Exploring Consumer Online Resale Behavior

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ABSTRACT

This article draws on a phenomenological study of consumer resale behavior in consumer-to-consumer (C2C) e-commerce. We developed a taxonomy to describe consumer online resale behavior using the dimensions of “planned” or “unplanned resell” and “used” or “unused products” in order to examine the relationship between consumers’ reselling and purchasing behavior. We named the four consumer resale types as 1) extra purchase, 2) temporary ownership, 3) mis-purchase, and 4) disposition. Further, we implemented consumer interviews to empirically examine our taxonomy. Three major implications are derived. Firstly, consumer resale behavior influences consumers’ purchasing decisions. Secondly, consumer unsatisfied resale experience would damage brand image and decrease consumers’ willingness to repurchase. Finally, the motivations and behavior of consumer resale behavior are multidimensional.

Keywords: Consumer Online Resale, Disposition, Secondary Market, C2C E-commerce

INTRODUCTION

For a long time, consumer behavior studies have focused on consumers’ purchasing decisions and behavior. However, thanks to the Internet, more and more consumers not only purchase but also resell merchandise through consumer-to-consumer websites. Interestingly, this type of consumer resale behavior differ from the behavior of retailers and cannot be analyzed from a retailer’s perspective. This paper thus aims to examine and define consumer resale behavior.

On the rise of the Internet, supplier power has declined as consumer power has increased. Consumer power is an important notion in e-commerce and has received a great deal of attention in recent literature (e.g., Andresen, 1999; Bakos, 1991; Carton, 2000; Eaton, 1998; Loewe and Bonchek, 1999; Markillie, 2006; Murphy, 2000; Nunes and Cespedes, 2003; Pitt et al., 2002; Rezabakhsh et al., 2006; Rha and Widdows, 2002; Rust and Oliver, 1994; Schoenbachler and Gordon, 2002; Shipman, 2001; Urban, 2002; Van Raaij, 1998). Consumer-to-consumer e-commerce is a revolutionary and popular model of e-commerce, where consumers form a market to sell and buy products online. In online auctions, consumers may play dual roles as consumers and resellers simultaneously or in turn. The role of a consumer as reseller is a relatively new concept; studies of consumer behavior with regard to selling goals, knowledge and skills differ tremendously from that of the traditional consumer buying and consuming behavior. Why and how consumers learn to be a reseller is an interesting issue in C2C e-commerce research. Unfortunately, the behavior of consumer reselling online has not been studied in depth.

To explore the aforementioned phenomenon further, we first review literature and identify the background of consumer resale situations in order to elucidate our research questions for the nature and representation of consumer resale behavior in C2C e-commerce market and the possible implications for researchers and marketers. Next, we conceptually define and specify types of consumer online resale behavior in a taxonomy followed by consumer interviews to examine the plausibility of the taxonomy further. Finally, we present the conclusions and implications of the research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The role of consumer as reseller

The Oxford Concise Dictionary and the Shorter Oxford Dictionary define consumers as “the user as opposed to the producer of a product.” In academia, Schiffman and Kanuk (2000) argued that while “consumer” is used to describe two different kinds of consuming entities--the personal consumer and the organizational consumer--consumer behavior
studies only focus on ultimate consumers or end users, who purchase goods and services for their own use, for the use of the household, or as gifts to friends. Similarly, Mullen and Johnson (1990) described consumers by referring to “an individual who uses products, goods, or services of some organization” (p.1). Walters and Bergiels (1989) defined consumers as “who determines personal wants, buys products, and uses those products” (p.5). Scholars share the consensus that consumers are those who purchase or who are involved in the purchasing process. More importantly, the purchases are for self-use or as a gift, not for production or resell for profit.

The broad classification of buyer behavior encompasses two different constructs and areas of study, namely, consumer behavior and consumption behavior (Glock and Nicosia, 1963, 1964). Consumer behavior refers to the buying behavior of individual consumers and groups of consumers, that is, the spending units such as family or household. This area of study is concerned with the factors which cause such spending units to behave as they do. Consumption behavior studies focus on explaining the behavior of aggregates of spending units—i.e., the behavior of consumers in the economy as a whole. Schiffman and Kanuk (2000) identified consumer behavior as how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources on consumption-related items. The definition of consumer behavior provided by the scholars above addresses only purchasing behavior, and does not include behavior of disposing of or reselling products.

Some scholars, however, expanded the study to include the disposition of products. Mowen (1995), for example, believes that consumer behavior is “the study of the buying units and the exchange processes involved in acquiring, consuming, and disposing of goods, services, experiences, and ideas (p.5).” Jacoby (1976) defined consumer behavior as “the acquisition, consumption and disposition of goods, services, time and ideas by decision-making units (p.1).” Solomon et al. (2002) explained that consumer behavior research is the study “of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires (p.5).” Engel et al. (1986) defined consumer behavior as “those acts of individuals directly involved in obtaining, using, and disposing of economic goods and services, including the decision-making processes that precede and determine these acts (p.5).”

The above definitions all rely on the fact that consumer behavior is related to a purchasing process, including after-purchase disposal behavior. However, the definitions offered by the literature do not seem to explain fully the way consumers dispose of their products. As much of the research in consumer behavior has focused on the acquisition phase, the disposition process has received relatively less attention (Mowen, 1995; Lastovicka and Fernandez, 2005; Rassuli and Harrell, 1990). There are only few past studies have explored consumer disposition and the extended channel (Paden and Stell, 2005; Hanson, 1980; Harrell and McConocha, 1992; Jacoby et al., 1977; Lastovicka and Fernandez, 2005; Price et al., 2000; Young and Wallendorf, 1989).

Jacoby et al. (1977) in the first research about consumer disposition developed a conceptual taxonomy for describing consumer disposition behavior and classified reselling as one of the disposition choices. Following Jacoby’s research, Hanson (1980) developed an explanatory model of several salient factors involved in the disposition decision process. Harrell and McConocha (1992) explored further and conducted a field study to discover how consumer characteristics are related to the selection of several important disposition options. Jacoby et al. (1977) suggested for future research in their article that consumer disposition patterns would vary over time. With the availability of C2C e-commerce in the Internet era, the resale pattern of consumer disposition is now not only more significant, the behavior is also more sophisticated. Mowen (1995) noted that “disposition phase” refers to what consumers do with a product once they “have completed using it.” But today, consumers may resell unused or not completely used goods through the Internet to gain profit or recover partial payment by taking the benefit of lower transaction cost than what is been charged in traditional used market. Paden and Stell (2005) reported in their study that new formats for product redistribution are emerging and evolving, thus; consumers have more options to dispose unwanted possessions. The most important emerging disposition channel is doubtlessly the Internet via online auctions.

Because of environmental protection and recycling issues, consumer disposition issues are receiving more research attention. However, consumer resale behavior, a choice of disposition, still draws little attention from researchers. While most prior disposition research has focused on surface descriptions of disposal behavior, little has looked into the essence of consumer reselling and its influences. Consumer disposition by reselling, which was once only a small part of consumer behavior, now has grown to be a huge section of C2C e-commerce. The proliferation and vast amount of online resale trading among consumers has complicated consumer disposing behavior and thereby changes the aspects
of consumer behavior. By reselling on the Internet, consumers are empowered more than ever to initiate and close a trade for both profit and pleasure. The scope of this behavior is well beyond the traditional consumer behavior model, whether it is for both profit or pleasure.

**CONSUMER ONLINE RESALE: A NEW BOUNDARY OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR**

Information technology has reduced the search and transaction costs for buyers and sellers to locate and trade products, and can thereby facilitate the creation of technology-mediated electronic exchanges (Ghose et al., 2005). The Internet allows sellers to easily reach a worldwide market and buyers to easily locate items that frequently would be unavailable in traditional physical stores. C2C e-commerce is a popular model of e-commerce, where the low search and transaction costs in IT-enabled markets have realized new and used goods exchanges that would not have been viable in a comparable brick-and-mortar environment. The sale of used products has been around for a long time in physical markets. However, electronic exchanges alter the scale and scope of what is possible with regard to the sale of used products (Ghose et al., 2005).

eBay, the largest and most popular C2C company running an online auction site, has 203 million registered users worldwide, with 90 million users in the U.S. and 113 million users in eBay’s international markets (U. S. Census Bureau, 2005). If eBay were a country, it would be the fifth most populous country in the world behind China, India, the United States, and Indonesia (U. S. Census Bureau, 2005). In the 2nd Quarter of 2006, gross merchandise volume, the total value of all successfully closed items on eBay’s trading platforms, was US$12.9 billion internationally (eBay news release, 2006). Prior reports indicated that online auctions would account for US$48.5 billion of the expected US$195 billion of online retailing revenues by 2006 (Forrester Research, 2001). Approximately 1.3 million sellers utilize eBay as a primary or secondary source of income, according to A.C. Nielsen’s 2006 International Research.

Most sellers on eBay are ordinary consumers who sell unwanted goods on an auction platform. We infer from the huge seller numbers and sales amount, a great deal of consumer behavior is no longer the same as the traditional consumer behavior of only purchasing and consuming. These consumers actually play a role as retailers; therefore, they have a dual role as a consumer and reseller simultaneously. Suter and Hardesty (2005) made explicit comment on the dual roles played by consumers in a C2C transaction. In discussing online auctions, Suter and Hardesty remarked that consumer sellers, serving a retailing function, can allow consumer buyers to determine the price they are willing to pay. Flexible pricing is one of most interesting characteristics of online auctions, so it draw considerable attention from researchers interested in studying the unique pricing system. The pricing system also reveals that most online sellers are amateurs because they allow more bargaining room for buyers. The flexibility of online auctions not only brings significant numbers of online consumers on eBay, but many, in fact, are performing dual roles as both buyers and resellers.

Little research has been done on the resale behavior of consumers. In particular, the formation of consumer online resale motivation and the backward influence on offline purchase plans and decision-making when consumers intend to resell at the time of purchase has not been adequately researched. For example, consumers may feel less risk and be more willingly to purchase higher-priced products offline if they have the skill using online auctions to resell the products at a higher price. In view of the prosperity of C2C e-commerce, it is a strong need to further investigate the behavior of C2C resellers to better explain the consumer resale phenomenon.

**A TAXONOMY OF CONSUMER ONLINE RESALE BEHAVIOR**

By excluding professional full-time sellers or retailers on auction sites from our study scope, we attempt to delineate consumer online resale behavior by developing a taxonomy. We classify the resale behavior of consumers into four categories based on the first dimension “planned resell” or “unplanned resell” and the second dimension “reselling unused products” or “reselling used products” in order to study the essence of the resale behavior.

**Planned to resell upon purchase**
We define the first dimension “planned resell” as the condition when consumers, before purchase, consider that they can and have the intention to resell the target product after using it for a period of time. Consumers will receive compensation in the future if the product is successfully resold on an online auction site. Once consumers have the thought to resell the products, how the products can be resold for a desired profit becomes a major concern which pre-determines consumer evaluation and willingness to buy. Thus, we propose “intention to resell” as the first dimension of classification. While the intention to resell can occur anytime—after purchase, during purchase, or even before purchase—only if the intention to resell occurs before the purchase is the condition termed a “planned resell” behavior; otherwise, if the resell intention occurs after purchase, it is called “unplanned resell.”

“Intention to resell” is an important concept we use to analyze consumer resale behavior. If consumers do not intend to sell, their passive disposal behavior is more like traditional disposition in prior literatures (e.g., Hanson, 1980; Harrell and McConocha, 1992; Jacoby et al., 1977). On the other hand, selling is used to be the retailers’ job and the main purpose for retailers to purchase products is to resell. The “consumer reseller” described here stands between traditional consumers and retailers, and consumer resale behavior is an amalgam of traditional consumer and retailer behavior. Consumers play a role closer to that of a retailer if they plan to resell. In this case, product buying blends the purposes of personal use and future business. If consumers uncover the resell intention after they have purchased and used the product for a while without a prior plan of reselling, they are more like traditional consumers in that product buying is mainly considered for personal consumption at the time of purchase.

Another reason we use the dimension of “planned” or “unplanned resell” is that the nature of consumer reselling is strongly linked to purchasing. Since the major purpose of consumer purchase is for personal use, consumers are not consumers if their purchase is solely for resale. Thus, to analyze consumer resale behavior, we have to start from examining the motivation for purchasing.

Unused or used products

The second dimension we propose is whether the products consumers sell are “unused” or “used.” The behavior of reselling used goods or unused goods is quite different. Reselling unused products is more similar to the behavior of retailers, while reselling used goods is more like traditional consumer disposing behavior. The motivation to dispose of used and unwanted goods is clear; though, the reasons for consumers to resell unused products are unknown to us. Using the resell plan and product usage condition as our classification scheme, we identify four different types of resale behavior, each with its unique meaning.

Four types of resale behavior

In the “extra purchase” situation (see Table 1), consumers sell unused goods, with the reselling a planned behavior. This occurs when consumers buy extra units of the same product over and above those purchased for self use with the intention of reselling the extra for profit or for personal enjoyment. For example, travelers may go abroad and buy products at a lower price than that in their domestic markets, and may buy one for self use and buy extra to list on online auction sites to make a profit. It is important to clarify that the subjects we study here are consumers, not retailers. Therefore, the motivation of these buyers to purchase products is to satisfy their own needs, not to buy and sell them for profit as a retailer. Therefore purchasing for self use is a must in this type of behavior.

The “temporary ownership” type of consumer sellers are usually sophisticated consumers and savvy auction site users who have plentiful experience in reselling used goods on online auction sites. In their minds, products are flow assets which can be easily traded in exchange for cash at a low transaction cost. Having expertise to resell, they are knowledgeable of the possible resale price as well as the risk if they can’t resell the goods successfully online. For instance, consumers may replace their mobile phones more frequently because they know they can sell a “Nokia 5500” cell phone for 70% of the price they paid after six months of use. Of course, market uncertainty may also cause consumers to lose money if they sell the cell phone at a lower price than expected. With the development of such purchasing and resale skills like retailers, consumers’ purchase considerations and behavior are significantly different than the traditional decision-making. We will discuss the effects further in later part of the article.
Table 1. Taxonomy of Online Consumer Resale Behavior

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<td>PLANNED RESELL</td>
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<td>UNPLANNED RESELL</td>
<td>MIS-PURCHASE</td>
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In “mis-purchase” type reselling, consumers may mistakenly purchase personally inappropriate items, and find returning them not worth the effort. For example, according to the law, consumers in Taiwan have to return mis-purchased goods within 14 days with complete original package and receipts, or they can not get a refund. In this context, consumer sellers chance being unable to return goods and may thus sell those mis-purchased items, such as clothing in the wrong size or the wrong computer components, via online auction sites. Having difficulties in returning these products for refund, the online reselling becomes a risk reliever for consumers. Also, it can be a channel for impulse purchasers or shopping addicts to dispose of superfluous goods.

The “disposition” type behavior is a better understood behavior in existing literature. Consumers dispose of their used products to secondary markets. Prior research about consumers disposing second-hand goods falls in this category. Jacoby et al. (1977) in his research about disposition developed a conceptual taxonomy to describe consumer disposition behavior. Although “sell it” has been a disposition category in Jacoby’s study, the ease and intensity of online reselling in our study indicates a revolutionary difference than what was proposed by Jacoby and his colleagues. With the Internet, consumers can currently resell unwanted goods with much lower cost and at a higher scale than before. Comparing the popularity of traditional and IT-based secondary markets, we can see that the disposing scale is much larger than before the Internet era. In the United States each year, there are US$9 million of traditional garage sales dwarfed by the $19 billion worth of C2C online auctions (Dykema, 1999; Herrmann, 1997).

CONSUMER INTERVIEWS

We conducted consumer interviews to collect possible consumer purchasing decisions and online resale behavior, evaluating correspondence to the proposed taxonomy. By a snowball process, a purposeful sample of nine participants who had successful experience in selling a number of products online took part in this study. Three of the nine participants are males and six of them are females. Intensive interviews were conducted using a conversational, unstructured, exploratory interview style guided by participants’ stories of their shopping and online resale experiences. Each consumer interview lasted about an hour.

Participants ranged in age from 19 to 32, with an average age of 25. They were current or past university students from different disciplines with 4 to 15 years of computer usage experience. Regarding online transaction experience, they had 2 to 8 years of online purchase experience and 1 to 5 years of online resale experience. Almost 95% of their reselling was through global online C2C auction websites affiliated in Taiwan, such as Yahoo Auction or eBay Auction.

To help participants recall their experiences, a conversational-styled personal interview was conducted to gain in-depth information from each participant. The interviews focused on the participants’ perceptions of themselves, of their environment and of their experiences. No questions were pre-determined or standardized. Information gathering came from a free-flowing conversation, relying on the interaction between the interviewer and the participants (Patton, 1990). Burns (1994) stressed that there are many advantages for in-depth or open-ended interviews; one of the advantages is the greater degree of informality involved, leading to stronger rapport.
FINDINGS

The results support our four-cell taxonomy. The taxonomy as a tool to analyze consumer online resale behavior is meaningful and useful, providing plenty of insights. In this session, we discuss findings from our interview regarding the typology and important subjects discovered in the process. As noted above, the present investigation is considered a highly preliminary exploration of relatively unknown terrain. Its primary goals have been to acquire some familiarity with the phenomenon, to achieve some insight, and to develop propositions for future study. The findings are categorized into three subsections (motivation to sell, reselling influencing purchasing, and plan to resell before purchasing), each of which examined the robustness and meaningfulness of the taxonomy.

Motivations to sell

Common responses supplied to this question include disposing of unwanted used goods, reselling for fun, and turning goods into cash. The motives of consumer reselling are multidimensional, such as monetary return, hedonic purposes, avoidance of waste, and reduced perceived risk. The resale behaviors may evolve from one type to another or exist simultaneously. Mostly, the reselling started from unplanned disposing of used goods:

- “In the beginning, I tried to sell used text books for fun. The success inspired me, and I listed unwanted goods after cleaning house because it’s a waste to keep this stuff.”
- “Sometimes when I was running out of money, I would sell an unwanted item.”
- “If I bought too much and I can’t use them all, I would sell them.”
- “I would sell a product if it did not meet my expectation.”

Reselling influencing purchasing

The purpose of the question is to examine our proposition that reselling will influence purchasing behavior. Among the nine participants, three replied that there is no significant influence on their purchasing, while six replied positively including the answers like “becoming more sensitive to online and offline prices,” “more willingly buying from the Web,” “trying to sell more to get cash for a new purchase,” and “feeling frustrated when reselling products in a low price.” The results supported the strong relation between purchasing and reselling. More importantly, the reselling also affected repurchasing, like a cycle. Thus, resale behavior and resale result play important roles in deciding the first purchase and subsequent repurchase.

- “I found that prices on auction sites are much cheaper and I now consider buying the products from there.”
- “After selling a cell phone at a very low price, I wondered about the reason and considered not buying the same brand next time.”
- “I realized that the huge amount of unwanted goods in the storeroom is no longer trash. It’s another bank account for me-- if I sell them I can get cash for lots of new stuff I desire.”

Plan to resell before purchasing

When asked about their plans to resell before purchasing and the influences of the planned act, five of nine answered that they had plans to resell prior to purchase. The results conform to our taxonomy’s proposition that consumers form intentions to resell even before purchase. Equipped with the Internet, now consumers evolve to a position that competes with retailers. However, it shows that reselling does have a positive effect on consumers being more willing to buy from retailers and other suppliers. It is because consumer sellers feel backed up by the convenient online resale channel as a disposition outlet, so they perceive less risk even if they’ve purchased something less desirable. Since online reselling can rectify the awkward situations of poor buying and meanwhile provide the cash to increase next-stage
buying power, consumer sellers have more incentives to buy and resell. Hence, consumers’ purchase behavior affected by the intention to sell is well worth our attention. Their replies for the questions were:

- “I sold a pair of shoes at a price just 5% below the price I bought them at. I am thrilled. From that day I learned I could wear a new pair for a while and sell them when I don’t like them. The best part is, I can even have most of my money back when I sell them.”
- “When I purchase a high-priced product, I consider buying one with a better resale price.”
- “I now keep the receipt, certificate and original package of purchased goods, because I can prove it’s authentic when I want to sell them.”
- “I am more likely to try a new product, because I can sell it if it doesn’t meet my expectation.”
- “After successfully selling several products, I wondered if I could make a living by selling products online.”
- “I found some brands are much cheaper in United States and I would buy extra to resell back home if I get to travel there.”

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

From the interviews, we discovered that the motivations for consumer online reselling are multidimensional. Unlike retailers who have profit as the only goal of selling, consumers resell for different purposes. These purposes include practical concerns of monetary return and reduction of purchase risk, or emotional dimensions of pleasure and avoidance of guilt. Just as consumers select and purchase to fulfill different needs, online consumer reselling serves to meet individuals’ financial, utilitarian and hedonistic goals. However, it is well illustrated in consumer interviews that consumer resale behavior is idiosyncratic and multifaceted and differs fundamentally from consumer buying behavior. The results of the consumer interviews demonstrate our taxonomy, in which all the participants’ online resale experiences are identified and classified within four types of consumer resale behavior. Among the four patterns of resale behavior, the “disposition” type accounts for the largest proportion of resellers in our interviews. Not only have all participants undertaken disposition reselling, but they all began their online reselling with unplanned disposition of used goods. The disposal of unwanted goods is the most common type of reselling by far and is the most studied behavior (Hanson, 1980; Harrell and McConocha, 1992; Jacoby et al., 1977; Lastovicka and Fernandex, 2005; Price et al. 2000; Young and Wallendorf, 1989).

The second-largest proportion of resale behavior identified in our interviews is the “mispurchase” type. Eight out of nine participants reported that they used C2C websites as a channel by which to resell mispurchased goods. Because of consumer rationality, one cannot avoid feeling regret about what one has mispurchased. Once this awkward post-purchase situation occurs, consumers are eager to resell unused goods online to redress the problem and recoup their money. The motivation of the mispurchase type of reselling may help us to understand why the prices of unused goods listed on C2C auction sites sometimes are much lower than their retail prices; mispurchase resellers do not value the unused goods, simply want to get rid of them, and don’t employ any type of real plan for reselling.

Two of nine participants reported to have performed “extra purchase” reselling, which is planned online reselling. Despite the proportion’s being smaller, this type of reselling illuminates some important insights. Once consumers have successfully made a profit from extra purchase reselling, the profit-making motive drives them to devote more time and investment into reselling unused products. In extra purchase reselling, consumers may face the risks of overstocking or product depreciation, just like the risks experienced by a retailer. To avoid the potential loss, consumers would train themselves to acquire the necessary resale expertise in purchasing, pricing, promotion, and service in the planned buying and reselling process. Gradually, the extra purchase resellers may transform themselves from consumer to retailer. The main purpose of their purchase is planned profit-making by arbitrage, while the personal desire fulfillment becomes an additional benefit.

Five of nine participants indicated that they had plans to resell prior to purchase of goods for personal use, which is the “temporary ownership” type of online resale. From the interviews, we found that the higher priced and more fashion-oriented the products, the greater the likelihood consumers will plan prior to purchase to use and resell the prod-
ucts. When purchasing high-priced products, consumers perceive a higher risk in the transaction; therefore, they will search for more information or choose a well-known brand to reduce perceived risk (Engel et al., 1995; Grewal et al., 1994). Temporary ownership reselling may thus serve as a risk-reliever for hesitant consumers. On the other hand, fashion-oriented products are easily planned for resale in that consumers are more likely to change their tastes with changing trends. In this case, temporary ownership reselling allows a consumer to enjoy luxurious and fashionable products for a while while getting some of the expense reimbursed later from reselling.

While the speculated cannibalization effect (Ghose et al., 2005) predicts C2C online auction market may steal some sales from retailers, online auction sites that resell consumers’ unwanted goods may actually carry over and lead to more new product sales from retailers (Paden and Stell, 2005), in particular with the extra purchase type of reselling. The other three types of consumer reselling also can bring the consumer cash to recover part of the original purchase payment, which could encourage them to buy more new products from retailers (Paden and Stell, 2005) and increase retail sales. Nonetheless, the online secondary market could be a double-edged sword. Although mis-purchase and temporary ownership types of reselling could act as a useful risk reliever to buyers, these two types of behavior may drive consumers to spend less time in searching product information and, therefore, to purchase less desirable goods in quantity. The possible positive or negative impact of the online secondary market on consumers and retailers deserves further examination in future research.

The study found that the consumer decision-making process is not only influenced by the consumer’s intention to buy but is also significantly affected by the consumer’s intention to resell. In the pre-purchase phase, consumers with the intention to resell could search for different information and have different evaluations of market preference and perceived risks than those with only the intention to buy. Consumers’ resale price knowledge of the secondary market would also directly affect their attitudes toward and their perceived value of a brand, regardless of any intention to resell. In the post-purchase phase, consumer satisfaction with a brand may be heavily altered by the resale result, as noted earlier. Consumers may also be less likely to purchase a new product if they can’t make “completed use” of it without reselling it. In this circumstance, consumer reselling could help to decrease the psychological dissonance that arises from a mispurchase or incomplete use (Okada, 2001). Finally, consumers may establish a mental account of resalable goods to foresee a product’s future value. The mental account of whether or not goods are resalable exists for both unused and used goods, even if the goods are not purchased yet. This mental accounting may interact with consumers’ present cash accounts and affect both buying and resale behavior.

The relationships between the concepts of motivation, perceived risk, brand attitude, perceived value, intention to buy, satisfaction, consumer loyalty and the construct of consumer online resale behavior are of great value and interest for further study. By scrutinizing online resale behavior, we can better explore and identify consumer resale strategy and the interrelated buyer bidding behavior in C2C e-commerce. The pervasive consumer resale phenomenon has blurred the traditional boundary between consumer and retailer. Therefore, an advanced comparison of the differences in behavior between consumer as consumer, retailer as retailer, and consumer as reseller is necessary to capture the full aspect of consumer resale behavior.

With the growth in the Internet user population and the development of the Internet infrastructure, there is little doubt that the phenomenon of consumers as resellers will proliferate. Our study has only scratched the surface of consumer resale behavior, but by developing the taxonomy of types of online reselling, it has shed some light on the phenomenon of consumer resale behavior. Given its potential impact on changing purchase and consumption patterns, online consumer resale behavior should be extensively researched and addressed. Even a large portion of consumers have not sold or purchased on the Internet, the impact of C2C e-commerce is intensifying, with more sell agents and online resale consignment stores emerging daily (Paden and Stell, 2005). In sum, the more efficient the information flow on the Internet and the lower the cost to resell products online, the faster consumer behavior will change. Researchers and marketers ignore these changes at their peril.
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