

# EXPLORING INSTAGRAM'S VISUAL COMMUNICATION EFFECTS OF INDONESIA'S PREMIUM FASHION BRANDS

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the influence of visual communication towards consumer behavior in purchasing premium local fashion products through the mediating effects of brand image and eWOM on Instagram as the main distribution channel of visual content, and understanding the preferred visual content types by the consumers in Indonesia. This is a quantitative study and was conducted using a structured-questionnaire from 250 Instagram users who are premium fashion brand customers, who lived in Indonesia. Statistical analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modelling (PLS - SEM) approach with path analysis. This study investigated Instagram as visual content distribution channel for Indonesian premium local fashion brand. The result of this study showed that visual communication has significant influence on both brand image and eWOM, the result also shows it has significant influence on purchase intention both directly or through the mediating effect of brand image and eWOM. This study brings theoretical and practical implication in the study of visual content distributed through Instagram and could provide information about the types of visual content which is preferred by customers which may improve brand image and eWOM in social media marketing.

**Keywords:** *Visual Communication, Premium Fashion, Social Media, Brand Image, eWOM, Purchase Intention.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Visual culture is very apparent and inseparable from the fashion Industry. Visuals are a powerful tool in communication and advertising (Messaris, 1996). Fashion itself has an expressive and communicative capacity with many of its distinguishing characteristics (Kalbaska, Sadaba, and Cantoni, 2018), and fashion is heavily associated with their visual communication approach through publication of fashion editorial and magazine.

The digital revolution has transformed the way fashion brands approach their customers and distribute information. The rapid evolution of digital technology and the internet has had a major impact on the luxury industry in recent years. The growth of the fashion market and its various sectors has been supported by the use of the internet and new digital technologies (Rios, 2016) among them is the existence of social media. With the existence of new media fashion

brands no longer need to deliver their marketing campaign through the mediation of the magazine, brands now able to generate their own editorial in a form of digital visual content and distribute it independently for their customer through social media. The collaborative nature of social media also allows everyone to create content and contribute to the creation of brand identities. Individuals may also contribute to the online fashion conversation by expressing their experiences on the latest trend, as well as their positive and negative purchase experiences (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004).

Indonesia is among one of the largest numbers of active social media users in the world; between April 2019 and January 2020, the number of users in Indonesia increased by 12 million (+8.1%), with Instagram as one of the most popular social media platforms, with about 59.84 million users in Indonesia alone (Datareportal, 2020). In Indonesia, Instagram has also grown in popularity as a marketplace platform. 81 percent of Instagram users use the site to learn more about the products they want and 52 percent of companies prefer to

direct their customers to their Instagram profile page rather than their website (Ipsos, 2018). These days with the existence of visual centric social media like Instagram fashion brands utilize social media to launch campaigns and share their newest items. Instagram has become one of the key tools for fashion brands to communicate with their audiences. The visual power of Instagram is crucial to the fashion industry and its very common to find many fashion brands run social media-based campaigns. The use of social media may also facilitate conversation online or eWOM. People use eWOM to share and express their opinions about products and services they have purchased by sending and receiving messages via the internet (Kaur, 2020)

Few studies have looked at the impact of visual communication on social media, specifically focusing on the content of the images. There is a need to understand how products are displayed and how visual information is presented, as these can evoke different responses and, and then may lead to different effects on buying decisions. The study of variables that can influence purchasing decisions products can provide valuable theoretical and practical contributions (Kaur, 2020; Amornpashara, 2015). In this study, mediating factors such as the brand image and the perceived quality and communication between customers through eWOM will also be studied whether they have an effect on the willingness of customers to pay for price premium. Hence, the analysis aims to determine whether these visual approaches by Indonesia premium fashion brands have significant influence on purchasing behaviour.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Premium Fashion and Premium Pricing

To underline the difference between luxury fashion and premium fashion; if luxury fashion is at the top level of fashion, with vertical extension premium fashion brands can be considered one level down in the spectrum (Riley, Pina, and Bravo, 2015). Premium brands aspire to be luxury brands, but their marketing mix is more mass market driven (Okonkwo, 2007).

Premium pricing has long been used by premium and prestige brands to highlight the brand strength, high quality, and exclusivity associated with luxury products, as well as to set them apart from mass market fashion brands (Okonkwo, 2007). Pricing is an essential component of a branding and marketing strategy because it is one of the first indicators of a brand's positioning (Okonkwo,

2007). Luxury has a psychological association with premium pricing, with the belief that high price is an indication of good quality (Allsopp, 2005). Premium fashion brands have a priority to offer products with good quality but at a more affordable price. Quality is the main factor for premium fashion brands in order to encourage customers to pay a premium price to buy their products. This paper aims to find out how visual communication would encourage consumers' willingness to pay price premium for premium fashion brand's goods.

### 2.2 Visual Communication

The broad definition of visual is everything that can be seen. Visual culture is anything that is created and created by humans that can be seen and has functionality and has a communicative purpose (Barnard, 1998), and visual communication is an extensive range of signs, typography, drawing, graphic design, illustration, industrial design, advertising, animation, colour, and electronic resources (Josephson, Kelly and Smith, 2005). For the fashion industry which mostly uses photography and magazine editorial, visual culture and visual based communication is something that cannot be separated from fashion. In the digital era, fashion has adapted and transformed using new media, especially social media that is very visual centric like Instagram, which is crucial in carrying out product promotions. For fashion brands, social media is an effective tool which allows them to communicate directly with their customers, inform various events and initiatives and build brand awareness (Cukul, 2015). Instagram is a visual centric social media, which provides visual content that has no linguistic or cultural barrier (Manic, 2015), becomes very crucial for the fashion industry. In its current state, the fashion industry has been emphasizing on building brand awareness by establishing new collaborations and engaging with their social media followers (Ha, Kwon, Cha, and Joo, 2017). In the fashion industry, marketing practices of luxury fashion brands on social media have been shown to be strongly associated with consumers' eventual purchasing intent, as mediated by brand perception (Kim and Ko 2012).

### 2.3 Brand Image

Brand image as a consumer's impression of a brand as represented by brand interactions that are remembered by the consumer. This can happen as customers integrate their observations, use, and consumption of a commodity with all of the knowledge available to them (Keller, 2003)

Information about a product can be gleaned from instantly recognizable information, such as advertisement, personal sales, and product packaging, and in this context the visual aid used by fashion brand in their social media. Brands may use brand image to create distinction in their products from the competitors. The luxury goods industry places a heavy emphasis on branding as a core competency and a means of distinguishing itself from competitors. The brand identity is shaped by the personality and image of the business (Okonkwo, 2007). Brand image is also the main driver of trust in brands, generally referring to the basic perceptions and feelings that consumers feel and influencing consumer behaviour. (Zhang, 2015) There are no definite definitions regarding trust, as the concept of trust is broad, therefore in this paper, we will only discuss the concept of trust within online shopping behaviour and activities. Trust is defined as a device used to reduce complexity; it is considered as a shortcut used to avoid complex decision processes when facing decisions that carry risk (Riegelsberger et al., 2003). In online marketing transactions, online customer trust is necessary (McCole and Palmer, 2001). Both brand knowledge and trust in online shopping channels is proven to have a fundamental role in driving customers' online shopping decisions (Wang, Chen, and Jiang, 2009) It is safe to say that If customers do not trust online providers sufficiently, the result may be that they are not willing to make transactions because they fear the risks involved.

#### 2.4 eWOM

eWOM is interpreted as an electronic form of word-of-mouth communication. Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) is a negative or positive statement about a product or business made by current, future, or previous customers, and made accessible to individuals and organizations through the internet media. eWOM communication on Web-based opinion platforms may be driven by a willingness to assist other customers with their buying decisions, to help and protect others from negative experiences, or a combination of the two. As a consequence, positive and negative customer interactions with the product or business may occur in such correspondence (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Traditionally, text media is often used in eWOM communication, but with the advances in technology and digital communication, consumers now use other media, such as posting photos and

videos, to share and express their views and experiences with products/services bought online (Kaur and Singh, 2020). eWOM as a mechanism has evolved into an information-rich environment with communication elements, and it is always needed as part of electronic commerce. (Wang et al., 2015). The information could be standard, as presented by the retailer, or it could be shared by other customers after they've used a product they bought online (Kaur and Singh, 2020). In summary, it could be defined that the conversation among customers on social media and the comment section of Instagram where the visual content about the products presented is considered as a form of eWOM.

#### 2.5 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention can be defined as a process that stimulates and encourages consumer purchases of products and services. Among factors that influence consumer buying decisions is purchase intention. Purchase intention is one of the factors that can measure a purchase decision (Hawkins and Motherbaugh, 2010). Purchase intention can be measured through three dimensions: likely, definitely, and probably. The word "likely" refers to a consumer's decision to purchase a product based on their preferences of like or dislike. The word 'definitely' refers to a consumer's level of certainty that they will purchase a product. The word 'probably' refers to the possibility that a customer will purchase a product (Till and Busler, 2000). (1) Willing Purchase refers to a consumer's willingness to buy a product or service after comparing it to other brands. (2) Considering Purchase; customers' willingness to consider a brand when they need a specific product or service. (3) Purchase recommendations; the willingness of customers to recommend certain goods or services to their friends and family. (Roozy, Arastoo, and Vazifehdust, 2014). In the brand evaluation stage, two factors will intervene in customers' purchase interest and purchase decisions: other people's attitude and unanticipated situation factors. (Kotler and Keller, 2016) this will explain how the attitude of others which is reflected on eWOM can motivate customers and hold roles in purchase decisions.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODS AND MATERIALS

#### 3.1. Conceptual Framework

Based on previous theoretical studies, therefore the conceptual framework if this study can be illustrated in figure 1 as follows:

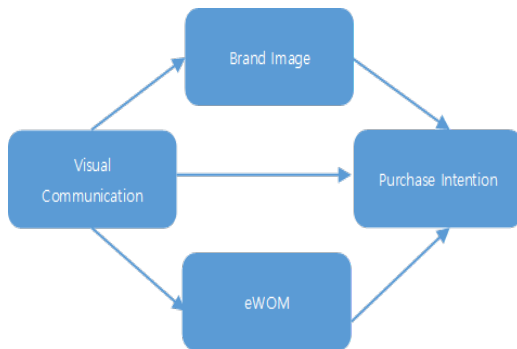


Figure 1: Conceptual model of visual communication effect

In this model, all the variables' theoretical relationships have been adjusted for the context of visual communication in social media. The consumer's motivation to purchase a product depends on their decision-making, with several factors to consider, such as; brand image, and eWOM. This study seeks to examine how visual communication approaches in the social media marketing process on Instagram could affect the brand image and eWOM, and later influenced their peers' purchase intention. Based on this model, the research is hypothesized as follows;

**H1:** Visual Communication will influence purchasing intentions in online buying behavior.

#### 3.1.2. Visual Communication and Brand Image

User-generated content images from Instagram, as well as random Google images, are more effective at improving destination image than user-generated content images reposted by destination-marketing organisations (Bernkopf & Nixon, 2018). With the assumption that the findings of the research may be extended to a study of the effect of Instagram's visual content as a means of visual communication on brand images. As a result, the second hypothesis which based on this research is;

**H2:** Visual Communication will influence Brand Image of premium fashion brand.

#### 3.1.3. Visual Communication and eWOM

Visual manipulation produced significant effects on perceived eWOM message quality and credibility. People would rate eWOM articles in blogs with visual information significantly higher than identical articles without visual information (Lin, Lu & Wu, 2012). This can illustrate how people would better rate products that include visual information. There is also an interaction effect on product interest and purchase intention between product category and visual information (Lin, Lu & Wu, 2012). Therefore, this previous study, become the main basis for the fourth variable as following;

**H3:** Visual Communication will influence eWOM about premium fashion brands.

#### 3.1.4. Brand Image and Purchase Intention

In a previous study it was found that brand image has a significant effect on purchase intention (Reza & Samiei, 2012). In relation to this research regarding the influence of brand image towards purchase intention for Indonesian premium fashion brands, (Aghekyan et al., 2012) stated that brand image has a significant effect on purchase intention of clothing products.

**H4:** Brand Image will influence purchase intention in online buying behaviour.

#### 3.1.5. eWOM and Purchase Intention

Since the emergence of many studies regarding digital marketing, the effect of eWOM on purchase intention has been well understood. One of the studies notes that eWOM has a direct impact on purchase intention (See-To & Ho, 2014). The results of research by (Erkan & Evans, 2016) stated eWOM in social media does influence consumers' purchase intentions, with some key factors which are; quality, credibility, usefulness also the adoption of information, the needs of information and attitude towards the information.

**H5:** eWOM will influence purchase intention in online buying behaviour. 3.2

### 3.2. Operationalization of Research Variables

Visual communication is the independent variable (x) and purchase intention is the primary dependent variable (z) with brand image, and eWOM as mediating variables (y). Table 1 presents the operationalization of variables used in this research.

Table 1: Operational Definitions and Measures of the Variables

Variables	Measurement		Reference
Visual Communication	1. Visual content is a very useful and practical source of knowledge about premium fashion brands in Indonesia.	VC1	Kujur and Singh (2018)
	2. Visual content from Indonesia's premium fashion brands keeps me updated about new items.	VC2	
	3. Visual content tells me which Indonesian premium fashion brands have the features I'm looking for.	VC3	
	4. Visual content provides relevant information about Indonesian premium fashion brands' goods and prices.	VC4	
	5. Indonesian premium fashion brands' visual content is entertaining to watch and learn.	VC5	
Brand Image	1. I associate premium fashion brands with fashionable and trendy images.	BI1	1) , 4) & 5) Hanaysha, (2016)
	2. Products by premium fashion brands are distinctive and cannot be imitated by other brands.	BI2	
	3. Indonesia's premium fashion brands come with a unique style that distinguishes it from the others.	BI3	
	4. Indonesia's premium fashion brand provided me with a better lifestyle.	BI4	
	5. Indonesia's premium fashion brands provide good value to its customers.	BI5	
E-Wom	1. I would like to warn others about the poor quality of Indonesian premium fashion brands and my bad experience with the brand	eWOM1	Thurau (2004)
	2. I would like to share my positive experience with Indonesian premium fashion brands with others.	eWOM2	
	3. I would like to share my delight at a great purchase from Indonesia's premium fashion brands.	eWOM3	
	4. I enjoy interacting with other customers of the Indonesian premium fashion brands.	eWOM4	
	5. I hope to get some advice from others to help me solve my problems with Indonesia's premium fashion brands.	eWOM5	
Purchase Intention	1. Will consider purchasing a product from one of Indonesia's premium fashion brands.	PI1	Wu & Chang (2016)
	2. Would most likely purchase a product from one of Indonesia's premium fashion brands.	PI2	
	3. Willing to purchase products from Indonesia's premium fashion brands.	PI3	
	4. Willing to suggest products from Indonesia's premium fashion brands.	PI4	
	5. Will attempt to acquire product information of Indonesia's premium fashion brands.	PI5	

### 3.3. Categorizing Visual Content

In this research, the types of content from Instagram categorized in 2 big categories of visual content on brand's Instagram profile and visual content on brand's Instagram story, the visual content includes both photos and videos. From these 2 categories in this study, the visual information from the brand's Instagram categorized into several major themes of Product only, Body Snap (Products with Model), Marketing (Information regarding products or promotion) and

Non-Fashion (Interactive contents) (Ha, Kwon, Cha, and Joo, 2017).

Table 2: Visual Content Categorization

Category	Sub-Category
Instagram Post	1. Product Only
	2. Body Snap (Products with Model)
	3. Marketing (Information regarding products or promotion)
	4. Non-fashion
Instagram Story	1. Product Only
	2. Body Snap (Products with Model)
	3. Marketing (Information regarding products or promotion),
	4. Non-Fashion (Interactive contents)



In Instagram post and Story Non-Fashion category visual contents included post such as behind the scene of product making, trivia, quizzes, questions and poll. This visual content category and the sample images of the content later presented to the respondent in the questionnaire. However, this study was limited to find which type of visual content was considered favourable by the respondents.

### 3.4. Methodology

#### 3.4.1. Data Collection and Analysis

The approach of this study is quantitative and data obtained through a survey method. In order to obtain the necessary data, the researchers distributed questionnaires both directly and online through social media.

Responses were measured on a six-point Likert scale where six indicates strongly agree and one indicates strongly disagree (Likert, 1932). The partial least squares structural equation model (PLS-SEM) was used to analyse the data using the SmartPLS 3 computer program.

#### 3.4.2. Target Population

The population in this study is all people who are active internet and social media users. The method used in sampling is purposive sampling, selecting those with experience in buying Indonesia's premium fashion brand goods. The sampling technique in this study used non-probability sampling techniques with purposive sampling category. Sample in this study were 250 respondents, this sampling is limited to certain types of people who can provide the desired information because they meet several predetermined criteria which are people who are born in 1980 – 2010+, have done online shopping from premium fashion brand and shop online within the last 6 months.

Table 3: Sample Demographic

Demographic		f	%
Gender	Man	61	24,40
	Woman	189	75,60
Year of Birth	1965 - 1980	4	1,60
	1981 - 2000	138	55,20
	2001 - 2010+	108	43,20
Online Shopping Frequencies	Once every six months	118	47,2
	Once in three months	68	27,2
	Once a month	37	14,8
	2-4 times a month	20	8,0
	Once in a week	7	2,8
	2-4 times a week	0	0,0

Out of the 250 respondents, 55,20 percent of the respondent were part of generation Y or millennial group and 43,20 percent were part of generation Z, while the rest are from generation X (Oh and Reeves, 2014). The sample consisted of 75,60 percent female and 24,40 percent male, and have done online shopping within the last six month.

## 4. ANALYSIS AND DATA FINDING

### 4.1. Reliability and Validity Assesment

This study involved a total of 20 items, 5 each for Brand Image (BI), Purchase Intention (PI), Visual Communication (VC) and eWOM (eWOM). The model evaluation is done by finding out the results of loading factors, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE), with the results listed in the following table:

Validity evaluation is carried out using convergent validity in the reflexive model by looking at the loading factor value. Each observed variable is declared valid if the loading factor value is above 0.5. Based on the table above, it is known that all loading factor values indicate the relationship between the observed variables (manifest) and the dimensions above 0.5.

Based on table 4, it is known that all the loading factor values of the observed variables (manifest) meet the requirements, namely greater than 0.5. Table 4 shows the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), composite reliability and Cronbach alpha obtained from the calculation. According to the regulations, the AVE value must be above 0.5, Composite reliability must be above 0.7, and Cronbach alpha must be above 0.7. In the calculation results, it is found that both the AVE value, composite reliability and Cronbach alpha meet the requirements or are valid.

Table 4: Reliability and validity estimates for constructs of the model

Construct	Construct Item	Load	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Brand Image	BI1	0.909	0,928	0,945	0,776
	BI2	0.809			
	BI3	0.893			
	BI4	0.914			
	BI5	0.875			
Purchase Intention	PI1	0.915	0,962	0,962	0,836
	PI2	0.907			
	PI3	0.892			
	PI4	0.942			
	PI5	0.914			
Visual Communication	VC1	0.950	0,961	0,970	0,865
	VC2	0.930			
	VC3	0.930			
	VC4	0.934			
	VC5	0.905			
E-Wom	eWOM1	0.582	0,938	0,938	0,756
	eWOM2	0.945			
	eWOM3	0.927			
	eWOM4	0.901			
	eWOM5	0.938			

#### 4.2. Structural Model Analysis

This study used the Partial Least Square (PLS) method. The following is an image of the calculation results of the initial model processed using the SmartPLS 3.0 application.

Based on the structural model equation above, it is known that visual communication has a path coefficient of 0.830 to brand image, this shows that visual communication value has a very strong relationship with brand image, with a positive direction of relationship meaning that if the higher the visual communication, the higher it is. brand image.

Visual communication has a path coefficient of 0.849 to eWOM, this shows that visual communication value has a very strong relationship with eWOM, with a positive relationship direction, meaning that if the higher

the visual communication, the higher the eWOM. Visual communication through brand image has a path coefficient of 0.157 on purchase intention, and visual communication via eWOM has a path coefficient of 0.335 on purchase intention.

After testing the outer model, then testing the inner model. The inner model specifies the relationship between latent variables (structural model) which describes the relationship between latent variables based on the substantive theory.

The inner model testing will be carried out consisting of R-square, hypothesis testing, and Goodness of Fit (GoF). R-Square Is the coefficient of determination in the endogenous construct described in the table below. The R-square value of 0.75 concluded that the model was strong, 0.50 concluded that the model was moderate, and 0.25 concluded that the model was weak

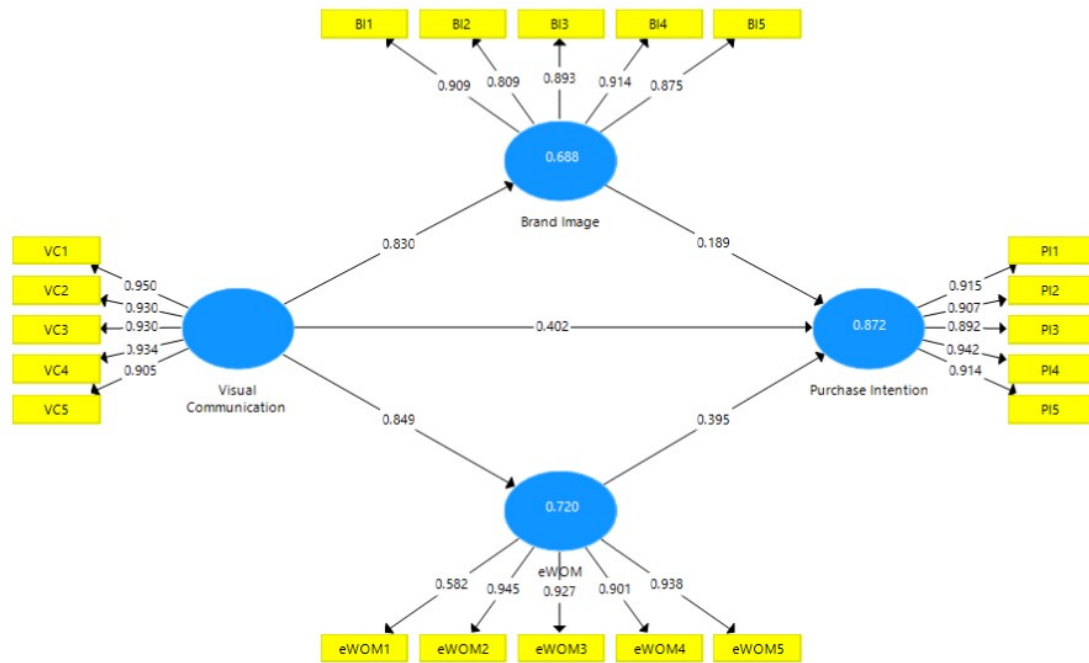


Figure 1: Structural Model

Table 5: R-Square Value Evaluation

	R Square
Brand Image	0,688
eWOM	0,720
Purchase Intention	0,872

Based on the table above, it is known that: visual communication affects brand image by 68.8 percent; visual communication affects eWOM by

72.0 percent; Visual communication has an effect on purchase intention through brand image and eWOM by 87.2 percent and the remaining 12.8 percent is the influence of other factors. Testing the hypothesis in this study by looking at the results of the PLS data processed in the Path Coefficients section as in table 6 below:

Tabel 6: Path Coefficients

Variable	Original Sample (O)	t-Statistics	p-value	Hypotheses
Visual communication on purchase intention	0,402	6,176	0,000	Significant
Visual communication on brand image	0,830	34,708	0,000	Significant
Visual communication to eWOM	0,849	32,460	0,000	Significant
brand image towards purchase intention	0,189	4,238	0,000	Significant
eWOM towards purchase intention	0,395	7,304	0,000	Significant
Visual communication of purchase intention through brand image	0,157	4,232	0,000	Significant
Visual communication on purchase intention through eWOM	0,335	7,071	0,000	Significant

Based on the table above, it is known that all variable has a significant effect because all of the t statistical value is greater than 1.96 or 6.176 > 1.96 or a probability value <alpha 5 percent or 0.000 <0.05. Next is to look at the F Square value which

is used to see the effect of predictors of latent variables at the structural level. The F Square value of 0.02 indicates a small rating, an Effect Size of 0.15 indicates a medium rating and an Effect Size of 0.35 indicates a large rating. Based on the results of testing with SmartPLS 3., the F Square results are as follows:



Table 7: F-Square

	Effect Size	Rating
Visual Communication	0,286	Moderate
Brand Image	0,073	Small
eWOM	0,286	Moderate

Based on table 7, it shows that the Visual Communication variable has a moderate category of influence in influencing the Brand Image; Brand Image variable has a small category influence in influencing Purchase Intention, and the eWOM variable has a moderate category influence in influencing Purchase Intention.

The next step is to look at the Q-square predictive relevance for the construct model. Q-square test is used to measure how well the observation value generated by the model and also its parameter estimation. The Q-square value is more different than 0 (zero) indicating that the model has a predictive relevance value, while the Q-square value is less than 0 (zero) indicating that the model has less predictive relevance (Ghozali, 2014: 41). The Q-square value obtained using the R<sup>2</sup> value in the table above, the following calculation results are obtained:

Table 9: Q<sup>2</sup> Predictive Relevance

Variable	R Square	1-R Square
Brand Image	0,688	0.312
eWOM	0,720	0.280
Purchase Intention	0,872	0.128
Q <sup>2</sup> =	$Q^2 = 1 - (1-R_1^2) (1-R_2^2) (1-R_3^2) = 0.989$	
Galat =	$Q^2 = 100\% - 98,9\% = 1,1\%$	

Based on the results of the above calculations, it is known that the value of Q square is greater than 0, this means that the observed values have been reconstructed properly so that the model has predictive relevance. This Q square value can also be used to see the relative effect of the structural model on observational measurements for endogenous latent variables. This means that there is 0.989 or 98.9 percent relative effect of the structural model on the observation measurement for endogenous latent variables, and as much as 1.1percent is the model error.

#### 4.3. Visual Content Category Survey

To find out the visual content type preferences of a premium fashion brand audience, the

questionnaire included a survey regarding the type of visual content preferred, with the following results:

Table 8: Visual Content Category

Category	Sub-Category	F	%
Instagram Post	1.Product Only	44	17,60
	2.Body Snap (Products with Model)	89	35,60
	3.Marketing (Information regarding products or promotion)	99	39,60
	4.Non-Fashion	18	7,20
Instagram Story	1.Product Only	21	8,4
	2.Body Snap (Products with Model)	59	23,6
	3.Marketing (Information regarding products or promotion)	74	29,6
	4.Non-Fashion (Interactive contents)	96	38,4

Characteristics based on visual content (Instagram post) - what kind of visual content do you like about Instagram posts belong to premium fashion brands in Indonesia, it can be seen that the majority answered 99 people or 39 percent answered visual content with marketing (Information regarding products or promotion), while the minority answered non-fashion visual content namely 18 people or 7.2 percent And characteristics based on visual content (Instagram story) It can be seen that the majority of respondents answered Non-Fashion (Interactive contents), namely 96 people or 38,4 percent, while the minority answered Product only visual content, namely as many as 21 people or 8.4 percent.

#### 5. CONCLUSIONS & DISCUSSION

The aim of this research was to analyze and examine at how visual communication affects purchasing intent directly or through the mediating effects of brand image and eWOM on Instagram as the main content distribution channel. The result of this study finds that visual communication has a positive and significant effect directly on purchase intention, this means visual information delivered through Instagram immediately encourage viewer's purchase intention. Visual communication also significantly influences both brand image and eWOM of Indonesia's premium fashion brands, which means visual communication enhance positive brand image and eWOM which also

influence the purchase intention and willingness to pay price premium for premium fashion goods.

Through this research, it is understood that the audiences use visual information as a practical source of information to keep them updated with product's information and the current trend. The audiences also find visual contents as source of entertainment. The visual information presented will associated with the brand image. The audience also may share both their positive and negative shopping experience and exchange information with other customers. Consumer purchase intent and eWOM communication can be improved by using effective visual information in online communication.

Through a survey conducted in this study, it is known that the audience has a preference for visual content accompanied by text regarding information about the product followed by visual content that shows the use of the product by the model on the Instagram post. Meanwhile for Instagram stories, audiences prefer interactive content with features such as voting or multiple choices followed by visual content that shows information text and demonstrations by models.

### 6.1. Practical Implications

This research paid attention on how premium fashion brands may utilize visual communication to enhance brand image, the conversation about the brand through eWOM, which can stimulate purchase intention. The findings in this study verified the need to gauge intention for online purchase through visual information. It also revealed that those who receive positive information about online shopping experience possess a high level of online purchase intention.

From business point of view, marketeers and entrepreneurs engaged in the fashion industry can use this research result as consideration in their strategic planning for social media marketing activities, especially on Instagram. According to the current findings premium fashion brand should not only concentrate on providing visual information to their customers, but also look for ways to build the credibility of consumer-generated online reviews (eWOM) and established brand image through visual content. The results of this study can provide

information about the types of visual content that are preferred by customers and potential customers, and can improve a better brand image and EWOM.

### 6.2. Limitation and Scope for Future Research

Since this analysis only looked at 4 variables, it's likely that other factors influence purchasing intention. Furthermore, this research mainly assesses the perception regarding the visual communication in the variable construct rather than examine the visual information content as part of the variable. For other researchers, it is possible to re-examine more detailed categorization of visual content that has a positive effect on purchasing intention based on the data that has been presented in this study, and include the visual content as part of the variables. This is done to refine research on visual communication on social media.

Further research is needed in order to understand the indicated factors that could trigger stronger positive attitude towards customers' intended behavior and the factors which trigger stronger negative attitude, this way both marketeers and entrepreneur will understand the type of visual content to push and the type of visual content to avoid during their social media marketing activities. Other researchers are also expected to be able to uncover new discoveries that can support this research.

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