

## **The Influence of e-WOM and Korean Celebrities as Brand Ambassadors on Consumer Purchase Decision through Brand Image (Case on Somethinc Consumers in Semarang)**

**Nabila Rahmananda Komara, Amie Kusumawardhani <sup>1</sup>**

Departemen Manajemen Fakultas Ekonomika dan Bisnis Universitas Diponegoro  
Jl. Prof. Soedharto SH Tembalang, Semarang 50239, Phone: +622476486851

### **ABSTRACT**

Nowadays, with the advancements in science and technology, particularly the internet, business competition has become increasingly intense, while foreign cultures, such as The Korean Wave, have become more accessible to Indonesia. Subsequently, the increased rivalry will force Somethinc, an Indonesian beauty company that is known for its wide range of skincare and beauty products, to refine their marketing strategy in order to remain competitive, enhance their brand image, and improve consumer purchase decisions, by making use of the trends of electronic word of mouth and the usage of brand ambassadors.

This study aims to analyze the exact extent to which the brand ambassadors and electronic word of mouth contribute to the purchasing decisions of Somethinc customers. The population in this study are the consumers of Somethinc products in the city of Semarang, Indonesia. The sample used was 170 respondents. The sample collecting method used is purposive sampling. The data collecting method used is the distribution of questionnaires through Google Form. This study uses Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Partial Least Square (PLS) approach utilizing the 3th edition of SmartPLS as the analysis tool.

The findings from this study illustrate that, the electronic word of mouth and brand ambassadors have a positive and significant effect on brand image. In addition, electronic word of mouth and brand ambassadors have a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions..

**Keywords: Electronic word of mouth, brand ambassadors, brand image, purchase decisions**

### **INTRODUCTION**

. In contemporary times, the competition among enterprises involved in industries, commerce, and services is progressively intensifying due to the rapid pace of scientific and technological advancements. Along with the advancement of fashion, film, photography, and social media in developed countries, including Indonesia, the cosmetic sector will inevitably advance. This is consistent with an 80 percent growth in online cosmetics transactions (Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020), which shows the increasing competition among cosmetic companies. Subsequently, the increased rivalry will force companies to refine their marketing strategy in order to remain competitive. One crucial component of a marketing strategy is understanding the consumer behavior. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), there are several factors that influence consumer behavior, one of which is the social factors. According to Qazzafi (2020), the social factor is one of the most influential influences on consumer purchasing behavior.

As stated by Qazzafi (2020), the strongest social factor influencing consumer purchasing behavior is word-of-mouth. Moreover, along with the internet technology

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<sup>1</sup> Corresponding author

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advances, consumers have access to a variety of information through multiple channels that has a way of influencing people, such as social media, virtual marketplaces, and online sources that offer accurate and trustworthy information (Zulkifli et al., 2017). Consequently, it can be understood that the electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has risen and influence the consumer behavior.

Azzahra et al. (2021) stated that social factors on consumer behavior may involve a prominent figure such as a trendsetter or an idol who is commonly recruited as a brand ambassador. Typically, businesses choose well-known artists who have notable accomplishments to serve as brand ambassadors as it is crucial to choose a suitable brand ambassador to enhance the brand image in the consumer's mind (Dewi et al., 2020). Since The Korean Wave has been gaining widespread acceptance and popularity across multiple countries including Indonesia, The Korean Wave phenomenon is being used by several Indonesian brands that have been leveraging the Korean Wave by hiring Korean celebrities as their brand ambassadors. One of the companies that have been making use of these strategies is Somethinc.

Somethinc is an Indonesian beauty company that is known for its wide range of skincare and beauty products, using NCT Dream, a subunit of the popular South Korean boy group NCT, as their brand ambassador, and is leveraging social media as its primary marketing platform, using electronic word of mouth as a powerful tool to promote its products. From the survey carried out by Kompas (2022), Somethinc is ranked as the top-selling local skincare brand in e-commerce Shopee and Tokopedia, with total sales of 53.2 billion. In fact, the results of the same survey in the previous year proved that Somethinc was ranked third, namely under the Ms Glow and Scarlett brands, with total sales of 8.1 billion. This shows that Somethinc has rapid increase in its sales revenues. However, the exact extent to which the brand ambassadors and e-WOM contribute to the purchasing decisions of Somethinc customers remains unknown and is an area of research that is worth exploring. Moreover, the findings of the pre-survey results show the dissatisfaction with the reasons of 15 consumers in Semarang regarding purchasing Somethinc products.

**Table 1 Pre-survey Results**

Statement	Agree	Disagree
<b>Variable X1: e-WOM</b>		
I am sure to buy Something's product because Something's product has good reviews from other social media users	80 %	20%
<b>Variable X2: Brand Ambassadors</b>		
NCT Dream's popularity as the Brand Ambassador for Something's product can influence me to buy Something's product	73.3%	26.7%
<b>Variable Z: Brand Image</b>		
I feel that Somethinc is a well-reputed brand that sells quality products	66.7%	33.3%
<b>Variable Y: Purchase Decision</b>		
I feel confident in my decision to buy Somethinc's products over other brand's products	73.3%	26.7%

Source: Pre-survey results

Based on the pre-survey results, there are 20% of consumers who are still hesitant to buy Somethinc products because there are still bad reviews and complaints regarding Somethinc products circulating on social media. 26.7% of consumers are also not convinced to buy Somethinc products with NCT Dream as brand ambassadors because they feel confident about buying Somethinc products by other factors other than the brand ambassador and some of them do not really know Korean artists. 33.3% of consumers, which is the largest number in the "Disagree" column, doubt that Somethinc is a well-reputed brand that sells quality products because the effects of using Somethinc on their

skin are not as expected, such as skin redness, allergic reactions, and pimples arise. There is also another reason, namely because they saw complaints on Somethinc's social media that Somethinc did not give feedback. Lastly, 26.7% of consumers are hesitant to make Somethinc's product as the first-choice product that they will buy compared to other brands' products because they are still considering products from other brands.

From the description above, the author derives the title "The Influence Of e-WOM and Korean Celebrities as Brand Ambassadors on Consumer Purchase Decision through Brand Image (Case on Somethinc Consumers in Semarang)".

## RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

According to Kotler and Keller's research in 2016, consumer buying behavior pertains to the examination of the manners in which individuals, groups, and organizations purchase and dispose of goods, services, ideas, or experiences to fulfill their needs and desires. As a result, comprehending consumer buying behavior is imperative for marketers and business entities. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) model suggests that consumers' attitudes towards the brand, perceived social norms regarding the brand, and their perceived control over purchasing the brand could significantly determine consumers' or individuals' purchase intention and decision toward buying. Also according to Kotler and Keller, there are several factors that influence purchasing decisions, one of them is promotion, which, according to Gitman et al. (2018), it is an attempt by marketers to inform, persuade, or remind consumers and B2B users to influence their opinion or elicit a response. Therefore, in the context of e-WOM and Korean celebrities as brand ambassadors, understanding the impact of e-WOM and brand ambassador with the brand image as variable intervening is crucial for understanding their influence on consumer purchase decision.

### Relationship between E-WOM and Brand Image

Previous studies show that electronic word of mouth influences brand image, this is in line with research from (Saputra & Wardana, 2020) which found that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has a positive effect on brand image. This can be interpreted that the e-WOM variable has an influence on brand image or the stronger the e-WOM engagement, the better the brand image can be. This shows that the hypothesis can be made as follows:

**H1: The stronger the e-WOM engagement, the better the brand image can be.**

### Relationship between Brand Ambassadors and Brand Image

There is research showing that brand ambassador has an effect on brand image, this is in line with research from (Dewi et al., 2019) and (Hendi et al., 2022) which found that brand ambassador has a positive effect on brand image. This can be interpreted that the brand ambassadors variable has an influence on brand image or the better the brand ambassador, the better the brand image can be. This shows that the hypothesis can be made as follows:

**H2: The better the brand ambassador, the better the brand image can be.**

### Relationship between E-WOM and Purchase Decision

Prior research show that electronic word of mouth influences purchase decision, this is in line with research from (Nurhasanah et al., 2021) which found that electronic word of mouth has a positive effect on purchase decision. This can be interpreted that the e-WOM variable has an influence on purchase decision or the stronger the e-WOM engagement, the higher the purchase decision can be. This shows that the hypothesis can be made as follows:

**H3: The stronger the e-WOM engagement, the higher the purchase decision can be.**

### Relationship between Brand Ambassadors and Purchase Decision

Previous studies show that brand ambassadors influence purchase decision, such as the research from (Dewi et al., 2019) and (Hendi et al., 2022) which found that brand ambassadors have a positive effect on purchase decision. The same findings were also found in (Nabilah, 2020). This shows that the hypothesis can be made as follows:

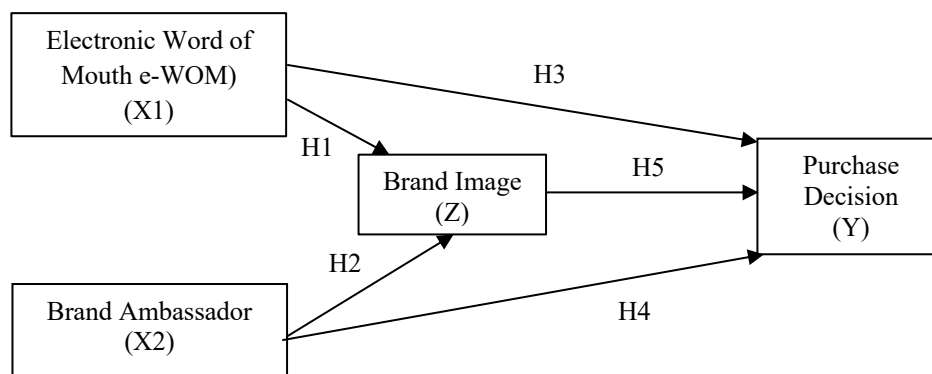
**H4: The more favorable the brand ambassador, the higher the purchase decision can be.**

### Relationship between Brand Image and Purchase Decision

There is research showing that brand image influences purchase decision, this is in line with research from (Dewi et al., 2019) which found that brand image have a positive effect on purchase decision. The same findings were also found in (Saputra & Wardana, 2020) and (Hendi et al., 2022). This shows that the hypothesis can be made as follows:

**H5: The more positive the brand image, the higher the purchase decision can be**

**Figure 2 Conceptual Framework**



Source: Data processed by author (2023)

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Research Variables

Research variables are constructs, attributes, properties or values of people, objects, or activities that have certain variations and are determined by the researcher to be discussed, studied, and then conclusions drawn. This study uses variables, namely the independent variable, intervening variable, and the dependent variable, as follows:

1. Dependent Variables

The dependent variable is the focus and main concern in research because it is a variable that can produce a problem solving in research (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). In this study, the dependent variable used is consumer purchase decision of buying Something products.

2. Intervening Variables

Intervening variables are variables that affect the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable, so that an indirect relationship is created between them (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). In this study, the intervening variable used was brand image.

3. Independent Variables

The independent variables are not influenced by other variables but has a role in influencing the value of other variables or the dependent variable in a model. Independent

variables are the answer to how problems in the study are solved (Ferdinand, 2014). In this study the independent variables used are brand ambassadors and electronic word of mouth.

**Table 2 Operational Definitions of Variables**

Variable	Operational Definition	Indicator
Electronic Word of Mouth (X1)	The expression of positive or negative feedback about a product or company by potential, current, or former customers, which is disseminated to a wide audience and various institutions via the internet.  (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004)	1. Intensity 2. Content 3. Positive Opinions 4. Negative Opinions  (Goyette et al., 2010)
Brand Ambassadors (X2)	Energetic individuals hired by companies to represent their products or services, thus creating a brand image in the minds of the intended audience.  (Utami et al. (2020)	1. Visibility 2. Credibility 3. Attractiveness 4. Power  (Rossiter and Percy, 1987, in research by Nabilah in 2020)
Brand Image (Z)	The beliefs, ideas, and impressions that individuals have of a particular brand.  (Kotler & Keller, 2013)	1. Recognition 2. Reputation 3. Affinity 4. Domain  (Aaker, 2018)
Purchase Decision (Y)	The election of two or more alternative purchasing decision.  (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004, as stated in Foster, 2017)	1. Customers' good feeling 2. Customers' likelihood to recommend to others 3. Customers' frequency of purchase 4. Customers' intent to purchase in the future 5. Customers' overall satisfaction  (Hanaysha, 2018)

Source: Previous Research

### Population and Sample

Based on research conducted by Majid in 2018, a population is the study's target population that it intends to study or treat. The population in this study is the consumers of Somethinc products in the city of Semarang, Indonesia. The location of this research is in the city of Semarang because Semarang is the fifth metropolitan city in Indonesia as well as one of the developing cities on the island of Java. Semarang is also the capital city of Central Java province which, according to Department of Population and Civil Registration of the City of Semarang in 2022, has a population around 1.7 millions of people, so it is hoped that this research will provide relevant results. Its location in the center of Java Island means that it could be a strategic location to conduct research that is relevant to the wider Indonesian market.

A sample is a subset of the population (Banerjee & Chaudhury, 2010). Non-probability sampling is a strategy that is not based on the law of probability and does not provide all members of the population with equal opportunities to be selected as samples (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Taking this method because researchers have limited knowledge about the number and characteristics of the available population. While the type of nonprobability sampling method used in this study is purposive sampling which is

a limited sampling method according to the criteria set by the researcher. Purposive sampling is selecting a sample that uses several judgments or the researcher's own judgment to find a representative sample that is considered to be able to provide the necessary information (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The criteria for the sample applied to this study include the following:

1. Domiciled in Semarang City
2. Minimum 18 years old
3. Have purchased buying Somethinc products (at least once)

To determine the number of samples, this study refers to the Maximum Likelihood estimation model described by Ghozali (2014) which states that the minimum number of samples used is 100 respondents and the maximum sample is 200 respondents. While the determination of a representative sample is 5-10 times the number of indicators (Ferdinand, 2006). In this study, the number of indicators is 17 indicators multiplied by 10 so that the number of samples selected is 170 samples.

### **Collecting Data Methods**

The data collection process used in this study was using an online-based questionnaire distributed to the people in Semarang that meets the criteria as a research sample using Google Form. This study uses closed questions as a questionnaire. A closed questionnaire is a type of survey that does not allow respondents to answer questions as they wish and asks respondents to choose from the various options provided. The scale used in compiling the questionnaire is the semantic differential scale. Sugiyono (2015) defines a measurement standard in the form of a semantic differential used by a researcher named Osgood, where a standard measure can measure behavior, but its form is not multiple choice which is strung in 1 linear. In this study, the Semantic Differential scale has a scale of 1 to 10, where scale 1 means strongly disagree, and scale 10 means strongly agree. The reason of choosing the Semantic Differential scale is to increase the tendency of sample elements to have the closest answer to which they prefer, compared to only 5 points of Likert scale (Joshi et al., 2015).

### **Data Analysis Methods**

The data analysis technique in this study uses the 3<sup>th</sup> edition of SmartPLS program, using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Partial Least Square (PLS) approach. PLS is a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) equation model with an approach based on variance and component based structural equation modeling. The author chose to use PLS-SEM because PLS-SEM processes data quickly and easily, even though the model is complex, and the results can be used for further analysis. As stated on the official website of SmartPLS, PLS-SEM provides a means to examine intricate connections among observed and latent variables. The SEM-PLS analysis consists of two sub-models, namely the measurement model or outer model and the structural model or inner model. The measurement model is used to test validity and reliability, while the structural model is used to test causality (testing hypotheses with predictive models).

## **DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Description of Respondents**

This research involved a total of 170 respondents who had purchased Somethinc products at least once in Semarang. Based on gender, the respondents are dominated by females with 79.4%. Based on profession, the respondents are dominated by students with 62.4%. Based on age range, the respondents are dominated by those who are 18 – 25 years

old with 72.9%. Lastly, based on income in Rupiah, the respondents are dominated by those who have income in range of 1 million until 3 millions Rupiah with 31.8%.

### Research Model

The research model used in this study can be seen in Figure 3.

Figure 3 Research Model



Source: Data processed by author (2023)

### Measurement Model Testing (Outer Model)

Outer model analysis is carried out to ensure that the measurement used is valid and reliable for measurement. Outer model analysis can be seen from several indicators, namely convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite reliability.

#### Convergent Validity Evaluation

Evaluation of convergent validity is an evaluation in measuring the extent to which there is a positive correlation between indicators and their latent variables. Based on Convergent Validity Evaluation, all the items are valid because all the outer loading values are greater than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2017). Hair, et al (2017) argue that to measure convergent validity AVE values can also be used. The AVE results in this study show that the values of all variables are good as it fulfills the rule of thumbs  $> 0.5$ . Thus, it can be concluded that the indicator variables represent construct variables.

#### Discriminant Validity Evaluation

Discriminant validity is an assessment of how far a construct really represents the construct variable compared to other construct variables with empirical standards (Hair, et al, 2017). In this study, the outer loading value of each indicator variable of the related

construct variables is greater than the cross-loading value. So, it can be said that the question on the indicator represents the construct variable itself compared to the cross-loading value on other indicator variables.

### **Composite Reliability Evaluation**

According to Hair, et al, (2017) the rule of thumbs from Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability is  $> 0.70$ . In this study, the value of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability is  $> 0.70$ . This value has fulfilled the rule of thumbs, so it can be concluded that each variable has good reliability.

### **Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)**

Structural model testing aims to predict the relationship between latent variables (Ghozali & Latan, 2015). The measurement of the inner model has measurement indicators, which are the R-square, Q-square, and F-square.

#### **R-Square**

In this study, the R square result on the Brand Image variable is 0.768 so it can be concluded that the electronic word of mouth and brand ambassador variables have a strong influence or 76.8% and the rest are influenced by other factors. Meanwhile, the purchasing decision variable is moderately influenced by electronic word of mouth and brand ambassadors by 0.691 or 69.1% and the rest is influenced by other factors.

#### **Q-Square Predictive Relevance**

The Q-square measurement aims to measure how strong an indicator can be as a predictive power of a model without a sample. In this study, the Q-square value of the Brand Image (0.498) and Purchase Decision (0.511) are more than  $> 0.35$ , so it can be concluded that the exogenous variables in this study (EWOM and Brand Ambassador) have large predictive relevance for endogenous variables (Brand Image and Purchase Decision).

#### **F-Square**

In this study, the influence of Brand Ambassadors on Brand Image has a moderate effect because the F square value is 0.151, which means it is between 0.15 and 0.35. Meanwhile, the influence of Electronic Word of Mouth on Brand Image has a big effect because the F square value is 0.659 which means more than 0.35. The influence of Electronic Word of Mouth on Purchase Decision, Brand Ambassador on Purchase Decision, Brand Image on Purchase Decision is considered small because the F square value is in the range of 0.02 to 0.15. Meanwhile, there is no negligible effect because there is no effect that has a value of f square  $< 0.02$ .

#### **Model Fit**

Henseler et al. (2014) introduce the SRMR as a goodness of fit measure for PLS-SEM that can be used to avoid model misspecification. Criteria for model fit are SRMR or Standardized Root Mean Square Residual values  $< 0.1$ . Based on the SRMR in this study, the value is 0.061  $< 0.10$ , hence the model is fit with the data.

#### **Discussion**

Testing the hypothesis is done with the SmartPLS application using the bootstrapping feature and seeing the results on the path coefficient. In this study, the researcher used an alpha value of 5% so that the allowed p value was  $< 0.05$ . The following is the result of bootstrapping from this study:



**Table 4 Path Coefficients Bootstrapping**

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ((O/STDEV))	P Values
Brand Ambassador (X2) -> Brand Image (Z)	0,299	0,298	0,049	6,094	<b>0,000</b>
Brand Ambassador (X2) -> Purchase Decision (Y)	0,297	0,292	0,081	3,660	<b>0,000</b>
Brand Image (Z) -> Purchase Decision (Y)	0,267	0,274	0,102	2,605	<b>0,009</b>
Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) (X1) -> Brand Image (Z)	0,624	0,624	0,049	12,794	<b>0,000</b>
Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) (X1) -> Purchase Decision (Y)	0,327	0,324	0,099	3,307	<b>0,001</b>

Source: Primary data processed, May 2023

Based on Table 4, all the proposed hypotheses are declared accepted because they have a P value that is less than 0.05 and the t-statistics values are greater than 1.96. Further explanation regarding hypothesis testing will be explained below.

### **Hypothesis 1**

The first hypothesis suspects that the stronger the e-WOM engagement, the better the brand image can be. From the results of the analysis in Table 4.16, the t-statistic value is 12.794 with a p value of 0.000, and a positive path coefficient with a value of 0.624. The t-statistic value is greater than the t-table value of 1.960 and the p value is less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the first hypothesis is accepted.

### **Hypothesis 2**

The second hypothesis suspects that the better the brand ambassador, the better the brand image can be. From the results of the analysis in Table 4.17, the t-statistic value is 6.094 with a p value of 0.000, and a positive path coefficient with a value of 0.299. The t-statistic value is greater than the t-table value of 1.960 and the p value is less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the second hypothesis is accepted.

### **Hypothesis 3**

The third hypothesis suspects that the stronger the e-WOM engagement, the higher the purchase decision can be. From the results of the analysis in Table 4.18, the t-statistic value is 3.307 with a p value of 0.001, and a positive path coefficient with a value of 0.327. The t-statistic value is greater than the t-table value of 1.960 and the p value is less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the third hypothesis is accepted.

### **Hypothesis 4**

The fourth hypothesis suspects that the more favorable the brand ambassador, the higher the purchase decision can be. From the results of the analysis in Table 4.19, the t-statistic value is 3.660 with a p value of 0.000, and a positive path coefficient with a value of 0.297. The t-statistic value is greater than the t-table value of 1.960 and the p value is less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the fourth hypothesis is accepted.

### Hypothesis 5

The fifth hypothesis suspects that the more positive the brand image, the higher the purchase decision can be. From the results of the analysis in Table 4.20, the t-statistic value is 2.605 with a p value of 0.009, and a positive path coefficient with a value of 0.267. The t-statistic value is greater than the t-table value of 1.960 and the p value is less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the fifth hypothesis is accepted.

### Mediation Effect Testing

Testing the mediation effect was carried out by using the bootstrapping feature of the specific indirect effects in the SmartPLS 3 software.

**Table 5 Specific Indirect Effect**

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
Brand Ambassador (X2) -> Brand Image (Z) -> Purchase Decision (Y)	0,080	0,082	0,035	2,288	<b>0,023</b>
Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) (X1) -> Brand Image (Z) -> Purchase Decision (Y)	0,166	0,172	0,068	2,435	<b>0,015</b>

Source: Primary data processed, May 2023

Table 5 shows that there is an indirect positive influence between electronic word of mouth (X1) and purchasing decisions (Y) through brand image (Z) with a positive original path coefficient value of 0.166, a t-statistic value of 2.435, and a significance value of p values of 0.015. Seeing the t-statistic value that is greater than the t-table value of 1,960 and the p value that is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that there is a positive and significant indirect effect between electronic word of mouth (X1) and purchase decisions (Y) through brand image (Z). This makes the role of brand image very important in mediating electronic word of mouth on purchasing decisions.

Table 5 also shows an indirect positive influence between the brand ambassador variable (X2) and purchasing decisions (Y) through brand image (Z) with a positive original path coefficient value of 0.080, a t-statistic value of 2.288, and a significance value of p values of 0.023. Looking at the t-statistic value that is greater than the t-table value of 1,960 and the p value that is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that there is a positive and significant indirect effect between the brand ambassador variable (X2) and purchasing decisions (Y) through brand image (Z). This makes the role of brand image also very important in mediating brand ambassadors for purchasing decisions.

## CONCLUSIONS

### Conclusions

From the results of the analysis and discussion that have been described previously, this research concludes that of the 5 hypotheses proposed, all hypotheses accepted. This study also found that the direct effect has bigger influence than the indirect effect and that the variable that has the greatest influence on purchase decision is the electronic word of mouth. This shows that the better the e-WOM engagement by consumers, the greater the user's decision in purchasing a Somethinc product. This research also indicates that e-WOM can contribute to brand image, and as discussed in the study, good brand image is more likely to increase purchase decision. This is very influential in the cosmetics industry, considering the context of this research is Somethinc and the fact that is based on the pre-survey results that Somethinc gets doubts from its consumers about its brand image as a

brand that has a good reputation and sells quality products that influence their consumer purchase decisions.

### Theoretical Implications

Based on the above conclusions, this research can strengthen the theoretical concept and provide support for previous research. The following are the results of the hypotheses related to theoretical implications:

**Table 6 Theoretical Implications**

No	Previous Research	Current Research	Theoretical Implications
1.	Research conducted by Saputra & Wardana (2020) states that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has a positive and significant effect on brand image.	Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has a positive and significant effect on brand image.	The findings in this study support previous research because if consumer opinion about a product is positive, the brand image of a product will also be well formed. Conversely, if consumer opinion is negative, then the brand image of a product will be bad. Therefore, positive consumer opinion is needed to create a good brand image.
2.	Research conducted by Dewi et al. (2019) said that brand ambassadors have a positive and significant effect on brand image.	Brand ambassadors have a positive and significant effect on brand image.	The findings in this study support previous research because the reputation of the brand ambassador chosen by the company can influence the formation of the brand image of Somethinc's product in consumer perception. Thus, the selection of brand ambassadors by companies is very important to create a good brand image.
3.	Research conducted by Nurhasanah et al. (2021) said that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions.	Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions.	The findings in this study support previous research because if consumers' opinions about a product are positive, consumers will become more familiar with the product and will choose the product to buy. Therefore, the positive opinion of consumers of a product is needed by the company.
4.	Research conducted by (Hendi et al., 2022) says that brand ambassadors have a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions.	Brand ambassadors have a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions.	The findings in this study support previous research because the reputation of the brand ambassador chosen by the company can influence consumer decisions to purchase Somethinc products. The more favorable the brand ambassador chosen by the company; the more likely consumers will buy the product compared to other products. Thus, the selection of brand ambassadors by companies is very important to create a good brand image.
5.	Research conducted by (Saputra & Wardana, 2020) says that brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions.	Brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions.	The findings in this study support previous research because when deciding to buy a brand or product, consumers will first consider the image of the product. The better the image of the product, the more consumers decide to buy the product. Therefore, the brand image of a product is needed by the company.

Source: Primary data processed, May 2023

### Managerial Implications

Based on the research that has been done, it is hoped that it can provide input for Somethinc in an effort to increase purchase decisions for Somethinc's products in Semarang. Some of the implications resulting from this research are as follows:

**Table 7 Managerial Implications**

No.	Variable	Analysis Results	Managerial Implications
1.	Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)	<p>The indicators used to measure electronic word of mouth variable are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Intensity</li> <li>2. Content</li> <li>3. Positive Opinions</li> <li>4. Negative Opinions</li> </ol> <p>The indicators that have the greatest influence are positive opinions, then negative opinions, content, and finally intensity.</p>	<p>So far, the majority of consumers feel that the electronic word of mouth of Somethinc's products is good as evidenced by the frequent access of consumers to Somethinc's product information from social media, the large number of reviews written by social media users, the availability of product information, the availability of product quality information, the availability of product price information, many positive comments from social media users, the many recommendations to buy products from social media users, and the lack of doubts about buying products due to negative comments on social media. With the increasingly strong electronic word of mouth engagement between consumers and Somethinc products, it will have a positive influence on purchase decisions.</p>
2.	Brand Ambassador	<p>The indicators used to measure brand ambassador variable are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Visibility</li> <li>2. Credibility</li> <li>3. Attractiveness</li> <li>4. Power</li> </ol> <p>The indicators that have the greatest influence are visibility, then attractiveness, credibility, and finally power.</p>	<p>Appointment of NCT Dream as the brand ambassador for Somethinc's product is the right decision because NCT Dream has popularity that can influence consumers to buy Somethinc's product, has the ability to convey information about the quality and benefits of Somethinc's products well, has the power to make consumers believe and trust the information the products they have conveyed, and have good physical appeal so as to influence consumers to buy Somethinc's products. With a popular, credible, attractive, and powerful brand ambassador chosen by Somethinc, it can have a positive influence on purchase decisions.</p>
3.	Brand Image	<p>The indicators used to measure brand image variable are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognition</li> <li>2. Reputation</li> <li>3. Affinity</li> <li>4. Domain</li> </ol> <p>The indicators that have the greatest influence are recognition, then reputation, domain, and finally affinity.</p>	<p>So far, the majority of customers feel that Somethinc's brand image is good as evidenced by the many customers who have recognized the Somethinc brand before, already know the advantages of Somethinc's products compared to other brands, and the large number of customers who can identify the Somethinc brand from the logo or slogan presented. Most customers have often used Somethinc's products and feel that Somethinc is a reputable brand that sells quality products, so that Somethinc is their first choice when purchasing similar products. Thus, Somethinc's good reputation provides a dominant influence on purchasing decisions.</p>
4.	Purchase Decisions	<p>The indicators used to measure brand image variable are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Customers' good feeling</li> <li>2. Customers' likelihood to recommend to others</li> <li>3. Customers' frequency of purchase</li> </ol>	<p>To increase consumer purchase decisions for Somethinc products, what needs to be done is to continue to improve product quality so that more and more positive consumer opinions are widely spread, choose brand ambassadors who are well-known, credible, attractive, and powerful, create a good brand image so that later effect on consumer</p>

No.	Variable	Analysis Results	Managerial Implications
		4. Customers' intent to purchase in the future	purchase decision. With the purchase decision felt by customers today, Somethinc's product can be the first choice to buy compared to other similar products.
		5. Customers' overall satisfaction	
	The indicators that have the greatest influence are customers' overall satisfaction, customers' intent to purchase in the future, customers' frequency of purchase, customers' likelihood to recommend to others, and customers' good feeling.		

Source: Primary data processed, May 2023

### Research Limitations

The limitations of the research that has been conducted are as follows:

1. Questionnaires were distributed with the help of the Google form so that researchers could not ensure that respondents had read and understood the questionnaire statements.
2. The data analysis in this study utilizes SEM SmartPLS because the data is not normally distributed multivariately, making it unsuitable for using SEM AMOS.
3. This research was dominated by respondents who work as students as much as 62.4% and also dominated by respondents with female gender as much as 79.4%, so the research results are still uneven.

### Suggestions for Future Research

Based on the limitations of the research mentioned above, it is necessary to improve and develop for future research. For further research, it is hoped that they can conduct research using other variables outside the variables that have been studied in order to obtain varied results and can be a reference for further research. Other variable choices can include brand trust, brand loyalty, repurchase intention, and others. Future research can use different company objects but still within the same scope. In addition, it is recommended that further research be able to increase the number of samples used and expand the population, not only in Semarang City but can be carried out throughout Indonesia, so as to obtain results that are close to actual conditions.

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