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Faculty of Business Economics

Master of Management

Master's thesis

Navigating the Digital Buzz: eWOM Strategies for Global Brand Success. The case study of Korean beauty brands in Vietnam

Tran Bao Tram Phan

Thesis presented in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management, specialization International Marketing Strategy

SUPERVISOR :

Prof. dr. Erin ROMAN

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www.uhasselt.be
Universiteit Hasselt
Campus Hasselt:
Martelarenlaan 42 | 3500 Hasselt
Campus Diepenbeek:
Agoralaan Gebouw D | 3590 Diepenbeek

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ABSTRACT

This study applies the ADO (Antecedents–Decisions–Outcomes) framework to examine the relationship between brand attributes and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in the context of Korean global cosmetics brands in the Vietnamese market. Specifically, brand awareness and brand love are identified as antecedents, eWOM as the decision, and brand choice as the outcome. Additionally, brand identity is examined as a moderating factor. A total of 209 responses were collected with 171 valid answers, and SPSS version 29.0 was used to analyze data through multiple regression analysis to test the proposed hypotheses and address the research questions. The results reveal that brand love significantly influences eWOM, and brand identity plays a moderating role in the relationship between eWOM and brand choice. However, the study did not find significant relationships between brand awareness and eWOM, eWOM and brand choice, or the moderating effects of brand identity on the relationships between brand awareness and brand love with eWOM. These findings emphasize the substantial impact of brand love on positive eWOM behavior and the important role of brand identity in customer reducing brand-switching behavior. This study contributes theoretical insights to the existing literature on eWOM and offers practical recommendations for brand managers. Several limitations are still noted, providing opportunities for future research improvement. The detailed results and discussions are presented in the subsequent sections of this study.

SUMMARY

The global market and international trade have expanded significantly over the past few decades as multinational companies and international marketers actively seek new opportunities worldwide (Rezvani et al., 2012). Among several countries, Vietnam has become an attractive destination for many international beauty brands. This is due to the Vietnamese economy's growth, which leads to increased consumer spending on discretionary items, including beauty and personal care products (Statista, 2024). Among the international beauty brands, Korean beauty brands are considered the most poppular. For this reason, this study is conducted within the Korean brands in the Vietnamese market. Additionally, the wide use of the Internet offers international businesses various digital platforms to reach the global market quickly and efficiently (Steenkamp, 2020). As a result, digital platforms such as e-commerce sites and social media enable customers to exchange information about brands (Steenkamp, 2020). This virtual communication is called electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) (Steenkamp, 2020), which is considered a tool to increase brand awareness and drive sales. (Steenkamp, 2020). Previous studies in eWOM have focused on the customer perspective, particularly exploring the determinants of eWOM (Donthu et al., 2021). For example, how businesses use incentives to motivate people to share eWOM (Rosario et al., 2020), how people consume eWOM and how it impacts their attitude toward brands (Park & Jeon, 2018) or exploring the cognitive procedures behind the customer eWOM behavior (Mishra et al., 2018). However, brands cannot fully control what consumers share about them online (Basuroy et al., 2003). This highlights the need to investigate from the business side by investigating the relationship between brand attributes and eWOM. Brand attributes are the characteristics or features that customers associate with a brand, which can be used to leverage and manage eWOM through targeted branding activities (Maru, 2024). This study addresses the research gap by utilizing the ADO framework to examine the relationships between brand attributes, namely brand awareness, brand love, brand identity, brand choice, and eWOM. The objective is to address the research gap in the eWOM context and provide insights into eWOM strategies for global brands by answering these research questions:

1. How does the brand awareness of Korean cosmetic brands affect the eWOM in the Vietnamese market?

2. How does the brand love of Korean cosmetic brands affect the eWOM in the Vietnamese market?

3. How does the eWOM affect the brand choice among Korean cosmetic brands in Vietnam? Moreover, how does the brand identity moderate the relationship between brand awareness, brand love, eWOM, and brand choice?

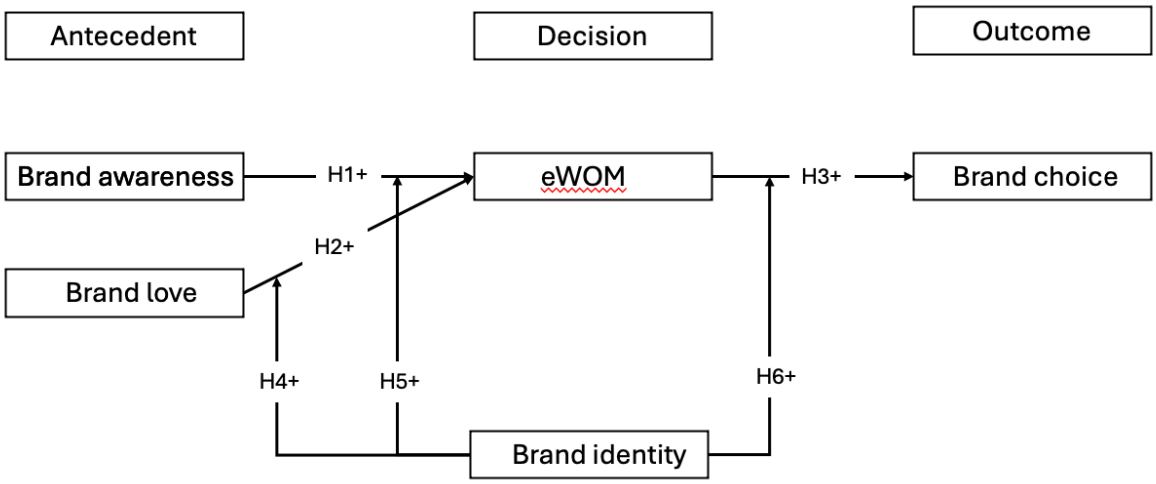

Figure: Conceptual model

This study conducted quantitative research to investigate the relationship between brand attributes and eWOM. A survey with core questions that adopted measurement scales from previous research was created using Qualtrics. A total of 209 responses were collected with 171 valid answers, and SPSS version 29.0 was used to analyze data through multiple regression analysis to test the proposed hypotheses and address the research questions.

The sample consisted of participants aged between 18 and 39 years, with the majority (73.1%) falling within the 18–22 age group. Female respondents accounted for 87.7% of the total sample, outnumbering male participants.

One of the key findings of this study is the influence of brand love on eWOM. Brand love alone was strong enough to predict eWOM behavior. This suggests that brand love is far stronger than just customer satisfaction with a brand. Customers are already satisfied with their chosen brand and have some emotional sentiment to engage with it, boosting them to spread the positive word about the brand they love to others online. Another noteworthy finding is the new function of brand identity as a moderator in the relationship between eWOM and brand choice. While eWOM alone can not predict brand choice due to some possible reasons such as the variety-seeking buying behavior of some of Vietname customers in the beauty market and people are interested in following trends and want to try new brands associated with the trend movement; this relationship is still significant if there is a presence of brand identity. This study highlights the significant role of brand identity in customer resistance to switching brands again. Customers are seeking not only utilitarian value but also emotional and symbolic value, meaning a brand is nice to have the ability to represent customers' identity to impact their preference of choosing brands in the future.

The relationship between brand awareness and eWOM was not noted in this study. This could be in the Vietnamese beauty market as Korean brands already have high visibility among Vietnamese customers. However, just knowing a brand is not enough to push people to talk positively about

these brands online. Customers may focus on other factors such as product performance, price, or personal experience rather than solely positively talking about the brand itself.

Additionally, the moderating effect of brand identity on the relationships between brand awareness and brand love on eWOM was not found. This could be because recognizing or recalling the brand's advertising is not enough to stimulate people to talk about it on the internet, even in the strong presence of brand identity. This is particularly relevant to the beauty industry in Vietnam, where Korean beauty brands are popular and account for the largest share of international imported cosmetics in Vietnam. Furthermore, brand love alone is sufficient to predict eWOM, and brand love involves integrating brand to customer identity (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006); therefore, brand identity has less impact on the relationship between brand love and eWOM in this study.

Hypothesis	**Detail**	**Result**
H1	Brand awareness has a positive impact on positive eWOM	Rejected
H2	Brand love has a positive impact on positive eWOM	Accepted
H3	Positive eWOM has a positive impact on Brand choice	Rejected
H4	Brand identity positively moderates the effect of Brand love on positive eWOM	Rejected
H5	Brand identity positievly moderates the effect of Brand awarenes on positive eWOM	Rejected
H6	Brand identity positively moderates the effect of positive eWOM on Brand choice	Accepted

This study contributes to the theoretical development of eWOM literature by addressing research gaps. This study approaches eWOM from a business perspective, utilizing the Antecedents-Decisions-Outcomes (ADO) framework of Paul & Benito (2018) to examine the structural relationships in which brand attributes (antecedents) influence eWOM (decisions), ultimately affecting brand choice (outcomes). Moreover, this study also fills the research gap about the moderating role of brand identity in eWOM literature.

This study proposes recommendations for international businesses leveraging eWOM strategies based on the findings. International marketers should consider creating activities and marketing campaigns to boost user interaction across all social networks that the brand has presented to encourage eWOM. Moreover, international brands can implement experiential campaigns, allowing customers to experience the product and encourage them to share their thoughts widely online. In addition, international brands should not only focus on satisfying customers but also strengthen the emotional relationship, which is brand love with the customer; then, it can lead to naturally wanting

to recommend products that work for them. Furthermore, instead of relying on brand identity, companies can focus on engaging activities and offer trendy product experiences to encourage customers to share positive comments about the brand online.

Some limitations were noted in this study. This research selected only a few brand attributes, including brand awareness, brand love, brand identity, and brand choice, within the ADO framework to examine their relationship with eWOM. Future studies can consider other brand attributes to expand the scope of research. Moreover, due to the use of quantitative data, this study cannot further explain the relationships that are not supported in this paper. Future research can apply quantitative and qualitative methods to have more in-depth information to explain this situation. Finally, the scope of this study was limited to the beauty industry in the Vietnamese market. Future studies may consider other industries and expand the scope of study to another counties and increase the sample size to gain insights into different markets and demographic groups.

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Finally, I acknowledge the use of Grammarly for grammar check and ChatGPT solely for language editing and paraphrasing purposes to enhance the fluency of my writing. They were not used for any other purpose. All concepts, interpretations, and analyses presented in this thesis are based on my understanding and knowledge acquired through the Customer Research course. All content and analytical results are the outcome of my independent research, carried out using data collected from the survey. ChatGPT was not used to generate academic content or influence the research findings or discussions. No external sources were used beyond those explicitly listed in the references section of this thesis.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the overall research topic of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in Vietnam's beauty sector and outlines the research problems, including the gap identified in existing literature. After that, this study outlines research objectives, develops its research questions, and ends with an overview of the structure of this study.

1.1 General introduction about beauty market in Vietnam

Over the past few decades, international trade and the global market have seen significant growth as businesses, multinational corporations, and international marketers actively seek new opportunities in the global marketplace (Rezvani et al., 2012). Among several countries, Asian nations are attractive and present numerous opportunities for international retailers as Asian customers spend more, driven by rising incomes and a growing middle-class population (Lee & Nguyen, 2017). According to Mast (2021), Asia's consumer class is growing rapidly, accounting for half of the global consumer class since 2016. Today, there are 2.2 billion middle-class living in Asia out of a total of 4 billion located worldwide (Mast, 2021). Vietnam stands out as one of the most promising markets in Asia, driven by strong economic growth and a rising middle-class population. Vietnam's economy has demonstrated consistent growth over recent years, continuing its positive trajectory in 2023 (KMPG, 2024). As of 2023, the country's GDP is estimated at 437 billion USD, with a growth rate of 5.05% (KPMG, 2024). Additionally, according to Vietnam's Ministry of Finance, by 2030, if there are two households, there will be one belonging to the middle class, reflecting the ability of middle-class customers to spend on discretionary items (Ministry of Finance of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2019).

As the Vietnamese economy grows, consumers are experiencing demand for beauty and personal care products and are less hesitant to spend on them (Statista, 2024). According to Statista (2024), the revenue in Vietnam's Beauty & Personal Care sectors is expected to reach US$2.79 billion by 2025 (Figure 1), with an annual growth rate of 3.26%. This is shaped by macroeconomic factors, including rising incomes and the growth of the middle class (Statista, 2024). According to a report from Vietnam Briefing (2022), a Vietnamese woman spends an average of between VND 450,000 and 500,000 (US$19 – US$21) a month on skincare and makeup goods in 2022. This is slightly increased compared to a report done by Q&Me (2020), which found that most of the survey respondents allocated their skincare product budget around VND 200,000 to 400,000 per month (approximately US$8 – US$17). Therefore, Vietnam's cosmetics sector presents a potential business and attracts a lot of foreign brands. It is particularly obvious that there are 90% of foreign brands dominate Vietnam's cosmetics market, with Korean brands holding the largest share at 30%, followed by European brands (23%), Japanese brands (17%), Thai brands (13%), and U.S. brands (10%) (International Trade Administration, 2022), making it a hub for international cosmetic businesses.

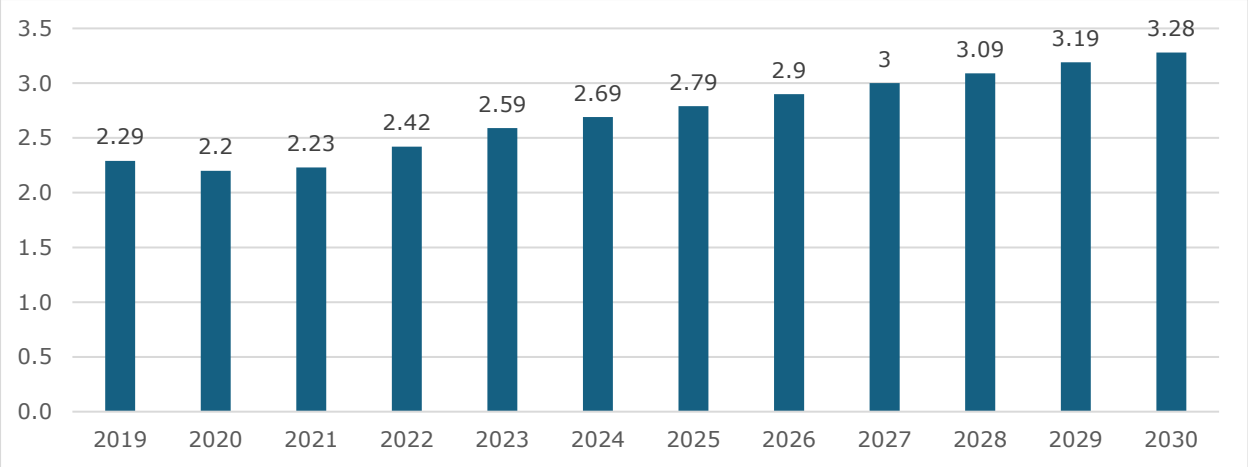

Figure 1. Revenue of the beauty & personal care market in Vietnam from 2019 to 2030 (in billion U.S. dollars) (Statista, 2024)

1.2 Electronic Word-of-mouth in the Vietnamese digital market

The emergence of the public internet and the commercial use of the World Wide Web has accelerated global interconnectedness with extraordinary speed and reach (Steenkamp, 2020). In 1995, only 16 million people were online; however, by 2019, that number had surged to 4.5 billion (Steenkamp, 2020). This digital transformation has influenced international marketing, particularly in the context of global branding (Steenkamp, 2020). Instead of establishing a global brand through significant efforts to build physical distribution and local connections in the traditional way, the digital age has introduced the platforms and tools that allow brands to develop globally at a rapid pace (Steenkamp, 2020).

Digital platforms play an important role in advertising and impact how marketers approach their customers on the Internet, which is also known as digital marketing (Nguyen & My To, 2022). Specifically, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) is one key aspect of digital marketing in today's digital marketplace. Many people participate in online forums (Albors et al., 2008), enabling them to connect with others to exchange information and seek advice (Nguyen & My To, 2022). A variety of online word-of-mouth communities have been created for beauty items, such as social media, discussion forums, and weblogs, all of which facilitate customers to share feedback, post reviews, and evaluate products/services or brands (Nguyen & My To, 2022). Consequently, online forums and word-of-mouth (WOM) behavior are considered fundamental channels and tools for businesses doing marketing in the digital era (Chen & Xie, 2008). Notably, eWOM is even more powerful than traditional WOM. Traditional WOM is limited geographically and socially as it typically occurs among people who already know each other and live in the same area (Nguyen & My To, 2022). In contrast, eWOM is more powerful and overcome these limits thanks to the invention of the Internet, as customers can leave their comments elsewhere on the Internet, and others can reach it globally (Nguyen & My To, 2022).

In Vietnam, there are 76.32 million users active on social media as of 2024, nearly 75% of Vietnam's population (Statista, 2025), engaging with platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and

YouTube. Additionally, according to a survey conducted in 2022, 69% of Gen Z respondents stated that they are influenced by social media posts when purchasing cosmetics items. Millennials came next, with 66% of respondents acknowledging that they are also affected by social media when deciding to buy cosmetic products (McKinsey & Company, 2023). Additionally, with the tech-savvy population, the increase in internet users, and social media integration, Vietnam experiences growth in e-commerce every year. It is considered the fastest-growing sector in Southeast Asia (Statista, 2024). Specifically, around 57 million people were recognized as users of e-commerce platforms in Vietnam as of 2022, with popular platforms including Shopee (the dominant player), Lazada, TikTok Shop, and Tiki (Statista, 2024). These diversified digital platforms allow businesses and customers to produce content and widely share product information, brand knowledge, and brand feedback with audiences (Shankar et al., 2022). As a result, many businesses in Vietnamese market acknowledge the significance of eWOM and have taken steps to promote eWOM expansion in order to take advantage of its benefits (Nguyen & My To, 2022).

1.3 Problem statement

In the digital age of connectivity, global brands can easily set up digital sales channels to reach customers in other parts of the world where they cannot offer a physical store. In addition, it changes the way brands communicate with their customers. In contrast with the pre-digital age, when brands control brand-related communications, which are directional and monologue, the rise in internet-based platforms also supports how customers discuss all the brands (Steenkamp, 2020). Consumers exchange brand knowledge, experiences, and thoughts through various platforms, such as social media, e-commerce, and review platforms. This virtual communication is commonly called electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), and it has been considered an essential factor that helps brands drive sales (Steenkamp, 2020).

The increasing popularity of online platforms has raised the impact of eWOM (Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024). A recent survey by Todorov (2021) showed that 90% of consumers rely on eWOM for brand recommendations, even reviews from strangers. Therefore, in the context of digital setting, where brands can not control all the contents created by online users (Basuroy et al., 2003), there is a need to investigate the relationship between brand features and eWOM (Donthu, Kumar, Mukherjee, et al., 2021; Donthu, Kumar, Pandey, et al., 2021; Isabel et al., 2023; Mukhopadhyay et al., 2022). However, despite many works related to eWOM, it has yet to research it in the realm of branding (Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024). Researchers did much research in the domain of eWOM from a customer perspective (Donthu, Kumar, Mukherjee, et al., 2021; Donthu, Kumar, Pandey, et al., 2021; Isabel et al., 2023) and left a research gap in the business side. In other words, these papers focused on researching determinants of eWOM (Donthu et al., 2021), for example, how businesses use incentives or build a brand community to motivate people to share eWOM (Babić Rosario, De Valck, & Sotgiu, 2020), how people consume eWOM and impact their attitude towards brands (Park & Jeon, 2018) or researching the cognitive procedures behind the eWOM behavior of customers (Mishra, Maheswarappa, Maity, & Samu, 2018). Hence, this study will address this research gap by investigating the relationship between eWOM and brands from a business perspective, aiming to provide insights into how global brands can manage and motivate positive eWOM through branding activities.

The business perspective consists of brand attributes leading to eWOM. Many brand attributes have been mentioned in the context of eWOM, for example, brand awareness (Keller, 2013), brand choice (Tobon & García-Madariaga, 2021), and brand identity (Farzin et al., 2022). The relationship between brand attributes and eWOM has been investigated significantly in America and Southeast Asian countries (Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024), but there is still a lack of this observed connection in Vietnam. This study will use the ADO (Antecedents – Decisions – Outcomes) framework to further study the relationship between brand attributes and eWOM in the context of Korean global cosmetics brands in the Vietnamese market. Specifically, brand awareness and brand love will be considered as an antecedent, eWOM will be considered as a decision, and brand choice will be considered as an outcome. In addition, brand identity is usually considered as a mediator or antecedent in eWOM research (Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024); therefore, this study will study it as a moderator to close the research gap.

Overall, there is the research gap in the context of eWOM from the business perspective. Therefore, this study acknowledges the importance of understanding this topic for international brands.

1.4 Research objectives

This study aims to address the research gap mentioned above by investigating the relationship between brand attributes and eWOM from a business perspective through brand attributes in the context of Korean cosmetics brands in the Vietnamese market. Firstly, the research will explore the impact of Korean cosmetic brand awareness and brand love on eWOM in the Vietnamese market. Secondly, the study will delve into the influence of eWOM on brand choice among Korean cosmetics brands in Vietnam. Thirdly, the study will evaluate the moderating effect of brand identity on the relationship between brand awareness, brand love, eWOM, and brand choice. Finally, based on the result findings, this study aims to contribute to the theoretical framework of eWOM research and provide for international marketers insights into how the brand attributes relate to eWOM and recommendations to adapt branding activities to leverage their business through positive eWOM.

1.5 Research questions

In line with the research objectives above, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

Research question 1: How does the brand awareness of Korean cosmetic brands affect the positive eWOM in the Vietnamese market?

Research question 2: How does the brand love of Korean cosmetic brands affect the positive eWOM in the Vietnamese market?

Research question 3: How does the positive eWOM affect the brand choice among Korean cosmetic brands in Vietnam?

Research question 4: How does the brand identity moderate the relationship between brand awareness, brand love, positive eWOM, and brand choice?

1.6 Structure of the study

This study comprises of six chapters, and the content of this study is presented in the following structure:

Chapter 1: Introduction: This chapter introduces the research topic, states the research problems, identifies the research gaps, and presents the research objectives and questions.

Chapter 2: Literature review: This chapter provides a comprehensive review of existing literature related to the research topic of eWOM and brand attributes, helping build the theoretical framework for this study.

Chapter 3: Hypothesis development: Based on the literature review, this chapter provides the conceptual model and develops the hypotheses to be examined in this study.

Chapter 4: Research methodology: This chapter describes the research design, data collection methods, and the software and procedures used to analyze the data collected.

Chapter 5: Data analysis and results: This chapter presents the statistical results, and hypothesis results and interprets these data.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusion: This chapter discusses the meaning of the findings, compares them with existing literature, proposes theoretical and managerial implications, addresses its limitations, and proposes recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter summarizes and discusses the existing literature on the research topic. The contents of this chapter are structured as follows: first, the concept of eWOM will be presented; then, brand attributes, including brand awareness, brand love, brand identity, and brand choice, will be discussed in terms of their concepts and their linkage within this study.

2.1 eWOM

The increase in the use of the internet has transformed the form of word-of-mouth into what is now commonly known as electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) (Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024). It is a crucial factor that impacts customers' perceptions and behaviors regarding a product or a brand (Huete-Alcocer, 2017). It is defined as any positive or negative opinions about a brand, a product, or a service shared by potential, current, and former customers, accessible to a broad audience and various organizations through the Internet (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Information sharing can vary from reviews of a specific product to recommendations for visiting certain locations (Chieffi et al., 2022). eWOM is familiar with traditional offline WOM as a means of communication to share experiences and information about products or services (Katz et al., 2017). However, it differs from traditional offline WOM in four elements (Babić Rosario, De Valck, & Sotgiu, 2020). Firstly, eWOM has a more extensive network and can reach more customers than the traditional offline WOM due to the spread of the Internet (Babić Rosario et al., 2020). Second, eWOM is not limited by time and location as information is usually stored online for a while, and they can receive information whenever they have connected to the internet. People are not required to interact with each other simultaneously (Hoffman & Novak, 1996). Third, eWOM is not limited to expression formats, mostly spoken or written like traditional WOM; it can appear in many other formats such as videos, pictures, reviews on the e-commerce platforms, and blogs, and this drives more insights to process information and adoption (Schweidel & Moe, 2014). Fourth, eWOM has more unique characteristics, such as anonymous, diverse sources of eWOM that are different from traditional WOM and lead to shaping its credibility and effectiveness (Babić Rosario et al., 2016). As online platform growth has rapidly grown, eWOM has become more important and is gaining much attention (Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024). It is one of the most important sources of information (Abubakar et al., 2016) and a factor that customers consider when making a purchase (Azimi, 2022). Moreover, eWOM has a more significant influence than product attributes and can shape the purchasing decisions of customers (Hu et al., 2011).

Given the importance of eWOM, extensive research has been conducted on the topic from various perspectives, using diverse methods and conceptualizations. Initially, the eWOM relationship has been examined, considering the source, information, and receiver characteristics (Chiou & Cheng, 2003; Le et al., 2023; Mahapatra & Mishra, 2017). However, eWOM is a broad concept that impacts various areas, including branding (Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024). As a result, there is an increasing demand for research on eWOM within the branding context as it has become a significant influence on consumers' perceptions of brands (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). Early literature explored the relationship between eWOM and brand selection across different types of brands, such as fashion and electronics brands (Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024). Later, literature evaluated specific characteristics

of eWOM, such as valance, source, and their effects on customers' brand choices (Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024). Over time, studies on the relationships between eWOM and brand attributes have grown steadily (Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024). Some brand attributes have been studied in detail within the context of eWOM. For example, studies have highlighted the direct relationship between brand image and eWOM (Alrwashdeh et al., 2019), the significant impact of eWOM on hedonic and utilitarian brand attitudes (Kunja & Gvrk, 2018), and the influence of brand experience on eWOM engagement (Almohaimmeed, 2020), and so forth. In the previous literature, Donthu, Kumar, Pandey, et al. (2021) emphasized the high correlation between eWOM and brand features. However, the existing studies primarily discuss eWOM related to products and services and their connections to respective brands (Hoskins & Watts, 2022). Therefore, there is a need for further research on brand-specific eWOM. In addition, Maru and Sai Vijay (2024) have emphasized that eWOM significantly influences brand attributes and vice versa, as brand attributes also impact eWOM. Nonetheless, studies evaluating the relationship between eWOM and brand attributes remain fragmented. Previous literature has highlighted more exploration of the relationship between brand features and eWOM (Donthu, Kumar, Mukherjee, et al., 2021; Donthu, Kumar, Pandey, et al., 2021; Isabel et al., 2023; Mukhopadhyay et al., 2022). Therefore, this study aims to investigate the relationship between brand attributes and eWOM to address this research gap.

2.2 Brand attributes

2.2.1 Brand awareness

Brand awareness is considered as the most suitable definition to describe the strength presence of a brand in the consumers' mind (Langaro, Rita, & de Fátima Salgueiro, 2018). It is a precondition for a brand to be taken into account when customers are evaluating their purchase options, highlighting its critical function in fostering brand knowledge (Keller, 1993, 2003b). According to Keller (2013), brand awareness includes two key aspects: brand recognition and brand recall. The first element, brand recognition, referring consumers' ability to recognize and identify a brand when they receive a cue like a brand's logo, packaging, or slogan. The second element is brand recall, which means consumers can retrieve the brand from their memory when exposed with a cue related to product category, the needs that brands can satisfy or making purchases or usage. For example, when people think about the cereals or what they should have for their breakfast or snack, people might recall some specific brands like Kellog corn flakes (Keller, 2013). Both aspects of brand awareness are important. However, the level of importance may differ in different situations. Sometimes, people make decisions at the point of sale and are cued with physical and visible brand names, logos, packaging, and so on; hence, brand recognition is crucial in this situation (Keller, 2013). On the other hand, if people make decisions far from the point of sale, brand recall will be more crucial in this situation as people are not cued with any physical or visible logos, packaging, and so on (Keller, 2013). Therefore, brand recall plays an important role for services or brands with only online sales channels, as people will seek specific products or brands, keep that in mind, and recall it whenever they need it (Keller, 2013).

Brand awareness has been recognized as important in customers' decision-making process (Keller et al., 2011). It represents the initial mental phase of a consumer's connection with a particular

product or brand (Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt, & Füller, 2013). This process means that the consumers first need to gain awareness and knowledge about the brand, its products, and its services. Subsequently, they raise positive or negative feelings towards the brand and its products or services and finally take action by either purchasing or using the brand's products or services or by rejecting and avoiding their brands and products or services (Hutter et al., 2013.).

Keller et al. (2011) explained three key reasons that are worth considering when a brand wants to shape customer decision-making. The first is learning advantages; in other words, if a company wants to build a strong brand image, it is required to create meaningful brand connections in the customer's memory. Specifically, companies have to build brand elements that are easy for customers to remember and recognize. The second is consideration advantages, meaning if the brand is included in the consideration set of customers, it will be considered a good choice, and has competitive advantages among other brands in the market. The third is choice advantages, which means brand awareness influences consumer decisions even when they lack detailed information about the brand. When differentiation among brands is minimal, consumers prefer a brand they well-recognize. In other words, when insufficient information or differentiation among brands is minimal, customers intend to choose a brand they are more aware of.

In line with this, Langaro et al. (2018) indicated that brand communication is the key factor in improving brand awareness, assuring both brand recall and brand recognition. It can be enhanced through regular and memorable exposure to brand components like the name, slogan, logo, or packaging, which can increase brand awareness (Langaro et al., 2018). These interactions help consumers remember the brand, enhance the connection between the brand and product categories, uses, and consumption situations (Aaker, 1991), and increase their familiarity with the brand (Keller, 2003a; Hoyer & Brown, 1990). In addition, companies can focus more on the two dimensions of brand awareness by increasing the frequency of exposure (impacting recognition) and broadening the scope of exposure to category and usage-related clues (impacting recall) (Hoyer & Brown, 1990; Bravo Gil, Fraj Andre´s, and Mart´ınez Salinas 2007).

In the context of global markets, brand awareness becomes even more critical, particularly for international brands entering new territories, as brand awareness is the first step in the relationships between customers and a brand (Hutter et al., 2013.). It is necessary that international brands put their effort into spreading their brands in the new market and make more customers aware of their brands and their products or services. Additionally, brand awareness influences word-of-mouth (WOM), which is considered one of the most impactful forms of brand awareness (Weber, 2009). Customers with high brand awareness are more likely to discuss the brand, further enhancing its visibility (Liao, Wu, Widowati, & Chen, 2012). Hence, in this study, brand awareness is considered one of the brand attributes, and in relationship with eWOM, a new form of WOM refers to how well a customer can recognize and recall a particular brand.

2.2.2 Brand love

Brand love represents the most intense emotion in consumer-brand relationships (Langner, Schmidt, & Fischer, 2015). It has a significant impact on customer behavior, resulting in increased brand

loyalty, positive word of mouth, confrontation with negative feedback, forgiveness for shortcomings, and a greater willingness to pay higher prices for loved brands (Batra, Ahuvia, & Bagozzi, 2012; Bauer, Heinrich, & Albrecht, 2009; Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006; Ji, 2002; Lambert & Desmond, 2013; Rossiter, 2012). Generally, consumers who experience brand love show a high level of involvement, which can be seen as engaging in brand communities or traveling long distances to attend brand events (Langner et al., 2015). Therefore, brand love is an attractive marketing topic that drives researchers and practitioners' eagerness to understand this powerful customer-brand relationship (Langner et al., 2015). In the most recent research of Palusuk, Koles, and Hasan (2019), the authors indicated that the definition of brand love should capture the evolution of the consumer-brand relationship, which can be presented from the beginning and continue over time or can be developed gradually. As such, authors conceptualized the definition of brand love to reflect its complexity and dynamic nature as an intensive emotional connection illustrated by intimacy, passion, and commitment, which can arise during the initial interaction between the brand and customers but may also grow over time through positive experiences and a shared history (Palusuk et al., 2019).

The brand love that arises during the initial interaction between the brand and customers can be considered as love at first sight, and this "Love at first sight" brand encounters align closely with the interpersonal love framework, as they involve an explicit, reciprocal interaction between the consumer and the brand (Palusuk et al., 2019). There are some researchers also assumed that brand love is grounded in theories of interpersonal love and relationships (Batra et al., 2012; Langner et al., 2015). Some research has applied the theories of interpersonal love to study brand love and suggested that customers often use interpersonal relationship norms to shape their connection with brands (Aggarwal, 2004). However, some researchers argued that interpersonal love theory is unsuitable for explaining consumer-brand relationships (Palusuk et al., 2019). For instance, Langner et al. (2015) indicated that interpersonal love has stronger arousal compared to brand love, as the emotions experienced in interpersonal relationships are generally more intense. Hence, Langner et al. (2015) confirmed there are some fundamental distinctions in emotional nature between brand and interpersonal love (i.e., romantic love, love marriage, love at first sight). Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) also acknowledged that customers use the term "love" loosely when referring to commercial products compared to use the term “love” for people.

Furthermore, Langner et al. (2015) pointed out that rational factors and perceived benefits play a more significant role in driving brand love than interpersonal love. In this situation, Palusuk et al. (2019) suggested that consumers can not develop brand love as immediately as those who experience love at first sight, like interpersonal love, but they can build brand love gradually. When brand love develops gradually, it is built on the accumulation of positive experiences with the brand over time and can be strengthened as long as the experiences remain favorable, progressing in a positive direction (Palusuk et al., 2019). Therefore, brand love is not directly comparable to the more intense emotional forms of interpersonal love (Ahuvia, 1993, 2005; Oliver, 1999; Shimp & Madden, 1988), and researchers should be careful when adapting the theories and scales from interpersonal love to the context of brand love (Langner et al., 2015). When brand love is developed gradually through the accumulation of experience over time, satisfaction must be maintained to ensure continued involvement (Palusuk et al., 2019). Additionally, satisfaction and brand liking are the most

relevant factors in fostering this ongoing connection (Palusuk et al., 2019). However, satisfaction and brand liking are separate and distinct from the brand love construct (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006).

Satisfaction is a cognitive evaluation and a foundation for long-term emotional attachment (Thomson et al., 2005; Whang et al., 2004). As a result, it is recognized as a key antecedent to brand love; however, it alone is insufficient to generate brand love (Albert et al., 2008; Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006; Drennan et al., 2015). Brand love is conceptualized as a mode of satisfaction experienced by some customers, but not all satisfied customers (Fournier & Mick, 1999). In other words, satisfaction is considered a more macro construct than brand love, and Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) proposed several differences between these two constructs. First, while satisfaction is typically understood as a cognitive evaluation, brand love is more deeply rooted in affective connections. Secondly, while satisfaction is generally viewed as a transaction-specific outcome, brand love often emerges from a long-term customer and brand relationship and is developed over time. Thirdly, while satisfaction is often associated with expectancy disconfirmation, brand love does not rely on expectations or disconfirmation. Consumers may develop an emotional connection to a brand without a cognitive evaluation, as they already know what to expect, resulting in minimal, if any, disconfirmation. Finally, while brand love shows a willingness to declare love and integrate the brand into the consumer's identity, these elements are not required in satisfaction experiences.

Brand love also differs from brand effect, like brand liking (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). The results from Langner et al. (2015) also highlight the distinct emotional nature of brand love and brand liking, with brand love being significantly more arousing than brand liking. Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) emphasized the stronger emotional response associated with brand love compared to brand liking and highlighted that they are conceptually distinct. Specifically, brand love includes an integration of the brand into the consumer's identity, which is not required in basic brand affection like brand liking. Moreover, as brand love is considered a form of satisfaction, its minimum threshold is the absence of emotional connection (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). In other words, a customer can be cognitively satisfied but may feel no strong emotions toward the brand. This contrasts with simple brand affect like brand liking; brand love excludes negative emotions such as disliking or hate.

As there are various choices available for customers, organizations understand that simply attaining customer satisfaction or liking is no longer enough to ensure long-term relationships with customers (Jones & Sasser, 1995). Instead, marketers are urged to develop strategies to cultivate deep emotional connections, making their brands truly loved by customers (Castaño & Eugenia Perez, 2014; Rauschnabel, Ahuvia, Ivens, & Leischnig, 2015; Sallam, 2014; Wallace, Buil, & Chernatony, 2014). Brand love is related to various organizational benefits (Rossiter, 2012). Among the most commonly cited advantages are brand loyalty and positive word of mouth (WOM) (Palusuk et al., 2019). Specifically, customers who love the brands can serve as spokespersons and actively promote the brand through positive WOM (Batra et al., 2012; Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006; Karjaluoto, Munnukka, & Kiuru, 2016). Research indicates that a customer's deep emotional attachment to a brand is the most reliable indicator of brand strength (Karjaluoto, Munnukka, & Kiuru, 2016). As a result, fostering this attachment should be a key priority for brand management and customer relationship marketing (Pawle & Cooper, 2006).

Therefore, in this study, brand love is also considered one of the brand attributes, and in relationship with eWOM with the definition of brand love from Carroll and Ahuvia (2006): Brand love can be defined as a satisfied customer's passionate, emotional commitment toward a specific brand (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). This definition aligns with the love prototype framework of Ahuvia (2005) that brand love involves feeling passionate about the brand, having a sense of attachment, having a positive assessment of the brand, having favorable emotional reactions to the brand, and affirming the love for the brand.

2.2.3 Brand identity

Brand identity refers to the mental state in which consumers perceive, experience, and evaluate their sense of connection to a brand (Lam et al., 2013). It represents consumers' perceptions of a brand and can be measured through the associations stored in their memory and influences how customers perceive, feel, and interact with it (Farzin, Sadeghi, Fattahi, & Eghbal, 2022). A well-managed brand identity can generate positive customer responses through a unique, consistent, and distinctive identity that enhances product value, preference, and loyalty (Buil et al., 2016). It serves as a point of reference for customers and is key to establishing and maintaining relationships with customers who share their beliefs with the brand (Farzin et al., 2022) as individual customers use brands to define themselves (Albert et al., 2013). This strong relationship between the brand and its customers builds trust and drives brand differentiation (Farzin et al., 2022). Additionally, consumers are more likely to engage with brands that reflect their identity and values (Wolter et al., 2016). When this kind of identification takes place, it generates customers' positive emotions toward the brand (Harrison-Walker, 2001).

Brands also contribute to the construction of a social self, as consumers may perceive themselves as part of a group that shares a common brand identity (Lam et al., 2010). Identification with a brand often reflects a stronger sense of identity alignment (Farzin et al., 2022). In an era where consumers are covered with advertisements, brand identity has become significantly vital for online retailers, helping to counteract growing consumer skepticism (Farzin et al., 2022). This is especially relevant in international markets, where a strong brand identity can help the brand stand out in a competitive market. Specifically, some international brands, relying solely on online presence, benefit from a well-defined brand identity to establish themselves in foreign markets.

In addition, Lam et al. (2010) indicated that when customers select among various brands, they investigate both functional and identity-driven comparisons. Additionally, they highlighted that it is challenging for customers to change their connection with a brand because the brand becomes a part of their self-identity (Lam et al., 2010). Their findings indicate that the strong connection between a brand and its customers' identity strengthens loyalty to the brand more effectively than functional or utilitarian value (Augusto & Torres, 2018).

Furthermore, the concept of brand identity, also known as customer-brand identification, is rooted in social identity theory, which suggests that individuals construct their self-identity based on their relationships with social groups and organizations (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Previous literature on brand identity demonstrated that brand identity can foster both in-role behaviors of customers, such

as product usage, and extra-role behaviors, including word-of-mouth promotion and symbolic passing (Ahearne et al., 2005; Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006; Brown et al., 2005; Donavan et al., 2006). From a marketing standpoint, some prior research on brand identification in other contexts, such as higher education, indicates that students who strongly identify with their university are more likely to recommend it to others and share positive feedback about their experience (Balaji et al., 2016; Cassidy & Wymer, 2015).

Building on this, strong and meaningful connections, especially those linked to consumers' sense of self, has become crucial for brands to stand out among the challenge of product commoditization (Chernev et al., 2011). However, brand identity is often examined as a mediator or antecedent in eWOM research (Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024). It can also be explored as a moderator, as its strong emotional influence may help mitigate circumstances that trigger negative eWOM (Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024). Therefore, in this study, brand identity is considered a moderator in the relationship between positive eWOM and other brand attributes.

2.2.4 Brand choice

This study aims to investigate customers' intention to select a Korean beauty brand in the Vietnamese market, using brand choice as the key measurement. In the prior studies of Lu et al. (2015) and Hsu et al. (2012), the authors have not provided a comprehensive or precise definition of brand choice. However, Hsu et al. (2012) have conceptualized brand choice as a customer's willingness to choose the same brand instead of the presence of competing brands. Therefore, this study examines related terms from other research that align with the conceptualization and objectives of this study.

The first concept identified is "revisit intention," which is considered a crucial factor for business sustainability and growth in the tourism industry (Paisri, Ruanguttamanun, & Sujchaphong, 2022). Revisit intention has gained increasing attention in travel research as a key concept in destination marketing, helping to predict traveler behaviors (Paisri et al., 2022). Hu (2003) viewed it as a cognitive state reflecting a traveler's plan to revisit a destination within a given period. In Moutinho's (1987) research, repeat intention is referred to as repeat buying probability, which serves as an antecedent of future travel behavior toward a destination or tourism service. In addition, Tsai and Huang (2007) defined revisit intention as a visitor's assessment of the likelihood of returning to the same destination. For instance, if the customers find that a destination or tour service can fulfill their needs, such as relaxation or enjoyment, they may be inclined to return and engage in similar activities at the same destination. Moreover, in the context of travel loyalty research, revisit intention is recognized as a crucial measurement of behavioral loyalty (Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978). In line with this, Gronholdt et al. (2000) and Baker and Crompton (2000) described revisit intention as tourists' willingness to a destination and viewing it as an indicator of customer loyalty, similar to the willingness to repurchase a specific product (Paisri, Ruanguttamanun, & Sujchaphong, 2022). Furthermore, Paisri et al. (2022) defined revisit intention as the possibility that a tourist will return to a destination in the future. This definition is similar to brand loyalty, which reflects a strong commitment to choosing certain products or services from a specific brand, regardless of external

factors that encourage brand switching (Oliver, 1999). This loyalty reflects customers' strong confidence in the brand, reducing the chance of them moving to competitors (Paisri et al., 2022).

Another relevant concept identified is "repurchase intention," which demonstrates customers' willingness to repurchase specific products, services, or information in the future (Choi, 2019). In the era of digital surroundings, eWOM has become a crucial source of information for customers, with various studies indicating a strong relationship between eWOM and repurchase intention (Fahmy, 2022; Khan et al., 2023; Anastasiei et al., 2024). For instance, in the context of the smartphone industry, Kudeshia and Kumar (2017) revealed that positive eWOM posted on social networking sites such as Facebook significantly influences brand attitudes and purchasing intentions. Similarly, in another context, apparel brands, Khan et al. (2023) indicated that eWOM positively and strongly impacts customers' purchase intention, in which the favorable online review posted by customers will enhance their decision to repurchase products or services. This relationship is also examined in the studies of Chang and Chin (2010), revealing that the likelihood of a customer recommending a product is closely linked to their purchase intention and can influence their final choice. Furthermore, recent studies by Wandoko and Panggati (2022) and Zeqiri et al. (2023) highlight the strong correlation between positive eWOM and repurchase intention. Specifically, customers who generate and spread positive eWOM about a product or service are more likely to return and make repeat purchases from the same brand or business (Anastasiei, Dospinescu, & Dospinescu, 2024). Moreover, the behavior of sharing positive feedback and opinions online can shape purchasing behavior and significantly impact a company's success (Anastasiei et al., 2024). In other words, customers who write positive reviews about their online shopping experience are more inclined to return and make additional purchases from the same online retailer (Anastasiei et al., 2024).

Therefore, the two concepts of revisit intention and repurchase intention are comparable to this study, which aims to measure brand choice among customers who express positive eWOM. Moreover, another concept that shares a close alignment with brand choice is brand preference. According to Hellier et al. (2003), brand preference refers to the extent to which a consumer favors a particular service over others within their consideration set, particularly in a restaurant setting. Thus, the conceptualization of brand preference of Hellier et al. (2003) shares similarities with the notion of brand choice in this study. Consequently, this study offers a revised definition of brand choice as the extent to which customers prefer and consider one brand over other competing brands in the market when making repurchase intention based on their expression of positive eWOM regarding a brand they are satisfied with.

In conclusion, this chapter summarizes the existing literature on the relationship between brand attributes and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). Specifically, brand awareness is one of the brand attributes examined in this study, as brand awareness is considered the first step of brands in building relationships with customers (Hutter et al., 2013.). eWOM, in turn, is considered one of the most impactful forms of brand awareness (Weber, 2009).

Brand love is the second brand attribute explored in this study, as it brings one of the most advantages for the business by generating positive eWOM (Palusuk et al., 2019). Customers who love the brand can act as spokespersons to promote the brand on the internet (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006).

Brand identity is also considered a brand attribute in this study, as nowadays, people are covered with advertisements, and a strong brand identity can help mitigate consumer skepticism (Farzin et al., 2022). It is especially vital for international brands, where some rely on online sales channels and face the challenge of contacting directly with customers. Brand identity can help these brands stand out in a competitive market and boost customers' eWOM behavior.

Finally, brand choice is included as a brand attribute. Though previous studies did not have an exact definition of brand choice, some related terms still align with this study's objectives. Therefore, this study focuses on brand choice as the decision of customers when they prefer one brand over a competing brand and continue to choose it based on their positive expression of eWOM.

CHAPTER 3: HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

This chapter summarizes and discusses findings from earlier studies to provide a foundation for the conceptual model. Then, the conceptual model is developed to explore the relationships among brand awareness, brand love, brand identity, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), and brand choice.

3.1 Antecedent – Decision – Outcome (ADO) Model

The Antecedents-Decisions-Outcomes (ADO) framework (Paul & Benito, 2018) is widely used to structure research findings by systematically organizing the relationships between constructs. This framework consists of three interlinked dimensions: Antecedents (A), Decisions (D), and Outcomes (O). Antecedents (A) refer to the motivations influencing an individual's engagement or non-engagement in a behavior (Paul & Benito, 2018). Decisions (D) represent a behavioral performance (Paul & Benito, 2018). Outcomes (O) reflect the results of performing or not performing a particular behavior (Khatri & Duggal, 2022; Thomas & Gupta, 2022). This framework allows researchers to analyze relationships among constructs in an organized manner, describing how antecedents influence decisions, which in turn impact outcomes (Paul et al., 2023; Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024). The ADO framework has been applied across various domains, including internationalization (Paul & Benito, 2018), marketing (Södergren, 2021), innovation (Singh et al., 2021), brand scandals (Kapoor & Banerjee, 2021), life insurance (Bhatia et al., 2021), and education institutions (Kumar et al., 2021).

The ADO framework is commonly used in systematic reviews to organize previous research findings and their relationships in a structured manner (Paul et al., 2023). However, one of its limitations is that it does not clearly explain the theories or context behind these relationships. Despite this, in the context of branding and from a business perspective, the ADO framework provides a structured approach to investigating the relationship between brand attributes and eWOM (Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024). Maru and Sai Vijay (2024) suggested that this framework can be further applied to study the connection between eWOM and brand attributes in future research.

Therefore, this study employs the ADO framework with theoretical and contextual explanations in the literature review to enhance understanding of the relationship among factors and how brands can utilize and leverage eWOM in a global context. Specifically, brand awareness and brand love are examined as antecedents, brand identity is introduced as a moderator, and brand choice is considered the outcome of eWOM (decision factor).

3.2 Literature findings & Hypothesis

Hutter et al. (2013) stated that brand awareness is the first mental stage of the relationship between customers and a specific product or brand and plays a crucial role in predicting eWOM. It is expected that if a brand stays in consumers' minds, they are more likely to think about and discuss that brand (Hutter et al., 2013). Additionally, Weber (2009) noted that word-of-mouth is considered the strongest driver of high brand awareness, and eWOM represents a new form of WOM facilitated by the development of the internet and online communication platforms (Barreda, Bilgihan, Nusair, & Okumus, 2015; Poulis, Rizomyliotis, & Konstantoulaki, 2019). Brand awareness has also been found

to influence positive WOM, as customers who are aware of and favor a brand tend to speak positively about it (Barreda et al., 2015). Thus, brand awareness can serve as an indicator of positive eWOM (Hutter et al., 2013). Moreover, brand awareness has been shown to impact eWOM through brand trust (Liao et al., 2012). Specifically, in the context of banking and dental patients, Esch et al. (2006) found that brand awareness influences brand trust, while Gremler et al. (2001) demonstrated that trust positively affects word-of-mouth. Furthermore, the influence of brand awareness on positive eWOM has been confirmed in several prior studies (Zhu & Zhang, 2010; Schindler & Bickart, 2012). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed in this study:

H1: Brand awareness has a positive impact on positive eWOM

Previous research has demonstrated that when customers are passionate about a brand, they experience emotional arousal, which leads them to share their experiences with others—commonly known as positive eWOM (Lovett et al., 2013). Similarly, Loureiro et al. (2017) stated that customers who feel passionate about a specific brand are more likely to share positive reviews and actively promote the brand. WOM is recognized as the strongest outcome of brand love (Albert & Merunka, 2013). According to Amaro, Barroco, and Antunes (2020), this behavior also occurs in the context of travel destinations, where tourists who have satisfying travel experiences are likely to share positive reviews with others. In a study on destination brand love among Erasmus students, Amaro et al. (2020) further demonstrated that students with a positive Erasmus program experience were likely to speak favorably about their host country. Therefore, prior research has widely recognized a positive connection between brand love and both WOM and eWOM (Bairrada et al., 2018; Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). Thus, in this study, consumers who experience brand love are expected to speak positively about the brand and recommend it to others.

H2: Brand love has a positive impact on positive eWOM

The influence of word-of-mouth on customer-decision making has been proved in the studies of Maxham III (2001). Similarly, Kubickova et al. (2014) stated that word-of-mouth affects customer behavioral intentions, particularly in repurchase and revisit intention, with findings indicating a positive impact on revisit intentions; in line with this, Abubakar et al. (2017) emphasized the effect of eWOM on revisit intention in the context of medical tourism. Moreover, Park et al. (2007) also demonstrated a strong correlation between the quality of eWOM messages and customer purchasing intentions. Matute et al. (2016) further pointed out that eWOM directly affects consumers repurchase intentions. Therefore, it can be seen that the effect of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions has been extensively examined in the previous literature (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006; Godes & Mayzlin, 2004; Häubl & Trifts, 2000; Hu et al., 2008; Liu, 2006; Park et al., 2007; Prendergast et al., 2010; Trusov et al., 2009; Wen, 2009; Zhang et al., 2013).

Furthermore, the study of Anastasiei et al. (2024) also investigated the link between eWOM tendency and repurchase intentions, with the findings supporting that positive eWOM is positively correlated with repurchase intention. This can be explained by the expectation that customers who share favorable reviews on social media are more likely to continue purchasing the product or service, as they are unlikely to recommend something they do not personally use (Anastasiei et al., 2024).

Therefore, in this study, it is sensible to assume that the customers who share positive eWOM will continue to choose the same brand again:

H3: Positive eWOM has a positive impact on brand choice

Brand identity is crucial in shaping customer choices and behaviors, as customers do not remain loyal to a brand or consider switching solely for functional utility reasons (Lam et al., 2010). Instead, they evaluate brands based on both functional and identity-related factors (Augusto & Torres, 2018). As Albert et al. (2013) explain, customers use brands to self-identify. Furthermore, brand identity is developed from social identity theory, meaning individuals may perceive themselves as part of a community of consumers who share the same brand identification (Lam et al., 2010). In this regard, Lam et al. (2010) found that brand identity plays a more significant role in customer resistance to switching brands than utilitarian value alone.

Regarding word-of-mouth (WOM), discussing brands with others is considered an essential aspect of personal identity construction (Holt, 1997). This behavior is driven by the desire to benefit others (Steffes & Burgee, 2009) and fulfill social needs by connecting with individuals with the same brand identification (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995). Additionally, prior research in a different context—higher education—demonstrated that individuals who strongly identify with their university are more likely to recommend it and share positive experiences (Balaji et al., 2016; Casidy & Wymer, 2015). Based on the findings from previous studies, the following hypotheses are reasonable to propose:

H4: Brand identity positively moderates the effect of Brand love on positive eWOM
H5: Brand identity positively moderates the effect of Brand awareness on positive eWOM
H6: Brand identity positively moderates the effect of positive eWOM on Brand choice

3.3 Research framework

Based on the in-depth analysis presented in the literature review for each variable, along with the research hypotheses regarding the relationships between the variables discussed in the literature findings & hypothesis section, the conceptual model is proposed in the following:

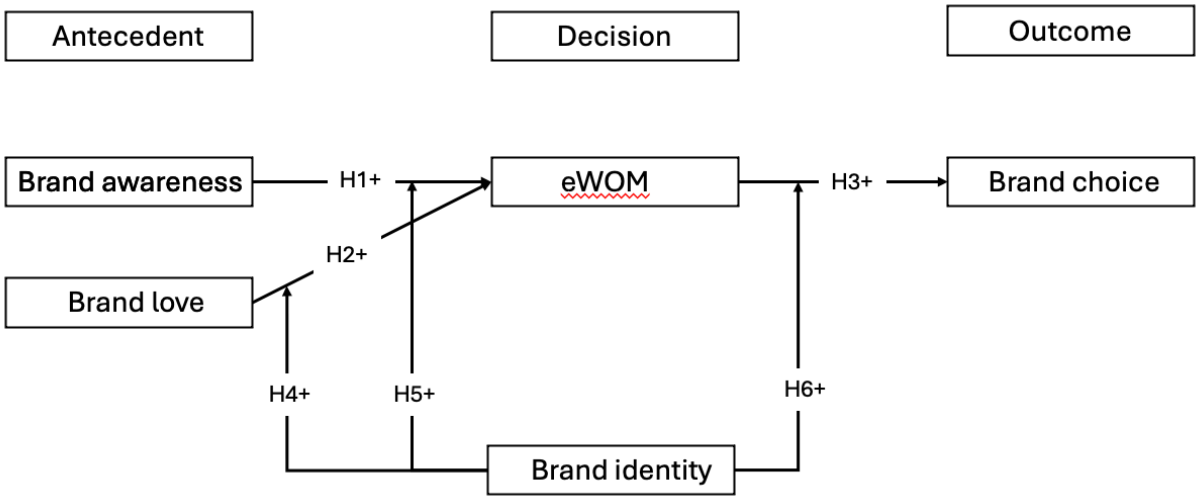

Figure 2. Conceptual model

H1: Brand awareness has a positive impact on positive eWOM
H2: Brand love has a positive impact on positive eWOM
H3: positive eWOM has a positive impact on Brand choice
H4: Brand identity positively moderates the effect of Brand love on positive eWOM
H5: Brand identity positievly moderates the effect of Brand awarenes on positive eWOM
H6: Brand identity positively moderates the effect of positive eWOM on Brand choice

In summary, this chapter reviews and examines earlier research to develop hypotheses about the relationships between variables and applies the ADO framework to structure these relationships. According to this, brand awareness and brand love serve as antecedents (A) that lead to the decision (D) to engage in positive eWOM behavior. In turn, eWOM serves as the decision factor leading to the outcome (O), brand choice. Based on this conceptual model, customers with stronger brand awareness and brand love are more likely to spread positive eWOM, and those who speak positively about a brand are more willing to prefer and continue choosing it. Additionally, brand identity moderates the relationships among brand awareness, brand love, eWOM, and brand choice.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter highlights the research design, methods and measurements selected to achieve the objectives and test the hypotheses. It presents the processes of data collection, processing, and analysis used to address the research questions.

4.1 Research design

4.1.1 Quantitative research

This study conducts a quantitative research design to investigate the causal relationship between variables outlined in the conceptual framework. Aliaga and Gunderson (2000) described quantitative research as an approach to explaining relationships between variables by collecting quantitative data and analyzing it with statistical software. It is suitable to examine and confirm the hypotheses developed prior to data collection. In other words, this quantitative method provides a structured approach to investigate causal relationships, quantify data using metric-scale measurements, and analyze statistically to examine the developed hypothesis by accepting or rejecting the hypothesis (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Research design is an action plan that outlines how the author collects data and conducts analysis (Ragin & Amoroso, 2011). I chose survey design as the method to collect quantitative data. Surveys are a useful way to gather responses from sufficient participants to gain general knowledge about the research topic.

The questionnaire for this study is designed based on measurements used in previous research studies, including brand awareness from the study of Langaro, Rita, and de Fátima Salgueiro (2018), brand love and eWOM from Carroll and Ahuvia (2006), brand choice from Lu, Gursoy, and Lu (2015), and brand identity from Farzin et al. (2022). The details of the measurement used in this study are described details in the Table 1. Once the data is collected, SPSS software version 29.0 is used to evaluate the measurement scales and test the hypotheses.

4.1.2 Regression formula

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), multiple regression analysis is a method for evaluating the strength and nature of relationships among multiple variables. Therefore, this study use multiple regression analysis to examine the causal relationships between variables proposed in the conceptual model. The general regression formula in this study is:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta 1 * X1 + \beta 2 * X2 + \cdots + \beta n * Xn + \varepsilon$$

- Y = dependent variable
- α = constant
- $X_{1,2,..n}$ = independent variables
- βi = coefficient parameter
- n = number of variables

- ε = error

Decision characteristics directly result from antecedents and precursors to outcomes (Paul & Benito, 2018). In this study, eWOM serves as the decision characteristic and is the result of brand attributes, specifically brand awareness and brand love, while brand choice acts as the outcome of eWOM. Additionally, this study considers brand identity as a moderator in the relationships between brand attributes and eWOM and between eWOM and brand choice. Therefore, this study includes two dependent variables: eWOM and brand choice. As a result, there are two regression equations are conducted.

The first regression examines the impact of brand attributes, specifically brand awareness and brand love, on eWOM with brand identity as moderator. In this first regression model, eWOM is the dependent variable, brand awareness and brand love are independent variables, and brand identity is the moderator. Hence, the first equatation is:

$$\text{eWOM} = \alpha + \beta 1 * (\text{brand awareness}) + \beta\ 2 * (\text{brand love}) + \beta\ 3 * (\text{brand awareness} * \text{brand identity}) + \beta 4 * (\text{brand love} * \text{brand identity}) + \varepsilon$$

The next regression examines the effect of eWOM on brand choice with brand identity as moderator. In the second regression model, brand choice is dependent variable, eWOM is independent variable and brand identity is the moderator. Hence, the second equation is:

$$\text{Brand choice} = \alpha + \beta\ 1 * (\text{eWOM}) + \beta\ 2 * (\text{eWOM} * \text{brand identity}) + \varepsilon$$

4.2 Data sampling technique

The nature of this study is exploratory research, aiming to investigate from the business perspective the relationship between brand attributes and eWOM in the context of Korean cosmetics brands in the Vietnamese market. I chose a convenience sampling technique to collect data from Vietnamese customers, where participants are chosen based on their availability and readiness to answer (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). While this sampling technique may limit generalizability, it enables the author to gather sufficient data at a low cost and time-efficient manner, wherever the survey is distributed. This approach provides initial insights into the business perspective of the relationship between brand attributes and eWOM for Korean cosmetics brands in the Vietnamese market.

The questionnaire survey was distributed through popular social media platforms in Vietnam, such as Facebook and Instagram. These two platforms are considered convenient for distributing surveys and gathering data, allowing the author to reach a broad range of Vietnamese customers with basic knowledge about Korean cosmetics in Vietnam. Additionally, through these media platforms, the author can have immediate interaction and feedback from responses, ensuring sufficient data collection is timely for further analysis.

In terms of determining sample size, Hair et al., (2010) suggested that the minimum sample size should be five times larger than the observed variables. In this present study, there are five factors and 25 observed variables. Therefore, the minimum sample size should be 25*5= 125 observations.

4.3 Data collection plan

Using standardized data is recommended as the best approach to clarify and compare relationships between variables (Saunders et al., 2009). Therefore, this study applies validated questionnaires from previous studies to investigate the relationships between brand attributes and eWOM in the context of Korean cosmetics brands in the Vietnamese market.

The questionnaire was created using Qualtrics in English with Vietnamese subtitles and distributed across multiple social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, to make it easier for respondents to complete the survey and to reach a larger number of participants. Additionally, to expand the survey's reach and speed up data collection, I shared the survey with relatives and friends via Messenger and Zalo (a popular messaging app in Vietnam) and requested their assistance in sharing it with new participants in their networks. The data collection was from 3rd February to 17th March 2025.

4.4 Questionnaires design

The questionnaire was designed based on validated measurement scales from previous studies. The survey was developed in English with Vietnamese subtitles to ensure that the content accurately conveys the same meaning as the original studies while adapting to the research context and facilitating participants' understanding and completion of the survey. The details of the validated scales for all variables are explained below, and a copy of the questionnaire presented in Qualtrics is attached in the Appendix 1 for reference.

The structure of the questionnaire is divided into four sections: Introduction, Filtered questions, Main research questions, and General information. Specifically:

Introduction Section: Before starting the questionnaire, respondents were provided with a brief description of the author conducting the survey, the researcher's identity, the purpose of the research, and the importance of their cooperation. Instructions emphasized that "there are no right or wrong answers; only your personal opinions matter" to minimize potential response bias (Aronson, Ellsworth, Carlsmith, and Gonzales, 1990). Respondents were then asked to consent to the processing of their data for survey analysis. If consent was not provided, respondents were directed to a thank-you page, marking the end of their participation. This approach aimed to establish accessibility, foster goodwill, and encourage cooperation.

Filtered questions: Brand awareness can be created by anything that exposes the consumer to the brand, such as advertising, promotions, publicity, and public relations (Hutter et al., 2013). Furthermore, the brand love construct necessitates focusing on heavily branded products and comes from a satisfied customer's passionate, emotional commitment toward a specific brand (Carroll,

2006). Therefore, the survey included a list of eight Korean beauty brands popular in Vietnam, including three brands from Amore Pacific—a South Korean company that, as of October 2022, had established 29 stores in Vietnam and successfully captured Vietnamese consumer interest. There brands are Sulwhasoo, Laneige, and Innisfree. Additionally, five other brands ranked among the top ten popular K-beauty brands on the Shopee platform (the most popular e-commerce platform in Vietnam): COSRX, Peripera, 3CE (which achieved double growth in 2023 compared to 2022), Torriden, and D'Alba, which are increasingly popular in Vietnamese beauty communities. After that, participants were also asked whether they satisfied with products from the brand mentioned earlier. If they had, they were asked to indicate how long they had been using the brand. Responses were categorized as follows: 1 = Less than a year; 2 = 2–4 years; 3 = 5–7 years; 4 = 8–10 years; 5 = More than 11 years. They then completed the questionnaire with reference to the selected brand. Participants who did not choose any brand or they did not satisfy with any brand were excluded from further participation.

Main research questions: This section includes the core questions based on validated scales to collect the necessary data for analysis. The scale measurements (core questions) in this study are derived from various authors, as detailed in the Table 1. These scales have been selected based on their established reliability and relevance in previous studies. There were 25 questions in total, using a 5-point Likert scale to measure respondents' level of agreement or disagreement with each statement. The benefit of the Likert scale is that it does not require respondents to provide binary yes/no answers but instead allows for varying levels of opinion or even neutrality (Ain, 2020). To facilitate data collection and analysis of a large sample, I coded the 5-point Likert scale numerically as follows: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree

Table 1. Measurement scale

Factor	Items	Reference
Brand awareness	I can easily recognize the brand's characteristics, such as its logo, color, or name.	(Langaro, Rita, & de Fátima Salgueiro, 2018)
	I can recall advertisements for this brand.	
	I frequently remember this brand.	
	I can easily describe this brand to my friends.	
	I feel familiar with this brand's products	
Brand love	I think this is an amazing brand.	(Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006)
	This brand makes me feel good.	
	This brand is totally awesome.	
	I don't have any strong feelings about this brand. (–)	
	This brand brings me a lot of happiness.	
	I love this brand!	
	I don't feel anything special about this brand. (–)	
	This brand gives me great joy.	
	I feel passionate about this brand.	
	I feel very connected to this brand.	

eWOM	I talk positively about this brand in online environments.	(Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006)
	I share a lot of positive comments about this brand online.	
	I try to spread positive things about this brand on the internet.	
Brand choice	Even if this brand is similar to others, choosing it feels like a smarter option	(Lu, Gursoy, & Lu, 2015)
	This brand is always a better choice compared to its competitors	
	It makes sense to choose this brand over other similar brands.	
	This brand is my favorite brand among all the competing beauty brands.	
Brand identity	This brand helps me express my identity.	(Farzin, Sadeghi, Fattahi, & Eghbal, 2022)
	I feel personally connected to this brand.	
	This brand represents who I am.	

General information: This section consists of demographic questions to gather background information about respondents. Specifically, there are four options were provided for gender: Male, Female, Non-binary/Third gender and Prefer not to say. Regarding age, respondents was asked to fill in their ages in number in the answer box.

This structured approach ensures clarity, ease of response, and the ability to analyze data effectively.

4.5 Research process

SPSS version 29.0 software was used to analyze the data collected from the survey using Qualtrics.

4.5.1 Data preparation

First, I clean the data by removing outliers, missing values from the data file. Then I perform Mahalanobis test to remove nonsense data, which is data with the same answer for different statements. Next, because the survey has two questions using reversed wording, I will recode it to ensure that the scaled items all measure the same direction.

4.5.2 Descriptive statistics

Next is the descriptive statistics section of the data. I perform demographic statistics to grasp the research subjects. Next, I perform descriptive statistics to summarize the characteristics of the data as well as examine whether the data is normally distributed or not through the parameters of mean, skewness and kurtosis. Specifically, skewness indicates how the data is distributed unevenly. If the Skewness is negative, most responses are on the higher end of the scale; in contrast, if the Skewness is positive, most responses are on the lower end. The distribution is considered very good for a skewness value range between -1 to +1, and the distribution is within an acceptable range with a

value within -2 to +2 (Hair et al., 2010). Additionally, Kurtosis describes whether data distribution is more peak or flatter. If the Kurtosis is positive, the sample distributes a sharp perk with heavier tails, indicating that participants strongly agree with the statement and fewer responds that disagree, while the negative kurtosis value shows the distribution is flatter and more spread out, which means there are more diverse responses. A kurtosis value between -2 and +2 is considered acceptable (Hair et al., 2010).

4.5.3 Factor analysis

Factor analysis is performed to determine whether statements group together and effectively measure the factors/variables they are designed to measure. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test is conducted to assess the data's appropriateness for factor analysis. In addition, the Bartlett test of sphericity is considered to check that the observed variables in the study are sufficiently correlated with each other to use factor analysis. Factor analysis is appropriate if the KMO value is higher than 0.5 and the Bartlett test is statistically significant (sig < 0.005) (Nunan, Birks and Malhotra, 2020).

When data is suitable for exploratory factor analysis, if the eigenvalue is greater than 1 and a total variance explained of at least 50%, the observed variables can be grouped and used to explain the extracted factor (Hair et al., 2010). Then, the communalities are checked to assess the correlation between each item and the extracted factor. A higher communality value indicates a higher proportion of variance in a variable explained by the factor. In other words, the communality value suggests the observed items fit well within the extracted factor. Generally, a communalities extraction value of 0.4 or higher is considered acceptable. Additionally, the factor loadings, which are the correlation coefficients between the observed items and the extracted factor, are examined. According to Hair et al. (2010), a factor loading greater than 0.6 shows the practical significance of the relationship between the observed items and the extracted factor.

4.5.4 Correlation analysis

After examining factor analysis, a bivariate Pearson correlation analysis is conducted to investigate the variables' linear correlations. The range of the Pearson correlation coefficient is -1 to +1, where -1 represents a perfect negative correlation. In contrast, +1 represents a perfect positive correlation, and a value of zero indicates no correlation between the variables. In addition, the correlation matrix reveals insight into the strength and direction of the correlations between variables. According to Hair et al. (2010), a correlation coefficient value ranging between 0.1 and 0.29 is considered a small correlation, a correlation coefficient between 0.3 and 0.49 is considered medium, and a value above 0.5 is considered strong.

4.5.5 Regression analysis

Multiple regression analysis is used to analyze the relationship between metric-dependent variables and metric-independent variables. Some requirements should be satisfied before performing regression analysis. Firstly, a sufficient sample size must be used to run the regression analysis. According to Hair et al. (2010), the necessary sample size in a regression model is determined by the number of observed variables. Specifically, the sample size threshold should be five times larger

than the number of observed items. Secondly, outliers should be removed from the dataset because of the sensitive scores of regressions (Pallant, 2010). The third criteria is examining the dataset distribution to see whether it is normal (Pallant, 2010). The data must be normally distributed, with homoscedasticity and linear correlations between variables. Finally, once the quality scale is satisfactory, the author should examine the multicollinearity of the model, which occurs when two or more independent variables have a high degree of correlation, which makes the regression model unreliable (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). According to Hair et al. (2010), the variance inflation factor (VIF) < 10 is acceptable.

When all the criteria are met, I explore the significant of the model relationships and the power of the model. The coefficient of determination (R-squared) is used to evaluate the regression model's overall performance by indicating the degree to which the independent variables reflect the variance of the dependent variable. The R-squared has a minimum value of 0 (0%), meaning the independent variables cannot explain any variance in the dependent variable, while the maximum value of 1 (100%), suggesting that the model fully captures the variance (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). A higher R-square value suggests that the independent variables explain a larger portion of the variance in the dependent variable, meaning the overall regression model is effective. Additionally, the Adjusted R-squared will take into account the number of variables, specifically considering how many independent variables are involved. If the adjusted R-squared value is close to the R-squared value, it suggests that the included independent variables sufficiently contribute to explaining the dependent variables and that no irrelevant independent variables are present (Nunan, Birks, & Malhotra, 2020).

In the regression coefficients, the unstandardized coefficients are used to examine the effect of independent variables on dependent variables while keeping other variables constant. In contrast, the standardized coefficients are used to compare and rank the strength of the influence of different independent variables on the dependent variables (Nunan, Birks, & Malhotra, 2020). In addition, the standardized coefficient is used when using different scales to measure the independent variables, and standardization is needed. Thus, given the questionnaire design in this study using a standardized scale (five-point Likert scale) for all measurements and the nature of this study is applied research rather than theoretical research, I interpret the unstandardized coefficient (Pallant, 2010) to explain how much change in independent variable effect dependent variables.

In conclusion, this chapter outlines the research methodology approached in this study. A quantitative research design was used to investigate this study's objectives and test the hypotheses regarding the relationships among brand awareness, brand love, brand identity, eWOM, and brand choice. A survey was used as an instrument to collect quantitative data, created using Qualtrics. Additionally, this chapter details the development of measurement scales, the design of the questionnaire, and the data collection procedures. Finally, the chapter describes the data analysis process and the conditions for testing the hypotheses and research model using SPSS version 29.0.

CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this chapter, SPSS software version 29.0 is used to analyze the data collected from the survey. The data analysis process includes data preparation, demographic description, descriptive statistics and data distribution, factor analysis, correlation and regression analysis. Then, a summary of the results and confirmation of the proposed hypothesis.

5.1 Data preparation

After collecting data from 3rd February to 17th March 2025, 209 responses were collected from consumers in Vietnam. After that, I continued cleaning data to ensure the quality and reliability of the sample for further analysis by removing the inappropriate answers. Initially, respondents who did not consent to do a survey and missing values were removed from the sample set. In addition, the questionnaire has filtered questions to include only respondents who know one of these eight Korean beauty brands, have experience with them, and are satisfied with the brands to continue with the survey. There was one person who did not consent to do the survey, and seventeen missing values were removed. Continuingly, there were ten answers that showed respondents did not know one of these brands, and then 4 people, although they knew the brand but did not have satisfaction when using brands, were excluded from the data set. Consequently, the sample set was continued to the second phase of cleaning, with 177 respondents who satisfied the criteria that consented to do the survey, knew one of these brands, and were satisfied with the selected brand. After that, the Mahalanobis test was conducted to identify and remove nonsense data with a straight-line answer for every question. If the probability variables from the Mahalanobis test are less than 0.001, they would be considered valid answers. Following this step, five participants were excluded, resulting in a total of 171 valid observations. Furthermore, two questions use negative wording in the factor "Brand love"; therefore, I re-coded them to ensure all the statement have the same meaning direction before continuing to further step analysis.

5.2 Demographics

In terms of *age,* the sample has an age distribution ranging from 18 to 39 years, with a mean age of 22.3, meaning the respondents are mostly in their early twenties. The standard deviation is 3.014 years, indicating that most respondents are within 3.014 years of the mean age. The mode is 22, meaning that the most frequent age recorded in the sample is 22 years old. The survey result is closely aligned with this mean and mode, showing that most respondents belong to the group aged 18 – 22 years, with 125 out of 171 (73.1%). The second age group is 23 – 27 years, including 37 recorded responses (21.6%). Only nine individuals, which comprised 5.3% of the sample, fell within the age group of over 27 years. This age distribution can be explained by the fact that the data collection was distributed through social media platforms such as Facebook, so it can reach the younger communities, who are more active on social network sites.

In terms of *gender*, the results show that female participants outnumber male participants. Specifically, the ratio between female and male individuals is 5.17:1, with 150 female participants accounting for the largest share with 87.7%, while only 11.1% of male participants (19 individuals). These results suggest that females are more interested in skincare than males. Additionally, there

is also a small percentage of non-binary/third gender individuals who participated in this survey, with two recorded responses (1.2%).

Regarding *brand knowledge*, the results show that 3CE is the most well-known among eight selected Korean brands, accounting for 25.7 % of responses, with 44 recorded participants. It is followed by Innisfree, accounting for 22.2 % of the sample, with 38 participants. These two brands are the most well-known brands in the sample set, which can be explained as aligned with the age distribution, as these two brands have been presented in the Vietnamese market for a long time, offering affordable prices and trending products, making it particularly appealing to the young Vietnamese population. The following recognized brands are Peripera, Sulwhasoo, Torriden, and D'Alba, accounting for 11.1%, 10.5%, 9.4%, and 7.6%, respectively. The least known brand is COSRX, with only 4.7% of participants (4 individuals) knowing about it.

Regarding *the length of experience with the brands*, the results reveal that most participants have used their selected brands for 2-4 years, with 76 participants making up 44.4% of the sample. It is highlighted that the majority of participants have spent a moderate amount of time with their chosen brands. The second largest group, which is close to the largest group, is 71 individuals (41.5%) who have been using their selected brand for less than a year. Highlighting the emerging association with the brands. In contrast, fewer participants were noted to spend more extended time with their chosen brands. Specifically, there are 19 individuals who spent 5-7 years with the selected brands, while only 4 and 1 individuals have experienced around 8-10 years and more than 11 years respectively with the selected brands.

Table 2. Sample demographic characteristic

Demographic variables	**Type**	**Value**	**Frequency**	**% Percentage**
Age	Min	18		
	Max	39		
	Mean	22.30		
	Mode	22		
	Standard deviation	3.014		
	18 – 22		125	73.1 %
	23 – 27		37	21.6 %
	>= 27		9	5.3 %
Gender	Female		150	87.7 %
	Male		19	11.1 %

	Non-binary/third gender	2	1.2 %
Brand knowledge	Sulwhasoo	18	10.5
	Laneige	15	8.8
	Innisfree	38	22.2
	COSRX	8	4.7
	Peripera	19	11.1
	3CE	44	25.7
	Torriden	16	9.4
	D'Alba	13	7.6
Length of experience	Less than a year	71	41.5
	2 - 4 years	76	44.4
	5-7 years	19	11.1
	8 - 10 years	4	2.3
	More than 11 years	1	0.6

5.3 Descriptive statistics

The conceptual model of this study includes five variables: brand awareness (BA), brand love (BL), brand identity (BI), brand choice (BC), and eWOM. In the questionnaire design, each variable was measured using statements adopted from previous studies and scaled on a five-point Likert scale. Specifically, participants scored how much they agreed with each statement on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = totally disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = totally disagree. The descriptive analysis of scale measurement describes the characteristics of the data, especially the mean level of participants' responses to each statement. In addition, this section examines the distribution of the scale, including Skewness to identify the asymmetry in the distribution of the responses and Kurtosis to measure the peak or flatness of scale distribution.

5.3.1 Descriptive statistics of brand awareness

The brand awareness scale is measured using five items (BA1, BA2, BA3, BA4, BA5). The data presented in Table 3 indicates that customers generally agreed with the provided statements. Specifically, the mean values for all five statements exceed the midpoint 2.5 of the five-point scale 1-5 and range from 3.49 to 4.23. The highest mean recorded is 4.23 (BA1), suggesting that most respondents can easily recognize the brand characteristics. However, it is challenging for the

customer when they need to recall their selected brands' advertisements or brand characteristics, as indicated by the lowest mean score of 3.49 (BA2). This suggests that while these customers can identify the brand characteristics, the advertisement may not be impressive enough for people to let them remember and ensure strong recall when needed.

Regarding the data distribution, the skewness value shows that all five items have values ranging from -2 to +2, so the distribution is normal. Additionally, all the skewness values are negative, indicating that respondents agree with all the statements. Notably, the BA1 has a strong negative Skewness (-1.889), suggesting that respondents strongly agree that they can easily recognize the brand characteristics. In terms of Kurtosis, BA1, and BA2 exhibit high positive kurtosis (3.756 and 2.657, respectively), indicating that responses are concentrated around strong agreement, particularly regarding brand recognition and the ability to describe the brand to others. Conversely, BA2 has the lowest kurtosis value (-1.67), meaning that the distribution of this statement (customer can recall the brand) is more flat and has diversity in responses.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of brand awareness

Items	Details	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
BA1	I can easily recognize the brand's characteristics, such as its logo, color, or name.	1	5	4.23	0.994	-1.889	3.756
BA2	I can recall advertisements for this brand.	1	5	3.49	0.972	-0.383	-0.167
BA3	I frequently remember this brand.	1	5	3.85	0.838	-0.811	1.259
BA4	I can easily describe this brand to my friends.	1	5	4.11	0.826	-1.275	2.657
BA5	I feel familiar with this brand's products	1	5	4.06	0.899	-1.197	1.883

5.3.2 Descriptive statistic analysis of brand love

The brand love scale is measured by 10 items, including two negatively worded items that have been reserved (BL1, BL2, BL3, Recode_BL4, BL5, BL6, Recode_BL7, BL8, BL9, BL10). The data presented in Table 4 below suggests that, overall, responses agree with the statement, as the mean values of all the observed items range from 3.26 to 4.04. The highest mean values are recorded for BL1 (4.04) and BL2 (4.01), indicating that respondents perceive the selected brand as amazing and feel good about it. For the two statements with negative wording, Recode_BL4 and Recode_BL7, the mean values are 3.26 and 3.35, respectively. These values are slightly above the neutral point (3), suggesting that while respondents may not have strong emotional attachments to the brand, they do not completely lack feelings toward it either. Additionally, respondents still reflect a positive feeling towards the brand, as indicated in the mean values of the rest of the statements, which range above 3.5, from 3.54 to 3.7, with a low deviation of 0.16 among them.

Regarding the distribution of responses, the skewness values fall within the very good range of -1 to 1, indicating a normal distribution. The skewness value for all 10 items is negative, ranging from -0.104 to 0.902. It is also suggested that most responses are on a higher point, meaning customers generally agree with the statement and have positive feelings toward the chosen brand. Specifically, BL1 has the most substantial negative skewness value (-0.902), meaning they agree that the chosen brand is amazing. Regarding the Kurtosis value, most of the items have a Kurtosis value range from -0.299 to 2.127, which is generally acceptable. Although a kurtosis value higher than +2 or less than -2 may suggest some non-normality, variation here is insignificant. Specifically, item BL1 has the highest positive value (2.172), indicating a strong agreement that the brand is amazing, with only a few disagreeing. However, BL3 presents a strong negative Kurtosis value (-0.299), indicating a diverse range of opinions on whether the selected brand is totally awesome.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of brand love

Items	Details	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
BL1	I think this is an amazing brand.	1	5	4.04	0.751	-0.902	2.172
BL2	This brand makes me feel good.	1	5	4.01	0.732	-0.647	1.200
BL3	This brand is totally	1	5	3.69	0.896	-0.140	-0.299

	awesome.						
Recode_BL4	I don't have any strong feelings about this brand. (–)	1	5	3.26	1.161	-0.232	-1.024
BL5	This brand brings me a lot of happiness.	1	5	3.60	0.850	-0.296	0.073
BL6	I love this brand!	1	5	3.70	0.880	-0.423	0.286
Recode_BL7	I don't feel anything special about this brand. (–)	1	5	3.35	1.215	-0.304	-0.916
BL8	This brand gives me great joy.	1	5	3.69	.814	-0.433	0.475
BL9	I feel passionate about this brand.	1	5	3.54	.903	-0.406	-0.032

BL10	I feel very connected to this brand.	1	5	3.57	.900	-0.417	0.035

5.3.3 Descriptive statistic analysis of brand identity

The variable brand identity is measured using three items: BI1, BI2, and BI3. The results in the Table 5 demonstrate that people feel personally connected with the brand and that the chosen brand can reflect their identity. This is evident as all three items have a mean value ranging from 3.18 to 3.49, exceeding the five-point Likert scale's midpoint value (2.5).

Regarding scale distribution, the skewness value ranging from -0.070 to -0.247, between the range -1 to +1, which is considered very good, indicates a normal distribution. In addition, the skewness value of all three brand identity items is negative, indicating that they have a strong sense of brand identity. Additionally, the Kurtosis value also falls within the acceptable range of -2 to +2, with all three items showing negative kurtosis. It suggests that the distribution is spread out rather than concentrated at the mean, which can imply some variation in the level of agreement about their connection with the brand and the degree to which the brand is able to express their identity.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of brand identity

Items	Details	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
BI1	This brand helps me express my identity.	1	5	3.49	0.948	-0.247	-0.363
BI2	I feel personally connected to this brand.	1	5	3.49	1.014	-0.421	-0.274
BI3	This brand represents who I am.	1	5	3.18	1.021	-0.070	-0.362

5.3.4 Descriptive statistic analysis of eWOM

The three items that measure the eWOM variable are labeled eWOM1, eWOM2, and eWOM3. The statistical results in the Table 6 below indicate that the mean value for all observed variables is significantly higher than the midpoint value (2.5), ranging from 3.47 to 3.69. It implies that respondents generally agree with the statement and are willing to share positive comments about the selected brand widely in the electronic environment.

Regarding the distribution, the skewness value falls within the range between -1 to +1; specifically, the skewness value of the three statements of eWOM ranges from -0.474 to -0.665, which is considered normally distributed. Since all the skewness values were also negative, suggesting that people scored higher points. Agreeing with the idea of sharing positive things about the brand. The value of Kurtosis is also between the acceptable range of -2 to +2, specifically present in the range -0.316 to 0.086. The eWOM1 has a positive value of Kurtosis (0.086), implying that most respondents agree to talk positive opinions about their chosen brand in online environments, and only a few disagree with doing it. On the other hand, the eWOM2 and eWOM3 (-0.316 and -0.292) have negative Kurtosis values, meaning the responses are diverse, and there are some variations in the level of willingness of the customer to share and spread positive messages about the chosen brand.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of eWOM

Items	Details	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
eWOM1	I talk positively about this brand in online environments	1	5	3.69	0.972	-0.665	0.086
eWOM2	I share a lot of positive comments about this brand online.	1	5	3.47	1.036	-0.474	-0.316
eWOM3	I try to spread positive things about this brand on the internet.	1	5	3.60	1.049	-0.507	-0.292

5.3.5 Descriptive statistic analysis of brand choice

Four elements are used to measure the brand choice: BC1, BC2, BC3, BC4. According to the results in the table, the mean value of all four items ranges from 3.73 to 3.87, with only slight variation among them. These values are higher than the midpoint value of the five-point Likert scale (2.5), suggesting that respondents agree with the idea of preferring their chosen brand over competing brands.

Regarding scale distribution, a normal distribution is indicated by the skewness value between -0.726 and -0.834, which falls between -1 and +1 and is regarded as a good distribution. In addition,

the skewness values are presented in negative numbers, implying that respondents strongly agree that they intend to prefer their chosen brand over similar competitors. Regarding Kurtosis, all four statement values are within the acceptable range between -2 to +2, specifically 0.556 to 0.953. Notably, all the kurtosis values are positive numbers, meaning that the distribution is relatively flat with wide variations in the degree of agreement with the desire to choose the brand.

Table 7. Descriptive statistic of brand choice

Items	Details	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
BC1	Even if this brand is similar to others, choosing it feels like a smarter option	1	5	3.76	0.885	-0.797	0.953
BC2	This brand is always a better choice compared to its competitors	1	5	3.73	0.919	-0.726	0.556
BC3	It makes sense to choose this brand over other similar brands.	1	5	3.84	0.852	-0.834	0.869
BC4	This brand is my favorite brand among all the competing beauty brands.	1	5	3.87	0.901	-0.757	0.650

5.4 Factor analysis

The five variables, brand awareness, brand love, brand identity, brand choice, and eWOM, are measured by multiple statements. Therefore, I performed factor analysis to determine whether these statements group together and effectively measure the factors/variables they are designed to measure.

5.4.1 Factor analysis of brand awareness

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value measure for Brand awareness is recorded at 0.804, higher than the 0.5 threshold presented in the Table 8, meaning the dataset is suitable for factor analysis.

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for Brand awareness reports a Chi-square value of 217.932 with 10 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.001, less than the threshold of 0.005. Therefore, it shows a correlation between the measured items for Brand awareness and supporting their use in factor analysis.

Table 8. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test (Brand awareness_BA)

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	**Measure of Sampling Adequacy**	0.804
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	**Approx. Chi-Square**	217.932
	df	10
	Sig.	<.001

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Using the extraction method of Principal Component Analysis, the factor analysis results for brand awareness show that the Eigenvalue is 2.655, exceeding the threshold of 1, and the total percentage of variance explained by the first component is 53.1%, which is higher than 50%. Therefore, the items used to measure brand awareness exhibit strong commonality (see Table below).

Table 9. Total Variance Explained (Brand awareness_BA)

Component	Eigenvalues (Variance	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.655	53.100	53.100
2	.774	15.485	68.586
3	.693	13.855	82.441
4	.478	9.564	92.005
5	.400	7.995	100.000

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Examining the communalities, the results of all five brand awareness items are closer to 1, indicating a strong association between each item and the extracted factor. The level of communalities indicates that each item's variance is explained by the extracted factor structure. Specifically, three items, BA3, BA4, and BA5, have extraction values higher than the commonly accepted cut-off of 0.4. Meanwhile, two items, BA1 and BA2, have slightly lower extraction values (0.374 and 0.369, respectively), but no severe deviations are noted. Additionally, the component matrix shows that all five items have loadings exceeding 0.6, confirming that the relationship between observed items and the extracted components is significant. Therefore, I retain the five items to measure brand awareness and uses these five items for brand awareness in further analysis. The details of communalities and component matrix are presented in the Table 10

Table 10. Communalities and Component matrix (Brand awareness BA)

Communalities		
	Initial	**Extraction**
BA1	1.000	0.374
BA2	1.000	0.369

Component Matrix	
	Component 1
BA1	0.611
BA2	0.607

BA3	1.000	0.636
BA4	1.000	0.641
BA5	1.000	0.635

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

BA3	0.798
BA4	0.801
BA5	0.797

a. 1 components extracted.

After conducting exploratory factor analysis, Cronbach Alpha is evaluated to check the reliability of the extracted component. A Cronbach Alpha is considered acceptable if it is above 0.6; those between 0.6 and 0.8 are moderate, and those higher than 0.8 are excellent (Nunan, Birks, & Malhotra, 2020). The statistical results in Table 11 show that the Cronbach Alpha of the five items is 0.765, which is higher than 0.6. Consequently, brand awareness has been assessed reliably using five items. Specifically, brand awareness accounts for a percentage of the variation of BA1 (37.4%), BA2 (36.9%), BA3 (63.6%), BA4 (64.1%), and BA5 (63.5%)

Table 11. Reliability test (Brand awareness_BA)

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Brand awareness	0.765	5

5.4.2 Factor analysis of brand love

The Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy of brand love is 0.872, above the cut-off of 0.5, suggesting the data is appropriate for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity confirms the correlation among measured items and supports their use in factor analysis by presenting a Chi-squared value of 998.408 with 45 degrees of freedom and a p-value <0.001, less than 0.005. Details of the results are shown in the Table 12 below

Table 12. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test (Brand love_BL)

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	**Measure of Sampling Adequacy**	0.872
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	**Approx. Chi-Square**	998.408
	df	45
	Sig.	<.001

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The total variance explained results reveal that two components were extracted, demonstrating a share variance among the items, accounting for a cumulative 69.163%. The first component explains 51.750% of the variance, while the second component accounts for 17.413%. The details of the results are outlined in the Table 13 below.

Table 13. Total Variance Explained (Brand love_BL)

Component	Eigenvalues (Variance	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.175	51.750	51.750
2	1.741	17.413	69.163
3	.721	7.212	76.375
4	.481	4.810	81.185

5	.436	4.362	85.547
6	.394	3.943	89.490
7	.315	3.146	92.636
8	.276	2.763	95.399
9	.261	2.611	98.010
10	.199	1.990	100.000

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The communalities result of 10 items of brand love are relatively close to 1, suggesting that each item has a strong relationship with the extracted factor. Specifically, the extracted values range from 0.542 to 0.878, above the threshold value of 0.4, indicating that the factor model well-explained the variation of each item. Notably, Recode_BL4 and Recode_BL7 have the highest extraction values (0.875 and 0.878, respectively), while BL2 and BL1 show lower values (0.542 and 0.562, respectively).

The component matrix results (factor loadings) indicate that all items in the first component have factor loadings above 0.7, greater than the suggested value of 0.6, confirming a strong correlation between observed items and the extracted factor. Notably, BL1 to BL10 load strongly onto the first component, except for Recode_BL4 and Recode_BL7, which load onto the second component with factor loadings of 0.932 and 0.917, respectively. Items that reveal high loadings on particular components are considered to be aligned with the extracted factor. Specifically, the observed items BL1 to BL10 strongly correlate with the extracted component (brand love), as evidenced by their significant positive loadings on the primary factor. Therefore, in order to assess the brand love variable and move forward with further analysis, the eight items BL1 (0.562), BL2 (0.542), BL3 (0.666), BL5 (0.682), BL6 (0.678), BL8 (0.703), BL9 (0.687), BL10 (0.644) will be retained. This ensures that the focus will be on the most representative elements of the dataset. The details of communalities and component matrix are presented in the Table 14 below.

Table 14. Communalities and Component matrix (Brand love_BL)

Communalities			**Component Matrix**		
	Initial	**Extraction**		**Component 1**	**Component 2**
BL1	1.000	0.562	BL1	0.749	-0.010
BL2	1.000	0.542	BL2	0.736	-0.018
BL3	1.000	0.666	BL3	0.815	-0.031
BL5	1.000	0.682	BL5	0.817	-0.122
BL6	1.000	0.678	BL6	0.823	0.014
BL8	1.000	0.703	BL8	0.835	-0.073
BL9	1.000	0.687	BL9	0.823	-0.095
BL10	1.000	0.644	BL10	0.802	0.029
Recode_BL4	1.000	0.875	Recode_BL4	0.080	0.932
Recode_BL7	1.000	0.878	Recode_BL7	0.192	0.917

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. *a. 2 components extracted.*

Cronbach's Alpha is then calculated to determine how reliable the extracted component is. A Cronbach's Alpha above 0.6 is considered acceptable, with values between 0.6 and 0.8 deemed moderate and those above 0.8 deemed excellent (Nunan, Birks, & Malhotra, 2020). The statistical results indicate that Cronbach's Alpha of the eight remaining items is 0.920, exceeding the 0.8 threshold, indicating strong internal consistency. As a result, the remaining eight items, namely BL1, BL2, BL3, BL5, BL6, BL8, BL9, and BL10, can be used to measure the brand love variable and go with further analysis.

Table 15. Reliability test (Brand love_BL)

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Brand love	0.920	8

5.4.3 Factor analysis of brand identity

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test result for brand identity is 0.733, which is higher than the suggested cut-off of 0.5. This demonstrates that the factor analysis is suitable. In addition, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity shows a Chi-square value of 250.074 with 3 degrees of freedom, which is statistically significant at $p < 0.001$. These results show that there are indeed correlations between the observed variables, supporting the appropriateness of factor analysis. The details of KMO and Bartlett's text is shown in Table 16 below.

Table 16. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test (Brand identity_BI)

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	**Measure of Sampling Adequacy**	.733
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	**Approx. Chi-Square**	250.074
	df	3
	Sig.	<.001

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Using principal component analysis as the extraction method, the first component's Eigenvalue surpasses the threshold value of 1 (2.377). Additionally, the first component accounts for 79.228% of the total variance. This suggests that the first component successfully reflects the brand identity construct.

Table 17. Total Variance Explained (Brand identity_BI)

Component	Eigenvalues (Variance	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.377	79.228	79.228
2	.356	11.872	91.099
3	.267	8.901	100.000

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Examining the communalities, the results of all three brand identity items are closer to 1, indicating a strong association between each item and the extracted component. BI1 has an extraction value of 0.763, BI2 has 0.822, and BI3 has 0.791, all higher than the commonly used cut-off value of 0.4. These values suggest that the extracted factor explains a proportion of the variance for each item.

Additionally, the component matrix reveals that all three items, BI1 (0.874), BI2 (0.907), and BI3 (0.890), have high factor loadings and above 0.6, further supporting the idea that these items strongly correlate with the extracted component. As a result, these three items can be grouped and are reliable indicators of the brand identity construct.

Table 18. Communalities and Component matrix (Brand identity_BI)

Communalities		
	Initial	**Extraction**
BI1	1.000	0.763
BI2	1.000	0.822
BI3	1.000	0.791

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix	
	Component 1
BI1	0.874
BI2	0.907
BI3	0.890

a. 1 components extracted.

Cronbach Alpha is assessed following the exploratory factor analysis to verify the reliability of the extracted components. The Cronbach Alpha of the three items is 0.869, which is considered high internal consistency. Consequently, the three items are reliable for assessing brand identity. In particular, a percentage of the variation of BI1 (76.3%), BI2 (82.2%), and BI3 (79.1%) can be explained to brand identity.

Table 19. Reliability test (Brand identity_BI)

Variable	**Cronbach's Alpha**	**N of Items**
Brand identity	0.869	3

5.4.4 Factor analysis of eWOM

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure for the eWOM variable has a value of 0.726, surpassing the threshold value of 0.5. This result shows the dataset is appropriate for doing factor analysis. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity results also demonstrate the correlation between the variables, with approximately a Chi-square of 217.946 over 3 degrees of freedom, along with a significant p-value <0.001. These results strongly confirm that these variables are suitable for factor analysis to explore the key elements that describe eWOM. The details of KMO and Bartlett’s test are shown in the table below.

Table 20. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test (eWOM)

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	**Measure of Sampling Adequacy**	0.726
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	**Approx. Chi-Square**	217.046
	df	3
	Sig.	<.001

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The factor analysis shows that the Eigenvalue for the first component is 2.304, higher than 1, and the cumulative percentage of variance is 76.789%, more than 50%. As a result, the three items measured in eWOM can be combined into one variable to assess eWOM.

Table 21. Total Variance Explained (eWOM)

Component	Eigenvalues (Variance	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.304	76.789	76.789
2	.391	13.020	89.810
3	.306	10.190	100.000

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The communalities value for the three items measuring eWOM are recorded at 1 initially, with extraction value ranging from 0.743 to 0.799; details to be listed in the table below meet the criteria higher than the cut-off value of 0.4. This suggests the ability of extracted factors to capture the variance in observed items. The component matrix also shows significant factor loadings, in which all factor loadings are higher than 0.8, while the acceptable range is from 0.6, demonstrating strong relationships with the extracted factor. As a result, three items can go together to measure the eWOM variable as every item has a high loading and contribution to the explanation of eWOM and can be continued with further analysis

Table 22. Communalities and Component matrix (eWOM)

Communalities		
	Initial	Extraction
eWOM1	1.000	0.743
eWOM2	1.000	0.799
eWOM3	1.000	0.761

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix	
	Component 1
eWOM1	0.862
eWOM2	0.894
eWOM3	0.873

a. 1 components extracted.

After factor analysis, a reliability test is performed to evaluate the consistency and reliability of the three items measuring eWOM. The Cronbach Alpha is higher than 0.6, which is acceptable, and this result presents a value of 0.849, which is considered high reliability. Consequently, the three items are valid for evaluating the eWOM variables. Specifically, eWOM accounts for 74.3%, 79.9%, and 76.1% of the variation in eWOM1, eWOM2, and eWOM3, respectively.

Table 23. Reliability test (eWOM)

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
eWOM	0.849	3

5.4.5 Factor analysis of brand choice

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) tests of the four items measuring the Brand choice variable indicate a value of 0.824, higher than the cut-off point 0.5. According to this outcome, the dataset is suitable

for factor analysis. The results of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, which show a Chi-square of approximately 276.907 over six degrees of freedom and a significant p-value less than 0.001, also confirm the appropriateness for factor analysis to investigate the items that characteristic brand choice. The table below displays the outcomes of KMO and Bartlett's test.

Table 24. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test (Brand choice_BC)

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	**Measure of Sampling Adequacy**	0.824
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	**Approx. Chi-Square**	276.907
	df	6
	Sig.	<.001

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The table below shows that the first component has an eigenvalue of 2.762, more than 1. In addition, the total variance of the first component explains at least 50%, precisely 60.051%. Based on these results, these four observed items can be grouped under one factor: brand choice, and these four items can represent the underlying structure of brand choice.

Table 25. Total Variance Explained (Brand choice_BC)

Component	**Eigenvalues (Variance**	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**
1	2.762	69.051	69.051
2	.459	11.468	80.519
3	.404	10.104	90.622
4	.375	9.378	100.000

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The communalities of four items measuring brand choice are initially recorded as 1, recommending there is a strong connection between the observed items and the extracted factor (brand choice). The extraction values also range from 0.650 to 0.717, surpassing the cut-off of 0.4, meaning the factor solution can explain significant variance in the observed variables. Moreover, the component matrix exhibits significant factor loadings of every item on the first component. In particular, it is higher than the cut-off value 0.6, ranging from 0.806 to 0.847. These sufficient loadings of four items on the primary component mean that all four items effectively capture the underlying characteristics of brand choice.

Table 26. Communalities and Component matrix (Brand choice_BC)

Communalities		
	Initial	**Extraction**
BC1	1.000	.650
BC2	1.000	.697
BC3	1.000	.717
BC4	1.000	.699

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix	
	Component 1
BC1	.806
BC2	.835
BC3	.847
BC4	.836

a. 1 components extracted.

After the factor analysis, Cronbach alpha will be evaluated to examine the reliability of four items in measuring brand choice. Given that the value of Cronbach Alpha is 0.850, surpassing the criteria value at 0.6, it indicated that brand choice is measured in reliability using these four items. To be more specific, the variation in BC1, BC2, BC3, and BC4 is explained by brand choice in the following proposition: 65%, 69.7%, 71.7% and 69.9%, respectively

Table 27. Reliability test (Brand choice)

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Brand choice	0.850	4

5.5 Correlation Analysis

After examining factor analysis, a bivariate Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to investigate the variables' linear correlations. Table 28 below presents the results of the correlation matrix for the five variables, Brand awareness, Brand love, Brand identity, eWOM, and Brand choice, after conducting factor analysis with confidence levels of 95% and significance levels of p-value < 0.01. According to Hair et al. (2010), a correlation coefficient is regarded as strong if the value is above 0.5. As evident in the table, all the correlations are above 0.5 and positive, meaning the variables are highly related to each other in a positive correlation and have the same direction.

According to the results, the strongest positive correlation exists between brand love and brand choice, with a correlation coefficient value of 0.730. It reflects a strong linear association where consumers who feel a greater love for a brand are more likely to choose it. The following strongest correlation is between brand love and brand identity (0.718), suggesting that a stronger personal connection to a brand results in a greater love for the brand.

Compared to those in the higher range, which have a correlation value above 0.7, a moderately strong correlation is found between brand love and brand awareness, showing a correlation value of 0.699, reflecting that the more brand awareness there is, the more emotional love attachment to the brand. Moreover, brand love is also significant in relation to eWOM at r = 0.683. This correlations suggests that customers with greater brand love are more likely to participate in positive eWOM communication. Furthermore, brand identity correlates with eWOM and brand choice, at r = 0.639 and r = 0.671, respectively, highlighting that consumers who strongly identify with a brand are more likely to choose and share favorable eWOM about it.

Although a correlation coefficient higher than 0.5 is considered a strong correlation, the relationships between brand awareness and brand identity (0.598), brand awareness and brand choice (0.584), and brand awareness and brand choice (0.555) are not as strong as other correlations in the framework. These correlations suggest that, in comparison to other variables, brand awareness has a relatively lower association with brand identity, eWOM, and brand choice.

Table 28. Correlation matrix

	Brand Awareness	Brand Love	Brand Identity	eWOM	Brand Choice
Brand Awareness	1				
Brand Love	0.699**	1			
Brand Identity	0.598**	0.718**	1		
eWOM	0.555**	0.683**	0.639**	1	
Brand Choice	0.584**	0.730**	0.671**	0.624**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level*

5.6 Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis is used to analyze the relationship between metric-dependent variables and metric-independent variables. Some requirements should be satisfied before performing regression analysis. Firstly, a sufficient sample size must be used to run the regression analysis. According to Hair et al. (2010), the necessary sample size in a regression model is determined by the number of observed variables. Specifically, the sample size threshold should be five times larger than the number of observed items. This study, 25 observed variables were used to measure five variables (Brand awareness, brand love, brand identity, eWOM, and brand choice); thus, the minimum sample size should be 125. Initially, the survey collected a total of 209 responses, which is above the threshold of 125. After the data preparation step, there are 171 remaining valid responses. Therefore, in terms of sample size, the dataset has enough valid responses to satisfy the first requirement. Secondly, outliers should be removed from the dataset because of the sensitive scores of regressions (Pallant, 2010). As mentioned, I have conducted data preparation to remove outliers from the dataset, with the remaining 171 valid answers. Therefore, the second requirement is also satisfied. The third criteria is examining the dataset distribution to see whether it is normal (Pallant, 2010). The data must be normally distributed, with homoscedasticity and linear correlations between variables. These criteria have been demonstrated previously in the descriptive data section and correlation analysis section, and they suggest that these data criteria are met. Finally, once the quality scale is satisfactory, I examined the multicollinearity in the model, which occurs when two or more independent variables have a high degree of correlation, which makes the regression model unreliable (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). According to Hair et al. (2010), the variance inflation factor (VIF) < 10 is acceptable. The VIF is mentioned in the following sections to assess the multicollinearity.

This section evaluates two primary regression models with details presented in the following sections.

5.6.1 Regression model 1: eWOM

The first regression model examines how brand attributes, particularly brand awareness and love, affect eWOM. In this regression model, brand awareness and brand love are the independent variables, eWOM is the dependent variable, and brand identity serves as the moderator. Since each variable is measured through multiple items, I computed the average of items representing the factor. Regarding the moderate variables, I created a new variable by multiplying the brand identity with the two independent variables (brand awareness and brand love). The first equation is as follows:

$$\text{eWOM} = \alpha + \beta 1 * (\text{brand awareness}) + \beta\ 2 * (\text{brand love}) + \beta\ 3 * (\text{brand awareness} * \text{brand identity}) + \beta 4 * (\text{brand love} * \text{brand identity}) + \varepsilon$$

In Table 29, a summary of the first regression model is presented. With an R-squared value of 0.517, the model explains 51.7% of the variance in eWOM. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.506 means that the predictors included in the model explain 50.6% of the variance of eWOM. Since the R-squared and the adjusted R-squared are close, the model effectively captures the variance in the dependent variable.

Table 29. Regression model 1: Model summary

Model	R-squared	Adjusted R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.517	0.506	0.62809

a. Predictors: (Constant), BLxBI, Brand_awareness, Brandlove, BAxBI

According to the ANOVA results in the table 30, the total model is statistically significant, with a p-value < 0.001 and an F value of 44.448, higher than the critical F-value of 2.43. This critical F-value was determined using 5 degrees of freedom for the numerator and 22 for the denominator, at a 95% confidence level. That significant F-statistic value (44.448) suggests that at least one regression coefficient differs from zero, meaning that the independent variables enhance the model's ability to predict the dependent variable (eWOM). Thus, at least one relationship between the dependent variable (eWOM) and independent variables (brand awareness, brand love, and brand identity) exists in the regression model.

Table 30. Regression model 1 - ANOVA

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
1	Regression	70.140	4	17.535	44.448	<.001b
	Residual	65.487	166	.395		
	Total	135.627	170			

a. Dependent Variable: eWOM

b. Predictors: (Constant), BLxBI, Brand_awareness, Brandlove, BAxBI

In the regression coefficients, the unstandardized coefficients are used to examine the effect of independent variables on dependent variables while keeping other variables constant. In addition, the questionnaire design in this study using a standardized scale (five-point Likert scale) for all measurements and the nature of this study is applied research rather than theoretical research, I interpret the unstandardized coefficient (Pallant, 2010) to explain how much change in independent variables effect dependent variable.

With a confidence level of 95%, if the significant (p-value) is below 0.05, there will be a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The coefficient results in Table 31 indicate that brand love significantly affects eWOM (with p-value =0.003, less than 0.05) and VIF = 9.001, below the threshold of 10, showing no multicollinearity. In addition, with a confidence level of 90%, if the significance (p-value) is less than 0.1, there will be a relationship between the independent variable (s) and the dependent variable. In this situation, the interaction between brand awareness and brand identity may have a moderate effect on eWOM (p-value =0.089, p-value < 0.1). However, the variance inflation factor is too high (VIF = 25.647), violating the multicollinearity and affecting the regression analysis results. Moreover, the constant value of eWOM (p-value = 0.097, p -value < 0.1) indicates that without the involvement of brand awareness, brand love, and the interaction of brand identity, eWOM is positive (α=0.631). Furthermore, the significance level of the relationship between brand awareness and eWOM (p-value = 0.733) and the interaction between brand love and brand identity and eWOM (p-value = 0.643) are higher than 0.05. These results indicate that eWOM is not predicted by brand awareness alone or by the interaction between brand love and brand identity.

Table 31. Regression model 1 - Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized B	Sig.	VIF
1	(Constant)	0.631	.097	
	Brand_awareness	-0.060	0.733	5.633
	Brandlove	0.634	.003**	9.001
	BAxBI	0.083	0.089	25.647
	BLxBI	-0.026	0.643	32.470

a. Dependent Variable: eWOM

According to the standard error in the model summary and the unstandardized beta in the coefficient table, regression model 1 is as follows:

eWOM = 0.631 + (-060) * brand awareness + 0.634 * brand love + 0.083 * (brand awareness * brand identity) + (-0.026) * (brand love * brand identity) + 0.628

5.6.2 Regression model 2: Brand choice

In the second regression model, I evaluated the relationship between eWOM and brand choice. In this regression model, eWOM is the independent variable, brand choice is the dependent variable, and brand identity serves as the moderator. The equation of the second regression model is as follows:

Brand choice = α + β 1 * (eWOM) + β 2 * (eWOM * brand identity) + ε

According to the table model summary, the R-squared value is 0.462, indicating that the model can explain 46.2% of the variation in brand choice. The adjusted R-squared value is 0.456, suggesting that the included predictors explain a 45.6% variance in the model. These two values are closer, meaning the predictors in the regression model effectively predict the variance in the dependent variable. Additionally, the number of independent variables is appropriate, and no irrelevant variables exist.

Table 32. Regression model 2: Model summary

Model	R-squared	Adjusted R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate
2	0.462	0.456	0.54496

a. Predictors: (Constant), eWOMxBI, eWOM

The ANOVA results show that the overall model is highly significant, with a p-value below 0.001 and an F-statistic value of 72.22, which is much larger than the critical F value of 3.05. The critical F-value was determined using 2 degrees of freedom for the numerator and 168 for the denominator at a 95% confidence level. These results suggest that the regression model is suitable for explaining brand choice with the presence of independent variables. Therefore, this regression model will have at least one relationship between independent and dependent variables.

Table 33. Regression model 2 - ANOVA

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
2	Regression	42.897	2	21.449	72.223	<.001b
	Residual	49.892	168	.297		
	Total	92.789	170			

a. Dependent Variable: Brandchoice

b. Predictors: (Constant), eWOMxBI, eWOM

The coefficients table shows the constants have a significant impact in predicting the dependent variable (brand choice), as its p-value is below 0.001, which is also below the 0.05 threshold. In addition, the unstandardized coefficient is positive (α=2.423), meaning that without other independent variables, the brand choice is expected to be positive. Moreover, the VIF for both predictors eWOM and the interaction between eWOM and brand identity are below 10 (both VIF values are 4.256), which does not violate the multicollinearity. However, the eWOM variable does not significantly affect Brand choice, as the p-value is higher than the cut-off point 0.05 (p-value = 0.247). This indicates that eWOM alone can not predict brand choice. In contrast, the interaction between eWOM and brand identity significantly influences brand choice as a p-value < 0.001.

Table 34. Regression model 2 - Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized B	Sig.	VIF

	(Constant)	2.423	<.001	
2	eWOM	0.112	0.247	4.256
	eWOMxBI	0.077	<.001	4.256

a. Dependent Variable: Brandchoice

Using standard error in the model summary and unstandardized coefficient beta, the second regression formula is shown as follows:

Brand choice = 2.423 + 0.112 * (eWOM) + 0.077 * (eWOM * brand identity) + 0.544

5.7 Summary of the results

5.7.1 Results of regression model 1 - eWOM

The first regression model, which includes the dependent variables (eWOM), independent variables (brand awareness and brand love), and the moderate variable (brand identity), was conducted to test hypotheses H1, H2, H4, and H5. To evaluate the hypotheses, I will consider the p-value to check whether a relationship exists between the dependent variable and independent variables. If the p-value is less than 0.05 with a significance level of 95%, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Thus, there will be a significant relationship between independent and dependent variables. Additionally, this study uses an unstandardized coefficient to interpret the regression results, examining how independent variable changes in one-unit affects dependent variables. Table 35 below summary the results of the first regression model:

Table 35. Correlation and regression results of model 1- eWOM

	Correlation		**Regression**			
	Pearson coefficient	**p-value**		**Unstandardized coefficient**	**Sig.**	**VIF**
Brand awareness	0.555	<.001	Brand awareness	-0.060	0.733	5.633
Brand love	0.683	<.001	Brandlove	0.634	0.003*	9.001
Brand identity	0.639	<.001	Brand awareness x Brand identity	0.083	0.089**	25.647
			Brand love x Brand identity	-0.026	0.643	32.470

Dependent variable: eWOM

** Significant at 95% confidence level*

***Significant at 90% confidence level*

Based on the correlation results, there are linear relationships between brand awareness, brand love, brand identity, and eWOM with p-value less than 0.001, all of which are positive linear relationships. Brand love shows the strongest relationship with eWOM (r = 0.683), followed by the relationship

between brand identity and eWOM, with r = 0.639. Brand awareness has the lowest correlation with eWOM among these three relationships, with r = 0.555.

According to the results of the Regression analysis, the hypotheses are analyzed as follows:

H1: Brand awareness has a positive impact on positive eWOM

The regression results show that there is no significant relationship between brand awareness and eWOM, as its p-value is 0.733, much higher than the threshold of 0.05. The VIF value of 5.633 is below the accepted threshold of 10, meaning there is no multicollinearity. Additionally, the unstandardized coefficient is negative (-0.06), meaning an increase in brand awareness can lead to a decrease in eWOM, particularly if brand awareness increases by 1 unit, the eWOM will decrease by 0.06 units. However, the effect is not significant as its p-value is higher than 0.05. Given these findings, **H1 is rejected**, indicating that brand awareness cannot predict eWOM behavior. Consumers may be familiar with the brand and can recognize a brand, but they do not feel that knowing a brand is enough to share positive comments about the brand in an online environment.

H2: Brand love has a positive impact on positive eWOM

The regression results demonstrate a significant relationship between brand love and eWOM. This relationship is supported by the p-value = 0.003, less than 0.05. The variance inflation factor is 9.001, which is satisfied with being below the threshold of 10, indicating that it does not violate multicollinearity. Therefore, **H2 is accepted**. This implies that brand love alone can predict eWOM. The unstandardized coefficient is 0.634, suggesting that brand love increases by 1 unit, and eWOM will rise by 0.634 units. These results highlight the impact of brand love on eWOM, as consumers who feel attached to a brand are more likely to share and recommend the brand to others.

H4: Brand identity positively moderates the effect of Brand love on positive eWOM

The regression table results demonstrate that brand love does not impact on eWOM with the moderating effect of brand identity. The p-value of 0.643 for this relationship is much higher than 0.05. This implies that the relationship between brand love and eWOM is not moderated by brand identity. Additionally, the unstandardized coefficient is negative (β = -0.026), meaning that brand love and identity decrease the likelihood of positive eWOM. Specifically, an increase in the interaction between brand love and brand identity of 1 unit will result in a decrease of 0.026 units in eWOM. Furthermore, the VIF value of 32.470, much higher than the accepted cut-off point of 10, indicates potential issues with multicollinearity that can affect the regression results. Given the results, **H4 is rejected,** Brand identity may not interact with brand love in a way that enhances customers' willingness to participate in positive eWOM. Another possibility is that brand identity is not strong enough to affect the relationship between brand love and eWOM.

H5: Brand identity positively moderates the effect of Brand awareness on positive eWOM

Results from the regression model indicate there is a relationship between brand awareness and eWOM with moderating effect of brand identity. The p-value for this relationship is 0.089 at a

significance level of 90%, as its p-value less than 0.1. The unstandardized coefficient is positive, with β = 0.083, suggesting that if the interaction between brand awareness and brand identity increases, eWOM is expected to increase as well. Specifically, if the interaction between brand awareness and brand identity increases by 1 unit, eWOM will increase by 0.083 units. However, the VIF value is 25.647, much higher than the accepted threshold of 10; multicollinearity may occur and affect the regression results. Given this concern, **H5 is rejected.** This indicates that the moderation effect of brand identity on the relationship between brand awareness and eWOM is unreliable.

5.7.2 Results of regression model 2 - Brand choice

The second regression model was conducted to test hypotheses H3 and H6, whether there is a direct relationship between eWOM and brand choice, and this relationship with the presence of brand identity. In this second regression model, eWOM is the independent variable, brand choice is the dependent variable, and brand identity is the moderate variable. The correlation and regression results are summarized in the table below:

Table 36. Correlation and regression results of model 2 – brand choice

	Correlation			**Regression**		
	Pearson coefficient	**p-value**		**Unstandardized coefficient**	**Sig.**	**VIF**
Brand identity	0.671	<.001	eWOM	.112	.247	4.256
eWOM	0.624	<.001	eWOMxBI	.077	<.001*	4.256

Dependent variable: Brand choice

** Significant at 99% confidence level*

In the table, the correlation results show that eWOM and brand identity have linear relationships with brand choice, with p-values of less than 0.001. It indicates that if there is a stronger brand identity and consumers participate more in positive eWOM, they are more likely to continue to choose that brand in which they have a stronger personal connection and brand that they talk positively to others. The analysis of hypotheses based on the regression results are as follows:

H3: eWOM has a positive impact on Brand Choice

The regression results show that the relationship between eWOM and brand choice is not noted in this regression model due to its high p-value of 0.247, much higher than the accepted p-value of 0.05. This means that only eWOM is not significant in predicting the change in brand choice. Although the VIF value is 4.256, satisfying the criteria of being under 10 to have no multicollinearity and unstandardized coefficient is positive (0.112), meaning if an increase in eWOM by 1 unit, brand choice also sees an increase by 0.112 units. However, the significance of this relationship is not supported based on the statistical results; therefore, **H3 is rejected**. Customers share optimistic reviews about the brand, but sharing positive comments is not the only reason to continue to choose the brand. When choosing a brand, customers may consider various factors, such as price or their purpose.

H6: Brand identity positively moderates the effect of eWOM on Brand Choice

According to regression results, eWOM positively impacts brand choice with a moderating effect of brand identity. It is evident that the p-value is less than 0.001, with a confidence level of 99%, confirming that the interaction between eWOM and brand identity sufficiently predicts change in brand choice. The VIF value is 4.256, below the common cut-off point of 10, suggesting that no multicollinearity among the variables can affect the regression model results. The unstandardized coefficient is positive (0.077), meaning that the interaction between eWOM and brand identity increases by one unit, which can lead to an increase of 0.077 units in brand choice. Therefore, **H6 is accepted**. When customers spread out the positive things about the brand and feel brand-connected at the same time, they will intend to choose the brand they are talking about positively.

In essence, I presented the data analysis process with SPSS software version 29 in this chapter. This data analysis process went through data preparation to remove outliers, descriptive data to see the characteristics of data and data distribution, then doing factor analysis to see if the observed variables went together to present the factors well, correlation analysis, and finally, regression analysis to test the relationships among variables. The results of the hypothesis are presented in the table below:

Table 37. Hypothesis summary

Hypothesis	Detail	Result
H1	Brand awareness has a positive impact on positive eWOM	Rejected
H2	Brand love has a positive impact on positive eWOM	Accepted
H3	Positive eWOM has a positive impact on Brand choice	Rejected
H4	Brand identity positively moderates the effect of Brand love on positive eWOM	Rejected
H5	Brand identity positively moderates the effect of Brand awareness on positive eWOM	Rejected
H6	Brand identity positively moderates the effect of positive eWOM on Brand choice	Accepted

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses the data analysis results from Chapter 5. In light of this discussion, theoretical implications will be proposed to conclude how research findings contribute to existing theories, and managerial implications will be proposed for businesses, managers, and retailers doing in the international context. Furthermore, this study will acknowledge its limitations and make recommendations for future research.

6.1 Discussion

This study aims to analyze the relationship between brand attributes and eWOM from a business perspective by investigating the revolving relationship between eWOM and brand attributes. Specifically, this study focuses on how brand awareness, brand love, brand identity, and brand choice interact with eWOM instead of exploring which factor causes eWOM behavior in customers, which is considered more from a customer perspective, as seen in previous studies done in eWOM literature. In the context of the digital world, consumers are free to create and share content, making it increasingly challenging for brands to control online customers' narratives. Therefore, understanding the relationship between eWOM and brand attributes will help businesses know how brand attributes can contribute to eWOM and how eWOM behavior can predict customer-brand-related behavior, enabling them to develop more effective brand and eWOM strategies. This study adopts the ADO framework to investigate these relationships and address key research questions: *How does the brand awareness of Korean cosmetic brands affect the eWOM in the Vietnamese market? How does the brand love of Korean cosmetic brands affect the eWOM in the Vietnamese market? How does the eWOM affect the brand choice among Korean cosmetic brands in Vietnam? Moreover, how does the brand identity moderate the relationship between brand awareness, brand love, eWOM, and brand choice?* Generally, the results of this study have some alignment and differences from those of previous literature. Based on the results of the data analysis section, the details of these relationships will be discussed in the below sections.

6.1.1 The effect of brand awareness on positive eWOM

First, this research shows that brand awareness alone does not affect positive eWOM. This result is similar to the findings of Liao et al. (2012), who conducted research in the context of online gaming to see whether brand awareness leads to eWOM. In their study, brand awareness is not enough for players to spread their recommendation to others; they also consider functional, experiential, and symbolic value. Online game businesses need to fulfill these core values of game players to make them willing to share their words in the gaming community. This study also shows the same results, as brand awareness alone does not affect talking positive eWOM. This can be explained by the fact that Korean cosmetics are widely recognized and available in the Vietnamese beauty market. In addition, the Hallyu wave (Korean pop culture influence) and famous K-pop idols' endorsements have brought Korean brands closer to Vietnamese consumers. As a result, Korean brands already enjoy high visibility among Vietnamese customers. However, just knowing a brand is not enough to push people to talk positively about these brands in the online spaces. In that case, brand awareness is considered obvious and well-known to everyone, so customers may focus on talking about other

factors such as product performance, price, or personal experience rather than solely talking about the brand itself in a positive way.

This result differs from previous literature, such as Barreda (2015) and Hutter et al. (2013), who found that brand awareness can impact eWOM. In Barreda's (2015) paper, they found that a higher brand awareness among online social network users can lead to a greater likelihood of them engaging in positive word-of-mouth about travel firms such as hotels and destinations. In their study, brand awareness is not just about knowing a brand. However, it is reinforced through virtual interactions, meaning users engage with the brand in online communities, which strengthens their recognition and recall of the brand. The study of Hutter et al. (2013) had a similar approach to Barreda's (2015), as they also researched the context of people already having some level of commitment to the brand page, which can enhance their brand awareness and lead to eWOM. So, that means customers have some engagement activities with the brand to enhance brand awareness, which, in turn, leads to eWOM rather than simply just knowing the brand. It is different from this study, as this study approaches from a business perspective to see how brand attributes, specifically brand awareness in this relationship, lead to eWOM, so it means that this study investigates how brand awareness alone can lead to eWOM without considering the customers' engagement in brand activities or advertising. In light of these discussions, it is concluded that brand awareness alone is not enough to lead customers to talk about brand positivity in an electronic environment. In the case of brands that are already widely recognized, such as Korean cosmetic brands in Vietnam, getting customers to share online reviews requires more than just awareness. Customers need to consider their personal experience with the brand to have something to discuss. Additionally, it is required that customers have some activities with the brand, like participating in the activities of the brand's fan page to stay connected and update about brands to increase eWOM activities of customers.

6.1.2 The effect of brand love on positive eWOM

This study confirms that brand love has a significant impact on positive eWOM. This finding aligns with previous studies by Carroll and Ahuvia (2006), Amaro et al. (2020), and Karjaluoto et al. (2016). The paper of Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) studied in the context of consuming packed goods such as soft drinks, soaps, and cereals, and they revealed that brand love is a kind of customer satisfaction linked to post-customer behavior, including eWOM. The study by Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) found that if people reported a high level of brand love, they engaged in spreading the good word about the brand. This is similar to the study of Amaron et al. (2020), where they found that Erasmus students still actively share and continue to post about their memorable experiences during the Erasmus program in the online community after finishing the Erasmus exchange program. In addition, the study of Karjaluoto et al. (2016) also confirms this relationship, showing that brand love alone is strong enough to predict the eWOM, even though their study also tested the moderate effect of price and experience of customers on the relationship between brand love and eWOM but found no significant moderating effects. It could be explained that brand love is far stronger than just customer satisfaction with a brand. Brand love is unlike simple satisfaction; it represents a deeper emotional attachment to a brand, built through accumulated positive experiences with the brand over time. Therefore, this study's result further highlights the strong influence of brand love

on positive eWOM behavior. In addition, the minimum threshold of brand love is that people are already satisfied with the brand and may not have strong emotions toward the brand. In this study, the statistical results show that although customers do not exhibit strong emotional attachment, they still show a moderate positive emotional connection to their selected brand. Thus, the impact of brand love is strong enough to affect eWOM. The customers are already satisfied with their chosen brand and have some emotional sentiment to engage with the brand, boosting them to spread the positive word about the brand they love to others in the online environment.

6.1.3 The effect of positive eWOM on brand choice

This study examined the relationship between positive eWOM and brand choice, and the statistical findings indicate that the relationship between positive eWOM and brand choice is not significant. It means that even though customers share positively about brands in online spaces, they still do not choose those brands for future purchase. This result is different from the previous study of Anastasiei et al. (2024). In the study of Anastasiei et al. (2024), customers with eWOM tendencies are associated with repurchase intention with the brand. Anastasiei et al. (2024) explained that customers could not recommend a brand or product they do not use, so it makes sense that they would continue purchasing what they have recommended. However, this study did not capture such a relationship; eWOM alone cannot lead to brand choice intention. One possible explanation is variety-seeking buying behavior, a typical consumer behavior that describes how people make purchase decisions. Specifically, consumers spend a little time researching if they have variety-seeking behavior. In this situation, consumers enjoy shopping around and trying various cosmetics brands, tending to switch brands to seek new experiences. Indeed, in the beauty industry, especially in emerging markets like Vietnam, Korean beauty is popular, and consumers have a vast selection of new brands and products to try, encouraging switching behaviors to find fresh experiences. They may still share positive eWOM for their selected brands as they have enjoyed, but this does not necessarily mean they will remain loyal. Another possible reason is that the Vietnamese customer's beauty market is significantly influenced by K-beauty trends due to the Hallyu wave. Consumers interested in those trends will have the drive to try new products and brands associated with these trend movements.

Additionally, the results of this study are also different from those of Khan et al. (2023), as their study context about multinational apparel brands showed that positive eWOM can result in customers' purchase intention. The main difference between this paper and the study of Khan et al. (2023) is the point of view of the study. In Khan's paper (2023), customer purchase intention is impacted by reading positive reviews. In other words, in the study of Khan et al. (2023), it is concluded that consumer purchase intention is influenced by online information; people usually consult other consumers' reviews before deciding to purchase a product or choose brands. While this study assesses whether customers who leave positive reviews are more likely to prefer the same brand again. Thus, this study aims to help the brand predict consumer buying behavior and propose suitable strategies to encourage these positive behaviors. These differences in the approach to the problem may result in differences in the results of both papers.

6.1.4 The moderating effect of brand identity on the relationship between brand awareness, brand love, positive eWOM and brand choice

In this study, the author investigates how brand identity can moderate the effect of brand awareness and brand love on eWOM, as well as the effect of eWOM on brand choice. However, data analysis revealed that only the relationship between eWOM and brand choice is moderated by brand identity. While previous research has often explored brand identity as a mediator or antecedent in eWOM studies, little attention has been given to the role of brand identity as a moderator. Despite this, the finding is still considered consistent with the previous theory of Lam et al. (2010), as brand identity plays an important role in shaping customer behavior as consumers evaluate brands in both functional and identity-related aspects. A customer can spread good word about a brand if its product provides functional value to the customer. However, eWOM alone cannot predict brand choice intentions as customers also consider whether a brand aligns with their identity when choosing brands. Hence, although eWOM cannot directly predict brand choice intention, this relationship is still noticed significantly if the customers find that the selected brand can present their identity, driving the ability to continue with their chosen brands in the future. In addition, some Asian countries are well-known for having a collectivist culture instead of individualism like Western countries (James, 1992), and Vietnam shares these characteristics within the Asian area. The concept of brand identity is rooted in social identity theory, meaning Vietnamese customers tend to define their identity based on their relationships with social groups or organizations (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). It suggests that customers who have already expressed their support for the brand publicly may continue using it to reinforce their identity and maintain social consistency within their peer groups. Thus, this study highlights the significant role of brand identity in customer resistance to switching brands again; they are seeking not only utilitarian value but also emotional and symbolic value, meaning a brand is nice to have the ability to represent customers' identity to impact on customers preference of choosing brands in the future.

Secondly, the moderating effect of brand identity on the influence of brand awareness on eWOM is not significant in this study. In the previous literature, when brand identity was usually studied as a mediator or antecedent in eWOM literature, some studies were recognized to support the relationship between brand identity and eWOM behavior (Lee et al., 2020). For instance, in the study of Lee et al. (2020), when the authors studied how brand identity affects eWOM behavior on social media, they revealed that if students have a strong brand identification with their university, they can leave positive comments about the university and recommend them to other students. In addition, brand identity is considered a strong emotion that can shape customer behavior (Lam et al., 2010). However, in this study, brand identity cannot moderate the influence of brand awareness on eWOM. Customers may talk about a brand only if they have positive personal experiences. It is particularly relevant to the beauty industry in Vietnam, where Korean beauty brands are popular; simply recognizing the brand or recalling its advertising is not enough to trigger people to talk about it, regardless of how strong the brand identity is. Therefore, additional factors should be considered for customers to talk positively about the brand, as brand awareness is insufficient. Even if customers may find a strong connection with brand identity, it cannot change people's intention to speak positively about a brand widely on the internet.

Finally, this study cannot notice the relationship between brand love and positive eWOM with the moderating effect of brand identity. Brand love alone is sufficient in predicting the eWOM behavior of customers, meaning even if brand identity is present, it does not change how customers talk about a brand they already love. Moreover, because brand love includes integrating brand to customer identity (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006), this could make brand identity less impact the relationship between brand love and eWOM in this study.

6.2 Theoretical implications

This study has contributed certain theoretical implications for current research related to eWOM.

First, this research paper has expanded the eWOM research direction compared to previous theories by approaching eWOM from a business perspective. Notably, instead of previous studies, authors tend to study the relationship around eWOM from a customer perspective by examining the factors that influence eWOM and the possible outcomes from that eWOM. This paper has added a business perspective by investigating the relationships between brand attributes and eWOM. It can be a meaningful implication because the internet is widely used, and people have the freedom to spread their opinions, so businesses cannot fully control what customers write, talk about, and share about brands on the internet. Therefore, it is important to research how business attributes interact with eWOM and influence business outcomes. To do that, this study has utilized the Antecedents-Decisions-Outcomes (ADO) framework of Paul & Benito (2018) to analyze structural relationships where antecedents influence decisions, which in turn impact outcomes. Particularly, this study uses brand awareness and brand love as antecedents; eWOM is the decision, brand choice intention is the outcomes, and brand identity is the moderator. This study also expands the scope of research about eWOM by expanding the use of the ADO framework to explore its practical applications. By doing so, this study addresses a critical research gap, offering valuable insights into eWOM from a business perspective.

Secondly, this study fills the research gap about the moderating effectiveness of brand identity in eWOM literature. As mentioned, previous literature usually serves brand identity as an antecedent or mediator to lead to outcomes of eWOM. The results show that brand identity moderates the relationship between eWOM and brand choice, while it does not moderate the influence between brand awareness and brand love on eWOM. These findings provide a new function of brand identity, which serves as a moderator in the eWOM context and makes it easier for researchers to predict brand behavior outcomes with customers sharing positive reviews. However, brand identity is not recognized in moderating the influence of brand awareness and brand love on eWOM. Therefore, it suggests some limitations of the strength of brand identity. Although brand identity is a strong emotion that can impact the relationship between eWOM and brand choice and can be used in predicting customer behaviors, it cannot apply to all of the outcome behaviors of customers. Some outcome behaviors cannot be strengthened by integrating brand identity within customers.

Thirdly, this study once again confirms the impact of brand love on the positive eWOM behavior of customers. Previous studies have supported brand love's role in driving eWOM; this study further confirms and supports this relationship with the eWOM generation. This finding enhances the

relationship marketing theory, which suggests that customers who have strong emotional bonds with the brand, such as brand love, are more likely to share positive experiences widely on the internet.

Finally, another interesting finding from this study is that most respondents are female. Because female customers account for a larger share of the beauty market and are mostly the primary customer segment of beauty brands, this study can represent some of the thinking and behavior of this group, and it is considered meaningful for researchers.

6.3 Managerial Implications

This study demonstrates the meaningful relationship between brand attributes and eWOM in the context of Korean brands in the Vietnamese market. As Vietnam is an emerging market and attractive for international brands to consider going into this market, and in the era of digitalization, international brands can easily set up their business outside their domestic market, eWOM becomes important for these foreign brands to attract customers and predict customer future behavior. Therefore, this study proposes some recommendations for foreign businesses and the international market on leveraging eWOM strategies to expand their business.

Firstly, although brand awareness is the foundation (Hutter et al., 2013), without brand awareness, it is challenging to have a higher level of brand attributes or brand engagement strategy; only brand awareness is not enough to create positive eWOM. International marketers should consider creating activities and marketing campaigns to boost user interaction with the brand in all the online social networks that the brand has presented to encourage eWOM. Moreover, international brands can provide campaigns that allow customers to have a chance to experience the product and encourage customers to share their thoughts widely online. For example, livestreaming has recently emerged as one of the most popular activities in the Vietnamese market. International beauty brands can host live streams to increase customer interaction, offer product giveaways for testing, and organize user-generated content contests to encourage customers to spread eWOM about the brand.

Secondly, the effect of brand love on eWOM has been confirmed in various previous literature, and it is still confirmed again in this study. Therefore, managers and international marketers must pay more attention to this relationship. As brand love is different from satisfaction, which needs to meet the cognitive level, brand love requires additional emotional attachment and accumulative satisfaction experience over time. Therefore, international brands should not only focus on how to satisfy customers but also organize campaigns that strengthen the emotional relationship with the customer such as using personalized messages that make the customers feel they are valued and heard; then, it can lead to naturally wanting to recommend products that work for them, and brands value them. It needs to be noted in the context of competitive Korean beauty brands in the Vietnamese market, where Korean brands are already widely recognized and need something to differentiate them from other competing brands.

Thirdly, regarding the terms of brand identity, brand identity is not found to enhance the eWOM behavior of customers even if they are aware of the brand or when they love the brand. In this case, companies can focus on engaging activities and offer trendy product experiences to encourage

customers to share positive comments about the brand rather than relying on brand identity. For customers who show their love towards the brands, businesses need to continue nurturing this emotion to make it last longer such as telling brand stories that relate to customers' values or carrying out branding activities that communicate to customers that they are always open to honest communication, and brands can benefit from eWOM from the people who love the brands.

Finally, though eWOM alone cannot affect the brand choice intention, people's willingness to have positive eWOM can be considered a good starting point. Businesses can capture the willingness of customers to give positive recommendations to nurture deeper customer relationships, as international brands may have some limitations on reaching broader customers, and every positive eWOM from customers helps their business become more widely recognized. Additionally, many customers may belong to variety-seekers who are always looking for and experiencing new products; brands can create exclusive loyalty programs for these customers to make them feel valued and bridge the gap between eWOM and brand choice intention. A loyalty program can be a reward program for people who share positive comments about the brands; for example, if people post a positive review about the brands and hashtag brands on the internet, a brand can offer them a voucher to encourage them to have a repeat purchase in the future. Furthermore, eWOM influences brand choice intention when brand identity is strong enough. Therefore, international brands can invest in creating a distinctive or adaptive marketing messages that resonate with Vietnamese consumers' lifestyles and beauty aspirations. These local adaptive marketing strategies, along with the reward programs, can turn eWOM into actual purchase intention rather than trying to use it to increase the volume of eWOM.

6.4 Limitations and future research

Although this study has expanded some knowledge on both theoretical and practical sides, some limitations are still noted and can be improved in future research.

First, previous studies related to eWOM have shown many brand attributes that can have relationships with eWOM. This research selected only a few brand attributes, including brand awareness, brand love, brand identity, and brand choice, to apply to the ADO framework to study their relationship with eWOM. Therefore, future studies can consider other brand attributes to expand the scope of research. For instance, further studies can consider researching brand personality, as it provides a competitive advantage for brands in the market (Aaker, 2014). It is indicated in prior research that if a brand is associated with a personality trait, its customers are willing to talk positively about it (Erkan & Evans, 2016), helping brands differentiate themselves from competing brands (Kotler, 2005). Brand engagement is also an attractive brand attribute that can be captured in further studies, as brand engagement is a multidimensional factor that includes activation affection, affection, and cognitive dimensions, being used to measure a meaningful broad level of commitment of customers for a brand (Brodie et al., 2011). If a consumer reads a positive review of a brand, they may feel eager to engage with the brand; this is moderated by brand involvement; specifically, if consumers have high brand involvement, they will not passively consume the review, but they will do critically evaluate the content and quality of that positive review and decide the level

they want to engage with the brand (Srivastava et al., 2020). A vice versa understanding could be that if a customer has a high level of customer brand engagement, they can spend more time writing a quality brand review. In this case, future research can expand the measuring scale of eWOM, not only measuring the intention of eWOM behavior of the customer but also measuring how much quality of review customers can put in the review. For example, they can add more text and insert pictures and videos to make the eWOM more reliable for other readers.

Secondly, this study only finds the moderating effect of brand identity in the relationship between eWOM and brand choice. In contrast, the moderating effect of brand identity on the relationship between brand awareness and brand love on eWOM is insignificant. Brand identity is a factor strongly connected to a customer's sense of self and can influence consumer behavior, including negative eWOM (Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024). However, brand identity has just gained attention as a mediator and antecedent of eWOM. Therefore, future research could further explore its role as a moderator to see if this moderating effect is significant in another context and if brand identity plays a more significant role in other brand attributes and eWOM in other market conditions.

Thirdly, due to the use of quantitative data and using survey designs, participants rated their level of agreement or disagreement with each statement on a scale from 1 to 5 without any explanation. This study cannot further explain the relationships not supported in this paper, including how brand awareness cannot predict the eWOM and eWOM only cannot predict the brand choice and the moderating effect of brand identity. Future research can apply a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods by combining surveys and interviewing customers to have more in-depth information about their decision to explain this current situation.

Moreover, this study approaches from a business perspective to see the relationships between brand attributes and eWOM. However, the data is collected from only one end-customer side to see how eWOM interacts with brand attributes. This approach may limit the study's ability to know how the businesses perceive the eWOM to interact with brand attributes and how they try to manage it. To address this limitation, future research can adopt multiple approaches by incorporating insights from interviewing with business owners and international marketers to understand how brands perceive and respond to eWOM comprehensively.

Finally, the scope of this study is limited in the context of Korean beauty brands in the Vietnamese market as some conclusions and implications from this study may not be applicable to other industries or countries. For example, the beauty market in an emerging country like Vietnam may differ from that of a developed country such as Belgium. Future studies may consider expanding the scope of the study by expanding the study to include different industries, such as apparel and fast-moving consumer goods, where there are multinational brands active in this industry and are always eager to expand their market. Additionally, future research can include studies in different countries and compare cultural and market differences in eWOM behavior. There are also some limitations in the research sample, as the main subjects of the survey group are between the ages of 18-22, which may limit the representativeness of the research results as the range of beauty product users is not limited to the age group from 18-22. Future research can improve the representativeness of the

studies by increasing sample size, including a more diverse age range to have more insights into different demographic groups.

In conclusion, this chapter discusses the relationships among brand attributes and eWOM, highlighting that brand love positively influences eWOM and eWOM positively impacts brand choice when there is a presence of brand identity in the context of Korean beauty brands in the Vietnamese market. Based on this discussion, theoretical and managerial implications are proposed. Finally, the chapter outlines the study's limitations and offers suggestions for future research.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Questionnaire

(Xin chào anh/chị và các bạn,

Mình là Trâm, đang theo học Thạc sĩ tại trường đại học Hasselt. Hiện tại, mình đang thực hiện luận văn thạc sĩ về đề tài mối quan hệ giữa các đặc điểm thương hiệu và eWOM (truyền miệng điện tử) trong bối cảnh các thương hiệu mỹ phẩm Hàn Quốc tại thị trường Việt Nam. Nghiên cứu tập trung vào các đặc điểm thương hiệu như mức độ nhận diện thương hiệu, tình cảm đối với thương hiệu, bản sắc thương hiệu, và sự lựa chọn thương hiệu. Khảo sát này sẽ đề cập đến tám thương hiệu mỹ phẩm Hàn Quốc, và được liệt kê chi tiết trong phần khảo sát.

Sự tham gia của anh/chị và các bạn hoàn toàn dựa trên tinh thần tự nguyện, và khảo sát này dự kiến chỉ mất khoảng 5 phút để hoàn thành. Không có câu trả lời đúng hay sai, mọi ý kiến cá nhân của anh/chị và các bạn đều vô cùng giá trị cho đề tài nghiên cứu. Mọi câu trả lời đều được giữ ẩn danh và chỉ phục vụ cho mục đích nghiên cứu tại trường đại học Hasselt. Tất cả thông tin (bao gồm thông tin cá nhân, ý kiến về thương hiệu và ý định liên quan đến eWOM) đều được bảo mật tuyệt đối.

Cảm ơn anh/chị và các bạn đã dành thời gian tham gia khảo sát!)

My name is Tram, a Master of Management student specializing in International Marketing Strategy at Hasselt University. I am currently conducting research on the relationship between brand attributes and eWOM (electronic word of mouth) in the context of Korean beauty brands in the Vietnamese market. The brand attributes being studied include your assessment of brand awareness, brand love, brand identity, and brand choice for a Korean beauty brand. This questionnaire focuses on eight popular Korean beauty brands, which will be further mentioned in the survey.

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and the survey will take approximately five minutes to complete. All responses are anonymous, and your honest feedback is greatly appreciated. There are no right or wrong answers—only your personal opinions matter. Rest assured, all information (including demographic details, opinions on brands, and eWOM intentions) will remain strictly confidential.

Thank you for your participation.
Kind regards,
Tran Bao Tram Phan

Bạn có đồng ý tham gia khảo sát này và chia sẻ câu trả lời của mình cho mục đích nghiên cứu không?

Do you consent to participate in this survey and share your responses for research purposes?

- *(Tôi đồng ý và muốn tham gia khảo sát)*
  I agree and would like to take the survey.
- *(Tôi không đồng ý và không muốn tham gia khảo sát)*
  I disagree and do not wish to proceed.

(Bạn có biết một trong những thương hiệu mỹ phẩm này không?)

Do you know one of these brands?

- Sulwhasoo
- Laneige
- Innisfree
- COSRX
- Peripera
- 3CE
- Torriden
- D'Alba
- *(Tôi không biết những thương hiệu này)*
  None of them

(Bạn có hài lòng với các sản phẩm từ thương hiệu đã chọn không?)

Have you been satisfied with the products from the chosen brand?

- *(Có, tôi hài lòng)*
  Yes, I am satisfied
- *(Không)*
  No

(Bạn đã sử dụng thương hiệu này trong bao lâu?)

How long you have been used this brand?

- Ít hơn 1 năm
  Less than a year
- 2-4 năm
  2 – 4 years
- 5-7 năm
  5 – 7 years
- 8-10 năm
  8 – 10 years
- Nhiều hơn 11 năm
  More than 11 years

(Dựa trên trải nghiệm của bạn với thương hiệu đã chọn ở phần trước, vui lòng cho biết mức độ đồng ý của bạn với các nhận định sau bằng cách đánh dấu vào ô tương ứng với thang đo mà bạn chọn)

Based on your experience with the selected brand in the previous section, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements in the box corresponding to your chosen scale

(Vui lòng cho biết mức độ đồng ý của các bạn với những nhận định sau)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements

	(Hoàn toàn không đồng ý) Strongly Disagree	*(Không đồng ý)* Disagree	*(Trung lập)* Neutral	*(Đồng ý)* Agree	*(Hoàn toàn đồng ý)* Strong ly agree
(Tôi có thể dễ dàng nhận ra các đặc điểm của thương hiệu, chẳng hạn như logo, màu sắc hoặc tên gọi của thương hiệu.) I can easily recognize the brand's characteristics, such as its logo, color, or name					
(Tôi có thể nhớ lại những quảng cáo của thương hiệu này.) I can recall advertisements for this brand.					
(Tôi thường xuyên nhớ đến thương hiệu này.) I frequently remember this brand.					
(Tôi có thể dễ dàng mô tả về thương hiệu này với bạn bè của tôi.) I can easily describe this brand to my friends.					
(Tôi cảm thấy quen thuộc với những sản phẩm của thương hiệu này.) I feel familiar with this brand's products					

(Vui lòng cho biết mức độ đồng ý của các bạn với những nhận định sau)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements

	(Hoàn toàn không đồng ý)	*(Không đồng ý)* Disagree	*(Trung lập)* Neutral	*(Đồng ý)* Agree	*(Hoàn toàn đồng ý)*

	Strongly Disagree				Strong ly agree
(Tôi nghĩ đây là một thương hiệu tuyệt vời.) I think this is an amazing brand.					
(Thương hiệu này khiến tôi cảm thấy tốt hơn.) This brand makes me feel good.					
(Thương hiệu này thật xuất sắc.) This brand is totally awesome					
(Tôi không có cảm xúc nào mạnh mẽ đối với thương hiệu này.) I don't have any strong feelings about this brand.					
(Thương hiệu này mang đến cho tôi nhiều niềm vui.) This brand brings me a lot of happiness					
(Tôi yêu thương hiệu này!) I love this brand!					
(Tôi không có cảm xúc gì đặc biệt về thương hiệu này.) I don't feel anything special about this brand					
(Thương hiệu này khiến tôi cảm thấy rất vui vẻ.) This brand gives me great joy.					
(Tôi cảm thấy rất đam mê với thương hiệu này.) I feel passionate about this brand.					
(Tôi cảm thấy rất gắn kết với thương hiệu này.)					

I feel very connected to this brand					

(Vui lòng cho biết mức độ đồng ý của các bạn với những nhận định sau)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements

	(Hoàn toàn không đồng ý) Strongly Disagree	*(Không đồng ý)* Disagree	*(Trung lập)* Neutral	*(Đồng ý)* Agree	*(Hoàn toàn đồng ý)* Strong ly agree
(Thương hiệu này giúp tôi thể hiện bản sắc của mình.) This brand helps me express my identity.					
(Tôi cảm thấy có sự kết nối cá nhân với thương hiệu này.) I feel personally connected to this brand.					
(Thương hiệu này đại diện cho con người tôi.) This brand represents who I am.					

(Vui lòng cho biết mức độ đồng ý của các bạn với những nhận định sau)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements

	(Hoàn toàn không đồng ý) Strongly Disagree	*(Không đồng ý)* Disagree	*(Trung lập)* Neutral	*(Đồng ý)* Agree	*(Hoàn toàn đồng ý)* Strong ly agree
(Tôi thường nói tốt về thương hiệu này trên các nền tảng trực tuyến.) I talk positively about this brand in online environments.					
(Tôi thường chia sẻ nhiều bình luận tích cực về thương hiệu này trên các nền tảng trực tuyến.)					

I share a lot of positive comments about this brand online.					
(Tôi cố gắng lan tỏa những điều tích cực về thương hiệu này trên các nền tảng trực tuyến.) I try to spread positive things about this brand on the internet					

(Vui lòng cho biết mức độ đồng ý của các bạn với những nhận định sau)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements

	(Hoàn toàn không đồng ý) Strongly Disagree	*(Không đồng ý)* Disagree	*(Trung lập)* Neutral	*(Đồng ý)* Agree	*(Hoàn toàn đồng ý)* Strong ly agree
(Mặc dù thương hiệu này có thể giống như những thương hiệu khác, nhưng việc chọn thương hiệu này khiến tôi cảm thấy đây là lựa chọn thông minh hơn.) Even if this brand is similar to others, choosing it feels like a smarter option.					
(Thương hiệu này luôn là sự lựa chọn tốt hơn so với những thương hiệu mỹ phẩm khác.) This brand is always a better choice compared to its competitors.					
(Tôi cảm thấy đây là sự lựa chọn hợp lý khi chọn thương hiệu này thay vì lựa chọn những thương hiệu khác.) It makes sense to choose this brand over other similar brands.					

(Thương hiệu này là thương hiệu yêu thích của tôi trong số những thương hiệu mỹ phẩm khác.) *This brand is my favorite brand among all the competing beauty brands*					

(Giới tính của bạn?)

What gender do you identify yourself as?

- *(Nam)*
  Male
- *(Nữ)*
  Female
- *(Không xác định/ Giới tính thứ ba*)
  Non-binary / third gender
- *(Không muốn tiết lộ)*
  Prefer not to say

(Tuổi của bạn?)

What is your age in years?

Appendix 2. Demographics

Age_cat					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-22	125	73.1	73.1	73.1
	23-27	37	21.6	21.6	94.7
	>=27	9	5.3	5.3	100.0
	Total	171	100.0	100.0	

Statistics		
Age		
N	Valid	171
	Missing	0
Mean		22.30
Median		22.00
Mode		22
Std. Deviation		3.014
Minimum		18
Maximum		39

Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	19	11.1	11.1	11.1
	Female	150	87.7	87.7	98.8
	Non-binary	2	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	171	100.0	100.0	

Brand_knowledge					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sulwhasoo	18	10.5	10.5	10.5
	Laneige	15	8.8	8.8	19.3
	Innisfree	38	22.2	22.2	41.5
	COSRX	8	4.7	4.7	46.2
	Peripera	19	11.1	11.1	57.3
	3CE	44	25.7	25.7	83.0
	Torriden	16	9.4	9.4	92.4
	D'Alba	13	7.6	7.6	100.0
	Total	171	100.0	100.0	

Exp_Time					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than a year	71	41.5	41.5	41.5
	2 - 4 years	76	44.4	44.4	86.0
	5-7 years	19	11.1	11.1	97.1
	8 - 10 years	4	2.3	2.3	99.4
	More than 11 years	1	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	171	100.0	100.0	

Appendix 3. Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics of brand awareness

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
BA1	171	1	5	4.23	.994	-1.889	.186	3.756	.369
BA2	171	1	5	3.49	.972	-.383	.186	-.167	.369

BA3	171	1	5	3.85	.838	-.811	.186	1.259	.369
BA4	171	1	5	4.11	.826	-1.275	.186	2.657	.369
BA5	171	1	5	4.06	.899	-1.197	.186	1.883	.369
Valid N (listwise)	171								

Descriptive statistic analysis of brand love

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
BL1	171	1	5	4.04	.751	-.902	.186	2.172	.369
BL2	171	1	5	4.01	.732	-.647	.186	1.200	.369
BL3	171	1	5	3.69	.896	-.140	.186	-.299	.369
Recode_BL4	171	1	5	3.26	1.161	-.232	.186	-1.024	.369
BL5	171	1	5	3.60	.850	-.296	.186	.073	.369
BL6	171	1	5	3.70	.880	-.423	.186	.286	.369
Recode_BL7	171	1	5	3.35	1.215	-.304	.186	-.916	.369
BL8	171	1	5	3.69	.814	-.433	.186	.475	.369
BL9	171	1	5	3.54	.903	-.406	.186	-.032	.369
BL10	171	1	5	3.57	.900	-.417	.186	.035	.369
Valid N (listwise)	171								

Descriptive statistic analysis of brand identity

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
BI1	171	1	5	3.49	.948	-.247	.186	-.363	.369
BI2	171	1	5	3.49	1.014	-.421	.186	-.274	.369
BI3	171	1	5	3.18	1.021	-.070	.186	-.362	.369
Valid N (listwise)	171								

Descriptive statistic analysis of eWom

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
eWOM1	171	1	5	3.69	.972	-.665	.186	.086	.369
eWOM2	171	1	5	3.47	1.036	-.474	.186	-.316	.369
eWOM3	171	1	5	3.60	1.049	-.507	.186	-.292	.369
Valid N (listwise)	171								

Descriptive statistic analysis of brand choice

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
BC1	171	1	5	3.76	.885	-.797	.186	.953	.369
BC2	171	1	5	3.73	.919	-.726	.186	.556	.369
BC3	171	1	5	3.84	.852	-.834	.186	.869	.369
BC4	171	1	5	3.87	.901	-.757	.186	.650	.369
Valid N (listwise)	171								

Appendix 4. Factor analysis

Factor analysis of brand awareness

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.804
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	217.932
	df	10
	Sig.	<.001

Total Variance Explained						
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.655	53.100	53.100	2.655	53.100	53.100
2	.774	15.485	68.586			
3	.693	13.855	82.441			
4	.478	9.564	92.005			
5	.400	7.995	100.000			
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.						

Communalities		
	Initial	Extraction
BA1	1.000	.374
BA2	1.000	.369
BA3	1.000	.636
BA4	1.000	.641
BA5	1.000	.635
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		

Component Matrix[a]	
	Component
	1
BA1	.611
BA2	.607
BA3	.798
BA4	.801
BA5	.797
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.	
a. 1 components extracted.	

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.765	5

Factor analysis of brand love

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.872
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	998.408
	df	45
	Sig.	<.001

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.175	51.750	51.750	5.175	51.750	51.750
2	1.741	17.413	69.163	1.741	17.413	69.163
3	.721	7.212	76.375			
4	.481	4.810	81.185			
5	.436	4.362	85.547			
6	.394	3.943	89.490			
7	.315	3.146	92.636			
8	.276	2.763	95.399			
9	.261	2.611	98.010			
10	.199	1.990	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
BL1	1.000	.562
BL2	1.000	.542
BL3	1.000	.666
BL5	1.000	.682
BL6	1.000	.678
BL8	1.000	.703
BL9	1.000	.687
BL10	1.000	.644
Recode_BL4	1.000	.875
Recode_BL7	1.000	.878

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix[a]

	Component	
	1	2
BL1	.749	-.010
BL2	.736	-.018

BL3	.815	-.031
BL5	.817	-.122
BL6	.823	.014
BL8	.835	-.073
BL9	.823	-.095
BL10	.802	.029
Recode_BL4	.080	.932
Recode_BL7	.192	.917
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		
a. 2 components extracted.		

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.920	8

Factor analysis of brand identity

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.733
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	250.074
	df	3
	Sig.	<.001

Total Variance Explained						
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.377	79.228	79.228	2.377	79.228	79.228
2	.356	11.872	91.099			
3	.267	8.901	100.000			
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.						

Communalities		
	Initial	Extraction
BI1	1.000	.763
BI2	1.000	.822
BI3	1.000	.791
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		

Component Matrix[a]	
	Component
	1

BI1	.874
BI2	.907
BI3	.890
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.	
a. 1 components extracted.	

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.869	3

Factor analysis of eWOM

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.726
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	217.046
	df	3
	Sig.	<.001

Total Variance Explained						
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.304	76.789	76.789	2.304	76.789	76.789
2	.391	13.020	89.810			
3	.306	10.190	100.000			
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.						

Communalities		
	Initial	Extraction
eWOM1	1.000	.743
eWOM2	1.000	.799
eWOM3	1.000	.761
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		

Component Matrix[a]	
	Component
	1
eWOM1	.862
eWOM2	.894
eWOM3	.873
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.	

a. 1 components extracted.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.849	3

Factor analysis of brand choice

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.824
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	276.907
	df	6
	Sig.	<.001

Total Variance Explained						
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.762	69.051	69.051	2.762	69.051	69.051
2	.459	11.468	80.519			
3	.404	10.104	90.622			
4	.375	9.378	100.000			
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.						

Communalities		
	Initial	Extraction
BC1	1.000	.650
BC2	1.000	.697
BC3	1.000	.717
BC4	1.000	.699
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		

Component Matrix[a]	
	Component
	1
BC1	.806
BC2	.835
BC3	.847
BC4	.836
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.	
a. 1 components extracted.	

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.850	4

Appendix 5. Correlation

Correlations						
		Brand_awareness	Brandlove	Brandidentity	eWOM	Brandchoice
Brand_awareness	Pearson Correlation	1	.699**	.598**	.555**	.584**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	171	171	171	171	171
Brandlove	Pearson Correlation	.699**	1	.718**	.683**	.730**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	171	171	171	171	171
Brandidentity	Pearson Correlation	.598**	.718**	1	.639**	.671**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001		<.001	<.001
	N	171	171	171	171	171
eWOM	Pearson Correlation	.555**	.683**	.639**	1	.624**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001		<.001
	N	171	171	171	171	171
Brandchoice	Pearson Correlation	.584**	.730**	.671**	.624**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	
	N	171	171	171	171	171
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

Appendix 6. Regression Analysis

Regression model 1 – eWOM

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.719[a]	.517	.506	.62809
a. Predictors: (Constant), BLxBI, Brand_awareness, Brandlove, BAxBI				

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	70.140	4	17.535	44.448	<.001[b]
	Residual	65.487	166	.395		
	Total	135.627	170			
a. Dependent Variable: eWOM						
b. Predictors: (Constant), BLxBI, Brand_awareness, Brandlove, BAxBI						

Coefficients[a]								
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.631	.378		1.669	.097		
	Brand_awareness	-.060	.175	-.044	-.342	.733	.178	5.633
	Brandlove	.634	.214	.480	2.965	.003	.111	9.001
	BAxBI	.083	.049	.467	1.710	.089	.039	25.647
	BLxBI	-.026	.055	-.143	-.465	.643	.031	32.470

a. Dependent Variable: eWOM

Regression model 2 - brand choice

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.680[a]	.462	.456	.54496
a. Predictors: (Constant), eWOMxBI, eWOM				

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	42.897	2	21.449	72.223	<.001[b]
	Residual	49.892	168	.297		
	Total	92.789	170			

a. Dependent Variable: Brandchoice
b. Predictors: (Constant), eWOMxBI, eWOM

Coefficients[a]								
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.423	.200		12.137	<.001		
	eWOM	.112	.097	.136	1.162	.247	.235	4.256
	eWOMxBI	.077	.016	.558	4.783	<.001	.235	4.256
a. Dependent Variable: Brandchoice								