accounting education students at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta consisting of 3 cohorts, namely 2020, 2021, and 2022 totaling 204 students, data based on sources from the secretary of the accounting education study program at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. This research uses simple random sampling techniques for samplings. The sample size was calculated using the Krejcie & Morgan table (1970). Therefore, the samples obtained in this study amounted to 134 respondents.

Questionnaires were used in this study's data collection method with closed-ended questions. The research used brand ambassador questionnaires, brand images, e-WOMs, and purchase decisions. The purchase decision questionnaire was developed based on several indicators by Widokarti & Priansa (2019) consisting of 5 indicators: product choice, brand choice, purchase channel choice, purchase time, and purchase quantity. The brand ambassador questionnaire was developed based on several indicators by Sagia & Situmorang (2018) consisting of 4 indicators: popularity (visibility), credibility, attractiveness, and power. The brand image questionnaire was developed based on Kotler & Keller (2016:347) consisting of 3 indicators: favorability of brand association, strength of brand association, and uniqueness of brand association. The electronic word-of-mouth questionnaire was developed based on indicators by Lin et al. (2013) consisting of 3 indicators: electronic word-of-mouth quality, electronic word-of-mouth quantity, and sender's expertise. Each statement in the questionnaire has 4 answer options, each with a different score: Score 1 indicates

strongly disagree, Score 2 indicates disagree, Score 3 indicates agree, and Score 4 indicates strongly agree.

To ensure whether the items in the questionnaire accurately measure the variables to be studied, the data obtained from respondents will undergo validity and reliability testing of research instruments on each statement item. To test the validity of the instrument, the r_{count} and r_{table} values are compared. The question is deemed valid if $r_{\text{count}} > r_{\text{table}}$ and r value is positive (Sujarweni & Utami, 2019). The validity test results showed that any instrument of a valid 32 questionnaire item, r counts 0.515 to 0.828 larger than table r 0.1697. If a questionnaire has a Cronbach's Alpha score ≥ 0.70 , it is deemed reliable (Sujarweni & Utami, 2019). Cronbach's Alpha for the reliability test is $0.913 > 0.70$, thus concluding that the questionnaire instrument is reliable.

Data prerequisite tests were conducted using tests for normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and heteroskedasticity. To ascertain whether the residual or nuisance variables in the regression model are normally distributed, a normality test is performed. If the data approach has a normal distribution, It is decided that the regression model is good (Ghozali, 2018). Normality was tested in this study using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (1-Sample K-S) method. Data is said to be normally distributed if the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) > 0.05 . The Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test findings, which indicate that the data is normally distributed, show a significant value of $0.226 > 0.05$. Testing for linearity is done to ascertain whether or not variables have a significant linear connection. If the significance value is > 0.05 , it indicates a linear relationship between variables (Sugiyono & Susanto, 2015:323). The three variables have significant values of 0.283, 0.712, and $0.719 > 0.05$ according to the linearity test's results. Therefore, it is concluded that the model shows a linear relationship, and regression testing can be performed. The multicollinearity test aims to determine whether the independent variables in the multiple regression model have a significant correlation. A regression model is considered acceptable when the independent variables do not significantly correlate with one another. On the other hand, a significant correlation indicates a problem of multicollinearity. For a regression model to detect a multicollinearity problem, the VIF value must be less than 10. The regression result shows

multicollinearity between these independent variables if the VIF score is more than 10 (Ghozali, 2018). There isn't multicollinearity in this research, according to the multicollinearity test results, because all of the dependent variables have tolerance levels of 0.10 and VIF values less than 10. To determine whether there is an indication of heteroscedasticity in a multiple linear regression model, this study uses the Glesjer test. This test uses a significance value greater than 0.05 as its basis for decision-making, which indicates the absence of a heteroskedasticity issue (Ghozali, 2018). The Glejser test results show significance values > 0.05 , which means there is no heteroskedasticity.

The data analysis method of this study combines hypothesis testing with multiple linear regression analysis for partial significance test, simultaneous significance test, coefficient of determination, and effective contribution of variables using SPSS version 26.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Partial Significance Test (t-test)

The Influence of Brand Ambassador on Purchase Decisions of Accounting Education Students

Table 1
Partial Tests (t-test)

Model	T	Sig.
Brand Ambassador	0,217	0,829

According to Table 1 above, the test results of the brand ambassador hypothesis on the purchase decision show that $t_{\text{count}} 0.217 < t_{\text{table}} 1.978$ and the significance value of the Brand Ambassador variable (X_1) is more than 0.05, or $0.829 > 0.05$. As a result, H_0 was accepted and H_1 rejected, that brand ambassadors do not have a significant influence on purchasing decisions in shopee e-commerce.

This study backs up the research carried out by Gusdaputra et al. (2023), who stated that the purchase decision of Pekanbaru students was not significantly influenced by the brand ambassador. This result differs from the research carried out by Momongan et al. (2022), which indicated that brand ambassador brand ambassadors influence purchase decisions among students majoring in Social and Political Sciences at Unsrat. This is known

because, in this study, respondents did not pay much attention to the brand ambassadors or individuals promoting the Shopee e-commerce platform. Accounting education students at the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta often use the Shopee e-commerce site to make decisions about purchases that are impacted by other variables.

The Influence of Brand Image on Purchase Decisions of Accounting Education Students

Table 2
Partial Tests (t-test)

Model	T	Sig.
Brand Image	6,916	0,000

Table 2 above presents the findings of the test of the brand image hypothesis on purchasing decisions. It indicates that the t_{count} of 6.916 > t_{table} 1.978 and the significance value of the brand image variable (X_2) < 0.05 or 0.000 < 0.05. Therefore, H_0 is refused and H_1 is allowed, proving that brand image significantly influences purchasing decisions in Shopee e-commerce.

This study validates the findings of another study by Kolinug et al. (2022), who found that among Sam Ratulangi University students, brand image significantly influenced the purchase decision of Revlon cosmetics. The study's findings also corroborate earlier research by Ghadani et al. (2022), who concluded that brand image significantly influences the purchasing decisions of FEB students at Universitas Harapan Medan at Shopee. This condition reflects that the creation of a strong brand image will provide positive value to the Shopee e-commerce platform and will be deeply embedded in consumers' memories.

The Influence of E-WOM on Purchase Decisions of Accounting Education Students

Table 3
Partial Tests (t-test)

Model	T	Sig.
E-WOM	4,413	0,000

The results of testing the e-WOM hypothesis on purchasing decisions, as shown in Table 3 above, indicate that the e-WOM variable's significance (X_3) is < 0.05 or 0.000 < 0.05 and obtained a t_{count} of 4.413 > t_{table} 1.978. Therefore, H_0 is turned down and H_1 is allowed,

indicating that electronic word-of-mouth has a significant influence on Shopee e-commerce purchasing decisions.

This research supports the research that was carried out by Rohmah et al. (2023), which states that e-WOM significantly influences purchase decisions among economics education students at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro on the Tokopedia marketplace. The research findings were also influenced by the research conducted by Andika & Nurbaiti (2023), who indicated that e-WOM influences purchase decisions of fashion products among students at the STIAMI Institute, class of 2019. Because students often refer to online product reviews from other consumers to understand the positive impressions of a product. When students intend to purchase a product, positive or negative reviews will affect their purchase decisions. Additionally, recommendations from others also play a significant role in decision-making. For example, if two stores, A and B, sell the same product, but store A has few reviews and sales, while store B has many reviews and higher sales than store A, students tend to choose store B because it appears more popular. This makes the Shopee e-commerce platform attractive to accounting education students for making purchases.

The Influence of Brand Ambassador, Brand Image, and E-WOM Together on Purchase Decisions of Accounting Education Students

Simultaneous Significance Test (F-test)

The F test's objective is to ascertain whether the variables X_1 , X_2 , and X_3 simultaneously affect the significance of the effect of variable Y on accounting education students. The following are the results of the F test:

Table 4
Simultaneous Hypothesis Test (F-test)
ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2663,534	3	887,845	65,656	,000 ^b
Residual	1757,959	130	13,523		
Total	4421,493	133			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

b. Predictors: (Constant), E-WOM, Brand Ambassador, Brand Image

According to Table 4 above, which shows the outcomes of the F test and simultaneous testing of hypotheses, the F_{count} result is 65.656 with a significance (p-value) of 0.000. Additionally, it is compared to the F_{table} value and a probability of 5%. Because the results show that $F_{count} > F_{table}$ $65,656 > 2.67$ and significance (p-value) $0.000 < 0.05$, H_0 is discarded and H_1 is allowed. So, it can be concluded that brand ambassadors, brand image, and E-WOM have a significant influence on Shopee’s e-commerce purchasing decisions.

The results of this study are supported by previous research by Maghfirah & Suyono (2023), which discovered that brand ambassadors and brand image had a simultaneous effect on purchase decisions. The outcomes of this investigation align with the findings of Awaludin & Gunawan's (2024) study, which indicates that electronic word-of-mouth influences purchase decisions concurrently.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Finding the direction of the link between brand ambassador, brand image, electronic word-of-mouth factors, and purchasing decision variables is the goal of multiple linear regression analysis.

Table 5
Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Test
Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	9,880	3,233		3,056	,003
	Brand Ambassador	,013	,058	,015	,217	,829
	Brand Image	,852	,123	,569	6,916	,000
	E-WOM	,496	,112	,296	4,413	,000

Source: Data processed, 2024

The multiple linear regression equations yield the following findings, which are based on table 5 above:

$$Y = 9,880 + 0,013 X_1 + 0,852X_2 + 0,496X_3$$

From the results of the above equations, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- a. The constant 9.880 indicates that the purchase decision will still be worth 9.880 if the value of the brand ambassador, image, and e-wom is 0 and there is no change.

- b. The brand ambassador regression coefficient obtained a value of 0.013 and is positive. Thus, for every one-unit increase in the brand ambassador variable, the dependent variable of purchasing decisions will increase by 0.013. The unidirectional relationship with purchase decisions is indicated by the positive brand ambassador coefficient.
- c. The brand image regression coefficient is 0.852 and is positive, which means that with each one-unit increase in the brand image variable, the purchasing decision variable will increase by 0.852. The positive brand image regression coefficient indicates that there is a unidirectional relationship between purchasing decisions and brand image.
- d. The electronic word-of-mouth regression coefficient is 0.496 and has a positive value. this indicates that the dependent variable purchase choice will increase by 0.496 for every unit increase in the e-WOM variable. The electronic word-of-mouth coefficient is positive, indicating a one-way relationship with decisions about what to buy.

Coefficient of Determination

Table 6
Coefficient of Determination Analysis
Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,776 ^a	,602	,593	3,677

Source: Data processed, 2024

- a. Predictors: (Constant), E-WOM, Brand Ambassador, Brand Image
- b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

Table 6 shows the coefficient of determination of 0.602, or 60.2%, which indicates that the independent variables brand ambassador, brand image, and e-wom contribute 60.2% to the dependent variable purchasing decisions. Other variables outside the study contributed 39.8 percent to the dependent variable of purchasing decisions. The calculation results show that the Brand Ambassador Variable (X_1) provides an effective contribution (SE) of 0.62% to the Purchasing Decision (Y), the Brand Image Variable (X_2) provides an effective contribution (SE) of 41.80%, and the Electronic Word of Mouth Variable (X_3) provides an effective contribution (SE) of 17.8%. the total effective contribution (SE) is 60.23% if rounded up to 60.2% or the same as the coefficient of determination (R_2).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion drawn from the examination of the test results and the described discussion is that accounting education students' purchase decisions are significantly influenced by the Brand Image and e-WOM variables. In contrast, accounting education students' purchase decisions are not significantly impacted by the Brand Ambassador variable.

The study finds a positive and significant influence between Brand Image and E-WOM, while Brand Ambassadors did not have a significant influence on the purchasing decisions of accounting education students at the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. This study has several limitations, including the use of only three independent variables, namely Brand Ambassador (X_1), Brand Image (X_2), and e-WOM (X_3), while there are still many other factors influencing purchase decisions. In light of this research's limitations, the following advice for research is to add another independent variable that was not examined in the study, such as product quality, price perception, promotion, and brand trust. This study only focuses on accounting education students at the University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta, so the results obtained cannot be generalized. Therefore, for future research, it is hoped that the sample is not limited only to accounting education students but can include students from various disciplines or universities.

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