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MASTER'S THESIS

THE IMPACT OF eWOM MESSAGE CREDIBILITY AND APPEAL ON
CONSUMER ATTITUDE AND PURCHASE INTENTION

*A INVESTIGATION INTO MOVIE CONSUMPTION INTENTION AMONG
CHINESE YOUNG ADULTS*

Allowed to defend

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Author's Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this submission is entirely my own work, in my own words, and that all sources used in researching it are fully acknowledged and all quotations properly identified. It has not been submitted, in whole or in part, by me or another person, for the purpose of obtaining any other credit / grade. I understand the ethical implications of my research, and this work meets the requirements of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Vilnius University.

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INTRODUCTION

With the development of the internet, traditional offline peer communication is moved online. The traditional WOM communication evolved into eWOM communication which refers to information share and exchange among consumers via the internet (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). The development of mobile information technology and the rise of new media channel has provided a perfect hotbed for further flourishing eWOM communication. Every people can take part in eWOM communication and post their information online at any time anywhere. This leads to vast amounts of unfiltered product information posted by numerous unknown consumers in eWOM communication. The anonymous and unfiltered features are the non-negligible difference between eWOM and traditional WOM. This also leads to difficulties for people to evaluate the credibility of eWOM information. People think the credibility of online reviews is lower than traditional WOM information although some researches reported that consumers trust online reviews posted by unknown peer consumers more than they trust traditional advertisement and marketing information (Nielsen Company, 2009). Therefore, the characteristics of eWOM messages attract a lot of concern among scholars and marketers. Previous studies on eWOM have focused on various different perspectives. Some are based on the perspective of information adoption, finding the relationships which explain how the online reviews are adopted. Information credibility were usually considered as an important determinant of the usefulness of eWOM which is then positively related to the adoption of eWOM information (Erkan, I., & Evans, C., 2016; Hussain, S et al., 2017). In the time with explosive growth of the information available for public, the credibility of the online reviews is more unclear while the consumers today usually have limited cognitive capacity or time evaluated information systematically, and instead, they tend to apply direct eWOM factors to evaluate and determine the level of eWOM credibility (Stubkjaer, Jonas Forup, 2015). Therefore, it would be a meaningful and interesting focus of this thesis to investigate how consumers usually evaluate eWOM credibility. What eWOM factors do they depend on and take into consideration when evaluating the credibility of online WOM? Except for the perspective of information adoption, some other previous researches focus on the impact of eWOM, such as the impact of eWOM on sales and revenue, influence on consumer purchase behaviors. There is a consistent finding that eWOM directly impacts purchase intention, which positive eWOM enhances purchase intention, while negative eWOM reduces it (Bailey, 2004; Xia & Bechwati, 2008). The credibility of eWOM

is also an important perspective to research eWOM impact. In some previous studies, eWOM credibility is equal to source credibility. In this study, eWOM credibility is separated from the source credibility while source credibility will be taken as one of the predictors of eWOM credibility which refers to the believability of the online review in this thesis. Then, the impact of eWOM credibility on consumers' attitudes and purchase intention will be explored and tested in this thesis. Besides, because studies focusing on the impact of factors like volume and valence on consumers are quite extensive, this study will not continue to take these familiar factors as research forces, while it will explore the impact of message appeal on consumers' attitudes and purchase intention. Compared with studies on familiar eWOM factors, such as volume and valence, eWOM appeal hasn't gained a lot of attraction. However, it is also very important to understand the in-depth effect of eWOM message-appeal on the consumer, previous studies have not adequately addressed this effect (Wu, P. & Wang, Y. , 2011). Therefore, another goal of this thesis is to make a contribution to fill in this gap. This research will test the effect of eWOM appeal on consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions.

The research in this thesis is not solely focused on a specific perspective, such as only on information persuasiveness or eWOM impact. However, this research will take information persuasiveness and eWOM impact as two processes of information stream in eWOM communication, thinking that only the eWOM information which is trusted that has the possibility to have an impact on consumers. Hence, this research will systematically and comprehensively study eWOM on both the perspective of eWOM credibility and eWOM impact on consumers. In this research context, the aim of this thesis is to explore the antecedents of eWOM credibility and to reveal the relationships between two specific eWOM factors, credibility and appeal, and consumer intentional behaviors, attitude and purchase intention. The research questions are:

What antecedents have influence on the eWOM credibility? How eWOM credibility and eWOM appeal impact consumers' attitudes and purchase intention?

Despite significant academic attention on eWOM communication, few research studies have directly tested the impact of perceived eWOM credibility and eWOM appeal on consumers' intentional behaviors in the special context of Chinese movie and Chinese young adults. It is

deserved to study eWOM communication in this special context with nontrivial consumption potential. This thesis aims to figure out how the online movie review impacts the attitudes and purchase intention Chinese young adults and also to reveal how Chinese young adults evaluate the perceived credibility of eWOM reviews. To achieve the aims of the thesis, a series of specific objectives are formulated to achieve the goal of the thesis.

Objective 1: Based on review of previous studies, define eWOM credibility and disclose the antecedents of eWOM credibility, identify the relationship between eWOM credibility and antecedents (source credibility, eWOM quality, volume, and valence);

Objective 2: Present literature analysis of the impact on consumers' attitude and purchase intention via empirical survey and data analysis;

Objective 3: To discuss the different impacts of different message appeals on consumers' attitudes and purchase intention;

Objective 4: To construct research model and develop hypotheses on the relations among eWOM credibility, appeal, consumer attitude and purchase intention;

Objective 5: To conduct empirical research via suitable research methods and instruments and to apply suitable statistical methods to analyze data and figure out the findings of hypotheses testing;

Objective 6: To provide theoretical and practical implications based on the reliable and significant findings of the research.

As for the structure of this thesis, firstly it identifies the determinants of eWOM credibility and two influential eWOM message factors of consumers' intentional behaviors by extensively and comprehensively reviewing the related previous scientific studies and then it develops two conceptual models and seven hypotheses based on the extensive literature review. Online survey is applied to collect empirical data and statistical technique as regression analysis via SPSS is applied to test the hypothesized eWOM attributes and their impact on consumers' attitudes and purchase intention. Theoretical and practical implication are provided and finally conclusion and limitation are also included in the thesis.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW OF EWOM COMMUNICATION AND ITS IMPACTS

1.1 Traditional WOM & Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)

Word-of-mouth (WOM) is a consistently popular research subject in marketing studies because it is thought to be an important role in business. Scholars tended to investigate its effects among senders and receivers, marketers and consumers. WOM is defined as the exchange of information and recommendations related to a specific brand, product or consumption with non-commercial intention (Gilly et al., 1998, Xingyuan et al., 2010, Sambashiva & Acharyulu, 2017). Traditional WOM is characterized as the offline verbal exchange of product information among people from a familiar social circle like families and friends (Arndt, J. 1967). This implies the traditional WOM only instantaneously involves a small group of people and it is easily to identify its credibility based on the social connection. Different to the traditional WOM, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is online information sharing among numerous people. It is referred as “any positive and negative statement made by potential, actual or former customer about a product or a company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via Internet” (Henning-Thurau et al., 2004). eWOM is one of the products of the development of internet and mobile communication technology; thus, different from traditional eWOM, it shakes off the constraints from geography and time which allows numerous people to post and receive information at any time and any place via the various form such as text, picture and video. The advanced technologies allow WOM involves much more people than before but it also lower the credibility of eWOM compared to the traditional WOM. People who participate in eWOM activities are anonymous and usually they don't know each other. Because of the access to the internet, people can participate in the eWOM easily and freely. There are numerous information on the internet where might good messages and bad ones mix together. And this lead to the difficulty for people to judge the credibility of information. People cannot easily take all the messages as credible as they treat the traditional WOM. Thus, the influence of online WOM on people will also be different to the traditional WOM because its credibility is seemed to decrease. It attracts interests from researchers in recent years. It is argued that the credibility of information may be correlated with the impact of information. The main objective of this thesis is to explore the relationship between eWOM credibility and the impact of eWOM on consumers. It aims to find out the fact that how the eWOM credibility

impacts consumers' attitude and purchase intention. In the previous researches on eWOM communication, researchers usually analyze the eWOM from four levels: individual level, group level, market level, social level (Xiaorong Wang et al., 2016). According to Xiaorong Wang et al. (2016) individual level of analysis focused on the personal motives to send and receive eWOM, while group level focused on the group behaviors. Market level of analysis focused on market-level parameters, for example, to examine the impact of eWOM messages on product sales and revenues (ibid). At the social-level studies, scholars are interested in the cross-cultural characteristics on the eWOM communication (ibid). Based on the systematic categorization of eWOM studies by Xiaorong Wang et al. (2016), this study tends to analyze the eWOM on the individual level. The following subsection will collate and introduce the previous studies on eWOM communication.

1.2 EWOM Communication Impacts

In the previous studies focused on the eWOM impact on consumer behaviors, most findings support the relationship between eWOM and consumer behavior and intention. These studies cover a wide range of products and industries, such as tourism, restaurants, books, smart electronics, etc. Many empirical studies showed that numbers of reviews and average star-rating are positively related to book sales on the Amazon (Chevalier and Mayzlin, 2006; Chen, Wu, and Yoon, 2004). Empirical research on hospitality resulted that a larger rating variance denoted the poorer performance (Ye et al., 2009). The study in this thesis seeks to go deeper to focus on how eWOM exerts its influence and what factors make eWOM work for consumers rather than just focus on the result of the relation between eWOM and consumers. In this thesis, the eWOM elements are categorized into two types, internal factors, and external factors. Internal factors refer to the intrinsic characteristics of the eWOM information while the external ones are external mediators or moderators. Many scholars are interested in the intrinsic characteristics of eWOM like eWOM source, contents, volume, valence, usefulness, and so on. For example, Mudambi and Schuff (2010) examined the perceived helpfulness of product reviews from amazon.com, they found eWOM valence and the length of reviews have a positive relationship with the perceived helpfulness of those online reviews. It is also demonstrated in a 2x2x2x2 online experiment that eWOM volume and valence can influence consumers' purchase intention in virtual communities (Yi-Fen Chen et al., 2014).

Ho Lee et al. (2016) conducted the research to study the veracity of eWOM analysis by matching review ratings with actual review contents concurrently. Vermeulen, I. E. and Seegers, D. (2009) stated that both eWOM volume and valence can improve consumers' awareness of products. All of these examples are intrinsic to the analysis of eWOM, but there are also analyses in the perspectives, such as types of online platforms and consumer involvement. They are usually studied as mediators or moderators in the relationship between the predictors and outcomes of eWOM communication. Tsao and Hsieh (2015) showed that the type of eWOM platform which represents multiple sources of information moderates the influence of eWOM quality on eWOM credibility and purchase intention. Dao et al. (2014) suggested that the effects of information and individuals' attitudes toward the information differ from various digital channels in their empirical findings. Different platforms have different characteristics, so consumers hold a different attitude to different platforms. It is suggested that platforms that are seen to be non-commercial, transparent can increase the level of credibility of the eWOM posted on them (Cheung et al., 2009). A path analysis model reveals that if a channel which is perceived to be credible can enhance consumers' attitudes towards eWOM messages (Yaniv Gvili et al., 2015). Moreover, in an empirical study about the impact of eWOM on consumers' book purchase intention, book eWOM channels are verified to have a significant mediating influence on the eWOM persuasion (Yang et al., 2018). From the previous literature can know that the relationship between online platforms and eWOM has attracted a lot of focuses and the findings are quite consistent. Most findings agree that online platforms may be a mediating role in the eWOM impact on consumers' attitudes. Based on this, no further effort will be expended in this thesis to discuss and validate again the role of the platform and eWOM and between consumers. However, given that the moderating roles of platforms cannot be ignored, this study will focus on eWOM on a specific category of platforms, and the most representative of such platforms will be chosen as the eWOM source for this study. This section will be described in more detail in the research design section.

Consumer involvement is another element that attracts a lot of concern in the previous researches. Evaluation Likelihood Model (ELM) is widely used in previous studies. The ELM theory represents two routes, the central route and the peripheral one, that consumers process the eWOM information (Petty and Cacioppo, 2009). Consumers who are familiar with the discussed topic will follow the central route which means that they will be influenced by the

personal understanding of the facts. However, the peripheral will be adopted by people who are not familiar with the topic, then it will persuade people by other cues rather than the specific facts of the topic. Based on the Evaluation Likelihood Model, scholars explore the persuasion effect of eWOM on consumers' attitudes. Krishnamurthy, A., & Kumar, S. (2018) conducted research on eWOM under the moderating influence of consumer involvement. The study conducted among over 1000 consumers across USA and India, and across smartphone and hotel services categories, finding that compared with low-involvement consumers, high involvement consumers will go through more EWOM information and spend more time with EWOM to develop an expectation or idea of the brand and they also form a better image of the brand (ibid). Based on these two routes represented in ELM, Li (2015) adds a third route, emotion, in the model. Referring to these previous studies, the study in this thesis also includes the consideration of emotion. Differently, this study will not directly discuss the role of the personal emotion plays in the correlation between eWOM impact and consumer, while it will focus on the impact of emotion expressed by the eWOM messages (valence) on consumers who are review readers. There is a more specific introduction about it in the following subsection.

Learned from the previous studies, the perspectives on eWOM analyses are extensive. eWOM communication is researched in various industries and various products. In this thesis, the study is centered on the impact of eWOM intrinsic factors on consumer incentive behavior. Referring to the eWOM intrinsic characteristic factors, this thesis takes the most representative eWOM factor, compared with the traditional WOM, which is the ambitious credibility, as the research focus. At the same time, the other popular eWOM factors will also be discussed in this study from the perspective of the correlation with eWOM credibility. The following subsection will introduce eWOM credibility and explore its correlation with other message factors.

1.3 Overview of eWOM credibility

1.3.1 eWOM credibility defined

Most studies on eWOM message directly focus on the relationship of message factors, such as message volume, valence, and consumer purchase behaviors. For example, it is shown that numbers of reviews and star-rating are positively related to book sales on the Amazon

(Chevalier and Mayzlin, 2006; Chen, Wu, and Yoon, 2004). Similarly, Duan et al. (2008) found that eWOM volume also positively influence the box office revenues of the movie. However, the key point is that only the messages that are considered to be credible and reliable will be accepted by consumers and then, in turn, produce an impact on consumers. Usually, traditional WOM is exchanged between people we know each other, especially in friends and families, thus it is considered as the message with high credibility based on the strong ties between message senders and receivers. Differently, eWOM is online information sharing that happened anonymously so the credibility of eWOM is difficult to judge directly compared with traditional WOM. eWOM credibility is defined as the believability of the online review, and it rests largely on perceptions of the trustworthiness and expertise of the information source as interpreted by the information receiver (Jonas Forup Stubkjaer ,2014; Hovland et al., 1953; Metzger & Flanagin, 2013). Faced with the numerous online message, consumers feel difficult to judge the reliability of these messages quickly and lessen the confidence to trust the message at once. In the time of eWOM, Consumers need other message factors (eg. volume, valence, message type, and so on) for reference to evaluate whether the information can be reliable or not. Therefore, in this thesis, the correlation between eWOM credibility and other message factors also will be discussed.

1.3.2 Antecedent factors related to eWOM credibility

The source credibility of the messages is the primary variable in studying eWOM credibility. eWOM source's credibility refers to "the extent to which a source is perceived to be believable, competent, and trustworthy by the receiver"(C. M. K. Cheung & Thadani, 2012). In traditional WOM communication, the sources of information are thought to be clear because the information exchanges usually happen face to face in a familiar circle. Differently, in eWOM communication, it is much tougher to evaluate the source credibility because the source is often anonymous and it can be posted by any person anywhere (Jonas Forup Stubkjaer, 2014). Usually, people will evaluate the source credibility via the source's motivation for writing the reviews and the expertise of the sources (message sender). With the development of internet marketing and the outstanding influence of eWOM messages, not only regular consumers engage in eWOM communication but also marketers do. Based on the different motives, eWOM messages can be sorted into two types: the marketing message and the conversational message (Kwok and Yu, 2013; Hu and Zhang, 2018). As the name

suggests, the marketing messages are usually generated by the marketers for a certain marketing motive such as promoting new products or improve brand awareness. Companies post product-related topics on the online communities to stimulate more and more eWOM on the product or the brand from other consumers. Differently, conversational messages are shared by regular consumers. It refers to personal experiences or individual recommendations such as online reviews and discussion on online forums and rating websites (Hu & Zhang, 2018). Kwok and Yu (2013) investigated the different messages on Facebook and pointed out that conversational messages tend to receive more likes and responses from Facebook users than marketing messages. This can also be argued that the messages with conversation motives are more trustworthy and credible for consumers. That's to say, messages with conversation motives are with higher trustworthiness which refers to the degree of information receivers' trust and acceptance to the messages.

Source trustworthiness is a usual sub-dimension of source credibility in the pre academic studies (Wu, P., & Wang, Y., 2011; Ohanian, 1990). In addition, Tri D. Le et al. (2018) found that expertise of sources, which are generally linked with opinion leaders, is also positively related to sources' credibility. The eWOM messages generated by influential opinion leaders, such as experts and online celebrities, are perceived as more persuasive and credible. Opinion leaders are thought to be professionals in certain product categories, sharing some similarities and relevant information to help other consumers to evaluate the products (Gilly et al., 1998; Sweeney et al., 2008; Tri D. Le et al., 2018). This particularly applies to experiential products, such as travel guides and movie reviews. In the domain of movies, there are many professional reviewers posting critic movie reviews on websites or forums (Anindita et al., 2010). It is commonly believed that the critic reviews are more professional and high quality so that have persuasion influence on moviegoers' attitude and intention to movie consumption (Basuroy et al., 2003). Consumers tend to accept reviews from online channels or opinions from celebrities as a reference before they are making a purchase decision because they decide to take these messages as credible sources. In general, it can, therefore, be argued that the source credibility of the messages is positively correlated with eWOM credibility. And source credibility can be measured with the sources' trustworthiness and expertness.

Except for source credibility, in the evaluation of information credibility, some scholars emphasize the **argument quality** (Cheung, C. et al., 2012). Therefore, argument/message quality will also be considered in this study. eWOM message can be posted by every user on the internet, thus the quality and credibility of such numerous online messages are diverse. Facing numerous online messages, it is natural and necessary for consumers to choose which message to adopt and believe. Researches found that the quality of messages matters a lot in the information adoption process of consumers (Bhattacharjee and Sanford, 2006; Xu, 2014). Message quality refers to the persuasion power of message towards targeted receivers and is often evaluated based on the richness or elaboration of the message, which refers to the breadth, depth, and relevance of message content to the products or consumption experience. (Cheung and Lee, 2008; Sweeney et al., 2012). More directly, the review quality is usually evaluated by the length (word counts) of the reviews, comprehensiveness, readability, insights, sidedness, and extremity. People will also judge the quality of the message by its logic organization and clearance which allows receivers to read and comprehend more easily (Zakaluk and Samuels 1988; Z. Liu & S. Park, 2015). Connors et al. (2011) stated in the study that the reviews with more words stimulate consumers to read more carefully, then better induce consumers to strengthen or change the original attitudes and increase awareness of the reviewed product. Previous studies have also lined message quality to the persuasion. Chen, Dhanasobhon, and Smith (2006) points out that the extent to which online reviews influence consumers' attitude and decision-making varies greatly from high-quality reviews to low-quality reviews. High-quality reviews are more persuasive to influence consumers' attitudes due to their intrinsic quality (Chen et al., 2006; Pan & Zhang, 2011; Park et al., 2007). It is the consistent result from several empirical studies that positive reviews of high-quality levels are more effectively enhance consumers' positive attitude toward the products and stimulate a stronger purchase intention. In the contrast, consumers more possibly hold stronger negative attitudes to the products when they are facing negative reviews of high-quality levels (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006; Liu et al., 2015; Lee and Shin, 2014). That is to say, there is a correlation between message quality and message persuasiveness. Correspondingly, we can suspect that there might be a correlation between message quality and message credibility. Hence, in this thesis, the eWOM quality was hypothesized as one of the predictors of eWOM credibility, the relationship between eWOM quality and credibility will be empirically tested in a specific context in the later sections. In this study, we will focus on eWOM quality

through comprehensiveness, accuracy, relevancy and argument strength. Besides, volume and valence, the two factors which have attracted many researchers, are also considered to be related to the eWOM credibility in this thesis.

The volume of eWOM is defined as the number of information and interactions relating to product which is posted and shared by users or potential consumers (Liu, 2006). The quantity of eWOM such as online reviews, whether they are favorable or unfavorable comments, is considered as a significant cue guiding consumers' response to the eWOM messages (Duan, Gu, & Whinston, 2008; Dellarocas et al., 2007). When consumers intend to avoid risk and uncertainty of the outcomes of the consumption, they will engage in information searching and gathering. More information gathering and referencing can help consumers to eliminate the risk of the action, and improve confidence in purchase behaviors (Lee & Koo, 2012). It is noted by Liu (2006) that "the greater the volume of WOM, the more likely a consumer will be able to hear about a product. Not surprisingly, greater awareness tends to generate greater sales".

Particularly, volume in this study especially means the number of view and likes of the online reviews, as well as the total number of interaction which involves sharing, discussion among review readers. More number of view, likes and interaction of a review implies that more people pay attention to it and take it as a reference. "Likes" are also messages that express people's opinions and attitudes, so the number of "likes" is also a representation of eWOM volume. Also, more "likes" of a review may be considered as more consistency and agreement achieved in this review. The larger number of likes signifies that the message is accepted and believed by more people. It has been pointed out that the persuasion effect of WOM may differ based on the volume of WOM messages (Bone, 1995). The number of eWOM messages, no matter whether they are positive or negative, has a positive impact on the outcome of eWOM. More sources indicated the same opinions, WOM has a stronger influence on consumers' perceptions of products and service, leading to the changes in attitudes and the likelihood of purchase (ibid). Yi-Fen Chen et al. (2014) also supported in their empirical test that the more of eWOM there is, the greater influential there is on consumer purchase intention in an online forum. Duan et al. (2008) viewed the volume of WOM may be the most influential cue on which consumers may rely when judging the credibility of the WOM. Reviewing the previous literature referred above, most researchers

studied the relationship among eWOM volume, eWOM persuasion effect, and consumer final purchase behaviors, while comparatively the relationship between volume and the eWOM credibility lack in-depth research and clear tests. Therefore, it is necessitated that the study in this thesis explores and tests the relationship between these two variables. And given the findings of the previous researches, it is reasonable to conjecture that eWOM volume and credibility are positively associated.

Together with the volume of messages, **valence** is also taken as a vitally influential factor of eWOM message. EWOM valence refers to the positive or negative reviews or ratings given by consumers when they evaluate products (Robert Allen King et al., 2014). Positive eWOM message usually implies the consumers feel satisfied and pleasant to the products or experience and positively recommend the products to peers and strengthen consumers' intention to purchase. Conversely, negative eWOM usually describes the unpleasant product experience or express consumers' complaints about products which may weaken consumers' confidence in the purchase (C. Dellarocas et al., 2007, W. Duan, B. Gu & A. Whinston, 2008; Yoon, 2013; Kacy Kim, 2019). Some prior studies found that the valence of eWOM is significantly related to consumers' attitudes and purchase intention (Chevalier and Mayzlin 2006; Li and Hitt 2008). However, as for its impact on message persuasion and consumer behavior, the findings in the previous studies are inconsistent. It is claimed that only the volume of eWOM messages is the significant factor of the movie box office (Liu, 2006; Kim et al., 2013). Nevertheless, other studies share a different result that the valence does affect the outcome of movie performance (Hsu & Jane, 2016). They conducted the dynamic Granger causality analysis; the result showed that the causality direction for positive and negative critics with the box office is asymmetric which means negative critics affect the box office in the long run while the effect of positive critics on the box office is in the short run (ibid). Besides, researches advocated that people tend to designate more importance to negative WOM messages according to the negativity bias, and take the negative reviews more seriously than the positive ones during their purchase decision-making process (Lee & Koo, 2012; P.M. Herr, 1991). The negativity bias refers to the tendency for humans to pay more attention to negative than to positive information in a wide range of domains, including perception, decision making, and evaluative judgment, because the negative information is scarcer than the positive information (Cacioppo and Berntson, 1994, Rozin and Royzman, 2001). People tend to be more affected by the negative wording than the positive wording

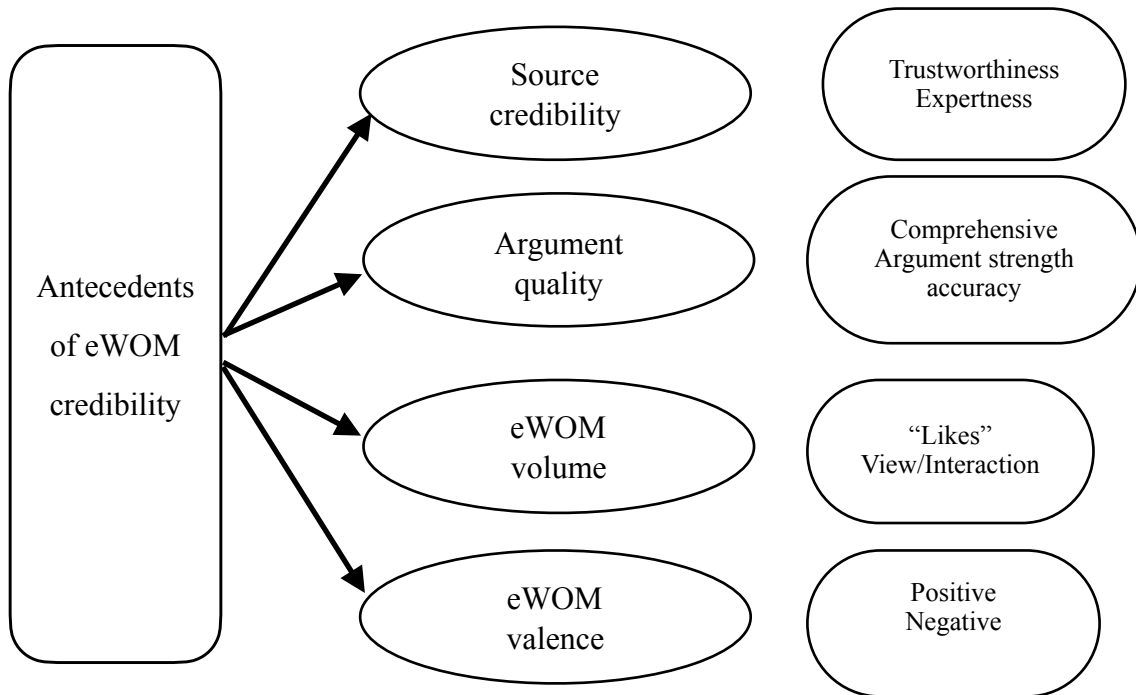
when they are evaluating an object (Chiou & Cheng, 2003). Compared with positive reviews, negative reviews create deeper impressions on consumers and have a stronger impact on consumers' attitudes and purchase intention (Park and Lee, 2009; Sen and Lerman, 2007). It is noted that negative online reviews tend to be perceived as a more credible and honest representation of the product to be reviewed (Metzger, Flanagin, & Medders, 2010). In the results of ANOVA Lee and Koo (2012) supported that the credibility of negative online reviews was higher than that of positive online reviews.

Although there are a bunch of studies suggest the stronger impact of negative eWOM messages, the importance of the positive eWOM is also shown in the findings of other studies (Clemons, Gao, & Hitt, 2006; Gershoff, Mukherjee, & Mukhopadhyay, 2003; Lee et al., 2009). Positive reviews are positively associated with consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions (Doh and Hwang, 2009). Gershoff et al. (2003) suggested that the impact of the positive reviews on consumers' attitudes is stronger than that of negative reviews. When consumers perceive the positive information is more diagnostic than negative information and rely more on those positive cues, the positive impact occurs (Skowronski & Carlston, 1989). Positive and negative reviews have been found to differ in their respective abilities to influence the review credibility(Qiu, L., Pang, J., & Lim, K., 2012). Based on the inconsistent results of eWOM valence, this study will also consider valence as an influential factor or eWOM credibility and conjecture that eWOM valence and credibility are correlated.

Based on the above discussion, the influential factors of eWOM credibility in this research can be summarized and presented in the **Figure 1**. Although it is important to find out the relationship among eWOM credibility and other message factors to figure out the crux of the consumers' evaluation of eWOM credibility, the study in this thesis pays most concern on that how the eWOM credibility affect consumers' attitudes and intentions. Hence, the next paragraph will present a review of the findings from previous literature on the relationship between eWOM on consumer attitudes and intentions to help clarify the research objectives and questions for this thesis.

(Figure 1 is shown in the next page.)

Figure 1: Antecedents of eWOM credibility.



Source: Author's analysis.

Regarding researches on message credibility, it is claimed by the message source theory that the message with higher credibility can persuade the message receiver more possibly than the message of lower credibility does (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; Zhang and Buda, 1999). Message credibility is also claimed as the initial factor in the individual's persuasion process (Wathen and Burkell, 2002). Paul and Wang (2010) have examined the influence of message source credibility on brand attitude and purchase information in the setting of positive eWOM message. The result of the study found that the positive eWOM message with higher message credibility indicates a better brand attitude than the eWOM message with lower message credibility (ibid). At the same time, the positive eWOM message with high credibility may persuade consumers better than that of lower credibility (Paul and Wang, 2010). In the social media context, it is shown that people tend to hold a positive attitude towards product if they believe the message as credible, while they tend to ignore the message if they consider the message as incredible (Teng S et al., 2014; Shasha Teng et al., 2017). People are more possible to use the eWOM message in their information adoption process if they believe the message is credible (Sussman SW, Siegal WS, 2003). Other studies also pointed that message credibility plays a clear role in the persuasiveness of a message regardless of whether the

message ultimately influences consumer attitudes and purchase intention or not (Chatterjee, 2001, Kotler and Keller, 2008, Paul C.S. Wu et al., 2010). Based on the review of the previous literature involved in eWOM credibility, it is known that much concern put on the relationship between message credibility and message persuasiveness, while the relationship between eWOM credibility and consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions is still unclear yet. The relationship between eWOM credibility and consumers' incentive behaviors needs to be further explored and tested. Based on that, one of the main research objectives of this thesis is to explore and tested the relationship between eWOM credibility, consumers' attitudes, and purchase intention. It will be presented in the methodology part involving the construct of the research model and the development of hypotheses. However, the general and core goals of this thesis are to figure out the impact of eWOM message factors on consumers' attitude and purchase intention, thus, except for the eWOM credibility which is mentioned a lot above, eWOM appeal is also suspected as the critical factor related to the eWOM impact on consumers' incentive behavior. In the previous studies, message appeal is usually studied in the general context, this study will provide further in-depth validation of the impact of the eWOM appeal on consumers in a specific context. In the next sub-section, the review of previous studies on eWOM appeal shall be presented.

1.4 Overview of eWOM appeal

1.4.1 Types of appeal: rational and emotional appeal

In the researches of marketing strategies and eWOM communication, message appeal which aims to persuade or induce target consumers to build a specific attitude to the product or engage in purchase behavior has been extensively studied as one of the influential factors of the persuasion effect of eWOM or advertisement (L. C. Leonidou and C. N. Leonidou, 2009; Lim et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2017). Compared with researches focusing on advertisement appeal, there are much less academic studies focusing on eWOM message appeal. Among studies on message appeal in eWOM context, a research conducted by Wu and Wang (2010) is relatively influential and well known. In the study, they examine the relationships between eWOM message appeal and brand attitude based on elaboration likelihood model. However, they conducted the research in the context of physical products, notebooks and shampoo, and found that different types of eWOM message appeals do have different impacts on brand attitudes with the moderating effect of product involvement (Wu and Wang, 2010). Different

to the studies which discussed and examined the impact of eWOM message appeal on physical products and brands, this empirical study was conducted in the context of experiential product which is movie; and message appeal would be considered as an independent variable whose impacts on consumers' attitude and purchase intention would be examined.

Message appeals are usually classified into two groups, rational appeal and emotional appeal, in many studies (Kotler, 2003; Wu and Wang, 2010; Chou and Lien, 2010; Lim et al., 2014). A rational appeal is featured as providing factual and usefully relevant information about the product, service or brands presented clearly and logically that enables consumers to make rational purchase intention based on credible and functional information (Laskey et al., 1989). It usually describes the basic facts of the product or the brand, such as functional value and performance (You et al., 2013). Differently, emotional appeal is the message that emphasizes the objective and intangible element of the product and the brand which may arouse consumers' emotional feelings or attitudes to the product and the brand (Chou and Lien, 2010; Wang et al., 2014). It is also defined by "attempting to awaken either positive or negative emotions that motivate purchase" (Kotler, 2003). The categories of message appeal are concluded in the **Table 1**.

Table 1: Two categories of message appeal.

Message Appeal	
Rational Appeal	Using functional facts and information of products as the appeal to evoke consumers' attitude
Emotional Appeal	Appeals that emphasize the objective and intangible elements of products to awaken consumers' positive or negative emotions which may motivate purchase.

Source: Author's analysis based on Laskey et al., 1989 and Kotler, 2003.

The emotional feelings aroused with emotional appeal can be either positive, such as excitement and happiness, or negative, such as uncertainty, fear, guilt, and worry (Lim et al., 2014; Sony Kusumasondjaja, 2018). Many studies suggested that emotional appeals have a greater effect on evoking positive consumer's purchase attitudes and behavior in comparison with rational

appeals (Geuens, De Pelsmacker, & Fasseur, 2011; Huang, 2003). It is supported that, by arousing the heightened psychological feelings, messages, or advertisements with emotional appeals are more likely to encourage people to develop favorable attitudes and intentions to consume. Nevertheless, other studies are stating that rational appeals are filled with functional and thoughtful arguments such that they are more persuasive and credible for consumers and more likely to influence consumers' attitudes and behavioral intentions, compared with emotional appeals (Aaker and Norris, 1982; Holbrook 1978). Because of these mixed results, further researches discuss the message appeals combining with some mediating factors such as consumer features and product types.

1.4.2 The effect of eWOM appeal

The persuasion effect of message appeals varies based on consumers' message process styles. Most studies use the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) to explain this finding. The theory of ELM, as introduced before, explains how people process messages via different routes, which are the central route and peripheral route based on personal involvement with consumption (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). When consumers have high involvement with the products (the number of thinking about the product) and a strong need for cognition, they will adopt the central route which refers to elaborately rational thinking and evaluation about the message to form an attitude to the target behavior. Conversely, when the consumer involvement with the products is low, the peripheral will be taken, which refers that people use simple message cues heuristically in evaluating the target behavior, without cognitive thinking (Chia-Ying Li, 2013; Bhattacharjee & Sanford, 2006; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Based on the ELM, studies found that rational appeals are more attractive for consumers who are in strong need of cognition while emotional appeals are more acceptable for consumers with a low need for cognition (Putrevu, 2008). Petty and Cacioppo also supported that the rational appeals are more influential when consumers' involvement is high, while emotional appeals have a stronger impact on consumer attitudes when consumers' involvement is low. In the context of China and the young adults in this country, most young adults in China live a fast-paced life, they tend to make quick decisions on daily entertainment such as watching a movie. It is reasonable to propose that emotional appeals are more likely effective on Chinese young adults' attitudes and intention to movie consumption.

Except for the consumer's features, the previous empirical studies also explained that the effectiveness of message appeals also depends on the product types (Shavitt, 1990). Rational appeals are found to be effective in the use of tangibly utilitarian products or the consumption that feeds the functional utilities. In contrast, emotional appeals are more suitable for consumption which is intangible or highly experiential or hedonic, such as tourist products, hotels, restaurants, or movies (Shostack, 1977). These relatively experiential consumption rely more on emotions and feelings than functional information (Albers-Miller & Royne Stafford, 1999). For experiential consumption, eWOM messages with emotional appeal works better in arouse consumers' interest and help them to develop attitudes to the experiential products (Wu and Wang, 2011; Mazzotta et al., 2007). Nowadays, in the context of China, watching the movie is a popular experiential consumption among young adults; hence, it's necessary to understand whether eWOM messages such as online movie review with emotional appeals are more attractive and have an impact on consumers' attitudes and intention to watch the movie. These suggest that eWOM message with emotional appeal has a strong impact on consumers' attitudes which will be tested in the context of movie consumption in this thesis. The choice of specific context will be explained in the following subsection.

1.5 The concept of attitude and purchase intention

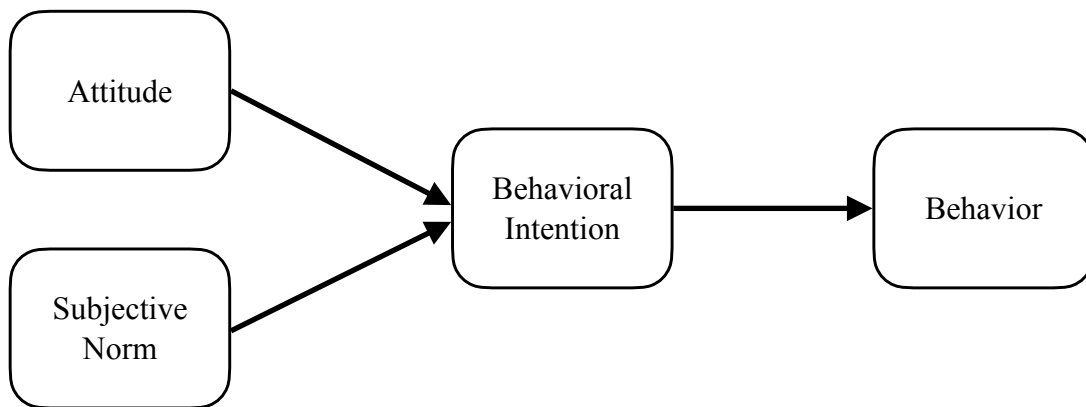
In the previous research, although many studies demonstrate the objectives as to test the impact of eWOM on consumers' intention, many scholars take the final sales and revenue, such as the hotel booking rate in the tourism industry, revenue in retail industry and box office in the movie industry, as the measurement of eWOM impact. In behavioral studies, sales, like box office in the context of movie consumption, belongs to the action results of purchase behavior. The theory of planned action and the theory of reasoned action are usually used to explain the purchase behaviors of consumers. The theories explain that purchase intention doesn't equal to the act of purchase behaviors. Purchase intention belongs to the scope of behavioral intention. Behavioral intention refers to the subjective probability of taking a specific action, which reflects the personal willingness to take a specific action and is usually used as a tool to predict a consumer response behavior. Purchase intention is the personal willingness to purchase a particular good or service in the future which is a tool to anticipate a subsequent purchase decision and behavior of a potential consumer (C.-Y. Li, 2013; Eargly &

Chaiken, 1993; Houston, 1980 ~~Zanna & Rempel, 1988~~). A consumer who has the purchase intention of a product cannot guarantee that he or she must purchase or pay for the product. Purchase intention is just one of a predictor of the act of purchase behavior, while in the real context, the implementation of purchase behavior will be influenced by many other unpredictable factors, like knowledge and skills to perform the behavior, the salience of the behavior, environmental constraints and so on according to integrated behavior model. Therefore, to achieve clearer research objectives and findings with limited capacity and resources, this thesis will only discuss purchase intention; the final purchase behavior of consumers will not be included in the scope of this research. Also, the theories, such as the theory of planned action, which are usually applied to eWOM and consumer purchase behavior research previously, will not be referenced in the development of this thesis.

To study purchase intention, the attitudes of consumers also have to be discussed. Attitude refers to the positive or negative feeling of an individual towards the subject or the behavior, in other words, the evaluation of individual towards the specific object (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). It is developed on the basis of the evaluation and assessment of the specific attributes of the object (ibid). Relatively, attitude towards products and eWOM messages describes a personal evaluation of products and eWOM messages based on the favorability of an individual's affection and cognition. (C.-Y. Li, 2013; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). In the context of eWOM communication, many researchers found the correlation between eWOM and consumers' attitudes towards to the brand or the product. Doh and Hwang (2009) found that attitude towards the product could be developed and created if consumers are exposed to great volume of eWOM. Lee, Park and Han (2008) concluded in the study that consumers' attitude towards the product are more negative and unfavorable when they face greater volume of negative online reviews. Consistent with these researchers, Hamouda, M., & Tabbane, R. (2013) also supported in their study that eWOM exposure has a significant influence on consumer attitude towards the product; and specially noted that positive reviews promote a positive attitude towards the product regardless of the existence of negative reviews. Based on theses research, findings on the impact of eWOM on consumers' attitude towards the product are consistent; and it is reasonable to propose the influence role of eWOM in consumers' attitude. In this thesis, the relationship between eWOM message and consumers' attitude is also discussed and examined in a specific context, based on the specific attributes of eWOM message. In addition, the processual relationship between attitude and purchase intention is

also explored and examined in this study. The theory of reasoned action has been usually applied in the previous studies to explore the processual relationship between consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions. It takes intention, which is decided by attitude and subjective norm, as the antecedents of actual behavior because actual behavior can be influenced by other uncertain factors (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, I. Erkan, C. Evans, 2016). Figure 2 depicts the theory of reasoned action.

Figure 2: Theory of reasoned action.



Sources: Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975.

Based on this theory, this thesis emphasizes the difference between purchase intention and actual purchase behaviors, and focuses the research on the purchase intention instead of actual purchase behavior. Two components of TRA which are attitude and behavioral intention are borrowed in this empirical study. The theory supports that an individual will hold a stronger behavior intention when his attitude towards the behavior tends to be more positive (ibid). And this also applies to the eWOM communication context. Past studies have studied the effect of online reviews on consumers' attitudes to the reviewed products and brands, also investigated the influence of attitude change of consumer on the purchase intention of the reviewed products (Lee and Youn, 2009; Xu, 2014, S. R Kunja & A. GVRK, 2017). Attitude towards products and eWOM message is examined to be positively associated with purchase intention in empirical studies (Zha X et al., 2013; Kim T et al., 2009; Azlin, 2015). I. Erkan, C. Evans (2016) conducted a research in the setting of social media and supported the positive influence of attitude of social media users on purchase intention. Stronger purchase intention will be induced when the consumer has a positive attitude towards the product and eWOM

message. Based on the reference from the previous academic paper and theories, it is reasonable to argue that the consumers' attitude is positively correlated with purchase intention. Consumers who hold positive attitudes to the product will have a stronger intention to purchase the product. Corresponding to the background of this thesis, the relationship between these two elements will be discussed and tested in a specific context which is the movie consumption among Chinese young adults. The specific context will be introduced in the next sub-section.

1.6 eWOM in movie context

It is stated in the studies on the consumers' motive in searching online reviews that consumers search and read the online reviews to reduce effort, uncertainty, and risks (Wen-Chin Tsao, 2014). Numerous online comments of products and consumption experience, posted and shared by peers become significant information sources about making purchase decisions (Shasha Teng et. Al., 2016). Reading online reviews and ratings from peer consumers becomes an indispensable step in the purchase process (Pitta DA, Fowler D., 2005). This applies particularly to the category of experiential goods, such as tourism, hotels, restaurants, and movies, in that it only can be known after consumption (Wen-Chin Tsao, 2014). People cannot touch the product physically except for the actual consumption, thus largely rely on internet information, for which share from previous consumers can provide indirect experience and perception of products, to reduce the risk and increase certainty. The movie is a typical experiential product, many moviegoers lively engaged in opinions exchange on the discussion forum, blog, and social media. These movie-related communications online are so flourishing and widespread that they become an influential market force for the movie industry (Liu, Y., 2006; Chaffee, S. H., 1982). It is analyzed that eWOM can increase consumers' awareness and interest in a film in the promotion stage, then influence moviegoers' evaluation and subsequently has an impact on the performance of the movies. (Nathan Lefvre & Andreea Vlangar, 2016; Liu, 2006; Mckenzie, 2009). The volume of eWOM can be a predictor of the future success of the movie and the revenue of movie marketers (Basuroy et al., 2003; Gemser, Van Oostrum & Leenders, 2007). Scholars explained that the number of online reviews and ratings significantly influences the box office of movies (Chintagunta et al., 2010; Duan et al., 2008). Yu et al. (2012) and Hu et al. (2018)

found that the number of movie reviews written and the length of reviews had the greatest effect on box-office performance. eWOM related to movies can be positive and negative. Positive reviews often show consumers' expectations and recognition of a movie which will encourage potential moviegoers' intention to pay for the movie. Negative reviews often refer to the complaints and satisfaction of a movie which may lead to a negative effect on movie performance. Prior researches also have shown that consumers are more easily influenced by negative eWOM. Compared with positive reviews, negative reviews attract more attention and they are considered to have a greater impact on box office performance (Wen-Chin Tsao, 2014; Ahluwalia and Shiv 2002; Ahluwalia and Shiv 1997). Yun-Kyung Oh (2017) supports that major eWOM variables play a significant role in box-office outcome prediction. Especially, the growth rate of the positive eWOM volume has a significant effect on the growth potential in sales (ibid). Lee, S., & Choeh, J. (2018) indicate in their studies that in cases when the review is helpful, the number of reviews and review comprehensiveness is more greatly influencing box office. Lee et al. (2016) compare the explanatory power of volume of WOM, star power, and valence in analyzing box-office sales. As shown in this section, most previous studies focus on the effect of eWOM on the box office of movies, while as it is stated before, the box office is the representation of purchase behavior rather than intention. However, more and more movie audiences are increasingly relying on online reviews to make their viewing choices and increase their knowledge of movies. Hence, in this thesis, consumers' attitudes and purchase intention rather than the purchase behavior will be studied and they will be discussed in the context of the reviewed movies. That is to say, consumers' attitudes and purchase intention to the reviewed movie will be discussed rather than the behavior of paying for a movie.

In addition to focusing on the impact of eWOM on consumer behavior, previous studies have also examined the mediating role of the eWOM platform. eWOM differs from WOM in that eWOM occurs in an online environment and is disseminated by multiple platforms and channels. eWOM recipients in an eWOM environment generally have no knowledge of the recipients, so the credibility and quality of the information are often difficult to identify. Therefore, eWOM message recipients need to draw on other more cues to help them identify the credibility of the information. One of the cues that are often considered is the eWOM platform. According to M.Y. Cheung et al.(2009) and W.C. Tsao(2015), the persuasion of eWOM messages varies from the different message transmitting channels. Dao et al. (2014)

suggested that the effects of advertising information and individuals' attitudes toward the information differ from various digital channels in their empirical findings. A path analysis model reveals that if a channel that is perceived to be credible can enhance peoples' attitudes towards eWOM messages (Yaniv Gvili et al., 2015). Moreover, in an empirical study about the impact of eWOM on consumers' book purchase intention, book eWOM channels are verified to have a significant mediating influence on eWOM persuasion (Yang et. al., 2018). Differently, Lee & Youn (2009) examined the impact of different eWOM platforms on consumers' product judgment based on the attribution theory (Kelley 1971). In the study, eWOM platforms were categorized as the marketer-generated website where comments and reviews could be controlled by the person or the organization with some objectives, such as a brand website, and non-marketer-generated websites which is free of the marketers' control, such as an independent product review website and a personal blog (Lee & Youn, 2009). The non-marketer-generated websites were supposed to be more credible for information receivers; however, the study found the impact of eWOM platforms on consumers' product judgment is insignificant (ibid). As shown by previous studies, the role of eWOM platforms in the relationship between eWOM and consumers is unclear. The conclusions in the previous researches are inconsistent, while this thesis doesn't aim to discuss and examine the role of eWOM platforms but rather focuses on the relationships between eWOM attributes and consumer attitudinal behaviors. Therefore, eWOM is studied in the context of a specific non-marketer-generated platform in this thesis.

As the largest internet community in the world, China has 904 million netizens, with the average daily time spent on the internet rising to 7.2 hours in March 2020 (China Internet Report, 2020). Correspondingly, eWOM in the movie also presents a vibrant scene. Numerous movie ticketing sites with movie review features and the specialized third-party apps being launched, such as Douban Movie and Mitime provide third-party information of movies and movie ratings, review forums. These review forums successfully gain a large number of users is the most persuasive proof. They provide an incubator for the movie eWOM, but also the fruit of the proliferation of eWOM and the prosperous development of China's film industry. Movie eWOM is generated and transmitted via a variety of channels and platforms. These channels have their unique capabilities and characteristics, and people use these channels differently (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010; Levy and Gvili, 2015). In China, the popular platforms for movie consumption and reviews are Douban(movie.douban.com),

Maoyan(maoyan.com), Taopiaopiao(dianying.taobao.com), Mtime(mtime.com), Zhihu(zhihu.com), WeChat, Weibo(weibo.com). Based on their distinguished orientation and features, these eWOM platforms can be categorized into three types: movie forum, ticket platform, promotion platform. As mentioned above, online platforms are studied as a mediating role in eWOM communication although the results are mixed.

To more focus on the eWOM credibility and message appeal, in this research, we choose a specific platform as the source of eWOM, to control the possible mediating influence of different platforms. eWOM posted on the third-party movie forum is considered to be most close to the definition because of its cultural orientation rather than the commercial orientation. The orientation of the third-party platform is to promote movie culture and construct a community for interaction between regular movie fans and consumers. Therefore, this study chooses one of the most popular and representative third-party movie review forums in China as the source of our research on eWOM. Douban is the most popular movie forums in China, which possesses the largest community of movie lovers and is viewed as the movie library. It already gained 200 million monthly unique users in the first season in 2013 and young adults aged from 20 to 35 are its main user group. One of its most popular functions, Douban Movie is China's largest movie sharing and review community, featuring millions of movies and filmmakers. The source of eWOM in this study will be from this representative third-party platform in China.

The above literature reviews set the theoretical foundation for the research. It aims to identify the variables and the potential connections between variables for the research. It first gave a general introduction to traditional WOM and eWOM communication. Then, the definition of eWOM credibility and antecedents related to eWOM credibility were presented. This analysis allows identifying four antecedents that influence eWOM credibility in this research context. Besides, the relationship of eWOM credibility and consumer attitude was also reviewed in this part, which allows identifying the proposed impact of eWOM credibility on consumer attitude in the context of movie eWOM. Later, reviews the prior study on message appeal including the presentation of types of message appeal. This analysis allows identifying the role message appeal plays in eWOM communication. And review of prior research on consumer attitude and purchase intention identified the proposed relationship between these two variables. Besides, it introduced eWOM communication in a movie context which allows

identifying the specific context of this research. The development of research methodology which aims to formulate models and develop hypotheses and research instruments will be conducted building on these literature analyses. It will be presented in the following chapter.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research approach and strategy

This sub-section aims to present the research method used by this research and explained the logics behind employing those specific methods. Firstly, research approach and strategy would be discussed and chose. Then the specific research instrument and measurement will be presented in the next section. To conduct a research, there are mainly two research approach which guide researchers to develop the relationship between theory and empirical findings. They are inductive and deductive approach. The inductive approach is a process of reasoning which infers a genera conclusion based on individual cases; thus it is characterized as a move form the specific to the general (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Conversely, the deductive is characterized as the development from general to particular. It is a process developing the hypotheses in a specific case based on a pre-existing general theory or knowledge base, and then formulating the research methods to test it (Silverman, 2013). The process of deductive approach can be described in Figure 3. In this thesis, the deductive approach is applied. As shown in the last subsection, seven hypotheses and two research models are developed based on the related literature analysis and they would be tased via scientific instruments. Deductive approach usually goes with survey as a research strategy which allows the researcher to observe and compare variables via collecting empirical data (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Besides, survey strategy is characterized as one of the finest and economical research strategy which is used in quantitative research. Quantitative research refers to statically test and measure hypotheses and draw conclusions based on large sample data. It meets the setting of this research and the conditions of the researcher in terms of finance and time. Therefore, survey was chose as the strategy for this research.

Figure 3: The process of deductive approach.



Source: Bryman & Bell (2011)

2.2 The scope and setting of the research

With the governmental support and the rapid economic growth in China, the Chinese movie market also grows vigorously and has surpassed the United States to become the world's largest market with 57.146 billion annual box office in the year of 2018 (iiMedia Research, 2019). Watching movie has become one of the most popular entertainment activities in China in recent years. The Annual Report of Chinese Film Market (2019) exhibits that the annual box office of 2019 reaches 64.266 billion with a 5.4% year-on-year increase. Hence, movie, this flourishing industry in China, deserves more specific research to better contribute to its development. The Annual Report of the Chinese Film Market (2019) also points out another important fact about the Chinese film market. It is also shown in the report that young adults aged 20-35 have become the main consumer, contributing more than half of the total yearly box office in 2019. They have a large demand for daily entertainment such as watching the movie with friends. This age group have entered the colleges or the workplace, so financial freedom to some extent allows them to pay for the movie tickets. What's more, born in the era of the rapid development of network technology, these young Chinese are the most active internet participants (China Industrial Information Network, 2018). They are the main user of social mobile application and actively join the eWOM communication paying high concern on eWOM messages during the process of purchase decision making. Hence, young adults who age from 20-35 were deemed appropriate for this study. While previous studies on eWOM effect usually available for general consumers, this thesis, considering the different characteristics of different consumer groups, limits the research group to the ones which are more important to the Chinese movie market today. Thus, this study is targeted at Chinese movie review website users aged 20-35.

2.3 The development of research model and hypotheses

The relationships among source credibility, argument quality, volume, valence and eWOM credibility.

Figuring out and establishing the processual relationships between eWOM message factors and purchase intention is not an easy task. Specially, this research is focus on one product, as it mentioned above, movie. To enable a structured research design, collection, analysis and discussion of the primary data, and also facilitate the systematic integration of secondary data, the corresponding hypotheses will be developed to explain the causal and processual

relationships between the variables and how they interact in the context of movie eWOM. Two research models also should be constructed to answer two research questions based on the previous literature review and analysis to outline the variables and their relationship in a clear way. Firstly, the hypotheses and model will be developed to explore the relationships between eWOM credibility and other message characteristics which are discussed in the previous literature review.

When comes to this part, some readers of this thesis may be confused, wasn't this study designed to verify the relationship between eWOM's credibility and consumer purchase intentions? Why are we here discussing the relationship between other specific eWOM information elements and credibility? Doubtless, this will limit the scope of this research, while the study in this thesis aims to be a detailed and specific rather than an extensive research. Before figuring out the relationships among eWOM credibility, consumers' attitude and purchase intention, identifying the information elements that affect eWOM credibility will not only help research participants define eWOM credibility more clearly and form an impression of eWOM to better participate in this study, but will also be a good guide for subsequent practical implementations. What's more, eWOM credibility is such an objective variable that we need more factors to make it more specific. Therefore, the following hypotheses developed for the relationship between eWOM credibility and other information elements such as information quantity, quality, and source are necessary for this study. In this thesis, four other message factor, source credibility, eWOM quality, valence and volume, would be tested as the antecedents of eWOM credibility. Based on the elaboration and relationship conjectures of eWOM credibility and these four information factors in the previous literature review, we propose the following four hypotheses.

H1: The source credibility of the messages positively impacts the eWOM credibility.

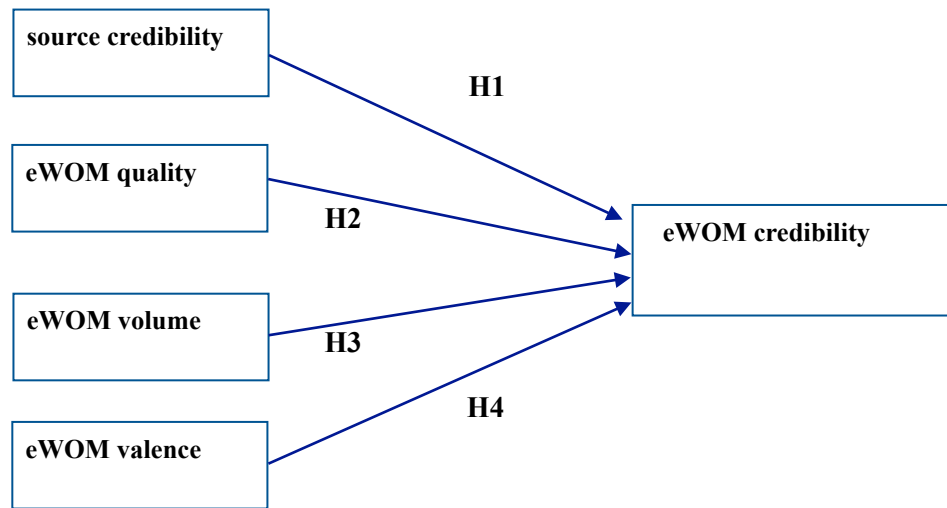
H2: The argument quality positively impacts the eWOM credibility.

H3: The eWOM volume positively impacts the eWOM credibility.

H4: The message valence positively impacts the eWOM credibility.

A research model (see Figure 4) is correspondingly drawn to better outline the processual relationships among source credibility, message quality, volume, valence and eWOM credibility.

Figure 4: Model of the relationships between eWOM credibility and source credibility, eWOM quality, volume, valence.



Source: Author's own analysis

The relationships among eWOM credibility, eWOM appeal and consumer's attitude.

In the previous, eWOM has impact on the consumers' attitudes to the reviewed product. (an, S. et al., 2018; Wu, P., & Wang, Y. 2011; Kunja, S., & Gvrk, A. 2018). While not all every eWOM has influence on consumers. The extent to which different eWOM can impact consumers is different. In this study, through a systematic review of previous researches, and in relation to the specific experience-based product of film, we conjecture that eWOM's credibility and appeals are important in causing a change in the formation of consumer attitudes. Thus, two hypotheses are developed:

H5: eWOM with high credibility positively impacts the consumers' attitude to the reviewed movie.

H6: Emotional appeal has a more significant impact on consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie, compared with rational appeal.

The relationship between consumer's attitude and purchase intention.

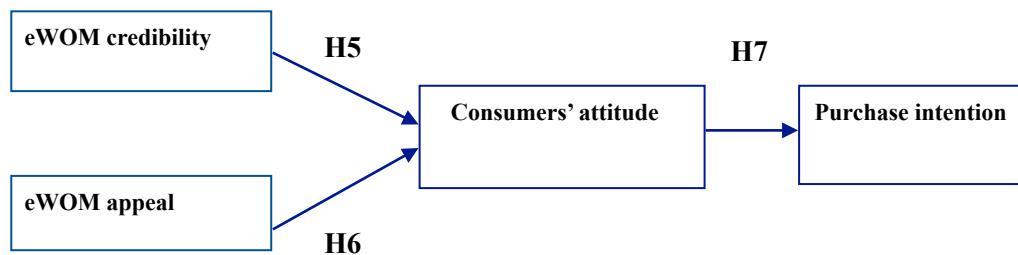
Attitudes of consumers have been examined by researchers in several studies when the purchase intentions have been studied (I. Erkan & C. Evans, 2016 ; Prendergast et al., 2010). Moreover, two more theories, which are Theory of Planned Behavior TPB (Ajzen, 1991) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Bagozzi, Davis, & Warshaw, 1992), also indicate

the relationship between attitude and behavioral intention. Attitude of consumer is considered as the main predictor of purchase intention. Therefore, particular in the context of movie consumption, we also predict that attitudes to the movie is positively related to consumers' purchase intention. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H7: Consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie positively impacts the consumers' purchase intention.

The second analytical model in this research shown in Figure 5 was constructed to help achieve the research objectives of this thesis and answer the second research questions. It encompasses and outline the relationships among eWOM credibility, appeal, consumers' attitude and purchase intention.

Figure 5: Model of the impacts of eWOM credibility and appeal on consumers' attitude and purchase intention.



Source: Author's own analysis.

2.4 Research Sampling

This sub-section will specify sampling of this research. Firstly, as is stated before, the research object of this study is testing the eWOM impacts on the young Chinese adults who aged from 20-35 because they are the most active online participants and most important movie consumers. Thus, compared with randomly sampling young people aged 20-35, sampling people who aged 20-35 and also focus film reviews as a sample group can more accurately and closely in line with the goal of research. Therefore, for this particular study, non probability convenience sampling technique was applied. Convenience sampling is a non probability sampling method that allows the researcher uses the set of samples he or she can

most easily obtain as the data for the study. This sampling method has the advantage of saving time and research costs. It friendly allows researchers to reach the sample group in the condition of limited time and finance. This research is clearly focus on young Chinese who are active online and movie consumption. Accordingly, the users of douban.com who aged from 20 to 35 were chose as the sample group of this research survey. To reach this sample, the link of questionnaire firstly was posted and shared via Chinese social media platform WeChat, QQ, and Weibo. Everyone on these platform has possibility to gain this questionnaire link while the screening questions in the questionnaire help to filter the participant into the targeted sample group. The design of the questionnaire will be presented later.

Because non-probability sampling method was applied in this research, there is none statistical method to be used in order to calculate the sample size. Under non-probability sampling, there is no knowledge of the probability that an individual in the sample will be drawn from the total population, so it is impossible to calculate a sample size without knowing sample error. Therefore, in this particular research, we have to use a non-statistical method to calculate the sample size by taking average number of respondents from previous studies. Nine previous studies on eWOM impacts have been referred, where the researchers also used online questionnaire and non-probability sampling as research methods. After evaluating sample size from those nine scientific papers, average sample size was calculated to be 271 respondents (**Table 2**).

Table 2: Sample size used in previous studies.

Author	Type of questionnaire	Sampling	Number of respondents	Research
José M. Álvarez-Monzoncillo, Guillermo de Haro Rodríguez & Robert G. Picard (2018)	Online questionnaire	Non-probability	707	Digital word of mouth usage in the movie consumption decision process: the role of Mobile- WOM among young adults in Spain
Manuela López & María Sicilia (2014)	Online questionnaire	Non-probability	325	eWOM as Source of Influence: The Impact of Participation in eWOM and Perceived Source Trustworthiness on Decision Making
Vlangar, A., & Lefèvre, N. (2016)	Online questionnaire	Non-probability	135	Impact of Online Word of Mouth on moviegoers: Students at the University of Gävle

Pang, J., & Qiu, L. (2016)	Online questionnaire	Non-probability	108	Effect of Online Review Chunking on Product Attitude: The Moderating Role of Motivation to Think
Kudeshia, C., & Kumar, A. (2017)	Online questionnaire	Non-probability	311	Social eWOM: Does it affect the brand attitude and purchase intention of brands?
Jieun Lee & Ilyoo B. Hong (2019)	Online questionnaire	Non-probability	216	Consumer's Electronic Word-of-Mouth Adoption: The Trust Transfer Perspective
Wu, P., & Wang, Y. (2011)	Online questionnaire	Non-probability	211	The influences of electronic word-of-mouth message appeal and message source credibility on brand attitude
Han.S. et al (2018)	Online questionnaire	Non-probability	158	Exploring the Persuasion Effect of Restaurant Food Product Online Reviews on Consumers' Attitude and Behavior
		Average	271	

Source: Author's own processing.

2.5 Research Instrument

As explained before, the survey would be applied as the research strategy in this thesis. Accordingly, an online questionnaire is applied as the research instrument. The online questionnaire is constructed to test the proposed hypotheses and models. The online questionnaire is a time and resource-friendly way to gather primary data comparing with other research instruments such as interviews and observation. Besides, it is easy to test data for reliability and validity. These advantages make it a suitable instrument for this research considering the limited time and resources of the thesis writer. The questionnaire is developed by <https://www.wjx.cn>, a Chinese popular website that offers a useful and free way to build an online survey. A Chinese survey tool was chosen because this research is targeted on China market where the Google form cannot be applied and Chinese consumers who are much more familiar with the survey on the <https://www.wjx.cn> rather than Google form. On the <https://www.wjx.cn>, not only the survey can be built in a clear and proper way, but the collected data also can be grouped and drew in the form of graphs and tables based on questions and variables which makes it more friendly for further data analysis. As for the questionnaire, it was developed in English at first, and then it was translated into Chinese considering the specific setting of the research. The translation was made by the researcher, a native Chinese who is fluent in English. To ensure reliability and efficiency, the translation maximally follows the consistency with the English version and the compliance with Chinese reading

habits.

The questionnaire aims to verify the constructs in the research model and the proposed relationships between variables. The research model and hypotheses developed in chapter 2.2 provide the base for developing the questions. The questionnaire was made up of 3 parts. It begins with the general and simple introduction of the research and questionnaire; then follows the four screening questions which allows to group the respondents by age, gender, and educational level, as well as to filter out the inappropriate respondent by the question as “have you ever read movie reviews on Douban website before deciding to watch the movie”. After the screening section, it is the second part aiming to examine the relations between antecedents (source credibility, eWOM quality, volume, and valence) and eWOM credibility. The respondents were first given a situation that aims to help the respondents to better understand the survey and questions. The situation was described as “There are thousands of reviews for each movie on Douban website, while not each review is credible. We usually evaluate the reviews from the source credibility, argument quality, the number of review's interactions (likes, sharing, discussion, views), and valence (positive/negative)”. In this case, as a review reader, to what extent do you agree with the following statement, if you evaluate a review as credible. In this section, questions 5-12 are developed to examine hypothesis 1; the questions 13-22 for hypothesis 2, the questions 23-27 for hypothesis 3, the questions 28-35 for hypothesis 4. The third part of the questionnaire is designed to examine the impact of eWOM credibility and eWOM appeal on consumers' attitudes as well as the relationship between consumer attitude and purchase intention. The respondents were also given situations related to the questions. Questions 36-40 aim to collect data for hypothesis 5 measuring the relation between eWOM credibility and consumers' attitude. The questions 41-50 are designed for hypothesis 6 measuring the relation between eWOM appeal and consumers' attitude. Questions 51-56 are for hypothesis 7 measuring the relationship between consumers' attitude and purchase intention. Except for the screening questions, all the questions were carried out by a seven-point Likert-scale which includes seven response categories from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Strongly disagreement was marked as 1 point, while strongly agreement was marked as 7 points. All the items were adopted from previous relevant studies and appropriately modified and rephrased for the setting of this study. These instruments were borrowed and referred because the variables used were similar to the ones in this research and they are reliable and valid as they were tested and published. The specific measurement will

be explained in the following paragraphs. And the whole questionnaire framework can be checked in **Annex 1**.

1. Antecedents of eWOM Credibility

Firstly, corresponding to the research model and hypotheses, the independent variable eWOM credibility was measured via source credibility, eWOM quality, volume, and valence. Measurement of source credibility and eWOM quality are all based on the measurement in the study of Teng and et. (2014). The scales consist of 18 items. Specially, in the questionnaire, source credibility was measured by eight items: trustworthiness and the expertise of reviewer by asking respondents to rate the statements such as “People who posted reviews/comments are trustworthy/dependable/honest/reliable” and “People who posted reviews/comments are knowledgeable/qualified/expert/experienced in evaluating movies. Ten items such as “The comment is informative”, “The comment is accurate/correct” and “The comment is convincing/persuasive/applicable” were used to measure the eWOM quality involving the angles of review comprehensiveness, relevancy, and accuracy, and argument strength. eWOM volume in this research was measured via the number of ‘likes’, views and interactions involving sharing and discussion of the online comments among eWOM readers. Items were developed based on the research from Mohamed et. Al.(2015). Items such as “The comment is read by more people, more likely I will trust the comment” and “More likes the comment gains, more likely I will trust the comment” were used in the questionnaire. Finally, eight items were used for the eWOM valence which is based on the scale from Chong and et. (2018). Statements include “Overall, the comment stresses unfavorable appraisal of the discussed movie”, “Overall, the comment recommends the movie” and so on. As it is mentioned before, the statements are rated based on a seven-point Likert scale where 1 represents strongly disagree and 7 represents strongly agree. The bigger number is rated, the more strongly the respondents agree with the statements.

2. eWOM credibility

Respondents are asked to explain how they perceive a credible review by rating five items with a 7-point Likert scale. Five items in this construct were referred from Cheung et. al., (2009). Items including “I think the review is factual,” “I think the review is accurate,” “I think the review is credible,” and so on were used.

3. eWOM appeal

In this research, eWOM appeal is classified into emotional appeal and rational appeal. The emotional appeal involves the experiential feelings and emotions of watching the movie while the rational appeal which involves the movie facts which are referred from a study investigating the influence of eWOM message appeal on brand attitude (Wu, P., & Wang, Y. 2011). Survey respondents are asked to rate the same statements involving their thoughts of review with rational appeal and review with emotional appeal. In the survey, review with the rational appeal is described as “the reviews/comments mainly mention some facts of the movie (movie genre, shooting technique, actors).” The review with emotional appeal is explained as “the reviews/comments mainly share the emotional feelings (enjoyable/unenjoyable, sad/happy...)and experience of the movie watching.” Five items are referred from Albers-Miller and Stafford(1999); Park et al., 2007. The item such as “I find the review is helpful as it shares the emotional feelings (enjoyable/unenjoyable, sad/happy...) and experience of the movie watching” and “I always read the review involving facts of the movie (movie genre, shooting technique, actors...)” were used. Survey respondents are also asked to rate the item based on a 7-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

4. Attitude towards the reviewed movie

The measurement of consumers’ attitudes was referred from Schivinski and Dabrowski (2014) and modified to better fit the context of this research. The attitude in this study points to consumers’ attitudes towards the reviewed movie. Six items such as “The movie is an interesting movie,” “I like the movie,” “I have a pleasant idea of this movie” and so on are included in this scale. Respondents still need to rate the items based on a 7-point Likert scale.

5. Purchase intention

Purchase intention was measured as the willingness and intention that the consumer will watch the movie There are six items included in this scale. They were borrowed and referred from Schivinski and Dabrowski (2014) and Teng, et. al., (2011). The items as “I intend to watch the movie,” “I would watch the movie,” “I would expect to watch the movie” and so on were used. All the measurement items and adopted sources are shown in Annex 1.

3. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH RESULTS

3.1 Demographic characteristics & Descriptive analysis

As it was mentioned before, considering realistic conditions like limited time and finance, an online survey was conducted for this empirical study. It is not only a cost-efficient way but also a method that is easy and friendly by respondents. To reach the potential respondents as many as possible, the survey was published and transferred via different social media platforms in China, such as WeChat and QQ, the two most popular social platforms. The survey was translated into Mandarin by the researcher who is a native Chinese speaker so as to make the survey more available for the targeted sample population. In order to more precisely and accurately target the sample group for this study, respondents would ask to answer the specific question as “have you read movie reviews on the Douban website before you decide to watch the movie”. The specific question aims to make sure that respondents are Douban movie review readers. People who answered no and never read a movie review on Douban were not treated as the valid sample people for this test and were excluded from the analysis. Besides, respondents were also asked to present their age in the demographic part of the survey. Because the sample population for this research is people whose ages are between 20 and 35, respondents who are not in this age category were also excluded from the study analysis. The third way to precisely make a respondent a valid sample person is via reverse wording question. A reverse wording question was used in the survey in order to avoid respondents who casually filled out the survey and pay less attention to the content of the questionnaire. The reverse wording question as “ The online review didn’t really change my mind about movie selection” was set in the construct which aims to ask consumer attitude towards the review. With these filtering questions, 276 respondents were chosen as valid sample people within 351 original respondents who completed the survey. Therefore, in the further analysis phase, only these 276 respondents were included and it is satisfactory for the sample size of this research which is 271 needed. These 276 respondents are all between 20 and 35 years old and are all movie review readers on the Douban site.

Table 3: Demographic Characteristic.

Demographic Characteristic

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	male	115	41.7
	female	161	58.3
	Total	276	100.0
Age	20-25	101	36.6
	26-30	114	41.3
	31-35	61	22.1
	Total	276	100
Educational level	high school and lower	8	2.9
	college diploma	68	24.6
	bachelor	166	60.1
	master degree and higher	34	12.3
	Total	276	100.0

Source: Author's own processing.

Besides, in the demographic part of the survey, respondents also presented their gender and educational level. Out of that, 41.7 percent of them are male and 58.3 percent are female. The majority of the participants in this study hold a degree of bachelor with a percentage of 60.1%. Approximately 25% of respondents hold a college diploma and 12.3% gained a master's degree while only 2.9 percent got a high school diploma and below. In case of age, participants whose age are between 26 and 35 are the biggest group with 41.3 percent. 36.6 percent of respondents are between 20 and 25 years old while only around 22 percent of participants are aged 31 and 35.

In addition, descriptive analysis for the constructs in this research will also be presented in this section. All items in the survey were measured by a 7 Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The mean, standard deviation o the scale items were applied to describe the constructs. It is meaningful to know about the overall level of various variables. Generally, almost all constructs have a quite high mean value which is more than 5.5, while valence has

a comparatively lower mean value of 4.16. The specific descriptive statistics of the important constructs are presented in **Table 4**.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics.

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
source credibility	276	5.5643	0.74806
argument quality	276	5.6750	0.64141
volume	276	5.5928	0.90555
valence	276	4.1630	0.77241
credibility	276	5.7138	0.64720
emotional appeal	276	5.7027	0.58611
rational appeal	276	5.6593	0.66700
attitude towards the movie	276	5.6401	0.64920
purchase intention	276	5.8207	0.63940
Valid N (listwise)	276		

Source: Author's own processing

3.2 Reliability analysis

In order to ensure the quality of the survey and all the items in the survey are reliable for the study, reliability analysis was conducted in SPSS and Cronbach's Alpha was performed to examine the internal consistency of responses among questions in the survey. The higher Cronbach's Alpha shows the higher reliability of the measurement. Generally, 0.6 is claimed as the lowest acceptable point for academic researches. The measurement is thought to be with satisfactory reliability with Cronbach's Alpha from 0.6 to 0.7. Between 0.7 and 0.8 are with good reliability while it is taken as excellent reliability if the Cronbach's Alpha is higher than 0.8 (Hair et al., 1998). All of the constructs in this research have a Cronbach's Alpha higher than 0.6 which is considered satisfactory. The result is shown in Table 5.

Regarding the source credibility, 8 items were included in the construct which involves source trustworthiness and source expertise. All these 8 items are tested for reliability and it got a quite good Cronbach's Alpha of 0.832 which shows excellent internal consistency in the construct. Same as the source credibility, the constructs of argument quality and eWOM volume also showed excellent internal consistency with an excellent Cronbach's Alpha of

0.829 and 0.838 each. In case of argument quality, ten items were included and the volume was five items. Compared with another three determinants of eWOM credibility, eWOM valence with an 8-item scale was tested with a lower Cronbach's Alpha of 0.689. eWOM valence involves both negative valence and positive valence in the scale; however, specially a higher Cronbach's Alpha was found in terms of negative valence and positive valence separately. Negative valence with four items was performed with Cronbach's Alpha of 0.947 and in the case of the four-item scale of positive valence is 0.781. In the case of eWOM credibility, a five-item scale was used and the Cronbach 's Alpha of the construct is satisfactory 0.689. eWOM appeal is studied as another important influencing factor of consumers ' attitudes in this research. There are five statements to measure respondents' reactions to emotional and rational appeal separately. It was found that Cronbach's alpha of the five-item scale for emotional appeal is 0.626, and that of rational appeal is 0.673. It is not a high Cronbach 's alpha while it is satisfactory for further analysis.

The relationship between attitude towards the reviewed movie and purchase intention is the final hypothesis this research aims to examine. Regarding to the attitude towards the reviewed movie, it is found that the construct showed good reliability with Cronbach's alpha of 0.772 after running the analysis procedure in SPSS. Same as the attitude towards the reviewed movie, the side-item scale for purchase intention also showed good reliability with the Cronbach 's alpha of 0.722. Finally, as a summary of reliability analysis for all the constructs in this research, Table 3 was drawn to present the reliability coefficient of each construct.

Table 5: Reliability analysis of Constructs.

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Source credibility	0.832	8
Argument quality	0.829	10
Volume	0.838	5
Valence	0.689	8
eWOM credibility	0.689	5
Emotional appeal	0.626	5
Rational appeal	0.673	5
Attitude towards the reviewed movie	0.772	6
Purchase intention	0.722	6

Source: Author's own processing.

3.3 Testing of hypotheses

The research not only investigates the relationships between eWOM message factors (eWOM credibility and eWOM appeal) and purchase intention but also examines the relationships between determinants and eWOM credibility and also the significant contribution of each determinant. Thus, both multiple and simple linear regression analyses were applied in this research to better reveal the connections between various variables. Multiple regression not only can reveal the cause and effect relationships between independent and dependent variables but also can evaluate the independent variables' strength of impact on dependent variables. Therefore, multiple regression analysis was implemented to test the first four hypotheses. Hypothesis 1, 2, 3,4 are trying to examine the relationships of four antecedent elements and eWOM credibility. It is hypothesized that source credibility, argument quality, volume, and valence have an impact on eWOM credibility. After conduct multiple regression analysis in SPSS, it was found that all four antecedents are correlated to eWOM credibility while only two antecedents, argument quality, and volume, have a significant impact on eWOM credibility ($R^2=0.853$, $F(2)=364.912$, $p<0.001$). Specially, argument quality ($t=14.906$, $p<0.001$) has bigger impact on eWOM credibility than eWOM volume ($t=5.116$, $p<0.001$). However, another two predictors, source credibility ($p=0.209>0.05$) and valence ($p=0.673>0.05$) didn't show a significant impact on eWOM credibility based on statistical analysis. In summary, H2 and H3 are supported while H1 and H4 are rejected.

To explore the relationships between eWOM credibility and consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie, hypothesis 5 is presented. Simple Linear regression analyses were implemented in this case. From the statistical result, it was found that these two variables are correlated and eWOM credibility positively impacts consumers' attitude towards movies ($R^2=0.431$, $F=207.432$, $t=14.402$, $p<0.001$). Therefore, hypothesis 5 is supported. The next hypothesis concentrates on the relationship between eWOM appeal and consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie. After conducting simple Linear regression in SPSS, it was statistically verified emotional appeal ($t=19.791$, $p<0.001$) has a stronger impact on consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie ($t=8.723$, $p<0.001$), compared with the rational appeal ($t=7.089$, $p<0.001$). Thus, in this case, hypothesis 6 is also supported statistically. The last hypothesis is related to the relationship between consumers' attitudes

towards the reviewed movie and purchase intention. It suggests that consumers' attitudes towards the reviewed movie positively impact purchase intention. From the result of Linear regression analysis, it was found that consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie is an influencing factor of purchase intention. It has a significant impact on purchase intention (R square=0.490, F=263.169, t=9.647, p<0.001). Therefore, hypothesis 7 is also supported by the statistical result. The summary of all the hypotheses testing are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: The Hypotheses Testing Results.

Hypothesis	Result
H1: The source credibility of the messages positively impacts the eWOM credibility.	Rejected
H2: The argument quality positively impacts the eWOM credibility.	Supported
H3: The eWOM volume positively impacts the eWOM credibility.	Supported
H4: The eWOM message valence positively impacts the eWOM credibility.	Rejected
H5: eWOM credibility positively impacts consumer's attitude towards the reviewed movie.	Supported
H6: Emotional appeal has a more significant impact on consumers' attitude compared with rational appeal.	Supported
H7: Consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie positively impacts consumers' purchase intention.	Supported

Source: Author's own processing.

3.4 Findings and discussion

As mentioned earlier, as a typical eWOM message factor, eWOM credibility is getting more and more concern from more and more scholars. Most research was conduct in the context of the physical product. In addition, various antecedents were discussed to be influencing factors

of eWOM credibility while from the section of literature review, we can know the results and findings are inconsistent and even controversial. Besides, compared with other eWOM message factors, eWOM message appeal hasn't gained a lot of concern. Less existing studies have concentrated on this eWOM factor which is also unable to neglect in eWOM communication. To fill this gap, this research is focusing on examining the relationships between four specific antecedents (source credibility, argument quality, volume, valence) and eWOM credibility as well as eWOM appeal. What's more, the research is conducted in a specific context of the movie and Chinese young adults. Furthermore, consumers' attitudes and purchase intention were also discussed and examined.

Source credibility is one of the popular eWOM antecedents which was studied in previous studies. It refers to "the extent to which a source is perceived to be believable, competent, and trustworthy by the receiver" and it was measured with the sources' trustworthiness and expertise in this research (C. M. K. Cheung & Thadani, 2012). In this research, source credibility is considered as an antecedent of eWOM credibility, and is hypothesized as having an impact on eWOM credibility. However, it was found that there is no significant relationship between source credibility and eWOM credibility because the p-value is higher than 0.05 in the regression analysis. It means that eWOM credibility is not influenced by source credibility. Specially, the qualification of review senders will not influence the credibility of reviews. Chinese young adults who are 20-35 years old do not take source credibility too seriously when they are evaluating the credibility of movie reviews online. One plausible reason for this statistical finding might be that the review platform studied by this research is the most popular and reputable movie review site which is characterized as the conversational forum in China, then most review senders on this site are naturally accepted as reliable review senders who are with conversational motives rather than marketing or financial motives. Thus, source credibility is a more salient cue for review readers of the Douban site than other antecedent cues in evaluating eWOM reviews. This might lead to the result that the sample people in this research, the review readers of the Douban site, do not take source credibility too serious in evaluating the credibility of movie reviews. And this might be the reason why the finding in this case is inconsistent with the previous findings regarding to the relationship between source credibility and eWOM credibility. It is deserved to be further studied and confirmed the inconsistent findings in more different context in future research.

Argument quality is hypothesized as a second antecedent of eWOM credibility. Argument quality refers to the persuasion power of a message towards targeted receivers and is often evaluated based on the richness or elaboration of the message, which refers to the breadth, depth, and relevance of message content to the products or consumption experience. (Cheung and Lee, 2008; Sweeney et al., 2012). In our case, it is measured with the comprehensiveness of the information, argument accuracy, and argument strength. The significant relationship between argument quality and eWOM credibility was successfully found in this research ($R^2=0.853$, $F(2)=364.912$, $p<0.001$, $t=14.906$, $p<0.001$). It was examined statistically that argument quality positively impacts eWOM credibility. It means an online review with higher argument quality would be thought to be more credible by review receivers or readers. Specially, the online reviews which are more comprehensive, more accurate, and more persuasive would be more easily trusted by review receivers or readers. In our case, 20-35 years old Chinese young adults would be influenced by argument comprehensiveness, message accuracy, and argument strength when they judge whether the online movie reviews are credible or not.

Same as argument quality, the relationship between volume and eWOM credibility was also found to be significant ($t=5.116$, $p<0.001$) which means volume also has an impact on eWOM credibility based on the statistical analysis. In this study, volume especially refers to the number of view and likes of the online reviews, as well as the total number of interaction which involves sharing, discussion among review readers. More number of views, likes, and interactions of a review implies that more people pay attention to it and take it as a reference. That's to say that reviews with more interaction such as like, sharing and view would be considered as more credible by review readers. In our case, it implies 20-35 years old Chinese young adults also care about the number of review interactions when they choose online movie reviews to read and trust. Moreover, it is meaningful and important to point out another interesting insight from this study. It was found that the argument quality of eWOM messages has a stronger impact on eWOM credibility, compared with volume which might mean that review receivers or readers care more about the argument quality of the reviews rather than the number of review interactions when they are evaluating eWOM credibility. However, both of these two antecedents showed a significant impact on eWOM credibility in this study; thus, both of these two predictors of eWOM credibility need to be paid attention to.

Same as the case of source credibility, there is no significant relationship found between eWOM credibility and eWOM valence which is hypothesized as a fourth predictor by the researcher. It refers to the positive or negative reviews or ratings given by consumers when they evaluate products (Robert Allen King et al., 2014). In this research, the P-value is higher than 0.05 in the regression analysis which means that valence is not an influencing factor of eWOM credibility. In our case, it implies that 20-35 years old Chinese young adults don't consider eWOM valence a lot when they read movie reviews on Douban and try to evaluate the eWOM credibility. This finding is consistent with the finding from Cheung, Luo, Sia, and Chen (2009) that message valence has no impact on message credibility. To summarize, only two antecedents, argument quality and the number of review interactions have an impact on eWOM credibility.

Except for studying which antecedents bring about the evaluation of eWOM credibility, more importantly, this research also examined the cause and effect connection between eWOM credibility and consumers' attitude. Based on the pre literature, eWOM credibility is defined as the believability of the online review, and it rests largely on perceptions of the trustworthiness and expertise of the information source as interpreted by the information receiver in this research (Jonas Forup Stubkjaer, 2014; Hovland et al., 1953; Metzger & Flanagin, 2013). Message credibility is claimed as the initial factor in the individual's persuasion process (Wathen and Burkell, 2002). The result of the study found that the positive eWOM message with higher message credibility indicates a better brand attitude than the eWOM message with lower message credibility (Paul and Wang, 2010). Specially, in the context of this research, how the eWOM credibility influence consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie was studied and examined statistically. It is successfully found in this research that eWOM credibility is a significant influencing predictor of consumers' attitudes. eWOM credibility positively impacts consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie. Consumers who are more tend to trust the review would be more likely to have a more clear and positive attitude towards the movie. Therefore, it is critical and significant to know the necessity of improving eWOM credibility and how to improve it because it is an important eWOM message factor among 20-35 years old Chinese young adults.

In addition to the eWOM credibility, this research also discussed and examined the relationship between eWOM appeal and consumers' attitudes. It concentrated on two types of message appeal which are emotional appeal and rational appeal. In our special context, eWOM with emotional appeal refers to online movie review which mainly shares the emotional feelings (enjoyable/unenjoyable, sad/happy...) and experience of the movie watching while review with rational appeal focusing on facts of the movie such as movie genre, shooting technique, actors and so on. From the statistical analysis, we found that there are significant relationships between eWOM message appeal and consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie which implies that message appeal positively impacts consumers' attitude. In our case, the online movie review with emotional appeal has a stronger impact on Chinese young adults' attitude towards the reviewed movie, compared with online reviews with the rational appeal. It implies that Chinese young adults concern more on reviews that mainly share the emotional feeling of the movie-watching experience and are more easily influenced by the reviews with emotional appeal. To summarize, it is verified by the current study that it is the emotional appeal, instead of the rational appeal, which has a stronger impact on consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie.

Last but not least, the cause and effect connection between consumers' attitude and purchase intention was also studied in our case. Attitude refers to the positive or negative feeling of an individual towards the subject or the behavior, in other words, the evaluation of the individual towards the specific object (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). And purchase intention is the personal willingness to purchase a particular good or service in the future which is a tool to anticipate a subsequent purchase decision and behavior of a potential consumer (C.-Y. Li, 2013; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Houston, 1980). Past studies have investigated the influence of attitude change of consumer on the purchase intention of the reviewed products (Lee and Youn, 2009; Xu, 2014, S. R. Kunja & A. GVRK, 2017). In empirical studies, it was found that attitude towards products and eWOM messages is examined to be positively associated with purchase intention (Zha X et al., 2013; Kim T et al., 2009; Azlin, 2015). I. Erkan, C. Evans (2016) conducted research in the setting of social media and supported the positive influence of attitude of social media users on purchase intention. Stronger purchase intention will be induced when the consumer has a positive attitude towards the product and eWOM message. In the context of this research, as it mentioned before, an attitude refers to consumers' feeling towards the movie while purchase intention refers to the willingness to watch the movie. And

It is also found that there is a significant relationship between consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie and purchase intention ($R^2=0.490$, $F=263.169$, $t=9.647$, $p<0.001$). It means that consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie positively impacts purchase intention among 20-35 years old Chinese young adults, suggesting that more positive consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie is likely to result in higher intention to watch the reviewed movie.

In summary, the above findings of this research confirm some relationships between antecedents and independent factors of eWOM messages in prior literature; in the mean time, it also reveals some inconsistent and controversial opinions relating to antecedents and determinants of eWOM credibility and eWOM message factors related to consumers' attitude in prior studies. The results of this research will be performed in a more specific way in the next subsection. The theoretical and practical implications will also be discussed and presented.

3.5 Summary of results and Implications

3.5.1 Results

The characteristics of eWOM message and the impact of eWOM factors on attitude and purchase intention of consumers have long gained a great of concern and attention (Zha X et al., 2013; Kim T et al., 2009; Wu and Wang, 2011). The characteristics and impact of eWOM communication have been studied based on various theoretical models such as technology acceptance model (Davis, 1989), the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) and information adoption model (Sussman & Siegal, 2003). However, after conducting a comprehensive analysis of prior literature, the current research explained the antecedents that have an impact on the overall credibility of eWOM messages, as well as the cause and effect connections of eWOM credibility, eWOM appeal, and consumers' attitude towards the reviewed product which further influence consumers' purchase intention. The current research was conducted in the context of online movie reviews in China and targeted Chinese young adults whose age are between 20 and 35. There are seven hypothesis testing in this study. With both multiple and simple regression analysis, five hypotheses were accepted and another two hypotheses were rejected.

The result of this empirical study indicates that the argument quality of eWOM messages positively affects eWOM credibility. It provides evidence that comprehensiveness of the eWOM messages, relevancy, argument accuracy, and strength are important indications for Chinese young adults who are 20-35 years old to evaluate the overall credibility of the reviews they read. This result is consistent with the findings from Daowd et. al. (2020) which also supported the significant relationship between argument quality and the overall credibility of that review. It explained that argument quality is a big concern for Thai Generation Y people and it impacts the overall credibility of the review (ibid). What's more, Daft and Lengal (1986) indicated in their study that the more accurate the messages are, the higher the perceived credibility of the messages would be. It is advised that message receivers prefer the most relevant and comprehensive information because most internet users are sensible of their time and want to find information efficiently (Madu and et al., 2002; Nah and Davis, 2002). The result of this research reconfirms these above findings in the prior studies.

Except for argument quality, the result of this study also indicates that eWOM volume has a significant impact on eWOM credibility. The researcher found that the volume of the online review is also a significant cue for Chinese young adults for evaluating eWOM credibility. This result is echoing the finding of Duan et al. (2008) that the volume of WOM is an influential cue on which consumers may rely when judging the credibility of the WOM. Other studies also pointed out that the persuasion effect of WOM may differ based on the volume of WOM messages (Bone, 1995, Duan, Gu, & Whinston, 2008; Dellarocas et al., 2007). The result of the current research one more time verified these prior related results. What is different is that Duan et al. (2008) advised that eWOM volume is the most influential cue for the consumer to judge the overall credibility of eWOM information while this research found that argument quality has a stronger impact on eWOM credibility compared with eWOM volume. In addition, different to the prior literature which indicated that source credibility and eWOM valence have a significant impact on the overall credibility of online source (Park and Lee, 2009; Wu and Wang, 2011), the result of this research did not find significant relationships of source credibility, eWOM valence, and eWOM credibility. The current result indicates that source credibility and valence of the movie review are not a big concern for Chinese young adults when they evaluate the overall credibility of the review.

Furthermore, the current research found that there was a statistically significant relationship between eWOM credibility and consumers' attitude. It found that eWOM credibility has a positive impact on consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie among Chinese young adults. This agrees with Teng S et al., (2014) that people tend to hold a positive attitude towards the product if they believe the message as credible, while they tend to ignore the message if they consider the message as incredible. This is also echoing the finding from Paul and Wang (2010) that the positive eWOM message with higher message credibility indicates a better brand attitude than the eWOM message with lower message credibility. As same as eWOM credibility, the significant relationship of eWOM appeal and consumers' attitude has also been found in this study. It was statistically verified that eWOM message appeal significantly impacts on Chinese young adults' attitude towards the reviews movie. This result is consistent with the finding from Wu and Wang (2011) that both emotional and rational message appeal affect consumers' attitude towards a product and a brand. Majid and Farshad (2016) also supported in their empirical study that the appeal of viral messages positively impacts consumer attitude toward the brand. In our case, it has statistically resulted that emotional appeal has a more significant impact on consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie, compared with the rational appeal. This result is consistent with prior findings that emotional appeals have a greater effect on evoking consumers' purchase attitudes and behavior in comparison with rational appeals (Geuens, De Pelsmacker, & Fasseur, 2011; Huang, 2003). It is also supported that in the context of experiential consumption, eWOM messages with emotional appeal works better in arouse consumers' interest and help them to develop attitudes to the experiential products (Wu and Wang, 2011; Mazzotta et al., 2007). These findings are the same as the result of this research.

Finally, similar to most past studies, the result revealed that purchase intention is the consequence and consumers' attitude toward the reviewed product act as a significant influencing factor of purchase intention. The result implies that attitude toward the reviewed movie positively affects intention to watch movie among Chinese young adults. This result is exactly consistent with past studies where the attitude towards products is examined to be positively associated with purchase intention (Zha X et al., 2013; Kim T et al., 2009; Azlin, 2015). I. Erkan, C. Evans (2016) supported in their empirical studies that stronger purchase intention will be induced when the consumer has a positive attitude towards the product.

3.5.2 Theoretical and practical implications

The results of this research make some contribution to the theoretical implications. Most prior studies paid great focus on discussing and verifying the impact of eWOM message factors on actual purchase behaviors and sale performance. However, it is also significant and meaningful to pay attention to the characteristics of eWOM messages factors and their impact on intentional purchase behaviors rather than actual purchase behaviors. The present research adds to this by enhancing the understanding of eWOM characteristics and their impact on intentional purchase behaviors in a specific context. The research believes that the results of this study can contribute to the existing eWOM literature theoretically on some level. Firstly, to better study the eWOM credibility, a comprehensive conceptual framework was built and four representative antecedents were discussed and examined to further analyze eWOM credibility. Many prior studies directly explained the relationships between these eWOM characteristics and actual purchase behaviors of consumers, while this study considered these characteristics as the antecedents of eWOM credibility and eWOM adoption and further verified it in a specific context. This empirical study found that in the context of movie consumption among Chinese young adults, argument strength and the number of review interactions are significantly influencing factors of the overall credibility of movie reviews. This is consistent with findings from most prior sources and reaffirms the prior findings in a new context. Thus, the researcher believes that the study increases the reliability and validity of the existing academic findings. If for nothing else, it at least is an inspiration for future research.

In addition, source credibility and eWOM valence were also hypothesized as the determinants of eWOM credibility and were verified statistically. However, the findings present that information source credibility and information valence are not always significant influences in different research contexts. In this specific context of online movie reviews and Chinese young adults, there is no significant relationship found between source credibility, online review valence, and eWOM credibility. In the prior studies, there are also a lot of inconsistent findings and results regarding these two eWOM antecedents (Doh and Hwang, 2009; Cheung, Luo, Sia, and Chen, 2009; Wu, P., & Wang, Y., 2011). Therefore, the results of this research theoretically suggest that future research could investigate and validate these two information

antecedents in more different research contexts of eWOM communication and more new areas.

Thirdly, the results of this study also confirm the effect of eWOM credibility on consumer attitudes towards the product, which once again strongly confirms and reiterates previous findings on the effect of eWOM credibility and reveals a significant area of eWOM research on movie reviews in the context of young Chinese groups. What's more, this study also looks at the relationship between message appeal and consumers' attitudes. It agrees with prior studies that message appeal has a positive impact on consumers' attitudes towards the product. Same as the prior studies, the current thesis claims that for an experiential product like movie in this case, the impact of emotional appeal on consumers' attitude is more significant than that of rational appeal. It adds an additional contextual validation to the existing sparse research on eWOM message appeal and provides inspiration for future research. Finally, in line with most previous studies, this study demonstrates a significant relationship between consumer attitudes and consumer motivation in a new and specific context. It is again increasing the reliability and validity of the related existing academic findings.

It is also argued that this thesis has some tentative practical implications. Watching movies is one of the most popular entertainment activities among young consumers in China. Due to the popularity of the internet and the rapid development of social media, reading movie reviews is also a mainstream habit among Chinese young adults who are 20-35 years old. According to this study, these young Chinese people read movie reviews with the argument quality of the reviews and the number of review interactions as important indicators of the overall credibility of the reviews, so companies and related organizations that would like to conduct marketing campaign through electronic word of mouth should focus on improving the quality of information and interactions to provide overall credibility. For example, they can improve the credibility of online information by increasing the number of retweets and likes on a message which will also increase interaction and connection between companies and potential consumers.

Secondly, it is advisable for the review senders or marketer to provide the information receivers with accurate, truthful, comprehensive, and useful information, which will influence

the message recipient's assessment of the credibility of the review. Furthermore, the findings of this study suggest that companies and related organizations can influence consumer attitudes by improving the credibility of eWOM communications or by providing information with more emotional appeals. Instead of spending a lot of capital and effort on traditional advertising and marketing, it would be better to learn more about eWOM characteristics and the importance of eWOM communication and incorporate eWOM communication that is accepted friendly by younger groups into integrated marketing strategies. Overall, this study helps eWOM communicators, as well as relevant corporate marketers, to better understand China's younger consumer groups and eWOM communication in the context of movie consumption. Marketers have the opportunity to benefit from an insightful view of eWOM marketing in China.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This section will first come to the conclusions of this thesis and then provide recommendations based on the findings and conclusion. The starting point for this thesis is the observation on the rise of movie consumption and movie review forums among Chinese young adults, yet the characteristics of movie reviews and their influential relationships with consumers' intentional behaviors do not seem to have been sufficiently explored in this particular marketing context and consumer group. Thus, this thesis aims to investigate the relationship between eWOM message antecedents and eWOM credibility, and the impact of eWOM credibility and eWOM appeal on consumers' attitudes and purchase intention in the context of movie reviews and Chinese young adults. Six objectives were formulated based on the aim of the thesis. By conducting comprehensive literature reviews and analysis, the first three objectives were achieved and four theoretical conclusions were drawn by this research:

1. Different with traditional WOM which are communicated via face to face in a familiar circle, eWOM is online information sharing that happened anonymously so the credibility of eWOM is difficult to judge directly compared with traditional WOM. Thus, credibility is taken as one of the most important and representative eWOM message factors which might lead to eWOM adoption and eWOM impact on consumers' intentional behaviors.
2. In the time of eWOM, Consumers need other message antecedents such as source credibility, argument quality, information volume and valence for reference to evaluate the overall credibility of eWOM messages.
3. In eWOM communication, message appeal which aims to induce target consumers to build a specific attitude to the product or engage in purchase behavior has been studied as one of the influential factors of the persuasion effect of eWOM (L. C. Leonidou and C. N. Leonidou, 2009; Lim et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2017). It is explained by previous studies that the effectiveness of message appeals depends on the types of product and consumption. For experiential consumption, eWOM messages with emotional appeal works better in arouse consumers' interest and help them to develop attitudes to the experiential products (Wu and Wang, 2011; Mazzotta et al., 2007).

4. In the context of eWOM communication, the correlation between eWOM message and consumers' intentional behaviors which are attitudes toward the product and purchase intention.

Based on the literature analysis, two theoretical models and seven hypotheses were developed in the chapter of methodology. The conceptual models and hypotheses were validated through an empirical survey of 276 Chinese young adults who are 20-35 years old. The empirical testing and analysis were conducted to answer the research questions and achieve the fourth and fifth objective. Through empirical analysis, another five conclusions were reached:

5. The analyses substantiate that argument quality and information volume are influential antecedents of eWOM credibility. Online reviews with good argument quality and a great number of interactions may be considered more credible.
6. Previous studies have found inconsistent findings on the impact of source credibility and valence on eWOM credibility. The results of this study agree with the existing findings that these two antecedents have no significant impact on eWOM credibility. Chinese young adults who are aged between 20-35 do not take source credibility and valence too seriously when they evaluate the credibility of movie reviews on the Douban site.
7. It supported by this thesis that the overall credibility of the movie review positively impacts consumers' attitude towards the reviewed movie. It once again validates the result of existing studies that affirm eWOM credibility as an influential factor on consumer attitudes towards the reviewed product (Teng S et al., 2014; Paul and Wang 2010).
8. This study affirms the existing research claiming that the impact of emotional appeal on consumers' attitudes is more significant than rational appeal in the context of the experiential product.
9. This study reaffirms the findings of most existing researchers on consumer attitude and purchase intention. It concluded that consumer attitude to the reviewed product has a positive impact on purchase intention in the context of movie reviews among Chinese young adults.

After providing a comprehensive picture of the antecedents of eWOM credibility and relationships between eWOM message factors and consumers' intentional behaviors, several theoretical and practical implications were provided which means that the final objective was achieved. In summary, this thesis fulfills the aims and objectives presented in the introduction

section. Besides, in reference to the research results and conclusions presented above, few recommendations could be provided for movie marketers, review publishers, and all companies employing eWOM marketing. According to the findings of the research, the following applied recommendations are provided for companies:

1. Marketers, administrators of review sites or review publishers can enhance the credibility of their eWOM messages by providing comprehensive, accurate, and useful information. It is also recommended to gain the initial trust of potential consumers and review readers by encouraging other eWOM participants to interact with the posted reviews. Marketers or administrators of review sites can encourage review readers to participate in the discussion of the comments, share the comments they read to their friends, or give likes to the comments they read. Credible eWOM messages may help marketers to further influence the attitudes of potential consumers towards the product.

2. The results of the study show that eWOM message appeal is one of the factors influencing consumer attitudes. The influence of emotional appeal is more significant. Film marketers and reviewers in China should pay more attention to share and analyze the emotional feeling about the movie watch experience, as such reviews with emotional appeal are more effective in influencing consumers' attitudes towards the reviewed films among Chinese young adults. Marketers of other experiential products are also recommended to provide more information with emotional appeal if they tend to influence consumers' attitudes towards the products by eWOM communication.

3. Marketers and companies employing online marketing should focus more on the influence of eWOM on the young group of 20-35 years old because these people are active participants in eWOM communication. Also, research has one more time confirmed that eWOM has an impact on their attitudes and purchase intentions. Therefore, for better and more effective marketing, marketers should incorporate eWOM communication into their integrated marketing strategies. Compared to put most investment in traditional marketing campaigns, it might be more effective to appropriately applied eWOM marketing to influence existing and potential consumers.

Except for the conclusions and recommendations, the limitation of this empirical research are also discussed and explained.

1. Firstly, due to limited conditions on time and financial budget, only a small number of people are included in the sample. Although the sample size is considered reasonable based on the reference of previous researches, it is still too small if we considering the population size of the Chinese. This would lead to a limitation of the representativeness of this research's results and finding. The findings and result would be expected to be more representative and more deserved to be generalized if the research could conducted with a bigger sample population. Therefore, it is recommended that future research could study eWOM communication in a wider scope and reach a bigger sample group.

2. Secondly, regarding the scope of the research, the researcher only focused on the online reviews of one specific product which is movie, and reviews from only one specific platform. Exactly, this specific setting will improve the relevance of the research and contribute implications to targeted marketers, review writers or site administrators; however, it also brings limitations to the research. It might become a restriction for the generalization of the results and findings of the research. It needs to be cautious to overgeneralize the findings of this research. Hence, future research is suggested to study eWOM in more different product settings or eWOM platforms, especially for new popular products such as subscriptions of a plan and other types of movie review platform. The difference in the context of other products and eWOM platforms might result other meaningful and generalized findings.

3. Thirdly, in this thesis, most findings and results regarding to the relationships of antecedents (argument quality, volume, valence) and eWOM credibility are consistent with the findings of related previous studies and reaffirmed the results of previous studies. However, regarding to the result of the impact of source credibility on eWOM credibility, it is typically inconsistent with findings in previous research. It is explained before that the inconsistency might be led by the specificity of this study context. Therefore, the significant relationship between source credibility and eWOM credibility might be still found if this thesis choose another platform or another context to study. Therefore, this inconsistent result drawn by this study is suggested to be further examined and confirmed by more context in the future research. Future research is suggested to explore the relationship between these two

variables by adding a moderating factor of eWOM platform. The results would be expected to be more persuasive based on it.

4. Fourthly, this research only examines four determinants (source credibility, argument quality, eWOM volume, eWOM valence) of eWOM credibility and two eWOM message factors (eWOM credibility and eWOM appeal); however, there are still more eWOM message factors deserving more concerns. It is also very necessary and meaningful to explore and examine their relationships with consumer attitudes and purchase intention. Therefore, it is suggested that future research could explore and examine more determinants that might have an impact on eWOM credibility such as message style, the involvement of review receivers, and so on. Also, future research could discuss and examine other eWOM message factors that might have an impact on consumer attitude and purchase intention. More influential antecedents of eWOM credibility and more influential eWOM message factors are expected to be identified and examined.

Finally, it is hoped that this research will encourage future research to seek a greater understanding of eWOM message factors and their impact on consumers' intentional behaviors.

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THE IMPACT OF eWOM MESSAGE CREDIBILITY AND APPEAL ON CONSUMER
ATTITUDE AND PURCHASE INTENTION
A INVESTIGATION INTO MOVIE CONSUMPTION INTENTION AMONG CHINESE
YOUNG ADULTS

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Master thesis

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SUMMARY

80 pages (including annexes), 6 tables, 5 figures, 105 references.

The main purpose of this Master's thesis is to explore and find the relationships between four antecedents and eWOM credibility, and the relationships between two specific eWOM factors, credibility and appeal, and consumer intentional behaviors which are attitude and purchase intention.

The work consists of three main parts: analysis of literature, development of the research methodology, analysis of the empirical study. The essence of the thesis paper is presented in the introduction; the thesis paper ends with conclusions and recommendations, references, and annexes.

Literature analysis starts with the introduction of traditional WOM and eWOM. It is followed by the review of prior research of eWOM communication impacts. Then, the definition of eWOM credibility and antecedents related to eWOM credibility were presented. This analysis allows identifying four antecedents that influence eWOM credibility in this research context. Besides, the relationship of eWOM credibility and consumer attitude was also reviewed in this part, which allows identifying the proposed impact of eWOM credibility on consumer attitude in the context of movie eWOM. The fourth part of the literature analysis reviews the prior study on message appeal including the presentation of types of message appeal. This analysis allows identifying the role message appeal plays in eWOM communication. The following part presents research on consumer attitude and purchase intention to identifying the proposed relationship between these two variables. The last part of the literature analysis

introduces the eWOM communication in movie context which allows identifying the specific context of this research.

The Chapter on research methodology firstly presents the research approach and strategy which is followed by the introduction of research scope and setting. The research methodology is based on two conceptual models which were formulated on a basis of literature analysis. The models map out the relationship of variables that are relevant in the research context. The hypotheses include the impact of four antecedents (source credibility, argument quality, eWOM volume, and valence) on eWOM credibility, the impact of eWOM credibility and eWOM appeal on consumers' attitude as well as the impact of consumer's attitude on purchase intention. The sample size was decided by taking reference to the sample size in prior relevant studies. Data is collected via the online survey, using convenience sampling. The questionnaire was applied as the research instrument and was developed by borrowing and referring scales that had appropriate reliability in the earlier studies.

The empirical analysis is performed on the basis of 276 valid questionnaires. The key elements of the sample structure include: the proportion between male/female respondents is 42/58%; according to age, respondents are evenly distributed in three groups (20-25, 26-30, 31-35), majority of them have bachelor level education. Reliability of the used scales is appropriate (Cronbach's Alpha above 0.8) and allows the further analysis of data.

The statistical analysis allows verifying the impact of argument quality and eWOM volume on eWOM credibility while rejecting the proposed relationship of source credibility and eWOM valence on eWOM credibility. The influential relationships of eWOM credibility and eWOM appeal on consumer attitude were also confirmed by data analysis. It is found that the impact of emotional appeal is stronger than that of rational appeal on consumers' attitudes towards the reviewed movie. Last but not least, data analysis allows confirming the significant influence of consumer attitude on purchase intention.

On the basis of theoretical and empirical analysis, conclusions and managerial recommendations are drawn. The important conclusions include argument quality and the number of review interaction can affect the overall credibility of movie eWOM; eWOM credibility and eWOM appeal can affect consumers attitude towards the reviewed movie and

further influence purchase intention. Relevant recommendations for marketers and companies then are presented. Finally, the limitation of this master thesis and the suggestion for future research are indicated.

„ewom” žinučių patikimumo ir patrauklumo įtaka vartotojų požiūriui ir ketinimui pirkti:
polinkio vartoti (įsigyti) filmus peržiūrai tarp jaunų kinų tyrimas

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SANTRAUKA

80 puslapiai (su priedais), 6 lentelės, 5 paveikslai, 105 nuorodos.

Pagrindinis šio magistro darbo tikslas yra ištirti ir rasti ryšius tarp keturių ankstesnių faktų ir eWOM patikimumo bei ryšius tarp dviejų specifinių eWOM veiksmų - patikimumo ir patrauklumo bei tyčinio vartotojo elgesio, kuris yra požiūris ir ketinimas pirkti.

Darbą sudaro trys pagrindinės dalys: literatūros analizė, tyrimo metodikos sukūrimas, empirinio tyrimo analizė. Darbo esmė pateikiama įžangoje; baigiamasis darbas pateikiamas išvadomis ir rekomendacijomis, nuorodomis ir priedais.

Literatūros analizė prasideda nuo tradicinių WOM ir eWOM įvedimo. Po to apžvelgiami ankstesni eWOM komunikacijos poveikio tyrimai. Tada buvo pateiktas „eWOM“ patikimumo apibrėžimas ir su eWOM patikimumu susiję pirmtakai. Ši analizė leidžia nustatyti keturis ankstesnius veiksmus, turinčius įtakos eWOM patikimumui šiame tyrimų kontekste. Be to, šioje dalyje taip pat buvo apžvelgtas eWOM patikimumo ir vartotojų požiūrio santykis, kuris leidžia nustatyti siūlomą eWOM patikimumo poveikį vartotojų požiūriui filmo eWOM kontekste. Ketvirtojoje literatūros analizės dalyje apžvelgiamas ankstesnis pranešimo patrauklumo tyrimas, įskaitant pranešimo kreipimosi tipų pristatymą. Ši analizė leidžia nustatyti pranešimo patrauklumo vaidmenį eWOM komunikacijoje. Šioje dalyje pateikiami vartotojų požiūrio ir pirkimo ketinimų tyrimai siekiant nustatyti siūlomą šių dviejų kintamųjų ryšį. Paskutinėje literatūros analizės dalyje pristatoma eWOM komunikacija filmo kontekste, kuri leidžia nustatyti konkretų šio tyrimo kontekstą.

Tyrimo metodikos skyriuje pirmiausia pateikiamas tyrimo metodas ir strategija, po kurios nustatoma tyrimo apimtis ir nustatymas. Tyrimo metodika pagrįsta dviem konceptualiais modeliais, kurie buvo suformuluoti remiantis literatūros analize. Modeliai atvaizduoja kintamųjų, kurie yra svarbūs tyrimo kontekste, ryšį. Hipotezės apima keturių ankstesnių procesų (šaltinio patikimumas, argumentų kokybė, eWOM apimtis ir valentingumas) įtaką eWOM patikimumui, eWOM patikimumo ir eWOM patrauklumo poveikį vartotojų požiūriui, taip pat vartotojo požiūrio į ketinimus pirkti. Imties dydis buvo nuspręstas remiantis ankstesnių atitinkamų tyrimų imties dydžiu. Duomenys renkami atliekant internetinę apklausą, naudojant patogią atranką. Anketa buvo taikoma kaip tyrimo priemonė ir buvo sukurta skolinantis ir nurodant skales, kurios ankstesniuose tyrimuose turėjo tinkamą patikimumą.

Empirinė analizė atliekama remiantis 276 galiojančiais klausimynais. Pagrindiniai imties struktūros elementai yra šie: 42/58% respondentų vyrų ir moterų dalis; pagal amžių respondentai yra tolygiai pasiskirstę grupėse (20-25, 26-30, 31-35), dauguma jų turi bakalauro išsilavinimą. Naudojamų svarstyklių patikimumas yra tinkamas (Cronbach'o alfa virš 0,8) ir leidžia toliau analizuoti duomenis.

Statistinė analizė leidžia patikrinti argumentų kokybės ir eWOM apimties poveikį eWOM patikimumui, atmetant siūlomą šaltinio patikimumo ir eWOM valentiškumo ryšį su eWOM patikimumu. Duomenų analizė taip pat patvirtino įtakingus eWOM patikimumo ir eWOM patrauklumo santykius su vartotojų požiūriu. Nustatyta, kad emocinio patrauklumo poveikis yra stipresnis nei racionalaus patrauklumo vartotojų požiūriui į peržiūrėtą filmą. Paskutinis, bet ne mažiau svarbus dalykas - duomenų analizė leidžia patvirtinti didelę vartotojų požiūrio įtaką pirkimo ketinimams.

Remiantis teorine ir empirine analize, daromos išvados ir vadovų rekomendacijos. Svarbios išvados yra argumentų kokybė, o peržiūros sąveikos skaičius gali turėti įtakos bendram filmo eWOM patikimumui; „eWOM“ patikimumas ir patrauklumas „eWOM“ gali paveikti vartotojų požiūrį į peržiūrėtą filmą ir dar labiau įtakoti ketinimus pirkti. Tada pateikiamos atitinkamos rekomendacijos rinkodaros specialistams ir įmonėms. Galiausiai nurodomas šio magistro darbo ribotumas ir pasiūlymas dėl būsimų tyrimų.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 Measurement & Questionnaire framework

Demography

1. Your gender

- a) Female
- b) Male

2. Your age _____

3. Your educational level :

High school or lower

College of high education

Bachelor degree

Master degree and higher

4. Have you ever browsed movie reviews on the Douban website before deciding to see the movie?

- a) Yes.
- b) No.

Source credibility

Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Source
Person(sender) who posted reviews/comments is trustworthy.	0.849	Teng and et. (2014)
Person(sender) who posted reviews/comments is dependable.		
Person(sender) who posted reviews/comments is honest.		
Person(sender) who posted reviews/comments is reliable.		
Person(sender) who posted reviews/comments is knowledgeable in evaluating movies.		
Person(sender) who posted reviews/comments is expert.		
Person(sender) who posted reviews/comments is qualified.		
Person(sender) who posted reviews/comments is experienced.		

Argument quality

Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Source
The comment is informative.	0.933	Teng and et.(2014)
The comment has sufficient breadth and depth.		
The comment satisfies your needs.		
The comment is accurate.		
The comment is correct.		
The comment is reliable.		
The comment is convincing.		
The comment is applicable.		
The comments are persuasive.		
The comment is consistent with real life comments.		

eWOM volume

Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Source
More share the comment gains, more likely I will trust the comment.	0.817	Mohamed et. Al. (2015)
More like the comments gains, more likely I will trust the comment.		
The comment is read by more people, more likely I will trust the comment.		
More interaction(discussed by other readers...) the comments gains, more likely I will trust the comment.		
More views the comment gains, more likely I will trust the comment.		

eWOM valence

Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Source
The comment stresses negative implication of the discussed movie.	0.878	Chong and et. (2018).
Overall, the comment stresses unfavorable appraisal of the discussed movie.		
The comment includes complaints on the movie.		
The comment emphasizes the negative justification of the movie.		
Overall, the comment recommends the movie.		
The comment explains the positive features of the discussed movie.		
The comment positively evaluates the movie.		
The comment shares a positive experience rather than a negative experience.		

eWOM credibility

Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Source
I think the review is factual.	0.805	Cheung et. al., (2009), T. D. Pham(2016)
I think the review is accurate.		
I think the review is credible.		
I think the review is believable.		
I think the review is helpful.		

Emotional appeal

Items	Source
I find the review is helpful as it shares the emotional feelings (enjoyable/unenjoyable, sad/happy...) and experience of the movie watching.	Albers-Miller and Stafford(1999); Park et al., 2007
I always read the review as it shares the emotional feelings (enjoyable/unenjoyable, sad/happy...) and experience of the movie watching.	
The review that shares the emotional feelings (enjoyable/unenjoyable, sad/happy...) and experience of the movie watching makes me confident in choosing a movie to watch.	
The review that shares the emotional feelings (enjoyable/unenjoyable, sad/happy...) and experience of the movie watching will influence my choice about the movie.	
The review that shares the emotional feelings (enjoyable/unenjoyable, sad/happy...) and experience of the movie watchin will help me have a clear attitude to the movie.	

Rational appeal

Items	Source
I always read the review involving facts of the movie (movie genre, shooting technique, actors...).	Albers-Miller and Stafford(1999); Park et al., 2007
I find the review is helpful as it shares facts of the movie (movie genre, shooting technique, actors...).	
The review that shares facts of the movie (movie genre, shooting technique, actors...) makes me confident in choosing a movie to watch.	
The review that shares facts of the movie (movie genre, shooting technique, actors...) will influence my choice about the movie.	
The review that shares facts of the movie (movie genre, shooting technique, actors...) will help me have a clear attitude to the movie.	

Attitude towards the reviewed movie

Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Source
I have a pleasant idea of this movie.	0.971	Schivinski and Dabrowski (2014)
I like this movie.		
The movie is an interesting movie.		
The movie is a favorable movie.		
The movie is a good movie.		
The movie is a satisfactory movie.		

Purchase intention

Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Source
I intend to watch the movie.	0.842	Schivinski and Dabrowski, 2014; Teng, et. al., 2011
I would consider watching the movie.		
I would expect to watch the movie		
I would plan to watch the movie.		
I would like to watch the movie.		
I would watch the movie.		

Annex 2 Reliability analysis

1. Source credibility

Reliability Statistics			
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items	
0.832	0.832	8	

Item Statistics								
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Person(sender) who posted reviews/comments is trustworthy.	5.70	1.017	276	38.82	29.742	0.454	0.303	0.825
Person(sender) who posted reviews/comments is dependable.	5.63	1.122	276	38.88	27.953	0.557	0.313	0.813
Person(sender) who posted reviews/comments is honest.	5.62	1.001	276	38.90	28.484	0.593	0.399	0.809
Person(sender) who posted reviews/comments is reliable.	5.52	1.133	276	38.99	27.440	0.598	0.401	0.807
Person(sender) who posted reviews/comments is knowledgeable in evaluating movies.	5.72	1.044	276	38.80	28.955	0.513	0.359	0.818
Person(sender) who posted reviews/comments is qualified.	5.49	1.171	276	39.02	27.432	0.572	0.378	0.811
Person(sender) who posted reviews/comments is expert.	5.34	1.206	276	39.17	26.951	0.592	0.385	0.808
Person(sender) who posted reviews/comments is experienced.	5.50	1.117	276	39.02	27.669	0.587	0.420	0.809

2. Argument quality

Reliability Statistics			
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items	
0.829	0.829	10	

Item Statistics								
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
The comment is informative.	5.69	0.967	276	51.06	33.942	0.556	0.354	0.810
The comment has sufficient breadth and depth.	5.63	1.200	276	51.12	31.754	0.588	0.436	0.806
The comment satisfies your needs.	5.68	0.988	276	51.07	35.100	0.433	0.244	0.821
The comment is accurate.	5.74	0.889	276	51.01	35.611	0.447	0.254	0.820
The comment is correct.	5.66	1.079	276	51.09	33.414	0.526	0.329	0.812
The comment is reliable.	5.61	1.041	276	51.14	33.855	0.512	0.328	0.814
The comment is convincing.	5.61	1.037	276	51.14	33.441	0.552	0.320	0.810
The comment is applicable.	5.80	0.970	276	50.95	34.743	0.477	0.251	0.817
The comments are persuasive.	5.68	0.998	276	51.07	33.621	0.564	0.362	0.809
The comment is consistent with real life comments.	5.66	1.023	276	51.09	34.094	0.502	0.314	0.815

3. eWOM volume

Reliability Statistics			
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items	
0.838	0.839	5	

Item Statistics								
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
More like the comments gains, more likely I will trust the comment.	5.58	1.258	276	22.38	12.994	0.653	0.452	0.802
More views the comment gains, more likely I will trust the comment.	5.46	1.219	276	22.50	13.415	0.627	0.407	0.809
More share the comment gains, more likely I will trust the comment.	5.47	1.139	276	22.49	13.494	0.682	0.479	0.794
The comment is read by more people, more likely I will trust the comment.	5.70	1.066	276	22.27	14.473	0.603	0.365	0.815
More interaction(discussed by other readers...) the comments gains, more likely I will trust the comment.	5.75	1.120	276	22.21	13.883	0.642	0.419	0.805

4. eWOM valence

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.689	0.611	8

Item Statistics								
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
The comment stresses negative implication of the discussed movie.	2.82	1.705	276	30.49	23.916	0.681	0.800	0.569
Overall, the comment stresses unfavorable appraisal of the discussed movie.	2.52	1.676	276	30.78	24.062	0.688	0.742	0.568
The comment includes complaints on the movie.	2.55	1.676	276	30.75	23.810	0.707	0.778	0.562
The comment emphasizes the negative justification of the movie.	2.62	1.597	276	30.69	24.353	0.716	0.770	0.563
Overall, the comment recommends the movie.	5.58	0.948	276	27.72	36.209	0.094	0.299	0.707
The comment explains the positive features of the discussed movie.	5.79	1.041	276	27.51	37.014	0.007	0.229	0.723
The comment positively evaluates the movie.	5.70	1.037	276	27.60	37.041	0.005	0.354	0.723
The comment shares a positive experience rather than a negative experience.	5.72	1.012	276	27.58	37.851	-0.056	0.355	0.731

5. eWOM credibility

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.689	0.693	5

Item Statistics								
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
I think the review is factual.	5.78	0.994	276	22.79	7.032	0.465	0.254	0.630
I think the review is accurate.	5.65	1.056	276	22.92	7.168	0.387	0.159	0.667
I think the review is credible.	5.68	0.877	276	22.88	7.201	0.531	0.299	0.606
I think the review is believable.	5.68	0.977	276	22.89	7.050	0.476	0.227	0.625
I think the review is helpful.	5.78	0.934	276	22.79	7.663	0.374	0.144	0.668

6. Emotion appeal

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.626	0.625	5

Item Statistics								
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
I find the review is helpful as it shares the emotional feelings (enjoyable/unenjoyable, sad/happy...) and experience of the movie watching.	5.67	0.923	276	22.84	5.818	0.431	0.269	0.547
I always read the review as it shares the emotional feelings (enjoyable/unenjoyable, sad/happy...) and experience of the movie watching.	5.70	0.953	276	22.82	5.988	0.363	0.228	0.581
The review that shares the emotional feelings (enjoyable/unenjoyable, sad/happy...) and experience of the movie watching makes me confident in choosing a movie to watch.	5.72	0.881	276	22.79	6.428	0.309	0.109	0.606
The review that shares the emotional feelings (enjoyable/unenjoyable, sad/happy...) and experience of the movie watching will influence my choice about the movie.	5.68	0.980	276	22.84	5.626	0.431	0.265	0.545
The review that shares the emotional feelings (enjoyable/unenjoyable, sad/happy...) and experience of the movie watching will help me have a clear attitude to the movie.	5.75	0.888	276	22.77	6.190	0.364	0.209	0.580

7. Rational appeal

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.673	0.676	5

Item Statistics								
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
I always read the review involving facts of the movie (movie genre, shooting technique, actors...).	5.68	0.976	276	22.62	8.284	0.336	0.230	0.660
I find the review is helpful as it shares facts of the movie (movie genre, shooting technique, actors...).	5.82	1.091	276	22.47	7.496	0.407	0.198	0.632
The review that shares facts of the movie (movie genre, shooting technique, actors...) makes me confident in choosing a movie to watch.	5.55	0.873	276	22.75	7.947	0.491	0.328	0.599
The review that shares facts of the movie (movie genre, shooting technique, actors...) will influence my choice about the movie.	5.65	0.993	276	22.65	7.719	0.438	0.218	0.617
The review that shares facts of the movie (movie genre, shooting technique, actors...) will help me have a clear attitude to the movie.	5.59	1.115	276	22.70	7.055	0.476	0.344	0.598

8. Attitude towards the reviewed movie

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.772	0.771	6

Item Statistics								
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
I have a pleasant idea of this movie.	5.63	1.172	276	28.21	11.161	0.614	0.391	0.710
I like this movie.	5.61	1.105	276	28.23	12.053	0.531	0.287	0.734
The movie is an interesting movie.	5.59	0.932	276	28.25	12.968	0.523	0.297	0.737
The movie is a good movie.	5.67	0.901	276	28.17	13.199	0.510	0.282	0.740
The movie is a satisfactory movie.	5.70	0.975	276	28.14	13.065	0.473	0.245	0.748
The movie is a favorable movie.	5.64	0.983	276	28.20	13.144	0.454	0.222	0.753

9. Purchase intention

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.722	0.723	6

Item Statistics								
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
I intend to watch the movie.	5.99	0.974	276	28.93	11.254	0.385	0.213	0.705
I would consider watching the movie.	5.79	0.999	276	29.14	10.752	0.453	0.259	0.685
I would plan to watch the movie.	5.76	0.911	276	29.16	10.922	0.492	0.293	0.675
I would like to watch the movie.	5.76	1.028	276	29.17	10.765	0.429	0.217	0.693
I would expect to watch the movie	5.79	1.017	276	29.14	10.468	0.489	0.272	0.674
I would watch the movie.	5.84	0.995	276	29.08	10.568	0.488	0.282	0.674

Annex 3 Results of regression analysis of variables used in the study.

1. Antecedents → eWOM credibility

Multiple Regression— Enter

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	84.047	4	21.012	182.855	.000b
	Residual	31.140	271	0.115		
	Total	115.188	275			
a. Dependent Variable: credibility						
b. Predictors: (Constant), valence, volume, argumentquality, sourcecredibility						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.902	0.199		4.544	0.000
	sourcecredibility	0.067	0.053	0.077	1.259	0.209
	argumentquality	0.624	0.061	0.619	10.213	0.000
	volume	0.152	0.034	0.213	4.447	0.000
	valence	0.011	0.027	0.014	0.423	0.673
a. Dependent Variable: credibility						
R square=0.730, adjusted R square=0.726						

Multiple Regression — Stepwise

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.838a	0.702	0.701	0.35414
2	.853b	0.728	0.726	0.33891
a. Predictors: (Constant), argumentquality b. Predictors: (Constant), argumentquality, volume				

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	80.823	1	80.823	644.433	.000b
	Residual	34.364	274	0.125		
	Total	115.188	275			
2	Regression	83.830	2	41.915	364.912	.000c
	Residual	31.358	273	0.115		
	Total	115.188	275			
a. Dependent Variable: credibility. b. Predictors: (Constant), argumentquality. c. Predictors: (Constant), argumentquality, volume						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.917	0.190		4.824	0.000
	argumentquality	0.845	0.033	0.838	25.386	0.000
2	(Constant)	0.939	0.182		5.158	0.000
	argumentquality	0.679	0.046	0.673	14.906	0.000
	volume	0.165	0.032	0.231	5.116	0.000
a. Dependent Variable: credibility						
Excluded Variables ^a						
Model		Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics Tolerance
1	sourcecredibility	.166b	2.788	0.006	0.166	0.298
	volume	.231b	5.116	0.000	0.296	0.490
	valence	.009b	0.257	0.797	0.016	0.968
2	sourcecredibility	.080c	1.310	0.191	0.079	0.268
	valence	.018c	0.552	0.582	0.033	0.965
a. Dependent Variable: credibility.						
b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), argumentquality.						
c. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), argumentquality, volume.						

2. eWOM credibility → attitude towards the reviewed movie

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	57.101	1	57.101	207.432	,000 ^b
	Residual	75.426	274	0.275		
	Total	132.527	275			
a. Dependent Variable: attitudetowardsthereviewedmovie						
b. Predictors: (Constant), credibility						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.617	0.281		5.753	0.000
	credibility	0.704	0.049	0.656	14.402	0.000
a. Dependent Variable: attitudetowardsthereviewedmovie						
R square=0.431 adjust R square=0.429						

3. Emotional appeal → attitude towards the reviewed movie

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	49.044	1	49.044	391.676	,000 ^b
	Residual	22.914	274	0.125		
	Total	71.958	275			
a. Dependent Variable: attitudetowardsthereviewedmovie						
b. Predictors: (Constant), emotionalappeal						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.688	0.255		2.698	0.008
	emotionalappeal	0.881	0.045	0.826	19.791	0.000
a. Dependent Variable: attitudetowardsthereviewedmovie						
R square=0.682, adjusted R square=0.680						

Rational appeal → attitude towards the reviewed movie

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	26.591	1	26.591	76.095	,000 ^b
	Residual	31.101	89	0.349		
	Total	57.692	90			
a. Dependent Variable: attitudetowardsthereviewedmovie. b. Predictors: (Constant), rationalappeal						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.883	0.532		1.658	0.101
	rationalappeal	0.815	0.093	0.679	8.723	0.000
a. Dependent Variable: attitudetowardsthereviewedmovie						
R square=0.461, adjusted R square=0.455						

4. Attitude towards the reviewed movie → Purchase intention

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	55.076	1	55.076	263.129	,000 ^b
	Residual	57.352	274	0.209		
	Total	112.428	275			
a. Dependent Variable: purchaseintention						
b. Predictors: (Constant), attitudetowardsthereviewedmovie						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.185	0.226		9.674	0.000
	attitudetowardsthereviewedmovie	0.645	0.040	0.700	16.221	0.000
a. Dependent Variable: purchaseintention						
R square=0.490, adjusted R square=0.488						