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# The Role of Brand Attitude to Mediate Electronic Word of Mouth on Purchase Intention

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Keywords:</b> Electronic Word of Mouth; Brand Attitude; Purchase Intention; Digital Marketing; Consumer Behavior.</p> <p><b>Conflict of Interest Statement:</b> The author(s) declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.</p> <p><b>Copyright © 2024 ABIM. All rights reserved.</b></p>	<p><b>Purpose:</b> This study aims to investigate the role of Brand Attitude as a mediator in the relationship between Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) and Purchase Intention.</p> <p><b>Research Design and Methodology:</b> His research employs a quantitative survey approach. Data were collected from 171 respondents who were guests at Suni Garden Lake Hotel &amp; Resort Sentani. The validity and reliability of the research instruments were tested, and analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine the relationships between variables.</p> <p><b>Findings and Discussion:</b> The main findings indicate that eWOM positively and significantly affects Brand Attitude and purchase Intention. The regression results show that Brand Attitude mediates the relationship between eWOM and Purchase Intention, thus strengthening the impact of eWOM on consumer purchase decisions.</p> <p><b>Implication:</b> The implications of this study highlight the importance of effectively managing eWOM to enhance Brand Attitude and Purchase Intention. Marketers can leverage positive reviews and constructive interactions on social media to strengthen Brand Attitude. This study also opens opportunities for further research to explore how specific elements of eWOM influence Brand Attitude and Purchase Intention across different demographic segments and cultural contexts.</p>

## Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, the intersection of e-commerce and financial performance has become a crucial focal point for academic researchers and marketing practitioners. E-commerce, defined broadly as the buying and selling of goods and services over electronic systems such as the Internet, has revolutionized how businesses operate and interact with consumers (Laudon & Traver, 2020). The emergence of digital platforms has facilitated new business models that enable companies to reach a global audience with minimal physical infrastructure. As a result, businesses have increasingly shifted their strategies towards online channels, aiming to capitalize on the growing consumer base that prefers digital transactions over traditional brick-and-mortar shopping experiences (Keels, 2021). However, despite the proliferation of e-commerce activities, their direct impact on financial performance remains significant. While some studies suggest a positive correlation between e-commerce adoption and financial success, others argue that the benefits are

not universally guaranteed and depend heavily on various mediating factors, such as market conditions, digital strategy effectiveness, and customer engagement (Grewal et al., 2021).

The practical challenge, therefore, lies in understanding the nuanced relationship between e-commerce practices and their impact on a company's financial outcomes. This understanding is vital for businesses aiming to optimize online presence and ensure sustainable growth. Theoretically, there is a growing interest in the mechanisms through which e-commerce can drive financial performance, especially in an increasingly digital consumer environment (Kannan & Li, 2017). Researchers are particularly interested in exploring the critical components of digital marketing strategies—such as brand attitude, electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM), and purchase intention—that can potentially influence a firm's financial success. Despite the importance of these factors, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that integrate these elements to provide a holistic understanding of their interplay in the e-commerce landscape. This research seeks to address this gap by exploring the trends, benefits, and challenges associated with e-commerce and its impact on financial performance.

Recent studies have shed light on various aspects of e-commerce and its influence on financial performance, highlighting the importance of understanding consumer behavior in the digital realm. For instance, Al-Dmour et al. (2021) found that positive electronic word of mouth (eWOM) could enhance a company's brand image, subsequently driving consumer purchase intentions and impacting financial performance. Heryana & Yasa (2020) emphasized the power of online reviews in influencing repurchase decisions, especially when these reviews are perceived as trustworthy and relevant. These studies collectively underscore the significant role of consumer perception and digital engagement in shaping financial outcomes for e-commerce businesses. However, while these studies provide valuable insights, they also reveal notable limitations in the current body of knowledge. Many existing studies have predominantly focused on the direct effects of e-commerce activities, such as online advertising and digital sales channels, on financial performance without adequately accounting for the mediating factors that influence this relationship (Cheung et al., 2009). For example, the role of brand attitude as a mediator between eWOM and purchase intention, which is critical for understanding the comprehensive impact of e-commerce on financial outcomes, has yet to be largely explored. Moreover, there is a need for more nuanced research that investigates how different e-commerce strategies, such as personalized marketing and omnichannel approaches, can differentially affect financial performance depending on the context (Teng et al., 2017). The lack of a unified theoretical framework integrating these diverse elements further complicates efforts to generalize findings across different e-commerce settings.

The review of recent literature highlights several research gaps that necessitate further exploration. First, although there is a general agreement on the positive effects of electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) on brand image and purchase intention, the precise interactions among these elements and their collective impact on financial performance in e-commerce remain unclear (Alnoor et al., 2024). Most studies treat eWOM, brand attitude, and purchase intention as separate variables, lacking an integrated view of their combined influence on a firm's financial health. Understanding these synergies could provide more valuable insights for optimizing e-commerce strategies. Second, the role of consumption goals and product types as moderators in the eWOM-financial performance relationship needs more research. While Chu & Chen (2019) noted the significance of consumption goals in determining eWOM's effectiveness, there is insufficient empirical evidence on how these goals interact with other factors like brand attitude and purchase intention to influence financial outcomes. Furthermore, current theoretical models must adequately capture consumer behavior's dynamic nature in digital contexts, such as feedback loops and network effects (Cheung et al., 2009). Third, there is a need for more comprehensive research on how various digital marketing strategies collectively affect financial performance, especially within omnichannel environments (Verhoef et al., 2021). Exploring these interactions is vital for developing more robust digital marketing frameworks.

Based on the gaps identified in the existing literature, this study explores the mediating role of brand attitude in the relationship between electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and purchase intention and how these factors collectively impact financial performance in an e-commerce context. The

primary research question guiding this inquiry is: "How does brand attitude mediate the relationship between eWOM and purchase intention, and what is the subsequent effect on financial performance in an e-commerce setting?" This question aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of the interplay between digital marketing strategies and financial outcomes, addressing the empirical and theoretical gaps highlighted in the previous sections. The novelty of this research lies in its integrative approach, which combines insights from multiple streams of literature to develop a more comprehensive model of e-commerce performance. Unlike previous studies that have primarily focused on isolated factors, this study will examine the combined effects of eWOM, brand attitude, and purchase intention on financial performance, considering the moderating roles of consumption goals and product types. Doing so seeks to advance the current theoretical frameworks and provide practical guidelines for businesses looking to enhance their digital marketing strategies. The findings are expected to contribute significantly to academic research and practical applications, helping marketers design more effective e-commerce strategies that leverage the synergies between different digital marketing elements to drive financial success.

## Literature Review

### *Understanding and Aspects of Purchase Intention in the Context of Hotel Room Reservations*

In the context of hotel room reservations, purchase intention refers to a consumer's decision to book a room, a critical part of the customer journey. This process is managed by a hotel's Front Office Department, which ensures guests can secure their desired accommodations upon arrival (Sambodo & Bagyono, 2012). Soemarno (2012) defines a reservation as an arrangement made in advance to secure a room before a guest's arrival. Sugiarto (2011) and Setyawan and Wijayanti (2014) further emphasize that room reservations are often booked ahead of time through various channels to guarantee availability, while Monaghan (2006) describes reservations as clerical or electronic processes that facilitate the availability of travel products like hotel rooms. In consumer behavior theory, purchase intention reflects a customer's likelihood of buying a product or service (Kotler & Keller, 2009). Within the hotel industry, the intention to book a room is influenced by several factors, including brand image, customer perceptions, and attitudes toward the hotel (Lien et al., 2015). Purchase intention is considered a crucial aspect of consumer behavior, shaped by factors like brand image, attribute knowledge, and loyalty, which influence decision-making (Mirabi et al., 2015). Understanding purchase intention is essential for hotels to predict customer behavior and develop effective marketing strategies to increase bookings (Garg & Joshi, 2018).

The formation of purchase intention is a complex, multi-stage process that begins with recognizing a need or desire, followed by information processing, where consumers gather and evaluate their options (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007). This evaluation leads to a final purchase decision, culminating in the consumer's intention. Critical aspects of purchase intention identified by researchers include interest in seeking information, considering a purchase, wanting to try a product, and wanting to own the product (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007). Ferdinand (2002) categorizes purchase intentions into transactional, referential, preferential, and exploratory intentions, representing different levels of consumer engagement and commitment in the purchasing process.

Recent research has expanded on these foundational theories, identifying new factors influencing purchase intention, particularly in e-commerce and digital marketing. Environmental stimuli, such as social media influence and digital advertising, are critical determinants of consumer behavior (Drossos et al., 2014)—personalized marketing strategies that build trust significantly enhance purchase intentions (Otopah et al., 2024). Product quality, brand reputation, pricing, and availability are crucial in shaping purchase intentions, especially in competitive markets (Jumawan et al., 2024). Ferdinand (2002) provides an updated overview of indicators influencing purchase intention, stressing the importance of different intention types in predicting consumer behavior. The complexity of purchase intention highlights the need for hotels to understand the factors influencing consumer decision-making. By enhancing brand image, building customer loyalty, and providing relevant information, hotels can better convert potential customers into actual bookings, improving their overall financial performance.

### *Understanding Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)*

The rapid advancement of technology, particularly the Internet, has transformed traditional word-of-mouth communication into electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). In today's digital age, consumers increasingly seek information about products, services, and destinations online before purchasing. eWOM has emerged as a powerful tool that leverages technological advancements to align with contemporary consumer behaviors. As Kotler and Keller (2016) explain, viral marketing, often called eWOM, uses the Internet to create word-of-mouth effects that amplify marketing efforts. This type of marketing can spread like a virus, prompting consumers to share information about products and services in various formats—such as audio, video, or written content—across online platforms. eWOM is often manifested in online reviews, which have become one of the most frequently used sources of information for recommending products and services (Sotiriadis & van Zyl, 2013). Prasetyo et al. (2018) define eWOM as customer-generated statements about products or companies, whether positive or negative, that are available to the public or institutions via the Internet. Similarly, Mishra & Satish (2016) describes eWOM as communication between potential, current, or former customers about products or companies, accessible to the public online. Groeger & Buttle (2016) note that word-of-mouth communication has shifted from face-to-face to online exchanges, significantly expanding its reach and influence.

Several characteristics define eWOM, making it a unique and impactful form of communication. Ismagilova et al. (2017) highlight these characteristics, including increased volume and reach, the spread across multiple platforms, persistence and observability, anonymity, the importance of valence, and community involvement. These aspects enable eWOM to reach a vast audience quickly, with information disseminated across various platforms and communities, ultimately influencing future eWOM activities. The anonymity provided by the Internet means that the credibility of eWOM often hinges on consumer experiences rather than identifiable sources. Valence, which refers to the positive or negative ratings consumers assign to products or services, is crucial in shaping perceptions. Furthermore, community involvement on eWOM platforms fosters the formation of specialized consumer groups that transcend geographic boundaries. Hasan (2010) identifies several dimensions of eWOM, including valence, focus, timing, solicitation, and intervention. From a marketing perspective, valence can be positive or negative, influencing consumer perceptions and decisions. eWOM marketing focuses on fostering beneficial relationships with consumers, while timing ensures that eWOM remains relevant both before and after purchase. Solicitation refers to eWOM communication often arising from consumer interactions, whether solicited or unsolicited. Although eWOM can occur spontaneously, companies increasingly manage these activities to promote their products more effectively.

Effective eWOM is characterized by several critical indicators, as Ismagilova et al. (2017) noted, including content quality, recommendation consistency, ratings, and volume. High-quality reviews provide consumers with credible information that guides their purchasing decisions. Consistent recommendations from multiple users make evaluating products easier, while ratings reflect overall consumer perceptions and contribute to product evaluations. The volume of eWOM is also critical, as it indicates a product's popularity and can significantly influence consumer perceptions. Understanding these aspects of eWOM is essential for businesses looking to leverage online consumer opinions effectively and enhance their marketing strategies. By focusing on the quality and consistency of eWOM, companies can better influence consumer behavior, improve brand perception, and ultimately drive sales.

### *Understanding Brand Attitude*

Brand attitude is a critical concept in marketing that reflects how consumers perceive and evaluate a brand based on its attributes or benefits. It represents the evaluative judgment consumers make about a brand, considering whether they view it positively or negatively. According to Wijaya (2011), brand attitude is shaped by the communication and interaction between the brand and its consumers, influencing its overall image. As cited in Ramesh et al. (2019), Keller defines brand attitude as the overall evaluation by consumers, which includes their perceptions of the brand's quality and their level of satisfaction with it. Similarly, Sauro, mentioned in Sumiati (2016), describes

brand attitude as the thoughts and feelings consumers hold towards a brand. Brand attitude serves several vital functions in consumer behavior. Schiffman and Kanuk (2004) identify four essential functions: utilitarian, ego-defensive, value-expressive, and knowledge functions. The utilitarian function guides consumer behavior to achieve positive or negative outcomes, such as seeking benefits from a brand or avoiding associated risks. The ego-defensive function helps enhance a consumer's sense of security by protecting against perceived threats and reducing uncertainty about a brand. The value-expressive function reflects a consumer's values, lifestyle, and social identity, indicating how a brand aligns with their self-concept. Lastly, the knowledge function is driven by consumers' curiosity and desire to learn more about the brand and its offerings.

Brand attitude comprises three main components: cognitive, affective, and conative. The cognitive component involves a consumer's knowledge and beliefs about a brand, including perceptions of its features and benefits (Engel et al., 1994). The affective component reflects a consumer's emotions and feelings toward the brand, which can be positive, negative, or neutral. Conversely, the conative component represents the consumer's behavioral intentions towards the brand, such as the likelihood of making a purchase or recommending the brand to others. Understanding these components is essential for marketers, as they provide insights into how consumers form their overall attitudes toward a brand and how these attitudes drive their behavior. Sutisna (2002) identifies several indicators of brand attitude, including interest, positive impressions, and trust. Interest indicates a consumer's level of curiosity or attention towards a brand. Positive impressions reflect favorable feelings or attitudes based on past experiences or perceived quality. Trust represents a consumer's confidence in the brand's reliability and consistency. These indicators are vital for assessing how consumers perceive and feel about a brand, providing valuable information for marketers seeking to enhance brand loyalty and customer satisfaction.

Recent research has further explored these concepts, emphasizing the role of brand attitude in influencing consumer decision-making and loyalty. For example, a study by Xie et al. (2019) found that solid brand attitudes positively correlate with higher levels of consumer loyalty and advocacy, particularly in competitive markets where brand differentiation is crucial. Similarly, Loureiro et al. (2017) highlighted that positive brand attitudes are significantly associated with increased consumer engagement and word-of-mouth recommendations, critical for brand growth in digital environments. Moreover, Nugraha et al. (2021) emphasized that understanding brand attitude's cognitive, affective, and conative components can help businesses tailor their marketing strategies to target specific consumer segments more effectively. Brand attitude is thus a multifaceted construct that plays a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior and influencing marketing outcomes. By comprehensively understanding the various components and functions of brand attitude, businesses can better position their brands in the marketplace, foster stronger consumer relationships, and ultimately drive long-term success.

## Research Method

This study employs a survey method with a quantitative approach to provide a detailed description of the background, nature, and characteristics of individuals or cases. The research design is associative, examining causal relationships between the independent variable (Electronic Word of Mouth), the dependent variable (Purchase Intention), and the mediating variable (Brand Attitude). The study was conducted at Suni Garden Lake Hotel & Resort Sentani over one month in November 2023, with a population of 300 guests and a sample of 171 respondents determined using the Slovin formula. Data is collected through observation and questionnaires, with interval scale measurement using the Bipolar Adjective scale. Data analysis utilizes Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the relationships between variables, considering sample adequacy, normality, and outlier testing assumptions. Model evaluation is performed using various fit indices such as Chi-Square, RMSEA, GFI, AGFI, CFI, and TLI, along with the Sobel test to measure the indirect effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable through the mediating variable. The results are expected to provide a deep understanding of the impact of eWOM on purchase intention and its contribution to digital marketing strategies.



## Findings and Discussion

### Findings

#### Instrument Test

In conducting this research, ensuring that the instruments used to measure the variables are valid and reliable is crucial. Validity indicates how well an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure, while reliability refers to the consistency of the measurement. The following table presents the results of the validity and reliability tests for the indicators used in this study. These tests were performed to confirm that the instruments for measuring Purchase Interest (Y), E-WOM (X), and Brand Attitude (Z) are appropriate and dependable.

**Table 1.** Validity and Reliability Test Results

Variable	Indicator	R Calculated	N. Sig	R Table	Validity Description	Cronbach Alpha	Reliability Standard	Reliability Description
Purchase Interest (Y)	Transactional Interest	0.865	0.0	0.1501	Valid	0.858	0.6	Reliable
	Exploratory Interest	0.876	0.0	0.1501	Valid			
	Referential Interest	0.886	0.0	0.1501	Valid			
E-WOM (X)	Content	0.864	0.0	0.1501	Valid	0.842	0.6	Reliable
	Consistency of Recommendations	0.829	0.0	0.1501	Valid			
	Popular Volume	0.821	0.0	0.1501	Valid			
Brand Attitude (Z)	Attracted	0.846	0.0	0.1501	Valid	0.855	0.6	Reliable
	Positive Impression	0.892	0.0	0.1501	Valid			
	Trust	0.886	0.0	0.1501	Valid			

Source: Data processed using SPSS 22.0 in 2024

This study conducted validity and reliability tests to ensure that the instruments used to measure the variables under study are valid and reliable. The table above shows that all variable indicators have an R calculated value that is more significant than the R table value of 0.1501 with a significance level (N. Sig) of 0.000. This indicates that all the indicators used to measure Purchase Interest (Y), E-WOM (X), and Brand Attitude (Z) are valid. Additionally, the reliability test results show that all variables have a Cronbach Alpha value above the reliability standard of 0.60, meaning all variables are reliable. In other words, the instruments used in this study have been proven valid and reliable for measuring the variables under investigation. Purchase Interest (Y) is measured through three indicators: Transactional Interest, Exploratory Interest, and Referential Interest, all valid and reliable. E-WOM (X) is measured through three indicators: Content, Consistency of Recommendations, and Popular Volume, which are also valid and reliable. Brand Attitude (Z) is measured through three indicators: Attracted, Positive Impression, and Trust, all valid and reliable. In an academic context, high validity and reliability are crucial as they provide confidence that the research results are trustworthy and reflect actual conditions. Using valid and reliable measurement tools ensures that the collected data is accurate, and that the analysis conducted based on this data is appropriate. This supports the conclusions drawn from the research and provides a solid basis for any recommendations or actions based on the research results.

#### Structural Equation Modelling Analysis (SEM)

This study involves the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis, which requires normality testing and Mahalanobis distance testing to detect multivariate outliers. Normality testing ensures that the data used follows a distribution that approximates normality. In contrast, Mahalanobis distance is used to identify observations that have the potential to be outliers and could influence the analysis results. The table below presents the normality test results and Mahalanobis distance analysis of this study's data.

**Table 2.** Results of Normality Test and Mahalanobis Distance

Variable	Min	Max	Skew	c.r. Skew	Kurtosis	c.r. Kurtosis	Observation Number	Mahalanobis Distance	Critical Mahalanobis Distance (0.001;9)
X.1	4.0	10.0	-0.103	-0.549	0.709	1.894	141	23.06	27.877
X.2	4.0	10.0	0.129	0.688	0.156	0.416	8	20.917	
X.3	4.0	10.0	-0.075	-0.403	0.633	1.691	9	20.249	
Y.3	5.0	10.0	-0.04	-0.211	0.086	0.228	18	19.611	
Y.2	5.0	10.0	-0.053	-0.283	-0.237	-0.633	15	18.01	
Y.1	5.0	10.0	0.016	0.085	-0.378	-1.009			
Z.3	5.0	10.0	0.158	0.843	-0.564	-1.506			
Z.2	5.0	10.0	0.188	1.003	-0.41	-1.094			
Z.1	6.0	10.0	0.408	2.18	-0.075	-0.199			
Multivariate					0.344				

Source: Data processed using SPSS 22.0 in 2024

Table 2 presents the results of the data normality test and Mahalanobis distance analysis as part of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis. The normality test results show that all variables have skewness and kurtosis values close to 0, with relatively small critical ratios (c.r.). This indicates that the data distribution is approximately normal, an essential prerequisite in SEM analysis. Data normality is a condition where the data follows a normal distribution, allowing for more accurate and valid use of various statistical techniques. Mahalanobis distance is used to detect observations that are multivariate outliers. Several observations in this dataset have significant Mahalanobis distances but do not exceed the critical value of 27.877 at a significance level of 0.001, indicating no significant outliers that could affect further analysis. Multivariate outliers are data points significantly different from the overall dataset mean, which can influence statistical analysis results if not detected and handled correctly. Overall, these results indicate that the data used in this study has a normal distribution and no significant outliers, thus meeting the basic assumptions for SEM analysis. This provides a strong foundation for researchers to proceed with SEM analysis to test the developed theoretical model. High data validity and reliability are crucial in ensuring that research results are accurate and reliable, ultimately contributing meaningfully to the field of study being investigated.

This hypothesis-testing technique tests the hypothesis and produces a good model. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used with the help of the AMOS 22 program to test it. This study used various measures to assess the model's fit, including Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ ) with a value of 29.724 and a probability of 0.194, indicating a fit model. The Chi-Square/Degree of Freedom (CMIN/DF) value is 1.238, less than 2, thus considered fit. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is 0.037, less than 0.05, indicating a fit model. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI), with a value of 0.993, and the Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) of 0.989, both greater than 0.95, demonstrate good model fit. The Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) with a value of 0.967 and the Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) of 0.939, both greater than 0.90, indicate a fit model. Therefore, all measures show that the model in this study has a very high level of accuracy. Figure 1 displays Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

#### Hypothesis Test

Table 3 presents the regression analysis results examining the influence of electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) on brand attitude and purchase intention. The analysis includes direct and indirect effects, providing a comprehensive view of how these variables interact to impact consumer behavior. The estimates, standard errors, critical ratios, and significance levels offer detailed insights into the relationships between the variables.

**Table 3.** Regression Analysis Results

Category	Variable	Estimate	S.E.	C.R	P	Note
Regression Weights	Brand Attitude <--- E-WOM	0.737	0.102	7.214	0.000	Significant
	Purchase Intention <--- Brand Attitude	0.308	0.151	2.035	0.042	Significant
	Purchase Intention <--- E-WOM	0.654	0.162	4.045	0.000	Significant
Direct Effects	E-WOM (X) → Brand Attitude (Z)	0.737				
	E-WOM (X) → Purchase Intention (Y)	0.654				
	Brand Attitude (Z) → Purchase Intention (Y)	0.308				

Source: Data processed using SPSS 22.0 in 2024

The regression analysis results indicate that Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) significantly impacts Brand Attitude, with an estimate of 0.737 and a p-value of 0.000. This suggests that higher E-WOM positively influences consumers' attitudes towards the brand. Furthermore, Brand Attitude significantly influences Purchase Intention with an estimate of 0.308 and a p-value of 0.042, indicating that a more favorable brand attitude increases the likelihood of purchase intention. Direct effects show that E-WOM also significantly impacts Purchase Intention, with an estimate of 0.654 and a p-value of 0.000. The indirect effect of E-WOM on Purchase Intention through Brand Attitude is calculated to be 0.227, demonstrating the mediating role of Brand Attitude in this relationship. Overall, the findings highlight E-WOM's importance in shaping brand perception and consumer purchase decisions.

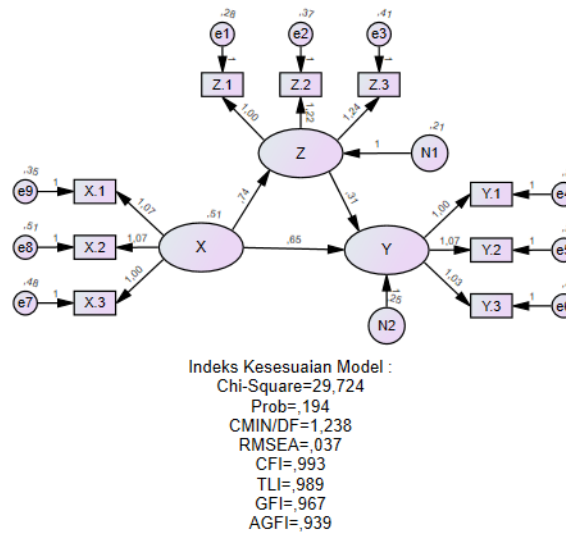


Figure 1. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Analysis  
 Source: Data processed using SPSS 22.0 in 2024

## Discussion

### Electronic Word of Mouth on Purchase Intention

The discussion of this research indicates that Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) significantly positively affects purchase intention in reservations at Suni Garden Lake Hotel & Resort Sentani. This finding suggests that the higher the intensity of E-WOM communication, the greater the consumer's curiosity about what is communicated, ultimately leading to purchase intention. This phenomenon is relevant not only in tourism and hospitality but also in various other sectors where E-WOM plays a crucial role. The theories underpinning this hypothesis can be traced back to the basic concept of Word of Mouth (WOM) in marketing. WOM is one of the oldest and most effective forms of communication in influencing consumer decisions. Arndt (1967), in his study, suggested that WOM has persuasive solid power because it comes from sources trusted by consumers, such as friends or family. In today's digital context, E-WOM has evolved into a broader platform where consumers can share their experiences online through social media, reviews, and discussion forums. Supporting studies include those by Putri & Warmika (2020), which found that WOM and marketing communication positively influence purchase intention. Putri & Warmika (2020) also highlighted the mediating role of brand equity, showing that WOM not only directly affects purchase intention but also through increased consumer perceptions of brand value. Vázquez-Casielles et al. (2013) emphasized the importance of managing both positive and negative WOM, showing that both types of communication significantly impact consumer purchase decisions.

Some studies also show variations in their findings. Chun & Lee (2016) identified a positive participation externality effect, where consumer participation in WOM can influence the purchase intentions of others in their community. Ceran (2011) highlighted the role of inventory management in the context of purchase intention, indicating that product availability can also affect how WOM influences purchase intention. Wang et al. (2021) distinguished between WOM and observational



learning, both influencing stock market participation, suggesting that the effects of WOM may not always be linear and can be influenced by other factors such as observation and direct experience. The implications of these research findings are extensive. For hotel managers and marketers, these findings highlight the importance of effectively managing E-WOM to increase purchase intention. This includes strategies such as encouraging positive reviews from satisfied customers, responding quickly and professionally to negative reviews, and using social media influencers to expand the reach of E-WOM. This research also underscores the importance of understanding how various social media platforms can be used to maximize the effects of E-WOM.

#### *Electronic Word of Mouth on Brand Attitude*

This discussion highlights that Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) positively and significantly affects Brand Attitude. This indicates that the better the E-WOM communication, the more favorable the consumer's attitude toward the company's brand. This is not merely a hypothesis but the result of a series of studies consistently demonstrating the significant influence of E-WOM on brand attitude. Pourkabirian (2021) and Kudeshia & Mittal (2016) found that E-WOM significantly affects brand awareness, image, and attitude. Sandhu et al. (2021) further emphasized the role of E-WOM in enhancing brand attitude, particularly when combined with brand awareness. Charo et al. (2015) and Ardani (2024) highlighted the positive impact of E-WOM on brand image and purchase intention. Ardani also noted the mediating role of E-WOM in the influence of social media and brand image on purchase intention. Mohamed et al. (2024) and Beyari & Garamoun (2024) expanded on this by demonstrating the link between brand service recovery strategies, consumer attitudes, and positive E-WOM, as well as the effects of E-WOM channels on brand perceptions and purchase intentions.

The theories underlying this hypothesis can be traced back to the basic concept of WOM in marketing. Arndt (1967) explained that WOM has persuasive solid power because it comes from sources trusted by consumers, such as friends or family. In the digital era, E-WOM has evolved into a broader platform where consumers can share their experiences online through social media, reviews, and discussion forums. This theory is reinforced by the findings of Pourkabirian (2021) and Kudeshia & Mittal (2016), which show that E-WOM increases brand awareness and strengthens brand image and attitude. Some studies also show variations in their findings. Kudeshia & Kumar (2017) identified a positive participation externality effect, where consumer participation in WOM can influence the purchase intentions of others in their community. Ceran (2011) highlighted the role of inventory management in the context of purchase intention, indicating that product availability can also affect how WOM influences purchase intention. López & Sicilia (2014) differentiated between WOM and observational learning, both of which influence stock market participation, suggesting that the effects of WOM may not always be linear and can be influenced by other factors such as observation and direct experience.

The implications of these research findings are extensive. For hotel managers and marketers, these findings underscore the importance of effectively managing E-WOM to enhance brand attitude. This includes strategies such as encouraging positive reviews from satisfied customers, responding quickly and professionally to negative reviews, and using social media influencers to expand the reach of E-WOM. This research also underscores the importance of understanding how various social media platforms can be used to maximize the effects of E-WOM. Ongoing studies could further explore how demographic and psychographic characteristics of consumers influence their response to E-WOM. Research on the effectiveness of various E-WOM management strategies in different industry contexts could provide valuable practical insights. Longitudinal analyses of how E-WOM influences brand attitude and purchase intention over time could help understand the dynamics of changing consumer perceptions. By understanding and leveraging the power of E-WOM, businesses can more effectively attract consumer interest and build stronger relationships with their audience. This is an exciting journey full of potential for further digital marketing and consumer behavior exploration.

#### *Brand Attitude on Purchase Intention*

This research highlights that Brand Attitude positively and significantly affects Purchase Intention. The more favorable the Brand Attitude a company cultivates, the higher the consumer's

desire to purchase. This is not just a fleeting observation but a well-supported phenomenon in marketing literature. Faishal (2018) concluded that brand attitude significantly influences purchase intention, with Faishal also noting the critical mediating role of consumer attitudes. Shwastika & Keni (2021) provided further validation, with Shwastika identifying brand awareness, perceived quality, and sales promotion as pivotal in driving purchase intention and Hashim emphasizing the importance of product cues and brand attitude. This body of work underscores a fundamental truth in marketing: the perception of a brand profoundly shapes consumer behavior.

The theoretical foundations of this hypothesis can be traced back to classic and contemporary marketing theories. Brand attitude, a consumer's overall evaluation, is a cornerstone in understanding consumer behavior. Ajzen & Fishbein (1975) Theory of Reasoned Action posits that an individual's attitude towards a behavior (in this case, purchasing a brand) significantly impacts their intention to perform that behavior. This theory has been expanded in modern contexts to include the role of brand equity components such as brand awareness and perceived quality. Haiban & Rimadias (2023) and Achmad et al. (2020) emphasized how brand image and awareness shape brand attitudes and purchase intentions. Salehzadeh & Pool (2017) further enriched this understanding by demonstrating the influence of brand attitude on perceived value and purchase intention and the impact of brand image on purchasing attitude and intention. These findings collectively highlight the intricate web of factors contributing to a strong brand attitude and its subsequent effect on consumer purchase decisions.

The implications of these findings are extensive for both academics and practitioners. For marketers, this research underscores the importance of investing in strategies that enhance brand attitude, such as improving product quality, engaging in effective sales promotions, and fostering a positive brand image. The divergence in findings from previous studies might be attributed to differences in market conditions, consumer demographics, or even the evolving nature of consumer-brand relationships in a digital era. It opens avenues for future research to explore these variables in greater depth, perhaps through longitudinal studies that track changes in brand attitude and purchase intention over time. Understanding how digital marketing strategies and social media influence brand attitudes in different demographic segments could provide valuable insights. As businesses navigate a highly competitive market landscape, leveraging the power of a strong brand attitude could be the key to driving consumer purchase intentions and achieving sustained success. This journey, filled with potential for innovation and deeper insights, is vital for marketing and consumer behavior exploration.

#### *Electronic Word Of Mouth on Purchase Intention Through Brand Attitude*

The Brand Attitude variable can mediate E-WOM on Purchase Intention, meaning that Brand Attitude can amplify the impact of E-WOM communication on Purchase Intention. This nuanced understanding reveals that the more favorable the Brand Attitude developed through positive E-WOM, the greater the likelihood of converting consumer interest into actual purchases. A substantial body of research consistently supports the mediating role of brand attitude in the relationship between electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) and purchase intention. (Yohana et al., 2020) It was found that brand attitude significantly mediates the influence of e-WOM on purchase intention, suggesting that positive E-WOM communication enhances brand perception, which in turn drives purchase intention. Similarly, Bataineh (2015) demonstrated that a robust brand attitude shaped by E-WOM positively impacts consumers' purchase decisions. Heryana & Yasa (2020) further validated these findings, showing that the relationship between e-WOM and purchase intention is significantly strengthened when mediated by brand attitude. Jain et al. (2023) also highlighted that brand attitude is crucial in translating positive E-WOM into higher purchase intentions, emphasizing the critical link between consumer perception and buying behavior.

The theoretical underpinnings of this hypothesis are grounded in the broader framework of consumer behavior and brand management. The Theory of Planned Behavior by Ajzen (1991) and the elaboration likelihood model by Petty (1986) provide a foundational understanding of how attitudes formed through persuasive communication can influence behavioral intentions. E-WOM acts as a persuasive communication channel, shaping brand attitudes that, in turn, affect purchase intentions.

This mediation effect underscores the importance of managing brand perception through E-WOM channels. By fostering positive E-WOM, companies can enhance brand attitudes, which are a potent mediator in driving purchase intentions. This dynamic is supported by the work of Bataineh (2015), who found that E-WOM's influence on purchase intention is significantly mediated by brand attitude, revealing a crucial pathway through which consumer behavior is shaped in the digital age.

The implications of these findings are profound for marketers and brand managers. By understanding the mediating role of brand attitude, companies can strategically focus on enhancing E-WOM to improve brand perceptions and ultimately drive higher purchase intentions. Effective management of E-WOM involves encouraging positive reviews, engaging with consumers on social media, and addressing negative feedback constructively. These actions can help build a favorable brand attitude, amplifying the impact of E-WOM on purchase intentions. Future research could explore the elements of E-WOM that most effectively enhance brand attitude and how these elements vary across different demographic groups and cultural contexts. Additionally, longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into how the relationship between E-WOM, brand attitude, and purchase intention evolves. As businesses navigate the complexities of the digital marketplace, leveraging the mediating role of brand attitude could be a key strategy in achieving sustained consumer engagement and loyalty. This ongoing exploration offers a fertile ground for academic inquiry and practical application, driving innovation in marketing strategies and consumer relationship management.

## Conclusion

The study concludes that Brand Attitude significantly and positively impacts Purchase Intention, meaning that a more favorable consumer attitude towards a brand leads to a stronger desire to purchase the product. It also highlights Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) 's critical role in shaping brand attitude, subsequently influencing purchase intention. These findings are consistent with previous studies, emphasizing the effectiveness of E-WOM as a marketing tool in the digital era, where online communication and consumer reviews significantly affect purchasing decisions.

This research contributes both to scientific literature and marketing practice. Scientifically, it enriches the understanding of how E-WOM influences Purchase Intention through Brand Attitude, using a quantitative approach and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) for empirical validation. Practically, the findings offer guidelines for marketers to enhance brand attitudes through positive reviews and engaging social media interactions, thereby boosting consumer purchase intentions. By leveraging E-WOM to strengthen brand attitudes, companies can better attract consumer interest and build stronger relationships with their audience.

However, the study has limitations. It focuses on a specific context—Sun Garden Lake Hotel & Resort Sentani—which may limit the generalizability of the results. Additionally, the quantitative survey approach might not fully capture the complexities of E-WOM and Brand Attitude interactions. For a more complete understanding, future research should use qualitative or mixed-method approaches and investigate the effects of certain E-WOM factors across a range of demographics and cultural settings, such as the appeal of the message and the credibility of the source. Overall, this study offers valuable insights into the mediating role of Brand Attitude in the relationship between E-WOM and Purchase Intention and lays the groundwork for further exploration in digital marketing and consumer behavior.

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