

Gojek - Tokopedia: the desire of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises to become merchant members

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Abstract

This research aims to identify factors that significantly impact the interest in adopting Tokopedia as the marketplace of choice for micro, small and medium enterprises. By using 100 samples with criteria not yet registered as a merchant member at Tokopedia, this research proves that of the three variables tested, only one variable has been shown to have a significant impact, namely brand awareness. While the other two variables, namely brand ambassador and electronic WoM, had no significant effect. Before running the path analysis using the Smart PLS program, the researcher tested the validity and reliability with the outer loading, average variance extracted, and composite reliability parameters sequentially. Thus, based on the results of this research, Tokopedia can create other activities that encourage increased brand awareness of the brand.

Keywords: Brand ambassador; brand awareness; electronic word of mouth; marketplace adoption

1. Introduction

Technological advances in the current era of globalization have caused almost all activities to be carried out online, including shopping. In Indonesia, various groups commonly carry out shopping through the marketplace, from teenagers to adults. Based on Kompas.com (2021) states that Indonesia is a country with the third largest marketplace users in the world. The large consumer market for e-commerce users causes competition between marketplaces in Indonesia to be increasingly complex and uncertain, resulting in many challenges that each marketplace must face. To win the competition, several marketplaces seek to implement unique marketing strategies to attract customers and maintain market share. One of the marketing strategies the marketplace uses is attractive taglines and brand ambassadors in the form of current famous artists.

One of the rapidly growing marketplaces in Indonesia is Tokopedia. Tokopedia is a marketplace founded in 2009 by William Tanuwijaya and Leontinus Alpha Edison. The specialty of Tokopedia is that there is a program to support Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to develop their businesses by marketing their products through the internet. To face business competition, at the end of May 2021, Tokopedia officially merged with PT Gojek Indonesia, a company with a business model based on on-demand services and financial payments leading in Southeast Asia. With the joining of Tokopedia and Go-Jek, it is hoped that all merchant partners at Tokopedia can reach Go-Jek users and vice versa.

In addition to using taglines, Tokopedia uses popular artists as brand ambassadors for its marketplace. Brand Ambassadors are individuals who disseminate information about the products of a company. The use of brand ambassadors in the Tokopedia marketplace is considered to be able to attract young users to use Tokopedia. In addition, the use of brand ambassadors is also considered as the identity of a brand or product. Thus, Tokopedia chose K-pop artist, BTS (*Bangtan Sonyeondan*) as its brand

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ambassador. Tokopedia chose BTS as the brand ambassador of the marketplace because it is considered to have a vision that is in line with Tokopedia's vision.

In addition to the previous two factors, Electronic-Word of Mouth is also considered essential for marketing a product/service. Simply e-WoM is a marketing activity using the internet to create the effect of word of mouth to support marketing efforts and goals. With the existence of e-WoM, the company can minimize costs and it is important to make the marketing activities of the marketplace more effective. In addition, e-WoM is considered to have the effect of marketing the brand of the product/service, so that it can attract audiences to use the product/service.

At first glance, the merger of the two companies will bring many benefits to both. One of them, Tokopedia is the marketplace application with the most users in Indonesia in 2021 (Katadata.id, 2022). However, of course, various things concern consumers, one of which is the increasing spread of Go-Jek user information to the databases of Tokopedia and its partners. In addition, even though they will have greater digital business power in Indonesia, it is feared that the two companies will form an oligopoly market contrary to the initial concept of forming Tokopedia itself, which is to help micro, small and medium enterprises to develop. Although according to (Katadata.co.id, 2021) as many as 28% of online traders in Indonesia stated that they would not be able to maintain their business if it were not for digital platforms such as Tokopedia. However, the entry of foreign investors after this merger also worried the micro, small and medium enterprises.

Suppose the bargaining position of the GoTo group becomes stronger. In that case, micro, small and medium enterprises will find it difficult to innovate in e-commerce and inevitably have to become partners of the GoTo group. Thus, a fairly high switching cost will be formed if the partners want to break away as GoTo partners. This research aims to confirm the perception of micro, small and medium businesses to join Tokopedia's partners after the merger with Go-Jek also the entry of foreign investors.

2. Literature review

Brand ambassador

Brand Ambassador can be understood as an individual or community group with a level of popularity as a public figure (Sola, 2012). In addition, Balmer & Gray (2003) reveal that brand ambassadors are very important in communicating corporate brands to external audiences. Furthermore, Goutam (2013), through his research shows that brand ambassadors can increase product sales through the community. The existence of a brand ambassador also results in an improvement in the image of the company and products, which can lead to increased trust in the product (Yoo & Jin, 2013). In addition, based on previous research by Nagdev & Singh (2017) and Bachrun (2015), brand ambassadors can be used to increase consumers' positive perception of a brand. According to Mani et al. (2022) stated that there are four indicators of brand ambassadors, namely visibility (this shows how popular the celebrity who is used as a brand ambassador), credibility (related to product knowledge introduced by the brand ambassador), attraction (related to how attractive the celebrity who is used as a brand ambassador), power (indicates how strong the celebrity's ability to persuade people to make a purchase).

However, brand ambassadors do not only come from celebrities, parties who are considered to have considerable influence and often appear through social media are also seen as brand ambassadors. Even though it is proven to have a positive influence on a product, the negative personal behavior of the brand ambassador is assumed to have an unfavorable impact on the referenced product. Therefore, the selection of a brand ambassador needs to be done carefully, taking into consideration the reputation and integrity of the chosen individual.

Brand awareness

Today's modern marketing environment is very different from 10 years ago, where brand awareness is currently a priority aspect for various companies in increasing consumer engagement (Latif et al., 2014). Furthermore, according to Latif et al. (2014), the importance of brand awareness in the modern marketing environment lies in the fact that consumers tend to prefer and engage with brands that are well-known and easily remembered. Brand awareness can be understood as the capacity or ability possessed by consumers to recall a brand based on certain categories (Romaniuk et al., 2017). A social marketer will pay more attention to how to raise awareness among the public to influence attitudes, associations, and trust in certain organizations or brands (Foroudi et al., 2014). From this understanding, it can be understood that although consumers no longer use products with certain brands,

they can still re-identify the product just by hearing the brand (Świtła et al., 2018).

In various management literature, brand awareness is closely related to the strength of the extent to which the brand can be recalled in a relatively short time in various market conditions that are always changing (Stahl et al., 2011). To encourage consumers to be more involved and participate in the use of certain products, several previous studies have proven the significant influence of brand awareness (Sasmita & Mohd Suki, 2015; Shahroudi & Naimi, 2014; and Shah, 2012). In general, brand awareness can be created by companies by conducting exposure to brand elements repeatedly and giving a distinct impression to consumers, such as names, logos and slogans, where these things are able to provide impetus, strengthen consumer memory, and enhance a sense of brand familiarity (Keller, 1999); Keller, 2003).

Electronic word of mouth

The ease of accessing information in this era makes a lot of information and advertisements received by the public, therefore it is quite difficult for them to accommodate all the available information and in the end they will choose to receive concise and filtered information through friends and relatives (Warrington, 2002). In addition, with the development of technology, especially in the use of various social media, it will automatically change the communication style of producers and marketers in communicating their products and services (Naz, 2014). Hennig-Thurau & Walsh (2003) defines e-WOM as a negative or positive statement made or stated by former customers, real customers, or prospective customers about a product or company via the internet in large numbers. Furthermore, López & Sicilia (2014) define all forms of product and service communication that rely on internet-based social media as electronic Word of Mouth. Furthermore, Severi et al. (2014) revealed that internet-based social media serves as the main platform that supports the success of electronic Word of Mouth. Thus, marketers and producers need to keep the reviews given by users remain positive so that other potential users still have a high interest in the product (Syahrivar & Ichlas, 2018).

Various previous studies have proven that there is a significant impact on increasing the intention to buy electronics based on electronic Word of Mouth (Hendriyani & Raharja, 2018; Kim & Ko, 2012; Lo, 2014), but it is still rare research that focuses on the interest in using service like marketplaces.

Marketplace adoption

The wide penetration of the internet and smartphone networks has led small, micro, and medium businesses to participate in marketing their products digitally. There is a platform that is generally known as a marketplace that can make it easier for business actors to carry out their sales activities. Furthermore, Misra et al. (2020) explained that the Electronic Marketplace offers traditional sellers an additional benefit, namely a wider market reach and more potential buyers without creating and designing internet networking sites. The effectiveness of the electronic marketplace has been proven through the large seller-buyer network formed by various marketplaces such as Alibaba, OLX, Amazon, and e-Bay (Javier Miranda et al., 2013).

However, some previous research proves that micro, small and medium enterprises are hampered by the costs of procuring smartphones, lack of knowledge about the use of Marketplace applications, and low confidence in the effectiveness of the Marketplace (Suhartanto & Leo, 2018). The existence of a merger between the Tokopedia entity as one of the Marketplaces in Indonesia and Gojek as an internet-based transportation company is assumed to increase the interest of micro, small and medium enterprises to invest. However, it should also be understood that with the entry of large amounts of capital funds, it is possible for the higher profit expectations expected by stakeholders and the tendency to create high switching costs for merchant members.

Based on several backgrounds and theories above, researchers propose hypotheses below to be tested.

H₁: Brand ambassador provide a significant effect toward micro, small and medium enterprise marketplace adoption.

H₂: Brand awareness provides a significant effect toward micro, small and medium enterprise marketplace adoption.

H₃: Electronic word of mouth provides a significant effect toward micro, small and medium enterprise marketplace adoption.

3. Method

To ensure that the objectives of this research are achieved, the researchers used 100 respondents from micro, small and medium enterprises who did not have a Tokopedia account. The respondent search process was carried out using the Snowball Sampling model and provided gifts for 50 selected respondents. The questionnaires are distributed directly to micro, small and medium enterprises using the Self Administered technique by implementing health protocols. The implementation of health protocols during the questionnaire distribution process is crucial to ensure the safety and comfort of the respondents while filling out the questionnaire.

After the data is collected and tabulated, the researcher carries out a validity test with the provisions of the Outer Loading value and a reliability test with the provisions of the Average Variance Extracted and Composite Reliability values. In this case, Outer Loading values, Average Variance Extracted, and Composite Reliability are used as indicators of data suitability. All significance values used as reference are T-statistic values of 1.96. Furthermore, to test the proposed hypothesis, the researcher uses the Smart PLS version 3 program, where the data will be tested for the significance level between constructs. A construct will be declared to have a significant impact if the T-Statistic exceeds the critical value of 1.96.

4. Result and discussion

By using a sample of 100 respondents of micro, small and medium entrepreneur in Semarang, the researchers tested the validity and reliability of the measuring instrument. As previously stated, the parameters used in this research are a minimum t-statistic value of 1.96 and a significance level of 0.05. By using the Smart PLS version 3 program, the researchers proved that the measuring instrument used was valid and reliable, as shown in table 1, table 2, and table 3 below.

Table 4.1. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Constructs	Sample mean	t-statistic	p-values
Brand Ambassador	0.953	71.341	0.000
Brand Awareness	0.299	11.191	0.000
Marketplace Adoption	0.354	8.853	0.000
e-WoM	0.866	66.434	0.000

Table 4.2. Composite Reliability

Constructs	t-statistic	p-value
Brand Ambassador	340.560	0.000
Brand Awareness	15.486	0.000
Marketplace Adoption	16.595	0.000
e- WoM	179.968	0.000

Table 4.3. Outer loading

Constructs	t-statistic	p-value
Market Adoption --> ado1	7.884	0.000
Market Adoption --> ado2	8.201	0.000
Market Adoption --> ado3	9.204	0.000
Market Adoption --> ado4	25.879	0.000
Brand Ambassador --> amb1	217.489	0.000
Brand Ambassador --> amb2	92.402	0.000
Brand Ambassador --> amb3	217.489	0.000
Brand Ambassador --> amb4	92.402	0.000
Brand Ambassador --> amb5	217.489	0.000
e- WoM --> ewom1	286.602	0.000
e- WoM --> ewom2	56.143	0.000
e- WoM --> ewom3	286.602	0.000
Brand Awareness --> aw1	2.832	0.003
Brand Awareness --> aw2	7.148	0.000
Brand Awareness --> aw3	39.401	0.000
Brand Awareness --> aw4	7.121	0.000

After confirming that the measuring instrument used is valid and reliable based on the parameters that have been determined, the researcher proceeds to conduct a path analysis whose processing is assisted by the Smart PLS version 3.3 program. The test results are shown in table 4 below.

Based on the table 4.4, it is proven that only the Brand Awareness construct can act as a predictor by giving a significant influence on the intentions of micro, small and medium enterprises to become merchant members at Tokopedia with a t-statistic value exceeding 1.96, which is 5.833. Meanwhile, the Brand Ambassador construct and the Electronic Word of Mouth construct have not had a significant impact because the t-statistic value obtained is only 0.105 and 0.048, respectively. Thus, only one hypothesis is proven, while the other two are not. The results of the path analysis are also shown in Figure 1.

Table 4.4. Path analysis

Path	t-statistic	p-value
Brand Ambassador --> Marketplace Adoption	0.105	0.459
Brand Awareness --> Marketplace Adoption	5.833	0.000
e-WoM --> Marketplace Adoption	0.048	0.481

Based on the results of the completed questionnaire, most respondents stated that K-Pop artists who are currently brand ambassadors for Tokopedia do not provide any reflection on the Tokopedia brand, with an average answer of 2,471 (dominantly disagree). From the point of view of micro, small and medium enterprises, the existence of these K-Pop artists does not encourage the perpetrators to become merchant members at Tokopedia. The sellers see that the attraction of K-Pop artists to the Tokopedia brand is only temporary and not long-term. In addition, the use of K-Pop artists as brand ambassadors only displays the image of Tokopedia, so sellers do not benefit from the use of brand ambassadors. This research's results contradict previous research on brand ambassadors (Goutam, 2013; Nagdev & Singh, 2017).

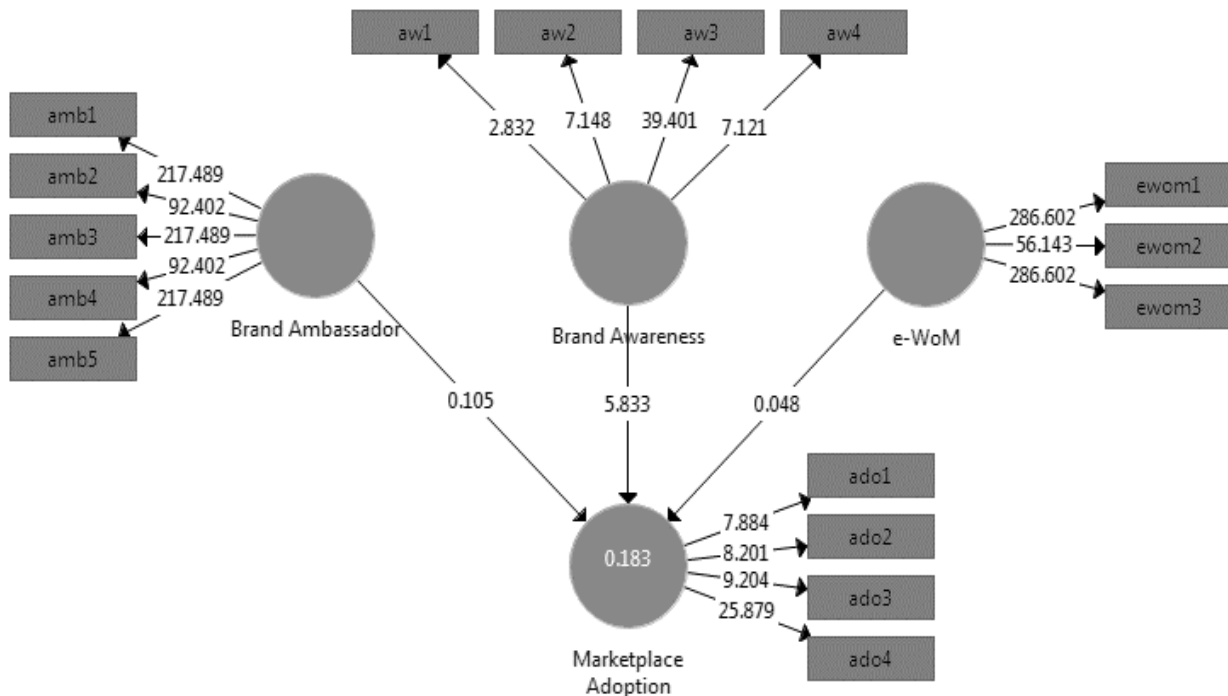


Figure 1. Research Model

Furthermore, although electronic-WoM strongly influences various previous studies for consumers (Hendriyani & Raharja, 2018; Kim & Ko, 2012; Lo, 2014), this has not been proven for micro, small and medium enterprises. Electronic-WoM does not have a significant impact because in

general, sellers assume that all marketplaces have their respective advantages and disadvantages, so the opinions of several parties who support one marketplace are seen as normal and focus more on marketplaces that have competitive administration fees and considering the convenience offered when registering as a merchant on the marketplace. The average answer given by respondents regarding electronic WoM is 2,489 (dominantly towards Disagree). Although various parties claim that Tokopedia is the best marketplace because Go-Jek has joined, micro, small and medium enterprises do not seem to see any more benefits that can be felt for them by the merger of the two corporate entities.

The only construct proven to have a significant impact on the intention to adopt the marketplace is brand awareness, with a t-statistic value of 5,833. The results of this research strengthen the results of previous research conducted by Romaniuk et al. (2017), Latif et al. (2014), and Sasmita & Mohd Suki (2015). In this study, micro, small and medium enterprises can easily recognize the Tokopedia brand as one of the marketplaces in Indonesia. However, many are not aware of the merger between Tokopedia and Go-Jek. Micro, small and medium enterprises do not seem to think much about how Tokopedia will perform after the merger with PT Gojek Indonesia. They have in mind that Tokopedia can be easily recognized as a site for buying and selling goods based on an internet network.

5. Conclusions

This research contributes to the development of marketing management theory, particularly concerning the interest of micro, small and medium enterprises to adopt Tokopedia as a medium for selling online. Based on this research, brand awareness is the only determinant that has a significant impact on the interest in the adoption of Tokopedia by micro, small and medium enterprises. In contrast, the other two determinants, namely brand ambassadors and electronic WoM, did not produce a significant impact. These findings make a significant contribution to enriching the understanding of factors influencing marketplace adoption among smaller-scale businesses. The results, indicating that brand ambassadors and electronic word-of-mouth do not have a significant impact, highlight the need for a deeper understanding of the most effective marketing strategies in this context.

Referring to the results of this research, Tokopedia can put more emphasis on brand awareness to attract micro, small and medium enterprises. However, this study is limited in the number of respondents, so it is assumed that the generalization of the results of this study is not high. In addition, this research has not discussed many factors from the buyer's side such as virtual communities and customer experience. However, this is an opening for further research, especially to predict what factors will attract micro, small and medium enterprises to become merchant members at Tokopedia from a customer perspective and expand the number of respondents so that more accurate generalizations can be made. In addition, this study only used a cross-sectional approach where the data was collected at a single point in time, so the investigation of factors influencing the adoption of marketplaces by micro, small, and medium enterprises is still limited. Further research is expected to employ a longitudinal approach to investigate more in-depth relationships.

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