

## Predicting Halal Cosmetics Purchase Intentions Through Linking EWOM, Attitude and Emotional Values: A Comparative Study of Oman and Pakistan

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**Abstract.** Halal products and services are gaining momentum and there is continuous growth in the size of halal markets. Halal cosmetics is one of the important segments of the same. The core aim of the current study is to propose and empirically test the role of electronic word of mouth (EWOM) in predicting halal cosmetics purchase intentions (PI) via mediation of attitude and moderation of emotional value (EV) on data from Oman and Pakistan. Considering the nature of the study, the data is collected from role of the study, the data is collected from female respondents using the convenience and snowball sampling techniques. All in all, 171 and 193 responses (from Oman and Pakistan respectively) are used for analysis purpose. Findings of the study reveal that EWOM influences PI both directly and indirectly via attitude for both the samples. The moderation is supported but the findings highlight that the EV dampens the relationship of EWOM and attitude instead of strengthening it. The results are similar for both the samples. The study is novel, because there are limited studies available that focus on comparing the results of two countries on halal cosmetics purchase intentions. Furthermore, EV has largely been ignored topic in the halal cosmetics purchases literature. The study offers valuable insights into communication, information and marketing literature.

**Keywords:** Electronic word-of-mouth, Emotional values, Halal cosmetics, Oman, Pakistan, Purchase intentions.

## 1. Introduction

Muslims are the largest growing market for the global firms and therefore obtained their attention (Izberk-Bilgin & Nakata, 2016). A halal market is a place where halal products and services are traded. It is one of the most rapidly growing markets globally with estimated net value of \$2.5 billion in 2024 (Statistica, 2024). The halal market covers a wide range of offerings including entertainment, education, travel & tourism, finance, personal care, pharmaceutical and cosmetics (Fauzi, 2023; Jailani and Adinugraha, 2022). Out of all the offered products halal cosmetics are considered a growing market because of its ability to meet the growing demand of Muslim youth (Bhutto et al., 2024). Its market size estimated at USD48 billion in 2024, which will grow due to growth in population of Muslims. Its size, when compared with the global cosmetics market of USD336 billion, is too petite (Fortune Business Insight, 2025). The given facts also give a reality check when we compare Muslim population, which is 25% of global population (Nghah et al., 2021), with the market share of halal cosmetics. It is, therefore, halal cosmetics market has obtained researchers' attention recently and purchase intentions of halal cosmetics are the area that has gained researchers' attention (Anubha, 2023).

Literature highlights that electronic word of mouth (EWOM) is an important predictor of purchase intentions (e.g. Anubha, 2023). It is defined as the sharing of views, experiences, opinions and recommendations using online sources (Anubha and Shome, 2021). The role of EWOM in predicting halal cosmetics purchase intentions seems organic (Anubha, 2023; Bhutto et al., 2024), because the halal purchases are based on religious beliefs and external feedback, information and authenticity is very important to form and validate the beliefs. EWOM is different from conventional word-of-mouth as it covers digital mediums where interaction is virtual instead of physical (Park et al., 2025). The digital platforms influence the customer at various levels and determine the level of satisfaction (Ruiz-Alba et al., 2022). EWOM is also considered valuable as it may help in understanding the view across cultures and form an overall account of the customer responses (Ferreira et al., 2022). This is because the EWOM is more interactive in nature where customers can interact without time and place limitations. Therefore, there is a global belief that EWOM, through universal presence, has ability to influence the belief of the customers (Liu and Jayawardhena, 2023). EWOM, through comments and feedback of the users, can help in building a belief about the product which may later influence their purchase intentions. As EWOM leads to formation of beliefs, it is expected that there exists a mechanism between EWOM and halal cosmetics purchase intentions. Therefore, the current study proposes the mediation of customer attitude. Recently, Bhutto et al., (2024) has also called for studying the mechanism between EWOM and halal cosmetics purchase intentions. Similarly, Anubha (2023) highlighted that there exists a gap that explains how EWOM could influence the purchase intentions of halal products. Furthermore, some recent studies have observed that attitude links purchase intentions of halal cosmetics with its predictors (Anubha, 2023; Hasim et al., 2025).

Against this backdrop, the current study contributes in two ways, first by proposing and testing the mediation role of customer attitude and second, the boundary condition of emotional value (EV). The value of EV is considered important because of the halal cosmetics purchase intentions. According to Theory of Consumption Value (TCV, Sheth et al., 1991) there are five values (functional, social, emotional, conditional and epistemic values) that influence the attitude and intentions towards a product or service. But here we propose that emotional values are the most important in the case of products requiring religious beliefs and emotions. Halal cosmetics purchase intentions and attitude towards those products require an emotional level attachment to those products. Emotional values bind one person emotionally with the product which ultimately influences the purchase decisions (Rachman and Amarullah, 2024). Similarly, EV is linked with social belief about the product (Stone and Zhou, 2023) and helps in fulfilling the emotional needs (Lee et al., 2021). But empirically there is dearth of literature that has proposed and investigated the boundary condition of EV on the relationship of EWOM and outcomes.

In addition to that the existing literature on consumption values offers mixed results, which calls for studying the values in isolation. For example, a recent meta-analysis of Mason et al., (2023) carried out on 82 studies from 34 countries highlights that EV is the most important determinant of consumer behavior. Contrarily, later studies have found that other values may have greater value over others, e.g. Hoyos-Vallejo et al., (2025) observed that social and functional value outweigh all other values. Corbos et al., (2024) observed that EV is one of the most important determinants of consumer buying behavior. Due to mixed results, research is needed to investigate the value of EV in isolation. This study aims to fill this gap by considering EV as moderator between EWOM and customer attitude towards halal cosmetics.

This study also contributes to the literature by conducting a cross-country comparative study between Oman and Pakistan. Studying these two countries is valuable because both the countries share some similarities along with the differences. Oman is an important high-income member country of Gulf Cooperative Council (GCC) and collectively the market share of GCC for halal cosmetics is USD6.4 billion (IMARC group, 2024), contrarily Pakistani market has an expected market share of USD783 million. Both the countries are Muslim majority countries with young as the major chunk of population, thus halal cosmetics is a growing market for both the countries. Furthermore, both societies are bounded by the religious values (Ali et al., 2021; Mukhtar and Butt, 2012), therefore, the halal cosmetics can have a good market share in these countries. Yet the countries are different with respect to disposable income. Oman is attributed as high-income country with high disposable income and people like modesty with luxury. Contrarily, Pakistan is a middle-income country where customers are more price sensitive. Furthermore, Pakistan has a well-established halal market and bodies that evaluate the products and firms through halal audit and certification. On the other hand, Oman is having an underdeveloped system of halal audit and is expected to have a certification system (Hashim and Musa, 2021). The given similarities and differences make these countries suitable for carrying out a comparative study. The value of culture has been valued as an important factor influencing the cognitive and later stages of attitude, as highlighted by Wilson and Liu (2011) in the following words: “The authors present the halal paradigm as demonstrating an area where cognitive, affective and conative decision-making patterns are affected by risk minimisation. These are related to the Muslim consumer cultural lens and Islam” (p.40). Therefore, the current study seems to offer empirical support for the same by considering a cross-cultural comparison.

## **2. Hypotheses Development**

### **2.1. EWOM and halal cosmetics purchase intentions**

First, this study proposes the relationship of EWOM, and halal cosmetics purchase intentions. Existing literature has highlighted that EWOM can influence the purchase intentions of numerous forms of products including lifestyle products (Kala and Chaubey, 2018), electronics (Kudeshia and Kumar, 2017) and smart phones (Alrwashdeh et al., 2019). EWOM has also been observed to be the predictor in various industries as well, e.g. online retails business (Prasad et al., 2019; Roy et al., 2017), movie and film industry (Kim et al., 2019), hospitality industry (Ruiz-Mafe et al., 2018) and traveling industry (Anubha and Shome, 2021). But the literature linking the EWOM and halal cosmetics purchase intentions is scant (Anubha, 2023).

EWOM influences the purchase intentions in many ways. For instance, it could improve perceptions of quality (Roy et al., 2019), perceptions of usefulness of the product (Tien et al., 2019), and overall image of the product (Handriana et al., 2020). As the halal products require buying intentions that is backed by the belief and provision of information that can clarify and help in building that belief. The information provided through EWOM, therefore, could build the perceptions about the product and its

image. Therefore, when customers build their positive perceptions through EWOM, they tend to plan to buy such products.

Literature also highlights that EWOM should contain both positive and negative comments, so that customers can make a realistic preview of the product. The value of such comments is specifically important for halal cosmetics where one has been built opinion that coincides with beliefs and it could be better predicted by both positive negative feedback through EWOM (Filieri, 2016; Roy et al., 2019). The fairness of views could build trust in the product which can influence the intentions to buy it (Handriana et al., 2020).

Furthermore, uniformity of the reviews is also important, as when masses provide similar views the customers can build an image of the product which can later influence their buying intentions (Cheung et al., 2012). The consistent reviews also build the perception about the product (Shankar et al., 2020), that determines the purchase patterns of the customers. The said relationship can also be explained using the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), which proposes that people attitude towards a product or service is persuaded by two routes, (i) central route – where the receptor thinks about the information provided to them, and (ii) peripheral route – where the receptor relies only on the available information (Petty et al., 1981). As the EWOM is considered as a source of information and being a view about religious belief it is expected to influence the central route as well as peripheral route (Anubha, 2023). Therefore, it is proposed that it would influence the purchase intentions of halal cosmetics. Moreover, being the global belief about humans, we propose that the proposition may stand true across cultures and the same is proposed below:

**H1:** EWOM and halal cosmetics purchase intentions are positively related for Omani (H1a) and Pakistani participants (H1b).

## 2.2. Mediating role of attitude

This study also proposes that attitude mediation the relationship of EWOM and halal cosmetics purchase intentions. The said relationship could be predicted using the product attitude model of Fishbein (1963). This model proposes that customers build an attitude based on certain traits a product possesses. As EWOM helps in finding information that can help in knowing the traits and features of the products, it is expected that they will build a positive perception and feeling (attitude) about the product. This could be considered more relevant to the religion and faith-based products (e.g. halal cosmetics), because such products should possess unique traits (e.g. halal ingredients and halal marketing channels) when compared with conventional products. EWOM may ensure provision of information related to products to customers which may influence their attitude towards the halal product (Anubha, 2023). This could also be attributed to the expectancy-value formulation proposed by Fishbein (1963). The model further highlights that belief strength and evaluation of attributes influence the overall evaluation of the products. As EWOM creates a mechanism of provision of information that may be helpful in evaluating the product (e.g. features, religious permissibility, quality and usefulness) and formulating a belief about (with authentic, timely and accurate information), it is expected that EWOM may influence the overall attitude of customers towards the product.

Empirically literature also supports this assertion, as EWOM and attitude are found to be related (Azhar et al., 2022; Bianchi et al., 2017; Moradi and Zihagh, 2022). This attitude and feelings about the product become positive when customers have trust in EWOM (Verma et al., 2023). Zayed et al., (2022) also found that EWOM positively influences the customer attitude. Bhutto et al., (2024) found also that EWOM influences the level of trust in the product which influences the attitude. Anubha (2021) highlighted that for halal products, EWOM plays an important role because they provide authenticity which influences the overall belief about the product. Furthermore, EWOM reinforces the belief and changes the attitude towards the product (Bhutto et al., 2024). As halal cosmetics require a reinforcement of belief about the product and EWOM can work as a reinforcer it is expected that due to EWOM the attitude towards the halal cosmetics would be positive.

The attitude towards halal cosmetics is expected to influence purchase intentions further. This could be attributed to the fact that attitude has three components (cognitive, affective and behavioral intentions) where these components are associated. Therefore, it is expected that positive affective element (attitude) could lead to positive intentions (purchase intentions). The same has been empirically proposed and tested, for instance, Hansmann et al., (2020) observed that positive attitude towards the products influences the purchase intentions. Researchers have also found that attitude towards halal cosmetics influence the intentions of buying (Bhutto et al., 2023, 2024; Suparno, 2020).

ELM can also help us predict the said relationship on the grounds that EWOM ensures provision of timely, accurate, reliable and valid information to the customers (Bhutto et al., 2024) which influence their peripheral route (through reliability of information) and central route (through creating a thinking process of validation of belief about halal products) (Petty et al., 1981). Therefore, it is proposed that EWOM can predict the customer attitude both in short (peripheral) and long-run (central routes). Therefore, this study proposes that EWOM would foster the attitude of customers towards halal cosmetics and they would tend to plan more buying of it in long run.

As given literature highlights that EWOM positively influences the attitude which in turn determines the intentions to act towards halal cosmetics across cultures, the following mediation hypothesis is proposed:

**H2:** Attitude mediates the relationship of EWOM, and halal cosmetics purchase intentions both the Omani (H2a) and Pakistani (H2b) samples

### **2.3. Moderating role of emotional value**

This study also proposes the moderating role of emotional values (EV). Recent meta-analytical findings of Mason et al., (2023) also highlight that out of all values, the emotional values are the most significant predictor of consumer behaviors. Similarly, Corbos et al., (2024) also found that emotional values are one of the most important factors of all values that determine the consumer buying behavior. Therefore, the choice of selecting EV overall is justified. The emotional value is felt when a product provides meets the emotional needs and customer is satisfied with that (Lee et al., 2021; Yeap et al., 2020). Emotional values are often linked with the social beliefs about the product (Stone and Zhou, 2023). The emotional benefits offered by the product (e.g. enjoyment, excitement, joy, fun and relaxation) tend to create positive response towards the product (Cheung et al., 2021; Shin et al., 2025; Wang et al., 2021). Therefore, we propose that EV tends to influence the attitude of the customers. But how EV can influence the outcomes is an area that has not gained due attention of researchers (Rachman and Amarullah, 2024). Similarly, it is proposed that EV may change the influence of EWOM. Though this relationship has been largely ignored in literature, we can propose the same using similar findings from literature. For example, Cheung and Thadani (2012) also identified that strong emotions towards a product influence the acceptance of EWOM strongly. The higher emotions also build higher social consensus (Goh et al., 2013), which ultimately influence the attitude and intentions.

Based on the discussion given, we propose that EV along with EWOM would influence the attitude of customers positively and the relationship would be stronger when EV would be higher. This could be built on the results of Huang et al., (2023) who identified that EV is important as it influences the emotional state which draws the behaviors of the customers towards certain products. As attitude towards halal cosmetics is a specific form of feeling it is expected to be influenced by the EV of the customers. Li and Tang (2024) also identified that emotional level values are more important in determining the attitudes of the customers.

We also predict that using the lens of Theory of Consumption Value (TCV), which proposes that values a customer assign to a product determines the attitude towards the products. This theory proposes the role of five important values, but here we propose that EV is considered the most instrumental for halal cosmetics, because such products are belief-based products and require emotional attachment before

buying and consumption (Li and Tang, 2024). Based on the given discussion, it is proposed that EV would strengthen the relationship of EWOM and attitude, which is hypothesized below:

**H3:** EV moderates the relationship between EWOM and attitude for both the Omani (H3a) and Pakistani (H3b) respondents, such that the relationship is stronger when EV is high.

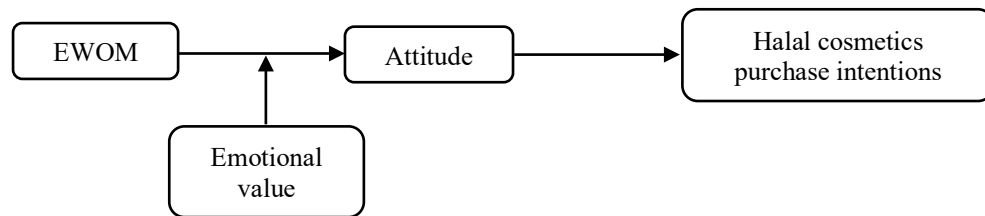


Fig.1: Conceptual model

### 3. Research Methodology

Considering the comparative nature of the study the data were collected from Oman and Pakistan using the convenience, snowball and self-sampling technique. Though these sampling techniques restrict generalizability of the findings, but these are widely used in literature in management and social sciences (Ahmed, 2025). Other researchers have recommended some ways through which these limitations can be overcome. For example, Staines (2008) highlighted that generalization can be obtained by using multiple independent samples. Jager et al., (2017), on the other hand, highlighted that taking homogenous samples can also reduce the issues of contextualization and can ensure that results are generalized. As this study is based on samples from two countries and women below 30 years of age, the requirements of met and therefore it is expected that the issue of contextualization/generalization is addressed. Similar approaches have been used by some latest studies including Ahmed (2025) and Khan et al., (2025) and these studies have considered multiple samples.

Respondents with age up to 30 years were considered most suitable as this age group is more prone to use of online social media platforms and their buying intentions are largely influenced by the EWOM available online (Ngo et al., 2024). This segment of the population is more tech-savvy and is largely influenced by the social-media and information over there (Turner, 2015). Moreover, some recent studies (Anubha, 2023; Bhutto et al., 2024) have highlighted that this age group is largely interested in buying online, so selecting this age group is justified. An online survey was designed to elicit the responses of the respondents. The purpose of doing so was to get the maximum responses from the selected age groups of both nations. We used G\*Power to determine the sample size (probability=0.05, power=80, and  $f^2$  effect=0.20), and the estimated sample size was 250. We distributed the questionnaires to our close associates and resources to fill out the questionnaire. They were further requested to share the link of the online questionnaire to their circles. It took us three months to collect the data from 171 responses from Oman and 193 responses from Pakistan. Already well-established and widely used measures were used to measure the variables. For instance, halal cosmetics purchase intentions, attitude and EWOM were measured using the Bhutto et al., (2024) scales. EV was operationalized using the Rachman and Amarullah (2024) scale. All these measures had high reliability values in their respective source studies; therefore they were considered suitable for this investigation. There were no missing values as response was only recorded when filled.

### 4. Findings

Before hypotheses testing, the preliminary analysis was carried out. At this stage data was tested for normality, validity and reliability. The normality of the data was assessed using the skewness and kurtosis, where the data was found normally distributed (calculated value  $\pm 1$  and  $\pm 3$ , respectively) for both the samples. Common method variance (CMV) was assessed using Harman's single factor test which showed the variance of 32.15% and 34.56% respectively, thus the issue of CMV was not present

(Podsakoff et al., 2012). This approach is widely used by management and social sciences researchers (Ahmed, 2025). After that the data was assessed for validity and reliability. Measurement model was used to assess the same, and the model showed acceptable fitness indices (RMSEA=0.35 & 0.40, CMIN/DF=1.98 & 2.01, respectively). The factor loadings were also acceptably fit ( $\geq 0.50$ ) showing that all the factors loaded acceptably on the constructs. Furthermore, the values of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were also above the threshold value of 0.50. These values also conferred that convergent validity was established. The discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornier and Larcker (1981) guidelines, where table 1 shows that the tabulated values met the threshold and therefore validity was established. Composite reliability was also assessed, where all the measures had above threshold value of reliability, showing that the measures were reliable.

Table 1: Factor Analysis Results

	Factor analysis			Discriminant validity			
	Loading	AVE	CR	EWOM	Att	PI	EV
<b>Oman Sample</b>							
EWOM	0.70–0.80	0.584	0.92	<b>0.76</b>			
Att	0.71–0.79	0.554	0.89	0.64	<b>0.74</b>		
PI	0.69–0.79	0.564	0.90	0.68	0.64	<b>0.75</b>	
EV	0.72–0.76	0.548	0.91	0.67	0.59	0.65	<b>0.74</b>
<b>Pakistan Sample</b>							
EWOM	0.71–0.80	0.579	0.91	<b>0.76</b>			
Att	0.73–0.78	0.563	0.88	0.48	<b>0.75</b>		
PI	0.68–0.82	0.543	0.89	0.62	0.53	<b>0.73</b>	
EV	0.70–0.80	0.741	0.92	0.68	0.56	0.60	<b>0.74</b>

EWOM=Electronic word of mouth, Att=Attitude, PI=Purchase intentions, EV=Emotional value  
Source: Author's own work

The results for descriptive statistics and correlation are shown in table 2, where it is evident that all the variables of interest were positively and significantly related. For instance, EWOM is positively related to attitude ( $r=0.439$ ,  $p<.05$  and  $r=.302$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and halal cosmetics PI ( $r=0.510$ ,  $p<.05$  and  $r=.528$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Similarly, attitude is also positively related to the halal cosmetics purchase intentions ( $r=0.437$ ,  $p<.05$  and  $r=.578$ ,  $p<.05$ ).

Table 2: Descriptive statistics and correlation

Variables	Descriptive	Correlation			
	Mean (SD)	EWOM	Att	SN	PBC
<b>Omani Sample</b>					
EWOM	3.84 (0.880)				
Att	4.24 (0.864)	0.439*			
PI	3.99 (0.942)	0.510*	0.437*		
EV	4.08 (0.924)	0.577*	0.517*	0.602*	--
<b>Pakistani Sample</b>					
EWOM	3.72 (0.603)				
Att	4.26 (0.782)	0.302*			
PI	4.00 (0.669)	0.528*	0.578*		
EV	4.08 (0.739)	0.525*	0.580*	0.509*	--

\* $p<.05$

EWOM=Electronic word of mouth, Att=Attitude, PI=Purchase intentions, EV=Emotional value  
Source: Author's own work

Table 3 covers the results of direct and indirect (mediation) tests. The table reveals that EWOM is positively related to halal cosmetics PI (effect=.4327,  $p=.0000$  and effect=.3509,  $p=.0000$ , respectively), and attitude (effect=.7752,  $p=.0000$  and effect=.3194,  $p=.0000$ , respectively). These results highlight that the direct paths are significant and H1 (H1a and H1b) is supported. The indirect effects highlight that the attitude mediates the relationship of EWOM and PI for both the samples (indirect effect=.3281, total effect=.7608, ULCI=.2242, LLCI=.4370, VFA=41% and indirect effect=.1256, total effect=.4765,

ULCI=.0315, LLCI=.2477, VFA=46%, respectively). Therefore, the mediation hypothesis H2 (H2a and H2b) is also supported, and partial mediation is found.

Table 3: Hypotheses testing results (Mediation)

Path	Relation	Effect	se	T	LLCI	ULCI	p
<b>Oman Sample</b>							
<b>H1a</b>	EWOM-PI	.4327	.0645	6.7118	.3054	.5600	.0000
	EWOM-Att	.7752	.0718	10.790	.6334	.9170	.0000
	Att-PI	.4233	.0531	7.9686	.3184	.5281	.0000
<b>H2a</b>	EWOM→Att→PI	.3281	.0540		.2242	.4370	
<b>Pakistan Sample</b>							
<b>H1b</b>	EWOM-PI	.3509	.0500	7.0220	.2523	.4494	.0000
	EWOM-Att	.3194	.0728	4.3816	.1758	.4631	.0000
	Att-PI	.3933	.0473	8.3112	.3000	.4866	.0000
<b>H2b</b>	EWOM→Att→PI	.1256	.0559		.0315	.2477	

EWOM=Electronic word of mouth, Att=Attitude, PI=Purchase intentions, EV=Emotional value

Source: Author's own work

Table 4 shows the results of moderation of emotional value (EV). The results reveal that both the predictors i.e. EWOM and EV significantly predict the attitude of respondents from Oman (effect=.6195,  $p=.0003$  and effect=.1259,  $p=.0000$  respectively) and Pakistan (effect=.7956,  $p=.0003$  and effect=.2695,  $p=.0000$  respectively). These results help us conclude that we can go with testing the interaction effects of EWOM\*EV. The results reveal that the interaction effects are significant for both Omani sample (effect=-.1067,  $p=.0077$ ) and Pakistani samples (effect=-.2043,  $p=.0001$ ), but the effects are negative which shows that the inclusion of EV as a moderator changes the effects of EWOM from positive to negative. Therefore, it is to conclude that moderator weakens the relationship of EWOM and attitude towards halal cosmetics.

Table-4: Hypotheses testing results (Moderation)

Hypothesized Path	Relation	Effect	se	T	LLCI	ULCI	P
<b>Oman Sample</b>							
EWOM→Att		.6195	.1659	3.7336	.2919	.9471	.0003
EV→Att		.1259	.1447	7.7800	.8402	1.4116	.0000
<b>Moderation (H3a)</b>							
Interaction effect (EWOM×EV→Att)		-.1067	.0396	-2.696	-.1848	-.0286	.0077
<b>Pakistan Sample</b>							
EWOM→Att		.7956	.2164	3.677	.3688	1.2224	.0003
EV→Att		.2695	.1813	7.001	.9118	1.6272	.0000
<b>Moderation (H3b)</b>							
Interaction effect (EWOM×EV→Att)		-.2043	.0523	-3.906	-.3075	-.1011	.0001

EWOM=Electronic word of mouth, Att=Attitude, PI=Purchase intentions, EV=Emotional value

Source: Author's own work

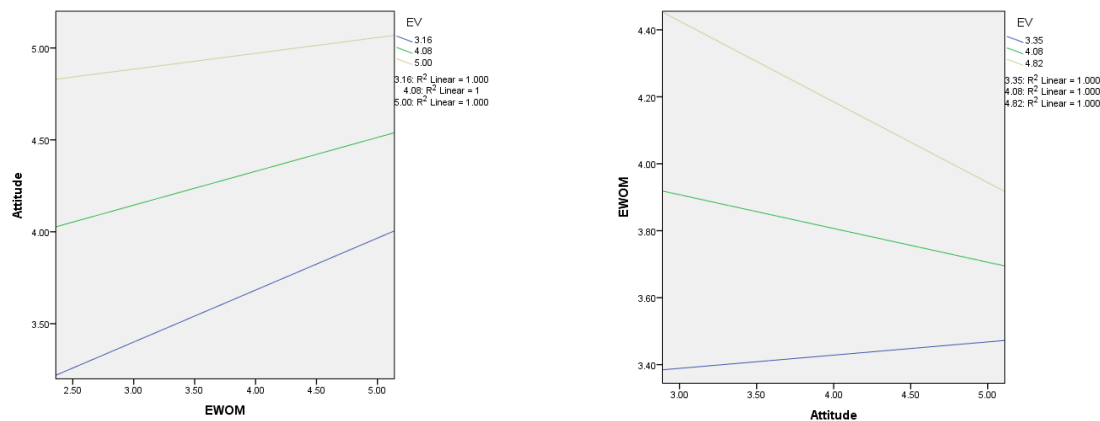


Fig.2: Slope of moderation (Oman and Pakistan samples respectively)



## 5. Discussion

This study uses the lens of Fishbein's (1963) attitude model, ELM (Petty et al., 1981) and TCV (Sheth et al., 1991) to propose and test a mechanism of attitude and EV between EWOM and halal cosmetics purchase intentions. The comparative study of Oman and Pakistan highlights that EWOM significantly influences the halal cosmetics purchase intentions of customers in both the countries. These results support the findings of meta-analysis of Ismagilova et al., (2020), where they reported that 93% of the customers EWOM is one of the most important elements influencing their purchase intentions. The findings from two Muslim countries validated and supported the claim by providing empirical evidence.

Furthermore, this study also proposes the explanatory mechanism (mediation of attitude and moderation of EV), which has been an unattended area of research. The findings highlight that attitude towards halal cosmetics partially mediates the relationship. The findings again support the previous studies (e.g. Bhutto et al., 2024). This current study also supports the results of Anubha (2023) who observed that various traits of EWOM and halal cosmetics purchase relationship are mediated by attitude. These results also support a globally accepted theoretical lens of ELM (Petty et al., 1981) and highlight that attitude is an important mechanism that links EWOM and its outcomes across cultures and countries.

The moderation relationship has been an important but unique offering of the current study. Up to the best of researcher knowledge, there has been dearth of literature testing the moderating role of emotional values. The empirical results highlight interesting results, where the EV is found to reduce the influence of EWOM on attitude. These results are significant but against expectations for both the samples. First, the emotional values (e.g. job, excitement, and fun due to product) may be superseded by the halal preferences. This is because the halal products require one's perceptual dominance by the religious values instead of personal preferences (like, joy and excitement) (Khan et al., 2025). Second, the difference could also be attributed to the sample attributes, as the study is based on responses from females only and due to gender (Khan and Azam, 2020). These findings could also be attributed to religiosity (Khan et al., 2025), because customers may consider it something more important than their emotions. Third, Chebab and Boukerch (2025) have recently observed that "emotional attachment goes beyond the liking a product" (p.14). Therefore, it is expected that the respondents may have greater emotional attachment to the product which would have dampened the role of EWOM. Similarly, EWOM may cover both positive and negative information shared for the products while the EV, being based on emotional attachment, may reduce the overall effects of the EWOM. Soliman et al., (2025) also identified that the purchase intentions of halal cosmetics are largely influenced by the personal factors instead of social factors. EWOM, being a social view about of product, may therefore not be a significant factor that influences the purchase intentions in the presence of personal factors (EV here). Recently, Hidayah et al., (2025) in their systematic literature review identified that "*purchase intention towards halal cosmetic products cannot be explained in a single dimension, but rather from a complex dynamic between personal, psychological, social values, and exposure to marketing information* (p. 33). These results could also be attributed to the fact that emotional values are important driver of purchase intentions and behaviors in collectivist societies (e.g. Pakistan) (Majeed et al., 2022). Ahmed et al., (2021) also observed that customer perceptions about the brand are largely influenced by the social belief and the value offered by the brand.

Furthermore, the results also support the existing literature on EWOM, which proposes that EWOM works as an information channel for customers present at global levels and therefore it is a different channel than conventional channels (Park et al., 2025). The findings also highlight that these channels influence the customers (Ruiz-Alba et al., 2022) beyond borders (Ferreira et al., 2022). Therefore, the findings help in confer that the EWOM is more interactive than conventional WOM and its effects are universal (Liu and Jayawardhena, 2023), as supported by the current study.

The findings of the study were also interesting when we compared the results of Omani and Pakistani samples. The findings highlighted that the results were similar across samples. Though these results

support hypothesized relationships, but these results also highlight that economic conditions, size of population and cultural differences have no impact on the purchase intentions of halal cosmetics and the factors predicting them. This could be attributed to the many factors including religiosity, as both the countries have high religious values (Koc et al., 2025) and halal as the basic standard of measuring the quality of the product (Van Waarden and Van Dalen, 2013). Furthermore, both the societies are conservative and collectivist in nature which may also result in generalized and similar results. These results also help us provide empirical evidence of Islamic marketing theory proposed by Wilson and Liu (2011), who highlighted that branding and halal is finite and perishable as the cultural and environmental factors influence the overall definition of halal.

### **5.1. Theoretical and Practical Implications**

This study offers some important insights into theory and practice. The foremost is theoretical understanding based on the findings of the study. The study has proposed and empirically tested the mechanism (mediation of attitude and moderation of EV) between EWOM, and halal cosmetics purchased intentions. The model has been statistically supported, and it has been observed that EWOM fosters halal cosmetics purchase intentions both directly and via attitude. Thus, the study adds value to the limited literature on halal cosmetics purchase intentions and highlights how this variable of interest could be predicted.

The findings also highlight that EV moderates the relationship of EWOM and attitude, but instead of strengthening the relationship it dampens/weakens the same. These results are interesting and novel and can be attributed to numerous factors. First, the emotional value offered by the product is more important than the personal values (emotions of fun, excitement and job) offered through EWOM. Second, gender could be a decisive factor, and male may have varying responses. Third, the samples from highly religious societies may have such results because the sample has been taken from two collectivist and religiously conservative countries. This study also adds value to the literature by drawing samples from Oman and Pakistan. Both these countries have unique traits (e.g. population size, income, spending habits, and buying preferences). But the results reveal that both EWOM and EV are important for the people of both countries. Similarly, EV dampens the relationship for samples from both nations. Thus, the findings highlight that similar cultures may offer similar results. The use of attitude model (Fishbein, 1963), ELM (Petty et al., 1981) and TCV (Sheth et al., 1991) in tandem is yet another contribution of the study. The findings provide an alternative explanation (by providing empirical evidence), i.e. EV dampens the relationship instead of strengthening it. Therefore, this study highlights an area of further investigation for future researchers.

Based on the findings of the study, we can draw some important practical implications as well. For instance, the findings can be used by the marketing managers while developing their marketing plans. The plan for one country can be replicated in the other country, though there are some different prevalent. Furthermore, the findings highlight that religious values are more important for respondents of both countries. Therefore, the marketing departments should make efforts on highlighting “how the product quenches the thirst of religious values” instead of highlighting the EV for the customers. The study also reveals that attitude is an important explanatory variable between EWOM, and halal cosmetics purchase intentions, therefore the factors that positively influence the attitude should be focused by the management.

### **5.2. Limitations and Future Directions**

This study has some limitations, where the foremost is the use of comparative approach from two countries (Oman and Pakistan) who are similar in religion. The findings could be different and interesting if the researchers compare the findings of Muslim respondents living in Muslim majority and minority countries (e.g. India). This research is based on small sample sizes (<200) from both the countries, though the sample size is considered sufficient, but the results may vary when we compare

the finding of large sample sizes. The inclusion of only females as respondents is yet another limitation of the current study. Future studies may also look at the male respondents as well as they have unique cosmetics for them. This study uses Fishbein's attitude model, ELM and TCV as underpinning theories, while the future researchers may integrate them with other theoretical models and theories (e.g. TAM, TPB and SOR perspective). Future studies can also test some other variables, e.g. religiosity (Khan et al., 2025). Similarly, this study covers only one value (i.e. emotional value) while functional, conditional, social and epistemic values (Rachman and Amarullah, 2024) could also be studied. Here EWOM has been valued as a unidimensional construct, while its drivers (quality, quantity and consistency) can be important determinant of attitude and purchase intentions (Anubha, 2023). Future researchers may also work on the mixed results on TCV; for instance, Mason et al., (2023) meta-analytical results highlighted that EVs are the most important values determining consumer behavior while Hoyos-Vallejo et al., (2025) observed that social and functional values are more important than all other values while making purchase intentions for green products. Similarly, Corbos et al., (2024) observed that the EV is one of the most important determinants of the consumer behavior towards products. These results highlight that the values may vary with change in type of the product. Therefore, future studies should identify the significance of values for different products. The values should also be studied from the perspectives of loyalty of customers (Liu et al., 2025), as it is one of less focused areas of research in halal cosmetics purchase intentions.

## **6. Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study investigates and empirically tests the relationship of EWOM, and halal cosmetics purchase intentions of females from Oman and Pakistan. The findings highlight that EWOM is an important predictor of halal cosmetics PI both directly and indirectly (via attitude). These results are consistent for both the samples, but EWOM is a stronger predictor for Omani sample. The inclusion of EV as moderator offers some interesting results and insights, as EV weaken the effects of EWOM on attitude for both the samples, while a stronger influence is observed in case of Pakistani sample. These results highlight the value of emotions, values, culture and factors other than EWOM in predicting halal cosmetics purchase intentions.

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