The Role of Student Trust in Mediating Service Quality and Student Reputation Against E-WOM

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Abstract. The rapid rise of universities, particularly private universities, frequently results in intense competition among these institutions. As a result, the purpose of this research is to examine the study titled The Role of the Quality of Student Trust in Mediating the Quality of Student Services and the University's Reputation on Electronic Word of Mouth among students. This study's sample was chosen utilizing a multi-stage sampling technique, beginning with the selection of private institutions using purposive sampling and ending with the selection of students using incidental sampling. In this survey, there were 255 students who represented five private universities in percentage. Descriptive statistics and structural equation modeling were employed in the data analysis (SEM). The study's findings revealed that service quality has a positive and significant effect on electronic word of mouth, university reputation has a positive and significant effect on electronic word of mouth, student trust has a positive but not significant effect on electronic word of mouth, student trust can mediate between service quality and electronic word of mouth, and student trust can moderate the influence of university reputation on electronic word of mouth.

Keywords: Service quality, University reputation, Student trust, Electronic Word of Mouth.

INTRODUCTION

The progress of a country today cannot be measured only by relying on the number of natural resources (SDA) it has, but depends on the quality of existing human resources (HR). Countries with minimal natural resources that have succeeded in becoming developed countries have proven this, such as Singapore, South Korea, Japan, and Norway (Kusyana et al, 2020).

Education plays a very vital role, both in developed and developing countries. If for developed countries education still plays a vital role, then you can imagine how important education is for developing countries like Indonesia (Ramadhani et al, 2021).

Education is one of the most effective tools for changing human mindsets. The impact of education in the formation of human quality is two or three times stronger than in other fields

(Syafe'I, 2017). Education has the task of improving the quality of individuals to be more productive. Education serves as a function of social control, cultural preservation, training center and workforce development and attitude formation (Dirgantari, 2012)

Education, particularly higher education institutions (PT) in Indonesia, both public and private, must be developed in order to continuously advance science and technology. As a result, higher education's function is particularly critical in terms of enhancing the quality of resources, including human resources and educational infrastructure (Primayana, 2015). Universities must always make modifications to provide more sophisticated, independent, and quality education in response to the demands of a quickly changing global world (Asmawi, 2010).

Higher education is a pure service that necessitates a greater number of interpersonal contacts. Because higher education is a service and students are expected to fund their education costs, it seems appropriate that universities shift from product orientation, i.e. relying on products to sell, to a customer approach (Handayani et al, 2011). Abdullah devised a five-dimensional scale to measure service quality in higher education, which encompasses features of academic and non-academic services, program difficulties, access, and reputation (2006a). The importance of university service quality must be recognized, as ignoring the nature and importance of service quality has been shown to have a negative impact on service providers in the higher education industry, where student satisfaction plays an important role in university success and can act as an important tool in improving service quality. felt Abdullah (2006)b

Student satisfaction is critical to the university's long-term existence and progress. University administration expects satisfied students to spread positive word of mouth, much as satisfied customers do, which helps the university attract and recruit new students (Helgesen & Nesset, 2007), and seeks to retain present students in order to build future collaboration. Client happiness leads to customer loyalty, according to the service profit chain (Alves & Raposo, 2010). Students are now seen to have a new function in relation to their impact on university achievement and the changing position of universities in the current economy and society; student loyalty, along with college quality and student satisfaction, has been

demonstrated to play a very essential role (Ganic et al, 2018).

Word of mouth (WOM) is a type of marketing communication in which individuals communicate information about products to other individuals (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). In this context, the amount of student satisfaction influences WOM communication made by students to other parties (including potential students) (Hermawan, 2001). WOM can be an effective promotional medium in an effort to increase the number of students because it can influence the attention of potential students. Trust, information sources, attractiveness of sources, strength of social relationships, expertise of sources, and usefulness of information are all WoM elements that drive interest (Nurlatifah & Masykur, 2017). WOM communication has more clout than advertising and other forms of marketing (Pamungkas, 2016). According to Kudeshia and Kumar (2017), word of mouth communication (WOM) is a communication process in which individuals and organizations make recommendations for a product or service that attempts to convey personal information.

Electronic Word of mouth (E=WOM)

Word of mouth marketing, according to Kotler and Keller (2012), is a marketing activity that occurs through person-to-person intermediaries, either orally, in writing, or through technological communication technologies, and is tied to the experience of purchasing services or utilizing products or services. Electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) is the electronic spread of word of mouth (WOM) through the use of digital technology or the internet.

According to H. J. Jeong and Koo (2015), E-WOM communication is a favorable or negative comment made by consumers or former consumers regarding products / firms to a large number of people via the internet, such as chat rooms, blogs, online forums, and others. According to Abubakar et al. (2016), E-WOM is defined as numerous favorable or negative statements made by a person or prior client about a product, service, or company that is made available to the larger community via the internet.

E-WOM is defined by Gruen et al (2006) as a communication tool for sharing information on a product or service that has been consumed between consumers who do not know each other and have never met before. In general, E-WOM is a type of communication that evolved from traditional WOM as a result of technical

advancements and the internet. E-WOM can be both beneficial and harmful.

Student Trust

Trust, according to Wong (2017), is the backbone of business. If two or more parties trust each other, a business transaction will take place. This trust cannot be easily recognized by other parties or business partners; it must be created from the ground up and demonstrated.

According to Mowen and Minor (2009), consumer trust is the knowledge that customers have about an object, its attributes, and its benefits. The conviction that one's statements or promises can be trusted and that one will fulfill his duties in an exchange relationship, according to Mao (2010). Building trust in long-term client relationships is critical for creating consumer loyalty. This trust cannot be recognized by other parties/business partners; it must be created from the ground up and proven. Trust is defined by Mayer et al. (2007) as a person's willingness to be sensitive to the acts of others based on the assumption that others will execute particular activities on individuals who believe in them, independent of their ability to monitor and control them.

According to Kotler and Keller (2012), "trust is a firm's readiness to rely on a commercial partner." It is determined by a variety of interpersonal and interorganizational elements, including the firm's perceived competency, integrity, honesty, and compassion." Whereas trust is defined as the company's willingness to rely on the trust of business partners.

Definition of Service Quality

According to M. Ali and Raza (2015), service quality is the amount to which client expectations or wants differ from their perception. Service quality can be determined by comparing consumers' and customers' perceptions of the services they receive with the services they desire. If the service obtained exceeds expectations, it is said to be of high quality. Meanwhile, if the service obtained is consistent with what was expected, the service is satisfactory.

Meanwhile, if the service is lower than expected, it is of poor quality. Finally, service quality can be described as the distance between reality and expectations of the service received/obtained. And whether or not the service provider meets client expectations on a constant basis determines whether or not the service is of high quality. A good service system would also create good service quality. Furthermore, the service system must be in agreement with consumer requirements. This means that the firm must be capable of responding to client needs and desires by implementing the appropriate service system and strategy.

College/University Reputation

According to Fombrun (1996) in Adeosun et al (2013), "a corporate reputation are perceptions held by people inside and outside a corporation." In Hasan and Yun (2017), Fombrun (1996), Gotsi, M., and Wilson (2001) define a firm's reputation as an ongoing appraisal conducted by stakeholders of the company. The evaluation is based on stakeholders' direct interactions with the company, as well as other kinds of communication and symbolism that convey information about the company's actions/actions and/or comparisons with the actions/actions of its primary competitors.

According to Fombrun (1996) in Hasan & Yun (2017), a company's reputation stems from its ability to directly manage impressions, to build strong relationships with constituents (consumers, education personnel (tendik), investors, and communities), and to deal with indirect issues that arise from the company. from active traders to interested onlookers like analysts and reporters

According to Urde and Greyser (2016), a good reputation boosts revenues by attracting consumers' attention to the company's products, investors' interest to securities, and educational staff (tendik) attention to the company's job vacancies. The company's reputation is quite significant in influencing the attitude to choose which one is the best for us to choose from the many options, and we invest in firms with very good or good reputations.

Framework

This study develops a theoretical framework based on the associated literature review and hypothesis generation, as illustrated in Figure 1
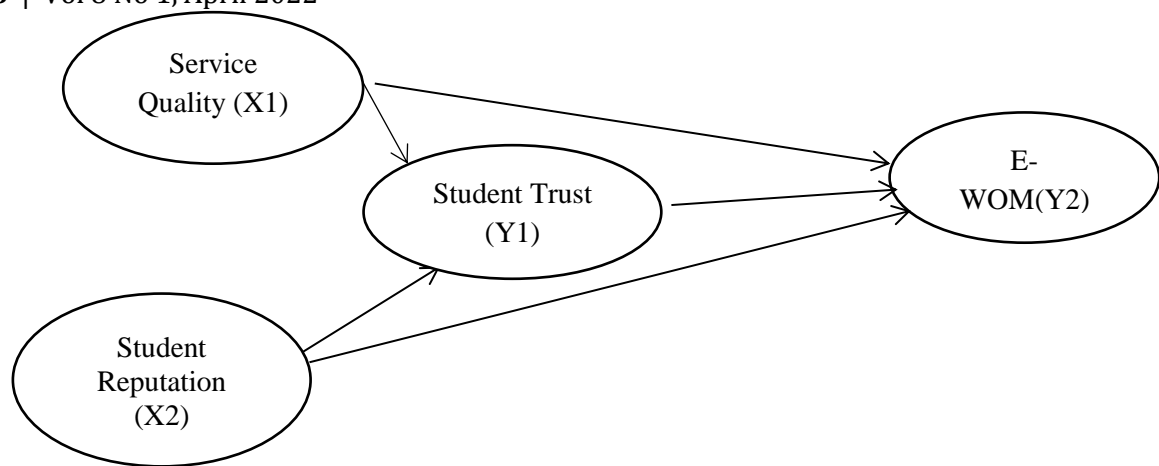
Figure 1. Framework

The research hypotheses in this study are as follows:

H1: Service Quality has a significant effect on E-WOM

H2: Service Quality has a significant effect on Student Trust

H3: Student trust has a significant effect on E-WOM

H4: Student reputation has a significant effect on E-WOMX

H5: Student Reputation has a significant effect on the performance of Student Trust

H6: Service quality has a significant effect on E-WOM through student trust

H:7:Student reputation has a significant effect on E-WOM through student trust.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative research design. Data gathered through the dissemination of surveys using a Likert scale. A total of 265 Bireuen Private University students were chosen as the population and research samples. Furthermore, the data was analyzed using a Structure Equation Model (SEM) based on Partial Least Square (PLS) that seeks to perform route analysis, as well as direct and indirect effects of Service Quality and Student Reputation variables on Electronic Work From Home (E-WOM).

SEM-PLS can perform efficiently with small sample quantities and sophisticated models, according to (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2013). Furthermore, the assumption of data distribution in SEM-PLS is weaker than in CB-SEM. SEM-PLS is a nonparametric method that works well even with really aberrant data. Furthermore, the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach utilized in this study is as follows: 1) The first stage is to test the measurement model (Outer Model), which is to assess the validity and construct reliability of each indicator. 2) The second stage involves testing the structural model (Inner Model) to see if there is an influence between variables/correlation between the constructs examined in this study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Measurement Model Analysis (Outer Model)
Convergent Validity Test

According to Figure 2, all indicators in the model are more than 0.7. As a result, it may be inferred that it is reliable for measuring research variables. It can then be used in additional analysis.
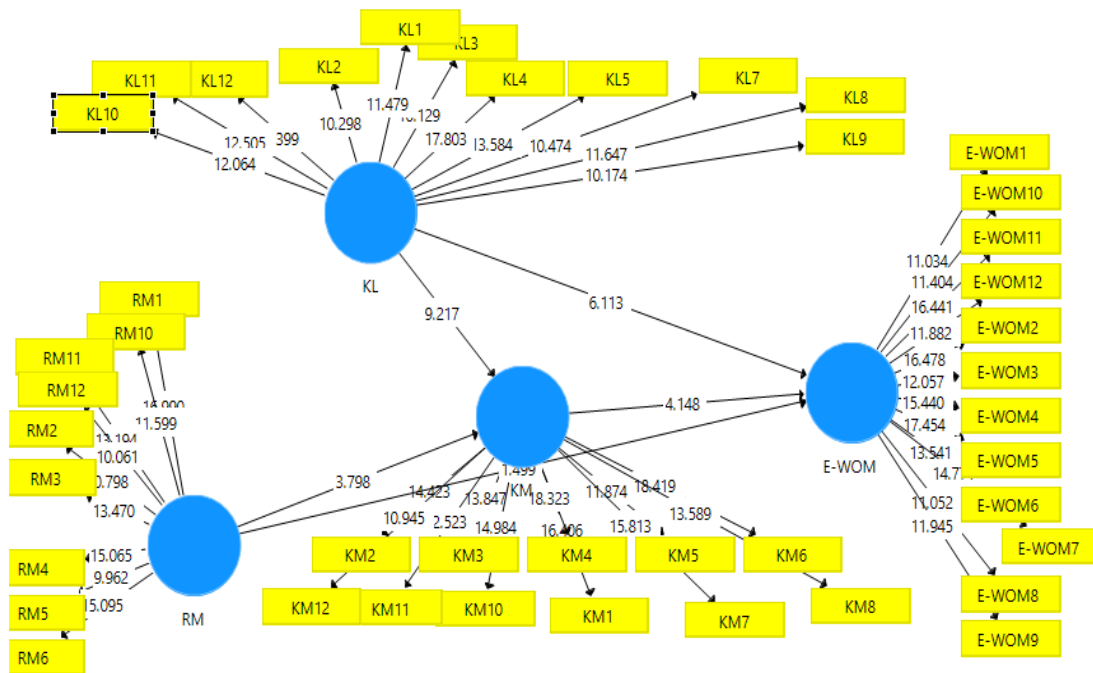
Figure 2. Convergent Validity Test

Construct Reliability Test

The results of data processing show that:

Table 1. Construct Reliability and Validity

Matrix	Cronbach Alpha	Rho_A	Composite Reability	Average
E WOM	0.934	0.934	0.943	0.578
SQ	0.917	0.918	0.930	0.546
ST	0.929	0.929	0.939	0.584
SR	0.911	0.911	0.927	0.584

According to Table 1, the mean value is greater than 0.5, and the composite reliability value is greater than 0.7. It follows that the indicators used in this study are accurate measures.

Measurement Model Analysis (Inner Model)
Coefficient of Determination (R2)

Table 2. Coefficient of Determination (R2)

Matrix	R Square	R Square Adjusted
E WOM	0.981	0.980
ST	0.970	0.970

It is known that the R Square Adjusted value for the Electronic Work From Home variable is 0.980, which is 98.0%, while the remaining 2.0% is influenced by other variables that are not variables studied in this study, and that the R value Square Adjusted for the Student Trust variable is 0.970, which is 97.0%, while the remaining 3% is influenced by other variables that are not included in this study. These findings are based on the data from table 4, which shows that the R Square Adjust.

Predictive Relevance (Q2)

The significance of the value of Q2 is equivalent to that of the coefficient of determination (R-Square). Q- Large value of Square (Q2) 0 indicates the model has Predictive

relevance, whereas if a value (Q2) is less than 0, this indicates the model has less Predictive relevance; in other words, where all values of Q2 are higher, the model can be considered more suitable to the data. Q- Large value of Square (Q2) 0 indicates the model has Predictive relevance. Taking into account the worth of Q2 can be done in the following way:

$$Q_2 = 1-(1-R_1^2)(1-R_2^2) \ldots (1-R_n^2)$$
$$Q_2 = 1-(1-0980)(1-0.970)$$
$$Q_2 = 1-(0.2)(0.3)$$
$$Q_2 = 1-0.06$$
$$Q_2 = 0.94$$

The value of Q2 is determined to be 0.94 on the basis of these results. Therefore, it is possible to draw the conclusion that all of the variables in this study, including quality of service, university reputation, student trust, and electronic word of mouth, contributed to the 94% authenticity of the data in the currently available structural model. The remaining 0.6%, on the other hand, will need to be produced independently of this research variable.

Hypothesis Test

Table 3. Direct Effect

	Original	Sample	Std Deviation	T Statistic	P Value
SQ -→ E WOM	0.453	0.455	0.077	5.900	0.000
SQ -→ ST	0.702	0.695	0.076	9.236	0.000
ST -→ E WOM	0.434	0.417	0.103	4.222	0.000
SR -→ E WOM	0.111	0.126	0.074	1.503	0.133
SR -→ SQ	0.292	0.299	0.077	3.808	0.000

1. The Effect of Service Quality on E-WOM

E-WOM can be significantly influenced by a company's Quality of Service in a direct manner. This conclusion can be drawn from the fact that the significance value of 0.000 is lower than the threshold of 0.05. The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of prior studies, which suggest that the level of service provided has a substantial impact on the amount of word-of-mouth communication. The findings of this research are consistent with those obtained from studies conducted by Sako (2012). According to the findings of Sako's studies, the level of customer satisfaction has a positive and significant influence on the amount of word-of-mouth communication and repurchase intentions. The level of pleasure experienced by customers is an essential asset for the company since it may serve as an indicator of both the quality of the firm as well as its potential future earnings. If a customer is happy with a product, they may feel more inclined to buy it again and may also actively share their positive experience with it with others.

2. The Influence of Service Quality on Student Trust

The findings of testing based on direct data indicate that the level of service provided has a considerable impact on the degree to which students trust the institution. It is common knowledge that the significance value of 0.000

for the Service Quality responsibility is significantly less than 0.05. This indicates that the quality of service is an important factor in determining the degree to which students trust private universities in Bireuen City. This research is consistent with the findings of prior studies, which found that the quality of the service provided has a substantial impact on the degree to which students trust an institution. The findings of this study are consistent with those found in previous studies carried out by I Gede Yogi Pramana and Ni Made Rastini (2016) as well as Nurhadi and Asriel Azis (2018).

3. The Effect of Student Trust on E-WOM

In the data analysis that was carried out directly, it was concluded that Student Trust has an effect on E-WOM. In this case, it is known that the significant value of the Student Trust variable is 0.000 less than 0.05, so this finding is consistent with what was expected. The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of previous research, which found that student trust has a significant impact on electronic word of mouth (E-WOM), such as the studies carried out by Kartika and Shihab (2019) and Kassim and Asiah Abdullah (2010), which found that trust is the primary factor in positive E-WOM among private universities in Bireuen City. The results of this study are in line with the findings of previous research.

4. Student Reputation is Positive But Not Significant to E-WOM

The situation in which it is known that the significance value of the Student Reputation variable is 0.105, which is more than 0.05. The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of previous research, which found that student trust has a significant impact on E-WOM. For example, research carried out by Lee & Hong (2019); Wibowo & Junaedi (2019); Yen & Tan, (2019) found that trust is the driving force behind positive E-WOM in private universities in Bireuen. These researchers also found that trust is the driving force behind positive E-WOM in public universities in Bireuen.

5. Student Reputation Trust affects Student Trust in E-WOM

Where it is known that the Student Reputation Trust variable has a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. The findings of this study are consistent with other studies that show that student reputation has a substantial impact on student trust, such as research conducted by Herwin and Abadi (2018); Nurul Husna and Farid Farid (2020).

Table 4. Indirect Influence

	Original	Sample	Std Deviation	T Statistic	P Value
SQ → ST → E-WOM	0.305	0.293	0.086	3.531	0.000
SR → ST → E-WOM	0.127	0.121	0.038	3.352	0.001

6. The Effect of Service Quality on E-WOM Through Student Trust

Indirectly, Student Trust has a substantial impact on E-WOM Service Quality. This is demonstrated by the significance value of 0.001, which is less than 0.05. According to research conducted by Sako (2012), consumer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on E-WOM communication and purchase intentions, and this study supports the findings of previous studies that concluded that Student Trust plays an important role in improving Service Quality towards E WOM. return. Consumer happiness is an essential asset for the company because it can be used to predict the company's quality and future earnings. This is shown in the lack of student transfers seeking another higher education when the student chooses to study for the first time at a private institution in Bireuen City.

7. The Effect of Student Reputation on E-WOM Through Student Trust

Student Trust has a substantial indirect influence on mediating Student Reputation on E-WOM. This is demonstrated by the significance value of 0.001, which is less than 0.05. This study supports earlier findings that Student Trust plays a key role in enhancing Student Reputation on E-WOM. (2019); which states that trust is the driver of positive E-WOM in private universities in Bireuen City.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the findings of a study on the effect of service quality and student reputation on E-WOM at private universities in the City of Bireun Aceh, with student trust as an intervening variable, it can be concluded that service quality has a direct and significant effect on E-WOM, which means that the higher the service quality, the higher the E-WOM. the higher the E-WOM communication; service quality has a significant influence on student trust, which means that the better the service quality, the higher the student's trust in universities; student trust has an effect on E WOM, which means that the higher the level of student confidence, the higher the student will communicate E WOM; reputation has no significant positive influence on E WOM, which means that student reputation has only a minor influence on students' E-WOM communication. Furthermore, Student Trust has a substantial indirect effect on mediating Service Quality on E-WOM, and Student Trust has a strong indirect effect on mediating Student Reputation on E-WOM. This is the student trust variable that mediates reputation and service quality on students' ability to communicate E-WOM by introducing their college to prospective new students.

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