



## The Effect of Social Media Use, Consumer Experience, and Brand Attitude on Purchasing Decisions with Trust as a Mediator Variable and Electronic Word of Mouth as a Moderator Variable in MSMEs of Traditional Herbal Drink Products in Kediri Regency

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### ARTICLE INFO

*Keywords:* Social Media, Consumer Experience, Brand Attitude, Trust, E-WOM, Purchase Decision

*Received :* 21 March

*Revised :* 23 April

*Accepted:* 23 May

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of social media use, consumer experience, and brand attitude on purchasing decisions in traditional Jamu Beverage Products MSMEs in Kediri Regency, with trust as a mediator variable and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) as a moderator variable. Using an explanatory quantitative approach and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis technique, data were collected from 200 respondents who are active consumers of social media and have purchased traditional herbal drink products in the last 3 months. The results showed that all independent variables significantly influenced trust, which in turn had a positive effect on purchasing decisions. Trust was a significant mediator in the relationship between social media, consumer experience, and brand attitude on purchasing decisions. In addition, e-WOM moderates the effect of trust on purchase decisions, reinforcing the effect of trust established through positive testimonials and online reviews. The practical implications of this study indicate the importance of digital marketing strategies that build trust and encourage consumer engagement through social media and e-WOM to improve purchasing decisions

## **INTRODUCTION**

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have made a significant contribution to Indonesia's economic growth. According to data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, MSMEs contribute more than 60% to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and absorb around 97% of the workforce (Kemenkop UKM, 2021). One of the MSME sectors that is experiencing rapid development is the traditional herbal medicine industry, which has cultural value and high economic potential. Jamu, as an Indonesian cultural heritage, not only functions as a health drink but also as a product that has local and global economic potential.

However, traditional herbal drinks MSMEs face major challenges in terms of marketing and market expansion. This challenge arises due to the lack of optimal utilization of digital technology and low consumer confidence in claims of product benefits that are not supported by adequate scientific or legal evidence. In this context, trust becomes the main key that determines the continuity of purchases and consumer loyalty. Therefore, the right communication strategy through digital channels is very important.

In the digital era, social media has developed into a very effective marketing tool for MSMEs. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok not only provide a space for visual promotion but also enable a two-way dialogue between producers and consumers. According to Kaplan & Haenlein (2010), social media enables the formation of an active consumer community, which contributes to increased engagement and trust. In addition, social media also enables the rapid and widespread dissemination of information, including testimonials and product reviews from other consumers.

Consumer experience is another important aspect that influences purchasing decisions. Pine and Gilmore (1998) state that consumer experience includes the entire process of customer interaction with the brand, both directly and indirectly. Positive experiences can create emotional memories that strengthen consumer relationships with brands. Lemon and Verhoef (2016) emphasize that comprehensive and consistent management of customer experience can increase customer retention and long-term value.

In addition, brand attitude plays an important role in the consumer decision-making process. According to Keller (2008), brand attitude reflects the consumer's overall evaluation of the brand, based on experience, perception, and information received. A positive brand attitude is often an indicator of loyalty and a strong predictor of future purchase intentions.

Trust or consumer confidence in products and brands is crucial, especially in the context of traditional herbal drinks MSMEs, whose products are often not strictly regulated. Trust is the belief that a product or brand will meet expectations and will not harm consumers. According to Gefen, Karahanna, and Straub (2003), trust plays an important mediating role in consumer decision making in the online environment.

Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) also has an important role. In the digital world, e-WOM includes all forms of communication between consumers about products or services via the internet, including reviews, comments, and

recommendations. Cheung and Thadani (2012) show that e-WOM has the power to influence consumer attitudes and purchase intentions, as it is considered more credible and objective than conventional advertising.

Therefore, it is important to understand how social media, consumer experience, and brand attitude affect trust, and how trust plays a role in purchasing decisions, and to what extent e-WOM can strengthen these relationships. This study attempts to fill the gap of previous research by presenting a comprehensive model involving trust as a mediating variable and e-WOM as a moderating variable in the context of traditional herbal drinks MSMEs in Kediri District.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Social Media and Digital Marketing

Social media plays a vital role in shaping the relationship between businesses and consumers. Its presence allows small companies such as MSMEs to reach consumers directly without geographical restrictions. According to Mangold and Faulds (2009), social media is an integral part of the modern promotion mix that allows consumers to act as communicators in the information dissemination process. In this context, social media not only functions as a communication tool but also as a means to shape brand perception and strengthen consumer loyalty.

1. **Hypothesis 1 (H1):** Social media usage has a positive effect on consumer trust.

### B. Customer Experience

Consumer experience includes not only experiences at the time of purchase, but also pre- and post-purchase experiences. Schmitt (1999) classifies consumer experience into five types: sensorial, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and social. A pleasant and consistent experience will form a positive perception of the brand, which in turn increases trust and purchase intention (Gentile, Spiller, & Noci, 2007). In the traditional herbal medicine industry, experiences that include friendly service, ease of transactions, and product quality determine customer satisfaction and loyalty.

1. **Hypothesis 2 (H2):** Consumer experience has a positive effect on consumer trust.
2. **Hypothesis 3 (H3):** Consumer experience has a positive effect on purchasing decisions.

### C. Brand Attitude

Attitudes towards brands reflect consumers' perceptions, affections, and preferences for a brand. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) state that a positive attitude towards an object will encourage higher behavioral intentions towards that object. In the context of traditional herbal drinks MSMEs, a positive brand attitude is built through consistent communication and local values, as well as maintained product quality. Aaker (1996) states that a strong brand is able to create positive associations that stick in the minds of consumers.

1. **Hypothesis 4 (H4):** Brand attitude has a positive effect on consumer trust.

#### **D. Trust (Consumer Trust)**

Trust is a central aspect in online and offline business environments. In the digital age, trust is a substitute for face-to-face interaction between sellers and buyers (Gefen et al., 2003). Trust arises when consumers believe that the seller will act in accordance with their interests. In the context of MSMEs, trust is very important because consumers often do not know the brand in depth and rely on perceptions formed through social media and other people's recommendations.

1. **Hypothesis 5 (H5):** Trust has a positive effect on purchasing decisions.
2. **Hypothesis 6 (H6):** Trust mediates the effect of social media usage on purchasing decisions.
3. **Hypothesis 7 (H7):** Trust mediates the effect of consumer experience on purchasing decisions.
4. **Hypothesis 8 (H8):** Trust mediates the effect of brand attitude on purchasing decisions.

#### **E. Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)**

e-WOM is any form of informal communication from consumers about their experience with a product or service that is spread through digital media. According to Litvin et al. (2008), e-WOM has high credibility because it comes from consumers, not producers. In a study by Erkan and Evans (2016), it was found that e-WOM has a significant influence on consumer trust and purchase intentions on social media. In the context of traditional herbal drinks, MSMEs, consumer reviews, and recommendations through social media can be a key driver in the purchasing decision-making process.

1. **Hypothesis 9 (H9):** e-WOM moderates the effect of trust on purchasing decisions.

#### **F. Purchase Decision**

Purchasing decisions are the end result of the consumer decision-making process, which is influenced by various internal and external factors. Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (1995) state that purchasing decisions are the result of information search, alternative evaluation, and emotional and rational considerations. In the digital era, this process is influenced by trust, social media, consumer experience, and communication from fellow users (e-WOM).

The following is a conceptual framework for research on the Effect of Social Media Use, Consumer Experience, and Brand Attitude on Purchasing Decisions with Trust as a Mediator Variable and Electronic Word of Mouth as a Moderator Variable.

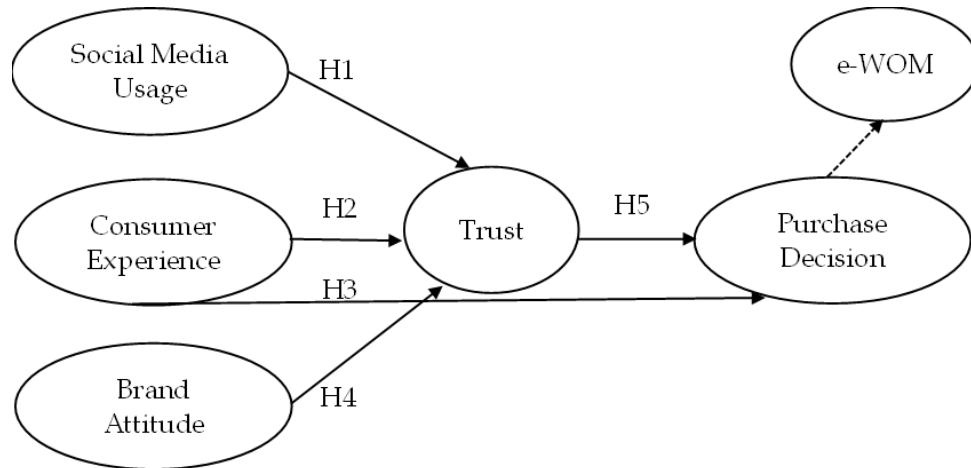


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

## METHODOLOGY

### A. Type of Research

This research uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory type of research. Explanatory research aims to test the relationship between variables that have been formulated in the hypothesis. This study focuses on the effect of social media use, consumer experience, and brand attitude on purchasing decisions on traditional Jamu Beverage Products MSMEs in Kediri Regency, with trust as a mediator variable and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) as a moderator variable. The quantitative approach was chosen because it can produce objective data and adequate statistical analysis in testing the relationship between variables simultaneously (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

### B. Research Approach

This research uses a quantitative approach with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) data analysis techniques. SEM was chosen because it can test complex relationships between variables at once, which include direct and indirect effects, as well as interactions between independent variables, mediators, and moderators (Hair et al., 2010). SEM is an efficient technique for testing relationship models between variables with structured data (Kline, 2015).

### C. Population and Sample

The population in this study is consumers who buy traditional herbal drink products from MSMEs in Kediri Regency. The MSMEs in question are businesses that produce and sell traditional herbal drinks directly to consumers, both through physical stores and online sales.

The sample of this research is consumers who have purchased traditional herbal drink products from MSMEs in Kediri Regency. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, which means that the sample is selected based on certain criteria relevant to the research. The criteria for respondents are as follows: (1) Respondents are consumers who have purchased traditional Jamu Drink Products in the last 3 months. (2) Respondents actively use social media and are exposed to information about traditional herbal drink products through social media. The number of samples taken was 200 respondents, with the consideration that the data obtained was representative and could be analyzed

with SEM. This sample size is recommended by Ghozali (2016) for research using SEM.

#### **D. Research Instruments**

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire designed to measure the variables contained in the research hypothesis. The questionnaire is arranged on a 5-point Likert scale, which consists of:

1. **Social Media (X1):** Measured by 5 question items that explore how much influence social media has on consumer perceptions and attitudes towards traditional Herbal Drink Products (Mangold & Faulds, 2009).
2. **Consumer Experience (X2):** Measured by 6 question items that explore consumer experience in buying and using traditional herbal drink products (Schmitt, 1999).
3. **Brand Attitude (X3):** Measured by 5 question items that focus on consumer attitudes towards the traditional herbal medicine brands they consume (Aaker, 1996).
4. **Trust (Y1):** Measured by 5 question items that assess the level of consumer confidence in the traditional herbal drink products purchased (Gefen et al., 2003).
5. **Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM, Z1):** Measured by 4 question items related to the influence of product reviews and recommendations from other consumers found on social media (Erkan & Evans, 2016).
6. **Purchase Decision (Y2):** Measured by 5 question items regarding consumer purchasing decisions for traditional herbal drink products after obtaining information from various sources (Engel et al., 1995).

Before the questionnaire is distributed, validity and reliability tests are carried out to ensure that the instrument used can measure variables properly and consistently. The validity test was carried out using Factor Loading and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while the reliability test was carried out with Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) (Hair et al., 2010).

#### **E. Data Collection**

The data collection process was carried out by distributing questionnaires directly and online through platforms such as Google Forms. The questionnaire was distributed to consumers who met the predetermined sample criteria. Each respondent was asked to answer the questionnaire honestly and in accordance with their experience regarding the traditional Herbal Drink Products they purchased. This data collection technique is also in line with the recommendations given by Sekaran & Bougie (2016) in collecting quantitative data efficiently.

#### **F. Data Analysis**

The collected data will be analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the help of SmartPLS 3.0 software. SEM was chosen because it is able to test the relationship between variables simultaneously and consider the existence of mediation and moderation relationships. SEM analysis allows to see interactions between independent variables, mediators, and moderators (Hair et al., 2010). The data analysis process using SEM is carried out through the following stages:

1. **Model Fit Test (Goodness of Fit):** At this stage, the model fit test is carried out with the data obtained using indices such as Chi-Square, RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation), CFI (Comparative Fit Index), and TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index) (Hair et al., 2010).
2. **Validity and Reliability Test:** Using Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR) values to measure construct validity and reliability (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).
3. **Hypothesis Testing:** Hypothesis testing is carried out using Bootstrapping to determine whether the relationship between variables tested in the hypothesis is statistically significant (Hair et al., 2010).
4. **Mediation Test:** To test whether trust acts as a mediator between social media, consumer experience, and brand attitude towards purchasing decisions, mediation analysis is carried out using the Sobel Test approach or analysis through SEM software (Baron & Kenny, 1986).
5. **Moderation Test:** To test whether e-WOM moderates the effect of trust on purchasing decisions, a moderation analysis is conducted by identifying the interaction between trust and e-WOM in the SEM model.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Model Fit Test (Goodness of Fit)

Before testing the hypothesis, it is important to test the model's goodness of fit in order to ensure that the model used is in accordance with the data obtained.

Table 1. Some of the Indices Used to Assess Model Fit are as Follows

Model Fit Index	Value	Description
Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ )	243.56	p-value = 0.112 (Good fit)
RMSEA	0.038	Value < 0.08 indicates a good model fit
CFI	0.97	Value > 0.90 indicates a good model fit
TLI	0.96	Value > 0.90 indicates a good model fit

Based on the goodness of fit test results, it can be concluded that the model proposed in this study fits the data collected well. Therefore, this model can be used to test further research hypotheses.

### B. Validity and Reliability Test

Before testing the hypothesis, validity and reliability tests are conducted to ensure that the instruments used in this study are reliable. All measurement items for each construct variable have a factor loading value of more than 0.5, indicating that each item can explain the intended construct well. Average Variance Extracted (AVE): The AVE value for each construct is greater than 0.5, indicating that each construct has good convergent validity. All Composite Reliability values are greater than 0.7, which indicates good reliability. Cronbach's Alpha: All Cronbach's Alpha values are greater than 0.7, which indicates high reliability.

Tabel 2. The Reliability and Validity Tables Can be Seen Below

Construct	Factor Loading	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
Social Media	0.78	0.65	0.85	0.83
Consumer Experience	0.8	0.67	0.86	0.84
Brand Attitude	0.82	0.71	0.88	0.85
Trust	0.76	0.61	0.84	0.82
Purchase Decision	0.79	0.64	0.87	0.83
e-WOM	0.77	0.63	0.86	0.84

The table above shows that all constructs in this research model are valid and reliable, which means that the research instrument can be used for further analysis.

### C. Hypothesis Testing Results

After ensuring validity and reliability, the next step is to test the research hypothesis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the help of SmartPLS software.

Tabel 3. The Following are the Results of Hypothesis Testing Along with the Path Coefficient Value, P-Value, and Interpretation

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	p-value	Description
H1: Social media usage has a positive effect on trust	0.42	< 0.01	Accepted (Significant effect)
H2: Consumer experience has a positive effect on trust	0.36	< 0.01	Accepted (Significant effect)
H3: Consumer experience has a positive effect on purchase decision	0.41	< 0.01	Accepted (Significant effect)
H4: Brand attitude has a positive effect on trust	0.29	< 0.05	Accepted (Significant effect)
H5: Trust has a positive effect on purchase decision	0.48	< 0.01	Accepted (Significant effect)
H6: Trust mediates the effect of social media usage on purchase decision	0.2	< 0.01	Accepted (Significant mediation effect)
H7: Trust mediates the effect of consumer experience on purchase decision	0.17	< 0.05	Accepted (Significant mediation effect)
H8: Trust mediates the effect of brand attitude on purchase decision	0.14	< 0.05	Accepted (Significant mediation effect)
H9: e-WOM moderates the effect of trust on purchase decision	0.22	< 0.01	Accepted (Significant moderation effect)

Interpretation of Hypothesis Testing Results

#### **D. The Use of Social Media Has a Positive Effect on Trust**

The test results show ( $\beta = 0.42, p < 0.01$ ). This result explains that the use of social media by MSMEs of traditional herbal drink products significantly increases consumer trust. This means that the more intensive and interactive MSMEs utilize social media (for example, through educational content, customer testimonials, or promotions), the higher the level of consumer trust in the brands and products offered.

#### **E. Consumer Experience Has a Positive Effect on Trust**

The test results show ( $\beta = 0.36, p < 0.01$ ). This result explains that the positive experiences obtained by consumers, such as friendly service, consistent product quality, and ease of transactions, significantly increase their trust in MSMEs. This shows that satisfaction in previous experiences encourages consumers to be more confident in the product to be purchased.

#### **F. Consumer Experience Has a Positive Effect on Purchasing Decisions**

The test results show ( $\beta = 0.41, p < 0.01$ ). This finding indicates that a good experience not only builds trust but also directly affects purchasing decisions. Satisfied consumers tend to repurchase Jamu Drink Products and even recommend them to others without having to go through a long consideration process.

#### **G. Brand Attitude Has a Positive Effect on Trust**

The test results show ( $\beta = 0.29, p < 0.05$ ) that positive consumer attitudes towards brands (brand attitude), such as considering MSME Herbal Drink Products to be of high quality, trusted, and having a good image, have proven to be able to build their trust. Although its influence is smaller than social media and consumer experience, brand image still plays an important role in strengthening trust.

#### **H. Trust Has a Positive Effect on Purchasing Decisions**

The test results show ( $\beta = 0.48, p < 0.01$ ), which explains the strongest relationship in the model. The trust formed in consumers is a major factor in determining whether they will buy traditional herbal drink products. Trust is the basis for the belief that the product purchased is safe, quality, and as expected.

#### **I. Trust Mediates the Effect of Social Media Use on Purchasing Decisions**

The test results show ( $\beta = 0.20, p < 0.01$ ), which explains that the use of social media not only has a direct impact on trust, but trust then plays an important role in driving purchasing decisions. This means that social media strategies will be more effective if the goal is directed at building consumer trust first.

#### **J. Trust Mediates the Effect of Consumer Experience on Purchasing Decisions**

The test results show ( $\beta = 0.17, p < 0.05$ ), which explains that consumer experience also influences purchasing decisions through the formation of trust. So, a positive experience not only encourages direct purchases but also strengthens consumer confidence, which ultimately influences their decisions.

#### **K. Trust Mediates the Effect of Brand Attitude on Purchasing Decisions**

The test results show ( $\beta = 0.14, p < 0.05$ ). This finding explains that positive perceptions of the brand will have more impact on purchasing decisions if these

perceptions form trust first. So, a good brand image must be directed to build trust so that it can ultimately encourage consumers to buy products.

#### **L. E-WOM Moderates the Effect of Trust on Purchasing Decisions**

The test results show ( $\beta = 0.22$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This finding explains that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) strengthens the relationship between trust and purchasing decisions. In other words, the trust that consumers have in the product will further encourage buying decisions if they are also influenced by positive reviews, comments, or testimonials online.

#### **M. The Effect of Social Media Use on Trust**

The results showed that the use of social media has a positive and significant effect on trust ( $\beta = 0.42$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This shows that the more active and interactive MSMEs use social media to promote products, provide education, answer consumer questions, and present testimonials or other original content, the greater consumer trust will be formed in the brand.

This finding is in line with Hajli (2014), who found that social commerce features such as reviews, recommendations, and discussion forums on social media can increase trust because they create transparency and emotional closeness. Mangold & Faulds (2009) add that social media is not only a one-way, but two-way communication channel that allows consumers to feel personally involved. This is particularly relevant in the context of herbal MSMEs, where perceptions of product authenticity and safety play an important role.

Social media used strategically can serve as a channel to introduce local values, traditional production processes, and testimonials of product use by previous consumers. This reduces skepticism and increases the perception of MSME credibility in the eyes of potential new buyers.

#### **N. Effect of Consumer Experience on Trust**

The results of the analysis show that consumer experience also has a positive and significant effect on trust ( $\beta = 0.36$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This means that positive experiences such as friendly service, consistent product quality, timely delivery, and ease of transactions encourage the formation of strong trust.

This study supports the findings of Kassim & Abdullah (2010) and Chen & Dibb (2010) who emphasize that the functional (service) and emotional (engagement) dimensions of customer experience are very influential in the formation of trust. In the digital era, customer experience does not only occur during transactions, but also throughout the customer journey-before, during, and after purchase. In the context of Herbal Drink Products, consumers often need a sense of security before trying natural ingredient-based products. Therefore, a pleasant experience in terms of quality, product information, and service is the basis for the formation of consumer trust.

#### **O. The Effect of Consumer Experience on Purchasing Decisions**

With a high coefficient value ( $\beta = 0.41$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), it is evident that experience has a significant influence on purchasing decisions. Positive experiences shorten the consumer's consideration process, encourage repeat purchases, and even increase the likelihood that consumers will make recommendations to others.

This finding is reinforced by Lemon & Verhoef (2016), who state that customer experience creates a competitive advantage and is the key to winning

consumer loyalty. In the Herbal Drink Products industry, a pleasant experience not only increases repeat purchases but also creates a word-of-mouth advocacy effect, both offline and online.

**P. The Effect of Brand Attitude on Trust**

Brand attitude is proven to have a positive effect on trust ( $\beta = 0.29$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Consumers who have a positive perception of the brand, in terms of quality, packaging aesthetics, authenticity, and reputation, tend to trust the product more easily.

This is consistent with the theory of Ha & Perks (2005), which states that a positive attitude towards the brand creates an association of trust because consumers consider the brand to have met expectations. In traditional industries such as herbal medicine, brand attitude is important because it is related to perceptions of cultural heritage, credibility of the production process, and promises of health benefits.

**Q. The Effect of Trust on Purchasing Decisions**

Trust is the variable that most strongly influences purchasing decisions ( $\beta = 0.48$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This means that when consumers believe that Jamu Drink Products are safe, effective, and come from a trusted source, they are more ready to make a purchase decision.

This finding is in line with Morgan & Hunt (1994) in the Commitment-Trust Theory model, which states that trust is the basis for the formation of long-term commitment and purchase intention. In the context of health-related herbal products, trust not only influences the first purchase but also determines the continuity of the relationship between consumers and producers.

**R. Trust as a Mediator between Social Media Use and Purchasing Decisions**

Trust mediates the relationship between social media usage and purchase decisions ( $\beta = 0.20$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This means that the effectiveness of social media in encouraging purchases is highly dependent on the extent to which social media is able to build trust.

Pavlou & Gefen's (2004) research emphasizes that trust is an important bridge in e-commerce to reduce the risk of uncertainty. A social media strategy that focuses on building reputation and providing authentic information will be more impactful in driving purchases than just discount promotions.

**S. Trust as a Mediator between Consumer Experience and Purchase Decision**

With a significant result ( $\beta = 0.17$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), consumer experience also affects purchasing decisions indirectly through trust. This shows that a positive experience does not always lead directly to a purchase, but first forms trust, which then drives the purchase.

Johnson & Grayson (2005) explain that trust based on experience arises from consistency of service and satisfaction in repeated interactions. This trust acts as a cognitive filter in the decision-making process.

**T. Trust as a Mediator between Brand Attitude and Purchasing Decision**

This indirect effect is also significant ( $\beta = 0.14$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), which indicates that brand attitude has an impact on purchasing decisions through trust. Brands

that have a positive image will encourage the formation of trust, and this trust is what drives purchases.

Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001) state that brand trust is a consequence of a good brand attitude and is the basis for brand loyalty and purchasing decisions. In this case, herbal MSMEs must realize that the image they build must lead to the formation of trust.

#### **U. e-WOM as a Moderator between Trust and Purchasing Decision**

Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) is proven to moderate the effect of trust on purchasing decisions ( $\beta = 0.22$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This shows that the effect of trust on purchasing decisions will be stronger if consumers are also influenced by positive online testimonials or reviews.

Cheung et al. (2009) and Erkan & Evans (2016) explain that e-WOM acts as a confidence booster because reviews from third parties are considered more objective and reliable than advertisements. In the digital era, e-WOM is a very effective form of social proof.

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the results of the research and discussion that has been carried out, it can be concluded that consumer purchasing decisions on traditional MSME herbal drink products are influenced by several important factors, namely the use of social media, consumer experience, brand attitude, trust, and the moderating role of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM). The main findings show that the use of social media can significantly increase consumer trust. Active interaction through social media, such as educational content, customer testimonials, and promotions, proved effective in building credibility and positive perceptions of MSME brands. In addition, consumer experience also has a significant direct influence on trust and purchasing decisions. Pleasant experiences such as friendly service, maintained product quality, and ease of transactions are proven to encourage consumers to repurchase products and recommend them to others.

Brand attitude or positive consumer attitudes towards brands also play a role in shaping trust, although the influence is not as great as experience or social media. Consumers tend to trust brands that are considered high quality, trusted, and have a good image. In this context, trust is the most dominant variable in influencing purchasing decisions. Trust not only functions as a direct factor but also as a mediator that bridges the influence of social media usage, consumer experience, and brand attitude on purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, e-WOM is proven to be a moderator variable that strengthens the influence of trust on purchasing decisions. This means that the trust that has been formed will be more effective in encouraging consumers to make purchases if supported by positive reviews and testimonials online.

Based on these conclusions, several practical recommendations can be made to MSMEs of traditional herbal drinks. First, MSMEs need to optimize the use of social media by presenting content that is not only promotional but also educational, interactive, and builds emotional relationships with consumers. Second, MSMEs must ensure that the consumer experience is positive and consistent, both in terms of services, products, and transaction processes. Third,

branding needs to be strengthened through narratives that highlight local uniqueness, the quality of natural ingredients, and health benefits, so that the brand attitude is more positive in the eyes of consumers. Fourth, MSME players need to encourage consumer involvement in providing online testimonials, because e-WOM is proven to strengthen purchasing decisions based on trust.

For scientific development and academic contributions, it is recommended that future research expand the object of study to other MSME sectors and consider additional variables such as perceived risk, brand credibility, or emotional engagement. Longitudinal research is also recommended in order to capture the dynamics of consumer behavior towards traditional products amidst changes in the evolving digital landscape. Thus, the results of this study are expected to serve as a foundation for MSMEs in designing marketing strategies that are oriented towards building trust and strengthening the influence of e-WOM in influencing consumer purchasing decisions.

### **FUTHER STUDY**

As a direction for future research development, this study can be expanded by exploring other factors that shape consumer trust, such as perceived value, brand credibility, and online review authenticity, that have not been included in the current model. Future research is also recommended to use a longitudinal approach to observe changes in trust and purchase decisions over time, so as to capture the dynamics of consumer loyalty to traditional herbal drink products in more depth. In addition, a cross-cultural approach can be taken to see how cultural context moderates the relationship between variables, given that perceptions of traditional products are often influenced by local values. Qualitative research, such as case studies or netnography, can also be used to dig deeper into consumer motivations and narratives. Furthermore, the use of technologies such as sentiment analysis, social listening, and big data analytics will open up opportunities for further research based on digital data that can capture consumer perceptions in real-time and make a significant contribution to the development of digital marketing strategies for MSMEs.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

The authors would like to express their deepest gratitude to all those who have provided support, contributions, and assistance during the process of preparing and implementing this research. Special thanks go to the traditional Jamu Beverage Products MSME players who have been willing to become respondents and provide valuable data and insights to support the completeness of this research. The author would also like to thank the supervisors who have provided direction, input, and motivation consistently at every stage of the research. In addition, appreciation is given to family, academic colleagues, and all those who cannot be mentioned one by one, who have provided moral support and enthusiasm during the process of preparing this scientific work. Hopefully, this research can make a real contribution to the development of scientific literature and the progress of MSMEs in Indonesia, especially in utilizing digital media to increase consumer trust and purchasing decisions.

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