

Impact of Ewom Valence and Source Credibility on Purchase Intention

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Abstract

In the digital age, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and the credibility of information sources have emerged as critical determinants of consumer behavior, particularly in influencing purchase intentions. This study investigates the impact of eWOM valence and source credibility on consumers' intentions to purchase electronic durable goods. Drawing on dual-process theories of consumer behavior, the research posits that both emotional (valence) and cognitive (credibility) cues in online communication significantly shape purchase decisions. A structured questionnaire was administered to a sample of 494 respondents, and data were analyzed using correlation and regression techniques. The findings reveal a moderate and statistically significant positive relationship between eWOM valence and purchase intention ($r = 0.370$, $p < 0.01$), as well as between source credibility and purchase intention ($r = 0.383$, $p < 0.01$). Regression analysis further confirms the predictive validity of both constructs, with eWOM valence explaining 13.7% and source credibility explaining 14.7% of the variance in purchase intention. These results have both theoretical and practical implications, highlighting the need for marketers to manage online sentiment and partner with credible influencers to build consumer trust. The study contributes to the growing body of literature on digital marketing by reinforcing the dual role of affective and cognitive factors in online purchasing behavior.

Keywords: eWOM Valence, Source Credibility, Purchase Intention, Online Consumer Behavior, Digital Marketing, Influence of eWOM, Consumer Trust, Social Influence, Electronic Durables, Online Reviews, Marketing Strategies

1. INTRODUCTION

Consumer buying behavior is a multifaceted and dynamic field of study, encapsulating the decision-making processes individuals undergo when selecting, purchasing, using, and discarding products and services (Islam & Khan, 2024; Paul, 2024; Turkson et al., 2024). According to Solomon et al. (2006), it involves the study of the processes individuals or groups experience when they make choices to fulfill their needs and desires. The complexity of consumer behavior is shaped by a range of factors, including cultural, social, personal, and psychological influences (Singh et al., 2024; Gupta et al., 2024). These influences are further amplified by the growth of digital platforms and the increasing reliance on online sources for product information, particularly through electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM).

eWOM refers to the user-generated content shared through online platforms, such as social media, review sites, and forums, that provides valuable insights into the quality, usability, and overall experience with a product or service (Zaman & Kusi-Sarpong, 2024; Soliman et al., 2024). It is

increasingly seen as a credible and persuasive tool in shaping consumer attitudes and purchase behaviors. Unlike traditional marketing messages, eWOM is perceived to have higher authenticity and relevance due to its personal and peer-driven nature (Sadeqi & Roozmand, 2024; Alnahhal et al., 2024). As digital platforms continue to proliferate, the influence of eWOM in reducing consumer uncertainty and enhancing product evaluations has become a central theme in marketing research (Nguyen, 2024; Makhrouf & Chouhbi, 2024).

A critical aspect of eWOM is its valence—the tone of the message, whether positive, negative, or neutral. Positive eWOM often enhances brand trust and product image, fostering increased purchase intention (Minh & Quynh, 2024; Karmaker et al., 2024). On the other hand, negative eWOM, particularly when highlighted by credible sources, can significantly lower purchase intention by underscoring product flaws and fostering distrust (Baidoun & Salem, 2024; Toudeh Bahambari et al., 2024). The role of valence, however, may vary across product categories, consumer involvement, and brand familiarity (Laradi et al., 2024), suggesting the need for further exploration of how different consumer segments are influenced by eWOM messages.

Another pivotal factor in shaping consumer decisions is the credibility of the source providing eWOM. Source credibility is defined as the perceived trustworthiness and expertise of the individual or entity sharing the information. Research has shown that credible sources, such as influencers, experts, or peers with high domain knowledge or purchase experience, are more likely to influence consumer attitudes and behaviors (Radhi & Al Mubarak, 2024; Chaudhary et al., 2024). The perceived reliability and authority of these sources amplify the impact of the information shared, making them highly influential in shaping purchase intentions (Gupta et al., 2024; NS & Khandai, 2024).

Purchase intention, a psychological construct reflecting a consumer's readiness to purchase a product, serves as a critical predictor of actual buying behavior. It is significantly influenced by both the valence of eWOM and the credibility of its source (Paul, 2024; Bravo et al., 2024). Positive eWOM, particularly when communicated by credible sources, enhances product evaluation and reduces perceived risk, leading to higher purchase intention (Turkson et al., 2024; Singh et al., 2024). Conversely, negative eWOM, especially from credible sources, can increase doubts and foster negative attitudes, thereby decreasing purchase intention.

The interplay between eWOM valence and source credibility in shaping consumer purchase intentions is a well-established topic in marketing research, grounded in theories such as the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM). These theories suggest that both the content (valence) and the source (credibility) of eWOM play crucial roles in the persuasiveness of messages and subsequent consumer behaviors. However, despite the growing body of research, gaps remain in understanding how these two factors interact across varying demographics and product categories, particularly in emerging markets. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the combined influence of eWOM valence and source credibility on purchase intention, with a focus on identifying the nuanced ways in which these factors influence consumer decisions.

2. Research Questions

Research Question 1 (RQ1):

Does the valence (positive, negative, or neutral tone) of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) significantly influence consumers' purchase intentions for electronic durable products?

Research Question 2 (RQ2):

How does the perceived credibility of the source providing eWOM impact consumers' purchase intentions in an online environment?

3. Research Objectives

- **To examine the influence of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) valence on consumers' purchase intentions** for electronic durable goods.
- **To analyze the effect of source credibility** (i.e., the trustworthiness and expertise of the information source) **on consumers' purchase intentions** in the context of online marketing.
- **To identify the strength and significance of the relationship** between eWOM valence and purchase intention using statistical analysis.
- **To assess the predictive power of source credibility** in determining consumer purchase decisions based on online reviews or recommendations.
- **To provide managerial insights** into how digital marketing strategies can leverage eWOM and source credibility to drive consumer behavior effectively.

Research Hypothesis

- **H2:** Source Credibility has significant relationship with the purchase intention.
- **H1:** e WOM valence has significant relationship with the purchase intention.

4. Literature Review

Consumer buying behavior refers to the decision-making processes and actions that individuals undertake when selecting, purchasing, using, and discarding products and services (Islam & Khan, 2024; Paul, 2024; Turkson et al., 2024). As Solomon et al. (2006) define, it involves “the study of the processes individuals or groups undergo when they choose, buy, use, or discard products, services, ideas, or experiences to meet their needs and desires” (p. 3). The complexity of consumer behavior stems from a multitude of cultural, social, personal, and psychological influences (Singh et al., 2024; Gupta et al., 2024). Cultural norms and values, peer groups, social media interactions, and marketing tactics all converge to influence purchase decisions (Bravo et al., 2024; Alghamdi & Agag, 2024; Dorokhova et al., 2024). With the proliferation of digital platforms, **electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM)** has emerged as a pivotal influence in shaping consumer decisions. eWOM refers to user-generated opinions, reviews, or recommendations shared online through platforms like social media, review sites, and forums (Zaman & Kusi-Sarpong, 2024; Soliman et al., 2024). Compared to traditional marketing channels, eWOM is perceived as more credible, personal, and persuasive due to its perceived authenticity (Sadeqi & Roozmand, 2024; Alnahhal et al., 2024). As consumers increasingly rely on peer-generated content, the role of eWOM in forming attitudes, reducing uncertainty, and influencing purchasing decisions has become a central theme in marketing research (Nguyen, 2024; Makhrouf & Chouhbi, 2024). The **valence of eWOM**—whether the information shared is positive, negative, or neutral—significantly affects consumer perceptions and behavioral intentions. Positive eWOM typically enhances product image, boosts brand trust, and increases the likelihood of purchase (Minh & Quynh, 2024; Karmaker et al., 2024). Conversely, negative eWOM can deter potential buyers by highlighting dissatisfaction or flaws, leading to a decline in purchase intentions (Baidoun & Salem, 2024; Toudeh Bahambari et al., 2024). However, the impact of valence can vary based on product type, consumer involvement, and brand familiarity (Laradi et al., 2024). **Source credibility** refers to the perceived

trustworthiness and expertise of the individual or entity disseminating information. In eWOM contexts, the credibility of the source can significantly amplify or diminish the effect of shared information (Radhi & Al Mubarak, 2024; Chaudhary et al., 2024). Credible sources are more likely to influence consumer attitudes and behaviors due to their perceived reliability and authority (Gupta et al., 2024; NS & Khandai, 2024). Studies show that consumers are more likely to trust reviews or recommendations from individuals with real purchase experiences, high follower counts, or perceived domain knowledge (Alnahhal et al., 2024; Soliman et al., 2024). **Purchase intention** is a psychological construct that reflects a consumer's readiness or plan to buy a particular product or service. It acts as a critical predictor of actual buying behavior and is influenced by a range of factors, including eWOM valence and source credibility (Paul, 2024; Bravo et al., 2024). When consumers encounter positive, credible eWOM, their purchase intention tends to rise due to enhanced product evaluation and reduced perceived risk (Turkson et al., 2024; Singh et al., 2024). In contrast, negative eWOM, particularly from credible sources, can significantly reduce the likelihood of purchase by triggering doubts and negative attitudes. Drawing from the **Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)** and **Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)**, current literature supports the idea that the persuasiveness of eWOM depends both on the content (valence) and the characteristics of the source (credibility). However, despite a growing body of research, there remains a gap in understanding the interactive effects of eWOM valence and source credibility across varying consumer demographics and product categories—particularly within emerging markets. This study aims to address this gap by investigating the combined influence of eWOM valence and source credibility on purchase intention.

5. Data Analysis and Discussion

The study has been carried out in order to test the following hypotheses. The hypotheses for the study are designed on the basis of previous studies and relevant literature study.

H1: e WOM valence has significant relationship with the purchase intention.

The sentiment or tone of the electronic word-of-mouth messages, whether they are positive, negative, or neutral.

Proof of Hypothesis

Correlations			
		EVOMCO MP	PURINCO MP
EVOMCO MP	Pearson Correlation	1	.370**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	494	494
PURINCO MP	Pearson Correlation	.370**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	494	494
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The correlation analysis between "EVOMCOMP" (e WOM valence) and "PURINCOMP" (purchase intention) shows a moderate positive relationship, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.370. This

indicates that as e WOM valence increases, purchase intention tends to increase as well, suggesting that individuals who are more motivated by e WOM valence are more likely to have a higher purchase intention for electronic durables. The correlation is statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.000, which is well below the 0.01 threshold, indicating that the observed relationship is highly unlikely to be due to chance. The moderate strength of the correlation suggests that e- WOM valence plays a meaningful role in influencing purchase intentions.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.370 ^a	.137	.135	1.00841
a. Predictors: (Constant), EVOMCOMP				

The regression analysis examines the impact of the e WOM valence of Online Marketing (EVOMCOMP) on Purchase Intention (PURINCOMP). The correlation coefficient (R) is 0.370, indicating a moderate positive relationship between the e WOM valence of online marketing and purchase intention, suggesting that as the e WOM valence increases, purchase intention tends to rise. The R Square value of 0.137 implies that 13.7% of the variation in purchase intention is explained by the e WOM valence of online marketing, while the Adjusted R Square of 0.135 provides a more precise estimate of the model's explanatory power, accounting for the number of predictors. Additionally, the Standard Error of the Estimate, at 1.00841, reflects the average deviation of observed values from the predicted values. In summary, the results highlight that the e WOM valence of online marketing has a significant and moderately strong influence on purchase intention, though other factors are likely to contribute to purchase intention beyond this variable.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	79.492	1	79.492	78.172	.000 ^b
	Residual	500.309	492	1.017		
	Total	579.802	493			
a. Dependent Variable: PURINCOMP						
b. Predictors: (Constant), EVOMCOMP						

The ANOVA table assesses the overall significance of the regression model that examines the influence of e WOM valence of Online Marketing (EVOMCOMP) on Purchase Intention (PURINCOMP).

The **Regression Sum of Squares** is **79.492**, representing the variation in purchase intention explained by the e WOM valence of online marketing. The **Residual Sum of Squares** is **500.309**, indicating the variation not explained by the model. Together, these make up the **Total Sum of Squares** of **579.802**, which accounts for the total variability in purchase intention.

The **F-statistic** for the model is **78.172**, with a significance level (**Sig.**) of **0.000**. Since the p-value is less than **0.001**, the model is highly statistically significant. This confirms that the e WOM valence of online

marketing has a meaningful impact on purchase intention and that this relationship is unlikely to have occurred by chance.

In summary, the ANOVA results strongly support the conclusion that the e WOM valence of online marketing significantly influences purchase intention, aligning with the findings from the model summary.

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.914	.164		11.676	.000
	EVOMCO MP	.385	.044	.370	8.842	.000
a. Dependent Variable: PURINCOMP						

The coefficients table provides detailed insights into the regression equation predicting Purchase Intention (PURINCOMP) based on the e WOM valence of Online Marketing (EVOMCOMP).

The **constant (B)** is **1.914**, indicating that when the e WOM valence of online marketing is zero, the baseline purchase intention is 1.914. This serves as the intercept of the regression line.

The unstandardized coefficient (B) for EVOMCOMP is **0.385**, meaning that for every one-unit increase in the e WOM valence of online marketing, purchase intention increases by **0.385 units**, assuming other factors remain constant.

The **standardized coefficient (Beta)** is **0.370**, showing the relative strength of the relationship between EVOMCOMP and PURINCOMP in terms of standard deviation. This indicates a moderate positive effect of emotional value on purchase intention.

The **t-statistic** for EVOMCOMP is **8.842**, with a significance level (**Sig.**) of **0.000**, confirming that the relationship is statistically significant at the 0.001 level.

In summary, the results show that the e WOM valence of online marketing has a statistically significant and moderately strong positive influence on purchase intention, further validating its importance as a predictor.

H2: Source Credibility has significant relationship with the purchase intention.

The perceived credibility and expertise of the individuals or sources providing e WOM, such as online influencers, expert reviewers, or friends and family.

Proof of Hypothesis

Correlations			
		SOCRECO MP	PURINCO MP
SOCRECO MP	Pearson Correlation	1	.383**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	494	494

PURINCO MP	Pearson Correlation	.383**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	494	494
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The table presents the Pearson correlation results between two variables: **SOCRECOMP** (source credibility) and **PURINCOMP** (purchase intention), with a sample size of 494 observations for each variable. The Pearson correlation coefficient for **SOCRECOMP** and **PURINCOMP** is **0.383**, which indicates a **moderate positive relationship** between the two variables. This means that as one variable increases, the other variable tends to increase as well, although the relationship is not strong enough to be classified as a very high correlation. The positive value suggests that when **SOCRECOMP** (source credibility) increases, **PURINCOMP** (purchase intention) also increases, but the correlation is moderate in strength. The significance level, indicated by the **Sig. (2-tailed)** value of **0.000**, is less than the standard threshold of **0.01** (or 1%), indicating that the correlation is statistically significant at the **0.01 level**. This means that the probability of observing this correlation by chance is extremely low (less than 1%), providing strong evidence that the relationship between the two variables is real and not due to random fluctuation in the data. Furthermore, with **494** observations for both variables, the data sample is sufficiently large to ensure that the results are reliable. The table also notes that the correlation coefficient is significant at the **0.01** level, confirming that the relationship is meaningful and not the result of random variation. In summary, the correlation of **0.383** suggests a moderate positive relationship between **SOCRECOMP** and **PURINCOMP**, and the **p-value of 0.000** confirms that this relationship is statistically significant, making it a noteworthy finding despite the moderate strength of the correlation.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.383 ^a	.147	.145	1.00286
a. Predictors: (Constant), SOCRECOMP				

The regression analysis investigates the effect of Source Credibility (SOCRECOMP) on Purchase Intention (PURINCOMP). The correlation coefficient (R) is 0.383, indicating a moderate positive relationship between source credibility and purchase intention, suggesting that as the credibility of the source increases, purchase intention also tends to rise. The R Square value is 0.147, meaning that 14.7% of the variation in purchase intention is explained by source credibility, highlighting it as a meaningful predictor of purchase intention. The Adjusted R Square, at 0.145, refines this measure to account for the number of predictors, offering a more accurate estimate of the model's explanatory power. Additionally, the Standard Error of the Estimate, at 1.00286, represents the average deviation of observed values from the predicted values. In summary, the results indicate that source credibility has a moderately strong and statistically significant impact on purchase intention, although other factors likely contribute to purchase intention beyond source credibility.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	84.981	1	84.981	84.497	.000 ^b
	Residual	494.820	492	1.006		
	Total	579.802	493			
a. Dependent Variable: PURINCOMP						
b. Predictors: (Constant), SOCRECOMP						

The ANOVA table assesses the overall significance of the regression model examining the impact of Source Credibility (SOCRECOMP) on Purchase Intention (PURINCOMP).

The **Regression Sum of Squares** is **84.981**, which represents the variation in purchase intention explained by source credibility. The **Residual Sum of Squares** is **494.820**, indicating the unexplained variation in purchase intention. The **Total Sum of Squares** is **579.802**, representing the total variability in the dependent variable.

The **F-statistic** is **84.497**, with a **Significance (Sig.)** value of **0.000**, which is well below the 0.05 threshold. This indicates that the regression model is statistically significant, meaning that source credibility has a meaningful effect on purchase intention. The model is unlikely to have produced the observed results by chance.

In summary, the ANOVA results strongly support the conclusion that source credibility significantly influences purchase intention, further reinforcing the findings from the model summary.

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.933	.156		12.384	.000
	SOCRECOMP	.381	.041	.383	9.192	.000
a. Dependent Variable: PURINCOMP						

The coefficients table provides detailed information about the regression equation used to predict Purchase Intention (PURINCOMP) based on Source Credibility (SOCRECOMP).

The **constant (B)** is **1.933**, which represents the predicted value of purchase intention when source credibility is zero, serving as the intercept of the regression line.

The unstandardized coefficient (B) for SOCRECOMP is **0.381**, indicating that for each one-unit increase in source credibility, purchase intention increases by **0.381 units**, assuming other factors remain constant.

The **standardized coefficient (Beta)** is **0.383**, suggesting that source credibility has a moderate positive influence on purchase intention in terms of standard deviation. This shows that the relationship between source credibility and purchase intention is moderately strong.

The **t-statistic** for SOCRECOMP is **9.192**, with a significance level (**Sig.**) of **0.000**, indicating that the relationship is statistically significant at the 0.001 level.

In summary, the results suggest that source credibility has a statistically significant and moderately strong positive effect on purchase intention, emphasizing its importance as a predictor in the model.

6. Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the impact of two key factors of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM)—**valence** and **source credibility**—on **purchase intention** for electronic durables. The conclusions drawn from the correlation, regression, and ANOVA analyses for both hypotheses are as follows:

Conclusion on H1: eWOM Valence and Purchase Intention

The hypothesis (H1) proposed that eWOM valence has a significant relationship with purchase intention. The analysis supports this hypothesis:

- A **moderate positive correlation** ($r = 0.370$, $p < 0.001$) was found between eWOM valence and purchase intention, indicating that **more positive eWOM leads to higher purchase intentions**.
- The **regression model** further confirmed the influence of eWOM valence, with an **R² value of 0.137**, suggesting that **13.7%** of the variance in purchase intention is explained by eWOM valence.
- The **regression coefficient** ($B = 0.385$, $p < 0.001$) indicates a statistically significant and positive effect.
- The **ANOVA results** ($F = 78.172$, $p < 0.001$) affirm the model's significance.

Conclusion:

eWOM valence significantly and positively influences purchase intention, demonstrating that the tone (positive or negative) of online reviews plays a meaningful role in shaping consumer decisions for electronic durables.

Conclusion on H2: Source Credibility and Purchase Intention

The second hypothesis (H2) stated that source credibility has a significant relationship with purchase intention. The analysis also supports this hypothesis:

- A **moderate positive correlation** ($r = 0.383$, $p < 0.001$) was observed between source credibility and purchase intention, suggesting that **more credible sources lead to higher purchase intentions**.
- The **regression model** revealed an **R² value of 0.147**, meaning that **14.7%** of the variation in purchase intention can be attributed to source credibility.
- The **regression coefficient** ($B = 0.381$, $p < 0.001$) further validates the significance of this predictor.
- The **ANOVA test** ($F = 84.497$, $p < 0.001$) confirms the model's statistical significance.

Conclusion:

Source credibility significantly and positively impacts purchase intention. Consumers are more inclined to act on information provided by trusted, knowledgeable, or familiar sources, such as influencers, experts, or peers.

7. Overall Conclusion

Both **eWOM valence** and **source credibility** are **statistically significant and moderately strong predictors** of **purchase intention**. While each factor independently explains a portion of the variance in consumer decision-making, their combined influence emphasizes the importance of managing online content and the credibility of information sources in digital marketing strategies.

These findings have practical implications for marketers, suggesting that fostering **positive online reviews** and ensuring they are delivered by **credible sources** can meaningfully enhance consumer purchase intentions in the competitive market for electronic durables.

8. Implications

8.1 Managerial and Practical Implications

The findings of this study highlight the powerful role of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) valence in shaping consumer purchase intentions. Marketers are encouraged to actively promote and facilitate the sharing of positive customer experiences on digital platforms. This can be achieved through post-purchase engagement strategies such as thank-you emails, feedback collection, and loyalty rewards, which encourage satisfied customers to share reviews. When customers feel valued and heard, they are more likely to become vocal advocates, influencing prospective buyers positively.

Additionally, the moderate but significant correlation between eWOM valence and purchase intention underscores the importance of sentiment monitoring. Businesses should utilize online sentiment analysis tools to track public opinion in real-time. Promptly addressing negative feedback with transparency and solutions not only mitigates reputational damage but can also convert disgruntled customers into loyal promoters. Creating a feedback loop that listens, responds, and improves based on consumer input is essential in this digital age.

The study also emphasizes the significant influence of source credibility on purchase intention. Consumers place a higher degree of trust in product recommendations from credible and knowledgeable sources such as influencers, expert reviewers, or trusted peers. Hence, companies must collaborate with influencers who demonstrate authenticity, subject-matter expertise, and strong audience engagement. In addition to influencer marketing, integrating verified testimonials, expert reviews, and endorsements from known figures into digital campaigns can significantly enhance consumer trust and persuasion.

Building credibility should also be a central pillar of content strategy. Businesses must ensure that their content is accurate, transparent, and informative. This includes detailed product descriptions, customer Q&A sections, and expert comparisons that cater to informed decision-making. These features not only boost source credibility but also strengthen the brand's perceived reliability.

Furthermore, organizations should invest in the training and development of online brand ambassadors, whether they are employees, influencers, or customers. Clear policies and communication guidelines should be established to ensure that brand representatives maintain consistency, transparency, and trustworthiness in all interactions. Training these individuals equips them to responsibly handle online discussions, especially on public forums and social media platforms.

Lastly, firms should adopt a more nuanced, data-driven targeting approach based on consumer sensitivity to trust cues. Different consumer segments respond differently to message tone and credibility. For instance, older or more conservative customers may prioritize trust and source credibility, while younger and tech-savvy audiences may be more influenced by the emotional appeal or tone of the message. Tailoring communication strategies to match these preferences can enhance campaign effectiveness and consumer engagement.

8.2 Theoretical Implications

This study contributes meaningfully to the theoretical understanding of consumer behavior in digital marketing contexts. It affirms that both the emotional tone (valence) of online messages and the perceived credibility of the source play vital roles in shaping behavioral intentions. The dual significance

of these variables provides empirical support for dual-process theories in consumer psychology, which suggest that individuals process persuasive messages through both emotional (affective) and rational (cognitive) routes. By validating these mechanisms in the context of eWOM and online purchase decisions, the study bridges a critical gap between theoretical models and real-world consumer behavior, paving the way for more integrated frameworks in future research.

9. Future Scope of Study

While the present study provides significant insights into the influence of eWOM valence and source credibility on consumer purchase intention, there remains substantial scope for further exploration and extension in future research. One promising direction is to examine additional dimensions of eWOM, such as message volume, argument quality, and platform-specific effects (e.g., differences between social media platforms, review websites, and e-commerce platforms). These factors may interact with valence and credibility to create a more complex influence on purchase behavior.

Moreover, future studies can adopt a **longitudinal approach** to assess how eWOM impacts purchase intentions over time, offering deeper understanding into the durability and evolution of online influence. The current study is cross-sectional in nature, and while it establishes significant relationships, it does not capture how repeated exposure to eWOM or changing sentiment over time may shape or shift consumer attitudes.

Additionally, the model can be expanded to include **mediating and moderating variables** such as consumer trust, involvement level, brand loyalty, and digital literacy. These variables may provide further nuance in understanding how and when eWOM valence and source credibility exert their strongest influence.

It is also valuable to investigate **demographic and psychographic differences** in consumer responses to eWOM. Variables such as age, gender, cultural background, personality traits, and previous online shopping experience could significantly affect how consumers interpret and react to eWOM content and its sources.

Lastly, as the digital landscape continues to evolve with technologies such as **AI-generated reviews**, **chatbots**, and **virtual influencers**, future research should explore how perceptions of authenticity and credibility adapt to these innovations. Understanding consumer behavior in response to synthetic yet persuasive forms of eWOM will be crucial for marketing scholars and practitioners alike.

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