<http://www.diva-portal.org>

Postprint

This is the accepted version of a paper published in *Australasian Marketing Journal*. This paper has been peer-reviewed but does not include the final publisher proof-corrections or journal pagination.

Citation for the original published paper (version of record):

Khodabandeh, A., Lindh, C. (2021)

The importance of brands, commitment, and influencers on purchase intent in the context of online relationships

Australasian Marketing Journal, 29(2): 177-186

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ausmj.2020.03.003>

Access to the published version may require subscription.

N.B. When citing this work, cite the original published paper.

Permanent link to this version:

<http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:mdh:diva-54410>

The importance of brands, commitment, and influencers on purchase intent in the context of online relationships.

Asaneh Khodabande & Cecilia Lindh

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the external input of influencers and the internal input of commitment in online relationships as antecedents for purchase intent with consideration of the mediating role of brand image. Data were gathered from a survey of 730 international online consumers, and results were analyzed using LISREL. The result shows the importance of the brand image for the purchase intent in online relationships, and also finds that the brand mediates an effect from influencers and commitment on purchase intent. Companies working to strengthen their relationships concerning their brand can learn that it is meaningful to also work with relationship commitment (to encourage customers to be part of a continuous relationship) and to find influencers appropriate to showcase the product. Also, even if strong relationships build brands, carefulness concerning the brands offered in the online store is strategically important. This study adds to the literature by extending research on brand importance in online relationships, specifically by adding the concepts of commitment and influencers' influence into the model. The latter expands knowledge of how complex the online environment is in terms of factors to consider for online marketers.

Keywords: Online Relationships, Commitment, Influencers, Brand Image, Purchase Intent.

Paper type: Research paper

1. Introduction

In recent years, online marketing relationships have revolutionized marketing because, in a sense, online sales provide a “new marketplace” in that there are new ways to receive information on products. New actors such as influencers, experts, and online reviews by other consumers seem to affect purchase behavior, and research still has much to explore in this area. To study relationships in these new settings entails research into established behaviors of

relationships as, e.g., commitment-trust, but studies must also encompass the new factors that technological advances provide. Although studies have confirmed the importance of trust in these relationships, academic research remains wanting, particularly concerning the connection between different components affecting the consumers' behavior. This study integrates the phenomena of influence of influencers into the traditional thinking that commitment increases purchase intent. The new technologies available to consumers provide information from new sources in the online environment, such as social media or blogs, thus investigating their effect on consumers' purchase intent is highly relevant. More specifically, the character of these relationships, as well as the influence of new actors emerging in the new digital environment on relationship behavior, call for a more in-depth study (Barnes & Cumby, 2002; Brodie, Ilic, Juric, & Hollebeek, 2013; Huang & Shyu, 2009). This study aims to explore three aspects of purchase intent antecedents to contribute with new knowledge on the relationships between the components in online marketing (Boateng, 2019; Safari, Thilenius, & Hadjikhani, 2013). As an internal input to strengthen relationships, commitment is relevant (Dwivedi & Johnson, 2013; Osuna Ramirez, Veloutsou, & Morgan-Thomas, 2017; Ruben, Paparoidamis, & Chung, 2015) but the Internet provides information on products by external factors, e.g., online influencers (Johnstone & Lindh, 2018; Lou & Yuan, 2019). Furthermore, many studies point to the fact that product brand and perceived brand image (Brodie et al., 2013; Erdoğan & Cicek, 2012; Wang & Tsai, 2014) are decisive for consumer purchase intent (Illic & Webster, 2011). This paper presents a structural model of these components to explore how the influence from influencers impacts purchase intent when incorporated in a model built on the traditional marketing concepts of brand image and commitment. With purchase intent as the performance variable, the model contributes with new knowledge of how these antecedents' impact each other when considered in the same relationship. The following discusses and defines the background, concepts, and how there can be relationships in the online environment.

Background

Marketing begins at the organization and involves the creation, communication, and delivery of something of value to customers (Berkowitz, Kerin, Hartley, & Rudelius, 1992). Companies are mainly looking for new markets in order to have new potential. Online marketing is attractive and interesting for companies that plan to produce a global product or achieve a larger market. The Internet is considered a developed technology, which opens new types of marketing opportunities and overcomes any traditional and physical borders (Quelch & Klein, 1996; Palumbo & Herbig, 1998; Petersen, Welch & Liesch, 2002; Kotabe & Helsen, 2004;

Virtanen, Björk, & Sjöström, 2017; Zahoor & Quereshi, 2017). Thus, the Internet is considered as a tool changing conditions concerning many factors such as delivery of services (Quach, Jebarajakirthy & Thaichon, 2016) and the international business environments (Hamill, 1997; Yannopoulos, 2011).

People's lifestyles have undergone a lot of changes with the advent of the Internet, and it is becoming more of an e-lifestyle, which has had a direct impact on consumer purchase behavior (Koshksaray, Franklin & Hanzaee, 2015). Shaltoni (2017) has discussed the importance of Internet marketing and how, unlike traditional media, it opens new channels and opportunities. The online environment creates opportunities for both parties. On the one hand, customers have access to more products and suppliers, thus obtaining more valuable sources of information in order to make purchase decisions. On the other hand, organizations can expand their businesses into new potential marketplaces all around the world by using an online environment. One of the values created by online market platforms is that it knows no geographical or time limits; thus, it is more effective than traditional purchasing means (ibid). Brodie et al. (2013) state that the digital world allows both companies and customers the opportunity to have interactive communication, which was not the case in the era of traditional media (Barnes & Cumby, 2002). Companies need to connect with their clients to introduce and sell new products. The development of the online environment gives managers of online stores the opportunity to determine the factors which influence consumers' intent to purchase online and understand the actors that play a role in online relationships. Recently, digital influencers have become one of the most important components in an online relationship, playing a crucial role as a third party to influence customers (see, e.g., Johnstone & Lindh, 2018; Osei-Frimpong, Donkor & Owusu-Frimpong, 2019). They are well-known people in the online environment (YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook) who share various content and information regarding products, recommending that their loyal followers purchase them (Bakshy, Hofman, Mason & Watts, 2011; Godes & Mayzlin, 2004).

In addition, with the development of the Internet, online businesses have expanded greatly, and many studies focus on consumers' online purchasing intent in this setting (Anastasiadou, Lindh, & Vasse, 2018; Van der Heijden, Verhagen & Creemers, 2003). The Internet is one of the most important factors in all steps of customer decision-making behavior, regarding the pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase (Meskaran, Ismail, & Shanmugam, 2013) decisions. According to Koo, Kim, and Lee (2008), absorbing customers and providing an attractive

online marketplace is important in the pre-purchase stage. Thus, as influencers are used to attract customers, they consequently play a key role in consumers purchase intent and the pre-purchase stage (Osei-Frimpong et al., 2019). Furthermore, in the post-purchase stage of commitment, loyalty, and e-trust can be considered as a vital key for re-purchasing (Moriuchi & Takahashi, 2016).

Although companies adjust to new conditions in a new environment, such as influencers, the building of relationships remains important. Using an influencer to increase the purchase of a brand may lead to more sales, but that does not dismiss the necessity of commitment in the relationships. Even on the Internet, commitment seems to remain key in the interplay with trust to maintain loyalty, as highlighted in a study on Internet and services (Thaicon & Quach, 2015). According to many scholars of the relationship marketing theory, the continuation of purchasing by a consumer is contingent on the establishment of relationships (Bejou, 1997; Hunt, Arnett & Madhavaram, 2006; Morgan & Hunt, 1994), based on trust and commitment (Hess & Story, 2005). The relevance of commitment in relationships when they exist online is acknowledged in newer research (cf. Anastasiadou, 2018; Boateng, 2019). Commitment is also a part of this research, as it is fundamental in relationship marketing theory.

The aforementioned factors influencing purchase intent in online relationships suggest that the relationships between buyer and seller are not the only aspects that may change when moving from a physical store to the online purchase environment. When online, a consumer has access to other information sources than they would have offline, e.g., influencers, experts, and reviews. Studies on online relationships need to take into account the emergence of new actors.

Figure 1 shows the example with the focal relationship between buyer and seller, i.e., consumers and online stores, and includes the third party of influencers. The two-sided arrow between consumers and online stores shows that there is a mutual relationship between these two variables (see Liang, Chen, & Wang, 2008). Many factors may have an impact on and possibly improve the quality of the relationship between consumers and online stores and vice versa. The dotted arrows show that influencers may play a role in the relationship between online stores and consumers in online relationships. Brown and Hayes (2008) call influencers “Trusted Advisors” as influencers usually create trusting relationships with potential customers, advising them on products. Consumers are usually convinced by personal information from influencers because this kind of information is considered more credible than information from mass media or marketing sources such as TV or radio campaigns (Bickart & Schindler, 2001).

Essentially, online stores recommend and introduce their products via influencers, who convince consumers to purchase recommended products.

Figure 1 the counterparts of the studied online relationships.

However, influencers are not the only element that impacts customer purchase intent in online relationships. In this study, commitment and brand image are considered as antecedents in creating purchase intent, elements internal to the relationship. In Figure 1, they are part of the thicker arrow between the consumer and online store, i.e., part of this relationship. Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal (1991); Wang and Tsai (2014) state that brand image is an important element in the process of customers' purchase decision-making and good brand image can positively impact on purchase intent. According to Wu, Yeh, and Hsiao (2011), commitment with a favorable brand or product will be shaped when the consumers' purchase intention is positive. Thus, based on the literature, there is a direct relationship between customers' commitment and purchase intent.

The research gap and study aim

Although there is vast knowledge on online purchasing, there is a gap in the research of structural models explaining the impact of different factors on purchase intent, especially of the kind that proposes the Internet as an international environment. Ghazi, Muhammed, Khalil, Fwwaz, and Raed (2013), as well as Huang and Shyu (2009), state that emerging technologies in marketing and creating online relationships between customers and companies are leveraging, however discussion in this area remains wanting. Further, Boateng (2019) posits that more knowledge is required to understand the relationships between the variables of online marketing. In addition, many scholars have focused on the connection between one specific factor (such as commitment, influencers, or brand importance separately) and purchase intent

in the online environment; thus examining relationships between the two main factors in this area (Quero & Ventura, 2015; Park, Lee & Han, 2007; Lindh & Lisichkova, 2017; Boateng, 2019) yet without taking into consideration the whole process of online relationships. Even if some new studies focus on new actors in-depth, research with a more holistic perspective should take into account established variables, such as the importance of already established brands and commitment. The development of a structural model can contribute to such knowledge by including the traditional elements as well as new actors and study the effect on consumers' purchase intention.

The gap this paper aims to fill considers not only the study of influencers on purchase intent; it also concerns a broader picture of factors affecting purchase intent in online purchasing. The paper studies behavior in online relationships with the aim of studying more than just important antecedents of purchase intent. The paper also aims to show that they matter simultaneously and through potential mediation, which is a positive outcome of multivariate methods used to analyze complex relationships within marketing (c.f. Nyadzayo, Casidy & Thaichon, 2019). This is achieved by modeling with SEM (Martínez López, 2013). Assuming the brand image of purchased products is important, we look into the two factors of (a) commitment in online relationships and (b) the influence of influencers. These represent internal and external elements that may affect brand image or purchase intent. Consequently, this study adds value to previous customer behavior research by offering both academic and managerial contributions because there is a lack of previous research regarding the mediating role of brand image in online relationships.

2. Literature backdrop and hypotheses

Hawkins, Mothersbaugh, and Best (2010) define intention as a variable that stimulates and drives consumers' purchases of a product or service. An important approach used by marketers in understanding consumer behavior is through studying their intentions (Blackwell, Miniard, & Engel, 2006; Ghalandari & Norouzi, 2012). Based on various other scholars (e.g., Anastasiadou et al., 2018; Curtis, Arnaud, & Waguespack, 2017; Hausman & Siekpe, 2009; Li, Daugherty, & Biocca, 2002), purchase intent is considered a key dependent variable in both online and physical marketplaces. Kim and Thorndike Pysarchik (2000) state that purchase intent serves as a tool to measure consumers' purchase behavior. Also, Morwitz and Schmittlein (1992) show that purchase intentions could be used to predict consumer buying-decision behavior. Consumers' purchase intent is affected by many factors such as the opinions of

friends, family, or acquaintances, as well as the consumers' commitment (Quero & Ventura, 2015; Price & Feick, 1984). In addition, product and brand popularity can play a role in forming purchase intentions (Park et al., 2007). In the following, some components are discussed as affecting purchase intent, namely: the importance of the brand and its image as a mediator, consumer commitment, and influencers.

Consumer commitment is considered a fundamental component that plays a key role in managing customer communication in long-term marketing relationships (Gustafsson, Johnson & Roos, 2005; Hess & Story, 2005; Hunt et al., 2006; Fullerton, 2003). The definition of commitment is close to that of loyalty, and sometimes it makes for confusion. However, these two concepts are dissimilar (ibid). In many studies, commitment is defined as the customer's desire to maintain a relationship (Dick & Basu, 1994; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Fullerton, 2003; Anastasiadou et al., 2018). Based on Sashi (2012), for online relationships, there are two types of commitment, namely *affective* and *calculated*. Calculative commitment comes from a lack of choice and is considered rational commitment, whereas affective commitment is a consequence of trust and reciprocity and is additionally based more on emotion (Bloemer & Odekerken-Schröder, 2003; Gustafsson et al., 2005). Some literature shows that the brand identity (which is considered as a favorable brand for customers, suggested by Kohli, Harich & Leuthesser, 2005) leads to a positive brand image, from which, commitment can occur between customers and businesses (Kapferer, 2006). Fullerton (2003); Erciş, Ünal, Candan, and Yıldırım (2012) consider high commitment as a strong attachment to brands which appears when customers have a positive feeling about the brands. According to this research, attachment is the cause of relationships being maintained and increased purchase intent. According to Erciş, Ünal, Candan, and Yıldırım (2012), having high commitment to a brand shows that consumers trust that specific brand and thereby, do re-purchase. For example, there are many customers with high commitment who tattoo the brand image of their favorite brand on their body (ibid). Taking the aforementioned into consideration, the first hypothesis is offered:

H1a Commitment strengthens the consumers' perception of the brand in online relationships.

Commitment is one of the most important variables in the creation of long-term relationships within a marketplace. This is because customers feel that they have a strong bond with the company, and this feeling plays an important role in maintaining customer relationships (Quero & Ventura, 2015). According to Wu et al. (2011), commitment to a favorable brand or product is shaped when the consumer's purchase intent is positive, leading to an actual purchase. Keh

and Xie (2009) conclude that higher customer commitment leads to greater purchase intent and actual subsequent purchase; thus, customers' commitment impacts on purchase intent positively. Retention may lead to customer loyalty, but it does not signify customer engagement (Gustafsson et al., 2005; Sashi, 2012). In relationships, customer commitment plays a significant role in shaping forthcoming activities such as purchase intent (Bloemer & Odekerken-Schröder, 2003); this also applies in online relationships (Anastasiadou et al., 2018). Thus, the impact of customers' commitment on purchase intent is founded, and the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1b Consumers' commitment strengthens purchase intent in online relationships.

Based on Price and Feick (1984), as well as Quero and Ventura (2015), most consumers attempt to collect information to make their purchase decision from their family, friends, or review comments online rather than from traditional advertisement mechanisms such as newspapers or the television. Elwalda and Lu (2016) state that the Internet is a valuable source of information for making purchase decisions. In order to attract customers, marketers have introduced influencers, defined as “a new type of independent third-party endorser who shapes audience attitudes through blogs, tweets, and the use of other social media” (Freberg, Graham, McGaughey, & Freberg, 2011, p. 90). Influencers effectively influence their followers who trust them, leading the followers to spread comments and recommendations about products in an online environment (Lindh & Lisichkova, 2017; Osei-Frimpong et al., 2019). Reviewing those comments increases the interaction among customers by collecting more information related to the products and brands, which in turn can affect the purchase decision by either changing or revising it (Illic & Webster, 2011; Isenberg, 1986). Information provided by influencers impacts customers' purchase intentions and subsequently purchase decisions by advising specific brands or products in the online environment (Hoonsopon & Puriwat, 2016).

Additionally, consumers are convinced to purchase by such reviews because the personal sources of information from influencers are considered more credible than information from mass media or marketing sources such as the television or radio campaigns (Bickart & Schindler, 2001). According to Lindh and Lisichkova (2017) and Im and Choi (2018), influencers are known as one of the most powerful tools for influencing the intent to purchase in the online market. Furthermore, influencers can be helpful for customers' purchase decision-making, as customers do not have any physical contact in the online environment. By considering the aforementioned statements, the following hypothesis is offered:

H2a The input from influencers strengthens customer purchase intent in online relationships.

The importance of brand image becomes more significant with the advent of online shopping due to the increase in available options. In the online environment, influencers are considered trusted ports that brands use in order to engage with customers and build a brand image. Thus, according to Jin, Lee, and Huffman (2012), one of the most important factors in the success of businesses is the relationship between influencers and brand image. Using influencers for marketing is an appropriate strategy because, in this way, brands not only maintain their current customers but also absorb potential new ones. Based on Sirapricha and Tocquer (2012), influencers have the power to upgrade the position of the brand and communicate between customers and brands as a third party and, as such, are important for the brand. Shen and Bissell (2013) state that distributing messages through influencers is a strategy for the promotion of brand image and generally fulfills almost all marketing purposes, such as boosting purchase intent. Lindh and Lisichkova (2017) state that trust is an influential factor in influencer potential, especially trust between customers and online influencers, which is considered an important link in the online environment. This link is extremely important as influencers affect customers purchasing products, which may make a stronger bond between buyers and brands (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Thus, by considering the previous statements, the following hypothesis is offered:

H2 b The input from influencers strengthens brand image in online relationships.

Brand image pertains to the perceptions of a brand that a customer has and is reflected in their memories, containing, for example, brand associations (Keller, 1993). Brand associations are considered information that describes the brand and allows for customer memorization (Hartnett, Romaniuk, & Kennedy, 2016). In addition, Aaker (1996) claims that brand image is how the consumers perceive the brand and is a set of associations, which might not even reflect objective reality. Compared with some decades ago, branding has become highly transparent, and it is easier for customers to select their favorite brand and interact with it in the online environment (Smith, 2014). The online environment is one of the main factors that help companies promote their brand and brand image (Biloš & Kelić, 2012). Based on Erdoğan and Çiçek (2012), applying online marketing and engaging with social media marketing provide great opportunities for companies to build the brands image with their customers in order to improve their purchase intention.

To further investigate the role of brand image as a mediator between consumer commitment and purchase intent, a fourth hypothesis is formulated. Good brand image plays a significant role in making a commitment between customers and businesses, and consequently, this relationship is considered as a cause for purchase intent (Hunt, 2019). Making a good brand image can take a long time, however, ruining it can happen in just a moment; thus, taking care of brand image is highly important (Bacik, Fedorko, Nastisin, & Gavurova, 2018). Another point that this study focuses on is the mediator role of the importance of brand image between influencers and purchase intent. Influencers possess the power to strengthen a brand's image and make a bond between the customers and the brand. Thus, influencers are considered as one of the significant factors in building brand image in online markets. By considering the impact of influencers and consumer commitment on the importance of brand image as a mediator and its role in empowering this impact in order to influence purchase intent, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3 *Brand image increases purchase intent in online relationships.*

H4 *Brand image mediates the effect of consumers' commitment and input from influencers on purchase intent.*

3. Method and research design

Designing a project to handle the research problem of behavior in the online environment concerns finding new variables that may be relevant (such as the influence of influencers that is relevant to this research), as well as integrating them into a present context. It necessitates a method of data collection that permits analysis of complex online relationships, i.e., with many latent variables (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993). To this end, a type III, i.e., an integrated measurement/latent variable model (Martínez -López, Gázquez-Abad, & Sousa, 2013), is developed. This study benefits from previous surveys that are used in the selection of items used in this survey. To develop the model and test the hypotheses, an international dataset of 730 observations is used, and the method of computation is LISREL, as developed and presented by Jöreskog and Sörbom (1993). LISREL is adequate for this research as it tests the hypotheses as part of one model and includes any potential mediating effects (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Relevant values to test indicators and constructs, as well as fit indexes to strengthen reliability and validity, are included.

The Dataset

The Internet opens up possibilities for the cross-border transfer of goods and services, and many companies work to seize such opportunities in order to increase sales and, in the process, become international (Safari et al., 2013). It also opens the possibility to collect cross-border data. The international dimension is considered in this study, as the respondents constitute consumers from 55 countries. Although internationalization is not problematized in this research, it is acknowledged that purchasing online is increasing in many countries and, to some extent, is international. Similar data has been used to analyze differences between countries (see Anastasiadou et al., 2018), which is a potential avenue for analysis if the objective is to detect differences between countries. To obtain this international dataset and avoid a very homogenous one, 30 students enrolled in an international masters' program worked to collect data. They approached as many people (friends, family, fellow students, and other acquaintances), asking them to take the survey. The potential respondents were also asked to pass on the survey link to others in order to increase the number of respondents from each country where participants were found. This method of data collection can be referred to as *convenience by snowball sampling* and is a method appropriate when an international dataset of consumers online is to be obtained. From the view of reliability, i.e., how well the result can be applied to generalize onto a population, there are limits. The result of the analysis of this data set can be applied to understand and explain how consumers with access to the Internet and knowledge in English behave. It is, however, necessary to perform many studies over the years, with different respondents to improve the work and really establish the results as reliable (which is the case for all studies).

During the collection, the dataset was monitored to ensure various groups were represented. For example, if after two days, the data showed a sample of 90% men, efforts are made to reach more women. Even if the method results in a convenience sample, the recruiting of more respondents must aim to contribute to the spread of demographic variables. The researchers must, therefore, try and find people from different countries and groups (such as gender). Since the survey concerns online purchasing internationally, many people can be potential respondents, and thanks to digital means, anything from social media to regular email can be used to distribute the web link. The difficulty lies within the issue to make people answer the whole survey, which often is perceived as long.

In total, there were 730 completed survey responses. All those participating in the data collection took notes on the responses to their messages. This suggested that a total of 1198 said they would take the survey. With 730 completed survey questionnaires, the response rate

is 60.1%, composed of 45% male and 65% female. Furthermore, 55% of the respondents were spread among the ages 21-30 years old, and 25% were in the category 31-40. Only 6% were between 18-20, and 14 % were over 41 years old. Among the participating countries, Sweden stood for 30% of the responses (a Swedish University hosts the masters' program within which the data were collected), followed by Austria at 11%, Bangladesh at 7%, Canada at 6%, the USA at 4%, and then an additional 50 countries from all continents composed the rest. These countries are represented by 1% – 4 %, which included approximately 10-40 people per country. The methodological issues concerning the method of data collection are discussed under the limitations and further research.

Measurements and question items

In order to collect data to test the hypotheses, two question items were used for each construct. These were statements that were pre-tested by other researchers, and the answers were given on a 1-7-degree scale on which the respondents could disagree or agree.

To measure *commitment*, the two statements intended to capture a sense of commitment to the online store by assessing if the consumer prefers one favorite online store over another, even if the former is more expensive (Kim, Jin, & Swinney, 2009; Lin & Sun, 2009). To measure *purchase intent*, two items taking the belief of buying more online in the future, and the intention to continue buying into account (Lee & Turban, 2001; McKnight & Chervany, 2001). In the quest to measure brand image, two items developed and tested earlier by Knox and Freeman (2006) were used: the first regards loyalty to preferred brands, and the second captures the consumers' intention to buy the brand when it is trusted. The items to measure brand related issues are not brand specific, since each respondent thinks about how they behave towards brands they buy, meaning it is specific for them, but not for the study. Finally, to measure the influence of influencers, the two items regard if the respondent tries new products based on influencers' recommendations, and that influencers have his/her best interest at heart (Brown & Hayes, 2008; Smith, 2011). Table 1 shows the question items and their values.

Table 1: Items and their loadings

Constructs and Indicators	R^2	t	Factor loading
<i>Commitment</i>			
I prefer my favorite online store over any other, even if it's more expensive.	0.46	9.81	0.68
How do you feel toward the online store you usually buy from? - I feel committed to the online store that I usually buy from.	0.86	1.67	0.92
<i>Purchase Intent</i>			
I will continue buying from the websites I buy from today.	0.49	8.69	0.70
I believe that I will buy more online in the future.	0.74	3.09	0.86
<i>Brand Image</i>			
I am loyal to my preferred brands.	0.68	6.31	0.82
If I trust a brand, I intend to purchase goods or services from that brand.	0.55	10.24	0.74
<i>Influence from influencers</i>			
If my favorite influencer recommends a brand I haven't tried before, I am more likely to try it.	0.60	4.92	0.77
I feel that the influencers I follow have my best interests at heart.	0.57	5.31	0.76

Validity and Reliability

LISREL is appropriate for finding relations between latent variables (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993). To examine relations within the model, as well as its convergent and discriminant validity, the suggestions by Martínez-López et al. (2013) to display R^2 -values, are followed. They should exceed 0.2 for each variable. Table 1 shows that is the case in this analysis. Another way of ascertaining there are no threats to validity and reliability of the model is the examination of t-values, which should exceed 1.96 and, and the factor loading (completely standardized solution), which should exceed 0.3 (Holm, Eriksson, & Johanson 1996). Convergent validity is determined to ascertain that the degree to which two measures of constructs (that theoretically should be related), actually are related. The discriminant validity concerns the relation between two constructs, i.e., that the different constructs of the model measure different things. In the process of analyzing the collected data with LISREL, it is important to diminish threats to discriminant and convergent validity. A scale containing many items can, in the analysis, turn

out to have items posing threats, which becomes apparent in them not meeting the criteria set. Such items are omitted from the model in the iterative process of analyzing, and when the analysis is finished, and the model is fit to the data, threats are minimized, and there is certainty that the model is reliable for interpretation that becomes results (Fornell & Larker, 1981; Steenkamp & van Treijp, 1991). The model of this paper has only items that meet the established criteria (see table 1 for values, and figure 2 for the model), and simultaneously prove the model fit to the data, as an assurance that there are no threats to its reliability and validity. More testing of the data is required, however, and to further test the strength of the model and the quality of its constructs, appropriate fit indexes (Martínez-López et al., 2013) were analyzed. The established criteria of the different indexes are met: GFI (Hayduk, 1988) : 0.99; AGFI (Hayduk, 1988): 0.97; CFI (Byrne, 2001): 0.99; TLI/NFFI (Bentler & Bonnet, 1980): 0.98. The model is valid on the 0.02 level, with a chi-square of 15.75. These fit indexes are relevant to ascertain the quality of data and measurements (Martínez-López et al., 2013). Variables can only be used to find significant paths if they have a spread (similar to a normal distribution), and this shows in the meeting of criteria, e.g., chi-square and degrees of freedom (ibid).

4. Analysis

To evaluate the data in order to test hypotheses, t-values, estimates, and significance levels are discussed. These values say something about the strength of relations (paths), but above all, they say which ones are significant. Table 2 shows the values for each hypothesis.

Testing of the five hypotheses

The first hypothesis, which suggests an effect of consumer commitment on brand image, is supported by the analysis (8.89; 0.62***), in line with the results of Park et al. (2007). The second hypothesis of commitment on purchase intent, however, is not supported (-0.36; -0.03†). The lack of a significant path here can be explained by context, as becomes apparent later by the detected mediated effect (on purchase intent) by brand image. Also, the third hypothesis about influencers' influence on purchase intent is not supported (0.24; 0.01†). This finding shows that the influence of influencers does not increase purchase intent by itself, and as in the case of commitment is returned to shortly in the discussion on the mediating effect found in the analysis. Again, context is the key to explanation and returned to in the following discussions. The influence by influencers does affect brand image positively as confirmed by support for the hypothesis (2.35; 0.13**), which is in line with Sirapricha and Tocquer (2012). Strong

support is also found for the hypothesis that brand image increases the purchase intent (5.77; 0.54***), and it is in line with Biloš and Kelić (2012)

Table 2. Paths, estimates, and significance

		t-value	estimate	outcome
H1 a	consumers' commitment -> brand image	8.89	0.62***	supported
H1 b	consumers' commitment -> purchase intent	-0.36	-0.03 †	non-supported
H2 a	influencers -> purchase intent	0.24	0.01 †	non-supported
H2 b	influencers -> brand image	2.35	0.13 **	supported
H 3	brand image -> purchase intent	5.77	0.54 ***	supported

† $P < 0.1$, * $P < 0.05$, ** $P < 0.01$, *** $P < 0.001$

Result of testing for the model and mediating effects

The analysis with LISREL reveals the path values between the four latent variables (that are the concepts of the conceptual model in figure 2), as well as the mediating effects as the evaluation in the computations is on the potential model. The values in table 2 show that three of them received strong support, and two of them are not supported. The two that are not supported are on the influencers' influence and commitment as directly impacting purchase intent (H1b, H2a). However, they are both confirmed as affecting brand image, which in turn affects purchase intent (H1a, H2b). Thus, there is support for the fourth hypothesis, that brand image mediates the effect of consumers' commitment and input from influencers on purchase intent. The finding of the mediating effect is permitted by means of computation, as it evaluates the hypotheses as part of the model and not in separation (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993). When the path between two variables is not significant, but the two paths that concern the variable to mediate between them are (specifically, the path to the dependent variable must be significant), there is mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986). This is shown in figure 2 as factor loadings and t-values (indirect effects: $\xi_1 \rightarrow \eta_4$). This, in itself, implies an interesting discovery for the present analysis. In this case, the implication is that both influencers and commitment have a bearing on purchase intent when mediated by the brand image. It indicates that in online

relationships where brands are important to purchase intent, the effect of the brand is even stronger when there is a commitment as well as an influence by influencers. Together, these factors have a strong impact on purchase intent, which naturally implies that research continues with consideration to multiple factors affecting purchase intent online and that managers developing new strategies for their online sales must apply diverse strategies and not singular ones.

The result as a structural model

The search for more complex models motivates the use of LISREL, and in this case, it helped to establish that influencers and commitment do make a difference when mediated by brand image. The outcome is that brand image is powerful in online relationships and can be affected by influencers as well as commitment, as figure 2 shows.

Figure 2: Structural model with direct and indirect effects (factor loadings and t-values)

The model in figure 2 illustrates the impact of influencers, commitment, and brand image on purchase intent in online relationships. It shows that influencers and commitment have a higher degree of direct impact on brand image than purchase intent. Brand image plays an important mediating role in this model and empowers the impact received from influencers and commitment, which leads to purchase intent. In this model, the direct effects of influencers and commitment on purchase intent are weaker than the impact of brand image, which originates from influencers and commitment. Indicating that brand image increases the received impact of influencers and commitment in order to have a greater influence on purchase intent. Thus, this model considers brand image as a mediator between influencers and commitment and purchase intent in online relationships.

5. Discussion

This study investigated the complexity of relationships among various actors in online relationships (namely influencers, commitment, brand image, and purchase intent) by testing six hypotheses. The analysis shows that commitment and the influence of influencers do not directly increase purchase intent, although these hypotheses were based on earlier research suggesting such correlations. According to East and Ang (2017), unpredictable findings play an important role in producing new theoretical ideas. Some studies have shown that both influencers and commitment, influence on increasing purchase intent in an online environment (Bloemer & Odekerken-Schröder, 2003; Wu et al., 2011; Keh & Xie, 2009; Lindh & Lisichkova; 2017). In addition, previous research shows that brand image is one of the most important factors in increasing purchase intent (Biloš & Kelić, 2012; Smith, 2014). This study, however, does not reject such research, i.e., the findings of the impact of commitment and influencers on purchase intention (Anastasiadou et al., 2018; Bloemer & Odekerken-Schröder, 2003; Lindh & Lisichkova, 2017; Keh & Xie, 2009). The interpretation of the result in our analysis must take into account that hypotheses are evaluated within the model as a whole. This is considered appropriate as a structural model aims to reflect actual behavior - something that is an outcome of many factors. In this case, it can be said that when brand image is assigned a central role in the model, it turns out that it is the strongest affecting factor on purchase intent. The study of the relation between, e.g., commitment/influencers on purchase intent in isolation can, therefore, show them as strong and influential, without contradicting this research. The consequence of this is that the main contribution of the model developed in this paper is that brand image is extremely important in online relationships, and to make a bigger difference, it also needs commitment and influencers.

This further entails that the lack of support for hypotheses 1b and 2a does not mean they are unimportant in the context of online relationships, only that the situation is fairly complex as more variables are involved, which is in line with Quero and Ventura's (2015) findings. Confirming the importance of relationship strength in terms of commitment, as well as the importance of the external input from influencers for consumer behavior in online relationships, and highlights that the greatest strength in these relationships is built on brand image.

From the point of view of technological development in marketing, the paper adds value in its pursuit to show that the new environment – such as the web and social media platforms – also makes new actors emerge as influential in marketing. In this case, the technologies of smartphones or tablets have opened new possibilities for consumers to obtain information that

they could not before, as via, e.g., influencers. But it is not only the sources of information and influence before a purchase that changes with technology – the web has opened possibilities to market and to purchase products and services from far away and created a new arena for international marketing.

6. Conclusion

This research provides new knowledge for managers and online stores to improve online relationships in order to increase purchases, answering to the call by Barnes and Cumby (2002), Huang and Shyu (2009); Shaltoni (2017). Online relationships constitute a complex environment for buying and selling with more than the two actors of the relationship (i.e., the consumer and online store) involved. This paper investigated the connection between some components, namely influencers, commitment, brand image, and purchase intent in online relationships. The important contribution is on the importance of brand image, as well as two potential ways of strengthening brand image to boost purchase intent among consumers. This paper confirms two important matters regarding online purchasing behavior: 1) the external input from a third actor, the influencers, in this case, makes a difference, and 2) factors internal to the relationship, such a commitment, also make a difference. As many researchers have confirmed, brand image is of utmost importance for purchase intention (Griffin, 1997; Erdoğan & Çiçek, 2012), but to build relationships commitment is also necessary (Hess & Story, 2005), likewise when on the Internet (Thaichon & Quach, 2015). This case in the online environment and can be described as a cornerstone in relationship marketing. Consequently, this study has important theoretical and managerial implications that are described more in the following paragraphs.

Theoretical implication

This study provides some contributions to the literature. As described earlier, most of the studies and research regarding online marketing and its variables have examined the relationship between just two specific variables (e.g., commitment and purchase intent, influencers and purchase intent, brand image, and purchase intent). Investigating the combination of different variables and their impact on purchase intent create a novelty in the current academic literature regarding online shopping from an international perspective. The results of the analysis show that online purchasing occurs in relationships of commitment and brand image, and that commitment is an antecedent of brand image (Bloemer & Odekerken-

Schröder, 2003; Kim & Kim 2016). Previous literature states that commitment poses a direct impact on purchase intent (Wu et al., 2011; Keh & Xie, 2009) and that it is relevant to connect relationship commitment to celebrity endorsers (Dwivedi & Johnson, 2013). Although the current study does not reject this statement, the results show that brand image mediates the relationship between commitment and purchase intent and that this mediation plays a significant role in increasing purchase intent. Even so, there seem to be third parties that are important sources of information, such as influencers (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Osei-Frimpong et al., 2019). Therefore, the involvement of third parties is important in models, as was suggested in Figure 1. These parties, such as family and friends, have always been important for consumer decision-making (Price & Feick, 1984). However, in the new arena that digital media offers, there are additional actors to take into consideration. This study confirms the relationship between the influence of influencers and purchase intention, which is along the same line as Lindh and Lisichkova (2017). However, the current study shows that the mediating role of brand image empowers the influence of influencers who boost purchase intent. Thus, the most significant contribution of this study is the importance of the brand image in online relationships, regardless of how strategies are employed concerning work with commitment and influencers, they are subordinate to the importance of the brand concerning the effect on purchase intent. The relationship marketing theory, as established (cf. Hunt et al., 2006), needs to be revisited and enriched by the new findings that research on online relationships provides. Even if commitment remains important, it is in a renewed relationship context.

Managerial implications

As appears in the literature, brand image has a pivotal role in online shopping. According to the literature, influencers and commitment have a crucial role in empowering the influence on purchase intent, when they mediate the brand image. Therefore, it is important for managers to carefully plan strategies for online stores because it is important to consider that even if the “right” influencer is found to make recommendations, that alone does not boost purchase intent. The implication is that managers work on the brand image in more ways than merely applying the right influencer. This research can stimulate the attention of marketing managers to switch towards creating the right combination of online variables, and that entails a variety of activities, finding influencers being one of them. Managers must consider that communicating directly with customers as well as delivering the right product of the right quality are all equally important to strengthen brand image and potentially increase customer commitment. Based on the findings, customer commitment empowers the influence of brand image to enhance

purchase intent. Thus, managers who strengthen commitment can indirectly create more purchasing opportunities in online relationships. It may seem controversial but merely means that managers' overarching target must be building brand image, which can be done by finding the right influencers and improving commitments when seeking to boost customers' level of purchase intention.

In a sense, new technological development changes the conditions by changing the routes for both products and information as new markets are created. From a managers' point of view, this simultaneously opens for new competition, as consumers can reach sites from the globe wherever they are. In this context, the result most important in this paper would be the notion of brand importance – building strong brands is ever more important when technological development establishes in consumer markets.

Recommendation to the businesses

The recommendations of the result for businesses working with online relationships concerns simultaneously managing several factors in order to be successful. When engaging in online business to increase the purchase intent and, consequently, the amount of purchase, we advise a strategy including influencers and commitment as well as strengthening the brand image. A strong brand alone, when measured in terms of the effect on purchase intent, is always more functional and profitable in context with work on relationship commitment and influencers on purchase intent. Simply this entails finding and hiring the right influencers for the products most important to show while also engaging in activities the customers deem important in the relationships. The latter may concern anything from personalizing services and offering good conditions for memberships in, e.g., customer clubs.

Limitations and future research directions

This study recommends various empirical and theoretical avenues for future research to refine understandings of the mediating role of brand image in the promotion of purchase intent with consideration of different factors affecting purchase intent in online relationships. This study suggests future research continues to explore the impact of third parties and map out both who they are and what impact they have on online relationships. Also, investigating online relationship behavior is needed. This is proposed by Boateng (2019), who shows the complexity of consumer behavior due to different influential actors, highlighting that that information sources are important. Moreover, this study also suggests studying how consumers behave

regarding whom they listen to and why this may be different in the online environment. Other aspects for further study that are relevant when many factors may impact the performance variable are potential moderating as well as mediating effects (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

An interesting aspect for further research is that of external validity, which refers to the applicability of the result in other contexts, in this case, that could be purchased offline. The effect of the brand on purchase intent is also established in other contexts. To investigate the influence of influencers, however, in other context is for future research, or possibly other ongoing research projects.

In further pursuit of an international dataset with this method, more people from more countries should be enrolled in collecting data, and the goals for many respondents that is wanted from each country, or age category/gender can be more strictly set. Finally, a longer time period than just a few weeks could generate a larger and more demographically dispersed sample.

References:

- Aaker, D. A. (1996). Measuring brand equity across products and markets. *California management review*, 38(3), 102-120
- Anastasiadou, E., Lindh, C., & Vasse, T. (2018). Are Consumers International? A Study of CSR, Cross-Border Shopping, Commitment and Purchase Intent among Online Consumers. *Journal of Global Marketing*, 1-16.
- Bacik, R., Fedorko, R., Nastisin, L., & Gavurova, B. (2018). Factors of communication mix on social media and their role in forming customer experience and brand image. *Management & Marketing*, 13(3), 1108-1118.
- Bakshy, E., Hofman, J. M., Mason, W. A., & Watts, D. J. (2011). Everyone's an influencer: quantifying influence on twitter. In Proceedings of the fourth ACM international conference on Web search and data mining 65-74.
- Barnes, J. G., & Cumby, J. A. (2002). Establishing customer relationships on the Internet requires more than technology. *Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ)*, 10(1), 36-46.
- Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator–mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 51(6), 1173-1182.
- Bejou, D (1997). Relationship Marketing: Evolution, Present State, Future. *Psychology & Marketing*, 14(18), 727.
- Bentler, P. M., & Bonett, D. G. (1980). Significance tests and goodness of fit in the analysis of covariance structures. *Psychological bulletin*, 88(3), 588–606.
- Berkowitz, E. N., Kerin, R. A., Hartley, S. W., & Rudelius, W. (1992). Marketing. Homewood, IL: Richard D. Irwin.
- Bickart, B., & Schindler, R. M. (2001). Internet forums as influential sources of consumer

- information. *Journal of interactive marketing*, 15(3), 31-40.
- Biloš, A., & Kelić, I. (2012). Marketing aspects of social networks. *Economic research-Ekonomska istraživanja* 2, 155-174.
- Blackwell, R., Miniard, P., & Engel, J. (2006). Customer behavior. Mason: Thompson.
- Bloemer, J. & Odekerken-Schröder, G. (2003). Antecedents and Consequences of Affective Commitment. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 11 (3), 33-43.
- Brodie, R. J., Ilic, A., Juric, B., & Hollebeek, L. (2013). Consumer engagement in a virtual brand community: An exploratory analysis. *Journal of business research*, 66(1), 105-114.
- Boateng, S. L. (2019). Online relationship marketing and customer loyalty: a signaling theory perspective. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 37(1), 226-240.
- Brown, D. & Hayes, N. (2008). Influencer Marketing: Who Really Influences Your Customers? Taylor and Francis Group.
- Byrne, B. M. (2001). Structural equation modeling with AMOS, EQS, and LISREL: Comparative approaches to testing for the factorial validity of a measuring instrument. *International journal of testing*, 1(1), 55-86.
- Curtis, T., Arnaud, A., & Waguespack, B. P., (2017). Advertising effect on consumer emotions, judgements, and purchase intent. *Asian Journal of Business Research*, 7(2), 57-73.
- Dick, A. S., & Basu, K. (1994). Customer loyalty: toward an integrated conceptual framework. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, 22(2), 99-113.
- Dwivedi, A. & Johnson, L.W. (2013). Trust–commitment as a mediator of the celebrity endorser brand equity relationship in a service context. *Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ)*, 21(1), 36–42
- Dodds, W. B., Monroe, K. B., & Grewal, D., (1991). Effects of price, brand, and store information on buyers' product evaluations. *Journal of marketing research*, 28(3), 307-319.
- East, R., & Ang, L. (2017). Making progress in marketing research. *Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ)*, 25(4), 334-340.
- Elwalda, A., & Lu, K. (2016). The impact of online customer reviews (OCRs) on customers' purchase decisions: An exploration of the main dimensions of OCRs. *Journal of Customer Behaviour*, 15(2), 123-152.
- Erdoğan, İ. E., & Cicek, M. (2012). The impact of social media marketing on brand loyalty. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 58 , 1353-1360.
- Erciş, A., Ünal, S., Candan, F. B., & Yıldırım, H. (2012). The effect of brand satisfaction, trust and brand commitment on loyalty and repurchase intentions. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 58, 1395-1404.
- Eriksson, K., 1998. LISREL for Business Analysis, Uppsala university, repro HSC, Uppsala.
- Fornell, C. & Larcker, D.F. (1981). Evaluating Structural equation Models with Unobservable Variables and Measurement Error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39-50.

- Freberg, K., Graham, K., McGaughey, K., & Freberg, L. A. (2011). Who are the social media influencers? A study of public perceptions of personality. *Public Relations Review*, 37(1), 90-92.
- Fullerton, G. (2003). When does commitment lead to loyalty? *Journal of service research*, 5(4), 333-344.
- Ghazi, A.A., Muhammed, S.A., Khalil, A., Fwwaz, A. & Raed, A. (2013). Electronic networks and relationship marketing: qualitative evidence from Jordanian travel agencies. *Journal of Relationship marketing*, 12(4), 261-279.
- Griffin, A. (1997). PDMA research on new product development practices: updating trends and benchmarking best practices. *Journal of Product Innovation Management: An International Publication of The Product Development & Management Association*, 14(6), 429-458.
- Gustafsson, A., Johnson, M.D & Roos, I, (2005). The effects of Customer Satisfaction, Relationship Commitment, Dimensions, and Triggers on Customer Retention, *Journal of Marketing*, 69(4), 210-218.
- Hausman, A. V., & Siekpe, J. S. (2009). The effect of web interface features on consumer online purchase intentions. *Journal of business research*, 62(1), 5-13.
- Hawkins, D. I., Mothersbaugh, D. L., & Best, R. J. (2010). Consumer behavior: Building marketing strategy. McGraw-Hill Irwin.
- Hamill, J., (1997). The Internet and international marketing *International marketing review*, 14(5), 300-323.
- Hartnett, N., Romaniuk, J., & Kennedy, R. (2016). Comparing direct and indirect branding in advertising. *Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ)*, 24(1), 20-28.
- Hayduk, L. A. (1987). Structural equation modeling with LISREL: Essentials and advances. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Hennig-Thurau, T. (2004). Customer orientation of service employees: Its impact on customer satisfaction, commitment, and retention. *International journal of service industry management*, 15(5), 460-478.
- Holm, D. B., Eriksson, K., & Johanson, J. (1996). Business networks and cooperation in international business relationships. *Journal of international business studies*, 27(5), 1033-1053.
- Huang, J. H. & Shyu, S.H.P. (2009). Building personalized relationships with customers via Emails. *Quality control and applied statistics*, 54(4), 329-331.
- Hunt, S.D., Arnett, D.B; & Madhavaram, S. (2006), The explanatory foundations of relationship marketing theory. *The Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing, suppl. Relationship theory and business markets*, 21(2), 72-78.
- Kapferer, J. N. (2006). The two business cultures of luxury brands. In Brand culture (pp. 75-83). Routledge.
- Ghalandari, K., & Norouzi, A. (2012). The effect of country of origin on purchase intention: The role of product knowledge. *Research Journal of Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology*, 4(9), 1166-1171.
- Hess, J., Story, J. (2005). Trust-based commitment: multidimensional consumer–

- brand relationships. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 22(6), 313–322.
- Hoonsopon, D., & Puriwat, W. (2016). The effect of reference groups on purchase intention: Evidence in distinct types of shoppers and product involvement. *Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ)*, 24(2), 157-164.
- Ilicic, J., & Webster, C. M. (2011). Effects of multiple endorsements and consumer–celebrity attachment on attitude and purchase intention. *Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ)*, 19(4), 230-237.
- Isenberg, D. J. (1986). Thinking and managing: A verbal protocol analysis of managerial problem solving. *Academy of management Journal*, 29(4), 775-788.
- Jin, N., Lee, S., & Huffman, L. (2012). Impact of restaurant experience on brand image and customer loyalty: Moderating role of dining motivation. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 29(6), 532-551.
- Johnstone, L., & Lindh, C. (2018). The sustainability-age dilemma: A theory of (un) planned behaviour via influencers. *Journal of consumer behaviour*, 17(1), 127-139.
- Jöreskog, K.G. & Sörbom, D. (1993). LISREL 8: Structural Equation Modeling with the SIMPLIS Command Language. Lincolnwood: Scientific Software International.
- Keh, H. T., & Xie, Y. (2009). Corporate reputation and customer behavioral intentions: The roles of trust, identification and commitment. *Industrial marketing management*, 38(7), 732-742.
- Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of marketing*, 57(1), 1-22.
- Kim, Y., & Choi, T. Y. (2018). Tie strength and value creation in the buyer-supplier context: A U-shaped relation moderated by dependence asymmetry. *Journal of Management*, 44(3), 1029-1064.
- Kim, S., & Thorndike Pysarchik, D. (2000). Predicting purchase intentions for uni-national and bi-national products. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 28(6), 280-291.
- Kim, J., Jin, B., & Swinney, J. L. (2009). The role of retail quality, e-satisfaction and e-trust in online loyalty development process. *Journal of retailing and Consumer services*, 16(4), 239-247.
- Knox, S., & Freeman, C. (2006). Measuring and managing employer brand image in the service industry. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 22(7-8), 695-716.
- Kohli, C. S., Harich, K. R., & Leuthesser, L. (2005). Creating brand identity: a study of evaluation of new brand names. *Journal of Business Research*, 58(11), 1506-1515.
- Koo, D. M., Kim, J. J., & Lee, S. H. (2008). Personal values as underlying motives of shopping online. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 20(2), 156-173.
- Koshksaray, A. A., Franklin, D., & Hanzae, K. H. (2015). The relationship between e-lifestyle and Internet advertising avoidance. *Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ)*, 23(1), 38-48.
- Kotabe, M., & Helsen, K. (2004). Global marketing strategy; Vol. Hoboken.
- Lee, M. K., & Turban, E. (2001). A trust model for consumer internet shopping. *International Journal of electronic commerce*, 6(1), 75-91.

- Li, H., Daugherty, T., & Biocca, F. (2002). Impact of 3-D advertising on product knowledge, brand attitude, and purchase intention: The mediating role of presence. *Journal of advertising*, 31(3), 43-57.
- Liang, C. J., Chen, H. J., & Wang, W. H. (2008). Does online relationship marketing enhance customer retention and cross-buying? *The service industries journal*, 28(6), 769-787.
- Lin, G. T., & Sun, C. C. (2009). Factors influencing satisfaction and loyalty in online shopping: an integrated model. *Online information review*, 33(3), 458-475.
- Lindh, C., & Lisichkova, N. (2017). Rationality versus emotionality among online shoppers: The mediating role of experts as enhancing influencer effect on purchasing intent. *Journal of Customer Behaviour*, 16(4), 333-351.
- Lou, C & Yuan, S. (2019). Influencer Marketing: How Message Value and Credibility Affect Consumer Trust of Branded Content on Social Media, *Journal of Interactive Advertising*. 19(1), 58-73.
- Martínez-López, F., Gázquez-Abad, J. & Sousa, C. (2013), Structural equation modelling in marketing and business research, *European Journal of Marketing*, 47(1/2), 115-152.
- Meskaran, F., Ismail, Z., & Shanmugam, B. (2013). Online purchase intention: Effects of trust and security perception. *Australian journal of basic and applied sciences*, 7(6), 307-315.
- McKnight, D. H., & Chervany, N. L. (2001). What trust means in e-commerce customer relationships: An interdisciplinary conceptual typology. *International journal of electronic commerce*, 6(2), 35-59.
- Morgan, R. M., & Hunt, S. D. (1994). The commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing. *Journal of marketing*, 58(3), 20-38.
- Moriuchi, E., & Takahashi, I. (2016). Satisfaction trust and loyalty of repeat online consumer within the Japanese online supermarket trade. *Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ)*, 24(2), 146-156.
- Morwitz, V. G., & Schmittlein, D. (1992). Using segmentation to improve sales forecasts based on purchase intent: Which “intenders” actually buy?. *Journal of marketing research*, 29(4), 391-405.
- Nyadzayo, M. W., Casidy, R., & Thaichon, P. (2019). B2B purchase engagement: Examining the key drivers and outcomes in professional services. *Industrial Marketing Management*, forthcoming, <https://reader.elsevier.com/reader/sd/pii/S0019850118307533?token=DB3E4FCA7190E78A4B160810B15BEB7220CDB0E4BB729BBE68BE240B6AC81B49E315D3C0993815E6132DD8B8384442D6>
- Oliver, R. L. (1999). Whence consumer loyalty?. *Journal of marketing*, 63(4), 33-44.
- Osei-Frimpong, K., Donkor, G. & Owusu-Frimpong, N. (2019). The Impact of Celebrity Endorsement on Consumer Purchase Intention: An Emerging Market Perspective. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 27(1), 103-12
- Osuna Ramírez, S. A., Veloutsou, C., & Morgan-Thomas, A. (2017). A systematic literature review of brand commitment: definitions, perspectives and dimensions. *Athens Journal of Business and Economics*, 3(3), 305-332.
- Park, D. H., Lee, J., & Han, I. (2007). The effect of on-line consumer reviews on consumer purchasing intention: The moderating role of involvement. *International journal of electronic commerce*, 11(4), 125-148.

- Palumbo, F., & Herbig, P. (1998). International marketing tool: the Internet. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, 98(6), 253-261.
- Petersen, B., Welch, L. S., & Liesch, P. W. (2002). The Internet and foreign market expansion by firms. *Management International Review*, 42(2), 2-22.
- Price, L. L., & Feick, L. F. (1984). The role of interpersonal sources in external search: An informational perspective. *ACR North American Advances*.
- Quach, T.N, Jebarajakirthy, C. & Thaichon, P (2016). The effects of service quality on internet service provider customers' behaviour: A mixed methods study. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 28(3) 435-463.
- Quelch, J. A., & Klein, L. R. (1996). The Internet and international marketing. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 37(3), 60.
- Quero, M. J., & Ventura, R. (2015). Affective commitment and future purchase intentions in the performing arts: An empirical approach. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences/Revue Canadienne des Sciences de l'Administration*, 32(2), 75-85.
- Ruben, C. C., Paparoidamis, N. G., & Chung, C. (2015). The Impact of Service Quality, Relationship Satisfaction, Trust and Commitment on Loyalty: An Empirical Investigation in a Business-to-Business Services Context. In: H. Spotts (Eds) *Revolution in marketing: Market driving changes. Developments in marketing science: Proceedings of the academy of marketing science*. New York, Cham, Germany: Springer.
- Safari, A., Thilenius, P., & Hadjikhani, A. (2013). The impact of psychic distance on consumers' behavior in international online purchasing. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 25(4), 234-249.
- Sashi, C. M. (2012). Customer engagement, buyer-seller relationships, and social media. *Management decision*, 50(2), 253-272.
- Smith, M.J. (2014). A crisis of political parties. In: *Institutional Crisis in 21st Century Britain*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 101-124.
- Smith, M. (2011). *The new relationship marketing: How to Build a Large, Loyal, Profitable Network Using the Social Web*. New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- Shaltoni, A. M. (2017). From websites to social media: exploring the adoption of internet marketing in emerging industrial markets. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 32(7), 1009-1019.
- Sirapricha, J., & Tocquer, G. (2012). Customer experience, brand image and customer loyalty in telecommunication services. In *Int Conf Econ Bus Mark Manag*, 29(1), 112-116.
- Steenkamp, J-B. E.M & van Trijp, H.C.M. (1991), The use of LISREL in validating marketing constructs. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 8(4), 283-299.
- Thaichon, P & Quach, T.N, (2015), The relationship between service quality, satisfaction, trust, value, commitment and loyalty of Internet service providers' customers. *Journal of Global Scholars of Marketing Science*, 25(4), 295-313.
- Van der Heijden, H., Verhagen, T., & Creemers, M. (2003). Understanding online purchase intentions: contributions from technology and trust perspectives. *European journal of information systems*, 12(1), 41-48.

- Vermesan, O., & Friess, P. (2014). Internet of things-from research and innovation to market deployment vol. 29. Aalborg: River Publishers.
- Virtanen, H., Björk, P., & Sjöström, E. (2017). Follow for follow: marketing of a start-up company on Instagram. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 24(3), 468-484.
- Wang, Y. H., & Tsai, C. F. (2014). The relationship between brand image and purchase intention: Evidence from award winning mutual funds. *The international journal of business and finance research*, 8(2), 27-40.
- Wu, P. C., Yeh, G. Y. Y., & Hsiao, C. R. (2011). The effect of store image and service quality on brand image and purchase intention for private label brands. *Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ)*, 19(1), 30-39.
- Yannopoulos, P. (2011). Impact of the Internet on marketing strategy formulation. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 2(18), 1-7.
- Zahoor, S. Z., & Qureshi, I. H. (2017). Social media marketing and brand equity: A literature review. *IUP Journal of Marketing Management*, 16(1), 47-64.