



Tomas Bata University in Zlín
Faculty of Management and Economics

Doctoral Thesis

**Exploring social eWOM intention in social
commerce environment:
Individual-level Culture Values as a Moderator**

Zkoumání eWOM v prostředí sociální komerce:
Vliv kulturních hodnot jednotlivce

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Degree course: 6208V038 Management & Economics
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Zlín, September 2019

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The publication was issued in the year 2019.

Key words in English: *Social Commerce Environment, Customer Experience, Trust, Perceived Value Co-creation, Social eWOM Intention, Individual-level Culture Value.*

Klíčová slova: *Prostředí sociální komerce, zkušenosti se zákazníky, důvěra, spoluvytváření hodnot, úmysl sociální eWOM, kulturní hodnota na individuální úrovni.*

Full text of the Doctoral thesis is available in the Library of TBU in Zlín.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my sincere and heartfelt obligation towards all the personages who have supported and given me ideal advice during my research study. Without their active guidance, help, cooperation and encouragement, I would not have made headway in the project.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my advisor Dr. Michal Pilík for his guidance, kindness, help and support. Besides my advisor, I would like to thanks to all professor who taught me at Tomas Bata University. I also would like to thanks Dr. Liem Viet Ngo for his valuable suggestion and useful comments throughout this research work. Specially thanks also to Nhat Tan Pham for his constructive discussion, perseverance and encouragement during this research work as well as his support in my Ph.D. life in the Czech Republic. I am also especially thankful to the Dean and my colleagues of Faculty of Marketing, University of Economics, The University of Danang, for fervently supporting and grating me to take up my Ph.D. program.

Secondly, I would like to express my sincere thanks to a special person, who initially stimulated me to study Ph.D. program. I would also extend my special thanks to my Vietnamese friends in Zlín; and my colleges – especially Ph.D. students at Tomas Bata University. They add to my fullness of life in the Czech Republic. Thanks to my special sister – Quynh and Lien and their husband for caring and being with me during the time in the Czech Republic. With a special thanks to the boss (Mr. Cuong), who helps me overcome financial stress; and all staff in Panda restaurant who give me a feeling of “family”.

I am thankful to my unconditional friends (Ngoc Uyen, Kieu Uyen, Thuy) from Vietnam for staying beside me making my journey less stressful. I am thankful to my mother, my big brothers and my sister-in-law, to my little nephew Tony for caring about me and talking with me whenever I needed to relax my mind. Thanks my darling for sharing and understanding me. Finally, I want to thanks my late Dad from my bottom of the heart. I know that he always stands beside me and blesses me.

Quyen Phu Thi PHAN
Zlín, August 2019

ABSTRACT

The growing popularity of social networking sites has made the experience of consumers on social commerce environment different from other contexts, as the consumers can share or reposted about a product or a brand. A latest version of electronic word of mouth, called social electronic word of mouth (social eWOM), has become popular for researchers and people from practice, too. Social eWOM occurs when consumers explore any information related to brands/ products exchanged among the users of social networking sites. The distinct social nature of social networking sites indicates an interesting and proper context for examining eWOM behaviours. Moreover, little research has been published addressing the factors influencing social eWOM intentions. Adopting the stimulus – organism – response (S-O-R) framework and Service – Dominant theory, this study explored the impacts of social commerce characteristics on social eWOM intentions in an integrative framework: stimulus environment (social commerce characteristics), consumers' internal state (trust, customer experience, perceived value co-creation), and response (social eWOM intention). In addition, the moderating role of individual cultural value (individualism and uncertainty avoidance) related to the relationship between customers' internal state and social eWOM intentions was examined.

To gain these objectives, this study will be performed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. First of all, the qualitative method consists of two focus-group. The findings of focus groups confirmed four dimensions of social commerce environment, such as information content, personalization, product selection, and social interaction. Additionally, the relationship between trust and customer experience was also explored. Then, a survey-based empirical study was conducted to examine the structural model. Partial Least Square (PLS) was applied using data collected from 325 respondents comprising users of Facebook. The results of the study indicate that (1) information content and social interaction do not influence customer experience; but they influence trust; (2) personalization and product selection influence both customer experience and trust; however, the opposite of a prediction is that product selection negative influence trust; (3) there is positively interrelationship between customer experience, trust and perceived value co-creation, and in turn (4) these variables significantly influence social eWOM intention; (5) individualism is moderated between trust and social eWOM intention; and uncertainty avoidance is moderated between customer experience, trust and social eWOM intention. Unexpected, the relationship between perceived value co-creation and social eWOM intention is not moderated by individual cultural value. This research provides useful and valuable insights into the theory and practice of social eWOM. It shows how a customer shapes social eWOM intention in social commerce environment, an area that largely remains unexplored. Additionally, the study presents limitations and future research.

ABSTRAKT

Rostoucí popularita stránek sociálních sítí způsobila, že spotřebitelé mají různé zkušenosti z prostředí sociální komerce. Díky sociálním sítím mohou spotřebitelé sdílet své zkušenosti s produktem či značkou. Word Of Mouth v nejnovější elektronické podobě (sociální eWom) je zajímavé pro výzkumné pracovníky i odborníky z praxe. Když spotřebitelé hledají na internetu informace o produktu nebo značce, vyměňují si své zkušenosti s dalšími zákazníky na sociálních sítích. Sociální povaha sociálních sítí nabízí velké možnosti pro vědecké zkoumání eWOM. V rámci zkoumání eWOM byl publikován článek, který se zabývá faktory, které ovlivňují eWOM. Tato studie využila rámeček (SOR) – Stimul, Organismus, Reakce a služba a zkoumala dopady aspektů sociální komerce na eWOM v rámci: prostředí (aspekty sociální komerce), vnitřního stavu spotřebitelů (důvěra, hodnoty, zkušenost) a reakce (sociální eWOM). Kromě toho byla zkoumaná i role kulturních hodnot jednotlivce (individualismus) ovlivňující postoj zákazníka vůči eWOM.

K dosažení zmiňovaných cílů je v práci využit kvalitativní a kvantitativní výzkum. Výsledky kvalitativní metody mají čtyři dimenze sociální komerce: obsah, personalizace, výběr produktu, sociální interakce. Dále byl prozkoumán vztah mezi důvěrou a zkušenostmi zákazníků. Poté byla provedena empirická studie, která prozkoumala strukturální model. Partial Least Square (PLS) byl použit ke zpracování údajů shromážděných od 325 respondentů, jenž jsou uživatelé Facebooku. Výsledky studie naznačují, že obsah informací a sociální interakce neovlivňují zkušenosti zákazníků, ale ovlivňují důvěru. Vliv personalizace a výběru produktu ovlivňuje zkušenost a důvěru zákazníků, nicméně výběr produktu negativně ovlivňuje důvěru a pozitivně ovlivňuje vzájemné vztahy mezi zkušenostmi zákazníků, důvěrou a vytvářením hodnot. Tyto proměnné významně ovlivňují využití sociální eWOM. Vztah mezi vnímaným a utvářením hodnot se zaměřením na sociální eWOM však nemá vliv na individuální kulturní hodnotu. Tento výzkum poskytuje užitečné a cenné poznatky o teorii a praxi využití sociální eWOM. Ukazuje, jak zákazník formuje sociální eWOM v prostředí sociální komerce, což je oblast, která do značné míry zůstává neprozkoumána. Studie navíc představuje omezení pro možnosti budoucího výzkum

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	3
ABSTRACT.....	4
ABSTRAKT.....	5
CONTENTS.....	6
LIST OF TABLES.....	9
LIST OF FIGURES.....	10
LIST OF ABBREVIATION.....	11
1. INTRODUCTION.....	12
1.1 Research Background and Motivation.....	12
1.2 Research Objectives.....	16
1.3 Research Contribution.....	17
1.4 Research Project and Scope Of The Study.....	17
1.5 Research Procedure.....	18
1.6 The Structure of This Study.....	20
2. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	21
2.1 Theoretical Background.....	21
2.1.1 Stimulus – Organism – Response.....	21
2.1.2 Service Dominant Logic (S-D logic).....	22
2.2 Definition of Research Constructs.....	24
2.2.1 Social commerce environment.....	24
2.2.2 Organism: Customer experience, Trust, and Perceived Value co-creation.....	26
2.2.3 Response: positive Social eWOM intention.....	29
2.2.4 Individual-level cultural values as moderator.....	32
3. TWO RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.....	33
3.1 Preliminary Model and Hypothesis.....	33
3.2 Study One: Qualitative Study-Focus Group.....	34
3.2.1 Sampling and Data Collection.....	35
3.2.2 Data Analysis.....	36
3.3 Study Two: Survey.....	36
3.3.1 Research Hypotheses.....	37

3.3.2	Research Instruments.....	37
3.3.3	Sampling and Data Collection.....	39
3.3.4	Questionnaire Design.....	41
3.3.5	Data Analytical Process.....	42
4.	QUALITATIVE STUDY AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT	44
4.1	Characteristics of Respondents	44
4.2	Focus Group Findings.....	45
4.3	Refinement of The Survey Questionnaire.....	47
4.4	Hypotheses Development	50
4.4.1	Social commerce environment stimulus and customer experience	50
4.4.2	Social commerce constructs and trust	52
4.4.3	Inter-relationships between customer experience, trust and perceived value co-creation	53
4.4.4	Effects of organism constructs on Social eWOM intention	55
4.4.5	Mediation effect of perceived value co-creation	56
4.4.6	Moderation effect of national culture value	57
5.	QUANTITATIVE RESULTS	61
5.1	Descriptive Analysis	61
5.2	Measurement Properties.....	63
5.2.1	Descriptive Analysis of Measurement Items.....	63
5.2.2	Factor Analysis Reliability Test	65
5.2.3	Common Method Variance.....	68
5.3	Model Assessment	71
5.3.1	Assessment of the Measurement Model.....	71
5.3.2	Assessment of the Structural Model.....	75
6.	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	81
6.1	Discussion	81
6.1.1	Effects of social commerce environment (S) on customer experience and trust (O).....	83
6.1.2	Interrelationship between variables in consumers' internal states	84
6.1.3	Impacts of consumers' internal response (O) on Social eWOM intention (R).....	85

6.1.4 Individual culture value as moderator between internal response (O) and Social eWOM intention (R).....	86
6.2 Conclusion.....	88
6.2.1 Theoretical Implications	88
6.2.2 Managerial Implications	90
6.3 Limitations and Suggestions	92
REFERENCES.....	93
APPENDICES	111
LIST OF PUBLICATIONS BY THE AUTHOR.....	123
AUTHOR’S CURRICULUM VITAE.....	125

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1. The Scope of this Study.....	18
Table 2.1. Comparison between WOM, eWOM, and Social eWOM.	31
Table 4.1. Focus group Demographic.....	44
Table 4.2. Variables of each factor mentioned by focus groups	47
Table 4.3. Constructs and their relationships.....	49
Table 5.1. Demographic and Descriptive Information of Sample for this research	61
Table 5.2. Descriptive Analysis for Questionnaire Items.....	63
Table 5.3. Results of Factor Analysis and Reliability Test of social commerce environment constructs	66
Table 5.4. Results of Factor Analysis and Reliability Test of Trust, Perceived Value co-creation, Social eWOM intention.....	67
Table 5.5. Results of Factor Analysis and Reliability Test of Culture Moderator.....	68
Table 5-6. Discriminant validity	70
Table 5.7. Measurement statistics of construct scales based on reflective indicators	72
Table 5.8. Weights of the first- order constructs on the second-order constructs	74
Table 5-9. Evaluation of Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing	75
Table 5.10. Mediation Results for Perceived Value co-creation.....	77
Table 5.11. The Results of Individualism Moderators	78
Table 5.12. The Results of Uncertainty Avoidance Moderators	79
Table 6.1. The summary of the Hypotheses Testing	81

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1. The flow chart for this research.....	19
Figure 3.1. Primary Research Framework. Source: Own Research	34
Figure 4.1. Final Conceptual Research. Source: Own Research	60
Figure 5.1. The Roles of Individualism Moderators.....	78
Figure 5.2. The Roles of Uncertainty Avoidance Moderators	80
Figure 5.3. Summary of Model Assessment.....	80

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

Social eWOM : social electronic word of mouth

eWOM : electronic word of mouth

WOM : word of mouth

S- O-R: Stimulus – Organism – Response

S-D : Service - Dominant