

Positive EWOM and Consumers with A Fear of Missing Out

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims at examining the effect of positive electronic word of mounth (eWOM) and consumers with Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) of local skincare products. This research adopted quantitative approaches. The population were Indonesians who have shopped for local skincare products through s-commerce applications. The number of samples were 150. The data analysis utilized the Structural Equation Model (SEM) approach, especially the Partial Least Square (PLS) method. The results showed that positive eWOM had no significant effect on impulse buying, while price discount showed the opposite. This study also found that FOMO strengthens the effect of eWOM on impulse buying, suggesting that if the fear of missing out is high, positive eWOM prompts consumers to buy products impulsively.

SARI PATI

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji pengaruh positive EWOM dan Fear of Missing Out konsumen pada produk lokal kategori skincare. Jenis penelitian yang digunakan adalah penelitian kuantitatif. Populasi dalam penelitian ini adalah masyarakat Indonesia yang pernah berbelanja produk skincare lokal melalui aplikasi s-commerce. Jumlah sampel dalam penelitian ini adalah 150 responden. Metode analisis data yang digunakan adalah pengujian dengan pendekatan Structural Equation Model (SEM) khususnya metode Partial Least Square (PLS). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa positive eWOM tidak memiliki pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap impulse buying. Disisi lain Price diskon memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap impulse buying. Selain itu, penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa FOMO menguatkan pengaruh eWOM terhadap belanja secara impulsif. Hal ini menunjukkan jika rasa takut ketinggalan yang tinggi, mennguatkan pengaruh positive eWOM terhadap pembelian produk secara impulsive.

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INTRODUCTION

Technological advances have become a strong antecedent to changing styles and consumption patterns in modern society, altering consumer decision-making processes (Renko & Druzijanic, 2014). These include digital markets that utilize social networking sites like Facebook and Instagram or social commerce (s-commerce) (Zhang *et al.*, 2024). Recently, s-commerce platforms have enhanced their previously rigid features, only displaying product descriptions and images. They have become more flexible and attractive by showcasing videos and interactive features between sellers and buyers, making them more comprehensive and user-friendly. As a result, purchase intentions and behaviors are more certain (Flavi'an *et al.*, 2017; Orús *et al.*, 2017).

In the Indonesian market, s-commerce is experiencing significant growth as the number of users reached 196.47 million people between 2018 and 2023 (*dataindonesia.id*). This trend indicates market potential for various commodities, including local products or brands. CNBC Indonesia suggested that in 2023, s-commerce will become a favorable marketing channel for local brands. Impulsive buying of local brands tends to be high in s-commerce due to the ease and trend of online shopping. Previous research conducted by Xu *et al.* (2024) stated that the intensity of impulsive buying in s-commerce is higher because of the influence of the features on the platform. In line with what was conveyed by Paramitha, Sulhaini, and Saufi (2022), impulsive buying is triggered when consumers feel happy and enthusiastic about shopping at s-commerce. Xiang *et al.* (2016) stated that the driver is the social interactions among potential buyers and between buyers and producers.

Zafar *et al.* (2021) stated that impulsive buying behavior in s-commerce is an important new topic to discuss, especially from the perspective of digital consumer behavior. This suggests that further studies need to investigate the behavior. Based on our review of the literature, we identified four

research gaps as follows:

1. Studies on s-commerce in developing countries are still limited (Riaz *et al.*, 2021).
2. Various s-commerce in Indonesia offer "buy local". However, previous studies on consumer behavior relating to local brands in s-commerce are still limited.
3. The results of previous studies, i.e., the effect of positive eWOM on impulsive buying, are inconsistent (Gita *et al.*, 2023; Salim *et al.*, 2021; Wulandari, 2021; Hasim & Lestari, 2022), and so are between price discount and impulse buying (Lestari, 2018; Wulandari, 2021; Utami & Juanda, 2022).
4. Fear of missing out (FOMO) has been widely studied as an independent variable, however, this variable is rarely viewed as a moderating variable (Asamoah *et al.*, 2024).

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development The Influence of Positive eWOM on Impulsive Buying

Positive eWOM is a communication medium that involves widespread and transparent exchange of information in positive terms. This means everyone on the Internet can freely access any reviews regarding products, services, or companies. Reading product reviews online influences buying intention. Consumers read at least 4-7 reviews before buying a product (Yayli & Bayram, 2012). However, positive eWOM not only influences a buyer to make purchasing decisions but may also trigger an impulsive purchase.

The relationship between positive eWOM and impulsive buying does not necessarily mean that eWOM solely determines a buyer's purchase decision. Instead, eWOM works when an individual accidentally or intentionally reads a positive eWOM so that they change their minds even when previously they had no plans to purchase. After reading a positive eWOM, they feel the necessity or desire that prompts them to make an immediate purchase (Gita *et al.*, 2023). Since eWOM influences individuals to make impulse purchases, it must be

considered seriously in marketing in the industrial era 4.0 (Ismagilova et al., 2017). Based on the references above, the first hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H1: Positive Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) has a significant effect on impulsive buying in s-commerce.

The Effect of Price Discounts on Impulsive Buying

Price discounts are one of the promotional strategies popular among consumers as they provide many benefits for consumers. Price discounts have a significant effect on purchasing decisions (Putra et al., 2016). Purchasing decisions themselves consist of two types: planned and unplanned. The latter is also called impulsive buying, where consumers make immediate purchases without previous consideration.

Several factors influencing impulsive buying are visual stimulus, shopping format, self-service, store environment and ambient, discounts, display space, social factors, perceived crowding, and ownership of credit card (Kalla & Arora, 2011). Previous research showed that the most significant price discount dimension influencing impulsive buying was the percentage of the price discounts (Wulandari, 2021). This means that the bigger the discount given to a product, the more likely consumers are to buy impulsively. Research has also shown that double-price discounts are the most significant influence for individuals to buy a product impulsively (Wulandari, 2021). Additionally, hedonic value moderates the influence of price discounts on impulse buying (Wulandari, 2021). Based on the references above, the second hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H2: Price discounts have a significant effect on impulsive buying.

The Influence of Positive eWOM on Impulsive Buying in S-commerce with FOMO as a Moderating Variable

Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) is a feeling of anxiety

that arises due to the fear of missing impressive moments and experiences others feel, as shown on social media, encouraging individuals to be connected and follow trend (Przybylski et al., 2013). Individuals who do not experience FOMO, they may be able to choose products according to their needs. However, for individuals who experience FOMO, when they see a product that is trending as a result of eWOM on social media, they make impulse purchases.

The urge to buy can also be stronger if individuals with FOMO see that their friends or people closest to them have purchased the product. A previous study has shown that positive eWOM and FOMO are determinants of consumers' attitudes in shopping online (Christy, 2022). Individuals that triggered by positive Ewom tend to purchase certain product because they are experiencing FOMO. So, FOMO can be assumed to moderate the positive relationship between eWOM and impulsive buying. Therefore, the third hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H3: FOMO moderates the influence of positive eWOM on impulsive buying.

The Effect of Price Discounts on Impulsive Buying in S-commerce with FOMO as a Moderating Variable

For individuals who experience FOMO, attractive promotions provided by manufacturers trigger them to make impulsive purchases. They do this to avoid the FOMO effect, which causes them to feel worried about missing out on moments that will soon pass and because they desire always to be connected like other people. Another study shows that promotions in the marketplace trigger impulse buying desires. Consumers feel anxious and uncomfortable if they miss promotions on products that many people like, encouraging them to buy impulsively without considering their need (Christy, 2022).

The relationship between price discounts and FOMO, which is associated with consumer behavior, has been observed in consumers who

buy price discount goods on Shopee (Safitri & Rinaldi, 2023). The results show that there is an influence of FOMO on consumer behavior among female students in buying discounted products on the Shopee App. The more FOMO a consumer experiences, the more consumptive they buy goods. The fourth hypothesis is formulated as in Figure 1. **H4: FOMO moderates the influence of price discounts on impulsive buying.**

METHODS

This research uses quantitative methods with a deductive approach. Problem formulation is answered by applying concepts and theories, which are then formulated into hypotheses. Hypotheses are tested by collecting field data. Quantitative research generally involves two variables: an independent variable (which influences) and a dependent variable (which is influenced). This research aims to find the relationship or positive influence of eWOM and price discounts as influencing variables (independent variables) on impulsive buying as the influenced variable (dependent variable) and FOMO as a moderating variable.

This research was conducted in Indonesia using social media to distribute questionnaires. The

population was Indonesians who have shopped for local brands in the skincare product category, i.e. Somethinc, MS Glow, Scarlett and Avoskin. These brands were selected as they represented a modern-trendy lifestyle and offered at high prices. They were marketed through various s-commerce applications such as: Shopee, Tokopedia, Lazada, etc. The research sample consisted of 150 respondents, obtained through a non-probability sampling technique, namely purposive sampling by considering certain criteria, namely:

1. Women, because women are the main target for marketing local skincare products on s-commerce
2. Minimum age 17 years
3. Purchased local branded skincare products in the last two months.

The Structural Equation Model (SEM) approach, especially the Partial Least Square (PLS) method because it can be applied to all data scales, does not require many assumptions and the sample size does not have to be large, besides it can be used as confirmation of the theory. PLS was used to analyze the relationship between variables and test hypotheses (Abdullah, 2015). This SEM-PLS test was carried out after conducting an instrument

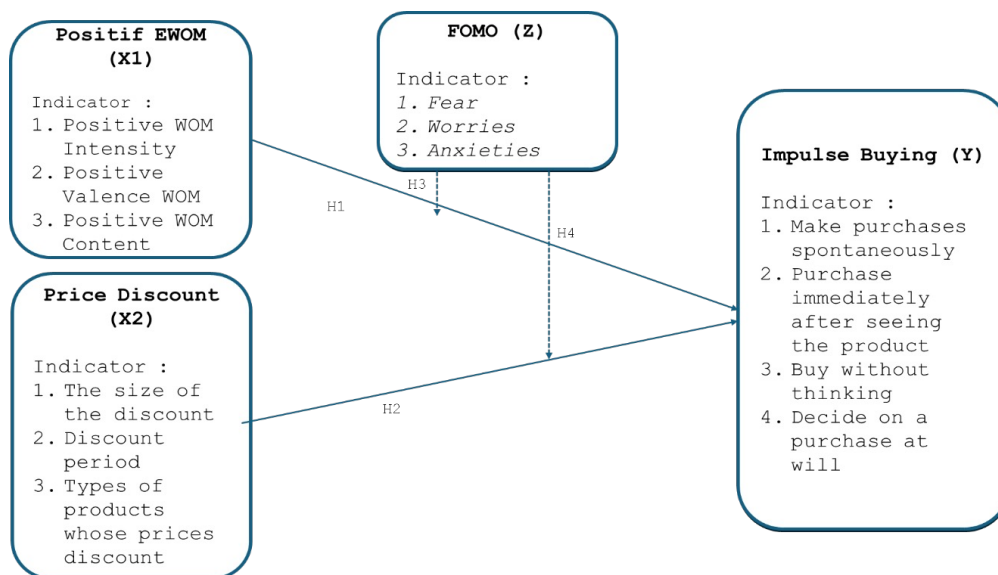


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

Table 1. Respondents' Profiles

| Profile | Amount | % |
|---|--------|--------|
| Age | | |
| 17-21 Years | 35 | 23.30% |
| 22-26 Years | 97 | 64.70% |
| 27-31 Years | 10 | 6.70% |
| 32-36 Years | 4 | 2.70% |
| 37-41 Years | 3 | 2% |
| >41 Years | 1 | 0.70% |
| Work | | |
| Civil servant | 6 | 4% |
| Private sector employee | 51 | 34% |
| Self-employed | 5 | 3.30% |
| Police/TNI | 0 | 0% |
| Student | 56 | 37.30% |
| Other | 32 | 21.30% |
| Domicile | | |
| Bali and Nusa Tenggara | 128 | 85.30% |
| Java | 11 | 7.30% |
| Sulawesi | 0 | 0.00% |
| Sumatra | 6 | 4% |
| Kalimantan | 3 | 2% |
| Maluku | 0 | 0% |
| Papua | 2 | 1.30% |
| Local Skincare used | | |
| Somethinc | 44 | 29.30% |
| Scarlett | 32 | 21.30% |
| Avoskin | 25 | 16.70% |
| Ms. Glow | 17 | 11.30% |
| Whitelab | 9 | 6% |
| YOU | 16 | 10.70% |
| Other | 22 | 15.40% |
| Online shopping application used | | |
| TikTok shop | 62 | 41.30% |
| Shopee | 133 | 88.70% |
| Tokopedia | 13 | 8.70% |
| Lazada | 2 | 1.30% |
| Blibli | 0 | 0% |
| Other | 11 | 7.70% |

quality test, which consisted of validity and reliability tests. Instrument testing and data processing in this research were assisted by SmartPLS 3.0 software.

Outer Model Analysis

Validity and Reliability Tests

The validity of the research instrument was measured using three methods, namely convergent validity,

discriminant validity, and internal consistency reliability. Convergent validity is measured based on the loading value with an AVE value ≥ 0.7 (Hair et al., 2022).

Table 3 shows that the constructs for all variables meet the reliable criteria. This is indicated by the Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability values

Table 2. Outer Loading

| Positive EWOM (X1) Goyette et al., (2010) | Outer Loading |
|--|----------------------|
| (1) I often read information related to local skincare products on s-commerce | 0.816 |
| (2) I often consult online forums regarding local skincare products on s-commerce | 0.735 |
| (3) I often see other people talking about local skincare products on s-commerce | 0.925 |
| (4) I often get recommendations from other people to buy local skincare products on s-commerce | 0.884 |
| (5) I often see positive reviews of local skincare products on s-commerce | 0.825 |
| (6) I often read about the benefits provided by local skincare products on s-commerce | 0.888 |
| (7) I often study the level of ease of use of online shopping applications when buying local skincare products on s-commerce | 0.928 |
| (8) I find out the security level of transactions and the Internet sites when buying local skincare products on s-commerce | 0.855 |
| (9) I often see the variety and quality of local skincare products on s-commerce | 0.899 |
| Price Discount (X2) Qomarul et al., (2021) | |
| (1) Discounts on local skincare prices on s-commerce are very attractive | 0.956 |
| (2) Discounts on local skincare prices on s-commerce really save costs | 0.950 |
| (3) Discounts on local skincare prices on s-commerce are cheaper | 0.969 |
| (4) Discounts on local skincare prices on s-commerce are limited for a certain period | 0.952 |
| (5) When the discount period is about to end, I immediately buy the discounted local skincare products on s-commerce | 0.955 |
| (6) When purchasing local skincare products on s-commerce, I will check the duration of the discount given | 0.947 |
| (7) Local skincare discounts on s-commerce offer attractive product variants | 0.890 |
| (8) The local skincare discount on s-commerce is given according to the type of skincare that I like | 0.914 |
| (9) Local skincare products on s-commerce offer complete discounts | 0.944 |
| FOMO (Z) Przybylski et al., (2013) | |
| (1) I am worried that other people will first know about local skincare products that are in the luxury category | 0.764 |
| (2) I am worried that other people will try local skincare products sold on s-commerce first | 0.857 |
| (3) I am worried of being left behind by local skincare trends that many people buy on s-commerce | 0.945 |
| (4) I am worried that I will not be able to access certain social status if I do not buy local products on s-commerce | 0.889 |
| (5) I am worried when I miss the opportunity to have local skincare products in the luxury category | 0.916 |
| (6) I am worried if other people are more updated in information about local skincare products | 0.932 |
| (7) I feel anxious if I do not have local skincare products immediately | 0.954 |

| Positive EWOM (X1) Goyette et al., (2010) | | Outer Loading |
|---|--|---------------|
| (8) I feel anxious if I do not follow developments on social media regarding local skincare products in the luxury category | | 0.839 |
| (9) I feel anxious if the local skincare products I want are out of stock | | 0.804 |
| Impulse Buying (Y) Hausman (2000) | | |
| (1) I buy local skincare products in the luxury category spontaneously | | 0.944 |
| (2) I buy local skincare in the luxury category without planning it beforehand | | 0.934 |
| (3) I buy local skincare in the luxury category suddenly | | 0.921 |
| (4) When I see a local skincare product in the luxury category, I decide to buy it immediately | | 0.948 |
| (5) I buy local skincare in the luxury category shortly after seeing the products on social media | | 0.850 |
| (6) I buy local skincare in the luxury category because I accidentally see the product appear on social media | | 0.939 |
| (7) I buy local skincare in the luxury category because I want to own that product | | 0.918 |
| (8) I just buy local skincare in the luxury category without any special reason | | 0.864 |
| (9) When I decide to buy local skincare, I do not think or consider it much | | 0.762 |
| (10) It is my own decision to buy local skincare in the luxury category | | 0.784 |
| (11) When I want something, I buy it right away | | 0.786 |

Table 3. Reliability test results

| Variable | Cronbach's Alpha | Composite Reliability | Rule of Thumb | Model Evaluation |
|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Positive eWOM (X1) | 0.962 | 0.963 | | Reliable |
| Discount (X2) | 0.984 | 0.986 | > 0.70 | Reliable |
| Impulse Buying (Y) | 0.970 | 0.974 | | Reliable |
| FOMO (Z) | 0.963 | 0.968 | | Reliable |

obtained from the SmartPLS estimation results. The resulting value is > 0.70 as recommended criteria (Hair et al., 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Research Results

Inner Model Analysis

Table 4. R-Square Value

| | R Square | R Square Adjusted |
|---|----------|-------------------|
| Y | 0.588 | 0.502 |

The output R-Square value from impulse buying is 0.588. These results show that the positive construct variables eWOM, price discount, and FOMO on impulse buying are 58.8%. In comparison, the remaining 41.2% is influenced by other factors not included in this research. The R-squared value is 58.8%, which suggests a relatively strong category.

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Positive Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) on Impulse Buying

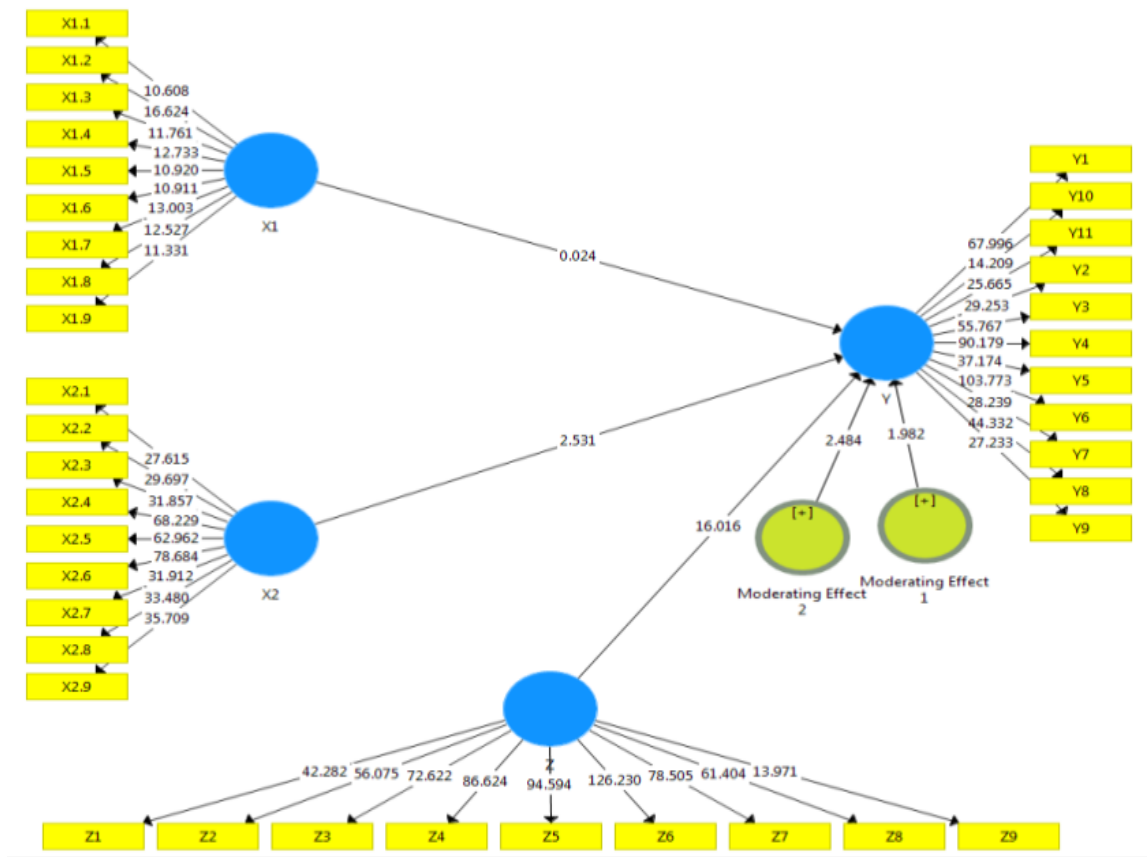


Figure 2. Bootstrapping Path Coefficient Test

Table 5. Interpretation of Hypothesis Test Results

| Hypothesis | Influence Between Variables | Original Sample | t-Statistics | P Values | Information |
|------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|--------------|----------|-------------|
| H1 | X.1 -> Y | 0.002 | 0.024 | 0.981 | Not proven |
| H2 | X.2 -> Y | 0.233 | 2,531 | 0.012 | Proven |
| H3 | Moderating Effect 1 -> Y | 0.136 | 1,982 | 0.048 | Proven |
| H4 | Moderating Effect 2 -> Y | 0.173 | 2,484 | 0.013 | Proven |

Source: Primary Data Processed by Researchers, 2024

The research results in Table 5 show no significant influence of positive electronic word of mouth (eWOM) on impulse buying because the p-value is greater than 0.05 and the t-statistic value is smaller than 1.96. Therefore, the first hypothesis (H1) is not proven. This shows that positive eWOM does not affect impulse buying of local skincare products on s-commerce. Positive eWOM is an

important marketing strategy to build consumer trust and interest in skincare products. However, positive eWOM does not always directly impact impulse buying because of various other rational factors; for example, skincare consumers often have different needs and skin types. Impulse buying is characterized by rapid decision-making, often within seconds. Consumers have limited time and

cognitive resources to analyze detailed information such as eWOM, which requires careful reading and interpretation. This finding aligns with Hasim and Lestari (2022), showing that eWOM does not affect impulse buying because potential new customers will pay attention and consider eWOM reviews when making unplanned purchases. Therefore, although eWOM is important in consumer decision-making, it does not always significantly impact impulse purchases. The results of this research contradict research by Wulandari (2021), which shows a significant positive relationship between eWOM and impulse buying. Differences in research results can be caused by various factors, such as research location, respondents, methods, variables, and data analysis. Even though positive eWOM did not significantly influence impulse buying in this research, this does not mean that positive eWOM has no value in marketing strategies. eWOM can still be a valuable source of information for consumers. It can help build a brand reputation by using eWOM effectively, which can increase brand awareness and credibility, obtain valuable feedback, and improve customer service.

The Effect of Price Discounts on Impulse Buying

The research results in Table 5 indicate a significant influence of price discounts on impulsive buying because the p-value is smaller than 0.05 and the t-statistic value is greater than 1.96. Therefore, the second hypothesis (H2) is proven. This shows that price discounts influence impulse buying of local skincare products in s-commerce. Research has shown that price discounts have a significant influence on impulse buying, where consumers tend to be triggered to buy products at lower prices, even without prior planning. Price discounts can also increase consumers' buying interest. The percentage of the discount is the most influential dimension in impulse buying—the bigger the discount, the higher the consumer's possibility to buy. This is also supported by research conducted by Lestari (2023), which shows that hedonic value moderates the influence of price discounts on impulse buying. Consumers tempted by

price discounts experience a hedonic sensation that triggers impulse buying, namely impulsive purchases, without careful consideration. In another study, the price discount's dimension that had the greatest influence on impulsive buying was the percentage of the price discount. These findings show the importance of price discounts as a powerful tool in s-commerce marketing strategies (Wulandari, 2021). In a competitive and information-filled s-commerce environment, price discounts can effectively increase consumers' intention to buy local skincare products.

FOMO as a moderating variable of the Influence of Positive eWOM on Impulsive Buying on S-commerce

The research results in Table 5 also show that FOMO moderates the significant positive influence of eWOM on impulse buying on s-commerce, as shown in the p-value smaller than 0.05 and the t-statistic value greater than 1.96. Therefore, the third hypothesis (H3) is proven. This shows that eWOM influences impulse buying with FOMO as a moderating variable in local skincare products on s-commerce. The significant positive influence of eWOM shows that online recommendations and reviews from other consumers strongly encourage impulse purchases of local skincare products on s-commerce. Local skincare companies exploit FOMO by creating engaging narratives on s-commerce so that customers fear being left behind if they do not purchase the product. Examples of positive eWOM for local skincare companies utilizing FOMO include "Buy now before the price goes up" or "Find healthy and radiant skin with local skincare." The role of FOMO as a moderator strengthens the influence of eWOM on impulse buying. Consumers with high levels of FOMO on trends or opportunities are more susceptible to being influenced by positive eWOM. They feel worried if they miss the opportunity to get skincare products that are popular and recommended by many people. This aligns with the research by Christy (2022), which shows that eWOM and FOMO are considerations for consumers when determining their attitudes toward shopping online.

With the rising trend of FOMO, customers will feel afraid of missing out on limited offers, thereby increasing their buying interest and encouraging them to make immediate purchases.

FOMO as a Moderating Variable of the Effect of Price Discounts on Impulsive Buying on S-commerce

The research results in Table 5 also show a significant influence of price discounts on impulse buying in s-commerce, moderated by FOMO, as shown in the p-value that is smaller than 0.05 and the t-statistic value that is greater than 1.96. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis (H4) is proven. This shows that price discounts influence impulse buying, with FOMO as a moderating variable in local skincare products on s-commerce. The significant influence of price discounts shows that attractive and tempting price offers have a strong appeal in encouraging impulse purchases of local skincare products in s-commerce. Price discounts that are limited in time or quantity can trigger a feeling of FOMO in consumers. Consumers must immediately buy products before they miss the opportunity to enjoy a cheaper price. This encourages consumers to make impulsive purchasing decisions without considering other factors because they are worried about missing the opportunity to purchase skincare products at cheaper and more profitable prices. This is supported by research by Christy (2022), where consumers exposed to promotions in a marketplace are susceptible to FOMO, which triggers anxiety and an impulsive urge to buy products being promoted especially popular products. Another study has shown that FOMO influences consumer behavior among consumers of price-discounted goods on Shopee (Safitri & Rinaldi, 2023).

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

This study explores the relationship between positive electronic word of mouth (eWOM), price discounts, fear of missing out (FOMO), and impulse buying of skincare products. The findings can provide recommendations for local brand managers. Consumers consider positive eWOM by reading online reviews and testimonials before

buying local skincare brands. Also, they take advantage of discounts by looking for attractive promotions to obtain local skincare brands with a reasonable price and quality.

Local brand owners shall build favorable online reputation through positive eWOM by providing high quality products and customer service, and managing close interactions with consumers on social media. They could also offer attractive discounts and promotions to strengthen buyers' interest and increase impulse buying. Finally, the Indonesian government should support the local skincare industry by providing incentives for the local skincare industry to improve their reputation, product quality, and competitiveness.

CONCLUSION

This research aims to examine how positive eWOM and FOMO influence consumers of local skincare brands/products. The statistical analysis results explained in the previous chapter have shown that positive eWOM does not significantly influence impulse buying. By contrast, price discounts have a positive and significant influence on impulse buying. Meanwhile, FOMO can moderate the influence of eWOM on impulse buying and strengthen the influence of price discounts on impulse buying.

This means that positive reviews on social media do not directly encourage someone to buy a product impulsively. By contrast, the higher the discount price offered, the higher the possibility of consumers buying the product impulsively. Meanwhile, the greater the FOMO someone experiences, the greater the possibility of positive eWOM encouraging them to buy a product impulsively, and the greater the FOMO someone experiences, the greater the possibility of price discounts encouraging them to buy a product impulsively.

This study has successfully filled the identified research gaps. However, there are several limitations that need to be considered for further research. In order to obtain samples from all regions in

Indonesia, the study utilized online survey. However, the majority of samples came from Bali and Nusa Tenggara. This may limit generalizability of the findings. Therefore, future research should cover a wider area and use robust sampling techniques. ■

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