

THE ROLE OF ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH (E-WOM) IN MODERATING THE INFLUENCE OF PRODUCT QUALITY ON CONSUMER PURCHASE DECISIONS (A STUDY ON CONSUMERS OF LUXCRIME BLUR & COVER TWO WAY CAKE PRODUCTS IN DENPASAR CITY)

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Abstract

Consumer purchase decisions for cosmetic products are influenced by various factors, including product quality and the impact of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM). In today's digital era, e-WOM has become one of the key elements shaping consumer perceptions of a product, especially in the highly competitive beauty industry. This study aims to examine and explain the role of e-WOM in moderating the influence of product quality on consumer purchase decisions. The research was conducted on consumers of Luxcrime Blur & Cover Two Way Cake in Denpasar City, with a sample size of 150 consumers obtained using a non-probability sampling method. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires. The analytical technique employed was Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with a Partial Least Square (PLS) approach. The results of the analysis indicate that: Product quality has a positive and significant effect on consumer purchase decisions, e-WOM has a positive but not significant effect on consumer purchase decisions, and e-WOM moderates by strengthening the influence of product quality on consumer purchase decisions.

Keywords: Purchase Decision, Product Quality, e-WOM

INTRODUCTION

Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) can be said as the dissemination of review information from previous consumers who have used a product via the internet as an expression of the actual and potential strengths or weaknesses of the product (Maulana et al., 2021). Muharom et al. (2024) stated that consumer perceptions and beliefs can moderate the influence of product quality on purchasing decisions, where consumer perceptions and beliefs in this study are electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) which will create collective perceptions through electronic interactions. Kahfi et al. (2024) also found that consumer perceptions and beliefs can strengthen the influence of product quality on consumer purchasing decisions. Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) was also found to be a moderating variable and had a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, which strengthened the influence of e-service

quality on purchasing decisions with electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) as a moderating variable in 4-star hotels in West Sumatra (Surenda et al., 2022).

Before this research was conducted, a limited observation and pre-survey were conducted on 20 consumers in Denpasar City who often shop online. The purpose of this pre-survey was to obtain an initial picture of consumer behavior, especially their decision to purchase Luxcrime Blur & Cover Two Way Cake cosmetic products. There were 5 (five) questions asked to consumers and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Pre-Survey on Luxcrime Cosmetic Products in Denpasar City

No	Question	Respondent's Answer (person)			Percentage (%)	
		Yes	No	Total	Yes	No
1	Do you know the Luxcrime brand of cosmetic products?	20	0	20	100	0
2	Have you ever received information and product reviews from other consumers about Luxcrime cosmetics?	19	1	20	95	10
3	Do you think Luxcrime cosmetics have good quality and appearance?	8	12	20	40	60
4	Have you ever purchased cosmetic products from Luxcrime?	15	5	20	75	25
5	Would you decide to purchase cosmetic products from Luxcrime?	13	7	20	65	35

Source: Processed data, 2024

Table 1 shows the pre-survey data, it is known that 20 out of 20 respondents know the Luxcrime brand cosmetic products. As many as 19 out of 20 respondents have received information and product reviews from other consumers about Luxcrime cosmetics, but 1 other respondent stated no. As many as 8 out of 20 respondents stated that Luxcrime cosmetics have good quality and appearance, but 12 other respondents stated no. Then as many as 15 out of 20 respondents have bought cosmetic products from Luxcrime, but 5 other respondents stated no. Furthermore, as many as 13 out of 20 respondents stated that they would decide to buy cosmetic products from Luxcrime, but 7 other respondents stated no.

The pre-survey results showed that the Luxcrime Blur & Cover Two Way Cake product received a positive response from consumers, and received good electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), which can predominantly convince consumers to decide to buy the product. In this context, positive information and opinions from others greatly influence consumer purchasing decisions related to the Luxcrime Blur & Cover Two Way Cake product. However, the Luxcrime Blur & Cover Two Way Cake product is considered to still have poor quality and appearance compared to its competitors. Therefore, continuous efforts are needed from the Luxcrime company to improve the quality of its products in order to survive in the market and compete with competing products. This is expected to re-convince consumers to choose to make purchasing decisions on cosmetic products from Luxcrime compared to products from other competitors.

Based on the background that has been described and the existence of research gaps and existing concepts, it is necessary to conduct research on purchasing decisions influenced by product quality with electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) as a moderator on Consumers of Luxcrime Blur & Cover Two Way Cake Products in Denpasar City. This study examines how the Role of Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) Moderates the Influence of Product Quality on Consumer Purchasing Decisions (Study on Consumers of Luxcrime Blur & Cover Two Way Cake Products in Denpasar City).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study is a study that uses a quantitative approach with a casual associative form. The casual associative approach is a study that aims to determine the relationship between two or more variables that are interrelated. This approach is used because this study aims to determine the effect of product quality on purchasing decisions, product quality on electronic word of mouth, electronic word of mouth on purchasing decisions, and the moderating role of electronic word of mouth in the influence of product quality on purchasing decisions.

This research was conducted in Denpasar City, Bali on people who had purchased Luxcrime Blur & Cover Two Way Cake products. Denpasar City was chosen as the research location because it is the capital city of Bali Province and the city with the largest population compared to other regencies. Based on data from the Bali Province Central Statistics Agency (2023), Denpasar City is ranked first as the largest number of internet users in Bali Province at 87.54 percent. This makes Denpasar City the center of the capital city whose people are technology literate, so they tend to actively use social media to share personal experiences and obtain information. Denpasar City is also a center of activity

where everything is developing rapidly, so it will make it easier for the author to collect respondents who are ready to help this research in order to obtain comprehensive data.

The population that will be used in this study is the users of Luxcrime Blur & Cover Two Way Cake products in Denpasar City whose number is not known for certain. The sampling method used in this study is the non-probability sampling method. Non-probability sampling is a sampling technique that does not provide equal opportunities or chances for each member of the population to be selected as a sample (Rahyuda, 2020). The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, which is a sampling technique that prioritizes research objectives rather than population characteristics in determining research samples (Sugiyono, 2019: 133).

The data to be collected in this study use a survey method. The survey method is data collection using a list of questions distributed to respondents regarding product quality, electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), and consumer purchasing decisions in Denpasar City. The list of statements will be distributed online and offline using Google Form. The list of statements consists of open questions containing respondent personal data and closed questions containing respondent questions and statements. This research was conducted on product consumers. Luxcrime Blur & Cover Two Way Cake in Denpasar City, with a sample size of 150 consumers obtained using the non-probability sampling method. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires. The analysis technique used is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using the Partial Least Square (PLS) approach.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Data Analysis Results

Research Model Analysis using the PLS (Partial Least Square) method

1) Evaluation of Measurement Model (Outer Model)

Table 2. Results of Convergent Validity Testing with Outer Loading

Variables	Item	Outer Loading Value	Provisions	Information
Product Quality (X)	X1	0.816	0.70	Valid
	X2	0.791	0.70	Valid
	X3	0.732	0.70	Valid
	X4	0.750	0.70	Valid
	X5	0.775	0.70	Valid
	X6	0.725	0.70	Valid
	Y1	0.894	0.70	Valid

Purchase Decision (Y)	Y2	0.892	0.70	Valid
	Y3	0.897	0.70	Valid
	Y4	0.911	0.70	Valid
	Y5	0.915	0.70	Valid
	Y6	0.867	0.70	Valid
Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) (Z)	M1	0.866	0.70	Valid
	M2	0.898	0.70	Valid
	M3	0.950	0.70	Valid

Source: Processed data, 2024 (Appendix 7)

Table 2 shows that all items have shown outer loading values of more than 0.70. This means that all items can be used to measure variables and have met the convergent validity criteria.

a) Discriminant Validity

Table 3. Results of Discriminant Validity Testing with Cross Loading

Item	Variables			
	Product Quality (X)	Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) (M)	Purchase Decision (Y)	Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) (M) x Product Quality (X)
X1	0.816	0.022	0.599	0.218
X2	0.791	0.047	0.550	0.233
X3	0.732	0.007	0.432	0.165
X4	0.750	-0.006	0.444	0.127
X5	0.775	-0.007	0.455	0.089
X6	0.725	-0.034	0.397	0.023
Y1	0.578	0.108	0.894	0.269
Y2	0.571	0.159	0.892	0.216
Y3	0.564	0.095	0.897	0.291
Y4	0.612	0.136	0.911	0.287
Y5	0.587	0.061	0.915	0.300
Y6	0.505	0.159	0.867	0.223
M1	-0.017	0.866	0.096	0.077
M2	0.026	0.898	0.096	0.087
M3	0.015	0.950	0.154	0.093
M x X	0.197	0.095	0.296	1,000

Source: Processed data, 2024 (Appendix 7)

Table 3 shows that all items have shown a cross loading correlation value with their latent variables that is greater than the correlation with other latent variables. The discriminant validity test can also be measured by comparing the square root of the average variance extracted (\sqrt{AVE}) for each variable with the correlation between the variable and other variables in the model. The model has good discriminant validity if the square root of the AVE for each variable is greater than the correlation between other variables in the model. The discriminant validity test with the square root of the average variance extracted (\sqrt{AVE}) can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of Discriminant Validity Testing with \sqrt{AVE}

	Product Quality	Buying decision	Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM)
Product Quality	0.765		
Buying decision	0.637	0.896	
Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM)	0.010	0.133	0.906

Source: Processed data, 2024 (Appendix 7)

Table 4 shows that the AVE root value for each variable is higher than the correlation value between other variables. This can provide a conclusion that all variables in this study have met discriminant validity.

b) Composite Reliability

Table 5. Composite Reliability Test Results

Variables	Composite Reliability	Provisions	Information
Product Quality	0.894	0.70	Reliable
Buying decision	0.961	0.70	Reliable
Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM)	0.932	0.70	Reliable

Source: Processed data, 2024 (Appendix 7)

Table 5 shows that the composite reliability value of each variable has a value > 0.70. This indicates that all variables in this study meet the reliability requirements.

2) Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

a) R-square value

Table 6. R-Square Value

Variables	R-Square
Buying decision	0.448

Source: Processed data, 2024 (Appendix 8)

Table 6 shows the R-square value for the purchasing decision variable is 0.448 which can be interpreted as 44.8 percent of the purchasing decision construct being influenced by product quality, while the other 55.2 percent is influenced by constructs outside the model.

b) T-statistics (bootstrapping)

Table 7. T-Statistic Value

Variables	T-Statistic	Provisions	Information
Product Quality -> Purchase Decision	11,354	1.96	Hypothesis accepted
Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) -> Purchase Decision	1,752	1.96	Hypothesis rejected
Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) x Product Quality -> Purchase Decision	2,258	1.96	Hypothesis accepted

Source: Processed data, 2024 (Appendix 8)

Table 7 shows that the T-Statistic values of H1 and H3 have values > 1.96 and H2 has a value < 1.96. This indicates that H1 and H3 in this study are accepted, while H2 is rejected.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 8. Results of Direct Influence

Direct Influence	Path Coefficient	SD	T-Statistic	P-value	Information
Product Quality -> Purchase Decision	0.603	0.053	11,354	0,000	Significant
Electronic Word of Mouth(E-WOM) -> Purchase Decision	0.111	0.063	1,752	0.080	Not Significant
Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) x Product Quality -> Purchase Decision	0.161	0.071	2,258	0.024	Significant

Source: Processed data, 2024 (Appendix 8)

Table 8 explains the results of the direct influence of the variables as follows.

1) The Influence of Product Quality on Purchasing Decisions

The results of the analysis of product quality on consumer purchasing decisions show a path coefficient value of 0.603 and a p-value of 0.000 smaller than the alpha value of 0.05 ($p\text{-value} < \alpha$) and a T-Statistic value of 11.354 greater than 1.96. These results indicate that product quality has a positive and significant effect on consumer purchasing decisions, which means that H1 in this study is supported.

2) Influence Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) on Purchasing Decisions

Results of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) analysis on consumer purchasing decisions shows a path coefficient value of 0.111 and a p-value of 0.080 smaller than the alpha value of 0.05 ($p\text{-value} < \alpha$), but the T-Statistic value of 1.752 is smaller than 1.96. These results indicate that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has a positive effect on consumer purchasing decisions but is not significant, which means that H2 in this study is rejected.

3) Influence Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) as a Moderating Variable in Relationship between Product Quality and Purchasing Decisions

Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) plays a role as a moderator in the influence of product quality on purchasing decisions which shows a value of 0.161 and a p-value of 0.024 smaller than the alpha value of 0.05 ($p\text{-value} < \alpha$) T-Statistic value of 2.258 greater than 1.96. This result means that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) plays a role in strengthening the influence between product quality and consumer purchasing decisions, which means that H3 in this study is supported. Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) in this study is said to be a pure moderator variable because it can be seen from Table 4.12 the relationship between electronic word of mouth (M) and purchasing decisions (Y) has an insignificant value and the relationship between product quality (X) x electronic word of mouth (M) and purchasing decisions (Y) has a significant value.

Discussion of Research Results

The Influence of Product Quality on Purchasing Decisions

Results of hypothesis testing on the influence product quality on consumer purchasing decisions show that product quality has a positive and significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions. This result means that the ability is getting better product quality will be able to improve consumer

purchasing decisions. Consumer behavior states that superior product quality forms positive perceptions and consumer attitudes towards the product, thus encouraging higher purchasing intentions and decisions, as supported by the results of this study which show a positive and significant influence of product quality on purchasing decisions. This is in line with research from Matheos et al. (2021), Chaerudin and Syafarudin (2021), Reinaldo and Chandra (2020). Other studies by Arda and Andriany (2023), Djafar et al. (2022), Krisstayani and Jatmiko (2023), and Deva et al. (2024) also found that product quality has a significant positive effect on purchasing decisions.

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

Results of hypothesis testing on the influence electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) on consumer purchasing decisions shows that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has a positive but insignificant effect on consumer purchasing decisions. This result means that increasing levels of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) tend to increase purchasing decisions, but the effect is not significant or not strong enough. The consumer behavior model explains that although electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) can shape information exposure and influence consumers initial perceptions, its effect on purchasing decisions may not be significant because the final decision is more influenced by internal consumer factors, such as personal needs or direct experience with the product. These results are supported by research by Luthfiyatillah et al. (2020) and Kasakeyan et al. (2021) which states that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has a positive but not significant effect on purchasing decisions. This result is also in accordance with research conducted by Febiyati and Aqmala (2022), Dewi et al. (2023), and Dwi Susanti et al. (2024) which shows that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) does not have a significant effect on purchasing decisions.

The Role of Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) as a Moderating Variable in the Relationship between Product Quality and Purchasing Decisions

The test results show that the variable selectronic word of mouth (e-WOM) considered to be able to strengthen the influence of product quality on purchasing decisions. This result means that when the quality of the product is high and is followed by electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) which is positive then has an impact on increasing consumer purchasing decisions. The consumer behavior model explains that positive electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) strengthens the influence of product quality on purchasing decisions by providing additional information that supports consumer perceptions, strengthens beliefs about product superiority, and encourages more confident evaluations in the decision-making process. Muharom et al. (2024) stated that consumer perception and belief can moderate the influence of product quality

on purchasing decisions, where consumer perception and belief in this study are electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), which will create collective perception through electronic interactions. Kahfi et al. (2024) also found that consumer perceptions and beliefs can strengthen the influence of product quality on consumer purchasing decisions. Research by Surenda et al. (2022) and Yunita and Nirawati (2022) also showed that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) can be a moderating variable and has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions.

CONCLUSION

The conclusions obtained based on the results of this study are as follows.

- 1) Product quality has a positive and significant effect on consumer purchasing decisions. The better the product quality level, the higher the consumer purchasing decision level, and vice versa.
- 2) Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) has a positive but not significant effect on consumer purchasing decisions. The increasing level of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) tends to increase purchasing decisions, but the influence is not significant or not strong enough.
- 3) Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) as a pure moderator (pure moderation) which moderate by strengthening the influence of product quality on purchasing decisions. This means that when the quality of a product is reinforced with positive electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), it will have an impact on increasing consumer purchasing decisions.

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