The Effect of Product Involvement on the Relationship between Electronic Word-of-Mouth and Purchase Intention: The Cross-cultural Comparison between Taiwan and Mainland China

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ABSTRACT

Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) has long been considered an important factor affecting online consumption. This study explores the impact of eWOM on purchase intention from three facets: strength of eWOM, profession of communicator, and profession of recipient, and the moderator effect of product involvement on their relationships. Furthermore, as cultural disposition of different societies can affect consumer behavior, this study selects consumers from Taiwan and mainland China as respondents in its discussion of cultural heterogeneity in the aforementioned relationships. The results indicate a significant effect of strength of eWOM on purchase intention for respondents from both regions. For respondents from Taiwan, profession of communicator shows a significant effect on purchase intention, while for those from mainland China, profession of recipient exhibits a significant effect on purchase intention. This difference may be attributed to different degrees of consumer trust in online goods, and the cultural differences between these two regions. Under the circumstance of product involvement as a moderator, respondents of both regions display a reduced effect of strength of eWOM on purchase intention, given a high degree of product involvement. This result may be associated with the increased inaccuracy of consumer decision-making resulting from information overload.

Keywords: Strength of eWOM, Profession of communicator, Profession of recipient, Individualism, Collectivism

INTRODUCTION

With the development of World Wide Web since the beginning of 1990s, an increasing number of enterprises have attempted to explore the field of electronic commerce (Chau et al., 2007). Particularly with the proliferation of the smartphone, the demand for online shopping has been accelerated. According to MasterCard Online Shopping Survey (2016) in the Asia-Pacific Region, consumers from mainland China, India, and Taiwan are most likely to shop via their smartphones. This survey also points out that most respondents conduct research online before making a purchase. Consumers’ online behaviors prior to a purchase decision include searching relevant product information and other consumers’ reviews and comments (Wu, & Lee, 2012). Consumers’ online shopping behavior makes eWOM significant in research on consumption behavior.

WOM has long been considered important in helping consumers reduce the uncertainty in making a purchase decision (Koller, & Salzberger, 2007). As the World Wide Web evolves, magnitudes of consumption behaviors are conducted through the Web, which is also utilized as a medium to communicate.
with others (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). The Internet, as an important information source and a medium for e-commerce, provides valuable references for consumers in their purchase decision-making through web-based opinion platforms, blogs, instant messaging platforms, emails, and other social media (Cheung, Lee, & Rabjohn, 2008; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004).

Furthermore, by accessing other consumers’ purchase experiences or product reviews on the Internet, thereby increasing the level of their product involvement, consumers not only obtain a magnitude of product information, but also save a great amount of time. Antil (1984) defined involvement as the level of perceived personal importance and interest evoked by a given stimulus in a specific situation. Different levels of consumer involvement in a product may affect consumers’ opinion and purchase strategies for this product, resulting in changes in their purchase intention.

Though WOM information has a similar impact on purchase intention in both Eastern and Western societies, Xue and Zhou (2011) pointed out that, compared to consumers in Western countries, Chinese consumers were more likely to generate stronger interest in and purchase intention for products with positive reviews. Therefore, the impact of eWOM on consumption intention varies with differences in cultural orientations (Chu, & Choi, 2011; Fong, & Burton, 2006). Previous research tends to interpret consumers’ cultural differences from the perspective of individualism and collectivism. However, even though Taiwan and mainland China are both included in the Chinese cultural sphere, Chao (2015) held that, despite these two regions sharing a homogeneous culture on a macro-level, cultural heterogeneity exists on a micro-level due to the past six-decade-long cross-Strait separation and differences in their political systems and social development. Therefore, in addition to examining the relationships between eWOM, product involvement, and purchase intention, this study aims to investigate, through a cross-cultural comparison of different cultural settings in Taiwan and mainland China, the reasons for consumption behavior variation in these two regions, with a view to highlighting the significance of cultural differences in relation to consumption behavior.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS

The influence of cultural orientations on consumption behavior

Results of previous research suggest that consumers’ communication and consumption behavior are deeply influenced by local cultures (Xue, & Zhou, 2011). Research on the influence of cultural differences on consumption behavior traditionally adopts individualism and collectivism as primary arguments (Aaker, & Maheswaran, 1997). For instance, Doran (2002) found that consumers in mainland China tend to rely more heavily on personal sources of information to provide guidance for their consumption activities. Wong, Chan, and Leung (2005) argued that this difference was probably because mainland China is more of a collectivistic society, which regards information sharing as a way to share favors, compared to an individualistic society, which focuses more on self-reliance. Chu and Choi (2011) criticized such a dichotomous approach as oversimplified and incapable of affording more in-depth analysis. To overcome these limitations, Shavitt et al. (2006) added horizontal (valuing equality) and vertical (emphasizing hierarchy) dimensions to the individualism and collectivism classifications, establishing a four-way typology for cross-cultural comparison and analysis. Its structure includes horizontal-individualism (HI), vertical-individualism (VI), horizontal-collectivism (HC), and vertical-collectivism (VC). Based on the conceptual framework of Shavitt et al. (2006), Sivadas, Bruvold, and Nelson (2008) believed that mainland China embraced the HC orientation, with a focus on maintaining benevolent relationships, common goals with others, social appropriateness, sociability, and
cooperation (Shavitt et al., 2006). Therefore, in building their social networks, consumers from mainland China are more likely to conform to peers’ opinions (Chu, & Choi, 2011).

It is worth contemplating whether Taiwan, as part of the Chinese cultural sphere, shares the same cultural orientation as mainland China. Hsu, Wang, and Yang (2001) found that, in terms of personality, Taiwanese were more contented than mainland Chinese. Moreover, drawing on findings from research on social relations, Lin, Chen, and Fu (2010) suggested that in Taiwan, school, neighbor, and kin ties are interrelated, whereas in mainland China schoolmates/elan (compatriots from home village or region) and neighbors are independent factors. Therefore, Chao (2015) advanced that, in the cultural dimension, even though the regions are homogeneous at a macro-level, they are heterogeneous at a micro-level, which could be attributed to their long-term separate governance and development. Based on this context, it may not be appropriate to categorize the cultural disposition of Taiwan consumers into HC cultural orientation, the same as their mainland counterparts. In their analysis of the economic-political regimes and social relations of three societies: Taiwan, mainland China, and the United States, Lin, Chen, and Fu (2010) pointed out that the social relations in Taiwan are in between those of mainland China and the United States; in other words, the society of Taiwan shares collectivistic characteristics of the traditional Chinese cultural sphere, but with an inclination towards individualism. Put in the construct of cross-cultural analysis proposed by Shavitt et al. (2006), Taiwan should be classified in the HI cultural dimension.

Since cultural variability has become an important factor in consumption behavior, this study further investigates whether the micro-cultural differences between Taiwan and mainland China affect the relationships between eWOM, level of involvement, and purchase intention.

The impact of eWOM on purchase intention

Despite its informal nature as a communication channel, WOM plays a major role in consumers’ purchase activities by affecting their purchase strategies (Lo, 2012). With the proliferation of the Internet, WOM is no longer transmitted from person to person merely by oral communication. A considerable number of consumers write their opinions, experiences, and reviews on Web-based opinion platforms such as blogs, discussion forums, online chat rooms, or message boards, leading to eWOM communication (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). The easy accessibility of eWOM makes it convenient for consumers to compare specifications and prices on the Internet. While eWOM significantly reduces consumers’ search costs, it also increases the variability in their decision-making. Regardless, Kuan, Yang, and Cheng (2005) suggested that the engagement of eWOM communication increases only when consumers experience very high or low perceived quality. Therefore, the more powerful and consistent the eWOM communication, the more susceptible consumers and their purchase intention are to the impact of eWOM. Factors such as the message intensity, tones, persuasion, impressions, and attitudes can all affect the power of eWOM (Chen, & Liang, 2006).

Another major factor influencing eWOM behavior is the profession of the communicator and recipient. Consumers generally generate a certain degree of trust in experts, considering them more capable of ensuring accurate information. To echo the view that experts represent individuals with a higher level of expertise, which enables them to perform product-related tasks (Alba, & Hutchinson, 1987), Bristor (1990) held that the WOM communicator equipped with expertise is perceived as capable of providing correct information. The expertise is expected to induce persuasion because once it is recognized by the receivers, it saves them the trouble of checking the WOM credibility. Additionally, Gilly et al. (1998) and Bansal and Voyer (2000) examined the influence of the communicator’s expertise on WOM in the contexts of product and service purchase decisions, respectively. The communicator’s
level of expertise was measured on five items: knowledgeable, competent, expert, trained, and experienced. Gilly et al. (1998) found that the higher the communicator’s level of expertise, the more influence the communicator’s WOM has on consumers, while Bansal and Voyer (2000) suggested that a recipient possessing a certain level of expertise would be able to check the WOM’s credibility. Once the recipient accepts the WOM information, they can process it more quickly and easily. Therefore, the recipient’s level of expertise can affect his or her purchase decision.

In light of the foregoing discussion, and in the context of the influence of the cultural differences between Taiwan and mainland China, this study presents the following hypotheses:

**H1:** Strength of eWOM has a positive and significant impact on purchase intention in the consumers of Taiwan (H1a) and mainland China (H1b).

**H2:** Profession of communicators has a positive and significant impact on purchase intention in the consumers of Taiwan (H2a) and mainland China (H2b).

**H3:** Profession of recipient has a positive and significant impact on purchase intention in the consumers of Taiwan (H3a) and mainland China (H3b).

**The effect of the degree of product involvement on the relationships between eWOM factors and purchase intention: A moderator**

Involvement is defined as a state of perceived importance, interest, and personal relevance evoked by a given stimulus or situation (Sadasivan, Rajakumar, & Rajinikanth, 2011). Hence, product involvement refers to the state of consumers’ interest in a product. Consumers with a high level of product involvement have a strong motivation to seek, process, and compare any relevant product information prior to a purchase (Im, & Ha, 2011). Previous research indicated that the level of involvement could affect consumers’ attitudes and behaviors (Wu, 2002). Hence, involvement is considered a critical factor in consumers’ purchasing process.

The higher the level of product involvement consumers have, the more efforts they will devote to seeking and comparing relevant product information, gathering information, and contemplating purchase decision. Prior research has revealed that product involvement moderates the relationship between eWOM and consumption behavior. Therefore, based on the premise that H1, H2, and H3 are true, in light of the preceding discussion, and given the context of the influence of the cultural differences between Taiwan and mainland China, this study presents the following hypotheses:

**H4:** For consumers from Taiwan (H4a) and mainland China (H4b), product involvement significantly moderates the relationship between strength of eWOM and purchase intention.

**H5:** For consumers from Taiwan (H5a) and mainland China (H5b), product involvement significantly moderates the relationship between profession of communicators and purchase intention.

**H6:** For consumers from Taiwan (H5a) and mainland China (H5b), product involvement significantly moderates the relationship between profession of recipient and purchase intention.

Based on the above research purpose, hypotheses, and literature review, this study develops the following research model (Figure 1):
METHODOLOGY

Measurement

The survey was designed to measure consumers’ opinions towards five facets: strength of eWOM, profession of communicator, profession of recipient, product involvement, and purchase intention. Questionnaires for the above five facets are independent from each other. The questionnaire for the three facets of eWOM is based on the scale by Bickart and Schindler (2001), and the questionnaire for product involvement and purchase intention is based on the scales by Zaichkowsky (1994) and Park and Lee (2008), respectively. The respondents’ answered the questions using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). For all respondents, Cronbach’s $\alpha$ for the five facets in this study is higher than 0.8, indicating that these facets were reliable.

Data Collection, Sample, and Statistical Method

The participants in this study were students selected from three schools in Taiwan and three schools in mainland China. Out of the 400 questionnaires distributed to each region, 388 valid questionnaires were collected from Taiwan, giving a response rate of 97%, and 370 valid questionnaires were collected from mainland China, giving a response rate of 92.5%. Of the respondents from Taiwan, 53.4% were female, and of those from mainland China, 68.6% were female. In terms of disposable income, most respondents from Taiwan had less than 150 U.S. dollars, accounting for 43.3%; whereas, most respondents from mainland China had between 75 and 150 U.S. dollars, accounting for 43.0%. Regarding the average time spent on shopping websites each week, the respondents from both countries tended to spend less than one hour, accounting for 46.9% and 45.7%, respectively. Regarding the average number of times the respondents shop online each month, the majority of respondents from Taiwan reported less than 1 time, accounting for 49.5%, while the majority of respondents from mainland China reported between 2 and 3 times, accounting for 55.9%. In terms of shopping items, the respondents from Taiwan shopped mostly for clothing and accessories (57.7%) followed by 3C electronic products (26.8%), while the respondents from mainland China shopped mostly for clothing and accessories (64.1%) followed by books (57.6%). This study uses Multiple Regression Analysis to test the hypotheses.
The results in Table 1 show that, for the respondents from Taiwan, the two facets of strength of eWOM and profession of communicator had a significant effect on purchase intention (test values are $t=6.631, p<.001$ ; $t=2.903, p=.004$), but profession of recipient did not demonstrate a significant effect (Test values are $t=1.443; p=.150$). Conversely, for the respondents from mainland China, the two facets of strength of eWOM and profession of recipient had a significant effect on purchase intention (Test values are $t=6.001, p<.001$ ; $t=3.456, p=.001$), and profession of communicator did not demonstrate a significant effect (Test values are $t=1.031; p=.303$). The above results thus support H1a, H1b, H2a, and H3b, but reject H2b and H3a.

Table 1: The effect of strength of eWOM, profession of communicator, and profession of recipient on purchase intention for the respondents from Taiwan and mainland China

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Collinearity Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Strength of eWOM</td>
<td>.315</td>
<td>.047</td>
<td>6.631</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Profession of communicators</td>
<td>.167</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>2.903</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Profession of recipient</td>
<td>.077</td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>1.443</td>
<td>.150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainland China</td>
<td>Strength of eWOM</td>
<td>.319</td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>6.001</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Profession of communicators</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>1.031</td>
<td>.303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Profession of recipient</td>
<td>.151</td>
<td>.044</td>
<td>3.456</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This study examines the respondents from Taiwan and mainland China in the context of product involvement and the influence of involvement level on purchase intention. Since the results in Table 1 indicate that profession of recipient has no significant effect on purchase intention for the respondents from Taiwan, we only analyzed the two facets strength of eWOM and profession of communicators for the results in Table 2. In the context of product involvement, the results in Table 2 show that strength of eWOM had a moderating effect on purchase intention (unstandardized $B=-.114, p<.001$), indicating that given the high level of involvement from the respondents from Taiwan, the influence of strength of eWOM on purchase Intention was reduced, while profession of communicators did not have a moderating effect. This study therefore supports H4a, but rejects H5a and H6a.

Table 2: For the respondents from Taiwan, the moderating effect on purchase intention in the context of product involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Purchase Intention</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unstandardized Coefficients</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength of eWOM</td>
<td>.219***</td>
<td>.242***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product involvement</td>
<td>.528***</td>
<td>.515***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength of eWOM * Product involvement</td>
<td>148.026***</td>
<td>13.797***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model F</td>
<td></td>
<td>.435</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td>.435</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profession of communicators</td>
<td>.157***</td>
<td>.170***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>product involvement</td>
<td>.564***</td>
<td>.562***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profession of communicators * Product involvement</td>
<td>137.793***</td>
<td>2.640</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Model F</td>
<td></td>
<td>.417</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td>.417</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
For the respondents from mainland China, since the results in Table 1 show that profession of communicators has no significant effect on purchase intention, we only analyzed the two facets of strength of eWOM and profession of recipient for the results in Table 3. In the context of product involvement, the results in Table 3 show that the strength of eWOM and profession of recipient had a moderating effect on purchase intention (unstandardized B=-.079, $p=.007$; unstandardized B=-.075, $p=.014$), indicating that, given the high level of involvement from the respondents from mainland China, the influence of strength of eWOM and profession of recipient on purchase intention was reduced, while profession of communicators did not have a moderating effect. This study thus supports H4b and H6b, but rejects H5b.

Table 3: For the respondents from mainland China, the moderating effect on purchase intention in the context of product involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Purchase Intention</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength of eWOM</td>
<td>.180 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product involvement</td>
<td>.551 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength of eWOM * Product involvement</td>
<td>130.392 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model F</td>
<td>130.392 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>.439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
<td>.439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.117 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.606 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>124.373 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model F</td>
<td>124.373 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>.428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
<td>.428</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Previous research indicates that for consumers in modern times, eWOM is a major factor in their purchase decision-making (Dellarocas, Zhang, & Awad, 2007; Lee, 2014; Zhang, Ko, & Carpenter, 2016). The investigation of Taiwan and mainland China in this study indicates that strength of eWOM has a significant effect on purchase intention, thus validating the importance of strength of eWOM on consumption behavior. However, for the two facets of profession of communicator and profession of recipient, this study indicates different answers for the two regions (Table 1). While profession of communicator was more significant for the respondents from Taiwan ($p=.004$), profession of recipient was more significant for the respondents from Taiwan ($p=.001$). The reason behind this difference can be investigated from two perspectives: different degrees of consumer trust in online shopping and different cultural orientations between the two regions.

In terms of consumer trust in the e-market, trust in eWOM mainly comes from consumers’ empirical experiences (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). In mainland China, as the awareness of intellectual property rights and the corresponding protection regime in the consumption market is still quite inadequate (Gao, & Song, 2012), a certain proportion of counterfeits remain in the e-market. Consumers in mainland China therefore tend to have doubts about the credibility of the communicator’s eWOM and resort to the strategy of self-trust. By contrast, the consumption market in Taiwan generates lower levels
of doubt related to counterfeits and their consumers expecting to seek references in the variety and complexity of information tend to trust the expertise of the communicator (Lin, & Tan. 2010).

Regarding the difference in cultural orientation, Hui and Triandis (1986) pointed out that people with a collectivistic tendency find it easier to adopt others’ opinions and advice, while it is less easy for people in individualistic societies to follow social norms. However, the results in Table 1 indicate that consumers from Taiwan tend to believe in the profession of communicators in eWOM, while consumers from mainland China tend to believe in the profession of recipient in eWOM. This finding seems to deviate from the consumption characteristics of HI and HC cultural disposition. According to Chen (2015), even though mainland China has traditionally been considered a country with a predominantly collectivistic culture, under the influence of generational shift, it tends to transition toward individualism. However, the changes that Taiwanese society is undergoing in industrialization, marketization, social division of labor, and urbanization do not advance Taiwan towards the individualism of U.S. society (Lin, Chen, & Fu, 2010). Therefore, Taiwanese society tends to trust collective and expert opinions and maintains a certain level of collective disposition.

In addition, in terms of the moderator effect of product involvement, consumers from Taiwan and mainland China showed reduced purchase intention given their high level of involvement (Tables 2 and 3). The result was consistent with that of Xue and Zhou (2011), who explained that, as online shopping in mainland China is still in its infancy, consumers might have insufficient trust in purchasing goods in high volumes or of high price, but they are still willing to buy inexpensive or low-risk products. This explanation, however, seems unsuitable for the current booming e-market. Interpreting from the perspective of information overload is thus more appropriate. Findings of prior research on the effect of information overload on consumer decision-making report that the relationship between information load and the accuracy of decision-making manifests an inverted “U” shaped curve (Hwang, & Lin, 1999; Wan, Menon, & Ramaprasad, 2009). In other words, when information load goes beyond an optimum performance point, extra information will negatively impact the accuracy of consumers’ decision-making. The phenomenon is also found in online shopping behaviors (Park, & Lee, 2008). Hence, for consumers with a high level of involvement, their prior experiences of making more mistakes in purchase decision due to information overload have discouraged their purchase intention in online shopping. They thus tend to adopt the physical/virtual cross-consumption strategy, and a moderate amount of information is therefore inductive to enhance consumers’ purchase intention.

**CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

With the development of information and the Internet, online shopping has gained increasing importance. The convenience of eWOM makes it easier for consumers to gather information, which further induces consumption activities. Research by Park and Lee (2008) revealed that consumers’ product reviews have more effect on influencing consumers than the company website, lending increasing importance to eWOM in e-marketing. This study investigates the effect on consumers’ online purchase intention of three facets: strength of eWOM, profession of communicator, and profession of recipient. By comparing consumers from Taiwan and mainland China, this study also aims to clarify the influence of cultural factors on eWOM and purchase intention.

The results reveal that, for consumers from both regions, strength of eWOM shows a significant effect on purchase intention. The distinction is that, for respondents from Taiwan, profession of communicator demonstrates a significant effect on purchase intention; whereas, for respondents from
mainland China, profession of recipient demonstrates a significant effect on purchase intention. This difference may result from the different degrees of consumer trust in online goods in these two regions. Consumers from Taiwan tend to have a higher degree of trust in online products, and hence the expertise of eWOM; whereas, consumers from mainland China tend to have a lower degree of trust in the quality of online goods and are inclined to trust their own judgment. Furthermore, experiencing the undergoing generational shift in social structure, consumers from mainland China exhibit a tendency towards individualism, which could be a plausible reason why they resort to self-trust in their online consumption behavior.

In the context of product involvement, the higher the product involvement, the less effect strength of eWOM has on purchase intention. This result converges with that of Xue and Zhou’ (2011) research. However, this study diverges from that of Xue and Zhou (2011) in the interpretation of the result. Whereas Xue and Zhou (2011) believed the reason was that the e-market was still in its infancy, this study suggests that, under the influence of information overload, consumers with a high level of product involvement tend to have reduced purchase intention.

The respondents in this study are university students from Taiwan and mainland China. Recent years have seen the expansion of age groups of online shoppers to middle and old age groups. Chen (2015) pointed out that the different values held by different generations influence consumption behavior. Using a cross-sectional approach, this study explores the online shopping behaviors of one generation across different regions and therefore suggests that future research study the effect of eWOM on online purchase intention across different generations. Furthermore, since this study indicates that information overload discourages online purchase intention, future research should investigate how consumers make decisions in the context of information overload, and establish how this influences the eWOM effect.

REFERENCES


