

Examining Social Media Usage, Brand Image and E-WOM (Quantity, Quality and Credibility) as Determinants of Purchase Intention

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Abstract

Social media took over the world in no time and proved to be a game changer for better connectivity, shared information, global integration and consumption. On one hand consumers became more enthusiastic about their social media image, products or services they consumer and perception of influencers towards brand, on another brand managers became more proactive about what their consumers are putting and seeking out in this dynamic world of choices. The traditional factors influencing purchase intention become less relevant and the modern factors like social media, E-wom, global trends become more important to analyse. This study aims at identifying social media usage, brand image and E-WOM (quality, quantity and credibility) as the determinants of purchase intention. The research is causal and descriptive in nature. For data collection, self-administered questionnaire was developed and data collection was via convenient sampling method. To check the reliability and data validity, exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis was run using SPSS and AMOS.

Keywords: Social media usage, E-WOM, E-WOM quantity, E-WOM Quality, E-WOM credibility, Brand Image, purchase intention

1. Introduction

Purchase intent is an important factor in developing marketing activities for any brand manager. Purchasing intention is a consumer behaviour that drives a purchasing decision (Yohana et al., 2020). Purchase intention is a person's attitude toward a product that they intend to acquire in the future (Papadopoulou et al. 2012). Cultural, demographical, social, personal, and psychological aspects are all relevant elements that impact consumer purchasing intentions (Mehyar et al., 2020).

P. Yu. Michelle (2018) conducted their research on different contexts like consumer reviews, reviewer personality, characteristics of the website that provides reviews, product review characteristics, factors influencing present in environment to identify the elements that influence consumer purchase intentions. The Internet facilitates direct connection of give and take between customers and advertisers. Customers may acquire a desire for consuming or buying a product/service, while marketers may obtain ideas, thoughts, and feedback from consumers (Avery et al., 1999).

With the rise in increased access to internet, social media consumption material has become an integral part of everyone's everyday life. Therefore, even for a small purchase, people search the brand on the internet for information and reviews (Jin & Phua, 2014). Marketers are both excited and

frightened by the rise of social media. More and more of businesses are marketing their products and services via social media and customer service or to keep an eye on their customers, one may say. Firms watch and analyse these websites to evaluate consumer impressions, identifying the huge range of information material and the openness of social media platforms (Ma et al., 2015). Given how much generation Y is influenced by the social media, brands that develop relations, encourages the brand-consumer interaction and can co-create the value for the benefit of this particular generation (Peres et al., 2006).

Although the study of E-WOM has only been around for around 15 years, it has drawn academicians and brand managers towards it from several domains such as marketing, sociology, communications, and psychology. Most of the current research has been conducted in a Western cultural context. This presents with an opportunity to explain E-WOM communications and impacts of social media usage in Asian regions (Cheng & Zhou, 2010). The evolution of web 2.0 technology has resulted in several shifts from traditional commerce to digital commerce. The impact of web 2.0 technologies has created a large social traditional website from word-of-mouth to electronic spoken communication which is more widely spread now (E-WOM) (Sulthana & Vasantha, 2019). As a casual communication medium, electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) has

proved useful in influencing customer decision-making and re-purchasing decisions (Joshi & Singh, 2017).

The effect of E-WOM on customer views of adopting products/services has been intensively researched in recent years. However, the spectrum of published studies in this field is fragmented, making systematic judgments on the usefulness of E-WOM a little problematic (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). The increasing popularity of electronic or digital communication, particularly E-WOM, is altering how consumers seek information, assess options, and make decisions. With the significant rise of E-WOM in the Indian setting, academics and marketers must develop a better understanding on how E-WOM influences customer purchase intention (Kala & Chaubey, 2018).

Despite several research studies on consumer goods branding and an expanding literature on product brands, very limited knowledge is developed about social media usage and E-WOM in the context of mobiles and laptops. As a result, this study report will give useful insight into E-WOM, image of brand, social media usage, & purchase intention in India's electronics (mobile and laptop) market. The contribution will mostly benefit academia and electronics brands, as stated further below. The study will significantly contribute to academia in having more research in the field of electronic word of mouth & social media marketing, as it will provide a profound insight on

the impact of E-WOM, brand image, & usage of social media on purchase intention in the Indian electronics industry, which can be useful not only to India but also to other countries as it can be used as a foundation for any other studies to replicate. research to be conducted.

The influence of E-WOM and social media usage is highly significant for laptop and mobile firms, particularly their marketing managers, to understand consumer behaviour relating to how customers view their goods, which is generally recognisable by its brand, from critical or positive feedbacks. As a result, the outcomes of this research can be findings of this study will be extremely useful to marketers in developing effective promotional techniques and social media strategies, to influence customer purchase decisions in this burgeoning market.

1. Literature Review

1.1 An overview

This part will include a critical evaluation of the literatures relevant to this inquiry. The chapter will then be followed by a finding's summary, which will be followed by the conceptual framework of this study. A chapter summary will be included at some point.

2.2 Purchase Intention

Purchase intent is a type of consumer behaviour that occurs in reaction to things that signal the customer's inclination to make a purchase (Kotler

& Keller, 2009). It can be defined as the perceived possibility that users would engage in particular behaviours. People who are concerned about acquiring a particular good or service usually have a buy intention, which is a desire to do so in the long- or short-term. According to Wells et al. (2011), purchase intention is a mental state in which a buyer has established a desire to buy a specific product or brand. Customers who are interested in a product will almost certainly seek the advice of their friends, family, or relatives before making a purchase.

Customers are more likely to make purchases when they have a positive opinion of a brand's goods or services because their attitude toward the product influences them (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1972).

2.3 Electronic Word-of-Mouth

Thurau & Walsh (2003) defined word of mouth as "any informal messages aimed towards other customers about the ownership, use, or features of certain items and services or their suppliers". It is only successful within narrow social interaction limits, and its influence wanes swiftly across time and space (Bhatnagar & Ghose, 2004). The emergence and growth of the internet has inherently transformed the way word of mouth is conveyed and its conventional constraints. Earlier transient word of mouth directed at a few known has now been changed into a long-lasting communications

accessible to the entire world. Therefore, electronic Word-Of-Mouth is becoming of paramount importance in customer purchasing decisions. The impact of E-WOM on consumers' lifestyles has created newer opportunities and complications for corporate marketing activities. Therefore, both researchers and practitioners have paid focussed attention to E-WOM method of communication for decades (Bruyn & Lilien, 2008).

E-WOM communication refers to any favourable or unfavourable comments on the internet, about a product or firm by future, existing, or previous consumers that are made available to a larger population of individuals and institutions. They may be sent by e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, forums, homepages, blogs, online communities, newsgroups, hate sites, social networking sites and review sites (Thurau et al., 2004). E-WOM is critical for generating customer purchasing interest, developing brand equity for brands and enterprises, and lowering promotional costs (Jalivand & Samiei, 2012).

Word of mouth has gained popularity among consumers due to several factors like utmost satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Maxhem & Netemeyer, 2002), devotion towards the organisation (Dick and Basu, 1994), duration of the connection with the company/brand (Wangenheim & Bayon, 2004) originality of the product or service (Bone, 1995) and motivation to share their happiness,

pleasure and disappointment regarding a product or service among other people (Neelameghan & Jain, 1999). Customers may see E-WOM as more trustworthy, understandable, and useful than commercial sources of knowledge on the internet provided by marketers. Social media's function of providing information and recommendations plays a key role in E-WOM because it has independent sender and consumer-centric channels, which are deemed more trustworthy (Brown et al., 2007), higher efficacy than traditional marketing activities (Trusov et al., 2009) and reduced customer risk (Hennig-Thurau & Walsh, 2004).

The aspects that distinguish WOM from E-WOM include spoken words versus written words, direct interaction versus indirect engagement, identity versus invisibility, and tight reach versus extensive reach (Bickart & Schindler, 2001).

Chevalier & Mayzlin (2006) in their study studied the impact of consumer reviews on the relative sales of books at the online book stores - Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com, and found that an enhancement in a book's reviews leads to increased sales at that website. Also, negative reviews (1-star) has greater impact than positive reviews (5-star).

When making purchase selections, an increasing number of consumers depend on network connectivity to look for detailed information. E-WOM

is a significant information source for customers making purchase decisions (Kozinets, 1999). When E-WOM for a product is favourable, people are more inclined to consider purchasing it, and vice versa (Park & Lee, 2008). Jalilvand and Samiei (2012) in their study concluded that the effect of positive E-WOM is very high on purchase intention. With the introduction of Internet deployed technologies, customers are progressively shifting toward computer devices led communication to receive the knowledge they require towards making purchase decisions. It has been found that good E-WOM contributes significantly for enhancing clients' purchase intentions (Kala & Chaubey, 2015).

2.3.1 E-WOM Quantity

There is a substantial association between the number of online reviews/positive product feedback for a given brand and a customers' positive buying intention toward it (Berger, Sorensen and Rasmussen, 2010). The vast amount of information available online gives a confidence boost to shoppers as the number of online reviews and comments may be an indication of the popularity and worthiness of the product and thereby influencing customers' intentions (Lee et al., 2008).

People these days live online and they tend to share every information on web, especially social media. Most shoppers require a supporting reference from existing users to make buying decisions.

It gives them confidence in making correct decisions as the quantity of online reviews/comments is directly proportional to how popular and worthy the product is. Greater the number of reviews or comments through electronic word of mouth will increase the purchase intention of the prospective customers (Mehyar et al., 2020). The customer's intention to purchase items and services is not only influenced by the quantity of information gathered but also by the review sites (Lee et al., 2008).

1.1.2 E-WOM Quality

The strength of the material included in an informational communication is known as information quality (Yeap et al., 2014) which plays a vital part in the appraisal of products and services by the customer (Filiari & McLeay, 2014). The persuasive power of reviews/comments included in the form of an informative message may be termed as E-WOM quality (Bhattacharjee, 2006). The quality of E-WOM may be defined as the persuasive power of reviews based on an informative message. The adoption of an E-WOM communication channels may depend on the quality of information displayed on it (Bhattacharjee, 2006). While looking for information, the quality of that information may have an impact on customers' acceptance of it, especially when in case of E-WOM communication channels (Cheung, Lee & Thadani, 2009). Mehyar et al., (2020) in their study established a positive correlation between the quality of E-WOM and the purchase intention.

1.1.3 E-WOM Credibility

Credibility is the extent to which one observes the suggestion to be realistic, accurate or realistic (Tseng & Fogg, 1999). Fogg et.al., 2002, defines e-WOM credibility as a range to which one distinguishes the reference of a certain source which may help in making a purchase decision. It explains the extent to which a customer separates the information which is crucial in making a purchase or not. In this study, E-WOM credibility refers to the extent of reliance of persons on the known list, such as cherish friends or companions and so forth (Bataineh, 2015). The credibility of E-WOM relates to how much an individual believes an advice from a certain source person or organization is trustworthy (Fogg et al., 2002).

Studies suggest that collecting C2C (customer to consumer) information electronically is considered not only dependable but also credible (Jonas, 2010). If the information obtained from E-WOM is credible and can be trusted, it may lead to better purchase intention of the customer (Eun-JuSeo & Jin-Woo Park, 2018). The credibility of E-WOM evaluations impacts the likelihood of acquiring new customers (Goyal & Sharma, 2020). As a result, it is claimed that online intervention tactics influence customer purchase intentions due to credibility at the source, message, and medium level (Lo & Yao, 2019). A crucial initial step in the information persuasion process is the receiver's evaluation of the information's reliability (Hilligoss & Rieh, 2007).

2.4 Social Media Usage

As the internet usage has surged in recent years, the globe is becoming more technologically globalised (Amen et al., 2017). Social networking use has increased as a result of this evolution. (Erkan and Evan, 2016). Customers in India utilise social media to stay up to date on product or service information. They also use social media to browse commercials, make evaluations, and read reviews. In the twenty-first century, social networking sites are a popular and reputable platform on which marketers may rely. As a result, conceptual comprehension of the social media is a critical area of study for marketers (PWC, 2018). Social media is becoming widely used as the preferred form of media, and it is changing how people shop. It allows users to compare and engage with data from around the world at any time and gives reliable information (effective two ways communication) (Bernhardt et al., 2012).

Social media is often referred to as an internet service that empowers and helps users to not only make but also share different kinds of content. It encompasses social networking sites, user-generated content platforms (like blogs), video sharing websites, online communities, online review and rating portals, and online virtual worlds where users may create, modify, and publish material (Krishnamurthy and Dou, 2008). Consumer behaviour on social media may be roughly divided into two categories: consumption (lurking or

watching) and contribution (posting) (Schlosser, 2005; Shao, 2009). The majority of people use social media to consume content rather than to contribute (Jones et al., 2004). Also, approximately 53% of social media users that are engaged do not actively promote a brand but rather follow it. (Nielsen, 2009). Marketers may use social networking sites to engage and connect with buyers for marketing goals. This engagement helps in the development of extended connections with the clients (Chikandiwa et al., 2013). Prasad et al., (2017) established the positive relationship between social media usage and purchase intention of consumers.

2.5 Brand Image

When someone thinks about a specific brand, they form an active association in their memory. This association is known as brand image (Shimp, 2010). The method by which a person chooses, arranges, and evaluates the information provided to create a valuable image is called brand image (Kotler & Keller, 2009). Brand image was described by Setiadi (2003) as a person's method of comprehending views of a brand that are produced as a result of knowledge and customer experience with a brand. A graphic representation of consumers' perceptions of brands based on experience and brand knowledge is another way to define brand image. Customers are more likely to make purchases when they have a favourable perception of a brand in their minds.

Brand differentiation, purchasing rationale development, sensation and feeling construction, and significant value to businesses all contribute to brand image as a crucial competitive advantage (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 2009). In order to make a brand more distinctive and set it apart from the competition, brand image analyses the features and advantages connected with a brand (Webster and Keller, 2004).

A product with the correct brand image is an important technique to capture a customer since people will unknowingly pick a product with a favourable image (Maulana, 2018). Brand image influences customer purchasing decisions by developing purchase intention (Aslam et al., 2019).

Brand image is an important phenomenon since by delivering what customers need and want, the firm is proclaimed to have met the brand's promise to its buyers, which may have a substantial positive influence on consumer buying intentions (Sahin et al., 2012). One of the key elements of consumer cognitive behaviour is purchase intention, which expresses the consumer's conscious desire to try to purchase a product (Spears and Singh, 2004). These findings support the study's finding that adoption of internet opinions can determine the impact of brand image on purchase intention (Charo et al., 2015).

3. Research Methodology

The study is intended to investigate the effects of e-WOM factors, social media

usage and brand image on purchase intention. To attain the study goal, the research design adopted is descriptive and causal in nature. The study is focused on the electronic products particularly mobile devices and laptops. The sample size is to be five times of the number of items in the questionnaire based on (Malhotra, 2010). The data has been collected using a questionnaire having established scales as shown in table 1. The data has been gathered over the course of three weeks from 165 Delhi-NCR residents using who were social media users and recent buyers of mobile or laptops.

Among the several quantitative data collection methods employed, a self-administered questionnaire with two sections was constructed using Google forms. The questionnaire comprised of two parts: the first part recorded the respondents' thoughts on the 46 items linked to the research constructs, and the second half included questions on the respondent's demographic facts, such as age, education, monthly pay, and job industry.

The face validity of the questions was examined to ensure that they were intelligible, straightforward, and logical by the respondents. Before data collection, a pilot study was conducted to ensure validity. The survey instrument was sent via several digital media channels such as WhatsApp, email, and Facebook.

The questionnaire was circulated among 230 people approximately out

of which 165 were collected for this study. The setting of google forms made it mandatory for the respondents to respond to each statement with the 'required' feature, therefore there were no missing responses. As a result, every response was deemed sufficient for the data analysis.

The collected responses were graded on a five-point Likert scale varying from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5

(Strongly Agree). The first half of the questionnaire assessed purchase intention and its determinants, while the second section assessed demographic parameters such as age, family, income, and education level. Brand image, E-WOM, E-WOM quality, E-WOM quantity, E-WOM credibility, social media usage and purchase intention are the seven constructs examined in this study.

S.No.	Constructs used	Adapted from
1	E-WOM	Electronic word of mouth (Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold, 2011)
2	Social Media Usage	Chu and Choi (2011); Mahapatra and Mishra, 2017; Hsu and Tran (2013)
3	Purchase Intention	The Impact Of Perceived e-WOM on Purchase Intention: The Mediating Role of Corporate Image by Abdallah Q. Bataineh (2015)
4	Brand Image	Role of electronic word of mouth on Purchase Intention by Wajeeha Aslam, Kahif Farhat and Imtiaz Arif (2019)
5	Credibility	The Impact Of Perceived e-WOM on Purchase Intention: The Mediating Role of Corporate Image by Abdallah Q. Bataineh – International Journal Of Marketing Studies (2015)
6	Quality	The Impact Of Perceived e-WOM on Purchase Intention: The Mediating Role of Corporate Image by Abdallah Q. Bataineh – International Journal Of Marketing Studies 2015)
7	Quantity	<i>The Impact Of Perceived e-WOM on Purchase Intention: The Mediating Role of Corporate Image by Abdallah Q. Bataineh – International Journal Of Marketing Studies (2015)</i>

Table 1: List of constructs

Cronbach alpha (reliability) and factor analysis (EFA) via SPSS & AMOS were used to calculate the variance explained by the given data on the recorded responses. In terms of research design, this study utilised the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) method for EFA (Exploratory factor

analysis), which is especially useful for fundamental factor-analytic procedures (Gorsuch, 1988; Fabrigar and Wegener, 2011). As un-rotated solutions are generally difficult to decipher, the axes are rotated, making them orthogonal (Gable and Wolf, 2012). If the factors are uncorrelated, the orthogonal rotation

methods or Varimax method is used. In this case, Varimax came in handy for rotating the variables and getting adequate extraction.

4. Results and Discussion

Group (n=120)	Variable	Percentage
Gender	Male	49.1 %
	Female	50.9 %
Age	Below 30	87 %
	31-45	9.6 %
	45 and above	3.5%
Income	Less than 30000	38.3%
	30000 – 60000	28.3%
	60001-90000	10.9%
	90001 and above	22.6%

Table 2: Demographic results of the respondents

Table 2 depicts the analysis of demographic data of respondents using SPSS. The analysis shows that the respondents comprise of 55.8% of females against 44.2 % of male members. Majority of the respondents are between the age group 20 to 25 years that constitute 93 % of collected data, 4.2% of respondents are below 20 years of age and 2.5 % respondents' range between 25 to 30 years of age. Majority of the respondents are people who earn less than Rs 30,000 per month that is 38.3% whereas 28.3% of the

respondents belong to the category of people who earn between Rs 30,000 to Rs 60,000.

Reliability

Cronbach Alpha has been used to evaluate the construct's and the whole scale's reliability. According to Table 3, the average Cronbach's alpha for all the constructs is .909. Burgess & Steenkamp (2006) state that a reliable collection of measurements for the underlying construct is one with a Cronbach Alpha of more than 0.6.

Factor	Score
Brand Image	.896
Credibility	.907
e-Word of Mouth	.857
Social Media Usage	.877
Quality of Information	.918
Quantity	.905
Purchase Intention	.888

Table 3: Reliability analysis

KMO and Bartlett's tests are used to determine sampling adequacy and sphericity. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sampling adequacy measure and Bartlett's sphericity test were used to determine that the data sets were appropriate for factor analysis based on the eigen value greater than one rule to identify the scale structure. The KMO was up to .925, and the sphericity test by Bartlett was significant (0.000).

Factors	Factor Loadings- β	Mean	Stand Deviation	% Of variance explained
Factor 1: Social Media Usage				
SMU3	.807	2.34	1.164	12.985%
SMU4	.793	2.44	1.129	
SMU5	.780	2.53	1.121	
SMU6	.733	2.87	1.021	
SMU2	.729	2.73	1.156	
SMU7	.708	2.66	1.147	
Factor 2: E-WOM Credibility				
CR4	.847	2.91	1.172	24.595%
CR5	.768	2.81	1.053	
CR2	.755	2.52	1.173	
CR1	.743	2.35	1.014	
CR3	.677	2.61	1.021	
Factor 3: Purchase Intention				
PI4	.806	2.83	1.032	36.202%
PI5	.795	2.88	1.046	
PI1	.760	2.54	1.035	
PI3	.750	2.55	1.153	
PI6	.705	2.34	1.166	
PI2	.591	2.42	1.176	
Factor 4: E-WOM Quality				
QL2	.764	2.96	1.162	46.931%
QL3	.761	2.32	1.035	
QL1	.751	2.54	1.174	
QL5	.721	2.66	1.021	
QL4	.719	2.61	1.164	
Factor 5: E-WOM				
E-WOM3	.819	2.46	1.162	56.925%
E-WOM4	.810	2.57	1.135	
E-WOM2	.743	2.68	1.015	
E-WOM6	.726	2.34	1.153	
E-WOM5	.657	2.22	1.146	
Factor 6 – Brand Image				
BI3	.805	2.51	1.175	66.820%
BI1	.779	2.57	1.121	
BI2	.724	2.53	1.022	
BI5	.694	2.75	1.017	
BI4	.681	2.42	1.141	
Factor 7 – E-WOM Quantity				
QT1	.803	2.43	1.119	75.132%
QT2	.725	2.86	1.011	
QT3	.712	2.75	1.072	
QT4	.696	2.64	1.411	

Table 4: Total Variance

On study variables, factor analysis with principal component analysis (PCA) and Varimax rotation produced entirely uncorrelated factors with Eigenvalues and factor loading greater than 1 and 0.50 respectively (Hair et al., 2010). When all seven principal components are considered together, the total variance is 75.13%. As shown in table 5, social media usage turned out to be the most important determinant of purchase intention (12.98%), followed by E-WOM credibility (11.61%). The third relevant factor is purchase intention (11.60%), fourth is E-WOM quality (10.73%), fifth is E-WOM (9.99%), followed by brand image (9.89%) and last is E-WOM quantity (8.31%).

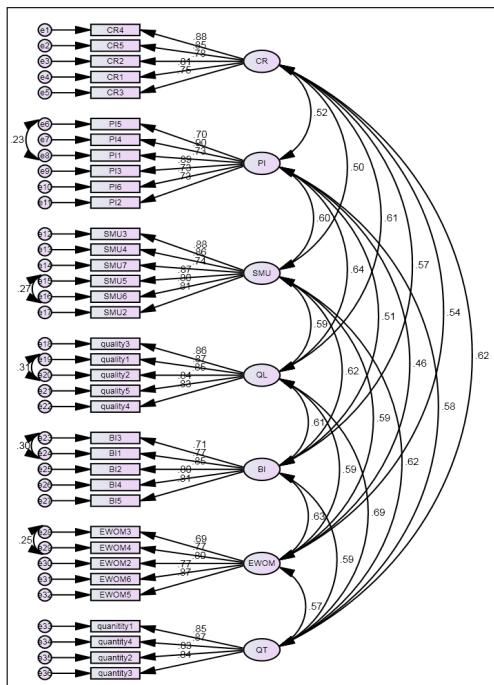


Figure 1: CFA – Determinants of purchase intention

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is strongly recommended following exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to evaluate and corroborate EFA results (Hair et al., 2010). As a result, CFA was performed using the AMOS 20 edition to determine the relationship between the research items kept in the final EFA. The construct validity of the scales shown in figure 3 was determined using confirmatory factor analysis.

Convergent and Discriminant Validity

CFA is an essential analytical technique for construct validation. CFA results can provide sufficient evidence of discovered constructs' convergent and discriminant validity (Hoyle, 2000).

The extracted average variance (AVE) is used to determine convergent validity. It is calculated by averaging the squared loadings of all items associated with the construct. Each concept should explain at least half of the variation in the assigned items. The dependability of a construct is determined using composite reliability (CR) in addition to Cronbach's alpha. The CR approach to total reliability is more retrospective, assessing the construct's consistency as well as its stability (Hair et al., 2010). Convergent validity measurements were effective for all constructs with AVE values greater than 0.5 and CR values between 0.7 and 0.9. (Hair et al., 2010). The aforementioned results are depicted in Table 6.

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)
E-WOM	0.888	0.615	0.402	0.899
E-WOM Credibility	0.909	0.666	0.387	0.916
Purchase Intention	0.904	0.615	0.404	0.925
Social Media Usage	0.929	0.687	0.391	0.935
E-WOM Quality	0.928	0.721	0.475	0.929
Brand Image	0.891	0.622	0.402	0.897
E-WOM Quantity	0.911	0.719	0.475	0.912

Table 6: Convergent and discriminant validity

Indicators	Results	Standard Value
CFI	0.926	>0.90
IFI	0.938	>0.90
TLI	0.915	>0.90
RMR	.049	<0.10

Table 7: Result of goodness of fit

The fit of the model is assessed using the fit index of the surveyed data. Three fitness indicators are typically checked to support the model (Gupta & Kaushik, 2018). The study uses the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Incremental Fit Index (IFI) and the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI). The corresponding tolerances for CFI, IFI, and TLI should be greater than 0.90. (Smith and McMillan, 2001). Goodness-of-fit test results correspond to the standard values shown in Table 7. Thus, we were able to establish the relationships between the selected constructs.

brand history. E-WOM credibility, purchase intention, social media usage,

E-WOM, brand image, E-WOM quality and E-WOM quantity. Therefore, the results of the study met the requirements of internal consistency, convergent validity and discriminant validity.

5. Conclusion, Limitations & Direction for future research

Consumers always go for products that are not only well branded but also have a exceptional brand image in the market. The intention of a consumer to buy the product largely depends upon how favourable brand image that product carries in the minds of consumers and how well that product satisfies their requirement and needs (Yohana, 2020).

If a product has a favourable brand image as perceived by the customer and is able to match the customers' requirements and desires, the consumer will more likely have an intention to purchase the product (Yohana, 2020). According to earlier research by Arifin and Fachrodji (2015), brand image significantly and favourably influenced consumers' interest in making purchases. The results of this study are

consistent with the findings of Ruhamak and Rahayu (2016) study, which found that brand image had a beneficial effect on customers' purchase intentions. The findings of this study are supported by those of Tseng et al. (2012), Maulana (2018), Prawira and Yasa (2014), and Putra and Giantari (2014). Brand image and purchase intent have a significant correlation, according to researchers (Shukla, 2010; Wu et al., 2011; Lien et al., 2015). The results confirmed the theoretical framework and demonstrated the positive impacts of social media use and EWOM on involvement in buying decisions.

The study has identified social media usage as a determinant to purchase intention of the consumers which is quite relevant considering its growing popularity but rather it is a less explored area. To gain a better understanding, a qualitative research technique could be used to obtain efficient results. Finally, future research should look into the role of gender moderation or any other possible moderators in information adoption, purchase intention, and information forwarding on mobile social networks.

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6. Managerial Implications

This study provides various understandings for firm's marketing strategy to exploit the digitization of WOM in obtaining fresh customers, holding on to existing ones, and building a positive brand image. It is said that if E-WOM is correctly managed, it has the ability to transform marketing operations and results for the firm. In the Indian market, where the number of internet users and online buyers are constantly increasing, marketers should consider E-WOM as an important marketing instrument which effects competitiveness, and long-term success. The implications of this study's findings are important for marketing managers and policymakers. This model demonstrates that the electronic communication technique will be effective in the long run if people develop trust in this context. As a result, rather than focusing solely on the propagation of information or simple communication, such a strategy should prioritise the development of trust through various means. People can participate in making decisions (or purchasing decisions) more effectively this way.

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