

THE ROLE OF BRAND IMAGE IN MEDIATING THE EFFECT OF ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH (EWOM) ON MIXUE PRODUCT PURCHASE DECISIONS IN DENPASAR CITY

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the effect of Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM) on Purchase Decisions with Brand Image as a mediating variable for Mixue products. The research was conducted in Denpasar City using data collection through questionnaires with a sample of 100 respondents who had purchased and consumed Mixue products. The data analysis techniques employed were Descriptive Statistics and Inferential Statistics. The results of the analysis indicate that EWOM has a positive and significant effect on Brand Image and Purchase Decisions, Brand Image has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decisions, and serves as a mediator in influencing the effect of EWOM on Purchase Decisions. Theoretically, these findings reinforce consumer behavior literature by confirming that EWOM can affect purchase decisions both directly and indirectly through brand image. Practically, this study provides insights for Mixue to optimize digital marketing strategies by strengthening brand image, enhancing customer experience, and leveraging positive EWOM through reviews, social media interactions, and collaborations with influencers.

Keywords: Electronic Word of Mouth, Brand Image, Purchase Decisions, Mixue, Digital Marketing Strategy

INTRODUCTION

The beverage industry in Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia, has become one of the fastest-growing sectors in recent years. This growth is driven by the popularity of various new types of beverages that attract public attention, one of which is the increasing popularity of tea among consumers. Traditional tea has long been well-known; however, innovations in serving tea in a more modern style with various flavors and toppings, such as bubble tea (commonly known as boba), have emerged. This phenomenon can be observed from the proliferation of modern beverage outlets in shopping centers, business districts, and residential areas.

Indonesia was recorded as the country with the largest bubble tea consumer base in Southeast Asia in a 2021 report, with a total turnover of USD 1,600 million, followed by Thailand at USD 749 million, and Vietnam at USD 362 million (Ridwan, 2023). A brand that significantly contributed to the high sales of bubble tea is Mixue Ice Cream & Tea.

Mixue Ice Cream & Tea is a Chinese ice cream and tea shop company founded in 1997 by Zhang Hongcao. The company offers a menu that combines the popularity of ice cream with various modern teas featuring unique flavors. By the end of March 2022, the ice cream and tea business had more than 21,000 outlets worldwide, making it one of the Food & Beverage companies with the most outlets to date (Chao, 2022).

According to data obtained in 2021, Mixue appeared to dominate the Southeast Asian bubble tea market with over 1,000 outlets, far surpassing other similar brands such as Chatime and Aicha, which had 595 and 336 outlets, respectively. Meanwhile, other brands such as Gong Cha and Koi The had opened 276 and 270 outlets, respectively, throughout Southeast Asia in 2021.

Mixue in Indonesia opened its first outlet in Cihampelas Walk shopping center in March 2020 and continued to expand through a franchise scheme across Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Nusa Tenggara. According to business analysis estimates, at least 317 Mixue outlets had operated in the country by the end of March 2022; however, a year later, Mixue Indonesia stated to CNBC that more than 1,000 stores had been established across Southeast Asia (Litya, 2023).

Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM) refers to the sharing of information about products and services among people interacting with each other in the digital social media environment (Sulthana & Vasantha, 2019). In this case, EWOM supporting Mixue's development generally comes from Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok. The large number of users creating video content about Mixue with its various unique features has made the product viral among the public. This content has sparked curiosity and prompted consumers to explore further the origins of Mixue products and the sensations experienced by the community (Azhara et al., 2023). Similarly, research on Mixue customers in Malang City revealed that EWOM has a significant effect on purchase decisions, with a path coefficient of 0.865 (Luthfi et al., 2023). Research by Mehyar et al. (2020) also found that the adoption of information is a determining factor influencing consumers' purchase decisions, while Sánchez et al. (2018) further identified that the adoption of information on social media tends to affect individual purchase decisions and shows a positive relationship between EWOM information adoption and purchase decisions.

The ongoing EWOM activity has undoubtedly increased Mixue's popularity and contributed to the development of its brand image as a company newly entering the Indonesian market. According to Keller & Swaminathan (2020:71), brand image is the consumer's response to a brand based on the good and bad aspects of the brand remembered by consumers. A strong brand image can enhance consumers' purchase decisions and strengthen the effect of EWOM on purchase decisions. In this context, brand image acts as a mediator in the relationship between EWOM and purchase decisions while simultaneously having its own role in improving purchase decisions for Mixue. Research by Savitri et al. (2021) stated that brand image plays a significant role

in influencing consumer purchase decisions, due to brand popularity and the company's ability to serve and meet consumer needs, which shapes public perception of the brand image.

The effect of EWOM on purchase decisions is often mediated by brand image in previous studies. Positive EWOM helps form favorable brand perceptions and associations, thereby encouraging consumer purchase decisions. One study on Mixue consumers in Denpasar showed that EWOM affects purchase decisions through its influence on brand image (Sekar et al., 2023). This is supported by research by Agatha et al. (2019), which stated that the presence of EWOM and the formation of a good brand image are elements that significantly affect the growth of consumer purchase decisions. The more exposure to positive EWOM, the stronger the brand image, and the higher the likelihood of consumers purchasing Mixue products.

These findings provide a positive and significant effect on the relationship between EWOM and purchase decisions with brand image as the mediator. However, this differs from the research conducted by Wowor, Lumanauw, & Ogi (2021), which stated that brand image does not have a significant effect on purchase decisions. Additionally, studies by Dewi, Fajariah, & Suardana (2023), R. I. Sholihin (2021), and Wijaya et al. (2022) all reached similar conclusions that EWOM does not significantly affect purchase decisions.

Based on the background above and previous research findings, this study was conducted with Mixue as the research object to explain the role of brand image in mediating the effect of EWOM on purchase decisions for Mixue products.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with an associative design to analyze the relationship between Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM), brand image, and Mixue product purchase decisions in Denpasar City. Denpasar was selected due to the high number of consumers and the large number of Mixue outlets, which allows the data collection process to be conducted effectively. The research variables consist of EWOM as the independent variable, brand image as the mediating variable, and purchase decisions as the dependent variable. All variables are operationally defined through indicators adapted from previous studies to ensure more directed and consistent measurement (Sugiyono, 2019; Candra & Suparna, 2019; Keller & Swaminathan, 2020; Indrasari, 2019).

The research population comprises Mixue consumers in Denpasar, whose total number is unknown (infinite). Therefore, the sample was determined using a purposive sampling technique, totaling 100 respondents who met the criteria, such as residing in Denpasar, actively using social media, and having purchased Mixue within the last six months. Data were collected through Likert-scale questionnaires distributed both online and in person. The research instruments were tested for validity and reliability

using Pearson Correlation and Cronbach's Alpha, showing that all indicators had correlation values above 0.30 and reliability values above 0.60, making them suitable for use in the study (Sugiyono, 2019; Rahyuda, 2020).

The data analysis techniques employed include descriptive and inferential statistical analyses, covering classical assumption tests, path analysis, Sobel test, and VAF calculation to assess the type of mediation. Path analysis was used to determine the direct and indirect effects of EWOM on purchase decisions through brand image. The Sobel test was applied to examine the significance of the mediation effect, while VAF was used to determine whether the mediation was full or partial. All these analytical techniques aim to provide a comprehensive overview of the relationships among variables and ensure that the research results have strong statistical validity (Ghozali, 2018; Utama, 2016; Matthews et al., 2018; Sholihin & Ratmono, 2013).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Company Overview

Mixue Ice Cream & Tea is a company operating in the ice cream and beverage sector, first established by Zhang Hongchao in 1997 in Zhengzhou, Henan, China. Starting as a small business selling affordable shaved ice, Mixue successfully developed into one of the largest beverage franchise companies in Asia. The company's success is inseparable from its business strategy that prioritizes economical pricing, consistent product quality, and effective marketing innovation.

In 2007, Mixue began implementing a franchise system to expand its network within China. In a short period, Mixue became one of the most popular ice cream and beverage brands in its home country. Furthermore, Mixue started international expansion in the early 2020s by opening outlets in various Southeast Asian countries, such as Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia. By 2024, Mixue had over 30,000 outlets worldwide, with significant growth in the Southeast Asian region.

In Indonesia, Mixue opened its first outlet in 2020. Mixue's business strategy, offering quality ice cream and beverages at affordable prices, received positive responses from the public. Within just three years, Mixue successfully opened more than 1,500 outlets spread across major cities and regions in Indonesia. This figure positions Indonesia as one of Mixue's largest markets outside China.

Mixue's flagship products, such as vanilla ice cream, bubble tea, and smoothies, serve as major attractions for consumers, especially among the younger demographic. Additionally, Mixue's marketing strategy, which leverages social media and the use of an iconic snowman mascot, further strengthens the brand's popularity in Indonesia. Mixue's rapid expansion demonstrates that the company effectively meets market demands through a combination of competitive pricing, product innovation, and adaptation to local preferences.

The rapid growth of Mixue in Indonesia and Southeast Asia illustrates how the company can adapt to the dynamics of the international market. With a well-planned strategy and the support of a strong franchise system, Mixue continues to expand its reach, making it one of the key players in the ice cream and beverage industry in the region.

Respondent Characteristics

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

No.	Variable	Classification	Number (people)	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	46	46
		Female	54	54
		Total	100	100
2	Age	18-22 Years	42	42
		23-29 Years	51	51
		30-36 Years	4	4
		>36 Years	3	3
		Total	100	100
3	Last education	High School/Equivalent	37	37
		Diploma	2	2
		Bachelor	60	60
		Postgraduate	1	1
		Total	100	100
4	Occupation	Student	40	40
		Private employee	33	33
		civil servant	10	10
		Entrepreneur	8	8
		Others	9	9
		Total	100	100
5	Income	<Rp. 1,000,000	23	23
		Rp. 1,000,000 –		
		Rp. 3,000,000	22	22
		Rp. 3,000,000 –		
		Rp. 5,000,000	36	36
		>Rp. 5,000,000	19	19
		Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data, Processed 2025

Table 1 shows the characteristics of the respondents obtained from questionnaires of 100 respondents. The gender characteristic among 100 respondents is dominated by females, totaling 54 people, while males consist of 46 people.

The age characteristic of 100 respondents is dominated by respondents aged 23 to 29 years, totaling 51 people, followed by respondents aged 18 to 22 years, totaling 42 people. The smallest number of respondents falls in the age range of 30 to 36 years, totaling 4 people, and those above 36 years totaling 3 people.

The last education characteristic is dominated by respondents with a Bachelor's degree, totaling 60 people, while the Postgraduate category has the fewest respondents, with only 1 person.

The occupation characteristic shows that students have the largest number, totaling 40 people, followed by private employees with 33 people, civil servants with 10 people, entrepreneurs with 8 people, and other occupations with 9 people.

The monthly income/pocket money characteristic shows that most respondents earn between Rp. 3,000,000 and Rp. 5,000,000, totaling 36 people, while respondents with an income of more than Rp. 5,000,000 have the lowest frequency, totaling 19 people.

Description of Research Variables

The description of the research variables shows that Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM), brand image, and purchase decisions generally fall within the good to high categories. The EWOM variable obtained an average score of 3.68, which is classified as good, with its main strength being online consumer reviews that are able to increase respondents' trust in purchasing Mixue products, although interactions in the form of online discussions are still relatively low. Brand image is also categorized as good, with an average score of 3.84, indicating that Mixue products are perceived to meet consumer taste needs, although brand uniqueness is still considered not very strong. Meanwhile, the purchase decisions variable falls into the high category with an average score of 4.09, dominated by the role of product information, which strongly influences consumers' decisions to purchase, although enthusiasm in giving recommendations to others is still relatively lower. Overall, these results reflect that positive consumer perceptions of online reviews and brand image contribute strongly to the high level of Mixue product purchase decisions.

Results of Inferential Statistical Analysis

Inferential statistical analysis is a statistical technique used to analyze sample data, and the results are applied to the population (Sugiyono, 2019:207). The inferential statistical analyses employed in this study include classical assumption tests, path analysis, Sobel test, and VAF test.

Classical Assumption Analysis

1) Normality test

Table 2 Normality Test Results (One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov)

Equation	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z
Substructural 1	0.124
Substructural 2	0.200

Source: Primary Data, processed 2025

Table 2 shows that the test conducted using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov yields Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) values of 0.124 for the first substructural equation and 0.200 for the second substructural equation. Both values exceed the alpha value of 0.05, indicating that the data are normally distributed and suitable for further research.

2) Multicollinearity test

Table 3. Multicollinearity Test Results

Equation	Model	Tolerance	VIF
Substructural 1	EWOM	1,000	1,000
Substructural 2	EWOM	0.601	1,665
	Brand Image	0.601	1,665

Source: Primary Data, processed 2025

Table 3 shows the tolerance and VIF values for substructural 1, each at 1.000, and for substructural 2, which has a tolerance value of 0.601 and a VIF value of 1.665 for both EWOM and brand image. This means that no variable has a tolerance below 0.10 or a VIF above 10. Therefore, the regression model can be considered free from multicollinearity issues.

3) Heteroscedasticity test

Table 4. Heteroskedasticity Test Results (Park Test)

Equation	Model	T	Sig.
Substructural 1	EWOM	-0.724	0.471
Substructural 2	EWOM	-1,667	0.099

Brand Image	0.771	0.442
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Source: Primary Data, processed 2025

A good regression model is one that does not contain heteroskedasticity symptoms, which is indicated by a significance value greater than alpha 0.05. Based on Table 4, the statistical calculation using the Park method shows that each model has a significance value exceeding 0.05. This indicates that the research variables do not exhibit heteroskedasticity symptoms.

Path Analysis

This study uses path analysis to examine the causal relationship between the exogenous variable (EWOM) and the endogenous variables, which consist of brand image and purchase decisions, as well as to test the mediating role of brand image on purchase decisions.

The initial step in path analysis begins with formulating hypotheses based on theory, which explains that EWOM has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions and brand image, brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions, and brand image acts as a mediator in the relationship between EWOM and purchase decisions for Mixue products. Based on these hypotheses, the first substructural equation is formulated as $M = \beta_2 X + e_1$, while the second substructural equation is formulated as $Y = \beta_1 X + \beta_3 M + e_2$ to describe the simultaneous relationships among the variables. Subsequently, the effect of EWOM on brand image was calculated using IBM SPSS, and the results are shown in Table 5 as part of the first substructural analysis supporting hypothesis testing in the research model.

Table 5. Path Analysis Results for Substructural 1

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	3,629	.988		3,674	.000
EWOM	.535	.066	.632	8,073	.000
R ²	: .399				

Source: (Data processed, 2025)

Based on the path analysis results in Table 5, the first structural equation can be formulated as:

$$M = \beta_2 X + e_1$$

$$M = 0,632X$$

The EWOM variable has a coefficient of 0.632. Therefore, it can be concluded that EWOM has a positive effect on brand image. This means that the higher the EWOM

activity, the better the brand image formed; conversely, a decrease in EWOM can lead to a decline in brand image.

Table 6. Path Analysis Results for Substructural 2

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	5,708	1,319		4,328	.000
EWOM	.531	.107	.426	4,956	.000
Brand Image	.603	.126	.410	4,766	.000
R ²	: .570				

Source: (Data processed, 2025)

The path analysis results show that EWOM and brand image simultaneously play an important role in influencing purchase decisions, with the structural equation $Y = 0.426X + 0.410M$ indicating that both EWOM and brand image have a positive effect on consumers' decisions to purchase Mixue products. EWOM has a direct effect of 0.426 on purchase decisions and 0.632 on brand image, while brand image has a direct effect of 0.410 on purchase decisions. In addition, the indirect effect of EWOM through brand image is 0.175, resulting in a total effect of 0.601. The total coefficient of determination is 0.742, indicating that 74.2 percent of purchase decisions can be explained by EWOM either directly or through brand image, while the remaining 25.8 percent is influenced by factors outside the model. All hypothesis tests show significance values < 0.05 , indicating that EWOM significantly affects brand image and purchase decisions, and that brand image is also significant in influencing purchase decisions. Overall, the results confirm that brand image strengthens the effect of EWOM in driving purchase decisions, making the combination of both a strategic factor in increasing consumer purchase intention.

Sobel test

Based on the results of the Sobel Test, which show a Z value of $3.047 > 1.96$ (with a 95 percent confidence level), the mediating variable brand image (M) significantly mediates the relationship between the EWOM variable (X) and the purchase decision variable (Y). Therefore, it can be concluded that H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted.

VAF Analysis

Variance Accounted For (VAF) is a measure of how much a mediating variable can absorb the direct influence. The VAF test is used to calculate the correlation

between the path coefficient value and the total path coefficient value. The formula for calculating the VAF value is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} VAF &= \frac{\text{Indirect Effect}}{\text{Direct Effect} + \text{Indirect Effect}} \\ &= \frac{0,175}{0,426 + 0,175} \\ &= 0,291 \end{aligned}$$

There are criteria for determining the type of mediating effect based on the VAF value (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2013: 82):

- 1) If the VAF value is above 80 percent, it indicates a full mediation.
- 2) If the VAF value is between 20 – 80 percent, it can be categorized as partial mediation.
- 3) If the VAF value is less than 20 percent, it indicates almost no mediating effect.

Based on the VAF calculation, the value of 29 percent falls within the 20 – 80 percent range, and thus can be categorized as partial mediation. Therefore, it can be concluded that brand image partially mediates the effect of EWOM on purchase decisions among Mixue product customers.

Discussion of Research Results

The Effect of EWOM on Purchase Decisions

The results of the first hypothesis test in this study indicate that Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM) has a positive and significant effect on the purchase decisions of Mixue products. This shows that the better the consumers' perception of the information obtained through online reviews, recommendations from other customers, and online discussions, the higher the tendency of prospective consumers to purchase Mixue products.

Descriptive statistical analysis shows that the average score for the EWOM variable is 3.68, which falls into the good category. In other words, the majority of respondents gave positive assessments of various aspects of EWOM, such as customer reviews, online discussions, and the information found about Mixue prior to purchase. The research results show that most EWOM indicators fall into the good category, with some aspects even reaching the very good category.

This indicates that information obtained through EWOM, such as reviews from other online consumers, is considered more reliable than conventional advertising because it comes from direct consumer experiences. However, some aspects still need improvement, such as interactions among consumers in discussing Mixue products online, to be more effective in influencing purchase decisions. Therefore, the more positive the reviews and discussions about Mixue, the greater the likelihood that prospective consumers will make a purchase.

These findings are consistent with previous research conducted by Mehyar et al. (2020), which found that information adoption is one of the determining factors affecting consumer purchase decisions. Other studies by Sánchez et al. (2018), Jayanthi & Suprati (2024), and Leong et al. (2022) also reported similar results, namely that information adoption is positively related to purchase decisions, meaning users who adopt information from EWOM on social media tend to form purchasing decisions.

The Effect of EWOM on Brand Image

The results of the second hypothesis test indicate that EWOM has a positive and significant effect on the brand image of Mixue. This means that the more positive information consumers obtain through online reviews, social media, or recommendations from other customers, the stronger the Mixue brand image in consumers' minds.

Descriptive statistical analysis shows that the average score for the brand image variable is 3.84, which falls into the good category. In other words, most respondents have a good perception of the Mixue brand, supported by an understanding of Mixue products and awareness of the uniqueness of this brand compared to other brands.

These findings confirm that information obtained through EWOM not only builds trust but also strengthens the brand image. However, there is still an opportunity for Mixue to enhance brand communication so that more consumers understand the advantages and unique value offered, especially through online media to provide information about Mixue's strengths and uniqueness. Therefore, the stronger the positive EWOM, the higher the positive consumer perception of the Mixue brand image. This finding aligns with previous studies by Krisnawati & Warmika (2020), which concluded that the more positive information obtained by consumers regarding a product, as well as more recommendations and promotions about the product, the better the brand image in consumers' minds. Similar results were reported by Ardana & Rastini (2018), Haikal et al. (2018), and Candra & Suparna (2019), which show that high-intensity EWOM communication affects consumer perception and ultimately shapes the brand image of the product.

The Effect of Brand Image on Purchase Decisions

The results of the third hypothesis test indicate that brand image has a positive and significant effect on the purchase decisions of Mixue products. This shows that the better the Mixue brand image in consumers' minds, the higher the tendency of consumers to make a purchase.

Descriptive statistical analysis shows that the average score for the purchase decision variable is 4.09, which falls into the high category. In other words, most respondents have a strong purchase decision toward Mixue products. Some indicators, such as clear purchase objectives, repeat purchase decisions, and the tendency to recommend Mixue to others, show that a good brand image encourages consumer loyalty and purchase intention.

A strong brand image not only increases the attractiveness of Mixue products but also gives consumers confidence that the purchased product meets their expectations. Therefore, marketing strategies that continuously emphasize the advantages and identity of the Mixue brand are essential in maintaining and enhancing consumers' purchase decisions by conveying that Mixue products are different and unique, unmatched by other brands. This finding aligns with previous research by Savitri et al. (2021), which stated that brand image plays a major role in influencing consumer purchase decisions, due to brand popularity and the company's ability to serve and meet consumer needs in shaping public perception of the brand. Studies by O. Y. A. Wijaya et al. (2021) and Wanasida et al. (2021) also concluded that brand image is often used as a reference by consumers when making purchase decisions, especially when they have little experience or knowledge of a product.

The Role of Brand Image in Mediating the Effect of EWOM on Purchase Decisions

The results of the fourth hypothesis test show that brand image significantly mediates the relationship between EWOM and purchase decisions. This means that EWOM not only directly affects purchase decisions but also indirectly through the enhancement of Mixue's brand image.

Descriptive statistical analysis shows that the high average score of brand image (3.84) contributes to a high purchase decision (4.09). In other words, the better consumers' perception of Mixue's brand image, the greater their tendency to purchase and recommend the product to others. Indicators such as confidence in product quality, the unique impression of Mixue, and positive post-purchase experiences show that a strong brand image is a key factor in reinforcing purchase decisions.

This indicates that although EWOM has a direct effect on purchase decisions, brand image strengthens this relationship by increasing consumer trust and preference for Mixue. Therefore, Mixue's marketing strategy should focus not only on increasing EWOM but also on strengthening brand image to enhance customer loyalty and purchase decisions.

These findings are consistent with previous research by Prayoga & Yasa (2023), which demonstrated that brand image positively and significantly mediates the effect of EWOM on purchase intention, showing that EWOM can drive purchase intention through brand image, proving that EWOM can build consumer purchase intention when brand image is strong. Krisnawati & Warmika (2020), as well as Ardana & Rastini (2018), reported similar results, stating that brand image significantly mediates the effect of EWOM on purchase intention. These studies indicate that EWOM and brand image simultaneously and significantly influence purchase intention.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research on the effect of Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM) on purchase decisions with brand image as a mediating variable among Mixue consumers, several conclusions can be drawn as follows:

- 1) EWOM has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions for Mixue products. The better consumers' perception of information obtained through online reviews, recommendations from other customers, and online discussions, the higher their tendency to purchase Mixue products. Therefore, effective management of EWOM can enhance consumers' purchase intentions.
- 2) EWOM also has a positive and significant effect on Mixue's brand image. Information disseminated through customer reviews, social media, and online forums influences how consumers perceive the Mixue brand. The more positive information received, the stronger the brand image of Mixue in consumers' minds.
- 3) Mixue's brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions. Consumers tend to make purchases when they have a positive perception of the brand. With a strong brand image, consumers feel more confident in the quality and advantages of Mixue products, which enhances both purchase decisions and customer loyalty.
- 4) Brand image significantly mediates the relationship between EWOM and purchase decisions. Positive information from EWOM shapes a favorable perception of the brand, which ultimately increases purchase decisions. Therefore, a strong brand image can strengthen the effect of EWOM on consumers' purchase decisions.

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