Abstract

This study has examined the roles of various electronic word of mouth (eWOM) antecedents on purchase intention of Indian online shoppers. The main objectives of this study were: (1) to examine the effect of mixed neutral eWOM (MNWOM) on eWOM credibility and adoption, (2) to investigate how rich eWOM content affects eWOM credibility, adoption, and purchase intention; (3) to study the comparative effects of eWOM volume and eWOM valence (PWOM and NWOM) on eWOM credibility, eWOM adoption, and purchase intention, and (4) to examine how source credibility factors affect eWOM credibility and adoption. In-depth literature review was conducted to develop the hypothesized relationships for analyzing the above objectives. This study developed an integrated eWOM model consisting of above hypotheses. This study used online sampling method to collect responses from 614 online shoppers through online survey questionnaire.

Existing scales of various eWOM constructs were validated using expert interview, pre-test and pilot test before using the questionnaire for the final survey. The various statistical analyses were conducted to check the outliers and normality of data set before conducting the final statistical analysis. Structural equation modelling (SEM) technique was used to check the hypothesized relationships in the integrated eWOM model. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to test the measurement model. Result of CFA confirmed good fit of the proposed eWOM model with the collected data. Afterward, path analysis confirmed the good model fit of the structural model. Result of path analysis indicated that mixed neutral WOM has positive effects on eWOM credibility and adoption. Text based rich eWOM content exhibited significant effects on eWOM credibility and purchase intention. Image based eWOM has indicated positive impact on all 3 types of eWOM outcomes. This study found higher effect of eWOM valence on eWOM credibility and adoption than that of eWOM volume. However, eWOM volume was found to have greater effect on purchase intention than valence. This study also found significant effects of market level source credibility factors on eWOM credibility and adoption. Finally, this study compared the proposed model with other alternative models. Theoretical and managerial implication of each objective was discussed based on the result and findings. At the end of the report, limitations of this study were discussed and future research directions were proposed.

Keywords: electronic word of mouth, eWOM valence, eWOM content, online purchase intention, source credibility, eWOM credibility, eWOM adoption.