

THE INFLUENCE OF *BRAND IMAGE* AND *ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH* ON PURCHASE DECISIONS ON WARDAH LIPSTICK PRODUCTS IN SEMARANG CITY

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ABSTRACT

Introduction/Main Objective: This study analyzes the influence of *brand image* and *Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)* on the purchase decision of Wardah lipstick products in Semarang City. This research is due to the fierce competition from the local cosmetics industry which encourages wardah to strengthen *brand image* and optimize digital interaction as a marketing strategy.

Background Issues: The perception of many people on social media cannot be easily controlled and becomes a challenge for companies to build and maintain a good Brand Image. Therefore, the author conducted research on the influence of *brand image* and *e-WOM* on purchase decisions on wardah lipstick products in Semarang City.

Newness: The novelty in this study is highlighted in the actual problem in the market, namely the indication of declining loyalty and market share in the lipstick category which is reflected in the decline in TBI. In addition, this study presents a manual sentiment analysis of 100 wardah product reviews on social media to strengthen the relevance of the e-WOM variable in the context of the problem being studied.

Research Method: This study used a quantitative approach by collecting data through a questionnaire to 100 wardah lipstick consumers in Semarang. The analysis was carried out through validity, reliability, simple and multiple linear regression, significance tests (T test and F test) using SPSS 21.

Findings/Results: Research results show that brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions, as well as e-WOM. Simultaneously, these two variables make a significant contribution to consumer decisions. However, some respondents are still hesitant, especially when comparing local products with foreign brands and responding to negative reviews.

Conclusion: This study emphasizes the importance of maintaining *a strong brand image* and utilizing positive online interactions to improve purchasing decisions.

Potential Implementation: The results are expected to help the company refine its marketing strategy and become a reference for future researchers in examining other variables or different objects to obtain more comprehensive findings.

Keywords: *Brand Image; Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM); Purchase Decision; Wardah; Lipstick.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Wardah is one of the largest local cosmetics brands in Indonesia which for many years has succeeded in building a strong image in the cosmetics market scene. However, in recent years, the dominance of wardah in the lipstick category has faced serious challenges. The emergence of new cosmetic brands from within and outside the country that offer product variants and aggressive marketing strategies has shifted consumer preferences. This is reflected in the *Top Brand Index* (TBI) data which shows indications of a decline in loyalty and market share of Wardah lipstick from year to year. Based on TBI Wardah from 2021 – 2025, there was a significant decrease between 31.90% to a decrease of 15%. This shows that from 2021 to 2025, the TBI Wardah index has experienced a significant 15% decline. TBI or Top Brand Index is the pinnacle of a successful brand image. It refers to the condition in which a brand has the most powerful, dominant image and is the one that first comes to the consumer's mind in a particular product category. A brand that has a strong Top Brand Image is often the reference or standard brand for consumers. The decline in TBI Wardah shows that there is a shift in consumer perception or preference for the brand. There are 5 main factors that cause the decline in TBI, namely: changes in product quality, the emergence of innovative new competitors, CITR and brand reputation problems, irrelevant marketing strategies, shifts in consumer preferences and trends. (Ade et al., 2020)

The decline that occurred at TBI Wardah was allegedly caused by price competition factors or product variants alone, but rather due to *non-financial factors* such as *brand image* and *Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)*. A positive and strong brand image is a valuable asset that can drive purchasing decisions. However, in the (Laila et al., 2023) *digital era*, *brand image* is very vulnerable to rapidly changing public perception. On the other hand, *Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)*, namely reviews, testimonials, or recommendations disseminated through *digital platforms*, has a crucial role in shaping public opinion. Positive reviews from influencers or other consumers can be a powerful driver, while negative reviews can quickly damage a brand's reputation and influence potential buyers.

The author conducted a manual sentiment analysis of 100 reviews of Wardah lipstick products collected from social media Instagram and TikTok and obtained results of 86% positive reviews, 14% of negative reviews. Further analysis of the 14 negative reviews can provide valuable input for the company. For example, common complaints might be related to "colors that don't match the photo," "textures that feel dry," or "lack of durability." By identifying these points, companies can make product improvements or communication strategies to address the problem, potentially improving consumer satisfaction in the future. (Christian Vishnu Gunawarman São Paulo & Gede Bayu Rahanatha, 2025) therefore, this study aims to examine in depth how Brand Image and *e-WOM* affect the purchase decision of Wardah lipstick products in the midst of increasingly fierce market competition. The study will focus on respondents aged 18-28, an age group known as Generation Z and early millennials. This group is the most active social media user, whose purchasing decisions depend heavily on the information they get from digital platforms.

1.1 Problem Formulation

We cannot easily control the perception of many people on social media and it is a challenge for companies to build and maintain a good Brand Image. A negative review on social media can cause doubts in potential buyers, especially if the review is supported by many people. These social media reviews can influence the ups and downs of cosmetic brand sellers. Therefore, the author will formulate the problem to be researched, namely: How does *Brand Image* affect the purchase decision of Wardah Lipstick Products in Semarang City. Also to find out the influence of *Electronic Word of Mouth* on the purchase decision of Wardah Lipstick Products in Semarang City? Finally, to see if the variables X1 and X2 both affect the purchase decision of Wardah Lipstick Products in Semarang City.

The novelty in this study is highlighted in the actual problem in the market, namely the indication of declining loyalty and market share in the lipstick category which is reflected in the decline in TBI. In addition, this study presents a manual sentiment analysis of 100 wardah product reviews on social media to strengthen the relevance of the e-WOM variable in the context of the problem being studied. So, with the novelty of research, researchers can easily determine the purpose of the research. The purpose of this study is: To determine the influence of *Brand Image*

on purchase decisions on Wardah Lipstick Products in Semarang City. In this study, the researcher also used the e-WOM variable to examine its effect on purchase decisions on Wardah Lipstick Products in Semarang City.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand Image according to (Kotler and Keller, 2012) is a set of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has towards a brand, therefore the attitude and actions of consumers towards a brand are very determined by the Brand Image. (Sangadji and Sopiah, 2013) explained that a positive brand image provides benefits for manufacturers by increasing their visibility and recognition in the eyes of consumers. In essence, consumers are more likely to choose products that are associated with a positive brand perception

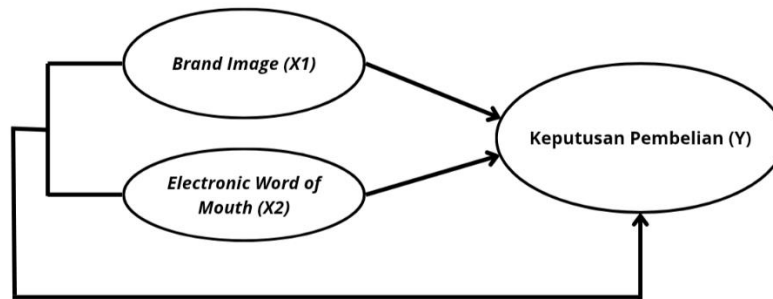
H1 : It is suspected that Brand Image has an influence on the purchase decision of Wardah Beauty Products in Semarang City.

According to (Zhao et al., 2015) there are 6 things in the Electronic Word of Mouth that can influence consumers in deciding to buy, namely the usefulness of information, review skills, timeliness, number of opinions, valence of opinions, and completeness of information. It is also strengthened by research from Sudarita (2020) that e-WOM has a significant positive influence on purchasing decisions

H2 : It is suspected that Electronic Word of Mouth has an effect on the purchase decision of Wardah Beauty Products in Semarang City.

A positive Electronic Word of Mouth and Brand Image will have an impact on good purchasing decisions in the minds of consumers. This means that Brand Image and Electronic Word of Mouth have a significant positive effect on consumer purchase decisions. Therefore, companies need to build a positive image so that the continuity of their company is certainly accompanied by quality products, so that the value is measured in accordance with the Top Brand Index data (Putra Frima Fadhila, 2020).

H3 : It is suspected that Brand Image and Electronic Word of Mouth have an influence on the purchase decision of Wardah Beauty Products in Semarang City



Source: processed primary data (2023)

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with the aim of analyzing the influence of Brand Image and Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) on the purchase decision of Wardah lipstick products in Semarang City. The data was collected through a questionnaire distributed to 100 Wardah lipstick consumers spread across Semarang City. The selection of respondents was carried out randomly using a simple sampling technique, which aims to get a representative picture of consumers' perception of brand image and the influence of e-WOM on their purchasing decisions.

In data processing, this study uses SPSS 21 software to conduct statistical analysis. Validity and reliability tests are carried out first to ensure the quality of the data used in the research. Furthermore, to test the relationship between variables, simple and multiple linear regression analysis was carried out, as well as significance tests with.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Master data was collected from 100 consumer respondents who purchased Wardah Lipstick Products at Najmia Beauty Tembalang, Elisha Beauty, Pink Box Tembalang, and Benny Cosmetics.

4.1. *Validity and reliability tests*

The questionnaire will be invalid if r counts less than r tables ($r_{\text{counts}} < r_{\text{tables}}$), r table is obtained by calculating Degree of Freedom ($df = n - 2$). This study used 100 samples, so $df = 100 - 2 = 98$, with a probability level of 5%, we get a table r of **0.1654**. The results of the validity of this research questionnaire are:

Table 1. Validity Test Results of X1, X2, and Y variables

Yes	Variable	r Count	r Table	Conclusion
Brand Image (X1)				
1	X1.1	0.587	0.1654	VALID
2	X1.2	0.719	0.1654	VALID
3	X1.3	0.738	0.1654	VALID
4	X1.4	0.749	0.1654	VALID
5	X1.5	0.681	0.1654	VALID
6	X1.6	0.573	0.1654	VALID
7	X1.7	0.609	0.1654	VALID
8	X1.8	0.614	0.1654	VALID
Electronic Word of Mouth (x2)				
1	X2.1	0.738	0.1654	VALID
2	X2.1	0.779	0.1654	VALID
3	X1.3	0.728	0.1654	VALID
4	X2.4	0.519	0.1654	VALID
5	X2.5	0.585	0.1654	VALID
6	X2.6	0.612	0.1654	VALID
7	X2.7	0.659	0.1654	VALID
8	X2.8	0.733	0.1654	VALID
9	X2.9	0.496	0.1654	VALID
10	X2.10	0.660	0.1654	VALID
11	X2.11	0.623	0.1654	VALID
Purchase Satisfaction				
1	Y1	0.767	0.1654	VALID

2	Y2	0.587	0.1654	VALID
3	Y3	0.676	0.1654	VALID
4	Y4	0.819	0.1654	VALID
5	Y5	0.784	0.1654	VALID

Based on table 1, all research variable question items are valid because they have a calculated r value that is greater than the r of the table so that it can be interpreted that all of these question items are declared valid. A variable can be said to be reliable if the Cronbach Alpha value > 0.60 . The reliability test table of the variables used in this study, namely *the variables of influencer marketing (X1), Brand Image (X2), and purchase decision (Y)* are as follows:

Table 2. Reliability Test Table

Yes	Variable	Cronbach Alpha Values	$\approx$	Conclusion
1	<i>Brand Image</i>	0.814	0.60	Reliable
2	<i>Electronic Word of Mouth</i>	0.854	0.60	Reliable
3	Purchase Decision	0.778	0.60	Reliable

Based on the results of the analysis, the results were obtained that the Cronbach Alpha value of the variable < 0.6 . This shows that the research variables have a reliable status.

4.2 Descriptive Analysis and Research Results

The descriptive analysis in the study is based on data processing derived from the results of the recapitulation of respondents' answers. In this study, 5 categorizations are used in accordance with the principles of the Likert scale, namely Strongly Agree (SS), Agree (S), Strongly Agree (CS), Disagree (TS), and Strongly Disagree (STS). It is very good to get a score of 5 points, good to get a score of 4 points, neutral to get a score of 3 points, not good to get a score of 2 points, and very bad to get a score of 1 point. The following are the results of the categorization of research variables:

Table 3. Categorization of brand image variables

Yes	Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	33,7 - 40	Strongly agree	82	82%
2	27,3 - 33,6	Agree	15	15%
3	20,9 - 27,2	Simply Agree	3	3%
4	14,5 - 20,8	Disagree	0	0%
5	8 - 14,4	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
	Sum		100	100%

Based on table 3.6, it can be seen that the Brand Image categorization owned by Wardah lipstick products is in the very good category of 82%.

Table 4. Categorization of Electronic Word of Mouth variables

Yes	Score	Category	Sum	Percentage
1	46,3-55	Strongly agree	72	72%
2	37,5-46,2	Agree	21	21%
3	28,7-37,4	Simply Agree	6	6%
4	19,9-28,6	Disagree	1	1%
5	11-19,8	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
	Sum		100	100%

Based on table 3.8, it can be seen that the categorization of *Electronic Word of Mouth* owned by Wardah lipstick products is in the very good category of 72%.

Table 5. Categorization of Purchase Decision Variables

Yes	Score	Category	Sum	Percentage
1	22 - 25	Strongly agree	65	65%
2	18 - 21	Agree	30	30%
3	14 - 17	Simply Agree	4	4%
4	10 - 13	Disagree	1	1%
5	5 - 9	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Sum			100	100%

Based on table 3.10, it can be seen that the categorization of purchase decisions owned by Wardah is in the very good category of 65% of respondents who show the very good category because consumers are actively looking for information about Wardah lipstick products.

4.3. Hypothesis Testing

The analysis of the research hypothesis is seen based on the T and F tests on the research variables. The following are the results of the analysis of the T and F Tests in the study:

Table 6. Multiple linear regression analysis of brand image and electronic Word of Mouth on purchase decisions

Type	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	F	Sig.
	B	Std_Error	Beta		
Constant	0.277	0.337		0.822	0.413
TOTAL_X1	0.350	0.113	0.283	3.094	0.003
TOTAL_X2	0.584	0.094	0.569	6.217	0.000

Based on table 6. It can be concluded that the significant value of the X1 variable < 0.05 (0.003) indicates that the brand image variable has a significant effect on the purchase decision. It is also for the significant value of the X2 variable < 0.05 (0.000), this shows that the electronic Word of Mouth variable has a significant effect on the purchase decision.

Table 7. Results of the F Test on Brand Image and Electronic Word of Mouth on Purchase Decisions

ANOVA					
Type	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Restriction	16.929	2	8.465	88.658	0.000
Residual	9.261	97	0.095		
Total	26.190	99			

Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

Predictors: (Constant), Brand Image, Electronic Word of Mouth

Based on the results of the analysis in Table 3.20, a Fcal value of 88.658 was obtained with a significance level (Sig.) of 0.000. The significance value is smaller than the significance level of 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). This shows that the regression model built is suitable for use and there is a significant influence simultaneously between the independent variable, namely *Brand Image* (X1) and *Electronic Word of Mouth* (X2), on the dependent variable, namely the Purchase Decision (Y).

4.4. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis aims to measure the influence of two independent variables *Brand Image* (X1) and *Electronic Word of Mouth* (X2) simultaneously on the dependent variable (Y) Based on the results of multiple regression, regression equations are obtained:

$$Y = 0.277 + 0.350X_1 + 0.584X_2 + e \text{ (5\%)}$$

4.5. Discussion

The results of the study show that the *Brand Image* Variable has a positive impact on purchase decisions which shows that the greater the value of *the Brand Image*, the greater the Purchase Decision of Wardah Lipstick Products in Semarang City. The results of the study can justify statements in previous studies such as the response (Sangadji and Sopiah, 2013) which explains that a positive *brand image* provides benefits for producers by increasing their visibility and recognition in the eyes of consumers. If a product already has a good image, then consumers

will be more interested in buying the product without worrying about the quality of the product and all negative thoughts about the product aforementioned. It is also strengthened by research from (Zhafirah, 2019) that (Santi Sanita et al., 2019) *Brand Image* has a positive and significant influence on product purchase decisions. So the results of this study support **IP (Hypothesis I)**.

Based on the research, it can be concluded that the *Electronic Word of Mouth* Variable has a positive impact on purchase decisions which shows that the greater the value of *Electronic Word of Mouth*, the greater the Purchase Decision of Wardah Lipstick Products in Semarang City. The results of this study are also strengthened by the research that e-WOM has a significant positive influence on purchasing decisions. (Yulindasari & Fikriyah , 2022) *Electronic Word of Mouth* will greatly influence the buyer's decision because there are consumers who are interested in suggestions from people who have experience with the product. Fitria (2016) research shows that *Electronic Word of Mouth* has a significant influence on purchase decisions. So that with *Electronic Word of Mouth* communication, a person will easily trust a product that can form a purchase decision. So the results of this study support **H2 (Hypothesis 2)**.

Based on Multiple Linear Regression Analysis, *Brand Image (X1)* and *Electronic Word of Mouth (X2)* variables on Purchase Decision (Y) were accepted. This indicates that the *Electronic Word of Mouth* variable has a positive impact on purchasing decisions supported by the F test with significant results. This supports the theory that has been described. This research also supports previous research on *Electronic Word of Mouth* and *Brand Image* which will positively impact good purchasing decisions in the minds of consumers. This means that *Brand Image* and *Electronic Word of Mouth* have a significant positive effect on consumer purchase decisions (Putra Frima Fadhila, 2020) . Therefore, companies need to build a positive image so that the continuity of their company is certainly accompanied by quality products, so that the value is measured in accordance with the Top Brand Index data. So the results of this study support **H3 (Hypothesis 3)**.

5. CONCLUSION

It has been found that ***Brand Image*** has a positive and significant effect on the decision to purchase Wardah lipstick in Semarang City. In general, *Wardah's brand image* is good, but there is still a perception of some consumers who are not sure about comparing the advantages of local products with foreign products. ***Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)*** also has a positive and

significant influence on purchasing decisions. Although the interaction and positive reviews are strong enough, negative reviews on various platforms are still a factor that affects the hesitation of some consumers in deciding to buy a **Purchase Decision** is simultaneously influenced by *Brand Image* and e-WOM. Although the overall purchase decision shows good results, some consumers are not fully confident in purchasing Wardah lipstick, so more efforts are still needed to grow their confidence.

6. IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Based on the results of the recapitulation, it can be seen that PT Paragon Technology and Innovation needs to strengthen *the local Brand Image* by conducting promotions that highlight the quality and excellence of local products that are equivalent to global *brands*, so as to increase consumer pride and trust in Wardah lipstick products. Wardah is also expected to be able to manage negative reviews by increasing quick and solutive responses to complaints or negative reviews on social media and online shopping platforms to build consumer trust and loyalty and there is a need for a promotion strategy that increases confidence by using evidence-based approaches, such as user testimonials, quality certification, and collaboration with *influencers* credible, so that consumers are more steadfast in making purchasing decisions.

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