

The Effect of Copywriting and E-WOM in Instagram Ads on Gen-Z Purchase Intention Through Brand Equity

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Abstract— *The purpose of this study is to analyze the effect of copywriting and e-WOM in Instagram ads on gen-Z purchase intention through brand equity. The population of this study are gen-Z followers of Coolio barber shop Instagram account. The sample size is 200 respondents. The data were collected through an online questionnaire. The data analysis method used is Structural Equation Modelling-Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS). The result of this study shows that copywriting and e-WOM have a significant effect on gen-Z's purchase intention. Moreover, brand equity perception has a significant effect on gen-Z's purchase intention. Furthermore, brand equity perception has the essential role as mediator of copywriting and e-WOM's effect in Instagram ads on purchase intention of gen-Z.*

Indexed Terms— *Copywriting, e-WOM, Instagram Ads, Gen-Z, Brand Equity, Purchase Intention*

I. INTRODUCTION

Social media has become an essential part of daily life, especially for young generations, including Gen-Z. Social media usage is one of the most popular online activities. In 2021, over 4.26 billion people were using social media worldwide, a number projected to increase to almost six billion in 2027. Social media platforms provide businesses with an opportunity to promote their products and services to a vast audience. Among various social media platforms, Instagram is one of the most widely used social media platforms. Instagram has more than 1 billion monthly active users and 90% of Instagram users are under the age of 35. This makes Instagram a perfect platform to reach the Gen-Z consumers, which are the young consumers born between 1997 and 2012.

According to Global Survey of Internet users in January 2023 Instagram ranks number 2 after WhatsApp in the category of favourite social media

platforms most used by users in Indonesia with a percentage of 18.2% of active social media users aged 16 to 64 years. The increasing use of digital platforms as communication media raises concerns about the formulation of content or messages to be communicated to the audience. According to Shen & Bissell (2019) message or content is a very important element of communication, also in marketing communication (Lin & Lu, 2021). This content is commonly referred to as copywriting in digital marketing. Copywriting is the art of using words to persuade people to take action, such as making a purchase.

Gen-Z consumers are known for their digital literacy, social media usage, and their willingness to try new products. Instagram provides a platform for businesses to showcase their products and services through Instagram ads. Instagram's unique features such as visual storytelling, live videos, and filters make it an attractive platform for businesses to promote their products and services (Kruja & Hysi, 2021).

In the barber shop industry, Instagram is an essential marketing tool to reach the target market, especially Gen-Z consumers. They are the new generation of consumers that have significant purchasing power. Therefore, understanding the factors that affect their purchase intention is essential for businesses to succeed.

One of the critical factors that affect purchase intention is brand equity. According to Keller (2023), brand equity is the value that a brand adds to a product or service beyond the functional benefits it provides. Brand equity is a valuable asset for businesses because it can create a competitive advantage and lead to customer loyalty.

Copywriting and e-WOM are two factors that can shape brand equity. Copywriting is an essential

element in advertising because it can attract the attention of the target audience and create a positive perception of the brand. E-WOM, or electronic word-of-mouth, is the transmission of information about products or services from one person to another through electronic channels, such as social media.

This study aims to analyze the effect of copywriting and e-WOM in Instagram ads on Gen-Z purchase intention through brand equity. The study will focus on the barber shop industry in Malang City because Malang City is a developing city with a growing number of young populations.

Copywriting is a critical component of Instagram ads that can influence the purchase intention of Gen-Z consumers. Effective copywriting can convey the brand message and highlight the unique features of the advertised products or services. It can also create a sense of urgency and encourage consumers to take immediate action.

Moreover, e-WOM plays a vital role in shaping the purchase intention of Gen-Z consumers. e-WOM refers to the online word-of-mouth communication between consumers about the quality and features of the products or services advertised on Instagram. Positive e-WOM can create a buzz around the brand and encourage potential customers to try the products or services.

This research aims to explore the impact of copywriting and e-WOM with mediation of brand equity on the purchase intention of Gen-Z consumers of Coolio Barbershop in Malang City. Recent studies have explored the impact of Instagram ads on consumer behaviour, highlighting the importance of copywriting and e-WOM. For instance, a study by Gupta et al. (2021) found that effective copywriting can significantly increase consumer engagement and purchase intention. Another study by Christy et al. (2021) highlighted the importance of positive e-WOM in shaping the purchase intention of Instagram users.

II. LITERATURES REVIEW

- *Copywriting*

Copywriting is the process of creating written content for the purpose of promoting or selling a product,

service, or idea. It involves crafting persuasive and compelling messages that resonate with the target audience and inspire them to take action, such as making a purchase or subscribing to a newsletter. Copywriting can refer to call-to-actions (CTAs), email copy, social media ads, and anything else that encourages users to purchase or convert.

Copywriting is an essential element in advertising because it can attract the attention of the target audience and create a positive perception of the brand. According to Chu & Kim (2020), copywriting is a persuasive message that aims to motivate people to take action. Copywriting can affect the attitude, perception, and behaviour of consumers towards the brand.

Copywriting can be categorized into two types: rational and emotional appeals. Rational appeals focus on the functional benefits of the product or service, such as quality, price, and features. Emotional appeals focus on the emotional benefits of the product or service, such as happiness, comfort, and satisfaction (Lin & Lu, 2021).

Effective copywriting include: Clear and concise language: Copy that is easy to understand and avoids jargon or technical terms that might confuse the reader; Attention-grabbing headlines: Headlines that capture the reader's attention and entice them to read further; Benefits-focused messaging: Copy that focuses on the benefits of the product or service being promoted, rather than just its features; Calls-to-action: Copy that includes a clear and specific call-to-action, such as "Sign up now" or "Buy today"; Emotional appeal: Copy that taps into the reader's emotions and connects with them on a personal level; Audience targeting: Copy that is tailored to the needs and interests of the target audience, using language and messaging that resonates with them; Storytelling: Copy that tells a compelling story and engages the reader on an emotional level (Chu & Kim, 2020).

- *Electronic Word of Mouth*

E-WOM is another important factor that influences consumers' purchase intention. Research shows that consumers are more likely to trust the opinions of other consumers than the claims made by companies (Brown et al., 2020; van der Lans, et al., 2020; Trusov

et al., 2018). Social media platform such as Instagram provide an easy and accessible way for consumers to share their opinions and experiences with others. Yen & Su (2021) convey that WOM is a widely accepted idea in the discipline of consumer behavior that shapes consumer attitudes and behavior towards brands, products, or services. Communication between consumers is considered independent and non-commercial driven on the exchange of personal information for a product or service.

Electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) refers to the exchange of product-related information, opinions, or experiences between consumers through online channels, such as social media, online forums, blogs, review sites, and other digital platforms. This form of communication is similar to traditional word-of-mouth (WOM), but it takes place in an electronic environment (Alalwan et al., 2020; Kim & Park, 2020)

Indicators of e-WOM can include metrics such as the number of online reviews or ratings of a product or service, social media shares or mentions, comments or discussions on online forums or blogs, and the overall sentiment or tone of the online conversations. Electronic word of mouth has the characteristics of a virtual community — anonymity, accessibility, and diffusion effects (Yin & Sadeque, 2019). These characteristics provide a better opportunity and environment for consumers to interact socially. The Internet has broadened consumer options for gathering impartial product information from other consumers and provided the opportunity for consumers to offer advice regarding their own consumption by engaging in e-WOM (Chen & Lee, 2018).

It is recognized that e-WOM has an advantage over traditional WOM as both consumers and marketers can post visual elements such as images, and videos which give other consumers the opportunity to better understand the information, and in turn help them to make better decisions (Hasan et al., 2019; Huang et al., 2019; Hsu & Lin, 2018).

- *Brand Equity*

Brand equity refers to the value that a brand brings to a company beyond its functional benefits. According Chen et al. (2021) brand equity encompasses the emotional and psychological connections that

consumers have with a brand, which can lead to greater loyalty, higher sales, and increased brand awareness. Brand equity can be measured through a variety of indicators, including: Brand awareness: the extent to which consumers are aware of a brand and its products or services; Brand loyalty: the degree to which consumers prefer a brand over its competitors; Perceived quality: the perception that a brand's products or services are of high quality; Brand associations: the mental connections that consumers make between a brand and certain attributes or characteristics; Brand personality: the human characteristics and traits that are associated with a brand (Aaker, 2020).

- *Purchase Intention*

Purchase intention refers to a consumer's willingness to buy a particular product or service in the future. It is an important concept in marketing as it helps businesses understand consumer behavior and make informed decisions about product development, pricing, and promotional strategies (Dang et al., 2021; Behboudi & Ebrahimi, 2019; Daneshvar & Aghaei, 2019; Abdullah & Idris, 2018).

Indicators of purchase intention include: Attitudes towards the product or service - Consumers who have a positive attitude towards a product or service are more likely to express purchase intention; Perceived usefulness - Consumers are more likely to express purchase intention when they believe that the product or service will be useful to them; Perceived ease of use - Consumers are more likely to express purchase intention when they believe that the product or service is easy to use; Price sensitivity - Consumers may express purchase intention if they believe that the product or service is priced competitively; Previous experience with the product or service - Consumers who have had a positive experience with a product or service in the past may express purchase intention for future purchases (Aydin & Özer, 2018).

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the impact of copywriting in Instagram ads on gen-Z's purchase intention.
2. To investigate the influence of e-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth) in Instagram ads on gen-Z's purchase intention.

3. To examine the impact of brand equity perception on gen-Z's purchase intention.
4. To assess the mediating effect of brand equity on the relationship between copywriting and e-WOM on gen-Z's purchase intention.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a quantitative approach, a systematic scientific study of parts and phenomena and their relationships. The purpose of quantitative research is to develop and use mathematical models, theories and/or hypotheses related to natural phenomena. The research uses a survey method which will be distributed through online questionnaire media, namely Google Form to respondents, with non-probability technique (purposive sampling). This study took a sample of 200 samples who were Instagram users, followers of Instagram @coolio_malang with the following criteria:

- Male only
- 11 to 26 years old
- Instagram user or following @coolio_malang Instagram account.

V. DATA ANALYSIS

The data analyzed in this study was based on a research instrument (questionnaire) which was distributed online to 200 respondents. Data is divided into two parts, one is demographic profile and second are their responses to copywriting, e-WOM and brand equity on purchase intention of Gen-Z by answering on both 5-point scales of Likert and categorical questions.

The composite reliability values of all constructs in the model are all greater than 0.70, so the measurement model with reflexive indicators has a very high level of validation. Thus, it can be said that the research instrument for all variables is reliable because it has met composite reliability.

In this research model, the R-square value generated in the overall model equation is 72.5%. This means that the structural model has a fairly high predictive relevance, and the model is good and feasible to be used in hypothesis testing.

The structural model consists of the relationships between the constructs. The results show that copywriting has a significant positive effect on brand equity ($\beta=0.459$, $t\text{-value}=6.766$, $p<0.01$). e-WOM also has a significant positive effect on brand equity ($\beta=0.587$, $t\text{-value}=9.513$, $p<0.01$). Brand equity has a significant positive effect on purchase intention ($\beta=0.668$, $t\text{-value}=12.491$, $p<0.01$). Thus, the hypotheses H1, H2, and H3 are supported.

Furthermore, the study also found that brand equity mediates the relationship between copywriting and purchase intention ($\beta=0.451$, $t\text{-value}=6.634$, $p<0.01$) and the relationship between e-WOM and purchase intention of Gen-Z.

VI. FINDINGS

The findings of the current study indicate that copywriting and e-WOM in Instagram ads have a significant impact on Gen-Z consumers' purchase intention through brand equity. Copywriting and e-WOM can influence consumers' perception of the brand, and a positive brand perception can lead to a higher purchase intention. Moreover, the indirect effects of copywriting and e-WOM on purchase intention through brand equity indicate the crucial role of brand equity in the purchase decision-making process.

The findings of this study indicate that copywriting and e-WOM are significant factors that influence brand equity and purchase intention. A well-written ad copy can increase the effectiveness of an Instagram ad, resulting in increased brand equity and purchase intention. Positive e-WOM can also increase brand equity and purchase intention, as it enhances the credibility and reputation of a brand. The results of this study highlight the importance of developing effective copywriting strategies and encouraging positive e-WOM for businesses to increase their brand equity and purchase intention.

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