

THE ROLE OF BANDWAGON EFFECT AS AN INTERVENING VARIABLE IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AND E-WOM ON THE BUYING INTEREST OF POTENTIAL BUYERS BYFE ART STUDIO

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Abstract- This study aims to determine the role of bandwagon effect as an intervening variable in the relationship between social media marketing and eWOM on the buying interest of potential buyers of Byfe Art Studio. In this study there were 4 variables used and analyzed the relationship between variables including the mediation relationship. The variables in question are social media marketing, eWOM, bandwagon effect, and buying interest. The results of the analysis can later be used by Byfe Art Studio to improve social media marketing performance and increase potential buyers' buying interest. Researchers use quantitative types of research. In this study, there were as many as 179 people used as samples. The data analysis technique used is the structural model equation with the partial least square (PLS-SEM) method. The tool used as a data analysis instrument is the SMARTPLS program. The results of this study are that social media marketing affects eWOM, the formation of bandwagon effect, and potential buyer buying interest, eWOM affects the formation of bandwagon effect but does not affect potential buyer buying interest, bandwagon effect influence on buying interest and be able to mediate the relationship between eWOM and buying interest, but unable to mediate the relationship between social media marketing and potential buyer buying interest

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, EWOM, Bandwagon Effect, Buying Interest, Potential Buyer

1. Introduction

The bandwagon effect is the ability of products to create "followers" in consumption patterns in the context of social media-based marketing. Therefore, the bandwagon effect in the online shopping environment not only produces positive eWOM but increases the effectiveness of social media marketing. Byfe Art Studio is a company that offers handmade resin art products including a variety of customizable home interior products, combining the concept of art and functional home decoration. Byfe Art Studio conducts market education by using paid advertising on social media, to increase the number of followers to thousands and reach 195 new consumers. Byfe Art Studio feels there is more potential that can be improved because it sees the number of new followers on Instagram who have not converted into buyers. Byfe Art Studio concluded that Instagram is a means for companies to engage with potential buyers. As for buying and selling transactions, more are executed through Shopee and

WhatsApp. Researchers conducted an initial survey of 10 consumers and found that the role of social media marketing and eWOM has encouraged consumers to purchase products and services from Byfe Art Studio.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Previous Research

Xu (2014) aims to determine the psychological mechanisms underlying how consumer profile characteristics contribute to consumers' cognitive and affective confidence in the credibility of product-related information. The results of the study show that consumer trust in eWOM spread by trusted members (brand ambassadors) will produce a positive bandwagon effect which further forms cognitive and affective trust, resulting in the perception of the majority of consumers that the information disseminated online is considered credible information.

Kwek et al. (2019) examined the relationship of eWOM that develops in the context of social media to the bandwagon effect and perception of the credibility of social commerce information with the perception of netizen's acceptance as a mediation variable. The results of PLS-SEM analysis using 407 questionnaire data showed that marketing activities through social media were found to produce a bandwagon effect for netizens, and eWOM that developed in a social-based business environment was also found to affect the formation of a bandwagon effect among netizens.

Sabir et al (2020) aimed to find out how the perceptions of other consumers can influence the interest of young people in Sialkot, Pakistan to make purchases of fashion products. The results of the study found that the bandwagon effect was proven to influence the interest of young people to buy fashion products. In this case, consumer buying interest increases when they see that many people around them have done the product in question, so that the participation of youth in consumption trends like this is considered to provide positive value socially.

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR)

SOR is a paradigm developed by Mehrabian & Russell in (1974), to explain consumer psychology as an organism in an environment, which tends to respond to something they encounter due to the emergence of a stimulus (Jaiyeoba et al., 2020). This theory states that the internal state of the consumer (O), lies between the stimulus of the external environment (S) and the behavioral response of the consumer (R).

2.2.2 Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing is a process that encourages individuals to communicate product promotion through websites, through online social channels, by utilizing a much larger community than through traditional advertising channels (Khoirunnisa &; Astini, 2020).

2.2.3 Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)

Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is a statement (either positive or negative) about a product or company, where the opinion develops through the Internet, and most of the related people who argue there are anonymous (Abir et al., 2020). EWOM is divided into two main parts: eWOM at the market level and eWOM at the individual level.

2.2.4 Bandwagon Effect

Bandwagon is the process of using products/services, behaviors/attitudes, or innovations and management practices on a network or community of people. At the individual level, a person may be influenced by a general tendency to follow the consumption patterns of the majority of members in the network, where there is an assumption that everything done by the majority of community members can indicate that something is good, which means it will be good for itself (Jiang et al., 2018).

2.2.5 Buying Interest

Buying interest is the tendency of a consumer to buy a brand or take actions in connection with the purchase, and is measured by the high and low probability of consumer purchase (Harjanti, 2021).

3. Research Framework

3.1 Analysis Model

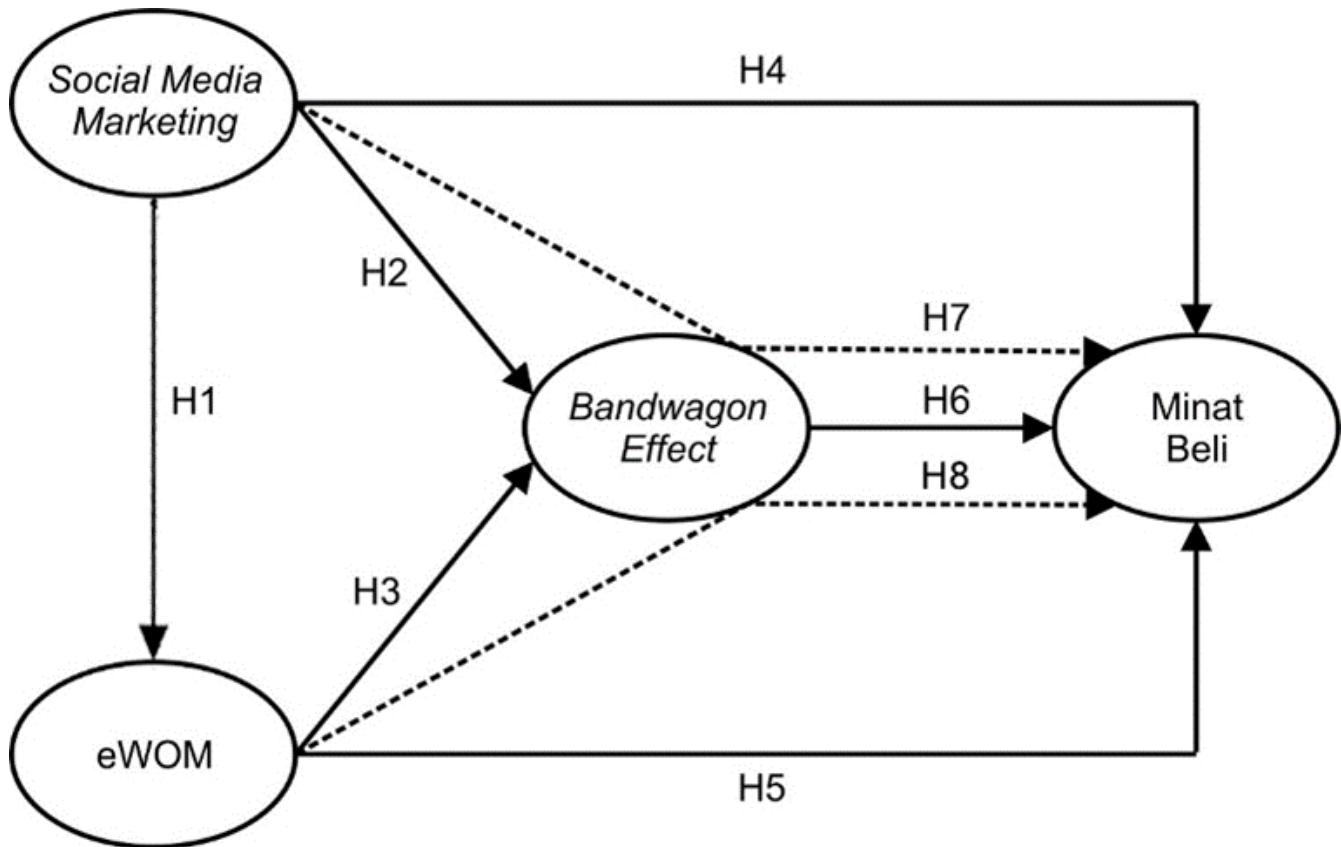


Figure 3.2 Analysis Model

Source: Researcher data (2023)

3.2 Hypothesis

H1: Social Media Marketing Effect on eWOM Byfe Artstudio

H2: Social media marketing influence on the formation of bandwagon effect at potential buyer Byfe Art Studio.

H3: eWOM which thrives on Byfe Art Studio influences on the formation of a bandwagon effect at potential buyer Byfe Art Studio.

H4: Social media marketing Influence on buying interest potential buyer Byfe Art Studio.

H5: eWOM which thrives on Byfe Art Studio Influence on buying interest potential buyer Byfe Art Studio.

H6: Bandwagon effect from consumers Byfe Art Studio Influence on buying interest potential buyer.

H7: Bandwagon effect from consumers Byfe Art Studio is a variable capable of mediating the relationship between Social Media Marketing and the buying interest of potential buyers.

H8: Bandwagon effect from consumers Byfe Art Studio is a variable capable of mediating the relationship between eWOM and buying interest potential buyer.

4. Research Methods

4.1 Research Approach

The research approach used in this study is descriptive quantitative. This research was conducted at the company *Byfe Art Studio*. The population of this study is people considered to have an interest in Byfe Art Studio products or services, *namely those who have sent Instagram DMs (Direct Messages) asking about products or services to Byfe Art Studio so that samples were taken with simple random side techniques totaling 179*. Data collection techniques in this study were carried out by distributing questionnaires using Google Forms.

4.2 Variables and Operational Definitions of Variables

Table 4.1 Variables and Operational Definitions of Variables

| Variable | Operational Definition | Indicators | Question Item |
|-------------------------|---|--|--|
| Social Media Marketing | <i>Social media marketing</i> is a process that encourages individuals to communicate product promotion through social media by utilizing a broad community (Khoirunnisa &; Astini, 2020) | 1. <i>Entertainment</i> 2. <i>Interaction</i> 3. <i>Trendiness</i> 4. <i>Customization</i> 5. <i>Advertisement</i> (Aji et al., 2020) | 1. Consumers feel a sense of pleasure when interacting with Byfe's social media content 2. Two-way information exchange occurs between companies and consumers through Byfe's social media 3. Byfe updates social media continuously when it has new products and services 4. Consumers get information related to Byfe products and services easily through social media 5. Images displayed on Byfe's social media attract consumers' attention 6. Videos displayed on Byfe's social media attract consumers' attention |
| <i>eWOM</i> | <i>eWOM</i> is a statement (either positive or negative) about a product or company that develops over the Internet (Abir et al., 2020) | 1. Online use of <i>the platform</i> 2. Recommendations 3. Reflection on personal experience 4. Seek advice (Imbayani & Gama, 2018) | 1. Information provided by consumers related to Byfe products is disseminated through social media 2. The purpose of consumers conducting <i>reviews</i> is to provide recommendations whether Byfe products and services are worth buying. 3. <i>The distributed EWOM</i> shows a picture of the real experience of consumers while using Byfe products and services 4. <i>Reviews</i> related to Byfe products and services can be input for potential customers to get a lot of information before making a purchase |
| <i>Bandwagon effect</i> | <i>The bandwagon effect</i> is something that can encourage the desire of others to buy what most people buy (Coreira &; Kozak, 2012). | 1. Exploratory interest 2. Transactional interest 3. Preferential interests 4. Referential interest (Stepien, 2018) | 1. Consumers want to have products that most people also buy. 2. The consumer wants to own the product when the person he admires also buys it. 3. Having a product that is widely liked shows that consumers are part of the community. 4. Having a much-loved product is fun. |

| | | | |
|-----------------|---|--|---|
| Buying Interest | Buying interest is the tendency of a consumer to buy a brand or take actions in connection with the purchase, and is measured by the high and low probability of consumer purchase (Harjanti, 2021) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bought by many people 2. Bought by people he admires 3. Products are much liked 4. The feeling of pleasure in buying products that many people buy (Padmi & Suparna, 2021) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consumers are very enthusiastic to get various information related to Byfe products and services 2. Consumers intend to purchase Byfe products and services in the near future 3. Consumers feel Byfe products and services will be the first choice when making purchases 4. Consumers will feel happy to recommend Byfe products and services to others |
|-----------------|---|--|---|

Source: Researcher data (2023)

4.3 Data Analysis

The data analysis technique used in this study is the structural model equation with the *partial least square* (PLS-SEM) method. The tool used as a data analysis instrument is the SMARTPLS program.

5. Result and Discussion

5.1 Characteristics of Research Respondents

Female respondents accounted for 91.6% of the total respondents. Potential buyers aged between 29-34 years amounted to 87 out of a total of 179 respondents (48.6%). Potential buyers with the latest S1 education amounted to 102 out of 179 respondents (57%). Potential buyers who have joined in the last 6 months are 68 out of 179 respondents (38%). Potential buyers who know Byfe Art Studio's products and services from the FYP (For Your Page) page that appears on their social media accounts are 81 out of 179 respondents (45.3%).

5.2 Descriptive Analysis of Research Variables

The total mean of social media marketing variables of 3.50 shows that overall, respondents feel Byfe Art Studio has a high ability in using social media marketing. The total variable mean of eWOM of 3.57 indicates that overall, respondents feel that the positive eWOM growth among Byfe Art Studio customers is at a high level. The total mean variable bandwagon effect of 3.52 shows that overall, respondents feel that the online community of Byfe Art Studio has a high ability to form positive opinions for other potential buyers individually. The total mean of the purchase interest variable of 3.50 indicates that overall, respondents have a high interest in making purchases of Byfe Art Studio products or services.

5.3 Data Analysis

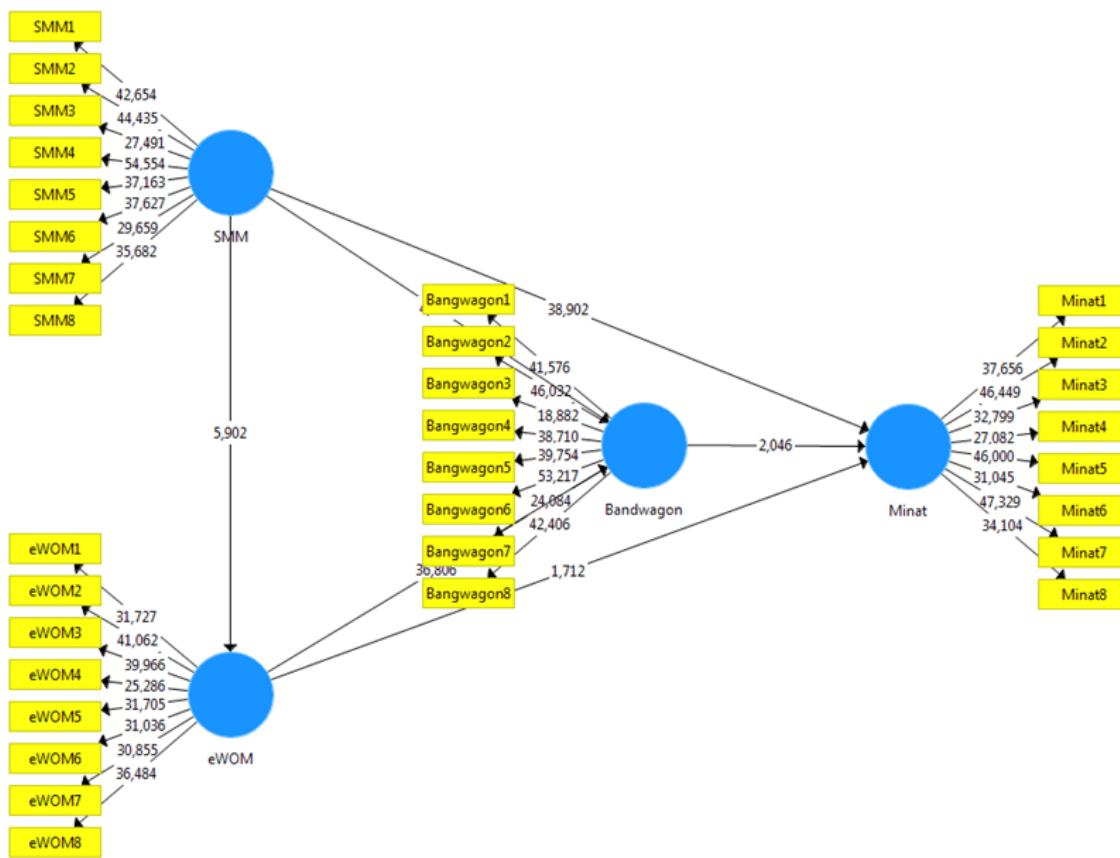


Figure 5.3 PLS Algorithm

Source: Researcher data (2023)

It is a bootstrap model that shows the value of t statistics in the PLS-SEM model generated based on data from 179 potential buyers who DM activities to Instagram @byfeartstudio.

5.3.1 Direct Hypothesis Testing

Table 5.1 Path Coefficient

| Hypothesis | | T Statistic | P Values |
|------------|----------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| H1 | $SMM \rightarrow eWOM$ | 5,902 | 0,000 |
| H2 | $SMM \rightarrow Bandwagon$ | 4,797 | 0,000 |
| H3 | $eWOM \rightarrow Bandwagon$ | 36,806 | 0,000 |
| H4 | $SMM \rightarrow Interest$ | 38,902 | 0,000 |
| H5 | $eWOM \rightarrow Interest$ | 1,712 | 0,087 |
| H6 | $Bandwagon \rightarrow Interest$ | 2,046 | 0,041 |

Source: Researcher data (2023)

Path coefficient is used as a guideline to determine the acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis proposed in this study, where if the p value of the relationship between variables is significant at the error level of 5% (Sig. < 0.05) indicates the acceptance of the relationship between hypothesized variables. Vice versa, if the p value of the relationship between the hypothesized variables > 0.05, then the hypothesis is rejected (Widardjono, 2015).

5.3.2 Mediation Hypothesis Testing

Table 5.2 Specific Indirect Effects

| Hypothesis | | T Statistic | P Values |
|------------|----------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| H7 | SMM -> Bandwagon -> Interest | 1,846 | 0,066 |
| H8 | eWOM -> Bandwagon -> of Interest | 2,036 | 0,042 |

Source: Researcher data (2023)

Specific indirect effect is used as a guideline to determine the acceptance or rejection of the mediation hypothesis proposed in this study. The p value of the relationship between variables with significant mediation at the error level of 5% (Sig. < 0.05) indicates the acceptance of the relationship between hypothesized variables. Vice versa, if the p value of the relationship between hypothesized variables with mediation > 0.05, then the hypothesis is rejected.

5.3.3 Coefficient of Determination (R²)

Table 5.3 R Square

| | R Square |
|-----------|----------|
| eWOM | 0,179 |
| BandWagon | 0,828 |
| Interest | 0,830 |

Source: Researcher data (2023)

Social media marketing (SMM) as a construct variable has a role of 17.9% in explaining the latent variable eWOM. Social media marketing (QMS) as a construct variable has a role of 82.8% in explaining the latent bandwagon effect variable. Social media marketing (QMS) as a construct variable has a role of 83% in explaining the latent variable of buying interest.

5.4 Discussion

5.4.1 The Influence of Social Media Marketing on eWOM

Through Instagram, information is exchanged regarding products, services, and reviews provided by customers. Some concrete, relevant examples are the number of customer reviews tagged in Instagram stories or @byfeartstudio feeds. Reviews given by customers will increase the credibility of the company and also the trust of potential buyers so that getting a positive review is very important for the sustainability of the company, especially when marketing and sales are carried out fully online. Therefore, hypothesis 1 which explains: "Social media marketing affects Byfe Artstudio's eWOM," is accepted.

5.4.2 The Effect of Social Media Marketing on the Bandwagon Effect

This bandwagon effect is very clearly seen in the Byfe Art Studio community, where in early 2020 only a few people knew about resin art, now the resin art community has grown and has a wide market, of course, this is supported by consistency in utilizing social media marketing so that it can make resin art as a new trend in the world of handmade crafts as well as new business opportunities for artists. Therefore, hypothesis 2 which explains: "Social media marketing affects the formation of bandwagon effect on potential buyers of Byfe Art Studio," is accepted.

5.4.3 The Effect of eWOM on Bandwagon Effect

The results of this study show that various positive information and reviews spread by Instagram followers @byfeartstudio on social media have a major impact on forming communities that can encourage individuals outside the community to behave or do the same thing as people in the Byfe Art Studio community. Therefore,

hypothesis 3 which explains: "The eWOM that develops about Byfe Art Studio affects the formation of bandwagon effect on potential buyers of Byfe Art Studio," is accepted.

5.4.4 The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Buying Interest

The results of the inner and outer model analysis also show that this hypothesis has the greatest direct influence value compared to other hypotheses. This is because Byfe Art Studio's marketing and sales system is carried out fully online through social media and marketplaces so the level of sales and buying interest will of course depend on the use of social media marketing. Therefore, hypothesis 4 which explains: "Social media marketing affects the buying interest of potential buyers of Byfe Art Studio," is accepted.

5.4.5 The Effect of eWOM on Buying Interest

The results of the company's internal analysis show that EWOM Byfe Art Studio is not all positive eWOM, but there are also a small number of negative ones that are indicated to affect the buying interest of potential buyers. Therefore, hypothesis 5 which explains: "the eWOM that develops about Byfe Art Studio affects the buying interest of potential buyers of Byfe Art Studio," is rejected.

5.4.6 The Effect of Bandwagon Effect on Buying Interest

The formation of a community that can encourage individuals outside the community to behave or do the same thing as people in the Byfe Art Studio community or the so-called bandwagon effect has proven to be able to encourage the interest of potential buyers of Instagram @byfeartstudio to purchase resin art products and services offered by Byfe Art Studio through social media. Therefore, hypothesis 6 which explains: "The bandwagon effect of Byfe Art Studio consumers affects the buying interest of potential buyers," is accepted.

5.4.7 The Role of Bandwagon Effect in Mediating Social Media Marketing Relationships and Potential Buyers' Buying Interest

The results of the company's internal analysis show that Byfe Artstudio's social media content turns out to form a bandwagon effect that has little impact on potential buyers, this can be caused by the content of social media content @byfeartstudio that leads less to viral content or less. Therefore, hypothesis 7 which explains: "The bandwagon effect of Byfe Art Studio consumers becomes a variable that can mediate the relationship between social media marketing and potential buyers' buying interest," is rejected.

5.4.8 The Role of Bandwagon Effect in Mediating the Relationship between eWOM and Potential Buyer Buying Interest

The formation of a community of resin art lovers created by Byfe Art Studio through the @byfeartstudio Instagram account has proven to be able to increase the effectiveness of positive eWOM carried out through social media in encouraging the buying interest of potential buyers of @byfeartstudio Instagram account. Therefore, hypothesis 8 which explains: "The bandwagon effect of Byfe Art Studio consumers becomes a variable capable of mediating the relationship between eWOM and potential buyers' buying interest," is accepted.

6. Conclusion and Suggestion

6.1 Conclusion

- A. Hypothesis 1 explains: "Social media marketing affects Byfe Artstudio's eWOM," accepted.
- B. Hypothesis 2 which explains: "Social media marketing affects the formation of bandwagon effect on potential buyers of Byfe Art Studio," accepted.
- C. Hypothesis 3 which explains: "The eWOM that develops about Byfe Art Studio affects the formation of bandwagon effect on potential buyers of Byfe Art Studio," accepted.
- D. Hypothesis 4 explains: "Social media marketing affects the buying interest of potential buyers of Byfe Art Studio," accepted.
- E. Hypothesis 5 which explains: "The eWOM that develops about Byfe Art Studio affects the buying interest of potential buyers of Byfe Art Studio," is rejected.
- F. Hypothesis 6 which explains: "The bandwagon effect of Byfe Art Studio consumers affects the buying interest of potential buyers," is accepted.

- G. Hypothesis 7 explains: "The Bandwagon effect of Byfe Art Studio consumers being a variable capable of mediating the relationship between social media marketing and potential buyers' buying interest," is rejected.
- H. Hypothesis 8 explains: "The bandwagon effect of Byfe Art Studio consumers being a variable capable of mediating the relationship between eWOM and potential buyers' buying interest," is accepted.

6.2 Suggestion

1. Byfe Art Studio Management

- A. Byfe Art Studio management should form a product development management team whose task is to research resin art products that are growing in the market.
- B. Byfe Art Studio management should also form a social media marketing management team whose main task is to document products, production processes, and customer reviews, then package them in interesting content according to trends.
- C. Byfe Art Studio devised a strategy to encourage customers to provide real reviews of Byfe Art Studio products and tag them on social media @byfeartstudio.
- D. Byfe Art Studio management can collaborate with or endorse resin artists or other brands that have many followers and high engagement on social media.

2. Advice for future researchers

The results of this study show that social media marketing as an independent variable only contributes as much as 17.9% in explaining the latent variable eWOM; contributes as much as 82.8% in explaining the latent variable bandwagon effect; and contributes 83% in explaining the latent variable of buying interest. Therefore, researchers can then use various other latent variables such as the service quality variable which explains how companies can improve services in the context of online marketing.

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