

## MAPPING IDEA &amp; LITERATURE FORMAT | RESEARCH ARTICLE

# The Influence of User-Generated Content and Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) on TikTok on Gen Z Purchase Intentions toward Ella Skincare

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## ABSTRACT

The development of digital technology and the increasing use of social media among Generation Z have encouraged companies to implement marketing strategies based on User-Generated Content (UGC). TikTok, one of the most popular social media platforms, allows users to create and share brand-related content, which then develops into Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) through user interaction and information exchange. This study aims to answer the research question: Do User-Generated Content (UGC) and Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) on TikTok influence Gen Z purchase intention towards Ella Skincare products?. The purpose of this study is to analyze how UGC and e-WOM contribute to increasing Gen Z purchase intention for Ella Skincare products. This study uses a quantitative, survey-based approach with 160 Generation Z respondents who actively use TikTok and are familiar with Ella Skincare-related content. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that UGC does not have a significant effect on purchase intention, whereas e-WOM has a positive, significant effect. These findings show that although UGC increases brand exposure, user reviews and recommendations play a stronger role in shaping perceptions and driving purchase intention among Generation Z in the digital age. This study reinforces the application of the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) model in digital marketing. It provides practical implications for marketers in designing consumer experience-based communication strategies to increase purchase intention.

**Keywords:** User Generated Content, E-WOM, Gen Z, Purchase Intention.

## I. Introduction

The development of information and communication technology in the digital era has significantly transformed the way consumers search for information, communicate, and make purchasing decisions (Delvina & Firdausy, 2025; Rohmah et al., 2025). Along with these changes, social media has evolved from merely a platform for social interaction into a strategic digital marketing tool that strongly influences brand perception and consumer behavior (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). In Indonesia, the rapid growth of internet usage has further accelerated this transformation. In 2025, the number of internet users in Indonesia reached 229 million people, representing approximately 80.66% of the total population (Manurung & Rusdianto, 2025).



Moreover, Indonesia ranks first globally in the number of TikTok users, with 194.37 million users, making TikTok a dominant platform for information consumption, entertainment, and product recommendations, particularly among Generation Z (Hayat et al., 2022; Aulia et al., 2025). Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, represents a cohort that grew up in a highly digitalized environment and exhibits distinct consumption patterns compared to previous generations. This generation tends to be more critical and selective, placing strong emphasis on authenticity and transparency in digital interactions (El-Shihy & Awaad, 2025). Consequently, they rely more on real experiences shared by other users than on traditional advertising messages. Therefore, interactive marketing communication strategies that emphasize consumer engagement are considered more effective in capturing their attention and shaping purchase intentions (Putra et al., 2025). Gen Z purchase intentions are strongly influenced by social media exposure and the level of trust in the information they receive, particularly content created by influencers and recommendations from fellow users (Harsono et al., 2022).

One of the most relevant digital marketing strategies in this environment is User-Generated Content (UGC). UGC refers to content created and shared by users based on their personal experiences with a product, such as reviews, testimonials, tutorials, or before-and-after results. On TikTok, UGC serves as a powerful form of visual communication because it presents authentic, relatable experiences. Previous studies suggest that UGC can influence purchase intentions, as it is perceived as a credible and trustworthy source of information compared to traditional advertising (Saroor & Khan, 2025; Zakaria et al., 2024). Trust and authenticity, therefore, play crucial roles in shaping consumer responses to such content (Nguyen, 2024). In addition to UGC, Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) has emerged as another significant factor influencing consumer purchase intentions. E-WOM refers to non-commercial communication among consumers in digital environments, where individuals share positive or negative opinions about products or services. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) explain that E-WOM is a form of non-commercial communication in the digital world in which consumers share positive and negative views about a product. Jalilvand & Samiei (2012) add that E-WOM is trusted more than regular advertisements because it comes from real user experiences, which are considered objective. When consumers read positive reviews on social media, they tend to have a more favorable view of the brand and feel compelled to buy the recommended product. In the beauty and skincare industry, consumer trust is particularly critical given the personal nature of the products and their long-term effects (Paramita & Angelina, 2024). Ella Skincare, a brand that has operated for over 17 years, actively uses TikTok as an interactive promotional platform, featuring product reviews, user experiences, and before-and-after results. The widespread dissemination of such content can shape consumer perceptions and influence purchasing decisions, especially among Generation Z.

Previous studies have produced mixed findings regarding the influence of UGC and E-WOM on purchase intention. For instance, Aulia et al. (2025) found that UGC and E-WOM on TikTok significantly and positively influenced purchase intention for Wardah products in Denpasar. Similarly, Manurung & Rusdianto (2025) reported that UGC, E-WOM, and perceived product quality significantly affected purchase intention for Somethinc products. These findings suggest that consumer participation in content creation and experience sharing can enhance perceived quality and strengthen purchase intentions. However, inconsistent results have also been reported. Aini & Dakwah (2025) found that UGC did not significantly influence purchase intention for Skintific products on TikTok, while Sari & Rosilawati (2025) reported that E-WOM had no significant effect on purchase intention. In contrast, studies conducted in different contexts show varying results, such as Tran & Thu Hang (2025), who found that UGC significantly influenced purchase intention in the hospitality and food service industry in Vietnam. In addition, research conducted by Wafiyah & Wusko (2023) indicates that E-WOM affects purchase intention for Nyrtea products on Instagram. These inconsistent findings indicate that the influence of UGC and E-WOM may vary across industries, brand positioning, platform context, and consumer segments. Furthermore, most previous studies have focused primarily on local skincare and cosmetic brands such as Somethinc and Wardah, as well as sustainable fashion and e-commerce contexts (El-Shihy & Awaad, 2025; Nguyen, 2024). Based on this research gap, this study aims to address the following research question: Do User-Generated Content and Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) on TikTok

influence Gen Z purchase intentions toward Ella Skincare products? By clarifying this research problem, the study seeks to enrich the digital marketing literature and provide practical insights into effective social media-based marketing strategies.

## II. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

### 2.1. Stimulus-Organism-Response Theory (S-O-R)

The S-O-R theory, developed by Mehrabian & Russell (1974), asserts that a person's feelings and actions are influenced by the external environment (stimulus) through conscious and unconscious processes that affect feelings, decisions, and actions. In the context of digital marketing, Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) and User-Generated Content (UGC) are recognized as powerful stimuli because they are considered credible and authentic and can influence consumers' internal conditions, which include cognitive and affective aspects such as quality perception, trust, attitude, emotions, and involvement, ultimately triggering behavioral responses in the form of purchase intention (Mukti & Santosa, 2023; Arif et al., 2019; Debatara et al., 2024; Gelashvili et al., 2024; Lady et al., 2025). According to Fisher (2002) in (Abidin & Abidin, 2021), the S-O-R elements consist of stimulus, organism, and response, which are reflected in changes in attitude or behavior, while Hochreiter et al., (2023) states that the success of the S-O-R model is determined by the appropriateness of the application of stimuli, the strength of the relationship between stages, and the role of moderator variables and external factors that influence the resulting response.

### 2.2. Purchase Intention

Intention is one of the psychological aspects that significantly influences individual behavior (Tristanto & Iswati, 2025). In the context of consumer behavior, Wang et al. (2025) define purchase intention as a consumer's desire or plan to buy a product, influenced by influencers or User-Generated Content (UGC). In line with this, Sang et al. (2024) emphasize that purchase intention arises when consumers feel confident and interested after learning from others' experiences or from digital media. Purchase intention is shaped by both external and internal factors, including exposure to social media advertising, positive online reviews, perceived credibility, and social influence (Sari & Hayuningtias, 2024; Aulia et al., 2025). It is also affected by online review ratings, perceived similarity within reference groups, and self-construal, which are reflected in behavioral indicators such as actively seeking product information, expressing interest in trying the product, and demonstrating a desire to purchase (Ahn & Lee, 2024; Romadlon et al., 2020).

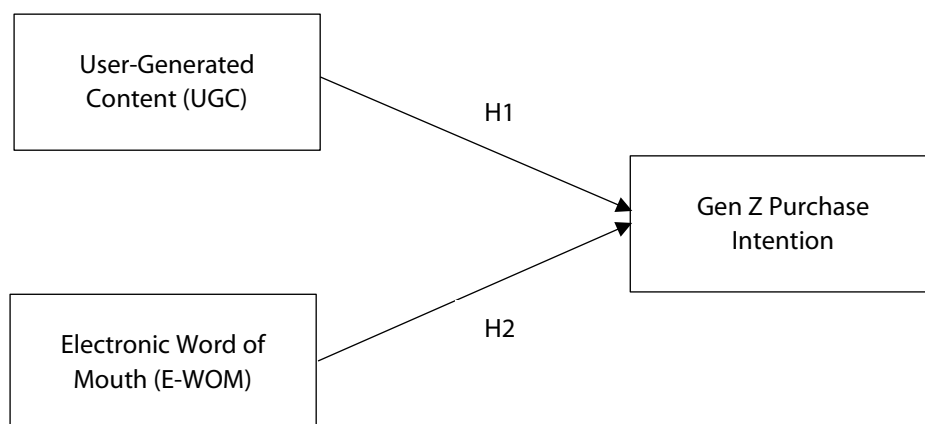
### 2.3. User Generated Content (UGC)

User-generated content (UGC) refers to brand-related content created and shared by internet users, not companies, including photos, videos, or online reviews (Bahtar & Muda, 2016; Jia et al., 2023). This content serves as an important source of information that influences consumer decision-making (Carr, 2022). In the context of modern consumers, especially Generation Z, UGC is considered more trustworthy than corporate advertising because it reflects authentic customer experiences. Indicators of UGC effectiveness include trust in buyer reviews, shared customer experiences, memorable content, and its ability to increase consumer insight (Hanindharputri & Putra, 2020; Putri, 2020).

### 2.4. Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM)

E-WOM refers to online consumer communication about products or services that can influence purchase intention (Hasna & Irwansyah, 2019; Paramita & Angelina, 2024; Tjahjaningsih et al., 2023). Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) is online communication that allows consumers to share information and

experiences about products or services, creating a word-of-mouth effect that influences brand perception. (Pangastuti & Tjahjaningsih, 2023; Lestari et al., 2025). According to Goyette et al. (2010), E-WOM is measured through indicators of intensity, positive and negative reviews or comments, and content.



**Figure 1. Research Model**

## 2.5. The influence of User Generated Content (UGC) on purchase intention

The development of social media, especially TikTok, has created a space for users to interact, create, and share authentic content based on direct experience. This type of content is often perceived as more trustworthy than traditional marketing messages (Younis, 2025). UGC has proven highly effective in shaping how consumers view and evaluate products before making purchase decisions (Zhang, 2024). It also plays an important role in building consumer trust and driving purchase intention on social e-commerce platforms. This is because UGC provides a more objective and convincing picture of product quality than regular advertisements (Van Dat et al., 2025). UGC can increase purchase intention by providing helpful information, encouraging community engagement, and fulfilling the need for social validation, thereby making consumers feel more confident when they see others approving or using the product (Venkataraman & Raman, 2016), a finding reinforced by El-Shihy & Awaad (2025). Their study shows that UGC on the TikTok app strongly influences Gen Z purchase intention, particularly through authentic, relevant content and a high number of likes, comments, and shares.

H1 : User-Generated Content (UGC) has a positive effect on purchase intentions.

## 2.6. The Effect of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) on Purchase Intention

The development of social media has enabled rapid information exchange among users, making consumer reviews, recommendations, and comments an important reference point for purchasing decisions because they are considered more honest and based on direct experience (Ahn & Lee, 2024; Rasulong et al., 2024). Positive conversations among users on social media can shape favorable perceptions of products and increase potential buyers' interest, with the more often a product is discussed positively, the greater the curiosity to try it (Sitepu et al., 2020). Consumer reviews and real experiences shared through digital media help build trust and security and increase confidence in product quality (Aprilianti et al., 2024; Zanah & Savitri, 2024). While the intensity of E-WOM, positive value, and quality of information content have a direct and significant influence on purchase intention, particularly for digital services and e-commerce (Goyette et al., 2010). In line with this, E-WOM on TikTok not only increases trust but also creates a fear of missing out that drives purchase intention, especially among Generation Z, so that E-WOM acts as a psychological influence

that reinforces the perceived value of highly recommended products (Febrianti & Usman, 2025; Ngo et al., 2024).

H2 : Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) has a positive effect on purchase intentions.

### III. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

This study employed a quantitative research design using numerical data and statistical analysis to test the proposed hypotheses (Sugiyono, 2019). A non-probability sampling technique, purposive sampling, was used. The selection criteria were determined to ensure that respondents were relevant to the research objectives. Participants were required to: (1) be active TikTok users, defined as accessing the platform at least three times per week; (2) have knowledge of Ella Skincare products and services; (3) have seen or interacted with User-Generated Content (UGC) related to Ella Skincare; (4) have read online reviews about the brand; and (5) demonstrate purchase intention toward Ella Skincare products. These criteria were established to ensure that respondents had sufficient exposure to the research variables (Amin et al., 2023; Etikan, 2016). Data collection was conducted through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms targeting Generation Z users. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were recruited from October 30 to November 6, 2025. The final sample consisted of 160 valid responses that met the predetermined criteria. The research instrument consisted of 13 measurement items divided into three constructs: four items measuring User-Generated Content (UGC) adapted from El-Shihy and Awaad (2025), six items measuring Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) adapted from Bambauer -Sachse and Mangold (2011), and three items measuring purchase intention adapted from Shukla (2010). These instruments were selected because they have been widely used and verified in previous consumer behavior and digital marketing studies, with adjustments made to suit the context of Ella Skincare and TikTok. Each item was measured using a five-point Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree (Ajayi, 2023; Gries et al., 2018; Sari & Zefri, 2019). The Likert scale was chosen because it allows respondents to express varying degrees of agreement and is frequently used in behavioral research. The sample size of 160 respondents met the minimum requirements for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0 to assess measurement and structural models. PLS-SEM was selected because it is suitable for exploratory research models, relatively small sample sizes, and prediction-oriented studies. Additionally, PLS-SEM is appropriate when examining complex relationships between latent constructs in digital marketing research. Convergent validity was established when outer loading values exceeded 0.50, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were above 0.50. Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, whereby the square root of AVE must exceed inter-construct correlations. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability; values above 0.70 indicated satisfactory internal consistency. The structural model was evaluated using  $R^2$  and  $Q^2$  values.  $R^2$  values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 indicate substantial, moderate, and weak explanatory power, respectively. A  $Q^2$  value greater than zero indicates predictive relevance. Model fit was assessed using SRMR ( $\leq 0.08$ ), NFI ( $\geq 0.90$ ), and RMS\_theta ( $\leq 0.12$ ). Hypotheses were tested using bootstrapping procedures, with a p-value  $< 0.05$  indicating statistical significance. Despite these procedures, this study has several limitations. The use of purposive non-probability sampling limits the generalizability of the findings beyond the studied population. Given that the majority of respondents were female and from Java Island, the results may not fully represent the broader Generation Z population in Indonesia. Additionally, self-reported data collected through online questionnaires may introduce response bias or social desirability bias. Future studies may consider probability sampling techniques and mixed-method approaches to enhance robustness.

## IV. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

### 4.1. Research results

#### 4.1.1. Respondent Characteristics

The respondents in this study were Generation Z individuals active on TikTok, aged 17–28 years. Data were collected via a Google Form distributed to the targeted respondents from October 30 to November 6. All questionnaires were returned, with 160 deemed suitable for analysis and 2 considered unsuitable. The respondents' descriptions are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Respondent Characteristics**

Respondent Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	131	81.9%
	Male	29	18.1%
<b>Total</b>		<b>160</b>	<b>100%</b>
Age	17-20	45	28.1%
	21-24	56	35%
	25-28	59	36.9%
<b>Total</b>		<b>160</b>	<b>100%</b>
Employment	Students	57	35.6%
	Civil Servants/ASN	41	25.6%
	Private Employees	38	23.8%
	Entrepreneurs	14	8.8%
	Others	10	6.2%
<b>Total</b>		<b>160</b>	<b>100%</b>
Income	<1.000.000	15	9.4%
	>1.000.000 - 2.000.000	22	13.8%
	>2.000.000 - 3.000.000	39	24.4%
	>3.000.000 - 4.000.000	60	37.5%
	> 4.000.000	24	14.9%
<b>Total</b>		<b>160</b>	<b>100%</b>
Hometown	Java Island	155	97%
	Outside Java Island	5	3.1%
<b>Total</b>		<b>160</b>	<b>100%</b>

Based on Table 1, most respondents in this study were women, accounting for 131 individuals (81.9%). The dominant age group was 25–28 years, comprising 59 respondents (36.9%), indicating a young and productive age group. Most respondents were students, totaling 57 individuals (35.6%). In terms of income, the most significant proportion of respondents earned IDR 3,000,000–4,000,000 per month, with 60 respondents (37.5%), indicating a middle-income segment among young urban workers. Additionally, the majority of respondents were from Java Island, totaling 155 individuals (97%).

#### 4.1.2. Convergent Validity Test

Validity testing is used to determine the extent to which research instruments provide accurate information about the variables being studied (Subhaktiyasa, 2024). Indicators are considered valid if the

resulting Outer Loading value is > 0.5. Furthermore, if the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value reaches 0.5, the model is considered to be sufficiently good (Hair et al., 2022).

**Table 2. Validity test**

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	Description	AVE
UGC	UGC 1	0.891	Valid	0.549
	UGC 2	0.811		
	UGC 3	0.745		
	UGC 4	0.761		
E-WOM	E-WOM 1	0.779		0.646
	E-WOM 2	0.805		
	E-WOM 3	0.685		
	E-WOM 4	0.720		
	E-WOM 5	0.775		
	E-WOM 6	0.671		
Purchase Intention	NB 1	0.731		0.734
	NB 2	0.909		
	NB 3	0.917		

Based on the validity test in Table 2, all indicators in the purchase intention, UGC, and E-WOM constructs have outer loadings above 0.5 and AVEs above 0.5. Therefore, all constructs in this model meet the criteria for convergent validity and can be used for further analysis.

#### 4.1.3. Discriminant Validity Test

Discriminant validity aims to assess the extent to which a construct is distinct from other constructs in the model. According to Hair et al. (2019), discriminant validity is established when the square root of the AVE of a construct is greater than its correlations with other constructs.

**Table 3. Discriminant Validity Test**

Variable	E-WOM	Purchase Intention	UGC
Electronic word of mouth (E-WOM)	0.855		
Purchase Intention	0.841	0.857	
User-generated content (UGC)	0.262	0.213	0.704

Table 3 shows the discriminant validity test using the Fornell–Larcker criteria. The diagonal AVE root values for each construct are greater than the correlation values between other constructs. Each construct represents a distinct dimension.

#### 4.1.4. Reliability Test

Cooper & Schindler (2014) emphasize that reliability testing aims to measure the extent to which an instrument or questionnaire produces consistent data. Hair et al. (2019) explain that the reliability of a construct can be assessed using composite reliability values. A composite reliability value between 0.6 and 0.7 indicates acceptable reliability, whereas values between 0.7 and 0.9 indicate very satisfactory internal consistency.

**Table 4. Reliability Test**

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite Reliability (rho_c)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Purchase Intention	0.820	0.874	0.891	0.734
User-generated content (UGC)	0.827	0.898	0.879	0.646
Electronic word of mouth (E-WOM)	0.838	0.854	0.879	0.549

Table 4 shows that the three variables of purchase intention, User Generated Content, and Electronic Word of Mouth have Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values above 0.7, which means that each variable has good consistency and can be considered reliable. Validity and reliability assessments ensure that each construct accurately reflects the intended theoretical concept. Establishing convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability is essential to confirm that the measurement model is robust before interpreting the structural relationships between UGC, E-WOM, and purchase intention.

#### 4.1.5. R Square Test

According to Hair et al. (2019), the  $R^2$  value is divided into three categories: 0.75 indicates a strong level of explanation, 0.50 is moderate, and 0.35 is considered weak.

**Table 5. R Square Test**

Variable	R-square	R-square adjusted
Purchase Intention	0.712	0.708

Based on Table 5 of the  $R^2$  test results, the purchase intention variable has an  $R^2$  of 0.712 and an adjusted  $R^2$  of 0.708, indicating that the independent variables in this study contribute significantly to the model's explanatory power.

#### 4.1.6. Q Square Test

The Predictive Relevance test assesses a model's ability to predict data accurately. Hair et al. (2021) explain that if the  $Q^2$  value is  $> 0$ , the model can predict well, but if  $Q^2 \leq 0$ , the model is less able to predict.

**Table 6. Q Square Test**

Variable	$Q^2$ predict
Purchase Intention	0.697

Table 6 shows that the Q-square value is well above 0, indicating that the model has good predictive power.

#### 4.1.7. Goodness of Fit Model Test

Model goodness-of-fit is evaluated using several indicators. The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) is the primary indicator; values  $\leq 0.08$  indicate a good model fit, while values up to 0.10 are still acceptable. In addition, the Normed Fit Index (NFI) is used as a supplementary indicator; values  $\geq 0.90$  indicate excellent model fit (Hair et al., 2021).

**Table 7. Goodness of Fit Test Results**

Criteria	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.017	0.018
d_ ULS	1.256	1.294
d_ G	0.765	0.783
Chi-square	656.725	663.752
NFI	0.874	0.872

Based on Table 7, the goodness-of-fit test results indicate that the model meets the required criteria satisfactorily. The SRMR values for both the saturated (0.017) and estimated (0.018) models are well below the maximum threshold of 0.08, indicating excellent model fit. Meanwhile, the NFI values (0.874 and 0.872) are slightly below the recommended threshold of 0.90. Although these values do not reach the "excellent" category, they still indicate that the model demonstrates an acceptable and adequate level of fit. Overall, the results suggest that the proposed structural model is suitable for further hypothesis testing.

#### 4.1.8. Hypothesis Test

According to Hair et al. (2021), a coefficient is considered statistically significant if the t-statistic is greater than 1.96 and the p-value is less than 0.05; in this case, the hypothesis is accepted. Conversely, if the t-statistic is less than 1.96 and the p-value is greater than 0.05, the hypothesis is rejected.

**Table 8. Hypothesis Testing Results**

Path	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values	Description
UGC → Purchase Intention	0.067	0.072	0.052	1.282	0.200	H1 Rejected
E-WOM → Purchase Intention	0.824	0.824	0.035	23.302	0.000	H2 Accepted

Based on the results presented in Table 8, User-Generated Content (UGC) does not have a significant effect on purchase intention, as indicated by a p-value of 0.200 ( $> 0.05$ ) and a t-statistic of 1.282 ( $< 1.96$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 (H1) is rejected. In contrast, Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) has a significant effect on purchase intention, as shown by a p-value of 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ) and a t-statistic of 23.302 ( $> 1.96$ ). Thus, Hypothesis 2 (H2) is accepted. The following section discusses the empirical findings in relation to the proposed hypotheses, relevant previous studies, and the theoretical framework employed in this research.

## 4.2. Discussion

### 4.2.1. The influence of User Generated Content (UGC) on purchase intention

The analysis results show that User Generated Content (UGC) does not have a significant impact on consumer purchase intention. This indicates that, although the content is frequently accessed and viewed by respondents, it has not exerted a strong influence on purchase intention (Andarsari & Suryadi, 2024). In other words, user-generated content circulating about Ella Skincare products has not encouraged consumer purchase intention. The findings of this study are supported by Ervina et al. (2025), which confirms that consumer-created content does not have a significant effect on the intention to purchase Make Over products

in Malang. This is because the content does not meet consumer expectations. User-generated content is often informal and less structured, which may reduce its perceived credibility (Lyu et al., 2023). This study also aligns with the findings of Khalidah et al. (2023), who found that user-generated content does not increase purchase intention for jajangmyeon. This is triggered by the lack of content about jajangmyeon on social media, which disrupts optimal information dissemination. The insignificant result may indicate that mere exposure to user-generated content is insufficient to stimulate purchase intention unless accompanied by substantial informational value, credibility cues, or emotional engagement. This suggests that UGC effectiveness depends not only on its presence but also on its perceived quality and relevance (Cheung & Thadani, 2012; De Vries et al., 2012; Erkan & Evans, 2016).

#### 4.2.2. The Effect of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) on Purchase Intention

Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) has been shown to have a positive, significant effect on consumers' purchase intentions. Therefore, it can be concluded that information, testimonials, and reviews about Ella Skincare disseminated through the TikTok platform strongly influence consumers' purchase intention. E-WOM is considered highly credible because consumers tend to trust the opinions of other users (Huete-Alcocer, 2017), who emphasize that peer-generated reviews are perceived as more objective than company-generated messages. Furthermore, the authenticity of information conveyed through E-WOM is an important factor in enhancing consumer confidence in a product (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Research by Leong & Chao (2024) explains that E-WOM has a positive effect and serves as a reliable source of information, thereby influencing consumers' purchase intentions for bubble tea drinks in the Taiwanese market. When consumers receive positive reviews or recommendations from others, their assessment of the product becomes more positive and increases their purchase intention (Ismagilova et al., 2020). The findings of Amanda et al. (2021) reinforce this study's results, demonstrating that E-WOM significantly increases purchase intention for imokey.ID fashion products. By spreading information, positive social media reviews can shape consumer trust in a product. Additionally, research by Tafolli et al. (2025) indicates that E-WOM positively affects purchase intention in the Albanian fashion industry. This is achieved by leveraging reviews, consumer experiences on social media, and brand trust.

Furthermore, the influence of E-WOM may vary depending on its valence. Positive reviews tend to enhance trust and reduce perceived risk, whereas negative reviews may either discourage purchase or, when balanced, increase perceived authenticity. Future research may examine the differential impact of positive and negative E-WOM to provide deeper insight into consumer decision-making mechanisms (Fileri, 2015; Mudambi & Schuff, 2010). Taken together, the results of this study highlight important differences in the roles of UGC and E-WOM in shaping consumer behavior. These findings contribute to the ongoing debate regarding the relative influence of User-Generated Content (UGC) and Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) on purchase intention. Unlike many previous studies that reported both variables as significant predictors, this study demonstrates contrasting effects within the TikTok platform context. While E-WOM significantly influences Gen Z purchase intention toward Ella Skincare, UGC does not. This suggests that not all forms of user-generated communication function equally as effective digital stimuli.

#### 4.2.3. Theoretical Implications

This study adds to the field of digital marketing by questioning the assumption that all types of user-generated content positively affect purchase intent. Unlike many earlier studies, user-generated content does not strongly influence Gen Z interest in buying Ella Skincare on TikTok. This indicates that mere exposure to user-generated videos is insufficient. They need to make people take action. Consumers require content that provides clear information and is perceived as trustworthy. This may be due to the high saturation of similar content within the beauty industry, and seeing the same things over and over makes people think general user-generated content is not invaluable for diagnosing issues. Unlike traditional word of mouth, Electronic

Word of Mouth (E-WOM) provides organized reviews and explicit opinions. This type of communication has a much greater impact, showing that messages based on trust and credibility are more potent than mere exposure to information, according to the S-O-R model. This study advances the S-O-R theory by showing that different types of digital content have distinct effects on behavior, and by highlighting how trust and the perceived credibility of the content play significant roles in influencing Gen Z's decision to buy in busy social media spaces.

## V. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that User-Generated Content (UGC) does not have a significant effect on consumers' purchase intention for Ella Skincare products. Although UGC is frequently viewed and reaches a broad audience, it does not provide sufficient confidence or encouragement for consumers to purchase these products. Therefore, UGC is not a factor that shapes purchase intention in this study. Meanwhile, Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) has a positive, significant effect on consumers' purchase intention for Ella Skincare products. Reviews and testimonials shared on TikTok are highly credible because they are perceived as objective and based on authentic user experiences. Positive, consistent information conveyed through E-WOM can encourage purchase intention for Ella Skincare products. From a managerial perspective, these findings suggest that marketers should prioritize strategies that encourage positive Electronic Word of Mouth, such as facilitating customer reviews, testimonials, and interactive discussions. Rather than relying solely on organic UGC exposure, companies should design structured engagement campaigns that stimulate meaningful consumer conversations and strengthen trust formation among Generation Z consumers. Overall, this study provides insights into digital marketing strategies on TikTok.

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