

Effects of Positive and Negative eWOM on Blog Reader's Shopping Intention

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Keywords

Attitude, Information Credibility, Negative eWOM, Positive eWOM, Purchase Intention, and Trust.

Abstract

Consumers depend on opinions and suggestions from others to evaluate their purchases. Especially in online context, the blogger's electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) is used as an important information source which shape consumer attitudes towards a product and influences their shopping intention. The purpose of this paper is to study the effects of positive and negative eWOM on blog reader's shopping intention. A sample of 76 respondents is drawn using random sampling technique and a five-point likert scale questionnaire is used to get data from blog users in Chandigarh. For hypotheses testing, regression, correlation and t-test are used. The result shows that trust in blogger recommendation positively affects blog reader's attitude and purchase intention. There is no significant difference in positive and negative eWOM on blog reader's shopping intention. Future researchers may consider effect of neutral eWOM on blog reader's purchase intention. Education level, attractiveness and perceived enjoyment of blogger may influence blog reader's attitude. Marketers should strive to encourage opinion leaders or experienced bloggers to recommend products and services to others.

Introduction

The development of internet technologies and popularity of e-commerce has prompted electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) communications such as online reviews to become a key source of information about products and services. EWOM is defined as the dynamic and ongoing information exchange process between potential and actual consumers regarding a product, service, brand or company, which is available to a multitude of people and institutions via the internet (Ismagilova et al., 2017).

Blogs are popular social media platforms for recording, sharing ideas and opinions related to particular events in one's daily life (Hsu, Lin & Chiang, 2013). The popularity and potential of a blogger's recommendation is evident and the underlying logic is simple that consumers trust peer's comments more than those given by product/service companies (Lu, Chang, & Chang, 2014). This is more especially if the comments are made by those who are perceived to be experts.

Earlier bloggers depend on their personal blogs to share comments on products or services. Today, the scenario is different. Most of them are now available on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, twitter and many more. The bloggers are getting famous as they become celebrities on social media with millions of followers. These celebrity social influencers earn millions of dollars for endorsement programmes and other businesses generated offline such as product lines and book deals (O'Connor, 2017). Their goal is to create electronic word of mouth (eWOM) via blogs so as to reap financial benefits. Without doubt, a blogger's opinion and recommendation can affect consumer purchase intention (Erkan & Evans, 2016). Therefore, who the consumers select as a suitable and effective blogger is a matter of crucial importance to the marketers as consumers are informed of the latest news and information via blogs that they frequently visit (Sin et al., 2012).

The existing studies emphasise the effects of positive eWOM on blog readers. It is an important issue to study how negative eWOM affects blog reader's shopping behaviours and the difference in impact of positive and negative eWOM on shopping intentions of the blog readers (Hsu et. al., 2013). The buying process includes the need recognition and problem awareness, information search, evaluation of alternatives and purchase. The recommendations of bloggers influence several stages of buying process. For instance, in the stage of need recognition, blog readers may respond to a blog stimulus (i.e. the blogger readers surf the blog and are attracted by the content of product recommendations written by a blogger). In addition, the recommendations of blogger may play an important resource during the stage of information search, since many potential customers search for additional recommendations for products they plan to own via internet. In the final evaluation stage, the recommendations also have influential effects on consumer consideration and choice of an experience product because blogger's recommendations help consumers perform verification and thus make final purchase decisions. Therefore, the influences of eWOM recommendations are multifaceted. The attitude toward online shopping to be the most important determinant of a user's behavioural intention, there by implying that increasing a user's positive attitude is likely to result in high behavioural intention.

Conceptual Background, Review of Literature and Hypotheses

The main aim of this study is to examine the effect of positive and negative eWOM on blog reader's shopping intention. As measuring attitude of blog reader would help to predict behavioural adoption intention according to the theory of reasoned action (TRA). Attitude is defined as a person's overall evaluation of a concept. Two types of attitude can be identified which are: attitudes toward objects and attitudes toward behaviours. As this study is about measuring blog reader's attitude towards positive and negative eWOM, attitude toward intention to purchase is relevant to the context of this study. Attitude towards behaviour can be referred to as an individual's positive or negative evaluation of relevant behaviour and is composed of an individual's salient beliefs regarding the perceived consequences of performing certain behaviour (shopping intention).

Online reviews (eWOM) and behaviours of consumers towards eWOM information have a positive impact on consumer's purchase intentions. The influence of eWOM information on social media not only depends on the characteristics of eWOM information, such as quality and credibility of information, but it also depends on the consumer's behaviour towards online reviews such as eWOM information (Erkan and Evans, 2016).

One single negative online review (eWOM) plays an important role in the purchase decision-making of individual customers while shopping on the websites. While three additional positive consumer reviews could significantly increase product purchase intentions (Brunner et.al, 2019). In online WOM context, consumers are especially interested in writing and reading negative product reviews. Negative online product reviews have considerable detrimental effects on consumer-based brand equity and thus lead to a significant brand equity dilution. Through mobile Internet, consumers can read online reviews for the product they are interested in directly at the point of purchase which might have strong effects on their purchase decisions (Bambauer et.al, 2011).

Trust

From customer's point of view, product information from various reference groups like online reviews and personal media such as blog are needed to reduce transaction uncertainty. Blogs are one of the popular eWOM platforms which are considered as a highly credible source. Trust is formed among blogger and the blog readers by continuous interaction on social media. Therefore, trust significantly affects the perceived usefulness of blogger recommendations and intention to purchase (Hsu et.al, 2013).

Trust is a product of perceived web quality and eWOM is a function of perceived web quality (Al-Debei et.al, 2015). Hence, trust and perceived benefits are key predictors of consumer attitudes toward online shopping. Further, higher levels of perceived web quality lead to higher levels of trust in an online shopping web site. Perceived web quality was found to be a direct predictor of trust, and the former positively and significantly influences perceived benefits.

Nowadays, companies are moving toward a more digitized communication to promote their products and brands. Both credibility and interaction with bloggers impact the purchase intention of followers, meaning that a follower goes through both affective and internalization processes when influenced to purchase a product. It means that followers who are attached to the blogger are more likely to purchase than less attached followers. This is particularly true for the younger generation: the credibility of the blogger has a positive impact on purchase intention. Credibility becomes predominant for the older generation (Sokolova and Kefi, 2019).

Information credibility

Credibility is synonymous with trust. Credibility beliefs stem from evaluating the attributes of an attitude object which results in perceptive knowledge that guides feelings and actions. From this perspective, credibility beliefs derive from a cognitive process. Assessing information credibility helps people to determine whether the given content by blogger can be trusted for information. Because social network visitors are interested in finding reliable information, the issue of trusting users and their content is rooted in credibility (Alrubaian et.al, 2019).

In an online communication environment such as a blog, information receivers may not obtain much information about the blogger. After reading a blog message that contains service complaints or negative eWOM, receivers will naturally make inferences on what motivated the writer to post that message. Such motivational inferences will be seen as information about the writer (blogger) and will in turn become the foundation of the judgment with regard to information credibility (Chang and Wu, 2014).

When seeking information in the online communication environment, the receivers not only compare opinions with several messages in online discussion forums but also view the replies within a blog.

Positive eWOM

According to previous studies, eWOM communication plays a significant role in forming and influencing internet user's attitudes and behavioural intentions (Cheung et al., 2008). In fact, eWOM communication has emerged as a result of the increasing numbers of consumers who are using the internet to find relevant information, thanks to recent rapid advancements in internet technologies. Previous research indicates that online opinions and recommendations are perceived to be credible and trustworthy by internet users (Phang et. al., 2018). For online shoppers, it seems that such online opinions and recommendations are important means whereby online shoppers can seek new information of interest to them such as product/service information. Consequently, this type of communication is considered as having a great persuasiveness effect on internet users (Lee et. al, 2012). Hence, it is believed that online opinions and recommendations can effectively reduce the risk and uncertainty recognized by internet users when purchasing products or services online. Prior research in the area of online shopping has highlighted the importance of eWOM in building online trust (Ha, 2004).

Negative eWOM

One of the most discussed topics around online reviews is their valence, which is the evaluative tone of a review varying from very positive to very negative. Several studies have investigated the role of valence in eWOM; for instance negative reviews have been found to be particularly influential on business profitability as they affect product sales (Filieri et. al., 2018) and impact on attitude towards reviews. Park and Lee (2009) reveal that negative reviews influence readers more than positive ones, both for experience and search goods, while Racherla and Friske (2012) reveal that negative reviews are perceived to be more useful than either extremely positive or moderate reviews. Most of these studies rely on the belief that “bad is stronger than good” and that negative reviews influence consumers more than positive one. This assumption derives and it is justified in social psychology and referred to as negativity bias. Translated to information processing, negative information have more weight and attract individual’s attention more than positive information. Negative and extreme cues are less frequent than positive and neutral and thus they tend to attract the attention of readers. With regards to the helpfulness of negative reviews, it is suggested that negative information is more diagnostic or informative than positive or neutral information (Zhang et. al., 2019). Negative information is perceived as helpful because it is less ambiguous and thus has higher impact on person impression.

Furthermore, well-known theories such as theory of reasoned action (TRA) and theory of planned behaviour (TPB) indicate that the individual’s behavioural intention is influenced by his/her attitude toward the concerned behaviour. For this study, it has been defined that attitude is the degree of a blog reader’s positive feelings about online shopping. Empirical studies based on these theories have found that attitude positively affect an individual’s behavioural intention (Hsu and Lu, 2007).

Methodology

Aim

To study the effects of positive and negative eWOM on Blog Reader’s Shopping Intention.

Hypotheses

H1a Trust will positively affect blog reader’s attitude to purchase.

H1b Trust will positively affect blog reader’s purchase intention.

H2a Information credibility will positively affect blog reader’s attitude to purchase.

H2b Information credibility will positively affect blog reader’s purchase intention.

H3a Positive eWOM will positively affect blog reader’s attitude to purchase.

H3b Positive eWOM will positively affect blog reader’s purchase intention.

H4a Negative eWOM will negatively affect blog reader's attitude to purchase.

H4b Negative eWOM will negatively affect blog reader's purchase intention.

H5 There is significant difference in positive and negative eWOM.

H6 Blog reader's attitudes toward shopping will positively affect their purchase intentions.

Description of Tools

Focus-groups method has been used as pre-field pretesting technique (Baalbaki et. al., 2013). This method helps in identifying variations in language, terminology, interpretation of questions and response options. Self-administered questionnaires can be pretested in a focus group. It helps to learn about the appearance and formatting of the questionnaire. In addition, knowledge of content problem is gained. Three respondents from various streams (1 from MBA HR, 1 from MBA finance and 1 from M.com) were taken from the UBS library. I conducted the focus group interview on the self-administered questionnaire. The interview lasted for around 30 minutes. They suggested me to add various categories of the bloggers for the better understanding of the respondents.

To ensure respondent's relevancy, two screening questions were asked prior to the answering of the questionnaire. All constructs and items in the questionnaire were adopted and adapted from extant literature with modifications made to suit this study. Each item was measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). The six 5-point scale items for trust were adopted from Hsu et al. (2013), Lee and Ma (2012) and Erkan and Evans (2016). One item, "blogger's recommendation are more trustworthy than company sponsored advertising because they are posted by peers" was later deleted due to negative cronbach's alpha. For information credibility, five 5-point scale items were developed from Chang & Wu (2014). The three 5-point scale items of positive eWOM was adapted from Phang & Ming (2018). Meanwhile, the five 5-point scale items for negative eWOM were adopted from Chang & Wu (2014). One item has been deleted to improve the low cronbach alpha. The four 5-point scale item of attitude toward blogger's recommendations were adopted from Casaló et al. (2011) and Lee, Xiong and Hu (2012). Finally, the four 5-point scale items for purchase intention were adopted from Plotkina and Munzel (2016). One item each from attitude and purchase intention has been deleted to improve the cronbach's alpha.

Sampling

The sampling unit of the study were blog readers (individuals) who follow the blogger's recommendation consistently. All respondents were the residents of Chandigarh who were about fifteen to forty four years of age and had minimum qualification of secondary level. The sampling frame mainly included youngsters, women and online users. They are believed to be the active users on blogger sites.

The data has been collected from 76 respondents out of 80 respondents contacted. Out of which, 53 respondents were contacted personally and 47 respondents filled the questionnaire. Multistage area sampling was used. The first stage sampling was done by randomly selecting three sectors of Chandigarh. The selected sectors are 10, 22C&D and 46. In second stage sampling, map of selected sectors are taken and further random sampling was applied in various categories (houses, shop cum offices/flats, parking lots and institutions).

The online questionnaire was prepared with the help of Google forms. The email ids of the employees of Haryana State Agriculture Marketing Board (HSAMB) were used for data collection. The online questionnaires were mailed to the employees with the request for cooperation. The employees were contacted again after 2 hours on Whatsapp with the link of the questionnaire and a formal request. The email ids used for data collection are of those who are active on social media. I have mailed the questionnaire to around 44 employees and got responses of 29 employees.

The data has been entered in the SPSS 20 program, a range has been set 1 to 5 for recording the responses as the responses were on 5-point likert scale. The field edit was done. The respondents were asked to fill the categories of the blogger as many as they follow. Non responses will be reported in the study. The formula will be used to calculate the response rate: Number of people who completed the survey/ Number of people contacted. In table edit, the missing values were reported as 99 in SPSS.

The data collected of blog readers is analysed using SPSS 20 program. Cronbach's Alpha is used to test the reliability (in SPSS) and confirmatory factor analysis is used to check fitness of model and validity of scales (in AMOS 26 statistics). Further analysis is done using correlation and regression.

A total of 76 responses were recorded, 47 face-to-face and 29 online. In total of 76 responses, 34 were male and 42 were females as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic profile

| Measure | Items | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|--------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | Male | 34 | 44.87% |
| | Female | 42 | 55.12% |
| Age | 15-19 | 11 | 14.10% |
| | 20-24 | 30 | 39.74% |
| | 25-29 | 18 | 24.35% |
| | 30-34 | 07 | 8.97% |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|----------|----|--------|
| | 35-39 | 05 | 6.41% |
| | 40-44 | 05 | 6.41% |
| Socio economic status | Grade A1 | 57 | 75.64% |
| | Grade A2 | 12 | 15.38% |
| | Grade A3 | 04 | 5.12% |
| | Grade B1 | 01 | 1.28% |
| | Grade C2 | 01 | 1.28% |

The percentage of female is more than male in the sample. As majority of sample lies in the age group of 20-24 years. If we combine the major share of percentage of respondents from age 15 to 29 years, that is of total 78.19%. The socio economic profile of sector-10, 22 C & 22D and 46 showed majority of sample lies in A1 category.

Scale Reliability and Validity

For testing the reliability, cronbach's alpha is applied. All the items on such measures are supposed to reflect the same underlying construct, so people's score on those items should be correlated to each other. The most common measure of internal consistency is cronbach's alpha. 0.70 or above value is acceptable. It is calculated on each construct as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Cronbach's alpha values

| Constructs | No. of items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|-------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Trust | 05 | 0.743 |
| Information credibility | 05 | 0.754 |
| Positive eWOM | 03 | 0.098 |
| Negative eWOM | 04 | 0.647 |
| Attitude | 03 | 0.040 |
| Purchase intention | 03 | 0.700 |

The alpha value of trust, information credibility and purchase intention is around 0.7. The scales for these constructs exhibited an acceptable level of reliability.

The internal consistency of the measurement model was assessed by computing the composite reliability. A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted using AMOS 26. Measurement model validity depends on establishing acceptable levels of goodness-of-fit for the measurement model and finding specific evidence of construct validity. To satisfy the validity procedure, the following are the validity and reliability checks that were carried out by Construct Validity- a) convergent validity b) discriminant validity. In the convergent validity, composite reliability was calculated using the formula= $\frac{\text{sum square}}{\text{sum square} + \text{error (i-Rsq)}}$. The values of composite reliability (CR) and average variance explained (AVE) are given in table 3.

Table 3: Value of CR & AVE

| Construct | CR | AVE |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Trust | 5.251 | 0.291 |
| Information credibility | 4.934 | 0.213 |
| Positive eWOM | 2.841 | 0.386 |
| Negative eWOM | 4.731 | 0.253 |
| Attitude | 3.623 | 0.344 |
| Purchase intention | 3.721 | 0.319 |

The average variance explained (AVE) should be greater than 0.5. The Composite reliability (CR) is greater than 0.7. $CR > AVE$ - CR of trust, information credibility, positive eWOM, negative eWOM, attitude and purchase intention values are greater than AVE of respective construct.

In the discriminant validity, the AVE (Average variance explained) $>$ MSV (Max shared variance). The MSV is square of arrows entering the construct. AVE (Average variance explained) $>$ ASV (Average shared variance). The ASV is calculated by adding the value entering the construct and taking the average of them as shown in table 4.

Table 4: Value of AVE, MSV & ASV

| Construct | AVE | MSV | ASV |
|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Trust | 0.291 | 0.64 | 0.295936 |
| Information credibility | 0.213 | 0.64 | 0.186624 |
| Positive eWOM | 0.386 | 0.7569 | 0.209764 |
| Negative eWOM | 0.253 | 0.3136 | 0.0361 |
| Attitude | 0.344 | 0.49 | 0.158404 |

| | | | |
|--------------------|-------|--------|----------|
| Purchase intention | 0.319 | 0.7569 | 0.438244 |
|--------------------|-------|--------|----------|

The AVE is greater than ASV of information credibility, positive ewom, negative ewom and attitude.

The analysis of the measurement model showed that the indexes were CMIN/DF=1.719 (it is good because of CMIN/DF<3), CFI=0.394 (it is not good as the values should be more than 0.95) and RMSEA=0.134 (the default value should be less than 0.05).

Result

Descriptive Statistics

Table 5 lists the means and standard deviations of the constructs.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics

| Constructs | Mean | SD |
|-------------------------|------|------|
| Trust | 3.83 | 1.72 |
| Information credibility | 3.63 | 0.55 |
| Positive eWOM | 4.14 | 3.80 |
| Negative eWOM | 3.88 | 2.19 |
| Attitude | 4.64 | 4.65 |
| Purchase intention | 3.77 | 2.78 |

It can be observed that on an average, the participants responded positively to the research constructs (the averages all being >3).

Results

To interpret the results, correlation and regression have been used.

H1a Trust will positively affect blog reader's attitude to purchase.

Trust has a positive effect on blog reader's attitude to purchase. The p value is positive but shows a low correlation as suggested value should be greater than 0.50. Correlation results are shown in table 6.

Table 6: Correlation table

| Construct | Attitude (p value) | Purchase intention (p value) |
|-------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Trust | 0.137 | 0.687 |
| Information credibility | 0.051 | 0.567 |
| Positive eWOM | -0.025 | 0.020 |
| Negative eWOM | -0.057 | 0.297 |
| Attitude | 01 | 0.101 |

H1b Trust will positively affect blog reader's purchase intention.

The p value is more than 0.50. It shows a high correlation between trust and purchase intention of the blog readers.

Table 7: Regression table

| Review | Constant | Trust (beta) | Information credibility (beta) | Positive ewom (beta) | Negative ewom (beta) | Adjusted R square |
|--------------------|----------|--------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Attitude | 4.411 | .182 | -0.026 | -0.037 | -0.095 | -.025 |
| Purchase Intention | -.338 | .550 | .187 | .003 | .059 | .473 |

For regression, the beta value is 0.550 which is significant. The H1b is accepted.

H2a Information credibility will positively affect blog reader's attitude to purchase.

Information credibility has a positive but low correlation with blog reader's attitude to purchase as the p value is 0.051. (Refer to table 6)

H2b Information credibility will positively affect blog reader's purchase intention.

This hypothesis is accepted as the p value is 0.567, shows a high correlation between information credibility and purchase intention of the blog reader.

H3a Positive eWOM will positively affect blog reader's attitude to purchase.

The hypothesis is rejected as p value is negative (-0.025).

H3b Positive eWOM will positively affect blog reader's purchase intention.

The hypothesis is accepted as the p value is positive but low correlation.

H4a Negative eWOM will negatively affect blog reader's attitude to purchase.

The hypothesis is accepted as negative eWOM has negative correlation on blog reader's attitude.

H4b Negative eWOM will negatively affect blog reader's purchase intention.

The hypothesis is rejected as negative eWOM shows a positive correlation with purchase intention.

H5 There is significant difference in positive and negative eWOM.

The hypothesis is rejected as there is no significant difference in positive and negative eWOM. The p value is more than 0.887 which is more than 0.05, as shown in table 8.

H6 Blog reader's attitudes toward shopping will positively affect their purchase intentions.

The blog reader's attitude toward shopping is positively correlated with their purchase intention. Thus, the hypothesis is accepted at p value 0.101.

Discussion

The study proposed several hypotheses and conducted a survey to test these hypotheses. The relationship noted between trust, information credibility, positive eWOM and negative eWOM on attitude and purchase intention. The study finds that the trust has the greatest impact on purchase intention, followed by information credibility, negative eWOM, positive eWOM and attitude. The relationship between trust and consumer attitude towards blogger recommendations is statistically supported in this study which shows that consumer attitude towards blogger recommendations tend to be more favourable if trust is involved. Trust helps consumers to avoid risks in the online context and the positive outcomes brought by trust will help to develop the positive attitude of consumers towards carrying out behaviour. The findings also show that blogs are viewed as credible sources of information (Hsu et al., 2013) and bloggers with high popularity can attract many loyal readers, thereby displaying the characteristic of trust (Wu & Lee, 2012). These bloggers are also viewed as non-commercial entities (Hsu et al., 2013). The present findings are consistent with Zhang et al. (2014) that the blogger recommendations are considered as true, accurate, convincing and reliable. Based on their firsthand experience and more neutral opinions, recommendations by a blogger who is viewed as an expert, can generate a higher degree of

trust. In fact, trust is the most important antecedent factor that can influence consumers' attitude towards blogger recommendations (Phang & Ming, 2018).

The finding of this study shows a positive relationship between information credibility and purchase intention of the consumer. Blogger recommendations act as a complementary information in improving consumers' purchase intention (Phang et.al). Consumer's attitude towards blogger recommendations tend to be more favourable when the information is factual, accurate, trustworthy, credible and believable and carries high quality reasons to support the opinions. These consumers use expert-generated media to obtain reviews from previous experts whom they perceive to be valuable. Consumers rely on these reviews heavily as they are highly valued information which is not biased and is based on personal experience (Filieri et al., 2015). The comments could be negative or positive in nature and are considered as important for consumers' decision making. Therefore, consumers are better persuaded; they also become more inclined towards buying the product (Park et al., 2007).

The findings of this study indicate that blog readers have a negative effect of positive eWOM on their attitude. The reasons could be that the blog readers pay less attention to the Positive eWOM is positively related to purchase intention of the blog readers. This finding is aligned with Hsu et al.'s (2013) study which investigated the influence of blogger recommendations (eWOM) and consumer's attitude on their purchase intention toward online shopping. The reason for this could be the influence blogger's recommendations have on consumers' buying process. This serves as a vital source of information if form of positive eWOM for the consumers during the searching stage and it can finally help consumers to affirm their final purchase decision. Undoubtedly, bloggers are considered as experts who are able to discuss the products in a realistic and unbiased manner. By providing useful information, their recommendations also help readers to form attitudes about the strength and weakness of certain products. Clearly, such recommendations help readers to improve their shopping effectiveness, performance, productivity and also their understanding of the products.

The findings of this study indicate that negative ewom negatively affect the blog reader's attitude while it has positive relation on purchase intention. This may be because the negative eWOM brings a feeling of fear in the minds of blog readers. Therefore, negative eWOM helps to shape the attitude towards the purchase. Fillieri et. al states that negative ratings are very helpful for the blog readers.

The study also indicates that attitude toward online shopping to be the most important determinant of a user's behavioural intention, thereby implying that increasing a user's positive attitude is likely to result in high behavioural intention. It is found out that overall trust significantly and directly influences intention. The result seems consistent with previous work by Lee et al. (2011) who verified that credibility of online consumer reviews had an influence on consumers' purchase intentions in online shopping malls. Since blog posting is a form of User generated content, the results seem to suggest that if the content provider (i.e.

blogger) is trustworthy and the contents are useful, the reader behaviours about online shopping will be more likely affected.

Conclusion

The objective of this research is to examine the effect of positive and negative eWOM on blog reader's shopping intention. The findings of my study are that there is no significant difference between positive and negative ewom on blog reader's purchase intention and there is no significant difference in positive and negative eWOM. The results appear to have important implications for companies seeking to promote their products and services. Blogger's eWOM seems to be a promising marketing strategy for increasing sales. Marketers should strive to encourage opinion leaders or experienced bloggers to recommend products and services to others. Through positive and negative eWOM communication, marketers can accelerate marketing effects to influence consumer's purchasing attitude and behavioural intention. Moreover, marketers also need to be sure that the recommendation is available online to help consumers make purchase decisions. The blogger's recommendation can be collected and revealed in the shopping web site. Furthermore, the collected recommendation can be delivered to consumers via email or short message service (SMS) of cell phone. The more recommended information the consumers obtains, the more user-generated experience it is likely to exchange and thus the more consumers it will affect.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Like any other research, this study is not free from limitations. The results should be interpreted and accepted with caution for the following reasons. The results show that 78 percent of the respondents were below 29 years of age, indicating that the respondents were primarily young. Care should be taken when generalizing these results to other settings because the respondents were relatively young. However, the young users eventually became the potential consumers. Thus, the results can still provide better understanding of the effects of positive and negative eWOM on blog reader's shopping intention. The respondents were blog readers from Chandigarh only. Culture, norms, traditions and lifestyle may differ among people from different places. Therefore, proper care should be taken into account when generalizing the results.

Future research is needed to further replicate the study by investigating the possible differences among various demographic factors. Such factors mainly include age, education levels, income levels, and different cultures. This study assumes that bloggers only make either positive or negative recommendations. However, blogger can make neutral recommendations. Neutral recommendations of blogger could be considered in future studies. Other considerations may influence blog reader's attitudes toward purchasing products/services such as education of blogger, attractiveness of blogger, perceived enjoyment of blogger, potentially leading to a variety of unexpected but useful results for marketers.

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