

“E-WOM effect through social media and shopping websites on purchase intention of smartphones in India”

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E-WOM EFFECT THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA AND SHOPPING WEBSITES ON PURCHASE INTENTION OF SMARTPHONES IN INDIA

Abstract

This study analyses the comparative effects between E-WOM on online shopping platforms and social networking platforms on consumers' purchase intention of smartphones in India. The E-WOM effect on buying intention has become an important context for many researchers due to its increasing importance in today's world of digitalization. This study aims to assess the influence of E-WOM factors on these two platforms, including E-WOM credibility, E-WOM attitude, E-WOM quantity, and E-WOM format, on purchase decisions of smartphones. The data were collected using a questionnaire from 361 respondents in Uttar Pradesh, India. Multiple regression has been applied to empirically measure the influence of independent factors (E-WOM credibility, E-WOM attitude, E-WOM quantity, and E-WOM format) on the dependent factor (consumers' purchase intention). The result indicates that E-WOM credibility, E-WOM quantity, and E-WOM format on online shopping platforms have more impact than E-WOM on social media on the purchase intention of smartphones. This study aids online companies in understanding the purchase patterns of consumers, and E-WOM on online shopping platforms is more effective in terms of credibility, quantity, and format as compared to E-WOM on social networking platforms toward buying intention of smartphones.

Keywords

E-WOM credibility, E-WOM attitude, E-WOM quantity, E-WOM format, purchase intention

JEL Classification

M30, M31, M37

INTRODUCTION

In the current scenario, marketers endeavor to identify the purchase decision of consumers to understand consumers' thoughts, feelings, and selection patterns from different alternatives. Customers always yearn for their satisfaction with past purchases. A variety of factors contribute to consumers' purchase intention, such as social, economic, psychological, and personal ones (Mehyar et al., 2020). However, marketers try to promote and push their products and services through several advertisement mediums to lure the attention of consumers in which verbal communication between customers about any product has been the most powerful medium among different forms of selling techniques (Keller & Fay, 2012). Consumers have a propensity that can be affected by what they perceive or learn from others like family, friends, and relatives, i.e., WOM (word-of-mouth). Previous researchers have observed that word-of-mouth messages are more persuasive than the standard form of circulars (Trusov et al., 2009). With the advancement of digital marketing, traditional WOM has gained a new perspective of sharing views and experiences with a huge audience, i.e., E-WOM. It is defined as an online form of communication or reviews given by consumers about various commodities that influence

the purchase decision of other consumers. Different opinions of consumers can be circulated between the end number of online shoppers instantly within seconds through E-WOM (Brown et al., 2007). Due to these positive sides of E-WOM, many researchers have shown interest in online word-of-mouth and administered a substantial volume of studies concerning E-WOM and its outcome on consumers' buying intentions (Cheung & Thadani, 2012; King et al., 2014). The effects of E-WOM on social media have also been widely studied, but very little attention has been paid to the comparison of E-WOM on social networking platforms and e-commerce websites.

With the emergence of web2.0, the online reviews given by users of e-commerce websites have become very influential in purchasing goods. According to the S-O-R framework (Stimulus-Organism-Response framework), the positive online opinions adjoined and collective responses with ratings significantly influence purchase intentions (Mo et al., 2015). Social media has also emerged as an essential platform in affecting consumers' buying intention in terms of sharing online reviews. Online shopping in India is snowballing as it is at its record height in 2021 with 780.27 million internet users despite stagnant consumer expenditure and abatement of the economy caused by Covid-19. Online shopping platforms are anticipating a sturdy rise in sales in the current years. It was shown that consumers have increasingly employed social platforms to acquire details regarding unknown brands (Naylor et al., 2012). Social platforms have initiated more exposure to E-WOM in the sense that individuals can share product views and opinions with known and familiar people compared to other online platforms. Therefore, social media are considered a valuable platform for E-WOM and consumer purchase decision-making.

The current study seeks to determine the comparative E-WOM effect between online shopping platforms and social networking platforms on the buying intention of smartphones in Uttar Pradesh, India. This study consists of four components of E-WOM, including E-WOM credibility, E-WOM attitude, E-WOM quantity, and E-WOM format affecting purchase intentions of smartphones.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research in E-WOM towards purchase decisions is comparatively scarce in India compared to other foreign countries. However, due to the extensive usage of online platforms and social media, research on the impact of E-WOM on online platforms toward consumer purchase decisions has become one of the important issues in India. Word-of-mouth has been a crucial part of changing the consumer's mind toward any product or service. It is a way of advertising any good or service to consumers based on their experiences. WOM can be defined as an exchange of information with friends and relatives or consumers related to any product or a company. Huang et al. (2007) identified the growing influence of WOM, and it has been acknowledged by marketers to be an effective and trustworthy form of marketing communication. Orthodox WOM is more reliable and recognizable as it is a trustworthy source of communication. However, with the advent of digital platforms, traditional WOM has been replaced by

E-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth) since it can reach millions of people immediately within a few seconds. The growth and expansion of the web give rise to the development of online word-of-mouth (WOM), known as electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM), which is considered the utmost and most effective form of conversation among consumers for making any purchase decision (Huete-Alcocer, 2017). E-WOM is any positive or negative comments posted by consumers online about any product or a company, which can reach millions of people via the internet (Hennig-Thurau & Walsh, 2003).

In the current digital marketing era, online word-of-mouth towards any product or service has become the medium of communication before making any purchase decision. E-WOM has become very important for marketers to attract the attention of consumers to their offerings. Therefore, many researchers showed interest in the effect of electronic word-of-mouth on any product or service. Doh and Hwang (2009) identified how consumers assess E-WOM infor-

mation about any product. They found that customers usually rely on E-WOM messages with high credibility. In addition, one or two negative messages play an important role in developing a positive attitude towards the E-WOM website and E-WOM credibility. Nadarajan et al. (2017) studied the influence of negative E-WOM through the qualitative method and its effect on consumer intentions of switching mobile service providers. The study found that negative E-WOM messages are more effective than positive ones, which leads to consumers switching intentions to mobile service providers. Manes and Tchetchik (2018) investigated the impact of E-WOM in reducing asymmetric information in online hotel booking. The results showed that the volume of online reviews based on listed prices positively impacts hotels with high online ratings compared to hotels with low online ratings.

Social media has become a vital and effective tool for marketers to promote their products and services. It not only allows people to communicate with the target audience but can also be used to create brand awareness and generate product sales. Previous studies have shown that individuals' online opinions on social media play an important role in customer decision-making toward any product. According to the proposed expectancy-value theory (EVT), credibility and social capital (social interactions within social networks) significantly influence consumer engagement with E-WOM on social networking sites (Gvili & Levy, 2018). MajlesiRad and Shoushtari (2020) determined the impact of marketing strategy through E-WOM and social networking sites on the purchase intention of luxury brands. The results confirmed that the number of likes, shares, famous followers, positive comments, the form of a marketing post, and the content of a marketing post were the factors that significantly affected E-WOM marketing and social networking sites toward the purchase intention of luxury brands. Saleem and Ellahi (2017) examined the outcome of electronic word-of-mouth on the purchase intention of fashion products on Facebook. The results showed that homophile, trustworthiness, expertness, informational influence, and high fashion involvement play a significant role in affecting elec-

tronic word-of-mouth on purchase intentions. Kudeshia and Kumar (2017) examined the effect of social E-WOM (Facebook) on attitude toward the brand and purchase intention of consumers. In addition, positive reviews on Facebook affect consumers' brand attitude and purchase intentions. Yan et al. (2016) identified the relationship between the adoption of E-WOM from e-commerce websites and social media. The result focused on the adoption of E-WOM based on cognitive cost theory. E-WOM usefulness and credibility were the two main factors that affected the adoption of EC-E-WOM and SM-E-WOM. The results showed that the impact of credibility on the adoption of both kinds of E-WOM is more effective than that of usefulness. According to the information acceptance model (IACM), E-WOM on shopping websites is more effective as compared to E-WOM on social media toward online purchase intentions (Erkan & Evans, 2016). The study showed that credibility, quality, usefulness, adoption, needs, and attitude toward information are factors of E-WOM that affect the consumers' purchase intention on social media. Alhidari et al. (2015) identified three critical antecedents of E-WOM, namely self-reliance, involvement, and risk-taking, and their influence on social networking sites and purchase intention. The result indicated that involvement and risk-taking positively affect E-WOM.

Moreover, E-WOM plays a mediating role between involvement on social networking sites and purchase intentions. Ladhari and Michaud (2015) examined the effect of E-WOM on Facebook toward hotel booking intentions, the user's trust, attitudes, and website perceptions of booking a hotel. The study revealed that positive Facebook comments significantly influence hotel booking intentions, the user's attitude, trust, and website perceptions rather than negative Facebook comments. Javier and Correa (2014) explored the influence of E-WOM on the internet and SNS across different product types in customer buying behavior, including gender as a mediating variable. The study discovered differences between the perceptions obtained from the internet and SNS. Also, females prefer SNS recommendations over internet recommendations more than males on purchasing mobile phones and travel services. Finally, Thoumrungroje

(2014) concluded that people are influenced to consume eye-catching products that are not required but impulsive due to extensive use of social media and reliance on E-WOM.

The purchase decision is directly affected by consumers' online reviews on different online platforms. There are many factors of electronic word-of-mouth that affect consumers differently based on their perception of importance. According to Mehyar et al. (2020), E-WOM quality and E-WOM quantity positively affect consumers' purchase intention, while E-WOM credibility has no such impact on purchase intentions. Ismagilova et al. (2020) proposed a meta-analysis and weight analysis to identify the relevant factors of E-WOM on customer buying intention. The study found that E-WOM usefulness, trust in the message, attitude towards product, valence, and argument quality are the best.

Furthermore, E-WOM credibility, attitude towards the website, attitude towards online shopping, and emotional trust are the most effective predictors that affect customers' buying intentions. Harun et al. (2020) identified that positive E-WOM messages have more impact on purchase intention than negative E-WOM messages, and trust positively acts as a moderator between E-WOM and purchase intention. Haque et al. (2020) examined the different elements of negative E-WOM, which affect consumers' purchase intention in Malaysia. The results confirmed that altruism, dissonance reduction, and advice-seeking significantly impact consumers' purchase intention while negative feelings had no such impact. Sa'ait et al. (2016) studied four elements of E-WOM, namely accuracy, relevance, timeliness, and comprehensiveness, that have a significant impact on customers' purchase intention. The study revealed that the accuracy of E-WOM has a stronger impact on purchase intention as compared to other elements. Wang et al. (2015) found that positive review has more impact on customer attitude towards E-WOM than neutral or negative. In addition, benefit-centric information is more effective on customer attitude and purchase intention than attribute centric. Torlak et al. (2014) investigated the impact of electronic word of mouth on

purchase intention of cell phone brands through brand image. The results revealed a significant impact of E-WOM on the purchase intention.

Moreover, brand image is more effective in forming consumer perceptions of purchasing cell phones. Park and Lee (2008) identified that E-WOM has a significant impact on consumers' behavioral intention based on consumer involvement, review quantity, and review type. Also, information overload has a positive influence on purchase intention as a large number of reviews show the product's popularity. Farzin and Fattahi (2018) examined that informational influence, sense of belonging, consumer trust, altruism, moral obligation, and self-efficacy are significant factors of E-WOM that affect the brand image and purchase intention of consumers. Furthermore, positive E-WOM information on social networking sites had a higher impact on brand image and purchase intention. Finally, Ahmad et al. (2020) examined the mediating role of online passenger trust on E-WOM and airline e-ticket purchasing intention. The independent variables were source credibility, source similarity, source expertise, source quantity, source trustworthiness, source quality, and tie strength. The results showed that online trust plays a mediating role in E-WOM and airline e-ticket purchasing intention. Moreover, there is a significant and positive relationship between E-WOM and airline e-ticket purchase intention.

2. AIMS AND HYPOTHESES

The paper aims to determine the effect of E-WOM on social media and online shopping platforms on the purchase intention of smartphones in India. This study consists of four factors, i.e., E-WOM credibility, E-WOM attitude, E-WOM quantity, and E-WOM format affecting purchase intention of smartphones in India.

2.1. Research model and hypotheses

Based on the above-mentioned works of literature, word-of-mouth and online word-of-mouth, known as E-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth), play a significant role in changing consumers' perception

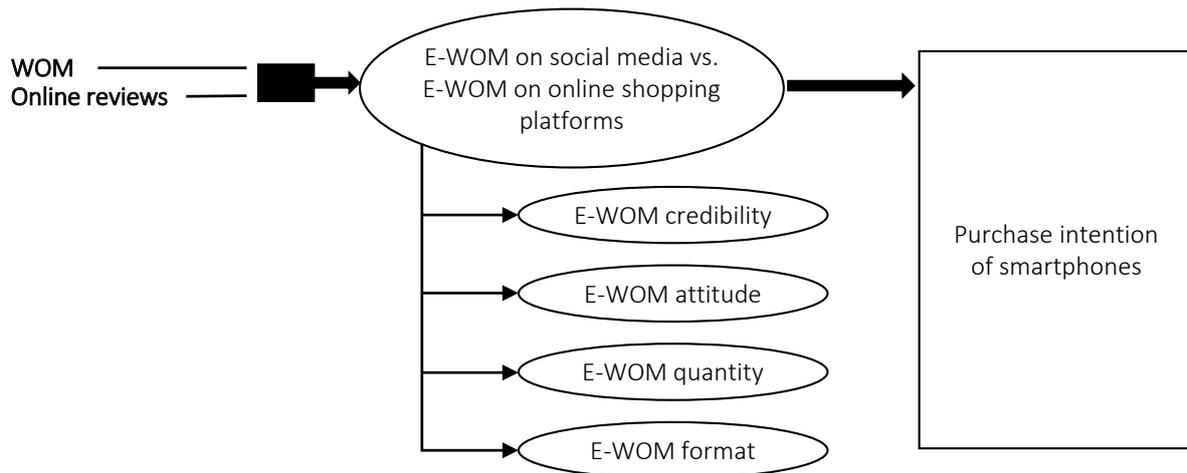


Figure 1. Research model

of purchase intention. Consumers’ purchase pattern is directly influenced by online reviews, i.e., E-WOM through different online shopping platforms and social media platforms. There are many factors related to electronic word-of-mouth that directly or indirectly affect consumers’ purchase intention differently based on their perceived effectiveness. E-WOM credibility, E-WOM quantity, and E-WOM attitude (Erkan & Evans, 2016; Ismagilova et al., 2020; Mehayar et al., 2020) on different online shopping platforms and social media are one of the key factors affecting purchase intention. This study proposed a research model that focuses on the effect of electronic word-of-mouth on social media and online shopping platforms on the purchase intention of smartphones. These factors are considered appropriate for the current study. The study applied these factors as independent variables. The conceptual model is different from previous research studies, as this paper has included E-WOM format as a new independent variable.

Following Erkan and Evans (2016), E-WOM from shopping websites is more impactful than E-WOM from social media. The paper compares these two platforms towards purchase intention on one specific product, i.e., smartphones, in Uttar Pradesh, India. Based on Erkan and Evans (2016), the study applied variables such as E-WOM credibility, E-WOM attitude, E-WOM quantity, and E-WOM format as independent variables and purchase intention as the dependent variable. The hypothesis of this study is developed and premised

on these variables. Figure 1 demonstrates the theoretical framework for the research objectives and hypothesis development.

2.2. E-WOM credibility

E-WOM credibility is defined as how an individual perceives the E-WOM information as trustworthy, believable, or true (Cheung et al., 2009). E-WOM credibility plays a critical role in changing the mind of the consumers toward a particular product. For example, if a consumer considers online reviews for any product (e.g., a smartphone) as reliable or trustworthy, there are more chances that the reviews can affect his/her intention to purchase it. Previously, E-WOM credibility has been considered an important factor in assessing consumers’ purchase intention (Dou et al., 2012; Erkan & Evans, 2016; Hsu & Tsou, 2011; Ismagilova et al., 2020; Mehayar et al., 2020; Park et al., 2007). Since consumers consider the reviews from online shopping platforms more trustworthy as it provides a large number of reviews with more detailed descriptions as compared to the reviews from social media (Erkan & Evans, 2016), the current study assumes that E-WOM credibility on online shopping platforms has more impact than social media platforms.

2.3. E-WOM attitude

Attitude refers to the belief of an individual towards a particular entity. E-WOM attitude can be

positive or negative based on a person's belief toward a particular website or a product. E-WOM attitude has been used to predict the purchase intentions of consumers (Cheung & Thadani, 2012; Lee et al., 2009). E-WOM attitude varies based on the difference in perception of social media and online shopping platforms for purchasing smartphones. This study assumed that consumers' E-WOM attitude on online shopping platforms has more impact than E-WOM attitude on social media platforms. People are more proximal to where purchases occur.

2.4. E-WOM quantity

E-WOM quantity is defined as the total number of online reviews or comments available on digital platforms (Cheung & Thadani, 2010). Many reviews about any product (e.g., a smartphone) will have more influence on consumers' decision to purchase it. Depending upon the number of online reviews or comments about a product, consumers often consider it a sign of how trending and popular it is (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006; Park & Lee, 2009). As online shopping platforms have a large number of reviews about any product compared to social media, the paper predicts that E-WOM quantity on online shopping platforms has more impact than social media on the purchase intention of smartphones.

2.5. E-WOM format

E-WOM format refers to the presentation of online reviews in different forms such as text-based, image-based, video-based reviews, or a combination of these. Previous studies suggest that consumers prefer online reviews with detailed information about a product and images or videos (Teng et al., 2014). Nowadays, visual reviews and audio can be found on different online shopping platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, and social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube are the most popular for unboxing smartphones (King et al., 2014). On the other hand, video-based reviews are considered more influential for consumers as they involve a visual presentation and gestures (Xu, 2014). Therefore, this study predicts that the E-WOM format on online shopping platforms is more impactful as compared to E-WOM format on online shopping platforms for purchasing smartphones.

Therefore, the study proposed the following hypotheses.

- H1: E-WOM credibility on online shopping platforms has more impact than E-WOM credibility on social media platforms on the purchase intention of smartphones.*
- H2: E-WOM attitude on online shopping platforms has more impact than E-WOM attitude on social media platforms on the purchase intention of smartphones.*
- H3: E-WOM quantity on online shopping platforms has more impact than E-WOM quantity on social media platforms on the purchase intention of smartphones.*
- H4: E-WOM format on online shopping platforms has more impact than E-WOM format on social media platforms on the purchase intention of smartphones.*

3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

To test the hypotheses, the data was collected through a questionnaire. The questionnaire is divided into three parts. The first part deals with the demographic profile of the respondents. The second part deals with the questions based on frequency and preference of using social media and e-commerce websites on purchase intention. The third part is the main body of the survey, which includes 18 items based on the variables taken for the present study. To enhance the validity of the data, most of the items for the theoretical constructs were adopted from previous related studies and modified according to the context of the current paper, as illustrated in Table 1. The variables were evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 for "strongly disagree" and 5 for "strongly agree." The current survey mainly focuses on social media users and online shoppers in Uttar Pradesh. A total of 361 samples were used in the current analysis (at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error). The study applies ANOVA and multiple regression to reach the results of the data collected for different variables.

Table 1. Variables and items

Variables	Definitions	Items
1. E-WOM credibility (Dou et al., 2012; Erkan & Evans, 2016)	The extent to which an individual assesses the E-WOM information as trustworthy, preferable or genuine (Cheung et al., 2009)	I trust most of the opinions from my friend list on social media for purchasing smartphones
		I trust most of the opinions from users of online shopping platforms for purchasing smartphones
		Social media platforms offer honest opinions for purchasing smartphones
		The users of online shopping platforms offer honest opinions for purchasing smartphones
2. E-WOM attitude (Cheung & Thadani, 2012)	Learnt predisposition or tendency of an individual to respond towards an object in a positive or negative way (Reza Jalilvand et al., 2012)	I have a positive attitude toward recommendations of my social media contacts for buying smartphones
		I have a positive attitude towards consumer reviews of online shopping platforms for buying smartphones
		I will change my viewpoint about purchasing a smartphone after observing a positive or negative review about that smartphone on social media platforms
		I will change my viewpoint about purchasing a smartphone after observing a positive or negative review about that smartphone on online shopping platforms
3. E-WOM quantity (Mehyar et al., 2020)	Total number of online reviews or comments available on digital platforms (Cheung & Thadani, 2010)	I prefer to buy smartphones according to the number of reviews on social media platforms
		I prefer to buy smartphones according to the number of reviews on online shopping platforms
		I usually buy a smartphone based on the number of comments rather than the quality of reviews
4. E-WOM format (Teng et al., 2014)	The presentation format of E-WOM (Lin et al., 2012)	I usually buy a smartphone based on the format of user's reviews (i.e., the combination of text, image, and videos uploaded) on online shopping platforms
		I usually buy a smartphone based on the users' comments and videos uploaded about that smartphone on social platforms
		I prefer to buy a smartphone based on the users' comments and images uploaded instead of videos
5. Purchase intention (Erkan & Evans, 2016)	The extent to which a buyer is eager to purchase a product via digital shopping platforms (Pavlou, 2003)	The online reviews received for any product have affected a previous purchase decision of mine
		A product recommendation through a former comment on online platforms influenced making my own purchase decision
		I tend to seek online reviews from social media platforms regarding smartphones that I intend to purchase
		I tend to seek opinions from online shopping platforms regarding smartphones that I intend to purchase

4. RESULTS

The sample demographics are presented in Table 2. According to the demographic profile, 237 participants were male, and 124 respondents were female (65.7% and 34.3%). Most of the respondents were adults, with 58.7% between 24 and 34 years old. According to the sample, 201 respondents consider online reviews always and 125 respondents sometimes before making a purchase intention toward smartphones. Most of the respondents prefer online reviews from online shopping platforms compared to reviews from social media platforms for purchasing smartphones (65.9 % vs. 29.9 %). On the other

hand, 4.2 % of the respondents do not consider online reviews for purchasing smartphones.

This study used ANOVA to confirm whether the demographic profile of the sample affects online purchase intention. According to Table 3, the estimation of p-values is higher than 0.05. Therefore, the demographic profile of the respondents did not have a significant effect on the purchase intention of consumers. Cronbach's alpha was exercised to determine the reliability of all the factors. Cronbach's alpha figures (Table 4) for all dependent and independent variables are above 0.75. These values confirmed the reliability of all variables used in the present study.

Table 2. Respondents’ demographics

Measure	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	237	65.7
Female	124	34.3
Age		
18-23	87	24.1
24-34	212	58.7
35-45	38	10.5
Above 45	24	6.6
Education		
Below UG	58	16.1
Graduate	125	34.6
Postgraduate	150	41.6
Ph.D.	28	7.8
Using online reviews		
Always	201	55.7
For purchasing smartphones		
Sometimes	125	34.6
Very rare	29	8.0
Never	6	1.7
Social media or Online shopping		
Social media reviews	108	29.9
Platforms for purchasing		
Online shopping	238	65.9
Smartphone platforms reviews		
None of the above	15	4.2

Table 3. ANOVA of purchase intention

	ANOVA	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	Between Groups	2.117	9	.235	.896	.546
	Within Groups	5.250	20	.263		
	Total	7.367	29			
Age	Between Groups	3.833	9	.426	1.345	.276
	Within Groups	6.333	20	.317		
	Total	10.167	29			
Education	Between Groups	10.700	9	1.189	.892	.549
	Within Groups	26.667	20	1.333		
	Total	37.367	29			

Table 4. Cronbach’s alpha values

Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach’s Alpha
Online purchase intention	4	.815
E-WOM Credibility	4	.796
E-WOM Attitude	4	.786
E-WOM Quantity	3	.816
E-WOM Format	3	.807

4.1. Analysis of hypothesis testing

According to the overall findings, a significant statistical impact for all the variables was found with r^2 of .357 and a p-value of .000 (Table 5.1 and 5.2). It indicates that the model explained

35.7% of the variance, and all the variables were significant predictors of purchase intention. To evaluate the hypotheses, a multiple regression tool was carried out to determine the impact of independent variables on dependent variables, as shown in Table 5.3.

4.2. Analysis of E-WOM credibility

According to the multiple regression analysis, the E-WOM credibility on social media platforms did not have a significant effect on buying intention of smartphones ($B = .98, p = .059$), whereas E-WOM credibility on online shopping platforms has a significant impact on the purchase intention of smartphones ($B = .181, p = .002$). Hence, $H1$ is supported.

4.3. Analysis of E-WOM attitude

As shown in Table 5.3, E-WOM attitude on social media platforms has a significant impact on the purchase intention of smartphones ($B = .226, p = .000$). Next, E-WOM attitude on online shopping platforms also has a significant impact on the purchase intention of smartphones ($B = .195, p = .001$). Since the beta value of E-WOM attitude on social media platforms is higher, it has a more significant

impact than E-WOM attitude on online shopping platforms. Hence, $H2$ is not supported.

4.4. Analysis of E-WOM quantity

According to the results, E-WOM quantity on social media platforms does not have a significant effect on the buying intention of smartphones ($B = .009, p = .895$). Next, E-WOM quantity on online shopping platforms also does not significantly affect buying intention of smartphones ($B = .086, p = .242$). Since the beta value of E-WOM quantity in online shopping platforms is higher, $H3$ is supported.

4.5. Analysis of E-WOM format

As shown in Table 5.1 and 5.2 below, E-WOM format on social media platforms ($B = -.011, p = .867$) and E-WOM format on online shopping platforms do not significantly affect buying intention

Table 5.1. Value of R square

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.598 ^a	.357	.342	.57967

Note: a. Dependent Variable: Purchase intention. b. Predictors: (Constant), E-WOM FORMAT on shopping platforms, E-WOM ATTITUDE on social media, E-WOM CREDIBILITY on shopping platforms, E-WOM QUANTITY on social media, E-WOM CREDIBILITY on social media, E-WOM ATTITUDE on shopping platforms, E-WOM FORMAT on social media, E-WOM QUANTITY on shopping platforms.

Table 5.2. Value of P

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	65.680	8	8.210	24.433	.000 ^b
	Residual	118.277	352	.336		
	Total	183.957	360			

Note: a. Dependent Variable: Purchase intention. b. Predictors: (Constant), E-WOM FORMAT on shopping platforms, E-WOM ATTITUDE on social media, E-WOM CREDIBILITY on shopping platforms, E-WOM QUANTITY on social media, E-WOM CREDIBILITY on social media, E-WOM ATTITUDE on shopping platforms, E-WOM FORMAT on social media, E-WOM QUANTITY on shopping platforms.

Table 5.3. Multiple regression analysis of dependent and independent variables

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.994	.225		4.417	.000
E-WOM CREDIBILITY on social media	.083	.044	.098	1.893	.059
E-WOM ATTITUDE on social media	.228	.054	.226	4.262	.000
E-WOM QUANTITY on social media	.007	.054	.009	.132	.895
E-WOM FORMAT on social media	-.011	.067	-.011	-.168	.867
E-WOM CREDIBILITY on shopping platforms	.161	.051	.181	3.160	.002
E-WOM ATTITUDE on shopping platforms	.188	.057	.195	3.266	.001
E-WOM QUANTITY on shopping platforms	.073	.063	.086	1.171	.242
E-WOM FORMAT on shopping platforms	.059	.067	.060	.876	.382

Table 6. Results of hypothesis testing

No.	Hypothesis	Results
H1	E-WOM credibility on online shopping platforms has more impact than E-WOM credibility on social media platforms on the purchase intention of smartphones	Supported
H2	E-WOM attitude on online shopping platforms has more impact than E-WOM attitude on social media platforms on the purchase intention of smartphones	Not Supported
H3	E-WOM quantity on online shopping platforms has more impact than E-WOM quantity on social media platforms on the purchase intention of smartphones	Supported
H4	E-WOM format on online shopping platforms has more impact than E-WOM format on social media platforms on the purchase intention of smartphones	Supported

of smartphones ($B = .060, p = .382$). Since the beta value of E-WOM format on online shopping platforms is higher, H4 is supported.

5. DISCUSSIONS

This study is based on a comparative review of the effect of E-WOM on e-commerce platforms and social media platforms on the purchase intention of smartphones. The domination of WOM (word-of-mouth) and E-WOM toward any product has been widely studied (Doh & Hwang, 2009; Nadarajan et al., 2017; Saleem & Ellahi, 2017). Due to the increase in the utilization of e-commerce platforms and social networking platforms, E-WOM has turned out to be an important tool and the medium of communication for making any purchase. Many researchers have identified the impact of E-WOM on social networking platforms and e-commerce platforms separately on consumers buying intention (Alhidari et al., 2015; MajlesiRad & Shoushtari, 2020; Mehیار et al., 2020; Park & Lee, 2008) and have found it effective. In addition, Erkan and Evans (2016) and Yan et al. (2016) determined the comparison between E-WOM on social media and shopping websites toward purchase intention. However, the impact of these two online platforms on a particular product has not been compared yet as their influence may have different findings and results for different product categories. On online shopping platforms, the reviews and comments are more detailed and in large numbers than social networking websites with limited comments.

On the contrary, most of the reviews on social media are from familiar people like friends and relatives, whereas online shopping platforms contain reviews from unfamiliar people, which may or may not be effective for consumers' purchase intention. Therefore, the effects of E-WOM on these two platforms have a significant difference in terms of their effectiveness

for the purchase intention of a particular product. Therefore, this paper studied consumers' preferences through online shopping platforms and social platforms on the purchase intention of smartphones. Therefore, the effects of E-WOM on these two platforms have a significant difference in terms of their effectiveness towards the purchase intention of a particular product.

The study proposed four hypotheses, and the result of the hypothesis testing are revealed in Table 6. The multiple regression analysis showed that E-WOM attitude on social platforms, E-WOM attitude on online shopping platforms, and E-WOM credibility on online shopping platforms have a significant statistical impact on consumers' purchase intention. Whereas the other variables (E-WOM credibility and E-WOM quantity on social media platforms, E-WOM quantity on online shopping platforms, E-WOM format on social media, and E-WOM format on online shopping platforms) do not have a significant impact on purchase intention. Based on the hypotheses framed, three hypotheses were supported, and one hypothesis was rejected as shown in Table 6. The study focuses on the comparison of E-WOM on online shopping platforms and social media platforms toward the purchase intention of smartphones. The results compared the beta values of these two online platforms. According to the beta values, E-WOM credibility, E-WOM quantity, and E-WOM format on online shopping platforms have more impact on purchase intention of smartphones as compared to social media platforms, except for E-WOM attitude on social media, which has more impact than E-WOM attitude on online shopping platforms. Hence, it is clear from the study that online shopping platforms are more effective than social media platforms for the purchase intention of smartphones. Furthermore, the results may vary on these two online platforms based on the online reviews for different product categories with different variables.

CONCLUSION

The main objective of this study was to evaluate E-WOM influence on online shopping platforms and social media platforms on buying intention of smartphones. Based on the result of the study and factors of E-WOM, E-WOM through online shopping platforms has more impact than social media E-WOM as online reviews on shopping websites are more proximal and direct to where buying takes place, and also it is more detailed and comprehensive. Accordingly, results on E-WOM through online shopping platforms have more impact than E-WOM through social media platforms. Moreover, based on the overall findings, this paper concluded that E-WOM affects the purchase intention of consumers, and E-WOM on online shopping platforms is more effective in terms of credibility, quantity, and format as compared to E-WOM on social platforms toward purchase intention of smartphones in Uttar Pradesh, India.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Although this study clearly explains the comparison of E-WOM on social media and online shopping platforms toward the purchase intention of smartphones, it has some limitations. First, this study is based on the limiting factors affecting E-WOM on social networking platforms and E-WOM on online shopping platforms toward consumers' purchase intention. There are many other factors of E-WOM on these two online platforms, which can influence purchase intentions. Second, the study focuses on one specific product category, i.e., smartphones, so the effect of E-WOM on social platforms and online shopping platforms may be different for different product categories. Third, the study was conducted only in Uttar Pradesh, India. Thus, it is complicated to conclude the results for other states of India. Consumer preferences and purchase intentions may vary in different states of India and other countries.

Although the factors considered represent the comparison of E-WOM on social networking platforms and online shopping platforms, future research should include other factors of E-WOM related to purchase intentions. Moreover, further studies can also emphasize the impact of E-WOM on other product categories and also in other states of India with different sample sizes and populations.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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