

The Relationship of E-WOM, Brand Ambassador to Buying Interest, and Brand Image as Mediation Variables

Nur Diana^{a,1*}, Ratih Juliati^{b,2}, Eko Handayanto^{c,3}

¹Master of Management, University of Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia

²University of Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia

Email: ^adiananur501@gmail.com, ^bratih@umm.ac.id, ^chandayanto@umm.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Electronic Word of Mouth, Brand Ambassador, Brand Image, Buying Interest.

The cosmetics industry in Indonesia continues to develop well, especially with the increasing demand for beauty products. This research was conducted to analyze and prove whether E-WOM and Brand Ambassadors influence Buying Interest with Brand Image as a mediating variable for Wardah cosmetic products at the University of Muhammadiyah Malang. This type of research uses a quantitative approach and uses primary data. Data was collected using a questionnaire of 160 respondents. The gathered data is subsequently analyzed using the Structural Equation Model - Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) technique. The study's results prove that E-WOM, Brand Ambassador, and Brand Image significantly affect Buying Interest. In contrast, E-WOM and brand ambassadors positively and significantly affect brand image, which acts as a mediator. The Company must leverage these factors to improve its brand image and drive consumer purchasing decisions.

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INTRODUCTION

As the number of internet users in Indonesia has grown, there has also been a rise in interest in online shopping (Thohir et al., 2022). A desire to purchase future goods or services is known as buying interest. Purchase intent refers to the likelihood or likelihood of a consumer to purchase a product or service. This intention is a crucial indicator of future buying behavior and is rooted in various psychological and external factors. Brand ambassadors and electronic word-of-mouth

(E-WOM) impact purchasing interest (Marcella *et al.*, 2023). In addition, brand image also significantly influences consumer buying interest (Prayogo *et al.*, 2023). The increase in online buying interest is inseparable from the role of e-commerce as a connecting medium between sellers and buyers (Thohir *et al.*, 2022). Buying interest is very important in marketing activities because it shows the potential of consumers to buy a product. High buying interest can increase the chances of transactions and customer loyalty.

The presence of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is one of the most effective marketing sources. Consumer interest in purchasing is positively impacted by E-WOM. The influence on consumer purchasing interest increases with the amount of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) received (Sinaga & Sulistiono, 2020). Positive E-WOM can increase trust in a product or service because consumers tend to value the opinions of others who have real experience compared to traditional advertising (Permadi & Suryadi, 2019). E-WOM use on social media is effective because it can reach a broad audience (Sinaga & Sulistiono, 2020). More consumers are now using E-WOM to make purchasing choices. One form of electronic word of mouth is comments and reviews from other users. Studies by (Mughoffar *et al.*, 2019; Zakaria, 2020) show that eWOM affects buying interest. Utilizing electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM) on social media is considered effective due to its ability to reach a wide audience. Contractive studies show that e-WOM does not impact consumer buying interest.

A brand ambassador (BA) is a well-known individual that a company uses to promote a particular brand or product. The role of BA in influencing customer buying interest is vital. BA's presence can increase the product's appeal and create consumer trust due to associations with respected or liked figures. A study by (Johan *et al.*, 2021) shows that brand ambassadors positively and significantly influence buying interest in Shopee e-commerce. Other findings also show that brand ambassadors significantly impact consumer buying interest (Lestari *et al.*, 2021; Sagir *et al.*, 2021; Septyan, 2016). Brand ambassadors play an important role in shaping the brand image and driving purchase intent, particularly in industries such as fashion (Hong *et al.*, 2023). Brand ambassadors, or BAs, are essential in increasing consumer buying interest by improving brand image, trust, and emotional connection with consumers.

Furthermore, brand image plays a crucial role in brand development as it pertains to the reputation and credibility of the company's products. Consumers make brand image a guideline when trying and consuming products. Research indicates that brand image positively and significantly impact consumer purchasing interest (Anjani *et al.*, 2023; Febrianti & Hasan, 2022; Prihartini *et al.*, 2022). A robust brand image fosters a favorable view of product excellence, dependability, and worth, elevating purchasing intent. Companies that want to increase consumer buying interest need to strengthen their brand image with the right strategies, such as effective marketing campaigns and maintaining product quality.

The current phenomenon in Indonesia is that the cosmetics industry is growing quite rapidly, and it has become one of the products that increased interest in buying. The graph below illustrates the development of the cosmetic industry in Indonesia from 2010-2023. It can be seen that from year to year, the cosmetic industry has increased and developed. Several factors, such as digitalization, advertising, lifestyle changes, rising per capita income, and the sizable female population in Indonesia, totaling 132.89 million individuals, contribute to this advancement. These factors make Indonesia a reasonably large market share for the cosmetics industry.

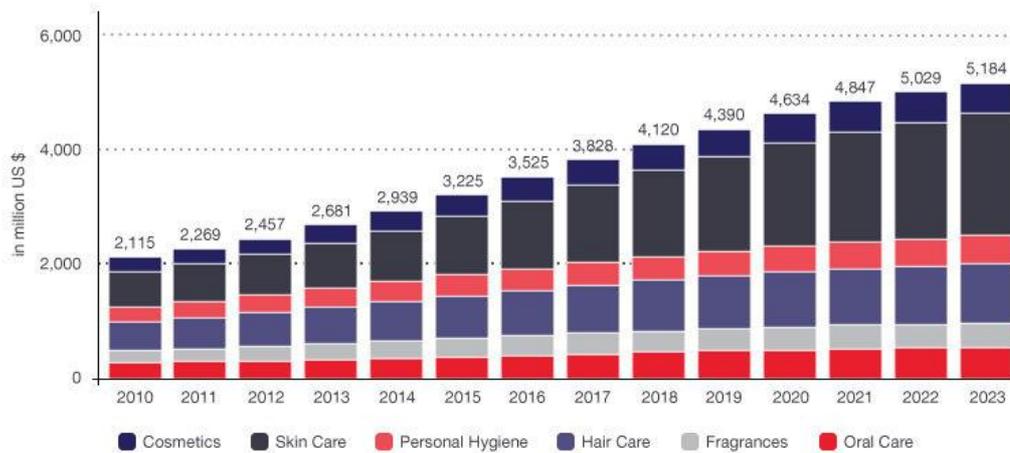


Figure 1. Graph of the Development of the Cosmetics Industry in Indonesia 2010-2023

Source: <https://technobusiness.id/>

Cosmetics is an industry that is aware of electronic word-of-mouth communication strategies because online product reviews are one of the things that women often talk about nowadays. For example, www.femaledaily.com is an online forum for women in Indonesia discussing cosmetics. In general, when someone uses a product, consumers discover some of the information needed to have some considerations. In particular, choosing cosmetics requires information about color, skin stimulation, brand, content, price, etc. By looking at reviews from the experiences of former product users, the impact of strengthening the brand image and consumer buying interest in a product (Adriyati & Indriani, 2017). In this study, researchers studied Wardah cosmetic products used as research objects. This is because, in Indonesia, Muslim fashion trends are very popular; along with these developments, cosmetics are also experiencing changes in the development of Muslim cosmetics.

Muslimah cosmetics are cosmetics related to halal products. Wardah Cosmetics is one of the beauty cosmetic brands that conducts marketing targeting female customers ranging from teenage girls to adult women. Wardah has been produced since 1995 by PT. Paragon Technology and Innovation. This cosmetic product has received a certificate with a halal brand image since 1999 from the Institute for the Assessment of Food, Drugs, and Cosmetics of the Indonesian Ulema Council (LPPOM-MUI). Wardah is considered successful in building its brand image. It is a pioneer of halal cosmetics in Indonesia to provide a positive image for them. This brand has been known since its inception for its halal brand image, and data on sales of wardah products also reinforced this in early February 2021, which exceeded Rp. 13.4 billion. This is the total sales for two weeks on the marketplace or online, February 1-18.

The following data are obtained from the Top Brand index in the Wardah cosmetics category for 2023, as shown in Figures 2 and 3 below.

LIPSTIK (Fase 1)		
Brand	TBI	
Wardah	26.00%	TOP
Maybelline	19.30%	TOP
Revlon	6.30%	
Pixy	3.60%	
Viva	1.50%	

Sumber: Top Brand Award (www.topbrand-award.com)

BB CREAM (Fase 1)		
Brand	TBI	
Wardah	26.50%	TOP
Garnier	14.50%	TOP
Maybelline	12.90%	TOP
L'Oreal	6.80%	
Olay	6.10%	

Sumber: Top Brand Award (www.topbrand-award.com)

BEDAK MUKA PADAT (Fase 1)		
Brand	TBI	
Wardah	23.60%	TOP
Make Over	11.30%	TOP
Pixy	8.10%	
Maybelline	7.80%	
Caring	5.70%	
Viva	5.60%	

BEDAK MUKA TABUR (Fase 1)		
Brand	TBI	
Wardah	19.30%	TOP
Marcks	17.70%	TOP
Make Over	11.20%	TOP
Viva	5.20%	
Pixy	4.20%	
Sariayu	3.80%	

Sumber: Top Brand Award (www.topbrand-award.com)

Figure 2. Wardah Cosmetics Index

Source: <https://www.topbrand-award.com/>

Based on these data, Wardah Cosmetics occupied first place on the Top Brand Index of similar products. Young people are currently liking Wardah cosmetics and have dominated the market. In 2023, the lipstick category will score 26.00%. Wardah scored 26.50% for BB Cream, 19.30% for Loose Face Powder, and 23.60% for Pressed Face Powder based on the table, which proves that consumers are interested in Wardah cosmetics compared to other products in the market www.topbrand-award.com. For companies to form a strong brand image, it is a must because a brand image is a valuable asset owned by the company. Brand image has a role in differentiating the company's production from competitors' products. So consumers can understand and be interested in and get to know Wardah's cosmetic products. Brand image influences consumer attitudes when they are interested in buying a product (Wulandari et al., 2017). A positive brand image, supported by electronic word of mouth, can encourage consumer buying interest in Wardah's cosmetic products (Adriyati & Indriani, 2017).

Her substantial influence with brand ambassadors like Dinda Hauw can attract the attention of potential customers and build trust in Wardah's products (Malenia, 2023). Wardah creates a perception of halal cosmetics in consumers' minds, reinforced by brand ambassadors who are public figures known for wearing hijabs, such as Dinda Hauw, presenting an elegant and subtle makeup appearance. Products that are attached to halal cosmetics can give the impression of a religious image and, of course, require celebrities who have the personality and impression of a good Muslim woman. Established familiarity with a product among consumers facilitates its acceptance and fosters a positive brand image. Therefore, this study discusses the relationship between Electronic word of Mouth, the Brand Ambassador, and Buying Interest or interest in buying Wardah cosmetics through Brand Image as a mediating.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer purchasing interest refers to the inclination of consumers to select, utilize, and potentially consume or desire a product that is available for purchase (Kotler & Keller, 2016b). Buying interest is also interpreted as consumer behavior toward products consisting of consumer trust in brands and brand evaluation, where from these two stages, an interest in buying arises. Based on the experts above, it can be concluded by researchers that buying interest is a consumer behavior that involves the desire to buy a product or service, which consists of consumer trust in a product brand (Setiadi, 2019). Feelings and emotions play a significant role in determining purchasing interest. When individuals experience happiness and satisfaction with their purchases, it enhances their desire to buy goods or services. Conversely, dissatisfaction typically diminishes interest (Swastha & Irawan, 2003). Lidyawatie (2008) explains several factors that influence buying interest, namely: a) Socioeconomic differences, b) Gender differences, meaning that women's interests are different from men's interests, for example, in shopping patterns, c) Age

differences, meaning the age of children, youth, adults and parents. Factors influencing buying interest include cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors. External influences, awareness of needs, introduction of products and alternatives, and evaluation can also lead to consumer buying interest (Gurubay et al., 2020).

Brand image affects purchasing interest (Anshori et al., 2021; Prayogo et al., 2023); brand image has an important role in brand development because it involves the reputation and credibility of the company's products. Consumers make the brand image a guide in trying and consuming products. According to (Kotler & Keller, 2016a), brand image refers to the outward aspects of a product or service, encompassing efforts by brands to fulfill customers' psychological or social desires. Usually, consumers tend to buy well-known brand products compared to non-famous brand products. Consumers assume that well-known brands are reliable, always available, accessible to find, and have unquestionable quality.

Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) influences the brand image. EWOM can help create a positive or negative impression of a brand, thus influencing consumer decisions and brand loyalty (Krishnamurthy & Kumar, 2018). Electronic word-of-mouth channels can be opinion platforms, forms, discussion groups, email, forums, blogs, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and other social networks (Rathore & Panwar, 2015). Positive E-WOM can produce a good brand image and increase trust and credibility, while negative E-WOM can damage brand reputation (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). Studies show that E-WOM positively affects brand image (Ahdiany, 2021; Estheryna et al., 2015; Pentury et al., 2019). E-WOM is important in shaping consumers' perceptions of brand image and influencing consumers' purchasing decisions.

One of the marketing strategies used by the company to win the hearts and trust of consumers in the products offered is that the company uses public figures as brand ambassadors. A brand ambassador has a significant role in being trusted to represent certain products, one of which is to form a positive image of a product. Numerous methods exist for cultivating a favorable perception of a product brand. Studies show that brand ambassador Dian Sastrowardoyo significantly influences L'OREAL Paris' makeup brand image (Masyita & Yuliati, 2017). Another study revealed the use of brand ambassador Hamish Daud and Clear "Come on! Indonesia Can" to Clear brand image (Yanti & Gusfa, 2022). Brand ambassadors are significant in crafting a favorable brand perception since they are commonly seen as exemplifying product values and excellence.

Hypothesis 1: e-WOM has a significant effect on brand image

Hypothesis 2: Brand ambassador has a significant effect on brand image

A strong brand image creates trust and familiarity with the brand, making consumers more likely to choose its products or services over competitors' offerings. Studies consistently reveal that brand image significantly influences purchase intent (Anjani et al., 2023; Febrianti & Hasan, 2022; Prihartini et al., 2022; Solihin, 2021). The greater the value and caliber of a brand's image, the higher the level of interest in purchasing will rise. Brands make a product more easily recognizable to consumers (Wahyoedi et al., 2021). Another similar study found that brand image is partially directly related to buying interest (Zainuddin, 2018).

Hypothesis 3: Brand image has a significant effect on buying interest

The rapid advancement of technology, especially the internet network, can provide a choice of information about a product. However, it has become a form of WOM communication that propagates globally through online media, called electronic word of mouth (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). E-WOM has a positive effect because it can invite consumers and influence perceptions of buying interest in a product that other consumers have recommended. Studies show that e-

WOM affects consumer buying interest. E-WOM greatly influences the interest in buying Eiger fashion products in Bogor (Sinaga & Sulistiono, 2020).

Hypothesis 4: e-WOM has a significant effect on buying interest

The role of brand ambassadors in marketing a product allows purchases because consumers assume that the public figure has used the product. Brand Ambassadors are a determining factor shaping consumer buying interest (Nofiauwaty et al., 2020). Septyan (2016) said brand ambassadors positively and significantly affect consumer buying interest, meaning that every increase and decrease affects consumer buying interest. Similar to these findings, it was also revealed that Brand Ambassadors have a positive and significant effect on Buying Interest (Lestari et al., 2021).

Hypothesis 5: Brand ambassador has a significant effect on buying interest

E-WoM is a way of marketing so that consumers immediately understand and are clear about a product brand (Anggitasari & Wijaya, 2016). For this reason, helpful information and other people's opinions are positively related to a brand, and eWOM encourages the emergence of brand image (Samuel, H., 2014). The high and low brand image impacts buying interest, so a product with a good brand causes consumer tendencies to buy interest in the brand, Majid & Sumadi (2014). E-WOM positively and significantly influences purchasing decisions through brand image (Kusuma et al., 2022; Subhan et al., 2022; Suci et al., 2017), which means consumer buying has been interested in the product.

A brand ambassador is passionate about the brand and influences consumers to buy or use a product (Firmansyah, 2019). Using brand ambassadors is a great and attractive option. Improve the positive brand image of the product. Consumers feel confident using brands supported by brand ambassadors that are attractive, entertaining, and very expressive in influencing consumers to buy (Andarista et al., 2022; Kusuma et al., 2022). Brand ambassador studies positively and significantly affect purchase intent through brand image. A strong brand image can increase consumer trust in a brand and motivate them to buy a product or service (Andarista et al., 2022).

Hypothesis 6: e-WOM has a significant effect on buying interest through brand image

Hypothesis 7: Brand ambassador has a significant effect on buying interest through brand image

Given the theoretical and variable connections outlined earlier, the ensuing research framework is constructed accordingly:

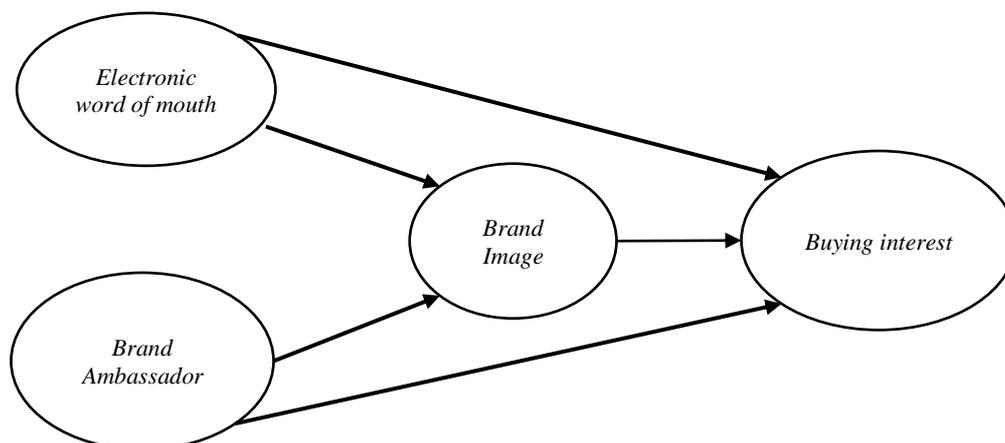


Figure 3. Conceptual framework

Source: developed in this research, 2023

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative methodology rooted in the positivist philosophy to investigate particular populations and samples (Sugiyono, 2016). The population in this study were female students at the University of Muhammadiyah Malang who were interested in buying Wardah Cosmetic products. The sample of this study uses a formula with the term "10 time-rule". This formula requires that the sample be ten times the number of indicators used to set a concept (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011). The number of indicators in this study was 16, so a sample of 160 respondents was obtained. The sampling technique of this research is purposive sampling, which is carried out using specific criteria to determine the sample. The data collection technique for this research used a questionnaire that provided a set of questions or statements. The questionnaire is used online with the help of the Google form in the link via WhatsApp number.

The measurement scale is the Likert scale. This Likert scale assesses an individual's or collective's viewpoints, beliefs, and understandings regarding social occurrences. Indicators of purchase intention use transactional interest, referential interest, preferential interest, and exploratory interest (Ferdinand, 2014). E-WOM uses indicators including platform assistance, consumer concern, and extraversion/positive self-enhancement (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Brand ambassadors use indicators including Visibility, Credibility, Attraction, and Power (Kertamukti, 2018). Finally, the brand image uses indicators of strengths, Uniqueness, and Favorable (Kotler & Keller, 2016a).

The data examination and hypothesis validation employed the Structural Equation Model-Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) approach. PLS analysis employs two sub-models: the measurement model (outer model) is utilized to assess validity and reliability. In contrast, the structural model (inner model) evaluates R-Square and predictive relevance (Q²), then tests the hypothesis with t-statistic criteria > 1.96 (Ghozali & Latan, 2015).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The respondents of this study were FEB students in semesters 2-4 who were interested in buying Wardah cosmetic products at the University of Muhammadiyah Malang. The number of respondents in this study was 160 respondents. Respondents' identities were categorized based on gender, age, and generation. The majority of respondents, as many as 157 people (98.1%), were respondents aged 18-20 years and were young or teenagers. This is because people in the 18-20 age group still prioritize brands and low prices when purchasing.

The first test, convergent validity, is said to have good convergent validity if it has an AVE value greater than 0.5. It is known that the value of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) in all research variables is more significant than 0.5. The evidence suggests a strong degree of convergent validity for all variables. The outcomes of the test are displayed in the subsequent Table 1:

Table 1. AVE and Validity Test

Variable	AVE	Information
Electronic word-of-mouth	0,601	Acceptable
Brand Ambassador	0,636	Acceptable
Brand image	0,644	Acceptable
Buying interest	0,640	Acceptable

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2023

Furthermore, Composite reliability (CR) testing is reliable if it has a CR value greater than 0.7. It is known that the value of composite reliability on all research variables is greater than 0.7. It can be inferred that all variables demonstrate high reliability and consistency. The composite reliability findings are displayed in Table 2 as outlined below:

Table 2. Composite Reliability and Cronbach Alpha

Variable	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Information
Electronic word-of-mouth	0.958	0,898	Reliable
Brand Ambassador	0.963	0,889	Reliable
Brand image	0.964	0,912	Reliable
Buying interest	0.963	0,929	Reliable

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2023

It is known that the value of R Square in the brand image variable is 0.633. because the R Square value of > 0.50 includes having a moderate influence, it can be interpreted that electronic word of mouth and brand ambassadors affect brand image 63.3% and other variables outside the study influence the remaining 36.7%. While the value of R Square in the buying interest variable is 0.816. because the value of R Square > 0.75 , including having a strong influence (substantial), it can be interpreted that the variables electronic word of mouth, brand ambassador and brand image affect buying interest 81.6%, other variables outside the study influence the remaining 18.4%. The R-Square results are shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3. Coefficients of determination (R^2 value)

Variable	R-Square
Brand image	0,633
Buying interest	0,816

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2023

Table 4. Direct Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Original Sample	T-Statistic	P-Value	Information
e-WOM -> Brand Image	0.416	4.134	0.000	Accepted
e-WOM -> Buying Interest	0.247	2.881	0.005	Accepted
Brand Ambassador -> Brand Image	0.425	4.244	0.000	Accepted
Brand Ambassador -> Buying Interest	0.315	3.365	0.001	Accepted
Brand Image -> Buying Interest	0.421	5.220	0.000	Accepted

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2023

Using the information presented in Table 4, the outcomes of hypothesis testing can be readily inferred in the following manner:

H1: Electronic word of mouth has a positive and significant effect on brand image

H2: Brand ambassadors have a positive and significant effect on brand image

H3: Electronic word of mouth affects buying interest positively and significantly

H4: Brand ambassadors affect buying interest positively and significantly

H5: Brand image affects buying interest positively and significantly.

Table 5. Indirect Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Original Sample	T-Statistic	P-Value	Information
e-WOM -> brand image -> buying interest	0.175	2.834	0.005	Accepted
Brand ambassador -> brand image-> buying interest	0.179	3.841	0.000	Accepted

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2023

Based on Table 5 above, the results of hypothesis testing can be concluded indirectly as follows:

H6: Electronic word of mouth has a significant positive effect on buying interest through the brand image

H7: Brand ambassadors have a positive and significant effect on buying interest through the brand image

Electronic Word of Mouth affects Brand Image. This shows respondents find helpful information about product choices, quality, and wardah cosmetic recommendations on YouTube. So, through YouTube, students interact through electronic media; this allows information exchange to be carried out quickly and increases consumers' choice of wardah products to purchase wardah cosmetic products. This is in line with the research of (Ahdiany, 2021; Estheryna et al., 2015; Pentury et al., 2019) that there is a positive influence between the E- WoM and brand image. E-WoM provides information to customers regarding the brand of Wardah Cosmetic products that they will buy. E-WoM significantly influences how consumers perceive a brand.

Based on the study's results, brand ambassadors influence the brand image of Wardah cosmetic products because these results indicate that female students believe that Dinda Hauw, as the Brand Ambassador of Wardah cosmetic products, has a personality that can give consumers confidence. In addition, brand ambassador Dinda Hauw, who used Wardah cosmetic products, impressed her with the simple and elegant and not excessive makeup appearance so that she could inspire women in Indonesia, including female students at the Malang Muhammadiyah University, to use the Wardah cosmetic brand. This is in line with the research of (Yuliati, 2017; Yanti & Gusfa, 2022), where there is a positive and significant influence on brand image; a brand is someone who has a significant role and can be trusted to represent a product and can form a positive image on a product.

Brand image has a positive and significant effect on buying interest. The higher the brand image felt by consumers, such as the excellent reputation of Wardah's cosmetic products in the eyes of consumers, the more the brand image of Wardah's cosmetic products will stick in the minds of consumers. It can affect the intention to buy Wardah's cosmetic products. Additionally, consumers are unaffected by comparable cosmetic items. This is in line with the research of Eli (Anjani et al., 2023; Febrianti & Hasan, 2022; Prihartini et al., 2022; Solihin, 2021); it is evident that a strong brand image significantly impacts purchasing intent, highlighting its pivotal role in motivating consumers to make purchases.

Electronic word of mouth affects buying interest. It shows that the better the eWOM, the higher the buying interest felt by respondents toward Wardah Cosmetics products. The better the brand ambassador reviews regarding Wardah cosmetic products on YouTube content, the higher the buying interest will be. Because there is good interest and hope in the eyes of consumers

regarding good information about Wardah cosmetic products, these results align with empirical studies showing and confirming the role of eWOM through reviews of certain products providing possible effects on consumers (Al-Dmour *et al.*, 2021). Apart from that (Kurdi *et al.*, 2022) revealed that electronic word of mouth affects buying interest. E-WOM has a positive effect because it can invite consumers and influence consumer perceptions of products others recommend (Oktafia & Sutarwati, 2023). E-WOM is vital in shaping consumer interest in buying products or services.

Brand ambassadors affect buying interest. These results indicate that the brand ambassador Dinda Hauw is a brand that can be trusted with a simple and elegant makeup appearance that can make female students interested in buying Wardah cosmetic products and can give female students confidence because the brand ambassador Dinda Hauw represents a model the appearance of youth makeup in today's circles. This is in line with research by (Jannah & Hadita, 2022; Lestari *et al.*, 2021; Turjo *et al.*, 2023) that brand ambassadors have a positive and significant influence on buying interest; the role of brand ambassadors in marketing products allow purchases to occur because consumers assume that the public figure uses the product itself.

Based on the research results, electronic word of mouth significantly affects buying interest through the brand image of Wardah cosmetic products. This shows that female students can see first-hand reviews of Wardah cosmetic products through electronic word of mouth. YouTube content can help female students find information on wardah cosmetic products themselves and can generate interest in buying wardah cosmetic products. This aligns with the research of (Achmad *et al.*, 2021; Ardana & Rastini, 2018) that electronic word of mouth positively and significantly affects buying interest through brand image as an intervening variable.

Brand ambassadors significantly affect buying interest through the brand image of Wardah cosmetic products. This shows that the brand ambassador Dinda Hauw is in a suitable category in the eyes of female students with a graceful, simple, and unobtrusive makeup appearance, making female students prefer the appearance of simple and elegant makeup when used while on campus and raises a high interest in buying the product. Besides the price, Wardah cosmetics are pretty affordable and suitable for all skin types. This is in line with the research of (Achmad *et al.*, 2021; Nurhuwaida & Sholahuddin, 2024), brand ambassadors exert a favorable and noteworthy impact on purchasing intent through brand image as an intermediary factor. They exhibit enthusiasm for endorsing a brand, ultimately swaying consumers to purchase and utilize its products.

CONCLUSION

Research can conclude that electronic word of mouth, brand ambassadors, brand image, and purchase intention have a relationship and influence each other. The better the electronic word of mouth for Wardah cosmetic products, the more consumers will be interested in Wardah cosmetic products. Besides that, the better the brand image of Wardah cosmetic products, the better it will be embedded and well remembered in the minds of consumers who are interested and want to try cosmetic products from Wardah. With the simple make-up look of the ambassador brand Dinda hauw, consumers want to try using the make-up used by the ambassador brand with a simple make-up look. This is because consumers are interested and interested in using Wardah cosmetic products. In addition, brand image can mediate between the electronic word of mouth and brand ambassadors for buying interest. The better the electronic word of mouth consumers feel regarding information on Wardah cosmetic products, the better the brand image of Wardah

cosmetic products, and the better the brand ambassador in the eyes of consumers, the better the brand image for Wardah cosmetic products.

The findings highlight that companies should be able to capitalize on electronic word-of-mouth promotion by encouraging positive reviews of their cosmetic products. Companies should also choose brand ambassadors carefully because they significantly affect brand image and consumer buying interest in the product being played. Companies should leverage E-WOM and brand ambassadors to enhance their brand image. This research offers valuable insights into the complex relationship between E-WOM, brand ambassadors, buying interest, and brand image. Leveraging these factors to improve brand image and drive consumer purchasing decisions is essential. Future research needs to expand the object of its respondents and not be limited to one object and area. Adding variables that are related and have novelty can be studied further in future studies.

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