

The Impact of Willingness to Engage in NeWOM and Brand Attitudes on Purchase Intention Mediated by Company Mitigation Responses: A Case Study of The Energy Drink in Central Java

Endwien Hersetyawati¹, M Arief², Asnan Furinto³, Hardijanto Saroso⁴

Management Department, BINUS Business School Doctor of Research in Management, Bina Nusantara University^{1,2,3,4}

Jl. K. H. Syahdan No. 9, Kemanggisan, Palmerah, Jakarta, 11480, Indonesia

Correspondence Email: endwien@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The aims of this study were to determine the impact of willingness to engage in negative eWOM from and brand attitudes on purchase intention of Joss extra energy drink products mediated by mitigation responses of companies in Central Java. The method in this is descriptive and verification. This study used a purposive random sampling technique with a total sample of 167 respondents. The results of this study indicate that the Brand Attitude variable has nonsignificant effect on Repurchase Intention, the negative brand experience sharing (NBES) variable has nonsignificant effect on engaging in NeWOM, the negative electronic review (NER) variable has a significant effect on engaging in NeWOM, the variable involved in NeWOM has a significant effect on Brand Attitude, the variables involved in NeWOM have no significant effect on Repurchase Intention, and the CMR variable has not been proven to be successful in mediating the relationship between engaging in NeWOM and Repurchase Intention. This study also contributes to the meaning of strategic management, by empirically proving the importance of mediation of social networking sites and company mitigation responses variables and their role in influencing NBES and negative electronic reviews, negative electronic word of mouth on repurchase intention. The managerial implications to determine behavior and actions in assessing the performance of the company to seek the efforts made in dealing with the negative impact of NeWOM.

Keywords: Brand Attitude, Negative Electronic Review, NeWOM, Repurchase Intention

JEL Classification Codes: A10, O31, O35, L1

INTRODUCTION

Word of mouth is a communication medium that developed with the internet into eWOM. This is due to the development of the Internet and the emergence of social media platforms that are increasingly developing as information media. Consumer are free to express their opinions, experiences and complaints due to unsatisfactory services. Complaints are referred to as negative eWOM. Frequently used social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp groups where consumers can share their views and complaints.

Many think that all information spread on social networking sites (SNS) or the internet has become an important source of information for consumers because of the accessibility, speed and volume of information that can be obtained. For example, a viral message circulating on SNS type Facebook on June 19, 2015 about a list of dangerous drinks that can trigger brain cancer, diabetes, and hardening of

the spinal cord. The negative message was spread on behalf of the Indonesian doctor, namely from Dr. Ismuhadi, MPH is the most viral one posted by an account in the name of Gunawan Inkokusumo. This old message is redistributed by Facebook users.

Wibowo and Junaedi (2019) show that interest in engaging in eWOM negatively influences perceptions of brand attitudes. If there is an unsatisfactory service, this level of dissatisfaction can be measured by consumer brand attitudes, with the level of brand trust, Brand influence, and its impact on consumer purchase intentions negatively affected (Surya & Saragih, 2019). The NeWOM experienced by dissatisfied consumers has an impact on the attitudes of other online users, thus posing a threat to the company's brand.

Given that NeWOM can inhibit the buying behavior of its recipients, and thus has the potential to reduce corporate earnings (Gu et al., 2005). Technological developments do not always have a good impact, various negative impacts also often appear along with faster technological developments.

Online media consumers rely on information from other consumers in deciding to purchase goods online (Wu et al. 2014). Consumers not only seek medical information electronically and use word of mouth (WOM) from other consumers who have the same problem or have related experiences, but also share their experiences, share opinions and knowledge with other consumers on SNS.

The negative message circulating about the list of dangerous drinks that trigger cancer was shared up to 105,459 times. The essence of the information claimed that aspartame contained by the beverage products on the list is the cause of hardening of the brain, diabetes, and hardening of the spinal cord. And the news forbids the public to drink energy drink products such as Extra Joss.

In recent years, the energy drink market has continued to stagnate. This is indicated by the market growth which is always stagnant, even decreasing every year. According to research from the marketing intelligence company in 2019, the energy drink market in America and Australia experienced a slight decline of 0.5%. The decline in sales of several energy drink products in America such as Monster products decreased by 0.3%, Red Bull products decreased by 0.6%, Living Essentials products decreased by 0.1%. In total, the projected sales of energy drink products in America in 2014-2018 and 2019-2023 only decreased by 0.5%. Meanwhile in Indonesia, the decline in sales of energy drink products in Indonesia reached 5.5%, based on research conducted by Nielsen (2019). Several energy drink products in Indonesia, such as extrajoss, decreased by 8.3%, Kuku Bima by 9.9%, Hemaviton by 12.8%, E-juss by 65.5%, Ena'o by 1.9%, and Proman by 88.8%. As a result of the negative news that was shared through social media, it resulted in a decline in energy drink products in Indonesia. The emergence of a negative stigma attached to the minds of consumers mentioned by Nielsen (2019) due to negative news spread on social networking sites (SNS) called negative electronic word of mouth (NeWOM) from negative brand experience sharing (NBES) and negative electronic reviews (NER). So that company mitigation responses are needed to generate repurchase intention (RI) for energy drink products.

Based on the problems above, this study aims to further examine the impact of interest in engaging in negative eWOM and brand attitudes on purchase intention of extra Joss energy drink products mediated by the company's mitigation response in Central Java.

Literature Review

Negative eWOM

According to research by Wu and Wang, (2011), the presence of the internet has changed society and human lifestyles. Wang and Chaudhry (2018) found that when consumers experience negative experiences, companies usually offer something in the form of compensation to restore the situation such as explaining or apologizing can have a positive impact on consumer satisfaction and product repurchase intentions. According to Seibold et al., (2010), recovery efforts play an important role in maintaining consumers' feelings about negative experiences. Many previous studies have identified that explanations can effectively reduce the impact of Negative eWOM (NeWOM) (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). Fehr and Gelfand (2010) illustrates and defines explanations using four dimensions including references, reasons, and apologies.

The effect of engage in negative eWOM on energy drink brand attitudes Extra Joss

Brand attitude is an important variable because consumer intentions and behavior can be shown by the attitudes they display towards the brand. Consumer attitudes towards brands show how interested consumers are about the brand in their memories, which affects their buying behavior (Min et al. 2019). Negative eWOM from consumers in online communities indicate whether these consumers have positive or negative attitudes towards the brand. Consumers' views of these messages in social media can influence their attitudes. NeWOM from dissatisfied consumers can affect the attitudes of other members, thus becoming a threat to the company. Favorable brand attitudes are formed on the basis of a single favorable WOM communication about the brand. One of the important constructs is brand attitude because consumers' intentions and behavior can be seen by their attitude towards the brand. This makes consumers become attached to brands that are recorded in their memories, so that consumers' attitudes towards brands affect their buying behavior. Messages from consumers in online communities indicate whether these consumers have positive or negative attitudes towards the brand. Consumers' views of these messages in a community can influence their attitudes. Negative messages from dissatisfied consumers can affect the attitudes of other consumers, especially consumers who are just about to shop, so this is a threat to the company. Therefore, this research will propose:

H₁: willingness to engage in NeWOM is associated with a decrease in the overall level of extra Joss brand attitude

Relationship of NBES Characteristics with engaging in negative eWOM for Energy Drink Products.

In a study conducted by Pfeffer et al., (2014), posting a NeWOM message is a complaint behavior by consumers. By posting NeWOM, consumers are trying to express emotional dissatisfaction, spreading information about their dissatisfaction with others. If the NeWOM message is not resolved properly, the consumer will stop buying the product and terminate the relationship with the company. Without the NeWOM message being propagated, the company may not be aware that a problem exists and be unable to resolve the issue that arises. Recovery and finding good solutions will lead to positive consequences such as repurchase. When consumers experience unpleasant experiences, consumers often express their emotions on SNS and share stories with other consumers to relieve the burden caused by their negative experiences about the product (Pfeffer et al., 2014). Based on research from Guo and Turan (2016) sharing negative experiences very much a bigger impact on users than sharing a positive experience. Consumers who share negative experiences about a product usually expect positive responses from others, although sharing negative experiences carries the risk of being criticized (Guo &

Turan ,2016). Sharing through NeWOM was found to be associated with online support activities such as helping others and sharing information that would reinforce feelings such as self-affirmation (Alexandrovet al., 2013). Therefore, this research will propose:

H₂: NBES has a negative effect on NeWOM for Joss extra energy drink products as a whole

The relationship of NER characteristics with engaging in negative eWOM for Energy Drink Products.

Reviews distributed via SNS are a quick way to share opinions and experiences regarding an product or service that other consumers receive to everyone as a form of their frustration with the products and services they receive without being limited by region (Fehr and Gelfand, 2010). Based on a survey conducted by AC Nielsen (2012), online reviews (OR) are trusted with 70 percent of global consumers being one. In the absence of direct experience, potential consumers tend to believe that evaluations from other consumers can provide a reliable basis for making future purchasing decisions (Metzger & Flanagin, 2011). It was found that in the absence of direct experience, potential consumers tend to believe that evaluations from other consumers can provide a reliable basis for making future purchasing decisions. Based on research by Wang and Chaudhry, (2018) about the influence of online consumer reviews on companies and on readers, especially NER posted on SNS can affect companies such as decreased sales and can influence readers to influence other readers about a particular product. EWOM communication via SNS can go viral because it can reach a large audience in a short time. It is very important for companies to understand how-to respond to NER and minimize product damage and deterioration as a result. Based on research by Bae and Lee, (2011) found that potential consumers perceive NER as more useful and informative than positive reviews, and the extent to which NER reduces the number of purchases is higher than the effect of positive reviews on increasing the number of purchases. Therefore, this research will propose:

H₄: NBES has a negative effect on engaging in negative eWOM for Joss extra energy drink products as a whole

Brand Attitude Towards Purchase Intention

Attitude towards the brand according to Wang and Chaudhry, (2018) is a learned tendency by consumers to evaluate the brand in a way that supports (positive) or does not support (negative) consistently. Sulthanah (2019) define brand attitude is the overall form of consumer evaluation of the brand, or brand image as an overall evaluation of the brand in the context of quality and brand satisfaction.

Brand Attitude affects perceptions and behavior, so Brand Attitude can be said as a key of brand assets or an opening key to enter other elements. In other words, as stated by Kudeshia and Kumar (2017), Brand Attitude is an important component of brand equity. In addition, it can also be said that the formation of awareness is the initial stage in communicating the brand of a product. Brand Attitude is the ability of a buyer to recognize, recall a brand as a certain product category.

Having a positive attitude towards a brand, it significantly affects its purchase objectives. Brand Attitude is considered as a marker of behavioral intention (Wu & Wang, 2011). Consumer attitudes towards a brand have a great impact on their purchase intention decisions, because brand attitude is one of the most important determinants of purchase intention (Abzari et al., 2014). Factors such as brand awareness and consumer perceptions directly or indirectly affect consumer purchase intention towards the product to be purchased. Attitudes towards purchasing positively affect eWOM can result in positive evaluations of the brand that encourage "retrial" of the brand (Kudeshia & Kumar, 2017).

H₅: Brand Attitude has a positive effect on Purchase Intention.

CMR mediates engaging in negative eWOM on repurchase intention

By providing more explanations, companies can improve the evaluation of CMR. The need for effective CMR strategy research can influence consumer behavior in the future such as future repurchase intentions. In previous studies, it was agreed that five general results from NeWOM which included dissatisfaction, complaints, switching to other products, negative messages, and stopping buying needed efforts to improve consumer perceptions and increase consumer loyalty. The need for effective CMR strategy research can influence future consumer behavior such as future repurchase intentions. In previous studies, it was agreed that five general results from NeWOM which included dissatisfaction, complaints, switching to other products, negative messages, and stopping buying needed efforts to improve consumer perceptions and increase consumer loyalty (Wu & Wang, 2011). Research conducted by (Alexandrov et al. 2013) shows that avoidance and non-response are inappropriate approaches taken by companies. Active engagement with the NeWOM message may instead be more appropriate (Wang & Chaudhry, 2018). Highly empathetic CMR can increase positive interactional perceptions which can reduce the virality of NeWOM. Responses involving companies may also include substantiated explanations, and the number of reasons offered is more influential (Seibold et al. 2010) if the company provides a clarifying argument about its product with substantial evidence, it can provide feedback among SNS users and improve perceived quality.. By providing more explanations, companies can improve their evaluation of recovery efforts from negative e-word of mouth. Therefore, this research will propose:

H₇: CMR mediates engaging in negative eWOM on repurchase intention

RESEARCH METHOD

Awareness of the importance of the influence of social networking sites (SNS) and company mitigation responses (CMR) is not only aimed at keeping consumers loyal to use the product, but also to increase repurchase intention (RI) for energy drink products. The negative impact of electronic word of mouth (NeWOM) resulting from negative brand experience sharing (NBES) and Negative Electronic Reviews (NER) can have a negative impact on the survival of the company. Quantitative research methods are used in this study to achieve the objectives of this study.

This research builds on the conceptual model by developing a structural model to see the variables that influence NeWOM to be able to support the company's sustainability in a sustainable manner by increasing the repurchase intention of energy drink products. The variables involved were determined in using NeWOM based on the existing theoretical framework, and then tested the relationship model between variables. The research area is limited to the energy drink business environment in Central Java. Questionnaires were distributed via google form. The number of questionnaires distributed amounted to 200 questionnaires, the returned and complete questionnaires amounted to 167 questionnaires. The instrument used to collect data is a questionnaire identified using a Likert scale, where the alternative answers given consist of 5 choices, namely SS = strongly agree (5 points), S = agree (4 points), RR = doubtful (3 points), TS = disagree (2 points), STS = strongly disagree (1 point). This research using Smart PLS software to analyze.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic respondent

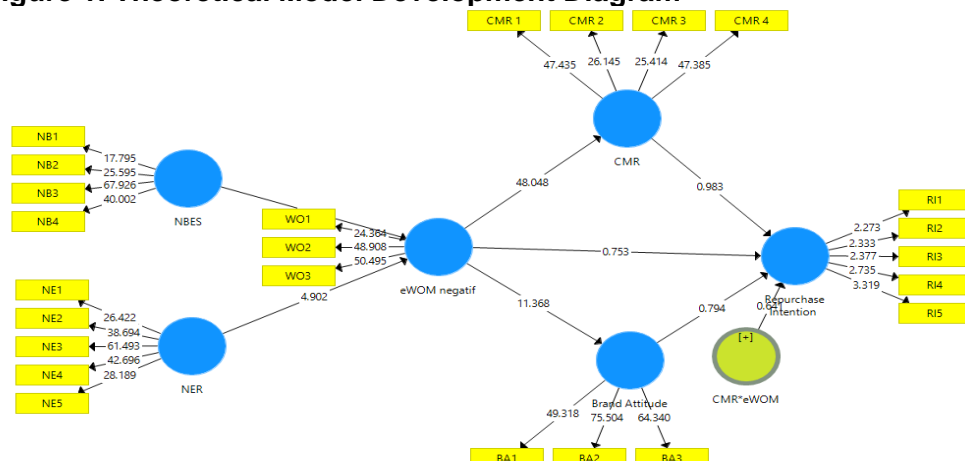
Table 1. Characteristics of respondents in this study

| Respondents | Total | |
|---|--------|-------|
| | Person | % |
| Respondents by gender | | |
| • Men | 114 | 68% |
| • Women | 53 | 32% |
| Respondents by long use extra joss products | | |
| • < 1 year | 26 | 15,6% |
| • 1- 2 year | 35 | 21% |
| • 2- 3 year | 37 | 22,2% |
| • > 3 year | 69 | 41,3% |
| Respondents by age | | |
| • 25-30 years | 97 | 58% |
| • 30-35 years | 46 | 27,6% |
| • 35-40 years | 24 | 14,4% |
| Respondents based on education level | | |
| • SMA/SMK | 98 | 58,7% |
| • High (D3, S1) | 52 | 31,1% |
| • S2 | 17 | 10,2% |

Source: interview

Through Table 1, the characteristics of the respondents viewed the characteristics of the respondents viewed from the demographic aspect, namely gender, duration of using extra joss products, age, and education show some interesting information. Based on gender, the percentage of male respondents was 114 people (68%) and for female respondents was 53 (32%) of the total sample size. Most of the respondents have used extra joss products as many as <1 year as many as 26 people (15.6%), 1-2 years as many as 35 people (21%), 2-3 years as many as 37 people (22.2%), and > 3 years as many as 69 people (41.3%) of the total number of respondents. For education, most of them have SMA/SMK education as many as 98 people (58.7%), diploma and bachelor degree as many as 52 people (31.1 %), and Master's education covers 17 people or as much as 10.2%.

Figure 1. Theoretical Model Development Diagram



Validity testing is used to measure whether a research questionnaire is valid or not. In other words, a measurement that has high reliability is one that is able to provide reliable measurement results. Geetha and Sreenath (2017) states that a variable is declared reliable if it provides a Cronbach Alpha value greater than 0.60.

Table 2. Cronbach Alpha

| | Cronbach's Alpha | Description | Composite Reliability | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) | Description |
|----------------------|------------------|-------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Brand Attitude | 0,889 | Valid | 0,931 | 0,819 | Reliable |
| CMR*eWOM | 1,000 | Valid | 1,000 | 1,000 | Reliable |
| NBES | 0,867 | Valid | 0,909 | 0,715 | Reliable |
| NER | 0,904 | Valid | 0,929 | 0,724 | Reliable |
| Repurchase Intention | 0,821 | Valid | 0,832 | 0,704 | Reliable |
| negative eWOM | 0,844 | Valid | 0,906 | 0,763 | Reliable |

Based on Table 2, the composite reliability test is obtained, the latent variable can be said to have good reliability if the composite reliability value is greater than 0.7. Reliability test will test each latent variable reliability. The composite reliability value on all latent variables in the study shows a value greater than 0.7 so that it can be said that all latent variables are reliable.

Table 3. R Square

| | R Square | R Square Adjusted |
|----------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Brand Attitude | 0,427 | 0,424 |
| Repurchase Intention | 0,072 | 0,071 |
| negative eWOM | 0,621 | 0,617 |

Structural Model Evaluation

Table 3 shows the results of $R^2 = 0.427$, meaning that the latent variable Brand Attitude can be explained well through engaging in NeWOM by 42.7%. $R^2 = 0.621$ means that the variables involved in NeWOM can be explained well through negative brand experience sharing (NBES) and negative electronic review (NER) of 62.1%. $R^2 = 0.072$ means that the Repurchase Intention variable can be explained well through Brand Attitude and is involved in NeWOM by 7.2%.

Hypothesis test

The results of testing the outer model hypothesis concluded that all significant indicators were used to build the model while the results of the inner model hypothesis testing can be seen in Table 4 with the results of all significant path coefficients.

Table 4. T Test for Path Coefficients

| | Original Sample (O) | Sample Mean (M) | Standard Deviation (STDEV) | T Statistics (O/STDEV) | P Values | Description |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Brand Attitude -> Repurchase Intention | 0,156 | 0,088 | 0,196 | 0,794 | 0,427 | Not support |
| CMR*eWOM - > Repurchase Intention | 0,048 | 0,017 | 0,074 | 0,641 | 0,522 | Not support |
| NBES eWOM negative -> | 0,216 | 0,218 | 0,115 | 0,976 | 0,061 | Not support |
| NER eWOM negative -> | 0,597 | 0,599 | 0,122 | 4,902 | 0,000 | Support |
| eWOM negative -> Brand Attitude | 0,653 | 0,659 | 0,057 | 11,368 | 0,000 | Support |
| Negative eWOM Repurchase Intention -> | 0,131 | 0,137 | 0,174 | 0,753 | 0,452 | Not support |

Source: author

Discussion

Brand Attitude variable has no significant effect on Repurchase Intention (t statistic $0.794 < 1.96$ and p value 0.427). This means that the Brand Attitude variable has nonsignificant effect on the Repurchase Intention variable. The results of this study are in accordance with the results of research by van Parys and James (2010), which states that Brand Attitude has not been proven to have a positive effect on Purchase Intention. However, this result is different from the research result of (Wu & Wang, 2011) which states that Brand Attitude is an important predictor of behavioral intention. Consumer attitudes about a brand that they feel have an impact on their decisions in deciding to purchase a product, this shows that consumer attitudes towards a brand are important for companies regarding consumer buying intentions (Abzari et al. 2014). Factors related to brand awareness and consumer perception are the main predictors for consumers in deciding consumer buying intentions for products to be purchased online.

The variable negative brand experience sharing (NBES) has a significant effect on engaging in negative eWOM (t statistic $0.976 < 1.96$ and a value of 0.061). This means that the negative variable brand experience sharing has no significant effect on the variables involved in negative eWOM. The results of this study are in accordance with the results of research conducted by (Thomas et al. 2012), which states that not all consumers think that the NeWOM message is true because some consumers think that this message is just a hoax, but there are some consumers who think that NeWOM is true. For consumers who think that the NeWOM message is wrong, it will not have a negative impact on the product, but it is different from consumers who think that NeWOM is true. The negative behavior of electronic word of mouth refers to communication between consumers where consumers exchange product-related marketing information (Liang et al., 2018). As for the negative impacts of electronic word of mouth, such as being able to form negative attitudes

from individuals, the emergence of negative brand experience sharing attitudes on product use, switching to other products and reducing the intention to repurchase a product which of course will ultimately have a negative impact on the company.

The negative variable of electronic reviews has a significant effect on engaging in negative eWOM (t statistic $4.902 > 1.96$ and the value is 0.000) This means that the negative variable brand experience sharing has a significant effect on the variables involved in negative eWOM. This means that the negative electronic review variable has a significant effect on the negative electronic word of mouth variable. The results of this study are in accordance with the results of research conducted by Chen et al. (2020) which says that companies must immediately respond to positive negative reviews submitted by consumers electronically in order to create an atmosphere of good marketing relations between consumers and the company. Based on research found by Gafni and Golan (2016) about the influence of online consumer reviews on companies and on readers, especially NER posted on SNS can affect companies such as decreased sales and can influence readers to influence other readers about a particular product. EWOM communication via SNS can go viral because it can reach a large audience in a short time. It is very important for companies to understand how to respond to NER and minimize product damage and deterioration as a result.

The variables involved in negative eWOM had no significant effect on repurchase intention (t statistic $0.753 < 1.96$ and a value of 0.452). This means that the variables involved in negative eWOM have no significant effect on the repurchase intention variable. The results of this study are not in line with the results of research conducted by (Liang et al., 2018; Wu et al. 2014) which said that the negative brand experience sharing variable had a significant effect on repurchase intention. With the increasing use of the internet, consumers take advantage of the advantages of SNS to seek information about a product that is integrated in the purchasing decision process. Based on research by Bae and Lee (2011) found that potential consumers perceive NER as more useful and informative than positive reviews, and the extent to which NER reduces the number of purchases is higher than the effect of positive reviews on increasing the number of purchases. For some consumers, consuming energy drink products is a habit that is repeated automatically. In this case, consumer behavior that is often done before is an important determinant of behavior that will be carried out in the future which can make sales of energy drink products positive and increase for the company's business continuity (survival business).

The variables involved in negative eWOM have a significant effect on Brand Attitude (t statistic $11.368 > 1.96$ and a value of 0.000). This means that the variables involved in eWOM have a significant negative effect on the Brand Attitude variable. The results of this study are supported by the results of research by Kudeshia and Kumar (2017) which states that reviews are a form of assessment of favorable nor unfavorable responses to brand-related stimuli or beliefs. Thus, marketers regard it as the most important predictive tool of consumer behavior towards products or services. Online reviews can be very convincing in influencing product evaluations (Wei & Lu, 2013). eWOM which is the most popular way to know more about the brand is definitely useful in influencing consumers' evaluation of the product (Kudeshia and Kumar, 2017). eWOM which has a higher quantity and credibility of sources (Vlogger/Reviewer) indicates a superior brand (Wu & Wang, 2011).

The CMR variable was not proven to mediate involvement in negative eWOM with repurchase intention (t statistic $0.641 < 1.96$ and p value 0.522). This means that the CMR variable is not proven to mediate involved in negative eWOM with repurchase intentions. The results of this study are different from then results of research conducted by Thomas et al. (2012), Chen et al. (2020) which stated that

the company's mitigation response variable can moderate negative electronic words from word of mouth on repurchase intentions, either directly or indirectly. However, SNS can also pose a significant risk, namely NeWOM from SNS users in a short and fast time which is called viral (Pfeffer et al. 2014). NeWOM messages from dissatisfied consumers spread on SNS can go viral and damage the reputation of products and companies that cause companies to lose thousands of customers (Seibold et al. 2010). Wang and Chaudhry (2018), companies have limited understanding of how to respond to NeWOM messages, companies nor does it know how to predict NeWOM messages. The company will continue to experience negative impacts caused by the spread of NeWOM messages.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis and discussion above, it can be concluded that: Based on the results of the analysis, it was found that Brand Attitude, mediated CMR*NeWOM, NeWOM had no effect on Repurchase Intention, this indicates that sharing negative experiences usually indirectly has a greater impact on users than sharing positive experiences, while NER has an effect on NeWOM and NeWOM has an effect on Brand Attitude. In energy drink products, consumers have a tendency to choose energy drink products that have positive ratings from other consumers. In addition, the control of perceived behavior in accordance with the actual behavioral control also has a direct influence on consumer buying behavior.

Brand Attitude can be formed from beliefs about the intrinsic attributes of a brand as well as functional benefits and accompanying experiences. In addition, engaging in NeWOM may have a strong effect on consumer behavior, at all phases of the consumer decision-making process including evaluation, choice, purchase behavior and product loyalty, providing insight for companies to have reactive and proactive strategies to reduce their spread.

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