

Word of Mouth, Brand Image, and Their Effects on Purchase Decisions: Evidence from Female Students Using OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the influence of word of mouth and brand image on purchase decisions of OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream among female undergraduate students. The research adopts a quantitative approach using a survey method. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed to 40 female students who had purchased and used the product, selected through purposive sampling. Measurement was conducted using a five-point Likert scale, and data analysis was performed using SPSS. The analytical techniques included validity and reliability tests, normality testing, correlation analysis, multiple linear regression, coefficient of determination, and hypothesis testing using t-tests and F-tests. The results indicate that word of mouth has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions, while brand image also shows a positive and significant influence. Simultaneously, both variables significantly explain variations in purchase decisions. These findings highlight the importance of interpersonal communication and brand perception in shaping consumer behavior in the cosmetic industry. The study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence from a local cosmetic brand context and offers practical insights for marketers to strengthen word of mouth strategies and brand image to enhance consumer purchase decisions.

1. INTRODUCTION

The global cosmetic industry has undergone significant transformation due to rapid technological development and changes in consumer lifestyles. Increased access to digital platforms has altered how consumers search for information, evaluate alternatives, and make purchasing decisions. In this environment, cosmetic products are no longer judged solely on functional attributes, but also on symbolic value, social influence, and brand perception (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). Lip cream products, particularly matte variants, have become highly popular among young consumers, creating intense competition among brands offering similar product features and price ranges. OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream has emerged as one of the local cosmetic products targeting young female consumers in Indonesia. Its popularity is driven by affordable pricing, diverse color variants, and aggressive promotion through social media influencers and digital marketing channels. Despite this growth, the abundance of competing cosmetic brands both local and international creates uncertainty in consumers' purchase decisions. Female undergraduate students, as a highly trend-sensitive and socially connected group, are exposed to large volumes of product information, which can complicate their decision-making process and increase reliance on external cues when choosing cosmetic products.

One of the most influential external cues in consumer decision-making is word of mouth (X1). Word of mouth refers to informal communication among consumers regarding their experiences, opinions, and evaluations of products or brands (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). In the cosmetic industry, consumers often share product reviews, usage experiences, and recommendations through social media, online forums, and interpersonal interactions. Such communication is perceived as more credible than traditional advertising, making word of mouth a powerful determinant of purchase decisions (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). Positive word of mouth can strengthen consumer trust and encourage purchasing behavior, while negative word of mouth may reduce interest and discourage potential buyers. In addition to word of mouth, brand image (X2) plays a critical role in shaping consumer perceptions and influencing purchasing behavior. Brand

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image represents the set of associations, beliefs, and impressions that consumers hold toward a brand (Keller, 2013). A strong brand image enhances perceived product quality, emotional attachment, and brand credibility, which are essential factors in the cosmetic market where products are closely linked to self-expression and personal identity (Aaker, 1997). For OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream, brand image may influence how consumers perceive the product's quality, safety, and suitability, ultimately affecting their purchase decisions.

Previous empirical studies have provided strong evidence regarding the effect of word of mouth on purchase decisions. Research across various industries, including cosmetics, fashion, and online retail, confirms that both traditional and electronic word of mouth significantly influence consumer attitudes and buying behavior (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). Word of mouth has been found to reduce perceived risk, increase confidence, and accelerate the purchase decision-making process, particularly for products with experiential attributes such as cosmetics. Similarly, numerous studies have demonstrated that brand image has a positive and significant impact on purchase decisions. A favorable brand image increases perceived value and strengthens emotional bonds between consumers and brands, leading to higher purchase likelihood (Aaker, 1997; Keller, 2013). In the cosmetic industry, Wu et al. (2011) found that brand image plays a crucial role in influencing consumer evaluations and purchase intentions. However, most of these studies focus on globally recognized brands or apply brand image as a single explanatory variable without considering other social influence factors.

Despite the extensive literature on word of mouth and brand image, several research gaps remain. First, many prior studies examine word of mouth and brand image independently, rather than investigating their combined influence on purchase decisions. Second, empirical evidence focusing on local cosmetic brands in emerging markets such as Indonesia is still limited. Third, few studies specifically target female undergraduate students, who represent a highly influential consumer segment due to their strong engagement with social media and peer communication. Based on these gaps, this study introduces novelty by integrating word of mouth (X1) and brand image (X2) into a unified research model to explain purchase decisions (Y) for a local cosmetic product, OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream. By focusing on a specific demographic group female undergraduate students this research provides a more contextualized understanding of consumer behavior and extends existing marketing literature by offering empirical evidence from a developing country context. Accordingly, the objective of this study is to analyze the influence of word of mouth and brand image on purchase decisions of OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream among female undergraduate students. This study aims to contribute theoretically by enriching the literature on consumer behavior and practically by providing managerial insights for cosmetic companies in designing effective communication strategies and strengthening brand image to enhance consumer purchase decisions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTESIS

Literature Review

Word of Mouth

Word of mouth (WOM) is defined as informal communication among consumers regarding the ownership, usage, or characteristics of products and services (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). WOM can occur through direct interpersonal interactions or via electronic platforms such as social media, online reviews, and discussion forums. Compared to firm-generated marketing communication, WOM is perceived as more credible and trustworthy because it originates from fellow consumers who are assumed to have no commercial interests (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). As a result, WOM plays a critical role in influencing consumer perceptions and evaluations, particularly for products with experiential attributes such as cosmetics. In the consumer decision-making process, WOM serves as an important information source that helps reduce uncertainty and perceived risk (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). Positive WOM can enhance consumer confidence and encourage purchase decisions, while negative WOM may discourage potential buyers and damage brand perceptions. Jalilvand and Samiei (2012) found that electronic word of mouth significantly influences consumers' attitudes and purchasing behavior by shaping brand-related beliefs. In the cosmetic industry, where product outcomes are often subjective and difficult to evaluate prior to purchase, WOM becomes a key determinant in influencing consumers' willingness to buy.

Brand Image

Brand image refers to the set of perceptions, beliefs, and associations that consumers hold in their memory about a particular brand (Keller, 2013). It represents how a brand is perceived rather than its objective characteristics. A strong brand image helps differentiate a product from competitors and creates a favorable impression in consumers' minds, which is essential in highly competitive markets such as the

cosmetic industry (Aaker, 1997). Brand image is formed through various elements, including marketing communication, product experience, and consumer interaction with the brand. Previous studies indicate that brand image significantly influences consumer behavior by shaping perceived quality, trust, and emotional attachment (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Consumers are more likely to purchase products from brands with a positive image because they associate such brands with reliability and superior value. Wu et al. (2011) demonstrated that brand image has a significant effect on consumer evaluations and purchase intentions in the cosmetic and retail sectors. For young consumers, brand image also serves as a symbolic representation of identity and lifestyle, further strengthening its influence on purchase decisions.

Purchase Decision

A purchase decision refers to the stage in the consumer decision-making process where individuals choose a specific product or brand after evaluating available alternatives (Kotler & Keller, 2016). This decision is influenced by various internal and external factors, including personal preferences, social influence, and brand perceptions. In the context of cosmetics, purchase decisions are often complex due to the wide range of available products, rapid trend changes, and strong social influence from peers and digital communities. Research in consumer behavior suggests that purchase decisions are strongly affected by information obtained from external sources such as word of mouth and brand image (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). WOM provides experiential insights from other consumers, while brand image offers a cognitive shortcut that helps consumers simplify their evaluation process. Studies have shown that positive WOM and a strong brand image increase consumers' likelihood of choosing a particular product over competing alternatives (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012; Keller, 2013). Therefore, understanding purchase decisions requires an integrated analysis of social communication and brand-related factors.

Hypothesis

The Effect of Word of Mouth on Purchase Decision

Word of mouth (WOM) is widely recognized as a powerful factor influencing consumer behavior, particularly in markets characterized by high information asymmetry such as the cosmetic industry. Consumers tend to rely on recommendations, reviews, and shared experiences from peers because such information is perceived as more credible and trustworthy than firm-generated advertising (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). WOM provides experiential insights that help consumers evaluate product quality and suitability, thereby reducing uncertainty and perceived risk in the decision-making process (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated a positive relationship between word of mouth and purchase decisions. Jalilvand and Samiei (2012) found that positive word of mouth significantly influences consumers' attitudes and increases their likelihood of purchasing a product. Similarly, research by Schiffman and Wisenblit (2019) suggests that consumers exposed to favorable interpersonal communication are more confident in making purchase decisions. In the context of cosmetic products, where product outcomes are subjective and closely related to personal appearance, word of mouth becomes an essential determinant of purchasing behavior. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Word of mouth has a positive effect on purchase decisions of OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream.

The Effect of Brand Image on Purchase Decision

Brand image plays a crucial role in shaping consumers' perceptions and evaluations of products. According to Keller (2013), brand image represents the associations and impressions held by consumers toward a brand, which influence how they perceive product quality, credibility, and value. A strong and positive brand image provides a sense of assurance and emotional attachment, encouraging consumers to choose a particular brand over competing alternatives (Aaker, 1997). Previous research supports the significant influence of brand image on purchase decisions. Studies by Wu et al. (2011) and Kotler and Keller (2016) indicate that consumers are more likely to purchase products from brands with a favorable image because they associate such brands with reliability and superior performance. In the cosmetic industry, brand image is especially important, as products are often linked to self-expression, confidence, and social identity. Thus, a positive brand image of OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream is expected to increase consumers' willingness to purchase the product. Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H2: Brand image has a positive effect on purchase decisions of OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream.

The Combined Effect of Word of Mouth and Brand Image on Purchase Decision

While word of mouth and brand image individually influence purchase decisions, their combined effect may provide a more comprehensive explanation of consumer behavior. Word of mouth serves as an external social influence that shapes consumers' initial perceptions, whereas brand image functions as an internal cognitive and emotional evaluation that reinforces purchasing confidence (Keller, 2013). Positive word of mouth can strengthen brand image by reinforcing favorable brand associations, while a strong brand image can amplify the impact of word of mouth on purchase decisions. Several studies suggest that integrating social communication and brand-related factors provides a stronger predictive power in explaining consumer purchasing behavior (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012; Cheung & Thadani, 2012). In the cosmetic market, where consumers are highly influenced by peer opinions and brand symbolism, the interaction between word of mouth and brand image is expected to play a significant role in shaping purchase decisions. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H3: Word of mouth and brand image simultaneously have a positive effect on purchase decisions of OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream

Based on consumer behavior theories and prior empirical evidence, both word of mouth and brand image are expected to have a direct positive effect on purchase decisions of OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream among female undergraduate students in the cosmetic industry.

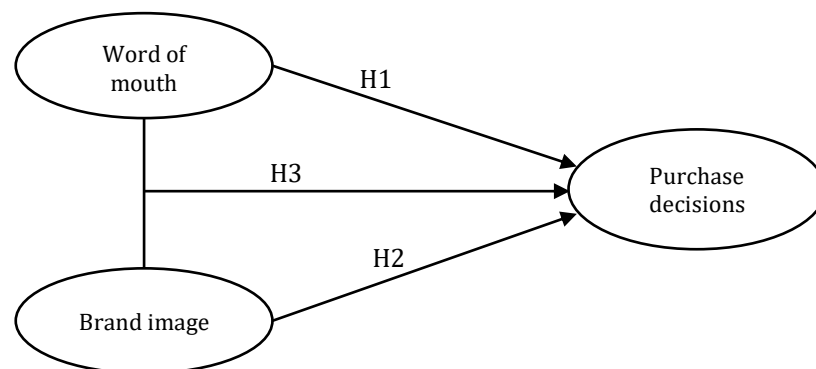


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

3. METHODS

This study employed a quantitative research approach to examine the influence of word of mouth and brand image on purchase decisions of OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream. A quantitative method was chosen because it allows the measurement of relationships among variables through statistical analysis and provides objective empirical evidence to support hypothesis testing (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The research design was explanatory in nature, aiming to explain the causal relationships between independent variables word of mouth and brand image and the dependent variable, purchase decision. The population of this study consisted of female undergraduate students of STIE Putera Perdana Indonesia from the 2021/2022 academic cohort. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, as respondents were selected based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The criteria required respondents to have purchased and used OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream, ensuring that all participants had direct experience with the product and were able to provide accurate evaluations. Based on these criteria, a total of 40 respondents were selected as the research sample. The sample size determination followed Arikunto's (2013) guideline, which suggests that when the population size is relatively limited, a sample of 30–50 respondents is considered adequate for quantitative analysis.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed online through Google Forms. This method was chosen to facilitate accessibility, efficiency, and convenience for respondents. The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), which is commonly used in consumer behavior research to measure attitudes, perceptions, and behavioral intentions (Likert, 1932). The word of mouth variable was measured using eight statement items, brand image was measured using eight statement items, and purchase decision was measured using ten statement items. All measurement items were adapted from relevant prior studies and adjusted to fit the context of OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream. The collected data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

(SPSS). Prior to hypothesis testing, several preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure data quality and suitability for further statistical procedures. Validity testing was performed to assess whether each questionnaire item accurately measured the intended construct, while reliability testing was conducted to evaluate the internal consistency of the measurement instruments using Cronbach's alpha. A normality test was applied to determine whether the data distribution met the assumptions required for parametric analysis. Subsequently, partial correlation analysis was conducted to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between each independent variable and the dependent variable. The coefficient of determination was calculated to assess the proportion of variance in purchase decisions explained by word of mouth and brand image. Multiple linear regression analysis was then employed to analyze the simultaneous effects of word of mouth and brand image on purchase decisions. Hypothesis testing was carried out using the t-test to examine the partial effects of each independent variable and the F-test to evaluate the joint effect of all independent variables on the dependent variable. These analytical procedures enabled a comprehensive evaluation of the proposed hypotheses and provided empirical support for the research conclusions.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

Validity Test

Table 1. Validity Test Result

	Corrected Item-Total Correlation		Corrected Item-Total Correlation		Corrected Item-Total Correlation
Word of mouth.1	0.406	Brand image.1	0.436	Purchase decision.1	0.622
Word of mouth.2	0.585	Brand image.2	0.512	Purchase decision.2	0.76
Word of mouth.3	0.56	Brand image.3	0.586	Purchase decision.3	0.45
Word of mouth.4	0.382	Brand image.4	0.601	Purchase decision.4	0.499
Word of mouth.5	0.356	Brand image.5	0.61	Purchase decision.5	0.661
Word of mouth.6	0.571	Brand image.6	0.518	Purchase decision.6	0.646
Word of mouth.7	0.689	Brand image.7	0.573	Purchase decision.7	0.653
Word of mouth.8	0.531	Brand image.8	0.626	Purchase decision.8	0.737
				Purchase decision.9	0.457
				Purchase decision.10	0.675

The validity test was conducted to assess whether each measurement item was able to accurately represent its respective construct. Item validity was evaluated using the Corrected Item–Total Correlation (CITC) method, where an item is considered valid if the correlation value exceeds the minimum threshold of 0.30 (Hair et al., 2019). The results show that all indicators of Word of Mouth, Brand Image, and Purchase Decision have CITC values ranging from 0.356 to 0.689 for Word of Mouth, 0.436 to 0.626 for Brand Image, and 0.45 to 0.76 for Purchase Decision. These values indicate that all items demonstrate adequate correlation with their total construct scores and meet the validity criteria. The findings confirm that all questionnaire items used in this study are valid and suitable for further analysis. The relatively high correlation values for several items, particularly within the Purchase Decision construct, indicate strong internal consistency and good construct representation. This result suggests that the indicators effectively capture respondents' perceptions related to word of mouth communication, brand image formation, and purchase decision behavior. Therefore, all measurement items were retained and included in subsequent reliability testing and hypothesis analysis, supporting the robustness of the research instrument (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016; Hair et al., 2019).

Reliability Test

Table 2. Reliability Test Result

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Word of mouth	.796	8
Brand image	.830	8
Purchase decision	.872	10

The reliability test was conducted to evaluate the internal consistency of the measurement instruments used in this study. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, where a coefficient value above 0.70 indicates acceptable reliability and internal consistency (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Hair et al., 2019). The results show that the Cronbach's alpha value for the Word of Mouth variable is 0.796 with eight items, indicating good reliability. The Brand Image variable obtained a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.830 across eight items, while the Purchase Decision variable achieved the highest reliability with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.872 across ten items. These findings demonstrate that all constructs in this study exhibit strong internal consistency, as all Cronbach's alpha values exceed the recommended threshold. The high reliability coefficients indicate that the measurement items consistently reflect their respective constructs and are suitable for further statistical analysis. Therefore, the research instrument can be considered reliable for examining the relationships between word of mouth, brand image, and purchase decisions in this study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016; Hair et al., 2019).

Normality Test

The normality test was conducted to examine whether the residuals of the regression model were normally distributed, which is a key assumption in multiple linear regression analysis. Normality was assessed using the Normal Probability-Probability (P-P) Plot of standardized residuals. As shown in Figure 2, the data points are distributed closely around the diagonal line, indicating that the observed cumulative probabilities correspond well with the expected cumulative probabilities. This pattern suggests that the residuals follow a normal distribution. According to statistical guidelines, residuals can be considered normally distributed when the points in the P-P plot cluster around the diagonal line without substantial deviations (Ghozali, 2018; Hair et al., 2019). The results of this test indicate that the normality assumption is satisfied, allowing further parametric analyses such as multiple linear regression and hypothesis testing to be conducted. Therefore, the regression model used in this study meets the normality requirement and is appropriate for subsequent statistical analysis.

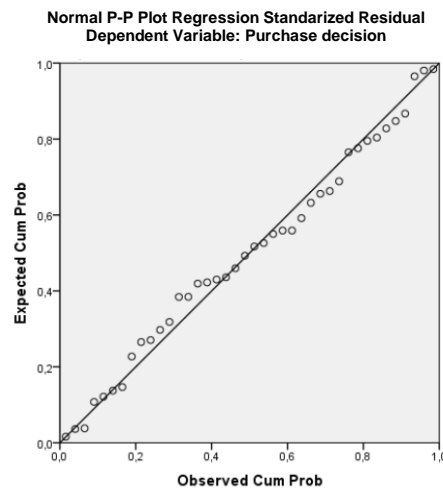


Figure 2. Normality Test

Correlation Analysis Test

Table 3. Correlation Analysis Result

		Correlations		
		TOTAL.X1	TOTAL.X2	TOTAL.Y
TOTAL.X1	Pearson Correlation	1	.789**	.935**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	40	40	40
TOTAL.X2	Pearson Correlation	.789**	1	.755**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	40	40	40
TOTAL.Y	Pearson Correlation	.935**	.755**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	40	40	40

The correlation analysis was conducted to examine the strength and direction of the relationships among word of mouth (X1), brand image (X2), and purchase decision (Y). Pearson correlation coefficients were used because the data met the assumptions of normality and interval measurement. The results indicate a strong positive correlation between word of mouth and purchase decision ($r = 0.935, p < 0.01$), suggesting that higher levels of positive word of mouth are associated with stronger purchase decisions. In addition, brand image also shows a strong positive correlation with purchase decision ($r = 0.755, p < 0.01$), indicating that a more favorable brand image is related to higher likelihood of purchasing OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream. Furthermore, the correlation between word of mouth and brand image is also strong and positive ($r = 0.789, p < 0.01$), implying that positive consumer communication tends to reinforce favorable brand perceptions. According to Hair et al. (2019), correlation coefficients above 0.70 indicate a strong relationship between variables. The statistically significant results ($p < 0.05$) demonstrate that all variables are meaningfully related and suitable for further regression analysis. These findings support the theoretical assumption that word of mouth and brand image are important factors influencing consumer purchase decisions (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019).

Coefficient of Determination (R²)

Table 4. Coefficient of Determination (R²) Result

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.796 ^a	0.633	0.614	2.984

a. Predictors: (Constant), TOTALX1

The coefficient of determination was analyzed to assess the extent to which word of mouth and brand image explain variations in purchase decisions. As presented in Table 4, the R Square value is 0.633, indicating that 63.3% of the variance in purchase decisions can be explained by the combined influence of word of mouth and brand image. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.614 further confirms the robustness of the regression model by accounting for the number of independent variables included. According to Hair et al. (2019), an R Square value above 0.60 reflects a strong explanatory power in behavioral research. The remaining 36.7% of the variance in purchase decisions is explained by other factors not included in this model, such as product quality, price perception, promotional strategies, or individual consumer preferences. The standard error of the estimate of 2.984 indicates an acceptable level of prediction accuracy. These results suggest that word of mouth and brand image play a substantial role in influencing consumers' purchase decisions, supporting the theoretical framework of this study and providing a strong basis for further hypothesis testing (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 5. Multiple Regression Analysis Result

Coefficients ^a						
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error				
1	(Constant)	2,268	0.254			
	TOTALX1	0.794	0.086	0.836	9,247	0.000
	TOTALX2	0.136	0.097	0.479	3,503	0.001

a. Dependent Variable: TOTALY

The multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the effects of word of mouth and brand image on purchase decisions. As shown in Table 5, the regression model indicates that word of mouth (X1) has a positive and statistically significant effect on purchase decisions, with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.794, a t-value of 9.247, and a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This result suggests that an increase in word of mouth leads to a substantial increase in purchase decisions. The standardized beta coefficient of 0.836 indicates that word of mouth is the most dominant variable influencing purchase decisions in the model. Brand image (X2) also shows a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions, with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.136, a t-value of 3.503, and a significance level of 0.001 ($p < 0.05$). The standardized beta coefficient of 0.479 demonstrates that brand image contributes meaningfully to purchase decisions, although its influence is weaker than that of word of mouth. These findings indicate that both independent variables significantly affect purchase decisions, supporting the proposed research

model and aligning with previous studies that emphasize the importance of social communication and brand perception in consumer behavior (Hair et al., 2019; Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Hypothesis testing (t-Test)

Table 6. t Test Result Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
1 (Constant)	2,268	0.254		4,054	0.000
TOTALX1	0.794	0.086	0.836	9,247	0.000
TOTALX2	0.136	0.097	0.479	3,503	0.001

a. Dependent Variable: TOTALY

The multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the effects of word of mouth and brand image on purchase decisions. As shown in Table 6, the regression model indicates that word of mouth (X1) has a positive and statistically significant effect on purchase decisions, with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.794, a t-value of 9.247, and a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This result suggests that an increase in word of mouth leads to a substantial increase in purchase decisions. The standardized beta coefficient of 0.836 indicates that word of mouth is the most dominant variable influencing purchase decisions in the model. Brand image (X2) also shows a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions, with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.136, a t-value of 3.503, and a significance level of 0.001 ($p < 0.05$). The standardized beta coefficient of 0.479 demonstrates that brand image contributes meaningfully to purchase decisions, although its influence is weaker than that of word of mouth. These findings indicate that both independent variables significantly affect purchase decisions, supporting the proposed research model and aligning with previous studies that emphasize the importance of social communication and brand perception in consumer behavior (Hair et al., 2019; Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Hypothesis testing (F-Test)

Table 7. F Test Result ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	7.284	2	3.642	136.753	.000 ^b
Residual	.985	37	.027		
Total	8.270	39			

a. Dependent Variable: TOTALY

b. Predictors: (Constant), TOTALX2, TOTALX1

The F-test was conducted to examine the simultaneous effect of word of mouth and brand image on purchase decisions. The results show an F-value of 136.753 with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the regression model is statistically significant. This finding demonstrates that word of mouth and brand image jointly have a significant effect on purchase decisions. According to Hair et al. (2019), a regression model is considered valid when the significance value of the F-test is less than 0.05, confirming that the independent variables collectively explain variations in the dependent variable. These results support the third hypothesis (H3), which states that word of mouth and brand image simultaneously influence purchase decisions. The significant F-test result indicates that the proposed model is appropriate for explaining consumer purchase behavior toward OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream. This finding aligns with consumer behavior theory, which emphasizes that purchase decisions are shaped by a combination of social influence and brand perception rather than by a single factor alone (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Therefore, the overall regression model provides strong empirical support for the relationships proposed in this study.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that word of mouth and brand image play significant roles in influencing purchase decisions of OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream among female undergraduate students. The strong positive effect of word of mouth on purchase decisions indicates that consumers heavily rely on interpersonal communication and shared experiences when evaluating cosmetic products. This result is consistent with the theory of consumer behavior, which suggests that information obtained from peers is perceived as more credible and persuasive than firm-generated communication, particularly for

experiential products such as cosmetics (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). The dominance of word of mouth in the regression model further highlights the importance of social influence in shaping consumer purchasing behavior in highly competitive cosmetic markets. The empirical results align with previous studies that found a significant positive relationship between word of mouth and purchase decisions. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) emphasized that positive consumer-to-consumer communication enhances trust and reduces perceived risk, leading to higher purchase likelihood. Similarly, Jalilvand and Samiei (2012) reported that electronic word of mouth significantly influences consumer attitudes and purchasing behavior by shaping brand-related beliefs. The strong correlation and regression coefficients found in this study reinforce these findings and suggest that word of mouth remains a crucial determinant of purchasing behavior among young consumers who are highly active on digital platforms.

Brand image was also found to have a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions, although its influence was weaker than that of word of mouth. This finding supports branding theory, which argues that a favorable brand image enhances perceived quality, emotional attachment, and consumer confidence (Aaker, 1997; Keller, 2013). The result is consistent with prior empirical studies conducted in the cosmetic and retail sectors, which have shown that consumers are more likely to purchase products from brands they perceive positively (Wu et al., 2011). For OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream, a strong brand image appears to reinforce consumers' trust and willingness to purchase, particularly in a market where brand symbolism and self-expression play important roles. The simultaneous effect of word of mouth and brand image on purchase decisions confirms that consumer behavior is influenced by a combination of social communication and brand-related perceptions. This finding supports previous research suggesting that integrating multiple explanatory variables provides a more comprehensive understanding of purchasing behavior (Cheung & Thadani, 2012; Kotler & Keller, 2016). Positive word of mouth can strengthen brand image by reinforcing favorable associations, while a strong brand image can amplify the impact of word of mouth by increasing the credibility of shared information. The high coefficient of determination in this study indicates that these two variables together explain a substantial portion of variance in purchase decisions, highlighting their strategic importance for cosmetic brands.

Compared to previous studies that primarily focus on global cosmetic brands or general consumer populations, this study provides empirical evidence from a local brand context and a specific demographic group. The findings suggest that female undergraduate students are highly responsive to social influence and brand perception when making cosmetic purchase decisions. This extends prior research by demonstrating that the influence of word of mouth and brand image is not limited to well-established brands, but also applies strongly to local cosmetic products competing in dynamic and digitally driven markets.

5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that word of mouth and brand image have significant and positive effects on purchase decisions of OMG Matte Kiss Lip Cream among female undergraduate students. Word of mouth emerged as the most influential factor, indicating that consumer recommendations, shared experiences, and peer communication play a dominant role in shaping purchasing behavior. Brand image also contributes positively, suggesting that favorable perceptions toward the brand enhance consumer confidence and willingness to purchase. Simultaneously, both variables explain a substantial proportion of variance in purchase decisions, confirming that social influence and brand perception are key determinants in the cosmetic purchasing process.

From a managerial perspective, the findings imply that cosmetic companies, particularly local brands such as OMG, should prioritize strategies that stimulate positive word of mouth. Encouraging user-generated content, influencer reviews, and customer testimonials can strengthen interpersonal communication and enhance consumer trust. In addition, maintaining a strong and consistent brand image through quality assurance, attractive packaging, and coherent brand messaging is essential to reinforce consumer perceptions and support purchase decisions. Integrating word of mouth initiatives with brand image management can create a synergistic effect that improves market competitiveness.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. The sample size was relatively small and limited to female undergraduate students from a single institution, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, the study only examined two independent variables, whereas purchase decisions may also be influenced by other factors such as price, product quality, promotion, or lifestyle. The cross-sectional design also limits the ability to capture changes in consumer behavior over time. Future research is recommended to involve larger and more diverse samples across different demographic groups and regions to enhance external validity. Additional variables such as perceived quality, brand trust, social media marketing, or customer satisfaction may be incorporated to provide a more comprehensive model of

purchase decisions. Longitudinal or mixed-method approaches are also suggested to gain deeper insights into how word of mouth and brand image influence consumer behavior over time in the cosmetic industry.

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