The Effect of *Brand Image* and *Electronic Word of Mouth* (E-Wom) on Buying Interest of Mixue Consumers in Generation Z in Surabaya City

Medi Hendika Syakban[1], Rizky Dermawan[2]

[1,2] Management Study Programme, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional 'Veteran' East Java
Email: [1] medihendika29@gmail.com, [2] rd.soemanagara@gmail.com
Correspondence: rd.soemanagara@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyse the effect of brand image and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) on the purchase intention of Mixue consumers in Generation Z in Surabaya City, using a quantitative approach. The research population comprises Mixue consumers in Generation Z in Surabaya City. The sample consists of 100 Mixue consumer respondents born between 1997 and 2012 and domiciled in Surabaya City, selected using the accidental sampling technique. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics and partial least squares (PLS) with the SmartPLS application. The results demonstrated that brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. Similarly, e-WOM was found to have a positive and significant effect on purchase intention.

Keywords: Brand Image; Electronic Word of Mouh (e-WOM); Buying Interest

INTRODUCTION

Today, advances in technology, information systems, and social media have a significant impact on people's lives as they provide easy access to information. This is also true in the business world, especially in the F&B (Food and Beverage) sector, where marketing through the internet has become more promising because consumers can more easily find information about the product. In the F&B business, the internet is utilised as a way to do marketing through platforms such as Instagram or other media, which makes it easier for consumers to see the products they want, the recommended products, or the most popular products among consumers. Nowadays, consumers' interest in F&B products is increasing, and many entrepreneurs are opening new outlets with various F&B products.
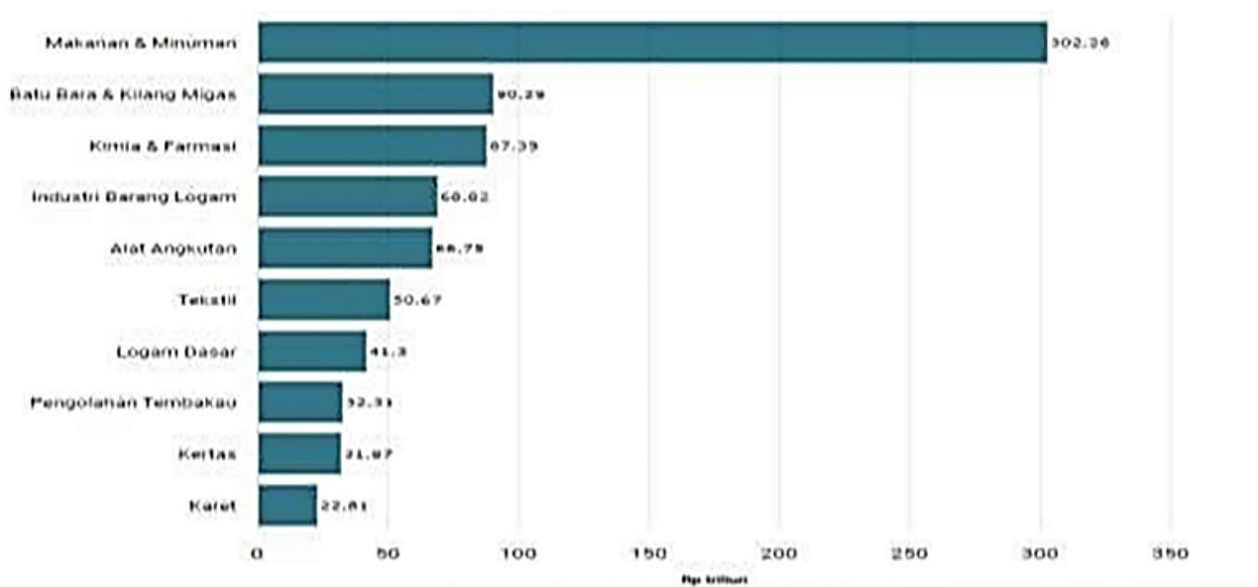

Figure 1: Industrial Sector GDP by Subsector (Q2-2022)

The data presented above illustrates a notable interest in food and beverage products, with a particular emphasis on Mixue products, which are currently experiencing a surge in popularity. Mixue is an ice cream and tea shop company with its origins in China, having been established in 1997. Presently, the ice cream enterprise boasts over 10,000 outlets distributed across China and international markets, including Vietnam, Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Notably, Indonesia represents the largest market for boba drinks in the Southeast Asia region. By 2021, it is estimated that Mixue will record an annual turnover of US$1.6 billion, which is equivalent to IDR23.74 trillion. Given the high level of interest in F&B products, some companies employ social media as a promotional tool, given the high usage of social media globally, particularly in Indonesia.

One of the social media platforms utilised by Mixue is Instagram. This is due to the fact that Instagram is the second most frequently utilised social media platform by Indonesians. Aslam et al. (2019) define e-WOM as the utilisation of online reviews by consumers, encompassing the utilisation of blogs, search engines, virtual communication, social media, instant messengers, and customer reviews for the collection and dissemination of product information (Farhat et al., 2019). This enables the general public to readily access Mixue products via the company's official Instagram account. This facilitates the formation of purchase intentions among potential consumers, who have gained a general understanding of Mixue products.

Jalilvand & Samiei (2012) posit that communication disseminated via interactive media, such as social media, may exert a profound influence on brand image, thereby stimulating consumer purchasing interest (Jalilvand, 2012). The brand image of Mixue products may also be shaped by electronic word of mouth (E-WOM). Consequently, negative reviews or information sharing through E-WOM may have a detrimental impact on the brand image of Mixue products.

Other commentators have suggested that the quantity of Mixue ice cream received did not align with the images and videos of Mixue content that are widely circulated online. Additionally, there have been complaints about the quality of the ice cream, which has been described as melting quickly, overly sweet, and even unpleasant to consume. Some have even drawn comparisons between the ice cream and Dancow milk. However, some users also stated that Mixue ice cream is a suitable product for them, offering a wide range of toppings at reasonable prices and portion sizes. The presence of online reviews can reinforce customers' intention to purchase. Once a product or service is launched and recognised, companies must consider how it can earn a distinctive position in consumers' hearts.

As posited by Priatama et al. (2024), consumer buying interest can be defined as a reflection of the desire and intention of consumers to purchase a product (Anjar Priatama et al., 2024). Purchase interest can be defined as the level of interest or desire exhibited by an individual with regard to the purchase of a product or service. This constitutes the initial phase of the purchasing decision-making process, which serves as an indicator of prospective future transactions. In light of the aforementioned definition, it can be posited that buying interest represents a consumer behavioural phenomenon wherein individuals evince a desire to select and consume a product from a range of available brands, ultimately making a selection that aligns with their preferences through the act of payment or otherwise. Promotion constitutes an essential element of the marketing strategy, exerting a significant influence on consumer decisions regarding car rental. Efficiently designed promotions can effectively create awareness, stimulate interest and motivate consumers to utilise car rental services. The deployment of a range of promotional tools, including discounts, bundled packages and loyalty programmes, can enhance the appeal of car rental services. However, companies frequently encounter challenges in selecting the optimal promotional medium and ensuring a comprehensive promotional reach.

As posited by Kotler in Salfina & Gusri (2018), a number of factors exert an influence on consumer buying interest (Salfina, 2018). The initial factor is brand image, which is of significant consequence for both the company and the consumer. A favourable brand image will confer benefits to the company. Consequently, if the brand image of a product is perceived as positive by consumers, they will be inclined to purchase the product in accordance with their requirements. The initial factor that influences buying interest is brand image. The existence of a brand image in a company also influences potential customers to desire the product.

The second factor that can influence buying interest is electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM). Electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) is defined as a form of digital communication in which consumers share opinions, reviews, or recommendations about products or services. This is corroborated by the findings of Sarah and Rubiyanti's research, as presented in Krisnawati and Warmika (2020), which identified a positive correlation between the E-WOM relationship and brand image (Krisnawati & Warmika, 2020). E-WOM furnishes potential customers with information about the products they intend to purchase. The information provided by E-WOM is typically derived from consumers who have utilized the product and offer their experiences with it. If the feedback is positive, it will have an impact on the positive brand image of the product, and vice versa. According to Jalilvand (Ellen & Tunjungsari, 2019), E-WOM refers to positive or negative statements made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which are available to many people and institutions via the Internet. Information from other consumers that is clear and honest helps potential buyers make more informed decisions. (Ellen & Tunjungsari, 2019)

This study aims to examine the effect of brand image and electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) on the purchase intention of Mixue consumers in Generation Z in Surabaya City. Adopting a quantitative approach, the research will analyse the

impact of each of these factors on purchase intention and provide insights into strategies that can be implemented to enhance customer satisfaction and the company's competitive advantage.

It is anticipated that the findings of this study will make a significant contribution to Mixue in the development of more efficacious strategies pertaining to brand image and electronic word of mouth (E-WOM). Furthermore, the insights derived from this study are also expected to provide valuable guidance for analogous companies in the FnB industry with respect to the factors that influence customer purchase intention.

Literature Review

Brand image

According to Widyastuti & Said (2017), Brand image is formed through a consumer's impression of a brand, and or as a reflection that remains in the memory that can be associated with the brand (Widyastuti, 2017). Suhaily & Darmoyo (2017) argue that brand image is a condition where a brand can change consumer behaviour about a product, related to purchasing decisions (Suhaily & Darmoyo, 2017).

According to Keller in (Oktaviani et al., 2024) suggests the use of Brand image measurement indicators, among others: a.) Image of the maker (Corporate Image), b.) User Image, c.)Product Image .

Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)

According to Jansen in (Eristia & Wijaya, 2014) similar but not the same as the form of word of mouth, e-wom proposes various ways of obtaining information, including anonymous or anonymous writing (Eristia, 2014).

Gruen (2006) describes e-wom as a reciprocal platform for sharing information about a product or service that has been used, between fellow consumers who were not originally in contact (Gruen et al., 2006).

In analysing the influence of e-wom, Goyette (2010) chose the following indicators: a.) Intensity, b.) Content, c.) Positive opinions.

Purchase Interest

According to Japarianto, buying interest is the stage of consumer tendency to act before the buying decision is actually carried out. Purchase interest explains a person's attitude towards the pleasure of a particular product, followed by a feeling of eyeing the preferred product.

Someone with a certain interest will display a positive affection and behaviour towards it. Febriani (2018) argues that buying interest arises from stimuli that arise after visualising a product .

Septyadi et al. (2022) describe indicators of buying interest, including: a.) Transactional interest, b.) Referential interest, c.) Preferential interest, d.) Exploratory interest (Septyadi, 2022).

The Effect of Brand Image on Purchase Intention

A brand or brand if you want sales to increase, a lot of marketing and promotion is carried out so that the brand is known to many people. When the brand is widely known, consumer behaviour whether they like the brand or not depends on the testimonials after using the brand depending on the testimonials after using the brand , after the testimonials, it arises in the minds of consumers called brand image.

The effect of Brand Image on Purchase Interest is explained by Firmansyah & Purwanto (2022) which states that Brand image has a positive effect on Purchase Interest. This reflects that the better a Brand Image / Brand image, the better it will affect buying interest. Then research conducted by Magfiroh & Aminah (2024) suggests that brand image has an effect on buying interest. Which means that the better the brand image of a company, the more buying interest will increase.

H1: It is suspected that brand image has a positive effect on the purchase intention of Mixue consumers in Generation Z in Surabaya City.

The Effect of Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) on Purchase Intention

Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) is part of product marketing. Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) is a form of statement from consumers (testimonials) who have used a product. Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) is positive or negative through social media that can be accessed by the wider community, so that positive statements can increase consumer buying interest.

As previous research by Zulfahmi et al. (2023) suggests that Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) has a positive effect on buying interest, which means that good Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) will create good perceptions and reputation in the minds of customers so that buying interest increases.

Like the research conducted by Napitu et al. (2024) which concluded that Electronic Word of Mouth has a positive and significant effect on buying interest, which means that the better the Electronic Word of Mouth, it will increase buying interest and vice versa, if the Electronic Word of Mouth is bad, the buying interest will decrease (Napitu et al., 2024).

H2: It is suspected that Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has a positive effect on the purchase intention of Mixue consumers in Generation Z in Surabaya City.

Conceptual Framework

A framework or conceptual framework is a temporary explanation of something or a symptom that is the object of the problem. With brand image (X1) and Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) (X2) which are independent variables, while purchase intention (Y) is the dependent variable.
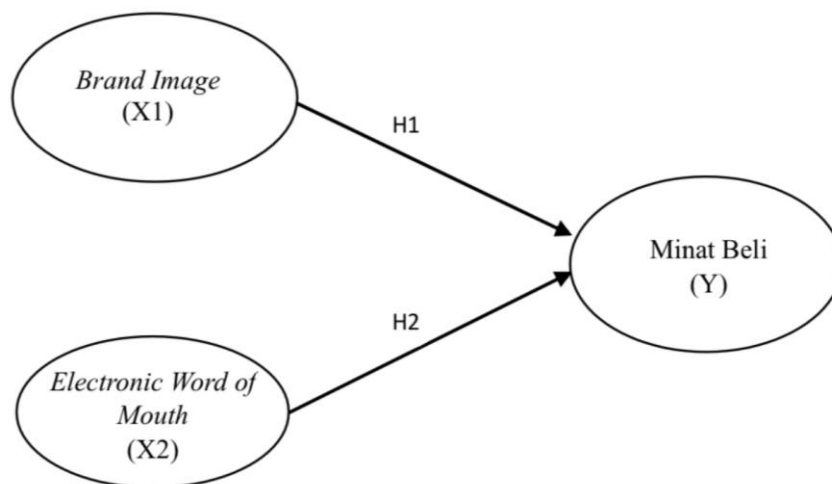

Figure 2. Conceptual Framework

METHOD

The research approach taken by this research is quantitative research. To produce quantitative data in this study, a measurement scale is used, namely an ordinal measuring scale with Likert weighting techniques. The population in this study were Mixue consumers in Generation Z in Surabaya City. The sampling technique in this study used accidental sampling, with a research sample of 100 Mixue consumer respondents who were born 1997-2012 and live in Surabaya City.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Of the 100 respondents who answered the questionnaire, the gender of the respondents can be found in the table below:

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents Based on Gender

No	Gender	Total	Percentage
1.	Girls	69 Respondent	69%
2.	Men	31 Respondent	31%
	Total	100 Respondent	100%

Based on table 1, it can be seen that respondents are divided into two categories, namely women and men. Data collection resulted in 69 female respondents or 100% and 31 male respondents or 31%. Thus female respondents tend to be interested in buying Mixue.
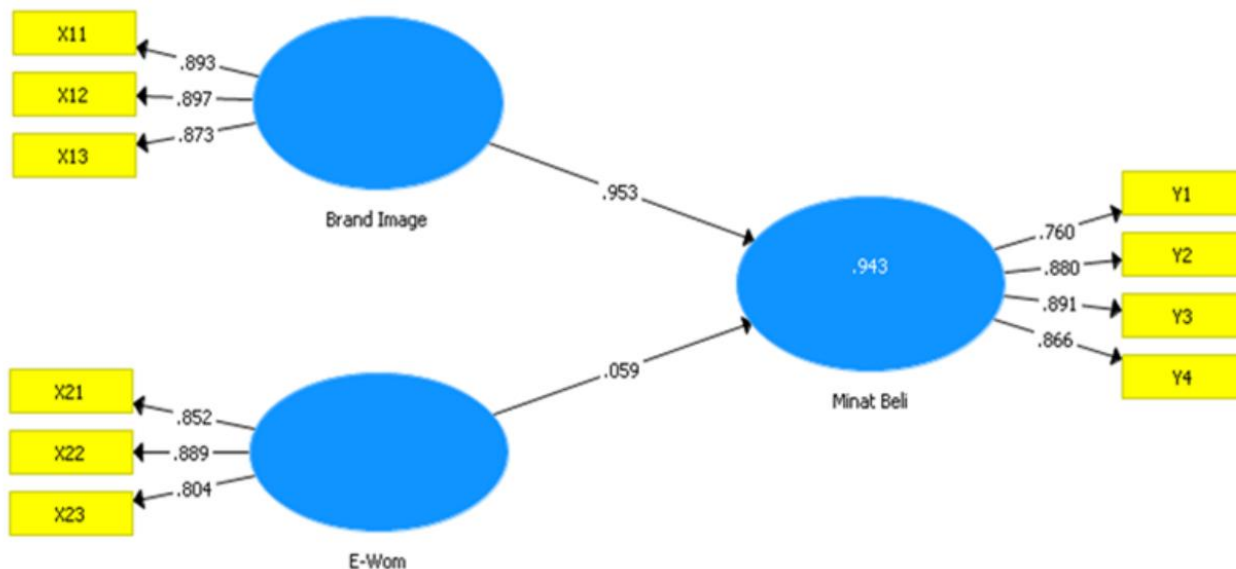
Figure 3. Outer Model with factor loading, Path Coefficient and R-Square

From the PLS output image above, it can be seen the magnitude of the factor loading value for each indicator located above the arrow between the variable and the indicator, it can also be seen the magnitude of the path coefficients above the arrow line between the exogenous variables and the endogenous variables. In addition, it can also be seen the amount of R-Square which is right inside the endogenous variable circle (Rental Decision variable).

Based on the outer loading table above, all reflective indicators on the Brand Image variable (X1), Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) (X2) and Purchase Intention (Y), show factor loading (original sample) greater than 0.50 and or significant (T-Statistic value more than Z value α = 0.05 (5%) = 1.96), thus the estimation results of all indicators have met Convergent validity or good validity.

Average variance extracted (AVE)

Tabel 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

	AVE
BRAND IMAGE (X1)	0.788
E-WOM (X2)	0.721
BUYING INTEREST (Y)	0.724

Based on the table of AVE test results for the Brand Image variable (X1) of 0.701, the E-wom variable (X2) of 0.746, and Purchase Intention (Y) of 0.723, the three variables show a value of more than 0.5, so overall the variables in this study can be said to have good validity.

Composite Reliability

Tabel 3. Composite Reliability

	Composite Reliability
BRAND IMAGE (X1)	0.918
E-WOM (X2)	0.885
BUYING INTEREST (Y)	0.913

Berdasarkan tabel hasil pengujian Composite Reliability menunjukkan bahwa variabel Brand Image (X1) sebesar 0,918, E-wom (X2) sebesar 0,885, dan Minat Beli (Y) sebesar 0,913, ketiga variabel tersebut menunjukkan nilai Composite Reliability diatas 0,70 sehingga dapat dikatakan seluruh variabel pada penelitian ini reliabel.

Latent Variable Correlations

Tabel 4. Latent Variable Correlations

	BRAND IMAGE	E-WOM	BUYING INTEREST
BRAND IMAGE (X1)	1.000		
E-WOM (X2)	0.279	1.000	
BUYING INTEREST (Y)	0.969	0.325	1.000

From the latent variable correlations table above, it is obtained that the average correlation value between variables with each other shows a moderate average correlation value. The highest correlation value is between the Purchase Interest (Y) variable and brand image (X1) of 0.969, this can also be stated that among the variables in the research model, the relationship between the Brand image variable (X1) and Purchase Interest (Y) shows a stronger relationship than the relationship between other variables, this can also be interpreted that in this research model, the high and low purchase interest is more influenced by the Brand image variable than other variables.

R-square

Tabel 5. R-square

	R Square
BRAND IMAGE (X1)	0,943
E-WOM (X2)	-
BUYING INTEREST (Y)	-

Based on the table above, the R-square value for the purchase intention variable is 0.943, meaning that the influence of the variability of purchase intention which is influenced by the independent variables including brand image and E-wom with a variance of 94.3%, while the remaining 5.7% is explained by other variables outside this study (other than brand image, E-wom).

Tabel 6. Path Coefficients (Mean, STDEV, T-Values, P-Values)

	Path Coefficients (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STERR|)	P Values
Brand Image -> Buying Interest	0.953	0.951	0.013	72.636	0.000
E-Wom -> Buying Interest	0.059	0.063	0.025	2.336	0.021

Based on the results of the table above, hypothesis 1: Brand image has a positive effect on purchase intention can be accepted, with path coefficients 0.953, and a T-statistic value of 72.636> 1.96 (from the table value $Z\alpha = 0.05$) or a P-Value of 0.000 <0.05, with significant (positive) results. This means that consumer buying interest in Mixue products for Generation Z in Surabaya will not be maximised if it is not supported by a strong brand image among the community. The results of the analysis based on factor loading on the brand image variable show that the indicator that has the most influence on buying interest is the user image. Indirectly, brand image can provide a user image to improve lifestyle and social status. The results of this study are in line with (Peronika, 2020) entitled The Effect of Brand image on Buying Interest in Wardah Cosmetics products in Pagar Alam City, this is also in line with research conducted by (Firmansyah & Purwanto, 2022) entitled 'The Effect of Brand image and Electronic Word Of Mouth (e-WOM) on Buying Interest in Mahar Agung Surabaya Wedding Organizer Services. The results showed that from this study there was a positive influence of brand image on buying interest.

Hypothesis 2: E-wom has a positive effect on purchase intention can be accepted, with path coefficients 0.059 and a T-statistic value of 2.336> 1.96 (from the table value $Z\alpha = 0.05$) or a P-Value of 0.021 <0.05, with significant (positive) results. This means that it shows that the better the e-WOM that consumers feel can increase consumer buying interest in

Mixue products for Generation Z in Surabaya. The results of the analysis based on factor loading on the e-WOM variable show that the indicator that has the most influence on buying interest is content. A content that is in accordance with the needs in society, makes buying interest better because consumers feel relate to their needs. The results of this study are in line with the research of Maghfiroh & Aminah (2024) entitled The Effect of Price Perception, Brand Image and Electronic word of mouth (E-Wom) on Purchase Interest in the Spotify Premium Music Application and in line with the research of (Napitu et al., 2024) entitled 'The Effect of Electronic word of mouth and Brand image on Interest in Buying Emina Skincare in Students of the Faculty of Economics, University of Simalungun'. The results of this study indicate that e-WOM has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the test results using PLS analysis, it can be concluded that brand image and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) have a positive and significant influence on the purchase intention of Mixue consumers in Generation Z in Surabaya City. A goodbrand image increases trust and influences purchase intention positively. electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) which is considered in accordance with the value received also contributes significantly to purchase intention. Therefore, Mixue is advised to continue to improve brand image and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) so that customers can be impressed and increase consumer buying interest for the company.

REFERENCES

Anjar Priatama, Ria Arifianti, & Raden Ratna Meisa Dai. (2024). PENGARUH KUALITAS PRODUK TERHADAP MINAT BELI PADA BAKARA CAFE & KITCHEN DEPOK. *JURNAL LENTERA BISNIS*, *13*(2), 1270–1284. https://doi.org/10.34127/jrlab.v13i2.1162

Ellen, E., & Tunjungsari, H. K. K. (2019). Pengaruh Electronic Word Of Mouth (e-Wom) Dan Country Of Origin (Coo) Terhadap Purchase Intnsion; Melalui Mediasi Brand Image Terhadap Produk Nature Republic Di Universitas Tarumanagara. *Jurnal Manajerial Dan Kewirausahaan*, *1*(3), 411. https://doi.org/10.24912/jmk.v1i3.5348

Eristia, L. P. , & W. T. ,. (2014). *Pengaruh Electronic Word Of Mouth (eWOM) Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Kamera DSLR. Seminar Nasional dan Call For Paper (Sancall 2014), 12-19.*

Farhat, K., Aslam, W., & Arif, I. (2019). Role of electronic word of mouth on purchase intention. *International Journal of Business Information Systems*, *30*(4), 411. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJBIS.2019.10020633

Firmansyah, R. D., & Purwanto, S. (2022). Pengaruh Brand Image dan Electronic Word Of Mouth (e-WOM) terhadap Minat Beli Jasa Wedding Organizer Mahar Agung Surabaya. *J-MAS (Jurnal Manajemen Dan Sains)*, *7*(2), 658. https://doi.org/10.33087/jmas.v7i2.527

Goyette, I., Ricard, L., Bergeron, J., & Marticotte, F. (2010). e-WOM Scale: word-of-mouth measurement scale for e-services context. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences / Revue Canadienne Des Sciences de l'Administration*, *27*(1), 5–23. https://doi.org/10.1002/cjas.129

Gruen, T. W., Osmonbekov, T., & Czaplewski, A. J. (2006). eWOM: The impact of customer-to-customer online know-how exchange on customer value and loyalty. *Journal of Business Research*, *59*(4), 449–456. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2005.10.004

Jalilvand, M. R. , & S. N. ,. (2012). *The Effect Of Electronic World Of Mouth On Brand Image And Purchase Intention: An Empirical Study In The Automobile Industry In Iran. Journal Of Marketing Intiligence And Planning, 30(4), 460-476.*

Kautsar, A. Z. S. A., Indayani, L., & Sari, D. K. (2024). Peran Digital Marketing, Word Of Mouth Dan Brand Image Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Masyarakat Sidoarjo Pada Merek 3second Di E-Commerce. *Journal of Economic, Bussines and Accounting (COSTING)*, *7*(5), 2408–2419. https://doi.org/10.31539/costing.v7i5.11706

Krisnawati, N. W., & Warmika, I. G. K. (2020). PERAN BRAND IMAGE MEMEDIASI PENGARUH E-WOM TERHADAP NIAT KONSUMEN MENGGUNAKAN OVO MOBILE PAYMENT. *E-Jurnal Manajemen Universitas Udayana*, *9*(1), 79. https://doi.org/10.24843/EJMUNUD.2020.v09.i01.p05

Muhibin, D. H., & Fitriyah, Z. (2023). The Effect of Price Perception and Electronic Word of Mouth on the Purchase Intention of Spotify Premium Service in Surabaya City. *Indonesian Journal of Business Analytics*, *3*(5), 1605–1618. https://doi.org/10.55927/ijba.v3i5.5465

Napitu, R., Sinaga, M. H., Munthe, R. N., & Purba, J. W. P. (2024). Pengaruh Electronic Word Of Mouth Dan Brand Image Terhadap Minat Beli Skincare Emina Pada Mahasiswa Fakultas Ekonomi Universitas Simalungun. *Manajemen : Jurnal Ekonomi*, *6*(1), 78–94. https://doi.org/10.36985/manajemen.v6i1.1170

Peronika, N. , J. J. , & M. Y. ,. (2020). *Pengaruh Brand Image Terhadap Minat Beli Produk Kosmetika Wardah Di Kota Pagar Alam: (Studi Pada Masyarakat Pengguna Kosmetika Wardah di Kecamatan Pagar Alam Utara Kota Pagar Alam). Ekonomia, 10(1), 83–93.*

Salfina, L. , & G. H. ,. (2018). *Pengaruh Citra Merek, Kualitas Produk, Dan Harga Terhadap Minat Beli Pada Pakaian Anak-Anak Studi Kasus Toko Rizky Dan Afdal Pariaman. Indonesian Indovisi Institute (III), 1(1), 83-100. .*

Septyadi, A. K. , S. M. , & N. S. ,. (2022). *Literature Review Keputusan Pembelian Dan Minat Beli Konsumen Pada Smartphone: Harga Dan Promosi. Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Dan Ilmu Sosial, 3(1), 301–313.*

Suhaily, L., & Darmoyo, S. (2017). Effect of product quality, perceived price and brand image on purchase decision mediated by customer trust (study on japanese brand electronic product). *Jurnal Manajemen*, *21*(2). https://doi.org/10.24912/jm.v21i2.230

Widyastuti, S. , & Said. ,. (2017). *Consumer Consideration in Purchase Decision of SPECS Sports Shoes Product Through Brand Image, Product Design and Price Perception. International Journal of Supply Chain Management 6(4), 9.*

Zulfahmi, A., Rayhan, A., & Ramanda Saputra, A. (2023). Pengaruh Brand Image Dan Electronic Word Of Mouth Terhadap Purchase Intention. *JURNAL KEWIRAUSAHAAN, AKUNTANSI DAN MANAJEMEN TRI BISNIS*, *5*(2), 124–138. https://doi.org/10.59806/tribisnis.v5i2.284

.