



## THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PURCHASE INTENTION ON PURCHASE DECISIONS (The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-Wom) and Customer Reviews in Supporting The Development of Creative Economy and Culinary Sector at Kanenakan, Malang City)

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**Abstract:** *The development of the creative economy in Malang City is supported by the emergence of local culinary businesses such as Kanenakan, which utilize digital technology in their marketing activities. The culinary sector is one of the most in-demand subsectors of the creative economy today, due to its potential to drive innovation and local economic growth. This study aims to analyze the influence of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) and customer reviews on purchase decisions, with purchase intention as a mediating variable, while also exploring how these findings contribute to the development of the creative economy, particularly in the local culinary sector. A quantitative approach was employed through a survey of 135 respondents. The results indicate that customer reviews significantly influence purchase decisions, both directly and indirectly through purchase intention. In contrast, E-WOM does not have a significant effect. These findings highlight the importance of authentic customer reviews in supporting purchase decisions and sustaining local creative businesses. The implications suggest that optimizing customer experience can be a key strategy in strengthening the creative economy ecosystem in Malang.*

**Keywords:** *creative economy; electronic word of mouth (e-wom); customer review; purchase decision; purchase intention.*

**Abstract:** *Perkembangan ekonomi kreatif di Kota Malang didukung oleh hadirnya bisnis kuliner lokal seperti Kanenakan, yang memanfaatkan teknologi digital dalam aktivitas pemasarannya. Kuliner merupakan salah satu subsektor ekonomi kreatif yang saat ini banyak diminati masyarakat karena potensinya dalam mendorong inovasi dan pertumbuhan ekonomi lokal. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) dan ulasan pelanggan terhadap keputusan pembelian, dengan minat beli sebagai variabel mediasi, serta melihat bagaimana temuan tersebut dapat memberikan kontribusi terhadap pengembangan ekonomi kreatif, khususnya di sektor kuliner lokal. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan teknik survei terhadap 135*

*responden. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa ulasan pelanggan berpengaruh signifikan terhadap keputusan pembelian, baik secara langsung maupun melalui minat beli sebagai mediasi. Sebaliknya, E-WOM tidak memberikan pengaruh yang signifikan. Temuan ini menekankan pentingnya ulasan pelanggan yang otentik dalam mendukung keputusan pembelian serta keberlangsungan usaha kreatif lokal. Implikasi dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa optimalisasi pengalaman pelanggan dapat menjadi strategi penting dalam memperkuat ekosistem ekonomi kreatif di Malang.*

**Keywords:** *ekonomi kreatif; electronic word of mouth (e-wom); ulasan pelanggan; keputusan pembelian; minat beli.*

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## BACKGROUND

In the era of digital transformation, the creative economy has emerged as a vital force driving innovation, entrepreneurship, and regional development in Indonesia. Among its most dynamic subsectors is the culinary industry, which continues to attract widespread consumer interest due to its cultural relevance, adaptability, and economic potential (Setio *et al.*, 2024). Culinary businesses are not only central to daily consumption but also represent a form of creative expression that integrates local identity, storytelling, and innovation—key pillars of the creative economy (Dwidienawati *et al.*, 2020).

Malang City is one of Indonesia's leading urban centers in the development of the creative economy. One notable example is Kanenakan, a local culinary business that specializes in innovative donut creations inspired by local flavors and cultural narratives. Kanenakan is not merely a food outlet; it is a creative enterprise that reflects how the culinary sector can contribute to the creative economy. The business actively utilizes digital platforms, storytelling, and community engagement to enhance visibility and build strong emotional connections with consumers (Mukaffi *et al.*, 2018). The growing public interest in Kanenakan demonstrates that culinary businesses embedded in local culture and creativity hold strong potential for further development.

Culinary enterprises like Kanenakan illustrate how creative economy initiatives at the grassroots level can become powerful tools for local economic empowerment. By integrating locally sourced ingredients, distinctive product designs, and digital marketing strategies—including customer reviews and Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM)—these businesses contribute not only to commercial success but also to the sustainability of creative industries and cultural preservation (Setio *et al.*, 2024). Furthermore, they play a strategic role in positioning Malang as an emerging hub for creative entrepreneurship.

In this context, understanding how digital communication tools influence consumer behavior becomes increasingly relevant. Customer reviews and E-WOM are no longer just

platforms for customer feedback but are now seen as strategic drivers of consumer trust, brand perception, and purchase intention (Mukaffi *et al.*, 2018; Dwidienawati *et al.*, 2020). For small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operating within the creative economy, especially in culinary sectors, digital visibility and interactive engagement with customers are key to maintaining competitiveness and achieving long-term sustainability.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the influence of E-WOM and customer reviews on purchase decisions, with purchase intention serving as a mediating variable. Rather than merely testing the relationship between variables, this research seeks to demonstrate how such digital engagement strategies can be used by creative economy actors like Kanenakan to support business resilience, strengthen consumer relationships, and contribute to the broader development of Malang's creative economy ecosystem.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM)

Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) refers to digital marketing communication that enables consumers to share reviews and recommendations broadly (Cheung *et al.*, 2008). Compared to traditional marketing, E-WOM is considered more efficient in reaching a wider audience in a shorter time (Chetna & Amresh, 2017). Key indicators of E-WOM include message intensity, opinion valence, and content (Goyette *et al.*, 2010). Several studies have emphasized the role of E-WOM in influencing purchasing decisions. Yang *et al.*, 2018 found that E-WOM can significantly enhance consumer interest and drive purchase behavior. Slamet & Ulil Albab (2023), however, reported that the impact of E-WOM varies across market contexts and consumer segments. These findings suggest that while E-WOM can be a powerful tool, its effectiveness is context-dependent. In the context of the creative economy, particularly among local culinary businesses in Malang such as Kanenakan, E-WOM plays a vital role as a cost-effective promotional tool with broad impact. Unlike previous research that focuses on large-scale e-commerce or national brands, this study explores how E-WOM influences purchase decisions in a localized, creative economic setting. This provides new insight into how digital engagement can empower regional SMEs and contribute to the resilience of the creative economy.

## Customer Review

Customer reviews are evaluations given by consumers based on their experience in using a product or service (Cheung *et al.*, 2008). These reviews are often a key consideration for potential buyers in making purchase decisions. Their effectiveness depends on factors such as source credibility, volume of reviews, and the clarity and relevance of the information presented (Sianipar & Yoestini, 2021). Research by Anggraini & Simanjorang, 2023 showed that customer reviews have a strong influence on purchasing decisions in online marketplaces. However, Choirunnida & Prabowo (2024) found that the influence of reviews may differ depending on product types and consumer characteristics. These variations indicate that reviews must be assessed within their specific business and market contexts. In creative-based businesses like Kanenakan, customer reviews serve not only as promotional content but also as a medium for building consumer trust and fostering long-term engagement. Unlike previous studies that generalized review effects across platforms, this study highlights the role of reviews in supporting localized branding and enhancing visibility in regional creative ecosystems.

## Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is a consumer's tendency to buy a product after evaluating its value (Chi & Yeh, 2009). It reflects readiness to purchase based on factors such as quality, price, promotions, and customer reviews (Sari, 2020). Rohmatulloh & Sari, (2021) found a strong relationship between digital word-of-mouth and purchase intention, emphasizing its role in influencing consumer behavior. Pandelaki *et al.*, (2023), however, noted that this relationship can be moderated by demographic and behavioral factors. These insights suggest the need for contextual understanding of what drives purchase intention. For creative-based culinary businesses like Kanenakan, understanding purchase intention is crucial for tailoring marketing strategies. This study extends previous research by situating purchase intention within the framework of creative economic development and digital consumer behavior in Malang.

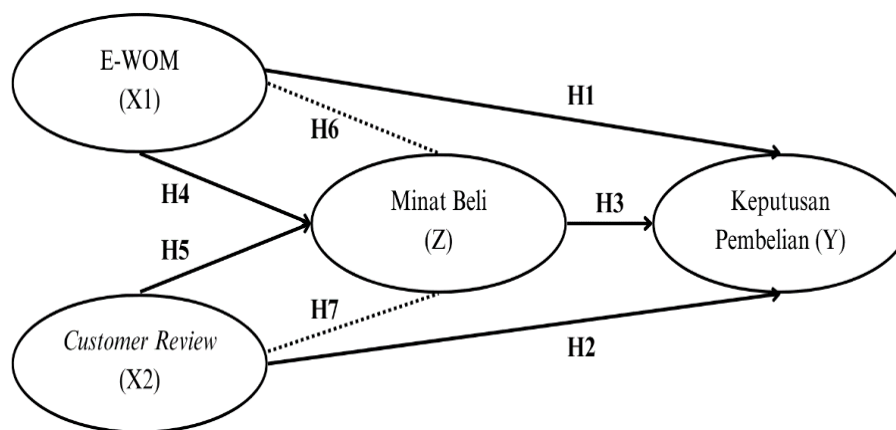
## Purchase Decision

Purchasing decisions are the final stage in the buying process taken by consumers after going through a series of considerations and evaluations (Solomon & Michael, 2015). According to Kotler *et al.*, (2022), this decision is influenced by various factors, including psychological, social, and situational aspects. Prastiwi & Aminah (2021) emphasized that digital platforms and user feedback can directly shape purchasing outcomes. Firdaus *et al.*,

(2023) found that while digital engagement does affect decision-making, the impact can differ across industries and consumer segments. This research complements these findings by examining purchasing decisions in the context of a local creative economy enterprise. It highlights how insights into consumer behavior can help businesses like Kanenakan design more effective engagement strategies to support economic sustainability.

### Conceptual Framework

According to the literature review, the connection between E-WOM, customer reviews, purchase intention, and purchase decisions still shows mixed findings. Therefore, a conceptual framework is needed that can systematically describe the relationship between variables and explain the role of each in affecting purchasing decisions. The conceptual framework in this study is designed to illustrate the relationship between independent variables, mediating variables, and dependent variables by referring to the theory and results of previous research, as follows:



**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework (Author,2025)**

Note:

- > = Direct effect  
- - - - - = Indirect effect (mediation)

1. H1: E-WOM directly influences the purchasing decisions of Kanenakan consumers in Malang City.
2. H2: Customer reviews have a direct impact on the purchasing decisions of Kanenakan consumers in Malang City.

3. H3: Purchase intention directly affects the purchasing decisions of Kanenakan consumers in Malang City.
4. H4: E-WOM has a direct impact on the purchase intention of Kanenakan consumers in Malang City.
5. H5: Customer reviews directly influence the purchase intention of Kanenakan consumers in Malang City.
6. H6: E-WOM affects purchasing decisions through the mediating role of purchase intention among Kanenakan consumers in Malang City.
7. H7: Customer reviews influence purchasing decisions through the mediation of purchase intention among Kanenakan consumers in Malang City.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative correlational approach to examine the relationship between Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM), customer reviews, purchase intention, and purchase decisions. A field-based method was chosen to observe real consumer interactions within a creative economy context, particularly in the culinary sector (Sugiyono, 2022).

The research was conducted from January to March 2025 in Malang City, focusing on Kanenakan, a local culinary business recognized for its innovative products and active digital presence. Kanenakan was selected due to its strong integration in the local creative economy and use of online marketing platforms.

Respondents were 135 consumers selected through purposive sampling. Criteria included being active social media users and having interacted with Kanenakan's digital content, especially customer reviews. This ensures the relevance of data collected (Hair Jr *et al.*, 2021).

The study aims to evaluate the influence of E-WOM and customer reviews on purchase decisions, with purchase intention as a mediating factor. Data collection was conducted via an online questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale (Malhotra & Naresh, 2006). Secondary data were sourced from scholarly publications and credible references (Yusuf, 2017).

Data analysis employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 3.0 software (Henseler *et al.*, 2015). which is suitable for exploratory research with complex variable relationships and relatively small sample sizes. This method helps derive both theoretical and practical insights to support the growth of creative culinary businesses in Malang.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Respondent Data Based on Gender

The distribution of respondents based on gender from a total of 135 participants in this study is as follows:

**Table 1. Respondent Gender Distribution**

No.	Gender Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Male	43	31,9%
2.	Female	92	68,1%

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

From the table above, 43 male respondents (31.9%) and 92 female respondents (68.1%) participated in the total sample. This indicates that females have a greater interest in buying desserts, especially from Donat Kanenakan in Malang City, compared to males.

### Respondent Data Based on Age

The distribution of respondents based on age from a total of 135 participants in this study is presented in the table below:

**Table 2. Respondent Age Distribution**

No.	Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	13-17 years	6	4,4%
2.	18-22 years	83	61,5%
3.	23-27 years	32	23,7%
4.	28-32 years	11	8,1%
5.	> 33 years	3	2,2%

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

These data show that the majority of respondents belong to the 18-22 age group (61.5%), followed by the 23-27 age group (23.7%). Meanwhile, respondents aged 13-17 represent 4.4%, those aged 28-32 make up 8.1% and only 2.2% of respondents are over 33 years old.

### Respondent Data Based on Domicile

The distribution of respondents based on domicile from a total of 135 participants in this study is presented in the table below:



**Table 3. Respondent Domicile Distribution**

No.	Domicile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Klojen	22	16,3%
2.	Blimbing	28	20,7%
3.	Lowokwaru	33	24,4%
4.	Sukun	33	24,4%
5.	Kedungkandang	19	14,1%

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

The above data shows that the majority of respondents reside in Lowokwaru and Sukun, both contributing an equal number of respondents (33 respondents or 24.4%). This is followed by Blimbing with 28 respondents (20.7%), Klojen with 22 respondents (16.3%) and finally Kedungkandang with 19 respondents (14.1%). The relatively small differences in the distribution of respondents across the different districts suggest that Kanenakan has a fairly uniform consumer base across Malang City.

### **Respondent Data Based on Latest Education**

The distribution of respondents based on their latest education from a total of 135 participants in this study is presented in the table below:

**Table 4. Respondent Education Level Distribution**

No.	Latest Education Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	SD/MI	0	0%
2.	SMP/MTS	8	5,9%
3.	SMA/MA/SMK	79	58,5%
4.	D1/D2/D3/Sederajat	18	13,3%
5.	S1/D4/Sederajat	29	21,5%
6.	S2/S3	1	0,7%

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

The data show that the majority of respondents have completed high school (SMA/MA/SMK), representing 79 respondents or 58.5% of the total sample. None of the respondents had primary school (SD/MI) as their highest level of education. Other educational backgrounds included bachelor's degree or equivalent (S1/D4) with 29 respondents (21.5%), diploma (D1/D2/D3) with 18 respondents (13.3%), high school (SMP/MTS) with 8 respondents (5.9%), and master's/doctoral degree (S2/S3) with only 1 respondent (0.7%).



These findings suggest that people with higher secondary education are the main group of respondents in this study. This indicates that this demographic group has higher levels of participation and interest in purchasing Donat Kanenakan in Malang City compared to other educational groups.

### Respondent Data Based on Income

The distribution of respondents based on income from a total of 135 participants in this study is presented in the table below:

**Table 5. Respondent Income Distribution**

No.	Income data	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	< Rp500.000	9	6,7%
2.	Rp500.000 - Rp1.000.000	18	13,3%
3.	Rp1.000.000 - Rp2.000.000	47	34,8%
4.	Rp2.000.000 - Rp3.000.000	29	21,5%
5.	Rp3.000.000 - Rp4.000.000	16	11,9%
6.	> Rp4.000.000	16	11,9%

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

Based on the income data of the respondents, of the total 135 respondents, the majority earn between Rp 1,000,000 - Rp 2,000,000, with 47 people (34.8%) falling into this category. This is followed by 29 respondents (21.5%) who earn Rp2,000,000 - Rp3,000,000. In addition, 18 respondents (13.3%) have an income of Rp500,000 - Rp1,000,000. Both the Rp3,000,000 - Rp4,000,000 income groups and the income groups above Rp4,000,000 each account for 16 respondents each (11.9%). Meanwhile, the smallest group consists of 9 respondents (6.7%) who earn less than Rp500,000.

These data suggest that the majority of Donat Kanenakan consumers belong to the middle income group. Given the price of the product, which starts at Rp 9,000 per donut, it remains affordable and accessible to people in this income range.

### Respondent Data Based on Status as Kanenakan Consumers

The distribution of respondents based on their status as Kanenakan consumers is presented in the table below:

**Table 6. Status as Kanenakan Consumers**

No.	Consumer Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Yes	135	100%
2.	No	0	0%

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

The data indicates that all 135 respondents (100%) in this study have purchased Donat Kanenakan at least once. This confirms that the entire sample consists of actual consumers who have experienced the product firsthand.

### Respondent Data Based on Social Media Usage and Activity

The distribution of respondents based on their status as active social media users is presented in the table below:

**Table 7. Status as Social Media Users and Activity Level**

No.	Status as Social Media User	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Yes	135	100%
2.	No	0	0%

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

The data indicates that all 135 respondents (100%) in this study are active social media users. This confirms that every participant engages with social media platforms, making them relevant subjects for analyzing online interactions and digital marketing influences.

### Respondent Data Based on Frequency of Viewing Recommendations and Reviews About Kanenakan on Social Media

The distribution of respondents based on how often they see recommendations and reviews about Kanenakan on social media is presented in the table below:

**Table 8. Frequency of Viewing Recommendations and Reviews About Kanenakan on Social Media**

No.	Frequency of Viewing Recommendations and Reviews	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Very Often	57	42,2%
2.	Often	48	35,6%
3.	Rarely	17	12,6%
4.	Occasionally	11	8,1%
5.	Never	2	1,5%

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

Based on the data, the majority of respondents (77.8%) frequently or very frequently see recommendations and reviews about Kanenakan on social media. This indicates strong visibility and high consumer engagement. A smaller portion (12.6%) rarely sees them, while

9.6% have only seen them occasionally or never. These findings highlight the crucial role of social media in Kanenakan's marketing and communication strategy.

### Convergent Validity Test

Convergent validity can be assessed using Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and outer loading values. According to Hair Jr *et al.*, (2021), an outer loading value should ideally be at least 0.7. However, values between 0.4 and 0.7 can still be accepted if they contribute to the overall validity of the model. Meanwhile, an AVE value is considered valid if it exceeds 0.5. The outer loading values obtained in this study are presented as follows:

**Table 9. Outer Loading and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Values**

Variabel	Item	Outer Loading	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Status
<b>Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) (X1)</b>	X1.1.1	0,828	0,706	Valid
	X1.1.2	0,820		
	X1.2.1	0,850		
	X1.3.1	0,837		
	X1.3.2	0,859		
	X1.3.3	0,829		
	X1.3.4	0,823		
	X1.4.1	0,859		
	X1.5.1	0,856		
<b>Customer Review (X2)</b>	X2.1.1	0,843	0,612	Valid
	X2.2.1	0,779		
	X2.2.2	0,808		
	X2.3.1	0,764		
	X2.3.2	0,803		
	X2.4.1	0,769		
	X2.4.2	0,771		
	X2.4.3	0,717		
<b>Purchase Decision (Y)</b>	Y1.1.1	0,719	0,597	Valid
	Y1.1.2	0,808		
	Y1.2.1	0,802		
	Y1.2.2	0,771		
	Y1.3.1	0,788		
	Y1.4.1	0,744		
<b>Purchase Intention (Z)</b>	Z1.1.1	0,825	0,673	Valid
	Z1.2.1	0,822		
	Z1.3.1	0,771		
	Z1.4.1	0,860		

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

All items have outer loading values above 0.7, indicating a strong contribution to their respective constructs. Additionally, the AVE values for all constructs (E-WOM = 0.706, Customer Review = 0.612, Purchase Decision = 0.597, and Purchase Intention = 0.673) exceed the threshold of 0.5. This suggests that more than half of the variance in the indicators is explained by their respective constructs, confirming good convergent validity. These results demonstrate that each construct is valid, reliable, and consistently represents the measured concept, ensuring the robustness of the measurement model.

### Discriminant Validity Test

Discriminant validity ensures that each construct has unique characteristics and does not correlate excessively with other constructs (Rahadi, 2023). This validity is achieved when the square root of AVE for each construct is greater than the correlations between constructs, following the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Ghozali & Latan, 2015). The results of the Fornell-Larcker criterion in this study are as follows:

**Table 10. Fornell-Larcker Criterion Results**

	<b>Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM)</b>	<b>Customer Review</b>	<b>Purchase Decision</b>	<b>Purchase Intention</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM)</b>	0,840				Valid
<b>Customer Review</b>	0,765	0,782			Valid
<b>Purchase Decision</b>	0,555	0,700	0,773		Valid
<b>Purchase Intention</b>	0,505	0,678	0,744	0,820	Valid

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

The results indicate that each construct has adequate discriminant validity, as evidenced by the square root of AVE values (E-WOM = 0.840, Customer Review = 0.782, Purchase Decision = 0.773, Purchase Intention = 0.820), which are greater than the inter-construct correlations. This confirms that each construct in the PLS-SEM model is unique and does not overlap with other constructs, thereby reinforcing the distinctiveness and validity of the model.

### Reliability Test

In addition to validity testing, reliability testing is essential to evaluate the accuracy, consistency, and precision of an instrument in measuring a construct (Sugiyono, 2022). This analysis is conducted using reflective indicators through two methods:

1. Composite Reliability – A value greater than 0.7 indicates a variable is reliable.
2. Cronbach's Alpha – A value above 0.6 confirms the reliability of a variable (Rahadi, 2023).

**Table 11. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability Results**

	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM)</b>	0,948	0,956	Reliabel
<b>Customer Review</b>	0,909	0,926	Reliabel
<b>Purchase Decision</b>	0,865	0,899	Reliabel
<b>Purchase Intention</b>	0,837	0,891	Reliabel

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

Based on Table 11, all constructs exhibit good reliability, with composite reliability exceeding 0.7 (E-WOM = 0.956, Customer Review = 0.926, Purchase Decision = 0.899, Purchase Intention = 0.891) and Cronbach's alpha values above 0.6. These results indicate a high level of internal consistency, ensuring that each indicator in the model measures the construct stably and reliably, without being influenced by external factors or random errors.

### **R-Square Test**

The R-Square test measures the extent to which independent variables explain the variation in the dependent variable. An  $R^2$  value of  $\geq 0.75$  indicates a strong model, a value between 0.50 and 0.75 signifies a moderate model, and a value between 0.25 and 0.50 suggests a weak ability to explain variable relationships (Rahadi, 2023). The following table presents the R-Square test results from this study:

**Tabel 12. R-Square Values**

	<b>R-Square</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>Purchase Decision (Y)</b>	0,626	62,6%	Moderate Model
<b>Purchase Intention (Z)</b>	0,460	46,0%	Weak Model

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

Based on the results presented in the table above, the  $R^2$  value for Purchase Intention (Z) is 0.460, indicating that the independent variables contribute 46%, which falls within the weak category (0.25 – 0.50). Meanwhile, the  $R^2$  value for Purchase Decision (Y) is 0.626, suggesting a contribution of 62.6%, categorized as moderate (0.50 – 0.75). Overall, this model demonstrates a moderate to weak explanatory power in describing the relationships between

variables, implying the potential influence of other factors on Purchase Intention and Purchase Decision.

### Path Coefficient Analysis

The path coefficient indicates the direction and strength of relationships between variables in the model. In the PLS-Algorithm, values range from -1 to 1, where values closer to -1 or 1 signify stronger relationships. A positive coefficient indicates a positive relationship, while a negative coefficient suggests a negative relationship (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2020). The following table presents the path coefficient results from this study:

**Table 13. Path Coefficient Values**

	<b>Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM)</b>	<b>Customer Review</b>	<b>Purchase Intention</b>	<b>Purchase Decision</b>
<b>Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM)</b>			-0,032	0,064
<b>Customer Review</b>			0,702	0,312
<b>Purchase Intention</b>				0,501
<b>Purchase Decision</b>				

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

Based on Table 13, the path coefficient analysis indicates that Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) has a positive impact on Purchase Decision with a coefficient of 0.064, although the relationship is relatively weak. Customer Review exerts a greater influence on Purchase Decision, with a coefficient of 0.312, whereas Purchase Intention has the strongest effect with a coefficient of 0.501. This suggests that higher Customer Review ratings and stronger Purchase Intention increase the likelihood of making a purchase decision.

However, E-WOM does not influence Purchase Intention and even exhibits a negative relationship, with a coefficient of -0.032. This implies that E-WOM does not drive Purchase Intention. In contrast, Customer Review has a very strong relationship with Purchase Intention, with a coefficient of 0.702, indicating that higher Customer Review ratings significantly enhance Purchase Intention. Overall, these findings highlight the complex relationships between E-WOM, Customer Review, Purchase Intention, and Purchase Decision.

### T-Statistic Analysis

T-Statistics are used to examine the relationships between variables and test hypotheses in the analysis. Results are considered significant if T-Statistics > 1.96 at a 5% significance

level and P-Values  $< 0.05$ , allowing for the rejection of  $H_0$  and acceptance of  $H_a$  (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2020). The following table presents the T-Statistics and P-Values from the bootstrapping test:

**Tabel 14. T-Statistics and P-Value**

Relationship	T-Statistics	P-Values	Interpretation
<b>Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) → Purchase Decision</b>	0,562	0,574	Not Significant
<b>Customer Review → Purchase Decision</b>	2,564	0,011	Significant
<b>Minat Beli → Purchase Decision</b>	5,408	0,000	Significant
<b>Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) → Purchase Intention</b>	0,246	0,806	Not Significant
<b>Customer Review → Purchase Intention</b>	5,688	0,000	Significant

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

Based on the results in the table above, Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) does not have a significant effect on Purchase Decision, with a T-Statistic value of 0.562 ( $< 1.96$ ) and a P-Value of 0.574 ( $> 0.05$ ), leading to the rejection of the first hypothesis ( $H_1$ ). In contrast, Customer Review significantly influences Purchase Decision, with a T-Statistic value of 2.564 ( $> 1.96$ ) and a P-Value of 0.011 ( $< 0.05$ ), supporting the second hypothesis ( $H_2$ ).

Purchase Intention demonstrates a significant effect on Purchase Decision, with a T-Statistic value of 5.408 ( $> 1.96$ ) and a P-Value of 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ), confirming the third hypothesis ( $H_3$ ). However, E-WOM does not significantly influence Purchase Intention, as indicated by a T-Statistic value of 0.246 ( $< 1.96$ ) and a P-Value of 0.806 ( $> 0.05$ ), resulting in the rejection of the fourth hypothesis ( $H_4$ ). In contrast, Customer Review has a significant impact on Purchase Intention, with a T-Statistic value of 5.688 ( $> 1.96$ ) and a P-Value of 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ), supporting the fifth hypothesis ( $H_5$ ).

Overall, Customer Review and Purchase Intention play a crucial role in influencing Purchase Decision, whereas E-WOM does not have a significant effect. Customer Review is proven to be a key factor in shaping consumer decisions, while Purchase Intention exerts the strongest influence on Purchase Decision. These findings emphasize that Customer Review is more effective than E-WOM in marketing strategies.



### Predictive Relevance Test

Predictive relevance is evaluated through the blindfolding test to measure the quality of the dependent variables. A  $Q^2$  value of 0.02 indicates low relevance, 0.15 represents moderate relevance, and 0.35 signifies high relevance. This test applies only to endogenous constructs with reflective indicators (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2020). The following table presents the predictive relevance results in this study:

**Table 15. Predictive Relevance Values**

	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1 - SSE/SSO)$
<b>Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM)</b>	1,215,000	1,215,000	
<b>Customer Review</b>	1,080,000	1,080,000	
<b>Purchase Decision</b>	810,000	514,496	0,365
<b>Purchase Intention</b>	540,000	378,198	0,300

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

Based on the table above, the Q-Square values indicate the model's predictive capability. Purchase Intention has a  $Q^2$  value of 0.300, suggesting a fairly high predictive relevance, with 30% of its variance explained by E-WOM and Customer Review. Meanwhile, Purchase Decision has a  $Q^2$  value of 0.365, indicating high predictive relevance, with 36.5% of its variance explained by the independent variables. Overall, these results demonstrate that the model is effective in predicting Purchase Intention and Purchase Decision based on E-WOM and Customer Review.

### Model Fit Test

The evaluation of model fit using the PLS Algorithm is based on the Normed Fit Index (NFI). A model is considered acceptable if  $NFI > 0.85$ , while an  $NFI < 0.85$  indicates that the model is not recommended (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2020). The model fit test results are presented in the following table:

**Table 16. Model Fit Test Results**

	SSO	SSE
<b>SRMS</b>	<b>0,064</b>	<b>0,064</b>
<b>NFI</b>	<b>0,779</b>	<b>0,779</b>

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

Based on the table above, the NFI value of 0.779 (77.9%) indicates a moderately good model fit but remains below the high-standard threshold ( $\geq 0.9$ ). While the model can explain

the relationships between variables, there are still some weaknesses in its overall fit to the data. Therefore, this model is not fully recommended for future research without significant modifications.

### Mediation Test

The mediation test assesses the effectiveness of the relationship between independent and dependent variables. If T-statistics  $> 1.96$  and P-values  $< 0.05$ , the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted, indicating a significant indirect effect (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2020). The mediation test results are presented in the following table:

**Table 17. Mediation Test Results**

	<b>T-Statistics</b>	<b>P-Values</b>
<b>Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) → Purchase Intention → Purchase Decision</b>	0,236	<b>0,813</b>
<b>Customer Review → Purchase Intention → Purchase Decision</b>	3,585	0,000

(Processed by The Researcher, 2025)

The mediation test results indicate that Purchase Intention does not mediate the relationship between Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) and Purchase Decision, as shown by a T-Statistic value of 0.236 and a P-Value of 0.813. This confirms that E-WOM does not significantly influence Purchase Decision, either directly or indirectly, meaning no mediation effect exists in this relationship.

In contrast, Customer Review has a significant effect on Purchase Decision through Purchase Intention, with a T-Statistic value of 3.585 and a P-Value of 0.000. This suggests that positive Customer Reviews enhance Purchase Intention, which in turn drives Purchase Decision. Since Customer Review influences Purchase Decision both directly and indirectly through Purchase Intention, the mediation effect observed is classified as partial mediation.

### The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) on Purchase Decisions Among Kanenakan Consumers in Malang City

The results of this study indicate that Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) does not influence the purchasing decisions of Kanenakan consumers in Malang City, leading to the rejection of the first hypothesis ( $H_1$ ). This finding aligns with the study conducted by Slamet & Ulil Albab (2023), which also concluded that E-WOM does not significantly affect purchase decisions. A possible explanation is the limited trust consumers place in E-WOM, especially

when the source is perceived as less credible or overly subjective. Instead, purchasing decisions tend to be driven by factors such as price, product quality, and brand image. Moreover, the abundance of mixed reviews on social media may create confusion, reducing the impact of E-WOM. These findings highlight that for creative businesses like Kanenakan, relying solely on E-WOM may not be effective. Strengthening product quality and brand trust remains crucial for supporting sustainable growth within Malang's creative economy.

### **The Influence of Customer Reviews on Purchase Decisions Among Kanenakan Consumers in Malang City**

The findings show that customer reviews significantly influence the purchasing decisions of Kanenakan consumers in Malang City, leading to the acceptance of Hypothesis 2 (H2). This supports the research by Sianipar & Yoestini (2021), which also found a positive link between customer reviews and purchase decisions. Credible reviews based on direct customer experience help build trust and positively shape potential consumers' perceptions. For creative businesses like Kanenakan, leveraging authentic customer feedback becomes a powerful strategy to strengthen market trust, enhance purchase decisions, and contribute to the growth of the creative economy in Malang.

### **The Influence of Purchase Intention on Purchase Decisions Among Kanenakan Consumers in Malang City**

The study finds that purchase intention significantly influences purchasing decisions among Kanenakan consumers, supporting Hypothesis 3 (H3). This result is consistent with by Luthfiyatillah *et al.*, (2020), who also noted the positive impact of purchase intention on purchasing behavior. As consumer interest grows, they are more likely to proceed to the purchase stage, supported by internal motivations (Kedaton *et al.*, 2022). Strengthening purchase intention among consumers is therefore essential for creative businesses like Kanenakan, as it drives sales and fosters the sustainability of Malang's creative economy.

### **The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) on Purchase Intention Among Kanenakan Consumers in Malang City**

The results show that Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) does not significantly influence purchase intention among Kanenakan consumers, leading to the rejection of Hypothesis 4 (H4). This finding is consistent with Pandelaki *et al.*, (2023), who noted that while E-WOM can raise product awareness, it does not always translate into stronger purchase

intentions. For creative businesses like Kanenakan, this suggests that simply increasing online exposure is not enough. Building deeper consumer engagement and trust remains critical to enhancing purchase intentions and supporting the growth of Malang's creative economy.

### **The Influence of Customer Reviews on Purchase Intention Among Kanenakan Consumers in Malang City**

The study confirms that customer reviews significantly influence purchase intention among Kanenakan consumers, supporting Hypothesis 5 (H5). This finding aligns with Gultom & Khoiri (2023), who noted that positive reviews strengthen purchase intention, especially in digital environments. Credible reviews not only enhance consumer perceptions of product quality but also build a sense of trust and security (Salsabilla & Handayani, 2023). For creative businesses like Kanenakan, leveraging authentic customer feedback is crucial for increasing purchase interest and sustaining the growth of Malang's creative economy.

### **The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) on Purchase Decisions with Purchase Intention as a Mediating Variable Among Kanenakan Consumers in Malang City**

The study finds that Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) does not have a significant indirect effect on purchase decisions through purchase intention, leading to the rejection of Hypothesis 6 (H6). This finding is consistent with Pandelaki *et al.*, (2023), who similarly reported a limited role of E-WOM in influencing consumer behavior. For Kanenakan and similar creative businesses in Malang, this result highlights the importance of not solely relying on E-WOM strategies. Building strong brand credibility and deeper consumer trust remains essential to drive purchase decisions and strengthen the local creative economy.

### **The Influence of Customer Reviews on Purchase Decisions with Purchase Intention as a Mediating Variable Among Kanenakan Consumers in Malang City**

The study confirms that customer reviews significantly influence purchase decisions indirectly through purchase intention, leading to the acceptance of Hypothesis 7 (H7). This finding supports Wahyuni *et al.*, (2022) and Sriyanto & Kuncowo (2019), who emphasized the mediating role of purchase intention in strengthening the impact of customer reviews on purchasing behavior. For Kanenakan and similar creative businesses in Malang, positive customer reviews do not merely shape consumer trust and increase the likelihood of purchase—they also serve as strategic assets that enhance digital visibility and market competitiveness.



This, in turn, plays a crucial role in supporting the growth and sustainability of the local creative economy by encouraging innovation, increasing demand for locally produced goods, and reinforcing Malang's position as a dynamic hub for creative entrepreneurship.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that customer reviews significantly influence purchase decisions, both directly and indirectly through purchase intention as a mediating variable. Conversely, Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) does not show a significant effect on either purchase intention or purchase decisions. These findings suggest that consumers place greater trust in detailed, experience-based reviews than in general digital recommendations, making customer reviews a more powerful tool in shaping consumer behavior.

Beyond statistical validation, this research provides valuable implications for the development of the creative economy in Malang. For creative culinary businesses like Kanenakan, customer reviews are not only a marketing asset but also a catalyst for business growth and sustainability. Authentic digital interactions help build consumer trust, increase product visibility, and strengthen the business's market position. When effectively utilized, customer reviews can enhance competitiveness, stimulate innovation, and promote the broader goals of the creative economy by fostering local entrepreneurship and economic resilience.

Therefore, businesses within Malang's creative economy sector are encouraged to integrate review-based strategies into their digital marketing efforts. Actively managing and promoting positive customer experiences can contribute not only to individual business success but also to reinforcing Malang's identity as a center of creative economic activity. Future research should explore additional variables such as brand image, platform engagement, and consumer loyalty to further deepen the understanding of digital influence in supporting creative economy development.

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