

THE INFLUENCE OF ONLINE PRODUCT REVIEWS ON THE SAUDI CUSTOMERS' PURCHASE INTENTION

Fahad A Alqahtani

Najran University, Saudi Arabia

faalqammash@nu.edu.sa

Khald S Alatawy 

College of Administrative Sciences, Najran University, Saudi Arabia

ksalatawy@nu.edu.sa

Abstract

The advanced technology has led to many social platforms in the digital and virtual space has made business activities to easy. The social media has made many people to access information online and make personal decisions. Online reviewers and service recommendations have played an important role in the decision making on purchases. The researchers have drawn most of their attention on the online reviews and purchase intentions. However, because of the complexity of the topic a lot of research has not been exhausted and there is need for further studies on the same topic. The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of online product reviews on the Saudi customers' purchase intention. The qualitative research method was used to collect primary data through semi structured questions. Purposive sampling was used to get 40 participants for the interviews. The results from this study revealed that most of the clients in Saudi Arabia use online platforms to source information regarding what they want to purchase and that has a great impact on their decision to buy the product as opposed to the offline channels. The results indicated that Saudi Arabia uses online shopping only from other nations but not in their organizations. The customers' attitude towards e-commerce has a positive influence on the other users. Moreover, the motives of the users determine their purchase decision. This may be due to emotional behavior or cultural restriction regarding online shopping. This can easily affect other customers' motives to buy online. The reviews and

recommendations are easily available and it is time and cost efficient. Therefore, it can be concluded that when the customers have a positive attitude towards the product they are likely to purchase it.

Keywords: Online reviews, customer purchase intentions, trust, loyalty

INTRODUCTION

Overview of online product reviews

Personal opinions are reviews for goods and services have become a valuable sources of information that helps the users to make purchasing decisions (Becker & Nobre, 2014). A lot of research has been done on impact of online reviews and purchase intentions. However, because of the complexity of the topic a lot of research has not been exhausted and there is need for further studies on the same topic. As a result, the current study was conducted to fill the gaps left out by other researcher on the influence of online product reviews on the Saudi customers 'purchase intention (Bickart & Schindler, 2017). This study will be significant since it will add more data to the existing literature and give more insight to further studies. Research shows that with rapid advanced technology and excess use of internet there are a lot of opportunities of gathering and posting information. People are no longer limited to face to face interaction. They communicate through blogs, chat rooms, social sites and discussion forums among others (Blythe & Cairns, 2009). There is a new generation of different online tools, approaches, and applications such as social network sites, online communities, bloggers, as well as customer review sites. These have transformed the internet into a transformed interactive place that allows wide technology mediated social participation worldwide (Chang & Lewis, 2013). Due to improved technology the online word of mouth has been made easy. It is now a major source of information as well as empowerment to clients. Online reviews, opinions, experiences, and attitudes expressed by other clients has influence of online product reviews on the Saudi customers 'purchase intention (Burtona & Khammash, 2010). Through internet generated content, people can share their opinions as well as experiences regarding a certain brand, company, services or product (Constantinides & Fountain, 2008). This helps the customers to make personal decisions. Such reviews and recommendations are easily accessible hence they have weakened the power of communication as a strategy in marketing. The online information given by other clients influences the customers 'views, preferences as well as decision to purchase more than the information provided by the company (Chua & Banerjee, 2015). The online marketing has also enabled the clients to compare the offers

provided in the market and search for advice through product reviews. Research shows that the predominant audience on the review websites is made of the customers who seek information regarding the prospective purchases. These platforms have been widely accepted because they have a greater influence on purchases (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2016). Most customers trust negative online reviews than positive ones because when something is talked to too much online might be a just marketing strategy. However, the negative review might be from an experience from the client who may have used the product. Nevertheless, positive reviews result to favorable attitude towards the client and that increases the purchase intentions. Therefore, it can be concluded that when the clients have a positive attitude towards the product they are likely to purchase it (Dellarocas, 2014).

Through consumer generated online customer reviews, it is easy for one to assess the way online content as well as word of mouth helps in the clients to make their decision to purchase a certain product or service (Fan & Gordon, 2014). This is based on the trust they build on the customers through reviews found online. These reviews have supplemented the opinions from experts and the way the companies inform the clients about a given product. The internet has made it possible through gathering information and distributing it at a lower cost (DiMauro & Bulmer, 2014). Online reviews reach a wider range of customers hence judging the trustworthiness of online store as well as a seal of assurance. It is realized that the reviews have the strongest influence of trust judgments. The customers trust the sites where most of the clients have visited and recommended (Floh, et al., 2013). The clients look at the perception of the companies, websites as well as the consumer characteristics. In Saudi Arabia, most of the clients do not know the vendors behind a given product or service hence making it hard for them to build that trust. Trust is defined as the confidence developed between the two partners' reliability and integrity. Therefore, the customers have some expectations from the service provider if he is dependable and reliable (Australien Competition & Consumer Commission, 2013).

Online product reviews in developed countries vs developing countries

As online business is widely practiced in the developed nations it is still young in the developing nations such as Saudi Arabia. Though it is the nation that has the largest as well as the fastest information and technology as well as communication the progress is still slow towards online marketing and business activities. The researchers have concentrated so much on the online shopping among the developing nations and found out that most people still do not trust online shopping especially in Saudi Arabia. For instance, Hansen (2016), asserts that there are many opportunities for online shopping in Saudi Arabia, most of the clients do not utilize it. Saudi

Arabia is found in the Arabian Peninsula and its culture is based on the Islamic and Arabian traditions. Arabic is the national language but they also speak English as it is regarded as a second language. Islam is their religion which governs the legal, political, personal as well as economic issues (Hass, 2015). The Saudi Arabia is made up of four different regions with different populations and every region has its own culture and history unique from each other. However, the four religion have the same traditional lifestyles (Henning-Thurau & Walsh, 2013). Initially, the tribal affiliations divided the group in major categories but currently the categories are based on the economic and academic status. Initially, Saudi Arabia was among the poorest nations in the whole world but as a result of oil the nation built its physical structures and started developing economically (Goldsmith & Horowitz, 2016). Online shopping is defined as a business interaction where the client engages with the seller on the commercial website. In this case the client browses for the goods and services he or she needs and use contact the seller through online means and make purchases (Huang, et al., 2015). Apart from purchasing there are online stores where the client seeks information makes orders and arranges for payment and waits for delivery of goods. In Saudi Arabia, the online experience is not very easy due to lack of trust and cultural barriers. However, online transaction is made then the delivery methods are applied where the clients leaves the address when placing an order (Ho-Dac, et al., 2013).

In this case is not just enough on the online shopping experience but rather the clients also look for the most convenient delivery methods that makes them enjoy the mode of purchasing (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013). There are many challenges that the clients in Saudi Arabia experience regarding online shopping. For instance, despite the fact that there is popularity in the online shopping in other nations, it is still slow in the Saudi Arabia and that has posed a lot of challenge to the online business. It is still regarded as a new wave of information and technology revolution. Though Saudi Arabia is the fastest growing nation in the Middle East nations and it has adopted information and technology very fast there are still few business organizations which have adopted e-commerce as opposed to the corporations in the developed nations (Hung & Li, 2016).

Rationale of the study

A lot of study has been done on the impact of online reviews on the consumer purchase intentions, however since the topic is wide a lot have not been exhausted. Therefore, this study fills the gap and the limitations left by the previous researchers. In addition, the data obtained from this study will add knowledge on the effects of online customer reviews on the purchase intentions of the consumers. The results will broaden the knowledge on the changing impact of

online reviews as well as the significant theoretical contributions will help the academicians and scholars while conduct future research. The information given from this study will also help the managers to know how reviews influence the buying behavior and will use those reviews to change good to fit in the taste and preference list of the customers. Moreover, the managers can know that the marketers can directly or indirectly influence the purchase intensions of the customers. The organization can use the reviews to ensure quality products are provided to meet the promises and the brand. A lot of research has been done on the impact of online shopping on the customer's decision making. However, due to the complexity of the topic a lot has not been exhausted reading the topic. There is a growing need to understand the processes of online shopping and the variables that influence the customer buying decisions. There is an increased number of online shoppers how have different experiences and attitudes towards different goods and services. A large number of studies havs done a global scale research in the developed nations but few have centered on the customers in the Saudi Arabia (Teng, et al., 2014).

Online reviews have become a center of product information that inform the clients on certain products for them to make sound decisions. As online customer reviews increase popularity, it has made most clients to increase their trust drawing more attention for scholars and market practitioners to try to understand why online customer reviews have influenced the buying decision of the clients. Previous studies have already shown that these online reviews shape the attitudes of the customers towards a certain subject (Wang, 2011). Online customer reviews can be a good way to improve the customers' ability to evaluate the product and make decisions to buy. However, the negative reviews may also affect the decisions made by buyer. Some competition companies give negative reviews so as to discourage clients from buying that product. Marketers may decide to create fake profiles so that they post as customers regarding a certain product which may be negative or positive towards the reader (Senecala & Nantel, 2014).

The main objective of this study was to investigate how online product reviews influence the customers' purchase intention in Saudi Arabia. In order to achieve the objective, the following research questions were used to guide the study;

- What are some of the social factors that influence behavior?
- What are the economic factors that influence your buying intentions?
- How does online customer review influence your intentions to buy a product?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Due to the recent technology, internet, social media as well as user created content influence the way the consumers make the purchases. For instance, in 2014, 10 million internet users are between 12 and 75 years of age. An online shop is different from the traditional physical shop

whereby in online shop. This has its own limitation where it can only be done by people who can read and use the computer (Schmidt & Spreng, 2016). People who read and use products usually read as well as write reviews online. Study shows that over 80% of the clients who use the products online read reviews before they decide to purchase. Due to these exchange a new form of online word of mouth has risen. These refers to the statement that the customers make online regarding a product through the websites, messaging, news feeds and social networking sites about a given product, company and brand (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013).

Electronic word of mouth

People's attitude, purchase intentions as well as behavior can be influenced by what they hear about from the reviewers hence the term word of mouth. Research shows that the personal conversations and exchanging of information just not just affect the consumer's buying intentions but also affects their expectations. According to Schmidt & Spreng (2016), word of mouth makes the consumers aware, raises their perceptions, attitudes, intentions and raises their expectations. Clients use statements and recommendations to assess the credibility of the product. This part of the paper reviews previous studies on the influence of customer reviews on the customer's purchase intentions (Preece & Shneiderman, 2009). Under this section, the following topics will be covered; the importance of online product reviews from marketing perspective, the value of online product reviews on Consumers' purchase intention process. In addition, influence of negative or positive online product recommendations on purchase intention and finally the role of culture, attitudes, trust and security on online consumer reviews.

Importance of online product reviews from marketing perspective

Online customer review is one of the most commonly used word of mouth. According to Mudambi & Schuff, 2010) the results from his study indicate that 88% of the customers who have read online reviews to know the quality of the product that the company offers and among the 88% , the 39% usually read the reviews on a daily basis. This shows how frequent people read online reviews. Moreover, Lu, *et al.*, (2014) also found out that 88% of the customers consult online reviews before making purchases and out of that 66% are likely to buy the product after reading the product. Online reviews coming from the clients who have purchased the product give extensive information and that attracts more customers' interest. As a result, most companies are taking advantage of online reviews as a strategy of marketing. The platforms concerning the goods and services as well as brands are advertised through online reviews. In the online reviews, the reviewer can help to add more information about the product and recommend consumers to buy the product. (Li, *et al.*, 2011), However, the reviewers may

decide to give a negative or positive comment on the product. Online customer reviews improve the ability of consumers to evaluate goods and services. It is the authenticity of online customer reviews which is still a concern because of the positive online reviews. Marketers generate reviews to build the brand image and attract more customers, they may decide to create an image and post like a client and talk good about the product so that they improve purchases (Klein & Ford, 2013).

The role of culture, attitudes, trust and security on online consumer reviews

Online reviews influence the attitude of the customers towards the company or the product. Positive reviews result to favorable attitude towards the product. On the other hand, negative reviews decrease the customer's attitude towards the product as well as the sales of the company. The positive online reviews help the company to place their goods on the market and create a favorable attitude towards the customers (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2016). According to the theory of planned behavior as applied by Lee & Youn, (2009) when he investigated the customer's attitude towards purchases. The researcher was investigating the relationship between attitude and purchase intentions. The researcher recommended that the companies can create an effective marketing strategy that emphasizes on the positive parts of the products to increase the attitude and the buying intentions of the buyer. Attitude and suggestions given by clients are valuable sources of information to the customers because they help users to make purchase decisions very quickly (Lee & Youn, 2009).

The buying behavior of the consumer is determined by the social, psychological and cultural factors. Basically, culture has the widest impact and pressure on not just the individual but also the society. DiMauro & Bulmer, (2014) asserted that the human behavior is heterogeneous because of the cultural difference. Culture and religion go hand in hand. In his study to investigate the way culture and religion influence the buying behavior of the customers, he found out that the buying behavior of individuals is determined by their cultural values (DiMauro & Bulmer, 2014).

On the other hand, Hung & Li, (2016) noted that the online communities build their trust through sharing information. The online reviewers share knowledge and experiences about a given product or company. The results from this study revealed that consumer trust websites which show reviews more than the guides that are professional. In addition, Senecala & Nantel (2014) also noted that the level of trust is enhanced by the way people talk about it especially when it is a new product. Floh, et al., (2013), similarly agree that the online word of mouth is an antecedence of online market trust. Moreover, he noted that loyalty is built through electronic word of mouth. Additionally, Burtona & Khammash, (2010) explained that trust is transferred to

online communities through various social platforms whose viewers have a common goal. Trust can be built through people who know each other especially in the social media, however, it can also be from a person an unknown person to the best target. The reviewers may post a related experience because they may wish to let people know or they may be used as credible as well as trustworthy reviewers who may be used by the company to promote their products and image. Lee, (2011) stated that the social presence of websites can be created by the online customer reviewers and those websites have a positive impact on the trust of the consumer (Lee & Bradlow, 2011).

METHODOLOGY

This section states the research design, sampling method, research procedures, data collection designs and data analysis. The current study was investigating the influence of customer reviews on the customer's purchase intentions. A descriptive research design was employed to help the researcher to understand more about the population characteristics and the aspects in the area of study. This helps the researcher to draw conclusions and make necessary recommendations. There was qualitative research that consisted of semi structured interview which involved 40 participants who were purposively selected. However, interviews are common in the qualitative study. In this case, semi structured interview was the best method of collecting data in order to understand the behavior of the buyers towards online reviews. The open ended questions allow the interviewees to talk freely their opinions, present questions and give suggestions based on their experiences. Semi structured questions intent to explore the participants' ideas and opinions. The primary data was coded and analyzed.

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of online product reviews on the Saudi customers 'purchase intention. The qualitative research method was used to collect primary data which used semi structured questions. The researcher used purposive sampling method to get 40 participants who participated in the interviews. Out of 40 participants, 20 were male and 20 were female. There were aged between 20 to 40 years as indicated in the table below. Most of the participated agreed that they often read online reviews to search for relevant information before deciding on the purchase. However, two of the participants said that they do not consult online reviews. Data also demonstrated that 28 of the participants had searched for product information for the last one month. Moreover, it was noted that Saudi Arabian citizens usually search for online information about a certain product before buying it whether online or offline.

In addition, it was discovered that females are more likely to search for information online than men and most of the women go for online shopping as opposed to men. In another group of the 25-year-old group and above, the participants said that shopping and reading reviews online was getting less with age. Besides that, educational level was also significant as it had a great impact on the attitude and loyalty of the customers. For instance, those participants whose highest level of education was degrees and above were more interested in reading online reviews and shopping as opposed to those with low level of education. To add on that, employment status also played a key role in this study. Those people who were employed showed more interest in reading reviews and buying compared to those with no employment. Furthermore, the data also looked at the psychographic factors like convenience, trust information, time and the cost. Goldsmith & Horowitz, (2016) realized that most Saudi citizens were benefiting from online platforms especially those who had experienced cultural and social challenges. Cultural factors also hindered them from engaging into online searches.

Besides, the results related to demographic information indicated that many females were highly attracted to online shopping as opposed to men. Though shopping online was just a new topic in Saudi but people have embraced it. Results from previous studies indicate that about 62 % of the participants have searched and used online reviews to make purchase intentions. Nevertheless, 48 % of the participants said that they had used online reviews but have never shopped goods online. Therefore, it is practical that most of the Saudi citizens use online customer reviews to decide on their buying intentions (Burtona & Khamash, 2010).

Convenience

Most of the participants said that it is convenient to consult online reviews than having to hear from the marketers. By the time someone makes the decisions to buy the product he or she already is aware of what he is looking for and has gathered enough courage. In addition, due to improved technology, people can now search and products online so shopping is available 24/7 (Hung & Li, 2016).

Information

All the respondents declared that they prefer to search for reviews online to get the information of the product they need. Most reviewers are trusted more than the marketers because they believe that marketers may give fake information or exaggerated information to win the customers' trust. They also said that online sources give more information regarding the product and that's why they prefer to utilize the internet. The information meets their needs for goods

and services they need and they sometimes make requests online and the goods are delivered to them (Goldsmith & Horowitz, 2016).

Culture

The participants were also asked whether culture prohibits them from dealing with some goods. The results indicate that 30% strongly agreed that their culture was very strong and it discouraged and that affects their purchasing intentions. In addition, 35% agreed that culture affected their decisions on purchasing however, 28 % strongly disagreed that culture affected their buying decisions. Nevertheless, 7% of the participants were not sure whether culture affected their buying intentions or not (Zhu & Zhang, 2010).

Peer influence

The data from this study revealed that most people are influenced by their peers in decision making to buy something. For instance, 32% of the participants agreed that they were influenced by their reviewers, 16% agreed strongly that they relied on friend's suggestions on the product before they make the decision. However, 20% did not agree that they were influenced by their peers but they read their suggestions and 20% of the participants strongly did not agree to be checking for their peer's recommendations but read other reviewers. Finally, only 12% of the respondents did not know whether they agree or not if peer influenced their purchase intentions (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2016).

Influence by the role models

The participants said that they buy some products especially women buy beauty products because of their role model's influence. Many people may choose to use the products that are used by the people they known as prominent and role models because they believe that might not be using a bad product. In this study, 43% of the participants strongly disagreed that role models could influence their buying decisions, whereas 6% strongly stated that they make their purchases decisions because of their role models influence. In addition, 8% percent agreed to be influenced by role models while 2% remained neutral on whether they were influenced by their role models or not. This shows that indeed role models do not play a significant role in the decisions making of the purchases among the clients (Wang, 2011).

Religion

The people in Saudi Arabia value their religion so much, most of them are Muslims though they have different cultures. Therefore, religion played an important role in the decision making on

the purchases. For instance, from this study, data indicated that 10% strongly disagreed that religion mattered while 20% did not agree whereas 10 % did not state whether religion could determine their purchase intentions. However, 60% strongly agreed that religion influenced their buying intention therefore in this case, it can be concluded that religion strongly influenced their buying intentions since there are very many religious and cultural restrictions

DISCUSSIONS

The advanced technology has led to many social platforms in the digital and virtual space which have made business activities to easy. The social media has made many people to access information online and make personal decisions. Online reviewers and service recommendations have played an important role in the client's decision making on purchases (Preece & Shneiderman, 2009). Results show that most of the participants were motivated by online reviewers to make their purchase decisions. Most of the participants stated that they felt the convenience of dealing with online reviewers because they did not need to walk all the way to the shop consult and make decisions. In addition, they stated that customer reviews had more weight compared to the market reviewers since the customer reviews already had an experience with the product and could not exaggerate about the product. However, the marketers would exaggerate to get more clients buy goods and services because they are employed to win the customers (Zhu & Zhang, 2010). It was also noted that most clients believe negative comments regarding the product from the reviewers as opposed to the positive ones because they believe that anyone can create a fake profile and pose as a customer and give false testimonies about the product so that they attract their will to buy. However, it is not easy for customers who have a negative experience about a product to lie about it. Motivation was one of the factors that received many points as many participants felt they were motivated by their peers, friends and relatives. They believed that if the people they knew told them about a certain product then they could not lie or exaggerate about it. Therefore, the reviews from friends and relatives on the social media increased the need for purchases. Many Saudi customers seek for information online than dealing with hard copies of papers (Yap, et al., 2013).

Another factor that online reviews contributed is that the information about a product was readily available online. All they needed was data bundles and all the information was there. In addition, they could compare different views and recommendations from different customer reviewers so that they see if the information given is true or false. In this case they can choose the brand or product they prefer. Some customers who buy goods online would find it more convenient since they would just Google get to different review sites and once they are satisfied

they can decide to buy online and make transactions immediately then the product is delivered right away. That saves them on the cost, time and distance to travel to the shops (Wang, 2011).

In addition, the results indicated that the people of younger age as students as well as young professionals embraced online channels so much compared the older ages. They said that they preferred searching for the product they want through reading reviews of other clients before buying it. Moreover, most of them said that they even go ahead buying the product online rather than going to the physical market. When the consumers research for product information online there are various factors that make them decide to purchase. For instance, the key factors identified included, convenience, knowledge, cost and efficiency. In addition, they may be affected by other factors such as prices. In this case they start making comparison of the prices based on the reviews of other customers and they eventually tend to go to places where the prices are slightly lower than the other. They also look for shops which offer discounts and promotions especially in the online shops. Despite of the advanced technology in Saudi Arabia, most of the people do not buy their goods and services online. Therefore, shopping online is still a new trend in Saudi as opposed to other nations all over the world. Most people in Saudi have an attitude towards online shopping however they are expected to grow therefore most of them consult online reviews but go to buy in physical shops where they can feel and touch.

CONCLUSION

Online reviewers and service recommendations have played an important role in the client's decision making on purchases. The advanced technology has led to many social platforms in the digital and virtual space has made business activities to easy. The social media has made many people to access information online and make personal decisions. The researchers have drawn most of their attention on the online reviews and purchase intentions. However, because of the complexity of the topic a lot of research has not been exhausted and there is need for further studies on the same topic. The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of online product reviews on the Saudi customers 'purchase intention. The qualitative research method was used to collect primary data which used semi structured questions. The researcher used purposive sampling method to get 40 participants who participated in the interviews. The results from this study revealed that most of the clients in Saudi Arabia use online platforms to source information regarding what they want to purchase and that has a great impact on their decision to buy the product as opposed to the offline channels. The results indicated that Saudi Arabia uses online shopping only from other nations but not in their organizations. The people's attitudes towards e-commerce has a positive influence on the other users. Moreover, the motives of the users determine their purchase decision. This may be due to emotional behavior

or cultural restriction regarding online shopping. This can easily affect other clients' motives to buy online. The reviews and recommendations are easily available and it is time and cost efficient. Therefore, it can be concluded that when the clients have a positive attitude towards the product they are likely to purchase (Yap, et al., 2013). Online customer reviews can be a good way to improve the customers' ability to evaluate the product and make decisions to buy. However, the negative reviews may also affect the decisions made by buyer. Some competition companies give negative reviews so as to discourage clients from buying that product. Marketers may decide to create fake profiles so that they post as customers regarding a certain product which may be negative or positive towards the reader who is the customer (Preece & Shneiderman, 2009).

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors acknowledge the support provide by the Deanship of Scientific Research at Najran University, Saudi Arabia under Research Grant code (NU/SHED/16/306). Also, recognize the support of all research assistants who helped in data collection.

REFERENCES

- Australian Competition & Consumer Commission. (2013, 12 03). What you need to know about: Online reviews - a guide for business & review platforms. Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, 2601, Australia: Australian Competition & Consumer Commission.
- Becker, K., & Nobre, H. (2014). Social Network Reputation Management: An International Study. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 20:4, 436-451.
- Bickart, B., & Schindler, R. M. (2011). Internet forums as influential sources of consumer information. *Journal of Interactive Marketing* Volume 15, Issue 3, 31–40.
- Blythe, M., & Cairns, P. (2009). Critical methods and user generated content: the iPhone on YouTube. CHI 2009, Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, (pp. 1467-1476). Boston, MA, USA.
- Burtona, J., & Khammash, M. (2010). Why do people read reviews posted on consumer-opinion portals? *Journal of Marketing Management*, Volume 26, Issue 3-4, 230-255.
- Chang, J., & Lewis, C. (2013). Chapter 5: Towards a Framework for Web 2.0 Community Success: A Case of YouTube.
- In M. Khosrow-Pour, *E-Commerce for Organizational Development and Competitive Advantage* (pp. 85-98). Hershey, PA, United States: Business Science Reference (IGI Global).
- Chevalier, J. A., & Mayzlin, D. (2016). The Effect of Word of Mouth on Sales: Online Book Reviews. *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 43, No. 3, 345-354.
- Chua, A. Y., & Banerjee, S. (2015). Understanding Review Helpfulness as a Function of Reviewer Reputation, Review Rating, and Review Depth. *Journal of the Association for Information Science & Technology*, vol. 66, issue 2 , 354-362.
- Constantinides, E., & Fountain, S. J. (2008). Web 2.0: Conceptual foundations and marketing issues. *Journal of Direct, Data and Digital Marketing Practice*, 9, 231–244.
- Dellarocas, C. (2014). The Digitization of Word of Mouth: Promise and Challenges of Online Feedback Mechanisms. *Management Science* 49 (10), 1407-1424.

- Dellarocas, C. (2010). Online Reputation Systems: How to Design One That Does What You Need. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, Vol.51, No.3, 32-38.
- DiMauro, V., & Bulmer, D. (2014). The-Social-Consumer-Study. The Society for New Communication Research. Fan, W., & Gordon, M. D. (2014). The Power of Social Media Analytics. *Communications of the ACM*, Vol. 57 No. 6, 74-81.
- Floh, A., Koller, M., & Zauner, A. (2013). Taking a deeper look at online reviews: The asymmetric effect of valence intensity on shopping behaviour. *Journal of Marketing Management*, Vol. 29, Nos. 5-6, 646-670.
- Goldsmith, R. E., & Horowitz, D. (2016). Measuring Motivations for Online Opinion Seeking. *Journal of Interactive Advertising* Volume 6, Issue 2, 2-14.
- Hansen, F. (2016). Psychological Theories of Consumer Choice. *Journal of Consumer Research* Vol. 3, No. 3, 117-142.
- Hass, R. (2015). Effects of source characteristics on cognitive responses and persuasion. In R. Petty, T. Ostrom, & T. Brock, *Cognitive responses in persuasion* (pp. 141-172). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Henning-Thurau, T., & Walsh, G. (2013). Electronic Word-of-Mouth: Motives for and Consequences of reading Customer Articulations on the Internet. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, Vol.8, No.2, 51-74.
- Ho-Dac, N. N., Carson, S. J., & Moore, W. L. (2013). The Effects of Positive and Negative Online Customer Reviews: Do Brand Strength and Category Maturity Matter? *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 77, No. 6, 37-53.
- Huang, L.-S. (2015). Trust in product review blogs: the influence of self-disclosure and popularity. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, Volume 34, Issue 1, 33-44.
- Huang, Z., & Benyoucef, M. (2013). From e-commerce to social commerce: A close look at design features. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications* 12 , 246-259.
- Hung, K. H., & Li, S. Y. (2016). The influence of eWOM on virtual consumer communities: Social capital, consumer learning, and behavioral outcomes. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 485-495.
- Klein, L. R., & T.Ford, G. (2013). Consumer search for information in the digital age: An empirical study of prepurchase search for automobiles. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, Vo. 17, Lee, J. (2013). What makes people read an online review? The relative effects of posting time and helpfulness on review readership. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior and Social Networking*, Vol. 16, No. 7, 529-535.
- Lee, M., & Youn, S. (2009). Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) - how eWOM platforms influence consumer product judgement. *International Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 28, No. 3, 473-499.
- Lee, T. Y., & Bradlow, E. T. (2011). Automated Marketing Research Using Online Customer Reviews. *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 48, No. 5, 881-894.
- Li, X., Hitt, L. M., & Zhang, Z. (2011). Product reviews and competition in markets for repeat purchase products. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, Vol.27, No. 4, 9-31.
- Lu, L.-C., Chang, W.-P., & Chang, H.-H. (2014). Consumer attitudes toward blogger's sponsored recommendations and purchase intention: The effect of sponsorship type, product type and brand awareness. *Computers in Human Behavior* 34, 258-266.
- Mudambi, S. M., & Schuff, D. (2010). What makes a helpful online review? A study of customer reviews on amazon.com. *MIS Quarterly* Vol. 34, No.1, 185-200.
- Preece, J., & Shneiderman, B. (2009). The Reader-to-Leader Framework: Motivating Technology-Mediated Social Participation. *AIS Transactions on Human-Computer Interaction* (1) 1, 13-32.
- Schmidt, J. B., & Spreng, R. A. (2016). A proposed model of external consumer information search. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Volume 24, Issue 3, 246-256.
- Senecala, S., & Nantel, J. (2014). The influence of online product recommendations on consumers' online choices. *Journal of Retailing*, Volume 80, Issue 2, 159-169.
- Teng, S., Wei Khong, K., Wei Goh, W., and Yee Loong Chong, A. (2014). Examining the antecedents of persuasive eWOM messages in social media. *Online Information Review*, 38(6), 746-768.
- Wang, H.-Y. (2011). Exploring the factors of gastronomy blogs influencing readers' intention to taste. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Volume 30, Issue 3, 503-514.
- Yap, K.B., Soetarto, B., and Sweeney, J.C. (2013). The relationship between electronic word-of-mouth motivations and message characteristics: The sender's perspective. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 21(1), 66-74.

Zhu, F., & Zhang, X. (2010). Impact of Online Consumer Reviews on Sales: The Moderating Role of Product and Consumer Characteristics. *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 74, No. 2, 133-148.