

The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth Communication Motivation on Sociolla App Review Columns Towards Gen Z Attitude

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the influence of electronic word of mouth communication motivation on review columns within the Sociolla app on the attitude of Generation Z. Data collection and research for this thesis were conducted over a period of approximately 6 months. Research participants involved Generation Z aged 13-28 years (born between 1997 and 2012) who were active users of the Sociolla app and had engaged with its review section. The analysis technique used was quantitative explanatory with an online survey. The findings of this study suggest that eWOM communication motives in the Sociolla app's review section can increase the likelihood of a positive attitude by up to 12 times. However, the research also shows that in the absence of eWOM, an individual's attitude tends to be negative. The implications of this research are expected to serve as a basis for developing more effective promotional strategies for similar brands or e-commerce, as well as contributing to the research literature on the utilization of electronic word of mouth.

Keywords: *electronic word of mouth, e-commerce, Sociolla, review columns, attitude*

INTRODUCTION

This research investigates how electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on platforms like Sociolla influences Generation Z's attitudes toward beauty products. Grounded in the understanding that eWOM, as a form of marketing communication involving online consumer experience exchange, can shape attitudes and perceptions. eWOM is a credible form of communication vital for building a positive brand image and consumer trust, often categorized as Marketing Public Relations (MPR). MPR, as defined by Thomas L. Harris, involves "planning and evaluating programs that encourage purchase and customer through credible communication of information and impressions that identify companies and their products with the needs and concerns of customers" (Ruslan, 2020). Essentially, MPR leverages structured PR activities to achieve marketing objectives by providing information to enhance public understanding and knowledge of products or services, rather than focusing solely on sales. More broadly, the process of conveying product or service information to a target market falls under marketing communication. Firmansyah (2020) defines this as the

means by which companies inform, persuade, and remind consumers about their products and brands. Tjiptono (2015:219) describes it as "marketing activities that seek to disseminate information, influence or persuade, and remind target markets about the company and its products so that they are willing to accept, buy, and be loyal to the products offered by the company concerned." This makes marketing communication a critical strategy for building relationships with target audiences.

In the context of marketing communication, strategies can be implemented through various instruments known as marketing communication tools. According to Burrow (2002), these tools include advertising, sales promotion, events and experiences, public relations and publicity, direct marketing, word of mouth (WOM), and direct selling. In WOM communication, the public discusses a brand's or company's products or services with their friends, family, or other close contacts. Lang & Hyde (2013) define Word of Mouth (WOM) as "a form of communication where non-commercial individuals share information or opinions about a brand, product, or service with others.". Word of Mouth (WOM) communication is said to have higher effectiveness in marketing activities because it is based on the public's personal experience in using a company's product or service. WOM can spread beyond traditional word-of-mouth to social media and the internet, which is known as electronic word of mouth (eWOM). eWOM communication is any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the internet (Hennig-Thurau & Walsh, 2003). Christy (in Tommi Wijaya, 2014:13) argues that eWOM communication allows consumers to gain product and service information not only from those close to them, but also from individuals across the globe who have experience with those products or services. Furthermore, Abrantes et al (in Fitriyani & Nanda, 2022) state that eWOM can occur on various online platforms, including forums, websites, review sites, social media, and other mediated communication tools. There are several motives why individuals read eWOM disseminated across various online platforms. According to Hennig-Thurau & Walsh (2003), these motives include "obtaining buying-relevant information, a social orientation through information, community membership, remuneration dan to learn how a product is to be consumed." A motive itself is defined as "general drivers that direct a consumer's behavior toward attaining his or her needs" (Hennig-Thurau & Walsh, 2003). Thus, eWOM in the form of product reviews provides an opportunity for audiences to share or acquire information that reveals product quality and risks before they take any action.

According to research conducted by Rahayu and Sudrajat (2024), eWOM influences respondents' attitudes. Eagly & Chaiken (1993) state that attitudes can be expressed in three components: cognitive, affective, and conative. Consumer attitudes can be influenced by personal experiences, relatives or friends, family, direct marketing, and mass media (Edyansyah & Ahyar, 2021). One platform where individuals can receive informational stimuli is e-commerce. This is possible because e-commerce platforms feature review sections that allow all app users to view comments and ratings from other users about desired

products. Based on a Statista survey reprocessed by the Ministry of Trade (2024), consumers frequently use e-commerce to purchase beauty and personal care products, ranking it second at 49.73%. There are several e-commerce platforms that offer more specialized products. Examples include Sociolla, Sephora, BeautyHaul, and others that specifically provide beauty and personal care products. The 2023 ZAP Beauty Index survey showed that e-commerce is increasingly popular for Indonesian women seeking beauty information, ranking third with a 47.3% increase since 2019. Sociolla, a growing beauty e-commerce platform founded in 2015 under PT Social Bella, offers over 5,000 original and BPOM-certified makeup, skincare, and personal care products through collaborations with national distributors and official brand owners. With product safety being the top concern for 77.5% of Gen X to Gen Z consumers (Zap Beauty Index, 2024), Sociolla is highly trusted due to its direct partnerships with beauty product manufacturers. Sociolla's app offers key features like transactions, favorites, product descriptions, ratings, and user reviews. Users can also complete a Beauty Profile for personalized product and content recommendations. Consumers view reviewers as credible evaluators providing accurate product information (Thomas, et al, 2019), and Sociolla further enhances this with Expert Reviews from beauty professionals.

The digital age has significantly shifted consumer behavior, with Sociolla's review feature empowering the public, especially Gen Z, to prioritize personal recommendations over traditional advertising. This phenomenon highlights how review columns influence public opinion and shape attitudes, as e-WOM acts as a stimulus leading to a response. Therefore, this research focuses on Gen Z (13-28 years old, born 1997-2012) residing on Java island, aligning with the Indonesian Ministry of Health's (2009) age categories for early adolescence (12-16), late adolescence (17-25), and early adulthood (26-35). Gen Z are also known as a digitally native demographic highly influenced by peer recommendations and online reviews.

The research highlights the significance of e-commerce platforms, particularly beauty-specific ones like Sociolla, as key sources of information and eWOM due to their emphasis on product authenticity and user-generated content. Sociolla's unique features, including detailed review systems, user beauty profiles, and expert reviews, underscore its role in shaping consumer perceptions. Building on previous studies on eWOM's impact on consumer attitudes, this research seeks to understand how eWOM communication on Sociolla's review platform influences Gen Z's attitudes, acknowledging the profound shift towards online recommendations in the digital age.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketing Public Relations

Marketing Public Relations (MPR) merges Public Relations' goal of image building with marketing's objective of product selling, aiming to facilitate consumer purchases and satisfaction through effective communication about a company's image and products (Kriyantono, 2008; Ruslan, 2020). Essentially, MPR is a marketing management function

focused on informing, educating, and fostering consumer understanding of a brand or product to enhance recall and competitive advantage (Floor & Raaij, 2011). Its functions include educating consumers on product use and benefits, launching and revitalizing brands, organizing events to support brands, enhancing public service by improving information access and addressing complaints, and assisting media with product testing and tours (Wasesa, 2011).

Marketing Communications

Marketing communication combines marketing's focus on value transfer through exchange and communication's role in conveying shared meaning, essentially functioning as a management process where organizations engage with their audiences (Chitty et al., 2008). Its core purpose is to disseminate information, influence, persuade, and remind target markets about a company and its products to foster acceptance, purchase, and loyalty (Tjiptono, 2015). This strategic approach helps organizations understand their audience characteristics, set targets, and establish market positions, ultimately informing consumers about how, why, by whom, where, and when a product is used (Firmansyah, 2020). Key elements of marketing communication include the communicator (sender of the message), communicant (message receiver), the message itself, potential barriers to reception, the goal of achieving customer purchase, feedback from the communicant to gauge effectiveness, and the product as the central element requiring thorough understanding by the communicator.

Electronic Word Of Mouth

Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) is defined as online marketing communication where consumers share positive or negative experiences about products or services (Ismagilova et al., 2017). It encompasses any statement made by potential, actual, or former customers regarding a product or company, accessible to many via the internet (Hennig-Thurau & Walsh, 2003). This communication occurs across various online platforms like forums, review sites, and social media, enabling consumers to share opinions beyond their immediate social circles (Abrantes et al. in Fitriyani & Nanda, 2022). According to Hennig-Thurau & Walsh (2003), motivations for reading Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) include: obtaining buying-relevant information to reduce purchase risk and search time; a social orientation through information to confirm purchasing decisions and evaluate social prestige; community membership to engage with shared consumption passions and learn about new products; and to learn how a product is to be consumed. The motivation of "remuneration" was excluded from this study due to its negative impact on communication behavior in prior research and its irrelevance in the context of Sociolla's review section, where readers don't receive incentives.

Attitudes

Attitude is a predisposition to behavior comprising three components: cognitive, affective, and conative (Azwar, 2015). The cognitive component reflects an individual's knowledge and beliefs about an object, formed through experience, which shapes their expectations. The affective component pertains to an individual's feelings or emotions towards an object, often expressed as like or dislike, and is crucial in shaping attitudes. Finally, the conative component describes an individual's behavioral inclination consistent with their attitude; positive feelings lead to praise or utilization, while negative feelings result in criticism or rejection.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a quantitative explanatory research approach, employing an online survey with questionnaires to collect primary data. According to Priyono (2016, p. 38), explanatory research is conducted to find explanations for *why* an event or phenomenon occurs, with the ultimate outcome being a description of causal (cause-and-effect) relationships. The sample comprised 100 Gen Z (born in 1997-2012) individuals from Java Island who had viewed the Sociolla app's review section, selected via non-probability sampling. Data analysis was performed using SPSS, incorporating descriptive analysis with a Likert scale. In this study, the research criteria (likert) will be weighted and analyzed as follows:

Table 1 Likert Scale

Response Option	Score
Strongly Disagree (SD)	1
Disagree (D)	2
Neutral (N)	3
Agree (A)	4
Strongly Agree (SA)	5

Since the researcher used a 5-point Likert scale, there will be 3 class intervals to describe the mean value for each variable in this study. The results for the class intervals are as follows:

Table 2 Interval Class

Variable	Classification	Intervals
Electronic Word-of-Mouth Communication Motives	Low	1,00 < 2,33
	Moderate	2,34 < 3,66
	High	3,67 < 5,00
Attitudes	Low	1,00 < 2,33
	Moderate	2,34 < 3,66
	High	3,67 < 5,00

On top of that, this study also uses other data analysis testing such as reliability and validity testing, normality and linearity testing, logistic regression, and Chi-Square tests to explore the influence of electronic word-of-mouth on Gen Z's attitudes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Validity Testing

A questionnaire is considered valid if its statements accurately measure what it intends to (Sugiyono, 2018). This study's validity test results for two variables, electronic word-of-mouth communication motives and attitude, are as follows.

Table 3 eWOM Validity Data

Variabel	Indicator	Item	R hitung	R tabel	Details
Electronic Word-of-Mouth Communication Motives	<i>Obtaining buying-relevant information</i>	1	0,452	0,163	Valid
		2	0,211	0,163	Valid
		3	0,331	0,163	Valid
		4	0,495	0,163	Valid
	<i>A social orientation through information</i>	1	0,562	0,163	Valid
		2	0,390	0,163	Valid
		3	0,218	0,163	Valid
		4	0,630	0,163	Valid

Variabel	Indicator	Item	R hitung	R tabel	Details
	<i>Community membership</i>	1	0,561	0,163	Valid
		2	0,641	0,163	Valid
		3	0,594	0,163	Valid
		4	0,657	0,163	Valid
	<i>To learn how a product is to be consumed</i>	1	0,581	0,163	Valid
		2	0,520	0,163	Valid
		3	0,626	0,163	Valid
		4	0,646	0,163	Valid

For electronic word-of-mouth communication motives, validity was tested on four indicators: "obtaining buying-relevant information," "A social orientation through information," "Community membership," and "To learn how a product is to be consumed." Each indicator had four questionnaire items. Using Pearson's Product Moment correlation with an r-table value of 0.163 (at 0.1 significance for n=100 respondents), all statements for this variable were found to be valid, as their calculated r-values exceeded the r-table value.

Table 4 Attitude Validity Data

Variable	Indicator	Item	R-values	R-table	Details
Attitude	Cognitive	1	0,582	0,163	Valid
		2	0,612	0,163	Valid
	Affective	1	0,676	0,163	Valid
		2	0,634	0,163	Valid
	conative	1	0,568	0,163	Valid
		2	0,552	0,163	Valid

For the attitude variable, validity was tested on three indicators: cognitive, affective, and conative, each with two questionnaire items. Similarly, using Pearson's Product Moment correlation with an r-table value of 0.163, all statements for this variable were also found to be valid, as their calculated r-values surpassed the r-table value.

Reliability Testing

Reliability testing assesses whether a measurement tool is stable, dependable, and consistent. A tool is considered reliable if it consistently yields the same results or answers for the same phenomenon, even when used repeatedly (Kriyantono, 2010). The following are the reliability test results for the two variables in this study: electronic word-of-mouth communication motives and attitude.

Table 5 eWOM Reliability Data

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0,815	16

For the electronic word-of-mouth communication motives variable, reliability was assessed across four indicators: "obtaining buying-relevant information," "A social orientation through information," "Community membership," and "To learn how a product is to be consumed." Each indicator had four questionnaire items, resulting in an N of 16. Using Cronbach's Alpha, an instrument is considered reliable if its Alpha value is greater than 0.60 (Ghozali, 2005). Based on these results, all statements for this variable are reliable.

Table 6 Attitude Reliability Data

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0,645	6

Similarly, for the attitude variable, reliability was assessed across three indicators—cognitive, affective, and conative—each with two questionnaire items, resulting in an N of 6. This reliability test also used Cronbach's Alpha, with a threshold greater than 0.60. The findings indicate that all statements for the attitude variable are reliable.

Logistic Regression

Variables in the Equation

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a x	2.488	.858	8.405	1	.004	12.035
Constant	-7.587	3.361	5.097	1	.024	.001

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: x.

Figure 1 Logistic regression test

Based on the test results, the regression equation used is $P(Y) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1$ or Positive Attitude = $-7.587 + 2.499 \times \text{eWOM}$. Here, Attitude (Y) is the dependent binary variable, predicting the probability of a positive attitude, while eWOM (X) is the independent predictor. The eWOM coefficient (B = 2.488) is positive, indicating that each one-unit

increase in eWOM leads to a 2.488 increase in the log-odds of having a positive attitude. The significance level ($p = 0.004$) is less than 0.05 (and even less than 0.01), confirming that eWOM is highly statistically significant in predicting the model. The odds ratio ($\text{Exp}(B) = 12.035$) signifies that a one-unit increase in eWOM score increases the consumer's odds of having a positive attitude by 12 times. This demonstrates a positive and significant influence of eWOM on attitude. For instance, one additional exposure to positive reviews drastically increases the chance of a positive attitude. The constant ($B = -7.587$) represents the log-odds of a positive attitude when eWOM is zero. Its significance ($\text{Sig.} = 0.024$; $p < 0.05$) means this baseline log-odds is statistically different from zero. As Sheskin (2003) notes, in logistic regression with one predictor, B shows the increase (or decrease) in log-odds for each one-unit predictor increase. Thus, when eWOM is zero, the log-odds of a positive attitude are -7.587 (odds of 0.001), indicating a very low baseline probability of a positive attitude without eWOM's influence.

Chi-Square Hypothesis Test

This research uses the following hypotheses:

- H_0 : There's no influence of electronic word of mouth communication motives in Sociolla app reviews on Gen Z's attitudes.
- H_1 : There's an influence of electronic word of mouth communication motives in Sociolla app reviews on Gen Z's attitudes.

Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients

		Chi-square	df	Sig.
Step 1	Step	9.642	1	.002
	Block	9.642	1	.002
	Model	9.642	1	.002

Figure 2 Chi-Square Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis testing compares the significance level (sig) with a p-value error rate of 5%. If $p\text{-value} \leq \alpha$, H_0 is rejected, indicating a significant influence/relationship (H_1 is accepted). If $p\text{-value} > \alpha$, H_0 isn't rejected, meaning no significant influence/relationship. Based on the Chi-Square Hypothesis Test (Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients), with a significance value of 0.002, which is less than the 0.05 significance level, the model's hypothesis test is statistically significant overall. This means there is a significant influence or relationship between the independent variables in the model and the dependent variable. In other words, electronic word of mouth communication motives in Sociolla app reviews do influence Gen Z's attitudes.

Electronic Word Of Mouth

Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) Communication Motives consists of 16 statements/items across 4 indicators. Theoretically, eWOM is defined as any statement made by potential, actual, or former customers regarding a product or company, accessible to many via the internet (Hennig-Thurau & Walsh, 2003). These motives are detailed in four main indicators, according to Hennig-Thurau & Walsh (2003): obtaining buying-relevant information, a social orientation through information, community membership, and to learn how a product is to be consumed.

Table 7 eWOM Variable Data

Indicators	Mean	Total Mean
Obtaining buying-relevant information	4.34	4.3
A social orientation through information	4.14	
Community membership	4.12	
To learn how a product is to be consumed	4.22	

Among the four eWOM indicators, "obtaining buying-relevant information" has the highest average score. This indicator aligns with Schiffman and Kanuk's (in Hennig-Thurau & Walsh, 2003) concept of reducing purchase-related risk and search time. Conversely, the lowest average score is found in the "community membership" indicator, which refers to *"the public's tendency to turn to the Internet to interact with others who share the same 'consumption passion'" and "can also help the public to learn about new products on the market"* (Hennig-Thurau & Walsh, 2003).

The high score for "obtaining buying-relevant information" reflects the primary function of online reviews: to provide crucial details for purchase decisions. Statements like "I read reviews on Sociolla because it helps me reduce my doubts in making the right purchasing decision" (mean 4.45) specifically highlight that risk reduction is a key motivator. Consumers in the beauty market, which often involves high risk due to skin interaction, price, and personal preference, heavily rely on peer information to reduce uncertainty and maximize product utility. Sociolla's public relations efforts are vital in ensuring accurate and reliable product information, especially through eWOM in review sections, aligning with MPR's role in educating consumers. By offering honest, user-friendly review platforms with features like beauty profiles and expert reviews, Sociolla are able to build high credibility.

Conversely, the "community membership" indicator focuses on a sense of belonging and community participation. However, the statement "I feel like I'm a part of the beauty community when reading and writing reviews on Sociolla" received the lowest average score (3.88) among all eWOM statements. This suggests that while users may feel some connection

or gain information from the community, the feeling of active, deep involvement in a virtual community is weaker than the motivation for product utility information or social validation. Users likely view Sociolla as an efficient information platform rather than a place for deep community interaction or active social identity building, leading to more passive membership. The presence of points as rewards for reviews also indirectly supports users who primarily seek personal benefits.

Overall, the questionnaire findings indicate that informational benefits and psychological validation (Risk Reduction, Reduction of Search Time, Dissonance Reduction) are the primary drivers for consumers reading reviews on Sociolla, followed by the need to learn how to use products effectively ("To learn how a product is to be consumed"). Although a social aspect exists, the feeling of belonging to a virtual community appears to be the least dominant motivation compared to other more transactional or individual-outcome-oriented review functions. These results align with Hennig-Thurau's (2003) study of German platform users, which showed that readers prioritized informational content for better purchasing decisions and faster searches. While their findings also noted that virtual opinion platforms can serve as "social positioning" or virtual community infrastructure, it was concluded that the weight of informational content is more important than the virtual community aspect, which users utilize only occasionally. In other words, despite "community membership" being identified as a motivation, a stronger and more fundamental motivation for consumers seeking eWOM are to obtain purchase-relevant information and understand product usage. Thus, while important for some, "community membership" is not a top priority for the majority of users seeking online information. Many consumers are primarily interested in the product information itself without needing to be part of a larger community.

Attitudes

Attitudes are measured through 6 statements/items categorized under 3 indicators. Theoretically, attitude is defined as *a tendency to act, perceive, think, and feel when encountering objects, ideas, situations, or values* (Rakhmat, 2011). These tendencies are further broken down into three main indicators: cognitive, affective, and conative.

Table 8 Attitude Variable Data

Indicators	Mean	Total Mean
Cognitive	4.36	4.34
Affective	4.3	
Conative	4.24	

In this study, the attitude being referred to and investigated is that of Gen Z aged 13-28 years old. Therefore, the researcher will also perform a cross tabulation for attitude

indicators with age classifications according to the Ministry of Health (Kemenkes) 2009 data. Below are the results of the cross tabulation between the attitude variable and respondent age.

Table 9 Cross Tabulation of attitude indicators with age classifications

Age Classifications	Cognitive	Affective	Conative
12 - 16 years old	3.50	3.50	3.50
17 - 25 years old	4.38	4.31	4.22
26 - 35 years old	4.32	4.36	4.43
Total Mean	4.37	4.31	4.24

Crosstabulation was also performed with the gender of the research respondents, as shown in the following table:

Table 10 Cross Tabulation of attitude indicators with gender

Gender	Cognitive	Affective	Conative
Man	4.21	4.14	4.14
Woman	4.38	4.32	4.25
Grand Total	4.37	4.31	4.24

Among 100 respondents, the Cognitive indicator for attitude scored highest with an average of 4.36. This indicator reflects an individual's level of belief in an object, formed through their experiences, which then creates ideas or a knowledge base about that object (Azwar, 2011: p.23). Conversely, the Conative indicator was the lowest, representing an individual's behavioral tendencies aligned with their attitude towards an object (Azwar, 2011: p.23).

The high Cognitive score indicates users have a strong understanding of product reviews on Sociolla. This is supported by statements like "I know the Soco by Sociolla app contains many product reviews" (mean 4.42; 94% agree/strongly agree) and "I know the products reviewed on the Soco by Sociolla app" (mean 4.31; 90% agree/strongly agree). This confirms users are highly aware of Sociolla as a rich source of review information and the types of products reviewed. This aligns with Chaplin's (2002) view of cognition as recognition and demonstrates the success of Sociolla's app design and brand strategy, including Marketing Public Relations (MPR) efforts, in communicating the review feature and shaping public perception.

Meanwhile, the Conative indicator recorded the lowest average at 4.24, though still in the "high" category. This is supported by statements such as "I will buy products on Sociolla after seeing many product reviews there" (mean 4.36; 88% agree/strongly agree) and "I will buy products reviewed on the Soco by Sociolla app" (mean 4.12; 81% agree/strongly agree).

This suggests that while users have a strong intention to purchase highly-reviewed products on Sociolla, this intention isn't as high as their knowledge (Cognitive) or positive feelings (Affective). It indicates that despite successful PR in informing and educating the public, these efforts haven't significantly driven deeper active participation beyond passive information consumption.

When cross-tabulated by age, the 12-16 year-old group shows the lowest scores across all three attitude indicators. This group, considered early adolescents, is still developing their psychosocial identity (Saputri, 2014), leading to less mature knowledge, unstable preferences, and less independent purchase intentions for beauty products. Their uncertainty and reliance on peer groups explain their lower attitudes towards products and reviews on Sociolla. Conversely, the 17-25 year-old group demonstrates the highest Cognitive scores, indicating high awareness of review features. Their high Affective and Conative scores suggest reviews are effective in influencing their attitudes, as they are digital natives actively seeking and absorbing information. This is also because they are actively building preferences for skincare, experimenting with various brands and ingredients. However, through this trial-and-error, they eventually develop stable preferences as they mature. This maturity in preferences is why the early adult group (26-35 years old) exhibits a higher affective and conative mean compared to other age groups. This indicates that they are the strongest potential audience influenced by reviews. Their high cognitive understanding based on their previous experience translates into strong liking (affective) and very strong purchase intent (conative), likely valuing reviews as an efficient tool for effective decision-making given their experience and purchasing power.

When cross-tabulated by gender, Gen Z women consistently scored higher than Gen Z men across various indicators, including understanding, positive beliefs, and intent to act. This suggests women have a stronger grasp and more positive conviction towards products and platforms like Sociolla, possibly due to their proactive information-seeking. Conversely, traditional gender norms (Utami, 2024) can deter men from engaging with skincare, contributing to their lower scores, despite evolving societal views where men's appearance is increasingly valued (Pradani & Suhanti, 2020). Women's higher emotional connection and preferences for platforms like Sociolla's review section, aligning with the idea that women are more motivated by appearance (Ningsih & Bawono in Dewandari & Putri, 2021), further drive their stronger inclination to act, demonstrating a consistent alignment between their knowledge, feelings, and behavioral tendencies.

The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth Communication Motives on Attitude

Logistic regression and hypothesis testing confirm a significant influence of eWOM communication motives in Sociolla app reviews on Gen Z's attitudes. This means public motives for eWOM on Sociolla significantly influence attitude formation. Examining the average scores reveals that the highest indicator for eWOM communication motives is "Obtaining Buying-Relevant Information" (mean 4.34), while the lowest is "Community

Membership" (mean 4.12). For the attitude variable, the highest indicator is Cognitive (mean 4.37), and the lowest is Conative (mean 4.24). These findings highlight crucial aspects for Marketing Public Relations (MPR) and marketing communication strategies.

Sociolla's providing a review platform aligns with public relations goals to build and maintain corporate reputation by ensuring accurate and timely product information. This also serves an MPR function, as per Wasesa (2011), to provide consumer's education, whether it's about how to use products already launched, information on upcoming products, or understanding product benefits. The review media thus becomes a key channel for Sociolla to educate the public, offering added value beyond mere promotion. The ethics of effective marketing communication, as outlined by Jumriani (2022), requires tailoring messages to the target market, being honest about product offerings, and maintaining politeness in communication. This complexity necessitates well-planned strategies (Firmansyah, 2020) implemented through marketing communication tools. Sociolla leverages electronic word of mouth (eWOM), defined as any statement made by potential, actual, or former customers regarding a product or company, accessible to many via the internet (Hennig-Thurau & Walsh, 2003). This aligns with Ismagilova et al. (2017) who state eWOM is a marketing communication where consumers exchange positive or negative experiences via online media. In this research, it's specifically about Sociolla's review section, which is a form of eWOM. Abrantes et al (in Fitriyani & Nanda, 2022) further explain that eWOM occurs across various online platforms like forums and review sites.

Ideal information in review media should be honest, easy to understand, and ethically conveyed (Jumriani, 2022), a concept crucial for platform credibility. Sociolla demonstrates this by providing dedicated review columns, fostering honest eWOM where users freely express opinions. Features like beauty profiles and expert reviews further enhance credibility. As Yaniv et al. (2011) suggest, consumers are sensitive to similar opinions, as shared experiences boost reviewer credibility and trust. So, when the public reads reviews from users with similar issues or skin types, they perceive the reviews as credible and trustworthy, because it is rooted in someone's real experiences. If Sociolla fails to provide clear product information, it hinders its MPR functions, particularly educating consumers and developing public service (Wisesa, 2023). Unclear information reduces eWOM effectiveness and credibility. If product information is insufficient, the public will heavily rely on reviews. However, if reviews also lack basic information, public doubt will persist, potentially leading to delayed actions or switching to other platforms. Inadequate basic information also forces users to read numerous reviews for a complete picture, diminishing eWOM's advantage as a quick information source and reflecting poor information access and responsiveness from Sociolla.

According to Frahyanti et al. (2024), factors influencing online store choice include ease, price, security, consumer trust, product quality, and promotions. When seeking buying-relevant information, product quality is key, demanding accurate, relevant, clear, and consistent details. Users also consider product type, attributes, availability, quality, and user

reviews as evidence of quality. Svend Hollenson (in Irawan, 2023) states that consumer satisfaction significantly impacts positive or negative WOM, affecting companies. Satisfied users spread positive experiences, and dissatisfied ones spread negative ones. Thus, more positive reviews correlate with higher perceived product quality. The quantity and quality of online reviews influence public information processing, with review quantity indicating product popularity (Chatterjee, Chen, and Xie in Park et al., 2007). In Sociolla, numerous reviews suggest more users have purchased and used the product, validating the information presented. Online platforms allow virtual interaction with other users, offering insights and perspectives unavailable in physical stores, creating an information community where individuals can share and receive information.

The "community membership" indicator in Sociolla reviews refers to user engagement in the review ecosystem, including writing reviews, creating posts, or interacting with others. The virtual community motive is rooted in socio-psychological research on Internet communities, driven by a desire to share experiences, help others, gain recognition, or connect with like-minded individuals (Fischer et al., 1996). In marketing and PR, a community is a group sharing interests, needs, or identity, interacting around a brand (Rothaermel & Sugiyama, 2001). Sociolla users, sharing an interest in beauty, gather to seek information, share experiences, and find suitable products, often identifying as "beauty enthusiasts" or "skincare junkies." From a marketing communication perspective, virtual communities enhance eWOM, with virtual brand communities increasing eWOM generated by members (Royo-Vela & Casamassima, 2011). Satisfied and engaged community members can eventually become brand advocates, recommending products and positive experiences to other users. That's why it's important for online platforms to facilitate community formation through features like discussion forums and deeper review interactions. McAlexander et al. (2001) found that strong community relationships correlate with higher member integration, increasing positive word-of-mouth, repurchase intentions, and acceptance of brand extensions. Such membership, involving product opinion exchange, is intrinsically motivated: "*Consumers may turn to the Internet to interact with others who share their 'consumption interests'*" (Granitz & Ward, 1996), emphasizing interactivity and public participation. However, despite review columns, Sociolla's features for deeper community interaction (e.g., discussion forums, interactive follower systems) are not optimally developed or a primary draw. Users tend to focus on individual review consumption rather than social relationship building, reinforced by a lack of specific mention of community aspects in additional affective questions.

Continuing the discussion on motives driving eWOM engagement, it's crucial to understand how these motives translate into attitude formation. This aligns with Sen and Lerman's (2007) research, which reflects the process readers likely use when responding to online consumer reviews: reading reviews, deciding whether to trust the reviewer and the review content, and then forming an attitude about the product. This process underscores the cognitive (processing information) and affective (forming trust and feelings) stages essential

before reaching the conative (behavioral intention) stage. Public relations practitioners, as message carriers, possess the power to influence public attitudes, as message circulation can alter perceptions and behaviors (Moloney, 2006). The high cognitive indicator, particularly regarding awareness of the review column, reflects successful initial MPR efforts. To foster changes in attitude or behavior, public awareness and comprehension are vital, which is why MPR needs to actively highlight key product features, such as Sociolla's review column, to target audiences.

The alignment between the highest Cognitive indicator for attitude (mean 4.37) and the highest eWOM motive, "Obtaining Buying-Relevant Information" (mean 4.34), highlights the strong link between public information seeking and attitude. High cognitive awareness of Sociolla's rich review content drives users to actively leverage reviews for crucial purchasing information. This reflects rational and efficient users who use available information to meet their decision-making needs. Conversely, the lower Conative attitude indicator (mean 4.24), linked to the lowest eWOM motive, "Community Membership," it suggests that while MPR creates awareness of review features (high cognitive attitude), it doesn't always translate into strong behavioral change or deep participation beyond passive information consumption. Users may not feel part of a community that encourages interactive behavior, despite actively processing review information (high "Obtaining Buying-Relevant Information") and developing positive feelings (high Affective).

Overall, regression analysis indicates that eWOM influences attitude by 12.5%, showing a powerful leverage effect where eWOM can increase the odds of a positive attitude by 12 times. This aligns with the Social Proof theory in marketing, where consumers follow others' actions, especially when faced with uncertainty. Without social proof from reviews, positive attitudes are harder to form. Sociolla's eWOM offers significant contributions to influencing attitudes, as regression analysis also showed that without it, the probability of a positive attitude becomes negative. This is due to several factors: Firstly, eWOM's credibility. Users trust peer to peer opinions over official marketing messages, seeing eWOM as more objective. As Afinia (2025) states, recommendations from trusted individuals are more objective and trustworthy than ads. Users who make the effort to download the app, register, and complete a beauty profile are perceived as more serious, authentic users, increasing review credibility. Growing up in an information-saturated, ad-heavy era, Gen Z is skeptical of direct brand claims due to their awareness of inherent biases in company-issued reviews or promotions. Consequently, their trust is significantly higher when a product receives positive recommendations from a reliable "third party" like Sociolla, where reviews come from fellow users who've made an effort to join. Gen Z seeks unbiased information, and platforms like Sociolla, providing authentic user reviews, fulfill this need. This indicates that despite low general trust in traditional promotions, Gen Z highly values social proof and authentic peer experiences.

Secondly, direct user experience. eWOM reviews are based on direct user experiences, offering concrete insights into product expectations. This aligns with Tommi

Wijaya (2014:13), stating eWOM allows consumers to gain product information from diverse individuals worldwide with product experience. Thirdly, risk reduction. eWOM helps consumers reduce uncertainty and perceived risk by weighing pros and cons, increasing confidence in decisions, or encouraging avoidance of risky products. This is supported by the highest-mean statement in "Obtaining Buying-Relevant Information": "I read reviews on Sociolla because it helps me reduce my doubts in making the right purchasing decision."

Therefore, companies should prioritize strengthening eWOM indicators that influence Gen Z's attitudes. The primary focus should be "Obtaining Buying-Relevant Information" (mean 4.34), ensuring relevant, accurate, and comprehensive information is provided to reduce doubt and save time, aligning with Frahyanti et al. (2024) on product quality information. Companies should also encourage practical usage guides (To Learn How a Product Is to Be Consumed, mean 4.22) and leverage social validation (A Social Orientation Through Information, mean 4.14). While "Community Membership" (mean 4.12) is a motive, companies may not need to intensely focus on it compared to informational and social validation aspects, as users often view review columns as practical information sources rather than deep social communities.

Furthermore, age-based respondent characteristics are crucial. The 17-25 year-old group exhibits the highest cognitive level (4.38), indicating strong understanding of review information. Maentingsih (in Chita et al., 2015:p.298) notes adolescence as a period of identity search, making teenagers susceptible to influence, especially from trends, for validation. Yet, Gen Z still prioritizes product safety and ingredients when searching for beauty products (Zap Beauty Index, 2024). That's why they have a high cognitive score. However, their conative intent (4.22) is slightly lower than older groups, suggesting marketing communication strategies need to be not just informative but also persuasive to drive behavioral change. The 26-35 year-old group shows the highest affective (4.36) and conative (4.43) levels, representing the segment most influenced by reviews, largely due to their established personal preferences and brand loyalty (Ferdinand & Ciptono, 2022). They are less influenced by trends and often relying on past experiences. Thus, marketing communication should focus on retaining loyalty and encouraging repeat purchases in this segment through consistent positive validation and information relevant to their mature needs.

Cross-tabulation analysis reveals that Gen Z women consistently exhibit a more positive attitude across all indicators (cognitive, affective, conative) towards Sociolla compared to Gen Z men. This difference suggests that the motive for reading eWOM is more effective for women, who are generally more active and receptive to reviews, whereas the stigma surrounding skincare for men impacts male engagement. Nevertheless, the affective-conative consistency in men indicates an alignment between their feelings and actions.

CONCLUSION

Research shows that the motive for engaging with eWOM, like reading reviews, significantly influences positive attitudes toward a product or service. A stronger eWOM motive can increase the likelihood of a positive attitude by roughly 12 times. The study even found that in the absence of eWOM, attitudes tend to be negative. This impact stems from eWOM's high credibility, as Gen Z, skeptical of direct advertising, trusts authentic third-party reviews. The relevance of user experiences, offering concrete product insights, further reduces uncertainty and perceived purchase risks, aligning with Gen Z's reliance on reviews for buying-relevant information. The absence of eWOM can lead to negative attitudes due to a lack of trustworthy, relevant, and comprehensive information.

Academic recommendations for future research include exploring eWOM's impact on attitudes across different platforms like Instagram and TikTok, and investigating other marketing communication strategies. Practical suggestions for Sociolla involve enhancing their review section, conducting user needs assessments, and optimizing reviews for two-way communication to foster stronger community engagement and ultimately convert Gen Z's positive attitudes into concrete actions, addressing the relatively lower mean in "community membership" and "conative" attitudes.

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