

A STUDY ON IMPRESSION FORMATION AND ONLINE WOM OF FASHION BRAND SUPPORTER THROUGH ONLINE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, along with the rise of Social Networking Service (SNS) and the popularization of smart devices, consumers who act as value producers have positive influence on marketing all over the world. The consumers act as brand supporter by spreading brand-related information or communicating with other consumers via online network. Therefore, many brands try to use the consumers as part of marketing strategies, and especially in fashion industry because the fashion business is sensitive to consumers' reaction.

The purpose of this study is (1) to analyze how the impression of online review by fashion brand supporter is formed, (2) to examine the online WOM effect of the review by fashion brand supporter and the contribution to brand attitude, and (3) to measure the moderating effect of fashion involvement on online re-WOM intention.

The present study uses experiments with 2(utilitarian vs. hedonic review attributes) by 2(positive vs. negative review valence) between subject designs. According to the designs, 4 kinds of reviews are suggested as stimuli for consumer survey. This research targets online review by fashion brand supporter. The survey is conducted through consumers who have experience with online review posted by a brand supporter. In the survey, we measure the feelings of respondents when they face utilitarian and objective message, utilitarian and subjective message, hedonic and objective message, and hedonic and subjective message to evaluate the impression of each message. In addition, we measure the willingness of respondents whether they want to share or repost the messages through their SNS and the contribution on their attitude towards the brand.

The result of the study demonstrates that consumers give the highest reliability to the online reviews with utilitarian and negative message. In contrast, consumers give more favorability to the online review with utilitarian and positive message. The result also shows that the formed impression of the online review has a positive effect on re-WOM, contributing to brand attitude of respondent. In addition to, the moderating effect produced by fashion involvement on re-WOM is supported. These results suggest that online review of fashion brand supporter has ripple effect on consumer impression formation, affecting re-WOM intention and brand attitude.

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Keywords: Impression formation, Online review, Review valence, Review attributes, Online WOM