

The moderating role of reliability on the relationship between electronic word of mouth and customer purchase intention in Jordanian real estate enterprises

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ABSTRACT

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Jordanian real estate enterprises are experiencing difficult market circumstances and an increasingly competitive environment; following these issues, this study examines the leverage of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) on customer purchase intention in a Jordanian context with specific reference to real estate enterprises, considering the moderating role of reliability. Based on earlier studies, a conceptual model for the study was created. This research includes e-WOM as an independent variable affecting customers' purchase intention as a dependent variable mediated by reliability. The investigation follows descriptive-analytical methods; based on a convenience sampling approach, 300 questionnaires were distributed through Google Forms; nonetheless and 250 responses were accepted. To analyze data and assess hypotheses, a structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using PLS was employed. Results demonstrated a significant effect of e-WOM and Reliability on purchasing intent of customers, and the moderating role of reliability in the relationship between e-WOM and purchase intent was also affirmed. The findings give Jordanian real estate businesses information on ways to use that are most effective e-WOM to persuade buyers to buy.

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1. Introduction

Jordan has shown a productive and booming environment for investment in the real estate sector due to security, political stability, and a growing population at 2.4 percent annually which increased the demand for real estate, investors who found lucrative opportunities in the Jordanian market, and the broad-based on youth in Jordan created a natural need for real estate's (Alheet et al., 2021; Alnsour, 2016). One of the most essential investments, both in Jordan and globally, is real estate (Khatib, 2020). Real estate corporations want to sell properties as fast as possible, so they have efficiently used the entire marketing instrument at their disposal (Dumpe, 2015). When exhibiting and selling apartments, agents for real estate emphasize emotion marketing to improve communication and value and build a positive experience with potential customers (Consoli, 2010). Yet, since the start of the COVID-19, real estate investments appear to be in a state of deflationary, and real estate businesses are dealing with unfavorable marketing situations (Alrawashedh, 2021). Real estate is a high-involvement product and involves one of the essential financial decisions to purchase, and it necessitates gathering lots of information about unit (LeHoang et al., 2020). Before buying products or services, consumers frequently seek information that previous customers have uploaded to feel more at ease. It could be communicated via multimedia messages via electronic word of mouth (Yaseen &

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Jusoh, 2021). Then the information content offered on an online merchant's website ought to be accurate and reliable, as this will improve the possibility that customers will return to the site (Lee et al., 2016). The others' feedback can be shared in a variety of methods, such as user reviews, and recommendations. As a result, Jordanian customers' purchase intentions on social networks are swayed by these opinions (Al-Haddad et al., 2021). Consumers trust e-WOM before making product purchases, significantly impacting their buying intentions. Before purchasing any goods, consumers trust e-WOM; this has a big influence on their purchasing intent. Additionally, we anticipate that positive e-WOM reviews of a product may influence other customers' intent to acquire the product (Aji et al., 2020). As opposed to that, by Halim et al. (2022), e-WOM negatively reduces purchase intentions. As a result, reliability represents a person's trust in information. Without trust, buyers are less likely to fulfill their intentions to make purchases. As a result, customers' confidence may rise in the perceived reliability of product information, strengthening the connection between intentions and purchasing behavior (Ghalandari, 2021).

2. Literature review

2.1 Theoretical Background

2.1.1 e-WOM

Online word-of-mouth connection is referred to as e-WOM. This method of connection has evolved into one of the farthest useful sources of information about brands, goods, and businesses with the growth of online platforms (Huete-Alcocer, 2017). Conventional media are far less dependable than e-WOM (Ghada et al., 2021). Positive e-WOM connection boosts purchasing intentions, whereas negative feedback leads to a lack of interest in purchasing. E-WOM is a novel type of online WOM connection (Yang, 2017). Described by Litvin et al. (2008) e-WOM is any informal discussion made possible by the Internet that is aimed at consumers and concerns the use or characteristics of products, or the providers of those products or services. Users may utilize online forums to express their ideas and opinions to other users. Instead of relying on recommendations from friends and family, consumers often resort to e-WOM to spread product knowledge (Nieto et al., 2014). E-WOM can be displayed through communications in either collected or personal forms like images, texts, audio, and video clips, as well as ranks and reviews on the internet (Pourfakhimi et al., 2020). All of these websites offer suitable platforms for e-WOM, including blogs, and social media (Haibin, 2018). The Internet's most credible information source is WOM through social media (Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016). Making comparisons, knowing how other customers' opinions certain product, and finding product and brand information are all things that help consumers so they can make an educated decision about what to buy (Park et al., 2021). Social media websites are the best venues for e-WOM (Kim et al., 2014), written text, pictures, videos, and even apps can be used by users to leave comments. So social media platforms also enhance it simpler to disseminate e-WOM information to a large consumer (Sohn, 2014). Social media has given e-WOM a new dimension by enabling consumers to interact with their current networks. Unlike other platforms, social media enables people to offer their thoughts on products and encounters with results with people they are already familiar with, such as friends and acquaintances (Erkan, 2016).

2.1.2 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is the possibility that a consumer will choose to acquire a product, and it is associated with consumer attitudes and preferences. Intention has an impact on how someone behaves (Alnsour et al., 2018). Furthermore, consumers acquire things or services because they believe they will meet their needs, wants, or desires and are consistent with their overall outlook (Al-Adamat et al., 2020). Therefore, it is the first stage towards rewarding actual purchasing behavior. Purchase intent is a term used to describe a part of a consumer's cognitive behavior that suggests how they are likely to purchase a particular brand (Pauzi et al., 2017). The concept of purchase intent in social media is like traditional purchasing methods (Yaseen & Jusoh, 2021). In the housing market, home-ownership intentions are more linked to the actual purchasing activity. A person's intentions are what drive them to make decisions (Karunaratne & Ariyawansa, 2015), intention to buy, and the decision to buy. There is a robust correlation between the two phases, particularly regarding home purchasing. In other words, if someone has a desire for something, consumers are more inclined to boost performance to accomplish what they set out to do in the first place. As a result, real estate purchase intent is how eager customers are to buy a home immediately (Chia et al., 2016).

2.1.3 Reliability

Reliability is the ability of a website operated by an online seller to accurately process orders, deliver goods on schedule, and safeguard customer information. It is about reliably providing the promised service. In other words, reliability arises when the buyer is aware and understands that the online merchants will offer precisely and honestly what the merchant promised on their websites (Lee et al., 2016; Al-Gasawneh et al., 2020). Online purchase decision qualities are determined by three factors: reliability, pricing, and costs (Sohn & Kim, 2020). Lau and Lee (1999) defined brand reputation as the consensus that the brand is good or reliable. Reliability is risk-related since it shows whether customers can rely on internet firms to uphold their commitments (YahayaNasidi, 2021). Service reliability helps organizations gain a positive brand image and preserve client loyalty (Li & Liu, 2019). Perceived information reliability measures how much a person trusts that information is accurate and coming from a trustworthy source; hence, perceived product information dependability can boost customer confidence, resulting in a stronger correlation between intentions and purchasing behavior (Ghalandari, 2021). Further, Tran et al. (2022),

mentioned that buyers check legitimacy of reviews, and reviews with an obvious source are regarded as being more trustworthy than those lacking reliable. Therefore, systemic reliability and data quality are the most important variables determining initial trust in e-commerce websites (Zhou, 2011).

2.2. Hypothesis Development

2.2.1 e-WOM and Purchasing Intention

According to Park et al. (2021) and Al-Gasawneh and Al-Adamat (2020), the importance of e-WOM in social media in describing consumer participation in e-WOM and luxury brand purchase intention is highlighted by the function of luxurious perception in explaining consumer involvement in e-WOM and luxurious purchase intent. Further, According to Sosanuy et al. (2021), consumer purchase intent increased because of e-WOM and customer judgments of economics. Moreover, Nuritamont (2021) and Nusairat et al. (2021) stated that e-WOM communication impacts working customers' purchasing decisions. As opposed to that, Halim et al. (2022) and Hammouri et al. (2020) noted that negative e-WOM lowers purchasing intentions, attitudes, and perceived behavior. The researcher established the following hypothesis based on the prior research:

H₁: *E-WOM has a positive impact on customer purchase intention.*

2.2.2 Reliability and Customer Purchase Intention

A study by Lee et al. (2016) aims to study website quality and website reliability on the purchase intention of online buyers; the result shows that website design and website reliability has a positive impact on online purchasers' intent to continue purchasing through online channels. Finally, a study by Zoghalmi et al. (2018) and Hammouri et al. (2022) aims to explore the effect of e-service dimension (reliability) in e-loyalty and e-WOM in a mobile banking context. The result findings illustrate the positive effect of e-service quality component reliability on e-loyalty and e-WOM. The researcher established the following hypothesis based on the prior research:

H₂: *Reliability has a positive impact on customer purchase intention.*

2.2.3 Reliability as a Moderator

A study by Li and Liu (2019) aimed to measure the effectiveness of an airline's corporate brand image on purchase behavior by moderating service reliability. Findings were that service dependability plays a substantial moderating effect between brand image and purchase behavior, implying that an airline corporation's service reliability influences customer purchase behavior. In a study by Lee and Ha (2015), consumer loyalty is influenced by reliability and satisfaction as a moderator variable. Information dependability is crucial in mediating the link between purchasing intent and ethical purchasing behavior (Ghalandari, 2021). Another study by Afroze et al. (2021) looked to examine the role of reliability as moderator in the relationship between customer satisfaction of customer and e-loyalty in the banking sector; the result showed that moderation positively impacts customers staying loyal to the bank. Based on the researcher established the following hypothesis based on the prior research:

H₃: *Reliability has a moderate role in the relationship between e-WOM and customer purchase intention.*

3. Methodology

This study examines the leverage of e-WOM on customer purchase intention in a Jordanian context with specific reference to real estate enterprises, considering the moderating role of reliability. Thus, a quantitative descriptive approach based on a survey is suited for this issue.

The goal of this kind of research is to update a previously developed hypothesis that is related to existing situations. The questionnaire's first section contained demographic details (gender, age, academic qualification, income), whereas the second part of the study involved the measurement of the study model's components; the following are elements of the questionnaire used to evaluate each construction: Al-Gasawneh and Al-Adamat (2020) indicated that e-WOM used a one-dimensional variable (5 items). Aji et al. (2020) suggested that purchase intent used a unidimensional variable (4 items). Kim and Cha (2021) indicated that reliability used a unidimensional variable (4 items). In addition, there were 5 Likert scales used in the questionnaire to help establish accurate results.

4. Sampling

All potential real estate customers in Jordan are the study's population. Regarding the sample size, the current study followed the fundamental informant methodology, choosing potential real estate customers in Jordan. Meanwhile, the data was obtained by employing an online survey through online methods like google forms. The research uses non-probability convenience sampling to choose a sample of units from a population to collect enough relevant data from potential real estate customers in Jordan. The sample size for this research was determined using G-power statistical software, which established 92 samples as the minimum sample size by adopting the following guidelines: F-statistical test, power standard of 0.80, with a 0.05 error probability (which translates to a power level of $1-\beta = 0.95$), and various predictors were three in this study (Alotaibi & Roussinov, 2016). The least number of respondents to analyze must, however, be more than 100 questionnaires (Hair et al.,

2010), to get more accurate results the study will distribute 300 questionnaires. For the analysis of research data, PLS-SEM software was utilized.

6. Result

In total, 283 questionnaires were submitted, of which 38 required to be filled out and for the project, 250 of the imperishable swabs were used. The study's two-stage procedure, which adopted the partial least squares technique, was used to test the moderator using already-existing reflecting structures and indicators, removing the issues associated to the inadequate statistical power of the product indicator technique. Convergence and discriminate validity were extracted in the first stage (interaction term excluded), as depicted in Fig. 1. The requirements for the structural model were then extracted in the second stage, as shown in Fig. 2, following Hair et al. (2017) and Al-Gasawneh & Al-Adamat (2020), the interaction term was included together with the predictor and moderator factors in constructing the product indicator for the second-stage analysis. Three main constructs used include e-WOM, reliability, and consumer purchase intention as a first-order construct and each was considered as a reflective construct. According to Hair et al. (2016), the second instruction was used to restrict the number of connections and hypotheses that were to be incorporated into the structural model. to make the PLS path model inexpensive and understandable. The measuring model's discriminant and convergent validity were assessed. Convergent validity can be ascertained by analyzing composite reliability, average variance extracts (AVE), and factor loading. According to the results, each item had a loading value more than 0.5, as shown by the AVE figures in Fig. 1 and Table 1. Were above 0.5, and CR numbers exceeded 0.7:

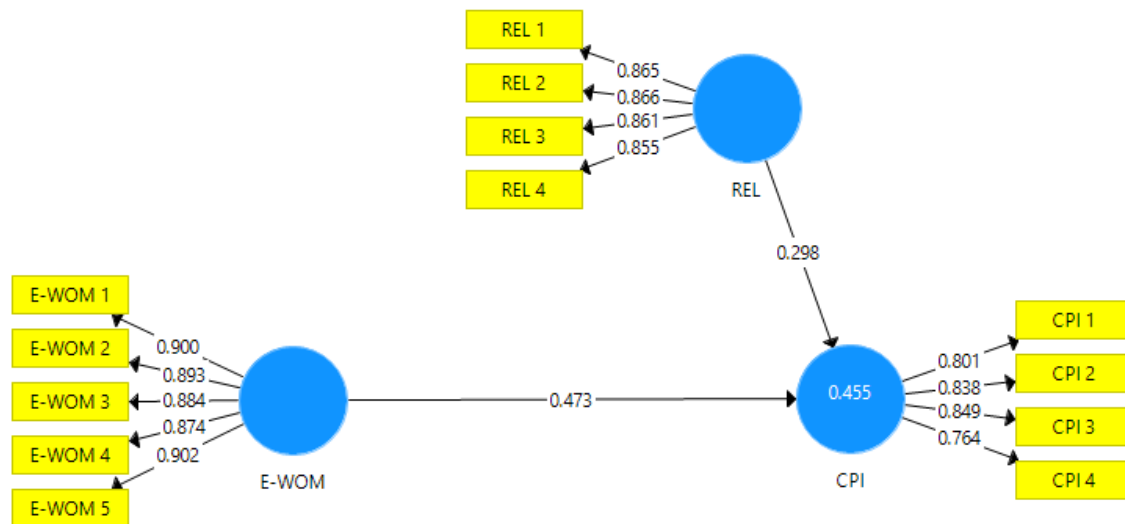


Fig. 1. The Measurement Model

Table 1

Measurement model

First order Construct	Items	Factor loading	CR	AVE
e-WOM	EWOM 1	0.814	0.874	0.634
	EWOM 2	0.790		
	EWOM 3	0.764		
	EWOM 4	0.816		
	EWOM	0.864		
Reliability	REL 1	0.860	0.833	0.626
	REL 2	0.759		
	REL 3	0.750		
	REL 4	0.876		
Customer purchase intention	CPI 1	0.753	0.881	0.650
	CPI 2	0.866		
	CPI 3	0.713		
	CPI 4	0.880		

The model's discriminating validity is assessed using HTMT (Henseler, 2015), which returns HTMT rate beneath 0.90 (between 0.671 and 0.887). These findings found that each concealed menstruation completely discriminated against the others.

Table 2
H.T.M.T evaluation

	EWOM	REL	CPI
EWOM			
REL	0.887		
CPI	0.671	0.713	

The measured weight employed to examine the components and related items in the C.F.A model meet accuracy, according to an investigation of the convergent validity and discriminant validity of the measurement model.



Fig. 2. Model of a structure

R² estimate is equal to 0.455, which corresponds to a 45.5 percent degree of variation in the customer purchase intention (CPI) as explained by its predictors. The CPI figure for Q2 was 0.301, which shows the relevant forecasting model in that it is well above zero. The model is suitable and has a high level of predictive usefulness considering these factors. The VIF values were 1.332, 1.653, and 1.116, which are all less than 5. The e-WOM and reliability predictors showed a positive influence on CPI, returning an estimate of $\beta = 0.473$ and $p = 0.000 < 0.05$, as shown in Table 2 and Fig. 2. Concerning H1, therefore, e-WOM on CPI is supported. Based on the outcome, the values for H2, which considers how REL affects CPI as well, were: $\beta = 0.298$ and $p = 0.001 < 0.05$ concerning H2, therefore, reliability (REL) on CPI is supported. The findings revealed that REL had a moderating effect on the connection between EWOM and CPI, with values of $\beta = 0.220$ and $p = 0.000 < 0.05$. The parallelism of the lines is not seen in Fig. 3. As a result, therefore, the relationship between EWOM and CPI is moderated, and therefore there is support for H3.

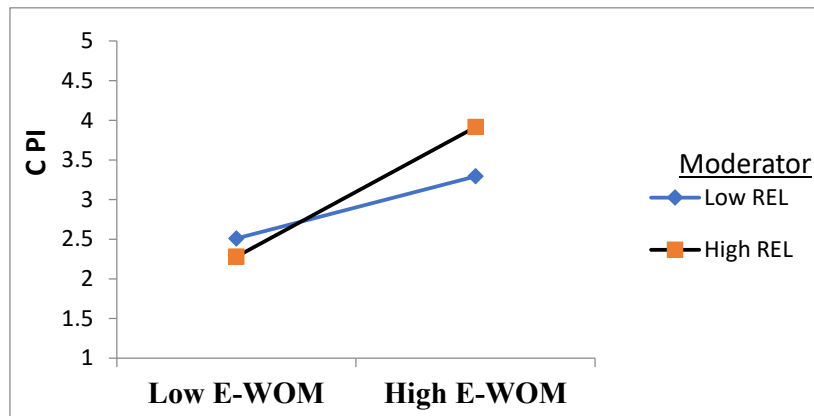


Fig. 3. Moderation Effect of REL on the Relationship between e-WOM and CPI

Table 3
Structural model

	S. β	S. D	R ²	Q ²	VIF	T-value	P Values
H1 EWOM → CPI	0.473	0.118	0.455	0.301	1.332	4.008	0.000
H2 REL → CPI	0.298	0.103			1.653	2.893	0.001
H3 REL × EWOM → CPI	0.220	0.058			1.116	3.793	0.000

7. Discussion and Conclusion

Three hypotheses were examined in this study. The first reflected the study's primary objective, which was to examine how e-WOM affected customers' intent in Jordanian real estate companies. The findings confirm H1, and the e-WOM significantly impacted CPI. This result is consistent with past research showing that e-WOM affects CPI (Sosanuy et al., 2021; Nurittamont, 2021). This finding indicates that positive e-WOM impacts CPI in Jordanian real estate enterprises. Before making a purchase, consumers frequently consult information posted online by other consumers since it supports their choice and because they place greater trust in other consumers than they do in traditional advertising (Mukattash et al., 2021). Studying how REL affected on CPI in Jordanian context with specific reference to real estate enterprises was the second objective symbolized by Hypothesis H2. According to the investigation, REL does have a beneficial impact on CPI. This result is consistent with past research showing that reliability affects CPI (Lee et al., 2016; Zoghiami et al., 2018). This demonstrates how high levels of reliability can boost client confidence, resulting in a more significant connection between intentions and purchasing behavior. The third objective, which examined whether reliability is a moderator between e-WOM and CPI Jordanian context with specific reference to real estate enterprises, symbolized by Hypothesis H3. The results indicated that the hypothesis was supported. Furthermore, previous research showed that reliability impacts purchase intention and moderates' relationships (Lee et al., 2016; Afroze et al., 2021; Lee & Ha, 2015; Zoghiami et al., 2018). This demonstrates how high levels of reliability can boost client confidence, resulting in a more significant connection between intentions and purchasing behavior.

8. Future research

The study, which was primarily targeted at Jordanian customers of real estate companies, received few responses to the survey. Future research may decide to conduct comparable studies with a wider range of respondents as a result and look further into e-WOM effects on return on investment in real estate companies. This may make the moderating role of reliability in the relationship between e-WOM and CPI clearer. Future research may shed light on the viewpoint of the consumer by examining the impact of virtual reality on consumers' intent. Future studies may examine the connections revealed in this study to see if they hold true for other countries, and sectors. The study was cross-sectional; This indicates that modifications in the e-WOM over time may have taken place and that purchase intent was not recorded. In order to achieve its objectives, the study also used a quantitative approach from the perspective of the user. Hence, longitudinal research studies could be carried out using another method, like a qualitative technique, to better understand the challenges and the potential changes that could occur when e-WOM is carried out on purchase intention through a moderator. Last but not least, this study solely looked at how reliability influenced the association between e-WOM and CPI. Future studies should therefore look into additional moderators that affect the relationship. Therefore, to comprehend the changes that might arise when e-WOM is carried out on purchase intention through a moderator, longitudinal research studies could be undertaken using another method, such as a qualitative technique, to understand the issues better. This study solely looked at how reliability influenced the association between e-WOM and purchase intention. Consequently, additional moderators that affect the association should be the subject of future research.

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