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The Mediating Role of eWOM and Customer Experience in the Relationship between Perceived Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty Toward Local Beauty Products

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Abstract

Background: The growing intensity of competition within the local beauty industry underscores the need to understand the factors that influence customer loyalty.
Objective: This study seeks to examine the effect of Perceived Satisfaction on Customer Loyalty and to evaluate the mediating role of eWOM and Customer Experience within this relationship.
Methods: Data were obtained from 451 respondents who use local beauty products by means of an online survey and were analyzed with the SEM-PLS method.
Results: The findings show that Perceived Satisfaction positively affects Customer Loyalty, eWOM, and Customer Experience. Nevertheless, eWOM and Customer Experience neither significantly affect loyalty nor mediate the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty. These results emphasize that Perceived Satisfaction continues to be the principal factor in fostering loyalty, whereas the effectiveness of digital channels and user experience hinges on trust and emotional engagement.
Conclusion: This study offers practical guidance for local beauty industry participants to concentrate on enhancing Perceived Satisfaction and on establishing authentic, trustworthy communication in the digital sphere.

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INTRODUCTION

Digital purchasing has increasingly become embedded in the daily routines of Indonesian consumers. Advances in technology together with widespread internet accessibility have reshaped how buyers engage with products and brands. In Indonesia, the e-commerce sector is projected to surpass one thousand trillion rupiah in value by 2024 (Statistik, 2025), a figure that signals the migration of shopping activity from physical outlets toward digital channels. Within this landscape, cosmetic and beauty items rank among the most in-demand product categories. Even so, numerous domestic brands face considerable difficulty sustaining themselves amid competition, whether in product quality or in how consumers perceive the shopping experience.

Consumer satisfaction stands out as a key determinant of whether an individual will make a repeat purchase. According to Oliver (2015) and Dias et al. (2023), satisfaction represents an emotional reaction that emerges once consumers weigh their prior expectations against the actual experience they encounter. In practice, a single negative encounter can be sufficient to discourage customers from coming back. This notion is supported by the PwC Global Consumer Insights

Survey 2024, which reports that 32% of consumers would abandon a company that lets them down, whereas 93% would repurchase when the service they obtain meets their expectations.

Nonetheless, satisfaction alone does not fully account for the formation of loyalty. In the digital age, the act of shopping has grown more intricate and now encompasses numerous points of contact. Buyers evaluate not merely the product delivered to them but also the treatment they receive throughout the searching, ordering, and after-sales stages. Meyer and Schwager (2007) and Nguyen and Nguyen (2023) argue that customer experience arises from the entire set of interactions between consumers and the firm, occurring through both direct and indirect means. Such experience may shape enduring impressions of the brand and, in turn, either encourage or obstruct the development of loyalty. Furthermore, the opinions and endorsements shared by other users carry growing weight. Within an interconnected environment, consumers can readily access the views of others prior to reaching a purchase decision. Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) has emerged as the principal channel through which experiences, whether favorable or unfavorable, are disseminated. Chatterjee (2001) and Zhou (2022) contends that consumers are inclined to place greater trust in peer reviews than in advertising issued directly by brands. Satisfied consumers are more apt to post favorable reviews, which may subsequently sway the choices of other buyers.

Earlier studies have sought to investigate how consumer experience, satisfaction, and loyalty relate to one another. For instance, Edhie Budi Setiawan (2021) and Danurdara and Masatif (2025) demonstrated that price perceptions and customer experience can influence satisfaction, which in turn affects loyalty. That research, however, did not account for eWOM as a mediating factor within the relationship. In a related vein, Firmansyah and Arif (2023) explored the way experiences of using cosmetic products shape satisfaction, eWOM, and loyalty. More recent international work such as Ngo et al. (2024) on eWOM credibility, Khoa & Huynh (2023) on social media marketing and loyalty, and Yum and Kim (2024) on perceived value and trust in digital platforms reported significant relationships; nevertheless, these approaches have neither integrated the twin mediating roles of eWOM and customer experience nor given particular attention to the local brand context.

More precisely, the gap in the literature spans three distinct dimensions. The first is theoretical, since most prior studies have assessed single mediators instead of dual mediation. The second is empirical, given that the context of Indonesia's domestic beauty market has received limited attention in SEM-based inquiry. The third is methodological, as only a handful of studies have coherently combined satisfaction, eWOM, and customer experience within a single framework. Consequently, a deeper examination is warranted of how consumer satisfaction drives loyalty, considering the experiences buyers accumulate across the purchasing journey and the ways they voice and circulate those experiences on digital platforms. This study concentrates on consumers of domestic beauty products who make their purchases via online shopping platforms. Given the rising public interest in self-care and the substantial, expanding potential of the local product market, a fuller grasp of the interplay among satisfaction, experience, and loyalty grows ever more pertinent. It is anticipated that this research will reveal patterns that enable practitioners to craft marketing strategies capable not only of drawing in new consumers but also of retaining current customers in a more humane and sustainable manner.

METHOD

This research adopted a quantitative method to assess how perceived satisfaction affected customer loyalty through the mediation of eWOM and customer experience among consumers of local beauty products purchased online, with data gathered through online questionnaires (Google Forms). A quantitative design was appropriate for this study because it enabled the systematic measurement of several constructs through standardized scales, the simultaneous examination of direct and indirect effects using SEM-PLS, the generalization of findings based on 451 respondents, and an objective assessment of the hypothesized model. Siroj et al. (2024) note, quantitative research serves to verify particular theories by analyzing the associations and effects among variables. This method was therefore appropriate for empirically investigating the relationships among satisfaction, eWOM, customer experience, and customer loyalty within the proposed model. The resulting data were numerical in form and thus suitable for computation and statistical analysis. Through this approach, the researchers were able to draw generalizable

conclusions grounded in statistical evidence. The research was associative in nature, aiming to determine the degree of relationship and influence among the variables. An associative quantitative approach incorporating a mediation model was employed, featuring two mediating variables, namely eWOM and customer experience. Such an approach permitted the simultaneous testing of both the direct and indirect effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

The research framework positioned perceived satisfaction as the independent variable (X), eWOM (Z1) and customer experience (Z2) as the mediating variables, and customer loyalty as the dependent variable (Y). A quantitative associative design was applied to explore the relationships among the variables and establish both the direct and indirect effects within the proposed model. A mediation model was chosen because it allowed the researchers to measure the extent to which eWOM and customer experience mediated the effect of perceived satisfaction on customer loyalty. A cross-sectional time horizon was adopted because the data were collected from respondents at a single point in time, thereby capturing the conditions present during the data collection period for the purpose of analyzing the relationships among the variables.

Data were gathered by distributing online questionnaires through Google Forms, which were then shared across a range of social media platforms oriented toward beauty enthusiasts to ensure that the respondents met the study's criteria. A five-point Likert scale (1–5) was used to capture respondents' perceptions of perceived satisfaction, customer loyalty, eWOM, and customer experience, reflecting their degree of agreement with the provided statements. The questionnaire items were adapted from well-established instruments: perceived satisfaction from Oliver (2015), customer loyalty from Zeithaml et al. (1996) and Gayford et al. (2023), eWOM from Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004), and customer experience from Schmitt (1999). The validity and reliability of the adapted instrument were confirmed through a pilot test involving 30 respondents.

A population refers to the complete set of individuals, events, or objects of interest to researchers that forms the basis for sampling (Bougie, 2024; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The target population of this study comprised individuals who purchased or consumed local-brand beauty products and had transacted for such products through online shopping platforms. Recent figures estimated that online shoppers in Indonesia numbered between 70 and 75 million people (Google et al., 2025). Of these, roughly 60% to 65% purchased beauty products through digital platforms (Google et al., 2025; Populix, 2024), placing the estimated number of online beauty product buyers at approximately 40 to 50 million people. Drawing on this information, the study focused on the beauty-enthusiast community as the most pertinent group of target respondents.

As stated by Krejcie & Morgan (1970) and Asenahabi & Ikoha (2023), a sample constitutes a portion of the size and attributes belonging to the population. Accordingly, when the sample was derived from the population using the Krejcie and Morgan formula, with an estimated population of 40 to 50 million people and a 5% margin of error, the minimum recommended sample size for this study was 385 respondents. The actual number of respondents, however, could exceed this initial estimate to enhance the accuracy of the findings and statistical power. A purposive sampling technique was applied, targeting respondents who used online shopping platforms and had purchased local beauty products online.

The data were analyzed using SEM-PLS owing to its ability to accommodate complex models and multiple mediating variables simultaneously. The procedure began with a descriptive analysis of respondent characteristics, proceeded to outer model evaluation (validity and reliability), and then addressed the inner model to assess the strength of the relationships among the constructs. The metrics employed included R-square, path coefficients, indirect effects, f-square, and Q-square. Hypothesis testing was conducted using bootstrapping to determine the significance of the relationships among the variables. Together, these steps clarified the role played by perceived satisfaction in shaping customer loyalty, along with the contribution of eWOM and customer experience to that relationship.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Following the validity and reliability assessments conducted through SEM-PLS, the results obtained are presented in figure 1.

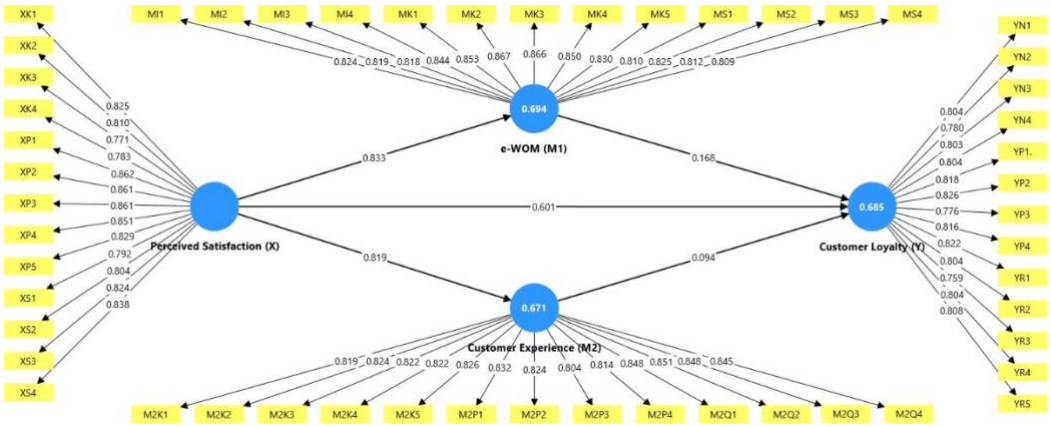


Figure 1. SEM-PLS Outer Model Test Results

Outer Model Test

Loading Factor

Table 1
Loading Factor

Variable	Question Item	Outer Loading	AVE	Description
Perceived Satisfaction (X)	XK1	0.825	0.680	Valid
	XK2	0.810		
	XK3	0.771		
	XK4	0.783		
	XP1	0.862		
	XP2	0.861		
	XP3	0.861		
	XP4	0.851		
	XP5	0.829		
	XS1	0.792		
	XS2	0.804		
	XS3	0.824		
	XS4	0.838		
Customer Loyalty (Y)	YN1	0.804	0.643	Valid
	YN2	0.780		
	YN3	0.803		
	YN4	0.804		
	YP1	0.818		
	YP2	0.826		
	YP3	0.776		
	YP4	0.816		
	YR1	0.822		
	YR2	0.804		
	YR3	0.759		
	YR4	0.804		
	YR5	0.808		
eWOM (Z1)	MI1	0.824	0.694	Valid
	MI2	0.819		
	MI3	0.818		
	MI4	0.844		
	MK1	0.853		

Variable	Question Item	Outer Loading	AVE	Description
	MK2	0.867		
	MK3	0.866		
	MK4	0.850		
	MK5	0.830		
	MS1	0.810		
	MS2	0.825		
	MS3	0.812		
	MS4	0.809		
	M2K1	0.819		
	M2K2	0.824		
	M2K3	0.822		
	M2K4	0.822		
	M2K5	0.826		
	M2P1	0.832		
Customer Experience (Z2)	M2P2	0.824	0.687	Valid
	M2P3	0.804		
	M2P4	0.814		
	M2Q1	0.848		
	M2Q2	0.851		
	M2Q3	0.848		
	M2Q4	0.845		

The cross-loading output reveals that every indicator records its strongest value on the construct it was designed to measure. This confirms that each indicator genuinely captures its intended variable, thereby satisfying discriminant validity (Chin, 1998; Hair et al., 2019; Hair, Singh, et al., 2022). The AVE exceeds 0.50. This signals that all indicators are adequately consistent and capable of faithfully representing the targeted construct.

Construct Reliability and Validity

Table 2
Results of Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite Reliability (rho_c)
Customer Experience (Z2)	0.962	0.963	0.966
Customer Loyalty (Y)	0.954	0.954	0.959
Perceived Satisfaction (X)	0.961	0.962	0.965
eWOM (Z1)	0.963	0.964	0.967

The assessment indicates that every variable in the model attains Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability scores exceeding 0.70. This demonstrates that the indicators are sufficiently consistent and able to represent the intended construct with accuracy. Put differently, the measurement instrument used in this study can be regarded as reliable and statistically valid (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2019; Hair, Hult, et al., 2022).

Table 3
Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	Customer Experience (Z2)	Customer Loyalty (Y)	Perceived Satisfaction (X)	eWOM (Z1)
Customer Experience (Z2)				
Customer Loyalty (Y)	0.761			

	Customer Experience (Z2)	Customer Loyalty (Y)	Perceived Satisfaction (X)	eWOM (Z1)
Perceived Satisfaction (X)	0.849	0.852		
eWOM (Z1)	0.900	0.781	0.863	

The HTMT-based discriminant validity test shows that all inter-construct values remain under the 0.90 threshold. This implies that the variables in the model are adequately distinct from one another, indicating sound discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015; Panzeri et al., 2024).

Model Fit Test

Table 4
Model Fit

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.057	0.073
d_ULS	4.442	7.259
d_G	3.643	3.734
Chi-square	8718.301	8870.551
NFI	0.702	0.697

Model fit serves to evaluate how well the model corresponds to the data. The SmartPLS output yields SRMR values of 0.057 (saturated) and 0.073 (estimated), each falling under the 0.08 cutoff Hair et al. (2019) and Hair, Singh, et al. (2022) signaling an acceptable model. While the NFI value of 0.702 falls short of the ideal benchmark of 0.90, it remains tolerable within the predictive orientation of PLS (Henseler et al., 2016). Hence, the model is deemed suitable for subsequent analysis.

Inner Model Test

Table 5
R-Square

	R^2	R^2 adjusted
eWOM (Z1)	0.694	0.693
Customer Experience (Z2)	0.671	0.671
Customer Loyalty (Y)	0.685	0.683

The R-square figures show that the independent variables account for 69.4% of eWOM, 67.1% of Customer Experience, and 68.5% of Customer Loyalty. Such proportions point to a strong and dependable level of predictive power in the model (Hair et al., 2017; Hair, Singh, et al., 2022).

Hypothesis Testing

Table 6
Path Coefficient

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values	Result
Customer Experience (Z2) → Customer Loyalty (Y)	0.094	0.094	0.088	1.063	0.288	Rejected
eWOM (Z1) → Customer Loyalty (Y)	0.168	0.164	0.102	1.651	0.099	Rejected

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values	Result
Perceived Satisfaction (X) → Customer Experience (Z2)	0.819	0.819	0.019	42.509	0.000	Accepted
Perceived Satisfaction (X) → Customer Loyalty (Y)	0.601	0.604	0.085	7.102	0.000	Accepted
Perceived Satisfaction (X) → eWOM (Z1)	0.833	0.833	0.018	45.430	0.000	Accepted

Table 7
Indirect Effect

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values	Result
Perceived Satisfaction (X) → Customer Experience (Z2) → Customer Loyalty (Y)	0.077	0.076	0.072	1.067	0.286	Rejected
Perceived Satisfaction (X) → eWOM (Z1) → Customer Loyalty (Y)	0.140	0.136	0.083	1.677	0.094	Rejected

The testing reveals that Perceived Satisfaction exerts a significant and positive effect on Customer Loyalty, eWOM, and Customer Experience (H1, H2, and H3 supported). These outcomes strengthen the premise that perceived consumer satisfaction is central to cultivating loyalty, prompting consumers to share information willingly through digital media and fostering a more pleasant and meaningful shopping experience. This suggests that satisfied consumers are inclined to exhibit positive behaviors spanning multiple facets of their interaction with the brand.

In contrast, neither eWOM nor Customer Experience displays a significant effect on Customer Loyalty, whether directly or in a mediating capacity (H4, H5, H6, and H7 not supported). This indicates that although consumers may participate in eWOM or enjoy positive experiences, such factors are insufficient to generate loyalty unless they rest on strong satisfaction. It follows that, in the setting of local beauty products sold on online platforms, loyalty is shaped more by direct satisfaction than by digital opinions or functional experiences.

From a theoretical standpoint, these findings add to the literature by underscoring the predominant role of satisfaction in building enduring consumer–brand relationships. Emotional factors, personal satisfaction, and the relevance of individual needs seem to carry greater weight than broad experiences or the views of others. In practical terms, the results imply that local beauty brands should concentrate on delivering genuine and comprehensive satisfaction across product quality, service, and emotional value, rather than depending primarily on digital experiences or consumer reviews to foster customer loyalty.

CONCLUSION

This research investigated the effect of Perceived Satisfaction on Customer Loyalty, together with the mediating functions of eWOM and Customer Experience, among consumers of local beauty products on online shopping platforms. The findings reveal that Perceived Satisfaction significantly and positively affects Customer Loyalty, eWOM, and Customer Experience. Conversely, eWOM and Customer Experience show no significant direct effect on

Customer Loyalty. The indirect-effect analyses likewise indicate that eWOM and Customer Experience fail to mediate the link between Perceived Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty. These results suggest that, within the examined context, customer loyalty is propelled more forcefully by direct satisfaction than by digital recommendations or customer experience acting as indirect routes.

On a practical level, local beauty brands ought to give priority to sustaining and enhancing Perceived Satisfaction through product quality, service, and streamlined purchasing and delivery processes, while employing authentic digital communication and crafting more personal and meaningful customer experiences. The results further imply that eWOM and Customer Experience should not serve as the main drivers of loyalty when satisfaction itself remains weak. Subsequent studies might explore psychological variables such as trust, perceived risk, and emotional engagement as possible mediators, broaden the scope to additional industries, and adopt a longitudinal design to track shifts in customer loyalty over time.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Suwarno and Dinda Khalisa Aryaputri contributed jointly to the study's conceptualization, methodology, data collection, data analy
sis and interpretation, and the drafting of the manuscript. Both authors examined and endorsed the final version of the manuscript.

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