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Extended Abstract

The Influence of Opinion Leader Characteristics on Consumers' Purchase Intention in a Mobile E-commerce Webcast Context

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Abstract: The mobile e-commerce webcast has great commercial value through the way of live streaming to sell products, place advertisements and create an ecosystem in conjunction with other industries to make capital available. Based on SOR model, multiple regression analysis and Bootstrap were used to analyze the influence of opinion leader characteristics on consumers' purchase intention in this context. The results show that opinion leader characteristics have a significant positive influence on consumers' purchase intention and flow experience; flow experience has a significant positive effect on consumers' purchase intention; flow experience plays a mediating role between opinion leader characteristics and consumers' purchase intention. Accordingly, it provides theoretical guidance for the long-term development of mobile e-commerce live operators.

Keywords: opinion leader, flow experience, purchase intention, SOR

1. INTRODUCTION

Mobile e-commerce webcast is based on e-commerce, using mobile live streaming system to recommend, display and try out to consumers, thus promoting the willingness to buy^[1]. Live marketing focuses on anchors' personal characteristics and the traits conveyed will affect the consumer's judgment. This paper will focus on the influence of professionalism, trustworthiness, interactivity, and attractiveness in the information characteristics of opinion leaders on consumers' purchase intention. Observing people's performance in consumer service activities, when individuals are fully engaged in a specific situation, their whole body concentration will make them feel no other perceptions outside the situation and be in a state of process immersion, i.e., flow experience. Rodgers and Harris pointed out that when users shop online if the more pleasant the user is, it will increase the user's viewing time and increase purchase intentions^[2]. This study adopts a quantitative analysis method and tries to answer two questions. First, we want to analyze and verify the influence mechanism of opinion leaders' traits on consumers' purchase intention; Second, we explore the inner flow experience of consumers and its influence on consumers' purchase behavior in the context of mobile e-commerce live streaming.

2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION AND HYPOTHESES

Mehrabian & Russell(1974) proposed the S-O-R theory, which is used to explain the mechanism of influence of environmental stimuli on individual psychological and behavioral changes. Studies have demonstrated that opinion leaders can informally influence a variety of consumer behaviors, and play an important role in the entire consumer decision-making process^[3]. Here, the characteristics of opinion leaders were classified into four dimensions: credibility, professionalism, interactivity, and attractiveness. Chunfeng Liu, et al. (2020) studied that the professionalism, interactivity, homogeneity, and credibility of individual characteristics of opinion leaders in online brand communities positively affect the flow experience, and the flow experience positively affects consumers' impulsive purchase intentions^[4]. Manman Xu, et al. (2021) have

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demonstrated that the flow experience generated by consumers in a live streaming scenario positively and significantly affects purchase intentions in a mobile live streaming scenario. According to SOR theory, this paper uses this theoretical model to examine the influence of opinion leaders' characteristics on consumers' purchase intentions. Totally, opinion leaders' characteristics affect the generation of flow experiences, and at the same time, flow experiences have a significant influence on consumers' purchase intentions.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

This study used questionnaire survey method, and the respondents were consumers who had experience of watching mobile webcast. A total of 479 questionnaires were distributed and collected, of which 393 were valid, with an effective return rate of 82.05%. We use multiple regression analysis and bootstrap to validate the hypothesis. Multiple regression analysis was done on the data using SPSS 22.0. There were positive effects of opinion leader, credibility, professionalism, interactivity, and attractiveness on the flow experience ($\beta=0.926$, $p<0.001$; $\beta=0.781$, $p<0.001$; $\beta=0.813$, $p<0.001$; $\beta=0.722$, $p<0.001$; $\beta=0.615$, $p<0.001$), and hypotheses 1, 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d hold. There are positive effects of opinion leaders, credibility, professionalism, interactivity and attractiveness on purchase intention ($\beta=0.866$, $P<0.001$; $\beta=0.732$, $P<0.001$; $\beta=0.770$, $P<0.001$; $\beta=0.666$, $P<0.001$; $\beta=0.636$, $P<0.001$), hypotheses 2, 2a, 2b, and 2c, and 2d hold; the positive influence of flow experience on purchase intention is significant ($\beta=0.640$, $P<0.001$), and hypothesis 3 holds. The result of bootstrap shows that none of the five mediated paths contain 0 between LLCI and ULCI, indicating that the flow experience partially mediates in all five paths. That is, opinion leaders and their credibility, professionalism, interactivity and attractiveness can indirectly influence their purchase intention through the flow experience, and hypotheses 4, 4a, 4b, 4c and 4d hold.

4. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the SOR model, this paper proposes the mechanism of influence of opinion leaders on consumers' purchase intention in the context of live mobile web-based e-commerce, and all hypotheses are verified with the following conclusions. First, the credibility, professionalism, interactivity, and attractiveness of opinion leaders all have a positive impact on the flow experience; Second, the credibility, professionalism, interactivity and attractiveness of opinion leaders all have positive effects on purchase intention. Third, the flow experience has a significant positive impact on purchase intention. Fourth, the flow experience mediates the effect of credibility, professionalism, interactivity, and attractiveness on purchase intentions at different levels. But there are also certain limitations, such as the scope of the research subjects, lack of discussion of the breakdown of the mediating variable and so on. Future research can expand the scope of the study and study each dimension of flow experience.

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