Examining the Factors Influencing eWOM Through Social Networking Sites and the Effect of eWOM on Consumers' Purchase Intention

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Abstract

Purpose : This study aimed to quantify the impact of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on consumer purchase intention (PI), brand awareness (BA), and brand image (BI) by analyzing the variables influencing eWOM on social networking sites (SNSs). The preference of SNSs in relation to eWOM is another goal of this study.

Methodology : A structured online questionnaire was utilized to gather information from 315 respondents who frequently utilized social media platforms. Using SmartPLS 4 software, partial least square-structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to evaluate the data.

Findings : The findings revealed that out of six factors considered in the study to influence eWOM, four were found to influence eWOM positively. eWOM also had significant direct effects and indirect effects on BA, BI, and consumer PI. Furthermore, the current study highlighted preferred SNSs for eWOM. Instagram was found to be the most preferred site, followed by YouTube, Twitter, and then Facebook.

Practical Implications : It was suggested that brands would boost user interaction, the company's social media presence, and consumers' propensity to purchase if they acknowledged the significance of particular factors influencing the eWOM channel and included it as a key component in their integrated communication strategy.

Originality : Many empirical studies on the elements that directly influenced eWOM and its effect on consumer purchase intention have not been conducted despite the widespread use of online social networking. In order to close this gap, our study looked at four SNSs in order to determine the primary elements that directly influenced eWOM and to examine the direct and indirect effects of eWOM on purchase intention.

Keywords : **electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), social networking sites (SNSs), brand awareness, brand image, purchase intention**

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The emergence of new channels of communication and the advancement of information technology has resulted in significant changes in the behavior of the consumer. The widespread use of the Internet has allowed people to communicate immediately at little or no expense, with electronic communication being a vital forum for consumers to share their opinions regarding their experiences with products and services (Brown

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et al., 2007; Yadav, 2017). Marketers are reconsidering their approaches in light of the digital revolution, concentrating on distinctive methods to draw in customers, stimulate demand, and provide memorable brand experiences (Chakraborty & Dash, 2022). Consumer reviews that have been put online, along with the sharing of data and personal opinions, have developed over time into incredibly potent communication tools, according to new marketing research. The most widely used channel for sharing reviews and opinions is electronic word-of-mouth, or eWOM (Bu et al., 2021).

Online reviews of products are one of the most important forms of eWOM communication (Sen & Lerman, 2007). People often use the Internet to find peer opinions and product reviews before making a purchase (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). According to Sharma, Singh, and Jaiswal (2023), positive advocacy attracts new customers. In light of this, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has a considerable impact on consumers' product opinions, reviews and purchase intentions (Bambauer-Sachse & Mangold, 2011; Mahmud et al., 2024). It is crucial to comprehend the factors that affect eWOM as well as its consequences. Social media have enhanced marketers' connectivity with consumers, and they act as a catalyst for shaping the preferences of consumers (Arora et al., 2018; Singh & Dagur, 2022). Social networking sites (SNSs), like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, enable users to disseminate information and communicate with other users in real and virtual life. India is one of the largest internet markets with a rapidly growing and culturally diversified economy. Consumers have various options to actively engage in eWOM communication, considering the current trends. Social media facilitates interaction and allows consumers to interact about products through reviews (Giri et al., 2018). As a result, consumers actively approach SNSs for information on unfamiliar brands and products (Sharma et al., 2019; Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016). Consequently, these SNSs have been a suitable medium for eWOM communications (Knoll & Proksch, 2017). Past studies have discovered that eWOM generated by SNSs through web-based networking media influences consumers' purchase decisions (See-To & Ho, 2014; Venkataraman & Raman, 2016). We, therefore, use brand awareness (BA) and brand image (BI) as mediators to examine the factors that affect eWOM and the effect of eWOM on consumer purchase intention.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM)

Harrison-Walker (2001) defined word-of-mouth (WOM) as casual, one-on-one communication about a good, service, brand, or company between non-commercial communicators and recipients. Conventional WOM communication has been transformed into an electronic format by the Internet (Li & Du, 2011; Weinberg & Davis, 2005). WOM in the virtual form is known as electronic word-of-mouth, i.e., eWOM. Litvin et al. (2008) defined eWOM being informal communication between consumers utilizing Internet channels about the key characteristics of certain goods and services. The advent of information communication technology has profoundly altered individuals' mannerisms in terms of collecting and absorbing information requirements (Thakur et al., 2022). According to Sharma, Pandher, and Prakash (2023), reliance on electronic word-of-mouth as a means to fulfill their informational requirements has substantially increased.

Factors Influencing eWOM

Tie Strength

Tie strength is described as the strength of a relationship or connection among various users in social networks (Mittal et al., 2008). SNSs help to expand social circles that facilitate the flow of communication, encourage people to interact with each other, and disseminate information and their views regarding products and services,

thereby encouraging eWOM behavior. Therefore, eWOM behavior is encouraged by perceived tie strength (Chu & Kim, 2011; Sohaib et al., 2020). In accordance with the research background that has been outlined above, the first hypothesis is proposed as:

↳ **Ha1a :** Tie strength has a positive influence on eWOM.

Trust

Trust can be defined as having faith in a partner's conduct or as having the ability to forecast someone else's behavior (Carroll et al., 2007; Moorman et al., 1993). In terms of the reliability of sources, suggestions are deemed reliable if the data is supplied and presented honestly and legitimately. We looked at the connection between eWOM interaction behavior and eWOM trust (Bulsara & Vaghela, 2022; Filieri et al., 2015). Therefore, one factor influencing consumers' participation in eWOM communication is trust, which needs to be investigated.

↳ **Ha1b :** Trust has a positive influence on eWOM.

Interpersonal Influence

Interpersonal influence is defined as an essential social component that affects how consumers make decisions (D'Rozario & Choudhury, 2000; Ismagilova et al., 2021). Many researchers have distinguished between two aspects of interpersonal influences, the first being normative influence and the second being informational influence (Bearden et al., 1989). The impulse to live up to people's expectations, which shapes attitudes, values, and norms, is known as normative influence (Burnkrant & Cousineau, 1975).

The second is information influence, which refers to the inclination to accept and receive opinions and information from people who are usually seen as knowledgeable and to use it as a standard for selecting goods, companies, and brands (Bearden et al., 1989). Normative and informational impacts have been shown to have a significant impact on people's eWOM behavior in SNS by previous studies (Christodoulides et al., 2012; Kitirattarkarn et al., 2022; Padival et al., 2019). Thus, it has been hypothesized that:

↳ **Ha1c :** Normative influence has a positive influence on eWOM.

↳ **Ha1d :** Informational influence has a positive influence on eWOM.

Knowledge Self-Efficacy

Knowledge self-efficacy means the ability to believe in one's own ability, and it leads to higher self-confidence (Maran et al., 2022). Recent studies have shown that this knowledge self-efficacy greatly influences an individual's thinking process, motivation behavior, and decision-making; it acts as a self-motivator to share information in online platforms and communities like SNSs (Bhat & Bhat, 2020; Lee et al., 2012; Sharma et al., 2023). Therefore, we predict that greater self-efficacy will increase people's desire to engage in eWOM on online platforms like SNSs.

↳ **Ha1e :** Knowledge self-efficacy has a positive influence on eWOM.

Altruism

Altruism is the desire and motivation to help others and is considered the main driving force for sharing knowledge and information (Herschel & Yermish, 2008). It is thought to be a natural urge to assist other customers

with the good or service that one is pleased with (Yang, 2017). People who use SNSs and other online communities find satisfaction and joy in helping other users (Arakji et al., 2009; Wasko & Faraj, 2000).

- **Ha1f :** Altruism has a positive influence on eWOM.

Brand Awareness (BA)

The capability of consumers to recognize and categorize a good or service in different contexts is known as BA. It is described as the strength of presence in the minds of the consumers (Keller, 1993). According to research by Ha (2004), eWOM has a unique ability to raise awareness levels and consequently influence the behavior of consumers. The results are corroborated by a number of studies (Hutter et al., 2013; Singh et al., 2023), which indicate that BA influences actual purchase intent.

- **Ha2 :** eWOM will positively influence BA.

Brand Image (BI)

The brand image includes all of the features and benefits that give a brand its distinctiveness and differentiate it from the products and services of its competitors. Thus, brand image is the ideas and associations that consumers have in their minds (Keller, 1993). Consistent with the arguments that specifically mention that WOM communication strongly influences product decisions (Herr et al., 1991), eWOM communication can strongly influence BI and purchase intent (PI). Therefore, eWOM positively impacts BI and PI through social networks.

- **Ha3 :** eWOM will positively influence BI.

Purchase Intention (PI)

PI refers to that moment when consumers decide that they will choose a particular product or service definitely. It is the final stage in the purchasing process, where a consumer reaches an intention to purchase a particular product (Yan, 2011). Consumer PI is a very key concept in marketing (Abdelkhair et al., 2023; Sun & Morwitz, 2010) and is important for forecasting the purchasing behavior of consumers (Carrington et al., 2010). According to the literature, purchase intent is the most frequent outcome of eWOM communication (Cheung & Thadani, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2009; Venkataraman & Raman, 2016). Park and Kim (2008) found that buyers typically consult online reviews or inquiries before making any kind of purchase.

- **Ha4 :** eWOM has a positive influence on consumers' PI.
- **Ha5 :** BA has a positive influence on consumers' PI.
- **Ha6 :** BI has a positive influence on consumers' PI.

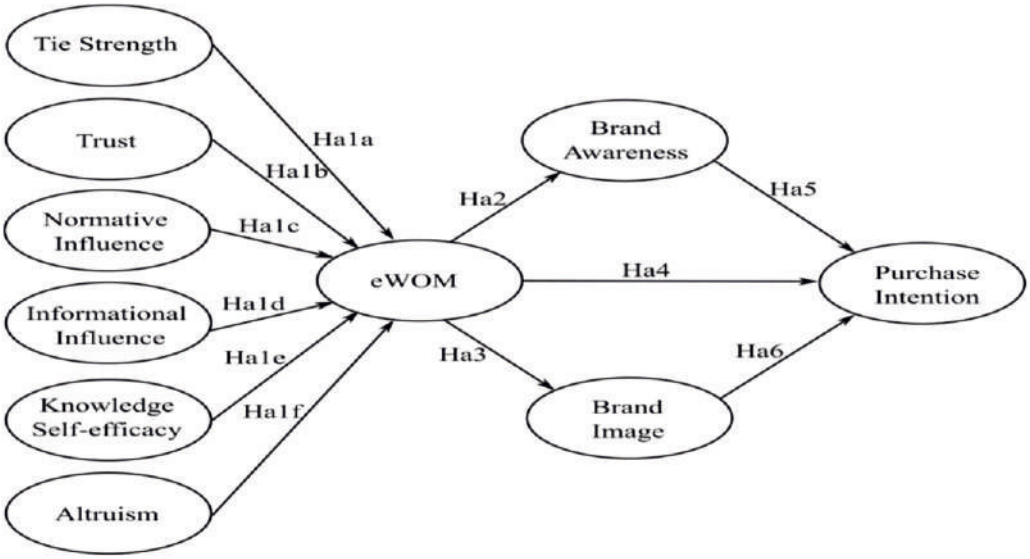
Figure 1 displays the conceptual framework of the study.

Research Methodology

Procedure/Data Collection

Individuals who are social media users were the target group for this study. The core data was collected online

Figure 1. ***Conceptual Framework***



using a self-administered survey from Delhi NCR. A pilot test with 55 respondents was conducted before collecting the actual data. The pilot research aimed to evaluate the instrument's validity and respondents' comprehension of it. Prior to the final data collection, the instrument underwent a few minor adjustments. The questionnaire was divided into two main components. The first section asked questions about respondents' age, gender, education, and preferred social networking sites. The second section consisted of assessment questions for study constructs, which are based on a 5-point Likert scale. The appendix presents the measurement scale/instruments used in this study. A brief explanation of eWOM was added for a better understanding of the research survey. There were a total of 315 responses in all, and those were analyzed. PLS-SEM was used to analyze the data by using SmartPLS4 software. The overall assessment comprised of two parts, the first being an assessment of the measurement model and the second being an assessment of the structural model.

The respondents consisted of 46.7% females and 53.3% males (Table 1). Most of the respondents belonged to the age bracket of 18–30 years (82.6%). Furthermore, 60.3% of the respondents were undergraduates, 24.5% had completed graduation, 9.8% had completed post-graduation, and 5.4% were doctorates. When it came to the

Table 1. ***Demographics of the Respondents***

Category	Sub Category	Frequency	(%)
Gender	Female	147	46.7
	Male	168	53.3
Age	Up to 18 years	53	16.8
	18 – 30	260	82.6
	Above 30 years	2	0.6
Educational	Undergraduate	190	60.3
Qualification	Graduate	77	24.5
	Post Graduate	31	9.8
	Doctorate	17	5.4
Daily time spent	Less than 1 hr	122	38.7

on social	1 – 2 hrs	113	35.9
networking sites	More than 2 hrs	80	25.4
Preference for social	Instagram	243	77.1
networking sites	YouTube	57	18.1
	Facebook	6	1.9
	Twitter	9	2.9

amount of time respondents spent on social networking sites each day, 38.7% spent less than an hour, 35.9% spent between one and two hours, and 25.4% spent the greatest amount of time—more than two hours. In terms of social media preferences, Instagram is the most popular of the four fundamental social media platforms, followed by YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook. Table 1 gives the detailed demographics of the respondents.

Analysis and Results

Assessment of Reliability and Validity

Measurement Model Assessment

A reliability and validity test is run in order to properly evaluate the measurement model. In order to assess if the measurements can accurately and consistently measure the variables included in our study, reliability must be established. The composite reliability, i.e., CR scores and Cronbach's alpha, were evaluated for the reliability of our measurements. The CR value ranges from 0.87 to 0.953, whereas Cronbach's alpha ranges from 0.783 to 0.902, both above the acceptable limit of 0.7 (Hair et al., 2012). Factor loadings for each indicator were also assessed and were found above the prescribed limit of 0.70. To confirm the validity of our model, two aspects, convergent validity and discriminant validity, were assessed (Gefen et al., 2011).

Convergent validity is the extent to which the two measurements of the same concept are correlated (Hair et al., 2012). The average extracted variance (AVE) of the constructs was evaluated to verify convergent validity. Convergent reliability was attained since AVE was also more than the permissible cut-off value range of

Table 2. ***Reliability and Consistency***

Variables	Items	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Tie Strength *(TS)*	*TS1*	0.863	0.783	0.87	0.69
	TS2	0.790			
	TS3	0.837			
Trust *(TR)*	*TR1*	0.807	0.841	0.902	0.756
	TR2	0.895			
	TR3	0.902			
Normative Influence *(NI)*	*NI1*	0.901	0.886	0.929	0.813
	NI2	0.910			
	NI3	0.895			
Informational Influence *(II)*	*II1*	0.885	0.858	0.914	0.779

	II2	0.906			
	II3	0.856			
Knowledge Self-Efficacy *(SE)*	*SE1*	0.954	0.902	0.953	0.91
	SE2	0.954			
Altruism *(ALT)*	*ALT1*	0.906	0.892	0.933	0.822
	ALT2	0.899			
	ALT3	0.916			
eWOM	*eWOM1*	0.842	0.889	0.923	0.75
	eWOM2	0.885			
	eWOM3	0.874			
	eWOM4	0.862			
Brand Awareness *(BA)*	*BA1*	0.840	0.798	0.881	0.713
	BA2	0.827			
	BA3	0.865			
Brand Image *(BI)*	*BI1*	0.874	0.858	0.914	0.779
	BI2	0.875			
	BI3	0.896			
Purchase Intention *(PI)*	*PI1*	0.877	0.852	0.91	0.771
	PI2	0.872			
	PI3	0.885			

0.5, falling between 0.69 and 0.91. The detailed results are presented in Table 2. Discriminant validity denotes the extent to which two conceptually related concepts are distinct (Hair et al., 2012). The square roots of AVE, as shown by the diagonal values in Table 3, must be greater than the correlations with the other variables, or off-diagonal values, in order to demonstrate this discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The discriminant validity is validated by Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criterion. Table 3 shows that all the values of the latent variables' AVE are higher than their maximum shared variances (MSV), and the diagonal values are higher than non-diagonal values, thus establishing discriminant validity for all the constructs.

Table 3. ***Discriminant Validity–Fornell and Larcker Criterion***

	ALT	***BA***	***BI***	***eWOM***	***II***	***NI***	***PI***	***SE***	***TR***	***TS***
ALT	0.907									
BA	0.372	0.844								
BI	0.331	0.522	0.883							
eWOM	0.436	0.425	0.492	0.866						
II	0.417	0.407	0.375	0.399	0.883					
NI	0.395	0.341	0.366	0.353	0.404	0.902				
PI	0.413	0.488	0.481	0.424	0.407	0.338	0.878			
SE	0.392	0.281	0.269	0.369	0.369	0.281	0.296	0.954		
TR	0.427	0.324	0.282	0.272	0.34	0.366	0.381	0.394	0.869	
TS	0.329	0.363	0.387	0.273	0.271	0.42	0.342	0.267	0.457	0.831

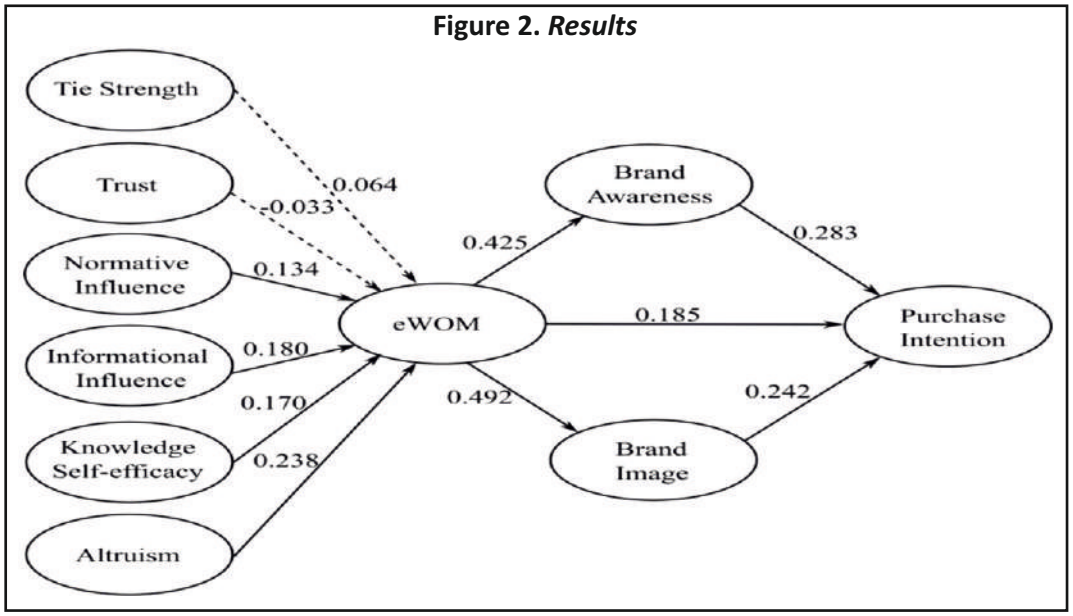
Structural Model Assessment

For assessing the structural model, the systematic method of structural equation modeling was used to examine the hypothesized relationship in our conceptual framework. We utilized the bootstrapping technique within the SmartPLS 4 software to ascertain the estimates of the paths and other crucial statistical information. The path coefficients and other key statistics of our structural model are presented in detail in Table 4. The findings reveal except for the two, all the other formulated hypotheses are found to be significant and are accepted as $p < 0.05$ and $t > 1.96$. The two hypotheses, i.e., Ha1a and Ha1b, are rejected as the p-value is higher than 0.05 and the t-value is less than 1.96. Therefore, tie strength has an insignificant relationship with eWOM (Ha1a: $\beta = 0.064$, $t = 1.005$, $p = 0.315$), and trust, too, has an insignificant relationship with eWOM (Ha1b: $\beta = -0.033$, $t = 0.550$, $p = 0.582$). For all the hypotheses, the results are shown in Table 4, and Figure 2 shows the relationship among the variables.

Table 4. ***Hypotheses Testing Results***

Hypotheses Relationship	Path Estimate/ Beta Coefficient	Standard Deviation	*t*-statistics	*p*-values	Results
Ha1a : Tie Strength –> eWOM	0.064	0.063	1.005	0.315	Rejected
Ha1b : Trust –> eWOM	–0.033	0.059	0.550	0.582	Rejected
Ha1c : Normative influence –> eWOM	0.134	0.044	3.036	0.002	Supported
Ha1d : Informational influence –> eWOM	0.180	0.078	2.320	0.020	Supported
Ha1e : Knowledge self-efficacy –> eWOM	0.170	0.059	2.888	0.004	Supported
Ha1f : Altruism –> eWOM	0.238	0.061	3.902	0.000	Supported
Ha2 : eWOM –> Brand awareness	0.425	0.059	7.158	0.000	Supported
Ha3 : eWOM –> Brand image	0.492	0.062	7.879	0.000	Supported
Ha4 : eWOM –> Purchase intention	0.185	0.077	2.413	0.016	Supported
Ha5 : Brand awareness –> Purchase intention	0.283	0.070	4.054	0.00	Supported
Ha6 : Brand image –> Purchase intention	0.242	0.087	2.784	0.005	Supported

Figure 2. ***Results***



Mediation Analysis

The PLS-SEM bootstrapping procedure was performed to carry out the mediation analysis. The bootstrapped method is a useful tool for assessing the indirect relationship between the variables. Table 5 depicts the specified indirect effects estimates with 95% bias-corrected bootstrapped CIs. BA partially mediates the path from eWOM and PI ($\beta = 0.12$, $t = 3.412$, $p = 0.001$), and BI partially mediates the path from eWOM and purchase intent ($\beta = 0.119$, $t = 2.552$, $p = 0.011$). Therefore, BI as well as BA partially mediate the relationship between eWOM and consumer purchase intention.

Table 5. *Mediation Table*

Hypotheses Relationship	Path Estimate/ Beta Coefficient	Standard Deviation	*t*-statistics	*p*-values	Result
eWOM –> BA –> PI	0.12	0.035	3.412	0.001	Partial Mediation
eWOM –> BI –> PI	0.119	0.047	2.552	0.011	Partial Mediation

Discussion

This study aims to identify the key factors influencing eWOM and also identify the effect of eWOM on the BA, BI, and PI of consumers. This study also figured out whether BA and BI mediate the relationship between eWOM and consumer PI or not. Our results indicate that out of six factors considered to effect eWOM, four were only found to influence eWOM. Companies who wish to implement eWOM should especially focus and work on normative influence, informational influence, knowledge self-efficacy, and altruism factors as they positively impact eWOM (Ha1c, Ha1d, Ha1e, Ha1f supported). In the new technology-driven scenario, the role of tie strength and trust has faded out in evoking eWOM. Thus, tie strength does not have any influence on eWOM (Ha1a not supported). This may be explained in the way that a large number of members means a wide range of members with different backgrounds, which facilitates the exchange of information and the sharing of ideas (Brown et al., 2007; Pigg & Crank, 2004), while homogeneity of members in a social group may limit access to different types of information and knowledge. Surprisingly, trust also does not have any influence on eWOM (Ha1b not supported).

Nevertheless, this unexpected result deserves further research. eWOM positively impacts BA, BI, and consumer PI (Ha2, Ha3, and Ha4 supported). BA and BI also have a positive and substantial impact on the PI of the consumers (Ha5 and Ha6 supported). Lastly, with regard to the mediating effect, the findings reveal that eWOM has significant indirect effects on consumer PI via BA and BI. The findings of our research confirm that both BA and BI partially mediate between eWOM and consumer PI. By better understanding the eWOM information dynamics associated with different social networking sites individually, marketing managers can forecast and develop better strategies to effectively leverage the use of eWOM to market their products/services. The results support the researchers' claim that eWOMs play an important role in SNSs in influencing consumer PI (Moran & Muzellec, 2017; Rao & Rao, 2019; Sher & Lee, 2009; Verma & Dewani, 2021). Furthermore, the current study highlights preferred SNSs for eWOM. Instagram is the most preferred site, followed by YouTube, Twitter, and then Facebook.

Managerial and Practical Implications

The results of this study are important for brand managers who invest a lot of time and resources in developing their brand's reputation and awareness in order to draw in and keep consumers. When appropriate and effective

information and communication are provided through the appropriate channels, the likelihood of success for these activities increases significantly. This will improve the BI and BA of consumers, which consequently will affect their PIs. Considering the targeting benefits that SNSs provide, efforts may be taken to precisely target people who are both opinion leaders and opinion seekers. As a result, the study's conclusion offers crucial information to marketers. As consumers increasingly participate in online SNSs and actively post their reviews and opinions about their product usage and experiences, marketers should reach out to these consumers and try to actively engage them in the process and, where appropriate, provide some sort of recognition or incentives for their honest opinions. Utilizing SNSs, like Instagram, as a channel for producing content that represents their brand, businesses can attract customers' attention. Thanks to SNSs, it is projected that customers will broaden their social network and have discussions in real time on how they use and experience products. Consumers actively participate in the sharing and disseminating of information on their purchasing choices throughout this process. Consumers greatly appreciate and rely on information obtained from colleagues and friends and are happy to share their knowledge and opinions with others.

Furthermore, managers should deeply observe and study the online behavior of consumers to track opinion seekers and build strong relationships with them. Recognizing the importance of your social eWOM channel and including it in your complete marketing plan would increase user interaction as well as the company's social media presence. From a theoretical perspective, the results of our study contribute to understanding the potential of social eWOM and demonstrate how this new communication channel influences consumers. It also contributes to the existing literature on eWOM by providing a theoretical framework that includes both the anteceedents as well as outcomes of eWOM communication.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Future Research

This study has looked into a few key constructs that we believe contribute to eWOM communication. Studies in the future may extend the model of this study by including more factors affecting eWOM and analyzing the individual relationship of eWOM predictors with actual product purchases. Also, we can consider including geographical and cultural diversity in India and across the world. Some unique variables, like brand admiration, can also be studied as mediating variables. The fact that this study only looked at Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter is another drawback. Studies in the future could include many other types of SNSs, and also comparisons among SNSs may be done to know the efficacy and potential of individual platforms.

Authors' Contribution

Jyakshi Sharma conceived the idea and developed the research model. Dr. Bhawna Agarwal extracted research papers and helped in the data analysis. Dr. N. Malati reviewed the paper for mistakes and supervised the study. Jyakshi Sharma wrote the manuscript in consultation with both authors.

Conflict of Interest

The authors certify that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

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Appendix. *List of Questionnaire Items*

Construct	Measurement Statements	References
Tie Strength	***TS1 :*** I frequently interact with members of my SNSs.	Norman & Russell (2006) ;
	TS2 : I get upset if any member leaves my social network.	Gilbert & Karahalios (2009)
	TS3 : If I leave the social network that I was a member of and join another social network, it is important to me that my friends accompany me.	
Trust	***TR1 :*** I trust most of my contacts in my social network.	Smith et al. (2005) ;
	TR2 : Members of my social network trust each other and share their information regarding products and brands.	Chu & Kim (2011)
	TR3 : Members of my social networks are competent and effective in giving information on products and brands.	
Normative Influence	***NI1 :*** When buying products, I generally consider those brands that other members endorse in my social network.	Bearden et al. (1989)
	NI2 : If I get influenced by someone, I often try to buy the same brands that they use.	
	NI3 : I achieve a sense of belonging by purchasing the same products and brands that others purchase.	
Informational Influence	***II1 :*** If I have little experience with a product or brand, I often obtain the information from my friends on social networks.	Bearden et al. (1989)
	II2 : I often advise others that helps them choose the best alternative available from a product class/category.	
	II3 : I usually gather information from friends or family about a product before making a purchase.	
Knowledge Self-Efficacy	***SE1 :*** I am confident in providing the information to other fellow members of my social networks, which they consider valuable.	Kankanhalli et al. (2005)
	SE2 : I have the required knowledge to provide valuable information to my social networks.	
Altruism	***ALT1 :*** Helping other users on the social networks I am a part of is something I enjoy doing.	Wasko & Faraj, (2005) ;
	ALT2 : Helping other members of social networks that I am a member of feels good to me.	Hu & Kim (2018)
	ALT3 : I feel a sense of satisfaction by helping other fellow members of my social networks.	
eWOM	***eWOM1 :*** To make sure that I buy the right products or brands, I often read online reviews of products and brands written by other fellow members on social networks.	Bock et al. (2005) ; Bambauer-Sachse
	eWOM2 : I am willing to share my experiences with products and brands with other fellow members on social networks.	& Mangold (2011) ; Cheung & Lee (2012)
	eWOM3 : I try to more effectively share my experiences with products and brands with other fellow members on social networks.	
	eWOM4 : When I buy a product/brand, consumers' online product reviews make me confident in purchasing the product/brand.	
Brand Awareness	***BA1 :*** I can recognize the products or brands introduced by my friends in social networks among other competing brands.	Yoo et al. (2000)
	BA2 : I am aware of products and brands through social networks.	
	BA3 : I can quickly recall the symbol or logo of products and brands introduced by my friends in social networks, among other competing brands.	
Brand Image	***BI1 :*** Compared to other products and brands, the products and brands	Davis et al. (2009) ;

	recommended to me by my friends on social networks are of high quality.	Jalilvand & Samiei (2012)
	BI2 : The products or brands introduced by my friends on social networks have a rich history.	
	BI3 : My friends on social networks can reliably estimate the efficiency of products or brands.	
Purchase Intention	***PI1 :*** I would rather buy the products or brands introduced by my friends on social networks than the other existing (competing) products and brands.	Shukla (2011) ; Jalilvand & Samiei (2012)
	PI2 : I would like to recommend the products or brands introduced by my friends on social networks to other people.	
	PI3 : I would like to buy the products or brands following their introduction by my friends on social networks.	

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