

The Influence of USP and E-WOM on Brand Trust and Its Impact on Purchasing Decisions

Rendy Dwi Purnomo ^{1*}, Donni Junipriansa ²

^{1,2} Marketing Management Study Program, Faculty of Applied Sciences, Telkom University, Jl. Telekomunikasi No. 1, Bandung Regency, West Java 40257, Indonesia.

Corresponding Email: donnijunipriansa@telkomuniversity.ac.id ²

Histori Artikel:

Dikirim 23 Juni 2025; Diterima dalam bentuk revisi 10 Juli 2025; Diterima 10 September 2025; Diterbitkan 1 Oktober 2025. Semua hak dilindungi oleh Lembaga Otonom Lembaga Informasi dan Riset Indonesia (KITA INFO dan RISET) – Lembaga KITA.

Suggested citation:

Purnomo, R. D., & Junipriansa, D. (2025). The Influence of USP and E-WOM on Brand Trust and Its Impact on Purchasing Decisions. *JEMSI (Jurnal Ekonomi, Manajemen, Dan Akuntansi)*, 11(5), 3504-3515. <https://doi.org/10.35870/jemsi.v11i5.4629>.

Abstrak

Peningkatan jumlah penduduk menyebabkan peningkatan permintaan produk sabun dan deterjen di Indonesia, hal ini dibuktikan dengan tingkat persaingan industri sabun dan deterjen yang fluktuatif dari tahun ke tahun. Salah satu merek industri sabun dan deterjen di Indonesia adalah sabun Gentle Gen. Produk sabun Gentle Gen tersedia di minimarket, supermarket hingga hypermarket. Namun, berdasarkan pra-survei yang dilakukan oleh penulis, ternyata masih banyak yang tidak menggunakan produk sabun Gentle Gen meskipun produk ini telah tersedia di berbagai pasar. Hal inilah yang menjadi alasan penulis memilih sabun Gentle Gen sebagai objek penelitian penulis. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan mengirimkan Google Forms kepada 100 sampel yang berdomisili di Kota Bandung. Menurut penelitian ini, semua variabel memiliki pengaruh. Variabel mediasi kepercayaan merek secara parsial memediasi USP dan E-WOM secara penuh terhadap keputusan pembelian. Penelitian ini memiliki beberapa keterbatasan seperti hanya berfokus pada sabun Gentle Gen dan responden yang berdomisili di Kota Bandung.

Kata Kunci: USP; E-WOM; Kepercayaan Merek; Keputusan Pembelian.

Abstract

The increase in population causes an increase in demand for soap and detergent products in Indonesia, this is evidenced by the level of competition in the soap and detergent industry which fluctuates from year to year. One of the brands of the soap and detergent industry in Indonesia is Gentle Gen soap. Gentle Gen soap products are available in minimarkets, supermarkets to hypermarkets. However, based on a pre-survey conducted by the author, it turns out that there are still many who do not use Gentle Gen soap products despite this product being available in various markets. This is the reason the author chose Gentle Gen soap as the object of the author's research. This research uses a quantitative approach by sending Google Forms to 100 samples residing in Bandung City. According to this study, all variables have an impact. The mediating variable of brand trust partially mediates USP and E-WOM fully on purchasing decisions. This study has several limitations such as only focusing on Gentle Gen soap and respondents who live in Bandung City.

Keyword: USP; E-WOM; Brand Trust; Purchase Decision.

1. Introduction

One of the manufacturing industries that is growing rapidly in Indonesia along with population growth is the soap and detergent industry. The population growth in Indonesia leads to heightened demand for soap and detergent goods, as seen by the annual fluctuations in competitiveness within the soap and detergent business. The HHI index, also known as the Herfindahl Hirschman index, measures the level of competition in a country. The HHI index for the soap and detergent market in Indonesia shows fluctuations in the degree of market competition from 2017 to 2022. At the beginning, the market is highly competitive and moderately competitive with an HHI between 1000-2000, but by 2022, the HHI increases sharply to nearly 3000, this increase indicates that the market is becoming concentrated or in other words, there is a brand that is the market leader. Therefore, Indonesian soap and detergent producers need to carry out product development in order to remain competitive with other competitors, especially with market rulers. Indonesian soap and detergent manufacturers can utilize internet technology as a strategic tool for product development. Such as easily monitoring trends in the market and applying and developing them to their respective products. The advancement of internet technology is unavoidable as a result of globalization, leading to an annual growth in internet users in Indonesia (Yulianto & Soesanto, 2020). This can be seen in the data on Indonesia's internet penetration rate in 2018 of 64.80%, 2020 of 73.70%, 2022 of 77.01%, 2023 of 78.19%, and 2024 of 79.50%. With the increase in internet users in Indonesia, consumers increasingly rely on online recommendations such as information searches and product reviews via the internet before deciding to buy the product. One of the brands of the soap and detergent industry in Indonesia is Gentle Gen Soap. Gentle Gen Soap products are already available in major Indonesian minimarkets such as Alfamart and Indomaret and even available in supermarkets and hypermarkets such as Griya and Transmart. The author conducted a pre-survey for Gentle Gen Soap by delivering Google Forms questionnaires to 25 respondents in Bandung on November 15, 2024. As many as 68% of respondents did not use Gentle Gen Soap, 8% of respondents rarely used Gentle Gen Soap, and the remaining 24% of respondents used Gentle Gen Soap. Therefore, from the pre-survey results it can be concluded that there are still many who do not use Gentle Gen Soap products besides this product is available in various markets. This is the reason the author chose Gentle Gen Soap as the object of the author's research.

Whether or not there are many consumers of a product is related to consumer purchasing decisions. The information consumers have and the knowledge they have about the goods to buy influence their decisions (Priansa, 2016). This consumer decision is influenced by many factors, one of which is USP, E-WOM, and brand trust. In marketing a product, it must have uniqueness in the way it is sold or often known as the Unique Selling Proposition (USP) (Murdayanti *et al.*, 2020). This Unique Selling Proposition (USP) can attract consumer attention by presenting additional benefits that competitors do not have in terms of quality, innovation, and also special benefits. An effective Unique Selling Proposition (USP) can foster a favorable perception among consumers, enhancing trust and influencing their purchasing decisions. In this study, Gentle Gen Soap has a Unique Selling Proposition (USP), namely "*Lembut di Tangan*" with the aim of differentiating itself from competitors in terms of washing clothes by hand without having to worry about hands becoming rough. The Word of Mouth process by utilizing internet media is called E-WOM (Sinaga & Sulistiono, 2020). Consumers may utilize E-WOM as a benchmark to evaluate products. Moreover, E-WOM communications might mitigate the risk and uncertainty encountered by consumers during product purchases. Effective E-WOM communication among consumers can positively influence their confidence in making purchasing decisions. Brand trust is the belief that a brand is dependable and fulfills client requirements and safety (Lindawaty & Syawaluddin, 2022). This brand trust is strongly influenced by factors such as direct consumer experience and testimonials from other consumers. High brand trust can have an impact on consumer purchasing decisions and even make repeat purchases. The objectives of this study are (1) To find out how much influence USP Gentle Gen Soap has on brand trust, (2) To find out how much influence E-WOM Gentle Gen Soap has on brand trust, (3) To find out how much influence brand trust has on purchasing decisions, (4) To find out how much influence USP Gentle Gen Soap has on purchasing decisions mediated by brand trust variables, (5) To

RESEARCH ARTICLE

find out how much influence E-WOM Gentle Gen Soap has on purchasing decisions through mediation of brand trust. Based on the objectives to be achieved, this research is expected to provide great benefits for both academics and related companies. This research is valuable for (1) Academic purposes, serving as a substantial literature source that provides profound insights into the effects of USP and E-WOM on brand trust and their implications for purchasing decisions regarding Gentle Gen Soap in Bandung City in 2025, and (2) Practical applications (Company), acting as a reference for enhancements or assessments informed by the findings of this study.

2. Literatur Review

2.1 Unique Selling Proposition (USP)

The basic concept in marketing that refers to different features or benefits that differentiate a product or service from competitors is called a Unique Selling Proposition (USP) (Majka, 2024). This is also stated in (Murdayanti *et al.*, 2020) that marketing products must be unique. The strength of a product's Unique Selling Proposition (USP) can create a positive value or image in the minds of consumers, which in turn consumers become more trusting and then end in purchasing decisions. In this study, Unique Selling Proposition (USP) is the uniqueness of Gentle Gen Soap both in terms of quality and special benefits that differentiate it from other competitors. The Unique Selling Proposition (USP) in question, namely "*Lembut di Tangan*" aims to differentiate itself from competitors in terms of washing clothes traditionally, namely using hands without having to worry about hands feeling rough and this can be a strong reason for purchasing decisions.

2.2 E-WOM

The process of WOM through internet media is referred to as E-WOM (Sinaga & Sulistiono, 2020). E-WOM transpires when individuals utilize online platforms, such product reviews, social media, and discussion forums, to disseminate information, experiences, or opinions regarding a product to others. Positive E-WOM among consumers can influence their confidence in purchasing decisions. E-WOM is regarded as an independent variable in this study that influences brand trust and customer purchase decisions.

2.3 Brand Trust

Consumer trust in a brand is very important for companies to establish good relationships with consumers and maintaining consumer trust is called brand trust (Dharmayana & Rahanatha, 2017). Brand trust is an essential element in the relationship between organizations and consumers. This study indicates that trust in the Gentle Gen Soap brand is affected by its unique selling proposition as a means of product differentiation from competitors and E-WOM. Elevated brand trust might result in recurring purchases.

2.4 Purchase Decision

A form of behavior from consumers who search for information about products and examine them which will then arise a desire to buy them is called a purchase decision (Yulindasari & Fikriyah, 2022). In this research, purchasing decisions are the dependent variable which is influenced by variables such as USP, E-WOM, and brand trust. This study uses the AIDA method. A strategy in marketing that identifies each cognitive step a person experiences when buying a product or service is called AIDA (Pramita & Manafe, 2022). This AIDA will explain how consumers go through various steps before finally making a purchase. (1) Attention: In the first stage, consumers' attention is attracted by information spread through digital media, such as the USP and E-WOM of Gentle Gen Soap, (2) Interest: Information that attracts consumers builds interest in knowing more about the product, such as the quality and core benefits of Gentle Gen Soap products, (3) Desire: The interest develops into a desire to buy the product, (4) Action: In the last stage, consumers make a decision to purchase the merchandise based on their previously

RESEARCH ARTICLE

formed beliefs. In this study, the AIDA model is suitable because it explains how USP and E-WOM influence the purchasing decision-making process through the formation of brand trust.

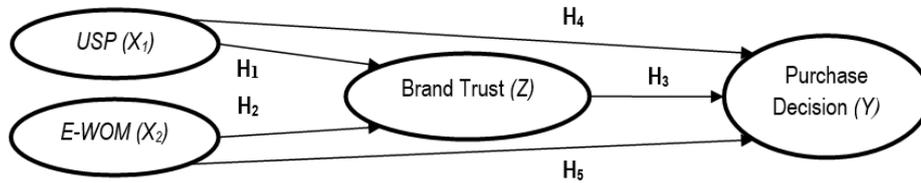


Figure 1. Research Model

H₁ : USP has a positive effect on brand trust. In research (Rosari, 2024) found that the Keden traditional market has a USP because it is proven to be crowded with visitors. This indicates that USP positively influences trust.

H₂ : E-WOM has a positive effect on brand trust. According to (Yulianto & Soesanto, 2020) E-WOM has a significant impact on trust and purchasing decisions. In this study, E-WOM is the same as this study, which is an independent variable that also affects consumer trust and decisions.

H₃ : Purchasing decisions are positively influenced by brand trust. In research (Khoirudin & Giyartiningrum, 2021; Putri *et al.*, 2021)) found that brand trust affects purchasing decisions

H₄ : USP has a positive effect on purchasing decisions through the mediation of brand trust. In research (Yosua, 2021) found that product quality has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions mediated by consumer confidence.

H₅ : E-WOM has a positive effect on purchasing decisions through the mediation of brand trust. The study (Kholil *et al.*, 2024) found that E-WOM increases consumer purchasing decisions with consumer trust.

3. Research Methodology

This research employed quantitative methodologies (Priadana & Sunarsi, 2021). This study aims to assess the influence of USP and E-WOM on brand trust and their subsequent effect on purchasing decisions for Gentle Gen Soap products in Bandung City, utilizing statistically processed numerical data. This study use descriptive verification research methodology. The author use descriptive verification to illustrate the facts or conditions encountered throughout the investigation, which are subsequently evaluated for accuracy against established hypotheses prior to reaching a conclusion (Martowinangun *et al.*, 2019). This study explains the relationship or influence between the independent variable (USP and E-WOM) and the dependent variable (Gentle Gen Soap purchase decision) through the mediating variable (brand trust).

3.1 Operational Variables

The independent variable, namely USP, is measured using the dimensions of product advantages and product differentiation (Berghueser & Spann, 2024; Deniz Dalman & Min, 2016; Helmold, 2020). Simultaneously, another independent variable, referred to as E-WOM, is assessed through the dimensions of E-WOM intensity and E-WOM quality (Guede *et al.*, 2018; Inocêncio & Marques, 2016; Jyoti *et al.*, 2024; Mehayar *et al.*, 2020; Reyes-Menendez *et al.*, 2019). This study includes a mediating variable, specifically brand trust, which is assessed through the dimensions of brand credibility and brand reputation (Han *et al.*, 2015; Rasoolimanesh *et al.*, 2024; Wang & Scheinbaum, 2018). And finally the dependent variable, namely purchasing decisions, is measured using the dimensions of Attention, Interest, Desire, Action (Asnani & Riki, 2024; Kotler & Keller, 2016).

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Table 1. Operational variables

Variables	Dimensions	Symbol	Sources
USP (X ₁)	Product	X ₁ KUP1	(Berghueser & Spann, 2024; Deniz Dalman & Min, 2016; Helmold, 2020)
	Advantages	X ₁ KUP2	
	Product	X ₁ KCK1	
	Differentiation	X ₁ KCK2	
E-WOM (X ₂)	E-WOM Intensity	X ₂ FMUO1	(Guede <i>et al.</i> , 2018; Inocêncio & Marques, 2016; Jyoti <i>et al.</i> , 2024; Mehayar <i>et al.</i> , 2020; Reyes-Menendez <i>et al.</i> , 2019)
		X ₂ FMUO2	
	E-WOM Quality	X ₂ KUO1	
		X ₂ KUO2	
Brand Trust (Z)	Brand Credibility	ZKM1	(Han <i>et al.</i> , 2015; Rasoolimanesh <i>et al.</i> , 2024; Wang & Scheinbaum, 2018)
		ZKM2	
	Brand Reputation	ZPP1	
		ZPP2	
Purchase Decision (Y)	Attention	YMP1	(Asnani & Riki, 2024; Kotler & Keller, 2016)
		YMP2	
	Interest	YMTP1	
		YMTP2	
	Desire	YKM1	
		YKM2	
	Action	YTP1	
		YTP2	

3.2 Population and Sample

The population encompasses all objects and subjects in a study that share specific characteristics, forming the basis for conclusions (Suriani *et al.*, 2023). In this study, the population consists of residents of Bandung City. A sample is a subset selected to represent the population (Suriani *et al.*, 2023). This study employed a non-probability sampling method, specifically purposive sampling, targeting individuals aged 15 and above. The sample size was determined using the Cochran formula, yielding 96.04 respondents, which was rounded to 100 to facilitate data collection.

2.1 Data Analysis Technique

This research uses non-parametric inferential statistical techniques with the help of analytical tools in the form of Smart PLS. Data were obtained through Google Forms (electronic survey). This analysis involves evaluating the outer model and inner model. A relationship can be said to be significant if it has a T Statistic value > 1.960 or P Value < 0.05 (Savitri *et al.*, 2021: 35).

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

Table 2. Respondent characteristics

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	28	28%
Female	72	72%
Total	100	100%
Age		
15-24	93	93%
25-34	2	2%

RESEARCH ARTICLE

35-44	1	1%
45-54	3	3%
55-64	1	1%
65-74	0	0%
>75	0	0%
Total	100	100%

Based on Table 2, the sample is predominantly composed of women aged 15–24 years, representing the millennial generation.

4.1.1 Convergent Validity

In table 3 there is X_1KCK1 where X_1 indicates the USP variable and $KCK1$ indicates the indicator with statement 1 and $ZKM1$ where Z indicates the brand trust variable and $KM1$ indicates the indicator with statement 1 and this applies to all. The loading factor value > 0.70 is declared convergent valid (Savitri *et al.*, 2021: 34). All statements are declared convergently valid, as shown in table 3, if the loading factor value of each statement is more than 0.70.

Table 3. Loading factor

	USP (X_1)	E-WOM (X_2)	Brand Trust (Z)	Purchase Decision (Y)
X_1KCK1	0.934			
X_1KCK2	0.898			
X_1KUP1	0.911			
X_1KUP2	0.928			
X_2FMUO1		0.803		
X_2FMUO2		0.920		
X_2KUO1		0.855		
X_2KUO2		0.844		
ZKM1			0.893	
ZKM2			0.919	
ZPP1			0.909	
ZPP2			0.904	
YKM1				0.891
YKM2				0.919
YMP1				0.733
YMP2				0.749
YMTP1				0.900
YMTP2				0.922
YTP1				0.897
YTP2				0.902

4.1.2 Discriminant Validity

In table 4 there are bolded numbers which are the root results. All numbers marked in bold or root results have a greater value when compared to the numbers or values below them or vertically. As is the case, the correlation value between USP (X_1) which is 0.857 this value is above the correlation value of USP (X_1) with E-WOM (X_2) which is 0.817, brand trust (Z) which is 0.784, and purchasing decisions (Y) which is 0.831. The correlation value between E-WOM (X_2), namely 0.906, this value is above the correlation value of E-WOM (X_2) with brand trust (Z), namely 0.868 and purchasing decisions (Y), namely 0.840. The correlation value between brand trust (Z), namely 0.867, this value is above the correlation value of brand trust (Z) with purchasing decisions (Y), namely 0.844. The correlation value between purchasing decisions (Y), namely 0.918, this value is above the correlation value of brand trust (Z) with

RESEARCH ARTICLE

purchasing decisions (Y), namely 0.844, E-WOM (X₂) with purchasing decisions (Y), namely 0.840, and USP (X₁) with purchasing decisions (Y), namely 0.831. Overall, it can be declared discriminant valid.

Table 4. Fornell larcker

	USP (X ₁)	E-WOM (X ₂)	Brand Trust (Z)	Purchase Decision (Y)
USP (X ₁)	0.857			
E-WOM (X ₂)	0.817	0.906		
Brand Trust (Z)	0.784	0.868	0.867	
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.831	0.840	0.844	0.918

4.1.3 Composite Reliability

According to Savitri *et al.*, (2021). It a variable is considered reliable if the composite reliability (pc) and Cronbach's alpha exceed 0.70. As shown in Table 5, both values for each variable in this study are greater than 0.70, indicating reliability.

Table 5. Composite reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_c)	Description
USP (X ₁)	0.937	0.955	Reliable
E-WOM (X ₂)	0.878	0.917	Reliable
Brand Trust (Z)	0.927	0.948	Reliable
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.952	0.960	Reliable

4.1.4 R Square

Based on table 6, it can be seen that the adjusted R-square value for the brand trust variable (Z) is 0.746, this indicates that the USP (X₁) and E-WOM (X₂) variables can explain the brand trust variable (Z) by 74.6%. The adjusted R-square value for the purchasing decision variable (Y) is 0.793, this indicates that the USP (X₁), E-WOM (X₂), and brand trust (Z) variables can explain the purchasing decision variable (Y) by 79.3%. Therefore, it can be concluded that all models are considered strong.

Table 6. R square

	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Brand Trust (Z)	0.751	0.746
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.799	0.793

4.1.5 F Square

Table 7 illustrates that the impact of USP (X₁) on brand trust (Z) is 0.338, indicating that this impact is deemed moderate. E-WOM (X₂) has a moderate impact on brand trust (Z), as seen by its 0.184 effect. Brand trust (Z) has a moderate impact on purchase decisions (Y), as evidenced by the effect of Z on Y being 0.325.

Table 7. F square

	Brand Trust (Z)	Purchase Decision (Y)
USP (X ₁)	0.338	
E-WOM (X ₂)	0.184	
Brand Trust (Z)		0.325

4.1.6 Hypothesis Test

According to (Savitri *et al.*, 2021). a statistical T value > 1.960 or a P value < 0.05 indicates a significant effect. Based on Table 8, X₁ significantly influences Z (T = 4.762 > 1.960, P = 0.00 < 0.05),

RESEARCH ARTICLE

supporting H¹. Similarly, X² significantly affects Z (T = 3.859 > 1.960, P = 0.00 < 0.05), confirming H₂. Furthermore, Z significantly influences Y (T = 3.584 > 1.960, P = 0.00 < 0.05), validating H₃.

Table 8. Hypothesis test

	T Statistics	P Values
USP (X ₁) -> Brand Trust (Z)	4.762	0.000
E-WOM (X ₂) -> Brand Trust (Z)	3.859	0.000
Brand Trust (Z) -> Purchase Decision (Y)	3.584	0.000
USP (X ₁) -> Purchase Decision (Y)	2.369	0.018
E-WOM (X ₂) -> Purchase Decision (Y)	0.719	0.472
USP (X ₁) -> Brand Trust (Z) -> Purchase Decision (Y)	3.322	0.001
E-WOM (X ₂) -> Brand Trust (Z) -> Purchase Decision (Y)	2.275	0.023

Figure 2 shows the moderation analysis in this study, which was carried out using indicators (Mediation Analysis Procedure) from (Hair Jr *et al.*, 2022). If indirect hypotheses such as Unique Selling Proposition on purchasing decisions through brand trust mediation show positive significant results as well as direct hypotheses such as Unique Selling Proposition on purchasing decisions show the same results, namely positive significant, called partial mediation. However, if indirect hypotheses such as Unique Selling Proposition on purchasing decisions through brand trust mediation show significant positive results, while direct hypotheses such as Unique Selling Proposition on purchasing decisions show the opposite result, namely insignificant, called full mediation. If indirect hypotheses such as E-WOM on purchasing decisions through brand trust mediation show positive significant results and also direct hypotheses such as E-WOM on purchasing decisions show the same results, namely positive significant, it is called partial mediation. However, if indirect hypotheses such as E-WOM on purchasing decisions through brand trust mediation show positive significant results but the direct hypothesis path, namely E-WOM on purchasing decisions, shows the opposite result, namely insignificant, it is called full mediation. Based on table 8, X₁ on Y through mediation of Z has a statistical T value of 3.322 > 1.960 and a P value of 0.00 < 0.05, meaning that it is positively significant, while X₁ on Y has a statistical T value of 2.369 > 1.960 and a P value of 0.01 < 0.05, it is positively significant. Therefore, H₄ can be accepted, namely X₁ has an influence on Y through the mediation of Z with a partial mediation model. X₂ on Y through the mediation of Z has a statistical T value of 2.275 > 1.960 and a P value of 0.02 < 0.05, it is positively significant, while X₂ on Y has a statistical T value of 0.719 < 1.960 and a P value of 0.47 > 0.05, it is not significant. Therefore, H₅ can be accepted, namely X₂ has an influence on Y through the media Z with a full mediation model.

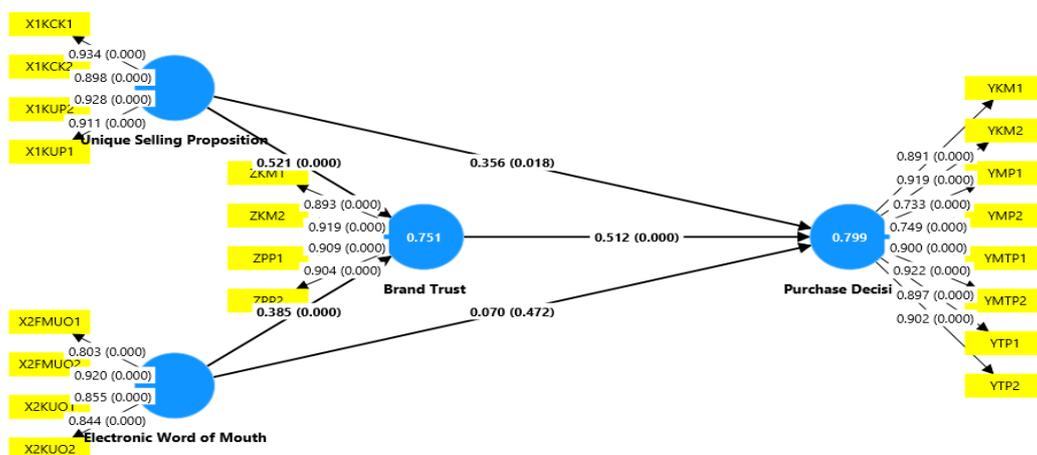


Figure 2. Mediation Analysis

4.2 Discussion

Researchers found that USP significantly influences brand trust, as indicated by a statistical T value of 4.762 (> 1.960) and a P value of 0.00 (< 0.05). These findings align with previous research demonstrating a positive and significant relationship between USP and brand trust (Rosari, 2024). The USP referred to in this study is "*Lembut di Tangan*" which means that Gentle Gen soap has an advantage where there is no need to worry if washing clothes by hand because it does not make hands rough. Based on the research results, this advantage has a significant influence on consumer trust in the brand. Researchers found that E-WOM significantly influences brand trust, as indicated by a statistical T value of 3.859 (> 1.960) and a P value of 0.00 (< 0.05). These findings are consistent with previous research demonstrating a positive and significant relationship between E-WOM and brand trust (Yulianto & Soesanto, 2020). This means that in this study, E-WOM such as reviews, recommendations, and information from online has a significant influence on consumer trust in brands. Purchase decisions are significantly impacted by brand trust, according to research. This is evidenced by the statistical T value of 3.584 > 1.960 and a P value of 0.00 < 0.05 . The study's findings are consistent with other studies showing that brand trust significantly and favorably influences consumer decisions (Putri *et al.*, 2021). This means that high brand trust can have an impact on consumer purchasing decisions and even make repeat purchases.

Research indicates that Unique Selling Proposition (USP) substantially influences purchasing decisions via the mediation of brand trust. This is demonstrated by a statistical T value of 3.322, which exceeds 1.960, and a P value of 0.00, which is less than 0.05. The USP regarding purchase decisions exhibits a statistical T value of 2.369, exceeding 1.960, and a P value of 0.01, which is less than 0.05, indicating positive significance. Consequently, the mediation model exhibits partial mediation. The results of this study align with previous research indicating that Unique Selling Proposition (USP) significantly and positively affects purchasing decisions via brand trust (Yosua, 2021). Through the mediation of brand trust, researchers found that E-WOM substantially influences purchasing decisions. The statistical T value of 2.275 exceeds 1.960, and the P value of 0.02 is less than 0.05. Furthermore, E-WOM regarding purchasing decisions has a statistical T value of 0.719, which is less than 1.960, and a P value of 0.47, which exceeds 0.05, indicating a lack of significance. Consequently, the mediation model exhibits complete mediation. The results of this study align with previous research indicating that E-WOM considerably and positively affects purchasing decisions through brand trust (Kholil *et al.*, 2024).

5. Conclusion

This study shows that the USP and E-WOM variables significantly influence brand trust which then affects the purchase decision of Gentle Gen soap in Bandung City. The results of this study indicate that the USP exerts a more significant influence on brand trust than the E-WOM variable. This suggests that product differentiation plays a more critical role in establishing brand trust. In this study, the specific differentiator or USP examined is "*Lembut di Tangan*." Brand trust partially mediates the relationship between the Unique Selling Proposition (USP) and purchase decisions, indicating that while the USP directly influences buying choices, brand trust remains a critical aspect in the decision-making process. Furthermore, brand trust completely buffers the association between E-WOM and decisions to buy, demonstrating that while brand trust is a determining component in the decision-making process, E-WOM does not directly influence decisions to buy. This study also has several limitations such as focusing only on Gentle Gen soap, this indicates that this research only focuses on one brand, besides that this research is also limited to respondents who live in the city of Bandung. From the existing limitations, it causes limited generalization of findings or research results. Therefore, it is hoped that further research can expand coverage such as researching other soap brands and including a wider range of respondents such as from other regions in order to get a better understanding.

6. References

- Al-Ja'afreh, A. L. I., & Al-Adaileh, R. A. I. D. (2020). The impact of electronic word of mouth on consumers purchasing intention. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Information Technology*, 98(02), 183-193.
- Berghueser, S. M., & Spann, M. (2024). The value of distinctiveness: Product uniqueness in crypto marketing. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*.
- Deniz Dalman, M., & Min, J. (2016). Unusual Product Differentiation: Strategic Use of Trivial Attribute and the Separate Evaluation Mode. In *Marketing Challenges in a Turbulent Business Environment: Proceedings of the 2014 Academy of Marketing Science (AMS) World Marketing Congress* (pp. 573-574). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Dharmayana, I. M. A., & Rahanatha, G. B. (2017). *Pengaruh brand equity, brand trust, brand preference, dan kepuasan konsumen terhadap niat membeli kembali* (Doctoral dissertation, Udayana University).
- Hair, J. F. (2014). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)*. sage.
- Han, S. H., Nguyen, B., & Lee, T. J. (2015). Consumer-based chain restaurant brand equity, brand reputation, and brand trust. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 50, 84-93. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2015.06.010>.
- Helmold, M. (2020). Creating the value proposition. In *Total Revenue Management (TRM) Case Studies, Best Practices and Industry Insights* (pp. 89-94). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Inocencio, F. D. C., & Marques, E. V. (2016). The best and the worst: Word-of-mouth in e-tail websites. *Revista de Administração de Empresas*, 56, 518-532. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0034-759020160506>.
- Khoirudin, I. R., & Giyartiningrum, E. (2021). Pengaruh kepercayaan merek, kesadaran merek dan kualitas produk terhadap keputusan pembelian smartphone Xiaomi di DIY. *Journal Competency of Business*, 5(1), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.47200/jcob.v5i1.870>.
- Kholil, M., Sutisna, S., & Umalihayati, U. (2024). Pengaruh Electronic Word Of Mouth Dan Persepsi Risiko Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Melalui Kepercayaan Konsumen Pada E-Commerce Bukalapak, Lazada Dan Blibli Di Kabupaten Serang. *Innovative: Journal Of Social Science Research*, 4(6), 3214-3230.
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management, global edition* (15th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Lindawaty, L., & Syawaluddin, S. (2022). Pengaruh Kepercayaan Merek Dan Kepuasan Konsumen Terhadap Loyalitas Merek Pt Alfa Scorp li Marelan Medan. *Jurnal Bisnis Kolega*, 8(1).
- Martowinangun, K., Lestari, D. J. S., & Karyadi, K. (2019). Pengaruh Strategi Promosi Terhadap Peningkatan Penjualan Di Cv. Jaya Perkasa Motor Rancaekek Kabupaten Bandung. *Jurnal Co Management*, 1(1), 139-152. <https://doi.org/10.32670/comanagement.v2i1.162>.
- Murdayanti, Y., Indriani, S., Gurendrawati, E., Ulupui, I. G. K. A., & Suherman, S. (2020). Pemberdayaan masyarakat UKM dalam mengimplementasikan unique selling proposition dan strategi penentuan harga jual. *JPPM (Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat)*, 7(1), 65-77.

RESEARCH ARTICLE

- Pramita, K., & Manafe, L. A. (2022). Personal selling implementation and AIDA model; Attention, interest, desire, action. (*International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Business Development*), 5(3), 487-494.
- Priadana, M. S., & Sunarsi, D. (2021). *Metode penelitian kuantitatif*. Pascal books.
- Priansa, D. J. (2016). Pengaruh e-wom dan persepsi nilai terhadap keputusan konsumen untuk berbelanja online di Lazada. *Jurnal Ecodemica: Jurnal Ekonomi Manajemen dan Bisnis*, 4(1), 117-124. <https://doi.org/10.31294/jeco.v4i1.353>.
- Putri, N. A., Burhanudin, A. Y., & Sarsono, S. (2021). CITRA MEREK, KEPERCAYAAN MEREK, DAN KUALITAS PRODUK TERHADAP KEPUTUSAN PEMBELIAN HAND SANITIZER DETTOL PADA MASA PANDEMI COVID-19 DI LUWES GENTAN (Brand Image, Brand Trust, And Product Quality To Purchase Decision For Dettol Hand Sanitizer During-19 Pande. *Jurnal Ekbis*, 22(1), 69-87.
- Rasoolimanesh, S. M., Tan, P. L., Nejati, M., & Shafaei, A. (2024). Corporate social responsibility and brand loyalty in private higher education: mediation assessment of brand reputation and trust. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 34(1), 156-177. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08841241.2021.1973645>.
- Reyes-Menendez, A., Saura, J. R., & Martinez-Navalon, J. G. (2019). The impact of e-WOM on hotels management reputation: exploring tripadvisor review credibility with the ELM model. *Ieee Access*, 7, 68868-68877.
- Rosari, M. S. B. (2024). *Believability Dan Distinctiveness Proposisi Penjualan Unik Pasar Tradisional Keden Di Desa Keden Kecamatan Pedan* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Sarmiento Guede, J. R., Esteban Curiel, J. D., & Antonovica, A. (2018). Word-of-mouth communication as a consequence of relationship quality in online environments. *Palabra Clave*, 21(4), 1075-1106.
- Savitri, C., Faddila, S. P., Irmawartini, I., Iswari, H. R., Anam, C., Syah, S., ... & Siregar, M. T. (2021). Statistik multivariat dalam riset.
- Sinaga, B. A., & Sulistiono, S. (2020). Pengaruh electronic word of mouth dan promosi media sosial terhadap minat beli pada produk fashion Eiger.
- Suriani, N., & Jailani, M. S. (2023). Konsep populasi dan sampling serta pemilihan partisipan ditinjau dari penelitian ilmiah pendidikan. *IHSAN: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 1(2), 24-36. <https://doi.org/10.61104/ihsan.v1i2.55>.
- Tran, T. H. A., & Kumar, J. (2024). The impact of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) on tourist purchase intention: a comparative study of the Indian and Vietnamese tourism industries. *Global Knowledge, Memory and Communication*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/GKMC-12-2023-0497>.
- Wang, S. W., & Scheinbaum, A. C. (2018). Enhancing brand credibility via celebrity endorsement: Trustworthiness trumps attractiveness and expertise. *Journal of advertising research*, 58(1), 16-32. <https://doi.org/10.2501/JAR-2017-042>.
- Yosua, A. (2021). Pengaruh Personal Selling, Brand Image, dan Kualitas Produk Terhadap Kepercayaan (Trust) Konsumen dan Dampaknya Pada Keputusan Pembelian Polis Asuransi. *Jurnal Syntax Transformation*, 2(12), 1686-1699.

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Yulianto, M. R., & Soesanto, H. (2020). Analisis Pengaruh Electronic Word Of Mouth Terhadap Kepercayaan Dan Citra Merek Serta Dampaknya Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian (Studi Pada Konsumen Lazada. co. id di Semarang). *Diponegoro Journal of Management*, 9(1).

Yulindasari, E. R., & Fikriyah, K. (2022). Pengaruh e-WoM (Electronic Word of Mouth) terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Kosmetik Halal di Shopee. *Journal of Islamic Economics and Finance Studies*, 3(1), 55-69. <https://doi.org/10.47700/jiefes.v3i1.4293>.