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The influence of electronic word of mouth through Tiktok on purchasing intention of skincare products in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The ever-expanding internet has brought social media become a medium by which Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) is disseminated, particularly among skincare users. This study aims to assess the impact of eWOM through TikTok on skincare product purchase intention by developing a conceptual model of hypotheses that encompasses a multiplicity of factors that might be associated. The researcher investigates what factors impact eWOM usefulness & eWOM credibility and why consumers may adopt it when making a purchase. To examine our research model, a quantitative approach is employed using a sample of 373 Indonesian respondents via a web-based questionnaire. Structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis with the program SmartPLS was employed to test ten proposed hypotheses. The results indicate that source expertise is the most significant factor that may impact eWOM credibility in addition to perceived persuasiveness, perceived informativeness, and source trustworthiness. Additionally, source trustworthiness is the main predictor of eWOM credibility in addition to perceived persuasiveness and source expertise with regard to TikTok. It was found that eWOM usefulness and credibility together increase the possibility of adopting an eWOM message, and eWOM adoption mediates the influence of credibility and usefulness on customer purchase intention toward skincare products on TikTok. Only a few studies have examined TikTok as a medium of eWOM distribution and its influence on skincare product purchase intention, therefore this study provides vital insights into eWOM literature by identifying the new platform. This study helps brands learn what to consider when designing marketing strategies to enhance purchase intentions.

KEYWORDS

Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM); Purchase Intention; eWOM adoption; Social Media

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Introduction

Nowadays modern era is characterized by the rapid development of technology. The rapid development of technology and the Internet also affects humans in business matters. Various businesses ranging from small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to multinational corporations, all compete to take advantage of internet advancements through social media to support their business. One of the reasons for using the internet and social media as promotional media is to reach a wider market share, as social media allows us to reach people regardless of their location or time zone.

Various local and international skincare brands have used TikTok as a means of marketing tool. Videos that use certain brand hashtags on TikTok also get millions of hashtag views. With millions of active users in Indonesia, it is undeniable that TikTok can be an effective promotional medium for selling a product, especially skincare products which are on the rise lately. According to Monica et al., (2017), the essence of advertising is to implant something in the minds of consumers and encourage consumers to act or the existence of advertising activities often results in immediate sales, although many sales will also occur in the future.

In light of the tightening market conditions, there must be a strategy to win the competition by offering products that meet the needs of consumers so that these products can be sold on the market. One of the strategies that can be considered is through eWOM. Controlling eWOM to stay positive is one of the most efficient ways to gain market share and promote products on social media. Therefore, this study draws on prior research and provides expanded information regarding eWOM and purchasing intentions. As such, this research contributes by identifying and better comprehending the characteristics of eWOM via TikTok, and its influence on customers' purchase intention of skincare products in Indonesia.

It has been demonstrated that source credibility has a major impact on eWOM credibility, information adoption, and ultimately purchase intention (Daowd, et al., 2020). Moreover, Anh & Hien (2022) on their research, eWOM perceived usefulness and perceived credibility play an important role in mediating the impact of information quality and source credibility on purchase intention. According to Tien., et al., (2019) the role of eWOM adoption in mediating the influence of eWOM credibility and usefulness on consumer purchase intention toward products recommended on social media sites has been demonstrated to be significant. However, in the previous study, social

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media site in which a platform where eWOM transfers are limited to Facebook, Line, and Instagram mostly. The products being recommended on social media sites also remain unclear and unspecific. This study thus examines the role of eWOM through social media TikTok and its adoption in mediating the influence of eWOM credibility and usefulness on consumer purchase intentions toward skincare products.

Literature review

TikTok Application

TikTok is a short-form, video-sharing app that allows users to create and share short videos on any topic. Users can add filters, text, sounds, and music. Users scroll through a newsfeed, react to content, and navigate with keywords and hashtags. According to Sihura (2022), after TikTok was blocked by the Ministry of Communication and Information, TikTok is now a new trend and popular culture in Indonesia. The development of a popular culture today in Indonesia is very large for the millennials and Gen Z, because these generations are very active and intense with new technologies, one of which is TikTok which is widely used by millennials and Gen Z in Indonesia and makes it popular culture in Indonesia.

Electronic Word of Mouth

Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) is a communication medium to share information about a product or service that has been consumed between consumers who do not know each other (Gruen. 2006:6). The application of electronic word of mouth in social media is considered much more effective because it can be accessed by the wider community. The electronic word of mouth (eWOM) has emerged as a crucial forum for consumers' feedback and is regarded as more effective than traditional word of mouth (Priansa, 2017).

Information Adoption Model

IAM, which was developed by Sussman and Siegal (2003), has been used in many studies in the field of information systems and marketing to explain how persuasive information is processed. The basic premise of IAM is based on the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) and the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989). IAM has four constituents: argument quality, source credibility, information usefulness, and information adoption. Thus, according to this model, consumers filter and critique certain pieces of information centrally and peripherally to determine whether to follow the related recommendations, evaluating their usefulness (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). In the main line, consumers are closely watching the content quality of the task-related suggestions presented on social media. When forming opinions, consumers prefer strong and convincing arguments to weak and unreal arguments (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

Perceived informativeness

The perception of informativeness, according to Sullivan in (Tien et al., 2019), is contained in a full message encompassing in-depth and broad information. Messages that offer information that is relevant, timeliness, and completeness improve customer perceptions of informativeness (Ye, 2014). The informativeness of eWOM messages is very important (Ye, 2014).

Perceived persuasiveness

Persuasive perception, as defined by (Ye, 2014), is a common perception of the persuasive power inherent in online reviews. Customers require information messages from online reviews that include someone's perspective or opinions. According to (Gunawan, 2015), customers want to convince messaging on social networking platforms in order to obtain useful information. Meanwhile, according to Bhattacherjee and Sanford in (Ye, 2014), customers will absorb information if it involves external persuasion that adds to lucrative customer decision-making.

Source expertise

According to Fang (2014), source expertise refers to the level of trust the reader as the recipient of the information has in the source for his knowledge in producing valid statements. The reader's perception of the capabilities of information sources to produce an assessment of a product is referred to as source expertise. The source's expertise and qualifications inspire the reader to apply the information and modify his views and intentions toward a specific product (Baber, 2016). The amount to which the information supplier has knowledge and experience with a product or service is referred to as sourcing expertise.

Source trustworthiness

Baber (2016) defines trust in sources as "the level of reader acceptance of information based on the characteristics of sources that communicate authentically and sincerely." According to (Baber, 2016), trust in sources is an aspect in which persons who provide information about a product or service can be trusted, honest, reliable, and fair.

eWOM usefulness

Ye (2014) defines perceived usefulness as "the degree to which a person believes that utilizing a certain system would improve his or her job performance. It expresses users' expectations of the possible benefits of employing information technology. Numerous studies have repeatedly demonstrated the critical role perceived utility plays in fostering IT acceptability by developing a good attitude toward utilizing the technology, raising users' intentions to use the technology, and, as a result, increasing actual usage of the technology.

eWOM credibility

eWOM credibility analyzes how much consumers believe testimonials or recommendations to be factual, true, and trustworthy (Cheung, 2008). A subjective aspect of information quality is credibility (Tien et.al., 2019). The persuasive strength of the message influences eWOM's credibility (Fang, 2014). The reader, who is the intended recipient of the persuasive message, will have a positive attitude if the online review or recommendation has one (Ye, 2014).

eWOM adoption

Information adoption is the process through which consumers consciously make use of information (Cheung, 2008). The degree of consumer approval of utilizing eWOM to make purchasing intention has a direct impact on the adoption of eWOM information. When information is transferred from one person to another online or via social media, this is known as eWOM. eWOM was created as a result of the paradigm shift in human life, which saw communication shift from face-to-face to online.

Purchase intention

A person's behaviour can be influenced by various factors, both internal and external. Similar to buying interest in a product, consumers tend to be influenced by various types of marketing (advertising), or information that is widely spread. According to Kotler (2012), interest is an effective response or process of feeling or liking a product but has not made a decision to buy. In addition, Assael (2004), said that purchasing interest is the tendency of consumers to buy a brand or take actions related to purchases as measured by the level of possibility of consumers to make a purchase. Motivation is the driving force from within individuals that compels them to take action (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007). The motivation will be used by consumers to find out certain products along with the increasing desire to have the product, and one's perception of the product will affect one's buying interest.

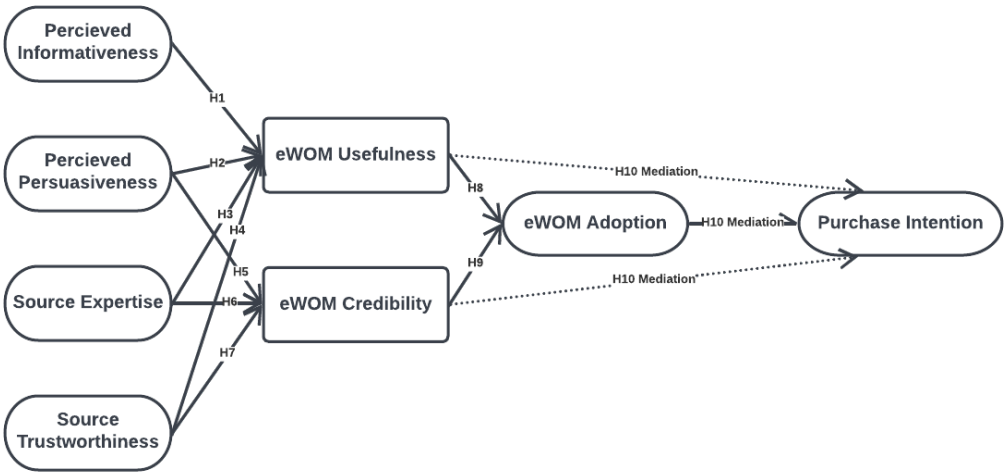

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Methods

This study employs a quantitative approach. The quantitative approach is one of the research methods that does not emphasize the depth of the data, but rather the ability to collect as much data from a large population as feasible. The population in this study are TikTok users in Indonesia aged 15 years old or above. The sampling technique used in this study is non-probability sampling with purposive sampling methods, which is sampling based on certain criteria, including TikTok users in Indonesia who are 15 years old or older, have an active TikTok application installed, open/access TikTok application at least once a week, and ever received skincare product information from TikTok content. To represent Indonesian TikTok users, the sample is determined proportionally to the total population based on the population density in 3 regions in Indonesia which are Western Indonesia, Central Indonesia, and Eastern Indonesia. In this research, we deployed 373 samples that met the criteria and met the minimum number of samples. The sample in this study was obtained by distributing questionnaires through social media networks, chat platforms, and online groups on messaging applications.

In data analysis, this research model used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), and SmartPLS (Partial Least Square) tool to process data. PLS is an analytical technique that can perform measurement model testing as well as structural model testing. The measurement model is used to test the validity and reliability, while the structural model is used to test causality or in other words to test hypotheses in the form of predictions. Hypotheses testing was carried out to analyze the causal relationship between independent, mediating, and dependent variables. In evaluating the hypotheses, the outer and inner model method was carried out. The outer model analysis is used to test the feasibility of the measurement model to be used as a measurement tool (validity and reliability). In this stage, the relationship between indicators and their latent variables will be explained. The analysis used to test the validity of the variables is convergent validity and discriminant validity. Meanwhile, to test the reliability of the variables used Cronbach alpha and composite reliability. Convergent Validity is done by comparing the value of the outer model (loading factor) with a critical value of 0.5. If the loading factor > 0.5 then the instrument item is declared valid and vice versa if the value is < 0.5 then it is declared invalid. The next assessment of the fulfillment of convergent validity uses the AVE value shown to be greater than 0.5. Convergent Validity is done by comparing the value of the outer model (loading factor) with a critical value of 0.5. If the loading factor > 0.5 then the instrument item is declared valid and vice versa if the value is < 0.5 then it is declared invalid. The next stage will be an assessment of the discriminant validity of this construct. The assessment will be carried out by comparing the square root values of each construct's AVE value with one another. The results at this stage indicate that the model proposed in this study can meet the required discriminant validity criteria.

Furthermore, the study will analyze the value of cross-loading between each item, cross-loading is an alternative method in assessing discriminant validity other than the Square root method. The requirement that must be met is that the loading value that forms the intended latent variable must be greater than the loading value of the item to the non-target latent variable. If testing the validity of all indicators has been carried out in this study, then the next analysis is the reliability test on the research model. The reliability test is carried out in two ways, namely Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) or what is often called Dillon Goldstein's. This research is confirmatory so that if the composite reliability value ranges from 0.6 to 0.7 then it is still acceptable (Ghozali, 2015).

After the accepted model meets convergent validity and discriminant validity, the next step is to test the structural model (Inner Model). Assessing the inner model is to see the relationship between variables by looking at the results of the path parameter coefficients and their level of significance (Ghozali, 2015). The first step in the inner model is to measure the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The way that can be done is to see R2 of the dependent variable. Ghozali (2015) explains that R2 can explain the number of variants of the construct described by the model. The hypothesis in this study will also be analyzed with SMARTPLS 3.0 so as to test the significance of loading factors and research coefficients using the bootstrapping technique which makes the sample double (Ghozali., 2015). The minimum criteria that must be met for the hypothesis to be accepted are t-statistic or t-count must be above 1.96 or p-value <0.05 for standard error (alpha) 5% and beta are positive. Testing the mediating effect in the analysis uses a procedure developed by Baron and Kenny (1998) in (Ghozali, 2015). Testing the mediating effect using the results of the specific indirect effect on the SmartPLS analysis.

Results

Descriptive analysis of respondents' demographics

The following section will describe the data obtained from the respondents. Descriptive data that describes the condition or condition of the respondent needs to be considered as additional information to understand the results of the study.

Table 1. Respondents' profile

Respondents' characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	125	34%
Female	248	66%
Age		3
15-25 years old	316	85%
26-30 years old	38	10%
31-35 years old	17	5%
>35 years old	2	0.5%
Education level		
Junior High School	6	2%
Senior High School	213	57%
Diploma	35	9%
Bachelor	117	31%
Other	2	1%
Job		
Civil servants	17	5%
Private-sector employees	43	12%
Students	294	79%
Unemployed	6	2%
Self-employed	13	3%

Respondents' characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Domicile		
Western Indonesia	173	46.4%
Central Indonesia	106	28.4%
Eastern Indonesia	94	11.3%

Based on table 1 the number of female respondents is more dominant than that of male respondents, where female respondents are 66%. The respondents' education levels were varied. 2% of respondents had a junior high school education, 57% had a senior high school education, 9% had a diploma, 31% had a bachelor's degree, and 1% had some other level of education. In terms of employment, 79% of respondents were students, 12% were private sector employees, 5% were civil servants, 3% were self-employed, and 2% were unemployed. The respondents were also divided into three categories based on their place of residence: 46.4% lived in western Indonesia, 28.4% lived in central Indonesia, and 11.3% lived in eastern Indonesia.

Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis

The data processing of this research used partial least square (PLS) analysis with the help of the Smart-PLS program. The partial least square (PLS) analysis has three analytical models, namely the outer model which describes the relationship between latent variables and indicator variables, inner model which describes the relationship between latent variables and hypothesis testing.

Outer model

The convergent validity of the measurement model with reflexive indicators is assessed based on the correlation between item scores or component scores estimated with the Smart-PLS program. The rule of thumb that is usually used to assess convergent validity is the factor loading value > 0.5 (Hair et al, 2012).

Table 2. Outer Loading Results

Construct	Item	Outer Loading
Perceived informativeness	PI1	0.810
	PI2	0.815
	PI3	0.826
Perceived persuasiveness	PP1	0.837
	PP2	0.871
	PP3	0.816
Source expertise	SE1	0.846
	SE2	0.835
	SE3	0.825
Source trustworthiness	ST1	0.883
	ST2	0.904
	ST3	0.857
	ST4	0.809
eWOM usefulness	EU1	0.882
	EU2	0.858
	EU3	0.779
eWOM credibility	EC1	0.859
	EC2	0.919
	EC3	0.923
eWOM adoption	EA1	0.821
	EA2	0.854
	EA3	0.903
	EA4	0.773
Purchase intention	PI1	0.843
	PI2	0.904
	PI3	0.891

The results of data processing using the Smart-PLS program can be seen in Table 2 All correlation values between constructs or latent variables with indicator variables are above 0.5 or have met the convergent validity assessment requirements.

Discriminant validity is carried out to ensure that each concept of each construct or latent variable is different from other variables. The model is said to have good discriminant validity if each loading indicator value of a latent variable has a loading value that is greater than the loading value of the correlation with other latent variables (cross-loading).

Table 3. Cross-Loading Value

	PI	PP	PU	SE	ST	EA	EC	EU
PI1	**0.810**	0.595	0.545	0.527	0.538	0.456	0.567	0.533

	PI	PP	PU	SE	ST	EA	EC	EU
PI2	**0.815**	0.522	0.513	0.532	0.551	0.550	0.535	0.563
PI3	**0.826**	0.443	0.514	0.528	0.485	0.453	0.510	0.527
PP1	0.564	**0.837**	0.566	0.578	0.591	0.450	0.578	0.600
PP2	0.519	**0.871**	0.509	0.550	0.566	0.448	0.592	0.532
PP3	0.524	**0.816**	0.553	0.567	0.560	0.641	0.560	0.574
PU1	0.525	0.490	**0.843**	0.535	0.470	0.597	0.469	0.574
PU2	0.592	0.606	**0.904**	0.598	0.594	0.610	0.573	0.651
PU3	0.573	0.601	**0.891**	0.573	0.554	0.736	0.554	0.611
SE1	0.546	0.571	0.533	**0.846**	0.646	0.463	0.611	0.598
SE2	0.524	0.527	0.482	**0.835**	0.577	0.461	0.545	0.586
SE3	0.552	0.585	0.604	**0.825**	0.564	0.547	0.544	0.616
ST1	0.548	0.588	0.549	0.633	**0.883**	0.504	0.670	0.588
ST2	0.610	0.638	0.591	0.636	**0.904**	0.547	0.724	0.653
ST3	0.512	0.508	0.480	0.593	**0.857**	0.428	0.622	0.566
ST4	0.546	0.608	0.498	0.603	**0.809**	0.468	0.661	0.595
EA1	0.461	0.525	0.543	0.446	0.478	**0.821**	0.463	0.635
EA2	0.465	0.450	0.518	0.437	0.385	**0.854**	0.384	0.591
EA3	0.535	0.535	0.635	0.520	0.490	**0.903**	0.530	0.620
EA4	0.527	0.518	0.750	0.546	0.524	**0.773**	0.565	0.585
EC1	0.560	0.611	0.484	0.567	0.648	0.556	**0.859**	0.554
EC2	0.610	0.615	0.576	0.614	0.715	0.524	**0.919**	0.607
EC3	0.606	0.627	0.575	0.652	0.733	0.510	**0.923**	0.619
EU1	0.559	0.572	0.604	0.628	0.611	0.621	0.593	**0.882**
EU2	0.649	0.640	0.654	0.654	0.659	0.639	0.663	**0.858**
EU3	0.444	0.480	0.479	0.518	0.467	0.568	0.374	**0.779**

From Table 3 it can be seen that the loading factor value for each indicator of each latent variable has the largest loading factor value compared to the loading factors associated with other latent variable indicators. This means that each latent variable indicator has good discriminant validity whereas the latent variable indicator has a gauge that is highly correlated with other constructs.

The validity and reliability criteria can also be seen from the reliability value of a construct and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of each construct. The construct is said to have high reliability if the value is 0.70 and the AVE is above 0.50. Table 4 will present the Composite Reliability and AVE values for all variables.

Table 4. Composite Reliability Results

	Cronbach's α	ρ_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
PI	0.751	0.751	0.858	0.668
PP	0.794	0.794	0.879	0.709
PU	0.854	0.860	0.911	0.774
SE	0.784	0.784	0.874	0.698
ST	0.886	0.889	0.922	0.746
EA	0.859	0.861	0.905	0.704
EC	0.884	0.886	0.928	0.812
EU	0.792	0.805	0.878	0.706

In table 4, it can be seen that all variable values in reliability testing using both Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability have values above 0.7, and validity testing uses AVE with a value of more than 0.5. Therefore, it can be concluded that the variables tested are valid and reliable, so that structural model testing can be carried out

Inner model

The evaluation standard used in the evaluation phase of the structural model is R-square (R^2). Changes in the R-square value are used to assess the effect of certain independent latent variables on the dependent latent variable. The higher the R-square value, the greater the ability of the independent variable to contribute to the dependent variable.

Table 5. R Square Value

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Purchase Intention	0.617	0.614
eWOM Adoption	0.549	0.546
eWOM Credibility	0.661	0.658
eWOM Usefulness	0.635	0.631

The R-square data in table 5 above shows that the R-square value for the purchase intention variable is 0.617. This means that 4 independent variables (perceived informativeness, perceived persuasiveness, source expertise, and source trustworthiness) and 3 mediating variables (eWOM usefulness, eWOM credibility, and eWOM adoption) simultaneously explain their effect on the dependent variable purchase intention by 61.7%. Furthermore, the R-square value of eWOM adoption is 0.549 which means that 4 independent variables (perceived informativeness, perceived persuasiveness, source expertise, and source trustworthiness) and 2 other mediating variables (eWOM usefulness and eWOM credibility) simultaneously explain their effect on eWOM adoption, further the dependent variable of purchase intention by 54.9%. The value of construct eWOM credibility on the R-square result is 0.661. This means that independent variables (perceived usefulness, source expertise, and source trustworthiness) are simultaneously able to explain their effect on the variable eWOM credibility by 66.1%. While the R-square value of eWOM usefulness is shown at 0.635. This means that 4 independent variables (perceived informativeness, perceived persuasiveness, source expertise, and source trustworthiness) are simultaneously able to explain their effect on the eWOM usefulness variable by 63.5%.

From Figure 2 it can be explained that the variance of indicator measurements is influenced by latent constructs or reflects variations from unidimensional constructs which are depicted in an oval shape with several arrows from construct to indicator. This model hypothesizes that changes in latent constructs affect changes in indicators.

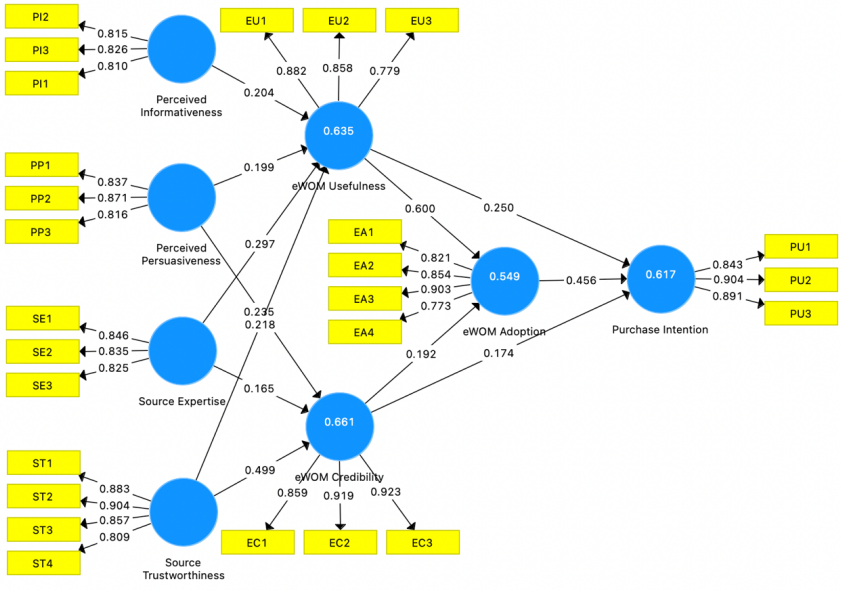

Figure 2. Structural Model

Hypothesis Testing

Testing this hypothesis is based on processing research data using SEM–PLS analysis. To conclude whether the hypothesis is accepted or rejected, the p-value is used at a significant level of 5% or 0.05 and through a t-statistical test or (t count must be > 1.96). If the p-value <0.05 then the hypothesis is accepted and there is an effect. On the

other hand, if the p-value > 0.05, the hypothesis is rejected and there is no effect. The results of the evaluation of the inner model with the Smart-PLS program are as follows:

Table 6. Path Coefficient Results

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
PI -> EU	0.204	0.206	0.056	3.631	0.000
PP -> EC	0.235	0.239	0.054	4.357	0.000
PP -> EU	0.199	0.202	0.060	3.330	0.001
SE -> EC	0.165	0.162	0.058	2.861	0.004
SE -> EU	0.297	0.297	0.062	4.805	0.000
ST -> EC	0.499	0.497	0.056	8.885	0.000
ST -> EU	0.218	0.215	0.061	3.566	0.000
EA -> PU	0.456	0.458	0.051	9.028	0.000
EC -> PU	0.174	0.171	0.050	3.492	0.001
EC -> EA	0.192	0.185	0.049	3.895	0.000
EU -> PU	0.250	0.252	0.066	3.798	0.000
EU -> EA	0.600	0.607	0.046	13.144	0.000

Based on the bootstrapping and statistical testing, these are the summary of the findings:

Table 7. Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

	Hypothesis	Result	Description
H1	The perceived informativeness of eWOM messages on TikTok has positive effects on eWOM usefulness.	β = 0.204 T Statistics = 3.589 P Value = 0.000	Supported
H2	The perceived persuasiveness of eWOM messages on TikTok has a positive effect on eWOM usefulness.	β = 0.199 T Statistics = 3.403 P Value = 0.001	Supported
H3	Source expertise has a positive effect on eWOM usefulness.	β = 0.297 T Statistics = 4.924 P Value = 0.000	Supported
H4	Source trustworthiness has a positive effect on eWOM usefulness.	β = 0.218 T Statistics = 3.676 P Value = 0.000	Supported
H5	The perceived persuasiveness of eWOM messages on TikTok has a positive effect on eWOM credibility.	β = 0.235 T Statistics = 4.329 P Value = 0.000	Supported
H6	Source expertise has a positive effect on perceived eWOM credibility.	β = 0.165 T Statistics = 3.001 P Value = 0.003	Supported
H7	Source trustworthiness has a positive effect on perceived eWOM credibility.	β = 0.499 T Statistics = 8.529 P Value = 0.000	Supported
H8	Higher levels of eWOM usefulness create higher levels of eWOM adoption.	β = 0.600 T Statistics = 12.177 P Value = 0.000	Supported
H9	Higher levels of eWOM credibility create higher levels of eWOM adoption.	β = 0.192 T Statistics = 3.737 P Value = 0.000	Supported
H10	eWOM adoption (AD) mediates the influence of eWOM usefulness (US) and eWOM credibility (CR) on purchase intention (PU).	**US → AD → PU** β = 0.274 T Statistics = 7.249 P Value = 0.000 **CR → AD → PU** β = 0.088 T Statistics = 3.554 P Value = 0.000	Supported

Discussion

To simultaneously analyze the correlations between numerous dependent and independent variables, this study used structural equation modeling (SEM) and the smart partial least squares (PLS) method. On the basis of the analysis, all hypotheses developed for this study were accepted. The effect of eWOM on consumers' purchasing intention has been the subject of extensive research for quite some time (Tien *et al,* 2019; Anh & Hien 2022; Daowd *et al.* 2019). Indeed, the influence of eWOM on purchase intention has been verified in some Asian countries such as Taiwan (Tien *et al*, 2019; Anh & Hien, 2022) and Thailand (Daowd *et al*, 2019). This study, however, adds to the existing verification of eWOM's impact on consumers' purchase intent in Asia by conducting an empirical investigation in Indonesia. This study goes further by specifying and identifying TikTok as the platform via which eWOM spreads.

The findings of the research reveal that the perceived eWOM usefulness is highly impacted by both the perceived informativeness (β = 0,204, p <0,001) and perceived persuasiveness (β = 0,199, p <0,01) of the eWOM message. Therefore, H1 and H2 can both be considered supported hypotheses. This finding is consistent with the findings of Tien et al. (2019), who discovered that persuasive communications can be helpful to audiences by offering clear reasoning to support their statements, which in turn encourages people to accept the relevant suggestions. In addition, consumers need to cognitively assess both the informativeness and the persuasiveness encoded in the eWOM in order to determine whether or not an eWOM message is applicable and beneficial for them to achieve their consumption goals. This finding lends credence to earlier research that shed light on several aspects of the content quality of eWOM, such as how timely it is, how comprehensive it is, and how relevant it is. According to the research carried out by Tien et al. (2019), the primary antecedents of usefulness are relevance, comprehensiveness, and timeliness. It should come as no surprise that customers are likely to generate unfavorable opinions on low-quality posts that contain incorrect and unrelated content or information that is lacking in detail.

This study also shows that source expertise has a considerable impact on eWOM usefulness (β = 0,297, p <0,001) indicating that H3 is supported. This evidence is consistent with Tien et al. (2019), who confirmed that source expertise improves information usefulness. Expertise from the source may assist audiences in sorting through relevant and useful information to assist them in selecting the skincare products that best meet their needs. In addition, source trustworthiness shows a significant impact on eWOM usefulness (β = 0,218, p <0,001); thus, H4 is supported. Previous study by Tien et al. (2019) found that source trustworthiness does not associate with information usefulness. However, the findings of this study indicate that the trustworthiness of the message's source has a positive impact on its usefulness. It is apparent that when deciding whether or not the information is useful, audiences are more inclined to prefer a trustworthy message source.

Furthermore, our findings reveal that perceived persuasiveness (β = 0,236, p <0,001), source expertise (β = 0,165, p <0,01), and source trustworthiness (β = 0,499, p <0,001) are all significant predictors of eWOM credibility, supporting H5, H6, and H7. According to the findings, the more persuasive, expert, and trustworthy the information creators are, the more credible their information will be. This observation is consistent with the findings of Tien et al. (2019) and Daowd et al (2019). Findings from this study corroborate those of Tien et al. (2019) in that eWOM recipients are highly motivated to evaluate the credibility of eWOM and place increased weight on the quality of the supporting evidence provided in the message in an effort to minimize risk and eliminate mismatches in the information available to them. Furthermore, Daowd et al. (2019) discovered in their study that consumers in Thailand trust expertise and professional information senders, and place a priority on the popularity of online reviews and eWOM. This pattern appears to be shared by Indonesian customers, who are more willing to believe to creators who are experts in their field when assessing the credibility of product content on TikTok.

The findings of this study have also been shown to have similar results to previous studies conducted by Tien et al. (2019). In those investigations, the authors found that the usefulness of eWOM was mainly influenced by source expertise (β = 0.297). This demonstrates that consumers have a tendency to place a greater emphasis on information that originates from an expert background when deciding which information, they believe is useful for them.

In addition, the trustworthiness of the source is the factor that has the most impact on the credibility of eWOM (β =499). Customers have a tendency to be fastidious when it comes to evaluating the trustworthiness of the information sources from which they might obtain it. Information that originates from trustworthy sources has a significant impact on the consumers' perceptions of whether or not the information is credible.

Supporting hypotheses H8 and H9, studies also found that the usefulness and credibility of eWOM contributed positively to eWOM adoption (β = 0,600, p <0,001; β = 0,192, p <0,001). There are two main factors that influence a customer's decision to trust an eWOM and use it: usefulness and credibility. This result is in accordance with previous research showing a connection between perceived usefulness and information adoption (Tien et al., 2019; Anh & Hien, 2022) and between perceived credibility and information adoption (Tien et al., 2019; Daowd et al., 2019). TikTok, like many other social media platforms, encourages users to connect with their peers in order to share their own unique perspectives and opinions on a wide range of topics. This supportive environment minimizes uncertainty and improves the value of eWOM gained via these platforms, which in turn motivates participants to utilize the relevant information. Both usefulness and credibility assessments can be seen as consumer-empowerment endeavors since they help customers use eWOM messages in making future decisions. Taken together, these findings show that in order to fully capitalize on the potential presented by TikTok, eWOM senders need to put extra effort into improving the information's credibility and usefulness in the eyes of its target audience.

Although it has been demonstrated that the credibility of eWOM has a positive influence on the adoption of eWOM, the results of this study show that the effect is very minor (β = 192). Meanwhile, the usefulness of eWOM has been shown to have a significant influence on the adoption of eWOM (β = 0.600). It's possible that this is due to

consumer factors in the adoption of information, particularly on social media, where the usefulness of information is seen to be more significant than the trustworthiness of the source. They will adopt it as long as the content is helpful and beneficial. In addition, social media platforms such as TikTok provide such a wide opportunity for anyone to appear on the FYP (For You Page) of the application, which is the homepage for users, regardless of the credibility or expertise background of the user.

There was a statistically significant relationship between eWOM usefulness and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.250$, $p < 0,01$). When eWOM adoption was added to the model, the direct influence of eWOM usefulness on purchase intention was considerably increased and significant ($\beta = 0.274$, $p < 0,001$); supporting the partial mediation effect of eWOM adoption. Similarly, there was a significant relationship between eWOM credibility and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.174$, $p < 0,01$). However, when eWOM adoption was added to the model, the direct impact of eWOM credibility and purchase intention was considerably reduced ($\beta = 0.088$, $p < 0,01$); indicating that eWOM adoption is a partial mediator of the eWOM credibility-purchase intention relationship. This result shows a slight difference from the prior study conducted by Tien et al. (2019) where in their study, eWOM adoption fully mediated the relationship between eWOM usefulness and purchase intention. This study indicated a partial mediating effect of eWOM adoption on eWOM usefulness-purchase intention relationship. This indicates eWOM usefulness and eWOM credibility influence purchase intention but the influence is mediated by eWOM adoption.

This study also provided an answer that stands in contrast to the findings of a prior study carried out by Bangsawan et al. (2017), who discovered that eWOM does not have a significant relationship with purchase intention. The results of this study demonstrated a significant connection between eWOM and purchase intention. It's possible that this is because the subject of the study was different. Bangsawan et al. (2017) found that eWOM did not have an effect on consumers' purchase intention at Indonesian restaurants. Meanwhile, the results of this study indicate that eWOM has a significant impact on the purchase intention of skincare products.

The empirical findings of this study advance our understanding of the connection between consumer persuasion and consumer decision-making. eWOM adoption plays a crucial role in creating the impact that eWOM has on purchase behaviors. By revealing that information adoption is a key mediator, the study's empirical findings advance our understanding of this connection. This conclusion suggests that there is a tremendous amount of business commercial opportunity to be had by capitalizing on eWOM on TikTok. This study also suggests that brand marketers should engage in eWOM on TikTok in order to enhance customers' purchase intention towards skincare products.

Conclusions

This study evaluates the factors that affect purchasing intention of skincare products in an online e-word of mouth (eWOM) environment through the use of the social media platform TikTok. The study included 373 valid respondents from Indonesia, with 66% of respondents being female and 79% being students. The age range of 15 to 25 years had the highest proportion of participants. The findings of the research reveal that eWOM perceived usefulness is highly impacted by the perceived informativeness, persuasiveness, and expertise of the eWOM sender, as well as the trustworthiness of the sender. While, eWOM credibility is predicted by perceived persuasiveness, source expertise, and source trustworthiness. It was found that eWOM usefulness and eWOM credibility together increase the possibility of adopting an eWOM message, and eWOM adoption mediates the influence of credibility and usefulness on customer purchase intention toward skincare products on TikTok in Indonesia.

The theoretical implications of this study are that on several levels, this study adds to the existing body of literature. The study uses representative samples from 26 Indonesian provinces, grouped into three geographic categories, to provide a broad view of the findings and accurately portray Indonesian respondents. The study adds to the existing literature on eWOM by examining a new platform for eWOM dissemination, TikTok, which is a popular social media platform. It also sheds light on the differences in consumers' cognitive and affective processes in relation to eWOM adoption, showing that eWOM usefulness has a major impact on consumers' perceptions of the usefulness of the eWOM message. The findings of this study indicate that the quality of the argument is more important than the credibility of the source when it comes to eWOM adoption, which is in line with the recent findings of Tien et al. (2019) and extends the findings of earlier studies. This research establishes a more comprehensive connection between consumer persuasion and decision-making in the realm of social media and eWOM, and highlights the importance of information adoption in the influence of eWOM on purchase intention. Overall, this study adds new insights into consumers' cognitive and affective processes in relation to eWOM adoption on TikTok.

Furthermore, the practical implications of this research are that this research explores the effects of consumer-to-consumer (C2C) electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on purchase decision-making when shared via TikTok social media platforms. The study found that C2C eWOM has a significant impact on consumer purchasing decisions in the skincare industry. Brands in the skincare industry should pay more attention to user-generated content on platforms like TikTok, where C2C eWOM is prevalent. Although companies cannot directly influence the content of user-generated content, they can engage in social care, where they actively seek out group discussions and comments about their products, reply to consumer questions, and provide assistance to customers using TikTok tools. This can help to control the spread of negative eWOM by quickly addressing customer complaints and resolving any underlying issues. Marketers can use the findings of this research to gain a better understanding of how consumers use eWOM information from social media to inform their purchasing decisions. Companies should carefully select the eWOM senders they work with, as consumers may be more likely to trust reputable sources for guidance. The success of peer

communication also depends on the quality of the information exchanged. Brands in the skincare industry should encourage their customers to provide more detailed information about their products, including how they work, any new features, performance, and effectiveness. Recommenders must also keep their information on the product up-to-date and regularly respond to customer comments and messages.

As the limitations and directions for future research, the study only examined a small number of eWOM antecedents, which could lead to less comprehensive or accurate findings. Additionally, the study did not explore the influence of negative online reviews on consumer decision-making, which could be missing important insights. Another limitation is that the sample consisted mostly of low-income students, which may not be representative of the wider population. Furthermore, the sample size was small and may not accurately represent the attitudes and behaviors of TikTok users. Lastly, the study focused specifically on the effects of eWOM on skincare products, and it would be interesting to conduct similar research on other types of products and services. In conclusion, future research could address these limitations by incorporating additional dimensions of eWOM, exploring the effects of negative reviews, using a more diverse sample, increasing the sample size, and studying other products and services.

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