

A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF FACTORS INFLUENCING ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH COMMUNICATION: AN AUGMENTATION OF WORD OF MOUTH COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

The proliferation of internet has bought an irreversible shift in the mode of communication by influencing consumers to move from orthodox means of communication to newer version of online communication. However, means of communication can vary and so is their impact. The purpose of this study is to provide a systematic review of newly introduced communication mode known as electronic word of mouth (eWOM) which is an extended version of word of mouth (WOM). This study uncovered some important dimensions in which Internet-based feedback mechanisms differ from traditional word-of-mouth networks and surveys the most important issues related to their design, evaluation, and use. It was found that among all platforms, SNS (social networking sites) are considered the utmost influential base. A total of 35 research paper were identified initially out of which 31 were selected after initial screening. Articles were selected pertaining to period 2000-2020 .The result of the study illustrates that eWOM platforms are very effective in building customer relationship whereas, social networking sites are considered most influential of all as they create a buzz among present and prospective customers.

Keywords: eWOM, WOM, online consumer reviews, consumer purchase decision, Social media.

1. Introduction

Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) has been a transformed continuation of the previously held concept of the traditional Word of Mouth (WOM). In simpler terms, WOM can be defined as an interpersonal communication between individuals, primarily acquaintances, about any particular topic (Arndt, 1967). By the origination of technological

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advancements, WOM has established into an innovative method of message delivery known as, eWOM. The eWOM has its perks as a strategy for effective marketing and has proved itself to be a strong one. There has been immense research done on the performance of eWOM as a communication tool (Davis & Khazanchi, 2008). However, as there has also been a thorough research done to study the impact of eWOM communication, as is evident from the published studies; it has become disintegrated, thus, inconclusive. According to Lee and Lee (2009), research studies that have been done to gauge the impact of eWOM communication can be broadly categorized into two levels: Market-level Analysis and Individual-level Analysis. The former can be defined as a study which catered to the broad parameters of market. It used objective panel data from secondary sources such as websites (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006). The latter researches are done on an individual-level basis whereby eWOM is considered as a powerful tool of changing the receiver's attitudes and decisions following any communication between the receiver and sender (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). The significant stages of examination are :

1. Individual level and market base level investigations
2. Wider spectrum, i.e. market level and an exclusive spectrum, i.e. individual level

Our study focus will be based on individual level of WOM research and review its theoretical base. The road map of our paper is first we made a comparison between old way of communication through WOM and the new method of providing opinions to one another via internet i.e. eWOM. Secondly, we define the quantitative analysis of the prior research work done on electronic word of mouth, including the inclusion and exclusion criteria of our search. Thirdly a detailed review of earlier work on eWOM is mentioned. Lastly, the avenues of future research are also mentioned.

1.1 Objective of the study

The eWOM carries the limelight from immense number of researchers across various parts of the world and blending of numerous hypothetical frame works and foundations from diverse fields such as attitudes of consumers, beliefs and actions, loyalty and brand recognitions are found to be the most influential sources for generating eWOM. The

subject of eWOM has not failed to enthrall the researchers and has lead them to work on combination of speculative fundamentals and structure from special areas such as, consumer purchase behavior, systems related to information and technology and study on sociology.

Main purpose of the review withholds two factors:

- (a) Recapitulation of the remaining works in the area of eWOM
- (b) Recognize spaces to conduct upcoming research.

2. Methodology

The total of 35 research papers and two conference papers were identified for this study. Out of which 31 peer reviewed papers were found more relevant and therefore selected for this review paper. All finalized papers were Impact factor based. The determination and time scale used in resounding and publishing review of previous studies illustrates that these literatures will become out of date very fast. The examined papers were published between 2000 to 2020. Two papers were also included belongs to the time period of 90's due to their significance related to WOM.

2.1 Searched Databases

Previous research studies have claimed that a vast number of papers exist in the particular domain, thus, the electronic databases searched for the purpose of this review were accumulated as a set of those that were used in previous studies. (Christy& Cheung,2001; Thadani, Anubhav Mishra & Silverman,2000; Buttle &Arndt, 2005; , Shirky & Sesamen, 2006; Judith & Chevalier, 2010) .The following online data bases were searched to identify published peer reviewed articles.

- Google scholar
- Science direct
- Science target
- Emerald, Elsevier
- Taylor and Francis
- ProQuest
- Sage
- Informs

2.2 Inclusion Criteria

Webster and Watson (2002) suggested method of systematic literature has been used in this review paper. By using Thomson Reuters data was retrieved from huge pool of research papers based on Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) during period of 2000-2020. After consulting senior research fellows and several trial and error rounds search terms were decided and divided into four main topics connected to eWOM. Irrelevant search terms were excluded in preliminary trials. Firstly, papers published in peer reviewed journals were used. Secondly, empirical papers on eWOM were also selected other than the theoretical papers. Thirdly main topic connected to eWOM and its influence on online purchase intentions and lastly factors influencing the expansion of eWOM.

3. Review of Literature

3.1 Word of Mouth Communication

The Word of Mouth Communication(WOM) is considered to be the most effective and strongest communication process in the market place (Silverman, 1997).The prime reason behind this strength of word of mouth is that consumers often trust more on the familiar and casual sources of communication while making any sort of decisions particularly the purchase decisions over the formal methods of communication e.g. advertising (Bansal & Voyer, 2000).According to Buttle (2000) word of mouth has the potential to influence diverse situations such as consumer's awareness, opinions, expectations and particularly the attitude and intentions behind performing any behavior. WOM is found to be an ancient way of delivering information(Dellarocas, 2003).WOM is defined as an important pillar in determining the consumers attitudes and behaviors towards the products, services and brands Katz and Lazarsfeld (1966).Among the highly acknowledged definitions of WOM (Arndt, 1967) has explained WOM a verbal, face to face communication among receiver (noncommercial)and sender where receiver receives the personal message related to products and services.

According to Bansal and Voyer(2000) the power of word of mouth increases with the power of relationship between sender and receiver. The stronger the relationship between both parties(sender and receiver), the stronger will be the effect of word of mouth. Bansal and Voyer (2000)has also

highlights the significance of the knowledge provided by the sender of the information in word of mouth communication. The sources of WOM could be the individual or other platforms but the degree of knowledge source has about the product or service, increases the reliability of the WOM communication (Buttle, 2000). Two ways are used to generate the word of mouth communication, i.e. consumer generated WOM and market generated WOM. Among both, consumers rely more on the former method because they found it noncommercial and free of any interest (Arndt, 1967). Similar to other mode of communication, WOM also carries few unfavorable aspect for consumers as it cannot be fully controlled due to the inherent structure of WOM (Nyilasy, 2006).

3.2 Electronic Word of Mouth Communication

Ismagilova et al. (2020) defined Electronic word of mouth communication (eWOM) as opinions made by consumers using the product presently, users who left using the product, users who never use the product or from consumer who might in future will use the product or service, on the internet in order to reach large amount of consumers and organizations (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). The continuous advancement in the internet has made the bases of electronic word of mouth communication more productive (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). The eWOM communication occurred in various stages for example SMS- social media sites (Facebook, Twitter), shopping websites (amazon.com), blogs, online forums, review websites (Epinions), discussion forums (zapaq.com), reviews on weblogs (xanga.com), e-bulletin board system, newsgroup (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). As internet plays a vital role in delivering eWOM communication, the knowledge about the products and services will remain for an indefinite time period which will help both the marketers as well as the practitioners (Park et al., 2007). According to Cheung and Thadani (2012b). EWOM not only uses text information to communicate with its customers but also uses various other visually supported sources such as videos, images and animations. Unlike WOM communication takes place through eWOM is easily track able (Nyilasy, 2006). Therefore, WOM communications are less quantifiable than electronic word of mouth. Electronic word of mouth communication does not have boundaries and remain for the longer time period until said by any legal institution to temporarily or permanently remove or delete any content

of the information (Cheung & Thadani, 2012)

3.3 Electronic Word of Mouth Types

The web technology usage has given customers a prospect to exchange their feelings and views with the people they know and also with the anonymous consumers by taking full advantage of the various new platforms of eWOM such as blogs, micro blogs, online forums, discussion forums, chat rooms and the highly preferable tool of social networking sites and shopping websites.

Table 1: Electronic Word of Mouth Types

Types of eWOM	Examples
Online discussion forums	Zapak.com
Online consumer review sites	Epinions.com Shopping.com
Blogs	Xanga.com Bloggers.com
Social networking sites	Facebook.com Instagram.com
Online brands/shopping sites	Amazon.com

Source: Cheung and Thadani (2012). *Decision Support Systems*, 54, 461–470

3.4 Viral Marketing

Many different expressions are used for electronic word of mouth for example “Internet- word of mouth” and “word of mouse”(Goldenberg et al., 2001).The terms electronic word of mouth and viral marketing are used by many authors as an interchangeable word(Cheung & Thadani, 2012) .Viral marketing as the name suggests spreads information, contents both visual and non-visually to its consumers like virus which will create the favorable or unfavorable responses for consumers (Hassan, 2018).

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) describe viral marketing as “electronic word of-mouth whereby some form of marketing message related to a company, brand, or product is transmitted in an exponentially growing way,often through the use of social media applications.” This description has binary features which are of great significance. Firstly is the development,

which means that the person receiving the message passes it around to many other people. Second of the important thing is the frequent use of social media in order to spread the above mentioned messages in a quick and prompt way which leads to viruses.

Viral marketing is defined by AMA as a process that support and motivate consumers to exchange their opinions of the performance or non-performance of products particularly the communication related to the marketing. The name viral marketing itself suggests that this phenomena spreads the views very rapidly just like the virus or any disease among consumers themselves, their acquaintances, formal and informal social groups(Laudon & Traver, 2020).Therefore it is very hard to differentiate the eWOM from viral marketing, due to the similarity among both concepts. However, the ultimate aim is to accelerate the revenue generation activities and create buzz among target audiences(Livingstone, 2006).

3.5 What makes Electronic Word of Mouth Unique?

1. Sharing: eWOM has the capability of creating a viral marketing concept applicable. Conversations between complete strangers to those between friends make the idea of sharing beliefs, concepts, or just perceptions very easy and comfortable. Sharing of general thoughts is what makes eWOM a strategy unique to its core.
 2. Information-provider: People while intending for a purchase, need information and an assurance about the value and worth of that product. Online surveys, for example, are utilized as sources to extract the useful perception data.
 3. Trustworthiness: eWOM is considered to be a more reliable source of information rather than the more publicized and general modes of media, for example, news. In a wholesome view, eWOM is deemed to be more credible due to the one-on-one communication strategy it implies.
- Among all the communication methods,eWOM is most dominant, since it contacts more individuals, it lives everlastingly on the web and can be observed. Moreover, eWOM offers organizations an approach to recognize clients' needs and recognitions and even a practical method to speak with them.

Various social networking sites such as Facebook, Snap chat, twitter and Instagram are incredible promoting instruments for publicizing and creating eWOM. Customers who scan for eWOM are keen on picking up data before making a buy to diminish chance. For instance, at the point when purchasers scan for eWOM on Instagram, they are searching for pictures of the items that have been transferred by shoppers with their very own viewpoint or survey of the item. Design brands can receive this strategy by empowering built up customers snap a photo of their most recent buy and offer it on Instagram with a particular hashtag as a component of a challenge. Consequently, shoppers will get vouchers, endowments and rebate of their next buy.

3.6 Prospects and Challenges of Electronic Word of Mouth Communication

Electronic word of mouth communication (eWOM) has been facing tremendous challenges and opportunities created by the were (Jalilvand et al., 2011). Consumers are so much at ease because of eWOM as it not only allows them to pertain the information of products and services from the small group of people they know but also from a bigger cluster of people dispersed all across the world. Moreover, a recent survey has proved that online opinions have been perceived by consumers as much reliable as the branded sites(Soh et al., 2013).

An eWOM imposes a powerful control over the decision making of the consumers. Companies have also been facilitated because of eWOM as it is a substitute source of information to consumers, eventually reducing the burden on companies of marketing and advertising campaigns to provide information to the consumers. To influence the consumer opinions and to gather further knowledge from them about their preferences, companies are provided with the new venues by the occurrence of eWOM (Dellarocas, 2003) .By developing innovative dimensions in the eWOM companies can influence consumer opinions as eWOM has an unparalleled source of information which spread on large scales with small charge of knowledge exchange. Although eWOM is extremely beneficial, it has some weak points as well.One of the disadvantages of eWOM is the anonymity of communicators, which leads to the problem of ambiguousness and messages outside the related framework of communication. Furthermore,

the digitalization of eWOM has been very challenging to the existence of geographical markets, leading to the disintegration of conducting local marketing strategies. However, consumers are increasing day after the other in larger numbers seeking the advice of opinion leaders, in the recognition of media's low cost, broader scope, and increased anonymity.

3.6.1 Negative eWOM

The electronic word of mouth communication is basically dual sided. One is the positive side which is associated with the trust, credibility and familiarity of the source or sender whereas the other side of eWOM is known as the Negative eWOM.

According to (Dellarocas, 2003b) negative eWOM as the name suggests does not have the similar influence on the consumers purchase intentions as compare to the positive eWOM .Both areas of eWOM function in a different way. Negative WOM is a way of communication between two parties sender and receiver in which they malign the real aim of the communication, due to which it has been observed that negative eWOM has more influencing power than positive eWOM on the consumers buying behavior (Weinberger et al., 1981)

The intensity of the negative eWOM varies with the industry for instance at restaurants consumer rapidly believe the negative opinion about the place regardless of having their own (C. H. Lee & Cranage, 2014) where as in the case of e reviews regarding the selling of books ,negative eWOM again plays a leading role. Moreover, the service sector is also unable to protect itself from the dominating influence of negative eWOM over positive eWOM, in fact according to (Livingstone, 2006) the influence of negative eWOM is double the impact of positive eWOM while establishing the consumers reviews about the service.

The perception created by negative eWOM leads to consumer dissatisfaction and higher switching cost between the brands and services (Zhang et al., 2011) The power of negative eWOM is determined by the rate of occurrence of the negative information received and adopted by consumers. This encounter affects in return the consumers mental ability ,analysis of received and shared knowledge about the brands or services and likely to pose the threat of moving from one brand to another brand (Bojei et al.,2018)

3.6.2 How Negative eWOM influences Consumer Behaviour

According to (Nadarajan et al., 2017) consumers behavior concerning to negative eWOM is the level of likeness and dislikeness and its associations with individual's willingness to do some act or show some behavior. Approach and avoidance behavior are the two parameters which help in performing the empirical measurement of favorable and unfavorable behavior towards the negative eWOM. On the other hand, evaluation of positive eWOM and negative eWOM is measured via approach behaviour and avoidance behaviour respectively (Kaldewaij et al., 2016) .

In the age of technology, the spread of negative eWOM is just a one click away which fatly change the opinion of a potential an prospect customer (Zaraket & Vanheems, n.d.) The good will of the company is also get affected by the negative eWOM because consumers starts distrusting organization. According to (Park et al., 2007) . When a customer who is willing to buy the product has seen the negative view may change his mind and result in becoming a switcher instead of satisfied customer.

There a numerous reason which are responsible for the negative eWOM generated by consumers such as apprehension, retaliation and asking for recommendation (C. M. K. Cheung & Thadani, 2012b).

Previous researches also shows that negative eWOM leads to revenge full behavior by customers against the company such as buying product form the company's rival and higher number of dissatisfied customers. (Jalilvand et al., 2011) .

4. Prior Review of Theories

The eWOM is basically the addition in the knowledge and theories of WOM which is one of the oldest way of communication (Cheung & Thadani, 2012).An immense amount of theories plays a pivotal role in creating the strong base of electronic word of mouth communication. These theories include; Theory of Cognitive fit,Theory of Social Exchange, Expectation Confirmation Theory, Theory of Social Contagion Theory and Multistep Flow Model.

The concept of electronic word of mouth is incomplete without the description of Information Adoption Model (IAM) which is based on the notion of well researched TRA (theory of reasoned Action(A. Fishbein & Ajzen,

1975).TRA is extended into Elaboration Likelihood Model which is also addressed in this review paper.

4.1 Cognitive Fit Theory

The Cognitive Fit theory states that high drive of doing any action is solely based on the logical and rational cues instead of focused messages. It is very much similar the way consumers tend to create intentions towards performing any behavior. A larger amount of information carrying arguments will be accepted by consumers if they believe that more knowledge is better without inquiring the reliability of the information. This phenomena basically explains the strength of electronic word of mouth communication on consumers who are of the view point that more information leads to more reliability (Mishra & Satish2016).According to Gopinath et al. (2014) based on the cognitive progression of information, three magnitudes are used to evaluate the valence of eWOM, which are attitude ,emotions and recommendations in inquiring the relationship occurred between eWOM, brand image and advertisement.

4.2 Social Exchange Theory

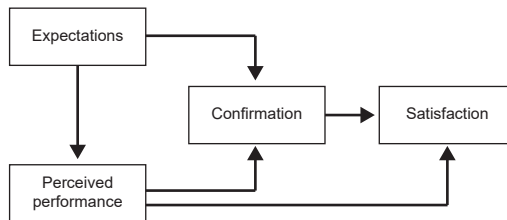
The Social Exchange Theory Homans (1958) describes the reasons behind the social interaction among consumers regarding the trade of knowledge and opinions in order to create eWOM. These public relations carry the tangible and intangible exchange of ideas, views and information. In online consumer opinion forums(Cheung et al., 2008) make use of the social capital to study the causes responsible in generating electronic word of mouth communication.

4.3 Expectation Confirmation Theory-ECT

Expectation Confirmation Theory (ECT), Oliver (1977)postulates that post purchase behavior of consumers occur when consumers find its expectations ,reaching the perceived performance of the brand or service. If the expectations meet supposed action thought by the consumers, a satisfied post purchase attitude takes place where as unable to meet the expectations with professed feat, an unsatisfied after sales behaviors by consumers occurred. Positive disconfirmation or negative disconfirmation arises when the expectation reaches the perceived performance or not

respectively (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993).The expectation confirmation theory provided the strong base for the volume and valence (favorable or unfavorable eWOM) of electronic word of mouth communication created in online reviews (Cheung et al., 2008) .The conceptual diagram of ECT is shown below in figure 1

Figure 1: Expectation Confirmation Theory Model



Source: Adopted from Oliver (1977)

4.4 Social Contagion Theory

The Social contagion theory illustrates the basis which generates, accelerate and broaden the electronic word of mouth communication among consumers. According to Trusov et al. (2009) this behavior also increase the consumers online use of social networking sites such as Face book, Twitter. Moreover, the theory also focuses on the impact of eWOM on consumers which is found to be more long lasting as compare to the ancient word of mouth communication (Trusov et al., 2009). Libai, Muller, and Peres (2013) has very well explained the social contagion theory by describing the concept of speedy spread of information among consumers about the innovate idea.

4.5 Multistep Flow Model

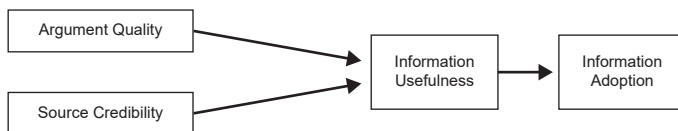
Multistep flow model, also known as two step way of communication illustrates that consumers rely a lot on their opinion leaders before taking any decision. Opinion leaders are basically the most influential persons for the consumers who eventually become the aspiration leaders as well. The concept of opinion leadership focuses on the expansion and enhancement of the effect of eWOM communication (Phelps et al., 2005). Furthermore, Myers defines that opinion leadership is a dual way methodology in which the influencer who actually influences the other person is himself inspired from someone who plays a very vital role in his decision making. According to

(Sridhar & Srinivasan, 2012) reviewers on online forums becomes the opinion leaders for future reviewers or shoppers.

4.6 Information Adoption Model-IAM

The way consumers adopt information to create intentions toward performing any behavior or adopting any new or old technology, in the same manner they develop intentions towards the acceptance of any idea (regardless its new or old) or behavior (Mishra & M, 2016). According to Sussman and Siegel (2003) the factors which are responsible in the intention formation of an individual for performing any action can be simultaneously be used for the acceptance of advice. The information adoption model primarily supports in getting the in-depth insight about how the intentions are built through the message received via electronic word of mouth communication. The two main factors behind the information utility are the quality of the argument (content) and source credibility. The conceptual illustration of the information adoption model is shown below in figure 2

Figure 2: Information Adoption Model



Source: Adopted from Sussman and Siegel (2003)

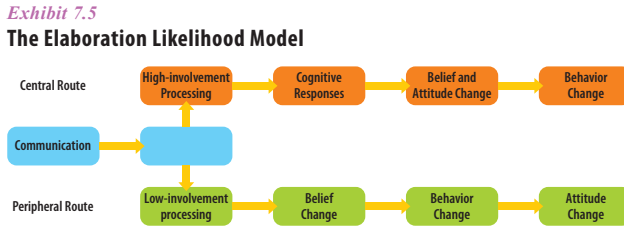
4.7 Elaboration Likelihood Model

The extension of IAM model based on quality of information and credibility of source leads to ELM. These are the two main reason behind the consumer trust on information received from their known people or people belongs to their own social circle as compared to knowledge received from marketers (Bickart & Schindler, 2001).

The elaboration likelihood model explains the process which describes that how the consumers get influenced by the received information (Sussman & Siegal, 2003). The Elaboration likelihood model illustrates the two modes of information which persuade the consumer to do favorable or unfavorable action. These dual routes are direct routes or indirect routes which are also known as peripheral routes (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). During low involvement decisions, consumers get involved in

peripheral or indirect route whereas while taking any decision which involves high involvement, the direct or central route is adopted (Park et al., 2007). Figure 3 will explain the ELM.

Figure 3: The Elaboration Likelihood Model



Source: Bickart and Schindler (2001)

5. The Effective Escalation of Electronic Word of Mouth:

Reviewing eWOM literature elucidates some fascinating facts on consumer distinctiveness and qualities which elaborates the inspiration behind the creation and wider spread of eWOM. Two factors are responsible for the motivation of eWOM. First one is the behavior and psychology of the consumers and the second factor is product-specific antecedents. These factors encourage the consumer to express themselves.

Moreover, these two motivational factors play very significant role in generating and expanding the influence of eWOM on consumer's individuality, behaviors, attitudes, actions and personal qualities. Consumer tends to play dual role such as an informant, then as a recommender, when a consumer is involved in creating an online review which incorporates evaluation, experience, and opinions regarding products (Park et al., 2007).

Four perspectives of Psychological literature classifies why consumers prefer eWOM generated online in opinion platforms: They are

1. Egoism Social advantage for the betterment of individuals
2. Collectivism Social advantage for the betterment of groups
3. Altruism To serve good for the masses
4. Principlism To serve public good to uphold a principle.

Through social interaction perspective, consumer spread eWOM as to show

their loyalty and belonging towards a product (Dholakia et al., 2004).The fundamental leading factors to eWOM behavior are consumer's need for social interaction, concern for other consumer, desire for economic incentives and potential to enhance self-worth (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004).

5.1. Consumer Purchase Intentions & Electronic Word of Mouth:

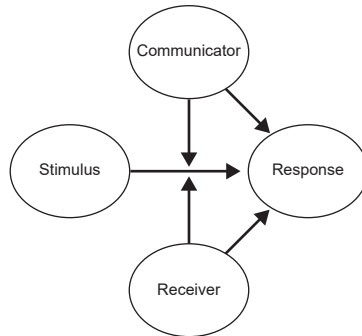
The method of communication between consumers has changed drastically by the advent of internet. An immense amount of eWOM platforms have been used by consumers such as blogs, social networking sites, online discussion forums, research forums, user groups, bulletin boards. The eWOM has a larger influence on the consumer purchase decision. According to purchase behavior the process is divided into five steps beginning from the initial search of problem, also known as problem recognition stage which leads to searching of required information and gaining knowledge about the problem. Once the information is achieved, consumers start evaluating the alternative brands available in the market to avail the better option. Finally after completing all these steps, consumer made a final purchase which will be backed by the post purchase behaviors

5.2. Electronic Word of Mouth and Social Communication:

Social communication cannot be separated from the communication occurred on the internet. Based on the previous communication theories, four major elements of communication has been derived which are as follows: (1) The Communicator, (2) the Stimulus, (3) the receiver and (4) the response. The communicator is defined as the sender or the transmitter of the knowledge, whereas stimulus refers to the actual message generated by sender (C. Cheung & Thadani, 2010)

The receiver is the one as the name suggests is the one who provides the response to the actual communication while the response provides the favorable or unfavorable action against the subject communication.

Figure 4: Traditional Method of Communication



Source: Cheung and Thadani, (2010)

6. Impact of Electronic Word of Mouth:

Online reviews and recommendation prompt the preponderance of consumer while making purchase decision. Technological options such as mobiles phones, notebooks, smartphones, etc. which provide adaptability and accessibility to the consumers having considerable latitude in choosing various channels and platforms to voice out their opinions, in the shape of eWOM. The role of critic can be played by any consumer who has access to the internet (Piller 1999). The point of differentiation between real experts and normal users eliminates when it comes to influencing the consumer's preference. Consumers are more influenced by the critics of users who are alike to them rather than an expert's on online channels or platform. In comparison eWOM generated by users is more reliable.

Table 2: Impact of eWOM and Results in Literature

Research	Measures	Key Results
Chevalier and Mayzlin (2006)	Effecty of eWOM, consumer reviews on sales (Books)	Number of reviews and average star-rating scores are positively related to product sales.
Dellarocas et al. (2007)	Online Product reviews in forecasting sales (using motion pictures)	Significant positive relationship with a movie's online review volume, gender entropy of online reviewers, and average valence of critic reviews.
Duan et al. (2008)	Persuasive and awareness effect of online user reviews on movie daily box office performance	Rating of online reviews (as endogenous factor) has no significant impact on box office sales of movie which means there is a very little persuasive effect on consumer purchase decision. Box office sales are significantly influenced by volume of onlune posting, suggesting the importance of the awareness effect.
Lee, Park, and Han (2008)	Effect of negative eWOM on product attitude (mp3 player)	High quality negative online consumer reviews influence consumer attitude more than low-quality negative online consumer reviews thus impacting future sales.
Park and lee (2008)	Dual role of customers-the informant and the recommender	Number of reviews increase perceived popularity of a product (the recommender role). Low= involvement consumers consider the recommender role as being more important than the informant role, but high-involvement consumers consider the informant role as being more important than the recommender role.
Zhu and Zhang (2010)	Effect of product and consumer characteristics using video games and console sales	Online reviews are more influential for less popular and online games. Online reviews are more influential when consumers have relatively greater internet experience (benefits of reduced search costs).
Ho-Dac, Carson, and Moore (2013)	Effect of eWOM (both positive and negative) on Bluray and DVD players brand strength and category maturity	Positive (negative) reviews increase (decrease) sales of weak brand but have no significant impact on strong brands whearas brand equity plays a moderator role in this relationship.
Gopinath et al. (2014)	Effect of eWOM and advertising on firm performance (Five major cell phone brands)	Valence of recommendations has a direct impact on sales. Volume does not have a significant impact on sales

Source: Anubhav Mishra and Satish (2016)

6.1. Electronic Word of Mouth Measurability:

The electronic word of mouth communication used two methods to measure its effectiveness. The first approach is used to measure the number of consumers influenced from eWOM by keeping the dimension of time constant (Heinz et al., 1994).The second approach perceives that profits results from the gradual users of the product, brand or service(Ho et al., 2012).The 3V criteria is used to measure the eWOM: Valence, Variance and Volume. Valence states that positive or negative responses while variance provide the statistical difference and volume provides the details of posts and the amount of reviews given at the eWOM platforms.

6.2. Electronic Word of Mouth Effectiveness:

Researcher have deduced that consumer and brand characteristics demonstrates eWOM multiplex and interconnected relationship. These distinctiveness can be deployed to effective marketing communication as well as influencing consumers. The factors include societal, expressive, and efficient brand characteristics such as thrill, uniqueness and difficulty could be the leading factors that lets the consumer spread WOM or eWOM (Peres et al., 2011). However, the dispositions of these characteristics differ from offline (emotional, functional and social) to online (social, functional, and

emotional) platforms. The order of these drivers can be used by firms on their channels depending on its planning that is used for communication between consumers. The relationship between revenues generated by sales and online consumer reviews is determined very fairly with the help of brand equity. A favorable consumer review will have positive impact on products of less strong brand than strong brands, likewise, a negative review will have a negative impact on weak brand than a strong brand. Well-known and recognized brand will have less impact on unfavorable eWOM. Thus, eWOM can easily be secured with the help of powerful brands.

Social Media has played a role of game changer when it comes to the communication between the manufacturer and retailers, their brand and consumers. An eWOM is involved in consumer purchasing decision and has also become the means to share their experiences. The shared information access is not bounded by the geographical location and is easily accessible to every prospective customer. Firms can gain, hold and involve customers (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006) and can content and satisfy their consumers by use of eWOM. The sales of weaker brands can be increased by positive eWOM and thus provoking more positive eWOM by increasing sales. Ultimately, steers its position from a weak brand to strong brand, which creates a positive loop and also creates positive brand equity as well as increased sales. The reserve case is liable in negative eWOM (Ho et al., 2012).

Numerous organizations are employing novel procedures to mobilize the strength of electronic word of mouth communication. As the significance of eWOM is widely increasing and being accepted. They are seeking new eWOM channels or platforms to directly connect to their consumers to achieve direct feedbacks. An eWOM has gained attention of many researcher and marketers due to its significance and effects on marketing communications and strategies. The growth of internet and social media platforms has led to increased researches on eWOM. Technological advancement and inter-relationship between consumers provides enough opportunities for future researches.

7. Forthcoming Research:

There are immeasurable amount of research readily available on eWOM that explains its facets and features. Due to technological advancement, arrival of electronic devices, and access of internet, there is more potential for future research on eWOM. Various sources such as experts review, sponsorship by companies or directly through consumers creates eWOM. Sales and other parameters of companies still use eWOM in generating their forecast (Dellarocas, 2003). An eWOM has an effect on deviating immensities based on the mature stage of the product and power of the brand . It has various evaluation criteria's at different levels of product life cycle (Libai et al., 2013) scrutinize the worth of electronic word of mouth through the seeding programmers & comparison between expansion and acceleration effect. Researches procure for reviews from online communities and discussion forums. They use platform of shopping websites for eWOM content and gather data for analysis from therein.

8. Conclusion:

The rapid development of technology specifically the internet has made the communication process immensely easy and quick. This advancement now allow individuals to even communicate with anonymous people. We have found from extensive review of literature that among all internet platforms electronic word of mouth is an addition of the already well developed notion of word of mouth. Consumers have more power and authority now due to the growth of online forums and social communities. The landscape of business markets as well as consumer markets are also influenced greatly by eWOM as it support organizations in creating, developing and sustaining their brands or service growth according to the ever changing demands of consumers.

Trust and speed are the two pivotal pillars which are responsible of consumers preference of eWOM over WOM. Consumers use eWOM to vouch their experiences about products and services and to share their views after the purchase process. Consumer's motivation is also a creativity enabled by the use and generation of eWOM. They help other consumers by providing them first hand reviews, to discuss advantages and disadvantages of brands and share information of the products. Thus, brand loyalty is the most burning issue for marketers in the battle of social interactions among

consumers.

Moreover, eWOM helps marketers in generating awareness about products and services and escalation of brand value by immediately getting the consumers feedback. This direct response will support the marketers in overcoming their pitfalls and improve their strategies to fulfill the customer satisfaction. However, the innovations and inventions occurring on daily basis such as smart phones, instant messaging applications and other latest technological breakthroughs of smart devices play a great role in this field. In future, the new avenues will provide further research in this area.

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