

The Relevance of Word of Mouth Strategy in the Era of Modernization

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ABSTRACT

Using a literature review technique, this study seeks to determine the degree to which the word-of-mouth (WOM) strategy is relevant in dealing with the dynamics of the modernizing era. WOM is still one of the best marketing techniques for establishing credibility and swaying customer choices, even in the face of technology's quick advancement and shifting communication styles. This study examines a number of earlier research projects concerning the use and impact of word-of-mouth (WOM) in a completely digital setting and technological and social media modernization. This study clarifies the idea of word-of-mouth (WOM), its traits, and the evolution of its function in the context of digital communication through an extensive literature review. The study's findings demonstrate that WOM tactics are still effective when properly adjusted to new communication channels and technology. For WOM to be effective, however, issues including the pace of information, digital accessibility, and shifts in consumer behavior provide obstacles that need to be overcome. This study comes to the conclusion that WOM methods can be made more effective by having a better awareness of the features of modernization, technology, and social media environments. The study's implications also help marketing and business professionals create creative and adaptable communication strategies that will maximize the benefits of word-of-mouth (WOM) in fostering customer connections and increasing brand loyalty.

Keywords: Word of Mouth, Modernization,

Marketing Strategy, Social Media,
Literature Review

INTRODUCTION

Due to changes in consumer behavior and technology improvements, marketing communication strategies are increasingly confronted with a variety of variables in the current era. Word of Mouth (WOM) is one of the tactics that is still relevant and significant in a variety of situations. WOM, one of the interpersonal communication techniques, is essential for gaining the trust of customers and swaying their decisions to buy. However, the usefulness and relevance of WOM are changing significantly in an environment that is becoming more and more dependent on social media and digital technology.

The modernization and digitization phenomenon has altered how people acquire and distribute information. In this regard, digital communication methods are increasingly including Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM). Research by Firdaus and Mulyanto (2020) demonstrates that WOM tactics can improve the caliber of customer interactions. However, several dynamics pertaining to technical advancements and WOM's adaptation to the rapidly evolving digitalization era must be investigated. This results in two gaps: the phenomena gap and the research gap.

The study gap arises from the fact that prior studies have mostly examined word-of-mouth (WOM) in conventional settings, failing to sufficiently explore how WOM can adapt to digital technology-influenced surroundings and the ever-changing dynamics of consumer behavior. Although studies like those by Jatmiko (2022) and Firdaus et al. (2022) address word-of-mouth (WOM) in relation to social media and digital communication, they have not yet produced a thorough analysis of WOM's applicability in the modern day that affects marketing strategies.

The phenomenon gap is demonstrated by the way that social media, digital platforms, and a rapidly modernizing environment are influencing consumer behavior. This calls for a thorough comprehension of the function that word-of-mouth (WOM) plays in fostering relationships with customers and influencing their decisions to buy in a complicated digital environment. To comprehend these dynamics, a more focused investigation is thus required.

Goals of the Research for evaluating the Word of Mouth (WOM) strategy's applicability in light of the shifts toward modernity and digitization and through this research, it is expected to fill the existing gap by outlining the role of WOM in the context of modernization and digital technology, as well as providing significant practical contributions to contemporary marketing practices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

To comprehend the idea of Word of Mouth (WOM) and its applicability in the present era of increasingly sophisticated digital technologies, a literature survey is carried out in this study. The theory of word-of-mouth (WOM), the dynamics of technical advancements on WOM, and earlier research on the variables affecting the efficacy of WOM and Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) are the main topics of this literature. Research from different publications, case studies, and pertinent theories from different authors are all included in the examined literature.

The idea behind word-of-mouth (WOM)

Word-of-mouth (WOM) is a communication strategy used by people to tell others about goods, services, or brand-related experiences (Kotler & Keller, 2016). WOM can take place in a variety of formal and casual settings and is crucial to enhancing a company's or brand's reputation. Because it is frequently regarded as more reliable than paid marketing, word-of-mouth (WOM) has a lot of influence (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). Firdaus and Mulyanto (2020) claim that there is a substantial correlation between WOM and the caliber of the relationship that is established between the business and its customers. WOM may generate customer loyalty by cultivating goodwill, which influences sales growth and the competitive edge of the business.

This study demonstrates that having positive relationships with consumers is the foundation of a strong WOM approach. The significance of word-of-mouth (WOM) in influencing marketing success that depends on product innovation and differentiation as strategic benefits in influencing consumer perception is further highlighted by research by Dan (2020). Positive word-of-mouth contributes to the development of a powerful brand identity and increases the attractiveness of the company's products.

Modifications to Communication Styles in the Modern and Digital Age

WOM has changed significantly as a result of technological advancements and digitization, particularly through digital media known as Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM). According to Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004), electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) is communication between people via digital platforms like social media, online reviews, or e-commerce sites. This shift has an impact on how knowledge is shared more rapidly, extensively, and instantly by a wider range of people (Jatmiko, 2022). Firdaus and Setyarini (2022) discovered that positive word-of-mouth (WOM) spread via digital media is influenced by factors such as pricing and product quality. This study demonstrates that businesses can promote more efficient WOM dissemination by leveraging digital platforms and social media. But there are risks associated with the pace at which information is disseminated, as unfavorable information can spread swiftly if improperly managed.

According to Nofikasari, Nurhayati, and Firdaus (2024), marketing tactics that use E-WOM can improve consumer purchasing decisions as long as relevant and transparent information is used to gain the trust of the consumer. The notion that digital dynamics affect consumers' responses to word-of-mouth (WOM) in both good and negative ways is supported by this study.

WOM and E-WOM Influencing Factors

Relationship quality, trust, pricing perception, and product quality are some of the elements that have a significant impact on WOM and E-WOM (Cheung et al., 2007; Firdaus & Mulyanto, 2020). According to research by Firdaus and Setyarini (2022), consumers' positive word-of-mouth (WOM) through digital media is significantly

influenced by their perceptions of product quality and pricing. Furthermore, positive word-of-mouth (WOM) is greatly influenced by the quality of relationships; a positive relationship with the company or brand can promote the spread of positive information (Kotler & Keller, 2016). In the context of tourist locations and the great experiences that customers have had, Jatmiko (2022) highlights that word-of-mouth (WOM) might impact consumers' intents to visit or buy products.

Consumer trust, meanwhile, emerges as a significant factor that affects how well WOM and E-WOM work to foster brand loyalty. Firdaus and Firdaus (2024) found that the impact of E-WOM on the desire to make repeat purchases is mediated by customer trust. This suggests that one of the most important components of a successful marketing plan in the context of WOM is establishing trust.

WOM Dynamics in the Framework of Modernization and Social Media

WOM is changing into a digital environment with distinct features from traditional WOM due to the quick usage of social networking sites like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and e-commerce sites like Lazada and OVO. According to a study by Hidayah and Suwanto (2023), social media is crucial for influencing customer opinions and quickly disseminating word-of-mouth. Social media expands the reach of word-of-mouth (WOM), which was previously restricted by interpersonal contact. Nofikasari, Nurhayati, and Firdaus (2024) claim that the social media landscape enables businesses to more successfully reach customers by implementing E-WOM tactics that are directed towards platforms that customers use regularly. However, stakeholders that depend on this technique must also be aware of the elements of information speed, freedom of opinion sharing, and bad views through E-WOM.

The significance of trust in the use of E-WOM via social media as a mediating factor in influencing consumers' intents to re-use the same goods or services is also noted by Azizah and Firdaus (2024). This study demonstrates that in a contemporary setting, WOM and E-WOM tactics necessitate flexible and creative methods in order to foster consumer confidence and goodwill.

WOM and E-WOM have been shown to have a major impact on consumer perceptions and purchase decisions in a variety of scenarios, according to the findings of the literature analysis. WOM communication is now faster and more widely disseminated through digital media due to modernization and technological advancements. The success of WOM and E-WOM tactics is influenced by elements like trust, relationship quality, price perception, and product quality.

Prior study suggests that in order to better build marketing strategies, it is necessary to comprehend these dynamics in light of technical advancements and the digital world. Therefore, by taking into account the dynamics of shifting consumer behavior and technology improvements, this research attempts to explore deeper into the relevance of WOM and E-WOM in the present era.

RESEARCH METHOD

The following table outlines the research methodology employed in this study. This methodology focuses on synthesizing previous research to explore the relevance of *Word of Mouth* (WOM) and *Electronic Word of Mouth* (E-WOM) strategies in the era of modernization.

Research Methodology Component	Description	References
Research Approach	The study adopts a qualitative approach with a literature review method to synthesize prior research findings.	Creswell (2014); Booth et al. (2016)
Research Type	Qualitative research utilizing systematic literature review .	Booth et al. (2016)
Research Objective	- To synthesize existing research on the role of WOM and E-WOM in the era of modernization.	-
Data Collection Method	Data is collected from academic journal databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, JSTOR, ProQuest, and ResearchGate.	Creswell (2014); Cheung & Thadani (2012)
Keywords for Literature Search	<i>Word of Mouth (WOM)</i> , <i>Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM)</i> , modernization, social media, consumer behavior, trust, and technology.	Cheung & Thadani (2012)
Literature Selection Criteria	Articles published between 2019 and 2024 with a focus on WOM, E-WOM, consumer behavior, social media, and modernization trends.	Booth et al. (2016); Cheung & Thadani (2012)
Analysis Method	Thematic analysis is applied to identify common themes and patterns across studies.	Braun & Clarke (2006)
Stages of Analysis	1. Identifying and collecting relevant literature. 2. Analyzing themes and patterns from selected articles.	Booth et al. (2016); Braun & Clarke (2006)

Research Methodology Component	Description	References
	3. Synthesizing findings to create a conceptual framework.	
Data Sources	Peer-reviewed journals, academic studies, and case studies focused on the context of WOM, E-WOM, consumer trust, social media, and modernization.	Booth et al. (2016); Cheung & Thadani (2012)
Key Variables Analyzed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WOM and E-WOM strategies - Trust - Social media influence - Technology's role in WOM - Consumer behavior patterns 	Firdaus & Mulyanto (2020); Nofikasari et al. (2024)
Expected Outcome	An integrated conceptual framework that illustrates the relationship between WOM, E-WOM, consumer trust, social media, and modernization trends.	Firdaus & Mulyanto (2020); Nofikasari et al. (2024)
Key Literature for Analysis	Relevant journals include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Journal of Business and Economic Insights</i> - <i>Jurnal Bisnis: Teori dan Implementasi</i> - <i>International Journal of Economics, Management and Accounting</i> 	Firdaus & Mulyanto (2020); Jatmiko (2022)

Explanation of Methodology Components

Research Approach:

The study uses a qualitative research approach with a systematic **literature review** method to evaluate and synthesize existing studies relevant to the research topic.

Literature Search and Selection:

Relevant studies were identified by searching academic databases such as **Google Scholar, Scopus, JSTOR, ProQuest, and ResearchGate** using specific keywords (*Word of Mouth, Electronic Word of Mouth, modernization, social media, consumer trust, etc.*).

Thematic Analysis:

A thematic analysis method was applied to identify common themes, patterns, and relationships across various studies to derive a conceptual framework for understanding the research problem (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Data Analysis Process:

1. Identification of key literature from multiple sources.
2. Categorization of literature into themes.
3. Analysis of relationships between WOM, E-WOM, trust, social media, and technological changes.

RESULTS

This section presents the results of the literature review's analysis. Key findings about the applicability of Word of Mouth (WOM) and Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) tactics in the modern era were found by synthesizing pertinent research studies. The findings shed light on the variables affecting these tactics, how they relate to developments in technology, and how they affect customer behavior and purchase choices.

1. The Function of E-WOM and WOM in the Age of Modernization

WOM and E-WOM are important communication tactics that have been modified for the digital era, according to the study's findings. Consumer perceptions and buying decisions are significantly influenced by both WOM and E-WOM (Firdaus & Mulyanto, 2020). WOM initiatives are now mostly carried out digitally as E-WOM, which provides a quicker and more expansive contact channel for customers, due to technology advancements and a greater dependence on social media platforms.

The results are consistent with those of Nofikasari, Nurhayati, and Firdaus (2024), who highlighted how E-WOM has transformed conventional word-of-mouth tactics through the use of online platforms. These platforms make it possible for information to reach a wider audience in a matter of seconds, which affects consumer behavior, purchase intentions, and brand trust.

Additionally, the idea that digital platforms enhance the impact of word-of-mouth (WOM) by facilitating the dissemination of both favorable and unfavorable customer experiences is supported by Jatmiko (2022).

2. Social Media's Impact on WOM and E-WOM

E-WOM communication has been shown to be significantly influenced by social media. According to research, social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube play a key role in the spread of word-of-mouth in contemporary consumer behavior (Jatmiko, 2022). On these platforms, customers often express their thoughts, evaluations, and experiences, giving marketers the chance to interact with their target market.

Social media improves E-WOM's reach, speed, and interaction while also enabling brands to react to input instantly, as noted by Nofikasari et al. (2024). Similar

findings were made by Firdaus and Setyarini (2022), who discovered that social media platforms promote loyalty and trust by boosting customer interaction and facilitating open conversation. According to these results, businesses should strategically use social media platforms to improve their E-WOM tactics and cultivate relationships with customers.

3. Elements Affecting E-WOM and WOM Techniques

A number of factors affecting the effectiveness of WOM and E-WOM techniques were found by the literature synthesis, including:

- a) **Consumer Trust** The effectiveness of WOM and E-WOM communication was found to be significantly influenced by consumer trust. Firdaus and Firdaus (2024) discovered that trust mediates the relationship between E-WOM and repurchase intentions, highlighting its function in promoting positive consumer behavior and brand loyalty. Customers are more inclined to depend on E-WOM-shared information when making decisions about what to buy.
- b) **Relationship Quality** Building solid, high-quality relationships with customers is crucial to producing positive word-of-mouth (WOM), according to Firdaus & Mulyanto (2020). Customer happiness, loyalty, and the desire to tell others about good experiences are all impacted by the quality of a relationship.
- c) **Perceived Utility and Usability** Perceived utility and perceived ease of use were found to be significant determinants of online buying behavior by Lestari et al. (2024). These factors have an impact on how customers interact with E-WOM communication, particularly when they base their decisions on social media or online reviews.
- d) **Product Quality and Price Perception** Product quality and price perception have a big impact on how WOM spreads. Firdaus, Setyarini, and Ardi (2022) claim that customers are more likely to communicate positive word-of-mouth (WOM) experiences and impact other people's purchasing decisions when they believe a product is of good quality and is competitively priced.

These results highlight how effective WOM and E-WOM tactics rely on establishing credibility, utilizing social media interaction, and taking into account elements like cost, product quality, and ease of digital interaction.

4. The Connection Between Consumer Behavior, E-WOM, and WOM

The results of the investigation showed a significant correlation between customer purchase decisions and WOM/E-WOM communication tactics. According to research by Nofikasari et al. (2024), good E-WOM increases consumer confidence, which in turn raises purchase intentions. In a similar vein, Jatmiko (2022) discovered that E-WOM has a significant impact on a customer's choice of destination, especially when it comes to travel and tourism. Furthermore, trust is essential for enhancing the connection between E-WOM and repurchase intents, according to Firdaus & Firdaus (2024). This suggests that businesses looking to maximize E-WOM tactics should give top priority to trust-building practices including openness, consistency, and responsiveness to customer input.

5. How Technology and Modernization Shape E-WOM Dynamics

The creation and dissemination of WOM and E-WOM have been impacted by modernization and technical developments. Social media platforms, smartphone apps, and other technological integrations have made it possible for customers to express their ideas virtually instantly. According to research, modernization and technology improvements boost the effectiveness of WOM and E-WOM tactics by expanding their reach and speed (Nofikasari et al., 2024).

Modern E-WOM trends are largely driven by technologies like mobile wallets and online payment systems (like OVO and Lazada). According to Firdaus & Firdaus (2024), E-WOM can have a big influence on consumers' intents to re-use digital platforms for transactions when it is mediated by trust.

These results demonstrate that in order for firms to be competitive in the current market climate, their strategies must be in line with technology advancements.

Tabel 1. Summary of Findings

Key Findings	Supporting Literature
WOM and E-WOM are central to consumer behavior and strategic marketing in the modernization era.	Firdaus & Mulyanto (2020); Nofikasari et al. (2024)
Social media platforms amplify E-WOM's reach and effectiveness by enabling fast and wide communication.	Jatmiko (2022); Firdaus & Setyarini (2022)
Trust is a significant mediator between E-WOM and consumer repurchase intentions.	Firdaus & Firdaus (2024)
Relationship quality and consumer satisfaction impact WOM communication.	Firdaus & Mulyanto (2020)
Perceived usefulness, ease of use, and product quality strongly influence consumer decision-making through WOM and E-WOM.	Lestari et al. (2024); Firdaus, Setyarini, & Ardi (2022)
Modernization and technological innovation (e.g., mobile platforms) have expanded the scope and speed of E-WOM strategies.	Nofikasari et al. (2024); Firdaus & Firdaus (2024)

According to the findings, electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM) and word-of-mouth (WOM) are crucial tactics in the present era. Social media, perceived simplicity of use, relationship quality, trust, and technology advancements all have an impact on these tactics. The findings highlight how crucial social media platforms and technology advancements are to improving E-WOM tactics that affect customer involvement, trust, and decision-making. Additionally, the results show that developing trust is essential to encouraging loyalty and gaining an edge in online markets. These revelations advance our knowledge of how marketing tactics and customer decision-making are impacted by technological progress.

DISCUSSION

The results of the literature review on Word of Mouth (WOM) and Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) tactics in the present period are interpreted and placed in perspective in the discussion section. This section looks at the data's ramifications, how they support or contradict accepted ideas, and the wider effects of technology on marketing techniques, consumer behavior, and corporate tactics.

1. Relevance of WOM and E-WOM in the Modernization Era

The results unequivocally demonstrate the importance of word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM) in today's marketing environment, especially in light of the modernization fueled by digital technologies and social media platforms. The emergence of E-WOM in the digital age has caused a substantial evolution in WOM, which is typically thought of as interpersonal communication. According to Firdaus & Mulyanto (2020), E-WOM provides a quicker and more comprehensive way to share customer experiences, virtually instantly reaching a worldwide audience.

Consumers in the digital age actively contribute to the reputation of brands rather than being passive recipients of marketing messages (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). Customers now have more power thanks to the transition from traditional to electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM), particularly in terms of their capacity to affect the opinions and choices of others. This is consistent with research by Nofikasari et al. (2024), who contend that E-WOM is a major influence on consumer behavior and has a big impact on buying decisions.

E-WOM increases the speed and reach of customer opinions, giving brands more opportunities to communicate with their audiences than conventional WOM, which was usually limited in scope and involved face-to-face encounters. In order to preserve brand reputation and foster customer loyalty, companies must successfully utilize both traditional and electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM) (Jatmiko, 2022).

2. Influence of Social Media Platforms

Social media platforms have emerged as vital avenues for the spread of E-WOM, according to the study. Customers can readily share their experiences with brands, goods, or services on social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok. E-WOM has become a more potent marketing technique due to social media's capacity to link consumers globally.

This conclusion is supported by earlier research by Jatmiko (2022), which found that viral marketing campaigns—which are frequently fueled by user-generated material on social media—have a big impact on how consumers perceive products. Additionally, social media facilitates direct communication and real-time feedback between brands and customers, which builds loyalty and trust (Firdaus & Setyarini, 2022). Social media's interactive features help brands and customers build deeper connections, which raises the legitimacy of E-WOM posted on these channels. Furthermore, because it originates from peers or other customers rather than the business itself, E-WOM on social media is seen as more genuine. Peer-to-peer communication is frequently regarded as more reliable, particularly when it comes to making purchases (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). WOM is becoming one of the most important components of contemporary marketing strategy since social media has increased its influence.

3. The Role of Consumer Trust

The importance of consumer trust in the success of both WOM and E-WOM tactics is among the study's most important conclusions. Firdaus & Firdaus (2024) and Nofikasari et al. (2024) have shown that trust is an important mediator in the association between E-WOM and repurchase intentions. If consumers believe the source, be it an influencer or a peer, they are more likely to act on E-WOM communications. Additionally, trust in

E-WOM builds brand credibility, which raises buy intent and consumer engagement. Customers are more likely to be convinced by information they believe to be reliable, according to the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) theory, which is supported by this study (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). E-WOM has a higher perceived level of credibility because it is frequently shared by individuals and peers rather than the brand itself. By directing their purchases and encouraging brand loyalty, this in turn affects customer behavior.

The importance of trust increases in the current marketing environment, as customers are inundated with marketing messages on a regular basis. Brands must concentrate on establishing trust with their customers through open communication, excellent customer service, and the continuous provision of pleasant brand experiences, as consumers depend more and more on E-WOM as a decision-making tool (Firdaus & Setyarini, 2022).

4. Relationship Quality and Consumer Satisfaction

A key determinant in the success of WOM and E-WOM strategies is relationship quality. As found by Firdaus & Mulyanto (2020), the quality of the relationship between brands and consumers significantly influences the likelihood of positive WOM. When consumers are satisfied with a brand's products or services, they are more likely to share their experiences with others, both offline and online.

This finding highlights the importance of fostering long-term relationships with consumers, rather than focusing solely on one-off transactions. Brands that invest in relationship-building strategies, such as personalized customer service, loyalty programs, and post-purchase support, are more likely to benefit from positive WOM and sustained E-WOM.

Additionally, **consumer satisfaction** plays a crucial role in the WOM process. As Lestari et al. (2024) observed, when consumers perceive a product or service as valuable and meeting their expectations, they are more likely to engage in positive E-WOM. This reinforces the need for businesses to focus on delivering high-quality products and ensuring customer satisfaction to stimulate organic word-of-mouth promotion.

Technological Advances and Their Impact on WOM and E-WOM

Modernization and technological advancements have fundamentally changed the dynamics of WOM and E-WOM. With the proliferation of mobile technology, e-commerce platforms, and digital payment systems, consumers now have more tools at their disposal to share their experiences and opinions (Nofikasari et al., 2024). The increased reliance on smartphones and digital platforms has enabled consumers to create and disseminate E-WOM messages instantly, often influencing large audiences in real time.

The findings indicate that businesses must align their strategies with these technological shifts to stay competitive. As Firdaus & Firdaus (2024) argue, integrating E-WOM into digital marketing strategies such as through social media campaigns, influencer partnerships, and online reviews can significantly boost brand visibility and consumer engagement. Brands that fail to leverage these technologies risk falling behind in the digital marketplace.

In particular, the rise of digital wallets and e-commerce platforms, such as Lazada and OVO, has created new avenues for E-WOM generation. As consumers engage with these platforms and share their experiences, the brands behind these services benefit from the authentic, peer-driven communication that E-WOM facilitates. Brands that successfully incorporate these technological innovations into their marketing strategies can enhance consumer trust and loyalty, ultimately driving long-term success (Firdaus & Firdaus, 2024).

Implications for Practice

Based on the findings, several implications for practice can be drawn:

Leverage E-WOM in Digital Marketing: Brands should actively engage with consumers on social media platforms to encourage E-WOM. By creating shareable content, responding to customer feedback, and fostering online communities, brands can increase their reach and influence. **Focus on Building Trust:** Trust is the foundation of successful WOM and E-WOM strategies. Brands must prioritize transparency, authenticity, and customer-centric service to establish and maintain trust with their consumers.

Enhance Relationship Quality: Brands should invest in long-term relationships with their customers, providing exceptional experiences and personalized interactions to foster loyalty and encourage positive WOM. **Adopt Technological Advancements:** With the continued rise of digital platforms and mobile technologies, businesses should embrace technological tools that facilitate the creation and sharing of E-WOM, such as review platforms, influencer marketing, and customer engagement tools.

CONCLUSION

The study demonstrates that WOM and E-WOM are integral to modern marketing strategies, particularly in the era of digital transformation. The role of social media, the importance of consumer trust, and the influence of technological advancements all contribute to the effectiveness of WOM and E-WOM strategies. To remain competitive, businesses must harness these strategies by adapting to the digital landscape, focusing on relationship-building, and fostering trust among consumers. As consumer behavior continues to evolve in the digital age, E-WOM will play an increasingly significant role in shaping the future of marketing and consumer decision-making.

LIMITATION

While this study provides valuable insights into the relevance of *Word of Mouth (WOM)* and *Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM)* strategies in the era of modernization, there are certain limitations that should be acknowledged:

1. Scope Limited to Literature Review:

This study relied exclusively on a systematic literature review methodology, synthesizing previous research findings from academic journals and credible databases. As a result, the findings are limited to existing research and may not incorporate primary data or empirical observations.

2. Timeframe of Reviewed Literature:

The study focused on research published between **2019 and 2024**, which means that any relevant studies published before or beyond this period were excluded. Although the timeframe was intentionally selected to align with recent trends and technological advancements, this may have excluded insights from earlier studies that could add additional context.

3. Technological Rapid Evolution:

The rapid pace of technological changes and social media innovations means that findings based on current trends may become outdated quickly as consumer behavior, technological platforms, and market strategies continue to evolve.

4. Exclusion of Other Relevant Factors:

While key factors like trust, social media, relationship quality, and technological advances were analyzed, other contextual or psychological factors influencing WOM

and E-WOM were not explored in-depth. This may result in a partial view of the broader ecosystem affecting WOM and E-WOM strategies.

5. Quality and Availability of Data:

The findings are dependent on the quality of available studies. Variations in study methodologies, data quality, and theoretical approaches in the reviewed literature could influence the synthesis process and findings' reliability.

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DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors of this study declare that there are no conflicts of interest, financial or otherwise, that could have influenced the research findings, analysis, or conclusions presented in this study. All efforts were made to ensure the integrity, transparency, and objectivity of this research by adhering to academic and ethical research standards. If any potential conflicts of interest arise in the future, they will be disclosed promptly to maintain transparency and uphold the credibility of the research.

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