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INVESTIGATION OF EWOM ON GREEN PRODUCT PURCHASE INTENTION AMONG GEN Z : INTEGRATING OF EWOM ADOPTION

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the influence of eWOM on social media on green product purchase intention among Generation Z. This study integrates two adoption models into a conceptual framework. A quantitative research design was used to collect data from 300 Generation Z respondents through a structured questionnaire distributed online via Google Forms. Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 4.0, which included testing the validity and reliability of the measurement model (outler) and structural model (inner) to evaluate path coefficients and test hypotheses. The results showed that eWOM Quality, need of eWOM and attitude toward eWOM positively influenced eWOM usefulness, but eWOM Quantity and eWOM Credibility did not affect the influence of eWOM usefulness. eWOM Credibility, eWOM Quantity, Need of eWOM and attitude toward eWOM positively influenced eWOM Adoption. Furthermore, eWOM usefulness showed significant impact on eWOM adoption and green purchase intention among gen Z consumers. The conceptual framework in this study offers significant managerial implications as it identifies key elements of eWOM reviews that positively influence Gen Z intentions.

Keywords: ***eWOM; Green Products; Generation Z; Social Media; Purchase Intention***.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's younger generation (Gen Z) has recently become increasingly environmentally conscious. They feel that purchasing products can contribute to environmental pollution due to unsustainable production. They also recognize that their purchasing behavior will impact the ecological environment. Therefore, they are gradually tending to increase their consumption of environmentally friendly products. According to NielsenIQ's 2024 "Spend Z" report, the average Gen Z is willing to pay up to 10% more for sustainable products. Gen Z is concerned about the environmental impact of their purchases, with 91% saying they want to buy from sustainable companies. The increasing trend of green product consumption is influenced by the presence of eWOM on social media. eWOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) is a term that refers to the spread of information, opinions, or recommendations, both positive and negative, about a product or service from one consumer to another via the internet (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). eWOM is seen as a trusted source of information because it comes from consumers' experiences using the product. According to (Chivandi & Samuel, Michael Olorunjuwon Muchie, 2021), consumers are increasingly relying on social media platforms as a primary source for finding product information, including details about the brand, manufacturer background, and available retailers, to help facilitate their purchasing decisions (Erkan & Evans, 2018). These platforms have opened up new possibilities for electronic word of mouth (eWOM), allowing users to engage with their network of followers and friends, sharing their opinions and experiences.

Recent developments in eWOM adoption highlight social media as the most popular channel for engaging with and seeking product reviews based on facts and consumer experiences. Social media is considered a primary source of eWOM, enabling consumers to quickly disseminate information to their target audience. Furthermore, social media has become crucial for marketers in influencing their consumers through eWOM, offering a cost-effective and convenient means of communication (Alghizzawi, 2019). This phenomenon has opened new avenues for communication and interaction between businesses and consumers in shaping the eWOM context in the modern era. It is worth noting that despite the increasing importance of eWOM, there is still a limited amount of research conducted in this area. Despite this growing body of research, the relationship between eWOM on social media and consumer purchase intentions is not yet fully understood. Research (Kumari & Sangeetha, 2022) conducted an eWOM adoption study on private label products (PLB). This study presents a new framework that integrates the

Elaborative Likelihood Model (ELM) and the Information Adoption Model (IAM) along with store image to assess purchase intentions for private label products. A similar study by Bueno & Gallego, 2021 was conducted on consumers using the Taobao app using the IAM model framework as its underlying theory. Research by Subekti & Susilo Nugroho, 2023 investigated the relationship between eWOM usability and eWOM adoption on smartphone product purchase decisions using the IAM Model approach. (Ngo, Vuong, et al., 2024) investigated consumer purchase intentions by integrating predictions from information characteristics and their information-related behaviors. The proposed model using IACM has information-task fit as an additional variable contributing to purchase intention. Many previous studies still focus solely on eWOM characteristics without considering consumer behavior towards eWOM.

This study integrates two adoption models: the IAM model and the IACM model. This approach builds on the findings of (Indrawati et al., 2023) that go beyond considering the impact of independent factors in the IAM model solely on eWOM Usefulnesss to also examine their effects on eWOM adoption. Furthermore, this study incorporates factors from the IACM model into the research framework to provide a more comprehensive analysis. Furthermore, previous eWOM adoption research has primarily focused on consumers in general, without specifically examining its effects within specific generational or age groups (Erkan & Evans, 2018). As Generation Z ages, marketers face the task of adapting their communication strategies to the evolving purchasing behaviors of this demographic (Ismail et al., 2020). Consequently, exploring the impact of eWOM on social media specifically within a specific generation becomes crucial. Therefore, this study aims to examine the influence of eWOM on social media on online purchase intentions of Generation Z consumers. The results of this study will help businesses or marketers understand which eWOM factors influence purchasing decisions. From there, businesses can formulate appropriate and optimal strategies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)

The term eWOM refers to electronic word of mouth, which is any type of feedback or opinion about a product or service that is easily accessible to many individuals on internet-based platforms (Gvili & Levy, 2018). According to Litvin et al., (2008) eWOM is described as all informal communication via the internet that sends information to consumers related to the use or characteristics of goods or services. eWOM emerged due to technological and communication developments that allow every social media user to quickly share their opinions through various forms such as images, text, or videos by utilizing mobile applications or reposting (Erkan & Evans, 2016).

eWOM Quality

eWOM quality is defined as the effectiveness of a message in persuading customers to make a purchase (Yeap et al., 2014). Many researchers have concluded that several characteristics related to the quality of eWOM information include understanding, clarity, high quality, detail, factual basis, and relevance to needs (Filieri, 2015). It has been observed that through eWOM, eWOM Usefulnesss are positively correlated with eWOM quality (Xue et al., 2018). Therefore, the hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

H1 eWOM quality has a positive effect on eWOM Usefulness

The quality of eWOM plays a crucial role in consumers' decisions to utilize eWOM. According to Sussman and Siegal (2003), eWOM quality has a significant impact on eWOM adoption. The higher the quality and quantity of eWOM information, the higher the adoption rate (Sardar et al., 2021). Therefore, the hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

H2: eWOM quality has a positive effect on eWOM adoption.

eWOM Credibility

In the IAM model, source credibility serves as a peripheral pathway through which eWOM influence can spread (Sussman & Siegal, 2003). Filieri (2015) states that information credibility, particularly its accuracy, influences the ability to persuade consumers and build trust in eWOM. Other research shows that eWOM credibility significantly influences eWOM Usefulnesss (Ngarmwongnoi et al., 2020). Therefore, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H3: eWOM credibility has a positive effect on eWOM Usefulnesss.

Liang et al., (2021) defines eWOM credibility as online recommendations perceived as trustworthy sources, which increases the acceptance of eWOM information on social media. The literature on eWOM has shown that information credibility is a crucial factor in driving information adoption (Tien et al., 2019). Furthermore, Sussman & Siegal,

(2003) found that individuals who receive authentic eWOM information are more likely to use it than those who do not. Therefore, the hypothesis can be formulated as follows:
H4: eWOM credibility has a positive effect on eWOM adoption.

eWOM Quantity
eWOM quantity is defined as the volume of eWOM information or reviews provided to consumers (Filieri, 2015). López & Sicilia (2014) emphasize that individuals rely on the amount of information available to understand product performance. Verma et al. (2023) showed that eWOM quantity on social networks has a significant positive effect on eWOM Usefulnesss. Therefore, the hypothesis can be formulated as follows:
H5: eWOM quantity has a positive effect on eWOM Usefulnesss.
The quantity of eWOM on social media can encourage consumers to adopt eWOM more frequently. Previous research also shows that eWOM quantity influences eWOM adoption (Indrawati et al., 2023). Furthermore, increasing the quantity of eWOM information contributes to eWOM adoption (Abedi et al., 2020). Therefore, the hypothesis can be formulated as follows:
H6: eWOM quantity has a positive effect on eWOM adoption.
When considering and selecting a product, consumers often rely on eWOM reviews on social media, including their own experiences (Chu & Kim, 2011). Consumers can provide or seek opinions to address problems by sharing eWOM information, thereby obtaining more specific and useful feedback (Ismagilova et al., 2021). Phung et al. (2020) found that the need for eWOM is a significant factor influencing the perceived usefulness of eWOM. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be formulated:
H7: The need for eWOM positively and significantly influences the perceived usefulness of eWOM.
The need for eWOM on social media has a positive impact on eWOM adoption. Previous research has shown a significant relationship between the need for eWOM and eWOM adoption (Peres & Silva, 2021). Consumers who seek reviews on social media are more likely to find valuable resources and utilize them (Sardar et al., 2021). Therefore, the following hypothesis can be formulated:
H8: The need for eWOM has a positive and significant effect on eWOM adoption.

Attitudes Toward eWOM
According to Erkan and Evans (2016), individuals are increasingly relying on product review information when making purchases. Attitudes toward eWOM on social media can positively impact eWOM usefulness. Furthermore, various studies show that attitudes toward eWOM information are positively correlated with eWOM usefulness. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be formulated:
H9: Attitudes toward eWOM have a positive and significant effect on eWOM usefulness.
Attitude toward eWOM is a crucial factor influencing consumer acceptance of eWOM information. According to Verma et al. (2023), attitude towarsd eWOM has a direct impact on eWOM. Furthermore, a study by Sardar et al. (2021) supports this finding by demonstrating a substantial and positive impact of attitude, indicating that consumers with positive attitudes toward eWOM information are more likely to accept it. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be formulated:
H10: Attitude toward eWOM has a positive and significant impact on eWOM adoption.

eWOM Usefulness
Sardar et al. (2021) stated that individuals are more likely to adopt information if they perceive it as relevant and valuable to their specific needs and goals. In the context of social media, where individuals are exposed to a large amount of eWOM information, the presence of eWOM Usefulnesss plays a significant role in its acceptance. Previous research has argued that perceived eWOM Usefulnesss positively influence an individual's likelihood of adoption (Erkan & Evans, 2016). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:
H11: eWOM Usefulness have a positive and significant effect on eWOM adoption.

eWOM Adoption and Purchase Intention
eWOM adoption is a cognitive process through which individuals internalize and accept information from external sources, thereby enhancing their understanding and aiding decision-making (Shen et al., 2014). Conscious eWOM adoption is demonstrated in the process of personal behavioral intentions. Furthermore, eWOM adoption has been identified as a factor influencing customers' purchase intentions (Erkan & Evans, 2016). Previous studies have highlighted a positive correlation between purchase intentions and eWOM adoption, with eWOM adoption through

social media platforms having a significant impact on individuals' purchase intentions. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H12: eWOM adoption positively and significantly influences purchase intentions.

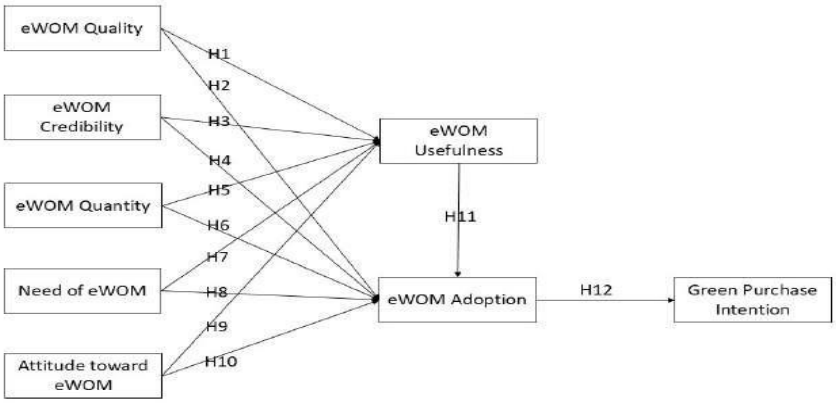

Figure 1 The conceptual research framework

METHOD

A quantitative approach was used to examine the relationship between various aspects of eWOM reviews, consumer behavior, and green product purchase intentions among Generation Z in Indonesia. Data collection used a questionnaire using Google Forms. Respondents had to meet three main criteria: be at least 16 years old, be part of Generation Z (born 1997-2012), and have used environmentally friendly products for at least the past three months. A pilot study was conducted with 50 respondents. This research was conducted in Rokan Hulu Regency, Riau Province, from January 2025 to August 2025. This study used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with PLS as its analysis technique. The results of the data analysis are reported in two stages to evaluate the suitability of the research model. There were two evaluations in this study. The measurement model evaluation included convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite reliability. Simultaneously, the internal model assessment included a structural analysis using the R-squared measurement (Latan & Ghozali, 2017). During the initial measurement scale development phase, a loading coefficient between 0.5 and 0.6 is typically considered adequate. However, this study applied a minimum loading coefficient threshold of 0.70

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We conducted primary data collection by distributing online questionnaires to 320 respondents over two months. However, we only received 300 completed questionnaires usable for data analysis. Based on the results of data collection through questionnaire distribution, 300 respondents were obtained consisting of 22.7% men and 77.3% women with ages between 16-25 years old at 85% and ages between 26-35 years old at 15%. Furthermore, the last level of education consisted of high school 78.3%, followed by undergraduate at 17.8% and postgraduate only 3.2%. Meanwhile, the duration of using social media was 31-60 minutes at 33%, 61-90 minutes at 18%, 91-120 at 15% and more than 121 minutes at 26%.

Measurement Model (Outler Model)

The outler model is an instrument test to assess validity and reliability (Hair et al., 2011). Validity assessment is divided into convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity refers to the degree of alignment of a measurement with other measurements within the same construct (Taylor et al., 2010). Convergent validity is established by demonstrating a strong correlation between the instrument and other measurements that are theoretically related to representing the same construct (Sekaran & Bougie, 2020). This is assessed using indicator loading factors and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which reflects the average variance explained by the indicators. based on test results, each indicator exhibits a loading factor exceeding 0.70, thus meeting the established threshold. This indicates that each indicator adequately explains its measured variable, demonstrating its validity for subsequent analysis.

Tabel 1 Convergen Validity & Reability

Attitude toward eWOM	0.821	0.831	0.893	0.736
Need of eWOM	0.745	0.746	0.887	0.797
Purchase Intention	0.812	0.839	0.869	0.574
eWOM Adoption	0.791	0.833	0.870	0.636
eWOM Credibility	0.911	0.921	0.937	0.789
eWOM Quality	0.798	0.831ss	0.869	0.629
eWOM Quantity	0.886	0.886	0.946	0.898
eWOM Usefulness	0.785	0.802	0.874	0.698

This study examines the measurement model by evaluating composite reliability and convergent validity, as shown in Table 2. Convergent validity refers to the extent to which a construct explains the variance of the indicators studied (Hair et al., 2017). The convergent validity results in this study exceeded the minimum threshold, with Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values greater than 0.50 for each variable. The AVE values in this study, ranging from 0.573 to 0.898, indicate that the construct meets the required standards for convergent validity. In addition to convergent validity, composite reliability was also evaluated to ensure the consistency and reliability of the measurement instrument. Composite reliability values between 0.6 and 0.7 are considered acceptable for exploratory research, while values between 0.70 and 0.90 indicate good internal consistency. After validity and reliability testing, the next stage is structural model testing. This testing is conducted to assess the significance of the indicators and path coefficients obtained (Chin et al., 2008). Model quality is evaluated using the coefficient of determination (R2).

Tabel 2 R Square

	R-square	**R-square adjusted**
Purchase Intention	0,600	0,592
eWOM Adoption	0,813	0,787
eWOM Usefulness	0,518	0,463

As seen in Table 3, the R-Square value of eWOM adoption of 0.813 can be interpreted that the eWOM adoption variable can be explained by the eWOM Usefulnesss variable by 81 percent, while the other 19 percent is explained by other variables. Then the R-Square value of purchase intention of 0.600, can be interpreted that the purchase intention variable can be explained by eWOM adoption by 60 percent while the other 40 percent is explained by other variables and Gozhali and Latan (2014) explain that the R-Square values are 0.75, 0.5, and 0.25, respectively. It can be concluded that the model is strong, moderate, and weak, so that the R-Square for eWOM use and eWOM adoption has a moderate R-Square value.

Tabel 3 Model Fit

	Saturated model	**Estimated model**
SRMR	0,092	0,105
d_ULS	3,168	4,149
d_G	3,345	3,523
Chi-square	682,784	702,750
NFI	0,522	0,508

The model fit of the research model is examined by SRMR and NFI indicators in terms of saturated model. SRMR value of 0.092 represents a good fit since it is below 0.1 (Henseler et al., 2014). The NFI value of 0.522 shows a good fit because it is closer to 1.

Tabel 4 Result of Hyphotesis Testing

Relationships	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation	T statistic	P values	Result
eWOM Quality -> eWOM Usefulness	0.128	0.126	0.059	2.150	0.032	Accepted
eWOM Quality -> eWOM Adoption	0.002	0.003	0.053	0.036	0.971	Rejected
eWOM Credibility -> eWOM Usefulness	0.091	0.090	0.061	1.493	0.136	Rejected
eWOM Credibility -> eWOM Adoption	0.254	0.251	0.064	3.980	0.000	Accepted
eWOM Quantity -> eWOM Usefulness	0.107	0.108	0.066	1.629	0.103	Rejected
eWOM Quantity -> eWOM Adoption	0.171	0.172	0.058	2.938	0.003	Accepted
Need of eWOM -> eWOM Usefulness	0.138	0.139	0.064	2.163	0.031	Accepted
Need of eWOM -> eWOM Adoption	0.213	0.213	0.051	4.146	0.000	Accepted
Attitude twd eWOM -> eWOM Usefulness	0.485	0.485	0.060	8.086	0.000	Accepted
Attitude twd eWOM -> eWOM Adoption	0.143	0.143	0.054	2.635	0.008	Accepted
eWOM Usefulness -> eWOM Adoption	0.237	0.238	0.053	4.459	0.000	Accepted
eWOM Adoption -> Purchase Intention	0.814	0.816	0.023	35.301	0.000	Accepted

The results of this study shown in Table 5. The direct effects between variables areas follows: Our Finding showed that eWOM Quality (β= 0,128, p < 0.05), (β= 0,107, p < 0.05), need of eWOM (β= 0,138, p < 0.05), attitude toward eWOM (β= 0,4s85, p < 0.05) positively influences eWOM usefulness, and eWOM Quantity (β= 0,171, p < 0.05), need of eWOM (β= 0,213, p < 0.05), Attitude toward eWOM (β= 0,143, p < 0.05), eWOM Usefulness (β= 0,237, p < 0.05) also significantly influences the eWOM adoption. eWOM Adoption have a significant influence purchase intention with path coeffisient (β = 0.814, p < 0.05). Additionally, he study show eWOM Quality (β= 0,002, p > 0.05) have a not significant influence eWOM adoption, also eWOM credibility and eWOM Quantity has not significant infuelces eWOM usefulness. The results confirmed that eWoM quality significantly influenced eWOM usefulness. This aligns with studies by Xue et al. (2018) and Yones and Muthaiyah (2022). Social media users tend to perceive eWOM information as high quality when it is clear, understandable, and reliable. However, eWOM Quality had an insignificant impact on eWOM Adoption. This finding is inconsistent with the studies of Shankar et al. (2020) and Sardar et al. (2021). This difference may be due to consumers distrusting existing information due to its irrelevance, inaccuracy, or originating from unreliable sources.

The relationship between eWOM Credibility and eWOM usefulness was found to be insignificant, which contradicts the findings of Park et al. (2007), ngarmwongnoi et al. (2020), but is in line with Huete-Alcocer (2017), who stated that eWOM information, due to its anonymity, can negatively impact reliability. This implies that eWOM Credibility may not be perceived as useful by users on social networks. Furthermore, eWOM Credibility has a significant positive impact on eWOM adoption. This finding is in line with the studies of Daowd et al., (2020) and Ngo, Bui, et al., (2024). Consumers tend to trust and accept information they perceive as true and reliable, making it more persuasive and increasing their intention to use it in purchasing decisions. This holds true across various consumer demographics and online platforms, as credible eWOM builds trust in products and services. eWOM quantity was found to have no significant impact on eWOM usefulness. This finding contradicts studies conducted by Ngarmwongnoi et al. (2020), Yones and Muthaiyah (2022), and Verma et al. (2023). This indicates that the quality and credibility of eWOM information are often considered more important than quantity in determining usefulness and driving purchase intentions. Although a higher quantity of reviews may signal greater popularity, consumers ultimately rely more on the quality and relevance of the information itself to make decisions. However, eWOM

quantity was found to have a significant impact on eWOM adoption. This finding aligns with Bedi et al. (2020) and Yones and Muthaiyah (2022).One possible explanation that the more reviews a product has on social media, the greater consumers' trust and willingness to incorporate that information into their decision-making. The relationship between need for eWOM and eWOM usefulness was found to be significantly positive. This finding is consistent with previous studies conducted by Erkan and Evans (2016) and Phung et al. (2020). This means that individuals consider information useful when it aligns with their goals. Furthermore, need for eWOM also has a significant positive impact on eWOM adoption, consistent with the findings of Erkan and Evans (2016), Sardar et al. (2021), and Peres and Silva (2021). This suggests that Generation Z consumers in Indonesia are more likely to accept eWOM information when they perceive it as relevant to their needs or have prior experience with it.

As proved in studies by Verma et al. (2023), Sardar et al. (2021), attitudes toward eWOM have a significant positive impact on eWOM usefulness and eWOM adoption. Therefore, consumers show increased attention and careful absorption of eWOM information when they have a favorable attitude toward it. Attitude toward eWOM is an influential factor that influences consumers' behavioral responses when utilizing eWOM information in their purchase intentions. In the context of this study, it was observed that respondents tend to ignore information sources that do not impact their attitudes. Finally, eWOM usefulness was found to have a significant positive relationship with eWOM adoption. This finding aligns with studies conducted by Erkan and Evans (2018), Abedi et al. (2019), and Subekti (2023). Higher perceived usefulness of eWOM information directly increases the likelihood of consumers accepting and using that information in their decision- making. Consumers are more likely to adopt information when they believe it is useful, relevant, timely, and reliable, making usefulness a crucial factor in eWOM's effectiveness in influencing purchase intentions and behavior. Importantly, we introduce the concept of information adoption, which reveals its indirect but substantial contribution to sustainable consumption intentions through perceived information usefulness. We found that eWOM adoption significantly influences green purchase intention. This finding aligns with a study conducted by Hoorich (2024). This construct is important because it indicates that although consumer attitudes may not directly contribute to information adoption, their influence manifests itself through perceived information usefulness, which ultimately impacts sustainable consumption intentions.

CONCLUSION

This study investigates the influence of eWOM information on social media on eWOM usefulness, eWOM adoption, and their indirect impact on green purchase intention among Generation Z in Indonesia. This study used a structural analysis (SEM PLS) with a sample size of 300 respondents. The results indicate that seven hypotheses—eWOM Quality, eWOM Credibility, eWOM Quantity, Need for eWOM, and Attitude toward eWOM—significantly influence eWOM usefulness and eWOM adoption. On the other hand, eWOM Quality did not significantly influence eWOM adoption, and eWOM Credibility and eWOM Quantity also did not significantly influence eWOM usefulness. Furthermore, eWOM usefulness had a significant positive impact on eWOM adoption. Furthermore, eWOM adoption had a significant positive impact on green purchase intention. These findings provide valuable insights for marketers, enabling them to improve their eWOM communication strategies targeted to potential customers. Furthermore, exploring the impact of eWOM information in social networks on the purchase intentions of generation Z contributes to a more accurate understanding and assessment for researchers and marketers who want to reach this demographic segment.

This study significantly contributes to the existing literature on green product purchase intentions among Generation Z by investigating the impact of eWOM on social media. Although previous research has recognized the validity of the information adoption model (eWOM), the specific relationship between eWOM information on social networks and consumer purchase intentions remains inadequately understood (Erkan & Evans, 2018). This study's contribution lies in the integration of two eWOM adoption models to provide a more comprehensive framework. For managerial implications, this study provides valuable insights for marketers who want to understand how eWOM information on social media influences the purchase intentions of Generation Z consumers. First, marketers should focus on improving the quality of eWOM information to increase its usefulness and adoption. Second, gaining a deep understanding of customers' needs for eWOM information allows marketers to understand market dynamics and develop tailored marketing campaigns. Third, increasing the volume of information shared on social media platforms can contribute to creating brand awareness. This study acknowledges several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the sample used in this study, consisting of 300 participants, primarily represents Generation Z in Central Sumatra. Therefore, the generalizability of the findings to the entire Generation Z population in Indonesia may be limited. Future research should aim to expand the sample size and include participants from

various geographic locations in Indonesia. This will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the characteristics and behaviors of Generation Z consumers across regions. Furthermore, the respondents in this study were predominantly female, so generalizability to specific groups may be limited. Therefore, future studies should extend the model to different age groups, sectors, or cultural contexts. Incorporating moderating variables such as lifestyle orientation, personal values, or gender could also provide richer insights into consumer decision-making in the social media context.

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