

Comparing the Effectiveness of Traditional Vs. Digital Word-Of-Mouth Marketing in quick e-commerce

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Abstract—The present paper discusses the relative performance of conventional word-of-mouth (WOM) and online word-of-mouth (e-WOM) marketing in the rapidly developing industry of quick e-commerce, where time and again instant delivery, convenience, and customer credibility are the essential factors in determination of the buying decision. The most accepted type of WOM is traditional WOM, that is, personal communication and recommendations among friends, family members and close social networks, which is considered to be highly credible and trustworthy. Nevertheless, it tends to have less influence due to slower dissemination and a reduced reach. Digital WOM, on the other hand, which is enabled by online reviews, ratings, social media, and e-commerce applications, allows the dissemination of information to a large group of people within a short period. It gives consumers easy access to a variety of opinions, real-time feedback, and comparative insights, and is an effective tool in shaping buying behavior in time-sensitive settings such as quick commerce. Moreover, online WOM enables organizations to monitor customer-feedback, interact with customers and improve their marketing strategies based on data. Trust, reach, speed, accessibility, and influence on purchase intention are some of the main aspects analyzed in the study to compare the two types of WOM. It states that, whereas traditional WOM has a high level of success concerning the creation of emotional trust and long-term relationships, digital WOM has a dominant role in influencing instant purchasing as it is fast and visible. The results indicate that hybrid strategy, a combination of both conventional and digital WOM strategies, is best suited to rapid e-commerce websites to enhance customer interaction, build a strong brand image, and stimulate sales increase in a competitive environment.

I. INTRODUCTION

Consumer buying habits and marketing have changed dramatically in the era of digital transformation, especially in the rapidly expanding field of quick e-

commerce, which places an emphasis on speed, convenience, and instantaneous purchasing decisions. Word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing continues to be one of the most effective strategies for influencing consumer choices as companies and brands vie for consumers' attention in a matter of seconds. Traditional word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing is based on personal recommendations from friends, family, or acquaintances and is frequently based on social relationships and trust. However, electronic word-of-mouth (electronic Word of Mouth), which encompasses user-generated content, social media shares, influencer endorsements, and online reviews, has emerged as a result of the development of digital platforms.

Fast food delivery services, express grocery apps, and fast fashion websites are examples of quick e-commerce platforms that function in fast-paced settings where customers frequently make decisions about what to buy in a matter of minutes. Knowing which type of WOM digital or traditional is better at influencing these snap decisions is essential in these situations. Digital WOM has the advantages of speed, scale, and accessibility, but traditional WOM is thought to be more personal and credible.

In the context of rapid e-commerce, this study attempts to investigate and contrast the efficacy of digital and traditional word-of-mouth marketing in influencing consumer buying habits. It will examine how customers view and react to these two types of word-of-mouth, how urgency and trust affect how effective they are, and which has a greater effect on promoting engagement, conversion, and loyalty in a rapidly evolving digital economy.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

It has long been known that word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing is an effective way to change customer behavior. The emergence of digital platforms has drastically changed the field of word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing and brought about new factors that influence its efficacy. With an emphasis on their effects on consumer purchase decisions, trust, reach, emotional engagement, and brand loyalty, this literature review contrasts the efficacy of traditional and digital word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing.

Personal, in-person interactions where people exchange information, suggestions, and personal stories are referred to as traditional word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing. WOM has long been regarded as one of the most reliable marketing strategies (Arndt, 1967). WOM is a reliable and genuine form of communication because of the personal connections between the source and the recipient, as noted by HOVLAND & Weiss (1951) and Sweeney et al. (2008). In this situation, consumers are more likely to believe recommendations from friends and family than commercials (Gartner, 2008).

As social media and the internet have grown in popularity, digital word-of-mouth (WOM) has become a powerful force in marketing. Online reviews, social media posts, blog recommendations, and influencer endorsements are all included in digital word-of-mouth (WOM). It has a number of benefits over conventional WOM, chief among them being its speed and reach. Digital word-of-mouth (WOM) enables brands to instantly reach millions of potential customers by facilitating the quick spread of information across extensive networks (TRUSOV et al., 2009). Digital WOM is especially useful for global brands that aim to reach a diverse range of geographically dispersed consumers because of its capacity to broadcast messages widely.

The nature of the product, the consumer demographic, and the social context are some of the variables that affect how effective traditional versus digital word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing is. Particularly in local or highly involved contexts, traditional word-of-mouth (WOM) is still a potent tool for building credibility, trust, and emotional engagement. Digital WOM, on the other hand, provides better reach, speed, and engagement, especially for brands aiming to reach younger, tech-savvy consumers.

III. RESEARCH GAP

Although the role of word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing has increasingly gained importance in the e-commerce field, there exists a paucity of research that specifically compares traditional WOM and digital WOM (e-WOM), in the quick e-commerce context. The majority of the literature discusses these two types individually or in general about e-commerce, but there is very little discussion on the peculiarities of quick commerce, including instant delivery, time-sensitive decisions, and high-frequency purchases. In addition, empirical studies conducted to evaluate the effects of such variables as speed, trust, and accessibility on the effectiveness of WOM in fast e-commerce sites are lacking. Although the concept of digital WOM is well-researched regarding online reviews and social media effects, its direct comparison with traditional WOM in forming instant consumer behavior has not been extensively researched. There is also a gap in the knowledge of the joint or hybrid influence of a traditional and digital WOM strategy on customer engagement and loyalty. Also, very little research has been carried out on regional markets such as India where cultural aspects, social pressure and the rate of digital adoption can have a big influence on the effectiveness of WOM. Thus, this research seeks to fill such gaps by conducting a comparative study of the traditional and digital WOM in quick e-commerce taking into consideration such important aspects as trust, reach, speed, and consumer decision-making behavior.

IV. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To compare the efficiency of the traditional word-of-mouth (WOM) and digital word-of-mouth (e-WOM) in fast e-commerce. To examine the influence of WOM in consumer buying behaviour in time-related situations. To investigate the major aspects of trust, reach, speed, and accessibility of both digital and traditional Omoto investigate the customers preferences in between offline recommendations and online reviews/ratings. To assess the impacts of WOM on customer loyalty and repeat purchase in fast e-commerce websites.

Research Model: The research model will be founded on the correlation between the traditional WOM and digital WOM as independent variables, and their

impact on dependent variables, including purchase intention, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty. These relationships are further affected by mediating factors like trust, credibility, speed of information, and accessibility. This model also considers the fact that both traditional and digital WOM affect consumer perception, which eventually results in making a purchase decision and has an impact on long-term loyalty.

Technographic Segmentation: In this analysis, the technographic segmentation is applied to segment the consumers according to their technological usage and digital behavior. The consumers may be categorized as low-tech who primarily use traditional WOM, moderate-tech who use both traditional and digital platforms, and high-tech that are highly reliant on digital platforms like mobile applications, social media, and online reviews. Moreover, mobile-first users constitute a significant portion in quick e-commerce, since they mainly use smartphones to make fast buying decisions and are extremely affected by online WOM.

Research Design: The research design applicable in the study is descriptive, comparative in nature since the study will compare the effectiveness of traditional and digital WOM. The data are analyzed using both primary and secondary data. The structured questionnaires and surveys are used to obtain the primary data, and journals, articles, and reports are used to get the secondary data.

Types of Research

- Research Nature: Quantitative
- Research Approach: Deductive
- Research Design: Descriptive and Analytical

The study is descriptive because it examines consumer responses to digital marketing, and analytical because it explores the relationship between digital marketing factors and consumer behaviour using statistical analysis.

V. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This research is aimed at comparing and contrasting the efficacy of traditional word-of-mouth (WOM) and digital word-of-mouth (e-WOM) marketing to quick e-commerce. In the modern world of high-speed and the need to get instant data and the ability to have fast

services to deliver products, it is crucial to know how various types of communication can change the purchasing behavior. This paper will seek to investigate the difference between personal recommendations by friends and family with online reviews, ratings and social media in influencing consumer choices. The study will also aim at establishing the most important variables or elements like trust, credibility, speed, and accessibility that influence the effects of conventional and digital WOM. It is also keen to know the preferences and behavioral trends of the consumer especially in a time-sensitive market such as quick e-commerce. Through this, the study aims at offering insights that can assist businesses to ensure that they come up with effective marketing strategies, are able to engage their customers better and also increase overall customer satisfaction and loyalty.

VI. SAMPLE DESIGN

Targeting Population. This study will target consumers who actively use fast e-commerce sites to buy their goods including groceries, food and essentials. The users of these are usually in the urban and semi-urban regions that have easy access to such services.

Sampling Frame. The sampling frame is comprised of all possible respondents that belong to this category, and can be approached via online platforms, social networks, or personal contacts.

Sample Size. The study is planned to have a sample of 50 to 150 respondents, as this is enough to have a meaningful sample and be practical in terms of time and resources.

Sampling Technique. This type of descriptive research is suitable because a convenience sampling method is employed since the researcher is able to access and interview the accessible and willing participants.

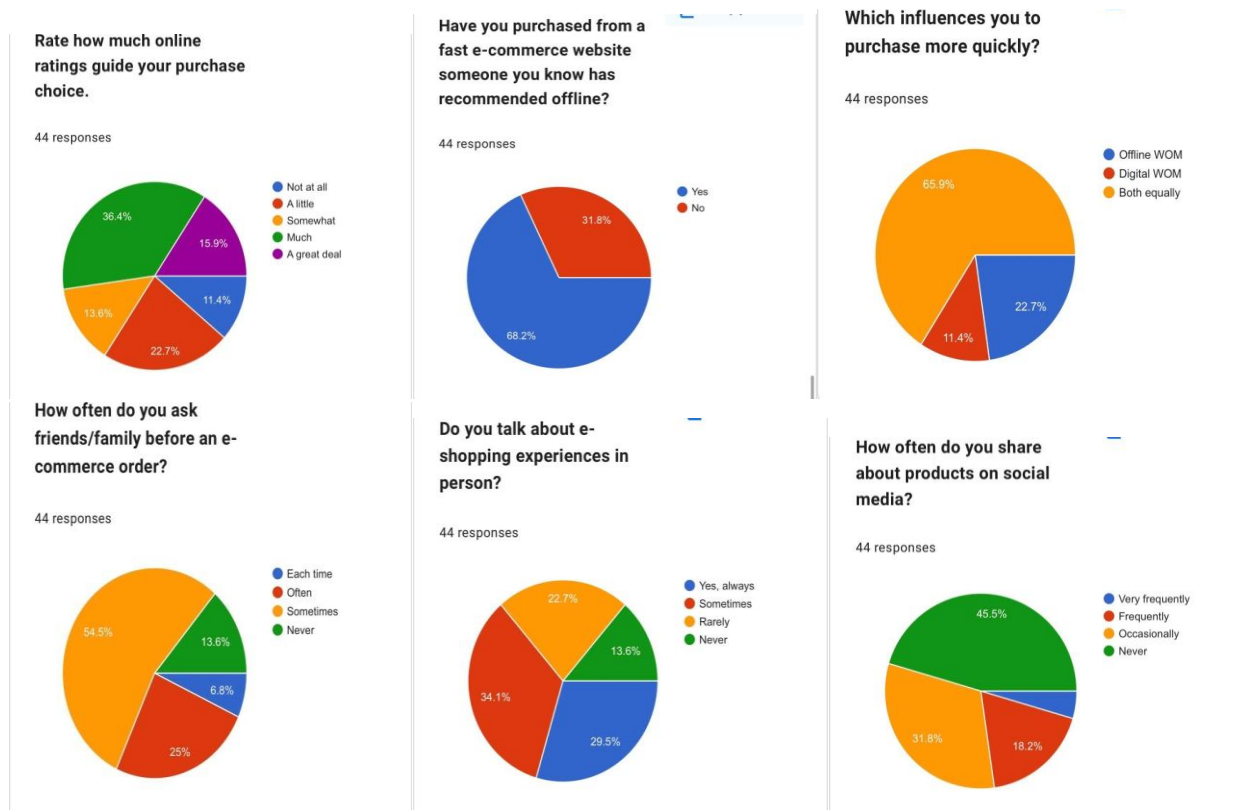
Sampling Unit. The sampling unit is specified as individual consumers using quick e-Commerce application whereas sample element refers to each respondent selected, participated in the survey and given relevant data.

Sample Element. The sample will primarily consist of consumers who are affected by digital marketing and engage in online shopping activities. **Geographic Scope** This research is not limited to a city. The responses varied in region in India, thanks to online

distribution which makes this more diverse and relevant digitally. 8. Data collection was conducted

from a specific time period (e.g., January 2025, through the online survey method).





VII. QUESTIONNAIRE

- How often do you rely on recommendations from friends or family before making a quick online purchase (e.g., food delivery, instant grocery)?
 - Very often
 - Often
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never
- How often do you check online reviews, ratings, or social media posts before making a quick e-commerce purchase?
 - Very often
 - Often
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never
- Which do you trust more when making a fast-purchasing decision online?
 - Traditional word-of-mouth (friends, family, peers)

- Digital word-of-mouth (online reviews, influencers, social media)
 - Both equally
 - Neither
- Have you ever made an impulse purchase on a quick e-commerce platform based on a friend or family member's suggestion?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Have you ever made an impulse purchase on a quick e-commerce platform based on an online review or influencer's recommendation?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Which type of recommendation influences your purchase decision faster?
 - Traditional WOM
 - Digital WOM
 - Depends on the product/service
 - Not sure

7. On a scale of 1–5, how trustworthy do you find online reviews and influencer promotions (1 = Not at all, 5 = Very trustworthy)?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

8. On a scale of 1–5, how trustworthy do you find recommendations from people you know (friends/family)?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

9. Which form of word-of-mouth has led you to repeat purchases from the same quick e-commerce platform?

- Traditional WOM
- Digital WOM
- Both
- Neither

10. In your opinion, which type of WOM is more effective for promoting quick e-commerce services in today's digital environment?

- Traditional WOM
- Digital WOM
- Both equally
- Don't know

11. How often do you make a purchase after a friend/family recommends a quick e-commerce product in person?

a) Always b) Often c) Sometimes d) Rarely e) Never

12. How often do you make a purchase after seeing positive online reviews or influencer posts?

a) Always b) Often c) Sometimes d) Rarely e) Never

13. Which do you trust more for fast online shopping?

a) Personal recommendation b) Online review c) Both equally d) Neither

14. Have you purchased from a fast e-commerce website someone you know has recommended offline?

a) Yes b) No

15. Which influences you to purchase more quickly?

a) Offline WOM b) Digital WOM c) Both equally

16. How often do you ask friends/family before an e-commerce order?

a) Each time b) Often c) Sometimes d) Seldom e) Never

17. Rate how much online ratings guide your purchase choice.

a) Not at all b) A little c) Somewhat d) Much e) A great deal

18. Do you talk about e-shopping experiences in person?

a) Yes, always b) Sometimes c) Rarely d) Never

19. How often do you share about products on social media?

a) Very frequently b) Frequently c) Occasionally d) Seldom e) Never

VIII. DISCUSSION

In today's fast-paced e-commerce world, consumers want quick delivery and convenience. Marketing strategies have changed a lot. Among these strategies, word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing is still one of the biggest influences on consumer behavior. This study looks at how effective traditional WOM personal recommendations from friends and family compares to digital WOM (e-WOM), which includes online reviews, ratings, and social media influence. It focuses on how these factors affect people's thoughts and choices. Traditional WOM is often seen as very trustworthy because it comes from familiar and reliable sources. Many people feel that recommendations from friends and family have emotional value and personal experience, which boosts their confidence in making decisions. However, traditional WOM has limited reach and takes longer to spread since it relies on face-to-face or direct communication.

On the other hand, digital word of mouth has become very powerful in fast e-commerce. Consumers often depend on online reviews, ratings, and feedback from apps before they buy something. Digital word of mouth reaches a larger audience, gives quicker access to information, and offers multiple opinions from various users. In situations where time matters, like

ordering groceries or food, customers want quick information available on apps. This makes digital word of mouth more practical and efficient. The comparison shows that while traditional word of mouth is stronger in trust and emotional connection, digital word of mouth leads in speed, accessibility, and its impact on immediate purchase decisions. Therefore, both forms work together to influence consumer behavior.

IX. CONSLUSION

To conclude, the comparative analysis between WOM and digital WOM shows that each of them plays an essential role, but each in its own way. The WOM remains very reliable because it is grounded on actual communication, personal experience, and trust relationships. In particular, it is quite helpful for establishing trust, increasing brand credibility, and promoting brand loyalty, although it has limited reachability and relatively slow speed of communication. In turn, the digital WOM has been gaining popularity since the 21st century, owing to its convenient, rapid, and efficient communication. With the growing tendency of consumers to make decisions quickly, they prefer using online resources, such as product reviews, ratings, and user feedbacks. Thus, digital WOM is more influential compared to the conventional one and is perfectly suitable for quick commerce. From the results obtained in the study, there seems to be an increased preference for digital WOM over conventional WOM, especially among young consumers who have advanced technological skills. However, conventional WOM remains crucial in the building of trust within business transactions. Thus, the most appropriate approach that quick e-commerce businesses should implement would be a combination of conventional and digital WOM approaches. In summary, the integration of both approaches will enable businesses to expand their influence through the use of different strategies and techniques, thereby promoting stronger customer relationships and making informed decisions. This will enhance customer satisfaction levels.

X. RESEARCH IMPLICATION

The findings of this study have important implications for businesses, marketers, and researchers in the field of quick e-commerce. The study demonstrates that

traditional word-of-mouth (WOM) and digital word-of-mouth (e-WOM) both act as powerful forces which shape how consumers make their purchasing decisions. Businesses should therefore adopt a hybrid marketing strategy which combines traditional word-of-mouth (WOM) trust and credibility with digital word-of-mouth (WOM) rapid reach to achieve their marketing goals.

Managerial / Practical Implications

Based on the research results, it is reasonable to recommend the managers within the fast e-commerce industry to follow a balanced policy using the combination of both traditional and digital WOM methods. Taking into consideration the prominent role played by digital WOM in shaping consumers' behavior in terms of making quick decisions to buy certain goods or services, it is important to pay attention to managing the online image of the company, which can be achieved via getting positive testimonials from satisfied customers, having high rates, and reacting to customer comments and feedback. Apart from that, providing customers with good quality products and satisfactory services is crucial for developing a positive WOM through personal referrals. The implementation of data analytics is needed to learn more about the preferences of consumers and make relevant changes. It is also useful to divide customers according to their use of technology.

Theoretical Implications

Contributions to existing marketing theories in regard to this research can be viewed in terms of the expanded definition of WOM in the area of fast e-commerce. This study sheds light on the transformation of the WOM role with the introduction of e-WOM next to the conventional WOM. The behavior of customers can be considered under the influence of personal interaction as well as online interaction. The research can be used to support theories concerning consumer decisions, information spreading, and development of trust, indicating the importance of modern environment for WOM activities.

Social Implications

This research bears significant social implications because it demonstrates changes in consumer behavior in an era where technology connects everyone

together. One implication that stands out is the growing tendency among people to use reviews and social media to guide their buying decisions. Such reliance may affect social relationships because communication through technology makes less reliance on advice from others possible. Another social implication of this study is the need to practice online decency to prevent misleading consumers.

Implications for Future Research

There are several possibilities that arise from the findings of the study. First, future researchers may investigate the role of other demographic variables like age, income, and education in consumers' choice between traditional WOM and digital WOM. Furthermore, research may be done on particular quick e-commerce websites or a comparative study may be made between consumers in the rural and urban areas. Finally, future researchers might consider conducting advanced research on the effects of AI, influencer marketing, and personalized recommendations in digital WOM.

Limitations of the Study

There are some limitations to the study. First, the sample size used in the research is relatively small and restricted to only one group of people. Second, the method of sampling used is convenience sampling, which introduces some degree of bias because the selection of the respondents is not random but based on their availability. Third, there is an overreliance on the self-reporting technique, whereby the information is obtained from the individual without verification from other sources.

Future Scope of the Study

Future scope for this study is vast due to the rapid expansion of quick e-commerce. In future, there are possibilities of having a wider and diversified sample set to enhance generalization of findings. It would be possible to conduct comparative analysis in other countries/regions in order to learn about differences between women's opinions in different cultural settings. There may be an analysis of how technology like AI chatbots, voice assistants, etc., can impact WOM in digital marketing. Another potential aspect of study could focus on the effect of WOM on brand loyalty and customer retention.

Hypotheses

The research is conducted under the following hypotheses:

H1: Digital word-of-mouth (e-WOM) has a statistically significant positive effect on consumer decision-making for quick e-commerce purchases.

H2: Word-of-mouth (WOM) has a more significant influence than e-WOM on the process of establishing trust.

H3: E-WOM has a greater effect than WOM on consumers' decision-making for immediate purchase decisions.

H4: There is a significant correlation between WOM (both traditional and digital WOM) and customer satisfaction.

H5: The combination of WOM and e-WOM creates greater customer loyalty.

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