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The Role of Brand Image Mediates the Effect of Word of Mouth on Purchase Decisions at Erimarebangun Stores

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ABSTRACT : Consumer purchasing decisions are basically not only dependent on the brand image created by a company, but on the role of consumers in influencing other consumers to buy company products. The purpose of this study was to explain the effect of word of mouth on brand image, to explain the influence of word of mouth on purchasing decisions, to explain how brand image affects purchasing decisions, and to explain the role of brand image mediating the influence of word of mouth on purchasing decisions. This study uses primary data obtained through distributing questionnaires. The number of samples used was 110 respondents. The results showed that 1) word of mouth (WOM) had a positive and significant effect on brand image, word of mouth (WOM) had a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, 3) brand image had a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, 4) brand image (M) is a variable that mediates word of mouth (X) in purchasing decisions (Y) or in other words, word of mouth has an indirect effect on purchasing decisions through brand image. The advice given is that the Erimarebangun store should always ensure the quality and model of products sold are in accordance with consumer desires so that it will be easier to attract consumers to buy products.

KEYWORDS : *word of mouth, brand image, purchasing decisions*

I.　　INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization, if a company wants to exist in competition, it must pay attention to one of its main functions, namely marketing. The phenomenon of competition directs the economic system to market mechanisms which ultimately positions marketers to always develop and seize market share. Efforts that must be made in implementing good marketing are knowing what consumers want and needs. Now the company is in fact faced with consumer purchasing decisions in choosing products based on brands. This is very important, because the brand affects consumer purchases.

The purchasing decision according to Schiffman and Kanuk (2012) is the selection of two or more alternative options, meaning that in order for someone to make a decision, several alternative choices must be available. The decision to buy can lead to how the decision making process is carried out. Purchasing decision is an integration process that combines knowledge attitudes to evaluate two or more alternative behaviors, and choosing one of them. One of the factors that influence purchasing decisions is promotion. Promotion is a way of communication to convince someone to make decisions about buying a product or service and provide information to consumers. Niazi, et al (2012: 114). Promotion in this case is related to building a company image through a brand or brand. Brand image includes the advantages of the company's products that can make consumers interested in trying and then making buying decisions. A good and positive brand image in front of consumers will become a lifestyle reference in determining purchasing decisions (Permadi et al., 2014).

The development of people's lifestyles has led to various brands starting to appear and offering various advantages in an effort to attract consumer buying interest. This happens to companies engaged in production, especially Balinese traditional clothing. Since the issuance and enactment of the Governor of Bali Regulation

Number 79 of 2018 concerning the Day for the Use of Balinese Traditional Clothing, namely on certain days, the community's need for Balinese traditional clothing has begun to increase. The policy also has a positive impact on demand and production levels, as well as providing opportunities to introduce more local brands of products to consumers. Companies that have a good brand image, not only provide quality products but can also present the perceptions and feelings of a consumer, this condition provides a great opportunity to increase customer loyalty (Kotler and Armstrong, 2015). In line with this, Alfiana Putri and Atmosphere (2018) found that brand image which includes brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty affects the level of consumer decisions in making purchases. This means that the brand image that is formed by the company for the products it produces has an effect on customer satisfaction. The satisfaction that consumers feel after buying a product will indirectly foster a sense of loyalty to the company. Purchasing decisions do not only depend on the brand image created by a company, but on the role of consumers in influencing other consumers to make purchases on the company's products.

Kertajaya (2007) states that Word Of Mouth (WOM) is an effective communication medium, so that information will be trusted by consumers and of course will benefit the company. This is in line with research conducted by Utama and Abdullan (2013) which states that the factors that influence purchasing decisions are cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors. This means that the brand image of a company must be able to influence the psychology and social environment of consumers, the brand image will form word of mouth which in turn triggers consumers to make purchasing decisions and repurchasing (Molinari et al., 2008). The relationship between brand image and purchasing decisions through word of mouth occurs because of the perceptions built by the consumers themselves. Word of mouth shapes marketing communication activities that have an impact on purchasing decisions. Word Of Mouth (WOM) is communication in the form of conversations or testimonials conducted by people who talk about a product or service (Permadi et al, 2014). A consumer will tell his experience of using a product or service from a certain company, or even to the stage of recommending the product or service to others. Recommendations for clothing products through WOM can generate curiosity which will indirectly lead to purchasing decisions. This research will focus on consumers who make purchases at the Erimarebangun Store.

The Erimarebangun shop is a business engaged in the production of traditional Balinese clothing. This company was founded in 2013, located in Ubud District, Gianyar Regency, Bali. The company produces and sells various kinds of traditional clothing; songket, udeng, clothes, couple saput, kamen, sandals, and other supporting knick-knacks. Information about Erimarebangun and its products are easily accepted by potential consumers through social media. This strategy will be the first step of a company in attracting consumers' attention and determining their purchasing decisions when they feel like products from Erimarebangun Stores. The good use of social media, namely through uploading interesting photos and videos in promotion, causes products from Erimarebangun to be quickly recognized by the public. In addition, the image of Erimarebangun Stores fixing affordable prices, good quality and providing customer satisfaction, triggering the phenomenon of word of mouth promotion (Word Of Mouth). A satisfied consumer will spread PWOM (positive word of mouth). Conversely, if consumers feel less satisfied with the products from the Erimarebangun store, they will spread NWOM (negative word of mouth) (Pradnyawati and Atmosphere, 2014).

The results of a pre-survey conducted on 15 respondents related to purchasing decisions explained that of the 15 respondents surveyed, 46.7 percent stated that they made purchasing decisions based on trust in the quality of goods, 26.7 percent stated that Erimarebangun's products were always updated, then 13, 3 percent stated that it was because the price was affordable, and 6.7 percent for other reasons. Regarding the origin of knowing the Erimarebangun Shop, as many as 80 percent stated that they received recommendations from friends, 13.3 percent through social media, while 6.7 percent stated that they saw the street. In terms of marketing communications, 80 percent said they would recommend it to a friend, and 20 percent said they would probably recommend it. The results of the pre-survey proved that most consumers stated that the cause of purchasing decisions was due to the positive influence of word of mouth and brand image. This factor is indicated by the high percentage of consumers who stated that they chose products at Erimarebangun Stores because of their belief in the quality of the goods and were willing to recommend them to other consumers. This is consistent with research conducted by Torlak et al. (2014) which states that e-WOM has a positive effect on brand image. Aberdeen et al. (2016) stated that brand image has an effect on purchase intention. However, it is undeniable that 20 percent of

respondents said that they might recommend the Erimarebangun Shop. This means that there is still uncertainty or doubt from the consumer itself. This is supported by research conducted by Herdani and Sunaryo (2016) which states that WOM has no significant effect on purchase intention. Based on the description above, researchers suspect that there are factors that influence consumer uncertainty or doubt in recommending a product. So, it is necessary to prove it through a further study using variables related to purchasing decisions, and the main focus of this study is the role of brand image mediating the influence of word of mouth on purchasing decisions.

Based on the background described above, the problem formulations in this study are (1) How does word of mouth affect brand image? (2) How does word of mouth affect purchasing decisions? (3) How does brand image affect purchasing decisions? 4) How is the role of brand image mediating word of mouth on purchasing decisions? The objectives of this study were (1) To explain the effect of word of mouth on brand image. (2) To explain the effect of word of mouth on purchasing decisions. (3) To explain how the influence of brand image on purchasing decisions. (4) To explain the role of brand image in mediating the influence of word of mouth on purchasing decisions.

II.   LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS OF RESEARCH

Buying decision
According to Kotler & Armstrong (2016: 177) defines purchasing decisions as follows: consumer behavior is the study of how individual, groups, and organizations select, buy, use, and dispose of goods, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy their needs and wants, which means that purchasing decisions are part of consumer behavior, consumer behavior, namely the study of how individuals, groups and organizations choose, buy, use, and how goods, services, ideas or experiences satisfy their needs and desires.
According to Kotler and Armstrong (2016: 188), there are indicators of purchasing decisions including:
1) Product selection
2) Choice of brands
3) Choice of reseller
4) Time of purchase
5) Purchase Amount

Brand Image
Brand image describes the brand as a product, the brand as an organization and the brand as a symbol. Brand image can also be created from other factors. Brand image can be created in a very long time and it could be a short time. This depends on how the company builds a brand image and maintains it. Brand image is a consumer's perception of a brand as a reflection of the associations that exist in the minds of consumers (Kotler and Keller, 2016). The indicators of brand image according to Tjiptono (2014: 112) are: brand image, namely:
1) Brands have a high status or level of trust from consumers because they have a good track record (Reputation) (Hamel and Prahalad, 2011).
2) A brand must be able to provide its own value and benefits when consumers buy and consume the product. (Consumer Benefit) (Aaker, 2000).
3) Brands that belong to the expression of a set of personal characteristics that consumers will associate with a particular brand. (Brand Personality) (Aaker, 2000).

Word Of Mouth
Word of mouth is word of mouth communication about views or assessments of a product or service, both individually and in groups which aims to provide personal information. Word of mouth is a very effective strategy that influences consumer decisions in using products or services and can build a sense of trust from customers. According to Kotler and Keller (2012: 512), word of mouth is a marketing activity through person-to- person intermediaries either verbally, in writing, or through communication tools based on experiences with products or services. According to Babin (2014: 133) word of mouth indicators are as follows:
1) The willingness of consumers to talk about positive things about the quality of service and products to others.
2) Recommendation of company services and products to others.
3) Encouragement of friends or relations to make purchases of the company's products and services.

Based on several previous studies related to the variables studied in this study, the following research hypothesis can be formulated.
(1)   Word of mouth has a positive and significant effect on brand image
(2)   Word of mouth has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions
(3)   Brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions
(4)   Brand image is able to mediate the influence of word of mouth on purchasing decisions.

III.   METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted on the Erimarebangun Shop which is located in Peliatan, Ubud District, Gianyar Regency, Bali with the consideration that the shop has a brand image that is well known by the public. The research object in this study is brand image, word of mouth, and purchase decisions. The population in this study are consumers who make purchases of Erimarebangun products. The sample used in this study was between 55 and 110 respondents, this number was obtained based on the number of indicators, namely 11 indicators. So the sample taken from this study is the maximum number based on the multivariate count, namely 110 respondents obtained through the distribution of research instruments in the form of questionnaires with the help of google form. The data obtained in the field were tested first using the classical assumption test which was then analyzed by path analysis and sobel test.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Validity and Reliability Test Results

The results of the validity test carried out on this research instrument can be described in Table 1.

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Test Results

Variable	Items	Value Pearson Correlation	Desc	Alpa Cronbach	Desc
WOM (X)	X1.1	0,869	Valid		
	X1.2	0,885	Valid	0,861	Reliable
	X1.3	0,899	Valid		
BRAND IMAGE (M)	M1.1	0,904	Valid		
	M1.2	0,862	Valid	0,854	Reliable
	M1.3	0,889	Valid		
KEPUTUSAN PEMBELIAN (Y)	Y1.1	0,887	Valid		
	Y1.2	0,894	Valid		
	Y1.3	0,862	Valid	0,898	Reliable
	Y1.4	0,795	Valid		
	Y1.5	0,782	Valid		

Processed Data, 2020

The results of the validity test in Table 1. It can be seen that all research variable items have a Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (r)> 0.3 so that it can be said that all of the research variable items are valid. Likewise, the results of the reliability test were indicated by the Cronbach alpha value of more than 0.60. This means that all instruments used obtain consistent data, in the sense that if the instrument is submitted again, an answer that is relatively the same as the first answer will be obtained.

Description Of Research Variables

(1) Word of mouth (X)

Based on the results of distributing brand image questionnaires, respondents' answers to brand image variables were obtained as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Total score, average score and category of assessment of respondents' answers from word of mouth variable at Erimarebangun Store

No	Statement X (WOM)	Proportion of Respondents' Answers					Total Score	Average score	Category Rating
		STS	TS	CS	S	SS			
1	I tend to give my friends positive reviews about the products and services at Erimarebangun Store.	0	6	42	51	11	397	3,61	Good
2	I give recommendations about products in the Erimarebangun Store to my friends.	0	7	36	53	14	404	3,67	Good
	I invite my friends to purchase products at the								

3	Erimarebangun Store.	0	3	51	41	15	398	3,62	Good
Total Score							1199	10,90	
The Average Score							400	3,63	Good

Primary Data, 2020

From Table 2. it can be explained that the average score of the three indicators of word of mouth variables is 3.63 which fall into the agree category. This shows that the respondents' statements regarding the indicators of word of mouth are good. The indicator that has the highest average value is shown in the statement "I provide recommendations about products in Erimarebangun to my friends" with an average score of 3.67. This means that consumers of Erimarebangun Stores tend to provide recommendations to other consumers to shop for Erimarebangun Stores products. Meanwhile, two other indicators that have a score below the average score, namely: "I tend to give positive reviews about the products and services at the Erimarebangun Store to my friends" with an average score of 3.61 and "I invite my friends to do it. product purchases at Erimarebangun Stores "with an average score of 3.62 which indicates that the consumer response of Erimarebangun Stores has a good impact to influence other consumers to buy their products.

(2) Brand Image (M)
Based on the results of distributing brand image questionnaires, respondents' answers to brand image variables were obtained as presented in Table 3.
The table explains that the average score of the three indicators of brand image variables is 3.57, which fall into the agree category. This means that according to the respondent's statement, the brand image of Toko Erimarebangun is good. The indicator that has the highest average value is shown in the statement "I feel the product I bought at the Erimarebangun shop is what I expected". This means that the purchase price of the product is in accordance with the quality of the product. Two other indicators, namely "Erimarebangun Stores have a good reputation" with an average score of 3.46 and "Erimarebangun Stores are distinctive when compared to similar products" with an average score of 3.57 indicating that Erimarebangun Stores have succeeded in building a good reputation and gain the trust of its consumers.

Table 3. Total score, average score and category of assessment of respondents' answers from brand image variables at Erimarebangun Stores

No	Statement M (Brand Imge)	Proportion of Respondents' Answers					Total Score	Average score	Category Rating
		STS	TS	CS	S	SS			
1	Erimarebangun's shop has a good reputation	0	16	39	43	12	381	3,46	Good
2	I feel that the product I bought at the Erimarebuilt store was what I expected	0	0	47	50	13	406	3,69	Good
3	The Erimarebangun shop is distinctive when compared to similar products	0	15	35	42	18	393	3,57	Good
Total Score							1180	10,73	Good
The Average Score							393	3,57	

Primary Data, 2020

(3) Purchase Decision (Y)
Based on the results of the distribution of the purchase decision questionnaire, the respondents' statements regarding the purchasing decision variables were obtained as presented in Table 4 as follows.

Table 4. Total score, average score and category of assessment of respondents' answers from purchasing decision variables at Erimarebangun Stores

	Statement M (Brand	Proportion of Respondents' Answers	Total	Average	Categor

No	Imge)	ST	TS	CS	S	SS	Score	score	y Rating
1	I like the product from Erimarebangun Shop	0	9	32	46	23	413	3,75	Agree
2	The Erimarebangun shop is widely known by the public	0	14	29	41	26	409	3,72	Agree
3	Erimarebangun store sells products with complete collections	0	15	32	33	30	408	3,71	Agree
4	I made more than 1 purchase at Erimarebangun	0	3	41	41	25	418	3,80	Agree
5	I usually buy more than one product at Erimarebangun	2	10	32	45	21	403	3,66	Agree
Total Score							2051	18,65	Agree
The Average Score							410	3,73	

Primary Data, 2020

From Table 4, it is explained that the average score of the five indicators of purchasing decision variables is 3.73 which fall into the agree category. The indicator with the highest average value of 3.80 is shown by the statement "I made more than 1 purchase at the Erimarebangun Store". This shows that the respondent likes the product of Toko Erimarebangun so that they decide to buy the product. Meanwhile, other indicators, namely "I like products from the Erimarebangun Shop" have a score of 3.75, then "Erimarebangun Stores are widely known

by the public" with a score of 3.72, "Erimarebangun Stores sell products with complete collections" with a score of 3 , 71, and "I usually buy more than one product at the Erimarebangun Store" has a score of 3.66 indicating that the respondent has a positive assessment of the Erimarebangun Store product so that his purchasing decision is made on the product.

Path Analysis

(1).   The Influence of Word of Mouth (WOM) on Brand Image
Structural I test was conducted to see the effect of word of mouth on brand image which then the regression results are presented in the table 5.

Table 5. Result of Structure Path Analysis I

Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.193	.807		2.718	.008
WOM	.783	.073	.719	10.756	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Image Processed Data, 2020

Based on the results of the path analysis of Structure I as presented in Table 5, the following structural equation can be made.
$$M = 0,719 \, X + e_1 \quad \text{...(1)}$$
The standardized beta coefficient value is 0.719 and the significance value is 0.000 (<0.05), which means that Ho is rejected and H1 is accepted. This means that word of mouth (WOM) has a positive and significant effect on brand image at Erimarebangun Stores. The results of the analysis prove that the higher the activity of using word of mouth, the higher the impact on the brand image. This shows that the products sold by Toko Erimarebangun have succeeded in making consumers actively participate in providing recommendations and product reviews. The consumer's view of a brand is very important in a marketing strategy so that positive reviews are needed to build a good image in the view

of consumers. The application of word of mouth to various types of internet media helps respondents or potential consumers get recommendations and information as well as other consumer experiences. Positive information conveyed through word of mouth will form a positive image perception in the minds of consumers. The results of this study are also in accordance with previous research conducted by Rahman (2016) and Umamy, et al (2016) which found that positive word of mouth communication has a positive effect on increasing brand image. This result is reinforced by research conducted by Semuel and Lianto (2014) which revealed that the word of mouth variable has a positive and significant effect on brand image. In addition, research from Pasaribu (2019) states that high and positive word of mouth will lead to a good brand image.

(2). The Influence of Word of Mouth (WOM) and Brand Image on Purchasing Decisions
Structure II testing is carried out to see the effect of word of mouth and brand image on purchasing decisions, then the regression results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Result of Path Analysis Structure II

Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.674	1.146		.589	.557
WOM	.581	.144	.298	4.034	.000
Brand Image	1.085	.132	.607	8.206	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Keputusan Pembelian Processed Data, 2020

Based on the results of the Structural II path analysis as presented in Table 6, the following structural equations can be made.

$$Y = 0{,}298X + 0{,}607M + e_1 \tag{2}$$

The standardized WOM beta coefficient value for purchasing decisions is 0.298 and a significance value is 0.000 (<0.05), which means that Ho is rejected and H1 is accepted. This means that word of mouth (WOM) has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions at Erimarebangun Stores. This proves that purchasing decisions are influenced by recommendations, suggestions and reviews received by respondents or potential customers. Consumers trust word of mouth more in assessing a product, and it influences their buying decisions than advertising. The story and experience of someone using a product sounds more interesting which can influence his view to try the product. The more often potential customers collect information with high credibility and good quality information, the more likely it will be to increase the tendency towards purchasing decisions. According to Hasan (2013), word of mouth is a strong source of information in influencing purchasing decisions because the source of information is more independent, honest, and credible so that it provides benefits to other consumers with direct experience of the product. The results of this study are in accordance with previous research conducted by Hidayati (2013) which states that the indicator that has the dominant influence in purchasing decisions is organic word of mouth. WOM can influence decisions, both positive and negative. In face-to-face communication between parties who are known to each other, trust can be more easily built through familiarity so that the information conveyed is more likely to be used in purchasing decision making (Niininen et al., 2007). In writing, Joesyiana (2018) and Andari (2016) say that WOM has proven to be an effective method in obtaining useful information for purchasing decisions. In addition, in research conducted by Sari (2012), the variable word of mouth has a significant effect on purchasing decisions.

The standardized brand image beta coefficient value for purchasing decisions is 0.607 and the significance value is 0.000 (<0.05), which means that Ho is rejected and H1 is accepted. This means that brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions at Erimarebangun Stores. The results of the analysis prove that a brand that has a positive or favorable image is considered to reduce the purchase risk or loss arising from the product chosen by the consumer. This is why consumers often use the brand image of a product as a reference in making a purchase decision. The image of a brand has a certain level of strength and will get stronger along with the increasing experience of consumption or information gathering and will get stronger if it is supported by other networks. So that this brand image is important for consumers to make their choice in buying a product. The results of this study are supported by research conducted by Gilaninia and Mousavian (2012) which states that brand image is often used as an extrinsic requirement to make a purchase decision. Schiffman and Kanuk (2012) say that if consumers have no experience with a product, they will tend to trust brands that they like or are well- known for. These results also strengthen the research conducted by Prasetya, et al. (2018) that brand image consisting of the image of the maker, the image of the user, and the image of the product have a significant effect on purchasing decisions. Likewise, research conducted by Soim (2016) states that brand image variables consist of favorability of brand association, unique of brand association, strength of brand association to the dependent variable, namely purchasing decisions. This means that all dimensions in the brand image above can influence purchasing decisions.

Model Validity Examination

Examination of the validity of the model in path analysis is calculated using the coefficient of total determination. Previously, it was necessary to calculate the standard error value as follows.

$e_1 = \sqrt{1 - R^2} = \sqrt{1 - 0{,}517} = 0{,}694$

The standard error of e1 obtained is 0.694 which means that 69.4 percent of the variance brand image (M) is not explained by the word of mouth variable (X).

$e_2 = \sqrt{1 - R^2} = \sqrt{1 - 0{,}718} = 0{,}531$

The standard error value of e2 obtained is 0.531, which means that 53.1 percent of the variance of the purchase decision variable (Y) is not explained by the word of mouth (X) and brand image (M) variables.

Based on the calculation of the effect of error, the result of the effect of error (e1) is 0.694 and the effect of error (e2) is 0.531. The results of the total coefficient of determination are as follows

$R^2m = 1 - (Pe_1)^2 (Pe_2)^2$
$= 1 - (0{,}694)^2 (0{,}531)^2$
$= 0{,}864$

Based on the calculation results, the total coefficient of determination is 0.864, it is found that the diversity of data that can be explained by the model is 86.4 percent. This means that 86.4 percent of the purchasing decision variable is influenced by word of mouth and brand image, while the remaining 13.6 percent is explained by other variables not contained in the model.

Furthermore, it can be calculated the amount of direct effect and indirect effect as well as the total effect between variables. The calculation of the influence between variables is summarized in Table 4.7 as follows.

Table 7. Direct Influence and Indirect Effect and Total Influence of Research Variables

Variable Relation	Impact		Total
	Direct	Inderect Through M	
X → M	0,783	-	0,783
X₁ → Y	0,581	(0,783 x 0,132) = 0,103	0,684
M → Y	0,132	-	0,132

Processed Data, 2020

Table 7. shows that the effect of word of mouth on brand image is 0.783. The direct effect of word of mouth on purchasing decisions is 0.581. The direct effect of the brand image variable on purchasing decisions is 0.132. This means that the purchasing decision variable is more influenced by word of mouth than brand image. Meanwhile, the indirect effect of word of mouth on purchasing decisions through brand image is 0.103. So the total influence of word of mouth variable on purchasing decisions through brand image is 0.684.
Sobel test

Testing the indirect effect of the word of mouth variable (X) on the purchasing decision variable (Y) through the brand image variable (M) was carried out by the following steps.
(i)   Hypothesis Formulation
Ho: Brand image does not mediate the influence of word of mouth variables on purchasing decision variables. H1: Brand image mediates the influence of word of mouth variables on purchasing decision variables.

(ii)   Testing Criteria
If Z count ≤ 1.96 then H0 is accepted, it means that brand image is not a mediating variable. If Z count> 1.96 then H0 is rejected, meaning brand image is a mediating variable.

(iii)   Calculating Test Statistics
The significance test for the indirect effect of the z value of the ab coefficient is calculated by the following formula:

$$Z = \frac{ab}{\sqrt{b^2 Sa^2 + a^2 Sb^2 + Sa^2 Sb^2}}$$

$$= \frac{(0,783)(1,085)}{\sqrt{(1,085)^2(0,073)^2 + (0,783)^2(0,132)^2 + (0,073)^2(0,132)^2}}$$

$$= \frac{0,8495}{0,1305} = 6,506$$

Information :

Sab = amount of standard error is not direct Sa = standard error coefficient b1
Sb = standard error coefficient b3 a = path X with respect to M
b = path M with respect to Y
ab = path X to M (a) with path M to Y (b)

Because Z count is 6.506> 1.96, brand image (M) is a variable that mediates word of mouth (X) in purchasing decisions (Y) or in other words word of mouth has an indirect effect on purchasing decisions through brand image. (M). This means that if the intensity of word of mouth increases, it will have an effect on increasing the brand image and this will automatically increase the purchase decision of a product. Purchasing decisions do not only depend on the brand image created by a company, but on the role of consumers in influencing other consumers to make purchases on the company's products. In other words, if consumers who shop at Erimarebangun Stores provide good reviews or testimonials of the products sold by Erimarebangun to others. This will have a positive impact on the brand image or image of the Erimarebangun Store which will also have a direct impact on product purchasing decisions at the Erimarebangun Store.

The results of this study are supported by previous research conducted by Dewi and Ardani (2018) which states that brand image plays a role in mediating the effect of word of mouth on consumer purchase intentions, which means that the better the brand image generated by the company will be able to influence WOM to generate purchase intentions in the minds of consumers. These results reinforce previous studies by Hatane and Adi (2014); Reham and Dina (2016); Omer et al. (2014) and Jalilvand (2013) who prove the relationship between the 3 variables studied, namely word of mouth, brand image, and purchase decisions.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the previous discussion and description, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1) Word of mouth (WOM) has a positive and significant effect on brand image at Erimarebangun Stores. This means that the products sold by Toko Erimarebangun have succeeded in making consumers actively participate in providing recommendations and product reviews. The consumer's view of a brand is very important in a marketing strategy so that positive reviews are needed to build a good image in the view of consumers.

2) Word of mouth (WOM) has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions at Erimarebangun Stores. This means that purchasing decisions are influenced by recommendations, suggestions and reviews received by respondents or potential customers. Consumers trust word of mouth more in assessing a product, and it influences their buying decision than advertising.

3) Brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions at Erimarebangun Stores. This means that a brand that has a positive or preferred image is considered to reduce the risk of buying or loss arising from the product chosen by the consumer.

4) Brand image (M) is a variable that mediates word of mouth (X) in purchasing decisions (Y) or in other words, word of mouth has an indirect effect on purchasing decisions through brand image. This means that if the intensity of word of mouth increases, it will have an effect on increasing the brand image and this will automatically increase the purchase decision of a product.

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