

The Effect of Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) on TikTok on Fudgybro Purchase Intention Among Generation Z in South Jakarta

Regita Rizki Safira^{1*}, Moh. Benny Alexandri², Rivani Rivani³

¹⁻³Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Padjadjaran, Bandung, Indonesia

Email: ¹⁾ regita22001@mail.unpad.ac.id, ²⁾ mohammad.benny@unpad.ac.id, ³⁾ rivani@unpad.ac.id

Received : 04 August - 2026

Accepted : 30 September - 2026

Published online : 01 October - 2026

Abstract

Despite Generation Z in Indonesia being highly active on TikTok, where organic video-based eWOM about viral food products like Fudgybro's 'Cookie Bomb' spreads through videos, and comments, research on its effect on their purchase intention remains limited. This inquiry endeavors to ascertain and dissect the sway exerted by electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) disseminated via TikTok upon the purchase intention of Fudgybro among Generation Z denizens of South Jakarta. The investigation adopts a quantitative methodology, employing a survey architecture undergirded by a Likert-scale questionnaire. The populace comprises Generation Z individuals aged 17–29 domiciled in South Jakarta who have engaged with Fudgybro content circulating on TikTok. The sample was ascertained through purposive sampling, yielding 101 respondents, with the requisite tally computed via the Lemeshow formula. Data underwent scrutiny by means of simple linear regression, facilitated by IBM SPSS Statistics version 27. The findings reveal that eWOM is positively and significantly associated with purchase intention, evinced by the regression equation $Y = 4.968 + 0.332X$, alongside a t-value of 13.979 at a significance threshold of <0.001 (<0.05), whereupon H_0 is repudiated and H_1 is corroborated. The coefficient of determination (Adjusted R Square) discloses that eWOM accounts for 66.0% of the variance manifest in purchase intention. Among the dimensions examined, Platform Assistance garnered the loftiest score (86.93%), whereas Economic Incentives languished with the most modest score (74.80%). The study culminates in the assertion that the more favorable the eWOM proliferated through TikTok, the more pronounced the purchase intention harbored by Generation Z toward Fudgybro.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Electronic Word-of-Mouth, Generation Z, Purchase Intention, TikTok.

1. Introduction

Advances in information technology have transformed communication patterns and consumer behavior in Indonesia. Wafa (2025) reports that the number of internet users in Indonesia stands at 229,428,417, or 80.66 percent of the population. This situation has driven a shift in marketing activities towards social media. Rahmawati (2025) notes that around 67 percent of MSMEs use social media as their primary marketing channel, whilst DS/innovative (2022) indicates that its use stands at 91.3 percent for marketing, 81.9 percent for sales, and 72.5 percent for building relationships with customers.

TikTok has become a key platform, particularly for Generation Z. Wafa (2025) indicates that around 42.27 percent of Generation Z use TikTok as their primary platform. The influence of social media on this group is also evident from findings by Walk-Morris (2023), which show that over 85 percent of Generation Z are influenced by social media in their purchasing decisions. RetailBoss (2024) observes that 60 percent of Generation Z unearth novel products by way of social media, with 32 percent proceeding to consummate purchases predicated upon



these discoveries. We are Social and Meltwater (2024) likewise remark that Generation Z's mean daily social media consumption clocks in at 6 hours and 44 minutes. This circumstance renders TikTok not merely a vehicle for diversion but also a milieu wherein electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) is engendered.

This phenomenon is particularly pronounced in the food industry due to TikTok's reliance on visual content and consumption experiences. Indonesia even had 157.6 million TikTok users in July 2024, making it the country with the largest number of TikTok users globally (CNN Indonesia, 2024). This situation enables food products to go viral through user-generated content and participation. This aligns with the characteristics of Generation Z, who prioritize emotional and social experiences in their consumption (Priporas et al., 2017).

One such phenomenon is the 'Cookie Bomb' from Fudgybro, a food and beverage company established in October 2018 and founded by Rayendra Abiyasa. The Cookie Bomb features a unique presentation: vanilla ice cream atop a biscuit that releases a chocolate melt when pressed. This uniqueness encourages consumers to share their experiences via TikTok. A post by @peoniestales, for example, shows consumers queuing for over an hour to get their hands on the product. The viral trend gained further momentum through the 'Cookie Bomb' challenge launched by the account @youarediee, which featured a product that did not 'explode' and had reached 22.6 million views, 925,700 likes and 8,300 shares as of 7 July 2025.

This phenomenon demonstrates that consumer experiences can evolve into content that broadens a brand's exposure. Fudgybro responded by commenting on the challenge and launching the "Cookie Bomb doesn't explode" challenge, which offered free products to consumers who shared their experiences. This interaction reflects the concept of co-creation value, the creation of value through the engagement of both the company and consumers (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). In this context, consumers also act as 'prosumers', which means the individuals who both consume and produce information (Toffler, 1980). Moca (2025) reported that 82% of Indonesian consumers had purchased products based on influencer recommendations, highlighting the growing influence of social media and digital word-of-mouth on consumer purchasing behavior.

The 'Cookie Bomb' phenomenon reflects eWOM in a more visual and participatory form. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) define eWOM as informal online communication by consumers regarding products, services or brands. On TikTok, eWOM can take the form of experience videos, reactions, challenges, comments and user-generated content. Cheung and Thadani (2012) state that eWOM from unsponsored users tends to be perceived as more authentic and trustworthy. In the case of Fudgybro, eWOM developed organically through consumer content and interactions with the brand, differing from conventional eWOM, which generally takes the form of written reviews.

Sundry investigations have substantiated the sway of eWOM upon purchase intention. Mandala et al. (2025) ascertained that eWOM wields a positive and significant effect upon purchase intention on TikTok Shop, with trust functioning as a mediating variable. Triwibowo and Achmad (2025) unearthed a positive effect of eWOM upon purchase intention, with brand image serving as a mediating variable, whilst Saputra and Jasa (2024) evinced a positive and significant effect of eWOM upon the purchase intention of TikTok users.

However, research specifically examining organic video-based eWOM on TikTok regarding Generation Z's purchase intention for viral food products remains limited. TikTok's characteristics, which combine product visualization, emotional expression, content replication, challenges and brand interaction, make the eWOM mechanism on this platform distinct from text-based media. Therefore, this study focuses on the influence of eWOM via TikTok on Generation Z's purchase intention for Fudgybro's Cookie Bomb in South Jakarta.

The selection of South Jakarta is supported by relevant demographic and consumption characteristics. The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of DKI Jakarta Province recorded the population of South Jakarta in 2024 at approximately 2.36 million, with 67.8 percent falling within the productive age group of 15–59 years. The 2024 Jakarta Statistical Profile also indicates a per capita expenditure of approximately Rp24.22 million per year. Consequently, this study is expected to expand the body of research on eWOM, Generation Z consumer behavior, and video-based digital marketing, whilst providing implications for food business operators in utilizing consumer communication to shape purchase intent.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM)

Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) constitutes a mode of communication transpiring amongst consumers by way of electronic media, whereby information, experiences, opinions, or recommendations pertaining to a product or company are conveyed. Electronic word-of-mouth is a multidimensional construct, as consumer behavior in conveying or seeking information via digital media can be driven by various motivations. This inquiry draws upon the dimensions of eWOM propounded by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004), namely platform assistance, concern for others, expressing positive feelings, social benefits, economic incentives, and advice seeking. Platform assistance describes the role of media in facilitating consumers to convey and obtain information about products. Concern for others reflects consumers' motivation to help others by providing information, experiences, or recommendations. Expressing positive feelings relates to consumers' desire to express satisfaction and positive experiences with a product. Social benefits reflect the motivation to gain social benefits through engagement in digital communities. Meanwhile, economic incentives relate to financial incentives such as rewards, promotions or compensation that may encourage consumers to share information.

2.2. Consumer Purchase Intention

Purchase intention denotes the proclivity or inclination of consumers to effectuate a purchase subsequent to procuring information and deliberating upon a product. Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) explain that purchase intention is part of the consumer decision-making process that indicates an interest in a particular product. Kotler and Keller (2016) posit that purchase intention constitutes the consumer's proclivity to elect and procure a product predicated upon perceptions, needs, motivations, and the information garnered. Purchase intention may arise after consumers receive stimuli from their environment, including information from social media, user reviews, or recommendations from other consumers. During this process, consumers may seek additional information, weigh up the benefits and risks, and compare a product with other alternatives.

2.3. Consumer Behavior in the Digital Environment

Consumer behavior constitutes the process pertaining to the activities of seeking out, electing, procuring, utilizing, and appraising products or services with a view to satisfying needs and desires (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). Schiffman et al. (2010) elucidate that consumer behavior is swayed not solely by rational deliberations but also by psychological and social determinants that mould consumers' perceptions and judgments. Engel et al. (1986) expound that the consumer decision-making process encompasses problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase evaluation.

2.4. The Relationship between Electronic Word-of-Mouth and Purchase Intention

Electronic word-of-mouth is intimately entwined with purchase intention, insofar as information disseminated by fellow consumers may serve as a touchstone in the product evaluation process. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) elucidate that consumers may be impelled to divulge their experiences and opinions regarding a product owing to a yearning to assist other consumers, to articulate positive sentiments, or to reap certain benefits. The information consumers glean via eWOM can thereupon sway their perceptions, trust, and appraisal of a product. Fu et al. (2011) demonstrate that the quality and quantity of eWOM information can influence consumers' perceptions of value and trust in a product. Zhao et al. (2020) likewise reveal that eWOM plays a part in shaping consumer trust and purchase intention within a social commerce milieu. Jeong and Jang (2011) emphasize that the valence and credibility of messages are key aspects in determining the effectiveness of eWOM. Positive information deemed credible tends to foster a more favourable perception of a product, whilst negative information may instil doubt regarding purchasing decisions. In the context of TikTok, eWOM can emerge through review videos, testimonials, comments, or user reaction videos that provide an insight into real-life experiences with a product. For viral food products such as Fudgybro, such content can increase attention, provide information, and generate consumer interest prior to making a purchase. Findings by Dwiputri and Syahputra (2023) also indicate the influence of eWOM on purchase intent. Based on this analysis, eWOM is seen to play a role in shaping consumer purchase intent, particularly among Generation Z, who actively use social media as a source of product information.

2.5. Theoretical Framework

The evolution of social media has metamorphosed the manner in which consumers procure information and forge perceptions of a product. TikTok functions not merely as a wellspring of entertainment but also as a venue for the exchange of information and consumption experiences via video reviews, comments, recommendations, and sundry forms of user-generated content. These conditions position eWOM as one of the information sources capable of influencing the consumer evaluation process. In this study, eWOM was measured across six dimensions: platform assistance, concern for others, expressing positive feelings, social benefits, economic incentives, and advice seeking, as outlined by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004). Meanwhile, purchase intention is gauged through product interest, purchase intention, and recommendation intention, predicated upon Schiffman and Kanuk (2007). Predicated upon theory and antecedent research findings, information procured through eWOM can mould consumer perceptions and trust, which in turn galvanize interest and the intention to purchase. Consequently, this study construes electronic word-of-mouth as the independent variable (X) and purchase interest as the dependent variable (Y). This theoretical scaffold furnishes the basis for empirically examining the influence of eWOM upon purchase interest in Fudgybro products amongst Generation Z in South Jakarta.

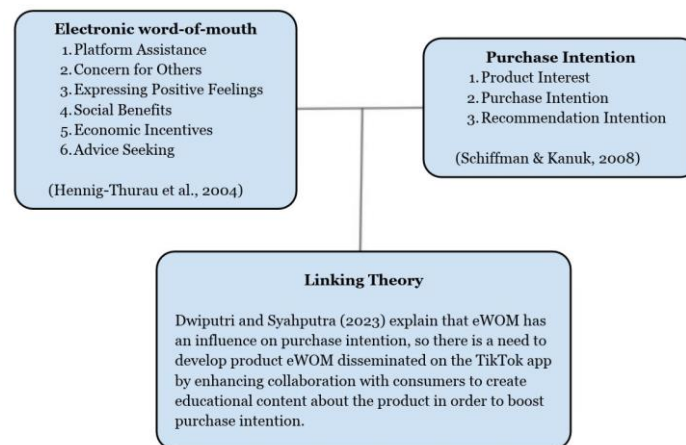


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
Source: Compiled by the researcher, 2026

Based on the conceptual framework depicted in Figure 1, here are the hypotheses used in this study.

H₀: There is no significant effect of eWOM on purchase intention.

H₁: There is a significant effect of eWOM on purchase intention.

3. Methods

3.1. Research Approach

This study employs an explanatory quantitative approach to scrutinize the influence of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) upon consumer purchase intention. A quantitative approach was espoused inasmuch as the research data were amassed via a closed-ended questionnaire and subjected to statistical analysis to examine the relationships between variables (Muhajirin et al., 2024). This approach also employs a deductive mindset, which involves testing concepts or theories through empirical data obtained from respondents (Hair et al., 2015).

3.2. Research Methods and Design

This study availed itself of a survey method undergirded by an explanatory quantitative design. Data were amassed via a closed-ended questionnaire employing a four-point Likert scale, which was disseminated to Generation Z TikTok users domiciled in South Jakarta. The survey design was elected inasmuch as it empowered the researcher to procure data systematically so as to gauge the relationship and influence betwixt eWOM as the independent variable and purchase intention as the dependent variable (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). An explanatory research design was enlisted inasmuch as the study aspired to elucidate the relationship and predictive association betwixt variables and to put the formulated hypotheses to the test (Jannah, 2006). Data on both variables were collected from the same respondents through a single questionnaire at one point in time (cross-sectional).

3.3. Research Location and Timeframe

The research was conducted in South Jakarta, focusing on the food product 'Fudgybro', which has gained recognition through its content and virality on the TikTok platform. The location was selected purposefully based on the suitability of the area's characteristics and the respondents' profiles in relation to the phenomenon under investigation. The research was carried out from September 2025 to April 2026, encompassing the pre-research phase, the

development and pilot testing of instruments, the distribution of questionnaires, data collection and processing, analysis of results, supplementary interviews, and the drafting and finalization of the research. The research location and timeframe were determined based on their relevance to the research objectives and ease of access to respondents (Sugiyono, 2017).

3.4. Data Sources

Primary data constitutes data procured forthwith from the research wellsprings. In this study, primary data was procured through the dissemination of an online questionnaire to Generation Z individuals domiciled in South Jakarta, who are active devotees of TikTok and have hitherto engaged with Fudgybro content thereupon. The questionnaire instrument was fashioned predicated upon the indicators of the eWOM and purchase intention variables established within the theoretical review (Sugiyono, 2017).

Secondary data was used as supporting data obtained from books, scientific journals, articles, documentation, and online sources relevant to eWOM, TikTok, purchase intention, and the Fudgybro marketing phenomenon. Secondary data was used to strengthen the theoretical framework, provide context for the research phenomenon, and support the interpretation of the research findings (Sugiyono, 2017).

3.5. Population and Sample

The population in this study comprises Generation Z aged 17–29 who reside in or are active in South Jakarta and use TikTok. This population was selected because Generation Z is characterized as a group that is closely engaged with social media and digital content, making it relevant to research on eWOM and purchase intent via TikTok. The population comprises all elements possessing specific characteristics and forming the target of the research (Jannah, 2006; Malhotra & Birks, 2015).

A sample constitutes a subset of the population culled on the basis of specific characteristics so as to ensure it stands representative of the research population. The sampling technique enlisted was purposive sampling, entailing the selection of respondents predicated upon criteria congruent with the research objectives.

The respondents in this study were individuals aged 17-29 years, domiciled in South Jakarta, who actively partake of TikTok, have hitherto engaged with Fudgybro content thereupon, have never made a purchase from Fudgybro, and evinced willingness to complete the questionnaire in its entirety. The criterion of no prior purchase aligns with the research focus on purchase intention, so respondents who had already purchased were excluded. Meanwhile, the criterion of prior engagement with Fudgybro content was instituted so as to ensure respondents possessed experience of eWOM exposure germane to the subject of the study.

The sample size was ascertained via the Lemeshow formula, given that the precise magnitude of the population satisfying the study's characteristics remained unknown. Consequently, the minimum sample size amounted to 96 respondents. To guarantee data sufficiency for the study, the tally of respondents was fixed at 101.

3.6. Data Collection Methods

Data collection for this study was undertaken by way of questionnaires, a literature review and internet searches, as well as interviews. Questionnaires served as the principal instrument for procuring primary data from respondents online via Google Forms. Literature reviews and internet searches were carried out to obtain theories, previous research, and relevant information regarding eWOM, TikTok, purchase intent, and Fudgybro. In addition, a limited number of interviews were conducted with the Fudgybro marketing team and several

consumers to obtain supporting information that could help strengthen the interpretation of the questionnaire results.

3.7. Data Processing Techniques

The data collected via the questionnaire was then systematically processed prior to statistical analysis. Data processing involved checking the completeness and consistency of responses (editing), assigning numerical codes to respondents' answers (coding), and entering and organising the data into tables (tabulating). The data is then entered into the SPSS programme for statistical analysis.

3.8. Data Measurement Techniques

Variables in this study were gauged via a four-point Likert scale so as to appraise respondents' attitudes, perceptions, and degrees of concurrence with each statement proffered in the questionnaire. A score of 1 signifies "Strongly Disagree," a score of 2 signifies "Disagree," a score of 3 signifies "Agree," and a score of 4 signifies "Strongly Agree." The deployment of four categories is intended to diminish respondents' propensity to elect a neutral rejoinder. The Likert scale was enlisted as it proves apt for gauging respondents' attitudes, opinions, and perceptions vis-à-vis social phenomena (Sugiyono, 2017).

3.9. Variable Operationalization

This study comprises two variables which are electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) as the independent variable (X) and purchase intention as the dependent variable (Y). The eWOM variable is measured through six dimensions based on Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004), namely platform assistance, concern for others, expressing positive feelings, social benefits, economic incentives, and advice seeking. Platform assistance refers to the role of media in helping consumers convey and obtain information about products, and concern for others refers to consumers' motivation to help others by providing information, experiences, or recommendations, whilst the purchase intention variable is measured through the dimensions of product interest, purchase intention, and recommendation intention (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007). All indicators were measured using a 1-4 Likert scale. The research instrument comprised 36 statements: 26 statements for the eWOM variable and 10 statements for the purchase intention variable.

3.10. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was executed via SPSS, deploying descriptive statistics and simple linear regression so as to ascertain the effect of eWOM upon purchase intention. Descriptive analysis was enlisted to depict the characteristics and tendencies manifest in respondents' answers predicated upon frequency, percentage, and mean, with a scale interval of 0.75. Subsequently, classical assumption tests were undertaken, encompassing the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test, the Glejser heteroscedasticity test, and the linearity test, so as to ensure the suitability of the regression model. Hypothesis testing was conducted via simple linear regression, the coefficient of determination (R^2), and the t-test at a significance threshold of 0.05. Furthermore, the validity of the research instruments was examined by juxtaposing the calculated r and table r values, whilst reliability was appraised via Cronbach's Alpha, with an Alpha value > 0.60 serving as the criterion for reliability.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Research Results

4.1.1. Validity and Reliability Tests

Validity testing was undertaken so as to ascertain the extent to which the research instrument proved capable of accurately gauging the variables of electronic word-of-mouth (X) and purchase intention (Y). The test was conducted by comparing the r value against the table r value at a significance threshold of 5 percent ($\alpha = 0.05$) with a sample size of 101 respondents, yielding a table r value of 0.1956. The test results disclosed that all 26 items comprising the electronic word-of-mouth variable (X) possessed calculated r values spanning from 0.506 to 0.747, whilst the 10 items comprising the purchase intention variable (Y) possessed calculated r values spanning from 0.590 to 0.805. All these values surpassed the table r value of 0.1956. Consequently, all statement items for both variables were adjudged valid and apt for deployment in the research data analysis.

Subsequently, a reliability test was conducted so as to ascertain the consistency of the instrument in gauging the research variables via Cronbach's Alpha. The instrument is adjudged reliable provided the Cronbach's Alpha value exceeds 0.60. The test results reveal that the electronic word-of-mouth variable (X) garnered a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.940 across 26 items, whilst the purchase intention variable (Y) garnered a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.893 across 10 items. Both values transcend the minimum threshold of 0.60; therefore, the instruments for both variables are adjudged reliable, evincing a lofty degree of internal consistency. Consequently, all statement items are deemed valid and reliable and may be enlisted for the ensuing data analysis stage.

4.1.2. Respondent Characteristics

Data collection was carried out in April 2026, involving 101 respondents who met the research criteria: they were active TikTok users, had previously obtained information about Fudgybro via TikTok, had never made a purchase from Fudgybro, and were resident in South Jakarta. All data from respondents who did not meet the criteria were excluded, ensuring that the analyzed respondents corresponded to the defined population characteristics. These criteria were established to ensure the data aligned with the research objectives and to minimize potential bias in data collection.

All respondents were TikTok users who had previously obtained information about Fudgybro via the platform but had never made a purchase at a Fudgybro outlet. This aligns with the research focus on examining purchase intent; consequently, respondents who had already made a purchase were excluded from the study criteria. Furthermore, all respondents reside in South Jakarta. The selection of this area is supported by a report from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of the Special Capital Region of Jakarta entitled 'Consumption Patterns of the Population of the Special Capital Region of Jakarta 2024', which indicates that the average per capita expenditure of South Jakarta residents reaches Rp3.27 million per month, the highest figure compared to other administrative cities within the Special Capital Region of Jakarta. This indicates a relatively high purchasing power and is relevant to considerations of geographical segmentation (Kotler & Keller, 2016). The definition of the study area is also in line with Sugiyono (2017), who emphasizes the importance of delimiting the object, population and area to ensure the research is more focused and targeted.

Based on the duration of TikTok usage, 87 respondents (86.1 percent) had been using TikTok for more than two years, 11 respondents (10.9 percent) for one to two years, and 3 respondents (3 percent) for less than one year. These results indicate that the majority of

respondents have had considerable experience using TikTok and are therefore relatively familiar with various forms of digital content, including electronic word of mouth (eWOM) regarding food products that are currently going viral.

By age, the respondents were predominantly in the 21-year-old age group, comprising 37 people (36.6 percent), followed by 32 people (31.7 percent) aged 22, 11 people (10.9 percent) aged 20, and 7 people (6.9 percent) aged 23. Furthermore, there were 4 respondents aged 19 (4 percent), 3 aged 28 (3 percent), 2 each aged 17, 26 and 27 (2 percent each), and 1 aged 24 (1 percent). Consequently, the study's respondents were predominantly from the 21–22 age group, which falls within Generation Z. The dominance of this age group indicates that the majority of respondents are active TikTok users and are likely to be exposed to information and emerging food trends via the platform.

4.1.3. Classical Assumption Test

A. Normality Test

A normality test was conducted so as to ascertain whether the residual data within the regression model conformed to a normal distribution. The test was undertaken via the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test and buttressed by a graphical analysis employing a normal Q-Q plot. Predicated upon Table 1, the significance value for the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test stood at 0.197, whilst that for the Shapiro-Wilk test stood at 0.310. Both significance values exceeded 0.05. It may therefore be concluded that the residual data are normally distributed.

Table 1. Normality Test Results

	Normality Test ^a					
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Unstandardized Residual	.074	101	.197	.985	101	.310
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Source: Researchers' analysis, 2026

B. Heteroscedasticity Test

A good regression model is one in which there is no heteroscedasticity.

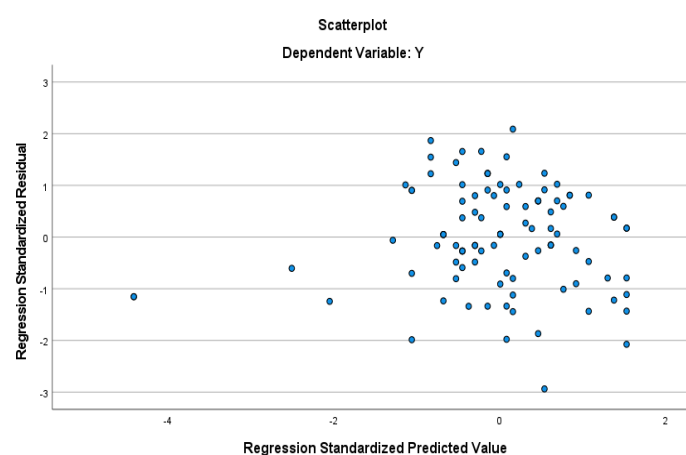


Figure 2. Scatter plot

Source: Researchers' analysis, 2026

These results are further buttressed by the scatterplot depicted in Figure 2 above, which reveals that the data points are haphazardly dispersed both above and below the value of 0 on the Y-axis (Standardized Regression Residuals). Furthermore, the data points fail to constitute

any discernible, regular configurations, such as fanning out, narrowing, or undulating patterns. Thus, visually, the scatterplot likewise corroborates that the regression model in this study remains unblemished by heteroscedasticity.

C. Linearity Test

The criterion governing the linearity test stipulates that should the significance value ensconced in the “Deviation from Linearity” row exceed 0.05, the relationship betwixt the independent and dependent variables is adjudged to be linear.

Table 2. Linearity Test Results

			ANOVA				
			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Y * X	Between Groups	(Combined)	2183.941	32	68.248	6.893	<.001
		Linearity	1896.453	1	1896.453	191.542	<.001
		Deviation from Linearity	287.489	31	9.274	.937	.569
	Within Groups		673.267	68	9.901		
Total			2857.208	100			

Source: Researchers’ analysis, 2026

Predicated upon the results of the linearity test presented in Table 2, it may be discerned that the significance value ensconced in the “Linearity” row registers <0.001, signifying a statistically significant linear relationship betwixt variable X and variable Y. Meanwhile, the significance value ensconced in the “Deviation from Linearity” row registers 0.569. This value exceeds 0.05 ($0.569 > 0.05$), betokening the absence of any significant deviation from linearity. It may therefore be concluded that the relationship betwixt variable X and variable Y is linear, and that the assumption of linearity in this study stands satisfied.

4.1.4. Regression Analysis

A. Coefficient of Determination

The coefficient of determination ranges from 0 to 1; the closer it is to 1, the greater the ability of the independent variables to explain the dependent variable.

Table 3. Coefficient of Determination

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.815 ^a	.664	.660	3.115
a. Predictors: (Constant), X				

Source: Researchers’ analysis, 2026

Looking upon the results of the analysis presented in Table 3, an Adjusted R-squared value of 0.660 was procured. This value betokens that the independent variable (X) accounts for 66.0% of the variation manifest in the dependent variable (Y), whilst the residual 34.0% is accounted for by other variables not encompassed within this research model. The R value of 0.815 likewise betokens a robust and positive relationship betwixt variable X and variable Y.

B. Hypothesis Testing (t-test)

The test criterion stipulates that should the significance level fall beneath 0.05, the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. The results of the t-test are proffered in Table 4 below.

Table 4. t-test and Regression Equations (Coefficients) Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	4.968	2.014	-	2.467	0.015
eWOM (X)	0.332	0.024	0.815	13.979	<0.001

Source: Researchers' analysis, 2026

Based on Table 4, the following simple linear regression equation was obtained:

$$Y = 4.968 + 0.332X + e$$

The regression equation delineated above may be construed thus: (1) The constant term of 4.968 signifies that should the eWOM variable equal 0, the predicted purchase intention score would stand at 4.968. (2) The regression coefficient for eWOM registers 0.332, a positive figure; this connotes that each 1-unit higher eWOM score is associated with a 0.332 higher predicted purchase intention score.

The results of the t-test disclose that the eWOM variable possesses a calculated t-value of 13.979 with a significance threshold of <0.001. This significance threshold falls beneath 0.05 (<0.001 < 0.05), whereupon H_0 is repudiated and H_1 is corroborated. It may therefore be concluded that eWOM is positively and significantly associated with, and predicts, purchase intention.

4.2. Discussion

This study was conducted amongst 101 Generation Z respondents residing in South Jakarta who had viewed Fudgybro content on TikTok. Data was amassed via an online questionnaire and subsequently subjected to analysis employing IBM SPSS Statistics version 27, so as to examine the relationship between eWOM as an independent variable and purchase intention as the dependent variable. The results of the study disclose that eWOM is positively and significantly associated with the purchase intention for Fudgybro products. These findings indicate that higher eWOM scores received by consumers via TikTok are associated with a higher tendency for Generation Z to have an interest in purchasing Fudgybro products. These findings are consistent with a study by Dwiputri and Syahputra (2023), which explains that eWOM is related to purchase intention; therefore, there is a need to develop product eWOM disseminated on the TikTok app by enhancing collaboration with consumers to create educational content about the product in order to boost purchase intention.

These findings are also consistent with the theory proposed by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004), which explains that eWOM is consumer-to-consumer communication via electronic media that enables individuals to obtain, disseminate and evaluate information regarding a product or service. Information conveyed by other users via TikTok may provide a stimulus for consumers to form perceptions of the product, which theoretically may shape the development of purchase intention. The results of this study accord with the theory propounded by Schiffman and Kanuk (2007), which elucidates that purchase intention constitutes an individual's proclivity to effectuate a purchase as part of the consumer decision-making process. Ere a purchase intention materializes, consumers first seek out and appraise information pertaining to the product. Consequently, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) may function as a pivotal wellspring of information that is associated with this evaluative process, which is consistent with higher consumers' purchase interest in Fudgybro products.

In the context of this study, TikTok acts as the primary platform accelerating the dissemination of eWOM regarding Fudgybro through video content, consumer reviews, and

purchasing experiences shared by users. The characteristics of TikTok's algorithm enable content to reach a wide audience, making information about Fudgybro easier for prospective consumers to find. This allows consumers to access various references regarding product quality, purchasing experiences and available promotions before deciding to make a purchase.

Descriptively, the eWOM variable scored very highly across all dimensions used in the study. The 'Platform Assistance' dimension achieved the highest percentage at 86.93 percent, followed by 'Expressing Positive Feelings' (81.49 percent), 'Advice Seeking' (81.06 percent), 'Concern for Others' (80.89 percent), 'Social Benefits' (77.56 percent), and 'Economic Incentives' (74.80 percent). These results indicate that eWOM regarding Fudgybro on TikTok is dominated by the ease with which consumers can obtain information and the sharing of positive experiences with the product, rather than motivations to gain economic or social benefits.

The high performance in the 'Platform Assistance' dimension is closely linked to the changes in Fudgybro's marketing strategy over the past few years. Based on open-ended interviews with Fudgybro's marketing team, used as supporting data for this study, it was found that the content strategy for 2022–2023 remained reactive in nature, merely following emerging trends on social media without structured planning. By the time this study was conducted, however, Fudgybro had already established a scheduled content plan and several stages of the marketing funnel to ensure content reached its target audience in a more targeted manner. This shift in approach, from merely following trends to a more systematic content plan, reinforces Sernovitz (2009) argument that an effective word-of-mouth strategy must be deliberately designed, rather than left to run its course, so that information about the product is easily found by potential consumers. It can be said that the ease with which the audience finds information about Fudgybro on TikTok, reflected in the highest 'Platform Assistance' score compared to other dimensions, may be related to a combination of TikTok's algorithmic characteristics and the content strategy refined by the marketing team.

Regarding the emergence of eWOM itself, the marketing team stated that the viral 'cookie bomb' user-generated content (UGC) phenomenon in 2023 occurred purely organically, without any promotion by influencers or key opinion leaders (KOLs) on Fudgybro's behalf. According to Cheung and Thadani (2012), eWOM messages tend to be perceived as more credible when they originate from sources with no direct commercial interest, compared to messages from brands or parties paid to promote products. The organic nature of the 'cookie bomb' UGC also may help explain the high scores for the 'Advice Seeking' and 'Concern for Others' dimensions in this study, as audiences who had never purchased Fudgybro actually sought out and placed greater trust in reviews from fellow non-influencer consumers as a basis for their decision-making before deciding to buy.

Fudgybro's social media team also explained that they routinely monitor social media and compile weekly reports on reviews and organic content created by consumers regarding Fudgybro, without ever encouraging such reviews through paid promotion. Such practices demonstrate that the company's approach to eWOM is more about monitoring and listening than directing or manipulating, consistent with the view of Mangold and Faulds (2009) that social media is a hybrid element within the promotional mix, requiring companies to listen to consumer conversations rather than merely delivering one-way messages. The marketing team's decision to allow UGC to develop organically, rather than immediately converting it into a paid campaign, helps maintain the authenticity of Fudgybro's eWOM in the eyes of Generation Z, a group which, according to Priporas et al. (2017), has high expectations for digital interaction with brands and tends to trust UGC more than conventional advertising.

This research data was validated by audience feedback, with several respondents stating that their initial awareness of the brand and sense of FOMO (fear of missing out) regarding Fudgybro products stemmed from viral user-generated content (UGC) on TikTok, rather than through official brand promotions. This demonstrates that whilst Fudgybro's promotions received a positive response, not all members of the audience became aware of or interested in the products solely through these promotions. This belief is further reinforced at the item level, where 90 out of 101 respondents (89.1 percent) stated they agreed or strongly agreed that they were more confident about purchasing Fudgybro after seeing reviews from non-influencer users (UGC), with 43 respondents (42.6 percent) stating they strongly agreed, the highest proportion of extreme among all items in the 'Advice Seeking' dimension. It can therefore be concluded that both awareness and purchase confidence among the Fudgybro audience are associated with exposure to user-generated viral content, thus providing supporting evidence that is consistent with the statistical finding that eWOM via TikTok is significantly associated with Generation Z's purchase interest.

This proportion of extremely positive responses is consistent with field data provided by Fudgybro's marketing team, which indicates that following the viral success of the 'cookie bomb' UGC in 2023, Fudgybro's sales reportedly increased by more than 100 percent and the product almost always faced queues or had a waiting list of customers. The marketing team also noted that the content elements most consistently converting into sales were the virality of reaction videos and beauty shots of the product. Berger and Milkman (2012) describe this phenomenon as a 'viral loop', namely the spread of content that occurs because it elicits an emotional response, thereby triggering other users' desire to share the information further. In the case of Fudgybro, this cycle appears to have repeated itself, coinciding with a surge in demand that far exceeded the results of conventional marketing campaigns in general, a finding consistent with the regression coefficient for eWOM on purchase intent in this study, which was classified as very strong ($\beta = 0.815$; $t = 13.979$; $p < 0.001$). Both the primary questionnaire data and the supporting qualitative data, comprising interviews and internal sales data, revealed mutually reinforcing patterns, namely that eWOM was not only significantly associated with purchase intention but also appears consistent with Fudgybro's sales performance. The sales data were not collected through the questionnaire and do not by themselves establish that eWOM caused the increase in sales.

On the other hand, the interviews also revealed that negative Google reviews of Fudgybro have so far posed the greatest challenge, along with negative posts on social media; the company admitted to having difficulty addressing these directly as it was unable to contact the authors of the reviews. Filieri (2015) explains within the diagnosticity-adoption framework that the usefulness of a review, whether positive or negative, is determined, amongst other things, by the recipient's ability to verify or clarify the review. In the absence of a direct communication channel between Fudgybro and the authors of negative reviews, such negative eWOM becomes difficult to clarify or mitigate; consequently, although the volume is far smaller than that of positive UGC such as 'cookie bomb' posts, its impact on the perceptions of some potential customers remains potentially significant. Sweeney et al. (2014) also emphasize that the strength of WOM's influence is determined not only by the volume or valence of the message, but also by how convincingly the message is conveyed and how difficult it is for the party being discussed to refute it. This finding represents a limitation that must be taken into account when interpreting the research results, given that the eWOM instrument used follows the typology of Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004), which predominantly measures positive eWOM motives and perceptions; consequently, it does not fully capture the potential risks posed by negative eWOM that also occur in practice.

This study also has limitations related to its design. Both eWOM and purchase intention were measured through the same self-report questionnaire, completed by the same respondents at one point in time. The findings therefore show an association and cannot establish temporal precedence or rule out reverse causality, for example, respondents who already have a higher purchase intention may selectively attend to eWOM and rate it more favorably. Because both variables came from one source, part of the shared variance, including part of the 66.0% explained variance, may also reflect common method bias rather than the influence of eWOM alone, and no procedural or statistical test for common method bias was reported. In addition, only respondents who had never purchased from Fudgybro were included, so the results describe purchase intention among prospective consumers and should not be generalized to existing customers.

Overall, the results of this study betoken that eWOM on TikTok may function not merely as a conduit for information exchange but likewise as a stimulus associated with consumers' attention, evaluation, and behavioral tendencies Fudgybro products. The ease of accessing information, the prevalence of positive experiences shared by users, and the high level of review-searching activity are factors associated with Generation Z's purchasing interest. Findings from interviews with the marketing team complement these conclusions by showing that TikTok's effectiveness as an eWOM medium for Fudgybro did not materialize instantly, but rather appears to have resulted from the interaction between the momentum of unplanned organic UGC, namely the 'cookie bomb' phenomenon, and marketing strategies that were continually refined through a more structured content plan and marketing funnel. This success, however, is still accompanied by the challenge of managing negative reviews, which the company has not yet been able to fully resolve. Therefore, TikTok can be regarded as a relevant eWOM platform in supporting Fudgybro's marketing strategy, associated with positive perceptions and higher consumer purchasing interest.

5. Conclusion

This study found that eWOM on TikTok is positively and significantly associated with Generation Z's purchase intention for Fudgybro in South Jakarta ($Y = 4.968 + 0.332X$; $t = 13.979$; $p < 0.001$), so H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted. The regression coefficient of 0.332 signifies that each one-unit higher eWOM score is associated with a 0.332-unit higher predicted purchase intention score. eWOM accounts for 66.0 percent of the variance in purchase intention (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.660$), while the remaining 34.0 percent is explained by other variables outside the research model. Descriptively, the eWOM dimensions fell into the high to very high categories. The 'Platform Assistance' dimension achieved the highest score (86.93 percent), followed by 'Expressing Positive Feelings' (81.49 percent), 'Advice Seeking' (81.06 percent), 'Concern for Others' (80.89 percent), and 'Social Benefits' (77.56 percent), while 'Economic Incentives' received the lowest score (74.80 percent). These findings suggest that eWOM regarding Fudgybro is driven more by the ease of obtaining information and the sharing of positive experiences than by the desire to gain social or economic benefits.

The interviews with Fudgybro's marketing team complement these findings. The viral 'Cookie Bomb' user-generated content emerged organically, without influencer promotion, and the effectiveness of TikTok as an eWOM medium appears to result from the interaction between this organic momentum and a more structured content plan. However, negative reviews, particularly on Google, remain a challenge that the company has not fully resolved. The reported increase in sales is consistent with the statistical findings but does not establish that eWOM caused it. Given the cross-sectional self-report design, the potential for common

method bias, the exclusion of existing customers, and an instrument that predominantly captures positive eWOM motives, these findings show an association only and do not establish causality.

Based on the research findings, Fudgybro is advised to keep its eWOM organic and authentic by continuing to monitor and respond to consumer content, and to maintain its structured content plan. The company should also actively manage reviews and consumer interactions on digital platforms, especially negative reviews, and could expand its eWOM presence to other platforms such as Google Maps by encouraging customers to leave reviews in ways that do not undermine authenticity. Consistency in product quality and service must be maintained through standard operating procedures (SOPs) and regular evaluations. Innovations such as seasonal menus or limited-edition products could also be considered to boost consumer interest whilst encouraging the creation of organic content on social media.

For future researchers, this study could be extended with longitudinal or experimental designs and procedures to reduce common method bias, and should include negative eWOM and existing customers. It could also be expanded to include different subjects and business sectors, as well as respondent characteristics such as region of residence and generational groups. Furthermore, future research could compare the effect of eWOM across platforms, such as Instagram and Google Maps, and incorporate other variables such as trust and brand image, which may mediate purchase intention, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of the factors shaping consumer behavior.

6. References

- Berger, J., & Milkman, K. L. (2012). What Makes Online Content Viral? *Journal of Marketing Research*, 49(2), 192–205. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmr.10.0353>
- Cheung, C. M. K., & Thadani, D. R. (2012). The impact of electronic word-of-mouth communication: A literature analysis and integrative model. *Decision Support Systems*, 54(1), 461–470. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dss.2012.06.008>
- CNN Indonesia. (2024). *Indonesia Pengguna TikTok Terbanyak di Dunia, Kalahkan AS hingga Rusia*. CNN Indonesia. <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/teknologi/20241007094807-192-1152374/indonesia-pengguna-tiktok-terbanyak-di-dunia-kalahkan-as-hingga-rusia>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2023). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. SAGE Publications.
- DS/innovative. (2022). *MSME Empowerment Report 2022: Digital Transformation and Recovery*. DS/innovative. <https://www.studocu.com/row/document/king-abdulaziz-university/e-commerce/dsinnovate-msme-report-2022/61271602>
- Dwiputri, A. L., & Syahputra, S. (2023). Minat beli skincare: Peran electronic word of mouth di Tiktok. *Jurnal Manajemen Maranatha*, 22(2), 217–226. <https://doi.org/10.28932/jmm.v22i2.6399>
- Engel, J. F., Blackwell, R. D., & Miniard, P. W. (1986). *Consumer Behavior*. Dryden Press.
- Filieri, R. (2015). What makes online reviews helpful? A diagnosticity-adoption framework to explain informational and normative influences in e-WOM. *Journal of Business Research*, 68(6), 1261–1270. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2014.11.006>
- Fu, X., Zhang, B., Xie, Q., Xiao, L., & Che, Y. (2011). Impact of Quantity and Timeliness of EWOM Information on Consumer's Online Purchase Intention under C2C Environment. *Asian Journal of Business Research*, 1(2), 37–52. <https://doi.org/10.14707/ajbr.110010>
- Hair, J., Wolfinbarger, M., Money, A. H., Samouel, P., & Page, M. J. (2015). *Essentials of Business Research Methods*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315704562>
- Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K. P., Walsh, G., & Gremler, D. D. (2004). Electronic word-of-

- mouth via consumer-opinion platforms: What motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the Internet? *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 18(1), 38–52. <https://doi.org/10.1002/dir.10073>
- Jannah, M. L. (2006). *Metode penelitian kuantitatif: Teori dan aplikasi*. RajaGrafindo Persada.
- Jeong, E., & Jang, S. (Shawn). (2011). Restaurant experiences triggering positive electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) motivations. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 30(2), 356–366. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2010.08.005>
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing Management : Pearson Prentice Hall* (15 ed). Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Malhotra, N. K., & Birks, D. F. (2015). *Marketing Approach: An Applied Approach*. Pearson Education Limited.
- Mandala, M., Afifah, N., Giriati, G., Purmono, B. B., & Setiawan, H. (2025). Pengaruh Product Information Quality dan Electronic Word-Of-Mouth (E-Wom) Terhadap Purchase Intention pada Platform Tiktok Shop di Indonesia dengan Customer Trust sebagai Mediasi. *Primary Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 1(3), 58–70. <https://doi.org/10.70716/pjmr.v1i3.195>
- Mangold, W. G., & Faulds, D. J. (2009). Social media: The new hybrid element of the promotion mix. *Business Horizons*, 52(4), 357–365. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2009.03.002>
- Moca. (2025). *Cracking the Code: How to Win Over Indonesia's Next-Gen Shoppers*. Moca Technology. <https://www.moca-tech.net/news/cracking-the-code-how-to-win-over-indonesias-next-gen-shoppers>
- Muhajirin, Risnita, & Asrulla. (2024). Pendekatan Penelitian Kuantitatif dan Kualitatif Serta Campuran. *Jurnal Genta Mulia*, 15(1), 82–92. <https://ejournal.uncm.ac.id/index.php/gm/article/view/903>
- Prahalad, C. K., & Ramaswamy, V. (2004). Co-creation experiences: The next practice in value creation. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 18(3), 5–14. <https://doi.org/10.1002/dir.20015>
- Priporas, C.-V., Stylos, N., & Fotiadis, A. K. (2017). Generation Z consumers' expectations of interactions in smart retailing: A future agenda. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 77, 374–381. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2017.01.058>
- Rahmawati, A. (2025). Apakah Social Media Marketing Meningkatkan Kinerja UMKM? Analisis Kerangka TOE (Technology, Organization, Environment). *Jurnal Economic Resource*, 8(2), 1426–1436. <https://doi.org/10.57178/jer.v8i2.1759>
- RetailBoss. (2024). *60% of Gen Z shoppers found a new product or brand through social media*. RetailBoss.
- Saputra, S., & Jasa, R. H. (2024). Pengaruh Karakteristik Informasi eWOM dan Perilaku Konsumen Terhadap Niat Beli Smartphone. *Equilibrium : Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi, Manajemen Dan Akuntansi*, 13(1), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.35906/equili.v13i1.1852>
- Schiffman, L. G., Bednall, D., Cowley, E., Cass, A. O., Watson, J., & Kanuk, L. (2010). *Consumer Behaviour*. Prentice Hall.
- Schiffman, L. G., & Kanuk, L. L. (2007). *Consumer Behavior*. Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Schiffman, L. G., & Wisenblit, J. (2019). *Consumer Behavior*. Pearson.
- Sernovitz, A. (2009). *Word of Mouth Marketing: How Smart Companies Get People Talking*. Greenleaf Book Group Press.
- Sugiyono. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Alfabeta.
- Sweeney, J., Soutar, G., & Mazzarol, T. (2014). Factors enhancing word-of-mouth influence: positive and negative service-related messages. *European Journal of Marketing*, 48(1/2), 336–359. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ejm-06-2012-0336>
- Toffler, A. (1980). *The Third Wave*. Morrow.

- Triwibowo, A., & Achmad, N. (2025). Analisis Pengaruh E-WOM dan Brand Awareness terhadap Purchase Intention Milenial melalui Brand Image: Studi pada Brand Fashion Lokal. *Center of Economic Students Journal*, 8(2), 589–609. <https://doi.org/10.56750/csej.v8i2.1117>
- Wafa, I. (2025). *Penetrasi Internet Indonesia Konsisten Naik, Tembus 80% pada 2025*. GoodStats. <https://data.goodstats.id/statistic/penetrasi-internet-indonesia-konsisten-naik-tembus-80-pada-2025-jSGpJ>
- Walk-Morris, T. (2023). *ICSC: 85% of Gen Z says social media impacts purchase decisions*. RetailDive. <https://www.retaildive.com/news/generation-z-social-media-influence-shopping-behavior-purchases-tiktok-instagram/652576/>
- We are Social, & Meltwater. (2024). *Digital 2024: Global overview report*. We Are Social. <https://wearesocial.com/id/blog/2024/01/digital-2024/>
- Zhao, Y., Wang, L., Tang, H., & Zhang, Y. (2020). Electronic word-of-mouth and consumer purchase intentions in social e-commerce. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 41, 100980. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.elerap.2020.100980>