



# The Relationship between Customer Value with eWOM and Customer Satisfaction as an Intervening Variable for Generation Y and Generation Z Boba Drink Consumers.

1<sup>st</sup> Betarisha Putri 1\* 2<sup>nd</sup> Zulfikar Fauzi 2\*

1<sup>st</sup> [betarishap@gmail.com](mailto:betarishap@gmail.com) | 2<sup>nd</sup> [zulfikar@poltekmi.ac.id](mailto:zulfikar@poltekmi.ac.id) 2

Boba drinks have become a contemporary beverage trend gaining popularity, particularly among Generation Y and Generation Z. These two generations coexist with technological advancements such as the internet. However, in this rapidly evolving industry, competition is becoming increasingly fierce, as reflected in the rising number of boba beverage outlets in Indonesia. This research aims to explore the relationship between Customer Value, Electronic Word of Mouth, and Customer Satisfaction as Intervening Variables among Generation Y and Generation Z Boba Drink Consumers. Customer Value encompasses four dimensions: emotional value, social value, quality value, and cost value. Customer satisfaction is measured through the dimensions of product and service attributes. Electronic Word of Mouth is assessed using intensity, content, and opinion valence. The research employs descriptive and verification methods, targeting consumers of boba drinks from Generation Y and Generation Z. Questionnaires were distributed to 165 respondents from each generation. Data were analyzed using path analysis. Hypotheses were tested using t-tests and Mann-Whitney tests to determine differences. The results indicate a strong relationship between customer value and customer satisfaction and a relationship between customer satisfaction and electronic word of mouth. Additionally, differences in boba drink consumer behavior between Generation Y and Generation Z were identified.

Keywords: Customer Value; Customer Satisfaction; EWOM; Generation Y; Generation Z

*Minuman boba menjadi tren minuman kekinian yang memperoleh popularitas, terutama di kalangan Generasi Y dan Generasi Z. Namun dalam industri yang berkembang pesat ini, persaingan semakin kompetitif yang tercermin dari peningkatan jumlah gerai minuman boba di Indonesia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi Hubungan Nilai Pelanggan dengan Electronic Word of Mouth dan Kepuasan Pelanggan sebagai Variabel Intervening pada Konsumen Minuman Boba Generasi Y dan Generasi Z. Electronic Word of Mouth menggunakan tiga dimensi yaitu intensitas, konten dan valensi opini. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah deskriptif dan verifikatif. Objek pada penelitian ini adalah konsumen minuman boba Generasi Y dan Generasi Z. Kuesioner disebarkan kepada 165 Generasi Y dan 165 Generasi Z. Data dianalisis menggunakan metode analisis jalur. Hipotesis diuji menggunakan uji t dan uji man Whitney untuk menentukan perbedaan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan hubungan yang kuat pada nilai pelanggan dengan kepuasan pelanggan dan hubungan kepuasan pelanggan dengan electronic word of mouth. Selain itu ditemukan adanya perbedaan perilaku konsumen minuman boba Generasi Y dan Generasi Z.*

*Kata Kunci: Nilai Pelanggan; Kepuasan Pelanggan; EWOM Generasi Y; Generasi Z*

## INTRODUCTION

Around 10,900 culinary businesses are scattered across Indonesia, ranging from restaurants, catering services, and other ventures (BPS, 2022). The growing culinary industry is creating trends in contemporary food and beverages. Contemporary beverages refer not only to taste but also to their uniqueness (Listiorini, 2022). Boba drinks are a combination of tea, milk, and tapioca balls created in the 1980s in Taiwan by Chung Sui Teng. Boba is a type of tapioca jelly, round in shape, and coated with palm sugar. Indonesia holds the top position in Southeast Asia with the largest market value for boba drinks, reaching \$1,600 (Databoks, 2022). This is evident from survey results indicating that Boba drinks rank first as the most frequently ordered contemporary beverage by consumers online (Jakpat, 2022). This phenomenon has spurred business owners to continue creating boba drink ventures in Indonesia.

**Table 1.**  
**Number of Boba Outlets in Indonesia (2023)**

Boba Brand	Number of Outlets
Mixue	2400
Chatime	389
Xiboba	200
Haus!	126
Koi The	68
Gulu Gulu	67
Xing Fu Tang	33

Based on Table 1, there is an increase in the number of boba outlets in Indonesia, leading to a more intense competition in the contemporary beverage business. Another perspective suggests that the product life cycle of drinks like boba is categorized as relatively short, raising concerns about the sustainability of the trend (Margaretha, 2020). Additionally, it is known that 40% - 60% of Indonesian consumers have switched brands, especially among young consumers following the latest trends (McKinsey & Co, 2022). This is believed to occur because, according to Thomas (2021), the beverage industry is currently not responsive enough to adapt to the differing preferences of each generation of consumers. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the target consumers of a company. In market segmentation theory, each consumer requires a different approach (Zhou et al., 2020). Nowadays, consumers want more than just a drink; they desire a beverage that satisfies their specific preferences (Lee, 2018).

Companies that focus on customer value will establish a sustainable competitive advantage in their business (Zauner et al., 2015). Customer value is the perceptual preference and evaluation of customers regarding product attributes, performance attributes, and the consequences derived from product usage that facilitates the achievement of goals and objectives in usage situations (Tjiptono, 2014). Customer value, as a comprehensive assessment by consumers of the benefits of a product, is based on their perceptions of what the product provides and what they receive (Zeithml, 2014). Customer value is an emotional bond formed between the customer and the producer after the customer uses the product or service provided by the supplier and finds that the product adds value (Butz & Goodstein, 2014). According to Sweeney and Soutar as cited in Tjiptono (2014), the dimensions of customer value encompass four important aspects: emotional value, social value, cost value, and quality value. Kotler and Keller (2017) define customer value through factors including product value, service value, personnel value, image value, and cost value

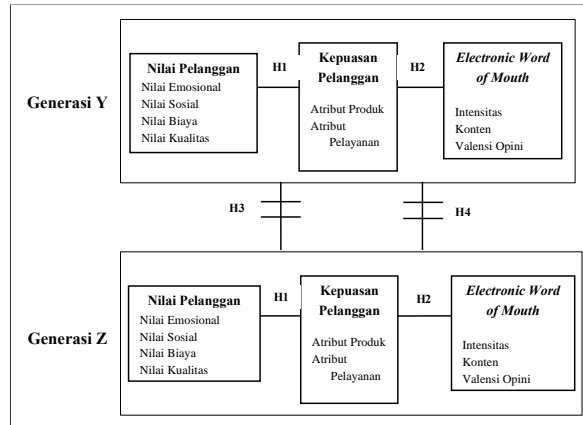
In the food and beverage industry, customers evaluate the quality of products, services, and experiences, which ultimately determines their satisfaction and leads to positive consumer behavior (Wahyuningsih et al., 2022). Customer satisfaction is a primary outcome of performance and holds a crucial position in both theory and application (Rahmalia & Syafruddin, 2019). Customer satisfaction is an emotional response in the form of approval given by consumers when they obtain satisfactory results from a product or service (Cheng et al., 2019). It is the difference between the performance delivered by the company and the customer's expectations, which is then compared with the company's performance (Mar'ati & Sudawrwanto, 2016). Measuring customer satisfaction can be done through dimensions such as performance, quality, expectation, and disconfirmation (Wahyuningsih et al., 2022). Customer satisfaction can also be assessed through attributes related to the product, attributes related to service, and attributes related to the purchase (Dutka as cited in Ismanto, 2020).

Digital channels have become essential mediums for consumers to communicate, seek product information, express themselves, and share their experiences (Fabiell et al., 2020). Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM) is another form of word-of-mouth communication that utilizes the internet (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). EWOM is an online communication tool aimed at spreading information about a product to the entire public that may not be familiar with the product (Priansa, 2017). The measurement of EWOM can be done through positive experiences, recommendations, and persuasion (Ali, 2020). On the other hand, some opinions suggest that EWOM can be measured through intensity, content, and the valence of opinions (Goyette et al., 2010).

Boba drinks have gained popularity among the younger generation, particularly Gen Y and Gen Z (Tejada, 2020). Gen Y is known for being idealistic, valuing diversity, and easily adapting, especially to technology (Arkoful et al., 2022). The advancements in internet technology, such as social media, make Gen Y comfortable with communication and self-expression (Dewanti & Indrajit, 2018). When making purchases, Gen Y tends to conduct extensive research using their mobile phones (Kotler et al., 2021). On the other hand, Gen Z considers career, economic stability, and money as crucial factors in their lives (Kotler et al., 2021). Gen Z spends a significant amount of time on electronic devices engaging in social relationships, learning, shopping, and communicating

(Sramkova & Sirotiakova, 2020). The consumption pattern of Gen Z is high, making them prone to making purchases without overly considering the benefits (Arda & Andriany, 2019).

There have been several previous studies related to the variables of customer value, customer satisfaction, and EWOM. Gen X, Y, and Z perceive different values. The customer value of Gen X and Gen Z significantly influences customer satisfaction and EWOM, while the customer value of Gen Y does not have a significant impact on customer satisfaction and EWOM (Wahyuningsih et al., 2022). Customer satisfaction has a significant impact on EWOM (Febrian & Fadly, 2021). Customer value also has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction and loyalty (Abadi et al., 2020). Customer satisfaction affects electronic word of mouth (Pranataria & Abro, 2019). If illustrated, the following is the paradigm of this research:



**Figure 1.**  
**Research Paradigm**

Based on the theoretical review and previous research by experts, the hypotheses for this study are as follows:

H1: There is a relationship between Customer Value and Customer Satisfaction in Gen Y and Z.

H2: There is a relationship between Customer Satisfaction and EWOM in Gen Y and Z.

H3: There is a difference in the relationship between Customer Value and Customer Satisfaction in Gen Y and Z.

H4: There is a difference in the relationship between Customer Satisfaction and EWOM in Gen Y and Z.

## METHODOLOGY

The research method employs a quantitative, verificative approach reinforced with descriptive analysis. The population of this study consists of Gen Y and Gen Z consumers of boba drinks in Indonesia. The sample is obtained using Hair's (2010) theoretical formula due to the large and unknown population size. The study utilizes a non-probability sampling technique, specifically purposive sampling, to select 165 Gen Y and 165 Gen Z consumers of boba drinks.

The data collection techniques employed include both primary and secondary data. Primary data is gathered through questionnaires distributed to respondents via Google Forms. The data analysis techniques involve descriptive analysis, validity and reliability tests, t-tests, independent t-tests, and path analysis, with the assistance of Microsoft Excel and SPSS 21 version software.

The structured questions used in this study were formulated both from existing measurements and information from literature review. Metrics scale using 1 – 5 Likert scale was employed for questions related to the main variables of customer value, customer satisfaction, and eWOM.

To measure customer value, dimensions such as emotional value, social value, quality value, and cost value are adapted from previous studies (Tjiptono, 2014). Customer satisfaction is measured using dimensions related to product attributes and service attributes (Dutka as cited in Ismanto, 2020). Meanwhile, to measure EWOM, dimensions such as intensity, content, and valence of opinions are utilized (Goyette et al., 2010)

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the descriptive analysis show that the majority of respondents, whether in Gen Y or Z, are women, accounting for 64.2% and 67.3%, respectively, while the rest are men. Boba drinks consumers are predominantly aged 27-32 in Gen Y and 23-26 in Gen Z, with percentages of 65.5% and 60%, respectively. The highest education level for boba consumers in both Gen Y and Z is a Bachelor's degree (S1). In Gen Y, the majority are private employees at 52.1%, while in Gen Z, the majority are students at 42.4%. The frequency of boba purchases in the last three months for Gen Y and Z is 2-3 times. Respondents are grouped based on six islands with the highest number of boba outlets in Indonesia, with the following results:

**Table 2.**  
**Respondent Profile According to the Residence**

Residence	Gen Y (%)	Gen Z (%)
Sumatera	20,6%	20,6%
Java	37%	40%
Bali	15,2%	13,3%
Kalimantan	11,5%	10,9%
Sulawesi	12,1%	12,1%
Papua	3,6%	3%

The results of the frequency analysis of Gen Y respondent's answers from research variables indicate that customer value, customer satisfaction, and EWOM are in the quite high category.

**Table 3.**  
**Variable Percentage Gen Y**

Variable (Gen Y)	Total Score	Mean	Category
<b>Customer Value</b>	6663	3,37	Quite High
<b>Customer Satisfaction</b>	2234	3,38	Quite High
<b>EWOM</b>	3113	3,14	Quite High

The results of the frequency analysis of Gen Z respondents answers from research variables indicate that customer value, customer satisfaction and EWOM are in the quite high category.

**Table 4.**  
**Variable Percentage Gen Z**

Variable (Gen Z)	Total Score	Mean	Category
<b>Customer Value</b>	6975	3,53	High
<b>Customer Satisfaction</b>	2759	4,18	High
<b>EWOM</b>	3497	3,53	High

### The Relationship of Customer Value on Customer Satisfaction

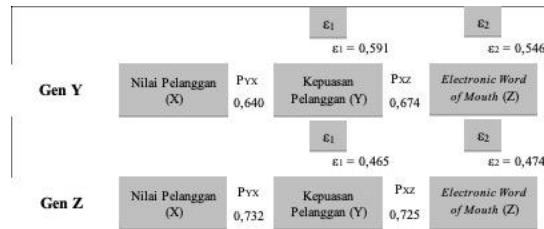
Based on the SPSS output, the calculated t-value for the variable customer value with customer satisfaction is 10.621, and the p-value (Sig.) is 0.000. Since the calculated t-value is greater than the tabulated t-value ( $10.621 > 1.975$ ) and the significance value is  $0.000 < 0.05$ , H0 is rejected, and H1 is accepted. This means there is a significant relationship between customer value and customer satisfaction among Gen Y boba drink consumers

Based on the SPSS results, the calculated t-value for the variable customer value with customer satisfaction is 13.706, and the p-value (Sig.) is 0.000. Since the calculated t-value is greater than the tabulated t-value ( $13.706 > 1.975$ ), and the significance value is  $0.000 < 0.05$ , H0 is rejected, and H1 is accepted. This means there is a significant relationship between customer value and customer satisfaction among GenZ boba drink consumers

**The Relationship of Customer Satisfaction on EWOM**

Based on the SPSS output, the calculated t-value for the variable customer satisfaction with EWOM is 11.639, and the p-value (Sig.) is 0.000. Since the calculated t-value is greater than the tabulated t-value ( $11.639 > 1.975$ ) and the significance value is  $0.000 < 0.05$ , H0 is rejected, and H1 is accepted. This means there is a significant relationship between customer satisfaction and EWOM among Gen Y boba drink consumers.

In Gen Z, the calculated t-value for the variable customer satisfaction with EWOM is 13.438, and the p-value (Sig.) is 0.000. Since the calculated t-value is greater than the tabulated t-value ( $13.438 > 1.975$ ) and the significance value is  $0.000 < 0.05$ , H0 is rejected, and H1 is accepted. This means there is a significant relationship between customer satisfaction and EWOM among Gen Z boba drink consumers. The results from the first and second paths would be as follows



**Figure 2.**  
**Path Analysis**

From the diagram, it can be observed that the relationship between customer value and customer satisfaction in Gen Z tends to be higher than in Gen Y. This is consistent with the relationship between customer satisfaction and EWOM in Gen Z, which also tends to be higher than in Gen Y, indicating that the relationships are stronger and better in Gen Z compared to Gen Y.

**Differences in the Relationship between Customer Value and Customer Satisfaction in Gen Y and Gen Z**

Based on the data analysis results, it is known that the average score for the relationship between customer value and customer satisfaction in Gen Y is 26.96, while the average score in Gen Z is 29.50, with a difference between Gen Y and Gen Z of 2.54. This value indicates that the average score in Gen Z is higher than in Gen Y. Since the p-value is smaller than the significance level ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), H0 is rejected, and H1 is accepted, meaning there is a significant difference in the relationship between customer value and customer satisfaction among Gen Y and Gen Z boba drink consumers

**Table 5.**  
**Differences in the Relationship between Customer Value and Customer Satisfaction in Gen Y and Gen Z**

Gen	Mean	Difference	p-value	$\alpha$	Decision
Gen Y	26,96	2,54	0,000	0,05	Significantly Different
Gen Z	29,50				

**Differences in the Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and EWOM in Gen Y and Gen Z**

Based on the data analysis results, it is known that the average score for the relationship between customer satisfaction and EWOM in Gen Y is 16.20, while the average score in Gen Z is 18.96, with a difference between Gen Y and Gen Z of 2.75. This difference value indicates that the average score in Gen Z is higher than in Gen Y. Since the p-value is smaller than the significance level ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), H0 is rejected, and H1 is accepted, meaning there is a significant difference in the relationship between customer satisfaction and EWOM among Gen Y and Gen Z boba drink consumers.

**Table 6.**  
**Differences in the Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and EWOM in Gen Y and Gen Z**

Gen	Mean	Difference	p-value	$\alpha$	Decision
Gen Y	16,20	2,75	0,000	0,05	Significantly Different
Gen Z	18,96				

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This research compares the relationships between customer value, satisfaction, and EWOM for Gen Y and Z in the purchasing behavior of boba drinks. It is known that there is a strong relationship between customer value and customer satisfaction for both Gen Y and Gen Z, as well as a strong relationship between customer satisfaction and EWOM for Gen Y and Gen Z. Additionally, there are differences in the relationship between customer value and customer satisfaction for Gen Y and Gen Z, and differences in the relationship between customer satisfaction and EWOM for Gen Y and Gen Z.

The main contribution of this research is related to the market segmentation of boba drinks for Gen Y and Z. For Gen Y, managerial implications may include creating attractive yet professional branding, personalizing boba drinks, and organizing photo, video, campaign contests, or hashtags involving the company's products. Meanwhile, for Gen Z, activities can be regularly organized that align with the company's values, designing photos, menus, and even packaging using high-definition (HD) resolution, and implementing reward or loyalty programs for loyal customers.

The contribution of the relationship between the customer value variable and customer satisfaction for Gen Y and Z is 40.9% and 53.5%, respectively, while the remaining percentage can be influenced by other variables. Similarly, the contribution of the relationship between the customer satisfaction variable and EWOM for Gen Y and Z is 45.4% and 52.6%, respectively, with the rest potentially being influenced by other variables. For future research, adding the variable of repeat purchase interest could help understand how the relationships between variables influence consumers' final decisions to repurchase boba drink products

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