

The Influence of Word of Mouth (WOM) on Customer Buying Interest with Brand Image as a Moderating Variable

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Abstract. Consumer purchase intention is related to word of mouth along with the increasing brand image of the company. Brand image is a brand that is based on the good and bad of the brand that consumers remember. This study aims to: (1) Analyze the influence of word of mouth on Purchase Intention and (2) Analyze how word of mouth (wom) influences Purchase Intention with brand image as a moderating variable. This study is a quantitative descriptive study. With a research sample of 100 respondents. The data collection method uses a questionnaire. The data analysis method uses MRA analysis. The results of the study show that (1) word of mouth has a positive effect on consumer Purchase Intention with a calculated t value = $10.927 > t$ table = 1.987 with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This means that if the word of mouth variable increases, the purchasing decision will increase. (2) Brand image moderates the influence of word of mouth on consumer purchase interest with a regression coefficient value of the moderation variable (Word of Mouth*Brand image) of 0.588 with a positive value with a significance value of $0.032 < \alpha$ (0.05).

Keywords: Brand Image, Purchase Interest, word of mouth (WoM)

1 Introduction

Purchase intention is a tendency and desire that strongly drives individuals to make a purchase of a product [1]. Purchase intention is the consumer's intention to buy and have a product or service with various considerations that have been determined, for example looking at the advantages or disadvantages of a product, the price offered, the quality of the product, the service provided. Purchase intention consists of three aspects, namely possible to buy, wanting to buy, and considering buying, meaning that consumer behavior is determined by the consumer's behavioral intentions. Purchase intention is a stage of consumer tendency to act before actually making a purchase, where consumers form their choices among several brands included in the choice set and finally make a purchase on an alternative that they like the most or the process that consumers go through to buy a good or service based on various considerations.

High purchase intention reflects a high level of customer satisfaction when deciding to adopt a product [2]. This encourages companies to strengthen their brand position so that it is always used as a recommendation by other consumers who have bought or consumed the product, known as word of mouth (WOM). Repurchase intention is a consumer stage in forming their choices among several brands that will ultimately make purchases based on various considerations [3]. Repurchase intention is consumer behavior that appears as a response to objects that indicate the customer's desire to make a purchase [4]. Word of Mouth is a consumer's intention to make a purchase that is influenced by their own experience and can be influenced by recommendations or opinions from other consumers who have bought or consumed the product. Word of Mouth affects several conditions such as awareness, perception, attitude, intention and behavior, this can explain that word of mouth communication can affect several conditions such as awareness, hope, perception, attitude, desire to act and behavior.

Consumer purchase intention is related to word of mouth along with the increasing brand image of the company. Brand image is a brand that is based on the good and bad of the brand that consumers remember [5]. Consumer memory is formed by the experience of using the product or formed from the perceptions and opinions of other consumers. Brand Image is a perception that appears in the minds of consumers when remembering a particular brand or product line [6]. Rationally, consumers believe that certain brands can provide a guarantee of

quality for a product. Many customers have the intention to buy at Nuansa Cafe & Roastery rather than other places because they receive good service such as customers can order by phone before arriving at the place so they don't have to wait long, customers can order a place in advance before arriving at the place, and the service is very friendly from the beginning of the customer's arrival, until the presentation of clean and neat drinks. These things cause the tendency of Nuansa Cafe & Roastery to have an advantage over its competitors so that many customers tend to like and feel satisfied with the food and service offered.

Brand image is able to support the success of a business in achieving its goals, increase company profits, make consumers not mind buying at a higher price and facing increasingly tight competition [7]. Brand image is able to influence the company's long-term profits, encourage consumers' desire to buy products at high prices, increase selling prices, competitive advantages and marketing success [8]. Based on the background above, this study aims to analyze the influence of Word of Mouth (WoM) on Customer Purchase Interest with Brand Image as a Moderation Variable.

2 Literature Review

Brand image plays an important role in providing a positive or negative image of a particular profile. Brand image is the public's perception of a company or its products. This explains that brand image or brand image describes a person's perception of a product from a company that has been used or marketed widely. Brand image is what consumers think and feel when they hear or see a brand and what consumers learn about the brand [2]. This experience will be reflected in a brand that forms a positive or negative brand image. Brand image is a representation of the overall perception of a brand and is formed from information and past experiences with the brand itself [17]. Brand image is considered a guideline or instruction used by customers to provide an assessment of the product when customers have limited knowledge about the product. This shows that there is a tendency for consumers to choose and use products based on information obtained from various sources.

The process of communication individually or in groups in the form of providing recommendations for a product or service with the aim of providing personal information is known as word of mouth. Word of mouth is one of the company's marketing strategies that is formed indirectly and occurs among consumers. Word of mouth has a very influential or effective role in the survival of a company. Word of mouth can spread widely quickly and is trusted by potential customers. The spread of Word of mouth can not only be done by providing information through word of mouth communication, but can also be disseminated through existing internet social media advertisements [9]. This Word of mouth can be a powerful source of information in influencing customer Purchase Interest through satisfaction and dissatisfaction from previous customers who provide information [10]. The satisfaction and dissatisfaction of a customer greatly influences the impact of Word of mouth, both positive and negative, that will arise, and can affect the company [9]. So it can be concluded that Word of mouth is a promotional media carried out through people to convey messages about the value of a product/service that has been used to others and has an impact on the assessment of the product/service [11].

Purchase Interest is a delay made by customers before planning to buy a product [12]. Customer Purchase Interest reflects the customer's desire and desire to buy a product [13]. While another definition, Purchase Interest is how much customers buy a brand and service or how likely customers are to switch from one brand to another. If the benefits are greater than the sacrifice to get it, the urge to buy is higher [14]. Repurchase Interest shows the buyer's desire to make repeat visits in the future. Repurchase behavior is often associated with loyalty. However, the two are different, repurchase behavior is more about repurchasing the same brand repeatedly, while loyalty reflects a psychological commitment to a particular brand. Customer actions after purchasing, the occurrence of satisfaction or dissatisfaction after purchasing a product will affect subsequent behavior, if the customer is satisfied, they will show a higher possibility of repurchasing the product [15]. Repurchase Interest is different from loyalty, if loyalty reflects a psychological commitment to a particular brand while repurchase behavior is solely about purchasing the same brand repeatedly [13].

The conceptual framework is explained as follows:

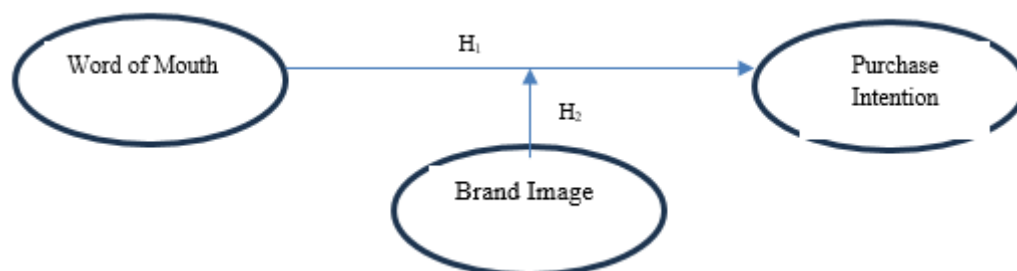


Figure 1. Research Model

Based on the framework above, the hypothesis of this study can be formulated as follows.

A. The effect of word of mouth on Purchase Intention.

Word of mouth (WOM) is a non-formal communication between consumers who provide information about brands, products and services. The information conveyed can be positive or negative information depending on what the messenger feels about the products and services that have been consumed. The information contained in word of mouth (WOM) comes from the customer's own experience so that it is more trusted by others than advertising which can positively affect brand image. Several studies have stated that word of mouth has an influence on brand image. Word of mouth has a positive influence on buying interest [20]. Word of mouth has a positive effect on buying interest significantly [21]. Likewise, the results of research, state that word of mouth has a positive effect on buying interest [22]. Word of mouth has a positive influence on Purchase Intention [23]. Based on the theory and results of previous research, the hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

H₁: It is suspected that there is an influence between word of mouth on buying interest.

B. The effect of word of mouth on Purchase Intention with brand image as a moderating variable

Customer buying interest is strongly influenced positively and significantly by word of mouth and brand image of a product (Schiffman, 2013). (Kotler, 2016) Objective assessment of customer purchase intentions can be assisted by word of mouth (WOM) as an effective form of promotion compared to other promotional methods. Word of mouth can effectively increase customer purchase intentions, directly word of mouth will contribute positively to the information conveyed by customers regarding the product brand image to others so that it will have a major influence on purchase intentions.

Word of mouth is able to mediate the positive influence of brand image on product purchase intentions [24]. Other studies state, that word of mouth mediates the effect of brand image on product purchase intention [22] [25] and word of mouth has a positive mediating influence in the relationship between brand image and customer purchase intention, that brand image is an important factor that has a positive influence on customer purchase intentions through the mediating role of word of mouth [26]. Based on the theory and results of previous research, the hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

H₂: It is suspected that word of mouth has an effect on buying interest with brand image as a moderator variable.

3 Method

The subject of this research is Nuansa Café & Roastery consumers, with the object of research word of mouth (WoM), brand image and purchase intention. The population of this study were all consumers of Nuansa Café & Roastery, with a research sample of 100 respondents obtained using the Lemeshow formula. Data sources are primary and secondary. The data collection method is by distributing questionnaires to consumers of Nuansa Café & Roastery using a Likert scale. This research is quantitative descriptive research. [9].

The data analysis method uses the classical assumption test, multiple linear regression analysis, t test, F test and Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA). Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) or interaction test is a linear multiple regression application where the regression equation contains interaction elements. MRA (Moderated Regression Analysis) is a data analysis technique used to maintain sample integrity and provide a basis for controlling the influence of moderator variables [19]. This analysis aims to determine whether the moderating variable will strengthen or weaken the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. MRA analysis is used to answer the hypothesis, namely whether Purchase Intention is influenced by the interaction between the independent variable (Word of Mouth with the moderator variable brand image).

4 Result and Discussion

4.1 Instrument Test

Instrument testing using data from 30 respondents. The results of the validity test, all questions were declared valid in the questionnaire data on the use of word of mouth (X), brand image (Z), Purchase Interest (Y). All questions that were declared valid had a correlation coefficient value of ≥ 0.374 for $N-2 = 30 - 2 = 28$ at a significance level of 5%. The calculation of the results of the validity test of each variable in full can be seen in the following table.

Table 1. Word of Mouth Validity Test Table

Variable	Item	r count	r table	Criteria
<i>Word of Mouth</i>	WoM 01	0,724	0,374	Valid
	WoM 02	0,653	0,374	Valid
	WoM 03	0,589	0,374	Valid
	WoM 04	0,485	0,374	Valid
	WoM 05	0,554	0,374	Valid
	WoM 06	0,492	0,374	Valid

Source: Primary data processed 2024

Table 2. Brand Image Validity Test Table

Variable	Item	r count	r table	Criteria
<i>Brand image</i>	BI 01	0,479	0,374	Valid
	BI 02	0,616	0,374	Valid
	BI 03	0,636	0,374	Valid
	BI 04	0,520	0,374	Valid
	BI 05	0,726	0,374	Valid
	BI 06	0,587	0,374	Valid

Source: Primary data processed 2024

Table 3. Validity Test Table of Purchase Intention

Variable	Item	r count	r table	Criteria
<i>Minat Beli</i>	PI 01	0,455	0,374	Valid
	PI 02	0,441	0,374	Valid
	PI 03	0,467	0,374	Valid
	PI 04	0,420	0,374	Valid
	PI 05	0,714	0,374	Valid
	PI 06	0,700	0,374	Valid
	PI 07	0,480	0,374	Valid
	PI 08	0,516	0,374	Valid

Source: Primary data processed 2024

The reliability test results show that the alpha coefficient value of the Word of Mouth variable = 0.899, brand image = 0.924, and Purchase Intention = 0.937. These results exceed the reliability value of 0.7 so that the variables are declared reliable and suitable for use.

Table 4. Research Reliability Test Table

No.	Variable	Alpha Cronbach's	Value Critical	Description
	<i>Word of Mouth</i>	0,899	0,7	Reliabel
	<i>Brand image</i>	0,924	0,7	Reliabel
	<i>Minat Beli</i>	0,937	0,7	Reliabel

Source: Primary data processed 2024

4.2 Classical Assumption Test

The results of the Classical Assumption test consist of normality test, multicollinearity test, and heteroscedasticity test, as follows:

A. Normality Test

The data normality test aims to test whether in the regression model, the confounding variables or residuals have a normal distribution.

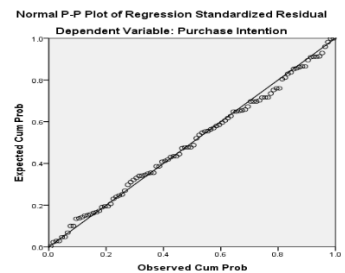


Figure 2. Graph of Normality Test
Source: Primary data processed 2024

Based on the graph above, it can be seen that the data distribution is close to the linear line, so it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed.

The statistical test used in this study is the Kolmogorov-Smirnov non-parametric statistical test. The basis for decision making is seen from the significant value, if the significant value is more than 0.05 then the research data is normally distributed.

Table 5. Table of Normality Test Results

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		100
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	0E-7
	Std. Deviation	5.21902698
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.053
	Positive	.053
	Negative	-.044
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.529
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.942

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.

Source: Primary data processed 2024

The test results above show that the data above is normally distributed with a significance value of 0.942 above 0.05.

B. Heteroscedasticity Test

The heteroscedasticity test aims to test whether in the regression model there is inequality of variance from the residual of one observation to another observation. If the variance from the residual of one observation to another observation remains, then it is called homoscedasticity and if it is different it is called heteroscedasticity. A good regression model is a regression model that is homoscedastic or does not have heteroscedasticity[19].

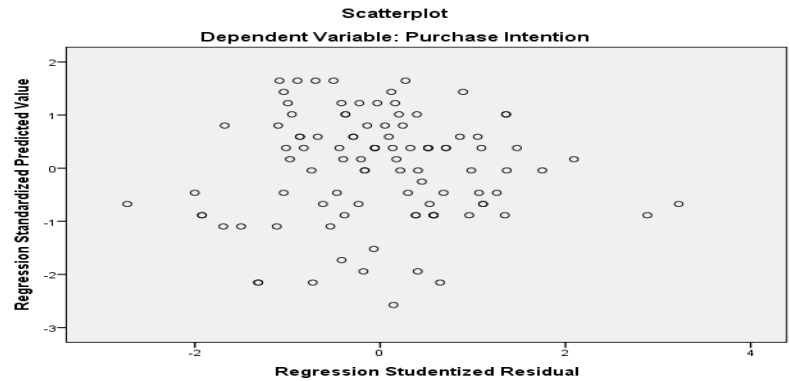


Figure 3. Heteroscedasticity Test Chart

The test results show, the distribution of data on the graph looks spread and between the upper and lower 0 points, it is concluded that there is no heteroscedasticity..

4.3 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression is used to analyze how much influence the independent variable has on the intervening variable using the dependent variable. Based on the results of the regression model analysis, the following results are obtained:

Table 6. Table Multiple Regression Test Results

Model		Coefficients ^a			t	Sig.
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta		
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	.116	2.526		.046	.963
	WoM	1.216	.111	.741	10.927	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Minat Beli

Table above shows the multiple linear regression equation as follows:

$$Y = 0.116 + 0.741X$$

Where:

Y = Purchase Interest

X = Word of Mouth

Z = Brand image

The table above shows a constant value of 0.116, meaning that if the Word of Mouth variable is fixed or unchanged, the value of the Purchase Intention variable is 0.116. The Word of Mouth perception regression coefficient (X) is 0.741, if the Word of Mouth variable increases, the Purchase Interest increases. The coefficient is positive, meaning that there is a unidirectional relationship between Word of Mouth and Purchase Intention.

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

The t test is used to determine the significant effect between the independent variable and the dependent variable partially [19]. The analysis of the partial test results (t test) is intended to prove the research which states that each independent variable has a significant effect on the dependent variable by comparing the sig t value with a significance level of 5% (0.05).

Table 7. T-test results

Model		Coefficients ^a			t	Sig.
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta		
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	.116	2.526		.046	.963
	WoM	1.216	.111	.741	10.927	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Source: Primary data processed 2024

The significance test results show that the Word of Mouth (X1) variable has a tcount value = 10.927 > ttable = 1.987 with a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05. This means that Word of Mouth has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention. This value can prove the hypothesis is accepted, meaning that there is a significant influence of the Word of Mouth variable on Purchase Intention.

4.5 Model Feasibility Test (F test)

The F test is used to test the effect of the independent variables, namely Word of Mouth, and brand image simultaneously on buying interest. This can be seen by looking at the significant F value with $\alpha = 5\%$. If significant > α then H_a is rejected but if the significant F value < α then H_a is accepted. The test results are shown in the table below:

Table 8. F Test Results

Source: Primary data processed 2024

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3285.204	1	3285.204	119.392	.000 ^b
	Residual	2696.586	98	27.516		
	Total	5981.790	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), WoM

The test results show the Fcount value of 119.392 with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$, meaning that the research model is feasible to continue.

4.6 Coefficient of Determination

The coefficient of determination (R^2) is used to measure the ability of the model to explain the variation in the independent variable. The smaller the R^2 value, the smaller the ability of the independent variable to explain the dependent variable, and if the R^2 value is closer to one, the ability of the independent variable to provide information to explain the dependent variable is greater [19].

Table 9. Determination Coefficient Test Results

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.741 ^a	.549	.545	5.24559

a. Predictors: (Constant), WoM

b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Source: Primary data processed 2024

The test results show, the R Square value is 0.549, which means that the Word of Mouth variable is able to explain 54.9% of the Purchase Intention variable, while the remaining 45.1% is influenced by other variables not examined.

4.7 Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA)

MRA analysis is used to answer the hypothesis, namely Purchase Interest is influenced by the interaction between independent variables (Word of Mouth with the brand image modifier variable). If the level of significance obtained is more than 5% then the hypothesis is rejected, conversely if the level of significance is between 0-5% then the hypothesis is accepted.

Table 10. Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) Test Results between Word of Mouth * Brand Image

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
		Coefficients				
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.655	8.167		.937	.351
	WoM	.865	.437	.527	1.979	.051
	Brand Image	.872	.385	.571	2.263	.026
	WoM*Brand Image	.808	.219	.588	1.412	.032

a. Dependent Variable: Minat Beli

Source: Primary data processed 2024

The test results show, the regression coefficient value of the moderating variable (Word of Mouth * Brand image) is 0.588 with a significance value of $0.032 < \alpha (0.05)$, so it can be said that the brand image variable strengthens the influence of Word of Mouth on Purchase Intention. Thus the hypothesis is accepted.

5 Conclusions

Word of Mouth has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention. Word of mouth (WOM) is a non-formal communication between consumers who provide information about brands, products and services. The information conveyed can be positive or negative information depending on what the messenger feels about the products and services that have been consumed. The information contained in word of mouth (WOM) comes from the customer's own experience so that it is more trusted by others than advertising which can positively affect brand image.

Brand image moderates the effect of Word of Mouth on Purchase Intention, meaning that the brand image variable strengthens the influence of Word of Mouth on Purchase Intention. Customer purchase intention is strongly influenced positively and significantly by word of mouth and brand image of a product. An objective assessment of customer purchase intentions can be assisted by word of mouth (WOM) as an effective form of promotion compared to other promotional methods. Word of mouth can effectively increase customer purchase intentions, directly word of mouth will contribute positively to the information that customers convey about the product brand image to others so that it will have a major influence on purchase intentions.

The implications of this research are 1) Theoretical Implications, This research contributes to the development of marketing theory, especially in understanding the relationship between WoM, purchase intention, and brand image, namely Strengthening the theory that positive WoM can increase customer purchase intention, Showing that brand image can strengthen or weaken the influence of WoM. Brands with a strong image are better able to optimize the positive impact of WoM than brands with a weak image, Provides a new understanding of how moderating variables (brand image) work in the context of consumer behavior; 2) Practical Implications, namely Optimization of WoM strategies: Companies need to increase positive reviews from customers, because recommendations from others are proven to increase purchase intention; The importance of brand image management: A good brand image can strengthen the impact of positive WoM, so companies must continue to maintain brand reputation through consistent branding, Marketing communication strategy: If the brand image is weak, then WoM may not have a significant impact on purchase intention. Therefore, there needs to be the right combination of communication strategies to increase brand appeal; 3) Managerial Implications, namely Companies must be more proactive in encouraging positive WoM, for example with referral programs, influencer marketing, or customer testimonials, Strengthening brand branding and positioning to ensure that the impact of WoM is getting stronger in encouraging buying interest, Analyzing customer perceptions of brand image periodically, for example through customer satisfaction surveys or social media listening, so that marketing strategies are more targeted.

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