

The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) and Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decisions of Erigo Products Mediated by Consumer Trust Among Generation Z in Pekanbaru

Desvi Emti^{1*}, Sehani², Ainun Mardiah³, Nadila Eka Sari⁴

^{1,3,4} Management, Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, Pekanbaru, Indonesia

² D3 Corporate Management, Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, Pekanbaru, Indonesia

Email Correspondent

desvi.emty@uin-suska.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

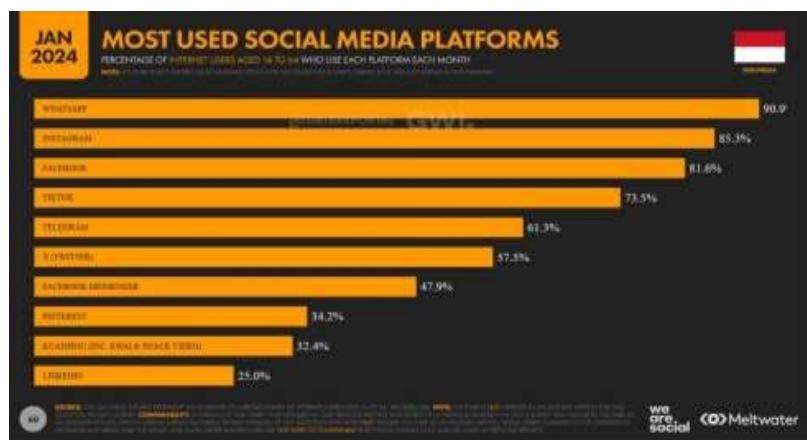
The aim of this study is to examine the impact of electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) and social media marketing on consumer purchasing decisions for Erigo products among Generation Z in Pekanbaru, with consumer trust acting as a mediating variable. This research employs a quantitative approach, using structural equation modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Square (PLS) for analysis. The sample consists of 100 respondents selected through purposive sampling. The findings reveal that E-WOM significantly influences purchasing decisions, although it does not contribute to building consumer trust. In contrast, social media marketing does not have a direct positive effect on consumer trust. However, consumer trust positively affects purchasing decisions and mediates the indirect effect of social media marketing, but it does not mediate the effect of E-WOM. With an R-square value of 0.325, the model explains 32.5% of the variation in the dependent variable, where E-WOM and social media marketing influence consumer trust. Furthermore, an R-square value of 0.542 indicates that these three variables account for 54.2% of the factors affecting purchasing decisions, while the remaining influence is due to other factors not explored in this study.

INTRODUCTION

The clothing and fashion business sector is a type of business that never changes with time. This is due to the fact that clothing is one of the basic human needs. In fact, due to current technological advances, clothing has significantly transformed into a part of lifestyle and fashion, and has become a basic necessity for modern society and a social identity.

Erigo is a fashion label or clothing brand that focuses on producing trendy, semi-formal, stylish, and comfortable women's and men's clothing. Companies like Erigo can reach a wider and more personalized audience by utilizing digital channels like Instagram and TikTok. Digital promotional tactics using social media allow them to get closer to customers, increase brand recognition, and influence consumers to make more informed purchasing decisions.

Figure 1. List of the Most Used Social Media



Source: Hootsuite and We Are Social

Figure 1. shows that the internet-connected population in Indonesia, particularly those aged 16 to 64, predominantly uses WhatsApp, Instagram, followed by Facebook, TikTok, and various other social media platforms. The increasing use of social media in Indonesia allows Erigo to reach a wider customer base and community.

This study examines the influence of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) and social media marketing on purchasing decisions for Erigo products among Generation Z in Pekanbaru. E-WOM, defined as customer feedback shared online, has significant potential to influence purchasing decisions (Kotler, 2018). However, many consumers remain skeptical about the reliability of the information they receive, creating challenges in building trust.

Social media marketing also plays a crucial role in attracting consumer attention, but not all social media marketing strategies are effective in reaching the target audience (Novila, 2018). In this regard, presenting engaging and relevant content is key to increasing consumer interest in the products offered.

Consumer trust in information conveyed through e-WOM and social media advertising is a crucial factor in the decision-making process. With the many conveniences offered by e-commerce, there are several issues related to product quality, price perceptions, and product reviews. Over time, consumers encounter stores with varying prices, but the images displayed in the stores are identical, making consumers confused because it is difficult to distinguish which stores are genuine and

which are not. Furthermore, over time, stores are found to deceive buyers into making purchases and provide fake reviews to increase sales.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Purchasing Decision

Based on the definition of Kotler and Armstrong (2016), consumer attitudes regarding purchasing decisions are: an analysis of how individuals, communities, or organizations make choices and make purchases, and the consumption of goods, services, concepts, or knowledge directly in an effort to satisfy their needs and expectations.

According to Djaya (2023), a purchasing decision is defined as a choice made by a buyer in purchasing an item using the stages they go through before purchasing, such as perceived importance, pre-purchase actions, method of use, and post-purchase feelings. It is a process consisting of a series of steps to determine the actions to be taken after purchasing a product or service.

In the decision-making process, a purchasing decision refers to a series of steps to select one or more of the most appropriate behavioral alternatives to solve a problem. This decision is considered the primary choice before proceeding to the next stage of the decision-making process (Firmansyah, 2018).

Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)

Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) is a statement or review from a customer about a product or company posted on social media for public viewing. These reviews can be positive or negative, depending on the consumer's experience (Ahmad et al., 2020).

According to Pramudita and Sitinjak (2021), electronic word of mouth is defined as a description of positive, negative, or neutral experiences produced by actual, potential, or previous customers regarding a product, brand, service, or business presented online. According to Ismagilova (2017), electronic word of mouth is a consistent, adaptive interaction process on the internet between prospective and existing customers, existing customers, or former customers, who discuss a particular service, product, brand, or company, and whose information is accessible to the public online.

According to Kotler, (2018) electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) is customer comments using online devices such as online pages, promotions, mobile applications, online broadcasts, emails, personal pages, social media, and other promotional activities that attract consumers' attention so that they are encouraged to share them with others.

Social Media Marketing

According to Keller & Kotler (2016), social media marketing is a promotional communication tool that uses online-based electronic media channels to improve a company's image, awareness, and sales by using various images, videos, and text. Annissa (2021) defines social media as a medium that facilitates communication

between individuals without face-to-face interaction. Social media is also used for sharing, allowing people to interact with each other about knowledge and information.

Social media marketing (Santoso, Baihaqi, & Persada, 2017) is a type of promotion used to increase the use of social media, including blogging, microblogging, and social networking, to improve awareness, understanding, retention, and even attitudes toward a product, company, individual, or group.

Based on this explanation, it can be concluded that social media marketing is a promotional activity carried out by marketers through social media in the hope of increasing customer perception and understanding of a brand, product, or service that can attract consumer interest.

Consumer Trust

Suparwo and Rahmadewi (2021) state that consumer trust is formed from all the conclusions and knowledge customers have regarding a product's attributes, the product itself, and how it is used. On the other hand, Wiedyani and Prabowo (2019) explain that customer trust refers to the customer response resulting from evaluating the difference between what is expected and the actual performance experienced during use. According to Kotler (2018), trust is a company's belief in the reliability of its business partners. Several factors in interpersonal and interorganizational interactions, such as skills, honesty, integrity, and good manners, contribute to the formation of trust.

According to Sangadji & Sopiah (2015), consumer trust is crucial for business continuity because if a business's products are not trusted by consumers, it will be difficult to grow. Conversely, if a business's products are trusted by customers, the business can continue to evolve in the market. Companies must always gain consumer trust, and the more trust consumers give, the better the relationship the company has with its consumers.

Referring to various explanations by experts by looking at the existence, this shows that consumer trust is a form of belief that consumers have different attributes and preferences for a product, which makes them confident that the company will fulfill their needs and desires by providing the product.

METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted in Pekanbaru City. The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) and social media marketing on purchasing decisions for Erigo products, mediated by consumer trust among Generation Z in Pekanbaru.

A population is a general conclusion based on entities with specific qualities and characteristics determined by the researcher in studying and drawing conclusions. The population in this study was Gen Z in Pekanbaru City, whose number is uncertain and who have purchased Erigo products on social media.

A sample is a collection of population elements provided to represent an object. The sampling process uses two techniques: probability sampling (each individual in the population has a chance of being selected) and non-probability sampling (not all

elements in the population have a chance of being selected). Sugiyono (2019) stated that the Lameshow formula was used in this study, resulting in a total of 96.04 respondents, rounded up to 100. This study adopted a non-probability sampling method, specifically purposive sampling, which was applied based on specific criteria in accordance with the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2019). With this approach, researchers applied purposive sampling to select the appropriate group, where the sample was selected by carefully explaining the established criteria. The standards in this research sample selection process aim to ensure that the information obtained is relevant and supports the overall research objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Validity Test

Convergent Validity

Table 1. Convergent Validity Test Results Before Dropping

	E- WOM	Consumer Trust	Purchase Decision	Social Media Marketing	Keterangan
EWOM1	0.254				No Valid
EWOM2	0.882				Valid
EWOM3	0.811				Valid
EWOM4	0.863				Valid
CT1		0.728			Valid
CT 2		0.771			Valid
CT 3		0.782			Valid
CT 4		0.788			Valid
PD1			0.792		Valid
PD 2			0.794		Valid
PD 3			0.784		Valid
PD4			0.792		Valid
SMM1				0.767	Valid
SMM2				0.818	Valid
SMM3				0.788	Valid
SMM4				0.739	Valid

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

Based on Table 1, it is clear that most of the indicators representing each variable in this study have outer loading values exceeding 0.7, indicating that they are valid. However, there is one exception, indicator X1.1 from the electronic word of mouth variable, which shows an outer loading value of 0.254. This finding indicates that indicators with outer loading values above 0.7 demonstrate a strong or adequate level of validity and thus meet the requirements for convergent validity. Conversely, indicators with outer loading values less than 0.7 are considered to have a low or inadequate level of validity and, therefore, should be excluded from the model.

Table 2. Convergent Validity Test Results After Dropping

	E- WOM	Consumer Trust	Purchase Decision	Social Media Marketing	Information
EWOM2	0.877				Valid
EWOM3	0.814				Valid
EWOM4	0.872				Valid

CT1	0.727	Valid
CT 2	0.771	Valid
CT 3	0.783	Valid
CT 4	0.788	Valid
PD1	0.793	Valid
PD 2	0.794	Valid
PD 3	0.784	Valid
PD4	0.792	Valid
SMM1	0.767	Valid
SMM2	0.818	Valid
SMM3	0.788	Valid
SMM4	0.739	Valid

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

Based on Table 2, it can be seen that the output of the loading factor value of the second stage of testing is that all statements of the variables Electronic Word Of Mouth, Social Media Marketing, Consumer Trust and purchasing actions. All indicators are considered valid because they have a loading factor value above 0.7, so they can be used in the next research and analysis stages.

Average Variant Extracted

Table 3. Average Variant Extracted

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Average variance Extracted \sqrt{AVE}
E-WOM	0.731	0.855
Consumer Trust	0.589	0.768
Purchase Decision	0.625	0.791
Social Media Marketing	0.606	0.779

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

Referring to the data presented in Table 3, it can be seen that the AVE values for Electronic Word of Mouth, Social Media Marketing, Consumer Trust, and Purchasing Decisions all exceed 0.50. This concludes that each of these constructs meets the validity criteria.

Discriminant Validity

Table 4. Discriminant Validity Test (Cross Loading Value)

	E-WOM	Consumer Trust	Purchase Decision	Social Media Marketing
EWOM2	0.877	0.497	0.561	0.584
EWOM3	0.814	0.394	0.401	0.473
EWOM4	0.872	0.383	0.530	0.469
CT1	0.311	0.727	0.501	0.455
CT 2	0.456	0.771	0.542	0.305
CT 3	0.457	0.783	0.452	0.479
CT 4	0.302	0.788	0.502	0.349
PD1	0.561	0.573	0.793	0.547
PD 2	0.359	0.450	0.794	0.440
PD 3	0.494	0.531	0.784	0.463
PD4	0.410	0.480	0.792	0.351
SMM1	0.420	0.435	0.433	0.767

SMM2	0.492	0.419	0.507	0.818
SMM3	0.537	0.467	0.463	0.788
SMM4	0.402	0.257	0.386	0.739

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

Based on Table 4 above, it shows that each indicator in the research variable has a high cross-loading value with its own construct, which can be compared with the values of other constructs. This finding also indicates that there are indicators in the research that demonstrate discriminant validity that can define the variables.

Reliability Test

Table 5. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability Values

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Electronic Word of Mouth	0.817	0.833
Consumer Trust	0.767	0.767
Purchase Decision	0.802	0.808
Social Media Marketing	0.785	0.794

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

According to the data presented in the following table, it can be seen that the composite reliability measure for each research variable has a Cronbach's alpha value exceeding 0.70. These results confirm that each variable meets the criteria for composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha, indicating a variable with a high level of reliability.

Table 6. R-Square Results

Variable	R-square
Consumer Trust	0.325
Purchase Decision	0.542

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

Referring to the data presented in the table above, the R-Square value for the trust variable is 0.325. This indicates that trust can be explained by electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) and social media marketing by 32.5%, while the remaining 67.5% is influenced by other variables not included in this study. Meanwhile, the R-Square value for the purchase decision variable is 0.542, meaning that 54.2% of the variation in purchasing decisions can be explained by social media marketing, trust, and E-WOM, while the remaining 45.8% is caused by other unobserved factors.

Table 7. Q-Square

Q SQUARE	0.472558
Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025	

Based on the data in table 7 with a Q2 value of 0.472558, this result indicates that the model has a value capacity that is relevant to the endogenous constructs analyzed.

Table 8. Direct Effect Test Results

	Original sample (O)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Information
E-WOM -> PURCHASE DECISION	0.255	2.300	0.021	Accepted
SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING -> PURCHASE DECISION	0.212	1.789	0.074	Rejected

E-WOM -> CONSUMER TRUST	0.297	1.953	0.051	Rejected
SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING -> CONSUMER TRUST	0.340	2.130	0.033	Accepted
CONSUMER TRUST -> PURCHASE DECISION	0.413	5.009	0.000	Accepted

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

The hypothesis test produces the first data. The path coefficient obtained is 0.255, with a P-value indicating that the composition of the influence of E-WOM related to purchasing decisions. The p-value obtained is 0.021 with a positive T-statistic of 2.300. These results meet the rule of thumb criteria, where p-value < 0.05 and T-statistic > 1.96. Therefore, it can be concluded that Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) has a positive and detailed influence related to purchasing decisions. Based on these results, the first hypothesis is declared accepted.

H1: Electronic word of mouth has a positive influence on purchasing decisions.

The results of the second hypothesis test showed a path coefficient of 0.212, and a P-value indicating the influence of social media marketing on purchasing decisions was represented by a coefficient of 0.074 with a positive T-statistic of 1.789. However, this value was still below the established threshold, namely a T-statistic > 1.96, so the effect was not statistically significant (T-table < 1.96 and P-value > 0.05). Thus, based on the analysis, social media marketing does not have a significant direct influence on purchasing decisions. Based on this hypothesis, the second hypothesis is rejected or not accepted.

H2: Social media marketing has no impact on purchasing decisions.

The results of the third hypothesis test showed a path coefficient of 0.297, while the accompanying P-value indicated an influence between the e-WOM variables on consumer trust. These results indicate that electronic word of mouth does not have a significant direct impact because the P-value is > 0.05 and the T-statistic is < 1.96. Based on these hypotheses, the third hypothesis is rejected or not accepted.

H3: Electronic word of mouth does not have a significant influence on consumer trust.

The fourth hypothesis test yielded a path coefficient of 0.340, with a P-value of 0.033 and a T-statistic of 2.130. These results align with the rule of thumb, which states that a hypothesis is considered significant when the P-value is less than 0.05 and the T-statistic exceeds 1.96. Therefore, we conclude that social media marketing has a positive impact on consumer trust, and thus, the fourth hypothesis is supported.

H4: Social media marketing has a positive and significant impact on the formation of consumer trust.

The fifth hypothesis test, which examines the influence of consumer trust on purchasing decisions, showed a path coefficient of 0.413, supported by a P-value of 0.000 and a T-statistic of 5.009. These values meet generally accepted criteria, namely, a P-value below 0.05 and a T-statistic above 1.96 indicating statistical significance.

H5: Consumer trust has a significant and positive influence on purchasing decisions.

Table 9. Direct Effect Test Results

	Original sample (O)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Information
E-WOM -> CONSUMER				
TRUST -> PURCHASE	0.123	1.771	0.077	Rejected
DECISION				
SOCIAL MEDIA				
MARKETING ->				
CONSUMER TRUST ->	0.286	1.988	0.042	Accepted
PURCHASE DECISION				

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

The impact of e-WOM on purchasing decisions mediated by consumer trust. The results of the sixth hypothesis test revealed a path coefficient of 0.123, with a P-value of 0.077 and a T-statistic of 1.771. This value is smaller than the T-table value <1.96 and a P-value >0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that the influence of electronic word of mouth does not affect consumer trust mediated by consumer trust. Based on this hypothesis, the sixth hypothesis is rejected or not accepted.

H6: The influence of electronic word of mouth on purchasing decisions becomes insignificant if influenced indirectly through the mediation of consumer trust.

The results of the seventh hypothesis test showed a path coefficient of 0.286, with a P-value of 0.042 and a positive T-statistic of 1.988. These values meet the rule-of-thumb criteria, namely a P-value <0.05 and a T-statistic >1.96. Thus, it can be concluded that social media marketing has a positive and significant relationship with purchasing decisions mediated by consumer trust. Based on this hypothesis, the seventh hypothesis is accepted.

H7: Social media marketing exhibits a significant influence on the purchasing decision-making process if mediated by consumer trust.

Discussion

The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) on Purchasing Decisions

Based on the analysis results, the Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) variable was proven to have a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions. The SmartPLS 4.0 output showed a t-statistic of 2.300, which exceeds the t-table value of 1.988, and a p-value of 0.021, which is below the 0.05 significance level. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that E-WOM influences purchasing decisions is accepted. This finding indicates that the more positive and convincing the E-WOM information received by consumers, the greater their likelihood of making a purchase.

The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchasing Decisions

Based on the test results, the Social Media Marketing variable did not have a significant influence on purchasing decisions. The t-statistic value of 1.789 is lower than the t-table value of 1.96, with a p-value of 0.074, which exceeds the 0.05 significance level. Therefore, the hypothesis regarding the influence of social media marketing on purchasing decisions is not supported in this study. Although e-WOM contributes to the formation of consumer trust, its contribution in this context is not strong enough.

The Influence of E-WOM on Consumer Trust

The analysis results indicate that e-WOM does not have a significant influence on consumer trust. The t-statistic value of 1.953 is still below the t-table value of 1.96,

with a p-value of 0.051, which exceeds the 0.05 significance level. Although this value is close to the significance level, indicating that e-WOM has the potential to build trust, it is not strong enough in the context of this study.

The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Trust

Statistical tests show that social media marketing activities have a positive and significant influence on consumer trust, with a t-statistic of 2.130 and a p-value of 0.033. This finding indicates that the quality of a company's interactions and communications with consumers through platforms like Instagram and TikTok can increase perceptions of brand reliability and credibility.

The Influence of Consumer Trust on Purchasing Decisions

The test results show that consumer trust has a significant impact on purchasing decisions, with a t-statistic of 5.009 and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that consumers who believe in the integrity and goodwill of the Erigo brand tend to be more confident in their purchase decisions.

The Influence of E-WOM on Purchasing Decisions Mediated by Consumer Trust

The test results show that the impact of E-WOM on purchasing decisions through consumer trust yields a t-statistic of 1.771 and a p-value of 0.077, indicating an insignificant mediation effect. This means that consumer trust is not a strong enough mediator between E-WOM and purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchasing Decisions Mediated by Consumer Trust

The test results show that social media marketing has a significant impact on purchasing decisions through consumer trust, with a t-statistic of 1.988 and a p-value of 0.042. This indicates that consumer trust is an effective mediator in bridging the influence of social media marketing on purchasing decisions.

CONCLUSION

The research concluded that Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) significantly influences purchasing decisions, with a T-statistic of 2.300 and a P-value of 0.021. Social media marketing has no significant direct impact on consumer purchasing decisions (T-statistic = 1.789; P-value = 0.074). E-WOM does not have a strong enough impact on building consumer trust (T-statistic = 1.953; P-value = 0.051). Social media marketing clearly influences consumer trust (T-statistic = 2.130; P-value = 0.033). Consumer trust has a very significant impact and plays a crucial role in increasing consumer trust (T-statistic = 5.009; P-value = 0.000). Consumer trust does not play a significant role as a liaison between variables in the influence of e-WOM on consumer purchasing decisions, with a T-statistic of 1.771 and a P-value of 0.077 (>0.05).

The role of consumer trust as a mediator was proven significant in this study, which significantly affected the relationship between social media and customer relationships, as indicated by a T-statistic of 1.988 and a P-value of 0.042 (below 0.05).

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