Exploring the Impact of e-WOM on Generation Z Purchase Intention: The Mediating Role of Brand Image and Perceived Quality

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the impact of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) on the purchase intention of Generation Z, considering e-WOM quantity, quality, and valence, as well as brand image and perceived quality as mediators. **With the rapid rise of** online platforms, e-WOM has become a key factor influencing consumer decision-making, particularly among digitally native groups like Generation Z. **A total of 260 respondents**, who met the inclusion criteria, were selected, with the study population consisting of Generation Z individuals residing in Bandung. The purposive sampling technique was applied to ensure that participants had relevant experience with e-WOM. **Data were collected** using a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, employing a Likert scale to measure responses. The analysis was carried out using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method based on SmartPLS 4.0 as the testing tool, which allowed for the examination of both direct and indirect effects of e-WOM on purchase intention. **The results of this study** indicate that e-WOM quantity, quality, and valence have a positive and significant influence on purchase intention. These relationships were found to be both direct and indirect, highlighting the importance of e-WOM in shaping consumer behavior. **A limitation of this study** is that the sample only includes Generation Z in Bandung, which means the findings may not fully represent Generation Z in other regions or countries. Future research could expand the sample to improve generalizability and explore additional mediators in the e-WOM to purchase intention relationship.

1.   INTRODUCTION

In the current digital era, the internet continues to develop rapidly, and the exchange of information has become more dynamic. With the advancement of the internet, Word of Mouth (WOM) has evolved into a new concept known as Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) [1]. Through internet technology, informal communications about how to use and the characteristics of certain sellers or goods and services are shared with consumers. e-WOM can take place through various online channels, including product reviews, social media, email, and discussion forums. It has become common for consumers to examine both positive and negative reviews from other consumers as pre-purchase information, since they cannot physically interact with

the product when purchasing it online [2]. Thus, e-WOM helps reduce concerns about the brand or product they plan to buy. e-WOM has become an important source of information and is relied upon by companies to develop marketing strategies that attract Generation Z consumers. Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, has grown up in the internet era and is knowledgeable about the benefits and risks of online shopping. More than 60% of Generation Z prefers to shop online rather than in physical stores, and they tend to rely on, consider, and be influenced by product reviews they encounter on digital platforms [3].

e-WOM plays a significant role in shaping purchase intentions among Generation Z, especially those who frequently use e-commerce and read reviews before making purchases. Consumers typically research products before purchasing to reduce uncertainty. e-WOM offers evaluations not only in the form of text but also in photos, videos, and sounds, providing clearer information that helps consumers make decisions about which products to buy [4]. Brand image and perceived quality have proven to be key mediators in the relationship between e-WOM and purchase intention. Brand image, a crucial asset, shapes consumer confidence in a brand and plays a significant role in influencing purchase intention [5]. A strong brand image enhances the effectiveness of marketing communications, making the brand more attractive to consumers. On the other hand, perceived quality refers to a consumer's assessment of product excellence or perfection. High perceived quality increases consumer confidence and, in turn, their intention to purchase the product.

Moreover, this research aligns with the broader agenda of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically focusing on SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure). By promoting the use of e-WOM in an ethical and transparent manner, companies can influence responsible consumer choices and enhance trust in sustainable products. The digital platforms that facilitate e-WOM can serve as tools for promoting more sustainable consumption patterns by educating consumers on the environmental and social impacts of their purchasing decisions. Furthermore, the digital transformation fostered by e-WOM also supports innovation in marketing strategies and digital infrastructure, contributing to the overall development of industries in line with SDG 9.

Previous research has shown that e-WOM, brand image, and perceived quality all influence purchase intention. Studies have found that brand image and perceived quality mediate the relationship between e-WOM and purchase intention [6]. However, some research suggests that e-WOM has no effect on purchase intention, while other studies have found that brand image does not influence purchase intention. In contrast, this research replicates previous studies on Millennials but focuses on Generation Z. The aim of this study is to analyze and test the impact of e-WOM on the purchase intention of Generation Z, with brand image and perceived quality acting as mediators in this relationship. This research highlights the importance of e-WOM as a critical driver of purchase intention in Generation Z, and the role of brand image and perceived quality in strengthening this relationship [7].

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

e-WOM Quantity leads to the number or amount of consumers receiving information and reviews from other people regarding a product or service they want on the online network. Consumers tend to compare the number of product reviews, which can reflect the popularity of the product [8]. Popular products have a significant market presence, and their reputation plays an important role in the minds of customers, so the higher the number of reviews uploaded on online platforms, the more likely the product is considered popular, even with some negative reviews. The quantity of e-WOM on online shopping platforms has an impact on purchase intention [9].

- *H1*: e-WOM quantity, defined as the number of online reviews and consumer feedback available for a product, has a positive influence on purchase intention among Generation Z buyers in Bandung. As the volume of reviews increases, Generation Z perceives the product as more popular, which increases their likelihood of purchase.

  e-WOM Quality refers to the level of quality and clarity of the content of reviews or information about a particular product conveyed by other people on online media. e-WOM quality is considered a review that is informative and persuasive, reflecting how well the information meets consumer needs in evaluating a product. e-WOM quality is measured based on the strength of the information, with characteristics including completeness, relevance, effectiveness, and timeliness, which can help consumers fully understand product quality and increase their confidence in making the right decisions [10]. Previous research shows that e-WOM quality has an impact on purchase intention.

- **H2**: e-WOM quality, defined as the clarity, informativeness, and persuasiveness of the online reviews, positively influences purchase intention among Generation Z buyers in Bandung. Higher quality reviews, especially those that provide comprehensive and relevant information, increase trust and the likelihood of purchase [11].

  e-WOM Valence is one of the most important factors, where the nature of the review can be positive, negative, or neutral, which can influence online behavior. e-WOM valence can be seen as the average rating of online reviews, represented by customer satisfaction levels. Positive reviews have a positive feedback effect on online sales and can strengthen brand image, which in turn influences trust and purchasing decisions [12]. On the other hand, negative reviews can cause consumers to switch to other brands and decrease purchase intention. e-WOM valence is considered an important assessing factor for purchase intention.

- **H3**: e-WOM valence, which refers to the positive or negative sentiment expressed in online reviews, influences purchase intention among Generation Z buyers in Bandung. Positive reviews increase the likelihood of purchase, while negative reviews may decrease the likelihood of purchase [13].

  e-WOM mediated by brand image has a significant effect on purchase intention, indicating that e-WOM accompanied by a positive brand image will influence and determine purchase intention. Brand image has a significant positive impact as a mediator between e-WOM and purchase intention. e-WOM quantity has an impact on purchase intention mediated by brand image [14].

- **H4a**: Brand image mediates the influence of e-WOM quantity on purchase intention among Generation Z buyers in Bandung.

  Although e-WOM quality has a smaller result compared to e-WOM quantity and valence, it still impacts purchase intention mediated by brand image. Likewise, research shows that e-WOM quality mediated by brand image impacts purchase intention [15].

- **H4b**: Brand image mediates the influence of e-WOM quality on purchase intention among Generation Z buyers in Bandung.

  Brand image that mediates e-WOM valance has the greatest effect on purchase intention. e-WOM valance also influences purchase intention mediated by brand image [16].

- **H4c**: Brand image mediates the influence of e-WOM valance on purchase intention among Generation Z buyers in Bandung.

  Perceived quality is an influencing cognitive factor for purchase intention. The results show that perceived quality impacts purchase intention [17]. Perceived quality mediates the influence of e-WOM on purchase intention. e-WOM quantity, mediated by perceived quality, has an impact on purchase intention. e-WOM quantity also impacts purchase intention mediated by perceived quality [18].

- **H5a**: Perceived quality mediates the influence of e-WOM quantity on purchase intention among Generation Z buyers in Bandung.

  Perceived quality that mediates e-WOM quality has an impact on purchase intention. e-WOM quality also impacts purchase intention mediated by perceived quality [19].

- **H5b**: Perceived quality mediates the influence of e-WOM quality on purchase intention among Generation Z buyers in Bandung.

  Perceived quality mediating e-WOM valance has the strongest effect on purchase intention because it achieves the greatest results [20]. e-WOM valance also influences purchase intention mediated by perceived quality.

- **H5c**: Perceived quality mediates the influence of e-WOM valance on purchase intention among Generation Z buyers in Bandung.

These hypotheses collectively examine how e-WOM in its various forms (quantity, quality, and valence) impacts purchase intention among Generation Z consumers in Bandung [21]. By considering brand

image and perceived quality as mediators, this study aims to better understand the pathways through which e-WOM influences consumer behavior in the digital age. The following sections will discuss the theoretical underpinnings of these variables and the research that supports their inclusion in the model [22].
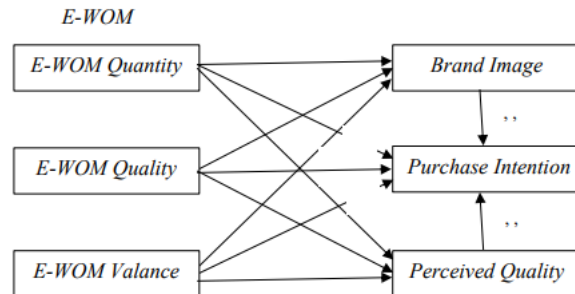

Figure 1. Research Framework

As shown in Figure 1, the research framework illustrates the relationships between e-WOM quantity, quality, and valence with brand image, purchase intention, and perceived quality.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a quantitative method with an explanatory research design to examine the correlation between various aspects of e-WOM, brand image, perceived quality, and purchase intention among Generation Z in Bandung City. The population in this survey consists of Generation Z individuals aged 12–27 years in 2024 [23]. The sample was determined using purposive sampling with criteria based on consideration, namely Generation Z in Bandung City who read product reviews and comments before making a purchase. The sample size was calculated using the PLS-NO minimum sample size formula with the "10-times rule." There are 20 indicators in this research, so the sample size is 10×20, requiring a minimum of 200 samples [24].

Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires to potential respondents. Each item used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The SEM method through SmartPLS 4.0 was used to conduct inferential analysis of the collected data and to test hypothetical relationships in the current model [25]. The model metrics were derived from an explanatory perspective, which shows how well the hypothesized model fits the existing data [26]. This research uses validity tests, reliability tests, discriminant validity, coefficient of determination (R^2), and t-tests [27].

Table 1. Operational Definition of Variables

Variable	Indicator	Source
e-WOM Quantity (X1) refers to how much consumers get information and reviews submitted by other people about a desired product or service in the media online (Mariasih & Setiyaningrum, 2021).	1. Mostly reviews/comments online implies that the product is popular. 2. Number of reviews/comments online which shows that the product has good sales. 3. Many people are talking about it on platform digital.	Younus & Anjum (2023)
e-WOM Quality (X2) refers to how high quality and how clear the content of reviews or informational messages about a particular product that other people convey in the media online (Mariasih & Setiyaningrum, 2021).	1. Reviews/comments online provide appropriate information about the product. 2. Reviews/comments online useful for making more effective decisions. 3. Reviews/comments online provide sufficient reasons to purchase the product.	Younus & Anjum (2023)

Variable	Indicator	Source
e-WOM Valance (X3) is one of the most important where the nature of the review can be positive, negative or neutral which can influence behavior online (Tardin & Pelissari, 2021).	1. I rely on reviews with very high or very low ratings to make purchasing decisions. 2. The overall rating of the product/service helps to choose the best among several alternatives quickly. 3. I will likely change my opinion about a product/brand after seeing positive or negative comments on a forum Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM).	Younus & Anjum (2023)
Purchase Intention (Y) is a psychological stage or evaluation phase that consumers undergo to determine whether there is a willingness to use a product or service and is a tool for assessing the effectiveness of behavioral responses (Garima & Sheokand, 2024).	1. I prefer to buy products recommended on forums e-WOM than other brands/products available. 2. Reviews/comments online makes me want to buy that product or brand. 3. I purchased the product I read about in the reviews/comments online. 4. I prefer to buy products that I read about in reviews/comments online in the future	Younus & Anjum (2023)
Brand Image (Z1) is an asset that can shape customer confidence in a brand (Tahir et al., 2024)	1. The brand is known for providing good attention to customers. 2. The brand has a rich history. 3. The brand is known for consistently providing very high quality	Younus & Anjum (2023)
Perceived Quality (Z2) is the consumers assessment of product excellence or the level of product perfection (Younus & Anjum, 2023).	1. Product quality will be consistent. 2. Other people will approve of the product. 3. The product will work well. 4. The product will evoke positive feeling	Younus & Anjum (2023)

As shown in Table 1, the operational definitions and indicators for each variable, including e-WOM quantity, quality, valance, brand image, perceived quality, and purchase intention, are provided [28].

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings reveal that e-WOM significantly influences purchase intention among Generation Z, with brand image and perceived quality acting as key mediators [29]. These results emphasize the role of e-WOM in shaping consumer behavior, especially when mediated by brand image and perceived quality.

4.1. Result

This research received responses from 260 respondents, and 100% of the respondents met the criteria, namely: willingness to fill out a questionnaire without any coercion, having read product reviews or comments before purchasing, and being domiciled in Greater Bandung [30]. The overall characteristics of the respondents in the study are identified in Table 2.

Table 2. Characteristics of Respondents

	Information	Amount	Percentage
Genre	Man	138	53,1%
	Woman	122	46,9%
Age	12 - 15 years old	33	12,7%
	16 - 19 years old	55	21,2%
	20 - 23 years old	97	37,3%
	24 - 27 years old	75	28,8%

	Information	Amount	Percentage
Work	Student	73	28,1%
	Student	105	40,4%
	State officials	5	1,9%
	Private officer	54	20,8%
	Businessman	18	6,9%
	Other	5	2,0%
Production	<IDR 1,000,000	42	16,2%
	IDR 1,000,001 - IDR 3,000,000	71	27,3%
	IDR 3,000,001 - IDR 5,000,000	89	34,2%
	IDR 5,000,001 - IDR 7,000,000	44	16,9%
	IDR 7,000,001 - IDR 9,000,000	11	4,2%
	>IDR 9,000,000	3	1,2%
Platform digital which is most often used to view product reviews or comments	Instagram	28	10,8%
	Tiktok	68	26,2%
	YouTube	43	16,5%
	Shopee	90	34,6%
	Tokopedia	31	11,9%
The most frequently purchased product types at platform digital	Food	60	23,1%
	Clothing and accessories	90	34,6%
	Cosmetics and personal care	77	29,6%
	Electronic	29	11,2%
	Other	4	1,6%

Data processing is carried out using PLS which consists of six variables, namely e WOM quantity (EQUAN), e-WOM quality (EQUAL), e-WOM valance (EVAL), purchase intention (PI), brand image (BI), danperceived quality (PQ) as shown in Figure 2.
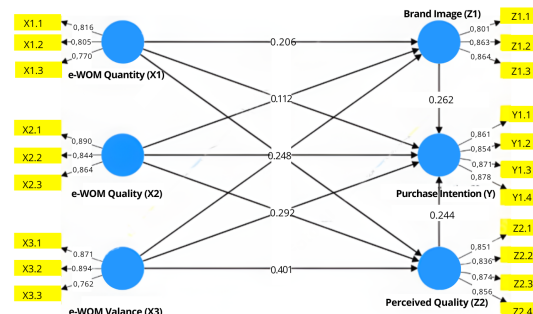

Figure 2. Research Framework

Testing outer loadings Table 3 which is recommended to contain a value ≥ 0.708 to be declared accepted [31]. Based on the outer loadings obtained, all indicators for each variable have a correlation value ≥ 0.708, so that all indicators are declared valid. Furthermore, the results of the validity test show that the variables in this study have an AVE value > 0.5, thus all variables are valid.

Reliability testing is carried out with Cronbach Alpha, whose value must exceed 0.70 to be declared reliable [32]. In this study, the results of Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability have met the criteria because the value obtained from the test results exceeds 0.70, which proves that the six variables are said to be reliable.

The R-squared value for brand image is 0.516 or 51.6%. This value shows that e-WOM quantity, quality, and valence are able to explain 51.6% of the variation in brand image, and the remaining 48.4% is caused by factors other than the variables in this study [33]. The R-squared value for perceived quality is 0.627 or 62.7%. This value indicates that e-WOM quantity, quality, and valence are able to explain 62.7% of the variation in perceived quality, while the remaining 37.3% is caused by factors other than the variables in

this study [34]. Finally, the R-squared value for purchase intention is 0.720 or 72%. This value indicates that the combination of e-WOM quantity, quality, valence, as well as mediation from brand image and perceived quality, are able to explain 72% of the variation in purchase intention, while the remaining 28% is caused by factors other than the variables in this study [35].

Table 3. Outer Loadings, AVE, Cronbach Alpha, CR, dan R-Square

Variable	Item	Outer loadings	AVE	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	R-square
e-WOM quantity	EQUAN1	0.816	0.711	0.713	0.840	-
	EQUAN2	0.805				
	EQUAN3	0.770				
e-WOM quality	EQUAL1	0.890	0.750	0.833	0.900	-
	EQUAL2	0.844				
	EQUAL3	0.864				
e-WOM valance	EVAL1	0.871	0.636	0.800	0.880	-
	EVAL2	0.865				
	EVAL3	0.849				
Purchase intention	PI1	0.861	0.710	0.889	0.923	0.720
	PI2	0.857				
	PI3	0.871				
	PI4	0.854				
Brand image	BI1	0.801	0.730	0.796	0.881	0.516
	BI2	0.863				
	BI3	0.864				
Perceived quality	PQ1	0.836	0.750	0.877	0.915	0.627
	PQ2	0.854				
	PQ3	0.874				
	PQ4	0.856				

Testing discriminant validity Table 4 is carried out using Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT). Discriminant validity issues arise when the HTMT value is high, with the HTMT value required to be < 0.90. Based on the overall results, the HTMT value is < 0.90, so it is proven that HTMT meets the strong criteria [36].

Table 4. Discriminant Validity Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT)

Variable	WITH A	EQUAL	EQUAN	EVAL	PQ	PI
WITH A						
EQUAL	0.788					
EQUAN	0.783	0.812				
EVAL	0.680	0.599	0.702			
PQ	0.818	0.760	0.823	0.790		
PI	0.872	0.834	0.826	0.737	0.852	

Next, testing discriminant validity is also conducted using the Fornell Larcker Criterion Table 5. Discriminant validity is considered good if the square root value of the AVE for each indicator is greater than the correlation between indicators in the model. Based on Table 5, it is proven that each variable indicator has the greatest results in each indicator [37].

Table 5. Discriminant Validity Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Variable	WITH A	EQUAL	EQUAN	EVAL	PQ	PI
WITH A	0.843					
EQUAL	0.643	0.866				
EQUAN	0.589	0.626	0.797			
EVAL	0.570	0.508	0.550	0.842		
PQ	0.684	0.651	0.652	0.686	0.854	
PI	0.735	0.719	0.659	0.644	0.755	0.866

Table 6 shows the test results obtained direct effect so that the influence between variables is known directly, where the significance can be seen through the values t-statistics > 1.96 and p-values < 0,05 [38].

Table 6. Operational Definition of Variables

Variable	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Information
EQUAN → PI	0,112	0,110	0,049	2,271	0,023	Significant
EQUAL → PI	0,251	0,245	0,081	3,094	0,002	Significant
EVAL → PI	0,138	0,135	0,047	2,898	0,004	Significant

Table 7 shows the test results indirect effect obtained to find out whether other variables are significantly influenced by the mediating variable. The significance criteria can be seen through the values t-statistics > 1.96 and p-values < 0,05 [39].

Table 7. Indirect Effect

Variable	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Information
EQUAN WITH A PI	0,054	0,054	0,025	2,168	0,030	Significant
EQUAL WITH A PI	0,100	0,101	0,032	3,078	0,002	Significant
EVAL WITH A PI	0,069	0,073	0,032	2,143	0,032	Significant
EQUAN PQ PI	0,061	0,060	0,027	2,265	0,024	Significant
EQUAL PQ PI	0,071	0,072	0,032	2,205	0,028	Significant
EVAL PQ PI	0,098	0,096	0,037	2,612	0,009	Significant

4.2. Discussion

The test results for H1 indicate that e-WOM quantity has a significant positive influence on purchase intention among Generation Z buyers in Bandung. This means that as the number of e-WOM reviews encountered or accepted by Generation Z increases, so does their intention to purchase. This finding supports previous studies, which also found that e-WOM quantity influences purchase intention [40].

Regarding H2, e-WOM quality was found to have a significant positive impact on purchase intention. This suggests that higher-quality e-WOM (more informative, persuasive, and clear reviews) increases the likelihood of purchase among Generation Z [41]. Furthermore, as shown in Table 6, this research highlights that e-WOM quality has the strongest effect on purchase intention, as evidenced by the highest t-statistic compared to other variables [42].

In terms of H3, e-WOM valence (whether positive, negative, or neutral) also significantly affects purchase intention. The emotional value of the reviews that Generation Z encounters directly impacts their purchasing decisions. This result is consistent with previous studies [43].

The findings for H4 show that brand image mediates the relationship between e-WOM quantity and purchase intention, which is significant for Generation Z in Bandung. These results indicate that a higher quantity of e-WOM not only directly influences purchase intention but also strengthens the brand image, ultimately boosting purchase intention. A strong brand image helps increase consumer desire to make a purchase [44].

As for H5, brand image mediates the relationship between e-WOM quality and purchase intention, with significant results among Generation Z in Bandung. The quality of e-WOM plays an important role, not only by directly influencing purchase intention but also by enhancing the brand image, which ultimately increases the likelihood of purchase. As presented in Table 7, e-WOM quality mediated by brand image has the greatest effect, with the highest t-statistic compared to other variables [45].

The findings for H6 show that brand image also mediates the relationship between e-WOM valence and purchase intention. This suggests that the emotional value of e-WOM reviews, whether positive or negative, influences purchase intention by strengthening the brand image [46].

Regarding H7, perceived quality mediates the effect of e-WOM quantity on purchase intention, with significant results for Generation Z in Bandung. This implies that a higher quantity of e-WOM increases the perceived quality of the product, which in turn boosts purchase intention [47].

In the case of H8, perceived quality mediates the effect of e-WOM quality on purchase intention, with significant results for Generation Z in Bandung. This finding indicates that higher e-WOM quality increases the perceived quality of the product, which subsequently raises purchase intention [48].

Finally, for H9, perceived quality also mediates the effect of e-WOM valence on purchase intention. These results suggest that both positive and negative e-WOM reviews, mediated by perceived quality, significantly impact purchase intention [49].

This study provides new insights by demonstrating the mediating roles of brand image and perceived quality in the relationship between e-WOM and purchase intention [50]. It expands on previous studies by focusing specifically on Generation Z in Bandung, offering a more nuanced understanding of how digital word-of-mouth influences this unique demographics purchasing behavior.

5.   MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

This study highlights the significant role of e-WOM in influencing the purchase intentions of Generation Z, with brand image and perceived quality acting as crucial mediators. To effectively engage this demographic, companies should focus on encouraging positive reviews by enhancing customer experiences and creating a conducive environment for sharing feedback. Ensuring high-quality, informative, and persuasive reviews is also essential, as this type of e-WOM has a direct impact on consumer decision-making. Additionally, managing brand image plays a key role in building trust and credibility, as Generation Z tends to favor brands they perceive as authentic and reliable. Companies should prioritize strengthening their brand image, ensuring that it reflects transparency, quality, and alignment with the values of this generation. By leveraging e-WOM strategically, brands can increase their reach and influence, fostering loyalty and ultimately driving purchases [51].

6.   CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of the analysis and hypothesis testing, it is concluded that e-WOM quantity, e-WOM quality, and e-WOM valence have a significant influence on purchase intention. This means that the number, quality, and direction of the valence of online reviews play an important role in shaping Generation Z's intention to make purchases. Brand image and perceived quality act as effective mediators in strengthening the relationship between e-WOM and purchase intention. A positive brand image can foster a good perception of the brand among Generation Z, thus enhancing the impact of e-WOM. Meanwhile, perceived quality provides additional confidence to Generation Z, which ultimately increases their intention to buy the products offered.

It is essential to implement effective e-WOM management strategies, such as ensuring consistent positive reviews and improving the perception of good brand quality through consumer experiences. By understanding the roles of e-WOM, brand image, and perceived quality, businesses are better equipped to reach and influence Generation Z consumers. This understanding can help companies improve their marketing strategies to effectively engage with this demographic and boost sales.

There are several limitations to this research. First, the data are limited because the research focuses only on Generation Z in Bandung, which means the findings may not fully represent Generation Z as a whole.

Additionally, this study analyzes only a few aspects of e-WOM that are believed to influence the buyer journey toward making a purchase, and the results focus on purchase intention rather than the final purchase decision. Future researchers are encouraged to expand the scope to include a broader sample of Generation Z and explore additional elements of e-WOM that may make this communication more impactful. They can also address the gap in this study by examining the conversion from purchase intention to the actual purchase decision, which is the final stage of the purchasing process.

7. DECLARATIONS

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7.2. Author Contributions

Conceptualization: HD; Methodology: HD and AA; Software: HD and AA; Validation: AA; Formal Analysis: AA; Investigation: HD; Resources: HD; Data Curation: AA; Writing Original Draft Preparation: HD and AA; Writing Review and Editing: HD and AA Visualization: HD and AA; All authors,HD and AA, have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

7.3. Data Availability Statement

The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

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7.5. Declaration of Conflicting Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest, known competing financial interests, or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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