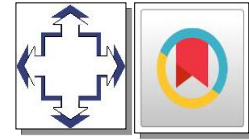# The Role Of Electronic Worth Of Mouth In Mediating Tiktok Social Media Toward The Organizational Image Of Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

The use of social media as a new medium in marketing has been considered quite effective. The users obtain plenty of marketing benefits through social media. TikTok social media has been recently famous amidst the society. This social media with a short video has the advantages to draw the attention of the viewers. The use of social media in marketing creates comments in the form of E-WOM which enables it to impact the image of an organization or company. This research uses a quantitative research method, taking 100 members of the campus tour of Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo in 2021 as the sample. The marketing strategy using social media is executed by the technical implementation unit of the new student admissions of Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo by creating a short video uploaded in its Instagram account. The organizational image becomes a dependent variable of this research which will be tested by the use of TikTok as an independent variable and E-WOM as a mediator variable. The result of this research shows that E-WOM has a positive influence in mediating the impact of TikTok use toward the organizational image of Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo.

## 1. Introduction

Social media has been the most chosen media globally and influenced the consumers' behavior. Via social media, authentic information from the entire world is acceptable regardless of the time, with many kinds of electronic devices like computers and cell phones, enabling the consumers to compare and have a two-way interaction which happens to be more effective. Based on the data of Indonesia Internet Service Providers Association, the number of internet users in Indonesia reached 143.26 million or as equal as 54.68% of the total citizen of Indonesia in 2017, with the biggest percentage based on the age range of 19-34 years old, accounted for 49.25% of the data of the minister of information and communication in (Wiridjati & Roesman, 2018).

The most renowned dominating internet users would be those with the range of age of millennial generation or Y generation. They are the first generation spending their time in a digital environment; technology information does influence how they thrive and work. This generation was born between 1980 and 2000, growing with the advancement of technology like computers and the internet. They, by nature, are active users of social media, cellular gadgets and its related applications, making them stay connected with their colleagues and relatives (Wiridjati & Roesman, 2018).

In one research (Fauziah et al., 2018), it is said that social media is effective enough when being used for promotion activities. In addition, the use of Instagram social media works effectively enough in promoting tourism spots. With a number of features in social media, the users are capable of conveying various information that are immediately accessible by the society. This indicates that the transformation of marketing mode from conventional to social network exists.

In 2014, a social media application called Musical.ly was vastly used, targeting the demography of those aged 13 to 18 years old. Its main purpose is videos made by users (often called Musers) by combining popular songs with their videos. The most common use of this application is to create a video where they sync their lips while dancing. In 2017's, this app had more than 200 million users before being bought by Bytedance on November 9, 2017. TikTok deem this as a way of expansion to teenagers' market in the USA, previously dominated by Musical.ly. They combine accounts within two programs but are integrated into one application, named TikTok (Kusumawardhani & Sari, 2021).

After almost four years of the release, TikTok was officially released after witnessing a huge jump of popularity (September 2016). In a period of 4 years, it becomes one of the applications getting the highest attention with approximately 500 million of global users that are its active users. This number ranks it ninth as a social media application with the most frequent use, overshadowing other popular applications such as Twitter, LinkedIn, Snapchat and Pinterest. Around 150 million of the total number of the users are actively and easily found in some countries in Asia (Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesian, Japan, Vietnam and Malaysia) (Kusumawardhani & Sari, 2021).

The technical implementation unit of new student acceptance which will be further abbreviated to the technical implementation unit of the new student admissions is one of bodies in Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo, primarily promoting the university to the society as one of its responsibilities. Multifarious programs imposed as a media of promotion to elevate the image of the campus with the ultimate goal to increase the interest of society to study in Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo. One of the social media accounts of the new student admissions under the name pmb_unmuhponorogo provides some short videos, informing either the advantages or the attraction of Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo. As a matter of fact, some other bodies of this university have used TikTok as a means of promotion like faculty-based UPT and student unions. In (Kusumawardhani & Sari, 2021), it is elaborated that TikTokpresents two images of the young generation, between the negative and but the

positive ones (informative with clear conception, following norms, while not ignoring the entertainment values) are more easily found.

This research focuses on the role of social media toward the organizational image by the factor of worth of mouth (E-WOM). Some research mentioned that the role of social media influences marketing positively (Romdonny et al., 2018); (Fauziah et al., 2018); (Sugianto Putri, 2016). Currently, social media is in the strategic position since generations today mostly devote their time to it. Additionally, the use of social media brings a positive impact toward E-WOM (Wiridjati & Roesman, 2018), describing that via social media, consumers are capable of sharing their experience when seeing particular activities in social media with their friends or relatives. Meanwhile, according to (Putri & Amalia, 2018), the existence of E-WOM can positively influence the company image.

## 2. Literature Review

### Brand Image

Brand Image is a perception of consumers in their mind concerning certain merks reflected as a merk association (Agmeka et al., 2019). In other words, the company image is a result of the number of processes in which the consumers compare various attributes possessed by a company. They will make a subjective perception regarding the company and its every activity exposed to them. The perception would be individually different despite being directed toward one similar object. The broader definition of company image proposed by Adbel- Salam et al. in the same reference is a general concept imprinted in the mind of consumers as an output of the collection of feeling, idea, attitude, and experience that company put in their mind (Putri & Amalia, 2018).

Thus, it can be summarized that the brand image is a set of assessments from people to the activities of a company, including the promotion, product description and others that are responded by consumers to indicate distinct characteristics that only belong to the company or organization. This assessment can be a reference for both consumers and other entities having different importance.

### E-WOM

The form of effective and fast marketing in influencing the decision of people, either online or offline, compared to other information sources would be word of mouth. Information required by consumers is lately easy to access through internet media. E-WOM is used by them to respond to a product or a company via internet media and is considered to be more effective than Word of Mouth (WOM) in a traditional way or offline. E-WOM is a recommendation or comment made by the consumers based on their experience and has a strong effect toward the decision making made by others. The most frequently used media of E-WOM for companies or consumers is via social media. The emotional bonding and sense of belonging is proven to have a significant role in inducing the consumers to write a positive review regarding products via E-WOM (Oktaviani et al., 2019).

E-WOM is a comment or suggestion of an individual over something that they see or becomes a part of their life experience. E-WOM will, later, present an impact in one's decision making after witnessing particular events. With the continuous development of technology, commenting via electronic media is simple and more practical.

### Social Media

Social media is an interaction between an individual and or a business organization (consumers and producers), in the form of text, picture, video and network. The obstacle encountered by the business in utilizing social media is human resource restriction that can understand the field of technology communication and information. This surely must have the attention of the business doers to make their products more visible and wanted by the consumers internationally (Romdonny et al., 2018). Social media has been one of the most preferred media

in delivering information and knowledge, highlighting the social connection forming amongst those with similar passion and activities and are involved in online interaction (Soares et al., 2017).

## 3. Research Method

This research uses quantitative methods and primary data, obtained by spreading the questionnaires to the respondents. The population in this research is student candidates of Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo that participated in the program of Campus Tour in 2021. The sampling method is a method of data collection done by writing or observing a part of a population. In this research the sampling method is done by using census method or taking the whole population as a sample.

Data is analyzed with SMART PLS (Partial Least Square) application, while the model measurement uses an outer model (outer relation or measurement model) which defines how every indicator block is related with its latent variables. Blocks with reflective indicators can be written with following equation:

$x = \Lambda x \, \xi + \varepsilon x$ ……………………………… (3.1)
$y = \Lambda y \, \eta + \varepsilon y$ ……………………………… (3.2)

X and Y are variable indicators for exogen and endogen latent variables ($\xi$ and $\eta$), while $\Lambda x$ and $\Lambda y$ are loading matrix describing a simple regression coefficient that relates the latent variables with their indicators. Residuals are measured and can be interpreted as a measurement mistake.

The measurement model (outer model) is used to assess the model of validity and reliability. Validity test is done to know the ability of a research instrument in measuring what needs to be measured (Cooper dan Schindler in (Jogiyanto & Abdillah, 2009), while reliability test is used to measure the consistency of measurement tools in measure a concept or can also be used to measure the consistency of respondents in answering statement items in questionnaires or research instruments. Convergent validity from the measurement model can be seen from the correlation between the indicator's value with its variable score. Indicators considered valid if they have AVE value above 0.5 or ensuring the whole outer loading of variable dimension has loading value > 0.5 so that it can be interpreted that such measurement fulfills the convergent validity criteria (Chin, 2002).

The formula of AVE (average variance extracted) can be written as follows:

$$AVE = \frac{\Sigma ni{=}1 \lambda i}{n}$$ ………………………………(3.3)

Information:

AVE is the average percentage of variant value extracted from a set of latent variables that are estimated through loading standardization with its indicators in the algorithm iteration process in PLS. $\lambda$ symbols standardized loading factor and I is the total of indicators. For latent variable of the use of social media uses the formula (1 = x1 X1 + x2 X2 + x3 X3+ x4 X4 +1), while for organizational image variables uses (2 = x6 X6 + x7 X7 + x8 X8 + x9 X9 + x10 X10 + +2) and lastly E-WOM as a latent variable intervening uses formula (3 = x13 X13 + x14 X14 + x15 X15+3).

## 4. Results and Discussion

In analyzing data, the first stage is to test the variables. The analysis of the first loading factor shows that there has still been an indicator with value less than 0.7. Such indicators means that they are not reliable yet (figure 1).
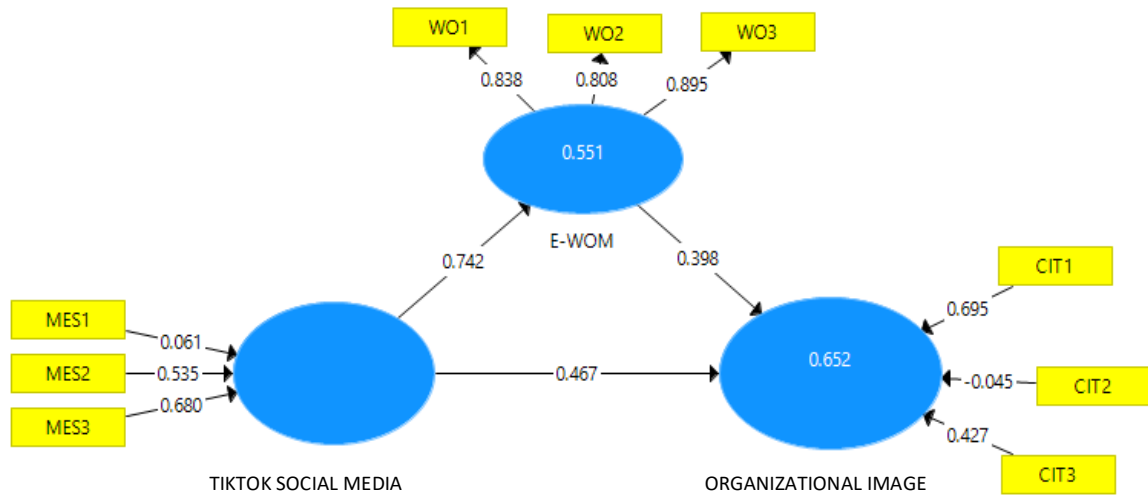
Figure 1. The Result of PLS Algorithm Test
Source: Processed Data, 2022.

Based on the research procedure using Partial Least Square method, an indicator of variables with value below the loading factor (which is below 0.7), has to be eliminated from the model due to its unreliability. Next is to eliminate indicators with loading factor value less than 0.7 before repeating the outer model measurement. In another theory, Chin (1998) portrays that such indicators (with loading factor value 0.5 to 0.6) can still be tolerated or acceptable by considering the correlation output between indicators and their variables. The test, then, will be continued to the next step by ignoring the elimination of two indicators having loading factor value less than 0.7. If it does not pass the test, then the outer loading test must be re-estimated by removing two of two indicators with loading factor value less than 0.7

Discriminant validity evaluation has a purpose to process the test of variables correlation power with their own indicators, by setting the cross loading as the beginning stage. The cross-loading value shows the correlation value in each variable with its indicators and indicators from other block variables.

Table 1. Cross Loading

|  | The Use of TikTok | E-WOM | Organizational Image |
|---|---|---|---|
| MES1 | 0.493 |  |  |
| MES2 | 0.745 |  |  |
| MES3 | 0.840 |  |  |
| WO1 |  | 0.838 |  |
| WO2 |  | 0.808 |  |
| WO3 |  | 0.895 |  |
| CIT1 |  |  | 0.954 |
| CIT2 |  |  | 0.788 |
| CIT3 |  |  | 0.872 |

Source: Processed Data, 2022.

**The Evaluation of Composite Reliability**

Seeing the table 1, it tells that the majority indicators have a cross loading value more than 0.7. MES1 variable has the score below 0.7 (0.493). The next evaluation is from the discriminant validity by observing the comparison between the root value of AVE with the correlation between variables. The result that is worth recommending is that the value of AVE root should be bigger than the relation amongst variables to obtain a better discriminant validity value (table 2).

Table 2. The Value of AVE and AVE Root

|  | AVE Value | Composite Reliability Value |
|---|---|---|
| E-WOM | 0.719 | 0.819 |

Source: Processed Data, 2022.

The table above depicts that the value of AVE root in E-WOM variable as a mediator variable is 0.719, followed by evaluating the variable reliability with composite reliability showing the reliability level of each indicator in each variable. The value of composite reliability is reliable if it reaches above 0.7. The result of the composite reliability in the table above shows that its value of each variable is reliable owing to having value above 0.7.

**Structural Model Test (Inner Model)**

While all indicators made in this research have been in line with the criteria and passed the test of measurement model (outer model), the next is to test the structural model or analysis of the inner model in different terms. The Bootstropping test as in Figure 7 is the result of the process of variables check.
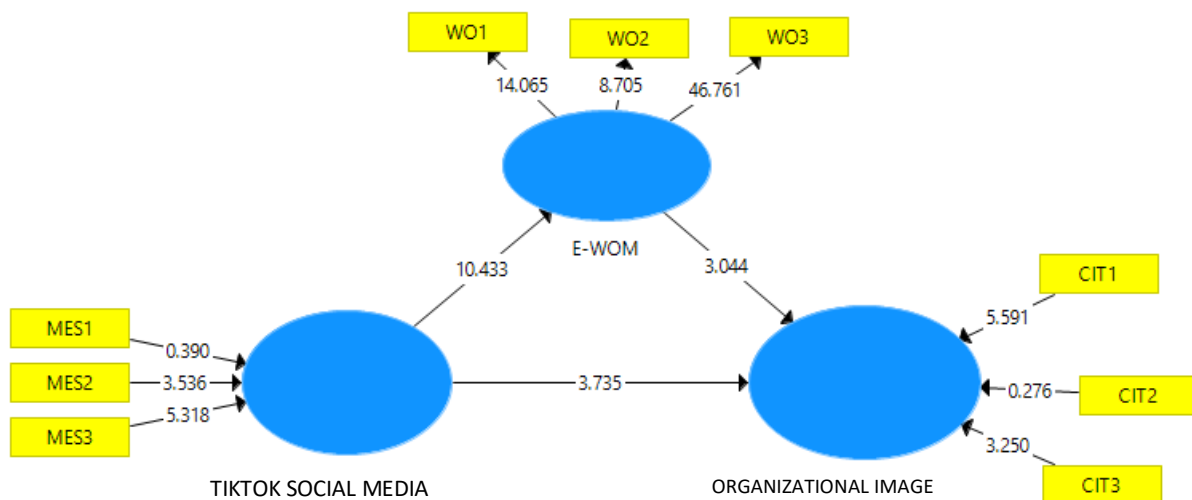


Figure 2. The Result of Bootstropping Test
Source: Processed Data,2022.

From the result, the parameter coefficient of the relation amongst the variables has a positive correlation which can be seen from the positive correlation number, meaning that the E-WOM variable has a positive influence in mediating the use of TikTok variable toward organizational image variable. The next process is to test the appropriateness of model (goodness of fit) by considering the value of R square, with a principal goal to calculate to what extent the ability of a model in explaining the dependent variable. The value of the coefficient is at around nil and one. If the R square value is small, it can be said that the ability of the independent variables in illustrating the variety of dependent variables is highly limited. However, if the value is closest to 1, it means that all independent variables give almost the entire information needed to predict the variety of dependent variables which in this case is the organizational image of Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo.

Table 3. The Value of R Square and R Square Adjusted

|  | R Square | R Square Adjusted |
|---|---|---|
| ORGANIZATIONAL IMAGE | 0.652 | 0.645 |
| E-WOM | 0.551 | 0.546 |

Source: Processed Data, 2022.

The R square value obtained through the research model is 0.652 or 65.2% for the organizational image variable. This means that the model of this research is able to explain the dependent variable for 65.2%, meaning that as previous percentage is the variety of organizational image of Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo can be described with the variety of the variable of the use of TikTok with E-WOM as a mediator variable. The remaining 34.8% (100%-65.2%) is influenced by some variables other than the variables set as consideration in this research analysis (table 3), while to measure the significance, t statistic value of each relation is counted and should be above 1.96, indicating that the significance is as 5%. Significance, in this case, is directed to also count the hypothesis proposed before (table 3).

Table 4. The Value of T Statistic

|  | Original Sample (O) | Sample Mean (M) | P Values | Standard Deviation (STDEV) | T Statistics ($|O/STDEV|$) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Use of TikTok -> E-WOM | 0.742 | 0.749 | 0.000 | 0.01 | 10.433 |
| The Use of TikTok -> Organizational Image | 0.467 | 0.502 | 0.000 | 0.125 | 3.375 |
| E-WOM-> Organizational Image | 0.398 | 0.368 | 0.002 | 0.131 | 3.044 |

Source: Processed Data, 2022.

Based on the table above, the three relations of the variables have a value of t statistic above 1.96, meaning that according to (Jogiyanto & Abdillah, 2009), if the result of t statistic is more than 1.96, it indicates that there is an effect in the relation of the variables. E-WOM variable as a mediator variable has a t statistic value of 3.044 when being related to

organizational image variable. Meanwhile, the variable of the use of TikTok has a t statistic value of 10.433 and 3.375 in its relation with E-WOM variable and organizational image respectively. This proves that the use of TikTok has an effect toward organizational image with E-WOM as a mediator variable.

The result of this research is in line with some research reporting that the role of social media brings a positive impact toward marketing (Romdonny et al., 2018); (Fauziah et al., 2018); (Sugianto Putri, 2016). In recent times, social media has a strategic value due to the huge time devotion of the youth for it. The use of social media influence E-WOM positively (Wiridjati & Roesman, 2018), explained that through social media, consumers have the capability to share their related to activities experience with their friends or colleagues, whereas (Putri & Amalia, 2018) believe that E-WOM presence would positively impact the organizational image.

## 5. Conclusion

The purpose of this research is to provide empirical evidence on the roles of E-WOM variable in mediating the variable of the use of TikTok toward the organizational image. After evaluating the result of the research, it can be deduced that the role of E-WOM variable in mediating the construction on the use of Tiktok is known to bring positive effect significantly toward the organizational image of Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo. Knowing that the value of t statistic is as 3.044 and significant at the value of t table > 1.96, thus it can be concluded that the first hypothesis stating that the use of TikTok mediated by factor of E-WOM influences the organizational image of Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo.

Consequently, it can be summarized that the strategy to use TikTok applied by the technical implementation unit of the new student admissions of Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo as a part of promotion methods has a positive effect toward the organizational image. The comments emerge in social media from the perspective of respondents regarding this strategy is able to connect the factor of using TikTok with the organizational image. The better the quality of TikTok use in delivering information related to the campus promotion, the higher the increase of online respondent assessments (E-WOM). Realizing that the respondents are students participating in Campus Tour 2021, it can be said that those who saw the content of the videos made by the technical implementation unit of the new student admissions will spread the information to others and discuss it. The better the assessment on E-WOM, the higher the increase of organizational image is.

The result of this research shows that E-WOM has a positive effect in mediating the relationship between the use of TikTok social media toward the organizational image of Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo. TikTok, which has been a popular media amongst youth in the late three years, becomes one of the strategies for the technical implementation unit of the new student admissions Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo aiming a similar segmentation as TikTok, which is young people. Information delivered effectively with attractive nuances in TikTok videos create comments and talks amongst people, specifically secondary high school students in online platforms or E-WOM. When the assessment on W-WOM is positive then the organizational image of campus will also be positively influenced, validating the success of the technical implementation unit of the new student admissions performance. This finding can be one of the fundamentals for the technical implementation unit of the new student admissions of Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo to keep increasing the online promotion quality, targeting young people as a prime market.

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