

The Effect of Price Discount and Electronic Word of Mouth on Purchase Intention with Brand Image as a Mediator (A Case Study of Generation Z Coffee Consumers in Surabaya)

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Abstract. The rapid growth of social media and digital platforms has transformed consumer behavior, particularly among Generation Z, who increasingly rely on online information and promotional offers when making purchasing decisions. In Indonesia, TikTok has emerged as a key marketing channel, with local brands like Kopi Kenangan leveraging discounts and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) to engage young consumers. However, the interplay between price incentives, digital recommendations, and brand perception remains underexplored in the context of coffee consumption. The purpose of this research is to determine the effect of price discounts and e-WOM on buying interest through the mediating role of brand image. The data source for this study is primary data. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, with a total of 400 Generation Z respondents in the city of Surabaya. Data collection was conducted through the distribution of questionnaires. This study employs the SEM-PLS analysis method using the SmartPLS version 4.0 data processing tool. The results indicate that price discounts and e-WOM have a significant effect on brand image. In addition, price discounts, e-WOM, and brand image have also been proven to significantly influence buying interest. The findings further reveal that brand image mediates the influence of price discounts and e-WOM on buying interest.

Keywords: Price Discount, e-WOM, Buying Interest, Brand Image

INTRODUCTION

Changes in people's behavior when seeking information about products have made social media one of the most strategic platforms for brands to reach their consumers. Promotional activities that previously relied on conventional advertising are now shifting toward digital content, which is faster, more interactive, and easier to distribute. The rapid development of technology and the internet has further strengthened this shift. Social media, which was initially used merely as a means of communication and entertainment, has now become a tool for companies to market their products (Ferdinand, 2016; Mao & Lyu, 2017). Moreover, the types of digital marketing available through social media are increasingly diverse (Sholikhah et al., 2025), allowing companies to tailor strategies and communication methods to suit the characteristics of users on each platform (Maharani et al., 2024; Yunus et al., 2016).

TikTok is one of the social media platforms that has experienced rapid growth in recent years. Based on data compiled from (Statista, 2025), by 2025 TikTok will become one of the most popular social media platforms in the world, with a global user base reaching 1.59 billion and projected to increase to 1.9 billion by 2029. Indonesia ranks second after the United States as the country with the largest number of TikTok users in the world, estimated at around 107 million users by 2025. Demographically, the majority of TikTok users are aged 25 to 34, accounting for more than 20 percent of total global users.

This growth has made TikTok one of the most effective marketing channels (Anggarwati et al., 2023). According to (Mulyani et al., 2022), marketing strategies using TikTok have been widely implemented by business owners, as reflected in the increasing number of

advertisements and online stores promoting their products through content on the platform. Kopi Kenangan is one of the brands that utilizes TikTok as its main marketing channel. (Aprilianti et al., 2024) stated that Kopi Kenangan employs short marketing content designed to follow TikTok trends that are currently popular among the public.

According to a GoodStats survey conducted in September 2025 (GoodStats, 2025), Kopi Kenangan ranked first as the favorite coffee shop among Indonesians, with a popularity rate of 42%. These results indicate that Kopi Kenangan remains the top choice among consumers compared to other coffee brands such as Fore Coffee and Starbucks. The survey results align with the findings of (Sinabariba & Risal, 2025), who stated that Kopi Kenangan products are preferred by many people due to their distinctive taste and affordable price, making them more accessible to consumers, especially young people. In addition, most consumers are familiar with the Kopi Kenangan brand, which is recognized as a local brand offering coffee flavors that stand out from competitors.

Beyond product quality, promotional activities such as discounts also influence consumer purchase decisions (Hongdiyanto et al., 2020). Providing discounts or promotional vouchers can be a key factor in stimulating consumer purchase interest, as such promotions serve as a form of communication between sellers and buyers intended to attract attention and encourage product trials (Solihin & Azka, 2024). Discounts increase purchase interest because consumers perceive them as opportunities to gain value when products are offered at prices lower than usual (Kiptiyah et al., 2025).

According to (Marlius, 2025), price discounts have a significant effect on purchase interest because they create feelings of satisfaction and excitement that encourage consumers to seize the opportunity immediately. However, (Aldoreno & Chairy, 2021) found contrasting results, showing that price discounts do not significantly affect purchase interest, as consumers tend to be more influenced by product type and functional needs rather than the form or amount of discount offered.

The rapid growth of social media has also made it easier for consumers to access product information. Reviews and recommendations from other users play an important role in shaping perceptions and purchase interest—a phenomenon known as electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) (Arifa & Noegroho, 2024). One of the key elements of e-WOM is advice seeking, which refers to the tendency of consumers to look for input, suggestions, and validation from others before making a purchase decision. Recommendations from friends, influencers, or credible figures on social media are often more influential in shaping purchase interest than promotional messages directly delivered by companies (Kotler & Armstrong, 2020; Kotler & Keller, 2020; Kurniawan & Fitriyah, 2025; Nefrida et al., 2024).

(Sudaryanto. et al., 2025; Sudirman & Musa, 2023; Sundari & Hanafi, 2024; Sutisna. & Pawitra., 2017; Sylvia & Ramli, 2023; Tafolli et al., 2025; Wardhana, 2024; Winarno & Indrawati, 2022) explained that e-WOM has a significant effect on purchase interest, as it builds trust and provides convincing information that encourages potential consumers to buy. In contrast, (Pandelaki et al., 2023) found that e-WOM did not significantly influence purchase interest, suggesting that not all brands can implement online communication strategies effectively. Unappealing promotional content and limited consumer interaction on digital media can reduce the impact of e-WOM on product purchase interest.

Kopi Kenangan has become one of the industry leaders due to its positive brand image in

the eyes of consumers. According to Junifanto et al. (2024) (Helmi et al., 2022) (Imron & Wajdi, 2024), Kopi Kenangan has become known for its consistent taste and distinctive coffee quality, as reflected in numerous positive reviews on culinary platforms and social media. Strong branding can attract consumer attention, but it is not always sufficient to stimulate purchase interest if consumers feel that the product does not align with their needs, preferences, or values (Irawanti, 2024).

Based on the above background, this study aims to determine the influence of price discounts and e-WOM on purchase interest through the mediating role of brand image. The study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it enriches the literature on marketing and consumer behavior, particularly regarding the effect of price discounts and e-WOM on purchase intention with brand image as a mediator (Fitriasari & Ahmadi, 2025). The findings also strengthen existing theories, such as the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory, by integrating digital communication and price incentive variables in the context of Generation Z consumers. Practically, the research can guide companies such as Kopi Kenangan in designing more effective promotional strategies, especially in utilizing discounts and managing e-WOM on platforms like TikTok. For digital marketing practitioners, the study offers insights into the importance of building a positive brand image to enhance purchase intention. Moreover, the results can help Generation Z consumers better understand the factors influencing their purchasing decisions, enabling them to make more informed and rational choices.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This study employs a quantitative approach with a causal research design. The purpose is to examine the causal relationships between the independent variables (price discount and electronic word of mouth), the mediating variable (brand image), and the dependent variable (purchase intention) (Jasin, 2022). The study uses a survey method through questionnaires to collect primary data from respondents. Data analysis is conducted using Structural Equation Modeling – Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) to test the proposed hypotheses.

Sampling and Data Collection

The population in this study consists of Generation Z individuals living in the Surabaya area. Based on BPS data, the number of Surabaya City residents categorized as Generation Z in 2024 was approximately 954,213 people. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling (Statistik, 2025). The sample size was calculated using the Slovin formula, resulting in a total of 400 respondents. The data used in this study are primary data, collected through online questionnaires distributed via Google Forms. The questionnaire consists of two parts: the first part contains respondent identity information, and the second includes statement items related to the research variables.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis in this study was conducted using the Structural Equation Modeling – Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach with the assistance of SmartPLS software version 4. The analysis process involves two main stages: the outer model and the inner model. The first stage involves testing the reliability and validity of the constructs. Reliability was assessed

using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) values, while convergent validity was evaluated through the outer loading and average variance extracted (AVE) values. Discriminant validity was tested using the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) criterion. The second stage involves analyzing the structural model to test the relationships between latent variables in the hypothesized framework. This analysis includes examining the values of R^2 , Q^2 , effect size (f^2), and path coefficients.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

Through the questionnaire distributed to respondents, identity data was obtained which included age, gender, occupation, last education, and intensity of purchase of Kopi Kenangan, which is presented in the following table:

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Respondent Identities	Description	Percentage
Age	13 – 18 years old	18%
	19 – 23 years old	47%
	24 – 28 years old	35%
Gender	Male	42%
	Women	58%
Final Education	Junior High School	4%
	High School/Vocational School	38%
	Diploma	18%
	Bachelor	40%
Jobs	Student/Student	48%
	Private Employees	32%
	Entrepreneurship	12%
	Not Working	8%
Product Consumption Intensity	1 – 2 times per week	30%
	3 – 5 times per week	44%
	>5 times per week	26%

Source: Data processed, 2025

Based on the identity of the respondents obtained from the research questionnaire, the majority of respondents were in the age range of 19-23 years, where female respondents were more dominant than men. In terms of education, most of the respondents are Bachelor's graduates, while based on employment, respondents are dominated by students or college students. In addition, most respondents have an intensity of consumption of Kopi Kenangan products as much as 3-5 times per week.

Evaluation of Measurement Models (*Outer Model*)

A construct is declared to have good reliability, namely if the value *cronbach's alpha* new > 0.70 (Shiva et al., 2020), and the value of *composite reliability* (CR) > 0.70 (Hair, 2019). The following are the results of the reliability test using the *cronbach's alpha* and *composite reliability*.

Table 2. Reliability Test Results

Variabel	<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>	<i>Composite reliability</i>
<i>Price Discount</i>	0.886	0.916
<i>e-WOM</i>	0.825	0.896

<i>Brand Image</i>	0.849	0.909
Buying Interest	0.889	0.923

Source: Data processing results, 2025

Based on table 3, all research variables show *Cronbach's alpha* and *composite reliability* values > 0.70 , so that all research variables can be declared reliable. After the reliability test is met, the next step is to conduct a validity test seen from convergent and discriminant validity. The convergent validity is considered to be fulfilled when, *the average variance extracted* (AVE) value > 0.50 , and the *outer loading value* > 0.50 (Hair *et al.*, 2019). The following are the results of the convergent validity test.

Table 3. Convergent Validity Test Results

Variable	Item	Loading	AVE
<i>Price Discount</i>	PD1	0.860	0.687
	PD2	0.844	
	PD3	0.825	
	PD4	0.787	
	PD5	0.827	
<i>Electronic Word of Mouth</i>	EW1	0.876	0.741
	EW2	0.871	
	EW3	0.834	
<i>Brand Image</i>	BI1	0.901	0.769
	BI2	0.888	
	BI3	0.840	
Buying Interest	MB1	0.870	0.750
	MB2	0.870	
	MB3	0.885	
	MB4	0.838	

Source: Data processing results, 2025

Based on the results of the convergent validity test, all *outer loading* values in each item of the research statement are greater than 0.50. In addition, the *average variance extracted* (AVE) value for each variable also shows a value greater than 0.50. Then the validity of the discriminator in this study was measured using HTMT. According to Gold *et al.* (Boon *et al.*, 2020), that a good HTMT value is < 0.90 . The following are the results of the discriminatory validity test.

Table 4. Results of the Discriminant Validity Test

Variable	Brand Image	Buying Interest	Price Discount	e-WOM
<i>Brand Image</i>				
Buying Interest	0.882			
<i>Price Discount</i>	0.760	0.809		
e-WOM	0.835	0.723	0.446	

Source: Data processing results, 2025

Based on the test results in table 5, all HTMT values between *brand image*, buying interest, *price discount*, and e-WOM variables are below the limit of 0.90, so that the construct in this study meets the criteria of discriminant validity. Furthermore, structural model testing (*inner model*) was carried out to see the relationship between latent variables in the research.

Based on Figure 3 below, the structural model contains the outer loading value of each indicator, the value of the path coefficient between constructs, and the value of the determination coefficient (R-square) on the endogenous variable.

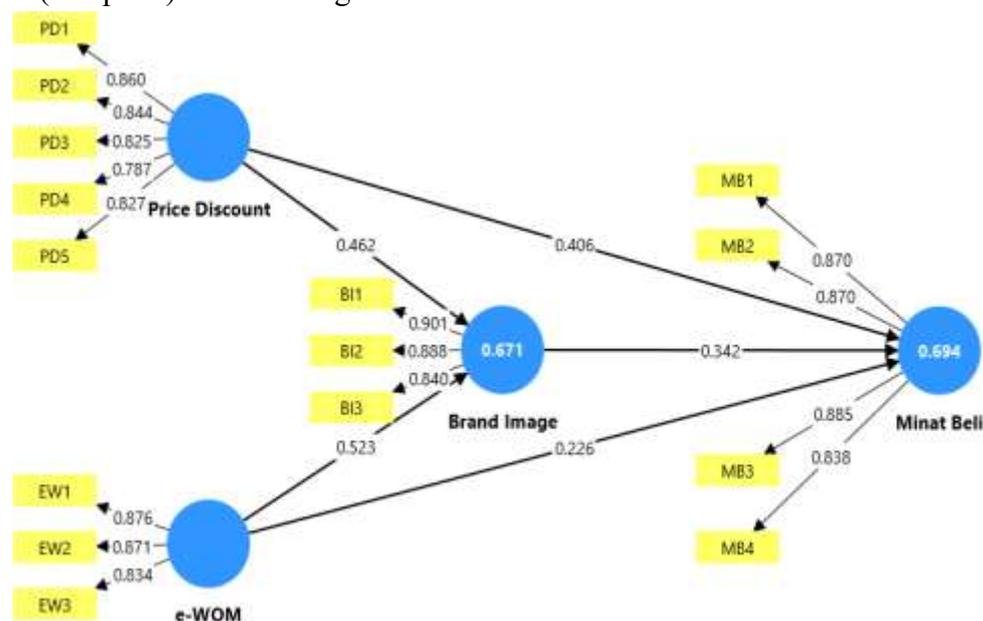


Figure 1. Results of the Analysis Test

Source: Data processing results, 2025

Inner Model

Coefficient of Determination (R-Square)

The inner model in this study is also seen from the values of the determination coefficient, F-square and Q-square. According to (Haryono, 2016), the determination coefficient (R-square) is basically used to show how much strength the relationship between exogenous variables and endogenous variables is. Based on the results of data processing, here is the value of the determination coefficient.

Table 5. R-Square Value

	R-square
<i>Brand Image</i>	0.671
Buying Interest	0.694

Source: Data processing results, 2025

In the *brand image* variable, an adjusted R-square value of 0.671 or 67% was obtained. These results show that the *price discount* and *e-WOM* variables affect *brand image* by 67%, while the remaining 33% are influenced by other variables outside this research model. Meanwhile, the value of the determination coefficient on the purchase interest variable of 0.694 or 69% showed that the *price discount*, *e-WOM*, and *brand image* variables had an effect on buying interest by 69%, while the remaining 31% was influenced by other variables outside the research model.

F-Square

According to Hair *et al.* (2019), *F-square* used to describe how strong an exogenous variable is to an endogenous variable in a research model. *F-valuesquare* It can be classified into several levels, namely:

- 1) An F-square value of 0.02 or close to this value indicates a small influence, so the relationship between independent and dependent variables is relatively weak.
- 2) The value of F-square, which is in the range of 0.15 – 0.35, reflects a moderate influence, which means that the relationship between variables is already visible but not yet relatively strong.
- 3) An F-square value of 0.35 or more indicates a large influence, so the relationship between independent and dependent variables can be categorized as strong.

Table 6. F-Square Value

	Brand Image	Buying Interest
<i>Brand Image</i>		0.126
<i>Price Discount</i>	0.554	0.296
e-WOM	0.712	0.083

Source: Data processing results, 2025

Based on table 7, *the price discount* and e-WOM variables have contributed to the *brand image* variables and buying interest with different levels of effect. The effect of *price discount* on *brand image* shows an F-square value of 0.554, while the effect of e-WOM on *brand image* is 0.712, both of which fall into the category of large effects. Furthermore, the influence of *brand image* on buying interest has an F-square value of 0.126, which is included in the category of small effects. The effect of *price discount* on buying interest shows an F-square value of 0.296, which is classified as a medium effect. Meanwhile, the influence of e-WOM on buying interest has an F-square value of 0.083, which is included in the category of small effects.

Q-Square

The magnitude of the Q-square value indicates the level of accuracy of the model's predictions. A Q-square value of 0 indicates low predictive ability. Then, a Q-square value of 0.25 indicates predictive ability at a moderate level, and a Q-square value of 0.50 or more indicates high predictive ability (Hair *et al.*, 2019). Based on the results of data processing, the Q-square value was obtained as follows.

Table 7. Q-Square Value

Item	Q2predict
BI1	0.543
BI2	0.556
BI3	0.436
MB1	0.479
MB2	0.500
MB3	0.543

MB4	0.431
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Source: Data processing results, 2025

From the table above, the *brand image* with indicators BI1 and BI2 having a value of *Q-square* are 0.543 and 0.556, respectively, meaning it has a high level of predictive ability, while the BI3 indicator has a *Q- valuesquare* 0.436 which shows predictive ability in the moderate category. Meanwhile, in the buying interest variable, the MB1 and MB4 indicators have a value of *Q-square* respectively of 0.479 and 0.431 which means that the indicator has predictive ability at a moderate level, while the indicators MB2 and MB3 have a value of *Q-square* 0.500 and 0.543, respectively, and show high predictive ability.

Uji Hypothesis Direct Influence

Table 8. Direct Influence

Hypothesis	Relationship	Original Sample	Std Error	t-value	p-value	Results
H1	<i>Price Discount</i> → <i>Brand Image</i>	0.462	0.029	15.690	0.000	Accepted
H2	e-WOM → <i>Brand Image</i>	0.523	0.031	16.781	0.000	Accepted
H3	<i>Brand Image</i> → Buying Interest	0.342	0.052	6.532	0.000	Accepted
H4	<i>Price Discount</i> → Minat Beli	0.406	0.039	10.312	0.000	Accepted
H5	e-WOM → Minat Beli	0.226	0.043	5.261	0.000	Accepted

Source: Data processing results, 2025

According to Hair *et al.* (2019), in the PLS-SEM structural model, the *original sample value* shows the direction (positive/negative) and the strength of the relationship between indicators. Then, a relationship is declared significant at a significance level of 5% if the t-value is > 1.96 and the p-value is < 0.05. Based on table 6 above, the results of direct influence are obtained as follows.

- 1) In H1, the *original sample value* was obtained at 0.462, this means that *the price discount* has a positive effect on *the brand image*. Then the t-value value is 15,690 (> 1.96) and the p-value is 0.000 (< 0.05) which means that *the price discount* variable has a significant influence on *the brand image*. It can therefore be concluded that H1 is acceptable.
- 2) In H2, the *original sample value* was 0.523, which means that e-WOM has a positive influence on *brand image*. Then the t-value is 16,781 (> 1.96) and the p-value is 0.000 (< 0.05), meaning that the e-WOM variable has a significant influence on *the brand image*. It can therefore be concluded that H2 is acceptable.
- 3) On H3, the *original sample value* was obtained of 0.342, this means that the *brand image* has a positive influence on buying interest. Then the t-value value is 6,532 (> 1.96) and the p-value is 0.000 (< 0.05), meaning that *the brand image* variable has a

significant influence on buying interest. It can therefore be concluded that H3 is acceptable.

- 4) On H4, the *original sample value* was obtained of 0.406, this means that *the price discount* has a positive influence on buying interest. Then the t-value is 10,312 (> 1.96) and the p-value is 0.000 (< 0.05), meaning that the *price discount* variable has a significant influence on buying interest. It can therefore be concluded that H4 is acceptable.
- 5) On H5, the *original sample value* was obtained of 0.226, this means that e-WOM has a positive influence on buying interest. Then the t-value is 5,261 (> 1.96) and the p-value is 0.000 (< 0.05) which means that the e-WOM variable has a significant influence on buying interest. It can therefore be concluded that H5 is acceptable.

Indirect Influence

Table 9. Indirect Influence

Hipotesis	Jalur	Original Sample	Std Error	t-value	p-value	Results
H6	<i>Price Discount</i> → <i>Brand Image</i> → Minat Beli	0.158	0.030	6.038	0.000	Accepted
H7	e-WOM → <i>Brand Image</i> → Buying Interest	0.179	0.027	5.924	0.000	Accepted

Source: Data processing results, 2025

Based on table 7 above, the results of indirect influence are obtained as follows.

- 1) On H6, the *original sample value* was obtained of 0.158, this means that *the price discount* has a positive indirect effect on buying interest through *brand image*. Then the t-value of 6,038 (> 1.96) and the p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05) showed that the *brand image variable* was able to mediate the influence between *price discount* and buying interest. Therefore, it can be concluded that H6 is acceptable.
- 2) On H7, the *original sample value* was obtained of 0.179, this means that e-WOM has a positive indirect influence on buying interest through *brand image*. Then the t-value of 5,924 (> 1.96) and the p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05) showed that the *brand image variable* was able to mediate the influence between e-WOM and buying interest. Therefore, it can be concluded that H7 is acceptable.

The Effect of Price Discount on Brand Image

Based on the hypothesis test, the results show that price discount has a positive and significant effect on brand image. These findings are consistent with the research of Fadilah et al. (2023) and (Sudaryanto. et al., 2025), which state that price discount significantly influences brand image. The presence of discounts makes consumers feel they gain more value because they can purchase products at lower prices without sacrificing quality. This condition creates a positive perception that the brand provides benefits to consumers. Such perceptions subsequently strengthen the brand image in the eyes of consumers.

The Influence of e-WOM on Brand Image

Based on the hypothesis test, the results indicate that e-WOM has a positive and significant effect on brand image. These findings align with the research of (Lestari &

Gunawan, 2021) and (D. Putri et al., 2021; S. A. A. Putri et al., 2024), which found that e-WOM significantly affects brand image. A large number of positive comments and reviews from other users on digital media can shape a favorable perception of a brand. When these positive opinions continue to appear and circulate widely, the brand is perceived as having good quality and reputation, thereby strengthening its brand image.

The Influence of Brand Image on Buying Interest

Based on the hypothesis test, the results show that brand image has a positive and significant effect on buying interest. These results are in line with the research of (Purwati & Cahyanti, 2022) and (Parhusip et al., 2025), which state that brand image significantly influences buying interest. A brand with a strong and positive reputation is generally viewed more favorably by consumers. Brand image may be formed through product quality, impressions, and information attached to the brand. This positive perception encourages consumers to try and purchase products because the brand is already associated with trust and quality.

The Effect of Price Discount on Buying Interest

Based on the hypothesis test, the results show that price discount has a positive and significant effect on buying interest. These findings are consistent with the research of (Ernawati et al., 2025) (Petrecia & Hakimah, 2025) and Marlius (2025), who stated that price discount significantly influences buying interest. Discounts offered by sellers can increase consumers' desire to make purchases, as they perceive that they spend less than the usual price. This perception of getting a better deal motivates consumers to buy because they associate the discount with economic benefits.

The Influence of e-WOM on Buying Interest

Based on the hypothesis test, the results indicate that e-WOM has a positive and significant effect on buying interest. These results are consistent with the research of (Yunikartika & Harti, 2022) and Solikhah et al. (2025), which found that e-WOM significantly affects buying interest. Positive e-WOM in the form of reviews, comments, or consumer opinions about a brand can create a favorable impression of the product in potential consumers' minds. When individuals encounter positive feedback from other consumers, it stimulates interest and desire to try and purchase the product.

The Effect of Price Discount on Buying Interest Mediated by Brand Image

Based on the hypothesis test, the results show that brand image strengthens the relationship between price discount and buying interest. These findings are consistent with the research of (Fadilah et al., 2023) and Sudaryanto et al. (2025), which confirm that brand image mediates the effect of price discount on buying interest. Discounts can enhance brand image because consumers perceive that the brand delivers more value than the price paid (Rahmansyah, 2020). This stronger brand image influences how consumers view the product, increasing their confidence in the brand and consequently their willingness to purchase.

The Influence of e-WOM on Buying Interest Mediated by Brand Image

Based on the hypothesis test, the results show that brand image strengthens the relationship between e-WOM and buying interest. These findings are consistent with the research of (Achmad et al., 2021) and (Pangestu et al., 2025), which found that brand image mediates the relationship between e-WOM and buying interest. Electronic word of mouth, in

the form of consumer reviews and opinions shared via digital media, can shape a brand's image. When such reviews portray a product positively, the brand is perceived more favorably by other consumers. This strengthened brand image enhances consumer confidence, which in turn increases buying interest.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the variables price discount and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) have a positive and significant effect on brand image. In addition, the variables price discount, electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), and brand image also have a positive and significant influence on purchase interest in Kopi Kenangan products. As a mediating variable, brand image has been proven to mediate the relationship between price discount and e-WOM on buying interest in Kopi Kenangan products. For future research, it is recommended to include additional variables that may influence purchase interest, such as product quality, brand ambassadors, and viral marketing. Researchers are also encouraged to consider using control variables such as age and gender. Furthermore, subsequent studies can expand the scope of respondents by widening the research area and increasing the sample size.

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