

## Influence of Electronic Word-of-Mouth on Consumer Behaviour

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### **Abstract:**

This paper investigates the impact of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) on consumers' purchase decisions, and more specifically on product attitude and purchase intention. After a brief review of the academic literature, we conducted a survey of 70 respondents. The results of the data analysis, using PLS structural equation modelling, show that e-WOM has a positive and a significant impact on product attitude and purchase intention. Managerial implications and avenues for future research are addressed.

**Keywords:** electronic word of mouth; Product attitude; Purchase intention; Consumer behavior.

**Jel Classification Codes:** D11, M31, M37.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the fastest-growing marketing tactics used to persuade and win customers is e-Wom (Soares & Garrido, 2015, p. 93). Word of mouth is without doubt the oldest sales, marketing and communication technique in existence. Word of mouth, which is synonymous with recommendation, has proven its effectiveness in every business. The aim of word of mouth is to convey a message to the consumer and to give him/her all the reasons and means to pass on information to potential customers in his/her surroundings. This notion also includes all the techniques that allow the large-scale dissemination of a message, a product or brand name, and is a means of quickly creating a craze or a fiasco around an object. This person-to-person exchange of information has a significant impact on consumer decision-making. As electronic feedback and recommendations are increasingly becoming a very influential source of information for decision making (Keller, 2007).

It is considered as a tool for promoting (or denigrating) a product, a brand, a commercial or marketing offer or an organisation by which consumers advise, recommend or criticise the product, the company and/or the brand on digital networks (B.Bathelot, 2019). It is the digital (virtual) version of the classic electronic word of mouth. In other words, it is an informal positive or negative communication, between Internet users, concerning the characteristics of a product and/or service, a brand, or a supplier (Helm S. , 2000). Consumers give it a higher credibility than formal communication from the company (media communication or communication controlled by the company).

Non-media communication, also known as interpersonal communication, includes interactions between human beings that allow the exchange of ideas, information and emotions. This electronic word of mouth has received considerable attention in marketing research.

A study by Reevoo - GMI Research (2012) reveals that 89% of French people consult reviews on the internet before making a purchase. Moreover, according to research published in the eMarketer magazine, 76% of consumers seek the advice of a friend before buying a new product, (Audigier, 2014, p. 72). It is in this sense that word of mouth (WOM) has become, with the arrival of the internet, a very important subject of interest in recent decades (Dellarocas, ( 2003)., p. 1411) et (Bruyn & Lilien, 2004, p. 3).

The importance given by academics and marketing professionals to the mouth phenomenon can be explained by the importance that they attribute to it in the process of consumers' decision to buy their products and services.

eWOM communications have also brought some opportunities.

First, by using eWOM communications, consumers are able to receive information about brands, products and services from social media and more specifically from large groups of people geographically dispersed in the world.

Secondly, consumers can find out about price and non-product attributes, which helps them to make more informed purchasing decisions. In addition, eWOM is an alternative source for consumers to obtain information about products and services based on buyer considerations, thus reducing the influence of companies compared to traditional marketing and advertising. (Ismagilova, Dwivedi, Slade, & Williams, 2017, p. 23).

### 1.1 The problematic research

As a form of mass media, word-of-mouth communication is one of the widest and the most important tool for consumers in the modern world and it can influence where they shop, what they purchase and how they evaluate certain brands and products. (Özdemira, Tozclub, Şenc, & Ateşoğlu, 2016, p. 23).

Many companies are interested in **e-WOM**, as it changes the attitude and perception of consumers towards the product, which makes companies take this type of communication into consideration. In other words, marketers are constantly looking to target the right influencers such as celebrities, market mavens and electronic opinion leaders who provide positive feedback and share experiences via **e-WOM** in order to push the consumer to purchase the product and therefore promote, or even encourage, sales of products and services.

The (**e-WOM**) can influence the level of attitude towards the product. For example, a 10% increase in the electronic word-of-mouth effect (**e-WOM**), spread by electronic opinion leader (e-OL), generated a 4.4% increase in bookings (Hotel) and 6.3% for cinema (Helm, Möller, Mauroner, & Conrad, 2013, p. 1065).

According to Nielsen research, 92% of people trust recommendations from family and friends over any other type of advertising as TV, radio, newspaper and magazine advertising. Even academic research into WOMM has proven its effectiveness in conversion (Glover, 2021).

This communication based on (**e-WOM**) is much more important than that of the mass media. The opinion of a friend has a high weight in the decision-making process and specifically when the risk is serious. This (**e-WOM**) plays a very important role in decision making (Douglas Hoffman & Bateson, 2016, p. 100).

In this regard, the problematic of our research is the following:

What is the role of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) on consumer behaviour?

### 1.2 The research objective

The objective of this study then, is to shed light on the concept of word-of-mouth and its effects on consumer behaviour. Currently, the means of spreading the idea are more and more numerous and particularly with the advent of the Internet, the appearance of social media and the rise of social networks. This technological revolution has made the task of advertisers much easier by making the circulation of information much faster, more efficient and universal.

The ultimate goal of this study is to understand the role of **e-WOM** on consumer behaviour. Specifically, the objective of this research is to show the importance of this tool in the purchase decision process and particularly its influence on the consumer's attitude towards the product and purchase intention.

### **1.3 Research interest:**

Currently, society has become more and more a digital society, using the Internet more to circulate information. It is undeniable that the Internet must be integrated into the company's communication strategy since digital social networks have invaded all areas: political, social, cultural, economic and even our daily lives. Today's companies have seen the emergence of a new communication strategy since the beginning of the 1990s.

In sum, this research will provide additional data to previous research on this subject and will also provide information on the communication strategy in Algeria, based on electronic word of mouth. The results will be available for the companies themselves, for managers and for marketers. Knowing that there is little marketing research that addresses this theme in the Algerian context.

### **1.4 Research methodology**

In this study, we use descriptive and analytical methods, supported by documentary analysis techniques and the electronic questionnaire. The descriptive method is used to describe the basic concepts. For the analysis of the results, we used the PLS version 3 structural equations, which is widely used in marketing research. Since we are going to study and predict the purchase intention of the product, this method becomes more and more suitable.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1 Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM)**

Many companies have found that for their products to be successful in the market, they must use word of mouth marketing ( Maisam & Mahsa, 2016, p. 19). Word-of-mouth (WOM) has become one of the most influential tools in the purchase decision (Chakravarty, Liu, & Mazumdar, 2010, p. 186). Generally, WOM word-of-mouth can be oral, written or electronic communication (Kotler, Keller, & Monceau, 2012, p. 478).

Traditional word-of-mouth (WOM) can be defined as "a process of sharing opinions and information about a specific product among consumers" (Jalilvand, Esfahani, & Samiei, 2011), in other words, the word of mouth is a promotional activity that revolves around the recommendations of satisfied customers. It is a free-of-cost advertisement from a buyer resulting from a positive experience with a produit or a brand.

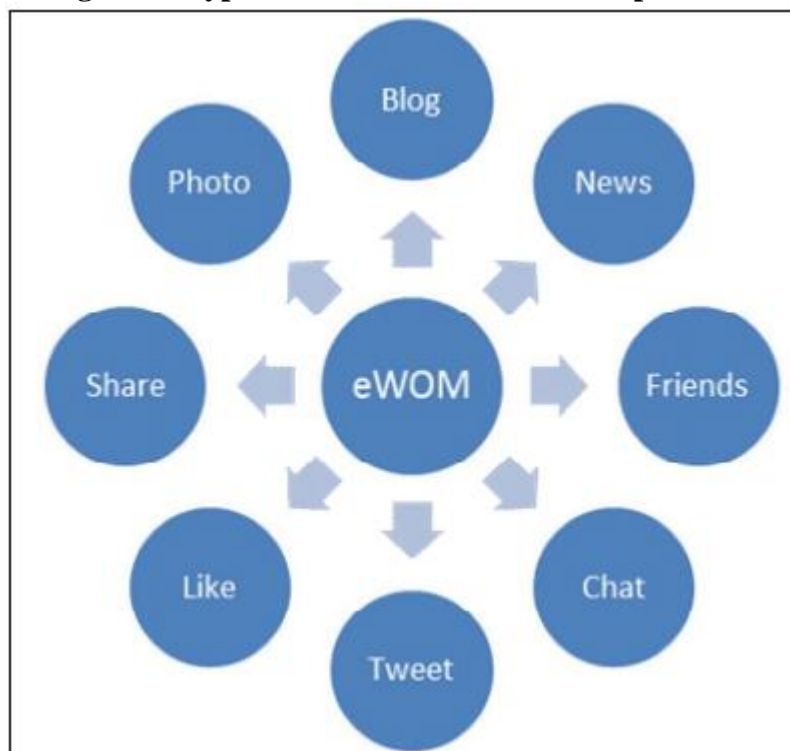
The expansion of the internet in recent years has given rise to a new and more dynamic form of WOM compared to the former which is (eWOM). (Themba & Mulala, 2013, p. 32). It is a form of communication through which the individual disseminates positive or negative information about the company or its products via the net, knowing that this individual can be

potential, current, and previous consumer (Hennig-Thurau & Gremler, 2004, p. 49). Word of mouth marketing (WOMM), also called word of mouth advertising, is the social media era's version of simple word of mouth.

Many consumers prefer to consult the suggestions made by consumers who have already used the products. The e-WOM is a phenomenon that has developed with the arrival of (Web 2.0) (Bataneh, 2015, p. 127). **WOM** "is an individual-to-individual oral communication between a recipient and a sender that the recipient perceives as non-commercial in relation to a brand, product or service (Arndt, 1967). In other words, the **WOM** consists of conveying information and especially a personal opinion about an experience with a brand, product or service. It is characterised by the speed of dissemination.

The social media used to propagate an electronic **WOM** are: blogs, social networking sites, virtual discussion forums, online shopping sites and consumer review sites. These media have become a formidable source of **e-WOM** based communication. Its impact has been accelerated and amplified by the growth and development of digital social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. These allow consumers to easily recommend a product or an offer to a large number of individuals (Bataneh, 2015, p. 127). In Figure 1, the chart explains the types of (e-WOM) on social media platforms.

**Fig.1. The type of e-WOM on social media platforms**



**Source:** Alghizzawi Mahmoud, 2019, A survey of the role of social media platforms in viral marketing: The influence of eWOM, International Journal of Information Technology and Language Studies (IJITLS), Vol. 3, Issue. 2, pp. 55.

The chart below shows the five best known and most used social networking sites in the world, as shown in the Figure 2 below:

**Fig.2. The top 5 most famous social network sites worldwide**



**Source:** Alghizzawi Mahmoud, 2019, Op Cit, pp. 56.

## **2. 2 The consumer's attitude towards the product (Att)**

The concept of consumer attitude towards the product is considered a fundamental variable in consumer behaviour and justifies the considerable amount of research related to it (Simon, 2000, p. 4). Attitude is a key to understanding how consumers develop preferences towards products, services, brands, people, organisations....individuals construct positive or negative attitudes towards a brand, product, or company...

According to (Allport, 1935), attitude is "a mental predisposition whose organisation is the result of experience exerting a directive or dynamic influence on an individual's responses to the objects or situation to which it relates", he also defines it according to its role on the individual's behaviour as "a state of moral readiness [. ...] exerting a dynamic influence that directs an individual's response" (Bressoud, 2001, p. 13), or even more, "an acquired predisposition towards a behaviour" according to (Campbell, 1963) "attitude is a way in which a person situates himself in relation to objects of value" according to (Stoetzel, 1970). For their part, (Godener & Fornerino, 2005) show the existence of a direct link between attitude and behaviour (Godener & Fornerino, 2009, p. 6).

### 2.3 Purchase intention (PI)

Electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) communication influences potential consumer attitudes and behavioral intentions toward a company, a brand and/or a product. (Huang, Hsiao, & Chen, 2012, p. 2326), (SAYAH, 2017a, p. 64) and (Daoudi & ELGRAINI, 2021, p. 3).

In our study we are interested in the variable purchase intention because intentions precede and determine the purchase decision, they often turn into the actual act, i.e. the purchase decision as proven by (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Generally, this purchase intention is used to predict the purchase decision (SAYAH, 2020a, p. 29). It is used to predict consumer behaviour (Wang & Chen, 2016, p. 99) (Chi, Yeh, & Yang, 2009, p. 137) as well as company sales enterprises (SAYAH, 2017a, p. 212), (SAYAH, 2020b, p. 589), (SAYAH, 2019) (Zouabi & Kammoun, 2016, p. 91) and (Bressoud, 2001, pp. 61-62).

Purchase intention can be defined as the probability that a consumer will purchase a product or service or the willingness to purchase the product in the future (Dodds, Monroe, & Grewal, 1991). It is a good indicator or even estimator of future behaviour of individuals in marketing literature. According to studies in social psychology, purchase intention is considered the best estimator of buyer behaviour since it allows a person to individually incorporate all the important factors that could influence his or her actual behaviour. Stated intention is a random variable with a mean that tends towards true intention (Bressoud, 2001, pp. 61-62). Purchase intention is influenced by the perception of family, friends and the media (SAYAH, 2018a, p. 423), (SAYAH, 2018b, p. 161.) and (Lim, Osman, Shahrul Nizam, Romle, & Safizal, 2016, p. 406).

A research by (Martin & Lueg, 2013), confirmed the role of attitude towards the product generated by a **WOM** on purchase intention. Other studies have also shown that consumer attitude influences purchase intention (Sundaram & Webster, 1999, p. 664).

The link between product attitude and purchase intention has been proven by several researches on online consumer behaviour (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). According to (Chang, Cheung, & Lai, 2005), attitude significantly affects online purchase intention. A significant amount of research shows that **e-WOM** influences consumers' purchase intention in that the information generated from the **e-WOM** also affects the attitude towards the product. In this study we want to verify in the following the influence of the consumer's

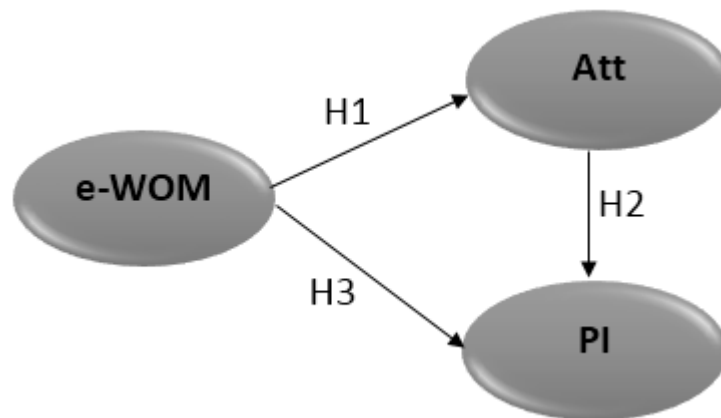
attitude towards the product on the purchase intention of the Algerian consumer based on the information collected from the electronic **WOM**.

Based on this information, it seems legitimate to propose the following hypothesis:

- H.1 Electronic word of mouth positively influences the Algerian consumer's attitude towards the recommended product.
- H.2 The consumer's attitude towards the recommended product positively influences the Algerian consumer's purchase intention (PI).
- H.3 Electronic word of mouth has a positive and direct influence on the purchase intention (PI) of the recommended product.

Based on this literature review, we have established the following research model:

**Fig.3. Proposed research model**



Source: Designed by the author.

### 3. Research methodology

#### 3.1 Product selection

We have selected electronic products and more precisely Condor smart watch "U80" from the videos broadcast by the youtubers Dzair Tech. The U80 watch weighs less than 44 grams. The strap is made of a synthetic material that is very pleasant to the touch: smooth and matt on the outside, and woven on the inside to prevent it from slipping on the wrist. The touchscreen is very responsive, and navigation is fluid.

The design is good, the size is good and the performance is outstanding on important criteria such as screen, photo and endurance. It has a USB and mini USB output. The choice of products and brands is justified by the fact that these products are considered to be mass consumption products and are consumed by Algerians.



Generally, Algerian consumers use this channel a lot to describe, evaluate and share their experiences and opinions with other internet users. (See **Table 1**)

**Table 1. Sélection des produits**

Product category	Product	Brand	Nom du produit
Electronic products	smart watch	Condor	" U80"

Source: Conceived by the author

### 3. 2 Selection of measurement scales

The operationalisation of the constructs was based on the use of measurement scales tested in the marketing literature. To this end, we adopted the measurement scales of (Xia & Bechwati, 2008) and (Munch & Swasy, 1988) in order to measure respectively the purchase intention, the global attitude towards the product and concerning the electronic **WOM**, the choice of the measurement scale was fixed on (scale of (Bansal & Voyer, 2000)). These scales have good internal consistency.

We chose the Likert scale since it is more common and is widely used in marketing research. This Likert scale is based on five points ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The various measurement scales used in this study are presented in the following detailed table:

**Table 2. The measurement scales used in our research**

Variables	Item	Item description	References
<b>Electronic word-of-mouth</b>	e-Wom1	I will recommend this brand to anyone who asks me for help.	<b>Bansal et Voyer (2000)</b>
	e-Wom2	I will encourage my friends and family to become customers of this brand (company).	
	e-Wom3	Online comments really help me.	
	e-Wom4	If one day a discussion leads me to talk about brands in general, I will speak favorably about the product of smart watch I have purchased.	
	e-Wom5	I will say positive things to those around me about this product.	
<b>Attitude towards the product</b>	Att1	My opinion of the brand is good/bad	<b>Munch et Swasy (1988)</b>
	Att2	I don't appreciate this brand at all / I appreciate this brand a lot	
	Att3	This product is unpleasant/pleasant	
<b>Purchase Intention</b>	PI1	It is very probable that I will buy this product.	<b>Xia et Bechwati (2008)</b>
	PI2	If I had to decide now, I would probably buy this product.	
	PI3	The probability that I will buy this product is high	

Source: Conceived by the author

### 3.3 The questionnaire process

The data collection took place over a period of nine (9) months from January 2020 to September 2020. It was carried out by means of online interviews. The questionnaire therefore consisted of 15 questions. We distributed it in different social networks (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube).

### 3.4 The target population and sample of our study

We collected about 70 responses, which constitutes our sample. These people are aged between 18 and 56 years old and all live in Algeria. For the sample, we used a random sample distributed as follows:

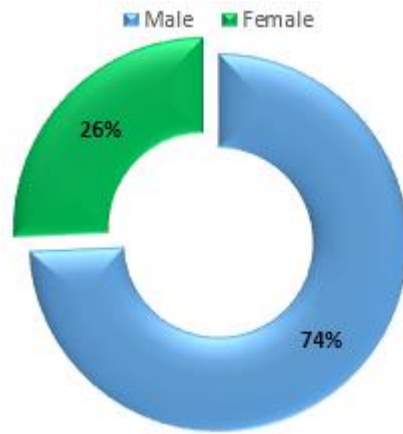
**Table 3. Participants' Demographical Features**

Demographical Variables	Demographical Features	N	%
Sex	Female	18	26 %
	Male	52	74 %
	Total	70	100%
Educational Background	University	41	58 %
	Secondary School	23	33 %
	Middle School	4	6 %
	Primary School	2	3 %
	Total	70	100%
Age Group	From 17 to 20 years old	12	17 %
	21 to 25 years old	21	30 %
	26 to 30 years old	16	23 %
	31 to 35 years old	11	16 %
	36 to 40 years old	4	6 %
	41 to 45 years old	3	4 %
	46 to 50 years old	2	3 %
	Over 51 years old	1	1 %
Total	70	100%	
Social networks	Facebook	42	60 %
	Twitter	4	6 %
	Instagram	9	13 %
	Youtube	15	21 %
	Total	70	100%

**Source:** Conceived by the author based on the SPSS Outputs

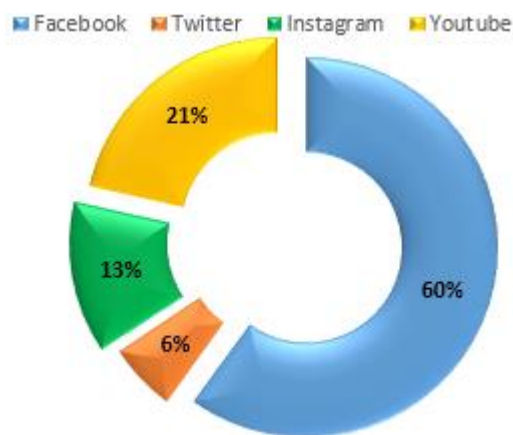
In addition, 74% of the respondents are male and 58% of the respondents have university degrees, and the overwhelming age range of our respondents is mainly in the age range of 21-25 years with a percentage of 30%. (See Figures No. 4, 5, 6 and 7):

**Fig.4. Presentation of the sample by gender in percentage**



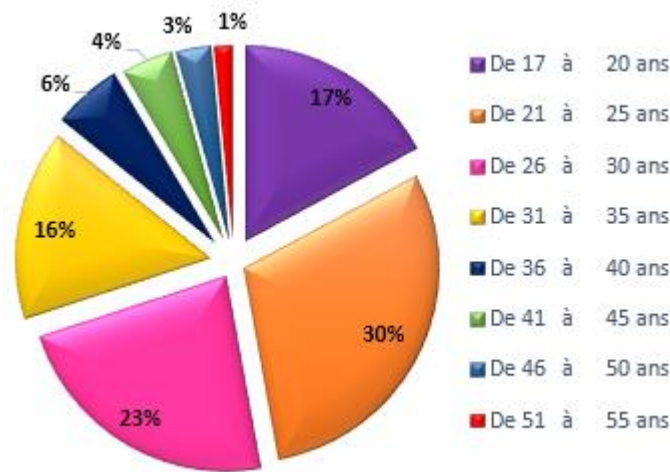
**Source:** Designed by the author based on the information collected

**Fig.5. Distribution of the sample by social networks in percentage**



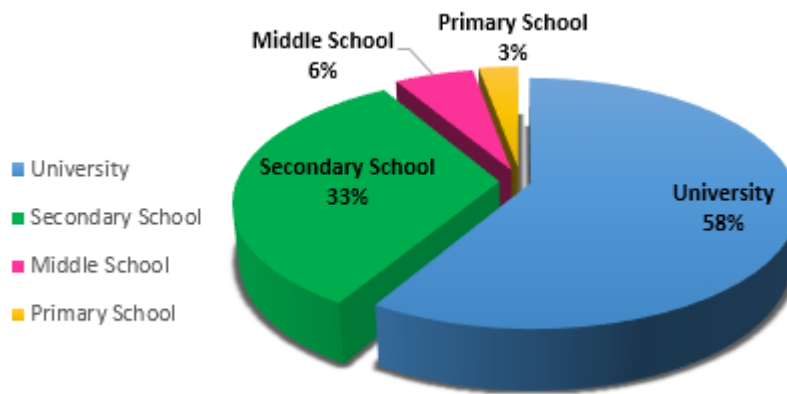
**Source:** Designed by the author based on the information collected

**Fig.6. Sample Presentation by by age group in percentage**



Source: Designed by the author based on the information collected

Fig.7. Educational level of the sample in percentage



Source: Designed by the author based on the information collected

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Purification of the measurement scales

The questionnaire is based on the following three variables Consumer attitude towards the product (Att) without any purification with 3 Items, electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) with none (05) items and purchase intention (PI) with 3 Items.

### 4.2 Reliability and validity

Before testing the hypotheses of our conceptual model, we must first evaluate the measurement model (the external model). To do this, we first perform an exploratory factor analysis and then test the hypotheses using PLS Version 3 structural equations.

The validation of the external model "the measurement model" is done through the Bartlett's sphericity test which must be significant (Bartlett's significance < 5%) and the Kaiser, Meyer and Olkin Index (KMO) which must be higher than the recommended threshold of 0.70.

As for the reliability analysis, we will calculate the reliability indicator Cronbach's alpha for each dimension. Cronbach's alpha, introduced by Lee Cronbach in (1951), is used to measure the internal consistency (or reliability) of the questions asked in a test, i.e. the answers to the various questions on the same subject must be correlated. Its value ranges from 0 to 1, being considered "acceptable" from (0.7). (SAYAH, 2018, p. 226).

According to the table below, all variables are correlated with each other: we accept the correlation, since Cronbach's coefficient, KMO values and Bartlett's index are highly significant. The data are indeed suitable for factoring since

- The KMO values are above 0.7 (electronic word of mouth (**e-WOM**), and consumer attitude towards the product (Att P) purchase intention (PI)).
- Cronbach's Alpha is excellent for all variables for consumer attitude towards the product (Att P), **e-WOM** and purchase intention (PI).
- Bartlett's tests are also highly significant for all variables  $p=0.000$ .
- All values of the explained variances exceed 70%. (See Table)

**Table 4. The results of the reliability analysis**

variable	Cronbach's Alpha	KMO	Bartlett's Sphericity Test. (Sig.)
<b>e-Wom</b>	0,878	0,729	<b>0,000</b>
<b>Att</b>	0,803	0,795	<b>0,000</b>
<b>PI</b>	0,857	0,798	<b>0,000</b>

**Source:** Conceived by the author based on the SPSS Outputs

And to check the discriminant and convergent validity of our conceptual model (measurement model), we obtained this table. Therefore, according to the values in this table, the convergent and discriminant validity are well and truly verified. (See Table):

**Table 5. Convergent construct validity**

Variable	Rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
<b>e-Wom</b>	0.813	0.858	0.813
<b>Att</b>	0.893	0.812	0.893
<b>PI</b>	0.902	0.904	0.902

**Source:** Conceived by the author based smartPLS Version 3 Output

#### **4. 3 Test of the hypothesis of the influence of (e-WOM) and (Att) on (PI)**

According to the table below we find that electronic word of mouth (**e-WOM**) strongly and positively influences the consumer's attitude towards the product (Att) since ( $\beta= 0.498$  and  $p =0.000$ ) and ( $f^2 =0.389$ ). In other words, a positive correlation between the attitude towards the product and the electronic word of mouth is validated since (Att) ( $R^2=579$ ) coefficient  $\beta =0.498$ . This means that the variance of the attitude towards the product is explained by 57.9% of the electronic word of mouth, which confirms hypothesis H1.

The relationship between consumer attitude towards the product and purchase intention is significant since the coefficient  $\beta = 0.227$  with ( $R^2 = 0.502$ ) and  $p = 0.001$  and ( $f^2 = 0.298$ ), which confirms hypothesis H2.

We also find that electronic word of mouth (**e-WOM**) directly and positively influences purchase intention (PI) since ( $\beta = 0.309$  and  $p = 0.000$ ) and ( $f^2 = 0.373$ ), which leads us to accept hypothesis (H3).

In other words, the variance in purchase intention is explained by 50.2% of electronic word of mouth and consumer attitude towards the product. These results actually support the existing literature. They thus affirm the role of electronic word of mouth on consumer behaviour and more specifically consumer attitude towards the product and purchase intention. Knowing that electronic word of mouth strongly influences the consumer's attitude towards the product and the purchase intention.

**Table 6. Hypothesis testing results**

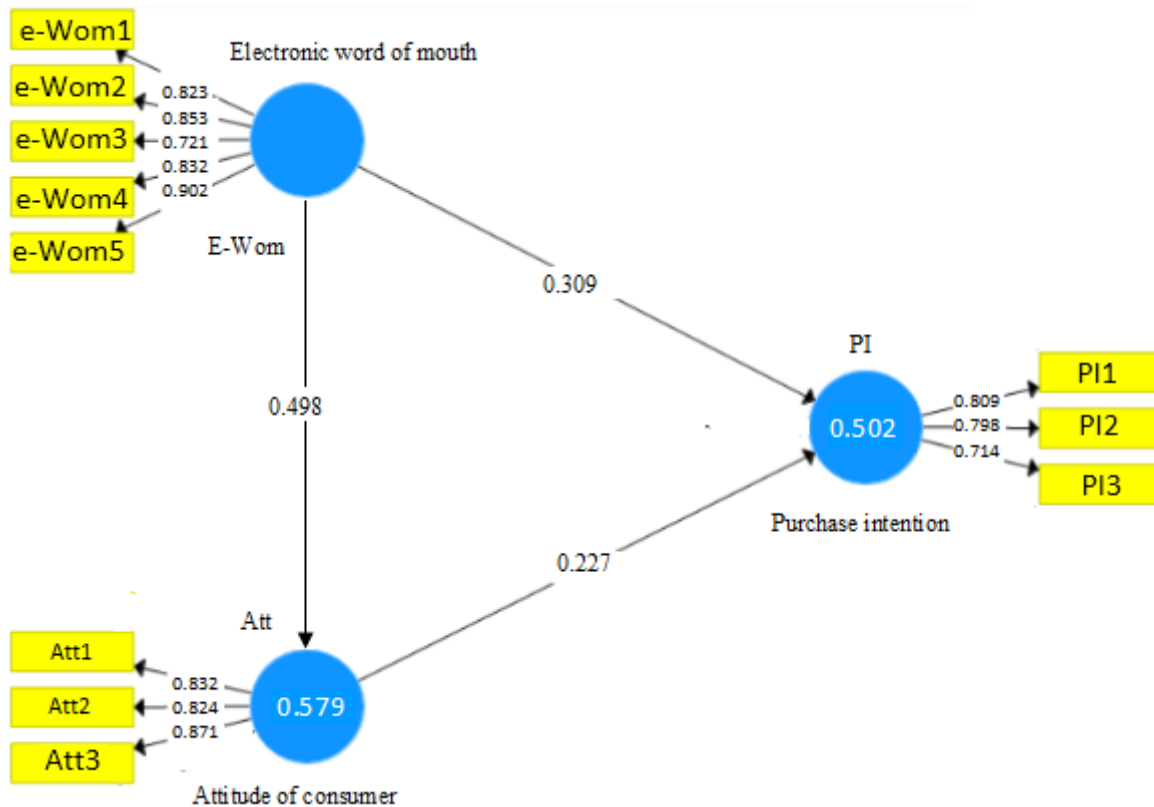
Causality	Path Coefficient	P-value	Effect size $f^2$	$R^2$
<b>H1 e-Wom</b> → Att	0,498	0,000	0,389	0,583
<b>H2 Att</b> → PI	0,227	0,001	0,298	
<b>H3 e-Wom</b> → PI	0,309	0,000	0,378	

**Source:** Conceived by the author based on the smartPLS Version 3 Output

In sum, purchase intention is influenced by electronic word of mouth (e-Wom) and (Att) respectively. Note that electronic word of mouth is the most important (30.9%), in other words, it is the most influential on the intention to purchase electronic products (U80 from the Condor brand). Moreover, these different independent variables (e-Wom and Att) explain about 50.2% of the variance of the dependent variable purchase intention (PI) since ( $R^2 = 0.502$ ), i.e., 50% of the variance of the purchase intention is explained by the electronic word of mouth and the attitude of the Algerian consumer towards the product (U80).

Electronic word of mouth (**e-WOM**) has a strong and positive influence on the Algerian consumer's attitude towards the product (U80) (Att) and this attitude in turn influences the Algerian consumer's purchase intention as shown in the figure below.

**Fig.8. The conceptual research model**



Source: The smartPLS Version 3 Output

#### 4.4 Discussion

From the results obtained, we can say that electronic word of mouth positively influences the Algerian consumer's attitude towards the recommended product. In other words, the more positive and important the comments are, the more positive the consumer's attitude towards the product becomes. This can be explained by the fact that positive comments and recommendations go hand in hand with the favourable attitude towards the product, so there is a close relationship between (**e-WOM**) and (Att). When Internet users recommend the product, this favours the attitude of the Algerian consumer towards the recommended product. The greater the number of recommendations, the more favourable the attitude towards the product. And when the latter is positive, it positively affects the intention to buy. The electronic **WOM** now plays a crucial role in the consumer's decision-making process.

These main results lead us to conclude that the (**e-WOM**) can influence consumer behaviour and directly change

- Consumer attitude towards the product (Att)
- Purchase intention (PI)

#### 5. CONCLUSION

The results reveal that this electronic word-of-mouth influence indirectly and positively influences the consumer's attitude towards the recommended product and the purchase intention. Some electronic opinion leaders (e-LO) communicate via social networks (Youtube,

Facebook, Twitter, blogs, vlogs, instagram...). They have a lot of social capital in their network. He creates videos, disseminates information and publishes messages about products and brands. This information is then picked up and widely shared by his followers and fans through the electronic word of mouth effect. This information and recommendations are considered relevant, which allows the product information to be spread and therefore to reach a large audience.

The contributions of this research are structured around the following two inputs:

- **Theoretical contributions**

This study introduces additional information on marketing communication, particularly non-media communication (interpersonal communication). The role of electronic word of mouth is essential for marketing strategies and in particular in the launch of innovation.

The concept of word of mouth has attracted increasing attention from researchers since the 1940s. Furthermore, we have found that word-of-mouth marketing studies remain limited. This is even more true for the role of electronic word-of-mouth on the purchase decision, especially when it comes to the behaviour of the Algerian consumer. The scarcity of such research reaffirms the theoretical interest of the present research.

It also enriches the marketing literature in particular consumer behaviour based on electronic word of mouth. The study is of interest to future researchers in Information and Communication Science and even in marketing.

- **Managerial inputs:**

This work is of interest to business leaders, managers and marketers. It allows them to appreciate the effectiveness of marketing communication strategies, and essentially interpersonal communication based on (**e-WOM**) to market their products, and consequently to take into consideration the role played by this (**e-WOM**) on consumer behaviour. This (**e-WOM**) can make or break the reputation of the product, the brand or even the company. It could guide managers in the elements to be taken into consideration in the communication strategy.

It must be humbly acknowledged that every research has its limitations:

- The choice of the convenience sample may limit the generalisation of the results. A different sampling method might yield different results;
- Other variables could better explain the influence of e-WOM on purchase intention;
- The choice to use only one product category (High Tech products (smart watch) in our quantitative study is another limitation. Indeed, the study only focused on this main category to measure consumers' purchase intention;
- In some cases, Internet users give negative recommendations and advise against buying the product, which negatively influences consumer behavior;
- We did not take into account some variables such as the consumer's involvement with the product, familiarity with the product and the brand...

Clearly, this study opens the way to a number of research avenues. It seems interesting to us to :



- ✓ Explore other factors influencing purchase intention such as trust in recommendations and test it in the Algerian context;
- ✓ Take into account other moderating variables such as age and gender;
- ✓ Validate the results on other product categories since we focused on a single product category, such as food and agri-food products and other brands and even services;
- ✓ Other researchers can replicate this study for other countries to compare results.

Algerian companies are therefore obliged to integrate the e-Wom into the company's communication strategy. For example, it would be essential to integrate sections where consumers can broadcast, share and express their opinions on the company's products. Our research shows that e-WOM has an effect on attitude and purchase intention, especially in high-tech products. These results suggest that, compared to other promotional media, e-WOM communication is an antecedent to consumer purchase intention and attitude.

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