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# The Influence of Social Media Influencer and Electronic Word of Mouth Mediated By Brand Image on Purchase Intention at Eternamoore Beauty Clinic Makassar

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**Abstract:** This article investigates the effect between social media influencer and electronic word of mouth mediated by brand image on purchase intention at Eternamoore Beauty Clinic Makassar through descriptive-quantitative research. We test the hypotheses of 117 respondents from Eternamoore's Instagram followers and used the Structural Equation Modelling with PLS. The result reveal that social media influencer exhibit better for brand image. Electronic word of mouth has significant and positive effect on brand image. Whereas the social media influencer has unsignificant effects on purchase intention, brand image mediates this effect. Electronic word of mouth can enhance purchase intention. Additionally, the moderated mediation analysis result revealed that the indirect effect of electronic word of mouth on purchase intention is positively moderated by brand image. These results provide a better understanding of the influencer and e-WOM and offer important contribution to the social media marketing and add valuable insights for practitioners to advance the use of Influencers and e-WOM.

**Keywords:** Social Media Influencer, Electronic Word of Mouth, Brand Image, Purchase Intention.

## INTRODUCTION

Digitalization's era has changed the perspective of marketers (Andreki & Yazdanifard, 2014). According to data, Indonesian's internet usage has reached 210 million people which makes internet digital services as a great opportunity to promote the products and services (Firmansyah, 2022). Digital marketing provides many advantages such as to stay connected with customers or potential customers, receiving feedback, enable marketers to achieve marketing objectives with relatively low cost, and enhance purchase intention (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

Purchase intention is the desire to buy product or service within a certain time (Naszariah et al., 2021; Romadhoni & Nurhikmah, 2018). Important factors to influence purchase intention is brand image. When brand image has formed, it could increase interest and purchase decisions. The company implements a strategy to improve their brand's image among customers, who often judge a brand image based on their knowledge, attitude, and perceptions. (Ali Soomro et al., 2021). To distinguish one product from competitor's, it is crucial to cultivate the proper brand image, outperform the competitors and offer higher value. (Romadhoni & Nurhikmah, 2018; Ruslan et al., 2021). According to Dempsey (2016), effective marketing may pique consumer's intention in products and services and create a lasting impression. The advancement of technology and the availability of social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok or Youtube, marketers have chosen to use social media as a platform to advertise items (Balaban & Racz, 2020; Ong & Ito, 2019b).

One of the most popular social media platforms in 2023 was Instagram. As of January 2023, Instagram has ranked first as the most used social media in Indonesia. There were 86.5% oof the total population in Indonesia. Instagram includes features and services that can be useful for managing a business. Displaying intriguing images or videos on Instagram's feed which may then be shared on another social media such as Whatsapp and Facebook is a good opportunity to reach wider audience for marketers.

The phenomenon of sharing daily content on Instagram, like pictures of daily activities, places visited, and outfits indirectly attracts curiosity from audience and can result a chain on electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) (Aprilia & Kusumawati, 2021). E-WOM develops when a costumer gets an experience from product or service's usage, whether positive or negative, which inspires them to share it as information to others via media. Ratings, opinions, reviews, feedback, comments, testimonials, and other types of consumer experiences can all be used as information in e-WOM. Costumer to costumer information provides resources to stimulate the purchase intention (attention, interest, desire and action).

Influencers are another phenomenon of using Instagram. Social media influencer is a form of advertising that relies on one or more people to help spread trends, foster social interactions, and increase engagement rates to reach the target audience (Balaban & Racz, 2020; Chekima et al., 2020; Ong & Ito, 2019a; Young-Ae & Gyu-Ju, 2020). According to the Influencer Marketing Hub's survey (Benchmark Report, 2022), marketing through influencers increased by S13,8 billion in 2021 and projected to grow by 19% or \$16,4 billion in 2022. This demonstrates that businesses and costumers alike are becoming more interested in using social media influencer. Nonetheless, social media also has drawbacks. Based on the Federal Trade Commission, more than 2.144 complaints of violations filled for influencers in 2020. This is due to the fact that influencers are paid to promoting and may lead costumers to mistrust a company.

Beauty clinic is one of the industry in Indonesia that grows rapidly through influencers and e-WOM. Social media influencers are particularly thought to be knowledgeable about fashion, photography, and lifestyle (Anna, 2018; CNBC Indonesia, 2022). Beauty clinic marketers use influencers and e-WOM as a way to pique visitor's interest including Eternamoore beauty clinic Makassar. Their Instagram account presently has 60.100 followers and used to post costumer's reviews and they also collaborate with local influencers to market their products. According to observation result, Eternamoore beauty clinic Makassar had unsteady sales for the last six months which is a sign of declining costumer purchasing intention. Then in 2021, costumer shared her disappointment on Instagram, underscoring the mistrust of customers in influencer recommendation.

Months	Costumers	Total
December 2021	538	Rp. 1.742.192.600
January 2022	551	Rp. 1.793.265.530
February 2022	443	Rp. 1.193.849.500
March 2022	478	Rp. 1.179.856.750
April 2022	535	Rp. 1.573.478.000
May 2022	434	Rp. 1.245.637.750

Source: Secondary Data of Research, processed in 2022

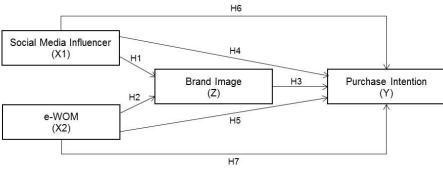
According to previous research conducted by Adewunmi et al., 2022; Giang Nam & Thái Dân, 2018; Godey et al., 2016, influencers has an appeal to purchase intention. In addition, electronic word of mouth can have significant effect on purchase intention as well (Napawut et al., 2022; Plidtookpai & Yoopetch, 2021; Zhao et al., 2020). Another research gave different result that social media influencer does not have effect on purchase intention (Hermanda et al., 2019; Nurhandayani et al., 2019)

This purpose of this research is to investigates the effect of social media influencer and e-WOM mediated by brand image on purchase intention at Eternamoore beauty clinic Makassar.

#### **METHODS**

Based on the purpose of the research, this research uses a descriptive quantitative method approach. This research was conducted at Eternamoore beauty clinic Makassar which is located at Botolempangan street, Makassar, South Sulawesi. We using questionnaire to gather quantitative data from the respondents and the distribution of the questionnaires were distributed with social media announcement. The measurement scale used the Likert scale (1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree). The population in this research is Instagram followers of Eternamoore beauty clinic. Therefore, the population is too wide so this research is using 5-10 x estimated parameters to determine the number of samples (Hair et al., 2017). We collected 117 out from 130 respondents and the data were analyzed using SmartPLS 3.0 software.

The conceptual framework can be shown in Picture 1.



**Picture 1. Conceptual Framework** 

As such, in this research, we aim to purpose the following :

H<sub>1</sub>: Social media influencer has a positive impact on brand image

- H<sub>2</sub> : Electronic word of mouth has a positive significant effect on brand image
- H<sub>3</sub>: Brand image significantly positive on purchase intention
- H<sub>4</sub>: Social media influencer has a positive impact on purchase intention
- H<sub>5</sub> : Electronic word of mouth has a positive impact on purchase intention
- H<sub>6</sub>: Brand image mediate the effect of social media influencer on purchase intention

 $\mathrm{H}_7$  : Brand image mediate the impact of electronic word of mouth on purchase intention

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

#### Result

The respondents in this research are mostly women (60%) and self-employed (40.9%). Additionally, the respondents mostly in a range of 31 to 40 years old (38%). The descriptive analysis also shows that means of the four variables (social media influncer 4.12, electronic word of mouth 3.93, brand image 4.22, purchase intention 4.065) are high. These mean that most of respondents agree to the statement in the questionnaire.

Furthermore, validity is a test to state how far the data instrument can measure what want to be measured. Validity will be tested using convergent and discriminant validity test.

Table 2. Convergent Validity Test – Average Variance Extracted			
	AVE	Rule's Thumb	
Social Media Influencer	0.660	Valid	
Electronic Word of Mouth	0.701	Valid	
Brand Image	0.744	Valid	
Purchase Intention	0.558	Valid	

Source : primary data, processed 2022

From the results displayed in Table 2, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) are beyond 0.50 suggesting that measurement model had satisfactory convergent validity. To test discriminant validity, we test the cross loading value. This value for each variable must be greater than 0.70 (Imam Ghozali & Hengky Latan, 2014).

Table 3. Discriminant Validity Test – Cross Loading					
	SMI	EWOM	BI	PI	
SMI.1	<mark>0.774</mark>	0.427	0.466	0.397	
SMI.2	<mark>0.854</mark>	0.593	0.586	0.480	
SMI.3	<mark>0.806</mark>	0.515	0.480	0.559	
EWOM.1	0.563	<mark>0.786</mark>	0.494	0.563	
EWOM.2	0.560	<mark>0.843</mark>	0.461	0.565	
EWOM.3	0.478	<mark>0.879</mark>	0.546	0.600	
BI.1	0.529	0.542	<mark>0.861</mark>	0.513	
BI.2	0.516	0.401	<mark>0.850</mark>	0.511	
BI.3	0.582	0.587	<mark>0.876</mark>	0.701	
PI.1	0.401	0.396	0.594	<mark>0.752</mark>	
PI.2	0.520	0.616	0.463	<mark>0.723</mark>	
PI.3	0.450	0.545	0.542	<mark>0.790</mark>	
PI.4	0.390	0.483	0.421	<mark>0.720</mark>	
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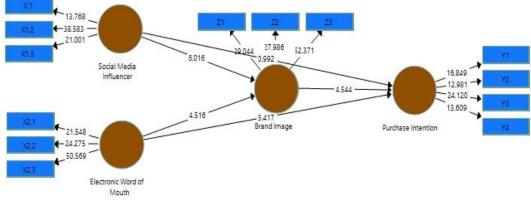
Source : Primary data, processed 2022

The results showed in Table 3, cross loading value from each variable are beyond 0.70 that means the model had satisfactory discriminant validity. Reliability of each factor in the instrument was tested using Composite reliability and each value was required to be at least 0.5 as this is the Rule's thumb. From the results displayed in Table 4, all the measured constructs exhibited reliabilities above the benchmark (Imam Ghozali & Hengky Latan, 2014). The results of structural model can be seen on Picture 2.

	Cronbach's Alpha	<b>Composite Reliability</b>	Rule's Thumb
Social Media Influencer	0.742	0.853	Realible
Electronic Word of Mouth	0.785	0.875	Realible
Brand Image	0.829	0.897	Realible
Purchase Intention	0.736	0.834	Realible

Table 4. Reliability Test – Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability
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Source : primary data, processed 2022



Picture 2. Structural Model

The results showed of  $R^2$  value. In addition to using the  $R^2$ , the model is also measured using  $R^2$  total.

$$Rm^{2} = 1 - P_{e1}^{2} \cdot P_{e2}^{2}$$
  
Pe 1 =  $\sqrt{1 - 0.465} = 0.73$   
Pe 2 =  $\sqrt{1 - 0.589} = 0.64$   
 $Rm^{2} = 1 - 0.73^{2} \cdot 0.64^{2} = 0.781$ 

The results of this calculation showed  $\text{Rm}^2$  is greater that 0 (0.781) so it indicates that model can describe the facts in this research by 78.1% and the remaining is a limitation of measuring instruments and researcher's errors in uncovering facts.

Moreover, the results from bootstrapping analysis on SEM-PLS as shown in Table 4 indicates that six of seven hypotheses are supported and one hypothesis is rejected as the p value beyond 0.50.

Table 4. Path Coefficient Analysis						
Hip	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Direct	Direct Effect		
			Coefficient	T statistic	P-value	
H1	Social Media Influencer	Brand Image	0,421	6,030	0,000	
H2	Electronic Word of Mouth	Brand Image	0,332	4,558	0,000	
H3	Brand Image	Purchase Intention	0,372	4,901	0,000	
H4	Social Media Influencer	Purchase Intention	0,106	0,994	0,320	
Н5	Electronic Word of Mouth	Purchase Intention	0,399	5,196	0,000	
Hip	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Variabel Intervening	Indirect Effect		
				Coefficient	P-value	
H6	Social Media Influencer	Purchase Intention	Brand Image	0,157	0,001	
H7	Electronic Word of Mouth	Purchase Intention	Brand Image	0,123	0,000	

Source : primary data, processed 2022

#### Discussion

Based on the data analysis, the main findings and implications were presented and discussed as follows.

Social media influencers have a positive and significant impact on brand image which means that the hypothesis is accepted. This indicate that Eternamoore beauty clinic's brand image will improve with better social media influencer implementation because persuasive influencer can raise positive perceptions of a brand, making it easier to recognize and have a good reputation. Additionally, Eternamoore beauty clinic have built partnerships with local influencers sice 2015. Influencer acts as an intermediary between company and consumers to be able to convey product's information effectively. The presence of influencers can foster two-way communication and inspire consumers to get in touch with Eternamoore beauty clinic.

Based to the hypothesis, Electronic word of mouth has a significantly positive influence on brand image. As a result, Eternamoore beauty clinic's brand image will improve as good as more positive reviews or recommendation from costumers. The previous research by Himmah and Prihatini (2021) showed that electronic word of mouth through information and recommendation in digital platform had a beneficial impact on brand perception.

The research hypothesis states that there is a positive influence between brand image and purchase intention at Eternamoore beauty clinic. This means that the better level of brand image obtained, the higher the purchase intention. Research from Nurhandayani et al (2019) found that products and services can provide satisfaction to prospective consumer and create high expectations and purchase intention as well. Brand image theory and consumer behavior both lend credence to the significance of brand image in influencing consumer purchasing intention. A strong brand image can influence how consumer view a company's value, reliability, and distinctiveness (Zebuah, 2018). Good reputation of brand image can build consumer trust and confidence in using anything offered. Because consumer are more likely to choose a brand with a positive reputation by belief it will satisfy their requirements and expectation.

As a result shows, there was no correlation between social media influencer and purchase intention in Eternamoore beauty clinic. This research is in line with Hermanda et al (2019) research where influencers cannot directly alter purchase intention but can indirectly affect the behavioral attitude variable. Facts on the ground revealed that although social media influencers can be dependable, trustworthy, and fascinating, there is a mistrust among followers of the veracity of the recommendation if influencers holds more than one brand. The cognitive dis sonance theory can be used to explain this finding (Athaya, 2022). Cognitive dissonance happens when a person's beliefs or attitudes clash with the conduct the exhibit. In this instance, despite the fact that social media influencers may have an impact on the brand image of Eternamoore beauty clinic, consumer concerns about the veracity or suitability of influencer's recommendations in light of their needs and preferences prevent a direct increase in purchase intention. Costumers may feel skeptical of reviews or promotions posted by influencer, which may lessen their desire to make a purchase.

Based on research, electronic word of mouth has a favorable impact on consumers' purchase intention at Eternamoore beauty clinic. The more positive reviews they receives, the higher possibility that a customer will make a purchase. Research from Sulthana and Shanmugam (2020) revealed that purchasing intention are influenced by a post from friends, relatives, and anonymous users on social media. Because they originate from actual customer experiences and are really shared by these users as a resource for others, e-WOM provided by users who are not compensated by company as natural boosters are more readily believed. Several explanations can be used to explain this finding. Firstly, consumer perceptions and preferences can be significantly shaped through eWOM. Online complaints or negative

experiences might harm a beauty clinic's reputation and image. Prospective consumer who read these unfavorable evaluations will probably have second thoughts and reservations about using the services, which will affect their decision to make a purchase. Second, e-WOM has a wide audience and it is simple for potential customers to access. Online reviews and information can spread quickly and make an impact on how other people regard beauty clinic.

According to the research's findings, social media influencer have a positive and significant impact on purchase intention mediated by brand image. This results indicating that there is correlation between social media influencer, brand image, and purchase intention. Social media influencers introduce and recommend beauty clinic to their followers, which can result in increased consumer purchase intention. Thus, this research provides a deeper understanding of the importance of social media influencer in the context of beauty clinic marketing. Through effective collaboration with relevant influencers, beauty clinics can leverage their influence to strengthen barand image and stimulate purchase intention.

Based on the results of the research which showed that brand image as mediating variable has an impact between electronic word of mouth and purchase intention. We discovered in this study that electronic word of mouth had a favorable impact on brand image. Consumers who hear positive reviews or testimonials are more likely to think favorably of the company. Because consumers tend to have higher levels of trust and preference for brands with a positive reputation.

### **CONCLUSION**

The current study investigated that social media influencer has a positive and significant effect on brand image at Eternamoore beauty clinic Makassar. This means the collaboration with influencer who has good attitude, can be trusted and attractive can affect the level of brand image. Electronic Word of Mouth has a positive and significant influence on brand image. Brand image partially has a significant and positive effect on purchase intention.

Social media Influencer variable on purchase intention does not have a significant effect. This indicates that although social media influencer can affect brand image, but due to consumer concerns about reliability and suitability of the recommendations, it does not directly increasing purchase intention. This study shows that electronic word of Mouth has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. Social media influencer positively and significantly have an effect to purchase intention as well as the mediating effect of brand image. Brand Image have a mediating role between electronic Word of Mouth and purchase intention. This means positive reviews can build a positive brand image which in turn influences consumer purchase intention.

Thus, future studies should investigate other variables to increase purchase intention and will be able to explain the dynamics of social change specifically and accurately. For Eternamoore beauty clinic it is suggested to have a special team to handling costumer's complaints especially complaints from socia media before gone viral.

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