Factors Affecting Electronic Word of Mouth and Leading towards Purchasing Decision in the Smartphone Industry of Pakistan

Muzammil Khurshid[1]*, Muhammad Abdullah[2], Muhammad Haris Khan[3]

Abstract

The study looks into the factors that influence electronic word of mouth, leading to goods and services purchases. By reviewing the reviews of other reviewers on the internet, this study attempts to determine which factors impact an individual's purchasing decision because most internet users consult reviews before purchasing things; both the quality and quantity of reviews matter for that specific brand. In this study, four independent variables (information quality, website trustworthiness, social ties, and number of reviews) each impact electronic word of mouth, which leads to client purchasing decisions. For this study, two hundred and sixty-one university students were used as samples. A basic random sampling approach is used because the data is collected solely from university students. Out of the four variables studied, only two (website credibility and number of reviews) have a meaningful relationship with the purchasing decision. The findings imply that electronic word of mouth generated on a reputable website positively impacts purchasing decisions. In addition, many reviews persuaded students who were considering online consultation to make a purchase. The other two components (information quality and social ties) have a minor impact on purchasing decisions. This research provides a comprehensive picture of the factors that consumers believe are critical in making a purchasing decision. As a result, our study aids managers in developing strategies for the Pakistani market.

Introduction

Since the emergence of the internet, e-commerce has changed a lot. Internet-enabled consumers get information about almost all the products across the world. The internet made

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[1] Department of Banking and Finance, University of the Punjab, Gujranwala Campus, Gujranwala, Pakistan.

[2] Department of Business Administration, University of the Punjab, Gujranwala Campus, Gujranwala, Pakistan.

[3] Department of Business Administration, University of the Punjab, Gujranwala Campus, Gujranwala, Pakistan.

* Corresponding Author: muzammil.khurshid@pugc.edu.pk

the world a global village. Now consumers are more aware of the market and changing trends than before (Zhang, Yuan & Song, 2020). On one end, the internet made it easy for consumers; on the other hand, it's challenging for companies to sell consumers anything. The internet has made consumers savvier now; people share their product-related experiences through the internet. This sharing of experiences increases consumer's knowledge about product benefits, and now consumers carefully invest in products and try to seek maximum benefit from their invested money (Ismagilova, Dwivedi, Slade & Williams, 2017). Even now a day, consumers have started purchasing offline products while relying on online information. World population statistics in December 2020 showed 3 billion internet users almost across the globe, and almost 950 million people belong to Asia. Considering this huge number of diversified consumers, marketers try to create online content that may attract consumers. It helps to make a favorable purchasing decision for their company products (Liao, Zhang & Wang, 2020) psychology of humans shows that human nature is expressive. When people experience anything, they start sharing their experiences with their family members, peers and people around them. This sharing of experiences is known as word of mouth, and when word of mouth is shared over the internet to digital media blogs and social media, this content is called electronic word of mouth (Khwaja, Mahmood & Zaman, 2020). It has been seen when online information regarding the product has been uploaded, the more the information relevant and comprehensive regarding the matter, the more likely the chances are it's been adopted by online readers. Information that is scattered and not useful for readers is rejected immediately.

Similarly, it is witnessed that consumers tend to adopt information on credible websites. The more credible the website, the more its information is perceived as trustworthy. If the content is generated on a credible website, readers will tend to follow, and information about the product will make a favorable purchasing decision (Zhou, McCormick, Blazquez & Barnes, 2019). There is a tendency in human behavior to trust more information given by family members and their peers, so if the information is generated on online communities by their social ties, people tend to adopt them without questioning considering that worthy of adoption and making purchasing decisions. Another phenomenon studied is that when ratings or reviews about a product are large, consumers follow those products (Sijoria, Mukherjee & Datta, 2018). Consumers make their minds easily for a product with more ratings or more reviews. Companies should keep these factors in mind because they influence humans while reading content and making their minds. When creating online content considering these factors in mind, the chances of positive impact are higher. Such favorable generated content will help companies make consumers' minds easily in terms of product purchases and it will help companies earn more profits easily (Zhou, Barnes, McCormick & Cano, 2021). Mangold and Faulds (2009) have discussed that social media alone had captured millions of users worldwide. Facebook has around one billion users, Twitter has 500 million users, LinkedIn has around 350 million users and Pinterest has 30 million users.

On these social media platforms, carefully designed content considering favorable factors can generate more user influence and make a positive purchasing decision for more profits. Every consumer product and services company try to reach current and potential consumers to sell their products, but this traditional marketing is not cost-effective; it also has a little geographic reach. The internet has elevated geographical boundaries, and the world has become a global village. Marketing through the Internet has become easy, and it made companies approach consumers easily with little or no time in a cost-effective way (Cheng & Huang, 2013). This research is helpful for companies to know what type of content attracts Pakistani online users and what key factors influence them to make a purchasing decision while reading online reviews before buying a product. This research also gives managers insight into using non-paid promotional sources on social media to attract consumers by including key elements that make online content more appealing.

Literature Review

In traditional marketing, marketers try to influence consumers through different techniques. Still, it's difficult for marketers to convince consumers in an online medium context. There is a lot of information already placed on the internet, and consumers can easily access it. So, marketers need to understand different tactics to capture consumer attention to make consumers' minds buy products and services.

Purchasing Decision and Information Quality

The purchasing decision is a part of consumer behavior. People tend to buy many things in their daily routine that require purchasing decisions. Less costly things require little cognitive effort. As with expensive items, people put a lot of cognitive effort to make the right decision against the amount they are investing into buying them (Donthu, Kumar, Pandey, Pandey & Mishra, 2021). Kitsios, Kamariotou, Karanikolas & Grigoroudis (2021) concluded that purchasing decision-makers in the automotive industry found that consumers tended to seek online recommendations before offline purchases. Seeking information from the internet made up their mind about the best option for them, and it automatically gave them confidence regarding making a purchasing decision. Ismagilova, Rana, Slade & Dwivedi (2021) have discussed that as there is much information available on the internet about products, consumers seek that information which is relevant and comprehensive about the product description. Comments in which people put proper information about product details and usage experiences likely impacted purchasing decisions. Another study suggested that information to which readers can relate is more satisfying in online communities. When it satisfies them in the aspect of information fullness about the product, it impacts consumer decision making (Yan, Wu, Zhou & Zhang, 2018). Quality rich information was decisive regarding product purchase where information is sufficient so that consumers may make their minds about purchasing. Usually, when information is haphazard, consumers immediately reject it, considering it time wastage (Ngarmwongnoi, Oliveira, AbedRabbo, & Mousavi, 2020). People did not have much time to read full-length comments in this fast speed era. If comments were relevant, people tended to read them to save their time and decide. The

information which was provided must cover the related aspects to the subject matter to impact a great amount (Kim, Kandampully & Bilgihan, 2018).

H1: There is a relationship between information quality and purchasing decision

Social Tie

Khwaja & Zaman (2020) revealed that social ties had great significance in online communities. People generally tended to adopt those reviews placed by their family and friends. There was a level of trustworthiness in it that whatever information was given would be worth adopting. Hussain, Song & Niu (2020) defined social tie as a level of intensity among relationship and trust between information provider and information seeker. Since the internet eliminated geographical boundaries, people easily asked about products from their family and friends in far distant countries and those who had an idea about products. Such exchange of online reviews positively impacted consumers' mindset about buying a product (Srivastava & Sivaramakrishnan, 2020). It had been witnessed that people, before buying any product, tended to ask their peers on social media and especially on Facebook. Those products with which their peers had negative usage experiences were strongly discouraged by creating negative electronic word of mouth, which changed people's purchasing decisions regarding that purchase (Hussain, Huang, Ilyas & Niu, 2020). Similarly, it was crucial that different online social groups where people could easily interact and share their experiences. They impacted people's decision-making a lot as there was a trust level between group members, so online reviews were picked up (Farzin & Fattahi, 2018).

H2: There is a relationship between social ties and purchasing decision.

Website Credibility

Belanche, Flavián & Pérez-Rueda (2020) revealed that consumers picked websites with the highest ratings and credibility to get information before buying a product. It was seen that consumers preferred official websites to buy products compared to some general retail store websites. Consumers paid attention to those websites for purchasing which had a great design look, proper colour schemes and properly maintained website. Moreover, information on the website should be properly structured and easily accessible to consumers to make their purchasing decisions (Cheung, Pires, & Rosenberger, 2020). Websites like Amazon and eBay took a lot of consumers' attention as information on these websites was in the proper structure, and consumers could easily get information. These websites had online reviews sections where consumers placed their reviews about products after usage. After reading those comments from authentic websites, current and potential consumers built trust incredible websites, and it helped them make buying decisions easily (Algharabat, Rana, Dwivedi, Alalwan & Qasem, 2018). A credible website gave its visitors mental satisfaction that the information they were acquiring was authentic. Visitors tended to adopt information from such websites (Loureiro, Gorgus & Kaufmann, 2017).

H3: There is a relationship between website credibility and purchasing decision.

Number of Reviews

Several reviews have a serious impact on a consumer's purchasing decision. Most of the time, consumers, before purchase, checked product ratings or how many consumers had hit the like button. Products with the most reviews gave them confidence about their reliability and helped them make buying decisions (Phan, Pham & Nguyen, 2020). The number of reviews made less popular products popular ones. There seemed to be an ocean of information on the internet, so many reviews saved consumers search costs and time to review all the comments. People tended to go with those products with more ratings and large reviews. Even on amazon, it was seen that books with more ratings were sold more even though they were not so popular (Bilal, Jianqu & Ming, 2021). The number of reviews was used to know about product popularity, and the more it was, the more people trusted compared company-generated information. The number of reviews positively impacts product rating, and when product rating increases, the product's sale automatically increases (Osei-Frimpong & McLean, 2018). Online consumers rated online discussions based on several participants. The more participants in a discussion, the more reliable review would be, and ultimately people follow opinions about products (Phan et al., 2020).

H4: There is a relationship between the number of reviews and purchasing decision.

EWOM and Purchasing Decision

Ananda, Hernández-García, Acquila-Natale & Lamberti (2019) revealed that electronic word of mouth broadened the horizon. Social media platforms enabled consumers to discuss and give product-related suggestions to group members. Since all members were bonded somehow and had mutual interests, they trusted each other's suggestions and made purchasing decisions accordingly (Ananda et al., 2019). It was also witnessed that companies often create electronic word of mouth or hype about their products and services to make consumers aware of them. After reading a certain blog, potential consumers searching for their problem-solving hunt decided to buy that company's product (Chu, Lien & Cao, 2019). Similarly, several people made usage experience vlogs when different products were launched. They wrote blogs about the product's functionality, and it helped potential consumers to decide whether they should buy that product or not (Fatma, Ruiz, Khan & Rahman, 2020).

H5: There is a relationship between electronic word of mouth and purchasing decision.

Role of Electronic Word of Mouth as a Mediator

Electronic word of mouth as a mediator impacted a lot in general. Since it's a digital era, many people are on the internet searching for products and services, and almost every company made possible their online presence (Gvili & Levy, 2018). It was also witnessed online readers paid that information with some quality data heed. In online communities, not every information can be adopted. Online word of mouth with relevance and comprehensive topic related information impacted reader's purchasing decisions (Yusuf & Busalim, 2018).

Electronic word of mouth is the new source of marketing, a lot of companies are using this tool efficiently in order to capture more consumers digitally as digitally created hype has huge impact on consumer decision making psychology (Tobon & García-Madariaga, 2021)

H6: Electronic word of mouth mediates the relationship between information quality and purchasing decision

The internet is an ocean of information. Current and potential consumers use the internet for their problem-solving. These problem-solving tools could be in the form of products or services. Consumers, in terms of adopting suggestions on online communities or groups, are inclined to that information given by some peers, family members or colleagues. They considered such information trustworthy in terms of adoption and made purchases accordingly (Srivastava & Sivaramakrishnan, 2020). When electronic word of mouth is from strong source like from credible personality, credible website then the information quality enhances and information is perceived more useful for target audience. The more information quality will be increased then more conusmer decision making regarding buying the company products will be stronger (Mukhopadhyay, Pandey & Rishi, 2022).

H7: Electronic word of mouth mediates the relationship between social ties and purchasing decision.

Internet users mostly adopted reviews from credible websites. They believed that comments and reviews of credible websites were more trusted and reliable. Those comments from credible websites helped shape consumers' purchasing mindset (Abedi, Ghorbanzadeh & Rahehagh, 2019). Health is a sensitive issue on health-related websites where there was a facility for online consultants, so health-related consumers preferred getting information from such websites. It inclined them to get medical facilities (Kwok, Mao & Huang, 2019). Whenever a digital review is uploaded by the consumer's affiliation, some peers, friends and family the electronic word of mouth is perceived more useful and trustworthy. The more the electronic word of mouth will be coming from the consumer's ties the more likely consumer will adopt those word of mouth and purchase will happen (Donthu et al., 2021).

H8: Electronic word of mouth mediates the relationship between website credibility and purchasing decision.

As the number of reviews increased about a product discussion in online communities, many ambiguities would be cleared, and consumers would have eased to make their purchasing mindset (Al-Htibat & Garanti, 2019). More discussion reviews gave more details about products, and greater satisfaction for purchasing was there (Aruan & Felicia, 2019). A credible website is the greater source of spreading electronic word of mouth just like reviews on Amazon, eBay, Olx are more opted then some random website. The ranking of website and it electronic reviews impacts its reader's psychology to adopt that particular information and that information makes consumers buying mind about any product (Chetioui, Butt & Lebdaoui, 2021)

H9: Electronic word of mouth mediates the relationship between the number of reviews and purchasing decision.

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework
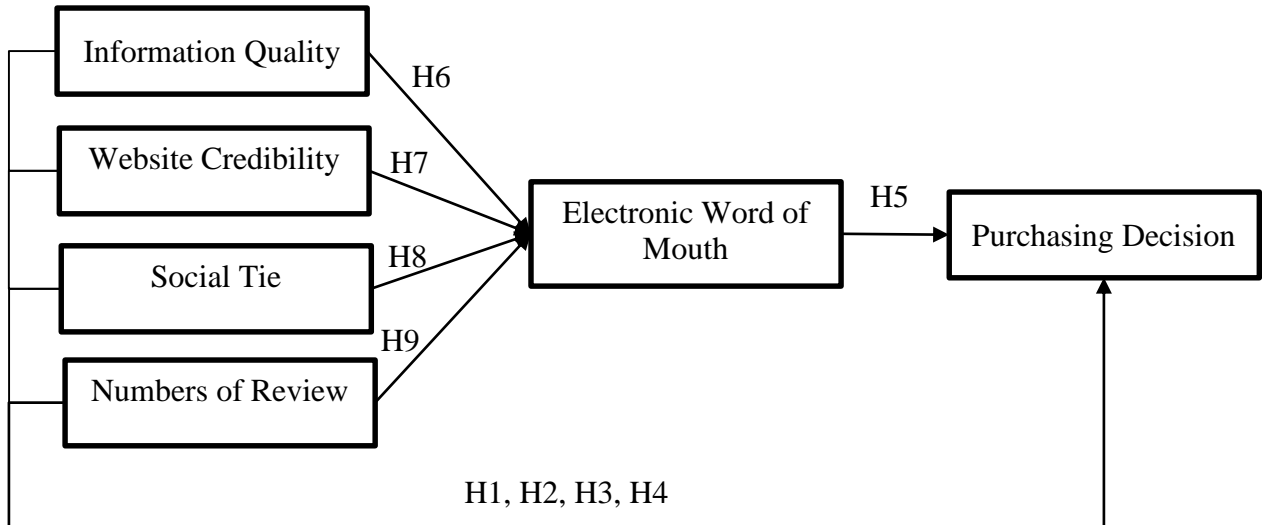
The figure 1 shows the relationship among the concerned variables. It exhibits that electronic word of mouth was measured through information quality, website credibility, social tie and numbers of review to investigate the purchasing decision in the smartphone industry of Pakistan.

Research Methodology

The population of this study consists of the educational sector of Islamabad. In the educational sector, university students were targeted. SZABIST, Air University, Bahria University and FAST were considered. The sample size of this study consists of 261 university students. A simple random sampling technique was used for primary data collection. In this sampling technique, respondents have an equal chance of selection from the population. The data was collected from the respondents through a questionnaire. The questionnaire was adapted according to variables and kept in mind literature for research purposes. The questionnaire comprised the demographic section, including 30 items of Information Quality, Social Ties, Website Credibility, Number of Reviews, Electronic Word of Mouth, and Purchasing decisions. Variables in this study were measured by using different scales. Information quality was measured by selecting five items from the scale developed by (Mei, 2013). All questions were measured on a five-point Likert scale. The social tie was measured by selecting five items from the scale developed by (Erin & Lawrence, 2009) and measured on a five-point Likert scale. Website credibility was measured by selecting five items from the scale developed by (Rodgers, 2004) and measured on a five-point Likert scale. Several reviews were measured by selecting five items from the scale developed by(Park & Lee, 2008) using a five-point Likert scale. Electronic word of mouth was measured by

selecting five items from the scale developed by (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012) on a five-point Likert scale. Purchasing decision was measured by selecting five items from the scale developed by (Berens, Riel & Bruggen, 2005) using a five-point Likert scale. Likert-type scale was used as (1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= neutral; 4= agree; 5= strongly agree). University students were targeted to get responses.

Results and Discussion

In this study, primary data were entered into SPSS for analyzing results. All data of variables Information Quality, social ties, website credibility, Number of Reviews, Electronic word of mouth, and purchasing decision was analyzed through SPSS. For analyzing data, multiple tests were applied, such as Descriptive statistics, Reliability or Cronbach Alpha test, Pearson Correlation, Regression analysis and Mediating effect test by using SPSS.

Table 1: Data Reliability

Variable name	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Information Quality	0.740	5
Website Credibility	0.809	5
Social tie	0.775	5
Numbers of Review	0.828	5
EWOM	0.740	5
Purchasing Decision	0.854	5
Total	0.931	30

Table-1 illustrates the values of Cronbach's Alpha according to (Nunnally, 1987). If the value of Cronbach's alpha is more significant than 0.7, then the instrument will be reliable. The table depicts the values of Cronbach's alpha of Information Quality, Social tie, Website credibility, Number of Reviews, Electronic word of mouth and purchasing decision as 0.740, 0.775, 0.809, 0.828, 0.740 and 0.854, respectively, so the instrument is reliable.(Leech, Barrett & Morgan, 2004).

Table 2 shows the correlations between the independent variables (information quality, website credibility, social tie, number of reviews and electronic word of mouth) and dependent variable (purchasing decision) that show the values of 0.393, 0.573, 0.309, 0.584 and 0.393, respectively. Considering values of correlation information quality, social tie, and electronic word of mouth, website credibility and number of reviews have moderate relationships with purchasing decisions.

Table 2: Correlations

Variables	IQ	Website Credibility	Social Tie	Number of Reviews	EWOM	Purchasing Decision
IQ	1					
Website Credibility	.582**	1				
Social Tie	.527**	.493**	1			
Number of Reviews	.521**	.775**	.417**	1		
EWOM	.582**	.527**	.521**	.521**	1	
Purchasing Decision	.393**	.573**	.309**	.584**	.393**	1

Note: ** and * show that Correlation is significant at the 0.01 and 0.05 level.

Table 3 demonstrates the results multiple regression. The R showed the multiple correlation coefficient. It is the combined correlation of all IVs with DV. Its value is 0.616, showing that all the independent variables have a moderated relationship with the dependent variable. R^2 is the explanatory power of the model. It depicted the explained variation in the Dependent variable due to the independent variable. The value of R square is 0.379, which explains the 37 percent variation independent variable (purchasing decision) due to independent variables. It explained the variation for a sample and adjusted R square showed the variation for population, i.e. four universities in Islamabad. The standard error of estimates is unexplained variation due to some external factor not taken in the study. Beta is the slope of the relationship. However, the significant value of the variables (information quality and social tie) is more than 0.05, so the relationship between the information quality and purchasing decision and social tie and purchasing decision is insignificant. At the same time, the t value is less than 2, so hypotheses *H1* and *H2* are rejected. The relationship between website credibility and purchasing decisions is significant.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis- Model Summary

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Er	Beta		
(Constant)	.860	.320	.051	2.686	.008
IQ	.060	.074	.053	.812	.417
WC	.335	.102	.276	3.279	.001
ST	.003	.061	.003	.055	.956
NR	.401	.092	.342	4.348	.000
EWOM	.451	.066	.393	6.877	.000

N = 261, R = .616, R square = .379, adjusted R square = 0.369; F Stat= 39.089; p<0.01,
Dependent Variable: Purchasing decision.

Similarly, results showed that the relationship between several reviews and purchasing decisions and electronic word of mouth with purchasing decisions is also significant; hence hypotheses *H3*, *H4 and H5* are accepted. As the direct effect of information quality and social tie-on purchasing decision is insignificant and there are no relationships in primary paths, further mediating for information quality and social tie is also insignificant; hence hypotheses *H6* and *H7* are rejected.

Table 4 showed the results of Mediation that have although the BETA value changed from the primary path, which was .276, and in path c, which is step 4, the value of BETA was greater than the previous that is .520, but in step 4, the sig value is 0.152 which was greater than 0.05 (p>0.05). Also, the T-value in step 4 is 1.437, less than 2. Hence it is in-significant, and mediation did not occur in this step. It means there was no mediation effect of electronic word of mouth between website credibility and purchasing decision; hence hypothesis *H8* is rejected.

Table 4: Regression Analysis – Mediation Results

Steps	IV	DV	R^2	F STAT	BETA	T Value	Sig
1	WC	PD	.379	39.809	.276	3.279	0.001
2	WC	EWOM	.339	133.000	.582	11.533	0.000
3	EWOM	PD	.154	47.292	.393	6.877	0.000
4	WC	PD	.333	64.485	.520	8.320	0.000
	EWOM				.090	1.437	0.152

** Significance level p < 0.01

Table 5 of mediation showed that in the primary path beta value is .0342, and this beta value increased even after mediation, and the value is .521 also, the sig. value of step 4, which is path c, is .039, which is less than 0.05 (p< 0.05). Also, t-value is 2.075, which is greater than 2. Hence it showed that electronic word of mouth mediates the relationship between the number of reviews and purchasing decisions; hence hypothesis *H9* is accepted.

Table 5: Regression Analysis – Mediation Results

Steps	IV	DV	R^2	F STAT	BETA	T Value	Sig
1	NR	PD	.379	39.809	.342	4.348	0.000
2	NR	EWOM	.271	96.347	.521	9.816	0.000
3	EWOM	PD	.154	47.292	.393	6.877	0.000
4	NR	PD	.352	70.068	.521	8.869	0.000
	EWOM				.122	2.075	0.039

** Significance level p < 0.01

Hypothesis 1

From this study, it is concluded that an insignificant relationship exists between information quality and purchasing decisions. The information quality is argument quality measured through relevancy and comprehensiveness of the review/feedback (Ruiz-Equihua, Casaló, & Romero, 2021). The previous study on online tourism services depicted no clear information regarding the relationship between information quality and purchasing decisions

in online communities; different people engage, so it became crucial to trust whom. People are of different experiences and knowledge in these settings, and each gives opinions according to their perception (Lyu, Li, Wang, & Yang, 2018). Consumers seeking electronic information have different motives; in the tourism industry, consumers find useful information based on that information, and ticket transactions occur (Hussain, Huang, et al., 2020).

Hypothesis 2

This study accepts the second hypothesis that website credibility positively correlates with purchasing decisions. The previous studies in the online context also support this hypothesis test; buying consumers tend to visit those websites for online shopping which are perceived as credible, like Amazon eBay. Due to their credibility and trust, consumers easily make transactions through credit cards and make transactions on many budgets. Also, consumers do not hesitate to give credit card information to well-known and trusted websites; otherwise, websites that are low in credibility fail to attract consumers (Majeed, Zhou, Lu & Ramkissoon, 2020). Another empirical study explored that website characteristic is an influential factor affecting online purchasing decision. This study concluded that website types play a moderating factor in online purchasing (Yan, Shah, Zhai, Khan & Shah, 2018).

Hypothesis 3

There exist an insignificant relationship between social tie and purchasing decision. A study on online seeking and passing done on social networking sites proved that homophily, trust, and social tie (tie strength) are antecedents of electronic word of mouth with customer engagement (Line, Hanks & Dogru, 2020). It was revealed that social ties negatively relate to electronic of mouth in terms of customer engagement. This study was done for the product-focused electronic word of mouth people were less influenced to buy any product towards any review written by people with a weak or moderate tie (Yusuf & Busalim, 2018).

Hypothesis 4

There is a significant impact on several reviews about a product or service posted by online consumers. It has been seen when the number of reviews increased, it meant there was a significant discussion had been done on the topic, and consumers judged discussion reliability by merely seeing several reviews. It also impacted their purchasing decision making. Several reviews have drawn significant attention as an impact factor in consumer purchasing decisions and sales of products and services (Yan et al., 2018).

Hypothesis 5

Electronic word of mouth has a positive relationship with purchasing decisions. The hypothesis is accepted as the p-value is less than 0.05. Kim et al., (2018) revealed that Electronic word of mouth has broadened the scope of online discussions. Through electronic word of mouth, people who have never met interacted with each other. People asked for different suggestions online and impacted each other's purchasing decisions (Khwaja & Zaman, 2020). Another study supported the significant relationship between ewom and purchasing decision and concluded that many websites upload their reviews whenever a

product is launched, and many online discussions happen. These online discussions among consumers gave insights into how the product works or is it worth buying. After reading those online reviews, a lot of consumer's purchasing decision regarding that product has altered (Wang, Wang & Wang, 2018).

Hypothesis 6

Electronic word of mouth mediates the relationship between information quality and purchasing decisions. This hypothesis is rejected because the primary path between information quality and purchasing decision is insignificant as the T-value was just 0.812, less than 2, and sig. value is 0.417, which was greater than 0.05 (p>0.05); hence the first assumption of mediation is not fulfilled that is primary path needs to be significant, so no further proceed to check the next steps for mediation. One study reveals that there are two types of information that have everything common in with each other (news and rumours). The only difference between the two is the truth. Nowadays, the news and rumours are fed to the public by the same source of information. This creates a problem and may impact how message receivers look at information quality in the future (Ngarmwongnoi et al., 2020).

Hypothesis 7

The mediation table analyzed that the beta value changed from the primary path, which was .276 and in path c, which is step 4, the beta value is greater than the previous, which is 0.520. Still, in step 4, the sig value was 0.152, greater than 0.05 (p>0.05). Also, the T-value in step 4 was 1.437, less than 2. It is insignificant, and mediation did not take place in this step. There is no mediation effect of electronic word of mouth between website credibility and purchasing decision. Website credibility has a positive impact on purchasing decisions of consumers. When a website is reputed, consumers tend to buy from that website, such as Amazon.com, eBay, and alibaba.com (Daowd et al., 2020). Another study showed that people do not always adopt online word of mouth, even from credible websites, because people know that now a days, anybody can sign up and make an account on the website to post a comment. Hence, not every buzz created on these websites attracted people, and this buzz did not affect people's purchasing decisions (Perera, Nayak & Long, 2019).

Hypothesis 8

Electronic word of mouth mediates the relationship between social ties and purchasing decisions. This hypothesis was rejected because multiple regression showed that the primary path between social tie and purchasing decision was insignificant as T-value was just 0.055, which was less than 2 and sig. The value was 0.956, greater than 0.05 (p>0.05). Hence the first assumption of mediation was not fulfilled that is primary path needs to be significant, so no further proceed to check the next steps for mediation. There is an insignificant relationship between social ties and purchasing decisions. A study conducted in the context of social media to adopt online discussion examined the impact of source credibility and social ties. It proved that social ties negatively affect electronic word of mouth, which didn't impact purchasing decisions. Buying a smartphone is a matter of personal preferences, so people's decisions don't get affected by what their family or friends of friends have recommended

because everybody has different needs and people tend to buy things accordingly (Ismagilova et al., 2021).

Hypothesis 9

The table of mediation shows that in the primary path BETA value is 0.0342, and this BETA value increased even after mediation, and the value is 0.521 also, the sig value of step 4, which is path c, is .039, which was less than 0.05 (p< 0.05) also T-value was 2.075 which is greater than 2. Hence it showed that electronic word of mouth mediates the relationship between several reviews and purchasing decisions. Several reviews have drawn significant attention as an impact factor in making the electronic word of mouth persuasive and affecting consumer purchasing decisions and sales of products and services (Berné-Manero, Ciobanu & Pedraja-Iglesias, 2020). Another study discussed that the number of reviews alters any search for good online ratings. When the number of reviews increased of search goods, their ratings also increased, ultimately increasing their sales (Ismagilova, Dwivedi, Rana, Sivarajah & Weerakkody, 2021). It has been observed that when the number of reviews increased even for movies, it impacted their sales, and overall business showed upward sales graphs. Online reviews, when placed in large quantity, attract information seekers and impact their behavioral intentions (Mishra, Shukla, Rana & Dwivedi, 2021).

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Conclusion

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Internet has made consumers savvier now; people share their product-related experiences through the internet. This sharing of experiences increases consumer's knowledge about product benefits, and now consumers carefully invest in products and try to seek maximum benefit from their invested money. This paper has witnessed that consumers tend to adopt information on credible websites. Moreover, this study urges companies to make a digital marketing team that may put their online reviews about their products and rectify misconceptions about their companies through a larger number of reviews. This study highlights the factors that affect electronic word of mouth in online communities that help make consumer purchasing mindset (Mishra, Shukla & Sharma, 2021). People ask online opinions from their peers or people across the globe before buying anything. They discuss the pros and cons of products they are interested in. This study concludes that people do not consider information quality and social ties as impactful factors within Pakistan. People consider that most of the information on the internet is fabricated and is not trustworthy. Also, social ties are not an impactful factor in influencing people's purchasing decisions because they think their family ties have the same needs.

This study gives marketing managers insight into successfully promoting their brands on digital media. This study helps design a roadmap for companies to design their digital marketing campaigns to compete in this competitive era where consumers are tech-savvy now. Although website credibility affects purchasing decisions, managers of companies should increase the credibility of their websites. Still, it doesn't mean that online word of mouth generated on such websites will help them to influence people to buy and increase their sales (Bawack, Wamba & Carillo, 2021). Meanwhile, digital marketers of companies can

design such a campaign in which online discussions are taking place to a large extent where the number of participants is large, and the number of comments generated is more. This large discussion based on content and comments will attract people and persuade people to make a positive purchase decision (Febrian & Fadly, 2021). Specifically, managers and organizations should focus on building digital marketing expert teams that engage consumers online and get the feedback from them solve their issues. Digital marketing teams should do SEO (search engine optimization) so that their content may be seen to maximum of the people (Farzin, Sadeghi, Fattahi & Eghbal, 2021).

This investigation illuminates the theoretical implications of the literature. Previously, the proposed model's rationality was tested using four variables: digital marketing, EWOM, and buy intention, which described the previous research. Customers' purchase procedures and marketing have evolved so swiftly as life has gotten so fast and the globe has become so digitalized. With the support of various social networking sites, marketers can now deliver their message and information to customers via digital marketing. Customers in Pakistan are increasingly migrating to online shopping, which is why businesses rely on digital marketing approaches rather than traditional marketing methods. As a result, digital marketing substantially impacts client purchase intent.

The first recommendation for future researchers is that they can replicate this model in some specific product purchasing behavior context. This research gives insight into some specific regions. Other researchers can use this research for other geographic regions with different cultures and demographics. The data collection technique for this research is simple random sampling. Other methods for primary data collection can be used, such as interviews and group discussions. This research uses mediating variables. Other researchers can use mediator variables. Lastly, other factors influencing electronic word of mouth, such as source credibility and homophily, can be studied as independent variables.

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