

The Relationships between Website Reputation, Website Quality, and Repeat Purchase Intention: The Moderating Effect of Trust

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationships between website reputation, website quality, and repeat purchase intention and the moderating effect of trust on the relationship between website reputation and website quality. Results show that website reputation has a significant and positive effect on website quality, which also has a significant and positive effect on repeat purchase intention. However, trust does not moderate the relationship between website reputation and website quality.

Keywords

Website Reputation, Website Quality, Repeat Purchase Intention, Trust

1. Introduction

In the context of e-commerce, pre-purchase, on-line, and post sales are three phases of marketing based on the functions and features of websites (Liu & Arnett, 2000). Consumers search product information, complete online payments, and fulfill purchases through a website (Zhang, Fang, Wei, Ramsey, McCole, & Chen, 2011). Thus customers rely on website for their online transactions. Prior studies investigated the relationships between website reputation, trust, and website quality (Hsu, Chang, Chu, & Lee, 2014; Park, Gunn, & Han, 2012) as well as the relationship between user-perceived website quality and trust (Liao, Palvia, & Lin, 2006). It comes out the following research questions: Does website

reputation enhance consumers' perceptions of website quality and does trust moderate this relationship? If so, how about this relationship? Thus, this study explores the effect of website reputation on website quality and the moderating effect of trust on this relationship.

2. Theoretical Foundations and Research Model

2.1. Website Reputation

Website reputation is defined as "customers believe that a seller/website is honest and concern about its customer" (Hsu et al., 2014, p. 238). Websites with reputation are more likely to provide objective information rather than false reviews to their customers and care about their customers' benefits by delivering values to them (Hsu et al., 2014). Thus, consumers can receive credible information from a website with good reputation and perceive its product's value (Sullivan & Kim, 2018), which increases consumers' benefits in transaction process, reduces search time, and creates convenient communication. A website's reputation has a significant effect on consumers' trust (Kim & Park, 2013).

2.2. Website Quality

Website quality influences customer's purchase decisions (Liao et al., 2006). A well-designed website provides high quality to make easy navigation to consumers and increase their online purchasing experiences and their evaluations (Zhang et al., 2011). In addition, website quality indicates high information quality, quick response time, and high visual attractiveness (Liao et al., 2006). Consumers are eager to easily find the information and clearly communicate with online vendors via high quality of website. Website quality significantly improves customers' satisfaction (Kim & Peterson, 2017; Zhang et al., 2011). Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H1: Website reputation has a significant and positive effect on website quality.

2.3. Repeat Purchase Intention

Repeat purchase intention is related to the probability that consumers will continuously purchase from the same website. It reflects continuous purchasing behavior in online context. Website quality is a key factor of motivating consumers in shopping process (Chou & Hsu, 2016) and guarantees accuracy, completeness, currency, and format (Kim & Peterson, 2017). Consumers can quickly find necessary information in the website to reduce time cost. This can facilitate consumers to perceive reliable and convenient website to fulfill their purchases. Furthermore, quick response time leads consumers to experience more meticulous and thoughtful services. High attractive and visual website induces consumers' desires to browse it. Therefore, a successful website can attract customers, increase their perceptions of reliability, and improve their satisfaction (Liu & Arnett, 2000). Moreover, satisfaction positively influences customers' intentions in online shopping context (Chou & Hsu, 2016). Thus, satisfaction influences

consumers' repeat purchase intentions. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H2: Website quality has a significant and positive effect on repeat purchase intention.

2.4. Trust

“Trust refers to one’s belief that others in an exchange will not act opportunistically by taking advantage of the situation” (Hsu et al., 2014, p. 237) and includes ability, benevolence, and integrity (Pavlou & Fygenson, 2006). Ability refers to a set of characteristics, competencies, and skills within some specific domain. Benevolence refers to an exchange partner is willing to keep customers’ interests (Hallikainen & Laukkanen, 2018). Integrity is an individual’s perception that a partner adheres to a series of principles in an exchange process. A well-designed website with simple navigation improves its ability to affect its consumers’ perceptions of quality (Zhang et al., 2011). Benevolence reduces social uncertainty by ruling out undesirable behavior (i.e., opportunistic behavior) (Gefen & Straub, 2004). Website possesses a large amount of consumers’ personal information. Consumers may face the risk of information theft and corruption data due to the opportunistic behavior of websites. Privacy risk is one of the most salient factors which consumers concern (Featherman, Miyazaki, & Sprott, 2008). A trustworthy website cares about its consumers’ interests. Integrity reflects the perception of one party toward another party as being honest, acting ethic, fulfilling its promises, making faith agreements, and telling the truth (Hallikainen & Laukkanen, 2018). Consumers are more likely to believe online vendors who keep their promises. They expect that online vendors will behave reliably and protect their personal information to reduce risk in the website. Comments and rating in the feedback-based website decide its trustworthiness (Hsu et al., 2014). Thus, website reputation is related to trust.

Intermediary trust and seller trust are two types of trust in the online shopping context. Intermediary trust is regarding the trustworthiness of a website (Hsu et al., 2014). Consumers and vendors conduct their transactions on the website which is the intermediary between them. A website with accurate and objective information about vendors and their products increases consumers’ trust. Consumers generate positive attitude and enhance high level of quality perception toward high level of trust. Conversely, low level of trust mitigates quality perception (Hsu et al., 2014). Thus, trust beliefs determine the perception of website quality (Hsu et al., 2014). Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H3: Trust moderates the relationship between website reputation and website quality.

Figure 1 shows the proposed model.

3. Methods

3.1. Measure Development

Scales were adopted from previous studies. Scales for website reputation and

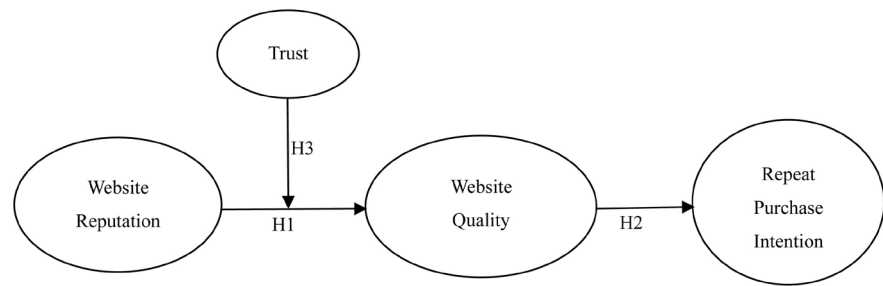


Figure 1. Proposed research model.

website quality were derived from Kim and Park (2013) and Park et al. (2012), respectively. Scales for repeat purchase intention and trust were derived from Chiu, Hsu, Lai, and Chang (2012). This study adopted a 7-point Likert scale (1 for strongly disagree and 7 for strongly agree) for all items and conducted pre-test to ensure the appropriate wording of items.

3.2. Samples

All respondents are undergraduate students in Guangdong, China. Each respondent had shopping experience on Jingdong website in China. A total of 314 samples were collected with 225 valid samples.

3.3. Common Method Variance

This study adopted prevention and post-detection procedures to mitigate the common method variance (CMV) problem. For prevention procedure, we randomized the constructs in the questionnaire. For post-detection procedure, we adopted Harman's single-factor analysis to check CMV problem (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). The explained variance for the first factor of Harman's single-factor analysis is 49.18%. Thus, CMV problem is not concerned in this study.

4. Results

We conducted the measurement model and structural model (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988) with AMOS 20.0 versions software to analyzed data. The results of measurement model indicated that the factor loadings of all items were higher than 0.5 (Hair Jr., Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010), the values of composite reliability and Cronbach alpha of all constructs were higher than 0.70 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Nunnally, 1979), and the average variance extracted (AVE) of all constructs were above 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The square roots of AVE for all constructs were greater than the correlations with other constructs. It indicated the for the discriminant validity. Thus, the results demonstrated sufficient validity and reliability.

The results of the structural model showed an acceptable model fit: $\chi^2 = 76.249$, $df = 33$, $\chi^2/df = 2.311$, Goodness-of-fit index (GFI) = 0.934, Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) = 0.948, Comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.962, Nonnormed fit index

(NFI) = 0.936, Incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.962, Parsimonious normed-fit index (PNFI) = 0.686, Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.076. In addition, structural model analyzed the path coefficients of research hypotheses and the results confirmed that website reputation has a significant and positive effect on website quality, which has a significant and positive effect on repeat purchase intention. The R^2 values are 32.3% and 40.1% for website quality and repeat purchase intention, respectively. **Figure 2** shows the results of structural model.

This study adopted the conditional process model (Hayes, 2013; Hayes, Montoya, & Rockwood, 2017) to analyze the moderating effect of trust. The results indicated trust does not moderate the relationship between website reputation and website quality ($t = 0.671, p > 0.05$). **Figure 3** shows the conditional effect of trust.

5. Conclusion

This study explored the relationships between website reputation, website quality, repeat purchase intention, and trust. Website reputation increases website quality, which improves consumers' repeat purchase intentions. However, trust does not moderate the relationship between website reputation and website quality. Theoretically, trust does not moderate the relationship between website reputation and website quality although website reputation influences trust, which influences website quality (Hsu et al., 2014). Practically, website managers should enhance their website reputation to increase their website quality in order to improve consumers' repeat purchase intentions.

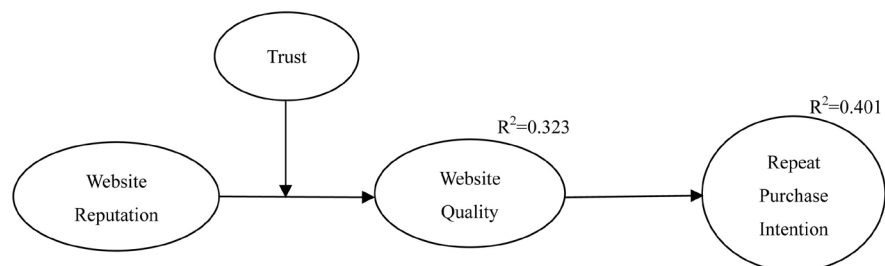


Figure 2. Research model results.

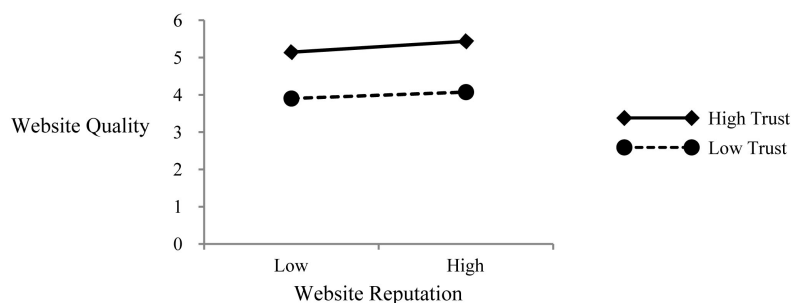


Figure 3. Conditional effect of trust on the relationship between website reputation and website quality

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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