

## **Antecedents of Information Effect of Word- of- Mouth in Motion Picture Industry**

Anoop Tom Thomas<sup>1</sup>, Antony Joseph K<sup>2</sup>

### **Abstract**

There has been a paradigm shift in the manner in which movies are marketed these days. Rather than direct advertising, movie producers all over the world started harnessing the potential of Word-of-Mouth (WOM) and Word-of-Mouth-Marketing (WOMM). Studies reveal that WOM creates numerous effects over the recipients. One among them is information effect. In this article an effort is made to theoretically establish the relationship between the antecedents of information effect of WOM in Motion Picture Industry (movie genre, star value, production budget, screen count, crew reputation and poster) and their impact on the potential movie-goers (awareness, attitude change and purchase intention) based on the findings of the previous studies in this domain. Moreover, a hypothesized model portraying the relationship between the antecedents of information effect of WOM and box office revenue is added to the existing literature.

**Keywords:** *Box office revenue, information effect, motion picture, motion picture industry, word –of- mouth, word-of mouth-marketing*

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<sup>1</sup>Anoop Tom Thomas, Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, St. Dominic's College, Kanjirapally, [anooptomthomas@sdck.in](mailto:anooptomthomas@sdck.in) , ORCID ID <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0122-2652>

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Antony Joseph K, Associate Professor, Department of Commerce, St. Berchman's College (Autonomous), Changanassery, [ajksbc@gmail.com](mailto:ajksbc@gmail.com), ORCID ID <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0773-7235>

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## **Introduction**

Word-of-Mouth (WOM) is the oldest and the most commonly used channel of information exchange between people (Ismagilova et al., 2017). In a layman point of view, WOM refers to any form of oral interpersonal communication (Nyilasy, 2005) and in marketing scenario, WOM is described as an interpersonal communication concerning the commercial entities regarding a brand, a product or a service (Westbrook, 1987). It is an unpaid informal conversation among the likeminded people about a particular product or a service. Uniqueness and relevance of WOM lies in the fact that WOM is accepted to be the most credible and the trustworthy source of information by the recipients (Cheung & Thadani, 2012) and also its ability to readily disseminate through social groups and networking sites (Banerjee, 1992). WOM plays a vital role in developing and introducing new products or services as awareness needs to be created among the potential customers and they should be provided with the necessary information for taking a favorable purchase decision (Mahajan, Muller & Kerin, 1984).

Thousands of new films are released annually around the globe and therefore, the Motion Picture Industry (MPI) is worthwhile in evaluating the role of WOM in the promotion of theatrical motion pictures. Experts in the field of MPI are of the opinion that WOM is so crucial in deciding a movie's success as it determines the staying power of the movie in theatre (Elberse & Eliashberg, 2003). Liu (2006) and Zhang (2016) are of the opinion that movie industry deals with an experience product and its promotion greatly depends on words of others.

There is every possibility to believe that WOM occurs among movie-goers. First, movie receives great interest and public attention which results in active interpersonal communication about the movie (Liu, 2006). Second, being an experience product, the quality of a movie cannot be decided by the movie-goers before watching a movie and so they engage in WOM. Third, people have a tendency to talk more about a popular subject like cinema than less popular subject owing to its greater social acceptance (Brown & Reingen, 1987). Fourth, like or dislike of a movie depends on the personal interest and taste of the movie viewers and hence they become part of WOM. Fifth, memory of conversation about an interested topic like movie will last longer and hence there is more chance that people will talk about it (Brown & Reingen, 1987). Finally, when there are multiple opportunities

(simultaneous releases), the alternatives become difficult to evaluate and it calls for WOM references for gathering further information before finally deciding whether to watch a particular movie or not (Bristor, 1990).

Previous studies reveal that in MPI, WOM generates numerous effects over the recipients like information (informative) effect (Liu, 2006), suspense (surprise) effect (Hutter & Hoffman, 2011), diffusion effect (Hutter & Hoffman, 2011), snowballing effect (Mohr, 2007), multiplier (ripple) effect (Kim et al., 2014), carry over effect (Trusov et al., 2009) and economic effect (Hutter & Hoffman, 2011). This study takes into account the information effect of WOM and its antecedent in motion picture industry namely, movie genre, star value, production budget, screen count, crew reputation and posters and conceptually tries to create a model that shows the interrelationship between the information effect of WOM and its antecedents in MPI and how these lead to the promotion of cinema. This study thus aims to fill the conceptual gap that exists in the available literature regarding the role of information effect of WOM in the movie promotion. This study puts forward the following research objectives.

### **Research Objectives**

RO<sub>1</sub>: To identify the antecedents of information effect of WOM in MPI

RO<sub>2</sub>: To know the consequent of information effect of WOM in MPI

RO<sub>3</sub>: To develop a conceptual model showing the relationship between the antecedents and the consequents of information effect of WOM and its role in increased cinema viewership

Remainder part of this conceptual paper is arranged as follows. A thorough review of the existing literature has been carried out to identify the popular and the possible antecedents and consequents of the information effect of WOM in MPI. The role of these antecedents in the generation of WOM in movie industry and thereby the promotion of motion picture is established by joining together all the strings of research conducted so far in this field. Also an effort has been made to theoretically propose and establish a conceptual model portraying the relationship between the antecedents of information effect of WOM and movie sales. This paper concludes by stating the practical implication of the study.

### **Review of Literature and Model Building**

Theatrical motion picture or cinema is the most common form of family entertainment when compared to the other forms of family entertainments such as visiting an amusement park,

watching a cricket tournament or football match in a stadium...etc owing to its greater affordability and easy reach (Gunter, 2018). High production and marketing cost coupled with a very short life span of movie in theatre makes MPI a risky industry (Packard et al., 2016). Previous studies reveal that globally about 60 to 70 per cent of movies released annually yields a return less than the total cost incurred (Vogel, 2014). One of the main reasons for the failure of movies in theatre is the lack of proper and effective promotional activity or huge proportion of marketing cost in the total cost structure of the movies (Vogel, 2014). According to Pham and Watson (1993) movie marketing is any activity directed towards making the movie particulars available to the target audience at any time during its life time. Promotional measures adopted, i.e., forms of marketing by the movie producers should be capable enough to attract target audience attention and drive them to movie houses (Moore, 2015) and also at the time affordable to the movie producers. WOM reduces the promotional expenditure as it is the no cost or low-cost medium of information exchange. Moreover, as WOM originates (in most cases) from a non-commercial source, its acceptance is much more than other paid forms of promotion. Many research works substantiate the claim that movie success to a great extent depends on words of others whether it is WOM or e-WOM (Liu, 2006). According to Moore (2015), the promotional measures adopted in MPI should lead to audience participation in conversation known as WOM. WOM occurs in MPI even before movies are released in theatres and last during the entire run (Liu, 2006). Such conversations, according to him, will create awareness and thereby eagerness in the minds of the participants and listeners which will ultimately leads to increased theatre admissions.

### **Information Effect of WOM**

Potential customers have a tendency to collect all the relevant information before making a purchase decision so as to avoid the chance to regret in future. They collect the required information from various sources. The sources can be broadly classified into business-initiated and customer- initiated (Buttle, 1998; Steffes & Burgee, 2009). Reviews from the available literature clearly indicate that consumers have a strong affinity towards various customer- initiated sources over business-initiated platforms. This is because they believe that the best alternative to get relevant and accurate information free from the undue influence of companies is to engage in conversation with others (Jalilvand et al., 2011). According to Varadarajan and Yadav (2002), interaction with others results in the acquisition of required information relating to a product. Thus, before making a purchase decision people seeks

other's opinion or suggestion. As the inter personnel conversation regarding a product increases, greater will be the chance that more people will be informed about such products (Godes & Mayzlin, 2004). Moldovan et al. (2006) are of the view that innovative products (in this case new products) stimulate the emergence of 'awareness WOM'. According to Liu (2006), 'information effect' of WOM in movie industry refers to the extent of understanding regarding the 'whereabouts' of the movie under discussion. According to him larger the volume of WOM, higher is the information effect generated. Liu (2006) and Zajonc (1968) are of the opinion that audience exhibit a greater liking to products they are aware or familiar. Thus, in this study information effect is defined as

*“Increased liking or preference for a product or service developed as a result of better awareness about the whereabouts of the products or services is termed as Information Effect”*

It is also known as 'informative effect' (Liu, 2006) or exposure effect (Zajonc, 1968). Thus 'Information Effect' leads to better awareness about the whereabouts of the matter discussed. Lee and Pee (2013) are of the opinion that exposure to products basic information creates expectation among the recipient and such expectation has a significant role in deciding the intensity of Information effect. In MPI, there are numerous pre-release actions leading to the generation of 'Information Effect' of WOM. Table 1 shows the popular pre-release actions leading to the generation of Information Effect of WOM in MPI.

**Table 1**

*Pre-release action leading to the generation of WOM in MPI*

Source	Genre	Star Value	Production budget	Screen count	Crew Reputation	Poster
Henning-Thurau et al., 2001	✓	✓	✓	–	✓	–
Desai and Basuroy, 2005	✓	✓	–	–	–	–
Liu, 2006	✓	✓	✓	✓	–	–
Mohr, 2007	✓	✓	–	–	✓	–
Karniouchina, 2011	–	✓	✓	✓	–	–
Mohammadian and Habibi, 2012	✓	✓	✓	–	✓	✓
Lee et al., 2016	✓	–	✓	✓	–	–
Rawal and Saavendra, 2017	–	✓	✓	✓	–	–

Source: The Authors

### **Antecedents of Information Effect of WOM in MPI**

In any industry, the initial exposure to a new product is the direct contribution of various seller-initiated efforts (Narayanan et al., 2005). Thus, it is not possible to think of a promotion strategy excluding business-initiated promotion strategies. However, the acceptance of business-initiated promotion strategies is decreasing day by day and gradually giving way to people's opinion. People's opinion or WOM has got a greater acceptance among the general public as they believe that WOM gives a real representation of the product unlike exaggerated picture depicted by commercial sources. Moreover, the business houses feel that their promotion expenses can be reduced considerably if they resort to WOMM along with paid promotional techniques.

MPI employs certain pre-release action or decision with a purpose to trigger inter-personnel conversation among movie audiences. These pre-release actions include movie genre, star value, screen count, product budget, crew reputation, posters, trailers, critic reviews...etc. In this study these pre-release actions are termed as antecedents as these action or decision leads to the generation of inter-personnel communication among movie-goers. Previous literature reveals that pre-release action such as movie genre, star value, screen count, product budget, crew reputation, and posters and the resulting WOM leads to movie promotion by informing the potential cinema-goers with the whereabouts of the new movie. The rationale behind the exclusion of other pre and post release actions leading to the generation of WOM in MPI (trailers, critic reviews, ratings, customer reviews TV shows, online discussion...etc) is that these action leads to the generation of other effects such as suspense, diffusion...etc and not the information effect.

### **Movie Genre and WOM**

Movie genre is the classification of the movie on the basis of the story type such as action, comedy, adventure, horror, romantic, thriller, drama...etc. Some people have a strong liking or preference towards a particular genre. Movie genre is an important factor that influences the cinema viewership (Neelamegham & Chintagunta, 1999). According to Desai and Basuroy (2005), audience stores certain impressions about different movie genre in their memory based on their previous experiences. Thus, movie-goers can be segmented into different groups based on their taste about movie genre. So movie genre is taken as a

construct to be incorporated in the proposed model as a potential antecedent of WOM in the MPI.

Prang and Casavant (1994) in their study state that information about a newly released or going to be released movie will help the movie-goers to conclude whether the film suits their interest or not. So, there is every possibility to conclude that cinema viewers naturally engage in interpersonal communication before watching a movie so as to know whether the theme of the film is in line with their taste and preferences. Once they came to know that a particular cinema is of a specific genre, it will automatically create certain impression about the entertainment experience that the cinema viewers will be receiving after watching the movie based on their previous experience (Musun, 1969). Liu (2006) is of the opinion that movie genre thus acts as a potential antecedent of information effect of WOM in the MPI. Thus, movie genre of a new movie acts as a potential antecedent leading to the generation of WOM. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed for empirical verification.

*H<sub>1</sub>: WOM mediates movie genre and information effect*

### **Star Value and WOM**

Star value refers to the intrinsic value attributed to an actor or actress based on his/her previous experience of attracting the audiences to the movies in which they have acted (Lampel & Shamsie, 2003). A superstar is any person who through his creative talent is capable enough to contribute significantly to the movie sales irrespective of the script, the co-actors, the producer and the director ( Sharda and Delen, 2006). Successful theatrical opening is the guarantee of the superstars (Bing, 2002). According to Albert (1998), 20 per cent of the box office revenue is the direct contribution of the star. Basuroy *et al.* (2003) says that the best way to hedge the risk involved in the promotion and release of a high risky product like motion picture is to employ superstars in that movie. Some audiences are addicted to the movie of certain stars (Prang & Casavant, 1994). Hence star value is taken as an important construct to be included in the study.

A major concern of the cinema viewers is regarding the question of who are the major players of the movie planning to watch and thus it becomes a topic of conversation among the cinema viewers (Liu, 2006). There is a general belief among movie lovers that stars will commit only to those projects which are career-wise promising and economically rewarding (Ravid, 1999). Alternatively producers prefer actors and actresses with high reputation in their cast as they

generate high media attention and thereby increased publicity of the movie through WOM (Karniouchina, 2011; Wei, 2006). According to Rawal and Saavendra (2017), conversation about the major stars in the movie acts as a potential antecedent of WOM and it mediates the relationship between star value and information effect of WOM. Information about the presence of their idol (superstar) in the main cast of a newly released movie or going to be released movie act as catalyst among the movie-goers in the generation of conversations about the movie in their social circles. Such conversation creates a buzz about the movie which leads to the further spread of the news about the movie among the potential movie-goers and thereby more and more people getting informed about the movie. Hence we state the following hypothesis for empirical verification

*H<sub>2</sub>: WOM mediates star value and information effect*

### **Screen Count and WOM**

Screen count refers to the number of screens through which movies are exhibited on the releasing day. This opening strength, i.e. the screen count, is a common topic of conversation among cinema-goers and it determines the distribution intensity and thereby audience's accessibility to movies (Liu, 2006). Einav (2007) is of the opinion that opening screen count is an important factor that decides the movie success as 40 percent of the total box-office revenue is collected in the initial week in which the movie is released. In this study screen count is taken as an antecedent of WOM in MPI.

Screen count contributes to movie promotion in two ways. First, there is a general belief among the cinema-goers that movies with high screen count are considered to be a movie of high quality. Second, as the number of screens through which a particular cinema is released is large, greater is the chance that it will be watched by more people. This increases the publicity of the movie and triggers more people talking about the movie (Karniouchina, 2011). As a result, it will lead to increased likelihood of more people becoming aware about the movie (Suominen, 2011). Studies reveal that there is a positive relationship between the screen count on the releasing day and box office success as wide opening results in greater accessibility to movies (Elberse & Eliashberg, 2003; Karniouchina, 2011) Empirical studies in this area show that screen count acts as a pre-release action leading to the generation of WOM about the movie which, in turn, results in higher box office revenue (Rawal and Saavendra 2017). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed for verification.



*H<sub>3</sub>: WOM mediates screen count and information effect*

### **Production Budget and WOM**

Production budget is the aggregate amount in monetary terms that the producer of a movie spends for the total crew and for the allied activities till the movie reaches the theatre. According to Vogel (2014), around 50 per cent of the production budget is attributed for the promotional activities. Big budgets add value to the movie through the publicity and the buzz it generates (Gunter, 2018). Discussions about the movie budget lead to the spread of information about the movie to multitude of people. Consequently, the construct of production budget is included in the proposed model as an antecedent of WOM in the MPI.

Production budget of movies is the subject matter of discussion among cinema-goers. This is because, the production budget is considered to be an indication of movie quality (Prang & Casavant, 1994). There is an implied belief among the cinema viewers that the big budget movie selects the best director, chooses the best scriptwriter, employees the most talented, popular and well accepted stars, carries out shooting in the most suited locations and expensive sets...etc (Gunter, 2018). This creates a feeling among them that it would be worth watching such movies. Rawal and Saavendra (2017) in their study found out that there exists a partial mediation of WOM in the case of production budget and box office revenue. Following hypothesis is hence proposed for the verification.

*H<sub>4</sub>: WOM mediates production budget and information effect*

### **Crew reputation and WOM**

Crew reputation refers to the repute of the team involved in the development of a movie such as the goodwill of the director, script writer, producer...etc. Packard *et al.*, (2016) in their study divided the film core team into two namely on-camera cast consisting of actors or actresses and off-camera crew consisting of director, scriptwriter, music director, cinematographer...etc. Packard is of the opinion that the formation of the film core development team i.e., their identification and assembly, is a very important criterion that decides box office success of a movie. Hence, crew reputation is included in the proposed model as an antecedent of WOM in the MPI.

The repute of the crew is a silent indication of the quality of the movie and it automatically adds publicity to the movie and thereby the generation of WOM about the movie and its crew members. Information about the crew mix contributes the subject matter of discussion among

the cinema viewers leading to the generation of WOM. Liu (2006) in his study stated that crew reputation is equally important as star power in determining the movies' success in the MPI. Hence crew reputation is taken as an antecedent of WOM in the MPI. Therefore, following hypothesis is put forward for verification.

*H5: WOM mediates crew reputation and information effect*

### **Cinema Posters and WOM**

Cinema poster is the printed matter furnishing the particulars of a movie using collage of images and text matters in colorful designs usually pasted on a wall or on a vertical surface (Gosling, 2012). Posters provide first-hand information about the movie going to be released and it can raise the public awareness about the whereabouts of the movie just released or going to be released. For a common man poster serve the easiest and immediately available source of information about new movies. Even though the reach of the poster is low when compared to similar sources, it mainly targets audience who are the regular visitors of the theatres situated within a locality (Stokmans, 2009). So, in this study, cinema poster is taken as an antecedent of WOM.

Movie posters are part and parcel of local the publicity of a particular movie as they trigger WOM about the movie. The textual matters on the movie poster are usually in the local language. These posters provide inputs for conversation among the cinema-goers. Such conversations further enhance the knowledge level of potential cinema-goers and leads to the creation of an interest in the movie. Hence it can be concluded that WOM assumes a mediation role in the promotion of motion picture through cinema posters. Hence, we formulate the following hypothesis.

*H6: WOM mediates posters and information effect*

### **Information Effect and Cinema Viewership**

Received information about a product or a service has got a significant role in the buyer's decision-making process (Fan *et al.*, 2013). According to Aramendia (2017), the availability of proper and prior information is a prerequisite for potential customers to decide which product or service is to be opted. Movie being an experience product, its quality cannot be evaluated before watching it. So, movie-goers naturally engage in WOM to gather all available information before making the decision to watch a particular movie. Information about movie genre, screen count, star value, production budget and crew reputation are

presumed by the movie lovers as some quality signals which assist them in reaching their decision to watch a movie or not. Only vivid information passed through the WOM results in awareness leading to a change in the attitude and the purchase intension (Herr *et al.*, 1991). Table 2 summarizes the consequents of Information Effect of WOM identified by previous researchers. Thus, in this study awareness, attitude change and purchase intention are taken to be the consequents of information effect of WOM.

**Table 2***Consequent of Information Effect of WOM*

<b>Study</b>	<b>Awareness</b>	<b>Attitude Change</b>	<b>Purchase Intension</b>
Buttle, 1998	✓	✓	✓
Podnar and Javemik, 2012	–	✓	✓
Cheung, 2014	–	–	✓
Kin et al., 2014	✓	–	✓
Lee et al., 2016	–	✓	✓
Kudeshia and Kumar, 2017	–	✓	✓
Jamali and Khan, 2018	✓	–	✓
Briliana and Silaen, 2019	✓	✓	✓

Source: The Authors

**Information effect and Customer Awareness**

Interpersonal communication result in consumers' awareness about a product or service (Lee, 2016). WOM platform provides information to consumers not only from known sources but also from anonymous people having similar consumption behavior (Cheung et. al., 2008). Also, theses platforms ensure interactivity and feedback options which further enhances the consumer's awareness. Awareness regarding the whereabouts of the product is a pre-requisite for a favorable purchase decision. This is particular in the case of new products.

MPI deals with new releases. Awareness regarding the details of the newly released movie is essential for the movie-lovers to arrive at a decision as to whether to watch a particular movie or not Mahajan et al., (1984). According to Liu (2006), the major role of WOM in the MPI is to create awareness about a particular movie and its whereabouts through the information effect. Zajonc (1968) agrees with this finding. Previous studies reveal that there exists a direct relationship between the awareness level of the potential movie-goers regarding the particulars of a newly released movie and movie sales (Liu, 2006). It is the informative role

of WOM leading to awareness that matters in movie promotion. Thus, awareness is taken as consequent of information effect of WOM in MPI.

*H7: Information effect leads to customer awareness*

### **Information Effect and Attitude Change**

Interpersonal communication, commonly known as WOM, is an important source of information that provides inputs which influence customer's attitude (Lee, 2016) and thereby their buying behavior (Christiansen & Tax, 2000). Unlike other information sources, WOM is perceived to be the most crucial information source that influences the potential consumer's attitude especially in matters involving high risk (Park et al., 2012). According to Liu (2006) audience shows a positive attitudinal change to those products they are aware.

In the case of experience product like motion pictures, it is the volume of WOM that results in the formation of a favorable attitude and not the valence (positive, negative or neutral). This is because the like and dislike of motion pictures varies from people to people. Information received from a credible source exerts more influence in forming favorable attitude by consumers (Kautsar et al., 2012). Product familiarity leads to the formation of favorable attitude among potential buyers (Braunsberger & Munch, 1998). Formation of a favorable attitude is the second last step to sales. It is the strong desire for a particular product or to avail a particular service. Thus, formation of favorable attitude towards a product or service is the outcome of information effect as information effect leads to awareness. According to Izquierdo-Sanchez (2019) WOM information influences consumers' attitude towards theatrical motion pictures.

*H8: Information effect leads to a change in the customer attitude through awareness*

### **Information Effect and Purchase Intension**

Purchase intention refers to the mental state of the potential consumer regarding the extent of his conscious plan to purchase a particular product or to avail a particular service (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). WOM exerts both informative and customary influence upon the recipients regarding post purchase evaluation and purchase intention (Bone, 1995). Individuals who are well aware about the particulars of a product or service are more prone to arrive at a favorable purchase decision (Braunsberger & Munch, 1998).

It is evident in the literature that received information persuades consumers towards purchase intention. According to Hwang et al., (2011), the success or failure any business promotion

strategy, either formal or informal, is decided by the extent to which such promotion strategies lead to purchase intension. This is because it is the intension that leads to final action (Fishbein, 1963). Thus, future action of an individual is the outcome of his intention to perform a particular task. In this study purchase intention refers to the decision taken by an audience to watch a new release on the basis of the received information about the new movie. Hence in this study purchase intension is taken as an outcome of information effect.

*H9: Information effect leads to purchase intention through awareness and attitude change*

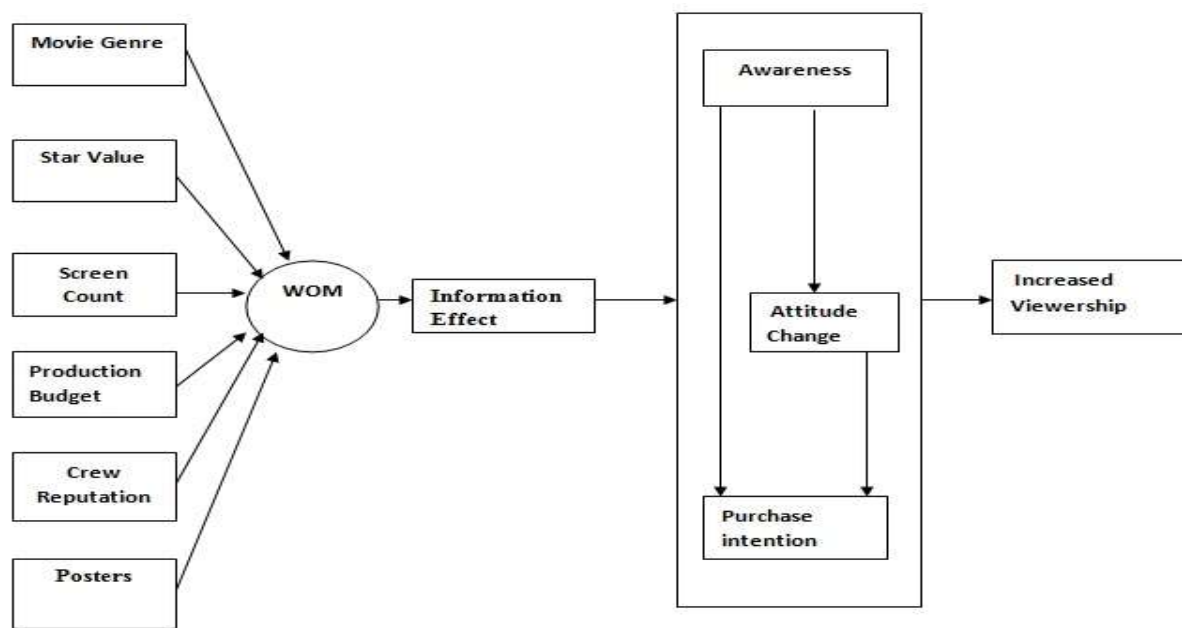


Figure 1: Conceptual Model: Information Effect of WOM on Movie Promotion

Source: The Authors

### Implications and Conclusions

Research on MPI is greatly appreciated and encouraged by both the academicians and the industrialists around the world owing to its high economic importance. The contribution of this research paper to the academic and the industrial community is a conceptualization (Figure 1) backed by the available research findings in this domain which is capable of empirical verification. The antecedents of the information effect of WOM in motion picture industry, namely, movie genre, star value, screen count, production budget, crew reputation and posters and its resultant outcomes namely, awareness, attitude change and purchase intention, lead to the promotion of motion picture industry in a cost effective and efficient manner.

The proposed model helps to reduce the risk involved in the creation and exhibition of a commercial and experiential product like cinema. Since motion pictures have a very short life in theatres (2-12 weeks) and more than 40 per cent of revenue received during the first two weeks of movie release, the potential movie-goers should be informed with the details of the movie. Proper employment of the proposed model will definitely drive them to theatres. Thus, the risk of failure of movie owing to its poor promotion can be avoided.

Second, as stated in the study, the volume of WOM plays an informative role. Larger the volume of WOM generated, more is the chance that people are aware of the same. Each cinema being a new product, awareness about the cinema and its particulars play an important role in cinema viewer's decision to watch that movie. The spread of people's opinion about movies whether online or offline serves as an information source leading to the make or break of motion pictures. The study clearly establishes (theoretically) how the antecedents of information effect of WOM in motion picture industry lead to the generation of WOM about the various aspects of a newly released movie and how this awareness leads to an attitudinal change in the form of interest generation in the movie and thereby its promotion. Moreover, success of a movie in theatre is a pre-requisite for their acceptance in secondary platforms.

Third, the promotional cost of movies, which at present constitute more than 50 per cent of the production cost, can be reduced to a great extent if the MPI properly uses the possibilities of WOMM effectively as illustrated in the proposed model. Like all other industries, COVID-19 and its outbreak has affected the MPI also. Producers are of the opinion that they cannot move ahead with new shooting initiatives unless the production cost is reduced. As WOMM reduces the promotional cost of motion pictures, which at present constitute 50 per cent of production cost, proper utilization of WOMM in motion picture industry strikes as a solution to uplift this drowning industry. Proper applications of WOMM in motion picture industry will definitely give a new direction and phase to this most promising and rewarding industry. Previous studies clearly indicated that the antecedents of WOM in motion picture industry namely, movie genre, star value, screen count, production budget, crew reputation and posters act as catalysts in WOM generation. This paper portrays the multifaceted aspects of information effect of WOM. An examination of the existing and available literature in this domain clearly indicates that there exists a visible positive impact of information effect of

WOM on box office revenue during the pre-release and the opening weeks. Thereafter WOM about a new movie revolves around other effects, namely, suspense effect, diffusion effect, snowballing effect, multiplier effect, carry over effect and economic effect of WOM. This unexplored area and its findings will provide a new insight to the cinema marketers to harness the potential of this free advertising mechanism- Word-of –Mouth-Marketing (WOMM).

### **Limitations and Scope for Future Research**

WOM and WOMM being a hot topic of academic research, it is practically not possible to include all the prior studies conducted in this field. However, sincere effort has been taken to include all the relevant (suitability to the study) and pertinent studies (number of citations) in the domain of WOM and WOMM in MPI. Moreover, this study is limited to the information effect of WOM in MPI. Future research can be carried out relating to other effects of WOM in MPI namely suspense effect, diffusion effect, multiplier effect, economic effect and carryover effect Also an empirical study can be carried out in the further to have a statistical confirmation of the propositions raised in this study.

### **Statements of Ethics and Conflict of Interest**

“I, as the Corresponding Author, declare and undertake that in the study titled as “Antecedents of Information Effect of Word-of-Mouth in Motion Picture Industry”, scientific, ethical and citation rules were followed; Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry Journal Editorial Board has no responsibility for all ethical violations to be encountered, that all responsibility belongs to the author/s and that this study has not been sent to any other academic publication platform for evaluation.”

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