Personality Antecedents of EWoM in Determining Online Customer Purchase Behavior

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ABSTRACT

Electronic word of mouth (EWoM) is similar to the standard word of mouth- the only difference is, the use of Internet as a base in EWoM. By understanding the personality antecedents of EWoM, the consumer buyer beahviour could be analysed more specifically. The current study has the objectives of understanding the influence of the personality antecedents and EWoM, and of the consumer towards consumer purchase behaviour. The data were collected from 200 respondents in different districts of TamilNadu through a structured questionnaire. The data is analyzed by using the structural equation model in determining the relationship towards the purchase behaviour. It is evident from the study that EWoM determinant influent purchase behaviour with significant R square value of 0.41, and equally the personality of the customer influence with R square value 0.58. The model fit well and has greater alignment of fit also. The personality antecedents of EWoM have become an integral part of the current generation while making a purchase decision.

KEYWORDS

Customer, Electronic Word of Mouth, Online Marketing, Personality, Purchase Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

Word of mouth (WOM) describes how opinions, views, and comments on products and services are communicated to others and transacted (Aslam et al. 2011). At present, word of mouth finds a new method of communication to enhance the value of products and services (Cheung and Thadani, 2010). Due to the growth and developments of extensive usage of the Internet delivers a new form of word of mouth termed electronic word of mouth (EWoM) (Yang, 2017). Thus it provides more information to consumers and businesses. Traditional word of mouth reaches very few, but EWoM can reach an extraordinary number of people at once through online media. EWoM information is more trusted than company-generated information as the most credible source of information from consumers (Mangold & Faulds,2009; Chu & Kim, 2011). When making purchase decisions, Wu & Wang (2011), word of mouth is considered the best source of information by consumers than other

sources. Both practitioners and researchers have been attracted due to the facts like offering non-commercial details on the products and the impact it creates on consumer purchase decisions by EWoM (De Bruyn & Lilien, 2008). Additionally, consumer feedback, recommendations, and online consumer reviews act as essential decision aid in online shopping (Kamtarin,2012).

One of this study's outstanding aspects is a better understanding of customers affected by word of mouth in their buying decision. Understanding the personality of impressible people can direct this new phenomenon in the appropriate direction. Personality contributes a significant part while deciding about a person's character, and it will help to determine how the person will approach different things in a different situation. The personalities can be grouped into the Big Five Personalities: Extroverts, Agreeableness, Conscientious, Emotional Stability, and Openness to experiences. Thus this study aims to assess the potential moderating effect of each personality dimension in the EWOM-effecting process of purchasing behavior (Schindler &Bickart, 2005).

Background of the Study

EWoM is just like word of mouth; the only difference is using the Internet as a base in EWoM. EWoM has its advantage and disadvantage; the advantage is that the consumer will have access to a wide range of access to information. The disadvantage is that the customer may not always know if it is an accurate review. According to the theory of consumer information search, in the consumer behavior theory, consumers depend on outer information for a purchase or for making a decision, though with different intensities (Hui, 2011). Studying individual differences can create an opportunity to enhance the effect of EWOM, and in this way, the five-factor model of personality (Big Five) has been used. The Big Five's framework of traits (Costa & McCrae, 1995) creates a powerful model for understanding the relationships between different personalities and behaviors (Komarraju et al., 2011). It also considers argument quality, source credibility, source perception, source style with purchase intention, and post-purchase behavior. Thus the study aims to find out the importance of EWoMand how the personality traits of the individual consumer impact the electronic word of mouth, factors of EWoMlike Argument quality, Source credibility, Source Perception, and Source style determining the purchase decision of the consumer, and how it impacts on the post purchasing behavior of the consumer

LITERATURE REVIEW

EWoM is any view or information, either positively or negatively, shared by a customer about a product or service on the internet(Hennig-Thurau et al. 2004). Nowadays, consumers depend on online reviews about a product or service before they decide whether to purchase it or not is a major change in the form EWoM (Khammash, 2008). These people who rely on others in online consumer reviews to make their purchase decision will have different opinions on consumer behavior characteristics. EWoM, trust, and perceived value are important factors in online consumers' behavioral intentions (Kamtarin, 2012). Researchers claim that EWoM is a process of personal influence through which the information communicated will change the attitude and purchasing decision of the receiver (Park & Lee, 2008; Cheung, Lee, and Thadani, 2009). EWoM can be quantifiable more than traditional word of mouth (Lee, Park, and Hen, 2008; Park and Kim, 2008*),* which can be measured through its presentation format, perseverance, and size and makes it visible. Electronic Word of Mouth is important today in online reviews that provide important and reliable information (Sotiriadis & Zyl, 2013; Teng et al., 2014).

Personality traits have a moderating impact on online purchase intentions, and risk-aversion and technology readiness is found to increase the online purchase intention of the consumer (Ranaweera et al. 2008). Personal behavior is one factor that determines how a person processes information processing from the environment (Azzadina et al., 2012). As internet use is high, impulsive buying

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