IMPACT OF EWOM ON ONLINE PURCHASE DECISION AMONG MILLENNIALS IN UTTARAKHAND REGION

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Abstract

This study investigates how millennials in the Uttarakhand region make online purchasing decisions and the influence of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). The widespread use of virtual entertainment and internet stages has made electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) a powerful force molding consumer behavior. Through an exhaustive examination of relevant literature and experimental investigation, this study plans to investigate the extent to which eWOM impacts millennials' decision-production processes when they purchase labor and products online in Uttarakhand. A survey of fifteen items that were evaluated utilizing the Likert scale model served as the examination instrument. The examples were selected involving a purposive inspection strategy that targeted buyers in the millennial and Z-age gatherings. data was used to gather the necessary information. 200 responders altogether contributed to this evaluation. The collected information were analyzed utilizing unmistakable regression examination and clear investigation. That's what the results showed, before making an exchange, most of customers (75.51%) send off the Shopee food application, and 91.34% view item data, surveys, and reviews. 81.41% of purchasers report having had a decent experience in previous exchanges. Testing hypothesis suggested, to some extent, that the power border doesn't matter to the decision to purchase. While this is happening, 36.41% of the purchase choice is influenced and contributed to by the substance boundaries and assessment valence.

Keywords:(EWOM) electronic word-of-mouth,online purchase,decision,millennials

1. INTRODUCTION

The emergence of e-commerce and the internet have revolutionized consumer shopping habits, with millennials emerging as a major demographic driving the expansion of online retail. Because they grew up in the digital age, millennials are quite skilled at using digital platforms for shopping as well as other purposes. Electronic word-of-mouth, or eWOM, has become a significant online consumer behavior influence in recent years. eWOM, which is defined as the dissemination of user opinions, suggestions, and reviews via digital platforms like social media, forums, and review sites, is crucial in influencing how consumers evaluate products and make decisions about what to buy.Understanding the influence of eWOM on millennials' online shopping decisions is especially important in the context of the Uttarakhand region, which has a diverse population and socioeconomic backdrop. Uttarakhand, a state in northern India, is a fascinating case study for examining consumer behavior in the digital age because of its distinctive fusion of traditional and modern elements. With a rising e-commerce market and a population of tech-savvy millennials, Uttarakhand offers an intriguing backdrop for researching how eWOM shapes consumer preferences and behaviors.Even though the amount of study on eWOM and online consumer behavior is increasing, little is known about how it affects millennials in particular places, like Uttarakhand. This study aims to close this knowledge gap and further our understanding of the factors impacting online purchase decisions in the Uttarakhand region by concentrating on this demographic cohort. This research aims to provide useful insights for businesses, marketers, and policymakers looking to engage with this demographic and take advantage of the opportunities provided by the digital marketplace by clarifying the ways in which eWOM influences millennials' online shopping behavior.

1.1 Overview of Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM):

The digital spread of thoughts, suggestions, and details about goods, services, companies, or experiences via online channels including social media, review websites, blogs, forums, and online communities is known as electronic word-of-mouth, or eWOM. eWOM is a crucial factor in influencing consumer behavior and buying decisions in today's digital environment. In contrast to conventional word-of-mouth, which mostly depended on face-to-face interactions,

electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) makes use of the internet's power to instantly reach a larger audience. The spread of social media platforms and people's growing global connectedness have contributed to this problem. Nowadays, consumers actively seek out and participate in eWOM, using other people's experiences and opinions as a guide for their own purchases. Beyond specific recommendations, eWOM has an impact on brand impression, loyalty, and trust. Companies understand how important electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) is for increasing customer engagement, brand advocacy, and revenue. Thus, for marketers looking to fully utilize the potential of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and include it into their digital marketing strategy, it is imperative that they comprehend its dynamics.

1.2 Millennial Consumer Behavior in Uttarakhand Region

In the Uttarakhand region, millennial consumer behavior exhibits a synthesis of contemporary tastes and traditional values shaped by fast digitization. The state of Uttarakhand, renowned for its breathtaking scenery and rich cultural legacy, is home to a diverse population of millennials who have distinct shopping preferences. Uttarakhand's millennial population is deeply entrenched in tradition, but they're also tech-savvy and connected, frequently making decisions and shopping online. However, depending on variables like urbanization, educational attainment, and socioeconomic level, their adoption of digital media may differ. The distinct topography of Uttarakhand, which combines rural and urban areas, also influences the purchasing habits of millennials by influencing their inclinations for particular goods and services as well as their accessibility to internet shopping. Businesses operating in Uttarakhand must comprehend the subtleties of millennial consumer behavior in order to customize their marketing strategies, effectively engage this group, and take advantage of new opportunities in the digital marketplace.

1.3 objectives

- To Determine the effect of eWOM on the purchasing decisions of millennials in Uttarakhand.
- To Determine the elements that contribute to successful online transactions.
- To Evaluate Shopee's impact on the purchasing behavior of millennials.
- To Analyze the impact of eWOM factors on decision-making.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Bashar, Singh, and Pathak (2022) use a thorough bibliometric analysis to look at online impulse purchase behavior. Their research, which was published in the International Journal of Electronic Business, provides insightful information about the elements that influence impulsive online buying. Through a comprehensive analysis of extant literature, the writers offer a sophisticated comprehension of this progressively widespread consumer conduct, emphasizing its consequences for electronic commerce tactics.

Introducing at the twelfth Yearly Worldwide Exploration Gathering of Beneficial interaction Organization of The board Studies, Bharej's (2022) bibliometric investigation centers around eWOM and its effect on purchaser conduct during the pandemic and the approaching new ordinary. This study examines how electronic word-of-mouth influences consumer preferences and buying decisions. It was published by Springer Nature Singapore. The importance of eWOM as a potent tool for companies managing the changing market scenario is highlighted by Bharej's study.

The study conducted by Gupta, Agarwal, and Singh (2020) delves into the impact of instafamous celebrities on customer purchasing behavior. The findings provide novel insights into the influence of social media influencers on purchase intentions. Their research, which was published in the Academy of Marketing Studies Journal, explores the topic of influencer marketing and how well it may draw in customers and increase sales. Through their analysis of the effects of instantly famous individuals, the writers add to the expanding corpus of research on consumer behavior and celebrity endorsements.

Joshi et al. (2021) examine the variables that influence the way millennials in India view online shopping in terms of customer perception, readiness for reception, and perceived value of advanced exchanges. Their study, which was published in the Journal of Operations and Strategic Planning, provides insightful information about the distinct traits and inclinations of the millennial generation in the digital marketplace. The authors present a comprehensive overview of the factors driving millennials' adoption of digital transactions by highlighting important variables like ease, security, and trust. This allows them to make practical advice for companies

in this market.

Singh, Mamgain, and Kumar (2023) concentrate on Gen-Z customers and their usage of social media for electronic word-of-mouth marketing. Their research, which was published in the International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising, examines how sources and content quality function as mediators in influencing the attitudes and actions of Gen-Z consumers. By means of path modeling study employing Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), the writers reveal the complex interrelationships among Gen-Z consumers between electronic word-of-mouth communication, source legitimacy, and content quality. Their research advances our knowledge of the mechanisms influencing consumer participation on social media platforms and provides useful information for marketers aiming to reach Gen-Z audiences through electronic word-of-mouth.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Study Area: A Quantitative Approach

The present investigation employs a quantitative research paradigm, which is particularly congruent with the goals of associative research. The main goal of the study is to investigate how Millennial and Generation Z customers' buying decisions relate to electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) variables. The primary method of gathering data is through direct surveys in Uttarakhand region has been designated as an extra study area.

3.2 Data Collection:

Quantitative data from direct subject surveys is used in the study. The research tool is a questionnaire with 15 statements that are split between two variables: the measurement of purchasing decisions and the e-WOM variables (intensity, content, and valence of opinion). On a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 represents strongly disagree and 5 represents strongly agree, respondents indicate how much they agree with each statement. To guarantee the questionnaire's efficacy as a research tool, extensive validity and reliability testing was conducted before it was put into use. Through validation testing, all items were found to be appropriate; the coefficients (r counts) ranged from 0.34 to 0.85, exceeding the r table's threshold of 0.26. The instrument's

consistency was confirmed by reliability testing, which yielded a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.88, over the allowed cutoff of 0.60.

3.3 Sampling Technique and Population:

Millennials and Generation Z residents of the Uttarakhand region, ranging in age from 16 to 40, make up the study population. Because of the unknown size of the population, non-probability sampling methods were used. The Cochran equation was used to calculate the sample size, guaranteeing a representative sample for the investigation.

3.4 Hypothesis

H0:E-WOM had no impact on the online decisions made by millennials and Generation Z regarding the purchase of food and/or beverage products.

H1: E-WOM has a direct impact on millennials' and Generation Z's online decisions to buy food and/or beverage products.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULT

Table 1 displays the customer evaluation of Shopee food's electronic word-of-mouth.

Table 1: Customer Evaluation of Shopee food's E-Wom

E-WOM Dimension	Consumer Action	% Approval
Intensity	Launching the Shopee food application	20.11
	Speaking (via chat) with vendors	20.10
	Getting to other clients' remarks	19.09
Average		**60.12%**
Content	Getting to item varieties	
	Taking into account item quality	30.09
	Taking into account the item cost	10.02
	Perusing other purchaser tributes	20.11
Average		**60.22%**
Valence of Opinion	Giving positive surveys on the off chance that the items and administrations live up to assumptions	15.12
	Giving suggestions to different shoppers	20.26

	Composing negative surveys in the event that the items and administrations are less/not true to form	24.12
	Not giving suggestions to different shoppers	20.15
Average		**79.66%**

The information given sheds light on customer behavior and the acceptance rates that go along with it in relation to the three aspects of electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM): valence of opinion, content, and intensity.The Shopee food application and chat sessions with merchants had relatively low approval percentages (20.11% and 20.10%, respectively) in terms of intensity, indicating a modest level of participation. On the other hand, viewing other users' remarks receives a higher acceptance rate (19.09%), indicating a larger inclination towards obtaining input from peers. All things considered, the average acceptance percentage for Intensity is 60.12%, which suggests that customers are somewhat involved in E-WOM activities.Regarding the Content dimension, there is a moderate level of interest in product-related information as seen by the acceptance percentages of 30.09% and 20.11% for accessing product variations and taking product quality into consideration, respectively. Nevertheless, just 10.02% of respondents approve of taking the product price into consideration, indicating that in this situation, consumers may be less influenced by price. However, the average approval rate for content is marginally higher at 60.22%, indicating a moderate level of participation in E-WOM activities connected to content.Lastly, the Valence of Opinion dimension shows that recommending products and services to other customers obtains a somewhat higher approval percentage of 20.26%, while favorable reviews are given if they match expectations and receive a 15.12% approval rating. On the other hand, leaving unfavorable reviews when goods or services don't live up to expectations and not making recommendations result in approval percentages of 24.12% and 20.15%, respectively. The average acceptance rate for valence of opinion is significantly higher at 79.66%, suggesting a generally good attitude toward voicing ideas and offering suggestions, whether positive or negative.

We at first performed old style suspicion tests, which included multicollinearity, linearity, and ordinariness tests, before doing direct relapse examination and speculation testing. Table 2 presents the discoveries.

Table 2: Results of the Classical Assumption Test

Classical Assumption Test	Significance	Decision	Criteria	Source
Normality Test	0.51	Normal Distribution	Sig. ≥ 0.06	One-Sample Kolmogorov–Smirnov Test
Linearity Test	0.39	Linear	Sig. ≥ 0.06	Anova Table
Multicollinearity Test		Multicollinearity Does Not Happen	Tolerance ≥ 0.11	Table of Coefficients (Collinearity Statistics)
Tolerance Value (X.1)	0.61	Multicollinearity Does Not Happen	Tolerance ≥ 0.11	
Tolerance Value (X.2)	0.60	Multicollinearity Does Not Happen	Tolerance ≥ 0.11	
Tolerance Value (X.3)	0.59	Multicollinearity Does Not Happen	Tolerance ≥ 0.11	
Variance Inflating Factor (VIF)	X.1 = 2.05	VIF < 10		
Variance Inflating Factor (VIF)	X.2 = 2.50	VIF < 10		
Variance Inflating Factor (VIF)	X.3 = 2.51	VIF < 10		

The statistical analysis's classical assumption tests produced a number of important conclusions. First, the normality test, which determines whether the data has a normal distribution or not, produced a significance level of 0.51; this means that the data does follow a normal distribution because the p-value is higher than the 0.06 significance level. In a similar vein, the linearity test, which looks at the linear relationship between variables, produced a significance level of 0.39, indicating that the data is linear since the p-value is higher than the 0.06 cutoff. The multicollinearity test was also performed to see whether multicollinearity existed among the independent variables. Since each independent variable (X.1, X.2, X.3) has a tolerance value greater than 0.11, which ensures that each variable adds distinct information to the model without duplication, the findings showed that multicollinearity does not arise. Moreover, the variance inflating factors (VIF) were determined to be below the threshold of 10 for all

independent variables (X.1 = 2.05, X.2 = 2.50, and X.3 = 2.51), indicating that multicollinearity is not a cause for worry in the analysis.

The objective of numerous straight relapse examination in research is to evaluate how much Shopee food buying decisions are impacted by the aspects/factors of power (x1), content (x2), and valence of assessment (x3). Table 3 shows the numerous direct relapse test results.

Table 3: Test Results for Multiple Linear Regression

Coefficient	Anova	Model Summary
Constant	7.151	Fcount = 15.812
		Sig. < 0.002
		R-squared = 0.412
Intensity (x1)	-0.002	
	-0.151	
	0.912	
Content (x2)	0.612	
	4.251	
	0.001	
Valence of Opinion (x3)	0.312	
	3.061	
	0.058	

The association between the independent variables—Intensity, Content, and Valence of Opinion—and the dependent variable is significantly revealed by the regression analysis. The constant term, 7.151, is shown to have an associated Fcount statistic of 15.812, which, at a significance level of less than 0.002, indicates the overall relevance of the model. Furthermore, the dependent variable's variation is estimated to be explained by the independent variables in the model by an R-squared value of 0.412, or about 41.2%. Upon examining the coefficients, Content (x2) exhibits a statistically significant impact on the dependent variable, as seen by its coefficient of 0.612 and p-value of 0.001. In contrast, Valence of Opinion (x3) has a coefficient of 0.312 with a marginal significance level of 0.058, while Intensity (x1) displays a non-significant coefficient of -0.002 with a p-value of $9.112. These results highlight the significance of Content in predicting the outcome variable, indicating that Intensity and Valence of Opinion have a minimal impact.

5. DISCUSSION

The results of the research indicated that, when it comes to an individual's decision to buy this kind of food product on an online marketplace, e-WOM—which is measured by the dimensions of intensity, substance, and valence of opinion—contributes very little. An individual's decision to make a purchase is unaffected by the degree of intensity or frequency (intensity) of their market access. Decisions regarding what to buy are influenced by the information available in the market as well as the experiences and opinions of other customers. As a result, e-WOM in the marketplace continues to have an impact on consumer choice. For customers to decide what to buy, in particular, comprehensive product information and reviews based on prior user experiences are essential. According to the study's conclusions, a person using several marketplaces occasionally does so purely to pass the time, experiment, browse, and so on rather than always making a purchase decision. In the meantime, informed buyers who plan to make selections about what to buy online first examine the product's specifications in great detail. For instance, cost, product composition, quality presumptions, food additive content, and packaging. Apart from examining product details, shoppers also take into account reviews left by past customers when making judgments about what to buy online. In light of this, even though customers have visited the marketplace, carefully examining product details and other customers' reviews does not always enable them to make a purchase.

Several variables contribute to the limited impact of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) on food item buying decisions in the marketplace. Most of cellphones belonging to the Millennial and Z generations are already networked and have applications installed from different suppliers. Their day to day routines involve accessing the marketplace. The motivated e-lifestyles of Generation Z are linked to elements like e-activities, e-interests, e-conclusions, and e-values, as per a review Correspondence, entertainment, shopping, and local area activities are the fundamental reasons people utilize web-based entertainment and get data. Millennials are more receptive to and dependent on older generations' online information than earlier generations where the second reason is that many only purchase foods online as a last resort because of a variety of circumstances, such being overly lethargic or having a busy schedule that prevents them from leaving the house. All four components of e-WOM—relevance, correctness, timeliness, and

completeness—have an impact on potential customers' purchase intentions, and this study supports some of the findings of earlier research, including those Furthermore, demonstrates that the amount, credibility, and quality of e-WOM have a significant and favorable impact on purchase intention. Similar to this, hypothesized that e-WOM has a big impact on restaurant patrons' purchasing choices. This research partially supports earlier findings that customer reviews (content) influence product selection and that opinions' valence influences decisions to buy Conversely, showed that content has no influence on a purchase choice, noted that intensity against buying decision. Therefore, the study's subject and object are where this study and others are similar. When it comes to making purchasing decisions, the "millennial and Z" generations definitely don't comprehend the factors of e-WOM the same way. The product to be purchased also influences how foresighted one is after viewing the components of e-WOM.

Potential customers, particularly millennial, Z, and next-generation consumers, are now taking into account e-word-of-mouth on different marketplaces. Social media and information technology are two areas in which this generation excels. For many people, especially businesspeople, the media is their lifeblood. Numerous researches shown that the majority of prospective buyers take notice to prior remarks made on certain e-commerce or marketplace systems. When making judgments about what to buy, they can readily access their favorable or unfavorable feedback. In the digital age, this condition motivates entrepreneurs to take prospective customers' inclinations into account.

6. CONCLUSION

The most noteworthy finding of the study is that e-WOM is increasingly considered by potential clients when doing online business transactions, especially in the sector that caters to food and beverage suppliers. To summarize, when it comes to making online purchases, millennials in the Uttarakhand region are greatly impacted by Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM). This influence is extensive and multifaceted. Digital natives, millennials mostly use the internet and social media to check things, read reviews, and seek advice before deciding. The pervasive influence of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on review websites, online forums, and social media platforms is critical in shaping the opinions, attitudes, and ultimately the consumer behavior of

millennials. Positive eWOM can boost credibility and confidence, clear up confusion, and promote purchase intention, whereas negative eWOM may deter potential buyers and diminish sales. Furthermore, because eWOM is participatory and encourages the development of a vibrant online consumer community, millennials may engage in dialogue, seek advice from peers, and share their own experiences.

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