



# Website quality and users' intention to use digital libraries: Examining users' attitudes, online co-creation experiences, and eWOM

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## ABSTRACT

This research aims to examine how the website quality affects the intention of digital library users to use the website by considering factors of user's attitudes, online co-creation experiences, and electronic word-of-mouth. The statistical population of the research is composed of the users of Astan Qods Razavi digital library, which is one of the oldest digital libraries in Iran. Data was collected from 402 participants who use the library and analyzed in SPSS and PLS softwares. Construct validity was assessed and confirmed using convergent validity and divergent validity. Data reliability was assessed and confirmed using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. The research confirms that website quality affects the attitudes of users towards the website and their intention to participate in online co-creation and eWOM. The effects of user's attitudes to the online co-creation experience, eWOM, and intention to use the library, as well as the effects of the online co-creation experience and eWOM on the intention to use the digital library were also confirmed. Considering the results of the research, it is recommended to digital libraries to provide an efficient user-friendly website designed to increase user participation and establish close contact with them and in this way increase their intention to use digital library services.

## 1. Introduction

The digital revolution changed many jobs from offline to online (Aakash and Gupta Aggarwal, 2022). Considering these technological changes, libraries also faced a revolution in expanding their services (Garoufallou et al., 2013) and digital libraries are expanding. Digital libraries are the answer to the challenges of technological developments. Digital libraries have lots of advantages such as preserving valuable documents and rare and special collections of libraries, archives and museums, search optimization, mutual references to other documents, Simultaneous use by several users of the same original copy, Full text search, shortening chain from author to user and economizing the cost of preparation/protection, space and money (Sun and Yuan, 2012).

Digital libraries (DL) are a managed collection of digital objects in electronic form created based on the principles of library acquisitions in which information is stored and distributed with the relevant value added services to provide users with the opportunity to find and exploit resources like a traditional library. Electronic documents in a digital library have numerous user-friendly attributes and are easily accessible. With the correct methods, the durability of these documents is also guaranteed over time (Bhattacharya, 2004). Digitalization has affected

operational strategies in organizations. Due to benefits such as affordability, accessibility, fewer geographical restrictions, and few obstacles to enter and exit and an upward trend in online marketing, especially in the services sector, has taken place (Aakash and Gupta Aggarwal, 2022). By focusing on identifying and meeting customer needs, marketing supports organizational goals. Hence, it can significantly help nonprofit Organizations (NPOs) such as libraries to attain their objectives (Garoufallou et al., 2013).

Since digital libraries work in the form of a website, the quality of the website for digital libraries is therefore very important. Previous studies have suggested Various dimensions to assess website quality (Hasanov and Khalid, 2015). The exiting literature suggests different features of a website which may enhance its quality (Hasanov and Khalid, 2015; Akram et al., 2018). Considering the websites of digital libraries, we have selected the dimensions of ease of use, information and website design to investigate the quality of digital library website. These dimension have been also studied in studies conducted by Loureiro (2015), Jimenez-Barreto and Campo-Martinez (2018). Website quality affects the users' attitudes (Jimenez-Barreto and Campo-Martinez, 2018). On the other hand, customer interactivity with the organization and each other has taken a new form today. Developments in ICT

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have provided new tools for customers to participate in the co-creation experience (Blasco-Arcas et al., 2014) and eWOM (Puriwat and Triopsakul, 2022). This has created an opportunity for libraries to provide better services for their users by redefining user interface through marketing strategies for strong, durable interactivity with them (Mal-ekani and Bernard, 2018).

Although digital libraries have many advantages, technical success is not the only yardstick for determining the degree to which the developed system is accepted. Given that the nature of the digital library is unique in providing library services, it is vital to examine factors which contribute to using digital libraries so that new approaches in library services can be implemented to serve both the users and the library service providers (Abdul Rahman et al., 2011). Since using digital libraries in Iran is so limited despite its lots of advantages, therefore, marketing may act as a key instrument for digital libraries and help them develop and use them so much. Considering all these cases, marketing is a key tool for digital libraries and can significantly contribute to their development and use. Due to a lack of sufficient applied research in this field, the present study is important in assessing effective factors in the intention to use digital libraries by examining how website quality affects this, and by considering the users' attitudes, online co-creation experiences, and eWOM for the increasing growth of digital libraries which have been subjected to a lack of attention in marketing.

## 2. Theoretical framework and hypothesis development

### 2.1. Website quality of the digital library and users' attitudes

Today, library websites are more in demand due to innovative website technologies, widespread use of digital resources, and growing user demand. Digital libraries have become a primary source of information for most people. As a significant source of digital material, library websites are expected to have Useful features for user satisfaction (Inal, 2018).

Customer perceptions of website quality are based on its specific features to meet their needs and affect the excellence of that website (Li et al., 2017). Existing literature suggests a range of features for a website which may add to its quality (Akram et al., 2018). Some of these include ease of use, information, interactivity, and website design (Loureiro, 2015). According to research, there is a positive correlation between the quality of electronic services and the users' attitudes (Carlson and O'Cass, 2010). Also, a positive correlation has been observed between website quality and attitudes towards the website (Jimenez-Barreto and Campo-Martinez, 2018). Accordingly, the following research hypothesis is proposed.

**H1.** The quality of the digital library website has a positive effect on users' intention to use the digital library.

### 2.2. Website quality and online co-creation experience

Co-creation in business and marketing refers to a type of cooperation in which customers can influence the production process and final product. It is assumed that co-creation will add more economic value to businesses by increasing demand through continuous contact between the customers and the products (Leino and Puumala, 2021). Co-creation experience refers to the customer mentality which is formed with their participation in value co-creation. The experiences of customers in co-creation as a source and basis of value significantly affect their real, continuous participation in value co-creation (Zhang et al., 2015). Website quality greatly affects customer retention, satisfaction, loyalty, attitude towards the website and, eventually, their interest in taking part in the co-creation of products online (Suryani et al., 2020). The shared value creation literature seeks to identify the factors that drive user engagement with brands in various contexts of consumption. Website quality is a key factor which increases user motivation to participate in

the co-creation experience (Jimenez-Barreto and Campo-Martinez, 2018). A research by Elsharnouby and Mahrous (2015) showed that the quality of electronic services affects user intentions to participate in online co-creation. Accordingly, the following research hypothesis is proposed.

**H2.** The quality of the digital library website has a positive effect on the user's willingness to participate in the online co-creation experience

### 2.3. Website quality and eWOM

The era of the internet and social media has transformed the role of the customer from a passive receiver of information provided by brands to a more active experienter and content creator. In recent years, eWOM has become more popular as the internet and e-businesses have grown (Makvandi and Farzin, 2022). One of the most cited definitions for eWOM has been given by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004): "Any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet."

"The eWOM includes all informal communication on specific goods and services or their sellers directed to customers based on technology using the internet." Some see this as the most powerful online media which immediately reaches customers globally (Redditt et al., 2022). There is a positive and significant correlation between service quality and eWOM (Pandey and Sahu, 2020). Accordingly, the following research hypothesis is proposed.

**H3.** The quality of the digital library website has a positive effect on ewom.

### 2.4. The users' attitudes and the online co-creation experience

In recent years, ICT advances have created new tools for customer participation in the co-creation experience and emphasize the importance of ICT-linked services in creating virtual experiences (Blasco-Arcas et al., 2014). Since one of the key factors of forecasting future purchase intentions and behaviors of consumers, is their attitudes (Bruner and Kumar, 2005), it seems that attitude is one of the effective factors on user participation in online co-creation. Based on previous studies, attitude has a positive effect on participation in co-creation (Chepurna and Riaple Criado, 2021; Mason et al., 2023). Generally, attitude towards a behavior has been defined as the degree of favorable or unfavorable evaluation by people while performing a specific behavior (Verma et al., 2019). For instance, marketing research suggests that advertising is probably more convincing and effective for people who have a favorable attitude towards advertising (Kim et al., 2018). Accordingly, the following research hypothesis is proposed.

**H4.** The users' attitude towards the digital library website has a positive effect on the users' willingness to participate in the online co-creation experience.

### 2.5. The users' attitudes and eWOM

Customers participate in eWOM to add value to their online image, help other users, and score social points by interacting online (generate, share, or use information) (Mishra et al., 2018). The users' attitudes are considered as their vital initial answer and can positively predict their eWOM behaviors in the virtual space (Pang, 2021) And it positively influences eWOM (Muda and Hamzah, 2021; Puriwat and Triopsakul, 2022). Studies have shown that a positive attitude to a website affects the behavior of the online user (Muda and Hamzah, 2021). Also according to previous research, since attitudes are important predictors of behavioral intentions, a positive attitude towards a website will lead to more favorable intentions, such as revisiting the website, word-of-mouth recommendations, and purchase (Elsharnouby and

Mahrous, 2015). Kusumawardani et al. (2023) state that a positive attitude increases positive WOM. Accordingly, the following research hypothesis is proposed.

**H5.** The users' attitude towards the digital library website has a positive effect on ewom.

## 2.6. The users' attitudes and intention to use

Humans have an assessment plan for the outcome of a specific behavior they call attitude. Attitude significantly affects a person's intention towards a behavior (Kasilingam, 2020). Attitude refers to the effects of assessing the positive or negative emotions of a person in performing a particular behavior and is a method with which a person answers negatively or positively to an object (Atal et al., 2020). It is possible to explain the relationship between attitude and customer's behavior with theory of planned behavior. According to this theory, when people have a positive attitude to a behavior, there is more probability to do that behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In many researches, the influence of attitude on intention to use has been confirmed (Himel et al., 2021; Hasan, 2022; Safari et al., 2022; Oloveze et al., 2022). Accordingly, the following research hypothesis is proposed.

**H6.** The users' attitude towards the digital library website has a positive effect on the users' intention to use digital libraries.

## 2.7. The online co-creation experience and intention to use

Companies have not only continuously expanded their online and automated services, they have also encouraged customers to co-create. Customer collaboration in creating shared services is essential for value creation. Therefore, companies are increasingly creating platforms for sustainable company-to-customer and customer-to-customer interactivity. These interactivity platforms are different as offline (contact centers, private and public communities) and online (websites, online communities, online shops, and app stores) (Elsharnouby and Mahrous, 2015).

Most organizations want to be closer to current and potential customers and expand their relevant and optimal products and services. One of the most commonly used methods to achieve this is online co-creation which allows companies to work with their customers on a long-term basis (Ind et al., 2020). Modern customers have more information and more alternatives to make better decisions and are increasingly demanding a more active role in the innovation process and value creation. This motivates companies to move away from their traditional business-oriented views and become more customer-oriented (Constantinides et al., 2015). As a result, like many other organizations which provide electronic services, digital libraries are also seeking user participation through activities such as campaigns and submission of ideas by users. Blasco-Arcas et al. (2014), state If customers realize that they have played a role in their shopping experience, this will increase their intention to shop. Accordingly, the following research hypothesis is proposed.

**H7.** Participation in the online co-creation experience has a positive effect on the intention to use the digital library.

## 2.8. eWOM and intention to use

Today, customers are increasingly using eWOM to decide on products and services (Filieri et al., 2021); eWOM has become a vital marketing tool to achieve positive results related to customers and company performance (Mathews et al., 2022). Both researchers and marketers consider eWOM as a key marketing communication tool (Makvandi and Farzin, 2022). Given the intangible and experiential nature of services, customers seek extra information to reduce the complex uncertainty of the decision to buy and eWOM has become a main source of information

(Yen and Tang, 2019). Customers want to seek more information from other customers who have actually used these services (Hu and Kim, 2018). In addition to reading comments on a message, seekers of information may also create their own eWOM by commenting on a message. The self-perception theory shows that people infer their attitudes by observing their behaviors when their internal cues are weak or ambiguous. This means that people depend on their behaviors as a source of inferring their own attitudes, particularly when attitudes are weak or ambiguous. Expressing opinions is a typical scenario which may trigger the self-perception process. In fact, previous research has shown that online expression can influence the attitudes and behaviors of people. Sharing media content on a weblog will effectively increase interest in that content, and creating positive online arguments about a brand can lead to a more positive attitude towards that brand (Dai et al., 2022). Accordingly, the following research hypothesis is proposed.

**H8.** eWOM has a positive effect on the intention to use the digital library.

## 3. Methodology

To confirm the purpose of this research, a quantitative analysis was conducted with an online questionnaire. The statistical population of study are the users of Astan Qods Razavi digital Library. Astan Qods Razavi digital Library is one of the oldest digital libraries in Iran which has digitalized millions of informational resources according to scientific methods so far and has collected so many digital resources in different methods. It is possible to use the resources of this digital library both for member users and for users entered the website as guest. Considering the unlimited number of the users of Astan Qods Razavi digital Library, the number of sample was determined 384 based on Morgan Table. In addition to sending the questionnaire link to users who were members of the library, the questionnaire link was also placed on the website of Astan Qods Razavi digital Library so that in addition to member users, it is possible to collect information from guest users as well. Finally, 402 questionnaires were collected and analyzed. The research questionnaire consisted of two parts: 1) demographic information, and 2) specialized questions. In the first part, the demographic information of the respondents was evaluated, including age, gender, marital status, education, and usage levels of the Astan Qods Razavi digital library. In the second part, research variables were assessed in a questionnaire with 31 expert questions using the 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly disagree (1)" to "Strongly agree (5)". SPSS software was used to assess the demographic information, and data analysis was performed in PLS software. The variables questionnaire information is given in Table 1.

## 4. Results

The results of the respondents' demographic information are given in Table 2.

**Table 1**  
Variables questionnaire information.

Variables	Dimensions	Number of questions	Source
Intention to use	–	5	(Elsharnouby & Mahrous, 2015)
users' attitudes	–	3	(Elsharnouby & Mahrous, 2015)
Quality of the website	Ease of Use	4	(Jimenez-Barreto and Campo-Martinez, 2018) (Loureiro, 2015)
	Information	4	
	Interactivity	3	
	Web Design	5	
Online co-creation experience	–	4	(Jimenez-Barreto and Campo-Martinez, 2018)
eWOM	–	3	(Elsharnouby & Mahrous, 2015) (Augusto and Torres, 2018) (Sjoria et al. (2019)

**Table 2**  
Demographic information of respondents.

Measure	Items	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	148	36.82%
	Female	254	63.18%
Age	under the age of 18	4	1%
	18–24 years old	57	14.18%
	25–34 years old	135	33.58%
	35–44 years old	145	36.07%
	45–54 years old	43	10.70%
	+55 years old	18	4.48%
Education level	high school	3	0.75%
	diploma	10	2.49%
	associate	24	5.97%
	graduate	104	25.87%
	postgraduate	168	41.79%
	PhD degrees and above	93	23.13%
Marital status	Married	293	72.89%
	Single	109	27.11%
The amount of use of the digital library	once or twice a year	104	25.87%
	once or twice a month	212	52.74%
	once or twice a week	73	18.16%
	nearly every day	13	3.23%

Descriptive statistics analysis shows that most of the respondents are Female (63.18%). Also, most of the respondents are between 35 and 44 years old (36.07%), most of them are married (72.89%) and their education degree is postgraduate (41.79%), and they usually use Astan Qods Razavi digital library once or twice a month (52.74%).

The factor loading, convergent validity, and reliability results are shown in Table 3. According to Table 3, all factor loading is above 0.7 and acceptable (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Cronbach's alpha values above 0.7, and CR values above 0.7 are acceptable. Considering that the CR and Cronbach's alpha values for all variables are above 0.7, model reliability is confirmed.

The convergent validity of the model was also confirmed, because the exogenous average variance extracted (AVE) of constructs is at least 0.5. The criterion of Fornell and Larcker (1981) was used for divergent validity assessment. It showed that the square root of AVE must be higher than the correlation between model constructs. In this research, all constructs have divergent validity, because all correlations are lower than the square root of the extracted variance, demonstrating that all the indicators are better defined by the given constructs rather than other construct indicators. The results are shown in Table 4.

The structural results are shown in Fig. 2 (see Fig. 1). R2 and Q2 values were assessed for endogenous variables. For R2, which is the rate of change of each independent variable with the dependent variables of the model, the values of 0.19, 0.33 and 0.67 are considered poor, moderate, and substantial, respectively. All R2 values are higher than 0.5 and appropriate. Also, the values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 for Q2 show poor, moderate, and substantial predictive relevance of the model, respectively. Given the values obtained for Q2, the model has an acceptable structural fit.

The results of the research hypotheses are shown in Table 5. As can be observed, the t-statistic of all hypotheses at the 95% confidence level is greater than  $\pm 1.96$ . Therefore, all eight hypotheses of the research are confirmed.

## 5. Implications and discussion

In this research, the importance of website quality for digital libraries and its effects on users' attitudes, online co-creation experience, eWOM, and intention to use was assessed. The separate effects of these variables have been investigated in previous research, but the simultaneous effects of the variables of users' attitudes, online co-creation experience, and eWOM between website quality and intention to use its services

**Table 3**  
Measurement model.

Construct	Item	Factor loading	$\alpha$	CR	AVE
<b>Ease of Use</b>			0.880	0.918	0.736
	Ease1	Navigation is easy in this digital library	0.847		
	Ease 2	I can quickly find sections I want once I am in the website	0.856		
	Ease3	The menus in this website are very well organized	0.869		
<b>Ease4</b>		I can find what I need with a few clicks	0.860		
	<b>Information</b>			0.892	0.925
	Information1	Information on services provided by the digital library is easily accessible on this website	0.860		0.755
	Information2	The website provides adequate information	0.864		
<b>Information3</b>		Website information seems beneficial	0.896		
	Information4	The website is a good source of information on available services	0.856		
	<b>Interactivity</b>			0.831	0.899
	Interactivity1	The website lets me see the most views and what other people are interested in	0.856		0.747
<b>Interactivity2</b>		I can share my comments	0.867		
	Interactivity3	I can access the library's social media from the website	0.870		
	<b>Web Design</b>			0.894	0.922
	Design1	It's an attractive website	0.846		0.703
<b>Design2</b>		It's a well-organized website	0.851		
	Design3	The website uses multimedia content correctly	0.853		
	Design4	Website colors are good	0.817		
	Design5	Website font looks good	0.823		
<b>Users' attitudes</b>				0.844	0.906
	Attitude1	The Astan Qods Razavi digital library has a good website	0.897		0.762
	Attitude2	I have a good opinion of this website	0.865		
	Attitude3	I would like to visit this digital library	0.857		
<b>Intention to use</b>				0.858	0.898
	Intention1	I will use the website services in the future	0.800		0.638
	Intention2	I will give positive points about this website	0.808		
	Intention3	I will visit the website again the future	0.772		
<b>Intention4</b>		I will use the website more often in the future	0.806		
	Intention5	I will recommend the website to those who ask for my advice	0.808		
	<b>Online co-creation experience</b>			0.876	0.915
	Co-creation1	The website encourages me to participate by sharing content or	0.864		0.730

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**Table 3) (continued)**

Construct	Item	Factor loading	$\alpha$	CR	AVE
Co-creation	information (e.g. using personal library, links, ...)	0.862	0.839	0.903	0.756
	There is a good chance that I might share my content (links) or views (feedback) on the website.				
	I'd like to receive more direct information from the website				
	I follow the new services and offers of the Astan Qods Razavi digital library website				
eWOM					
ewom1	I have recommended the Astan Qods Razavi digital library to many people on social media	0.886			
ewom2	I make positive comments about Astan Qods Razavi digital library on social media.	0.891			
ewom3	I share my online comments on Astan Qods Razavi digital library for others to see	0.830			

were not examined in previous research. Another distinction point of this research from previous research is its statistical population. Digital libraries are one of the organizations which provide their services in a

website only format. Nevertheless, the importance of website quality on how users evaluate digital libraries and how these evaluations affect their other behaviors, such as participating in online co-creation experiences or positive e-advertising for digital libraries, have not been fully considered.

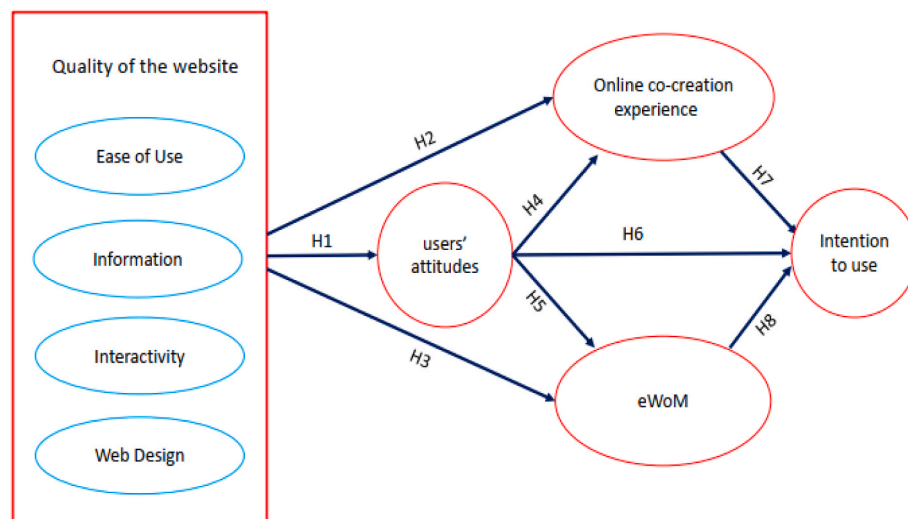
Results show that the website quality of a digital library positively affects users' attitudes towards the digital library. Since users only face the digital library website in digital libraries and services are provided through the website, therefore the quality of the website is a significant factor in creating a positive or negative attitude in the users. In fact, in the age of technology when users face technological elements instead of direct interactivity with the employees providing the services, website quality becomes a more significant contributing factor in the excellence of the digital library compared with other similar factors. These results are consistent with the findings of research conducted by [Elsharnouby and Mahrous \(2015\)](#) and [Jimenez-Barreto and Campo-Martinez \(2018\)](#).

Furthermore, the website quality affecting the intention of users to participate in online co-creation and eWOM was also confirmed. Today, the importance of eWOM and online co-creation has attracted much attention. Organizations in various sectors seek to encourage their customers to collaborate with them. In moving towards mass customization, organizations encounter obstacles when it comes to attracting large numbers of users; therefore, a distinctive feature of the services offered by an organization can be their profound, interesting interactivity with users to provide better services. The online co-creation activities are one such suitable example for closer connection with the users. Also, given that social media has shaped online communities in which people can talk, actively communicate in discussions, and acquire information on topics in addition to expressing their opinions, eWOM has become particularly important because it is not hidden to anyone that people are increasingly influenced by eWOM, which in turn influences users' attitudes such as the intention to use digital libraries.

**Table 4**

Discriminant validity.

	Ease of Use	Information	Intention to use	Interactivity	Online co-creation experience	users' attitudes	Web Design	eWOM
Ease of Use	0.858							
Information	0.780	0.869						
Intention to use	0.588	0.591	0.799					
Interactivity	0.724	0.745	0.634	0.864				
Online co-creation experience	0.546	0.543	0.740	0.582	0.854			
users' attitudes	0.590	0.649	0.676	0.536	0.734	0.873		
Web Design	0.759	0.773	0.623	0.741	0.533	0.556	0.838	
eWOM	0.577	0.552	0.701	0.593	0.798	0.724	0.551	0.869

**Fig. 1.** Research model.

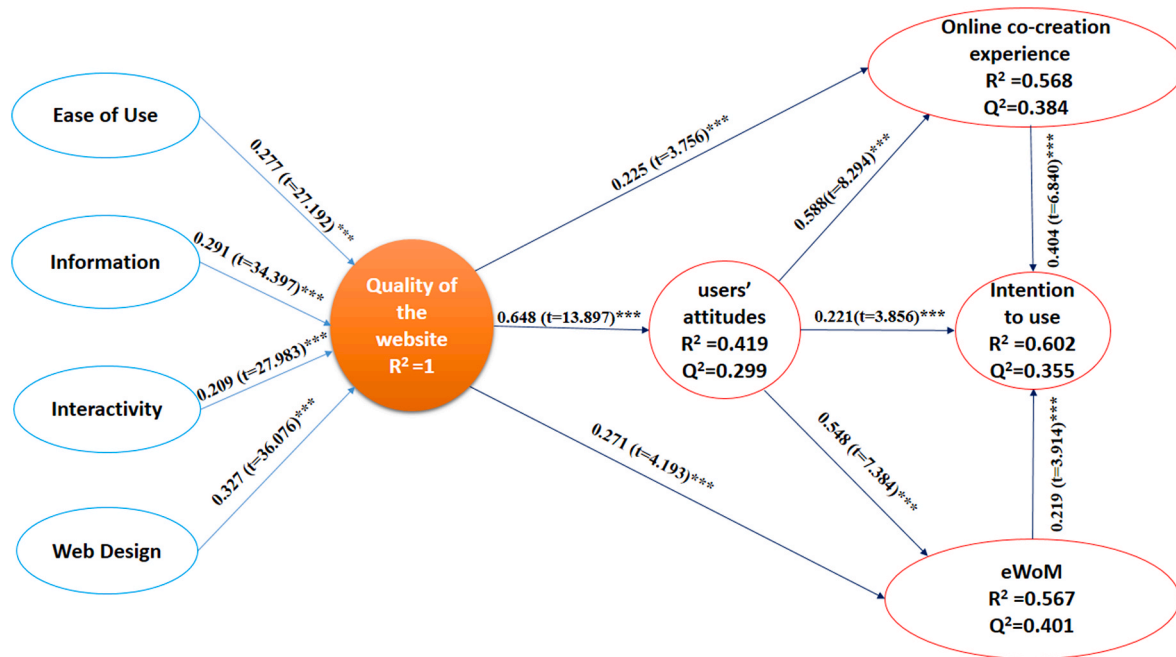


Fig. 2. Structural results.

Table 5  
Hypotheses results.

hypothesis	path	Path coefficient	STD	T-statistics	p-value	Result
H1	Quality of the website $\Rightarrow$ users' attitudes	0.648	0.047	13.897	0.000	supported
H2	Quality of the website $\Rightarrow$ Online co-creation experience	0.225	0.060	3.756	0.000	supported
H3	Quality of the website $\Rightarrow$ eWOM	0.271	0.065	4.193	0.000	supported
H4	users' attitudes $\Rightarrow$ Online co-creation experience	0.588	0.071	8.294	0.000	supported
H5	users' attitudes $\Rightarrow$ eWOM	0.548	0.077	7.384	0.000	supported
H6	users' attitudes $\Rightarrow$ Intention to use	0.221	0.057	3.856	0.000	supported
H7	Online co-creation experience $\Rightarrow$ Intention to use	0.404	0.059	6.840	0.000	supported
H8	eWOM $\Rightarrow$ Intention to use	0.219	0.056	3.914	0.000	supported

Considering that a contributing factor to user participation in online co-creation and eWOM is the quality of the website, digital libraries can endeavor to improve their website quality and through this grow user participation in online co-creation and eWOM. These results are consistent with the findings of research conducted by [Jimenez-Barreto and Campo-Martinez \(2018\)](#) and [Pandey and Sahu \(2020\)](#).

The impact of attitudes towards the digital library website on the intention of users to participate in the online co-creation experience, eWOM, and intention to use a digital library was also confirmed, indicating the importance of attitude in people's behavioral intentions. Also according to results, the effects of the online co-creation experience and eWOM on the intention to use digital library services was also confirmed, indicating the importance of providing an opportunity for the online co-creation experience and creating circumstances for user participation in eWOM. These findings are consistent with research findings conducted by [Blasco-Arcas et al. \(2014\)](#), [Elsharnouby and Mahrous \(2015\)](#), [Jimenez-Barreto and Campo-Martinez \(2018\)](#), [Ismaigilova et al. \(2020\)](#), [Rao et al. \(2021\)](#), and [Puriwat and Tripopsakul \(2022\)](#).

### 5.1. Implications for management

It is recommended that digital libraries pay attention to the evaluation of users of the digital library, because it is the cornerstone of many of their other behaviors. To this end, digital libraries must always endeavor to improve their website quality and consider this as an important contributing factor to user evaluations of the digital library.

Having a positive attitude towards a website will lead to optimal behaviors, such as eWOM, participation in the online co-creation experience, and intention to use the services of the digital library more often. Therefore, digital libraries can seek to form closer links with their users by welcoming their members with their user names, personalizing service delivery for different groups, giving quick effective feedback on the comments and suggestions of the users, and dealing in a friendly manner with users who seek to solve their problems through direct communication with the librarians to create a favorable attitude in their users towards the digital library. Also, given the importance of the online co-creation experience and eWOM on the intention to use the digital library services, the digital libraries are recommended to pay more attention to providing better opportunities for online co-creation for the users and also create circumstances for user participation in eWOM. Also, by providing a section on FAQs on the website and creating opportunities for co-creation for the users, such as contributing ideas, they can increase the intention to use the services of the digital library.

## 6. Conclusions

Despite the fact that internet services have expanded in Iran, some organizations such as digital libraries have fallen behind in this respect and been neglected so that the use of digital libraries in Iran has remained rather limited even though there is a high potential for it. Like all other organizations, nonprofit Organizations also seek to thrive. Hence, they can use marketing strategies to increase user awareness of the services provided by organizations or to improve their services. One

of the most basic ways to attract users and affect their intention to use digital libraries is the website quality of the digital library and user interactivity. This will shape the users' attitudes and intentions to take other measures. Hence, apart from their website design, ease of use, and adequate material, digital libraries must also attach importance to interactivity with their users and seek to create positive attitudes in them. Furthermore, online co-creation and eWOM can also be important in digital library marketing. Digital libraries can pave the way for user participation in online co-creation and eWOM to expand their services and find their rightful place.

### 6.1. Research limitations and future research directions

Although this research was conducted among the users of the Astan Qods Razavi digital library as one of the oldest and most credible digital libraries in Iran, it was still conducted in one digital library and other digital libraries were not evaluated. Also, the link for the questionnaire was sent to users by the Astan Qods Razavi digital library and the researchers had limited control over how the questionnaire was distributed. In future, researchers can assess other aspects of website quality and evaluate the research model in other statistical populations who provide electronic services or in other digital libraries.

### Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

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