



EWOM INFORMATION ACCEPTANCE MODEL (IACM) – A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

The word eWOM has created much interest among the researchers to probe into its influence among the consumers in online shopping, hotel bookings, travel recommendations, etc. This study mainly concentrated on the Literature review of the Information Acceptance model adopted by various researchers who aimed to bring out the limelight in their respective fields. In this technological era, it is critical to examine and evaluate the influence of eWOM among consumers. The way how consumers assess and evaluate information online has become a more important concern in the research field of Consumer behaviour, since it helps us to understand the factors that influence the consumer in adopting and processing the information as well as their intention to purchase. Among the prior research studies, the review of Information Acceptance of eWOM is comparatively less and thus emphasis has been given to the articles that have applied the Information Acceptance Model. Few of such articles are collected online, reviewed, and discussed in this paper. Further, implications for future research are also highlighted.

Keywords: eWOM, Consumer Behaviour, Information Acceptance Model, Purchase Intention

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1. Introduction

In today's scenario, more and more consumers use the internet for various purposes including knowledge-seeking, connecting with people, sharing information, shopping online, for entertainment purposes, to solve their problems if any, and like. Information seeking and sharing have gained much importance after the revolution of technology and the commencement of e-commerce. More consumers visit the internet frequently either to seek information to gain some insight about relevant topics/products or to share their experiences to educate others through various platforms like consumer review sites, personal blogs/vlogs, social networking sites, etc. (P. Gupta and J. Harris, 2010). This gave rise to the term "eWOM," which describes any positive or negative comments made about goods and services online by users of the internet (Gwinner, Hennig-Thurau, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004). eWOM has largely evolved into one of the marketing tools used to influence online shoppers. The researchers in the respective fields started to focus on eWOM and its influence on the consumer purchase decision. Many different models have been applied to study eWOM and its influence over consumers like Dual-Process Theory, Elaboration Likelihood Model, Social Identity Theory, Stimulus-Response model, Information Adoption Model, and so on.

eWOM

Presently, consumers are loaded with a lot of information about the product or services which has affected the process of decision-making greatly. The presence of eWOM influences the product evaluation as well as the consumer buying process. Before making a purchase decision, consumers frequently research products by reading reviews on websites, searching on social networking sites, or

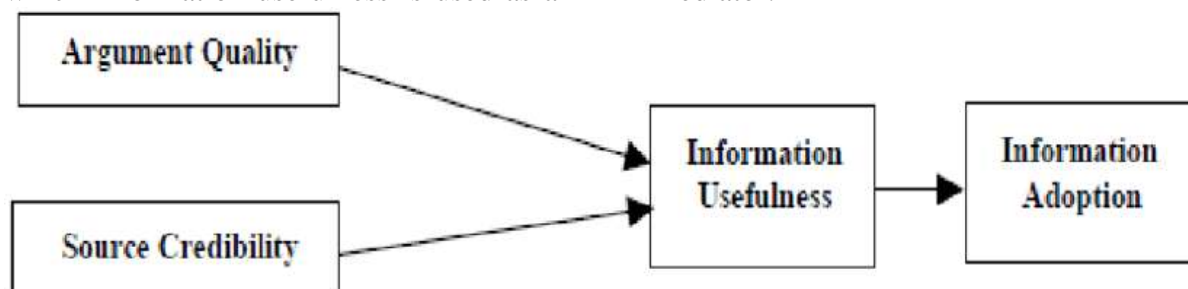
visiting personal blogs. For this reason, eWOM is regarded as one of the crucial factors and serves as a resource for consumers (Duan et al., 2008). At first, it was stated that consumers need access to a wide range of information in order to make decisions. But, it is quite challenging to determine the authentication of information that is being spread. However, how eWOM affects the consumers' purchase intention as well as purchase decision is literally significant for both the marketers and researchers. Many kinds of research have been made to probe into the detailed study of how eWOM affects the intention and decision of consumers with respect to various theories in mind. The eWOM effect can be analyzed based on two categories which include individual-level analysis and market-level analysis. In market-level analysis, how eWOM affects the sales of the product was analyzed whereas in Individual-level analysis, how eWOM information is being adopted, who provides information whether they are the laymen or expertise, the attitude of the receiver, and how eWOM affects the purchase intention and decision were analyzed.

Information Adoption Model

Sussman et al. (2003) explained how information is being adopted by the individuals, thus changing their behavioral intentions to purchase within the technology-based communication network channels by framing Information Adoption Model (IAM) via the integration of ELM and TAM models. The TAM model aims at individual usage of technology while the ELM model focuses on the social processes in which an individual is received and influenced by the information being shared through communication networks through modes including central and peripheral modes. Therefore, Sussman et al combined these two models (TAM & ELM) to explain the information adoption processes by the users online in

which information usefulness is used as a

mediator.

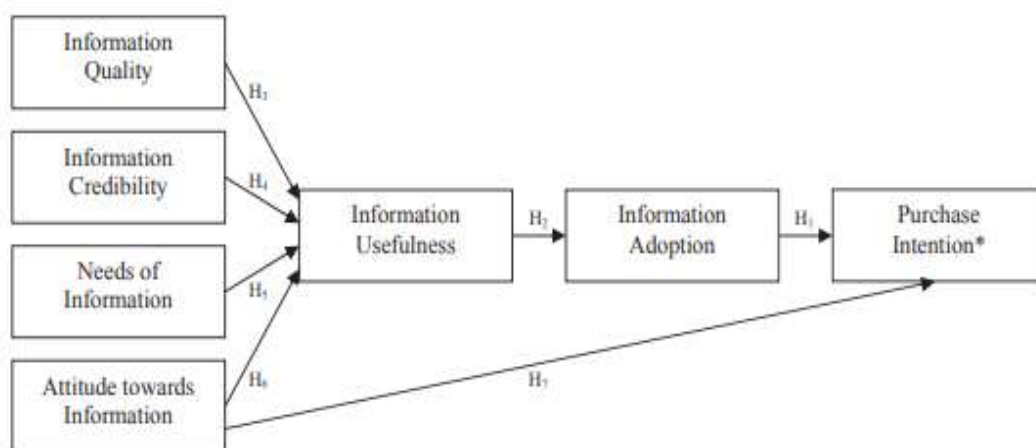


Source from Sussman & Siegal (2003)

Information Acceptance Model

Erkan's & Evans (2016) aimed to focus on how eWOM influences purchase intention of consumers through social media by combining the Information Adoption model and other related variables of the Theory of Reasoned Action. Purchase Intention served as the study's dependent variable, whereas information quality, information credibility, information needs, and attitude towards information served as its independent variables. In addition, Information usefulness and Information Adoption were used as mediators of

independent and dependent variables. Around 384 students of UK universities were taken as the sample of the study. After analysis, the study concluded that independent variables were found to affect the information usefulness as well as purchase intention. Hence, many researchers started to focus their attention on the Information Acceptance model. Moreover, the researchers claimed that it is significant to understand the changing perspective of consumer behavior. In this study, the analysis of the literature review was based on the Information Acceptance Model by Erkan's & Evans (2016).



Source from Erkan's & Evans (2016)

Review of Study Findings

- According to Javier A. Sánchez Torres et al., (2018) gender plays a significant role in the acceptance of eWOM information. In order to explain this, the researcher has adopted the Information Acceptance Model (IACM), in which the model

explains both the characteristics of the eWOM information and attitude towards the information used and how it influences the purchasing behavior of the consumers. The internet users were taken as the sample population in which data were collected from 271 users of social networking sites in

Spain using online questionnaires. A structural equation model is used for the analysis. The results revealed that eWOM acceptance is positively related to the purchase intention of the consumers. In addition, the results of the study highlighted that there is a significant difference between males and females with respect to acceptance of eWOM as well as purchase intention.

- According to Gunawan et al., (2019), eWOM is a powerful marketing technique since online marketers compete to hold power in the online platform. The researcher investigates through this study the relationship between eWOM information and purchase intention of a multinational corporation named Shopee using IACM. The researcher employed exploratory research in which college students were the sample respondents. Data were collected from 294 college students using closed-ended questionnaires. Based on Sekaran and Bougie's descriptive analysis, the information obtained is processed through three main processes including coding of data, editing the data, and transformation of data. The findings showed that there is no significant impact of attitude towards the eWOM information over information usefulness, while information usefulness has a significant impact on purchase intention. The study suggested that Shopee as well as other online competitors need to focus on the information perceived by the customers.
- Florentina Vania Santosa & Harimukti Wandebori (2019) elucidated that people in today's scenario can get information from what they search on the internet and hence information obtained as reviews from people who have used the specific product or services acts as an

effective eWOM. The researchers examine the factors that affect the purchase intention of the consumers from eWOM using the Information Acceptance Model in the virtual community of FemaleDaily.com. Data were collected from 474 respondents and the SmartPLS technique was used to probe the relationship between latent variables and Social capital was added as an independent variable along with other variables of IACM. The results indicated that the characteristics of eWOM information, attitude towards information, and Social capital affect eWOM. The study recommended that both FemaleDaily and marketers maximize the acceptance of eWOM information to gain more profit.

- Tiwa Park (2020) explored the eWOM influence on customer loyalty in Social media through IACM. The study examines the relationship of information usefulness with respect to all the independent variables of IACM as well as information adoption. Based on IACM, information adoption and attitude towards information have a significant effect on customer behavioral outcomes, and the researcher has used customer loyalty as the behavioral outcome. Data were obtained from the students of various universities of Thailand who actively use Facebook in which 771 students from 83 Facebook groups filled the questionnaire. Data analysis was done using SPSS and AMOS 24 in which the study findings showed that all the variables of IACM influence the customer's loyalty.
- Richard Tjongirin et al., (2020) assessed the eWOM relationship with purchase intention. The researcher used the variables of IACM to study this relationship. Descriptive research was carried out and data were collected from around 294 college students using closed-ended

questionnaires. The results highlighted that information usefulness plays a significant role in influencing purchase intention, however attitude towards the information does not influence information usefulness significantly. The study recommended that marketers need to focus on how useful their information is perceived by the consumers.

- Rita Peres and Mariana Silva (2021) sought to comprehend how social media has a substantial impact on how consumers choose hotels. The study objectives were to understand micro-influencers profiles who share user-generated content about different hotels and the network they operate in which 16 unpaid micro-influencers profiles were ascertained through interviews who share content about hotels in Portugal. The other objective was to find the eWOM influence in social media over consumers' behavior intentions in the hotel industry in which data were obtained from 166 consumers who follow the micro-influencers. The results revealed that micro-influencers play a significant part in influencing the decision-making process of the customers in which 79% of them agreed that they were influenced by the micro-influencers content and helped them to get an idea about the hotels they want to stay. In addition, the eWOM credibility shows a positive relationship, however other variables of IACM showed medium effect over the usefulness of the information. The behavioral intentions of the followers' were strongly affected by their attitudes toward eWOM information and eWOM adoption.
- Sharf Yaseen & Normal Jusoh (2021) examined the eWOM determinants on Social media that influence the purchase intention of Jordanian

consumers. The researchers have employed IACM and data were obtained from 300 Facebook users and data analysis was done using SPSS and Smart PLS software. The findings revealed that the determinants of eWOM significantly affect the information usefulness, and the purchase intention of the consumers is significantly affected by the attitude of the consumers and information adoption. The study suggested that the marketer needs to adopt appropriate strategies after understanding the dynamics of eWOM.

- LidijaPulevskaIvanovska&FaniMateskaPerovska (2021) explored the effect of eWOM on purchase intention online. The information shared in social networks and websites in which credibility and quality of the information, needs of the consumers, and their attitude towards the messages, usefulness, and acceptance of information were analyzed as the determinants of online purchases, and these determinants were derived from Information Acceptance Model. The researcher compared the impact of eWOM in social networks and websites on consumers' purchase intention so that marketers will get a better idea about the marketing strategies to be employed in influencing the consumers to maximize the sales.
- Choi-Meng Leong et al., (2021) investigated information characteristics relationship with the behavior of the consumers with respect to eWOM using IACM in which information task-fit was the variable used additionally to know the purchase intention of new flavored bubble tea. Data were collected from 222 respondents and partial least squares-SEM has been used for data analysis. The results demonstrated that all factors, including information

task-fit, account for information usefulness, and information adoption impacts consumers' purchase intentions, with information usefulness acting as a predictor of information adoption. The study recommended that marketers have to be encouraged to boost the online product reviews by considering the relevancy, quality, and credibility of eWOM information.

- Bui Thanh Khoa (2021) investigated the purchase intention of the consumers by integrating predictions from characteristics of information and their information-related

behaviors. The proposed model using IACM has information task-fit as an additional variable contributing to purchase intention. The data were obtained from 205 customers using quantitative research who use social media as well as websites to gather information about the products. The study's conclusions showed that information features and task-fit have a favourable influence on the usefulness, adoption, and purchase intention of the information. In addition, purchase intention has information adoption as a positive antecedent.

S. NO	Researchers	Model Adopted	Variables Used	Findings
1.	Javier A. Sánchez Torres et al., (2018)	IACM	Information Credibility, Information Quality, Needs & Attitude of Information, Gender as Moderator, Information Acceptance, Information usefulness, Purchase Intention, Purchase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Acceptance Positively influences Purchase Intention • Gender differences play a significant role in purchase Intention.
2.	Gunawan et al.,(2019)	IACM	Information Quality, Information Credibility, Needs & Attitude of Information, Information usefulness, Information Acceptance, Purchase Intention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no significant impact of attitude towards the eWOM information over information usefulness, • Information usefulness has a significant impact on purchase intention
3.	Florentina Vania Santosa & Harimukti Wandebori (2019)	IACM	Information Quality, Information Credibility, Needs & Attitude of Information, Social Capital, Information usefulness, Information Acceptance, Purchase Intention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The characteristics of eWOM information, attitude towards information, and Social capital affect eWOM.

4.	Tiwa Park (2020)	IACM	Information Quality, Information Credibility, Needs & Attitude of Information, Information usefulness, Information Acceptance, customer loyalty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information adoption and attitude towards information have a significant effect on customer behavioral outcomes, and the researcher has used customer loyalty as the behavioral outcome.
5.	Richard Tjongirin et al., (2020)	IACM	Information Quality, Information Credibility, Needs & Attitude of Information, Information usefulness, Information Acceptance, Purchase Intention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information usefulness plays a significant role in influencing purchase intention However attitude towards the information does not influence information usefulness significantly.
6.	Rita Peres & Mariana Silva (2021)	IACM	Information Quality, Information Credibility, Needs & Attitude of Information, Information usefulness, Information Acceptance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> eWOM credibility shows a positive relationship, however other variables of IACM showed medium effect over the usefulness of the information. The behavioral intentions of the followers' were strongly affected by their attitudes toward eWOM information and eWOM adoption.
7.	Sharf Yaseen & Normal Jusoh (2021)	IACM	Information Quality, Information Credibility, Needs & Attitude of Information, Information usefulness, Information Acceptance, Purchase Intention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The determinants of eWOM significantly affect the information usefulness, and the purchase intention of the consumers is significantly affected by the attitude of the consumers and information adoption.
8.	Lidija Pulevska Ivanovska & Fani Mateska Perovska (2021)	IACM	Information Quality, Information Credibility, Needs & Attitude of Information, Information usefulness, Information Acceptance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The determinants of eWOM significantly affect the information usefulness, and the purchase intention

9.	Hoi-Meng Leong et al., (2021)	IACM	Information Quality, Information Credibility, Needs & Attitude of Information, Task-Fit Information usefulness, Information Acceptance, Purchase Intention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the variables including information task-fit explain the usefulness of information and information adoption determines the purchase intention of the consumers, in which information usefulness acts as a predictor of information adoption.
10.	Bui Thanh Khoa (2021)	IACM	Information Quality, Information Credibility, Needs & Attitude of Information, Task-Fit Information usefulness, Information Acceptance, Purchase Intention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The findings of the study revealed that characteristics of information and task-fit have a positive impact on information usefulness, information adoption, and purchase intention.

2. Discussion and Future Research Implications

In the last few years, eWOM has attracted many researchers in different fields including marketing, psychology, sociology, and so on, but still from the review findings it is observed that there exists a gap in understanding the behavior of consumers after a pandemic. Through this literature analysis, the study concludes that the researchers mainly focused on the characteristics of the information being shared online either in social media or any other online platform. However, the authentication of information remains questionable with the availability of bundles of information on the internet. Therefore, the researchers and the marketers need to focus on the factors which will help the consumers to rely on the information available on websites and social networks. Moreover, the researchers are from different countries and the consumers' perspectives differ from one country to the other hence many scholars have to probe into deeper research knowledge on eWOM which will help to

understand the global consumers in a better way.

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