

THE EFFECTS OF VALENCE AND PERCEIVED BRAND GLOBALNESS
ON TRUST IN EWOM AND ON EWOM'S INFLUENCE

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2015

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Thesis submitted to the
Institute for Graduate Studies in the Social Sciences
in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
Management

by
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Boğaziçi University

2015

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

The Effects of Valence and Perceived Brand Globalness on Trust in eWOM and on eWOM's Influence

Word of mouth's effect on consumer behavior is already known. Developments in internet and mobile technologies have created a new form of this phenomenon, electronic word of mouth. It is not only capable to reach higher number of people, it is also able to reach them in much less time. That is why it is important to understand electronic word of mouth's dynamics. The aim of this study is to understand how perceived brand globalness and valence effects trustworthiness and influence of electronic word of mouth. Data have been collected from 160 electronic word of mouth users and have been analyzed by using correlation, regression, multiple regression, T-Tests and ANOVA. Results of analysis determine perceived brand globalness negatively effects trustworthiness and influence of positive electronic word of mouth, and positively effects trustworthiness and influence of negative electronic word of mouth. Besides, this study shows the relationship between demographics, purchase intention, perceived quality and perceived brand globalness, as well as the effect of valence.

ÖZET

Algılanan Marka Küreselliğinin ve Bağdeğerliğin Elektronik Ağızdan Ağıza İletişimin Güvenilirliği ve Etkisine Etkisi

Ağızdan ağıza iletişimin tüketici davranışına etkisi zaten bilinmekte. İnternet ve mobil teknolojilerdeki gelişmeler bu olgunun yeni bir formunu meydana getirdi; elektronik ağızdan ağıza iletişim. Bu sadece daha fazla insana ulaşmakla kalmayan, aynı zamanda bu insanlara çok daha hızlı ulaşabilen bir araç. Bu sebeple elektronik ağızdan ağıza iletişimin dinamiklerini anlamak önemli. Bu çalışmanın amacı, algılanan marka küreselliğinin ve bağdeğerliğin, elektronik ağızdan ağıza iletişimin güvenilirliğine ve etki seviyesine etkisinin belirlenmesidir. Veriler 160 elektronik ağızdan ağıza iletişim kullanıcısından toplanmıştır. Korelasyon, regresyon, çoklu regresyon, T-Test ve ANOVA analizi uygulanmıştır. Sonuçlar algılanan marka küreselliğinin, olumlu bağdeğerliğe sahip elektronik ağızdan ağıza iletişimin güvenilirliğini ve etki seviyesini negatif yönde etkilerken, olumsuz elektronik ağızdan ağıza iletişimin güvenilirliğini ve etki seviyesini pozitif yönde etkilediğini ortaya koymuştur. Bunun yanında bu çalışma; demografik özellikler, satın alma niyeti, algılanan kalite ve algılanan marka globalliği arasındaki ilişkileri gösterdiği gibi bağdeğerliğin etkisini de göstermiştir .

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my very special thanks to my parents and brothers, for their encouragement, endless belief and understanding.

Of course, I owe my special thanks to my advisor Assist. Prof. Hüseyin Sami Karaca who encouraged and challenged me throughout my academic work. I want to express my thanks to him for his guidance, contribution, patience and understanding he always showed.

I am also very thankful to Assoc. Prof. Özlem Hesapçı for her guidance during the preparation and execution stages of this study and Assoc. Prof. Gökhan Özertan for serving in my thesis committee.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

People tend to share information with other people about events, people, and all kind of phenomenon they encounter with. And willingly or unwillingly, individuals are affected by the information they have shared with each other. Marketing discipline is interested in this information sharing process; the causes, results, and dynamics of it, which has collectively been referred to as word-of-mouth (WOM). WOM is a channel that is dominated by consumers, and it has significant effects on information seeking, evaluation of alternatives, and purchase decision processes (Ramsunder, 2011). It is one of the traditional ways of gathering information about a product or service (Peppard & Butler, 1998). In order to decrease the level of uncertainty about a product or service and to decrease perceived risks, consumers delve into a search for information before they complete the buying process (Bronner & de Hoog, 2010). Right at this point, WOM enters the picture as an important actor. Individuals use WOM to increase their level of information and increase the perceived security level associated with the involved product or service. WOM, opinions of other people about products and services, can be observed in three different forms: positive, negative, and neutral. Most of the time, WOM is observed in highly positive or highly negative forms, which are natural results of high or low level of satisfaction about the products or services (Mazzarol, Sweeney, & Soutar, 2007)., In this study, we focus on understanding the differences between positive and negative WOM content from a consumer perspective..

WOM is one of the subjects that are mostly affected by the development of the Internet. The development of the World Wide Web has transformed traditional WOM into a new form that could reach broader populations in much less time and effort (J. O. Brown, Broderick, & Lee, 2007; Chatterjee, 2001; Davis & Khazanchi, 2008). This new form of WOM is called electronic WOM (eWOM) (Godes & Mayzlin, 2003; Kiecker & Cowles, 2002; Xia & Bechwati, 2010). eWOM communication has become an important platform that consolidates consumers' opinions (Bickart & Schindler, 2001; Godes & Mayzlin, 2003; Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004; Mayzlin, 2006). eWOM is also considered a more effective way of communication due to its ease of access and ability to reach millions of people (Chatterjee, 2001) while lacking the potential social pressure of face to face interactions (T. Sun, Youn, Wu, & Kuntaraporn, 2006).

With the development of Internet technologies, eWOM has become easily accessible, wherever and whenever consumers may need. Parallel to these changes, consumers are now developing some new habits. There are a great number of consumers who read comments and check ratings before they form purchase intentions (R. Zhang & Tran, 2009) or make final purchase decisions (Adjei, Noble, & Noble, 2010; Zhu & Zhang, 2010) That is why understanding the dynamics of eWOM as well as why and how they affect consumers is gaining importance. In this study, we will combine valence of eWOM and some product related characteristics in order to understand how those variables manipulate the level of trust people feel towards eWOM and the outcomes of eWOM .

Trust towards eWOM can be defined as individuals' perception of a comment or rating as believable, true and/or real (Cheung, Luo, Sia, & Chen, 2009). It is known that trust towards eWOM and affection capacity of eWOM depend on several factors. Previous research argues that these factors can be grouped under four main headings: Product related variables, information channel related variables, consumer related variables and information source related variables.

First main heading is product related variables. Price of the product or service (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004), number of comments (Fan, Miao, Fang, & Lin, 2013) that the product or service has, product category (Menkveld, 2013), valence of comments (Cheung et al., 2009) about a product are the variables that have been found to influence individuals' trust towards eWOM.

Prestige (Hörmfeldt & Cavalli-Abrahamson, 2011), type and reliability (Wathen & Burkell, 2002) of the website that eWOM exists are the variables that are effective on trustworthiness of the eWOM and related to the channel that is delivering the eWOM.

Individuals' gender (Ngoc Le, 2014), risk aversion tendency (Furner, Racherla, & Zhen, 2013), cultural collectivism level (Furner et al., 2013), affection level towards the related product or service (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004), level of involvement to eWOM (López & Sicilia, 2014), involvement in Internet shopping behavior (Jarvenpaa, Tractinsky, Saarinen, & Vitale, 1999), daily Internet usage amount (Zhu & Zhang, 2010), past experiences about the product or service (Ramsunder, 2011), expertise level about the related product or service (Furse, Punj, & Stewart, 1984), feeling of belongingness to a social community (Racherla, Mandviwalla, & Connolly, 2012) are

the variables that are related to consumer him/herself and effective on the level of trust that individual generates towards eWOM.

Relationship and emotional distance, perceived expertise level (Bickart & Schindler, 2001), similarities (Murphy, Moscardo, & Benckendorff, 2007), title (L.M., 2013), perceived actuality (Forman, Ghose, & Wiesenfeld, 2008), information level of the source (Hörnfeldt & Cavalli-Abrahamson, 2011), level of information detail that source provides (Menkveld, 2013), consistency (Cheung et al., 2009), subjectivity of the information given (Furner et al., 2013), usage of convincing and natural language, quality of the comment (Fan et al., 2013), number of words that been used in the comment (Mudambi & Schuff, 2010), up-to-datedness of the comment or rating(Hörnfeldt & Cavalli-Abrahamson, 2011) are the source related variables that are significantly effective on individuals trust towards eWOM.

These variables are explained in the following sections. Brief explanations and explanatory examples are given in order to clarify the subject. That being said, we can continue with explaining our other important element in this study, which is “perceived brand globalness”.

There are various definitions of the term “global brand” in the literature. Here is a good example: “Global brand is a brand that consumers can find under the same in multiple countries with generally similar and centrally coordinated marketing strategies” (Branch, 2001; Yip, 1995). Being perceived as a global brand can have various advantages for brands. According to the literature, even when there is no significant difference between two brands, global ones tend to be perceived having higher quality

and value than non-global brands (D. Shocker, K. Srivastava, & W.Ruekert, 1994; Kapferer, 1997). Accordingly, we are asking if companies are taking advantages of being perceived more global in the means of trust towards eWOM. If we are to explain this, do consumers tend to trust positive eWOM about more globally perceived companies? Or if there is a negative eWOM about a less global company, is it more trustworthy to consumers than a negative eWOM about a more global company? What we try to understand is, if the consumers are more tolerable towards negative information about more global companies and globally perceived companies “hide” behind their global image when it comes to negative eWOM?

We will examine relationships between some other variables as well. For example, we will investigate the relationship between perceived brand globalness (PBG), purchase intention, and quality perception. Moreover, we will take a look at the relationships between trust towards eWOM, individual’s daily Internet usage amount, and eWOM involvement level. Also, relationships between these variables and demographic features like income level, age, and gender will be examined too.

The hypotheses to be tested can be listed as follows;

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive correlation between PBG and perceived quality of the product/service.

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive correlation between trust towards and influence of eWOM and eWOM involvement.

Hypothesis 3: Daily Internet usage amount positively affects trust towards and influence of eWOM.

Hypothesis 4: A brand's PBG level positively affects purchase intention towards its products.

Hypothesis 5: PBG and valence of eWOM positively affects purchase intention towards related product/service interactively.

Hypothesis 6: eWOM about more global perceived brands/products are more trustworthy and effective than eWOM about non-global perceived brands/products

Hypothesis 7: eWOM with negative valence is more trustworthy and effective than eWOM with positive valence

Hypothesis 8: Trust towards and influence of positive eWOM about a more globally perceived company is higher than trust towards and influence of positive eWOM about a less globally perceived company.

Hypothesis 9: Trust towards and influence of negative eWOM about a less global perceived company is higher than trust towards and influence of negative eWOM about a more global perceived company.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 What is WOM?

Word of Mouth (WOM) is a consumer dominated marketing channel which has a significant effect on consumers' information seeking, evaluating alternatives, and purchase decision about a product/service (Ramsunder, 2011). It is one of the traditional information sources that is being used during product/service evaluation process (Peppard & Butler, 1998). Consumers begin generating WOM based on their experiences about products and services (Ramsunder, 2011). Those who have low level of expertise about a product/service (Furse et al., 1984; Gilly, Graham, Wolfinbarger, & Yale, 1998), feel high level of risk during purchase decision process (Bansal & Voyer, 2000a; Kiel & Layton, 1981), as well as consumers who are deeply involved in the purchase decision (Beatty & Smith, 1987) are more likely to search for others' opinions about products/services. These groups use WOM more than others. Therefore, we can refer to WOM as "traditional offline interpersonal information source". To reduce uncertainty and reduce perceived risk, consumers display an information seeking behavior before the purchase phase. In addition to mass communication tools, WOM is one of the tools used during selection process (Bronner & de Hoog, 2010). From a marketing perspective, WOM is defined as: "Informal communications towards other consumers about products'/services' and/or their suppliers' usage and characteristics". (de Matos & Rossi, 2008) WOM is the informal communication between consumers, about products/services; and because of its huge impact on purchase decision, it has been regarded as one of the most important information sources during purchasing process (Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan, 2008).

According to early studies, WOM has been seen as face to face conversations about product/services between non-commercial people (Arndt, 1967). Parallel to this, "communication based on the will of consumers that has been made after purchase" (E. W. Anderson, 1998; Dickinger & Basu, 1994) and "interpersonal and informal conversations, between a person who is not carrying any commercial interest and a buyer, about a brand, product, organization or service"(Harrison-Walker, 2001) are other definitions that has been made. Although there are several decades between these definitions, there is no significant difference between them.

WOM can be negative, positive, and neutral. Most common types of WOM are “positive” and “negative” as they are the natural results of high or low levels of satisfaction about products/services and/or their suppliers (E. W. Anderson, 1998; Bowman & Narayandas, 2001; Mazzarol et al., 2007). That is, WOM is positive or negative conversations about products/services (Mazzarol et al., 2007). WOM has been defined as telling about negative experiences about a product or service to at least one friend (Richins, 1983). However, this definition is rather inadequate because it singles out negative information and close environment of the subject consumer.

Previous research indicates that WOM is most valuable in high risk markets (Hogan, Lemon, & Libai, 2004) such as the service industry (Mangold, Miller, & Brockway, 1999; Murray, 1991; V. A. Zeithaml, 1981). Previous studies demonstrate important evidence about WOM's effect on purchase decision and evaluation process (Arndt, 1967; Dichter, 1966). Additionally, WOM has been found to increase consumer expectations about service evaluation criteria such as service quality and service value

by influencing expected and foreseen service quality level (V. a. Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1993).

For a long while WOM was known as a face to face communication about a product/service (Chatterjee, 2001; Sen & Lerman, 2007), but the Internet's world wide spread has given birth to a less personal and more widespread type of WOM communication. This new type of WOM communication has been called “electronic word of mouth (eWOM)” (J. O. Brown et al., 2007; Chatterjee, 2001; Davis & Khazanchi, 2008; Godes & Mayzlin, 2003; Kiecker & Cowles, 2002; Xia & Bechwati, 2010). This new type of WOM has become an important platform that consumer opinions come together (Bickart & Schindler, 2001; Godes & Mayzlin, 2003; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Mayzlin, 2006). Because of its ease of reach and omnipresence, it is valued as a more efficient communication form than traditional WOM (Chatterjee, 2001), thanks to its improved Internet spread and impact power (Litvin et al., 2008). In other words, WOM activity's reverberated version to online platforms is called eWOM.

With the advancements in technology, consumers are developing some new habits. More and more consumers are turning to eWOM and checking consumer ratings before making a purchase decision (Adjei et al., 2010; Zhu & Zhang, 2010) and shaping their purchase intention with the help of these sources (R. Zhang & Tran, 2009). Reviews that consumers generate on the Internet are one of the most important eWOM forms (Schindler & Bickart, 2005; Sen & Lerman, 2007)

Development of Internet technologies made eWOM easily accessible. Today, consumers can share their opinions, ideas, feelings, and experiences about

product/services with consumers all around the globe easier than ever (Schindler & Bickart, 2005). eWOM increases consumers' opportunities of gaining information about products/services from other consumers.

eWOM allows consumers to interact with each other, share their thoughts, experiences and information about products/ services in online environments (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Thus, Internet is changing WOM marketing rapidly by expanding its channels and allowing effective dialogs between marketers and consumers. This results in synergy between consumers and brands on online consumer platforms (J. O. Brown et al., 2007).

A WOM message is an important reference for consumers during purchase decision progress. Due to its information providing nature about product/services, related studies presents eWOM as an important source. (J. Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2004). Moreover, eWOM messages reduce uncertainty and perceived risk about the product/service, and help forming purchase intention and purchase decision processes (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). Because eWOM reduces purchase decision time and effort as well as help to make a more satisfactory decision, consumers are showing consult to eWOM (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000).

The most apparent differences between WOM and eWOM are speed of the communication and the number of people they each reach. Compared to WOM, eWOM can reach much more consumers in much less time (Serra Cantallops & Salvi, 2014). Based on this comparison, we can conclude that of eWOM is more effective than WOM

due to its speed, capability of reaching many people simultaneously, and lack of social pressure that face to face conversation can have (T. Sun et al., 2006).

2.2 Metamorphosis of WOM and birth of eWOM

Today, people can easily convey their opinions and feelings about various products/services through online platforms to other people (Jeong & Jang, 2011). We call this online version of traditional word of mouth (WOM) “electronic word of mouth (eWOM)”. Thanks to eWOM that contains online comments about products/services, people diversify their source alternatives of gaining information. Due to its structure, eWOM is an information source that can be reached by many people simultaneously. eWOM has anonymous sources and can be reached every moment. As a result of the development of the Internet technology and increasing number of consumers using Internet as a tool to gather information about products/services, eWOM phenomenon has emerged (Jeong & Jang, 2011). In 2008, Litvin and his colleagues defined eWOM as: "All informal communications that have been done towards consumers, via Internet technologies, about usage and/or characteristics of a product/service." Before this definition, Hennig-Thurau and colleagues defined eWOM as: " Any potential, active or former consumer's, positive or negative statements about a product/service, which is accessible to more than one person and/or institution at the same time, via Internet." Thanks to eWOM' s ease of access, millions of people can reach it, it can protect its existence for long time, and can be found on virtual platform by anyone (Jeong & Jang, 2011).

In the Internet era, WOM's spread and effects have increased with eWOM (Litvin et al., 2008). WOM's strong effect on consumer's purchase decision process is already known by researchers but with the development of the Internet, both its power and domain has expanded (Bickart & Schindler, 2001; Dellarocas, 2003; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; T. Sun et al., 2006). People can convey their thoughts about everything easily via tools that Internet provides, such as forum sites, online communities and others. Parallel to this, more consumers become prone to do an Internet search before making a purchase decision, to find out what others think about a product/service (Z. Zhang, Zhang, & Law, 2014). As a result, eWOM has become a crucial element of commercial activities and one of the primary factors that affect consumer behavior (Dellarocas, Zhang, & Awad, 2007).

Another definition of eWOM is simpler: "eWOM is the comments consumers make about products/services" (Bronner & de Hoog, 2010). It is a kind of word of mouth communication and some sort of feedback mechanism of current and past customers' experiences (See-To & Ho, 2014). It is the sharing of thoughts and perceptions via electronic and/or digital communication (Ramsunder, 2011). eWOM includes various media forms and web site types where online consumer reviews and ratings are easily accessible (Chatterjee, 2001).

In the United States, 31% of adults have rated a person, product or service at least once in their life (Purcell, 2010). Online comments and ratings are not just widespread, they are important too. Reason behind this is their power of affecting consumer behavior is than traditional advertisements (Yang & Mai, 2010), product providers or information on third party websites (Gretzel & Yoo, 2008; Zhu & Zhang,

2010). Emergence of social media and eWOM allow consumers to interact with each other and share their opinions and perceptions about products/services/brands (Gruen, Osmonbekov, & Czaplewski, 2006; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Ramsunder, 2011).

Hope of reducing decision making time and effort, and contribution to a better final decision is increasing consumers' countenance towards eWOM (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000).

In the sense of scope, eWOM is not just between suppliers and consumers, but at the same time covers communication between consumers too. Typologically, eWOM has two dimensions: Scope of the communication and the level of the interaction dimensions. Scope of the communication dimension is all about the number of people included in eWOM communication. One-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-many communication are three versions of the scope (Serra Cantallops & Salvi, 2014). Email is a good example of one-to-one communication. Generally, there is one sender and one receiver in an email. Blog sites can be specified as an example to one-to-many communication. On blog pages, writer can share his/her opinions and thoughts with users visiting the blog page. It means that a message coming from one person can be shared with many people simultaneously. Last but not least, virtual communities on forum sites can be a good example to many-to-many communication. On forum sites, more than one user can offer their thoughts to attention of many simultaneously.

On the other hand, interaction level dimension is examined under two types: Synchronous eWOM and asynchronous eWOM (Serra Cantallops & Salvi, 2014). Main difference between these two is whether the communication is simultaneous or not. In

synchronous eWOM, parties can offer their opinions about products/services simultaneously. On the contrary, on asynchronous eWOM, parties do not have the opportunity of communicating simultaneously. Some examples to synchronous eWOM are instant message and chat rooms. On these platforms, parties can express themselves to each other simultaneously. For the asynchronous eWOM platforms, we can give email and blog pages as examples. In these environments, users are in a communication that is not simultaneous. After expressing their thoughts, some time is needed for other party to answer. Correspondence does not take place simultaneously.

2.3 eWOM and variables effecting its trustworthiness and persuasiveness

As it is a source for the information needed by the consumers during purchase decision process, eWOM is differentiated from other information sources and can be preferred for some of its unique characteristics. One of these important characteristics is its ease of access (Herr P.M., Kardes, & Kim, 1991). Nearly from anywhere and anytime, consumers can reach eWOM using their smart phones and other devices. This convenience, gradually, is allowing consumers to use eWOM as a primary information source and expanding eWOM's usage region and frequency.

The motivations of consumers for consulting to eWOM is one of the fields that has been studied extensively. Saving time and reducing the effort when making a purchase decision are among the findings of these studies (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004). Before actualizing a purchase, consumers try to evaluate the alternatives and make the best decision for themselves. Naturally, they spend some time and effort during this process. Here, eWOM helps to reduce this effort and time that will

be spent. Reading the information provided by those who have knowledge and experience about the related product/service will save the effort and time that otherwise will be spent to gain same information by experiencing the product/service.

Some of the other factors that push consumers towards eWOM is risk reduction (Bronner & de Hoog, 2010) and risk aversion (Furner, Racherla, & Zhen, 2013). By consulting other consumers' opinions and experiences, the uncertainty and risks about related product/service are reduced. Reading other users' comments creates the feeling that other people have bought the same product/service and reduces perceived anxiety about related product/service (Chatterjee, 2001). Consumers increase their self-confidence level by reading other users' positive experiences (Hörmfeldt & Cavalli-Abrahamson, 2011; Locander & Hermann, 1979). Having more information about a product/service would reduce perceived risk by justifying or disproving concerns about the product/service. This helps consumers to complete their purchase decisions in a negative or positive way and therefore it speeds up the decision process. This benefit encourages consumers to consult to eWOM. That being said, the answer to why consumers are more likely to consult other consumers' comments and ratings than the information provided by the supplier itself is that consumers find other consumers more credible than marketers and/or advertisers (Blackshaw, 2006; Sen & Lerman, 2007; Yoo, Lee, Gretzel, & Fesenmaier, 2009). Consumers think other consumers would have less intention of manipulation (MacKinnon, 2012). Besides, because eWOM is perceived as independent from sale efforts of suppliers, it is perceived as more credible and effective (Bickart & Schindler, 2001). Therefore, based on previous studies, we can

say eWOM is more effective than information provided by companies (Bickart & Schindler, 2001; Parker, 2005).

Companies' effort to understand and manipulate eWOM is increasing day by day (Lim & Chung, 2011). For example, in South Korea, traditional media lost its perception of being an information source about product and services substantially. 80% of the consumers in South Korea are consulting eWOM when they need information about a product/service (Lee & Kim, 2006).

After highlighting the reasons of consulting to eWOM, we may proceed with explaining the factors that determine trust towards and influence of eWOM. It is essential for eWOM to be trusted and be effective in order to actualize its effects on purchase behavior and purchase intention, which are found to be significant before. People will not be influenced by the results of factors that they do not find credible and effective. We can define perceived trust and credibility of eWOM as one's perception of comment or review as credible, trustworthy, and true (Cheung, Luo, Sia, & Chen, 2009).

When we look over the literature, we can see some factors determining trust towards and influence by eWOM. We can categorize these factors under five main titles: Variables that are related to the product/service that is subject to eWOM, eWOM's source-related factors, eWOM's occurrence procedure and channel related variables, eWOM's consumer's related variables and variables related to eWOM message itself.

Price is one of the important variables that are related to product/service. Trust towards and influence of eWOM decreases as price of the related product/service increases (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). The reason behind this can perhaps be linked to

the thought that consumers of expensive products would not tell negative sides of the product clearly. It can also be explained by the natural result of the positive correlation between price and perceived quality, and the higher perceived quality of expensive products, hence one can expect expensive products to be influenced less by positive or negative comments. Hereupon, considering there is a negative relation between product's price and number of comments the product has, it is understandable that there is a negative relation between price of a product, and trustworthiness, and influence level of that product related eWOM.

Second product/service related variable that affects trust towards and influence of eWOM is the type of product. For example, eWOM about credence based products is harder to trust and gets more influenced than experience based products (Menkveld, 2013). Credence based products are the products that a consumer does not have definite idea about benefits and losses of the product/service. Drugs, education, car repair etc. can be examples for this category. For instance, a consumer might not know the exact consequences of using a certain vitamin since some information regarding the product may only be available to the supplier. Experience based products are just the opposite of this. It means that consumers have definite information about the pros and cons of the product/service. Since you have a more informed idea about what is going on with the experience based products, it is understandable that you can trust eWOM about it easier than credence based products.

Another product/service related factor that is affecting trust and influence is the number of comments about that product/service. As number of comments about a product/service increases, trust towards (Fan, Miao, Fang, & Lin, 2013; López & Sicilia,

2013; Park, Lee, & Han, 2007; Sher & Lee, 2009) and influence (Park et al., 2007) of that product related eWOM increases. Increased number of comments expands the scope of related eWOM and provides a wider sight, therefore increases trust and influence (Hörnfeldt & Cavalli-Abrahamson, 2011). Presentation of information given and reasons behind it extensively in a comment are factors that increase the consumer trust towards it (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974).

Previous studies showed that an increase in the number of eWOM messages has positive effect on consumer behavior (E. W. Anderson & Salisbury, 2003). Volume of eWOM is playing an informative role by raising awareness about products/services. Increased volume about a specific product/service increases the possibility of consumer awareness of that product/service (Yong Liu, 2004). As a result, because eWOM volume about a product/service can give an idea about number of people who have experience and number of people that used the product/service (Chatterjee, 2001; C. Park & Lee, 2009a; D.-H. Park, Lee, & Han, 2007), and because it tells more about consumers' self-stated experiences (Van Birgelen, Roderik, & Jörg, 2010), high number of comments, can raise a more trustworthy image about the possible coincidences of using that product/service.

Other than the number of comments, consistency of the comments is also important. If most of the comments about a product/service is in the same direction, they will be perceived as more credible and effective. Otherwise, if there is no consensus between comments, and everyone is saying different and contradictory things about a specific product/service, then eWOM about that product seems to be perceived as less credible and effective (Cheung et al., 2009; Fan et al., 2013). Numerous comments

implying similar opinions about a product/service surely increase trust towards and influence of eWOM (Lee & Kim, 2006; Park et al., 2007; Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983).

Very similar to consistency of comments, valence, i.e., balance of negative and positive comments, is also important. What we want here is not an absolute numeric balance. According to Information Integration Theory (N. Anderson, 1996), integration is bringing different pieces of information together. When consumers are exposed to more than one comment, they try to reach a general opinion by averaging them all (N. Anderson, 1996). Outcome of this process gives us eWOM's perceived valence. For example, if there are positive comments and a single negative one, their subjective valence will be positive. Based on this perspective, valence will be positive (Purnawirawan, De Pelsmacker, & Dens, 2012). However, in the traditional literature about interpersonal communication, it is stated that negative information is more determinative than positive information (Herr P.M., Kardes, & Kim, 1991; Lurie & Chen, 2014; L. Zhang, Ma, & Cartwright, 2013). According to Information Integration Theory, consumers give weights to all information pieces based on their reliabilities and persuasiveness before they combine them. In this context, most credible and persuasive information pieces get the heaviest weight in the average calculation. These explanations put forth that eWOM's objective valence does not have to be equal to eWOM's subjective valence.

We know that negative comments have higher influence level than positive ones (Pan & Chiou, 2011). Researchers indicate that this happens because negative comments are perceived as more "descriptive, diagnostic" (Herr P.M. et al., 1991). Besides,

because it is not likely for a negative information to come from a party that will benefit from sale of the product or from a marketer, these factors increase negative information's trustworthiness (Lee & Kim, 2006). According to the literature, the number of positive comments is much more than the number of negative comments (J. Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2004). For example, a research conducted by Google shows that 80% of online ratings are 4 or 5 stars out of 5 (East, Hammond, & Wright, 2007). On the other hand, a couple of negative comments that are mixed together will increase eWOM's potential influence level because it will increase the average credibility score (Doh & Hwang, 2009). In this case, it is understood that eWOM with lower objective valence might have higher influence level than eWOM with higher objective valence. Thus, the relation between valence and influence level of eWOM should be examined from a subjective valence perspective (López & Sicilia, 2013). The presence of the negative comments evokes the feeling that comments about the product/service are not putting forward only the pros of the product/service, but also mention its the cons as well. In the cases where positive comments dominate the reviews, it has been found that trust towards eWOM is affected negatively and comments' persuasiveness level decreased (Doh & Hwang, 2009). A balanced valence perception increases trustworthiness of eWOM (Cheung et al., 2009; Doh & Hwang, 2009; Hörnfeldt & Cavalli-Abrahamson, 2011; López & Sicilia, 2013; Menkveld, 2013; Pavlou & Dimoka, 2006).

Some research also showed that companies write positive comments for themselves and negative ones about their competitors (Mayzlin, Dover, & Chevalier, 2013). What these companies forget is that by writing negative comments about their

competitors, they are balancing the valence of comments about competitors, therefore they might be increasing their trustworthiness whereas they adjust their own valence balance in a positive dominant position and jeopardize their persuasiveness and trustworthiness (Reichelt, Sievert, & Jacob, 2014). When perceived valence gets to a subjective positive position, but not all dominant way, eWOM's influence level increases (López & Sicilia, 2013). Parallel to this, some studies put forth valence's effect on sales. When the valence reaches the balance that maximize credibility and influence level, sales reach the peak level (A. Chevalier & Kicka, 2006; Dellarocas et al., 2007).

As an addition to number and consistency of comments, scope is another important factor about comments for them to be perceived trustworthy and effective (Hong, 2006; Hörnfeldt & Cavalli-Abrahamson, 2011; Petty & Cacioppo, 2012). On the Internet environment, eWOM's comprehensiveness level directly affects its trustworthiness (Furner et al., 2013). Broader comments have higher influence capacity than shallow ones (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 2011; Mudambi & Schuff, 2010; Pavlou & Dimoka, 2006; Petty & Cacioppo, 2012). Besides being comprehensive, correctness, usefulness and quality of the content (Mayer et al., 2011; Mudambi & Schuff, 2010; Pavlou & Dimoka, 2006; Petty & Cacioppo, 2012), are also playing a determining role on the influence level of eWOM (Awad & Ragowsky, 2008; Menkveld, 2013; D.-H. Park et al., 2007). Comments that are pragmatic, providing reasonable evidence to its argument and expressing itself with objective facts are considered as more quality comments (Fan et al., 2013), thus they are more trustworthy and effective (Furner et al., 2013). But the noting point here is about the writing language. As the language converges to perfect, its possibility of being perceived as a

marketing effort increases, therefore its trustworthiness suffers. Consequently, comments that are written in a natural language and avoiding to be seen as a marketing effort will increase their trustworthiness. Other than this, up-to-datedness of the comments and reviews has positive relation with trust towards and influence by eWOM (Hörnfeldt & Cavalli-Abrahamson, 2011). A comment that has been made one year ago will have less effectiveness than comments that are one day old.

Research shows that consumers tend to agree the general opinion in eWOM (Menkveld, 2013). Additionally, if we look at a more micro perspective, one specific comment's trustworthiness and effect level is affected by its consistency in itself. If it contains contradictions in itself, then it will be perceived as non-credible thus not effective (Menkveld, 2013).

Other type of variables that affect trust towards and effect of eWOM, are user related variables, e.g., gender of the consumer. For example, it has been found that female consumers trust and gets influenced less by eWOM (Ngoc Le, 2014). Besides gender, some other personal characteristics are influential too. Level of risk aversion, i.e., feeling uncomfortable when lacking information about possible results of a decision (Furner et al., 2013), is another factor that is effective on trust towards and influence by eWOM. Those with higher scores of risk aversion put more effort to eliminate this discomfort (Berger, 1979). Hereupon, they will read more eWOM about the product/service they are interested in, because they are not as comfortable as risk taking people about trusting eWOM (Furner et al., 2013). These individuals have a hard time believing the information they have given when there is lack of evidence to prove the

correctness of the information (Wong & Birnbaum-More, 1994). This expresses their sensitiveness towards the verifiability of the information.

Research indicates that some cultural factors also affect one's trust towards eWOM. As we can put risk aversion level in this, additionally we can count collectivism and power distance phenomena as factors that are effective on trust and influence (Furner et al., 2013).

After defining collectivism as the caring about group activities and their results, more than individual activities and their outcomes (Furner et al., 2013), we can apprise that individuals with higher level of collectivism will have higher level of trust towards eWOM, and they will be more influenced when the source introduced him/herself (Furner et al., 2013).

Another factor about eWOM consumer is the consumer's affection towards the related product/service. According to research, increased level of affection towards a product/service results in decreased level of trust towards and influence by related product's negative eWOM (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). A good analogy for this is as follows: your tendency of believing negative comments about a person you like will be lower than your tendency to believe negative comments a person you dislike. Additionally, a high level of correlation is detected between attitude towards a product and number of positive comments (Doh & Hwang, 2009), which demonstrates that people talk positive about things they like. This can be understood as the other side of the same medallion.

Factors related to consumer behavioral can be effective on trust and influence. According to findings, one of these factors is consumer's involvement level in eWOM. Amount and frequency of comments a consumer writes effects influence of eWOM negatively for him/her. These people are much more careful than those with lower involvement level about eWOM about building trust towards eWOM (López & Sicilia, 2014).

Besides the involvement level, online shopping experience level is also effective on trust towards and influence of eWOM. People with more online shopping experience tend to trust easier and more to eWOM than those with less experience (Jarvenpaa et al., 1999). Similarly, Internet usage experience is highly correlated with trust towards and influence of eWOM. Studies show that experienced InternetInternet users are more open to influence of eWOM (Zhu & Zhang, 2010). Individuals with low level of InternetInternet experience search information in an inefficient way compared to experienced users (Frías, Rodríguez, & Castañeda, 2008). Moreover, they have much harder time managing information they encounter on the InternetInternet (Yuping Liu & Shrum, 2009), and they approach to information on the web in a less critical way (A. Chevalier & Kicka, 2006). Because of this, it will be harder to detect differences between the alternatives for inexperienced users. They will not be thinking about the possibility of manipulations of marketers on eWOM. As a matter of fact, according to previous research, inexperienced users are nearly never questioning what is actually happening behind the screen of the computer (Caruso, 1999).

Because inexperienced users are not aware of marketer's possible manipulations on eWOM, they are more prone to be influenced by eWOM. But for the experienced

users this is not the case. They are more aware about possible strategic manipulations of companies on eWOM (López & Sicilia, 2013). There is a high level of variation in quality of eWOM all over the Internet, previous negative experiences caused by low quality eWOM can affect trustworthiness and influence of eWOM (Cheema & Papatia, 2008). That's why it is more likely for experienced consumers to question the credibility of the source of eWOM (Dellarocas, 2006a; Mayzlin, 2006). These doubts can reduce the effective power of eWOM on experienced Internet users.

Other studies detected different variables effecting trustworthiness and influence level of eWOM. One of them is consumers' positive and negative experiences about related product/service (Bickart & Schindler, 2001; Doh & Hwang, 2009).

Understandably, people put their own experiences before what other people say. If an individual has negative experiences with a specific product, compared to one with no negative experiences, he/she will have tendency to trust less to that product's eWOM. The opposite is also true. If an individual has positive experiences with a specific product/service, whatever he/she hears from other people, compared to one with no positive experience with that product/service, he/she will trust and be affected less by negative eWOM (Herr P.M. et al., 1991; Hörnfeldt & Cavalli-Abrahamson, 2011; Ulivieri, 2005). Relevant to experience, we can talk about expertise which we can think of a natural result of experience. According to the literature, there are contradictory results about expertise level and trustworthiness and influence of eWOM. Some of them claim that consumers' expertise level about a product is not effective on one's trust towards and being influenced by eWOM (Fan et al., 2013). Some studies do not agree with this statement and claim that consumers with high level of expertise do not trust

and be influenced by other's comments and ratings about the product/service as they may see themselves adequate. In other words, they claim that there is a negative relation between trust towards and influence by eWOM and expertise level. It is found that consumers with higher level of expertise put their own opinions before others', thus they feel distrust towards eWOM (Fan & Miao, 2012).

In addition to experience and expertise, it is useful to imply another point related to these two. People may have past experiences about eWOM and these experiences can be enough to build trust towards it. Positive experiences with eWOM can reduce the anxiety related to eWOM and increase trust towards eWOM (Hörfeldt & Cavalli-Abrahamson, 2011; Howard & Sheth, 1969; Locander & Hermann, 1979; Ulivieri, 2005). We can also explain trust towards eWOM, with the Internet being increasingly perceived as a more serious and reliable information source (Hörfeldt & Cavalli-Abrahamson, 2011). With the development of the Internet culture, emerging product/service-specific forum sites provide consumers the chance to participate in high-quality discussions about related product/service, thus increase trust towards and influence by eWOM (Hörfeldt & Cavalli-Abrahamson, 2011). There are also findings that contradict this perspective. According to these studies, as consumers' experience with eWOM increases, they would be more careful and alert towards eWOM to prevent misguidance, therefore limiting their trust towards eWOM (Menkveld, 2013).

There are some other characteristics affecting trust towards eWOM, other than variables that are mentioned above, effecting eWOM's perceived quality hence eWOM's trustworthiness (Furner et al., 2013)

After mentioning consumer, product and comment-related variables, we next talk about channel/source-related factors. The existence of mechanisms on websites that allow users to rate other consumers' comments from usefulness perspective, is increasing trust towards and influence by eWOM (Ba & Pavlou, 2002; Reichelt et al., 2014). Online consumer comments are to be found on two types of website. First, company sponsored websites, which are supported and advertised by companies; second, third-party websites that no product is being marketed or advertised (Chatterjee, 2001; Gu, Park, & Konana, 2012). For example, to help consumers' purchase decisions, amazon.com is hosting other consumers' comments and ratings on products (López & Sicilia, 2013), whereas Epinions is a third party website example. It does not sell any products, it is an information purpose website that accumulate consumer comments and reviews (López & Sicilia, 2013). You simply sign up to the website and write a comment about any product you want. Or you can visit it just to read what others have said about products.

Despite the fact that eWOM does not have an advertorial nature (Bart, Shankar, Sultan, & Urban, 2005; Bickart & Schindler, 2001), its effectiveness level can change depending on the website it is presented. Previous studies showed that the type of the website that eWOM is provided can affect consumers' tendency to listen to and apply what is being said in an eWOM (Senecal & Nantel, 2004). In the case that eWOM is published on websites that companies are involved, consumers can perceive the possibility of comments being manipulated by companies (Xue & Phelps, 2004). It is important to note here that this is more than just a perception as on some firm sponsored websites marketers do actually filter or even canalize consumers to shape consumer

reviews in a way that companies desire (Dellarocas, 2006b; Magnini, 2011; D. H. Park & Kim, 2008). This possibility of filtering can jeopardize trustworthiness and credibility of consumers' trust towards such websites. When you take an eWOM from a company sponsored website, there is no way to be sure about comments are not filtered and/or manipulated by companies. That is why it is not completely wrong to think their effect on consumer's decision mechanism will be less than eWOM from third party website (López & Sicilia, 2013).

Prestige of the website that eWOM is on is presented as one of the factors that affects trust towards eWOM (Hörfeldt & Cavalli-Abrahamson, 2011; Ulivieri, 2005; Wathen & Burkell, 2002). Prestige of a website is determined by some variables like; popularity, trustworthiness, sophistication of the website, and people who prepare the content on the website. The higher the prestige of a website gets, the higher the trustworthiness of eWOM from that website will be. Design, number of active users of the website, excessiveness of the topics that information being shared on the website, the website having an useful discussion platform, organization way of the information presented on the website, are all among the factors that help increase prestige and trustworthiness of the website (Reichelt et al., 2014). Furthermore, comments on more trustworthy websites are perceived more trustworthy (Hörfeldt & Cavalli-Abrahamson, 2011; Menkveld, 2013).

Other than these mechanisms, reliability of eWOM source is important during trust building phase (Dabholkar, 2006; Dou, Walden, Lee, & Lee, 2012; Fan et al., 2013; L.M., 2013; Mayzlin et al., 2013; Wathen & Burkell, 2002). Receivers will not trust information from sources they find un-trustable (McCroskey & Teven, 1999), thus these

information will not have any effect on receivers (J. J. Brown & Reingen, 1987).

Whereas, if the information source perceived credible, their eWOM will be more trustworthy than ones that are less trustworthy (López & Sicilia, 2013). Even it makes difference if eWOM is provided by an opinion leader or a simple consumer by the means of trustworthiness and influence. Opinion leaders are found to be more trustworthy than plain consumers (MacKinnon, 2012).

Source credibility is defined as; “ receiver’s trust perception towards the message sender”(Chaiken, 1980). Both in traditional WOM and eWOM, independent from the quality and informativeness of the comment, some characteristics of the source are effective during consumer’s evaluation of eWOM (Racherla et al., 2012). Comments on platforms that eWOM source is known from real life, like social media websites, have higher levels of trust because most of the time eWOM sources are friends, relatives, and family members. Based on the fact that increased information about the source increases trust towards eWOM, it is natural think that an individual’s trust towards eWOM by relatives will be higher than trust towards eWOM by foreign people (Ngoc Le, 2014).

Let us assume that a consumer is going to buy a cell phone in a WOM environment, and one of his friends gives him an advice. Under normal conditions, this advice is more trustworthy and effective than a stranger’s advice for him. But in online platforms, things are a little different because most of the time we do not even know the name of the eWOM source. Even if we do not have information about identity of the source, trust towards the source is built over some other parameters (Ohanian, 1990). During trust development, source’s perceived expertise level (Bickart & Schindler, 2001; Buda, 2003; Fogg & Tseng, 1999; L.M., 2013; Lis, 2013; Vermeulen & Seegers,

2009), similarity level between the source and the consumer (Simpson & Siguaw, 2008) and prestige of the website that contains the comment (Fan et al., 2013) plays important role. Besides the source's awareness and information level about related product/service, depth of the comment, and appropriateness of terminology (Hörnfeldt & Cavalli-Abrahamson, 2011; Menkveld, 2013) are also effective on determination of source's expertise level (Mitchell & Dacin, 1996).

If we are to draw a wide and clear frame, we can say that expertise level of the source is determined of three fundamental arms. These are "experience caused expertise", "license caused expertise", and "title caused expertise" (Menkveld, 2013). Expertise level, which is determined according to these factors, is highly effective on source's reliability (Mayer et al., 2011). Even though there are findings claiming that eWOM of sources with higher expertise perception to be perceived as more trustworthy, there are studies claiming the other way around. Some of these studies binding this to that amateur perceived sources are being perceived more sincere (Schindler & Bickart, 2005; Smith, Menon, & Sivakumar, 2005; A. Wang, 2005). There is also some evidence that there is no relation between source's perceived expertise and trust towards his/her eWOM (Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009).

Related to source's perceived expertise phenomenon, there are interesting findings as well. For example, if an eWOM source introduces itself as an expert, its eWOM is perceived less trustworthy than an ordinary user's eWOM (Huang & Chen, 2006; Senecal & Nantel, 2004). Expertise claims that are done by source himself is perceived as an effort to display himself more remarkable, on the foreground, thus more convincing. This situation provides a contrary effect on consumers and causes trust

towards eWOM to decrease (L.M., 2013). Because everyday consumers does not have expert level opinions about related products/services, they perceive a similarity with ordinary consumers, therefore they could trust more to ordinary consumers' eWOM than consumers that are perceived as experts (Huang & Chen, 2006; Metzger, Flanagin, & Medders, 2010; J. L. Sun, Lee, & Jingyan, 2011)

Even though users introducing themselves as experts are indeed perceived as experts their trustworthiness decreases (L.M., 2013). However, if the source does not introduce himself as an expert but has an expertise title that is given by other consumers' votes, than he/she is perceived both expert and trustworthy (L.M., 2013). As a natural outcome of a high level of trust and expertise perception, they have high level of influence on other consumers (Bickart & Schindler, 2001).

In some studies there are both consolidating and interesting findings about expertise and trust. According to these findings, inexperienced consumers' trust towards eWOM from marketers is relatively higher than their trust towards other users' eWOM (Ngoc Le, 2014). This could mean that, inexperienced users might reflect their insufficient knowledge about related product/service to other consumers and, so to speak, with logic of "like they know better than the supplier?", they choose to trust marketers' and suppliers' eWOM more than other consumers' eWOM (Ngoc Le, 2014).

Another factor about the source affecting trust and influence level of eWOM is the number of words source use to form a comment. Comments formed using higher number of words are perceived more credible because of them being perceived more qualified by means of information quality (Mudambi & Schuff, 2010). Because of the

thought that qualified information might express characteristics of related product/service better (Furner et al., 2013), its trustworthiness and influence level will be higher. It has been found that information given by more credible sources have higher influence on consumers' decision process (López & Sicilia, 2013, 2014).

Trustworthiness of the message that the source provides is determined by information one have about the source (López & Sicilia, 2013). As mentioned before, eWOM's of trustworthy sources are more effective on consumers (Bansal & Voyer, 2000b; Dholakia & Sternthal, 1977).

Affiliation with the source is another factor that is playing a role on trust and influence. Even if we are talking about an online environment, we can say consumers perceive an affiliation level between the group that the source belongs and himself, and any increase in this level results in increased trust towards that source's message (Racherla et al., 2012). Besides, perceived similarities between the source and the consumer helps consumer to perceive the source' eWOM more trustworthy (Murphy et al., 2007). For example, if the source shares some demographic information like the city he lives, it has been found that consumers living in the same city perceive that source as more credible. Other than shared similarities, even if there is no similarity, some characteristics about source's profile (Xu, 2014) and shared social component level of the source affects perceived trustworthiness of the source (Bartel, 2014; Forman et al., 2008; Mayer et al., 2011; McAllister, 1995; Mcknight & Chervany, 2001; Pan & Chiou, 2011). According to some research, even some micro details about these social components can have importance to make difference on trust and influence(Menkveld, 2013). For example, the use of a real name by the source, instead of a nickname, can

increase perceived credibility of eWOM (Menkveld, 2013). The point here is creating perception that the review is written by a real person. Sharing some information like; real name, location, personal information in profile, makes the source perceived as more transparent, reliable thus more realistic (Forman et al., 2008; Meng & Agarwal, 2007; Yoo, Lee, Gretzel, & Fesenmaier, 2009). Especially when faced with negative comments, consumers do pay more attention to profile information.

We can use some of the theories to explain why we use more caution when faced with negative information. For example Correspondent Inference Theory. According to this theory, negative information is accepted as abnormal and therefore is examined in a more careful way with the help of source's profile information (Xu, 2014). The more the writer perceived as real, the more trustworthy his comments will be perceived (J. L. Sun et al., 2011). Additionally, existence of information like source's membership date to website and summary of previous comments also have positive effect on eWOM's trustworthiness (Hu, Liu, & Zhang, 2008; Meng & Agarwal, 2007; W. Zhang & Watts, 2008)

It is believed that source credibility affects communication effectiveness (Hovland & Weiss, 1951), and thus plays a crucial role on eWOM's influence level (C. Park & Lee, 2009b). In another words, trust towards the eWOM source is a determinative concept that is affecting influence by eWOM (J. O. Brown et al., 2007; Cheung et al., 2009; Lim, Sia, Lee, & Benbasat, 2006; Pornpitakpan, 2004)

According to previous studies, being a member of virtual communities is another factor that affects the level of being influenced by eWOM (Shang, Chen, & Liao, 2006;

K. Y. Wang, Ting, & Wu, 2013). eWOM coming from online communities that consumers feel belong to, have higher level of influence.

Research about trust towards eWOM, make it clear that, trust level that is shaping especially with contribution of variables mentioned above, is extremely determinative on consumers' attitudes towards products/services (Kiecker & Cowles, 2002; D. H. Park & Kim, 2008)

A significant relation has been found between variables; trust towards eWOM and influence by eWOM, which are the variables we have examined together so far. Based on the previous research, eWOM with higher level of trustworthiness have greater influence power and capacity on consumers, than eWOM with lower level of trustworthiness do (Bansal & Voyer, 2000b; Dholakia & Sternthal, 1977).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In the literature review part of the study, eWOM concept is examined in detail and the variables affecting trust towards eWOM and eWOM' s effect level are discussed. This chapter of the study identifies technical details of the vignette designed for this study.

With the guidance of the information from the previous literature, the objective of this study is determined as: (1) to find out the relationship between trust towards and influence of eWOM and PBG, (2) to learn how the level of PBG affect consumers' purchase intentions, (3) to detect valence of eWOM' s effect on trustworthiness and persuasiveness of eWOM (4) to determine if higher level of PBG increases perceived quality of the product/service, (5) to find out the relation between daily Internet usage amount and trust toward eWOM, and (6) to find out the relationship between eWOM involvement and trust toward eWOM.

The following sections detail the approach used for preparing the vignette, choice of participants for the study, and data analyses.

3.1 Preparation and components of the vignette

The vignette scenarios are developed after the literature survey part. A pilot survey is conducted with 14 people to choose the appropriate product for the scenarios. It is important to find a product that people consult to eWOM before making a purchase decision about the related product. This is because if people are not reading eWOM about a product, there is no point putting that product in a vignette that is exploring eWOM.

The results of the first pilot showed that it would be appropriate to prepare the scenarios about television products. Apparently, TV category is one of the categories people consult to eWOM most before making a purchase decision.

There are some crucial steps when preparing the vignette scenarios. First of all, it is important to eliminate the potential effect of variables that are not included in this study as treatments. Since we are including PBG as an independent variable in this study, we had to be careful to get brand globalness into action but not the brand itself. If we were to put a much known global brand in the scenarios, then it would be impossible to eliminate some other characteristics of that brand getting into action. Let us say if we were to put Samsung brand in the scenario, then it would be impossible to take Samsung just as it is being global. Because besides being global, Samsung is perceived as a high quality and advanced brand. To surpass this handicap, we use a “fictitious” brand. Fictitious brands are brands that do not exist in the real world. You can control their perceived characteristics just by telling people about them. That way it is easier to manipulate the treatments that we want to control.

Just using a fictitious brand is not enough to prevent unwanted effects. Caution must be exercised when choosing a name for the brand as well. The chosen name shall not be associated with a real brand or something that can positively or negatively affect our study. And of course it has to be a word that is related to TV or technology product type.

Our first treatment was PBG. We manipulated this by expressing some characteristics that make brands more or less global. We had to find two brand names:

one English and one Turkish to create the perception of global and non-global brands, which should have similar meanings in Turkish and English. We decided to use name “Fusion” for our more global brand, and “Füzyon” for our less global brand. An example scenario for the more global brand, Fusion, reads:

“You discovered that Fusion is a globally active, global brand since 1946. This brand, which continues its business in the TV market for many years, is also active all over the world with a consistent line, including many overseas countries.”

By putting this statement in the scenario we tried to give the Fusion brand a more global impression. We also did the same thing with the non-global version of the statements, for our less global brand Füzyon.

Our other treatment was the valence of the eWOM. To manipulate this, we created two scenarios that have positive comments about brands, and two scenarios with negative comments about them. We created a total of four scenarios. The only differences between these scenarios were globalness and valence manipulations. Other than these, everything, including the used words, were the same. To manipulate valence, we told participants that eWOM about Füzyon/Fusion was positive/negative. We had two scenarios for each brand, total of four scenarios: One positive and one negative scenario for Fusion, and one positive and one negative scenario for Füzyon. All these vignettes can be found in the four appendices A - D.

After completing the preparation of the scenarios, we have conducted a pilot study with 16 participants to see if there is anything hard to understand, easy to

misunderstand or any other problems with our scenarios. We did small adjustments on the scenarios based on our pilot study results, and proceeded with the next step.

After completing the pilot study, we prepared the questions about our variables. First of all, we needed to check if our scenarios were found as realistic. In order to check this, we put four statements expressing that the related scenario is realistic, credible, reliable, and likely to happen. We asked participants their degree of agreement with the statements using a Likert scale. Participants were asked to choose one of the options ranked from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”.

Then we created an eleven-item inventory using five point Likert scale each, about trust towards eWOM and influence level of eWOM with the help of Meriç (2010) and Akkaya’s (2012) work. These items are about participants’ attitudes about eWOM from trust perspective and eWOM’s capacity of influencing consumers.

After that, we prepared a manipulation check scale to check if our manipulations have worked properly. We had two treatments in this study, PBG and valence. To check our PBG variable manipulation, we adapted the PBG scale from Steenkamp, Batra and Aldens (2003). We put three statements for the purpose of understanding if related brand perceived as global and asked participants to choose their agreement level.

We also created a one-item inventory for checking manipulation of the valence. We asked participants to state their degree of agreement to the statement “Comments about X brand are positive” using a Likert scale.

In order to answer our research questions 2, 3 and 4, we prepared scales about perceived quality of related brand, valence of comments about the related brand, and

degree of purchase intention of participants. We asked participants if they found Füzyon/Fusion brand as a quality brand, and in another scale, we asked them to state their likelihood to buy a Fusion/Füzyon brand TV.

To answer research question 5, we asked participants about their daily Internet usage amount, using an interval scale question. We asked them to pick one of the options of “less than one hour”, “one to two hours”, “two to three hours” and “more than three hours”.

To understand the relationship between eWOM involvement and trust towards eWOM behavior, which was our research question 6, we put “I read comments about a product/service before I purchase it” statement in the survey, and asked participants to state their level of agreement to this statement, again using a Likert scale. By preparing this instrument, we completed our statements about our five main research questions.

Lastly, to understand which and how demographic characteristics influence our variables, we asked participants about their age, gender, and monthly personal income levels.

3.2 Sampling

When conducting a vignette-based quasi-experiment study, it is important to minimize the effects of any variables other than the ones that are manipulated. Hence, when giving information in the scenarios to participants, it is crucial to give objective information or not to give any additional information at all.

Although we can eliminate some variables just by not telling anything about them in the scenarios, this is not easy to do so for some variables. For example, for

demographics, we cannot prevent people from having demographic characteristics, and this will surely make a difference in the results. What we can do is though, is try to control them by making all participants to have similar demographics. That way we can say if there is a difference between the groups, and this is not because of their demographics..

To alleviate this problem, we decided to conduct our research with university students. Since they are in a much narrow age range (18 to 23), same education level, and similar monthly income levels, we thought this can help us stabilize demographic characteristics of our participants. Of course, we cannot say this will eliminate the effects of demographics completely, but it will surely help reduce them.

A total of 160 questionnaires are distributed to a random sample of undergraduate students from Istanbul University Business Administration Faculty, 40 participants for each of the 4 scenarios

3.3 Data analyses approach

After all the questionnaires were collected, the collected data were entered to SPSS for further statistical analyses. The following analyses were done to the data collected:

- ✓ Descriptive analyses were conducted for demographic characteristics of consumers.
- ✓ Factor analysis was performed to check the construct structures
- ✓ Correlation analysis was done for the relations between Perceived Brand Globalness and perceived quality of the brand, trust towards eWOM and eWOM involvement.

- ✓ Regression analysis was conducted to understand Perceived Brand Globalness level's effect on purchase intention, daily Internet usage amount's effect on trust towards eWOM, PBG and valence's effect on purchase intention.
- ✓ T-Tests were done to understand if trustworthiness and effectiveness of eWOM differentiates based on PBG or valence of eWOM.
- ✓ ANOVA analyses is done in order to find out if trust towards eWOM differs between four scenarios, which are; brand with high level PBG- with positive comments, high level PBG-negative comments, low level PBG-positive comments and low level PBG-negative comments.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSES AND FINDINGS

4.1 Descriptive findings

4.1.1 Demographic profile of the participants

4.1.1.1 Age

Since this is a quasi-experimental study, it is important to keep variables other than treatments stable. It seems we were able to hold age variable in a narrow range which is a positive sign for our research's health. We can observe that the standard deviation of the age (Table 1) variable is quite low (1,49). As 76.1% of participants are between the age of 20 and 23, and 100.0% of participants are between 20 and 27 years old, this is an acceptable age range for a quasi-experiment. Young and early adult population is dominant in this study. As younger people are more curious about technology, participants of this study most likely have insight about eWOM phenomenon.

Table 1. Age

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
age	160	20	28	22.67	1.499
Valid N (listwise)	160				

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
20-23	120	73.8	76.1	76.1
24-27	40	23.2	23.9	100.0
Total	160	96.9	100.0	
160	100.0			

4.1.1.2 Gender

While females are slightly more than males with a ratio of 58.8% (Table 2), it is possible to say that distribution is relatively equal with regards to gender. Thus, our study represents preferences of both males and females equally.

Table 2. Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		1	.6	.6	.6
	Male	65	40.6	40.6	41.3
	Female	94	58.8	58.8	100.0
	Total	160	100.0	100.0	

4.1.1.3 Monthly personal income level

When the income level distribution of the subjects is analyzed, it can be easily seen that 77.5% (Table 3) of the participants are cumulated in the income level of 0-1000 TL. This is good because we wanted participants to have similar demographic characteristics to prevent any unwanted manipulations of the variables, other than the treatment variables (PBG and valence).

Table 3. Income

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		1	.6	.6	.6
	0-500 TL	51	31.9	31.9	32.5
	1001-1500 TL	24	15.0	15.0	47.5
	1501 and more	11	6.9	6.9	54.4
	501-1000TL	73	45.6	45.6	100.0
	Total	160	100.0	100.0	

4.1.2 Internet usage and involvement of participants

4.1.2.1 Daily internet usage amounts

The distribution of daily Internet usage shows us that 92.5% (Table 4) of the participants of this study are using the Internet more than one hour daily. Because the more time you spend on the Internet, the more you encounter with eWOM. This is very important since it is better that questions are evaluated by more experienced users on the subject of eWOM.

Table 4. Internet Time

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	1	.6	.6	.6
Less Than 1 Hour	11	6.9	6.9	7.5
Valid 1-2 Hours	55	34.4	34.4	41.9
2-3 Hours	52	32.5	32.5	74.4
More Than 3 Hours	41	25.6	25.6	100.0
Total	160	100.0	100.0	

4.1.2.2 eWOM involvement

We can see that the mean of the answers given to statement “I do read comments about a product/service before I purchase.” is 4.05. This means that the participants agree with this statement in a general manner. Also, 82.4% (Table 5) of all participants either agree

or strongly agree to this statement. This result is in our favor because it means that our participants knew what they are saying when they answered our questions about eWOM.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of eWOM Involvement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	4	2.5	2.5	2.5
	2	12	7.5	7.5	10.1
	3	12	7.5	7.5	17.6
	4	75	46.9	47.2	64.8
	5	56	35.0	35.2	100.0
	Total	159	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		160	100.0		

4.1.3 Persuasiveness and manipulations check for scenarios

4.1.3.1 Persuasiveness of the scenarios

It is important to measure the credibility and reality level of the scenarios. If the scenarios are not perceived realistic and persuasive, the answers given to the questions will not be realistic as well. Table 6 demonstrates that the overall persuasiveness level of the scenarios is 3.46 over 5. This is not as high as we wanted it to be but we cannot say that the participants have found the scenarios unrealistic either. It is useful to point out that there were no significant differences between persuasiveness levels of four different scenarios. Therefore, we can conclude that persuasiveness level does not play a role in any possible difference between the groups.

Table 6. Persuasiveness

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Persuasive1	159	1	5	3.41	1.020
Persuasive2	159	1	5	3.37	.965
Persuasive3	158	1	5	3.29	.898
Persuasive4	159	1	5	3.74	.963
Overall	158	1.00	5.00	3.4652	.85234
Valid N (listwise)	158				

4.1.3.2 Manipulation check for PBG

We have named our four scenarios as 1, 2, 3 and 4. Number 1 and 3 are the scenarios for more global companies, and number 2 and 4 are the scenarios for less global companies. Our statements for PBG manipulation check were designed such that the higher the rating gets, the more global the company is perceived. For example, one of the statements was, “I think Fusion is a global brand” and the scale was a 5-point Likert scale with 1 being “strongly disagree” and 5 being “strongly agree”. If we look at Table 7, we can see that the scenarios 1 - 3 and 2- 4 had no significant differences between them but they were perceived significantly different from one another. Also, if we look at the average ratings of the manipulation check questions, we observe that the less global brand “Füzyon” is perceived less global with an average of 2,22-2,35 and more global company “Fusion” is perceived more global with average scores of 3,46-3,24.

Table 7. PBG

	(I) ID	(J) ID	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Tukey HSD	GP	LP	1.11*	.178	.000	.65	1.57
		GN	.21	.178	.627	-.25	.68
		LN	1.23*	.179	.000	.77	1.70
		GP	-1.11*	.178	.000	-1.57	-.65
	LP	GN	-.90*	.178	.000	-1.36	-.44
		LN	.12	.179	.903	-.34	.59
		GP	-.21	.178	.627	-.68	.25
	GN	LP	.90*	.178	.000	.44	1.36
		LN	1.02*	.179	.000	.55	1.49
		GP	-1.23*	.179	.000	-1.70	-.77
	LN	GN	-.12	.179	.903	-.59	.34
		LP	-1.02*	.179	.000	-1.49	-.55

GP: Global-positive scenario, LP: Non-global-positive scenario, GN: Global-negative scenario, LN: Non-global-negative scenario

4.1.3.3 Manipulation check for valence

Of the four scenarios we have, two of them are designed to have eWOM with negative valence and the other two with positive valence. Scenario number 1 and 2 were the positive ones and number 3 and 4 were the negatives. If we examine Table 8, we can notice that scenario number 1 and 2 are not significantly different from each other. This means that they do not have difference from the perspective of valence. Same thing can be said for scenario number 3 and 4.

Our valence manipulation check statement was “Comments about Fusion are positive” and measured by a 5-point Likert scale where the higher the rating gets, the

more positive the scenario is perceived. The average scores for four scenarios are as follows: number 1 and 2 have 3,33 and 3,65, number 3 and 4 have 2,40 and 2,51, respectively. Therefore, scenarios with positive content are indeed perceived as positive and scenarios with negative content are perceived as negative. From these scores, we can conclude that our valence manipulations did work properly.

Table 8. Valence

	(I) ID	(J) ID	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Tukey HSD	GP	LP	-.32	.177	.282	-.78	.14
		GN	.93*	.177	.000	.47	1.39
		LN	.82*	.178	.000	.36	1.28
	LP	GP	.32	.177	.282	-.14	.78
		GN	1.25*	.176	.000	.79	1.71
		LN	1.14*	.177	.000	.68	1.60
	GN	GP	-.93*	.177	.000	-1.39	-.47
		LP	-1.25*	.176	.000	-1.71	-.79
		LN	-.11	.177	.920	-.57	.35
	LN	GP	-.82*	.178	.000	-1.28	-.36
		LP	-1.14*	.177	.000	-1.60	-.68
		GN	.11	.177	.920	-.35	.57

GP: Global-positive scenario, LP: Non-global-positive scenario, GN: Global-negative scenario, LN: Non-global-negative scenario

4.2 Factor analysis

4.2.1 Scale about trust towards and influence of eWOM

Looking at the results of the factor analysis tabulated in Table 9, the 11-items used to measure trust towards and influence of eWOM are gathered under one factor, which we name as “Trust towards and influence by eWOM”.

Table 9. Factor Analysis

Component	Total Variance Explained					
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.013	63.751	63.751	7.013	63.751	63.751
2	.915	8.317	72.069			
3	.689	6.267	78.336			
4	.603	5.483	83.819			
5	.424	3.852	87.671			
6	.399	3.630	91.301			
7	.307	2.790	94.091			
8	.256	2.324	96.415			
9	.172	1.561	97.976			
10	.116	1.056	99.032			
11	.107	.968	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

4.3 Scale reliabilities

4.3.1 Scale about trust towards and influence of eWOM

An 11-item scale was used to measure the trust towards and influence of eWOM.

Cronbach's Alpha was calculated 0.94 for the 11-item scale (Table 10). It is generally

agreed that a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.70 or higher is a sign of reliability (Andrews, Robinson, & Wrightsman, 1991; Robinson & Shaver, 1972). Therefore it is safe to say that our scale satisfies the reliability condition.

Table 10. Reliabilities of Trust and Influence Scale

ITEMS	Number of Items	Reliability
I would trust comments about "brand" I would trust ratings about "brand" I would watch consistency in comments about "brand" I would take comments about "brand" into account I would take ratings about "brand" into account I would agree with general idea in the comments about "brand" I would have tendency to get ideas from comments about "brand" I would be effected from comments about "brand" I would be effected from ratings about "brand" Comments about "brand" would affect my decision Ratings about "brand" would affect my decision	11	0.94

4.3.2 Scales about PBG

A 3-item scale was used to measure the PBG. Cronbach's Alpha was calculated 0.889 for 3 items (Table 11), which is a more than sufficient level of reliability.

Table 11. Reliabilities of PBG Scale

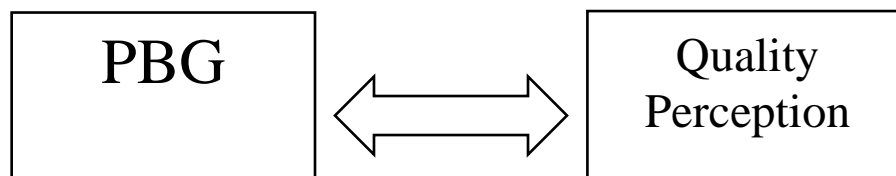
ITEMS	Number of Items	Reliability
I think "brand" is a global brand	3	0.889
I think people overseas purchase "brand" brand		
I think "brand" products are sold all over the world		

4.4 Correlations

4.4.1 PBG and perceived quality

A correlation analysis is conducted to understand the relation between PBG and quality perception.

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive correlation between PBG and perceived quality of the product/service.



We can see that there is a significant positive relation between PBG and perceived quality of the brand (0,234) at the significance level of 0.05 (Table 12). This means that brands that are perceived higher in quality are also perceived higher in globalness and vice versa.

Table 12. Correlations PBG-PQ

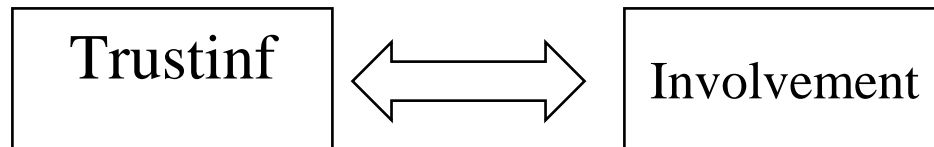
			pbgavg	Quality
Spearman's rho	pbgavg	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.234**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.003
		N	160	159
	quality	Correlation Coefficient	.234**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.
		N	159	159

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.4.2 Trust towards and influence of eWOM and eWOM involvement

Correlation analysis was conducted to understand the relation between trust towards and influence of eWOM and participants' involvement level of eWOM.

Hypothesis 2: There is a correlation between trust towards and influence of eWOM and eWOM involvement.



Significance level for this analysis was 0.05, and we found a strong positive correlation (0.503) between the variables (Table 13).

For involvement measurement, we asked participants to degree their agreement level with statement “I do read comments about a product/service before purchase”. It seems there is a strong, positive and significant relation between trust towards and influence of eWOM and involvement level to eWOM. That is, the participants who read eWOM before purchase more often have a greater level of trust towards and influence of eWOM. Similarly, participants who have greater trust towards and influence of eWOM tend to read eWOM before purchase more frequently.

Table 13. Correlations Trustinf – Involvement

			trustinf	involvement
Spearman's rho	trustinf	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.503**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	160	159
	involvement	Correlation Coefficient	.503**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	159	159

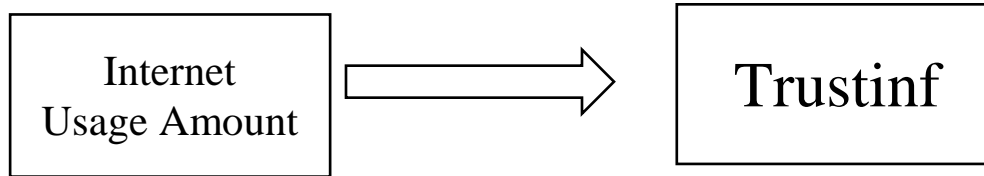
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.5 Regressions

4.5.1 Trust towards and influence of eWOM and daily internet usage amount

Regression analysis was conducted in order to determine the effect of daily Internet usage on trust towards and influence of eWOM. We wanted to see if an individual's Internet usage amount effect his/her trust towards and level he/she affected by eWOM.

Hypothesis 3: Daily Internet usage amount affects trust towards and influence of eWOM.



Significance level of 0.05 was selected for regression analysis. Standardized Beta coefficient for Internet usage was found to be 0.25 (Table 14). There is a significant positive effect of participants' daily Internet usage amount on trust towards and influence of eWOM. It seems that participants' trust towards and influence of eWOM increases as their daily Internet usage amount increases. This makes sense because as people get more familiar with a phenomenon, their trust towards that subject would increase.

Table 14. Regression Trustinf - Internet Usage

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	3.249	.166		19.539	.000
Internettime	.184	.057	.250	3.235	.001

a. Dependent Variable: trustinf

4.5.2 PBG regression over purchase intention

Regression analysis is done to understand PBG's effect on participants' purchase intention about the product.

Hypothesis 4: A brand's PBG level affects purchase intention towards its products.



Significance level of 0.05 was selected for this regression analysis. Even there is a significant correlation between PBG and purchase intention (Table 15), regressive effect of PBG on purchase intention is not significant at the level of 0.05. So it is not possible to say PBG level effects individuals' purchase intention.

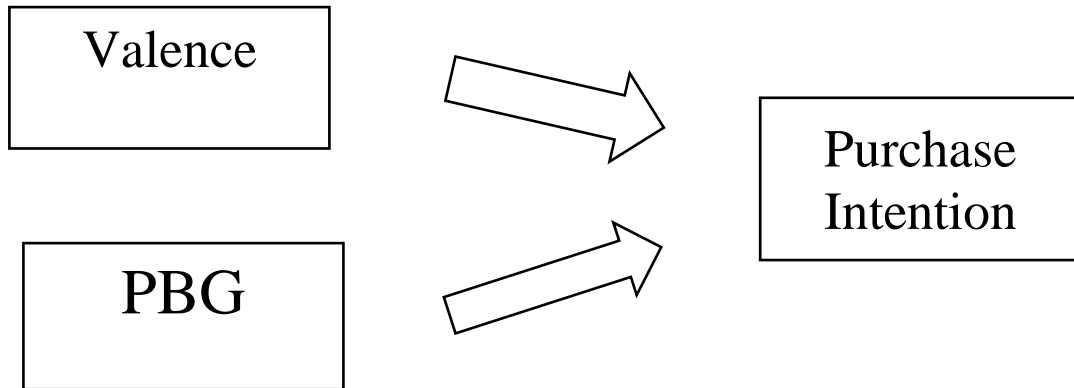
Table 15. Regression PBG – PI

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.629	.222		11.851	.000
	pbgavg	.141	.075	.149	1.883	.062

4.5.3 PBG and valence on purchase intention

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to understand the combined effect of PBG and valence on purchase intention. Because our results showed us that PBG does not have a significant effect on purchase intention just by itself, in this analysis we added valence variable in our regression model, and repeated the procedure as a multiple regression analysis.

Hypothesis 5: PBG and valence of eWOM affects purchase intention towards related product/service together.



Looking at Table 16, it is found that the estimated effect of PBG is not significant, while valence's effect on purchase intention is significant. It means that when PBG and valence taken into account together, PBG does not seem to have any effect on purchase intention as before, but valence still has significant effect on purchase intention.

Table 16. Multiple Regression PBG, Valence - PI

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.094	.253		4.318	.000
1 pbg	.111	.062	.117	1.793	.075
1 valence	.545	.062	.570	8.758	.000

4.6 T-Test

4.6.1 Trust towards and influence of eWOM differences between global and non-global brands

We conducted T-Tests to examine the differences between global perceived brands and non-global perceived brands from a trust towards and influence of eWOM perspective. This analysis will tell us if there is any significant difference between eWOM about global perceived brands and eWOM about non-global perceived brands in the sense of trustworthiness and persuasiveness. It will also tell us if there is a significant difference between them, which one is more trustworthy and effective. Based on the literature, we have established our hypothesis as;

Hypothesis 6: eWOM about more global perceived brands/products are more trustworthy and effective than eWOM about non-global perceived brands/products

We have used a significance level of 0.05 for our analysis. Results showed us that there is no difference between global and non-global brands' eWOM by means of trustworthiness and effectiveness (Table 17). We can interpret this as PBG does not create any difference between groups just by itself.

Table 17. Independent Samples T-Test, PBG - Trustinf

		Levene's Test		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95%	
									Lower	Upper
trustinf	Equal variances	.002	.965	-.218	158	.828	-.023	.106	-.233	.187
	Non-Equal variances			-.218	157	.828	-.023	.106	-.233	.187

4.6.2 Trust towards and influence of eWOM differences between positive and negative valence

Another T-Test was conducted to understand if trust towards and influence of eWOM differentiated based on its valence. With this analysis, we will try to see if valence of eWOM creates any diversity in terms of trustworthiness and effectiveness of eWOM. Following our literature review, we established our hypothesis as;

Hypothesis 7: eWOM with negative valence is more trustworthy and effective than eWOM with positive valence

Based on our test results at significance level of 0.05, valence of eWOM did not cause any difference between groups in terms of trust towards and influence of eWOM. eWOM with negative valence did not differ from eWOM with positive valence significantly (Table 18).

Table 18. Independent Samples T-Test, Valence - Trustinf

		Levene's Test		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95%	
									Lower	Upper
Trustinf	Equal variances	2.59	.109	-1.469	158	.144	-.155	.105	-.364	.053
	Non-Equal variances			-1.469	155	.144	-.155	.105	-.364	.053

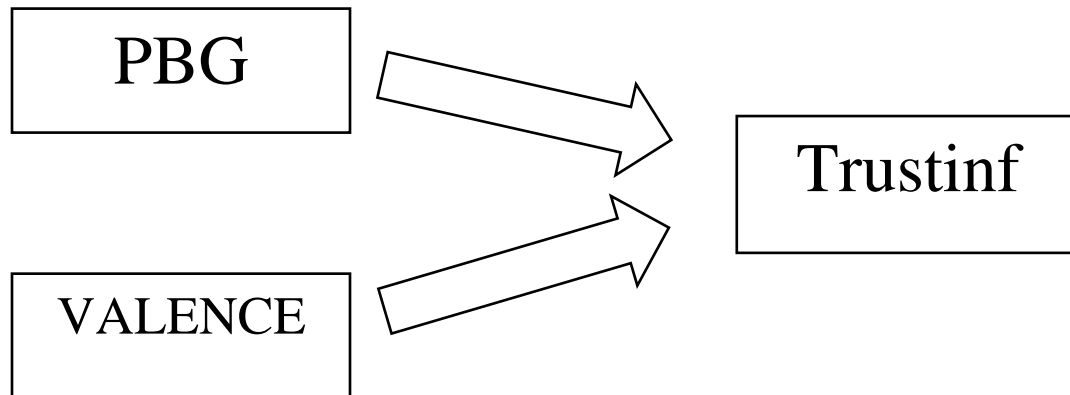
4.7 ANOVA

4.7.1 Trust towards and influence of eWOM differences between the scenarios

After completing T-Tests and finding out that neither PBG nor valence of eWOM does not create any difference on trustworthiness and persuasiveness of eWOM alone, we have conducted an ANOVA analysis and put PBG and valence of eWOM simultaneously into action. An ANOVA test was conducted to understand the differences between the four groups of the study. These vignettes are prepared with differences on their levels of PBG and valence, and we are interested in the differential effects of these variables (if any) on the trust towards and influence of eWOM.

Hypothesis 8: Trust towards and influence of positive eWOM about a more globally perceived company is higher than trust towards and influence of positive eWOM about a less globally perceived company.

Hypothesis 9: Trust towards and influence of negative eWOM about a less globally perceived company is higher than trust towards and influence of negative eWOM about a more globally perceived company.



Using a significance level of 0.05, the results of the ANOVA test shows that four groups are differentiated in the means of how much they trust and how much they get effected from eWOM (Table 19).

Table 19. ANOVA PBG, Valence - Trustinf

Dependent Variable: trustinf

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
pbg *	Hypothesis	2265.993	4	566.498	1287.002	.000	.971
valence	Error	68.666	156	.440 ^a			

a. MS(Error)

When we examined the main effects of our two independent variables on trust and influence, the results showed us they do not make any difference. However, when we put them in the model simultaneously in the ANOVA analysis, the scene has changed. Average trust towards and influence of eWOM scores for four scenarios have

significantly differed from each other. eWOM about more global brand with negative comment valence has the largest score with 3.93 and eWOM about less global brand with positive comment valence has the smallest score with 3.56 (Table 20).

Table 20. ANOVA

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval		Partial Eta Squared
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
[global=MGLOBAL] * [valence=POSITIVE]	3.560	.105	33.934	.000	3.353	3.767	.881
[global=MGLOBAL] * [valence=NEGATIVE]	3.939	.105	37.547	.000	3.731	4.146	.900
[global=LGLOBAL] * [valence=POSITIVE]	3.807	.105	36.287	.000	3.599	4.014	.894
[global=LGLOBAL] * [valence=NEGATIVE]	3.738	.105	35.637	.000	3.531	3.946	.891

Based on our ANOVA results, there are significant differences between the four scenarios. If we look at Table 20, we can notice that the highest trust and influence value belongs to more global with negative valence scenario. Two instances of the less global scenario come in the second and third places with very close average scores. Lastly, eWOM about more global with positive valence scenario has the smallest trust and influence score.

The difference between the trust and influence scores of positive and negative scenarios of more global company is much more than that of a less global company. Negative eWOM about global brand has the highest score of trustworthiness and persuasiveness, and positive eWOM about global brand has the lowest one. This can be

interpreted as global companies being more open to the effect of negative comments and less open to positive one's effects than less global companies.

Even though higher levels of PBG has its own merits for a brand, it seems to bring in some vulnerabilities as well. Based on our findings, it turns out that a negative comment affects a more global brand much more than it does a less global brand. Because people are more likely to trust and be influenced by the negative comments about a more global brand than they do from a negative comment about a less global brand as it can be seen in our ANOVA results.

With the same logic, we can argue that more global brands will benefit less from positive comments than less global brands do. This again can be observed from our ANOVA results: People are less likely to trust to and influenced by positive comments about a more global perceived company than they do from a positive comment about a less global perceived brand (Figure 1).

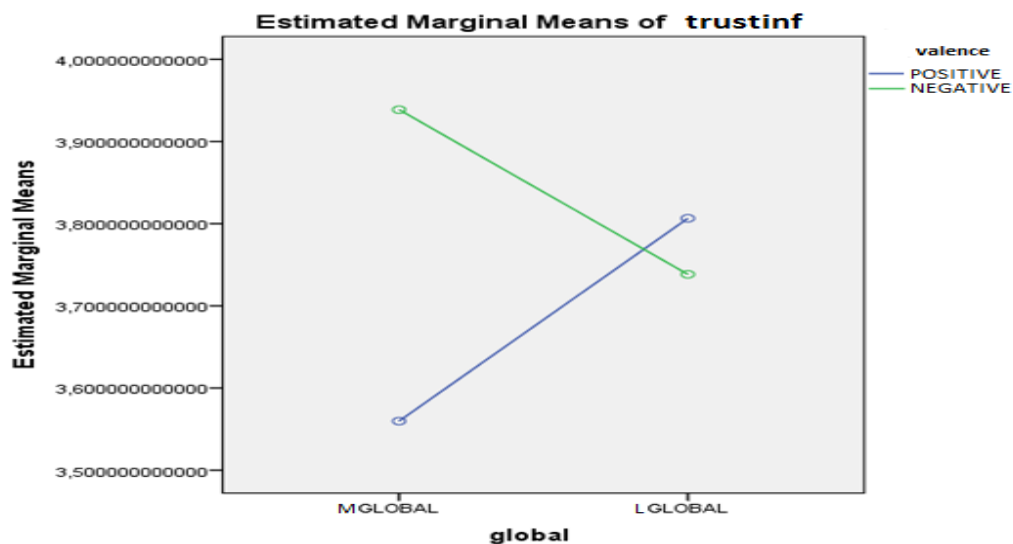


Figure 1. Trustworthiness and influence comparison graph of scenarios

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Global brands tend to be perceived as possessing higher quality than their less global counterparts, and seem to take advantage of this position in the markets for a while now (E M Steenkamp, Batra, & Alden, 2003). For example, one can find himself hearing a good word of mouth about a global brand from some consumers with no prior experience with, or knowledge about the very brand in question. It is hard to say if such a similar phenomenon holds for non-global brands. Because these non-global brands are not as popular as the global brands, most consumers will not be enthusiastic about talking positively about these brands without any experience or knowledge. Our study is about how this perception of globalness contributes –either positively or negatively- to trust towards and influence of eWOM about brands. As the main objective of the current study, we tried to determine PBG's effect on eWOM's trustworthiness and influence level. Our motive here is to examine one of the benefits of the global brands as a consequence of their global image, a subject that has not been studied yet. Since eWOM is relatively a new concept in the marketing discipline, we believe it is important to understand how this new phenomenon is affected by perceived brand globalness.

Understanding this unexplored dynamics of PBG will provide us a wider vision about our relatively new marketing tool, which is called eWOM. Since its affect on customer purchase intention and purchase decision is demonstrated many times before, figuring out the working principles of this phenomenon would give us a chance to put it to use, therefore also provide major advantage from a marketing perspective.

Although trust towards and influence of eWOM is examined over several different angles, PBG, a characteristic that every single product/service has at different levels, has been rarely examined before. From this standpoint, we think that this research will contribute to the literature by focusing on this very common but not examined area. It is important to cover and comprehend all aspects of eWOM, because it continues its road to become one of the most important information sources during purchase decision process. We hope this research will fill the gap in the relevant literature by providing fresh insights about PBG and eWOM.

It is important to note that the effect of PBG on trustworthiness and influence of eWOM is not our only finding. We have found positive correlations between PBG and perceived quality as well as trust towards and influence of eWOM and eWOM involvement. We have also found positive effect of daily Internet usage amount on trust towards and influence of eWOM, valence's effect on purchase intention, and valence's effect on perceived quality. Finally, we have found some encouraging results about the relation between PBG, valence and trust towards and influence of eWOM, which will be discussed at the end of the discussion part of the thesis.

If we are to talk about our findings; first of all, descriptive statistics suggest that the majority of the participants are close to each other in all demographics. These results indicate that the respondents fit the sample profile for our quasi-experiment, because their variance is quite low. Participants with similar demographics is something we want because we do not want variables other than our treatments to influence our results. It is useful to remind that since we have conducted our research with undergraduate students, all of our participants share same level of education.

Besides, 82.4% of our respondents have agreed the statement implying "I do read online comments about a product/service before I purchase". This is also another indicator of the appropriateness of our sample and the adequate level of experience to contribute to our experiment.

When we check if our treatments have worked or not and if our scenarios were found to be persuasive, we have found positive results. Based on the results, participants found our scenarios credible and real (3,46/5). Our treatments, PBG and valence, seem to have worked.

After conducting the of factor analysis, we found that all of our items in trust-influence scale are gathered under one factor. So we named this factor as "Trust towards and influence of eWOM". It is good to see all our items are united for achieving the same goal. If we could not have this accumulation, we had to eliminate some of the items to reach this structure.

After completing our factor analysis, we have conducted a reliability analysis. According to results, our items were found to be highly reliable with Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.94 out of 1.00. This shows us that we have measured what we wanted to measure with these items. Also we had Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.889 for our PBG scales, which strengthens our scales by means of validity and reliability.

We will first discuss our descriptive findings, and then continue with the correlations and our first hypothesis. We claimed that there is a positive correlation between PBG and perceived quality of related product/service. Our findings support our Hypothesis 1. Based on our analysis result, there is a significant correlation between

PBG and quality. This result is consistent with the previous findings in the literature. Based on their expertise and professional identity, quality is a characteristic that consumers expect from global companies. Thus, it is expected to see that any increase in PBG results in an increase in quality perception. Because quality is one of the first words that will come to consumers' mind when they hear the words "global brand", it is understandable that products that are perceived as high quality are also perceived as more global. We think that this is largely due to the global brand image on consumers' minds. Global brands have some characteristics that are set on people's minds such as profession, quality standard, credibility and prestige.

Our next hypothesis is about the relation between trust towards and influence of eWOM and eWOM involvement. We have claimed that there is a positive relationship between one's trust towards and the level of being affected from eWOM and his/her online comment reading habit. We conjectured that people who read eWOM more frequently will trust to and be influenced by it more than those who read less eWOM. A correlation analysis has confirmed our hypothesis with a correlation coefficient of 0.503. This result tells us that people who are more involved in eWOM reading behavior tend to trust and be influenced more by eWOM, and the more they trust and be influenced by eWOM, the more they consult to it. This finding is quite intuitive. The more you encounter with a phenomenon, the more you get familiar with it and start building trust towards it, so the more it influences your attitudes and behaviors. Complementary to this, as your trust level increases towards something, you will be more comfortable about getting into an interaction with it.

When consumers consult to eWOM, their information level about and experience on eWOM increases. With this increase, they start to feel more secure and familiar, and build trust towards it. This makes it easier for them to be influenced by it and later on, they find it even easier to re-consult to it because of the trust they have built. Hence, there is a two-way mechanism, and our Hypothesis 2 is confirmed.

Related to involvement finding, we had another hypothesis that investigates the effect of the amount of sInternet usage on trust and influence. In Hypothesis 3, we claimed that there is a positive effect of daily Internet usage amount on trust towards and influence of eWOM. According to the results of the regression analysis, Internet usage amount does affect consumer's level of trust towards and is influenced by eWOM. This result can be explained with the following logic: Increased amount of Internet usage will increase the frequency of encountering with eWOM. Increased interaction will result in familiarity with eWOM, therefore trust towards it will increase.

Once you spend more time on the Internet, consciously or unconsciously, it is impossible to avoid encountering more eWOM. The more you encounter with the eWOM, the more you will develop trust towards it therefore you will be influenced.

One of the independent variables in the research is PBG. Our fourth hypothesis was about PBG's effect on purchase intention. We claimed that increased perceived brand globalness will increase one's purchase intention towards that brand's products/services. To test this hypothesis, we have conducted a regression analysis. Unfortunately, our regression analysis was not significant at neither 1% nor 5% of significance levels. Even though we cannot discuss about regression results for this

hypothesis, it is useful to mention that there is a significant correlation between these two variables. Perhaps we can say that PBG and consumers' purchase intention are slightly correlated but regression results are not helping us confirm Hypothesis 4.

The reasoning behind this hypothesis was that global firms' products attract consumers to themselves with their higher prestige and image, but our results fail to support this idea.

We have also checked the mutual effect of our two independent variables on purchase intention. In Hypothesis 5, we claimed PBG and valence of eWOM are jointly affecting purchase intention towards related product. According to multiple regression analysis results, when these two variables are jointly accounted for, PBG does not have a significant effect on purchase intention, while valence has a positive significant effect on purchase intention. This result shows the importance of valence. When valence of eWOM is positive about a product, people are not saying “wait a minute, I should not buy this, this not a global brand”, or when the comments are negative they do not say “I can buy this anyway, this is a global brand after all.” People value what other consumers say about products and if there are negative opinions or experiences about a product, even if it is a global brand, they lose their purchase intention towards it. It also works other way around. If consumers are in a position to buy a product, and if valence is positive, which means comments are positive, they tend to buy the product anyway even if it is not a global brand. This can be a sign of people valuing real experiences and consumers' thoughts more than company-drawn global images. Maybe they do not care much about if a brand is active all over world; instead what they value, and take into account when shaping a purchase intention is what those people who bought the product

think, what they have experienced, and what the real consequences of purchasing related product are.

We are not claiming that being global is not important when competing in the market, but when you put what people say about you and where you are active on world in separate baskets, first one is surely more important and effective.

Our greatest goal in this study was to point out PBG's and valence's effect on trust towards and influence of eWOM. In order to test this, we selected quasi-experiment design as our method. In hypotheses 6 and 7, we tested our independent variables' separate main effects on trust towards and influence of eWOM. Our T-test results showed us that neither valence of eWOM nor PBG is determined just by itself on an individual's trust towards and being influenced by eWOM level. Then we have conducted ANOVA, and examined the differences between scenarios with different PBG and valence combinations. This way we examined PBG and valence's mutual effect on trustworthiness and credibility of eWOM. Our Hypothesis 8 reads: "Trust towards and influence of positive eWOM about a more globally perceived company is higher than trust towards and influence of positive eWOM about a less globally perceived company." And Hypothesis 9 reads: "Trust towards and influence of negative eWOM about a less globally perceived company is higher than trust towards and influence of negative eWOM about a more globally perceived company."

Our initial conjecture was that global image of a brand would help it dodge the negative effects of negative eWOM, and because of non-global perception of any non-global brand, they would be left more defenseless against effects of negative eWOM.

We also thought that positive eWOM about a global brand would be perceived more credible and persuasive while positive eWOM about a non-global brand would be opposite. Results were quite surprising. According to the results, negative eWOM about global brands are perceived more trustworthy and persuasive than negative eWOM about a non-global company. Moreover, positive eWOM about global brands have also been found to be less trustworthy and convincing than positive eWOM about non-global brands.

We can talk about the possible reasons for these results. As we mentioned in analysis and results part, most striking matter is results being % 100 percent opposite of our hypothesis 8 and 9. What these data intuitively tells us is, contrary to expectations, that global companies are more vulnerable to negative effects of negative eWOM compared to non-global companies. Even if it looks like this, because of global firms' images and various characteristics providing them advantages and prestige, relative loss that negative comments cause them, may be less than loss of non-global firms.

Effects of positive and negative comments on non-global companies are in a medium range. What we mean is that, because consumers do not have pre-shaped expectations from non-global companies as they do from global ones, any positive or negative comment is not considered as an unusual event. We think an example from journalism would help us explain; “A dog biting a human is not news but a human bites a dog is news”. In this respect, because expectations are high from global brands, positive comments about them would not be effective as positive comments about non global firms. A less known, non-global company being praised will be found catchier. On the other hand, based on higher expectations from a global brand, a negative

comment about its products/services would be more memorable and has more influence compared to a negative comment about a less known non global company. This is because there are no high level expectations from a non-global company as there is from a global one.

Some real life examples can help us reify. We all can recall food forgery news that on every once in a while. Most of the time these brands are small, little known brands and they are not remembered little while after the news. But case changes for well known brands. United Airlines lost %10 market value, costing stockholders about \$180 million dollars stock value in four days after a musician's complaint video about his broken guitar, that went viral on YouTube (Wikipedia, 2015b).

Producing fake and unhealthy food is not something less important than breaking "just a guitar", but what is important here is the perpetrator of the event. It seems "Who did?" is far more important than "Did what?" for consumers. High reputation and well-known name may bring responsibility and sensitivity to negative eWOM. Because so many more people are aware of a global brand's existence and it is easier to monitor its activities than watching a non-global one, any negative eWOM would spread much faster and wider compared to a negative eWOM about non-global brands. This lowers global brand's negative eWOM endurance threshold. Positive eWOM would spread faster too but since expectations of people from a global brand is higher it would not do the same effect. Besides, many people may think global brand has power to use and manipulate any form of eWOM, so positive eWOM about global brands would not be found as trustworthy and convincing as positive eWOM about a non-global brand.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In today's ever competitive markets, it is crucial to understand the dynamics of eWOM in order to make good use of it or act as needed to benefit from it and avoid any unwanted consequences. An analysis of the previous literature has revealed that the relationship between eWOM and PBG has not been uncovered yet. The current study is aimed at filling this gap. By discovering the relationship between PBG and trustworthiness and influence of eWOM, we can either control this variable or manage ourselves to avoid negative consequences and/or seize opportunities related to it.

This study provides a comprehensive list of studies on variables affecting trust towards and influence of eWOM. A detailed literature survey has been conducted on various elements determining credibility and persuasiveness of eWOM.

We used a quasi-experimental design. We gave four different scenarios to 160 participants, 40 participants per scenario. After the data gathering phase, we compared their answers, data of 160 participants were analyzed with descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis, T-test and ANOVA analysis.

Our main findings were detected using ANOVA analysis. We used ANOVA analysis to determine if there is a difference in the sense of trustworthiness and credibility between global and non-global companies' positive and negative eWOM. We find that trust towards and persuasiveness of eWOM differs depending on PBG of brand that is subject to eWOM and valence of eWOM.

The results of our analyses have revealed some noteworthy insights. According to our findings, trust towards and influence of positive eWOM about global brands is lower than positive eWOM about non-global companies. Consumers' expectations are higher for global brands, and when they encounter with positive comments about a global brand, this is not something of an extraordinary nature for them. Since expectations for non-global firms are not as high as global ones, when consumers encounter a positive comment about a non-global brand, they might find it more catchy and salient. Also, they may be thinking about possible interventions of global brands to eWOM in terms of uplifting the comments and ratings, for the sake of avoiding any financial harm that negative eWOM can cause them.

Our findings also denote that negative comments about a global brand are more credible and persuasive compared to negative eWOM about non-global brands. We think this happens because of the high norms that global brands set for themselves. Consumers get used to global brands' products being or at least being perceived as satisfactory, therefore when they encounter negative comment or low rating about them, they trust and be influenced by that eWOM more than they would when they encounter a negative eWOM about a non-global brand's product.

We believe that this study revealed the importance of valence of eWOM especially for global brands. It seems being a heavy hitter comes with higher responsibility. And non-global companies should be aware of possible advantages of positive eWOM for them and try to get the most out of it.

CHAPTER 7

IMPLICATIONS

This study has useful results for companies. In the further marketing applications, it is advised that global companies give place to local components in their advertisements, product groups, names and marketing tools. According to our findings, it would be very fundamental to use elements that will reduce global image. By implying local elements in their marketing efforts, brands can reduce their global perception and reduce effects of negative eWOM whereas increase credibility and effectiveness of positive eWOM about them.

Our results are supporting a famous phrase, "Think global, act local". This term is also used in marketing strategy, where multinational companies are encouraged to build local roots. This is sometimes expressed by converging the words "global" and "local" into the single word "glocal," a term used by several companies (notably Sony Corporation and other major Japanese multinationals) in their advertising and branding strategies in the 1980s and 1990s. Glocalization refers to the practice of conducting business according to both local and global considerations (Wikipedia, 2015a).

Acting local will decrease global perception of global companies and therefore reduce negative effects of negative eWOM and increase positive effects of positive eWOM for them.

CHAPTER 8

LIMITATIONS

This study also has some limitations. First of the limitations is about sampling. The experiment has been conducted among university students who have eWOM experience. While this group was targeted intentionally to ensure experiment's validity by keeping education variable fixed and to present attitudes of people that use eWOM before any purchase decision, it is a limitation as well, as this group does not represent all eWOM users.

Also effects of some uncontrollable variables like ethnocentrism levels of participants are a limitation for our study. Since we have one global and one non-global (Turkish) brand in our experiment, participants with high level of ethnocentrism might be affected when they answer our questionnaire.

One other limitation of our study is about our brands. We used fictitious brands to eliminate any unwanted effects that could have stemmed from using real brand names. On the other hand, this may have resulted in decreased perceived actuality, although we measured perceived reality of our scenarios. If we were to use real brand names, we may have observed higher scores of perceived reality.

One final limitation we have is related to the nature of questionnaire-based studies. Social desirability is something common in all studies that have survey in its structure. People may have answered questions differently from they normally would because of the fact that they are aware that the researchers control and analyze their answers. Even though they do not reveal their names when answering questionnaire, social desirability is something that can get into action in this kind of studies.

Further studies may be conducted with a wider range of participants from different educational levels, socioeconomic status, etc. to get a better insight.

Since eWOM is one of the important marketing communication phenomena in the Internet age, researching some other key variables' relations with trust towards and influence of eWOM would be on the mark.

APPENDIX A

VIGNETTE 1



Bu çalışma Boğaziçi Üniversitesi bünyesinde yürütülen, tüketicilerin genel tüketim alışkanlıklarını ölçümlemeyi hedefleyen bir çalışmadır.

Lütfen kendinizi aşağıda tasvir edilen durumda hayal ederek aşağıda verilen soruları cevaplayınız...

“Sıradan bir akşam televizyonun karşısında günün yorgunluğunu atmaya çalışırken, ne olduğunu anlamadan televizyonunuzun ekranı bir daha dönmek üzere karardı. Anlaşılan yaşlı televizyon ömrünü tamamlamıştı. Yeni bir televizyon almanız artık kaçınılmazdı. Satın almayı düşünebileceğiniz televizyon markalarıyla ilgili biraz araştırma yapmaya karar verdiniz. Tüm markaları detaylıca incelediğinizde Fusion markası birçok özelliğiyle diğer markalardan ayrışıyordu. Fusion ile ilgili biraz daha fazla bilgi toplamaya başladığınızda, Fusion’un 1946 yılından beri dünya çapında faaliyet gösteren, global bir marka olduğunu öğrendiniz. Uzun yıllardır televizyon pazarında faaliyet gösteren bu marka, istikrarlı bir çizgiyle bir çok deniz aşırı ülke de dahil olmak üzere, tüm dünyada faaliyetlerine devam etmekteydi. İnternette diğer insanların Fusion marka televizyonlar hakkında ne tür yorumlar yaptığını, daha önce kullanmış olanların ne tür deneyimler yaşadıklarını öğrenmek üzere araştırmalarınıza devam ettiniz. Fusion marka televizyonlara ilişkin kullanıcı deneyimlerinin ve yorumlarının genelde olumlu olduğunu, puanlamaların ise yüksek olduğunu gördünüz.”

Bu durumda olsam...	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Ne Katılıyorum Ne	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
1. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarına güvenirdim.					
2. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı puanlamalarına güvenirdim.					
3. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarının tutarlı olmasına dikkat ederdim.					
4. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarını dikkate alırdım.					
5. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı puanlamalarını dikkate alırdım.					
6. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarındaki genel kanaate uyardım.					
7. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarından fikir alma eğilimim olurdu.					
8. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarından etkilenirdim.					
9. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı puanlamalarından etkilenirdim.					
10. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumları kararımı etkilerdi.					
11. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı puanlamaları kararımı etkilerdi.					
12. Bence Fusion global bir markadır.					
13. Denizaşırı ülkelerdeki insanların Fusion markasını satın aldığını düşünüyorum.					
14. Fusion ürünleri tüm dünyada satılmaktadır.					
15. Bence Fusion kaliteli bir markadır.					
16. Fusion marka bir televizyon satın almayı düşünebilirim.					
17. Fusion marka televizyonlar hakkındaki yorumlar olumludur.					

18.Bir ürün satın almadan önce Internetteki kullanıcı yorumlarını okurum.					
19.Bu senaryoyu gerçekçi buldum.					
20.Bu senaryoyu inandırıcı buldum.					
21.Bu senaryoyu güvenilir buldum.					
22.Bu gerçekleşebilecek bir senaryodur.					
23.Günde kaç saatinizi Internette geçirirsiniz?					
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 saatten az <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 saat <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 saat <input type="checkbox"/> 3 saatten fazla					
24.Cinsiyetiniz					
<input type="checkbox"/> Kadın <input type="checkbox"/> Erkek					
25.Doğum yılınız (.....)					
26.Aylık <u>kişisel</u> geliriniz					
<input type="checkbox"/> 0-500 tl <input type="checkbox"/> 501-1000 tl <input type="checkbox"/> 1001-1500 tl <input type="checkbox"/> 1501tl ve üzeri					

Katılımınız için teşekkür ederiz...

APPENDIX B

VIGNETTE 2



Bu çalışma Boğaziçi Üniversitesi bünyesinde yürütülen, tüketicilerin genel tüketim alışkanlıklarını ölçümlemeyi hedefleyen bir çalışmadır.

Lütfen kendinizi aşağıda tasvir edilen durumda hayal ederek aşağıda verilen soruları cevaplayınız...

“Sıradan bir akşam televizyonun karşısında günün yorgunluğunu atmaya çalışırken, ne olduğunu anlamadan televizyonunuzun ekranı bir daha dönmek üzere karardı. Anlaşılan yaşlı televizyon ömrünü tamamlamıştı. Yeni bir televizyon almanız artık kaçınılmazdı. Satın almayı düşünebileceğiniz televizyon markalarıyla ilgili biraz araştırma yapmaya karar verdiniz. Tüm markaları detaylıca incelediğinizde Fusion markası birçok özelliğiyle diğer markalardan ayrışıyordu. Fusion ile ilgili biraz daha fazla bilgi toplamaya başladığınızda, Fusion’un 1946 yılından beri dünya çapında faaliyet gösteren, global bir marka olduğunu öğrendiniz. Uzun yıllardır televizyon pazarında faaliyet gösteren bu marka, istikrarlı bir çizgiyle bir çok deniz aşırı ülke de dahil olmak üzere, tüm dünyada faaliyetlerine devam etmekteydi. İnternette diğer insanların Fusion marka televizyonlar hakkında ne tür yorumlar yaptığını, daha önce kullanmış olanların ne tür deneyimler yaşadıklarını öğrenmek üzere araştırmalarınıza devam ettiniz. Fusion marka televizyonlara ilişkin kullanıcı deneyimlerinin ve yorumlarının genelde olumsuz olduğunu, puanlamaların ise düşük olduğunu gördünüz.”

Bu durumda olsam...	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Ne Katılıyorum Ne Katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
1. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarına güvenirdim.					
2. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı puanlamalarına güvenirdim.					
3. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarının tutarlı olmasına dikkat ederdim.					
4. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarını dikkate alırdım.					
5. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı puanlamalarını dikkate alırdım.					
6. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarındaki genel kanaate uyardım.					
7. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarından fikir alma eğilimim olurdu.					
8. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarından etkilenirdim.					
9. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı puanlamalarından etkilenirdim.					
10. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumları kararımı etkilerdi.					
11. Fusion'a ilişkin kullanıcı puanlamaları kararımı etkilerdi.					
12. Bence Fusion global bir markadır.					
13. Denizaşırı ülkelerdeki insanların Fusion markasını satın aldığını düşünüyorum.					
14. Fusion ürünleri tüm dünyada satılmaktadır.					
15. Bence Fusion kaliteli bir markadır.					
16. Fusion marka bir televizyon satın almayı düşünebilirim.					

17. Fusion marka televizyonlar hakkındaki yorumlar olumludur.					
18. Bir ürün satın almadan önce Internetteki kullanıcı yorumlarını okurum.					
19. Bu senaryoyu gerçekçi buldum.					
20. Bu senaryoyu inandırıcı buldum.					
21. Bu senaryoyu güvenilir buldum.					
22. Bu gerçekleşebilecek bir senaryodur.					
23. Günde kaç saatinizi Internette geçirirsiniz?					
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 saatten az <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 saat <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 saat <input type="checkbox"/> 3 saatten fazla					
24. Cinsiyetiniz					
<input type="checkbox"/> Kadın <input type="checkbox"/> Erkek					
25. Doğum yılınız					
(.....)					
26. Aylık <u>kişisel</u> geliriniz					
<input type="checkbox"/> 0-500 tl <input type="checkbox"/> 501-1000 tl <input type="checkbox"/> 1001-1500 tl <input type="checkbox"/> 1501tl ve üzeri					

Katılımınız için teşekkür ederiz...

APPENDIX C

VIGNETTE 3

FUSION

Bu çalışma Boğaziçi Üniversitesi bünyesinde yürütülen, tüketicilerin genel tüketim alışkanlıklarını ölçümlemeyi hedefleyen bir çalışmadır.

Lütfen kendinizi aşağıda tasvir edilen durumda hayal ederek aşağıda verilen soruları cevaplayınız...

“Sıradan bir akşam televizyonun karşısında günün yorgunluğunu atmaya çalışırken, ne olduğunu anlamadan televizyonunuzun ekranı bir daha dönmek üzere karardı. Anlaşılan yaşlı televizyon ömrünü tamamlamıştı. Yeni bir televizyon almanız artık kaçınılmazdı. Satın almayı düşünebileceğiniz televizyon markalarıyla ilgili biraz araştırma yapmaya karar verdiniz. Tüm markaları detaylıca incelediğinizde Füzyon markası birçok özelliğiyle diğer markalardan ayrışıyordu. Füzyon ile ilgili biraz daha fazla bilgi toplamaya başladığınızda, Füzyon’un 1946 yılından beri sadece Türkiye’de faaliyet gösteren, yerel bir marka olduğunu öğrendiniz. Uzun yıllardır televizyon pazarında yer alan bu marka, istikrarlı bir çizgiyle Türkiye’de faaliyetlerine devam etmekteydi. İnternette diğer insanların Füzyon marka televizyonlar hakkında ne tür yorumlar yaptığını, daha önce kullanmış olanların ne tür deneyimler yaşadıklarını öğrenmek üzere araştırmalarınıza devam ettiniz. Füzyon marka televizyonlara ilişkin kullanıcı deneyimlerinin ve yorumlarının genelde olumlu olduğunu, puanlamaların ise yüksek olduğunu gördünüz.”

Bu durumda olsam...	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Ne Katılmıyorum Ne Katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
1. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarına güvenirdim.					
2. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı puanlamalarına güvenirdim.					
3. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarının tutarlı olmasına dikkat ederdim.					
4. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarını dikkate alırdım.					
5. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı puanlamalarını dikkate alırdım.					
6. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarındaki genel kanaate uyardım.					
7. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarından fikir alma eğilimim olurdu.					
8. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarından etkilenirdim.					
9. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı puanlamalarından etkilenirdim.					
10. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumları kararımı etkilerdi.					
11. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı puanlamaları kararımı etkilerdi.					
12. Bence Füzyon global bir markadır.					
13. Denizaşırı ülkelerdeki insanların Füzyon markasını satın aldığını düşünüyorum.					
14. Füzyon ürünleri tüm dünyada satılmaktadır.					
15. Bence Füzyon kaliteli bir markadır.					

16.Füzyon marka bir televizyon satın almayı düşünebilirim.					
17. Füzyon marka televizyonlar hakkındaki yorumlar olumludur.					
18.Bir ürün satın almadan önce Internetteki kullanıcı yorumlarını okurum.					
19.Bu senaryoyu gerçekçi buldum.					
20.Bu senaryoyu inandırıcı buldum.					
21.Bu senaryoyu güvenilir buldum.					
22.Bu gerçekleşebilecek bir senaryodur.					
23.Günde kaç saatinizi Internette geçirirsiniz?					
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 saatten az <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 saat <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 saat <input type="checkbox"/> 3 saatten fazla					
24.Cinsiyetiniz					
<input type="checkbox"/> Kadın <input type="checkbox"/> Erkek					
25.Doğum yılınız					
(.....)					
26.Aylık <u>kişisel</u> geliriniz					
<input type="checkbox"/> 0-500 t1 <input type="checkbox"/> 501-1000 t1 <input type="checkbox"/> 1001-1500 t1 <input type="checkbox"/> 1501t1 ve üzeri					

Katılımınız için teşekkür ederiz...

APPENDIX D

VIGNETTE 4

FUSION

Bu çalışma Boğaziçi Üniversitesi bünyesinde yürütülen, tüketicilerin genel tüketim alışkanlıklarını ölçümlemeyi hedefleyen bir çalışmadır.

Lütfen kendinizi aşağıda tasvir edilen durumda hayal ederek aşağıda verilen soruları cevaplayınız...

“Sıradan bir akşam televizyonun karşısında günün yorgunluğunu atmaya çalışırken, ne olduğunu anlamadan televizyonunuzun ekranı bir daha dönmek üzere karardı. Anlaşılan yaşlı televizyon ömrünü tamamlamıştı. Yeni bir televizyon almanız artık kaçınılmazdı. Satın almayı düşünebileceğiniz televizyon markalarıyla ilgili biraz araştırma yapmaya karar verdiniz. Tüm markaları detaylıca incelediğinizde Füzyon markası birçok özelliğiyle diğer markalardan ayrışıyordu. Füzyon ile ilgili biraz daha fazla bilgi toplamaya başladığınızda, Füzyon’un 1946 yılından beri sadece Türkiye’de faaliyet gösteren, yerel bir marka olduğunu öğrendiniz. Uzun yıllardır televizyon pazarında yer alan bu marka, istikrarlı bir çizgiyle Türkiye’de faaliyetlerine devam etmekteydi. İnternette diğer insanların Füzyon marka televizyonlar hakkında ne tür yorumlar yaptığını, daha önce kullanmış olanların ne tür deneyimler yaşadıklarını öğrenmek üzere araştırmalarınıza devam ettiniz. Füzyon marka televizyonlara ilişkin kullanıcı deneyimlerinin ve yorumlarının genelde olumsuz olduğunu, puanlamaların ise düşük olduğunu gördünüz.”

Bu durumda olsam...	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Ne Katılıyorum Ne Katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
1. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarına güvenirdim.					
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4. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarını dikkate alırdım.					
5. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı puanlamalarını dikkate alırdım.					
6. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarındaki genel kanaate uyardım.					
7. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarından fikir alma eğilimim olurdu.					
8. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumlarından etkilenirdim.					
9. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı puanlamalarından etkilenirdim.					
10. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı yorumları kararımı etkilerdi.					
11. Füzyon'a ilişkin kullanıcı puanlamaları kararımı etkilerdi.					
12. Bence Füzyon global bir markadır.					
13. Denizaşırı ülkelerdeki insanların Füzyon markasını satın aldığını düşünüyorum.					
14. Füzyon ürünleri tüm dünyada satılmaktadır.					
15. Bence Füzyon kaliteli bir markadır.					
16. Füzyon marka bir televizyon satın almayı düşünebilirim.					
17. Füzyon marka televizyonlar hakkındaki yorumlar olumludur.					
18. Bir ürün satın almadan önce İnternetteki kullanıcı yorumlarını okurum.					
19. Bu senaryoyu gerçekçi buldum.					
20. Bu senaryoyu inandırıcı buldum.					
21. Bu senaryoyu güvenilir buldum.					

22.Bu gerçekleşebilecek bir senaryodur.					
23.Günde kaç saatinizi Internette geçirirsiniz?					
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 saatten az <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 saat <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 saat <input type="checkbox"/> 3 saatten fazla					
24.Cinsiyetiniz					
<input type="checkbox"/> Kadın <input type="checkbox"/> Erkek					
25.Doğum yılınız					
(.....)					
26.Aylık <u>kişisel</u> geliriniz					
<input type="checkbox"/> 0-500 t1 <input type="checkbox"/> 501-1000 t1 <input type="checkbox"/> 1001-1500 t1 <input type="checkbox"/> 1501t1 ve üzeri					

Katılımınız için teşekkür ederiz...

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