



## Impact of Review, Reviewer and Hotel Characteristics on Ewom Helpfulness: An Empirical Study

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### Abstract

Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) has been gaining popularity pertaining to its numerous benefits and ability to be applied in various fields. It helps consumers in making informed decisions and aids service providers in delivering an enhanced service or product. Despite all these benefits, dealing with the huge amounts of eWOM is a consistent problem. eWOM helpfulness comes handy in order to address this issue. In this study, we utilize 16699 hotels related eWOM written by 1099 reviewers which are collected from TripAdvisor.com. Our main objective is to analyze which factors impact eWOM helpfulness and how. For this purpose, eight unique variables belonging to three different categories are selected (eWOM length, eWOM subjectivity, eWOM polarity, eWOM readability, eWOM recency, hotel rating, reviewer badge and reviewer helpfulness) and are analyzed using econometric modelling. Our findings show that hotel rating as well as reviewer badge and helpfulness enjoy a positive significant relationship with eWOM helpfulness. It also suggests that eWOM

length, readability and subjectivity positively influences eWOM helpfulness though eWOM polarity and recency are found to have an inverse relationship with the helpfulness of eWOM. Thus, our study reports that review, hotel and reviewer characteristics impact eWOM helpfulness in different ways. This study is summarized with the discussion of theoretical and practical implications.

**Keywords:** eWOM helpfulness; review parameters; reviewer parameters; hotel parameters; econometric modelling.

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## Introduction

In this ever-evolving digital landscape, the impact of online reviews on consumer behavior has become a subject of increasing interest. This study explores the relationship between review characteristics (length, readability, subjectivity) and eWOM helpfulness. It also examines how reviewer and hotel characteristics influence this relationship. The findings suggest that while review length, readability, and subjectivity positively affect helpfulness, polarity and recency have an inverse relationship. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

With the rapid growth of eWOM, understanding its components and their impact is crucial for businesses. This study contributes to the literature by examining the moderating effects of reviewer and hotel characteristics on the relationship between review characteristics and eWOM helpfulness. The results indicate that reviewer characteristics (e.g., reviewer type, reviewer history) and hotel characteristics (e.g., hotel reputation, hotel type) significantly moderate the relationship. Practical implications for businesses include the need to focus on improving review quality and managing reviewer and hotel characteristics to enhance eWOM helpfulness.

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## Literature Review

### eWOM helpfulness

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**eWOM helpfulness and hotel characteristics**

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### **eWOM helpfulness and reviewer characteristics**

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## **Methodology**

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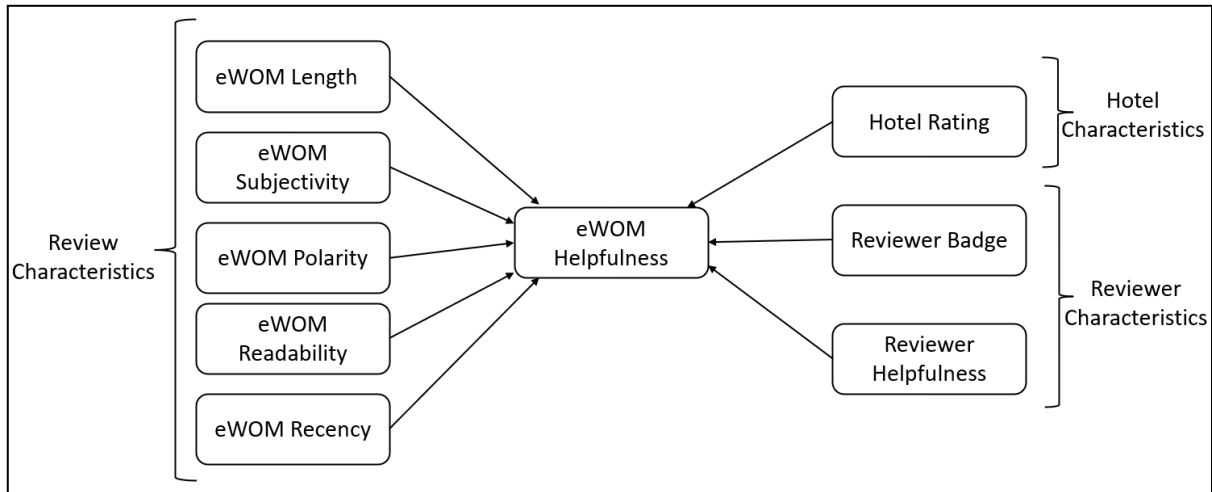


Figure 1. Research Model

Data collection

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Variables

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received by a reviewer". Recency is defined as the difference between the date of review and the date of extraction. Recency is calculated as follows:  $Recency = (Date\_of\_extraction - Date\_of\_review) / Date\_of\_extraction$ . Recency is a normalized value between 0 and 1. A recency of 0 indicates that the review was extracted on the same day as it was posted, while a recency of 1 indicates that the review was extracted one year after it was posted.

**Table 1. Variable Description**

Type	Features	Description
Dependent	Review Helpfulness (R_help)	Represents the total count of helpful votes obtained by an eWOM
Review	Length (R_length)	Represents the total count of words contained in an eWOM
	Subjectivity (R_subj)	Represents the amount of subjectiveness contained in an eWOM
	Polarity (R_pol)	Represents the degree of negativity/positivity of an eWOM
	Readability (R_read)	Represents how easy /hard an eWOM is to comprehend
	Recency (R_rec)	Represents the difference between eWOM posting and extracting date
Hotel	Ratings (H_rate)	Represents the numerical rating given to a hotel by the user
Reviewer	Badges (Rev_badge)	Represents the star badge assigned by the OTA website
	Helpfulness (Rev_Help)	Represents the total number of helpful votes obtained by that reviewer

Recency is defined as the difference between the date of review and the date of extraction. Recency is calculated as follows:  $Recency = (Date\_of\_extraction - Date\_of\_review) / Date\_of\_extraction$ . Recency is a normalized value between 0 and 1. A recency of 0 indicates that the review was extracted on the same day as it was posted, while a recency of 1 indicates that the review was extracted one year after it was posted.

$$FKGL = 0.39 \left( \frac{\text{count of words}}{\text{count of sentences}} \right) + 11.8 \left( \frac{\text{count of sentences}}{\text{count of words}} \right) - 15.59 \quad (1)$$

In this study, the FKGL score is used to measure the readability of the review. The FKGL score is calculated as follows:  $FKGL = 0.39 \left( \frac{\text{count of words}}{\text{count of sentences}} \right) + 11.8 \left( \frac{\text{count of sentences}}{\text{count of words}} \right) - 15.59$ . The FKGL score ranges from 0 to 100. A score of 90 or higher indicates that the review is "very easy to read", a score of 80 or higher indicates that the review is "easy to read", a score of 70 or higher indicates that the review is "fairly easy to read", a score of 60 or higher indicates that the review is "fairly difficult to read", a score of 50 or higher indicates that the review is "difficult to read", and a score of 30 or higher indicates that the review is "very difficult to read".

## Research Model

In this study, we propose a research model that examines the relationship between review characteristics, reviewer characteristics, and hotel characteristics on eWOM helpfulness. The research model is shown in Figure 1. The independent variables are review characteristics (Length, Subjectivity, Polarity, Readability, Recency), reviewer characteristics (Badges, Helpfulness), and hotel characteristics (Ratings). The dependent variable is eWOM helpfulness.



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llll -I

$$R_{help} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * \ln(R_{length}) + \beta_2 * R_{read} + \beta_3 * R_{subj} + \beta_4 * R_{pol} + \beta_5 * \ln(R_{rec}) + \varepsilon \tag{2}$$

llll -II

$$R_{help} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * \ln(R_{length}) + \beta_2 * R_{read} + \beta_3 * R_{subj} + \beta_4 * R_{pol} + \beta_5 * \ln(R_{rec}) + \beta_6 * H_{rate} + \varepsilon \tag{3}$$

..... -III

$$R_{help} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * \ln(R_{length}) + \beta_2 * R_{read} + \beta_3 * R_{subj} + \beta_4 * R_{pol} + \beta_5 * \ln(R_{rec}) + \beta_6 * H_{rate} + \beta_7 * Rev_{badge} + \beta_8 * Rev_{help} + \varepsilon \tag{4}$$

## Results

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**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics**

Variable	Std. Dev.	Mean	Min	Max
R_length	189.057	165.2276	1	2992
R_subj	25.9523	15.34577	0	100
R_pol	0.407924	0.244571	-0.89564	2
R_read	8.917005	6.304087	0.3	99.6
R_rec	1289.92	840.2087	2	4732
H_rate	3.966764	1.005511	1	5
Rev_badge	4.145637	0.900812	0	5
Rev_help	53.94197	69.79661	0	1468

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**Table 3. Multicollinearity results**

Variable	VIF	Tolerance
R_length	1.052104	0.950477
R_subj	1.318208	0.758605
R_pol	1.138710	0.878187
R_read	1.004220	0.995798
R_rec	1.097777	0.910932
H_rate	1.117548	0.894816
Rev_badge	1.326807	0.753689
Rev_help	1.258092	0.794855

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**Table 4. Econometric modelling results**

Independent Variable	Hypothesis	Standardized Coefficient (Standard Error)		
		Model-I	Model-II	Model-III
Ln(R_length)	H1	0.7479*** (0.015)	0.7150 *** (0.017)	0.6849*** (0.020)
R_subj	H2	0.0076*** (0.002)	0.0069*** (0.002)	0.0063*** (0.002)
R_pol	H3	-0.5292*** (0.094)	-0.6625*** (0.101)	-0.6386*** (0.101)
R_read	H4	0.0128** (0.004)	0.0121* (0.004)	0.0109* (0.004)
Ln(R_rec)	H5	-0.0548* (0.022)	-0.0659* (0.023)	-0.0759* (0.023)
H_rate	H6		0.0854*** (0.023)	0.0742* (0.023)
Rev_badge	H7			0.0633* (0.026)
Rev_help	H8			0.0007* (0.000)
<b>Adj. R-squared</b>		<b>0.749</b>	<b>0.749</b>	<b>0.750</b>

Note: Significance Level: \*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01; \*\*\*p<0.001



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### Implications

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**Limitations and Future scope**

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**Acknowledgements**

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**Conflict of interest**

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