

# The Effect of Electronic Word of Mouth, Emotional Branding and Brand Characteristic on Fashion Product Purchasing Decisions in E- commerce Platform

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## ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the influence of electronic word of mouth, emotional branding, and brand characteristics on purchasing decisions for Erigo products on Shopee e-commerce. The independent variables include electronic word of mouth, emotional branding, and brand characteristics, with purchasing decisions as the dependent variable. Employing a causal quantitative approach, data collection involved distributing questionnaires to 100 respondents who had previously made purchases on e-commerce. All questionnaire items for the variables demonstrated validity and reliability. Classical assumption tests indicated normally distributed data, a regression model free from multicollinearity, and the absence of heteroscedasticity. The research findings reveal that electronic word of mouth, emotional branding, and brand characteristics all have positive and significant effects on purchasing decisions, implying that these factors play crucial roles in shaping consumer choices.

**Keywords:** Electronic word of mouth, Emotional branding, Brand characteristics, Purchasing decisions

## ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh electronic word of mouth, emotional branding, dan karakteristik merek terhadap keputusan pembelian produk Erigo di Shopee e-commerce. Variabel independen yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah electronic word of mouth, emotional branding, dan karakteristik merek, sedangkan variabel dependennya adalah keputusan pembelian. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif kausal. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan mendistribusikan kuesioner kepada 100 responden yang sebelumnya telah melakukan pembelian produk di e-commerce. Semua item kuesioner untuk semua variabel terbukti valid dan reliabel. Uji asumsi klasik menghasilkan data yang terdistribusi normal, model regresi yang tidak mengalami multicollinearity, dan tidak terjadi heteroskedastisitas. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa electronic word of mouth memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap keputusan pembelian. Emotional branding memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap keputusan pembelian. Terakhir, karakteristik merek memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap keputusan pembelian. Hal ini menyiratkan bahwa faktor-faktor ini memainkan peran penting dalam membentuk pilihan konsumen.

**Kata kunci:** Electronic word of mouth, Emotional branding, Karakteristik merek, Keputusan pembelian

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Along with the times, information and communication technology in the era of digitalization is growing and spreading rapidly, continuing to be a topic of conversation in the community. According to Internet World Stats data, Indonesia ranks 3rd as the country with the largest internet users in Asia, reaching 212.32 million or 76.5% of the total population in Indonesia (Kalia et al., 2018). This has impacted changing consumer habits, shifting from traditional shopping to online shopping via the internet, commonly known as e-commerce. Online shopping is the activity of buying and selling goods or services through the internet, with computers and web browsers as the medium (Harahap, 2018). The general term currently used for the process of buying and selling supported by electronic means is commonly referred to as e-commerce (Baubonienė & Gulevičiūtė, 2015). Some popular e-commerce platforms among Indonesians today include Shopee, Bukalapak, Tokopedia, Blibli, and Lazada. According to Similar Web data, Shopee is the e-commerce platform with the highest number of visitors in the first quarter of 2023 (Setyaningrum, 2023).

Despite the ease and convenience of online shopping, which is considered more effective and efficient for consumers, there are risks related to uncertainty about product quality and discrepancies between expectations and the condition of the purchased goods. Therefore, to mitigate this risk, many consumers choose to conduct product research by gathering information about the item they intend to purchase. According to Julianto (2012), the more capable a consumer is in anticipating uncertainties and consequences related to the purchased product, the lower the risk perception will be from the consumer's perspective. In the results of the Global Web Index (GWI) survey in the Digital 2022 Global Overview Report (2022), the majority of consumers, 53% of the total global respondents, prefer to engage in product research before shopping online (Pourazad et al., 2023). Product research is a crucial factor influencing consumers' purchasing decisions. Therefore, companies or marketers must understand the needs and desires of consumers, as this understanding drives consumer behavior in making purchasing decisions (Triana et al., 2018). One way consumers conduct product research before making purchasing decisions is through electronic word of mouth (e-WOM). According to Ramadhani and Prihartini (2018), e-WOM is one of the information-searching stages for consumers before making a purchase, involving the process of listening to comments or reviews on the internet. In this regard, this research aims to analyze the influence of electronic word of mouth, emotional branding, and brand characteristics on purchasing decisions for Erigo products on Shopee e-commerce.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS**

The influence of electronic word of mouth on purchasing decisions has been substantiated by several previous studies, affirming that electronic word of mouth positively and significantly impacts purchasing decisions (Ramadani and Prihartini, 2018; Siswanti and Prihartini, 2020; Kurniawati and Susanti, 2023; Nyoko and Samuel, 2021). However, there is a conflicting opinion regarding the effect of electronic word of mouth on purchasing decisions, suggesting that electronic word of mouth has no impact on purchasing decisions (Dasopang and Sunargo, 2023).

In addition to electronic word of mouth, there are other factors that consumers take into account when making purchases, notably the existence of a strong relationship between consumers and brands, commonly referred to as emotional branding. According to Kim & Sullivan (2019), emotional branding is an endeavor to build a brand and company by tapping into consumers' emotions, encompassing their feelings, desires, needs, beliefs, and aspirations. If a consumer develops emotional attachment to a brand, the likelihood of purchasing the product increases, leading to the possibility of repeat purchases.

Emotional branding has been proven to have a significant influence on purchasing decisions. This is supported by several previous studies indicating that emotional branding positively and significantly affects purchasing decisions (Guo et al., 2020; Muthiah and Setiawan, 2019; Kumontoy et.al, 2023; Ramadaniati et.al, 2022). In addition to emotional branding, establishing consumer relationships with a brand can also be achieved by recognizing products through extracting information related to the brand of the product or service to be purchased by consumers. A good brand is one that possesses characteristics distinguishing it from brands of other companies, commonly referred to as brand characteristics. According to Kumontoy et al. (2023), brand characteristics represent a unique combination of human traits associated with specific brands, implying that brand characteristics constitute a distinct mix of human traits linked to particular brands. The influence of brand characteristics on purchasing decisions has been affirmed by numerous previous studies, asserting that brand characteristics positively and significantly impact purchasing decisions (Muthiah and Setiawan, 2019; Leisember and Andarini, 2017; Kumontoy et.al, 2023).

Based on an exploration of the background and phenomena, researchers are interested in conducting research that focuses on "the effect of electronic word of mouth, emotional branding, and brand characteristics on purchasing decisions for products on the Shopee e-commerce platform." The formulation of the problem in this study involves questions such as whether electronic word of mouth has a significant influence on purchasing decisions, to what extent emotional branding influences purchasing decisions, and whether brand characteristics have a significant impact on purchasing decisions. Through this research, the aim is to provide a deeper understanding of these factors and their contribution to purchasing decisions for products on the e-commerce platform. Drawing from the literature review above, the framework is outlined in Figure 1.

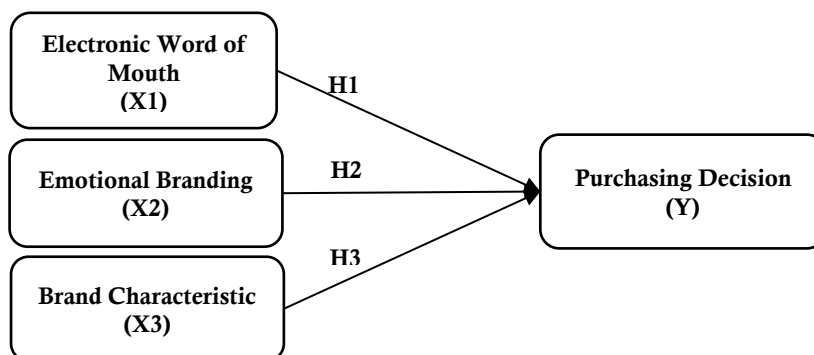


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

Based on the conceptual framework that has been described, this study develops the following hypotheses:

- H1) *Electronic word of mouth has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions for the product on the e-commerce platform.*
- H2) *Emotional branding has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions for the product in e-commerce.*
- H3) *Brand characteristics have a positive and significant impact on purchasing decisions for the product on the e-commerce platform.*

These hypotheses will be tested and analyzed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence consumer purchasing decisions regarding the product in the Shopee online business environment.

## METHODS

This study was carried out in the Special Region of Yogyakarta over a one-month period from August to September 2023. Yogyakarta, being a province with a substantial

number of universities and students, provided a suitable pool of participants for the research. Employing a survey method with the distribution of questionnaires, this research falls under the category of quantitative research.

The target population encompassed all customers who purchased Erigo products on the Shopee e-commerce platform in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. The sample for this study specifically included student customers of Erigo products on Shopee in the aforementioned region. The sampling technique employed was non-probability sampling, specifically purposive sampling. As noted by Sugiyono (2014), purposive sampling involves certain considerations or objectives. Due to the unknown exact number of Erigo product consumers making purchases on Shopee, the Cochran formula was used to determine the sample size, resulting in a total of 100 respondents. The analysis was conducted using SPSS (Social Package for the Social Sciences), chosen for its appropriateness in handling and processing the quantitative data collected in this study.

### RESULTS

The data presented in Table 1 reveals insights into the demographic distribution of respondents in the study. Gender-wise, the study comprised 46% male and 54% female respondents, indicating a predominance of female participants. Further classification by occupation indicates that 88% of respondents were students, with only 1% being civil servants, 5% self-employed, and 6% falling into other categories. Among the respondents, 38% had an undergraduate education, 1% held a master's degree, and 2% had a doctorate. Additionally, 58% completed high school, and 1% attended vocational school. Regarding monthly income, 40% earned less than 1 million, 39% earned between 1 million and 3 million, 11% earned between 3,100,000 and 5,000,000, and 10% earned more than 5 million. Notably, the majority of respondents, 40 people, fell into the income bracket of less than 1 million per month.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

No.	Characteristics	Category	Total	Percentage
1.	Gender	Male	46	46,0
		Female	54	54,0
2.	Age	17-25 Years	96	96,0
		26-30 Years	4	4,0
3.	Jobs	Public Servant	1	1,0
		Student	88	88,0
		Self-employed	5	5,0
		Miscellaneous	6	6,0
4.	Education	Undergraduate	38	38,0
		Master	1	1,0
		Doctor	2	2,0
		High School	58	58,0
		Vocational School	1,0	1,0
5.	Monthly Income	<1 million	40	40,0
		>5 million	10	10,0
		1 million- 3 million	39	39,0
		3.1 million -5 million	11	11,0

Based on Table 2, the evaluation of 100 respondents, selected as research samples, reveals notable trends. The average assessment for the electronic word-of-mouth variable stands at a high category, specifically with a mean value of 4.18. This suggests that a significant portion of consumers actively seeks product information through user reviews on the internet. Similarly, the emotional branding variable exhibits a high average value of 3.83 among the 100 respondents, indicating a positive emotional connection with brands. In the brand characteristic variable, the mean value of 4.11, based on the 100 respondents, falls within the high category, emphasizing the distinctive traits associated with certain brands. Finally, regarding the dependent variable, namely the purchasing decision, the 100 respondents yield an average value in the high category, with a mean value of 3.85, indicating a positive influence on purchasing decisions.

**Table 2.** Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variables	Indicator Statement	Mean	Category
<i>Electronic Word of Mouth</i>	Getting enough information about the product from reviews written by consumers on marketplace.	4.06	High
	Thinking that positive and negative comments from consumers about the product on marketplace are useful for understanding the product better.	4.27	Very High
	Positive reviews from others about the product on marketplace helped understand the quality of the product.	4.22	Very High
Mean		4.18	High
<i>Emotional Branding</i>	Feeling positive emotions when seeing the product brand.	3.62	High
	Can easily recognize the product brand.	4.00	High
	Having a certain impression when seeing the product brand.	3.82	High
	The product brand has a distinctive feature that distinguishes it from other brands.	3.90	High
Mean		3.83	High
<i>Brand Characteristic</i>	The product is a reputable fashion brand.	4.15	High
	The product brand will last a long time	4.06	High
	The product brand has the ability to compete with other brands in fashion products.	4.12	High
Mean		4.11	High
<i>Purchase Decision</i>	Buying the product on marketplace. enjoying benefits such as discounted prices and free shipping.	4.04	High
	Purchasing the product due to seeing an advertisement on marketplace.	3.65	High
	Choosing the product on marketplace. meeting fashion needs.	3.80	High
	Selecting the product at marketplace. obtaining information from other people (family/friends/celebrities. etc.).	3.83	High
	Opting for the product on marketplace. considering positive responses from other people about the product.	3.93	High
	Mean		3.85

Based on the validity test results for each statement item, the electronic word of mouth (x1) variable exhibits a significance value of  $<.001$ . This value, being smaller than 0.05, indicates that the statement items in the electronic word of mouth variable are considered valid. Similarly, for the emotional branding (x2) variable, each statement item demonstrates a significance value of  $<.001$ , confirming their validity as the value is smaller than 0.05. In the brand characteristic (x3) variable, each statement item also yields a significance value of  $<.001$ , establishing their validity as the value is smaller than 0.05. Likewise, for the purchase decision variable (y), each statement item records a significance value of  $<.001$ , confirming their validity as the value is smaller than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that all statements across the variables (electronic word of mouth, emotional branding, and brand characteristics) are suitable for measuring the purchasing decision.

The reliability test is employed to assess the consistency of the questionnaire and determine if the instrument used can be considered trustworthy or suitable as a measuring tool for variables. If the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value of a variable exceeds 0.60, the indicators used for that variable are deemed reliable; conversely, if the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value is less than 0.60, the indicators are considered unreliable. The results of the reliability test indicate that the electronic word of mouth (x1) variable has a reliability value of 0.793, emotional branding (x2) has a reliability value of 0.858, brand characteristic (x3) has a reliability value of 0.838, and the purchasing decision variable (y) has a reliability value of 0.861. All variables, including both independent and dependent variables, boast a Cronbach's alpha value greater than 0.60. Consequently, all statement items in the questionnaire for all variables are affirmed to be reliable.

In this study, the normality test was conducted to ascertain whether the research data exhibited a normal distribution. The normality measurement employed the one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov method. If the asymptotic significance value is greater than 0.05, the data is considered normally distributed, and vice versa. Abnormal distribution is

indicated when the asymptotic significance value is less than 0.05. The results of the normality test, utilizing the one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov method in this study, yielded an asymptotic significance value (2-tailed) of 0.200, which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that the residual data in the study is normally distributed, rendering the data suitable for use. Therefore, it is concluded that the research data is normally distributed, and the assumption of normality is satisfied.

Table 3. Regression Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
	(Constant)	4.397	2.184				2.013
1 E-WOM	0.398	0.199	0.224	2.002	0.048	0.536	1.864
Emotional Branding	0.357	0.163	0.235	2.186	0.031	0.585	1.710
Brand Characteristic	0.468	0.212	0.240	2.207	0.030	0.568	1.760

Based on Table 3, the multiple regression equation for this study is as follows:

$$Y = a + b_1 X_1 + b_2 X_2 + b_3 X_3 + e$$

$$Y = 4.397 + 0.224X_1 + 0.235X_2 + 0.240X_3 + e$$

From the results of the regression equation analysis, it can be explained that the constant value ( $\beta_0$ ) of 4.397 indicates that electronic word of mouth ( $x_1$ ), emotional branding ( $x_2$ ), and brand characteristic ( $x_3$ ) are considered constant. This implies that if there is no value in the three independent variables ( $x_1$ ,  $x_2$ , and  $x_3$ ) or if all three are 0, then statistically, the purchase decision ( $y$ ) will have a value of 4.397. Furthermore, the regression coefficient for electronic word of mouth ( $x_1$ ) of 0.224 indicates that if electronic word of mouth increases by 1 unit, the purchasing decision ( $y$ ) will increase by 0.224. Similarly, emotional branding ( $x_2$ ) and brand characteristic ( $x_3$ ) have positive regression coefficients of 0.235 and 0.240, respectively. This suggests that a 1 unit increase in emotional branding and brand characteristic will lead to an increase in purchasing decisions by 0.235 and 0.240 (Table 3).

Decision-making at the significance level uses the following criteria: if the significance value is  $> 0.05$ , then  $H_0$  is accepted and  $H_a$  is rejected, indicating that the data has no significant effect. Conversely, if the significance value is  $< 0.05$ , then  $H_0$  is rejected, and  $H_a$  is accepted, signifying that the data has a significant effect. Based on the test results using the t-test on the electronic word of mouth variable ( $X_1$ ), the t-value is 2.002 with a significance of 0.048, which is smaller than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that  $H_1$  is accepted, indicating that the electronic word of mouth variable has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions for the products on the e-commerce platform. Similar results were found in the emotional branding ( $X_2$ ) variable, with a t-value of 2.186 and a significance of 0.031, and in the brand characteristic ( $X_3$ ) variable with a t-value of 2.207 and a significance of 0.030. Therefore, these two variables also have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions for the product at Shopee. The implication is that this study provides empirical support for the importance of electronic word of mouth, emotional branding, and brand characteristics in shaping consumer preferences for the product in the e-commerce business environment.

Table 4. Coefficient of Determination Test

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.595	0.354	0.334	2.968

The coefficient of determination analysis is conducted to analyze how much electronic word of mouth, emotional branding, and brand characteristics as independent variables explain and influence the dependent variable (purchase decision) (Table 4). According to

the results of the coefficient of determination test, the coefficient of determination is 0.334. This implies that the independent variables (electronic word of mouth, emotional branding, and brand characteristics) can influence the dependent variable (purchase decision) by 33.4%. Meanwhile, the remaining 66.6% is influenced by other research variables not examined in this study.

Table 5. Anova Test

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	463,473	3	154,491	17,543	<0,001 <sup>b</sup>
Residuals	845,437	96	8,807		
Total	1308,910	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

b. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Characteristic, Emotional Branding, E-WOM

The result of the F count is 50.112, and the F table (with the F-test formula:  $F(k: n-k) = F(3: 100-3) = F(3: 97) = 2.70$ ) with a significance value of 0.000 at a significance level of 0.05. Thus, the value of sig.  $0.000 < 0.05$ , and the value of F count  $> F$  table ( $17.543 > 2.70$ ). Therefore, H0 is rejected, and Ha is accepted. It can be concluded that the electronic word of mouth, emotional branding, and brand characteristic variables simultaneously have a significant effect on purchasing decision variables (Table 5).

In testing the effect of electronic word of mouth on purchasing decisions, the results for the Electronic Word of Mouth variable (X1) obtained a t-value of 2.002 with a significance of 0.048. The significance value is smaller than 0.05. This shows that H0 1 is rejected, Ha 1, meaning that the Electronic Word of Mouth variable has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions for the product in E-commerce. The results of this study contradict research conducted by Dasopang and Sunargo (2021), which states that electronic word of mouth has no positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. However, the results of this study are supported by research conducted by Asnawati et al. (2022) and Kurniawati and Susanti (2023), which state that the electronic word of mouth variable has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions.

In the test of the effect of emotional branding on purchasing decisions, the emotional branding variable (X2) obtained a t-value of 2.186 with a significance of 0.031. The significance value is smaller than 0.05. This shows that H0 2 is rejected, and Ha 2 is accepted, meaning that the Emotional Branding variable has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions for the product in E-commerce. The results of this study are in line with previous research conducted by Ramadaniati et al. (2022) and Muthiah and Setiawan (2019), which state that the Emotional Branding variable has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions.

In the effect of brand characteristic on purchasing decisions, the brand characteristic variable (X3) obtained a t-value of 2.207 with a significance of 0.030. The significance value is smaller than 0.05. This shows that H0 3 is rejected, and Ha 3 is accepted, meaning that the brand characteristic variable has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions for the product in E-commerce. The results of this study are in line with research previously conducted by Muthiah and Setiawan (2019), which states that the brand characteristic variable has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that students, the sample of this study, consider electronic word of mouth when purchasing goods on e-commerce platforms. This consideration is further supported by emotional branding and brand characteristics, which also play a role when students engage in transactions on the Shopee e-commerce platform. These findings are evident through the research results involving the Purchasing Decision variable, the dependent variable, and the electronic word of mouth, emotional branding, and brand characteristics, which are test variables as well as independent variables in this study.

In examining the influence between the variables, classic assumption tests and coefficient of determination analyses were conducted using data processing software applications, namely SPSS. Based on the data analysis, testing, and discussions carried out, it can be concluded that the focal points of the research, namely Electronic Word of Mouth, Emotional Branding, and Brand Characteristic, all have a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions for products on the E-commerce platform.

These findings suggest that information spread through Electronic Word of Mouth, emotional aspects associated with the brand, and overall brand characteristics play crucial roles in shaping consumer purchasing decisions for products in the Shopee online business environment. The implications of these results may provide valuable insights for relevant parties, including Erigo manufacturers and the Shopee e-commerce platform, in enhancing marketing strategies and brand management to increase consumer appeal and trust.

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