

Generating positive online word of mouth via brand image and trust: The moderation role of perceived privacy

Son-Cong Bui¹ | Yung-Chi Chang²

¹ Corresponding author, Program in Business and Management, Southern Taiwan University of Science and Technology (STUST), Tainan, Taiwan, da41g211@stust.edu.tw

² Department of Finance, Southern Taiwan University of Science and Technology, Tainan, Taiwan

ABSTRACT

As the development of online business and social platform, the literature on eWOM keep increasing dramatically. Scholars try to find different mechanism that lead to positive WOM in the context of s-commerce, however, the link from online brand image to eWOM through mediation role of trust still required of more investigation. Our study aims to investigate aforementioned link in the context of social commerce and examine moderator role of perceived privacy. Empowered by Stimuli-Organism-Response theory the arguments in this study are developed. 239 empirical evident collected from Vietnam social commerce market provide the material for PLS-SEM to measure proposed hypothesizes. The results represent the existence of a positively significant effect of online brand image on trust and eWOM. In addition, the mediating effect of trust, as well as the moderation role of perceived privacy are also supported. The findings offer both theoretical and practical implications for literature and business.

Keywords:

Online brand image, Trust, E-word of mouth, Perceived privacy, SOR theory.

1 | Introduction

The appearance of social networks along with the advent of technology has transformed the way people interact and communicate with each other. Nowadays, people are connected through many digital platforms in which Facebook stands out as the most popular Social Network Site (SNS) with nearly 3 billion monthly active users (Dixon, 2022). The skyrocket in the number of active users in social networks has attracted firms' attention who always try to find the shortest way to reach the target consumer (Pasternak *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, SNS is an ideal place that not only offers organizations a straight connection with customers but also allows them instant interaction through likes, comments, and feedback (Donthu *et al.*, 2021; Krishnamurthy & Kumar, 2018). At some points, consumer's likes, comments, reviews, or feedback are considered useful reference sources for consumers in pre-purchase consideration (Babić Rosario *et al.*, 2016). These are also critical ingredients of electronic word of mouth (eWOM).

The extant literature articulates that SNS has become an ideal platform for eWOM to take place (Donthu *et al.*, 2021; Park & Kim, 2020; Pasternak *et al.*, 2017). Thanks to the powerful function (comment and share), SNS enables consumers to freely create and spread their thought and feeling about brand-related information (Chu & Kim, 2011; Daugherty & Hoffman, 2014). In the initiated purchasing stage, consumers tend to seek for diverse information sources to build up a certain knowledge about products and services. EWOM, therefore, is really a superlative reference for prospective consumers to search for the experience from post-purchasers. Moreover, scholars indicated that 88% of consumers believe in eWOM as equal to what

they received personal recommendations (Anderson, 2014).

As discussed above, eWOM play a critical role in shaping consumers' perception of product and service, which then influence their purchase decision (Donthu *et al.*, 2021; Pasternak *et al.*, 2017; Zeithaml *et al.*, 1996). Both researchers and practitioners are well aware of eWOM's pros and cons, hence, they have spent a huge effort on finding effective ways to generate as much positive eWOM as possible (Zhang *et al.*, 2019). At the same time, looking for useful solutions to control or minimize the factors that cause negative outcomes.

The aforementioned review represented the critical role of eWOM and explain why it has been among the top priority in the literature. To date, plenty of efforts investigating the antecedents of eWOM have been conducted. Among regular elementary, satisfaction (Serra-Cantalops *et al.*, 2020), trust (Barreda *et al.*, 2015), engagement (Chu & Kim, 2011), and customer relationship marketing (Ngoma & Ntale, 2019) are outstanding among the rest. Thus, there is still a lack of extant literature concentrated on the mechanism in which trust mediates the relationship between brand image and eWOM. In addition, the moderator role of perceived privacy is still not well addressed by scholars.

Therefore, empowered by SOR (Stimuli, Organize, Respond) theory this paper attempts to figure out the effective way to sustainably maintain the competitive advantages for the vendors by generating positive eWOM in the fast-developing e-commerce market. This study attempts to fill these research gaps by investigating the linkage between online brand image and eWOM; the mediation role of trust, as well as the moderation of perceived

privacy. Specifically, current research addresses research questions as below:

- Whether brand image positively impact eWOM?
- Whether trust positively influences eWOM?
- What is the role of trust in the link from brand image to eWOM?
- Whether perceived privacy moderate the relationship between brand image and eWOM and trust?

This article employed partial least square (PLS-SEM) for examining proposed hypotheses with the data rated by Facebook shopping users in the Vietnam market. In addition, the SOR theory perspective supported our argument about the causal relationship among the constructs. The finding in this study provides the implications for both theory and practice which reaffirm the critical role of brand image and trust in forming eWOM. In addition, the positive and significant effect of perceived privacy as the moderation for the link from brand image toward trust and eWOM is also secured.

The following part of our study recapitulates related literature and theories. Then, the conceptual research framework and hypotheses will be stated. Research methodology and data analysis are presented in the next part. Finally, this study ended up with a discussion about research results and point out the implications, and limitations as long as suggestions for future studies.

2 | Theoretical framework and hypothesis development

2.1 SOR theory

The scholarly literature considers the SOR framework a useful tool for analyzing the

impacts of environmental components on human behavior (Russell & Mehrabian, 1974; Vieira, 2013; Yun & Good, 2007). The SOR framework consists of three components stimuli which are known as environmental cues, the organism represents individual reactions toward the environment and categorizes response behaviors (Kawaf & Tagg, 2012; Peng & Kim, 2014). SOR has been widely applied in the literature. Prior research showed that SOR was suitable to explain how environmental cues affect shopping outcomes (Eroglu *et al.*, 2001; Mummalaneni, 2005); predict consumers' internal motivation (Björk, 2010; McKinney, 2004); or even investigate customers' emotions; and or judgments by using SOR model (Koo & Ju, 2010; Ladhari *et al.*, 2017).

Consistent with the literature, SOR theory will be implied to hypothesize the relationship among research constructs in this study in the context of social commerce. Specifically, a stimuli factor is given to online brand image which triggers the consumer's trust in the online shop in the organism stage, whereas positive eWOM stands for customer's response. In addition, consumers' perceived privacy also plays a role as an environmental stimuli factor that causes the effect on both trust and eWOM.

2.2 Antecedent role of online Brand image

As defined by the extant literature, the brand image reveals consumers' perception of a brand (Keller, 1993, 2009), which shows the customer association in their memories (Kim *et al.*, 2018; Nyadzayo & Khajehzadeh, 2016). While under the view of Kotler (2001) image is considered the host of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that consumer holds that are related to a brand. Based on these points of

view, once a brand is recognized and favored by consumers, it will obtain the opportunity to win a larger market share. Scholars also pointed out that, consumers are willing to pay more for an outstanding brand (Chakraborty & Bhat, 2018). In this way, firms possess competitive advantages which allowed them to gain success (Aranda *et al.*, 2015) as well as self-defense from rivalry attacks (Nyadzayo & Khajehzadeh, 2016).

Because of the rapid growth of e-commerce, both scholars and managers are required to adjust the term brand image to adapt to the new competitive environment. Among popular measurements of online brand image, Yun and Good (2007) it into three elementary merchandise, service, and shopping atmosphere. Those factors build up from consumers' practical evaluation and association with the brand based on the experience they perceived during the consumption procedure. In the words of Yun and Good (2007) cognitive perceptions and emotional responses aroused by positive images will evoke a sense of belonging to the brand. Which then not only allow the vendor to build up a solid brand in customer's cognition but also enhance the trust in the brand (Lien *et al.*, 2015), as well as trigger eWOM (Aghakhani *et al.*, 2018; Lien *et al.*, 2015; Nyadzayo & Khajehzadeh, 2016). Therefore, we proposed that:

H₁ : E-Brand image positively relates to Customer Trust

H₂ : E-Brand image positively relates to eWOM

2.3 Mediating role of trust

In the cyber world, extant literature views trust as the indispensable condition for an online transaction (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999; Iglesias *et al.*, 2020). For sure, consumers will

not make the deal with the brand/vendor they do not trust. As defined by scholars, trust represents the willingness to believe in an individual or a brand's confidence or reliability (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Yeon *et al.*, 2019). Trust is also an initial part of relationship quality, that could be accumulated due to positive perception and experience. In addition, prior studies found that consumer trust could lead to various outcomes like customer satisfaction (Wetsch, 2006), loyalty (Sirdeshmukh *et al.*, 2002), commitment (Nadeem *et al.*, 2020), repurchase intention (Amoako *et al.*, 2019; Sullivan & Kim, 2018), and or word of mouth (Barreda *et al.*, 2015; Lee & Hong, 2019; Martínez *et al.*, 2020).

Within the scale of current research, e-brand image with the perception of consumption experience plays a role as a stimulus factor which buildup trust in customer mind. The trust in brand in our case represents the organism process which then generates the response via recommendations to friends or relatives (word of mouth). We thus hypothesize:

H₃ : Trust positively relates to eWOM

H₄ : Trust mediates the relationship between e-brand image and eWOM

2.4 Moderation role of perceived privacy

Privacy was defined as "control over the flow of one's personal information, including the transfer and exchange of that information" (Shin, 2010, p. 430). In the digital world, users have reason to worry about their privacy because at the registration stage they are required to expose personal information. In addition, the recent scandal of leaking and selling individual data caused by Facebook

lead to serious anxiety about information protection and privacy (Wu *et al.*, 2012). Hence, both practice and research agree that the concern about information privacy is among the most critical issues for the user community in the cyber market (Miyazaki & Fernandez, 2001; Shin, 2010; Yu *et al.*, 2020).

As a result, scholars have spent a huge effort on understanding its cause and effect of it. Among the notable outcomes, information disclosure intention, trust, eWOM, and resistance stand out from the others (Bansal *et al.*, 2015; Buchanan *et al.*, 2007). Particularly, existing literature reaches a consensus on the correlation between privacy and trust. Wu *et al.* (2012) found a significantly negative impact of privacy concerns on trust. Meanwhile, Shin (2010) discovered a

positively significant effect of perceived privacy on trust. Similarly, research results presented by Bansal *et al.* (2015) showed that individual trust with a high and low level of privacy concern was distinct from each other. Besides, literature also proves the significant influence of privacy on eWOM (Park & Kim, 2020; Pasternak *et al.*, 2017). Based on these discussions, we propose the following hypothesis:

H_{5a} : Perceived privacy moderates the relationship between e-brand image and trust

H_{5b} : Perceived privacy moderates the relationship between e-brand image and eWOM

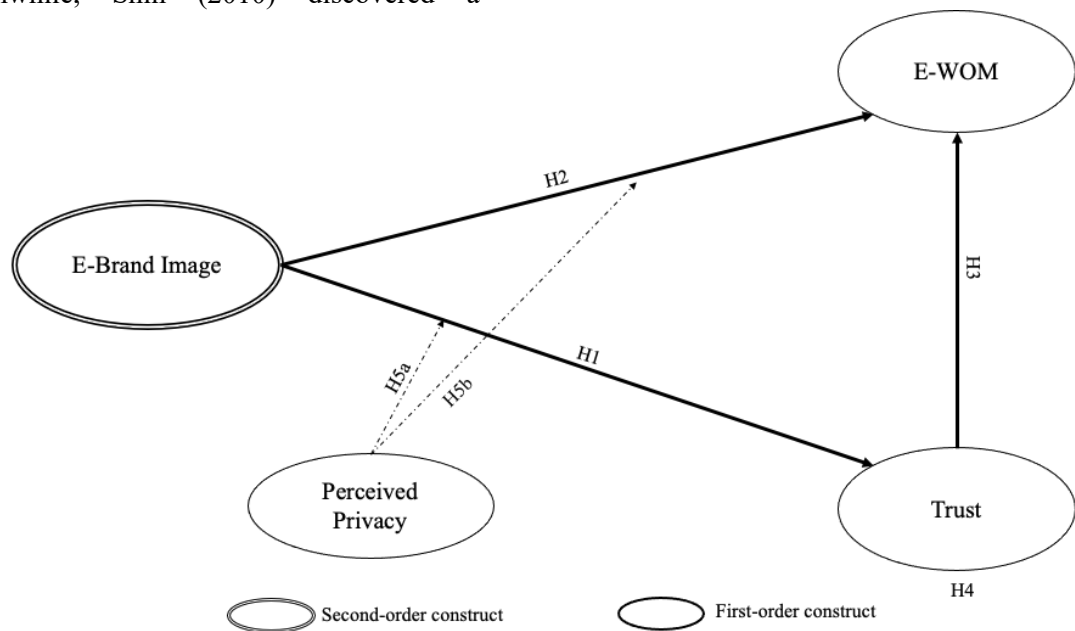


Figure 1 Research model

3 | Research methodology

3.1 Data collection and measurement

The questionnaire measurement items were adopted and adjusted from the extant literature. Particularly, 11 elements of online brand

image were modified due to Yun and Good (2007) research, and designed in formative construct. Meanwhile, other constructs formed as reflective constructs. Trust includes three measurement items adapted from the work of Fogel and Nehmad (2009). Whereas, perceived privacy was measured via two items

developed by Buchanan, Paine, Joinson, and Reips (2007). The dependent variable in this study eWOM evaluated based on three items produced by Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996) and Zhang, Zhang, Liu, and Du (2018). All responses were rated based on the mean of the seven-point Likert scale, which under the range of “absolutely disagree” and “absolutely agree”. Before sending out the survey to collect the data, we conduct the pre-test to avoid misinterpretation. In addition, pilot tests allow us to secure reliability, face validity, and predictive validity (Neuman, 2005). We asked for help from Facebook shops to share and encourage their customer to fill in the questionnaire. After two months from August 2021, in total, we received 262 responses. Among them, 239 valid observations were employed for further analysis.

3.2 Data analysis

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between online brand image and eWOM, as well as identify the moderation, and mediation effect of both perceived privacy and trust. Therefore, component-based SEM or Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Model (PLS-SEM) is more suitable than covariance-based structure equation modeling (SEM) for handling such a comprehensive structural model. PLS-SEM operates properly in several situations including exploration and forecasting objectives, the complex model with higher-order constructs, non-normality data, and relatively small sample size (Hair *et al.*, 2019; Le *et al.*, 2021). Consequently, PLS-SEM became more and more popular and preferred by researchers in both information systems and marketing (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Moreover, PLS-SEM strongly recommended for analyzing both mediation and moderation. As a result, PLS-SEM is considered as a more

conformable tool to our research purpose. In the next part, two steps for data analysis using PLS-SEM are shown which include the measurement model and structural model. In addition, the mediation and moderation measurements also represented

4 | Results

4.1. Measurement model

The measurement model in our study focuses on examining convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability. Table 1 unveils the results of reliability and convergent validity. All result of composite reliability and Cronbach’s Alpha surpass 0.7, indicating our study satisfy the condition of consistent reliability (Hair *et al.*, 2016). In terms of convergent validity, the minimum value of AVE is 0.798 far larger than the threshold of 0.5, representing the model fulfills the rule of thumb for convergent validity (Hair *et al.*, 2016). Furthermore, the second-order constructs (i.e., e-merchandise, e-service, and e-shopping atmosphere) also presented good reliability and convergent validity based on aforementioned criteria. In addition, this study also reports the weights of second order constructs which represents the information about “how each indicator item contributes to their respective dimensions” (Hair *et al.*, 2016, p. 176). All weight values in this study surpass level of the minimum value 0 (Hair *et al.*, 2020). For the test of collinearity, all VIF values were lower than 5, representing that collinearity was not the problem in our model

Table 1 Reliability and convergent validity

Construct	Items	Wgt	IOL	SOL	C.R	α	AVE	VIF
Reflective measurements								
Customer Trust	TRUST1		0.888					
	TRUST2		0.948		0.945	0.913	0.852	2.210
	TRUST3		0.933					
Word of Mouth	WOM1		0.889					
	WOM2		0.915		0.923	0.857	0.800	
	WOM3		0.879					
Perceived Privacy	PER1		0.896		0.903	0.787	0.824	3.350
	PER2		0.919					
Online Brand Image (2nd order formative construct)								
E-Merchandise (Reflective)	EMER1		0.917	0.827				
	EMER2	0.398	0.943	0.853	0.945	0.921	0.811	2.790
	EMER3		0.925	0.856				
	EMER4		0.809	0.770				
E-Service (Reflective)	ESER1		0.865	0.839				
	ESER2	0.400	0.924	0.851	0.936	0.908	0.811	2.524
	ESER3		0.900	0.835				
E-Shopping Atmosphere (Reflective)	ESER4		0.852	0.789				
	ESHOP1		0.878	0.809				
	ESHOP2	0.295	0.911	0.791	0.922	0.874	0.798	3.334
	ESHOP3		0.892	0.750				
<p><i>Note: All loadings and weights are significant at 0.001 level (2-tailed); Wgt = weights; IOL = first-order loadings; SOL = second-order loadings; S.D. = standard deviation; C.R = composite reliability; α = Cronbach's alpha; AVE = average variance extracted; VIF = variance inflation factor.</i></p>								

We used the Fornell-Larcker criterion to evaluate the discriminant validity base on two scales. First, the square root of the AVE of each construct was larger than its correlation with other constructs (Hair *et al.*, 2016). Second, all item's outer loadings on a

construct were higher than its cross-loadings with other constructs (Benitez *et al.*, 2020; Hair *et al.*, 2020; Henseler *et al.*, 2016; Henseler *et al.*, 2015). Results in Table 2 indicate that our research model contains good discriminant validity.

Table 2 Discriminant validity assessment

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. EME	0.9					
2. ESE	0.701	0.893				
3. ESA	0.784	0.758	0.886			
4. PER	0.746	0.77	0.787	0.908		
5. TRUST	0.616	0.666	0.681	0.662	0.923	
6. WOM	0.574	0.583	0.588	0.633	0.558	0.894

4.2 Structural model

In this section, the assessment of measurement mode is assessed for the whole structural model. Due to the Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2016) suggestion, the assessment includes of R^2 value and the effect size, and the statistical significance of structural relationships. The results of adjusted R^2 shown in table 3 indicate that the model accounted for 51.9% and 42.9% of the variances in Trust and eWOM. As such, we concluded that our structural model consists of a moderate level of explanatory power (Hair *et al.*, 2016, p. 175). Particularly, our study also reports the f^2 and q^2 values for the relationship between dependent variables and independent

variables. Results in table 3 represents that brand image causes strong effect on trust ($f^2 = 1.046$; $q^2 = 0.509$), while the impact on eWOM in range of medium and strong ($f^2 = 0.202$; $q^2 = 0.415$). Meanwhile, the correlation between trust and eWOM ($f^2 = 0.037$; $q^2 = 0.024$) falls into the category of weak effect size.

Table 3 represented the results of the structural model and the measurement for research hypotheses. Specifically, online brand image was found to have significantly positive relationships with trust ($\beta = 0.715$, $p < 0.001$) and eWOM ($\beta = 0.637$, $p < 0.001$). Trust was also found to have positively significant effect on eWOM ($\beta = 0.209$, $p < 0.01$).

Table 3 Results of the structural model and hypothesis testing

Structural path	Path coefficient (t-value)	Effect size (f^2)	Effect size (q^2)	95% confidence interval	Conclusion
E-Brand → Trust	0.715**** (22.045)	1.046	0.509	(0.779; 0.650)	H ₁ Supported
E-Brand → eWOM	0.637**** (14.476)	0.202	0.415	(0.719; 0.544)	H ₂ Supported
Trust → eWOM	0.209*** (2.656)	0.037	0.024	(0.368; 0.054)	H ₃ Supported

Note : n.s = not significant; ** | t | N = 1.96 at $p = 0.05$ level; *** | t | N = 2.58 at $p = 0.01$ level **** | t | N = 3.29 at $p = 0.001$ level; CI = Confidence level. The values of f^2 and q^2 are 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 for weak, moderate, and strong effects.

4.3. Further analysis of mediating effect

We follow the method proposed by Preacher and Hayes (2008) to measure the mediation effect of trust that link e-brand image toward eWOM. Due to their suggestion, the test begins with the measurement of the direct effect between e-brand image toward eWOM when trust is excluded from the model (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Gudergan, 2017). After that, the indirect effect value when the mediator is added to the research model needs

to be significant. Once the aforementioned condition is fulfilled, the variance accounted for (VAF) allows us to clarify “how much the target construct’s variance is explained by the indirect relationship via mediator variable” (Hair *et al.*, 2016, p. 176).

The calculation of both direct and indirect effects was conducted by using 2,000-subsample bootstrap. Based on the values in table 4, both the direct and indirect effects of the e-brand image on eWOM are positive and significant. With the appearance of trust, the direct effect of e-brand image on eWOM

reduces to 0.487 from 0.637; and the indirect value via trust equals 0.159 at $p < 0.01$. These results support the conclusion on the mediation role of trust for the link from the e-brand image to eWOM. However, we still need to calculate the VAF value to affirm the size of the indirect effect in relation to the total effect (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019).

The VAF value of the effect of e-brand image on eWOM was 20%, in the range of 20-80% proposed by Hair *et al.* (2016), indicating that 20% of the effect is explained via trust. Therefore, we conclude that trust partially mediates the link between the e-brand image to eWOM.

Table 4 Test of mediation

Effect of	Direct effect (t-value)	Indirect effect (t-value)	Total effect	VAF (%)	Interpretation
E-Brand - Trust - eWOM	0.637**** (14.476)	0.159*** (2.608)	0.796	20	Partial mediation

Note : VAF = variance accounted for; n.s = not significant; ** | t | N = 1.96 at $p = 0.05$ level; *** | t | N = 2.58 at $p = 0.01$ level **** | t | N = 3.29 at $p = 0.001$ level. The VAF N = 80% indicates full mediation, $20\% \leq \text{VAF} \leq 80\%$ shows partial mediation while $\text{VAF} < 20\%$ assumes no mediation.

Table 5 Results of moderation effects

Effect of	Path coefficient (t-value)	Effect size f^2	Effect size q^2	95% CI	Conclusion
BRAND – TRUST	0.540**** (6.958)	0.194	0.195	(0.695; 0.383)	
PER - TRUST	0.208*** (2.598)	0.045	0.021	(0.476; 0.050)	
BRAND*PER - TRUST	0.130**** (3.492)	0.052	0.006	(0.202; 0.055)	H5a supported
BRAND – WOM	0.263** (2.352)	0.032	0.007	(0.476; 0.050)	
PER – WOM	0.300**** (3.066)	0.048	0.028	(0.505; 0.099)	
BRAND*PER - WOM	0.020 (0.502)	0.001	0.0015	(0.111; -0.001)	H5b not supported

Note: n.s = non-significant; CI = Confidence level; *** | t | N = 2.58 at $p = 0.01$ level; **** | t | N = 3.29 at $p = 0.001$ level. The values of f^2 and q^2 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 for weak, moderate, and strong effects.

4.4 Evaluation of moderating effects

In this research, perceived privacy was assigned as the moderator for the links from e-brand image toward trust and eWOM. To measure the moderation effect, we conducted the calculation with 2000 bootstrap samples as suggested by Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2015) and Hair, Howard, and Nitzl (2020). The interaction

construct was formed that multiply the item of the moderator with the e-brand image. Table 5 produces the results for moderation measurement. The outcomes reveal that perceived privacy cause significant moderating effect on trust ($\beta = 0.13$; $p < 0.001$). Meanwhile, the moderating effect on eWOM is nonsignificant ($\beta = 0.02$; $p = 0.625 > 0.1$).

5 | Discussions and implications

5.1 Discussions on findings

The objective of this research was to investigate the mechanism of online brand image and trust toward eWOM in the s-commerce setting. Research results show several interesting findings were illustrated as follows. First, this research reaffirms the correlation between online brand image and eWOM. The extant (e.g., Aghakhani, Karimi, & Salehan, 2018; Babić Rosario *et al.*, 2020; Lien, Wen, Huang, & Wu, 2015; Nyadzayo & Khajehzadeh, 2016) insisted that positive brand image could lead to positive eWOM. In our research, consumer perception about the brand was built up through purchase experience with the evaluation of merchandise, service, and shopping environment during their consumption. The effect size generated in the previous part indicates that e-brand image causes a strong effect on eWOM.

Secondly, we also uncover the significantly positive relationship between e-brand image and trust. The direct correlation between brand image via positive perception about trust is even stronger than the link from the image to eWOM. In addition, trust in our study was found to have a positive impact on eWOM, thus, the size of the effects ranked as weak. This finding is consistent with the research on the relationship between trust and WOM in the existing literature (e.g, Barreda, Bilgihan, & Kageyama, 2015; Lee & Hong, 2019; Martínez, Herrero, & García-de los Salmones, 2020).

Fourth, this study highlighted the importance mediation role of trust in the relationship between e-brand image and eWOM. Especially, trust partially mediates the link from brand image to eWOM as 20% of the correlation can be explained via trust.

Last but not least, we also discovered positively significant moderation effect of perceived privacy on the relationship between e-brand image and trust. Meanwhile, the moderation effect for the link from brand image toward eWOM returned as non-significant. However, perceived privacy still causes a significantly positive impact on eWOM for the direct correlation. Those interesting results help to provide implications for the following parts.

5.2 Theoretical implications

This study contributes significantly to the theory of electronic word of mouth and literature on social commerce. First, this study enhances the knowledge about customer behaviors when consuming on s-commerce as well as the stimulation of generating positive WOM. The current study is another confirmation of the critical role of the e-brand image toward eWOM in s-commerce. Second, this study explored the mediation effect of trust on the relationships between brand image and eWOM. The result offers a better understanding of the insight mechanism to generate eWOM through trust. Lastly, this study also provides an insight into the moderation role of perceived privacy in the context of s-commerce.

5.3 Practical implications

For managerial implications, this study offers empirical evidence for managers on the way to generate positive WOM through brand image and trust. In our case brand image form up through three main sources that are merchandise, service, and shopping atmosphere. Therefore, the online vendor should pay more attention to those three pillars to first build up a better perception of the brand and; second, generate a positive

WOM in the community to attract the potential customer. Moreover, the critical role of perceived privacy for its moderation role for the link from brand image to trust and direct correlation to both trust and eWOM. These results remind the vendor about the importance of individual information security and suggest they enhance the security of consumers' personal information. Finally, the results do not be limited to the scope of the e-commerce. Brand management and personal data security are practical issues across the service industries. The results of this study, therefore, can be applied in practice generally.

5.4 Limitations and future extension

This study has several limitations. First, this study considered electronic word-of-mouth as the only outcome in our research structural model. Future studies can consider adding more dependent variables (e.g., brand loyalty, or other types of consumer behaviors). Second, this study focused on trust as the mediation of the relationship between online brand image and electronic word of mouth. Future studies can take into consideration inserting more mediators (e.g., customer satisfaction) to fully understand the different mechanisms for the link from brand image to WOM. Finally, future studies can extend the current research model to other contexts or industries for outcome generalization.

Reference

- Aghakhani, N., Karimi, J., & Salehan, M. (2018). A unified model for the adoption of electronic word of mouth on social network sites: Facebook as the exemplar. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, 22(2), 202-231.
- Amoako, G. K., Kutu-Adu, S. G., Caesar, L. D., & Neequaye, E. (2019). Relationship marketing and repurchase intention in Ghana's hospitality industry: An empirical examination of trust and commitment. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, 18(2), 77-107.
- Anderson, M. (2014). *88% of consumers trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations*. Search Engine Land. Retrieved March 31, 2016, from <https://searchengineland.com/88-consumers-trust-online-reviews-much-personal-recommendations-195803>
- Aranda, E., Gómez, M., & Molina, A. (2015). Consumers' brand images of wines: Differences between two leading Spanish denominations of origin. *British Food Journal*, 117(8), 2057-2077.
- Babić Rosario, A., de Valck, K., & Sotgiu, F. (2020). Conceptualizing the electronic word-of-mouth process: What we know and need to know about eWOM creation, exposure, and evaluation. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48(3), 422-448.
- Babić Rosario, A., Sotgiu, F., de Valck, K., & Bijmolt, T. H. A. (2016). The effect of electronic word of mouth on sales: A meta-analytic review of platform, product, and metric factors. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 53(3), 297-318.
- Bansal, G., Zahedi, F. M., & Gefen, D. (2015). The role of privacy assurance mechanisms in building trust and the moderating role of privacy concern. *European Journal of Information Systems*, 24(6), 624-644.
- Barreda, A. A., Bilgihan, A., & Kageyama, Y. (2015). The role of trust in creating positive word of mouth and behavioral intentions: The case of online social networks. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, 14(1), 16-36.
- Benitez, J., Henseler, J., Castillo, A., & Schuberth, F. (2020). How to perform and report an impactful analysis using partial least squares: Guidelines for confirmatory and explanatory IS research. *Information & Management*, 57(2), 103168.
- Björk, P. (2010). Atmospheric on tour operators' websites: Website features that stimulate emotional response. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 16(4), 283-296.
- Buchanan, T., Paine, C., Joinson, A. N., & Reips, U. D. (2007). Development of measures of online privacy concern and protection for use on the Internet. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 58(2), 157-165.
- Chakraborty, U., & Bhat, S. (2018). Credibility of online reviews and its impact on brand image. *Management Research Review*, 41(1), 148-164.
- Chu, S. C., & Kim, Y. (2011). Determinants of consumer engagement in electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in social networking sites. *International Journal of Advertising*, 30(1), 47-75.
- Daugherty, T., & Hoffman, E. (2014). eWOM and the importance of capturing consumer attention

- within social media. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 20(1-2), 82-102
- Dixon, S. (2022). *Facebook: quarterly number of MAU (monthly active users) worldwide 2008-2022*. Statista. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/264810/number-of-monthly-active-facebook-users-worldwide/>
- Donthu, N., Kumar, S., Pandey, N., Pandey, N., & Mishra, A. (2021). Mapping the electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) research: A systematic review and bibliometric analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 135, 758-773.
- Eroglu, S. A., Machleit, K. A., & Davis, L. M. (2001). Atmospheric qualities of online retailing: A conceptual model and implications. *Journal of Business Research*, 54(2), 177-184.
- Fogel, J., & Nehmad, E. (2009). Internet social network communities: Risk taking, trust, and privacy concerns. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 25(1), 153-160.
- Garbarino, E., & Johnson, M. S. (1999). The different roles of satisfaction, trust, and commitment in customer relationships. *Journal of Marketing*, 63(2), 70-87.
- Hair, J. F. Jr., Howard, M. C., & Nitzl, C. (2020). Assessing measurement model quality in PLS-SEM using confirmatory composite analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 109, 101-110.
- Hair, J. F., Risher, J., Sarstedt, M., & Ringle, C. M. (2019). When to use and how to report the results of PLS-SEM. *European Business Review*, 31(1), 2-24.
- Hair, J. F. Jr., Sarstedt, M., Hopkins, L., & Kuppelwieser, V. G. (2014). Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM): An emerging tool in business research. *European Business Review*, 26(2), 106-121.
- Hair, J. F. Jr., Sarstedt, M., Ringle, C. M., & Gudergan, S. P. (2017). *Advanced Issues in Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling*. SAGE Publications.
- Hair, J. F. Jr., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2016). *A primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Henseler, J., Hubona, G., & Ray, P. A. (2016). Using PLS path modeling in new technology research: updated guidelines. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, 116(1), 2-20.
- Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2015). A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 43(1), 115-135.
- Iglesias, O., Markovic, S., Bagherzadeh, M., & Singh, J. J. (2020). Co-creation: A key link between corporate social responsibility, customer trust, and customer loyalty. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 163(1), 151-166.
- Kawaf, F., & Tagg, S. (2012). Online shopping environments in fashion shopping: An S-O-R based review. *The Marketing Review*, 12(2), 161-180.
- Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Marketing*, 57(1), 1-22.
- Keller, K. L. (2009). Building strong brands in a modern marketing communications environment. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 15(2-3), 139-155.
- Kim, S., Choe, J. Y., & Petrick, J. F. (2018). The effect of celebrity on brand awareness, perceived quality, brand image, brand loyalty, and destination attachment to a literary festival. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 9, 320-329.
- Koo, D. M., & Ju, S. H. (2010). The interactional effects of atmospherics and perceptual curiosity on emotions and online shopping intention. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 26(3), 377-388.
- Kotler, P. (2001). *A Framework for Marketing Management*. Prentice-Hall.
- Krishnamurthy, A., & Kumar, S. R. (2018). Electronic word-of-mouth and the brand image: Exploring the moderating role of involvement through a consumer expectations lens. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 43, 149-156.
- Ladhari, R., Souiden, N., & Dufour, B. (2017). The role of emotions in utilitarian service settings: The effects of emotional satisfaction on product perception and behavioral intentions. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 34, 10-18.
- Le, L. H., Bui, S. C., Duong, G. H., & Chang, Y. C. (2021). Understanding the relationships between B2C and C2C value co-creation in the universities: the mediating role of brand awareness. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education, AHEAD-OF-PRINT*, 1-21.
- Lee, J., & Hong, I. B. (2019). Consumer's electronic word-of-mouth adoption: The trust transfer perspective. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, 23(4), 595-627.
- Lien, C. H., Wen, M. J., Huang, L. C., & Wu, K. L. (2015). Online hotel booking: The effects of brand image, price, trust and value on purchase intentions. *Asia Pacific Management Review*, 20(4), 210-218.
- Martínez, P., Herrero, Á., & García-de los Salmones, M. d. M. (2020). Determinants of eWOM on hospitality CSR issues. In Facebook we trust? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 28(10), 1479-1497.
- McKinney, L. N. (2004). Creating a satisfying internet shopping experience via atmospheric variables. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 28(3), 268-283.
- Miyazaki, A. D., & Fernandez, A. (2001). Consumer perceptions of privacy and security risks for

- online shopping. *Journal of Consumer affairs*, 35(1), 27-44.
- Morgan, R. M., & Hunt, S. D. (1994). The commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(3), 20-38.
- Mummalaneni, V. (2005). An empirical investigation of Web site characteristics, consumer emotional states and on-line shopping behaviors. *Journal of Business Research*, 58(4), 526-532.
- Nadeem, W., Khani, A. H., Schultz, C. D., Adam, N. A., Attar, R. W., & Hajli, N. (2020). How social presence drives commitment and loyalty with online brand communities? The role of social commerce trust. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 55(1), 102136.
- Neuman, W. L. (2005). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (6 ed.). Allyn & Bacon.
- Ngoma, M., & Ntale, P. D. (2019). Word of mouth communication: A mediator of relationship marketing and customer loyalty. *Cogent Business & Management*, 6(1), 1580123.
- Nyadzayo, M. W., & Khajezadeh, S. (2016). The antecedents of customer loyalty: A moderated mediation model of customer relationship management quality and brand image. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 30, 262-270.
- Park, N., & Kim, Y. (2020). The impact of social networks and privacy on electronic word-of-mouth in Facebook: Exploring gender differences. *International Journal of Communication*, 14, 176-199.
- Pasternak, O., Veloutsou, C., & Morgan-Thomas, A. (2017). Self-presentation, privacy and electronic word-of-mouth in social media. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 26(4), 415-428.
- Peng, C., & Kim, Y. G. (2014). Application of the Stimuli-Organism-Response (SOR) framework to online shopping behavior. *Journal of Internet Commerce*, 13(3-4), 159-176.
- Preacher, K. J., & Hayes, A. F. (2008). Asymptotic and resampling strategies for assessing and comparing indirect effects in multiple mediator models. *Behavior Research Methods*, 40(3), 879-891.
- Russell, J. A., & Mehrabian, A. (1974). Distinguishing anger and anxiety in terms of emotional response factors. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 42(1), 79-83.
- Serra-Cantalops, A., Cardona, J. R., & Salvi, F. (2020). Antecedents of positive eWOM in hotels. Exploring the relative role of satisfaction, quality and positive emotional experiences. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 32(11), 3457-3477.
- Shin, D. H. (2010). The effects of trust, security and privacy in social networking: A security-based approach to understand the pattern of adoption. *Interacting with Computers*, 22(5), 428-438.
- Sirdeshmukh, D., Singh, J., & Sabol, B. (2002). Consumer trust, value, and loyalty in relational exchanges. *Journal of Marketing*, 66(1), 15-37.
- Sullivan, Y. W., & Kim, D. J. (2018). Assessing the effects of consumers' product evaluations and trust on repurchase intention in e-commerce environments. *International Journal of Information Management*, 39, 199-219.
- Vieira, V. A. (2013). Stimuli-organism-response framework: A meta-analytic review in the store environment. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(9), 1420-1426.
- Wetsch, L. R. (2006). Trust, satisfaction and loyalty in customer relationship management: An application of justice theory. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, 4(3-4), 29-42.
- Wu, K. W., Huang, S. Y., Yen, D. C., & Popova, I. (2012). The effect of online privacy policy on consumer privacy concern and trust. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 28(3), 889-897.
- Yeon, J., Park, I., & Lee, D. (2019). What creates trust and who gets loyalty in social commerce? *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 50, 138-144.
- Yu, L., Li, H., He, W., Wang, F. K., & Jiao, S. (2020). A meta-analysis to explore privacy cognition and information disclosure of internet users. *International Journal of Information Management*, 51, 102015.
- Yun, Z. S., & Good, L. K. (2007). Developing customer loyalty from e-tail store image attributes. *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal*, 17(1), 4-22.
- Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., & Parasuraman, A. (1996). The behavioral consequences of service quality. *Journal of Marketing*, 60(2), 31-46.
- Zhang, D., Zhang, F., Liu, S., & Du, H. S. (2019). Impact of referral reward program on innovative customers' follow-up e-referral: The moderating role of creative self-efficacy. *Information Technology & People*, 32(3), 559-578.