



# The role of brand awareness, e-WOM, and perceived quality on purchase intention of Viva cosmetics in Medan

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## ABSTRACT

Viva Cosmetics is one of the oldest cosmetic brands known for their affordable prices and formulations that are suitable for tropical environments. As the beauty industry keeps evolving, there has been a noticeable decrease in the purchase intention of Viva Cosmetics' products which can be predicted through brand awareness, e-WOM, and perceived quality. This research intends to examine the role of these variables on the purchase intention of Viva Cosmetics among consumers in Medan. Descriptive quantitative and causal method are implemented in this research. Sample is determined using non-probability sampling (accidental sampling) with a total of 97 respondents. Multiple linear regression is used to analyze the data in this research. Results show that brand awareness, e-WOM, and perceived quality partially and significantly influence the purchase intention of Viva Cosmetics in Medan. Brand awareness, e-WOM, and perceived quality also influence the purchase intention simultaneously.

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## INTRODUCTION

Beauty trends have gone through constant and rapid changes throughout the years due to globalization, and social media has made it easy for consumers in the market to share a variety of beauty products from numerous brands that have different benefits, qualities, price ranges, and other features that make them unique and a "must-have". To maintain relevance in the saturated beauty industry, brands are required to focus on satisfying the needs of customers, influencing potential customers, and retaining customers (Iduoze et al., 2023). In recent years, Indonesian consumers have shown preferences towards local beauty brands. Hasibuan (2022) stated that according BPOM, there are 913 businesses in Indonesia's cosmetics industry as of July 2022, a 20.6% increase from the previous year which was 819 businesses in 2021. As of August 2023, Indonesia's cosmetics market saw a revenue amounting to 1.85 billion US dollars, and the market is expected to grow annually by 5.26% from 2023 to 2028 (Statista, 2023). Local skincare products are preferred due to their affordability and accessibility, natural and gentle ingredients, positive reviews from beauty influencers, as well as Halal and BPOM certifications (Andriani & Setiawan, 2020). In a research by Populix (2022), 54% of respondents prefer local makeup brands due to their

affordable prices and the quality of their products being on par with those of famous brands. One of the oldest and most notable local cosmetic brands in the Indonesian beauty market is Viva Cosmetics. Established in 1962, the products under this brand range from skincare, body care, hair care, and various makeup products such as foundations, eye shadows, and lipsticks which are specifically formulated for those who live in tropical conditions and environments. Viva Cosmetics have shown a weaker presence in the market compared to other local brands that have also been in the industry for several decades. Furthermore, many newcomers have entered the business and as the size of the competition in the cosmetics market keeps increasing, this puts Viva Cosmetics in an urgency to find ways to stay relevant.

Based on the data obtained from Populix (2022) that shows the most used local makeup brands among consumers of locally made makeup products, it is apparent that Viva Cosmetics did not manage to earn a spot in the list, which indicates a lack of interest towards the brand and its products. Cosmetic purchases made on e-commerce platforms can also be used to analyze the local brands that consumers tend to seek out on, and 66% of consumers in Indonesia use e-commerce channels to purchase makeup and skincare products, with Shopee and Tokopedia being the leading platforms Populix (2022). In a report by Ramadhani (2022), it was shown that Viva Cosmetics failed to enter the top ten local makeup and skincare brands with the highest market share and sales revenue on Shopee and Tokopedia. In order for Viva Cosmetics to be able to keep up with intense competition in the market, the brand should aim to strengthen purchase intention among consumers as it represents their plan and willingness to buy a certain product or service in the near future (Astuti & Rahmawati, 2023). Purchase intention leads to the occurrence of actual purchasing behavior, which means that increased purchase intention will result in an increased possibility of consumers moving forward to make a purchase (Suyanto & Dewi, 2023).

Previous research conducted by Lee et al. (2019), Wuisan & Angela (2022), and Prihartini & Damastuti (2022) show that brand awareness, e-WOM, and perceived quality positively and significantly impact purchase intention in the cosmetics industry. However, other studies done by Ningrum & Tobing (2022), Enjelina & Dewi (2021), and Wjaya & Yulita (2022) proved that the three independent variables do not have any significant influence towards purchase intention of beauty products. The inconsistencies and disparities that exist in the results among previous literature become the research or evidence gap that this research would like to address. Furthermore, the current research studies a different subject, which is Viva Cosmetics, and focuses on a different group of population, which are consumers of cosmetic products in Medan.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The research methodology that is implemented in this research is the descriptive quantitative method as it was conducted on certain populations or samples with the aim of describing and testing hypotheses that have been determined (Sugiyono, 2022). This research is also classified as a causal research due to the influence of the independent variables towards the dependent variable.

The population for this research is consumers who purchase cosmetic products in Medan. As stated by (Sugiyono, 2022), the sample size from a population where the exact number is unknown can be determined using the Cochran formula. The minimum number of samples that has to be collected in this research is 96 respondents. This research implements the accidental sampling technique, where the respondents are selected based on coincidence considering the sample has met the criteria of the study (Sahir, 2021). The criteria that should be met by respondents in this research include domiciled in Medan, both male and female, and within the age range of 15 to 45 years old.

Multiple linear regression analysis techniques are used to analyze the data in this research and identify the influence of brand awareness, e-WOM, and perceived quality towards the purchase intention variable with the assistance of IBM SPSS 22. A questionnaire hosted on Google Forms with a total of 21 written statements was distributed to respondents in order to obtain

primary data. Variables in this research were measured with the 5 point Likert scale, with 1 meaning strongly disagree, 2 meaning disagree, 3 meaning neutral, 4 meaning agree, and 5 meaning strongly agree.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Normality Test

Normality test is conducted to determine whether the independent and dependent variables in the research are normally distributed (Sahir, 2021). The Kolmogorov-Smirnov one sample test can be used to examine the normality of the variables.

**Table 1.** One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Unstandardized Residual
N		97
Normal Parameters <sup>a,b</sup>	Mean	.000000
	Std. Deviation	1.85784114
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.069
	Positive	.041
	Negative	-.069
Test Statistic		.069
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 <sup>c,d</sup>

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

According to the conditions of the One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, a data is distributed normally if the significance value is greater than 0.05. Based on Table 1, the significance value is 0.200, which means the data in this research is distributed normally.

### Multicollinearity Test

**Table 2.** Multicollinearity Test

Model		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					Collinearity Statistics	
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
		B	Std. Error	Beta				
1	(Constant)	.515	.909		.566	.572		
	BA	.328	.079	.373	4.138	.000	.312	3.204
	EW	.162	.055	.256	2.948	.004	.337	2.968
	PQ	.216	.059	.320	3.675	.000	.335	2.988

a. Dependent Variable: PI

Multicollinearity test is carried out with the objective of determining whether there is a high correlation between the independent variables (Sahir, 2021). In order to detect multicollinearity, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) method can be conducted.

A good regression model should have no multicollinearity, shown by a VIF value of smaller than 10 (Rafik et al., 2021). The VIF value for all three independent variables in this research are smaller than 10, which means that there is no multicollinearity in this research.

### Heteroscedasticity Test

Heteroscedasticity test is done to determine whether there is an inequality of variance from the residual of one observation to another observation. The heteroscedasticity test can be conducted with the Spearman correlation test.

**Table 3. Spearman Correlation Test**

			Correlations			Unstandardized
			BA	EW	PQ	Residual
Spearman's rho	BA	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.744**	.759**	.021
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.839
		N	97	97	97	97
	EW	Correlation Coefficient	.744**	1.000	.755**	-.017
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.867
		N	97	97	97	97
	PQ	Correlation Coefficient	.759**	.755**	1.000	.048
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.642
		N	97	97	97	97
	Unstandardized Residual	Correlation Coefficient	.021	-.017	.048	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.839	.867	.642	.
		N	97	97	97	97

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to the conditions of the Spearman correlation test, there is no heteroscedasticity if the significant value of each variable is greater than 0.05. As the significant values for all three independent variables in this research are greater than 0.05, hence there is no heteroscedasticity in this research.

**Coefficient of Determination Test**

The coefficient determination test looks at the magnitude of the influence of the independent variables towards the dependent variable (Sahir, 2021). The closer the coefficient of determination value in the regression model is to 1 or 100%, the bigger the influence of all independent variables towards the dependent variable.

**Table 4. Coefficient of Determination Test**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.874 <sup>a</sup>	.764	.757	1.88757

a. Predictors: (Constant), PQ, EW, BA

Based on Table 4, the Adjusted R Square shows a value of 0.757 or 75.7%. This indicates that 75.7% of purchase intention towards Viva Cosmetics is influenced by brand awareness, e-WOM, and perceived quality, meanwhile the remaining 24.3% is influenced by other factors or independent variables that are not analyzed in this research such as price, brand image, advertising, brand credibility and more.

**t-test**

According to Sahir (2021), the partial hypothesis testing or t-test is a partial test of the regression coefficient to determine the partial significance of each independent variable on the dependent variable.

**Table 5. t-Test**

		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.515	.909		.566	.572
	Brand Awareness	.328	.079	.373	4.138	.000
	e-WOM	.162	.055	.256	2.948	.004
	Perceived Quality	.216	.059	.320	3.675	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

An independent variable is said to have a partial influence towards the dependent variable if the t count is greater than the t table. The t table in this research is 1.9850. According to

Table 5, brand awareness, e-WOM, and perceived quality all have partial influence towards the purchase intention of Viva Cosmetics in Medan as the t count for all three independent variables is greater than the t table. All three independent variables also have a significant value smaller than 0.05, which means that all three independent variables influence purchase intention significantly.

### F-test

Simultaneous hypothesis testing or F-test is conducted to determine whether or not the independent variables influence the dependent variable altogether or simultaneously (Sahir, 2021).

**Table 6.** F Test

		ANOVA <sup>a</sup>				
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1074.773	3	358.258	100.552	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	331.351	93	3.563		
	Total	1406.124	96			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Quality, e-WOM, Brand Awareness

The independent variables in this research are said to have a simultaneous influence on the dependent variable if the F count is greater than the F table. The F table in this research is 2.70. According to Table 6, the value of F count is 100.552, which indicates that brand awareness, e-WOM, and perceived quality simultaneously influence the purchase intention of Viva Cosmetics in Medan.

## Discussion

### The Influence of Brand Awareness on Purchase Intention

Brand awareness shows the knowledge that consumers have regarding the presence of a brand, specified by the level or degree of consumer awareness during events in which they are in need of a product, the name of a particular brand will appear or be mentioned (Pramitha, 2021). According to the results of the t-test, brand awareness has a partial and significant influence on the purchase intention of Viva Cosmetics among cosmetic consumers in Medan. This proves that brand awareness boosts brand visibility and purchasing intentions among both old and new consumers (Rahardjo et al., 2023), and consistent exposure to a brand will result in a greater probability of consumers recognizing it, making it easier for them to recall brands and include them in their consideration set (Hameed et al., 2023). When a consumer's awareness towards a brand increases, their intention to purchase from the brand also increases because a strong brand awareness pushes the capability of consumers to remember a certain brand in specific situations or circumstances. In the case of Viva Cosmetics, it is revealed that there is a low brand visibility and awareness among consumers compared to other local cosmetic brands. On Instagram, for example, there is an apparent disparity between Viva Cosmetics and its competitors as the brand has only managed to achieve 175,000 followers, whereas its competitors have garnered millions. Respondents in the study indicated that Viva Cosmetics is not top-of-mind when considering cosmetic products, diminishing its chances of being recalled or chosen by consumers. The lack of familiarity with the brand contributes to a decline in purchase intention, as consumers tend to rely on heuristics and choose brands they are more aware of. Those who do consider Viva Cosmetics cite positive experiences with the brand's products, indicating that awareness and past usage positively influence purchase intention, aligning with the findings of Keller & Swaminathan (2020). Respondents who are familiar with the brand and its products are more likely to include Viva Cosmetics in their consideration set and express intentions to purchase in the future.

### **The Influence of e-WOM on Purchase Intention**

e-WOM is the means of communicating information about a product, service, or enterprise which is accessible by other consumers via the internet through the exchange of positive or negative statements made by potential, actual, or former consumers (Intansari & Roostika, 2022). Results of the t-test show that e-WOM has a partial and significant influence on the purchase intention of Viva Cosmetics in Medan. This result is supported by a previous study by Prihartini & Damastuti (2022), which state that e-WOM has an effect on purchase intention because positive comments or reviews about a specific product or brand increases the willingness of consumers to make a purchase. This also shows that consumers make use of e-WOM to assess goods and services and how businesses can rely on e-WOM to strengthen their reputation (Nam et al., 2020). Tanjung & Keni (2023) further explained that when e-WOM reviews contain information that are positive or corresponds with the thoughts and needs of consumers, they can push purchase intention. This is because information provided by e-WOM activities can help reduce uncertainty within consumers, lower search costs, and minimize the risk of buying unknown products (Majid & Sumadi, 2022). Consumers on social media and beauty forums have expressed negative experiences with Viva Cosmetics' products, such as stinging, irritation, and strong or unpleasant fragrances from their cleansers and soothing gels. Potential buyers could be deterred from these negative reviews. Purchase intention towards Viva Cosmetics is also hindered due to respondents' infrequency in accessing and engaging with Viva Cosmetics content on social media compared to other brands. Despite limited engagement, respondents acknowledge the positive reviews about the brand from previous consumers, with many recommending its products. This aligns with the study conducted by Prihartini & Damastuti (2022) as consumers rely on e-WOM to gain credible and non-commercial information. While respondents rarely access or seek information on Viva Cosmetics, they still value both positive and negative reviews from other consumers of the brand. Accessing information about a product's quality and variety helps consumers evaluate the brand, which pushes purchase intention to take place.

### **The Influence of Perceived Quality on Purchase Intention**

Perceived quality is the consumer's evaluation regarding the superiority of a product (Nuzula & Wahyudi, 2022). According to the t-test results, perceived quality has a partial and significant influence towards the purchase intention of Viva Cosmetics in Medan. A previous study conducted by Wuisan & Angela (2020) stated that when consumers form positive quality perceptions about a certain product, their choices are impacted and the brand gets differentiated from its competitors in the market, which increases the willingness to purchase. Consumers have raised concerns about Viva Cosmetics' products online, addressing issues such as the inadequate coverage of their foundations and how their makeup remover is unable to effectively lift excess makeup from the skin. Some products, such as their eyebrow pencils, are unable to conform to their promised claims. These impact purchase intention as negative perceptions dissuade potential buyers. Respondents stated that while the brand's makeup products do not fade away fast, Viva Cosmetics can still improve their wear resistance for their makeup products to be called long lasting. Responses are also aligned with statements by Ardisa et al. (2022) and Wicaksana & Kurniawati (2021), which stated that perceived quality gives consumers a reason to make a purchase and the perceptions of quality that are formed by consumers help them decide whether a product has the ability to meet their demands. Respondents see value in Viva Cosmetics' packaging, as they believe the brand's packaging to be good quality and are sturdy despite being made of plastic. This indicates that respondents are willing to purchase Viva Cosmetics' products solely based off the quality of their packaging.

### **The Influence of Brand Awareness, e-WOM, and Perceived Quality on Purchase Intention**

Results of the F-test show that brand awareness, e-WOM, and perceived quality influence the purchase intention of Viva Cosmetics simultaneously. Purchase intention represents the likelihood and willingness that consumers have to purchase products or services that have the ability to add value for them (Purwianti, 2021), and these motivations or urges to purchase within consumers are induced by unfulfilled demands (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). Brand awareness, e-WOM, and perceived quality can be used to predict purchase intention, meaning that if there is an increase in these factors, then it is expected that purchase intention will also increase. Based on the responses that have been collected, respondents are interested in purchasing Viva Cosmetics' products because they believe that the quality is adequate for daily wear. However, respondents who disagree prefer to purchase cosmetic products from other local brands as they feel like the products from Viva Cosmetics do not meet expectations and they are more familiar with other brands. Respondents would recommend Viva Cosmetics' products for beginners who are only starting to learn makeup as they have a wide variety of products that consumers can try, while those who still doubt the brand and are still skeptical about the quality of their products will not. Respondents would not choose to use products from Viva Cosmetics compared to those from other local cosmetic brands as many products from other brands are on par with or even better than those from Viva Cosmetics.

As brand awareness represents how well consumers are aware of a brand and how familiar they are with that specific brand enough to influence their purchasing behaviors, respondents agreed that Viva Cosmetics is not top-of-mind. Consumers are slowly becoming more unfamiliar with Viva Cosmetics because as times progressed, the cosmetics and beauty industry continued experiencing massive growth and many newcomers have entered the business. Viva Cosmetics is also known for rarely getting public figures such as celebrities or beauty influencers to represent their brand unlike most current local cosmetic brands, which helps these brands increase recognition and awareness among the current generation.

e-WOM acts as a reference point for consumers before they purchase products and they see e-WOM as a credible source of information as the reviews come from previous consumers who had experiences with the products before. While respondents find no problem in accessing information about Viva Cosmetics' products on social media and e-commerce platforms, they agreed that the amount of reviews about Viva Cosmetics on social media is still less compared to other local cosmetic brands, especially on beauty forums and from the self care or beauty accounts they follow. Low engagement can also be identified for Viva Cosmetics as respondents stated that they do not actively seek information about the brand's products.

Crucial to consumer preferences, perceived quality reflects their beliefs about a product's superiority compared to its competitors in the market. There have been complaints about Viva Cosmetics' products not being able to carry out their basic functions and meeting their promised claims, leading to doubts about the quality of their products and affecting the perceptions that potential buyers have. Positive quality perception towards Viva Cosmetics is mainly caused by their durable and well-designed packaging. As Viva Cosmetics are more known for their makeup products instead of skincare, there have been mixed reviews about the effectiveness of their skincare products as concerns about alcohol content start to rise. Respondents with specific skin types such as dry and sensitive skin agreed that they are skeptical about Viva Cosmetics' skincare products as they still contain harsh ingredients that could cause irritation. Respondents also do not see added value from the lifespan of Viva Cosmetics' products as it adhered to the industry standard.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, hence it can be concluded that brand awareness, e-WOM, and perceived quality all influence the purchase intention of Viva Cosmetics in Medan partially and significantly. The results of the research confirm that the more top-of-mind a brand is and the more a consumer recognizes a brand among its other competitors, the more likely that consumers will be interested in purchasing products or services from that particular brand. Furthermore, the results also prove that consumers tend to validate their intentions to purchase by looking at reviews online made by previous consumers as references, and they are more likely to make a purchase if the reviews about a product is positive. Quality perception also plays an important role in predicting purchase intention as consumers gravitate towards products they deem to be of superior quality compared to its competitors, and the perceptions that consumers shaped in their minds help brands differentiate themselves in the industry or market. Brand awareness, e-WOM, and perceived quality also influence the purchase intention of Viva Cosmetics in Medan simultaneously. In efforts of improving brand awareness, Viva Cosmetics can collaborate with other local cosmetic brands to do campaigns such as introducing a special or limited edition of cosmetic products, targeted advertising towards current consumers by getting public figures to represent their brand, communicating the brand's USP through various marketing channels and creating a compelling brand story, and joining more beauty events or conventions. Viva Cosmetics can encourage consumers to share positive reviews and testimonials regarding the brand's products on social media and beauty forums to push user generated content with rewards such as discount codes or free products as rewards as well as creating online challenges for consumers to join and collaborating with beauty forums to host virtual events as a platform for them to communicate about their products to increase e-WOM. Furthermore, Viva Cosmetics can incorporate a call-to-action on their packaging to ease the process of leaving reviews for consumers, such as including a QR code that leads to a section that is designated for reviews and comments from consumers on their website and creating an FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) section on their social media accounts and other marketing channels that covers the features, prices, and benefits of their products to thoroughly showcase their product variety and enrich the information about the variety of their products online. Utilizing social media accounts to post informational content about their products, continuous formulation research and safety testing of their products to improve wear resistance and minimizing the chances of irritation or allergies, and ensuring quality control of their products and that staff trainings are being implemented in production plants to strengthen compliance towards standardized guidelines and procedures can boost Viva Cosmetics' perception of quality among consumers. This research can be further expanded by analyzing other variables and determining their influence on the purchase intention of Viva Cosmetics. This research also contains a small number of samples and is only limited to consumers in Medan, therefore future researchers may gain deeper insight by studying a broader group of consumers.

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