The Impact of Electronic Word of Mouth and Brand Image on Online Purchase Decisions Moderated by Price Discount

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the impact of electronic word of mouth and brand image on online purchasing decisions moderated by price discounts. This study uses a quantitative research paradigm with an explanatory approach. The research instrument is a questionnaire designed to measure electronic word of mouth, brand image, price discount, and online purchase decisions. Data were collected from primary sources through surveys. The survey, as a data collection technique, was carried out in Malang City. Partial distribution of the questionnaire used google form and distributed directly to respondents. The research object is the Shopee platform, while the research subjects are millennials who have used the Shopee platform in the past year. The total number of respondents involved in this study was 100. Data analysis used two approaches namely categorization index analysis and multivariate regression. Study results show that electronic word of mouth is in a reasonably low category. The brand image has a high category, while the price discount has a reasonably high category. Hypothetically tested, electronic word mouth has no impact on purchasing decisions. However, when moderated by a price discount, it has an impact on purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, whether moderated by price discounts or not, the brand image variable had an impact on online purchasing decisions on the Shopee platform.

Keywords: Brand Image, Electronic Word of Mouth, Millennial, Price Discount, Purchase Decision.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) is an ongoing and dynamic exchange of information between actual and potential consumers about products, services, brands, or companies available on the internet (Elvira Ismagilova *et al*., 2017). e-WOM is the primary source of information for consumers and a significant and vital source of value for businesses and website owners (Nam *et al*., 2020), and e-WOM affects human behavior (Filieri *et al*., 2018). Online reviews or e-WOM significantly influence purchasing decisions (Tata *et al*., 2020). On the other hand, the brand image also has a positive and significant effect on purchasing behavior (Rindell *et al*., 2011). It is a determinant that affects subjective customer perceptions and consequent behavior (Ryu *et al*., 2008). The results of a study conducted by Padmantyo and Handayani (2017), Erdawati (2020), Mardiani and Imanuel (2013), Tjahjono *et al*. (2013), and Amilia (2017) show the factors that cause purchasing decisions including product mix, service quality, consumer behavior, brand image, word of mouth, price, and reference groups. Therefore, this phenomenon needs to be tested further on different conditions and objects, i.e., millennials. In this case, the millennials are current phenomena in making shopping transactions. Referring to MarkPlus, Inc Consultant Marketing, 46.10% of millennials have the habit of online shopping through their smartphones. This habit is encouraged by some factors including promos, product prices, reputation,

free shipping, payment methods, security, and availability of mobile applications (Shemi, 2018), and the biggest internet users are millennials (Haryanto, 2019). This new phenomenon has described consumer behavior that is different from the previous generation.

Previous researchers have analyzed the effect of e-WOM on online purchasing decisions. The research results by Arsyalan and Ariyanti (2018); Lin *et al*. (2013); and Sari *et al*. (2017) positively influence reviews submitted by buyers of previously used products or services. However, research by Wijaya and Paramita (2014) shows different results i.e. e-WOM does not affect purchasing decisions. To ensure consumers make purchasing decisions, companies need to integrate or combine consumer knowledge. Consumers tend to trust brands they like or well-known brands if consumers do not have sufficient experience with a product (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). Several studies have shown that brands positively affect purchasing decisions (Rahmawaty, 2014; Musay, 2013; Soim *et al*., 2016; Prasetya *et al*., 2018; and Wulandari & Oktafani, 2017). Brand image itself is formed by corporate communication and non-corporate communication and brand image affects customer loyalty (Ab Hamid *et al*., 2020). Keller (2003) argues that brand image has a strong relationship with the level of socialization in the target market about the product being offered.

On the other hand, price discounts affect purchasing decisions (Satyo, 2013; Rizki Warahma & Mudiantono, 2017; Dewi & Kusumawati, 2018; Anggraeni, 2016; Ikhwani &

Anisah, 2017). For some consumers, price discounts are a separate consideration before making a purchase decision. Hashim *et al*. (2017) found that price is a major factor considered by career women in Malaysia when making decisions on purchasing household appliances made in China. Likewise, Keller (2003) stated that consumer purchasing decisions are influenced by prices which are not directly related to product performance. On the other hand, price is an association of a particular product brand, because consumers believe that price and value are always associated with product performance (Cristina & Jean-Pierre, 2016). Thus, it is important to understand that low priced products are more attractive to different consumer segments. In other words, this proves that low prices are considered in making purchasing decisions (Hashim *et al*., 2017). Thus, many factors influence purchasing decisions for consumers who are either planning or not planning to make purchases.

Previous studies were mostly conducted on study objects that did not involve online-based information in which e-WOM has not yet been found while brand image, price discount, and online purchase decision have been tested jointly on millennials. In the previous studies, the measurement of WOM, brand image, price discount, and purchase decision was not based on online shopping, but was carried out on the phenomenon of offline shopping. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to test and analyze the effect of e-WOM variable, brand image, and price discount on online purchasing decisions on the online transaction phenomena. To answer these research objectives, the following research hypotheses are formulated, namely:

A. Hypothesis

To answer these research objectives, the following research hypotheses are formulated, namely:

1. H_1: there is an effect of e-WOM on online purchasing decisions for millennials.
2. H_2: there is an effect of brand image on online purchasing decisions for millennials.
3. H_3: the price discount as a moderator variable contributes to affecting e-WOM on millennials' online purchasing decisions.
4. H_4: the price discount as a moderator variable contributes to affecting brand image on millennials' online purchasing decisions.
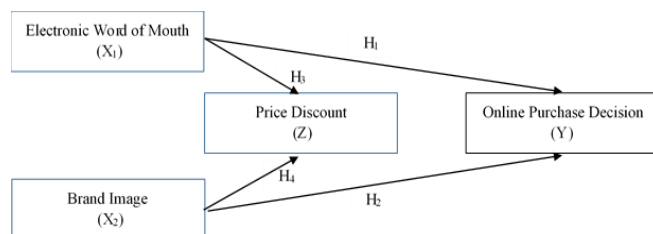
B. Framework

Fig. 1. Research conceptual framework.

This paper is based on an argument that e-WOM and brand image are variables that can influence consumers to make purchase decisions, especially online purchases, among millennials. In the digital and social media era, millennials often consider e-WOM before making purchasing decisions, and they have a high sense of selfishness about a brand. However, behind the consideration of e-WOM and brand image, millennials are strongly influenced by the price discount factor before making a decision. Even price discounts often beat the consideration of e-WOM and brand image. Thus, millennials are consumers who have their uniqueness that marketers must pay attention to.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Electronic Word of Mouth

The term e-WOM emerged along with the development of the internet and is a continuation of the Word of Mouth (WOM) concept. In general, WOM is conceptualized and explored as changing information between individuals or between individuals familiar with each other (Brown & Reingen, 1987). However, in e-WOM, there is no intimacy between individuals (Gupta & Harris, 2010). E-WOM is a communication medium between consumers to share information about the products/services they have consumed, even they do not know each other (Gruen *et al*., 2006). Referring to Kietzmann and Canhoto (2013), the term e-WOM refers to any statement based on positive, neutral, or negative experiences made by actual consumers or passive consumers about a product or service available on the internet (through websites, social networks, messages, and instant). Hennig-Thurau *et al*. (2004) stated that e-WOM is a positive or negative statement about a product or company through the internet. Another definition states e-WOM is all informal communication directed to consumers through digital media about the experience of using goods/services (Litvin *et al*., 2008). E-WOM is proliferating after the rapid growth of the internet and has increased the scope of WOM communication (Bataineh, 2015). Thus, e-WOM is information that has a broad scope of WOM through electronic media after making a business transaction.

This condition motivates new consumers to read it with reasons to reduce purchase risk and reduce information search time/easiness (Goldsmith & Horowitz, 2006; Hennig-Thurau *et al*., 2004; E Ismagilova, 2017), studied post-consumed products (Goldsmith & Horowitz, 2006; E Ismagilova, 2017), studied products circulating in the market (Hennig-Thurau *et al*., 2004), to get the lowest prices and seek information before purchase (Goldsmith & Horowitz, 2006), knowing the social status of the product and means of virtual interaction (Hennig-Thurau *et al*., 2004; E Ismagilova, 2017), which obtained from a digital platform. Therefore, companies provide excellent opportunities for consumers to seek more reliable information and provide their own experiences (Bataineh, 2015). Companies should also note that consumers prefer to read written reviews versus star ratings without words (YelpInc, 2021). Thus, the motivation of potential consumers to read other consumers' statements on electronic media is base-on different interests, and potential consumers prefer to read comments rather than just star ratings.

E-WOM impacts online shopping which allows consumers to buy products directly through a browser through the internet without having a third party. Nowadays, the popularity of online shopping continues to increase since consumers consider online shopping to be more convenient and can be done from home (Bhatti & Ur Rehman, 2020). Referring to (Cheema *et al*., 2013), online shopping enables

consumers to increase efficiency and positively influences the overall buying process. Thus, e-WOM develops in line with the development of information technology and the internet, allowing consumers to create information messages to other parties based on the experience of consuming products expressed in internet media. Previous studies have used the term WOM (a face-to-face meeting of two or more people). However, few studies related to e-WOM are not yet popularly used as a field of study.

B. Brand Image

The term brand image comes from the word brand. A brand is a complex phenomenon (Maurya & Mishra, 2012). A brand is a specific type or class of product indicated by its trademark ("A Dict. Mark.," 2011). A brand is a name and symbol associated with a product/service, and a brand has a psychological meaning (Susanto & Wijanarko, 2004). Brand image is a perception of the brand as reflected by the brand association perceived by consumers. Brand image is anything that people associate with the product offered by a company (Keller, 2003).Brand image is the knowledge, feelings, and beliefs that a person has about a product/organization, and it is they who know, describe, and remember those related to the organization/product (S. L. Huang & Ku, 2016). Keller (1993) defines *brand image* as associations that consumers have about themselves. Thus, brand image is the impression, feeling, belief, or knowledge that a person has about the brand of an organization/product.

Some studies mention a positive relationship between the brand association and brand image (Taylor *et al.*, 2007). Brand image can make better marketing strategy decisions and target market segments and product positions (Lee *et al.*, 2014). Brand image can help consumers determine their wants and needs about a product compared to other competitors' products (Anwar *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, the brand image needs to be developed by producing a brand association aiming to gain a strong position in the market (Handayani & Rashid, 2013). Another study also confirmed that brand image has a positive relationship with consumer purchase intentions (Chang & Liu, 2009; Khan *et al.*, 2014; Wang & Tsai, 2014; Yeh, 2015). Although the brand image positively impacts customer satisfaction and loyalty, there are still minor differences among researchers. Several researchers have proven that brand image affects loyalty directly and still requires mediating factors, such as customer satisfaction (Zhang, 2015). Therefore, the brand image must be built through the organization's central values, trust, humanity, and idealism (Voeth & Herbst, 2008).

A brand image consists of a favorite brand image and attributes. To find out the size of the brand image and can be identified through the response rate of the consumer. It is considered a good brand image if it provides better value than the money spent. Second, there are purchases of certain product brands compared to other brands. Third, a good price brand can differentiate between competitors' products (Martinez *et al.*, 2008). Brand image in a product is not only to build brand awareness (through a symbolic-oriented process) but also to generate a positive brand image (through the types, strengths, and uniqueness of brand associations) in the minds of consumers (Handayani & Rashid, 2013). Thus, brand image can influence consumers in determining their decisions.

On the other hand, brand image can increase company value and differentiate its products from competitors. Therefore, the company's brand image is an asset and must be maintained through product quality. The measurement of brand image in the previous studies emphasizes the brand of a product. In this study, brand image is noted in measuring the digital platform brand. Measurement of digital platform brand image has not been found in many previous studies.

C. Price Discount

Another variable that affects a purchase decision is a price discount. Another language of price discount is a discount on the speed of payment compared to the credit period (Kasimin *et al.*, 2015), and efficiency (savings) of the price offered to consumers lower than the average price as put on the label (Kotler & Keller, 2009). Another term for a price discount is a discount or a bonus package. Discounts are deductions or direct discounts on purchases during a specific time (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). *Price discount* is a pricing strategy that involves a long-term plan to reduce prices systematically after introducing a product with a high price (Peter & Olson, 2014). According Campbell (2020), the price discount is a type of price promotion strategy, where the original price of a product/service was suppressed to increase the rate of inventory turnover and encourage sales. There are four forms of discount, including discounts, quantity discounts, seasonal discounts, and available discounts (Kotler & Keller, 2009a).

Meanwhile, the bonus pack is one of the techniques used in sales promotions. *Bonus packs* are packages given by the factory, explicitly offering different products to consumers at no additional cost (Urseth, 1994 in Soo Ong *et al.*, 1997). However, consumers prefer bonus packs to discount prices (Mishra & Mishra, 2011). Bonus pack proves that the price discount is essential as stated in the study by Hooi and Leng (2008) that there is a tendency that price discounts attract customers to the store to buy not only for discounted products but also lead to purchasing other products (cross-buying). Thus, the price discount is a consideration for consumers, even though they are still considering the price discount. In this study, the measurement of price discount deals with the price discount offered by digital platform providers in the marketplace.

D. Purchase Decision

The purchase decision determines a purchase that starts from selection, acquisition, and evaluation (Rossiter, 2003). A decision-maker is a person who determines to part/all purchasing decisions (what to buy, when to buy, where to buy) (Marin, 2015). There are five stages in making decisions for consumers, including (1) problem identification, (2) information search, (3) alternative evaluation, (4) purchasing decisions, and (5) post-purchase behavior (Kotler & Keller, 2009b). Various studies explained that purchase decisions are influenced by many factors, including a brand image (Rianto, 2014; Suhaily & Darmoyo, 2017; Novansa & Ali, 2017; Djatmiko & Pradana, 2016), discount (Rianto, 2014), product quality (Suhaily & Darmoyo, 2017; Rachmawati *et al.*, 2019; Nguyen & Gizaw, 2014), price perception (Suhaily & Darmoyo, 2017; Rachmawati *et al.*, 2019), promotion (Rachmawati *et al.*, 2019), and e-WOM (Prasad *et al.*, 2017; Cheung *et al.*, 2009; M.AlMana & A. Mirza, 2013; Yaylí &

Bayram, 2012; Abd-Elaziz *et al.*, 2015).

Referring to Prasad *et al.* (2019), the purchase decision is the intention to buy. Sumarwan (2015), stated that purchase decisions, namely more questions, which are are about "what to buy," "whether to buy or not buy," "when to buy," "where to buy," and "how to pay for it." Others define the purchase decision, namely the buying process. For example, Tjiptono (2014), states that the purchase decision is a series of processes that begin with recognizing the problem, seeking information, evaluating it, and determining the alternative product/brand purchased. Likewise Philip Kotler & Keller (2012) states that the purchase decision is the process of getting a product, starting from recognizing problems, seeking information, evaluating alternatives, purchasing decisions, and post-purchase behavior. Thus, the purchase decision is conceptually influenced by many factors or variables, including the e-WOM variable, brand image, and price discount. A purchase decision is not a new variable used in a study. Many researchers have tested the purchase decision as the dependent variable, which is tested with various other variables. However, previous studies have not found the measurement and testing of e-WOM and brand image as independent variables and price discounts as mediating variables on the impact on online purchase decisions. In addition, this study was conducted on the phenomenon and behavior of online shopping, while previous studies mainly focused on offline shopping behavior.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative research paradigm with an explanatory approach. The quantitative research paradigm is based on this study's purpose, namely, to examine the impact of e-WOM and brand image on online purchasing decisions among millennials by using the variable price discount as a consideration. Data were obtained from primary data source, i.e., a survey of millennials in Malang City, East Java, Indonesia. Malang City was chosen since it is the second biggest education city after Jogjakarta. More than 150,000 students from various regions and countries study at universities in Malang.

The second reason is that those students are a group of the millennial generation who have a culture, lifestyle, and behavior that is different from the previous generation in term of making shopping transactions. They have mastered information technology and been familiar with gadgets and various digital platform applications. Respondents are limited to millennials who use the Shoppe marketplace because it is one of the digital platforms that ranks first in top of mind among millennials (Shemi, 2018).

The population in this study were millennials with a vulnerable age of 20-39 years. Based on the Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) of Malang City, the population aged 20 - 39 years is 472,587. The number of samples was 100 respondents based on the Slovin formula n = N / (1 + (N × e²)). The survey technique uses two approaches namely direct surveys and online surveys, using a Google Form. Based on the editing of respondents' answers on the instrument, there were 100 respondents' answers that were not suitable for further processing. The sampling technique used a purposive

sampling approach. The aim of this technique is to find representative respondents. To achieve this goal, the researcher directly controls the selection and selection of respondents. This technique aims to find representative respondents.

The instrument in this study is a questionnaire with 28 statement items. The measurement scale uses the Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). To ensure that each statement item of the questionnaire can be used to measure each research variable, apart from being statistically tested, the researcher conducted consultations and asked for help to make corrections to the marketing lecturer and research methodology. Statistically, the instrument was tested using validity and reliability methods to ensure that the statement items in the instrument have accuracy and consistency as a measure of a respondent's experience. The instrument test results show that all statement items are valid, and all variables are reliable. Data analysis uses categorization index and multivariate regression. The data categorization index is grouped into four categories.

TABLE I: CATEGORIZATION INDEX

Score Range	Categorization
X > μ + 1α	Very High
μ < X ≤ μ + 1α	High
μ - 1α < X ≤ μ	Low
X ≤ μ -1α	Very Low

Sources: Azwar (2012).

Multivariate regression with standard error (α) = 5% is used to test the dependent variable's impact. To facilitate the calculation of statistical figures, researchers used the help of the SPSS application program.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The descriptive data analysis using the three independent variables' categorization index approach is shown in Table II.

TABLE II: CATEGORIZATION INDEX

Variable	Categorization	Frequency	Valid Percet
e-WOM	Very High	8	8.00%
	High	35	35.00%
	Low	39	39.00%
	Very Low	18	18.00%
		100	100%
Brand Image	Very High	29	29.00%
	High	27	27.00%
	Low	26	26.00%
	Very Low	18	18.00%
		100	100%
Price Discount	Very High	28	28.00%
	High	38	38.00%
	Low	34	34.00%
	Very Low	0	0.00%
		100	100%

Sources: Primary Data (Processed, 2021).

The respondents' responses to the e-WOM variable show a trend to the low category. This result means that the e-WOM variable is less of a consideration in purchasing decisions for products on the Shopee platform for millennials. Here, the respondents in the study are customers of the Shopee

platform. The low level of considering e-WOM on the Shopee platform should be assumed that consumers of the Shopee platform already trust the products and services available on the Shopee platform. They have had a festive experience shopping on the Shopee platform. The findings of this study are almost the same as the findings of a study conducted by Wijaya and Paramita (2014), stating that e-WOM does not affect purchasing decisions.

On the other hand, the products' brand image on the Shopee platform shows a high trend. These results mean that brand image is essential for Shopee platform customers before making a purchase decision. Meanwhile, the price discount variable also shows a negative trend. These results can be interpreted that customers' price discount on the Shopee platform is less of consideration or concern for Shopee platform customers in shopping. Thus, the descriptive analysis results show that the variables of e-WOM and price discount are not a consideration or concern for Shopee platform customers, but instead, the brand image is a consideration for Shopee platform customers before making a purchase decision. This descriptive finding supports the study conducted by Rahmawaty (2014), Musay (2013), Soim *et al*. (2016), Prasetya *et al*. (2018), and Wulandari and Oktafani (2017) showing that brand image has a positive effect on purchasing decisions.

To prove the hypothesis, Table III shows the results of data analysis and hypothesis decisions.

TABLE III: HYPOTHESIS TEST

Hypothesis Test	Prob.	Hypothesis Decision
e-WOM a Online Purchase Decision	0.103	Reject the hypothesis 1 (H_1)
Brand Image a Online Purchase Decision	0.004	Accept the hypothesis 2 (H_2)
e-WOM a Price Discount a Online Purchase Decision	0.000	Accept the hypothesis 3 (H_3)
Brand Image a Price Discount a Online Purchase Decision	0.000	Accept the hypothesis 4 (H_4)

Sources: Primary Data (Processed, 2021).

Table III shows that the e-WOM variable in this study has no impact on purchasing decisions for Shopee platform customers. This result is also shown in the descriptive analysis, which shows a low category trend. Thus, the e-WOM variable rejects the H1 hypothesis because the probability (0.103) was > 0.05, meaning that e-WOM is not considered by millennials in making online purchasing decisions. The results of this study are different from previous studies (Agusta *et al*., 2019; Febriana & Yulianto, 2018; Diansyah & Nurmalasari, 2017; Priansa, 2016; Firdaus & Abdullah, 2017; Ekawati, 2014; Suharyono & Kumadji, 2016; Purwaningdyah, 2019), which show that e-WOM has a positive and statistically significant impact on purchasing decisions.

This positive impact is influenced by many factors, including the respondent's characteristics, the object of research, and the respondent's experience before making a purchase decision. Consumer behavior also has an impact on

the positive influence of e-WOM on purchasing decisions. Consumers who are more careful before making a purchase will pay attention to reviews in electronic media. They analyze the information on social media or online platforms first. However, the research results by Huang *et al*. (2012) state that e-WOM has no impact on purchasing decisions. He stated that e-WOM is different from WOM. E-WOM uses online media, in which informants and recipients of information do not know each other and do not meet face to face. Space and time limit them to meet so that the information recipients consider the credibility of the information conveyed by the informants.

The research is in line with the research conducted by Huang *et al*. (2012). In the e-WOM context, there are many negative reviews and analyses from previous consumers, and consumers do not know each other. Thus, e-WOM is no longer the concern of some consumers in making purchasing decisions.

The brand image variable accepted the research hypothesis because statistically the probability value was 0.004 <0.005. In this case, brand image had an impact on online purchasing decisions on the Shopee platform. This is supported by the results of the descriptive analysis showing the high category. This means that brand image became a consideration in determining online purchasing decisions for millennials. This result is in line with previous research conducted by Adiwidjaja and Tarigan (2017), Eka Saputri and Ratna Pranata (2014), Ali *et al*. (2019), Indrawati (2015), Sukma *et al*. (2016), and Kurniawan *et al*. (2016) showing that brand image has an impact on purchasing decisions.

However, other studies show different results Erresalia *et al*. (2016), Wenas *et al*. (2014), Huda (2020) showing that brand image does not affect purchasing decisions. It turns out that this difference is caused by the type of product they buy. This result means that the type of product purchased by consumers affects the consideration of brand image. Sometimes, consumers consider the brand image of a product. Therefore, the type of product affects consumers' consideration to consider the brand image of a product. Thus, the type of product affects consumer judgment in determining the product's brand image to be purchased. For certain types of products, consumers do not need to consider whether the product has a positive brand image or not. In contrast to certain types of products, consumers always consider the brand image of a product.

The two variables, e-WOM and brand image, moderated by the price discount variable affected online research decisions made by millennials on the Shopee platform. These findings support the hypotheses H3 and H4 of this study since statistically the probability value was 0.000 < 0.005. This result is supported by the categorization index stating that the price discount is a high category trend. It explicitly proves that price discounts had a significant contribution to millennials in determining online purchase decisions, even though e-WOM was not directly considered in online purchasing decisions. Thus, it is in line with the research by Soegoto and Emor (2015) and Afiah (2019), which use a price discount as a moderating variable, showing that a moderating variable's positive effect strengthens its impact on purchasing decisions. On the other hand, Afifah and Yulida (2015), Mendrofa (2012), and Rismawan and Purnami (2017) show

that price discount as a moderating variable weakens its impact on purchasing decisions. Hashim *et al.* (2017) also stated that price became a major factor that career women in Malaysia consider when making a purchasing decision.

The research differences are caused by many factors, including the object of research, the subject of the study, the characteristics of the respondents, and the type of research. Apart from the differences in research results, the concern is that the price discount has changed consumers who initially did not make purchasing decisions then changed to make purchasing decisions. Thus, the price discount should be considered by the company as a marketing strategy.

The hypothesis tests (see Table 3) show that e-WOM has no effect on online purchasing decisions; however, if e-WOM is mediated by a price discount, millennials (as consumers) have an impact on online purchasing decisions. In this context, the researcher assumes that the factors affecting online purchasing decisions are price and brand image, instead of e-WOM. This is consistent with the findings of descriptive analysis stating that e-WOM has a low category. On the contrary, the results of brand image hypothesis, whether mediated by a price discount or not, has an effect on online purchasing decisions. It can be assumed that a factor that is very much considered by millennials (as consumers) in purchasing decisions is the price factor or cost to get the product. Thus, price is the main factor considered by millennials in determining purchases on online platforms.

V. CONCLUSION

This study aims to test the effect of e-WOM and brand image on purchasing decisions moderated by price discounts. The results of hypothesis testing show that e-WOM did not have a significant impact on online purchasing decisions for millennials. This finding means that millennials do not consider reviews from previous consumers' positive or negative experiences. This lack of consideration is one factor caused by the credibility of the information conveyed by other consumers. The low credibility of information in online platforms can be caused by the fact that they do not know each other. In contrast to WOM, consumers recognize each other face to face. Information conveyed by other consumers has good credibility. E-WOM, when moderated by a price discount, has an impact on purchasing decisions. Thus, the purchase decision is not solely caused by e-WOM but is caused by the online platform's price discount factor.

Meanwhile, the variable brand image directly affected the purchasing decisions of millennials to shop on online platforms. These findings prove that millennials still consider the brand image as a factor in making purchasing decisions on online platforms. Millennials are still quite idealistic and selfish when buying products with specific brands. When the brand image is moderated by a price discount, millennials are more motivated to make purchasing decisions. Purchasing decisions can be planned purchases or unplanned purchases. Millennials in making purchasing decisions are often on practical thinking. On the contrary, they are often driven by a momentary external factor. Consumer experience reviews on the online platform do not influence millennials to make shopping decisions. However, when brand image and price

discounts are tested together are vital considerations for millennials to make online shopping decisions. So, it can be stated that price discounts are the main driver for the millennial generation to make online purchasing decisions.

This finding is based on the nature and character of the millennial generation itself. The millennial generation has more rational and transformative thinking and more control over digital media. They are more adaptable to changes and, in their growth period, have controlled ICT social media and mastered ICT use. The millennial generation has a different mindset from previous generations. They are more open-mind than previous generations because they accept the changes caused by technological changes. So, they are also more thorough in viewing the various comments on digital media from various platforms.

On the other hand, they are also more emotional and selfish towards certain brands than the previous generation. Nevertheless, this generation is very loyal to brands that can affect their lifestyle. From the economic aspect, the millennial generation is still not established compared to the previous generation because they achieve their glory. This condition affects them in making judgments when purchasing decisions related to price aspects. Thus, this study's findings are different from the other studies, caused by the nature and character of the millennials themselves.

This millennial generation has several characteristics. For example, they grow and develop in life with digital devices. Since a young age, they have used smartphones more sophisticatedly than the previous generation. They are also familiar with digital terms. They are used to using the internet network for communication. Thus, information technology is more friendly to use by the millennial generation. The second character is that the millennial generation is more friendly and has a high social status. This hospitality is expressed online. Social behavior has significant implications in the transaction process.

Meanwhile, the previous generation in the shopping process preferred to group and listen to other people's opinions. The third character is that millennials prefer to collaborate with businesses and brands. They have a positive mindset that is oriented towards a community. In the context of decision-making, this generation prefers to be done together. The millennial generation has excellent loyalty to certain brands. Another character, the millennial generation, puts forward values. Values can be related to aspects, such as the value of a product brand and values related to nationalism, Millennials in buying products must support the goals and values they want. Thus, some of these characteristics can influence decision-making patterns for the millennial generation.

VI. IMPLICATION

The implication of this finding for business practitioners (business actors/marketing managers) is to strengthen further the brand management of the products they have. The brand is the identity of the product. Brand image can be embedded in the product when it can be the quality of the product. Therefore, product quality must be planned, monitored, and controlled according to predetermined quality standards.

Product quality does not emphasize enough on product aspects and must pay attention to the quality of the process, the quality of human resources, and the company environment's quality. A product is said to be high quality if it can provide preferences to users. When consumers obtain preferences, brand image is automatically embedded in the product.

However, the brand image is not enough to be managed only through product quality. To get a sustainable brand image, business practitioners must also manage the brand. One crucial marketing strategy is brand management. An important reason in management is that there are brand components namely intangible and tangible. The intangible component is much more important than the tangible component. This intangible component is that consumers are willing to pay more for the product. Thus, business practitioners must pay attention and do brand management once.

Second, these findings also have implications for the development and repertoire of science in marketing. These findings provide additional knowledge and new references for academics showing that brand management is still one of the marketing strategies to be considered. On the other hand, it is a new knowledge that e-WOM does not always impact online purchasing decisions. The next consumer does not always consider information on previous consumer reviews on social media or online platforms. Besides, the findings of this study can be used as a new reference for academics and researchers who are directly involved in the marketing sector. Thus, the results of this study have added a new reference and a comparison for future researchers.

VII. RECOMMENDATION

The researcher realizes that in this study there are still limitations in both concepts and research methods. This study only involved two independent variables, one moderating variable, and one dependent variable from the conceptual aspect. Based on previous studies' concepts and results, it was found that many factors influence purchasing decisions. However, not all concepts can be studied together, and it is necessary to pay attention to the research context. The second limitation is the selection of research subjects and the number of respondents. In this study, the subject is limited to customers of one online platform. Meanwhile, nowadays, many people have used online platforms to make purchases. Another limitation is that this research was conducted during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Thus, researchers did not have a chance to meet the respondents directly. Thus, the limitations of this study are expected to be fixed by future researchers.

Suggestions for the next researcher are first to examine e-WOM factor more deeply, which involves all the respondents' broader characteristics Which are not only certain groups of respondents but all respondents who use online platforms. Given that currently the community has shifted the model of making purchases. Second, it is recommended to test the comparison of the WOM concept with e-WOM, which has a significant impact on purchasing decisions in digital marketing. Third, it is suggested that the number of research samples should be increased. According

to Arikunto (2010), a survey type research is recommended to have the sample size which is as close to the population as possible. Thus, further research is expected to complement this research and add other reference sources.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Authors declare that we do not have any conflict of interest.

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