The Effect of Online Retailing Engagement Dimensions on Electronic Word of Mouth and Purchase Intentions

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Abstract

In recent decades the internet has changed the nature of shopping, which has supported the proliferation of e-business sites and thus traditional shopping has been shifting towards online retailing. In order to contribute to literature of e-business, this study proposes a conceptual framework to investigate how the online retailing engagement dimensions (i.e. website features, service quality, social networking sites, subjective norms, perceived risk, and self-efficacy) take effects on electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and customers purchase intentions through mediating link of consumers' attitude towards e-tailers. Data were obtained from 286 university students in China with cross sectional questionnaire survey. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were used to test the validity and reliability of the measurement model. Next, structural equation modeling was conducted to test the proposed hypotheses of the research model. The results indicate that all online retailing dimensions are strong predictors of consumers' attitude towards e-tailers, while consumers' attitude towards online retailers has significant effects on customers purchase intentions and electronic word of mouth. Finally, academic and industrial implications are also discussed.

Keywords: Website Features; Social Networking Site; Online Retailing; Self-Efficacy; Purchase Intentions; Electronic Word of Mouth

1. Introduction

Online shopping and e-commerce have been steadily enjoying rapid and high development and growth (Chen et al., 2016). In 2016 online retail sales in China reached $752 billion which showed 26.2% growth rate and in the United States e-retail sales was $393 which had a track to grow 15%. In recent years, electronic word of mouth (EWOM) has gained importance in online business (Yoo et al., 2015). As eMarketer pointed out that 61% online customers make purchase decisions by exploring blogs, online forums and others sources of reviews (eMarketer, 2008). Likewise, Infogroup highlighted that 80% potential online retailing customers have considered online reviews before taking purchase decisions (Infogroup, 2008). According to Hennig-Thurau (2003) electronic word of mouth refers to as "any positive or negative statement make by potential, actual or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via internet". The eWOM tools for instance blogs, social media, search engine, consumer review system, internet communities and instant online messenger services are used to collect and disseminate information by consumers. Thus, these mechanisms create a shape of eWOM (Chatterjee, 2001; Helm, 2000).

Prior studies examined that information sources (e.g. neutral third party, eWOM, retailers, and manufacturers) played roles to impact on online customers' purchase intentions (Chen et al., 2016). Amaro and Duarte (2015) pointed that customers' intentions to buy online were influenced by compatibility, perceived risk and attitude. Nikbin et al. (2011) investigated that the interaction effects of firm's reputation and perceived justice on Iranian customers repetitive purchase intentions. Likewise, Ziaullah et al. (2016) indicated that online retailers' reputation and perceived justice components (e.g. distributive, procedural, and interactional) were important predictors of online consumers' purchase intentions in China.

These previous findings indicate the need and importance for understanding the development path of eWOM and purchase intentions. However, despite the proved importance of eWOM and purchase intentions, the research of their development paths has just been partially understood, and the previous studies suggest investigate the antecedents of eWOM and purchase intentions (Wu and Lin, 2017; Ziaullah et al., 2017; Yoo et al., 2015). Moreover, this research tries to strengthen the e-business literature by adding distinctive elements of online retailing engagement dimensions (ORED) which are website features, service

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quality, social networking sites, subjective norms, perceived risk, and self-efficacy as possible critical antecedents of customers attitude towards e-tailers' and their influence on eWOM and purchase intentions. To the best of our knowledge, there is no previous study in e-business which has examined such a research problem. This study tries to be an essential step towards filling this research gap.

This study contributes to examine the effect of online retailing engagement dimensions (e.g. website features, service quality, social networking sites, subjective norms, perceived risk, and self-efficacy) on eWOM and purchase intentions. Further, it pinpoints that ORED, eWOM and customers purchase intentions established an essential mediating connection with the consumers' attitude towards e-tailers.
The rest of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents the literature review and the development of hypotheses. Section 3 discusses the research methodology and Section 4 demonstrates the data analysis and results. Results discussion and theoretical and managerial implications are given in Section 5. Finally, Section 6 concludes with further research opportunities.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1 Research Framework Description

Eagly and Chaiken (1993) defined attitude as "the tendency to evaluate a behavior in a favorable or unfavorable manner". Customers' attitude toward online retailers and website is significantly influenced by the trust that produces customers' repetitive visits. Attitude has a vital role in consumer decision making as its effects on consumer's feelings and thoughts (Bagozzi and Warshaw, 1990). Customers' attitude is a main alert of their behavioral intention (Ajzen, 1991). Further, Zhang and Kim (2013) indicated that attitude toward behavior has a significant effect on behavioral intention.

Brodie et al. (2011) describe customer engagement as a "co-creative and interactive consumer experiences with the focal agent/object that lead to a particular psychological state". This is an important issue of firms dealing with online retailing mechanisms and businesses. Specifically, e-tailers have mainly concerned that how ORED affects consumers' attitude towards e-tailers', eWOM and purchase intentions (Bowden, 2009). As online customers cannot directly experience products in electronic atmosphere (Alba et al., 1997), thus important role of internet media, i.e. website features, service quality, social networking sites, subjective norms, perceived risk, and self-efficacy becomes crucial for examinations. The research framework of this paper is depicted in Figure 1. The model proposes that ORED have a positive significant effect on consumers' attitude towards e-tailers, which is hypothesized to significantly affect eWOM and purchase intentions. The subsequent sub-sections describe the hypotheses derived from the literature.

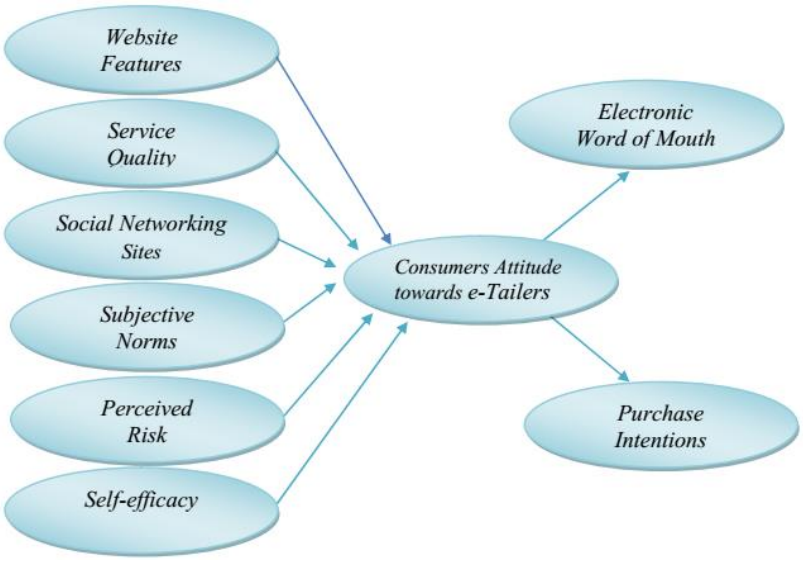

Figure 1: Research Framework

2.1.1 Websites Features and Consumers' Attitude towards E-Tailers

Websites are sources of information which can help customers as they require searching for information. Ranganathan and Ganapathy (2002) examined that business to consumer (B2C) websites can

enable customers to make purchase decision. Subsequently, the website design characteristics also influence online buying decisions of buyers (Shergill and Chen, 2005). The design and contents of web pages are vital considerations when e-tailers develop the design of high quality websites (Wolfinbarger and Gilly, 2003). Ranganathan and Ganapathy (2002) identified four important features of B2C websites which are design, privacy, information content and security. While, Elliott and Speck (2005) demonstrated five websites characteristics which are product information, ease of use, trust, entertainment, and currency. Zhang and Von Dran (2000) outlined the five characteristics of web human factors which are credibility, cognitive outcome, visual appearance, firms' informational contents and user empowerment. Hausman and Siekpe (2009) demonstrated that providing a website with richer media and a more realistic environment has a significant effect on user involvement with the content. Because, website human and computer features have positive effects on consumers' perceived usefulness. Ahn et al. (2004) concluded that an online and offline feature of online business has a positive significant influence on perceived ease of use and usefulness. A well design websites can attract customers and ensured them that the site is reliable, trustworthy and dependable (Liu and Arnett, 2000). Therefore, poor website design is considered the main reason for customers not to take the decision of online purchases (Shergill and Chen, 2005). Different from the previous studies, this study investigates the problem from the view of consumer's attitude, and proposes that online retailing website features can develop positive consumers' attitude towards e-tailers'. Accordingly, we propose the subsequent hypothesis.

H1: The website feature has positive significant effect on consumers' attitude towards e-tailers.

2.1.2 Online Retailing Service Quality and Consumers' Attitude towards E-Tailers

Service quality of online retailing firms is defined as" consumers overall evaluations and judgment of the quality of e-service provided by online companies" (Santos, 2003). The internet retailers are required to examine the value of service quality parameters in order to develop superior online marketing strategies (Yang and Jun, 2002). Santos (2003) indicated that service quality can improve the competitive advantage of e-commerce companies. In the context of online retailing, good service quality can positively influence customers' purchase intentions (Lee and Lin, 2005), and the poor service quality has a negative effect on customers' decisions to make purchases through the internet (Vijayasarathy and Jones, 2000). Online retailing service quality means that all the required efforts which are made by online firms are reflected on the website, because it is an important secret and gateway to develop online consumers' trust, satisfaction which induces to purchase (Shin et al., 2013). While some other research state that service quality is the main factors impacting customers' trust and loyalty intentions towards online retailers (Kim et al., 2009; Kassim et al., 2010). Therefore, service quality can have significant positive effect on consumers' trust toward online retailers (Fassnacht and Köse, 2007; Nadeem et al., 2015). This study tries to argue that online retailing service quality is considered as a key antecedent of the customers attitude towards e-tailers. Accordingly, we propose the subsequent hypothesis.

H2: Online retailing service quality has positive significant effect on consumers' attitude toward e-tailers.

2.1.3 Social Networking and Consumers' Attitude towards E-Tailers

Social networks are playing a vital role in online shopping and effects on consumers' behavior (Goh et al., 2013). It becomes important for online retailers to understand and examine the interaction of various activities of social media with online retailers' websites in order to attract customers (Nadeem et al., 2015). In different types of social media, Facebook has around 1.86 billion monthly active users in the world. Facebook is a very popular social networking in consumers and online retailers. Dekay (2012) described that generally online retailers prefer Facebook to other social media websites, for instance, Renren, Instagram, Google+, Pinteerest and Vkontakte. Facebook has become the most popular channel of marketing which permits the direct association with potential consumers.

Dennis et al. (2010) demonstrate that social networking has associations with online shopping because buyers are spending sufficient time on the social media. Further, the young adults prefer the idea of sharing their electronic shopping experience on Facebook (Harris and Dennis, 2011). Moreover, the users of social media share their fashion and style concerned information with their online peers and colleagues in order to collect different types and feedback from them. Subsequently, the social networking such as Facebook positively affects online purchasers trust (Nadeem et al., 2015). Further, it is argued that social networking has been playing a significant role in consumers' life in sharing online shopping experience and also giving and seeking information or recommendations freely about products. In social networking context,

the attitude and behaviors' of customers are developed from the messages or written texts which are sent by peers (Wang et al., 2012). Thus, social networking contributes in developing consumers' attitude towards e-tailers. Accordingly, we propose the subsequent hypothesis.

H3: Social-networking has positive significant effect on consumers' attitude toward e-tailers.

2.1.4 Subjective Norms and Consumers' Attitude towards E-Tailers

Subjective norm refers to as "a person's perception of the social pressures put on him or her to perform or not perform the behavior in questions" (Ajzen and Fishbein,1980). Normative belief means when a reference group will confirm or disconfirm of an action and individual's intention to obey with the approval or disapproval of the reference group (Choi and Geisfeld, 2004). While, the normative belief refers to as "the extent to which a consumer believes that people who are important to him or her would recommend the consumer to engage in online shopping" (Vijayasarathy, 2004). Subjective norms are classified by Tan et al. (2207) into two forms of external influence (press, news reports and mass media) and peer influence (family and friends). In past studies it is indicated that some customers will not take decision to buy online, if their family and friends do not recommend them to buy through internet (Foucault and Scheufele, 2002). Clemes et al. (2004) describe that subjective norms can affect consumers decisions to purchase product or service from the online store. Specifically, subjective norms are essential for preparing customers' attitude towards online shopping. Thus, in this study, subjective norms are a prerequisite to develop consumers' attitude towards e-tailers. Accordingly, we propose the subsequent hypothesis:
H4: Subjective norms has positive significant effect on consumers' attitude towards e-tailers.

2.1.5 Perceived Risk and Consumers' Attitude towards E-Tailers

Perceived risk refers to as "the anticipated negative consequences a consumer associates with the purchase of a product or service" (Dunn et al., 1986). Risks mean not getting what is expected (Bhatnagar et al., 2000). According to Chang et al. (2005), some previous research indicated that consumer risk perceptions customers' have a negative significant influence on the attitude of their online shopping intentions. Conversely, at the presence of security and privacy protection customers' are more likely encouraged to buy online (Doolin et al., 2005; Suki, 2007). The circumstances of purchase uncertainties can be influenced by the online shopping interface (Wood, 2001). Therefore, the more perceived risk related to online shopping can generate negative attitude towards an intention to purchase online (Dash and Saji, 2008). In this study, it is argued that lower perceived risk is an important to stimulate customers towards online retailing. We propose that lower perceived risk in online retailing can develop positive consumers' attitude towards e-tailers. Accordingly, we propose the subsequent hypothesis.
H5: Lower perceived risk of online retailing has positive significant effect on consumers' attitude toward e-tailers.

2.1.6 Self-Efficacy and Consumers' Attitude towards E-Tailers

Self-efficacy refers to as "generative capability in which cognitive, social and behavioral sub skills must be organized into integrated courses of action to serve innumerable purpose" (Bandura, 1982). Basically, self-efficacy means when an individual established a belief that how he or she can do a task sophistically (Huffman et al., 2013). It is associated to customers' actual behavior (Bandura, 2012). In the context of technology, self-efficacy is concerned that a person should have accurate and adequate skills set and work aptitudes to succeed while doing a task related with technology (McDonald and Siegall, 1992). Online shopping self-efficacy has significant effects on perceived usefulness and trust, and negative impact on perceived risk (Dash and Saji, 2008). In this study, it is argued that online retailing self-efficacy is essential to adopting online shopping. Thus, we propose that online retailing self-efficacy can develop better consumers' attitude towards e-tailers. Accordingly, we propose the subsequent hypothesis.
H6: Self-efficacy has positive significant effect on consumers' attitude toward e-tailers.

2.2 The Association between Consumers' Attitude towards E-Tailers, eWOM, And Purchase Intentions

The term eWOM is a communication among individuals regarding online mechanisms. It is an exchange of noncommercial and informal conversations using internet platforms (Goyette et al., 2010). The eWOM is a common terminology which describes behavior that information regarding goods or services are exchanged from buyer to buyer through the websites (Weinberg and Davis, 2005). Recently, eWOM has

gained much attention from researchers due to the rapid adoption of internet and popularity of online business. As information technology has been developing rapidly, thus anyone can engage in eWOM around the world without any boundaries via the internet (Yang et al., 2015). In previous studies, it is examined that community engagement (Zhang et al., 2017), tie strength, shared language and trust (Wang et al., 2016), and post recovery customers satisfaction (Jung et al., 2017) are the determinants of eWOM.

The eWOM plays an essential role in purchase decisions of online cusotmers (Chan and Ngai, 2011). There are some driving forces of eWOM in electronic customers-opinion platforms i.e. enjoyment derived from helping others, a sense of belonging, and reputation (Cheung and Lee, 2012). Consequently, as consumers' establish a positive attitude towards e-tailers' then they show positive eWOM during their interaction on the consumers-opinion platforms. In present study, positive eWOM is considered as the key behavioral outcome of the consumers' attitude towards e-tailers. Therefore, this study proposes that consumers' attitude towards e-tailers can foster positive eWOM. Accordingly, we propose the subsequent hypothesis:

H7: Consumers' attitude towards e-tailers' has significant positive effect on eWOM.

Zanna and Rempel (1988) pinpointed that customers' attitude and behavior depends upon various types of affective, cognitive, and information stored in human memory. Attitude towards e-tailers is mediating variable that we added through Nadeem et al. (2015). Consumers' attitude has been examined by scholars with respect to eWOM (Prendergast et al., 2010). Further, two more theories for instance technology of acceptance model (Bagozzi et al., 1992) and theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), also pointed out the relationship between attitude and consumers' behavioral intention. In this study customers' purchase intentions is considered the as key behavioral outcome of the consumers' attitude towards e-tailers. Therefore, this study proposes that consumers' attitude towards e-tailers' can foster customers' purchase intentions. Accordingly, we propose the subsequent hypothesis:

H8: Consumers' attitude towards e-tailers' has significant positive effect on purchase intentions.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Instrument

The instrument consists of two parts: the first part is about the respondent's profile and the second part is relating to website features, service quality, social networking sites, subjective norms, self-efficacy, perceived risk, attitude towards online retailers and electronic word of mouth. In the first section, questions were asked about the respondent's age, gender, education, experience and frequently bought items during online shopping. The nominal scale was used for the first part and the second section used seven-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree). An intensive literature review was conducted to explore the valid and reliable measures of the related constructs. The measurements items of the constructs including website features and service quality were adopted from the measurements developed by Yang et al. (2015). The website features and service quality consists of six items respectively. The perceived risk and subjective norms were measured by using five and three items respectively based on Clemes et al. (2014). The attitude towards online retailers, social networking and electronic words of mouth were adopted from the measurements developed by Nadeem et al. (2015). The attitude towards online retailers, social networking and electronic words of mouth constructs comprised of three, five and four items respectively. The self-efficacy was measured using three items based on Dash and Saji (2008).

Since the derived scales from the previous researches were in English. Thus, initially, an English version instrument was prepared. Next, original English version instrument was translated into Chinese by two Ph. D Chinese students of online business research area. Later, Chinese questionnaire was translated back into English with the help of another two Chinese Ph.D. scholars. The purpose of later translation into English was to compare with the original English version to checkout discrepancies and rectifications of errors. Finally, a study pilot test was conducted to confirm questionnaire comprehensiveness and clarity. For the pilot study, questionnaires were distributed among 40 respondents including 25 students and 15 teaching staff business management who had enough experience of e-business. Therefore, minor modifications and corrections were made in the wording of the questionnaire based on suggestions received from the pilot study participants.

3.2 Sampling Procedure and Data Collection

For this study, data were obtained through survey methodology. This methodology was used because it is suitable and deemed to be the most convenient and efficient way of accessing a large number of respondents (Panayides, 2009). Data were gathered during the period of eight weeks starting from March 2017 to May 2017 through instrument written in Chinese. This study used convenience sampling technique and the sample was collected from most convenient locations of various universities, for instance, research laboratories, mini-markets, libraries, and university cafeterias. As China is the world's largest online retailing market and its sales volume will be $ 1.7 trillion by the year 2020 (Jim, 2017). In China, the majority of online buyers are young people around 60 percent age at thirty years or less. The middle aged customers are initiating to buy online. Specifically, young online consumers usually have better purchasing power and also are willing to pay high prices of products. Fung Business Intelligence Center (2013) noticed that 19.5 percent online consumers aged over forty years in 2012.

Thus, university students are the most attractive segment to adopt e-commerce as they have a higher level of education (Lightner et al., 2002). Further, data collection from Chinese universities produces homogeneity in respondents' characteristics which reduces sample equivalence bias in terms of cultural differentiation, firms' position and educational experience (Yoon, 2009). Besides that universities student are skillful in using computers and have a better understanding of internet usage (Ziaullah et al., 2017; Bames and Vidgen, 2002). In order to encourage response rate and reduce response bias, respondents were offered incentives to carefully complete and return questionnaires. Initially, 350 questionnaires were given to students and a total of 300 questionnaires were received with 85.71% effective e response rate. Out of 300 returned, 14 questionnaires were inappropriate for data analysis due to incompleteness. Consequently 286 questionnaires were used for data analysis. Thus usable response rate was 81.71 percent. The respondent's profile and characteristics are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1 : Respondents characteristics

Characteristics	Category	Sample	Ratio (%)
Gender	Male	164	57.34
	Female	122	42.66
Age	Below 20	15	5.2
	20-29	244	85.3
	30-39	25	8.7
	Over 40	2	0.7
Education	Intermediate	40	14.0
	Bachelor	112	39.2
	Master	103	36.0
	Ph. D	31	10.8
Occupation	Students	100	100
Online shopping experience	Under 1 Year	15	5.2
	1-4 Year	131	45.8
	Above 4 Year	140	49

4. Analysis and Results

4.1 Analysis of Common Method Bias (CMV)

According to Bagozzi and Yi (1991) CMV refers to as "the variance that is attributed to the measurement method rather than to the construct of interest". However, the previous studies focused on dealing with the CMV prior to testing the proposed hypotheses (Waseem et al., 2013; Richardson et al., 2009). In the subject of information systems, CMV played an extensive validity threat to the findings of study (Burton-Jones, 2009). Moreover, Craighead et al. (2011) pointed out similar reservations that CMV may produce certain distort associations which lead to the erroneous conclusions. Thus, it is important to check the CMV, otherwise, it can produce various potential threats and doubts in the findings of the study. Harman's single factor test was recommended to examine the issue of CMV (Podsakoff et al., 2003). We used maximum likelihood method to point out the elements of framework with promax rotation by choosing the number of factors equal to one. Consequently, we found 34.1 percent of the total number of variance was explained which is less than 50%. Therefore, it is concluded that the collected data do not have any common method variance and posits that there will be no any uncertainty in this study results.

4.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

We used Maximum Likelihood (ML) method as suggested by Fabrigar et al. (1999) to reduce its thirty eight Likert scale based items into nine refined and proposed research model factors. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin indicates the value of 0.864 that is greater than the critical value of 0.70 exhibiting that there are sufficient items to predict each essential factor. Further, it shows that the sample is adequate enough to execute the EFA (Barkus et al., 2006). The Bartlett's test of sphericity results (Chi-Square=5580.14, df=730, p <0.000) indicates that correlation matrix is quite different from the identity matrix, while specific correlations between the variables is not equal to zero as recommended by Leech et al. (2005). We followed the Hair et al. (2010) to define criteria of factor extraction, thus the various methods i.e. latent root method, scree test and variance explained percentage together focused on retaining nine factors for data analysis. The total variance explained of nine factors is 71.1%. As the rotated components matrix contains final thirty eight items. Hence, all the construct items factor loadings were appropriate with minimum value 0.40. Generally, the factor loadings 0.30 or above are considered adequate (Hair et al., 1998). The detail of EFA is given in Table 2.

Table 2: Exploratory factor analysis

	SNS	WM	PR	SQ	WF	OPI	SN	SE	ATE
SNS4	0.930								
SNS2	0.913								
SNS3	0.895								
SNS1	0.863								
SNS5	0.802								
WM4		0.996							
WM2		0.881							
WM3		0.853							
WM1		0.673							
ATE2									0.573
ATE3								0.546	
ATE1									0.549
PR2			0.731						
PR4			0.724						
PR5			0.715						
PR1			0.612						
PR3			0.531						
SQ4				0.767					
SQ2				0.687					
SQ5				0.576					
SQ1				0.560					
SQ6				0.464					
SQ3				0.428					
WF1					0.810				
WF2					0.711				
WF3					0.633				
WF4					0.557				
WF5					0.403				
WF6					0.402				
OPI1						0.835			
OP3						0.791			
OPI2						0.790			
SN2							0.871		
SN1							0.602		

SN3	0.447
SE3	0.846
SE2	0.672
SE1	0.567

SNS: Social-Networking site, WM: Words of mouth, ATE: Attitude towards e-tailers,WF: Website features, PR: Perceivedd risk, OPI: Online purchase intentions, SN: Subjective norms, SE: Self-efficacy, SQ: Service quality.

4.3 Reliability

According to Hull and Nie (1981), internal consistency method is used to examine the reliability which is estimated by Cronbach's alpha. The Cronbach's alpha value 0.70 or greater is considered acceptable. Hair et al. (2006) recommended Cronbach's alpha 0.70 as a critical value. In this study the values of Cronbach's alpha are greater than the critical value and their ranges from 0.74 to 0.94. The reliability results are shown in Table 3 which indicates theoretical constructs with well psychometric properties.

4.4 Measurement Model's Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

AMOS-21 was used to test the collected data: First, CFA was conducted to test the validity of the proposed measurement model of multi-items scale. Second, hypotheses were tested by using a structural equation modeling (SEM).The Maximum Likelihood method is very popular for SEM measurements. The 286 valid questionnaires were sufficient for maximum likelihood estimation. Churchill and Iacobucci (2010) pointed out that SEM can work better even with small samples responses of 50 to 100. In this regard, our established sample size 286 is sufficient to perform SEM estimations. Thus, Goodness of fit of the proposed research model was tested by utilizing measurement model. Henry and Stone (1994) suggest that, for a goodness of model fit, chi-square/degree of freedom (x^2/df) should be less than 5, the Tucker-Lewis Index, and Comparative Fit Index need to be higher than 0.90, and the Root Mean Square Error should be less than 0.10. Thus, a measurement model was conducted to test the construct reliability and validity which are internal reliability, convergent and discriminant validities. According to Hair et al. (1998), the convergent validity was measured by the defined three conditions: (i) items loading should be at least 0.60; (ii) average variance extracted for constructs should be higher than 0.50; and (iii) composite reliability of constructs with a minimum critical value should be not less than 0.70. Fornell and Larcker (1981) stated that discriminant validity is tested by using the measurement that the square root of AVE for each construct should be greater than its correlations with other constructs. The measurement model results indicate that a goodness of model fit with indices as x^2/df (986.10/553=1.78), Tucker-Lewis Index 0.92, Comparative Fit Index 0.95, Root Mean Square Error 0.044, Normal Fit Index 0.91 and Goodness of Fit Index 0.84. The measurement model results are stated in Table 4.

Table 3 illustrates the reliability and convergent validity. An items loading of all constructs ranges from 0.614 to 0.911, composite reliability ranges from 0.76 to 094 and average variance extracted ranges from 0.51 to 0.76. The correlation matrix of discriminant validity is shown in Table 5, where the square root of average variance extracted of each construct is greater than its correlations with other constructs. The results illustrate highest acceptable level of validity and reliability.

Table 3: Reliability and Convergent Validity

Internal reliability			Convergent validity		
Items	**Cronbach's alpha α**	**Items Correlation**	**Standardized Factor Loadings**	**Composite reliability (CR)**	**Average Variance Extracted (AVE)**
SM4	0.94	0.882	0.911	0.94	0.76
SM2		0.881	0.853		
SM3		0.884	0.968		
SM1		0.803	0.780		
SM5		0.776	0.848		
WM4	0.89	0.807	0.864	0.90	0.68
WM2		0.786	0.850		
WM3		0.767	0.831		
WM1		0.695	0.754		
PR2	0.82	0.611	0.687	0.84	0.51
PR4		0.660	0.728		

PR5		0.619	0.709		
PR1		0.610	0.665		
PR3		0.665	0.771		
SQ4	0.78	0.614	0.822	0.87	0.53
SQ2		0.604	0.733		
SQ5		0.545	0.641		
SQ1		0.600	0.731		
SQ6		0.664	0.728		
SQ3		0.632	0.683		
WF1	0.74	0.638	0.778	0.87	0.53
WF2		0.634	0.790		
WF3		0.608	0.753		
WF4		0.572	0.614		
WF5		0.642	0.648		
WF6		0.646	0.761		
OPI1	0.85	0.717	0.811	0.84	0.64
OPI3		0.711	0.809		
OPI2		0.699	0.784		
SN2	0.84	0.696	0.758	0.76	0.52
SN3		0.740	0.749		
SN1		0.685	0.648		
SE1	0.88	0.673	0.711	0.84	0.51
SE2		0.704	0.698		
SE3		0.723	0.657		
SE4		0.757	0.768		
SE5		0.722	0.735		
ATE2	0.88	0.753	0.698	0.76	0.51
ATE3		0.816	0.756		
ATE1		0.769	0.695		

Table 4: Fit indices

Fit indices of measurement model
Chi-square/degree of freedom X^2/df: 986.10/553=1.78, GFI: 0.84, RMSEA: 0.044, AGFI:0.81, TLI: 0.92, NFI: 0.91, CFI: 0.95, PNFI: 0.72, PGFI: 0.69
Fit indices structural model
Chi-square/degree of freedom X^2/df: 1000.75/563=1.77, GFI:0.84, RMSEA: 0.046, AGFI:0.81, TLI:0.92, NFI: 0.91, CFI: 0.95, PNFI: 0.73, PGFI: 0.70

Table 5: Correlation matrix

Factor	SM	WM	ATE	PR	SQ	WF	OPI	SN	SE
SM	0.87*								
WM	0.038	0.82							
ATE	0.294	0.259	0.71				.		
PR	0.019	0.593	0.314	0.71					
SQ	0.001	0.592	0.121	0.666	0.72				
WF	0.023	0.069	0.049	0.004	0.035	0.72			
OPI	0.004	0.476	0.001	0.381	0.402	0.053	0.80		
SN	0.178	0.428	0.347	0.410	0.273	0.041	0.117	0.72	
SE	0.004	0.038	0.138	0.039	0.005	0.066	0.046	0.040	0.71

*Average variance extracted square root is shown diagonal

4. 4 Structural Equation Modeling

In this study structural model indices were utilized to examine the validity of the hypothesized model, and path analysis was conducted to indicate that how constructs relate to each other which are shown in Table 5. First, structural model fit was tested by using the indices as x^2/df 1000.75/563=1.77, Tucker-Lewis Index 0.92, Comparative Fit Index 0.95 and Root Mean Square Error 0.046. The indices indicate an adequate fit between the hypothesized model and observed data as shown in Table 3. Second, path coefficients for the hypothesized relationships were examined and the variance was explained for the

endogenous variable (r^2). Thus, website features, service quality, social networking site, subjective norms, low perceived risk and self-efficacy are the essential antecedents in developing the consumers attitude towards e-tailers (β=0.23,0.25,0.12,0.20,0.13 and 0.20). Therefore, hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, and H6 are supported. The ORED explains 51% of the variance in attitude towards online retailers. The consumer's attitude towards online retailers is the predictor of electronic word of mouth and purchase intentions (β =0.65 and 0.58). Therefore, attitude towards online retailers explains 43% of the variance in electronic words of mouth and 35% variance in purchase intentions. The results of hypothesized paths are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Hypothesized Paths

Hypotheses	β	t-value	Significance
H1 WF → ATE	0.237	4.432	0.000
H2 SQ → ATE	0.258	4.642	0.000
H3 SM → ATE	0.124	2.815	0.005
H4 SN → ATE	0.202	4.388	0.000
H5 PR → ATE	0.139	3.039	0.003
H6 SE → ATE	0.206	4.205	0.000
H7 ATE → eWOM	0.65	14.49	0.000
H8 ATE → OPI	0.587	12.215	0.000

Attitude towards online retailers (R^2): 0.51, Electronic words of mouth (R^2): 0.43 Purchase intentions (R^2): 0.35

5. Discussions

The core objective of the proposed research model was to understand that how consumers attitude towards e-tailers, electronic words of mouth (eWOM) and purchase intentions is affected by online retailing engagement dimensions i.e. website features, service quality, social networking site, subjective norms, perceived risk and self-efficacy. This study tries to build bridge to fill certain gaps in previous research which have not considered online retailing firms.

The online retailing engagement dimensions have a positive significant impact on customers' eWOM and purchase intentions. For the consumers' online retailing engagement dimensions, eWOM and customers purchase intentions have a substantial association to the mediating connection of attitude towards e-tailers. Thus, consumers' online engagement dimensions are essential determinants of the mediator.

The previous research has studied all the dimensions of consumers' engagement in distinctive ways. For instance, online retailing websites with richer media and a more realistic environment (e.g. improved human factors) has a positive significant impact on user involvement with the content. Thus, website human and computer features take positive effect on consumers' perceived usefulness (Hausman and Siekpe, 2009). Similarly, online retailing service quality is essential to develop online consumers' trust and satisfaction (Shin et al., 2013). While some other research state as a service quality is integral element impacting customers' loyalty intentions and trust towards online retailers. Therefore, service quality has significant influence on consumers' trust regarding online retailers (Fassnacht and Köse, 2007; Nadeem et al., 2015). Dennis et al. (2010) demonstrated that social networking has associations with online shopping because buyers spend sufficient time for surfing on social media. The young adults prefer to share their online shopping experience on Facebook (Harris and Dennis, 2011). Moreover, the users of social media share their fashion, preference style and other related information with their social media friends in order to gather various types of feedback and valuable suggestions from them. Subsequently, social networking i.e. Facebook affects online consumers' trust significantly (Nadeem et al., 2015). Clemes et al. (2004) described that subjective norms can affect consumers' decisions to purchase product or service from the online store. The circumstances of purchase uncertainties can be influenced by the online shopping interface (Wood, 2001). Therefore, the more perceived risk related to online shopping can generate negative attitude towards an intention to purchase online (Dash and Saji, 2008). While online consumers self-efficacy also positively affects perceived usefulness, trust and negative impacts on perceived risk (Dash and Saji, 2008).

This study demonstrates that the assurance of online retailing firms for such online retailing engagement dimensions can encourage and motivate the buyers to purchase products or services

electronically, and also it contributes to the establishment of eWOM and generate customer purchase intentions. As there is no any physical and digital connections between customers and online retailers in the market. Therefore, consumers' online retailing engagement dimensions can establish and maintain socio-emotional bonding between e-tailers and customers. This paper also points out that attitude towards e-tailers' develops mediating role in the association between consumers' engagement dimensions, electronic word of mouth and purchase intentions. These findings demonstrate both theoretical and industrial implications.

5.1 Academic Contributions

The consumers' attitude towards e-tailers' eWOM and customers' purchase intentions are academically important. The results of this study make essential addition in the online business research through investigating the effects of online retailing engagement dimensions on consumers' behavior in term of eWOM and purchase intentions. By our knowledge there is no prior empirical research specifically in this area. Thus, the proposed research model of this article exhibits a considerable level of fit and also explains that how consumers' engagement dimensions, attitude towards e-tailers' eWOM and purchase intentions are associated with online business. By this perspective this study contributes to fill this research gap.

First, this paper adds in the literature by developing a research framework. The developed research model encapsulates the consumer's engagement dimensions connection to attitude towards e-tailers, eWOM and purchase intentions. Accordingly, this study contributes to the online business literature by empirically examining the theoretical model through structural equation modeling.

Second, it has been revealed that consumers' engagement dimensions directly affect attitude toward e-tailers. Moreover, it highlights the role of engagement dimensions in strengthening the relationship between e-tailers and online customers. Thus, this study investigates the importance of main online retailing engagement dimensions in coming up with important valuable implications for industrial managers.

Finally, this paper adds to the theoretical literature predominantly on eWOM and customers' purchase intentions form consumers' attitude towards online retailers and electronic retailing engagement dimensions. The findings clearly extend the existing studies and indicate that consumers' attitude towards e-tailers is theoretically important, while its mediating effects on eWOM and customers purchase intentions is not much investigated by the previous research (Yang et al., 2015; Jung and Seock, 2017, Lee et al., 2017).

5.2 Practitioners Implications

This study offers various useful and valuable insights into online retailing engagement dimensions i.e. website features, service quality, social networking site, subjective norms, self-efficacy and perceived risk. Online business managers can take into their consideration the subsequent implications to establish and improve consumers' attitude towards e-tailers, eWOM, and purchase intentions. First, in the online retailing website is considered as a cyber space and it performs a vital role to making success of e-business. As website's features are under full control of the online retailers and using them effectively will impact on users' belief and behavioral intention. While psychological and demographic factors are hardly manageable by the e-tailers (Ahn et al., 2004). Thus, managers should concentrate on the development of web functionality, content variety, design, security and information quality. As website features will positively affect on consumers' attitude towards e-tailers. Second, this paper indicates that customer services are the important aspects of online retailing which can be addressed through various aspects of websites. Therefore, for service related issues customers still completely depend on the websites of online retailers. It is essential for industrial managers and practitioners to perform their role and responsibilities to facilitate conversations between firms and customers to develop consent and common positive feelings (Power et al., 2012). Third, organizations should place their emphasis on consistently enhancing retailing websites services. It is recommended that practitioners are required to make sufficient investment to improve their firm's websites and also ensure their connectivity and access to available social media plugins. As recently consumers are likely to use online social networking (i.e. Facebook) for connecting and searching, thus, it indicates that social networking site pages are mainly serving as an information source for customers as well as enjoyment source to connect with others. As this is an omni-channeling era and provides customers various methods of online connectivity with retailing firm which can improve the overall operation of online business. The

value of this finding shows that social networking site (i.e. Facebook) positively effect on consumers' attitude towards e-tailers which in turn to develop eWOM and customers purchase intentions.

Fourth, results of this paper show that subjective norms affect customer decisions and attitude towards e-tailers, supporting the findings in Clemes et al. (2014). Also, the findings of this paper demonstrate that an individual customer's attitude towards e-tailers can be influenced by his or her family or friends. Therefore, e-tailers may ensure that online buyers have a positive feeling of purchasing experience every time when they visit e-tailer. Consequently, online consumers would spread positive information in the e-market. Further, online retailers can use a membership system to encourage the subjective norms. For instance, when a consumer recommends a potential customer to be a member of the online store, the e-tailer can give 50 percent discount to their next purchase. Thus, it is important for Chinese online retailing managers to hire a friendly celebrity as a spokesperson for their online store (website) in order to attract potential customers. Fifth, it is suggested to online retailing managers that they need to make investment in risk reduction strategies to minimize customers' perceived risk. Generally, Chinese customers risk perceptions of online shopping relate to the security of personal information, privacy, online transaction security and product risk (Clemes et al., 2014). Thus, online marketers and retailers should develop certain risk reducing strategies (e.g. formal privacy policies, encryption technology, safe payment methods, product warranty policies, money back guarantees, right to return) to mitigate such risk factors. Finally, from a practical perspective, the findings also indicate clues for online retailers about the important impact of self-efficacy on consumers' attitude towards e-tailers. Thus, online retailers should offer an effective, personal and practical program which can train and educate online customers how to efficiently use online retailing. It can be more beneficial in improving the consumers' online self-efficacy as well as guiding them to cope with any problem which could arise during the online buying process.

6. Conclusions and Future Research

This study examines the effects of online retailing engagement dimensions on consumers attitude towards e-tailers' eWOM and purchase intentions. We apply SEM to empirically test the online retailing engagement dimensions influence on consumers' attitude towards e-tailers, purchase intentions and eWOM. This paper contributes to theoretical knowledge of the online retailing engagement dimensions as an important predictor of consumers' attitude towards e-tailers, eWOM, and purchase intentions. Thus, customers' perception of e-tailing engagement dimensions is a substantial and distinctive consideration in e-business. Moreover, this research explains the essential comprehension to e-tailers in order to understand the customers' concerns and main consideration in a market space. This study also has some limitations and opens up a new paradigm for future research. First, this study uses a cross sectional research design which is a limitation as the implications of consumers' attitude fluctuate over a period of time. Thus, a longitudinal qualitative study might provide more theoretical details underlying the results of the study.

Second, this study was completed with a limited sample of 286 recruited from Chinese universities. Further studies would be conducted with diverse respondents in order to produce results more generalizable. University students could exhibit different behaviors relative to other population in developing perceptions on eWOM and purchase intentions. Third, some other dimensions of e-tailing engagement might work with the constructs identified in this study. Further, the findings of this empirical investigation are limited to Chinese firms, thus it is considerable to examine whether these derived findings might be consistent in the world or other markets. Therefore, it is pertinent to indicate that this study open up the new avenues for further research opportunities in this area.

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