

Electronic Word of Mouth Analysis of Brand Attachment on MSME Products

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the effect of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) on brand attachment on MSME products. The technique used in this research was non-probability sampling with the purposive sampling method. The data collection technique in this research was a questionnaire distributed to 197 respondents via a google form. The data analysis used was f-test analysis, t-test, and simple linear regression analysis. Based on the results of the t-test, it was found that the t-count on the electronic word of mouth variable was 5.491 with a significance level of 0.000 and t-table = 1.972 with the probability of t being sig < 0.05 for the brand attachment variable. Meanwhile, based on the f-test results, the calculated F value was 30,152 with a significance level of 0.000 and F table = 3.89. The probability of 30,152 is greater than 0.05 and the calculated F value > F table showing that electronic word of mouth had a positive and significant effect on the brand attachment variable. The results of the study indicate that the presence of eWOM in a product can affect the brand attachment of an MSME product. The form of eWOM on social media can be seen when producers/sellers post on social media about product-related information, followers will respond (mention, comment, repost). At that time, the brand awareness of the product will increase.

Keywords: *Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM), Brand Attachment, Social Media.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Social media is a means for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to market their products. SMEs have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic because there is a physical distancing regulation to prevent the spread of the virus, making a decline in people's purchasing power for MSME products. To encourage product sales to remain high in this pandemic period, MSME actors should sell their products through digital platforms that are very attached to the era of globalization. However, the fact is, there are still many MSMEs that have not moved from conventional sales to digital methods, as it was conveyed directly by the Minister of Cooperatives and SMEs Teten Masduki. He said that currently, only about 13% or 8 million MSMEs have entered the digital ecosystem. Under the same conditions, the increase in digital sales in e-commerce increased by 26% or reached 3.1 million transactions [1]. Through social media, MSMEs can form and build product brands that will be sold, which can be assessed and attached to consumers so that they can establish

communication and be profitable for MSME actors themselves. The combination of existing factors with technological factors produces an interactive marketing media so that media can create interactions between producers, consumers, and markets. The emotional attachment between product brands and consumers is called brand attachment. According to [2], brand attachment is a deep and strong emotional bond that connects one person to another across space and time. This theory explains that brand attachment does not have to be reciprocal. Meanwhile, [3] define brand attachment as the strength of the bond that connects the brand with a person. Therefore, based on the explanation above, this brand attachment can help SMEs to promote their products.

Improving brand attachments is important so that consumers can feel the emotions of MSME products with themselves and can make their products stick with themselves. This will be beneficial for existing MSME actors if they engage with their consumers. One way for MSME actors to form brand attachments is through word of mouth (WOM) or talk about products that are already

tied to consumers and other consumers and with technological advances, consumers can share their WOM on social media to make it affordable for social media users. The conversation is called electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM). Through eWOM, consumers on social media will invite their followers to feel the MSME products that have been told on social media, and indirectly new potential consumers will try and feel the attachment to their products and then will provide eWOM as well. According to [4], every consumer who has consumed a product will give his/her assessment of the product, and it cannot be denied because it comes from oneself. Then, if the consumer is satisfied or dissatisfied with the consumption of the product, the consumer will give a review of the product to others. The existence of eWOM on social media will help form and increase brand attachments to products owned by MSME actors. In research conducted by [5] and research by [6], the results showed that there was an influence between the variables of brand awareness, brand image, brand satisfaction, brand trust, and brand attachment so that eWOM positively can increase brand satisfaction, brand trust, and brand attachment. In addition, research conducted by [7] and research by [8] which focused on eWOM found that consumers wanted social interaction, desire to get economic incentives, attention to consumers others, and the potential to increase their self-worth which is the main factor leading to eWOM behavior.

In this study, the problem faced is that there are still many MSME actors who have not switched digitally so the forming of brand attachments with consumers through eWOM on social media is still minimum. In addition, research on the relationship between eWOM and the formation of brand attachments is still rarely found. In this study, the elaboration of the research that has been done by [6] and [5] with [8] and [7] was conducted with some adjustments to suit the research object and field conditions of this research. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to find out how the influence of eWOM on social media on the Brand Attachment of MSME products that have gone online. Based on the above background, it is interesting to conduct a study with the title "e-WOM Analysis of Brand Attachment on MSME Products".

1.1. Brand Attachment

The concept of brand attachment developed from psychology known as attachment theory, which was coined by [2]. The level of emotional attachment to an object can predict the nature of an individual's interaction with the object [2]. For example, individuals who are attached to someone are very likely to be committed and willing to sacrifice for that person [9]. According to [9] described the consumer-brand relationship as the individual-object relationship in attachment theory. They argued that consumers' emotional attachment to a brand

can predict the consumer's commitment to the brand (e.g., brand loyalty) and their willingness to make financial sacrifices to get the brand.

Two important factors that represent brand attachment conceptually are brand-self connection and brand prominence. The brand-self connection is a cognitive and emotional relationship between the brand and self. This connection is important to facilitate the fulfillment of utilitarian, experiential, and or symbolic needs. Meanwhile, brand prominence is the extent to which positive feelings and memories about the object of attachment are perceived as the top of mind [3]. Positive memories about the object of attachment (brand) will be more prominent for people who are very attached to the object of attachment than consumers who show weak attachment.

1.2. Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)

According to [8], positive or negative statements made by potential and actual consumers who have used the products or services of a company and can be accessed by many people and institutions via the internet are also called with electronic word of mouth (eWOM). According to [10] mentioned that eWOM offers various ways to exchange information, which can be done confidentially or anonymously, and provides geographical and temporal freedom. eWOM also has a uniqueness that WOM does not have, one of which is that it is permanent [11].

1.3. Dimension of eWOM

In their research, [8] reflect on eWOM through 8 dimensions, namely:

1. Platform assistance
2. Venting negative feelings
3. Concern for other consumers
4. Extraversion / positive self-enhancement
5. Social benefits
6. Economic incentives
7. Helping the company
8. Advice seeking

In this study, only 5 dimensions were used, namely assistance, concern for others, expressing positive feelings, economic incentives, and helping the company.

1.4. The relationship between eWOM variable and Brand Attachment

A positive perception of a product or service will stimulate positive memories so that it creates an emotional attachment to the product or service.

According to [11] mentioned when there is an exchange of information through eWOM, consumers will evaluate the product. In addition, positive eWOM can also persuade potential customers and influence consumer perceptions of a product review or product recommendation by other customers. Consumers' emotional attachment to a brand can be used to predict consumer commitment to the brand and consumer's willingness to make financial sacrifices to get the brand.

Based on the explanation above, the hypotheses in this study are:

H1: EWOM has a positive effect on Brand Attachment.

Hypothesis show by Figure 1 as a follow:

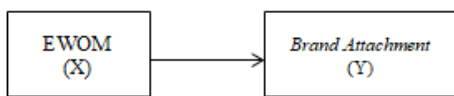


Figure 1. hypothesis

2. METHODS

This study was conducted to ensure the reliability and validity of the previously determined measures. Both analyzes were used to test whether the data obtained were valid and reliable so that they could be used for further research. Hypothesis testing was carried out using SPSS 25 assisted regression analysis. The collected data were analyzed using a 5-point Likert system rating scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree to get interval data and be given a score. This study involved 197 respondents.

The primary data used for the research were collected by using questionnaires. While secondary data were collected from online newspapers, literature, journals, books accessed via the internet, and others. The sample selected as respondents were students in Bandung who know MSMEs, with the sample collection technique in this study was non-probability sampling with purposive sampling method, namely the sampling technique provided that it meets certain criteria. According to [12] stated that the determination of a sample size greater than 30 and less than 500 is an appropriate and reasonable amount for research in general.

3. RESULTS AND DICUSSION

A. Description of Respondents Characteristics

The number of surveys analyzed further in this study was 197 respondents. According to the results of the questionnaire, most of the respondents were 64.4% female and 35.7%, male. Based on age, the majority of respondents aged 18 to 22 years were 87.7% and those who were at least under 18 years were 1.5%. The majority of social media used is Instagram with a percentage of

70.1%, Youtube with a percentage of 8.8%, Facebook and Twitter with a percentage of 5.7%, and followed by Whatsapp and TikTok. The majority of respondents saw and talked about MSME products in several sectors including culinary, fashion and clothing, beauty, crafts, and services.

B. Validity Test

The result of validity test show by Table 1 as a follow:

Table 1. Validity Test Result

Variable	Indicator	Statistic Test	Result
EWOM (X)	Q1	Valid	0.000
	Q2	Valid	0.000
	Q3	Valid	0.000
	Q4	Valid	0.000
	Q5	Valid	0.000
Brand Attachment (Y)	Q6	Valid	0.000
	Q7	Valid	0.000
	Q8	Valid	0.000
	Q9	Valid	0.000
	Q10	Valid	0.000

Based on the results from Table 1, it can be explained that the indicators for the eWOM variable namely the assistance platform, concentration for others, expressing positive feelings, economic incentives and helping the company, and the variable brand attachment have a significant value of $0.000 < 0.05$ are declared valid.

C. Reliability Test

The Resut of reliability test result show by Table 2 as a follow:

Table 2. Reability Statistics

Reliability statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
.737	10

The reliability test in this study was measured using Cronbach's Alpha. Table 2 shows that all of the research instruments have a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.737 > 0.06 which means reliable.

D. Nomality Test

The result of normality test show by Figure 2 as a follow:

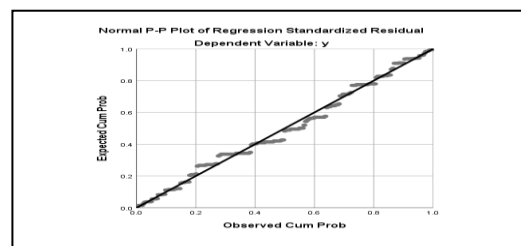


Figure 2. Graph of Normality Test Results

Based on Figure 2, the data being tested is normally distributed and meets the assumption of normality, because the data is spread out in a diagonal line and spreads around the link.

E. Heterocedasticity Test

The result of heterocedasticity test show by Figure 3 as a follow:

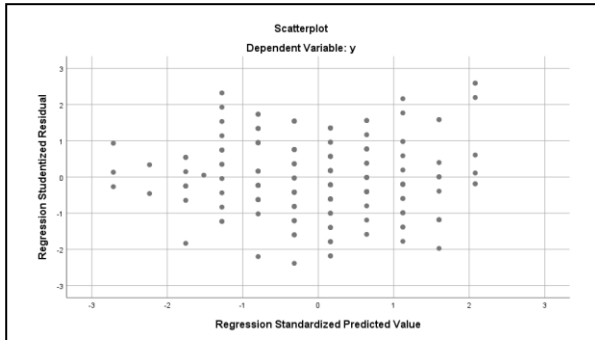


Figure 3. Heteroscedasticity Test Results

Based on Figure 3 above, it means that there is no heteroscedasticity in the data being tested because the data has been scattered, and there is no clear pattern and dots in the spread image above, and they are below the number 0 on the Y-axis.

F. Simple linear regression test result

The summary model of the simple linear regression test show by Table 3 as a follow:

Table 3. Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.366 ^a	.134	.129	.51063

a. Predictors: (Constant), x

From Table 3, the summary model of the simple linear regression test above explains the magnitude of the correlation/relationship (R²) value, which is 0.366. From the output, the coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.134, which implies that the influence of the independent variable electronic word of mouth on the dependent variable of brand attachment is 13.4%.

G. t- Test

The result of t-test show by Figure 4 as a follow:

Table 4. t – Test Result

t-Test result					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Std Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1					

1	(Constant)	1.294	.363		3.564	.000
	x	.480	.087	.366	5.491	.000

Based on the t significance number in the table above, it can be seen that the t count is 5.491 with a significance level of 0.000 and t table = 1.972. The probability of 5.491 is greater than 0.05 and the value of t count > t table. Thus, it can be concluded that the eWOM variable (X) has a direct significant effect on brand attachment (Y).

H. F- Test

The F-test result show by Tavle 5 as a follow:

Table 5. F- Test Result

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7.862	1	7.862	30.152	.000 ^b
	Residual	50.845	195	.261		
	Total	58.706	196			

a. Dependent Variable: y
b. Predictors: (Constant), x

Based on the significance number f in the table above, it can be seen that the f count is 30,152 with a significance level of 0.000 and f table = 3.89. The probability of 30,152 is greater than 0.05 and the calculated f value > f table, so it can be concluded that the eWOM variable simultaneously affects the brand attachment variable (Y) on MSME products.

I. Effect of e WOM on Brand Attachment

The t-test table shows that the t-count value of (5.491) is greater than the t-table of (1.97220) which means that H1 and H0 are rejected. It can be concluded that electronic word of mouth (eWOM) has a positive effect on brand attachment.

The results of the study indicate that the presence of eWOM in a product can affect the brand attachment of an MSME product. The form of eWOM on social media can be seen when producers/sellers post on social media about product-related information, followers will respond (mention, comment, repost). At that time, the brand awareness of the product will increase. This also happens to the brand image of the product; it will look good or bad depending on the opinions of product followers on Instagram social media. Brand knowledge consisting of brand awareness and brand image is the main area of eWOM communication that occurs in products. When product followers respond to producer/seller posts and this process continues to be carried out between fellow followers, many-to-many communication will be formed. After the establishment of brand awareness and brand image, it will then form brand satisfaction and brand trust. When followers

receive the required information about the product and the producer/seller provides solutions and services with a fast and satisfying response to consumers, a consumer brand satisfaction is formed for the product. When producers/sellers can provide information about their products honestly and sincerely, producers/sellers can provide recommendations to consumers/customers about products that are suitable and according to their needs, which will form consumer brand trust for the product. When brand satisfaction and brand trust have been formed on the product in Instagram social media, then brand relationships lead to the formation of brand attachments. Brand attachment is formed because the producer/seller through the account on Instagram can create interaction between followers and products. Giving rewards to followers through quizzes or challenges in Instagram can also form consumer brand attachments to products.

The results of this study are also consistent with the previous research that social-media brand pages with trendiness information were effective in attracting consumers' attention and were deemed to be important in strengthening consumers' ability in recognizing the brand [13]. According to [8] also stated that "consumers may be exposed to electronic WOM through websites, blogs, chatrooms or email". In addition, [8] also defined eWOM as "any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company which is made available to a multitude of the people and institutes via the Internet". Thus, it can be said that eWOM is something that is integrated. Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) will have a maximum effect if it is used in an integrated manner with other social media, such as Twitter, Facebook, blogs, broadcast email, chat BBM/WhatsApp. According to [10], eWOM is an important aspect of an expression of consumer satisfaction with a brand and may have a critical impact on brand image and brand awareness. eWOM is showing signs that it will become more important in the future as a wider social networking application. It is also explained that much of the focus of eWOM research has been on blogs, customer review sites, social media, and web pages. Recent empirical research has also found that the usage of firm-initiated SMM activities with the management of user-generated content is an effective strategy in building brand knowledge as well as purchase intentions [14].

4. CONCLUSIONS

This study aims to analyze the effect of social media eWOM which acts as an independent variable on brand attachment as the dependent variable. It was found that the Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) variable in social media had a positive and significant influence on brand attachment. This shows that the more eWOM on

Instagram that is received, the greater the influence on brand attachment.

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