
THE INFLUENCE OF EWOM AND BRAND IMAGE ON CONSUMER BUYING INTEREST IN AZARINE PRODUCTS



Anisa Fanestya Nofalia¹
Universitas Islam Indonesi, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
anisafanesss@gmail.com

Albari²
Universitas Islam Indonesia, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
albari@uii.ac.id

Abstract

This research aims to provide new information about the influence of Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) on consumer decisions, especially on Azarine beauty products. The focus of this research analyze the extent to which the quantity and credibility of eWOM affect brand image and consumer purchase intention. To answer these objectives, the author used quantitative methods through an online survey involving 210 respondents. Data were analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique based on Partial Least Square (PLS) with the help of SmartPLS software. The results showed that eWOM quantity has a significant effect on eWOM credibility, brand image, and purchase intention. In addition, eWOM credibility is proven to have a positive impact on brand image and purchase intention. Brand image also acts as a strong mediating variable in shaping consumer purchase intention. The findings suggest that companies need to manage eWOM strategies more purposefully, especially by increasing the credibility of messages conveyed by consumers.

Keywords: Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM), eWOM Credibility, e-WOM Quantity, Brand Image, Purchase Intention

INTRODUCTION

Along with the rapid development of technology, the number of internet users in Indonesia in 2024 is estimated to reach 221.56 million people (APJII, 2024). This has a significant impact on changes in consumer behavior, especially in the trade sector. Online trading or e-commerce is the main choice for many consumers because of the convenience offered, as well as greater time and energy efficiency compared to shopping directly in stores (Rahmawati & Oktarina, 2022).

One of the fastest-growing sectors is the cosmetics industry. In recent years, the cosmetics industry in Indonesia has experienced significant growth along with increasing public awareness of the importance of self-care (Rosyid et al, 2025). Based on data from the Food and Drug Supervisory Agency (BPOM), the number of business actors in the cosmetics sector continues to increase, from 819 business actors in 2021 to 1,039 business actors in 2023 (indonesia.go.id). This growth has also been accompanied by the emergence of various local cosmetic brands competing in the Indonesian market. One such brand is Azarine, which offers a range of affordable and halal-certified cosmetics and skincare products.

Along with market growth, the attractiveness of local cosmetic products such as Azarine is also influenced by factors such as eWOM (electronic Word of Mouth) and brand image. eWOM refers to reviews or opinions shared by consumers through digital platforms, which have the potential to influence consumer decisions to buy a product (Rahma & Setiawan, 2022; Nurwakhidah et al, 2025). Students, as one of the consumer groups with a limited budget, often look for product reviews online before making a purchase decision (Tarigan et al., 2023). The more positive reviews, the more likely consumers are interested in buying the product.

Apart from eWOM, brand image also plays an important role in shaping purchase intention. Products with a positive brand image will more easily attract consumer attention, because brand image describes the reputation and quality of a product in the eyes of consumers (Aisah & Wahyono, 2018). Thus, a good brand image can be a major driving factor in increasing consumer buying interest.

This study aims to analyze the effect of eWOM (including quantity and credibility) on brand image and consumer purchase intention, taking Azarine products as the object of research. This research focuses on how eWOM can affect brand image and how brand image in turn affects consumer purchase intention, particularly among university students. Through this research, it is hoped that it can provide deeper insights for companies, especially Azarine, in formulating effective marketing strategies and building a strong brand image.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Brand Congruence

Brand congruence refers to the degree of alignment between the brand image and the consumer's self-concept. According to Sirgy (1982), consumers tend to choose brands that reflect themselves, both actually and ideally. This congruence forms an emotional connection between consumers and brands, which has an impact on loyalty and purchase intentions (Mandasari et al., 2020; Ebrahim et al., 2016). In the digital context, eWOM is one of the important factors in shaping consumers' perceptions of brand fit (Lyu & Kim, 2020).

Electronic Word-Of-Mouth (eWOM)

eWOM is the communication of information about a product or service spread online by consumers, either in the form of positive or negative reviews (Ismagilova et al., 2017; Lusiah & Suryati, 2022). eWOM plays an important role in the consumer decision-making process because the information is considered more authentic and based on real experiences. Dimensions of eWOM include intensity, opinion value, and content (Goyette et al., 2010), while its characteristics include high volume, wide dissemination, and anonymous and persistent nature (Ismagilova et al., 2017).

Quantity eWOM

Quantity of eWOM refers to the number of reviews or comments available on an online platform. More reviews are often associated with product popularity and increased consumer trust (Cheung et al., 2008). According to Chevalier and Mayzlin (2006), review volume serves as a social cue that can reinforce perceptions of product value and quality, and drive purchase intention (Bataineh, 2015; Lkhaasuren & Nam, 2018).

Credibility eWOM

The credibility of eWOM is the extent to which information in online reviews is considered trustworthy and objective. It is influenced by the reviewer's expertise, trustworthiness and experience (Teng et al., 2014). When reviews are considered credible, consumers feel more confident and tend to use the information in purchasing decisions (Atika et al., 2018; Awad & Ragowsky, 2008). Credible information reduces uncertainty and increases confidence in the product (Bataineh, 2015).

Brand Image

Brand image is the overall perception of consumers towards a brand formed from experience and information received (Raharjo & Mulyanto, 2018). A positive brand image contributes to the formation of loyalty and the reduction of perceived risk in purchasing decisions (Albari & Safitri, 2018; Sitompul, 2019). Brand image indicators include reputation, recognition, emotional connection, and loyalty.

Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is a psychological urge for consumers to make a purchase of a product or service. This interest is influenced by various factors such as product value, information quality, and brand image (Janah & Suswardji, 2021; Saputra et al., 2023). effective eWOM is believed to influence consumer attitudes and purchasing behavior (Bataineh, 2015). Aspects of purchase intention include attention, interest, desire, and belief (Raharjo & Mulyanto, 2018).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach to analyze the relationship between electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), brand image, and consumer purchase intention for Azarine products. The data collection technique was carried out through distributing questionnaires online using Google Form, which were distributed through social media such as WhatsApp and Instagram. The sampling method used was convenience sampling, with respondents who were active users of digital platforms and were familiar with Azarine products.

The research instrument was developed based on indicators that had been validated in previous studies. The assessment uses a 4-point Likert Scale without a neutral option to avoid response bias. Scores were given as follows:

Description	Score
Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	2
Agree	3
Strongly Agree	4

The population in this study is Indonesians who know Azarine and are active on digital platforms. To ensure the feasibility of the instrument, a pilot test was conducted on 50 respondents. Validity was tested using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation technique, with the result that all items were valid ($r\text{-count} > r\text{-table } 0.278, \alpha = 0.05$). Meanwhile, reliability was tested through Cronbach's Alpha, with results ranging from 0.781 to 0.892, indicating that all constructs were reliable (Ghozali, 2016).

Data analysis was carried out using the Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach using SmartPLS software. This method is used because it is able to measure latent variables indirectly and is suitable for complex models and small sample sizes. Model evaluation is carried out in two stages:

1. **Outer model**, including convergent validity (AVE value ≥ 0.5) and discriminant validity tests.
2. **Inner model**, involves testing the R-square, Q-square, and t-statistic to assess the strength of influence between variables as well as the significance of the relationship in the research model.

It is hoped that the results of this study can provide a deeper understanding of how eWOM, brand image, and consumer purchase intention interact in the context of Azarine products, and provide practical insights for companies in designing more effective marketing strategies using digital media.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis of Respondent Profile

Descriptive analysis was conducted to determine the characteristics of respondents based on four aspects: gender, study program, batch, and average monthly expenditure. Of the 210 respondents, the majority were women as many as 164 people (78.1%), while men totaled 46 people (21.9%). Based on the study program, most of them came from Management Study Program as many as 139 people (66.2%), followed by accounting (18.6%) and Development Economics (15.2%). Judging from the class year, the respondents were dominated by students from the class of 2021 as many as 150 people (71.4%), followed by the class of 2023 (11.4%), 2022 (9.5%), and 2024 (7.6%). Meanwhile, for average expenditure per month, the majority of respondents (45.7%) have expenditure below IDR1,000,000, while 43.8% spend between IDR2,000,000-Rp3,000,000, and the rest (10.5%) more than IDR3,000,000. These results show that the majority of respondents in this

study are students from the 2021 Management Study Program with a relatively low level of monthly expenditure.

Measurement Models (Outer Model)

In this study, the analysis will be carried out using SmartPLS software with 210 respondents to test several indicators, namely convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability of all research variables.

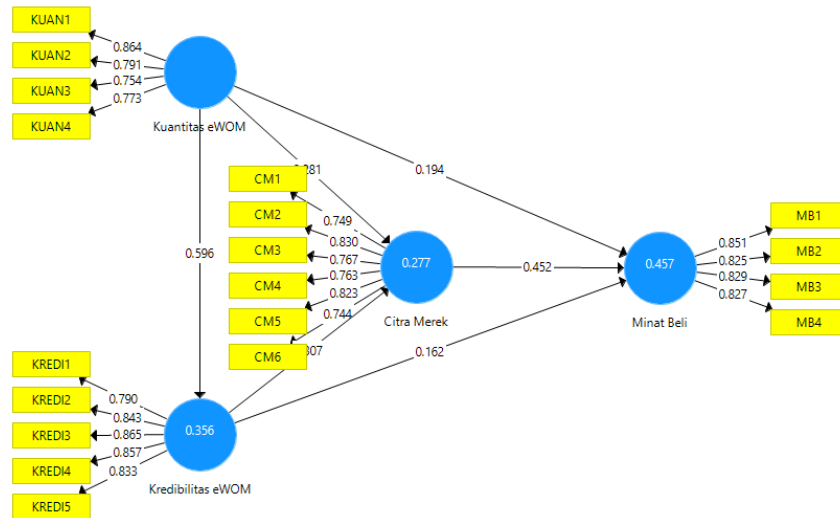


Figure 1
Outer Model

Source: Data processed (2025)

Convergent Validity

In the convergent validity test, there are two aspects that need to be considered, namely Outer Loading and Average Variance Extraced (AVE). According to Hair et al. (2017) a study will be said to be valid if the AVE value is more than 0.50 (AVE> 50). Meanwhile, the Outer Loading value of an indicator has a positive value greater than > 0.6. The Outer Loading value reflects the weight of each indicator or item in measuring each variable. When an indicator has a large Outer Loading value, the indicator is the most dominant measurement. The complete Outer Loading value can be seen in Figure 4.2 and Table 4.10 below:

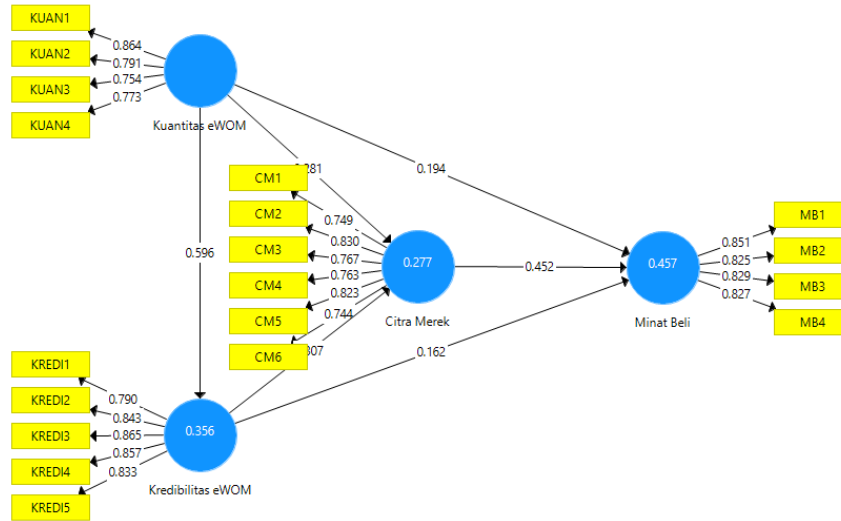


Figure 2
Loading Factor
 Source: Data processed (2025)

Table 1
Outer Loading Test Results

Variable	Item	Outer Loading	Description
Quantity eWOM	KUAN1	0.864	Valid
	KUAN2	0.791	Valid
	KUAN3	0.754	Valid
	KUAN4	0.773	Valid
Credibility eWOM	KREDI1	0.790	Valid
	KREDI2	0.843	Valid
	KREDI3	0.865	Valid
	KREDI4	0.857	Valid
	KREDI5	0.833	Valid
Brand Image	CM1	0.749	Valid
	CM2	0.830	Valid
	CM3	0.767	Valid
	CM4	0.763	Valid
	CM5	0.823	Valid
	CM6	0.744	Valid
Purchase Intention	MB1	0.851	Valid
	MB2	0.825	Valid
	MB3	0.829	Valid
	MB4	0.827	Valid

Source: Data processed (2025)

The results in Table 1 show that the Outer Loading test is in accordance with the indicators and is declared valid. This is evidenced by each variable having a value above 0.6. This value has met the Outer Loading validity criteria, where a variable is considered valid if it has a minimum value of 0.6 (Hair et al, 2017).

Table 2
Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Test Results

Variable	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Quantity eWOM	0.635
Credibility eWOM	0.702
Brand Image	0.608
Purchase Intention	0.694

Source: Data processed (2025)

Table 2 shows that the AVE test results of all variables in this study have a value above 0.50 and are declared valid.

Diskriminant Validity

Discriminant validity in this study was tested using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion approach. The results show that the square root value of the AVE of each construct is higher than the correlation between other constructs, which means that each variable forms a dominant diagonal. Thus, the model is declared to fulfill good discriminant validity. The results of the forneller criterion discriminant validity analysis can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3
Discriminant Validity Test Results (Fornel Lacker Criterion)

Variable	Brand Image	Credibility eWOM	Quantity eWOM	Purchase Intention
Brand Image	0.780			
Credibility eWOM	0.475	0.838		
Quantity eWOM	0.465	0.596	0.797	
Purchase Intention	0.619	0.493	0.501	0.833

Source: Data processed (2025)

The test results in Table 3 show that the AVE square root value of each construct (brand image = 0.780; eWOM credibility = 0.838; eWOM quantity = 0.797; purchase intention = 0.833) is higher than the correlation value between other constructs in the same row and column. This shows that each construct has good discriminant validity, so the instrument in this study can be said to be valid.

Table 4
Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Brand Image	0.871	0.903
Credibility eWOM	0.894	0.922
Quantity eWOM	0.807	0.874
Purchase Intention	0.853	0.901

Source: Data processed (2025)

In Table 4, all variables meet the reliability criteria with Cronbach's Alpha (CA) > 0.60 and Composite Reliability (CR) > 0.70. The highest CA value is found in the eWOM credibility variable (0.894), while the lowest is eWOM quantity (0.807). For the CR value, eWOM credibility also recorded the highest value (0.922), and the lowest eWOM quantity (0.874). With these results, all constructs are declared reliable, and the analysis can proceed to the inner model evaluation.

Structural Model Test (Inner Model)

This study also tested the structural model or also called the inner model, which is used to determine the relationship between variables. Testing of the structural model is done by evaluating the R-Square (R²) value on the dependent variable, which aims to see the extent to which the independent variable is able to explain variations in the dependent variable. Meanwhile, the analysis of the independent variables is carried out through the path coefficient, which represents the direction and strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. In addition, the t-statistic value on each relationship path is used to determine the level of significance between the variables tested.

Tabel 5
Collinearity Test

	Brand Image	Credibility eWOM	Quantity eWOM	Purchase Intention
Brand Image				1.382
Credibility eWOM	1.552			1.682
Quantity eWOM	1.552	1.000		1.661

Source: Data processed (2025)

The collinearity test results in Table 5 show that the relationship between the eWOM credibility and eWOM quantity variables to brand image is at an ideal level. Both variables have the same value, which is 1.552. In addition, the relationship between eWOM quantity and eWOM credibility also shows ideal results with a value of 1.000. For the variables of brand image, eWOM credibility, and eWOM quantity on purchase intention, the three of them do not show any collinearity symptoms. The VIF value of each variable is 1.382 for

brand image, 1.682 for eWOM credibility, and 1.661 for eWOM quantity. Based on the path coefficient test that has been carried out, all hypotheses in this study are proven significant and supported by the data.

Table 6
R-Square Results

Variable	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Brand Image	0.277	0.270
eWOM Credibility	0.356	0.352
Purchase Intention	0.457	0.449

Source: Data processed (2025)

It can be seen from Table 6 that the brand image variable gets an Adjusted R-Square value of 0.270 if it is percented to 27.0%. This means that there is still an influence of 73.0% from other variables outside the brand image variable. Then the eWOM credibility variable gets an R-Square Adjusted value of 0.352 if it is percented to 35.2%. This means that there is still a large influence of 64.8% of other variables outside the eWOM credibility variable. The purchase interest variable gets an R-Square Adjusted value of 0.449 if it is percented to 44.9%. This means that there are still 55.1% other variables outside the purchase interest variable.

Table 7
Predictive Relevance

Variable	Q ² (=1-SSE/SSO)	Description
Brand Image	0,255	Has a predictive relevance value
eWOM Credibility	0,223	Has a predictive relevance value
Purchase Intention	0,360	Has a predictive relevance value

Source: Data processed (2025)

Based on the data presented in Table 7, it shows that all variables in the study have Q-Square values above 0, namely brand image (0.255), eWOM credibility (0.223), and purchase intention (0.360). This indicates that the predictive relevance model is good. With these results, it can be concluded that all variables in this study have good predictive relevance.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to answer the question of how the influence of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) quantity, eWOM credibility, and brand image on consumer buying interest in Azarine products. Based on the results of the analysis conducted, it can be concluded that

all the variables studied have a mutually reinforcing relationship in influencing purchase intention. First, the quantity of eWOM is proven to have a positive and significant effect on eWOM credibility, brand image, and directly on purchase intention. This shows that the more reviews available about Azarine products, the higher the consumer's trust in the information, which in turn encourages positive perceptions of the brand and the desire to buy. Second, eWOM credibility is also proven to have a significant effect on brand image and purchase intention. This means that reviews that are considered credible by consumers will form a stronger brand perception and increase consumer interest in the product. Third, brand image is proven to play an important mediating role with a significant influence on purchase intention. A positive brand image becomes the main driving factor that strengthens consumers' decision to make a purchase. Overall, the results of this study confirm that the quantity and credibility of eWOM shape consumers' perceptions of brand image, which in turn influences purchase intention. Thus, it can be concluded that digital consumer communication (eWOM), both in terms of quantity and quality, has an important role in shaping the purchasing behavior of Azarine products.

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