

# THE IMPACTS OF SOURCE CHARACTERISTICS, PARASOCIAL RELATIONSHIP AND BRAND CREDIBILITY ON ELECTRONIC WORD-OF-MOUTH INTENTION

● TRAN DOAN PHUONG

## ABSTRACT:

This study is to investigate the phenomena of parasocial relationship development, especially relationship on social media. This study also explores how electronic word-of-mouth is being affected by other factors and parasocial relationship through the hierachic of information deliverd via social media influencers.

**Keywords:** influencer marketing, social media, parasocial relationship, word of mouth, eWOM

## 1. Introduction

Currently, with the dramatically developing of the Internet, word-of-mouth (WOM) concept is more and more crucial in marketing.

Firms do not see or confirm Influencer marketing's achievement because it is concerned just another approaching of brand-generated content rather than user-generated content. Therefore, the level of creditbility and authenticity has been dramatically affected by brands, firms' way of thinking

Firms do not see or confirm Influencer marketing's achievement because it is concerned just another approaching of brand-generated content rather than user-generated content.

Therefore, the level of creditbility and authenticity has been dramatically affected by brands, firms' way of thinking.

To gain authentic endorsement, brands and firms usually give influencers free new launched product, or reward them an exclusive service or payment transaction for their sponsored post.

The exposure of personal life often reveals the authentic characteristics and point of view of public figures, which may feel relatable and favorable to a certain group of audiences who have the same traits of their personalities described this feeling of favour and affection of ordinary individuals as "parasocial interaction" or "parasocial relationship" with public figures. However, little research is currently being conducted on the creation and effects of parasocial relationships on WOM's power and customer behaviour, as well as on its realistic application in marketing.

Therefore, in order to use influencer marketing

efficiently, in order to further understand the mechanism and how the audience processes and is influenced by content on social networking sites, parasocial relationships, their drivers and consequences need to be further explored and examined as a psychological and behavioral route model to explain and visualize the impact of the information process.

**2. Literature review:**

*H1: Source authenticity positively affects on parasocial relationship*

*H2: Source relevance positively affects on parasocial relationship*

*H3: Source expertise positively affects parasocial relationship*

*H4: Source trustworthiness positively affectts parasocial relationship*

*H5: Source authenticity positively affects on brand credibility*

*H6: Source relevance positively affects on brand credibility*

*H7: Source expertise positively affects on brand credibility*

*H8: Source trustworthiness positively affects on brand credibility*

*H9: Parasocial relationship positively affects on brand credibility*

*H10: Parasocial relationship positively affects on eWOM intention*

*H11: Brand credibility positively affects on eWOM intention*

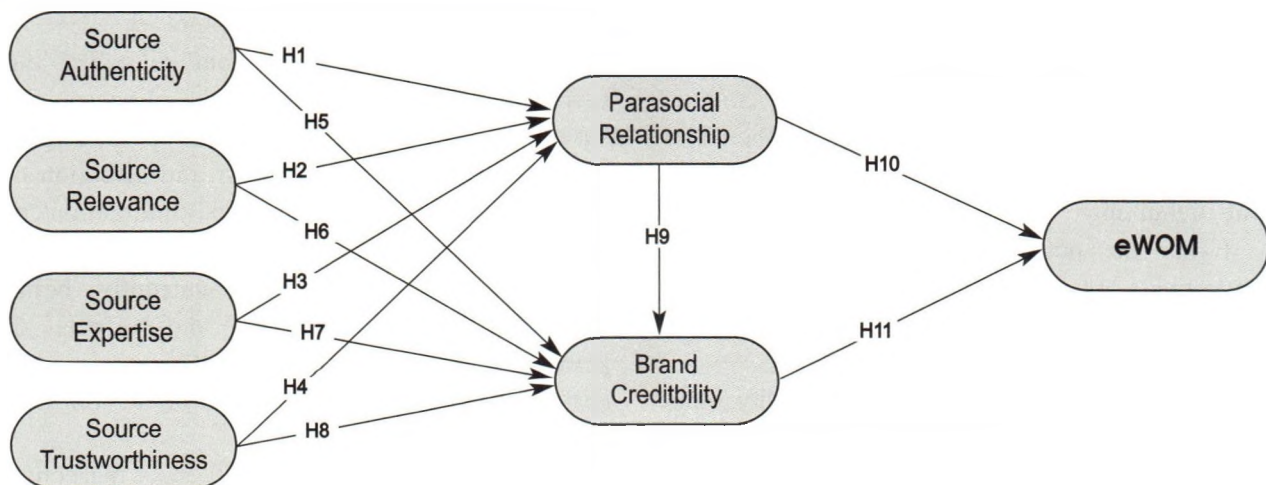
**3. Methodology:**

For testing the model of measurement constructs, authors collect 450 samples under 45 years old, using smartphones and social media regularly by 7-likert scales Google form.

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) tests the significance of observed variables and thereby investigates a smaller number of unobserved variables from them, which are denoted as factors, while Cronbach's alpha coefficients test the reliability and similarities across items of the measurements. EFA is used to test and retest variables for pre-determined theories, as well as to alternate and exclude null irrelevant functions (Hair et al., 2006).

For testing the model of measurement constructs, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is used. CFA is a commonly used instrument for measuring model creation, according to Tabachnick et al. (1996), and it may also identify correlations between observed variables of stimuli. To put it another way, CFA was used in AMOS to investigate the validity of measurement scales and model fit.

In addition to AVE, composite reliability (CR) is used to assess convergent validity, and should be equivalent to or greater than 0.7. (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). The correlation between particular variables must be substantially greater than the correlation between such factor and other factors in order to achieve



discriminant validity of the factors (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

**4. Result and discussion**

**4.1. Reliability analysis**

For the Cronbach's Alpha analysis for all elements is showed in Table 1, which means this scale is very good. Besides that, the total correlation of each element in the scale is higher than 0.5. Therefore, there is no elimination for any elements.

**Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha analysis**

Cronbach's Alpha analysis	
Source Trustworthiness	0.924
Source Expertise	0.9
Source Authenticity	0.953
Source Relevance	0.950
Brand Credibility	0.968
Parasocial Relationship	0.962
eWOM intention	0.943

**4.2. Factor analysis (EFA)**

KMO and Barlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.903
Barlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	25169.466
	df	1225
	Sig.	.000

For the EFA Analysis, the KMO Barlett's Test coefficients of this research is 0.903, which means it is higher than 0.5. Therefore, this research and model apply in the further research.

**4.3. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)**

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to obtain factor loadings as a predictor of calculation validity using AMOS. The factor loadings should be 0.5 or higher as a minimum. Hair (1998) further recommended that the Composite Reliability (CR) value be at least 0.7 and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value

be at least 0.5. The performance description for CFA as shown in Table 2. The discriminant validity indices CR and AVE, as shown, met the suggested requirements.

**Table 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)**

Variable	CA	CR	AVE
Source Trustworthiness	0.924	0.924	0.671
Source Authenticity	0.953	0.952	0.689
Source Relevance	0.950	0.948	0.784
Source Expertise	0.929	0.929	0.725
Parasocial Relationship	0.962	0.962	0.678
Brand Credibility	0.968	0.968	0.835
WOM Intention	0.943	0.944	0.708

**5. Implication**

Authenticity, Trustworthiness, Relevance, Expertise, have a significant impact on consumers' perceptions of a company and its message, as well as the degree of control the message has and its potential to influence consumers' decisions. Besides that, the Parasocial relationship, brand credibility and WOM intention has influenced and affected each other. Subsequently, the relationship between consumers and influencers will increase when the information of influencers has authenticity, trustworthiness and expertise. Despite the fact that influencer-product importance is a big determinant of knowledge source reputation, it plays a minor role in the creation of relationships between influencers and viewers. The hypotheses suggested that consumers grow loyalty to influencers when communicating with them, which is regarded as a parasocial relationship, and that the strength of this relationship would differ depending on how authentic the influencers are and how important they are to the commodity and the issue they are discussing. With the influence of parasocial relationships and brand credibility, the customers will increase the WOM intention in the long run.



Figure 1: Results of CFA

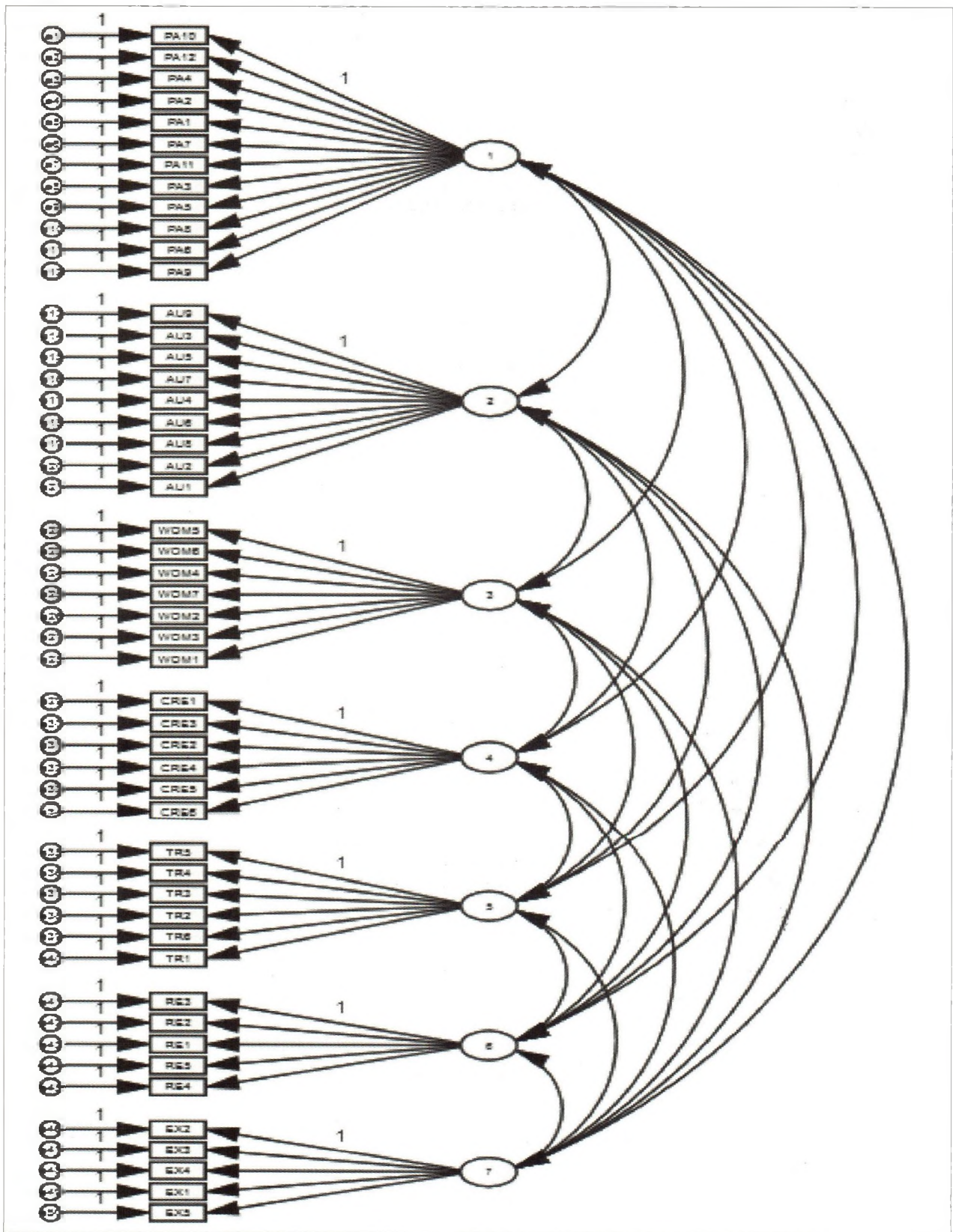
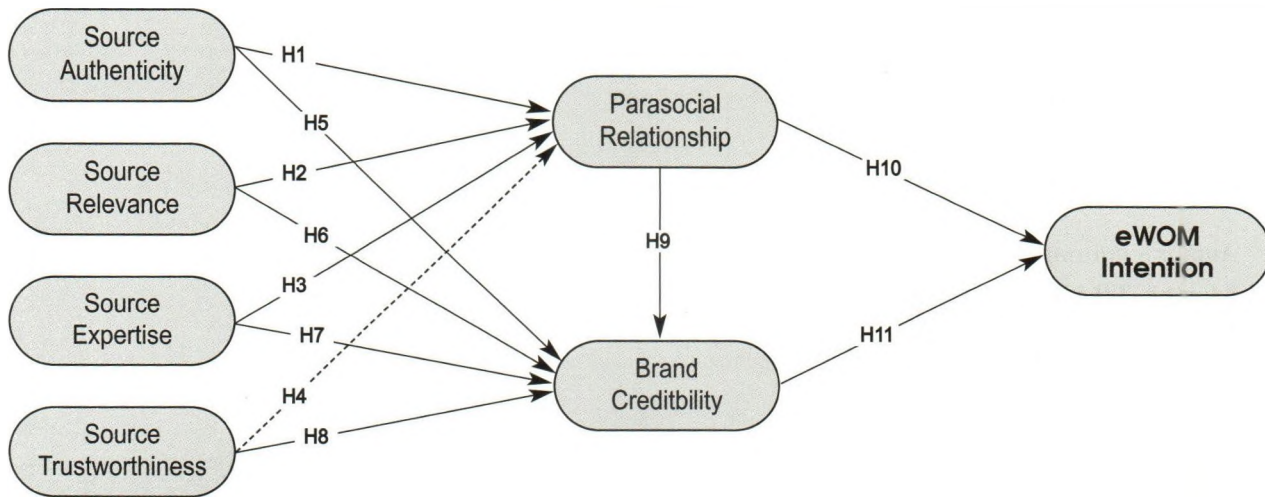


Figure 2: Illustrating the SEM results on conceptual model



Based on the results, it is inferred that the source of trustworthiness unaffected brand credibility. It can be explained by the fact that the customers will believe and have more trustworthiness about the review from the influencers rather than the brand, because the brand will give the positive information, the consumers nowadays understand and know more about this. Therefore, they will not have enough trust about the brand credibility. Besides that, the source of trustworthiness will have a significant and constructive impact on parasocial relationships. Moreover, the parasocial relationship and brand credibility is influenced by each other, while these two factors influence the WOM intention.

The results of this study revealed that the influencer's personality characteristics, as well as

the strength of their interaction with their audiences, have a direct impact on the degree of WOM control, or the efficacy of influencer marketing in the digital world. For brands, they should select influencers who specialize in the correct product field results in a higher level of importance, which, according to the research, leads to a higher awareness of experience, higher brand reputation, and more power. Also, brands should understand that influencer marketing does not often provide instant outcomes, such as promotions; however, it may help marketers develop strong trust and reputation over time, which can be extremely beneficial in the long run. Rather than focusing on instant revenue, influencer marketing can focus on creating legitimacy and instilling brand awareness in the minds of customers ■

**REFERENCES:**

1. Byrne, B. (2016). *Structural equation modeling with AMOS: Basic concepts, applications, and programming*. 3rd ed. s.l.:Routledge.
2. Byrne, D., Ervin, C. & Lamberth, J. (1970). Continuity between the experimental study of attraction and real-life computer dating. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 16(1), p. 157-165.
3. Fornell, C. & Larcker, D. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), pp. 39-50.

4. Hair, J., Black, W., Anderson, R. & Tatham, R. (2006). *Multivariate Data Analysis. 6 ed.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

**Received date: May 6, 2022**

**Reviewed date: May 18, 2022**

**Accepted date: May 29, 2022**

*Author's information:*

**Master. TRAN DOAN PHUONG**

**Lecturer, FPT Polytechnic Ho Chi Minh City**

## **TÁC ĐỘNG CỦA ĐẶC ĐIỂM NGUỒN, MỐI QUAN HỆ XÃ HỘI VÀ ĐỘ TIN CẬY CỦA THƯƠNG HIỆU ĐỐI VỚI Ý ĐỊNH TRUYỀN MIỆNG ĐIỆN TỬ**

● **ThS. TRẦN ĐOAN PHƯƠNG**

Giảng viên, Cao đẳng FPT Polytechnic TP. Hồ Chí Minh

### **TÓM TẮT:**

Mục đích nghiên cứu của nghiên cứu này nhằm tìm hiểu các hiện tượng phát triển mối quan hệ mang tính chất xã hội, đặc biệt là trên các phương tiện truyền thông xã hội. Nghiên cứu này cũng tìm hiểu việc truyền miệng điện tử bị ảnh hưởng như thế nào bởi các yếu tố khác và mối quan hệ xã hội thông qua chất lượng cao của thông tin cung cấp bởi những người có ảnh hưởng trên mạng xã hội.

**Từ khóa:** marketing với người có ảnh hưởng, influencer marketing, truyền thông xã hội, mối quan hệ xã hội, truyền miệng, eWOM.