

The Effect of E-WOM on Repurchase Intention Mediated by Brand Image, Brand Trust, and Brand Attitude Among Smartphone Consumers in West Sumatra

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Keywords:

E-wom, Repurchase intention, Brand image, Brand trust, Brand attitude

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effect of e-WOM on repurchase intention, mediated by brand image, brand trust, and brand attitude, among smartphone users in West Sumatra. The population of this study consists of smartphone consumers residing in West Sumatra. Since West Sumatra comprises 12 regencies and 7 cities, 3 cities and 3 regencies were selected. The sample size for this study was 140 respondents. Data collection was conducted by distributing an online questionnaire via Google Forms, and the data was analyzed using SmartPLS4 software. The findings of this study indicate that e-WOM has a significant effect on repurchase intention; e-WOM has a significant effect on brand image; e-WOM has a significant effect on brand trust; e-WOM has a significant effect on brand attitude, brand image does not have a significant effect on repurchase intention, brand trust has a significant effect on repurchase intention, brand attitude has a significant effect on repurchase intention, e-WOM does not mediate the effect of brand image on repurchase intention, e-WOM mediates the effect of brand trust on repurchase intention, and e-WOM mediates the effect of brand attitude on repurchase intention.

INTRODUCTION

Repurchase intention can be understood as the cognitive and affective evaluation an individual makes regarding their tendency to purchase a product or use a service from the same brand again in the future. This assessment is not only based on previous consumption experiences but also takes into account the current conditions and situations faced by consumers, thereby reflecting the level of commitment and the probability of repurchase behavior toward that brand (Chou Shihyu, 2017).

Smartphones are an innovation in the telecommunications sector that greatly assist human activities. It is undeniable that smartphones have become a basic necessity for everyone in the world. According to Top Brand (2025), the three most memorable Android smartphone brands in Indonesia are Samsung, Oppo, and vivo. Samsung ranks first with a 30.50% share, indicating that Samsung is the most memorable smartphone brand in consumers' minds and suggesting that Samsung has the highest repurchase intention among smartphone consumers in Indonesia. However, fluctuations in sales indicate that repurchase intent is unstable and influenced by various psychological and social factors. The downward trend in sales for certain brands suggests a weakening of consumers' repurchase intent, while the increase for other brands indicates stronger repurchase intent.

In the context of modern consumer behavior, smartphones are categorized as high-involvement products—that is, products that require a high level of engagement in the decision-

making process. High-involvement products are generally relatively expensive, carry high purchase risks, and have long-term consequences for users. High involvement occurs when consumers have a high level of concern regarding a purchase due to perceived risks. According to research by Gupta & Kim (2020), consumers tend to conduct a more in-depth evaluation of technology products compared to everyday products.

One of the most influential factors shaping consumer behavior today is e-WOM (electronic word of mouth). Consumers actively seek out reviews, recommendations, and experiences from other users before making a purchase decision. However, e-WOM alone is not enough to directly influence repurchase intent. e-WOM must first shape consumers' internal perceptions, such as brand image, before they decide to buy. Chen et al. (2014) state that if a brand has a positive image, customer trust in it will increase. This makes customers feel more comfortable and secure consuming products with a positive image. In addition to forming brand image perceptions, consumers facing high purchase risks also heavily consider how much they can trust the brand they intend to choose. Brand trust is a critical factor in building repurchase intent. Brand trust refers to consumers' willingness to rely on a brand's ability to fulfill its promises and functions (Stefanny et al., 2022). In the final stage of the evaluation process, after consumers integrate various information from e-WOM, form perceptions about brand image, and weigh their level of trust in a brand, they arrive at a comprehensive assessment known as brand attitude.

However, e-WOM does not directly convert stimuli into purchasing behavior. The Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework proposed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) asserts that external stimuli, such as online reviews, are first processed through internal psychological mediators before generating a behavioral response. In the context of this study, brand image (consumers' cognitive and affective perceptions of the brand), brand trust (psychological belief in the brand's reliability and integrity), and brand attitude (consumers' overall evaluative judgment of the brand) serve as mediating constructs linking e-WOM stimuli to the response of repurchase intention (Tafolli et al., 2025; Kumar et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2019).

The findings of Tafolli et al. (2025) examined only brand image and brand trust as mediators in the fashion industry in Albania, whereas Kumar et al. (2024) focused on brand image and brand attitude in a more general context. The novelty of this study lies in: (1) Integrating all three mediators simultaneously into a single model for high-involvement technology products in emerging markets. This study is the only one to examine brand image, brand trust, and brand attitude in an integrated manner as mediators in the relationship between e-WOM and repurchase intention among smartphone consumers in West Sumatra. (2) It provides theoretical and empirical novelty relevant to the marketing management literature.

Literature Review

Teori Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR)

This study is based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) Theory, first proposed by Mehrabian and Russel (1974) as a grand theory—a psychological model that explains human behavior as a three-stage process. Based on this theoretical framework, online reviews—functioning as stimuli—can influence consumers' emotions and trust as forms of internal (organismic) responses, which in turn positively impact repurchase intention (response). Based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) Theory by Mehrabian and Russell (1974), this concept emphasizes that perceptions of visual e-WOM—such as images or video reviews—can reinforce consumers' positive perceptions of a brand and shape their online repurchase intentions.

Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) refers to the exchange of information among consumers via digital platforms, including positive or negative opinions about products or brands. This plays a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions and decisions (Nguyen et al., 2025). Electronic Word of Mouth is the exchange of information or evaluations—whether positive or negative—shared by potential consumers, current consumers, or former consumers via digital media or the internet.

Brand Image is defined as the perception stored in consumers' memories regarding a brand. A positive brand image builds consumer trust and increases the likelihood of repeat purchases (Hoang & Tung, 2023). Brand image is a subjective perception formed in consumers' minds as a result of personal experiences, marketing communications, social interactions, and information from the surrounding environment.

Brand Trust refers to consumers' willingness to rely on a brand based on its perceived reliability and integrity. It is a key factor in building long-term relationships with consumers (Kumar et al., 2021). Brand trust can be defined as consumers' psychological belief that a brand is reliable, honest, and capable of meeting their expectations and interests.

Brand Attitude represents consumers' overall evaluation of a brand, reflecting their feelings and preferences toward that brand. Consumers with positive brand attitudes are more likely to identify with a brand, pay a premium price, and have a higher purchase intention (Kudeshia, 2017). Brand attitude is a consumer's internal, comprehensive evaluation or assessment of a brand, encompassing its direction (positive/negative).

Repurchase Intention This is influenced by an individual's cognitive and emotional evaluation of their likelihood of repurchasing the same product in the future (Chou Shihyu, 2017). Repurchase intention refers to the degree to which a consumer is likely to repurchase or use a product or service from the same brand in the future.

The Effect of E-WOM on Repurchase Intention

Jalilvand & Samiei (2012) state that reviews and recommendations shared on social media play a role in determining repurchase intention. When the information received is positive and consistent with previous consumption experiences, it encourages the formation of repurchase intention. Empirical findings indicate that e-WOM influences repurchase intention, as demonstrated in the study by Charo et al. (2015), which showed that consumer-to-consumer communication via digital media can influence consumers' tendency to purchase a product. Thus, e-WOM can be understood not only as a means of information exchange among consumers but as a determining factor that ultimately influences consumers to make repeat purchases.

Liang et al. (2017) explain that the exchange of information on digital platforms allows consumers to obtain product evaluations based on other users' experiences before making their next purchase. These findings are also consistent with the research by El-baz (2016), which shows that e-WOM has a positive and significant influence on repurchase intention. This indicates that the more positive the information circulating in the digital environment, the higher the tendency for consumers to form repurchase intentions toward that product. Thus, e-WOM can be understood not only as a means of information exchange among consumers but also as a key factor shaping consumer perceptions, beliefs, and evaluations, which ultimately influence the formation of repurchase intentions.

H1: E-WOM has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention.

The Effect of E-WOM on Brand image

The literature indicates that consumer experiences and evaluations shared online can serve as a source of social reference that influences other consumers' perceptions of a brand (Bambauer-Sachse & Mangold, 2011). Empirical research shows that exposure to e-WOM can strengthen brand image because consumers tend to use other users' experiences as a basis for influencing brand perceptions before making repeat purchases (Chatterjee, 2020). Jalilvand & Samiei (2012) found that e-WOM communication can enhance positive perceptions of a brand because information shared by other consumers is considered more credible and relevant to consumer needs.

According to Tiltay (2014), e-WOM influences brand image. El-baz (2016), who conducted research on e-WOM regarding smartphone products in Egypt, found that e-WOM has a significant influence on brand image. Thus, it is clear that in today's digital age, the experiences and opinions consumers share through online platforms are not merely supplementary information, but have become one of the key factors in shaping a strong and sustainable brand image in the minds of consumers.

H2: E-WOM has a positive and significant effect on brand image.

The Impact of E-WOM on Brand Trust

When the information circulating is positive and consistent with consumer expectations, it tends to increase, thereby fostering stronger brand trust (Abubakar, 2016). Other empirical evidence indicates that the intensity of consumer interaction with e-WOM positively contributes to the formation of brand trust, as consumers view other users' experiences as relevant references in assessing product credibility (Steffany et al., 2022). E-WOM functions not only as a medium for information exchange but also as a social mechanism that influences consumers' perceptions of a brand (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). Therefore, e-WOM can be understood not merely as an ordinary communication channel, but as a mechanism for building trust that actively operates in consumers' minds and has a direct impact on the strength or weakness of a brand's trust.

H3: E-WOM has a positive and significant effect on brand trust

The Effect of E-WOM on Brand Attitude

Most researchers agree that positive e-WOM about a brand can create positive brand associations, improve consumer attitudes toward the value offered by a brand, and foster perceived interactions, which in turn enhance brand attitudes (Wu et al., 2011). Additionally, other studies suggest that positive reviews have a positive contagion effect, which ultimately influences individuals' attitudes toward the brand (Park Hyun Hee, 2016). Bambauer-Sachse & Mangold (2011) indicate that the intensity of consumer engagement with e-WOM correlates with the level of an individual's attention and exposure to e-WOM, which in turn correlates with the extent of its influence on brand attitude. In other words, the higher an individual's level of attention and exposure to e-WOM, the greater the likelihood that such information will influence the brand evaluation process conducted by consumers.

Thus, brand attitudes can be influenced by e-WOM. However, there is also some evidence that positive brand attitudes are more likely to trigger e-WOM (Chu & Sung, 2015). Therefore, in this study, we assume that brand attitudes and e-WOM are correlated without treating one as the cause and the other as the effect. Therefore, in this study, the relationship between e-WOM and brand attitude is treated as a correlational relationship rather than a one-way causal relationship; consequently, the resulting analysis is expected to better reflect the reality of consumer behavior in the complex and interconnected digital age.

H4: E-WOM has a positive and significant effect on brand attitude

The Influence of Brand Image on Repurchase Intention

Brand image not only reflects how consumers perceive a brand but also determines the level of consumer preference in the repurchase intention process (Lien et al., 2015). According to Razy (2015), a strong brand image is positively correlated with repurchase intention, indicating that a positive brand perception increases the likelihood of repurchasing. This aligns with the findings of Jalilvand & Samiei (2012), who discovered that brand image indirectly influences repurchase intention.

The findings of Tiltay's (2014) study on e-WOM, brand image, and purchase intention indicate that brand image influences repurchase intention, consistently showing that a strong and positive brand image increases consumers' repurchase intention. When customers associate a brand with trust and quality, they are more likely to choose that brand over others, even if alternatives are cheaper or have similar features. Thus, building and maintaining a positive brand image is not merely a short-term strategy for attracting new customers, but a long-term strategic investment that directly contributes to the sustainability of repeat purchases.

H5: Brand image has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention

The Effect of Brand Trust on Repurchase Intention

Brand trust is a psychological factor that plays a significant role in shaping consumers' propensity to repurchase. This indicates that the higher the level of consumer trust in a brand, the greater the likelihood that consumers will intend to repurchase (Bakim & Alma, 2014). This relationship is further supported by Moslehpour et al. (2024), who found that brand trust is not only related to rational aspects but also involves an emotional bond between the consumer and the brand.

When consumers have a high level of trust, they tend to engage in repeat purchases and maintain an ongoing relationship with the brand (Chinomona & Maziriri, 2017). Thus, building strong brand trust is not just about maintaining a brand's reputation in the short term, but is the key foundation that determines the long-term sustainability of the relationship between consumers and the brand.

H6: Brand trust has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention

The Effect of Brand Attitude on Repurchase Intention

Consumer attitudes toward a brand are one of the psychological factors that play a key role in shaping repurchase intention. This encourages consumers to exhibit behavior that is more beneficial to the brand, such as a willingness to pay a higher price, as well as a stronger tendency to make repeat purchases (Kudhesia, 2017). Furthermore, according to Liao & Chung (2019), positive consumer attitudes toward a brand ultimately increase their likelihood of purchasing its products or services.

Furthermore, according to Lee et al. (2023), brand attitude is a key determinant in shaping repurchase intention, as a positive attitude increases consumers' confidence in the benefits of the product being offered. Findings from various empirical studies consistently support this relationship, showing that consumers who hold a positive attitude toward a brand will have higher levels of trust, be more resistant to competitors' enticements, and be more likely to make repeat purchases. Thus, companies that are able to build and maintain a positive brand attitude in the minds of consumers will have a sustainable competitive advantage, as a strong brand attitude essentially creates a foundation of loyalty that is not easily shaken by price changes or the emergence of new product alternatives in the market.

H7: Brand attitude has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention

The Role of Brand Image in Mediating the Effect of E-WOM on Repurchase Intention

The relationship between electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), brand image, and repurchase intention can be understood through the mechanism of consumer perception formation in a digital environment. Thus, brand image serves as a psychological mechanism that translates information from e-WOM into a more stable evaluation of a brand (Lin et al., 2013). In turn, e-WOM serves as a bridge connecting brand image with repurchase intention (Lien et al., 2015). Brand image has a positive mediating effect on the relationship between e-WOM and repurchase intention, meaning that brand image can function as a positive link between e-WOM and repurchase intention. Therefore, brand image can be viewed as a psychological mechanism that bridges the influence of e-WOM on repurchase intention, making its inclusion essential as a mediating variable in explaining the relationship between these two variables.

Furthermore, the brand image formed from various sources of information will create a positive perception of value in consumers' minds, thereby increasing the likelihood of repurchase intent (Siddiqi et al., 2019). In other words, the stronger and more positive the brand image successfully built through e-WOM, the greater the likelihood that consumers will form a repurchase intention for that brand's products. The role of brand image as a mediating variable in this relationship is not merely a theoretical assumption but is supported by various empirical findings showing that the influence of e-WOM on repurchase intention becomes stronger and more significant when mediated by a positive brand image. Therefore, positioning brand image as a mediating variable in this study is a theoretically sound and empirically relevant choice for explaining the dynamics of consumer behavior in the digital age.

H8: Brand image mediates the relationship between e-WOM and repurchase intention

The Role of Brand Trust in Mediating the Effect of E-WOM on Repurchase Intention

Liao & Chung (2019) found that exposure to information and consumer reviews on digital platforms can strengthen consumers' confidence in a brand's reliability and credibility, which ultimately fosters the intention to repurchase. This finding is supported by Bhandari & Rodgers (2018), who assert that e-WOM not only serves as a source of information but also tends to be perceived as more authentic than corporate marketing communications. Furthermore, Moskehpour et al. (2024) argue that e-WOM can alter trust levels, which in turn influence consumer purchase intent. Furthermore, it highlights the significant impact of brand trust on purchase intention, particularly in contexts where trust enhances marketing effectiveness. When e-WOM is able to build a high level of trust, consumers tend to reduce perceived risk and increase their confidence in the product's benefits, which ultimately drives the formation of repurchase intention.

These findings are supported by Kala et al. (2024), who confirm that brand trust acts as a mediating variable that bridges the relationship between e-WOM and repurchase intention. This means that the influence of e-WOM on repurchase intention does not occur directly, but rather through a process of internalizing information that shapes beliefs regarding the brand's integrity, credibility, and consistency. When e-WOM is able to build a high level of trust, consumers tend to reduce their perception of risk and increase their belief in the product's benefits, which ultimately drives the formation of repurchase intention. Thus, treating brand trust as a mediating variable in the framework of the relationship between e-WOM and repurchase intention is not merely a methodological choice, but an accurate representation of how consumers psychologically evaluate and trust a brand in the digital age, which is saturated with information.

H9: Brand trust mediates the relationship between e-WOM and repurchase intention

The Role of Brand Attitude in Mediating the Effect of E-WOM on Repurchase Intention

Bambauer-Sachse & Mangold (2011) state that consumers positively align e-WOM messages with their perceptions of brand attitudes if they are more easily influenced by e-WOM, thereby increasing their intention to repurchase as well, since consumers assess the brand as capable of meeting their expected consumption needs. This finding is reinforced by Ballantine & Yeung (2015), whose research has shown that a key determinant in the formation of repurchase intent is that a positive attitude toward a brand not only reflects satisfaction or a rational evaluation of the product but also reflects an emotional attachment that reinforces consumer purchasing behavior. Furthermore, Kumar et al. (2024) also confirm that brand attitudes formed through exposure to e-WOM have direct implications for consumers' tendency to repurchase products from the same brand.

e-WOM is effective in influencing repurchase intent when the information received helps build a positive and consistent brand image in consumers' minds (Ramesh, 2019). It is important to note that the effectiveness of e-WOM in influencing repurchase behavior depends heavily on its ability to shift or reinforce consumers' attitudes toward a brand; without the formation of positive and consistent attitudes, circulating digital information will not be able to drive sustained repurchase intent. Thus, positioning brand attitude as a mediating variable within this research framework is strongly justified both theoretically and empirically, and provides a deeper understanding of the psychological mechanisms linking digital communication to consumer behavior.

H10: Brand attitude mediates the relationship between e-WOM and repurchase intention

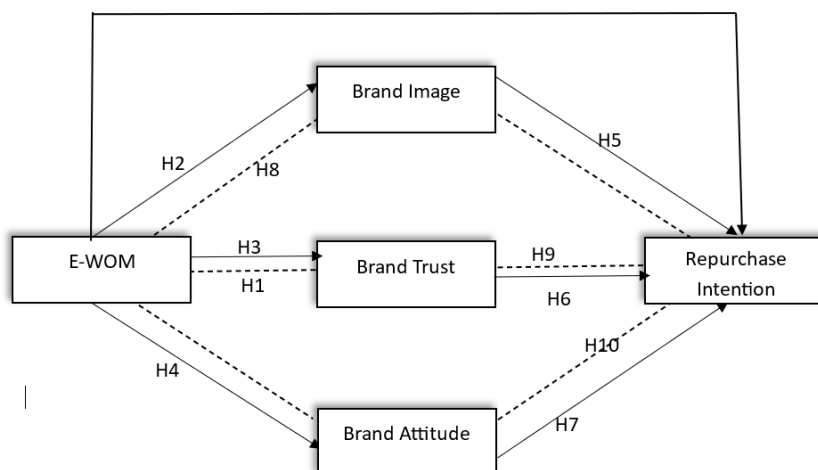


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHODS

This study employs a quantitative approach. The population consists of smartphone consumers in West Sumatra, specifically users of Samsung, Oppo, and Vivo devices. The sampling technique used is non-probability sampling, specifically purposive sampling based on specific criteria. West Sumatra comprises 12 regencies and 7 cities, totaling 19 administrative areas; therefore, 3 cities and 3 regencies within West Sumatra were selected.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). The analysis method used was Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which allows for the simultaneous examination of relationships between variables. The sample size in this study was 140 respondents. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire distributed online (Google Form).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Characteristics and Respondent Categories

Table 1. Characteristics and Respondent Categories

Characteristics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Women	96	68,6%
	Male	44	31,4%
Age	17-20	12	8,5%
	21-25	54	38,6%
	26-30	33	23,6%
	31-35	26	18,6%
	>35	15	10,7%
	Education	High School/Vocational School	32
Diploma I/II/III		78	56%
S1/Diploma IV		9	6%
S2		0	0%
S3			
Jobs		Student	20
	PNS	27	19,3%
	Entrepreneur	20	14,3%
	Private Employees	46	33%
	Miscellaneous	27	19,3%
Revenue	<Rp.2.000.000	15	10,7%
	Rp.2.000.000- Rp.4.000.000	50	35,7%
	Rp.4.000.000- Rp.6.000.000	42	30%
	>Rp.6.000.000	22	15,7%
	No income	11	7,9%

Source: Primary Data 2026 (Processed)

Based on the table above, the respondents in this study were predominantly female, totaling 96 people, or 68.6%. In terms of age, 54 respondents, or 38.6%, were in the 21–25 age group. Furthermore, in terms of education, the group was dominated by those holding a

bachelor's degree or Diploma IV, totaling 78 respondents or 56%. Then, based on occupation, the group was dominated by private sector employees, totaling 46 people or 33%, and based on income, the group was dominated by those earning between Rp.2,000,000 and Rp.4,000,000, totaling 50 respondents or 35.7%.

Outer Model Measurement

Convergent validity is determined by examining the correlation between item scores and construct scores. An individual indicator is considered valid when it has an outer loading of 0.50 or higher and an AVE greater than 0.50 (Hair et al., 2020). The following are the results of the convergent validity test, based on outer loading and AVE values.

Table 2. Outer Loading

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	AVE
Repurchase Intention	RI1	0.865	0,758
	RI2	0.876	
E-WOM	E1	0.765	0,632
	E2	0.833	
	E3	0.786	
Brand image	BI1	0.803	0,621
	BI2	0.854	
	BI3	0.700	
Brand trust	BT1	0.731	0,562
	BT2	0.747	
	BT3	0.771	
Brand attitude	BA1	0.794	0,616
	BA2	0.806	
	BA3	0.754	

Source: Primary Data 2026 (Processed)

Based on the outer loading results in Table 2, the indicators for each variable have yielded convergent validity with factor loadings >0.50 . Another method that can be used to assess convergent validity is to examine the AVE values; if the AVE is greater than 0.5, the construct can be considered valid. From the results in the table above, a factor loading value >0.50 indicates that all data in this study are valid. Convergent validity can also be assessed by examining the AVE value. The purpose is to measure the level of variance of a construct component derived from its indicators. The recommended AVE value should be greater than 0.5.

Table 3. Results of the Discriminant Validity Test Based on Cross-Loading

	Brand attitude	Brand image	Brand trust	E-WOM	Repurchase intention
BA1	0.794	0.333	0.274	0.449	0.40
BA2	0.806	0.373	0.402	0.378	0.435
BA3	0.754	0.328	0.306	0.319	0.452
BI1	0.378	0.803	0.416	0.428	0.440
BI2	0.387	0.854	0.459	0.458	0.416
BI3	0.258	0.700	0.546	0.398	0.298
BT1	0.293	0.326	0.731	0.418	0.391
BT2	0.222	0.429	0.747	0.419	0.300
BT3	0.392	0.552	0.771	0.515	0.490
E1	0.384	0.452	0.453	0.765	0.367

E2	0.427	0.402	0.486	0.833	0.449
E3	0.360	0.443	0.509	0.786	0.374
RI1	0.511	0.392	0.445	0.416	0.865
RI2	0.486	0.466	0.492	0.453	0.876

Source: Primary Data 2026 (Processed)

Based on Table 3, it can be seen that the correlation coefficients for the indicators of brand image, brand trust, brand attitude, EWOM, and repurchase intention are higher than the correlation coefficients for these indicators with other variables. This indicates that all the indicators tested in this study are valid, leading to the conclusion that all the indicators in this study possess good discriminant validity.

Tabel 4. Reliability and Validity Constructs

Variabel	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reability (rho-a)	Composite reability (rho-c)	Description
Brand attitude	0,689	0,692	0,828	Reliable
Brand image	0,693	0,707	0,830	Reliable
Brand trust	0,617	0,622	0,794	Reliable
E-wom	0,708	0,709	0,837	Reliable
Repurchase intention	0,682	0,682	0,863	Reliable

Source: Primary Data 2026 (Processed)

Based on the results of the instrument validation in Table 4, all variables are considered reliable if they have a Cronbach's Alpha value ranging from 0.6 to 0.7, which is acceptable at the exploratory stage (Hair et al., 2022). In Table 3, all research variable constructs have values indicating that all variables meet the established standards for reliability and construct validity.

Inner Model Measurement

The most commonly used measure for evaluating structural models is the coefficient of determination (R^2). According to Hair et al. (2020), the higher the explanatory power of the PLS structural model, the better the prediction of the endogenous variable. The range of R^2 values is 0 to 1, where 0 indicates no relationship and 1 indicates a perfect relationship. An R^2 value of 0.75 indicates a strong model, 0.50 a moderate one, and 0.25 a weak one. The most commonly used measure for evaluating structural models is the coefficient of determination (R^2 value). According to Hair et al. (2020), the higher the explanatory power of the PLS structural model, the better the prediction of the endogenous variables. The range of R^2 values is 0 to 1, where 0 indicates no relationship and 1 indicates a perfect relationship. An R^2 value of 0.75 indicates a strong model, 0.50 a moderate one, and 0.25 a weak one.

Table 5. R-Square

Variable	R-square	Adjusted R-square
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Brand attitude	0,241	0,236
Brand image	0,296	0,291
Brand trust	0,369	0,365
Repurchase intention	0,451	0,440

Source: Primary Data 2026 (Processed)

As shown in Table 5, the R-Square value for the brand attitude variable is 0.241. This value indicates that 24.1% of the variation in brand attitude can be explained by the influencing variables in this research model, while the remaining 75.9% is explained by other factors outside the model. This indicates that the model's predictive ability regarding brand attitude is still classified as weak to moderate.

Furthermore, the R-Square value for the brand image variable is 0.296. This means that 29.6% of the variation in brand image can be explained by the independent variables in this study, while the remaining 70.4% is influenced by other variables not included in the model. For the brand trust variable, an R-Square value of 0.369 was obtained. This value indicates that 36.9% of the variation in brand trust can be explained by the constructs in the research model, while the remaining 63.1% is influenced by other factors outside the model.

The R-Square value for the repurchase intention variable is 0.451. This means that 45.1% of the variation in repurchase intention can be explained by the variables tested in this study, while the remaining 54.9% is explained by other variables not examined in this study. This finding indicates that the model has a relatively stronger explanatory power regarding repurchase intention compared to other variables, although it still leaves considerable room for external factors outside the model.

Hypothesis Test Results

This section presents the results of the hypothesis testing using the SEM-PLS approach. The hypotheses were evaluated based on the t-statistic and p-values obtained from bootstrapping. A hypothesis was considered significant if the t-statistic was >1.96 and the p-value was <0.05.

Table 6. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Pathway	Original Sample (O)	T-Statistics	P-Value	Description
Direct Impact					
H1	E-WOM >Repurchase intention	0.448	6.999	0.000	Accepted
H2	E-WOM -> Brand image	0.544	6.940	0.000	Accepted
H3	E-WOM -> Brand trust	0.608	7.687	0.000	Accepted
H4	E-WOM -> Brand attitude	0.491	6.578	0.000	Accepted
H5	Brand image->Repurchase intention	0.155	1.840	0.066	Rejected
H6	Brand trust->Repurchase intention	0.286	3.321	0.001	Accepted
H7	Brand attitude->Repurchase intention	0.386	5.138	0.000	Accepted

	intention				
Indirect Impact					
H8	E-WOM -> Brand image-> Repurchase intention	0.084	1.700	0.089	Rejected
H9	E-WOM -> Brand trust -> Repurchase intention	0.174	2.895	0.004	Accepted
H10	E-WOM -> Brand attitude -> Repurchase intention	0.189	3.929	0.000	Accepted

Source: Primary Data 2026 (Processed)

DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis conducted, it was found that e-WOM influences repurchase intention. The results of this study indicate that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention among smartphone users in West Sumatra. In the context of the smartphone market, which is a high-involvement product, consumers tend to face greater functional and financial risks. Field findings indicate that smartphone consumers in West Sumatra who actively read and follow digital reviews tend to have a stronger intention to repurchase brands that consistently receive positive ratings. This finding aligns with the research by Liang et al. (2017), which explains that information interactions occurring on digital platforms allow consumers to access other users' experiences before deciding to make their next purchase. This is also consistent with the research by Tafolli et al. (2025), which states that e-WOM has a direct influence on purchase intent. Similarly, El-baz's (2016) study, which specifically examined e-WOM for smartphone products, found that e-WOM has a positive and significant influence on repurchase intention.

Based on the analysis conducted, it was found that e-WOM has an influence on brand image. The results of this study indicate that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has a positive and significant effect on brand image for smartphones in West Sumatra. E-WOM positively enhances trust in the brand. The better the e-WOM, the higher the brand image, and the more favorable the brand is perceived by smartphone consumers. This finding aligns with the research by Jalilvand & Samiei (2012), which indicates that e-WOM communication can enhance positive perceptions of a brand because information shared by other consumers is perceived as more credible and relevant to the needs of potential consumers compared to promotional messages from the company itself. Bambauer-Sachse & Mangold (2011) also emphasize that consumer experiences and evaluations shared online can serve as a source of social reference that influences brand perceptions among other consumers.

Based on the analysis conducted, it was found that e-WOM influences brand trust. The results of this study indicate that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has a positive and significant effect on brand trust regarding smartphones in West Sumatra. These findings confirm that the intensity and credibility of information disseminated through e-WOM make a substantial contribution to shaping consumer trust in smartphone brands. This study aligns with Tafolli et al. (2025), who confirmed that e-WOM significantly influences brand trust. Furthermore, Abubakar (2016) asserts that when information circulating via e-WOM is positive and consistent with consumer expectations regarding brand reliability and integrity, trust in the brand tends to form more strongly and sustainably. Bhandari & Rodgers (2018) also reinforce these findings by stating that consumers tend to view other users' experiences disseminated through e-WOM as more authentic information compared to corporate marketing communications, so its impact on brand trust formation is far greater.

Based on the analysis conducted, it was found that e-WOM influences brand attitude. The results of this study indicate that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has a significant effect on brand attitude among smartphone users in West Sumatra. These findings confirm that information, reviews, and recommendations circulating digitally make a substantial contribution to shaping consumer attitudes toward brands. Based on the empirical findings in this study, this research aligns with the study by Kumar et al. (2024) regarding the positive influence of e-WOM on brand attitude. This study is consistent with Wu et al. (2011), who assert that positive e-WOM about a brand can create positive brand associations, enhance consumers' perceptions of the value offered, and ultimately strengthen overall brand attitude. Additionally, supporting research includes Park Hyun Hee (2016), who states that positive reviews generate a positive contagion effect, which ultimately influences individuals' attitudes toward the brand.

Based on the analysis conducted, it was found that brand image does not influence repurchase intention. The results of this study indicate that brand image has a positive but insignificant effect on repurchase intention for smartphones in West Sumatra. This finding confirms that brand image does not yet have sufficient power to directly drive consumers' repurchase decisions. These findings align with the research by Santiko & Huda (2025), which states that the brand image variable does not influence repurchase intention. Consumers generally make purchasing decisions in a more rational and practical manner, so they tend to evaluate products based on tangible benefits and product performance, rather than brand image alone. These findings align with the research by Praja & Haryono (2022), which found that brand image has a positive but insignificant influence on repurchase intention, as the study explained that consumers prioritize product satisfaction and quality over brand image alone when forming repurchase intentions. This study does not align with the research by Tafolli et al. (2025), which states that brand image has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention. Brand image has a positive but not direct and significant influence on the repurchase intention of smartphone consumers in West Sumatra.

Based on the analysis conducted, it was found that brand trust influences repurchase intention. The results of this study indicate that brand trust has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention among smartphone users in West Sumatra. The higher the level of consumer trust in a smartphone brand, the stronger their intention to repurchase the same brand in the future. This study aligns with Tafolli et al. (2025), who state that brand trust has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. Moslehpour et al. (2024) emphasize that trust in a brand is not solely related to rational aspects but also involves an emotional bond between the consumer and the brand. Brand trust has a real and meaningful influence on the repurchase intention of smartphone consumers in West Sumatra.

Based on the analysis conducted, it was found that brand attitude influences repurchase intention. The results of this study indicate that brand attitude has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention among smartphone users in West Sumatra. These findings confirm that consumers' positive attitudes toward a brand are a strong determinant in driving sustained repurchase decisions, as brand attitude represents a comprehensive evaluation that has been validated through prior use. Thus, these findings align with those of Kumar et al. (2024), who demonstrated that brand attitudes derived from review sites significantly influence consumer decision-making. Furthermore, Lee et al. (2023) showed that brand attitude is a key determinant in shaping repurchase intention, as a positive attitude enhances consumers' confidence in the benefits of the products offered. Based on the analysis conducted, it was found that the mediating role of brand image in e-WOM does not influence repurchase intention. The results of this study indicate that brand image does not significantly mediate the influence of e-WOM on repurchase intention, although the direction of the relationship formed is positive among smartphone users in West Sumatra; that is, e-WOM mediated by brand image tends to contribute to an increase in repurchase intention, however,

Based on the analysis conducted, it was found that the mediating role of brand image in e-WOM does not influence repurchase intention. The results of this study indicate that brand image does not significantly mediate the effect of e-WOM on repurchase intention, although the direction of the relationship is positive among smartphone users in West Sumatra. This means that e-WOM mediated by brand image tends to contribute to an increase in repurchase intention; however, this contribution is not statistically strong enough to be considered significant. This finding aligns with the research by Putri & Sienatra (2023), which found that e-WOM does not have a significant direct effect on repurchase intention. Furthermore, this study does not fully align with previous research such as that by Jalilvand & Samiei (2012).

Based on the analysis conducted, it was found that brand trust acts as a mediator in the relationship between e-WOM and repurchase intention. The results of this study indicate that brand trust plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between e-WOM and repurchase intention for smartphones in West Sumatra. This finding confirms that the influence of e-WOM on repurchase intention does not occur directly and automatically but must first go through the process of brand trust formation as a crucial psychological mechanism. This study aligns with Tafolli et al. (2025), who state that brand trust acts as a significant factor and mediator in the positive relationship between e-WOM and repurchase intention.

Based on the analysis conducted, it was found that brand attitude in e-WOM influences repurchase intention. The results of this study indicate that brand attitude acts as a significant mediating variable in the relationship between electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) and repurchase intention among smartphone users in West Sumatra. This finding confirms that the influence of e-WOM on repurchase intention does not occur solely through a direct effect but rather through the formation of brand attitude that is first established in consumers' minds. These findings align with the research by Kumar et al. (2024), which indicates that brand attitude acts as a mediator between e-WOM and repurchase intention. Furthermore, a similar study by Elseidi & El-Baz (2016) also indicates that brand attitude serves as a key mediating factor in the influence of digital communication on purchase intention.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that e-WOM is a key determinant of smartphone consumers' repurchase intention in West Sumatra. The direct effect of e-WOM on repurchase intention is confirmed, as is its effect on the three mediating constructs: brand image, brand trust, and brand attitude. Among the three mediators, brand trust and brand attitude are proven to be significant channels in translating the influence of e-WOM into repurchase behavior, while brand image does not fulfill this mediating role.

For future research, from a managerial perspective, smartphone brands targeting consumers in West Sumatra must prioritize strategies to build trust and shape attitudes within their digital communication ecosystem. Specifically, brands should invest in curating user-generated content, managing online review platforms, and responding transparently to negative feedback to protect brand trust. Additionally, social media campaigns that evoke positive emotional associations and foster community-based sharing can strengthen brand attitudes, creating a stronger cycle of repurchase. Since brand image alone is insufficient to drive repurchase, brands must move beyond awareness advertising and focus on experiential content that deepens consumer trust and emotional engagement.

Theoretically, this study makes an important contribution by validating Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework in the context of digital consumer behavior in the smartphone market of West Sumatra. The findings of this study enrich our understanding of how external stimuli in the form of e-WOM are processed internally through psychological constructs before ultimately generating a behavioral response in the form of repurchase intent. For marketing managers and brand managers of smartphone companies operating in the West Sumatra market, this study provides several concrete strategic guidelines.

Investment in e-WOM management must be a top priority because e-WOM has been proven to not only directly influence repurchase intention but also serve as a gateway to building trust and positive brand attitudes.

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