

# **The Impact of Electronic Word-of-Mouth Communication on Online Purchase Intention: Mediating Effect of Brand Image**

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The present study investigates the impact of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) communication on online purchase intention and whether this relationship is mediated by the brand image concerning e-retailers in Sri Lanka. The study applied the quantitative approach with deductive reasoning as the primary research method. An electronically administered questionnaire was used to collect primary data from a sample of 250 e-retail customers. The data was analyzed using SPSS version 26 and Andrew F Hayes process procedure for SPSS version 3.0. This study revealed that the predictor variable, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) communication, positively affects the mediator variable, brand image, and the outcome variable, online purchase intention. The brand image also positively affects online purchase intention. However, the direct effect of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) communication on online purchase intention is higher than the indirect effect through brand image. Hence, the present study concluded that the brand image works as a partial mediator between the predictor and outcome variables. This study contributes practically important directions, especially to e-retailers recognizing how they can win more customers by changing their purchasing behavior through effective eWOM communication. Since the present study is confined to e-retailers, future studies should be conducted concerning other industries further to understand the study area and the research issue.

**Keywords:** *Brand Image, E-retailers, Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) Communication, Online Purchase Intention*