

THE INFLUENCING FACTORS OF SOMETHINC'S CUSTOMERS' PURCHASE INTENTION IN MEDAN

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ABSTRACT

Background: The beauty industry is one of the most competitive industries locally, contributing significantly to the nation's economy. With nearly a thousand local beauty brands, there is a huge competitiveness in the industry, with the most popular brands being in the top three. As a newer brand, Somethinc hasn't been successful in making it to the top 3 local cosmetics brand, which is eventually a necessary goal to thrive in such a competitive industry.

Purpose: The research aims to look into how brand trust, E-WoM, self-congruity and perceived quality influence the purchase intention of Somethinc customers in Medan.

Design/methodology/approach: The quantitative method is implemented for this research. Data is gathered through accidental sampling with 95 respondents of any gender and age group who are aware of cosmetics and beauty products, analysed through the multiple linear regression test.

Findings/Result: The results show that E-WoM, self-congruity and perceived quality have partial significant influence towards the purchase intention of Somethinc customers in Medan, but brand trust has no significant partial influence.

Conclusion: Brand trust does not have a partial significant influence on the purchase intention of Somethinc's customers in Medan, E-WoM has a partial significant influence on the purchase intention of Somethinc's customers in Medan, self-congruity has a partial significant influence on the purchase intention of Somethinc's customers in Medan, and perceived quality has a partial significant influence on the purchase intention of Somethinc's customers in Medan, with perceived quality contributing the most influence to purchase intention..

Originality/value (State of the art): The originality of this research is that it also discusses how brand trust can have no influence on purchase intention, with the context of a newly established brand not having built enough brand trust yet.

Keywords: brand trust, E-WoM, perceived quality, purchase intention, self-congruity

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INTRODUCTION

The beauty manufacturing industry is one of the industries that contribute most prominently to Indonesia's economy. Ong & Firdausy (2023) cited Kompas.com stating that during the low economic activities in the pandemic times, the beauty industry contributed significantly to Indonesia's GDP through the exporting value amounting to 4.4 trillion rupiahs for the first-half of 2020, seeing a 15.2% increase compared to the year before. There is a constant increase in the industry - further verified by data provided by *Badan Pusat Statistika* (BPS) where the number of firms in the beauty/cosmetics industry have increased from 819 in 2021 to 913 in July 2022. Another data provided by databoks.com stated that 54% of consumers of the beauty industry have preference towards local beauty brands as compared to international brands. In this research, 500 respondents were involved, within it 6% from Medan city.

Somethinc is an Indonesian beauty company and brand established by Irene Ursula in May of 2019. As a locally-established makeup and skincare brand in 2019, Somethinc has an upper advantage, seeing that more than half of the local market prefers using local beauty brands. However, with the constantly growing industry it is in, it is important for Somethinc to find ways to stay being one of the most popular beauty brands in Indonesia. Goodstats showed a 2022 statistics of the most-used local beauty brands in Indonesia, where Somethinc garners 19% of the share at the 4th place. Most used local cosmetics brand in Indonesia in Figure 1.

Effendy et al. (2023) defines purchase intention as the wanting to purchase goods or services as a part of consumers' buying behavior, which arises upon evaluation on stimuli and assessing factors from within and without. According to consumer behavior theory, the desire to purchase goods or services emerges from unmet needs (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019).

Sivaram et al. (2019) pointed out that there's a linearity between purchase intention and possibility of purchase. In other words, an increase in purchase intention means an increase in the possibility of purchasing products or services. To stay on top of the competitive industry, Somethinc as a brand would strive to attain a higher rank in the list, such as being in the top 3, because in the constantly moving industry, it's important to be

rigorous due to the high number of market participants and thus, higher competition. One key to pay attention in order to evoke customer purchases would be to first trigger purchase intention.

Purchase intention, according to Budiono et al. (2022), refers to the leaning towards buying from a brand, and it aligns with how suitable certain qualities of a brand are towards the aim of purchase. As elaborated by Dewi et al. (2023), the purchase intentions of consumers are shaped by numerous factors, one of which is other people's attitudes. It is mentioned that a consumer's initial positive regard towards a product or service could be reduced through two things - the intensity of other people's negative attitude towards the product or service of the subject, as well as the level of the consumer's willingness to follow suit to other people's wishes. The search for information about the product or service is closely tied to consumers' considerations of purchasing, as pointed out by Pamungkas & Hamdan (2021). Juliana et al. (2020) elaborated that purchase intention can give an overview that indicates actual buying behavior that might follow, which is increased when expectations are met.

A previous research Permatasari & Ferdinand (2022) analyzes how internal self-congruity helps mediate the other variables towards purchase intention including how self-congruity directly influences purchase intention, with a shared research object, that is, a cosmetics brand. The results of the research was that social media marketing as an independent variable affected one of its mediating variables, brand awareness, which later on affects another mediating variable which is internal self-congruity. Both the mediating variables affect the dependent variable, which is customer purchase intention.

Ekklesia & Kesumahati (2022) conducted a research titled "Factors Influencing Purchase Intention of South Korean Cosmetics and Skincare" in which the researchers chose a similar research object, which is also from the beauty industry; South Korean Cosmetics and Skincare. The researchers also analyzed the same dependent variable, which is purchase intention. The variables brand ambassador, E-WoM, brand awareness and sender's expertise were used as independent variables, while brand image was used as an additional mediating variable between E-WoM and brand awareness towards purchase intention. All hypotheses were accepted with the exception that

brand ambassadors and sender's expertise do not result in noticeable effect towards purchase intention.

Another research was done by Yulianti & Keni (2021) titled "Source Credibility, Perceived Quality, and Attitude Towards Brand as Predictor on Purchase Intention of Local Beauty Products". The research aimed to predict the influence of source credibility, perceived quality and attitude as independent variables towards customer purchase intention as the dependent variable. The object of research was a local beauty brand in Indonesia. The research showed that the independent variables perceived quality and attitude have respective partial positive and significant influences on purchase intention, while source credibility does not.

Lastly, the research titled "Celebrity Endorser Contribution Towards Local Cosmetic Purchase Intention" by Natalia et al. (2021) analyzed the consumer purchase intention of an Indonesian cosmetics brand, with the independent variable of celebrity endorser, mediated by the variables emotional attachment and brand trust towards purchase intention. The result was that all hypotheses were accepted; celebrity endorsers significantly influence emotional attachment, brand trust and purchase intention, emotional attachment and brand trust also significantly influence purchase intention.

This research is conducted through quantitative method, in which questionnaire is distributed to research samples, measuring the influence of the independent variables towards the dependent variable. The objective of this research is:

1. Analyzing the influence of brand trust on Somethinc's customer purchase intention in Medan.

2. Analyzing the influence of E-WoM on Somethinc's customer purchase intention in Medan.
3. Analyzing the influence of self-congruity on Somethinc's customer purchase intention in Medan.
4. Analyzing the influence of perceived quality on Somethinc's customer purchase intention in Medan.
5. Analyzing the influence of brand trust, E-WoM, self-congruity and perceived quality on Somethinc's customer purchase intention in Medan.

METHODS

Research is done in Medan city, including the arrangement of questionnaire, collection of data up to the processing and interpretation of results, taking place from August to November 2023.

Purchase intention, according to Budiono et al. (2022) refers to the leaning towards buying from a brand, and it aligns to how suitable certain qualities of a brand are towards the aim of purchase. The indicators of purchase intention, as elaborated and used in Saputro (2018) includes transactional interest, referential interest, preferential interest and explorative interest. Brand trust, or referred to as customer confidence in Wijaya et al. (2020), refers to the positive or negative emerging belief towards a brand or its products or services as a result of multiple influences towards the perception. Pandiangan et al. (2021) mentioned two indicators to brand trust, branching into two sub-indicators including trusting belief (benevolence and integrity) and trusting intention (willingness to depend and subjective probability of depending).

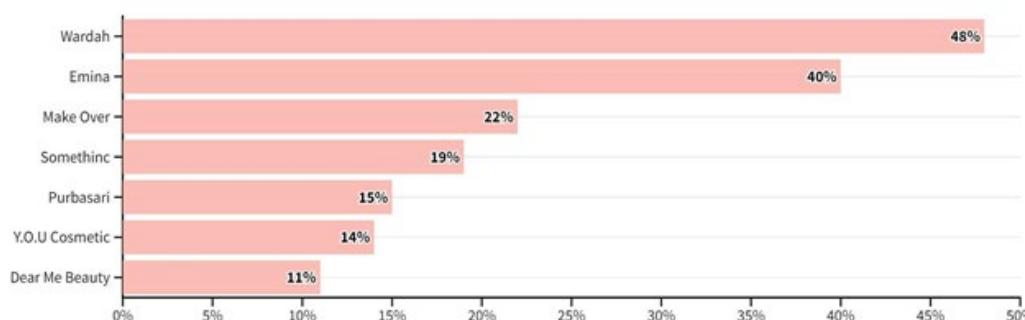


Figure 1. Most used local cosmetics brand in Indonesia

E-WoM refers to remarks that might be positive or negative from former, current or prospective consumers, which is crucial in business-to-consumers or business-to-business marketing as it highly influences buying decisions due to credibility of the review source (Prastyo, 2018). Sari & Saputra (2019) referred that there are three dimensions to E-WoM, including intensity, valence of opinion and content. Self-congruity, referred to as self-consistency in Chen et al. (2021), is the match between consumers' concept of self and cognition of things, such as product, service or brand images along with their symbolic attributes and meanings. Sirgy (2018) outlined that the indicators of self-congruity include actual self-congruity, ideal self-congruity, social self-congruity, ideal social self-congruity. Perceived quality refers to the perception in consumers' minds of the quality that a product or service can offer in relation to the expectation in mind, relative towards existing alternatives (Purwanto et al. 2022). The indicators of measuring perceived quality as mentioned in Edward & Ruslim (2021) includes possessing good qualities, possessing consistent qualities, reliable in terms of qualities and able to deliver merits.

The research falls under quantitative research design, which refers to a research design looking into relationships between two or more variables through the collection of numerical data from respondents. Quantitative research, known as the traditional research method that has been used by researchers for a long time, uses the positivistic paradigm which views phenomena as classifiable, concrete, observable, measurable, causal in nature with results that can be generalized (Fauzy et al. 2022).

The population for this research can be described through the following characteristics: men and women, belong in any age group, are aware of cosmetics and beauty products. The sample is focused on respondents living in Medan city, regardless of age or gender, who are familiar with the Somethinc brand or products from the skincare and makeup industry. The number of respondents is determined using the method described by Sahir (2021), which suggests calculating the sample size by multiplying the total number of indicators by a factor of 5 or 10 when utilizing a multivariate method. The total number of indicators in this research is 19, which makes the number of samples 95 or 190. It is

also mentioned that the number of samples that can be used in a research is between 30 to 500 (Sahir, 2021), hence, this research will collect responses from 95 respondents as a sample of the research population.

The data collection method that will be implemented to gather the primary data for this research would be through the distribution of questionnaires created on the Google forms platform through social media. This research uses the non-probability sampling technique where sampling is not based on equal probability (Sahir, 2021). This research uses accidental sampling, a technique where the sample is not pre-planned but instead determined based on which units or subjects are available to the researcher at the time of the study. (Pradiana & Sunarsi, 2021). The likert scale will be utilized for the variable measurement of this research. A Likert scale measures a construct by using multiple questions (Darwin et al. 2021). According to Hardani et al. (2022), the likert scale has a set of questions regarding respondents' attitude on the object of research, with each question consisting 5 points, ranging from "Extremely Agree" up to "Extremely Disagree", which will later on be summed to the respondent's total scoring.

The data gathered will be processed through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software, encompassing several data analysis tests such as descriptive tests, classical assumption test, multi regression analysis test, coefficient of determination test as well as hypothesis testing (t-test and F-test). Prior to the actual survey, a pre-survey to 30 respondents is carried out to test the questionnaire's validity and reliability. As stated by Abdullah et al. (2021), an item is considered valid if the calculated r_{xy} exceeds the r value from the Pearson Product Moment table. Conversely, if the calculated r_{xy} is lower than the table r value, the item is deemed invalid and needs to be revised or altered. Creswell & Crewell (2018) noted that the ideal range for Cronbach's Alpha reliability is between 0.70 and 0.90. Therefore, reliability results above 0.70 are actually favored. However, it is additionally stated in Purwanto et al. (2021) that if the variables have reliability value exceeding 0.60, it is already reliable. The questionnaire items that passed the instrument tests are proceeded to be distributed to the actual respondents of survey.

Hypothesis

Brand trust or referred to as customer confidence in Wijaya et al. (2020), refers to the positive or negative emerging belief towards a brand or its products or services as a result of multiple influences towards the perception. Dam (2020) pointed out that prior to preference towards brand, brand trust should exist first, which means that after consumers start trusting a brand, they will begin developing preference towards the brand when given several choices. This is supported through Hansopaheluwakan et al. (2020) who verified the path between brand trust to brand preference towards purchase intention, which means that after brand trust evokes consumers' preference towards a brand, it would lead to intentions of purchase.

H₁: Brand trust has a significant influence towards the purchase intention of Somethinc customers in Medan.

E-WoM refers to remarks that might be positive or negative from former, current or prospective consumers, which is crucial in business-to-consumers or business-to-business marketing as it highly influences buying decisions due to credibility of the review source (Prastyo, 2018). This differs traditional WoM to E-WoM, where traditional WoM takes place face-to-face, but information is transmitted through cyberspace for E-WoM due to technological advancements (Firman et al. 2021). In the digital era, shifting communication patterns have led consumers to seek connections with peers or engage in online communities associated with a particular brand. This helps them gather more information about a product and influences their purchasing and product experience journey (Armstrong et al. 2018). E-WoM influences purchase intention positively, according to research done by Napawut et al. (2022).

H₂: E-WoM has a significant influence towards the purchase intention of Somethinc customers in Medan.

Self-congruity, referred to as self-consistency in Chen et al (2021), is the match between consumers' concept of self and cognition of things, such as product, service or brand images along with their symbolic attributes and meanings. According to Yuanita & Marsasi (2022), when consumers try to take a stance on their attitude towards a brand, whether or not they favor a brand, they will try to evaluate the alignment between their self-image, defined as the way consumers view themselves in Schiffman & Wisenblit (2019), towards the brand's image; or in other words, looking for self-congruity.

Armstrong et al. (2018) explained that consumers' decision to interact with specific brands, including their products or services, is largely driven by the need for self-expression. As a result, consumers tend to consider purchasing products that align with their self-image. Consumers tend to have a preference towards brands or products that have a resonating image with their concept of self, as they see these brands or products as a representative of who they are. According to research done by Permatasari & Ferdinand (2022), self-congruity has significant influence towards purchase intention.

H₃: Self-congruity has a significant influence towards the purchase intention of Somethinc customers in Medan.

Perceived quality refers to the perception in consumers' minds of the quality that a product or service can offer in relation to the expectation in mind, relative towards existing alternatives (Purwanto et al. 2022). When the performance of a brand's products or services is said to meet what they're expected of by consumers, a good perception on the brand's quality will be formed (Sivaram et al. 2019). According to Azzari & Pelissari (2020), when consumers are in doubt about making decisions of purchase, perceived quality or the perception that one product has superiority when outweighed to the others will help decide the intention to purchase the product that delivers superior qualities. Perceived quality has a significant positive influence towards purchase intention, according to the research conducted by Sivaram et al. (2019) and Rooney et al. (2019).

H₄: Perceived quality has a significant influence towards the purchase intention of Somethinc customers in Medan.

The research will also look into how brand trust, E-WoM, self-congruity and perceived quality simultaneously influences purchase intention. With the previous elaborations outlining that each variable partially influences purchase intention in a significant manner, it is hypothesized that the simultaneous influence will be in the same direction.

H₅: Brand trust, E-WoM, Self-Congruity and Perceived quality have significant influence towards the purchase intention of Somethinc customers in Medan.

The research model (Figure 2) shows the relationship of the hypotheses in this research, where all independent variables (X) have an influence towards the independent variable (Y) partially, and altogether simultaneously.

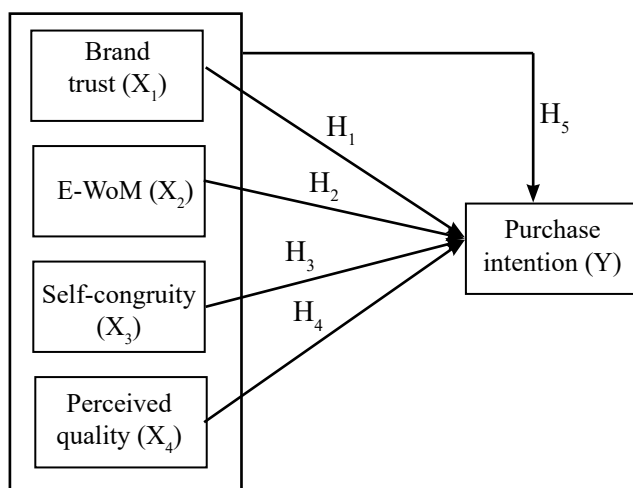


Figure 2. Research model

RESULTS

Multiple linear regression analysis is done to look into the relationship occurring between the independent and dependent variables. In this research, the independent variables include Brand Trust (X_1 - BT), E-WoM (X_2 - EW), Self-Congruity (X_3 - SC) and Perceived Quality (X_4 - PQ), whereas the dependent variable (Y) is Purchase Intention (PI). The output of the multiple linear regression analysis in Table 1.

The value of constant (a) is -6.772, coefficient of brand trust (β_1) being -0.181, coefficient of E-WoM (β_2) being 0.438, coefficient of self-congruity (β_3) being 0.413 and coefficient of perceived quality (β_4) being 0.743. With these coefficients, the equation for multiple linear regression would be:

$$Y = -6.772 - 0.181X_1 + 0.438X_2 + 0.413X_3 + 0.743X_4$$

The interpretation for the multiple linear regression is as follows:

1. With constant (a) being -6.772, it shows that when brand trust (X_1), E-WoM (X_2), self-congruity (X_3) and perceived quality (X_4) are constant, purchase intention will experience a decrease by 6.772.
2. The regression coefficient β_1 being -0.181. This is being interpreted in that with an additional 1 unit of brand trust (X_1), purchase intention will decrease by 0.181.

3. The regression coefficient β_2 being 0.438. This is being interpreted in that with an additional 1 unit of E-WoM (X_2), purchase intention will increase by 0.438.
4. The regression coefficient β_3 being 0.413. This is being interpreted in that with an additional 1 unit of self-congruity (X_3), purchase intention will increase by 0.413.
5. The regression coefficient β_4 being 0.743. This is being interpreted in that with an additional 1 unit of brand trust (X_4), purchase intention will decrease by 0.743.

Coefficient of determination is analyzed to see how much the independent variables in a research take part of influence in the changes of the dependent variable. The result for the coefficient of determination output in Table 2.

The coefficient of determination (Adjusted R Square) value is 0.862. This shows that brand trust, E-WoM, self-congruity and perceived quality have 86.2% of influence towards purchase intention, with the remaining 13.8% influence coming from other factors such as brand ambassadors, perceived price, brand awareness, etc.

The F-test is done in order to see whether or not the independent variables in a research altogether simultaneously affect the dependent variable. The result of the F-test in Table 3.

The criteria for the ANOVA F-test is that the simultaneously influencing hypothesis is accepted when the value of Sig. does not exceed 0.05. The value of Sig. displayed is less than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). Therefore, H5 where brand trust, E-WoM, self-congruity and perceived quality influence purchase intention simultaneously is accepted.

In order to test the hypothesis on the partial influence from each independent variable towards the dependent variable, the t-test is being conducted. Table 4 shows the result of the t-test output.

The criteria for the t-test is that each partially influencing hypothesis is accepted when the value of Sig. does not exceed 0.05.

Table 1. Multi linear regression results

		Coefficients ^a		
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
		B	Std. Error	Beta
1	(Constant)	-6.772	1.872	
	BT	-.181	.136	-.075
	EW	.438	.084	.258
	SC	.413	.080	.257
	PQ	.743	.077	.626

a. Dependent Variable: PI

Table 2. Coefficient of determination results

Model Summary ^a				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.931 ^a	.867	.862	227.201

a. Predictors: (Constant), PQ, SC, EW, BT

b. Dependent Variable: PI

Table 3. F-test results

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3041.377	4	760.344	147.296	.000 ^b
	Residual	464.581	90	5.162		
	Total	3505.958	94			

a. Dependent Variable: PI

b. Predictors: (Constant), PQ, SC, EW, BT

Table 4. t-test results

		Coefficients ^a		
Model		t		Sig.
1	(Constant)	-3.616		.000
	BT	-1.335		.185
	EW	5.190		.000
	SC	5.188		.000
	PQ	9.646		.000

a. Dependent Variable: PI

The sig. value for brand trust (BT) is 0.185 ($0.815 > 0.05$) which exceeds 0.05, meaning that H_1 is rejected and brand trust has no partial influence on purchase intention. An explanation found in Adil et al. (2018), which also had similar research results, stated that relative newness might be one of the causes of the insignificance of influence between brand trust and purchase intention. In addition to newness, the lack of innovation also contributes to how consumers' trust towards the brand is not developed well, which relates to an indicator of brand trust, trusting belief, where a lack of it leads to a lack of another indicator, trusting intention. This condition of lacking in the brand trust

indicators makes it not enough to evoke purchase intention. In comparison to many other brands that rank better and have a larger market share, Somethinc is a relatively newer brand that began to become more well-known only in the last few years. Other brands that are more long-standing are more likely to possess more brand trust in comparison to Somethinc because of the duration in which they can thrive and the amount of head-start exposure they have over Somethinc, leaving the brand at disadvantage due to their newness and thus less built brand trust. In relation to the indicators of brand trust, Somethinc still lacks benevolence due to not being long-standing enough for customers to believe

they will reap good impacts from their products, which relates to another indicator, willingness to depend, which is still lacking for Somethinc as well. With a brand trust that hasn't developed fully yet, its influence on consumers' purchase intention is insignificant. The insignificant result might be due to the inconsistent levels of brand trust perpetuated by Somethinc itself as a brand, in which it hasn't been able to evoke similar levels of trust towards the wholeness of its target consumers. Due to these inconsistent brand trust levels that make consumers wary in deciding to buy the cosmetics products they'll apply on their bodies, it has not had significant influence on purchase intention. The value of sig. for E-WoM (EW) as shown in the table is 0.000 ($0.000 < 0.05$) which does not exceed 0.05, therefore H_2 is accepted and E-WoM has a partial influence on purchase intention. The results of this research are not in accordance with previous research, Alfonsius and Lawrence (2023), where e-WOM had no partial influence on Purchase Intention at Oriflame Medan. A research done by Katuuk et al. (2022), which looks into purchase intention as a dependent variable of a local cosmetics product in Indonesia, found a similar finding where E-WoM has a significant influence on purchase intention on the brand's consumers. A handful of respondents remarked that prior to being involved in purchase behaviors, they deliberately do online search on reviews regarding Somethinc products. It is coming from the belief that lengthy and deep research has to be done when concerning beauty products, and also to know better on whether the products will suit the skin. This relates to the indicators of E-WoM, specifically the searching and reinforcement of valence of opinion from other product users. Looking at reviews from actual users of the products help respondents consider which products are best regarding their own skin concerns, in order to avoid the wasteful disposal of products that turn out not to match the skin's needs. Several respondents are also persuaded into intentions of purchase due to good claims they found on online reviews, one of them being the claim of brighter complexion and reduced acne after a 2-week use. Another respondent remarks that with reviews, audiences will have more sureness in the product's claim.

The value of sig. for self-congruity (SC) as displayed in the table is 0.000 ($0.000 < 0.05$) which does not exceed 0.05, hence H_3 is accepted and self-congruity has a partial influence on purchase intention. Similar results are also found in research done by Chen et al (2021), where it is elaborated that this significance of

influence occurs due to consumers opting for products or brands which have ornaments signifying a similarity to their own personalities, avoiding those that do not. A huge majority of respondents agree that they are inherently cheerful people as well as are perceived as cheerful by their social circle most of the time, which concludes that the dimensions actual self-congruity and social self-congruity play the crucial role in terms of the significance of self-congruity in influencing purchase intention. Both of these dimensions are more instinctual and internal than intentional, which could influence consumers in a way that they get subconsciously drawn into Somethinc's products due to the variation of colors used in packaging and posts. This is supported by respondents' statements that the colorful designs look vibrant and raise their moods, as well as look eye-catching. When consumers who are inherently cheerful and are often labeled as cheerful by their family and friends see Somethinc's products or posts that are colorful and give off a vibrant mood, they subconsciously give attention, feel good and interested because it resonates with a part of them, therefore increasing purchase intention.

Finally, the sig. value for perceived quality (PQ) as shown in the results above is 0.000 ($0.000 < 0.05$) which does not exceed 0.05, therefore H_4 is also accepted and perceived quality has a partial influence on purchase intention. This result supports that of Maghfiroh & Iriani (2021), which focuses on the purchase intention of local shoes customers, mentioning that quality is one of the main factors of purchase, and thus companies have to maintain good quality, along with being distinct in the market and communicating their products' strengths. Respondents have pointed out disappointments in terms of Somethinc's products' performance, consistency in colour, packaging, etc. Being indicators of perceived quality, namely possessing good and consistent qualities, they are all lacking in match in expectations, and connect to the explanation that purchase intention is motivated by the aim to fulfill needs. When consumers expect some things from Somethinc's products from advertisements for product descriptions and do not get the same instead, this is similar to expectations not being met, therefore needs being unmet and unfulfilled as well. When perceived quality is low, purchase intention is affected negatively as well, because consumers perceive that the products can not fulfill what they're looking for, hindering their intention to buy. This is seen through how several respondents remarked that they might not necessarily

choose to buy Somethinc's products. Conversely, when consumers perceive that quality is good and can fulfill their needs, their intention to buy will also increase, reflecting the significance of influence.

Managerial Implication

To work on reducing consumers' doubts on whether or not Somethinc's products will cause irritation on their skin upon use, the brand should formulate their products to be gentler with more hypoallergenic ingredients such as hyaluronic acid, arbutin, plant extracts, etc. Somethinc should also aim for a product texture that is lightweight yet moisturizing for a long time, for example going for light gel cream texture instead of heavy creams so it won't clog pores. Harmful ingredients like paraben or simple alcohols should be avoided. They can also include actual testimonials of customers in their official marketplace like Shopee and Tokopedia. This will help customers' feeling of trust to grow and they will be less worried whether or not the products will irritate their skin, therefore not inhibiting purchase intention. For E-WoM, it is recommended that they highlight the importance of the social media influencers and content creators to first try the products for some period of time and then outline in detail their experiences they felt throughout trying the product, ending the review with a call-to-action. Somethinc can also trigger the honest reviews from the actual users of their products, one of them through special incentives like vouchers, discounts or freebies that will be given to a randomized reviewer once in a while for the reviews of their products in different platforms like Instagram, TikTok, etc. As elaborated in the research, the influence of E-WoM is observably felt towards audiences who are not previously familiar with the brand, as recommendations from fellow consumers seem to be more trustable. This will help increase the number of real online reviews from fellow users that can convince other consumers to be involved in purchasing behaviors for Somethinc's products.

To increase ideal self-congruity, Somethinc can partner with public figures who are seen as the ideal role models for their target market. This can refer to young female celebrities in Indonesia like Lyodra, Mahalini, Niki, etc., or members of South Korean girl groups like TWICE, Blackpink, ITZY, etc. As for the ideal social self-image, Somethinc needs to look deeper into the trends that are circulating around their target market. For

example, nowadays the young beauty enthusiasts are into chic, clean and natural beauty images. Somethinc can create congruence with this ideal social self-image by adjusting their makeup shades like eyeshadow, blush and lip products to be more sheer and natural instead of too vibrant or bold. For perceived quality, Somethinc has to do improving in the quality of their products' packaging, performance and longevity. For instance, they can choose a more secure packaging tube for their eyeliner instead of using a spring that can bounce out anytime and cause the eyeliner to dry out prematurely and also consider switching up the glass material for their serums into recyclable plastic serum pumps. For their complexion products like cushion, Somethinc can consider a formula that sets better on the skin, which can be achieved by infusing primer and more moisture into the formulation so it transfers and cracks less. It is also important to implement the same to lip products and blushes so that they last longer on the cheeks and lips while staying the same color and not wearing off too easily. A strict and meticulous quality control procedure needs to be maintained so that products that belong to the same product line remain consistent through different production batches, without too many changes in texture or color. Products that seem to turn different than the established standard should automatically be rejected and not be distributed in the market anymore.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

According to the outcome of the research, the results of the research hypotheses can be concluded through the following: (1) Brand trust does not have a partial significant influence on the purchase intention of Somethinc's customers in Medan; (2) E-WoM has a partial significant influence on the purchase intention of Somethinc's customers in Medan; (3) Self-congruity has a partial significant influence on the purchase intention of Somethinc's customers in Medan; (4) Perceived quality has a partial significant influence on the purchase intention of Somethinc's customers in Medan; (5) Brand trust, E-WoM, self-congruity and perceived quality have a simultaneous significant influence on purchase intention of Somethinc's customers in Medan.

Recommendations

It is important for Somethinc to be special, distinct and solid in terms of quality to stand out to its target market in the midst of its competitors. This can be achieved by striving to be the 'top' and 'most' in several aspects, for example: most effective soothing toner in Indonesia, most waterproof mascara amongst local brands, most transferproof loose power locally, etc. This can be achieved by investing in good product quality control, doing good research on circulating trends and adjusting their brand image to their target market's self-image, as well as encouraging authentic, honest and comprehensive E-WoM through social media content creators and their customers.

For other researchers who might be interested in digging deeper into the topic and phenomenon discussed in this research, it is suggested that other factors that might influence purchase intention become the variables of research, such as brand ambassadors, perceived price, brand awareness, packaging in order to see how other factors might influence purchase intention towards customers of Somethinc differently. Choosing a different scope of research sample will also be a good idea, such as gathering respondents from another city in Indonesia, as it can reflect a whole new perspective from customers of Somethinc.

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